

National Storytelling Network

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

JULY PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Delanna Reed
President & Chair of the Board of Directors
National Storytelling Network

Warm greetings from Tennessee! As I write my final column as NSN Chair for the NSN Newsletter, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve. I also look forward with increasing anticipation to the upcoming National Storytelling Conference in Atlanta, now just weeks away!

Our dedicated conference team—including the Georgia Storytelling Network (GSN), board members, and our invaluable volunteer in NSN's virtual office, Dot Cleveland—has diligently crafted a rich and exciting program, designed *to edify, entertain, and build camaraderie* among storytellers nationwide.

From morning yoga, tai chi, and sing-alongs to daytime panels, workshops, and coaching sessions, to evening fringe concerts, a story slam, and story swaps, there's something for everyone. The traditional regional concert, national concert, ORACLE Awards ceremony, and even a garden tour, complete a full schedule. Over four days, we'll share a diverse range of experiences and create lasting memories together.

If you haven't made plans to attend, you can still register online (albeit not including housing and meals). If travel isn't possible, virtual tickets are available at an affordable price – only \$99 – allowing you to participate live and revisit sessions afterward through recordings.

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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.

CLICK THE RED HALF OF
THE PAGE TO TURN BACK

CLICK THE BLUE HALF TO
TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE



Reflecting on this past year as Chair, I'm amazed at how quickly the time has flown. While there is always more work to be done, I'm proud of what we've accomplished together as a board. Most importantly, we have **cemented a stable foundation** to support NSN's continued growth.

We welcomed two new board positions this year: **Public Relations Director** and **Publications Manager**. Our PR Director Melissa Fees, has made amazing strides toward expanding NSN's social media visibility and our newsletter – thanks to Editor Margaret Read McDonald and Co-editor Rishi Nixon has grown in both content and professional consistency.

Our **Special Interest Groups (SIGs)** have hosted a wide array of swaps and workshops, often free of charge. Dot Cleveland has continued to enhance and streamline our website, making it easier to navigate. We've made steady progress updating our by-laws. And Vice Chair Elect Caleb Hubbard has worked hard to establish committee structures and identify openings. (If you'd like to get involved, we'd love to hear from you! We have a committee for you.)

In addition, Past Chair Trudy Hanson compiled a comprehensive leadership manual to help orient new board members to the workings of our organization.

We've also taken meaningful steps to connect beyond our organization. When hurricanes Helene and Milton struck the Southeast, I reached out to Artists Standing Strong Together (ASST, "assist") to collaborate in raising funds for the Storyteller Relief Fund (SRF), supporting storytellers impacted by the hurricanes and other emergencies.

When we learned that the National Association of Black Storytellers (NABS) lost vital NEA funding, I proposed that NSN contribute to their 2025 fall conference. I'm happy to say the board unanimously agreed. In addition, I met with Michael Carson, President of the International Storytelling Center (ISC) to build collaboration between NSN and ISC. I was encouraged by his enthusiasm for supporting each other in future endeavors. Although we are in the initial stages, they lay the groundwork for more meaningful partnerships with our sister organizations.

In July, I will pass the Chair position to Vice Chair Rishi Nixon. While my term concludes, my involvement with NSN will continue. One way to do that is to celebrate the 50th birthday of NSN. One project I'm especially excited about is organizing a team to collect and record the oral histories of key figures in NSN's 50-year journey. These stories will help preserve our legacy for future generations of storytellers.

Serving on the Board of Directors has been an enriching experience for me. It took me years to commit to this level of engagement, and I am glad I did. I am genuinely thankful for the friendships I've made and will continue to support this vibrant community for years to come.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve. I look forward to what's next—for me, and for NSN.

Warm Regards,
Delanna Reed



NATIONAL STORYTELLING CONFERENCE

ATTENDEE INFO FOR 2025 CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE MAP: Stop first at housing to get key and drop off luggage, then go to Wilson Building—where all conference programming is held—to check in.

Addresses:

Housing: 1074 Canton Pl NW, Kennesaw, GA

Parking: 1085 Canton Pl NW, Kennesaw GA

Wilson Building: 471 Bartow Ave, Kennesaw, GA

OPENING MIXER: The conference will kick off in KSU's Stillwell Theater (on the first floor of the Wilson Building) at 3:00 pm on Thursday, July 17th with the opening mixer hosted by ORACLE Circle of Excellence Awardee Susan O'Halloran, one of America's top diversity speakers and storytellers.

