

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

National Storytelling Network

February Newsletter (Vol. 5, Issue No. 2)

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EDITORS' LETTER

Margaret Read MacDonald
Managing Editor

Rishi Nixon
Assistant Managing Editor

Dear NSN Newsletter Readers,

Here is our second edition of the revived NSN Newsletter. We have decided that a once a month issue will be best, as not enough new information arrives in our inbox to warrant a twice monthly newsletter.

Get your announcement and articles to newsletter@storynet.org by the 25th to be included in the next month's release. Kudos to Rishi Nixon for the elegant newsletter design. Click on the right (blue) margin to scroll down. Click on the left (red) margin to scroll back up.

Special thanks to Yvonne Healy and Bob Johnson for getting the newsletter project back up and running!

| ANNOUNCEMENT

NSN'S RESTRUCTURED BYLAWS PROPOSAL PASSES MEMBERSHIP REFERENDUM

NSN would like to officially thank all members who cast their vote on the restructuring proposal. The results are as follows:

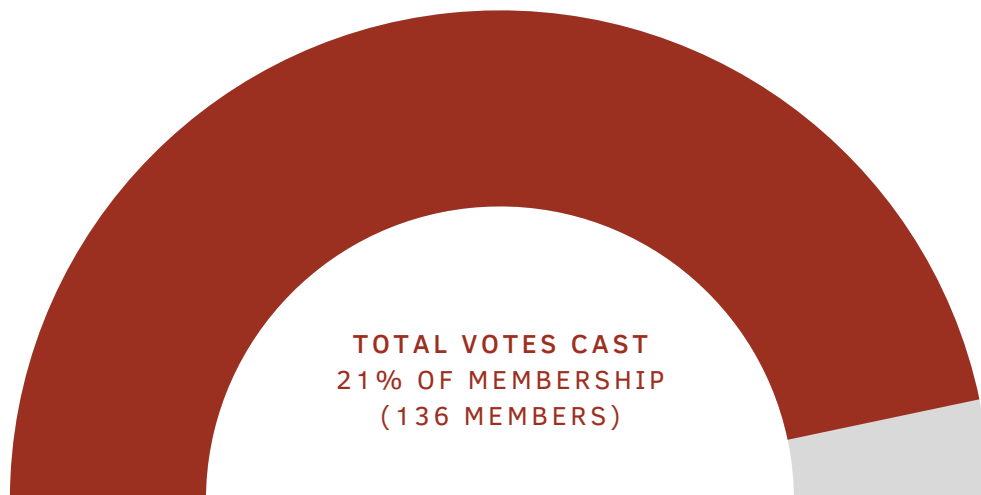
21% OF MEMBERSHIP VOTED (136 MEMBERS)

93.4% VOTED TO RATIFY THE BYLAWS (127 MEMBERS)

6.6% VOTED TO REJECT THE BYLAWS (9 MEMBERS)

The bylaws proposal has passed and was ratified by the Board of Feb 25. A copy of the ratified bylaws as well as the Board meeting recording are available [here](#).

**YES TO
RESTRUCTURED BYLAWS
93.4% (127 VOTES)**



**NO TO RESTRUCTURED BYLAWS
6.6% (9 VOTES)**

| GUEST EDITORIAL

ON THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE NATIONAL STORYTELLING NETWORK



Barry McWilliams
Special Correspondent

Last summer, the National Storytelling Network announced that some serious downsizing or perhaps even shutting down might need to take place. There was a surprised response from a membership who still highly valued the organization and feared what would happen if NSN ceased to be. Over the past several months, I have followed ongoing events and lurked at meetings of the Network's Board of Directors. I would like to bring you up to date on what is happening and the changes that are under way.

First of all, I want to encourage you concerning NSN. It will continue, adapting to our new situation and opportunities. The financial situation has improved considerably. The Board has been restructured and the bylaws updated to reflect those changes. Those were sent out to the membership for approval - voting just closed - and the Board met on February 25th to finalize the results. The vote was approved and a transition team was established. It is hoped that the organization will become even more of a "network" than before, connecting storytellers and their interests on a national level. I have paid my dues for this coming year. I hope you will either renew or join up as well.

