



# Kentucky Storytelling Association

October 2007 Support and Appreciation for the Art of Storytelling In Kentucky Volume 3 Issue 4

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### Useful Links:

#### KSA Website

[www.kystory.org](http://www.kystory.org)

#### National Storytelling Network Website

[www.storynet.org](http://www.storynet.org)

### Contact your Board

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## Final message from our President "Buck"

This article for our last KSA newsletter of the year 2007 is almost a week late. By the time I email it to Thomas Freese, our amazing-tolerant-brilliant editor, it will probably be five days past the deadline. Now, I hope that Thomas would vouch for me that I don't normally miss deadlines. But I have been having a hard time writing this particular article. You see, it is the last article I will write for the KSA from the role of the President. And we all know, because we are storytellers, that the last words are important.

For the past two years, I have often said with pride. "My name is Don 'Buck P' Creacy and then either... I am the President-Elect or the President of the Kentucky Storytelling Association." That pride was not in the offices of President-Elect or President but instead it was and is PRIDE in the people of the Kentucky Storytelling Association. I have never been more proud to know and work with a group of people in my entire life.

There has been so much growth, some of it, obvious, sixty-two Members, a real budget, our 501(c) (3) status, our FOURTH statewide Kentucky Storytelling Conference, our participation in the National Youth Storytelling Showcase. And then there are the things that are not so obvious. The whole Board worked on our organizational groundwork. All year long your Board has been working, off and on, to establish our functioning processes and documenting them so our transitions from one administration to the next can be as smooth as possible for the next generation of Leaders. For example, there are documented processes for our big chunks of work. Like, our annual review of the finances, our conference, membership, our website's calendar, directory, teller wanted, online donations and so forth. Your Board has been very busy, trying to make our future easier to travel into and I think we have done a fairly good job.

Yes there's more work to do, yes you have a place in it. One of the things that we built into our organization is a limit to the time a person can serve in consecutive leadership roles. This is for many reasons, but I will list just two; Founder's Syndrome and Burn-Out.

Does anyone need an explanation about Burn-Out? Enough said.

Many organizations have the same leadership for years and years, the organization itself becomes identified with those leadership persons. Now whether or not they may do a good leadership job is inconsequential, Founder's Syndrome sooner rather than later and always limits the ability of organizations to change and grow

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## Announcements

### Reminder!

Vote for KSA Board  
You should have received  
your ballot in the mail.  
Ballots are due by Oct.  
15. If you did not receive  
a ballot, contact Mary  
Hamilton, Nominating  
Committee Chair,  
immediately. 502-223-  
4523 or  
[mary@maryhamilton.info](mailto:mary@maryhamilton.info)

Natasha's Cafe  
Wandering Storytellers  
monthly event is so  
much fun!! Come on out  
the last Monday of each  
month to see and hear  
stories. And have some

and adapt to the new world around them. Every organization needs new ideas, new leaders, new visions of the future; your Board understood this from earliest days, when we were just a handful of people, passionate about storytelling. Our first Board held five chairs. Now there are eleven Board Members and we are still passionate about storytelling. There are eight service committees and there are empty seats open for you to join and serve. Modern technology allows us to have committee meetings over the phone and computer, savings thousands of dollars in gas, money, and time.

This next year; it is my turn to rotate out of the President's seat, I volunteered to serve as an officer for just one more year. It has been a wonderful honor to herd this lively flock of geese called the Kentucky Storytelling Association. I used the metaphor of geese for a reason. Perhaps you've seen them in the fall sky; beautiful skeins of birds across the sunrise or sunset depending on you sleep habits. Did you know that geese flying in formation fly 45% farther together in that V formation than a single goose can fly alone? They are facing the same direction with similar goals. Did you know that geese share leadership? If you watch them long enough, you will see the lead goose drop out and one from somewhere in the ranks will pick up speed and take the lead? I am glad that the KSA is designed in a similar way. I wish our governments were too. Do you hear the geese before you see them flying by in their formation, honking? They are encouraging one another; we should do the same too. Our organization is a volunteer organization; let me encourage you to lend us your skills. We need your skills, ideas, dreams, talents, money, and the most valuable thing of all—your time. Geese understand these things instinctively, I believe you do too. Each group you see is a community among communities with similar goals.

