



The Georgia Decompression 2011 Afterburn Report

December 3rd, 4th 2011

Event Lead: Tareq Fayyad

Table of contents

1. Event Structure
2. Results and Suggested Improvements
3. Team Lead Reports
4. Venue Details
5. Financial Report

Event Structure

- Overnight camping event on December 3rd and 4th 2011.
- There was indoor and outdoor space utilized for music, workshops, art, fire pits, and camping.
- Gate teams of 2 and 3 volunteers were scheduled from noon till 11pm Saturday and from 9am till 4pm Sunday. The Gate Team leads were Sarah Griffith and Sean Gains.
- Ranger teams of 2 volunteers were scheduled throughout the event. The Ranger Team leads were Eli Anderson and Melissa Roberts.
- The venue hired paid security for the night portion of the event.
- A slot was allocated for the Board of Directors to introduce the new Board and be available to interact with the attendants and field question.
- Workshops were scheduled throughout the day on Saturday.
- No alcohol was sold at the events. Attendants we allowed to bring in anything they needed.
- LNT volunteers did multiple MOOP sweeps throughout the event.
- A generator was used for power at the outdoors section of the venue
- Four porta potties were rented for use throughout the event.
- The Alchemy Public Works Team handled setting up and breakdown of the gate, generator, lighting, and set up signage. They also handled ordering the porta potties.
- Online presence: A webpage was built within Alchemyfestival.com. The page had information about the event, FAQ section, and a link to the online tickets page. A Facebook event page was set up along with announcements that were posted on relevant Facebook groups and Alchemy Talk.
- All volunteer needs and were organized by the Volunteer Coordinator, Jessica Seales, and the Team Leads.

Results and Suggested Improvements

- I believe that to serve the purpose of decompression, I believe that the Decompression event should take place 2 weeks after Alchemy.
- Despite the cold weather, the camping space was well filled and appreciated by the attendants.
- The Gate and Ranger teams were well staffed. We would have been better staffed if we had a longer time to promote the event the volunteer slots.
- The hired security was helpful at keeping people from entering the property through the bushes (please see the venue section of the report for more details). If we are to use the venue in the future, I believe that hired security is the best solution to prevent non-ticket holders from breaking in the property.
- The slot allocated for the introduction of the new Board of Directors was never utilized.
- The workshops were not well attended by participants. Suggested improvements include setting up the workshop schedule and advertizing it in a better timely manner and setting up more signage at the event.
- LNT went well with the venue being left cleaner by the end of the event than when received.
- The porta potties were sufficient for the number of attendants.
- Using the generator was a better idea than running extension chords from the building.
- Online presence: The page on Alchemyfestival.com was sufficient to support the event. A full, separate website may not be a bad improvement.
- Having a volunteer coordinator was very helpful for being the point of contact for volunteer needs, volunteer allocation, addressing volunteer questions, and promoting volunteer needs. I suggest a more structured form of collaboration between the Volunteer Coordinator and the Team Leads for future events to avoid overlapping of responsibilities.
- Having co-leads for teams is recommended to take shifts where a single volunteer does not have to work all day and all night.
- There was a lack of presence of art and participation. I suggest recruiting an Art Team Lead for future Decompression events.
- I believe that the Decompression event has a lot of potential for becoming a more elaborate and interactive event that is integral to strengthening our regional and local community. I suggest recruiting an Event Lead who is responsible for providing a time line and event plan at least 4 months before the date of the event. Planning and preparing for Decompression should happen at the same time as Alchemy. Hence I suggest that the Event Lead is less involved in events like Alchemy and Burning Man so that they can focus better on producing a well run Decompression. I also believe that Alchemy is a good place to promote for the event. Having the event well prepared by Alchemy would be very helpful to that cause.

Team Lead Reports

Ranger Team Report

Pre-event:

Volunteer recruiting went very well with Jessica's help. Self-promoted as well. Most shifts were manned. Allowing volunteers to sign up sooner next year will ensure good coverage. (NOT a jab at Jessica. Understand situation. Now that things are in place it will be much easier to fill all open shifts.)

Event:

No major/recordable incidents for Rangers. Just a few people that needed to understand gate hours and that was handled by the unofficial "First Camp" at gate. A few people were reminded to spin fire on the 'Playa' and not next to the tents.

One major first aid incident. Just Jingles hit herself in the eye with a lit fire poi. Ranger Nugget, Mel, and I rinsed her eye out and encouraged her to go to ER to get it checked out. She went to sleep and I checked on her every 30 minutes. When she woke up she was in a lot of pain and asked to be taken to ER. Tareq took her around 3:30 am. Fragile turtle picked her up around 8am. No permanent damage to eye. Just scratched and irritated. Spoke to her late last week and it has greatly improved.

Post event:

I was very impressed at how smooth things went. All participants behaved and rangered themselves. I believe it was a direct result of the event planner and leads doing a great job. I would not recommend any changes. The facilities were very adequate. Maybe figure out how to secure the doors to the main building and make sure the main road stays passable.

Gate Team

We made the decision to staff the gate with 1-hour shifts, 3 people at a time for most of it. This seemed to work out well. The Volunteer schedule was still pretty empty until Sarah did individual emails to her personal volunteer contacts. While not everyone that signed up was on the contact list, it seemed to help the word of mouth and encourage people to pass the schedule around. This simple step, added to our current Volunteer recruitment, could really help staff all of our teams.

