

96th Highlanders Pipes & Drums  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan



# Members Handbook

**2022-2023 Season**



## 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders Identity Statement

The 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders Pipes and Drums youth band is a non-profit organization whose objective is to preserve and promote appreciation of Celtic heritage through Highland piping and drumming.

### History of the Band

The 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders Pipes and Drums originated in the early 1960's and were known as the Saskatoon Boys Pipe and Drum Band. In the early 1980's, girls from the Bonnie Bluebells Girls Pipe Band were admitted to the band and the name was changed to the Saskatoon Optimist Pipes and Drums. In 1989, the band changed their name once again to the 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders Pipes & Drums.

The band takes their name from the 96<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan which was formed in 1915. The battalion consisted of 768 soldiers known as the "Canadian Highlanders" who fought in World War I. Their pipe band was made up of twelve pipers and six drummers. The battalion formally presented their cap badge to the band in 1966.

Some notable former members of the 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders include long-time Simon Fraser University Pipe Band piper Dani Millar, PEI College of Piping director and piper James MacHattie, and our own current 96<sup>th</sup> band instructor and accomplished solo piper, Raphael Mercier!

### 96<sup>th</sup> Organizational Structure

The 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders is a non-profit, volunteer-run organization, administered by an association made up of band members' parents. It operates under a constitution and by-laws.

A parent executive is elected at our annual general meeting each May. All families in good standing will have one vote. The executive typically meets the last Monday of every month during band practice. A parent meeting for all band families is typically held every second month on the first Monday of that month. Meetings begin at 7:15pm and last approximately 1-1.5 hrs. It is expected that a representative from each band family be present at each of the parent meetings.

To serve its artistic and instructional needs, the 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders contracts one band director and several instructors. The number of instructors may vary each year based on the number of participants on each instrument (chanter, bagpipes, drumpad, snare drum, tenor drum, and bass drum). The program could not function without our valued band director and instructors, but the vast majority of the responsibilities of running the organization falls to our parent volunteers.

The active participation of the 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders community is what makes the organization work, so please consider offering your time above and beyond the minimum volunteer requirements.

**96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders Parent Board  
2022-2023**

**Past President:**  
VACANT

**\*President:** Tina Stalker *(Daniel, piper)*

**\*Vice-President** Krista Noble *(Liam, piper and Claire, Tenor Drummer)*

**\*Secretary:**  
Jerrilee Orth  
*(Kaydan, snare)*

**\*Treasurer:**  
Katrina Regier  
*(Lauchie, piper and Conall, snare)*

**Uniforms Co-ordinator:**  
Margaret Nogier-MacGillivray  
*(Cole, snare and Kyle, piper)*

**Equipment Co-ordinator:** Clarissa  
Waldron *(Jonathan, piper)*

**Fundraising Co-ordinator:**  
VACANT

**Bingo Co-ordinator:**  
Shelley Gustafson

*Please notice the vacant positions on the board and feel free to contact any of the executive through TeamSnap should you like information about these rewarding volunteer opportunities.*

*\*indicates Board Executive*

**96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders Instructional Staff  
2022-2023**

**Band Director:** Shelley Gustafson

**Competition Band Instructor:** Raphael  
Mercier

**Chanter/Bagpipes Instructor:**  
Gabrielle Mercier

**Snare Drum Instructor:**  
Kevin Nykiforuk

**Tenor/Bass Drum Instructor:**  
Shelley Gustafson

*\*Feel free to contact our Band Director/Instructors through TeamSnap.*

## Communication – TEAMSAP

The main form of communication used by the 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders is through **TeamSnap**. Each family is required to provide an email address to be added to TeamSnap and to check for emails/messages regularly. If your student must miss a Monday night band practice, please reach out to their instructor directly through TeamSnap to let them know your student won't be there. Upcoming events and competitions are also communicated through TeamSnap. To the best of the band director's ability, tentative dates will be outlined in a calendar handed out at the beginning of the year. Events may be added or removed at the director's discretion. (Note: No calendar was created and distributed this year, as we currently have no events planned, due to the current Covid19 climate.)