A bit of review: in the past, NSN was focused on a network of regional liaisons which attempted to connect with various guilds and organizations, and its principal focus was on the annual National Conferences - which also brought in the bulk of NSN's income. It is very expensive to put on large conferences and expensive to attend them. The shutdown caused by the pandemic torpedoed those, at the same time opening up a more virtual world for storytelling organizations worldwide. NSN attempted virtual programming for a conference, with very limited success - NSN found there is a lot of competition out there for »

» those virtual audiences. At the same time, NSN membership continued a rapid decline - something many arts organizations are struggling with as well. There have been continuing problems with the website and email communications to the membership, which are being worked on. Added to this is the loss of paid staff and of board members who have stepped down. The need for broadening its revenue streams and pursuing grants has become clear.

The Network bylaws have now gone through a substantial revision - mainly a restructuring of the Board. Each year, a Chair will be elected to a three year term at three ranks, the first year serving as the Vice Chair-Elect and interacting with the Standing Committees: Nominations, Membership, Bylaws, Grants, Oracle Awards, Events, et cetera. The second year, the same moves into the Vice Chair position and works with the Board of Directors made up of representatives of the various Special Interest Groups. They will generate programming. Finally on the third year of the term, the Vice Chair becomes the Board Chair who moderates the Executive Committee, which includes the two vice chairs and a number of officers, such as the Secretary, Finance Officer, Publications, Volunteer Coordinator, and a Digital Specialist. There will be a number of "at large" members on this board as well.

Executive Board:

Chair ← Vice Chair ← Vice Chair Elect + Secretary - Finance - Tech Spec - Publications - Volunteer Co-ord's
(appointed positions) + some "At Large" Members

↓
Agenda/ Meetings

Board of Directors*: (Representatives of SIG's) (Generating Programming)

YES - PRO - SIO + additions - (20 members needed to apply) (Discussion Groups ie Proto-SIG's)

Standing Committees:

Nominating - Bylaws - Grants - Membership - Events - Fund Raising - Oracle Awards - etc

Chair positions are for 3 years - progressing each year up a step.

* Replaces former Regional Directors (Liaisons)

The Board voted on January 28th to focus on the nation as a whole rather than dividing it up by regions. In part, because now so many of our "virtual" audiences are now scattered about. In doing so, the emphasis shifts to various member groups with an interest in types of stories or aspects of storytelling. The Special Interest Groups. These interest groups would have a say in NSN governance and programming as each recognized SIG will have a member serving on the NSN Board of Directors. NSN membership dues will include not only a membership »

» to NSN, but also membership to one special interest group of their choice. This would, hopefully, increase membership interest and involvement in these various groups - or in creating new ones.

For example, if you like youth education there is the (YES SIG) interest group. There is a Producers and Organizers' Group (PRO SIG), and Storytelling in Organizations (SIO SIG). Unfortunately, the Healing Stories Alliance (HSA SIG) is no longer a part of NSN and another SIG left due to a shortage of members. Much of NSN's programming in the future will proceed out of these. YES, for example, has programs planned for this coming August.

More focus on SIGs will result in valuable networking for members. NSN would like to see the formation of other special interest groups consisting of 20 or more members (previously, 30 members were required of SIGs). Certainly we could use SIG's developing groups on traditional folktales, personal narratives, historical tellers, and more. Groups around ethnic and cultural interests, or perhaps technical aspects of storytelling. We look forward to a variety of groups related to the membership's various interests being added. Programming developed out of these groups will benefit not only them, but the larger membership. Perhaps these additional SIGs might gradually develop out of discussion groups, which - hopefully - will emerge as well. Some of these already exist on the internet.

Changing the bylaws is just a beginning and implementation will be an ongoing task - requiring membership involvement. Certainly the key to keeping alive oral storytelling and growing future storytellers is for storytelling organizations and storytellers to network in the virtual world, and NSN can be an important part of this task.

Get involved, and help support our National Storytelling Network!

Barry McWilliams served as President of the Seattle Storytellers Guild from 2016 to 2022, is Editor of In The Wind – its quarterly publication – and is a member of NSN's Producers & Organizers' Special Interest Group (PRO SIG).

