

# UWGA



Utah Winter Guard Association

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## **Contest Host Helper**

This document has been created to assist Contest Hosts to make the most of their Winter Guard contest. Please remember the information in this document is a guideline and may not work with all facilities. If you have any questions, please check with your Contest Director. Remember that we are here to give a positive experience to the student performers in a fair, competitive environment. We would like to wish you the best of luck with your contest and hope that you enjoy the experience as much as the performers you are servicing.

# Table of Contents

## ***Step One: Now That You Have A Contest, Then What?***

- Create Checklist
- Create a Contest Committee
- Book Facilities

## ***Step Two: Preparing For Your Contest***

- Organizing Volunteers
- Donations
- Check Facilities
- Budget
- Recommended Money Savers and Makers

## ***Step Three: Three Weeks before Contest***

- Contest Schedule
- Phone Calls
- Scheduling Volunteers
- Vendors/Sponsors

## ***Step Four: Week of Contest***

- What to Expect
- Double Check Everything
- Contact is SO Important

## ***Step Five: Night Before***

- What to Do?
- If There Are Problems...
- Judges

## ***Step Six: Day of Contest***

- Judges
- Other Personnel
- Let It Work For You
- Clean Up

## ***Volunteer Job Descriptions***

## ***Donation Letter***

## Step One: Now That You Have a Contest, Then What?

### Create Checklist

Included in this booklet are examples of checklists to help you get started. Please feel free to add or delete items from the list. If you are unsure, do not hesitate to ask for help from your Contest Director. The purposes of the checklist are to give you predetermined deadlines and keep you moving forward with planning of the contest. Remember, the more work you accomplish before the day of the contest, the less there is to worry about and do **on** the day of the contest. This will also help your Contest Committee and volunteers feel more confident with the tasks before them.

### Create Contest Committee

The purpose of this committee is to help with the planning and the footwork for the contest. **DO NOT TRY TO DO IT ALL.** Your committee should consist of the following:

Concessions	Judge's Host	Check-In
Spectators Needs	Programs and Awards	Inspection
Donations and Vendors	Gym Volunteers	Facilities
Security	First Aid	

As the school administrator, whether you are the guard or band director, you should not hold a position on the committee. This committee is to help you! Your job, within the committee, is to answer their questions and concerns. Let the active parents within your program help you. You would be surprised to see the community connections that come out when parents are asked to do something specific.

### Book Facilities

Within your preparation for applying for a contest, you probably already placed your intentions on the books. Now is the time to confirm with the school, athletics, and district that your contest was granted. Make sure they have no concerns, such as harming the gym floor. If they do have any concerns, and you are not sure how to handle them, make sure you communicate these concerns to your Contest Director. The more your Contest Director is aware of possible upcoming difficulties, the more they can be sensitive to them, and the Contest Director can help make those with the fears feel more secure. Our goal is to promote the activity, not squelch it.

## Step Two: Preparing For Your Contest

### Organizing Volunteers

After you have established your committees, it is important to find them some help. You want to schedule a volunteer meeting at least 3 months before your contest. The sooner you let your volunteer pool know what date they are needed, the sooner it is placed on their calendars and the better turn out you can expect. In preparing for this meeting you want to make sure you have job descriptions, which you can find at the end of this chapter, the number of volunteers needed for each job, copies of the donation letter, and, if possible, a schedule for them to sign up for shifts. Remember that students can do some jobs. There are also jobs specifically for adults. Make sure that you make it clear which jobs you want for the parents and which for the students. Please, also remember, that all students need to be supervised by an adult.

If you choose to have your Contest Director attend a parent volunteer meeting, this is the time. At this meeting the Contest Director can answer in depth questions, make recommendations for jobs, and address the importance of certain positions to make the most of your contest.

### Donations

Here are the meat and potatoes of your profit. Without donations your contest will not make much money and will not be worth the time and energy put into the contest. Donations are essential to the financial success of your contest. Please remember: **the more donations you receive the higher your profit margins.**

At the end of this packet is an example of a donation letter. You are welcome to use this letter as a guideline for writing one of your own. In writing your letter, remember to list your goals, your unit's successes, and your needs. You can either write specific letters, i.e. food donations, trophy donations, monetary donations, or you can write one letter to cover it all. Make sure that the letter is signed and approved by the band director and is printed on official letterhead.

