**FULL BLOOM ECO FARM AND COMMUNITY**

**New Member Information Packet - Earth and Sky Collective**

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**The Story of Full Bloom: Past, Present, Future**

***Past***

In 2004, Ryan invited some friends he lived with at Green Gulch Farm in Marin, California to join him in starting an intentional community and farm.  A few of us were able to jump on this amazing opportunity and begin searching for land together.  We were interested in Southern Oregon so we began to look for land together here.  In May of 2005, we found this wonderful Yale Creek property.  Within a couple months, Ryan bought it and moved up right away with Eden.  Within another year and a half, Rosie, Jo Ocean, Matt, Aria and Tara and Talia also moved up. For the next few years we continued to establish our vision for this community and the legal agreements for the Limited Liability Company (LLC), which is how we now own the land together.

In July of 2012, Matt, Aria, Tara and Talia moved off the land to start their own farm in Phoenix, OR.  They contributed greatly to the infrastructure and community, as well as farming the land.  Our interpersonal conflict and experiences together during the first 7 years highlighted the need for a deep commitment to open and heart centered communication, and a more equal distribution of caretaking roles.

***Present***

Our land spans 282 acres, the majority of which is coniferous forest but also includes:  3 creeks, 35 acres of farmland and pasture, water rights for irrigating, a farmhouse, and barn, as well as the additions we have made since buying the property:  A greenhouse, strawbale cottage, 2 cob homes, a common building/bakery/commercial kitchen, a bathhouse, 2 ponds, over 1 mile of deer fencing to protect our crops, and the most recent addition, a gorgeous custom-built wood-fired sauna.

A few words about the current members:

Rosie and Jo run Rise Up! Artisan Bread, a bakery with a large wood-fired oven located in the Common Building.  They have two daughters, Ocean is 8 and Skye is 3.  Jo is the forest and firewood steward and Rosie is the community bookkeeper and renewed landscaper.

Ryan and Eden live in the cottage.  Eden is a massage and craniosacral therapist and tantric dance teacher.  She has experience with herbal medicine and a love of wilderness skills. Ryan is a Hakomi and Voice Dialogue therapist, dance facilitator, as well as the kitchen garden caretaker. Both are deeply committed to ecstatic dance.

Also living on the land are a few temporary residents who contribute to the health and care of the community.

***Future***

We envision growing to a community of 10-12 land-holding or “full” members, their families, and a few temporary residents or seasonal apprentices.  We work towards living together in an ecologically harmonious way, localizing our economy, sustainably using and caring for the resources on our land, and housing businesses that provide the area with tasty treats and services.  We welcome other creative ideas for income generating that would allow community members to work here.

We are ecstatic that our children will be prime beneficiaries of our endeavors here.  They will grow up in a loving community of spiritually-oriented people sharing their abundant love and skills.  They will see our interests in action which includes: forestry management and rehabilitation, sustainable farming, artisan baking, sustainable building, woodworking, sewing, music-making and recording, consensus decision-making, cooperative business planning, interpersonal communication skills, dancing, nature awareness and wilderness skills and more.

It is our intention to share our skills with the wider community, as well as facilitate the sharing of skills.  Education and information sharing are central values to our community and our programs and activities will reflect this in many ways.  We envision outreach to schools, churches, community groups, elected officials and the general public.

**Money Matters**

As we have welcomed people into our community, we have seen the importance of being transparent with respect to money matters at Full Bloom. The following will help you know what to expect before beginning life in our rural setting with all its nuances. Because Full Bloom is not independent from the existing economy, financial contributions are necessary to maintain our long term sustainability. There are a variety ways that people make those contributions here. People who live at Full Bloom pay rent for rooms unless they are fully bought-in land partners. People may also create a viable land-based business that contributes rent. Another way to contribute is work-trading to fulfill a specific role or need such as maintenance or land stewardship (live link). We would like to minimize any unnecessary stress by discussing these financial arrangements beforehand.

**Cost of living at Full Bloom**

* Rent runs from $200 to $600 depending on the type of housing.
* $175 to $250/month for communally shared organic, non-gmo and as local as possible food
* $91/month for utilities: power, propane, trash, internet, laying chicken care, dish and laundry soap, etc
* To become a land partner you would invest $150,000 or make a down payment and monthly loan contributions. (Benefits of Becoming a Land Partner Link)
* Land based business rents are negotiated on a case by case basis but have ranged between $300 to $800 a month, though it is possible that a business with a high impact could have a higher rent.

So, even though it may be awkward for some to talk about, since many of us have grown up in a culture where talking about money is taboo, the land partners feel it is important to have clear conversations about people’s financial solvency, savings, and plans for financial stability so they are really ready to roll when they come to live here.

