

Journal of Tar Heel Tellers



Connie Regan Blake



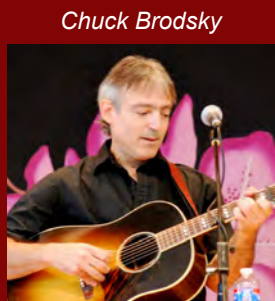
Lloyd Arneach



Kathy Gordon



Elizabeth Hardy



Chuck Brodsky



Kim Weitkamp



Michael Reno Harrell

Toe River Festival by Sherry Lovett

Those in the story business know that small festivals have been going by the wayside, but in Bakersville, we have managed to keep the Toe River Storytelling Festival on its feet. And what a year this was! We had Connie Regan Blake, Michael Reno Harrell, Kim Weitkamp, Lloyd Arneach, and Chuck Brodsky mesmerizing the audience with story and song, humor and heart. We also had storytellers Charlie St. Clair, Kathy Gordon, Sandra Gudger, Vixi Jil Glenn, and Elizabeth Hardy telling at the festival for the first time. They each told a story and then introduced one of the National tellers. This was just one of the new things we tried this year, and what a great job they did!

This was the third year the festival has been held in Bakersville after losing the sponsorship of Spruce Pine. I couldn't bear the thought of this sweet festival ending, and the community losing the opportunity to experience this oldest of art forms, so I said to Kay Goins, who had been responsible for the festival before she retired from the town of Spruce Pine, "Let's keep this thing going. What can we do?" Kay thought Bakersville would be a good location, and so we contacted Dr. Dan Barron, who lives there, is the director of the Avery-Mitchell-Yancey Library system, and loves stories, to see if he would be interested in helping us with this endeavor. He was, so the three of us began this new chapter for this small festival.

After gathering a few people to keep it going and finding a new location the next biggest obstacle was and still is the money to support it. Almost against all odds we pulled it off the first year in Bakersville thanks to some wonderful grants and private donations. Attendance was only fair, partly, I would guess, because of being in a new location and because we had limited money for advertising. The next year we had epic rain that flooded the park where we were to hold it, and we had to make an emergency move to Bowman Middle School's auditorium. Our attendance was low that year, due partly to all the rain, and to folks having a hard time finding us after our emergency move, and, again, limited advertising dollars.

(Continued on page 4)



Sherry Lovett



Charlie St. Clair



Vixi Jil Glenn



Sandra Gudger

JOURNAL OF TAR HEEL TELLERS

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Mission of the North Carolina Storytelling Guild:

- ☺ to celebrate the various cultures of NC,
- ☺ to promote excellence in oral tradition,
- ☺ to foster an appreciation and acceptance of the art of storytelling,
- ☺ to affirm the value of story and the importance of story listening,
- ☺ to nourish the development of emerging and established artists.

Correspondence should be addressed to the editor and will be considered available for publication, unless noted, "not for publication." The editor reserves the right to revise contributed articles for style and length.

Fall Cast of Characters

Sylvia Payne - Editor

Contributors, Sarah Larson, Sherry Lovett,
Tim Lowry, Ray Mendenhall, Marva Moss, Jan
Schmidt, Brian Sturm and Donna Washington



*Here's what's happening with your
storytelling friends around the state!*

Congratulations to **Marva Moss**, who participated in the Brunswick County NC Senior Games this year. She received a first place ribbon for her poem in the literacy category . . . **Cynthia Brown** has finished her 3rd book, *Ghosts & Pirates*, which is scheduled to be released late this fall from Schiffer Publishing . . . Cane Hollow Press is putting together a collection of **Joan Leotta's** short stories, a multi-genre grouping. The book should be released in paper in October . . . **Linda Goodman** recently completed an exciting and fulfilling week as Teller-in-Residence in Jonesborough, TN at the International Storytelling Center. Congratulations Linda . . . Congratulations to our own **Alan Hoal** and **Faye Fulton** who were selected as two of six tellers to participate at the National Storytelling Festival's *Story Slam!* in Jonesborough, Tennessee in October.

"The destiny of the world is determined less by the battles that are lost and won than by the stories it loves and believes in."

— Harold Goddard from *The Meaning of Shakespeare*

Crafting a Story

from the editor's desk

Fall has arrived to alleviate a somewhat hot and humid summer. I, myself, appreciate the change of seasons here in the south. Fall should soon overflow with dazzling color, and already I perceive an aroma of freshness in the air. This is a time not only to reflect on summer happenings, but to concentrate on upcoming plans, attend festivals, make observations, work on the crafting of new stories and enjoy life.

In this issue Brian Sturm presents an eye-catching article, "Emotion Motions," talking about how to communicate emotions in a story and Donna Washington gives her views, "Without a Net," on taking risks as a storyteller. Sherry Lovett talks about managing the Toe River Storytelling Festival and this year's changes.

Ray Mendenhall discusses Biblical storytelling, while Marva Moss presents a well crafted story and Jan Schmidt has an article about the Festival of Carolina that takes place this October in Laurinburg.

In addition there are other interesting articles about storytelling events and photos are included from recent events. Be certain to read our President, Sandra Gudger's article, and take note of upcoming storytelling events on page 13 of this issue.

Last, but not least, note the plug for NCSG's upcoming Winter Workshop, led by Kim Weitkamp, happening the end of January 2015. Terry Rollins and Dianne Hackworth do a grand job in organizing this annual event!

Submit articles for JTHT Spring 2015 issue to:
Sylvia Payne, JTHT Editor, 1621 Nathaniel Street, Newton, NC
28658. E-mail: sylpayne@bellsouth.net
Deadline for Spring Issue: March 15, 2015.



President's Message

Dear Members,

Thank you for the confidence you have placed in me to be president of our guild for 2014-2015. Sherry Lovett and the Board have moved us forward in so many ways this past year, and I am very appreciative. I look forward to working with the Board this coming year: Janice Davin (President-Elect); Alan Hoal (Secretary/Historian); Paul Stutts (Treasurer); Sylvia Payne (Journal and Membership Director); Ann Mendenhall (Coastal Representative); Doyle Pace (Northern Mountains Representative); Vixi Jil Glenn (Southern Mountains

Representative); Joel Richards. (Piedmont Triad Representative); Henry Vogel (Piedmont Triangle Representative); Catherine MacKenzie (Southern Piedmont Representative). Sherry will remain on the Board as President Ex-Officio.

