

Elders Spring Retreat Meeting Notes – Draft 3 approved at 5/28/26 committee meeting.

Saturday, May 9, 2026, 10 a.m.

Location: Alice's

Attendees present: Synnove Abrahamsen, Diane Albino, Rolyn "Ro" Arata, Roberta Austin, Amber Bacigalupi, Mark Bacigalupi, Malka Barber, Mike Barkhuff, Sandra Bauer, Tom Boyatt - facilitator, Anna Brown, Jean Bryant-Plimmer, Darlene Colborn, Katie Cousins, George Domijan, Jain Elliott, Molly Elliott, Jeannine Emery, Leone Gholston, Carolyn Gsell – scribe, John Higby, Percy Hilo, Annemarie Hirsch, Paxton Hoag, Justin Honea, Travis Honea, Chris Howe, Jerry Joffe, Kay Kintzley, Merrill Levine, Roy Lisi, Jim May, Robert "Mouseman" McCarthy, Eric Nicholson, Cathy Piazza, Jon Pincus, Jorjan Plimmer, Ann Rogers, Jay Schwichtenberg, Jerry Shultz, Etienne Smith, Lisa Stein, Daniel Stevenson, Stacey Stevenson, Patricia VanEsso, Jeff Vassey, Jenny Wilson

AGENDA

- Approve agenda
- Introductions – acknowledge first time retreat attendees
- Housekeeping - Kay
- Announcements
 - Chris Howe's idea
- Still Living Room
 - Timelines – Retrieval and return to storage – Jerry J.
 - Furniture retrieval & setup – Carolyn, Jerry S.
 - SLR Decorating – Sandra B.
 - Luminaries – Sandra B.
 - SLR Staffing – Ro A.
 - Soft Goods/decor Takedown – Carolyn G.
 - Furnishings returned to Dug's Green– Carolyn G.
- Elders Merch 2026 – Travis H.
- Geezer Pleezer – Cathy P., Roy L.
- Elder Camps – Jorjan P. & Anna B.
- Late Night Trips – Jerry J.

LUNCH

- After Lunch Announcements
- Events Subcommittee Volunteering (Meet & Greet/Special Events) – Kay K.
- Elder Volunteers Subcommittee Report – Synnove A.
- Wristbands – Katie C.

Introductions: Each attendee introduced themselves by first name. First time retreat participants were asked to identify themselves. Cheers and applause went up for each new attendee.

Housekeeping – Kay K.

Kay reviewed housekeeping logistics for Alice's. We need to have the building cleaned up and exited by Sunday noon.

Announcements:

Darlene shared that one of last conversations with George before he passed was about providing discounts to Elders for the ritz. It won't happen this year, but it is something that Darlene will continue to work on with the Sauna crew.

Kay – Our next spring retreat is April 9, 10, 11, 2027

Other events with dates (more details under Events in afternoon agenda)

- Meet & Greet Pre-Fair Thursday.
- June Elders In-Person committee meeting and potluck– Thursday, June 18. Show up 3 p.m.
- Spirit Walk Oct. 24, 3 p.m. (Lisa C. in charge).
- Tentatively Dec winter holiday party at Alice's Dec. 12 daytime.
- Fall retreat Sept. 18,19, 20, 2026

Chris Howe's idea -

For years Elders have been paying money into the Fair's coffers. She would like to make it known to Fair family how much money the Elders contribute each year through paying for their wristbands.

