



APRIL 2026 NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello friends,

Plans for the liars contest are in full swing. This year's contest will be in Joplin, MO.

Start preparing your lies so that you may compete in this year's contest. Remember there is a spoken contest and a written contest. It will be a great event. We have Elizabeth Ellis coming to tell us stories at the Friday night concert which you will not want to miss, and she is doing the workshop on Saturday. We will share lunch and stories at noon. The Spoken Liars Contest will begin in the afternoon. All events are free to spectators. A beautiful quilt has already been made by Marsha Mellendorf (Perrin Stifel's sister) for the raffle. The silent auction is always a hit. I can't wait. Come to Joplin.

The MO-TELL Zoom storytelling concerts continue to be a hit. Our next one is in June. Soon, storytellers will be telling their tales in the Missouri State Parks and Historic Sites.

We have a wonderful year ahead of us in storytelling. Keep sharing your stories.

Joyce Slater
President, MO-TELL



“When you tell a story, you spark a connection. That is the power of storytelling.”

– Jay O'Callahan

PRAIRIE VOICES

HONORING HERITAGE, INSPIRING TOMORROW

National Storytelling Conference
West Texas A&M University

JULY 23-26
CANYON, TX



NATIONAL
STORYTELLING
NETWORK

ATTENTION, TELLERS!

Hello, Missouri Folklore Society and friends, we have started planning our 2026 conference in the Queen City of the Ozarks... **Springfield, Missouri.**

We will be returning to the **Mansion at Elfindale, Nov. 5-7** with the plan for programming from afternoon Thursday to Saturday evening.

Our conference theme: **"What are y'all doing?"**

We are sending out this email as a "save-the-date" and rollout of our 2026 Call for Participation.

Submit your proposal [online](#).

We will have a flyer / mailer with Call for Participation information later this spring.

Thanks! Reach out if you have any questions!

-MFS 2026 Planners Chris & Jahni

<http://missourifolkloresociety.org>



32nd Annual Festival

Join us in Downs on April 24-25, 2026, for our annual celebration of the art of storytelling. Every year, on the last full weekend in April, we gather to showcase the finest professional tellers and highlight Festival audience favorites.

Prepare to be enchanted by captivating tales from master storytellers, immerse yourself in the excitement of the Tall Tale Contest, and discover the rich tapestry of Local Legends. With a lineup of engaging events and activities, there's something for everyone to enjoy at the Kansas Storytelling Festival.

Mark your calendars and make plans to join us for a weekend filled with laughter, wonder, and the timeless magic of storytelling. We can't wait to welcome you to Downs for an unforgettable experience!

MO-TELL First Tuesday Quarterly Concerts on Zoom



June 9, 7 pm

Theme: Summer Surprises

Live & in person

Liars Contest,

July 10 & 11, Joplin, MO

September 8, 7 pm

Theme: School Yarns

December 8, 7 pm

Theme: Peace and Joy

Tellabration!

**Tuesday, November 17,
on Zoom**

Live & in person

Tellabration!

in St. Louis, Nov. 20th



MAGNET
HERE

FOR YOUR FRIDGE

MAGNET
HERE

STORIES, GATHERINGS, AND STORY GATHERINGS
AROUND OUR FAIR STATE.

RAPS APRIL 2026

Regular Meetings:

First Thursday of every month from
7:00-9:00 PM (Central): Join us in-
person or on Zoom

[Trailside Center](#)

9901 Holmes
Kansas City, MO 64131

Third Saturday of every month from
10:30 AM-12 PM (Central): Join us
in-person or on Zoom

[Woodneath Library Center](#)

8900 NE Flintlock Road
Kansas City, MO 64157

MO-TELL

MO-TELL Calendar 2025/2026

Board meetings – First Monday of the
month, 2 pm Central time, Zoom
December 9, 2025 – Online concert (see
flier)

The Annual Membership Meeting –
January 13, 2026, 7:00 pm, Central time

Quarterly online concerts for 2026
March 10, June 9, September 8,
December 8, 7:00 pm, Central time

The 12 th Annual Liars Contest in
Joplin, MO, 2026
July 10/11

RIVERWINDS

GATEWAY

Why Dogs are Better than Husbands

Dogs think you are hilarious, even when you are silly.

Dogs think you are brilliant, even when you burn dinner.

Dogs don't complain about your hobbies- unless it's vacuuming.

A dog never complains about your driving.

Dogs don't care if you gain weight.

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Why Dogs are Better than Wives

The later you are, the more excited they are to see you.

