

Once Upon a Time

Portland Storytellers' Guild

Blogs, Social Networks and Storytellers

by Lynne Duddy

www.lynneduddy.com

People are hungry for connection. No doubt that's one of the reasons that you're involved with storytelling because you recognize this need in our society, in the world. Maybe we are living in the digital dark ages, but then again maybe there is something really valuable in technology that can support our efforts as storytellers to help people connect with one another.

Maybe it's generational. Many people are drawn to storytelling later in life, when they have more time, when they've lived a bit of life and realize what they believe and value. But I hear over and over again how we need to get the young people (I'm talking the under 40 crowd) involved in the storytelling community. I'm not talking kids, although that is very important and wonderful work. I'm talking young adults, people in their 20's and 30's, and the digital path might prove to be an attractive way to do that.

But for some folks technology can be intimidating and time-consuming. Maybe you have trouble with email and opening those pesky attachments or maybe the very word 'database' gives you an anxiety attack. But I remember that

my grandparents lived when there wasn't electricity, running water, cars, airplanes, or rocket ships. It seems to me that the people who thrived were the ones who were able to adapt and embrace those "new fangled devices." Today these devices come under the guise of technology.

Now there's an easy way for you to be a part of the technological work through a social network that's designed just for you. It's the Professional Storyteller's social network. So far there are less than 100 folks worldwide on it but you'll see some names you recognize. You can check it out at: <http://professionalstoryteller.net>

It's a network designed for professional storytellers, people who make their living in the field of professional storytelling: performance storytellers, workshop leaders, teaching artists, recording artists, and authors.

There are all kinds of resources, including forums with topics like, "Dealing with a Disappointing Response" or "Do You Have an Agent?," topics that many of us are interested in learning about. And you can make contributions, share your knowledge, and help support the storytelling community.

There are blogs, and groups like Storytelling in Education, or College Big Cats: Tracking and Capturing Gigs. But best of all this network gives you a way to see who is out there, what they are doing, let them know who you are, what you're doing, and connect with them.

You've probably heard of FaceBook, MySpace, and LinkedIn. Maybe you belong to some of these and others. The Professional Storyteller Network is a way for you to experience social networking in a friendly environment, with people you know or want to know because they are story lovers, just like you!



Jonesborough National Storytelling Festival

BY RUTH ANN HOMAN



A trip to the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough is an event in itself. Here, I share two of the performers I had the opportunity to see this October.

Beth Horner, like other tellers, offered the gamut of poignant tales, as well as humorous ones. Her first account was a true tale that she'd presented to The National Geographic Society. It seemed that Columbia, MO was being wooed by a pricey sewage treatment

corporation. The community was polluting the river downstream with raw sewage. This is an earthy tale. Only two people realized that the proposed plant would make matters worse. One person was a songwriter. Beth led us in the chorus that sang out what makes up much of the raw sewage! This has a happy ending because the public paid attention to the musical account. Today, Columbia, MO sets a metropolitan example of how to use affordable natural meth-

ods for treating raw sewage.

Donald Davis, also a master of many genres, and a Southern gentleman, talked about a high school experience of getting to know a black student. They attended different schools. Donald's respect for him came through the artistry of his telling. The surprise good ending lets the listener hope that we are moving beyond our prejudices.

A Dream Festival in the Land of Fairy Tales

By Sarah Stein

A few days before I returned to Portland in September from Europe, I had the opportunity to attend my first storytelling festival in Germany. I found out about it from another American storyteller, Judith Alexander, who lives in Munich. The festival took place in an 8th century palace in the idyllic town of Friedberg, about 60 miles from Munich. The palace was a perfect setting for the festival with an outdoor Renaissance courtyard, towers and ancient ivy covered stonewalls. The festival was organized by the Goldmund Erzählakademie, which translated means the gold mouth storytelling academy. The academy is located in Munich and many of the storytellers were trained there.

Every day there was a storytelling café, where students who had graduated from the academy could tell a story. The first full program I saw was a storytelling theater piece called "Intrigue and Love", a sort of medieval soap

opera featuring a wayward King, his mistress and his jealous wife. Audience members were asked how the story should proceed further and this was incorporated into the next day's telling. In the evening I went to an international storytelling program featuring storytellers from Africa, Turkey and Judith Alexander telling "Old One Eye" in English.

The following day storytellers from the Munich Storytelling Café told their favorite stories which included one set in an underground ice kingdom, another based on an O'Henry story and one set in the Schwabian province of southern Germany. I especially enjoyed the story from Schwabia, because my husband and many of my relatives come from this area. While the Schwabians are known for their hard work and thriftiness they are not known for their verbal eloquence. The storyteller said they could conduct an entire conversation only using the words ah, so and yes, yes. Not always true, but makes for a fun story. The highlight of the day for me was a tour of the

palace accompanied by storytellers dressed in historical costumes. The stories were historical, but embellished by a storyteller's imagination. It started in a dark basement vault lit only by one candle in which the palace ghost narrated a tale of lust, murder and being buried alive. Then we were led to an ancient apothecary, where the palace maid described her daily life. It ended in the giant banquet hall, where a noble woman described some of the fabulous feasts and merrymaking that took place there.

