

AFS Folklore & Education Section Newsletter

Spring 2012

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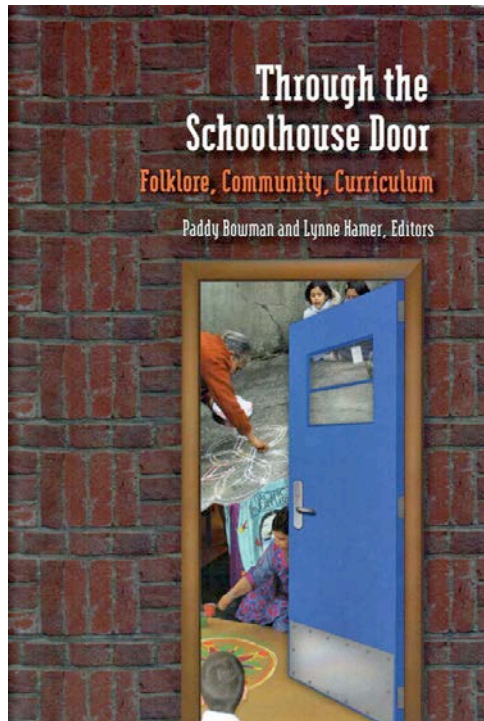
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Long-awaited folklore & education book published



The AFS Folklore & Education section congratulates two of its longstanding members, Paddy Bowman and Lynne Hamer, on the publication of their book-length guide to incorporating folklore and folk arts into the K-16 curriculum.

Through the Schoolhouse Door, published by the Utah State University Press in Fall 2011, offers a collection of experiences from exemplary school programs as well as analysis of these programs by an expert group of folklorists and educators. These are people dedicated to getting students out the door and into their communities to learn about the folk culture all around them, and also to honoring the culture teachers and students bring into classrooms.

With a foreword by Bonnie Stone Sunstein and an introduction by Bowman and Hamer, the collection features nine chapters with detailed descriptions of successful school/community collaborations from across the U. S. The authors of these chapters include many other education section members: Kristin Congdon, Amanda Dargan, Sue Eleuterio, Lisa Higgins, Gwen Meister, Ruth Olson, Maida Owens, Anne Pryor, and Lisa Rathje, among others.

Each chapter details a project that invites students to explore the creative traditions and expressive cultures of their families, neighborhoods, towns, religious communities, and peer groups. Such projects extend classrooms and sustain learning beyond school buildings, and better connect students and schools with their communities.

While folklorists and educators have long worked together to expand curricula through engagement with local knowledge and informal cultural arts—folk arts in education is a familiar rubric for these programs—the unrealized potential here, for both the folklore scholar and the teacher, is large. The value that folklorists place on the local, the vernacular, and the aesthetics of daily life does not reverberate throughout public education, even though, in the words of Bowman and Hamer, “connecting young people to family and community members and helping them to develop self-identity are vital to civic well-being and to school success.”

This exciting new resource should inspire many educators to start making such connections with their own students.

The book is available for purchase through the Utah State University Press' website at www.usu.edu/usupress/books/index.cfm?isbn=8596, or by phoning 800/621-2736. ❖

New resources

By Gregory Hansen

Two versions of *Masters of Traditional Arts Education Guide* by Paddy Bowman, Betty Carter, and Alan Govonar are available for free. The web-based edition at www.mastersoftraditionalarts.org links users to multimedia resources for 26 National Heritage Fellows to inspire educators to adapt the guide for artists of any genre or region.

Units of study such as Sense of Place, Sense of Wonder, and Sense of Discovery and classroom activities model how educators can develop lessons and incorporate folk artists into their teaching.

The guide was developed for the DVD-ROM that accompanies the *National Heritage Fellowships 30th Anniversary* publication, free from NEA. The guide is a PDF on the DVD-ROM, which may be accessed by using the "explore" function on your computer. To order, go to www.nea.gov/honors/heritage and click "publications."

The DVD-ROM features almost 400 Heritage Fellows' biographies and media samples and is an exciting resource for many audiences.



The new ChinaVine website now has been launched. This version of our website has a new content management system. It also includes numerous opportunities to participate through social media. Many folklorists have supported ChinaVine along the way. On behalf of the entire ChinaVine Team and its partners, Doug Blandy and Kristin Congdon thank you for your encouragement and interest. You can find ChinaVine at chinavine.org/. ❖



News from the Smithsonian

Cultural Research and Education at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage encompasses scholarly and collaborative research, the development of resources for schools and educators, professional training, and the production of books, documentaries, recordings, and multimedia materials. Center staff members provide workshops to encourage the integration of cultural education into K-12 curriculum and to train students to become cultural researchers. They also work with university, community, and other specialized audiences.

