



# NEFFA News

## New England Folk Festival Association

1950 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge MA 02140 — (617) 354-1340

Summer 1998 — Volume XXIV #2

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### President's Message

A colleague of mine attended the Festival for the first time this year and came away very impressed - especially by the complexity of the schedule. As someone who schedules events, he was overwhelmed by the number and organization of our offerings. I told him about our Program Committee: how the chair, Janet Yeracaris, coordinated the efforts of the various subchairs, each of whom had an area of responsibility: Lisa Greenleaf for American participatory dancing, Jonathan and Mari Young for line dancing, Susan Worland for couple dancing, Doris Possi for dance performances, Katy Burns for morris and sword dancing, and Ann Schunior and Suzanne Mrozack for folk music and song. The efforts of all of these people produced the very rich program that we all enjoyed.

As I thought about his enthusiasm I realized that what he saw was only the tip of the iceberg. The equally complicated infrastructure which keeps things running smoothly is hardly visible to most Festival-goers. Lori Fassman's printed materials are consulted, and performers and guests use Beth Parkes' performer sales table, but I suspect most folks don't think about the fact that the chairs they sit on, the tables holding vendors' wares, the porta-potties, the supplies for the bathrooms, the custodians sweeping between sessions, the electrical power for the food booths and sound equipment are all ably arranged for by Bob Solosko, arrangements and inside facilities manager, who also oversees set-up and take-down. Keeping it in the family his wife, Jean Krogh, oversees outside facilities: contracting for the popular shuttle buses, making parking plans, and arranging for outside signs, the last designed and set up by Nat Case. The clear and cheerful inside signs created by Diane

Biglow, Michael Resnick and crew (this year with the help of very well behaved young Matthew!) also help us all by making finding things at the Festival easy.

The excellent sound we enjoy in the dance and concert halls results from the efforts of Michael Bergman and Peter Olszowka and their committee, who continually strive to make it even better. The tickets are designed and printed by David Reid who, with his wife Claire, recruits, schedules and supervises the volunteers at ticket table. And the heroic task of matching folks needing hospitality with people willing to offer it is performed with grace and fortitude by Elsa Elliott.

Our vendors, too, are found and organized by Festival committee members. All the crafts people are solicited, juried, notified and placed by Mary Stafford, who has created a lively crafts room and a full demonstration schedule. Angela Taylor has expanded the folk bazaar through to the back hall, keeping her excellent balance of artifacts and music. Sandy Borden is responsible for the wonderful array of food in the cafeteria, dealing not only with the vendors but also with the Board of Health to make sure that our offerings are safely prepared as well as interesting.

At the Festival the cafeteria is very ably overseen by Mary Wakefield and Don Parkhurst, who keep peace in the crowded kitchen, check food temperatures and generally keep vendors and staff happy, allowing things to run smoothly and safely. Dan Pearl, operations manager, keeps the whole Festival running smoothly, available to solve any problems which might arise. He works closely with Shelagh Ellman-Pearl, who manages the hospitality table and is able, with great efficiency, to

*(Continued on page 2)*

(Continued from page 1)

teach all its volunteer staff the innumerable things they need to know in order to help Festival attendees. Michael Anthony oversees the instrument check table, giving performers a safe place for their instruments and costumes while they enjoy the Festival. John Wojtowicz and Rayna Tulysewski are responsible for general Festival safety and parking, organizing volunteers to keep corridors and doorways clear and to direct drivers, and being available and ready to respond to any emergencies. And Linda Palmstrom and her team plan, obtain supplies for, and produce the very popular activity room, which keeps children and their families happily occupied and looking forward to next year.

With all of the above doing their parts so well, and with the wonderful crew of volunteers who come and staff the Festival, the job of the President is easy! I come and enjoy the Festival, and listen to compliments and thank-yous from attendees who are having a grand time. Now I want to add my own deep thanks, and pass on everyone else's to the proper recipients: the Festival committee members and volunteers.

— Nancy Hanssen — President, NEFFA

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## Highlights of the Minutes of the NEFFA Exec Board

For information on attending future meetings, call Dan Pearl at 508-229-2854 or E-mail: [pearl@sw.stratus.com](mailto:pearl@sw.stratus.com)

7 December 1997

### Ralph Page Legacy Weekend

Sylvia Miskoe reports registrations are coming in. They would like scholarship applicants. The website is generating queries. Sylvia has not heard from Don and Mary.

