

NEWSLETTER: PRECISIONNAIRES FOUNDATION

2026 Precisionnaires Foundation Scholarship Recipients



Pictured from left to right, 2026 Precisionnaires Foundation Scholarship recipients Kendra Steiert, Amaris Haugh, and Precisionnaires Foundation President Don Smalley.

Precisionnaires Foundation Awards Two More Scholarships to Osage Students

Once again, the Foundation awarded two scholarships to Osage graduating seniors in May. When board president Don Smalley presented the awards, he gave the following remarks.

Fifty years ago, in 1976, after a brief 11 years of activity, the Osage Precisionnaires Drum and Bugle Corps performed for the very last time. During those 11 years, the corps grew from a group of 35 little boys who literally had no idea what drum corps was about to a coed, nationally respected, competitive unit that placed in the top 15 corps in North America.

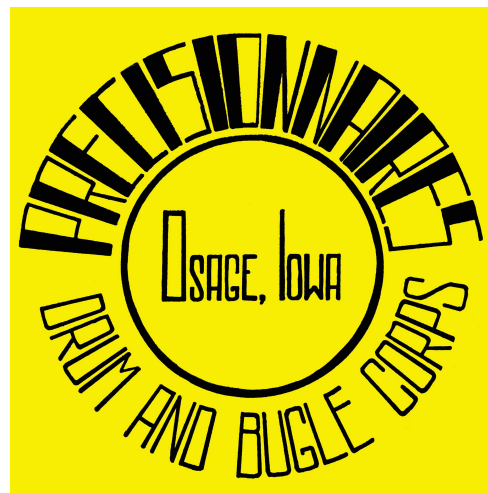
They say that all good things must come to an end, but our story didn't end in 1976. A few years ago, alumni of the corps created the Precisionnaires Foundation with the mission of keeping the story of the Precisionnaires alive by giving back to the community that had given so much to support the corps and make our story possible.

Our way of giving back is two-fold: First, we are donating \$1750 annually to help support elementary students in need, who are just getting started in the instrumental music program in the Osage Schools. This money is used to help defray costs of consumable supplies such as reeds and drum sticks and in some cases for instrument repair.

The other way we have chosen to give back is why I am here tonight, to award the Precisionnaires Foundation Scholarship. The criteria for the Precisionnaires Foundation Scholarship are that the applicants must be students who have participated and excelled in music or other performing arts activities while in school in Osage, and who will be pursuing a degree in a music related or other performing arts field.

As in previous years, we were overwhelmed by the quality and qualifications of the applicants. I am happy to announce that again this year we are able to award two \$500 scholarships. And now, it is my honor to present this year's Precisionnaires Foundation Scholarships to Kendra Steiert and Amaris Haigh.

Don Smalley



What does it take to be a Scholarship Recipient?

Kendra is a trumpet player and vocalist. She was in the Osage band, jazz band, choir and show choir for all four years of high school. Here are just a few of the highlights of her lengthy resume.

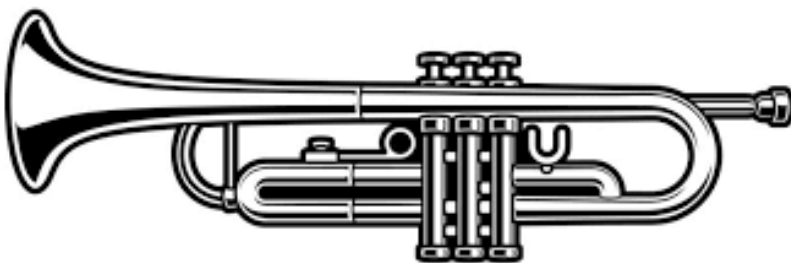
As a trumpet player, she was chosen for Iowa All-State Band for two years and recognized as an Iowa Ambassador of Music. She also was chosen for high school honors bands by Drake, Luther and Waldorf, as well as the Northern Festival of Bands, the NCIBA honor band and Top of Iowa Conference honor band.

As a vocalist, she was chosen for the Dorian Vocal Festival honor choir for two years and was named the outstanding soloist at the festival one year. She also received multiple division 1 ratings at the Iowa State Solo-Ensemble Contest.

She plans to attend either the University of Iowa or Drake University where she will pursue a degree in brass performance with a minor in voice.

Amaris also has an outstanding resume of band, choir and speech activities during her high school years. She developed a passion for theater by participating in all aspects of theater productions for 16 shows at the Cedar Summer Stock Theater in the past four years.

She plans to attend the University of Northern Iowa to pursue a degree in theater, focusing on the design and production aspects as well as performance.



Early Encounters with the Precisionnaires

Shared by Five of Our Former Instructors From Austin

Editor's note

As mentioned before, we interviewed over 100 people for the Precisionnaires history book and also pulled a wealth of information from news clippings and other documents. But no matter how much is written, there will always be more to the story.

