

Pacific Northwest drum corps population by state

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and Pacific Northwest Drum Corps.com – specializing in PNW drum corps of the 1960s and 1970s

Us Washingtonians have always prided ourselves that our state has produced many drum corps through the decades. Per our site data, between 1899 and 2023, the current count is 158 drum corps in Washington, 78 in Oregon, 22 in Western Canada and 18 in Montana. Any guy will tell you that more is better, but is it really?

Let's compare Washington and Oregon.

Oregon produced some fine junior drum corps -- the Royal Lancers (Portland), Hawks (Portland) and the Flamigos/Argonauts (Salem). In the senior division, we mustn't forget the Capital Post #9 American Legion corps from Salem that came in second place at the 1928 Legion Nationals in San Antonio, TX, and won the American Legion National title in 1932



when it was held in Portland, OR.

All of that being said, Washington State had more corps than Oregon did. From 1930 through 1979, Washington had 129 vs. Oregon's 69. The generally-accepted explanation for this was that since Washington had a larger population, they had more people involved in drum corps. Is this true? Let's find out.

Decade	Washington State Population in Mill	Number of Corps	Corps Per Capita (Corps/Pop)	Oregon State Population in Mill	Number of Corps	Corps Per Capita (Corps/Pop)
1930's	1.549	62	0.00003760	1.021	35	0.00003428
1940's	2.057	37	0.00001799	1.305	30	0.00002299
1950's	2.535	38	0.00001453	1.644	26	0.00001582
1960's	3.121	34	0.00001086	1.929	21	0.00001089
1970's	3.920	25	0.00000638	2.352	15	0.00000635



1932 American Legion National Champions
AL Capital Post #9 from Salem Oregon
Charles Wilkenmore - Capital Post DM,
Winner - Best Drum Major Award

If you look at the provided chart, you can see that we selected five decades to analyze. In three out of five decades, Oregon had more drum corps per capita (per person) than Washington. This is a little surprising given the total number of corps per state. *[State population was derived from the U.S. census, which is taken every decade in years ending in zero. We have calculated the average population mid-decade for our analysis].*

Our supposition was that a larger population gave rise to more drum corps which is accurate in this case, but truth be told, Oregon had more drum corps relative to their population size than Washington did. Oregon's numbers are surprising.

The data is too close in the 1960s and 1970', so we'll call it a "push," as the numbers could have gone either way with deeper digging on our part. Washington had more raw numbers of people involved in drum corps, but Oregon takes the cake as far as drum corps per person.

Sometimes things aren't necessarily what they seem at first glance. Every now and again life throws us a curve ball. As long as we don't get hit in the noggin with it, we'll live to enjoy another day.



1939 Pasco Washington Boy Scout D6/BC
Co-sponsored by the Pasco American Legion Post #34
and the Boy Scouts of America.
Winner of the Washington State Legion JR DC Championships
in 1940, 1941, and 1942.
This corps is the precursor of the present-day Tri-City Columbian.



The 1959 CYO Squires.

Renamed in 1962 as the "Seattle Showrocks".

The young gentleman on the right-front is the future drum major of the Seattle Thunderbirds; Jerry Logan

Hearty congratulations to our drum and bugle corps brothers and sisters south of the Columbia! We Washingtonians salute you.

Long live drum corps! -- ©Pacific Northwest Drum Corps.com 2024



1968 Cascade Cadets (Seattle Cascades) Color Guard



1970 Royal Laurens Portland Oregon



1973 Persimmon Hout Patriots Spokane Washington



1975 Argonauts - Salem Oregon



1974 Flamingos - Salem Oregon



1983 Argonauts



1976 Seattle Cascades American Legion National Champion Color Guard





Additional Pacific Northwest corps



(Top to bottom) **Thunder**, Spokane, WA, 2007 (Harry Heidelmark); **Black Watch Highlanders**, Federal Way, WA, 1975 (Jane Boulen); **Marksmen**, Seattle, WA, 1975 (Jane Boulen); **Grenadiers**, Bremerton, WA (unknown); **Renaissance**, Spokane, WA, 1977 (unknown); **Oregon Crusaders**, Portland, OR, 2007 (Raymond Fudge); **Imperials**, Seattle, WA, 1980 (Orin Wagner); **Mauraders**, Vancouver, WA, 1985 (Donald Mathis); **Titans**, Bremerton, WA, 1976 (unknown); **Columbians**, Pasto, WA, 2013 (Karen Sunmark)