



DISTRICT ONE StoryMasters

Quintessentially StoryMasters!

StoryMasters' March meeting demonstrated a quite remarkable range of storytelling, with quintessentially captivating performances by three members and two guests. We had a full house despite the time change and the Academy Awards the same day as our meeting.

Note to StoryMasters members: **our next meeting is April 16, 2023.** The second Sunday in April falls on Easter Day, so the Board voted to postpone our meeting by a week.

Anna Ziss-Patton – Scanned Past

Anna Ziss-Patton started off our meeting by reading from her new work-in-progress, "Scanned Past," with fond and funny memories of her late mother Evelyn and some of her Eastern European relatives. Although Anna had only finished the first draft of her story a day before, her superb writing, melodious voice and skillful use of humor kept her audience enthralled.

Pieter Severynen – The Beauty of Life

Arborist and eco-warrior **Pieter Severynen** went to the very roots of storytelling with a marvelous myth from the country of Georgia, "The Beauty of Life." In this rarely-told fable, our hero quests far and wide for eternal life, discovering only after centuries of almost-bliss that his love for his mother and his country was truly everlasting.

Hiba Hamdan – Half the Truth, and Not the Truth, So Help Me God!

StoryMasters co-founder **Hiba Hamdan** opened our eyes and our minds in her engrossing lecture-demo, "Half the Truth, and Not the Truth, So Help Me God," neatly dissecting a National Geographic article about Beirut, Lebanon, her homeland, and showing us how the editor's poor choice of photographs created a false impression of the country. Hiba even displayed alternative, whole-truth photos in her well-crafted slideshow.

Frank Traynor – CD Warriors Begin

Four-time Moth StorySlam Champion Frank Traynor kept us rolling in the aisles with his brilliant personal story, "CD Warriors Begin." Nerdy little pre-teen Frank longed to be a superhero, flinging razor-sharpened CDs to slice the heads off nasty villains. We laughed till we cried. Come back soon, Frank!

Michael Cormier – Mother's Day

From its earliest days, StoryMasters has been chosen by savvy Toastmasters contestants as a fine place to rehearse a contest speech and get feedback. We were delighted to have a chance to review **Michael Cormier's** International Speech entry, "Mother's Day." While we can't tell you anything about it, because it's a contest speech, we'll be cheering for Michael to win!

Meeting functionaries included Toastmaster **Jon White**, General Evaluator **Margaret Mitchell**, Timer **Catherine Magruder**, Wordmaster/Grammarians **Cynthia Moore**, Videographer **Tina Tomiyama**, Evaluators **Lin Van Gelder**, **Lee Amatangelo**, **Jill Vanderweit**, **Ashton Cynthia Clarke**, and, for the final evaluation, all our members and guests.

Next meeting is April 16, 2023. (GUESTS, [RSVP FROM HERE](#))

STORYMASTERS NEWS

Kudos to Camile and Lee!

Area F1 Tall Tales and International Speech Contests were held virtually on Saturday, March 23.

Camille Miller and **Lee Amatangelo** represented StoryMasters and their professionalism (the story structure, vocal variety, delivery, and engagement) made us proud! Lee will advance to Division F International Speech Contest on April 29. Please mark your calendar! Camille and Lee, Thank you for sharing your talent!

UPCOMING STORYTELLING EVENTS

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

Apr 5

Frank: Arrested

<https://glendunzweiler.com/shop/ols/categories/event>

7:00 PM PT

Category: Storytelling Concert

Location: 2510 W Sunset Blvd

Cost: \$12

Honest stories. No Rules. A storytelling show produced by Glen Dunzweiler is finally back after the pandemic coma. The theme is "Arrested." There will be stories you don't want recorded.



Apr 8

Precious Story Moments with Aunt Brandee

<https://thestorymasters.org/event/precious-story-moments-with-aunt-brandee/>

7:30 PM PT

Category: Storytelling Concert

Location: Lyric Hyperion

Theater and Cafe

Cost: \$12

A storytelling show of true, hilarious, and cringe-worthy stories told by several storytellers, and your host, Brandee Stilwell.

StoryMasters' friend, **Frank Traynor**, will be one of the storytellers!



Apr 11

It's Funny Now!

<https://thestorymasters.org/event/its-funny-now-20230411/>

8:00 PM PT

Category: Storytelling Concert

Location: The Crow

Cost: \$15

The funniest comedians and storytellers in LA telling true stories that they wouldn't wish on anyone else. It's a must-watch show in Santa Monica produced by **Frank Traynor**.



Apr 16

VAMP: Just Deserts

<https://thestorymasters.org/event/vamp-just-deserts-202304/>

8:30 PM PT (Doors at 8pm)

Category: Storytelling Concert

Location: Bar Lubitsch

Cost: \$10

Justice. Revenge. Schadenfreude. We love to see a good comeuppance. Sometimes the waters of fairness get muddy... but who's to say what's right and what's wrong. Right?



