

NECTR 2017 Afterburn Report

Message From The Event Leads

Welcome to our second-ever afterburn report! 2017 was a big year for NECTR -- we had more participants, volunteer shifts, campsites, and porta-potties than ever before! NECTR ran smoothly this year due to the hundreds of hours of volunteering put in by participants like you. Thank you to everyone who was able to volunteer this year (for those who weren't, there's always next year!). Thanks also to everyone who provided feedback via the survey or other means. As we grow and experience more NECTRs, we want to continue learning and experimenting based on what works and what doesn't work in order to make next year's event even better.

This report is broken down into three sections: First, each core lead got a chance to reflect on what worked and what didn't for their individual core. Second, the board of directors has provided a summary of how the NECTR organization financials are doing. Third, we have collected and summarized the participant survey responses.

We are always interested in hearing from NECTR community members who are interested in playing a bigger role in the event in the future! If you think that you might have the time and energy to take on a leadership or support role in organizing the 2018 event, even if you aren't quite sure what you specifically want to do, please reach out to a board member or core lead!

Your friendly neighborhood event leads,

Seth

Lia

Thomas

Jill

Mindy

Jon

Gate

Core Lead: *Gwiddern*

Overview

What Worked

Having a dedicated Parking Core was a huge improvement over last year and reduced about half of my stress load. GATE Core volunteers did really well this year. Last year there were several times that I went out and found that a lot of the content of the GATE schpiel was being lost between shift changes and I had to remind people/demonstrate what to do. This year every time I went out and watched volunteers greeting a car they were going over everything exactly as they should have been. Not sure if this was due to an improved Handbook, more experienced volunteers, or just a general improvement in base reality. No one ran out of firewood during a middle of the night shift this year either.

Thanks to Khaki for help finding short-notice volunteers for shifts that were empty or missed. Every time that happened someone showed up in no time at all from Ranger HQ or another station. Awesome.

What Didn't Work

I kind of wish I'd taken the neighbor who came joyriding & drinking beer on his tractor on a tour. He seemed like the kind of person who should be at the event, I told him to buy a ticket.

We had a lot of neighbors visit this year, many more than last year. Some on foot, several in car, one on giant sex-tractor. They were all pretty interested/friendly. Let's talk about GATE discretion in bringing neighbors who aren't on the guest list on tours if they seem cool enough.

The road signage needs to be updated next year. I'd like signs that have one obvious side to them, or that say the same thing on both sides. A couple times a sign or signs fell over and whoever righted them wasn't paying attention, and the result was that we had one that said "FESTIVAL ENTRANCE" up for a minute, which we shouldn't have, and for a while the arrow pointing to the entrance was pointing away from the entrance. This led to people blowing by the entrance at the road and missing it then having to U-turn or back up awkwardly, I feel like there is a mild risk of accident due to this sort of thing.

Lessons Learned

No response

Greeters

Core Lead: Sarah R

Overview

What Worked

People greatly appreciated the information and the consent cards went over well.

What Didn't Work

No response

Lessons Learned

A fire barrel at the greeter station would've been good

Parking

Core Lead: M@

Overview

What Worked

Got lots of cars in! Art cones garnered complements! Met humans!

What Didn't Work

I botched the programming in my radio so I was off comm the whole time. It went fine anyway, but it would probably have been better to be reachable. Also having volunteers check in at the absolute opposite end of the event was silly, I know I'm not alone in not checking in before showing up for my shifts.

Lessons Learned

No response

DPW

Core Lead: *Matt S*

Overview

DPW is responsible for coordinating the maintenance of the NECTR site before and after the event, including clearing trails and campsites and installing event infrastructure.

What Worked

Great volunteers, good work weekend turnout. The brush hog rental was a good investment for clearing the temple/effigy fields.

Volunteers willing to wade in the stream to retrieve the bridge and the fact that the bridge was not completely destroyed by the washout.

What Didn't Work

No response

Lessons Learned

The bridge definitely needs to be removed completely from the river post event, and we will see to that. We also need to think about a push to clear more land if we want to expand. I walked a couple in on Friday afternoon and they grabbed the last open camping spot we could find (in the woods). The big camps are well situated but the randoms really don't have tons of space to camp except the field (aka the sound toilet). If things are still tight, we should consider if everyone is grabbing an appropriate amount of space for their camp as well.

Rangers

Core Lead: Jon E

Overview

The NECTR Rangers volunteer to take shifts as sober, caring, and connected participants in order to facilitate communication across the event, help out participants who have questions or concerns, and provide the first line of response to emergencies.

What Worked

This year, we had a new Khaki position and a new Ranger HQ. These two changes made a huge difference in how organized we were and how good a job we were able to do in assisting other cores and participants. Despite minimal training and advance notice, Ranger volunteers jumped in and figured stuff out. Rangers helped to resolve several concerning situations in a sensible and professional manner, and feedback from other participants was overwhelmingly positive about the Ranger presence at the event.

What Didn't Work

Despite our best efforts to encourage sign-ups, we still had open slots on the schedule this year, especially for overnight shifts. We need to think about how to address this issue globally (not just within the Rangers) and make sure that we have key volunteer positions filled before the event starts.

Although we offered more training this year than ever before, it still wasn't enough to give everyone who wanted to volunteer ample opportunity to learn about the job before starting it. Next year, we should offer additional pre-event training options, and more in-depth training for Khaki volunteers to make sure they are prepared for the role. We should also involve more experienced Rangers in training sessions so the work is spread between more people.

While Ranger HQ was a great improvement over the past situation where there was no real defined location for Rangers to work out of, it was planned and assembled at the last minute. Next year we should plan ahead and bring more tables, office supplies, etc. to make sure HQ can support all the things people need to do there, and is a comfortable place to hang out.

There were advantages to the sign-in system this year (recording volunteer sign-ins at Ranger HQ) but also disadvantages, and the system was not communicated well to all volunteers. Next year we should change the system to not ask volunteers to physically travel to Ranger HQ to sign in, and make sure the system is communicated well.

Some volunteers reported radio issues when trying to communicate between the far ends of the event. We plan to look at technical solutions to this problem for next year.

FAST

Core Lead: *Mindy S*

Overview

The Fire Art Safety Team is responsible for ensuring that fire art and fire performance are done safely at NECTR by inspecting fire art, coordinating fire performance safety, and managing the safety perimeters at effigy and temple burns.

What Worked

Team work I think was spot on. The two Co-leads did a wonderful job; Weird Jimmy stepped right up and took charge of all propane tank inspections and labeled them safe for use during the event. Andi as always did a great job with the fire performers. Getting enough volunteers for perimeter for both the effigy and temple burn was perfect! I was lucky to have Seth Hardy at the ready to answer any questions or address concerns during the burns.

What Didn't Work

I myself could be more visible and reachable (i.e. have a radio on me) as a core lead as it seemed nobody really knew who was leader of FAST or what their job as volunteer for shifts really entailed.

Lessons Learned

This year was my first year as Core Lead whereas in the years past I was a co-lead so there were a few things that didn't occur to me to have done and ready before the effigy burn; such as having water ready and nearby to put out any possible unruly fires. Gathering rakes and other tools and having lights so effigy prep in the dark would have been easier as it has been in the past. The most stressful part of my position is the prep for the effigy burn. Once it goes up in flames I relax, but making sure it goes off without a hitch can have me on edge a little.

Center Camp

Core Lead: *Jill W*

Overview

Center Camp provides coffee and hot water to participants as well as a relaxing space for conversation.

What Worked

Great volunteers, instructions seemed to work for everyone, area was kept clean and bug free. Art supplies were used. People were happy with sharks and balls!

