

National Storytelling Network

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

NSN'S BOARD VOTES UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT STATEMENT ON CULTURAL EQUITY



Rishi Nixon
President & Chair of the Board of Directors
National Storytelling Network

I'm very happy to share that this October, the NSN Board of Directors voted unanimously to adopt a Statement on Cultural Equity for our organization. Following on our action last month to join Americans for the Arts (AFTA) and its national coalition standing up for the arts, an NSN committee consisting of vice chair-elect Darlene Richard, director-at-large Gwendolyn Napier, NSN member and acclaimed diversity consultant Susan O'Halloran, and chaired by our vice chair Caleb Hubbard, drafted the cultural equity statement, drawing upon a framework designed for AFTA member organizations.

I would like to recognize Caleb and the committee for the exceptional voice they crafted for our organization in this statement: thoughtful, incisive, and clear on our stand, as storytellers, on the importance of preserving equity and promoting belonging among underrepresented voices in our community. Please read the statement on the next page.

We will have more to share in the coming months, but look forward to engaging with AFTA on their upcoming *50 Stories, 50 States campaign* to mobilize storytellers in the effort to save our federal arts infrastructure.

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DID YOU KNOW? NSN
BOARD MEETINGS ARE
OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS

Click [here](#) to read this
month's and prior meeting
minutes.

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NATIONAL STORYTELLING NETWORK

STATEMENT ON CULTURAL EQUITY

The National Storytelling Network believes that everyone deserves the chance to live a full and creative life. We commit to supporting practices of cultural equity that help build a nation where all voices are welcomed, included, and valued.

“Cultural equity embodies the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people—including but not limited to those who have been historically underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion—are represented in the development of arts policy; the support of artists; the nurturing of accessible, thriving venues for expression; and the fair distribution of programmatic, financial, and informational resources.”

— *Americans for the Arts*

What We Recognize, What We Believe

In order to live out our mission, we begin by recognizing the realities that shape our world and affirming the values that guide our storytelling community.

- Throughout history some voices have been lifted up while others have been silenced. As storytellers, we thrive to recognize the current and historical systems of power and privilege. These inequities still exist and must be recognized, challenged, and changed.
- Cultural equity is essential for storytelling to thrive, because every culture's stories carries wisdom, truth, and value.
- We hold ourselves accountable to creating space for voices that have been overlooked, knowing that true change comes through listening, sharing, and building together.
- Every individual deserves the opportunity to tell and hear stories that reflect the fullness of human experience; this is vital to a healthy, connected, and democratic society.
- Storytellers help us imagine new possibilities and confront injustice. By centering diverse stories, we illuminate inequities and inspire alternatives.

Growing Through Story & Practice

To live into our values of cultural equity, we commit to modeling them in how we work, listen, and tell stories. We recognize that this is ongoing work, and we approach it with humility and care.

- We acknowledge that we are all learners. We do not know what we do not know, and we commit to curiosity, reflection, and growth as individuals and as a community.
- We recognize that each of us carries responsibility for the impact of our words and actions. While harm is rarely intended, we hold ourselves accountable when it occurs and strive to repair and learn from it.
- We seek to improve our communication skills—listening deeply, speaking honestly, and telling stories with respect—so that together we can grow as a stronger, more inclusive storytelling community.
- We commit to examining and addressing inequities in our policies, systems, and programs, and to sharing our progress openly.
- We dedicate time and resources to ensure that our leadership reflects the many voices and stories that make up our society.

Shaping Tomorrow's Story

To ensure that equity is not just an ideal but a lived reality, we commit to nurturing growth across the storytelling community.

- We encourage ongoing learning and reflection so that storytellers and audiences alike can expand their cultural awareness and foster practices that welcome every voice.
- We strengthen the storytelling pipeline by supporting programs, opportunities, and leadership that reflect the true diversity of our communities.
- We advocate for policies and partnerships—public and private—that uplift cultural equity and ensure all stories have space to be told and heard.
- We believe progress happens when we listen to one another, hold space for different experiences, and create opportunities for future generations of storytellers to flourish.

At the National Storytelling Network, cultural equity is not just a principle—it is part of how we live our mission, vision, and values. Guided by our belief in the power of storytelling to connect, inspire, and build respect, we commit to advancing cultural equity in every aspect of our work. This means lifting up underrepresented voices, engaging diverse communities with care, collaborating with integrity, and adapting to meet the needs of a changing world. By practicing cultural equity, we ensure that storytelling remains a vital, inclusive, and transformative force for all people.

