

# Inland Valley Storytellers

Tales told on 2/11/2020

We were 15 storytellers and listeners gathered to hear and tell stories on Feb. 11, 2020: Barbara Rugeley, Chris and John St. Clair, Jayne Sjodin, Juan Carlos Boada, Lillian & Louis Sergio, Paul Bublin, Ron Chick, Ron Evans, Tom and Aynn Freeman, Carolyn and Adam Gordon, and John Geddes.

**Thank you to our several hosts,** Paul Bublin with lemonade and wonderful homemade chocolate chip cookies, Tom and Aynn Freeman, who brought peanut butter fudge balls, Barbara who brought Some Crust bakery cookies (and forgot the Starbucks traveler of decaf coffee) and someone else who brought a wonderful cream cheese with jalapeno jelly topping and crackers. Who brought that, the Gordons? It was quite yummy. Thanks to all.

## **Introductions:**

**Paul** asked us to introduce ourselves and tell something interesting that happened to us recently. He started with announcing he just retired and had a party with 600 people. He'd worked over 40 years at Glenkirk Church in Glendora. He's still working the administrative part 20 hours a week, while they search for a replacement. He'd rather be doing the construction work: more satisfying at the end of a day.

**Ron Chick**, a member of 5 story guilds, told how he became a Resource Specialist "by luck." **Adam Gordon** spoke of seeing his first bald eagle in California. **Carolyn Gordon** visited Nottingham, England, and dared to rent a car and drive on the "wrong side" to see the Bronte house. **Louie Sergio** celebrated his 69<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary last week. **Lillian Sergio** marveled that she achieved 90 years recently! **Juan Carlos** said there is a little fox that waits for him to return from work and acts playful with him. **Juan Carlos** feeds him grapes (ala Aesop). **Tom Freeman** spoke of a friend who claimed to be able to channel requests to God, so he put in a desire to see a Blue Heron. Shortly thereafter a bird flew out: a Golden Eagle, almost as magnificent. **Aynn Freeman** said her highlight is "being married to Tom." Then she spoke of their wedding day almost 40 years

ago, when she forgot some flowers and left the altar to get them, to return to a standing ovation, so relieved were the attendees. **Jayne Sjodin** spoke of taking her solo helicopter test and nailing the flight plan. **John Geddes** enjoyed hearing his 15-year-old granddaughter sing the National Anthem at a large gathering of athletes. **Barbara Rugeley** was excited to say she has a new grandson. **Ron Evans** remembered viewing from the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro, 58 years ago. **John St. Clair** says perhaps his mother's house will be out of escrow tomorrow, providing closure after such a long time. He also mentioned his first teaching job, a first and second grade combination, a big challenge in a poor area. It almost did him in. **Chris St. Clair** spoke of their new puppy, named Sierra, so that when they come home, they can say, "Hi, Sierra."

## Stories

**Aynn Freeman** and **Juan Carlos Boaba** told a story and distributed snap dragons to us all, showing us how they appear to be kneeling and praying. It was in 1858 that a 14-year-old girl, Bernadette, thought she had an ecstasy moment, talking with a woman among the rose bushes. Her mother told her not to go back there, but she went back 14 times. The woman told her to dig to find water. The water cured a woman's injured hand. This happened in Lourdes. Bernadette became a nun and then a saint.

**Juan Carlos** heard that story from his aunt, who was one of 14 children. One day Juan Carlos' father was sliding down the staircase when his sister said, "Dad's home!" which scared him so much he fell to the marble floor and injured his ankle. By the time the doctor saw it, it appeared gangrenous. The doctor said he might die. His sister felt so guilty about scaring him that she prayed, "Please, God, let me take his pain onto me." His dad healed, though he limped for the rest of his life, but that aunt got polio and began to use a wheelchair. Wanting to be a nun, she was rejected because of her physical limitations. The aunt prayed to get out of the wheelchair, and she did, wearing braces and a crutch. On her second try to become a nun, they accepted her, impressed by her perseverance. She was loved by all.

**John Geddes** shared a book that he helped his father create, based upon his life in the military: a wonderful tribute and family archive. His father

was a great storyteller. One time in WWII he was flying in bad weather over water and had to drop to 300 feet above the water to avoid the weather, using instruments because there was no visibility. His father said that he felt the hand of God on his right shoulder. Another time, after an explosion, the joystick between his legs was the only thing that saved his future children when a piece of metal came flying at him. In the Korean war he served under a man so loathsome and sadistic that John's father lost confidence in himself. The man was eventually expelled from the Navy, but the damage had already been done. John's mother nursed his father back to mental and physical health. Last year he died at 97.

**Louie Sergio** says he likes to tell "anecdotes." This time he talked about trends of the 1950s: atheism, golfing, and hot pink! When Abraham sat on the bench outside the temple instead of attending services, his friend Tevia asked him, "Is it true what they are saying? That you have become an atheist?" No answer. The next day, Tevia asked him again, and he said, Yes. "Well why didn't you say so yesterday?" Answered Abraham, "Say I was an atheist ON THE SABBATH?"

3 bearded old men play golf, each having trouble but the last one gets a hole-in-one thanks to an eagle. Moses turns to Jesus and says, "God, I hate playing with your dad."

3 sons treat their mother to a pink birthday gift: a Cadillac, an ermine, a parrot. The mother says, "The parrot was delicious." The son exclaims, "You ate it? It was rare and spoke 5 languages." "Then why didn't it say something?"

Barbara Rugeley told a Johnny Cake story, also known as Gingerbread Man, using puppets and her new storytelling apron.

**Juan Carlos Boaba** told of a math teacher who had a poster recording 10 multiplications of 9. Ah, but the last was incorrect and all the students tittered and finally pointed out his error. But the teacher explained, "I got 9 right and you point to the one error. This is what life is like, unless you are nicer to others. Focus on the good, not the bad, in people."

We had good companionship and good stories this night. We need a volunteer to bring refreshments to the March meeting.