



INTRODUCTION

Folks are flocking to Lakeview Lavender Farm, the subject of our July Business Spotlight. Owners Mary and Bill Munn greet them with Oklahoma cordiality, tell their story and then hand them wicker baskets to gather flowers.

News of the lavender farm has spread across the state since its launch four years ago when the couple retired from teaching, started a new hobby and then joined the Chamber for support. Things have changed from then to now. In May, Oklahoma Tourism Department's "Discover Oklahoma" show featured the farm in an episode broadcast across Oklahoma and in southern Kansas and north Texas.

The marketing is working. A group visits the agritourism farm in Garvin County many days that the farm is open.

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The visitors are families, "Girls Day Out" trip participants, couples on an adventure, friends meeting at a halfway point between Oklahoma City and DFW, "Red Hatters," garden clubs and even amateur photographers wanting to capture scenes of colorful flowers.

"People who come want to just relax, enjoy their time here, walk around, cut some lavender, and we feel like everyone who leaves here is a new friend," says Mary. "We will never get rich, but helping people have a place to come and relax and just be themselves is its own reward."

When not walking through the rows and rows of lavender, visitors browse the gift shop. There, the Munns keep their shelves stocked with a wide range of lavender products. Lavender lovers can buy bath salts, lip balm, essential oils, room spray, cookies and cakes, beard oil, smudge sticks, lavender mulch, coffee mugs and of course dried lavender. In the next room over, Bill operates a steam distiller to extract the aromatic oil from the plant for all their products.

The farm has seasonal hours and is currently opened upon request. Visitors are encouraged to call 405-238-0042 before they come. Located about five miles west of I-35 on Airline Road, directions can be a little confusing, but don't worry. As Mary says, "Bill will come rescue you if you get lost."

This year, the farm is enjoying a bumper crop – of both flowers and of visitors. Between playing hosts, doing grounds crew work and running the shop, the Munns admit it's more demanding the older they get, but they don't regret starting a new challenge in their 70s.

"We wish we had started in our 50s, but we love the lavender, and do not mind hard work either," Mary says. "It truly has been a labor of love."