

**The 2nd Heroin Anonymous World Convention**  
**Wrap up Report**  
**August 31 - Sep 2, 2018**  
**Portland OR**

This document includes information from the Second HA World Convention planning committee. We used the wrap-it-up document from the first convention committee as a guideline to forming our committee. In our case, we operated with a much smaller committee, typically consisting of 7-8 people. Because of our small numbers, there was a lot of overlap between various committee positions. The position titles we had consistently filled were Chair, Advisor, Treasurer, Hotel Liaison and Program chair. Closer to the Convention, we filled the Outreach, Merchandise, Artwork and Hospitality positions. In this report we will include a link to the shared drive that we used to stay organized and track all of our activity and meeting minutes.

**Chair:** After we were awarded the convention bid, we had our first convention planning meeting. About 30 people showed up and we read through the wrap up report from the first convention and attempted to elect service positions. We had planning meetings every two weeks and tried to gather information between meetings. I had several hotel bids from when I was creating a bid and I turned the hotel contract service over to our hotel liaison, Jessica H. The biggest part of my job was to keep the team focused, motivated, and productive and overall keep the entire planning process moving forward. I did a lot of communicating with people throughout the week with committee members to make sure things were followed through for the next meeting. Also, I was responsible to communicate with the HA World Board. This entailed reporting the progress of the convention to world every month and communicating any needs or concerns to world members or former world convention steering team members and bringing this information back to the steering team. Everyone in our committee worked their ass off. It was a blast to see it all come together in the last couple months before the convention.

**Program Chair:** The program chair position has a lot of moving parts. The workload was shared with other members of the Convention Committee with respect to the workshop and panel organization. One of the most important parts of the Program Chair's job is handling registration. We used a web-based program called [www.Regonline.com](http://www.Regonline.com). With this program, we were able to develop an online registration that was easy for us to setup and update, and seamless for HA members in any location to register themselves and pay. The site charges a flat fee per registration, plus any credit card processing fees for purchases through the site. This account is still active and linked to the Convention bank account so it can be easily reused for future conventions. We also set up a Square account that is linked to the convention bank account to make taking donations and registration payments in person a little easier. Login information will be passed on to the next Convention Committee. We used the program to offer Bundle packages for a discounted price and also offered the option to purchase t-shirts at the time of registration. This helped give us an idea of how much merchandise we would need to order, and also gave us a little more capital to work with.

The Program Chair was also responsible for registration packets and name tags/badges. We printed them at home using name tag templates. Anyone that pre-registered for the convention received a printed name badge with their name and location. The rest of the registration packets contained pamphlets of things to do in the local area, as well as any information about the convention; Schedules, etc. We also prepared a survey, but forgot to include those in the packets!

The final major role for the Program Chair was to sort through the submissions for Convention Speakers. We formed an ad hoc committee and listed to all of the submissions. Out of the 23 submissions, we selected the 10 best, keeping in mind their location and clean time so we had a diverse representation of HA members. We took those 10 to the Convention Committee and picked our top 4 main speakers, and one alternate. Once we had the speakers selected, we contacted them and helped arrange flights, hotel and transportation to and from the Convention.

**Fundraising:** Our fundraising committee was a trainwreck. There were disagreements, hurt feelings and bruised egos, all of which led to a struggle to host successful fundraisers. The original fundraising committee had issues operating within the guideline of the 12 Traditions. Because of that, we dissolved the committee to avoid those issues repeating. Most of our funds came from independent fundraisers put on by a couple of local homegroups. We requested fundraising support from World Services. Arizona Area stepped up and held a really successful fundraiser, netting the convention about \$1200. Locally we held "Lazy Fundraisers" where we simply asked homegroup members to donate \$20 each. Those were the lowest-cost, highest return fundraisers.

**Treasurer:** After securing the hotel contract, we developed a rough budget based on estimated costs of all the the things we HAD to have, and also made a list of nice-to-have items. Our minimum cash needed to pull off successfully hosting the convention was around \$10,500 (not including hotel room night costs). Based on our estimated cost of putting on the convention, plus the cost of using Regonline, we decided on a ticket price. In an effort to encourage pre-registration, we offered a discount of \$5 for pre-registration and made "bundle" packages available for advanced online sales.