### Arrangements (Bob Solosko)

School contract has been signed. The tentative Festival dates for the 1999 Festival are April 23-25, 1999.

Committee chairs were alerted to check over their rental needs list.

Doris said that the coat racks outside the Main Hall intrude on the dance performance staging area. Bob thought that the back hallway was appropriate for this. Several ideas were raised for Doris to consider.

### Food

Sandy Borden wants guidance on what fees to set for booths. Bob has provided Sandy with concrete costs.

During the meeting, Sandy phoned in a report. She wanted guidance from the Board regarding the fee for non-profit, double-table booths. **Dan:** The chair has the authority to set fees lower for a non-profit. **Larry:** She needs us to back her up? **Nancy:** Yes. **Jonathan:** How do we establish costs? **Bob:** It is based mainly on number and type of electrical drops. **Nancy:** Sandy can allocate space how she wants, with the Board's backing.

### T-Shirt (Lisa Greenleaf)

The T-shirt committee was authorized \$200 to pay the T-shirt artist for their design. Dan expressed his opinion that this budgetary item could be regarded as a regular committee expense, and need not be authorized every year (unless it grows beyond certain guidelines).

### Program (Janet Yeracaris)

The new timeline is a great success. The program looks great.

The rejection rate for Folk Music and Song, and dance callers is higher this year (the former due to fewer slots, and the latter due to more applicants). Of interest is the high number of caller/band combos from the Midwest. **Larry:** I suggest giving special consideration to people who come a long way.

Doris is finalizing her performing group lineup. Doris has an extra 1/2 hour on Saturday night to fill.

### Advertising at the Festival (Shelagh Ellman-Pearl)

A sentence was omitted from the revised proposal (December 1, 1997, in the pre-meeting mailing): "Posted material that do not comply with the policy will be removed

by Board members." **Ralph:** I think it is good to specify what is going to happen. **Larry:** The policy already gives us the authority to remove materials; specifying how needlessly ties our hands. **Ralph:** What else could we do? **Dan:** The policy could be to remove, but retain for reclaim, non-conforming materials. Tossing out material might generate ill-will.

**Shelagh:** Multiple stacks are consolidated. I don't know what happens to posters around the school. Material could be retained at the Hospitality Table. **Dan:** Since we've been posting a policy, the multiple-stacks issue has been less of a problem. **Nancy:** Saying that materials can be removed is a desirable fair warning. **Jonathan:** I'd prefer a policy saying that materials "may be removed". **Shelagh:** **Larry:** Let's keep the policy as short as possible. **Janet:** Being explicit may make it easier to deal with the public. **Dan:** Suggest: "Materials that are removed will be retained at the Hospitality Table until the conclusion of the Festival." I'm trying to make it easier for myself (as Operations Manager) to deal with people.

**Jonathan:** Will the policy be posted? **Shelagh:** Yes, in the flyer hall. It could also go into the program book. **Dan:** It might be more appropriate to send the notice to the performers in their materials. They are the likely people to violate the policy. **Janet:** They get so much stuff, I don't think they'll read it.

A straw vote was almost unanimously in favor of adding: "Materials in violation of this policy may be removed." It would be placed at the end of the 1st paragraph. A formal vote confirmed this.

### **Festival Badge/Ticket Policy (Larry Jennings)**

Page 2 of the 12/7/97 pre-meeting mailing detailed suggested changes to the Nov. 9 proposal.

There was more discussion about old Festival Committee badges. John Wojtowicz said that in an emergency, old badges will just confuse the issue of clearly identifying the people in charge. There was lots more discussion, including about potential redesign of the Festival Committee badges. John clarified that he likes the current design, but would want former Festival Committee people to not wear their badges at the Festival. The revised proposal was passed by voice vote.

Do we want to change the badge design? **Bob:** I could make larger badge strips. **Lisa:** I want to see three designs, and then vote on it. **Larry:** There is no reason to change current design. We should consider Claire Reid's suggestion of awarding a 'retirement badge' and encourage people to wear that. **Nancy:** I'll put Claire on the committee, along with Rayna, to develop designs for retirement badges.

