

How to run Herald's Point at Gulf Wars

Congratulations on your choice to run the Herald's Point department at Gulf Wars! Herald's Point is one of the easiest departments to manage thanks to the great members of the Populace that love Heraldry. You will have no shortage of help throughout the war. That being said, it is up to you to ensure that the department runs smoothly. You will need to know the proper procedures for setting up and tearing down the tent, getting supplies for the printers, and moving submitters through the process without losing any paperwork.

Some of these procedures and policies are requirements, based on War rules, such as the handling of money. Others are best practices based on years of running Herald's Point. You should look at those as suggestions, but not rules; this is your Herald's Point, and you should feel empowered to run it the way you think is best. That being said, whether the department works or not is up to you and your decisions. At the end of the War you will have lots of happy Submitters with dreams of registered names and arms, or an angry horde of people wondering where their submissions are. No pressure...

This document is broken into four main parts. The first explains what you need to have before you arrive at site, who needs to know what, setup, and preparation. The second describes how to run the Site on any given day, from open to close. The third section details the steps you will need to tear down the site and store it for next year. The final one is some closing notes that you should be aware of.

Part 1: Setup

This section describes all of the things that will need to happen before the first submitter walks into the tent on Monday. Most of it involves communications with War staff, but after you arrive it is time to get the tent ready. Let's get started.

Before the War

Long before the War has even started, you need to start your preparations. These include interacting with the rest of the staff of Gulf Wars, picking out your Deputy, and communicating with the Heralds of the host and attending Kingdoms.

Interacting with Gulf Wars Staff

One of the first things you should do when taking over Herald's Point is communicate with the Autocrat of Gulf Wars. They need to know who you are in order to communicate with you. They can be reached at autocrat@gulfwars.org. They will help you get your email address, heraldspoint@gulfwars.org, set up. This email address will be the way that the rest of the staff, as well as the populace, will be able to reach you.

Once your membership in the Staff has been established, you should ensure that you have access to the Gulf Wars Staff Facebook group. This group has up-to-date information on anything the administration needs to tell. It also has a large library of documents, some of which are informational, others needing some feedback from you. Two of these documents are of particular importance: the requisition for chairs and tables, and the budget.

Historically, the department has used 12 tables and 40 chairs. The tent is a 20'x40' with four walls. This form likely does not need to be updated, unless they start from scratch. 40 chairs is almost guaranteed to be too many, but it is better to have extra chairs than too few. As far as tables go, you will certainly use every square inch of table space.

Your budget is very simple, since the supply of consumables, namely paper and markers, is stocked well in to the future. However, there are a couple of very important items: **Printer Cartridges** and a *possible* new printer. You should allocate enough money to purchase three cartridges. They are about \$30 each, so allocate \$100. A ream of regular printer paper can be added, for safety. We will be attempting to get a new printer this year that has Wi-Fi connect ability. With will improve ability to get new forms sand possibly help going completely digital in the future (like pensics)

Your snack budget is now centralized for the War. You just need to reach out to the “snack-o crat” to let them know that you need only the “regular” snack allotment, along with 2 flats of water. Things have changed this year o9n how this handle and budgeted so get with the auto crats.

You also need to allocate some money for the Herald and Scribal Social. Typically, a simple snack tray, some cookies, and a few liters of soda is sufficient. Add a couple of bottles of wine if you like.

Your Deputy

Picking the right Deputy is **vital**. They are much more than just another Herald helping with names and devices during the week. In fact, much of their job will be managing the flow of submissions. To be effective, they must know this document as well as you do, because they will be taking over if you are unable to finish the week for some reason. They should be there when you arrive to assist in every step of setup and tear down. If your deputy will be taking over for you the next War, you should insist that they are present for the entire process so that they can repeat it the following year.

You should include your deputy on any communications, since they need to know what's going on, too. They should receive a @gulfwars.org email address also, as well as get an invite to the Gulf Wars Facebook staff group.

Registration for Early On

To get Herald's Point ready before Monday, you should plan to arrive on site in the “early on” phase of the war. This allows you to arrive before the mad rush of the Populace,

set up your own campsite, and get going on prepping the Point. You should watch for the announcement

on the Facebook group or your email address. While it isn't vital to arrive early, it is very helpful, since Inventory will not be available beyond Sunday.

