



President's Message

Your Officers, Executive Board, and appointed officers are working diligently to provide you an enjoyable Spirit of Oklahoma Festival. We have secured the same building at Rose State and have a date set for June 19th-20th. Some members are busy contacting tellers, making a schedule, order forms for T-Shirts, and providing food. We have met with obstacles, but have managed to compromise and make adjustments.

This year will be our 20th time to meet for this Festival. It will be a time of remembrance, a time to share memories of the beginning and other Festivals that followed. It will be a time to recall the work of those who are no longer with us due to death or health and unable to travel. It will be a time to gather and enjoy swapping stories with old friends as well as making new friends.

If you would like to volunteer this is the perfect year to assist and learn from others who are experienced and eager to have help.

Be patient with your Board.
It will all come together,

Teresa Vail/President



Executive Board

President

Teresa Vail

san_bois@yahoo.com

Vice-President

Jim Caldwell

yourtaichicoach@gmail.com

Secretary

Donna Le

Dkle45@hotmail.com

Treasurer

Rosemary Czarski

rarczarski@gmail.com

Board Members

Eldrena Douma

bluecorn_teller@hotmail.com

Valerie Kimble

kimblevalerie@yahoo.com

Barbara Jones

bwjbook@yahoo.com

Alice Nathan

arnathan53@yahoo.com

Donna "Dancing Star" Courtney

achickasaw@aol.com

Nancy Lenhart Matthews

nancymatthews1023@gmail.com

Liaison Director

Shaun Perkins

okiestoryteller@gmail.com

Parliamentarian

Tony Hardman

tony.hardman@opsu.edu

Past-President

Liz Parker

elizabethparker862@yahoo.com

Webmaster

Shaun Perkins

okiestoryteller@gmail.com

Tattler Editor

Tina Saner

twosaners@aol.com

June 19-20, 2026

Elizabeth Ellis featured at Spirit of Oklahoma festival

No stranger to Oklahoma storytelling events, Elizabeth Ellis will be the featured teller at this year's Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival. From school events to OKC's Wintertails to intimate storytelling weekends, Elizabeth has shared her spirit in words to many Oklahomans.



As a storyteller, Elizabeth doesn't mince words. Filled with hilarious and poignant honesty, her stories deliver down-home wisdom, southern style. Hers is a voice that finds the heart and the funny bone, riveting audiences of every age wherever she goes.

Elizabeth is a recipient of both the Lifetime Achievement Award and the Circle of Excellence Award from the National Storytelling Network. She is a frequent favorite at the National Storytelling Festival and the Teller-In-Residence Program of the International Storytelling Center. More than half a million children have been mesmerized by her stories during her thirty-five year career as a teller. Adults fall under her spell as well. Her keynotes filled with story have energized and inspired people from public defenders to those who work in child abuse prevention.

“Ellis's buttermilk accent is the voice of family and trust, the voice of steep-sided hollers and ridge-top vantage points.” - Knoxville Voice

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TT and Social Media

Donna Courtney has been brainstorming ways to bring more attention to Territory Tellers and storytelling in Oklahoma. She has been seeing a shift from Facebook posts to platforms with reels like Instagram. It would be great if we could branch out into these other media forms. One thought is to use copyright free reels of our members storytelling to add to the social media accounts. If you have one you would be willing to have posted, send the information to Donna for her to use.



Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival

Rose State College
 Midwest City, OK
Tentative Schedule
June 19 & 20, 2026

Friday, June 19, 2026

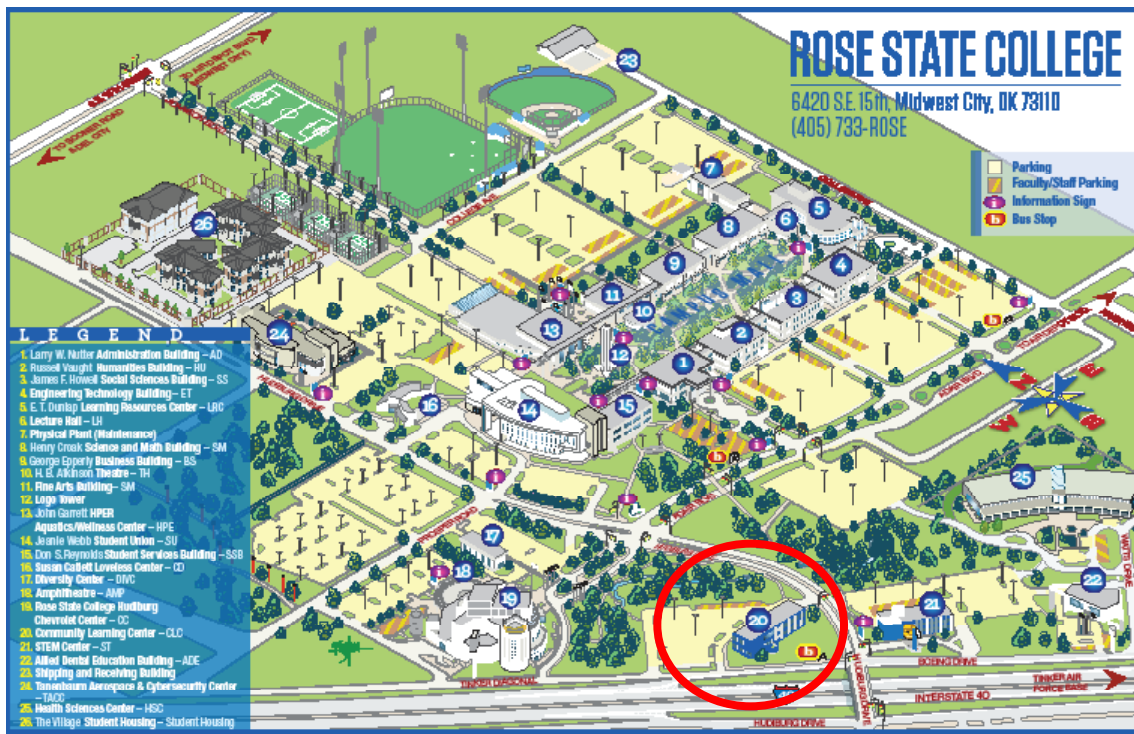
5:45 p.m. **Registration Begins**
 6:00-6:50 p.m. **Social Activity**
 6:00-7:00 p.m. **Silent Auction Review**
 7:00-8:45 p.m. **Welcome**
Teresa Vail, President
Remembering Past Festivals

10:15 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. **Silent Auction Bidding**
 10:30-11:30 a.m. **Story Swap**
 12:00-1:00 p.m. **Tails and Pails (Lunch)**
 1:00-2:15 p.m. **Concert**
 2:30-3:30 p.m. **Concert**
 3:45-4:45 p.m. **TT Business Meeting**
 5:00-6:30 p.m. **Dinner (On your own)**
 5:30 p.m. **Silent Auction Ends**
 6:30-7:00 p.m. **Tributes**
Fran Stallings and Tony Hardman

Saturday, June 20, 2026

9:00 a.m. **Registration**
 9:15-10:15 a.m. **Workshop**
Elizabeth Ellis

7:00-7:50 p.m. **TT Tellers Evening Concert**
 8:00-8:50 p.m. **Elizabeth Ellis Evening Concert**



All events take place at the Community Learning Center on the Rose State College campus at 6420 SE 15th Street. There is free parking in front of the venue.

Silent Auction

Everyone loves to browse the collection of items donated for the festival silent auction. And why not? You never know what you are going to find.

- There usually is a good selection of books ready to crack open during your summer vacation, or willing to patiently wait for when the temperatures drop and you are snuggled in your favorite chair with a hot cup of tea.
- Magical items brought back from world travels looking for a good home to spark the imagination of the new owner.
- We've seen some clothing items that added

General Membership Meeting 2026-27 Slate of Officers vote and acceptance of budget

The nominating committee has been busy finding members to fill the board positions for the next year. The slate will be voted on at the General Membership Meeting on the Saturday afternoon of the festival, June 20th. Below is the proposed slate of officers:

Executive Board

President - Teresa Vail
Vice President - Jim Caldwell
Secretary - Donna Le
Treasurer - Rosemary Czarski

Board Members

Richard Czarski Valerie Kimble
Barbara Jones Alice Nathan
Donna Courtney Nancy Lenhart Matthews
Past President Elizabeth Parker

In addition to the Slate of Officers, the proposed 2025-26 budget will be presented and voted on. Please make plans to attend the Festival in June and stay for the General Membership Meeting. Your input and support at the meeting can help make the next years of the organization bigger and better.

whimsy or flair to an outfit begging for a refresh.

