

NEALL Newsletter

North East Association for Language Learning Technology ◊

Winter 2000

NEALL '99- March 12 - 14 Hamilton College

Kathy Lewis

Mary Beth Barth hosted the NEALL 99 Conference, held at beautiful Hamilton College in Clinton, NY. The arrangements were wonderful and the scenery spectacular as a large group turned out for an informative weekend.

Our thanks to Chester Technical Services for the festive Friday night reception, to the many presenters who shared their ideas and solutions with us, and, most especially, to Mary Beth and her team for all of the time and effort that they put into making the conference such a success.

Summaries of various NEALL presentations, as well as selected sessions from other conferences, begin on page 4.

Nominations for NEALL Offices

We are now calling for nominations for leadership positions in NEALL.

All NEALL offices run for two years beginning in mid-March 2000. All officers are expected to attend the annual conference. The 2000 conference will be held March 3-5, at which time the new officers will assume their official duties. The 2000 conference will be held at Bryn Mawr/Haverford Colleges.

Board Office Duties

Vice President (President Elect):

- Produces the NEALL newsletter
- Manages the NEALL home page on the World Wide Web until such time as a newsletter/web page editor is named.
- Assists President with annual meeting. This could involve a certain amount of travel.
- Assumes the duties of President after two years.

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President's Column

Well, another busy year has passed more quickly than I care to remember and we're busy planning NEALL 2000 . Kathy Lewis and Marc Boots-Ebenfield at Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges have agreed to co-host the conference and judging from the planning it should be wonderful event We owe great thanks to Mary Beth Barth and Hamilton College for hosting a wonderful conference last year. We left with very fond memories of Hamilton where we spent two days listening to some of the best presentations I attended all year and where you'll find Guinness on tap in the student center. If you weren't able to attend, take a look at the abstracts on the NEALL web site and contact the presenter if you would like more information. I'm not sure about virtual beer, but I've added a picture of a frothy brew to web site.

We've somewhat altered the format of NEALL 2000 to reflect some decisions that were made at the last business meeting and the fact that we will be receiving support and funding from a consortial grant which Haverford and Bryn Mawr have received from the

NEALL 2000!

"NEALL 2000: *Connecting with Technology*" will be held March 3-5. The conference will be hosted by Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges in cooperation with the Tri-College Mellon Language Project.

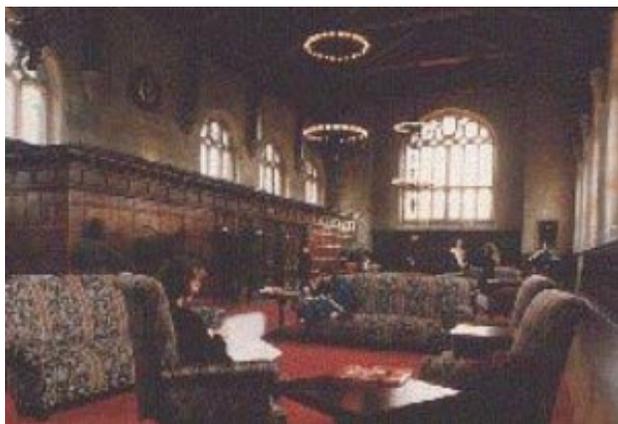
Visit <http://neall.swarthmore.edu/neall2000/>

President's Column

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Mellon Foundation. The Grant will sponsor two roundtable panel discussions on Sunday morning. In addition, we've decided to try to increase the amount of outreach we do to K - 12 foreign language teachers as well as the number of pre-conference workshops we'll be offering. I hope all of you plan to attend.

In closing I would like to ask that you spend a few minutes thinking about whom you would like to see in the posts of President-Elect and Secretary/Treasurer for the next two years. Please send your nominations to Wendy Baker-Davis at Franklin and Marshall College. Best wishes for the New Year!



M. Carey Thomas Library is a National Historic Landmark. Its Great Hall is one of the sites being considered for our reception Friday evening.

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1999 Officers

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Treasurer:

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Foreign Language Resource Center
Skidmore College
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Web Sites

NEALL - <http://neall.swarthmore.edu/>
IALL - <http://iall.net>

How can we serve you better?

