

Storytellers of San Diego  
President's Report – 2-28-24

Storytellers of San Diego is moving ahead with great storytelling programs.

We are planning our 14<sup>th</sup> annual San Diego Storytelling Festival at the Coronado Library, our third year at this beautiful and welcoming venue. We are wrapping up our Storytelling Institute, which has been a big success. We are doing regular in-person programming in a couple of venues. We are maintaining the programs that support our core values and are expanding our individual and collective storytelling efforts, both on-line and in person.

*To increase awareness of and appreciation for storytelling as an art form in a variety of settings: entertainment venues, educational institutions, health care facilities, community organizations, non-profit organizations and for-profit businesses.*

We continue to present monthly programs. At their request, our shows at Twisted Horn Mead and Cider in Vista are at a new day and time – the second Sunday at 4:00. This is proving to be a good slot for us, and we are able to fill the programs with new tellers and long-time favorites. Twisted Horn provides donations in addition to the use of the venue. James Nelson-Lucas often videos the performances, and Jim Dieckmann adds them to our YouTube channel. Our performances at the Template in Ocean Beach have also moved – to the second Monday at 6:30. We have continued our monthly open mic/story swap online, and there are always participants. Some are local and others are from out-of-state and occasionally international.

This year our “Art & Stories” program consists of three performances at the San Diego Chinese Historic Museum in downtown San Diego. Each performance features three tellers. Jim Dieckmann, Mindy Donner, and Aunt Li-Anne told dragon stories in January to celebrate the year of the dragon. In February, David Schmidt, Fred Laskowski, and Patti Christensen told stories of Luck, Love and Good Fortune, and in March, Lissette Ryan, Emily Stamets, and Marilyn McPhie will tell tales that feature fish and fishermen, with a nod to the traditional fishing of San Diego’s Chinese immigrants. The first programs were well-attended, and feedback from the museum has been very positive. These programs are supported by a grant from the Chinese Women’s Association.

We have continued to participate in programs sponsored by the Storytelling Association of California, of which we are an institutional member. Most months, our tellers have participated in their Genre Series, and Stories in Schools (aka Jenny Fund) is supporting school residencies in Coronado.

We participate in the National Storytelling Network, ASST, and other organizations.

Individual members have presented programs for civic groups, libraries, churches, schools, and other venues. Recently, OJ and Almena Mozon have presented several programs in conjunction with Black History Month.

*To provide opportunities for participation in storytelling for all children and adults, from beginners to professionals, through classes, workshops, story swaps, concerts and storytelling festivals.*

Our monthly open mic has continued virtually and has been an opportunity for small-group sharing of stories. Often the attendees come from out of our area. This is a casual, friendly time to share a short tale and discuss storytelling events and resources.

Aunt Li-Anne and Mindy Donner are teaching a series of workshops at Silver Strand Elementary School in Coronado. Mindy also mentors students through a program sponsored by Artists Standing Strong Together. Li-Anne, Oj Mozon and Marilyn McPhie have taught storytelling classes to military-related personnel through Armed Services Arts Partnership (ASAP).

Patti and James continue in-person storytelling at Rady Children's Hospital in their Hospital Arts Program.

*To encourage the use of storytelling to bring together diverse populations in the community and promote cross-cultural understanding.*

We are committed to offering storytelling programs to a wide variety of local communities across the San Diego area, and beyond. We have participated in storytelling events worldwide – leading to good connections and an increased understanding of diverse populations and cultures.

Our festival will include groups of people who will present their stories and facilitate cross-cultural understanding. In addition to presentations by veterans, a session will feature a panel discussing the Chicano bridge murals, and the Turning Wheel bus will be parked outside the library for visits.

*To serve as a source of information on the art of storytelling and storytelling events in the San Diego area*

Our website is an excellent source of information on storytelling with an emphasis on the many storytelling events happening in the San Diego area. Jim Dieckmann updates the website regularly, so the information is current, and links to future programs are provided. Our YouTube channel, updated and maintained by Jim, contains many videos, with playlists for specific programs and storytellers. It has more than a hundred subscribers. Emails are

sent to four hundred people twice a month, and there's an excellent open rate. We have regular posts on our Storytellers of San Diego facebook page, which has 1.3K followers. Li-Anne and Marilyn attend AERO meetings when possible. Mindy sends press releases and calendar items to local print and online calendars. James contributes items to social media. Our events are listed on our website and also on calendars of the Storytelling Association of California and the National Storytelling Network. Fred monitors membership, which is continuing to grow.

Some highlights since the last board meeting:

We enjoy performances in conjunction with both Twisted Horn and the Template.

Our grant funding allows us to share our work in a more diverse community.

Thanks to an NSN auction item, we were able to offer a successful workshop on telling to very young children to interested tellers from SSD.

We continue to work with other storytelling organizations like NSN, SAC, Black Storytellers of San Diego, and ASST.

We maintain our connection with San Diego Folk Heritage, and plan to participate in the Sam Hinton Festival in June.

We are excited about our annual storytelling festival at the Coronado Library for the third year. We have had excellent input and support from the library staff and Friends of the Library and are looking forward to a memorable festival.

This year, Deidra Davis and Sherrie Brown have joined our board. We were sad to lose Ivy Weston, who has left the Coronado Library.