



2010
MEMBERSHIP
HANDBOOK

November 9, 2009

The mission of **THUNDER Drum & Bugle Corps** is to provide a competitive platform upon which youth can build successful, healthy lifestyles through music and performance, and to promote artistic excellence.

What is a Drum Corps?

Drum & Bugle Corps is a uniquely American activity that began after World War I, when veterans formed corps to perform in parades as a way to celebrate patriotism. Transcending its military roots, Drum Corps today is a highly stylized form of competition that is an art form in and of itself. Precision, pageantry, musicianship, athleticism and originality combine to thrill audiences (and hopefully judges!) throughout the country. A combination of brass, percussion and movement, a drum corps performance embraces a variety of styles, including jazz, symphonic, pop and show tunes, all set to precision marching on a stage the size of a football field. The experience teaches music, discipline and teamwork. *Young performers achieve a level of performance comparable to Olympic athletes and are regarded as the best in their field.*

Who is THUNDER?

THUNDER was established in 2004 to serve the youth of the Inland Northwest. The corps consists of three distinct, but complementing sections: brass, percussion and color guard. The brass and percussion players bring the music to the competitive field, while the guard adds the rich and diverse color, costuming, and dance to help tell the story of the production. Camps and rehearsals begin this winter and continue through spring. The summer months will bring an ambitious tour schedule that will immerse the corps in travel and competition throughout the United States, culminating with the Drum Corps International World Championships.

Membership in THUNDER

Membership in THUNDER is open to any male or female, ages 13 - 21*, who meet audition requirements. (**-You must be 13 by January 1st and you cannot turn 22 before June 19*). Final membership will be capped at 120 persons for the 2010 season. THUNDER does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or age within the competition limitations set forth by Drum Corps International. Selection of corps membership is based on four factors

- 1. A teachable attitude*
- 2. Time commitment*
- 3. Ability to meet financial obligations*
- 4. Performance ability.*

The corps will put great emphasis on dedication, attendance and hard work.

Membership Fees

The annual membership fee includes music, instruction, uniforms, instruments, summer travel, food, and partial camp costs. Fee payment options are as outlined in the following table.

	Membership Fee
	\$1,300.00
January 16, 2010	Payment 1 - \$260 due
February 13, 2010	Payment 2 - \$260 due
March 13, 2010	Payment 3 - \$260 due
April 17, 2010	Payment 4 - \$260 due
May 29, 2010	Payment 5 - \$260 due

ALL MEMBERS MAY REDUCE THEIR TOTAL FEE BY \$100.00 IF THEY PAY IN FULL BY MARCH 31, 2010.

All fees are delinquent after the date on which they are due. Any member more than 30 days delinquent will be unable to participate in camps or rehearsals until fees are current, in which case the member may forfeit his/her position in the corps. **All fees are non-refundable after March 31, 2010.** Fees may be paid by cash, check, or credit card (VISA, MasterCard). Members are responsible for the full membership fee, regardless of when they join. **All fees must be fully paid by May 29, 2010.**

All members must sign an agreement indicating their intention to perform with THUNDER during the 2008 season.

Sponsorship Program

A donation made to THUNDER by a third party (friend, relative, business) in the name of a member will be applied to that member's fees. Any sponsorship beyond the amount of a member's fees will be used by the corps to offset operating costs and will be considered a tax-deductible donation.

Attendance

Attendance at rehearsals and performances of THUNDER are mandatory. In order for the corps to be competitive, it is vital that members attend rehearsals and performances. There are excused absences for personal or family illness or family tragedy. During the preparatory season, conflicts with school functions, band functions, Winter Guard, or Winter Percussion are legitimate reasons for missing rehearsals. They are not, however, legitimate reasons after daily rehearsals begin in June until the end of the tour. If you are unsure as to what is a legitimate reason for missing a rehearsal, contact the Corps for guidance. You must notify your Caption Head if you are going to miss all or any part of a rehearsal. Failure to notify Corps management could result in dismissal from the Corps and forfeiture of all dues paid up to that time.

Membership Transfer

The policy of DCI does not allow members to change corps after signing a membership agreement. Exceptions to this policy require extenuating circumstances and a written release from the Director. No member of THUNDER will be allowed to march in another corps in this or any following season if they owe money or have withheld equipment owned by the THUNDER Drum and Bugle Corps.

Communications

Communication is important in all aspects of corps operations, and the Drum Major(s) are the central point of the communication process. During the camps, information and instructions from Corps Management will be given to the Drum Major(s) and either announced to the corps as a whole or passed down to the members through the "chain of command". All approved changes to schedules or other operational functions will be coordinated through the Drum Major(s) for notification to the corps. As a general rule, all problems should be rectified at the lowest level possible. If a member is not satisfied with a resolution, then they should seek redress from the next higher level if warranted.