The Convention Account started with \$500 in seed money. The world treasurer added the Convention treasurer as a signer on the Convention account. After fundraising, pre-registration sales and an additional \$1500 loan from World Services, we were able to get almost everything we wanted and needed for the Convention (Banners, Merch, Snacks, etc.). We went into day one of the convention with about \$200 (after paying the hotel), and most of the profit then came from merchandise and registration sales. We made about \$9000 total during the convention (between the merch, registration at the door, and the last deposit of pre-registrations). We were then able to reimburse everyone (World Services, All flown in speakers, and our local committee).

**Outreach:** Our Outreach Committee called and/or emailed all contacts from the HA World Meeting Schedule to announce the Convention date and location. We also sent flyers to people we contacted to help with awareness about the convention. Locally, we contacted all the treatments centers, detox centers and recovery programs in the area to inform them of the convention and offer free admission and the opportunity for service work for their clients. As the convention drew near we intensified our efforts to get the word out that the convention was coming soon.

**Merchandise:** We had a hard time keeping this position filled. A few months before the convention, we had a member step-up and really take responsibility for what needed to be done. We found a local vendor who was willing to match the price of online merchandise companies. The local vendor provided all of the t-shirts, hoodies and tank-tops, and we used an online supplier for the lanyards and sunglasses. Looking back, we should have gotten more hoodies, as they were in very high demand.

**Extra Notes from Merch Chair (Written in 1st person):** Jumping into this position super late into the process was troublesome for a couple of reasons. The first is that it takes times time for the committee to agree upon designs, colors, and what types of merchandise to use such as hats, hoodies, shirts, tank tops etc. The second is that it takes time to make the actual merchandise which left me feeling pressured for time. The third is that there was not a budget set aside for merchandise. We had a huge advantage by having someone on the committee that was familiar with creating images in such a way that they could be handed off to the vendor that we used so that they could easily create the merchandise we needed. I also utilized the online company "Custom Ink" for making the lanyards and sunglasses which also has an option to drag and drop images onto different types of merchandise which is super helpful because it allows you to create a visual aid of how things would look with the agreed upon graphics on them. In conclusion my biggest pieces of advice are to plan budget and concepts early and shop around for best prices and quality. I have also attached a screen grab of the final counts of types, sizes and cost of merchandise. Please also feel free to contact me if you have any questions or come across any road blocks.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Item	Sizes	Quantity	Total Quantity	Price Per	Total	Total By Item	Grand total	Sale Price	Estimated Revenue
2	Con.Black									
3		S	30		\$9	\$270			\$20.00	\$600.00
4		M	40		\$9	\$360			\$20.00	\$800.00
5		L	60		\$9	\$540			\$20.00	\$1,200.00
6		XL	60		\$9	\$540			\$20.00	\$1,200.00
7		XXL	10		\$10.50	\$105			\$25.00	\$250.00
8				200			\$1,815			
9	Tank Black									
10		S	10		\$9.50	\$95			\$20.00	\$200.00
11		M	15		\$9.50	\$142.50			\$20.00	\$300.00
12		L	15		\$9.50	\$142.50			\$20.00	\$300.00
13		XL	10		\$9.50	\$95			\$20.00	\$200.00
14				50			\$475.00			
15	Hoodie									
16		S	5		\$19.50	\$97.50			\$35.00	\$175.00
17		M	5		\$19.50	\$97.50			\$35.00	\$175.00
18		L	10		\$19.50	\$195			\$35.00	\$350.00
19		XL	10		\$19.50	\$195			\$35.00	\$350.00
20		XXL	5		\$20	\$100			\$40.00	\$200.00
21				35			\$685.00			
22	Committee									
23		S	3		\$9	\$27				
24		M	2		\$9	\$18				
25		L	9		\$9	\$81				
26		XL	6		\$9	\$54				
27		XXL	1		\$10.50	\$10.50				
28				20			\$190.50			
29	Sunglasses									
30		One Size Fits		150	\$3.69		\$554		\$5.00	\$750.00
31	Lanyards									
32		One size		350	\$2.54		\$889			
33	Screens									
34				4	\$40	\$160	\$160			

**Secretary:** This position included responsibility for keeping minutes up to date and sending minutes out to the committee members. While we officially had this position filled, the duties were shared amongst a few committee members. To make organization easier, we started using a google shared drive as a central location for all of our documents, including minutes, contracts, budget forms, art work, etc.