We have a number of committees, some are weak for lack of help, some are quite strong, and some are in the infant stages of something great for the world of storytelling. My hope is that as I and others step aside, ten of you will step forward to replace each of us and lend your shoulder to the task. Not that I was doing anything that great, but the possibilities for the KSA are growing by leaps and bounds. It is going to take all of us, this is important work, more important to our society than even we possibly realize.

Oh I will always be a part of the KSA; I plan to attend Board Meetings even when I am no longer a Board Member. I would encourage you to do the same. Find time to go to a Board Meeting, volunteer to work on a Committee, get involved with the Youth Program or the Conference Program, and donate some money for one of our many programs. Go to our website and read about what we have done and hope to do. Read about the Committees and then call the Committee Chair and say those magic words; "What can I do to help?" Then take your place in formation, quwonk... quwonk... quwonk. Please read those geese "quwonks" as encouragement.

It has been a stellar privilege of my life to be your President. See you at the Conference in Dale Hollow, I can barely wait.

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## Our Fun Fall KSA Conference Nov. 2 & 3

TIME TO THINK ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND YOU!!

It's that time once again to get excited about attending the annual conference at Dale Hollow Lake State Resort Park is a lovely spot to have a conference. The site has a beautiful view of the water as you move from room to room and even from your lodge room if you so desire. As you know it takes a lot of

delicious food too!  
October will be the Spooktacular with Buck Creacy, Bill Watson, Charlie Hardy, Betsy Fleischer, and November will be Jonatha and Harold Wright. 9:00 p.m. Admission: \$5.00. Natasha's Café, 112 Esplanade, Lexington, KY. Contact: 859-259-2754 or [www.beetnik.com](http://www.beetnik.com) This is a KSA fundraising event.

[Kentucky Storytelling Conference](#), Friday evening November 2 and all day and evening Saturday November 3rd will take place at Dale Hollow Lake State Resort Park, near Burkesville, Kentucky. Visit the KSA website [www.kystory.org](http://www.kystory.org) for additional details. A Kentucky Storytelling Association, Inc. general membership meeting will take place on Saturday, November 3, during the Kentucky Storytelling Conference.

[The Owen Country Storytellers](#) performed at the annual Sweet Owen Days in Owenton, Kentucky on Saturday, September 15th. They started the entertainment program with an hour long performance. The three tellers who told were P. J. Beckett, Bill Watson and Bonnie Strassell.

people to make the conference a success and that's where you, the KSA member, come in.

The conference needs Y - O - U!!! Here's how you can pitch in. We need REGISTRARS - a couple of people to work the registration table - if you can smile and greet people and hand out packets then this is the job for you. We also need STORY STORE CLERKS - if you can smile and count change this is your kind of job. There will be different shifts so that no one is always in the store which is only open between sessions. We need a HOSPITALITY COORDINATOR - a person who coordinates car pools and room sharing. We need a SITE CONTROLLER - who is the liaison between the resort personnel and KSA to keep up with drinks and other needs. We need an EMCEE OF THE DAY who will make announcements and introductions. We need a ROOM MONITOR CHAIR who will recruit and schedule room monitors. Those monitors act as door captain, deal with handouts, move chairs if needed, ensure water is available and such. We need a DOOR PRIZE CHAIR who will solicit prizes, set up the table, create sets of prizes to give away. We need an OPEN MIC STORY CHAIR who will control the three hats, time the open mike story sessions and solicit MCs if not doing it him/herself. We need HELP to collate the attendee packets, and solicit inserts. We need a SET UP CREW of at least three people to get the banner and backdrop and sound up. We need a TEAR DOWN CREW of at least three people.

