

HARRY P. LEU GARDENS BOARD

January 28, 2015 Minutes

The Harry P. Leu Gardens Board of Trustees held its regular meeting on Wednesday, January 28, 2015, at Leu Gardens. **The meeting was called to order by Brian Forster at 7:50 a.m. announcing a quorum present:**

TRUSTEES PRESENT: (11 meetings scheduled; **3 meetings** held year-to-date for 2014-15 fiscal year)

Brian Forster, (2/1) Chair

Philip Farris, (3/0)

Alberto Sanchez de Fuentes, (3/0) Vice-Chair

Michelle Francos, (3/0)

Lorelei Anderson-Francis, (3/0)

Jay Hood, (3/0)

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Bowden, Executive Director, Harry P. Leu Gardens

Keri Byrum, Assistant Director, Harry P. Leu Gardens

Kim Robinson, Membership Coordinator

MINUTES:

It was moved by Jay Hood and seconded by Alberto Sanchez-Fuentes to approve the November 19, 2014 Harry P. Leu Board minutes. There was no discussion. **It was approved by all as presented.**

ATTENDANCE AND REVENUE:

Keri Byrum reported on November and December 2014 Leu Attendance reports. Attendance for November and December 2014 was a little lower with 20,415 compared to November and December 2013 attendance of 21,626, although overall attendance remains ahead of last year. December's Movie Night was cancelled due to rain and Facility Use Rentals are down slightly, attendance for education programs are excellent.

It was moved by Jay Hood and seconded by Alberto Sanchez-Fuentes that the Leu November and December 2014 Attendance reports be approved. It was approved by all as presented.

Michelle Francos arrived 7:55 a.m.

Ms. Byrum updated the board of upcoming special events. The board discussed the decrease in facility use revenue. They inquired about the rate change affecting rentals and made suggestions to help staff get the word out. The Board suggested reaching out to key groups and inviting them to have meetings at the gardens.

It was moved by Jay Hood and seconded by Alberto Sanchez-Fuentes that the Leu November and December 2014 Revenue reports be approved. It was approved by all as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Hearing no public comment, the meeting proceeded.

Robert Bowden arrived 8:02 a.m.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Bowden commented on Joseph Stine, Leu Foundation Trustee, visiting the gardens last week and seemed very pleased. Ms. Byrum informed the board of the success of Ribbit the Exhibit and the blooming of the Camellias. . She also mentioned the success of the Camellia class and the January Camellia Walk tours conducted by Robert Bowden with over 30 visitors in each tour. Artist Andy Cobb did a question and answers session with staff and volunteers. The gardens have received a lot of editorial coverage for the exhibit from *Orlando Family Magazine* and *WKMG Local 6 News*. The board inquired about cross-marketing with the Mennello Museum of American Art, Orlando Museum of Art and the Orlando Science Center. Ms. Byrum notified the board that the Gardens are on schedule to file a grant with Orange County Arts and Cultural Affairs for the Cultural Facilities Grant for repair of the Lake Rowena Overlook.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

HORTICULTURE:

Jay Hood reported from Thomas Hurst,

- With a mild winter so far, the Gardens are looking good. The Horticulture staff is in the process of mulching all of our center core and high visibility areas which makes all of our beds more aesthetically

appealing. With the addition of “Ribbit the Exhibit” and lots of upcoming events, we are hoping our guests have an added appreciation for the Gardens.

- Our camellias are now in the peak of bloom season and are spectacular. We are receiving lots of compliments on how nice they look and are excited at how well they have bloomed this year.
- We have begun this week to cut back all of our roses with the anticipation of being finished just after Valentine’s Day. The timing is essential on the cut back as we try to have some of the roses flushed back out by our annual Plant Sale, yet in the weeding area we must wait until all of our scheduled weddings are complete to do a final cut back.
- Our Leu volunteer base continues to grow and we are elated that this gives us the opportunity to do things that we could not do without their support.

LEU HOUSE MUSEUM:

Lorelei Anderson-Francis reported from Antoinette Ashman,

Visitors

- **November 2014** – 1,805 visitors, 239 tours; **November 2013** – 1,780 visitors, 246 tours.
- **December 2014** – 2,894 visitors, 323 tours; **December 2013** - 3,141 visitors, 318 tours.

Donations

- **November 2014** was **\$326** **Breakdown:** \$268 cash donation + \$58 (29 cookbooks sold)
- **November 2013** was **\$396** **Breakdown:** \$340 cash donation + \$56 (28 cookbooks sold)
- **December 2014** was **\$468** **Breakdown:** \$436 cash donation + \$32 (16 cookbooks sold)
- **December 2013** was **\$320** **Breakdown:** \$244 cash donation + \$76 (38 cookbooks sold)

The Leu House Museum was decorated for the holidays from November 24 to January 5. Each room was decorated with nature in mind. During the extended holiday hours from Sunday, December 7 through Friday, December 12, with the last museum tour at 6:00 p.m. instead of 3:30 p.m., there were 17 tours with 83 people and 1 cookbook sold.

