


Spellbinders
WWW.SPELLBINDERS.ORG
of
Broomfield, Colorado
News for June/July, 2020

BROOMFIELD SPELLBINDER STORY CIRCLE

On June 19, thirteen members convened via Zoom for a Story Circle. **Tom Tjarks** opened the session with his story of "The Love-Sick Skunk," and **Julie Toepper** shared her version of "The Freedom Bird," leading to a discussion of whether "nah nah na nah-naahh" is a taunt that children still use. **Denny Thompson** then gave us two stories for the price of one by blending "One Coyote & Another One" and "The Lion, the Bull, and the Jackal." **Vicki Tiedeman** shared an African tale—"How the Spider Got His Small Waist," and **Kathy Daniels** told the true story of Ida Lewis, the lighthouse keeper. After Kathy's story, there was an extensive discussion of the possible benefits of telling that story in the first-person, and how often that might be the best way to present an historical story. Kathy later decided that doing so made it an even better story, illustrating why our Story Circles are such a valuable resource for all of us. The input from the participants who did not share a story enriched this discussion and the ones that followed. Everyone is welcome—with or without a story to share. Those who joined this meeting as "listeners" were **Karen Green, Sandy Hopper, Ellen Klement, Kay Landers, Judy Lloyd, Larry Riesberg, and Ed Winograd. Linda Brotman-Evans** tried valiantly to join us, but was never able to make herself heard (probably for the first time ever).

NEXT STORY CIRCLE

DATE: Friday, July 31, 2020

TIME: 1:00 – 3:00 PM

PLACE: VIA ZOOM!!!

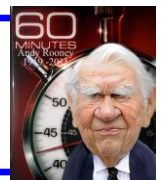


We also briefly discussed the possibility of a future meeting (either a Story Circle or a chapter meeting) in person outside the Brunner House wearing masks and observing social distancing requirements. Because of concerns about the heat from 1 to 3 in the afternoon, any such meeting in July or August might have to be later in the day. Stay tuned for more on this possibility.

We also briefly discussed the importance of improving our virtual storytelling as we are not likely to be able to tell in person in schools for some time after schools reopen. Part of this discussion focused on use of appropriate (and non-distracting) backgrounds during virtual telling. Several members indicated that they will not return to classrooms until an effective vaccine is available.

Wynn Montgomery wrapped up the storytelling with "A Twisted Pig Tale," his retelling of "The Three Little Pigs" adapted from a book Kathy referenced at one of our last "live" chapter meetings.

"The best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person." —Andy Rooney



TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

Despite the on-going challenges that we and our teachers faced at the end of the school year, our annual Teacher Survey drew numerous responses, and (guess what?) the responses were positive. Thirty-nine teachers responded (roughly a 37% response rate), providing some feedback on 21 members (84% of our 25 active classroom tellers). All respondents said that having a Spellbinder in their classroom helps them “achieve their academic goals for their students.” The only teacher who did not ask for the same storyteller next year is changing grades herself and wants a storyteller. The survey asks the teachers to rate (on a scale of 1-5, with 5 meaning “Strongly Agree”) if having a Spellbinders storyteller visit their classroom “improves/enhances” students’ skills in nine specific content areas. The results for our chapter are shown below:

<u>AREA</u>	<u>2019-20</u> <u>BSB AVG</u>	<u>2018-19</u> <u>SB AVG</u>
• <i>Listening skills and ability to pay attention</i>	4.97	4.84
• <i>Imagination, creativity, and visualization</i>	4.95	4.85
• <i>Worldview</i>	4.92	4.76
• <i>Understanding of story structure</i>	4.77	4.61
• <i>Recall and comprehension</i>	4.74	4.47
• <i>Vocabulary and verbal communication</i>	4.74	4.60
• <i>Reading skills and interest</i>	4.64	4.42
• <i>Problem-solving (critical thinking) skills</i>	4.62	4.30
• <i>Writing performance</i>	4.21	3.80

As shown, our chapter’s averages are equal to or higher than last year’s average for all Spellbinders chapters in ALL of the nine areas. The survey also asks the teachers to explain why and how Spellbinders support their classroom efforts. Most responded with general statements of appreciation, but many offered specific examples, some of which accompany this newsletter as a separate attachment. Unfortunately, the format in which we received the survey results makes it quite difficult to disaggregate the feedback for each storyteller. Putting this data in a useable format for individual tellers is time-consuming, but you should receive yours soon. For now, just know that all of you and your work are deeply appreciated.

YEAR-END STATISTICS (2019-20)

At the end of every program year (June 30), we compile a report summarizing our chapter activities for that 12-month period. This school year ended for most of us much sooner than usual, but the report shows that we still accomplished a great deal. We told stories in 120 classrooms in 18 schools, six senior facilities, and a few other venues (e.g. summer camps and Sunday schools) reaching more than 5,300 individual listeners and a total audience of more than 21,000 students and seniors. All of those numbers are slightly less than last year, and the total audience is far smaller (only 59% of last year’s total) primarily because we were not able to visit schools or senior centers for last quarter of the year. Only the addition of an extremely active group of new storytellers and the willingness of some members and teachers to experiment with virtual storytelling kept the numbers from dropping further. At this point, we may face a similar challenge at the start of the 2020-21 school year and need to look for creative solutions

NEWS FLASH: Saturday, July 11 (7:00 PM) Two Lauras (Packer & Deal) tell stories for adults via Zoom. COST: \$12. Details and registration at <https://laurapacker.com/storytelling-from-home/zoomconcert/>

VIDEOS/COPYRIGHTS

As social distancing requirements continue, more and more storytellers (professional and amateur alike) are turning to sharing their stories virtually. As this happens, there is increasing concern about possible copyright violations. It is a complex issue, and all of us must be more careful. In response, the Spellbinders Council of Trustees, with the support of its Training Team, has issued the following policy:

Spellbinders Volunteer Storytellers must not record stories that are subject to copyright protection. If Spellbinders Storytellers are sharing stories via video conferencing and classroom teachers choose to record a "virtual session", the stories used in the session must not be subject to copyright protection. Spellbinders recommends that volunteers share classic folk tales, fairy tales, historical stories, fables and other stories classified as public domain. No matter what the source of the stories shared virtually, Spellbinders Storytellers should always cite the source and author.

I HEARD THAT:



*"One of my students became very, very interested in a character (Anansi the spider) from a story we heard. He went to the library and got a picture book with Anansi and insisted I read it to our class. They were gasping and hollering just seeing the title! 'We know him, we know him!' Everyone loved the story, and my student who brought it in was so proud. [This comment from a 3rd grade teacher is just one example of the feedback we got in response to the annual Teacher Survey. Her storyteller, **Julie Toepper**, (and all of us) can be proud, too. We do have an impact!]*

BIRTHDAYS ON THE HORIZON

The following members have birthdays in July and August. Best wishes for a day filled with good friends, good food, and good stories...and many, many more enjoyable years

DAN KEENAN (07/12)
DENNY THOMPSON (07/26)
ELLEN KLEMENT (07/30)



JANNY DARBY (08/03)
MARRTON DORMISH (08/08)
JANIS LIEVENS (08/21)

Let's think positively about our current situation. As storytellers, we know and must remember that Rapunzel met her true love while "quarantined"!