### **School Issues**

There are the outstanding issues of dancing in bare feet and selling aspirin. Bob has inquired about the bare feet, with no definitive word yet. Rayna thought that there was an issue with the "Drug Free Zone" policy. Dan believes Beth Parkes was looking into the aspirin issue.

### **Nominating Committee**

The Board acknowledged the contributions of Jonathan Young, retiring Board member.

### **Vacancies**

The following positions are to be filled: Membership Chair, Housing Chair, maybe Newsletter editor, Cafeteria Supervisor, and Assistant Program Chair.

**25 January 1998**

### **Year 2000 Issue (Bob Solosko)**

Scrutiny of a Jewish calendar shows that Passover is less of a conflict with the Festival than previously thought. There is still a conflict with Easter Sunday, and possibilities for coping with this are being evaluated. Shelagh will craft a question for the evaluation form. We'll be asking our performers if they will have conflicts. We'll write an article for the newsletter and putting something on the web. Dan suggested doing a random phone poll of NEFFA members. People thought that asking people at check-in would be more effective than an exit poll. Larry suggests not putting too much credence in poll results; use good judgment.

### **Festival Emeritus Badge (Rayna Tulysewski)**

Some sample designs for this badge were circulated. There was some discussion about design issues: shape, color, and content, as well as who should be offered such a badge. Rayna and Claire will work on these issues and come up with a proposal for a future meeting.

### **NEFFA Ballot/Newsletter Combined Mailing (Lisa Greenleaf)**

At a meeting of the subcommittee, Dan presented a mockup of the proposed mailing pieces which demonstrated that this mailing can be done. The piece will include the News, the grid, the volunteer and TNDC flyers, and other Festival information. The labeling party is 10:30am on March 1st.

### **Publicity**

Steve Boylan reports that he is willing to continue with this, but would appreciate any help he can get. People cited the FAC as a resource in identifying potential publicity sources.

### **Activity Room (Linda Palmstrom)**

We'll need two or three volunteers each hour. It's hard to identify helpers in the room; aprons? There may be another person interested in doing Pysanky eggs, on the same basis as the current person.

What do we call the room? It was felt that the current name is probably best.

### **Folk Bazaar (Angela Taylor)**

There was a question as to whether one vendor belonged in the Crafts Room or in the Bazaar.

Some booth placement issues were discussed. Bob and Angie will discuss space issues during an upcoming walkthru.

### **Ralph Page Legacy Weekend**

Angela reported that attendance, as inferred from Food Service requests, was on a par with last year. People said that it was really fun.

## Outside Facilities (Jean Krogh)

We will ask Festival-goers to not park at the West Suburban Skating Rink until noon on Saturday and Sunday. Notify Jean about reserved space needs by March 24th at 4pm.

## Operations (Dan Pearl)

Dan presented a proposal for easing the issuance of pages during the Festival. No one had an objection. The process will be also used with communications to the custodians, if they want.

## Food (Sandy Borden)

There will be a new booth: Smoothies! Fresh fruit, dairy or soy...yum!

The fee structure was reviewed. It was confirmed that the fee is mainly based on the number and type of electrical drops. A modest fee increase will be made this year. We are not yet covering our costs.

I'll be passing out questionnaires to our booth people to ask them about their Festival experience.

There may be a staffing problem with the soft-drink booth. Sandy wants to hear about other organizations that might be interested in running it. (Dan thought a NHS organization might be interested.)

Bob will look into recycling containers.

Nancy has been in contact with Don and Mary regarding Cafeteria Operations.

## Housing (Elsa Elliott)

I'm working on mailing material. I have housing requests and offers.

## Safety (John Wojtowicz)

The volunteer recruiting has gone more slowly this year, due to turnover in the dance community in which I usually recruit.

## Program (Janet Yeracaris)

A preview of the program was presented. Highlights:

- There will be more family and beginner events.
- A record number of first-time applications from non-New England contra callers was received.
- Fewer international bands means that we'll have to use recorded music for some sessions (which is actually preferred by some).
- There will be one contra medley on Sunday and two simultaneous ones on Saturday.
- There will be lots of participatory singing.
- There will be more contra dancing as a percentage this year.
- A limited number of Folk Music and Song events will be on the Auditorium Stage: Inca Son, Sacred Harp, Kartuli Ensemble, and the Klezmer.