What Didn't Work

I think it's getting to be a pretty well oiled machine. I improve details of the flow each year and it's paying off. I like to keep a theme for no longer than two years which means it needs a makeover again next year (blue bedroom to carny cafe to...I am thinking Moroccan lounge...with hookahs, ball pit, etc). This year, the biggest challenge was a reduction in attendance - much more than last - I think a couple of reasons: (1) very warm - not too many hot drinks in demand outside of the morning (2) It was no longer the central spot for radios and volunteering which might have had an impact but I really liked that no one tried to charge radios off the marine batteries - so win :P (3) Perhaps the esplanade being increasingly interesting...not sure but we went through half the coffee ?!

Lessons Learned

(no response)

Trail Lighting

Core Lead: *Thomas D*

Overview

The Trail Lighting core is responsible for organizing the lighting of the trails, through a combination of bringing lights and encouraging theme camps to bring lights.

What Worked

During the event lights largely got turned off/on as needed. (With the type of lights I'm using now, they DO need to be checked on as the batteries usually don't last the full event). There was only one shift that it looked like lights did not get turned on.

What Didn't Work

(no response)

Lessons Learned

More lights. Lights that last long enough for the entire event. Easier to setup mantises. Easier volunteer check-in (due to the nature of it not being a long shift, I don't know that my volunteers had the clearest idea of how to check in).

Next year I would like to improve on the light design - make it something more unique than a string of lights in a jar.

Art Grants

Core Lead: Sarah F

Overview

The Art Grants core is responsible for reviewing and judging art grant applications, awarding grants, and serves as a liaison between artists and the event organizers.

What Worked

The team took initiative in analyzing entries and giving well thought out feedback to artists.

The Temple worked well this year. We took a chance on someone unknown to our community and it paid off big time

What Didn't Work

Need to do an art tour. Need to. Next year this is set in stone. It must happen on a Saturday!

Lessons Learned

(no response)

Ticketing

Core Lead: Jesse C

Overview

The Ticketing core is responsible for running the ticketing website and helping participants buy (and return, if necessary) their tickets.

What Worked

People got tickets!

Near zero complaints!

Easier workflow for purchases than in previous years

Automatically releasing tickets

What Didn't Work

Finding people to buy tickets during the last week

Lessons Learned

Next year, we should simplify the whole process more. We should also release a lot more extra tickets early, so that as returns come in, people aren't stuck waiting until the end to find out they can go to the event.

Trail Signs

Core Lead: Amy H

Overview

The Trail Signs core is responsible for designing, building, installing, and uninstalling the signs that mark the trails throughout the NECTR site.

What Worked

Had great weather for installing signs!

What Didn't Work

Some signs were hard to see, and prone to being knocked over by traffic.

27 people voted for the Brain names yet did a horrible job of stealing them. They should be ashamed of themselves. ; }

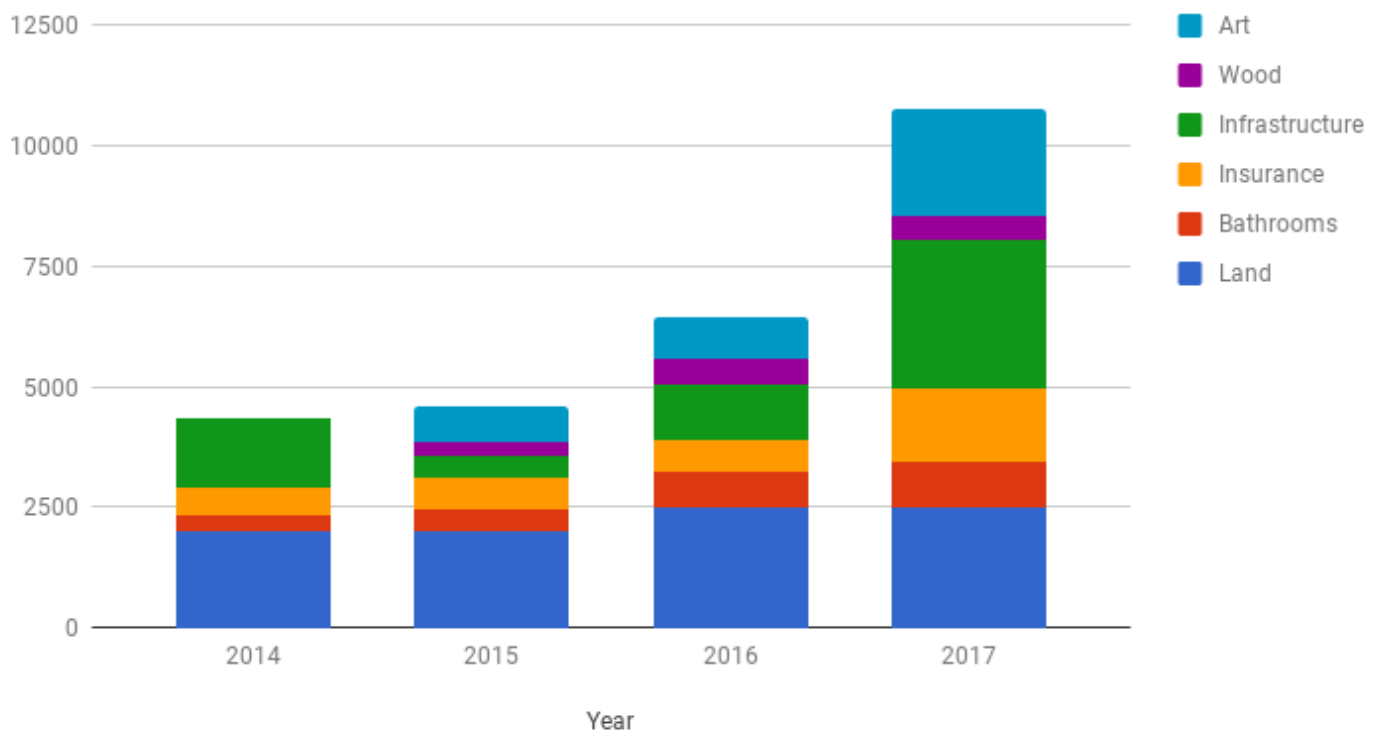
Lessons Learned

Next year we should consider making bigger signs and digging deeper holes for signposts.

