



OCTOBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello friends,



I ran across an article in Psychology Today magazine on storytelling. “Why We Tell Stories” written by Peter Gärdenfors Ph.D. The article is basically about these three points. It is not the first thing to be written about storytelling and why we do it, but it was a clear and precise version of the reasons stories continue to make us human.

Key points:

- Stories have two main roles: to communicate information and to resolve conflicts.
- Human brains are particularly suited to remembering stories. Without stories humans would have perished.
- Children learn the structure of language from stories.

Our job is to keep telling stories. Whether the stories are true or not we need them as much as we need the air we breathe to live.

Keep telling your stories.
Joyce Slater
President, MO-TELL

“I will tell you something about stories . . . They aren’t just entertainment. Don’t be fooled. They are all we have, you see, all we have to fight off illness and death.”

— Leslie Marmon Silko,
Ceremony



FOOD FOR THOUGHT, AND DUE THANKS.

When making your decisions regarding your year-end contributions, please consider Missouri Storytelling Inc. (MO-TELL) in your giving plan. MO-TELL is a not-for-profit, 501 C 3 organization. All donations are tax deductible.

The following donors are already part of this year's giving. The donor is able to designate which program they support. Donations are accepted throughout the year.

Thank you for all the support given to MO-TELL to keep storytelling alive in Missouri.

MO-TELL DONORS

Jan.-Sep. 2026

Post Office Box

Jackie & "Papa" Wright

General Fund

Ron Turner

Carol Kariotis

Liars Contest

Raelene Crotser

Sue Godsey

Anonymous

Joel Moore

Alice & Perrin Stifel

Joyce Slater

State Parks

Alice & Perrin Stifel

GBU Life

Memorial (In memory of a friend or loved one who has passed)

Sue Hinkel in Memory of John Hinkel and Steve Otto designated for **General Fund**

Alice & Perrin Stifel in Memory of Mary Guthrie, Tim Cosby, Jack Williams, Mary Frances RuddCarlson designated for **Tellabration!** and Don Flanagan designated for the **General Fund**

Honor (To honor someone who is living)

Alice & Perrin Stifel in Honor of Ron Turner designated for **State Parks**

THANK YOU, KIND DONORS!

Save the Date

St. Louis STORYTELLING Festival

November 8-15

www.slcl.org/storytelling

TRY A THRILLER FOR OCTOBER!

Agent Charles Morgner thought his mission was a success. Deep in the Amazon, he barely escaped a villain's lair, leaving behind an R&D complex filled with sinister secrets counting down to self-destruct. But when a chilling message confirms his gravest fears, Charles must confront his past to prevent a global nightmare from awakening.

Decades later, high school student Stuart Gorovich finds himself adrift. Disillusioned with his small-town life, a mission trip to the very heart of the Amazon jungle offers an unexpected escape. But what begins as a search for purpose quickly transforms into a desperate fight for survival when he and two friends stumble upon a decaying complex echoing with an insistent, unearthly call: "Wun... Wun... Wun..."

As these two timelines collide, a terrifying truth emerges about a dormant power poised to reshape humanity. Can Charles outwit the forces aligned against him, and can Stuart resist the allure of a darkness that promises worldwide peace through unimaginable means?



SAMPLE A FEW PAGES

[HTTPS://READ.AMAZON.COM/SAMPLE/BOGX6S45BD?CLIENTID=SHARE](https://read.amazon.com/sample/BOGX6S45BD?CLIENTID=SHARE)

St. Louis STORYTELLING Festival



November 8-15

Join us for the St. Louis Storytelling Festival, featuring nationally renowned storytellers and programs for all ages.

www.slcl.org/storytelling

SCAN ME



St. Louis County **Library**

Program sites are accessible. With at least two weeks' notice, accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities. Call 314-994-3300 or visit www.slcl.org.



SPOOKY STORIES

HALLOWEEN STORYTELLING SHOWCASE

THURSDAY OCTOBER 29 AT 7:00 PM

AT POWER CREATIVE - 3221 OAK HILL AVE ST LOUIS MO 63116

TICKETS \$20 - RECOMMENDED FOR AGES 12+

JOIN US... IF YOU DARE! FOR A NIGHT OF SPINE-TINGLING TALES TOLD BY FIVE NATIONALLY KNOWN STORYTELLERS. PLUS EERIE POETRY. A FEW SPOOKY SONGS. AND A BIT OF HALLOWEEN HUMOR!