I was very proud that I understand all of the stories, which were told in German, until the evening concert, where many of the stories were told in a thick Bavarian dialect. . The program was presented by a group of storytellers, who had received a grant from the Bavarian government to travel the countryside in the summer and tell liar's tales in many different locations.

(Continued on page 3)

A Dream Festival (Continued)

They traveled by mule and donkey (now that's a way to save gas!). Unfortunately I had to leave before the end of the festival and missed what sounded like a wonderful program of stories about love and hate, jealousy and murder accompanied by tango music.

Everyone I spoke to at the festival was very friendly and interested in American storytelling and politics. Judith Alexander was the perfect hostess. When I left I thought about how this festival was different from an American festival and I couldn't think of many things, except for the ancient location, language and the lack of a story swap. Otherwise it was a wonderful mixture of talented storytellers telling their stories

and enthusiastic audiences listening, plus lots of work and cooperation to put such a three-day festival together. I saw that storytelling is truly a global art!



Pacific Northwest Storytelling Festivals

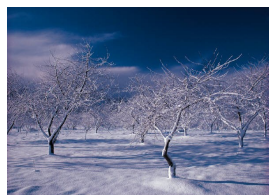
If you missed the Multnomah Library's **Tapestry of Tales Storytelling Festival** in November, there are two more festivals scheduled for early 2009!

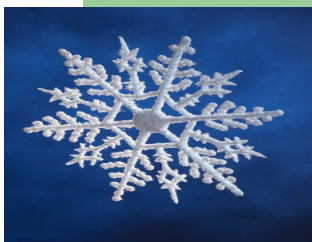
Watch for the **The Tcha Tee Man Wi storytelling festival** in Corvallis, OR. The Corvallis-Benton County Library will be bringing nationally known tellers to do concerts and workshops. This festival also features an evening of "Bawdy Tales" for adults only. Get information at: www.thebestlibrary.net or through the Wonderkeepers Storytelling Guild.

Hearing Voices: A Storytelling Festival presented by Washington County Cooperative Library Services is scheduled for April 2009. Detailed information will be found at www.wccls.org.

In Eugene, the multi-cultural storytelling festival is a third event scheduled for early 2009. Yvonne Young will send us information when they have scheduled their event.

Storytelling festivals are a place to hear nationally known storytellers, take some workshops and are provided at a nominal fee for storytelling listeners. Take advantage of the local festivals held each year in the Pacific Northwest!





Leslie Slape wins Journalism Awards

Guild member Leslie Slape received four awards from the Society of Professional Journalists for her 2007 work as a journalist for The Daily News (Longview, Wash.). She earned a first-place award in personalities for "Saved By a Bullet," a story about a meth addict who was shot by a sheriff's deputy. Since the shooting, the addict has gone straight and clean and, most in an interesting twist, has become friends

with the deputy who shot him.

She shared a first-place award in health issues with reporter Stephanie Mathieu for "Our Teens' Pill Problem," an examination of the rising problem of prescription drug addiction.

She won third-place in spot news for "Hundreds Hit the Streets," about a diversity march down the streets of Longview in

reaction to a Neo-Nazi recruiting meeting, and won honorable mention (with Stephanie Mathieu) in single-day comprehensive coverage for "Agents arrest 20 in massive drug sting," about a roundup of prescription drug dealers. The group arrest was the first to target that specific drug crime. She and Mathieu got to go with the narcotics agents on the early-morning raids.

January Calendar

January 2 – PSG Potluck and Story Swap

6:30 p.m. Community Rm, McMenemy's Kennedy School, 5736 NE 33rd Ave, Portland

Step-in/Step-out. Have fun finding ways to facilitate the framework of storytelling with Ruth Ann Homan's workshop. Bring an entrée and serving utensil. The guild provides plates, napkins and forks. Free!

January 10, 2009 - Growing Up Weird

7:00 p.m. Community Room, McMenemy's Kennedy School, 5736 NE 33rd Ave, Portland, OR

Roger Coles, Rick Huddle and Penny Walter are featured tellers for PSG's second Saturday monthly concert. Children 10 & up and Adults. Suggested donation: Adults \$5, Child \$4 and Family \$10. PSG Members discount \$1.

January 23, 24, 30 and 31 – Shackleton's Arctic Nightmare by Lawrence Howard

8:00 p.m. Portland Story Theater at Hipbone Studio, 1847 E Burnside, Portland

Back by popular demand! The gripping, heart-breaking true story of Ernest Shackleton and the Trans-Antarctic Expedition of 1914. Tickets: \$12
Phone: 503-793-5484



January Storytelling Events!

