

President's Message

Have you ever went somewhere that was so incredible that you did not want to leave? When you got home, you were still thinking of all the fun you had and the people with whom you met and spent time. Maybe some of the activities you enjoyed were so incredible; you bask in the memory of them.

Well, that is exactly how I feel about our storytelling retreat. I can honestly say that I have not enjoyed a retreat as much as I did the one we just concluded at the Tenkiller Lodge in Park View, Oklahoma, just outside of Tahlequah. To start with, the weather was beautiful. Nice and warm, sunny without being too hot.

Then was the retreat itself. There were two great storytelling workshops, where not only did the participants learn new things about storytelling, but were entertained as well. Then we had three incredible storytelling concerts. All of the tellers were in peak form and in spite of confidential hints made that they were nervous or worried; you would never have known it when they stood in front of an audience and told their stories. Seasoned veterans and first-timers alike told stories, but from the performances given, they all seemed equal.

Of course, the highlight of the retreat was our guest, featured teller Sequoia Guess. He concluded the retreat with a repertoire of ghost stories that were both humorous as well as downright frightening. In addition, he told us many things about his namesake, Sequoyah, the Cherokee linguist that were both informative and enlightening.

However, I think the best part of the retreat was the camaraderie. I have known many people ever since I became a member of Territory Tellers almost twelve years ago. It was nice to see them again and catch up on everything that has transpired in our lives since our last meeting. There were many new faces as well, and as always, I enjoyed

the opportunity to make new friends.

I know I am not alone in this sentiment. As I became reacquainted with old friends and acquainted with new ones, they all seemed to reflect on the same feeling. I heard comments that the retreat was indeed a great retreat and one of the best ones that they had attended.



The retreat was not just all play and no work. The Festival Steering Committee met and finalized many of the details about the upcoming festival. A board meeting was held the following morning and finalized everything so that the Festival Steering Committee could move forward. I would love to share in those details, but others are assigned that task and I am sure the news is featured elsewhere in the Territory Tattler.

Naturally, I have to give a huge 'hat's off' kudos to the people who helped make the retreat a success. Naturally, I want to thank our tellers and workshop presenters for participating and providing such a great atmosphere. I also want to give credit to Shaun Perkins, Sheron Rodgers and Dondi Rodgers for their help in organizing the retreat and providing us with some delicious meals.

Our next meeting is March 3 & 4 in Apache, Oklahoma. A storytelling story swap will occur Friday night and the board meeting will take place at 11:00 a.m. Saturday morning. I, as well as the rest of the board, invite you to attend and participate. I hope that I will see you there. In the meantime, keep telling stories and listening to them and keep creating great memories to bask in for the future.

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Festival Steering Committee

The Festival Steering Committee is progressing with plans for the 2017 Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival. The committee met on Friday, January 27 just before the retreat in Tahlequah. The enthusiasm of the group was like "oil for the gears" helping make this year's festival a great success.

The TT board then heard the presentation of the location sub-committee co-chairs, Liz Parker and Sheron Rodgers. The board unanimously voted to accept the location. The 2017 Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival will be at:

East Lake Cumberland Presbyterian Church
700 SW 134th Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

The other sub-committee co-chairs can now proceed with their designated charges:

Publicity: Tina Saner and Lorie Carmichael
Registration: Shaun Perkins and Roxann Yates
Finance: Steve Kardaleff and Paulette Geeslin
Hospitality: Teresa Vail and Bonnie Smith

Watch for further information to be shared soon about the festival. -- *Bonnie Smith, SOOSF chair*

Are you interested in serving?

Along with the start of spring is the filling of the slate of officers and board members to present to the membership at the next annual meeting.

We've got slots available! From president through to board member, your interest in serving the organization could be met. IF you are interested, check out our by-laws posted on the website at the bottom of the "About Us" page. There are descriptions of each of the positions' duties.

If you decide you'd like to join the board, please let Liz Parker know, *elizabethparker862@yahoo.com*. She is contacting members to see if they would be interested in serving and would love you to let her know of your interest.

Members' news

The Oklahoma Humanities Council recently named Tony Hardman as an Oklahoma Scholar. He is able to give book talks on selected books of literature or Oklahoma history. He has completed his first booking by presenting a book talk on the memoir, *Hurrah for My New Free Country* by Leon Charles Fouquet, at the Olive Warner Memorial Library in Hooker. The theme for this year is pioneers and living in the frontier, as told from a personal perspective of those living during those times. The book talk was well attended and well received and Tony hopes he has the opportunity to present more book talks in the future.