It would be extremely useful to get feedback about how NEALL (or IALL on a national level) might be able to better serve its members. Please contact any of the officers if you have ideas for newsletter articles, conference topics or other kinds of regional activities!

NEALL Membership Information

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One of the many beautiful views of Haverford's campus (left) and Bryn Mawr's campus (above).

Call for Papers

A Conference on Technology-Enhanced Foreign Language Teaching

The Northeast Association for Language Learning Technology (NEALL) in conjunction with the Tri-College Mellon Language Project at Haverford, Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore Colleges is organizing the NEALL 2000 conference, to be held March 3-5, 2000 at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges in the suburban Philadelphia area. NEALL is the regional group of the International Association for Language Learning Technology (IALL) covering the states of Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. Our membership and annual conference, however, are open to all who wish to present or participate.

This conference is intended to bring secondary and post-secondary faculty members in foreign language together with language lab directors in the Northeast region to share ideas, strategies and applications of technology to foreign language teaching. We expect to have presentations representing individual or collaborative development efforts, as well as innovative uses of broad-based tools such as the internet or the networked classroom. Particular emphasis will be placed upon the sharing of knowledge that many of us have gained over the past few years with those who are just getting started in their efforts with technology. The program will be designed to offer something for everyone who has an interest in integrating media, whether traditional form or via newer computer technologies.

We invite papers and panels on the above topics. Presentation time is 30 minutes for a paper or 45 minutes for a panel. Those who wish to present should email or

send one (1) abstract of about 500 words in length to:

Michael Jones
mjones1@swarthmore.edu

or

Language Resource Center
Swarthmore College
500 College Ave.
Swarthmore, PA 19081

In addition to the abstract, please include the following information:

- Name
- Affiliation, if any
- Status
- E-mail address
- Postal address
- Telephone and fax numbers
- Title of the presentation
- Co-author's name, if any
- Co-author's affiliation, if any
- Preferred session type: paper or panel

Submissions will be accepted on a rolling basis through Monday, January 31, 2000.

Additional information, including details on registration, lodging and the conference schedule, will be posted on the conference web site at <http://neall.swarthmore.edu/neall2000/> as it becomes available.

NEALL Nominations

(continued)

Secretary/Treasurer:

- Maintains the organizational history (minutes) and membership files.
- Manages the NEALL treasury by taking in funds for memberships and disbursing funds at the direction of the President. Files tax forms with the IRS.
- Manages NEALL conference registration.

Holding office represents an opportunity to assume a leadership role in an active organization dedicated to the use of educational technology in all the latest forms. In addition, the task of arranging the annual meeting gives the NEALL officers the opportunity to interact, on a personal basis, with leaders in the field of educational technology.

The NEALL officers assume an obligation to attend the annual NEALL meeting. Their institutions must be willing to provide some support in the form of travel, telephone, Internet and office supply funds. In regards to travel, the President, or duly appointed representative, must attend annual meetings of the umbrella organization, the International Association of Language Learning Technologies (IALL). The NEALL geographic area includes New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware.

Naturally, each candidate must be a current NEALL member and is encouraged to join the IALL. Nomination deadline is February 14, 2000. Elections will be conducted in February 2000.

Please include the following information in your nomination:

- NEALL Office
- NEALL Member Nominated
- Member Institution and Address
- Member Phone and E-mail
- Indicate whether you have contacted the NEALL member and whether they have agreed to stand for office.

Please use the nomination form included in the Newsletter, or email your nomination to Wendy Baker-Davis (NEALL Past President) by February 14, 2000:

Email: W_Davis@FandM.Edu

Conference Highlights

Highlights of NEALL 1999

Lisa Frumkes

Developing JavaScript Utilities for Interactive WWW Language Sites

Robert and Marie-J. Ponterio, SUNY Cortland

The Ponterios discussed their materials both from the view of the JavaScript developer and the non-technical user. By using a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editor such as Netscape Communicator and the JavaScript pieces that Bob has written, non-technically oriented individuals can create highly interactive webpages having to understand JavaScript themselves. And since JavaScript is resident on the downloaded pages, users experience none of the problems associated with constantly referring to server-side scripts. He addressed the issues of rendering foreign characters, noting the importance of specifying character sets at the beginning of HTML documents. He also showed the Spanish-language work of Jean LeLoup, the co-owner of his listserve, FLTEACH.