FEATURING:

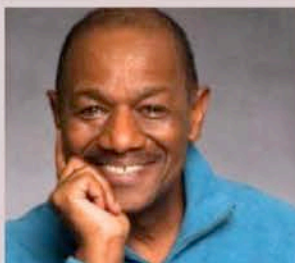
BEVERLY
BRENNAN



KEN
HALLER



BOBBY
NORFOLK



THREE-TIME
EMMY AWARD WINNER

SHERRY
NORFOLK



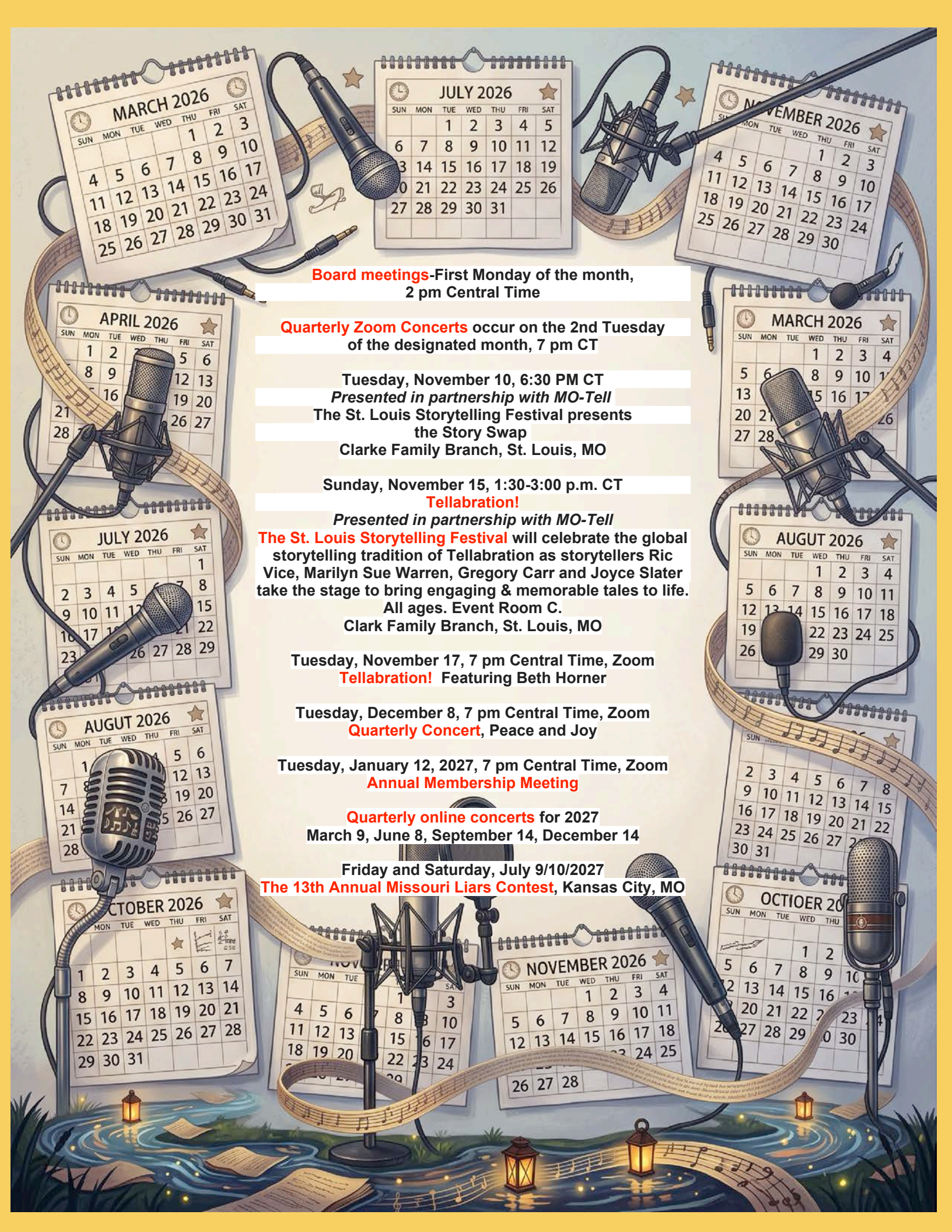
GREG
CARR



PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS AT:
POWERCREATIVESTL.COM/EVENTS/SPOOKY
OR AT THE DOOR WITH CASH OR VENMO



