



# PARENT MANUAL

**2026 EDITION VERSION A**  
**REVISION DATE 3/19/2026**

Assembled by Parents for Parents  
Organized by Jen Kowalski (Parent Liaison), Mary Cowperthwait  
(Corps Director) & Michael Gough (Executive Director)

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\*\*This handbook has been written for parents by veteran parents and the Troopers Administration. We've tried to address a wide range of questions and concerns. If you have a question and can't find the answer here, please feel free to ask on the Troopers Parent Facebook page or contact Corps Director, Mary Cowperthwait at [director@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:director@troopersdrumcorps.org) or Jen Kowalski at 210-722-0008. There are no silly questions and no question is insignificant. We were all newbies once!

Dear TrooParent,

I can't tell you how proud I am of your young adults. For them to have worked so hard and shown such determination is truly inspiring. Their dedication and resilience speak volumes about their character and potential.

Drum corps provides an incredible outlet for young people to grow and mature. Parents for decades have shared stories of sending their children into the Troopers only to have confident, capable adults returned to them. For nearly seventy years, this has been our mission: To provide a youth activity with positive educational experiences that promote the growth and development of specific life skills consistent with the Trooper Tradition of Excellence.

Your children are about to embark on one of the greatest adventures of their lives. They will form lifelong friendships, explore places they've only imagined, and experience moments most people only dream of.

What an amazing opportunity to grow, learn, and inspire those around them.

We are so honored to have you as part of our Troopers family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Gough", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Gough  
*Executive Director, Troopers Drum & Bugle Corps*  
[m.gough@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:m.gough@troopersdrumcorps.org)

## What is a drum corps?

Modern drum corps are composed of 165 performers who range in age from about 16 to 21. Each corps is made up of brass musicians, percussionists and a colorguard. They perform a 12-minute program on a standard football field. Programs are extravaganzas of musical excellence, marching precision, color, drama, dance and emotion. All members of the corps (except the front percussion ensemble) march in intricate formations which are coordinated with the musical productions.

Brass musicians in The Troopers play on top-quality King Marching Brass trumpets, mellophones, baritones, and tubas.

Percussion instruments include Pearl marching snare drums, tenor drums (often referred to as "quads" or "quints"), bass drums in five sizes and stationary Adams "front ensemble" instruments including various drums, cymbals, tympani, mallets (marimba, vibraphone, xylophone and chimes) and electronic synthesizers.

The colorguard adds color and drama through the coordinated use of flags, rifles, sabers and dance. The modern colorguard is as much a dance ensemble and storyteller as it is a precision marching unit.

## What are the benefits to the performers?

Drum corps is an activity which attempts to do much more than provide a performance opportunity for students or entertainment for the audience. Through the drum corps experience, students will learn useful life skills such as leadership, goal-setting and teamwork, among others. The Troopers curriculum includes opportunities for students to exercise their potential not only as musicians, but as complete human beings

# Chapter 1: Who Are The Troopers?

Your child has accepted a contract to be a Trooper! Congratulations and welcome to the Trooper Family! The Troopers mission is "to provide a youth activity with positive educational experiences that promote the growth and development of specific life skills consistent with the Trooper Tradition of Excellence."

For over sixty five years, the Troopers Drum & Bugle Corps has been at the cutting edge of the marching arts. In the early years, our corps founder, Mr. Jim Jones charted a new course for the destiny of Drum Corps. As originators of the touring model, the concept of merchandising, curve-linear formations, and more, the Troopers also became the first Drum Corps in history to win a National Championship with females in the playing line. In a spark of genius, Mr. Jones proposed the Midwest Combine which quickly became Drum Corps International.

The seeds that have been planted by the long blue line over the years have nurtured the activity into a high level performing and athletic art form. With that growth has come major expenses and support needs. Whether you are able to volunteer your time, make a major donation or even serve on the Board of Directors, you are the village that will keep the dream moving forward. Join us as we continue this unique mission of excellence and help inspire and raise the leaders of tomorrow.

The Troopers live with Honor, Loyalty, and Dedication. HLD

## Chapter 2: Being a Trooper Parent

Your child will learn many things besides improvement of their given talents. They will learn to deal with responsibility, discipline, and organizational skills. They will learn how to deal with disappointment and success. They will travel the country more in one summer than most people do in a lifetime. They will learn how to do their own laundry, manage their money, and clean up after themselves. They will also make friends that will last a lifetime.

The best thing you can do for your child as they embark on this life experience is to support their success, hard work, and dedication. Offer support, be proud of them, and have faith that they will survive this as they learn new life skills. Know that they will return to you in a short time, back to the safety of home and family, with a new family in tow. As a Trooper, they will have another family that will support their success, hard work, and dedication.

Drum corps is a very difficult sport. This world-level competition demands both physical and mental focus. Physical and mental focus becomes critical as the corps marches fast with precision on a large field with a few lines, hitting a spot and then moving again. It is 15 minutes of giving everything they have as they play an instrument or throw a flag with great expertise.

A parent's job is not to sweat the small stuff. There is so much that your child will experience through the course of a Trooper season, trust that your child will learn to deal with what comes their way. When they contact you with their pain, frustration, or self-doubt, continue to be positive and encouraging. Remind them to take their concerns to the Troopers member experience liaison, staff, and Trooper administration. Remind them to lean on their Trooper family. It is time to let the bird out of the nest and watch them fly. Be proud of your achievement as parents. This is your time to watch them soar.