That's it! Pick out what you would like to do to ensure a success for your conference. Then email or call me, Program Chair Betsy Fleischer at [betsycat2@yahoo.com](mailto:betsycat2@yahoo.com) or 859-734-3194. Don't think that someone else will do it. You do it! Grab a friend and work a bit together. What big fun we all will have! Cue the music—everybody sings!!



## THE KENTUCKY ARTS COUNCIL

The Kentucky Arts Council, a state agency in the Commerce Cabinet, has provided funding for the 4th Annual Kentucky Storytelling Conference with state tax dollars and federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes a great nation, deserves great art.

## Eastern Quadrant picturesque location for our Fall Conference

Dale Hollow Lake State Resort Park offers outstanding views and accommodations so make this year's Kentucky Storytelling Conference the special weekend with your family.

The Mary Rae Oaken Lodge is built of limestone and massive timbers, and sits high on a bluff overlooking the 28,000-acre lake and 3,400 acres of surrounding woodlands. The 60 guest rooms feature private balconies and patios. Over 15 miles of trails are designated as multi-purpose trails, open for hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking unless otherwise posted. No motorized uses are allowed. The trails generally follow old logging roads along narrow ridge tops through the park. Most of the trails end at the tips of these ridges which form peninsulas into Dale Hollow Lake, requiring a return trip on the same trail.



Mary Rae Oaken, an honoree of the Kentucky Women's Hall of Fame which is sponsored by the Central City BPW, was a director of the tourism commission and this is an outstanding facility in her honor. Here is a side note with family story... Mary Rae Oaken, was a niece of Stella Stum Slaton, who was married to Fletcher Slaton, a second cousin of Norris Slaton, who is married to Miss Pockets! Ask more about it at the conference. See you there!

## Member Spotlight

E.J. may be the most western member in our KSA. He is an active businessman in an unusual job, a Shrine clown, a storyteller and retired military.

"I was born a long time ago and now my hair has turned to pewter. I am married with two grown children and lots of grandkids. I am still gainfully employed, until the end of the year, by Commonwealth of Kentucky. I went to the KSA Conference and I was pleasantly overwhelmed. I signed up for a hitch and here I am, a happy member of KSA. My favorite quote is "It's better to be rich and healthy than to be poor and sick." I truly enjoyed the atmosphere at the 2006 Owensboro Conference. I greatly recommend attending the Conference this fall, for more super stories and great tips to improve your skills and repertoire."

**Spellbinders** is an organization dedicated to spreading the magic of storytelling by training volunteers to become storytellers in their communities. In fiscal year 2006 the Lexington Spellbinders sponsored by the Lexington Public Library told stories to 4210 children in 28 schools and five recreation facilities. The Lexington chapter welcomes your interest. Mary Hamilton will lead our next training for volunteers. It is scheduled for three days, October 9-11. Call Greg Davis, Marketing Director, for more information or to register. (859) 231-5554, email [gdavis@lexpublib.org](mailto:gdavis@lexpublib.org). Visit the National Spellbinders website at <http://www.spellbinders.org/> KSA members Charlie Eyer, Mary Kane and Paschal Baute are active members in the Lexington Chapter.



## News from the Youth Storytelling Competition

By Donna Slaton

I am pleased as punch to tell you that the Muhlenberg County children gained valuable storytelling experience, as they were honored with first place in each category. The winners included the following names with levels: Elementary - Katie Beth Dorris from Greenville Elementary School, Middle School - Brooke Pleasant, High School - Emilee Seaman, and Tandem Tellers - Jordin & Jonathan Pleasant. Some of the students were home schooled and sponsored by the Muhlenberg County Public Libraries, who held an open event for this competition.

The Glema Mahr Center was a wonderful stage for story telling. Mr. Bradley Downall and his staff of volunteers were welcoming and helpful. We had competitors in each class to move on to the next level. Their performances



Happy Listeners, Happy

Storytellers (Left to Right):  
Donna Slaton, Buck Creacy and Cynthia Changaris enjoy Kentucky Homefront during the Corn Island Storytelling Festival. Buck told stories that night.

