



NEWSLETTER

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Our Next SOCO Meeting

Our next SOCO meeting will be on **May 13, 2017** at 10:00 a.m. in St. Matthias' Reading Enrichment Room. St. Matthias is located at 1582 Ferris Rd. in Columbus.

A Professional Storyteller in the Making

Once upon a time a young girl enjoyed listening to the books her mother would read to her and when, wonders of all wonders, the printed word made sense to her and she could read on her own she was always seen with a book or three. Two or so decades later, the young girl, now a young woman, had become an elementary teacher. She enjoyed sharing books with her students as she invented different voices for the characters, added details to the stories that were not printed on the page, and even used puppets from time to time. She also worked with her students to write their own versions and variations of favorite tales as well as encouraged them to write original stories. And, of course, their stories were always shared with others. To her delight, many created character voices or asked to use the puppets when they shared their creations!

Fast forward another three decades and this now middle aged woman was facing retirement. She knew she would miss her students and the opportunities to collaborate with her colleagues. She also knew she would drive her husband crazy if she didn't have an outlet for talking since he was continuing to work full time and would only be home in the evenings and weekends. So many things she could have chosen to do with her time... But the answer came from the school's music teacher, Julia, whose mother was a professional storyteller and member of an organization called The Storytellers of Central Ohio (SOCO). So, our retiring teacher contacted Julia's mother and in short order became a member of SOCO. She found an organization of wonderfully talented and very supportive group of folks.

With their encouragement, she began to make "cold calls", sent out mailings and stopped at day care centers and senior retirement centers for the personal touch. And, to her amazement, she began to receive offers to come and do something she loved to do! Her first year, 2014, she told at 25 venues -most of which were paid gigs! Through continued networking and reaching out to new potential clients, she has already surpassed her 2014 total this year - and it is only the end of April!

As I'm sure you have realized by now the "professional storyteller in the making" is me, Teri Lott. I feel so blessed to be able to do something I enjoy so much and that brings joy to others. And, receiving a bit of money to help supplement my retirement income doesn't hurt either. As long as I stop purchasing new puppets! I hope that if you have been thinking about becoming a professional storyteller, this article will offer you encouragement. The first step is easy: join the Storytellers of Central Ohio and come to our monthly meetings. You'll get to know us and it will become easy to share stories with our supportive, encouraging group of fellow tellers. After that, the skies the limit! You won't regret it! I certainly haven't :) **Teri Lott**



Central Ohio Folk Festival

Saturday, May 6th & 7th

Once again the Storytellers of Central Ohio have been invited to tell at the Central Ohio Folk Festival. Here is the list of the tellers:

Teri Lott
Frank McGarvey
Julie McGhee
Roy Nichols
Melody Tolle
&
Bizzie Vunderink
Larry Staats will MC

Storytellers for Opening Day Ohio Village - May 27

12-12:30 _____ Cathy Jo_Smith____
1:00-1:30 _____ Julie McGhee____
2:00-2:30 _____ Joyce Geary____
3:00-3:30 _____ Roy Nichols____
4:00-4:30 _____ Frank McGarvey____

CUMBERLAND RIVER STORIES

Joy, my wife, and I were blessed to be able to attend the Third Annual Cumberland Falls State Resort Park Storytelling Festival, March 17-19, 2017. The event occurred in the hills of southern Kentucky, a stone's throw from the Tennessee State line, just west of I-75 at Corbin, KY, about 250 miles from Columbus. The Lodge which houses the Festival sits on a ridge high above the Cumberland River. The Falls are just below as the River makes another oxbow turn; they are world famous because it is the only place in the Western Hemisphere where you can dependably (weather conditions being conducive) see a "moonbow" every month. Check it out, put it on our bucket list.

The Festival featured three professional Storytellers; some of you will know them well. Lead teller and organizer was Stephen Hollen. "Pastor" Hollen claims to be a Baptist minister but though he tells countless falsehoods it is difficult to distinguish the truth from fictions that flow from his lips. He claims to have roots in the Cumberland of Kentucky but now lives in Beavercreek, OH. He is a great storyteller.

Pastor Amy Yeary-Holmes, a serving Methodist minister whose parish is in Johnson City, TN, was an equally adept teller. She shared a

variety of family and historical stories professionally and with élan. I should temper this positive review with a reminder that she was winner of the Liar's Competition last year; the traditional prize for that win is a ceramic crock of cow manure.

Representing West Virginia was the third professional teller, Suzi Whaples. Her stories featured tales of the hill folk of her home state; that includes Joy and me.

There were opportunities for participation by all with open-mike each evening and a "liar's contest" at lunch time on Saturday, open to all. The prizes remained the same. There were about a hundred attendees who came from states around the area but mainly Kentucks. The price is reasonable: for registration, ALL Meals, two nights lodging, and a world of fun - \$149.00 per person. The meals, a bounteous buffet, are in the first floor restaurant of the lodge, excellent country staples and views out over the river. The audience was all ages; some of the stories were adult because of their intellectual level, certainly not because of sex or violence.

The Festival will occur again next year, March 16-18, 2018. You can make reservations now. Parks.KY.gov or 1-800-325-0063

Bill Myers



The Mayflower