2011 highlights

The Center's Web sites attracted much traffic in 2011 with 4.5 million unique visits. More than 300,000 scholarly articles and texts were downloaded including lesson plans, recording liner notes, and the [Smithsonian Folklife and Oral History Interviewing Guide](#), which itself was downloaded 19,000 times. Our holdings of more than 300 videos were viewed 780,000 times and our audio holdings were accessed 1.5 million times. New content is being created and published to our Web sites throughout the year. In 2011, the Center published over 500 documents, including videos, recordings, Web pages, blog posts, newsletters, and other articles.

One of those new Web sites, [Assembling the Festival: A Journey into the 2011 Colombia Program](#), offers a window into the processes of conceptualizing, researching, and producing the 2011 Smithsonian Folklife Festival program on Colombia. *Colombia: The Nature of Culture* was a complex project that convened 100 cultural practitioners for ten days on the National Mall.

The project team was comprised of researchers, curators, translators, photographers, videographers, artists, educators, engineers, and educators from the United States and Colombia. For three years, they worked together to conceptualize, research, and produce the Festival, which featured live performances, demonstrations, workshops, and discussion sessions representing six ecosystems and three cities.

The "Assembling the Festival" site includes documentation from all phases of the project as well as the perspectives of project staff and participants. It showcases the Festival's content and themes, and provides insights, lessons, and models that others can adapt to document and interpret their own traditions.

For the past two years, the Center has partnered with the Beverly Robinson Community Folk Culture Program at

Smithsonian news, continued

the Mind-Builders Creative Arts Center and with students from Bowie State University to identify, document, and present traditions of African American “artisans of style” in New York City and the Washington, D.C./Baltimore region.

This work is part of *The Will to Adorn: African American Dress and the Aesthetics of Identity*, a multi-year collaborative folk cultural research and public presentation project initiated by the Center. Through the perspectives of museum, academic, and community scholars, as well as community-based cultural practitioners from across the nation, the project explores the diversity of African American identities as expressed through the cultural aesthetics and traditional arts of the body, dress, and adornment. The ongoing research is shared through public programs, including a Smithsonian Folklife Festival program in 2013, produced in partnership with the National Museum of African American History and Culture, as well as through upcoming publications and online educational materials.

Helen Klaebe, associate professor at Queensland University of Technology in Australia, began a five-month fellowship at the Center in December 2011. She is working with education specialists and curators to develop and test innovative ways of evaluating the economic, cultural, and audience impact of programs held at the annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival.

The collaborative team will develop a free online “tool kit” to help organizations better evaluate arts-led community engagement program and events. The Queensland-Smithsonian Institution Fellowship aims to establish mutually beneficial projects that advance research, disseminate knowledge, and promote social and cultural development.

The online conferences presented by the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies frequently feature Center staff members. During the past year, Jim Deutsch gave tips on protocols and strategies for conducting oral history projects as part of the “[Value the Land](#)” conference on July 13, 2011, and later discussed the occupational culture of the U.S. Forest Service as part of the “[Celebrate the Land](#)” conference on September 21, 2011.

Cultural Research and Education hosts interns year-round, providing opportunities for students and emerging scholars to gain research, program development, production, and collections management experience. Visit http://www.folklife.si.edu/join_us/internships.aspx for more details. ❖

Local Learning at AFS 2011

By Paddy Bowman

Things got started Thursday morning of AFS as Paddy Bowman, Lynne Hamer, and several contributors to the anthology, *Through the Schoolhouse Door: Folklore, Community, and Curriculum*, gathered for our poster session in Alumni Hall.

That evening, four new Local Learning Working Groups were launched to focus on goals designated compiled in a 2009 survey of the field by Rita Moonsammy in “Our Values and Goals,” found in the About Us section of www.locallearningnetwork.org.

Topics and leaders are: Research and Frameworks, Marsha MacDowell and Marit Dewhurst; Communications, Lisa Rathje and Lynne Hamer; Partnerships, Ruth Olson and Anne Pryor and Professional Support, Miriam Camitta and Nancy Watterson. These Working Groups will work throughout the year and reconvene at AFS in New Orleans. If interested in contributing, please contact paddybowman@verizon.net.



