

Storytellers of San Diego
President's Report – 7-15-25

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.

Every second Monday, we have a curated show at The Template in Ocean Beach. Each month has a different coordinator who chooses a theme and title. Tellers vary and often include new-to-SSD storytellers. A guide for these shows, written by Mindy, is making these shows more effective.

A second monthly show is at Skybound Coffee & Dessert Lounge in Vista on the third Thursday.

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.

Marilyn co-hosts with recent Storytellers of San Diego teller, Sarah Glazebrook, an in-person storytelling circle at the House of Ireland in Balboa Park on the first Monday. It is free and open to all.

We affiliate with other organizations, and often collaborate on programs. We continue to participate in programs sponsored by the Storytelling Association of California, of which we are an institutional member. We nominate a teller for each monthly program. A different genre is featured each month, and there is a special program for Juneteenth. Another connection with SAC is with the Regional Gem Program. Marilyn is on the SAC board and on the committee to select the yearly Regional Gem.

We work with the local San Diego Folk Heritage, providing a storytelling strand at the Sam Hinton Festival.

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

James coordinates the storytelling for the Vista Viking festival.

Emily is again organizing a storytelling event in connection with Julian Apple Days,

Emily, Marilyn, and Li-Anne will attend the National Storytelling Network conference in Texas in July. Emily is the Volunteer Coordinator for NSN.

Individual members often present programs for churches, schools, libraries, businesses, civic groups, and more. They may include music, writing, or puppetry.

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. The new in-person story circle at the House of Ireland offers an additional opportunity for anyone to share a story in a casual atmosphere.

We have received a grant from the City of Encinitas, which will be used for school and public workshops. A grant from the City of Coronado will help to fund library programming there. In addition, we have been the recipient of generous funding from the Coronado Library for the annual storytelling festival and a several-session storytelling institute. We have a new-to-us grant from the city of Carlsbad, which will be used for school and community projects, as well as a small grant from the Storytelling Association of California for programs in Escondido. These grants enable us to offer workshops – both individual and a series – free to participants. We often invite both youth and adult tellers – both those who have been in institute or residency programs and open-mic tellers -- to tell in our programs.

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

The tradition of oral storytelling is, by its nature, diverse and cross-cultural. We offer storytelling programs to a wide variety of local communities, including Oceanside, Vista, Encinitas, City Heights, Coronado, Chula Vista, Poway, and more. The programs include opportunities for people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures to listen to stories and to tell stories themselves. Some SSD-sponsored programs have been provided in Spanish as well as English. Our storytellers listen to and tell stories all over the world. This has led to connections and an increased understanding of diverse populations and cultures.

We encourage diversity in our programs – both in the storytellers and in the audiences.

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

Current information about storytelling is featured on the Storytellers of San Diego website. This includes the announcement of local storytelling events, as well as information on storytelling in general. Topics range from Storytellers of San Diego-sponsored events, events presented by individual members, and awards and news. Jim Dieckmann updates the website regularly to ensure that the information is current and accurate. Links to future programs and videos of past programs are provided. Emails are usually sent to subscribers twice a month. The website also notes accomplishments and awards to SSD members.

We have regular posts on our Storytellers of San Diego facebook page, which has 1.4K followers. Our YouTube channel, which is being updated by James, has 197 subscribers and 506 videos. Mindy and James send press releases and calendar items to local print and online calendars. We are institutional members of the National Storytelling Network. Several of our storytellers have been featured in ASST programs. 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:

Several of us attended the annual Southern California Story Swap Festival in April in Claremont.

We provided a series of storytelling sessions at the Sam Hinton Folk Festival in June. All sessions were well attended, and the listeners were very enthusiastic.

We presented a program of "Stories and Music from Scotland" the night before the San Diego Scottish Highland Games at the House of Pacific Relations in Balboa Park on June 19. This program was sponsored by the House of Scotland and the San Diego Highland Games.

Emily Stamets has organized the third annual storytelling event in conjunction with the Apple Days festivities in Julian.

With support from the City of Coronado and the Coronado Library, we continue to provide a full range of storytelling performance and workshops. In May the library hosted a book launch for the grant-funded publication of stories of Coronado ghosts.

We have received a grant from the San Diego Chinese Women's Association which will fund future storytelling at the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum.

Emily Stamets is organizing a storytelling event in Julian as part of their Apple Days. She also had a one-woman show at the San Diego Fringe Festival.

We are planning for our annual Storytelling Festival on March 20 at the beautiful Coronado Library. We are considering several options for a community panel and guest tellers

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 197 subscribers and 506 available videos.

James Nelson-Lucas has arranged for an expanded storytelling component at the Vista Viking Festival in September.

We are planning for Tellabration! tm in November in-person in Ocean Beach, and will consider a collaboration with another California storytelling group for an on-line Tellabration! tm

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.