

**Part IV: Narrative Description of Your Activities** (extract from 2012 application for nonprofit status)

Storytellers of San Diego was formed for exclusively charitable and educational purposes. Specifically, Storytellers of San Diego provides public storytelling concerts, festivals and workshops to increase awareness of and appreciation for storytelling as an art form in a variety of settings: entertainment venues, educational institutions, health care facilities, and for community organizations. In the early 1980's a handful of local storytellers began appearing in public as a loose-knit troupe, providing traditional oral storytelling at a series of events in San Diego County, calling themselves "Storytellers of San Diego."

After thirty years of loose association, in 2011, Storytellers of San Diego began the process of becoming a formal organization by holding monthly meetings, beginning an application as an unincorporated association under California State law, and actively seeking funding for storytelling events. Organizations providing grants to public arts organizations such as Storytellers of San Diego require the grantee to be a recognized tax-exempt, nonprofit. Storytellers of San Diego became incorporated in the State of California in November 2012, and are engaged in the process of applying for 501c3 status with the IRS.

Annually since the mid-1980's, Storytellers of San Diego have actively participated in the Sam Hinton Folk Festival, sponsored by San Diego Folk Heritage, (a 501c3 organization, <http://www.sdfolkheritage.org/>). A dozen storytellers provide an all day program of storytelling for families at this free event. Storytellers of San Diego will continue to work closely with San Diego Folk Heritage in perpetuating this traditional folk festival and to explore other opportunities to bring storytelling to the public.

In 2011 and 2012, Storytellers of San Diego partnered with the Encinitas Branch of the San Diego County Library System to present an annual day-long festival of storytelling. A variety of storytelling performance, oral history and workshops were presented free to the public. The thirty presenters provided: traditional storytelling programs specifically for children and adults, a workshop for business leaders, "Share Your Stories to Grow Your Business," oral histories by military veterans and Holocaust survivors, a storytelling games workshop and a video storytelling workshop. Funding for staging the festival comes from Friends of the Library (<http://encinitaslibfriends.org>) and donations received by Storytellers of San Diego from individuals, service organizations and businesses. Facilities and publicity expenses are donated by the Encinitas Public Library. Each of the thirty presenters received a token stipend of fifty dollars.

The 2013 Festival will be held in April with a similar structure as previous festivals, with the addition of oral history by Japanese-American internees from World War II, and a workshop and performance in personal storytelling conducted by "So Say We All," a local 501c3 writers/ spoken word organization. (<http://www.sosayweallonline.com/>) A special storytelling concert will bring a group of fourth grade students from the local school district to tell stories on the main stage. This is the culminating activity of an outreach program of storytelling residency/workshop presented by members of Storytellers of San Diego in target classrooms. A grant from the City of Encinitas (\$3280) will fund five assemblies in city elementary schools to promote the festival and the residency/ workshop, where students learn storytelling techniques, select and practice

telling a story. Attached are the 2011 and 2012 festival programs.

The festival format has been highly successful with over 700 people of all ages in attendance in 2012. The variety of the program with oral histories of honored elders, story time for preschoolers, workshops for first time tellers, and storytelling concerts for adults have attracted a diverse audience. Storytellers of San Diego will continue to offer this festival in conjunction with the Encinitas Public Library, and are seeking nonprofit partners to stage an additional festival in a different geographical part of San Diego County in the future. Funding for the festival will continue to be on a shared basis with the host venue and donations from individuals, service organizations, and businesses solicited by Storytellers of San Diego. Token stipends will be paid to presenters. Storytellers of San Diego is committed to continuing this as a free event for the public.

“Tellabration” (<http://www.tellabration.org>) is an international night of storytelling held on the first Saturday before Thanksgiving. Nationally inaugurated in 1988, Storytellers of San Diego has continuously participated since 1990 to bring an awareness and appreciation for the art of storytelling to an adult audience. For the first twenty years the event was held at the University of San Diego, as part of an adult storytelling course offered through the Division of Professional and Continuing Education. In 2011 and 2012 the Tellabration were staged in two different church auditoriums with eight tellers each night. Paid attendance at these concerts normally ranges between 100-150. Rent for the venue, publicity and \$100 stipends for the tellers constitute the expenses for the event. Storytellers of San Diego plan on continuing this tradition. The church, located in east San Diego County, is a suitable venue and the administration very cooperative. Having this event in the east county helps Storytellers of San Diego meet its goal of reaching out to the people of all geographic areas of San Diego County.