If parents have questions or concerns, they should speak directly to their child's instructor before or after class or make arrangements to discuss issues at a mutually convenient time, in person or over TeamSnap message/email. While the band director, instructors, and parent executive strive to do our best to provide accurate, up to date information at all times, it is also each family's responsibility to take an active role in knowing their student's schedule and responsibilities, and to seek assistance with any questions /concerns that arise. Please reach out or consult the information provided in this handbook for clarification, as needed.

---

## Band Fees

### ***Membership Fees:***

The membership fee for the 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders Pipes and Drums organization is \$100 per year. Only one membership is required per family.

### ***Instructional Fees:***

The annual Instructional Fee for 2022-23 is \$900 for all returning students and \$675 for beginner students.

Payment of fees may be made in one of three ways: in monthly payments, in quarterly payments spread out over the year, or the full amount in a lump sum payment. Payment of fees may be made by post-dated cheques, via e-transfer, or with the use of fundraising credits. For more detailed information on payment of fees please visit the website at [www.96th.ca](http://www.96th.ca) and navigate to 'Join the Band' and then to 'Fees Breakdown'.

\*Note: In order to use fundraising credits to pay for band fees, you must have already accumulated enough credits in your family's account to do so.



## Class Structure and Instruments

The 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders meet and practice on Monday evenings, from 7:00-9:00pm, September through June, at Knox United Church, Saskatoon (838 Spadina Crescent East). Because we welcome members at a variety of levels, the students are broken into smaller groups of like ability/experience.

### ***Beginner students:***

Beginner students do not start on the bagpipes and drums in their first year. The beginner pipers will begin to learn on an instrument called a practice chanter and beginner snare drummers begin on a drumpad and drumsticks. This equipment is not supplied by the band and must be purchased by the band member. Practice chanters and drumpads/sticks are available for purchase locally at Kinnaird Bagpipes and Reeds ([www.kinnairdbagpipes.com](http://www.kinnairdbagpipes.com)). Expect to pay approximately \$70 for a practice chanter, \$25-30 for snare sticks, and about \$45 for a drumpad. Beginner tenor drum students will need practice tenor beaters, also available through Kinnaird Bagpipes. Expect to pay approximately \$85 for the practice tenor beaters.

### ***Intermediate Students:***

After approximately one year of instruction, most students are typically ready to move on to the intermediate stage of learning their instrument. For the chanter players, this means moving onto a set of bagpipes. The band does have a limited number of sets of bagpipes which may be rented from the band for up to one year. Following this second year of instruction, students are required to purchase a set of their own bagpipes to free up the band's sets of pipes for other upcoming students. For snare, tenor, and bass drum students, this means moving onto drums. The tenor and bass drummers will also need tenor drum beaters or mallets. The band has a set of drums that the drummers will play on, but the purchase of a drum harness/sling and/or beaters are the responsibility of the band member. These items are also available through Kinnaird Bagpipes. Expect to pay \$75-100 for tenor beaters, \$70-80 for a tenor drum sling, \$45-90 for bass drum mallets, and upwards of \$600 for a snare drum harness.

### ***Parade Band:***

At the discretion of the instructors, intermediate students are next promoted to the Parade Band. This group marches and plays with the band for parades and other non-competitive events and performances throughout the year.

### ***Competition Band:***

The promotion to competition band is also at the discretion of the instructors. Once an instructor feels the student is accomplished/experienced enough, the student may be promoted to the Competition Band. The Competition Band members perform for all events in the band's schedule throughout the year, including competition performances at any Highland Games.

## Operational and Fundraising Commitments

### ***Band Fundraising Fee:***

The success of the 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders program is dependent upon two criteria - expert musical direction and parental involvement. In order to maintain a fee structure that is affordable for most band member's families, participation by all families in our four main band fundraisers is required.

1. Fall Bottle Drive
2. Christmas Concert/Steak Night
3. Burns Supper (January)
4. Scotch Tasting (April or May)

Revenues obtained from these four main band fundraisers help to cover the cost of instructor fees, uniforms and equipment purchases and maintenance, rent for the practice facility, workshops, band travel to competitions, and other band expenses. To ensure the participation of all families in these very important fundraisers, a Fundraising Fee is collected at the start of each year from each family in the amount of \$1000, spread over four postdated cheques.

