



Kentucky Storytelling Association

April 2008 Support and Appreciation for the Art of Storytelling In Kentucky Volume 4 Issue 2

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Useful Links:

KSA Website

<http://www.kystory.org/>

National Storytelling Network Website

<http://www.storynet.org/>

Contact your Board

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502-223-4523

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donna@misspockets3.com
270-825-1478

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Secretary, Betsy Fleischer

Message from our President

Several topics are on my mind as I write this issue's Message from the President. So skim to the topic that most interests you.

Youth Storytelling

What a successful venture for KSA! Read more about Kentucky's participation in the National Youth Storytelling Showcase in an article by Buck P. Creacy. Sign up now to help out in August at the Kentucky Youth Storytelling Showcase Finals at the Kentucky State Fair. Expect a full day of wonderful storytelling. If you know folks interested in storytelling, please invite them to take advantage of this opportunity to enjoy listening to young Kentuckians tell stories.

Kentucky Storytelling Conference

Did you see your call for conference proposals? It went out in mid-March with an April 10th deadline. Some of you may think it looks like the same people are always presenting workshops at the conference. Hmm, perhaps the same people always apply! If you have an idea for a workshop you believe would be of interest to folks who love storytelling, please suggest it in the form of a Conference Workshop Proposal. If you know someone who is not a member of KSA but has information of interest to storytelling, please encourage them to submit a proposal as well. KSA membership is not a requirement for proposal submission.

Fund-raising

As a 501c3 organization, KSA is required to fund-raise. Yes, required! Non-profit 501c3 status goes to organizations that can show they are providing service and that they receive public support—not governmental support, but general public support. Raising funds from the general public is the IRS accepted method for organizations to prove they have public support. So, expect a fund-raising appeal from KSA at least once a year. Also, please suggest people you think could be interested in supporting the work of the Kentucky Storytelling Association. If each KSA member suggested two non-members to receive fundraising appeals from KSA, this could make a big difference in KSA fundraising in support of KSA programs like Kentucky Youth Storytelling Showcase, Kentucky Storytelling Conference, and the KSA website which contains information on storytelling events as well as provides easy methods for storytelling event planners to connect with storytellers. Please send contact information for potential donors to me: Mary Hamilton, 65 Springhill Road, Frankfort, KY 40601-9211, 502-223-4523, mary@maryhamilton.info. Yes, I'm the chair of the Fundraising Committee. Also serving on this committee are Board members P.J. Beckett and Donna Slaton. Additional Committee members are always, always, welcome. Interested? Just let me know.

Wandering Storytellers

KSA does not just ask for money. We also go out and earn it by doing what we do best – telling and listening to stories. Wandering Storytellers at Natasha's

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Announcements

Your KSA Board Meetings
will be:

May 31, Harlan, KY,
Contact Pam Holcomb.

August 23, Lexington,
KY, contact Ann
Roseberry

November 9,
Shepherdsville, day after
the conference, same
location as conference.

I am **not** a traditional
storyteller but an
improvisational teller. I

Café in Lexington is an example of KSA fundraising – KSA receives the \$5 per person cover charge. On the last Monday of each month, listeners and tellers gather to hear stories beginning at 8:00 pm. This year, the stories all fit a different monthly theme. Two featured tellers, plus open mike times make it possible for anyone with a tale to tell to join in on exploring the theme. You'll find location and theme specifics on the Event Calendar on the KSA website: www.kystory.org If you know folks in the Lexington area who might enjoy Wandering Tellers, please tell them about this event so they will turn out to support KSA.

Founder's Syndrome

This syndrome means death, or at least a very painful struggle, for many non-profits. Founder's Syndrome is when the founder or founding members, of an organization resist change. Symptoms include: 1) the Board sees its role as "supporting the vision of the founders" rather than "supporting the mission of the organization," 2) a lack of organizational infrastructure, 3) a lack of a succession plan, 4) a reliance on "how we've always done it" instead of an understanding of why things have been done a certain way, 5) Board members who do not understand the organization's finances and/or the full extent of its programs, and 6) decisions made in crisis mode with little forward planning to prevent problems from occurring.

So what has KSA done to avoid Founder's Syndrome?

