

President's Message

Where Are We Going?

I can easily get lost in research, whether it be a story, a program, or any other project I am working on. Territory Tellers met for the regular board meeting this past weekend at Wilburton, so I did a lot of work reviewing about Wilburton. The church that I attend is planning for three special Sundays in the coming weeks before Advent. The first is Heritage Sunday, then All Saints Sunday. The one I have enjoyed the most in research is Veterans Day Sunday. I found out that Armistice Day was to remember the armistice with Germany



on the 11th day of the 11th month at the 11th hour of 1918. The name was later changed to Veterans Day in 1954, to acknowledge all who have served. Memorial Day is to honor those who died in service and is held in May. I think I have all of them straight.

I became fascinated with the story of the poppy which became an icon for Armistice Day. I found the story of Lt Col John McCrae who witnessed the shelling of his close friend and former student on May 2nd, 1915. Because of security, the soldier was buried that night, and in the absence of a Chaplain, Lt Col John McCrae read a passage by memory from the Church of England's ritual for burial. The next day, May 3rd, 1915, John McCrae wrote the poem, "In Flanders Fields" sitting on the steps of an ambulance. As he wrote, a mild eastern wind blew gently across the field of poppies. It is

a beautiful poem and has even been set to music.

As I read this information, I thought of those that work in our organization, The Territory Tellers. I thought of those who have served in years gone by and those that strive to keep this organization going in the changes in our time. Special events are coming about. The retreat is in January. The festival is in June. And don't forget the Tellabratations in November. We need to be aware of the special days, but all the people need to stand together in the "little days". The board NEEDS to have your support. There is where the decisions are made that support the organization and plan for future events. Sometimes we are in the trenches working toward victory. Sometimes we need to reflect on the past to remember those that came before us. Sometimes we need to write our poems of things that have meant so much to us as individuals. Sometimes we need to meet for friendship, for fellowship, and the joy of meeting together. We are the Territory Tellers. We are the spirit of Oklahoma. We are leaving the footprints for others to follow! Come with me. Hold your banner high~

Bonnie Smith
President

Tattler Deadlines

We want to include the information you are interested in! Please have information in by the following dates for inclusion in the Tattler:

January 15, 2018 • March 1, 2018
July 15, 2018 • October 1, 2018

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January 26-27, 2018

Winter Retreat right around the corner

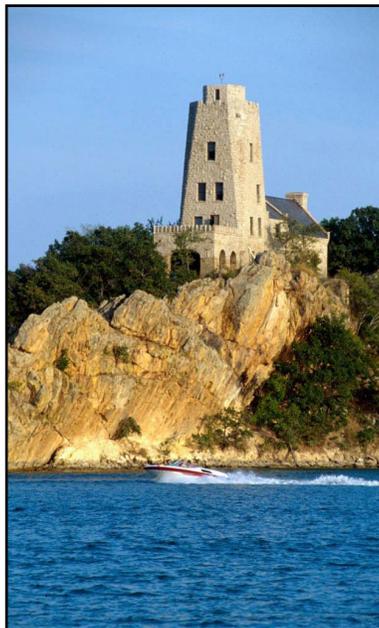
All who are interested in a fun, relaxing weekend of sitting around the fireplace listening or telling a tale will have a chance to do that January 26-27, 2018. The 9th annual Winter Retreat of the Territory Tellers will be at the new Lake Murray Lodge on Lake Murray in southern Oklahoma, just south of Ardmore.

Plans are still being finalized for the weekend, but you can be sure that the atmosphere will be laid-back and friendly and that there will be plenty of opportunities for stories to be told and shared between participants.

Besides storytelling there will also be a Festival Steering Committee and Board meetings during the weekend. Remember that as a TT member you are always invited to Board meetings.

Room reservations need to be made with the lodge prior to December 25, 2017 and mention you are with the Territory Tellers. The rate is \$99 plus tax per night. Each room has a lakeside view and balcony with refrigerators and microwaves. The phone number is (800) 257-0322.

There is a place on our website to "register" for the weekend (territorytellers.com/tt-winter-retreat/). This will give organizers an idea how many plan to attend. There is no registration fee for the retreat.



Tucker Tower stands as an iconic landmark of Lake Murray. It was originally built to be a retreat for Governor Alfalfa Bill Murray.

Lake Murray State Park is Oklahoma's first and largest state park consisting of 12,500 acres located on the shores of beautiful Lake Murray. The park has extensive trail systems for hikers and mountain bikes. New Deal, Anadarche, Buckhorn and a new system from the park office to Tucker Tower all combine for more than 30 miles of scenic trails offering a wide variety of hiking and biking experiences.