As you know, for the past eight years we enjoyed a partnership with Transylvania County Library and Friends of the Library in producing a fall festival. However, due to changes in staff and the availability of the library, it has become necessary to find another venue. The Board decided there was not enough time to produce a festival this year but that we should begin planning one for 2015. It was also decided that it be more centrally located, specifically in the Greensboro area. Thanks to Jim Payne and Stephen Bartlett who volunteered to personally visit prospective venues.

The Board then chose to partner with the Greensboro Arts Council and we hope that it will continue for many years. Thanks to Lona Bartlett who has agreed to chair the festival committee. However, it will take all of us to make the festival a success. We are practically having to start anew and we have a lot of work ahead of us. Lona will be letting us know what needs to be done and I hope you will volunteer as these needs arise. And, it's not too soon to start telling your friends about our festival.

If you have anything you would like the Board to consider, please contact your representative. I will also be glad to present your ideas and suggestions.

Thank you for being a member of NCSG and keeping storytelling alive.

Sandra Gudger

Email: gudgers@charter.net

Images Prompt Our Imagination by Sylvia Payne, Editor

Recently I was browsing through a book entitled *Imaginative Writing* by Janet Burroway. I was intrigued by a chapter title, *Image*, and the photograph on the title page. Accompanying the photo was this quote by author and literary journalist Joan Didion: "When I talk about pictures in my mind I am talking quite specifically, about images that shimmer round the edges...You just lie low and let them develop."

Burroway uses this photo with Didion's quote to challenge the reader's imagination. She asks them to study the photo and apply the five senses as they study it. We've all heard the old adage, "a picture is worth a thousand words." Here is one of my own photos in case you're game to try this.

I've attended many engaging workshops where instructors emphasized the importance of



engaging the five senses in a story. Using *feel, hear, smell, taste* and *touch*, draws your listener into the story.

I learned to apply these senses years ago, but sometimes wonder...do

I always remember to do it? I often find I'm concentrating on other areas of my story and may not pay close attention to the senses: *feel, hear, smell, taste* and *touch*. What did I leave out that hindered the story? What should I have left out? Did I do the story justice? How could I have made the story better by adding more images, or did I apply too many? When I stop asking myself these questions have I become complacent? On and on the questions spin through my mind.

If you prefer a 'real' image, go outside and take a walk. When you return, jot down how many of your senses were affected by your walk. Happy imaging!

The 9th Annual Storytelling Festival Of Carolina

Jan Schmidt

The Storytelling & Arts Center of the Southeast will host the 9th Annual Storytelling Festival of Carolina on October 17-19, 2014. The three-day event features performances by world-class, award-winning storytellers. Headliners at this year's Storytelling Festival of Carolina are Bil Lepp, Kim Weitkamp, Tyris D. Jones and Mitch Capel. With the new autumn time slot for the festival, ghostly tales both humorous and spooky, will be interjected into the weekend. Stories and poems of Edgar Allan Poe will also be part of the ambiance of the weekend.

Held at the John Blue Complex in Laurinburg, the festival includes multiple performances in a huge tent to assure you'll hear the best storytelling this side of Garrison Keillor. Festival admission passes range from \$10 to \$35. Single day and weekend tickets are available - as are military, senior and family packages. Advanced sales are also available and advised for



expedited registration, and for the workshops, the Olio and the Ghostly Gala, which have limited availability.

Jan Schmidt, executive director of the Storytelling and Arts Center, explains that authentic storytelling is a performance genre and an artistic medium crafted by speech, imagery, stage presence, and an integral relationship with audience members. "Our featured performers are absolutely the best when it comes to the talent, craft, and skill involved with storytelling. They all have a natural charisma that reaches into the audience with honesty,

poignancy, and down-to-earth appreciation for laughter and wit," states Schmidt.

Other festival activities include a Family Storytelling Olio, or performance sampler on Friday evening; a Saturday night Ghostly Gala at the Storytelling and Arts Center in Laurinburg; and a program of faith and spiritual stories on Sunday morning.

Also included are autograph sessions, workshops, open stage time slots for aspiring and experienced storytellers, tours of the John Blue House, a children's play center, and craft and food vendors.

For more information and registration contact the Storytelling and Arts Center of the Southeast at 131 S. Main Street in Laurinburg, at 910-277-3599 or 910-506-2103, and online at <http://www.sfoc.info/>

Jan Schmidt is Executive Director of the Storytelling Center of the Southeast. You may contact her at director@storyartscenter.org.

(Toe River...continued from front page)

That brings us to year number three. For year number three we pulled some extra people onto our board for fresh ideas. Number one was, let go of the tent. It was a huge expense and drain on our limited budget, and we found that Bowman Middle School's auditorium was a great place to hold the festival. (A silver lining to last year's emergency move.) Next, we decided to focus on our local talent, which is substantial. We mixed up the order we normally follow by having an opening teller for each National Teller. This provided listeners with a wide variety of stories and styles. To improve our advertising, to promote all of the wonderful tellers we had for this festival, we hit social media hard

using Facebook and several email list serves. The tellers also did a great job of promoting the event through their Facebook pages and newsletters. We also used as many free sources of advertisement as possible such as listing the event on community calendars and doing a local radio interview. The result was that we did have more people attend this year.

The festival came to a conclusion amidst much applause and anticipation for next year. The board had managed to pull off another year, the best one yet since the big move to Bakersville, thanks to the fresh input of Michael and Joan Harrell, Wallace Shealy, Pete Koschnick, and Heather Watrous on the board. And to the many volunteers without whom this endeavor wouldn't be possible.

No sooner had we finished the 2014 festival, than we started thinking about 2015. Small town storytelling festivals are an important part of keeping this ancient art form alive and accessible to people. People long to hear stories, and it doesn't matter if they are under a big tent or in a school auditorium. Get the word out and they will come. We have learned a lot in the transition of this festival over the last three years, and we are hopeful that the year 2015 will be even better as we continue to learn and improve through the collaboration of storytellers and story lovers.

Sherry Lovett is NCSG's President Ex-Officio. She serves on the board of the Toe River Storytelling Festival. You may contact her at thelovetts3@gmail.com.

