



GEORGIA MOUNTAIN 
STORYTELLING FESTIVAL
"Claim Your Voice"

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT for the **ARTS**
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COUNCIL for the **Arts™**

S O U
A R T H S

The Nora Roberts
Foundation

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THE RIDGES
RESORT ON LAKE CHATUGE



Dear friends,

Welcome! We are so happy to bring you all together again in person and to share the festival with the online audience that has blossomed during the pandemic. To be celebrating our 9th annual festival at a gorgeous new venue—The Ridges Resort on Lake Chatuge—is also a real treat. Since this event began in 2015, thousands of audience members of all ages have enjoyed countless tales of wonder, wisdom, and adventure. Over the next two days, The Ridges will be filled with the sounds of community as we come together to laugh, cry, and connect through retelling stories we've heard and telling our own. We hope that you will take this time to turn off the technology and enjoy the opportunity for unmediated experience and shared attention in a glorious place.

All of us come from a rich tradition of stories, and all of us have our own stories to share. The festival's slogan—"Claim Your Voice"—celebrates the fact that whoever you are and wherever you come from, you have a story to tell that is powerful and valuable. We hope that you'll explore your own stories while you're here, whether you attend a workshop to learn new ways to share your stories with others, tell a story to someone setting next to you, or share a story in our story swap or open mic contest.

Our featured tellers include some of the brightest stars in the storytelling world: Donald Davis, Josh Goforth, Kathi Littlejohn, Carolina Quiroga, and Donna Washington. We'll also enjoy the talents of tellers from our own backyard who will share local history stories, children's stories, ghost stories, and personal narratives and be featured in our showcase of regional storytellers. Finally, we'll explore storytelling through the work of local artisans through our display of quilts from community members and our quilt treasure hunt. Pick up your page of treasure hunt clues at the registration table, and complete the hunt to win prizes!

Sessions in the Red Banks Room will feature a sign language interpreter for visitors with hearing impairment. Visitors with a visual impairment may request a Braille copy of this program at the registration table in the lobby. Please let us know if we may provide other accommodations to help you make the most of your festival visit.

This year's festival has been made possible by contributions from area businesses and festival friends and by generous grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Georgia Council for the Arts, South Arts, and the Nora Roberts Foundation. We are deeply grateful for their investment in the arts and hope that you will take note of them in the program and share your thanks with them at the festival and afterward.

We're also deeply grateful to you, our audience! Thank you for sharing in the joy.

*Amanda Lawrence, Ruth Looper, Nathan Baerreis, Bob Whitaker-Lea, and Tom Wilkerson
2022-2023 GMSF Board*

FEATURED TELLERS

Donald Davis

Donald Davis was born in a Southern Appalachian mountain world rich in stories. While he heard many traditional stories about Jack and other heroic characters, he was most attracted to the stories of his own family and places of origin. Davis began retelling the stories he heard and then adding his own new stories to them until he was repeatedly asked to "tell it again, on purpose." During his 25-year career as a United Methodist Minister, Davis began to use stories more and more. He was also asked to begin performing at festivals and in other settings until he retired from the church to tell stories full time.



Featured at festivals throughout the United States and across the globe, Davis is also known as a prolific producer of books and CDs, having authored eighteen books and more than forty original recordings. He has been a guest host for NPR's *Good Evening*. Davis is a recipient of the National Storytelling Network's ORACLE Circle of Excellence and Lifetime Achievement awards.

His stories tickle the funny bone and warm the heart, as these comments show:

"Davis (is)...among the most popular figures on today's storytelling circuit."
– *Berkely Hudson, Los Angeles Times*

"I could have listened all morning to Donald Davis ... his stories often left listeners limp with laughter at the same time they struggled with a lump in the throat."
– *New York Times*

"Absolutely hilarious and unpredictable as well as emotionally reviving."
– *Wilson Library Bulletin*

Donald Davis's performances and workshop are funded, in part, by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Georgia Council for the Arts and by a generous donation from Angela and Tom Wilkerson.

To learn more about him, go to <https://www.ddavisstoryteller.com>.

Josh Goforth

Josh Goforth was already playing piano in church at the age of four, but it was an experience he had in the sixth grade that really lit the fuse of his precocious musical career. A performance at his middle school by Sheila Kay Adams caused him to start thinking about the musical heritage of his native Madison County.

A couple of years later, he received his first guitar from one of his great-uncles and began to learn the instrument under the tutelage of another great-uncle. The great-great-great-grandson of Madison County fiddler Asbury McDevitt then launched a career in traditional music.



Over the next few years, he learned to play at least ten different instruments by ear and now plays close to twenty. Most famous for his fiddling, Goforth is a highly accomplished old-time, bluegrass, and swing musician but is remarkably versatile, able to pick up any of a wide variety of instruments and make a solid contribution in almost any kind of band. He went to East Tennessee State University to study music education and to be a part of ETSU's famous Bluegrass and Country Music Program.

In 2000, Goforth played fiddle for the movie *Songcatcher*, both onscreen and on the soundtrack. He has toured extensively with a variety of ensembles, including the ETSU bluegrass band, with David Holt and Laura Boosinger, and with several bluegrass bands, including Appalachian Trail, the Josh Goforth Trio, and Josh Goforth and the New Direction. He has also shared stages with Ricky Skaggs, Bryan Sutton, The Yonder Mountain String Band, Open Road, and The Steep Canyon Rangers. He has performed in forty-nine US states, all over Europe, and in Japan. In 2000, 2003, and 2005, he was named Fiddler of the Festival at Fiddler's Grove and, after winning the third title, was designated "Master Fiddler" and retired from that competition.

Josh Goforth's performances and workshop are funded, in part, by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Georgia Council for the Arts, and South Arts.

To learn more, see <https://www.blueridgeheritage.com/artist/josh-goforth>.

Kathi Littlejohn



Kathi Littlejohn is an enrolled member in the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and has been telling Cherokee stories to various audiences since 1986. She is known for her dramatic, entertaining, and down-to-earth style.