1. **Term limits** – no one can serve in the same position on the KSA Board for more than two terms. Currently all terms are two year commitments. So no one can hold the same position more than four years.
2. **Board term limits** – no one can serve on the Board in any combination of positions for more than six years, without a required three years off the Board. So for every six years of Board Service, a person must take three years off the KSA Board.
3. **Job Instruction Sheets** – Your current Board has been working to create Job Instruction Sheets for all of the regular procedures that keep KSA functioning. Each Job Instruction Sheet not only tells how the current procedure is accomplished, but includes WHY the procedure is needed and WHY the current steps are needed. This work should make it easier for folks stepping into jobs to perform them. In a healthy organization if the reason for doing something a certain way no longer exists, the way of doing it can also easily change to suit the new reality. Including the "why" in the Job Instruction Sheets should help future KSA Boards more easily determine when change is needed.
4. **Mission Statement and Goals**. KSA wisely adopted these early on, based on comments from folks who attended the early "should Kentucky have a statewide storytelling organization?" gatherings. Having a mission and goals has made it possible for the Board to evaluate each proposed program idea against whether or not it supports KSA's mission (as opposed to whether or not we simply like it or think it sounds like a fun thing to do!)
5. **Board Manuals** – to help Board Members learn more about KSA, Board Manuals have been created. These include KSA Bylaws and procedures. KSA bylaws are also posted on the KSA website, in the "About KSA" section, so anyone can learn more about KSA. You'll find a brief history of KSA here too. Transparency is also a sign of a healthy organization.

So, why bring up Founder's Syndrome now?

I hope learning about Founder's Syndrome will help all KSA Members embrace the need for ever-changing Board members. I know there is the saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." While I believe the KSA Board is not broken, I also believe the potential for a less than strong organization exists if the same people rotate on and off the board year after year. It has been an honor for me to help found KSA by serving on the KSA Board from its beginning. After I complete this year, I'm leaving the Board, but I'm not leaving KSA. Instead I

can teach it, I can do it because improvisation is my talent. If anyone else out there does improvisational storytelling, then please let me know. I would like to converse with you. If you have either taught or did a performance as an improvisational teller, I'd like to talk with you. I was so inspired by the response from the students at Louisville's Creative Arts Festival, old and young alike. I'd like to do what I used to do in California here in Kentucky. In California we brought this art to schools, libraries and other interesting venues. It was always accepted and encouraged. I am not sure about Kentucky, so if anyone can give me advice, I'd love to hear from you. Robin Baldwin

Children of the Harvest Drama Troupe, Expressions Performing Arts

We are supported by Standing Stone, Inc. (non-profit)

StandingStone@insightbb.com
270-746-2988

National Youth Storytelling Showcase News

Buck P Creacy

Bobbie wrote to me this week. This is her take on what she saw.

"Emilee Seaman walked onto the stage at the National Youth Storytelling Showcase on the afternoon of Saturday, February 9 and all eyes watched as she positioned herself behind the microphone. The crowd had heard a variety of

hope to become one of those model members who work behind the scenes on KSA Committees to help the KSA Board meet KSA's mission and goals. In this issue you'll find a plea from Donna Slaton asking you to consider Board Membership. I hope you will step up and help KSA avoid the pitfall of Founder's Syndrome.

Mary Hamilton
KSA President

KSA Conference November 2008

Next year's 5th Annual Conference, 2008 will be held at the Paroquet Springs Conference Center in Shepherdsville, Kentucky, on the weekend of November 7th and 8th, with the new board meeting on the 9th. We will have an overlapping conference with the Knowledge Center on Deafness whose conference will be November 6th and 7th of 2008.

Come one, come all, to the 5th Annual Conference!!! Put it on your calendar now!

KSA Needs You!

Donna F. Slaton, President-Elect

Kentucky Storytelling Association is growing and we have accomplished a lot. But there is much still to do and we certainly want to maintain our outstanding conference and the wonderful new youth program. Volunteers are needed to participate on committees, help with events and be prepared to step into leadership roles as we head through the coming year. It is not too early to think about offering your services as an officer, board member or volunteer. Experience in leadership of other organizations is a plus but not necessary. Passion for storytelling and commitment are needed. If you have not served as a board member of another organization then maybe this is your time. KSA has lots of detailed information written in job descriptions. Also, the officer or board member currently holding the office will quite be available to truly help you learn the duties. Participation is strongly encouraged from all areas so that this will indeed be a statewide organization.

