Conferences, Workshops, and Festivals, oh my! Call For Nominations! Get Involved in NEFFA!



Members Bring Friends to the Festival ...For FREE?!?

**Minutes?** 



Report by Chrissy Fowler

#### The Puttin' On the Dance conference was a roaring success,

thanks to 78 of you who attended from across the Northeast and beyond, as well as a host of behind-the-scenes supporters who made the conference possible and enabled conferees to attend. A few things:

#### **Archive**

The POTD Conference Archive is now on our website. www.puttinonthedance.org/post-conf/archive. Notes from all conference sessions, handouts, presentation slides... a veritable treasure trove! (Thank you to session leaders, scribes, transcriptionists, and Mary Wesley for making this valuable resource available!)

#### **Other Post-conference Resources**

Five ways to stay connected and keep learning!

- 1. CLICK links to videos and awesome photos from Sharon, Quintin & Paul; blog posts from Lisa, David, Linda and a deliciously detailed field report from Max; and testimonials all in the Post-Conference section of the POTD website.
  - 2. JOIN the Shared Weight Organizers list ( www.sharedweight.net
- 3. ATTEND dance organizer sessions at DEFFA's DownEast Country Dance Festival in ME in March, NEFFA's New England Folk Festival in MA in April, and (several!) sessions of potential interest to dance organizers at DFO's DanceFlurry Festival in NY in February.
- 4. ORGANIZE the next Northeast Dance Organizers' Conference! Several POTD participants expressed interest in helping make a second conference happen in our region, maybe in 2013. Contact Linda Henry to join that effort -- linda@cdss.org (Mary, Delia, Linda and I can attest that organizing POTD was a deeply gratifying experience.)
- 5. TRAVEL to the Midwest Leadership Conference to be held August 10-12, 2012 in Cincinnati, OH. For more info about this two-track event for organizers and callers, contact Ryan Smith at Smithra@TwirlyShirts.com.

#### And finally, **GRATITUDE**

Thanks again (and again and again) to these specific organizations and individuals for their invaluable contributions to the conference.

• CDSS, DEFFA, Monadnock Folklore Society, New England Dancing Masters, and NEFFA for financial support and validation

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# Serve NEFFA! Call for Nominations



Office		Name	Term Expires	Eligible for re- election
President		Bill Cowie	2013	<b>✓</b>
Vice President	*	Nancy Hanssen	2012	~
Secretary		Beth Parkes	2013	always
Treasurer	*	Ralph Jones	2012	always
Nominating		Bruce Randall	2014	no
Committee	*	Nicole Singer	2012	no
		Linda Leslie	2013	no
Directors		Julia Nickels	2013	<b>✓</b>
		Jeff Boudreau	2013	<b>✓</b>
		Frank Kreimendahl	2013	no
		Don Veino	2013	no
	*	Terry Huffaker	2012	no
	*	Robert Johnson	2012	no
	*	vacant	2012	
	*	Alex Krough-Grabbe	2012	•

NEFFA is a non-profit organization run by volunteers. In addition to producing the annual Folk Festival, NEFFA runs a weekly contra dance, the Ralph Page Dance Legacy Weekend, and a series of family dances. NEFFA also supports various folk-related activities through its grants program.

Our traditions and bylaws encourage member participation in a number of ways. While many of you are no doubt familiar with the role of volunteering at the Festival, you may also know that NEFFA's goals of preserving folk traditions are actually overseen by an Executive Board, composed of elected and appointed members. Under NEFFA's bylaws, elected Directors are expected to chair or serve as a member of a committee or to take on another responsibility.

Each year, the Nominating Committee prepares a ballot listing the nominees for the open positions for the Board and for Officers. We welcome all **suggestions** and volunteers from the NEFFA membership. Our bylaws also encourage **direct nomination** by members: the name of any eligible person suggested by twenty-five or more members is included on the ballot, if he or she consents.

Please send all suggestions and direct nominations to Nominating Committee Chair, Linda Leslie, by mail (164 Maxfield Street, New Bedford, MA 02740) or by email (laleslierjg@comcast.net). The deadline for nominations is February 1, 2012. Feel free to contact any board member with an inquiry regarding the roles and responsibilities of the various positions.

