

## **The Tellabration!™ Story**

In 1988, Tellabration!™ was born. This event, dedicated to storytelling and story listening, was the brainchild of J.G. Pinkerton. J.G. was a board member of both the national and CT storytelling organizations as well as a CT storyteller. His vision was to create a fund-raising event that would also introduce new listeners to storytelling. That first year, TELLABRATION!™ took place in six towns across Connecticut. The following year, Texas and Missouri joined in producing Tellabration!™. Since that beginning, Tellabration!™ events have been held across the United States and around the globe. Venues have included public parks, public libraries, theater stages, senior citizens' centers and virtual events. Wherever a Tellabration!™ happens, audiences discover the delight of story listening.

**Want to produce a Tellabration!™ of your own? Here's a guide for you.**

### **What?**

What does an evening of storytelling for adults include? Choose the theme, target audience, and type of stories to share. You could plan a program of personal narratives, folktales, or a variety of genres. You could focus on stories of gratitude or stories of mystery. You might tie stories to historical events that happened in your local area. Anticipate what your potential audience might enjoy hearing.

### **Who?**

You can choose to invite well-known professional storytellers to perform or feature members of your own organization or storytelling guild. You can choose to present a combination of professional and community tellers. Decide in advance if you plan to pay the performers, volunteers, technical help, venues, etc. Make a budget to include payments and also expense items like programs, snacks, and beverages. Make a list of possible financial sponsorships with local businesses, look into possible grants, and other fundraising opportunities. You may want to have ads in a program. The program needs to be designed, and printing costs should be included in the budget. If you plan to sell tickets to the event or ask for audience donations, prepare a convenient way to handle ticket sales.

### **When?**

When Tellabration!™ events began in 1988, the night of storytelling took place on the Friday prior to Thanksgiving. However, many sponsoring organizations in the last few years have chosen to hold their Tellabration!™ event on another day in November. The National Storytelling Network will not designate a single day for these events but encourages you to schedule a day and time in November that works best for you.

### **Why?**

The main goal of Tellabration!™ is to introduce new listeners to storytelling. In addition, your gathering can collect money and make a contribution to a local non-profit organization or to a storytelling organization of your choice. Each sponsoring

organization can determine if they might like the event to be a benefit performance, using the power of story to support worthy causes. The event brings people together and shares the power and joy of storytelling.

### **Where?**

Choosing your venue is an important decision. Consider the size of the audience you expect to attend, the availability of sound and video production equipment, and accessibility issues. Also factor in the cost of scheduling the venue. If you opt to have a virtual night of storytelling, then having someone with technical expertise with ZOOM or other online platforms will be important.

### **Production Guidance**

NSN recommends that sponsoring organizations consider purchasing a copy of the Storytelling Event Production Guide that has been compiled by our Producers and Organizers Special Interest Group and is available from Amazon. This guide provides advice about every aspect of producing a storytelling event. Use this QR code to purchase the guide from Amazon.



### **Promoting Your Event**

Each sponsoring organization is encouraged to provide the following information to the NSN Office so that we can include information about your event on our Tellabration!<sup>TM</sup> webpage:

- Date and Time:
- Featured Tellers:
- Venue (or if virtual, link to the organization):
- Ticket Cost (if there is a charge)
- Sponsoring Group or Organization:
- Contact Person's Address, Email and Phone number
- If you have developed a poster or flier, upload a copy with your message.

Send to:

Email: [info@storynet.org](mailto:info@storynet.org)

Phone: 1-651-703-8191

## **A Note about Tellabration!™ Trademark**

Tellabration!™ has been trademarked by the National Storytelling Network. We will continue to use this trademarked logo on the NSN website, but sponsoring organizations are free to design their own logo for their event. If you choose to use Tellabration!™, please include the ™ after the word in any publicity you produce.

## **Tellabration!™ Proclamation**

Sponsoring organizations have complete control over the content of their night of storytelling, but we ask that all events begin with the reading of a Storytelling Proclamation. An updated proclamation follows:

In the name of storytelling  
(day of the week, date of your event)  
Is hereby proclaimed to be

**Tellabration!™**

**The worldwide event of storytelling**

As J. G. "Paw Paw" Pinkerton once said:

*May what the tellers share bring joy to many people and may the listeners come to know that... through storytelling,*

*we can draw closer together in peace... and in friendship... and in love.*

We celebrate the connection that stories give us.

**Let the stories begin!**



J.G.  
"Paw-paw"  
Pinkerton

Some of the sponsoring organizations we have visited adapted the proclamation to their locale, specifically mentioning the area and significant historical events tied to the location.

Brief Tellabration!™ Guide updated June 17, 2024.