

NESI 2021 – What You Need to Know -- Updated Sept. 5, 2021

Welcome to NESI 2021 at the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC), Dingmans Ferry, PA. If you have been to NESI at Chimney Corners in the past, please assume that everything is different this year at PEEC. Well, almost everything relating to site policies and locations is different. Event activities and procedures (such as how to offer a workshop and the policy for private sales) are much the same as before; detailed descriptions can be found at our website.

Please read the following information very carefully. *There are changes and adjustments that have been made since an earlier version of this document went out in June.*

Arrival

- Registration sign-in on Friday, September 10, will open at 2 pm. Please do not arrive earlier than 1 pm. The registration desk will be open again on Saturday morning.
- The registration desk will be in the main dining room. That area will also include the Big Board (where workshops and focused jams will be listed), the place to deposit your poetry entries, and the concert sign-up sheet on Saturday morning.
- You will get a name button and an information packet that includes your exact housing assignment when you arrive.
- *You do not need to bring your vaccination card with you.* We have images of everyone's cards on file, which will be destroyed at the end of the weekend.
- [Driving directions](#) can be found at the PEEC website. The phone number for PEEC's office is (570) 828-2319. The office closes at 4:30 pm.
- Registration will be open until the dining hall closes at 10 pm. If you arrive later than that, go to classroom #1 in the main building. It has its own door. Someone will help you find your housing, and you can register in the morning.
- We will email the most current housing assignments on Sept. 9 so that anyone who is extremely late can go to what is probably their housing. It may still be subject to change, so *please do not make any changes or arrangements on your own.* If you want to change your housing, talk to someone at the registration desk when you arrive. This is very important.

Covid protocols and policies

- All attendees have been fully vaccinated. Nonetheless, we strongly recommend getting a PCR test a few days before attending and -- perhaps more importantly -- getting one after you return home.
- Please notify us if you have a positive test after the weekend so we can alert the rest of our attendees.
- Everyone must wear a mask indoors except while eating. This is currently a National Park mandate. If a participant brings a child who is too young to be vaccinated as of August 19, the child must remain in the family bubble, wear a mask if old enough, and sit with family at a separate table at mealtimes. (We do not usually have young children in attendance. However, we believe there will be one toddler.)
- There will be no singing indoors. This includes the Saturday night concert.
- Take charge of your own comfort level as well as that of others -- by maintaining social distance, wearing a mask outdoors, asking your group before starting to sing outdoors,

and the like.

- If you start to feel unwell during the weekend, please let us know and then go home.
- Most or all of the PEEC staff are vaccinated. Participants will have little or no contact with them except at mealtimes, and then it will be limited. All PEEC staff must wear a mask when they are indoors or working with a group outdoors (such as starting a fire).
- If we cannot hold the event because of the imposing of new pandemic-related restrictions that would require cancellation, all registration fees will be fully refunded.

Accommodations

- Participants can park at or close to their housing. Almost all of the paths are paved. You can drive and park at or near almost all of the shared spaces, such as the teaching yurt that will serve as a lounge. There are many handicap parking places that are indicated by a blue “P” on the campus map. Please leave those places for cars with a display tag.
- NO FOOD is allowed in any housing. None. It attracts mice, and leftover bits could trigger an allergic response in the next occupant.
- Participants must provide their own bed linens, towels, and pillows. We recommend bringing a sheet to cover the mattress and a light sleeping bag, but that’s up to you. Some beds are full and some are camp-type singles. Bring bed linens that will fit a full (double) bed in order to be sure. We don’t have a list of bed sizes.
- You may want to bring a box fan to increase ventilation in your housing.
- This was a honeymoon destination in the 1950s. A few cabins still have a boarded-up fireplace and a tiled sunken bath. Those baths are for showers only; the tile cannot withstand a deep soak. Sorry!
- Please read and follow the departure clean-up instructions posted in each room. We must be out of all housing by 10 am on Sunday so the staff can start their cleaning routines. Lunch will be served at 12. We can hang around afterward until the main building closes at 4:30.
- Although it is possible to lock the doors in the housing, PEEC does not distribute keys. Be sure to check the button on the door handle so you don’t lock yourself out.

Food and Drink

- The dining room is a short distance from the main (admin) building. It’s very spacious, well ventilated, and architecturally dramatic. There are also two adjacent outdoor patios (partly roofed) that contain large picnic tables.
- Although food was normally served buffet-style at PEEC, one of their adjustments in response to the Covid pandemic is to have food plated by the staff, with condiments in individual single-use packets. People will be asked to maintain a 6-foot social distance while in line.
- The menu this year is not going to be similar to the meals at Chimney Corners. Unfortunately, the kitchen management has been having difficulty with suppliers; with prices as well as availability of fresh fish, meat, and produce; and with getting deliveries. This has been true throughout the pandemic and was made worse by the recent flooding that affected roads and businesses in the lower-lying areas around the park. We apologize for any difficulties or disappointment -- but we know we’re all here for the music and camaraderie, not the gourmet dining.
- Responsible use of alcohol by those over 21 is permitted. Please make sure you clean up after yourself and use good judgment.

- There will be snacks available in classroom #1 (main building) after the concert. Some will be provided by the NESI board, but participants are welcome to contribute. Bring them to classroom #1 in the main building. Everything must be individually wrapped this year -- no open bowls of candy or chips. We are going with Covid-safe decisions despite the impact on the environment.
- Coffee, tea, etc. will be available in the main building at 6:30 am and at 7:00 am in the dining room for you early risers (and those who never went to bed).