Adopted October 15, 2025

Acknowledging Caleb Hubbard, Darlene Richard, Gwendolyn J. Napier, Susan O'Halloran, and Americans for the Arts for contributions to this statement.

The statement is presented on the storynet.org ABOUT page—NSN's Story—at storynet.org/about-NSN



TELLABRATION!™

2025 NATIONAL TELLABRATION!™ CALENDAR

See the calendar below for listings of some Tellabration! sites. Remember to send us your Tellabration! info next year, and it's not too late to add it to our website calendar!

[TELLABRATION!™ CALENDAR](#)

Our website also has a useful document on how to produce your own TELLABRATION! Tellabration! has been an annual event each November since 1988. A great time to gather your local tellers together for a fundraising night of story.

[TELLABRATION!™ HOSTING GUIDE](#)



TELLABRATION!™

**NATIONAL STORYTELLING
NETWORK**

NOVEMBER 2025



VISIT STORYNET.ORG BY NOV 15 TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL!

TEXAS 2026 NATIONAL STORYTELLING CONFERENCE—LAST CALL FOR PROPOSALS



Caleb Hubbard and Trudy Hanson
Co-Chairs of the National Storytelling Conference
National Storytelling Network

Celebrating the Past, Investigating the Present, and Planning for the Future

Planning for the 2026 NSN Summer Conference on the campus of West Texas A&M is underway. We invite you to submit a proposal for the conference, *Prairie Voices, Honoring Heritage, Inspiring Tomorrow*, which takes place July 23-26 in Canyon, Texas.

As noted in the call for proposals, here are the terms and benefits:

1. We welcome proposal submissions from anyone by November 15, 2025. Presenters are not required to be members of NSN, but 80% of sessions must be presented by NSN members.
2. Each selected presenter of a 90-minute presentation will receive \$100 off registration. Morning activity leader receives \$100 off registration for three 30-minute sessions.
3. Proposals will be evaluated for: (a) quality of program, (b) clarity of intent, (c) practicality of process, (d) expertise of presenter on this topic, (e) interest to general membership or to applications of storytelling (Special Interest Groups), and (f) diversity of presentation.
4. All applicants will be notified of their acceptance or rejection by e-mail sent on or before January 31, 2026.
5. All applicants receiving notification of acceptance must email their acceptance confirmation to NSN by February 15, 2026 —failure to respond by the deadline may result in withdrawal of the offer to present. We will also request a high-quality electronic photo (300 dpi or higher) and a 30-word biography for publicity.

Session categories include the following:

- Workshops (90 min.): Practical, interactive learning experiences.
- Presentations (90 min.): Sessions on in-depth topics, innovative projects, etc.
- Panels/roundtable discussions (90 min.): Limit 4 presenters, including the moderator.
- Coaching (90 min.): Group coaching for a limited number of participants who sign up in advance.
- Early morning activity (30 min.): Exercise, meditation, dance, music

We encourage submissions that focus on the area and its history, but also welcome exploration of current topics in storytelling, and sessions that encourage us to examine the part technology plays in the stories we create and share. We want to celebrate the past, investigate the present and plan for the future.



The WTAMU campus offers outstanding performing venues, top of the line technology for presentation, and is located just a 20 minute drive from Palo Duro Canyon, the grand canyon of Texas, and home to the longest running outdoor musical "Texas." For more information about the area, check out the Amarillo Convention and Visitors Bureau: visitamarillo.com.



Only a Few Weeks Left to Share Your Story - *Prairie Voices Awaits*



Have you ever felt the power of a story to connect, inspire, and transform? There are only a few weeks left to submit your proposal for the 2026 National Storytelling Network Conference, *Prairie Voices: Honoring Heritage. Inspiring Tomorrow.*

This year, we celebrate our shared roots while imagining the stories yet to be told. Whether you're an experienced teller or exploring new ways to engage audiences, your voice belongs in this year's program. Don't miss your chance to be part of this gathering that honors where we've been and envisions a world renewed – one filled with opportunity, hope, and connection.



Submission Deadline:
November 15th
Submit your proposal:
[Click Here](#)



ORACLE

ORACLE AWARD NOMINATIONS OPENING NOVEMBER 10!



