

IOWA CHEERLEADING COACHES' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



AUGUST 2023

www.iowacheercoaches.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope you have each had an enjoyable summer and are ready for a new school year filled with all things cheer! Let the fun begin: football games, pep rallies, locker signs, cheer posters and Homecoming week, just to name a few. I hope as you read that list you are filled with excitement, not a sense of panic! The easiest way to get your squads excited for a season of cheer is to be excited yourself (Remember: when you are stressed or in a panic because you don't have everything ready for your season your cheerleaders will feed off that stress too!)

Be sure to show them YOUR excitement for a new season, which can set the tone for your entire year. Save the stress, which we all feel, for when you are alone. Your cheerleaders are ready for football games and to perform all those new cheers they learned over the summer and to show off those great stunts they have worked hard to perfect.

Make your cheerleaders feel like this is the best year ever, and that starts with YOU! If you have a positive attitude, it will carry over to your squads. When your cheerleaders are excited, they perform better and get along better. They will be able to share that excitement with the student body and all the fans at football games. I challenge you to do your best to show and share your excitement with them at all times. If you do, I feel certain your year will be filled with all things great!

I will be cheering for you!!

Cindy Pangburn
ICCA President

FALL ONLINE RULES MEETING ***July 31-August 25, 2023***

All coaches and choreographers must complete the Fall Online Rules Meeting and be registered ICCA members to participate in ICCA events.

Coaches will access the Online Rules Meeting via Varsity Bound.

Questions? Contact an Executive Director.

ICCA RULES CHANGE FOR FALL 2023

State Football 2023 – Only 20 cheerleaders will be allowed to cheer for post-season games.

These cheerleaders must cheer the entirety of the game and no additional cheerleaders may be rotated in.

Questions? Contact an Executive Director.

FALL EVENT REGISTRATIONS

opens August 10, 2023

closes September 20, 2023

Jeanne Ehn Spirit of Excellence Scholarship

~ JoEllen Wesselmann, Scholarship Director ~

Jeanne Ehn has been an outstanding mentor and friend to cheer coaches in Iowa for well over 35 years. She recently retired from the ICCA Board of Directors after serving since 1989. In honor of her exemplary service and leadership, an ICCA scholarship/award has been established in her honor. This award is not only based on cheerleading skills and/or academics, but it focuses on leadership, serving others, and making a difference in the lives of others. Encouraging and rewarding a cheerleader each year who fulfills the above characteristics is a fitting way to honor Jeanne!

An application process similar to our academic scholarship will be used. Topics to be addressed in the application essay and letters of recommendation are the applicant's experience volunteering/helping others, skills, and ideals that are evident in their life. These skills will facilitate them to make a difference, handle adversity, and help others to succeed and shine throughout their life.

Application criteria includes:

- ◆ Applicant's coach must be a present member of the ICCA.
- ◆ Applicants must have a cumulative 3.25 grade point average or above by the end of his/her junior year (DO NOT round up to 3.25).
- ◆ Applicants must follow all scholarship guidelines.
- ◆ Complete all information on white paper using dark print.
- ◆ Candidates may apply for the Jeanne Ehn Spirit of Excellence Scholarship AND the ICCA Academic Scholarship; however, they are not allowed to win both.

Please encourage your cheerleaders to plan to apply for this new scholarship as well as our traditional Academic Scholarships. The deadline for these scholarships is February 15, 2024. More information will be on our website, along with application directions and details. As always, feel free to contact Scholarship director JoEllen Wesselmann with any questions!

Encouraging Team and Individual Community Service

~ Jessica Kruse, Rep. Council Member ~

Summer is HERE, but the school year will be here before we know it. One of the items on my summer checklist is planning for what community service projects we participate in for the year. I give the cheerleaders a few project ideas and let them select the ones that they are collectively passionate about. This gives them ownership of the project. Socktober has challenged us to collect new socks in September and October for our local ministry programs. A winter gear drive is a favorite too. Last year we hosted a coloring contest for Color Out Cancer. The winning designs were made into button and t-shirt designs that were sold at home events in February. All the money raised was given to our local Relay for Life. The cheerleaders had fun encouraging elementary students to create designs and choosing the winner. We had such a good response, we ended up with 3 separate designs.

We are a small school, so community service and school involvement often happen very organically. During Hot Lunch/Book Fair Week the cheerleaders go into the lower elementary classrooms and read to students. Our mascot has even made visits to the elementary students to remind them about good character. During Homecoming we eat lunch with the upper elementary students. This gives the cheerleaders a chance to interact with kids who look at them as local celebrities. During Homecoming we also cheer at local nursing homes and then share a snack visit with the residents.

To motivate individual community service, I have an award at our end of the year banquet for the "Volunteeriest Volunteer." This goes to someone that is actively involved in our community, school, and is also a helper on the team. I have them report their activities to me and often have a hard time selecting just one winner!

Some of the big things I have found when motivating cheerleaders to be involved in the community are the activity must involve some fun, recognition, and a common WHY! Rewards and snacks help too! Lastly, I lead by example. My cheerleaders know that they will see me volunteering and working on community activities. They learn quickly how to give of their time when people who lead them are giving of their time too.

You're Invited To.....JOIN ICCA!!

~ Betty Lou Jones, All Stars Director ~

To anticipate and meet the needs of Iowa Cheerleading Coaches.

To provide educational opportunities to these coaches and their cheerleaders.

To provide educational resources, programs, and learning opportunities that promote access and equity.