- Original paintings or prints to brighten a spot on your wall. Or a witch's hat pillow to give a guest a great prompt to ask questions.

We've seen lively bidding wars between friends, knowing that all the proceeds of the auction goes back into the organization's coffers to help with the next event.

What do you have to bring this year? Maybe you have a contact with a business that would like to promote their services or wares with a donated item. Maybe you own a business that could donate an item or two to our tables.

And when you come to the festival, linger a bit in the auction room. You might be surprised what story you might hear. Better yet, volunteer to cover the auction for a couple of hours!

Sponsorship opportunities at the Festival

One way to show your support of Territory Tellers and the Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival is by sponsoring a session or event. Each sponsorship has a fee as listed below:

Registration	\$100.00
Friday's Social Activity	\$100.00
Saturday's Pails and Tales	\$100.00
Silent Auction	\$100.00
Workshop with Elizabeth Ellis	\$100.00
Story Swap	\$100.00
First Saturday Concert	\$100.00
Second Saturday Concert	\$100.00
Evening Territory Tellers Concert	\$100.00
Evening Concert (Ellis)	\$100.00

These sponsorships are also listed on the paper registration form found on page 5 of this issue of the *Tattler*. You can just mark the box of the event you'd like to sponsor and include the fee towards the bottom of the form and add it in to your total due.

Or contact one of the committee members: Teresa Vail, Donna Le, Rosemary Czarski or Tony Hardman to discuss which event you'd like to sponsor.



Spirit of Oklahoma Storytelling Festival

Mail In Registration Form

JUNE 19-20, 2026

Deadline to Register in Advance: June 6

Online registration will be available at territorytellers.com

NAME _____

Address _____

Email address _____

Contact Phone _____

Where did you hear about the festival? _____

FESTIVAL PASS, JUNE 19-20 (Includes all events)

Number of registrants: _____ @ \$35.00 each = _____

I'd like to sponsor: the registration table for \$100 the silent auction for \$100 Pails and Tales for \$100 the story swap for \$100

SATURDAY AFTERNOON CONCERT(S) ONLY, JUNE 20

First session: Number of registrants: _____ @ \$10 each = _____

I'd like to sponsor this event for \$100

Second session: Number of registrants: _____ @ \$10 each = _____

I'd like to sponsor this event for \$100

SATURDAY AM WORKSHOP ONLY, June 20

I'd like to sponsor this event for \$100

Number of registrants: _____ @ \$10 each = _____

SATURDAY EVENING CONCERT ONLY, JUNE 20

I'd like to sponsor the Territory Tellers Concert for \$100

I'd like to sponsor the Elizabeth Ellis Concert for \$100

Number of registrants: _____ @ \$10 each = _____

JOIN OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP IN TERRITORY TELLERS OF OKLAHOMA

Individual _____ @ \$25.00 or family/group _____ @ \$40 = _____

My sponsorship fee(s) _____

One Time Donation to Territory Tellers of Oklahoma _____

TOTAL DUE _____

No Pets allowed - Only Service Animals Permitted

MAIL with Check made out to Territory Tellers to:

Rosemary Czarski, PO Box 548, Jones OK 73049



APRIL 11

The Rural Oklahoma
Museum of Poetry
presents

Wonder City Wordfest

EVERYONE WELCOME

10:00-2:00, MUSEUM IS OPEN FOR TOURS

10:30-11:00, MARTIAL ARTS & HAIKU DEMO/WRITING

11:00-2:00, KITE-DECORATING & FLYING

NOON-1:00, PRESENTATION OF OKLAHOMA POEM AWARDS

1:00, KITE-DECORATING & HAIKU CONTEST AWARDS

1:30-2:00, MATCHBOX CAR RACES & PRIZES

DOOR PRIZE GIFT CARDS TO HOMETOWN COFFEE

114 E MAIN
Made with PosterMyWall.com

WWW.ROMPOETRY.COM

Anniversary SOOSF T Shirts available for order!

Send in your order form today for an anniversary shirt to proudly wear to this years festival. Sizes adult small to 4XL are available per the chart below. Not close to Stigler to pick up the finished shirt? No problem! **Add \$6 for shipping to your address.**

Name: _____

Address: _____



\$15

Adult Sizes	Qty
Adult Small	
Adult Medium	
Adult Large	
Adult XLarge	
Adult 2XL +\$2 each	
Adult 3XL +\$3 each	
Adult 4XL +\$4 each	

Add \$6 for shipping to your address.