Since Don Peck and Bob Hagglund passed away before we started the book, and some of our other former instructors were unavailable, Scott Lee wanted to hear more of their story. So in January 2024, he organized a zoom call with five of our instructors who came from Austin – Gary Lund, Doug Denisen, Steve Hansen, John ‘Bing’ Bolstead and Al McDowell.

When we finally got them all on the call, they were excited to see each other. Although some of them kept in touch regularly, I don't believe they had seen Doug in years. And now, just a little over two years later, Doug, Al and Bing are gone.

Here are a few highlights from their conversation, as we remember those who have passed.

Gary told the story of how he was the first person from the Austin Lancers to be contacted by Doc (this audio clip was played at the 2025 Precisionnaires reunion).

“My first encounter with Osage was in the summer of '68 and for some reason... I don't know how this happened... I was at a drum corps show in Dubuque. Usually a group of us Lancers – at that point ex-Lancers – would go to drum corps shows. But I was down there by myself because it was a pretty good show. I was sitting in the stands before the show and I was paged. “Gary Lund, there's a phone call for you.” Of course that doesn't sound good, so I made my way down to where they had the phone, and it was Doc, who I didn't know.

“He introduced himself and said he had a drum corps going and then asked a couple questions about the Lancers – whether they were still going and if they had equipment or uniforms...

Then he asked if he could come up to Austin and visit, and I said “sure”. In a couple days he and Dan Decker came up to my house in Austin, and we sat in the living room and chatted. Then he asked if I could come down and coach his drummers. I said, ‘Well I could do that but in a couple, three weeks I'm going to be inducted in the army.’

“So I went down to Osage, I think maybe twice. There were a bunch of drummers who seemed to be about 12 years old or something like that. I don't know what I tried to impart to them, but I tried to do something that would be helpful....

“So anyway, the way it turned out, I was in touch with Don Peck who was in Milwaukee, and [was planning to move] back to Austin. I said, ‘That's good, Don. Now that you have a few boys and a girl, I know you've got the time, you can [help this drum corps].’

“I thought this is the perfect situation, Doc needs the help and I couldn’t think of anyone better than Don to help him. I told Doc, ‘You’re going to have the perfect person to take young kids and build enthusiasm (although Doc already had them enthusiastic)... Get ahold of Don Peck and get him down there. I’ve got to go in the army. See ya! Good luck, you’re in good hands.’

“ I think immediately he got Don coming down there and they clearly became good buddies.”

Doug told about his early experience with the corps.

Doug recalled that he was asked to write charts for the corps soon after Don Peck came onboard. Then he started going to Osage regularly to instruct – nearly every week from the winter of 1968 through the early 70s, and after that, on occasion. *[He would have been 23 years old when he first started working with us.]*

“I’m still amazed that you guys were young, middle and late teen-agers at the time... you were kids. And I’m just amazed at how well you did. I loved going to those rehearsals because all this new stuff was coming into your heads and we were all just in it together. It was amazing how that all developed.

“And of course Doc was on the sidelines saying ‘Yeah, go for it, go for it. I don’t think Doc ever knew the word no.”

Later, Doug explained why he taught us (and others).

“The whole concept was the interactions we had with the kids in the corps. When you saw lightbulbs come on in the kid’s heads and stuff like that, that was worth more than any pay you could get.

“[Whether it was working with drum corps or church choirs], I didn’t go to the bank. It was all about connecting with the human condition and tying music in with that. It was fantastic...”

Steve told about his first impressions of our corps. [He had just aged out of the Blue Stars the year before he came to Osage.]

“Something happened when I went down there that made me want to stay at it, and it was because Doc was pretty amazing. The kids were young, but there were lots of them, and they seemed like they had talent. But Doc was a figure that, it’s hard to explain... *[He just made Steve want to try instructing our corps].*

“Frankly, when you’re in the visual end of the show, there’s no end to work. There was always something to do, something to work on. Al needed to work with this group because they were not getting it, that kind of thing, and that filled every practice for as long as you guys would take it.

Finally, Al talked about his experience.

“I had been in the military for three years, [and hadn’t been around drum corps for a while.] But Don Peck talked me into going down and seeing this drum corps. I went down there and looked at them and thought ‘hmmm, I’ll give it a try.’”

Since Bing and Steve were down there, at least Al knew what they were talking about. “I didn’t know WHAT they were talking about, but I knew what they were talking about.”

“[At first] I would have the color guard in the gymnasium where we were practicing, and I was making things up! And they thought I knew what I was doing.

“That’s kind of the way it went, but it worked, it really did. We improved the color guard, we improved most of the members [of the corps].... Working with Osage, as time went on, was really good.”

