

Journal of Tar Heel Tellers

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NC Storytelling Guild
Official Newsletter



NCSG Tarheel Tellers Storytelling Festival a Delight for One and All by Linda Goodman

Story lovers, there is a new storytelling festival in town! And where better to host it than the Andy Griffith Playhouse in Mount Airy, NC; the town that storytelling and comedy legend Andy Griffith called home.

What a great setting! An auditorium with comfortable chairs and controlled temperature, surrounded by photos and memorabilia of the fictional town of Mayberry, Andy's TV home.

Add to that mix 6 of the finest storytellers North Carolina has to offer, all ready to charm North Carolina story lovers with their unique storytelling skills: Lona Bartlett told a folksy tale of misidentified animals and a Scottish tale that mirrored Rumpelstiltskin; Willa Brigham sang her way through a tale of a visiting alien and then told the story of a wooden hat that had me sitting on the edge of my seat; Alan Hoal told a tall tale about a hero fish and followed that with a tale about scary movies; author and poet Joan Leotta shared an Italian tale of greed and its consequences, along with a Japanese story about three strong women;

Chautauqua Storyteller Becky Stone performed a powerful tale of slaves who flew, later morphing into a well-choreographed story about Br'er Rabbit and the snake; singer/musician Jon Sundell put on an authentic Irish accent to tell the story of Jamie O'Rourke, followed by the heartbreaking story of the Irish potato famine.

Carl Cordini, from Boone, NC came to the festival because he loves storytelling, and Tar Heel Storytellers did not disappoint. "I love the diversity of the stories, from silly frog stories to people flying," Cordini enthuses.

"We just happened to see a poster at the Hampton Inn," said Sam Stroud, who stopped at the Inn on his way to his home in Pennsylvania. "This was a marvelous surprise. I'll come back if the festival is here again next year."

Storyteller Lona Bartlett said that all her storytelling needs had been met. "An excellent stage, a great venue, the beautiful area, the wonderful people.... Best of all, people laughed in the right places. One

(Continued next page)

woman in particular was left speechless.”

Storytelling Festivals are usually run by a team of volunteers. The Tar Heel Storytelling Festival team was led by Terri Ingalls, who was backed by an army of volunteers, too numerous to mention.

Most of those attending the festival are hoping to see the festival in Mount Airy again next year. “For two years the Planning Team has been meeting and questioning and working to make this a festival to remember,” states Ingalls.

That goal was certainly met.

So keep an eye on what is going on with storytelling in the Carolinas, check out the North Carolina Storytelling Guild’s website: <http://ncstoryguild.org/>

Perhaps you might even be moved to volunteer.

Linda Goodman hails from the Virginia Appalachian Mountains, is an Author, Storyteller and Playwright. In October she told at the National Storytelling Festival for their evening Ghost Story Concerts. One of her dreams, which came true! You may contact her at happytales@aol.com, or visit her website at <http://www.lindagoodmanstoryteller.com/>

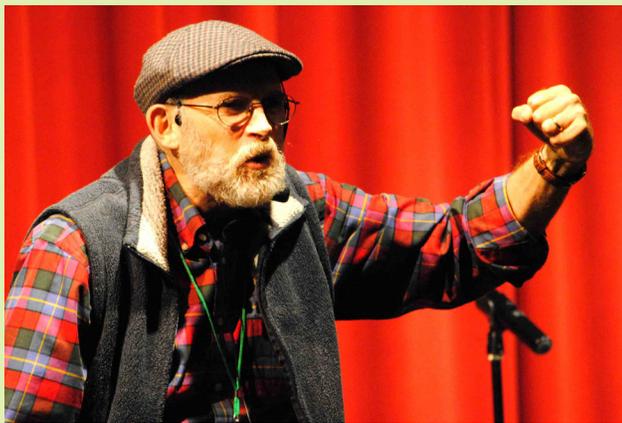


Our Featured Tellers

Photos credited: Jim and Sylvia Payne
Left to right

Joan Leotta

Alan Hoal



Jon Sundell

Lona Bartlett



Willa Brigham

Becky Stone

Called back
to the stage
following
Saturday's
final
performance

Left to right:
Jon Sundell
Lona Bartlett
Becky Stone
Alan Hoal
Joan Leotta
and
Willa Brigham



Priscilla Best, Willa Brigham, Marva Moss



Tellers: Jon Sundell, Becky Stone, and Lona Bartlett



Emcee: Elena Miller



Captain, Festival Planning Team: Terri Ingalls

JOURNAL OF TAR HEEL TELLERS

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Calendar listings are free.

Vision Statement

To communicate the power, joy, and impact of story to every community in North Carolina.

Mission Statement

To create and nurture a thriving community of storytellers through performance and education.

Goals

- To affirm the value of storytelling by fostering an appreciation of oral traditions and the importance of story listening.
- To educate people, both tellers and listeners, in North Carolina about storytelling.
- To promote excellence in oral tradition by developing emerging and established artists.
- To seek out the needs of North Carolina storytellers and respond by creating opportunities.

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.

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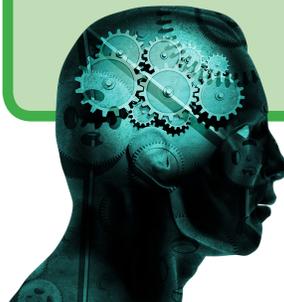
Here's what's happening with your storytelling friends around the state!

The August 2017 issue of *Ruby Magazine* - <https://issuu.com/ruby4women> - published an article and a poem by **Joan Leotta** . . . Recently **Lona Bartlett** was on Charlotte's *WBT Carolina Outdoors Show* podcast. She talked about the Guild's *Tarheel Tellers Storytelling Festival*, and what NCSG is about. She shared an eerie story about *Annie and the Boojum*, a popular folklore story from Western NC's Haywood County . . . **Terry Rollins** led two fun ghost tours in Washington, NC on Halloween's Eve and Halloween night . . . Kudos to **Terri Ingalls** who chaired the Guild's Tarheel Tellers Storytelling Festival in Mount Airy.

"Aristotle teaches us that being a good person is not mainly about learning moral rules and following them. It is about performing social roles well — being a good parent or teacher or lawyer or friend."