The current Elected Board members are listed below. Those positions marked with a asterisk  $(\cdot)$  are to be filled in the April election. Directors and Officers serve terms of two years and may be re-elected for one additional term (the Secretary and the Treasurer are always eligible for re-election). Members of the Nominating Committee serve for a single three-year term.

In recent years, Nominating Committees have recognized that NEFFA is a large organization with a geographically dispersed membership and that most members do not know each other or the candidates. Thus, there is little point to an actual contested election. In addition, the preference is to reward those who step forward and wish to become involved. Most ballots, therefore, have presented uncontested slates. We anticipate continuing this practice.

(Continued from page 1)

- Toki Oshima for gorgeous artwork and Ethan Hazzard-Watkins for superb website design and hosting
- Individual donors to the scholarship fund
- Alex Krogh-Grabbe, Bob Elliott, Bob Henshaw, Chris Ricciotti, Chris Weiler, David Millstone, Emily Addison, Lisa Greenleaf, Lisa Sieverts, Max Newman, Nancy Turner, Paul Rosenberg, Rick Barrows, Rob Lindauer, Robin Hayden, Suzanne Elliott & Tony Hernandez for inspired session leadership
- David Briggs and the staff at the Hotel Coolidge for a fabulous venue
- Northern Spy for letting us crash their phenomenal 2nd Saturday dance series
- Sally Bown and all of the other folks who volunteered to help in large and small ways throughout the weekend (coordinating, setting up, cleaning up, calling, playing music, driving, typing, writing, photographing, recording...)
- All of the dance groups who helped send their dance organizers to Puttin' On the Dance EVERY SINGLE PERSON who registered for the conference, for trusting that this would indeed be an important and vital aspect of their growth as dance organizers. Thanks to you, our vision was realized and our mission was accomplished. Happy organizing,

Chrissy, Delia, Linda, Mary

New NEFFA Member Benefit!

### Bring a Friend to the Festival...For Free!!

Here's a golden opportunity to share the fun of the NEFFA Festival with a friend! It's called **Members Bring-a-Friend Friday**, and it's just what it sounds like. Each adult NEFFA member can bring a non-member to the Friday night of the Festival (April 20th) for no charge!



When you and your friend arrive at the Festival, simply check in at the Membership table in the Mansfield High School lobby and claim your benefit.

Even better, each of the two adults included in a Family membership can invite one friend!

So now the question is not whether you should bring a friend, it is who you should invite!



Editor: Dan Pearl Mailing: Dayle Watts
Editorial Review: Bill Cowie, Shelagh Ellman-Pearl,
Lisa Greenleaf, Maureen Carey

The NEFFA News, a publication of the New England Folk Festival Association, Inc., is published four times a year to communicate with its membership and other interested persons. Please send all editorial submissions to neffa\_news@neffa.org . Opinions of

IssueDeadlineSpringFeb. 1SummerMay 15FallAug. 15WinterNov. 1

individuals are not necessarily the opinion of the NEFFA Executive Board.

**Publicize your events!** Display advertising is available for qualifying folk-related organizations. For more information, contact the editor.

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#### **Contra Dance Music and Calling Workshops in NH**

Ricky Holt is offering contra dance music and calling workshops in Deerfield NH. Call Ricky at (603) 679-1915 or email him at holt.e@comcast.net for information or registration. The schedule:

#### Feb. 4,3:30—6:00pm "Play in the Band" with Carol Compton

\*What makes a good dance tune? \*How do we shape a tune set? \* Creative and danceable intros, good transitions, fun endings, and cheap harmony tricks. \*How do we shape an evening, \*Tips on working with callers. This workshop for musicians who want to learn to play for contra dancing – or who already do that and want to get even better at it than they are. The workshop will be tailored to the interests of the participants. The goal is to provide some useful tools for participants to use, and perhaps introduce some topics for possible later, more in depth workshops.

#### Feb 4, afternoon TBD, "Call Chestnuts" with David Millstone

For callers interested in learning how to call traditional contra dances. Participants will have the opportunity to call one or more dances for a group of appreciative colleagues – who are all in this together - under the friendly eye of one the most expert and supportive callers working today. Some experience required. Dancers welcome.

