

Rinceorí Na Sléibhte *(Dancers of the Mountains)*



Irish Dance Association
(IDA)

2019-2020

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Irish Dance Association and Missoula Irish Dancers

The Irish Dance Association (IDA) is an organization that is separate from the Missoula Irish Dancers, although the two do work in tandem and share similar goals.

The mission of the Irish Dance Association (IDA) is to support the school in teaching traditional Irish step dancing through workshops and guest instructors; share the traditional aspect of the Irish culture with the public through festivals, school tours and public performances; and highlight the dress through the purchase of traditional, appropriate uniforms that can be worn during performances and at Feisannas. IDA supports these goals through fundraising efforts, corporate and private sponsorships, and individual donations.

In the past few years, the IDA has grown considerably in both scope and purpose. This growth reflects the growth of the Missoula Irish Dancers school as a whole. This handbook helps parents better understand the purpose of the IDA and the ways in which the fundraising efforts of the IDA support the school. It is also (hopefully!) a call to action.

IDA is a non-profit, volunteer organization. You and your family can help IDA this year by volunteering, donating, participating as a Board Member, or sponsoring IDA.

IDA Board of Directors

Current Offices/Members

- President: Laura Thompson
- Vice-President: Kelli Sather
- Secretary: Anna Walter
- Treasurer: Shannon McWilliams
- Head Instructor, Owner of Missoula Irish Dancers School: Sarah Donnelly,
- Instructors: Anna Walter, Katie Resch
- Uniform Coordinator: Jan Jacobson
- Other Members: Dana Grobb, Kylie Barnes, Leah Patterson, Ariel Cornelius, Jennifer Schultz

Contact Information:

Contact the board at MID.Board.MT@gmail.com. Or grab a current officer in the hallway during class. We're always happy to discuss ideas or answer questions!

Please be aware that IDA is not involved in any aspects of weekly lessons or instruction. Any comments or concerns regarding curriculum or instruction should be directed to the School by contacting an instructor or through email at missoulairishdancers@gmail.com.

Responsibilities

The IDA Board of Directors works with the school to identify ways in which the Club can support its goals and missions. Board members meet periodically throughout the year to identify ways in which it can implement and expand upon all of the activities outlined below.

Individuals need not be a Board Member to attend board meetings. Recommendations and input from all members of the Missoula Irish Dance community are welcome and encouraged.

Board Member positions are voted upon during the IDA annual board meeting, which takes place on the 1st Monday in October. Board positions include:

- President

- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Please contact a current board member if you are interested in filling any of these positions, or if you are interested in becoming a board member!

What IDA Does: Newsletter

IDA sends out a monthly newsletter via email with notices about upcoming activities and events, important dates, and other general information relevant to the School and IDA. If you are not currently receiving these newsletters, please contact us at MID.Board.MT@gmail.com.

Workshops

Workshops & Guest Instructors

In conjunction with the School, IDA identifies workshop opportunities that enrich and enhance the Irish dance experience. Together they identify qualified guest instructors to teach and facilitate these workshops, recognizing that guest teachers and choreographers offer fresh perspectives to the student's education, expose the dancers to new steps and choreography, prepare them for possible competition, and introduces them to the opportunities available in the Irish Dance world.

IDA funds these workshops as part of our mission to teach traditional Irish step dancing through workshops and guest instructors. As such, IDA pays for the guest instructor's fees and approved travel expenses, studio rental fees, and any other necessary expenses. These expenses are offset in part by student registration fees, which are kept to a minimum to allow interested students the opportunity to participate. However, most of the expenses are covered through IDA fundraising efforts.

Recent workshops have included *Step Workshops* and *Intensive Workshops* with Anne-Marie Cunningham, TCRG, ADCRG - an international teachers and former *Riverdance* dancer; and *Feis Workshops* with our own MID instructors.

Workshops are currently scheduled for the 2019-2020 year on the following dates:

- October 2019
- February 2020

Cultural Events

Cultural Events

Dancers in Rinceorí Na Sléibhte participate in a number of cultural events throughout the area. They perform regularly during a St. Patrick's Day tour at local elementary schools, perform for the Friends of Irish Studies annual benefit, and at other venues as deemed appropriate by both the School and IDA. These performances introduce Irish step dancing to the public, and provide performance opportunities to our dancers.

St. Patrick's Day School Tours are a collaborative event, with IDA volunteers making arrangements with schools, coordinating schedules, creating itineraries, and providing backstage parents; and

the School overseeing all the performance aspects of the day. This is always an exciting day, and one that would not be successful without all our wonderful parent volunteers!

Holiday Recital

The Holiday Recital is the School's formal annual performance. Because the Holiday Recital is such a big event, IDA helps coordinate parent volunteers to assist back-stage, provide refreshments, help with decorating, design the program, etc. IDA also works with student volunteers to help fill the transition time with small musical performances. IDA works closely with the school to identify volunteer needs.

