

## President's Message

**I**t's hard to believe that the new year is here. I am sure many of us have told ghost tales as part of Halloween and some participated in various Tellablations throughout the state during November.

The board as well as the Festival Steering Committee has made great strides with the festival. Contract details are being ironed out for our return to Southern Nazarene University in Bethany. Our Featured Teller will be Mary Hamilton. This will be our ninth festival and soon we will be approaching a major milestone with Festival Number 10 in 2016. It's hard to believe that eight festivals has come and gone, each one of them incredible and yet just getting better and better like a fine wine.



I remember the attending the first festival back in 2006. I had been in Oklahoma a year and was hungry for a storytelling event. I heard that there was a festival in Seminole and immediately I was determined to see this first landmark event. Of course, I only came as a spectator. I had no idea I was going to end up friends with so many of the members and would spend seven years as a member of the board, let alone become the President. I have fond memories of each of the festivals ranging from the

stories I have heard to the friendships made and the adventures that have stemmed from each.

One of these memories was telling ghost tales outside at St. Crispin and finding out that "hooting owls" were responsive audience members. Another is telling a story at the Winter Retreat at Lake Murray and having Greg Rodgers teasing me about large carp fish making fun of me in the background. I also remember swapping stories with Greg's dad Al, as well as many friendly conversations with Steve and Pat Kardalleff to just plain joking and laughing with several storytellers and other Territory Teller members. It is always fun to reminisce, but the best part is not all of the great memories I have, but of all the great memories that are to come.

I think that is why so many of us work so hard to see the festival grow and to see Territory Tellers to expand. Their future is our future and their memories are our memories, not only memories already stored in our minds, but memories yet to be created. And of course, with each memory is a story. If we were here all assembled I would raise a glass and make a toast to memories, past, present, and future and to the stories they create.

May those stories never end.



Greg Rodgers tells a story at Lake Murray Lodge. The infamous fish tank is seen behind Greg..

Weems

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# **2014 OKC Storytelling Festival supported by TT members**

Five storytellers donated their talents at the Oklahoma City Storytelling Festival. As usual, Territory Tellers participate in two events at the Oklahoma Storytelling Festival. The first event is a Story Swap which Territory Tellers hosts and provides an emcee. Then the second day, we provide the "Oklahoma Olio" where four storytellers and an emcee regale us with the finest stories from local tellers.

This year our four storytellers were Connie Fisher, Molly Lemmons, Tony Hardman, and Fran Stallings, with Shaun Perkins acting as emcee. Tony Hardman emceed the Open Mic Story Swap. Both events were well attended and all of the tellers did a great job. The "Olio" was attended by national tellers Donald Davis and Bill Lepp. The Story Swap was also successful as we had members of the Gold Dome Multi-cultural Society attend and they told us stories of immigrating to America, adjusting to the new culture and making a new home for themselves. Tony Hardman met with them and encouraged them to become members and hopefully they will become future festival participants as well.

The Oklahoma Storytelling Festival was held at the beautiful Oklahoma History Center making a truly great cultural event, combining great storytelling with great museum exhibits. The Festival was previously held in downtown Oklahoma City in or near the Stage Center, but has now made the History Center as their new home.

## **Did you miss the Fall Tattler?**

So did everyone! *Territory Teller* Editor Tina Saner's computer crashed just as the finishing touches were being put on the fall issue. Sadly she had not backed up the file to a secondary source before her screen went blank. Let that be a lesson to us all about not getting complacent in keeping regular back-ups to a secondary source!

By the time that multiple attempts were made to salvage data from her old computer failed, and a new computer set up, all our Tellabration events had come and gone. It was decided to wait until the winter issue and news of our Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival.

Happy reading everyone!

## **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:**

**March 1, 2015 • July 15, 2015  
October 1, 2015 • January 15, 2016**

June 12 & 13, 2015

# SOOSF Reveals Featured Teller

Plans are well underway for the 2015 Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival. The festival committee has confirmed that Mary Hamilton, Kentucky, will be the featured teller.