Saturday Night

- We will do the traditional processional from the dining hall to the concert space in the main building. You might want to leave your instrument cases in that room before going to dinner.
- The processional tune is *Appelbo*, the Swedish ganglat we have done for several years. It will be included in your registration packet and can be heard here: <https://squeeze-in.org/musicdownloads/index.html>
And here: <https://www.natunelist.net/ganglat-fran-appelbo/>
and you can see and hear the amazing collective performance that started the VNESI 2020 concert here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkXQ78uN0U8>
- There will be no dance after the concert, but there is a dance tune workshop that will be offered on the Big Board.
- The concert room and classrooms will be open as late as any Board member with the key is willing to stay up. The rest of the building will be locked.
- Remember that there can be no noise outdoors after 10 -- that's a park rule.

Workshops, jamming, etc.

- As we have done at Chimney Corners, we'll have a "Big Board" set up in the registration room (the dining hall) on which people can post offers of workshops and requests for workshops. Remember that this is a DIY event – it's as good as we all make it, and it evolves throughout the weekend.
- There are many indoor and outdoor places in which we can gather, most of which can be reached by car if needed as well as on foot. We plan to be outdoors as much as possible. The campus map that you will receive in your registration packet has the campus divided into 5 numbered zones to help you find things. All possible sites will be listed on the Big Board, but here are some of them:
 - 1) There are two 1,000-square-foot rooms available in the main building, There is also a large adjacent space with a small stage. We can keep this part of the main building open as late as we like.
 - 2) One of the large teaching yurts (map zone 4) is set up as a lounge. It has lots of comfortable seating, a refrigerator, a coffee/tea setup, and a microwave. Food is permitted here (unlike in your housing). It will be open 24/7. There is a little unisex bathroom yurt on the same platform.
 - 3) Yurt #31 (map zone 4) is available for workshops and jams if indoor space is needed. The yurts are not very soundproof, but there may be another (33) that is currently unoccupied.

4) The dining room can be used between meals, as can its outdoor picnic table areas. The room is large and extremely well-ventilated. It is also potentially noisy when they are running the dishwasher. It will close and be locked at 10 pm. It opens again at 7:00 am for coffee, etc.

5) Many of the cabins and lodges have roofed porches. There are several roofed pavilions of various sizes.

6) The Craft Cabin (between map zones 3 and 4) has room for a small gathering.

7) There should be plenty of armless chairs in most locations. If you move some, please put them back. The same goes for the picnic tables.

- A major difference between Chimney Corners and PEEC is that PEEC is part of the National Park Service. Their rules apply to us and are enforced by park rangers, not the PEEC staff. The important one for us is that all outdoor noise (music, for example, but not quiet conversation) must stop at 10 pm. Sessions and jams will have to move indoors at that time. Park rangers are empowered to issue citations and fines for violations. Please watch the time as the night goes on.
- Remember that a lot of sheet music for workshops has been posted on Si-Talk, and a lot of workshops have been proposed/discussed there.

Private sales and The Liberty Bellows Shop

- There will be one or more tables set up in the dining hall for private sales of instruments and related paraphernalia, with the location yet to be determined. Individuals who are not professional instrument dealers or builders are welcome to bring instruments, CDs, music books, and the like. Place your item(s) on the table with the price and other information, including how to contact you during the event. Most people with small items for sale (such as CDs) set up a payment box; the honor system seems to work for us. We cannot, however, be responsible for any damage or loss to your goods.
- Mike Bulboff, the owner of Liberty Bellows (Philadelphia), will be set up in the teaching yurt that is not a lounge. He'll have instruments for sale and will be able to talk to you about repairs.

General comfort and safety

- Prepare for cool evenings, especially if you are going to use a fan to ventilate your housing at night.
- You may want to bring your own folding chair or stool, although there will be a lot of chairs available around the campus.
- See the "[What to Bring](#)" page at our website for a full list. It has been updated for PEEC, although some of the information has changed and been updated in this doc.
- Keep in mind that PEEC is a national park which is open to the public during daytime hours. Know where your instruments are. Wear your name button all the time -- we don't all know each other by sight. Politely banish any non-NESI folks who come around to hear the music. PEEC staff will wear a T-shirt or other identification.
- The wi-fi outdoors is somewhat spotty. There is good wi-fi in the main building.

Dealing With Problems and Questions

- If it's about the event, find a board member. They will be wearing a yellow "VOLUNTEER" name button.

- If it's about the site facilities, such as a plumbing problem in your cabin, you should find our PEEC host for the weekend or go to or call the office in the main building (570/828-2319). There is always someone there during the day (8:30 to 4:30), and there is a designated on-call manager each night. (The entire staff live on site, and not all of them will be working when we are there. Please don't bother someone who happens to be relaxing out in their yard or porch.)

And a closing request --

Unfortunately, Tony and I won't be there, although we are doing a lot of work from home to make the weekend go well (along with the rest of the board, of course). After a very successful hip replacement in late June, Tony found himself back in the hospital 3 more times in the next 8 weeks for unrelated issues, including a very serious blood infection (yes, one that he almost certainly got in the hospital). He's lost a lot of strength and stamina as a result. So our family doctor has said that he absolutely should not attend the weekend, and he's not really up to it anyway. But that means there will be people taking on jobs they don't normally do, such as dealing with registration. Please be patient, offer help where you can, and give your heartfelt support to Randy Stein, who is going to be emceeing the concert. It should be great fun. Tony and I will hope to see you all in 2022.