#### Mar 3, 3:00pm—6:00pm "Caller's Workshop - A Solid Foundation" with Chris Ricciotti

This workshop is geared toward anyone who has never called before and has an interest in trying it out, as well as for people who have had limited calling experience, and would like a solid foundation to improve their skills. Practice material and caller guides will be handed out during the workshop for participants to use during the workshop. Experienced callers are welcome to help support newer callers. Dancers are welcome. To ensure that all callers get the time they need in this workshop, this workshop will be limited to 12

#### Mar 3, Afternoon TBD, "Play Your Accordion for Dancing" with Sylvia Miskoe

Accordion players unite and learn to play for dancing. While accordions have always been included in dance bands they are often overshadowed by fiddles. This workshop will cover ways to play the tunes and make them danceable, choice of tunes, and blending with other musicians. We will also cover basic techniques such as best fingering, pulsing with the bellows, and volume control. Some music will be provided.

#### Dan Pearl Gets the Gift of Life

A few issues ago, then NEFFA President Bob Golder wrote of my situation: my kidneys were failing due to a congenital condition called Polycystic Kidney Disease. Despite the name of the organization focusing on this disease (www.PKDcure.org), there is no cure. The treatment is either dialysis or a kidney transplant.

The call that I put out for potential donors was answered by several generous people in the dance community who inquired about donation, but for various reasons, were rejected as direct donors for me. Fortunately, my wife **Shelagh Ellman-Pearl** (also a former NEFFA President) was qualified as a donor, and so on October 11th her left kidney was transplanted into me. I am forever in her debt.

Live donor donations are much more successful than cadaver donation, and this operation fulfilled expectations. Immediately after being hooked up to my blood supply, the kidney turned a healthy pink and started producing urine. This one's a keeper!

There is a long waiting list for kidneys, and the longer someone is on dialysis, the worse the outcome after a transplant, so in the best of situations, the number of live donors will increase. (Here is some great information on live donations: www.livingdonorsonline.org/kidney/kidney.htm)

Transplant surgery is indeed major surgery for both the donor and recipient, and it takes some time number of months to recover. Both my wife and I are doing well and our energy is returning. I want to give thanks to the many people who helped us through the surgery and aftermath with rides, meals, support, information, and more.

Thanks!

Dan Pearl

### Summaries of the Minutes of the NEFFA Exec Board

11 September 2011

#### **Treasurer (Ralph Jones)**

The 2011 Festival has a deficit of \$1600. The previous year was \$9000 in the black.

Ralph told us of his intention to transfer some assets into mutual funds, as the market is "quite low right now". This is for a long-term investment.

T-Shirt sales netted \$300 in 2011.

A NEFFA member has offered some fund shares to be bequeathed to NEFFA. Would we prefer to accept unrestricted donations (perhaps with a non-binding suggestion on how the funds will be used)? **Shelagh:** We should encourage such donations as other organizations do. **Bill:** Can we get this into the NEFFA News? **Ralph:** No rush, but it would be useful. **Linda:** We should have a well-crafted policy statement on the web, possibly looking to other organizations for guidance. Ralph and Bob Golder will work on such a policy in concert with Jim Henderson (NEFFA's acting legal advisor).

#### Welcome

New folks in the NEFFA Exec have been assigned "board buddies" to provide information, answer questions, etc. Nicole's buddy is Nancy Hanssen; Jeff Boudreau's buddy is Linda Leslie; Bruce Randall's buddy is Bob Golder.

#### **President's Report (Bill Cowie)**

- Late Night Dance: No interest for now.
- Wheaton College Crash Space: Andrea Badden is working with Wheaton College to identify possibilities for inexpensive/ free Festival housing (like sleeping bag space).
- Bill has been fostering contacts with coffeehouses, other festivals, organizations, etc. Folk Song organizations don't know too much about us only enough to avoid scheduling events during our Festival. Bill would be happy to have the assistance others, especially those who have contacts with these other organizations.

Grants committee approved \$500 grant to the people producing the "Puttin' on the Dance" administrators' conference.

#### **Archives (Terry Huffaker)**

Terry is working with UNH on an agreement concerning the transfer of the NEFFA archives. There are some interesting classes of objects:

copyrighted products to which NEFFA has been granted rights (such as *Zesty Contras*)

original, important documents, such as letters that convey copyrights to NEFFA

other copyrighted material (photographs, letters, etc.),

minutes, video footage

Terry wants direction from the board on how to handle this material.