When you want to see, talk, or be with your Trooper as they pass close to you on tour, remember this and ask yourself, "Will my actions distract them?" Their job is to stay focused on the field until they are on break. If they are distracted and miss their spot, they, and others, could be hurt. Imagine them being run over by a fast-moving bass drummer or a swinging tuba ... focus, focus, focus.

Your Trooper is surrounded by people who are there to help them succeed. If you have any concerns, check in with them. If you feel they are struggling (scared, home sick, or just don't sound normal) use the contacts at the end of this handbook to communicate these concerns. Don't panic, communicate.

### Boundaries:

As parents, we must respect boundaries. The tour buses are one of the living spaces our Troopers enjoy. This is their private space. Parents are not to be on the buses. There is also a staff bus that is off limits. When volunteering and traveling with the corps, there is a van designated for volunteers. Each member bus will have chaperones onboard.

Another private space for our Troopers is the gym. Parents are not to be in the gym. There will be designated living quarters for the Troopers, staff, and volunteers.

It is important that parents respect these boundaries.

### Pictures, Video, and Audio Recordings:

Absolutely NO video or audio recordings of the Troopers music or shows are allowed. This includes periscope, live streaming, and other new technology. Much of the music played has copyright rules. Breaking these rules can have high dollar fines. These fines can be charged to you, the Troopers, and DCI. Please honor these copyright rules.

Parents may take pictures of the Troopers but cannot interfere with rehearsals or performances. Please STAY OFF THE FIELD!

Sharing appropriate pictures on the TrooParent Facebook page is encouraged. We all have limited access to our Troopers throughout the summer and love to see pictures of them!

As you find pictures of your Trooper posted on the TrooParent Facebook page, you might consider saving a copy in a file folder. These pictures can be used later for Inspiration Wall posters and mementos for your child.

## Chapter 3: Trooper Auditions & Camps

Auditions generally begin in November or December. At these audition events, your son or daughter will audition for some of the top instructors in the nation. After the first round of auditions there is generally a callback camp in January for brass and percussion, and then monthly camps in February, March and either late April or early May. For colorguard, the callback camp and next camp for all colorguard will be the camp in late April and early May (since our colorguard members have a busy winter season). One day audition events do not provide housing, food or transportation. Full weekend camps provide top level instruction, great food from our food staff and amazon volunteers, airport transportation, and lodging. Information on which camps provide accommodations will be a part of the ticketing description. Once a member is contracted, all remaining camps are mandatory and members must reach out to their Caption Heads to be excused if there is a conflict with a school performance or event.

All audition dates, camp dates and information can be found at the following link. Additionally all audition fees and camp fees may be paid online via credit or debit card on our website at <http://www.TroopersDrumCorps.org/camps>

Parents may volunteer at any of these camps. However, there is a process that all adults must adhere to including background checks and mandatory online safety training. You can register to volunteer by using the Volunteer page on the Troopers website. <http://www.troopersdrumcorps.org/volunteer> Read *Chapter 7: Volunteering*, to learn the roles and responsibilities of volunteers.

During the audition process, Troopers staff will evaluate the abilities of the individual and how they work as an ensemble. While auditioning at a camp, your son or daughter will get to know the Troopers. They will learn about drum corps and about what it takes to be a part of the Troopers. They will meet new people and will learn from some of the best instructors in the activity. Drum corps is a life-changing experience that will provide a lifetime of memories.

Not just anyone can become a member of the Troopers. While musical and marching ability is important, key requirements are; commitment, desire, a positive attitude and financial responsibility. If your son or daughter has what it takes to become a member of this corps, they will join the Long Blue Line of thousands who have proudly worn the cross-sabers of "America's Corps."

When your child attends an overnight camp (Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr/May), they should bring the following:

- Sleeping bag, pillow and a twin size air mattress or pad
- Comfortable clothing and quality athletic shoes
- Toiletries and a towel

- Personal equipment for rehearsal
- Required section materials as communicated by their caption staff
- 1 gallon water jug
- Members will have access to a packing list provided from their section leaders with more detailed information

# Chapter 4: Tuition

## 2026 TUITION AND FEE SCHEDULE

Once a member has been offered a contract to participate in the season, the member must submit these forms within 15 calendar days along with a \$500 non-refundable Participation Deposit.

Any member that has completed a full season with the Troopers Drum and Bugle Corps, prior to the 2026 season, will be rewarded with a \$150 discount, per completed season.

Marched 2025, Contracted for 2026 - \$150 Discount

Marched 2024, 2025 and Contracted for 2026 - \$300 Discount

Marched 2023, 2024, 2025 and Contracted for 2026 - \$450 Discount

Marched 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 and Contracted for 2026 - \$600 Discount

These discounts will be applied to the CampDoc profile once the contracted member has completed Phase 1 and Phase 2 of their contract.

### MEMBERSHIP CONTRACTED BEFORE JANUARY 1ST

Within 15 days of receiving the contract offer - \$500 Non-refundable participation deposit due when registering for CampDoc (Phase 2 of the Contract).

Monday, January 5th - \$910 Tuition Installment

Monday, February 2nd - \$908 Tuition Installment

Monday, March 2nd - \$908 Tuition Installment

Monday, April 6th - \$908 Tuition Installment

Monday, May 4th - \$908 Tuition Installment

Friday, May 22nd - \$908 Tuition Installment

TOTAL: \$5,950

#### ALL MEMBERSHIP CONTRACTED IN JANUARY

Within 15 days of receiving the contract offer - \$500 Non-refundable participation deposit due when registering for CampDoc (Phase 2 of the Contract).