Opening the Gate went smoothly for Decompression 2011, albeit a bit late since apparently we all showed up late except for Max. Once Tareq had the laptop set up, the “scanning” of the first few tickets from people already there all worked out fine. For Decomp we actually just typed in the ticket number (or sometimes order number) directly on the laptop and clicked the appropriate buttons to check people in as the actual scanner was unavailable. For an event of 200 or a little less people, just typing it in was not a problem and worked out fine.

Staffing for the Gate went with little hiccups really. We (Sarah and Sean) did the first 1-hour shift and were relieved by Patrick and Jill. The rest of the shifts went occasionally that way and otherwise clockworky. Holes were easily filled either by a person either already working staying a few more minutes or someone else hanging out behind the gate, most of which were other Gate volunteers anyway. We think 3 people was a good call, too. We rarely needed 3; however, about 1/3rd of our volunteers showed up late. This is usually a common staffing issue on the first day of a burn, as volunteers often underestimate how long it will take them to get places. As the first day was our only day, it's probably best to expect this. Staffing 3 meant we almost always had 2, and 2 was fine.

As we had no waivers for people to sign, we mostly did not check ID (though some volunteers insisted on doing it all proper and looking at them) and just made sure the tickets were valid. This made the whole gate process very efficient. We emphasized to everyone the importance of checking for bracelets and not letting anyone slip in. We were gratified that they consistently did so all night. They checked our bracelets multiple times. They even checked Tareq's and Troy's.

Incidents were mostly minimal and quickly resolved. Really only two stand out. One was the nice policeman that came to the Gate, saying “Excuse me, did

you call the cops?”, and the other was that couple that kept coming back and apparently tried to scam people.

The police officer that came to the Gate after being called by the hired security was nothing but nice. The security guard called the cops to report people who tried to sneak into the event and were threatening him. Tareq escorted the cop back to the security guard and place of incident. The people that were hassling him were gone by then. They apparently got things settled satisfactorily and the nice policeman went on his way.

Closing of the Gate was delayed until about 11:30 to 11:45 due partially to the somewhat rush of last minute people with tickets (15-20 in the last 10 minutes or so) and the actual rush of people who wanted to go grab something from their cars. After closing and locking the Gate, we opened it for people so they could leave and not come back. We opened it a lot.

Sarah suggested a possible solution to Tareq post-event. There was a Khaki table near our Gate table. The Khaki shifts went mostly unstaffed, presumably because volunteers assumed the Khaki slot was for the Ranger Lead on call, as there was no slot for that. I think we could staff that table pretty easily, especially if it's a social nexus, as it was this year. The Khaki would be a useful point of contact for many things, such as the 3 different incidents needing some degree of medical attention, as well as letting people get to their cars.

Specifically, if there is no First Aid lead next year, a first aid kit at the Khaki/Gate area would be a good idea. Participants seemed to naturally gravitate towards that area when they needed help and we were happy to try to help, but every time we had to send someone to get some supplies, to find Nugget, acquire burn cream, whatever. Having basic supplies would help mitigate this. Ideally, it seems we need First Aid, even at smaller events, so perhaps we should look at how we can make this happen.

The Gate could also have used some sort of large board, with volunteer schedules, workshops, etc., clearly visible. Pre-event, we had no way of knowing that area would become a mini-Connexus. It really worked out well! If we go into the next event expecting that and planning for it, we can maximize its usefulness.

We re-opened the Gate Sunday morning at 9:00 and had at least one person there until noon. No new people showed up to be checked in on Sunday. We may not need Gate hours Sunday at all. Considering no one showed up in

3 hours, we're tempted to say just throw the gate open and not worry about it, especially considering that they've probably all figured out the holes in the trees by then. If there's a useful reason to staff it, we certainly can. It wasn't problematic. It doesn't really need more than 1 person, and we would suggest hours more like 11-2, should we decide to staff it Sunday next year.

Note: Sections with additional details were omitted from this report. The full report is available upon request.

Venue Details

- The event was held at the Atlanta Arts Exchange: an old school building dedicated to hosting events such as theater performances, art galleries, and various workshops.
- The venue is in a central location in the city of Atlanta and is accessible using public transportation.
- We used the indoor theater and two big open spaces outdoors: one for music, fire pits, and gathering, the other space for camping.
- There was no camping indoors.
- The venue required that we hire security for the night portion of the event.
- We were able to play amplified sound any time during the event indoors, and until 11:00pm outdoors.
- The venue did not have adequate bathroom facilities so it was necessary to rent porta potties.
- The venue's parking was limited for the event.
- The outdoors parameter of the venue is lined by bushes, no fence, and has many holes that open up to the street. Trespassing is very easy to do for anyone who is familiar with venue.

Financial Report

The following was the projected budget for the event:

Item	Cost
Venue	\$800
Fire wood	\$200
Porta Potties	\$340
TP	\$20
Wrist Bands	\$35
Generator Fuel	\$100
Signs	\$20
PA Rental	\$50
Total	\$1565

The following was the actual budget for the event

Item	Cost
Venue	\$800
Fire wood	\$200
Porta Potties	\$340
TP	\$17.23
APW Supplied	\$46.07
Generator Fuel	\$35.35
Signs	\$17.41
PA Rental	\$50
Total	\$1506.06

The event brought an income through ticket sales of \$4080.00, bringing in a profit of \$2573.94, minus the cost of using ThunderTix and the insurance policy.

Tickets Sold and Attendance:

Attendance Cap: 350

Tickets sold: 272

Tickets scanned: 224