

# THE SPOTTER

## THE "OFFICIAL" NEWSLETTER OF THE IOWA CHEERLEADING COACHES' ASSOCIATION

Here's to the second edition of the adapted version of the Spring ICCA Newsletter! I hope you find this format to be as beneficial as our regular quarterly newsletter! As we are learning to live in this different kind of normal, I find people are much more willing to try things in a new way....and the effort on this newsletter is a prime example.

Let me know how you feel about this letter -- email me at [Kenna.johnson47@gmail.com](mailto:Kenna.johnson47@gmail.com).

See you Monday! ~ Kenna

### SNEAK PEEK OF WHAT'S INSIDE:

*Welcome!! -- pg. 1*

*President's Message -- pg. 1*

*Tryout Options (Continued)*

*-- pg. 2*

*Award of Appreciation - pg.*

*3*

*JH/MS Uniforms -- pg. 3*

### President's Message

I'm definitely surprised to be writing this still as president, but I am happy to do it! Spring is almost here and this is certainly a different spring from what we have ever experienced before! While it's easy to get bogged down in regrets over what we are missing, we can take heart that things will get better and we will figure out how to adapt and survive. Thank you to all of you who are working in essential professions and have to confront the virus on a daily basis. I also appreciate those who work in other industries who still continue to take care of the rest of us in this difficult time.

This time of year usually brings an important event for us: Conference! I am disappointed that we couldn't get together this year. The education, the interaction, and all the revitalizing that happens will be truly missed. We are still hoping to reschedule, and will know more as we get through this temporary setback. Keep watching the website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for updates and info! If you haven't signed up on social media, now is a good time to do so!

So what else can we do for now? Spend time with your family and, if you can't be physically with them, use social media to stay in touch. My children and I Facetime frequently just to see how we are doing and what we look like! My daughter decided to buzz cut her hair again, so there was that surprise to see! If you have some time, you could look at organizing your next cheer season! You may not know who is on the team yet, or when the first game will be, but you know what you will probably need to do, and can start looking ahead to another successful cheer year! Keep safe and healthy, and keep in touch with your family, your friends, and with your coaching friends!

~ Kristen Morlan

**ICCA Membership is  
OPEN  
for the 2020-2021  
School Year!  
Log on to:  
[www.iccaforms.org](http://www.iccaforms.org)**

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*The best advice I have ever received was to just be yourself. Don't try to be somebody else. People will like you for who you are.*

*~ Sandy Norby, Shrine Bowl Director*

## **Tryout Options, Continued....**

Option 2 - Don't have tryouts. Try a no cut season. Take all potential cheerleaders when practices begin in August. After practicing for a week or so, cheer coaches decide who is on each squad. There are a couple reasons this is good. First, one never knows who is going to develop into an outstanding cheerleader, or who has good potential, but just doesn't progress in skills. Cheerleaders will cut themselves if they don't like the squad that they are placed on after the squad placement.

Warning: Have a conversation with your athletic director before going with this option as the school has some responsibilities to the entire team for uniforms and practice area. Next, make sure the plan (squad placement tryout) is made clear to EVERYONE (cheerleaders, parents, athletic director, administration) before practices start. It will be important to answer questions before rather than later. Maybe create a Q & A document that can be sent out well ahead of time.

Advantage: This gives the coaches the opportunity to see the potential of all cheerleaders. Some might even be placed on JV and move up to varsity as the season goes. Truly, coaches are like every athletic coach by picking the team's "varsity starters." This option makes every cheerleader work to improve their skills because they have a spot to earn or lose. More cheerleaders will be ready to move up in case of injury. This takes the risk out of trying the sport of cheerleading for the cheerleaders themselves. If they were afraid to tryout, now they get to experience cheer with no strings attached. This approach will really let your assistant coaches be involved (as they should be) with all cheerleaders. Coaching organizational skills will be needed to keep cheerleaders improving on cheering skills. Focus is on improving skills by using stations and putting assistant coaches in charge of a station. If your team is high on numbers and low on coaches consider having your skilled cheerleaders take turns running a station after the coach has taught what should be accomplished. Use the cheerleader as a skill demonstrator. This shows your confidence in the demonstrator's skill knowledge.

Disadvantage: This can be challenging if there are massive numbers when considering practice space and uniforms (why the AD needs to okay this idea). Maybe numbers will have to be trimmed (not cut) because there are only so many uniforms. Cheerleaders do not have to be in the same uniform to cheer a game. It is okay if uniform styles are mixed as long as they are official cheer uniforms. DO NOT, repeat DO NOT put them all in T-shirts and shorts. This would be considered a violation of the uniform policies and rules. The school has an obligation to put cheerleaders in a uniform. There are several uniform companies with stock uniforms if necessary. Game participation may be low for some cheerleaders. Each cheerleader will need to feel value and purpose regardless of how much they cheer at games.

## Junior High and Middle School Uniforms:

### Getting What They DESERVE

~ Erin Taylor, ICCA Rule Interpreter

So you're thinking about starting a Middle School Cheer program to give younger kids an opportunity to get involved in cheer? That's awesome! Your AD is going to ask you what costs are associated with starting this new program. Since you aren't traveling, the costs are pretty minimal -- just paying a coach and buying uniforms. You might be asked if you really need uniforms - can't they just cheer in shorts and a t-shirt? Legally the answer is "no - they can't be in shorts and a t-shirt." They are to be in official uniforms. But, more importantly, they deserve to be in uniforms. Kids on a middle school squad are practicing, performing at games, and are on an actual school-sponsored cheerleading squad. Wearing cheer uniforms is part of being a cheerleader. If a school started a new football, baseball, volleyball, or other athletic entity, they would purchase uniforms for that team; they wouldn't expect them to play in t-shirts. By advocating for your middle school cheer squad, you are showing them that they are just as important as any other team, which they are!

There are many low to no cost options for cheerleading uniforms. Use of old high school uniforms is no cost. You are also able to purchase brand new uniforms from a discount retailer for very minimal cost. Just today, I found a shell for \$11 and a skirt for \$9. If you need help finding discount uniforms, email your ICCA rep and they can point you to someone to help. The ICCA's rule about all cheerleaders (high school and middle school) wearing official school issued uniforms isn't to make your life more difficult, it is because the ICCA believes that all cheerleaders deserve to wear a uniform. Please let your middle school or junior high cheerleaders feel important, special, part of team, and let them know they deserve to wear the uniform.

### Award of Appreciation for the Man Behind the Music

The ICCA Award of Appreciation is given to an individual, group, or school who has consistently assisted ICCA programs. ICCA is proud to recognize Vince Rubino as our Award of Appreciation winner for 2020. Vince is the "man behind the music" at the Boys' State Basketball Tournament, assisting ICCA and our music needs year after year. Previously, coaches would send in their music CDs to the IHSAA, and they would get them to Vince to play at performances. Now coaches of performance teams are able to send their music directly to Vince. This allows every team's music to be downloaded into the Wells Fargo Arena's music system so the sound quality is at the highest level. More than anything, Vince takes the nerves away from coaches because he runs the music during performances. No longer do they have to push "play", "pause", or "stop", all while hoping everything goes smoothly. Vince also attends the early morning All-State practice so the team can practice with the music through the sound system, and then he runs the music during their performances. Vince has given his time to our organization so the performance squads and All State teams might shine at the State Basketball Tournament. We truly appreciate all he has done for ICCA and Iowa's cheerleaders. ICCA's 2020 Award of Appreciation recipient, Vince Rubino.

What's the best piece of advice you have ever received? LISTEN!!  
~Betty Lou Jones, All Stars