

2013 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee Reports

From the President

The President's work since October 2012 has been primarily to help steer the NHFA from a leadership group of inspired individuals to a working board of committed individuals. This has included some bumps along the road as we navigated this new terrain. As a founding member of the NHFA leadership team and the only remaining member on the board from those years, my role was important, but far from easy. I could not have accomplished 1/10th of what I did without an incredibly effective and efficient executive committee. I chaired most of the NHFA board meetings, attended all executive committee meetings, and was generally available for any policy considerations. I served on the 1023 committee which was responsible for developing and refining all our documents in preparation for our 1023 filing, on the website committee in ensuring that our message was consistent, clear and attractive, and headed up the nomination committee in seeking new board members for replacing those whose terms were up. It is my hope that this past year was cultivation for a dynamic second and final year of my term. May it be so.

- Beth Knox, President

From the Vice President

The Vice President's work this past year included:

- participation on the Executive Committee
- leading meetings in the absence of the President
- proposing and guiding initiatives taken up by the Board
- researching and producing Board Development documents for continuing education of Board members
- drafting an Events Manual for future use by conference and retreat planners
- drafting and publishing an Orientation Manual for new Board members
- acting as liaison to the NHFA attorney
- researching and compiling an Advisory Council report for the Board
- providing support and advice to the President

- Lee Webster, VP

From the Secretary

(including Membership and Conference)

Merilynne served as the Secretary of the NHFA from October 2012 to October 2013.

There were four board meetings in 2012 during my tenure as Secretary (October 24, November 8, November 28 and December 13). There have been thirteen board

meetings to date in 2013 during my tenure as Secretary (January 10, January 23, February 14, February 28, March 14, March 28, April 11, April 24, May 9, May 22, June 26, July 24 and August 28). There will be three more in 2013 during my tenure as Secretary (September 12, September 25 and October 10). I take notes at board meetings, send them to the board members, post them on our communication website and remind board members of the tasks that they have agreed to do.

In addition I have maintained communication with the membership of the NHFA, received and either answered or delegated the answering of all email inquiries to the NHFA, performed the functions of the Membership Committee chair (without a working Membership Committee), maintained the wiki tool that the board uses for communication, consulted with the 1023 Committee and the Education Committee, served on the Executive Committee and served as its Secretary and served as Events Committee chair (inactive) and Annual Conference Planning Committee chair.

On this date (9/4/13), the NHFA has 146 active members.
Between 8/24/12 and 9/4/13;

- 2 have made an annual donation of \$200
- 1 has made an annual donation of \$150
- 15 have made an annual donation of \$100
- 10 have made an annual donation of \$75
- 34 have made an annual donation of \$50
- 33 have made an annual donation of \$25
- 51 have chosen not to make an annual donation

My tenure as Secretary for the NHFA terminates on October 19, 2013 at the NHFA Annual Meeting in Raleigh, NC. Thank you very much for the opportunity to serve you. It has been a pleasure and a valuable learning experience.

- Marilynne Rush, outgoing Secretary

From the Treasurer

We started with \$15,000 in our bank account at the beginning of the year. So far we've collected almost \$2,000 in member donations and \$13,000 from conference registrations, and we've spent about \$6,000.

\$2,100 of those expenses consisted of legal and filing fees related to the 1023 filing for non-profit status, and \$2,000 were conference related expenses paid so far. For public relations and outreach, we've spent about \$1,200 for printing, website costs, postage, advertising and design work for a new member logo. Office related expenses totaled about \$250 and PayPal fees for donations and conference registrations were \$450.

Currently we have about \$24,000 in our bank and PayPal accounts combined. We anticipate breaking even on the conference this year due to the fact that we kept the conference fees extremely affordable, so we anticipate having about \$11,000 in our bank account at the yearend.

This balance will allow us to continue the great work that has been started by our board and committee members.

- Lynn Barnett, Treasurer

From the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee, comprised of the President, Vice President, and Secretary, met twice monthly to prepare meeting agendas, develop formal proposals, help guide the direction of the Board's governance of its committees, and provide nonprofit board development opportunities to strengthen efficiency and commitment.

- Lee Webster for the Executive Committee

Committee Chair Reports

Ad Hoc Committees

1023 - Application to the IRS for Nonprofit Tax Exempt Status

The application to become a formal 501c3 was submitted to the IRS on January 28th. Due to a massive back up in processing these and other applications by the IRS, our attorney informs us that we should expect to hear whether we have been approved sometime before the end of the year. 501c3 status will allow all donations to be tax-exempt.

