

# in The Wind

## Seattle Storytellers Guild Events

First Friday Virtual  
on Zoom Story Swaps  
See Page 7

SSG StoryFests  
September 18  
October 16  
See Page 2

Tellabration™  
November 20  
See Page 6

### Inside this issue:

Storyfests with Norm and Anne Larry and Jeff	2
Vi Hilbert and Haboo In The Wind Publishing Info	3
Adventure with Green Magic The TBD Storytellers	4
Patty's Zoom Swap Hints	5
Tellabration™ 2020 Eva and MaryAnne The Timpanogos Festival	6
Trail Guides into the New Frontier: ASST and Crossroads	7
Calendar of Coming and Canceled Events	8
First Friday Story Swaps Regional Story Guilds Membership Info	9
Some Common Zoom Issues	10
Under the Rainbow Pocketgrass NSN Connected	11
Some Facebook Storytelling Groups to join or follow	12
Address Page	

## The +’s and -’s of Phase Two Virtual Storytelling



When the Special Summer Issue came out, we realized we were entering a “new normal.” I think most of us hoped that by this Fall, we would start up again as before. Sadly, we can’t. The pandemic impacted storytelling communities all over the nation. Several guilds – such as **The Clallam Country Story People**, **The Quimper Guild**, and others have basically been shutdown due to the social distancing restrictions and ongoing closed venues – live gatherings will not happen, at least well into the Fall, for many of the events on our calendars. Some Guilds like **Portland’s** and **South Sound’s** and **Fresh Ground Stories** have dipped their toes into virtual storytelling on **Zoom**, or posted recordings on **You Tube**. It has been hardest on the professional storytellers – quite a few have turned to the internet to keep storytelling alive – either with video posts, or internet events. We love telling face to face, but sadly we can see each other only on small screens.

On the plus side, our storytelling community has greatly expanded. Numbers of virtual concerts and workshops keep popping up in my Facebook groups’ news feeds. The eight **TBD Storytellers** (which includes our dear friends Norm Brecke, Anne Rutherford and Ingrid Nixon) are an example of the online concerts with some top notch tellers available though sometimes at odd hours. Almost too many to take advantage of!

The **NSN’s CONNECTED conference** successfully went virtual and some of us who wouldn’t have journeyed to Georgia got to attend concerts and workshops. And though the Forest Festival is canceled, The **Timpanogos Storytelling Festival** in mid September will be virtually available at a great price for both its concerts and workshops! It is increasing clear that online storytelling will continue even after things improve with movers and shakers like Sheila Arnold and Rachel Hedman urging us forward into the “cloud”.

The **Seattle Storytellers Guild** tested the waters with our toes with virtual **First** and **Third Friday Swaps** through the Summer, and hosted Anne-Louise Sperry for a virtual program in June. As we approach the Fall, there are minuses – **Auntmama’s Storytable** remains canceled, she is concentrating on the radio and **Pocketgrass**. **UTR** has also gone virtual. **Elder Tales** had a couple of Zoom storytellings at Merrill Gardens in the Spring (sadly the tellers outnumbered their audience). **Kat Tales** is canceled, though a baby is on the way.

The **SSG Board’s planning meeting** in late July anticipates we will be virtual through the end of the year, and possibly well into 2021. So we will have our monthly StoryFests with some excellent storytellers as zoomed events for the time being. However they will be shorter programs and earlier in the evening. It is likely that we may not be able to gather early next year and we are even open to having our March through May events online, which were postponed from Spring 2020 to next Spring, if necessary.

We will continue to have online **First Friday Swaps** hosted alternately by Briarcrest or SSG folks as well, and will explore, if there is interest, a second and somewhat different Swap evening. We hope to have a virtual workshop in October and another in 2021, And we do hope as well that our audiences will make suggested donations – we now have a Tip Jar on our website for just that purpose as we are striving to bring you some quality storytelling.

So here is **Part Two of our Virtual Storytelling Issues**. If you see too much Red on pages eight and nine, Hang in There! Storytelling is still more alive than ever!