Monday, February 2nd - \$1090 Tuition Installment

Monday, March 2nd - \$1090 Tuition Installment

Monday, April 6th - \$1090 Tuition Installment

Monday, May 4th - \$1090 Tuition Installment

Friday, May 22nd - \$1090 Tuition Installment

TOTAL: \$5,950

#### ALL MEMBERSHIP CONTRACTED IN FEBRUARY

Within 15 days of receiving the contract offer - \$500 Non-refundable participation deposit due when registering for CampDoc (Phase 2 of the Contract).

Monday, March 2nd - \$1362.50 Tuition Installment

Monday, April 6th - \$1362.50 Tuition Installment

Monday, May 4th - \$1362.50 Tuition Installment

Friday, May 22nd - \$1362.50 Tuition Installment

TOTAL: \$5,950

### ALL MEMBERSHIP CONTRACTED IN MARCH

Within 15 days of receiving the contract offer - \$500 Non-refundable participation deposit due when registering for CampDoc (Phase 2 of the Contract).

Monday, April 6th - \$1818 Tuition Installment

Monday, May 4th - \$1816 Tuition Installment

Friday, May 22nd - \$1816 Tuition Installment

TOTAL: \$5,950

### ALL MEMBERSHIP CONTRACTED IN APRIL

Within 15 days of receiving the contract offer - \$500 Non-refundable participation deposit due when registering for CampDoc (Phase 2 of the Contract).

Friday, May 22nd - \$2975 Tuition Installment

Friday, June 26th - \$2975 Tuition Installment

TOTAL: \$5,950

### ALL MEMBERSHIP CONTRACTED IN MAY

Within 15 days of receiving the contract offer - \$500 Non-refundable participation deposit due when registering for CampDoc (Phase 2 of the Contract).

Friday, May 22nd - \$2975 Tuition Installment

Friday, June 26th - \$2975 Tuition Installment

TOTAL: \$5,950

What does tuition cover? Tuition covers uniforms/costumes, busing, housing, equipment, spring training expenses, instruction, and a portion of the Troopers annual food budget. Tuition only covers about half of the corps annual budget and does not include the winter camps.

Why is tuition so expensive? Tuition is more expensive this year due to it being a full season, plus the state of inflation, fuel prices, and external expenses outside of our control. However, we are doing a coast-to-coast tour, traveling over 8,000 miles, performing in over 20 events with some pretty incredible free days being planned in major cities along our tour. All busing, food, housing, and fuel is included in this price. When you break it down, this is actually a pretty good opportunity to see the whole country at half the cost it would take to do on your own. In fact, the total actual expense per person is over \$10,000. We're starting you off with a pretty hefty scholarship. Plus you have some of the greatest instructors in the world, and you'll be performing in some of the most spectacular venues in America. To see where we are traveling, [CLICK HERE](#).

What do the fees include?

- Summer instruction
- Housing
- Uniforms
- Equipment
- Transportation while on tour
- Food
- Various Corps insurance policies

Tuition for the this season does not include:

- Laundry money
- Snacks and drinks outside of the Food Truck
- Spending money on souvenirs, etc...
- Spending money during laundry days meals
- Spending money on your days off.
- Transportation to move-in.
- Transportation home after the season is over.

Your payment schedule may look different if you sign at a later date.

TUITION POLICY  
Cancellations of the Member Contract

Your \$500 deposit, due along with your completed Contract, is non-refundable.

Cancellation of your Contract prior to April 1, 2026 will result in the return of all tuition payments made.

Cancellation of your Contract after April 1 but before May 1 will be refunded 50% of the paid tuition. If 50% of the paid tuition is less than the amount due on the tuition schedule, the contracted member and parent or guardian will not be issued any refunds and the remaining balance of the 50% will be due immediately.

Cancellation of your Contract made on or after May 1 and before June 1 will be refunded 25% of the paid tuition. If 25% of the paid tuition is less than the amount due on the tuition schedule, the contracted member and parent or guardian will not be issued any refunds and the remaining balance of the 75% will be due immediately.

Cancellation of your Contract after June 1 will not be eligible for any refund. If the contracted member and parent or guardian has a balance owed to the Troopers, the remaining balance will be due immediately.

The governing body of our activity, Drum Corps International ("DCI") has established policies to address situations where an individual has committed to one corps, then moves to another. In the event you cancel this Member Contract in order to march with another drum corps, you must be current on your tuition payments based on the tuition schedule in this Contract. Further, you must not have any money owed to any other drum corps. No refunds are available to any members if they leave to march another drum corps. Once all these conditions are met, the member will be released to march with another drum corps.

Scholarship Opportunities

Mick and Susie McMurry, left an enduring legacy of philanthropy and dedication in Wyoming. Mick, a University of Wyoming graduate and energy industry influencer, played a pivotal role in developing the Jonah field. Suzie, also a University of Wyoming graduate, began her career as a teacher and, upon moving to Casper, became deeply committed to volunteer service. In the early 2000s, the McMurry Foundation, established by Mick and Susie, generously supported organizations statewide, including the Troopers. Susie, a devoted educator, and Mick left Wyoming a better place with a legacy of kindness and love. The Troopers Drum and Bugle Corps honors the McMurrys by establishing the Mick & Susie McMurry Scholarship Fund, benefiting Troopers "A" Corps members and continuing their commitment to education. Throughout the last two decades, the McMurrys supported the Troopers in significant ways, too numerous to list. They have left an incredible mark on your Corps, enabling what we do and exemplifying their profound impact on Wyoming. Mick's mantra, "I'm just trying to make a better Wyoming," and Susie's enduring spirit of generosity live on

through this tuition scholarship. Look for more information to be released on how and when to apply for this scholarship!