A video is being considered for airing at the Festival. Before it is confirmed on the schedule, the committee will screen the video to ensure that it is educational, informative, and not

promoting a political agenda.

## Sound (Peter Olszowka)

Bids are due for Lower Hall in a week.

We are working on plans with other contractors.

## Nominating Committee (Lisa Greenleaf)

The slate was announced: VP: Shelagh Ellman-Pearl; Treasurer: Ralph Jones; Nominating Committee: John Wojtowicz; Directors: Rayna Tulysewski, Linda Palmstrom, Mari Boyar Young, Jean Krogh.

## Miscellaneous

Footwear issue needs to be settled soon. Bob will be making further inquiries regarding school policy.

22 February 1998

## Treasurer's Report (Ralph Jones)

Folk Arts Center rent is going up quite a bit starting March 1st, but it is still a good deal, somewhat below market rate. CDS Boston Centre sublets a portion of the FAC space and NEFFA sublets a portion from CDS; NEFFA pays 50%. Ralph would like authorization to pay CDS up to \$90 per month. No one had any problem with this.

## Festival Emeritus Badge (Claire Reid)

Five people responded to a survey. There was agreement regarding purpose but little agreement regarding design and award criteria. More sample designs for this badge were circulated. John expressed support for purely objective criteria.

The point was made that this project is not to be confused with the "authority at the Festival" issue, which is being handled by Nancy.

We decided to relegate this topic to a summer-retreat type discussion setting.

## Newsletter Editorship

Citing limitations of technical skills, Linda is stepping down as interim editor. She is willing to serve on an editorial committee. It would be great to find someone who can handle the technicalities and layout tools.

## Publicity

Angel says that Steve said that he discussed publicity issues with Susan Worland.

People are concerned that press releases need to be submitted in a timely manner to periodicals.

## Folk Bazaar (Angela Taylor)

The lineup of booths is complete. If anyone has any issue with a vendor at the Festival, seek Angie out to address it then and there, not after the Festival.

There was the possibility of an additional vendor (currently a scheduled Festival performer) who wants booth space to promote tourism for the Western Isles Tourist Board (presumably of Great Britain). They state that funding for their trip to the U.S. hinges on the presence of such a booth at the Festival. They want a card table (for flyers and brochures) and

a backdrop. **Janet:** It is unclear what is gating what. **Dan:** It makes me uncomfortable to be approached in this way.

**Claire(?):** It sounds like they are mentioning NEFFA to enhance their chances of getting funding. **Janet:** I think that this booth is different in some ways from just a tour promoter. I think it would be an asset to the Festival.

**Nancy:** But it is similar enough to a booth that we rejected, that we might suffer some criticism. **Robert:** I believe our consensus is that we don't want to provide a table nor backdrop, but that tourist materials should be put in the flyer hall.

## Crafts

Mary reports that the room will be full. In fact, is it possible to move some instrument builders into the Folk Bazaar?

## Dance Performances (Doris Possi)

Are bare feet a problem for our performance groups? **Dan:** "The High School athletic department discourages bare feet on the floors". **Nancy:** It's not a big issue for a performance group anyway.

## Food

Sandy reports that there is a vegetarian restaurant from NY on the waiting list.

## Safety (John Wojtowicz)

The volunteer recruiting is still going more slowly this year.

We want some inside signs telling people about desired styles of water bottles.

"Shoe inspectors" will be back this year.

## Program (Janet Yeracaris)

The video discussed during a previous meeting is excessively political and will not be at the Festival.

The next published grid will be at the Festival, although the website will be kept up to date.

Usage of the courtyard during unscheduled times was discussed. We felt that we want to set guidelines (say 1 hour per day) on how much time groups can use this time. Janet felt we can just tell groups not to monopolize the courtyard.

## Tickets (David Reid)

No one has requested "Complementary" tickets. Virtually all complementary tickets are "All-Session". How do we handle individual session complementary tickets? **Robert:** Don't concern yourself about such a small number. **Dan:** Are the tickets going to be labeled "Complementary"? This might cause some discontent. Why not give them All-Session tickets and just keep the accounting. **David:** We can take off the text. **Nancy:** Whoever awards the tickets should fill them in.