February Calendar

February 6 – PSG Potluck & Story Swap

6:30 p.m. Community Room, McMenemy's Kennedy School, 5746 NE 33 Ave., Portland

A chance to hear or share stories and do a mini-workshop. Bring an entrée and serving utensil. The guild provides plates, napkins and forks. Free!

February 14, 2009 - Stories of the Heart

7:00 p.m. Community Room, McMenemy's Kennedy School, 5746 NE 33 Ave., Portland
Howard Adler, Lori King, Leslie Slape and Franz van der Horst share their stories at PSG's Second Saturday concerts. Children 10 & up and Adults. Suggested donation: Adults \$5, Child \$4 and Family \$10. PSG Members discount \$1.

February 12 – 14 – SMITTEN!

8:00 p.m. Portland Story Theater at Hipbone Studio, 1847 E Burnside, Portland
PST regulars Penny Walter, Lawrence Howard and Lynne Duddy will be joined by special guests, Michael Philips, Will Hornyak and Concetta Antonelli. Remember your first crush? That kiss that made fireworks explode inside your head? Something for everyone in this new Valentine's show!
Phone: 503-793-5484

March Calendar!

March 6, 2009 - PSG First Friday Potluck and Story Swap at 6:30 p.m.
Community Room, McMenemy's Kennedy School, 5746 NE 33 Ave., Portland
A chance to hear or share stories and do a mini-workshop. Bring an entrée and serving utensil. The guild provides plates, napkins and forks. Free!

March 14, 2009 - Up the Creek at 7:00 p.m. PSG Second Sat Concert
Community Room, McMenemy's Kennedy School, 5746 NE 33 Ave., Portland
Sarah Hauser, Terry Jordan and Pam Maben share memorable stories! For children 10 and older. Suggested donation: Adults \$5, Child \$4, Family \$10, PSG members receive a \$1 discount.

March 28, 2009 - Portland Story Theater sponsors the 15th Ave. Writers' Group Phone: 503-793-5484
Portland Story Theater presents a reading of recent works and a departure for PST. This show will bring some new talents to the stage and is sure to be a lot of fun!

Guild Member with a Performance to Promote?

Are you a paid Guild member with a performance to promote? Send your information to Abbie Anderson at:

libraryabbie@gmail.com

by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the following month's email announcements.

Spring Newsletter Deadline

Interested in contributing to the Portland Storytellers' Guild Newsletter? Spring deadline is February 28, 2009. Send your articles, book reviews, performance announcements and information for the April - June newsletter to Lynn Fike at:

lmfike@comcast.net

Story Coaching

Sunday, January 11, 1-3:30pm Pam Maben's home (Beaverton)

Contact Terry Jordan, our Story Coaching Facilitator, to RSVP and get directions to the venue: terry.jordan@comcast.net or by phone at 503-699-1743.

Story Coaching is designed for tellers of all levels and abilities, with no fee to participate. Techniques are based on the work of Doug Lipman, and include listening and giving specific appreciations to each teller. If you desire constructive criticism, please request it.

Come prepared to tell a 5-7 minute story or segment. Tellers will be chosen at random. Stories and coaching will continue as time permits. Light refreshments will be provided. Please join us, even if you don't have a story

Your Portland
Storytellers' Guild
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Howard Adler
Abbie Anderson
Roger Coles

Membership Chair:
Lynne Duddy

*"Get your information to lynn fike
for the spring newsletter!"*

**Portland
Storytellers'
Guild**

PO Box 13164
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Fax: Attn: MJ Eng
503-257-1592

**Portland Storytellers' Guild Membership
Support local storytelling by joining today – it's easy!**

With your \$15.00 membership, you will receive the quarterly newsletter, reduced admission to all Guild events and, if you are a storyteller, you will receive a free posting to the Guild website <http://www.portlandstorytelling.org>. But most importantly, you will have the opportunity to share in a community of people, like you, with a passion for storytelling.

Full Name _____ Telephone _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Please send the newsletter and other Guild information to my street address

Email Address _____

Please send the newsletter and other Guild information to my email address

Please make checks out to: **Portland Storytellers' Guild**

Mail registration form to: **Portland Storytellers' Guild
PO Box 13164
Portland OR 97213-0164**

About Our Organization...

The Portland Storytellers' Guild works to preserve the ancient tradition of oral storytelling in the modern world.

- We do not read, but rather, tell our stories. We tell myths, legends, folktales, historical stories and personal tales.
- We strive to discover and convey the universal themes and messages in our stories.
- Oral storytelling is an interactive art, and we believe that the story happens not just in the mouth of the teller nor solely in the ear of the listener, but somewhere in between: the teller and the listener create the story together. The story is told face-to-face, eye-to-eye, and heart-to-heart. - Lawrence Howard.

We're on the Web!

See us at.

www.portlandstorytelling.org

