

The 2022 All Star 1 Conference, July 3 - 10 Report of the Chairs

The 2022 All Star 1 conference was well received by our community of conferees and guests. The week ran smoothly and could never have been accomplished without the tremendous support from our many generous volunteers who helped organize and run the activities throughout. We are especially thankful to Deb and Tom Walton, Deb Weiner-Soule and Ben Soule, and Annie and Scott Stewart who provided us with so much advice and encouragement in the months prior to the conference and to Susan O'Loughlin who masterfully kept our registrations on track up to and including last minute requests the week of the conference.

Dan Senning, our speaker for the week, was very popular, leading interactive sessions throughout the week on consideration, respect, and honesty in our modern world. Topics ranged from text message etiquette, to who should pay the dinner tab, the history of Emily Post, to even some basics on the proper way to do a table setting. Lots of questions from those in attendance and Dan's mother, Cindy, offered her advice from the Emily Post Institute as well. Dan's wife, Puja, their three children, and his parents Cindy and John, also enjoyed their week and actively participated in many activities.

Musicians Jean Rohe and Liam Robinson joined us for two days. They led a song writing workshop one afternoon and performed a great concert on Tuesday night. They really embraced the Star Island spirit - chatting with lots of Shoalers, indulging in Artichokes and T-shirts, and even trying the Polar Bear plunge.

Abundance of sun and fair weather meant all the usual outdoor activities like Pel/Conferee softball, the Great People Hunt, and the marshmallow roast were well attended. We enjoyed Social Hour in the Stone Village, as we did last year, this great outdoor space to gather, with musicians entertaining the crowd from the Marshman stage.

Jocelyn Pierce (who agreed to take on the big job of coordinating and preparing social hour food a few weeks before the conference) and Jenny Easter-Nelson preparing the Fourth of July social hour food, with Elissa Best and Cate Lamb contributing some food items from Vermont all made social hour a tasty and enjoyable time. One rainy afternoon meant Choke Fest and social hour needed to be shifted to the Oceanic side porch with many saying they liked that different venue. We went with boxed wine this year, thinking that would be easier for the social hour in Stone Village. It appeared that we had a lot of wine and non-alcoholic beverages left over at the end of the week. It was challenging to determine how much to budget for social hour food and beverages, so we would recommend future chairs look at historical spending vs. number of conferees to determine an accurate number for this category.

We also enjoyed the Stone Village for Stunt Night, with many singing and dancing acts, hosted by Brendon Etter and the live auction. A big thank you to Katy Biron for a superbly organized, successful and well run auction. The live auction, spearheaded by auctioneer Adam Osgood, was lively and great fun.

New activities this summer included Pickleball lessons for beginners. Jill Loewer and Phil Quatrochi showed groups throughout the week the basics of the game. We also replaced the last night party with an inter-generational jam sessions with lots of people, young and old, trying out songs for the crowd.

Early morning singers was branded the historic moniker "The Dawn Birds" with Louise Williams and April Castoldi creating original lyrics for the early morning singers to sing along the boardwalk before breakfast.

There were a few lessons learned from this year's conference. Because the conference was shifted to a Sunday-to-Sunday schedule, we decided in consultation with Nancy Wood, our minister for the week, to have her chapel service be on Sunday evening with the Chairs welcome chapel message as part of the service. It felt a bit rushed for the musicians and singers - with not much time to practice ahead of time as a group. Also, we had some cancelations in the month before the conference which meant some scrambling to fill in some major volunteer jobs. In true Star spirit, others who were asked helped to make things happen. Future chairs may want to ensure they have a few people they can count on to take on additional volunteer roles last minute. We tried to revive the Sandpiper Newsletter this summer with a few issues published. We also had a small but hard-working group volunteering a few hours for a paint repair project. Future chairs might consider making the Newsletter and volunteer project a more formal part of future conferences.

Respectfully submitted
Jill and Jeff Loewer