

**ELDERS FALL RETREAT MINUTES** – Approved at the 10/24/24 meeting

**DATE:** Saturday, September 21, 2024

**LOCATION:** Alice's, Oregon Country Fair site

**MEETING TIME:** 10 a.m.

**HOSTS:** Elder Events Subcommittee (Kay, Lisa, Synnove)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Diane Albino, Ann Bennett-Rogers, Jain Elliott, Nancy Hafner, Kay Kintzley, Robert "Mouseman" McCarthy, Eric Nicholson

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** Heather Kent, Michael James Long

**BOARD LIAISONS ABSENT:** Kevin Levy, Jon Steinhart

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Synnove Abrahamsen, Roberta Austin, Sandra Bauer, Tom Boyatt, Anna L. Brown, Amber Coates, Darlene Colborn – facilitator, Andy Constant, Lisa Cooley, Katie Cousins, Carolyn Gsell – scribe, Paxton Hoag, Chris Howe, Jim May, Jon Pincus, Jerry Shultz, Licia Shultz, Jenny Wilson, Linda Frohbach

**QUORUM ESTABLISHED:** 8 of 10 committee members present

### **AGENDA**

- Introductions
- Announcements
  - EAB – Ann
  - Elder 2024 T-shirts for sale
- Fair 2024 debrief
  - Elders Camping – Anna B.
  - Still Living room - Sandra
  - Meet and Greet - Kay Lisa
  - Geezer Pleezer – Anna B.
  - New Timeline - Sandra
- Events update - Lisa
- Alternate (off-site) Elder Camping - Amber
- Elders at large Mission Statement - Darlene & Amber
- Elders Committee Mission Statement. - Tom B.
- Wrap-up

### **Post Meeting:**

- 5 p.m. Elders Candidate forum
- 6 p.m. Dinner

### **Introductions**

Each person stated their name and what they are currently doing in the Fair.

### **Announcements**

- Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Update – Ann  
Jon P, Sandra and Ann are on the EAB task force. There has been more media attention lately with an increase in the outbreak. The stewardship during the past two fairs is educating folks on EAB. They are working on a plan, looking for financing, and trying to assess impacts on our ecosystem. Meetings are listed on the .net site, and anyone is welcome to attend. The outbreak in Marion County is the closest one to the Fair site. It has likely been here for 10 years has likely

been there for 10 years and is the closest outbreak to the Fair site. The infestation started in Michigan and spread to Maine at the same time it was initially identified in Oregon. Ann has photos of forests of dead trees running down I-80. The most important approach is managing the situation.

#### Further EAB Discussion:

- ⇒ What percentage of trees on the property are ash? 60% of tree inventory on the land is ash, mostly in the areas around the lower part of the property including South Woods.
- ⇒ Chris – All of the windrow trees in her area around the fields are ash.
- ⇒ Ann – loss of those trees will change the ground hydrology.
- ⇒ Paxton – The life cycle of the tree is for the first 2-3 years of infection starts in the tree crown, but it's not observable. It is the larvae that embed in the cambium of the tree and damage occurs top down. After 5 years into the process the tree becomes dangerous. Years 7-8 tree will die no matter what you do. Paxton feels that we will lose all our ash trees. What do we want to plant to replace these trees? How do we deal with our heritage trees which are ash? There are some ways to prolong the life of a diseased tree, but it is very complicated.
- ⇒ Next EAB task force meeting October 2: <https://oregoncountryfair.net/event/emerald-ash-borer-task-force-meeting-5/>
- ⇒ Sandra – we will lose a lot of shade canopy. It's a blessing and a curse. It may allow us to expand some camping, and at the same time we will lose shade.
- Ann - Our next Elders Committee Meeting – Thursday, 9/26 will be hybrid. We had our first Elders Hybrid committee meeting this past May. Ann won't be able to attend and help setup the in-person meeting at the Fair office. She gave instructions on how to use the owl camera. Vanessa can provide instructions. The September meeting will start at 6 p.m. We need an in-person facilitator. Tom won't be available to facilitate. Whoever shows up in-person will need to select a facilitator.
- Peggy Day was remembered with several moments of silence.
- Licia S. has all the Memorial Kiosk notes from the 2024 Still Living Room and will bring them to the Spirit Walk for a burning ceremony.
- Both board Liaisons contacted Carolyn to say they are unable to attend today.
- We still have a few Elder 2024 T-shirts for sale. See Carolyn after lunch.
- Kay brought some extra 2024 Elder laminates that were distributed amongst the group.
- Katie Cousins passed around a “free” box”.