Mary's early adventures in the storytelling spotlight led to a note on her report card, trips to the confessional, and smiles of delight on the faces of her 3rd grade classmates. When it was Mary's turn to stand in front of her class and tell what she had done over the weekend, she did not hesitate to describe how she rode her horse bareback. Carefully, she used her hands to demonstrate how she slid off the rump of her galloping horse, barely grabbing the tail. She showed them how she struggled to climb the tail, and then held tight to the mane to finish her ride.

The story was most convincing, especially from a girl who owned no horse. While her classmates were thrilled, her teacher recognized a disturbing lack of truth in need of correction instead of talent in need of encouragement and direction. A note to Mary's parents resulted in reminders that telling stories was sinful. For years Mary confessed her sins and struggled to overcome her talent. Thank goodness, she failed.

In 1983, after brief careers as a high school

Mary takes the stage, the show unfolds in the hearts and minds of her audiences - just as it did for her 3rd grade classmates so many years ago.

Mary entertains audiences of adults, families, or children with Kentucky tales, world folk & fairy tales, plus a few myths, legends, true stories, and original fiction.

In addition to numerous awards for both her books and story recordings, Mary was the first

storyteller to receive The Kentucky School Media Association's Jesse Stuart Media Award for her body of work in the medium of storytelling. In 2009 the National Storytelling Network honored Mary with a Circle of Excellence Oracle Award. Mary also counts herself among the many dedicated members of the National Storytelling Network and the Kentucky Storytelling Association.

The festival committee, Tony Hardman, chair, is hard at work making final plans. Next on their list of decisions is the selection of workshops and overall schedule. If you have an idea for a workshop topic or an activity that should be considered for the schedule, now is the time to contact one of them and provide your input.



English teacher and a public library children's librarian, Mary embraced professional storytelling. With her ever-expanding repertoire, Mary delights audiences throughout the USA. She tells tales in a straightforward "just talking" style. Yes, she still uses her hands to help tell the tale. Today, when

## '14 Festival final figures

From a request made at the 2014 General Membership Meeting, the final numbers from the festival are being provided to the membership.

### Revenue

Registrataion .....	\$1,954.00
Donors .....	415.00
Table sales.....	180.00
Housing (Dorm) .....	806.00
Silent Auction.....	504.00
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$3,859.00</b>

### Expenses

Teller/presenters .....	\$1,750.00
Musicians.....	50.00
Technician .....	250.00
Advertising .....	50.00
Printing .....	42.00
Insurance .....	134.00
Housing (Dorm) .....	806.00
Food .....	648.00
Supplies .....	105.00
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$3835.00</b>
<b>Net Surplus .....</b>	<b>\$24.00</b>

# Member news, notes and events

**Tallgrass Tellers** will be joining forces with L'Chaim Community Center in Dewey this Valentine's Day for a Dinner Theatre. Tickets can be reserved for \$24 each by calling 918.440.2393.

Storytelling "from the face" featured four tellers from Territory Tellers on Saturday, January 24th at the Mustang Public Library. Mustang's own storyteller **Molly Lemmons** was featured teller. Other tellers included **Anita Baker**, Oklahoma City, **Lynn Baker**, Oklahoma City, and **Nancy Lenhart Matthews**, Bartlesville. This event was in conjunction with the January Festival Steering Committee meeting in the morning and Territory Tellers' Board Meeting in the afternoon.

**Fran Stallings** has two collections of Hiroko Fujita's folktales ready to be released by Parkhurst Brothers Publishers. *How to Fool a Cat and more Japanese tales for children* and *The Price of Three Stories* should be available in March, 2015. A pre-release review of *How to Fool* from Dr. Margaret Read McDonald states "How lucky we are to have even more of Hiroko Fujita's delightful children's folktales from Japan! Fran Stallings has done an excellent job of framing these for us. Fun tale-sharing for teachers, librarians, and grandparents." And of *Three Stories* TT member Elizabeth Ellis writes, "Something special always happens when Hiroko Fujita and Fran Stallings work together. This collection of unique Japanese folktales is no exception, giving readers access to a wealth of stories in danger of disappearing."

Fran also presented keynotes and workshops at a two day conference in Hong Kong plus a week

of school visits Oct 25-Nov 2.

On Halloween night **Tony Hardman** told stories as part of "Nightmare at the Museum" program at the No Man's Land Museum in Goodwell. He told two different stories, depending on the age of his audience at the time. For younger attendees he told a version of "Black Bubble Gum" and for older audiences a scarier story, "The Blood of the Banshee."

