



## **TORCH RUN PLAY BOOK FOR CONFERENCE HOSTS** **A guide to help you prepare**

The Torch Run is a joint event planned primarily by the conference host with assistance and input from the NAGW Museum and NAWEOA. The goal is to give conference attendees the best Torch Run experience we can while raising as much money as possible for the Museum. The following is meant as a guide to provide answers to the most common questions that come up.

### **Awards**

I order the ribbons and medals every year. We have five award classes: Men, Women, Youth, Over 50 and Walkers plus one overall fastest time award.

### **T-Shirts**

Board member Terry McClelland and I normally take care of the order. All I need is your officer's association logo, preferably a large digital file copy. If you have design ideas, feel free to share them.

Normally, I need to get the final shirt count to the vendor by no later than June 15<sup>th</sup>. I base the count on the registration numbers at that time. To avoid any issues caused by people who sign up at the last minute, there should be a disclaimer placed on the website stating something like – “If you don't register by 6/15, you are not guaranteed a torch run t-shirt.”

I do order extra shirts using a fudge factor so most late sign-ups will get a shirt. The registration table should have a copy of the 6/15 registration spreadsheet so they can hand out shirts to those people guaranteed a shirt and only hand out extras to the late sign-ups on a first come first serve basis. Please let me know who is handling registrations when you get a chance.

### **Event Location**

Please let me know as soon as you think you have the run location picked out. Having the run at or near the conference location is always preferable for many reasons.

The finish location needs to be big enough to accommodate all runners, rain or shine. There should be a place to serve food and store it, if needed. There should be plenty of seating for the meal. There should also be adequate restrooms and trash receptacles.

Make sure you apply for any permits needed. If there is a fee for using the venue, please let me know. NAWOEA will add the event to their insurance policy but confirm this. Contact local police and EMS well ahead of time if you think you may want their assistance.

### **Transportation**

This causes problems almost every year. It can be costly and needs to be taken care of sooner rather than later, especially if the run location is not close to the conference location. Please let me know your thoughts on this as soon as possible.

### **Race Logistics**

We will probably need 10-15 volunteers on the course, depending on the course layout. Generally speaking, 3-4 at the start/finish line (I usually have these covered) and 2-3 at each of the water stations. Maybe some others along the course if there are confusing twists and turns. My wife usually walks the course, bringing up the rear to assure that everyone makes it back.

There should be 2 or 3 water stations spaced out evenly on the course. Get plenty of water for the race (at least 1-2 bottles per person). Have water available at the start line. Many folks like to carry a bottle with them. Make sure there are enough coolers. This always seems to be an issue.

An iPad with a stopwatch app works well as a time clock. Please let me know if you have one available.

A mini-PA system for announcing the run instructions and the awards would be very helpful. If you guys have access to one, let me know.

Photos will need to be taken for the newsletter. If you have a designated photographer, let me know.

### **Post-Race Meal and Beverages**

This is usually the biggest challenge. Depending on the location, you may be restricted on what you can do. For example, if you want have the meal at the conference location, they will probably require you to get the meal food from them and that is usually expensive.

Getting the meal catered is not a bad idea. It saves you from buying all the food yourself and rounding up volunteers to cook and then clean up. Be careful of the prices. Anything over \$12 per person is not great. You can almost never go wrong with a good barbeque as long as you have enough help to prep and cook. Just keep in mind that you will need at least 8-10 volunteers and a lot of preparation if it's a DIY meal.

Don't forget a good supply of soda and/or sports drinks as well. If you want to serve beer (which is a great idea), please let me know how that will affect the budget.

### **A Word About Expenses**

Two things make for a successful Torch Run. First, we want everyone to have a great time and second, we want to raise money for the museum. Sometimes balancing that out can be tricky. If problems arise or surprise expenses pop up, it gets tempting to be somewhat liberal on spending since the Torch Run money comes from a different pot. Please don't fall into that trap. If things start to get pricey, please pick up the phone and give me a call. I have worked on the Torch Run for the past several years and with the help of several NAWEOA board members, we have solved many problems for the conference host and lowered expenses. I am a resource for you. Please use me.

I'm a firm believer that it's not worth it to pinch pennies if the quality of the event suffers. On the other hand, we need to keep the expenses as low as possible so we raise good money for the Museum. Our best year to date was \$11,000 raised in 2009. If you can keep the meal, venue and transportation costs relatively low, then you have a real shot at breaking that record, which I would love to see happen. We have come close the last 2 years, so it can be done!

That's the NAWEOA Torch Run in a nutshell. On behalf of the North American Game Warden Museum Board of Directors; **THANK YOU** for hosting the NAWEOA Conference and helping to support the Museum. As always, feel free to call or email me as things progress and if I can be of any assistance, please let me know.

Best Regards and Stay Safe,  
Thomas Caifa (NY Conservation Police)  
Vice President, North American Game Warden Museum  
NAWEOA Torch Run POC