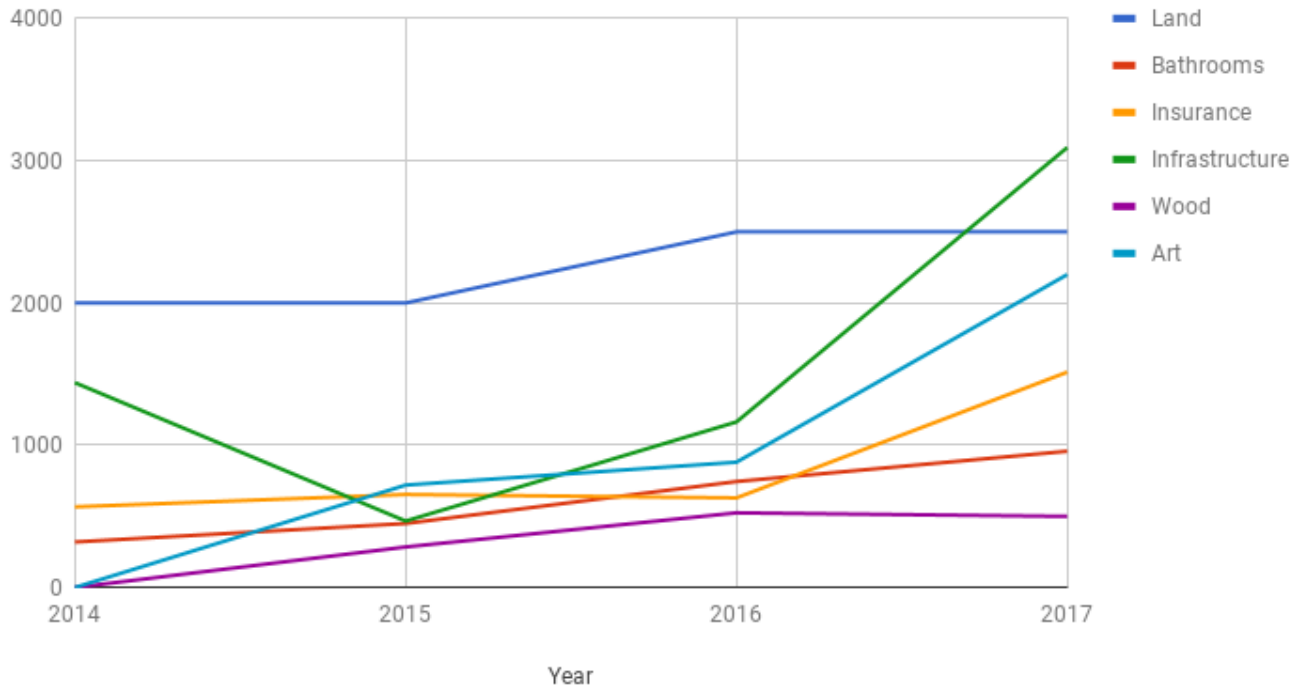
Financials

NECTR's primary expenditures include the land reservation, art grants, and event insurance which is consistent across most regional event budgets. This year, we invested more in insurance and porta potties for our increased population. We purchased one piece of long-term NECTR infrastructure (generator) but otherwise, all costs are annual. We were under budget for art grants since we did not distribute funds to all of those awarded. The current bank balance of just over \$21.3K will allow for an increased art budget, including effigy and temple for the 2018 event. The majority of surplus remains in the bank as recommended for unforeseen emergencies, including those relating to last minute venue changes. The summaries below include spending trends from 2014 onwards, including a detailed breakdown of costs for the 2017 event.

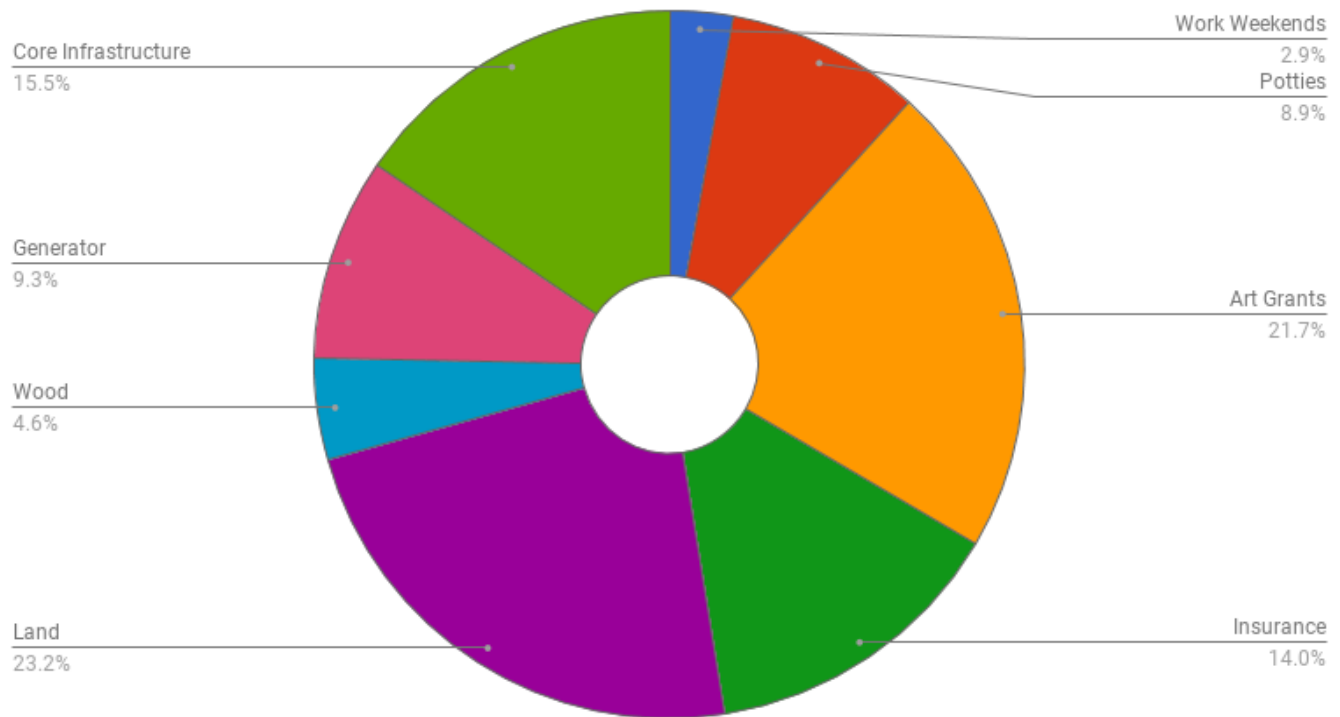
NECTR Expenditures (2014-2017)



NECTR Expenditures (2014-2017)



NECTR Expenditures by Category (2017)



NECTR 2017

EXPENDITURE	AMOUNT
Land	\$2,500.00
Art Grants	\$2,339.41
Insurance	\$1,514.00
Generator	\$999.00
Potties	\$957.15
Core Infrastructure: Greeters, Signs, Gate, Volunteer Supplies, Sanctuary, Recycling	\$862.34
Wood	\$500.00
Work Weekends	\$312.36
Core Infrastructure: Wristbands	\$357.96
Core Infrastructure: T-Shirts	\$228.30
Core Infrastructure: Lighting	\$215.09
Bank fees	\$30.00
Web fees	\$20.87
TOTAL	\$10,836.48
2017 BALANCE	\$21,260.00

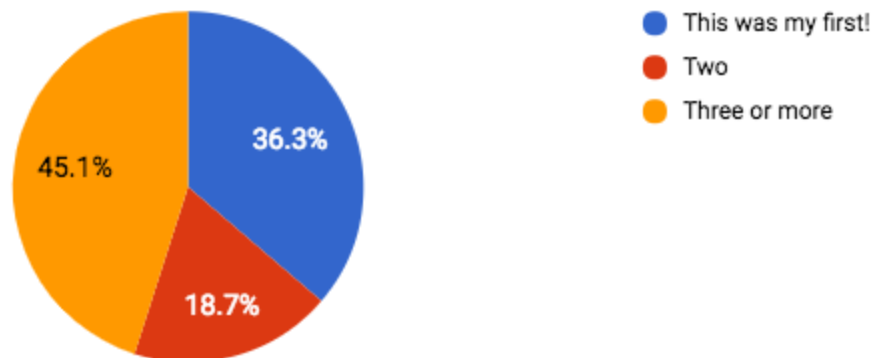
Participant Survey

Following the event, a survey was conducted to collect feedback from the participants to see how the event went. We received 92 responses out of a total of approximately 300 participants. (Comparable to the 71 responses from 250 participants in 2016).

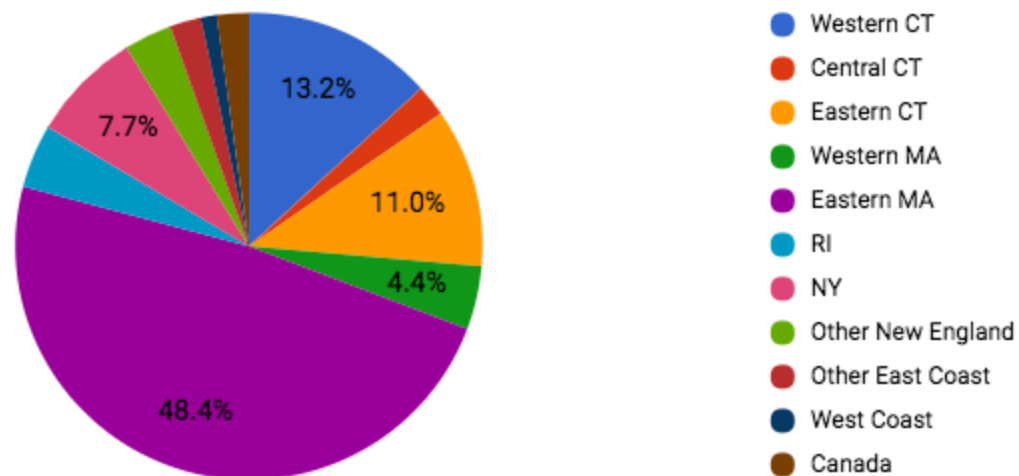
Note: Some license was taken with consolidating and summarizing responses from the survey strictly for presentation purposes. Please be assured that we received, largely loved and are considering all of the individual responses.

