

2016 – 2017

NORTHEAST STORYTELLING, INC.

Annual Report

to the

Membership



Board of Directors

Hope C. Lewis

Lynn Schweikart

Jo Radner

Pearl Lewis

Barbara Aliprantis

Gabby Davis

Cathy Furness

Northeast Storytelling
Annual Report to the Membership
March 26, 2017

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Northeast Storytelling

President's Report

Since this time last year, LANES has become Northeast Storytelling to more accurately reflect our region and our mission. The current Board is a highly involved, productive and creative team. New ideas are constantly being evaluated for worth to the organization.

New initiatives this year include a rebranding project that will take us more determinedly into the digital age. Our name has changed, our website is evolving and we are working hard to charge our organization's image with passion, honesty and thoughtfulness.

Additional projects (The NES Blog and the Starter Kit Task) allow us to reach to help each other within the organization and to promote Storytelling more effectively throughout the region (The Connections Task).

We have changed the Board year from July 1-June 30 to January 1-December 31. This will help us orient our new Board members and allow us to be more available for face-to-face meetings in the Spring (at STF) and the Fall (Board Orientation and Retreat).

We have invested in new software that will make our finances easier to manage and our website easier to work with. We have moved our accounting to a new expert who specializes in working with nonprofits to ensure the financial health of the organization.

At our Board retreat we have invited members at large to ensure that we are listening to you, our membership. Members are being engaged in our working committees. We have added emphasis to our social media presence and the Board has moved forward determinedly to promote Storytelling throughout the Northeast Region.

Thanks to a generous and committed membership, we have continued to be able to reach out a hand to offer numerous scholarships and assistance opportunities to members wishing to participate to the fullest extent. In this time of soaring costs, we have done all this and held the line on membership costs to you.

We have celebrated an extraordinary Brother Blue and Ruth Hill Award winner.

AND... there is still more to do. Worthy projects beckon us forward. Maintaining our commitment is central. Evolving ever more fully into an organization for this millennium demands our keen attention, flexibility and involvement. With the help of our members, we will continue to make our story inspiring.

Thank you all,

Hope C. Lewis

President of the Board of Directors

Northeast Storytelling

Governance Committee Report

The Governance Committee began the year by clarifying the bylaws article concerning vacancies. As we at times have vacancies due to Board members having to leave before their term is up, we need to be clear about filling those vacancies.

We will have three vacancies on the Board of Directors and two interim Directors to be appointed. If you feel that you could fill any of these roles, we need to hear from you. We are looking for creative, cooperative workers who want to see the plans we imagine come to fruition.

The Board continues to function well with each Board member pulling with the rest of team. A Board self-evaluation was completed with results that showed a comfort with our balance of involvement. Our Committees, Finance, Governance, Outreach program and Personnel are enhanced by subcommittees and special task groups.

Other than the change of name by a unanimous vote of Board members and 6 members at large attending the Retreat last November, the other significant change was a switch of Board terms to a calendar year. This will help the Board function more efficiently and meet twice a year in person. New Board members (now elected in September) will join the Board for an annual orientation retreat in the Fall before their terms actually start on January 1st.

The Governance Committee has been working closely with the Outreach Committee as the Branding effort that accompanies planning for an updated website continues.

2017:

Jo Radner	Secretary	7/1/15 – 12/31/17	(joined Board 7-1-13)
Gabby Davis	Director	7/1/16 – 12/31/17	(appointed 7-1-16)
Open	Director	4/26/17- 12/31/17	(interim term open)

2018:

Barbara Aliprantis	Director	7/1/16 – 12/31/18	(joined Board 7-1-16)
Open	Director	4/26/17– 12/31/18	(interim term open)
Pearl Lewis	Treasurer	7/1/15 – 12/31/18	(joined Board 7/1/15)

2019:

Hope Lewis	President	7/1/16 – 12/31/19	(joined Board 7/1/13)
Lynn Schweikart	Vice President	7/1/16 – 12/31/19	(joined Board 7/1/13)
Cathy Furness	Director	7/1/16 – 12/31/19	(joined Board 7-1-16)

Northeast Storytelling

Starter Kit Task Report

The NES Starter Kit is an evolving collection of documents available on the website. The goal of this task is to provide information to those beginning to explore the world of storytelling. Currently on the site is the following set of links.

