

# NECTR 2018 Afterburn Report

## Message From The Event Leads

NECTR 2018 was a great success despite some new challenges. We remained the same size this year due to concerns about space for growth and local permitting requirements.

This was probably for the best since one of the largest and unexpected challenges was the wet weather and resulting muddy terrain. This caused many headaches for work weekend volunteers, art setup, and load in/load out. However thanks to the hard work of many dedicated volunteers we persevered and the worst of the muddy areas were mitigated.

There was also an incident during the effigy burn where some fireworks exited the safety perimeter. This led us to identify and address some gaps in our safety procedures and consequently future events will be safer.

For a relatively small event, NECTR has many volunteer shifts to fill. Currently each and every attendee would need to volunteer for at least four hours to fill all the volunteer slots. This year was especially difficult since several participants/volunteers were not able to make it due to the weather/illness. We are looking into ways to address the number of required hours including combining/sharing volunteers across cores and hiring staff to attend the gate during the night.

NECTR continues to grow and change and we are excited to see how it evolves over the next few years especially as more local residents hear about it.

Your friendly neighborhood event leads,

Seth

Lia

Thomas

Jill

Mindy

Jon

# GATE

**Core Lead:** *Gwiddern*

## Overview

GATE Core is responsible for letting participants in to the event and staffing the GATE shacks overnight in order to be a first point of contact for anyone coming on to the event site.

## What Worked

Volunteers were able to stay warm and dry at both gates. We were able to have both gates staffed at all times despite a low volunteer turnout and a lot of cancelled shifts. GATE volunteers required very little supervision compared to previous years.

## What Didn't Work / Lessons Learned

Despite having a better volunteer signup rate before the event than ever before, I had more no-shows and cancelled/missed shifts from volunteers than ever before this year. A large number of people signed up for shifts and then did not attend the festival due to weather/health/etc. Key shifts on Friday night were unstaffed as a result so I did a ten-hour overnight GATE shift mostly at the back gate. I needed more crew this year and found it far more difficult to get emergency volunteers at the last minute than during any previous NECTR, even with the megaphone.

I talked to Greeter Core about this up at the Bee Hole on Sunday and we decided that next year we'll work out a process to lend Greeter volunteers to GATE core in the event that we are short-staffed for shifts like this again

# Greeters

**Core Lead:** Sarah R

## Overview

Greeter Core is responsible for Greeting participants after they have parked -- informing them about the event and its principles, and giving out advice, maps, and moop bags.

## What Worked

People feeling welcome, informed, and most people showing up for shifts.

## What Didn't Work / Lessons Learned

There wasn't enough for people to do during their shifts.

# DPW

**Core Lead:** *Matt S*

## Overview

## What Worked

Good turnout at work weekends, 2 weekends pre-event seemed to work out fine. Got lucky with willing volunteers to help bridge the bridge(twice) and build pallet bridges.

## What Didn't Work / Lessons Learned

- 1) So the bridge likely should be fastened to the trees, and likely be built on the last work weekend if this is feasible. Some of the pallets need minor repair.
- 2) To combat the mud we spent a lot of time and some budget on drainage solutions, but these didn't really solve anything. Time/money would likely have better gone into proper bridges through the mud. If they were longer and a few inches wider, with proper support (some pallets disintegrated in the moist), this likely would have made life much easier for load in/load out.
- 3) The LNT work weekend was kind of a volunteer fail . Only 6 showed, and Thomas and I ended up doing the lion's share of the heavy lifting, including most of the bridge, though Jason helped some, even with an injured knee. We really needed more help, it was a rough day. Suggest we disassemble the bridge Monday (noon) of the event and include this task as a sign up option in the Nectr sign-up board. A formal coordinated LNT sweep could be done that day as well, doing a final pass on the followup weekend.
- 4) The new burn barrels Mindy donated need better drainage/air flow holes. Once the barrels had ash they weren't burning well. They are also very thin and will likely only last a year or 2 before they rust out.

# Rangers

**Core Lead:** *Jon E*

## Overview

The Rangers Core is responsible for supporting the other cores and the event leads during the event by passing messages, assisting participants, checking in at volunteer stations to make sure things are running smoothly, and being a resource that others can turn to for help mediating conflicts.

## What Worked

The new Ranger HQ location was much better due to being a shorter walk on average from any point in the event. Being in the woods also made it easier to shelter HQ from the weather, and being close to several theme camps made it a more enjoyable place to spend time on shift.

## What Didn't Work / Lessons Learned

Enough people missed their shifts that we had low or no coverage during some critical times, especially at the beginning and end of the event. We need to figure out how to encourage more participants to volunteer for the Rangers, especially those who can be counted on to be at the event on the first and/or last day.

I need to recruit a co-lead for next year who can assist with the on-the-ground setup and teardown tasks. This year I got assistance from friends and campmates but would like to expand the Ranger organization to make it less of a personal project.

# FAST

**Core Lead:** *Mindy S*

## Overview

The Fire Art Safety Team (FAST) is responsible for ensuring that fire is done safely at the event. The team checks for the safety of flame effects, manages burn perimeters, and ensures that any other fires are attended and safe.

## What Worked

Perimeter for both burns was a success. Volunteers for effigy were not as many as last year, but we also always put up the caution tape line which works well. Temple burn overall went very well, it even fell on its own! We had a meeting on site for conclave before effigy burn, Purple Jess volunteered to lead the performance. Weird Jimmy as always was propane safety and inspection.

## What Didn't Work / Lessons Learned

Make sure there is a fire spinning/performance lead well ahead of the event. A new process for approving fire effects and their placements during burns. Better clarify what time/how soon before the burns volunteers for perimeter should be in place.

# Center Camp

**Core Lead:** *Jill W*

## Overview

Center Camp provides coffee, hot chocolate, tea and relaxation in a 24 hour space for all participants. Center Camp is staffed by two volunteers from 7am to 11pm each day.

## What Worked

Plenty of coffee/tea supplies, plenty of battery power, more balls, space stayed nice and dry. Participants enjoyed the extra large ball pit, hookah, and chill space.

## What Didn't Work / Lessons Learned

One responder preferred traditional tables and chairs to lounge spaces. People not being sure how to turn on the water and water being "off" in the mornings. A few participants noted that groups who "gift" food at Center Camp often take over stoves and leave large amounts of food behind. We had a few shifts completely empty, mostly due to weather (no one showed for Thursday shifts due to delayed arrivals).

# Trail Lighting

**Core Lead:** *Jordan*

## Overview

Trail Lighting Core is responsible for installing and removing lights along the trails in sections that aren't lit by theme camps.

## What Worked

Volunteers were dedicated, the new lights did not fail in copious amounts of mud and water, and persisted (provisional statement, see 'biggest problem' below) "always on" for the full length of the event. Also theme camps did a pretty great job lighting the space outside their camps, I wasn't sure how this would go but I thought it was successful (and beautiful).

## What Didn't Work / Lessons Learned

The biggest issue was people (rangers, attendees) turning off the lights during the day instead of simply leaving them on. This made them harder to find at dusk, and resulted in dark spots at night. I did many laps and found lights that were turned off in problem spots that were intended to have been left on. When I encountered people turning the trail lights off during the day, I got the same answer every time: ""Just trying to be helpful!"

Later in the weekend, going around and turning them on during the day helped, but even in this scenario people would turn them off before dusk.

