



# Kentucky Storytelling Association

July 2009 Support and Appreciation for the Art of Storytelling In Kentucky Volume 5 Issue 3

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### Useful Links:

#### KSA Website

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

#### National Storytelling Network Website

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

### Contact your Board

President, Donna Slaton  
[President@kystory.org](mailto:President@kystory.org)  
270-825-1478

President Elect, Pam Holcomb  
[Elect@kystory.org](mailto:Elect@kystory.org)  
606-573-4376

Treasurer, Nina Coyer  
[Treasurer@kystory.org](mailto:Treasurer@kystory.org)  
859-622-4966

Secretary, Betsy Fleischer  
[Secretary@kystory.org](mailto:Secretary@kystory.org)  
859-734-3194

Quadrant 1, Laura Seaman  
[Quad1@kystory.org](mailto:Quad1@kystory.org)  
270-543-8127

## Message from our President Donna Slaton

Dear KSA members:

KSA is having a wonderful year. Membership is up—it reached 120 in May. The conference and Youth programs are doing well and providing excellent opportunities for Kentuckians to support and participate in storytelling. We are moving forward in lots of ways and we appreciate your interest and help along the way. Each member is important. And you are our best form of publicity.

Help us to increase membership in the organization and participation at the conference. Please be an ambassador for KSA. Share your enjoyable and educational experiences with other tellers and listeners in your community, consider board service in the near future, offer to talk to local service clubs such as Lions or Rotary in order to provide programs about KSA or a storytelling experience to improve visibility of storytelling in Kentucky.

You could also help by writing a letter to the editor of your local paper, mentioning the wonderful opportunities for youth in Kentucky Storytelling and add the website address or mention the directory for people needing program teller information. Remind people in your letter that Kentucky has some nationally recognized talent right here at home and direct them to the website or board members for further information.

I am pleased to tell you that Emilee Seaman was selected National Youth Storytelling Showcase Torchbearer in the High School division and Emma Wylczynski was named a finalist. Each received a trophy and check from the event sponsored in part by the City of Pigeon Forge and the Smoky Mountain Storytelling festival. Please whenever you have interaction with those folks thank them for the fine opportunities afforded our young people. An extra big thank you to Elizabeth Rose of NYSS and Pam Holcomb of KYSS for leading the events that created the opportunities.

Thanks to Pam Holcomb, Octavia Sexton, Sonya Wood Mahler, and Mary Jo Huff for being there to support our youth as well at the finals on Saturday. Each of the youth tellers were outstanding performers.

Your KYSS Co-Chairs, Pam Holcomb and Don Creacy and their committee are busy preparing the September regional events in each quadrant that will lead up to the entries for the 2010 NYSS. Please check the website frequently for info and updates or contact them for more info.

The board meeting in Harlan and the Storytelling in the Mountains was a truly wonderful weekend. We thank President Elect Pam Holcomb and her local UK Extension office for the fine hospitality. Pam created a social picnic and tour of Kingdom Come area the next day and your executive board had a relaxing and bonding weekend. At the meeting we added Laura Seaman as Quadrant 1 representative. Then the next day Maggie Beville, Mike Beville's wife agreed to fill out the term of Quad 3 representative for Nelle Williams. Nelle had to resign for family obligations so Maggie will be elected in August meeting at Central City.

It is not too late to offer to run for a seat on the board, so if you are interested contact PJ Becket, nominating committee Chair. There are several offices including President Elect which are up for election this fall. Serving on the board is an opportunity to grow as a volunteer and a teller, giving you

Quadrant 2, Octavia  
Sexton  
[Quad2@kystory.org](mailto:Quad2@kystory.org)  
606-256-9796

Quadrant 3 is an open  
position at this time

Quadrant 4, Maggie  
Beville  
[Quad4@kystory.org](mailto:Quad4@kystory.org)  
270-737-0263

At-large Board Members  
P. J. Beckett  
[At-large1@kystory.org](mailto:At-large1@kystory.org)  
502-484-3359

Mary Kane  
[At-large2@kystory.org](mailto:At-large2@kystory.org)  
859-321-5923

## Contact Us

<http://www.kystory.org>

Newsletter Editor  
Thomas Freese  
[thomasfreese@bellsouth.net](mailto:thomasfreese@bellsouth.net)  
502-491-5664

## Announcements

### Welcome New Members!

Laura, Mark, Ryan and  
Derek Seaman  
Norris Slaton

### Upcoming Events

**July 13**, Tale Talk, a  
storytelling group where  
stories are told,  
camaraderie developed,  
critiques are available,  
story news is shared.  
Tale Talk is held in the  
Louisville area, 7:30  
p.m. Contact Cynthia  
Changaris at 502-451-  
7144, 502-645-2930 or  
[cchangaris@aol.com](mailto:cchangaris@aol.com).