We have four board meetings a year, spread as fairly as possible around the state. The November meeting is held at the close of the conference. So while there is a commitment of time and travel, we have adjusted to make it as practical as possible to accomplish the business of the organization. Storytellers and story listeners, come one, come all! Stand tall and share your talents with KSA. For more information contact PJ Beckett, at pjbeckett39@aol.com, the nominating chair or any current board member. Or visit the next board meeting which is planned for May 31st. For that meeting we are heading south and east and you can contact Pam Holcomb at pfholcomb@msn.com for local arrangement information.

Member Spotlight



Photo of Wade's wooden flute

This issue's Member Spotlight shines on Wade Outland of Lexington, KY.

stories by the time Emilee began to talk, but none told in as straightforward a manner. In a clear voice, Emilee began her story of "The Man with no Shoes" and immediately captured the crowd. With just her voice, Emilee led the audience through the story, making them feel the emotions and become a part of the story. The delivery was without flaw, and a sample of good storytelling was experienced by all lucky enough to share the room with Emilee Seaman for a few moments on a sunny Saturday afternoon.

"Brackon Curtis and Jordan Sallee were two other talents that came to the stage that Saturday afternoon as Kentucky's representatives in the Tandem Team Division. Either of these young men would be wonderful by him self, but those in the audience were in for a special treat as they chose to combine their talents into one team. The story they told, "Night at the Smokehouse" is one to beware of if you are outside on a dark night, far from crowds and the lights of town. This talented team led the audience through the frightening events, and had the audience so mesmerized, that when they said "jump", the audience did; and not just once, but each and every time. This was a display of what a story, in the hands of a team using storytelling technique in a masterful manner can do, and it

Wade is a 53 year-old computer programmer—his day job. But his passion is playing the wooden Native American style flute.

"I'm sort of new to the art of storytelling. Right now I mostly volunteer to play the flute. It was ten years ago when I visited a friend in Portland, Oregon. One day we went to an open-air market where a flute maker was playing and selling his flutes. I love the breathy sound and it works so well to improvise. I don't necessary represent the culture but I do respect the Native American stories. I'd like to relate tales about the origin of the instrument. I've played around with a few other musical instruments—guitar and drums."

Why did you join KSA?

I heard about KSA from an acquaintance who is a member. She mentioned that there are occasional workshops. She told me about the monthly events at Natasha's. I would like to go listen there one of these times. Also KSA just seems like an excellent resource for storytelling.

What so far have you liked about being a member of KSA?

So far I am really enjoying being on the email list—I like seeing announcements about networking and other opportunities. I think I may go to the upcoming April workshop in Pikeville.

What kind of stories do you enjoy?

I enjoy moral tales because they are fun yet also provide a morsel of teaching that can be useful. I enjoy tall tales. And I really love the stories from the book **Seven Arrows**. I have to say that reading the story of Jumping Mouse was a life-changing event. I carry that story around in my heart.

How has your life been affected by stories from family or friends?

My life has been really enriched by hearing my family stories—particularly on my mother's side. The stories also came from my Aunts and Uncles and to a lesser degree from my maternal Grandparents. Many of the stories they told us were about how things went when they were growing up. They lived in very rural part of Kentucky—Edmonton County. The stories explained things they might not have understood at the time. Edmonton County is in the central part of state near Bowling Green. Mammoth cave takes up huge part of the county.

You can contact Wade at wadeo@insightbb.com. His website is <http://thefluterguy.home.insightbb.com:80/>.

A Book Review

By Thomas Freese

Jackie Tales: The Magic of Creating Stories and the Art of Telling Them by Jackie Torrence
1998, Avon Books, NY, NY, ISBN # 0-380-97582-3, Hardbound, Illustrated, 240 pages.