Make sure that you keep records of who donated to your contest so that you can hit them up again the next year. Remember that you can use advertisement as an incentive for those not sure about donating. Whether it is a business-card sized ad in a photocopied program, or a sign in your concession area, every bit of advertisement helps their business. For ideas as to how to utilize these donations for the most profit refer to Recommended Moneymakers and Savers.

These letters need to get out into the public at least one month in advance. Most chain stores have to send the letter to their corporate offices, so make sure you give yourself enough time to allow these types of stores to help you. Donations are the heart of your profit. Good luck!

### Check Facilities

Make sure that you are checking your facility availability every month leading up to your contest date. Check, not only with your district facility calendar, but also with the athletics department and the basketball teams directly. Many times something will come up last minute and it may not always get to the music department. It is your job, as the Contest Host. To double-check your double-checks. Also, make sure that custodial and security is aware of your intentions for the contest. You need to have sufficient custodial staff, security staff, and someone ready to go in case something goes wrong with the facilities the day of the contest. Many times

things such as air temperature and alarms are not controlled directly within the gyms. Now is the time to figure out who is in charge of these things and how they can be reached on a Saturday.

### Budget

This is always a tricky subject because the budget is based more on the number of units attending your contest and the number of judges assigned to your contest and the cost of airfare for them. When making your budget, take into consideration things like:

**Judge's schedule** – will they need breakfast, will they need snacks, and how many lunch and dinner meals are required

**The length of your contest** – the more participants the longer the day will be which can impact your custodial costs and security costs

**Trophies** - make sure you are aware of the number of classifications scheduled in your contest

**Concessions** - if you are unable to get most of this donated, it will eat into the profits

Here is a list of costs that all Contest Hosts will be responsible for:

EQ, MV, EA, and GE Judges receive: \$300

T&P Judges receive: \$100

Tabulator receives: \$100

Announcer fees, building rental fees, awards, hotel/food/airfare for judges, program costs, security and custodial fees, etc.

### Recommended Moneymakers and Savers

The number one money saver is to plan ahead as much as possible. Try to think of every contingency that could occur then make a backup plan in case your first plan will not work. You cannot plan for everything, but if you have tried to plan for the most likely situations, you will feel more in control, which in turn will make those around you more comfortable with the situation.

The next money saver is to have your band program help with the donation for the concession stand. If every band member brings in a 24 pack of soda, you can stock the majority of your concession stand. For instance, flutes will bring 2 bags of nacho chips, clarinets will bring in hotdogs and buns, etc. It is a small donation from each family, yet it helps tremendously in cutting the number of donations needed for the concession stand and/or the amount spent to fill the concession stand.

As for moneymakers, make sure your concession stand has at least 2 meal-type items. Examples would be pizza, BBQ sandwiches, hamburgers, hotdogs, or chicken sandwiches. Try to work with the local restaurants within your community to get a deal in order to offer these items. Keep in mind the clientele that you are servicing, high school girls and boys and their parents. Also, keep in mind if the restaurants are not willing to donate food, but give you a discount on what you purchase, how much will you have to charge in order to make a profit? If there are fast food restaurants close to your school, and your prices are a little high, most families will choose to leave the facility to eat and then you have lost business. Make sure the price you charge will give you a profit and yet is something the average person would pay for the convenience of not having to leave the facility. Do not rule out stores like Sam's Club or Costco for easy concession foods. These mostly give vouchers that can be used within their stores to purchase items for your contest. Do not hesitate

to ask a restaurant, who is not willing to donate food, to donate a paper good or condiment. Taco Bell is great for napkins and nacho boats, McDonald's and Burger King are great about cups or silverware. Do not be afraid to approach grocery stores for hotdogs, buns, fruit, and nacho cheese (many stores are now carrying bulk items). Close-by pizza parlors are usually good about donating a certain number of pizzas. When using this type of service, make sure you set up delivery times ahead of time. Many concession stands under order for the meal items.

For those hosting shows, you might want to consider flower sales. It is not a huge moneymaker but every dollar counts when you deposit it into the bank. Flowers can be bought in bulk and sold as singles. They sell best if wrapped in tissue and tied with a simple bow.

## **Step Two Checklist: Preparing For Your Contest**

- Get two copies of the facility map, one labeled with the flow of the contest and one that is blank and send it to your Contest Director.
- Work with the Contest Director on half-court decisions, front side versus back side.
- Make sure Instructor Packet Form is updated.
- Find a trophy company that will work with your time frame and give a good discount.
- Make a list of companies and stores to ask for donations.
- Look for a company to purchase wrist bands. There are many options on the internet.
- Secure facilities on all calendars.