For more information: <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/Documents/forestbenefits/eab-readiness-and-response-plan-for-oregon.pdf>

and

<https://www.oregon.gov/oda/programs/IPPM/SurveyTreatment/Pages/EmeraldAshBorer.aspx#:~:text=In%20response%20to%20the%20discovery,Washington%2C%20Yamhill%2C%20Mario n%2C%20and>

#### **FAIR 2024 DEBRIEF**

- **Elders Camping** - Anna B.  
Elder Hub Camp had 74 sites, 86 tents, and 116 people. Everyone on the wait list this year got a spot, either permanent or temporary. Anna will take Peggy's camp spot next year. Elder

Camp folks have some projects in mind: They want to make cedar stakes to mark tents sites, Each tent stake will mark each tent site with the name and number for the site occupant. They would love to have the peach logo on each tent stake, though unsure they can make that happen this year.

Heat was hard on pre-Fair camp volunteers. There were plenty of volunteers helping to set up and clean up the camp. There are hazardous areas in the camp and Anna would like to contact someone with Fair Camping to see what can be done to make things safer. It was recommended to contact John Kay with Fair Camping.

- **Still Living room (SLR) - Sandra**
  - *Note: Jerry Joffe will report on the Counterculture History Coalition at the October Elders Committee Meeting*

Mouseman chimed in on the Counterculture History Coalition (CHC) presentation. It was fun and the participants remarked how well things went utilizing the SLR. Mouseman did some brainstorming with KOCF. They said they are willing to give us a time slot to tell our CHC story on the radio. He is bringing this up now so that we can get thinking about what we wish to discuss.

Sandra – Volunteers Showed up in the extreme heat. The display went very well. At each CHC event, the benches were filled. The CHC group were thrilled with the ability to connect with Fair people.

What should we do with the money we have to develop the area this year? The Magical History Theater was greatly improved with the addition of extra benches in the theater, as well as in the main area of the display. The next Improvement to be made is with lighting. A lot of the batteries are dead. Sandra would like to give away the heavy string lights that go in the trees. Anna B. said she is willing to take them to Elder Hub Camp. There may be some extra carpeting the SLR can donate to Elder Hub camp. Sandra would like to find her replacement for coordinating all the décor. She and Carolyn have someone in mind, and they will reach out to that person soon.

- Further SLR Discussion:
  - ⇒ A couple of people mentioned that we need to mentor younger elders.
  - ⇒ Carolyn mentioned that the big storage bin for SLR is a mess and It needs to be cleaned out. There are many items that are no longer used or are in disrepair. There was a discussion to put together a work party in May to clean out the box. Anna could use many things from the box. This should go on the Spring Retreat agenda.
  - ⇒ Jerry – We don't need any more furniture. However, the Memorial Kiosk really needs to be replaced. We need something that is easier to put up. Jerry would like to design and build a new Kiosk and name it the "The Peggy Day Memorial Kiosk". Everyone present was in favor of the rebuild.
  - ⇒ Mouseman **made a motion to approve the rebuilding the memorial kiosk and to name it The Peggy Day Memorial Kiosk.** Kay seconded. **The motion passed with unanimous consent.**
  - ⇒ A big shout-out went out to Mouseman, Eric, Jerry, Tom, and Michael. These are the guys who took down the SLR furniture on Monday and delivered it to the Conex. It takes two trips with the tractor and trailer to move the items back to the Conex. Mouseman navigated the

Monday after Fair paths filled with other folks trying to move, people walking all over the place, and obstacles such as trees and vehicles parked along the sides of the path.

- **Meet and Greet - Kay**

Kay – This year’s Meet & Greet was one of the best we’ve had. Thank you to Eric for setting up the music, which was fantastic. There were plenty of volunteers to set up. There was enough food. We stayed with finger foods so that no utensils were needed. The wine stewards, Rick Valley and Jim Higby, did a great job “long into the night”. We probably hosted about 200 people. It’s a great way to show how Elders throw a great party.