Every school and cheerleading coach in Iowa is invited and encouraged to belong to the Iowa Cheerleading Coaches Association. There are many benefits for those that join, whether you are a new coach or one that has been coaching for many years. The following list opportunities for those that are members:

- * Six **FREE** cheer clinics which are held during the month of August. Your cheerleaders will learn new cheers and chants plus a short dance, and you can attend a coaches' meeting where you can meet other coaches.
- * Honor Squad: The squad will perform at halftime of two state football championship games. Participants must be junior or seniors on a varsity squad for the current school year. Each school is limited to three participants.
- * State Competition: This championship is designed to give recognition to the excellent school cheer squads in the state of Iowa. There are three divisions for each class size plus coed. Information can be found on the ICCA website.
- * All-State: The All-State squad performs at the Iowa Boys State Basketball Tournament in March. Tryout information is found on the ICCA website.
- * All-Stars: The All-Star squad performs at four halftimes at the IBCA All-Star Basketball Games held in March. The tryouts are by video and more information can be found on the ICCA website.
- * Conference: Held in late March or April, guest speakers from around the United States will be there to hold sessions on many aspects of cheerleading. A great time to meet other coaches, you can also visit vendors from many different companies. Information for the next Cheer Conference will be on the website later in the year.
- * Special Olympics: The first 50 cheerleaders to submit their registration will be part of a squad that performs at the opening ceremonies of the Special Olympics Iowa in May.
- * Rules Meetings: All cheerleaders in the state of Iowa are under the NFHS cheer rules. These are not just for ICCA members. Rules meetings are online. You can ask your Athletic Director to sign you up for these. These rules have been adopted by the ICCA and IHSAA. More information on dates is on the ICCA website.
- * Scholarships: ICCA offers \$500 scholarships to high school seniors who display outstanding scholastic achievement. Information and forms are on the website.

More information and a calendar of the 2023-2024 dates can be found on the website www.iowacheercoaches.org

As you can see by the list there are many other opportunities that ICCA can give you as a coach and your cheerleaders.

ALL-STATE UPDATES

for 2024

~ Dana Logan, Central District Representative ~

The 2024 ICCA All-State season is coming up more quickly than you might think, and in order to give coaches and athletes time to prepare, we are sharing information regarding changes to the program as early as possible.

Tryout Updates

- **Location/Dates:** Ballard Middle School, Huxley, IA, October 14-15, 2023
- **Tryout Facilitators:** Melissa Hatfield & JoEllen Wesselman (responsible for hiring judges and making final team selections)
- **Scoring:** The score sheet shared last year *will be replaced* by a rubric of characteristics that reflect what skills All-State cheerleaders should have/ what judges will be looking for. The rubric is available on the ICCA website.
- **Tumbling:** Each candidate may show ONE running tumbling pass OR standing tumbling. Tumbling will not be scored, but will be noted for the choreographer on the final team roster. Tumbling continues to not be required.
- **Stunting:** *IF selected for the team*, coaches will be required to submit video(s) of their cheerleader(s) performing stunts that they have indicated they can do on the stunt skill sheet. These will be used by the choreographer to create the routine.
- **Administration:**
 - Coaches will input the mileage from their school to Ballard Middle School during online registration. This will assist the Tryout Facilitators so they can quickly determine the tryout order based on distance from the site.
 - Stickers with numbers will be adhered to the candidate's t-shirt when a tryout number is assigned.
 - There will be no designated "lunch break;" however, athletes may rest and eat while waiting to try out.

Program Updates

- **All-State Directors:** Kenna Johnson & Dana Logan (responsible for overseeing all practices and performances and corresponding with coaches throughout the practice season.)

All-State Updates...Continued on page 5

GRASPING THE GAME TIME SPIRIT DIVISION

~ Kenna Johnson, Executive Director ~

As we embark on another school year and another competition season, ICCA wants you to have a good understanding of the NEW Game Time Spirit Division. While it may seem foreign or out of your comfort zone, know that this division was created to (a) continue to help cheerleading in Iowa grow without (b) being super complicated or overwhelming. It's most important to keep in mind that this division is a combination of skills your team should already be doing!!

The main elements of the division: a ONE-MINUTE Basketball Time Out followed by your School Fight Song for around ONE MINUTE. The elements will be performed in that order. The entrance, signaled by a time out buzzer, will be judged as part of the performance, but the exit will not be judged. For example, teams should "spirit" on the mat as they would onto the basketball court. At the conclusion of the School Fight Song, teams will finish their motions to the song, yell back, etc., and then exit the mat. (Team members do not have to be off the mat at the end of the performance.)

The basketball Time Out section includes the use of signs, poms, and or megaphones. Jumps and limited tumbling/stunting should also be incorporated. The School Fight Song portion can also utilize signs, poms, and/or megaphones, but no flags are allowed. This part may include a single team jump if desired, but no tumbling or stunting is allowed. Finally, teams may incorporate a yell back or crowd involvement cheer to the School Fight Song, but ONLY if it fits into the two-minute time requirement. Adding the yell back is a good option if your school fight song is short OR you don't have time to repeat it.

Copyright information is also meant to be fairly simple. You can download a version of your song from iTunes in a single track AS LONG AS it is purchased with a school credit card on a school iTunes account. Another way is to have your school's band perform the school fight song for a recording. Then you would simply need a letter from your band instructor and a school administrator stating you have permission to perform with that recording. Most school songs are old and fall within the public domain, so they don't require special licensing. Contact Kenna (kennajohnson47@gmail.com) for school fight song music questions.

Game Time Spirit...Continued on page 5

- **Hotels:** Schools will not be required to stay in a hotel, but will still be required to attend all practices and performances ON TIME, regardless of the weather. ICCA will still arrange for a hotel room block near the performance site. Once the block is closed, schools still needing accommodations will be on their own to secure hotel reservations.
- **Attendance:** Cheerleaders are still required to attend ALL practices and performances or forfeit their place on the team. However, a cheerleader shall be excused for up to 60 minutes of ONE practice for a SCHOOL event only. The directors must be notified of the 60 minute absence at least 14 days in advance and this notification must include a letter from a teacher or school administrator explaining the event and academic reason for their required attendance. It should be noted that any cheerleader that misses 60 minutes of a practice for a school event is not guaranteed their spot in a stunt sequence upon their return.
- **Alternates:** Alternates will complete a commitment form like all other team members and be expected to know the material in order to step in to fill a spot in the routine. This includes knowing all cheer words/motions, the dance section, and shadowing a specific person/position during stunt sequences and knowing those stunt counts.
- **Medical Releases:** All participants will be required to turn in a copy of their school physical prior to the first practice. Because of the high level skills and kids not being as familiar with one another, it's necessary to have a more thorough medical history for the All-State team members.