DOORS OPEN AT 6:15 PM | WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE | FREE PARKING
FREE SNACKS & DONATION BAR FOR MORE INFO CALL: 314-968-4303



Board meetings-First Monday of the month,
2 pm Central Time

Quarterly Zoom Concerts occur on the 2nd Tuesday
of the designated month, 7 pm CT

Tuesday, November 10, 6:30 PM CT
Presented in partnership with MO-Tell
The St. Louis Storytelling Festival presents
the Story Swap
Clarke Family Branch, St. Louis, MO

Sunday, November 15, 1:30-3:00 p.m. CT
Tellabration!

Presented in partnership with MO-Tell
The St. Louis Storytelling Festival will celebrate the global
storytelling tradition of Tellabration as storytellers Ric
Vice, Marilyn Sue Warren, Gregory Carr and Joyce Slater
take the stage to bring engaging & memorable tales to life.
All ages. Event Room C.
Clark Family Branch, St. Louis, MO

Tuesday, November 17, 7 pm Central Time, Zoom
Tellabration! Featuring Beth Horner

Tuesday, December 8, 7 pm Central Time, Zoom
Quarterly Concert, Peace and Joy

Tuesday, January 12, 2027, 7 pm Central Time, Zoom
Annual Membership Meeting

Quarterly online concerts for 2027
March 9, June 8, September 14, December 14

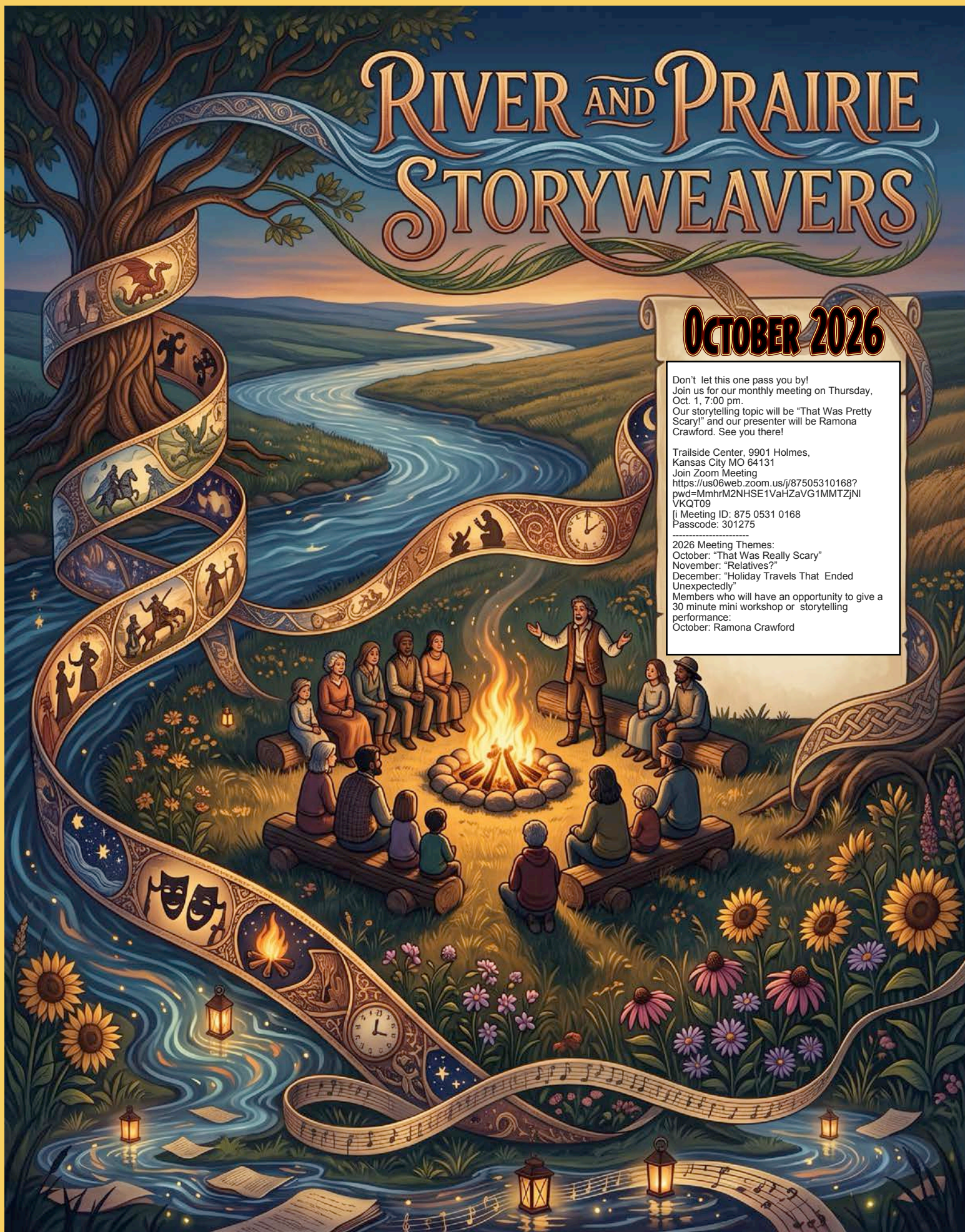
Friday and Saturday, July 9/10/2027
The 13th Annual Missouri Liars Contest, Kansas City, MO