**July 17, 18, 19**,  
Working on our Work  
Storytelling Weekend,  
Storyteller's Riverhouse

valuable networking and bonding time with fellow tellers all across the state. It is truly a rewarding experience where you receive well more than you give.

Mary Hamilton, chair of the fund raising committee, has been very busy looking for ways to help the organization grow, so please check out her letter below. Betsy Fleischer will have requests soon for assistance with the conference, so please jump in and volunteer. You will feel like a part of it and learn people's names and stories faster when you work behind the scenes.

Thanks to all the board members for their continued efforts on behalf of KSA. And thanks to each of you as members for supporting KSA through your dues, your participation and your networking around the state. Spread the word - storytelling is here to stay.

Donna F. Slaton ~ Miss Pockets

## A Good Day for Storytelling

As a recently appointed KSA board member, I want to thank the board for welcoming me back into the fold and introduce myself to KSA members who may not know me. I was a board member in the past but had to resign due to issues needing my attention elsewhere. I am happy that I am now able to devote more time to my passion, the world of storytelling. I gave up what many refer to as a 'real job' ten years ago to start my own arts in education business, SpoonWood Productions. Prior to that, I was in the teaching field for over 20 years. However, I was born into the storytelling tradition and have always been a storyteller. I am a folk artist in the oral tradition and continuing an ancestral art passed to me from generation to generation.

I tell stories professionally, but have not forsaken the tradition of 'family storytelling.' My grandsons hear my stories, just as I heard them. There is a vast difference in telling stories in family settings and what has come to be known as Platform Telling. Platform Telling is a storyteller telling from a stage, whether that stage is a spot in front of a room or from a raised stage. A platform teller may be a professional storyteller or someone who tells stories occasionally. You become a professional when you begin making money at it. The federal government has guidelines on how much money you can make before it passes from just being a hobby to becoming a profession. Ask your accountant.

Whatever your interest in storytelling, I encourage you to share stories with your family and friends. You may not be blessed with a tradition of storytelling in your family, which means you have the opportunity of beginning a wonderful tradition now. Through stories we can share family history, talk about things that are difficult to discuss, entertain, teach and just be someone who is willing to share time and heart. You do not have to be a natural or trained storyteller. You do not even have to be good at it. Believe me—my grandsons do not give a hoot about my credentials as a storyteller. What matters to them is that I take the time to talk just to them. Why not start a storytelling tradition or continue your storytelling tradition? Today looks like a good storytelling day to me!

Octavia Sexton, Teller of Tales  
[www.octaviaseyton.com](http://www.octaviaseyton.com)

## Kudos

Congratulations to KSA member Mary Hamilton who was selected to receive a Circle of Excellence Award from the National Storytelling Network! The Oracle Awards presentation will take place on Thursday, October 1, 2009 as part of the National Story Night celebration in Jonesborough, Tennessee. According to the National Storytelling Network website, the Circle of Excellence is presented

Bed & Breakfast,  
Bethlehem, IN.  
Registration required.  
Cost is \$150 which  
includes all food and  
lodging. Learn more at  
[www.maryhamilton.info/  
Programs/WOWretreats.h  
tm](http://www.maryhamilton.info/Programs/WOWretreats.htm)

**July 27**, Wandering  
Storytellers at Natasha's  
Bistro (112 Esplanade,  
Lexington, KY), begins at  
8:00 p.m. Admission is  
\$5.00. For more  
information call 502-484-  
3359 or  
[www.beetnik.com](http://www.beetnik.com).

**August 10**, Tale Talk, a  
storytelling group where  
stories are told,  
camaraderie developed,  
critiques are available,  
story news is shared—in  
the Louisville area at  
7:30 p.m. Contact  
Cynthia Changaris at  
502-451-7144, 502-645-  
2930 or  
[cchangaris@aol.com](mailto:cchangaris@aol.com).