She resides in Cherokee, North Carolina with her family and works with various history and story projects, such as art, plays, and exhibits. She is currently a featured artist at the Cherokee Bonfire, a long-running series that was created to bring people together and teach them about Cherokee history and culture through live performances.

Littlejohn has also been a featured artist at the National American Indian Museum in Washington, D.C.; Colonial Williamsburg in Williamsburg, Virginia; the Mountain Heritage Festival in Cullowhee, North Carolina; the Stecoah Valley Center in Stecoah, North Carolina; the Museum of the Cherokee Indian in Cherokee, North Carolina; the Georgia Swarm Lacrosse Team's Native American Night in Suwannee, Georgia; Eclipse with NASA and the National Park Service; and at various festivals and schools throughout Western North Carolina.

She has recorded four CDs of Cherokee stories and a series of ten YouTube videos titled "Cherokee History and Stories—What Happened Here." In these videos, she visits places that are culturally and historically significant, sharing the stories of the ground on which she stands. To view her 10-part video series on YouTube, visit the Cherokee Videos channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@cherokeevideos9203/featured>.

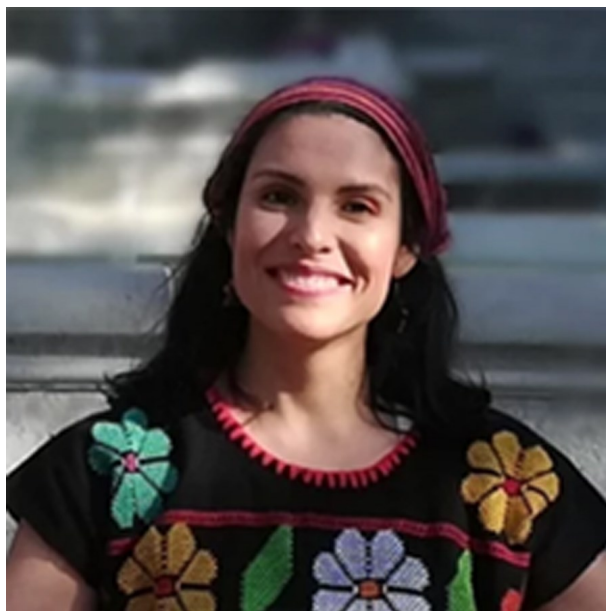
Littlejohn spoke of the importance of the storytelling tradition in Cherokee culture in an October 2022 interview with WATE: "When you think that these stories have been handed down, some of them since, we believe, the beginning of time, because we have quite a few stories about how the world was created and how people came to be in that world, how animals came to be and look like they do. A lot of the stories have really deep meanings and lessons. So, if we pass those on and teach the other generations that are coming up, then it benefits everybody."

Kathi Littlejohn's performances and workshop are funded, in part, by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Georgia Council for the Arts and by a generous donation from the Lawrence family.

She can be contacted at littlejohn.kathi@yahoo.com.

Carolina Quiroga

Carolina Quiroga is a Colombian bilingual storyteller, performer, podcaster, and author with a Masters in Storytelling from East Tennessee State University. Her vast repertoire of bilingual stories explores the myths, legends, folktales, historical, and literary tales of Latin America. She has performed at regional festivals and conferences in Texas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Colorado, and Kansas City and has told stories at numerous schools, libraries, universities, and colleges to culturally and socially diverse audiences.



Carolina has toured in Costa Rica with her shows *The Tatu's Night* and *Las Animas de Los Muertos* and was the featured storyteller at the Witte Museum (San Antonio) for the Mayan Exhibition *Hidden Worlds Revealed*. Early in 2017, she brought her show *Maya Tales* to the Storytelling Festival at the American School in Tampico, Mexico. She has also been a Teller in Residence at The International Storytelling Center in Jonesborough, Tennessee, and a featured teller at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee.

Carolina has been recognized for her skill as a teaching artist as part of the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning through the Arts, a recognized national model for utilizing the performing arts to support young children's cognitive, emotional, and physical development and school readiness. She received the J.J. Reneaux Emerging Artist Grant from the National Storytelling Network in 2015 and published her first book on Aztec myths, *The Hungry Goddess and The Five Suns*, in 2019.

Carolina's bilingual *Tres Cuentos Podcast*, dedicated to the literary, historical, and traditional narratives of Latin America, has been awarded grants by Alternate Roots and The National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures.

Carolina Quiroga's performances and workshop are funded, in part, by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Georgia Council for the Arts, and the Nora Roberts Foundation.

To learn more, see <https://www.carolinastoryteller.com>.

Donna Washington

Donna Washington was born an army brat in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and traveled the world with her parents. Her father would sit at the dinner table and spin the wildest yarns imaginable. He taught her Arthurian Legend and Greek Mythology by telling the stories in the first person. She thought he had actually been with Merlin and Oedipus. She thought he was thousands of years old. Donna spent from second to sixth grade in Seoul, Korea. It was during these years that her parents adopted three Amerasian children. Through it all, she learned about different people and places and, of course, learned their stories.



Washington attended Northwestern University and was involved with numerous theatrical productions. It was at this time that storytelling reemerged as something she wanted to learn more about. In the four years she was there, she began to make storytelling a central part of her performance life. Since then, she has become an award-winning storyteller, author, and recording artist. Her first writing project, *A Pride of African Tales*, was released in December 2003 to rave reviews from the American Library Association Booklist and the School Library Journal and was nominated for the Pennsylvania 2005-2006 Young Reader's Choice Award. Her second book, *The Story of Kwanzaa*, is a wonderful primer for kids about the African-American celebration of Kwanzaa. Her third book, *A Big Spooky House*, is a wonderful book to read aloud at Halloween. Her newest books are *Li'l Rabbit's Kwanzaa* and *Boo Stew*. Washington's five CDs—*Live and Learn: The Exploding Frog and Other Stories*; *A Little Shiver*; *Fun, Foolery, and Folktales*; *The Sword and The Rose*; and *Angels' Laughter*—are all award-winners and have been recognized for their excellence by the ALA Booklist, the Parents' Choice Awards, Storytelling World Honors, iParenting Media, and the Children's Music Awards. Washington has performed at thousands of schools and libraries throughout the country. She has also been featured at numerous storytelling festivals, including the National Storytelling Festival, Illinois Storytelling Festival, Three Rivers Festival, St. Louis Storytelling Festival, NC StoryFest, Corn Island and Cave Run Festivals in KY, and the Broward County Children's and Ocala Storytelling Festivals in Florida, just to name a few.

