

*Newsletter Date  
Volume 6, Issue 4*



# *ONCE UPON A TIME*

*Portland Storytellers' Guild/ 503-668-0546*

## *New Process for Selection of Kennedy School Tellers for 2005-2006 Year*

Dear Members of the Portland Storyteller's Guild,

Thanks to everyone during the past performance year of 2004-2005 for so many well-told stories and artful programs at the Kennedy School and the Cavatica Center. Thanks, also, to those who came regularly to the story swaps to listen, tell stories and break bread together. Because of the efforts of many people over the years, the Portland Storyteller's Guild continues to grow, improve and serve the art and craft of storytelling.

During the past several months, the board has been considering ways to provide storytellers with more opportunities to work on their craft as well as how to raise the overall level of our public performances in the coming year.

We have talked amongst ourselves as well as with several other guilds across the country and would like to propose a change to our selection process for the Saturday night Kennedy School Performances in 2005-2006. Rather than the traditional, "open" sign-up system we have used in the past, we would like to create a performance selection committee which would choose a pool of tellers for next year's Kennedy School performances.

Our reasons for proposing this change are two-fold: first, we want to create one performance venue in which we say to the public: "This is our highest standard of storytelling and we provide consistently excellent work."

In exercising this kind of self-scrutiny over our process, we believe the guild can continue to improve the quality and consistency of our programs. We hope that by creating this kind of "marquee" event, we will generate greater public awareness and enthusiasm about storytelling and build the word-of-mouth advertising that builds loyal audiences and attracts newcomers.

Another goal we hope to achieve with this change is to attract more people interested in learning the art of storytelling themselves, which can only continue to strengthen the Guild.

Although there are still some details to be worked out, we envision the process working something like this:

- A 5-member performance selection committee will be elected. Three of these members will be elected by the general membership and two will be appointed by the board. We will send out more details on this separately.
- The annual Guild meeting is scheduled for 6 pm Friday, June 17 at the Cavatica Learning Center.
  - That evening, members who want to perform at Kennedy School will sign up. Those unable to attend can sign up by e-mail or phone. Members will note which months they are, and are not, available.
  - The Cavatica signups will also happen this night, in the same manner as last year.
  - Elections for the performance committee may also happen this night, or by e-mail and phone.
- By June 24<sup>th</sup>, the members of the performance committee will be finalized.
- By July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the performance committee will choose the tellers for the September, October, November and December Kennedy School performances.
- The selected tellers would meet in July & August, along with the performance committee, to discuss performance titles, scheduling, etc.
- Tellers for January, February, March, April and May will be chosen by November.
- The performance committee will use its best judgment when selecting tellers. As many tellers as possible will be chosen for the Kennedy School during the next year, but the committee will pay special attention to the skill level of the tellers in making its decision. Each performance will include at least two experienced tellers with one less experienced teller.

This will not be a closed system by any means. The intention of pairing up advanced tellers with less experienced tellers is to provide mentoring. There is ample opportunity for anyone to move into the Kennedy School venue by demonstrating skills at open mikes, potlucks, public performances, etc.

And lastly, we will review this whole venture after a year to determine if the goals have been met or what further revisions are needed.

As a Guild, we also consider it essential that storytellers work on their craft independently and seek out a variety of teachers



## New Process (Continued)

and performance settings. This kind of work benefits us all because it raises the level of our collective skill and knowledge. It also translates into better public performances, which educate and inspire others to pass the word about storytelling.

To encourage, acknowledge, and honor this ongoing effort of our members, starting next fall the Guild will offer three special Performance Showcases. These events are intended to provide a stage for intermediate level tellers to perform before the entire Guild and guests. We consider it essential that storytellers are given a place regularly to showcase their work before their peers and the public.

Finally, please remember that the guild (and Portland storytelling in general) will grow and improve if its members put time and energy into it. Some of our members (Margaret, in particular) have been putting an extraordinary amount of energy into the guild and we all need to support them and take on some of their tasks so they don't get over-taxed. Here is a brief list of some of the vital tasks it takes to keep the Guild the supportive and vital organization we all want it to be. Please consider where you can best share your time and energy:

- Write an article or review for the newsletter
- Edit, mail and distributing the newsletter
- Publicize guild performances and potlucks
- Write material for the website
- Help organize workshops

Contact any board member for details.

This is quite a change to our process. If you have any questions about how it will work, or why we're implementing the changes, please call a board member. In any case, we will talk more about it at the meeting June 17<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Portland Storyteller's Guild Board

Will, Rick, Margaret, Ken, Barb, Walt, and Anne

## *Florida Story Camp*

Florida Story Camp. You're in the middle of central Florida at an old Baptist church camp (i.e. "No beer"). You sleep in 60's-era hotel rooms. You eat bad camp food. You wear nametags. But you're in the company of three hundred storytellers, librarians, teachers, and story fans.

In the welcoming ceremony, they had us stand up for how many years we had been to camp. I thought I was an old hat, because I had gone once a few years ago. Then I sat down and realized that some folks have been coming to this camp for the past 20 years!

