

Storytellers of San Diego
President's Report – 11-19-24

We are continuing to address our core values with a range of storytelling programs – both virtual 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 affiliate with other organizations, and often collaborate on programs. We have continued to participate in programs sponsored by the Storytelling Association of California, of which we are an institutional member. Tellers from Storytellers of San Diego have been featured SAC's monthly online "Genre Series." Marilyn is on the committee for the Regional Gem program. SAC has funded several of our programs of storytelling in schools, including the recent, extensive Chula Vista storytelling project organized by David Schmidt. We have also combined with another SAC story swap group for an online Tellabration!™

We work with the local San Diego Folk Heritage, providing a storytelling strand at the Sam Hinton Festival. They have agreed to provide some funding for our Storytelling Institute, and provide sound for our Tellabration!™

On the fourth Wednesday, there is a virtual open mic/story swap hosted by Marilyn. It usually has a small, friendly group with several regular attendees, both San Diego area residents and tellers outside the San Diego area. For several years, we have had two monthly programs – virtual during the pandemic, in-person lately. However, recently both have come to an end because of shifting programming needs at both venues. We are searching for new venues in both North and South County.

Patti Christensen and James Nelson-Lucas continue to tell stories weekly in person at Rady Children's Hospital.

We are an institutional member of the National Storytelling Network. Emily Stamets is a member of the NSN board in the position of Volunteer Coordinator.

Mindy Donner is a mentor for youth storytelling camps through ASST, Artists Standing Strong Together. Several of our storytellers have also been featured in ASST programs. We are planning to present an hour of online storytelling for the ASST New Year's Eve Blowout.

Mindy works with the Guild of Puppetry.

Individual members often present programs for churches, schools, libraries, businesses, civic groups, and more.

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 virtual open mic offers an opportunity for sharing stories in a small, friendly group. Often the attendees come from out of our area. This is a casual time to share a short tale. We often discuss storytelling events and resources.

We have received a grant from the City of Encinitas. In addition, we have been the recipient of generous funding from the Coronado Library for the annual storytelling festival and also a several-session storytelling institute. These grants have enabled us to offer workshops – both individual and a series – free to participants. We often invite both youth and adult tellers to participate in our various programs.

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

Storytelling is both diverse and multicultural. We continue to offer storytelling programs to a wide variety of local communities, including Oceanside, Vista, Encinitas and other north coast communities, City Heights, Coronado, Chula Vista, Bonita and more. The programs include opportunities for people to listen to stories and to tell stories themselves. Many of our members have strong connections with storytellers and storytelling organizations around the world, and have performed for NEST, ASST and other out-of-the-area organizations.

We encourage diversity in our programs – both in the storytellers and in the audiences, and we invite increased diversity in all of our programs.

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

Extensive and current information is featured on the Storytellers of San Diego website. It includes both storytelling in general and in particular the storytelling events in the San Diego area, those sponsored by Storytellers of San Diego and performances, classes, and workshops presented by individual members. Jim Dieckmann updates the website regularly. Links to future programs and videos of past programs are provided. In addition, Jim Dieckmann sends informational emails to subscribers twice a month.

We have regular posts on our Storytellers of San Diego facebook page, which has more than 1.3K followers. Our YouTube channel has 155 subscribers and 448 videos. Mindy

and James send press releases and calendar items to local print and online calendars. We continue our membership and connection with the National Storytelling Network. Our events are also listed on calendars of the Storytelling Association of California and the National Storytelling Network.

Some highlights since the last board meeting:

We recently had our annual Tellabration!™ event at Bethany Lutheran Church in Ocean Beach. It was curated and emceed by Fred Laskowski and Mindy Donner and included nine storytellers. We also collaborated with the Sacramento Storytellers Guild for an online Tellabration!™ It encountered some unfortunate zoom-bombing, but the program was quickly back on track. Both Tellabration!™ events were well-received.

David Schmidt put together a large storytelling project concentrating on the city of Chula Vista. He secured two grants for this project, one from the Storytelling Association of California and the other from the City of Chula Vista. Included more than thirty performances and workshops in elementary, middle, and high schools, in addition to libraries, museums, a nature center and other venues. David wrote a book about spooky sightings and legends from Chula Vista, in particular, the Proctor Valley monster. The book is available on Amazon, and copies have been given to the schools and other organizations which have been the sites of the performances. It was an ambitious undertaking and involved many storytellers and many venues. David plans to propose a similar project in the future.

Emily Stamets organized a storytelling event in Julian as part of their Apple Days. It was enjoyed by both tellers and listeners, and we anticipate that this will be an annual event. Emily, David, and Aunt Li-Anne provided a series of storytelling workshops and a concluding performance in Julian.

We will present a workshop at the Encinitas Library in January, thanks to a grant from the city of Encinitas.

We are planning for our annual Storytelling Festival on March 15 at the beautiful Coronado Library. We are considering several exciting options for community tellers. One addition to our tellers will be Vicki Kirschenbaum from Los Angeles. Another is Colin Urwin of Northern Ireland. Our Storytelling Institute will be held with funding from the Coronado Library and San Diego Folk Heritage.

We continue to enjoy our regular programming online and in-person. Our YouTube channel offers a great variety of stories from many tellers – available to anyone free of charge. The channel has 165 subscribers and more than 448 available videos.

OJ, Li-Anne, and Marilyn continue to work with ASAP, Armed Services Arts Partnership. These classes are free for people with an armed services affiliation.

We continue to work with other storytelling organizations, including NSN, SAC, Black Storytellers of San Diego, and ASST, in addition to other local organizations like the Vista Viking Festival.