The 18th annual FAIE Saturday morning workshop had an enthusiastic audience for “Keeping the Peace: Educating for Social Justice,” facilitated by Lynne Hamer and Lisa Rathje.

Ruth Olson, Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Culture, and Nancy Watterson of Cabrini College led the first session, “Living Social Justice: Using Dialogue to Craft the Story of Self, Us, Now.” This interactive session used ideas of renowned community organizer and Harvard professor Marshall Ganz to introduce participants to Public Narrative: “the skill of telling stories that motivate other people to...join us in action.” The hands-on activities included working in small groups to identify and share our personal encounters with injustice.

After the half-hour resource break, Mia Henry, Director of the Chicago Freedom School, led us in a group activity her organization uses to ground students in personal identity. Her session, “Being an Adult Ally in Social Justice” taught us of the Chicago Freedom School efforts to support social change, critical thinking about current social problems, study of past social change movements, and ways adults can be effective partners to youth activists and the role healthy intergenerational relationships have in social activism.

AFS 2011 news, continued

The capstone session, "The Banneker History Project: Learning About Racism in Our Town," gave us an opportunity to understand how the classroom can be a catalyst for social justice, civic participation, and voluntarism. Jan Rosenberg organized this event and the portable exhibit illustrating the work of the project. The exhibit was on display throughout AFS in Alumni Hall with all the posters from the coated poster session and was moved to our meeting room for the workshop. The project organizers were Lynne Boyle-Baise, IU School of Education; Pat Wilson, Bloomington High School North; Connie Ables, IU School of Education; Betty Bridgwaters, Banneker Associate; and Leslie Brinson, Benjamin Banneker Community Center. They described how a project develops historical reconstruction and citizenship education. The process addressed racism, segregation, and local history as well as student engagement.

Lisa and Lynne summed up the morning by facilitating a final conversation.

The workshop for AFS 2012 in New Orleans will highlight folk arts-infused arts integration residencies, featuring Local Learning in Lafayette and City Lore models. ❖



Mia Henry describes the work the Chicago Freedom School does to help youth advocate for themselves.

New on the Local Learning website

Find the annual roster of **summer training opportunities** for teachers in folklife and oral history on the home page of www.locallearningnetwork.org. As in other disciplines, folklife institutes are down again this year. Factors include state and local education budget cuts, year-round schooling, lack of financial incentives for professional development, and mandatory training around high-stakes testing. The number of NEH-funded seminars and institutes related to traditional culture is up, however.

Please review, use, and publicize our five **virtual artist residencies** with NEA National Heritage Fellows. In the newest, Michael Doucet introduces songs that he recorded just for us. Users may also listen to Eileen Engel's interview of Doucet and read the transcript. **Local Learning Tools** include simple interview guides and links to others and provides a Local Learning Profile worksheet to help students to document people in their communities. Please send additions and corrections to the **Regional Resource** to paddybowman@verizon.net.

Other Local Learning news

Local Learning sponsored kimono artist Mary Ohno at the 2011 Seattle conference of the National Art Education Association and Haitian vèvé artist Kesler Pierre for the 2012 conference in NYC.

To wrap up a Local Learning consultancy with the Oregon Folklife Network, Paddy Bowman prepared a guide for the AFS web site to help any organization learn more about education and incorporate FAIE. Link to "Incorporating K-12 Education and Folklore: Best Practices" at www.afsnet.org/?page=ConsProfDev.

A new NEA research report, "Improving the Assessment of Student Learning in the Arts: State of the Field and Recommendations" may be downloaded at www.arts.gov/news/news12/ArtsEd-Roundtable.html where users may also link to a webcast of the February 14 roundtable on this research. Several panels address a variety of assessment topics. Find the agenda, speakers' bios, and the webcast on this same link. ❖

Recess lore and advocacy

By Anna Beresin

One of the paradoxes of collecting children's folklore is that as adults become more aware of children's lore, it can threaten its very existence. What I hope emerges from my own work is a sharing of a profound respect for the complexities of childlore, and a sense of urgent advocacy for the protection of children's rights to their own expressive culture.

