

# Storytelling Live begins in Jonesborough

Storytelling Live!, the International Storytelling Center's teller-in-residence series, kicks off its new season May 1. The series features 26 of America's best-loved storytellers, one each week May through October, in addition to special concerts in December.

Each teller appears in matinee performances Tuesday through Saturday at 2 p.m. at the Mary B. Martin Storytelling Hall. Evening performances, children's concerts, holiday shows and workshops are also be offered.

Storyteller Bill Lepp of West Virginia begins the season May 1-5, which includes a special evening concert Thursday, May 3. An internationally-known storyteller, author and recording artist, he has been described as a satisfying blend of Bob Newhart and Jeff Foxworthy. Lepp has been featured at venues across the nation, including the Smithsonian Folklife Festival and Comedy Central. He is the recipient of the NSN ORACLE Circle of Excellence award, and his picture book, "The King of Little Things," won a Parents' Choice Gold award. A five-time champion of the West Virginia Liars' Contest, his outrageous tall-tales and witty stories are a signature of his repertoire.

Alton Chung of Hawaii appears during the second week of Storytelling Live, May 8-12. Growing up with the stories, superstitions and the magic of the Hawaiian Islands has given him a unique perspective when telling stories of Hawaii, WWII Japanese-Americans and Asian folktales. His finely spun stories, rooted in his culture and a one of a kind perspective, are delivered with a deep sense of reverence and authenticity. He has performed across the U.S. and abroad, including international storytelling festivals in the Cayman Islands, Singapore, Vietnam and Thailand.

Elizabeth Ellis of Texas performs as Storytelling Live's resident storyteller May 15-19. A designated American Masterpiece Touring Artist by the NEA, Ellis grew up in the Appalachian Mountains hearing stories from her grandfather, a mountain minister. The "Divine Miss E" is a versatile and riveting teller of Appalachian and Texas tales and stories of heroic American women, though her personal stories are arguably her best. An award-winning author, she is a recipient of the John Henry Faulk award from the Tejas Storytelling Association, and the NSN ORACLE Circle of Excellence and Lifetime Achievement awards.

Resident teller for the fourth week is Connecticut's Jennifer Munro, May 22-26. Munro creates funny, original stories that touch your heart, lift your spirits and make you laugh. With characters that resonate with the frailty and courage of the human condition, you'll find yourself cheering for them one moment and weeping the next. Her repertoire not only includes personal stories but also fairy and folk tales, myths and legends, which she brings to life with compelling character voices and her delightful British accent. Munro has performed on national public radio and across the nation. Her CDs as well as her collection of short stories, "Auntie Lily and other Delightfully Perverse Stories," are Storytelling World winners.

Rounding out the first month of Storytelling Live! May 29-June 2 is Peter Cook of Chicago, with a special children's performance June 2. An internationally renowned deaf performing artist, Cook's work incorporates American Sign Language, pantomime, storytelling, acting and movement. Cook has presented his work both nationally and internationally, including at the Kennedy Center, the National Book Festival and in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Japan. He has also appeared on PBS and traveled extensively as part of the Flying Words Project to promote ASL literature. Cook teaches at Columbia College where he received an Excellence in Teaching award.

All Storytelling Live! performances are in ISC's theater in Mary B. Martin Storytelling Hall.

Tickets for all matinee performances are \$12 for adults and \$11 for seniors, students, and children under 18, and ticket holders will receive discounts at many downtown establishments on the day of the performance. Season passes that offer nearly half off the price of regular admission are available (only as supplies last).

For more information about Storytelling Live! visit [www.storytellingcenter.net](http://www.storytellingcenter.net) or to purchase tickets call (800) 952-8392 ext. 222 or (423) 913-1276. *A!*



**Alton Chung**

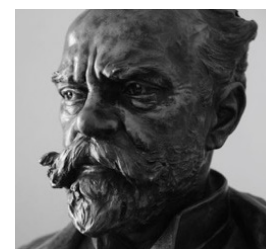
**Right: Bill Lepp**

**Below: Elizabeth Ellis**



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CHAMBER PLAYERS  
Chamber Music for the Mountain Empire

*Of Bohemians and Princes*  
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Tickets: \$15/adults/\$12 seniors/ students free

**Thursday, May 3 • 7:30 p.m.**  
First Presbyterian Church  
Kingsport, Tenn.

**Friday, May 4 • 7:30 p.m.**  
St. John's Episcopal Church  
Johnson City, Tenn.

**Saturday, May 5 • 7:30 p.m.**  
Paramount Center for the Arts  
Bristol, Tenn.

**Sunday, May 6 • 3 p.m.**  
Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church  
Spencer-Miller Memorial Concert Series  
\$10 adults/ students free

For tickets, visit [paramountbristol.org](http://paramountbristol.org)