Sounds and Sights of Night by Marva Moss

One chilly, wintry night on the second floor of the family house, it seemed almost too quiet, and felt a little scary. One's imagination could work overtime, especially when everyone in the house was asleep. Family members had warmed themselves at a heater in the corner of the kitchen. After warming, they quickly dashed off to settle in their beds beneath blankets and handmade quilts of beautiful patterns.

Louise, a seven-year-old - one of four children in the household - lay snuggled next to her aunt. But for her nightcap, Aunt Emma was barely visible in the bed. Her aunt's room was on the second floor. Warmth from the wood-heater downstairs continued to send up a little heat - just a breath of warm air.

Alert to the sounds around her, Louise found it hard to fall asleep. Pieces of wood could be heard settling in the heater downstairs. A squeak from a bedroom door was caused by a thirsty family member getting a sip of water. Thoughts of the day ran through her head.

Awaiting sleep to bring the night to a close, from the outside, the little girl's ears caught sound of an owl. Sounds made by the owl, broke the silence of the world outside. From the direction of that sound, she knew an owl was somewhere in the nearby grove of trees clustered a few yards from the house. She tried to imagine what it would be like, to be able to see an owl that night.

There had been talk about owls from the grownups - the different sizes of owls, their interesting ways and food habits. Yet, no one had ever really seen an owl up close. Louise was curious. She wanted to see a real owl. Again, and

again, she listened to its hoots. They were loud and clear. And, at times, that owl seemed to be just outside the window.

Auntie was sound asleep. "How could she not hear this owl too?" Louise wondered. Determined to be the first in the family to see an owl, she crawled from her warm place in bed, down to the foot of it. She tunneled through

**- One's imagination
could work overtime,
especially when
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was asleep. -**

heavy quilts and blankets, before her feet finally touched the floor. In her sock-feet, she tiptoed over to the window. There, behind the curtains, between the window shade and the windowpane, she stood peering out into the night hoping to see the creature, which was making those wonderful sounds. At one corner of the house, on this particular night, the nearby patch of woods, stood cold and deserted. Her ears followed the sounds; her eyes followed the path of her ears. Then, in a moment of quietness, while standing at the window, her attention left the thought of seeing an owl.

She stared out into a world of moon-lit beauty. Frost covered the yard, the nearby corn field with its fallen stalks, and the bare branches of trees. Under the light of a big silvery moon, everything looked as if it had been covered with snow. Never, had she dreamed there could be such a sight, such a sight of beauty in the night. There she stood gazing from the window, pigtails touching her shoulders, and her thoughts wrapped up in the

beauty of the night.

Louise forgot her wish to see an owl, that is - until she heard the next round of hoots flowing through the air. Again, straining, training her ears, and her eyes in the direction of the sounds, the little girl searched for the creature. She knew the owl was nearby; perhaps it was just too small to be seen from the window.

In a short time, the small child finally grew tired of waiting for more hoots, and tired of looking for the mystery bird. The owl and the night had become silent. She climbed up, and rolled over Aunt Emma - sliding back into her warm, snuggly spot in the bed.

Just as Louise began to fall asleep, from the outside there came a few more hoots from her invisible friend.

Marva Moss is a story-weaver, educator and creative writer. She won first place this year during the Brunswick County Senior Games for her poem in the literacy category. She may be contacted at owlcottage@atmc.net.



Winter Workshop with Kim Weitkamp

January 30—February 1, 2015
The Assembly at Fort Caswell

Marketing the Intangible

We, as story artists, do not make a physically touchable product that can be presented, looked at and purchased, and yet, we are expected to sell what we do. If we don't sell it, how do we get work? How do we find places to tell? How

(Continued on page 9)



emotion motions

BY BRIAN STURM

As storytellers, we're in the business of communicating emotions! While we use characters and plot as the vehicle, and setting as the backdrop, our purpose is to get our audiences feeling and sharing the emotions our characters experience or our stories evoke. How do we do that? As conversationalists, we often take for granted our knowledge of emotional communication...we just do it; our facial expressions and body language naturally conform to our feelings. But as storytellers, we must invest conscious attention in ensuring that we communicate at maximum efficiency and effectiveness. What do our bodies and voices do when we need to express certain emotions?

Try this little exercise: choose an emotion, let's say "wonder." Now think of a story or a moment that would evoke that emotion for you (a gorgeous sunset? an iridescent beetle? a new present? a new friend?) How do your body and face react? What do you DO in order to express wonder? Now say something and try to capture "wonder" in your voice....how do you change your normal, modal, speaking voice to evoke this emotion?

It seems to me that there are at least four, interrelated approaches to this question, and there are probably more, but this will get us started

thinking about the issue: 1) proxemics (our use of space), 2) kinesics (our use of body language), 3) breath (inhalation, exhalation), and 4) vocal effects (intonation or variations in spoken pitch; pacing or the speed of delivery; style of speech, etc.).

Proxemics explores "the role played in communication by the degree of physical distance between speakers." We have three, basic possibilities when it comes to physical distance: a baseline, deviations toward the listener, and deviations away from the listener. What emotional impact do these have? Personal space is culturally and individually determined. Middle Eastern and Latino speakers tend to stand closer to each other when conversing than do European or American speakers, but these generalizations are subject to individual preferences, the level of intimacy between the speakers, the context, and myriad other factors. Often in storytelling, the baseline distance is determined by the setting (on a stage, in a chair in the library, etc.), but children will often encroach on this initial distance, inching closer and closer until they are nearly (or literally) in our laps. Decreasing the distance between speakers (i.e., moving toward your listeners) can augment the intimacy and rapport of the storytelling, but it can also be perceived as threatening, particularly if it encroaches on the personal space boundary of your listener, so we cannot say that moving forward accomplishes only one thing.

Let's return to our emotion of "wonder." If you want to express the emotion of opening a present and seeing a marvelous object inside, you might step forward to increase the

anticipation, the complicit sharing of the experience; however, to communicate the wonder of the sunset, you might need to step back from the audience, showing the overwhelming grandeur of the experience. "Wonder," then, can be expressed both by moving toward the audience and by moving away.

Kinesics is "the study of meaningful gestures and other body movements in communication." While there are numerous, lengthy tomes written on the minutiae of gestures and their meanings, and the variety of possibilities for creating meaning from combinations of body movements is incalculable, let me offer a few questions to consider when thinking about "emotion motions."