Marie's part of the presentation gave insight into the experiences of the non-technical person with these materials, showing how easy it is to use the pre-prepared JavaScripts. The "Voyage Virtuel" (<http://www.cortland.edu/flteach/civ/Voyage/voyage.htm>) lets students click on a virtual map of France and access cultural, historical, architectural, and gastronomic information on various cities and regions. These materials are even routinely accessed by native speakers of French as they plan their own trips around France. Cloze and true/false exercises are available, with feedback popping up in separate windows which disappear when they are no longer needed. A record of student work can be printed and submitted to teachers.

NEALL Website:

<http://neall.swarthmore.edu/>

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Remote Collaboration: Theoretical and Practical Considerations

Cindy Evans & Mary-Beth O'Brien, Skidmore College and Harald Zils, Colgate University

Cindy and Mary-Beth talked about a project that links Skidmore students to their peers studying in Berlin this semester. Since the two students currently in Germany represent 20% of the college's fourth-year German program, it was felt that keeping them involved with Skidmore was important. By tying the two sets of students into a community of practice via a "Computerbrücke," the students who are abroad are able to share their experiences with students at home, who suggest activities that the Berlin students should pursue. The Berlin students then report back via the web site. Students on both sides seem to be motivated by and highly involved in the collaboration. Videoconferencing has been used to link the two sites as well. Cindy addressed the theoretical underpinnings of the enterprise within a cognitive framework and stressed the importance of discovery learning in the information age.

Harald spoke on the relationship between the students at Colgate and Freiburg. The German students, who are largely preparing to be teachers of German, created materials for the American students to use. But since they did not have a clear idea of the interests of their American counterparts, the materials they created were not always appropriate to the Colgate students' interests and needs. In general, computer support at German universities is largely left up to the students, but funding from the Max Kade Foundation has made more help available. The students have been collaboratively writing an on-line murder mystery set in Freiburg. Students have also been communicating via single-campus and joint mailing lists, and instructors are now copied on those messages. And via a PictureTel videoconferencing setup, guest speakers (such as authors and contemporary musicians) have participated in videoconferences with the Hamilton students. Next year, Dierk Hoffman will take a study group to Freiburg that will be armed with a digital camera and the means to create a much more ambitious web page. These new materials will be shared with Colgate students in much the same way as has been done at Skidmore.

Highlights of the North East Conference (NECTFL 99)

Lisa Frumkes

Federal Policies and Funding: National Programs and Getting Grants

Andrea Johnson-Stewart, JNCL-NCLIS and J. David Edwards, JNCL-NCLIS, Washington, DC

Mr. Edwards began by outlining the national trends and policies and gave some background on the types of grants available for language teaching and learning as well as international programs. "The news is good and getting better," he said. "Education has been discovered" by the federal government. Detailed information on the types of grants currently available (<http://www.languagepolicy.org/grants.html>) can be accessed through links from the NCLIS website (<http://www.languagepolicy.org/>).

During her part of the presentation, Ms. Johnson-Stewart discussed the biggest mistakes people make when writing grant proposals, such as not adhering to length restrictions or otherwise not following the guidelines, presenting a proposal that has no clear goal, or failing to present a set of measurable, achievable goals. She also noted that the best proposals are clear, often involve other outside funding, are directed towards agencies that are appropriate to the proposed grant's goals, and have results that can be shared with an appropriate community. Finally, both presenters stressed that granting organizations, while they cannot write grant proposals for applicants, are eager to help them write good ones. It's a good idea to contact the granting agency with major questions you may have before you start writing your proposal.