IDA utilizes the Holiday Recital in fundraising through a raffle. This is coordinated and executed by IDA, with dance families donating raffle items and selling raffle tickets. Winners are announced at the Holiday Recital. All proceeds benefit IDA. Additional information on the raffle can be found in the *Fundraising* section of this handbook.

Parent are strongly encouraged to consider ways in which they can help with the Holiday Recital. A number of volunteer opportunities are available prior to the performance which still enable parents to watch the entire recital.

Parades

In order to increase awareness and share the traditional aspect of Irish step dancing with the public, dancers from Rinceorí Na Sléibhte participate and dance in local parades. Annual participate in the St. Patrick's Day parade is expected. Other parades may include the Homecoming Day parade, the Day of the Dead parade, or the Holiday parade as deemed appropriate by IDA and the School.

IDA coordinates involvement in parades, including paying participation fees, communicating drop-off and pick-up locations with parents, notifying families of opportunities, etc. The School participates in the parade with the dancers and assists them in performing at appropriate locations during the parade.

Depending on the size of our group and whether or not we have a float, we usually require 3 to 5 parent helpers to help/walk with us in a parade. Please contact IDA to volunteer. Please do not plan to walk in the parade with our group unless you are the designated volunteered.

Uniforms

Uniforms

IDA provides dancers with specific items needed as part of their school dress for a nominal fee. These include skirts for our Fortress, Mystic, Storm, Thunder, and Wolf Mountain dancers; capes for Wolf Mountain dancers; and vests for our male dancers. Female dancers also receive a hair bow (for Blaze and Castle Mountain dancers) or headbands.

Dresses, skirts and vests are purchased by IDA on an as-needed basis, and money is allocated for the purchase of these items each year. IDA Board has a Uniform Committee that researches uniform options and presents recommendations to the board for their approval and review. The School helps the Committee understand uniform requirements, standards, and trends and has voting powers in determining which uniforms are selected for future purchase.

Headbands and hair bows are made by parent volunteers. Please contact the Uniform Coordinator if you are interested in volunteering on the Uniform Committee or if you are willing to make these items.

The fact that the IDA rents school uniforms to the dancers instead of making each family purchase these items individual is fairly unique. Most Irish Dance schools require parents to purchase these items individually, either directly through the dressmaker, or as part of a uniform exchange (during which specific items in needed sizes may not be available). This can be very costly to families as Irish Dance skirts range from \$125 - \$300, and dresses generally cost around \$600.

Additional information on uniforms can be found in the *Uniform Handbook* and the *Uniform FAQ Sheet*.

Group Orders

In an effort to help families purchase non-IDA issued items required as part of the school uniform, IDA places a group order on behalf of individual dancers, which allows everyone to utilize teacher and/or group discounts and share shipping costs. Parents may order needed items using the online *MID Group Order Form*. Information on group order deadlines and a link to the on-line order form is sent to families via email.

This is service provided on a volunteer basis by the IDA as a benefit to all our dancers.

Uniform Exchange

IDA also hosts an annual Uniform Exchange as a service to our dance families. This swap-meet style event allows families to sell non-IDA issued uniform items or MID Gear their dancers have out grown, and purchase used items at a lower cost. Information about the Uniform Exchange is sent out via email prior to the event. This generally takes place before the Group Order deadline.

Fundraising Efforts

Coffee & Candy Fall Fundraiser: “Reeling” in Funds for Missoula Irish Dance

The Coffee and Candy fundraiser pairs two Montana companies, Florence Coffee Company and Martinson’s Ranch Chocolates into one fundraising effort. During the fundraiser, dancers are asked to sell at least 5 products or make a donation of \$30 or more. Half of all proceeds are donated to IDA. This has historically been a very successful fundraising effort for the school, with approximately \$2700 made last year alone.

Additionally, each student receives a voucher for 10% of their proceeds. This voucher can be used to defray the cost of uniform rentals or tuition.

Holiday Recital Raffle

As mentioned, IDA utilizes the Holiday Recital as a fundraising tool. Rather than hosting a silent auction as in years past, IDA now sponsors a raffle. The raffle generally generates around \$1500 in proceeds.

Volunteers are needed to help coordinated the Raffle and collect and assemble raffle items/baskets. IDA also invites each family to donate an item to one of three raffle baskets. Raffle tickets are sold at Fundraising Performances prior to the Holiday Recital, and at the recital itself. Winners are

announced at the Recital, but need not be present to win. Raffle baskets, and item requests, are as follows:

- *Irish Basket* wish list: Irish trinkets, Irish food & drink, Irish Dance related items, trip to Ireland, etc.
- *Missoula Favorites Basket* wish list: Gift cards or tickets to favorite Missoula restaurants, venues, & activities; Missoula and/or Montana apparel, Griz related items, etc.
- *Family Fun Basket* wish list: games, movie tickets and/or DVDs, snacks, toys, sporting goods, family events, etc.
- Overnight stay at Fairmont Hot springs

We encourage everyone to sell raffle tickets to friends and family prior to the recital. All proceeds benefit IDA.