**August 16**, 2:00 - 4:00  
p.m. A Storytelling  
Celebration, stories told  
by Mary Hamilton &  
Cynthia Changaris, with  
possible additional  
presentations by various  
workshop participants  
from the June and  
August storytelling  
sessions. Ridgeway  
Memorial Public Library,  
Shepherdsville, KY 502-  
543-7675.

**August 22 or 29**,  
Kentucky Storytelling  
Association, Board of  
Directors meeting, 9:00  
a.m. to Noon, Central  
City Public Library,  
Central City, KY. For  
local arrangements

to artists who are recognized by their peers to be master storytellers who set the standards for excellence and have demonstrated, over a significant period of time, a commitment and dedication to the art of storytelling. To see Storytellers who have previously been selected for the NSN Circle of Excellence, see <http://www.storynet.org/programs/awards/circleofexcellence.html>.

## Book Review

by Thomas Freese

*American Fairy Tales from Rip Van Winkle to the Rootabaga Stories* compiled by Neil Philip and illustrated by Michael McCurdy, 1996, Hyperion, NY, NY, ISBN 0-7868-0207-3, 160 pages, hardbound.

I enjoyed reading these twelve tales and gazing at the woodcut-style illustrations. There are commentaries with brief biographies before each story, as well as discussions of historical and cultural contexts included in the preface and afterword. The commentaries note additional works by the authors if readers would like to explore further research.

Stories included such titles as *Rip Van Winkle*, *The Golden Windows*, *The Princess Who Could not Dance*, *The Bee-man of Orn*, *Feathertop*, *The Apple of Contentment* and others. The lives of the authors of these stories spanned our country's years from the latter 1700s to the 1960s and many a tale held quaint and older phrasing. I recognized some author names—Carl Sandburg, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Washington Irving and L. Frank Baum while others were not as familiar.

The stories are enjoyable in their own reading as well as providing material for possible adaptation to one's performance repertoire. I noted a number of sentences that were, how shall I describe it, poetically vague. These references which in my mind I link to such storytelling phrases as "Once there was and once there was not" are to me an amazing exercise in stretching the rational, linear mind of the reader or listener. In this book I found (in reference to a lovely party) "It would be impossible to repeat what everybody said or thought." Also, in noting the difference of appearance or fairness of three sisters, the author quotes "Why all this was so, even Hans Pifendrummel cannot tell, though he has read many books and one over."

Now whether or not you have seen or heard or felt a fairy or sensed nearby the presence of a magical creature you might very well enjoy the imaginative journey of our home-grown fairy tales spun out in this book. Thus I will quote Will Bradley who in 1916 wrote "The Lad and Luck's House", saying, "It takes sharp eyes to see a fairy; and when you do see one, you must never jump or make a loud noise or frown. That will scare the fairy away. Most of all, though, fairies love children, and I think it is only when old people keep a bit of childhood in their hearts that fairies come to them."

## Member Spotlight

This issue shines the spotlight on Laura Seaman.

I am a 42 year old wife and mother of three children. I work full-time evenings at AT&T in Owensboro, KY and share home schooling and housekeeping duties with my husband of 21 years, Mark Seaman. I have been a long-time church singer and music leader and art teacher and enjoy sharing my creative enthusiasm with others.

*Why did you join KSA?*

My daughter Emilee has been a member since 2007, when she was awarded KY torchbearer for the Kentucky Youth Storytelling Showcase. I became a member this year to become more involved.

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

contact Donna F. Slaton,  
President, 270-871-3719  
or  
[donna@misspockets3.com](mailto:donna@misspockets3.com).

**August 31**, Wandering Storytellers happens at Natasha's Bistro, (Bistro 112 Esplanade, Lexington, KY). Begins at 8:00 p.m. Admission is \$5.00. For more information call 502-484-3359 or [www.beetnik.com](http://www.beetnik.com).

**September 14**, Tale Talk, a storytelling group where stories are told, camaraderie developed, critiques are available, story news is shared—in the Louisville area at 7:30 p.m. Contact Cynthia Changaris at 502-451-7144, 502-645-2930 or [cchangaris@aol.com](mailto:cchangaris@aol.com).

**September 25-26**, Come to the Cave Run Storytelling Festival in Morehead, KY. See our website at [www.caverunstoryfest.org](http://www.caverunstoryfest.org)

Tellers include Donald Davis, David Novak, Kevin Kling, Bill Harley, Brenda Wong Aoki, Gay Ducey and Beth Horner.