TT Winter Retreat a great success

The Territory Tellers recently enjoyed a Winter Retreat at Tenkiller Lodge in Keys, Oklahoma, a few miles south of Tahlequah. The retreat was attended by 35 participants, with additional visitors who enjoyed the afternoon and evening concerts.

Tellers from Texas and Oklahoma gathered to have fellowship, share stories, listen, learn, talk to old friends and welcome new members.

Some new attendees to TT events included Hall Duncan, Angelina Grass, Shayne Larango, Ann Laughlin, Karen Lyons, Dona Welch, Trinity Welch, Kim Wenzel and Priscilla Wenzel.

We were also lucky to have two people sign up as new TT members during the weekend: Michelle Matthews and Ivan Pace.

The weekend began with a very well-attended table-telling session in the lodge lobby, hosted by Betty Perkins, who got many new and returning TT visitors comfortable and into the storytelling vibe.

Dinners at the Big Red Restaurant were a fun affair. The service and food were both excellent, with some pies that many people said were the best they had ever had.

Friday evening's concert held some true

longtime TT treasures with Liz Parker hosting the event, which included great stories from Rosemary Czarski, Barbara Jones, Steve Kardaleff, and Chester Weems.

Saturday started off with some fun storytelling games with workshop leader Shaun Perkins, where everyone got to tell group stories and impromptu stories based on old photographs or random words on cards.

The story swap at lunch gave many new attendees the chance to tell a story while having a sandwich meal provided by TT and wonderful desserts from Betty Perkins. After lunch, Tony Hardman facilitated a workshop that gave people some great tips for finding their own story.

In the afternoon, Teresa Vail hosted a concert with stories from Lorie Carmichael, Tony Hardman, Liz Parker and Shaun Perkins that included both funny and touching plots. A special treat was when the featured Saturday night teller Sequoyah Guess showed up at the end of the afternoon concert, and he graciously talked to the audience about his name, his ancestor Sequoyah and where his ancestor's name came from.



Sequoyah Guess, above, was a guest teller on Saturday night of the retreat.

I have never been to a two-day event which had such consistently good storytellers. I enjoyed every bit of it, from the table talks to the workshops, to the concerts. Excellent presentations. I felt Sequoyah Guess was the perfect closer for the concert Saturday. His stories were hilarious, and he even told a story at the table where he sold his books after the concert. He told this story rapidly, it is about three brothers. The eldest is named Foot, the second born, Foot Foot, and the younger brother is named Foot Foot Foot. So you imagine the confusion when he tells the tale of Foot, Foot Foot, and Foot Foot Foot! -- Betty Perkins, Locust Grove

Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival

There is a story.....a story of a poor man who searched far & wide for a great treasure. As it was, the treasure was buried in his own cottage and only needed to be uncovered. So, after many years of searching the poor man returned to his humble home, discovered the buried treasure and lived happily ever after. He was a most generous man and shared his wealth the rural village where he lived.

OKLAHOMA! What a treasure chest full of the many valuable gems. They hold the spirit of the land, the people, and the heritage who have created this our great state.

The Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival will once again uncover this treasure with stories from the heartland; our heritage, straight



Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival

from the heart. You may need to travel from far and wide to join in the celebration at :

East Lake Cumberland Presbyterian Church
700 SW 134th Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
June 2nd & 3rd, 2017

But you will find that treasure at this year's festival. You will share in a time to sit back and share in the fun, fellowship and story concerts. The stories are from "the people" that will whisk you back to the past, tickle your funny bone, or cause

you to reflect on your own perspective of life. There will be table talks, ghost tales, and story concerts with stories "by the people" that will make the heart sing. There is a story.....

