

Event or article to submit? Email newsletter@storynet.org.

National Storytelling Network

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 6 — JUNE 01, 2024

DON'T MISS THE 2024 SEATTLE CONFERENCE!



Margaret Read MacDonald
Conference Co-Chair

A chance to meet your fellow tellers in person at last!

The Full Conference includes:

- 5 Showcases/Concerts: Pacific NW Regional Tellers, National Tellers, Asian-American Tellers, International Tellers, plus Antonio Rocha's Malaga, and the Oracle Award Honorees.
- 9 Fringe Performances
- 4 Panels
- 49 Workshops
- 5 Coaching Sessions
- Slam / Story Swaps / Jam Sessions
- NSN Membership Meeting Saturday 1:15-3:15 PM
- ORACLE Awards and Concert Saturday 6:45-8:45 PM
- Sales Tables and Silent Auction
- Early Morning Activities ...yoga on the lawn, nature walks
- Sunsets, sing-a-longs, and dancing!

CONFERENCE HOUSING

Plenty of rooms still available at our two conference hotels: La Quinta, Federal Way and Comfort Inn, Federal Way. Shuttles will bring you to the conference center at Dumas Bay. See our conference page on the website for booking information.

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TOGETHER AGAIN!

Come for a day, a weekend, an evening, or come in virtually! Friday night concert features:

NSN National Storytelling Conference
Seattle 2024

Come hear our glittering lineup of featured tellers!

National concert held in Dumas Bay Centre Theater and livestreamed Friday, July 13 at 6 p.m.
storynet.org/conference-registration

- Eth-Noh-Tec
- Elizabeth Ellis
- Antonio Rocha
- Adam Booth
- Angela Lloyd

COACHING SESSIONS STILL AVAILABLE

Bring a 7 minute story and let our experts help you refine it. Sessions are available with Antonio Rocha, Nancy Donoval, Elizabeth Ellis, Milbre Burch. To reserve a spot, email:

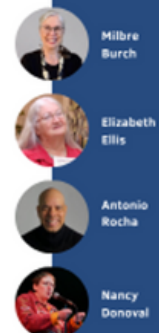
mrm@margaretreadmacdonald.com.

NSN National Storytelling Conference
Seattle 2024

Register asap for free conference coaching!

The first 20 to register get free coaching from one of our team.

To register, contact Margaret Read MacDonald today at
mrm@margaretreadmacdonald.com



WASHBOARD MAGIC AT THE CONFERENCE

Angela Lloyd is teaching folks how to excite audiences with a washboard. She will help you decorate your own washboard. If you need a washboard, Angela will provide one for \$45, but they must be pre-ordered from her:

atlastproductions4angelalloyd@gmail.com

NSN National Storytelling Conference
Seattle 2024

Enliven your telling with a washboard!

Angela Lloyd shows us how! And you can pre-order your own washboard from her.

Read our program and register today at
storynet.org/conference-registration

| FEATURE

INSTRUCTIONS TEND TO LIMIT CREATIVITY



Ralph Huntzinger
2024 Conference Workshop Presenter

Part III of a three-part excerpt from the “Magical Aspects Woven into Storytelling” workshop to be held at NSN’s 2024 summer conference. See March and April issues for Part I and II.

The two previous articles of this trio discussed concepts utilizing three magic effects that defy logic and natural laws: a transformation of lengths (“Even/Uneven Ropes”) and two cut and restorations (“Shepherd’s Knot” and “Gypsy/Hindu Thread”). Obviously, magic is accomplished by lying, cheating, and trickery. Everything you don’t want the audience to remember can be called “Mechanics” which are distractions to the audience. That is especially true with magic performances. Mechanics give strength to the effect’s backbone and allows you to texture the story to deliver powerful messages and experiences. This article is about boring and confusing details of mechanics.

Tying knots and cutting them is the “invisible skeleton” in “Shepherd’s Knot”. Measuring three ropes to initially prepare them for “Even/Uneven Ropes” is the same concept needed in cutting the middle of the rope in Shepherd. Handling, counting, and coordinating three ropes in a natural and normal way is central to Even/Uneven performance. Preparing the “restored string” in Gypsy/Hindu Thread is the only difficult part of that effect and is best taught in a hands-on dialogue so extra time will be reserved for understanding and solidifying that procedure during the workshop. Confidence in concealing the prepared thread, switching it in, and “ditching the pieces” comes with practice and a compelling story.

Ben Napier, co-host of HGTV’s “Home Town”, has a tongue-in-cheek insight, “Instructions tend to limit creativity”; this reflects our goal of understanding...

...magic effects and not training magicians. The coaching to integrate small physical coordination will be covered in the face-to-face workshop and what you know from your skill and craft as Storytellers will merge into a woven blend of Storytelling and Magic. Preparation, measuring, tying, and cutting knots sound daunting, but you will forget difficulties when you realize how powerful these actions are in performance. Let's get to the details, there are only four uncreative groups of instructions with details within them.