**Artwork:** The artwork position was not filled until about 3 months before the convention. One of the committee members did some design ideas but nothing was finalized until we had someone step up and take ownership of final development. We hired a graphic designer to put together some options and the artwork chair brought that to the committee for a final vote. The designer provided us with the necessary files to produce merchandise and banners/pamphlets. As a committee we decided on the number and type of banners we wanted to have, including room schedules, and a large “step-and-repeat” banner for people to take pictures in front of. One of our committee members who has experience with these materials arranged for all of the printing through their business contacts. This helped us to stay on budget for these items.

**Entertainment:** We decided early on that we didn’t want to do two dances. We opted for recovery comedians to fill our second night. The DJ for the dance is a local HA member, which made scheduling easy. The comedians we found were also local to the Portland area. When we

approached them about performing at the convention they were excited and offered us a great price. We found a vendor for our sound equipment through outreach on social media. They provided sound and recording equipment for both the convention main events as well as Conference and Convention workshops.

**Marathon Meetings:** We added an option to volunteer for marathon meetings on the pre-registration page. We also created a sign-up board at the convention to help us fill in any gaps. Almost all of the marathon meeting commitments were fulfilled.

**Volunteer Coordination:** We had multiple people helping to coordinate the volunteers. Many of our volunteers came from treatment centers and recovery programs. They provided help in the hospitality room, marathon meetings, merchandise sales, and registration. They also provided security and much needed relief for committee members during the weekend. They made food and supply runs, and gave committee members the opportunity to take breaks and experience some of the convention.

**Hotel Liaison:** Negotiating the contract was extremely important, with constant communication with the hotel (the hotel had a lot of staff turn-over, and each time they had a new staff person we had to go over the contract and details with the new staff). Staff turnover led to some items which had been verbally agreed to being left out of the contract, and then we were forced to do some last minute negotiations (example: when touring the hotel we were told that parking would be free for attendees, but by the time the conference came around, they were charging \$10/day for parking. We were able to negotiate this to free parking for attendees and those with hotel rooms booked, but people had to physically have their parking passes validated each time they left the facility). Knowing every aspect of the contract, in detail, is important, and having a co-chair would have been helpful (to be the contact in times when the Hotel Liaison is unavailable).

#### **Hotel Liaison Subcommittees**

- **Hospitality:** We ending up having a few home groups who donated some food/supplies (coffee, cupcakes, etc), and purchased energy drinks, PB & J makings, etc which we then sold in the hospitality room (in the hotel contract we negotiated a complimentary suite for the length of the convention to use as our hospitality room, so that we could then bring in our own food and beverages). Make sure that you are clear from the start who will be staying overnight in the room, and who will have access to the keys to unlock/maintain the hospitality room. Identifying ahead of time the hours the hospitality room will be open and having those hours posted for attendees would have been helpful, and would increase the number of attendees coming through and making purchases. We were able to secure two 50-cup coffee makers, which was helpful to have a backup as it took an hour to brew. Also, having people do the shopping the day before the event would have been helpful, as we were having people run out to make purchases hours before the room was supposed to be open for attendees, and we were having to set-up as people were already stopping by the room.