All scholarship monies will be applied after the contracted member, parent or guardian has fulfilled their contractual obligations of payment. For example: A contracted member or parent or guardian has been awarded a \$500 tuition scholarship. Therefore, the contracted member or parent or guardian owes the corps \$5,450. However, the member has only paid \$4,000. The contracted member must pay the remaining \$1,450 before the scholarship will be applied. If by July 8th, the contracted member or parent or guardian has not completed their contractual obligations of payments, the scholarship will be removed from the members account and the contracted member or parent or guardian will be responsible for their full tuition.

DCI also has scholarship opportunities. Those opportunities will be communicated with membership once they are announced by DCI.

### Refunds

Note: Any refund of direct payments made by the member or parent or guardian will be made directly to the member. Monies collected through sponsorships are nonrefundable and will be converted to credits in the Troopers' yearly scholarship fund to benefit another member.

## Chapter 5: Move Ins and Spring Training

Move Ins Registration and information will be available at [www.TroopersDrumCorps.org](http://www.TroopersDrumCorps.org) once final details are put into place. This information will also be emailed to contracted members, and communicated through the organization's SLACK communications platform that members have access to.

Please refer to the Travel Guide on the next page for details on your travel to Colorado for the start of Spring Training.

## Spring Training Information:

Where: Eaton High School, 1661 Collins St, Eaton, CO 80615 Date: Saturday, May 23rd Arrival Time: 4:00pm

### Admin Staff

Mary Cowperthwait - 307-462-1179 Michael Gough - 307-337-8010

### Move In Info

Call one of us in any case of emergency while at the airport, in transit to Eaton High School or at any other time throughout the day. Flying into Denver International Airport (May 24th) To ensure you're able to catch the 3:00pm shuttle we encourage you to arrive at the Denver Airport before 1:00pm MST. If those tickets are out of your price range/flight times on Saturday, May 24th, you might consider flying into Denver on Friday, May 23rd and staying at a hotel overnight. Many area hotels offer free shuttles to/from the airport.

After you land, head to baggage claim at the Jeppesen Terminal, Level 5. Member Leadership will be posted to meet you along the way and direct you where to go after retrieving your luggage. They will also be taking roll as you arrive. For any questions at the airport, contact information for our member leadership team is provided below. Two/Three buses will be departing from the Denver Airport at 3:00pm. At 2:45pm the group will move to the holding area for transportation pickup. The Corps will provide dinner at 5pm that evening, so you do not need to grab an extra meal at the airport. Feel free to bring snacks as needed.

If your flight is delayed and you will miss the shuttle because of the delay, please send a slack message to Michael Gough and Mary Cowperthwait to communicate this issue and we will let you know how to proceed. You can also call using the phone numbers listed at the top of this document. If you schedule a flight to Denver that arrives after the shuttle has departed, the corps will be unable to transport you to Eaton, CO. Please ensure that you arrive as early as possible on Saturday, May 23rd so that you're able to catch the shuttle.

### Additional Travel Details (May 23rd)

If you are driving yourself to/from camp or if you are being dropped off, do not arrive at Eaton High School until 4:00pm. Check in will begin at 4:00pm.

### Moving In Late (after May 23rd)

All members who are moving in late must communicate this late arrival with Mary to arrange for a shuttle. The corps may not be able to provide a ride from the airport at the exact time of landing, but we will make sure you have a ride to the school. Pick-up times will be communicated the day before you arrive at Denver International Airport.

If you are not flying in/do not need the shuttle, please still communicate your travel plans with Mary. Late arrivals must be communicated to all Caption Heads, and the absences must be excused by Caption Heads.

Leaving Spring Training/Returning to Spring Training \*\*\*only for those who are leaving/returning due to excused absences

All members who are leaving/returning during Spring Training must communicate these plans with Mary to arrange for a shuttle. The corps may not be able to provide a ride from the airport at a time exactly 2 hours before your flight, we may need to bring you to the airport earlier. Plan to be flexible during these times. We will make sure you are dropped off with enough time to make your flight and picked up at some point during the day when you return to Denver. All absences must be communicated to all Caption Heads, and the absences must be excused by Caption Heads.

## PACKING LIST FOR SPRING TRAINING AND TOUR

*Please Note: There is very limited space available under the buses. Please use a soft shell suitcase or rolling duffel bag rather than a hard shell type suitcase.*

We recommend having your Trooper talk to a Trooper vet or section leaders about this list to modify it to what their section uses. Your Trooper is encouraged to write his or her name clearly on all personal property, especially newly purchased Troopers gear; everyone else's looks just like theirs! Your Trooper is expected to bring the following items:

- ❑ **A NEW PACKING LIST IS BEING PREPARED AND WILL BE ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT ON THE NEXT REVISION**

Be sure to have your ATM Card & Insurance Card

The organization is NOT RESPONSIBLE for cell phones, iPads, chargers, personal jewelry, wallets. Etc...

The Troopers are not responsible for items left in schools. The cleaning crew will pick up unattended items and create a lost-and-found but will keep items only for a few days. Lost-and-found items will be disposed of after a few days.

The Troopers are not responsible for any lost or stolen property including phones, tablets, etc.