**Membership Process**

**Summary of Membership Categories**

1. FULL MEMBERSHIP.  Full members are members of the Earth and Sky Collective, LLC which holds title to the land and assets at 3000 Yale Creek Road.  Full members share equally in the responsibilities of managing the community.  These members sign the operating agreement of the LLC.  They are responsible for paying towards their equity in the LLC, either in the form of a capital contribution or signing a loan agreement with the LLC and paying monthly loan payments.  They are also responsible for paying $25 per month toward the development and emergency fund, as well as paying a portion of the “house” bills which include: food (if they eat communally), cleaning supplies (laundry, dish soap) and non-grocery bills including power, propane, phone, trash, wireless internet and netflix (if interested). Full members commit to other responsibilities like attending meetings, doing chores, and cooking meals (if they choose to be a part of the communal meals).
2. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP.  Associate members are “renters” who participate in many aspects of the community but do not own the land or participate in LLC meetings.  Associate members pay the LLC rent for their living space and commit to coming to house meetings and abiding by community policies and guidelines.  They also pay a percentage of all communal bills that they are benefitting from (food, utilities, etc).
3. PROVISIONAL FULL MEMBERSHIP.  Provisional members are those applying for membership and are in the provisional 6-month period before they’ve been accepted as full members.  Provisional members pay rent and other “house” bills they benefit from.  Provisional members also cook, do chores and attend house meetings.   Provisional “Full” members must attend one LLC meeting after approximately 6 weeks of their provisional membership, and then after 3 months, they must attend as may as possible. LLC meetings are currently held 2-3 times per month.
4. PROVISIONAL ASSOCIATE MEMBER. Provisional associate members are those applying for associate membership and are in the provisional 3-month period before they’ve been accepted as such.  Provisional members pay rent and other “house” bills they benefit from.  Provisional members also cook, do chores and attend house meetings.

**Internships and Income Opportunities**

INTERNSHIPS.  The businesses present on the land, including the LLC, occasionally host interns.  For more information, Rise Up! Artisan Bread owners Jo and Rosie (541 899 3472) or a member of the Earth and Sky Collective.

INCOME OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS.  Full, associate or provisional members seeking a job opportunity with one of the businesses here should talk to the owners of that business to see if one is available.  There may be other options for a member pursuing a business venture of their own on the land.  If this is the case, any business proposal needs to be cleared with the LLC.

**Applying for Membership**

Our membership application process is structured to enable the community and the applicant(s) to explore the possibility of living in community together.  It provides the applicant with the opportunity to experience a taste of community life and gives the community members a chance to get to know the applicant. The applicant may decide at any point in the process that community membership is not the right option for them.  Likewise, there are several points during the process when the LLC may decide to decline the membership application.  In order to find clarity about the best outcome, it is important to give honest feedback and maintain clear communication during the application process.  Although not all applicants become members, it is our hope that all applicant will become friends of the community.