<u>What Is Storytelling?</u>
<u>Invitation to Tell a Story</u>
<u>How to Become a Storyteller</u>
<u>Marketing Tools for Storytellers</u>
<u>Bibliography – Resources for Beginners</u>
<u>The Benefits of Storytelling</u>
<u>The Value of Folktales</u>
<u>Using Role-Playing in Storytelling</u>
<u>Storytelling Guilds in the NE</u>
<u>Starting and Building a Storytelling Guild</u>

We are enormously grateful to the storytellers who have been kind enough to share their insights and expertise on the website so that others may learn.

This collection of documents is in the process of review, with the intention of editing where necessary, and bringing all components up to consistency with our organizational name change. In addition, we will be soliciting other articles that can address subjects not currently covered.

Coming is a plan to expand and annotate the bibliography, to insert a link to the updated list of festivals, recurring events and guilds in our region that has recently been undertaken by the Program Committee. For further information, or to help out with this task, Contact Hope Lewis at Hope3944@gmail.com

Northeast **Storytelling**

Scholarship Review Committee Report

This year, NES had the enviable problem of receiving an abundance of excellent applications for scholarships to Sharing the Fire. Bolstered by donations from our generous members, we were able to accept ten (yes, that is 10!) applicants.

For our new Dr. Allen-Tamai ELL Scholarship, in honor of Dr. Mitsue Allen-Tamai of Japan we have two winners. **Jody Curran** comes to us from Brookline MA where she is an ELL teacher at the Michael Driscoll School. Another Brookline ESL teacher joining us is **Susan Chernillo**. Both these winners are looking at how to incorporate storytelling and folk tales into their curricula.

Recipients of the Jennifer Justise and Doug Lipman Artist Educator's Student Scholarship will be coming from Rockland, ME, Brooklyn, NY and Washington DC. **Shlomit Auciello** is exploring how to use storytelling to reach more diverse audiences than reached by traditional and electronic media. **Stephanie Guedalia** has been in love with ancient and modern Jewish stories for years, and is coming to "get even better" at telling these meaningful tales. **Leslie Soble** is engaged in exploring cultural sustainability. The social justice focus of our conference appeals strongly to her.

Both of these scholarships above are generously funded by an anonymous NES donor. Thank you, friend.

Typically, we award one New Teller and one Next Generation scholarship. This year, we are delighted to award three New Teller scholarships and two next Generation scholarships.

Nina Lesiga, **Sue Marcoe**, and **Javed Rezayee** are coming to the conference with New Teller scholarships. From the time Nina found a message in a Coke bottle at the shore, she has heard the siren call of stories. She is now a travel coach in Connecticut. Sue, from New York, understands the value of storytelling to impart values without lecturing. She is the Director of the religious school of Congregation Shir Chadesh. Javed fell in love with storytelling while still in New York City. Now a Boston resident, he wants to sharpen his skills to tell stories from his native Afghani culture and his immigrant experience in America.

Our Next Generation Scholarship recipients are **Danielle Mendola** and **Eliza Oldach**. Danielle is an educator and Social Worker from Brookline, MA who uses the concept and practice of storytelling in numerous ways in her careers as ESOL Director at the Brookline Housing Authority and as freelance consultant. She joins us to celebrate the power of personal storytelling in her work with clients. Eliza is freelance ecologist who hails from Bar Harbor, ME. Her interest is in creating a bridge between the worlds of science and stories that allows for a deeper, more rounded understanding of the complexity of our world. She recently returned from New Zealand where she spent a year both researching and writing.

In addition to these scholarships are those individuals who come to us with Jumpstart scholarships. These scholarships include three Saturday workshops, and permit a beginning teller a rich experience in storytelling at a low cost.

