North Texas Giving Day

North Texas Giving Day is an online giving event that provides nonprofits the opportunity to gain exposure to — and start relationships with — new donors, and for people in North Texas to come together to raise as much money as possible for local nonprofits.

This year TSA is honored to be one of the non-profit organizations that could benefit from donations made during the North Texas Giving Day. Our hardworking, ever vigilant Grants committee was successful in their efforts to put TSA on the list.

Here is the unique to Tejas link for potential donors: http://www.northtexasgivingday.org/#npo/tejas-storytelling-association

Please use this hashtag at the end of every social media post: #NTXGivingDay

If you’re onsite in DENTON COUNTY... from 5 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. — Denton County Donation Station at the Denton Square on the Courthouse Green (at 110 West Hickory, Denton, TX). The celebration will feature music from Denton Radio, live entertainment from the Denton non-profit community, comments from city officials and special activities for children.

In just five years, North Texas Giving Day has pumped more than $60 million into the North Texas community. In 2013, more than 75,000 gifts totaling $25.2 million, benefiting more than 1,350 nonprofits. Check out their website at http://www.northtexasgivingday.org/
What Is a Story, and Where Does It Come From?

By Mark W. Travis from www.TheWrap.com

We are all storytellers.

But, what is a story? And where does it come from?

Before we attempt to define story and its origin, I want to make one thing very clear. As storytellers, as purveyors of yarns that are intended to entertain, educate, inspire or intrigue, we have to be aware that our yarns can assume several different forms.

Like shape-shifters, our stories can morph themselves into a variety of configurations depending on the nature of the story, the intended recipients and the circumstances. Some possible shapes: novel, short story, poem, play, film, memoir, oral, audio, visual, etc. You get the idea.

Back to the first question: What is a story?

A story is a depiction of a journey. In a story we follow a character or a series of characters on a journey as they pursue something up against certain obstacles. Okay, that’s a beginning.

What does the dictionary say?

1. a factual or fictional narrative
2. a short fictional prose piece
3. a plot of fiction or drama
4. an account of facts
5. a falsehood
6. a news report
7. a legend or romance

OK, not bad – perhaps something to work with there.

(Warning: This is not a good time to get into all the genres, styles, delivery systems, etc. That can all wait until later.)

A story is the telling of an event, either true or fictional, in such a way that the listener experiences or learns something just by the fact that he heard the story. A story is a means of transferring information, experience, attitude or point of view. Every story has a teller and a listener.

No matter the medium, there has to be the one telling the story and the one receiving the story. That seems to be essential. “If a tree falls in the forest ...” “If I story is told and there is no one there to receive it, does it make a sound?”

But, where do stories come from?

We tell stories every day – mostly to ourselves. We tell ourselves stories to make a point, to imagine a possible future, to remind ourselves, to reprimand ourselves, to comfort ourselves. Inside each and every one of us is a complex system of storytelling that is active, rich in content, and, I believe, very necessary to the health and well being of each of us.

This is where stories start, where they are conceived, gestate and are eventually born. Consequently, the story’s first teller is our self and the first listener is our self.

A story is a series of events we either create or remember or imagine which we tell ourselves because we want or need to hear them. Perhaps we create stories because we want or need to know something, or learn something, or answer a question. Perhaps it is the listener within us that demands the story and the teller within us that does its best to accommodate.

‘Maybe the creative urge we feel is meant primarily to feed our selves, nourish ourselves, take care of, comfort and protect ourselves. We think we tell stories for others, to inform or entertain. But what if we are initially doing this for ourselves? What if our storytelling is such an essential tool to keep the human psyche in balance that it has become as important as food, air and sleep?

Continued...
‘What is a Story’ continued

Oliver Sachs (in “The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat”) said that he felt that the ‘telling of our life stories is perhaps one of the most powerful therapeutic tools available to man.’ What if the telling of our stories is necessary so that we can move the story out of our system, release our clutch on the life raft it has become, and make way for new stories, new life rafts?

The essentials of life (food, water, air, sleep) pass through us. Nothing remains. We take them in, absorb their essence and them let them out. Maybe it’s the same way with story. We need to create our stories. We need to allow them to grow inside us. We need to feed them knowing they will feed us. And then we need to let them go, to share them. In the sharing every story will generate or stimulate more stories, more nourishment. And life stays in balance.