**September 28**, Wandering Storytellers at Natasha's Bistro, (112 Esplanade, Lexington, KY) at 8:00 p.m. Admission is \$5.00. Contact 502-484-3359 or [www.beetnik.com](http://www.beetnik.com).

**From the KSA Fundraising Committee:**

Support KSA from your computer!  
What if Kentucky

I am looking forward to opportunities to promote youth storytelling in Kentucky with my daughter.

*What kind of stories do you enjoy?*

I enjoy stories that teach me new things and take me to new places. I especially enjoy redemptive stories as opposed to tragedies.

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

I am encouraged to see people tell stories and feel empowered and feel that they are changing things and impacting others.

**When I spoke with Laura I found out that she and her husband and family had lived in some of the same cities where I lived, Chicago and St. Louis suburbs. When we spoke about music and singing Laura shared about some fun and touching moments.**

"Once on a car trip I sang to Emilee about a little red teddy bear using the tune of The House of the Rising Sun. I enjoyed hearing Doug Elliott playing fiddle and singing songs at the Storytelling Festival. Before my current job I had time to go every Monday to hospitals or long term care facilities where I enjoyed singing older songs for the residents. I sang songs like *Jesus loves me*. Once I sang for a woman who was lying in bed but I could see her lips moving to try and sound out the words to the song. It was my favorite place to go and the residents so appreciated our singing to them. Another time my piano player couldn't make it and I was still learning to play the piano. When I finished a song a woman asked, 'Lady are you sure that thing is in tune?' Since I was young I've enjoyed singing in lots of different choirs, quartets, larger groups and musicals.

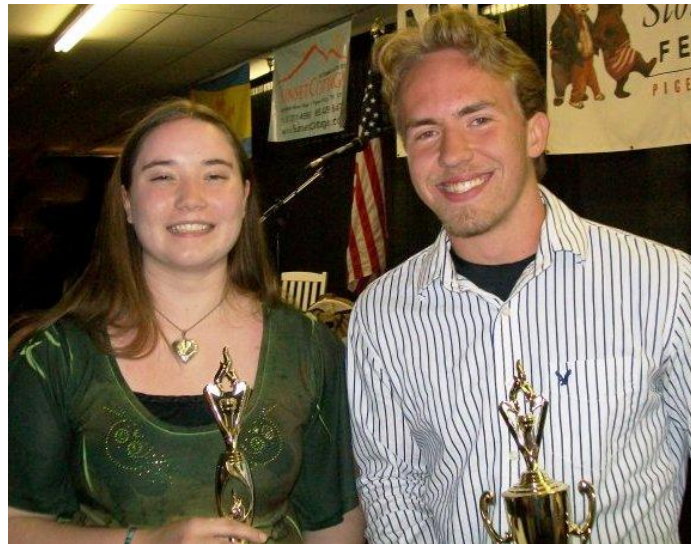


Appearing (from left to right) Mary Ann Zoll, Charlie Hardy and Betsy Fleischer

Storytelling Association earned a donation every time you searched the Internet? Or how about if a percentage of every purchase you made online went to support our cause? Well, now it can! Just start using Yahoo! powered GoodSearch.com as your search engine and they'll donate about a penny to KSA every time you do a search.

To search the internet and earn money for KSA at the same time, just go to [www.GoodSearch.com](http://www.GoodSearch.com) and enter Kentucky Storytelling Association as the charity you want to support. Then conduct your search as you normally would. Please note the following searches will not result in a KSA donation: Searches for images, videos, "search this site" searches, searches for URL's (search terms ending in .com, .org, .net, .edu), searches to sites for which the URL is well known such as HotMail, ESPN, MySpace, Facebook, Gmail, AOL, etc., searches for stock quotes or word definitions or Yellow pages searches.

To shop and earn money for KSA at the same time, just do all your online shopping through [www.GoodShop.com](http://www.GoodShop.com) where you'll pay the same price as you normally would, but a donation goes to KSA each time you make a purchase. Stores include Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy, eBay, Macy's, Hewlett-Packard, Barnes



Emilee Seaman and Rixon Lane with their awards!

## Updates

From Pam Holcomb

We are proud to announce that Kentucky was in the top tier of youth storytelling this weekend at the Smoky Mountain Storytelling Festival, National Youth Storytelling Showcase 2009, in Pigeon Forge, TN. Rixon Lane who returned for his fifth appearance at NYSS was selected Grand Torchbearer. He told a delightful personal story about his car and getting his driver's license. He received a trophy and \$500 prize. Emilee Seaman was selected as High School Torchbearer after giving the best performance of her "career" at her second NYSS appearance. She received a trophy and \$300 prize. Emma Wilczynski was named finalist and received a trophy and \$100.00 for her animated performance of "The Math Curse".

