

HARRY P. LEU GARDENS BOARD

February 25, 2015 Minutes

The Harry P. Leu Gardens Board of Trustees held its regular meeting on Wednesday, February 25, 2015, at Leu Gardens. **The meeting was called to order by Brian Forster at 7:55 a.m. announcing a quorum present:**

TRUSTEES PRESENT: (11 meetings scheduled; **4 meetings** held year-to-date for 2014-15 fiscal year)

Brian Forster, (3/1) Chair

Michelle Francos, (4/0) **via conference call**

Alberto Sanchez de Fuentes, (4/0) Vice-Chair

Jay Hood, (4/0)

Lorelei Anderson-Francis, (4/0)

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

Keri Byrum, Assistant Director, Harry P. Leu Gardens

Antoinette Ashman, Recording Secretary

Michelle Francos conference call established 7:55 a.m.

MINUTES:

It was moved by Jay Hood and seconded by Michelle Francos to approve the January 28, 2015 Harry P. Leu Board minutes. There was no discussion. **It was approved by all as presented.**

ATTENDANCE AND REVENUE:

Robert Bowden reported on January 2015 Leu Attendance noting January 2015 attendance higher by 3,287 compared to January 2014 with overall attendance ahead of last year. Paid and Free Admission numbers continue to increase. Class attendance has tripled from last year. The increase in attendance is attributed to a 500% increase in advertising due to the Cultural Affairs Grant, a mild winter and the Ribbit the Exhibit.

Lorelei Anderson-Francis shared ideas on small weddings for Valentine's Day.

It was moved by Jay Hood and seconded by Lorelei Anderson-Francis that the Leu January 2015 Attendance report be approved. There was no discussion. **It was approved by all as presented.**

Mr. Bowden reviewed the January 2015 Revenue and Expense Reports with the Board. Discussion ensued on the recording of revenues and expenses. The financial reports continue to be adjusted for accuracy after review and inquiries of accounts from the Workday system.

It was moved by Alberto Sanchez de Fuentes and seconded by Jay Hood that the Leu January 2015 Revenue reports be approved. There was no discussion. **It was approved by all as presented.**

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Bowden commented on attendance volume on the weekends. There will be an information table to help alleviate the bottleneck at the Front Admissions area while giving visitors customer service.

Mr. Bowden commented on the installation of the Southern Living Plant Collection between the cottage and the Rose Garden. Flowerwood Nursery will be marketing Leu Gardens as a display site for these plants.

Mr. Bowden updated the Board on his upcoming trip to the Camellia Forest Nursery in North Carolina.

Ms. Byrum informed the Board of Leu history snippets and articles from Albert Pfeiffer, Leu Museum volunteer, to be included in Leu's newsletters and on social media. There will be meeting and space availability for Leu Gardens posted in the newsletter. A stenciled laminate was installed on the wall behind the front desk stating admission and membership prices for visitors. The "Ribbit the Exhibit" signage is displayed on the wall across from the Front Desk for all visitors.

"Emerson, the Sitting Frog" will be relocated to the Amway Center for the Solar Bears game, on Friday, February 27 for visitors to view while receiving information on the Gardens and Ribbit the Exhibit. This frog sculpture will also be on display at Orlando's City Hall for one day.

Lorelei Anderson-Francis left at 8:25 a.m.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

HORTICULTURE:

Jay Hood reported from Thomas Hurst,

- With the cooler season almost behind us the Gardens have been fortunate with an overall mild winter. So far, only one night of sub freezing temperatures has done some minimal damage in the Gardens. Horticulture staff has been working hard throughout the Gardens, while fine tuning some of the areas that are harder to get to during the summer months.
- We are in the final stages of cutting back the Rose Garden and it should be completed by this week. Our warm season annuals have been ordered for the Color Garden and should be picked up next week so that we may grow them up to size for installation when removing the cool weather plant material.
- The focus will turn toward the Plant Sale and preparing the Gardens for thousands of visitors. Turf areas have been fertilized and treated for weeds, and several new plantings have been installed.

EDUCATION:

Robert Bowden reported from Linda Schmidt,

Tours:

January 2015 - 5 tours, 78 people; 2 comp., 25 people; **January 2014** - 10 tours, 213 people

Tours continued to be slow in January, but are picking up now in February and March. We have 5 new garden guides waiting to finish training; they hadn't been able to shadow tours recently, but will finally be able to do so. The guides should be ready to lead tours in March.