--Bonnie Smith

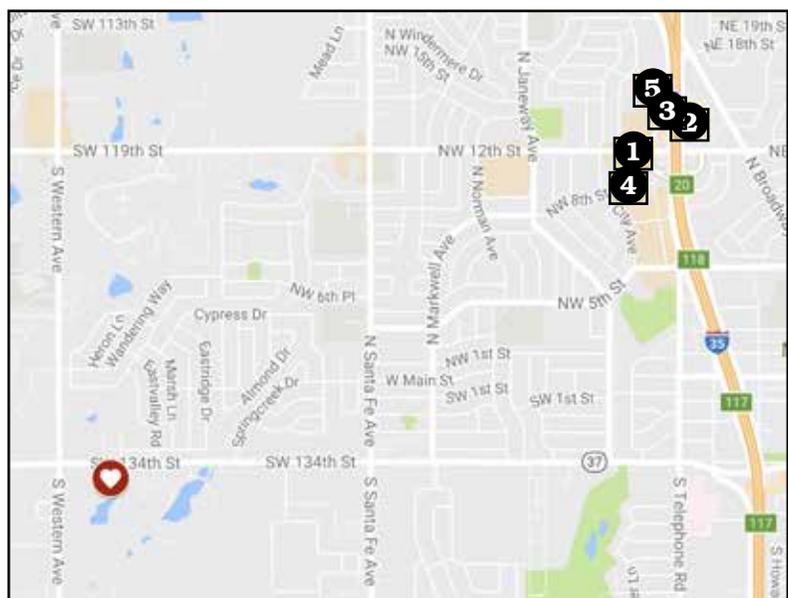
Need a place to rest your head during the Festival?

This year we won't have an official hotel in connection with the Festival. However, we've got a list of rooms close to the Festival site, mostly along the I-35 corridor.

You can contact these hotels individually to see which one meets your needs the best:

- 1.Motel 6:** NW 12th Street and N Moore Avenue, 405.799.6619 - has a continental breakfast
- 2.Super 8:** 1520 N Moore Ave (I-35 & 12th Street),405.794.4030 - has a continental breakfast
- 3.Comfort Inn & Suites:** 1401 N Moore Avenue, 405.735-6200 - has a free hot breakfast
- 4.Springhill Suites:** 613 NW 8th Street, 405.759.2600 - has a complimentary breakfast

5.Candlewood Suites: 1701 N Moore Avenue, 405.735.5151.



March Board Meeting

Get on board lil' children! We're movin' on! Mark the date! Get your "ticket" and plan on a great journey. TT board member Boonie Smith is hosting the March board meeting in Apache!

Friday, March 3, 2017 - 5:30 pm Apache High School Cafeteria

The Territory Tellers will be heading to Apache, OK. Plans are being made for a "down home meetin' and greetin'" and, great storytelling. A Story Concert at 7:30 pm will wrap up the evening.

Saturday, March 4, 2017 - Apache United Methodist Church - Fellowship Hall

9:30 am Festival Steering Committee

10:30 am Territory Tellers Board Meeting

Brunch will be served during this time by the ladies of the congregation.

You all come now! Ya Hear?

Did you know?

Your membership with Territory Tellers includes a posting on our website that includes your photo and bio? You just need to provide that information to our webmaster, Shawn Perkins, okiestoryteller@gmail.com, and she will make it happen.



Weems

Bonnie Smith took the stage for ghost tales at the Winter Retreat. Bonnie kept the audience's attention with a story of Sarah and her Civil War beau.

Wonder City Wordfest will have storytelling competition

Storytelling will be a part of the festivities at Wonder City Wordfest, Locust Grove, on April 15 this year. This festival replaces ROMPfest, a celebration for three years of the Rural Oklahoma Museum of Poetry (ROMP) and National Poetry Month.

"To increase our exposure, we decided to expand the festival's focus and include a location in town, as well as at ROMP," ROMP director Shaun Perkins, TT member and webmaster said.

A storytelling competition will be a part of the day's activities, in addition to an author fair, pastry and poetry competition, poetry recitation competition, poetry and story games, word art, and much more.

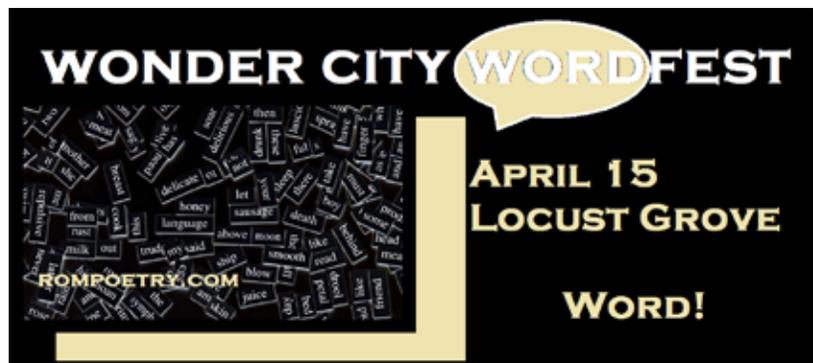
Perkins's one-woman show POEM LIFE will be the finale at 7:00 p.m. that night. This show combines storytelling, poetry, audience interaction and multimedia displays.

