

Arrangements Committee Report to Representatives Committee, February 2017

Intermountain Yearly Meeting's Arrangements Committee met January 13 and 14 at the Albuquerque Friends Meetinghouse.

We are pleased that we will return to our preferred time in June for Annual Gathering at Ghost Ranch this year. We will meet for Annual Gathering June 11-18, 2017. The theme will be: *About Money: A Call to Integrity, Community, and Stewardship*. Our speaker will be Pamela Haines of Philadelphia, who is active in the Friends Economic Integrity Project. Besides delivering the Keynote, she will give an Early Days Seminar and meet with our children, Junior Young Friends, and Senior Young Friends.

Last year our **attendance** was 300, down by 20 from the year before, with the biggest reduction in the number of Junior Young Friends, who had only about half of their usual numbers. We were able to house all who had mobility challenges on the lower level.

Yearly meeting attenders **paid** significantly more than in previous years because ~45% chose the new option to pay complete (full) cost – 60% in the more expensive housing and 30% in the less expensive housing. Monthly meetings provided significantly less in financial assistance than in previous years. The yearly meeting also provided less than in previous years. Why?

Of most concern is **Children's Yearly Meeting**. The usual strategy is that a coordinator will sign up for three years – one year as a learner, one year as main coordinator, and one year as mentor. Last year we were short a coordinator as learner, so this year we have only one coordinator with experience with CYM, Emily Box. Theresa Keating of Grand Junction has agreed to co-coordinate with Emily for this year only, because if we move, she does not want to develop a new CYM program to replace Ghost Ranch's college staff in 2018. Emily will NOT be present in 2018 because of long-planned international travel. So we are facing being short one coordinator this year, and three coordinators next year. This is especially critical if we move, for presently we have NO ONE to set up a children's program in the absence of Ghost Ranch college staff.

Since we want IMYM to be inclusive and welcoming of families, we decided that we want to have Infant Care during Early Days mornings when we also have childcare.

Clerks have written and sent out a plea for one or two CYM coordinators, for volunteers, and for Infant Care workers for this year, to all Monthly Meeting clerks and representatives. We believe that we need a minimum of four adults with CYM at all times.

Arrangements Committee also minuted: **Arrangements Committee recognizes that some Friends with a background in child services are uncomfortable nominating volunteers to positions that require working with children (infants and older) without a background check. Arrangements Committee asks that Representatives Committee consider this concern, including consideration of a possible change to current IMYM policy.**

Last summer we again had a problem with adults not showing up for **Intergenerational Worship Sharing** groups which they had signed up for. This is frustrating and discouraging for Senior Young Friends, especially to first-time worship sharing leaders. It was discerned that some IMYM committees meet during IWS time, which takes adults away from their groups. Some adults also could be volunteering at IWS time.

All committees are asked to not meet during Intergenerational Worship Sharing time, or if they must meet then, to inform members of committees to not sign up for IWS. Ministry and Counsel is being asked if they can move their listening-to-concerns sessions to a different time.

Senior Young Friends will organize a **Listening Session** again this year, and will discern their topic later.

Senior young Friends prefer that the **Keynote** be **in the afternoon on Thursday**. Several years ago, we agreed to alternate morning and afternoon Keynotes. Since last year's keynote was in the morning, this year it will be in the afternoon.

There will be a space provided during interest group time for those interested in a **follow-up discussion of the speaker's keynote address**. For 2017, we will not require the speaker to be present.

This year we will have a room during **interest group** times for **open sessions** for discussion of topics that arise after registration materials are published. There will be opportunities to sign up and publicize the topics of interest.

In response to requests for **more time for worship**, and a time early in the sessions for worship as a body, Thursday morning will open (after Worship Sharing Groups) with a half hour of Worship before we begin Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

The results of our surveys about **Early Days** are that many people find Early Days to be rich and important. Two-thirds of yearly meeting attenders arrived during Early Days, almost half of them on Sunday. Issues that have arisen are that they create a separation; that those (adults AND youth) who arrive only for Regular Days feel left out and like outsiders. That community has already formed. There is also the issue of folks feeling that they cannot come for Early Days because of the extra cost; feeling that it is a have/have not, financially exclusive, situation. We have a problem with folks being unwilling to ask for financial aid.

Everyone is reminded to be aware of the Early Days to Regular Days transition and the need to be welcoming to those who are arriving. Other ideas about how to deal with these issues are welcome!

Respectfully submitted,
Pelican Lee
Arrangements Committee Clerk