Term Limits

The realization that more than half the current Board would be leaving when terms expire in October 2014 spurred the formation of an ad hoc committee to study the current bylaws regarding term limits, and develop a plan to resolve the problem of rotation and uncertainty. The current bylaws call for one 2-year term, followed by eligibility to serve another year, and then a second one-year term, for a total of four years. The recommendation to adopt standard nonprofit board three-year terms that rotate so that not more than one third of the board vacates at the same time failed to pass at the Board level. The committee will reconvene after the October influx of three new, 3-year term members to complete formulating a proposal that will address the mass exodus and set us on a course that will avoid such an occurrence in the future.

- Lee Webster for the Executive Committee

Education Committee

A Power Point slide carousel presentation for use by members was developed through a joint effort by the PRO and Education committees. Input from members of both

committees also helped inform the creation of the new education pages on the website aimed at educating home funeral guides, families, end-of-life professionals, and the public. Future projects such as webinars and development of educational materials to benefit home funeral guides and professionals will rely on a robust group of committee members committed to broadening the scope of our educational offerings.

- Lee Webster, *Interim Chair*

Legislative Committee

The first meeting of the Legislative Committee was in May of 2012. In the subsequent monthly meetings we:

- began to meet with our own state legislators
- hosted Josh Slocum for part of a meeting, and asked him all our questions about educating legislators.
- stabilized the committee membership
- created subcommittees to focus on various tasks

Peg wrote a letter on behalf of the NHFA responding to restrictive language in new Florida laws. It was signed by NHFA President Beth Knox and sent to the appropriate legislative committees in FL.

The Committee formulated the building of a legislative webpage for the NHFA website. This included dividing up writing tasks over many months, focusing on a “roadmap” for members to follow, including how to meet and educate state legislators and how to track legislation.

The Committee also interfaced with the FCA to receive permission to use their “tracking legislation” page on our webpage. The Legislative Webpage was launched in the spring of 2013.

Current projects include the creation of a “Pilot Project” which involves inviting NHFA members to be paired with committee members (a buddy system) who help them become “bill trackers”. Over a period of 3 months these members, with the support of their buddies, will track legislation and report any bills which pose a threat to families' rights to care for their loved ones after death. After an evaluation period we plan to contact other members to volunteer for this ongoing project.

- Peg Lorenz, *Chair*

Public Relations & Outreach Committee

The following activities have been accomplished or addressed by the PRO Committee in the past year:

- responded to email queries from members and the public
- revised and reprinted general brochure
- created slide carousel presentation for use by members
- developed and published speakers bureau list

- developed and published Education web pages
- researched and shared an updated green cemetery list from NHFREA
- printed decals for member use
- designed a logo for member use in response to request of the membership
- published two quarterly e-newsletters
- designed and published advertisements in Natural Transitions Magazine for general use and conference
- acted as liaison between committees, Website and web mistress
- developed disclaimers, hospital language for use by members
- designed conference posters, postcards
- assisted Conference Committee with conference publicity
- arranged or participated in interviews for radio and written articles by reporters from agencies such as the Huffington Post and American Funeral Directors Magazine
- responded to Newtown shootings with opinion piece in NTM
- responded to various blogs and online newspapers with info on home funerals and the NHFA
- wrote guest blog spot on I'm Sorry to Hear on behalf of the NHFA
- arranged radio interview on A Good Goodbye featuring Beth Knox and Char Barrett
- began developing a marketing plan aimed at garnering nation-wide press attention
- began developing a press kit for member use

- Lee Webster, Chair

Resource Committee

RC has expanded our own resources by the additions of Susan Oppie, Sharon Ponciano, and Pegine Quain, a most grateful and welcome change in committee configuration. The Committee welcomes new members at any time.

RC decided that due to so many topics to keep abreast of, and discussions arising regarding resources, the RC has decided to maintain twice monthly meetings, instead of once per month.

RC continues to cull, categorize and post relevant material to both the website and NHFA Facebook pages (with the wonderful leadership of Charlene Elderkin), as well as sharing with the board, committees, and general membership.

The RC leaf logo was added to the NHFA public and member only resource pages for more prominent recognition of these member resources and communication from the RC to membership.

RC has continued to provide membership support and education through the sharing of resources, but also continuing the popular monthly member teleconferences and the newly renamed Member Support Program.

- Heather Massey, Chair

Website Committee

The Website Committee experienced renewed vigor this spring after a dormant period with the hiring of a web mistress to aid in making regular monthly changes. The website is now being monitored for accuracy and consistency more frequently, and new pages are being added as committees complete written initiatives. Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

New additions to the NHFA website include:

- Revamped front page text
- Legislative page
- 10 Education pages
- Annual Membership Meeting
- Disclaimers and explanations on Workshops and general pages

- Lee Webster, Website Liaison