

2018 - 2019
Annual Report
to the
Membership



Board of Directors:

Hope C. Lewis

Lynn Schweikart

Cris Riedel

Mike Lockett

Jim Brule

Barbara Aliprantis

**Northeast Storytelling
Annual Report to the Membership
March 25, 2019**

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Northeast Storytelling ~ President's Report ~ 2019

Your Board is not only responsible for our members' money but also for assuring that NEST functions according to nonprofit guidelines, creates and maintains a clear vision, drives forward new and old projects that reflect well on storytellers and storytelling in the Northeast, keeps a vibrant connection with NSN, creates a quality conference where members can come to together to learn and celebrate our Art, and reflects the wishes of our membership.

This year, the NEST focus was clearly on adding digital components to our presence. This makes our promotion and information functions more robust and facilitates access by the vast number of internet users out there.

As part of this outreach, we have new online options. An awareness of how many potential storytellers live too far from storytelling events to participate led Hope Lewis and Cris Riedel to begin a "Virtual Storytelling Guild." The VSG meets live via video conference, and immediately began connecting with tellers isolated by distance, age or health. Novice tellers form a significant percentage of the members, which bodes well for NEST's future. We now have a world-wide network and an enthusiastic following.

As the success of our VSG meetings became apparent, an additional project suggested itself. With the help of Jo Radner and new board member Jim Brule, a project evolved to train exceptional storytelling teachers to utilize the ZOOM video conference platform to develop online courses. This project is being piloted here at STF and our members will begin to see NEST sponsored online courses offered within the year.

Over last summer, the manuscript for the NEST Guide to Storytelling was finalized and completely reformatted for consideration by Parkhurst Brothers. Parkhurst ultimately declined the manuscript, but it has been sent to Mark Roe to be prepared for publication as an e-book. Articles from the Guide will begin to be posted on the website as well.

A second Guide - this one for teachers - is in the process of being developed. This volume is being piloted by Gail Herman and Linda Marchisio. In the future, Gail and Linda want the NEST Guide for Teachers to become a highly interactive resource for teachers at all levels.

Our committees have been busy and we have a new NEST Advisory Council to whom the board can turn for additional input and insight.

We continue to show a robust following (but couldn't we always wish for more members?) and our finances are secure. Take a look at the following reports to learn more about what we have been doing.

Our board is very small, perhaps too small, and we are hoping that this conference will be the time when each of you thinks about sharing a couple of hours a month with NEST by being on the board or on a committee. We are eager for your creative ideas and involvement.

I am deeply grateful to my board members for their creativity, their help and their humor.

Thank you all!

Hope C Lewis, President of the NEST Board of Directors

NEST Outreach Committee ~ March 2019

We, as an organization, are making significant progress toward our goal of re-visioning how to best fulfill our mission to “**support storytellers and storytelling.**” It began a couple of years ago when we acknowledged how very much our world, our society and our means of communication has changed over recent years. We updated our website to position us to move more assertively into the digital world. Those changes now allow our outstanding Executive Director, Deb Roe, to manage your membership better and to carry out the business side of NEST efficiently.

In order to support our storytellers, we have been building towards our goal of offering more educational “meat” to members and website visitors. The **NEST Storytelling Guide** is ready to be made available. You will start seeing some of the more than 40 instructive and insightful articles by leading pros from the Northeast and around the world. They will appear on the website in 2019 and, hopefully soon, digitally and in a “print on demand” publication.

We have plans to add to the *NEST Guide to Storytelling* by crafting a separate **NEST Guide to Storytelling for Teachers**. If you are, or have been a teacher, we encourage you to offer your experience and help to make this happen.

In addition, NEST has recently begun sponsoring a **Virtual Storytelling Guild**. The Guild is completely online. We meet by ZOOM video conference with both live video and audio. The goal of the VSG is to bring together storytellers from all over the country and the world to sit at the NEST hearth and share stories, discussion, knowledge and (most of all) community. Storytellers who are far from a local guild or storytelling community have joined the Virtual Guild eagerly to share tales and peer critiques. The VSG has also begun a Facebook group so that the discussion can continue and the community can meet between VSG gatherings.