(First group) Making loop for Shepherd and preparing for Even/Uneven: If you hold the two ends of a five-foot clothesline together poking up between your thumb and forefinger, a middle loop hangs at the bottom [normal behavior]. Inserting your other forefinger and thumb into the bottom loop and moving it next to the ends creates two ends and a loop above plus two loops hanging down [normal behavior]. However, if you pinch the closest strand of rope as you reach the bottom of the other holding forefinger, you can loop that strand around the rest of the strand while continuing up; thereby creating a new loop that replaces the "middle loop" [magical mechanics]. When you hold this new loop next to two ends and adjust the hanging loops to be even you see two ends and a loop above plus two loops hanging down. This action looks like the normal action – two ends and a loop at the top and two loops at the bottom.

During the Shepherd's Knot performance, when you cut the lower loops and drop the two opposite outside ends it looks just like you actually cut the middle of a rope, especially when you tie the upper ends together with an overhand knot. Moving away from Shepherd and returning to the above procedure where there are two ends and a loop above the finger, sets up Even/Uneven's one-time-only preparation. If you drop the end closest to the webbing of the hand between the holding forefinger and thumb there is one end and a loop at the top and one strand with an end and a short loop hanging down. Adjusting the bottom loop by pulling down and sliding so the loop and the bottom end are the same length completes this step. When you cut both the top and bottom loops you will end up with three ends on the top and three ends on the bottom, this appears as if there are three even strands of rope. Actually, you are holding a middle-sized rope plus a short strand looped through a longer rope hanging down (uneven). Individual experimenting is required to figure out how long you want the small loops' ends to appear above where you hold the ropes. You will need to finish the six ends of the ropes, so they all look the same, "whipping the ends" with string is the elegant look, however, sometimes tape is wrapped around the ends.

(Second group) Almost everyone knows how to tie an overhand knot around a rope. A surprising number of people have never learned how to tie a square knot. Bring your hand down to grasp a five-foot rope about a foot from the end, your thumb pointing to the end. Take that end in your other hand and bring it toward your body and then over and through the loop. Hold the end and its parallel strand pointing the way your thumb points. Then take the long part and put it parallel to the end and the loop. You complete the knot by taking the end over and through the new little loop making the end strand parallel to the long strand. The knot has been tied with two loops that have inserted their stands inside each other like decorative clasps on some belts. The strands should be flat and parallel to the other strands. (End goes over, though, hold; long rope switch, and end through new little loop, pull.)

The fact that the strand from the end's loop is parallel to the end means that if you cut the square knot's rope just past the end, you actually create a loop around the rope instead of cutting the rope in pieces. (Cutting the strand by the end of a granny knot actually cuts the rope.) "Upsetting a square knot" means you pull the long strands of the rope, and the knot transforms into two half-hitches which will slide off the rope.

(Third group) Putting the ends of uneven ropes together so ropes become even. There are different instructions about matching the ends of the ropes so the ropes all become the same length, but here is the simple concept. The long rope is near the ends of your fingers, the middle sized is in the middle, and the short one is at the webbing of your fingers and thumb. 1) Reach under the long rope from away and then towards your body and grasp the hanging short end, moving that end up around the long rope and toward you, ending up beside the other short end (this creates the critical looping). 2) Take the hanging long end and put it next to its upper end. 3) Take the remaining middle hanging end and put it next to the two long ends. 4) Grasp the three outer ends in one hand and the remaining three ends with the holding hand and pull the hands apart which will adjust the loops so the ropes appear equal. The looping is hidden within the fist.

(Fourth group) Counting the three equal ropes. You are holding the joint of the loops under your thumb with the fingers toward the audience so the looping is hidden; the single middle length rope is at finger tips. The counting sequence is straightforward: 1) Take the actual single middle rope and pull it out while letting it slip from the fist and count, "one". 2) Put that single rope back but in the crook of the thumb. 3) Grasping the two joined ropes with the free hand, dropping one strand below where you are holding the join while pulling out the other strand (so there are two in the pulling hand) and count, "two". 4) Put those two back with...