One more scholarship is given each year as The Helping Hand Scholarship. This scholarship supports one attendee who has made significant volunteer efforts in behalf of NES in the previous year. This is typically awarded to an individual who would not be able to afford to attend the conference without a Helping Hand. One of these scholarships was given this year. Both donor and recipient remain anonymous.

For those who find themselves financially strapped, NES offers another hand up in the form of the Membership Assistance Fund. This fund offers applicants grants of \$25 to assist them in paying for their NES membership.

The names of all recipients of needs-based scholarships are kept confidential out of respect for the awardees.

It is thanks to our generous NES donors that have the opportunity to get to know such exceptional applicants and welcome them to our community. Introduce yourselves to them as you see them at the conference. We welcome them with open arms.

Northeast Storytelling

NES Outreach Committee Report

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in 2016 reached 241, up from 193 last year (and up from 104 in August 2015.) Because of the new membership calendar, many of those memberships expired on March 1st and have not been renewed. It is our expectation that signups for STF will help remedy this situation. In 2016, membership fees came to \$7,689.

REBRAND

The long-discussed LANES re-brand kicked into high gear this year. The organization's name was officially changed to Northeast Storytelling (NES). This new name is simple, straightforward, and to the point, easily searchable for people who are looking for storytelling events and groups in our region. We are in the process of restating the NES purpose, mission, and vision statements, as well as our brand positioning and personality. This will help us determine our strategic plan for positioning NES for greater success in the future. We expect to be rolling out a new web site and marketing materials that reflect this work during 2017.

The Board has been working with a group of NES members on this initiative, and we thank them for their assistance.

BLOG

Musings, the NES online blog continues to be published on a regular basis. We encourage any member who wants to submit an article to do so. Blog posts are promoted on the NES Facebook page and Twitter feed, as well as on the Storytellers and Northeast-ish Storytelling Facebook pages. Our goal is to post twice a month; weekly in the lead-up to STF. We are always looking for contributors of new pieces, or pieces that have run in other forums and formats – as long as one has permission to reprint. Email lkschweik@aol.com or nestorytelling@gmail.com with submissions and/or questions.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We have been continuing our social media efforts. We have recruited additional people to help keep our

Facebook page lively, engaging, and up to date. In January of last year, we had 379 “likes”. On March 9th of this year, we were up to 486. If you’re on Facebook and haven’t “liked” us yet, do so—maybe we can reach 500 by the end of STF. Just go to <https://www.facebook.com/nestorytelling/people> .

Our Twitter feed changed with our name and is now @nestorytelling. At this time last year, we had 103 followers and were following 86 individuals and groups. Today, we have 173 followers and are following 113.

We use both these platforms to send out news/information about LANES, our guilds, and our members. We also share information and news from our followers, which include individual storytellers and local, regional, national, and international storytelling organizations, including the Facebook storytelling groups, Storytellers and Northeast-ish Storytelling.

People will be tweeting and posting on Facebook about STF throughout the conference, using [#STFstorytelling2017](#).

We also have a You-Tube channel, but have not been using it. We will also look into Instagram. If any one has any ideas about how to better use these or other social media platforms, please let us know.

MUSELETTER

The *Museletter* continues under the fabulous editorial leadership of Meg Gilman. A new issue should be coming out soon.

OUTREACH TO NEW AUDIENCES

We are looking for innovative ways to reach out to new audiences. Deb Rowe has been working with outreach to librarians. Hope Lewis has also been pursuing a number of initiative on this front, including The Storyteller’s Start-up Kit, a online resource for new storytellers; The Connections Task, which focuses on networking with other arts organizations, professions, and activities that connect through story; and by establishing and generously funding the Annual Storytelling Honor Award, which will provide an award of \$500 to the Maine library that best supports the oral tradition of storytelling. Anyone who has ideas to expand or increase our outreach efforts, please let us know.