Moving even more boldly into the digital world, we will soon be piloting a project to train exceptional NESTorytelling teachers to craft online workshops using the ZOOM platform. In 2019, you will see the first of our **NEST Sponsored online storytelling workshops**.

One more effort to bring awareness for all our events and venues around the Northeast is the **Story Trail**. In its first year, the Story Trail will collaborate with venues around the region to promote the widespread events that are part of the NEST presence.

You recently received our latest **Museletter**, a rich collection of articles and insights from our NEST leading lights. Meg has promised us TWO Museletters in 2019! Do you have an idea for an article you might wish to write? Perhaps you might wish to offer your editorial help? Let Meg know!

Remember that without your volunteer efforts and monetary donations, none of these amazing outreach projects are possible. Please plan to spend some time volunteering on a committee, on the board or at STF.

Hope C Lewis
3-18-2019

Northeast Storytelling ~ Personnel Committee Report ~ 2019

The NEST Board of Directors and Deb Roe, our Executive Director, continue to enjoy a productive partnership as NEST moves forward. Deb's extraordinary skills allow her to fulfil numerous responsibilities while at the same time including some time for her to show her creative side as we all work together on NEST's many projects.

If you like the NEST website, tell Deb. If the hotel works smoothly with our conference, thank Deb. If the STF registration goes easily, thank Deb.

For such a long list of things, please take a moment to thank Deb while you are at STF.

In a month, the Board will begin reviewing Deb's accomplishments for the last year. (I have a sneaking suspicion that she will earn many gold stars.)

Submitted by: Hope Lewis

Date: March 18, 2019

NEST Educators Program Report ~ 2019

As 2019 opened, NEST embarked on a new effort: to train a cadre of experienced storyteller / teachers in the use of the Zoom video conferencing platform. The goal is ultimately to produce a cadre of digitally facile teachers who will ply their craft with NEST assistance, and who will share their revenues from such training with NEST.

At this year's Sharing the Fire, NEST has retained Jim Brulé to conduct a three-hour live course for a hand-picked set of storyteller / teachers, each of which has committed to attempt at least one "digital" course with NEST in the following year. NEST will provide marketing, registration, and a Zoom license for their program-specific use, and as a result will see the course co-branded with NEST and revenues shared with NEST. This class is our "beta" test of this concept, and the program and course will evolve over time.

In this same period, NEST has launched a Virtual Storytelling Guild, managed by Hope Lewis and Cris Riedel. This group meets semi-monthly via Zoom, and has strong international participation. The primary purpose is to provide storytellers with an opportunity to "workshop" their stories and receive constructive critiques from other storytellers. It is a close cousin to Jim Brulé's Collaborative Storytelling group, which meets monthly via Zoom, and which discusses the more practical aspects of storytelling. Its most recent meeting saw participation from around the globe.

Submitted by: Jim Brule

March 2019

Northeast Storytelling ~ Executive Director Report ~ 2019

Membership

The current membership as of March 2019 is 219. This number represents a slight drop in membership. Membership due dates have been moved to September to ease financial burden on members during STF time and to encourage midyear giving.

Governance

NEST continues to work on its goals

- 1) **Build NEST's reputation and presence as the umbrella organization for storytelling in the Northeast**
 - Development of the Story Trail
 - Virtual Storytelling Guild that welcomes tellers from around the country and world
- 2) **Support awareness and development of the professionalism, art, and craft of storytelling**
 - NEST continued to support local tellers with the expansion of the Perspectives program at STF which was supported by grants from two local cultural councils
 - NEST expanded the family program at STF incorporating other art forms
 - NEST is promoting the online calendar more broadly and as a result seeing a rise in postings
- 3) **Diversify NEST's membership and programming**
 - NEST has taken on several new initiatives over the last year. The hope is that these initiatives will appeal to a broader audience
- 4) **Develop an active membership willing to take part in helping NEST accomplish its goals**
 - Membership involvement continues to be a need
- 5) **Help members develop their storytelling businesses**
 - Through the Story Trail, increased promotion of the NEST calendar, storytelling opportunities associated with STF, enhanced teller profiles on the website and the NEST Guide to Storytelling, NEST is hoping to encourage the storytelling businesses of its members
- 6) **Increase NEST's financial resources in order to support our mission**

Communications

The NEST Board is discussing the need to define and refine its communication. A survey will go out to the membership regarding the blog, *The Museletter* and the NEST newsletter in order to determine the value of each to our membership and areas for improvement.

