

Fraternal Connection

Please share with members!

Lodge Secretary's Newsletter

wfla

Western Fraternal Life Association

Fraternal Department

October 2012

Success story steps by Lori Silverman



The second part in a three-part series by Author Lori Silverman, “Capturing Compelling Stories in their Spoken Form,” is enclosed. While these steps to capturing success stories about your lodge are not a requirement, they can be a very helpful tool to use at your lodge meeting, after you have explained last month’s entry about using story prompts to your members. You can simply copy the attached sheet (front and back) and hand it out to attending members for discussion purposes.

This is a way to get to the heart of your lodge fraternal or community story.

Use this five-step plan to help you discover the significant moments in a member’s life, where wfla made a difference, or transformed a member or family in a significant way. These are the most powerful stories that your lodge can then agree to share with others in trying to grow your lodge - by word of mouth or in publicity such as newspaper or social media.

While Lori mentions that it’s important to audiotape the story, this can be easier than it sounds. She uses a \$10 tape recorder to record the spontaneous client stories. She turns on the speaker function on her telephone and places the tape recorder next to the speaker. It will save you a lot of time when it comes to crafting your lodge story. You can also use a FlipCam (video camera) and transcribe the story later. Be sure to tell the member in advance that you will be tape recording the conversation.

Youth Writing Contest

This year's theme for the Youth Writing Contest is "Why is volunteering important to you?" Ask your youth ages 8 to 16 to tell us about their volunteer efforts in the lodge, schools, clubs, sports teams, or community. Share your volunteer experiences, and explain what makes them worthwhile to you or others. Also, what is your favorite volunteer activity and why?



Prizes include cash, winner's photo in the *Fraternal Herald*, and the entry posted on www.wflains.org and our wfla Facebook page. We may also tweet the winner news.

Check out our lodges on Facebook

In case you are considering beefing up your social media strategy this year, here are the wfla lodges currently on Facebook.

Check these out before establishing your own:

Lodge No. 108, Denmark, WI

Lodge No. 389, Western, NE

Lodge No. 242, Owosso, MI

Lodge No. 225, Bannister, MI

Keep in mind that Facebook continually changes its visual layout and some of your initial photo uploads may no longer be immediately visible but in tab sections. You will need to have a lodge member monitoring this site to be sure it is constantly up to date.

Tips for Facebook pages: when sponsoring local activities, be sure to include your Facebook site so local residents know where to find you. Be sure to keep current photos and activities uploaded to keep interest and excitement for potential members. One WI lodge created business cards with their Facebook address and a square Quick Response (QR) code on the back for quick phone access to their Facebook page.

NCSML is now accepting record books

The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library is now accepting lodge record books, such as secretary minutes, or older lodge-related materials written in Czech to add to their collection. Please have a lodge officer contact David Muhlena, Library Director, at 319-362-8500, x202, if you have a donation, questions, or concerns. Also, you are allowed to access your donated material whenever you wish – all that's required is to contact the library. This goes for any lodge that has minutes or items that they want to preserve.

Remember to "Like" us on Facebook

So far, wfla's Facebook page has 141 Likes. At 150, 200, and 250, we will donate to the Children's Miracle Network, which helps hospitalized children obtain the treatments they need.

We are still promoting the donations for up to \$250 for every 50 "Likes." So far, we have donated \$100. Help us get to the 250 "Likes" before the holidays, so remind your inactives of this and share it with nonmember friends also!

To find wfla on facebook search wfla- western fraternal life association.

Lodge Outreach held in Tyndall, SD

On Sunday, September 16, District 6 Director Bonita Fillmore, Lodge Director Kitty Chadima, and Agent Holly Pechota held an outreach session for Lodge 80 Tyndall and Lodge 81 Wagner at the Corral Cafe in Tyndall, SD. Also present by special request were Lumir and Marcie Ruman, Lodge 71 members, to help guide the discussion from a local perspective.

Twelve members attended to find ways to rebuild activities and participation in these two lodges. A few members had not attended a meeting before.

Fortunately several members in the room were also members of the Czech Heritage group that sponsors the Tabor Czech Days Festival, so this group and the lodges decided to do two joint activities. After talks by Bonita, Holly, and Kitty, and group discussion by members, both lodges decided to do a joint Christmas party with the Czech Heritage club at 6:30 p.m. on December 2 at the American Legion. They also decided to co-sponsor a holiday food drive for a local food pantry.

The members agreed to try to keep both lodges open and active. Bonita, Kitty, and Holly will also follow up with them to help these activities become reality. Holly offered to help with a booth at Czech Days and/or the Wagner Farm and Home events next year.

Thanks to everyone who attended and helped!