FEEDBACK/COMMENTS:

- Aunty Em (Etienne S.) is willing to help.
- Establish PR effort including an annual article in FFN.
- Point was made that when a crew person becomes an Elder, they are no longer receiving a "free" wristband they received for being on a crew, they now have to pay for as an Elder.
- Has seen the cost for 1 person to camp at the Fair. Some people have stated that what we pay for wristbands does not cover the full cost per person for camping and using the services.
- A formal proposal needs to be brought to the committee that lays out the math.
- This is coming up because there is a negative perception about Elders.
- It should be emphasized the amount of volunteer time Elders have put in to put on past Fairs. Is there a way to track the amount of volunteer time to dispel the perception that Elders are taking a free ride.
- On the PRF form, it is asked if you camp at the Fair. After the Fair, the Wristband Subcommittee will have some statistics on how many people who get wristbands camp (vs. wristband holders who leave at night).
- The amount of money Elders contribute will be more accurately tabulated from the Elders' database, not sunshine. This is because Sunshine would count an Elder getting a pass from a crew. We just want to look at the total dollar intake from Elder Wristbands.
- This info we are talking about is the type of information that should go into the Elders Annual Report.
- Chris Brown used to attend board meetings and give an Elders Committee report to The board.
- It's not so much about how much money we generate; it is more about the volunteer time that all the Elders put in. How many hours did we all put in before we became elders?
- We submit an Elders committee report to the board before almost every board meeting.
- This project will take some time, so think about aiming for the 2027 Fair.
- Art kiosk 3-sided sharing what elders contribute to the Fair.
- We are fighting a headwind here. (perception of Boomers).
- The fact that Elders are here is already a testimony to how many hours Elders put into the Fair.
- Many volunteers who were in the generation preceding boomers helped start the Fair.

Still Living Room - Carolyn

There are many moving parts to the Still Living Room exhibit.

- **Timelines – Retrieval and return to storage** – Jerry J.

On pre-Fair weekend, Jerry opens archives in the basement of the Fair office. Robert Jacobs and Kevin McCormick move items from the Fair basement up to the truck. We could use a couple of younger elders to help move the timelines. They will take care of this on Sunday, July 5

- **Furniture retrieval & setup** – Carolyn, Jerry S.

The heavy furnishings such as benches, kiosk, wall panels, etc. that are stored in a designated Conex at Dug's Green need to be retrieved from storage and transported to the Still Living Room. The last two years, we broke this undertaking into 2 separate work parties.

Pre-Pre-Fair Wednesday, July 1, we will transport furniture from Dug's Green to the exhibit site on Strawberry Lane

Pre-Fair Sunday July 5, we will set up the furnishings at the exhibit site. There is a lot of heavy lifting involved both days and we need able-bodied volunteers.

- **Décor** –Sandra B.

Teresa Vaughn and her partner Aviathar are taking the lead. The décor will be set up on Pre-Fair Wednesday, July 8 at 9:30 a.m. all the photos, décor, lighting goes up, as well as setting up the theater. We need volunteers to help set up the décor. It is a fun project.

- **Luminaries** – Sandra B.

This year we are making Peach Luminaries that will include a memento for people who have passed. They are made of paper mache. There will be work parties at Sandra's home on June 29 and 30. Start time is 10 a.m. and expect to put in 3 -4 hours each day. Rochelle Potter is the artist taking the lead on the project.

Flyer for this event reads: *PEACH LUMINARY GATHERING, June 29 – 30*

A creative offering for the Oregon Country Fair community

Join us in a cozy private home as we transform a tree in the Still Living Room into a glowing Peach Luminary Tree.

Guided by artist Richelle Potter, we will create papier-mache peach lanterns to honor those who have helped "light the way."

Make one or many luminaries – each a tribute to founders, loved ones, and the spirits who continue to shape the Fair.

To reserve your spot and get location details, send a text message to Teresa Vaughn (360) 540-0456

- **Staffing - Ro**

This year we are changing the staffing shifts to 3 hours per shift. The shifts are staggered. Ro has the sign-up sheet so you can sign up at this meeting.

Connect with Ro at lunch. Staffing involves maintaining a presence at the exhibit, sharing information, keeping the space clean. A great skill is eavesdropping, it's fun!

Mouseman shared that Alice Chad (Grandma Alice) who spent almost all her Fair public hours staffing the Still Living Room is nearing the end of her life.

- **Soft Goods/decor Takedown**

Volunteers show up around 7 p.m. Sunday night as the Fair closes to the public to remove all the décor items and place them in the large storage box.