Chain of Command

- Corps Director
- Program Coordinator
- Caption Heads
- Staff Technicians
- Drum Major(s)
- Section Leaders/Section Captains

Controlled Substance & Alcohol Policy

No member of the THUNDER may possess or use any type of controlled substance or alcoholic beverage while participating in **any** corps activity. Members found using or possessing any type of alcohol, narcotics or controlled substance will, at the discretion of the Corps Director, either be removed from the Corps and sent home at **THEIR OWN EXPENSE**, or turned over to local authorities. Members who violate this policy and are removed from the Corps, are not eligible for future membership in THUNDER. Members found purchasing or selling alcohol or any controlled substance to other Corps members will be subject to the same policies and whatever local laws apply. **The THUNDER Drum & Bugle Corps is well aware of the dangers these substances pose to both the membership of the Corps and to the future of the organization. We will STRICTLY enforce these policies without regard to a member's position in the Corps or to potential competitive consequences.**

Smoking

THUNDER will maintain a smoke-free environment. No youth member, staff member or adult volunteer, regardless of age, may smoke while participating in THUNDER activities including camps, rehearsals, summer travel, and public

performances. Those who choose to smoke must do so out of the public eye when they cannot be associated with THUNDER. No smoking will be allowed EVER on any school or housing property and show sites. This is a DCI rule!

Illness, Medical Issues & Insurance

Drum and Bugle Corps is a physically, mentally and emotionally demanding activity. Members occasionally suffer illness while with the Corps. Members who become ill will be taken to the nearest hospital or clinic for treatment. Members who are too ill to complete the camp or tour will be sent home. All members will be required to file a medical history and a "Consent to Treat" form no later than March 1, 2010. THUNDER does not provide secondary medical insurance. Your personal medical insurance will apply and you will be responsible for any related expenses.

Emergency Contacts

Members will be provided with a primary and backup cellular phone numbers for camps, rehearsals, and tours that may be used by parents to contact the member in a family emergency. These numbers will be monitored 24 hours a day when possible and should **not** be used for routine messages, but are intended to allow the member to be contacted in the event of a true family emergency.

Camp Housing

THUNDER will utilize area high school campuses for weekend camp rehearsals. Members should be aware that THUNDER wishes to have an excellent reputation for taking care of rehearsal and housing facilities. Members should strive to treat facilities with the utmost care. Any member mistreating or damaging a facility will be immediately removed from the corps and sent home. When the Corps is departing from a facility, members will be assigned specific clean-up duties. These duties are to be carried out in an efficient, timely manner. Members will sleep in segregated areas by male and female as directed by the corps director. When housing sites do not accommodate separate areas for sleeping, an aisle approximately six feet wide is to be left between male and female areas. You are to stay in your designated sleeping area after lights are out. Any area designated as off-limits by the Director, staff or authorities in charge of the housing are to be complied with. Members may not leave a camp or housing site at any time without prior approval of corps management. Members not complying with these policies will be disciplined.

Lights Out Policy

A competitive drum and bugle corps is an athletic organization that requires proper physical care for each member. Sleep is not a luxury - it is a necessity. During camps and while on tour, rest and sleep is very important to your health. The management of the corps will strive to provide the corps with ample sleep time. It is the corps member's responsibility to take advantage of **EVERY MINUTE OF SLEEP POSSIBLE!** Thus, when lights are out, all members must be in their sleeping bag, all talking should stop and members should try to get to

sleep. **NO MEMBER MAY STAY UP AFTER LIGHTS ARE OUT.** The only possible exceptions would be members meeting with staff for a short period of time, or possible rehearsals for individual or ensemble competitions during the latter part of the season. Members who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary measures.

Food Policies

Members should eat meals provided by the corps during camps. The corps plans on feeding a specific number of people at each meal. When members choose to eat elsewhere, the corps wastes money and food. The corps strives to prepare wholesome, good tasting meals that are balanced to provide all nutritional needs appropriate to the performance needs of the corps. Some members have different needs or likes and dislikes relative to food. While the corps strives to provide for those individual needs, it is impossible to prepare individualized meals for each member. If you have specific dietary needs due to a medical condition (lactose intolerance, diabetes, etc.) or if you are a vegetarian, please make sure you notify Corps administration. Every effort will be made to accommodate these needs. It is also important for members to adhere to whatever schedules the food staff institutes. Failure to eat within the scheduled times could result in a member missing a meal. Please be understanding of the amount of time and effort it takes to feed 4 meals a day to 135 people. The people who prepare these meals are largely volunteers and deserve your appreciation and respect.

