

Host Team Annual Report

DATE: 07/27/2025

TO: Cathy Lee Gierke, OCC Co-Chair

FROM: Diane Young, Acting Host Team Lead

RE: Annual Report 2024-25, Host Team

Charge to the Committee: Ensure in-person event attendees feel welcome and connected to others. The Committee should be creative in helping foster a warm and positive atmosphere. OF NOTE: As the Host Team has evolved over the past 4 years, the team has focused on the six (6) in-person luncheon forums. The Host Team is a sub-group of the Program Committee and operates independently. It has a small budget of \$400 for the purchase of supplies.

Committee members (include any designated duties).

The 2024-25 Host Team included the following welcome table greeters: Barbara Heinemann, Becky Yust, Joyce Guelich, Kay Louis, and Nancy Helmich. Other host team members are Jan McCulloch (new member initiative lead); Sandy Weisberg (reservationist), Susan Kubitschek (venue point of contact, POC), and Diane Young (acting Host Team lead and nametag printing).

OF NOTE:

- Effective with the August 2025 River Cruise, Peggy Mann Rinehart has agreed to join the Host Team taking on nametag printing for the 6 forums and 3 special events.
- Susan Kubitschek has requested to leave the Host Team, as venue POC effective with the close of the November 2025 forum;.
- Diane Gihl has agreed to return to the Host Team as venue POC effective with the March 2026 forum.

Please see attached for a detailed description of Host Team job descriptions.

Activities

- The Host Team has worked together successfully for 4 years now and focuses its efforts on the 6 luncheon forums: Sept, Oct, Nov, Mar, April, May.
- Individual host team members have been available to assist with the welcome table for special events by request.

- The Host Team meets as necessary, usually once before fall programming begins and once before spring programming begins. The Host Team stays in contact via email, at events and connecting socially.
- With the introduction of the new Member Portal, Host Team member Sandy Weisberg has served as a member of the Wild Apricot (WA) tech group. As the member portal has evolved, Sandy has taken on more responsibility for reservations beyond the luncheon forums. This continues to evolve.

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Focus of activities and key outcomes/accomplishments of this committee this year

The host team focused on 6 luncheon forums at Midland Hills for 2024-25: Sept, Oct, Nov, Mar, April, May. Outcomes and accomplishments include:

- Helped members register for luncheon forums when experiencing a problem. (Reservationist)
- Provided reservations lists in the requested format to various members of the Host Team (Reservationist)
- Ensured the welcome table was set up and ready for members to pick up nametags by 10:30am the day of each luncheon forum (Welcome Table Greeters)
- Welcome table setup includes name tags in alpha order, UMRA banner, handouts, poster listing new members in attendance, photography notice and more. (Welcome Table Greeters)
- Had supply cart at all luncheon forums. (Host Team lead)
- Greeted members upon arrival and solved registration issues. (Welcome Table Greeters)
- Selected menus and piloted the buffet option vs plated meals. (Venue POC)
- Responded to member requests for technology, special tables and other set-up in the dining room to accommodate sponsors, speakers, new "Member Portal" help for members, etc. (Venue POC)
- Ensured Midland staff set up the dining room according to requests. (Venue POC)
- Provided backup in dining room for venue POC during her winter absence. (Host Team lead)
- Collaborated with webmaster on a poster in the dining room where UMRA volunteer "help needed" can be posted. (Host Team lead)
- Monitored comfort level in the dining room including heating/cooling and sound. Worked with Midland staff as needed in this regard. (Venue POC & Host Team lead) feedback on food, etc

- Visited tables in dining room welcoming members and gathering info on food, etc (Host Team lead)

While not serving officially on the special events team, individual host team members assisted with the welcome table at 3 special events: Aug, Jan and June.

- Produced nametags
- Brought supply cart
- Welcomed members

Policy issues or changes over the year? Why?