AUCTION: Bring your most fascinating items to the conference and donate to our Silent Auction! The monies raised fund our scholarship and grant programs. And another teller will enjoy your shared treasure!

BOOKSTORE: Bring your books too! We also host a volunteer-staffed bookstore and process payments for you to sell your books at the conference. NSN receives a 20% cut of book sales—please price accordingly.



- 1 All Presentations: Wilson Building
- 2 Dining Hall: The Commons
- 3 Housing: University Village Suites, Bldg. 3000
- 4 Parking: North Parking Deck, Basement Level

**PLEASE NOTE REGISTRATION FOR CONFERENCE HOUSING & MEALS HAVE CLOSED JUNE 30.
THE IN-PERSON TICKET WILL CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE THROUGH CONFERENCE DATES.**

VIRTUAL TICKET: Can't make it to Georgia? Take in the highlights of our programming from the comfort of your own home for only \$99. Performances will be streamed live by award-winning producers Jessica Piscitelli Robinson and Heather Forest and will be available for viewing afterwards until September 30th. The virtual ticket will include our regional and national teller showcases, general membership meeting, ORACLE awards ceremony, among highlighted panels and presentations. Get schedule and link on the next page.

LINENS: Please double-check your email conference ticket confirmation for whether you opted to use NSN-provided linens at conference housing or to bring your own linens. If so, please remember to bring your own 1) twin bed sheets, 2) pillow and pillowcase, 3) blanket, and 4) towels.

KITCHEN: Conference housing has a fully equipped kitchen (with a fridge) on each hall, each two-bedroom suite has a bathroom, kitchenette with microwave and sink (albeit without a fridge).



NATIONAL STORYTELLING NETWORK
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Georgia 2025		NSN 2025 CONFERENCE VIRTUAL TICKET OFFERINGS
NATIONAL STORYTELLING CONFERENCE		Virtual Ticket \$99
THURSDAY JULY 17th		
6:30 pm-6:45 pm Eastern Daylight Time	President's Welcome <i>by Delanna Reed</i>	
6:45 pm-8:45 pm Eastern Daylight Time	Regional Teller Showcase <i>Josie Bailey, Julie Bradshaw, Natalie Jones, Amanda Lawrence, Barry Stewart Mann, Denise Mount, Mike Mount, Cora Newcomb</i> <i>Emcee: Chetter Galloway</i>	
FRIDAY JULY 18th		
9:00 am-10:30 am Eastern Daylight Time	Callaloo: How Folktales Influence and Reflect Culture (ECO, HSA,YES) <i>by Bobby Norfolk</i>	
10:45am-12:15am Eastern Daylight Time	KSU Student Tellers: Five Live Lessons in Personal Storytelling <i>emcee Charles Parrott</i>	
12:15 pm-1:15 pm Eastern Daylight Time	Virtual Community Gathering on Zoom—courtesy of Healing Story Alliance <i>host: Heather Forest</i>	
1:15pm-2:45pm Eastern Daylight Time	Panel: Basket Weaving or Storytelling? A College Degree (YES) <i>Nancy Donoval, Charles Parrott, Melissa Fees or Liz Warren</i> <i>moderated by Delanna Reed</i>	
3:00pm-4:30pm Eastern Daylight Time	TELLING THE "OTHER'S" STORY: How do we share stories from someone else's tradition, history, or creative effort? Or should we...? (PRO, YES) <i>by Elizabeth Ellis, Nancy Pheasant, Chetter Galloway</i> <i>moderated by Anne Wheeler</i>	
4:45 pm-5:30 pm Eastern Daylight Time	Singing for His Supper <i>by Ed Stivender</i>	
6:45pm-8:45 pm Eastern Daylight Time	National Teller Showcase: <i>Carmen Agra Deedy, Lyn Ford, Bill Harley, Rev. Robert Jones, Connie Regan-Blake</i> <i>emcee: Adam Booth</i>	
9:00 pm-10:30 pm Eastern Daylight Time	National Storytelling Conference Slam <i>emcee: Loren Niemi</i>	
SATURDAY July 19th		
9:00 am-10:30 am Eastern Daylight Time	Presentation- A Legend In Overalls: Storytelling in the Footsteps of Ray Hicks <i>by Connie Regan-Blake</i>	
10:45 am - 12:15 pm Eastern Daylight Time	Youth Teller Showcase: How to Perform a Story by the Kuumba Tattle Tales <i>Javon Culver, Jarell Allen, Madison Culver</i> <i>emcee: Deborah Strahorn</i>	
1:15 pm -3:15 pm Eastern Daylight Time	NSN Annual General Membership Meeting. <i>This session is free to all Virtual Ticket Holders and all NSN members.</i>	
3:30 pm - 5:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time	Presentation: We are Women. Hear us Tell. <i>by Carmen Agra Deedy, Karin Amano, Lona Bartlett, Lyn Ford, Bonnie Gardner, Jennifer Munro, and Jessica Robinson</i>	
6:45 pm - 8:45 pm Eastern Daylight Time	ORACLE Awards & Concert Concert by Oracle winners <i>By Sherry Norfolk, Jo Ann Dadisman, Clinton Atwater, Meghna Bhat, Trudy Hansen, Jim Brule, Jennifer Otto, Sara Armstrong, Bob Johnson, Susan O'Conner</i> <i>This session is free to all Virtual ticket holders and NSN members.</i>	
9:00 pm -10:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time	Fringe A Taste of Kuumba Stew <i>by Kuumba Collective: Chetter Galloway, Gwendolyn Napier, Vernice Bailey</i>	
SUNDAY JULY 20th		
9:00 am -10:30 am Eastern Daylight Time	Presentation: The Strange Case of Lady Liberty- An Historical Investigation (YES) <i>by Barry Stewart Mann and Deborah Strahorn</i>	
12:15 pm- 1:15 pm Eastern Daylight Time	Virtual Gathering Space— courtesy of Healing Story Alliance <i>Host: Lee-Ellen Marvin</i>	

