

NON-PROFIT MEETING MINUTES FOR

RACE *for* RESEARCH

I. OPENING

President: Mickelina Monico

Date: Wednesday, May 14, 2025

Time: 7:00 pm (PT)

Location: Google Meet

➤ Mickelina called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM

II. ATTENDANCE

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|--------------------|---------------------|
| ▪ Mickelina Monico | ▪ Theresa DeMartini |
| ▪ Mark Monico | ▪ Nicole Dozier |
| ▪ Angie Osborne | ▪ Tori Kott |
| ▪ Heather Pacheco | ▪ Kelly Monico-Love |
| ▪ Mary Piraro | ▪ Janet Monico |
| ▪ Kenny Piraro | ▪ Raio Salmon |
| ▪ Denise DeMartini | ▪ Heather Snow |

DEBRIEF OF RACE FOR RESEARCH EVENT

Mickelina Monico

- All of us are powerful when we work together as a team. This was very evident on Friday night. The drivers had a lot of fun. It was a close community. It was a very social and fun night. We had more exposure and were highly elevated. She is very excited for next year.
- Things that need improvement: Mick could not be seen behind the podium. She will need a stool.
- For the driver's meeting. The music needs to be turned down and it needs to be in a different room. The driver's attendance at the driver's meeting must be MANDATORY. The hotel staff needs to be at the driver's meeting. It worked better the second year when the staff was present at the meeting.
- Freddie says that his job should be as the MC for the night. Although Kaleb has a lot of racing knowledge, Freddie can keep the evening going smoothly. Handing the reins to Freddie is the same price whether he is sharing the evening with Kaleb or by himself. Possibly adjust what Kaleb does.
- Tachi will need to have a manager in charge of their wait staff and the Celebrity Waiters
- Dinner needs to start earlier. Possibly have the silent auction/registration start simultaneously with dinner starting at 7. Final count by 10.
- We need a lot more volunteers for the night of the event. The driver profiles could have been done at a work day. Some of the things done Thursday night could have been done at a work day. Driver's cards do not need to be laminated and can be inserted in the acrylic frames as they are printed.

- We will need a committee in control of drivers.
- Now that people have been at the event, we will not have to work as hard to get people to attend next year's event.
- Raio wants to invite the go Kart racers next year.
- Run of Show and Table Assignments need to be posted all around the room for Celebrity Waiters that arrive late.
- While waiting for the check presentation, the Board members should be called up on stage. It will kill time. Theresa mentioned that the Board was assisting with the check out process. Kaleb did recognize the Board.
- Hotel Reservations: When reservations were made, RFR was unknown

Angie Osborne

- **Auction Proceedings:** It is my understanding that the staffing levels were insufficient in the initial year of the event, which led to delays. While improvements were made in 2024, resulting in a more organized process this year, I am concerned about the allocation of personnel for the auction. Given that ticket sales doubled this year, the addition of only one extra staff member appears inadequate to ensure a seamless experience. I would appreciate it if consideration could be given to providing a more substantial number of additional personnel in the future to accommodate the increased attendance.
- **Lack of Friendliness and Unprofessional Demeanor by a few of the auction personnel:** Although our check out process was better than last year when Angie asked for assistance in the check out process their response was very rude. We do not want our guests' last thought of the evening to be that our checkout process is not adequate.
- **Setup Process Required Over Eight Hours to Complete.** To mitigate this in subsequent years, I propose that a larger team be assigned to the setup. I propose a "set up" committee of volunteers who can help on the day of the event.
- **Dinner Service:** There were significant delays, with over one and a half hours elapsing between the salad course and the main meal. Regrettably, I was unable to receive my dinner due to assisting with the tip jar collection. I anticipate that others will also note this issue.
- **Bar Service:** The two bars were very busy, but I felt that they were understaffed and would recommend additional staff to accommodate the amount of people trying to place orders for drinks.
- **Dedicated Cleanup Crew:** Finally, considering the exhaustion experienced by everyone involved, I would like to propose the engagement of a dedicated cleanup crew of volunteers for future events.
- The St. Jude Letters on the stage were amazing!!!