[Healing Stories 103 workshop in Lexington](#), on October 20, led by Paschal Baute and other storytellers. Topics include the use and power of metaphors and reframing. Saturday from 10 until 3 at Paschal's conference room. Registration is limited. Fee \$10.00. References on request. Call 859-293-5302 or see web blog at <http://storytellinglexingtonky.blogspot.com>

### **KSA Web page**

#### [A sampling of events](#)

This list is NOT comprehensive; it is included here to inspire reader to look to the webpage for much more information.

October 23, Scott County Storytelling Guild, 7:00 p.m. Admission is free. Scott County Public Library, 104 South Bradford, Georgetown, KY. Contact: Buck P. Creacy, 859-402-0756.

November 1, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Owen County Storytellers, Owen County Public Library, 118 North Main Street, Owenton, Kentucky (across street from First Christian Church). Owen

were polished at the local and regional venues and taped twice to prepare for the packet that came with them at this level. Don Creacy did an outstanding job as organizer, emcee and encourager. He brought volunteers Mary Hamilton and Pam Holcomb. Thanks to both Mary and Pam, and to Don for traveling so far with him. Member E. J. Dewitt from Marion met us at the Center, along with a local storyteller and potential member Mrs. Kerby Parish of Madisonville. She is a reading teacher at MCC, teaching for Murray State University off campus classes.

Emilee Seaman told an original story, not a fairy tale. Katie Beth Dorris told stories that her papaw told her, so we have the variety of original, interview and classic tales. That's pretty good for our first year organizing the Youth Storytelling. Thanks again to all those who drove so far. The children felt special and we all learned a lot.



Donna F. Slaton, Jonathan and Jordin Pleasant.

## **Help Finance Youth Storytellers for Conference**

Folks, we planned a budget this year that was hopeful to get donations to help sponsor some of our youth tellers attending the conference. Don Creacy and your KSA board have worked hard to see that the Youth Teller event is going on and that there are competitors statewide. We now have 7 young people who have been selected at their regional events and another regional event at the Mountain Arts Theater in October to go. We need to see if we can canvas members and ask them to consider asking educational groups and civic groups in their community if they would be interested in sponsoring a youth to attend our conference or donate toward one or more of them attending the NSN on an educational scholarship.

People need a reason to donate, not just that we want money. Give them something specific for kids and a way to put their name on it and we can encourage giving.

If you simply want to help, mail a check or better yet go straight to the web page and donate through pay pal. Those of you who work for large corporations or school systems may have a way to have regular donations deducted from your paycheck, like United Way. Check into that and please let us all know if there are companies out there doing this.

County Storytellers meet the first Thursday of each month for story sharing and planning events. All ages welcome. Contact: Bill Watson, 502-514-1061. Admission: Free.

November 4, Kentucky Storytelling Association Board Meeting, Dale Hollow Lake State Resort Park, 6371 State Park Road, Burkesville, Kentucky. All KSA Board meetings are free and open to the public. Contact: Mary Hamilton, 502-223-4523

November 20, Scott County Storytelling Guild, 7:00 p.m. Admission: Free. Scott County Public Library, 104 South Bradford, Georgetown, KY. Contact: Buck P. Creacy, 859-402-0756.

December 6, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Owen County Storytellers, Owen County Public Library, 118 North Main Street, Owenton, Kentucky (across street from First Christian Church). Owen County Storytellers meet the first Thursday of each month for story sharing and planning events. All ages welcome. Contact: Bill Watson, 502-514-1061. Admission: Free.

As a young minister, I was asked by a funeral director to hold a graveside service for a homeless man, with no family or friends, who had died while traveling through the area. The funeral was to be held at a cemetery way back in the country, and this

## Tell for the Audience at hand by Mary Hamilton

One of the most difficult goals of a storyteller is to tell for the audience at hand. While reaching this goal sounds simple, after all what other audience is there except the one at hand, achieving this goal can be challenging. Here are some tips for successfully telling for the audience at hand.