CLICK TO GET YOUR VIRTUAL TICKET NOW!



NATIONAL STORYTELLING NETWORK
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Are you attending the NSN Conference in Georgia? Would you like to tour the newly renovated Smith-Gilbert Gardens in Kennesaw, GA? The tour is on Friday, July 18th at 9 am EDT. Transportation provided.

Fees: Adult \$20 / Seniors \$18 (65+) (Bus fee included)
Butterfly House: \$3 (optional)

July 18 9:00 – 10:30AM



Bus pickup in front of Housing

SLOTS ARE LIMITED! CLICK TO PRE-REGISTER FOR THE GARDEN TOUR





SIG REPORT

ECO SIG UPDATES & CONFERENCE PROGRAMS



Linda Yemoto & Claire Nolan
Directors, ECO SIG
National Storytelling Network

ECO SIG members have been enjoying monthly virtual gatherings where we share eco-related stories and receive feedback if requested. At the June gathering, Australian storyteller and environmentalist, Jenni Cargill-Strong presented a thought-provoking workshop, “Storytelling for Challenging Times”. You can catch Jenni’s live-streamed workshop, “Learn How to Harness Storytelling to Catalyze Regenerative Change” at the NSN conference. On Tuesday July 8, 8:30 pm EDT, please join us when Fran Stallings will be our guest teller. She will give us a preview of what she will be presenting at the National Conference. There will also be time for members to share environmentally themed stories they are working on. All members will receive an email with the zoom link. **And just a reminder:** there will be several ECO sessions at the National Conference. We’d love to see you there – virtually, if not in-person!

- **Special ECO SIG Field Trip to Smith-Gilbert Gardens** on Friday July 18 at 9:00-10:45

Click [here](#) to learn more about the gardens. Click [here](#) to reserve your spot for the tour.

- **Jackson Gillman:** Workshop: Close Encounters of the Natural Kind - an environmental story exploration on Thursday 4:00-5:30
- **Jenni Cargill-Strong:** Workshop: Learn How to Harness Storytelling to Catalyze Regenerative Change [INTERNATIONAL, STREAMED] on Thursday 4:00 -5:30 pm EDT
- **Bobby Norfolk:** Presentation: Callaloo: How Folktales Influence and Reflect Culture on Friday 9:00-10:30 am
- **Barry Stewart-Mann** STEAM Telling – Using Storytelling to Teach Math and Science on Friday 1:15-2:45
- **ECO SIG Dinner** (Dining Hall) on Friday 5:30-6:30
- **Swap with Fran Stallings** on Friday 10:05 – 11:00 pm
- **Judith Black:** Workshop: From Information Download to Creating a Compelling Story on Saturday 9:00-10:30 am
- **Fran Stallings:** Workshop: SCIENCE: Tell It Like a Story on Saturday 3:30-5:00
- **Judith Black:** Fringe: Feedback Loops on Saturday 9:00-10:00 pm

Looking ahead: The NSN Eco-Tellers and Healing Story Alliance will be joining groups all over the U.S. and beyond in celebrating Sun Day, thirdact.org/sun-day a day of action (Sunday, September 21, 2025) to celebrate solar and wind power. Join us and be a part of the movement to leave fossil fuels behind. We will be hosting a storytelling marathon with tellers from around the country and around the world. Please put this date on your calendar and if you think you have a good story to tell on this topic, please send a description to Elisa Pearmain elisa@wisdomtales.com. More details to follow in our August newsletter!



