



STORYTELLING: IT'S AS NATURAL AS FALLING OFF A LOG

Tips for Great Storytelling from Rebecca Rule

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.
- You may bring notes, but we will ask you to not read directly from them. We will piece your answers together later, taking out many of the "ahs" and "ums," plus any mistakes or false-starts you may make.
- ***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.***