Tony has also been active in the Guymon Community Theatre where he portrayed Kris Kringle in a stage adaptation of *Miracle on 34th Street*. For this role he had to grow a beard and during the performances and dress rehearsals he had to dye his hair and beard white each night. In spite of having to buy extra shampoo to wash it out each night, he enjoyed the role and made many new friends, children and adults alike.

The Tallgrass Tellers hosted "Tellabration! A Celebration of Family Stories" Friday evening November 21, in a new venue: Theater Bartlesville. A program of traditional and modern stories—with a few songs thrown in—touched on family feasts and gatherings, confusion and discoveries, hilarity and gratitude. The Tallgrass Tellers include Nikki Austin (Pawhuska), Connie Neil Fisher (Sand Springs), Dianne Cloutier, Deborah Langley, Nancy Matthews, and Fran Stallings of Bartlesville.

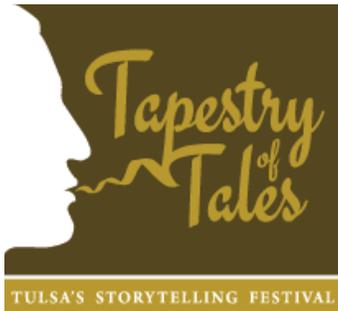


Tony Hardman spooks a young audience at No Man's Land Museum in Goodwell.



Bartlesville Tellabration included a story woven by Connie Fisher.

Weems



# 2nd Annual Tulsa Storytelling Festival

Tulsa's Storytelling Festival, Tapestry of Tales, returns to Boston Avenue United Methodist Church on April 17 &

18, 2015 at 7:30 pm.

This iconic venue in the heart of downtown Tulsa will feature some of the best national tellers in America. **Liz Weir**, world renowned Irish storyteller, from Northern Ireland - **Reggie and Kim Harris**, musicians and storytellers - **Motoko**, a Japanese teller - and **Kevin Kling**, a playwright and storyteller - all will be here for two evening olios.

A Family Day Event will be held on April 18 at 2 p.m.



**Liz Weir**

**Liz Weir** is a storyteller and writer from Northern Ireland, with an international reputation. Formerly a children's librarian for the city of Belfast, she now travels the world telling stories to adults and children.

Liz Weir was the first winner of the International Storybridge Award from the National Storytelling Network.

Consummate musicians and



**Reggie and Kim Harris**

storytellers, **Kim and Reggie Harris** have entertained audiences at venues such as The Kennedy Center and The Smithsonian Institute. They are a "mini" festival of diversity as they combine ear candy harmonies and sparkling wit.

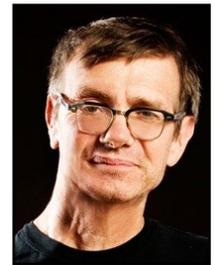


**Motoko**

A Parents' Choice Award winner, **Motoko** has shared her blend of traditional Asian tales, stories of her Osaka childhood and of her life as an immigrant, and original mime vignettes across the U.S. since

1993. She conducts classroom workshops on Japanese culture, creative writing, and origami geometry.

**Kevin Kling**, from Minneapolis, is a well-known playwright and storyteller, and his commentaries can be heard on NPR's All Things Considered. His storytelling stage shows deliver hilarious and often tender stories. The National Endowment for the Arts has recognized Kling's artistry.



**Kevin Kling**

For more information, including registration, schedule and teller's bios visit [www.tulsastorytellingfestival.com](http://www.tulsastorytellingfestival.com). You can also find us on facebook.

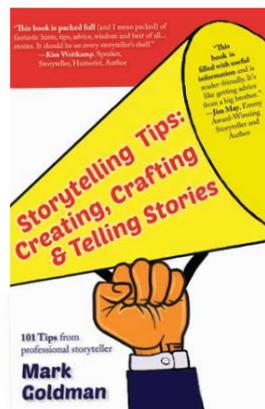
## So many books

**Storytelling Tips: Creating, Crafting & Telling Stories. 101 tips from professional storyteller Mark Goldman. Parkhurst Brothers Publishers 2014. ISBN978-62491-050-0.**

Because each of Goldman's 1-2 page tips is as appealing as a crunchy tortilla chip, it's tempting to munch through a lot of them at one sitting! But to get the real good of his experienced advice, try to take them just one or two at a time and really digest them, because they pack a lot of nutrition.