After publishing my book *Recess Battles: Playing, Fighting, and Storytelling* (2010, University Press of Mississippi) I wrestled with how to make the folklore material accessible to a wider audience. I placed the singing games recorded live in the schoolyard on the book's website, recessbattles.com, but realized that the very children who I studied would benefit little from both the book and website publication. With a grant from the Philadelphia Applied Research Lab of the University of the Arts, I created an advocacy project called "Recess Access."

Recess Access is a service learning organization for college students that collects and donates traditional play materials—ropes, balls, hoops, and chalk—to impoverished urban public schools.

Our own research has shown that there is both a physical inadequacy to Philadelphia's school yards, with 50% having broken hoops and jagged pavement, and an understanding inadequacy about the importance of play in public education. With each donation of materials comes free literature written for teachers, administrators and parents about the importance of play for children.

*Eedie Idee Odie
Now here comes the teacher
with a big fat stick
Now it's time for
'Rhythmic'...*

*--The Mill School, Philadelphia,
2011*



First Lady Michelle Obama and kids double-dutch jump rope during a taping for the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA) challenge and Nickelodeon's Worldwide Day of Play, on the South Lawn of the White House, July 15, 2011. ([Official White House Photo](#) by Chuck Kennedy)

One brochure is called "A Simple Solution Beckons" and is available for free, page by page, on our website, recessaccess.org. It focuses on the poverty of play opportunities, the decline of recess, and how recess offers opportunities for health. The health angle is something that a wider audience can easily relate to, as much attention has been paid to the epidemic of childhood obesity in our city.

A second brochure was created when a child began reading "Recess Battles" at a book fare, and I realized that she needed a book created just for kids. This one is in verse and has paintings of recess created by Philadelphia school children. It is called "If you Lose your Recess and It Makes you Really Mad: An Advocacy Book for Parents and Children." Email aberesin@uarts.edu if you want a copy to Xerox and distribute.

With more and more schools canceling recess, removing art and music and drama classes, folklorists have a unique role to play in the recognition of the value of expressive culture, both inside the classroom and out. ❖

Folklore and Education Section meeting minutes October 14, 2011 Bloomington, IN

The conveners sent an agenda to members the week prior to the annual meeting that included written reports from committees.

The meeting was called to order at 12:15 by Conveners Lisa Higgins and Lisa Rathje. Sean Galvin moved to approve the minutes from the 2010 meeting with revision to correctly edit all references to the Robinson-Roeder-Ward Fellowship (R-R-W); Paddy Bowman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Financial report:

| | |
|----------------------|----------|
| FY09-10 End Balance: | 2,622.00 |
| Total Income: | 440.00 |
| Expenses: | 240.00 |
| Administrative Fees: | 102.40 |
| Total Losses: | 342.40 |
| Net Income: | 97.60 |
| FY10-11 End Balance: | 2,719.60 |

Old Business

Newsletter report

Gregory Hansen and Rosemary Hathaway submitted the following written report:

Since the AFS changed its website, we can no longer post an online newsletter like we used to. This year, we did a more traditional newsletter in MS Word and made it downloadable from the section's homepage. That was a good stop-gap measure, but we'd be interested in hearing section members' thoughts about what kind of format they'd like to see, and what's likely to be the most useful to them.

The 2011 Newsletter contains a variety of items relevant to Folklore & Education. Featured sections include a description of new projects associated with "Local Learning," Paddy's Bowman's article on the annual AFS workshop, updates from the Smithsonian and other organizations, the regular feature on new instructional resources, and essays and position papers from the 2010 AFS Education Section Forum "Teaching Folklore When We're Not Teaching Folklore."

Members discussed the options that are available for the newsletter based on the new AFS website and agreed that an annual newsletter uploaded to the website in MS Word

and PDF is agreeable. There was also discussion about ways to make the newsletter more interactive using functions available through the AFS website like forums and blogs, though blogging was considered to be too complicated and complex at this time. It was also noted that the section needs to make sure that all past newsletters, including those posted on the website, are printed and sent to the AFS Archives at Utah State University.

Local Learning report

Paddy Bowman submitted the following written report:

Launch of the new web site www.locallearningnetwork.org was hard and exciting. Attracting users is a goal for this year. We were early to the web and the old CARTS.org site had been remodeled only twice since 1996. The new site offers a more user-friendly environment and educates users about folk arts and how integrating folk arts and ethnographic approaches across curricula deepen student engagement and community and parent connection. The new site's capabilities make editing simpler.