Body:

1. Does my body move up for this emotion (i.e., stand taller), or does it move down (i.e., hunch or squat)?
2. Does my body open (i.e., shoulders back, chin up, arms wide) or close (arms crossed, chin down, shoulders forward or slumped)?
3. Does my body tense or relax during this emotion?
4. Do I lean forward or lean back?
5. Do I move quickly or slowly?

Face:

1. Is my face open (i.e., eyes wide, eyebrows up, mouth open) or closed (eyes squinted, brows furrowed, mouth tight)?
2. Is my jaw tense or relaxed?
3. Which muscles in my face do I use to create this emotion,

(Continued on page 7)

The Storyteller's Book Shelf by Tim Lowry

There are books that I read and give to a friend. There are books that I read and then sell in a yard sale. There are books that I read and then throw into the trash. And then there are books that I read over and over and over. Here are five recommendations. Enjoy!

The Book of God by Walter Wangerin – This is the flow through narrative of the Bible presented as a novel. Wangerin explores the psychological depth of biblical characters. If I am called upon to tell a bible story at church, especially if I am telling to people who have heard the story before, I always start with this book.

The Young Hans Christian

(Emotion Motions continued from page 6)
and how does changing one muscle slightly alter the effect?

4. Do I need an exaggerated facial expression or is subtle more appropriate?

Breath is also important for examining emotions, as we inhale for some and exhale for others. Take our example of “wonder,” for instance. In the first instance listed above (opening a present) we may inhale our wonder to show anticipation and surprise, while the sunset might evoke an exhaled gasp of wonder tinged with awe. As you examine the emotion you want to convey, consider whether inhaling or exhaling (or neither) is most appropriate.

Vocal effects are also useful for portraying emotions. Increasing the speed with which we utter a phrase can increase intensity or urgency, while slowing down lets the listener relax. Staccato delivery accomplishes similar objectives to increased speed, while a more rhythmic, fluid, mellifluous style can be more entraining. Consider the following questions when thinking about your voice for any chosen emotion:

1. Should I speed up or slow down for this emotion? Excitement

Anderson by Karen Hesse – Short chapters (sometimes only a page) covering episodes from the famous fairytale author's life that he later turned into some of his most popular works. These stories behind the stories will give you inspiration for turning your own experiences into tellable tales.

The Grass Harp by Truman Capote – The short story “Jug of Silver” included in this collection is one of the best examples of a distinctive, clear, and authentic voice as you will ever read. It is a wonderful model for crafting personal narrative.

Classical Music by Phil G. Goulding – This “guide to the fifty

and tension are often performed more quickly, for example.

2. Does this emotion require fluidity or fractured style? Just as visual artists use jagged or angular lines to indicate stress and unease, vocal artists use an “angular” speaking style to accomplish similar ends.
3. What type of phonation is best: breathy voice (open, mostly relaxed vocal cords), modal voice (maximum vibration), creaky voice (somewhat restricted airstream), or harsh (tense vocal cords)

Remember, we can also use our bodies to express conflicting emotions. For example, a performer with tears running down her face, eyes wide, and lower lip trembling would make us believe she is deeply sad, and we might expect her body to slump and close with the weight of this sadness, but if her body is stiff and ramrod straight, we might internalize how she doesn't want to succumb to this sadness, how desperately she is fighting it. So all of our motions must work to create the very specific effect we want, but they

<http://www.do2learn.com/games/facialexpressions/face.htm>

greatest composers and their 1,000 greatest works” is a terrific way to navigate the world of classical music. There's a reason Bugs Bunny cartoons used classical music. It is absolutely the best for telling stories!

Modoc by Ralph Helfer – Someone once said that every failure of storytelling is at the root a failure to love (love for the story, love for the audience). This is the biography of an elephant and a terrific illustration of unfailing love.

With a degree in theater, Tim Lowry became a teacher, later morphing into a full time storyteller. He will appear on stage at the National Festival this October. You may contact him at <http://www.storytellertimlowry.com/>.

needn't all be focused on the general emotion we want to portray; in this case the posture juxtaposes the face.

Finally, a word of caution! Deconstructing emotions is a useful academic endeavor, and it's useful for performers as well in rehearsal. The time for this depth thinking is not on the stage while performing, as it will be the kiss of death to your performance. A placard on my office door claims, “When you try to make a good first impression, that is the impression you make.” The same holds true for emotions; if you try too hard to evoke a particular emotion, your audience will see your effort and you will be neither convincing nor persuasive. So, play in rehearsal, use a mirror to explore the possibilities offered by the more than 650 muscles in the body and the 40+ muscles in the human face, or see the impact of changing minor facial muscles with an online game such as Do2Learn's facial expression app: (see bottom of page)

Brian Sturm is an Associate Professor at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. His focus is on storytelling, folklore, children's and young adults' literature, public library services, children and technology, and bibliotherapy. You may contact him at sturm@ils.unc.edu.

Without A Net by Donna Washington

Originally posted on Donna's Blog - Saturday, August 30, 2014 -
<http://donnawashingtonstoryteller.blogspot.com/2014/08/without-net.html>

There are risky things in life. Take for example base jumping. I'm not going to do any base jumping...ever. I'm what you call a straight up prude when it comes to the whole 'life and limb' thing. One of the common refrains said of me as a young teen was that I was 'levelheaded'.

Needless to say, when I told my father I was going to be a professional storyteller, he was taken aback.

"What is a storyteller?" He demanded, having just forked over a small fortune to Northwestern University.

When I started explaining what it was, he shook his head and held up his hand. "Stop." He sighed. "Just call when you need money."

Three years later he flew through O'Hare International Airport and called my apartment. He thought he'd surprise me and take me out to lunch. He called the apartment for three hours without reaching me. (For those who find this story confusing, I should point out that nobody had cell phones at that time.)

When I got home, my roommates told me to call my dad because he was freaking out. When I reached him at his hotel in D.C, he asked, "Where were you all day?" "I was working." He was silent for a moment, and then said, "What do you do again?"