**Vary your words to suit the audience.** I'm not suggesting you talk down to your listeners. Instead I am suggesting you pay attention to your listeners so you will know what words to use to tell the story to the audience at hand. Audiences have varying degrees of knowledge. If you see a quizzical look pass over listeners' faces, you might want to rephrase part of the story before moving on to the next part. When you know the story, as opposed to memorizing the words, you have the freedom to vary your words to suit the listeners.

**Vary your timing to suit the audience.** Audiences have their own rhythms and personalities. Few things make a storyteller look more foolish than pausing for the laugh, gasp, or sigh that was there with the last audience but doesn't exist with this one. You must love the story enough to enjoy telling it even without your favorite responses. If not, your mind could be occupied with thoughts of, "What's wrong? They aren't acting anything like last week's audience - they loved it," or "Why aren't they laughing?" or "On no, they hate this story. Please God, just let me finish this program and go home," all the while missing delightful twinkles in the eyes of the audience at hand. Meanwhile, you prattle on telling the story on automatic pilot, a storytelling sin if ever one existed.

**Use space appropriately for the size of the audience.** For example, fifty people were expected, but only three showed up. Remember, you are a storyteller, not an actor. There is no rule that says you must remain in the "stage space" and project your voice to the far corners of the room. Leave the performance space, pull up a chair if possible, sit practically knee-to-knee with the three people present and tell them stories. If the situation is such that others may enter during the telling, don't worry. Use eye contact to invite them to join the group. As the audience grows, you may need to stand so all can still be included. If the audience grows rapidly, you may even be in the performance space you abandoned by then end of the story. That's fine. The key to making such changes is to know the story well. Then you can tell the story with its landscape no larger than your lap or with its landscape encompassing an entire stage and beyond.

**Make eye contact.** If three, fifty, or a thousand people are present, make eye contact with three, fifty, or a thousand. I've seen tellers making eye contact with vast audiences which existed only in the tellers' imaginations while I - present in the audience - was ignored in favor of those who would have been there if all the seats were filled. Storytelling exists between people, not between the teller and the performance space.

**Broaden your repertoire** so you can abandon your plans when the audience is not who you expected. For example, you were promised ages ten and up, but of sixty people in the audience, fifty of them are clearly under six and the other ten are the day care directors and chaperones for this outing. Tell for the audience at hand, and then learn to be much more involved in the program planning - especially the publicity - the next time you work for that client! Word

man would be the first to be laid to rest there. As I was not familiar with the backwoods area, I became lost; and being a typical man did not stop for directions. I finally arrived an hour late. I saw the backhoe and the crew, who was eating lunch, but the hearse was nowhere in sight. I apologized to the workers for my tardiness and stepped to the side of the open grave, where I saw the vault lid already in place. I assured the workers I would not hold them up for long, but this was the proper thing to do. The workers gathered around, still eating their lunch. I poured out my heart and soul. As I preached the workers began to say, "Amen," "Praise the Lord" and "Glory." I preached and I preached, like I'd never preached before: from Genesis all the way to Revelations. I closed the lengthy service with a prayer and walked to my car. I felt I had done my duty for the homeless man and that the crew would leave with a renewed sense of purpose and dedication, in spite of my tardiness. As I was opening the door and taking off my coat, I overheard one of the workers saying to another, "I've never seen anything like that before and I've been putting in septic tanks for 20 years."

of warning: When your audience is a mix of the promised group and others, consult with your client before assuming you will serve your client best by switching stories.

So, why do I think achieving this goal is difficult? It seems so simple. After all, "Who else could I tell for? The audience at hand is the only one here." To achieve this goal, I not only need a varied repertoire, but also whenever I tell a story I must give my full attention to this moment in this story with this audience. Such attention requires concentration, awareness, and flexibility. Do I always succeed? No, but when I catch my attention wandering, I send a gentle mental reminder, "Tell for the audience at hand." Such reminders help me remember my responsibilities. For more information, please see Mary Hamilton's website: <http://www.maryhamilton.info/Articles/articles.htm>

From my file of  
humorous tales received  
in emails—anonymous.