### Communication:

Communication from your child during Spring Training may be very limited. Believe that no news is good news! Spring Training is just as demanding on staff. If you have any concerns or just want someone to check in on your child, use the contacts listed in Chapter 10: Who to Call. Do not hesitate to call. You can also post a request on the TrooParent Facebook page and a parent volunteer can also help.

Volunteers during Spring Training are welcome! If you would like to volunteer, use the volunteer registration form on the Troopers web page at <https://www.troopersdrumcorps.org> Read *Chapter 7: Volunteering* to learn more about being a Trooper volunteer.

### Uniform Fitting:

During spring camps, measurements are taken of every Trooper. Final fittings are done during Spring Training. As the members rehearse, many of them tone up and lose weight. Uniforms need to be altered. The Troopers' lead seamstress and other volunteers work to alter uniforms throughout the summer.

Please know that the administration does everything possible to keep all Troopers looking good on the field. Your Trooper is responsible to report any issues with the uniforms to the appropriate people.

## Chapter 6: On Tour

While there will likely be a preview event prior to the start of the tour, the Troopers DCI Tour will begin on Saturday, June 28 and will conclude with the Troopers Awards Ceremony at “*The Farm*” on Sunday, August 10th in Lebanon, Indiana.

Some of the information below is tentative and additional events may be added. For up to date schedules and ticket details go to: <http://www.troopersdrumcorps.org/see-the-corps>

DATE	LOCATION
May/June	TBA
June	TBA
June 27	Ft. Collins, CO
June 28	Ogden, UT
July 1	Omaha, NE
July 3	Rockford, IL
July 5	La Crosse, WI
July 8	Ankeny, IA
July 10	Lisle, IL
July 11	Whitewater, WI
July 13	Olathe, KS
July 14	Hutchinson, KS
July 18	San Antonio, TX
July 20	McKinney, TX
July 22	Hattiesburg, MS
July 24	Birmingham, AL
July 25	Atlanta, GA
July 26	Winston Salem, NC
July 28	Annapolis, MD
July 31	Allentown, PA
August 3	TBD Lower Midwest
August 6	Indianapolis, IN
August 7	Indianapolis, IN
August 8	Indianapolis, IN
August 9	Lebanon, IN

### Attending Performances:

It is wise to purchase your tickets ahead of time. If you want to see the designs and layout of the performance, select seats that are high and at the 50-yard line. If you want a more intimate feeling with the music, select a seat closer to the field. We encourage you to experience both options.

Parents sometimes sit together in a block. Check the Facebook page for who is attending shows and where they are sitting.

Purchase a yellow bandana to tie to belt loop / purse strap for parents to recognize each other at shows. Kind of a Troopers gang sign! Ha!

### What to Expect During Tour:

During the tour, your Trooper continues rehearsal blocks. These rehearsals are in the morning before a show and on non-show days. These days are just as demanding as rehearsals during Spring Training.

Expect little contact. They are very busy and very tired at the end of the day. Don't worry if they do not respond to your texts or calls right away.

Be prepared for the home sick, "I'm ready to quit", "I want to come home, calls." It happens to every kid at one point or another. Heck, it even happens to the adults! The road life is tough, and it makes people tough. Listen and encourage them to talk to their section leader or the member experience liaison.

Consumption of alcohol or being under the influence of any illegal substances while with the program at a rehearsal facility, school campus, in your vehicle, or on tour will NOT be tolerated and is grounds for immediate dismissal.

### Laundry Days and Supplies:

There are approximately 5 designated days for laundry. The members are dropped off at laundromats and are expected to do their laundry. Once finished, the buses will pick them up. Generally we also do a Walmart run during Laundry days so that they can restock on personal items.

If your Trooper runs out of supplies, don't hesitate to ask for help on the TrooParent Facebook page. Parents are willing to help one another and purchase supplies your Trooper may need.

### Mail Drop:

Your Trooper will appreciate a message from home. Consider sending a card or a care package! Although a treat is nice, be careful not to send too many sweets. The Food Crew works hard to serve meals that have high-nutritional value and will sustain their bodies for their hours of work. Individuals approved by Troopers administration have volunteered to have packages mailed to their homes or businesses and will deliver all packages received by the posted deadline to the Troopers. The list will be posted on the Troopers web page once designated locations are determined.

If you mail any packages, please watch for the Mail-Drop List to avoid mailing packages after the corps has left. Any late packages will not be delivered to your Trooper.

DO NOT send mail to any housing site.

Maldrop locations can be found at: <https://www.troopersdrumcorps.org/maildrop>

### Parades:

Periodically, the corps will march in a parade. This information is posted on Facebook as opportunities are scheduled. Currently, no parades are planned for this season.

### Troopers Alumni:

Troopers Alumni make up the Long Blue Line and remain an important part of the Troopers organization. Current members love hearing their stories about how things were "back in the day."

Alumni often organize gatherings at regional performances and during Finals Week, and parents are always welcome to join. We will share details about these events on the Trooparents Facebook page. Alumni also organize special meals for the corps at several stops during the tour and will perform alongside the Troopers during Casper Week.

One of the Alumni's primary fundraisers is the "On the Road Again" campaign. Alumni purchase a yearly commemorative coin and are paired with a current member. Through monitored, corps-administered channels, they are encouraged to connect with their member partner and offer support and encouragement throughout the tour.

### Troopers Legacy Corps:

The Troopers Legacy Corps, founded in 2018 has had as many as 220 members in recent years and performed in Indianapolis last summer. They will be continuing operations this year and will appear with the Troopers "A" Corps in Casper, WY this June.