-Journalist, David Brooks

Storytelling in the Digital Age the editor's desk



It seems the digital age is becoming more mindboggling and overpowering every day. New developments appear almost overnight. How can I as a storyteller use the power of this dizzy digital age? Embrace it!

One way I use this power is to view fascinating TED Talks that deal with storytelling. One TED Talk that I recently enjoyed was by our fellow NC storyteller, Donna Marie Todd. Her TED Talk, "Harnessing the Power of Storytelling for Transformation," deals with difficult issues that we all face.

In addition to TED Talks, I enjoy listening to storytelling podcasts. A favorite of mine is NPR's StoryCorps at <https://storycorps.org/podcast/>

Here's a recent example. I heard air traveler, Russell, tell the story of his meltdown after a delayed flight. Russell, an adult with autism, said a kind stranger, an airline employee, helped him, which "changed his life." His story touched my heart and enhanced my knowledge of autism.

Last month I enjoyed five storytelling performances during the National Storytelling Festival via live streaming. A wonderful way to experience part of this festival at a distance!

After thinking about digital resources, maybe technology isn't so overpowering after all. I enjoy and learn from it. It's merely a matter of taking time to apply these resources to help me improve my storytelling. Though one thing is certain, I will never toss out my pencil and paper, or the printed book!

Submit articles for JTHT Spring 2018 issue to:
Sylvia Payne, JTHT Editor, 1621 Nathaniel Street, Newton, NC 28658.
E-mail: sylpayne@bellsouth.net
Deadline for Spring Issue: March 15, 2018.



President's Message by Elena Miller

IT began as a dream, a thought, an idea. 'Relighting the Spark' kindled North Carolina storytellers to meet at Brown's Summit Retreat and Conference Center north of Greensboro on Saturday March 28, 1998. The fire began. On Sunday March 29th an organizational and planning meeting was held to determine the possibility of forming a state wide storytelling group. This idea kindled a passion that ignited every corner of North Carolina from the mountains

to the sea. The lighting of the retreat candle united over 20 people to form a cohesive group of dedicated and loyal storytellers, who spread the word that our North Carolina Storytelling Guild had emerged. Our Purpose, Mission, Goals and By-Laws were defined. That year the North Carolina Storytelling Guild was founded. Since that time North Carolina Storytelling Guild has experienced many triumphs.

That spark has continued to grow. This past weekend was one of those triumphs with hearts all warm and fuzzy despite the little drizzle of rain. The 2017 North Carolina Storytelling Guild Festival at Mount Airy in Andy Griffith Playhouse was truly a moment to remember. It was successful and eventful with wonderful volunteers assisting in every way. Thanks

to the Tellers, who were all 'on fire' as they took the stage, to the Regional Representatives, who brought baskets to be raffled, to Sandra Gudger, who made jams and jellies, to Terri Ingalls, the liaison for us and the Surry Arts Council, to Jim and Sylvia Payne, who spent many hours in dedication to our mission, and to Frank and Ken, who commanded the sound equipment. Our 2017 NCSG Storytelling Festival was a great entrée into our next year's 20th Anniversary Celebration. Thanks to ALL of you who make this group special, one of the greatest Storytelling groups in this nation.

*Sincerely,
Elena Diana Miller*

The StoryCorps and The Great Thanksgiving Listen

The Great Thanksgiving Listen, is a national project to engage people of all ages in the act of listening. The project is designed for students ages 13 and over to be used as part of a social studies, history, civics, government, journalism, or political science class, or as an extracurricular activity. Students will develop research, archiving, and planning skills; speaking and listening skills; and social-emotional competencies including social awareness, appreciation for diversity, and respect for others.

During The Great Thanksgiving Listen's pilot year

in 2015, high school teachers across the country enlisted their students to interview a grandparent or elder over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, and record their story with the free StoryCorps mobile app. The result - over 100,000 people, from all 50 states participated and uploaded their stories into the StoryCorps Archive at the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress, where they will become an invaluable resource for historians and future generations to come.

Search the following websites for additional information:

<https://storycorps.org/participate/the-great->

[thanksgiving-listen/](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyhsTOWUYv0>

https://www.bncollege.com/GTL_2016_Faculty_Toolkit.pdf

<https://storycorps.org/2016-storycorps-gala/>

<https://www.socialstudies.org/resources/teaching-resources/great-thanksgiving-listen-2017-and-oral-history-storycorps>

You are encouraged to share this with Family and Friends during the Holidays. Pass those stories on!

- the Editor

Traveling Our Storied World

by Connie Regan-Blake

My husband Phil and I recently returned from an extraordinary journey in Peru. It was my first time in South America, and now I have visited and told stories on six continents! The whole experience was a feast for the senses - the vibrant colors, the ancient stone structures, brilliantly designed terraces, the tastes and sounds of an old, new world.

On my first morning in Lima, Peru, an engaging young poet

community of local storytellers he features through his work. (My interview will be up soon on the web with Spanish subtitles – I will send a link when it is available.)

After the interview with Carlos, Phil and I had more than a week to explore the wonders of Peru. We started out in Lima, marveling at the intricate architecture of the Adobe Pyramid, Huaca Huallamarca and the exquisite art work of the Lima Cathedral. Then we headed to Cusco, and were soon awed by

that soon it would be released again into the wild.

We ventured on to Machu Picchu, braving what seemed like a million stair-climb to the top! Let me tell you, I was grateful for the seven years I have spent doing a modified CrossFit exercise regimen! The view from the top was magnificent – lush, craggy mountain peaks rising above a land of architectural wonder. Wild llamas kept the grass neat and trimmed around the ancient buildings at the top. I marveled at the intricate stonework used by the builders – so sophisticated in a time before the wheel and when construction relied on a different kind of ingenuity and labor instead of machines.

Our next destination was along the shore of Lake Titicaca. During the day, we took a boat made of reeds from the lake to visit the man-made 'islands' at the center. At 12,500' Lake Titicaca is the world's highest navigable body of water. There are 85 small floating islands on the lake. Each is handmade out of the local totora reeds. Depending on weather and other factors, the islands must be rebuilt every 4-5 years.

