

Oregon Country Fair Board of Directors
Monday June 29, 2008, 4pm, onsite outside the Hub Yurt
(aka the “July” meeting)

Present: Diane Albino, Danya Ariel, Katie Cousins, Paxton Hoag, Lara Howe, Jack Makarchek, Deane Morrow, Joseph Newton and Palmer Parker (alternates), Carl Taylor, Lawrence Taylor, Bear Wilner-Nugent.

Announcements

norma said the Teddy Bear Picnic is August 23 and Paxton said the Evaluation meeting is the following day on Aug. 24.

Bear and Anna announced times of camp host trainings and Peach Power meetings to be held just before the Fair.

Joseph announced a conference at UO on non-violence as a way of life to be held September 12-14. He will lead a workshop on “the challenge of loving your political adversary.”

Jack talked about this being “Barb’s last meeting as scribe” and was the first of several who brought tears to her (*okay, my*) eyes with their kind words. He said, “I want to thank her for doing the best with my sometimes metaphorical cryptic language, and making it seem like it was kind of like what I thought I said.” Everyone laughed and applauded and Jack gave her a parting gift from the Board. (*I opened it right after the meeting. It’s a beautiful purple leather notebook inscribed with the OCF peach logo from Gabbiano Leather of Elmira, and inside a gift certificate to Down to Earth. Thank you, Thank you!*)

Approval of Minutes

Jack moved and Katie seconded to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2008 Board meeting. The motion passed: 9 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention (Lawrence). (*Palmer voted in place of Carl who arrived during member input.*)

Member Input

Kay Kintzley (Elder) talked about cool ideas that get generated in conversations that happen at the Fair. A couple ideas she heard in the past few days include having a steam train from Eugene to the Fair or some kind of people-powered transportation like at the Eugene Olympic trials. She got a laugh when she added, “and Elders want a zip line.”

Lara noted that since the minutes of this meeting “won’t be read until after the Fair, I’d like to give a shout-out and thank you to all the Crews who keep our toilets clean and give us clean drinking water” and so much more. She also thanked Crafters who “bring these gorgeous, gorgeous art pieces” and the Entertainers “who my daughter says is her number one thing to do at the Fair; she already has her schedule lined up.” Lara feels “blessed to be a part of this.”

Jen-lin Hodgden (Feedback Coordinator) talked about the qualities she’d like to see in the next GM. She said it will take “a quantum shift” in perspective of the membership. “All of us who were here in the beginning have to look at what the reality is now. It’s not the same as it was 30 years ago and we have to get up to speed. We have a million dollar budget, more acreage and more people.” She’s not an Elder yet but “has been here a long time” and talked about the importance of “learning to move over graciously and hand it over to the vision of our youth.”

Lara said this is Leslie's last Fair as GM and as she looks at her and thinks about that she feels that Leslie is "so amazing, so incredible to work with. She empowers me and everybody who's around her. It's hard to put into words. Thank you, love you, happy days ahead."

Lawrence reminded us that even though we're all busy, take the time "to look around at the trees, smell the pennyroyal, listen to the birds, take off your shoes and feel the dirt on your feet."

Doug Green (BUM) said Lara's words remind him of a line from Damn Yankees, "a man never knows what he has until he loses it." He nodded to Leslie and said, "It's been the best, the absolute best." Katie added, "It's been a great run." Everyone broke into applause again and it was Leslie's turn to cry.

Staff and Officer Reports

General Manager: Leslie said it's been her "day to cry and it comes from so much sweetness, kindness, generosity, so many moments that take my breath away. Seeing how happy people are when they're here, how totally we feel like this is the world we want. I think I'm somewhat in denial because I find myself thinking about planning for next year and making it better. That will always be my intention no matter what my involvement. I look forward to re-joining the ranks of the volunteers." She said it "has been such an honor to work with the other staff, the kind of work they do and the commitment they have and the quality and caring they bring to their work." She thanked the management team and introduced a new swimmer, Tony. "Everywhere I go the work I see people doing, it's an extraordinary group, an extraordinary thing we're creating here. It's so rare and such a gift to be a part of this. The fabulous thing is it seems like the world is starting to get it, starting to notice and pay attention to what the Fair is truly about and why it really does matter. I wish I had time to thank everyone personally – Carl you sit on this Board and are also a QM, Lara you give so much," and she continued around the circle mentioning people and praising the wide variety of things they do for the Fair. She ended with Jack, saying "and our President remembering to take Zach a bottle of water during intervention training. So many moments like that...that's really what this report should be about, so everything else can wait until it comes up in motion."

Administrative Assistant: norma said, "It's such an honor and privilege to be here and to be doing this, so my report is just a huge enormous thank you for allowing me to be part of this."