Mary Hamilton
Chair of the ORACLE Awards Committee
National Storytelling Network

Now is the time to prepare your nominations for the 2026 ORACLE Awards. Submissions will be accepted starting November 10.

Each year we show our appreciation to our fellow colleagues for the work they have done to perpetuate and preserve the art of storytelling. The National Storytelling Network has continued to recognize since 1995 those that have carried the torch, shared the vision and spread our tales throughout the world. Voltaire once said, "Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well."

2025 ORACLE AWARD RECIPIENTS



Meghna Bhat, Jennifer Pahl Otto, Jim Brule, Sara Armstrong, Trudy Hanson, Sherry Norfolk, Jo Ann Dadisman, Clinton Atwater, Susan O'Connor

(left to right)

The ORACLE Awards are national and international. They include:

- The International StoryBridge Award which recognizes those who use story to celebrate our cultural differences.
- The Talking Leaves Award honors authors, editors, collaborators and translators.
- The Circle of Excellence recipients are chosen for their artistic accomplishments.
- The Regional Service & Leadership Awards are presented to individuals or organizations that have made a significant contribution to their local or regional Storytelling community and/or have used Storytelling to make a significant contribution to the larger community in which they live.
- The Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to individuals in the storytelling community who have dedicated their lives to the art form of storytelling and who have demonstrated meritorious service to the National Storytelling Network, as well as to the community of storytellers at large.
- The Distinguished National Service Award is presented to those individuals, members or groups who contribute their time and energy in an exemplary manner on the national level to forward the work of the National Storytelling Network.



NATIONAL STORYTELLING NETWORK
NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

We have many storytellers deserving of these awards. Let's recognize and nominate them. When asked about the value of sincere praise, Sam Walton said, "It is absolutely free and worth a fortune." It is time to celebrate our colleagues, to honor them and give them their praise. Nominate them for these prestigious ORACLE Awards.

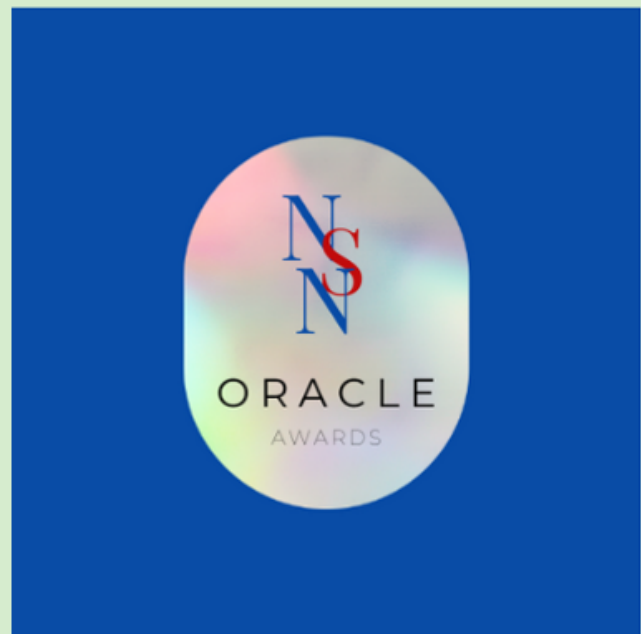
How? Visit storynet.org/awards/ORACLE-awards to access the instructions and nomination submission form. Submissions will be accepted November 10, 2025 through January 10, 2026. Start now, write your nomination narrative and solicit the three support letters you'll need.



Raise up your colleagues in your local and regional circles by sharing the work that's being done in support of storytelling.

How?

Nominate them for an NSN Regional Service & Leadership ORACLE Award. Nomination submission window is November 10, 2025 – January 10, 2026.



Get your nomination packet together. For instructions,
[Click Here](#)



CLICK EVENT ADS TO REGISTER



Storytelling In Organizations Presents a Virtual Webinar Series

Storytelling to Shape Culture Mindset in Organisations

When: Every 2nd Tuesday
January 13, 2026 February 10, 2026 March 10, 2026 April 14, 2026

Time: 800 pm -900 pm. Eastern

Goal: At the end of the webinar series, attendees will be able to learn how to notice, find, and use stories that nurture the way people think and perform in their organizations.

