Territorial Tattler

Newsletter of the Territory Tellers

Fall 2026 www.territorytellers.com

President's Message

Barn Quilt?

I've seen a barn. I've seen a quilt, but a quilt for a barn? I could not imagine what this would look like. It was described as a painting on the side or roof of a barn in a pattern. So when I read in an area newspaper that Talinina was planning a quilt to be placed on a building in Talihina, I followed the story. The call went out to pick up a piece to be painted and brought back to be assembled. I don't know much about quilting, but I do know that there are patterns that even have names and must fit together. So when this quilt was mounted on the building, I went to Talihina to see how this could all come together.



It was beautiful. I could not see where one piece stopped and the other started. The color around the edge matched perfectly as did the designs in the pattern. It amazed me that so many different people could work individually, but come together as one.

As we begin planning for our Winter Retreat and Spirit of Oklahoma Festival, my vision is that as we all work in our own roles the finished project will all come together as one.

Teresa Vail/President

Territory Tellers offers opportunities to learn the art of storytelling by supporting storytelling concerts, conducting workshops and providing information at professional conferences and regional and local events.

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Early info on 2027 SOOSF

Committee members have brought the Festival back to the first weekend in June for 2027. Mark your calendars for June 4 & 5, 2027 so you don't miss out of the fun.

This year we are spring-boarding from our Winter Retreat and will partner with The Chickasaw Nation again by using their marketing connections and facilities in downtown Ada.

There are lots of jobs that need to be done to get a festival off the ground. You know your abilities and strengths and can let Teresa Vail know what you can help with in 2027. We'll need folks to help with registration, logistics, the silent auction, promotion and emceeing sessions, just to name a few.

Do you have something to share?

The *Territorial Tattler* is one way that we can share noteworthy items from the storytelling world. My personal reach into that world is relatively small. That's why as editor I solicit stories, news and reviews from our members to include in each issue.

Have you been telling lately? Met up with a voice of tellers somewhere interesting? We'd all like to know about it.

Are you hosting a Tellabration™ this fall? Send that information and the Tattler can help spread the word.

Read a good storytelling resource book or article? You can write up a review and that can be added to our next issue. We aren't being asked by publishers for reviews any longer, but that doesn't mean we can't share with each other what we've been reading, or rereading, lately.

Deadlines for materials are listed below. What can you share for the rest of us to learn about? *Tina Saner*

Tattler Deadlines

We want to include the information you are interested in! Please have information in by the following dates for inclusion:

January 1 • March 1 • July 1 • October 1

Collecting Family Stories - "Just One"

You may want to collect your family stories, but don't know where or how to start. It just seems so overwhelming. The fact is you can't do them all, you can't do a book. What you can do is write down, or record, just one thing. Just one. It may be a couple of paragraphs, or a simple recording using your phone. Just one.

My wife recently started a group chat with a family group. The idea was just to check in with others on health or funeral issues. To make sure everyone knew about certain events. Simple. What is interesting is occasionally now someone adds in a bit of history, such as "Do you remember those biscuits grandma used to make?" Then someone else chimes in with their memory. Just One.

Chester Weems



Come drum with us or share a poem or both on Nov. 12, 5:30-6:30 at the museum. We'll gather in a circle to make rhythms and celebrate stories, poetry, life, and each other. Bring a rhythm instrument or borrow one of ours. All are welcome!

Rural Oklahoma Museum of Poetry

416 E. Main
Locust Grove OK 74352
(918) 479-ROMP
ROMPoetry@gmail.com



ROADS OF KINDNESS

"Tellabration! ™ Is an international celebration of storytelling. Come join the fun as we share tales of kindness on the journey of life.

Stroud Public Library,

Stroud, Oklahoma

Saturday 14 November, 2026

3 p.m.

"Come Listen - Come Tell"



STROUD, OK AMERICA 250

Find your account online
stroud.booksys.net/opac/spl/
Books, e-books & audios for all ages!

