

Oregon Lavender Association Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 8, 2016, 7:00-8:30 PM

Members present: Chris Mulder, Bonnie Rinaldi, Michael Lemmers, Karalee Mitro, Marilyn Kosel, Gene Schmidt, Dan Callen, Steve Seymour

Members absent: Carol Tannenbaum

Board Meeting Minutes February 2, 2016

Bonnie made a motion to accept the minutes as written and Gene Schmidt seconded the motion. The board unanimously voted to approve the February meeting minutes, as written.

Membership Update/New Members: Bonnie reported a current total of **76** members. **24 - Promote with Us, 25 - Grow with Us, 27 - Relax with Us**

Bonnie also reported that Joe Orcut, Hood River Lavender, would like to join at the Promote with Us level but he has not paid yet. Since his business will not be included in the 2016 OLD Guide, Bonnie asked if he could be allowed to join the Promote with Us level at a reduced rate of \$300. Steve felt it was reasonable to offer the reduced rate at this time, since Joe's business would not have the benefit of being in the printed Guide this year. The board agreed that Joe/Hood River Lavender, could be offered the discounted rate for the Promote level membership dues this year.

Financial Update: Michael reported a current OLA bank balance of approximately \$10,000. Laurel will be paid close to \$7,000 for the new website design. Also, \$800 will be paid out for the OLA insurance, soon.

Review February 20th Membership Meeting/Quarterly Brief: Chris asked for comments about the membership meeting and the first Quarterly Brief (e-newsletter), that detailed the February meeting and was emailed to members following the meeting. Michael stated that in the future, the correct process would be for the meeting presenters to provide a digital copy of their printed information, before the meeting, so it would be ready to include in the Quarterly Brief, right after the meeting. The general consensus of the board was that the meeting turned out well and all the links in the Quarterly Brief worked correctly.

Chris informed the board that two members, Suzi Kelley and Janna Liewergen, have offered to help with the marketing and website committees.

Presentation on Cooperatives: Bonnie suggested that the additional information regarding cooperatives should be sent out to members prior to the April membership meeting, in order to include members that did not attend the February meeting. Chris will bring the extra cooperative informational handouts to the April membership meeting. Members can contact Janna directly, if they are interested in working with her on forming a cooperative.

OLA Product Orders Update: Chris reported that she has placed an order for 200 OLA tote bags which will be available for pick up at the April meeting. The minimum order of 300 OLA chocolate bars was not met, so the deadline has been extended to May 9, 2016, coinciding with the deadline for the group order of McTavish shortbread cookies.
Bonnie will send an email to members reminding them of the product deadlines.

A notice needs to be sent to the members that have not yet picked up their OLD Guides.
Chris will send an email list of the Promote with Us members (that did pick up their Guides), to Bonnie and John. Bonnie will send an email reminder to the Promote members that still need to pick up their Guides, asking them how many boxes they want and where they will pick up the boxes. Those members will have a choice to pick up their Guides from John at RavenCroft, or at the next OLA meeting at Barn Owl Nursery, in April.

Marketing Update: Dan reported approximately 4,500 new Facebook views and “like” activity this past month. The OLA public newsletter now has 480 subscribers with a high percentage of traffic both opening the newsletter and browsing through it. Dan asked, if in previous years, members were reminded to distribute their guides. He believes this is necessary in order to get the guides fully distributed. He is working on a monthly report showing how many guides are being distributed. **Dan said that he is in the process of organizing the marketing information and will present the format at the April membership meeting.**

Dan also asked if anyone would be interested in having a **downloadable pdf format of the OLD Guide** on their own website and if that would be useful? The board agreed that this would be a useful tool and **Dan will look into it.** The press releases have been created by Amy, but none of them have been distributed yet. **Dan and the marketing committee will work on how the press releases will be distributed and will ask for one OLA volunteer from each region in Oregon to help, at the April meeting.**

The **OLA Photo Contest** is in need of a member/volunteer to coordinate the contest. Laurel has suggested an affordable Word Press format that could be used for the photo contest on the new website. It was suggested that a list be drawn up of what is needed to coordinate the photo contest. **Dan will discuss this at the upcoming marketing committee meeting and Bonnie will send an email to members asking for a volunteer.**

Website Update: Bonnie reported on the website committee meeting. The comments/remarks sent in by OLA members were organized by Bonnie and reviewed by Laurel. The two main areas with issues were in the Calendar of Events and the Products and Services part of the website. Laurel is looking into different plug-ins to improve those areas and working on the changes. Bonnie said that more testing of the website is still needed before going live. Training on how to use the back end of the website and Word Press will be scheduled as soon as the website is ready. Chris suggested asking several members to review the site, and possibly asking Suzi Kelley’s son, a web designer, since Suzi volunteered him for the job.

Action Items: Chris asked for board members to consider various portions of the website that they would be willing to edit. **She also asked Steve if he would be willing to review the website's privacy policy, and he agreed to do so.**

Michael stated that we should not ask anyone to volunteer to help edit the website until it is live. It was agreed to wait until that time.

Culinary Seminar April 2nd Update: Michael reported that registrations for the seminar are slow and he is considering cancelling it. Chris suggested sending the membership a reminder, along with suggestions for promotion avenues. The deadline is March 18th.

April 3rd Membership Meeting Agenda:

Education:

Andy Van Hevelingen will present information about some of the **new lavender cultivars from Australia** that he will be offering this year. Information about the **Oregon House Bills HB3226 and SB320**, concerning farm production of culinary products to sell, will also be presented. Steve will help with the legalities regarding the above bills. Bonnie Schmidt might help Michael and Steve with the information at the April meeting. **Action Item: Steve will decipher the bills and relay the details to Michael and Bonnie Schmidt so that they can prepare the presentation.**

Members' Fair/OLA Product Pickup and Sales/Road Sign Pick up

Chris asked Bonnie to send a reminder to members about the Members' Fair and product and sign pickup for the April meeting.

Action Item: Bonnie will send an email reminder to members regarding: Product deadlines, picking up brochures, the Culinary Seminar and the April members' fair. Other email reminders will address the need for a photo contest volunteer and the Cooperative information presented by Janna at the February meeting.

Old business:

Marilyn reported that the proposed Lavender Boot Camp that she is planning with Sarah Bader will be delayed. She will report on these changes, later.

Bonnie believes that it is very likely that the website will be live by the end of the March.

Dan suggested that several members have their laptops available at the April meeting to help members update their information and to take product orders.

Future Membership Meeting Schedule:

Saturday, August 27th at Still Waters Lavender in Redmond

Hosts: Gene and Bonnie Schmidt. Gene suggested offering a pruning demonstration as part of the education, as well as a presentation on propagation.

Sunday, October 23rd, 1:30 – 5:00 PM at the Chehalem Cultural Center in Newberg

Host: Marilyn Kosel - Carol will invite a Travel Oregon representative to speak at this meeting.

Next OLA Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 5th.

Minutes submitted by Karalee Mitro and edited by Chris Mulder