Carolyn will check in with the Fair photographer about our group picture taken at the Meet and Greet. (*scribe’s note – email sent to the photographer requesting photo link*).

Synnove – Volunteerism: Right now, the Events subcommittee is focused on the Spirit Walk and Holiday Party. Part of the problem is that events are getting bigger, so that prep, setup and cleanup requires more help. Synnove would like to find some people to help prepare for the two upcoming events.

The Events Subcommittee is looking to create their own email address to make it easier to communicate about events and get volunteers.

Kay emphasized that there are two types of parties – Through fall and winter, events are mostly local people attending, whereas pre-fair and Fair events are attended by Elders near and far.

Kay also emphasized that the volunteers they are looking for would only need to commit to ONE EVENT AT A TIME. It’s not a year-long commitment.

- **Geezer Pleaser (GP) – Anna**

Fran has retired from the GP group. The GP crew was happy with the Motor Pool this year. Both GPs were gas powered. While folks still prefer an electric cart, we need a decent charging station to accommodate it. Chris H. believes there is a good method at the hub for charging electric carts and would be happy to show the GP team how they did this in the past.

A preference for volunteer drivers is that they are Elders who are in Elder Hub Camp or close to the hub, because it is easier to find and communicate with them.

Diane had a negative experience driving the GP this year. The seat didn’t adjust properly, and she had a hard time reaching her foot to the accelerator, which made it extremely uncomfortable to drive.

Ann – hopes that we have reached out to Motor pool to commend them for the positive experience we had this year. She also remarked that volunteer drivers should know their way around the Fair.

Paxton asked if the GP folks got their 3<sup>rd</sup> radio. Anna said yes, they eventually got it.

- **Timelines - Sandra**

The new timeline was a heavy lift, and the group did an amazing job. Jerry mentioned that the new Timeline is printed on an aluminum sheet, making it very durable and much lighter

weight. Kirsten provided a stipend to cover the cost, and we came in at half the amount of money allocated.

Paxton appreciated the process used by the Timeline group in submitting and selecting pictures. It was a highly collaborative process. Most of the work was done at Dean Middleton's House.

- **Events Update:** Lisa C.

Next Thursday 9/26 is our Elders Committee Meeting, starting at 6 p.m. That same night there is a Coordinators Appreciation Party at the Vets Club

October 19 is Spirit walk. It starts at 4 p.m. People can spend the night. We have Alice's for the event. Bring a Potluck dish to share.

Oct. 12 is the Annual Meeting

Dec. 7 is the Holiday party at the Washington Community Center at 2025 Washington St, Eugene, OR 97405. The time is 1:30 – 4 p.m. 12:30 is set up time. Bring a potluck dish to share. Best to bring your own dishware and utensils.

For the Spirit Walk, Lisa would like to honor the people only from the past year (Since the ~~Last~~ last Sprit Walk. We will read the names at the fire pit, to accommodate folks with mobility issues.

Mouseman suggested that after reading the names, folks could have paper written with other names that could be thrown into the Fire.

The events subcommittee (Kay, Lisa, Synnove, Mollie) would like to find one more core person to join this group. Kay would like to stay in to mentor, but not use her physical energy. We need to do some outreach to find someone.

- **Alternate (off-site) Elder Camping** - Amber

Amber hasn't yet looked further into the idea. Per Anna, there is an interest. The folks who are in SWEATS and Del Boca Veneta are not happy with their sites. Should we look at what happens with the EAB ecosystem change, so that we can promote our Elder needs for camping?

Paxton mentioned there is a campground being developed at the winery, but it is two miles away. Anna and Amber will collaborate on some ideas and work with OCF Camping.

