



CHAPTER MEETING SUMMARY

Our March 20 chapter meeting was cancelled in response to the widespread advice that everyone, but especially higher-risk seniors (i.e. most Spellbinders volunteers), minimize group gatherings. BCAH made our decision easy by closing Brunner Farmhouse. Let's hope that we will be able to meet in April. Meanwhile, take every reasonable precaution, and by all means stay healthy. We will have plenty of time to read and rest and maybe even learn a few new stories.



ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATE

GOOD NEWS! The organizational changes discussed in the February newsletter are moving forward quickly. The SRC staff will leave at the end of this month, and the Council of Trustees is developing a plan for key services to be provided by a team of volunteer (and working) Trustees to those chapters that sign the required Intellectual Property Licensing Agreement. BCAH has agreed to accept Spellbinders as a program and has signed the Agreement and paid the associated fee. So, it is official: **We are still "Spellbinders"!!** Now, all we need is to be able to get back into the classrooms.

The terms of several current Trustees end in April, but the remaining members plus a few others who have agreed to join the Council ensure that the required minimum number of positions are filled. There are, however, seats still available. If you are interested in devoting some time and energy to ensuring the continued viability of Spellbinders, let **Kay Landers** or **Wynn Montgomery** know before the end of the month.

ANNUAL CELEBRATION POSTPONED

During a March 12 conference call, the Council of Trustees agree to postpone the planned April 24 Celebration (aka "Spellbinders Annual Meeting") in response to growing concerns about the pandemic. A Council committee is investigating alternate dates and approaches. Stay tuned for details.

NEXT MEETING
FRIDAY, APRIL 17 (12:45-3:00)
BRUNNER FARM HOUSE

A cartoon character with a speech bubble saying "MAYBE!" is on the left. On the right is a hand icon with the index finger pointing up.

SAD NEWS

We have lost a local legend. “**Grandma Jean**” **Barnett**, our chapter’s most senior member, passed away on March 9. Jean was born on February 9, 1936 in Moreland, Kansas—the third of Ralph and Alice Heath’s seven children--and was raised on a nearby farm. She and her husband Rex, who celebrated 66 years of marriage two weeks ago, farmed in Dudley, Kansas before moving to Broomfield in 1970. Their son, Rod, passed in 2012; daughters Debbie and Joyce live in Broomfield. Jean is survived by husband Rex, three sisters, nine grandchildren, and 13 great grandchildren. Jean loved her family, Precious Moments figurines, the Red Hat Society, and (of course) Spellbinders.



Jean passed leadership to Tom Tjarks in 2011

Shortly after Jean joined Spellbinders in 2006, the Broomfield chapter leader quit abruptly, and Jean agreed to take on that role for five years. She also became a Trainer and participated in several events that raised funds that still benefit the chapter. She passed the leadership torch to others in 2011, but continued to tell stories. In fact, the first Jefferson Academy kindergarteners who heard her stories graduated from high school last year.

Jean told stories in the same relaxed, conversational style that she heard from the old Kansas farmers when she was growing up. She told her stories in a way that let you “see” what she was telling. Joe Hayes may have written “The Gum Chewing Rattler,” but “Grandma Jean” made it her own. Jean Barnett was more than a wonderful storyteller; she was a warm, caring, and compassionate friend who will be greatly missed by all who knew her!

The family plans a Memorial Service sometime near Mothers Day, but no details are available now.

*[Many thanks to **Denny Thompson** and **Tom Tjarks**, who knew Jean better than most, for sharing their memories of her.]*

TRAINING SCHEDULED for AUGUST

Our next training class has been scheduled for the dates shown below. As usual, all four sessions will start at 1:00 and end by 4:00 every day and will be held at Brunner Farm House. We will make flyers available closer to the start of the training, but start now to think of people you know who would become good storytellers and start encouraging them to contact Wynn at wynnmill@comcast.net. August is a vacation month for many people, but last year’s August class produced a bumper crop of active new tellers in part because we were able to get them into classrooms immediately after training. Remember that participation in ALL four classes is required, but we are usually able to make alternate arrangements if one class must be missed. The training dates are

- **Thursday, August 6**
- **Monday, August 10**
- **Thursday, August 13**
- **Monday, August 17**



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

- Patty Franklin-April 3
- Sandy Hopper-April 16
- Liz Ryan-April 23

STORYTELLING SHOWCASE at ANTHEM RANCH

Thanks to **Tom Tjarks** and four chapter members who also are Anthem residents, 23 listeners heard six wonderful stories on Sunday, March 8. After Tom welcomed the grandparents, a few parents, and many enthusiastic youngsters, the Spellbinders pictured below (left to right) shared some of their favorite stories:

- **Janis Lievens:** "Brer Tiger & the Big Wind" and "Fair, Brown & Trembling"
- **Sandy Hopper:** "The Belly Button Monster"
- **Mary Ann Drury:** "Darby the Tailor"
- **Ed Winograd:** "The Tsar with Goat Ears" and "The Fly"



THE POWER OF STORIES

The Longmont chapter recently developed a handout to introduce Spellbinders to a local civic club. It included the following information, which may remind all of us why we are volunteer storytellers:

WHAT WE KNOW: Sharing stories in classrooms:

- Enhances imagination, creativity, and visualization
- Enhances listening skills
- Expands world view (with stories from different cultures)
- Enhances understanding of story structure (as a basis for students' own creations)
- Enhances vocabulary and verbal communication skill
- Enhances recall and comprehension scores
- Increases interest in reading & improves reading skills
- Enhances problem-solving and critical thinking skills

OUR VOLUNTEERS also benefit. Learning the stories keeps us mentally sharp. Knowing that we are making a difference energizes us. We are treated like "Rock Stars" by our young listeners. We have more FUN than we can describe.

A BIT of TRIVIA: **Vivian Hamilton** is now our longest-serving member. She joined Spellbinders in 2007.