- Midland Hills introduced new menu pricing effective January 2025. This impacted UMRA's luncheon forum revenue for the March, April and May. In the short term, Susan Kubitschek, venue POC, was able to mitigate this somewhat by choosing buffet-style lunches versus plated lunches.
- The buffets were well received especially the breakfast buffet, taco buffet, and the soup and salad buffet. This solved many of the dietary request issues and the issue of providing desserts since dessert **is** included in the buffets. Of note: Midland Hills no longer allows UMRA to provide candy on the tables.
- Treasurer Kristy Frost-Griep reported that we stayed within the subsidy that had been budgeted for the luncheon forums,
- For the longer term, Host Team members, Susan Kubitschek and Diane Young proposed new pricing options for forum luncheons for FY26 based on Midland's updated menu prices, 100 paid reservations, and 4 guests.
- The board approved luncheon forum pricing at \$39 for FY26. We will monitor any impact on reservations numbers.

Challenges or problems faced/solved? Innovations?

- While efforts to recruit new members have been successful to cover most of the host team functions described in the attached "Host Team Job Descriptions", one stands out as not yet covered – host team lead. This was especially exacerbated when Host Team lead Diane Young transitioned to president-elect/program chair and now president.
- Challenges with two key functions (reservations and nametag production) were solved during FY25 when Sandy Weisberg agreed to take on the reservationist role. And recently, Peggy Mann Rinehart responded to the call to take over name tags printing, collaborating with Sandy Weisberg.
- For the upcoming Braver Angels Workshop, participants wrote out their own nametags.
- Nevin Young has agreed to bring the supply cart back and forth to luncheon forums.
- Recruiting a Host Team lead remains a key recruitment task.

Suggestions for future chairs/leaders

The Host Team is a highly functioning group whose members like to participate together and support each other. A sign of success is their positive and catching vibe at the Welcome Table. Another sign of success is that several current members are from the four original members. The other members have joined the team along the way. One original member who left is returning. Volunteers agree to participate and then agree to stay because the task is fun and satisfying and they feel appreciated. So, my advice is say thank you as much as possible and in different ways and keep it fun,

What could UMRA leadership do to enhance your committee's work?

When engaging with members and wearing the "Welcome" ribbon on your name tag, leadership can listen for members who may be open to getting more involved in the smooth running of UMRA. If you hear something that makes you think the member may be open to getting more involved, ask them what it would take to get them more involved if the right opportunity came along. And what would the right opportunity be? In fundraising, when asked why they didn't give, the response is because no one asked me. When asked why they didn't give more, the answer is no one asked me to give more. So

Suggestions for what you and/or the organization you work with could do that would help UMRA move forward?

- Keep having fun!
- Enjoy each other and the differences and skill sets each member brings to the table.
- Remember to have fun!

