

## Report from All Star One 2023 Chairs

Date of Report: October, 2023

Chairs: April and Ray Castoldi

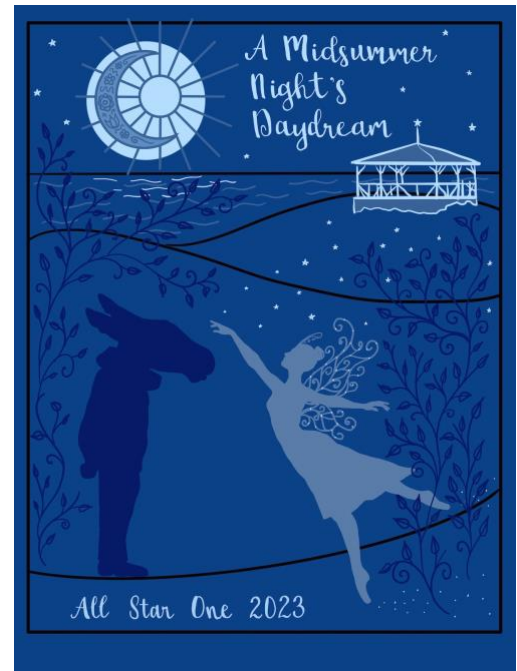
Speaker: Dr. Earl Showerman

Theme: "A Midsummer Night's Daydream"

Minister of the Week: Rev. Nancy Wood

"Blue Book" Description: (used on allstarone.org)

Each year, the All Star 1 conference begins about a week after the summer solstice. So, we'll reflect on this mysterious seasonal change, the moment when summer begins, and yet the hours of daylight immediately begin to diminish. This also ties in with "A Midsummer Night's Dream," one of the works of William Shakespeare. Or is it? Our guest speaker, Dr. Earl Showerman (April's uncle), will lead us through a fascinating exploration of the "Shakespeare Authorship Question," which some call the greatest literary mystery of all time.



Our Report:

To begin, we want everyone to know that we really enjoyed being Chairs for All Star One. Jim and Jan Prochaska nominated us for this role. Their first communication came in June of 2021. It included the following: "my wife and I believe the two of you would make special chairs for our conference in two years. All Star takes pride in the music of our week and the two of you would represent that pride. The music in the air is such a source of inspiration. We would like to nominate you and need your ok. Hopefully you will give us your ok. Jim and Janice"

We were touched and inspired by this message, and we did endeavor to not only offer wonderful musical experiences during the week, but to be especially inclusive so that more people in the community, of different ages and levels of experience, could participate in the musical experiences. One of the changes we made was to begin to invite people months in advance to perform during Social Hour. Ray and David Epstein coordinated the plans, using Google Docs to create a spreadsheet of who wanted to perform and what kind of accompaniment or support they needed. We let go of our own notions of what genres/styles of music were "supposed" to be played at Social Hour, and the result was that more people performed, the music was surprising and wonderful, and folks like Ray who sometimes feel like they need a break, got to relax and enjoy it.

And it was particularly poignant that Jim was able to attend the week, and shared that he enjoyed the music greatly, including hearing his grandson perform.

## Sunday

As part of the “Fire and Water” presentation, we included a singing of the new song “Our Spirits’ Home,” to help familiarize the community with the song and bring us together for the start of the conference.

Our arrival was rainy, so we held the marshmallow roast in Marshman (with a fire in the fireplace), which was not ideal, but still cozy and fun. We love how people just show up with guitars and ukuleles and their voices (and songbooks--thanks, Bill Tibbs).

In the evening, we presented the Chapel service with Rev. Nancy Wood. Planning this service over the course of the winter and spring gave us repeated opportunities to communicate with Nancy and explore ideas together, and this was a gift for all of us. Ray especially enjoyed singing “Change” with Hannah Winarsky. And Kemp Harris’ performance of “You Are So Beautiful” was sublime, and moved us deeply.

## Monday

The lecture series began Monday, and Earl’s enthusiasm for the topic was well received. In order to give the people who teach in the children’s program a chance to hear what the topic was about, Earl also presented Talk on the Rocks outside of class hours.

Monday afternoon, the rain cleared and we had a beautiful Memorial Service to celebrate the life of our beloved Tom Walton. There was singing and the sharing of stories about the many ways he offered love, compassion, kindness, humor and encouragement to so many people. We never dreamed we’d have to let go of this beautiful soul so soon, but we were grateful to have this community in such a time. In everyone’s sharing, we learned even more about how Tom changed so many lives-- and this changed ours. (Plus, it was amazing to see all those neon colors!)



In the evening, Ray was the DJ for a fun “Pride Dance,” followed by a theatrical production of “In Juliet’s Garden.” We were delighted to have a play as something new and special during the week, and congratulate the actors and directors on their ability to pull off show with so little time for face-to-face rehearsals.

## Tuesday

We started with our Fourth of July Parade. April shared some remarks on “Progressive Patriotism,” and she received very positive feedback and requests for the notes. The Fourth of July Games were fun and enjoyed by people of all ages.

The feature in the evening was the All Ages Beatles Sing-Along. We had requested that the Starlings, Puffins, Terns and Gulls prepare songs (“Yellow Submarine,” and “Octopus’s Garden.”) The kids sang their hearts out, and there were a lot of parents and grandparents proudly taking pictures and videos. People sang along to everything, and it was great!