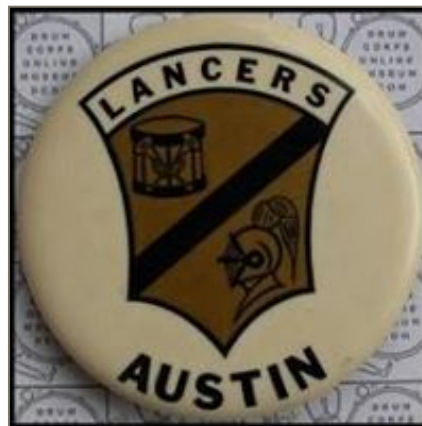
Transcript by Keith Richards



Doug Denisen, Steve Hansen and John “Bing” Bolstead



Al McDowell



Gary Lund

Adding to the Legacy of the Precisionnaires

Let's continue the good work together!

It's been 50 years since the Precisionnaires last competed in a drum corps show on August 21, 1976 in Philadelphia, PA. And in that time, we've lost 27 former members of the corps, many of our core instructors, and most of our parents and boosters.

Memories of the corps and its importance to Osage could have been lost, too. But instead, over the past four years, dozens of former Precisionnaires have worked to ensure that our corps' story lives on. Our history is now part of the landscape in Osage where future generations will pass by the monument in front of the CRC, marvel at the memorial wall in the Legion, and view Precisionnaires items on display at the Mitchell County Historical Museum. They can also read the full history of the Precisionnaires by checking out our history book at the Osage Public Library or purchasing a copy at Create. Information on the corps can also be accessed through our Facebook and web page.

But the story doesn't end there. For the past three years the Precisionnaires Foundation has supported the Osage band program in supplying instruments to beginning band students and awarded five scholarships to graduating Osage seniors who are pursuing further education in music or the performing arts. In this way, we are adding to the legacy of the corps and keeping the name of the Precisionnaires alive in the minds of Osage families.

Many of our alumni and friends have given generously to support this work in the past. If you'd like it to continue, we ask for your support again this year.

Let's continue the good work together!

To donate online, go to: <https://precisionnairesfoundation.org/Donate/>

Or send a check made out to:

Precisionnaires Foundation

3507 Golf Course Road, Osage, IA 50461

Thank you!

Reunion 2026!

As is our tradition, this years' reunion will be a smaller gathering and is scheduled to take place on **October 17, 2026**. The informal reunion/get together will be held again on the Saturday of the third weekend of October. Anyone who is around can also gather on Friday evening. **Times and locations will be announced in the next newsletter (September).**

Board of Directors!

If you have ideas for foundation business, please send an email to Don Smalley at (smalley@alpinecom.net).

Age does get the best of us and though the current Board of Directors functions well, please give thought to joining the board or nominating someone to be a member of the board. We could especially use someone with a background in marketing, as well as someone with a background in finance. Please email Keith Richards (KeithARK@pm.me) with suggestions. New members will be added at the next Annual meeting which is less than a year away.

Information Group

Please make sure that vital information is kept up to date in our records by contacting Karen Moore directly (km91540@gmail.com) Thank you.

Good Press

Our efforts to keep the story of the Precisionnaires alive, and now the Precisionnaires Foundation, continue. Can you help? We are currently looking for old trophies. We do not need the trophy but instead, would appreciate your efforts in sending us pictures of any trophies



Please Support the Corps By Purchasing Memorabilia

Please wear gear proudly around town and to musical events. If you need to contact Joann at Create, you may do so with her website create@osageia.net. To order merchandise please use www.osagecreate.com. Joann, the owner of Create in Osage, Ia supplies and mails to the address of your choice Baseball Caps, T-Shirts, and the official written history. Joann accepts credit cards to make the process easy for on-line customers as well as local customers. She can be reached by phone or email at 641-732-9780 or create@osageia.net. If you don't see your size or color in an item you wish to purchase on-line, contact Joann and she will print up what you desire at no additional charge.

Have you got a fresh new idea for corps swag? Please make your wish known by contacting us through the corps web site. admin@precisionnairesfoundation.org

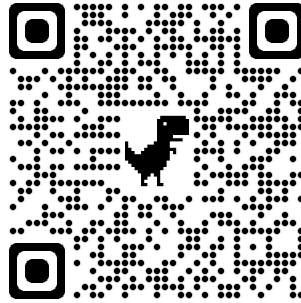


Foundation Information

The Web Page and Facebook Page can be accessed using our QR codes. The codes are listed below. The QR code marked book will take you to the CREATE web site where you can place a quick order for the corps' history book or other memorabilia. Just point your camera at the QR codes one at a time and open the link that appears on your screen.



Web Page



Facebook.



Book

Your Foundation

The Foundation represents you. Please contact us at;

Precisionnaires Foundation

3507 Golf Course Rd, Osage, IA 50461

admin@precisionnairesfoundation.org

Norm Halvorson

Eve Kenny

Scott Lee

Dick Mackin

Keith Richards

Don Smalley

“The mission of the Precisionnaires Foundation is to keep the story of the Osage Precisionnaires alive and build on its legacy through projects which give back to the community whose support made its story possible.”