OCTOBER 2026

Don't let this one pass you by!
Join us for our monthly meeting on Thursday,
Oct. 1, 7:00 pm.
Our storytelling topic will be "That Was Pretty
Scary!" and our presenter will be Ramona
Crawford. See you there!

Trailside Center, 9901 Holmes,
Kansas City MO 64131
Join Zoom Meeting
[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87505310168?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87505310168?pwd=MmhrM2NHSE1VaHZaVG1MMTZjNIjVVKQT09)
[pwd=MmhrM2NHSE1VaHZaVG1MMTZjNI](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87505310168?pwd=MmhrM2NHSE1VaHZaVG1MMTZjNIjVVKQT09)
[VKQT09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87505310168?pwd=MmhrM2NHSE1VaHZaVG1MMTZjNIjVVKQT09)
[i Meeting ID: 875 0531 0168
Passcode: 301275

2026 Meeting Themes:
 October: "That Was Really Scary"
 November: "Relatives?"
 December: "Holiday Travels That Ended Unexpectedly"
 Members who will have an opportunity to give a 30 minute mini workshop or storytelling performance:
 October: Ramona Crawford



THESE MIGHT BE WORTH A FEW



Some of my proudest moments in my life have been when my computer told me my password was very strong.

To anyone suffering from paranoia . . . remember you are not alone!

Don't you hate it when someone answers their own question? I do.

You don't need a parachute to go skydiving, but you do need one if you plan to go skydiving a second time.

If you're ever attacked by a bunch of clowns, go for the juggler.

Harvard has an 8.9 % rate of acceptance for all applicants. Walmart has a 2.6 % rate of applicants who are hired. It makes you think

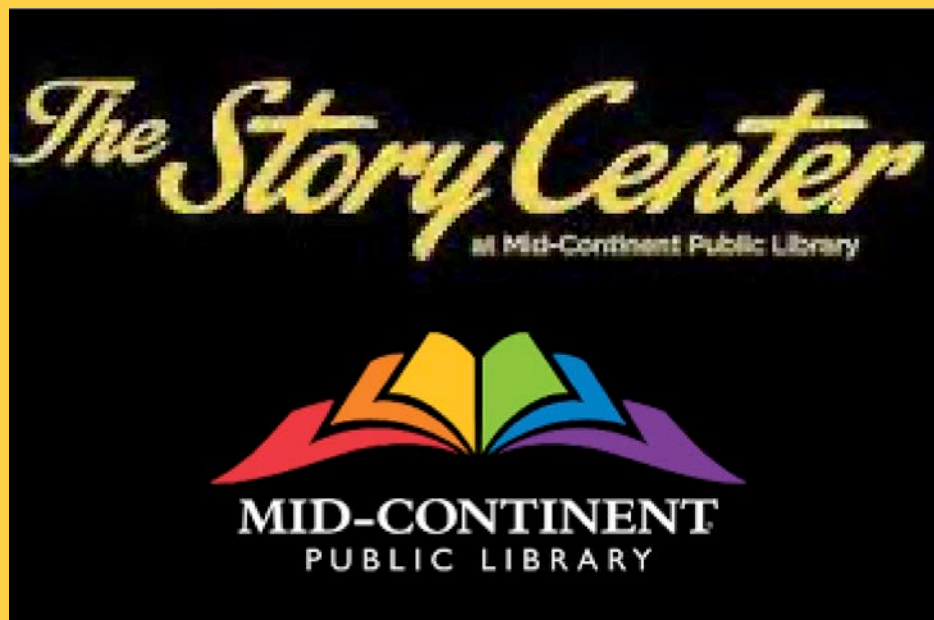
The Cookie Monster has a real name. It's Sid.