Secondary issues:

Volunteers getting creative with the fashion in which trail lights were strung up, making them difficult to remove on Monday and in some cases incurring minor damage. Examples of this would be winding them elaborately around trees, running them back and forth through natural terrain, hooking them on barbed wire in one case.

Improvement: The biggest this is probably sending out a couple blasts to the community letting them know to please, please not touch the trail lights. Did I say please? Since I doubt that would be enough to prevent the issue described above, I would like to modify the battery boxes in some fashion to suggest 'do not touch'.

Secondary improvements:

Make the lights even prettier without inducing a ton of extra labor



# Art Grants

**Core Lead:** Sarah F

## Overview

Art Grant Core is responsible for running the art grant process and helping artists bring their art to the event.

## What Didn't Work / Lessons Learned

In the future we should seek out artists that are more in need of grants to award them to, since this year a number of artists didn't even seek to be reimbursed for their expenses. We may also try different methods of disbursing money by letting members of the art grant committee have a share of funds to direct rather than just voting yes or no to each grant proposal.

# 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

Collaboration with trail lighting went well, resulting in easy-to-read signs. Signs were placed in more visible locations this year.

## What Didn't Work / Lessons Learned

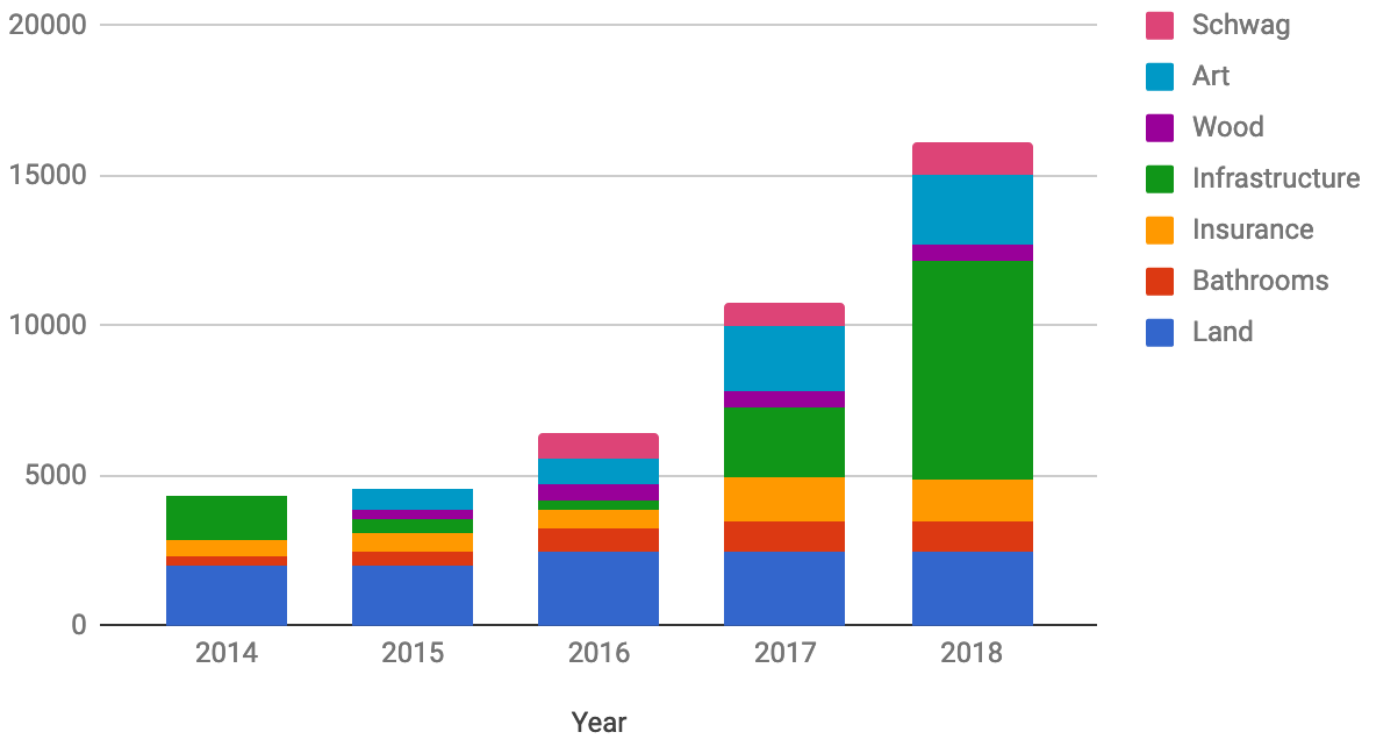
Some of the trails that were more affected by the rain/mud didn't get marked or lit very well.

It's a lot of work to remake the signs every year, so I'm working on a design for reusable sign posts so only the street name portion will need to be remade every year.

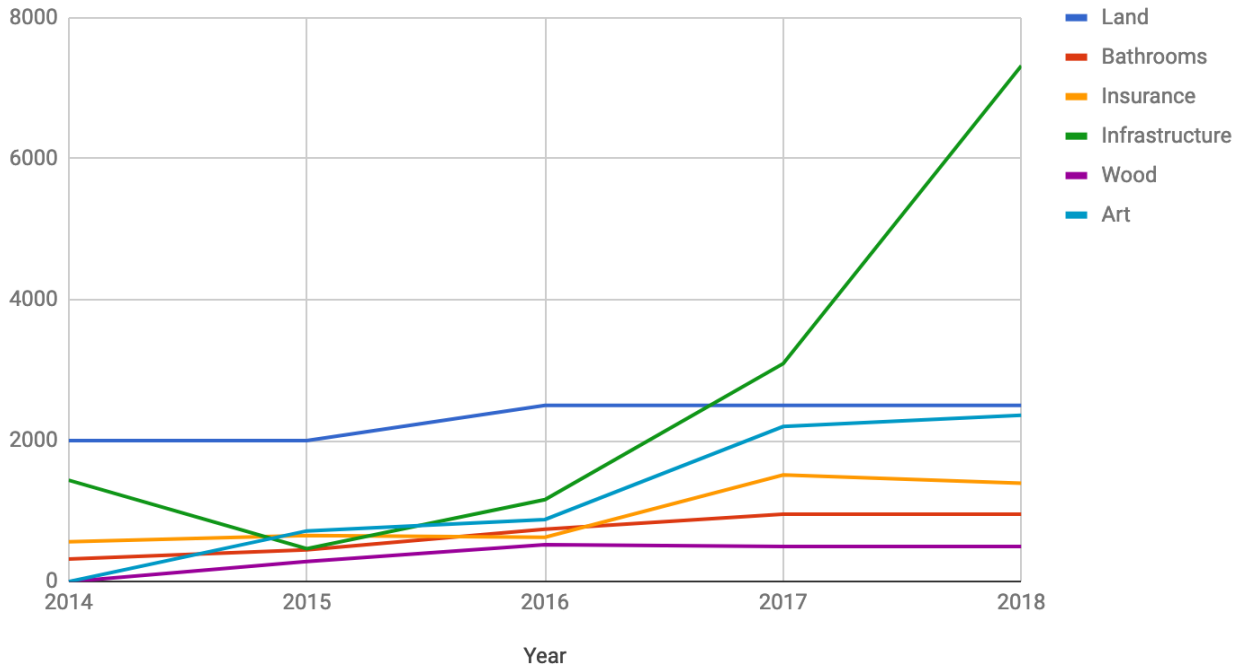
# Financials

NECTR's primary expenditures include the land reservation, art grants, and event insurance which is consistent across most regional event budgets. Each year, we continue to spend more on porta potties for our increased population. Along with minor infrastructure purchases, this year we purchased a trailer for on-site storage of NECTR infrastructure, which will help make organizing the event significantly easier. We continue to be under budget for art grants, as not all of the grants awarded ended up being funded. With the purchase of the trailer, NECTR's bank balance is steady since 2017, with just over \$21.5K, which will allow for an increased art budget, including effigy and temple for the 2019 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 2018 event.

