

## **East Coast Convention XXIV Chair report 04-05-2021**

Hello, well there are really a lot of moving parts in our attempt to host the East Coast Convention. Now that we agree we can actually hold it. So much has happened since the last AB meeting. We held a meeting on March 17 where we reported what limitations we would need to adhere to, in order to have a gathering during a pandemic. The motion to cancel the convention was rescinded by the makers. Only one person is not still in their position (Serenity Keeper Chair) so we have one vacancy. We held a second meeting in March on March 31.

I'm glad to report that I was able to modify both the web store and the web site. The info I initially received for the web site included the wrong user name and password to edit the site, so I was unable to access the interface where the website can be edited, but I figured out what I was missing, contacted Kim and we resolved it. I'm not sure if you understood that the convention is limited to a capacity of 250 people by the health dept of Kent County, and normally the convention is 600 – 1000. That makes for 350 – 750 unhappy people. We announced on social media that we were having the convention, and the registration went up exponentially until the next Wednesday March 24, and we were at 275-280 registrations when I took the store offline. If you didn't buy your package, I want to tell you: registration was available for 21 months. This is a pandemic. If you don't have a registration before the convention, please do not come. We cannot handle people crashing the party. The college and the health department are holding us to 250 people, unless something changes. The college and the health department are holding us to social distancing and masks. Please stay 6 feet apart and wear your damn mask. THANK YOU!

We've decided that we will refund people ASAP. With your support we have a list of people requesting refunds. We have a list of people who want to defer to next year. We will give you the list of people and amount of money paid so the money can be earmarked for whomever hosts next year with the dates of payments, names, email addresses, etc, so that we can have a refundless exchange to a person who wants to come for next year, for whatever reason. We've contacted the people who paid the deposit but not paid in full, to see if they intend to come, so we know where we stand in regards to the 250 people limit. Currently we are down to 252 registrations. There's people who have not registered and we have discussed it but have not made a plan. There's people on our committee, and subcommittees that need registrations in order to serve. Also there's speakers that need registrations. I'm not sure what everyone was waiting for.

We have a FAQ that is being authored. First thing on it will be corona virus related stuff, then the FAQ.

Sunday March 28 a group of us made tie dye shirts. We used the heron logo with this years dates. We made 35 because that was all I could get out of the committee in October, then the shirts sat in my garage for 6 months. I posted photos of the shirts on a facebook group and it sold out in 24 hours. We now have some revised art work and the merchandise committee will attend and assist in the next set of shirts. I think we will make 72 shirts, but the plan is still out there and in motion. Anything could happen. It

took 5 of us 4 hours to dye 35 shirts. I spent 8 hours laundering them, so I guess we can do more. These shirts will be at the convention. If you want a tie dye, go straight to merchandise and buy one. Its gonna be a hand made procion mx fiber reactive dye on 100% cotton.

On March 29 Wayne and I went to the college to get the info on the space we can use. Basically the main meeting hall is restricted to 50% by state law, and 85% due to 6' social distancing. It used to hold 450 people and now it holds 70. We were thinking that we needed to have less meetings due to COVID 19 but the meetings have to be smaller, so program committee is thinking of more meetings. Its counter intuitive. The largest meeting spaces are now the tent next to Hodson Hall which is 40' x 140' and I project we could have 170 – 200 people there with distancing. I have requested for exclusive use of this tent, and also the stadium for Saturday night. We cannot use the gymnasium. We are going to make this work, or die trying.

We asked for a quote for the golf carts, but also our Merchandise chair has one that we can probably use. Maybe we won't buy any to rent.

Fundraisers. Currently we have a raffle to win one of two full packages with the drawing on May 22. Tickets are \$5. You can buy them from me or Mike A. Do not have to be present to win. Also there is a rock n bowl this Saturday night in Severna Park for \$15.

Convention banners. In Florida there was a plan to give the banners to a guy from Georgia who would give them to a guy from Virginia who would get them to us. I was told Regen received some things that I thought was the banners but Steve S from Georgia called me Saturday to let me know he would not be attending the convention and still has a pallet of stuff that belongs to ECCNA including the banners. I immediately called Sparky who will be getting all our items from Steve S and bringing them all , or coordinating with someone to bring all on Wednesday before the convention. I knew she could do it. I have asked permission to hang the banners on the back of the building that looks over Betsy Ross Square, and I really hope that we can.

I do really want to thank you all for being willing to step up and help with service. I will take you up on it. If you are trying to help, let me know what you like to do and we will work it out. Having an event with normally an unlimited amount of attendants, get limited to 250 has really affected the event. If the health dept opens it up to more than 250 people but continues with masks and 6' distancing, there isn't room for any more people. We can't go up, with this 6' distancing. If by some miracle the event opens up we can add people but I'll just be glad if we can have it.

Grateful to service.

With love

Mike Realslow

[realslow@goeaston.net](mailto:realslow@goeaston.net)