I own a few storytelling books but they would hardly comprise half a shelf. So I'm not a serious collector of books in general and storytelling books in particular. I found *Jackie Tales* at Half Price Books for \$10. Peeking inside, it looked friendly and had a few favorite story categories so I bought it. In the Foreword it's noted that the stories were recorded and pictures taken in four 10-hour days at Jackie's home. The book has a prodigious amount of black and white pictures of Jackie in dozens and dozens of expressive poses

was inspiring. "These three youths from Kentucky came to the National Youth Storytelling Showcase and used real storytelling skills to capture a sophisticated audience. Then they left them wanting to hear more. We hope to hear more from these three storytellers in the future, and look forward with interest and anticipation for more storytellers from Kentucky. The Kentucky Storytelling Association, the adults helping these children, are doing a fine job of encouraging our youth in storytelling and should be commended."

Bobbie Morgan,
Executive Director,
National Storytelling
Network

Buck Creacy: I was proud of the kids; they did well and performed flawlessly. So did the kids from across the country. Bu it was an email from Carmen Agra Deedy which really made me smile. Carmen is a Storyteller who performed at most of the major venues in this country, including NPR and the National Storytelling Festival at Jonesborough. Carmen is also an author of wonderful children's books.

"Dear Buck,
Your kids were incredible. I dropped in on the NYSS concert yesterday afternoon, planning to listen for a bit, then take a nap before our evening

and facial expressions. There are side notes in the margins which carry Jackie's comments on the story being told, background or teller's tips. The text print is large, easy to read and the chapters are titled Jump Tales, Jack Tales, Br'er Tales, Family Tales and Scary Tales. Each chapter has three or four stories.

I rarely read a book sequentially from left to right. *Jackie Tales* can easily be sampled in any chapter order. I found many tales new to my eyes and many are gentle, suitable for the youngest listener or reader. But there are a few scary ones as well. A few of my favorite stories here were "The Ring" (Jump Tales), "Jack's Trip to Hell", "Br'er Rabbit Outsmarts the Frogs", "Aunt Sally and Uncle Fifth" (Family Tales) and "Elvira and Henry" (Scary Tales). Jackie's personal story is inspirational (see obituary below) and her stories are wonderful as well. I had not heard her tell in person but I now treasure this collection of lovely stories as a resource and glimpse into her story world.

Storyteller Jackie Torrence, died Tuesday, November 30, (2004) at her home in Granite Quarry, North Carolina. She was 60 years old. Although well-versed in traditional African American folklore and folktales, Jackie Torrence became a storyteller by chance. She was an assistant at the High Point, NC, library and started telling stories to keep peace among the children. As a result she was asked to tell a story at a community event, and continued to be asked to tell tales in the community, and continued telling tales in 47 states, Great Britain, New Zealand, Guam, Sweden, and Mexico. She first appeared at the National Storytelling Festival in 1977 and quickly became a spokesperson for the storytelling movement and for the National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling (NAPPS), forerunner to the National Storytelling Network. She appeared frequently on television, with appearances on Late Night with David Letterman, and CBS Sunday Morning with Charles Kurault and co-hosted a Halloween special, *The Teller and the Tale*, with Sally Struthers. Steven Spielberg asked Torrence to tell stories to the top creative artists of his DreamWorks SKG. Torrence produced nine recordings on several labels. In 1989, her work was recognized in *I Dream a World*, by Brian Lanker, a photographic essay about African-American women who have changed America. Her 1992 play *Bluestory*, related the history of blues music and was performed by Piedmont blues musicians John Cephas and Phil Wiggins. She authored two books, *The Importance of Pot Liqueur*, and *Jackie Tales: The Magic of Creating Stories and the Art of Telling Them*. Obituary courtesy of the [Folk Alliance](http://worldmusiccentral.org/article.php/20050213180607567), <http://worldmusiccentral.org/article.php/20050213180607567>.

KSA Members get Discount!

KSA Members Receive Discount on NSN Memberships

Because Kentucky Storytelling Association is an associate member of the National Storytelling Network, Kentucky Storytelling Association members will now receive a 10% discount on their NSN memberships – new or renewal. In addition to such benefits as *Storytelling Magazine*, Directory listings, sales of their own materials on NSN's MarketPlace, and discounts on conference registrations and MarketPlace purchases, NSN members have online subscription access to *World Folklore and Folklife*, the searchable Greenwood Press web site that contains thousands of tales as well as vast amounts of up-to-date information about world cultures and traditions.

