

GAYLA Planning Guide

GAYLA has been created by many men throughout the years. It evolves through the inspiration of volunteers who bring the best of themselves to the work of creating loving, spiritual and fun community. As a Coordinator, bring yourself to the work.

This guide lays out general timelines and groupings of tasks for Coordinators to consider. Compiled from the collective wisdom of past Coordinators, it provides the recipe for planning the week and compiling the ingredients to inspire. With your co-coordinators, Council of Elders and other volunteers, create the plan that works for you and your team.

First Quarter (July – September)

Follow up from prior year

- Finalize and mail conferee contact list
- Send evaluations and reminders. Set a “closing date” for evaluations.
- Send thank you notes to people who worked especially hard
- Send materials to the GAYLA Archives via Bob Walker

Form your team

- Talk about your hopes for your team. What do you value in one another? How do you want to treat one another? What ‘preventions’ can you put in place in case you need them later? How will you resolve conflicts and work through challenges? What are your personal and group goals for your time as coordinators?
- How will you communicate and stay aligned? Are there specific areas you will each focus on? Who will monitor gayla.at.ferry.beach@gmail.com?
- Set your meeting schedule

Form your partnerships

- Coordinate periodic joint meetings with the GAYLA Leadership Team (Coordinators, Council of Elders and Treasurer). The Elders are there to support you and to think about GAYLA’s long-term goals. How can your goals and theirs support each other? Ask if they will designate liaisons for specific projects or topic?
- Say hi to the Choral coordinator
- Ask for feedback from last year’s coordinators, Ferry Beach, Elders, volunteers, conferees, and Choral. What worked in their eyes? Invite suggestions/ideas for the future

Work with Ferry Beach

- Approach Ferry Beach as your partner in all aspects of planning and execution
- Ask who your contacts will be for registration, programing, logistics, financial, etc.
- Confirm Ferry Beach’s theme for the year
- Ask for a summary of prior-year expenses paid by Ferry Beach
- Watch for late Sept/Oct email from Ferry Beach to all conference coordinators

- Ask Ferry Beach to create “archive links” to prior year’s webpages, so they are not lost
- Send content for initial webpage for the upcoming GAYLA. Details can follow

Initial planning:

- Discuss the prior-year evaluation feedback. Share with Ferry Beach, Elders, presenters, etc.
 - Float “Big Ideas” for GAYLA. What will make your year special?
 - Decide how you will use or build on the Ferry Beach theme for GAYLA’s theme
 - Recruit the Minister of the Week. Start early!
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Second Quarter (October – December)

- Participate in Ferry Beach Coordinator meetings or calls
 - Outline the week’s schedule. Line up the big pieces – Sunday afternoon, morning tracks, evening activities, Opening and Closing Ceremonies, etc.
 - Line up volunteers for major events/activities – Remembrance Service, Bonfire, TNT host, Helping Hands fundraiser, Check-in-Circle organizer, Newcomer Orientation, Bijoux & Intimacy Room, evening movies, etc.
 - Work with Elders, Ferry Beach and volunteers to develop a marketing plan
 - Send Ferry Beach text and photos to update/expand website
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Third Quarter (Jan – March)

- Consider using the Winter Reunion to get together as a team, float new ideas to the men, and get everyone excited to help promote the summer conference
 - Publicize, publicize, publicize! Think about how you can make it easy for brothers to reach out to their friends. Place listings in gay publication calendars. Many have early deadlines
 - Finalize morning Tracks, afternoon workshops, evening activities, etc.
 - Recruit Check-In-Circle leaders
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Fourth Quarter (April – July)

Finishing Touches

- Name the Check-in circles
- Confirm scheduling details, meeting spaces and equipment/setups needs with Ferry Beach
- Decide what printed materials you will have available. Send to Ferry Beach 1-2 weeks in advance
- Map out the registration stations, staffing, etc.
- Order condoms and lube for delivery to FB (<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/hiv-std/order-form-wn-hiv-std.shtml>)

- Review volunteers to be introduced during Opening and thanked at Closing

Recruit

- Identify Frivs, Check-in Circle Leaders, etc.

Communication

- Recruit volunteers to call regulars who haven't registered yet
- In late June, send a pack-list, costuming ideas, any special events they may want to prepare for

Town Meeting

- Decide who will facilitate the meeting, and how decisions will be made (usually a modified Roberts Rules of Order)
- Develop the agenda for the GAYLA Town Meeting. Consider inviting Ferry Beach's Exec Dir to give a brief report. Ask the Council of Elders and Treasurer for reports. Acknowledge the last Winter Reunion and include selection of next host city. Look at last year's minutes for ideas and topics to be continued. Designate who will run elections (usually the outgoing coordinator)

Evaluation

- Decide what you want to ask. What feedback will help future coordinators? Coordinate with Ferry Beach's evaluation questions.
- Design the evaluation.
- If using an online evaluation, ask Ferry Beach about using their service. Write your cover-email so you can easily send the link to conferees on final day of GAYLA

Future Leadership

- Coordinators appoint a new member of the Council of Elders each year. Review the criterion. Ask for input from the current Elders and others. Ask the candidate in advance to be sure he will be interested, and will be present at GAYLA

Act in Love

- Set a loving tone. The community will watch and follow your lead
- Have a great week! Your work is appreciated and will not be forgotten