**These cheques are only cashed if the student/family fails to fulfill their volunteer requirement at each of the four band fundraising events.**

### ***Optional Personal Fundraising:***

The main form of personal fundraising for band members is by working as a charity group at the City Centre Bingo. Workers earn \$75 in fundraising credits per shift towards their family's account. These credits may be used to pay band fees, private lessons, band camp tuition, competition fees, or to purchase uniform items such as shirt/hose/earplugs. Credits may not be used towards certain other costs such as instrument purchases or band uniform deposits. Some band members pay for all their monthly band fees with fundraising credits while others choose to not participate in personal fundraising. Bingos are completely optional. For more information on working bingos, please reach out to our tireless Bingo Co-ordinator, Shelley Gustafson, through TeamSnap. Thank-you Shelley!



## Four Annual Band Fundraisers

### 1 – Bottle Drive

This first fundraiser of each year usually takes place on an agreed-upon date in October, hopefully before it gets very cold! We settle on a Saturday and meet as a group to head out in carloads to collect donated recyclables door-to-door. We're also registered at Sarcan for anyone, year-round, to drop off their recycling for the money to be donated to the band. Volunteers are needed to drive the carloads of band members around to pick up donations. Following that, we gather to sort the recyclables and finally, to deliver the haul to Sarcan. Pretty simple!

### 2 – Christmas Concert/Steak Night

Our second fundraiser each year is a Steak Night event which we also piggy-back a band Christmas Concert performance onto. All students, from our beginners to Competition Band members and everyone in between get a chance to display what they've been working on to date. Between the food, the music, various raffles and prizes, and, of course, the company, it's always a fun and festive evening. A volunteer schedule is created with shifts to sign up for before, during or at the end of the evening with duties such as decorating the hall beforehand, collecting tickets at the door, selling raffle tickets for the draws, selling 50-50 tickets, and for clean-up duty at the end of the evening. We also require each family to donate an item for the raffles. We can provide a donation letter for businesses to solicit support from.

### 3 – Burns Supper

January 25<sup>th</sup> is the birthday of Scotland's Greatest poet, Robert Burns, and Scots around the world take advantage of it as one more opportunity to celebrate! The 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders pay tribute to the life and cultural legend of Burns by hosting a Burns Supper on a day on or near the 25<sup>th</sup> each January and it's a night to look forward to. A traditional Scottish meal is catered, and it's accompanied by various colourful toasts, Burns poetry, and, of course, music. It's a night not to be missed! Volunteers sign up for shifts to pull off this event as well, from decorating, greeting guests and taking coats at a coat-check, washing dishes, selling 50-50 tickets, and clean-up duties.

### 4 – Scotch Tasting

The 96<sup>th</sup> have hosted a Scotch Tasting event in April/May the past several years and it's been a successful fundraiser for the band. It's a fun and educational night for attendees, whether they're seasoned Scotch-lovers or new to the world of Scotch. We bring in a knowledgeable sommelier for the event, and they present different Scotches, each flight expertly piped in by a volunteer piper. Other volunteer duties on the sign-up sheet include decorating the hall,

pouring each flight of Scotch, serving the flights, washing the glasses in between flights, and, of course, clean-up after the event is through



## Uniforms

All beginner and intermediate band members will be issued a band tie and glengarry to wear for performances. There is a \$50 deposit for these items. In addition to these items, for all performances, beginner and intermediate band members are expected to wear a button-down dress shirt in either pale blue or white, black dress pants (no jeans or athletic pants, please), black socks, and black dress shoes. Thrift shops such as Value Village or Once Upon a Child/Plato's Closet can be good places to source items such as these which students tend to grow out of so quickly!

Once a band member is promoted to the Parade Band, band members are issued a band uniform kit. Because of the value of the items in this uniform kit, a \$350 deposit is required once a uniform kit is issued, so if this seems to be on the horizon or in the near future for your student, please plan ahead as needed. This uniform kit of band-issued items includes the following:

|                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Kilt             | Sporran              |
| Vest             | Garters with Flashes |
| Softshell jacket | Glengarry            |
| Tie and tie pin  | Rain Cape            |
| Belt with Buckle | Garment Bag          |

To complete the uniform, these additional uniform items must be purchased by the band member:

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Blue dress shirt | Pipe bag cover with band emblem (Pipers only) |
| Black hose       |   |

Ghillie brogues or black dress shoes

To ensure that all members are dressed as uniformly as possible, the shirt, hose, and bag cover are purchased through the band. The ghillie brogues (or dress shoes) are purchased on your own. In accepting the responsibility of having a uniform, band members agree to take proper care of band owned items. A deduction from the \$350 deposit may occur should items be returned in poor or damaged condition or for any lost items that aren't returned. Uniforms must also be in clean condition when returned and must be accompanied by a recent dry-cleaning receipt for those items requiring dry-cleaning (kilt, tie, and vest).