To join NSN or renew your membership with the 10% Kentucky Storytelling Association discount, call Frankie Wolff in the NSN office at 1-800-525-4514, or e-mail her at frankie@storynet.org. To learn

event; instead, I was so bowled over, I stayed the full three hours. Anyone harboring doubts about the future of storytelling should hear three brilliant kids from Kentucky. Another generation of storytellers is on its way to Jonesborough-- hallelujah! Please tell the kids I thought they were incredible. Let me know if there is any way in which I can help in the future. Warmly,
Carmen."

The National Youth Storytelling Showcase workshops were terrific, Bill Harley, Bil Lepp, Carmen Deedy, Martha Hamilton & Mitch Weiss, Waddy Mitchell, and Willy Claflin each took several turns and taught more about the art of storytelling than I have heard them share from any platform. This kid (me) and other kids, young and old, sat mesmerized, taking notes as these fine tellers taught in conversational tones and answered probing questions from curious young tellers.

Hailing from West Virginia, California, New York and points between, the professional storytellers showcased their wide variety of storytelling styles in evening concerts. Besides the young storytellers, who performed in various venues, the concerts included Waddie Mitchell, a cowboy poet and storyteller from Nevada; Bil Lepp, five-time champion of the West

more about NSN Membership, visit the National Storytelling Network website www.storynet.org

NSN has received a list of KSA Members. This list will be used by NSN to verify your KSA Membership. If, for any reason, NSN does not have a record of your KSA Membership, please contact the KSA Membership Secretary, Charlotte Hogan. Charlotte has the most up-to-date KSA Member list and can verify your KSA Membership for NSN. Charlotte's contact information is: Charlotte Hogan, KSA Membership Secretary, Lee County Youth Services, PO Box J/599 Lee Ave., Beattyville, KY 41311. 606-464-5023
charlotte.hogan@lee.kyschools.us

To learn about your other KSA Membership Benefits, please visit the KSA website www.kystory.org and select the "Membership" button.

An Unusual Story Festival...

BRINGS EPIC TALES TO LIGHT

Going Deep: The Long Traditional Story Festival to be held in Bethlehem, Indiana

There will be three storytellers, three long traditional stories and three workshops about the stories. The Going Deep Storytelling Festival will be held on April 10-13, 2008 in Bethlehem, Indiana and turns the term "festival" on its head. While most festivals bring several storytellers in to give short performances, the Going Deep Festival has each of the three performers take an evening to tell one long traditional story. That story is then the subject of the next morning's workshop. Most festivals aim for hundreds of listeners but the Going Deep Festival has a more modest goal of 20 participants for the entire event. The evening performances are open to the public for a small admission fee.

Festival co-founder Priscilla Howe says, "We discovered that we're really hosting a retreat. We have stories in the evening, workshops in the morning and the afternoon is free for massage, palm readings, walks, naps and art activities. It's a funny combination of intense listening and relaxation. We eat together, talk about stories, laugh, sing and have an incredibly invigorating experience."

This year's performers will be Megan Wells, telling Helen's Troy, Olga Loya telling the Aztec Creation Myth, and Priscilla Howe telling Queen Berta and King Pippin. Performances begin at 7 p.m. and are for grownups and older kids.

Going Deep is held at the Storyteller's Riverhouse Bed and Breakfast in Bethlehem, Indiana, 45 minutes north of Louisville, Kentucky. The festival is sponsored by Scheherazade's Legacy. Early-bird registration ends Feb. 15. For information, visit www.goingdeepstories.com or call Cynthia Changaris at 502-451-7144, cchangaris@aol.com.

A Story from Kristy Cox

Virginia Liars Contest, Carmen Agra Deedy, an author and storyteller born in Havana, Cuba, who shares stories steeped in the riches of both Latin American and Southern culture. Mitch Weiss and Martha Hamilton, an award-winning husband and wife team, are known for their work in teaching the art of storytelling.

Also, Willy Claflin has a number of award-winning recordings and has been featured at storytelling festivals around the world. National Youth Storytelling Showcase is presented in partnership with the National Storytelling Network. The Showcase was created to feature storytellers age 17 and younger from across the nation, vying for the title of Grand Torchbearer.