Programs

This is the final year of a three-year contract in Plymouth. Attempts to involve the community have met with limited success. In both 2018 and 2019 programs were offered at the libraries in conjunction with the conference. Both years turnout was negligible. This year conference scholarships were offered to the teachers through the superintendent's office. It is unclear if there was any follow through on the part of this office. Also, PapaJoe Gaudet worked with his intern, Jenny Lee, to offer programs within the community and again success has been limited. The one related area where we made progress was in securing three local cultural council grants.

A shift in Board responsibilities caused the delay of the Story Trail commencement. It is still hoped that this will be rolled out in the spring.

Parkhurst Brothers decided against publishing the NEST Guide to Storytelling. Because the Board is still interested in making a Print-On-Demand version available, they have asked Mark Roe to format the guide. This is expected to be available in spring.

The Virtual Storytelling Guild (VSG), thanks to the work of Hope Lewis and Cris Riedel, has taken off and is even more popular than expected. For those who are geographically isolated, It provides an opportunity to share and receive feedback on their stories. Consequently, a tab has been added to the website so people may easily learn more about this opportunity.

Finances

Finances continue to be stable. STF attendance is at about the same level as it was for 2018. Additionally, STF picked up two sponsors – Criterium Inc and Transformational Storytelling. Ads for the program book also sold well.

Submitted by: Deborah Roe, Executive Director

Date: March 2019

Northeast Storytelling ~ Annual Treasurer's Report ~ 2019

Our financial state remains robust: Our cash and bank balance has increased 11% over 2017. That number is a snapshot and not precise, as account balances vary rapidly during the run-up to Sharing the Fire.

The finance committee is examining ways in which NEST can grow, both financially and in membership. Our membership continues to maintain, with 219 members. The Board decided to hold the line with the current membership fees. Our donations increased this year, which allowed us to grant 12 scholarships to STF. Everyone who applied by the application deadline was granted a scholarship. The committee feels that our most valuable strategy for increasing membership is to collaborate with other organizations, such as The American Library Association.

Our STF expenses continue to rise with the hotel and other costs increasing. The Finance Committee is considering the possibility of fee-based on-line streaming access to workshops, podcasts and the Olio to increase STF revenue. We recognize the need to plan far in advance for grant possibilities for STF 2020 and 2021. Deb Roe has begun a "Grant Calendar" about granting organizations and their application due dates.

Pearl Lewis, NEST's long-time treasurer, stepped down as of August, 2018. We thank her for her many years of service. Cris Riedel has taken that position as of November 2018.

Submitted by: Cris Riedel

March 19, 2019

| Northeast Storytelling | |
|--|-------------------|
| Balance Sheet | |
| As of March 25, 2019 | |
| : Mar 25, 19 : | |
| ASSETS | |
| Current Assets | |
| Checking/Savings | |
| Webster Checking | 59,657.12 |
| Webster Savings | 40,027.84 |
| Total Checking/Savings | 99,684.96 |
| Other Current Assets | |
| Prepaid Expenses | 9,000.00 |
| Undeposited Funds (Funds received, but not yet deposited to a bank acco... | 46.00 |
| Total Other Current Assets | 9,046.00 |
| Total Current Assets | 108,730.96 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 108,730.96 |
| LIABILITIES & EQUITY | |
| Equity | |
| Net assets (Undistributed earnings of the corporation) | 92,173.93 |
| Net Income | 16,557.03 |
| Total Equity | 108,730.96 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY | 108,730.96 |