Donna Washington's performances and workshop are funded, in part, by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Georgia Council for the Arts and by a generous donation from Gail and Greg Boots.

To learn more, visit <https://dlwstoryteller.com>.

Friday, April 14

All day, beginning at 8:30AM	Registration: Big Springs Room Marketplace: hallway between Red Banks/Blue Ridge and in Blue Ridge Quilt Display: Big Springs, Red Banks, and Blue Ridge	
	Red Banks Room*	Blue Ridge Room
9:00-10:00	<u>Storytelling</u> ☺ Donna Washington Kathi Littlejohn	<u>Workshop**</u> Carolina Quiroga <i>When the Body Tells the Story</i>
10:15-11:15	<u>Storytelling</u> ☺ Josh Goforth Carolina Quiroga	<u>Workshop**</u> Donald Davis <i>Finding the Stories We Already Know</i>
11:30-12:30	<u>Storytelling</u> ☺ Donna Washington Donald Davis	<u>Workshop**</u> Kathi Littlejohn <i>Cherokee Stories and the Environment</i>
12:30-1:45 Lunch Break A list of area restaurants is available at festival registration. These restaurants are offering a discount if you show your festival program: 5% off at The Aviator Café — 45 Home Town Way Suite C (Blairsville) 10% off at Hawg Wild BBQ & Catfish House — 625 Hwy 76 (Hiawassee) 10% off an entrée Brother's at Willow Ranch — 6223 Hwy 76 W (Young Harris)		
1:45-2:45	<u>Storytelling</u> ☺ Josh Goforth Kathi Littlejohn	<u>Workshop**</u> Donna Washington <i>A Ghost Story Tutorial— from the merely ticklish to the absolutely terrifying</i>

*A sign language interpreter will be on stage.

**Descriptions of the workshops follow the Friday schedule.

☺ As part of the festival's educational mission, we welcome students ages 18 and under and their teachers free of charge. Student groups may be in attendance at these sessions. We have set aside seats for non-school attendees and those with disabilities. For those who would like to engage with our storytellers in a smaller-group format during these times, the workshops in the Blue Ridge Room will provide wonderful opportunities for learning and conversation.

Friday, April 14 continued

	Red Banks Room*	Blue Ridge Room
3:00-4:00	<u>Storytelling</u> Carolina Quiroga Donald Davis	<u>Workshop**</u> Josh Goforth <i>Making Your Story a Song</i>
4:00-4:45		<u>Q&A</u> Join us for an informal chat with our featured tellers.
Dinner Break until 6:30PM A list of area restaurants is available at festival registration. These restaurants are offering a discount if you show your festival program: 5% off at The Aviator Café — 45 Home Town Way Suite C (Blairsville) 10% off at Hawg Wild BBQ & Catfish House — 625 Hwy 76 (Hiawassee) 10% off an entrée Brother's at Willow Ranch — 6223 Hwy 76 W (Young Harris)		
6:30-7:30	<u>Open Mic</u> Sign up to share a story of your own with our audience, or just join us for a rollicking good time!	Session made possible by Mountain Area Storytellers
8:00-9:00	<u>Olio</u> Carolina Quiroga Kathi Littlejohn Donald Davis Donna Washington Josh Goforth	The olio is the perfect way to round out your day! Each of our featured tellers will share one story. If you've missed anyone during the day, here's your chance to hear them all. Plus, we will be giving away 5 tickets to the 2024 festival!
After the olio	<u>Ghost Stories</u> Denise Mount Cayce Terrell Amanda Lawrence	Join us for thrills and chills outdoors by the firepit behind the hotel lobby (or in Red Banks if case of rain)

**A sign language interpreter will be on stage.*

***Descriptions of the workshops follow the Friday schedule.*

Friday Workshops in the Blue Ridge Room

Whether you're an aspiring tale-teller or just want to learn more about how our tellers practice their craft, take advantage of this rare opportunity to learn from the best!

Carolina Quiroga: *When the Body Tells the Story* (9:00-10:00 AM)

Have you considered incorporating body movements and gestures to complement and enhance your storytelling? Today, we know that some of our audience is more visually and kinesthetically oriented. Thus, when you support your stories with gestures and body expressions, you and your listeners are in for a sensory experience. Join Carolina in a fun exploratory workshop that will set you on the path of effectively using your body when telling a story.

Donald Davis: *Finding the Stories We Already Know* (10:15-11:15 AM)

Our heads are filled with unorganized memories. How can we explore this attic of memory and pull from it many of the stories from our lives that we do not even know are hiding there?

Kathi Littlejohn: *Cherokee Stories and the Environment* (11:30 AM-12:30 PM)

For centuries, the Cherokee have been and are stewards of the land. Hear Cherokee stories that reflect the feelings of a people towards all living things.

Donna Washington: *A Ghost Story Tutorial — from the merely ticklish to the absolutely terrifying* (1:45-2:45 PM)

Donna Washington will share the tips and tricks of the trade to help your ghoulish tales scare your audiences, and your merely spooky ones give them a little shiver!

Josh Goforth: *Making Your Story a Song* (3:00-4:00 PM)

Got a favorite story you want to put into song? This workshop will cover each step of the process. Through creative brainstorming and detailed listening exercises, we will explore the ways in which a story song can build from the seed of an idea to completion. Topics will include: structure, rhyme scheme, word crafting, theme, melody, harmony, analysis, and everything in between. Above all, this workshop will be a relaxed and fun environment where you can be confident and comfortable sharing your ideas with others. No musical background needed, just bring your stories and an open mind. Let's write a song together!