General Questions

How many NECTRs have you been to?

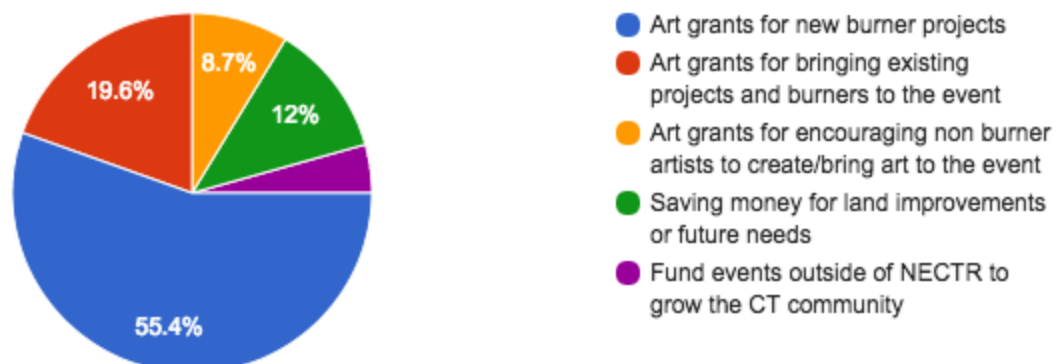


Where Are You From?



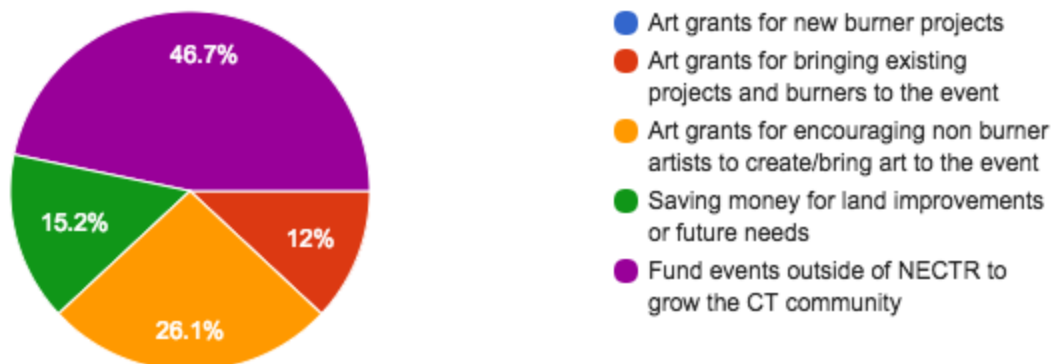
What would you MOST like to see NECTR's budget go towards?

92 responses



What would you LEAST like to see NECTR's budget go towards?

92 responses



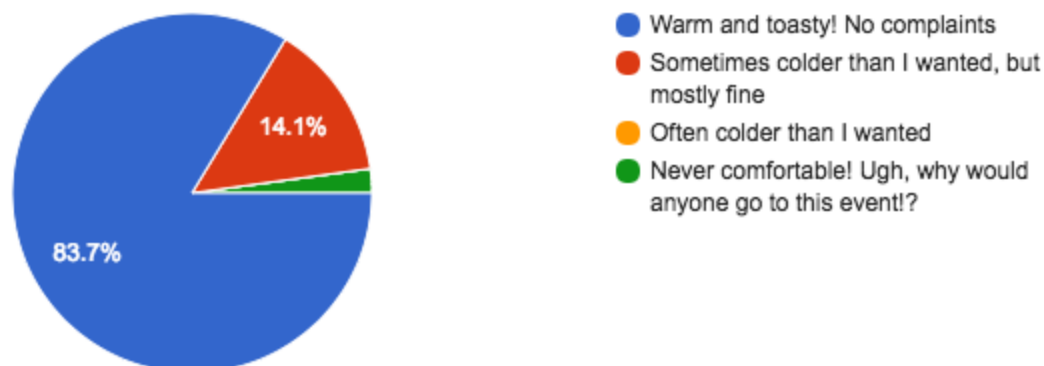
What improvements would you like to see leading up to the event?

35 responses - 10 selected responses:

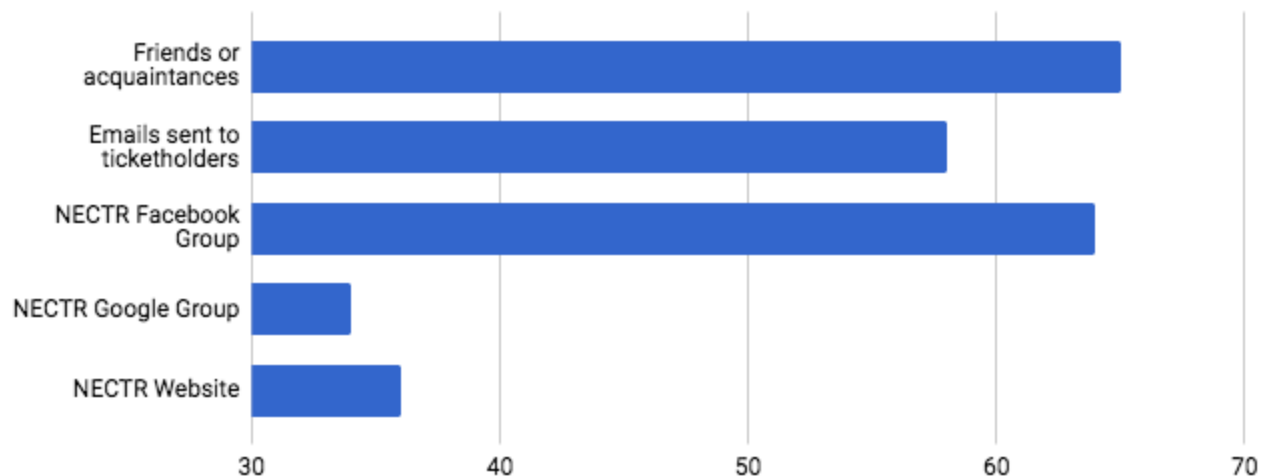
Level out the field. (Several responses)
Map and directions provided earlier (Several responses)
Improved placement (theme camps, individual camps and sounds camps) (Several responses)
Improved Ticketing Process (Several responses)
Publishing some conduct guidelines and community norms. (A couple responses)
Move the art grant deadline later because July 10 is too soon after Firefly. (An August deadline would be better)
Send out communication not just via FB. (Some information missed by those that do not check the FB group)
More pre-event trainings for volunteer positions that need it (rangers, sanctuary, etc)
Better communication about volunteer cores. (Signing up in advance after ticket offer or before purchased ticket.)
Poison ivy removal

How comfortable were you (temperature wise) this year?

92 responses



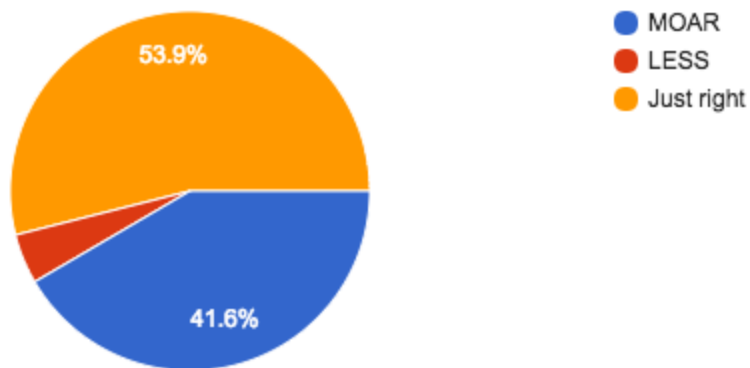
How did you get info about NECTR before the event?