Site Manager: Steve said, "Service is bliss, this is reward time. Our community is alive and well, self-aware, self-reinforcing. What's happening around us today and for the past couple of weeks is a community emerging stronger and more relevant than ever. Main Camp is going great. Crews are superb; they do everything they can possibly do not only for the event but for the community." He said his fuel budget is "shot to hell." It includes propane, diesel, and bio-diesel and a budget of \$13000 "based on last year and a reasonable increase" of which \$9000 has already been spent. "The balance will get us through the Fair, then we'll need to reassess what's needed for the rest of the year." He talked about having a facility onsite where Board and other meetings could be held, "where we can make decisions on our own land." He said the "decision-making feng shui of the EWEB building sucks" and "we're so much better out here than we are anywhere else." He said the kitchen has been great, "adjusting to new realities, new ways of doing things." Speaking of the kitchen, he nodded to the large plate of cookies on the table and said, "let's unwrap what they brought us."

Assistant Manager: Charlie said, "This is getting to be a tender experience for me. I've never had a working experience like what I have with Leslie. I'm halfway in denial about this and the other half I spend every moment I can embracing that time, because being present in those

moments is really an incredible gift to me. So much of what we do as staff is to set the stage... and now here it is, and the extended family is about to descend upon us, and some of it already has, and now to stand back and let go and let this thing come to life and animate itself... and to watch that happen. The next two weeks is what we're here for, this is what we do. I think of a quote about a band that's played here... we're not the *best* at what we do, we're the *only* ones that do what we do. It's more important now than ever that we be that unique shining role model and project that into a world that needs it so badly. There's nothing I've ever been a part of that's anything like this. I'm grateful I get to do this and let's have the best Fair ever."

Office Assistant: Robin said it's "really awesome to be able to hold down the fort at the town office, lots of people coming in, more than before during this period, and to have the honor of being able to welcome people, to help them, to represent the love that we are. There are people coming in with complex issues and it can be a challenge but I'm so grateful for the opportunity." She talked about Culture Jam bringing "artists, theatre people, dancers, and being able to give these kids an amazing experience... such a gift from the Fair every year for 50 kids. I can't say how grateful I am. Everything's rolling. Every time I come out here I can feel the love growing."

Treasurers: Hilary said she's been involved with the Fair since 1982 and in 1993 Leslie came to her and said the Fair needed a new Treasurer and had "been going through them pretty fast." She said, "At that time there were 2 employees, a budget of about \$300,000, no Culture Jam, no community relations team." She said the "maturity and depth we've achieved in the last 15 years has been remarkable. I, too, treasure working with Leslie and this is a great time to appreciate Leslie and her accomplishments and the changes we've been through as an organization. We've become a nuanced, complicated, fun-loving, ideal-driven organization." She thanked the kitchen, said it's a tight budget year, and said the "cooperation we've gotten from people has been great and the good morale has been wonderful."

President: Jack asked us to "pause for a moment for the spirits who are no longer with us in the flesh" and after a moment started to talk about Leslie saying, "My best times with Leslie are when we don't even talk about the Fair at all, some very cherished moments for me... I don't know if she always understands me but she always takes the time to listen and it makes sense what she says back to me. All the hard work that everybody's doing and the attention we pay to each other... to make sure we stay healthy, I personally appreciate that very much. Thank you Leslie and I'll certainly miss your... an example, just the other day we were walking through woods, nice day, she was so engaged with the Fair, so right on task, so right on spot, not even a moment she was not 100% on task even with the birds singing... so thank you for that right to the end."

Committee Reports

Personnel: Anna Scott said the GM job description is moving forward and they are working collaboratively with staff. "Within the PC, we've divided into tasks. We're all employers, we help the Board, they help us, it's all about the collective. If you have ideas for us, please let us know."

Path Planning: Chris Browne read the report from their June 15 meeting where "visual aid presentation boards" were reviewed. The boards will assist committee members in talks with Fair Family groups and Crews to inform them what Path Planning is looking at and what they are trying to accomplish. They ask for feedback from everyone "to gather together a picture of the Fair site's strengths and weaknesses." For the third time, they broke into groups to continue the "segment evaluation studies." They reported that the relocation and reconstruction of the Arts and Crafts booth and the installation of the new portable 6-booth structure is "well under way" and they asked people

to check it out and give the committee your thoughts. Their next meeting will be at noon on September 14 onsite at the Hub Yurt.

Vision Quest: Joseph said a summit was held on May 18 but because of pre-Fair work it will be after the Fair before details are put together. He said early last year Paxton made a motion asking VQ to study “the process by which we pick performers.” He said their process was already underway and they never took it up. “So it’s work that has not been completed and we’re handing it back to the Board who may have to take it up again.” The VQ goals adopted by the Board will be on display on Strawberry Lane.