If you would like a pictorial representation of what storytelling looks like. Tim Ereneta has put together a fabulous collection of images that show storytellers and storytelling. Check it out - (<http://storytellingpics.tumblr.com/>)

When I first started going to middle and high schools, I would freak out the principals. When I showed up at the school, they'd ask. "Where is your stuff?" "What do you mean?" "Don't you have props or scenery or an instrument or something?" "No."



"No?" "No. I'm just going to stand in front of the mic for forty-five minutes and talk." At that point they would smile, but behind their eyes, I could see them cursing the PTA with all of their might.

After the show I would get the inevitable question, "How did you do that?" I would look as innocent as possible and ask, "Do what?" "I've never seen them sit that still for anything. You had them in the palm of your hand!" "I'm a storyteller." I would explain. "That's what storytellers do."

I have had the occasional audience who I have trouble reaching over the years, and I get to experience one of those moments of 'introspection and growth'. Being on stage without a net can be scary, and sometimes I fall. I pick myself up, I brush myself off, and I go back to work...like anything else.

I strive to get better at my craft. I remind myself that even great performers can have off days, but that doesn't mean you don't keep striving for great. I have discovered that even when I think the show didn't go well I'm often the only one who noticed. Storytelling is a very forgiving occupation. I don't expect to get it right all of the time. Nobody is perfect. Well, except maybe Jay O'Callahan. He's pretty awesome.

Despite how effective and engaging

storytelling can be, there are still folks who find it risky to hire a storyteller. I attended an arts showcase last Thursday, and a pair of women who brought me into an elementary school last year stopped by my booth. "I've just got to tell you." One of them laughed. "We never had so many teachers compliment us on a program before as we did when you visited. They said that when you first came out and you didn't have any props or puppets or anything, they were nervous, but the second you started talking everything changed. They loved it, and the kids are still talking about it. We can't wait to have you back!"

There are many storytellers who could tell that story.

Twelve years ago, my husband and I decided to switch roles. He became a stay at home dad, and I went back out on the road to become the bread winner. Both of our fathers went a bit wild around the eyes. For starters, they are from a very patriarchal generation, and couldn't get their brains around me 'taking care' of my husband instead of the other way around. Besides, they told us, this is risky.

Well, everything is risky if you look at it from the right perspective.

Aside from the logistics of traveling and raising children, I rarely regret the decision to rejoin the work force. It has given my family not only stability, but flexibility. We've got retirement funds, savings, college funds, a house, two cars, and two kids getting ready to go off to college. Yes, I know, that sounds like a risky lifestyle, but we manage.

Last year I was driving my son to school. We were talking about his future as he prepares to choose a career.

I said to him, "In this economy, you have to have a flexible type of job. It needs to be one that can't be outsourced to another country for pennies on the dollar; it needs to be

(Continued on page 9)

NCSG Picnic

On a recent Saturday nearly 30 Guild members journeyed to Greensboro to partake of our first potluck picnic and relished in meeting with old friends as well as making new friends and acquaintances. The idea was suggested by Sherry Lovett at a Board meeting early this year. The Board thought it was a great idea, especially since we were unable to hold an annual storytelling event this year. The picnic plans were soon underway. We are hoping it may become an annual event.

It was an ideal day, just as if we had ordered the pleasant temperature and sunbeams. After visiting and enjoying a number of appetizing dishes, the group took pleasure in enjoying a broad assortment of stories. Those who shared a story were asked to make a donation toward the Guild Festival Fund. This is only the beginning to help raise money for NCSG's 2015 Festival. One hundred dollars was raised at the picnic. Thanks to all who attended and those who made contributions. - The Editor



Winter Workshop continued from page 5)

do we build interest in the art form? How can we make a living doing what we love?

In this workshop, we will look at the business of story, brick by brick, and see that it is really not that tough. We will discuss and learn about bookings, pricing, festivals, marketing, social media and more. We will learn how to stay relevant and creative while being true to our calling as storytellers.

Kim Weitkamp grew up as the middle child, who was allowed to roam free in the heart of Amish Country, where her imagination was ripened by a life lived outdoors. She survived numerous attempts, by adults, to cut and curb her rambunctious behavior. Kim is a humorist, storyteller, singer and songwriter, and she has a bounty of awards and recognitions to her credit. We are thrilled to have her lead our 16th Winter Workshop!

(Without a Net...Continued from page 8)

skilled enough so that your contribution is recognizable and desired. If you find that you have been booted out of a company or corporate structure, you need to be able to hang out a shingle on the turn of a dime and become either a small business, or a consultant to your industry."

My then seventeen year old son gave me a dramatic sigh. "That's easy for you to say, mom." He grumbled. "You and dad are lucky. You're a storyteller."

Yes, I am lucky. I'm a storyteller. We do it with words. We do it with imagination. We do it without a net.

Happy Telling!

Storyteller, Donna Washington, is a multiple award winning recording artist and author. A past NCSG President, she has been a professional storyteller for over twenty years. She may be contacted at gbot5@aol.com.

Storytellers Wild Week



Elizabeth Ellis



Sherry Lovett

Master storyteller, Elizabeth Ellis, gave her all to those of us attending her weeklong

workshop at Wildacres this past July. She was so gracious. Her teaching continued even after 'official workshop hours' ended. This caring lady continued giving until bedtime. It began again over breakfast the next morning.

She began with the laying of the foundation of a story. Next she had each class member picture the plot of his or her selected story

to develop. In order to understand our plot, she introduced us to the storyboard - though many participants have used them previously.

Leading toward



Tim Crouch & Dianne Hackworth

(Continued on page 12)



Judy Roumilat & Frankie Adkins



Sylvia Payne & Lona Bartlett

Tell Me the Stories of Jesus

by Ray Mendenhall. The Jolly Man

I was recently asked to lead a workshop on Storytelling in a religious context, so I have had cause to do a bit of research in Biblical storytelling. Since more than 90% of the Bible is in narrative form (poetry, proverbs, parables, hero tales and stories), it stands to reason that the Bible is ripe for telling.