Website: www.eldrbarry.net
Email: eldrbarry@gmail.com

| PROMOTIONAL

THE 38TH ANNUAL TEXAS STORYTELLING FESTIVAL

Tejas Storytelling Association

The Tejas Storytelling Association is pleased to promote its 38th Annual Texas Storytelling Festival, March 9 - 12 in Denton, TX.

See the full information here.

Tickets before and by February 23: \$95 | \$60 for TSA members

Tickets after February 23: \$130 | \$95 for TSA members

Location: Denton Civic Center

321 E. McKinney Street, Denton, TX

Lodging is available for a discounted rate. See the TSA website.



TEXAS STORYTELLING FESTIVAL: FEATURED TELLERS



Sheila Arnold
Artistic Director
Artists Standing Strong Together (ASST)



Bernadette Nason
Company Member
Austin Playhouse



Elizabeth Ellis
Former President
Tejas Storytelling Association



Colin Urwin
Singer-Songwriter
Haste to the Wedding Celidh Band



Joe Hayes
Former Resident Storyteller
Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian

TICKETS

VOLUNTEER

SCHEDULE

The Tejas Storytelling Association has kindly donated to the National Storytelling Network for the promotion of this event. To inquire about paid promotionals with NSN, contact info@storynet.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Registration forms linked in the title, if available.

[Texas Storytelling Festival](#) (seeking sponsors!)

- Denton, Texas

Tejas Storytelling Association

Mar 9 - 12, 2023

[Luck of the Draw](#)

- Virtual

Polite Kitty, Shayne Larango, Debbie Dixon, & Wolf Heart

Mar 7, 2023

[Putting the Pieces Together: The Art and Metaphors of Kintsugi \(Golden Joinery\)](#)

- Virtual

Kristin Pedemonti & Healing Story Alliance

Mar 19, 2023

[42nd Annual Sharing the Fire Conference](#)

- Portsmouth, New Hampshire

NEST

Mar 26, 2023

[Earth Tales](#)

- Virtual

Margaret Read MacDonald & Tom Rawson

Apr 21, 2023

[In the Voice of Our Ancestors](#)

[Workshop Retreat](#)

- Oakland, Maryland

Ilene Evans & Roots to Sky Sanctuary

May 4 - 7, 2023

[Playing with Story Workshop](#)

(contact [Margaret Read MacDonald](#) for more info)

- Des Moines, Washington

Margaret Read MacDonald & Seattle Storytellers Guild

May 13, 2023

NSN CALENDAR

MORE FROM THE NSN COMMUNITY

[Michigan Storytelling News & Events](#)

Virtual storytelling news from Michigan and around the world. Contributed by Michigan Storytelling editor Judy Sima.

click the link to read more

[Storytelling Preservation Initiative](#)

Read about SPI's events for Black History Month and their Learning Lab Project.

click the link to read more

[Storytelling and Acting by Kevin Cordi](#)

Storytellers are the first actors. Before there were set designs, lighting plots, or directors, storytellers were telling stories. Skillfully positioned words handled by a crafty raconteur steered the audience's attention. An African Griot might use stories to warn children to act on common sense...

click the link to read more



2023 KENTUCKY STORYTELLING CONFERENCE ACCEPTING PROPOSALS, DUE MAY

[Kentucky Storytelling Association](#)

Mission

The Kentucky Storytelling Association, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit membership organization whose mission is to develop on-going support and appreciation for storytelling in the Commonwealth.

Goals

1. To help people of all ages develop an appreciation and understanding of the oral cultural heritage of both the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the world.
2. To seek on-going support, understanding, and appreciation for storytelling as:
 - a. an everyday activity essential for strong families and communities.
 - b. a valuable component in many professions including, but not limited to, education, law, medicine, ministry, politics, and business.
 - c. a performing art.
3. To connect listeners, tellers, and event planners by serving as a clearinghouse for storytelling information.
4. To provide instruction for people of all ages seeking to develop and improve their storytelling skills.
5. To work with government agencies, businesses, organizations, and other groups to find new ways to bring storytelling to the public.
6. To encourage the ethical collection, preservation, and public dissemination of regional oral stories, including oral histories, through performances, recordings, and books.