I just want to go on record as saying that I have placed the Smokey Mountain Storytelling Festival and the National Youth Storytelling Showcase on my annual calendar and if you can... you should too. There were great workshops, of substance, for the young and old storyteller.

And from Willy Claflin: "At the youth storytelling showcase in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, I was especially impressed by the tellers from Kentucky. The tandem team of Brackon Curtis and Jordan Sallee conjured a powerful, eerie tale of a night spent in the



Photo of Kristy Cox and daughter

Send the Rain

He stopped and looked out into the back yard. Between the clumps of weeds, the sun glinted off a wide silver pool laced with dust. He shook his head. He went into the house and the screen door slammed behind him. He froze and cringed, but this time she didn't yell. She couldn't hear him over the orchestration that always seemed to be playing in the background of those 'kissing shows' she always watched. In the doorway to the den, he paused. "Got a puddle in the yard," he said.

He wished he had something to hold in his hands. Instead, he ran a pinky finger along the edge of the table that used to sit in his great-grandma's parlor. He skimmed the edge and disturbed the dust. Lifting his hand, he blew on the finger. Then he stuffed his hands into his pockets. He glanced up at her to see if he needed to repeat his discovery. She sat without moving, not blinking. Her tiny, pink rat-tongue slipped out between thin lips and flicked a drop of sweat from the hairs on her upper lip. She was a mountain of a woman – sturdy – a real find in this day of super skinnies and sweet teens running around showing nearly everything they had in tight clothes and low-waisted jeans. She had never been like that. Her soft outside hid the hardness underneath, the muscle of her home. He noticed she held the thick paper fan in her right hand so tightly it quivered. Her housedress – the bright one made from some dimply kind of polyester – stopped short of her biceps. Equally dimply skin on her arms hung in soft, doughy billows that swallowed her elbow.

She sat, with her heels pressed together and knees spread. Her housedress raised a little above the knees and showed him deeply veined, thick flesh where her thighs were supposed to be. Embarrassed, he looked toward the old Magnavox. On the screen he saw two super skinnies flicking their tongues in places he thought they ought not go. Candles on the table in the TV showed them up close, then in shadow, then up close again. Watching the play of light and hearing their moans and loud sucking noises made him lightheaded. Embarrassed again, he looked away. Through the window, he saw the puddle in the yard. But he didn't say it again yet. A cheery announcer voice exclaimed to the world that Folgers coffee was good to the last drop and he glanced at the sturdy, woman-mountain in the easy chair. She tilted her pelvis forward and back again, as if easing a strain on the inside somewhere, and reached for her iced tea glass. The ice cubes, half now of what they had been when she started watching her program, rattled in the bottom of the glass. She startled when she saw him standing there and she jerked, clinking the glass edge against her teeth. "Lord God a' mercy! Why aren't you outside somewhere?" He scanned the room, trying to see if any of the furniture would take up the conversation. He dug his fingers deeper into his pockets and fixed his eyes on a wadded up tissue that had missed the waste basket. "Got a puddle in the yard," he said. She twisted her head to look at the sky through the window and the folds in her neck deepened. "Lord God a' mercy, is it raining?"

smokehouse, complete with sudden frights, strange sights and just a hint of mountain music.

It was a perfect back porch tale, brought to life onstage with fine timing and intense telling. And Emilee Seaman's beautifully crafted original tale *The Man with No Shoes*, like a Ray Bradbury story, took us into a completely believable twilight realm, a seamless blending of the ordinary and the surreal."

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday- April 4, 5, and 6, Cape Girardeau Storytelling Festival. Festival begins either 9:30 or 10 am each day with evening activities scheduled Friday and Saturday. This is on the bank of the Mighty Mississippi River in Historic Downtown Cape Girardeau. Tickets are \$20.00 for the entire three-day festival. For more information, call 1-800-777-0068, email info@visitcape.com or visit capestorytelling.com.

Friday, Saturday- April 4, 5- Mountain State Storytelling Institute at Fairmont State University in Fairmont, West Virginia. Workshops and Storytelling Sessions featuring the West Virginia Guils and FSU Faculty. Cost: \$35 for adults/ \$15 students. For more information, contact Dr. Francene Kirk at 304-367-4170 of email fkirk@fairmontstate.edu.