Objectives

Session 1: Stories that define culture mindset

- Practice noticing cultural mindset indicators in existing stories

Session 2: Understanding stories, narratives, and beliefs

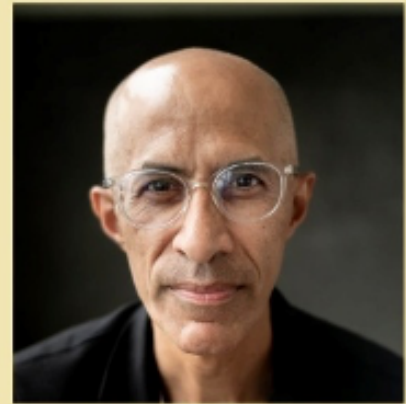
- Learn observation and listening techniques to uncover the deeper beliefs behind stories

Session 3: Leading change through narratives

- Practice eliciting powerful stories that support the desired culture mindset

Session 4: Stories to change culture mindset

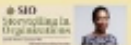
- Practice to deliver stories to become a better storyteller in an organisational context



Facilitator: Vinod Krishna

Founder of Storytelling at Work™,
MBA in Human Resources Management
Certified Project Management
Professional (PMP®)
Certified NLP Master Practitioner

SIO Members: Free
Non-SIO Members: Free



Community Plate

An interactive discussion with
its founder Karl Schatz.

Sunday November 9, 2025

7:00pm-9:00pm EST

on Zoom! Tickets \$25

Bringing People together over food & stories!

[CLICK TO REGISTER](#)



Storytelling In Organizations

The Transformative Power of Storytelling:
Personal Healing and Policy Change

Date: Saturday, Dec. 13, 2025

Time: 12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Eastern Time

Where: Zoom



Host: Lauryn Williams

Journalist, Researcher, Producer and
Storyteller



Guest: Eva Grayzel

Survivor, Public Health Advocate,
Storyteller and Motivational Speaker



**Free to SIO members and
Non-members**



NATIONAL STORYTELLING CALENDAR
LINKS IN TITLES IF AVAILABLE

NOVEMBER 2025 EVENTS

Storytelling in Organizations (SIO): Building Your Story Constellations

November 4, 2025; December 2, 2025 | 11:00 am – 12:15 pm Eastern

StoryMasters, Community Storytellers, Women's Voices: Tellabration!™ Los Angeles: Once Upon a Time LA

November 9, 2025 | 2:00 pm – 3:45 pm Pacific

Fanatic Salon Theater | 3815 Sawtelle Boulevard, Los Angeles, California

True Tales Live New Hampshire Storytelling Workshop Series

November 11, 2025 | 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm Central

November 25, 2025 | 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm Central

Patchwork Storytelling Guild: Tellabration!™ Pennsylvania: Spinning Honey—Harvesting Stories

November 13, 2025 | 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm Eastern

The Ice House | 56 River Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Storytelling in Organizations (SIO): Find Your Legacy Through Storytelling

November 15, 2025 | 10:00 am – 11:00 am Eastern

Voices in the Glen Story Swap

November 15, 2025 | 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm Eastern

Bethesda, Maryland

RSVP: dorfmanjo@gmail.com

Ridgefield Historical Society: Tellabration!™ Connecticut

November 15, 2025 | 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm Eastern

Scott House | Grove Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut

Patchwork Storytelling Guild Tellabration!™ Pennsylvania: Spinning Honey—Distilling Stories

November 16, 2025 | 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm Eastern

The Rotunda | 4014 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Tellabration!™ Indiana

November 21, 2025 | 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm Central

Timbercrest Senior Living | 2201 East Street, North Manchester, Indiana

Story Weaver: Reviving the Art of Nature-Focused Storytelling

December 18, 2025 | 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm Central