Take a glimpse of the 2018 Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival

The Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival (SOOSF) is excited to welcome nationally known storyteller Elizabeth Ellis as our featured teller for the 2018 Festival. Elizabeth is no stranger to Oklahoma. A Territory Teller member, she has been a SOOSF featured teller in the past and has had the same role at Wintertales in Oklahoma City. Besides telling Friday and Saturday nights, Elizabeth will offer a two-hour workshop on Friday afternoon.

Territory Tellers' own world-traveling David Titus will offer a spiritual story with string workshop on Saturday morning. Both workshop registration fees will be outside of the regular SOOSF registration costs.

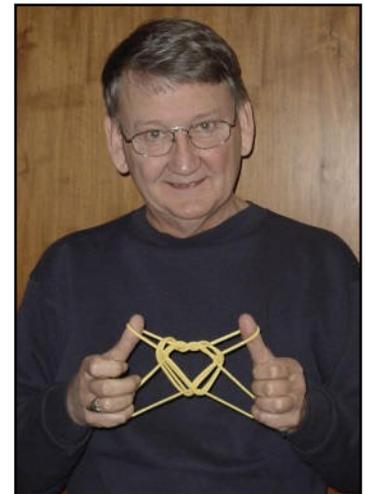
Last year Territory Tellers rolled out a new format for the 2017 Spirit of Oklahoma Festival. That format will see some minor changes at the 2018 Festival. Besides the addition of the workshops, the themes for the story swaps will see minor alterations. A tentative schedule and further details will be announced in January's Winter edition of the *Tattler*. A registration form will be in the Spring edition.

We will have opportunity to catch up on goings-on with fellow story lovers during the two meals that will be cooked by the Eastlake Cumberland Presbyterian Church members. Participants enjoyed the together-time last year and the Steering Committee have worked out the schedule to include them in 2018.

It's never too soon to be looking for items around the house that can be brought to the Silent Auction. Richard Czarski has stepped up and agreed to chair the Silent Auction committee. Any questions or to let Richard know what you'll be bringing can be sent to him at his email: rarczarski@yahoo.com.

If you have a suggestion on where and how to publicize our festival in your local area, please send those suggestions to Co-Chairs Tina Saner and Lori Carmichael (twosaners@aol.com and lorie.carmichael@chickasaw.net). They would love to hear your ideas.

If you would like to help with one of our committees (Registration, Hospitality, Publicity or Silent Auction) please let Bonnie Smith (bonniesmith943@outlook.com) know and she will put you in touch with the right person.



David Titus shows a finished Inuit heart string figure.



Elizabeth Ellis, show here holding yet another audience spellbound with her telling, is the scheduled feature teller for 2018 Festival. Come and be entranced!

November 14 **Tellabration 2017!**TM

The Choctaw Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

The Choctaw Library and the WayWord Tellers will host Tellabration 2017TM beginning at 6:30PM on Tuesday, November 14, 2017. Tellabration!TM is an international storytelling event with stories told all over the world. The WayWord Tellers will be presenting stories suitable for school age children and older. To encourage new tellers, a brief "open mic" session will be part of the program for audience members to share their 1-6 minute stories. Tellabration!TM is a program offered by the National Storytelling Network. Co-sponsors for this event are the Choctaw Library, WayWord Tellers, and Territory Tellers. For more information contact Shanna Shadoan at the Choctaw Library, 405-390-8418 or Liz Parker 405-769-9390. Light refreshments will be served.

November 17 **Wonder City Tellabration**TM

Wonder City Coffee, Locust Grove 6-7 p.m.

Come to the 13th annual TellabrationTM in Locust Grove, where stories are celebrated. Special guest this year is Choogie Kingfisher. Kingfisher is a Kituwah-Cherokee storyteller and musician who specializes in flute music and traditional Cherokee myths and legends.



Christin Cooper learns her first string figures at the hand of master David Titus at the 2017 SOOSF.

Wilburton Story Program

One of the things that makes it fun to attend TT board meetings is the special storytelling events we get to attend. The board meeting at Wilburton on Oct. 13 and 14 was no exception. Teresa Vale was our hostess and she asked the Arts Council in Wilburton to plan a storytelling event on Friday evening. It was held on the college campus in Wilburton at the original home of the college president, now restored and serving as a meeting place. Territory Tellers were greeted by a friendly group of story lovers. We were invited to join a story circle. In a comfortable atmosphere, we heard stories about a snow storm in Minnesota, a disastrous first date, antics of a father and uncle during the 1920's, ghost appearances on campus, a runaway fire truck and many others. Bonnie Smith was given time to talk about Territory Tellers and Paulette Gibson passed out brochures about the organization. Members of the Arts Council had a great spread set for us of homemade snacks and desserts. After snacks were finished, we shared more stories. It was one of those events where people wanted to linger. As Territory Tellers drove back to our motel, we kept talking about the stories we heard and told. It is nice to know that the tradition of oral storytelling is alive and well in Wilburton.