Ways to order:

Send your order form by email to:
jandmdesign@yahoo.com
 and your payment using Cashapp: \$jnsloan86

Or mail your order form and checks made out to
 J&M Design
 108 West Main Street, Stigler, OK 74462

Doug Lipman

Another voice whispers in our remembrances

Storyteller Doug Lipman and his wife Rev. Pam McGrath lived in Oklahoma for several years. Some of our long time members fondly remember them from their stay in our state.

Doug Lipman, 12/23/46 - 12/26/25, a notable storyteller who touched countless lives over his 79 years, passed away on December 26, 2025. His passing has sparked an outpouring of love and grief from storytellers worldwide. Doug's impact on my life is profound. I vividly remember attending a workshop with him in the



early 2000s. Years later, he returned to ETSU to teach an extraordinary summer institute on his unique approach to coaching. Additionally, I used Doug's practical and effective text, *Improving Your Storytelling*, in my graduate-level Foundations of Storytelling course for several years. His in-

fluence has undoubtedly shaped my journey as a teacher and storyteller.

Before his remarkable career as a storyteller, Doug was a folksinger. His path to storytelling was serendipitous, mirroring the journey of many storytellers during the early days of the storytelling revival. As documented

in Joseph Sobol's book, *The Storytellers' Journey: An American Revival*, Doug was teaching in a private school where the children who were bused in arrived early. One morning, when the assistant principal was absent and the teachers were unsure of how to keep the kids occupied until classes began, Doug had an idea. Since the assistant principal was known for his storytelling, Doug decided to take on the same role.

He recounted a Jack tale he heard Ray Hicks tell on a recording the previous night. The children were captivated by his storytelling. Shortly after that, Doug made a bold decision to bill himself as a storyteller who sings songs, rather than a singer who tells stories. His career took off, and he continued to inspire and entertain audiences for years to come.

Doug Lipman's life and contributions to the storytelling community are truly unforgettable. His stories, spanning Hasidic traditions and other folk traditions, have touched many people. His respectful, teller-centered coaching techniques have transformed lives. Through his books, Storytelling Tips, newsletters, website, and recordings, he shared his expertise with the world. Doug was instrumental in shaping NAPPS, which is now known as NSN. He served on the board, actively participated in conferences and supported the online auction by generously donating his time as a coach. In 2017, Doug Lipman was awarded the NSN ORACLE Lifetime Achievement Award, a well-deserved recognition for a life well-lived and a career that will continue to have a lasting impact on our community for years to come.

Delanna Reed, Past NSN Chair

reprinted from the NSN website: <https://storynet.org/in-memorial/>

Is your membership current? Send in your renewal today!

Territory Tellers is a network of individual tellers, listeners and local storytelling circles. Get connected by joining our statewide organization! Dues are \$25 for individual and \$40 for family membership per year.

Full Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Country _____

Preferred Phone _____ Alternate Phone _____

e-mail address _____ Are you a storyteller?

Web site (optional) _____ a story listener?

\$25 individual

\$40 family

\$40 organizational

Please complete this form and mail it with a check payable to Territory Tellers to:

Territory Tellers • 6619 S 4382 • Locust Grove OK 74352

TT members spotted at TX event

Territory Tellers members were well represented at the March Texas Storytelling Association Spring Festival. Tony Hardman was a featured teller in the Ghost Concert, Rich White did a fringe session and Fran Stallings did a workshop. Alice Nathan emceed the Liars Contest, Rich White was the Liars Timer, Chester Weems took first place in the Liars Contest and participated in the Poetry Slam. Nancy Mathews told at the open mike story swap.

Valerie Kimble was a session host, and an always present key finance folk for the festival. Although we think of Elizabeth Ellis as a Texan, we can't forget she is also a long time TT member. And Jaye McLaughlin, another TT Texan, was co-artistic director of the whole thing. And I hope I did not omit someone!

We took the group photo after the Liars Contest when we realized that the past five winners are all TT members. Photo is by Dean Keith, also a TT member.



Elizabeth Ellis



Tony Hardman



Alice Nathan
2025

Rich White
2024

Chester Weems
2026

Fran Stallings
2019

Tony Hardman
2023

Photo by Dean Keith
March 14, 2026

Members TSA & Territory Tellers