Interact with Host and Attending Kingdom's Submission Heralds

Throughout the week, you will be working on submissions. It stands to reason that the submitters would want to SUBMIT these submissions. Unlike Pennsic, where submissions can be submitted and paid for, **Gulf Wars does NOT allow departments to handle money.** Therefore, if submitters wish to actually submit, they need to be handled by their respective Kingdom's Submission Heralds. The process here is straightforward: contact each Host Kingdom's Submission Herald, as well as Kingdoms that typically have a large presence (example: Calontir and Midrealm), and find out if they will have a warranted Herald at War who will be willing and able to accept submissions and deliver them to their Kingdom submissions heralds where pmts can be worked out in that Kingdom.

Some Kingdoms will be able to pick up submissions. For them, allocate an hour or two on Saturday for them to be come to Herald's Point to pick up submissions packets. Make sure submitters know this too, let the submission Herald take the submission packets/documents with them to chase down their Populace on their own.

If Kingdoms forget to send someone to pick up their submissions, these can be taken home by the Host herald and scanned in then sent to the kingdom submission herald (for whatever Kingdom)

Laptop

Herald's Point runs on technology. Reaching out to offsite support for conflict checking is a vital step, and doing this on a phone is hard. Even a cheap netbook is useful here. Since you are controlling each submission as it moves through the process, having a laptop to take notes, look up things on the O and A, and talk to the greater Herald community, is practically required.



At The War (Saturday - Sunday)

Once you arrive at Gulf Wars site, the first thing you

need to do is, of course, check in at Troll. Make sure to identify yourself as Herald's Point Coordinator in case you get a special site token. While you are there, reach out to the Autocrat or their representative to let them know you are here.

Before you leave Troll, you need to pick up the printers. These are stored offsite in climate controlled storage instead of in the storage containers onsite. They should be set off to the side and are clearly marked as Herald's Point printers.

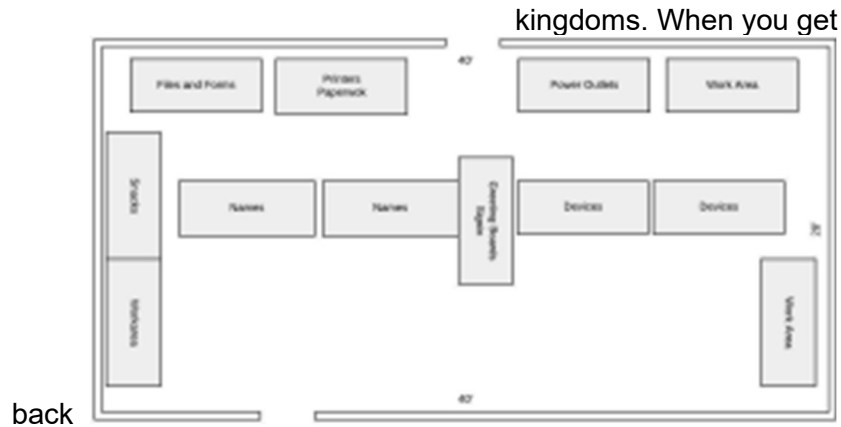
Once you are checked in and have the printers, it is time to get the Point tent set up. This will require two trips to different parts of the site: table and chair storage, which historically has been at the Hall, and onsite storage, which is next to the Archery Range.

At Inventory, pick up all of the bins of equipment, which has all of the markers, office supplies, form folders, and other things to decorate Herald's Point. While the inventory sheet lists individual items, everything is inside the bins. If you wish to be extra thorough, feel free to look through the individual bins to confirm everything is there. Of particular importance is the extension cords and power blocks; Herald's Point needs a lot of plugs for lights, printers, and computers.

Before starting the setup, check the tent over for potential problems. Small holes in the roof probably isn't a problem, since the pitch of the tent is enough to keep the rain moving over them, but a tear is bad and should be at least taped up. Check for active fire ant mounds. If it has been raining, check for standing water, and also look for potentially dangerous holes in the ground that would be a trip hazard. If you see any issues, report them to Facilities, and keep on them, since every other department at the War are also having problems and have swamped them with requests for help. Offer to come to them to get fire ant killer or whatever is needed.

When you have your table and chair allotment, setting up the Point is just a matter of placing them. In the past, tables have been placed along the three walls opposite the entrance, with a small gap in the middle of the back wall to have an opening for light, with five tables in the middle.

One bin should have all of our banners for the various



to Point, hang these around the perimeter of the tent, typically in order of Precedence. A couple of Kingdoms are missing, so don't panic if you don't find the most recently founded ones.

Access to a working power jack may be a problem at first. If the nearby power sockets are not hot, you will need to work with Facilities management to get either the jack repaired or, more

likely, an extension cord ran from a farther jack and then buried. Once you have power, assemble the lights and distribute them along the back wall.

