

Inland Valley Storytellers

Summary of meeting on Oct. 13, 2020

Angela provided the Inland Valley Storytellers with her professional Zoom account so we could watch and listen to stories during this pandemic. I saw 15 faces or avatars: Ron Evans from Claremont's Pilgrim Place, Angela Lloyd from Victorville, Chris & John St. Clair from Ontario, Ron Chick from Riverside, Elisabeth Anghel from Riverside, Juan Carlos Boada from Claremont, Mary Ann Ruiz from Chino, Julia Spriggens from New York!! (one of the advantages of Zoom meetings, though she had to stay up later than we did), Nick Smith, now of North Hollywood and still working for Pasadena Public Library from home, Adrian Lowery, from Riverside, Stephanie Towns from ?, and John Geddes from Upland? and me, Barbara Rugeley from Claremont. Virginia Stark from La Verne got to listen to the stories but her computer has no microphone or camera so we couldn't see or hear her.

Angela gave the Zoom host controls over to John St. Clair, to help him get practice before the Nov. 10 Joint Tellabration!™. (More announcements at the end.)

STORIES

We heard 7 good stories, many with October themes.

Ron Evans began with, "As each person is unique, so also is each year." 701, 1620, 1778, 1945, but 1956 was special: He graduated from high school AND met his wife-to-be. He lauded the high school: 2 indoor pools, marvelous teachers, 3000-seat auditorium, hosted the Great Lakes Shakespeare Festival each year, and the Cleveland Orchestra, with Dr. Zell as conductor, came each year to perform. Dr. Zell announced that the third work they would perform had a lot in common with what happened the day before, Oct. 6, 1956: Don Larson pitched a perfect game in the World Series. And when Mozart wrote music, each time he wrote a perfect piece!

Juan Carlos treated us to another history lesson. It was on Oct. 10, in 1810, that Crown Prince Ludwig married Princess Teresa with all Munich citizens watching the ceremony in, what is now called, Teresa's Meadow. From 1811-1900's the Oktoberfest was celebrated in Teresa's Meadow, to promote the Bavaria's agriculture and horse racing. Now it is the citizens who put on the Oktoberfest.

Elisabeth Angel shared a story from Rumanian folklore with a bit of a moral. You have heard the proverb, "Necessity is the mother of invention." A father was stranded in the forest with a cart full of the wood for the family, but the cart was broken. He tried to fix it, and finally made it home. When his son asked, "How did you fix it?" He replied, "The Necessity helped me fix it." Years later, the son is in the same situation, stranded in the forest. He called out, "Necessity! Necessity! Come help me!" But no one came. He finally fixed it himself. When he got home, he told his dad, "I called to Necessity, but nobody came." "Then what did you do?" asked his father. "I fixed it." His father said, "That was The Necessity."

Ron Chick told a tale set on the Mississippi banks about a High Town girl who loved a Low Town boy, but her parents forbade her to see him. (This has never worked.) They got to be together in a deserted area, but as they were holding each other, Sarah felt an icy hand touch her. Then she saw an old gravestone that read, "Daniel Walker, Oct. 31, 1850-Oct. 31, 1870." "How sad! He died on his birthday!" said Sarah. They ran away from the stone and entered "The Sick House," where she used to play as a child. But an icy mist came over the area and followed them as they ran into the house and up to the attic. Johnny's hand found something

cold, an urn, that read "Sarah Law, Oct. 31, 1850 - Oct. 31, 1870." "That was my aunt. I was named for her." He took the ashes and poured them over the grave. Lo, they saw 2 figures rising, dressed in clothing from the 1800's. The figures kissed...and smiled.