Heather Pacheco

- MC needs to explain the check-out procedure. Social media posts have been great. Tag your posts.
- Silent auction: get two or more volunteers dedicated to checkout
- Live auction area: Some people did not know that it existed.
- 8 x 10 posters for the live auction should be bigger and spotlighted
- Large items for silent auction were missed by a lot of people
- We need at least 2 waiters per table
- Saturday at the race track – Awards need to be in the infield; Next year one raffle. 1 for \$10 or 3 for \$20. Heather and Raio will need a lot of help at the track.
- Victory Lane at Jet Bowl: Race for Research Banner (Mary says to give her the dimensions)
- A lot of families have said that they cannot wait until next year

Denise DeMartini

- **Stage Lighting:** We saw great energy during presentations, and enhancing stage lighting will further highlight our speakers and special moments. Let us ensure the stage is lit during all presenter segments, including the check presentation, Caleb's introductions, and interviews with Celebrity Waiters. Additionally, let us spotlight the live auction item displays to draw more attention and excitement.
- **Guest Speaker Update:** Tiara has been a phenomenal voice for our cause. We are excited to feature her singing the National Anthem at the Race again! To keep our storytelling fresh, next year could be a great year to invite a new speaker—possibly a patient's mother—to share a powerful, personal journey.
- **Recognizing Dignitaries:** We would love to honor any attending dignitaries, such as St. Jude representatives or city leaders like the mayor. Let us plan to have them stand and be recognized—this small gesture makes a big impact.
- **Bar Service Improvements:** To keep lines moving smoothly, I recommend adding a third bar and ensuring each has two staff members (bartender and barback or two bartenders). This will keep the experience seamless and enjoyable for our guests.
- **Friday Morning Setup:** To ensure a flawless setup, linens should be available by 6 AM and dedicated staff ready for setup at the same time. This will allow us to focus on our individual roles without added pressure.
- **Food Service Coordination:** For the best guest experience, we will build a run-of-show plan specifically for Tachi's food delivery. Salads should be ready and served promptly as the Celebrity Waiters make their entrance.
- **Auction Staffing:** As the event grows, so does the need for auction support. To alleviate stress and allow Board members to enjoy the evening, we will engage committee members to assist the auction team.
- **Event Planner & Liaison:** We are at the stage where a dedicated event planner is key. Having one point person as the liaison for the Tachi team will ensure the night runs according to plan with minimal confusion.
- **Dessert Toppers:** Our dessert toppers would have been a lovely touch! Let us make sure we collect and use them for next year.
- **Champagne Service:** If we continue offering champagne, let us ensure every guest receives a glass for a uniform experience. Or, we can consider whether this service is essential moving forward.
- **Handling No-Shows:** Let us explore thoughtful solutions for unused meals—perhaps a donation to local shelters or pre-arranged distribution for those in need.
- **T-Shirts Sales Review:** It is time to assess our T-shirt strategy—did our current method raise funds effectively, or should we return to handling sales in-house?
- **Silent Auction Analysis:** Overall, our auction performed well! Only 13 items remained unbid. It seems categories like wine, jewelry, and San Francisco restaurants could use a refresh. We will explore new, exciting packages for next year.
- **Tips Recap:** Wonderful news! While the announcement said \$38,000, the actual amount was closer to \$40,000 in tips—an incredible show of generosity from our attendees!
- **Board Members for Next Year:** We are in a great place with our current Board and do not need to add more members at this time. However, we are excited to welcome new volunteers and encourage anyone interested to get involved by joining one of our key committees—such as decorating, auction items, run of show, live auction, Race Day events, and more. As we continue to grow, this may be a good time to consider if a reorganization would better support our goals. If any current Board Members are ready to step into more focused leadership roles within committees rather than remain on the Board, we fully support that shift. Committee members will have more flexibility, only needing to attend the first 15 minutes of regular meetings for updates—until we near the event date, when more involvement may be needed.
- **Expectations and Commitment:** All Board and Committee Members should be expected to attend the Race for Research event and actively support auction preparation efforts. This includes helping with donation collection, ticket, and table sales, and more. It is essential that everyone involved brings a positive, mission-driven mindset to their work. Our enthusiasm and focus on our mission make all the difference in our success!