Claim Your Voice!

share
your
story

Friday Night Open Mic 6:30-7:30PM Red Banks Room

- 5-7minute time limit
- Family-friendly, please



**Sign up at festival registration.
The first 8 people to sign up get to tell!**

Saturday Story Swaps

Blue Ridge Room 10:15-11:15AM and 3:00-4:00PM

Have a story you'd like to tell?

**Drop in to share a story (10 minutes or less) or just
come by to enjoy listening.**

**These will be informal gatherings. Everyone is
welcome, and new tellers are especially encouraged.**

Saturday, April 15

All day, beginning at 8:30AM	Registration: Big Springs Room Marketplace: hallway between Red Banks/Blue Ridge and in Blue Ridge Quilt Display: Big Springs, Red Banks, and Blue Ridge	
	Red Banks Room*	Blue Ridge Room
9:00-10:00	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Storytelling</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Carolina Quiroga</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sharks in the Shower and Other Whimsical Stories from my Colombian Childhood</i></p> <p>It has been said that Magical Realism runs wild in Colombia; perhaps it is true! Growing up, I believed sharks could come out of the shower, and tall beds hid monsters under them. I feared water and falling off the bed. It would take me hours to shower, and my bed shrank one inch per year. In this show, you will discover that my fears came true in the quirkiest ways.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Workshop</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Denise Mount</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>A Sharp Stick in the Eye: Family Stories 101</i></p>
10:15-11:15	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Storytelling</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Donald Davis</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Our Stories Take Us Home</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Story Swap</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Drop in to listen or tell.</p>
11:30-12:30	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Storytelling</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kathi Littlejohn</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Opossum's Tail</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Local History</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Zula Cox</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Stories from the African American community of Texana, NC</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">12:30-1:45 Lunch Break</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A list of area restaurants is available at festival registration.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">These restaurants are offering a discount if you show your festival program:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5% off at The Aviator Café — 45 Home Town Way Suite C (Blairsville)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10% off at Hawg Wild BBQ & Catfish House — 625 Hwy 76 (Hiawassee)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10% off an entrée Brother's at Willow Ranch — 6223 Hwy 76 W (Young Harris)</p>		

**A sign language interpreter will be on stage.*

Saturday, April 15 continued

	Red Banks Room*	Blue Ridge Room
1:45-2:45	<p><u>Storytelling</u></p> <p>Donna Washington <i>We Regret Nothing: Dark Tales from the . . . Misunderstood Women of Folklore</i></p> <p>These fractured tales are not for small children or the faint of heart!</p>	<p><u>Children's Stories</u></p> <p>Judy Baker, Terrell Shaw, and Leslie Shelley <i>Stories for our youngest listeners and the young-at-heart</i></p>
3:00-4:00	<p><u>Storytelling</u></p> <p>Josh Goforth <i>Stories and Songs</i></p>	<p><u>Story Swap</u></p> <p>Drop in to listen or tell.</p>
4:00-6:00		<p><u>Workshop</u></p> <p>Dr. Joel Ying <i>Storytelling Medicine: How Stories Heal</i></p>
<p>Dinner Break until 6:45PM</p> <p>A list of area restaurants is available at festival registration.</p> <p>These area restaurants are offering a discount if you show your festival program: 5% off at The Aviator Café — 45 Home Town Way Suite C (Blairsville) 10% off at Hawg Wild BBQ & Catfish House — 625 Hwy 76 (Hiawassee) 10% off an entrée Brother's at Willow Ranch — 6223 Hwy 76 W (Young Harris)</p>		
6:45-7:45	<p><u>Showcase of Regional Voices</u></p> <p>Judy Baker Dan Hollifield Dani Ramos Anne Wheeler Joel Ying</p>	<p>We're so pleased to introduce you to these talented tellers from Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida. You're in for a real treat!</p>
8:00-9:00	<p><u>Olio</u></p> <p>Josh Goforth Donna Washington Kathi Littlejohn Carolina Quiroga Donald Davis</p>	<p>The final olio is a must-see! Join our featured tellers as they tell one story each to close out the festival in style. Plus, we will be giving away 5 tickets to the 2024 festival!</p>

*A sign language interpreter will be on stage.

Special Programming on Saturday in the Blue Ridge Room



9:00-10:00 Denise Mount: A Sharp Stick in the Eye—Family Stories 101

Join us for a beginner's class in crafting memories into touching tales for front porch telling, sharing from the stage, or writing to the page, and along the way, discover what is better than a sharp stick in the eye!

10:15-11:15 Story Swap

Claim your voice! Drop in to share a story (10 minutes or less), or just come by to enjoy listening. This will be an informal gathering. Everyone is welcome, and new tellers are especially encouraged.

11:30-12:30 Zula Cox: Stories from the African American Community of Texana, NC

Learn about the fascinating history of this historic mountain community that was first settled in the 1800s.

1:45-2:45 Children's Stories with Judy Baker, Terrell Shaw, and Leslie Shelley

Come and enjoy tales especially for the young and young-at-heart.

3:00-4:00 Story Swap

Claim your voice! Drop in to share a story (10 minutes or less), or just come by to enjoy listening. This will be an informal gathering. Everyone is welcome, and new tellers are especially encouraged.

4:00-6:00 Dr. Joel Ying, MD: Storytelling Medicine—How Stories Heal

What is healing? How do stories heal? How do we create a safe space for stories? In this experiential workshop, explore the healing potential of stories and storytelling. Experience the power of presence, active listening, and community. Transform difficult stories into healing stories. Consciously create more space for stories in our lives.

Dr. Joel Ying, MD, is a holistic physician in Naples, Florida. He teaches "Storytelling as Healing" to undergraduates at Florida Gulf Coast University. He produces local storytelling events and performs personal stories and folk tales that range from touching to humorous.

Regional Voices

We're proud to introduce you to a group of outstanding storytellers from across the Southeast!

