

IMYM Annual Gathering 2016 Evaluations Summary

Summary prepared by Pelican Lee, Clerk of Arrangements Committee.

As the Arrangements Clerk, these are the things that stood out for me as I reviewed the results of the survey that 118 participants filled out for IMYM 2016. This year, 50% of IMYM adult attenders submitted evaluations. I encourage everyone to read the rating results and the comments, especially in those areas in which you have a special interest.

The number of IMYM participants this year, 300, was 20 less than last year, closer to the numbers we had in 2013 and 2014. The number of children was higher, and the number of JYFs, SYFs, and YAFs were lower than in past years.

Again, there were many comments about the high prices of IMYM. Although some thought that we get a good deal for what we pay, many others said that the **cost** was too much for them. Comments indicate that folks don't ask for financial aid even though they are stretched to pay for IMYM, or that they won't be able to come in the future because of the prices. We don't know how many folks don't come because they don't think they deserve financial aid. Interest was expressed in the Pay as you are Led model, as a possible way to solve these problems.

Ratings for **housing** were slightly lower than in recent years. There were quite a few complaints about lack of cleanliness in the housing, especially Old Mesa housing and especially that there were spiders in Old Mesa housing. Also about needs for maintenance, and a feeling that we should get more and better service, considering the price of housing. "I'd rather have a clean room and make the bed myself." Others were quite happy, especially most campers.

Ratings for **meals** were higher than last year. "Food is much improved over last year. Seems that Joey has hit his stride." There was much praise for the improved vegetarian offerings, though more protein there would be appreciated.

All of the **youth programs** – CYM, JYF, SYF, and YAF – had slightly lower ratings this year than in the past. Comments about CYM did not indicate why, except that we know they were short on IMYM staff. "Internal GR communication needs to improve. The pool for example." "There were way too many complications in scheduling and a big disconnect between IMYM expectations and GR expectations." As for JYF, the only negative comment, "JYF can't be run as a school, with everything whole group take it or leave it." There are some specific comments for YAFs to look at. SYFs received a lot of praise, especially for their Listening Session on gender and sexuality. Some folks missed their Epistle.

Schedule: There were requests for more time between events to get from place to place, for more meal time to allow time to eat for those toward the end of the lines and for visiting, and for more time with nothing scheduled. Some folks wanted more worship and less business, but others noted that some things got dropped in Business Meeting because of not enough time.

Quite a few felt there were too many **Interest Groups**, and too many at the same time; although some wanted more. There were requests for Interest Groups more tied to the theme. Individual

Interest Groups received praise. The Private Dining Room was mentioned as not a good location for groups because it is too small and too hot.

Operations: Although ratings were slightly lower this year for golf carts and access, orientation of newcomers, and registration, most of the comments were positive. Registrars received much praise! A need for welcome signage for when no one is at Registration was mentioned.

As always, **Worship Sharing** is the best part of IMYM for some folks. Several non-campers were unhappy to be assigned a group that met in the campground.

The **Keynote Speaker** this year, Callid O'keefe-Perry, received a lot of praise.

Business Meetings received especially high ratings, largely due to the excellent clerking by Sara Keeney, although there were some criticisms.

Our **location** at Ghost Ranch received exceptional praise, though some would welcome a more accessible (physically and to southern Arizona) and less expensive location.

Communications were generally thought to be well done, although difficulty with communication with Ghost Ranch was noted. E-mails sent from registrars were appreciated. Schedules need to include locations of events. More availability of Daily Bulletins was desired, and less mealtime announcements.

Of the 110 people who answered our additional question about **Early Days**, 30 were neutral about Early Days, 5 disliked them and 5 strongly disliked them; 40 liked them and 30 strongly liked them. Clearly, Early Days are valuable to a large portion of respondents. The biggest drawbacks were the added expense and the sense of division (exclusive, for only those privileged enough to afford it, and arriving Wednesday feeling left out of an already-developed community). There was disappointment that some people come only for Early Days. The benefit to Youth was noted.

Respectfully submitted,
Pelican Lee
Arrangements Committee Clerk