

Registrar's Report to Arrangements Committee, 2017

2016 was our second year as registrars, and we found it easier overall than our first year! Although we were probably every bit as busy as we'd been in the first year, we were at least prepared for our role. We continue to hope that Friends to find a way to put the registrars onto a staggered nominating schedule. We think it would be a much more pleasant job, with a lower rate of burn-out and better knowledge-sharing, if only one registrar were replaced at a time.

Some of the changes made to the registration process last year were quite successful. We added a field in which all under-18 registrants were required to specify a Responsible Adult. By keeping an eye on this field, we were able to confirm that appropriate arrangements had been made, and we were able to follow up (or nag) with minor-age registrants to make sure we had their Unaccompanied Minor permission forms before they arrived at Ghost Ranch. As a result, we achieved an amazing thing: We had complete permission forms for all unaccompanied minors before they arrived at Ghost Ranch.

Also, adding a hard deadline for registration reduced our stress surrounding room assignments and providing head counts to Ghost Ranch. Although we had a few people register after the deadline, we did not have the dozen+ we saw in our first year. However, there was some confusion with Ghost Ranch when our too-late registrants tried to book rooms, and in hindsight, we should have done a better job of communicating with Ghost Ranch. Going forward, we are considering a small change in the way we manage the late registration deadline: Essentially, registrations received on or after May 27 will be accepted at registrar's discretion. To facilitate this, on May 27 we will remove the link to online registration, and remove the ability to download the paper registration, from imym.org. Both locations will instead contain a message directing those wishing to register, to contact registrars for instructions. That will allow us to have a conversation with those late registrants about lodging options, so that we can be sure a mutually agreeable accommodation is available before they send in their registration materials. If anyone mails in a paper registration after May 27 without talking to us, we will initiate that conversation before we accept the registration.

One change that proved confusing, and could use some improvement, was the introduction of Complete Cost vs Traditional Cost. We face a challenge here, in that we need to explain what these options mean, preferably in 20 words or fewer! Based on informal feedback and some of the survey feedback, we did not quite achieve comprehension. We welcome suggestions and would happily provide interested Friends with screen shots of last year's registration pages, if anyone cares to try their hand at a bit of wordsmithing and/or screen layout. One option the Meeting might consider is going back to the single fee structure but introducing specific donation levels that allow people to achieve "Complete Cost". However, we have not raised this issue with the Finance Committee yet.

We are considering one minor change to online registration this year: we will probably disable re-use of prior year's data. Few people remember their old password, and this "remembered

data” feature is more confusing than helpful, for people registering entire families using a single email address. Overall, it seems the confusion is not worth it.

There were two concerns raised in the IMYM evaluations, that we would like to mention. One was that we need clearer instructions at the Ghost House for those who arrive after hours. To be honest, we are not sure how to solve this. We can’t staff the table all night, of course. If someone comes late who has been there before, we think they probably “know the drill”. But if first-timers are arriving late, we are sure they find it confusing. Perhaps we will develop a sheet of instructions, but we wonder how first-timers even know how to find Ghost House after dark. It doesn’t seem like a trivial thing to solve.

The other concern from evaluations was from more than one person, saying it was hard to find the schedules online. We note, here, that the schedules are on imym.org under “Registration” in the age-group-specific Registration Materials, with the page description (viewable from the main registration page) listing “Schedule” specifically. And imym.org is searchable! But we will look at the online registration materials too, especially confirmation pages and reminder emails, and see if we should add links to the schedules there.