SW - August 5, Nodaway Valley HS, Greenfield
(desire.grismore@wayne.k12.ia.us)

NW - August 12, Storm Lake High School
(cpucheer@gmail.com)

SE - August 12, Washington High School
(kirkpatrickpaula26@gmail.com)

C - August 12, Ames High School
(dana.logan@ames.k12.ia.us)

NE - August 19, Lincoln Intermediate, Mason City
(cpang60@yahoo.com)

NE - August 19, West Delaware HS, Manchester
(bbrink@northlinncsd.org)

**** Registration for Free Fall Clinics is now open on the ICCA website home page!!**

Game Time Spirit judging criteria includes the following:

- Jumps – Difficulty and Technique
- Formations/Spacing/Transitions
- Motions – Difficulty and Technique
- Use of Crowd Leading Tools – Proper use of signs, poms, and/or megaphones
- Crowd Effectiveness – Voice, place, flow, ability to elicit a crowd response, maximum crowd coverage.
- Visual Appeal – Level changes, ripples, creativity in movements
- Overall Impression – Leading, engaging, and connecting with the crowd; genuine school spirit and energy; coordination of all performers as one team.

As you navigate this new route, be sure to check the ICCA website frequently. The Game Time Spirit Division guidelines are posted under EVENT INFORMATION – STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS. The scoring rubrics will also be added soon. In the meantime, feel free to reach out to any of the ICCA Board members for assistance.



Motivating Kids To Take On Challenges

~ Melissa Hatfield, Executive Director ~

We could all probably agree that motivating kids is not an easy task. Whether it be on the playing field or in the classroom, finding ways to motivate kids to step up, work hard, and accept a challenge can be a struggle. Positivity is KEY! As a coach you should always try to encourage your cheerleaders, and no matter what the outcome is, help your team see the good things that came from the experience.

One team challenge could be to help gain more positive school spirit across your campus. Identify how all team members can help. Are they going to be the role models for showing positive school spirit? Encourage each person to try and better themselves. Other students will start to see the cheer team leading them down a more positive path and join them along the way.

Do you have a cheerleader who just can't perfect that skill they have been working on for months? Don't brush them off and make them feel like they will never get it. Stay involved and try to troubleshoot. Where

Motivating...Continued on page 6

can you help? Show you are invested in helping them work towards success. Give them encouragement and remind them it's ok to make mistakes but practice and determination will pay off.

Maybe you have a cheerleader who struggles in the classroom. Motivate them by rewarding effort and not just results. The reward doesn't have to be something tangible, just a few kind words can go a long way. Encourage them to advocate for themselves and be there as a support system.

Finally, a competition could be considered a team challenge. Are they competing against other tough teams, facing injuries, having to rework parts of the routine? Whatever the challenge may be, again identify how each individual can help the team succeed. Each individual has an important role, so make sure everyone knows that they bring something different to the table. Each person is critical for success. Help them see the big picture!

In the end, you want your kids to feel good about the work they put in to face a challenge. Help them see the big picture and stay involved. The more positive you are when it comes to encouragement, the more responsive kids will be and see success no matter the outcome.

The Value of (Being) a Junior Varsity Coach

~ JoEllen Wesselmann, Secretary ~

Some schools are lucky enough to have multiple cheer coaches. They may split the duties up in various ways, but the typical format is to have a designated "Head Coach" and then another as an "Assistant" or "Junior Varsity" coach, just like other sports. So, just what does this mean for cheer coaches? What are the roles and responsibilities of these titles/positions? More importantly, what is the most effective way to use the knowledge and talent of each?

First of all, let's talk about the benefits of having multiple coaches, whatever your school might consider the "official name(s)" for each position. It is obviously best practice to have more than one adult at practices, have someone there as back-up in the case of multiple coach obligations (practice for one squad/game for another), illness, etc. It is also beneficial to have one

Junior Varsity Coach...Continued on page 7

ASK ERIN

~ Erin Taylor, ICCA Rules Interpreter ~

Our student body is doing a super cool theme for our next home game. How can we participate?

Everyone loves a good themed event, and there are ways cheerleaders can participate without breaking any rules. Cheerleaders can always have their socks, bows, or poms go with a theme of a game. One example would be using black poms and black socks for a "black out." For ugly Christmas sweater games, cheerleaders can wear Christmas socks. Things that can't be done would be wearing anything that could be considered jewelry, such as Hawaiian leis around your neck. You also must be in your official uniform. You cannot wear football jerseys with skirts or clinic t-shirts over your uniforms. You can wear a t-shirt as your uniform top if that t-shirt was specifically made and sold for that game as a fundraiser for a special cause, like "Coaches vs. Cancer."

The opposing team (home team) is holding a mental health awareness game. Can we buy the t-shirts and wear them to the game even though we aren't at home?

Of course you can support and participate in a special cause game. This is a great way to be good community members. Don't forget to get both teams together for a picture!

More information can also be found on the ICCA website – See the Spirit Rules tab: Coaches vs. Cancer/ Pink Out Night Cheerleading Uniforms OR Uniform Requirements and Recommendations.

When you are questioning what you can wear to a game just reach out - iowaerintaylor@gmail.com.

Become an ICCA Member TODAY!!

Go to the ICCA website (www.iowacheercoaches.org) and find the BECOME A MEMBER button on the Home Page.

Remember: if you attended the Spring Coaches Conference in April, your membership is already paid. Membership covers all coaches within your individual school, including head coaches, assistant coaches, and junior high coaches.

coach take care of secretarial-types of coaching duties, while the other begins working with the cheerleaders.