Submitted by: Lynn Schweikart, Chair

Date: March 2017

Northeast Storytelling

Program Committee Report

According to the NES Bylaws, the Program Committee

is responsible for long-range planning, oversight, and publicity for NES events such as conferences, classes, teleconferences, etc. Subcommittees and task forces may be appointed to take responsibility for specific programs.

In previous years, the Program Committee has been small, and has not had the capacity to do more than plan the annual conference. However, after the immensely enthusiastic Membership Meeting at Sharing the Fire in 2016, the committee immediately gained a number of active and enthusiastic members. Now we are:

Jo Radner (Chair)
Gabby Davis
Muriel Horowitz
Cathy Furness
Pat Spalding
Nicolette Nordin Heavey
Hope Lewis (*ex officio*)

This wonderful expansion of numbers has allowed us to expand our areas of activity this past year: (1) planning the 2017 Sharing the Fire Conference and (2) making NES a more effective regional organization by working toward strengthening its connections and service to storytelling groups and events throughout the Northeast.

1) Planning toward Sharing the Fire 2017

The 2017 Planning Committee includes: Jo Radner (Chair)

Cathy Furness
Doug Lipman
Andrea Lovett
Muriel Horowitz
Deb Roe (Executive Director)
Hope Lewis (*ex officio*)

Once again – taking our cue from last year’s enthusiasm – we chose a conference theme that focused on current issues – *Voices Across Borders: Creating Connections* – and invited a keynote presenter (Sue O’Halloran) whose work, though internationally celebrated, is not yet well-known to our Northeast Storytelling audience. We also preserved the pattern of the 2016 meeting, opening with a concert and keynote introducing the theme and its various challenges and opportunities for storytellers, continuing with a thread of workshops aligned on aspects of the theme, and concluding with a panel of storytelling colleagues whose work has addressed the theme creatively and a follow-up workshop in which attendees are invited to shape their own next plans.

Within this pattern, however, we have introduced a number of experimental new features: *Stories Galore*, a series of storytelling performances running parallel to the Saturday and Sunday workshops; *discounted Stories Galore registration* for attendees who prefer story-listening to interactive classes; *Fringe performances*, chosen by lottery, to give attendees a chance to present and experience longer storytelling programs by single performers; *Coaching by appointment* by professional coaches selected by application, who will be paid by clients for sessions; and a *closing Sunday lunch buffet* instead of a formal closing program, to allow attendees a final chance for conversation and planning future contacts. We also somewhat re-fashioned the Sunday-afternoon post-conference concert, presenting Haitian performer/artist Charlot Lucien, to introduce STF attendees to a storyteller and a storytelling tradition with which many are unfamiliar.

We will be holding our 2018 conference in the same hotel in Plymouth, and are hoping to build in more collaborative programming with local cultural groups and institutions next year.

2) Strengthening NES as a regional organization

Survey of Northeastern storytelling: The Program Committee began this aspect of its work with the question, “What is the extent of storytelling in the Northeast?” Recognizing that storytelling events and organizations are far more numerous than the listing of guilds, festivals, and events on the NES web site, we undertook a new survey of what is going on – and found riches! Although the survey is still in process (and will never be truly “finished,” since new groups and events are constantly evolving and old ones sink out of sight), we have identified not only twice as many *organizations* as were formerly listed, ranging from state-wide organizations to local guilds, but many times as many new *events*, most of which are open mics and story slams featuring personal storytelling. We have also found other kinds of groups seriously interested in storytelling (for example, the **Vermont Story Lab** (<http://vermontstorylab.org/>), a Vermont collective of non-profits and individuals dedicated to using storytelling in their various work).

How should NES relate to the many storytelling events and groups in our region? We see these new entities as the growing tip of storytelling nowadays; they are the place where most younger storytellers first become interested in the art form, and if we do not connect with them, NES will lose much of the next generation. Most of these groups, however, have no relationship at all now to NES. So far, NES has reached out to this newly-identified regional diaspora only to send out information about Sharing the Fire. We are still discussing ways that NES can serve such groups and extend and strengthen the regional storytelling web. Among the ideas mentioned are:

- invite representatives of these personal storytelling groups to write guest blogs for NES;
- invite the groups to send representatives to the STF story slam;
- find ways to offer regional storytelling workshops to encourage new tellers to develop their skills;
- link those workshops with storytelling events, through a touring series.