## Wednesday

The softball game continues to be a beloved activity. However, we received some important feedback from participants/viewers that the play-by-play needs to be more inclusive and diverse. For future games, we suggest including a Pel announcer, at least for part of the game.

Cooper Quatrocchi led this year’s “Great People Hunt,” and all alumni of this event were invited to participate, so it was a large and festive group!







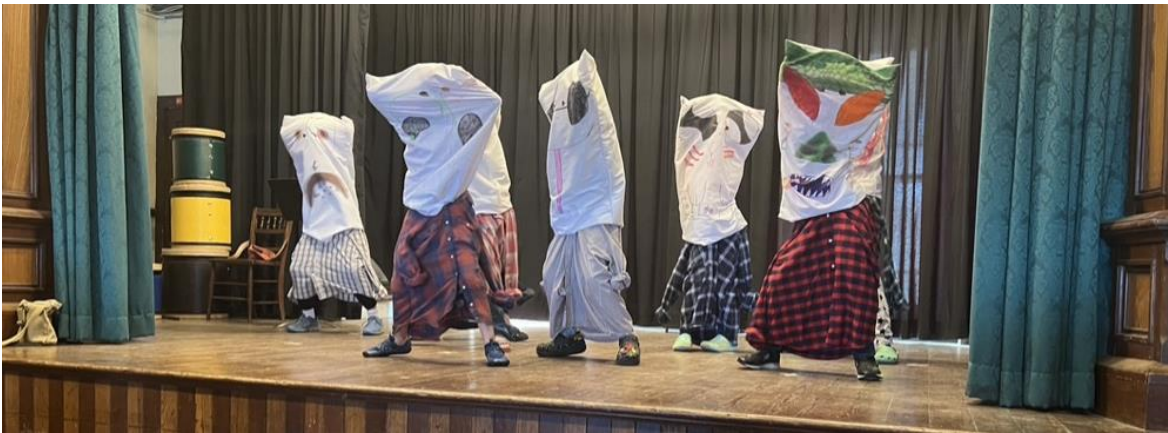
### Thursday

We brought back the Quadrathlon, named in honor of Tom Walton. It was a huge success, with over 80 people, ranging in age from 7 to 70+. There were a few injuries, however, so if this event is repeated, please remind participants to stretch/warm up, and have medical staff on hand.

One of our biggest undertakings was to prepare and present 8 pieces from “Jesus Christ Superstar” for the second part of the Musicale. This performance included young adults and new shoalers, as well as some more “seasoned” folks. The rehearsals were a great opportunity to connect, and the community seemed to greatly enjoy the performance.

### Friday

We brought back the Kid’s Talent Show in the afternoon, and the kids were amazing. Friday evening’s events included the Adult Stunt Show, and music from the “Allman Brothers.” Again, we were able to include youth in these events, including high school youth, and more women joining in the performances.



### Saturday

We had another very successful auction. People offered amazing items, including artworks and vacation homes. Our auction raised a record-breaking amount of money, which saved the conference from running a deficit, but this is not a sustainable approach to supporting our program and goal to support the Star Island Corporation and financial aid fund.



The theme of the banquet was Shakespearean characters or Elizabethan era dress, and there were some fantastic outfits.

During the Banquet, Matthew and Michele Cohen announced the Chairs for 2024 -- Ali Walton and Phil Quatrochi! We sang "Our Spirit's Home" again during the banquet, and enjoyed it once more during the Grand March. Jen Cook and Ellen Clegg organized an Intergenerational Dance party. After Matthew and Michele's chapel service, we ended with an intergenerational jam session.

Additional Comments:

The Children's program at Star Island is incredibly special, and we thank all the coordinators and teachers who make our young people feel welcome, give them so many fun and memorable experiences, and help them form friendships that may last a lifetime.



Attendance was down from 2022. This was addressed repeatedly in the months leading up to the conference, as it was apparent by the end of January that registrations were coming in more slowly than hoped for/expected. Our efforts to attract more people to register included increased posts on social media (including FaceBook, Instagram, and TikTok). In addition, we worked with Island staff to create a list of past attendees who had not registered for 2023, and reach out to them personally. These efforts seemed to only yield a few additional registrations. We also made an effort to invite young adults who had attended growing up with their families. However, despite these efforts, we did not reach our target number of participants. Discussions within the Executive Committee and Governance Council have continued.



We made extra efforts to be welcoming to new shoalers. Gretchen McCloy served as a “New Shoaler Ambassador.” With the support of Matthew Cohen, Elissa Best, new shoalers were called, and received welcome postcards. They were also matched with seasoned shoalers to help them feel at ease on the island.

Thank You:

Everyone who attended the conference contributed to making it a special week. We are grateful for all the love and support we received. It really made this experience a joy. We can't name you all, but we must offer a few special words to the folks who really worked with us all year to put the conference together, including Susan O'Loughlin, Deb Walton, Keith Knox, Nancy Wood, Earl Showerman, David Epstein, Deb Soule, Ali Walton, Brendon Etter, Jocelyn Pierce, Katy Biron, Jenny Easter Nelson, Gretchen McCloy, Louise Williams, Andy Bristol, Scott Stewart, Matthew and Michele Cohen, David Yermack, Jeff and Jill Loewer, and Gabrielle Prochaska.



Here stand the Chairs for 2024 (Matthew and Michele Cohen), 2025 (Phil Quatrochi and Ali Walton), and 2023 (April and Ray Castoldi), toasting in joy with champagne sent to use by Jeff and Jill Loewer, the Chairs for 2022.