With a Varsity and JV coaching format, it is possible to develop/take advantage of expertise in specific areas of cheerleading. One coach may be knowledgeable in conditioning, while another might be experienced in teaching tumbling skills. Use these skills for the advantage of ALL of your cheerleaders! No one is an expert in everything; using the strengths of all coaches is making good use of time and resources!

So, to circle back to the original topic, what is the value of a Junior Varsity Coach? Junior varsity coaches are of utmost importance in developing overall stronger programs. The best use of JV coaches is to use their knowledge/skills while working side-by-side with their head coaches to improve the program in their schools. They are also important to the program as they help to develop younger or less-experienced cheerleaders into Varsity-level by teaching/ focusing on cheer fundamentals and sharing the love of cheerleading.



START YOUR CHEER SEASON IN CHARGE!

~ Paula Kirkpatrick, Vice President ~

As the coach, you are in charge. There are a few things you can do, as the coach, to help establish that from the very beginning.

First of all, set your expectations and consequences and be prepared to stick to them. This probably means having some type of contract or constitution that the team, the parents, and you, as the coach, go through together and everyone signs. This should also be shared with and supported by your administration. You are in charge of enforcing your expectations and dealing with consequences if needed.

Secondly, have a plan. Have a plan for practice, a plan for pre-game, and a plan for game time. Then, stick to your plan. As a coach, I had a binder with a practice plan for each day. I could take notes, record absences and document stunt progressions. It helped with organization and, if I followed the plan, I was in charge of practice. Decide ahead of time a warm up plan for before the game and stick to it. Organization is key to being in charge.

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Setting Goals for 2023-2024

~ Kristi Carew, Rep. Council Member ~

The time has come to set goals for our upcoming football, basketball, and wrestling seasons,, and for some of us, looking ahead to competition. For me, whether it's setting goals for the cheerleading seasons ahead or setting goals for my classroom, I like to use the goal-setting acronym that has been around for over 40 years and has proven to work in both athletics, academics, and honestly, life in general: SMART .

Using the SMART acronym helps me to keep a focus for our squad goals so they are achievable.

Specific: What exactly do we want to accomplish? As long as you are specific in what you are trying to achieve, both you and your cheerleaders will know which direction you are heading, and what you hope for the final outcome. This applies to skill building, fund raising, even team bonding. In any area, the more specific you are, the more achievable your goals will be. One specific goal our cheer coaches and cheerleaders have set for this year is to have clean stunts with the goal of hitting solid extended stunts with a clean dismount. This is a goal that will drive our cheerleaders who are very new and without any returning stunt groups among the squad.

Measureable: How will I know when this goal is accomplished? Having a way to measure your goal is important because it will help to show the progress being made, which leads to motivation both for you as a coach and for your cheerleaders. We have stunt progression check lists that we use in practice to show measurement towards our goal of solid stunts. This has proven to be beneficial in knowing whether or not we are ready to move on past the basics when trying to build difficulty and allows us to not move on too fast.

Achievable: Is this goal realistic and attainable? By double checking if your goals are realistic, you are setting your squad up for success. I would love to have my squad doing elite level stunts and pyramids, but it's important to be realistic. Right now our goal is just to get to extended stunts that are clean with celebrations along the way as we build our skills.

Relevant: Does this goal matter to your and your squad? My team wants to stunt and have seen previous squads that have had more experience excel, so our goal for clean, extended stunts is something that

Setting Goals...Continued on page 8

Lastly, be professional. You are the coach, not the friend. That doesn't mean you can't have fun, but you are the coach, the authority. Be professional in how you speak to your athletes. Require them to use Mr. or Mrs. or Coach when they talk to you. Following these steps will help establish your role as coach in charge of your team.



Setting Goals...Continued from page 7

matters to them. Involving the squad in setting goals is so important to gaining buy-in and hard work from the cheerleaders you work with.

Time-bound: When do we want this goal achieved? Having a focus date for when something should be accomplished allows you to keep looking ahead and helps prevent everyday tasks from overtaking the focus on your long-term goal. We know we want to have clean extended stunts by competition season so that helps set a timeline for us.

One of the most important strategies that coaches have while working with their cheerleaders is goal setting. Keeping your squads involved in setting goals that matter to them, while making sure the goals are ambitious but realistic, is a sure bet on moving your program forward.... and don't forget to celebrate all of the little accomplishments along the way!



Avoiding Wasted Practice Time

~ Jordan Sytsma, At Large Rep. ~

"Where did the time go?" That is a question I used to ask myself at the end of every practice. I felt like we had just gotten started, and yet there was so much left to do. I had a good idea when I walked into practice of what I wanted to accomplish, only to get through the first two or three things on my mental checklist. I was notorious for thinking a certain stunt sequence would only take 10 minutes to clean up and those 10 minutes turned into 45 due to changes being made, adding a different skill, or wondering if the skills even went with the cheer. Then there was the "quick" water break that lasted five extra minutes due to a discussion amongst coaches or amongst athletes. Let's also not forget the warmup that went a few minutes longer, or devoting

Avoiding...Continued in next column

too much time to stunting, and too little time working on jumps or tightening up motions. The list goes on and on.

After constantly feeling like I was wasting precious time during practice, I knew I had to make a change. I wanted to make sure our practices were purposeful and that I could get the most out of the time we had together. I realized that I could no longer have in my head what I wanted to accomplish. It needed to go on paper. I began making a rough outline of what I wanted a typical practice to look like, from the warmup to breakdown at the end of practice. I created a minute by minute schedule, including how much time would be devoted to announcements, warmups, jump class, motion technique, cheers, stunting, and choreography. I even added in planned water breaks.