Special General Session: "Just Imagine... A Vision for the Future of Language Instruction"

Myriam Met, Montgomery County (MD) Public Schools, Moderator; Richard Donato, University of Pittsburgh; Jean LeLoup, SUNY Cortland; Paul Sandrock, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

The panel was asked to discuss aspects of the future of language instruction beginning from an assumption and a question. The assumption is: we must realize that the

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future is not only different from what we imagine, but also that it is different from what we can imagine. Therefore, we must ask ourselves the following question: if the impossible were actually possible, what would we do differently?

Jean LeLoup addressed the issue of how technology could change language learning. The major on-line course providers are apparently not yet offering language courses. If students could come to class via virtual reality, how would it change how we teach and learn? Can students get enough input, cultural information and exposure to culture materials via the computer? While many of the tools for doing so are already available, we have not yet managed to bring them all together for language teaching.

Richard Donato explored the idea of re-examining the learning goals we set for our students: perhaps even without technology, there is already a mismatch between our tools, teaching techniques and goals. We may need to do more to help students use language (involving a community of language learners, for example) rather than provide them with more opportunities to practice using language. If students always had access to speakers of the target language, classrooms as we know them could perhaps become obsolete.

Paul Sandrock spoke on the issue of standards, and noted that having standards need not mean that we teach using a standardized curriculum—that is, students can be allowed to show their mastery of material in a variety of ways rather than traditional classroom participation, homework or tests. Students could incorporate language

learning with other topics relevant to their interests such as art or economics, and present projects that demonstrate their mastery.

Comments from the audience touched on issues such as the use of recent immigrants as language resources (while them to maintain their native languages) and teacher training that encourages the view of human beings as “works in progress” who continue to develop and learn throughout their lifetimes.

Highlights of IALL 1999

Lisa Frumkes

XML and Language Learning: What's in Store?

Douglas G. Mills, University of Illinois

XML (eXtensible Markup Language) is a metatag language that can be used to create other markup languages; that is, it lets you create your own tags with which you can mark up documents. XML documents can be used in conjunction with style sheets, which means that the content of any XML document can be viewed via any number of different styles to achieve a variety of effects and emphases. XML is still under development and is not yet supported by Netscape, but its capabilities hold promise for the future. XML is also the core for Microsoft Office 2000. The presenter's materials are available on the web (<http://deil.lang.uiuc.edu/xml/>) for perusal, and require Microsoft Internet Explorer 5 for Windows.

Keep in mind...

Other Regional Groups - If you're interested in keeping up on Newsletters and Conferences in other regions take a look at the IALL website:

<http://iall.net/Groups.html>

LLTI - If you're new to the field, keep in mind that the LLTI listserv is an invaluable resource. More information is available from the IALL website:

<http://iall.net/LLTI.html>



Gratuitous filler shot of the Holly collection at the Swarthmore's Scott Arboretum.

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No, No, No, Non voglio piu servir: Language Media Driving the Curriculum

Peter Smith, University of Texas-Arlington; Jan Marston, Southern Methodist University; Ursula Williams, University of Notre Dame

“I must work day and night for someone who doesn’t appreciate me...I too would like to be a gentleman. I no longer wish to serve.” Many who run Language Resource Centers (LRCs) feel they play the servants to the masters that are the language teaching departments. But LRC directors want to be recognized as “masters” in their own right, and to do this, they need to define new roles for themselves. Many LRC directors perform virtually every task in their facilities: technical support, pedagogy training, maintenance, user support, and the like, in order to keep things running smoothly. In an era of shrinking budgets and growing demands, this is a monumental challenge, and those who work to meet these expectations need to work with their faculty and administrators to ensure that they are compensated—both monetarily and in terms of institutional status—for their efforts.

Highlights from ACTFL ’98, Chicago, IL *Lisa Frumkes*

Cost-Effective Alternatives to Oral Proficiency Assessment: VOICI’s Function and Rating System

Mary Ann Lyman-Hager and Ryu Kitajima

In the absence of her co-presenter, who could not attend for personal reasons, Mary Ann Lyman-Hager described the Video Oral Communication Instruments (VOICI) which the Language Acquisition Resource Center (LARC) at San Diego State University (SDSU) has developed for seven languages. While these tests are not as reliable as the OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview), they can allow a rough estimation of student level without the high cost of the OPI. The tests are comprised of video presentations of questions to which students must respond appropriately. Both untimed and timed versions of the tests are available, and students record their answers on audiotape for later evaluation by raters. LARC is also beginning to work on converting these materials to digital format (d-VOICI) so that both the tests and the responses can be transmitted over the internet. VOICI is available from LARC on an evaluation basis.