#### Program (Linda Leslie)

We have about 60 applications. Performers can now update their own data. Thanks, Dan! Thanks, also, to Frank for assisting me with a database download problem.

#### Publicity/Advertising (Bill Cowie)

The new NEFFA Facebook **page** [an organization-driven page, as opposed to "group" which is an affinity group driven by members] is up and running. Please visit and "like" it.

TNDC has its own page. **Harold:** Is there a potential problem with too many pages?

Dan encouraged Jeff to run a session at NEFFA about how to use social engineering websites to publicize your events.

Ann asked if there was a way to use these tools to become "more effective ambassadors". The consensus seemed to be that there was some need for a tutorial about these and other tools, and there are lots of online resources for this.

#### **Festival Committee Reports**

Food – Maureen and Barbara Nichols will be working on this. Barbara and Harold met the Philippine group at the Lowell Folk Festival, and they may be interested in selling food at our Festival. Jeff: Is there an outreach committee? Answer: We all are! Angela: What are the standards for vendors? Harold: These are set by the Commonwealth and enforced by the town's Board of Health. Linda: The booths need to have "certified food handlers". Jeff: There should be more information for vendors on the website. Ann: Crafts already has this.

**Crafts** – We've shortened the hours: Friday 9pm to close; Sat. 9:15am to 9:15pm; Sun. 9:15am to 5:30pm. When the room is closed, people need to detour around the room.

**Performer Sales** – Performers need to be informed about the limited hours of the Crafts Room. Performers have been leaving before the end of the Festival more frequently. If they leave merchandise behind, they need to understand that they won't necessarily get their items back.

#### **Retreat Follow-Up (Bill Cowie)**

The list of suggestions collected at the retreat was discussed. A few proposals were made on how to proceed were also discussed, and it was decided that the list would be put up on Google Docs, where interested Exec members could refine the items; then people would multi-vote to reveal items of interest.

Don and Harold will get this set up.

#### Folk Music Events (Jeff Boudreau)

Jeff is envisioning that NEFFA could produce folk concerts to provide outreach to folk music fans and provide possible fundraising opportunities. In the past years, Jeff has run 80 events, starting with house concerts (all proceeds to the performer) and evolving to larger events where donated admissions are divided among the house (for expenses like rent, sound, etc.) and the performers.

Jeff uses a venue that allows a \$300 production cost. While Jeff is cutting back on his active production of concerts due to other time demands, people keep approaching Jeff with interest to perform. Jeff is willing to provide expertise and contacts to make interesting things happen.

Don: Other benefit events have been run by other organization – not NEFFA. Bob: I see this as somewhat different. Ralph: If NEFFA is involved, we would need to conform to all governmental regulations. Don: In Mass, we'd be OK. We'd have to look into other states' requirements. Linda: I'm in favor of a regular concert series, and not just a benefit-oriented event. We need a more detailed proposal. Jeff: So I'll propose a year or half-year set of concerts. Terry: Given NEFFA's background, it would be beneficial to have an educational component to each project, say an afternoon workshop followed by an evening concert. Harold: Jeff needs a mentor to proceed. Linda: I'm your "buddy!"

#### Miscellaneous Items

**Wristband Tickets** -- After her experience at New Bedford Summerfest, Linda has reconsidered her position on wristbands, and now thinks we should look into them. Don will try to find the data he collected in an earlier investigation. This would not preclude providing badges for ID purposes.

**Advance Tickets** – At this point, Don is encouraging us to leave Brown Paper Tickets, and doing it ourselves on our website.

**Newsletter/Publicity** – Jeff mentioned that "Vertical Response" provides Constant Contact-like emails for free (or almost free) to non-profits.

#### 11 September 2011

#### **President's Report**

I have sent out 7 thank-you notes for donations in the past few months. This is good to see.

I have chatted with Dave Bateman about improving the attendance at the Ralph Page Legacy Dance Weekend.

We still do not have a children's activity room chair. I am frankly out of ideas. Any ideas are encouraged, both who and whether we should restructure the room, etc.