- **Furnishings returned to Dug's Green**– Carolyn G.

In the past we have removed all the furnishings and transported them along with Elder Hub Camp furnishings on Monday morning post Fair back to our Conex in Dug's Green. We are rethinking the logistics and are seriously considering moving this project to Tuesday morning after things at the Fair have settled down and we can get an earlier start. Stay tuned....

Jerry S. mentioned that the Magical History Tour Theater is a big attraction, and it requires power to run it. This year, Jerry is going to buy a battery and solar panel for \$300. This has already been run by Linda Frohbach (budget) and Teresa Vaughn (décor coordinator).

Next year we need to add 2 or more pieces of equipment. Renting is a consideration, but Jerry figures it is better to own the equipment. Someone mentioned that unused batteries drain over time. Jerry reported that he takes the batteries home and keeps them maintained throughout the year.

The committee doesn't determine budget allocation.

Sandra suggested that with future expenses that Jerry work with Teresa. If you have a bigger ask than usual, the time to bring that up is before the budget gets approved.

Elders Merch 2026 – Travis

Travis provided prototypes of the new shirts in sizes XS, M, and XL. Tote bags with the new design will also be available. To obtain orders, they will send out a MailChimp with a link to the order form along with 4 different ways to pay online. They will also post information with the order form and payment options on the Elder Listservs, Facebook page, and the Elders Website. They expect this to happen later in the coming week. The deadline for ordering and payment is June 10. *Scribe's note – after the meeting, the deadline for ordering was changed to June 14, and 3, not 4 ways to pay were offered.*

Geezer Pleezer – The need for GP transport is increasing. Last year there were 2 onsite coordinators. This year we will have 4 onsite coordinators. The GP service officially starts Thursday at Noon (sooner if we get the cart sooner).

GP Hours: Thursday Noon – 9 p.m., Friday, Saturday, and Sunday 9 a.m. – 9 p.m., Monday 9 a.m. – Noon.

Driving Shifts are 3 hours.

We will get 1 gas powered golf cart

1 motor pool golf cart will likely be electric

Travis and Justin mentioned that they have a golf cart. Justin will show up as he is available to help provide transport services with his cart.

How to reach the GP – talk to someone with a radio. GP has its own channel. Best way is to come up to Elder Hub and ask. Traffic and Fair Central know which channel to call the GP. As with anything else with Fair, you must have patience.

During operational hours there is someone at the hub who receives a dispatch. If someone driving the GP is out in the parking lot and finds someone who is looking for a ride, it's up to the driver to assess whether to take them.

There is a sign-up board at the Hub where you can request rides.

There are designated GP spots. There is a map at the hub that shows where the stops are. GP Shifts tend to navigate all the stops.

Snivel is getting a dust control measure before this year's Fair.

Elder Camps

- Elder Hub camp – Anna B. & Jorjan P.

This year the Hospitality Tent will be open on both ends for ease of movement.

Anna would like to see our decon on Tuesday rather than Monday. She is concerned about heat. (the SLR decon folks typically don't get there until after Noon to pick up the camp items).

Anna would like to find some lighter weight tables. Elders Hub camp needs to "lighten up".

They are going to closely monitor what needs to be kept and what needs to be thrown out/recycled. They are looking for a 6 x 6 or 8 x 8 canopy for an outdoor cooking area. 10 x 10 was too big. They want to eliminate straw bales but need some end tables or small free-standing picnic benches as replacements.

Per Page 30 of OCF guidelines, the cook space must have 5-gallon buckets with water and burlap bags plus certified fire extinguishers.

The camp needs a better way to cover extension cords. They would like to procure their own cords. Anna reiterated that it would be much easier if they could take down and move the camp items to the Conex on Tuesday.

Feedback – The décor must get taken down Sunday night due to security concerns. The folks who decon the SLR and Elders Camp need to get together to determine when to transport decon items to the Conex at Dug's Green.

- SWEATS – David G.