Barry McWilliams, Editor and President



## Adventures with Green “Magic”

*As we entered the virtual realm of storytelling last Spring, I set out to create my own “virtual studio.” I first got a magic wand – a selfie stick with a folding tripod base that extends to 40 inches for making videos with my smart phone.*

*Because I wanted to escape from my normal humdrum life – isn't that what stories are for? - I also wished for a magic carpet upon which I could travel to beautiful places and fantasy worlds – with a Green Screen and Virtual Background – I could put myself anywhere!!*

*Much more classy places than that view of an ironing board and the glare of a skylight behind me, reducing me to a featureless silhouette as I sit at my desktop. Or a view of my kitchen wall with half my face in darkness. Or my laptop gazing up at my chin from a TV Tray.*

*But to travel afar and enter those “cloud realms” – I first needed some more “magic” - like Queen Grimhilde's Magic Mirror (from Snow White) or a gazing ball that sees everywhere – I had to settle for just that “one tiny single eye” on my phone or laptop, or the Webcam, which like Odin's Raven, perches on my monitor looking at me, listening to all I say.*

*“Now who is the fairest in the Land. . . ?” For that I needed a Magic Ring as well – a light ring to illuminate my face. There are all sorts of these available from small ones that clip to my phone, to much larger 10” ones that glow behind a laptop – filled with adjustable LED bulbs to drive away the shadows and flatter my looks. I have a set of 6” Twins – adjustable for cool or warm light, brightness – even colors! Zoom now has features that adjust for low light, and can improve your appearance – with just a couple clicks on a mouse!*

*However, to see myself in far off places and fairy realms – I need my green magic carpet. It measures 5 feet tall by 7 feet wide, and hangs behind me, supported by a long 1”x 1/2” stick inserted in a sleeve sewn across the top, held up by a tall tripod stand. There are ways you can improvise these screens, and I saw a big round one that straps to a computer chair.*

*Why Green? Well, apart from the Wicked Witch of the West and the Jolly Green Giant – very few of us are green. When my magic device fills in the screen with a virtual background of scenic or fantasy images – it only fills in the green in back. Of course, any solid background may work, but as photographers and special effect folks know – green is the best!*

*So when you see me on Zoom, in those imaginative places, with perhaps a logo floating over my shoulder – you will know that all it took was a bit of creative magic and . . . some green out of my pocket!!*



*Submitted by Barry McWilliams*

**Perhaps one of the best treats this Summer** has been a cohort of eight seasoned Storytellers who are working together to inspire each other. They call themselves **TBD Storytellers** because they finally decided since they couldn't decide, their name became “**To Be Determined**”. They are special to us because our good friends, Norm Brecke, Anne Rutherford and Ingrid Nixon, are part of the group. The others are Simon Brooks, Sheila Arnold, Paul Stickland, Jeff Doyle and Antonio Rocha. All are skillful storytellers!

Every couple of weeks, four of them have zoomed in with some great telling in a Tuesday afternoon concert, followed by another concert with the other four. Most recently was the first part of a “Pants on Fire” Liars Telling - Part two will be September 29th at 5 PM.

We hope that they will continue to inspire each other and us with their storytelling. Look for them on Facebook, or connect by email at [TBDstorytellers@gmail.com](mailto:TBDstorytellers@gmail.com) for more details and the links to attend. Events are free, but they can use donations!



## Hints for Storytellers at our Zoom Swaps *by Patty Zeitlin*

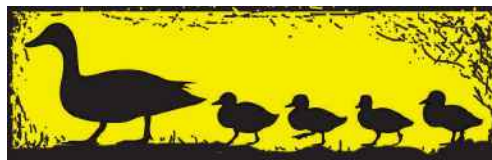
We want our First Friday Swaps to be opportunities for people to enjoy sharing stories with each other. We welcome everyone to listen. Some folks might be trying out a new story, or telling a story for the first time. Here are some reminders to make our swaps more pleasant for all

**Attention.** Having the full, respectful attention of an audience in virtual form is just as important to tellers as it is during "in person" tellings. It is common web etiquette not to walk around while holding your device, or be eating while on screen. Drinking a few sips of water now and then is not as much of a problem. Getting up and down is visually distracting, though on occasion, in home situations, it can't be helped. If it is essential that you leave for a moment, please try to do it in between tellers and please turn off your video until you return. Using the **Chat box** while a story is told shows poor attention and distracts others.