Once I got my template down for practice I started to look at important dates that we needed to have certain things done by and worked my way backwards. First home game: what needs to be accomplished by then? Cheers, fight song, sideline dances, stunt sequences choreographed, touchdown cheers etc. I would then look at homecoming, our cheer clinic, and State Cheer Championships to begin creating a bigger picture of what needed to happen in days and weeks leading up to those larger events.

Once I started implementing a tight schedule, I was feeling pretty good about things. The athletes started to ask questions..."When are we working on this?" "Is jump class next?" etc. Finally, I realized that I needed to take my planning a step further, and thus, the "whiteboard" was implemented. I brought in a large whiteboard to the gym and wrote out the practice plan. Every eye in the gym could see it and know exactly what was going to happen next and the minute it was supposed to happen. It helped keep everyone in the gym accountable and value our time. I saw immediate results in the productivity of our practices.

At the end of the day, consistency and accountability are key to retaining all of those precious and fleeting practice minutes. Find a method that will keep your practices consistent and make sure assistant coaches and athletes are all in on it. Collective buy in will keep everyone on task, and it helps develop a system within your program. So the next time you find yourself wondering "where the time went," you will be able to look at your whiteboard and know EXACTLY where to find it.

Making Time for Team Bonding

~ Angie Damman, Rep Council Member ~

Making time for team bonding is important for the squad and for you as a coach. It's important for many reasons, such as building trust, relationships, collaboration, problem solving and especially communication skills. I have learned over the years of coaching that making time for team bonding helps a lot with my season. The cheerleaders are not only learning the cheer side of it all, but they are also learning about each other. When you build that trust, it makes a lot of things go smoother, and honestly, helps reduce the drama. Trust helps with the communication of being able to talk things over while being comfortable with each other. Trust is the key for safety when it comes to stunting as well. I don't let my kids stunt until we have a level of trust built with each other.

Every season when we talk about goals, the one thing I hear most from my cheerleaders is they want lots of team bonding. Team bonding doesn't have to be another thing added to our plate as coaches. Something you could do is you could give your cheerleaders turns at picking the team bonding activity. By doing this it gives the cheerleaders different turns with picking the team activity, and it gives them an opportunity to shine. It gives them a chance to share with the team what they like to do or something they're good at, and then it's less planning for you as a coach. Then they're in charge of coming up with the activity and the items for the activity. If you have too many cheerleaders then maybe you have seniors rotate picking out the activities or buddies.

Team bonding doesn't have to be a time waster. There are activities we do while we are practicing so that we don't have to set aside extra time for team bonding. We do things like stretching with each other and keeping eye contact to build the comfort level of looking at each other. We do random icebreakers in the middle of practice to learn something new about each other such as a favorite food, animal, etc. We also talk about things we don't like, so then they are aware of boundaries and possible triggers for each other.

Each season I teach my team a new cheer to learn together. This is a great way to get them to see that everyone struggles at learning something new. It also builds a comfort level for them and you. Another thing you can do is create a team playlist. At the start of each season I have my cheerleaders send me the title of the song that's on their "go to" playlist currently. I

Team Bonding...Continued on page 10

Cheering at Away Football Games

~ Bethany Brink, All Stars Director ~

If you're like me, your favorite season is right around the corner... I'm not talking about fall. I'm talking about football season! While having your own traditions at your home field can be really fun, experiencing Friday Night Lights at a different school can create a great opportunity for team bonding. Here are a few things that could help make that away game successful.

Transportation is the first thing you need to think about for football season. Make sure to contact your athletic director or transportation department to figure out if you will be riding a bus, with or separate from the football team, or if you will be driving your team in a van or vans to the game. If you have to take multiple vans, you may need to consider finding a second driver. Another thing to consider is when cheerleaders wish to ride home with their parents after an away game. To lower my liability, I only allow my cheerleaders to ride home with their own parents; however, that parent must sign them out before they leave the game. Make sure you know your school's policies about students leaving events and make sure you communicate your expectations to your cheerleaders' parents before the start of the season.

Next, think about being prepared. It is most certainly not my responsibility as a coach to supply spandex for the cheerleaders who always forget them, but I do like to be as prepared for these incidents as possible. I like to keep a few pairs of spandex, some spray deodorant, bobby pins, ponytail holders, hairspray, and some extra bows in my bag, just in case. You can limit the frequency of your cheerleaders needing to use these things by giving them an "Away Game Checklist" at the beginning of the season. Make them a packing list to go through as they are getting their things ready to go on game day. Include obvious things like their uniform, spandex, shoes, etc.. but also include things like extra clothes for under their warmups, gloves, snacks, water bottle, or money for the concession stand. If we are driving in a van, we will often leave a little early and grab dinner as a team somewhere on the way. Make sure you include money for dinner on your packing list if that's the case. I also make myself a checklist of things that I need to remember beyond my usual coach's bag. Are you traveling with your signs? Are the cheerleaders in charge of their own poms? I like to sit on the track (or wherever the cheerleaders will be cheering) so that I'm able to coach them when necessary, so I bring my own chair.

Cheering...Continued on page 10

create a list by using these songs. The first time I play parts of their song while we are stretching and have them guess who's "jam" it is. This is fun for them to hear what type of music their teammates like. The bonus to this is we have it to use to listen to while we are doing other team bonding activities or van rides to away games.

Other team bonding ideas could be having your team meals. My favorite thing to do as a coach is take them to places they haven't been before to eat. Some other ideas would consist of doing a craft together, playing a card or board game before the event or even in the van ride. We did other things like Christmas cookie decorating, stocking making, Just Dance games, yoga, meditations etc. Again, let them come up with the planning and have them come up with the items needed for the activity.

Taking the time to have team bonding will make your season more enjoyable for you and your cheerleaders. Do the activities with them! It will create memories for you and for them.