Volunteering

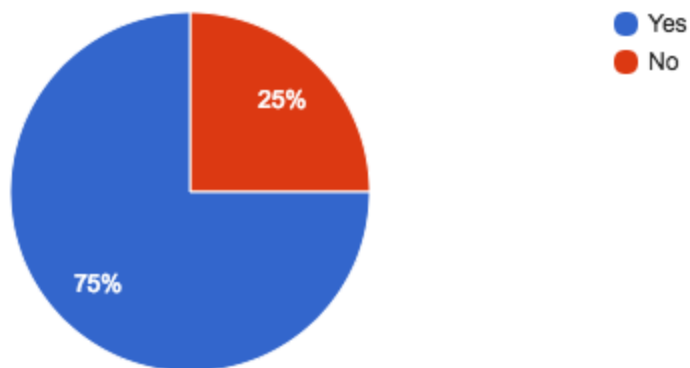
Does NECTR need more or less volunteers?

89 responses

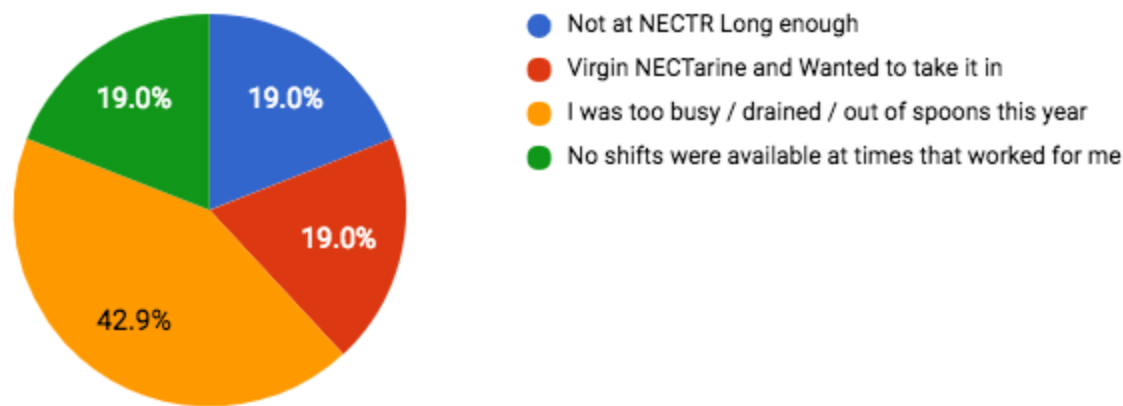


Did you volunteer for one of the NECTR cores this year?

92 responses

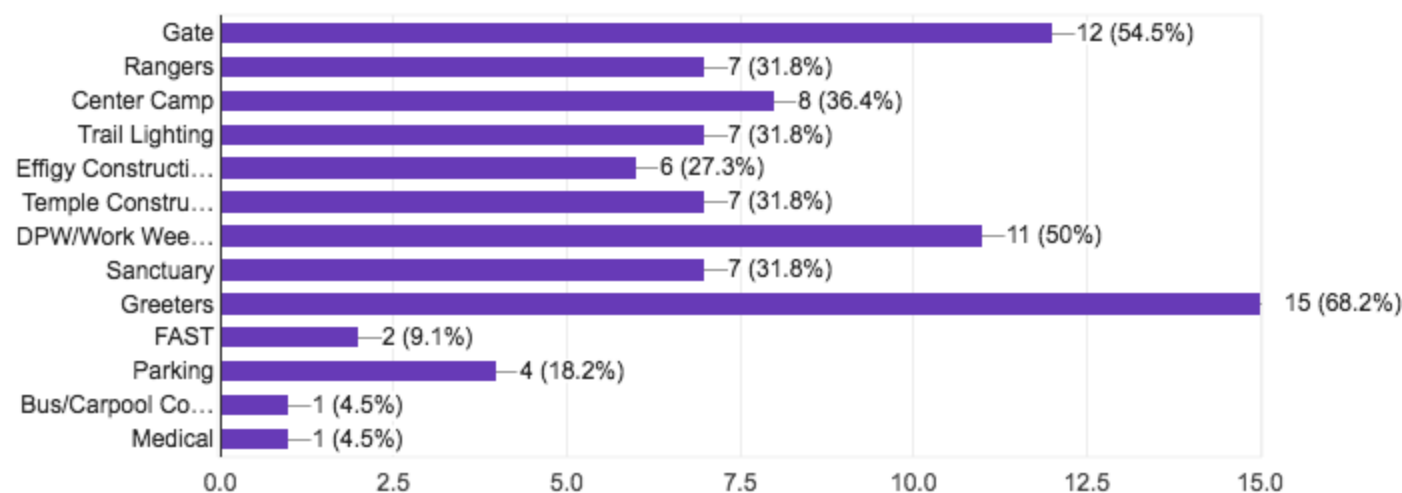


Why didn't you volunteer for the event this year?



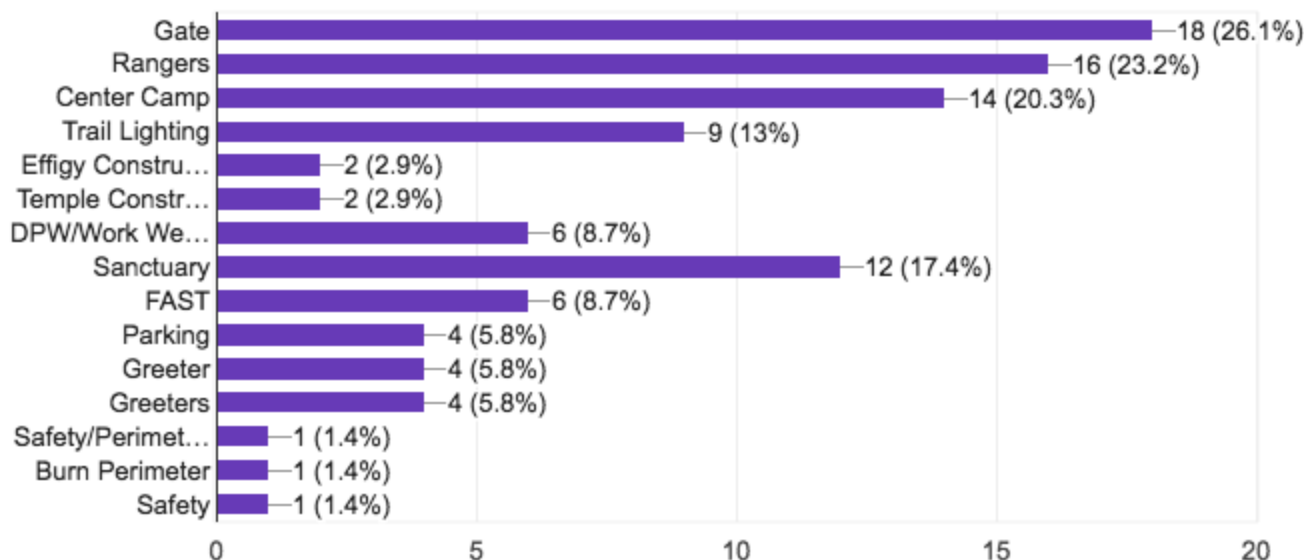
Would you consider volunteering for any of these cores next year?