Band members/parents should ensure that uniforms are stored properly so that they remain in good condition and are presentable when worn for performances. A kilt that spends most of its time in a pile on the floor instead of hanging properly in a closet becomes very obvious come performance time.

Don't be **that** band member!

Please direct any uniform issues or concerns to the Uniforms Coordinator, Tina Stalker, via TeamSnap.



## Band Member Expectations

Each member of the band plays a critical role and bears a responsibility to his or her fellow participants and the band as a whole. For this reason, students are expected to attend and participate in ALL scheduled events, from performances, and competitions, to regular Monday evening band practices.

Band practices cancelled by the band may or may not be made up. The schedule is set at the beginning of the year based on school holidays. The monthly fees are averaged out over the entire band season rather than based on the number of practices per month, as some months (December, for example) have fewer lessons. There will be no refund for missed practices.

Students are expected to practice at home on a regular and continuing basis. Even a few minutes each day can contribute to their progress in taking them from beginners to experienced band members. As parents are sometimes unclear of their role in assisting with at-home practice, we simply ask that you help your child find the time and space to practice and leave the rest up to them. If your student would like more guidance in at-home practicing, please consult with your student's instructor. Students are also encouraged to take private lessons outside of band to both enhance their playing and to develop a solo repertoire for solo competitions. \*Note: Our instructors are paid by the band to work with the students Monday evenings in the group setting. If your student expresses interest in taking private lessons as well, this would be a separate pursuit outside of band.

Students should aim to arrive 10 minutes early to band so that the evening's band practice can begin on time.

It is also expected that students' instruments be maintained in good playing condition and their uniform be clean and pressed and in good, presentable condition for all events/performances.

The band participates in Highland Gathering Competitions throughout the year. In February of years past, Regina has hosted a mini-gathering. The mini-gatherings are an opportunity for the competition band to receive adjudication and feedback in a non-competitive setting. It's also a low-pressure opportunity for all players, from beginner chanter/drum pad to experienced players, to receive adjudication and feedback on their solo playing.

The band has traditionally participated in band and solo competitions at the Winnipeg Scottish Festival in March of each year, as well as the Saskatchewan Highland Gathering in Regina each May. All are encouraged to participate in solo and small ensemble events at these competitions. The Competition Band members are also expected to participate in the Band events.

**\*Please note** that while all students are encouraged to participate in solo competitions, the 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders is a band-focused program. This means that preparing for any solo competitions is the responsibility of the student/family, whether that be arranging for private instruction to work on solo repertoire or arranging for a piper to accompany and practice with your drummer (a requirement for solo drumming competitions). The band instructors are usually willing to provide some guidance but will not be tasked with taking time from a band practice to help students prepare for solo competitions. The responsibility for this falls on the students themselves and their parents.

Students are expected to always represent the 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders in a reputable manner.

### **Winnipeg Scottish Festival**

The Winnipeg Scottish Festival is the largest indoor pipe band and solo competition from the Alberta border to the Ontario border. The festival committee strives to bring in top notch adjudicators from around the country to offer comments and critiques to each solo player and band alike. The festival presents highland dancing, piping, drumming and Celtic Vendors all under one roof. With the exception of the last two years of cancelled festivals, the Winnipeg Scottish Festival takes place each March. The 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders have made the trip to Winnipeg for it's festival for years and we look forward to when it gets back up and running once again. Our Competition Band competes and all band members are encouraged to participate in the solo competitions as well. For our beginner students who are not yet playing with the band, this may only mean a short solo performance for them but the experience of listening to all the bands there make it well worth the trip and a nice, relaxing (albeit, LOUD) weekend away.

For this band trip, we book a charter bus for the trip and any band member and their family member(s) are able to buy a seat on the bus for \$75 roundtrip. This usually ends up covering the cost of the charter. This is not a chaperoned trip. Instead, each band member must have a parent or guardian accompany and be responsible for them for the weekend. We also reserve a block of rooms at a Winnipeg hotel, but each family is responsible for booking their individual room.