The printers can be unboxed and tested to confirm that they are still working. They should have been packed away WITHOUT the printer cartridge from the previous War, so you'll need to drop one of the new ones you purchased before arriving.

Assemble the file dividers that is used to track the progress of submissions. I normally set it up with new submissions at the top, moving down the trays until "finished." At the bottom I put the "problem children" submissions that have issues preventing them from moving forward.

The final thing you'll need to confirm is that the forms in the master file box are the most recent versions. We are currently using v4.0 forms. **Any forms that are v3.0 should be discarded**, since Ragged Staff Herald will administratively return any submissions using them. It might mean you will need to print out new master forms from the various Kingdoms, during set up.

Saturday evening, there is a staff meeting at the Main Hall. You and your deputy should attend in order to get any last minute instructions or changes to policy. You will also get your volunteer forms for the week. These are very important so don't forget!

At this point, you should be ready for Monday and the start of submitters flowing in. Turn off the printers and wrap them in the plastic that came in the boxes, move anything that could be damaged by rain to the middle tables, and prep yourself for a busy week!

Part 2: Running Herald's Point (Monday - Friday)

It's time start turning ideas into names and devices, so now let's go over the flow of operations to run Herald's Point for any given day. You, as Coordinator, are going to get pulled in a lot of different directions, from answering basic Heraldry questions you may or may not know the answer to (it's ok to say "I don't know"!), dealing with submitters asking questions about the status of their submission, printing copies of submissions, and looking for that submission that has invariably gone missing. **DON'T PANIC!** Just take every request for help, one at a time, deal with that one, and then move on to the next. Rinse and repeat until the end of the War.

As I said before, you will have no time to help submitters with actual arms or names. Put that out of your mind now. You are running the Point, and have too much to do keeping the flow going. Your volunteers are here to help with submissions; let them do their job, and you do yours.

The typical hours of Herald's Point during the War are:

Monday Noon - 5PM

Tuesday Noon - 5PM

Wednesday 10AM - 5PM

Thursday 10AM - 5PM

Friday 10AM - 3PM

Saturday Varies

Hours of Operation

On Monday, from 10AM - Noon, is "Orientation" where you explain the process of submission to any volunteers who show up. Typically, no one does since most everyone who will volunteer at Herald's Point has worked at Herald's Points at Gulf Wars and others before, and know the drill. You should be there, with your Deputy, anyway. Tuesday is "opening ceremonies and Royal Procession" and will keep the Point closed until Noon. Friday the point closes early to give all remaining and pending submissions time to get finished. You will have people come in at 4:45 on Friday looking to start the process.

A Typical Day

Before arriving at Herald's Point each day, stop by the Watch cabin and pick up your radio. You rarely will need to use it, since Herald's Point is rather self-contained, but it will be useful to reach out to Facilities if you need something. Tell your Deputy to do the same.

On arriving at the Point each day, first go over everything in the tent to confirm that everything looks good. Check for water that might damage electronics and paper forms, tidy things up, and get ready for a day of Heraldry.

As your volunteers arrive, have them sign in on the Volunteer form for that day. Invariably, they will not follow directions on the form. Ensure that they sign in using the instructions as clearly printed on the form! Remind them that if their name isn't clear, Volunteer Point can't assign them their hours.

As submitters flow in, have them sign in on the signing sheet, even if they are the only one there. Tracking the number of submitters is useful to know how busy the Point was. Direct them to names or devices volunteers, depending on what they are looking for and whether there is a volunteer free to help. As they get their forms completed, make sure to keep their name and device forms, along with any documentation attached, pinned together with a **paper clip**. Then, place the finished form into the top of the hopper, signifying that the submission is in and unchecked.

As submissions come in, you should reach out to the Facebook group "Herald's Point Offsite Support". Put a Post-It™ note on it to flag that it has been uploaded. As comments flow back, if it is ok, move the submission down to the next tray, in preparation for it to be drawn. If it is a name, you can file it in the "Kingdom Completed Submissions" folder. If there are problems, move the ENTIRE packet down to the "Problem Children" tray, and put a Post-It™ explaining the problem.

The "Problem Children" tray is where any submission that has problems that would keep it from being submitted live. Arms submissions that have conflicts, or style problems, name submissions with the same, or just general questions for the submitter, should go here.

Remember to keep the packet pinned together at **ALL TIMES**.

When a device has been checked for conflict and style and has been ok'ed, it moves to the "to be drawn" tray. Heralds with **actual** artistic ability can take a stab at drawing the submission. Once the drawing has been completed, make two copies of the line art and copy of the name form. However, it is important to NOT start coloring the submission. Before the submission can be colored, we need to get the OK from the submitter saying that the drawing meets their approval. If you color before, and changes need to be made, you've just wasted effort.