22 responses



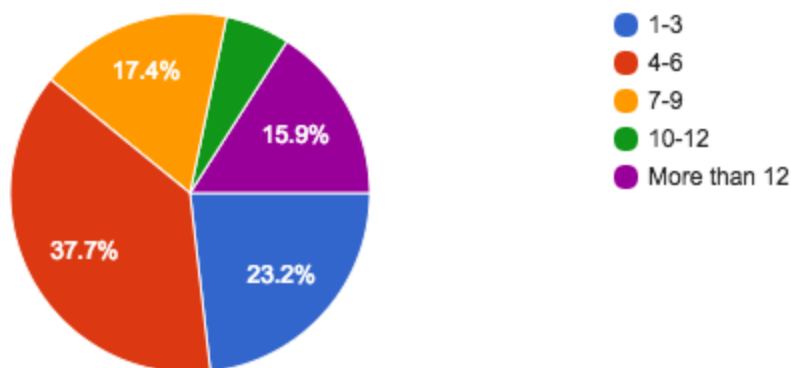
Which core(s) did you volunteer with?

69 responses



About how many hours did you spend volunteering for the event (including early arrival and late crew)?

69 responses



What improvements would have helped improve your volunteer experience?

39 responses - 9 selected responses:

Better communication about volunteer shifts.
(Where to sign in, instructions, what to bring, etc)

Clear way to locate each CORE Lead

Make it clear where instructional binders for each CORE are located.

Better infrastructure at greeters (music, lighting, fire pit, etc)

Better gate/greeter process
A Placement CORE to address various issues (sounds camps, Sanctuary, open camping, etc)
MOAR Volunteers for key COREs
Better radio coverage at Gate/Greeters
A Medical Tent/CORE

What worked well?

39 responses - 10 selected responses:

The Rangers had their Shit Together
Parking Core
Volunteering at Center Camp and making SNAKS
Being a Bug on the Window of a Spaceship
Well designed and coordinated Sanctuary providing a nice quiet space.
Cookies and consent cards at Greeters to remind everyone of the importance of consent.
Loved the overall lighting of the event contributed by the camps
Training for Rangers and Sanctuary
Radios worked very well this year.
The programs for Sanctuary and Center Camp were well defined with information for volunteers.

Would you volunteer again?

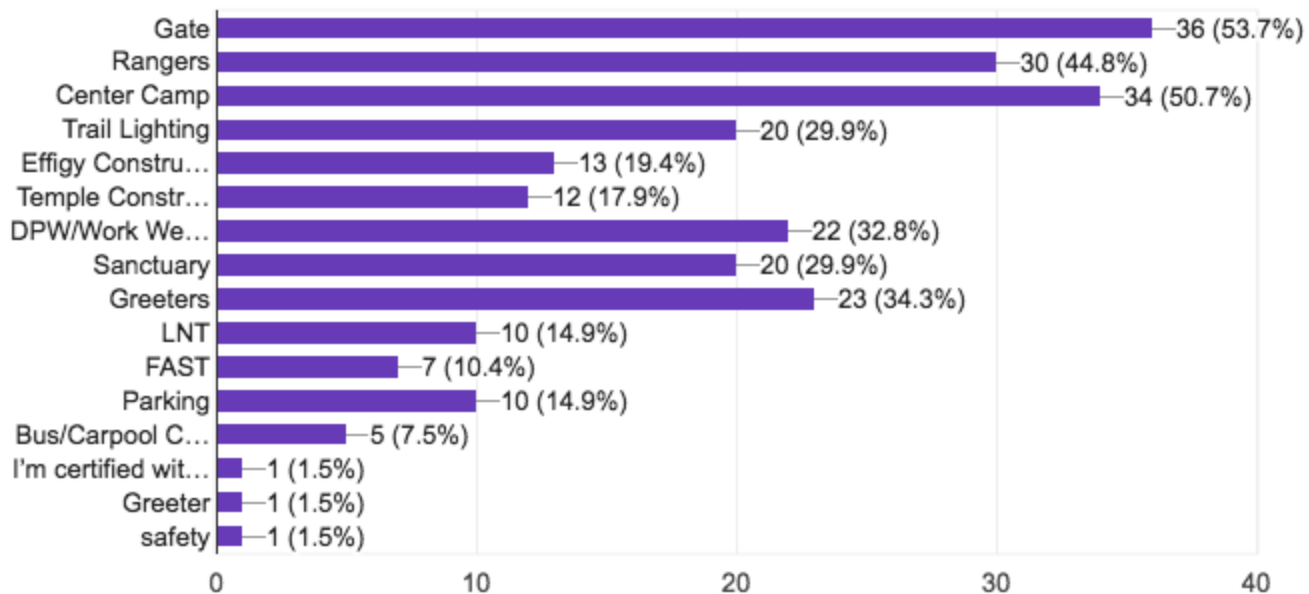
69 responses



- Yes! For sure!
- Eh maybe
- Nah
- Maybe for a different core

Which cores would you consider volunteering for next year?

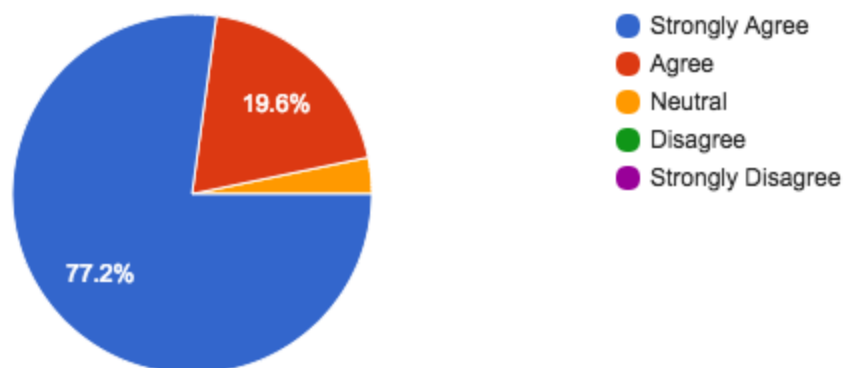
67 responses



Experience Questions

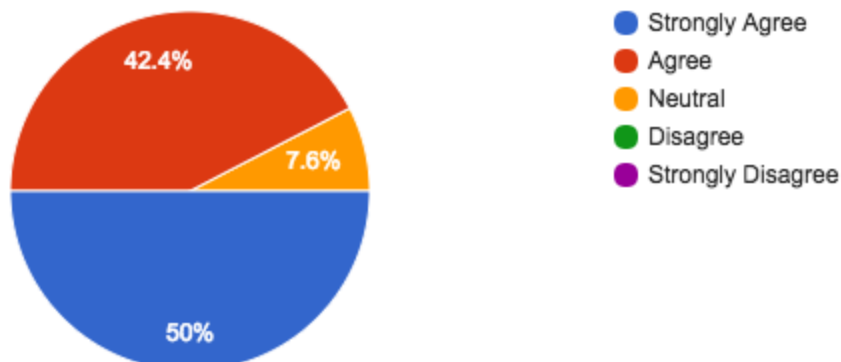
I felt safe at NECTR this year.

92 responses



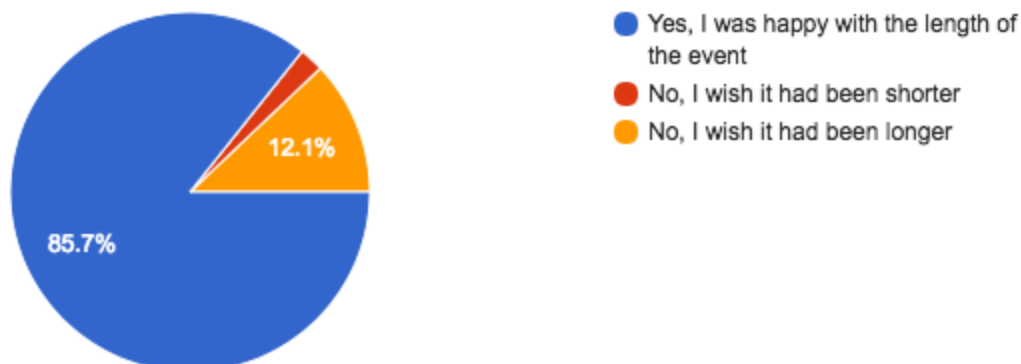
NECTR was a well-organized event this year.