Northeast Storytelling
Profit & Loss
February 2019

| | Feb 19 |
|--|------------------|
| Total Performances | 300.00 |
| ▼ Registration - Main Conference | |
| Full weekend - Non-Member | 1,240.00 |
| Stories Galore - Member or NonM | 600.00 |
| Saturday - Member | 875.00 |
| Full Weekend - Student | 130.00 |
| Full weekend - Member | 12,045.00 |
| Friday - Member | 845.00 |
| Registration - Main Conference - Other | 60.00 |
| Total Registration - Main Conference | 15,795.00 |
| Conference Fees - Other | 1,050.00 |
| Total Conference Fees | 17,145.00 |
| Donations - General | 930.00 |
| ▼ Donations - Restricted | |
| ▼ Scholarships | |
| STF Support | -750.00 |
| Total Scholarships | -750.00 |
| Total Donations - Restricted | -750.00 |
| Membership | 550.00 |
| ▼ Sales (Gross Sales) | |
| Program Book Ads | 680.00 |
| Total Sales (Gross Sales) | 680.00 |
| Total Income | 18,555.00 |
| ▼ Expense | |
| Credit Card Fees | 394.56 |
| ▼ Postage | |
| Operations | 47.17 |
| Total Postage | 47.17 |
| ▼ Professional Services | |
| Executive Director | 1,645.00 |
| Total Professional Services | 1,645.00 |
| ▼ Program Expenses | |
| Advertising | 50.00 |
| Refund Fee | 265.00 |
| Total Program Expenses | 315.00 |
| Total Expense | 2,401.73 |
| Net Income | <u>16,153.27</u> |

NEST Council Advisory Report ~ 2019

This was the first year of trying to operate the NEST Advisory Committee. The board authorized policies for forming and operating the advisory council. This took the first part of 2018.

Letters and emails have gone out throughout 2018 to committee members throughout 2019 seeking input for NEST. Individuals were willing to serve on the committee. Yet little feedback has been received back from members of the committee to give to the NEST Board.

The failure to properly launch the committee and get feedback is mine. I am requesting that NEST use my services in an area where I can be more productive and that another individual with more experience in working with advisory councils be appointed to head up the committee. There are many areas where I excel. This has not been one of them. The concept of having an active council to address NEST's needs and to guide the board is important. It cannot be allowed to flounder.

I have prepared a survey for the committee and will share it at the board meeting prior to sending it out to the advisory council members. If a new committee chair is appointed at the board meeting - the chair may want to revise the survey.

Respectfully Submitted by: Mike Lockett

Date: March 18, 2019

NEST ~ Scholarship Committee ~ 2019

This was my first year serving as the chairperson of the Ad Hoc Scholarship Committee. The committee met via phone to discuss all of the types of scholarships that would be available for NEST in 2019, what the criteria should be for those scholarships, the monetary amounts and how many we could afford to give to help individuals attend the Sharing the Fire Conference. The committee met again on-line to discuss to select the awarding of the scholarships.

Twelve scholarships were offered in all. Eight **STF Support Scholarships** were awarded along with two **New Voice** scholarships, one **Helping Hands Scholarship** and one **Allen-Tamai Winner** scholarship.

The **Jennifer Justice and Doug Lipman Educator's Scholarship** did not receive any applicants this year and so was not awarded.

It was delightful to be able to facilitate the needs of individuals to help them attend the Sharing the Fire Conference. I recommend we give attention to the scholarships and the winners at this year's conference and for the need for donations to help us continue to fund scholarships in the future. I will be trying to interview the eleven winners at the conference and give a report at the May board meeting.

Respectfully Submitted by: Mike Lockett

Date: March 18, 2019

NEST ~ Plymouth Promotion ~ 2019

After many emails back and forth with Jennifer Jones of the Plymouth Library to arrange pro bono promotion programs, one for Jackson Gillman on March 7th, the other by me on March 14, things did NOT turn out as had hoped but we did SPREAD THE WORD!