And, isn’t it possible that if we viewed our stories (and our deep desire to tell stories) with more respect and admiration we might possibly tell better stories? Someone said, “…write what you know”. But how often do we actually do that? How often do we reveal ourselves in our stories? How many of us are really willing to allow our inner stories to be shared and exposed? Every story is a piece of us, a gift to the world, an attempt to find a deeper connection with the other inhabitants of this globe.

We are all storytellers.

Story Promps –
Fall is Upon US

Fall echoes with the sounds of school bells, football cheers, and trick-or-treaters. Leaves will be starting to turn and fall. The evening air will begin to crisp as the long, hot summer fades. Below you will find a few story prompts that may nudge the recesses of your mind for past events that could inspire the creation of a story.

I remember...

• My first day of kindergarten
• My first day of college
• My favorite Halloween costume
• That giant pile of leaves raked in the front yard
• Building a bird house suitable for nesting
• An experience with a late summer barbecue
• Hiking trails long and short
• Watching the autumn night sky
• Night sounds of crickets, katydids, cicadas, coyotes
• That first school dance
• Popcorn balls in baggies
• Winning the big game
• Labor Day outings

Festival 2015

March 12-15 – Denton Civic Center.
Planning is in high gear for the 30th Annual Texas Storytelling Festival. Premiere performers include Gayle Ross, Elizabeth Ellis, Barbara McBride Smith, and James Ford.

Volunteers are always needed very much appreciated – if you will be there and would like to volunteer, contact Reagin Hults @ 214-502-0809 or email mommareagin@gmail.com

To complete a submission form for a workshop – just click over to the TSA website: http://www.tejasstorytelling.com/downloads/CFP15.doc.
President’s Column

As we went to press, Richard Nash, TSA President, was about to fly up to the Standing Rock Reservation to attend the services and ceremony for Isaac Dog Eagle. “Uncle” Isaac, as Richard refers to him, made his journey in late August. He was a descendent of Sitting Bull, a former tribal judge, a holy man, and Sundance Chief. And truly he was known most for being one of the kindest and most gentle people a man could know.

I’m reminded of a story about a grandmother’s quilt. About a little girl who was getting over measles at her grandmother’s house, but there was nothing at all she could do until her eyes were better. So every day she was allowed to select one patch from the quilt which covered her bed, and her grandmother told her a story about that particular patch. Amazing how each patch in the quilt had a story to tell.

We’re all like that quilt I suppose – filled with the stories of people and places of our past. These “patches” make us who we are in so many ways.

As the summer fades to fall and then to winter, grabbing a quilt seems more appropriate as days progress. Remember and reflect on your “patches” and share them with the world through your stories.

Richard Nash
President, TSA

From the editor

My son just turned 30 last month - it’s milestones like that that bring back a flood of memories. His first steps; his first day of school; his run-in with the principal in the fourth grade; his triumphs on the stage and the tennis court; an extremely short attempt at football; his marriage and first child.

At the 2015 festival, TSA will be celebrating 30 years! Similarly, this should bring back a flood of memories. Your first time at the festival; that rainy weekend of storms; your first nervous seconds on stage; the connection you made with that “really famous guy from Tennessee!”

My memories include, too many years ago, taking the stage for the Rising Star Concert – an amazing few minutes that I cherish. But I also remember losing out in the Liar’s Contest to Tom Taylor’s story about herding turtles! Preposterous!! But I suppose that was the point...

If you have photos or stories you’d like to share in the Teller as we lead up to that milestone, please send them along. We’ll include as many as we can.
NSN News

Tejas was well represented at the NSN conference in Phoenix AZ in July by (L-R) Jaye McLaughlin, Fran Stallings, Mary Grace Ketner, Margaret Hudson, Donna Ingham, Nancy Self, Fred Peters, Veronica Gard and Ryan McPherson (not shown). Next year’s conference will be at NSN’s new digs, Kansas City MO, July 31-August 2.

Guild News

TLA Spring 2014 Storytelling Panel, “How to Start a Youth Storytelling Guild” featuring Toni Simmons, Sue Kuentz, Mary Ann Blue, and Vivian Rutherford. The students are tellers from the guilds of Sue and Mary Ann.

A storytelling workshop just for kids hosted in June by the Heart of Texas Storytelling Guild.

Heart of Texas Storytelling Guild

Tellabration 2014!