SIG REPORT

YES SIG UPDATES & CONFERENCE PROGRAMS



Karin Amano & Kevin Cordi
Directors, YES SIG
National Storytelling Network

1. The Angela Lloyd Legacy Award application will be opening soon—stay tuned!
2. Please stop by the YES table at the NSN conference to learn more about what we do and to meet some of our board members. We'd love to see you there!
3. If you aren't able to attend the conference in person, we have a variety of virtual presentations endorsed by YES that you can enjoy from anywhere.

These include:

Presentation (ECO, HSA, YES):

Callaloo: How Folktales Influence and Reflect Culture
by [Bobby Norfolk](#)

Panel (YES):

Basket Weaving or Storytelling? A College Degree by
[Nancy Donoval](#), [Charles Parrott](#), [Melissa Fees](#),
moderated by [Delanna Reed](#)

Panel (PRO, YES):

Telling "the Other's" Story - How do we share stories from someone else's tradition, history, or creative effort? Or should we....? by [Elizabeth Ellis](#), [Nancy Pheasant](#), [Chetter Galloway](#), moderated by [Anne Wheeler](#)

Presentation (YES):

The Strange Case of Lady Liberty - an Historical Investigation by [Barry Stewart Mann](#) and [Deborah Strahorn](#)



Angela Lloyd, director of YES SIG until her passing in January, helped bring back the youth showcase to the NSN conference this year. This year, the award-winning Tattle Tales youth group of the Kuumba Storytellers of Georgia perform.



SPOTLIGHT

NSN MEMBER LOSES HOME IN LA FIRES



Margaret Read MacDonald
Managing Newsletter Editor
National Storytelling Network

Ashton Cynthia Clarke, one of our newsletter editors, lost her Altadena home in the January Eaton Fire. She was one of the grantees from the disaster funds administered by ASST (NSN matched the ASST disaster funds last fall after the hurricanes). Ashton has written an intense article documenting her life in Altadena, the fires, and the history of black home ownership in Altadena.

I encourage you to read it at:

losangelesliterature.com/2025/04/11/a-writers-life-in-altadena-in-the-line-of-arts-and-the-eaton-fire



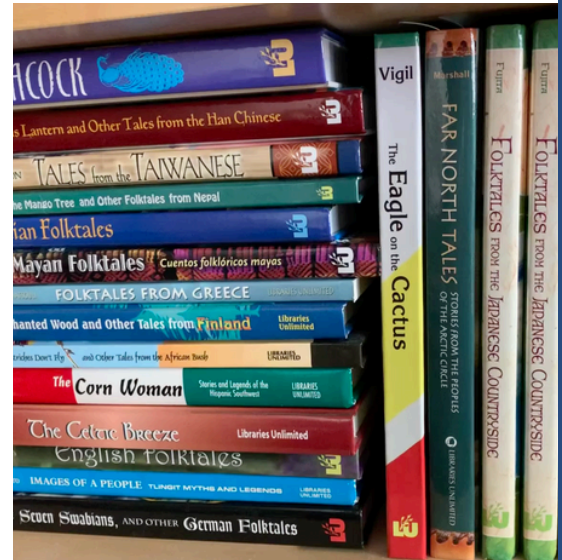
Ashton tells at Celebrating the Beauty of Altadena event



MEMBER RESOURCES

FREE RESOURCES FOR NSN MEMBERS!

Remember that through our website members have access to the ABC-CLIO database. We have recently added to this subscription Women's History and Shakespeare databases. An incredible amount of information is available through this database. For example you will find texts from the multi-volume Folktales of the World (Libraries Unlimited) series there. Here is a great spot to start research for tales from specific cultures and for background info on world cultures.



