



DISTRICT ONE StoryMasters

StoryMasters: Reflecting Our Sunday Afternoon

StoryMasters' meetings are like being wrapped in a warm cozy blanket. When our Toastmaster of the Day, **Miyo Yamauchi**, signed into our November Zoom meeting early, expecting to see nobody, she was surprised by a warm welcome from our first-timer guest, **Dave Soltura**, from the Philippines. Our water cooler chat became even more pleasant and lively when new and old friends from six different time zones joined. On November 14, we were treated to five fine stories.

Bharat Sangekar – Do The Math

Bharat Sangekar wanted a beast as his pet, one like his former street dog in India—a big, black, bull-headed dog. But, married with two kids, he knew where he stood . . . at the bottom of the pecking order! That's how a cute clean fluffy—and expensive—puppy, *Cookie*, arrived in his house in a fancy basket. Bharat's 3-year-old kid proudly nicknamed him Smart Cookie. However, Cookie kept proving himself far from smart by eating Bharat's dirty socks every day. The real comedy of errors started when Cookie was lost for 48 hours during a camping trip. Bharat is going to bring this tale to his upcoming humorous speech contest. Good luck, Bharat!

Jill Vanderweit – My Voice Mentor

As a typical 23-year-old junior artist, the only things **Jill Vanderweit** had were a lousy job with a killer commute, a tiny apartment, and no confidence. But when she bought a \$100 Victorian piano, her artistic nerve got stimulated and she signed up for voice classes with opera singer Liz Daniels. When Liz took Jill under her wing, Jill started feeling intellectually, mentally, and physically content. Liz not only guided Jill on her journey as an artist, but also shared organic vegetables that she got from her other students. Knowing how accomplished Jill is, it was inspiring to find out how far she has come. Have you had someone who brought out your talent when you didn't even know you had potential?

Hiba Hamdan – Surviving War-Ona Part II: Living a Fun-demic!

If we can't control it, don't fight it. Just survive it. That's what **Hiba Hamdan** taught us last year during her speech about how to survive War-Ona (*made-up word: War of Corona*). Going through the pandemic was already challenging for many of us, but even more so for Hiba. She broke one foot, and then, before she'd even thrown away her crutches, she broke the other one! What eased her excruciating pain was laughter. Her husband and relatives kept her in good spirits with humor. Reflecting on her situation, she suggests we need to sanitize our negativity out of our life and be happy.

Pieter Severynen – The Poet

When the poet saw his bestselling book at a shabby used-book store in Amsterdam, with a price tag of a quarter, he felt anger. At the time, one could buy a decent meal with a quarter, but still, it was insulting for him as an important poet to find his work on sale so cheaply. Swallowing his ire, he left the store. A little later, a young student stepped into the store, clutching a quarter and hoping to find a book for the night. As he was about to leave the store disappointed, he found the little book of poems. That night, the student forgot about being cold and hungry. The poems gave him joy not only for the night but for his whole life. **Pieter Severynen** retold the beautiful story of the poet and the student, written by Dutch author Ko van der Laan.

David Chittenden – My Father's Red Convertible

"David, do you want a car? I found a car for you. It's only \$400. Do you have enough money?" When **David Chittenden's** father asked him, David jumped on it right away. What a steal! It was a 1956 red convertible, surprisingly in perfect condition, with paint and top cloth that looked new. How could it be only \$400? Later, David discovered that it was his father's car. When his father was young, he couldn't afford a red convertible. Now he had money, but his wife vetoed his buying a flaming-red convertible for himself—so he bought it for his son!

Meeting functionaries included Toastmaster **Miyo Yamauchi**, General Evaluator **Jacki Williams-Jones**, Timer **Mallery McMurtrey**, Wordmaster/Grammarians **Elizabeth Smith**, and Evaluators **Harold Gee**, **Tina Tomiyama**, **Lin Van Gelder**, **Catherine Magruder**, and **Margaret Mitchell**.

Next meeting is December 12. (GUESTS, [RSVP FROM HERE](#))

UPCOMING STORYTELLING EVENTS

Many intriguing storytelling events keep coming up. Check them out on [our event page!](#)

NOV 21 Tellabration!™ 2021

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkd-iprzsHdRnie6S7_MuW4K5IGUyg6r2

3:00 PM PST / 6:00 PM EST

Category: Storytelling concert

Location: Zoom

Cost: Free

Annual celebration of storytelling! Sponsored by [National Storytelling Network \(NSN\)](#) and the [Storytelling Association of California \(SAC\)](#) with tellers from the Sacramento Storytellers Guild (SSG) and Storytellers of San Diego (SSD).