**Full and Associate Member Application Process**

1. VISIT US.  Anyone who is interested in applying for membership must visit the community first. Make arrangements with an LLC member to come and tour for a day or more.
2. APPLICATION.  A person officially applies for membership by submitting a new member application.  Upon receipt of the application the LLC assigns the applicant a liaison who will be his/her contact person during the membership process.  After reviewing the application, the LLC will decide whether or not to invite the applicant to an interview.
3. INTERVIEW.  A meeting is held with the LLC and the applicant to clarify the applicant’s intentions, discuss concerns and determine if there are any obvious impediments to membership.  The LLC will decide whether or not to proceed with the 14-day visit.  The Liaison will notify the applicant of the community’s decision.
4. 14-DAY VISIT.  The goal of the 14-day visit is for the applicant and community members to get to know each other by interacting in various community settings. That is why we ask each applicant to commit to the following requirements.  The applicant must spend a minimum of 14 days at Full Bloom participating in community life, unless otherwise proposed to the LLC and agreed upon.  In order for the applicant’s time at Full Bloom to count as a “day” the applicant must spend at least 3 hours here. Upon arrival, the applicant will meet with the liaison to find out how the applicant wishes to participate.  During the 14-day visit the applicant will either do work exchange of 2 hours per day or pay $10/day toward food and $10/day toward lodging.  We encourage work exchange as a way to get to know each other and as a contribution to the beauty and function of our community.  The applicant or the LLC may decide to terminate the application process at anytime during the 14 days.  The applicant along with all of his/her possessions must leave the community upon completion of the 14-day visit.  During the 14-day visit, the applicant should complete the following requirements:
   1. Spend a minimum of 1 hour talking with each full member. This can include time during meals and work projects.
   2. Attend House meetings
   3. Participate in check-ins about how the applicant’s membership process is going.
   4. While in residence, participate in chores and cooking.
   5. Do a minimum of 5 hrs of community work where needed (this can count toward food/lodging expenses).
   6. If eating communally, post a list of the applicant’s special food needs.
   7. Process conflicts as they arise.
   8. Eat 10 meals with the community.
   9. Review any material presented by the community (policy book, LLC operating agreement, etc).  Applicants may request copies of any documents.
5. PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP CLEARNESS MEETING.  At the end of the 14-day visit a meeting will be held with the applicant to discuss the visit and any issues involving the applicant. Applicants will complete questions listed below. And post them on the bulletin board at least three days prior to the meeting.
   1. Do you feel you have spent an adequate amount of time with each community member?
   2. What concerns do you have about becoming a community member or an LLC member?
   3. What is *your* vision for Full Bloom? How do you see yourself involved in this vision?
   4. What would you like to gain from your experience at Full Bloom?
   5. Do you think Full Bloom can improve? How do you see yourself contributing to improvement in those areas?
   6. How do you see yourself fitting into the web of interpersonal relationships at Full Bloom?
   7. If applying for Full membership, are you able to commit to the financial and time commitments outlined below?  What concerns do you have regarding these commitments?
      1. Payment of a set capital contribution (or loan) when you become a full member, $25 per month towards development/emergency fund, food ($200/mo) and house expenses ($100/mo).
      2. Contributing 6 hours per week including approximately 2-3 hours to meetings, 2 hours of cooking/dishes, 1-2 hours of chores.
      3. Participation in sporadic community fun days.
6. PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP DECISION. After the applicant has left the community. The LLC will decide whether or not to accept the applicant for the 6-month provisional membership (3-months for those applying only for associate membership).  If the applicant is not accepted as a provisional member, other options may be proposed such as extending the visit or accepting the applicant as a provisional associate member.  The liaison will contact the applicant to inform them about the LLC’s decision. If the LLC or the applicant desires further discussion, a meeting may be scheduled to do so.
7. PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP.  The provisional member will sign a 6-month provisional membership contract and pay a non-refundable $50 membership fee, a security deposit on their space and their 1st month’s rent.  He/She will complete the new member checklist, which outlines what to do to get settled and integrated into Full Bloom community life.  Provisional members will have full responsibilities except that they cannot block decisions in meetings.  They will be asked to make monthly payments into the development/emergency fund, but if they do not become members at the end of their provisional period, they will be refunded that money.  Provisional members must live on the land during their provisional period. If  space is not available upon acceptance as a provisional member, the person may begin the provisional membership period by pro-rating his/her time spent on the land.  The details of this arrangement must be  negotiated with the LLC and specified in the contract.
8. PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP CHECK-INS. Two meetings will be scheduled approximately 1/3 and 2/3 of the way through the provisional membership period for the applicant and community members to give each other feedback about how the provisional membership is going. These meetings will occur during LLC meetings and will be scheduled at the beginning of the provisional membership.]
9. OPTIONS FOR TERMINATING THE PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP.  The provisional member may decide to apply for associate membership instead of full membership at any point during their provisional period.  Or they may terminate their provisional membership by giving 30 days written notice and leave the community.  The LLC may decide to terminate their provisional membership contract at any point during the provisional period by giving them 40 days written notice.
10. FULL  or ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP CLEARNESS MEETING.  Upon completion of the provisional membership period, a meeting will be held with the provisional member to discuss the provisional period and any issues relating to the membership status.
11. FULL MEMBER DECISION.  On the day of the clearness meeting or at a later date, in a closed meeting, the LLC will decide whether to accept the provisional member as a full member. If the applicant is not accepted as a full member, other options may be proposed such as associate membership or extending the provisional membership period.
12. ASSOCIATE MEMBER DECISION. On the day of the clearness meeting or at a later date, in a closed meeting, the LLC will decide whether to accept the provisional member as an associate member. If the applicant is not accepted as an associate member, other options may be proposed such as extending the provisional membership period.
13. FULL MEMBERSHIP.  The member signs Earth and Sky’s Operating Agreement and any other documents required for the financial responsibilities and assumes full membership.
14. APPEALS PROCESS.  If a provisional member is denied membership he/she can request a special meeting with the LLC to discuss the reasons for refusal of membership.