Some men shave in front of the passenger side-view mirror. That was because they get a closer shave than it actually appears.

I have been reading a novel in Braille. Something very bad is going to happen. I can feel it.

And, lastly, to impress your friends with somewhat useless knowledge:

The last President of the United States to sport facial hair was William Howard Taft. He left office in 1913 still having a mustache.



[Performance Options and Opportunities \(Zoom\)](#)

Wed, Oct 7 2026 6:30pm - 8:00pm Central Story Center Event **MCPL Online**

Learn how to match venues, gigs, and audiences to your storytelling content and style from Lisa Overholser.

REGISTER NOW

[Podcasting for Storytellers \(Zoom\)](#)

Thu, Oct 8 2026 6:30pm - 8:00pm Central Story Center Event **MCPL Online**
Podcasting presents an exciting platform for stories, from audio essays to deeply researched narratives.

REGISTER NOW

[Story Swap \(Hybrid\)](#)

Thu, Oct 15 2026 6:30pm - 8:00pm Central
Story Center Programming Room and Online
Story Center Event **MCPL Online**

This open-mic storytelling event is open to anyone!

REGISTER NOW

[Spooky Storytelling at Woodneath](#)

Wed, Oct 21 2026 6:30pm - 7:30pm

Story Center Programming Room

Story Center Event Registration Required

Visit the historic Woodneath house (in costume if you dare) for a fall evening of family-friendly spooky stories!

REGISTER NOW

TIPS FOR TELLERS

offered for your edification by Nan Kammann-Judd

1. Before arriving at your performance site, provide all the information requested and return it in a timely manner.
2. Reconfirm anything that matters to you or your performance.
3. Respect all requests of you or negotiate a solution if necessary.
4. Be on time or early.
5. Cultivate and practice a generous spirit of kindness and good humor while adapting to the local culture or expectations.
6. Remember to connect with your audience first before telling your story. One of the distinctions between storytelling and theatre is the storytellers make a direct connection and response to the audience. It's not just about you: it's about giving and receiving with the audience.
7. Be yourself. Most of the audience wants to see you as a person too.
8. Express gratitude when you feel it to the organizers, volunteers, sponsors, and audience. You may never know the life-changing experience you will provide.
9. Provide helpful feedback for your experience.

Nan Kammann-Judd directed the St. Louis Storytelling Festival for 15 years, served on the National Storytelling Board of Directors for six years and many committees, helped found and co-direct the Belleville Festival of Stories, served as a consultant to other festivals, and was honorary chair of the NSN Chicago Conference in 2002.

MO-TELL STORYTELLERS & MO STATE PARKS & HISTORIC SITES

<i>DATE</i>	<i>PARK/SITE</i>	<i>STORYTELLER</i>
10/03/2026	WASHINGTON SP	RIC VICE
10/03/2026	JEFFERSON LANDING	JIM TWO CROWS WALLEN
10/17/2026	THE SCOTT JOPLIN HOUSE	BOBBY NORFOLK
10/31/2026	CROWDER SP	GARY KUNTZ
11/12/2026	ROCK BRIDGE SP	BR. JOHN ANDERSON
12/19/2026	ROARING RIVER SP	JOYCE SLATER
02/2027	BATTLE OF LEXINGTON	GEORGE PETTIGREW
04/03/2027	ROBERTSVILLE SP	MIKE/NANCEE WALKER MICHAM
05/15/2027	ST. FRANCOIS SP	ERIC HAYNES
05/15/2027	FIRST MO STATE CAP	HEATHER HARLAN
05/22/2027	ARROW ROCK SP	
06/11/2027	PRAIRIE SP	JIM TWO CROWS WALLEN

COME, SEE, HEAR, ENJOY!