On one such island, we visited with the five Uros families who live there, learning about their lives, tasting some of their food, and hearing stories about their art and their heritage. Later, the children arrived home from school and what a welcome we received! They were thrilled to see us and insisted on dressing us in their traditional clothes. We all got a good laugh!

(Continued on next page)



from the Ministry of Education, Carlos Estela, came to interview me with a friend Daniel Ochoa, who handled the video-taping. Carlos works as part of the initiative, "Historias Q Cuentan," which roughly translates to "Stories that Count." We spent a delightful hour and I thoroughly enjoyed his thoughtful questions as I shared my story journey. I was so thrilled to connect with him and the

its Incan Golden Temple and the cobblestone roads so narrow that it seemed our van would scrape its sides as we barreled along them. Then, on we went to the Sacred Valley where we visited an animal sanctuary with amazing wildlife including bear and pumas. One of the most memorable creatures we encountered there was a rehabilitated condor bird that had a 10-foot wingspan! We were told

(Continued from Our Storied World)

Then I asked our guide, Omar, if he would interpret a short story for me - and he jumped right in. As we shared the story together, the barrier of language did not seem so hard to overcome.

As the trip came to a close, I was sorry to leave this beautiful

land and all of the people who I encountered there, touching my life and shaping my journey. At the heart of each place we visited, I was struck with awe at how connected the people are to their land, their lineage, and their history. Even when we were hearing about what had happened to their ancestors 500

or 2,000 years ago it felt real and present. It was and is still their story - they are living it now.

Many of us know Connie, but just in case you don't, learn more about her and her influence on the oral tradition. Check out her website at: <http://www.storywindow.com/> or just Google Connie Regan-Blake.

My Wild Week Experience by Kaye Byrnes



Pat Nease and Kaye Byrnes.
Wild Week Photos courtesy, the Editor

As a working storyteller for over twenty years, I've participated in my share of retreats, workshops and conferences. Most have been helpful, some not worth the time and money. Others have been spectacularly wonderful and inspiring. Such was the case with my first participation in the Storytellers Wild Week held in July at Wildacres Retreat near Little Switzerland, North Carolina. A dear friend who attended in 2016 insisted I join her for the week and to her I owe a debt of gratitude.

The Storytellers Wild Week offered not just a day or two to skim through one or two topics, but rather a five-day inspiring journey through a multitude of pertinent subjects. With the inimitable Kim Weitkamp leading the way, there

was no aspect of storytelling that wasn't explored. Those relatively new to the art and the seasoned practitioners, together found common ground in the practical tools and open discussions.

The almost magical environment at Wildacres Retreat immerses the body, mind and spirit into nature.

The creative source within cannot help but be touched by the beauty of the mountains and plenty of time for exploration is built into the daily schedule.



Linda Schuyler Ford

The Storytellers Wild Week at Wildacres is the perfect combination of people, place, time and space. There I made a host of new friends, added some great



Kim Weitkamp, Workshop Leader

tools to my storytelling practice and reconnected with my inner artist. A pretty good return on the investment!

Regardless of our place on the continuum of experience, as storytellers we are artists. The nurturing of our art must be a priority, albeit one that sometimes gets lost in the shuffle. Giving one's self the time and space to explore and expand is not an indulgence; it's a necessity. The Storytellers Wild Week reminded me clearly that sometimes we need to retreat to move forward.

As a past President of the Florida Storytelling Association, Byrnes plays a leadership role in promoting storytelling and encouraging storytellers throughout the state. She serves as Director of the annual Florida Storytelling Festival. She may be contacted at: <https://www.kayebyrnes.com/>

Storytelling and the 4th Wall

by Brian Sturm

For many years, I have been intrigued by the theatrical concept of the fourth wall, an idea attributed to Denis Diderot in 1758, when he wrote, "Whether you write or act, think no more of the audience than if it had never existed. Imagine a huge wall across the front of the stage, separating you from the audience, and behave exactly as if the curtain had never risen" (299). This invisible "window," through which traditional theater audiences watch the unfolding drama on the stage without influencing what happens, serves to keep the audience members separate though connected as voyeurs. Actors, on the other hand, perform as though they were unobserved, paying no heed to the "observed" nature of the experience.

While this concept is usually associated with theater, it has also been applied to storytelling (Harley, 1996), virtual worlds (Dawson, et. al., 2011), television (Auter and Davis, 1991), film (Brown, 2012), video games (Conway, 2010), and social media (Ballinger, 2014). As a storyteller and story educator, however, my interest here is in Bill Harley's approach.

In his book chapter, Harley explores the ways in which the fourth wall can playfully be used to increase the connection between teller and listener. For storytellers, this fourth wall is "a psychological distance between...[the teller] and the audience" (131). When the wall is "down," the storyteller

interacts with – or speaks directly to – the audience; when it is



"up," the storyteller ignores the audience. He explains that there are at least three "positions" a storyteller might take with respect to the fourth wall:

1. In the position of narrator, the storyteller speaks directly to the audience (the wall is down)
2. In the position of character, when speaking to another character, the teller ignores the audience (the wall is up)
3. In the position of metanarrator, the storyteller can respond to the environment and the audience directly by commenting on the story from outside it (the wall is completely down)

When the wall is down, there is a strong connection between the teller and the listeners, as the storyteller is taking the story to the

audience as an offering. When the wall is up, Harley suggests, the storyteller is inviting the listeners into the story world by effectively disappearing into it herself. As he states, "when dialogue occurs between the...[story characters] the fourth wall is up – it is as if two actors are on stage and we are watching events transpire as if we were not there" (132). In this character-stance, the storyteller "must be committed to staying in those characters when the wall is up" (135, italics in original). He claims that a "sloppy closing of the wall is an aspect of bad storytelling" (134) because the roles of storyteller-as-narrator and storyteller-as-character may become intermingled, causing the audience confusion and disconnecting them from the story world. "Another possibility, just as confounding, is when the character is speaking to the audience....For instance, when the wolf yells at us, 'I'll huff and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house down,' we may feel that we are pigs under attack. It feels like bad children's theater. We feel assaulted and confused when the storyteller emotes at the audience" (138).