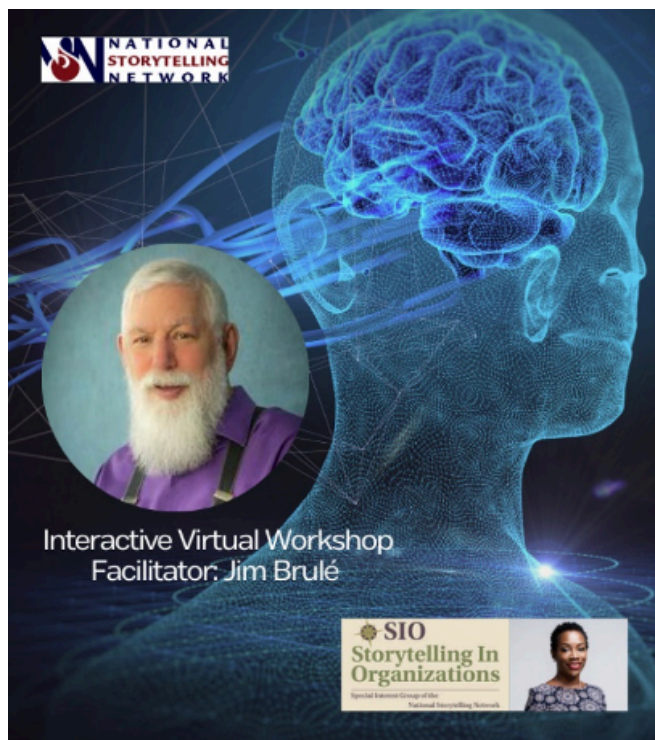
...the other one and pull the middle one singly by doing the same action you have been using; count, “three”. The spoken counting can be omitted if the story emphasizes and suggests “three”, you usually don’t count less than five items unless you are a magician.

Although the ninety-minute workshop will center around instruction and how to weave actions into a story, there will be dialogue, handouts, and conversations. Tools for cutting and different types of thread, string, yarn, and rope along with their characteristics will be discussed. Supplies will be provided; rope inspires rope tricks. You will walk away with three ropes ready to practice “Even/Uneven Ropes” while finding your own impactful story. Knowing how to measure, tie, cut, and remove knots will spark ideas for meaningful “restoration” stories. After understanding the preparation for restoring Gypsy/Hindu Thread you will be able to perform it and be challenged to create more insightful variations instead of a simple restoration story.

These three articles have an overall goal of introducing some aspects and thoughts about Magic performance outside a typical approach; Storytellers who attend the workshop should be able to perform the effects. Another goal of these articles is so that attendees can ask questions with some knowledge, since pre-workshop material already had a chance to age and bubble. And lastly, this is a demonstration that the NSN Newsletter could include longer pieces. I’d love feedback, suggestions, questions, and thoughts. Feel free to open a conversation at info@magickhappens.com – I will respond. The articles’ 4000 words are just the tip of an iceberg which most readers avoid.

If you know you are attending the workshop, please let me know beforehand since I want enough scissors to be there to support opening new thoughts about weaving magic into storytelling.

Ralph Huntzinger
info@magickhappens.com



Storytelling In Organizations Presents:
"Enhancing Presentations with Narrative"

When: Sunday, June 9, 2024

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. CDT
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. EDT

Objective:

Participants will learn:

- how to integrate narrative structure and style into a specific presentation they wish to create

Outcomes:

By the end of the workshop participants will have:

- a draft presentation
- a plan to create a final, workable presentation

SIO Members: Free
Non-SIO Members: Free

Register here <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0sd-Chqj4jGtZAxC10wA9oNrUGSvNUGpix#/registration>

TRADITIONS AND
TRUTH: A VIRTUAL
OPEN MIC

Saturday, June 1
7:00-8:30pm CDT
Online via Zoom-FREE

Featuring
Patricia Coffie

Email jdelnegro@dom.edu
for the Zoom link and/or if
you are interested in telling
a story (7-10 minutes)

Presented by: Storytelling.org and Dominican University





UPCOMING EVENTS

CLICK [EVENT NAMES](#) TO REGISTER

[Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival](#)

Territory Tellers

Rose State College Community Learning Center, Midwest City, OK

June 7 & 8, 2024 (Friday evening and all day Saturday 9-9)

[VITG Monthly Story Swap](#)

Voices in the Glen

Online Zoom

June 8, 2024 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm CDT

Storytellers and listeners are invited to an evening of shared stories. Anyone is welcome to tell a tale; no one ever has to. For adults or families. Free. Info: Jane Dorfman, 301-654-5818, dorfmanjo@gmail.com.

[Enhancing Presentations with Narrative](#)

Storytelling In Organizations

Jim Brulé

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. CDT

Zoom

[Tejas Storytelling Association Summer Conference](#)

June 21 – 23, 2024

Holiday Inn Energy Corridor

1112 Eldridge Parkway

Houston, TX 77077

[2024 Sierra Storytelling Festival](#)

June 28 – 29, 2024

North Columbia Schoolhouse Cultural Center

17894 Tyler Foote Rd

Nevada City, CA 95959

[2024 Missouri Liars Contest](#)

July 20, 2024 9:15 am – 4:30 pm

Columbia Public Library

100 W. Broadway

Columbia, MO 65203



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**CONTRIBUTE TO THE NSN
NEWSLETTER**

Send an email with your contribution to newsletter@storynet.org to go out to the NSN community. Membership not required.

Stories for the next issue are due on the 25th of the month.

If you have written an article, please send a headshot photo of yourself.

Content subject to editing, inclusion in final issue not guaranteed