MARSHA'S QUILTS

Marsha Stifel Mellendorf, honorary MO-Tell member
told by Perrin Stifel

Marsha Stifel Mellendorf, a lifetime member of Missouri Storytelling, has made quilts for MO-Tell raffles for several years. She loves the memories and comfort that quilts can bring.

Her love of needlework began at the age of 7 (she's now 88 and going strong!), at her grandmother Stifel's home in old North St. Louis. There Marsha learned to knit and crochet "the right way," now known as the continental way.

When she was 9, Marsha made a sampler of various embroidery stitches, and in her late teens she often took a bus downtown after school to look in the St. Louis department stores for fabrics and patterns for dresses and formal gowns.

Even though Marsha had enjoyed quilts for many years, she didn't take a quilting class until the 1990s! Now she creates and completes more than 20 quilts a year, doing all the cutting, piecing, and sewing herself. Choosing the fabric, colors, and design are her favorite parts of the project, as differences in these choices can create a totally different look.

Marsha's favorite sewing machines are Singer Featherweights, of which she has 8. They are small and easily carried to quilting sessions of the two quilt guilds to which she belongs. Elias Howe invented the sewing machine, but Isaac Singer created the installment plan to sell the machines. Housewives could own and use their new machine while paying a small amount each month to complete the purchase. Marsha also owns 2 antique sewing machines: a Singer treadle machine from her grandmother Bailey, and an electric Singer machine from her aunt Tillie.

Recently Marsha made more than a dozen "Quilts of Valor" for family members who had served their country in the military, or for their children or grandchildren. She used the patriotic colors of red, white, and blue, one of her favorite combinations. With her 2 guilds she also makes quilts for children with Downs Syndrome, newborns, and teens who grow out of foster care. She does not sell her quilts, but prefers to give them as family wedding gifts, graduations, and other special occasions, personalizing each with school colors or patterns.

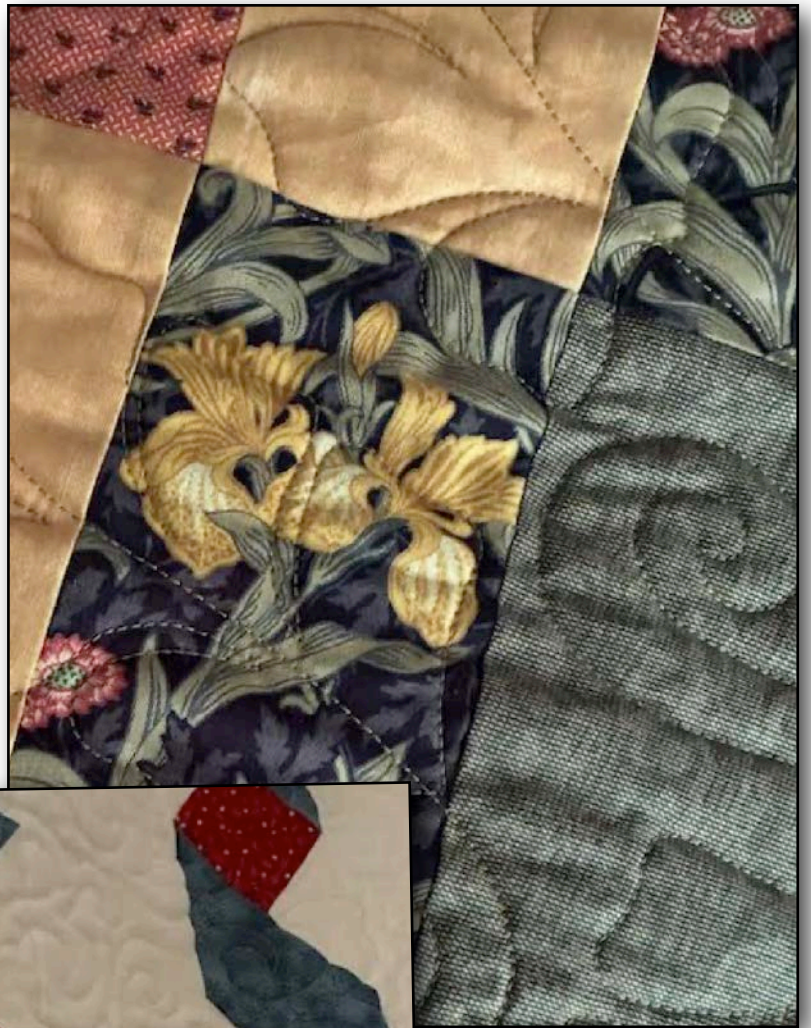
Marsha's most precious quilt is a "postage stamp" quilt her mother, Berniece Bailey Stifel, made in 1935 when she had the mumps: a pattern of a basket of flowers. Marsha's first quilt was a Dutch doll pattern applique quilt, which her daughter now has.