#### **Treasurer's Report (Ralph Jones)**

Membership income is up, and helps to defray the losses from the Festival.

#### **Programming (Bob Golder, for Linda Leslie)**

The Program committee is aware of needing more waltz events. Also, they are looking for more variety, new performers and to avoid repetition. They are looking for a jamming room. Changes can cause a cascade of other changes.

#### **Crafts (Ann Schunior)**

We are losing some people that we've had, but we have some new people we are excited about. We would love to see a quilter and someone with wooden utensils, etc. We have talked about how we feature new things. One of the things coming in is Peruvian semi-precious jewels with macramé. We have a nice artist press release that we want to know more about how to use it

#### **Ideas from Retreat**

The top vote getting ideas:

- Find More Food Options
- An open-mic room, with a host, for singers and musicians.
- Create job descriptions for all jobs / Document Roles & Responsibilities of Festival Chair
- Use the NEFFA web site to publicize performers in general, and new/different performances in particular
- Secret programming as a way to greet people; roving performers. "Populate the waste land"
- Publicize what is new and different about the Festival this year (the theme?)
- Encourage people to bring a friend (one who has not attended before?)
- Publicize the Festival in the Dance Gypsy and online community bulletin boards
- Encourage a third party to provide inexpensive lodging options

Work on these issues was farmed out to separate individuals.

#### **Publicity (Bill Cowie)**

I've established an Ad Hoc Publicity committee. We need to get some of our policies, messages, and audiences defined. Some of us took a non-profit seminar on this subject. We are trying to create publicity items without a clear sense of the message. Don has said he would help out. I've asked Bob to chair. I am looking for people outside of dance. I would like suggestions for other people who are not currently on the NEFFA board or committees who could provide outside input.

#### **Policy (Bill Cowie)**

I want to have a discussion on policies at each meeting. I would like to define a repository of policies so we can actually find our policies. **Shelagh**: Larry Jennings used to keep policies. I was doing this and realized that some of our policies have become outdated. I would suggest that we give policies a that have been voted on a number so that we can refer to it by reference number. Three person committee: Shelagh, Terry, Beth.

#### 6 November 2011

#### Food (Maureen Carey)

Maureen distributed a list of the food vendors from the 2011 Festival. She is considering adding two food vendors, who will

be located outside the High School near the ritual dancers. Dan felt that the efforts to improve food at the Festival should focus on a wider variety of types, rather than a greater quantity, as people like to sample food they don't normally eat.

Linda is planning for performers to entertain patrons in the Bistro. Maureen will let Mangia Bene know. Linda will make sure performers know that there should not be jamming in the Bistro.

Dan suggested that the schools might allow us to rent the kitchens of the elementary school across the street, if we need to increase food preparation facilities.

Maureen will work with Barbara Nichols and Rayna Tulysewski to identify some additional vendors and report back to the Board.

#### Program (Linda Leslie)

Children's dance will return this year, and there will be more Morris dancers than last year. There will be several new performers.

#### **Tickets**

The Board decided not to change ticket prices in 2012.

The Board discussed the idea of moving to wristbands instead of (or in addition to) the current nametag tickets.

Linda suggested that we put a question about this on the evaluation form. She also suggested that we could encourage people to use plastic covers, perhaps by selling them for a nominal amount at the ticket table. Ticket holders can be added to the form on which people select their tickets.

There was a brief discussion about the ticket replacement policy. If people lose their ticket, it is replaced for no charge. The ticket committee keeps track of the number of replacement tickets, and there are few.

#### **Ad Hoc Publicity Committee**

Bill reported that the committee is working on a publicity brochure in time for Alex to take to the Puttin' on the Dance event.

#### **Folk Music Concert**

The Board discussed Jeff's plans for a concert in the Spring. Jeff has identified some possibilities for location and the artists, but has held off in order to apply for a grant.

The total cost would be less than \$1000. The potential profit would be about \$750 if the event is at Unity and the ticket price is \$10.

Linda suggested a variable ticket price, so people could contribute more if they wish.

She also suggested a silent auction or some other side fundraiser at the same event, perhaps a silent auction.

The consensus of the Board was to move forward with plans for the event, with or without a grant.

Nicole suggested a similar event for participatory singers, and will look into it for late 2012 or early 2013.