Cheering...Continued from page 9

Lastly, before each Friday away game, figure out the details of the field you're traveling to. Contact the cheerleading coach or the athletic director for the school you're visiting and figure out if your cheerleaders will have a place to change before the game, what kind of surface they will be cheering on, (i.e. grass, dirt track, all weather track), where the bathrooms and concession stand are. I also like to make contact with the coach for the home team to see if/when they plan on stopping to introduce themselves or greet my team. Sometimes it's not as easy to make connections with other teams at football games because of the distance between.

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UNLEASHING YOUR POTENTIAL AT STATE 2023!

~ Tim Gibson, Rep Council Member ~

There is no better way to prepare for your competition season than guiding your team through purposeful goal setting. Setting clear and inspiring goals is the key to unlocking your team's potential and achieving greatness together. I'd encourage you to look at taking a holistic approach to goal setting that goes beyond the traditional SMART framework.

Unleashing...Continued in the next column

1. Vision and Aspirations

What does the ultimate cheer season look like for you and your team? Encourage each team member to share their aspirations and dreams. Let this vision act as the catalyst for your season.

2. Collaborative Goal Setting

Goal setting should be a team effort, fostering collaboration and open communication. Conduct a brainstorming session where every team member can contribute their ideas and suggestions. Start with single/buzz words as a starting point and then refine them collectively. Embrace inclusivity and value everyone's opinions and desires.

3. Balanced Goals for Holistic Growth

Consider the holistic growth of the team when setting goals. In addition to technical skills, include goals that focus on teamwork, communication, leadership, and personal development. Aim for a balance that encompasses physical fitness, mental resilience, and emotional well-being. Remember that cheerleading is a team sport, and the team's attitude and culture impact its success.

4. Progress-Oriented Milestones

Instead of solely relying on time-bound deadlines, establish progress-oriented milestones. Break down your goals into smaller, achievable steps that represent significant progress along the way. For example, if your goal is to execute traditional grip full-ups, break the stunt down into manageable progressions and celebrate each milestone achieved.

5. Celebrate the Journey

Maintain open communication through regular check-ins and feedback sessions to discuss progress, challenges, and areas needing attention. Foster a culture of recognition and celebration, acknowledging team members' efforts, improvements, and achievements. Value the journey itself, embracing the process, lessons learned, and memories created. Cheerleading is a transformative experience that promotes personal growth, resilience, and lasting friendships.

The goal-setting process is imperative to success. Take 30-45 minutes out of your practice, sit your team down and discuss your goals together. Let's unleash your team's potential, support each other wholeheartedly, and savor the remarkable journey that lies ahead. Together we will create a season filled with passion, growth, and extraordinary achievements.

Nominate an Outstanding Cheer Coach for the 2024 ICCA Coach of the Year!

~ Kristen Baker, Trustee ~

Cheer coaches spend immeasurable hours working with their cheerleaders. They provide guidance, leadership, training, and time to make their squads the best they can be. They teach their cheerleaders the importance of sportsmanship, teamwork, and service to their schools and to their communities.

Coaches also provide opportunities for their cheerleaders to perform beyond their school commitments through ICCA events. They bring them to Honor Squad, help them tryout for All-State, and train them to compete at the State Competition. They help them prepare videos for All-Stars, they write recommendations for scholarships, and they bring them to Fall Clinics.

ICCA chooses to honor one of those coaches every year as the Iowa Cheer Coach of the Year. You can nominate a coach that you have seen demonstrate a strong commitment to cheerleading in the state of Iowa.

This award must be given to an active cheer coach in Iowa who demonstrates the highest standards of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and community service. Coaches nominated for this award should be those actively involved in ICCA programs who seize opportunities to recognize cheerleaders on their squads. This person does not need to be in your district. Nominations will only be accepted from ICCA member schools. Any administrator or cheer coach may nominate any active cheer coach for this award. The winner will be honored at the ICCA Conference, the State Championships, and an Honor Squad performance.

The criteria for nominating a coach can be found on the website through the following link: <https://www.iowacheercoaches.org/awards>. All nominations must be submitted by December 20.



SELECTING TEAM CAPTAINS

~ Sandy Norby, At Large Rep. ~

Having or not having team captains is something every cheer coach needs to decide. As a coach you need to decide what you want this person to be. Do you want them to be the one you call to relay messages, to run practice, or to help you out like an assistant? Do you want them to oversee the general duties of helping you?

In my experience as a cheer coach it just caused hard feelings among the cheer squad. I knew what cheerleaders I could call on for help and get the things I asked done. I knew who my strong leaders and role models were among all the squads. I called on every cheerleader to help me in some way, so they all felt important and had a sense of belonging.

If you were to name a captain for your squad, I would look for the strongest cheerleader that had excellent leadership skills. You don't need someone bossing everyone around, but rather someone to help mold the younger cheerleaders and to guide all the squads in a positive way.

Making the Most of a Mascot

~ Franci McClenathan, At Large Rep. ~

Whether you have lots of students who want to be the mascot and you have to have tryouts, or you are just lucky to have one or two volunteers that want to act as your mascot, please include them on your spirit squad as one of your team members. I have found at our small school that sometimes the students who want to act as the mascot are often the most shy kids who just need that mask to hide behind to openly show their school spirit. And if you want them to be successful with increasing spirit and crowd participation, they should have the same guidelines and expectations as your cheerleaders.

Create a practice schedule specifically for them because you may prefer they don't attend every daily practice, or maybe not attend the entire 2-3 hour cheer practice, but having them there when you are teaching or reviewing game day material like pregame activities and sidelines is very important. Teach them your pregame material...simple band dances, crowd yell-back cheers; teach them what your squad does during an injury. Teach your team's touchdown traditions of

Mascot...Continued on page 12

running the flag, dancing the school fight song, or doing jumping jacks. Teach them it's okay to exaggerate a little bit, to show a little extra excitement when your team scores or your team has a great offensive or defensive play. And teach motions to simple sidelines will give your mascot more confidence to participate alongside your cheerleaders.