Compiled from two years' worth of weekly online newsletters, these tips reflect wisdom gleaned from colleagues' workshops as well as Goldman's own work as a teller, teacher, and coach. He has sorted them into General advice, Creating stories, Crafting stories, and the Telling process itself. A beginning teller will find several conferences' worth

of good information here! A veteran teller will probably find some novel gems too, as well as being reminded of good ideas that should be tried again.



Goldman has a knack for coloring each tip with concrete, specific examples that make his point better than a generalized description--and prove that he knows the value of a good story.

This book is highly recommended for tellers at all levels of experience.

--reviewed by Fran Stallings.

*Greg Rodgers*

# Remembering one of our own

I was traveling on a business trip to Oklahoma City when I received a phone call telling me that my good friend and fellow storyteller, Greg Rodgers had passed away suddenly. Greg was at his peak, as both a storyteller and as a writer and he was taken from us far too soon.

I met Greg eight years ago at the first Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival in Seminole. I was introduced to him and the two of us hit it off. Since then my storytelling world has been inevitably linked with him. He was at every Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival, not to mention other festivals such as Winter Tales and later the Oklahoma City Storytelling Festival. The two of us performed together at a Tellabration in Watonga and we attended several retreats together. I honestly cannot think of storytelling in Oklahoma without having some memory of Greg. Not only did we share the stage in many events, but we had several friendly chats on almost every topic two storytellers could discuss. I can honestly say I looked forward to each of these events because I knew he would be there to hang out with and I am going to miss him greatly.

There are three things I think of when I think of Greg. First, of course, is his storytelling ability. In many Facebook posts I saw Greg listed as a Choctaw Storyteller, but to me Greg was a great storyteller who happened to be Choctaw. I heard Greg tell many Choctaw stories and consider my own perspective of storytelling and humanity greatly enhanced because he shared those rich stories of his heritage. My favorite one was of two lovers, the male protagonist a flute player, and I remember sitting mesmerized as he told the story and hauntingly played the flute as part of it. But I also remember Greg telling Oklahoma ghost stories, some of which were from his two spooky tales books that he had written. I also heard him tell hilarious personal stories that I still chuckle at just thinking of them.

Secondly, I remember is his generosity. I proudly own two autographed copies of his ghost story books that he personally gave to me. I met him once for a Territory Tellers board meeting and when it finished he said to me, "I have something for you." I followed him out to his truck and he handed me two copies of his first book. I asked him why two. He told me that one was for the library I worked at and that the other one was for me. He did the same thing with his second one. Greg also shared his time and his experience with everyone.

But the main thing I remember about Greg is his love for life. He had a great sense of humor and a certain spark of mischief in him. I remember when we were at the retreat held at the Lake Murray Lodge. Many of us were telling stories as part of an evening for the other lodge residents and members of the community. We told in their main room and there was a big fish tank that had several fish swimming in it. As I told my story I saw Greg smiling at me and afterwards I asked him why. He told me that one of the fish would swim over so it looked like he was just above my head and stared straight out to the audience and seemed to be mesmerized by my story. According to him, the fish seemed to turn every time I made a gesture and he told me it was all he could do to keep from laughing. He even showed me which fish it was. Now I know that Greg was playing one of his practical jokes on me, but to this day I refuse to perform in front of a fish tank and cannot look at one without seeing his mischievous grin.

Greg was a great storyteller, writer, and Native American flutist. He was a great friend and the storytelling world has definitely lost one of its brightest stars. I know he is in a better world and I know that that world is greatly enriched because he is now in it. I just wish we could have kept him a little longer.

*Tony Hardman*





March 12-15, 2015 • City of Denton Civic Center

# 30th Anniversary Texas Storytelling Festival

Four outstanding tellers will be featured at this year's Tejas Festival.