It's a neat event- workshops during the day, then performances by national tellers in the evening. There are also chances throughout the day and in the evening to attend story swaps. This year Bobby Norfolk, Beth Horner, Dovie Thomason, and my personal favorite, Bill Harley were in the lineup. A Floridian, Carrie Sue Ayvar, told along with them and was magnificent.

Bill Harley gave workshops on fixing "broken" stories and telling personal stories. Beth Horner talked about incorporating music in stories, as well as how to collaborate with other storytellers. She talked about her experience of putting original, personal stories together with Susan O'Halloran and Nancy Donoval called "Mothers & Other Wild Women".

Dovie told the best version of "Why Dogs Sniff Each Others' Tails" that I've ever heard. Beth told a fantastic version of "Goldilocks & The Three Bears"- without words, only using a kazoo and very elementary mime. Bill told us about The Shirtless King, The Teacher's Lounge, and Mrs. Nottingham- the teacher who he realized was a real person, after all.

I highly recommend going to this camp. It's far away, but it's a great chance to get a lot of information, straight from well-experienced tellers, as well as hearing some great stories. It's held each year in late March/early April. In 2006, Carmen Deedy, Kevin Cordi, Tom Rinkoski, and Donna Washington will all be there.

You can find out more info at <http://www.flstory.org/index.html>.

## REMEMBER, PLEASE RSVP FOR GUILD MEETING!

Agenda for the June 17 Guild Meeting at Cavatica Learning Center, 602 NE Prescott St., Portland at 6:00 p.m.

1. Discuss the proposed new process for Kennedy School concerts.
2. Elect members for the selection committee. **IMPORTANT:** If you do not have the time to meet for 2 meetings in July and once a month meetings after that or do not want to be considered for the selection committee please let Margaret know by June 16.
3. Please RSVP so Margaret may have the correct amount of food for our picnic dinner. Message at 503-668-0546 or email: [meng@mesd.k12.or.us](mailto:meng@mesd.k12.or.us)
4. Sign up for Cavatica storytelling programs for 2005-2006 year.
5. Announcements



New Road for PSG

## Walt Vincent Schaefer

Portland Storytellers Guild said goodbye and good wishes to Walt Schaefer at the Lucky Lab on Hawthorne Blvd. Monday, June 6. He and Sue are off to new adventures in Nashville, Tennessee as Louisiana-Pacific moves their offices to Nashville.

During Walt's time with the guild in Portland, we expanded to two storytelling venues, increased attendance in our programs, and started some great collaboration with the Multnomah County Library's Tapestry of Tales storytelling festival.

At this year's National Storytelling Conference in Oklahoma, Walt receives the **Regional Leadership and Service Award** presented to individuals or organizations that have made a significant contribution to their local or regional storytelling community and/or have used storytelling to make a significant contribution to the larger community in which they live.

This is what is posted on the StoryNet web site:

### Walt Schaefer

Walt Schaefer's commitment to the storytelling community is only surpassed by his passion for storytelling. Walt's energy and leadership has brought the Portland Storytelling Guild alive. His energy and commitment has attracted new membership to the Guild and raised the bar on performance standards for the guild and, overall, elevated the recognition of the Portland Storytelling Guild through his leadership. Walt has also made the Guild members more aware of NSN and its benefits. Walt has increased the opportunities for guild members through workshops for beginning tellers. He creates a safe place for tellers to step out and try their hand at telling. His background in both storytelling and theater have prepared him well for leading exercises to help other tellers find the deeper parts of stories and learn how to bring that out in their tellings. Evening performances for adults and families have also become a regular part of the Guild's activities thanks to Walt. Under Walt's leadership, the quality of public performances has improved so vastly that the Portland Storytelling Guild now has a loyal base of listeners, who return month after month to hear the tales we tell.

Thank you Walt for all you have done for the Portland Storytellers' Guild!

*ONE  
UPON A  
TIME*

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## Join Portland Storytellers Guild

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Membership is \$15 per year. We will email your newsletter unless you request to receive it via postal mail. Make checks payable to **Portland Storytelling Guild** and mail it to **39125 Meinig Ct., Sandy, OR 97055-8303**.

### Has Your Membership Expired?

If you still receive your newsletter via the snail mail, your address label shows your membership expiration date and year. If you receive your newsletter via email then this will help you remember if it is time to renew. The following memberships have expired or will expire in the next month:

Marcia Anderson & Ross Williams

Sam Butler

Roger Coles

John B. Dashney

Savina Darzes

Lynne Duddy & Lawrence Howard

Sarah Hauser

Michelle Howard

Ann LaGrande Patt Opdyke

Anne Rutherford

Sarah Stein

Rita Jean Stochosky

Julie & Brian Strozyk/Russell

### *Future Events to Place on Your Calendar*

September 16-18 Stories by the Sea in Newport, OR

October 14-16 Forest Storytelling Festival in Port Angeles

November 14-16 Tapestry of Tales in Portland OR Storytellers Dovie Thomas, Bill Lepp and Charlie Chin

February Tcha Tee Man Wi Storytelling Festival in Corvallis

*Portland Storytellers' Guild*

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