

Oregon Lavender Association Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday July 14, 2015, 7:30-9:00

Board Members Present: Chris Mulder, Carol Tannenbaum, Melissa Van Hevelingen, Karalee Mitro, Marilyn Kosel, Gene Schmidt, Bonnie Rinaldi

Board Members Absent: Michael Lemmers

Oregon Lavender Farm Tour Experiences: Carol reported a very busy farm tour. Helvetia Lavender, according to Melissa, had a very busy festival. Chris reported having about the same attendance as last year. She said that the Clackamas County farm loops helped to promote the OLFT with a press release about the OLA members' farms in all three loops, along with a radio interview and other media coverage. Andy reported to Melissa there was a good showing at the new Newberg site. Marilyn also reported a very good attendance in Newberg and said that the festival went very well. Marilyn also noted that the Plein Air Paint Out, Art Show and Artists Award Reception went very well. This year artists only painted on OLA members' farms and included the name of the farm that they painted, with their pieces. About 1000 people came to Marilyn's festival at Wayward Winds. Gene reported that his event at Still Waters Lavender in Redmond went well. However, he saw a bit of competition with the Sisters Quilt Show and the Bend Summer Festival. Gene said he was overwhelmed with building his greenhouses and with the bloom coming on all at once. Despite all, he says it went pretty well. Gene had three artists who came to paint at his farm and he also said that the *Bend Bulletin* came out to his farm and is doing an article on culinary lavender, including photos. Gene believes that most of participants received their information regarding the Farm Tour from the OLD Guides. He is still having people visit his farm this week, so it has had a residual effect. Bonnie reported great media coverage in the *Grants Pass Tribune*. A local TV station interviewed Bonnie and another grower. She also said that a poster put out by The English Lavender Farm, was used on the front cover of the *Jacksonville Review* for the month of July, which has a wide circulation. Many of Bonnie's visitors reported seeing the information in the *AAA VIA Magazine*. Bonnie believes that the statewide promotion was very effective in driving people to the lavender events in her area. Carol reported that an article in the *Eugene Register Guard* did a very good job of promoting this year's event as a statewide event. There were also two spots on TV. One of the interviews was done at Red Ridge Farms in Dayton and another interview was done at a Bend TV station host that interviewed Holly Pearson from Cascade Lavender. Both TV spots helped promoted the Oregon Lavender Farm Tour as a statewide event. (Chris emailed the link to Holly's interview for all Board members to view before the Board meeting).

Additions or corrections to the June 2nd Board meeting minutes: No corrections reported.

Treasurer's Update: Chris reported that she sold eight more cases of jam, (which leaves eight cases remaining), and she also sold ten tote bags. These product sales to

members during the weekend of the Farm Tour created approximately \$427.00 in income that is not showing in Michael's report. The OLA checking account balance is approximately \$1100.00. Marilyn reported that she has not invoiced the recent honey orders yet. Bonnie has received a quote from Mark Wilson, with 7 Oaks Design, for \$500.00 to complete the additional website work that would be needed to set up the website to be able to offer members the option of placing ads on the OLD site.

Membership Update: Bonnie reported two new Grow With Us members and one Relax With Us member have joined OLA. Total membership to date is: 75 active members with 5 pending members. This includes: 27 Promote With Us members, 24 Grow With Us members and 23 Relax With Us members. Bonnie heard from the Pearson's (Cascade Lavender), and they will not be able to help out with OLD website work and they have not indicated whether they will be able to host the August meeting.

New Business: Added to the agenda was Amy's letter of resignation. A brief discussion took place regarding Amy Morris' resignation as OLA Marketing Coordinator. Chris reported that she had good conversation with Amy, prior to her letter of resignation. As Amy stated in her letter of resignation, she will continue in the same capacity, as far as doing the work that she has been paid to do and some of the volunteer work she has done for OLA marketing, (such as designing the OLD Guide, sending Constant Contact emails to members, OLA Facebook postings and the OLA Public Newsletter). Amy has suggested that Dan Callen, Norwood Farm, be placed on the ballot this fall for the OLA Marketing Coordinator position. She plans to meet with him and discuss how OLA marketing has evolved.

Chris brought up the issue with the OLA/Festival Farm Tour road signs. **The board needs to make a decision regarding the use of the festival road signs and how the signs can be used by Promote With Us members. The board needs to decide whether OLA will allow the road signs to be used by members, only during the statewide OLA festival/farm tour weekend, or if these signs could also be used by individual farms for their own festivals that occur at other times.** After some discussion, Board members decided to table further discussion regarding the road signs. If there is a change made about the use of these signs, the Promote with Us agreement will need to be changed for next year.

Marketing Update: Amy's Facebook and Public Newsletter reports were email to Board members before the meeting. The question was posed as to whether Amy should continue to make as many Facebook posts into the fall season? The Board discussed the value of Facebook posting and collectively decided to continue to have Amy make 3 posts per week through the month of August, and then gradually cut back the number of posts going into the fall. There was some thought relayed that we may also get good coverage from the monthly OLA Public Newsletters, and eventually, it might be as helpful as Facebook posts, as more people sign up to receive the e-newsletter in the future. Chris will pass this information on to Amy. Chris reported that two Travel Oregon Visitors Centers have requested more OLD Guides.