EVENTS—CLICK ADS FOR LINKS





NATIONAL STORYTELLING CALENDAR
LINKS IN TITLES IF AVAILABLE

JULY 2025 EVENTS

Traditions & Truth: A Virtual Open Mic featuring Laura Simms

Saturday, July 5, 2025 at 7:00-8:30 pm CDT

Online – Free

Donations Welcome

Email: jdelnegro@dom.edu for the Zoom link and/or if you are interested in telling a story (7 to 10 min) in the open mic.

Crafting and telling difficult stories: A workshop for storytellers, writers and others

Date: July 8, 2025 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm CDT

Online

Everyone needs to know they are not alone in their experiences. Whether through personal narrative, traditional material, games, or fiction, shared stories help us talk about difficult things so we can recognize common ground, find more healing, and help others. Sharing these stories requires special attention to the needs of both the story crafter and the audience. This three-session Zoom workshop (July 8, 15, 22 2025) will help you shape your difficult story so you can share it safely, the audience can experience it deeply without worrying about you or themselves, and will give you the tools you need for a crafted, powerful story. If participants choose, we will have a recital so they can share their stories with others. This workshop is three sessions, held on July 8, 15, and 22 at 7pm CDT. Each session will last no longer than 90 minutes. Attendance is capped at 20 people so everyone can have individual attention. The workshop will not be recorded. You can expect to learn:

- Why telling challenging stories is important
- How to identify these stories
- Crafting techniques to support tellers and listeners
- Ways to determine if a difficult story is ready to tell
- Expert facilitation
- A detailed handout, and more.

Free at Last: Stories of Revolution, Evolution, and Convolution

Date: July 10, 2025 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Venue: Ice House, 56 River Street, Bethlehem PA

Join Patchwork for an unforgettable evening of storytelling as we present Free at Last: Stories of Revolution, Evolution, and Convolution, at the Ice House, 56 River Street, Bethlehem, PA, on Thursday, July 10, from 7 PM to 9 PM. This live performance event explores the many faces of freedom—liberation, transformation, and the moments in between.



From personal milestones to mythic journeys, humorous mishaps to poignant revelations, this showcase celebrates the pivotal points in life where something changes—and nothing is ever quite the same again. These are the stories we can't forget—the ones that mark us, move us, and shape us—and, sometimes, the stories we finally get to laugh about from an older and wiser perch. Whether it's breaking free from an old habit, embracing a new identity, surviving a setback, or triumphing over a fear, these stories illuminate what it means to evolve, to let go, and to find freedom in expected—and wholly unexpected—ways. As Patchwork president and host Denise McCormack says, "These stories remind us that freedom isn't always a finish line—it's often a flicker, a feeling, a fierce moment of clarity. Each tale is a spark, and together, they light the way." The program features a mix of traditional folk and literary tales and deeply personal narratives told by a diverse and dynamic lineup of storytellers: Denise McCormack (Host & Emcee), Jim Cyr, Andy Pollack, Avern Williams, Catherine Moore, Kristin Pedemonti, Carin Bonifacino, and Mike Agranoff.

Note: Recommended for adult audiences. Some stories unfold in layers and may include mature subject matter.

Voices In The Glen Story Swap

Date: July 12, 2025 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm EDT

Storytellers and listeners are invited to join Voices in the Glen storytellers for an evening of shared stories. Anyone is welcome to tell a tale; no one ever has to.

FREE in Falls Church, VA. RSVP to margaret.chatham@verizon.net for address.

Humorous & Laughing Stories

Date: July 16, 2025 7:00 pm PDT

This is July's show in the monthly Storytelling Association of California Story Swap Genre Series. Tellers are from the California storytelling community. This online series is free to members of SAC, and \$5 to non-members.

Chills for a summer's night III: Campfire stories and more

Date: July 24, 2025 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm CDT

Online

The campfire hisses and you hope those sounds are nothing more than the wind in the trees. Was that something stepping on a branch behind you? Stories for a haunted summer night. Who says scary stories are just for Halloween? Join master storyteller Laura Packer for an evening of campfire creepy stories you hope aren't true. Vengeful spirits. Ghosts who want to get home. Monsters and memories. Places, people, and ...things... that have no business lingering on this side of the veil. Live show on July 24, 7:30pm with recording available for two weeks after. Suitable for a mature 12 and up. **Content warning:** Scary stories, so expect death, mild gore, longing and other strong feelings.