Developing a “story trail” in the Northeast: The idea that has seemed most promising so far would involve producing a series of performances and residencies/workshops across the region in collaboration with local storytelling groups. This concept will be studied strongly in the months following STF 2017. For starters, we have to consider how such a Story Trail would be funded, who would take responsibility for managing it, and what kinds of partnerships and collaborations we would need to forge.

Toward this planning, on November 2, 2016, Deb Roe and Jo Radner learned a great deal at the Idea Swap of NEFA (New England Foundation for the Arts) in Worcester. The meeting opened with an overview of NEFA’s programs, several of which may well be of use to NES, but its major focus was on the NEFA Expeditions Program, which includes two grants of great interest to NES:

1. The Tour Planning Grant

(http://www.nefa.org/grants_programs/grants/expeditions_tour_planning_grant), which gives up to \$5000 to fund nonprofit organizations’ project planning, allowing time to build interest among other nonprofit presenting organizations, and

2. The Touring Grant

(http://www.nefa.org/grants_programs/grants/expeditions_touring_grant), which funds nonprofit organizations to present performing artists from around the world.

NEFA is very serious about honoring the goals of its Expeditions Program – goals that feel quite relevant to NES and to the outcomes of the Program Committee survey project:

- Build cultural vitality in New England by supporting the planning and implementation of arts projects that engage audiences and communities across New England through the public presentation of artists from New England, the United States, and the world.
- Encourage projects that provide meaningful interaction between artists and communities, extending beyond the stage.

- Stimulate opportunities for collaboration and partnerships among New England cultural organizations and with artists.
- Extend the arts to communities that include populations underrepresented due to socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, nationality, geography, language, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, mental/physical status, or age.

Judging from the sample presentations we saw throughout the day, the performances and artists whose tours have been funded by NEFA are of very high quality, and performances are often innovative. NEFA sets a high bar – NES should, too.

If NES should decide to design some sort of touring program, we should certainly apply for the Tour Planning Grant, because we will need time to build a tour of the quality that NEFA might fund and NES would be proud of. The planning grant (up to \$5000) requires no match, and covers such expenses as

- hiring a coordinator for the tour
- planning residencies in conjunction with tours
- creating a showcase of the performance(s) for a tour
- filming the work to create a work sample that can be submitted for a Touring Grant
- developing contextual and educational materials related to the tour
- developing marketing materials

The next application deadline for the Tour Planning Grant is in February, 2018; this gives NES time to solidify connections with northeastern groups and build momentum for the planning. Ideally, we would apply for the planning grant in 2018 and the Touring Grant in 2019. (The period covered by the Touring Grant would be June 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020, and activities can happen at any time during that span.) NEFA Staff are eager to talk with NES and help us think through the project and the applications. In NEFA we have a resource we can tap for advice and collaboration.

We look forward to conversations about these ideas – and about *new* ideas – at the annual Membership Meeting on Mar. 26.

Submitted by: Jo Radner, Chair

Date: March 2017

Northeast Storytelling

Annual Treasurer's Report 2017

This year has been a productive and financially strong year. Our January 2017 cash and bank accounts balance is 23% higher now than the January balance last year. That number is a snapshot and not precise, as account balances vary widely and rapidly during the run-up to Sharing the Fire. Nonetheless, it is an indicator of our financial health.

Our membership is relatively steady, although members are all still adjusting to the March 1st renewal date. Our donations held relatively steady which has allowed us to support 10 scholarships this year. Our steady funding, donations and membership also mean that we can continue to support and serve our members in a consistent and committed fashion.

Our budget is reviewed quarterly and revised yearly to reflect our present needs and what is needed for future growth. Funding, grants and donations are reviewed to keep us current with present needs. We are within our projected budget for the year, and will be begin working on next year's budget soon.