I agree with Harley that confusing the roles of narrator and character is disconcerting at best, a train wreck at worst, but I would like to offer another interpretation of the position of the fourth wall during dialog, and how long it should stay "up." If I can encourage the audience to feel like "pigs under attack," is that not precisely the immersive experience

(Continued on next page)

I hope for as a storyteller?

Communicating characters' emotions is fundamental to good storytelling; eye contact is, in my opinion, one of the most powerful tools we have for doing so. When our story characters talk to each other, we feel and share their emotions because we must become them to speak as them. Narrators speak about and for their characters, but dialog enables us to speak in character. Dialog also enables us to play with the deictic shift inherent in the pronoun "I," further enhancing listeners' identification with our characters and immersion in our stories (for more on this concept, please see Sturm, "The Power of I" in *JTHT*, 18, 2: 4-5).

What happens to emotions when we raise the fourth wall? As Harley states, despite an invitation to join us in the story world, the audience is expected to watch "events transpire as if we were not there." Yes, listeners feel the characters' emotions (there is research on mirror neurons that would suggest that our brains react to watching others, much as they do when experiencing ourselves), but do they feel them as deeply? Do tellers ever want their audiences to be "not there"? I believe not, particularly if we want to enhance the immersive power of our storytelling. When the fourth wall goes up and we turn aside from our audiences, our characters share their feelings with each other, and the audience just gets to watch. As a listener, do I want to sympathize with a piggy about to be eaten, or do I want to feel as if I am a piggy about to be eaten? How do we enable our audiences to receive the full

emotional power of our stories without confusing them?

I believe raising the fourth wall is fundamental to this endeavor, but it remains in place only momentarily...long enough to signal the different stance the storyteller has taken when speaking in character. As a storyteller, I break eye contact with the audience just briefly to show that one character is speaking to another (i.e., I use the direction of my gaze to "stage" or "choreograph" the conversation and delineate where each character is on stage), and then I return my gaze to the audience and speak to them as if they were the character to whom I am speaking. Briefly raising the fourth wall avoids the confusion of roles Harley mentions, and changing the audience's role from "listener" to "character" enhances emotional communication. I see the storyteller/audience interaction following this sequence:

1. Storyteller-as-narrator addresses audience-as-listener
2. Storyteller-as-narrator signals a change to storyteller-as-character (through a change in voice, posture, gesture, and/or direction of gaze)
3. Storyteller-as-character addresses audience-as-character
4. Storyteller-as-character signals a change to another character (through similar means)
5. At the end of the dialog, storyteller-as-character signals a return to storyteller-as-narrator (and by extension audience-as-listener)

I have found audiences of all ages perfectly capable of this role-switching, as we use it in conversation all the time. These signals are nuanced and subtle: a tilt of the head rather than a complete shift of position on stage. Beginning storytellers often want to "act out" the story and end up prancing around as they try to occupy the imaginary space of each character on stage. It requires practice to develop a full repertoire of "signals" we can use to help our audiences recognize the various roles we play as storytellers, but I firmly believe that raising and keeping up the fourth wall during dialog hampers my ability to evoke in my audiences the magnificent emotions my characters feel. Does this mean that traditional acting (with a permanent fourth wall) is less emotionally involving than storytelling (with a diaphanous one), or that Bill Harley's approach is flawed? Not necessarily, but how we manipulate the fourth wall may be uniquely individual, so I offer this approach as an alternative to the one Harley suggests in his book chapter. It is our responsibility as artists to experiment with the fourth wall and find the best approach for ourselves.

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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 strum@ils.unc.edu.

Historic Rickman Store

By Jeannie McPhail

Nestled in the beautiful Cowee Valley, just seven miles up Hwy 28 north of Franklin, NC, sits the T.M. Rickman Store. Every Saturday, May-December, 10-4, the community and visitors gather together for old-fashioned fellowship, music, food, stories, and history on display.

This historical landmark was originally built in 1895, and is one of twenty structures on the National Register of Historic Buildings in the Cowee-West Mill Historic District. The Rickman Store was owned and operated as a General Store by Mr. Thomas M. Rickman for 69 years, from 1925-1994. It was privately purchased at that time, but in 2007 the store came up for sale again and members of the community formed the Friends of the Rickman Store and enlisted the help of Mainspring Conservation Trust to purchase the property and restore it to its original purpose.

Visit the store to enjoy a sense of community, traditional music jams, crafts, art and books by local

artists and authors. The Friends of the Rickman Store Volunteers are on site and available to show and tell visitors about Cowee Valley



history, including its past and present gem mining operations. Adjacent to the Rickman Store, and a must on your visit to the Cowee area is the Cowee School Arts and Heritage Center which also hosts music concerts and storytellers, including the Annual Franklin Area Folk Festival.

This past summer, during the store’s special Ten-Year Anniversary programming, local author and storyteller, Gregg Clark, read from his book, *Ghost Country: The Lost Hauntings of*

Southern Appalachia. Gregg is passionate about preserving the stories that could be lost without someone putting them in print. That is his mission. But he has put those stories to work in another way. During October his “Where Shadows Walk Ghost Tours” in the Macon and Jackson County areas were popular and entertaining events for the season. For more information on Gregg’s books and tours, visit: <http://www.whereshadowswalk.com/>

The Friends of the Rickman Store invite you to spend a Saturday with them to experience the history and enjoy the music and stories. They prefer to schedule storyteller and author presentations, so if you are interested in sharing at the Rickman Store, contact Elena Carlson at 828-322-8282 to set up a time.

J.A. (Jeannie) McPhail is the author of three books; two middle-grade novels and a memoir. She is a member of NCSG, the Morganton Writers Group, and SCBWI. <http://www.jamcphail.com/> or <http://www.facebook.com/jamcphailbooks>

How Brain Gym Can Help Storytellers

by Mary Gray

What is Brain Gym?

Brain Gym, or Educational Kinesiology as it is properly called, is a tool that can help you learn and live more easily. It can help to improve posture, increase stamina, vitalize your memory, help improve public speaking skills, increase confidence and poise and allow a performer to enjoy their chosen art form more, whether it is ballet dancing or storytelling. These simple exercises are also ideal to use in between the telling of stories, they help listeners of all ages feel more refreshed and relaxed. Some of them can be used directly in your storytelling program to improve auditory skills in the group you are telling to.