If there are problems in one part of the submission, perhaps the name, but the device is fine, **DON'T SEPARATE THE PACKET**. Keep everything together, in the "Problem Children" tray, until the entire packet is ready.

End of the Day

When closing time rolls around, it is time to shut down.

- Turn off printers and wrap them in the plastic bag they came in
- Ensure that all Volunteers signed OUT of the volunteer sheet, **correctly**.
- Tidy up, collect trash.
- Check for any forms that might have gotten loose on the tables, and make sure they get with their packets.

- Move the submissions progress tray to a middle table for extra safety ○
[Optional] If there will be severe weather overnight, move printers, other paper, or anything “delicate” to the center tables.
- Turn out the lights.

The only thing left at this point is to take the Radio back to the Watch cabin to get recharged, and drop off the Volunteer form for the day at Volunteer Point. **DON'T MAKE THEM COME LOOKING FOR YOU! THEY WILL!**

Social

The Herald and Scribal Social is hosted in the Herald's Point tent on your chosen day – this year we are going for Wednesday. It is the responsibility of the Herald's Point Coordinator to supply with snacks, desserts, drinks, and optionally wine. Look to spend no more than \$50. What to buy is all up to you. The social starts usually around dark.

Saturday

At this point, all submissions are finished, and you should be looking to get everything closed down. The only thing that is left is for the various Kingdom's Submissions Heralds to arrive and pick up submission packets to take home with them. The flow of the day will totally depend on how many Submission Heralds will be arriving.

CONGRATULATIONS! You just ran Herald's Point at Gulf Wars!

There's only one thing left to do, which is the opposite of setup...

Part 3: Teardown

The teardown process is the reverse of the setup process, but let's go through some specific points to ensure that next year's Herald's Point Coordinator (maybe you? Your deputy?) will have a smooth setup.

Forms

Since we'll be throwing away the printer cartridges, we might as well get our money's worth and a jump on next year. Go ahead and print out a “good supply” of submission forms for the various Kingdoms to be used next year.

Printers

Put the printers away the way that you found them. First, take out the ink cartridge and toss it; there's no way it will survive a year idle. Take out any paper and put it back in the paper ream for next year. Wrap them thoroughly in the plastic back, and put them back into the box with the Styrofoam™ spacers. Make sure that the power cable is inside the box, and close it up.

Lights

Remove the bulbs and put them back into their boxes. Coil the lights' cords up and put them into the bin.

Decorations

Take the banners down and fold them neatly back into the box. Don't forget the wooden Herald's Point sign.

Markers and Business Supplies

Put the color markers back into their individual boxes, and gather up all of the pens and pencils. Now would be a good time to note what will need to be replaced for next year, such as pens, paper, PAPERCLIPS, and such, and pass along to your successor for next year.

Inventory

We will need to get everything back into storage for next year, so get all of the bins and such loaded up and taken back to Inventory. Our section of the inventory shed is clearly marked; if another department saw it as empty and put stuff there, just take it off the shelf and put it on the floor. Put our bins on the shelves; make an effort to keep things neat and use as little space as you can.

Tables and Chairs

Take down the tables and chairs back to the Hall. Put them neatly in a stack.

Printers

You will need to tote the printer boxes back to Troll so that they can be stored offsite, just like they were the previous year. Make sure that the boxes are still clearly marked as for Herald's Point, and let the Head Troll know you've dropped them off and where.

Part 4: Conclusion

These processes and procedures for running Herald's Point at Gulf Wars comes from my personal experience. You may decide to make changes, and that is fine! This is YOUR department, and so run it how you feel best. Just remember that our number one goal is to make Heraldry fun both for our submitters AND our volunteers.

If at any time this stops being fun, you should ask yourself what's happening. If you are feeling overwhelmed, don't hesitate to say so. Stop. Ask for help. It's FINE! If you need to step away for a while, that is why you have a deputy. If a huge group of people just arrived looking for names and devices, and you don't have enough volunteers, just ask them to come back a bit later. We're all at the War for fun, and while running Herald's Point is *work*, it should be seen as a labor of love.

When you are all finished and the War is over, you have a big decision: Will you come back next year to run the Point again, or hand it off to your Deputy? Running Herald's Point at a major event in the SCA is a big deal, and is a great experience builder for taking on even greater things. The decision is all up to you, but whatever you decide, make sure the people running Herald's Point the following year are aware.

Good Luck. We're all counting on you.