- Transportation: We did not have official transportation. Members went to the airport to shuttle our speakers who were coming in from out-of-state. We did receive some good pamphlets and coupon-books from the Portland Transportation Bureau that included activities and things to do around the immediate area that we were able to give to attendees at check-in.
- Decorations: Decorations were mainly signage for the event. For the meals, the hotel had centerpieces that we were able to use free-of-charge. We had a large “Step & Repeat” banner, a large two-sided banner that hung behind the stage, large two-sided banner that hung behind the check-in table, and a banner in front of each room with the schedule for that room. The only “snag” we ran into during set-up of the banners was that two of the hanging banners did not have stands included... this meant that we had to use zip-ties to attach them to the ceiling and to a projector screen that was in the main ballroom (we did not think this through and luckily made it work!).
- Information/Host: Make sure you have committed security volunteers. We selected several who were fairly new in their sobriety, and took the role very seriously. The committee all downloaded the app “GroupMe” where we were all able to coordinate throughout the planning process and throughout the conference weekend. GroupMe was a life-saver in terms of communication!
- Bruch: We decided to add a Bruch about three months out from the conference. The hotel allowed this to go towards our Food & Beverage minimum requirement, which helped us out. We pre-sold tickets for the Banquet, and did not allow last minute sales at the door. It's important to have a person at the door taking tickets and only allowing those who purchased meals ahead of time through the doors. For some reason Bruch that we served got confused with breakfast being provided by the hotel, and we served well over. This meant that the hotel told us we would have to pay for each meal that was over-sold... we were able to negotiate this down, a lot, but this could have been a huge issue if the hotel had not been so generous!
- Banquet: We pre-sold tickets for the Banquet, and did not allow last minute sales at the door. When people registered and paid for the Banquet, they also selected their meal choice: steak, chicken, or veggie. This made it possible to give our banquet orders to the hotel three days prior to the conference. Each attendee who purchased a Banquet ticket presented their ticket upon entering the room and also showed their ticket to the servers denoting their meal type. It's important to have a person at the door taking tickets and only allowing those who purchased meals ahead of time through the doors. Decorations for the banquet were provided only by the hotel: centerpieces made up of mirrors, flowers, and LED candles. We did not have enough funds in the budget to go all-out on decorations, as we had originally envisioned (although I don't believe anyone noticed!).
  - Additional Banquet notes:
    - Consider hotel tax & gratuity when doing your budgeting & setting the price for meal tickets for attendees. We ended up charging \$50 for the banquet (it did not matter whether you chose steak, chicken, or veggie) and \$30 for the Bruch (buffet style). Gratuity ended up adding another

23% to our charges, and this does not count towards your food & beverage minimum!

- Get a menu from the hotel ASAP, and ask people when they register to select their food options. We used RegOnline for tracking all of our registration.
- Use a folder sharing service (Google Docs) to keep an updated registration list with their individuals menu selections so that you have instant access to numbers when you need them
- Closing Chair: This position was neglected up until the convention and someone was asked to fill it. They simply grabbed a few other volunteers and asked everyone to help clean up after the conference closed.
- IT Chair: We used an outside vendor to set-up the PA system in the main speaker hall, and used a recorder to voice-record speakers. We did not provide immediate access to speaker tapes, but instead provided them digitally after the conference. We definitely saved money going with an outside vendor rather than having the hotel manage the sound, although we did experience a few semi-stressful moments when recording (it all worked out in the end!).

**Advisor (Aiden F.):** I was involved during the first HAWC in Phoenix AZ and was elected as Advisor to relay experience as well as guide the group when 12 Traditions issues arose. In this position, the biggest challenges we faced were with regards to the fundraising fiasco (see the fundraising report before reading further). The money disagreements brought out some fierce opinions and frequently diverted attention and energy away from our primary purpose. Ultimately it was decided to forgo and forget a couple hundred dollars that had been caught up in a dispute in favor of simply putting it behind us and moving forward. There were other local meeting and local committee vs. HAWC resource conflict of interest scenarios as well. For instance, with a core membership or service junkies greatly overlapping between the local Area and the HAWC Committee, it could have been easy to syphon ALL funds from the local Area to the Convention with a handful of motions. In other words, the HAWC members that also served on Area held almost 50% of all the votes at Area. Other than that, we feel we planned this Convention with the newcomer foremost in mind, upheld the 12 Traditions as best as humanly possible, and succeeded in throwing one helluva Convention!

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