NOV 28 StoryMasters Storytelling Café

<https://thestorymasters.org/storytelling-cafe/>

3:00 PM PST / 6:00 PM EST

Category: Storytelling swap

Location: Zoom

Cost: Free

StoryMasters Storytelling Café is a safe place where you can share your work of art. Bring one whether it's still a work in progress or a finished product. Everybody is welcome!



NOV 30 True Tales Live: Transformations

<https://thestorymasters.org/event/true-tales-live-20211130/>

4:00 PM PST / 7:00 PM EST

Category: Storytelling concert

Location: Zoom

Cost: Free

At True Tales Live, people tell stories from their own lives, reflecting our community's diversity and common ground. The experience uplifts, inspires, and binds us together, in laughter and tears.



Check out more events at: <https://thestorymasters.org/events/>

Disclaimer: Events are posted as a service to our members, friends and the storytelling community. Posting is not an endorsement.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What It Takes to Be Great

Once upon a time, there was a young violinist named Edwin who dreamed of playing with all the finest orchestras.

One day, he was playing a concert, and he noticed his hero in the front row.

The man's name was Walden Strauss III, and he was the greatest violinist of his day.

Edwin loved this guy's music so much that he listened to it every day and even had a poster of Mr. Strauss on his bedroom wall.

So naturally, Edwin played his heart out, hoping he would impress his hero.

After the concert, Mr. Strauss came backstage for a few minutes, and Edwin asked, "How was I, Mr. Strauss? Do you think I have what it takes to be great?"

Mr. Strauss looked down his nose at him and said, "No. I don't think you have what it takes to be great."

Edwin was devastated. But he persevered.

He continued practicing all day, studying all night, and he spent as much time in the company of accomplished musicians as he could.

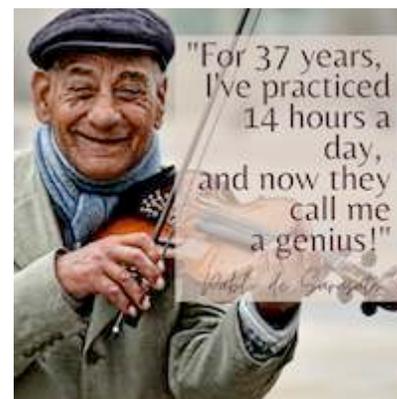
Many years later, Mr. Strauss came to another one of his concerts, and when the show was over, he went backstage and complimented Edwin on his performance.

"You don't remember me, do you?" Edwin asked. "When I was young, you told me I would never achieve my dream of becoming a great musician."

Mr. Strauss shrugged. "Oh well. If you let one person's opinion discourage you from chasing your dream, you never would've achieved it anyway."

Catherine Toops

<https://medium.com/@catherinetoops/a-short-story-about-self-trust-commitment-for-creatives-who-care-so-much-it-hurts-5f186795b2b9>



MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT

Mallery McMurtrey Receives Distinguished Toastmaster Designation

In 2016, Mallery knocked on StoryMasters’ door for the first time. Being a brand-new Toastmaster, she wasn’t eligible to join the club yet, but she was determined. After speaking at many other clubs as a guest speaker, she joined StoryMasters the following year and got her storytelling journey ball rolling. The rest is history.

Congratulations, Mallery! Watching your growth and accomplishments in the past five years have been truly inspiring.

Mallery McMurtrey, DTM



Well done, Mallery! What a delight to see our StoryMasters Club President earning this honor this year. Your committed work with youth programs is an inspiration to us all.
Tina T

Congratulations on attaining your DTM, Mallery! Your willingness to lead and help others to grow exemplifies the meaning of servant leadership. StoryMasters is fortunate to have you.
Margaret Mitchell

Congratulations, Mallery. I know how hard you worked for this. You deserve those three initials behind your name! DTM: Determined to Master!
The highlight of my Toastmasters experience has been working with you and the Youth Leadership Program. You dedicated time and effort for three years. You touched many people’s lives and I know they all appreciate you.
Kathy Garr

Mallery, great job on earning your first DTM! It is a challenge, a lot of work, but you mastered it all with grace and beauty. I can't wait to see what you do next!
Jacki W-J

Susan B. Anthony, leader of Women getting the Right to Vote said, "Failure is Impossible!"
I believe she was talking about you, Mallery!
Congratulations, Aprille

Congratulations, Mallery, on earning your DTM. It is a huge accomplishment and you should be very proud of yourself. I know personally that earning your DTM is a long, demanding, and arduous task. So kudos to you for your perseverance and patience. Thank you for embodying the spirit of Toastmasters’ support and service and for being such a powerful Toastmaster ambassador. You have always been so positive and kind to me and your energy and enthusiasm is contagious.
My only caveat, please don't let the DTM go to your head; keep being Mallery!!
Jon White