Eugene Stifel, Marsha's father, made more than 24 cross-stitched quilts after he retired. Most were given to the family, but several were donated to Missouri Storytelling for raffles to raise funds to support MO-Tell's mission. Marsha has continued this family tradition; she loves sharing them for this cause and is always happy when the quilt raffle brings in good money!

MARSHA'S QUILTS

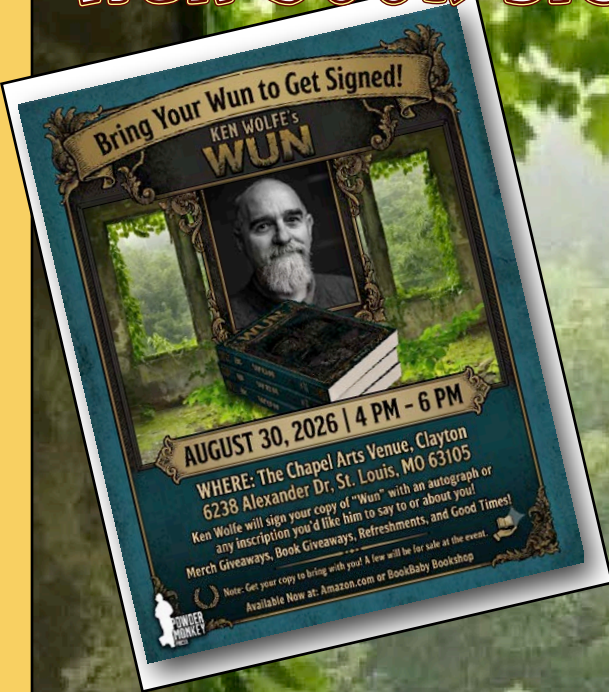


Marsha Stifel Mellendorf, honorary MO-Tell member



A sneak peek at this year's Liars
Contest Quilt Raffle Quilt!

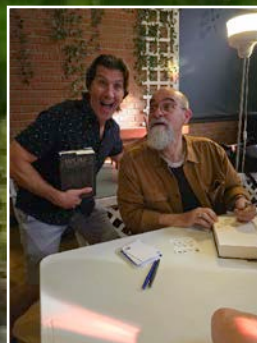
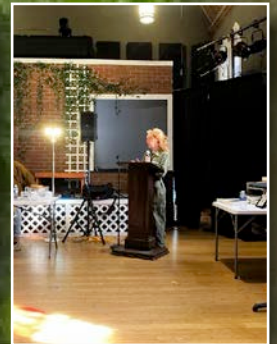
WUN BOOK SIGNING GOES SWIMMINGLY



KEN WOLFE HOSTED A BOOK SIGNING FOR HIS FIRST NOVEL, **WUN**, A FEW DAYS AGO AND IT WENT WELL. IT'S HIS LONGEST CONTINUOUS LIE AND ALMOST 70 PEOPLE (DARE WE SAY, "FANS"?) CAME BY FOR A SIGNATURE AND A COUPLE OF READINGS FROM THE TEXT. IF YOU MISSED THE EVENT AND WANT AN INSCRIPTION, JUST SEND YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND WHAT YOU WANT INSCRIBED TO "MOTELLNEWS@GMAIL.COM" AND KEN WILL GLADLY SEND YOU A PERSONALIZED BOOKPLATE TO AFFIX TO YOUR COPY.

WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY? YOU HAVE NO COPY OF **WUN**?

THAT'S AN EASY FIX. SEE BELOW.