Judy Baker

From stories of long ago and far away, to stories that happened just down the road, Judy can pull out a story from her eclectic repertoire sure to suit any occasion or venue. Traditional Appalachian tales, personal stories, folk tales, legends, and stories about things that go bump in the night are all stories that she loves to tell and retell. Judy has told at many regional venues, including being named champion liar at the Cumberland Falls Storytelling Festival. She has shared in her local schools, telling stories and teaching the art of storytelling to students, and has served as an educational docent at her local history museum. She serves as event chair of the Ocoee Story Fest, now in its 27th year. She helps develop stories and serves as a teller at her town's evening of mystery and folklore each October and conducts workshops at festivals and conferences.



Contact info: www.tallyouastory.com Facebook: Judy Baker, Storyteller tellone406@gmail.com
tellone@bellsouth.net judy@tallyouastory.com 423-618-7257

Zula Cox

Zula Cox, lifelong resident of Murphy, North Carolina, widowed, mother of three, grandmother of seven, and great grandmother of eight, is retired and enjoys reading, cooking, and spending time with her family. She is the Vice president of the TEXANA Community Club and loves to talk about the history of TEXANA. She can be contacted at zulac54@yahoo.com



Dan Hollifield



Born and raised in Hayesville, NC, Dan Hollifield retired from the Hall Co. (GA) Fire Service after 26 years as a firefighter/paramedic and worked 12 more years in various positions within the Clay Co. (NC) Sheriff's Office, retiring for the final time in 2018. He has been happily married to his wife, Patricia, for 50 years, and they have two adult daughters, Michelle and Sabrina, and two grandchildren. Mr. Hollifield has served as the pastor of Pilgrim Baptist Church in Hayesville for over 20 years. He is the 5th generation great-grandson of Chief Dragging Canoe of the Cherokee. He enjoys learning Cherokee history and passing on this knowledge to others, particularly his grandchildren.

He has presented at the annual Cherokee Heritage Festival in Hayesville since its beginnings and received his eagle feathers from Mr. Junior Sequoyah in 2018 for his commitment to keeping Cherokee traditions alive. He is a skilled craftsman and enjoys making and playing traditional Cherokee flutes. Mr. Hollifield considers it both his duty and honor to continue the Cherokee traditions in order to preserve the rich heritage of his ancestors. He can be contacted at dan1372@brmemc.net.

Amanda Lawrence

Dr. Amanda Lawrence is from Blairsville, Georgia. She taught college courses in writing, literature, and storytelling for 21 years before entering the nonprofit world. She is co-director of the Georgia Mountain Storytelling Festival and director of The Haven Project of Georgia, an organization that serves individuals with disabilities and their families. Amanda grew up in a family of storytellers and enjoys sharing family tales, folktales, and ghost stories. She was a finalist in the Story Slam at the 2018 National Storytelling Festival and has shared stories at the Bear on the Square Festival, Acworth Book Festival, Haunts and Harvests in Blue Ridge, and other events around the region. She will be a New Voice at this year's Stone Soup Storytelling Festival in Woodruff, South Carolina. She is a regular teller at the John C. Campbell Folk School and at Mountain Area Storytellers' events.

Amanda can be contacted at dramlawrence@gmail.com.



Denise Mount



Denise Mount grew up in Western New York, in the shadow of the Peace Bridge. Her personal stories span five generations, several states, and three countries. Denise has also been known to spin Appalachian yarns, fabricate humongous tall tales, and conjure scary stories for any occasion. Some of the venues at which she has told include the Georgia Mountain Storytelling Festival, the Peach State Storytelling Festival, the John C. Campbell Folk School, the Acworth Literacy Festival, the Big Fibbers Festival, the Hagood Mill Liars Contest, and most recently the Lies and Pies show at the Peacock Playhouse in Hayesville, North Carolina. Denise and her husband, Mike, are the founders of Stories on the Square Gwinnett, a monthly open mic personal storytelling event which celebrated, in March 2023, its tenth year promoting storytellers, story listeners, and story lovers. Presently residing in Dahlonega, Georgia, Denise hopes her stories are helping to build bridges to peace!

Contact information: Denise Des Soye Mount, Dahlonega, GA
ddmount9328@gmail.com or 404-735-9328

Dani Ramos

Daniela Ramos is a senior theatre and performance studies major at Kennesaw State University. She is so thrilled to be performing here! While she loves all aspects of theatre both on and off stage, her favorite is storytelling. She has credits from theaters all around Atlanta and is a proud Alumna of the KSU Tellers! When she's not doing theatre, she's with her cats and her roommates living life!

You can contact her at daniramos.com@gmail.com or on Instagram: [@ooflookitsdani](https://www.instagram.com/ooflookitsdani)



Terrell Shaw



Terrell Shaw's stories range from prize-winning lies to heart-warming personal tales to eerie ghost stories to animal folk tales. For the last ten years, Terrell has been Storyteller/Naturalist for Arrowhead Environmental Education Center, so his animal tales have bits of flora and fauna snuck in to teach about Georgia ecology. He is president of the Ridge & Valley Storytelling Guild and serves on the board of the Georgia Storytelling Network. He directed the Big Fibbers Storytelling Festival from 2015-2020. Retired from a 33-year teaching career, Terrell would love to show you pictures of his three granddaughters, Clemmie, Ruth, and Suzie; tell you about Sheila, his bride of 50 years; or brag on his two actress-daughters, Brannon and Lillian.

Contact information: terrellshaw@me.com www.terrellshaw.com YouTube: Terrell Shaw, Storyteller

Leslie Rainey Shelley

Leslie Rainey Shelley is from a small town in the foothills of the North Georgia mountains. Leslie and her husband have three grown children and spouses, and five beautiful little grandsons. She recently retired from the local school system and is focusing on grandmothering, storytelling, and just catching up on fun! Leslie grew up in the midst of a large rural family in the foothills of North Georgia. She was fortunate to grow up in a farm environment filled with wonderful storytellers at a time when people sat on the porch at night sharing life. A lot of wisdom snuck in the stories, shrewdly hidden amongst the tears and laughter. Telling stories was just part of life, and Leslie, like so many from rural areas, found herself sharing stories and tales routinely without giving it much thought. She strongly believes in the power of stories to bring hope, encouragement, and healing. Her mission has become to share—not just tell, but share—stories with the hope of helping others share their story too.