We are presently revising our Website and building a new branding profile. Keeping in touch with how to reach new members is a priority. Growth in this area actually means growth in every aspect of our organization.

We have recently hired a new accountant and changed our bookkeeping system. Both of these new additions will make our finances easier to monitor when our new budget is in place for next year.

We are a volunteer organization and we rely on each other for our growth.

Thank you all for the constant support.

Pearl Lewis, Treasurer

Cash Flow - Feb 2017
2/1/2017 through 2/28/2017

Category	2/1/2017- 2/28/2017
INFLOWS	
Uncategorized	260.00
Conference Fees	
coaching	65.00
Friday	15.00
Full weekend	13,650.00
Jumpstart	125.00
Meals	46.00
Post-Conf Ticket	340.00
PreConference	1,080.00
Saturday	2,560.00
Saturday Student	55.00
Stories Galore	300.00
Stories Galore Saturday	200.00
TOTAL Conference Fees	18,436.00
Donations	
Bonfire	600.00
Ember	246.00
Flame	370.00
General	50.00
Torch	245.00
TOTAL Donations	1,511.00
Membership	3,110.00
Sales	
Program Book Ads	510.00
TOTAL Sales	510.00
TOTAL INFLOWS	23,827.00
OUTFLOWS	
Computer Software	110.00
Contractor	
ED	1,287.50
TOTAL Contractor	1,287.50
Credit Card Fees	487.61
Postage	6.75
STF	

Cash Flow - Feb 2017
2/1/2017 through 2/28/2017

Category	2/1/2017- 2/28/2017
Presenter Fees	175.00
Recognitions	106.01
Supplies-Expendable	10.84
TOTAL STF	291.85
Supplies	
Operations	10.97
TOTAL Supplies	10.97
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	2,194.68
OVERALL TOTAL	21,632.32

Balance Sheet - As of 3/7/2017

As of 3/7/2017 (Cash Basis)

Account	3/7/2017 Balance
ASSETS	
Cash and Bank Accounts	
Checking	0.00
Savings	0.00
Webster Checking	51,748.69
Webster Savings	40,011.84
zBeverly Co-op	0.00
zBOA-Checking	0.00
zBOA-Savings	0.00
PayPal Funds	0.00
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts	91,760.53
TOTAL ASSETS	91,760.53
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
LIABILITIES	0.00
EQUITY	91,760.53
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	91,760.53

Banking Summary
7/1/2016 through 3/12/2017

Category	7/1/2016- 3/12/2017
INCOME	
Uncategorized	288.00
Conference Fees	
coaching	140.00
Friday	75.00
Friday - Student	5.00
Full weekend	18,830.00
Full Weekend - Student	130.00
Jumpstart	250.00
Meals	92.00
Olio	30.00
Post-Conf Ticket	420.00
PreConference	1,760.00
Saturday	4,630.00
Saturday Student	55.00
Stories Galore	1,370.00
Stories Galore Saturday	300.00
TOTAL Conference Fees	28,087.00
Donations	
Amazon Smile	7.81
Bonfire	900.00
ED Expenses	0.00
Ember	435.00
Flame	550.00
General	208.88
Justice Lipman Scholarship	150.00
Scholarships	
Tamai-Allen	575.00
TOTAL Scholarships	575.00
STF	50.00
Torch	742.00
TOTAL Donations	3,618.69
Interest Earned	5.32
Membership	7,999.27
Sales	
Program Book Ads	550.00