Water

Every member of the corps will have a water cooler at all rehearsals. The member should make time to fill the cooler before the start of each rehearsal. The corps will be given sufficient water breaks during rehearsal. Members will not be permitted to leave the practice area during these breaks. You must, therefore, have a water cooler with you at the rehearsal, filled with water. Members are advised to have **WATER ONLY** at rehearsal, as it is the best source for efficiently re-hydrating your body. Coolers should be emptied and cleaned thoroughly before the next day's rehearsal. This will help prevent harmful bacteria from forming.

Interactions Outside of the Corps, Use of Corps Logo

THUNDER encourages members to become friends with members of other corps. It is important to remember, however, that as a member of THUNDER you are a representative of this organization. In or out of uniform, members have a responsibility of maintaining the image and tradition of THUNDER. Any action made while wearing the member jacket or other identifying emblem reflects on the organization and any member who has ever marched in the corps. Any type of misconduct, use of drugs, drinking alcohol, use of offensive or profane language, fighting or any other inappropriate behavior could result in dismissal from the corps and forfeiture of all dues paid. Anyone who posts in any Internet forum or chat group shall not insult, criticize, or flame other posters, other corps,

DCI or any other sanctioning body while identifiable as a member or potential member of THUNDER.

Use of Corps Logo, Literature, and other Materials: The corps wishes to maintain a professional appearance in all matter in which it participates. Therefore, anyone wishing to use any corps logo or other identifying mark, any corps literature, or any other material generated by the corps must secure authorization from the Corps Director for the use of these items prior to using them in any personally produced materials, regardless of its purpose.

Care of Equipment

THUNDER supplies equipment for use in practice and performance. Members are responsible for proper maintenance of all assigned equipment. Any damage beyond normal wear and tear will be charged to the corps member. Intentionally damaging another person's equipment could result in dismissal from the corps and forfeiture of all dues paid.

Rehearsal Wear

Members must dress appropriately for rehearsals. No type of restrictive clothing is allowed for marching rehearsals. Guard will have special requirements for rehearsal clothing: check with the caption head for specific information. Members should always dress in good taste. Clothing with profane or suggestive words or slogans is not allowed. Any member wearing clothing that is inappropriate or in poor taste will be asked to change into more appropriate clothing before being allowed to participate. Members are urged to use hats and sunglasses to protect them from the sun.

Uniform Policy

The corps will provide a uniform to each Percussion, Brass, and Drum Major member. It is the responsibility of the member to maintain the uniform properly. While the corps will have the uniforms cleaned periodically, the members must make sure the uniform and accessories are kept clean and free from major wrinkles. Any damage beyond normal wear and tear will be charged to the corps member. Members should be aware of these rules and strive to follow them, as it will result in a positive image for the corps.

Hair

Members must maintain a neat and professional image in uniform. Excessive hair on the neck must be kept trimmed. All hair for the members wearing headgear must be able to tuck their hair inside the headgear. The Corps Director will determine if hair is in violation of policy and members will be required to have their hair trimmed before performing with the corps. Mustaches and beards can be worn if trimmed neatly and grown fully prior to the start of tour. Do not attempt to grow a mustache or beard during the summer. All males in the corps will be clean-shaven for every performance. Color guard members will have their own hair policy as defined by the instructional staff.

Shoes & Footwear

Every member of THUNDER will wear footwear when involved in outdoor activities of the Corps. The only exception to that policy is when for medical reasons a member must leave their foot uncovered. This includes loading and unloading buses, waiting in line for food, going to showers when you must go to another building and any other activity which requires the member to go outside. Members must always have appropriate footwear for rehearsals. Members may not rehearse barefoot or in sandals.

Gloves

All members of the brass section must wear gloves when handling instruments. There are no exceptions. Practice gloves will be made available for you. Guard members may need to wear gloves for rehearsal. Instructional staff will determine this need and implement at their discretion.

Cell Phones & Pagers

Cell phones and pagers will not be carried by any member during rehearsals or performance. Cell phones may not be used after lights out in sleeping facilities.

Volunteers

At the heart of the THUNDER organization is its volunteers and parents. Providing the support for the young men and women who make up the organization, the volunteers use their skills and manpower to aid in the operation of the camps, special projects, and summer tours. We encourage all members to talk with their parents and friends about volunteering with THUNDER. With their help we can maintain a quality program and keep costs down. Their support is needed in many ways. We hope that they will share some of their experiences with us, helping us grow and become the best that we can be.