The youth were treated to up-close workshops with Donald Davis, Andy Offutt Irwin, Doug Elliott and several more. There were live concerts with all those tellers and the best of the Smoky Mountain Storytelling Association. The city of Pigeon Forge Special Events team led by Lana Boze, the NYSS director Elizabeth Rose and your KY state liaison Pam Holcomb are all to be congratulated for creating this outstanding event and its forerunners. These events provide opportunities for growth and learning that were shared by the 15 young people in attendance from SC, TN, TX, MD, Utah & KY as well as the many more that made that effort to try to get to NYSS finals.

Emilee Seaman is ready to start recruiting more youth storytellers and since her mother has joined the KSA board as Quadrant 1 representative, we expect a workshop to be held in the Western end of Kentucky sometime this summer. If you are interested in video or photos or perhaps Emilee performing in your area for a group of young people, please contact your Quadrant 1 representative on the [www.kystory.org](http://www.kystory.org) website.

**And from Emilee Seaman...**

I love the mountains. Just being within them makes me realize how small and insignificant I really am. I had never seen mountains before until February of last year. Of course I had seen them on postcards and in movies, but I had never stood outside and looked out at real mountains, the tips shrouded in thick white mist. I had the great privilege to see them again this year for the second time.

The Smoky Mountain Storytelling Festival in Pigeon Forge, TN was amazing. Each workshop was interesting and fun in its own way. The first

& Noble, Land's End, and many, many more – up to 900 online retailers.

Here's the web site — <http://www.goodsearch.com>. You can also read about GoodSearch in the NY Times, Oprah Magazine, CNN, ABC News and the Wall Street Journal.

To help spread the word, you can add the following footer to your email signature and every time you email someone, you'll also be promoting their support of KSA:

I GoodSearch & GoodShop for the Kentucky Storytelling Association. Raise money for Kentucky Storytelling Association just by searching the Internet with GoodSearch.com (powered by Yahoo), or shopping online with GoodShop.com

**News from NSN**  
Save Dollars  
KSA Members, if you join or renew your membership with National Storytelling Network, please remember to specify that you are a member of Kentucky Storytelling Association. This reduces your NSN dues by 10%. That's a \$6.00 savings on a \$60 dues payment!

What's on the KSA Website?  
Want to read past KSA newsletters? Visit the KSA website [www.kystory.org](http://www.kystory.org) Select Programs & Activities; then scroll down to

workshop, taught by four energetic and creative women, was an interactive workshop teaching us impromptu storytelling. It was in two parts, so that gave ample time for each group (there were three groups) to present stories to the parents, coaches, and teachers at the end of the workshop. The next workshop, taught by Donald Davis, was mostly sitting and listening. It was still quite interesting. We learned all about how to craft a story and to NEVER EVER cut your little brother's hair. After that we sat in a workshop that was taught by Lyn Ford. She let us do a lot of storytelling during class. We listened to everybody tell short stories and gave advice to each other on how to improve. The final day of workshops included exploration behind the Belz Mall in Pigeon Forge for edible plants with Doug and Todd Elliott. I honestly enjoyed that much more than any other sort of science class I have ever taken. The last workshop, taught by Andy Offutt Irwin, had us laughing, listening to him share how he got into storytelling and giving us useful tips on telling stories. He shared with us a couple of songs he had written, such as Grape Jelly and Chlamydomonas to which we'd sing along, trying to stifle our giggles.

In addition to the informative and fun workshops, the afternoons of each day had storytelling concerts and swapping grounds—where anybody who wanted to, could go up and tell their stories. We heard stories from professional storytellers such as Kent Rollins, Andy Offutt Irwin, Doug and Todd Elliott, Donald Davis, Elizabeth Rose, Lloyd Arneach, and a story Donna Slaton told about John Glenn at the swapping grounds. Some of the tellers had us rolling in the aisles and others had us captivated by thoughtful stories. Saturday afternoon, however, instead of the usual concert featuring two or three professional storytellers, there was the National Youth Storytelling Showcase. All the kids/teens did AMAZING, simply amazing. It was a pleasure to spend time with the other student tellers and listen to them perform. They all did so well.