## Volunteers (Nancy Hanssen)

I want to collect volunteer needs immediately after the Festival, when things are fresh in peoples' minds.

## Miscellaneous

Sylvia reports that David Smukler and Ridge Kennedy have completed the Ralph Page Legacy Weekend syllabus.

# The Butcher Dance

By ? — Grabbed from the Internet

A guy has spent five years traveling all around the world making a documentary on Native dances. At the end of this time, he has every single native dance of every indigenous culture in the world on film. He winds up in Alice Springs so he pops into a pub for a well earned beer.

He gets talking to one of the local Aborigines and tells him about his project. The Aborigine asks the guy what he thought of the "Butcher Dance." The guy's a bit confused and says "Butcher Dance? What's that?"

"What? You no see Butcher Dance?" "No, I've never heard of it." "Oh mate. You crazy. How you say you film every native dance if you no see Butcher Dance?"

"UmmSUM. I got a corroboree on film just the other week. Is that what you mean?"

"No no, not corroboree. Butcher Dance much more important than corroboree."

"Oh, well how can I see this Butcher Dance then?"

"Mate, Butcher Dance right out bush. Many days travel to go see Butcher Dance."

"Look, I've been everywhere from the forests of the Amazon, to deepest darkest Africa, to the frozen wastes of the Arctic filming these dances. Nothing will prevent me from recording this one last dance."

"OK, mate. You drive north along highway towards Darwin. After you drive 197 miles, you see dirt track veer off to left. Follow dirt track for 126 miles til you see big huge dead gum tree - biggest tree you ever see. Here you gotta leave car, coz much to rough for driving. You strike out due west into setting sun. You walk 3 days til you hit creek. You follow this creek to Northwest. After 2 days you find where creek flows out of rocky mountains. Much too difficult to cross mountains here though. You now head south for half day til you see pass through mountains. Pass very difficult, very dangerous. Take 2, maybe 3 days to get through rocky pass. When through, head north-west for 4 days til reach big huge rock - 20 ft high and shaped like man's head.

From rock, walk due west for 2 days and you find village. Here you see Butcher Dance."

So the guy grabs his camera crew and equipment and heads out. After a couple of hours he finds the dirt track. The track is in a shocking state and he's forced to crawl along at a snails pace and so he doesn't reach the tree until dusk and he's forced to set up camp for

the night. He sets out bright and early the following morning. His spirits are high and he's excited about the prospect of capturing on film this mysterious dance which he had never heard mention of before. True to the directions he has been given, he reaches the creek after three days and follows it for another two until they reach the rocky mountains. The merciless sun is starting to take its toll by this time and his spirits are starting to flag, but wearily he trudges on until he finds the pass through the hills - nothing will prevent him from completing his life's dream.

The mountains prove to be every bit as treacherous as their guide said and at times they almost despair of getting their bulky equipment through. But after three and a half days of back breaking effort they finally force their way clear and continue their long trek. When they reach the huge rock, four days later, their water is running low and their feet are covered with blisters but they steel themselves and head out on the last leg of their journey. Two days later they virtually stagger into the village where the natives feed them and give them fresh water and they begin to feel like new men.

Once he's recovered enough, the guy goes before the village chief and tells him that he has come to film there Butcher Dance.

"Oh mate. Very bad you come today. Butcher Dance last night. You too late. You miss dance."

"Well, when do you hold the next dance?" "Not til' next year."

"Well, I've come all this way. Couldn't you just hold an extra dance for me, tonight?"

"No, no, no! Butcher Dance very holy. Only hold once a year. If hold more, gods get very angry and destroy village! You want see Butcher Dance you come back next year."

The guy is devastated. But he has no other option but to head back to civilization and back home.

The following year, he heads back to Australia and, determined not to miss out again, sets out a week earlier than last time. He is quite willing to spend a week in the village before the dance is performed in order to ensure he is present to witness it.

However, right from the start things go wrong. Heavy rains that year have turned the dirt track to mud and the car gets bogged every few miles, finally forcing them to abandon their vehicles and slog through the mud on foot almost half the distance to the tree. They reach the creek and the mountains without any further hitch, but halfway through the ascent of the mountain they are struck by a fierce storm which rages for several days, during which

they are forced to cling forlornly to the mountainside until it subsides. It would be suicide to attempt to scale the treacherous paths in the face of such savage elements. Then, before they have traveled a mile out from the mountains, one of the crew sprains his ankle badly which slows down the rest of their journey to the rock and then the village enormously.