Elders: Chris Browne read the report from their June 26 meeting where they finalized plans for the Old Timers Picnic held on the 28th with “good food, wonderful music and great friends old and new; once again the Kitchen Crew did a first rate job and deserves high praise.” They also reviewed plans for the Meet and Greet on July 10 and the Welcoming Ceremony and Remembrance Ceremony on July 11. They reported 293 Elder passes and 212 vehicle stickers requested and paid for through the Elders Committee, totaling \$15,670. Their next meeting will be on Thursday July 24 at 7pm at the OCF town office.

Old Business

Budget Issues – Increase Budget for Buses

Bear moved and Joseph seconded that the Board increase the LTD line item in the budget by \$4500.

Peach Gallery and Board: Leslie said, “We all know about the struggle to renew the contract with LTD. The original contract was signed in February and even though gas prices have soared LTD is honoring the hourly rate set at that time. That’s the good news. However, we expect a 5-10% increase in ridership this year, which is something we want and we encourage,” but will require a larger budget. She added, “Our ability to add hours during the weekend is really limited because it involves driver scheduling. It would be unwise not to budget for it as a contingency now. If it’s not needed, we won’t spend it.” She also reported that 40-50% of online ticket buyers are buying green tickets. Paxton encouraged people to ride the bus.

The motion passed: 10 in favor and 0 opposed.

Craft Committee Appointment

Lara moved and Joseph seconded that the Board appoint Justin Honea to Craft Committee.

Peach Gallery: norma said Justin is a first year Co-Coordinator of Registration Crew and is “doing a great job; we’re really fortunate to have him working with us.”

Board: Lara said it’s “a pleasure working with him” and called him “a ball of freakin’ energy”. Deane said Justin has “stepped up to the plate” and because of all of the Registration Crew there are “no names on the wait share list this year.” (*This drew a round of applause, too.*)

The motion passed: 10 in favor and 0 opposed.

Appoint New Recording Secretary

Deane moved and Lawrence seconded that the Board appoint Bill Ganser as Recording Secretary.

Background: Bill sent a letter of application to the Board a couple months ago and took ‘practice’ minutes at the June 2 meeting. He comes with a wealth of experience taking minutes for various organizations as well as a history with the Fair. He spoke to the Board saying he moved to

Eugene in 1988 and shortly afterward found out about the Fair and got a job on Security Crew. He said, “This place resonates with me. It’s where I want to put my time. I feel humbled that you’re going to allow me to do Barb’s job. I hope I can serve you well.”

Peach Gallery: Barbara said Bill has lots of experience and it “feels good to pass the responsibility to someone who I know will do an incredible job. His practice minutes of the June 2 meeting were more complete than my official minutes.” Leslie welcomed Bill and thanked Barbara for her “fidelity to telling the truth with grace and wisdom and thoroughness.” (*Alright, it’s embarrassing to write that about myself and I almost omitted it, but I really like the way those words sound together. Leslie’s got the gift.*) Grumpy recalled the position’s history: “Casey Renfro was Secretary, then norma, then Heidi, then norma again, then Jen-lin, then Barb. Everybody’s been incredible in this position.” norma told Barb she’d miss her and said welcome and congratulations to Bill.

Board: Deane, Lara and Bear all thanked Barb for her work and Bill for stepping forward, and dittoes all around.

The motion passed: 10 in favor and 0 opposed.

Personnel Amendments Re: Health Benefits and More

Katie moved and Jack seconded that the Board make the following amendments to the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual. (She had a hand-out which she read into the minutes.)

Background: The hand-out has the old wording and the proposed new wording for section VI Compensation and Benefits. The new wording is as follows: “Subsection E Benefits: 1. Contract and regular full time employees are entitled to such benefits as authorized by the Board. As of the date of these policies, those benefits are: a. personal time; b. health insurance as adopted by the Board; c. employee retirement contributions. 2. Regular part time employees are entitled to such benefits as authorized by the Board. As of the date of these policies, those benefits are: a. pro-rated personal time; b. employee retirement contributions. 3. Temporary and probationary employees are not entitled to any benefits, including paid vacation, sick leave or other form of paid leave or personal time, except if required by law. Subsection G Personal Time: After their probationary period, regular employees are eligible for personal time. Personal time is accrued at the rate of 1/8 hour per hour worked, up to 40 hours per week starting at the end of the probationary period. Personal time may be used for any purpose. Use of personal time should be scheduled with the employee’s immediate supervisor in advance whenever possible. Up to a total of 120 hours personal time may be carried over from year to year.”