## **Step Three: Three Weeks before Contest**

### Contest Schedule

At this time, if not before, your contest will close. Please follow the guidelines in place by UWGA for determining performance times.

### Phone Calls

For the most part, either the schools' Color Guard Director or the Contest Director will be fielding most of the phone calls regarding your contest. Do not expect calls regarding contest spectator fees, directions, or prop problems. Prop problems are mostly your call as the Contest Host. If you are unsure about a question, run it by your Contest Director just to be safe. You can never ask too many questions or call too often. The more you ask up front, the less troubles there are the day of the contest.

### Scheduling Volunteers

Now that your schedule has been set, for the most part, you can finalize the volunteers' schedule. We ask that volunteers work the entire show time as it is harder to have them coming in and out throughout the day. It is helpful for the staff to keep things running smoothly if they are not having to adjust a new volunteer every couple of hours. Also, make sure that the first shift starts at least 1 hour before the first unit competes. Most units will arrive earlier than this. You may even want Check In to be there 2 hours before the first unit competes. Breaks in the schedule are for judges and staff to get caught up, so please make sure you always have volunteers working. Try to make sure that any shift change you must have are not happening during critical times of the show, like meal rush or runner changes in the middle of a class. Think the schedule through and if you have any doubts, run it by your Contest Director.

### Vendors and Sponsors

Vendors and Sponsors will be contacting you to set up rental space. A Vendor is someone who sells items and a Sponsor is someone who either displays or provides information on their goods and services. All Vendor/Sponsor spaces will be determined by the contest host. If not specified, space will be on a first-come first-serve basis. We recommend you determine space ahead of time to cut back on conflicts. All vendors will make arrival arrangements with the contest hosts prior to the day of the show.

### Step Three Checklist: Three Weeks before Contest

- Order blank audio tapes (**minimum 10 minute each side**), no cases, for judges – number of tapes needed will be determined by the number of units signed up for the show times number of judges **making sure that there are extras for each judge**
- Purchase 9x12 envelopes and brown paper bags (one for each unit but make sure there are extras)
- Set the volunteer schedule with exact shift times
- Order wrist bands – 2 different colors – 1 for spectators and 1 for participants
- Determine vendor spaces and make a floor plan to make assigning spaces easier

## Step Four: Week of Contest

### What to Expect

This will be the week that all the planning comes together. Make sure you have sufficient people to help organize donations as they come in and to help gather from around town. This will be a time that can try the nerves, but keep your cool and make sure that you are communicating with your Contest Director on a daily basis. If problems come up, it will be within this time frame. Remember that you are not in this alone and that UWGA is here to help.

Do not forget to pick up the trophies, make or print programs, and double check your supplies. At the end of this chapter is an example of a checklist that will help you organize. Make sure you use some type of checklist to keep your sanity.

### Double Check Everything

Make sure you go down the list of donations to verify what is being donated and when it will be picked up. It is always nice to send thank you cards to those businesses that donated something, no matter how small. Make sure you double check the judges' travel and housing arrangements and the meals for the staff and judges. All meals will be eaten in the Judges' Room. If you choose to set up a Hospitality room for directors, it is acceptable for the judges and staff to be served from this room but they will require a separate room for meeting. **Under no circumstances are the judges to be served from the concession stand.** If you have any questions or concerns, please consult your Contest Director. Also, please plan meal breaks for judges and make sure that the food is there on time.

### Contact Is SO Important

Make sure that you are checking with things on a daily basis. Just as things come up with your volunteers and donations, things come up with the judges and participants. The more contact that you have with them the better prepared they can be the day of the contest to help you.

Make sure you are in touch with your Contest Committee. These people have been working hard to put this show together. Now is the time to pat them on the back for all their hard work.

## Step Four Checklist: Week of Contest

- Pick up trophies
- Complete program and have it printed
- Confirm donations and delivery dates and times
- Reserve tables and chairs needed for the contest
- Confirm security, first aid, and custodial personnel and schedule
- Confirm judges' meals, snacks, housing, and transportation arrangements
- Make sure all volunteer slots in the schedule are filled
- Acquire 2 cash boxes and change (spectator tickets and concessions)
- Confirm information for all checks needed
- Label all judges tapes
- Label envelopes and bags for tabulation
- Put together unit Check-In packets (make sure to include map and schedule)
- Make at least 15 copies of blank Spiel Sheets in case someone forgot theirs
- Make copies of the Critique Preparation Form for each unit to put in their packet – one form for each judge at your show for each guard

## Step Five: Night Before

### What to Do?

DON'T PANIC! Make sure you go through your checklist. Remember that the more you can get done the night before the less there is to do the next morning. Make sure that all of the donations are strategically placed for easy access the next day. Make sure you test all equipment and that the volunteers are aware what time to be at the facility the next morning.