92 responses

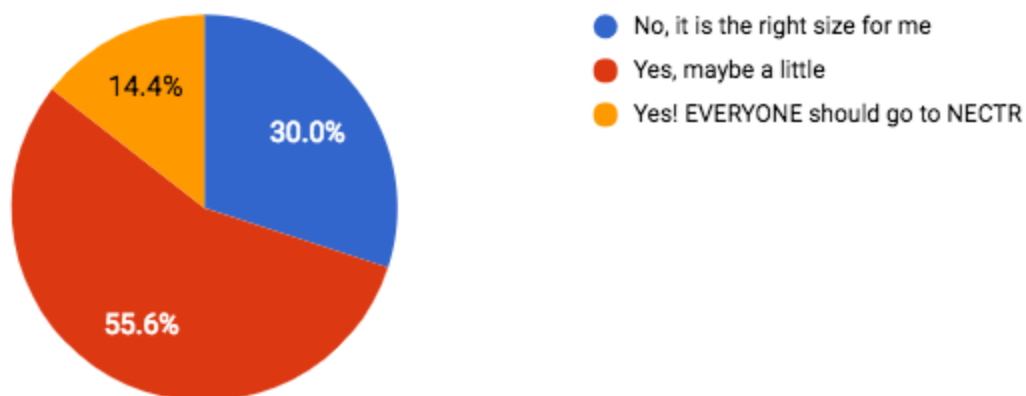


Was NECTR the right length this year?

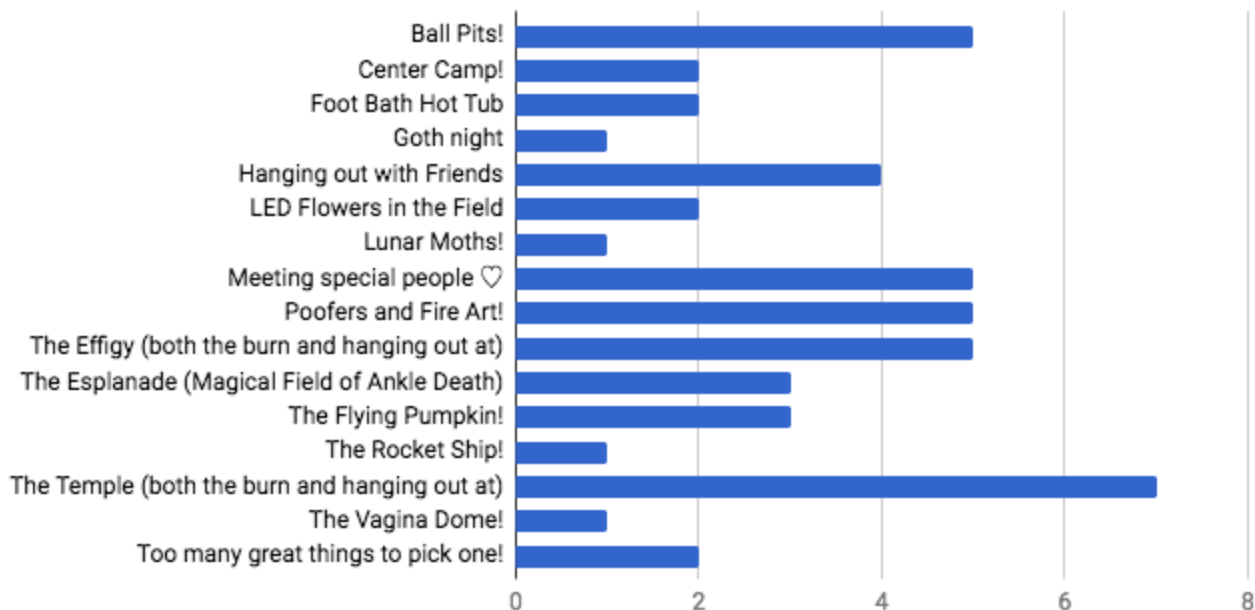
91 responses



Would you like to see NECTR grow?



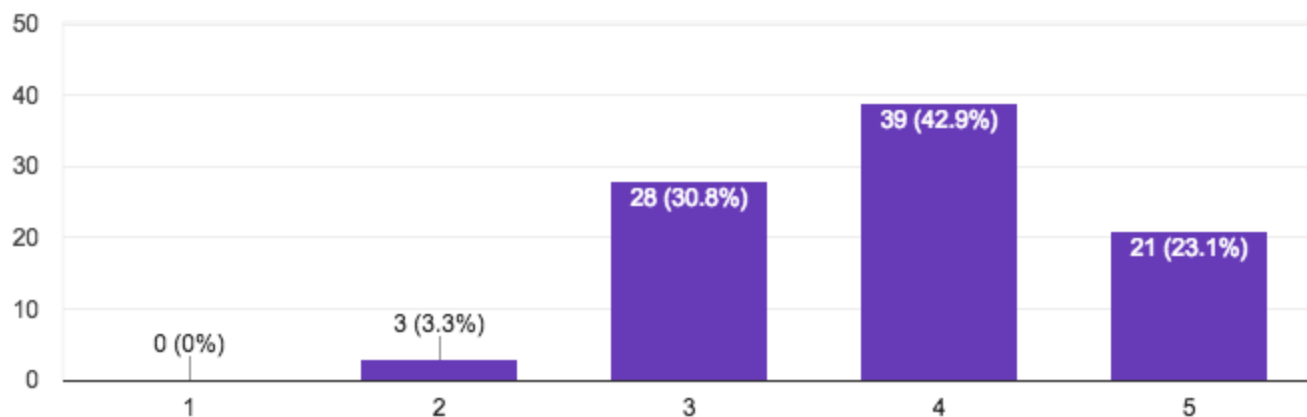
What was your most memorable moment at NECTR 2017?



Note: There were a lot of unique responses here. We tried to capture the commonalities as best possible.

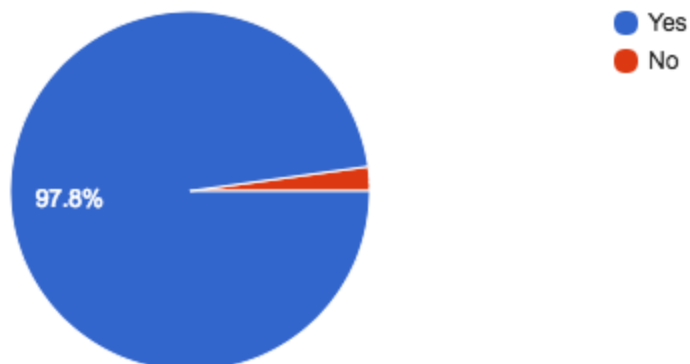
Overall on a scale of 1 to 5 how comfortable did you feel entering theme camps?

91 responses



Did you interact with any art this year?

92 responses



Favorite Interactions with Art Pieces and Theme Camps

63 responses - 10 selected responses:

Luna moths!
The mini hot tub foot bath of bliss and relaxation
Nevermore
SPACESHIP!
LED Flower Garden in the Field
Birthday Camp and the Vagina Dome
Getting lots of awesome clothes from Bee Hole
Poofers and Fire Art!
Climbing up sky-is-pirates
I got to interact with art freely and that was my favorite thing.