Dogs forgive you even when you play with other dogs.

A dog's disposition stays the same the whole month long.

Dogs can't talk.

You never have to wait for a dog, they are always ready to go out 24 hours a day.



MO-TELL'S

ANNUAL LIARS CONTEST

JULY 10-11, 2026



TALL TALES!
OUTRAGEOUS!

A SUMMER TRADITION

CAN YOU SPIN THE BEST YARN?

PRIZES FOR THE BIGGEST STRETCH REGISTER AT MO-TELL.ORG

MORE DETAILS SOON!



[Storytelling as a Successful Business \(Zoom\)](#)

Mon, Apr 6 2026 6:30pm - 8:00pm Central Story Center Event MCPL Online
Learn the fundamentals of creating and running a successful storytelling business from award-winning storyteller Tracey Segarra.

REGISTER NOW

[How to Tell a Folktale \(Zoom\)](#)

Thu, Apr 9 2026 6:30pm - 8:00pm Central Story Center Event MCPL Online
Folktales and fairy tales have been part of humanity for millennia--entertaining or chilling, they tell us about the culture they emerged from and about ourselves.

REGISTER NOW

[Story Swap](#)

Thu, Apr 16 2026 6:30pm - 8:00pm The Auditorium at Woodneath Library
Center Story Center Event Registration Required
This open-mic storytelling event is open to anyone!

REGISTER NOW

[Copyright Basics \(Zoom\)](#)

Thu, Apr 23 2026 6:30pm - 8:00pm Central Story Center Event MCPL Online

Learn the basics of copyright law, what rights copyright holders have, the exceptions to those rights, and the proper application of fair use from Chris LeBeau, a member of the faculty for the Univers

REGISTER NOW

TIPS FOR TELLERS

From the prowess & generosity of Linda Kuntz

Add sensory elements to your story—

What could they see?

What could they feel?

What could they smell?

What could they taste?

What could they touch?

Practice your story, then see where you can add sensory flavor.

Practice your story again.

MO-TELL FUTURE CORNER



The Future of Storytelling in Missouri

Lisa and James Costello completed the Oral Storytelling Certificate through the Story Center at Woodneath Library. These fresh faces will carry on the tradition of storytelling.

Lisa Costello from Parkville, Missouri says, "I love a good story. I grew up listening to stories that my grandparents would tell. As I grew up, I used stories in my work life to help clients understand issues and options when considering risk management options for their companies. I was sitting at the library one day and picked up a Program Guide and saw classes for the Story Center. I dug into this a bit and learned there was a certificate program and as they say - the rest was history."

James Costello added, "I have always loved a good story. I was one of those kids that constantly had a book and loved telling other people about them. My dad told stories all the time and I started doing the same. When Lisa found the Story Center, I was inspired to start getting back to some of my roots."

Lisa prefers folktales, tall tales and fairy tales particularly if they are clever or have a twist. As she hangs out with other story tellers, she has not only picked up tips and tricks but also different kinds of stories that might be interesting to tell such as historical tales or family history. Currently, Lisa has only told stories to adults.

James leans towards folk and tall tales with a bit of a personal slant to many of them. He also tells tales of his time in computer security and some of the crazy things he had come across. His stories typically have a humorous slant to them.

Lisa's current goals in storytelling are to be a professional storyteller and writer during her retirement. However, in the meantime she would like to gain as much experience telling all kinds of stories. James wants to expand the breadth of his stories to include some folk tales of Ireland and Colorado. He has been exploring stories about the variety of cryptids and unusual creatures that are apart of American and Irish folklore.

Lisa said, "My storytelling has been impacted by simply being around these great storytellers. They are full of information, tips, tricks, resources, books and what events to attend. Everyone is so helpful and willing to share. The creativity is so inspiring and the feedback so helpful."

James said, "The feedback and openness of the community has been amazing and has allowed me to refine my stories from humorous thoughts to fully realized characters and stories. The encouragement I have received has been a catalyst for my improvement."

You can reach **Lisa and James Costello** at Storyriotcollective@gmail.com or (913) 710-8615.

STORY OF THE MONTH

The Wolf and the Dog

A story by Aesop

There was once a Wolf who got very little to eat because the Dogs of the village were so wide awake and watchful. He was really nothing but skin and bones, and it made him very downhearted to think of it.

One night this Wolf happened to fall in with a fine fat House Dog who had wandered a little too far from home. The Wolf would gladly have eaten him then and there, but the House Dog looked strong enough to leave his marks should he try it. So, the Wolf spoke very humbly to the Dog, complimenting him on his fine appearance.