**What kinds of stories?** Time limits for the stories may vary, "family-friendly", and should be told, not read. They might or might not be on the suggested theme. They can be personal, historical, original or folk tales, etc. If the stories are not personal tales, please also share where you found your story. Generally, stories will be timed, and a signal given when you have one more minute. Tellers should be alert for the signal - by a bell or chime, and might acknowledge it with a nod or gesture. And wrap up when time is up. If you want to tell a story at a Swap, contact Barry McWilliams ([eldrbarry@gmail.com](mailto:eldrbarry@gmail.com)) ahead of time, and if there is time for more tellers that evening, you might still get "on the list". In order that others might have a chance to tell, those who haven't told recently at a swap will be given priority.

**Regarding feedback after each story.** Tellers can request feedback or not. If you give feedback, start with something you enjoyed/liked about a story and/or how it was presented. Or if anything was confusing, say so and ask about that. Please keep your responses on the telling and the story rather than talking about something the story reminded you of - some folks call that "bird walking." I see it as a message to yourself, that maybe what you heard has stirred up a story that you might want to tell, but at some other time.



In the Past couple of Months, a couple of Storytellers have really stood out - helping to inspire and move us all into this new virtual Storytelling frontier.

**Sheila Arnold** has been using her talents since she was eight years old. Based in Virginia, She has been a full-time Storyteller for seventeen years, traveling in 41 states since 2003 sharing a variety of stories and historic character presentations through her company **History's Alive!** At her core, Ms. Sheila, has passion, vision and a ministry of healing hearts, unifying communities and reminding people to share their stories. A member of the **Virginia Storytelling Alliance**, Sheila has been a featured storyteller at several major Storytelling Festivals.

This summer, she seems to be everywhere online. And she is involved in all sorts of projects - the pandemic can't keep her down. She is one of the eight in **TBD**. She promoted an online concert, **Sacred Stories** and the recent **Bridging North America** storytelling events. Sheila **joined with Donna Washington** in founding **Artists Standing Strong Together**, at first a fund to help struggling storytellers, now a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit. Over the next few months, Sheila Arnold's tireless efforts made ASST the gold standard of virtual storytelling, inspiring many others to jump in with both feet. You will want to follow **their Facebook Group**.

*"We want to keep assisting artists to find ways to bring their visions, hopes, and dreams into the world. We want to help artists as they run their own businesses. We want to financially support artists who have run headlong into one of those dry spells in the "feast or famine" life of an itinerant performer. We want to keep virtual spaces open and connecting artists from all over the world."*



**Rachel Hedman** As a family folklore expert and youth storytelling advocate, Rachel Hedman looks to the future by first looking in the home. She promoted positive communication and relationships through the **Folktales About Families Series**. Rachel started telling stories in High School and has guided storytelling organizations through leadership, blogs, and e-newsletters since 1997. She received the 2012 **National Storytelling Network Service and Leadership Award for the Western Region** (ORACLE). She completed her Storytelling Masters from East Tennessee State University. Her **adoption folktales thesis** was defended two days before adopting two boys with her husband, Casey. They have since adopted a girl. She kickstarted **Story Crossroads** in 2016, a Salt Lake county storytelling festival and is its Executive Director, a grassroots organization that aims to gather and unify people across generations and cultures to celebrate story and promote creative communities. Click for an article about **how they took their summer events online**.

**Story Crossroads** has been sending a series of very useful **Blogs** on topics like "What Youth Tellers Want and Need—7 Parts" and "How to Set Up Virtual Events—5 Parts".

**Story Crossroads** is offering **a series of Workshops** called **All Things Story** - Learn and develop storytelling skills in all areas - professional, performance, and applied. This is a monthly series with a certificate after each time that can be used for professional development or continued education credit. It kicks off with a Zoom Workshop with Simon Brooks "**Breaking the Boundaries of the Screen**" on September 7<sup>th</sup> from 8:00—9:30 PDT AM.

Starting in January, they are beginning **a virtual storytelling email list** with a bi-monthly newsletter.





## Some Common Zoom Control and Tech Issues

**Please Update Zoom in your browser to the latest version 5.2.1!**

(Update is found in your settings)

Here is a short video for those new to using Zoom: <https://youtu.be/zIUHmGaOZ-4>

**Joining a meeting** sometimes is a problem. The usual approach is to simply to click on the **Web Address Link** sent via the **Invitation Email**. Sometimes that includes the meeting number and passcode and just clicking will take you right into the **Waiting Room**, but it may require you to click on **Open Zoom Meetings** in the pop up box.