The Association calls for proposals to its 2023 annual conference on Nov 3 - 4, 2023 in Corbin, KY. See the full guidelines [here](#). Proposals are due May 1, 2023.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SOUTH ASIAN STORYTELLERS

Meghna Bhat

Freelance Gender & Social Justice Consultant

[Gulabi Stories](#) is a South Asian Healing Initiative - where written and oral storytelling will be used to address and unpack topics and themes that are unspoken, invisible, and often a stigma in our South Asian diaspora and immigrant/ refugee communities. This multidisciplinary art project is led, created, and curated by [Meghna Bhat, Ph.D.](#), one of the 45 grant recipients of the Seeding Creativity Art Grant in Sacramento, CA. Eligible participants will be invited to be a part of virtual and in-person storytelling workshops or interviews to learn how to write or strengthen their stories and share their stories about healing, health, intimacy, identity, body autonomy, etc. The stories they gather from this project will be shared on a website (with the storytellers' consent) where visitors can come to read and listen to the stories to help create healing and awareness, and to destigmatize sensitive topics. If you are interested in contributing or simply finding out more about sharing your story, the Gulabi Stories team would love to have you participate.

Priority Deadline for applications: March 31st, 2023. Any applications received after 3/31 will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Website: www.gulabistories.com

Email: contact@gulabistories.com



VOLUNTEER STORYTELLERS SOUGHT FOR HOSPICE CARE IN JOHNSON CITY, TN

Stephanie Paulins
Volunteer Coordinator, Gentiva Hospice

Dear National Storytelling Network Community,

I am the Volunteer Coordinator with Gentiva Hospice. I am in great need of volunteers. Many of our patients would enjoy a great story. One person specifically when I visit he always asks me to tell a story. This would be a blessing to so many of our patients. If you know of someone who would like to volunteer please give them my below information. There are no required time limits to volunteer. Thanks in advance and have a blessed day.

Contact Stephanie Paulins via [email](#) to inquire about assisting.

Gentiva Hospice
208 Sunset Drive
Johnson City, TN

STUDY HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION IN ITALY THIS SUMMER

San Gemini Preservation Studies

Dear National Storytelling Network Community,

We are accepting applications for our summer 2023 field school in Italy. Our deadline for applications is March 15, 2023.

Now in its 23rd year, with alumni from over 170 colleges and universities worldwide, SGPS is dedicated to the preservation of cultural heritage. We offer students the opportunity to study and travel in Italy where they acquire hands-on experience in restoration and conservation.

Session One (June 5 - June 30)

[Building Restoration – Touching the Stones](#)

Restoration of Traditional Masonry Buildings and Sketching and Analyzing Historic Buildings

(Program includes lectures and restoration field projects)*

[Archaeological Ceramics Restoration](#)

Analysis and Restoration of Archaeological Ceramics in Italy

(Program includes lectures and restoration workshop)*

[Book Bindings Restoration](#)

Introduction to the History and Craft of Bookbindings

Introduction to the Preservation and Preventive Conservation of Books

(Program includes lectures and practical workshop)*

»

» **Session Two (July 17 - August 11)**

Paper Restoration

Introduction to the Restoration and Conservation of Paper in Artwork and Archival Documents
(Program includes lectures and restoration workshop)*

Traditional Painting Techniques

Traditional Materials, Methods of Painting and Art Restoration Issues
(Program includes lectures and painting workshop)

Preservation Theory and Practice in Italy

Restoration Theory, Ethics and Issues
(Program includes lectures and discussion)

***Field Projects:**

Restoration of Porta Tuderte (also known as the San Giovanni City Gate) (13th century)

Analysis of medieval buildings in San Gemini as part of an urban study of the city
Restoration and conservation of artifacts from the Parco del Colosseo and Museo delle Storie di Bergamo

Restoration of the Historic Archives of the Commune di San Gemini

Archaeological research of the Roman Baths in the Ancient City of Carsulae

Short Intersession Program (July 2 - 11)

Preservation Tour – Italy

A ten-day trip visiting Siena, Florence and Rome: places of cultural interest, with emphasis on the urban and historical development of each town, including specialized visits to places of interest to restorers.