**LUNCH BREAK:** 11:50 p.m.– meeting resumes at 1:30 p.m.

- **Mission Statements**

Darlene cited pertinent points excerpted from the OCF Board's policy that was approved at the June 30, 2002 Board Meeting:

⇒ *The OCF Board of Directors hereby establishes an Elder Policy Status to honor those Fair Family members who have contributed for many years.*

⇒ *Any Fair participant who has served the Fair as staff, booth member, and/or entertainer for at least 20 years and who is over the age of 55 is eligible for Elder Status.*

- ⇒ *An Elder working on a crew or in a booth will not be counted against the crew or booth quota, thereby making room in the Fair for the next generation.*
- ⇒ *The program shall start with 350 passes. Preference may be given to qualified Elders who are unable to continue serving the Fair in their present capacity and face losing their ability to attend the Fair for that reason.*
- ⇒ *Proposal: that the Board approves the Elders Motion as originally published in the June 3, 2002, Board minutes.*
- ⇒ *The Board of Directors requests that the Elders Committee returns to the Board with further proposals for implementing this policy.*
- ⇒ *This policy will go into effect as of the 2003 Fair.*

Darlene next read out the purpose or goal of a mission statement:

*The company's mission statement emphasizes its ongoing commitment to meeting the needs of the community.*

Diane mentioned that prior to the Elders policy being passed, a work group met for 2 years prior to hammer out the details of a policy. That group came out of the evaluation process that was done in the 90's. Brad Lerch Shepard'd it through the board.

Paxton said the working group continued after the policy was established, and the vetting process was approved at a later meeting.

Draft 1 of the At- large Elders mission statement was read out loud:

*Based on counterculture and grassroots movements, the mission of The Oregon Country Fair Elders is to foster a living legacy based on the principles of sustainability, diversity, and inclusion. While continuing to evolve as an entity, the Elders support the Fair, its members, and the community by sharing ourselves, our stories, our inspiration. On-site, on-line or through community outreach, we cultivate and manifest by example, encouraging others to do the same.*

The idea was thrown out that part of the mission should be fun.

Licia – We, by living examples, show our younger generations how to behave, teach, live by example.

Jenny identified 3 areas she things are important to Elders:

- 1) Assist elder fairgoers get around the fair, make it easier for old fairgoers in general.
- 2) Educate on the history and values of the fair.
- 3) Elder perspectives contributed to the BOD – our role is to make sure they understand the perspective of Elders.

Amber – The next generation of people is technology focused. Elders can foster the importance of (in-person) connection.

Kay –Every person’s statement is to lighten the load of negativity in the world. The purpose is to have fun on purpose, to be light-hearted on purpose, to lighten our psychic load on purpose, party with purpose.

Jerry – if you look carefully at the BOD policy, it says nothing about making it easier for Elders to attend.

Synnove is like concept of connecting all the generations.

Jon P. recalls a meeting some time ago when a new mission statement was developed for the Fair. Option F. Psychospiritual Rejuvenation won out.

Paxton – Psychospiritual Rejuvenation came in our early bylaws. Having been on the bylaws committee, Paxton said he has been fighting to keep it this in the bylaws. Elders as a whole support Elders.

There was an acknowledgement of Janet Tarver and Meera Rainy contributing to starting Elders.

Carolyn – Sustainability, Diversity and Inclusion are buzz words. We can’t really diversify because we are limited to who we already are. We should emphasize education, networking, how to be in the world, and most importantly, what Kay said.

Diane – Mentioned Council of Elders (C of E)

Ann – When the council met, they discussed specific issues to Elders

Jon P – I went to most C of E meetings. He doesn’t recall excluding non-Elders.

Kay – C of E occurred early on after the approval of Elder status by the board. Because so many people were involved in other committees, they often missed C of E meetings.

Patricia – It was about problem solving for individuals. People would come to the Council with an issue or grievance, and the C of E would go to the board to resolve the issue, but nothing ever got resolved.

It turned out that C of E were only able to advocate, but there were no results.

Paxton – C of E could come back. Originally the discussions were about late-night Fair issues.

The facilitator requested that if people want to have in depth discussion of the C of E, that we should make this an agenda item for another meeting. We are talking about Mission Statements right now.

Darlene and Amber will take the suggestions and bring back Draft 2 to the Committee.

Licia - Every participant of a meeting should have a say in the Mission Statement, but the Committee has the final vote.