Jackson had one grandmother and two grandchildren ages 5 and 3 at his presentation. He told me they left after about 20 minutes. Not sure if Jackson submitted a report but he was discouraged and gave me fair warning. I was NOT discouraged. Accompanied by Linda Havel and Penny Post we took our show on the road and made the roundtrip from Natick to Plymouth and it worked out GREAT! (Photos Attached)

When we arrived at the Plymouth Library we were greeted by a librarian named Jennifer Jones (or gal named Madison?). After viewing the cavernously, dimly lit, room where I was to perform, I asked her if we could find a place somewhere in the "stacks" where they normally tell stories. She was scheduled to "read" to children at the Plymouth Plantation and was about to leave and invited us to tag along. We followed her to the Plantation. When we arrived at the spot she was going to tell, she placed her large "story mat" on the floor and before you know I set up "shop" my "story hat" in hang and ready to go. The librarian was delighted and so were we. We had a captive audience, the surrounding vendors within earshot, two moms and their two little kids and Dave of Plato's Farm. GREAT time was had by all. And I went home with a pound of fresh carrots from Plato's Farm.

We left flyers here and there throughout the marketplace and have no idea if anyone will join us at the Sunday Family Concert. but we certainly tried.

Promoting Northeast Storytelling Conference & Festival

Thursday, March 14 - 4:30 PM

Plymouth Plantation Farmers Market



Barbara's Story HAT Menu

(The Program Included a few of the following stories)

- Where in the World is Henry? By Lorna Balian
- Bear's Toothache, By David McPhail)
- The Little Red House - Eastern European Folktale
- Three Aesop Fables
- Belling the Cat * Feathers in the Wind * The Candy Jar
- The Good Shoemaker - Greek/Turkish Folktale
- "Something from Nothing" - Eastern European
- Mathew and the Gold Watch - Folktale from Ireland

"A story, a story, let it come, let it go..." - African Saying

Submitted by: Barbara Aliprantis

March 2019

Northeast Storytelling ~ Program Committee Report ~ 2019

According to the NEST Bylaws, the Program Committee is responsible for long-range planning, oversight, and publicity for NEST events such as conferences, classes, teleconferences, etc. with subcommittees and task forces appointed to take responsibility for specific programs.

Program Committee members include: Brendyn Schneider, Doug Lipman, Hope Lewis, Jo Radner, Joanne Piazzini, Joy Kelly Smith, Lani Peterson, Linda Schuyler Ford, and Muriel Horowitz.

This year most of the activity of this committee has taken place within our subcommittees and task forces.

STF PLANNING Subcommittee

Coordinators: Christie Keegan & Madelyn Folino.

Participants: Andrea Kamens, April Armstrong, Audrey Mason, Doug Lipman, Elizabeth Rowe, Elsa Zuniga, Jennifer Munro, Joey Talbert, Joy Kelly Smith, and Muriel Horowitz.

Sharing The Fire 2019 will once again be held at the Hotel 1620 in Plymouth, MA. This year's theme is "All Kinds" and will feature a keynote and two performances by Bill Harley, a Sunday afternoon performance by Sheila Arnold, and the regular evening olio and swaps. To further our mission of promoting storytelling, the conference will offer a NEST Story Nook for families and a new program for first-time STF conference attendees looking to dip their toes into the storytelling waters.

We continued a number of recent innovations, including *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; and Fringe performances that give attendees a chance to present and experience longer storytelling programs by single performers.

Outreach to the local community also continued with *South Shore Perspectives*, a storytelling showcase where local tellers representing different perspectives and occupations will share their stories.

To help members attend STF this year, a total of 12 scholarships were awarded.

Following this year's event, the conference will move to upstate New York, with STF 2020 and 2021 scheduled for the Gideon Putnam Resort and Spa in Saratoga Springs. We look forward to returning to this vibrant storytelling community, and once again Christie Keegan & Madelyn Folino will be coordinating the event.

