



of Broomfield, Colorado News for APRIL, 2024

MARCH MEETING

On March 22, eighteen Broomfield Spellbinders and one guest (Betsy Crosby from Boulder Valley Spellbinders) gathered at Brunner Farmhouse for our monthly meeting. **Julie Toepper** opened the meeting by asking attendees for to introduce themselves by answering this question: "What was your first car?" Everyone had interesting and extended anecdotes about those first cars, most of which were from the 1960's, with a couple from the 1950's. The oldest car mentioned was a 1947 Nash Coupe. **Ed Winograd** then shared a story entitled "Two Hired Hand Brothers" from a book of Chinese folklore called *The Lady in the Picture*. **Janet Rope** then shared "Juan Bobo's Pig"--a Puerto Rican story from *More Ready-to-Tell Tales*.

After a break for socializing and yummy snacks provided by **Tiffany Painter** and **Ed Winograd**. **Julie** reminded all to fill out our Data Sheets for **Vicki Tiedeman**. She also encouraged all to register for Spellbinders Annual Meeting on April 13, which we are co-hosting, and announced that **Janis Lievens** has volunteered to serve a 3-year term as a Trustee for Spellbinders National. She also noted that Tiffany and Wynn have volunteered to serve on a Task Force that will work to improve Spellbinders website.

Wynn Montgomery then discussed "Crafting and Telling Personal Stories." He noted that he and Denny had done a similar session in April 2021 and that a number of members had shared personal stories at the May meeting, which was our first in-person post-Covid gathering. Time was short, so Wynn told no stories, but quickly reviewed his handout (copy attached). He observed that the "first car" tales were interesting anecdotes, but not truly stories. **Scott Carrico** challenged this point, but there was not enough time for a thorough discussion of the differences. Perhaps in a future meeting.

Denny Thompson commented that the Arvada Center has a class on memoir-writing every quarter, but it fills up fast. He also recommended memoirs by Doris Kearns Goodwin and David Sedaris. **Kathy Daniels** reported that she has received a lot of new books for our Library. She will give details at our April meeting.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- **APRIL 13 (8:30-3:00): SPELLBINDERS ANNUAL MEETING-SOLD OUT**
- **APRIL 19 (12:45-3:00): MONTHLY MEETING @ BRUNNER FARMHOUSE
[PROGRAM: Deborah Crabbe on "Using Poetry to Enhance Your Storytelling"]**

RESOURCES FOR STORYTELLERS

- **Illinois Storytelling** has created quite a website. Credit for design and content goes to well-known national storytellers Megan Wells and Janice Del Negro. The website already contains many storytelling resources. More will be added soon. The link to the website is <https://storytelling.org/>. The direct link to the Resources page is <https://storytelling.org/resources/>. There you will find bibliographies and other resources. The "Stories to Tell" button leads to Janice "gently retelling" public domain stories so that YOU can tell them. There are only two stories now, but Janice promises more in the future,
- **Story Preservation Initiative** (www.storypreservation.org) is the website of a "story-based K-12 educational non-profit" that was founded in 2010. The portion of the website that is perhaps most useful to Spellbinders storytellers is the "K-3 Learning Lab" which contains recordings of stories for that age group told by noted professional tellers.
- **A Source for Brief Stories:** We all know that storytellers need a few short (1-3 minute) stories in their "bag of tricks," but finding them can be difficult. Some of Aesop's fables will work, as will some Nasrudin tales. Another source is a book that is aimed at teachers and parents—Pat Nelson's *Magic Minutes: Quick Read-Alouds for Every Day*. That title tells you that the book is not aimed at storytellers, but many of the stories are as easily told as read and can be easily learned.

"STORYTELLING" at CU's CONFERENCE ON WORLD AFFAIRS

One of the panel discussions at this year's Conference on World Affairs (CWA) at the University of Colorado was called "**Incredible Reach of Storytelling.**" The panel of four experts was to discuss "how intriguing stories inspire, persuade and motivate us when sharing culture, promoting science or advocating for change." It seems a clear indication of how broad the term "storytelling" has become that none of the four panelists is an oral storyteller. The panel consisted of a television producer/screen-writer and author; a Native American muralist; a communications director for a wildlife conservation organization; and an author and facilitator of poetry and journal therapy. During the hour-long session, there were few references to the kind of storytelling that Spellbinders do. Danielle SeeWalker did discuss the importance of oral transmission of Native American stories, but said that she prefers to tell stories through her murals. She also said that it is fine for non-natives to tell Native American stories—if they do so with respect. At one point, the panelists were asked to name their favorite myth or metaphor, and the answers included the myth of Icarus, indigenous stories, and Hans Christian Andersen's "The Nightingale." There was a long discussion of the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on storytelling and the consensus was that such use of AI is "lazy" and counter-intuitive—because good storytelling comes "from the heart." There was a brief discussion of the "cathartic effect" of personal storytelling and a discussion of how to help others become good storytellers. That latter discussion suggested that we help best by being good listeners who give the teller our full attention, withhold judgement and ask questions. In my opinion, the best advice offered during the session was that a storyteller should know why s/he wants to tell a particular story. Ask "What is my intention? What do I want my story to do?" For me, it was time well-spent. -Wynn Montgomery

SEE YOU AT THE ANNUAL MEETING on SATURDAY, APRIL 13 @ 9:00 AM!!

DON'T FORGET YOUR NAME BADGE & WATER BOTTLE.

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