Peach Gallery: Jen-lin said this provides no health insurance for part-time employees of which the Fair has only one at this time (the Groundskeeper). Katie explained the gist of the change is to eliminate, temporarily, health insurance for part-time employees. This is necessary because the Fair’s only part-time employee will be working less than the minimum number of hours to qualify, and that would disqualify everyone else on the payroll from receiving the HSA (Health Savings Account) benefit. (*Katie explained to me that this is the benefit that permits the employer to deposit money into a cash account for the employee to use for medical purposes. This is frequently used when the main health insurance carries a high deductible. The way the law is written, this is the piece we would lose if we tried to accommodate a less-than-half-time employee in the health insurance plan as it is currently written. The Board will be allowed to explore other options when the “change window” opens in February.*)

The motion passed: 9 in favor and 1 opposed (Deane).

Incorporating Graduating Teens and Transitioning Elders into New and Existing Crews

Katie moved and Lawrence seconded that vacancies on new and existing crews should be filled as much as possible with graduating teens and transitioning Elders.

Peach Gallery: Grumpy questioned why we'd want to move an Elder who has experience in one job to another new job, and said he thought the idea was to have Elders give up their jobs to make room for teens, "this doesn't make any sense to me." Bryon Hummell (Cabal Gate Security) said the hardest thing he's seen is "when parents have kids on crew, and asking the parents to step down to make room for their kids; then they have to worry how to get their SOP. We need more room, I guess, because to bring in a teen someone else has to step down and it's not always an Elder." Steve W. gave the example of an Elder doing hard work such as Tree Crew who might want to retire or perhaps move to a less physical job like staffing an Info booth. Lois Morford (Elder) said, "Some of us are not able to continue our old jobs but still want to stay active and contribute. Also, I have to pay \$60 for my Elder pass where before I could earn my pass and food vouchers, so that's an economic reason why many Elders who can't continue in their old jobs would still like to participate in a new job." Jon Pincus said this is an "if possible" motion, "not a hard and fast requirement but more like a recommendation." Hilary said it would be good operationally to have a list of graduating teens and their job skills, because hiring someone depends on if they are suited for the job. Chris Browne (Elder) asked about the intent of the motion. Katie answered the intent is for the Board to publicly state a policy preference without it being a requirement. Leslie said we tend to use teens for heavy work and she hopes this policy doesn't promote the mindset that teens are only good for physical work and Elders are only good for mind work. She said Elders have a 20-year history with the Fair and she doesn't want to see teens lose their opportunity to an Elder. She said she doesn't mean to speak against Elders, only to speak up for teens "who need more of a leg up." Robin asked if Elders need a job more for the purpose of saving money or to have work to do. She felt the idea of saving money was not a good enough reason to take a spot that could go to a youth. Hilary said it's a big issue to have access to a pass.

Board: Palmer said to do more than this motion requires would be "overstepping our bounds" but to say just to consider something is "not giving it any bite at all." Joseph said the Board already encourages openings for teens and he doesn't want to "create more of a sense of entitlement." Deane said the motion is only a recommendation. He talked about the Elders and said the Fair wouldn't be here without them. "Some want to sit in the shade, some want to still be involved." He said there are lots of jobs Elders can do, such as being a guide for a foreign visitor. "Some Elders need help setting up their tent site, who better to help them than teens? We'd work well together." Lawrence said since it's not really a rule it doesn't really do anything. He suggested a memo to Coordinators is all that's necessary, rather than a motion. Jack said he is "sensitive to the issue of cost because that is real for some Elders. We're trying to find a way to not throw anybody off the island. We're throwing teens off the island. There's a bit of an administrative problem. We've not solved the teen problem and this motion doesn't do it." Lara agreed with Jack and Lawrence and said Recycling Crew placed all their graduating teens. Danya agreed that all that's needed here is a memo, not a Board motion.

The motion failed: 3 in favor and 7 opposed (Bear, Carl, Danya, Diane, Jack, Lara, and Lawrence).

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm. The next Board meeting will be held on Monday August 4, 2008 at 7pm at the EWEB Training Room. The agenda, subject to change, will include the following tabled items: Budget Issues; Consider Donation to Southeast Works (Bear); Health Insurance for Fair Family (Deane); Path Planning Committee Appointment (Deane); as well as the following new business: Executive Director Job Description (Katie). Removed from the agenda: Reactivate Survey Committee (Paxton). *(He said he plans to do some re-writing at this year's Fair with some other people involved.)* Donation to Multi-Cultural Storytelling Festival (Joseph) is on the agenda for the September meeting. Because Labor Day falls on the first Monday, the September Board meeting will be held on Monday Sept. 8, 2008 at 7pm onsite at the HubYurt.

Minutes by Barbara Edmonds who thanks Carl Sagan for the following quote:
“Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known.” *(Thank you all for a great run, that includes you, dear readers. It's been a pleasure to serve you. Welcome, Bill.)*