Tips for Housing a "Little Kids" Clinic

~ Michelle McCann, NW District Rep. ~

Can you believe how close we're getting to fall?? As we gear up for our seasons next year, one thing that some of you might be thinking about is fundraising and how you can make some good money for your program. One of my favorite fundraisers that we do is our annual Junior Cheerleading clinic, and if you don't already do one, I highly encourage you to start!

There are some great benefits to hosting a clinic for the younger students in your district. For one, it's a great way to get your cheerleaders involved in your community and get them into your elementary schools. It's no secret that little kids heavily look up to high schoolers, and they would love a chance to work with your cheerleaders! It's also a great way for parents/guardians in the community to see your program working in a really positive way, and that, in turn, can really boost support for your program! And of course the cherry on top – it can bring in some good income for you and your cheerleaders! Here are some helpful tips I've learned that have helped me run successful clinics:

Advertise early and everywhere you can in the district! Talk to any and all school/district secretaries to see how you can reach as many parents as you can to advertise your clinic, and make sure to give parents/guardians plenty of time to get their kids registered! Find out who's in charge of your schools' various social media sites and see if they will post about it, and don't be afraid to post on your own cheer social media as well!

Figure out what you want to offer for your clinic and set a good price. What do you want your participants to get out of your clinic? For our clinics, all participants learn a small handful of cheers and a small dance that they perform at halftime of a football game

Tips...Continued in next column

(fall) and basketball game (winter). We also have the high school cheerleaders demonstrate jumping and tumbling a little bit just to give them a little taste of what it's like to be a high school cheerleader. We don't do stunting at all with them, and I would make sure the kids aren't attempting to stunt at recess without a trained cheerleader or adult present. All of our participants get snacks during their clinic practices, and they all receive a t-shirt for the performances. Between the time you and your cheerleaders are putting in as well as the cost of what you're giving them, think about what that costs and what you want to charge the families so that you can make a little bit of money off the clinic.

Be organized with the clinic! When I first started doing these clinics, I was not as organized with them, and it really affected how the clinic went overall. Remember, you're working with a (hopefully) large number of kids and their parents/guardians, so it's important to make sure you do what you need to do to make the clinic practices and performances as organized as possible so that everything goes smoothly! Be very clear with your expectations for time to arrive for the clinic and performances, as well as what to expect for both the kids and the adults the night of the performances.

Lastly, make sure everyone involved is having fun! Yes, this is a fundraiser, and yes, the point of the clinic is to help the kids in your community learn what it means to be a cheerleader, but let them have some fun, too! Play games with them at the beginning and/or the end of the practices; have your cheerleaders do something silly with them at some point like some fun dances. You want these little kids to want to come back and do the clinic every year, so give them incentive to do so!

Know a talented singer?

ICCA is looking for a singer or group of singers to perform the National Anthem at the State Championships on November 4. The individual or group will sing at the start of either the morning session or the afternoon session. The performer DOES NOT need to be a cheerleader!! Interested parties can go to the ICCA website and click the FORMS tab – find the National Anthem application form. Deadline is September 15. If you have questions, contact Kenna at kennajohnson47@gmail.com

ICCA Board of Directors Meeting
Held at Bertha Bartlett Public Library 503 Broad St., Story City
Sunday June 4, 2023@ 9:30 am

Call to Order: The 2023 June ICCA Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM by President Cindy Pangburn. Members in attendance included Paula Kirkpatrick, Cindy Pangburn, Kristen Baker, Melissa Hatfield, Kenna Johnson, Jordan Systma, Erin Taylor, Betty Lou Jones, Sandy Norby, Dana Logan, Desiré Grismore, Franci McClenathan, Michelle McCann, and Tami Doyle arrived at 9:31.

Minutes from January 2023 meeting: A motion to approve the minutes of the January 2023 meeting was made by Sandy Norby, with a second by JoEllen Wesselmann. All approved.

Reports:

Membership:

Coaches: 285

Schools: 141

Financial Report:

Checking: \$69,421.39

Savings: \$35,423.09

CD: \$17,824.65

Investment account: \$17,880.17

Executive Directors Report:

***Rules meetings and other training:** Concussion training is always available to coaches through NF. This year's rules meeting will be online from July 31 to Aug. 25. Our event registration opens August 10, and closes Sept. 20. Once the rules meeting certificate and concussion certificate is turned in by a coach and uploaded online, coaches will receive a link to register for events.

***All State:** A survey concerning All-State was sent out to this year's All-State coaches and board members for improvement ideas. 2023 tryouts will be Oct. 14-15, at Ballard M.S. Melissa Hatfield and JoEllen Wesselmann will be site directors.

***State Championships:**

*The Executive Board will meet with IHSAA on June 21st. Guidelines for State (particularly Game Time Spirit) will be posted after this date. Executive directors will send final information after the meeting.

*Music for school songs will need to be verified. Schools must also verify that it is their own school song.

*Sample schedule: Using last year's numbers and adding in the time for the new division, the addition of the new division will possibly make our day go very late. Questions about the logistics of a two-day competition were discussed, along with more area/another building. Currently, stunt groups are limited to two per school, and we discussed limiting to one group per school per division. It was decided to leave as two stunt groups for this year and revisit in October when we have numbers. We can review in January after State and we have seen how the day ran for time.

*Kenna Johnson made a motion to change entry fee per stunt team to \$125. Motion seconded by Kristen Baker. Motion approved.

*Melissa Hatfield is going to help with hiring workers. We are asking for students who need hours of community service hours, etc., to work.

*Game Time Spirit - Timeout portion, entering as before; followed by school fight song. Entry will be judged, exit will not. Timeout portion needs to be one minute in length; the fight song portion is flexible and intended to be what they typically do with their home crowd. The entirety of the whole routine is limited to 2 minutes total. (There will be a penalty if exceeding two minutes, as in other divisions.)

*An addition to registration will include each participant's grade level and the sport each cheers.