Leslie Shelley is a current board member of the Georgia Storytelling Network, formerly the Southern Order of Storytellers. She has been 2nd Place Fibber at the Rome Big Fibber's Festival and has shared stories at the Georgia Mountain Storytelling Festival, Dillard's Heritage Days Festival, John C. Campbell Folk School Appalachian Stories, the SOS Winter Festival, Bear on the Square in Dahlonega, Cobb County Tellabration, Acworth Cultural Arts Festival, Peacock Performing Arts Appalachian Music and Tales, and the Chattooga Library Annual Royal Ball.

You can contact her at lesliershelley@gmail.com or 770-286-2074.

Cayce Terrell

Cayce has been involved in providing community entertainment through time-honored traditions since she was a theater major at Brenau in the late 1970s. She was a featured artist at Five Tellabration at the Sautee-Nacoochee Arts and Community Center and has been a part of the Georgia Mountain Storytelling Festival every year since its inception. She has done a one-woman show at the Sweetwater Coffee House, presented stories at the Chestatee Regional and Cleveland libraries, and worked with the White County, Habersham County, and Forsythe County school systems, entertaining children of all ages and teaching tolerance of other cultures through the medium of stories. She is well-known in the North Georgia area for her Native American story cycle and also has a wealth of stories from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Brittany. In addition, she has studied tales from the Middle East, the Orient, and the Pacific Isles.



You can contact Cayce at cayceterrell@gmail.com or through her website: <http://cayceterrell.com>.

Anne Wheeler

Anne is a storyteller, writer, and musician who divides her time between her native Birmingham and the mountains and rivers of western North Carolina. A retired lawyer and university professor, she loves using skills developed in those worlds to craft stories of family, history, and, especially, the harpers of Scotland. She has been a featured teller at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, N.C., and the Fresh Air concert on the square in Hayesville, N.C., and tells frequently at open mics in both North Carolina and Georgia. Anne currently serves as Vice-President and Grants Manager for the Georgia Storytellers Network.



Email: fignthistle@yahoo.com Call or Text: 205-410-0366

Joel Ying

Dr. Joel Ying is a Physician-Educator-Storyteller. He practices holistic medicine part-time in Naples, Florida. When he discovered the powerful medicine of storytelling in 2015, he knew that he had to start sharing it. He produces events and performs an eclectic collection of touching and humorous personal stories, world folk tales, and enlightening historical and literary tales. He teaches "Storytelling as Healing" at Florida Gulf Coast University. How does a physician become a storyteller? Finding passion, one story at a time. Stories, he will tell you, bring him alive... and he brings that aliveness to his performances to share the healing power of story.



Website: JoelYing.com Email: joel.ying@gmail.com

Accommodations

Sign Language Interpreting



Courtney Sanders



Marti Slaughter

Courtney Sanders and Marti Slaughter will be interpreting stories in the Red Banks Room throughout the festival.

Courtney Sanders is currently an ASL interpreter at a local elementary school. She has a younger brother who is deaf and learned how to sign when she was around five years old by taking classes at his school. She is continuing her education at the University of Georgia. She enjoys spending time with her boyfriend Christian and dog Ava and loves reptiles, swimming, working out, exploring, working on cars, and playing video games.

Marti Slaughter currently serves as the Director of Disability Services at Young Harris College. She holds an Associate of Arts Degree from Georgia Perimeter College's Sign Language Interpreter Training Program, a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sign Language Interpreting from Maryville College, and a Masters of Social Work Degree from the University of Georgia. Marti has served in the Deaf community for 20 years as a professional interpreter, as a volunteer for Deaf and Deaf/Blind-centered camps, and for transition initiatives for Deaf students moving from high school to post-secondary life.

Braille Programs

Braille copies of this program are available at festival registration.

Seating

Accessible seating for visitors with wheelchairs, walkers, and other mobility devices is available. Please let us know if you need assistance locating a seat that works well for you.

Other Accommodations

Please let us know if we may provide other accommodations to help you make the most of your festival visit.

Marketplace



Our marketplace tables will be open throughout the festival in the hallway between Red Banks and Blue Ridge and in the Blue Ridge Room. Stop by to shop for books and CDs by our featured tellers, festival t-shirts, handmade mugs, tote bags, notebooks, pins, and other items. You can also chat with our community partners to learn about all that they have to offer.

Quilt Display

Quilts tell the stories of our lives. We hope that you'll walk through the festival quilt display to learn about our heritage in fabric. The display features the work of local quilters and quilts on loan from personal collections. It will be available for viewing throughout the festival in Big Springs, Red Banks, and Blue Ridge.

Quilt Treasure Hunt

Pick up your list of clues at the registration table, and learn more about the quilts in our display by identifying the quilts on the clue sheet. The first person to complete the hunt on each day of the festival will receive a special prize, and everyone who completes it will receive a gift. Come to the marketplace table when you're finished to claim your prize!



Get Ready for the 10th-Anniversary Celebration

In 2024, we'll be celebrating the 10th annual Georgia Mountain Storytelling Festival with a memory quilt. Stop by the table in the Blue Ridge Room to create a square that will become part of that quilt. You can share a favorite festival memory or just sign your name.

Also, we'll be giving away free two-day tickets to the 2024 festival to 5 lucky people at the Friday night olio and 5 more at the Saturday night olio. There is no fee to enter! Just pick up a ticket for the drawing when you come to the olio.



IN MEMORIUM

Since our last in-person festival, we have lost Gary Greene, a professional storyteller from North Georgia who performed for over 20 years, including at the MayFest in Adairsville, TaleSpin Festival in Chattanooga, Smoky Mountain Storytelling Festival in Pigeon Forge, Autrey Mills Nature Preserve & Heritage Center in Johns Creek, and the Chieftains Museum in Rome with Cherokee Flutist Tommy Wildcat. One of Gary's songs, "Cherokee Names," has traveled from Georgia to California, New Zealand, and Scotland. Some of his great loves were Cherokee folk tales and stories, Appalachian tales, Jack tales, and his own family stories. Gary is greatly missed, but his stories live on.