## Chapter 7: Volunteering

We HIGHLY recommend volunteering. While you are probably not going to see much of your Trooper, you will get to experience, first hand, the hard work and dedication it takes to be a Trooper. There are many opportunities to get involved, whether it be for a few days or a few weeks, the Troopers would love to have you!! Volunteers are truly the backbone of the Trooper organization. Anyone who has traveled with the corps will tell you it is a highly rewarding experience.

The Troopers need your help for the upcoming Tour. Please look over your summer schedules and see when you can volunteer. Your help is needed and appreciated. If you plan to volunteer this season, please be aware that you will have to follow our health and safety guidelines. In addition, a background check and online SafeSport Volunteer training courses may be required.

Please complete the volunteer form on the Troopers web page. Once it is submitted our volunteer coordinator will be in contact with you about specific dates. Register to volunteer at the following link: <https://www.troopersdrumcorps.org/volunteer>

### Typical Volunteer Roles:

Spring Training: Cook Crew, Airport Runners, and Uniforms Crew

During Summer Tour: Cook Crew, Uniform Crew, Wash Crews, and Drivers

Parents traveling with the corps will need to pack your belongings, including a sleeping bag with an air mattress or sleeping pad.

Volunteers sleep on the floor and will shower in locker rooms during designated times when the membership is not using them. Remember to bring your towel and shower shoes!

### Volunteer Incentives:

All volunteers that volunteer for 7 continuous days during the summer (May 23rd - August 9th) will receive a \$250 tuition discount for their member.

Additional days after that (does not have to be continuous after the 7 days) will be an additional \$50 discounted from their member's tuition. The \$50 per day can only be applied after the 7 continuous days of volunteering have been reached.

We cannot offer refunds on tuition if all tuition has been paid and then a parent

wishes to volunteer. So please plan your payments on tuition accordingly, if you're planning on volunteering this summer.

In the event that a volunteer does not meet the expectations of the role or is dismissed from service at the discretion of the organization, all associated tuition discounts will be forfeited. The member will be responsible for any outstanding tuition balance.

## Chapter 8: Finals Week

### Rehearsals:

"*The Farm*" is open to visitors during finals week. Just remember that all of the same rules apply to this location as any other rehearsal space.

### Inspiration Wall:

The Troopers will end the tour at "*The Farm*" for their final rehearsal days to prepare for finals. On a day before their final performances, the volunteers will hang up posters and pictures sent by friends and family. These items will be hung on a wall inside the eating shelter. This is the "Inspiration Wall." The intention is to remind our Troopers of how far they have come and how we all support them.

If you would like to contribute to the "Inspiration Wall," there will be postings toward the end of the summer with instructions on where to send your poster. It isn't necessary to spend money on these posters. Homemade posters are the best.

To get ideas of what to make, check out this Facebook link:

<https://www.facebook.com/tinarude/videos/10215253031572184/>

If you are making your own poster, please send it to (Look under Mail Drops for dates)

Boone County 4H Fairgrounds  
ATTN: Troopers Drum & Bugle Corps – Inspiration Wall  
1300 E 100 S.  
Lebanon, IN 46052

If you decide to use Walgreens to create your poster you can choose the store in Lebanon, IN. They will print for us, saving you shipping cost! Volunteers will be picking up posters from this location. All orders processed through Walgreens in Lebanon MUST BE PAID FOR AT THE TIME THE ORDER IS PLACED. In the past you would be charged once the poster was printed but the volume became too much and there were a few problems.

Walgreens  
1130 N Lebanon St  
Lebanon, IN 46052  
765-482-3240

Keep in mind the Vets know and look forward to the Inspiration Wall. Rookies will be totally surprised! If you want to keep your poster, remind your child to take it down AFTER they perform for the final time. Any posters left will be thrown away during the clean out of our final housing site.

**Accommodations:**

This year we were unable to find a suitable location in which to block a number of rooms but we have compiled a list of hotels near the stadium. You are free to find areas outside of downtown. Carmel, IN is the area we've stayed in the past.

- JW Marriott - 10 S West St, Indianapolis, IN 46204 - (317) 860-5800
- Hyatt Regency Downtown - 1 S Capitol Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46204 - (317) 632-1234
- Embassy Suites - 110 W Washington St, Indianapolis, IN 46204 - (317) 236-1800
- Courtyard - 601 W Washington St, Indianapolis, IN 46204 - (317) 822-9029
- Holiday Inn Express - 410 S Missouri St, Indianapolis, IN 46225 - (317) 822-6400
- Hilton Garden inn - 10 E Market St, Indianapolis, IN 46204 - (317) 955-9700
- Homewood Suites - 211 S Meridian St, Indianapolis, IN 46225 - (317) 636-7992
- Residence Inn - 350 West New York Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202 - (317) 822-0840
- Staybridge suites downtown - 535 S West St, Indianapolis, IN 46225 - (317) 536-7500
- Spring Hill Suites - 601 W Washington St, Indianapolis, IN 46204 - (317) 972-7293

You might also consider various AirBNB locations as well.

Event Tickets:

Please visit [www.dci.org](http://www.dci.org) for complete details concerning ticket information at all events happening this summer.

## Chapter 9: Banquet and Departure

The Troopers Finals Awards Banquet is held at "*The Farm*", the Boone County 4-H Fairgrounds at the Farm Bureau Banquet Hall on Sunday, August 9th from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Members and staff attend for free. Parents and alumni can purchase tickets and attend as well. Be aware that quantities are limited due to space.

