

2025 General Membership Meeting

Saturday, July 19, 2025 1:15-3:15 EDT

Delanna Reed. Meeting called to order at 1:15.

Chair Report: Delanna Reed.

NSN Initiatives during 2025:

NSN contributed to the Storytelling Relief Fund administered by ASST (Artists Standing Strong Together). We matched the monies ASST already had in their fund. \$1968.65

NSN donated to NABS (National Association of Black Storytellers) to make up the monies they lost for youth storytelling outreach when a grant funding their fall concert was cancelled. \$3,750 had been earmarked for the youth outreach. NSN as an organization gave \$2000 and each of the three SIGS contributed to make up the difference.

Member grants are returning to NSN. Up to \$1000 can be given to tellers to pursue research or creative work in storytelling.

The Katherine Windham Scholarship Recipients this year are: Mary Jo Huff; Jennifer Armstrong; Cynthia Orr; Bobby Norfolk; Denise Page. Four awardees unable to attend were: Lorelee Cooley, Marisa Luse, Rachel Briggs, Thomas Freese.

Board Members were introduced:

Present: Dot Cleveland, Staff; Rishi Nixon, Vice-Chair; Lesley Shelley (Board Member at Large); Melissa Souza Fees (Public Relations); Karin Amano (YES), Margaret Read MacDonald (Secretary); Linda Yemoto (ECO); Caleb Hubbard (Vice-Chair Elect); Trudy Hanson (Past Chair); Gwendolyn Napier (Board Member at Large); Emily Stamets (Volunteer Coordinator); Claire Nolan (ECO).

Absent: Lisa Overholser (PRO); Barry Williams (PRO); Upasna Kakroo (Publications Manager); Lisa Williams (SIO) attended the conference but was unable to attend the membership meeting. Staff: Robert Johnson (Treasurer).

Remembrances of:

Angela Lloyd, January 2025

Jimmy Neil Smith, March 15, 2025

Audience members mentioned also: Cynthia Changaris, Baba Jamal Koram, Tersi Bendiburg.

Vice Chair Elect Report: Caleb George Hubbard

Caleb collected skill set sheets members had filled out for volunteering for NSN. A drawing was held from the skill set sheets and five members won a stuffed buffalo. This was a promo for next year's conference in W. Texas.

The conference next year is in Canyon, Texas in July. On campus of West Texas University. Fly into Amarillo.

Treasurer's Report. Given by Dot Cleveland. Prepared by Robert Johnson.

Reports will be available on NSN website.

Total Income: \$163,293.00

Net income: \$35,831.00

NSN equity: \$126,280.00

Webmaster and Membership Report: Dot Cleveland.

Dot is hoping to make website more useful for SIGS.

At present we have 370 individual memberships, 39 new members this year.

SIO membership is 80; YES 148; ECO 70; PRO 71; 101 Members at large (those who chose not to select a SIG membership).

We have 113 Lifetime members; 71 non profit members; 6 international members.

176 members are in our directory.

Conference Report

188 attendees; 54 virtual attendees

Revenue: \$91,331.00 (before expenses)

SIG Reports

ECO (Environmental Storytelling) : Claire Nolan

ECO holds monthly swaps, Australian teller Jenny Cargill-Strong gave workshops on zoom and at conference via zoom.

Sept 8 "How to Engage the Youngest Listeners to Care for their Environment."

Equinox Concert Sept 21 Virtual concert worldwide. ECO, HSA, and Third Act are sponsoring. SUN DAY concert will feature tales of solar power, wind power, and alternate energy. A 4 hour concert. 7-11 pm EST. If you would like to tell during the SUN DAY concert, contact Claire Nolan: cbnolou@gmail.com

PRO (Producers and Organizers):Marilyn McPhie

PRO meets online monthly. They have published a storytelling production guide which is available on Amazon and is free to members of PRO.

PRO sponsors a consulting program to help members connect with experienced producers.

SIO (Storytelling in Organizations):Caleb Hubbard (for Lisa Williams)

A booklet with SIO's yearly report is available.

Upcoming events: A webinar series with: Artem Mushin-Makendonskiy Sept, Oct, Nov. Another webinar series with Vinod Krishna Jan-April.

YES: Karen Amano

Yes holds frequent Storylabs and monthly coffee hours.

Yes partners with Story Crossroads to provide free tickets for each other.

Angela Lloyd Legacy Award: YES is planning a fundraising concert for the award the first week of September.

NSN Celebrates 50 years: Delanna Reed

NSN will be collecting oral histories related to our history.

Nomination of Darlene Richard as Vice-Chair Elect.

Elected unanimously.

Old Business

Ray Hicks Fund: Connie Regan Blake

The fund was set up to aid Ray and his family. The fund was administered by ISC.

It moved to NSN when ISC went into bankruptcy.

Now that Ray and Rosa are gone, the money is no longer needed to help with their home expenses. It is hoped that the Ray Hicks Fund will continue the legacy of Ray Hicks and will support use of traditional stories and encouragement for young people as tellers and as audience members. There are plans to use funds to support traditional

telling through Ray Hicks legacy tellers. And mentorships. Ray Hicks.com is supported by fund.

Connie Regan Blake, Adam Booth, and Elizabeth Ellis, and Mary Hamilton are committee members.

J. J. Reneaux Grant: Jo Radner

25th year of J. J. Reneaux award.

Grants are offered for new tellers to improve their skills.

Passing of gavel to next president, Rishi Nixon.

Rishi talked of watching NSN revive over the last few years to the place where it had a profit of \$30,000 last year and \$30,000 by June this year. Five years ago NSN was on the brink of financial dissolution. But due to donors and work of members, we have recovered and are now thriving.

Rishi's priorities for the coming year: He wants NSN to start standing up for the storytelling community. He would like to see us join Americans for the Arts, a coalition of arts organizations that is speaking out against cuts to NEA.

This summer we will be relaunching our Member Grants Program. We are hoping to see proposals for projects that will help tellers amplify stories of communities whose stories are being silenced.

We would like to connect with our storytelling partners. Delanna has reached out to Michael Carson of ISC to restore friendships with that group. And we would like to build partnerships with other storytelling organizations, such as the National Association of Black Storytellers.

All conference registrants this year become automatic NSN members.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:15.