As one looks at the development of the Bible as a tradition and as a book, one fact emerges. The Bible stories were first and foremost an oral tradition. For centuries, the stories were told and retold, handed down from generation to generation, long before they were ever written down. In other words, the tradition was preserved first in stories, stories that became the “memory” of the people. The three “R’s” of early Hebrew education were: Remember the stories. In the Hebrew tradition to “remember” something was to relive it in the telling. Next was to Recite the stories, to tell them in the midst of the people especially in the presence of the children. This is how the people knew who they were. Finally, you Repeated the process over and over again until the stories became part of the fabric of the people’s lives. The Old Testament was not really written down and codified until the Babylonian Exile. There was a fear that the tradition might be lost so it was written down, but it continued to be conveyed orally. The New Testament stories circulated for a hundred years before they were written down. As the eye-witnesses started dying off, it became necessary again to preserve the traditions. History however tells us that the majority of people of the day were illiterate, so the written text became a script for those who could read to tell the stories of Jesus.

Well enough history and background, the salient fact is that

the Bible is made up of stories to be essentially told rather than read. There are two schools of thought when it comes to Biblical storytelling. One school is represented by the Network of Biblical Storytellers (nbsint.org). This is an international organization that seeks to preserve the “telling of the Bible.” This group stresses the memorization of the actual Bible text and the recitation or telling of it word for word. You are to add Absolutely nothing to the story that is not in the Bible. How this approach differs from a lively reading of the Biblical text, which talented ministers do Sunday after Sunday, is lost on me. From my perspective, if you are going to follow the text words for word why “tell” it. In their defense, I will say that their presumption is that the “story” is preserved in the text.

The second school is the one I prescribe to and that is the shaping, forming and telling of Bible stories in the same way you shape and form and tell stories in general. The point of this kind of storytelling is to convey the “message” of the Bible without being tied to the literal text. This can be done without changing the facts of the literal story itself, but allows for a more dynamic style of telling. For example, I once told the story of the prodigal son by playing the three characters in the story. I used a baseball hat worn three different way to indicate each character and told various parts of the story from the perspective of the different characters. Sometimes, I take an idea and write a totally fictitious story to convey the Biblical concept. I have done “first person” stories as Bible characters, had the audience help me act out a story. In one Bible school setting, I worked with the youth of the church to develop creative retellings of familiar Bible stories and parables.

The story of David and Goliath went something like this. Goliath was a youth situated at the top of a tall ladder with a tarp draped around the ladder. Each day, Goliath would challenge the Israelites. Each day they would run out (the children run over to Goliath) take one look and run back (the children would run back). Finally David comes out and kills Goliath. Since Goliath could not fall down, he just slumped over. The General’s servant went out and “prodded” the corpse and declared, “He’s dead!” Everyone cheers. I have also told the story of the prodigal son (in a round about way) by telling the “story” of the prodigal older brother who gets mad, leaves the farm never to return, but at the news of the Father’s death. The older brother “sneaks” back to see what has happened and the two brothers are reconciled. My favorite line in the story is what the younger brother says to his older sibling... “Dad was like that you know, just when you thought you weren’t a son anymore, he makes you one again.” (which sums up the point of the story).

In conclusion, Biblical stories are a vast resource of material for telling and teaching the good news and important lessons of life. It can be done creatively, dynamically and successfully and besides that, it’s a lot of fun.

Jolly Man, Ray Mendenhall, is a pastor, storyteller and musician. He is a former NCSG President. You may contact him at rwmend@juno.com.

National Storytelling Network (NSN) <http://www.storynet.org/>

In case you aren’t aware, NCSG is an affiliate member of NSN. Each state has a ‘Liaison.’ Nancy Reeder is the Liaison for North Carolina. You may contact her at twhconnect@yahoo.com.

If you haven’t visited NSN’s website recently, why not check it out?

NCSG Retreat Weekend - Acting Tips for Storytellers by the Editor

The mountain road twisted and curved higher and higher toward the misty mountain top. Finally, I reached my destination. My favorite mountain spot - the Wildacres Retreat Center.

It was early May 2014, time for the NC Storytelling Guild Spring Retreat. Our retreat leader, Terri Ingalls, is a longstanding member of NCSG. Calling on her expertise as an actor, her topic was Acting Tips for Storytellers. She led us through an extraordinary weekend flowing with activities. Her polished style set the pace for us to explore many tricks that can be applied to storytelling. We worked with physical, mental and emotional energy that became real to each of us.

Some activities involved 'thinking on our feet' with impromptu exercises. We worked on timing, gestures and applying a variety of vocal tones.

I particularly enjoyed our exercise using vocal tones. Here's how it went. We each drew an identical statement from a cup being passed around. From a second cup each person drew from a selection of job titles or professions. We were given a few moments to read the statement silently and determine what type of voice we should use to project the character of the job or profession we had drawn.

For example a teacher or a priest



Retreat leader, Terri Ingalls

wouldn't voice words in the same manner as a prosecuting lawyer. I was aghast when my piece of paper said "Prosecuting Attorney." My mind said, "Oh no, I can't. How can I pull this off?" Finally it was my turn. I had no choice. I had to stand up and make a fool of myself.

As I read the statement in my "Attorney" voice, participants began to guess who I might be. It turned out

much better than I expected. The first person guessed close and the second person hit it right on target. It was amazing how well everyone portrayed the profession they drew. Terri had us all speaking as if we were pros.

We were challenged all weekend, laughing and learning from one another. We took turns standing before our informal, comfortable group, working through the exercises Terri presented to us.

I was ready for this type of workshop style. Each participant was alert and on guard. Between Friday evening and Sunday morning we covered topics such as breath control, enunciation, vocal work, dialect, microphone use, pacing, eye contact, physicality and gestures. We were constantly paying attention, moving about, giving feedback and taking our turn at creative exercises.

Thank you Terri!

Your workshop gave me new energy and enthusiasm for storytelling.

During the Retreat we were presented with the following quote by George Burns, "The main thing about acting is honesty. If you can fake that you've got it made."



Above Photo - L to R: Janice Davin, Dianne Hackworth, Terri Ingalls and Faye Fulton.



Seated L to R: Faye Fulton, Terri Ingalls and Dianne Hackworth. Standing L to R: Sandra Gudger, Sherry Lovett, Elena Dianna Miller, Sylvia Payne and Janice Davin.



Janice Davin

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH OUR STORYTELLERS

STORIES ON ASHEVILLE'S FRONT PORCH

Asheville, NC - The founder of Stories on Asheville's Front Porch, Sarah Larson, announced that after five years as its director she is delighted to be passing on the baton of Executive Director to David Joe Miller, who was unanimously elected by their Board of Directors and who began his term of office in August 2014.