We were excited to develop a new Heritage Fellow virtual residency with Michael Doucet for the Learning with Guest Artists section, and the interview with Doucet and songs he sang for us are vibrant additions that dovetail with the successful Local Learning in Lafayette folk arts integration project. Other residency components include an interview transcript, artist bio, regional background, and classroom connections.

The About Us section provides examples of folk arts to help users understand the dynamic nature of folk arts. A library houses an archive of relevant articles and excerpts of back issues of the CARTS Newsletter to ground educators, parents, and students.

The Regional Resources section was completely revamped to update organizations and resources state by state. A new section, Local Learning Tools, emphasizes interviewing and features lesson plans, release forms, and a glossary. Please use the site and publicize it!

NEA funding for Year 3 of Local Learning in Lafayette adds French-speaking teachers, folk artists, and teaching artists to this model project, about which an English teacher from Year 2 said, "This has revolutionized my teaching." We plan to publish an online handbook in 2012 so others can adapt this work.

The 2010 CARTS Newsletter on Teaching with Foodways has proven very popular. Co-editor Amanda Dargan is working on the 2011 issue on folk artists in the classroom.

Current NEA funding supports four working groups that will be tackling the long-range goals established by the field in the report that Rita Moonsammy compiled after our 2009 AFS sessions in Boise, Our Values and Goals,

locallearningnetwork.org/about/our-values-and-goals. One goal is to ensure that every session during 2012 AFS in New Orleans will have an education forum or panel.

Finally, pushing through with the contributors to finish *Through the Schoolhouse Door: Folklore, Community, Curriculum* was a major focus of the year.

Paddy added that a pre-AFS workshop may be in the works for the Tuesday before AFS in New Orleans (October 23, 2012). Additionally, the annual Saturday morning workshop will feature school teachers from Lafayette, Louisiana with whom Paddy has been working.

Dorothy Howard Folklore and Education Prize

2011 committee members Lisa Rathje, Paddy Bowman, and LuAnne Kozma submitted the following written report:

This year's Dorothy Howard Award committee received four nominations. The committee was impressed with the diversity of projects nominated, as well as the high quality of work being done in the field. This year's winner will be announced at the section meeting. The committee will be looking for new members at the section meeting.

The 2011 Dorothy Howard Award was presented to *Show-Me Traditions: An Educators' Guide to Teaching Folk Arts and Folklife in Missouri Schools*, written and developed by Susan Eleuterio in collaboration with staff and master artists of the Missouri Folk Arts Program. The guide was published in 2009, and a revised and updated edition was e-published in 2011 at maa.missouri.edu/mfap. The guide includes eight lesson plans, definitions and vocabulary, outcomes and links to grade level expectations, as well as artist profiles for ten teaching artists in Missouri's folk and traditional arts.

R-R-W Fellowship

2011 committee members Betty Belanus, Sue Eleuterio and Rosemary Hathaway submitted the following written report:

Considering both the dearth of organized panels around Folklore and Education themes this year, as well as the richness, relevance and energy that classroom teachers/education students using Folklife in their classrooms bring to an AFS meeting, we encourage Section members to organize panels involving a (local) teacher each year. We propose to encourage and/or help enable this participation through support via the RRW Award (to the annual amount of \$150?).

We would like to discuss this process: should we encourage Section members to identify and include a local teacher in an organized panel, and thereby also identify candidate(s) for the award? Or do we still want to open the proposal to anyone, via relevant listseros? Is this sending a mixed message?

In the event that there are no candidates/viable proposals for the award any given year, should the award not be given, and should the current award committee members the following year have the discretion to either give two awards, [or to double the amount of the award that year in order to more adequately support one promising candidate]? Committee members also considered a "donor's choice" option, which might be implemented every other year.

Lisa Rathje read the report aloud and suggested that there are two considerations. First, how do we best solicit nominations for the award? And second, can we alternate solicitation methods bi-annually?

The prize was to be suspended this year pending discussion about future recruiting/nomination processes. However, a section member nominated a perfect candidate, and the committee unanimously decided, in consultation with section conveners, to award the prize, as the teacher epitomized the intent of the award and the spirit of the fellowship's namesakes.

The 2011 fellowship was awarded to Heather Bossert Cunningham, a social studies teacher at City Charter High School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Ms. Cunningham was nominated by section member Linda Deafenbaugh, who organized an AFS forum *The Pennsylvania Standards for Folklife Education in Practice: Three Perspectives on Viability*, sponsored by the Education Section, 1:30-3:30 p.m., also in the Oak Room. Ms. Cunningham is a member of the forum. She submitted a statement that was reviewed by the award committee members.