Hitchcock Nature Center | 27792 Ski Hill Loop, Honey Creek, Iowa

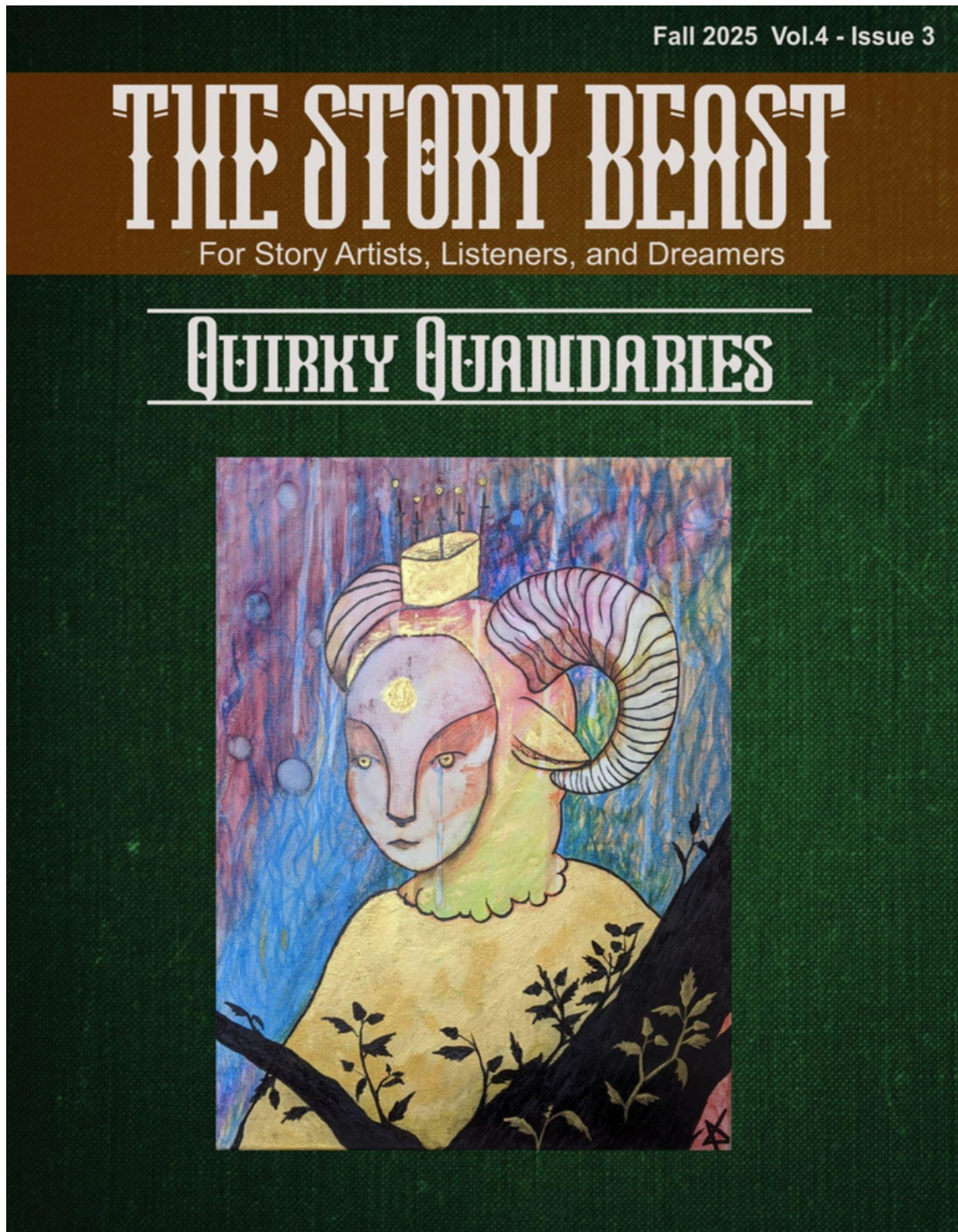


NATIONAL STORYTELLING NETWORK
NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

Click the cover below to read the The Story Beast Fall Issue *Quirky Quandaries!*

Submissions to Winter Issue *Frosted Glass* due November 15, 2025.

Visit storybeast.org for submission info.





NATIONAL STORYTELLING NETWORK
NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Margaret Read MacDonald	Managing Editor
Rishi Nixon	Assistant Managing Editor
Ashton Cynthia Clarke	Events Editor
Rita Rigano	Copy Editor
Sara Armstrong	Copy Editor
Nick Smith	Editor
Cassie Selleck	Editor

HOW TO SUBMIT TO THE NEWSLETTER

Send us your events, articles, opportunities, storytelling or storyteller news, and more in an email to newsletter@storynet.org to go out to the national storytelling community!

1. Contributions due on the 25th of the month.
2. Membership in the National Storytelling Network *not* required.
3. Content subject to editing and inclusion in final issue not guaranteed.
4. If you are the author of your contribution, please also attach a headshot photo of yourself to go next to your byline.