Brain Gym was developed in the 1960s by Paul and Gail Dennison. Paul Dennison was inspired to become an educational specialist in part because as a child he learned very slowly. Gail had trained and worked as a dancer. Together after twenty years of research and experimentation, they developed twenty-six distinct movements which became the foundational movements of the Educational Kinesiology system.

For the last century, most teachers in the west have been trained in colleges and universities on the principle that learning is entirely a mental activity. The physical components of learning: acquisition of visual, auditory and fine motor skills students needed were almost entirely ignored. The problem is that children learn in

different ways and around twenty-five percent of our young learners thrive in the classroom systems of learning we have devised. Too many of the remaining seventy-five percent struggle without significant success. When learning is stressful, the brain compensates by adapting alternative strategies which are in themselves stressful. In addition, a young learner who has difficulties in the early years of schooling seldom improves unless the physical cause of the stress is somehow addressed.

Brain Gym teaches that "movement is the door to learning." Paul realized early on in his work that those who came to him for help in learning often had postural, physical or perceptual stresses and inhibitions. He drew on research done by behavioural optometrists, kinesiologists and from a number of postural alignment therapies and sports. When his students did these foundational movements, not only did it become easier for them to learn but the postural compensatory stresses and their emotional and mental inhibitions were reduced. As the physical blocks released, they were better able to express their innate intelligence and abilities.

The Brain Gym movements recall the movements naturally done during the first years of life as infants, toddlers and young children learn to coordinate their eyes, ears, hands and whole body. Even though it is not fully understood why these simple movements work so well, people in many countries continue to report perceptible and significant improvements.



Mary Gray

All twenty-six movements can be learned in a three-day Brain Gym 101 Foundation course. This course is a gateway to becoming a Brain Gym movement facilitator. All the more advanced courses are utterly fascinating and can lead not only to a part-time career teaching others and giving individual balances but to learning many techniques that can help one's own development. You can learn more and find an instructor near you at www.braingym.org. Another informative website is www.heartsatplay.org.

Mary Gray is writer, poet and storyteller, whose works have been published in her home country of Wales. She is certified to teach Brain Gym to students and adults. She is a long-time NCSG member and taught Brain Gym movements this summer at Wildacres. She may be contacted at: penysgwarn@yahoo.com.

Telling in Schools

By Lona Bartlett



"I don't understand," she said, "I tell a great story so why won't schools hire me to come in and tell stories. Who doesn't want to hear a good story?"

I cannot tell you how many times I have been asked a variation of this question. Most of my work happens in schools. I'd say as much as 75% ... ok maybe more like 80% ... fine, it might even be more like 90% during the school year. It is a good fit for me. My degrees are all in education and I, at one time, was a classroom teacher.

Let's look at the question and get some clarification. Yes, yes, yes, everybody loves a good story, but ... when it comes to schools they don't have time for JUST a good story. Schools and teachers have a checklist of what needs to

be taught every year to students. They also have benchmarks (the goal of where each student needs to be in understanding and literacy by the end of the school year) for each subject. In addition they have schedules, tight schedules, every day. Add to that fire drills, lock downs (real and practice), special classes, ESL students, and the list just keeps going on. With all that being said, if your presentation doesn't meet the teacher's check list, they are simply not going to hire you for just a good story. So, where do you begin? Take a deep breath, breathe in ... and out.

Right now the thing in schools is the Common Core. Common, meaning they want everybody to use it so there for it is, let's say it together, common. Core, meaning it is the center of education. "Huh?" you ask. The Common Core is the checklist that most states use. It addresses literacy in Math and English/Language Arts. In addition states have a specific state checklist called State Essential Standards. Here is the website for Common Core www.corestandards.org. You will have to google your own state essential standards, they are each a little different. Read through them and see which standards your stories address. For instance, 4th grade is state history. If the school is in North Carolina then the stories need to connect to North Carolina. If the school is in Florida, connect your stories to Florida, etc. Next you need to consider the language of your stories. The younger the students, the more simple the language, as they get older their vocabulary increases.

Once you have decided which stories, which standards, what grade, you may need to write a lesson plan. There are schools

I work with and when I do an assembly they usually do not ask me for a lesson plan but when I do a residency most do require a lesson plan. Even if a lesson plan is not required it is good to do the exercise. A lesson plan can help to keep you on track and focused on the story and information you want to share. (How to write a lesson plan would be another article or workshop for another time, until then, google "How to write a lesson plan.")

You have your stories, standards, and lesson plan but you need a place to tell those stories. Get on your state and surrounding state storytelling directories. There seems to be a validation when you are part of a state group. Find out how to get on Arts Council Directories too. There are different requirements for each of them, you can research and find out what they require. I can't say enough about a website. You need a web presence, we are in that age. Find teachers and stay in touch with them. I get quite a bit of work because I talk to teachers. I ask them questions like: What lessons do you need in your classroom? What kind of stories do you wish someone would tell? What unit studies will you be concentrating on this year? Most are glad to tell you what they need. Many schools provide that checklist of what needs to be taught, but not a curriculum. That's right, the teachers are left to figure out their own curriculum to teach subject matter. They are usually thrilled to find someone who can help them with this.

I know all of this seems like a lot, but DON'T freak out!! You can do this! Ask questions, take a workshop, GOOGLE /research.

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You can navigate through all of this and make your way in. Once you are there, teachers talk to other teachers and they pass your information on. So don't ever

have the attitude of 'it is only kids'. Teachers are looking for quality Teaching Artists to come in and help them educate their students. You and your stories might just be what they are looking for.