"You can be as well-fed as I am if you want to," replied the Dog. "Leave the woods; there you live miserably. Why, you have to fight hard for every bite you get. Follow my example and you will get along beautifully."

"What must I do?" asked the Wolf.

"Hardly anything," answered the House Dog. "Chase people who carry canes, bark at beggars, and fawn on the people of the house. In return you will get tidbits of every kind, chicken bones, choice bits of meat, sugar, cake, and much more beside, not to speak of kind words and caresses."

The Wolf had such a beautiful vision of his coming happiness that he almost wept. But just then he noticed that the hair on the Dog's neck was worn and the skin was bare.

"What is that on your neck?"

"Nothing at all," replied the Dog.

"What! nothing!"

"Oh, just a trifle!"

"But please tell me."

"Perhaps you see the mark of the collar to which my chain is fastened."

"What! A chain!" cried the Wolf. "Don't you go wherever you please?"

"Not always! But what's the difference?" replied the Dog.

"All the difference in the world! I don't care a rap for your feasts, and I wouldn't take all the tender young lambs in the world at that price." And away ran the Wolf to the woods.

There is nothing worth so much as liberty.

THE STORY BEAST

For Story Artists, Listeners, and Dreamers

Sink your teeth and claws into our monthly publication now



A new free E-Publication the 15th of each month

While you explore, consider submitting stories, articles, poems, and art.



STORYBEAST.ORG/ARCHIVE





**PERMISSION
TO COME ABOARD
GRANTED!**

SEE DETAILS BELOW

THE MO-TELL BILL OF FARE

OFTEN IMITATED, NEVER DUPLICATED

MEMBERSHIP DUES

FISCAL YEAR, FEBRUARY 1-JANUARY 31

RENEW TODAY!

| MEMBERSHIP | ANNUAL DUES | COMES WITH |
|---------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| SINGLE MEMBERSHIP 1 YEAR | \$25 | MO-TELL PRESTIGE |
| SINGLE MEMBERSHIP 2 YEARS | \$40 | MO-TELL PRESTIGE |
| FAMILY MEMBERSHIP 1 YEAR | \$35 | FAMILY-WIDE MO-TELL PRESTIGE |
| FAMILY MEMBERSHIP 2 YEARS | \$50 | TWICE AS MUCH OF THE SAME!! |
| LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP -60 | \$250 | |
| LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP 60+ | \$200 | |

MEMORIAL DONATIONS HUMBLY ACCEPTED!
IMMORTALIZE YOUR LOVED ONE'S MEMORY WITH YOUR GENEROSITY.

SEND CHECK PAYABLE TO:

Missouri Storytelling, Inc.
9621 Olive Blvd. #28994
St. Louis, MO 63132-9998



A BARGAIN AT TWICE THE PRICE!

THE BENEFITS YOU RECEIVE FOR YOUR ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP:

1. MISSOURI STATE PARKS STORYTELLING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE
2. MISSOURI LIAR'S CONTEST
3. WEB SITE PRESENCE FOR STORYTELLERS
4. MONTHLY STORYTELLING PROGRAMS
5. LOADS OF MERCH (HATS, CAPS, CLIPS, MUGS, BAGS, AND WHATNOT!)
6. NATIONAL STORYTELLING NETWORK AFFILIATION
7. A WORLD CLASS NEWSLETTER (HUZZAH!)
8. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING (AND A VOICE THEREIN!)
9. CONNECTION TO THE OTHER STORYTELLING ORGANIZATIONS IN THE REGION

RENEW TODAY!

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Missouri Storytelling, Inc (MO-TELL) is an organization of storytellers and other interested persons dedicated to spreading the joy and art of storytelling throughout Missouri.

MISSION STATEMENT

We envision that every Missourian will hear and share stories and keep the oral tradition alive.

VISION STATEMENT

President: Joyce Slater, joyceslater20@gmail.com

Vice-President: Sue Hinkel, suehinkel1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Jackie Wright, jpapawright@sbcglobal.net

Secretary: Sue Godsey, sgodsey2@gmail.com

At Large: Gary Kuntz, galirahi@aol.com
Nancee Walker Micham, walkermicham@gmail.com
Glen "Papa" Wright, jpapawright@sbcglobal.net
Linda Kuntz, iharilag@gmail.com (membership)

Emeritus: Perrin Stifel, pstifelstl@earthlink.net

www.mo-tell.org

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Our mailing address: 7338 Belleview Ave, Kansas City, MO 64114



THE MO-TELL BOARD