## Expenditures by Year



## NECTR Expenditures (2014-2018)

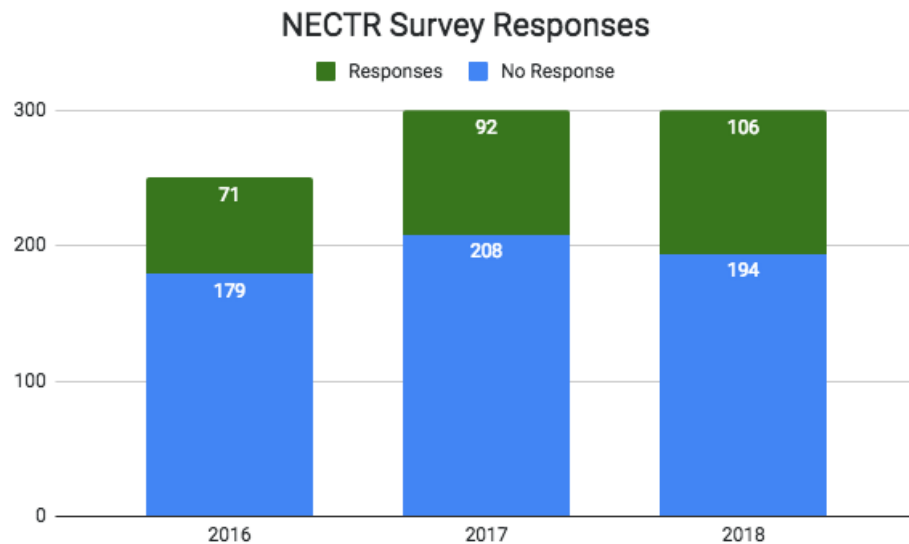


## NECTR 2018

Expenses	Amount
Infrastructure: Trailer	\$5,542.44
Land	\$2,500.00
Art: Art Grants	\$2,360.18
Insurance	\$1,396.00
Bathrooms	\$957.15
Infrastructure: Gate, Volunteer Supplies, Schwag (Stickers & T-shirts)	\$1373.03
DPW & Work Weekends	\$608.16
Infrastructure: Lighting & Signs	\$568.10
Wood	\$500.00
Infrastructure: Wrist bands	\$193.19
Infrastructure: Board Meeting & CT Meetup	\$178.77
Infrastructure: Web fees	\$91.47
Infrastructure: Legal Fees	\$72.00
Infrastructure: Bank fees	\$33.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$16,373.49</b>
<b>2018 Balance</b>	<b>\$21,581.25</b>

# Participant Survey

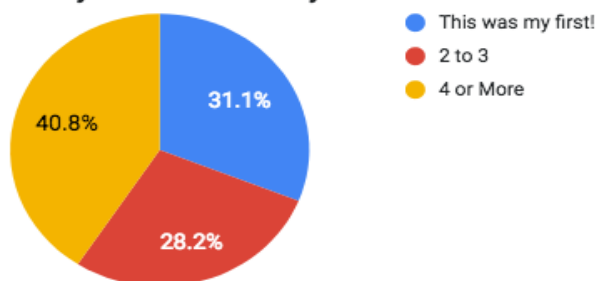
Following the event, a survey was conducted to collect feedback from the participants to see how the event went. We received 106 responses out of a total of approximately 300 participants.



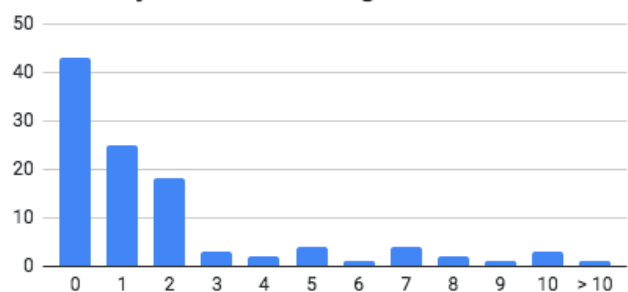
**Note:** Some license was taken with consolidating and summarizing responses from the survey strictly for presentation purposes. Please be assured that we received, largely loved and are considering all of the individual responses.

## General Questions

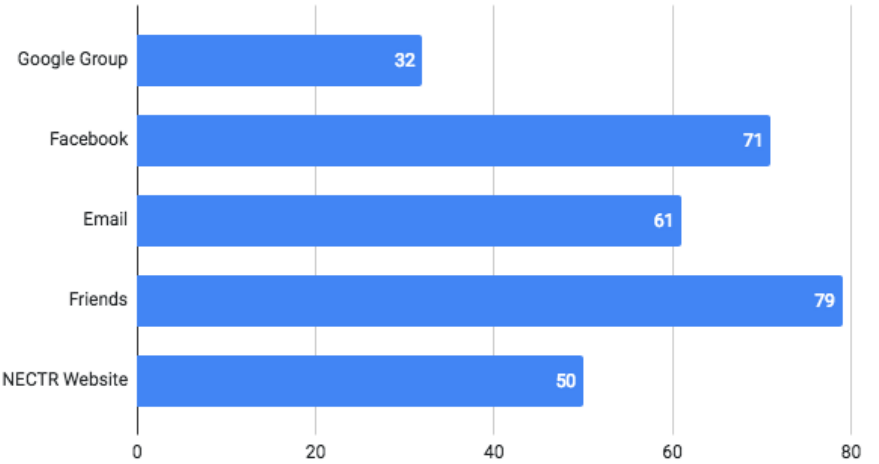
How many NECTRs have you been to?