In the past individual storytellers have assumed the responsibility of organizing events such as Tellabration for the benefit of the group, Storytellers of San Diego. The individual has been responsible for collecting and distributing all monies involved. With the incorporation of Storytellers of San Diego and the attainment of nonprofit, tax-exempt status, the organization will conduct all financial matters. A number of yearly events where Storytellers of San Diego perform as a group have been managed by individuals, including: “Harvest of Stories,” at Mission Trails Regional Park, (<http://www.mtrp.org>), The Highland Games, (<http://www.sdhighlandgames.org/>), and “Old Poway Ghost Walk,” (<http://www.poway.org/Index.aspx?page=110>). These events are funded through a combination of donations, and paid admissions. Storytellers of San Diego will assume the coordination and organization of these events, including financial considerations for tellers.

The second major goal of Storytellers of San Diego is to provide opportunities for participation in storytelling for all children and adults, from beginners to professionals, through classes, workshops, and story swaps. As outlined above in paragraph four, a storytelling residence/workshops funded by a grant from the City of Encinitas will train fourth grade students at Park Dale Lane Elementary School in the art of storytelling. Storytellers of San Diego will endeavor to repeat this model in other communities in San Diego County with cooperating nonprofit organizations to have children learn and participate in storytelling.

Story swaps are informal gatherings of novice and experienced tellers, who share stories

in a supportive environment. Storytellers of San Diego have conducted story swaps for adults on a regular basis for many years. Currently, two monthly story swaps are conducted; one in north county at a bookstore and one in east county at a public library. Storytellers of San Diego will continue to conduct story swaps in an effort to encourage individuals to learn storytelling techniques and practice their own stories. Storytellers of San Diego will explore new venues such as hospitals, retirement communities, day care centers, and recreation centers as possible locales for story swap sessions allowing all ages to participate.

In May 2013, Storytellers of San Diego will be hosting the Southern California Story Swapping Festival for the third time. The Story Swapping Festival brings together members of ten storytelling organizations from Southern California for a day of stories, workshops, and organizational sharing. Storytellers of San Diego will host the event at the University of San Diego. Adult students in the USD Continuing Education course on storytelling will be first-time participants. A minimal registration fee for participants covers the costs of publicity, lunch, and stipends for the workshop presenters.

In 2012 Storytellers of San Diego hosted nationally acclaimed storyteller David Novak for a storytelling master class. Fifteen local tellers attended the afternoon workshop. Registration fees and a grant from the National Storytelling Network (<http://www.storynet.org/>) funded the master class. Storytellers of San Diego will continue to partner with national and local organizations to bring nationally known storytellers to San Diego for performance and storytelling classes open to the public.

The third goal of Storytellers of San Diego is to encourage the use of storytelling to bring together diverse populations in the community and promote cross-cultural understanding. The three festivals at the Encinitas Public Library have all featured sessions to promote cultural understanding, including: local Native Americans, Holocaust survivors, war veterans, and Japanese-American internees. Storytellers of San Diego are dedicated to continuing outreach in the community to find and present storytellers from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Storytellers of San Diego is sharing information and building partnerships with other arts organizations such as So Say We All, San Diego Guild of Puppetry, and the Black Storytellers of San Diego. Storytellers of San Diego will continue to build upon these partnerships and seek out other nonprofit arts organizations interested in promoting storytelling in a variety of communities.

Goal four of Storytellers of San Diego is to serve as a source of information on the art of storytelling and storytelling events in the San Diego area. Storytellers of San Diego maintains a website at (<http://storytellersofsandiego.org>) to disseminate current information for the local community on upcoming storytelling events, classes and workshops, and links to other storytelling organizations and online resources for storytelling enthusiasts. Any storyteller in San Diego County may maintain a “connect” listing free of charge with a brief biography, types of stories told, and contact information. An archive of storytelling videos, articles and audio recordings of local storytellers is accessible through the website to help educate the general public on the art of storytelling and its widespread application in a variety of settings with diverse audiences.

To further the goals of providing information about storytelling to the public, Storytellers of San Diego maintains a Facebook page, a 300 person mailing list, and a WIKI (<http://storytellersofsandiego.wikispaces.com/>) The WIKI is openly accessible to all and

is used to archive organizational information, specifically meeting notes and can be used by members to discuss relevant storytelling topics. In the future Storytellers of San Diego will add additional videos to the website and explore the possibility of creating a YouTube channel expressly for Storytellers of San Diego performance videos. Storytellers of San Diego are also exploring the capability of video to record short “how-to” lessons to assist storytellers in storytelling techniques and story selection and preparation of oral telling.

The past, current and future activities of Storytellers of San Diego are compatible with the provisions of Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code for tax exemption due to its organization and operation exclusively for charitable and educational purposes as detailed above.