Story Trail Task Force

Chairperson: Lynn Schweikart

Participants: Brendyn Schneider, Doug Lipman, Jo Radner, Joanne Piazzi, Muriel Horowitz, Lani Peterson, Joy Kelly Smith, Linda Schuyler Ford.

Changes in committee responsibilities slowed progress on the Story Trail this year. However, the committee remains excited about its potential to strengthen the regional storytelling web, and will be moving forward with a “soft” launch of the program at STF 2019. While the vision of a series of performances and residencies/workshops across the region in collaboration with local storytelling events and groups remains strong, we are choosing to begin by creating a framework for the major events and venues in the region to work together, with the following goals:

- increase awareness of storytelling as art and entertainment, among the general public, as well as storytelling enthusiasts
- fill more seats at all levels of events/venues throughout the Northeast region
- promote collaboration, communication, and community among storytelling organizations throughout the region
- provide active outreach, education, and motivation to attend storytelling events.

The target audience for Story Trail activities will be broad:

- Listeners looking for entertainment/social engagement
- Listeners interested in storytelling itself
- Tellers of any kind of tales: folk tales, fairy tales, personal tales, slam stories, etc.
- Engaged members of the storytelling community
- Experienced mentors/teachers/performers of Storytelling

As an introduction to the concept of the Story Trail, we’ve developed a physical trail map. On the one side, the map shows the locations of the 15 major regional events happening between STF 2019 and STF 2020, as well as ongoing monthly and weekly events and venues. On the other side, we’d show descriptions/dates/urls.

Next step is to engage with the directors of the events and venues to get buy-in for the overall concept and brainstorm solutions to matters that still have to be decided:

- How will the Story Trail be funded?
- Who will have responsibility for managing it?
- How will the necessary partnerships and collaborations be forged and sustained?
- What incentives will encourage venues, events, and audiences to participate in Story Trail activities?
 - Frequent traveler discounts on conference/festival fees?
 - A drawing where the more events you attend, the more entries you have for a prize like a discount membership, discount bookseller’s card, or storytelling items?

Prepared by Lynn Schweikart

March 2019

NEST ~ GOVERNANCE REPORT ~ 2019

According to the NEST bylaws, the Governance Committee is tasked with management of Board issues, recruitment of Director Candidates, nominations, elections, continuing education, and orientation of new Directors.

There are currently six people serving on the NEST Board of Directors: Hope Lewis, President; Lynn Schweikart, Vice President; Barbara Aliprantis, Cris Riedel, Treasurer, and Mike Lockett and Jim Brule, Directors at Large.

The Board had a number of transitions this year: Barbara and Cris were each re-elected to three-year terms, which run to 2021. Jim Brule was elected to his first term in January, which also runs until 2021. Treasurer Pearl Lewis elected to not stand for another term; Lynda Schuyler Ford resigned due to unexpected professional commitments. We'd like to thank them both for their service to NEST and to the BOD. I'd also like to acknowledge the members of the Governance committee: Carolyn Stearns, Debra Ballou, Jo Radner, Hope Lewis, Mike Seliger, and Muriel Horowitz. I also want to acknowledge Gail Herman, NSN Northeast Regional Director. Though Gail is not a BOD member, she sits in on most meetings to keep us informed of what's happening with storytelling on the national level.

The Board continues to function well with each Board member pulling with the rest of Team and jumping in wherever and whenever necessary. However, there are three open positions on the Board, including the position of Secretary. This is creating quite a burden for the other members. In addition, both Lynn and Hope's terms expire at the end of this year; and Mike Lockett's term runs to 2020. This means that Board recruitment is at a critical juncture.

There is so much going on with the NEST community. So many new and interesting initiatives. Each year at this time, we ask for people who feel they could help to let us know. This year, more than ever, we need to hear from you. Help us bring the plans we are creating to fruition. IF you can't join the Bod, help us by agreeing to run one of the committees:

Finance

Program

Sharing the Fire Subcommittee
Story Trail Task committee

Outreach

NEST Guide to Storytelling Task
Ad Hoc Scholarship Review Committee

NEST Council

Submitted by: Lynn Schweikart
March 2019