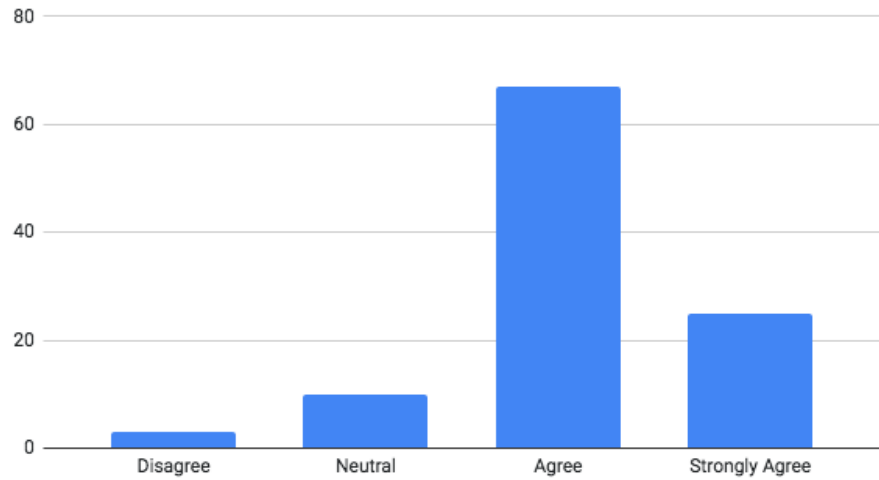
How many times to the Big Burn



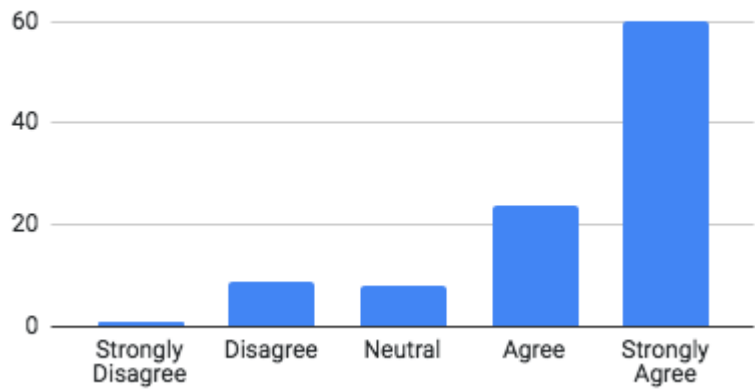
How did you get news about NECTR



NECTR was well organized



I felt safe at NECTR

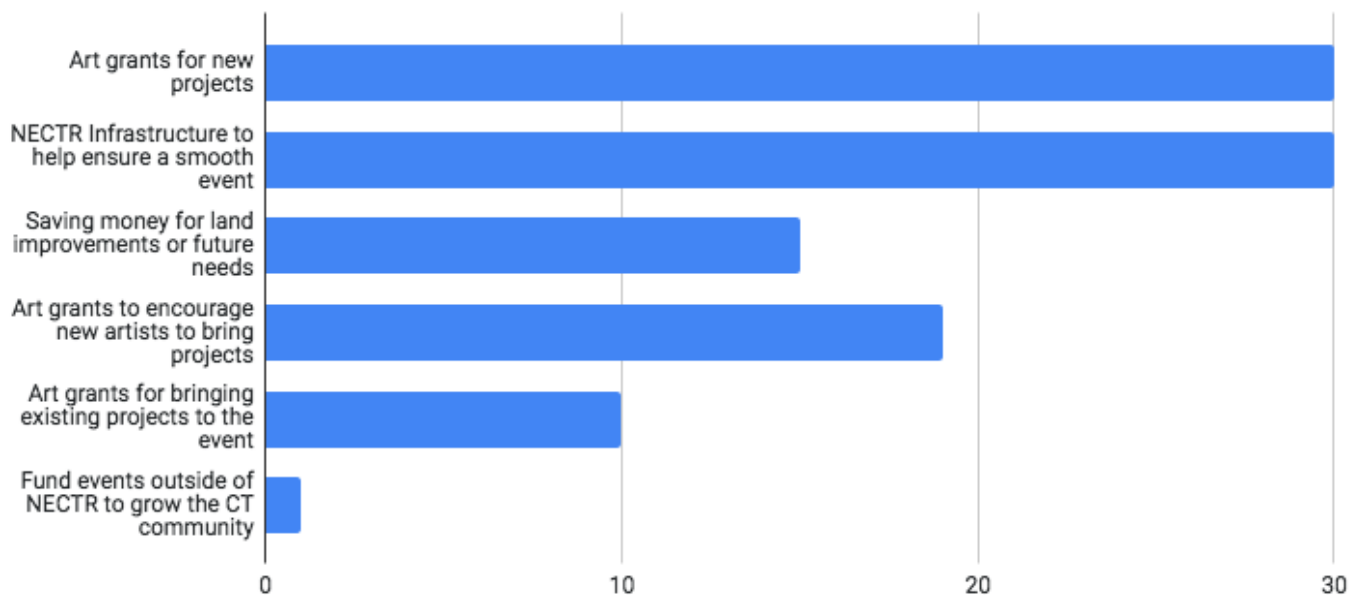


Note: For responses where the individual replied that they felt unsafe, a secondary form asked for additional information. All of these responses had to do with the fireworks used in the Effigy.

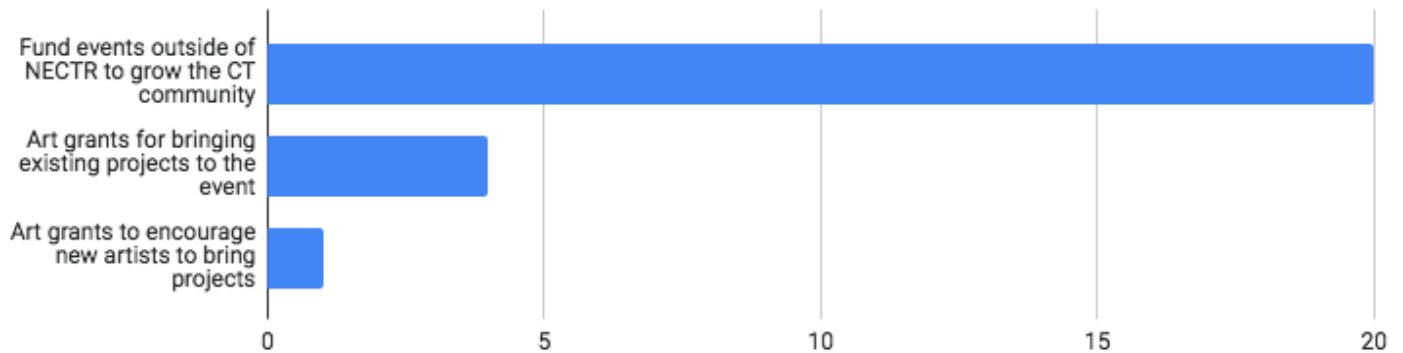
What improvements would you like to see leading up to the event?  
42 responses - 6 selected and summarized responses:

Better Volunteer Process and Communication about Volunteering Info, Shifts, Processes, etc
Better Trails & Bridges for Muddy Conditions
More advance notice for work weekends
More information about ticket lottery process and status
Various comments regarding centralizing communication leading up to the event and not having to chase through various platforms.
Dry firewood and a better burn barrel system for volunteers

### What would should NECTR's budget go towards?



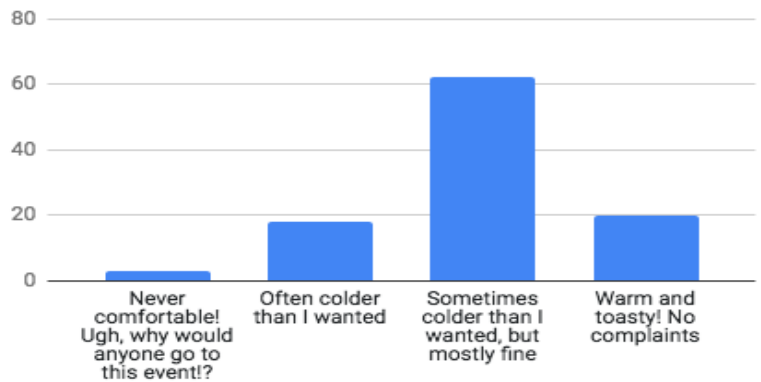
### What should NECTRs budget NOT go towards?