Lona Bartlett is former president of NCSG and the NCSG Festival Coordinator for The Heart of North Carolina Storytelling Festival in 2015. As a storyteller and puppeteer, her puppet creations are in four different continents. You may contact her at: lonabartlett@att.net



Winter Workshop with Sheila Kay Adams

January 26-28, 2018
The Assembly at Fort aswell

Just the Thought of Going Home

"In this workshop, we'll discuss how to develop family stories to tell 'from the page to the stage'. We'll write stories and determine how best to tell them to an audience. It's a huge jump but it can be done. Also, we'll talk about content, timing and how to begin and end a story with pizzazz, as well as dignity. We'll have a great time and that's the truth. Looking forward to seeing all y'all!" – Sheila Kay

Sheila Kay Adams is a seventh generation ballad singer, storyteller, author, and claw-hammer banjo player from the mountains of North Carolina. Adams' devotion

to preserving and perpetuating her heritage has earned her a prestigious National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as a Brown-Hudson Award from the North Carolina Folklore Society. The list of awards, accolades and recognitions for her contribution to the traditional arts is outstanding. Sheila Kay Adams is truly a national treasure!

To register go to <http://ncstoryguild.org/>

Questions? Contact Terry at bardelf@gmail.com, Dianne at dianne@dianne-hackworth.com or Sheila Kay at sheila31853@gmail.com

IN MEMORY OF CAROLYN SCHEUTZ



"There's always joy," Carolyn always commented, and it showed in her heartfelt conviction reflected in many of the tales she told. Her unique blend of playful exuberance and quiet intensity was guaranteed to evoke laughter, inspire the imagination, stir the heart, and lift the spirit. She shared her stories with all ages.

Carolyn passed away this past spring following a lengthy battle with cancer.

Prior to moving to Greensboro, NC, she had a long career with an accounting business in Detroit. She was a former member of the Detroit Story League and North Oakland Story Tellers prior to becoming a NCSG member.

THE STORYTELLING ANIMAL FROM THE EDITOR

A thought provoking book: *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*, explains why humans are wired for story. Published 5 years ago, author Jonathan Gottschall offers "the first unified theory of storytelling." He also argues "that stories help us navigate life's complex social problems..." He has done extensive research and has included an extensive bibliography, along with an index at the end. In the last chapter he assures us not to "despair for story's future... because as storytelling animals, we will no more give it up than start walking on all fours."

"If history were taught in the form of stories, it would never be forgotten."

-Rudyard Kipling

STORY WALK

BY LEEANNA LAWRENCE

This past spring, as part of Forsyth County Creek Week, I organized a "StoryWalk" event along Salem Creek at Gateway Nature Preserve. The event was a "progressive" storytelling experience for about 80 children and parents who came to walk along the creek, and as they walked, they encountered tellers posted at various stops along the way, all of whom told a 10-to-15 minute story based on the subject of water.

I prevailed upon drama students from UNCSA to play

the role of water sprites, who also helped me with staging and crowd control, as the number of children required that we divide the audience into two parts, giving one group a 10-minute head start while the water sprites entertained those who had to wait.

My storytellers were members of the Winston-Salem community: Amatullah Saleem of Happy Hill, Renee Jackson of the Forsyth County Public Libraries, local thespian Alice Cunningham, Quaker pastor Philip Raines, and Quaker Friend Marcie Newell.

The StoryWalk ended with a demonstration of a flood plain model by members of the NC Association of Flood Plain Managers (it was fascinating!) and an opportunity for the kids to make nature sprites (boggerts!) out of clay. Everyone went home happy and awash in tales of water.

LeeAnna Lawrence teaches Humanities in the College division at UNC-School of the Arts, where she incorporates myths and storytelling into her teaching process. She currently serves as the NCSG Southern Piedmont Area Representative. She may be contacted at: Lawrela@earthlink.net.

NCSG Picnic and Annual Meeting

The Guild held its Annual Meeting and Picnic on Saturday June 10, 2017 at Vandalia Presbyterian Church fellowship hall in Greensboro, NC. A total of nineteen members plus two guests attended.

Some drove great distances to join in the fun and fellowship. Some came from the Wilmington area while others abandoned their cool mountain abodes to join their fellow storytellers.

The hall resonated with cheerful greetings, hugs, and laughter. Soon an appetizing aroma of food permeated the room as the picnic spread of mouthwatering salads, baked beans, fried chicken, biscuits and various desserts, was enjoyed by all.

Following the picnic and annual meeting, we all gathered to enjoy a bounty of mesmerizing stories shared by our storytellers.

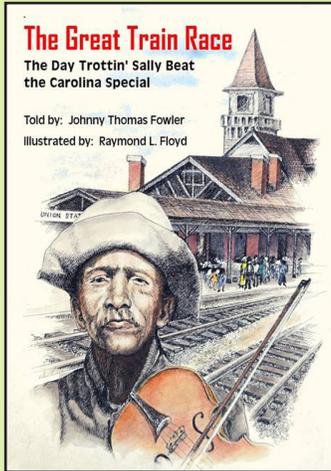
Photos, clockwise beginning with top left: Charlie St. Clair, Sandra Gudger; Henry Vogel, Robin Kitson; Marva Moss, Priscilla Best, Willa Brigham & Sylvia Payne; group photo.
Photos courtesy Jim Payne



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH OUR STORYTELLERS

TROTTIN' SALLY

Spartanburg, SC - Congratulations to Johnny Fowler who recently published his children's book. The Great Train Race: The Day



Trottin' Sally Beat the Carolina Special. A celebration was held at the Spartanburg Headquarters Library on September 10, 2017 and hosted by the Spartanburg County Historical Association. This story is the powerful telling of a legendary folk hero who outruns a passenger train from Spartanburg to Inman, SC, and is beautifully illustrated by local artist, Raymond L. Floyd. Both John and Raymond were on hand as part of the program, and a book signing followed.

Award fund recipients. These awards included NCSG's own, Sarah Beth Nelson who received an award for: *Performing Reality: An Ethnography of the Carapace Community*.

Quoting Sarah Beth, "I plan to conduct ethnographic observations during Carapace, an open mic reality storytelling show, which takes place in Atlanta once a month. I will also interview Carapace organizers, storytellers and attendees. The purpose of this study will be to better understand reality storytelling and the community that forms around events."