Classes:

January 2015 - 19 classes, 328 guests; 2 classes canceled;

January 2014 - 7 classes, 95 guests; 2 classes canceled

Classes continue to do quite well; in fact, January was our largest month ever for class attendance.

Lorelei Anderson-Francis returned at 8:28 a.m.

Plant Clinic:

January 2015 - 4 days, with 13 guests; **January 2014** – 4 days, with 14 guests

Envirothon:

Students and high school staff totaling 220 from high schools representing Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties competed in the 21st Annual Regional Envirothon at Leu Gardens on Thursday, February 5. This event tests students in 5 areas: aquatics, soils, forestry, the wetlands and environment while encouraging them to use decision-making and problem-solving skills. The weather was bit of a challenge, but there was only one small shower while the event was outside, but the students took it in stride.

LEU HOUSE MUSEUM:

Lorelei Anderson-Francis reported from Antoinette Ashman,

Visitors

- **January 2015** – 2,866 visitors, 299 tours; **January 2014** – 1,964 visitors, 251 tours.

Donations

- **January 2015** was **\$311** **Breakdown:** \$201 cash donation + \$110 (55 cookbooks sold)
- **January 2014** was **\$405** **Breakdown:** \$337 cash donation + \$68 (34 cookbooks sold)

On March 25 at 10 a.m., Joy Dickinson with The Orlando Sentinel will speak on the Mizell era to Leu House Museum volunteers.

Ms. Byrum updated the Board on the possible videotaping of Mr. Pfeiffer speaking on Leu history.

MARKETING & SPECIAL EVENTS:

Michelle Francos reported from Tracy Micciche,

Events in Review

- ***Storytime at Leu Gardens***, on February 2 had attendance 498.

- **Date Night** on February 6, featured the movie “**Stuck in Love,**” rated R. Attendance was 448; Cost was \$24.00; Revenue of \$2,026.80, Profit of \$2,002.80. Sold 12 memberships (**valued \$600**). The weather was chilly.
- **Valentine’s Stroll** on February 14, had attendance of 1,908. Cost of \$881.52; Revenue of \$30,378; Profit of \$29,496.48. Sold 12 memberships (**valued \$600**). The weather was chilly.
- **Seed Swap** on February 21, had attendance of 60.

Upcoming Special Events

- **Storytime at Leu Gardens** is on March 2nd, the first Monday of the month at 10 a.m.
- **Date Night** is on Friday, March 6, featuring the movie “**What If.**” 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.
- **Plant Sale,** is on Saturday and Sunday, March 14 and 15, at 9:00 a.m. Visitors can shop one of the largest selections of plants in Central Florida. Leu Members get early entrance on Saturday, March 14 at 8:00 a.m.

Marketing

Leu Gardens will be featured on two segments on the show **Outback with Jamie Durie** including our logo. Air dates to be determined.

Inside Central Florida filmed the gardens for one of their segments called Orlando’s Hidden Gems. This will be showing in the next few weeks.

Channels 2, 6 and 9 filmed the gardens with regards to taking care of your plants in cold temperatures.

MEMBERSHIP & VOLUNTEERS:

Keri Byrum reported from Kim Robinson,

- **January 2015 Membership:** New 156, Renew 159, Rejoin 24, Upgrade 13, Downsized 2, Drop 1
- **January 2014 Membership:** New 124, Renew 223, Rejoin 18, Upgrade 1, Downsize 5, Drop 168

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 January 2015 was 8,074, compared to January 2014 of 6,462.

January 2015 Complimentary Membership was 6, compared to January 2014 of 52.

Membership (Paid) January 2015 was 3,209, compared to January 2014 of 2,973.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Brian Forster shared information on board procedures from the City of Orlando’s Board Training he attended.

The nominating committee to choose the next Chair and Vice Chair will be at 7:40 a.m. on March 25, 2015 with Brian Forster and Jay Hood attending.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to discuss **the meeting adjourned at 9:04 a.m.** The next board meeting is scheduled for March 25, 2015.

Antoinette Ashman, Recording Secretary