Brochures available upon request

Please consider placing one or more of the wfla fraternal brochures (fraternal benefits, scholarships, etc) in your Halloween or Christmas bags for children or adults. If you would also like to add a general product brochure from Marketing, please let us know two weeks prior to your event, to allow processing time.

Prospective members often have questions about these benefits as above and beyond the commercial insurance they've heard about. They also have questions about purchasing certificates for themselves or as gifts for family members, before deciding to join wfla.

THE SECOND STEP IN TELLING STORIES: CAPTURING COMPELLING STORIES IN THEIR SPOKEN FORM

Written by Lori Silverman, Partners for Progress®, www.partnersforprogress.com, www.wakeupmycompany.com; Author of *Wake Me Up When the Data is Over: How Organizations Use Stories to Drive Results* and other books

It is my hope that you heard many stories when you used story prompts and story listening over the past several weeks in your lodge activities and with individual members. And that you have built stronger relationships as a result. So, what do you do now? How do you go about capturing the most compelling stories—those that move people to take some type of action—for use in a variety of media (online, in print, and for oral telling)?

Are All Stories Worth Capturing?

It is one thing to evoke stories out of members and staff to find out more about them and to deepen connections, to celebrate lodge successes, and to learn from various experiences. It is quite another to select specific stories to document and promote on a larger scale. Here are a couple rules of thumb when deciding which stories to formally capture. First, how powerful is the moral of the story—and, is it applicable to a wide variety of people? Does it cause people to stop, think and change something? Or is it merely nice to know information? Notice I did not make mention of the topic of the story. That is not as important as its overall message and the message's ability to make something happen. Second, does it give you goose bumps? Does it make the hair on the back of your arms stand up? Compelling stories evoke strong emotions in others. They also touch us at the level of the human spirit—something that is hard to define and measure.

When you hear stories that have both of these components, then you are ready to capture it. Remember, it all starts with story prompts.

- * Know the general key point you want to stress.
- * Identify which members or staff might have these stories to share.
- * Craft a prompt to evoke these sorts of experiences from them.
- * Have one or more individuals tell you their story. If they think of more than one story that could answer the prompt, help them determine which story best meets these two criteria.
- * Listen delightedly to it.

I Heard a Story We Need to Capture

Assume for a moment that you just heard a best practices story that has a very important lesson attached to it, one that caused you to feel both excited and relieved because it contains the answer to an ongoing problem. Now what?

1. Get permission from the individual to use their story in all forms (print, online, orally) and with a variety of audiences (with members, staff, the community at large and the media). Secure this permission in writing.
2. Set a date and time with the person to audiotape their story. The spoken word and the written word are two very different animals. By capturing the “spoken” word, you honor and acknowledge the nuances in the way that person talks and any informal expressions or jargon they use. You will get a better audio file when you do the taping over the phone (using the speakerphone function and a small tape player) rather than taping in person.
3. Prep the person. Tell the individual that you want to hear the detailed version of their story:
 - * What he/she said to someone and the other person's responses (to the best of his/her recollection),
 - * What he/she was thinking or feeling or saying to themselves as the situation unfolded,
 - * Sensory information (sights, sounds, tastes, smells, how something felt when it was touched), and
 - * Metaphors and analogies that make it easier to understand the situation.

Reinforce that you want the person to “tell you the story” rather than “describe the situation.” Do not have them write their story and read it to you. It will sound stilted because it will likely use proper grammar rather than conversational language. Also keep in mind that a story, by definition, must embody conflict. This can be a problem, an issue, a

dilemma, a paradox, a challenge or a combination of these. Emphasize this point with the story-teller.

4. Audiotape the story. Let the person talk uninterrupted. While the individual is speaking, take note of items you want to explore in further detail (such as the conflict or its resolution) or information that seems to be missing that is important to this particular situation (such as names, dates, ages, geography, weather, etc.). When the person is finished, ask the questions and audiotape the answers. Also ask the teller for his/her perspective on the key point (moral or lesson) of the story. This entire process may take up to an hour.

5. Have the audiotape transcribed exactly as it was told to you. Send a copy back to the person who shared the story. If you think of more questions to ask to capture additional details, ask them now and get the responses back in writing or by phone.

I Captured the Story: What's Next?

The final article in this series (in December) will explore how to polish a story so that it gets its message across to others so they take some sort of action as a result of hearing it. This is the primary reason to capture stories for ongoing use within and outside of organizations. Included will be an overview on how to structure compelling stories and how to include various elements that a story needs to contain beyond conflict, dialogue, sensory information, metaphors and analogies so that those who hear or read it are able to easily recall it and share it with others. This is how the best stories are able to travel from one person to another, with or without the aid of technology.

Lori Silverman is an author, professional speaker, consultant and the owner of Partners for Progress®, a firm dedicated to helping organizations think and act differently.

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