

Who are we? How did we get here?

by Carl Latchaw, Webmaster (latchman44@yahoo.com)

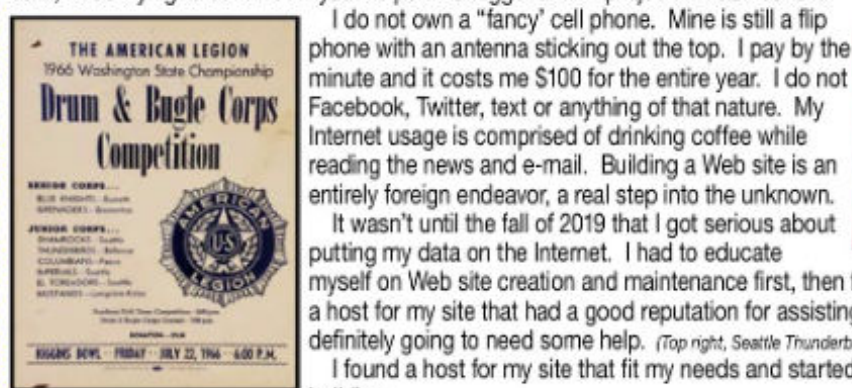
I'm the Webmaster of PacificNorthWestDrumCorps.com. I have been asked to briefly write about the site and its creation, so here we go.

I have been a resident of the Pacific Northwest my entire life and marched in local drum corps during the 1970s. During that time I gathered and kept a good-sized cache of drum corps documents. These laid dormant in a smooched cardboard box in my garage for DECADES. (We've all been there, right?)



I thought the best format was to list the corps' data on one side of the page and a photo of the corps on the other side, so you could see what you were reading about. Super-simple layout. It just made sense to me. (Above left, 1937 American Legion poster; below left, 1966 Washington American Legion state championship)

I continued building my Web site on my computer using PowerPoint, Word docs and Paint, off and on for the next few years. All the time I was collecting and organizing data, I was trying to convince myself to pull the trigger on the project. I was hesitant.



My initial focus was on 1960s and 1970s corps. After they were pretty well identified and added to the site, I decided to deep dive into pre-1960s corps. That section from 1919 through 1959 took many months. All the while my growing site would experience intermittent issues -- crashing, not backing-up and random acts of defiance against my will. The more I worked the site, the more proficient I was at fixing it or avoiding the issues altogether. Sites are not stagnant entities. They need attention and maintenance every week.

In 2015 I started to think about those documents. They were not doing any good sitting in the garage gathering dust and I felt they had value, historical value. I talked to others that were in the same situation, not wanting to throw them out, but needing somewhere or someone to save them for posterity.

Since I couldn't find any locally-run drum corps Web site or organization to take my documents, I decided to create a site of my own to share them with the drum corps community.

Creating the site

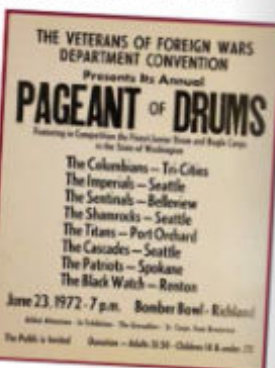
On my computer, I used PowerPoint to visually lay out what each page would look like -- home page, index, corps page, footnotes, etc. I used the same format to present the data for each corps. Clarity and consistency were important.

I do not own a "fancy" cell phone. Mine is still a flip phone with an antenna sticking out the top. I pay by the minute and it costs me \$100 for the entire year. I do not Facebook, Twitter, text or anything of that nature. My Internet usage is comprised of drinking coffee while reading the news and e-mail. Building a Web site is an entirely foreign endeavor, a real step into the unknown.

It wasn't until the fall of 2019 that I got serious about putting my data on the Internet. I had to educate myself on Web site creation and maintenance first, then find a host for my site that had a good reputation for assisting their customers. I was definitely going to need some help. (Top right, Seattle Thunderbirds 1964 program)

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the decades of 1980 and 1990, so in September 2021, they were added as well. The site is currently divided into these decades pre-1960s, 1960s and 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, and Beyond 2000. We now cover PNW drum corps from 1919 through 2021. Amazing.

I had no idea when we went live in May 2020 that we would go beyond the initial self-imposed constraint of 1960s and 1970s corps. But why not? May as well cover it all, soup-to-nuts. Something for everybody, right?

The site now contains 214 pages of data covering 156 unique PNW drum corps plus another 20 or so "Honorary PNW Drum Corps." We have raw data, news stories, photographs, show programs, personally written histories, equipment history and show results for 400 shows with scores of 300 of them. We have a substantial collection of Pacific Northwest Drum Corps history that is available to anyone, anytime. (Left, 1973, Percussionist Patriots program book; top right, 2014 Seattle Cascades)

Cascades)

I have been totally surprised and grateful for the generosity of our donors. They have donated electronic copies of some incredible photos and other irreplaceable artifacts. Others didn't donate documents, but donated their childhood memories instead. I am truly touched that people give so deeply of their cherished memories for all to see. I have data on the site, but those memories bring that data to life. (Above right, 2018 Columbians)

If I were to leave you with one last thought, it would be . . . read drum corps history. Read all of it. Become one with the data, absorb it into your soul, let it nourish you. If we remember the history, it will not fade. All the hours we practiced on and off the field will not be forgotten.

Many thousands of us have toiled to entertain others and be the best that we could possibly be. Let us not forget those



who came before us and those that marched among us. They are all part of drum corps history, as are we. (Left, 2017 Seattle Cascades program book; above, screen shot of the Web site)

Stay safe out there! PacificNorthWestDrumCorps.com. ■■■

(Left, 1973 Northwest Drum Corps Association retreat)

In July 2021, the site received a single donation of 27 show programs. I never thought it would've been possible for a donation of that magnitude to happen. There was another drum corps hoarder out there besides me! That donation contained some show programs from 2016 through 2018. Those needed to be put on the site, too, so we created a "Show Programs 2000 and Beyond" sub-page. That led to the creation of a "2000 and Beyond" corps page. All that was missing from the site now were