All events are free and open to the public. To learn more, visit Wonder City

Wordfest at the ROMP website: ROMPoetry.com.

Storytellers, pastry chefs and poetry reciters all need to register in advance at the website by April 1.

All events will take place at Wonder City Coffee, 118 E. Main, Locust Grove, or at ROMP, 6603 S 438 Rd., two miles west of town. Call Shaun Perkins, 918-864-9152 or email her at ROMPoetry@gmail.com for more information.



Sometimes the birth of a story comes from an unexpected place

One of the highlights at the retreat was the Story Games workshop facilitated by Shawn Perkins. Greeting each participant at their seat was a stack of items to use during the session: a blank sheet of paper, an old photograph, a sight reading card and a slip of paper with a code and a sentence beginning.

Ah, those beguiling slips of paper. We each had to complete the sentence we were given. Then each person with a slip with a code starting with the letter A was called to the front. A little confusion ensued to get everyone in the right numerical order (the second digit in the code). Then the magic happened. As each person read their slip of paper aloud, a story developed. We loved the stories so much that we wanted them shared with everyone that couldn't attend.

A *Once upon a time...*there was a frog sitting on an old swampy log. *Every day* I am grateful for my life. *But one day*, the door to the store was locked. *Because of that*, I stopped being afraid to tell to adults. *Because of that*, she became extremely confused. *Until finally*, I said yes. *And ever since then*, I have been an Elvis Presley fan.

B *Once upon a time...*in a land far way you could count on two things; people were pleasant and kind. *Every day* I need more Cheetoes. *But one*

day, the boy came to deliver the roses his friend had asked him to deliver. *Because of that*, the wicked troll stamped his foot so hard that the bridge crashed down on top of him. *Because of that*, I let my daughter apply to any college/university that she wanted to attend. *Until finally*, I turned on the ignition. I could go home. *And ever since then*, I have been famous in Scotland.

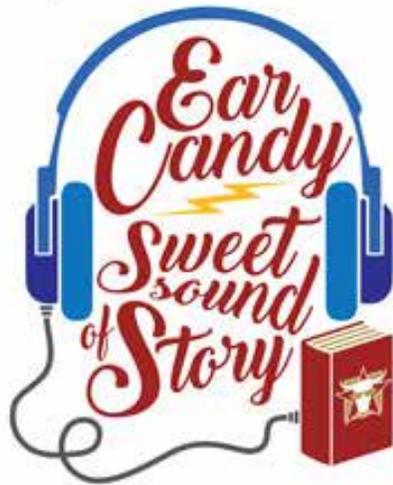
C *Once upon a time...*I hurt my thumb. *Every day* I get to talk to my daughter, Malachie! *But one day*, I saw a tractor and that red tractor changed my life. *Because of that*, I believe in miracles. *Because of that*, I always made sure I locked my apartment door at night. *Because of that*, I am now a Christian and a storyteller. *Until finally*, I excused myself and blew my nose on my apron. *And ever since then*, I've walked with a limp.

D *Once upon a time...*there was a garden with deep purple sunflowers. *Every day* in every way I love you more and more. *But one day*, I decided to live my life a courageous nit-wit. *Because of that*, I turned off the road and hit the tree. *Because of that*, he kissed her quickly. *Until finally*, the sun shone down on the field full of sunflowers. *And ever since then*, I touch a screw and lift my feet when I drive over a railroad track.

Group C took center stage at Tenkiller Lodge as they combined their snippets of story into a single, albeit fractured, tale.



32nd Annual TEXAS STORYTELLING FESTIVAL



Storytelling Concerts
Music • Ghost Stories
Kids' Activities • Story Slam
Sacred Tales Concert
Story Swaps • Liars Contest
Workshops



YVONNE HEALY

DON WHITE

DOLORES HYDOCK

CAROLINA QUIROGA-STULTZ

DENTON CIVIC CENTER | DENTON, TX
MARCH 9-12, 2017

Registration & More Information:
www.tejasstorytelling.com
940.380.9320 | tsa@tejasstorytelling.com

Is your membership current? Send in your renewal today!

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.

Full Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Country _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

e-mail address _____

Web site (optional) _____

Are you a storyteller? _____ a story listener? _____

\$25 individual

\$40 family

\$40 organizational

Please complete this form and mail it with a check payable to Territory Tellers to:

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