### **Saskatchewan Highland Gathering & Celtic Festival**

The Saskatchewan Highland Gathering & Celtic Festival incorporates older Highland Games events in Regina and Moose Jaw that have been running since the early 20th century! Pipers, drummers, dancers, heavy events athletes, and enthusiasts from all over Western Canada come to southern Saskatchewan each year on the May long weekend to participate in this exciting line-up of events. The 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders have especially missed the last two May long weekends we normally spend at this festival in Regina and are REALLY hoping to be able be there this coming May. Winnipeg is a wonderful festival too but there's just something about an outdoor festival like this one held in Regina's beautiful Victoria Park!

As with the Winnipeg trip, this is a family trip, rather than a chaperoned trip. Each family is responsible for your own transportation and hotel arrangements. As this one is held in downtown Regina, there are plenty of different options for where to

stay. Again, the Competition Band competes here, and all band members are encouraged to learn a solo to participate in the solo competitions as well.



## Common Pipe Band Terms

**The 96<sup>th</sup>:** a short form often used when referring to the 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders Pipes and Drums organization

**Band Director:** the person who guides the overall musical direction of the band program

**Pipe major:** the lead bagpiper and musician of a pipe band

**Pipe Sergeant:** the number two person in charge of the pipers in a pipe band; the Pipe Sergeant steps in when the Pipe Major is not available, or when requested to do so

**Drum Corps:** this consists of all drummers – snare, tenor and bass – and is led by the Drum Sergeant

**Drum Sergeant:** the Drum Sergeant is responsible for the function and performance of the Drum Corps; the Drum Sergeant is usually also the Lead Snare Drummer (also known as the band's 'Lead Tip')

**SPBA:** stands for Saskatchewan Pipe Band Association

**Highland Gathering (or Highland Games):** these festivals are opportunities to come together to celebrate Scottish culture. Usually included are special sporting events called Heavy Games, as well as competitions in piping, drumming, and dancing.

**Mini-gathering:** can be described as a miniature Highland Gathering. It is an opportunity for bands and solo players of all levels, from beginner chanter or drum pad, all the way up to experienced players, to receive adjudication and feedback in a non-competitive setting.

**Solo Competitions:** when the band travels to compete in a band competition, there is also most often the opportunity for students to compete in solo events as well.

**Grade:** for competition purposes, pipe bands are usually organized into grades, usually from 1 to 5, with grade 1 being the highest level - this is the same for individual players when they compete in solo competitions. In SK, a piper/drummer's private instructor or band director will determine what grade a student should be competing in for solos. The 96<sup>th</sup>

Highlanders youth band holds a grade 5 classification.

**Massed Bands:** a number of pipe bands performing together, commonly after a competition or as part of a military tattoo

**Tartan:** a woolen cloth woven in one of several patterns of plaid, especially of a design associated with a particular Scottish clan. The 96<sup>th</sup> Highlanders wear the Bonnie Prince Charles Edward Stewart tartan.

**Kilt:** a pleated tartan cloth garment, similar to a skirt (but never to be called a skirt!) traditionally worn by men as part of the Scottish Highland dress and now also worn by women and girls

**Hose:** the heavy socks worn as part of the Highland dress

**Flashes:** the small decorative ribbons attached to garters, used to hold up the hose

**Sporran:** a small pouch worn around the waist that hangs down in front of the kilt as part of the Scottish Highland dress

**Sgian dubh:** a small single-edged knife, worn tucked in the hose as part of the Highland dress; pronounced "skeen – doo"

**Ghillie brogues:** a traditional type of Scottish footwear worn as part of the Highland dress; pronounced "gill-ee brogues."

**Glengarry:** a woolen cap of Scottish origin and frequently worn as part of the Highland dress; also commonly referred to as just a 'glen'

**Haggis:** a Scottish dish consisting of a sheep's or calf's offal mixed with suet, oatmeal, and seasoning and boiled in a bag, traditionally one made from the animal's stomach. A popular menu item at the band's Robbie Burns supper each January.

**Neeps:** mashed turnips; commonly served with haggis

**Oatcakes:** a type of flatbread, similar to a cracker or biscuit. Commonly served at our Scotch Tasting event each spring.