

Arrangements Retrospective of Winter CPQM January 2019 @ Santa Rosa; Notes for Next Time

from Jim Avera (revised Feb 1, 2019 12:59)

Costs & Vendors

1. **Family Bible Church** rental: \$800 (same as in 2015).

\$400 advance + \$400 on day of. No security deposit this time. We had use of the church lobby, sanctuary, dining hall, Faith Cafe, and infant/toddler room, but **not** the middle classroom which we used in prior years, nor the upstairs Gym rooms. We did use the gym (downstairs only), and one portable in the back (with pews; it's rented to another church).

Pros: Adjacent to Friends House, which permits FH residents to host Worship Sharing groups. The Church is large enough when combined with spaces at Friend House. Good-size dining room. The Gym is okay for teens. Very helpful & accommodating pastor.

Cons: Bathrooms are not accessible (wheelchair users had to go over to Friends House). Marginal kitchen (not health dept. certified). Very unsuitable for school-age children's program – no playground, and the portable we used for children (which contains pews) had little to offer.

Suggestions for next time: Local arrangers should provide suggestions to children's program leaders for parks to use (Howarth is excellent, but requires driving and the associated risks & permissions; Rinconada Park is 3-4 blocks walk, but has minimal equipment.). Ask parents to ensure children have rain coats so they can safely be taken out in uncertain weather.

Crosspoint Church (formerly Baptist), adjacent to RFFM, has been suggested as an alternative future site, although the benefits to Friends House would be lost by relocating there. Crosspoint Church may have better children's facilities and is ½ block from RFFM, and there is a park 2 long blocks away (Comstock Park accessed via path behind RFFM, or via Marlow Rd). No contact with Crosspoint Church has been made, and availability & suitability are unknown.

2. **Table & Chair rental:** \$280 including delivery & pick-up, from

Sunny Jumpers Party Rentals,
707-236-7654 Julio.vizzuett@yahoo.com
94 Peach Ct Santa Rosa, CA 95407

They are *by far* the least-expensive vendor. A small (I'm guessing 1 or 2 person) outfit. We rented 10 6' rectangular tables & 80 tan wooden chairs with padded seats which were decently comfortable (much better than the cheap plastic chairs rented last time).

Next time: Rent 90 chairs and 11 tables (instead of 80 chairs & 10 tables).

3. **Morning Coffee & Snacks, coffee for lunch:** \$258

Brought tea & sweeteners from RFFM. Bought coffee, bagels, muffins, cut-up fruit. Used a coffee pot owned by the Church, plus two large pots and air-pot servers from RFFM. This worked well, however we started too late to have coffee ready at the published 8:00 opening time for CPQM.

There were no mid-morning or afternoon coffee breaks this time (M&O decision).

Next Time: Arrive 45 minutes before opening time and immediately start brewing coffee, before doing anything else. It takes a long time in those big pots!

Transfer coffee to air-pots immediately after brewing (as much as will fit). The coffee makers keep the coffee too hot to drink.

Only get two dozen bagels (cut in half). Only 2 lbs. each of decaf & regular coffee..

4. **Lunch** – sandwiches & other finger-friendly food. Made by RFFM volunteers: \$318

Extremely inexpensive at under \$4.00 per person! Got positive feedback (“simple”, “healthy”, “no plastic forks needed”). We were very lucky to have a dedicated team of people working many hours to buy, prepare ahead of time, and serve the lunch.

Next Time: If similarly fabulous volunteers are not available, look for options from Olivers Market (near Friends House), Safeway, etc. Jim did some research and in 2019 \$10 per meal was possible, but without delivery. At Family Bible Church it would probably have not been practical to heat hot food. In 2015 we served sandwiches and soup (pre-heated in paper tubs) from Olivers Market.

There was poor coordination around coffee/tea service at lunch, and cleaning up from morning snacks. Next time, get dedicated volunteers for that unless the lunch-serving crew can do it.

Don't try to coordinate shopping for shared items (plates, napkins, cups) for am/snacks and lunch stuff; the am/snacks stuff has to be delivered too early, and it's better if one person can be responsible for everything related.

5. **Miscellaneous Expenses:** About \$45

6. **Optional Dinner** prepared by teens at RFFM: \$237 (fed about 40)

This idea was instigated by Nate Secrest who did the shopping. Food prep was managed by a teen clerk (name I forgot). I did not attend but heard excellent feedback.

We *sold tickets* (\$10 each) during registration (30 for general sale, plus others reserved separately for teens and FRAPs who ate at a later seating). Selling tickets worked well to avoid over-selling (RFFM can seat 28 maximum) and to prevent crashers from showing up and causing food to run out.

I think success was also ensured by getting a specific cost estimate and commitment from teen committee leaders/FRAPs ahead of time, and reminding them to allow enough time to shop and prepare ahead of a hard deadline (6:15 pm in this case). They did a great job.

Next Time: If a similarly wonderful volunteer effort is not forthcoming, then suggest takeout from a Chinese or Thai restaurant (that was our backup plan). Asian food usually offers easy vegetarian options and possibly vegan if the right restaurant is found. In 2019 this would have cost \$10-12/person, but delivery was not available so someone would have had to go pick up dinner. Selling tickets during registration is still advisable to forestall crashers.

Other Comments

- Trash barrel(s) & trash bags: Be sure to bring at least one trash barrel (the church had one barrel but we needed at least two; Jim brought one from home). Drinking cups are not compostable, but plates and napkins are. If lunch is all finger food and wood coffee-stirrer sticks are used, then there is no plastic-ware to throw away.

The church has no compost barrels (only garbage & recycling). Jim took bags of compostables home and emptied them into his Green Barrel.

- **Worship Sharing** (coordinated by Kathy Runyan of M&O and Jim): We pre-printed TICKETS for worship-sharing seats at Friends House, and had people randomly take one when leaving plenary. This avoided a past problem where people forgot which apartment they were going to and/or switched on the spot, causing insufficient seating in some apartments and disappointingly small attendance in others.

Registrars asked people if they wanted Worship Sharing, and if so whether they could/would walk over to Friends House. This gave us an estimate of how many tickets to put in the basket, but had the extras ready and had to use them, because more people ended up taking tickets for a FH location instead of going to a group in the Church as they originally said they would. Since we only had as many tickets as seats available at Friends House, we knew when no more could go to FH. There ended up being only one group in the Church. In 2019 quite a few people did not attend Worship Sharing at all but went to a Women's March happening the same day.

Key Reasons Why Everything Worked Well

- Created clear, written job descriptions, with each job of moderate size (most jobs involved less than 2 hours work, but there were more than a dozen different jobs). Definite, concrete instructions.
- Asked for volunteers starting about a month before.
- Made hosting CPQM be a high priority for RFFM. Committees were asked to avoid activities which might drain energy away from CPQM or create scheduling conflicts. Periodically reported at M4B. Emphasized that we were hosts and had an opportunity to be of service to the wider Quaker community.
- Emphasized that we were responsible for physical arrangements, but not any program content. Many people volunteered. The work was made easy.
- Gave the Church a deposit check immediately to unambiguously secure the reservation.
- Rented extra chairs & tables, with delivery & pick-up (rather than borrowing somewhere).
- Made *no* use of Friends House equipment or personnel; only reserved their spaces (in addition to reserving the lobby, Library, Art room and Commons A, 9 residents volunteered to host Worship Sharing groups).
- Had a dedicated overnight housing coordinator.
- Counted tables & chairs owned by the Church with the pastor.