Saturday, April 5, 8 – 10 p.m. Storytellers Theater features Patrick Ball, *In Celtic Harp and Story*. Indiana History Center Basile Theater, 450 Ohio Street, Indianapolis, IN. Contact: Storytelling Arts of Indiana, 317-576-9848. www.storytellingarts.org

Friday-Saturday-April 11-12. Fiddlers Grove Storytelling Festival hosted by the Tennessee Storytelling Association and Wilson County

He shook his head, not daring a glance up at her tiny, close-set eyes. He felt her stare and knew her thin lips had all but disappeared, she pressed them together so tight. "Nope. Just a puddle in the yard," he repeated. She sat her iced tea glass back on the metal card table beside her bag of barbecued pork rinds. The flesh on her arm jiggled under the exertion.

"You done said that. But you ain't told me why." He dared a glance upward then, but focused on her first chin instead of her eyes. "Cistern," he said. Her pasty, wide fingers fluttered to her thick throat. She blinked rapidly a few times, nearly losing her eyeballs to the folds in her eyelids. She pumped the fan, too and crumbs flew off her sloping front. A few pieces of wispy gray hair danced in the sudden breeze.

"Lord God a'mercy!" she cried, and fanned faster. "In this heat? In this drought? And now me with no water. Lord God a'mercy." The orchestra music started again, but it didn't gain her attention. She stopped fanning abruptly. "Well, what're you gonna do to fix it?" A sudden hard look brightened her dark eyes and he looked away. "Got a crack there. Only one thing to do." It always seemed to surprise him when she moved fast, considering her size, and this time was no different. In a quick thrusting motion, she heaved herself upright and yanked on the back of her housedress, pulling the material from the folds in her skin. Like a ship, listing left and then right, she steamed toward him and the doorway. He moved quickly, out of her path, and backed through the den. "Lord God a'mercy!" The floor joists creaked when she crossed the dingy linoleum of the kitchen and he followed her out the back door. The harsh sun threw down their shadows on the porch: Jack Sprat and his wife, but the man tried not to think that. He moved to the rusty metal disc that guarded the cistern entrance. With a scrape, it pulled away and he leaned down to take a look. A bright circle darkened by his form shined in one spot. The rest of the water looked murky and he tried not to think of the things that washed out of his gutters. A thin white line, four feet above the dark water, showed him a scribbly testament of the months before the drought began. He tensed when he heard her bare, cracked feet shuffle across the concrete, and backed away. She grunted as she squatted and peered into the damp hole. "Don't see nothing." "You can't 'til you're down there."

Her look sliced through the air and he felt like ducking to avoid it, but then thought better of it. Every time he winced, it made her larger, somehow. Now and again, he wondered if her largeness would make him completely disappear, as if she could loom higher and wider and blot out people, houses, and the sun. She grunted again and leaned forward, tilting her mass closer to the hole. He watched her dress rise up the backs of her legs, past the creased and pudgy backs of her knees, past twin varicose veins on her thighs. A strange feeling entered his gut and worried him there, churning, twisting and tightening until he had to move his hand to his belly. As if her body read his mind and the clenching in his gut, she pitched forward. Her knees smacked against the concrete and her head, shoulders and upper arms disappeared. The sudden movement hiked her housedress up around her waist and lay in a colorful puddle over her elbows. He had a sudden flash-picture in his mind of an extra large petunia stuffed into a tiny glass, the petals resting on the rim. He had always hated petunias. The twisting-churning in his gut paused as he realized he would have to haul her out of the hole. He thought it was a shame she wouldn't let him drive the old blue tractor this close to the house to get a chain around her ankles, but then he wondered if she would make an exception this time. Her legs flailed and her toes smashed into the concrete; he heard a joint crack and hoped she hadn't broken anything. The thick concrete walls muffled her screams and he scratched his head, unsure of how to help her, unsure if he wanted to. He stepped backward and leaned against the house, the shade of the eaves giving him relief from the hot sun. He jammed his

Promotions, Lebanon, Tennessee. Friday and Saturday schedules include performances, storytelling and mentoring sessions provided by experienced storyteller TSA members. Contact: guerrymcconell@bellsouth.net.