**Member Time Commitments**

Members agree to contribute approximately 6 hours of time per week in the following areas:

3 hours on average per week in “House” and LLC meetings (associate members or provisional members applying for associate membership do not attend LLC meetings)

2 hours per week (possibly) cooking a communal meal and doing Dishes afterwards

1 hours per week doing assigned communal chores

12 hours per month working on LLC or house projects

**Member Financial Commitments**

1. CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS.  Full Members (only) agree to contribute a capital contribution of $150,000 each.  This amount remains their equity in the LLC until they exit the partnership or the LLC is dissolved.  If a full member cannot pay their capital contribution to the LLC upfront, they can set up a loan agreement at a 4.23% interest rate and make monthly loan payments until the loan is paid in full.  The details of the loan payment plan should be worked out with the LLC bookkeeper and proposed to the LLC.
2. FOOD & Operations:  Currently, residents share food and non-grocery house expenses and split the cost evenly, based on the number of adults and ages of children in their families.  There is a process of saving our receipts and calculating the difference between what was paid out and what is owed by each household at the end of each month.  In 2013, we averaged $238 per month, per adult on food and $91 per adult on non-grocery expenses.  The non-grocery bills include utilities, trash, phone, internet, our laying hen operation, firewood in winter garden supplies and Netflix. All residents benefit from  reduced power bills because of our solar panel system, which covers half of our power expenses in the summertime.
3. DEVELOPMENT/EMERGENCY FUND PAYMENTS.   A $25 payment is required of each member at the beginning of each month for our development/emergency fund.  Of this, $10 goes towards infrastructural developments (and increases your equity in the LLC, if you are a full member), $10 goes towards operating expenses (repairs and maintenance mostly), and $5 is saved aside in our emergency fund.
4. MONTHLY SPACE RENT.  Full members do not pay rent after they become land owners and pay towards equity in loan payments or a capital contribution.  Associate and provisional members as well as interns pay rent, unless they are in a work-trade agreement in exchange for rent, in which case the bakery or LLC will cover a portion or all of their rent to the LLC.  The LLC determines the amount of rent required for each space on the land.
5. SECURITY DEPOSIT.  Associate and provisional members are required to pay a security deposit, which is equal to one month rent.   The first month’s rent, new member fees, and the security deposit are due upon moving into community space.  The security deposit will be returned once it is determined that the rented space has been left in a satisfactory condition and all the member’s belongings have been removed from the space.
6. MEMBERSHIP FEE.  $50 is due when a person is accepted as a provisional member.  This fee is non-refundable.  No fee is required for children.
7. PAYMENT DUE DATE.  Rent, loan payments and development/emergency fund payments are due on the first of each month.  Food and non-grocery bills are due within a week of when Rosie posts the “house dues summary” for that month.  If a member will be more than two weeks late in making a payment, they are obligated to let the LLC know at the first LLC meeting of that month.  The member should also explain how they intend to bring their payments up to date.

**Summary of Earth and Sky Collective Operating Agreement**

This agreement is signed by all full members and will be available to read in full during a provisional member’s stay.   This book is also a legal document outlining our communal guidelines.  Below is the summary of the major points of the LLC’s Operating Agreement.

-HOLDING TITLE TO THE LAND.  LLC members hold title to the property and assets at 3000 Yale Creek Road.

-CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS.  LLC members buy-in to the LLC at a predetermined amount, and hold equity in the LLC until they exit the partnership or the LLC is dissolved.

-LOAN CONTRACTS.  Members make monthly loan payments, unless they can make their full capital contribution to the LLC upfront.

-ADJUSTED BUY-OUT AMOUNT (ABO).  A member’s adjusted buy-out account refers to an amount determined by a few factors, including how much a member bought into the LLC, minus any amount still owed to the LLC (from a loan contract), plus any sweat equity they accrued (5 members earned sweat equity their first year(s) for contributing lots of unpaid labor towards building the infrastructure here), plus up to $50,000 in relation to the years you have been a member.  The ABO amount will be kept track in an excel file maintained by the LLC bookkeeper and used in the event of a member exiting the LLC, or in the event of the dissolution of the LLC (sale of the land).

-INCOME, LOSS AND PERCENTAGE INTEREST.  Any income or losses gained by the LLC has to be distributed to the LLC members.  This is done according to the member’s percentage interest in the company.  As we are currently just a landholding company without a lot of income, any income mainly covers our expenses.

-DECISION-MAKING.  In our consensus-based meetings, all members hold equal decision-making rights on all decisions except in two areas.  The first is if one has done something that warrants expulsion, that person (and their partner) would not have the right to block the decision regarding their expulsion.  The second is that for the formative years of our LLC, in which Ryan holds more than 50% of the equity, he has the right to force the sale of the property at 3000 Yale Creek as long as he gives 2 years notice.

-TAX and LLC LAW.  Many sections of the operating agreement refer to tax laws and laws governing the financial operations of Oregon LLCs in general.  Much of it uses tax law language that can be confusing.  We have written summaries of many sections so members can feel empowered and understand what they are considering signing, for the most part.