Jorjan will meet with David to discuss getting a camper list and contact info. There's a wait list for Elders Hub Camp. There are sites available at SWEATS. We were reminded that there is a link on the Elders' website to sign up for a camping spot in South Woods

<https://ocfelders.weebly.com/elder-hub-and-elder-camps.html>

A camp work party is scheduled for Saturday, May 30. Bring gloves and tools. This will include a tour of the South Woods Camps.

Bottom line if you want your South Woods camping spot back, you need to go to the elders website and sign up again, because there is no list of campers who were there in 2025.

Late Night Trips - Jerry Joffe

If you don't want to camp, there is Late **Night Trips** option and there is info on the .net site and the Elders website. <https://oregoncountryfair.net/late-night-trips-2/>

LUNCH

Post-Lunch Announcement

- Encouragement to bring hybrid meeting back to the board, per a letter to FFN from Elder Michael "Coyote" Connelly.

Comments:

The request should come from Elders at large, not the Elders Committee.

Someone didn't realize that board meetings are still 100% online.

This year, as was also the case last year, the June-ly meeting is online (Sunday, June 28).

We should form a "Council of Elders" so we have a voice that is beyond committee meetings.

The majority of Elders at this meeting gave a thumbs up to in-person/hybrid meetings.

We find value in meeting in person. Tom B. said he would write something up for everyone to look at.

Events Subcommittee Volunteering (Meet & Greet/Special Events) – Kay K.

- June meeting in-person at Kay's home.

Address is: 84674 Hill TOP Drive, Pleasant Hill, OR

Directions: Hilltop is to the left past the 7-mile marker. Drive 1 mile and you'll see flagging at the entrance. Go down a long gravel driveway and you'll see the place.

Show up anytime starting at 3 p.m.

The events folks will be making ice cream treats for a donation that will be used to purchase wine and large trash cans for Meet & Greet. Donations of bottles of wine will also be accepted. John Higby, wine steward, requested no Cabernet Sauvignons. They are not popular with this group. Bring chairs and your own table service to the potluck.

Potluck starts at 5 p.m. and the meeting will be held afterwards.

- Meet & Greet:

Per Eric N., the entertainment will include Radar Angels, Melanie Reid, and the Never Ever Band.

Set up starts at 10 a.m. cleaning up the site and hauling in tables, etc.

Food setup starts at 2:30 - 3 p.m. We need plenty of volunteers to help with putting out food and decorating the space.

Party starts at 5 p.m.

Clean up must occur before dark. We need volunteers to help break things down. The events subcommittee folks will direct volunteers.

BE The LIGHT is the new theme for Meet & Greet 2026. Leone Gohlstein is making laminates for Elder volunteers using the "Be The Light" theme.

Elder Volunteers Subcommittee Report – Synnove A.

The subcommittee received applications from folks who indicated they would like to volunteer.

Annemarie, Carolyn & Synnove reached out to about 15 people each by phone. There are some new Elders who indicated they will step up to help.

Elder Hub Camp could use volunteer help decorating Thursday pre-Fair, and additional help with camp breakdown. It looks like final decon will be Tuesday July 14 this year.

Wristbands – Katie C

Pass Request Forms are being processed as we speak.

For registration: Tuesday July 7 pre-Fair at the Unitarian church 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Onsite registration will be different this year. Fair management wants to take responsibility for wristbanding. There will be an Elders Troubleshooting line with 5 people from the wristband subcommittee available to resolve any issues. There has been good coordination with the registration folks.

After wristbanding at the Unitarian Church, Katie and Mouseman will be at the Fair site at the Hub to wristband folks who are already onsite. They will start at approximately 3ish p.m.- 5 p.m. Afterwards they will head over to the Sauna to wristband the sauna crew. Last year they wristbanded about 300 Elders at the Church.

The meeting ended at 2:40 pm and everyone went outside for a group photo.

The next Elders Committee meeting is Thursday, May 28, at 6 p.m. The meeting is hybrid.