Regarding the issue of developing a more effective process for identifying future nominees for the R-R-W Fellowship, members offered several suggestions. One idea was to boost school teacher participation in AFS panels, thus "cultivating" nominees via proposed paper sessions and forums. Other members noted that "Donor's Choice" is a great way to identify teachers doing the work that the fellowship seeks to honor and the site is a viable way to identify nominees. The Smithsonian also hosts "teachers of the year," and these teachers are often doing work that dovetails with the section's goals. These teachers might be approached to present and/or be nominated.

A discussion ensued about the costs of travel and conference registration for fellowship awardees (i.e., the fellowship award does not cover all expenses, so attendance is cost-prohibitive for many teachers). On some occasions, awardees have had travel covered by their schools, and the award supplemented the school's funding. Additionally, section members continue to call for fundraisers to keep section income ahead of section expenses. Fundraising discussion included a call for memorial donations in honor of the fellowship's namesakes and a search for additional

sources of funding. Discussion also included questions about how well sessions that include R-R-W fellows are attended. 2011 R-R-W Fellow Heather Covington offered to report back to the section on her participation in and attendance at her panel.

A decision was made to encourage section members to coordinate AFS sessions that include K-12 teachers. After AFS proposals are submitted, section members should then nominate teachers for the fellowship. The timeline for nominations is somewhat flexible, and the deadline can be established after AFS sends out acceptance letters for session proposals in June.

New business

2012 conveners: A Proposal [Action item]

Conveners Lisa Higgins and Lisa Rathje proposed changing the conveners' terms of appointment. Currently, conveners serve two years, one as junior convener and the second as senior convener. Higgins and Rathje noted that two years is not enough time to truly provide institutional memory or to see projects and proposals through to fruition. Therefore, they suggested that conveners serve three years each. Since the current conveners are already staggered in their terms, for instance, Lisa Higgins would serve a third year in 2012. A new convener will be nominated and installed at AFS in New Orleans to serve a three year terms. Lisa Rathje is in her second year and will service through 2013's meeting when her replacement will be nominated and installed.

Lynne Hamer made a motion to accept the suggestion. Sean Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

2012 Robinson-Roeder-Ward Fellowship (R-R-W) committee

The section voted unanimously to install Lynne Hamer, Betty Belanus, and Rosemary Hathaway (chair) as the 2012 Fellowship committee.

2012 Dorothy Howard Folklore and Education Prize committee

The section voted unanimously to install Linda Deafenbaugh, Nancy Michael, Lisa Higgins, and Susan Eleuterio (chair) as the 2012 Prize committee.

2012 AFS Saturday morning workshop committee

Paddy Bowman asked for a committee to help plan and coordinate the annual Saturday workshop. Nelda Ault, Lisa Higgins, Lisa Rathje and Paddy Bowman will serve on the committee.

***Journal of American Folklore* article**

A committee volunteered last year to investigate the guidelines and deadline for submitting an essay on the

Folklore and Education Section for consideration to the *Journal of American Folklore* for publication in a special issue commemorating the Journal's 125th anniversary.

Anne Pryor, Ruth Olsen, and Gwen Meister exchanged emails and conversed with JAF editors Jim Leary and Tom DuBois. The committee will continue to serve and will lead section members in determining the appropriate author(s), theme and content for the essay.

Meeting adjourned 1:10 p.m. ❖

"Folklore and Education" is the newsletter of the Folklore and Education section of the American Folklore Society.

Individuals may join the Folklore and Education Section without joining the American Folklore Society. Annual dues are \$10. Join online by [clicking here](#).

Please e-mail address changes to Tim Lloyd, Executive Director, at lloyd.100@osu.edu, or Lorraine Walsh Cashman, Associate Director, at cashman.11@osu.edu.

Please send questions, comments, and contributions to the editors at the addresses below.

Editor: Rosemary Hathaway
Department of English
West Virginia University
P. O. Box 6296
Morgantown, WV 26506-6296
304 /293-9738
rosemary.hathaway@mail.wvu.edu

Co-Editor: Gregory Hansen
Department of English and Philosophy
Arkansas State University
P. O. Box 1890
State University, AR 72467-1890
870/972-3043
ghansen@astate.edu