SPECIAL THANKS

We are grateful for the assistance of the following folks, without whose help the 2023 festival would not have been possible:

- Andrew Bechard and Lauren Davis of The Ridges Resort on Lake Chatuge *for helping the festival to make its home in this lovely facility*
- Courtney Sanders and Marti Slaughter *for sign language interpreting*
- Tiffany and James Paschal *for making Braille copies of the program*
- Nathan Baerreis *for photography and videography*
- Blairsville Printing *for helping with posters, programs, and signs*
- The Georgia Department of Economic Development, Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, Lake Chatuge Chamber of Commerce, Fannin County Chamber of Commerce, Clay County Chamber of Commerce, Blairsville Cinema, City of Hiawassee, City of Young Harris, Cherokee County Arts Council, and many others *for spreading the good word about the festival*
- Many generous local quilters and collectors *for sharing their quilts for the display*
- Our festival sponsors *for enabling us to bring top-notch tellers to perform*
- Our festival volunteers *for donating their time and energy so generously*
- Our storytellers and musicians *for sharing their craft*
- Our festival visitors *for sharing in the joy*

We offer unending gratitude to everyone who has given of their time and talents to help the festival run smoothly since it began in 2015. Thank you for believing in the power of stories and enabling us to share it *for nine years in a row!*

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John C. Campbell Folk School
Lake Chatuge Chamber of Commerce & the City of Hiawassee
Mountain Area Storytellers
North Georgia Family Medicine
Peach State Federal Credit Union
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Tall Tale (\$200-\$499)

William and Claudia Callaway	Century 21 Black Bear Realty
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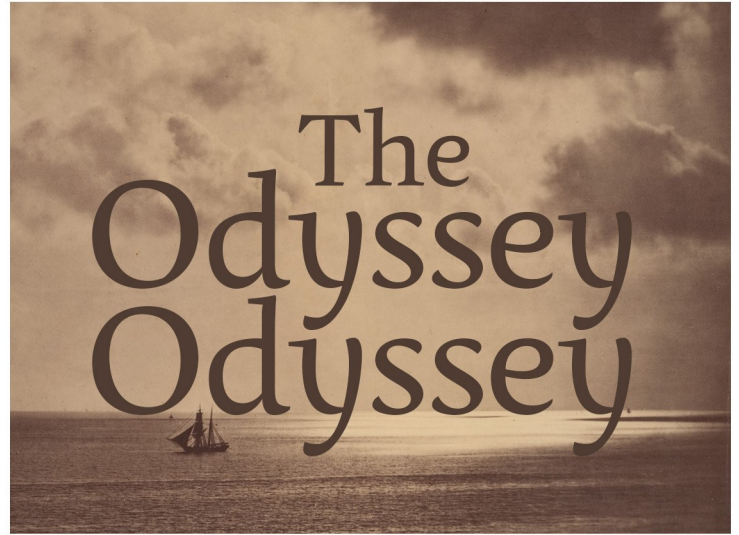
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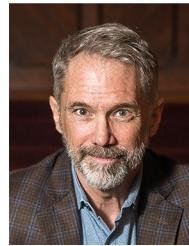
Fable (up to \$99)

Sara Armstrong	Sally Morgan
Tammy Askew	Roberta Rankin
Abby Bracewell	Judy Ruhling
Rebekah Conley	Liz Schellingerhoudt
Sandralyn Dannelley	Natalia Starostina
Jo Angela Edwins	Jacquelyn Thomas
JC Erikson	Kim Weitkamp
Henry Fizer	Anne Wilkerson
Lynne Grady	Rebecca Worthington
Christy Jordan	Blairsville Martial Arts Academy
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Mountain Area Storytellers (MAS) was formed in 2017. The organization is a regional network of independent storytellers focused on promoting storytelling and developing performance opportunities for new and experienced storytellers, writers, and singer-songwriters in Western North Carolina and North Georgia.

In 2017 Mountain Area Storytellers (MAS) began a program at local libraries in North Carolina and Georgia for storytellers and writers with a monthly story swap known as TELL IT LIKE IS. Today the on-going event is also available via Zoom.

In 2019 MAS began the first monthly regional OPEN MIC Night - Stories on the Square inviting new and experienced storytellers, writers and singer-songwriters at a wine and coffee shop on the historic courthouse square in Hayesville, NC.

Also in 2019 MAS created an on-going monthly series, An Evening of Appalachian Storytelling at John C. Campbell Folk School. Today the program continues to feature regional storytellers entertaining workshop attendees and the public as part of the folk school's featured programs.

In 2021 MAS created a one-season outdoor three-concert story and music series in Hayesville, NC called FRESH AIR - Stories on the Square.

In 2022 MAS began producing an on-going four-part story and music series called Scribes on Stage, at the Peacock Performing Arts Center, a popular regional theater, in Hayesville, NC. The 2023 series is underway.