Minutes...Continued on page 14

Click N Clear: Executive directors attended a Zoom meeting about this music site. There will be more investigation to see what it can do to help us in the future to verify music rights.

Constitution: Hard copies were passed out to board members with most recent additions that were updated and voted on at conference. It is also on the website.

Policies and Procedures: Membership version and board version; need to update to be inclusive.

Technology/Inventory: Kenna is due for a new (financial manager) computer. Erin offered her Dell if suitable.

***Conference:**

*Locked in at Hilton Garden Inn for next year. Most comments were positive about this year.

*Made about \$1,500 this year. Price of the banquet was approximately \$9,000 less than previous years.

*A request for round tables or mentoring ideas

*Abby from Minnesota will come back.

*Board Survey - How can ICCA become a better service organization?

Newsletter: Topics have been sent. Articles are due June 20.

Financial Committee:

*Need a new member since Betty Lou Jones is rotating off. Board members are encouraged to contact Erin Taylor by email if interested.

*Recommendations for pay - \$23,352 last year to Executive Directors. 60% to Kenna Johnson, 40% to Melissa Hatfield. It will be reevaluated after this first year of going back to two directors. \$14,011 - Kenna; \$9,341 - Melissa

*A motion to approve the Financial committee's recommendation was made by Sandy Norby, seconded by Dana Logan. Four abstained. All others in favor. Motion passed. *A recommendation was made by the Financial committee that the Financial Manager pay stay the same since last year the position received a 5% raise. Bethany Brink made the motion to keep the pay the same; Betty Lou Jones seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Rules: Erin Taylor

- Erin discussed revising the website to give general information for parents, specific divisions, etc. She will help Kenna to break down the information for clarity and easy access.
- Hair/Bows - Erin proposed to simplify (follow the NF rule?) or revise our rule to be less restrictive and more proactive, with a focus on safety. One example was a felt piece in the center of a bow. - "Large items sewn on a bow or headband are illegal" Not a safety risk, so OK.
- Rubrics - Erin passed out State rubrics.
- Co-ed Stunt: There was discussion about coaches reading and following rubrics and whether deductions would be per stunt/DQ/one time deduction, assisted entry to stunts and not continuing to hold to then be considered a base. Overall judge will be responsible for deductions on specific skills/scoring. Erin recommended a score deduction per routine.
- Consistency in scoring was addressed. Erin volunteered to make a powerpoint to post on the website to explain rubrics and scoring.

Rep Council:

Rep council met after the conference. This year there are four rep council members for us to reach out to. Proposing to make the change in language what the responsibilities are to say that they are to attend two meetings per year (Honor Squad practice) and Saturday of conference/meeting at the conclusion of the conference. Failure to attend these events will suggest that they will be asked to step off of the council and possibly reapply at a later date when they can attend the meetings to represent the membership. Motion to approve VP Kirkpatrick's recommendation was made by Sandy Norby; Paula Kirkpatrick seconded. All in favor; motion approved.

District Reps:

NE - Bethany Brink - Aug. 19 West Delaware; M & M.
NE Cindy Pangburn - Aug. 19 Mason City; Ronna McGrann
NW - Michelle McCann - Aug. 12; Storm Lake; M & M
C - Dana Logan - Aug. 12 at Ames HS; Lexi Brink
SW - Desiré Grismore - Aug. 5 at Nodaway Valley HS; Jo
SE - Paula Kirkpatrick - Aug. 12 at Washington HS; Jo

Website: Send errors or needed changes to Kenna if you see them so she can have them updated.

Social Media: Desiré Grismore volunteered to take over Instagram

All-State: Financial report will come from Kenna Johnson.

Honor Squad: Would like to have practice at Ames HS on Nov. 12; CF practice on Nov. 16; performances on Nov. 17. Need a solution for practice space at UNI. Tami will email the financial statement.

All Stars: 95 cheerleaders submitted videos; 52 were selected- 8 boys/44 girls. Uniforms were slightly more expensive; we will revisit the expectation that they stay overnight in the hotel, to be more consistent with All State.

Special Olympics: This was a transitional year with lots of new staff, both ours and Special Olympics. Overall, the day was successful with 45 cheerleaders and (16 coaches) participating. New director, Michelle McCann, has a lot of notes for next year.

Girls' Wrestling Tournament: Discussed this year's State Tournament. IGHS AU is locked into that venue for at least one more year. Attending coaches were very appreciative of our efforts.

Mileage Stipend: Reviewed for the next year; kept the same under recommendation of the Financial Committee.

New Business:

Deadline for filing VP application; change wording from October 28 to October 31.

Scholarship:

Requirements of the Jeanne Ehn Scholarship - one year, non-renewable scholarship for \$500. Students may apply for both, but will have to write both essays. Similar application form will be used, but a different essay topic. Letters of reference must come from an administrator and a supervisor of one of the community service activities. Students can win the Academic Scholarship OR the Jeanne Ehn Scholarship, not both.

Kenna Johnson made a motion to accept the above criteria; Franci McClenathan second. All in favor, motion approved.

Resignation:

A motion to accept Kristen Baker's resignation from the Executive Director position effective June 30, 2023, was made by JoEllen Wesselmann and seconded by Erin Taylor. All in favor, motion carried. Melissa suggested having Kristen keep her computer for continued board service, as she is also a trustee and will remain on the board in that position. It was agreed that she could keep the computer for her trustee position. The board will revisit the computer topic at a later date/as needed. (Revision: Action was taken by the Financial Committee.)

Appoint Financial Manager: JoEllen Wesselmann made a motion to appoint Kenna Johnson as the Financial Manager. Franci McClenathan seconded. All approved, motion carried.

Next Meeting: Oct. 1, 2023 - Story City @ 9:30 AM

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Jordyn Systma, seconded by Bethany Brink. All in favor, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 2:35.



2023-2024 ICCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Executive Directors

All State, Awards, Conference, State Championships, IHSA Cheer Safety, Membership, Trustees

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