A favorite with fans across the United States, including the National Storytelling Festival and International Storytelling Center, **Elizabeth Ellis** shares stories overflowing with hilarity as well as poignant honesty. A recipient of both the Lifetime Achievement Award and Circle of Excellence Award from the National Storytelling Network, Elizabeth delivers Appalachian-style down-home wisdom with a voice that touches the heart and tickles



**Elizabeth Ellis**

the funny bone.

Travel from Mt. Olympus in ancient Greece to the post-modern world of the Baby Boomers as **Barbara McBride-Smith** narrates the lives of shady ladies and bad boys of the Bible, navigates literature with the heart and soul of a librarian, and identifies with both country music and rock'n'roll. With a Texas-born cheerleader's perspective, this frequent headliner at the National Storytelling Festival offers a serving of sweet truth with a side of grit.



**Barbara McBride-Smith**

An enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation raised in a rich storytelling tradition, **Gayle Ross** has



**Gayle Ross**

and John Trudell.

Seasoning his personal and family stories with a pinch of pathos and a large helping of humor, **James Ford** has delighted storytelling audiences for over 25 years. Featured on Fox TV's "Texas Ghost Stories" and "Son of Texas Ghost Stories," James has mesmerized audiences at the Texas Storytelling Festival, National Storytelling Conference, the National Storytelling Festival's Exchange Place, and Haunting in the Hills in Big South Fork National Park



**James Ford**

The Texas Storytelling Festival offers three free concerts open to the public: Mostly Ghostly 7 pm Thursday, March 12, a Fringe Concert 3:15 pm Saturday, March 14, and Sacred Tales 9:30 am Sunday, March 15

More information, including registration, can be found at <http://www.tejasstorytelling.com/festival/>

## Notable dates

.....more details can be found on our website [www.territorytellers.org](http://www.territorytellers.org)

**Feb. 11** ..... 8:00 p.m.

**Ok, So Tulsa Story Slam**, Enso Bar, 104 S. Detroit  
The theme of this monthly story slam is Love and Lust.

**Feb. 14** ..... 6:30, doors open; 7:00 p.m. dinner

**Food, Romance, Humor and Dinner**, L'Chaim Community Center, Dewey OK  
An evening with dinner from gourmet cooks of Ahava Cafe, music by Corky Davis and his cowboy swing band and stories by Tallgrass Tellers, including Fran Stallings. Reservations can be made by calling 918-440-2393. \$24 per ticket.

**Mar. 11** ..... 1:00 p.m.

**Let's Talk About It: Myth and Literature**, Thomas-Wilhite Memorial Library, Perkins  
This Oklahoma Humanities Council event features Dr. Harbour Winn discussing the power of myth and storytelling.

**Mar. 12-15**

**Tejas Storytelling Festival**, Denton Civic Center; Denton, TX

**Mar. 21** ..... 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.,

**Poem Life**, VFW Hall, Locust Grove  
This one-woman show from TT webmaster/liaison Shaun Perkins focuses on poetry but includes a lot of storytelling that ties together the poetry and activities.

**Mar. 28** ..... 1:00 pm

**Territory Tellers Board Meeting**, SNU  
All members are welcome to attend any TT board meeting

**Apr. 4-5**

**Creative Expression Workshop**, Fort Sill  
This workshop, led by Comanche scholar Jimmy Arterberry, will explore Oklahoma history and give participants the opportunity to make a creative piece (including a story) based on that exploration. Enrollment is limited.

**Apr. 17-18**

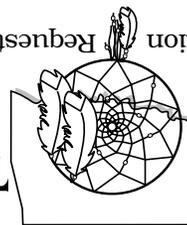
**Tapestry of Tales**: Tulsa's Storytelling Festival, Boston Avenue United Methodist Church

**June and July, Wednesdays**

**Okietales**, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City  
Every Wednesday in June and July, from 10:30-11:30, storytelling for kids will be presented. Stories will focus on Oklahoma history and the program is specially designed by 5-9 year-olds. \$2 per child, which includes museum admission.

**June 9**

**Enid Chautauqua: Dust Bowl**, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid  
This event features storytelling representatives as local figures and as Woody Guthrie, Ernie Pyle and John Steinbeck.



**T**erritory 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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 Country \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Web site (optional) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Are you a storyteller? \_\_\_\_\_ a story listener? \_\_\_\_\_

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