Banking Summary
7/1/2016 through 3/12/2017

Category	7/1/2016- 3/12/2017
TOTAL Sales	550.00
TOTAL INCOME	40,548.28
EXPENSES	
Uncategorized	109.25
Ads	150.00
Advertising	
STF	75.00
TOTAL Advertising	75.00
Computer Software	780.00
Contractor	
ED	7,468.75
TOTAL Contractor	7,468.75
Credit Card Fees	845.08
Dues and Subscriptions	90.00
Filing Fee - State Of Massachusetts	37.00
Insurance	
D&O	937.00
Liability	345.00
TOTAL Insurance	1,282.00
Office	54.52
Postage	48.41
Operations	17.85
STF	8.15
TOTAL Postage	74.41
Printing	
Operations	59.07
TOTAL Printing	59.07
Professional Memberships	85.00
Professional Services	
CPA	615.00
TOTAL Professional Services	615.00
STF	
ASL Interpreter	195.00
Gifts	167.24
Presenter Fees	175.00
Printing	243.78

Banking Summary
7/1/2016 through 3/12/2017

Category	7/1/2016- 3/12/2017
Recognitions	106.01
Supplies-Expendable	107.72
TOTAL STF	994.75
Supplies	10.00
Operations	70.40
TOTAL Supplies	80.40
Taxes	35.00
Travel	40.00
Website	300.53
Domain Name	136.63
TOTAL Website	437.16
TOTAL EXPENSES	13,312.39
OVERALL TOTAL	27,235.89

Northeast Storytelling

Personnel Committee Report

I joined the Board after the 2016 STF conference and volunteered to be chair of the Personnel Committee. It is with deep gratitude that I thank Lynn Schweikart for holding my hand as I learned to fulfill my responsibilities.

On September 22, 2016, with Lynn's help, I submitted my first report to the Board. The report concerned a follow-up conversation with Deb Roe concerning her annual Personnel Review. I asked Deb to prepare some goals for the coming year, based on her comments and submit it to the Board so we could help her prioritize these activities.

In preparation for the November 13, 2016 Board Retreat, I called Deb to follow up on my earlier conversation. Deb said she is continually looking for opportunities for professional development and will keep me/us posted.

I plan to follow-up with a Deb prior to the March 23rd Board meeting. As part of my report, I also plan to report/reflect on my own performance as Chair of this Committee.

Submitted by: Barbara Aliprantis, Chair

Date: March 2017

Northeast Storytelling

Connections Task Report

The Connections Task has moved from a tentative beginning this time last year to a growing network of organizations committed to cross promotion. NES members will see information about related conferences being made available, and connected organizations reaching out to us for proposals in our overlapping fields.

If you would like to find out about our Connections, go to the “Friends and Connections” logo on our website (lower right) and take a look at the links already present there.

If you are a member of another organization that relates to storytelling, let us know so that we can reach out to them with an offer to work collaboratively.

1. **American Folklore Society:** Kate Dudding and Hope Lewis are collaborating with exploring how NES can offer cooperative programming for the AFS 2018 conference in Buffalo, NY.
2. **Association of Personal Historians:** APH is connected to NES. Follow up contact continues. Marjorie Turner Hollman has sent STF promotion out to regional APH members. This connection appears on our website.
3. **Connecticut Story Center** is connected to NES. CSC conference material has been shared with NES members and STF information shared with CSC members. The connection is on our website.
4. **Down East Friends of the Folk Arts:** The process of developing a link to them will be continued.
5. **International Storytelling Network:** has accepted NES. This connection appears on our website.
6. **Maine Library Association:** A collaboration has been set up with the Maine Library Association. They agreed to publicize STF to their membership and Deb created and sent a library themed promotion to their Chair, Bryce Cundick, for distribution. We will promote the MLA conference to our membership when their information is available. A link on our websites will be explored next.
7. **National Association of Black Storytellers:** Follow up will continue with this organization.
8. **National Storytelling Network:** updated NES information with NSN.
9. **Puppeteers Of America:** Contact is continuing. This connection appears on our website.
10. **Rhode Island Black Storytellers** has been added as a connection, and the Funda Fest information posted. LANES brochures will be made available. This connection appears on our website.
11. **Family and Memorial Information Council** has been contacted about connecting (1-2-17). They are an association of associations, but it seems promising that we can connect with them about family storytelling. This potentially could be a collaborative effort with **APH**.
12. **Unima-USA**-additional puppet related organization; not contacted yet
13. **National Association for Interpretation:** has been added to list of organizations to contact
14. **Toastermasters:** has been added to list of organizations to contact
15. A blog will be posted to our website discussing the benefits of interconnectedness between small arts-oriented non-profits in the NE.