Congratulations Mallery, Ms. Amazing Distinguished Toastmaster, DTM!
Hiba

Some people are as reliable as sunshine, and like sunshine, they brighten the world with their presence. That's Mallery! BIG CONGRATULATIONS on achieving DTM—you deserve every accolade. BIG LOVE. Lin

Dear Mallery,
Congratulations and much respect on earning your DTM designation. Although I am relatively new to StoryMasters, I can see and appreciate your dedication and leadership in our group. Big Up! (That's Jamaica-speak for respect and admiration!)
Ashton C. Clarke

DTM Mallery, the sky is the limit and you are soaring higher and higher.
You are a shining, sparkling star and an inspiration to us all. Congratulations on your latest achievement, your DTM. We are thrilled for you and proud of you.
Hugs, Antoinette xo

Miyo Yamauchi at Our Stories 2021

Five storytellers from four different time zones—California, Maryland, India, and the Philippines—shared the virtual stage of the International Community Storytelling Festival in Maryland on October 21. Each story was told in a different format: anime, theatrical performance, personal story, folktale, and children's book. Our own **Miyo Yamauchi** shared her personal story, *"I Know It All."*

Questions asked by the emcee, Irene Bantique, helped the audience appreciate the stories even more by learning each teller’s storytelling journey.



Host, Irene Bantique interviewed Miyo Yamauchi
Photo credit: Jorge Sciupac

STORYTELLING STUB

Carry Across and Beyond

Metaphor, simile, and analogy — all of them use comparisons, but have you thought about the differences?

Analogy traces back by way of Latin to a Greek word meaning "proportionate." That word has a root in the Greek word logos, meaning "reason." It compares two things to help explain an idea or concept.

Simile comes from the Latin word similis (meaning "similar, like"). It's a phrase (usually using the word "like" or "as") that compares one thing with another thing to make a description more vivid.

Metaphor is a word or phrase that takes on the meaning of something else. The word comes from Greek, combining 'meta' (beyond) and 'phero' (to carry). Metaphors carry meaning across from one thing to another.

Here are some examples from William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* (1597).

- Analogy: "What's in a name? That which we call a rose, by any other word would smell as sweet. So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called."
- Simile: "Is love a tender thing? It is too rough, / too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn."
- Metaphor: "But soft! What light through yonder window breaks? It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!"

Intriguing, isn't it? Next time pay an attention to how your words help your audience visualize your story!

References:

- [Analogy vs. Metaphor vs. Simile \(Grammar Rules\)](#)
- [Metaphor, Simile, and Analogy: What's the Difference?](#)
- [The Essential List of 90+ Metaphor Examples in Literature and Pop Culture](#)
- [The words that help us understand the world](#)

EDITOR'S NOTE

Are We Friends?

It was one of the regular weekend afternoons from pre-pandemic era—a zillion years ago. I was sitting at the WholeFoods Wine Bar in Venice, people-watching. Then I noticed a familiar face passing by. Where do I know him from? My eyes were locked on him. Oh, I know! He's the actor from the Hangover. Even after I found my answer, my eyes were still stalking him. Soon he sensed my gaze and started staring back at me. Neither of us was smiling, though. We just kept staring at each other until he disappeared from my sight.

The word, "parasocial," is getting lots of attention lately. Parasocial is a one-sided relationship. You feel as though you know the person really really well just because you've been watching them on TV. The more you watch, the more you learn about them, and the more you're convinced you KNOW them. But in reality, they're not even aware of your existence. I didn't have a parasocial attachment to the actor at the WholeFoods, but I totally get what it feels like. If I see James Corden on the street, I may act like we're long time friends. Will I??? Nah, I'm not that delusional.

Over the years, parasocial relationships have evolved because of social media. Between individuals and celebrities, relationships are not limited anymore. Bloggers, influencers, and gamers are thrown into the mix. When viewers get a "like" or reply from their favorite persona, their presumptions become more solid. According to the [report by Bradley J. Bond](#), during the pandemic, parasocial thinking has evolved even more because our social patterns changed drastically. Isolation became unbearable. Craving for social interactions, people immersed themselves in social media more than ever. Soon, they started feeling close to those content creators much more than their actual friends. In fact, when my friend saw a YouTuber on the street, she started talking to him, believing she knew him. After watching his videos for months, she couldn't tell what was reality at the moment.

Having parasocial relationships is not necessarily a bad thing. Parasocial interactions sometimes help people's mental health. I often notice people sharing appreciation towards their favorite personas for helping them to get through tough times.

The other day, I attended an in-person storytelling event for the first time in a long time. When I saw my friend, I called her name . . . and realized that we were not "real" friends. I've seen her in virtual storytelling circuits, but it didn't mean she knew of my existence. Fortunately, she had heard of me and we acted like old friends.

Is the definition of "friends" changing as the virtual world is expanding? Wait! Is James Corden my friend?

— Miyo Yamauchi