But if that fails, you may need go to **zoom.us** in your browser, and click on **Join a Meeting without signing in**. Then enter the **Meeting ID** and **Passcode numbers** which were also included in the **Invitation email** when you are prompted for them. That should take you into the meeting. With a smart phone you may need to install the **Zoom App** first.

**If you experience Tech issues with your Device...**like no sound, video issues, vocal echoes, or low bandwidth, it works best to chat with just one person about this rather than involving the meeting in the problem. Be patient. We are all still learning how to use this media in these tough times.

**Mute and unmute.** Use buttons on your screen to **mute** and **unmute** as needed. The Tech host may at times **Mute All** on occasion, and he may **Request Permission to Unmute** as you join the meeting. Otherwise, you will have to Unmute yourself,

**Your Video Appearance.** There are some new controls over how you look on Screen. Click on the ^ beside your camera icon in lower left for the menu. **Virtual Backgrounds** can be only be used if you have a “green screen” or solid background. In Video Settings. you can turn HD on or off if your bandwidth is low. You can mirror your image. And you can improve your appearance and adjust for low light with sliders. **Filters** – many rather silly – are also now available.

**Screen Views** At the top right of your screen, you will see either the words “**Speaker View**” which allows you to see the teller/speaker in a bigger window and “**Gallery View**” which enables you to see everyone, and a pair of [ ]'s that click for **Full Screen**. Speaker View is best for listening to a storyteller. For group discussions and sharing feedback switch to Gallery View. However, if you are viewing in Full Screen, you will see there **lines** and **small squares**, The single square is for **Speaker View** and the one with many dots is for **Gallery View**. Try toggling back and forth a couple of times.

**A very common problem is Bandwidth.** Insufficient Bandwidth causes blocky video, poor and garbled audio, frozen screens, and sometimes, disconnection. You can test your audio or video connection on the Zoom test site at [zoom.us/test](https://zoom.us/test) – you’ll need at least 2 Mbps upload and 2 Mbps download. You could try closing other open windows on your device. Turning off HD video or turning off your video entirely may also help improve audio quality. If you are connecting from a laptop try plugging the laptop into wall power.. Or move it closer to your WiFi router, or connect to it directly to the router with a ethernet cable.

Here are a couple of helpful web pages with advice on how to fix common problems:

<https://www.pocket-lint.com/apps/news/152307-common-zoom-problems-and-how-to-fix-them>.

<https://uit.stanford.edu/guide/telecommuting/bandwidth>

## In the Mood for Some Stories?

There has been an explosion of online Storytelling Concerts and Shows this past Summer. And for good reasons! People are tired of isolating themselves and yearn for some face to face human contact. People are tired of binging on old TV shows and Netflix, and re-watching old blockbusters.

What could be better than down to earth, sitting on the porch Storytelling? Parking is no problem. Events are often in the late afternoon or early evening. You don't have to get gussied up. Many are just an hour or so long. And the Storytellers are great - people you probably only heard about in far off Festivals – are now eager to share with you face to face their tales. And your modest donations in the Tip Jars or for Tickets help support storytellers and our craft in a tough time.

There will be many more coming this Fall. But how to find them? The best place is Social Media – in particular a number of Facebook Groups where upcoming virtual events are constantly being posted. Some you can subscribe to, for others, it is easy to join.

In particular try:

**Storytellers** [www.facebook.com/groups/griots](http://www.facebook.com/groups/griots) – Private, 2.7K Members

**Storytelling Seattle** [www.facebook.com/groups/198209904060632](http://www.facebook.com/groups/198209904060632) – Public, 691 Members

**Worldwide Virtual Storytelling Guild** [www.nestorytelling.org/virtual-storytelling-guild/](http://www.nestorytelling.org/virtual-storytelling-guild/) – Private, 512 Members

**Society for Storytelling (UK)** [www.facebook.com/groups/14430125460](http://www.facebook.com/groups/14430125460) – Public 5.3K Members

---

## *In the Wind*

*Seattle Storytellers Guild*

*P.O. Box 18361*

*Seattle, WA 98118*



[www.seattlestorytellers.org](http://www.seattlestorytellers.org)

**Standard Mail**