Stroud Public Library
301 W. 7th St.
Stroud, OK 74079
918-968-2567
918-968-4700
library@cityofstroud.org
@StroudOKLibrary

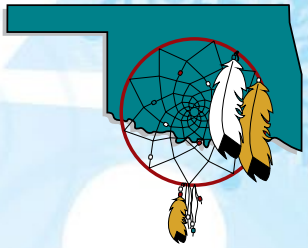
Territory Tellers Annual Winter Retreat

January 22 & 23, 2027

The Chickasaw Nation Arts & Humanities Building

201 N Broadway • Ada Oklahoma

Come and join in on a relaxing weekend of telling stories, hearing stories and learning how to tell the stories from your life and community.



www.territorytellers.com **for details**

TT Annual Winter Retreat is a weekend you won't want to miss!

Remember this past January when we were all looking forward to meeting up in Ada for a wonderful weekend together? Then the winter weather hit. We all were prevented from traveling. Lucky for us, Donna Courtney and Jeanette Harjo along with committee members Teresa Vail, Valerie Kimble, Tony Hardman, Donna Le and Rosemary Czarski, have been reweaving the event into an even better 2027 Winter Retreat!

Since it's inception, the Winter Retreat has been a time for Territory Tellers members and friends to come and enjoy a weekend getting to know each other a little better. The bonus is that we also get to hear great stories. Stories on the stage. Stories around the table. Stories just flowing out of conversations. Stories that bring out the best in us. Stories that inspire us. Stories that tie us together.

This year we have a wonderful opportunity to collaborate with the Chickasaw Nation. Through board member Donna Courtney and her position with the Nation, we have the chance to not only use their facilities in downtown Ada, we get to experience and participate in their monthly story swap on Saturday evening.

Plans are underway for both informal gatherings and more structured workshops during the weekend. There will be a board meeting on Saturday that any TT member can attend as a guest.

There are several hotels in Ada. Better rates may be found by using Priceline or Booking.com. Some options to check are Holiday Inn Express, La Quinta, Hampton Inn, SureStay Plus by Best Western, or AirBnB.

Plans also include a Saturday boxed lunch, which can be ordered when you register in advance of the weekend. Turkey or Ham sandwiches, chips, and a soft drink. Cost will be approximately $14.

Keep your eyes on your email inbox as plans are finalized and sent out. You will want to be sure to send in your registration as soon as possible. While the stories are free, those Saturday boxed lunches are not and need to be ordered in advance of the event.

January 15, 16, & 17, 2027

Be a part of the flock this January!

2027 marks the 34rd Annual River and Prairie Storyweavers Chicken Festival. Join us to celebrate as we wear chicken hats, wear chicken socks, dance the Chicken Dance and tell stories.

RAPS will gather at the Ramada Downtown Topeka Hotel & Convention Center on January 15, Friday evening; January 16, Saturday; and January 17, Sunday morning for the 2027 Chicken Festival.

Please bring a new or gently used item for the auction on Saturday.

Call and make your room reservation between November 1 and December 31, 2026 and be sure to ask for the Chicken Festival rate:

Downtown Topeka Hotel & Convention Center
420 SE Sixth Ave
(785) 380-8042



RAPS will provide a box lunch and a taco bar buffet for supper on Saturday for those with a full registration.

PAY your registration at the event! $50 for RAPS members, $75 for non-RAPS members. Annual RAPS Membership is $25/individual and $35/family.

Stories are a length of up to eight minutes unless otherwise specified.

Schedule is subject to change prior to the start of the 2027 Chicken Festival and more information will be provided about the Friday activities once the details are final.

For more information, contact River and Prairie Storyweavers at RAPS.events@gmail.com. Or contact TT's own **Alice Nathan** at: arnathan53@yahoo.com for more information.

Need to check on membership status?