Apr 29

Division F Tall Tales & International Speech Contests

<https://district1toastmasters.org/events/save-the-date-division-f-tall-tales-international-speech-contest/>

Details are coming soon.

Please mark your calendar for now!

Lee Amatangelo will be competing in Division F International Speech Contest. Stay tuned for more information.



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.

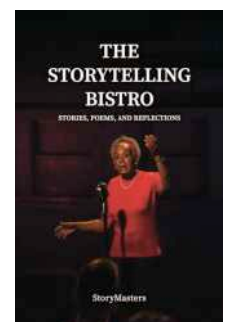
STORYMASTERS NEWS

The Storytelling Bistro Is Out!

Have you checked out our book, [The Storytelling Bistro](#)?

Fifteen diverse StoryMasters offer true personal stories, fanciful fiction, poems, and thoughts in this captivating collection of short works, perfectly sized for tossing into your bag to read at the beach, park, waiting in a business lobby, or enjoying a few quiet moments at home. We hope you enjoy these stories as much as we do!

The copies are available on Amazon: <https://a.co/d/7XPoTcT>



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I Say Chicken. You Say What?

“He looks like a penguin.”

Is it a compliment or an insult? What does it mean? Is he in a black & white outfit, waddling, heavy, or noisy? According to the study published in *Open Mind* by psychologists at the University of California, Berkeley, even single words have different concepts and associations depending on who’s sharing them, which tend to lead to disagreements, miscommunications, or arguments. The study found significant variability in how people get different ideas about even basic animals. The probability that two people selected at random will share the same concept about penguins is around 12%. That’s because people are disagreeing about whether penguins are heavy, presumably because they haven’t lifted a penguin.

Having different concepts is not a problem, though. The problem is that we tend to believe that everybody has the same concept. If I use “a chicken” as an analogy, I may mean the person is restless or forgetful, but not everybody gets it because each one of us has a different perspective. Especially when the words are conceptual, like love, philosophy, and freedom, the gap can become more apparent. Over-assumption based on your own little world can be dangerous.

When you use an analogy next time, step back, think a moment, and take another look from different angles.

References:

- [Research in Open Mind: Latent Diversity in Human Concepts](#)
- [UC Berkley News: I say dog, you say chicken? New study explores why we disagree so often](#)



EDITOR'S NOTE

If you really want it, you'll find a way!

Once in a while, I open an old wine from my “wine cellar” which is just a wine rack lying on the kitchen floor. I cannot open them for somebody’s special occasion because the humidity and temperature control doesn’t exist and the quality cannot be guaranteed. You never know if the quality is good or bad until you taste them. It’s a gamble. That’s why I open them randomly from time to time for no apparent reason. Today is one of those days I feel like opening a 10-year-old wine, but as soon as I stab the corkscrew, the cork starts crumbling. Uh-oh. The cork must’ve been dried out! I’m pretty good at rescuing a crumbly wine cork. It requires lots of patience. Stop, reposition, pull, stop, reposition, pull...if you repeat the process slowly, it’ll come out eventually without damage. But the repositioning method is not working for this wine. The more I stab, the more the cork crumbles. Disaster looms on the horizon.

Ten minutes later, I’m staring at the opened wine bottle with crumbled cork bits floating inside, wondering what to do. How can I remove the dust? The strainers won’t work. The mesh is too rough. Should I throw it away? NO! I didn’t keep this wine for 10 years just to waste it! I want to taste it! What should I do? What can I do? Suddenly, I got a flashback.

It was Boxing Day (a holiday celebrated after Christmas Day) morning, in Vancouver, Canada. My Canadian sister from different parents, Shelley, and I were staring at the empty coffee pot. After a food-coma evening, we desperately needed coffee. We had coffee beans, but coffee filters were nowhere to be found. How could it happen? Yeah, right...we forgot to stock them. I don’t remember if it was a snowy or rainy day, or if we were just being lazy, but going out to get a filter was not an option. What should we do? What could we do? After a hopeless moment, Shelley’s face brightened up. She took paper napkins, folded them neatly, and ta-dah! We had a filter. It wasn’t perfect, but it did the job.

When you really want something, you’ll find a way.

That’s what I learned from the Boxing Day miracle.

After intensive contemplation, suddenly, I get an a-ha moment. Tea filter bag it is! Tea filter bags are single-use, natural paper tea infusers for loose leaf tea. I can cover the lip of the bottle with a bag and strain the wine. What a perfect solution! Am I genius or what?! —Oh, how was the taste? Well, it wasn’t heavenly, but it wasn’t too bad. Either way, I’m content with the result.

Ding! I get an email notification. My application for the Vancouver Fringe has been accepted. Is it a coincidence? I don’t think so.

— Miyo Yamauchi

