

All Star One 2026 Chairs Report

The week of All Star 1 2026 was a success due to the efforts of the staff and volunteers, who all went above and beyond and to the conferees who participated enthusiastically in all the varied activities. We as chairs (oldest in All Star 1 history?) wanted to continue and build on the activities and spirit of the previous year, chaired by youngsters, Ali and Phil. Highlights included:

- **Heavenly Weather:** Steve & Shelley (despite being atheists) were able to convince God (or whomever) to grant us a temperate climate in contrast to the week preceding, which according to reports was hotter than the devil's crotch (on the existence of the devil and corresponding crotch we are agnostic). We had one day of rain (Tuesday), which only served to make us appreciate the glorious days wrapped around it. The rain happened to coincide with the Summer (4th of July) Games, which this year was combined with the new intergenerational Star Challenge. Scotia, Bernie, Hope, John, Cheryl and the rest of those two crews came together and nimbly adapted the games indoors to Brookfield and a fine time was had by all, culminating in the traditional water balloon toss conducted outside between the rain drops.
- **Speaker:** Our speaker, animal behaviorist, Dr. Jennifer Verdolin proved to be quite popular with her series "What *Other* Animals Can Teach Us About Being Human." Her lectures were informative and funny and well attended all week. She even attracted a full house (~75) on the final day, Friday, which historically is unheard of, considering all the fabulous weather and competing activities during the course of the week.
- **Auction:** The auction set a new record (see treasurer's report). Ken and Nuria did a bang-up job organizing it. It's one of the more labor-intensive and complex jobs on the island. We and the auction organizers made a concerted effort to recruit some big-ticket items (dinners, artwork, tickets, vacation homes) from conferees a couple of months before arrival and this made a difference. Again, conferees were generous with their items and with their bidding. We made sure the silent auction got more foot traffic by keeping the food service indoors in Newton. This had the added benefit of making it easier on Jenny, Michelle and their crews by keeping the food tables closer to the kitchen.
- **New Volunteer Job:** We created the job of "Pel Liaison" to continue what Ali and Phil started by including the Pels into more of our activities. This is an excellent recruitment tool to entice younger people to join our conference when they come of age. Not surprisingly, Ali and Phil were our liaisons this year because Cooper and Macy were Pel leaders. This is a good job for conferees who have Pels working during the conference.
- **Admissions:** This was the most difficult part of our job as chairs. The pandemic funk has officially ended as we had many more applicants than we could accommodate and quite a lengthy wait list. Eventually, we were able to whittle it down to about ten. Huge appreciation goes to Deb Walton, who put together the room puzzle, and to registrar Beth Corsa, who kept track of the ever-changing registration lists and delivered all the relevant information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Re: Admission Policy

Make sure the admissions policy and timing are clearly explained on the website
<https://allstarone.org/registration/>

- 1.) For All Star I, our application window is January 15th to March 10th, and all applications received by March 10 are treated as “on time.”
- 2.) Applications received earlier in the application window are not given preference and, because of other considerations, is not *first come first served*.
- 3.) Applications received after the 3/10 deadline are given less preference.
- 4.) Preference is given to people who have attended All Star I in the past over new shoalers.
- 5.) All past Chairs are automatically accepted.
- 6.) Preference is given to old shoaler families with children who are in the children’s program.
- 7.) Preference is given to old shoaler individuals and families with extenuating situations.

Re: Registration

- 1.) Given our experience this year, we think it’s very important not to use the word “registered.” This gives the person the impression that they have been accepted when it just means their *application* has been accepted **(This needs to be changed on the Star Island level)**.
- 2.) If you are applying for children, even adult children, please apply for yourself first before adding the children (so you will be listed as the host).
- 3.) Use the same email address in all your correspondence with All Star I
- 4.) Enter email address 2 times to make sure it’s correct
- 5.) Insist children’s staff apply as soon as they’re recruited
- 6.) Make it easier for people to apply if they don’t have funds available for the deposit - another selection besides conference leadership/staff/MOW, medical staff
- 7.) Ali proposed - We could set our own earlier deposit refund deadline (but we can’t set a later one). This would help with handling the waitlist and COG registration.

Re: Waitlist

The following has to be clear on website

- 1.) We don't have a numbered waitlist. It all depends on admission considerations (described above) and on housing requirements and on available rooms.

- 2.) With cancellations, the space that opens up may not be appropriate for everyone on the waitlist - it may be a family room on the floor with babies and evening babysitters, in a quad on a floor with teenagers, in a double or triple on the floor with young adults, a room appropriate for mobility issues, or in a space more exposed to the late-night music from Marshman and Brookfield.
- 3.) The accommodations on the Island are idiosyncratic and finite. It's a complicated puzzle to put together every year.

Re: Acceptance

- 1.) How does it happen that people contact the housing coordinator before acceptance?
- 2.) If they do, make sure to reply that housing happens after March 10 and after you are accepted
- 3.) all inquiries about housing should be referred to registrar or chairs

Re: Confirmation Form

Ali suggested - send a note out after registration closes on March 10 that asks people to reply right away if they already know (or even suspect) they aren't available to stay the full week. It would be helpful to have as much as that information as possible before we make acceptance decisions.

- 1.) confirmation email should include volunteer job question again
- 2.) have them fill in the email address 2 times on the form and make sure it's the same one they used for application

Re: Full Week Vs Cogs

Must remember that each year will be different and the last couple years have involved amazing puzzle and diplomatic skills on the part of the registrar and the housing coordinator. However, the process needs to be clearer

- 1.) Define full week: is it 6 out of 7 days, must it be the first or last day?
- 2.) Impact of COGS on the quality of conference
 - AS 1 is meant to be an immersive weeklong experience
 - children's program, cost, and impact on workload for volunteers & teachers (registrar, housing, chairs, island).
- 3.) If we are able to fill up with full time, then should the part timers who apply for full week and are accepted as full week pay for full week or have to register as COGS? Is it possible, under some circumstances, to have them agree to no refund?
- 4.) Consider giving preference to COGS who are old shoalers and people with work challenges (often younger people).

Re: Equity Grant

The timing of Equity Grant applications and All Star I application deadline have to be coordinated.

Re: Conference Evaluations

- 1.) Ask for name at top of form
- 2.) Specify everyone print their name

Miscellaneous

Another possible new volunteer job (in addition to Pel Liaison) would be someone tech savvy enough to assist the chairs, the housing coordinator, and the registrar with things like spreadsheets, formatting the Porch News, mail merge, and any other technical issues that will make communications smoother. This job could be called "Tech Whiz," or "The Sultan of Spreadsheets," or "The Maven of Mail Merge," or "The Farouk of Formatting." You get the idea.