LARC has a website at: <http://larcnet.sdsu.edu/>

Early Testing, Early Placement: A New Way of Assessing Students’ Language Skills

Franziska Lys and Janine Spencer, Northwestern University

In order to cope with the mounting pressures associated with administering placement tests at Northwestern, the French, Spanish and German departments decided to create an on-line test. This allows students to take the test at their leisure, before they even set foot on campus, allowing them to spend their time during “placement week” taking other required exams. Because this test is offered so early, faculty are able to make earlier contact with students and cancel or add sections of certain courses well before the beginning of the semester. The faculty also feel that they get a more accurate idea of students’ levels due to the fact that the testees are not so overwhelmed when they take the exam. Students who, according to the test, “place out” of the language requirement are required to take a written exam and OPI when they get to campus to confirm the test results.

The test, which consists mostly of multiple-choice and various types of fill-in questions, can be found at <http://placement-test.mmlc.nwu.edu/>. More audio and video-based items will be added as bandwidth allows.

MWALL ’99 notes

Dan Beeby

The conference was at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and even though it was the weekend of the infamous U of M vs. Michigan State football game, the forty participants got a lot done.

The introductory session was by Carl Berger (Academic Liaison of the office of the CIO at U.M.) who did an outstanding presentation about “Predicting the Future”. He had a lot of very solid research about how students learn using electronic techniques, how teachers feel about technology, people’s perceptions, and learning styles. Overall his early-morning session can be characterized as informative, energetic, and very interesting.

I attended several interesting sessions:

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Building a non-roman character-based web site for which you can find more information on the their web site.

Jan Stewart and Yashuhiro Omota

<http://www.Umich.edu/-umichjpl>

Hot Potatoes

Marlene Johnshoy

She did a very nice presentation based largely on the Hot Potato tutorial.

Beyond the language cassette

Bruno Browning and Reid Paxton

They discussed the use of MP3 and RealMedia for converting a bunch of analog audio to digital. Best practices and that sort of stuff. (Bruno's use of MP3 was really interesting and looks promising).

I also did a campus tour which yielded some very good materials from the "Faculty Exploratory" lab at <http://www.exploratory.lib.umich.edu/>

A student at U of M named Ben Howard developed a media player called Beehive. It plays all audio formats, has a nice interface and allows "five second back" skips (nice for language learners).

Though I didn't get a chance to see her presentation, Marlene Johnshoy showed me the pages for TrackStar (<http://scrtec.org>) which is very nice and might be a useful alternative to WYSIWYGs without the expense and learning curve of a WebCT/Blackboard.

All-in-all it was an excellent conference by the folks at the University of Michigan.

Local, National Conferences Showcase

Language Learning & Technology

Emmanuel Paris-Bouvret

A couple of items of interest from the CTW Mellon grant at Trinity: From May 24-26 the CTW Mellon Project for Language Learning and Technology organized a conference at Wesleyan University titled "Language Learning and Technology in New England and New York."

The conference, which drew an audience from colleges

which are Mellon grant recipients in New England and New York, gave faculty members who had been developing materials the opportunity to share their projects with a wider community. Presenters from Trinity College included Dario Del Puppo who presented the web projects created by his students as final projects for an Italian Senior seminar class, and Françoise Weaver, who discussed the web site that she uses as a primary resource from her French conversation class, Also from Trinity was Levana Polate who presented her multimedia project titled "Sheer Lashalom" (Song for peace) which she annotated with videos, sounds and images in order to illustrate cultural aspects of Israel.

The CTW Mellon Conference provided a excellent forum for the exchange of ideas about the development of multimedia projects and discussion of challenges such as completion of a project within a timeframe, copyright issues, font problems, etc.