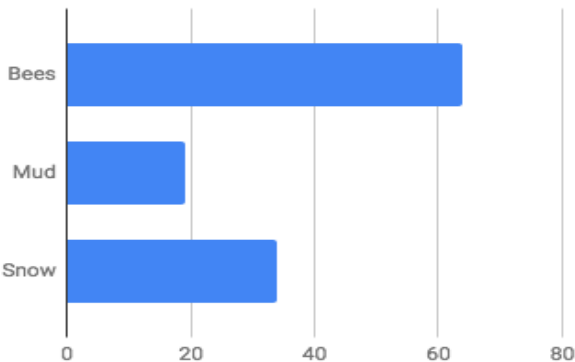
### Weather @ NECTR

Every year seems to present us with new weather. It can be warmer and we have more bees, it can be colder and there's snow. This year: It was wet. And muddy. Very muddy.

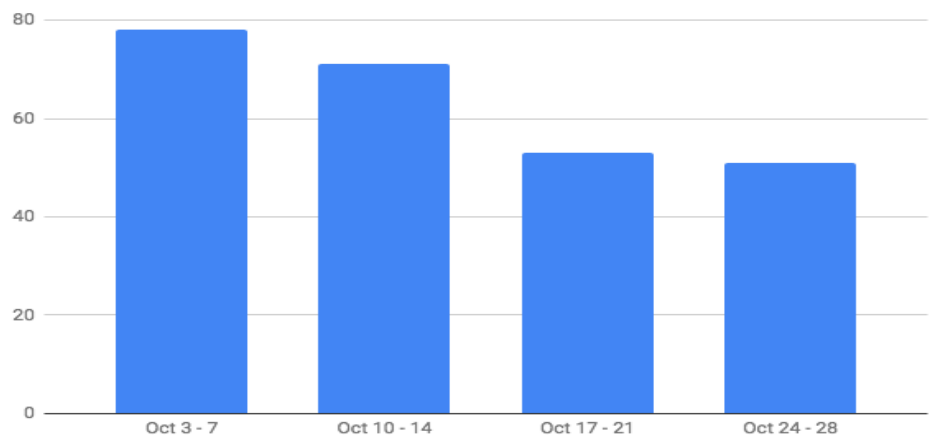
### How was the temperature?



### More Snow, Bees or Mud?

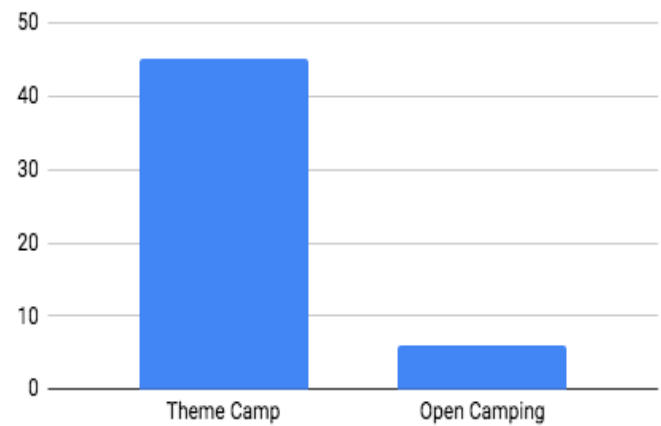


### This year NECTR was held from October 11 to 15. When would you like to see it held next year?



### Camping & The Event Population @ NECTR

#### Did you camp with a theme camp?



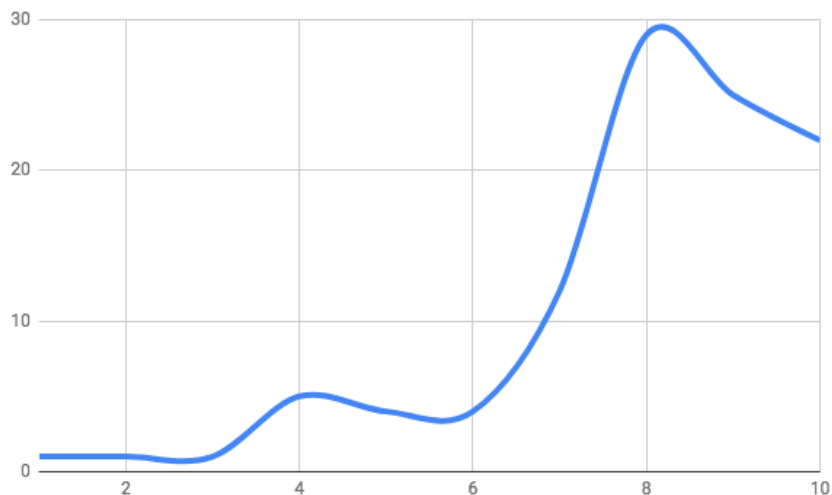
#### General feedback on finding a spot to camp

35 responses - 4 selected and summarized

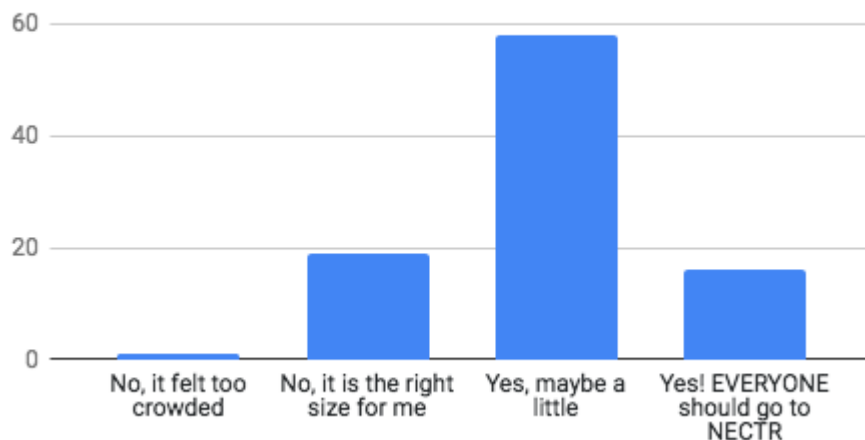
- A clearer map in advance of the event would have helped
- Getting there early on Thursday made it a doozy
- Map made it easy to find my camp
- The mud made finding a spot challenging this year for everyone.

### On a scale of 1 to 10, how clean were the Portos.





### Would you like to see NECTR grow?



### General Feedback on the Event

44 responses - 8 selected and summarized, except for the last one which was included for verbosity sake.

1 more porto and more toilet paper. Numerous reports that ports were very full on Monday and there was no TP
Temporary bridges or water draining along paths when there is heavy rain
More and better trail lighting.
A volunteer squad for helping people with disabilities
A light at the back gate so the Gate staff were not in the dark.
A central board/listing of events
Dry firewood made available for the volunteers
Worms! This year I didn't hear a single 90 minute set of the Nyan cat song. I missed it. Two problems: People are not coming to their assigned volunteer shifts, and people who wanted to volunteer during those times because of other restrictions signed up for less convenient volunteer shifts. The solution is to create backup volunteer shifts. First have volunteer shifts at different locations correlate to basically the same beginning and ending times. (Or at least units like all shifts start on the hour and are made of 30 minute intervals.) Then you can have some people volunteer to be available for whatever shift is open during their volunteer backup shift.

