

In the age of AI, Tik Tok and the pervasiveness of social media the ancient art of Storytelling is making a comeback.

SATURDAY, Sept 21, Spring Grove Village Park, noon—6pm. springgrovestorytelling.org

The Spring Grove Storytelling Festival, Sat, Sept 21, 2024 will feature professional and amateur storytellers telling their stories of adventure, hope and humor, face to face, person to person, without a need for screens, cell phones or other modern, high tech distractions.

The festival, in its third year, is inspired by other outdoor storytelling events around the country, that regularly draw large crowds. Spring Grove this year is expecting 300 attendees. In the past the Illinois Storytelling Festival (1984–2006), of which the current iteration is an offspring, regularly drew 2000 from (14) states to the same village park of Spring Grove. Storyteller and EMMY Award—winning author, Jim May, has returned as artistic director.

From noon to 6pm, four stages under large canvass tents present award-winning storytellers from Chicago Land and around the country in an outdoor Chautauqua-like setting. Their will be food trucks and room for families to wander.

There are separate stages for families, adults and an open mic so that attendees can tell their own stories with encouragement from emcees and suggested topics like “my favorite memory of grandparents telling me stories,” funny family episodes, and perhaps, passed down through the generations, stories of hardship, heroism, and lost fortune as well as of tenderness and heroism. Some of the best stories are shared on this “Open Mic,” stage.

PRE—FESTIVAL MASTERCLASS

Master storyteller and award-winning author, Loren Niemi, of Minneapolis, will conduct a pre-festival master class, 9:00am—11:00am Saturday morning, for those who would like to study, in-depth, storytelling, writing, and story creation. There will be an opportunity to tell and be critiqued at the “open Mic” portion of the festival (optional) later in the afternoon.

A brief partial list of storytellers presenting:

Noa Baum presenting A LAND TWICE PROMISED, AN ISRAELI WOMAN’S SEARCH FOR PEACE (90 min one-woman show)

America’s foremost deaf storyteller, Peter Cook, of Princeton University, will be telling in ASL (American Sign Language) with an interpreter.

Moth champion, Nestor Gomez, telling humorous and heartfelt stories of his and his family’s immigration from Guatemala to the US.

Beth Horner, NASA story consultant and trainer.

Jefferson award-winning actress, director and storyteller, Megan Wills, will be telling, in first person, Mary Magdalene.

And local youth and elder tellers as well—some (30) storytellers in all.

(In depth bios and interviews available)

For all tickets for class and festival proper and more info go to springgrovestorytelling.org

or purchase at the door.

For more details and interviews contact artistic director, Jim May, jimmaystories@gmail.com, 815-382-5264.