

Storytellers of San Diego

President's Report – 5-16-17

Since our last board meeting, we have had some excellent success in our organization's goals.

- *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.*

As an organization, we have monthly storytelling at a South Park coffee house, an annual festival at a North County coastal library, in addition to annual participation in a North County Inland folk festival and a North County coastal Scottish festival. Individual members tell stories regularly and offer workshops and classes at preschools, universities, the Rady Children's Hospital, and several libraries. Recent one-time presentations have included storytelling for historical societies, schools (both in-school assemblies and workshops and evening family literacy nights), service organizations, churches of several denominations and local businesses.

- *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.*

We continue to hold a monthly open mic at Barnes & Noble. It is lightly attended, but offers a place for anyone to tell a story, and also get a critique if desired and learn about storytelling resources. In addition, we had an open mic at our March festival, which offered an opportunity for several tellers to present on the main stage. There will be open mics for kids and adults at the Sam Hinton Festival. We welcome additional storytellers into our professional group.

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

Our festival included Linda Caballero-Sotello, director of the New Americans Museum, discussing the programs at the museum and Ardalan Jirjees, a refugee from Iran. In addition, Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo, a Filipino/Japanese/American told stories and presented a workshop at the festival, and Marianne Christensen, a storyteller from Denmark, told a story and was part of a panel, telling about her experiences with healing stories in Denmark. Marilyn writes a storytelling column for the monthly local Scottish newsletter. Our programming in different parts of the greater San Diego community is intended to offer storytelling experiences to different local communities.

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

We continue to provide information about storytelling on a regular basis. Jim sends a monthly email to subscribers. Several tellers post regularly on our facebook page (587 likes). Our Instagram has been

fairly inactive lately, but Li-Anne has plans to contact Lindsay about access to it. In addition, Li-Anne and Marilyn attend quarterly AERO meetings, and Li-Anne is part of one of their leadership committees. We provided an information table at the Kickstart the Arts in (Y)our Schools conference. Marilyn attended the annual Southern California Story Swap Festival in Santa Ana and informed attendees of San Diego storytelling events.

Some highlights for the quarter:

Our annual San Diego Storytelling Festival was in many ways our best yet. According to the library count, we had an attendance of around 600, although it felt like the crowd was down a bit from last year. Audiences enjoyed our local tellers, as well as our visiting tellers, Robert Kikuchi-Yngodo, Marianne Christensen and John St. Clair. The potter, Jason Brady, was a big hit, making several pots with his wheel as tellers told stories of clay and creation. A new addition was a panel on the subject of healing stories. Our connection with So Say We All for veteran's stories was compelling. The presentation on refugee stories in conjunction with the New Americans Museum was interesting, but not as strong as we would have liked. The kids from Li-Anne's residency were great; other children's programming was excellent, although lightly attended. The food truck was well-received, and our arrangement to provide vouchers for tellers was appreciated. The physical arrangements at the library were smooth, thanks to the planning of Bill Sannwald and staff. Kathleen Warren and the Friends provided much-appreciated snacks in the green room, a welcome table in the entry and oversight of a scaled-down opportunity drawing, which made over \$300 (in addition to a generous financial contribution). Suggestions for next year included more effective publicity, more upbeat concluding concert.

Our First Wednesday storytelling at Rebecca's continues to work well for us. This quarter we have been joined by two new tellers, and every month has had from three to six tellers with a small but enthusiastic audience. This has been a good point of connection for us and a good opportunity to try new material.

We had our second-ever house concert in Mindy's garden with Darci Tucker and Andy Offutt Irwin. A dozen people attended, a smaller group than we would have liked, but they were a great audience and appreciated by the tellers. We intend to do more house concerts and will work on policies and procedures for those.

Linda and Marilyn wrote a grant proposal for the City of Encinitas/Mizel Family Foundation Grants, and it has been recommended to be funded for \$3500 for school programs for the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

Marilyn attended a meeting of the California Arts Commission. Marilyn and Li-Anne will attend the National Storytelling Network conference in Kansas City.

Marilyn and Cathleen Chilcote-Wallace presented for a Leslie University class in Murietta. Marilyn is scheduled to do three programs for OASIS in Escondido this summer.

Upcoming events, in addition to the monthly Rebecca's storytelling, are participation in the annual Sam Hinton Folk Heritage Festival in Poway on June 3. Eight storytellers will tell stories in three sessions in the historic Porter House. Following that, there will be a kids' open mic and an adult open mic. Our annual "Tales and

“Legends of Scotland” concert will be at the Brengle Park Terrace venue to kick-off the San Diego Highland Games. Four tellers and fiddler Rachel Amov will participate. Marilyn and Li-Anne will tell stories at the Games on Saturday and Sunday.

We are beginning plans for Tellabration, and Mindy has already secured the venue. And we are thinking about the 2018 festival, which will be on St. Patrick’s Day and will involve the World Storytelling Day theme of “Wise Fools.”