MOST IMPORTANT TIP: Relax and have fun! Everybody loves a good story and you are doing your community a service by telling this one. Without you, it might have been forgotten. And we can’t have that!

What Makes a Story Compelling to Hear

- The story has a beginning, middle and end.

- It hooks listeners with something really interesting. Jump right in. If it interests you, it’ll interest them.

- Consider why you chose the story. The “why” will help you decide what to tell and what’s not relevant. A lot of storytelling is deciding what NOT to include. Sometimes the breed of cow matters (Holstein or Guernsey); sometimes a cow is just a cow.

- Let the story tell itself as much as possible. Stories shape themselves naturally. What happened, when, to whom…Include juicy details – usually in chronological order – that lead us logically and with some suspense (“…I wonder what will happen next…”) to...

- An ending that reveals, surprises, inspires, provokes thought, and satisfies. If you can picture yourself closing the book after a sentence -- that’s the end.

A Bit of Advice

- Be yourself. If you’re a quiet, thoughtful person, tell your story quietly and thoughtfully. If you’re excitable, use lots of gestures and exclamations, that’s good, too.

- Don’t memorize. Picture it. Remember the story as if it happened to you. Recall the images as if they were experiences or as if you were watching them unfold on a screen. Describe what you see.

- Shorter is better.

- Repetition works.

- If you’re enjoying and appreciating the story, your listeners will too.

- We want you to sound as good as possible, so relax and feel free to make multiple attempts to say things the way you would like.