Picture this, if a reliable clown can't arrive till Saturday but can't miss his Birthday party. He could sign up for a shift to be a backup for other rolls during that time frame that doesn't compete with the party. During that time he can cover for people who need to leave before their replacement or fill in for no shows.

I'm tired and typing this with my thumbs. Maybe I'm not explaining it well.

I might bring it up later when I can articulate better. <Name redacted>

### What was your most memorable moment?

61 responses - 10 selected responses.

3-axis spinney art was great. :)
A mysterious message while in Puerto Rico about what happened. (Posted by a previous NECTR Board Member)
Being in the ball pit at Center Camp on Saturday night with a big group of people and being visited by the Miyazaki-like night creature, and then later someone delivering hot delicious salty tiny potatoes. Perfection!
Echos of the temple burn off of the river
Encountering the Beast, the floating bar. Sleepover in the ballpit late Saturday night & Birthday camp was hilarious
Floating on the raft at Margaritaville (THANKS NATE!)
Goth Night dancing, and giving out hot salted potatoes to the masses. That was my absolute favorite thing to do!
Lamb of god
Playing bohemian rhapsody on fire organ and the group just started singing. And that creature of the night thing, pretty cool.

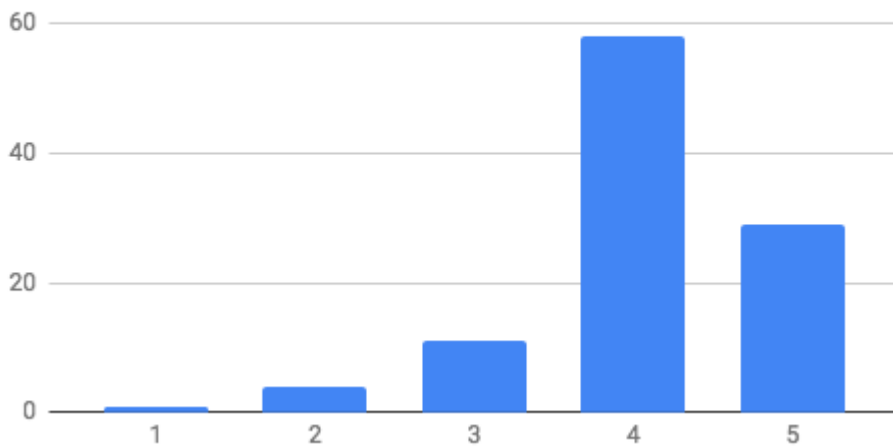
## Art & Music @ NECTR

### What were some of your favorite art pieces or music venues?

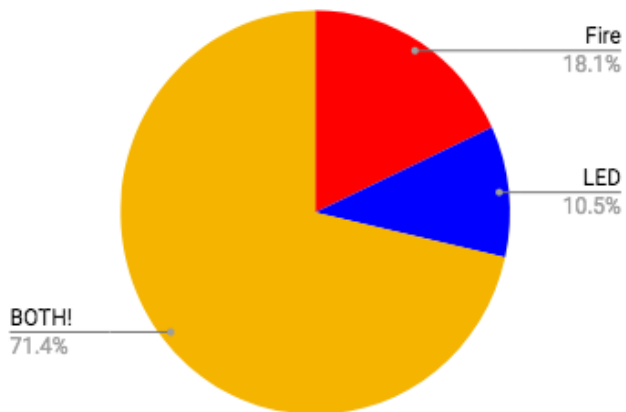
Lots of great responses here - we picked 10 that were mentioned the most.

- Camp Here
- Fire Organ
- Goth Party
- Noodle Bar
- LED Cube Tower
- Margaritaville was AMAZING!
- NY Dangerous
- The Human Beast!
- The Temple
- The Orbitron

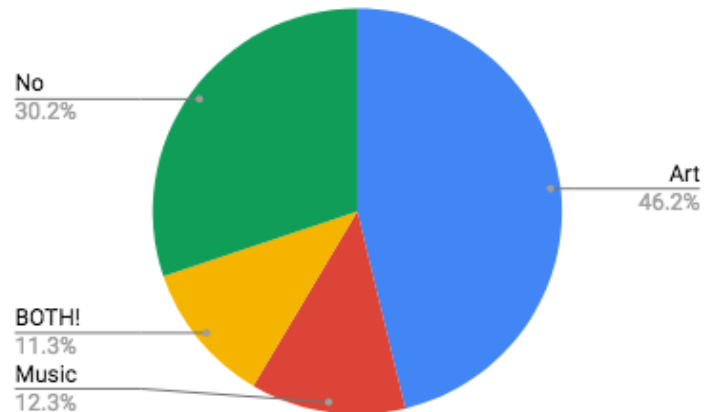
On a scale of 1 to 5, how comfortable did you feel entering theme camps?



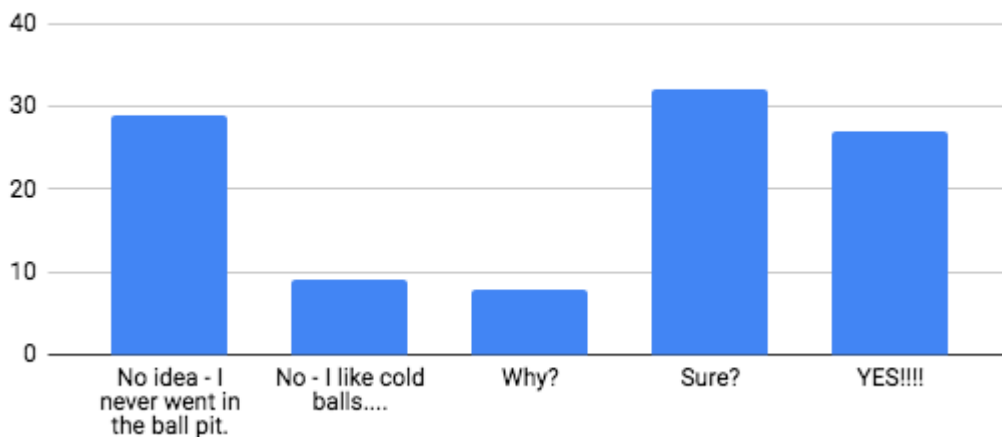
More LED or More Fire Art?



Did you bring Art or Music?



Should the Center Camp Ball Pit be Heated?



#### General feedback on Art & Music

Art seemed to be concentrated in the field rather than having a few pieces in the woods as well. I think it would be helpful for having NECTRines explore trails in search of specific art

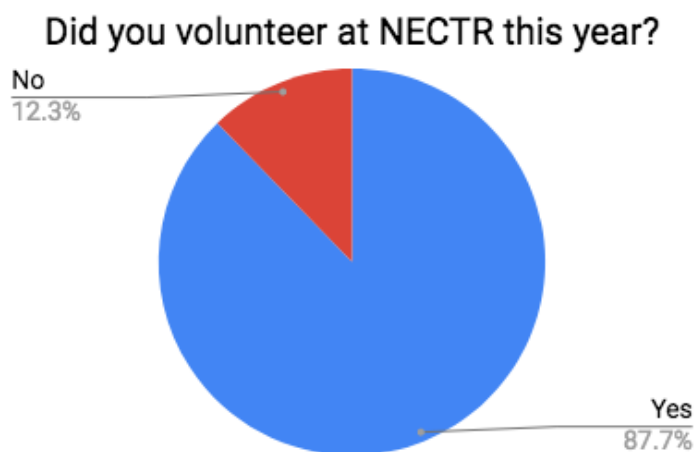
pieces.
Could have used more music, dancing and more sound camps
For its size, NECTR seems have more fire art/performance than most other burns, and less ravey music camps. That's not a problem, just an observation. Every burn has its own personality.
I know its cold, but I would have loved to see more LED & fire spinners.
I really enjoyed wandering around the field from art piece to art piece under the stars.
I would love to see more smaller weirdnesses in the woods and near the camps.
Let's fill up the field first! Make it a true esplanade. It would be nice to reach a critical mass of dancing as well.
New York dangerous were super inviting and flexible with time slots.
Placement this year for sound camps were perfect!
Seemed a pretty low dancing event. I'd also really like to see a fire circle/place for fire spinning.