Tickets are \$42, \$38 for seniors, \$7 for children under 6. An awesome catered lunch will be provided!

Tickets can be purchased at the following link when they become available:  
<https://www.troopersdrumcorps.org/troopshows>

\*Times and pricing is subject to change

Before the banquet, everyone will pack their bags and clean up "The Farm". As soon as the banquet is over, those flying out will load on to the buses and head to the airport. To be safe, Troopers should purchase flights that depart after 4:30 PM ET. Those who are driving home with family will be dismissed between 1:00 and 1:30 PM ET.

## Chapter 10: Who's Who and Who to Contact

The Troopers administrative staff is here, first and foremost, to serve the members of the Troopers. Their roles are varied but their goal is the same: To provide an educational and life experience that Troopers will remember for the rest of their lives.

### Key Trooper Personnel:

Troopers Board of Directors | [board@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:board@troopersdrumcorps.org)

Michael Ottoes- CEO | [m.ottoes@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:m.ottoes@troopersdrumcorps.org)

Michael Gough- Executive Director | [m.gough@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:m.gough@troopersdrumcorps.org)

Mary Cowperthwait- Corps Director | [director@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:director@troopersdrumcorps.org)

Dajia Simmons- Assistant Director | [d.simmons@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:d.simmons@troopersdrumcorps.org)

Mat Krum - Business Manager | [m.krum@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:m.krum@troopersdrumcorps.org)

Erika O'Bryant- Member Experience Liaison | [liaison@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:liaison@troopersdrumcorps.org)

Karen Nichols- Volunteer Coordinator | [k.nichols@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:k.nichols@troopersdrumcorps.org)

Jen Kowalski – Parent Liaison | [ladywyzyrd@yahoo.com](mailto:ladywyzyrd@yahoo.com)

Amy Roberts- Development Director | [a.robert@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:a.robert@troopersdrumcorps.org)

Kari Gilbert - Food Truck Manager | [k.gilbert@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:k.gilbert@troopersdrumcorps.org)

More information about the administration, tour team, and health and wellness team can be found at: <https://www.troopersdrumcorps.org/meet-the-staff>

**Troopers Main Office Address:**

Troopers Drum and Bugle Corps  
1801 East E Street  
Casper, WY 82601

**Troopers Main Office Phone Number:**

1.307.472.2141

## In Case of Emergency

Most Troopers have cell phones, and the best times to contact them are during dinner and after shows, although they may also find time throughout the day to return calls/messages. If there is an URGENT need to contact a Trooper who is not responding to personal communications, parents may call our administrative staff, but please use this contact information ONLY in case of an emergency:

Mary Cowperthwait, Corps Director 307-746-1179

Dajia Simmons, Assistant Director 817-269-0203

Troopers Office, Casper, WY 307-472-2141

Michael Gough, Executive Director 307-337-8010

**Troopers Educational Team:**

The instructors teaching our Troopers come with experience and expertise. Click on this link to find out more about this incredible team:

<https://www.troopersdrumcorps.org/instructional-team>

**Staff Training & Certification Process:**

Find out what kind of process our staff is required to go through in order for them to be a part of our team at [www.TroopersDrumCorps.org/staffportal](http://www.TroopersDrumCorps.org/staffportal) or [www.TroopersDrumCorps.org/summervolunteer](http://www.TroopersDrumCorps.org/summervolunteer).

### Troopers Member Leaders:

These are key people who can support your Trooper throughout the summer. Encourage your Trooper to get to know these individuals. Parents are not to contact these member leaders with any concerns as per Troopers policy. Parents address all concerns with Troopers Administration or with the Member Experience Liaison.

Members will be able to reach their leadership teams via Slack or in person.

### TrooParent Facebook:

This Facebook page is a private page open to only parents or guardians of current Troopers. We highly recommend you join the page. This is THE place to get the most accurate and up-to-date information. It is also the place to share any pictures you take during the season, ask questions and to connect with other parents or guardians. If there is any emergency information to be shared, this is where it will be posted. Here is the link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/219682384856536/>

### Troopers Drum and Bugle Corps Fans Facebook:

This Facebook page has much of the same general information as the parent page but is open to all family, friends and fans of Troopers. Here is the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/150220771783354/>

### Here are other notable links:

Troopers Online Merchandise Store

<https://troopstore.org/>

Drum Corps International

<http://www.dci.org/>

The Troopers Vault (Home of Troopers historical videos, photos, audio & drum corps training videos)

<https://www.troopersdrumcorps.org/vault>

Complete DCI Schedule

<https://www.dci.org/events>

Flo-Marching

<https://www.flomarching.com/>

Jolesch Photography

<http://www.bandgroupphotography.com/>

## Chapter 11: Social Media

These are the official social media pages of the Troopers Drum & Bugle Corps.



[Facebook.com/TroopersDrumCorps](https://www.facebook.com/TroopersDrumCorps)



[Instagram.com/thecaspertroopers](https://www.instagram.com/thecaspertroopers)



[Youtube.com/TroopersDrumCorps](https://www.youtube.com/TroopersDrumCorps)

## Chapter 12: Trooper Acronyms

*BIS* – “Butt in Seat” is the time given by the administration that your Trooper should be in his or her bus seat. When visiting with your Trooper, be sure to honor this expectation.

*Wagons Ho!* - This means, it’s time to go. Roll out.

*Block* – Is a group of seats at a stadium. Parents sometimes preorder a block of tickets in which you pay them for your ticket. By doing this, you get the opportunity to sit with other Trooper family, alumni, and fans.