Several people have asked how to know when their membership is due for renewal. Shaun Perkins, our webmaster, has added your renewal date to the membership list. So go to *www.territorytellers.com* find your name on the membership list and the renewal date follows your name. Send your $25 individual renewal to the TT address or $40 if you are enrolling as a family membership. There is a handy membership form at the back of the Tattler that you can use when you want to mail in a new or renewing membership.

Did you know that TT is a member of TSA?

Ever wonder why you get information on Texas storytelling events? Since Territory Tellers is a member of Tejas Storytelling Association (TSA), some of their membership perks get passed along to our members.

Read a good book?

Have you read a great storytelling resource lately? Have a favorite you'd love to share with the group? Any of our members can submit a book review for inclusion in the *Tattler*. Just remember to include the publisher information and the ISBN and email it to *twosaners@aol.com*.

Board Meetings

According to the By-Laws of Territory Tellers, board meetings will be held in July, October, January, March, and May. Any member is welcome to attend board meetings, make suggestions, and ask questions. However, only board members can vote. All board meetings with time and location will be posted on the webpage. *www.territorytellers.com*. Emails also go out to the general membership with the meeting date, time and Zoom link. Meetings are usually held via Zoom, but occasionally are held in person like the January meeting at the winter retreat.

It's also that time of year when members are asked to consider becoming board members for the next year. If you would like to share your unique talents and skills with Territory Tellers, this is a great opportunity for you to do so! Let President Teresa Vail or Vice-President Jim Caldwell know of your interest.

News and Notes on Members

Donna "*Dancing Star*" Courtney, *right*, has been named as a Rising Star for the 2027 Texas Storytelling Festival.



Chester Weems took a photo of the back of the conference program from this summer. He wanted to be sure everyone with Territory Tellers saw it. "It was neat that Territory Tellers was a significant sponsor at the NSN Conference this summer. An insulated water cup and the back page of the program included our logo."



Chester has been traveling and on the go a lot lately. This summer he was presented the ORACLE Award Regional Service And Leadership by our own **Fran Stallings,** *photo right***.** TT members know the work, leadership and dedication he has provided to our organization over the years. Well done, Chester!

Chester has, through a Wichita competition, qualified for the Kansas State Storytelling Festival Tall Tales contest in April. He will be one of four qualifiers for the finals. Two other Territory Tellers have won that contest. **Alice Nathan** has won, and **Rich White** has won three times. Rich is no longer eligible to win the "Shovel," and is considered a master tall tales teller in Kansas. You may recall that both Alice and Rich have also won the Texas Liars Contest.



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.

During the July General Meeting a robust discussion included using 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. Or if you would like to work with Donna to record a story or two that she can break down into shorter social medial reels, she will coordinate a meeting time with you.

"Everyone can help boost our social medial presence by following the TT Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063760974305), click to share any posts," Donna reminded all of us at the meeting.

Territory Tellers Treasurer's Report
October 24, 2026
Activity from July1 –Sep 30, 2026

Beginning Bank Balance		**$12,836.28**
Income		
Members *(Alexander (S), E. Weems (S), K. Weems, (S), C &V Weems (F)*		
1 unknown (S))	$140.00	
Festival	$ 5.00	
Total Income		**$145.00**
Total Income (Bank Balance & income)		**$12,981.28**
Expenses		
Festival Rose State College Rooms & refreshments	-$1,837.71	
Rodgers	-$100.00	
E. Ellis partial expenses	-$415.22	
Office supplies	-28.42	
Total Expenses		**-$2,381.35**
Income Less Expenses Bank Balance		**$10,599.93**
PayPal Balance	988.56	
Beginning balance	916.53	
Members *(Archer (S), Fisher (S), Grubitz (S))*	75.00	
Total Balance Plus Income	991.53	
Expenses		
Fees	-2 97	
Total Balance less Expenses		**$ 988.56**
Total Assets		**$11,588.49**

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