### If There Are Problems

It is very possible that there will be unexpected problems. Make sure you have a contact number for your Contest Director, just in case. There is nothing that cannot be overcome. If you feel that you need a your Contest Director at the facility the night before, let the Director know ahead of time so arrangements can be made. With your Contest Director present the night before, you know that you will have the correct answers.

### Judges

When setting up the Judges' Room the night before, we want the room to be relaxing and comfortable. Make sure the Judges' Host/Hostess is good with decorating as well as planning. Some nice touches to consider are:

Table Clothes	Centerpieces	Candles
Nice serving dishes	Theme planned decorating	Eye pleasing
Bowls of candy	Mints	Desserts

Please remind the parent servers for the day that this room is for the judges to be able to prepare for the contest. They may be asked to leave the room so that the Chief Judge can talk openly about any concerns for the day.

## Step Five Checklist: Night before the Contest

### Performance Gym

- Raise basketball goals
- Pull out stands
- Tape off the area in the lower bleachers for the 'downstairs' judges and an area in the upper bleachers for the 'upstairs' judges – downstairs judges like to be about 3 bleachers up and the upstairs judges like to be as high up as they can be
- Set up 1 table and 1 chair for announcer
- Set up 1 table and 2 chairs for tabulation
- Set up 1 table for awards
- Cooler for judges' drinks
- Hang signs

### Concessions

- Move all products into concession stands
- Double check that you have enough service items
- Double check that you have enough heating and cooling appliances
- Make a sign listing all prices
- Hang signs

### Guard Check In

- Set up at least 1 table and 2 chairs

### Judges' Room

- Set up tables and chairs
- Set up tables for buffet table
- Decorate room
- Double check that you have service items, cooler for drinks and place settings

### School

- Check all facilities to make sure they are clean and put together
- Pick up programs

### Performer's Meeting Areas

- Make sure areas are clean, clear, and setup

### Judges Paperwork

- Make sure that all paperwork (forms, menus, etc.) are handled before or after the show

## **Step Six: Day of Contest**

### Judges

The judges need to be at the facility at least 1 hour prior to the first performance. The Judges' Room should be waiting their arrival. If your contest starts early in the day, having coffee ready is recommended. Have the judges' tapes ready for them to take with them into the contest.

Within the Judges' Room the judges will eat, prepare, and take their breaks. This room is off limits to anyone except judges and contest serving personnel. We ask that you provide health choices for all meals provided. If anyone has special needs, you need to find this out before hand. You could ask a parent to cook a homemade meal to give that added touch.

### Other Personnel

Your tabulator should arrive 1 hour before the first unit performs to get setup. Your announcer should arrive at least 1 hour before the first unit performs. Sound checks will start within 20 minutes of the announcer's arrival. Please make sure Check-In is passing on this information to the first few units.

### Let It Work For You

Once the day has started just sit back and let the day happen. The more that you try to "control" what happens the more frustrated you will become. Things will go wrong and problems will come up. Just roll with the punches and keep your Contest Director updated on what is happening around the facility. You will be expected to make rounds through the facility checking up on the different areas of the contest. Make sure that you make time for yourself to eat and take breaks when you can.

If you or any of your volunteers come up against an abrasive or rude instructor, ask them to wait where they are and call for your Contest Director. It is the Contest Director's job to make the tough decisions and handle the fall out. Do not try to handle a situation that escalates. If you or your volunteers are feeling uncomfortable with a situation, make sure you call in the Contest Director. It will be a good idea to keep your Director on a radio or cell phone so that you can have easy and fast access to them. Do not be afraid to ask for help.

### Cleanup

Make sure that you have sufficient numbers of volunteers to clean up at the end of the day. We recommend that the concession stand stay open even after retreat. Many students will hit the stand before leaving. It will not be necessary to keep everything available, but the easy stuff will sell.

It is common for units to stay on the gym floor to take pictures and visit. We ask that they be given some time to celebrate, but do not hesitate to start gently nudging them toward the parking lot.