Feedback on the use of the field as an Esplanade

74 responses - 10 selected responses:

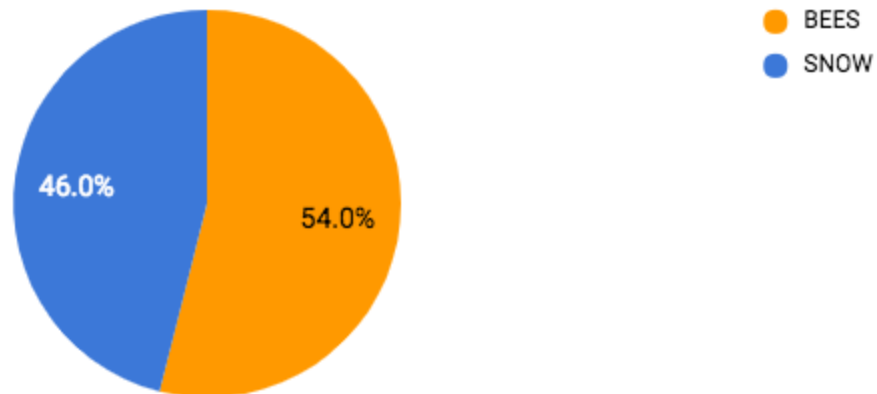
I liked it! Even though I fell down a bunch. Don't run in the field at night.
Figuring out a better way to do sound camps.
It was nice having a lot of interactive things all together
Needed more interactive things. Especially in the center area.
Too many sound camps too close together
Esplanade was great except placement of Sanctuary in that esplanade.
Was OK, but it made woods kinda boring.
Art was great, good social environment, just noisy

Great idea to centralize art and activities
Outstanding. More blinking and fire please!

Great Ideas and Suggestions for Next NECTR

48 responses - 9 selected responses:

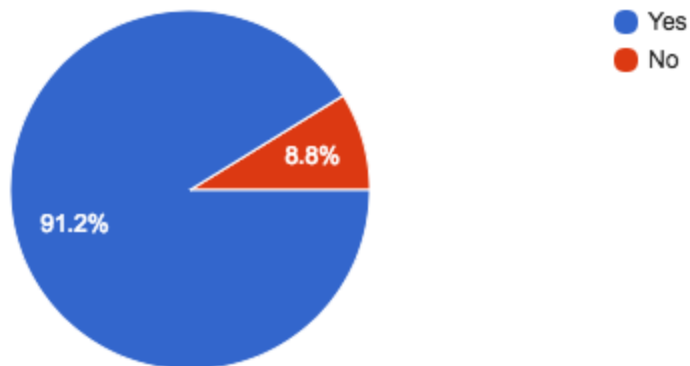
More BEES or More SNOW?



Note: This question had a wide range of non-standard responses. For simplification purposes, Yellow Jackets = Bees, and associated snark was stripped out :-p

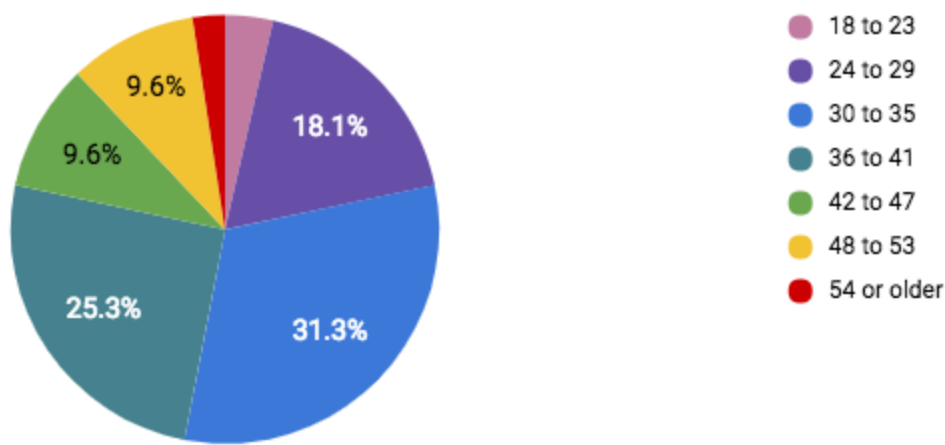
Would you like to take part in our census?

91 responses

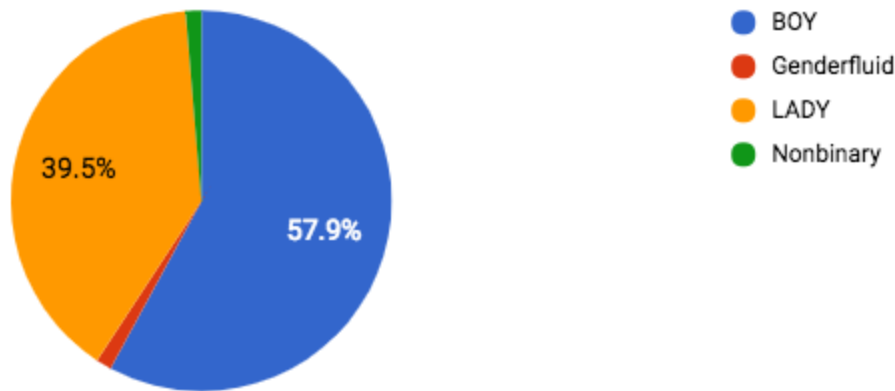


Census Results

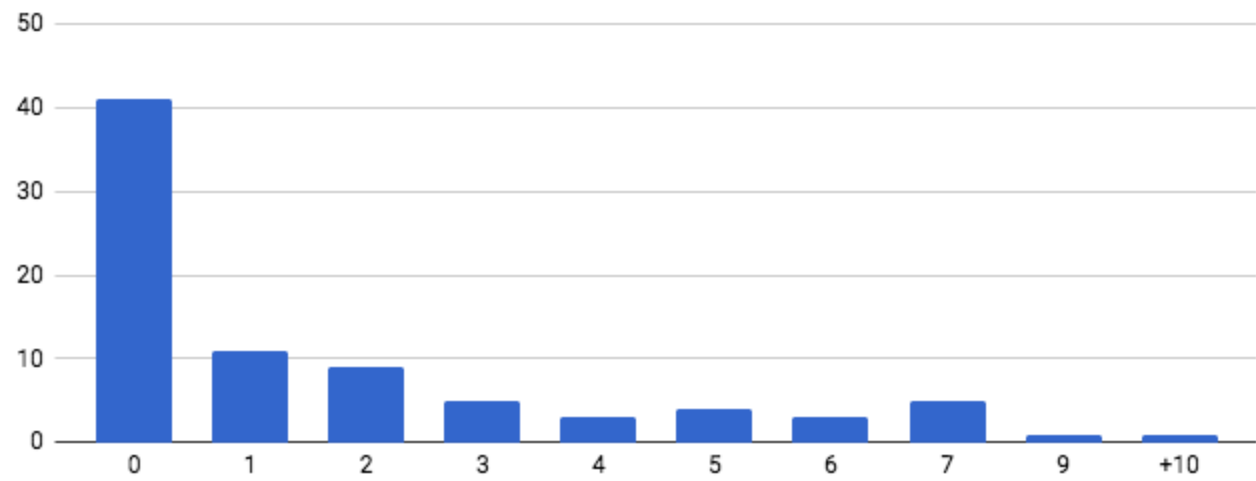
How old are you?



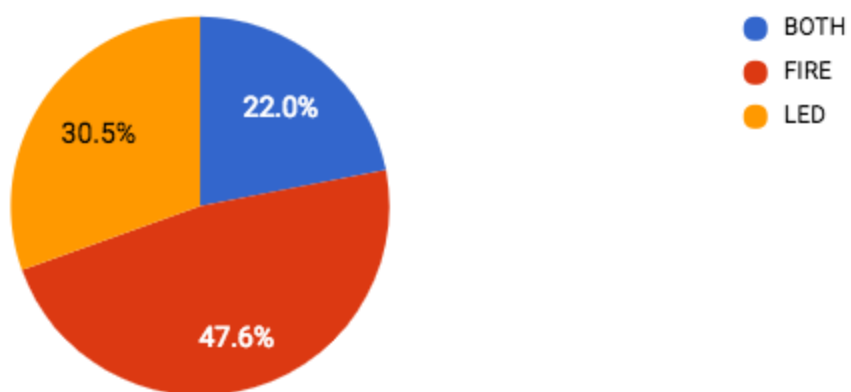
Gender



How many times have you gone to Burning Man?



LEDs or Fire?



More Ball Pits?