FOREST KINDERGARTENS

Seattle, Washington - This summer LeeAnna Lawrence traveled to Seattle, Washington to become certified for teaching Forest kindergartens. She plans to initiate an outdoor art enrichment program for 4-5 year olds come June 2018 at the Gateway Nature Preserve close to UNCSA! With the help of ArtistCorps students, they'll be engaging the kids in dance, drama, and music, all inspired by the outdoors. Tons of outside time!

NSN MEMBER AWARD RECIPIENT

Jonesborough, TN - The NSN Board and Member Awards Committee recently announced this year's deserving NSN Member

Alan's Spring Retreat Smorgasbord by Robin Kitson

The first order of business upon arrival was food. Smorgasbord = varied food. With set table, forks, and knives at the ready; Charlie St. Clair, David Joe Miller, Dianne Hackworth, Elena Miller, Jim Payne, Robin Kitson, Sherry Lovett, Sylvia Payne, Terri Ingalls, Ray Christian and Tommy Leonard dove in as if none had eaten in weeks.

Alan served a funny "getting to know" you appetizer. Next, he ransacked his pantry of legal knowledge about festivals and storytelling. Alan runs the successful Sounds of The Mountains Festival at Camp Bethel in VA, hence we supped in earnest. The Tarheel Tellers Festival Marketing Committee asked for a private tour of his vast cupboard, and Alan allowed grazing time. To keep us from busting a gut with all this new knowledge, Alan graciously supplied references.



Alan Hoal

As the meal continued Tommy Leonard and Ray Christian added new flavors. Ray contributed a serving of a paradigm shifting Moth contest winning tale. Tommy Leonard dished out a fish tale extraordinary while claiming to be a new teller.

For dessert the rest of us combined sweet, tart and calorie rich tales fit for a gourmet. By the end of our meal we folded napkins, washed plates and put away our stories till the next time.

All left satisfied having been served by our NCSG storytelling lawyer, and bold-faced liar.

Robin Kitson serves on the Board as the Piedmont Triangle Area Rep. and is a long standing Guild member. She is well known for her Cajun stories from the Ninth Ward in New Orleans where she grew up. You may contact her at: nanirobin@gmail.com



November 2017

November 21: David Joe Miller will be telling with the Jonesborough Storytellers Guild, at the International Storytelling Center, 100 W Main St, Jonesborough, TN, 7:00 to 8:30 pm. Admission is \$5. Contact: <http://www.storytellingcenter.net/> or 423.753.2171.

November 30: David Joe Miller Presents **Spoken Word OPEN MIC**, The McKinney Center at the corner of East Main St. and Franklin Ave, Jonesborough, TN, 7pm (sign-up at 6:30 pm to share a story or poem). Free admission. davidjoetells@yahoo.com

November 30: David Joe Miller Presents WORD! With two National Story Slam Champions, Vara Cooper and Tony Marr. First place and third place winners of the National Story Slam in Jonesborough for 2017! Admission is FREE. Sponsored by the Friends of the Buncombe County Library and Mr. and Mrs. David Joe Miller. Pack Memorial Library, 67 Haywood St. Downtown Asheville, NC. Thursday, doors open at 6:30pm in the Lorde Auditorium for seating; performance at 7pm. Contact davidjoetells@yahoo.com

November 30-December 2: The Uncalled for Trio: It's All Downhill from Here. Join Bil Lepp, Kim Weitkamp, and Andy Offutt Irwin as they celebrate the 10-year anniversary of their Uncalled for Trio. With fresh stories, songs, and refreshments to follow the performance, their holiday variety show is a tradition that's not to be missed. Reservations strongly recommended. 2:00pm and 7:30pm. Admission \$20. International Storytelling Center, Jonesborough, TN. Contact: 800.952.8392; 423.913.1276 or <http://www.storytellingcenter.net/events/storytelling-live/christmas-concerts/>

December 2017

December 1-3 Taking Your Story to the Stage, 3-day storytelling intensive. Asheville, NC; Participant performance opportunity on December 2nd at the Black Mt. Center for the Arts. The focus of this 3-day workshop led by [Connie Regan-Blake](#) is on storytelling performance. Each participant is asked to come with a story that is almost "stage-ready." Set in Connie's home tucked in the beautiful mountains surrounding Asheville, NC, this workshop provides a supportive, affirming atmosphere to nurture storytellers' performance skills and confidence. "Taking Your Story to the Stage" is open only to those who have previously studied with Connie. If you have not had this

opportunity and/or Connie has not heard you tell a story, a private coaching session may be required. More info: <http://www.storywindow.com/workshops/for-individuals/taking-your-story-to-the-stage>

December 2: David Joe Miller at Jonesborough's Colors of Christmas - Saturday, 3-9pm, downtown Jonesborough, TN. **David Joe will be telling stories** at 3:30, 4:30, 5:30 and 6:30 at the historic Oak Hill School on Sabine Drive behind the public library in downtown Jonesborough, TN. <http://www.townofjonesborough.thundertext.com/>

December 7: 25th Annual Winter Stories. World folktales with Brian Sturm and his storytelling students. Thursday, 5pm refreshments. Program from 5:30-6:30pm. Wilson Library, Pleasants Room, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill campus. Contact: Liza Terll, Friends of the UNC Library, liza_terll@unc.edu, 919-548-1203.

December 9: Bynum Front Porch Storytelling. Second Saturdays 6:30-9:00pm. Bynum General Store, 950 Bynum Road, Pittsboro, NC. <http://cynthiaraxter.blogspot.com/> or www.bynumfrontporch.org.

December 13: David Joe Miller Presents **HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS**, featuring Michael Reno Harrell telling stories from his new CD 7 pm. Tickets are \$18 online at Eventbrite.com (*may be purchased beginning in November*) or \$20 at the door. Seating is limited. Habitat Tavern and Commons, 174 Broadway in Downtown Asheville, NC. Visit: www.storytellingcalendar.com.