Enjoy a great meal and a concert of stories with Allen Ware and The Ware House Puppets. Other tellers will include students and adult members of The Heart of Texas Storytelling Guild. Our Tellabration is November 8, 2014 at the Austin Avenue United Methodist Church, 1300 Austin Avenue, Waco, TX.

We'll start at 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Cost: $12.00 adults, kids under 12 $5.00

For more information contact Vivian Rutherford @ 254-717-1763 or use email:
vivian.rutherford@thestorylady.org
www.hotstorytellingguild.org

Oakwood Cemetery’s “Walking Tales”

Bringing Historic Stories To Life

Saturday, October 18, 2014 from 10: a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Interpreters stationed throughout this historic cemetery will share stories about the life and times of renowned, legendary and infamous people laid to rest there.

Oakwood Cemetery
2124 S. 5th Street, Waco, TX

Free to the public

For more information contact Vivian Rutherford @ 254-717-1763 or email
vivian.rutherford@thestorylady.org
www.hotstorytellingguild.org
San Antonio Storytellers Association

Ghost Stories in the Park

There will be Ghosts in the Park in beautiful downtown San Antonio on Saturday evening, October 25, 2014 from 7:00 - 9:00p.m. Plan now to bring your family on over to our historic Travis Park, close to the Alamo. Load your blankets or chairs and cuddle up close because goose bumps will rise as scary tales are told from Mark Babino, Mary Ann Blue, Veronica Gard, Sue Kuentz, Ryan McPherson, Larry Thompson, Elder Stone, and others from our San Antonio Storytelling Association. We're devilishly delighted that our spooky tales will be heard at the newly reopened Travis Park, historically part of the original Alamo grounds. If you're visiting from out of town, consider staying at one of our haunted, historical hotels such as the Gunter, the Emily Morgan, or the Menger Hotel - all close to Travis Park.

Tellabration!

The Guild is also planning a Tellabration concert for November 14th at 7 p.m. at Franklin Park.

The San Antonio Guild meets every first Wednesday, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. at Brookhollow Library (530 Heimer, San Antonio). For more information or to volunteer to share your wisdom with this Guild, contact President Ryan McPherson at entelechies@gmail.com.

Dallas Storytelling Guild

The Dallas Storytelling Guild faces its busy season again with two annual storytelling projects for Dallas Heritage Village, the City of Dallas's historical park. In October the group sends tellers for the Village's "Legends, Lies and Fables" for elementary school students. Then in December, members return to tell stories for the Village's holiday two-day Candlelight event. And of course, one of the Guild's biggest fundraisers is the "Ghost Tales at the Bath House" on White Rock Lake, this year scheduled for Friday and Saturday, October 31-November 1.

New Guild – New Braunfels, TX

New Braunfels, TX will have its inaugural Guild meeting this August 27th, 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the Westside Community Center (2932 Interstate Highway 35 South, New Braunfels, TX). Meetings for the year are planned for every fourth Wednesday except December, same place and time. For more information or to volunteer to share your wisdom with this new Guild, contact founder Ryan McPherson, entelechies@gmail.com.
Newsletter Facts

The Tejas Teller is published and distributed to TSA members on a bi-monthly basis. Submission deadline is: (the last day of the month that precedes the next print cycle)

General news items or inquiries can be sent to the editor.

Guild News items should be sent to Sheila Phillips at zoolady@airmail.net

Currently the Tejas Teller is being distributed first electronically to email addresses stored with TSA membership records. If you would like a printed copy of the newsletter, please notify the production supervisor.

Houston Storytellers’ Guild

The Houston Storytellers’ Guild (HSG) is relocating their meeting place to the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center beginning with the July meeting. That location is at 1475 West Gray in Houston and is actually more centrally located than our previous place. We will continue to meet at 7 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of each month and everyone is invited. The format is the same with a Showcase Teller presenting for the first 20 minutes and then it is an open mic (without the mic) and all are invited to share a story. Next meeting is July 15th.

HSG is partnering with the Docents at the Edith Moore Nature Sanctuary for a one evening STORY FESTIVAL with the theme of Encounters with Nature. This event is for adults and children and stories will be told by both HSG tellers and the Sanctuary’s Docents. The date is October 11th beginning at 6 p.m. This is the first of what we hope will be many opportunities to join the Sanctuary in special events.

The Tejas Teller is the bi-monthly newsletter published by the Tejas Storytelling Association.

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Rosemary Davis, graphics
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Waynetta Ausmus, columnist
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