Discussion ensued on the extended holiday garden hours.

EDUCATION:

Robert Bowden reported from Linda Schmidt,

Tours:

November 2014 - 3 tours, 43 people compared to **November 2013** - 5 tours, 146 people
December 2014 - 2 tours, 22 people compared to **December 2013** - 4 tours, 97 people

Tours have been very slow, but we are starting to pick up adult tours and a few schools have started reserving spring trips.

Classes:

November 2014 - 12 classes, 197 guests (1 can.) compared to **November 2013** - 7 classes, 63 guests (8 can.)
December 2014 - 5 classes, 61 guests compared to **December 2013** - 5 classes, 68 guests

Classes have been on Eventbrite for one year and that along with the Orlando Sentinel listing classes each week and the marquee listings have helped attendance more than double. Class attendance total for 2014 had 1,823 participants compared 2013 total of 911 participants.

Plant Clinic:

November 2014 - 4 days, with 7 guests; **November 2013** – 4 days, with 9 guests
December 2014 - 4 days, with 7 guests; **December 2013** – 3 days, with 1 guest

MARKETING & SPECIAL EVENTS:

Michelle Francos reported from Tracy Micciche,

Events in Review

- **Date Night** on Friday, December 5, featured the movie “**National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation**” canceled due to weather. Cost was \$274.00; Revenue was \$0.00, No Profit (\$274.00). Sold 12 household memberships (**valued \$600.00**). The weather was rainy.
- **Storytime at Leu Gardens** on January 5 had attendance of 384.

Upcoming Special Events

- **Storytime at Leu Gardens** is on February 2nd, the first Monday of the month at 10 a.m.
- **Date Night** is on Friday, February 6, featuring the movie “**Stuck in Love**” Rated R. The gardens open at 6 p.m. and the movie starts at 7:30 p.m. Adult admission \$6, Child \$3, free for Leu member and child under 4 years.
- **Valentine’s Stroll** is on Saturday, February 14 at 7:00 p.m., features three bands: Ricky and the Buzzcatz, Daniel Heitz Band and The Shed Hounds. Tickets are on sale January 31 for \$17 and \$12 plus tax. Purchase tickets online at leugardens.eventbrite.com or in person. Day-of tickets are \$22 plus tax.
- **Seed Swap**, is on Saturday, February 21 at 9:00 a.m. This is a free event for anyone interested in swapping seeds. Patrons participating in the swap receive free entrance into the gardens the same day.

Marketing

Ribbit the Exhibit is featured on the ICF.com (Inside Central Florida), Orlandoweekly.com, Orlandoatplay.com, TheLedger.com, and clickorlando.com. Ads or articles have or will run in *O’Arts Magazine*, *Orlando Home & Garden Magazine*, *The Florida Gardener Magazine*, *American Gardener Magazine*, *Edibles*, *Playground*, and *Orlando Family Magazine*. Channel 6 ran a segment on Ribbit in January.

The Leu Holiday House was featured on Channel 6 in December.

MEMBERSHIP & VOLUNTEERS:

Philip Farris reported from Kim Robinson,

- **November 2014 Membership Update:** New 84, Renew 105, Rejoin 4, Upgrade 5, Downsized 10
- **December 2014 Membership Update:** New 167, Renew 117, Rejoin 11, Upgrade 3, Downsized 5
- **November 2013 Membership Compare:** New 90, Renew 93, Rejoin 9, Upgrade 2, Downsized 3
- **December 2013 Membership Compare:** New 134, Renew 101, Rejoin 15, Upgrade 1, Downsize 1

Leu Members Balance counts all members in each membership category. Senior and Individual has **1** adult; Household, Contributing, Sustaining, Orchid, Rose and Camellia has **2** adults and children (kindergarten thru the 12th grade) living at the same residence.

Members Balance November 2014 was 7,809, compared to November 2013 of 6,462.

Members Balance December 2014 was 8,213, compared to December 2013 of 6,535.

Membership (Paid) November 2014 was 3,135, compared to November 2013 of 2,955.

Membership (Paid) December 2014 was 3,169, compared to December 2013 of 2,958.

Leu Volunteers Quarterly Hours (October thru December 2014) were 3,185.

Philip Farris commented that he felt that special events targets couples and that the Gardens are missing a large audience by not marketing to singles. Discussion by the board ensued. Using meet-up groups and social media were mentioned. It was suggested that a sub-committee could discuss ideas in the future.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to discuss **it was moved by Alberto Sanchez-Fuentes and seconded by Lorelei Anderson-Francis that the meeting be adjourned at 8:47 a.m.** The next board meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2015.