For further information, or to help out with this task, Contact Hope Lewis at

Hope3944@gmail.com

Northeast Storytelling

Executive Director Report

Membership

Membership grew slowly throughout the year. It dropped off sharply in March as memberships automatically expired and many folks have not renewed. Many members are still getting used to the new Neon system. We continue to send email reminders and will provide a paper reminder to STF registrants. Keeping the membership current is an important step in having a strong vital organization.

Governance

This year the Board made a bold move to change the name of the organization from League for the Advancement of New England Storytelling, Inc. to Northeast Storytelling, Inc. This new name is more inclusive, easier to remember and therefore pass along through word of mouth, and better aligned to our goal of becoming the hub for storytelling in the Northeast. To become official, we changed the name with the Massachusetts Secretary of State, the IRS, our bank and financial institutions, all of our vendors, and created new social media accounts. We purchased new domain names (nestorytelling.org and northeaststorytelling.org) and are currently constructing the new website.

Communications

This year we took on many large tasks related to communication. We updated the current website lanes.org in many ways. The storyteller directory was modified to include a gallery and a search feature. The conference tab was modified to create a series of clickable graphics rather than a long dropdown list. We added a blog archive. We added a “Friends & Connections” page with links to other organizations that have agreed to mutual promotion. We also continued to work on the Storyteller Starter Kit.

Using a new membership CRM (Neon), we have been able to create a members only area on the website. Members can login to view all of their NES transactions, read past *Museletters*, renew, make donations, etc. The new CRM has many advantages from an administrative point of view. It is cloud based and so automatically backs up membership data. It allows us to track a greater amount of data and create useful reports. It can link with QuickBooks. It seamlessly integrates with our payment gateway. It automatically generates receipts. It allows us to do system emails and can automatically generate reminders. It also has a social media fundraising component which we have not yet explored.

We have begun building a new website and starting on new branding to go along with our new name.

The *Museletter* was delayed this winter but will be coming out in early spring.

Programs

The theme of this year's Sharing the Fire, "Voices Across Borders: Creating Connections," has really seemed to hit a chord with people. We have surpassed last year's registration. The STF Committee has worked tremendously hard, to not only create a wonderful conference, but to get the word out as well. Promotion included tv interviews, radio PSAs, flyers, email and social media campaigns and more. This year we added a strand for story listeners called Stories Galore and have had a healthy handful of people sign up for this. This year we were also able to sell ads in our program book and to entice a couple of outside vendors for the marketplace. Next year, we will try to expand on these efforts and hopefully gain some sponsors.

In the fall, the program committee collected contact information on storytelling organizations, events and venues across the Northeast. After STF, we will begin the process of adding this information to the website.

This spring the program committee will explore in further depth the possibility of creating a storytelling trail throughout the Northeast.

Finances

This year we worked on making certain NES financial records are in good shape. We will be working with a new accountant and also switching to QuickBooks. We made several changes to save the organization money, including; a change in our insurance provider, discontinuing the use of a UPS mailbox and mail forwarding service, and eliminating the use of a monthly storage unit. Also, the funds in the budget designated for website construction were not used due to a delay on this project and so the anticipated budget deficit did not occur this year.

Northeast Storytelling could not exist without all of the hard work from its dedicated members from the program committee to the finance committee to the governance committee. Dozens of folks dedicate innumerable unpaid hours to help keep Northeast Storytelling strong. Thank you to all of you. I would especially like to thank the members of the NES Board for everything that they have done and continue to do. For some, I know it is like having a fulltime unpaid job. Please know that you are making a tremendous difference. On a personal note, I appreciate all of the support and guidance that I have received. I couldn't ask for a better board!

Submitted by: Deborah Roe, Executive Director

Date: March 2017