Eventually, having lost all sense of how long they have been travelling, they stagger into the village at about 12:00 noon. "The Butcher Dance!" gasps the guy. "Please don't tell me I'm too late!" The chief recognizes him and says "No, white fella. Butcher Dance performed tonight. You come just in time."

Relieved beyond measure, the crew spend the rest of the afternoon setting up their equipment - preparing to capture the night's ritual on celluloid.

As dusk falls, the natives start to cover their bodies in white paint and adorn themselves in all manner of bird's feathers and animal skins. Once darkness has settled fully over the land, the natives form a circle around a huge roaring fire.

A deathly hush descends over performers and spectators alike as a wizened old figure with elaborate swirling designs covering his entire body enters the circle and begins to chant. Some sort of witch doctor or medicine man, figures the guy and he whispers to the chief "What's he doing?"

"Hush" whispers the chief. "You first white man ever to see most sacred of our rituals. Must remain silent. Holy man, he asks that the spirits of the dreamworld watch as we demonstrate our devotion to them through our dance and, if they like our dancing, will they be so gracious as to watch over us and protect us for another year."

The chanting of the Holy man reaches a stunning crescendo before he removes himself from the circle. From somewhere the rhythmic pounding of drums booms out across the land and the natives begin to sway to the stirring rhythm. The guy is becoming caught up in the fervour of the moment himself. This is it. He now realizes beyond all doubt that his wait has not been in vain.

He is about to witness the ultimate performance of rhythm and movement ever conceived by mankind. The chief strides to his position in the circle and, in a big booming voice, starts to sing:

"You butch yer right arm in. You butch yer right arm out. You butch yer right arm in and you shake it all about"

## Editor Needed

The *NEFFA News* is looking for a new Editor. **As you CAN see**, this issue was put-to-gether by a troupe of monkeys. They mean well, but bananas for pay can only go so far.

If you might be interested in helping NEFFA out, **PLEASE** give NEFFA president Nancy Hanssen a call at 508-875-0382.



*Our interim editor*



# N·E·F·F·A

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**The NEFFA News**, a publication of the New England Folk Festival Association, is published four times a year to communicate with its membership and other interested persons.

**The New England Folk Festival Association** is a non-profit educational and cultural organization, incorporated under the general laws of Massachusetts to encourage, sponsor, and preserve high standards of performance of the folk arts and traditions in New England and elsewhere.

**Membership** entitles one to voting privileges, publications, and to reduced admission to selected NEFFA-sponsored activities. It is open to interested persons who support our objectives.

**Annual Dues** are \$7/individual (\$18 for 3 years); \$11/household (\$28 for 3 years) (two or more persons living together as a family in one residence — one mailing per household). Supporting members are those who contribute any amount beyond regular dues. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent of the law. Send check, payable to NEFFA, to the address above. Occasionally, NEFFA shares its mailing list for a one-time use by like-minded folk organizations. If you do not want your name and address shared in this way, tell us with your membership.

**Please direct all telephone inquiries** to the NEFFA office (phone number above).

Interested persons can get on NEFFA's mailing list for one year at no charge. Send request with full name and address to the office.

## Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Covering</u>	<u>Calendar</u>	<u>News</u>
Spring	Apr.-Jul.	Jan. 20	Feb. 15
Summer	Jul.-Oct.	Apr. 20	May 15
Autumn	Oct.-Jan.	Jul. 20	Aug. 15
Winter	Jan.-Apr.	Oct. 20	Nov. 15

**Send Calendar items** to Jacob and Nancy Bloom, 169 Sylvia St., Arlington MA 02476, or to [bloom@gis.net](mailto:bloom@gis.net)

**Other submissions** go to Dan Pearl, 15 Buffalo Run, Southborough, MA 01772, or to [pearl@sw.stratus.com](mailto:pearl@sw.stratus.com)

**Publicize your events!** Display advertising or flyer enclosures are available for qualifying folk-related organizations. For rate and deadline information, contact Dan Pearl at +1-508-229-2854.

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