Find **Wun** of your own on
Book Baby.com Amazon





Tall Tales Competition

Exaggeration, hyperbole - or just plain outright lies!

Tall Tales are as American as baseball and mom's apple pie. You can find the legends of Paul Bunyan and his like in American traditions, and here at the Kansas Storytelling Festival, we celebrate this American genre.

WHAT IS A TALL TALE ? ([click here](#))

The opening day highlight of the Kansas Storytelling Festival is most certainly the Tall Tales Competition.

Four amateur storytellers come together with their best tall tale stories, prepared to try to outdo each other and win the coveted traveling trophy
- A Shovel.

Tall Tale Contestants

Preliminary contests are held in September and October to select four contestants to vie for the traveling trophy, the storytelling shovel, at the April Festival. Beginning in the fall of 2026, contestants will be determined at three preliminary competitions. So get busy concocting your finest ideas into hilarious or hair-raising tales. Hear the polished result on Friday evening at the Kansas Storytelling Festival. Email us at kansasstorytelling@gmail.com for more information or to register for Wichita or Downs qualifiers.

YOU ARE INVITED TO TELL A TALL TALE

ALL amateur storytellers are invited to enter the Tall Tale competitions.

Storytellers may compete in any or all of the events.



Preliminary Competitions for the 2027 Kansas Storytelling Festival will be held at 3 events in September and October 2026.

- **September 19, 2026 - Tonganoxie, KS. One qualifier will be selected. ([More Information](#))**
 - Special Tall Tale Workshop and Evening Concert by Bill Lepp
- **October 3, 2026 - Wichita, KS. One qualifier will be selected. ([More Information or call 785-545-5285](#))**
- **October 17, 2026 - Downs, KS. Two qualifiers will be selected. ([More Information](#))**

The public is welcome to attend these free events.

EXTRA CHANCES !

Competitors who are not selected at one of the events, may compete at any of the following events.

Rules for Tall Tales Competition ([click here](#))

Tall Tale Scoring Categories ([Click here](#))

STORY OF THE MONTH

Chester

FLORENCE PARRY HEIDE

Chester was lazy.

Chester was the *laziest* turkey you ever heard of.

The other turkeys were always very busy doing whatever it is that all good turkeys should be doing.

But not Chester. He was too lazy.

He was too lazy to get out of bed.

"What would I do if I *did* get up?" he asked.

"Make your bed," said the other turkeys, who always made theirs.

"What's the use? I'm only going to get right back in it again," said Chester.

As you see, he was very lazy.

If he was inside, he was too lazy to go outside.

If he was outside, he was too lazy to go inside.

He was too lazy to go "gobble gobble." And all turkeys go "gobble gobble."

One chilly morning the farmer called the turkeys.

"Here turkey, turkey, turkey, turkey, turkey!" called the farmer.

All the other turkeys got ready to run to the farmer to see what he wanted. "Come on, Chester," said the other turkeys.

"I'm going to stay in bed," said Chester.

"You're so lazy, Chester. How will you know what the farmer wants?" asked the other turkeys.

"Come back and tell me," yawned Chester.

"Lazybones," said the other turkeys. They all ran to see what it was the farmer wanted.

The next morning, which was Thanksgiving morning, Chester looked around the empty barn. "It pays to be lazy," thought Chester, turning over for a little nap.



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



**SOME PEOPLE ARE DETERMINED
TO NOT HAVE FUN.**



THE REST OF US JOIN MO-TELL!

**JOIN MO-TELL TODAY AND
GET INTO THE SWING OF THINGS!
DETAILS BELOW. CHECK 'EM OUT!**

The Mo-Tell Bill of Fare

OFTEN IMITATED, NEVER DUPLICATED

MEMBERSHIP DUES

FISCAL YEAR, FEBRUARY 1-JANUARY 31

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	A FANTASTIC, UNIQUE GLASS LOGO TUMBLER
LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP 60+	\$200	A SPLENDID, UNIQUE GLASS LOGO TUMBLER

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

RENEW TODAY!

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
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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

Why We Do What We Do

www.mo-tell.org

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Volume 10, Newsletter 10

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

MO-TELL's Mission

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.

MO-TELL's Vision

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

Your Fearless Leaders, The MO-Tell Board

President: Joyce Slater, joyceslater2o@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)

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