#### **Retreat Follow-up**

Enable more participatory singing, scheduled and unscheduled Nicole has discussed this with Ann Schunior. She will go to the site walk-through on Nov. 8 to identify spaces for open singing jams.

Nicole will recruit singers for NEFFA Board and Committee positions.

Linda cautioned that attempting to increase scheduled singing events might mean reducing other types of events and performances.

The emphasis will be on finding currently unused spaces for unstructured singing.

#### **Job Descriptions**

Bill reminded people to write up their job descriptions and send them to Bob Golder.

#### Secret programming, roving performers

Bruce is researching some ideas, like Mummers and perhaps a magician. Performance locations were discussed. Dan suggested that the dance performance groups might also be willing to do an unscheduled performance. Linda was concerned about potential conflicts with scheduled performances, and said that some groups leave immediately after performing. Jane suggested little competitions, like Irish dancers or yodelers. Nicole will look for locations for this type of performance on her walk-through. Dan mentioned that parades are prohibited. Bruce will continue to research, and will present some ideas at the next meeting.

#### Publicize performers on NEFFA web site

Dan will report in January.

#### Publicize what is new and different this year

Bill will begin this in January.

#### **Encourage people to bring friends**

The Board reviewed Dan's proposal to allow members bring one non-member guest who will be allowed to attend for free at the Friday session. The Board discussed expanding this benefit to all attendees, rather than just members.

Dan moved that NEFFA members will be invited to bring one non-member guest at no cost to the Friday evening of the Festival in 2012. This program will be referred to as "Bring-a-Friend Friday".

The motion was seconded. There was some additional discussion about the name "Bring-a-Friend Friday." The definition of a NEFFA member was clarified, so each of two adult members of a family membership will be allowed to bring a friend for free.

The motion was passed.

#### Facilitate low cost housing options

Bill has investigated several options but hasn't come up with any good leads.

Jane suggested researching youth hostels. Nicole suggested that we set up a Facebook page dedicated only for ridesharing and housing.

#### Miscellaneous

Don will make suggestions about a document repository at the December meeting. Dan summarized a request from Mark Jones asking NEFFA to support the latest Scout House fundraising effort. The consensus of the Board was to support their fundraising. Bill will tell Mark that we will provide addresses of members who allow us to do so, and who live in the New England area. We will also offer to include a letter of support from the NEFFA President.

Dan announced that the Natick High School is about to be demolished.

#### 4 December 2011

#### **Parking Committee**

Bill: Dena sent a report in the pre-meeting package. She will continue this year but needs support. Gene Fry is going be involved, as is Will Mentor so there is a committee. The longer term goal is to find someone who will apprentice and take over eventually. If you know someone who would be interested, we need to get that role filled.

Terry: Dena asked about an outside information person, speaking for hospitality we cannot supply that sort of staff person. I would assume that the parking person would handle that and send anyone inside who needed an answer to a question from hospitality. Linda: is there a parking person there? Bill: I recall one of my first jobs was out at the stop sign at Natick. That was a safety volunteer, not parking.

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#### **Ad Hoc Publicity**

Bill: We wanted to get a brochure together before the "Puttin' on the Dance" weekend. Alex took the lead. Alex: I put together a brochure. It has no dated references. I did not get it printed before the weekend, but I did take a flyer to the weekend. The Thursday Night dance was also well represented. Jeff: can we put a copy of a brochure on the web site? Alex: the flyer perhaps, probably not the brochure.

#### **Thursday Night Dance Committee**

Dan: this is our periodic report about past seasons. It was a pretty typical year, attendance is slightly up. Our  $1000^{th}$  event party we "lost" \$1200 because we made it a free party. We have a comfortable bank balance, so we can give reasonable guarantees to our performers and the event is a popular place for performers.

#### **Puttin' on the Dance Report**

Alex: It was a cool weekend. About 80 people mostly from New England. About 10 younger organizers, a lot from contra dance, but also family, square and English country dance. Most of the sessions were well attended. The dances were great, too. CDSS has posted some reports on line.

Alex: there were note takers at all sessions and the information will be made available by CDSS. There are plans for another one in the mid-west soon and hopefully back to New England after that.

NEFFA Festival: April 20-22, 2012, Mansfield, MA

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