Nick Smith: This story comes from near Chapel Hill, North Carolina, in swamp country. The tradition there was, you were called, "Mr. So and So" if you were respected, but by your first name, if you were liked. Ransom Cuff was called by his full name: too many people were in debt to him, so had to work for him to pay off the debt. His favorite activity was frog hunting, but he liked to spear them with a little pitchfork, and then watch them die. He and 2 men, one a native Injun, were frog hunting, when Ransom Cuff demanded, "Go there! That's where the big bull frogs lie." The Injun said, "No, that is the Place of the Kangabozzy, the Father. No, I won't go." "I don't believe in that mumbo jumbo. Git out of my boat." And right there in the gator-filled swamp, the Injun got out and swam away. The second man stayed in the Bayou Skimmer and did as Ransom Cuff told him. But the boat would not move. Suddenly, he saw Ransom Cuff slide out of the boat caught on a giant pitchfork. He sank down on that fork and was gone. The youth went back to the Sheriff and tried to tell him what happened, but the Sheriff didn't investigate. Next morning that youth had 3 home-baked pies on his front porch. He found the Injun and asked, "What kind of place do you have there in that swamp?" The Injun replied, "You were too close to the Place of the Kangabozzy, the Father...the Father of Frogs."

John St. Clair told a tale heard at the Tejas Storytelling Convention last weekend. Wisdom and Luck were arguing: Who was the most important? "If luck would stay out of the picture, one young man would have a long and wise life." So, Luck agreed. That young man did have a wise life, but every time he succeeded, something would happen to ruin it and he'd be chased out of the town. He decided to try to win the Princess who would not talk. If he failed, he would be beheaded. He told her wonderful tales, but she would not talk. "What am I going to do?" Then he saw a beautiful silver menorah and got the idea to tell this story to the Princess.

THE STORY: A man wanted to give his daughter a beautiful wedding but was short of funds. He went to his neighbor and asked their servant, "I have a favor to ask: May I borrow a bowl? I'll return it tomorrow." The servant decided to give him a bowl. When the man returned the bowl the next day, he said, "Thank you, and last night your bowl gave birth to this other bowl, and since it comes from you, it's yours too." Surprised, but pleased, the servant took both bowls. A week later, the same thing happened with a pot: it gave birth to another pot. The Lady of the house was told what had happened. A week later, the man returned to ask, "May I ask a favor: my daughter is getting married. May I borrow a Menorah? The Lady thought, "I'd love to have 2 Menorahs." But the man didn't return the Menorah. "What happened to my menorah?" "Oh, it died," said the neighbor. They consulted a judge to settle the dispute. The judge said, "If you believed that a bowl gave birth to a bowl and a pot gave birth to a pot, then a Menorah can die. I rule in favor of your neighbor, there is no menorah to be returned to you because it died." The Princess smiled but said nothing. Then came a second story about a tailor, a carpenter, and a scholar who argued over ownership of the wooden statue they created. The Princess yelled, "She belongs to the scholar. He gave her life." The young man said, "I think no one owns her." The Princess thought, "I think I could live with this man." But the guard hadn't heard her speak, so he took the young man to his execution. So Luck said, "OK. Let me step in now." As luck would have it, the Princess looked out her window and saw her man going to his execution and ordered it stopped. They were soon married and lived happily ever after, as luck would have it.

Adrian Lowery On the news today, Adrian had heard of a mother who was disgusted with her son's bullying other kids at his expensive private school. "I make fun of them because they don't have designer clothes like I do." She told him, "OK, you shop at thrift stores and use loaner gear for your sports for a year." Adrian had seen a similar experience on a House Build with her church in Mexico. A little five year old pink hoody girl came with her mother to a house build. "Will we have jet skis there?" "No," said the mother. "Will there be a swimming pool?" No, said the mother. On the House Build, Little Pink Hoody painted the bottom 2 feet of boards and a man lifted her up on his shoulders so she could pound in her first nail. At the end of the trip, Little Pink Hoody asked her mom, "Can we go there for vacation again? Can I bring my toys to give the children?"

Stephanie Towns said it was her first Zoom event and she is looking forward to Tellabration!TM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next month, on November 10 at 7:00 PM, we will have a Zoom joint Tellabration!TM instead of a regular story swap. We are co-producing the joint Tellabration!TM with Do Tell Story Swap of Sonoma County. Everyone needs to pre-register for this event in order to get the Zoom link. Go to the IVS website at inlandstorytellers.org/JointTellabration.html in order to get all of the information needed to pre-register. This is a free event.

To learn about other Zoom events, including one with Ron Chick performing, go to: inlandstorytellers.org/links.html

Barbara Rugeley

IVS scribe