Liz Parker

Anne Izard Storytellers' Choice Award

On September 19, Fran Stallings travelled to the wilds of Westchester County, north of New York City, to accept the Anne Izard Storytellers' Choice award for *The Price of Three Stories: rare folktales from Japan (Parkhurst Brothers)*, a collection of Hiroko Fujita's stories for adults and teens. It was a lovely ceremony, emceed by Carol Birch. Jim May and Heather Forest also received awards.

Film – Te Ata

A docu-drama based on the life of Oklahoma Hall of Fame and State Treasure, Chickasaw storyteller Te Ata, has finally come to theatrical release! In mid-October it was playing in dozens of major Oklahoma multiplex theaters. Te Ata performed at early WinterTales festivals when she was already in her 80s. Some TT folks may have been privileged to hear her. The movie includes a spot-on recreation of her telling "The Courtship of the Birds" which is a delight. Lynn Moroney worked with her to turn "Baby Rattlesnake" into a picture book that has been reprinted in many school curricula. I had never heard about Te Ata's role in repeal of the Indian Offenses Act of 1883, which forbade traditional ceremonies and artifacts.

The movie, which has already won awards at Indie festivals, was produced by the Chickasaw Nation's highly professional video team. For a trailer: www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnmMDIOVzDM

Fran Stallings

The Texas Storytelling Festival “Talk of the Town”

Every March since 1985 fabulous talespinners have filled the air with stories in Denton, “Little D,” Texas, 45 miles northwest of “Big D”—or, as Dentonites say, “north of ordinary.” In 2018, our “Talk of the Town” will again feature workshops, resources, fringe performances, a silent auction, new and traditional celebrations, awards, banquets, yummy lunches and snacks, music, contests, concerts and—more to the point—stories! And, are we ever looking forward to hearing those compelling tales to be delivered by our renowned featured tellers Adam Booth, Beth Horner, Laura Packer, and Tim Tingle!

Adam Booth The study of Appalachia and its culture are at the heart of all Adam Booth’s work. A four-time winner of the famed West Virginia Liars Contest (honest!), he teaches Appalachian Studies at Shepherd University in West Virginia. Each of the stories in his Appalachian Twentieth Century Series weaves together traditional folktales, character arch types and regional folklore. His original personal stories are based on real events, but since he is a Liar you are going to have to decide for yourself which parts to believe.

Website: www.adam-booth.com

Video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bey-lJktbNY

Beth Horner It is said of Beth Horner that her “wit is so sharp you can shave with it.” She is the recipient of the Circle of Excellence Oracle Award from the National Storytelling Network, being an acclaimed performer since 1983. Warm and charming, when she tells everyone wishes she was their kid sister. Her stories are filled with rhythm and music. She plays the autoharp and sings songs you are sorry you never heard before as part of her performance.

Website: www.bethhorner.com

Video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Ef-sKQ3GncFestival

Laura Packer “A true daughter of Scheherazade!” Laura Packer describes herself as a “real-time dreamer”. A saucy and sensual teller, she is a tour guide to wonder and delight. She is acclaimed for her work with fairy tales for adult audiences. “Fractured, Broken and Bent” helps contemporary audiences find new relevance in old tales. Her newest show “Fairy Tales for Grown Ups” won Best New Producer at the Indianapolis Fringe Festival. Her original tales are crowd pleasers, too, especially her “Crazy Jane” stories. She has been an Exchange Place teller at the National Storytelling Festival.

Website: www.laurapacker.com

Video and Blog: www.truestorieshonestlies.blogspot.com/2017/02/creativity-in-times-of-stress-this-is.html

Tim Tingle Award winning author and storyteller Tim Tingle is an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. His great-great grandfather John Carnes walked the Trail of Tears in 1835. His paternal grandmother, Minnie Ocheta-ma Goode, attended a series of rigorous Indian boarding schools in the early 1900s. In 1993 Tim retraced the Trail of Tears to the Choctaw homeland in Mississippi and began what would become his life’s work: collecting and sharing Choctaw culture.

Website: www.timtingle.com

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZGGGC2axE>

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Logos: TEXAS ARTS COUNCIL, DENTON, TEXAS COMMISSION ON THE ARTS, ART WORKS, NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS, 69



Address Correction Requested

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Locust Grove OK 74352

Territory Tellers is a growing network of individual tellers, listeners and local storytelling circles. Get connected by joining our statewide organization! Dues are \$25 for individual and \$40 for family membership per year.

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