Larson comments, "We are indeed fortunate to have Mr. Miller in Asheville and to work with him on the Board because of his many skills, years of experience and his passion for storytelling."

Miller has been a professional storyteller since 1989 and is the former staff storyteller for the National Storytelling Association in Jonesborough, TN. In 1994 he created the Jonesborough Storytellers' Guild. He and his wife, Robin, moved to Asheville from Atlanta in 2013. Miller has told stories to audiences of Disney, World Bank, Library of Congress and to former Vice President, Al Gore and family.

Board members for Stories on Asheville's Front Porch include Tom Bushar, David Castel, Jay Fields, Chuck Fink, Sarah Larson

and Michelle Rogers.

Stories on Asheville's Front Porch honors the tradition of storytelling here in the mountains, uses the five year old festival to enhance the downtown experience by selecting the Rhino Courtyard

at Pack Place as its venue and reaches out to the next generation of storytellers. "Pack Place and its administrator Tom Chalmers have been instrumental in our success," said Larson, "supplying access to a venue that can handle the performances rain or shine and at reduced rates. They have been a sponsor of the event for four of the five years and have stored props and sound equipment, facilitated a safe and clean environment for the performances and managed the set up and dismantling each week. We and the public are in their debt for their services."

Larson recalls the festival's beginnings when she approached members of Leadership Asheville Seniors 23, asking for guidance in realizing the vision of a free downtown storytelling festival where the storytellers are paid to perform in the city she loves.



After forming a steering committee, which drafted a vision and mission statement that continues to serve the festival's operations, the first Stories on Asheville's Front Porch was launched in 2009. LAS23 participants continue their support of the festival as charter members.

"I am overwhelmed by the response from the community both as an audience and as sponsors. Each year the festival celebrates a different focus and each year the focus results in community cohesiveness. Truly the closest distance between two people is a story," said Larson.

Having just completed its fifth season, "Kaleidoscope: Celebrating Diversity," Stories on Asheville's Front Porch continued with the production "Stories With a Twist" on August 21st in a coffee house setting at UNC Asheville's Reuter Center in the Manheimer Room. Michael Jeffy Stevens, Jazz pianist, accompanied the storytellers.

Larson is known for saying, "If you tell me a fact, I will learn; if you tell me a truth, I will believe, but if you tell me a story it will live in my heart forever."

Writer and storyteller, Sarah Larson, is the founder director of Stories on Asheville's Front Porch. She may be contacted at 828.450.5462.

WEEKEND STORYTELLING WORKSHOP WITH STORYTELLER TIM LOWRY

Summerville, SC - Storyteller Tim Lowry, Summerville resident and nationally known raconteur, is offering a two day workshop on a monthly basis. Story coaching sessions and information on marketing, business management, and program development will be complimented with four unique storytelling experiences. Participants will be Tim's guests for a Good Eats Trolley Tour, a Storytelling Matinee at the historic Timrod Library, a meeting of the Time Travelers History Club, and a private tour of Middleton Place Plantation.

Tim Lowry specializes in stories of the American people. He performed last year as a featured "New Voice" at the prestigious National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, TN. He returns to the national stage again this fall. His one-man show "Every Inch a

Gentleman: Stories from Charleston's Golden Age" has been seen by audiences from Florida to Connecticut. Tim is currently the resident storyteller at the historic Timrod Library in Summerville, SC.

The workshop is limited to six participants. For more information visit www.storytellertimlowry.com

NSN MEMBER GRANT RECIPIENT

Asheville, NC - The National Storytelling Network recently awarded grants to seven recipients across the US. Donna Marie Tood happens to be one of those fortunate seven. Her project will benefit a community of widows in the Asheville NC area in 2015. *A Widow's Tale* is a one-day, storytelling retreat to help grieving women rebuild their lives one story at a time.

'Courage is fear that has said its prayers.' - Dorothy Bernard

FIRST NOVEL PUBLISHED

Raleigh, NC - Henry Vogel has announced the publication of his first novel, *Scout's Honor: A Planetary Romance*, where the protagonist wrecks his starship's escape pod. He discovers he has been transported from the space age back to the steam age. The novel may be found at Amazon.com in either paperback or Kindle Edition.

(Storytellers...continued from page 9)

the week's end, Elizabeth instructed us on pulling the story together and sharing it aloud. Sandwiched between the plot and sharing aloud were ten all-encompassing layers of work. A few examples are developing conflict, point of view, characterization and sensory imagery.

Dianne Hackworth was the facilitator of this educational, yet fun workshop. I look forward to another great Wild Week in 2015! - The Editor



October 2014

October 2: Storytelling at Riverside Restaurant at Brownwood with Doyle Pace. Located at 7181 Railroad Grade Road, Todd, NC. 336.877.4847; <https://www.facebook.com/Riversiderestaurantatbrownwood>; questions contact ReVonda at 336.977.8275.

October 3-5: National Storytelling Festival. Featuring Carol Birch, Donald Davis, Bill Harley, The Healing Force, Bill Lepp, Tim Lowry, Kuniko Yamamoto and others. 116 W. Main St., Jonesborough, TN. <http://www.storytellingcenter.net/events/national-storytelling-festival/>.

October 9: Storytelling at Riverside Restaurant at Brownwood with Orville Hicks. 7181 Railroad Grade Road, Todd, NC. 336.877.4847; <https://www.facebook.com/Riversiderestaurantatbrownwood>; questions contact ReVonda at 336.977.8275.

October 10 - Hatterasity Festival, Molasses Creek will perform a two set concert on Friday evening at the festival. Time TBA (Friday), Hatteras Civic Center, Buxton, NC. Details at <http://www.hatterasitybluegrass.com>.

October 16: Storytelling at Riverside Restaurant at Brownwood with Charlotte Ross. 7181 Railroad Grade Road, Todd, NC. 336.877.4847; <https://www.facebook.com/Riversiderestaurantatbrownwood>; questions contact ReVonda at 336.977.8275.

October 17-19: Storytelling Festival of Carolina. Featuring Bill Lepp, Kim Weitkamp, Mitch Capel and Tyrus Jones. Friday night performance at the Storytelling Arts Center of the Southeast, 131 S. Main Street, Laurinburg, NC. Saturday and Sunday at the Historic John Blue House, 13040 X-Way Road, Laurinburg, NC. Contact: <http://www.sfoc.info/>, or call 910.277.3599.