## Step Six Checklist: Day of Contest

### Performance Gym

- Tape off judges' area in stands
- Put up signs (in/out, welcome units, etc.)
- Set up retreat table with trophies
- Tape off sound area
- Set-up sound table with schedule, program, extension cords, chair, etc.

### Spectator Tickets

- Set up table with cash box, change, programs, chairs, and wrist bands.

### Concessions

- Prep area (cash box with change, supplies, etc.)
- Have copy of volunteers work schedule with program
- Set-up tables for patrons
- Start up the foods that need to be heated

### Guard Check-in

- Set-up tables with pens, markers, wrist bands, and Check-In Packets
- Have a copy of volunteer work schedule, performance schedule, school map, and blank spiel sheets

### Inspection

- Provide duct tape, electrical tape, and a tool box
- Have a copy of the performance schedule

### Tabulation

- Program
- Extension cord
- 1 table and 2 chairs
- Ream of 8 ½ x 11 white paper
- Labeled envelopes and brown paper bags

### Warm-Up Areas

- Put up signs
- Make sure area is clear and lighting is ready to go

### Judges' Room

- Confirm arrival of food and snacks
- Start coffee and/or set out snacks
- Set out judge's tapes and boxes

### Dressing Areas

- Make sure all restrooms and locker rooms are open and clean

### School

- Hang directional signs inside and out (bus parking, spectator parking, prop entrance, dressing rooms, etc.)
- Make sure there are directional signs at all school entrances
- Make sure restrooms are open, fully stocked, and clean

## **Volunteer Job Descriptions**

### Parking Attendants

- Make sure the busses, vans, and equipment trucks are parking in the correct lots for unloading
- Make sure the spectators are parking in the lots closest to the facility
- Make sure there are sufficient parking spots reserved for judges if they rent a car

### Concessions

- People good with figures to accept money and make change
- People to prepare the orders and organize the booth
- People to help set up and break down
- People to help stock the concessions

### Spectator Tickets (2)

- Someone good with figures to accept money and make change
- Someone to either hand out the wrist bands or stamp hands

### Judge's Host (2)

- Someone to organize and see to their meals for the day
- Someone to drive them from the airport to the hotel to the school and back again
- Someone to make sure they are getting enough to drink and a possible snack in the gym

### Spectator Entrance (2)

- Someone to check for wrist bands and to make sure no one enters or leaves during a performance

### Readyline (1)

- Someone to keep guards moving from warm-up to performance gyms
- Someone to make sure no one enters or leaves during a performance

### Warm-up (2)

- Someone to notify guards 5 minutes before time is up and to keep on strict schedule
- Make sure that each unit gets time in the warm-up areas

### Runners (3)

- They will need to take judges drinks and run tapes and sheets to the tabulation table

### Guard Check-in (4)

- Someone to collect any unpaid fees
- Wrist bands for performing members and staff and floor crew
- Handout schedules, maps, and spiel sheets
- Answer any questions (these people need to really understand what is going on)

### Inspection (3)

- Make sure all poles are capped, rifles and sabers are padded, and any rough surfaces are taped
- They are to enforce these standards strongly and not allow any guard to bring anything substandard into the school

#### Programs & Trophies (1)

- Collect business cards/ads and organize them for print
- Get final schedule from Contest Director for print
- Copy, fold, and staple programs
- When the schedule is produced, place the final order for the trophies
- Arrange to pickup the trophies and make sure they are engraved correctly

#### Guard Entrance to the Performance Gym (2)

- Someone to check wrist bands to make sure they are performing members or have paid
- Will also be responsible for making sure no one enters or exits the gym during performances

## **Show Sponsor Reminders and Policies**

- First aid should be at the exit door and should be limited to ice, band-aids, and minor first aid materials.
- Both boys and girls locker rooms must be open 1 hour before the show begins.
- Please make sure that someone maintains the restrooms all day.
- Signs on the gym walls need to be limited and not a distraction.
- Map of the campus taped to the check-in table that clearly identifies the check-in location.
- Have parents supervising student workers at all locations.

## **Ticket Pricing**

\$5 at all shows for adults

\$4 at all shows for students with current school ID

\$4 ages 3-12

2 and under are free

Family Pass for 5 family members: \$20

# UWGA



## Utah Winter Guard Association

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### **Show Host Contact Information**

Show Host: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

School Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone: \_\_\_\_\_