SGPS is a program of the International Institute for Restoration and Preservation Studies, based in New York. An academic relationship has been established with West Virginia University that offers our students the opportunity to apply for and receive credits through the WVU Art History Department. Since COVID, we have established cooperation agreements with the Museo della Storie di Bergamo and the Parco del Colosseo to study and conserve artworks and archaeological »

» objects held in their museums, as well as a collaboration with the Historic Archives of the Commune di San Gemini for SGPS participants to study and conserve archival documents.

Our courses are open to students from various disciplines, both undergraduate and graduate. All lessons are taught in English. If you know any students, scholars, or others interested in this type of study, please inform them about our program.

REGISTER

ALL PROGRAMS

FINAL STORYTELLING WORLD AWARD NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCED

Flora Joy

Resource Director, Storytelling World Awards

The deadline for the receipt of nominated resources for the 2024 awards is NOVEMBER 30, 2023.

2024 will be the final year for this awards program. Nominated storytelling resources should be published on or after January 2019 and must have a visible printed copyright date. Thank you for sending your resources as soon as they are published. See [the site](#) for more information.

NSN'S BIENNIAL J.J. RENAUX MENTORSHIP GRANT AWARDED

Jo Radner

Chair, J.J. Reneaux Grant Committee

NSN is delighted to announce that Asia Starr of Lenexa, Kansas, is the recipient of the 2023 J.J. Reneaux Mentorship Grant. Asia has a strong gift for performing with children. Her dream is to establish her own storytelling theater for young audiences. With a background in theatrical design, she has created her own props and puppets and uses voice and physical humor to draw in even the youngest listeners. A talented artist, Asia is also Head of Design and Layout for the Story Beast online magazine. Her website is <https://mamastarrstorytelling.com/>.

Created in memory of storyteller J.J. Reneaux, the Mentorship Grant, awarded every other year, provides stipends for a younger teller and an experienced mentor to work together for a calendar year. During 2023, Asia will be mentored by Gail Herman.

Congratulations, Asia and Gail!

\$18,000 IN GLOBAL ARTIST GRANTS

MidAtlantic Arts

[USArtists International® \(USAI\)](#) supports U.S. artists' engagements abroad with grants of up to \$18,000 towards eligible expenses. The program funds individuals and ensembles across all performing arts practices and disciplines with eligible engagements at international festivals and global presenting arts marketplaces outside of the United States. Due Mar 29, 2023.



THUNDER VALLEY SEEKS SPONSORSHIP FOR LAKOTA VIRTUAL STORYTELLING SERIES

Deanna Mousseau

Advancement Coordinator, Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation

The Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation is an indigenous nonprofit on the Pine Ridge reservation serving the Oglala Lakota people.

The Pǰéta Kaílepi (rekindling the fire) annual virtual series is being held in honor of Lakota ancestral traditions of Ohuŋkaŋkaŋ (storytelling) throughout the winter season. Thunder Valley's Lakota Language & Education initiative started the series during the pandemic to support families staying home and connected. It has grown into an anticipated community tradition with 500+ people registered.

The purpose of the weekly gatherings is to

- Reconnect with our culture and way of life.
- Strengthen intergenerational relationships
- Celebrate Indigenous heritage and increase participant's knowledge of Indigenous communities
- Support Indigenous businesses/entrepreneurs by highlighting them and using their products as door prizes

The series begins February 6, 2023, and will run Monday through Thursday for seven weeks on zoom, from 6 PM MST - 7 PM MST, featuring two door prizes to random participants. Thunder Valley has also partnered with institutions like United Tribes and the local Women's Equity Movement (a volunteer group of Indigenous women professionals supporting the Oglala Lakota community).

The series is seeking sponsorships for seven-week programming to support stipends for our elder presenters. Contact [Deanna Mousseau](#) to inquire about sponsorship. See the [Thunder Valley website](#) for event info.



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FEBRUARY 28, 2023

National Storytelling Network

Monthly Newsletter

NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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Rishi Nixon	Asst. Managing Editor & Lead Visual Editor
Bob Johnson	NSN Treasurer
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SUBMIT CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER@STORYNET.ORG BY
MAR 24 FOR THE NEXT ISSUE.

SEE OUR PREVIOUS ISSUE [HERE](#).