**Note:** A couple comments on the feedback provided on Art & Music.

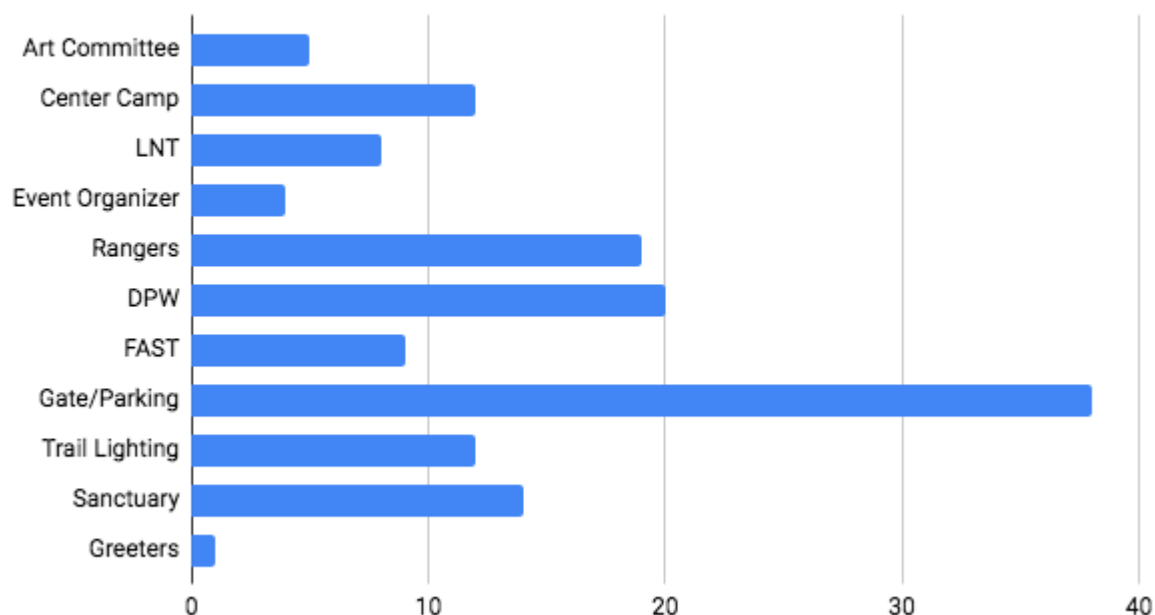
In 2017 we had a lot of feedback that there was too much conflicting music in the field. As a result of that we moved to a sound camp in the field for DJs and music that was available for sets. In general feedback seemed to be in favor of the new setup this year.

There were several comments about wanted to see more art. The weather may partially have played a factor in to that this year. In any case, we encourage everybody to bring and participate in art!!! This is a great opportunity for new and budding artists to apply for a grant and bring something - keep an eye out for art grant applications in June.

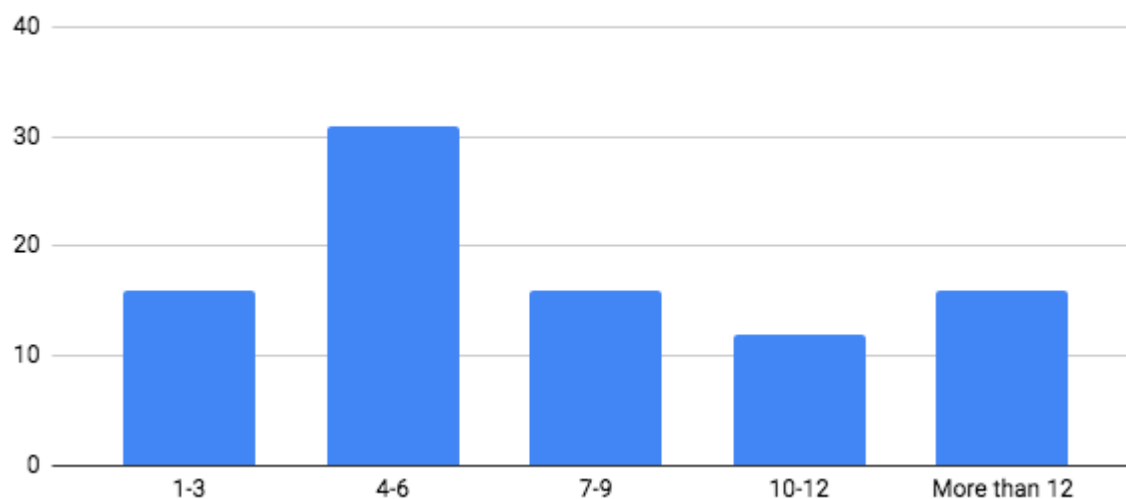
## Volunteering @ NECTR



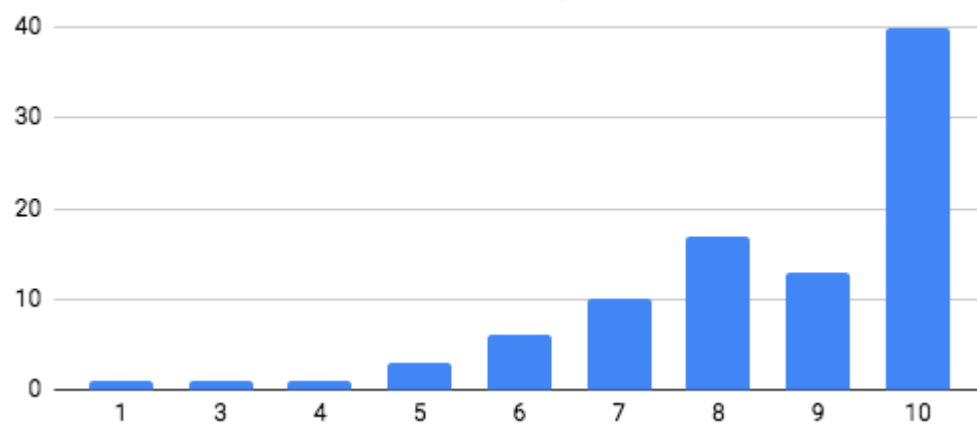
## What COREs did you volunteer with?



## About how many hours did you volunteer?



## Rate the Volunteer Sign Up Process



### What worked well for your volunteer area?

Center Camp is fun and comfy. Having a good stock of firewood for Sanctuary was key cuz it got cold down there! The leads checked in and were very supportive. They even brought Noodle Bar warm yumminess to me on shift!