OLA Product Update: Chris reported that only 8 cases of Lavender Marionberry Jam remain. Do we want to purchase more jam now for members to purchase this fall, even though it is not currently in the budget? The cost would be approximately \$3000 to purchase about 900 jars of jam. It is something that sells well and does make a profit for OLA. Chris believes that OLA will sell more to members this fall and we will be set early on for sales next year. **The OLA board voted and approved that we place a minimum order of jam now. Chris will place the order, pick it up and store it at Barn Owl Nursery when it is ready.** There are 100 chocolate bars left and Chris knows of some members that want to purchase them. Marilyn has processed orders for soap, honey and chocolate sauce and she has available quantities. **The board also agreed to keep Square Market up on the website for members to use to order products until at least the end of the year.** Bonnie suggests that Amy send out a communication to members about the products that are still available.

OLD Website Review/Discussion: Mark Wilson, OLA webmaster, has estimated \$500 for his time to add features to the OLD site to enable OLA members to place website ads. Gene has offered to help with screening the OLA ads that are placed. **Chris suggested that the board put this issue on hold, due to the timing, and to continue this discussion at the next board meeting when we are less busy and we have an idea of who else would have time to help set up a plan and manage OLD website ads. The OLA Board agreed.**

August Membership Meeting:

Bonnie suggested meeting places for the August OLA General Membership meeting. It was previously suggested by Michael that we ask Jim Dierking to host the meeting at Liberty Natural Products/ The Oregon Lavender Farm, or Robert Seidel with The Essential Oil Company, or Dr. Don Robert (and his daughter), Rhonda Johnson with Lavender Lake Farms, to host a membership meeting. The date for the meeting will be either Saturday, August 22 or Saturday, August 29th. Chris reported that the social portion of the meeting could include members' festival reports and that everyone could share their experiences with this year's festivals and the statewide farm tour. She also mentioned that Michael previously suggested an education session about what to do with lavender. If the meeting is held at a location where they distill oil, the host could possibly do some education on the distilling process.

Gene suggested arranging a meeting room at Eagle Crest to be able to have a place to meet in Central Oregon. Gene will find out if a space is available and report back to the board before next week. If Gene is not able to work this out, he will let the board know. **Chris will ask Michael to find out if any of the places he suggested at an earlier meeting would be willing to host the August meeting.** Once the location for the meeting has been determined, **Bonnie will ask Amy get an email out to members to save the date.**

Membership Survey: Bonnie requested suggestions for topics for the next membership survey. She feels it is important to ask members about their festival experiences. She also wants to ask members if they had enough Guides. Bonnie would like to get the

survey out by the end of August so that the numbers can be calculated by the October General Membership meeting. Chris would like the idea of a Lavender Grower's Conference added to the survey in order to get feedback from the membership as to who would attend such a conference, who would help organize it, and what members would like to see presented at such a conference.

OLA Membership Dues: Discussion about increasing membership dues was delayed at this meeting. **Chris thinks it would be helpful to first ask board members and Promote with Us members that attend the August membership meeting, to share the benefits of the OLD website, the OLD Guides, the media coverage/publicity that was received this year, as well as the OLA's Travel Oregon membership and all the marketing benefits that members receive during the year through OLA. Some of this information should also be included in the next OLA e-newsletters so that all OLA members can read about all the benefits of membership and see the publicity that was generated from the OLA sponsored Farm Tour this year.** A brief discussion followed with Bonnie reporting that with all the OLA marketing benefits, the Promote with Us membership dues should be closer to \$500, instead of \$325. Bonnie suggested adding benefits to the Grow With Us level of membership and perhaps increasing the dues at that level, too. **This discussion will be continued at the next board meetings.**

Next OLA Board Meeting Dates? The next OLA Board meeting will be held Tuesday, August 4th at 7:30 pm. Carol will send out the meeting agenda and will lead that meeting, as Chris will be out of town. The September OLA Board meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, September 8, 2015, after Chris returns.

Action Items:

Gene will contact Eagle Crest regarding reserving a space for the August OLA General Membership meeting. If Gene is unable to reserve a location for the August meeting in Central Oregon, **Chris** will contact **Michael** and ask him to contact and ask the three OLA members he suggested that might be willing to host the August meeting.

All Board members will email topic ideas to Bonnie for the next OLA Member Survey.

Chris will contact **Amy** about the Board decision on OLA Facebook posts.

Marilyn will clean 8 lbs. of lavender buds for the next batch of OLA jam and deliver them to Chris. **Chris** will place the jam order with the rep at Columbia Empire Farms. She will deliver the buds to their office this month and make arrangements to pick up the jam when it is ready.

Chris will ask **Amy** to include the OLA product availability in a Constant Contact email to members.

Karalee will email the Board meeting minutes to Chris. **Chris** will edit the Board meeting minutes and email them to Karalee and Carol to distribute to Board members before she leaves on vacation and before the August Board meeting.

Dan Callen's email will be added to the Board meeting distribution list.

He will help represent the OLA marketing committee. Dan has requested to attend the OLA Board meetings to learn more about the Marketing Coordinator position and how the OLA Board works, and to share his marketing experience with the OLA Board.

Minutes submitted by Karalee Mitro, edited by Chris Mulder.