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# North Pinellas Times

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Special to the Times

The Tarpon Springs High School's Outdoor Performance Ensemble performs at the Bands of America Grand National Finals in Indianapolis recently.

## Band collects a national title

■ The Tarpon Springs High ensemble brings home a championship award for the fourth time in six years.

By JANE MADDEN WELCH  
Times Correspondent

TARPON SPRINGS — Tarpon Springs High School's Outdoor Performance Ensemble can add another award to its growing list of honors.

At the Bands of America Grand National Finals competition Nov. 9-12 in Indianapolis, the school won the Division AA national championship, taking first place in all three

categories: music, visual and general effect. The Tarpon Springs band, one of three from high schools in Pinellas County to compete in Indianapolis, traveled to the RCA Dome and Indiana Convention Center for the national competition. East Lake and Seminole high schools also competed.

The 120-member ensemble also placed eighth overall, the only division AA band to make it into the top 12 along with the largest schools in the competition.

The award comes after the school won top honors in all categories in their division in the Bands of America Southeastern Super Regionals in Atlanta on Nov. 5.

"The Grand Nationals are the Olympics of band competitions," said Tarpon Springs band director Kevin Ford.

Ninety-six bands from across the country competed in three divisions, based on school size.

Tarpon Springs High School has been to the competition four times in six years and has won the title each time.

"The students worked extremely hard to come to this level of achievement," said Pam Ballew, a board member of the band boosters. Her daughter, junior Lindsey Richard, 17, has played the flute since her freshman year. "It's been a positive, life-changing experience for her," Ballew said.

"Our band members show a tremendous amount of poise and dignity," said assistant principal Wayne McKnight, who was a chaperone on the trip. "That makes all of us proud."