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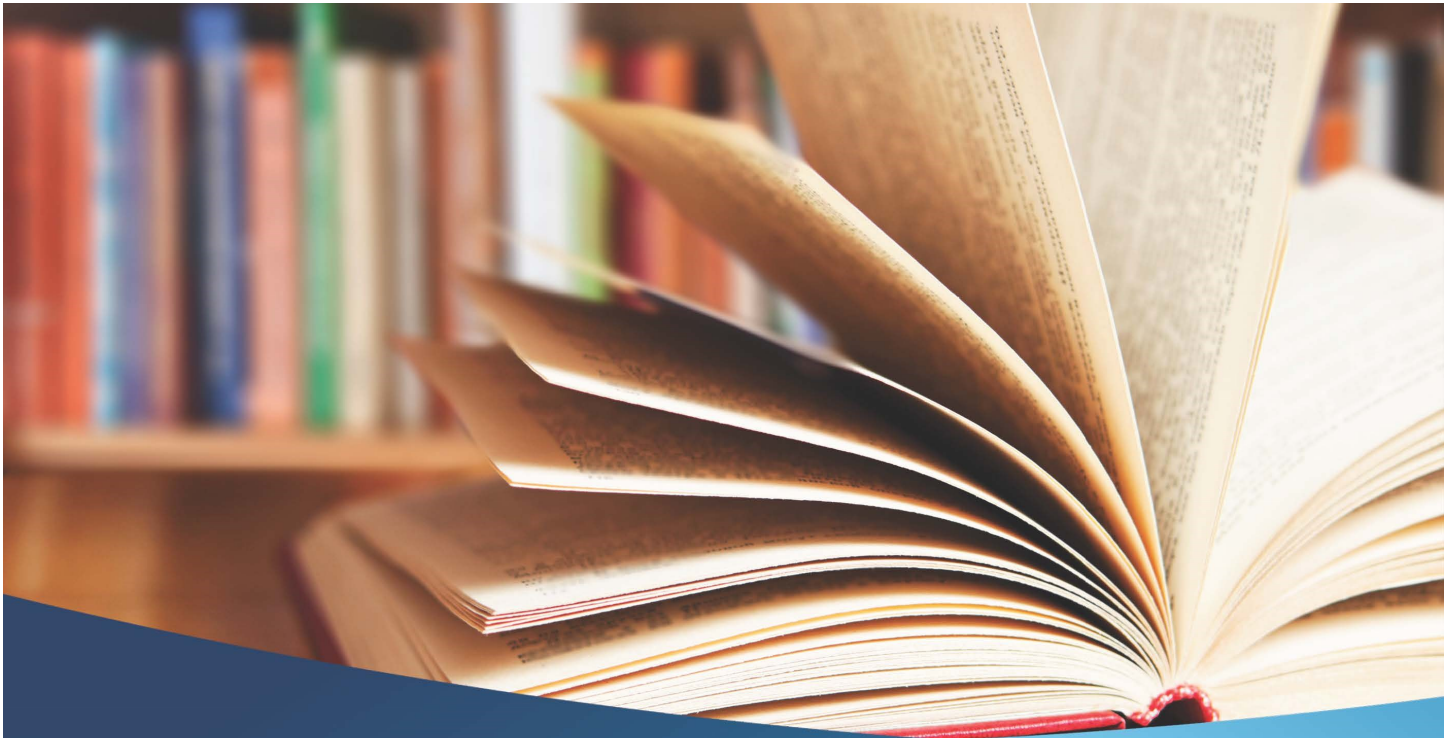
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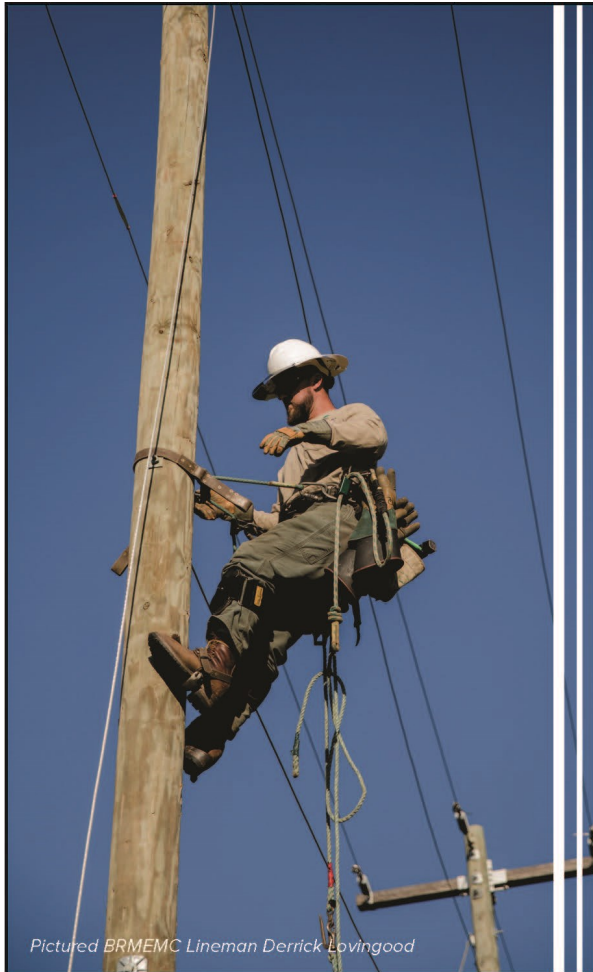


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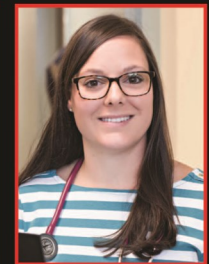
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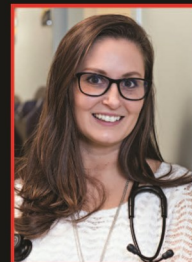
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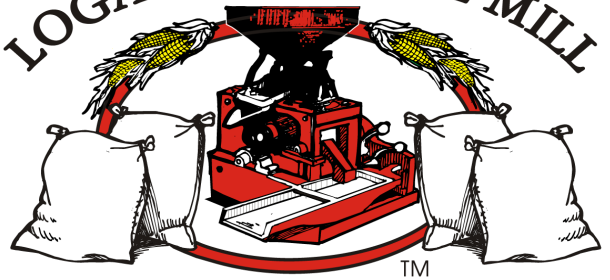


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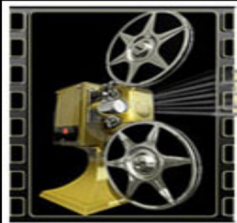
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Facebook: Georgia Mountain Storytelling Festival

Georgia Mountain Storytelling Festival, Inc. is a volunteer-run 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to providing meaningful opportunities for an underserved audience to engage with the voices of Appalachia through hearing stories and attending workshops that will enable them to develop a cultural intelligence through the arts of listening and speaking.