*EPL* – Eat, Pack, Load While on tour this will be posted on the daily schedule. This is the time after rehearsal and before leaving a housing site heading to a performance.

*Food Truck* – Is the truck where all meals are prepared and served.

*Free Days* – Are a few scheduled days during tour when the Troopers have several hours “off”. These dates will be announced throughout the tour. The Troopers enjoy having down time with one another, going to a restaurant, a movie, and shopping.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, these days will look very different in 2021.

*HLD* – Troopers live by these words “Honor, Loyalty, Dedication.”

*On the Line* – The time the corps is on the line, ready to perform.

*Rehearsal Block* – Typically a 4-hour block of time in which the Troopers rehearse

*The Farm* – Boone County 4-H Fairgrounds in Lebanon, IN. The site the Troopers return to at the end of tour. The address is 1300 East 100 South Lebanon, IN 46052

*Vet* – Troopers or parents who have been with Troopers for more than one year

## Chapter 13: Suggestions from Parents of Trooper Veterans

- Have your new Trooper ask for, and act on all advice offered from vets! They should ask what to pack, attitude, water intake, etc.
- Pack light!
- When packing laundry supplies, use a plastic pencil box to hold a Ziploc with 6 or so pods, dryer sheets, and \$30 worth of quarters. You can also use washer/dryer sheets and put a few in a Ziploc bag with \$4 in quarters. You can make 5 Ziploc baggies for the season.
- Good shoes and physical therapy tape make for a smoother season.
- Pack extra underwear and socks. They are more important than a clean t-shirt each day.
- Take lots of sunscreen AND sunglasses!
- Buy good shoes. Asics seem to be a popular brand.
- Must have good shoes WITH good support inserts! Spenco Polysorb Cross Trainer Insoles are recommended.
- They are a Trooper. They stay with the group on tour. No hotel with the family or dinner at a restaurant with the parents, unless they are on rare free time. We can do this September through April.
- When you get the homesick phone call, tell them they can do this and

encourage them to talk with their section leader.

- No news is good news, especially during spring training.
- Expect limited cell phone calls and communication during Spring Training as the kids' time is really limited.
- Be respectful of boundaries set by Troopers administration. All boundaries are set for the safety of your Trooper and productiveness of the show.
- Your Trooper is tougher than you think. They CAN survive without you.
- Do not be reactive to texts or phone calls you receive from your marching member - as tempting as it might be to do so - ALWAYS confirm with the Troopers Office before panicking. Do not rely on other section parents for accurate and/or up-to-date information.
- If your Trooper contacts you with a problem, encourage them to go to their member advocate first. Section leader, administration, or parent volunteers are also available to help.
- Follow and access TrooParents Facebook frequently.
- Positivity at all times! Support your Trooper, the staff, and the organization.
- As pictures of your Trooper come across the Facebook newsfeed, right click on them and save them to a folder on your computer. When it's time to make the Inspiration Wall posters, it's so much easier to have the pictures all in one place and your son or daughter will have a great time looking through them when they return from tour.
- Mail drops! Send goodies but remember to send small stuff. There is limited space on the bus and in their suitcases. Even if it is only a card, send something to each mail drop. If a friend is going to a show and asks if they can take something to your Trooper, a Gatorade, a box of snacks and a few dollars goes a long way.
- Soaking the yellow sweat stained socks and t-shirts in BIZ gets them white again.
- When the packing list says bring a jacket or a hoodie, DON'T ignore that. This is especially important for the Texas (and maybe Florida) Troopers. The temps do not account for wind or rain, and it doesn't matter if you're hot-natured. You WILL need a hoodie.
- Pack more sunscreen & bug spray than you think is humanly possible to use.
- Have a jacket for inside Lucas Oil. Cause I always freeze!
- Spring Training in June can also get a bit chilly. Members should have a good jacket for those cold evening rehearsals, especially if we are in Wyoming.

# Chapter 14: Final Thoughts

*JD FUNCORPS* is an age-out from a World Class Drum Corps. He's put together some funny but very insightful videos on Drum Corps life. Here are a few that hit on topics parents need to know about. He's got plenty more on YouTube that you'll probably find laugh out loud funny!

What to pack: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1Arr03Kwag>  
(Some items may vary. Members should also consult with their caption staff if they are unsure of specific items.)

Bus Box: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdAVFC43CeA>

DCI Bus Culture and Bus Boxes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hz6lmYsmzwk>

Laundry Days: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfV8Vn8M0O4>

Hitting The Wall: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlcWqbR1Frs>

Rookie Year: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISsxeNDeEqs>

Post Tour Depression: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Klu842JWt9c>

And finally ... as your Trooper leaves for Spring Training, know that they have chosen to participate in something special. This is their dream and they obviously have a gift. They are about to embark on an adventure of a lifetime, and as parents it is hard to send your Trooper off with so many questions and concerns. They are in one of the best places with some of the best teachers in the country, with an organization that has been doing this for nearly seven decades.

If you have any questions, PLEASE ASK! You can contact Corps Director, Mary Cowperthwait at [director@troopersdrumcorps.org](mailto:director@troopersdrumcorps.org) or if you need an immediate response, feel free to text or call at 307-462-1179. *During the non-touring part of the year, please call or text during business hours 8:00am MT - 5:00pm MT.*

If you are unable to reach the Corps Director, you can also check with Jen.

PHONE – (210) 722-0008

EMAIL – [ladywyzyrd@yahoo.com](mailto:ladywyzyrd@yahoo.com)