Host Team Job Descriptions

Contact: Diane Young: youngdianc@gmail.com
651-245-0805

<p>HOST TEAM LEAD - serves as organizer for the Host Team. (One year commitment. Renewable annually at member’s discretion.)</p> <p><u>Lead:</u> Open for FY26</p> <p><u>Back-up:</u> TBD</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Serves as main contact for Host Team 2. Creates agendas and chairs host team meetings, as needed 3. Ensures host team functions smoothly 4. Leads efforts to recruit host team members 5. Manages host team budget, currently \$400. 6. Coordinates with special events team lead 7. Remind Host Team members to register for the luncheon forums 	<p>Welcome Table GREETERS - Serve at Welcome Table for 6 Forums: Sept, Oct, Nov, Mar, April, May. (One year commitment. Renewable annually at member’s discretion.)</p> <p><u>Lead:</u> Open for FY26</p> <p><u>Back-ups:</u> Total of 5 members including lead: 1) Joyce Guelich, 2) Nancy Helmich, 3) Kay Louis; 4) Becky Yust, 5.) Barbara Heinemann</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange welcome table, including name tags and other materials 2. Greet members 3. Hand out name tags 4. Serve as “back-up” for a “function” lead as needed 5. Assist venue lead to encourage members to be seated so luncheon service may begin 6. Create a positive vibe
<p>VENUE LEAD – Serve as venue point of contact (POC) for 6 luncheons forums: Sept, Oct, Nov, Mar, Apr, May (One year commitment. Renewable annually at member’s discretion.)</p> <p><u>Lead:</u> Susan Kubitschek will serve through Nov. 2025. Diane Gihl will serve beginning with the Mar 2026 form.</p> <p><u>Back-up:</u> TBD</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Select and confirm menu with venue, including beverages 2. Reports menu to newsletter editor by 10th of month prior to forum 3. Confirms requests for room set-up with venue, including reservation table, display tables, new member orientation tables, podium, 	<p>WELCOME TABLE AND SUPPLIES LEAD -_Serves for 6 luncheon forums s: Sept, Oct, Nov, Mar, Apr, May (One year commitment. Renewable annually at member’s discretion. 0</p> <p><u>Lead:</u> Open for FY26</p> <p><u>Back-up:</u> TBD</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Orders, maintains, and stores supplies 2. Brings supplies to forums for the Welcome Table 3. Coordinates with venue to facilitate dietary requests, currently small tents stored in supply box. 4. Orders ribbons for name tags 5. Order general supplies for Welcome Table as needed

<p>microphone, reserved-table sign, tripod.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Answers questions and solves issues in dining room day off eveny 5. Encourages guests to take their seats to begin dinning service 6. Confirms forum dates with venue 	
<p>RESERVATIONIST - Serves for 6 forum luncheons: Sept, Oct, Nov, Mar, Apr, May and 3 special events Aug, Jan, June. (One-year commitment. Renewable annually at member’s discretion.) <u>Lead:</u> Sandy Weisberg <u>Back-up:</u> TBD</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respond to & resolve questions from members regarding Forum reservations 2. Use the UMRA Wild Apricot member database to manage the forum and special events reservation process. 3. Add names of UMRA speakers & guests to the Forum reservation list 4. Forward reservation numbers with dietary requests (and names) to the venue lead 5. Forward merged reservation list ready for printing nametags to Name Tag Producer 6. Provide reservation roster for Welcome Table 7. Forward reservation roster to “New Member” lead 	<p>NAME TAG PRODUCER – Serves for 6 luncheon forums: Sept, Oct, Nov, Mar, Apr, May and 3 Special Social Events (June, Aug. & Jan). (One year commitment. Renewable annually at member’s discretion.) <u>Lead:</u> Peggy Mann Rinehart FY26. <u>Back-up :</u> Cathy Lee Gierke & Diane Young</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produces name tags for 6 luncheon forums & 3 special events. 2. Produces name tags using the doc provided by the reservationist (Sandy Weisberg) who merges the event reservation list with the nametag template and forwards the nametag doc to the nametag producer. 3. Prints name tags. (Recently, UMN Print Services has printed name tags on blank labels provided by UMR (Avery 5395). UMN Print Services contacts is: Jeff Whiteside, whit0024@umn.edu. Other options include: 1) printing labels on home printer. UMRA will reimburse for one ink cartridge annually. 2) Use a different print service. 4. Adds ribbons and new member dots and other stickers to name tags, as appropriate 5. Brings name tags to forums & special events 6. Orders blank labels for name tags Avery 5395. Request reimbursement from treasurer. 7. Orders replacement ribbons as needed.

NEW MEMBERS INITIATIVE

Lead: **Jan McCulloch**

Back up: TBD

1. Identifies hosts and communicates hosting details to them
2. Identifies new (last 12 months) members and match with hosts
3. Prepares a table flyer with the names of new members attending the luncheon forum for display on welcome table (Acrylic table holder available in supply box)
4. Greets new members and hosts at the welcome table
5. "Jazz" up new member orientation tables (Currently there are tabletops in supply box. Purchase 2-4 balloons? Weights in the supply box.)
6. Ideally serves on the membership committee