October 18: 13th Annual Hagood Mill Storytelling Festival 10am - 4pm. With featured tellers: Linda Goodman, Cora Newcomb, and teller-in-residence Johnny Fowler. Also special music and stories by The James Brothers and Open Mic. Free admission. 138 Hagood Mill Road, Pickens, SC. More info at 864.898.5963.

October 18: Ghost Stories in the parlor

featuring Cynthia Moore Brown. 7pm, Blandwood Mansion, 447 Washington St., Greensboro, NC. 336.272.5003.

October 18: Local storytellers will perform at the **Horne Creek Historical Farm's annual Cornshucking**. The event is 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and there are also local crafts, food and music. The Horne Creek Farm is located at 308 Horne Creek Farm Road, Pinnacle, NC 27043. Call 336.325.2298 for information on the Cornshucking and ticket prices. Call Terri Ingalls at 336.351.3806 for information on the tellers.

October 19: The Feed and Seed Storytelling Series. Sunday, 3 pm. Feed and Seed, 3715 Hendersonville Rd., Fletcher, NC. Contact 828.484.9716 or 828.699.7114.

October 19-24: Starburst Storytelling Festival. Featuring storytellers: Tim Lowry, Adam Both, Geraldine Buckley, Andy Offutt Irwin and others. Anderson County Public Library, 300 N. McDuffie St, Anderson, SC. Contact Mary Beth Evans mevans@andersonlibrary.org or www.andersonlibrary.org.

October 23: Storytelling at Riverside Restaurant at Brownwood with Tammy Sanabria. Located at 7181 Railroad Grade Road, Todd, NC. 336.877.4847; <https://www.facebook.com/Riversiderestaurantatbrownwood>; questions contact ReVonda at 336.977.8275.

October 24: Ghost Stories in the parlor featuring Cynthia Moore Brown. 7pm, Blandwood Mansion, 447 Washington St., Greensboro, NC. 336.272.5003.

October 25: 35th Annual Ghost Stories in the Graveyard with storyteller Cynthia Brown - 2:00pm, Greensboro Historical Museum Graveyard, 120 Summit Ave., Greensboro, NC. Contact 336.373.2043.

October 25: Annual Ghost Party for Lydia featuring Cynthia Moore Brown. 5:30pm, Jamestown Public Library, Jamestown, NC. Contact 336.454.4815.

October 28-November 1: Storytelling Live! Teller-in-Residence, featuring Sheila Kay Adams. Tuesday through Saturday at 2pm. International Storytelling Center, 116 W. Main St., Jonesborough, TN. Go to <http://www.storytellingcenter.net/events/storytelling-live/> or contact 800.952.8392.

October 29-30: Stories of the American Revolution with Tim Lowry. Greenwood County Public Library, 600 S. Main St,

Greenwood, SC. Contact Prudence Taylor ptaylor@greenwoodcountylibrary.org.

October 30: Storytelling at Riverside Restaurant at Brownwood with Dianne Hackworth or ReVonda Crow. Located at 7181 Railroad Grade Road, Todd, NC. 336.877.4847; <https://www.facebook.com/Riversiderestaurantatbrownwood>; questions contact ReVonda at 336.977.8275.

November 2014

November 6: Concert with Molasses Creek. "Explorations in The ARTS" Series. 7:30pm (Thursday). Craven Community College, New Bern, NC. For details visit <http://cravencc.edu/ilc/performing-arts-series/>.

November 9: Mountain Spirit Coffeehouse Series, Molasses Creek performing at Unitarian Universalist Church. 7pm (Sunday). 1 Edwin Place, Asheville NC. One of the best listening rooms we have played at! Come on out! <http://uuasheville.org/mountain-spirit-coffeehouse/>.

November 22: Surry Storytellers will host Tellabration! (tm) on Saturday, at the Mount Airy Library at 7 p.m. The library is located at 145 Rockford Street, Mount Airy, NC 27030 (336.989.5708). This is a free event. For more information call Terri Ingalls at 336.351.3806.

November 23: Asheville Tellabration! Asheville Folk Art Center, Blue Ridge Parkway. Sunday before Thanksgiving. Sponsored by Asheville Storytelling Circle, Southern Highlands Craft Guild, and the National Storytelling Network. 828.664.1429 or 828.777.9177.

December 2014

December 10-11: Dickens' A Christmas Carol, with storyteller, Tim Lowry. Restaurant Circa 1886, 149 Wentworth St, Charleston, SC, www.circa1886.com.

December 13: The Feed and Seed Storytelling Series. Saturday, 3 pm, Feed and Seed, 3715 Hendersonville Rd., Fletcher, NC. Contact 828.484.9716 or 828.699.7114.

January 2015

January 30-February 1: NCSG Winter Workshop with Kim Weitkamp. The Assembly at Fort Caswell, NC. Contact Terry Rollins at bardelf@gmail.com or Dianne at dianne@diannehackworth.com.

February 2015

February 27: 7th Annual Celebration of Story Concert, through Music, Visual Arts,

Continued on back page)



Sylvia Payne, Editor
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(Calendar...continued from page 13)

and Spoken Word. Sponsored by Clemson Area StoryTellers (CAST) Guild. Friday evening at 7pm, The Arts Center, 212 Butler Rd, Clemson, SC. Contact info: lisaeister@bellsouth.net or judy_seeley@hotmail.com

February 27-March 1: *Grab That Story and Tell It!*, storytelling class, taught by Ted Cooley. John C. Campbell Folk School, One Folk School Road, Brasstown, NC. Contact 1.800.365.5724 or <https://classes.folkschool.org/Browse.aspx>

May 2015

May 17-22: *Storytelling from Scratch.* Storytelling class taught by Ted Cooley. John C. Campbell Folk School, One Folk School Road, Brasstown, NC. Contact 1.800.365.5724 or <https://classes.folkschool.org/Browse.aspx>

June 2015

June 28-July 4: *Basic Techniques of Telling.* Storytelling class taught by Elizabeth Ellis. John C. Campbell Folk School, One Folk School Road, Brasstown, NC. Contact 1.800.365.5724 or <https://classes.folkschool.org/Browse.aspx>