- **Clarifying RFR's Origins:** There has been some confusion about the founding of Race for Research. While Mark began the original fundraiser in the 1990s, Mickelina founded the current Race for Research organization as a 501©(3) nonprofit. As such, it is appropriate for her to be recognized as the founder of this new chapter. We deeply appreciate the foundation that Mark laid, and we are proud of how Mickelina has expanded and modernized the mission with the support of this incredible team. Together, we are building something truly impactful

Tori Kott

- Favorite part was the new venue. More opportunities. The drapery and the uplighting was amazing. The comments after the event were great to hear. The drapery made for better pictures. The bigger space was professional looking. Communication with hotel staff regarding set up needs to be better. Communication with hotel staff overall needs to be improved.

Raio Salmon

- She heard so many positive comments. She did not hear any negative comments. Everybody had a great time. Even if they did not have money to spend, they enjoyed the event.
- Heard that there were too many auction items.
- If the item is under \$50 then possibly, we should not use them or the items should be combined.
- We DEFINITELY need two bartenders at each bar. But we should have a bar with beer and wine only.
- The gift bags should be black next year.

Mark Monico

- When we heard that Dixon was closing it was devastating but it turns out that it was the best thing that could have happened to us.
- Having it at Tachi....we will grow into it.
- The security guard, Juan, shared with Mark that his nephew was a St. Jude patient.
- This group is a very special group! We have ruined his dating game because he always compares women to us.
- This is a chaotic event. There are a lot of moving parts. It can be refined and streamlined but we are the right group to handle chaos!
- Even if something goes wrong, we will find a solution and we will all be here next year!!!

Janet Monico

- Janet agreed with everything Denise said.
- Dessert was served on paper plates and it should not have been.
- Ken Clapp invited Janet, Mary, and Mick to lunch. There was nothing but praise for Mick and RFR. All the glitches that we are mentioning were not noticed. Janet showed the bags that they were given at the luncheon. Emily says that people called her with so many positive comments. Marie, who was present at our event, also had so many great things to say.
- All the feedback was generally good
- There was a zoom phone call during lunch. Possibly we can think about doing something like this next year.

Theresa DeMartini

- Overall, the event was wonderful. She agrees that the St. Jude lights in front of the stage was a wonderful highlight. Instead of the number that we put on the silent auction item, we need to assign the catalog number when it is entered into MaxGiving.
- The checkout process was much easier than in year's past.
- We need to get extra red rope to section off the auction area once the auction is closed. This is a MUST!
- There were a few video glitches. Was it on our end or the AV people's fault? Mick will speak with Emily to see how they handle their AV processes.

Mary Piraro/ Kenny Piraro

- The social media presence this year was amazing! Guests posted and reposted their experiences.

Heather Snow

- Wrist band worked out well. (do not use white)

- Crowd control went well. Tori and Step and Repeat/picture area worked very well. Not too crowded
 - Should we have check-in before guests take pictures/auction?
 - Clothing items: Sizing should go on the bid sheet.
- Nicole Dozier**
- Need to have auction item tables set up with tablecloths by 6am. This delayed us not being able to put all items on the table and some had to be removed to put the tablecloths on them.
 - Napkins need to be on the tables early AM. The silverware does not have to be but napkins need to be so we can put the fund-a-need card in them.
 - Bars - need two people attending each bar. Need to add a 3rd bar next year and maybe have one bar strictly just beer.
 - Need more servers to help our waiters get food out faster; For water and ice tea drink too
 - Need two more ladies to count money so two can start finalizing auction items to the winners.
 - Live auction item winners - needed to make a comment so they know they need to pick up their envelope
 - A second money counting machine?
 - What will make money counting go quicker so we do not have so much down time to check reveal?
 - Gift bags assemble in the bingo hall. Danny suggested doing this beforehand on a work day and laying them flat in a box to get more in a box instead of upright.
 - People liked the driver interviews
 - Someone said too many auction items
 - Eyelets in the top of the step and repeat banner to secure the balloon arch with zip ties
 - Stickers can be put on during work day for tissue and popcorn or whatever we choose to do next year.
 - Banner for Lemoore winner circle
 - Different guest speaker
 - Supplies: step ladder, clamps, scissors
- Kelly Monico-Love** – Left the meeting early – No comments or suggestions as she did not attend the Gala

ADJOURNMENT: 9:48 PM

MIRACLE ON THE BAY EVENT: Friday, October 17th - Location TBA

Next Meetings: July 30, 2025 7PM

August 20, 2025 7PM