I really enjoyed being able to tell in the National Youth Storytelling Showcase again. I do love storytelling and I felt honored just to have been asked to come. To be able to share my stories with people makes me so happy. I wish I could have taken all my friends and family with. Maybe next year I'll wrangle a huge bus to take everybody. It was a great experience and I hope to go again next year. Thank you to everybody who made it possible...thank you SO much.



NYSS Finalists of 2009 in Pigeon Forge, TN

KSA's First Annual Story Slam from Betsy Fleischer  
It's happening on the Wandering Storytellers' night of July 27th from 8-10pm. There will be an open mic for all to tell their favorite 5 minute story. Come on in, sign up and enjoy! We'll have immediate posting of the scores after each teller. Prizes will be awarded and bragging rights conferred at the conclusion of the night's event. Come have fun and enjoy stories for all. Tell, listen, laugh,

Newsletter Archive. Once a newsletter is one year old, it is published in the archive. So, if you are a new member and you want to find out what happened before you joined, or if you are a long time member wanting to refresh your memory, the Newsletter Archive is the place to go.

The results for the 2009 NYSS are as follows:  
2009 Grand Torchbearer  
Rixon Lane, Woodruff, SC  
High School Division  
Torchbearer  
Emilee Seaman,  
Owensboro, KY  
Middle School Division  
Torchbearer  
Wei Anne Reidy,  
Potomac, MD  
Elementary School  
Division Torchbearer  
Olivia Merryman,  
Catonsville, MD  
Tandem Team  
Torchbearers  
Rebecca and Sarah Bird,  
Dandridge, TN  
Finalists:  
Hayden Higgs, Denton,  
TX  
Hannah Smythe,  
Nashville, TN  
Sarah Filippone,  
Jefferson City, TN  
Nate Robinson, Alpine,  
UT  
Emma Wilczynski,  
Florence, KY  
Nicole Corn, Newport, TN  
Jacob Filippone, Jefferson  
City, TN  
Ruthanna Rubin, San  
Antonio, TX  
Caroline Miller, San  
Antonio, TX

wine and dine. Bring all of your friends, neighbors, relatives and yourself down to Natasha's Bistro and Bar at 112 Esplanade, Lexington, Kentucky. It's just off of Main Street within rock-throwing distance of the Kentucky Theater.

### Conference Sub-committee Report

This is for all story tellers, story listeners, story collectors, story "appreciators". The annual KSA conference is coming up November 7 & 8 at Eastern Kentucky University. Our artist this year is Cynthia Changaris. The workshop levels will range from pre-school to senior citizens. Topics to be presented include Basic storytelling by Cynthia Changaris, How to work with pre-schoolers by Cynthia Changaris, Audience Participation Story telling by Mary Hamilton, Turning Your Story Into a Fabulous Fib by Jonatha and Harold Wright, Skills for Youth Tellers by Pam Holcomb, Your Own Story: Writing, Owning and Telling by Paschal Baute and Charlie Eyer, I Want to Hear That Story: Turning your ordinary story into extraordinary with imagination, voice and body by Octavia Sexton, Story Delivery Skills for Making Your Fibs Believable by Jonatha and Harold Wright, Deaf Interpreters and Hearing Tellers Interchange to create a story by Nina Coyer and lastly, Telling with senior citizens by Cynthia Changaris.

We've got the workshop presenters. Now we need someone to: clerk in the story store for two times apiece (a total of 30 minutes). someone to be in charge of the door prizes and someone to be in charge of getting room monitors.

We need:

12 room monitors who will work one workshop session,  
1 game leader for the opening,  
an Emcee for the day to give all announcements,  
5 people for setup crew,  
5 for tear down crew,  
1 person to put up signs,  
an Open Mic Emcee and  
6 people to do a turn at the registration table (2 at a time in the morning, 1 at a time after that).

Already the Conference is a growing group of volunteers. In March three people jumped up and shouted, "I'll do.....Pick me! Pick me!"

"So let it be written, so let it be done." The first person to correctly identify who said that, and where, will win a prize at the conference.

To volunteer contact Conference Chair Betsy Fleischer at [betsycat2@yahoo.com](mailto:betsycat2@yahoo.com) or at 305 Cole Lane, Harrodsburg, KY 40330-7715 or at 859-734-3194. Don't delay, do it today. First come first served. You will be cheered in the order in which you signed up.

The success of the conference depends on us. So grab an oar and start rowing with your story friends!