Good Liars Club Festival

Date: August 2, 2025 2:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Online

Live on Zoom, Anne & Norm present: The 2025 Good Liars Club Festival

Sat Aug 2 11am AKDT/ Noon PDT/ 1pm MST/ 2pm CDT/ 3pm EDT

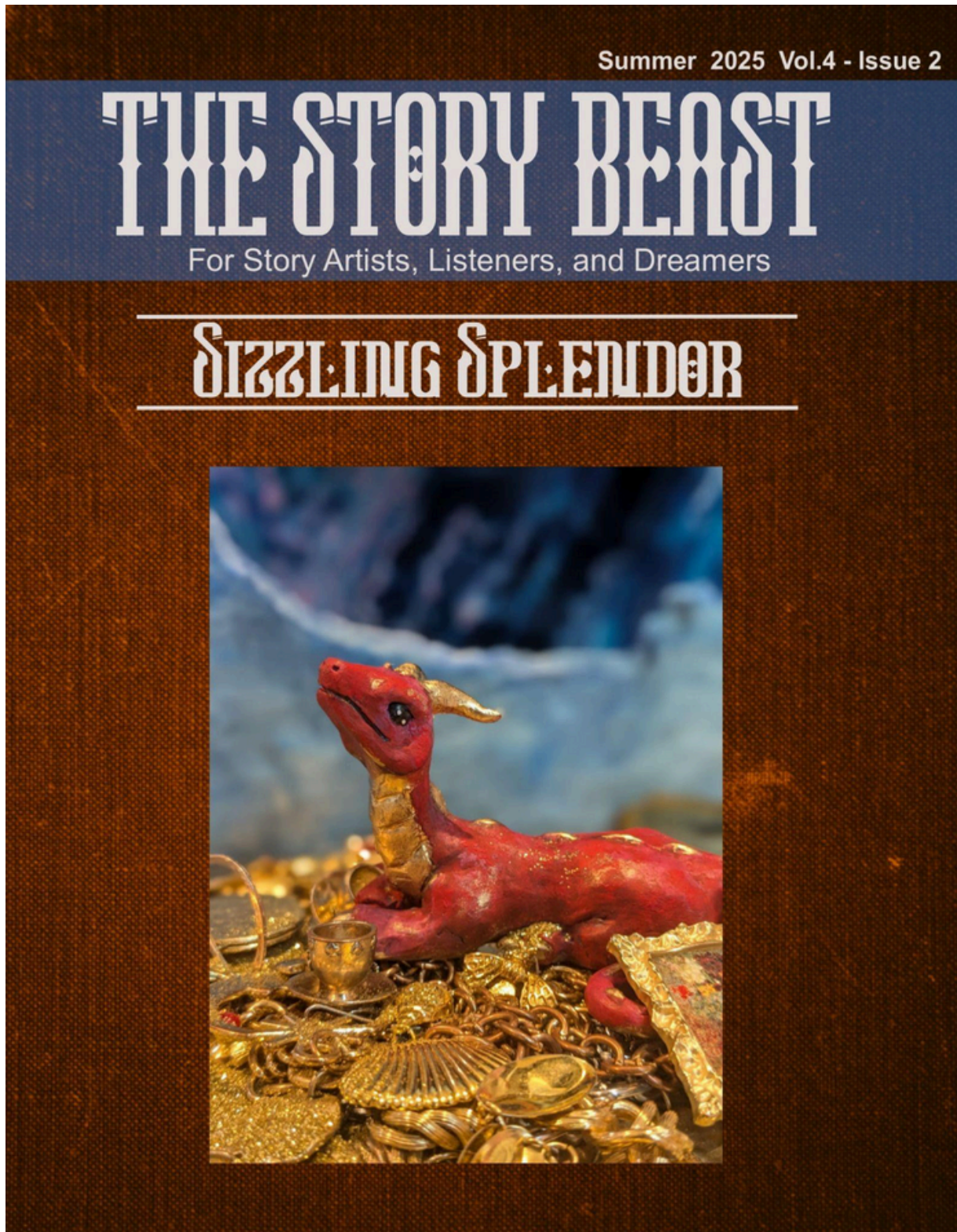
- 6 showcases of 24 fabulous liars stretching the truth in good-natured fun.
- Showcases run every hour on the hour
- One registration link lets you come in and out of the festival as you please.
- Donors get a recording of the festival to watch on demand.
- Don't miss the fourth year of this festival of confabulation!



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Click the cover below to read the June 2025 Story Beast Issue (Sizzling Splendor) this month!
Submissions for September 2025 Story Beast Issue (Quirky Quandaries) due August 15, 2025!

Visit storybeast.org for more information.





NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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Nick Smith	Editor
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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.