Clear duties, liked the Volunteer manual that was sent out ahead of time.

Comfy at the gate with the burn barrel

I had a lot of fun! Center Camp was well organized and stocked with lots of great amenities.

I think the most fun always is sitting around the burn barrel enjoying conversation with old and new friends.

OMG I GOT A BATHROBE!!!! <3  
(This was for volunteering at Gate)

Ranger was run well this year, their placement was much better than last year.  
(Shifted towards the center of the event from the far edge of the field)

Work weekends are well run, and do get lots of things done

### What could have been done better?

Add a light to back gate. This would help volunteers who are by themselves feel more comfortable and also help in the case that there is any sort of issue.

Fluffers (maybe as part of the Rangers?) to go around and make sure all the placed volunteers are well stocked - maybe carry a couple thermoses with hot water and coffee and some snacks?

Gate and greeter should be combined. Awkward to greet people after they've left their car with an arm full of stuff

Neon vests or light wands for parking shift at night?

The volunteer sign-in spreadsheet format was annoying

Being in the upper field gate didn't have good radio signal. Getting relieved by khaki didn't happen when there was no one to relieve come to next shift.

It gets lonely, especially when it's just 1 person at gate, so having a thing to draw people over to visit would be nice. If I can make it next year, I'll bring a big telescope to show people the planet. Or make them hot chocolate or something like that.

### General feedback on volunteering

4-5 hr shifts seem too Long a commitment. I would have signed up for more 2-3 hr shifts.

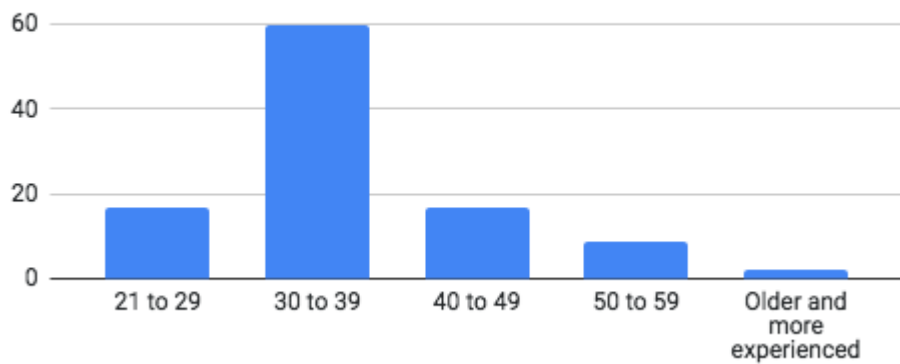
Don't let people sign up for shifts before ticketing them

Need more information about the "job description" at volunteer sign-up site.

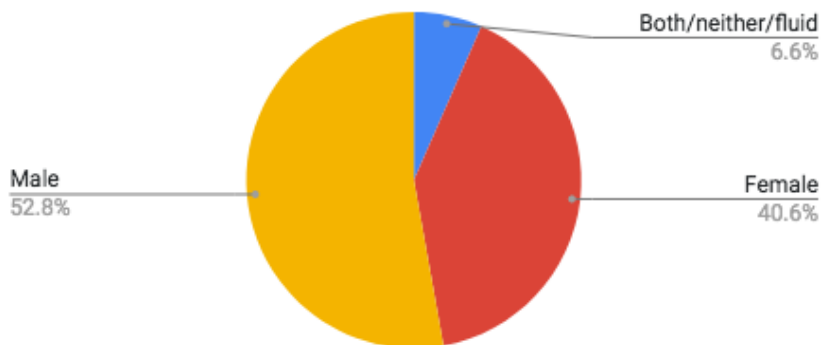
## Census Information

Note: We had a few comments around WHY we are collecting this information. It's useful for us to understand who comes to NECTR and where we could use some outreach to the broader community to share the principals and ideas of the burner community. Answering these questions was entirely voluntary.

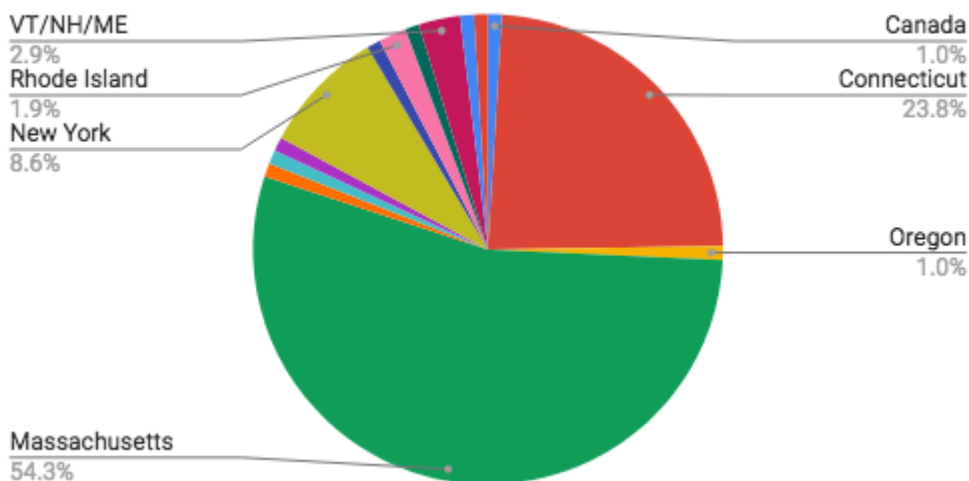
### How old are you?



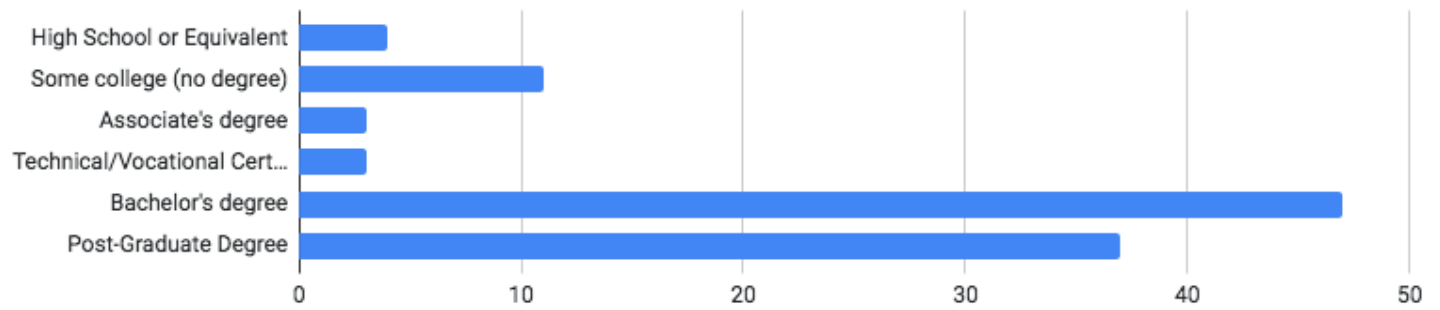
### Gender



### Where are you from?



## Level of Education



Note: Some responses included all levels of education, some only included the highest level attained. Because of this we attempted to pick the highest level.

## Ethno-Racial Background

Of 106 responses, 100 indicated their background as White/Caucasian.

Other responses included mixed, Asian, Native American, Hispanic/Latino and French