Saturday, April 26, 8 – 10 p.m. Storytellers Theater features Bobby Norfolk, *Swingin' with Duke Ellington* and accompanied by pianist Pete Ruthenburg. Indiana History Center, Basile Theater, 450 Ohio Street, Indianapolis, IN. Contact: Storytelling Arts of Indiana, 317-576-9848. www.storytellingarts.org

Monday, April 28, Wandering Storytellers at Natasha's Bistro, 8:00 p.m. Admission: \$5:00. Natasha's Bistro, 112 Esplanade, Lexington, KY. Contact 502-484-3359 or www.beetnik.com. The theme for April is "Gotta! Gotta! Stories of Compulsions. This is a KSA fund raising event.

Tuesday, May 20, 7:00 p.m. The Scott County Storytelling Guild at the Scott County Library, call 502-863-3566. 3rd Tuesday of the Month Story Swap. Adventure Stories (Free for all)

Monday, May 26, Wandering Storytellers at Natasha's Bistro. 8:00 p.m. Admissions: \$5:00. Natasha's Bistro, 112 Esplanade, Lexington, KY. Contact 502-484-3359 or www.beetnik.com. The theme for May is "Mother May I?" It's all about you and your mom, or your friend's mom, or.....This is a KSA fund raising event.

Monday, June 30, Wandering Storyteller's at Natasha's Bistro. 8:00 p.m. Admisson: \$5:00. Natasha's Bistro, 112 Esplanade, Lexington, KY. Contact 502484-3359 or www.beetnik.com. The theme for June is "Barefootin." It's time for summer stories, growing up, vacations, finally out of the office and on the beach, mountain, lake, etc. This is a KSA fund raising event.

hands into his pockets and gazed at the barn that held the tractor.

All of a sudden her body jerked, like it did with a hiccup, and her flesh quivered, reeling from the vibrations. He waited for an aftershock to ripple through her mountain of flesh, but she was still. The shadows inched across the porch and he finally reached for the tractor keys hanging on the barn nail. The clinching inside his stomach had subsided and he stretched taller than he had ever stretched before. Thunder rumbled in the distance.

"Lord God a'mercy," he whispered. "Send the rain."

Kristy Cox is a writer and mother of three. Her heart will always live in Kentucky. Contact her at ekcwriteone@yahoo.com.

Call for Conference Workshop Proposals!

The Kentucky Storytelling Association's 5th Annual Conference will be at the Paroquet Springs Conference Center in Shepardsville, Kentucky, near Louisville. KSA and the Kentucky Center on Deafness (KCD) will hold overlapping conferences in early November. On Thursday and Friday, Nov. 6 and 7 KCD will have their conference. Friday night, Nov. 7, KSA & KCD will be sharing KSA's opening with a combined concert and open mike session. On Saturday, Nov. 8 KSA's all-day conference will happen. The entire conference is handicapped accessible and deaf interpreted.

KSA is now officially holding an open call for workshop proposals. Workshops are 45 or 90 minutes in length. Topics for workshops are educational - promoting growth in the storytelling community. Previous workshops were grant writing, behind the scenes event planning, storytelling for beginners, going into school systems, telling, teaching, writing of Jack tales, Kentucky's core content and storytelling, how to make a CD, mechanics of humor, theatrical techniques for character building, tandem telling, History of American Sign Language, Rhythm, Rhyme and Storytelling, using the senses to enhance stories, stories from other cultures, voice-use and care of, tips for improving your ASL storytelling, biblical character tales, other places to tell, healing stories, and more. Yes you can teach a workshop! You do have something to share. Sure you can. You have information that can help others. And have fun besides.

Here's how to submit a proposal, please send

1. Your name
2. Title of workshop
3. Description of workshop
4. A brief bio
5. A photo of yourself
6. Contact information for your local newspaper
7. Send to Betsy Fleischer, Conference Chair at Bestycat2@yahoo.com or 305 Cole Lane, Harrodsburg, KY, 40330-7715

DEADLINE IS APRIL 10

For any questions please contact Betsy Fleischer.