December 16: Tim Lowry's performance of Dickens' A Christmas Carol. For a truly special holiday outing, see Storyteller Tim Lowry in his renowned one-man show, Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Dressed in Victorian costume, Lowry invokes the spirit of Mr. Dickens with his quick wit, rapid-fire delivery, and flair for the dramatic. 2:00 pm and 7:30 pm; Admission \$20. Reservations strongly recommended. International Storytelling Center, Jonesborough, TN. Contact: 800.952.8392; 423.913.1276 or <http://www.storytellingcenter.net/events/storytelling-live/christmas-concerts/>

December 16-17: Join **Donald Davis** at the Barn at Fearington Village. 11am Saturday morning; again Sunday afternoon at 2pm. No admission, we ask you bring non-perishable food items for the CORA Food Bank. 2000 Fearington Village Center, Pittsboro, NC. Contact: 919.542.4000 or <https://www.fearington.com/events/>

December 21: Storyteller Tim Lowry brings entertainment to the Timrod Library, 217 Central Avenue, Summerville, SC. Contact

<http://thetimrodlibrary.org/index.html> or 843.871.4600.

January 2018

January 13: Bynum Front Porch Storytelling. Second Saturdays 6:30-9:00pm. Bynum General Store, 950 Bynum Road, Pittsboro, NC. <http://cynthiaraxter.blogspot.com/> or www.bynumfrontporch.org.

January 17: Roadhouse Storytellers. Beginning at 7:00pm, five storytellers will entertain you at the renowned Pittsboro Roadhouse on US 64 in downtown Pittsboro. Pittsboro Roadhouse General Store, 39 West Street, Pittsboro, NC. Contact: <http://pittsbororoadhouse.com/> or 919.542.2432.

January 18: Storyteller Tim Lowry brings entertainment to the Timrod Library, 217 Central Avenue, Summerville, SC. Contact <http://thetimrodlibrary.org/index.html> or 843.871.4600.

February 2018

February 2: Charleston Tells Concert Series presents storyteller Susan Klein, Friday evening 7pm. The Charleston County Main Library, 68 Calhoun Street, downtown Charleston, SC. <http://www.ccpl.org/CharlestonTells> or charlestontells@ccpl.org.

February 10: Bynum Front Porch Storytelling. Second Saturdays 6:30-9:00pm. Bynum General Store, 950 Bynum Road, Pittsboro, NC. <http://cynthiaraxter.blogspot.com/> or www.bynumfrontporch.org.

February 15: Storyteller Tim Lowry brings entertainment to the Timrod Library, 217 Central Avenue, Summerville, SC. Contact <http://thetimrodlibrary.org/index.html> or 843.871.4600.

February 17-19: Saint Simons Island Storytelling Festival. Featuring Storytellers: Kevin Kling, Donald Davis, Kim Weitkamp, Andy Offutt Irwin. Epworth by the Sea, Christian Conference and Retreat Center, 100 Arthur J. Moore Drive, St. Simons Island, GA. Visit our website: www.epworthbythesea.org for information and to register online.

March 2018

March 10: Bynum Front Porch Storytelling. Second Saturdays 6:30-9:00pm. Bynum General Store, 950 Bynum Road, Pittsboro, NC. <http://cynthiaraxter.blogspot.com/> or www.bynumfrontporch.org

March 14: Roadhouse Storytellers. Beginning at 7:00pm, five storytellers will entertain you at the renowned Pittsboro Roadhouse on US 64 in downtown Pittsboro. Pittsboro Roadhouse General Store, 39 West Street, Pittsboro, NC. Contact:

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(Continued - Upcoming Events)

<http://pittsbororoadhouse.com/> or 919.542.2432.

March 15: Storyteller Tim Lowry brings entertainment to the Timrod Library, 217 Central Avenue, Summerville, SC. Contact <http://thetimrodlibrary.org/index.html> or 843.871.4600.

April 2018

April 12-15: Florida Storytelling Festival.

A premier storytelling event, known nationally for its unique combination of workshops, concerts, youthful voices and sense of community. People come from across the state of Florida and beyond to explore and savor the art of storytelling. The Festival kicks-off with a special Thursday evening storytelling concert and wraps up Sunday with a storytelling cruise around Lake Dora.

<https://flstory.com/festival/>

April 14: Bynum Front Porch Storytelling.

Second Saturdays 6:30-9:00pm. Bynum General Store, 950 Bynum Road, Pittsboro, NC. <http://cynthiaraxter.blogspot.com/> or

www.bynumfrontporch.org.

April 19: Storyteller Tim Lowry brings entertainment to the Timrod Library, 217 Central Avenue, Summerville, SC. Contact <http://thetimrodlibrary.org/index.html> or 843.871.4600.

April 20-22: Stone Soup Storytelling Festival.

Friday through Sunday. 231 E. Hayne Street, Woodruff, SC. <http://stonesouppsc.com/>

May 2018

May 12: Bynum Front Porch Storytelling.

Second Saturdays 6:30-9:00pm. Bynum General Store, 950 Bynum Road, Pittsboro, NC. www.bynumfrontporch.org

May 16: Roadhouse Storytellers.

Beginning at 7:00pm, five storytellers will entertain you at the renowned Pittsboro Roadhouse on US 64 in downtown Pittsboro. Pittsboro Roadhouse General Store, 39 West Street, Pittsboro, NC. Contact: 919.542.2432 or

<http://pittsbororoadhouse.com>

"The tale is often wiser than the teller." —Susan Fletcher (as Marjan, in *Shadow Spinner*)

Articles for Spring 2018 JTH

Articles, stories, and storytelling news are needed for NCSG's Spring 2018 issue of the *Journal of Tar Heel Tellers*.

We ask that you include storytelling events that you are aware of (*must be open to the public*). They will also be included on NCSG's website 'Events' page at <http://www.ncstoryguild.org/events.html>

Allow three to four weeks notice for your event to get posted on NCSG's website 'Events' page.

Deadline: March 15, 2018

Email to: sylpayne@bellsouth.net

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(July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018)

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ROADHOUSE STORYTELLERS™

Sam Pearsall invites you to tell at a new and exciting storytelling venue. He's producing a bimonthly show at the Pittsboro Roadhouse Café on the third Wednesday of each odd-numbered month. If you would like to be on the list of potential Roadhouse Storytellers™, please contact Sam at Sam@SamStories.org.

He is unable to pay tellers. However, the tip bucket has been yielding more than \$30 per teller, and the management comps the tellers and emcee up to \$20 for food and non-alcoholic beverage. The food is good.