Several guest speakers also contributed to the success of the program. Ted Sicker from WGBH Interactive in Boston, who was the executive producer for Nuevos Destinos—a multimedia CD-ROM designed to accompany the Spanish learning program Destinos—drew considerable interest during his presentation, which provided insights into the development of such an advanced product.

Presentations from Nina Garrett, former Director of the CTW Mellon Project, and Sharon Fechter and Clara Yu from Project 2001 at Middlebury College in Vermont provided motivating perspectives, guidelines and reflections about the state of technology in the teaching of languages. The conference concluded with a presentation by David Herren, main developer of the much awaited xMedia Engine XP authoring tool which enables faculty members to develop cross-platform annotations of texts to include sounds, graphics, and videos. The new xMedia Engine will replace the xMedia Engine Classic, which is now only available on the Macintosh Platform. Like the Classic version, the new xMedia Engine will be freely available to the 62 schools which are part of the Mellon Grant.

This was the first conference of this type organized by one of the 62 CTW schools and it was a great start that we expect other institutions will continue.

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Shortly after the local conference, Mellon Technical specialists from Trinity, Wesleyan and Connecticut College as well as Ana Pérez-Gironés, director of the project, headed to Ohio to attend CALICO '99 at the University of Miami, Ohio.

As always, this year's meeting of the Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium was a success and included various types of presentations. The World Wide Web was a source of great interest. It appears that more and more, the web is chosen as a primary resource for class resources, assignments, and sometimes, the only resource for a class. It might sound scary to some instructors, but most areas of language instruction such as conversation or culture and communication benefit greatly from the immediacy and the tremendous database that the internet offers.

For example, a presentation by Thierry Waryn from OSU and Sabine Levet from MIT showed an example of a class that is based on a web site *Cultura* in which students from both the US and France observe and compare a variety of similar materials from both cultures. A presentation by Bob Godwin-Jones from Virginia Commonwealth University showed the possibilities offered by cutting-edge programming languages for the web like DHTML, XML and "older" scripting languages like CGI or Javascript. His presentation was an excellent demonstration of what is possible with the most advanced web-programming technologies. In his web based presentation one can see interesting and useful effects such as the possibility of scrolling simultaneously in two windows so students can see a text in both the target language and the English as they scroll either one. His web site also lets you view a written text that appears progressively as the sound or the video plays (which allows viewing without subtitles). As of now, some of these features are available only through the Microsoft Browser Internet Explorer 5, which is available only on the PC side. Another concern would be the amount of programming that is necessary in order to achieve these goals. But, considering the rate at which web authoring tools are developed, we can expect that these features will be available very soon without the necessity of programming.

In brief, these conferences provided great perspectives on the crucial role that technology is playing and will increasingly play in the teaching of languages and other

disciplines. This makes the building of the new extension to the library that includes the academic media center and the language media center an even more exciting project for anyone interested in using state of the art technology to support and improve the teaching and learning of various disciplines.

CALICO notes

Marisa Castagno

The presentation I mostly liked was by Bob Godwin-Jones (<http://www.fln.vcu.edu/gj.html>). He presented a German stories web site with Java-JavaScript, advanced CGI, streaming media (text display synchronized to audio!!); and expanded incorporation of meta-data (use of XML and the Instructional Management System standard) really impressive (especially text display synchronized to audio).

Visit his German Story Website to see the many applications of his scripts.

NEALL Nominations

For President Elect

NEALL Member Nominated _____

Member Institution and Address

Member Phone and E-mail _____

Have you contacted the nominee and have they agreed to stand for office?

- They have agreed to stand for office
- They have not agreed to stand for office.
- I haven't contacted them. (the Neall President will then make every effort to contact the nominee)

For Secretary/Treasurer

NEALL Member Nominated _____

Member Institution and Address

Member Phone and E-mail _____

Have you contacted the nominee and have they agreed to stand for office?

- They have agreed to stand for office
- They have not agreed to stand for office.
- I haven't contacted them. (the Neall President will then make every effort to contact the nominee)

NEALL Ballot

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