Fundraising Performances

IDA hosts a variety of fundraiser events, including but not limited to events at local pubs, pint nights at area breweries, and Farmer's Market performances. Fundraising Performances are generally more informal than recitals or festival performances, and are fun opportunity for students to showcase their dance skills individually or in smaller groups. It is also an occasion for students to suggest their own music, dance with siblings, or choreograph their own dance.

The success of the fundraising performances vary depending on the nature of the venue/event. During St. Patrick's Day, our fundraising performances generated over \$500 in tips.

Please contact a member of the IDA Board with suggestions for Fundraising Performances. Parents are invited to help schedule these events directly with the venues after consulting with the Board.

MID Gear

T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, bags and other items with the Rinceorí Na Sléibhte logo are available for purchase periodically throughout the year through IDA as a fundraising effort. IDA uses the proceeds from the purchases to help fund workshops, uniforms, and cultural events as described in our mission statement.

Dancers are not required to have "MID-Gear." Many dancers and parents choose to purchase these items because they are fun, stylish, and promote school spirit, but they are optional purchases.

Sponsorships

IDAs workshops, cultural events, and uniforms are all supported and sustained through the following corporate sponsors. These companies/individuals have expressed their commitment to the culture and community of Irish Dance, and especially to our dancers, through their generous donations. Please support the corporate sponsors in thanks.

- Northern Rockies Orthopaedic: Dr. Justin Jacobson
- Felton Dental Care
- Point Six Engineering

IDA welcomes additional sponsorships on a corporate or private individual basis.

Parent Involvement/Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer Opportunities

Parent volunteers are needed to assist with all of the activities and events sponsored by IDA. Most of the volunteer positions require a very minimal amount of time. Please thoughtfully consider your skills, talents, and availability when identifying one of the volunteer opportunities. We have such a capable and talented parent pool! Most volunteer positions require a very little time.

Additional information and sign-ups for the following positions are available at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4DA5AB2EA7FB6-irish>. Volunteering is not limited to these positions, however. Please contact IDA with suggestions on how you can help with any of the following:

Board:

- Officer Positions
- Active Board Member

Fundraisers:

- Coffee & Candy Committee (assist with the IDA Coffee & Candy Fundraiser)
- Raffle Committee (assist with collecting raffle donations, displaying baskets, and/or selling tickets)

General:

- Volunteer Coordinator (organize volunteer efforts)
- Annual Audit Committee (conduct annual IDA audit)
- Newsletter (compile and send out monthly newsletter)
- Pubs/Breweries/Cultural Events Coordinator (organize and book events)
- Rehearsal Space Coordinator (secure rehearsal spaces for IDA activities)
- Technology Committee (assist with setting up IDA website and web-based activities)

Holiday Recital:

- Holiday Recital Coordinator (coordinate with all Holiday Recital committees to arrange and communicate all aspects of Holiday Recital)
- Photography Coordinator (secure photographer for Holiday Recital, work with Holiday Recital Coordinator to arrange time and share photographer fees with parents)
- Decorations Committee (decorate stage for Holiday Recital)
- Recital Programs (create Holiday Recital program)
- Refreshment Committee (work with Holiday Recital Coordinator to ask parents to bring plate of cookies, set-up & man the refreshments table)

Parades:

- Parade Registrations (work with various parades to secure spot)
- Parade Parents (walk with dancers during the parade)

Performances (Any):

- Backstage Parent Helper (assist teachers back-stage prior to performances)
- Music Support (control music during performances)
- A/V and Lighting Specialist (help with lighting and any AV issues)
- Emcee (introduce School, thank sponsors, etc. during performances)

St. Patrick's Day:

- School Tour Coordinator (work with schools to schedule performances, create itinerary)
- Teacher Chauffeur (drive instructors to schools and drop them near the front for easy set-up)

Uniforms:

- Uniform Assistant Coordinator (assist the Uniform Coordinator in taking measurements, uniform check-in and check-out, and group order distribution)
- Uniform Exchange Coordinator (schedule and oversee Uniform Exchange)
- Uniform Exchange Helper (sit in the hallways during Uniform Exchange, collect payments)
- MID Gear Coordinator (order and distribute MID Gear, including shirts, hats, sweatshirts, and bags)
- Headbands & Hair Bows (make headbands & hair bows)

Workshops:

- Workshop Committee (help schedule and organize workshops)
- Workshop Registrar (collect workshop registrations and payment)