Eric – Has been thinking about buzz words sustainability, diversity, inclusion. He thinks these words are important. We need to address these things, because this was the early vision of those who started the OCF. They had visions and dreams, and they cared about ending racism and caring for the land. These are still core values of the Fair. Jon P. agrees. These values are best applied to the entire Fair, every crew, and every committee. It is true that in the beginning, our purpose was to expand social progress and justice (Read Bill Wooten), but we are moving to the discussion of the committee itself. This discussion came out of the Committee Best Practices work group that we provide a mission statement. For that purpose, the mission statement is more of a nuts-and-bolts.

Darlene – We exist within the mission statement of the Fair. The Elders mission statement is more of a nuts-and-bolts thing.

Jenny – Our role is to provide education of those values. It's not just history, but the values.

Ann – we exist under the umbrella of the Fair's Mission Statement.

- **Elders Committee Mission Statement - Tom**

Draft 1 of committee mission statement:

*The Elders Committee is a space within the Oregon Country Fair governance structure to recognize our elders and to provide them with a voice in Country Fair activities. The Committee is responsible to conduct its business which includes meeting regularly and, among other things:*

- *Interacting with the OCF Board of Directors*
- *Conferring Elder status to qualified individuals*
- *Managing annual elder registration and wrist bands*
- *Coordinating and managing Elder Camps and facilities at the Fair*
- *Hosting the annual pre-Fair Elders Meet and Greet*
- *All activities associated with The Still Living Room*
- *Providing Geezer Pleezer services*
- *Maintaining the Elders website, listserv and other communication activities*
- *Managing the Committee's budget*

Tom shared that someone who read Tom's statements made the comment on the listserv that our only mission is to serve the board.

Tom stated that once the committee "approves" the Mission Statement, it should be taken to the board for final approval.

At some point, with so many people weighing in, we can end up nit-picking the draft for a long time, but at some point, we need to get over the nit-picking and give a thumbs up.

Jerry likes what Tom wrote. Very concise. Jon P. agrees. It aligns with the Committee Best Practices Work Group. It's important to get this done, because the board just passed a motion about when committees are not in good standing. A way to not be in good standing is by not submitting their annual report in full. The comment was made that our list looks operational. Tom said that the reason he did it this way (including all the bullets) is so that when the committee submits its annual report to the board, it's a place to dialogue from.

Katie – doesn't like the word "space". Agrees with controversial statement that the committee exists at the pleasure of the BOD. IT would be a good idea to point back to the original charge. Tom would like some help referring to that original charge.

Paxton – The motion that formed the Elders committee was separate from the original motion that approved Elders Status eligibility. It was chartered to have the Elders Committee report to the board concerning Elders' needs.

A suggestion was made to add: Hosting the annual Pre-fair Elders M&G, AND OTHER EVENTS. Paxton will find the wording to the motion that instructed the Elders Committee.

Synnove – We do a whole lot more than this.



Kay – Propose that this is a very important subject we are working on here. We have a committee meeting coming up on Thursday. Kay would like to see this as an agenda item then.

Jon P. confirmed that Kay is correct. It needs to be passed by the Committee. Today we are in a forum.

Paxton – We have until late winter to get this Mission statement completed.

Ann – Committee mission statement is not static. We can review it each year prior to submitting the report.

Licia – the Mission Statement at Large is not urgent.

Carolyn – I agree we should discuss this committee statement at the next meeting, but we should wait until the October meeting when Tom is available, given he originated the first draft.

Tom suggested that when we discuss this at the next meeting, that we let the audience know that Tom will include a reference to the original board motion.

Darlene requested that any draft of the statements references the version and date the draft was produced, and that the final version shows date approved by the Elders Committee.

- **Wrap-up**

Chris would like to see a nice photo and a memorial to Peggy at Elders Camp.

The group agreed to take a group photo outside.

We have a 5 p.m. meeting with candidates.

The meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.

Our candidate forum was attended by George Braddock and Lisa Parker online via Zoom, and by John Davis and Paxton Hoag in person. John Govsky was unable to attend as he was in L.A., and for the record, the Zoom option wasn't offered until Noon that day. John G. contacted me that evening, and I invited him to speak briefly at our Thursday committee meeting.

The next meeting is a committee meeting, Thursday, September 26, at 6 p.m., online and in-person.

Notes submitted by Carolyn Gsell, scribe for Elders Committee