



HEALING STORY ALLIANCE, INC.
ANNUAL REPORT
2025

OVERVIEW OF OUR YEAR

This past year, 2025, was the Healing Story Alliance's third full year of independent nonprofit status. HSA has increased its outreach, collaborations, and mission driven programming. Importantly HSA is attracting both consistent financial support through ticket sales and donations and a growing audience for its programs in support of storytelling as a healing art.

Organizational Structure

With Not-for-Profit Corporate Status in New York State and Federal Recognition of 501(c) 3 status now in place as of January, 2023, the HSA Board of Directors met every few months in 2025 to oversee HSA's fiscal, programmatic, technology, and policy affairs. The Board oversees that all HSA's initiatives are in keeping with HSA's vision as a service organization and its purpose to educate the general public about the applied use of storytelling in the healing arts and professions through live and virtual public cultural programs and online literary resources.

HSA is dedicated to storytelling as a healing art and its programs promote the healing of self, community, society, and the Earth. We aspire to collaborate with other like-minded organizations.

The Board has evolved in 2025 to these current officers:

- President of Board: Heather Forest
- Vice President: Jo Radner
- Secretary: Lani Peterson
- Treasurer: Jim Brulé

Heather Forest filed our third annual 990N in a timely fashion with the IRS and a Charities Registration form (CHAR 500) with the NY State Dept of State.

The HSA Board met several times over the course of 2025 and sought to address, clarify, and act on those topics, issues, and concerns raised or discussed in monthly Advisory/Programming Meetings. The HSA Board discussions focused on

- Exploring ways to expand and energize board leadership with a view to lead HSA sustainably into the future.
- Exploring ways to expand HSA's audience and outreach with events and offerings that address current relevant needs in society for social justice.

- Exploring ways to expand offerings without increasing burnout of Advisory/Program Committee, staff, and other volunteers.
- Expanding our reach and impact by identifying other organizations which relate to our mission and with whom we could collaborate.



HSA Advisory/Programming Committee 2025 Co-chairs

Heather Forest & Elisa Pearmain

Advisory/Programming Committee Members

Lani Peterson	Penny Post
Elisa Pearmain	Jim Brulé
Sara deBeer	Mike Seliger
Heather Forest	Jo Radner
Galen Brandt	Laura Simms
Karianna Rosenberg	Noa Baum
Joe Doolittle	Lee-Ellen Marvin

The 2025 Advisory/Programming Committee was co-led by Elisa Pearmain and Heather Forest. Elisa Pearmain, as programming coordinator, oversaw the smooth functioning of HSA project sub-committees and Heather Forest implemented and marketed HSA programs. The committee welcomed new member Lee-Ellen Marvin.

HSA Project Sub-Committee Leadership

- Chair of OARS in the Water: Galen Brandt
- Chair of Kind Stories in Concert: Sara deBeer
 - Kind Story in Concert Curators:
 - Elisa Pearmain
 - Lani Peterson
 - Sara DeBeer
 - Individual Social justice themed events: Lee Ellen Marvin & Jo Radner
- Chair of Special Events: Lani Peterson
- Ticketing, Marketing and Graphic Arts Design Manager: Heather Forest
- 2025 Tech Team: Heather Forest, Jim Brulé, Lani Peterson, Elisa Pearmain, Lee-Ellen Marvin, and Noa Baum

Healing Story Alliance's Advisory/Program committee currently meets on the third Wednesday of the month from 7:00pm – 9:00pm to design and devise practical ways to implement mission driven programs aligned with HSA's purpose to *educate the general public about the applied use of storytelling in the healing arts and professions through live and virtual public cultural programs and online literary resources*. HSA's mission driven programming promotes the use of storytelling to heal the self, community, society, and the Earth.

To this end thirty-eight cultural programs were produced in 2025 including:

- 23 free OARS in the Water Programs
- 6 free Kind Stories Concerts
- 1 Special Ticketed Event
 - Broken Mirror with Anubis
- 3 Author Interviews
 - Annie Brewster
 - Dan Yashinsky
 - Louis Mehl-Madrone
- 3 Collaborative Events
 - Climate Stories with Bill McGibbon
 - Sun Day Concert with Third Act! & Eco SIG
 - Sunbrella Fundraiser with YES SIG
- 2 Workshops
 - Climate Chaos with Judith Black
 - Community Plate with Carl Schatz

The HSA Website was maintained by Heather Forest and Dot Cleveland. Media content includes an archive of *Kind Stories in Concert* and an array of available viewing tickets for past programs.

The Sustainability Committee: Heather Forest and Lani Peterson worked to assure there is sufficient financial support for the needs of the organization through ticketed events, volunteerism, and the cultivation of donations. Jo Radner took on the job of thanking donors personally via email.

- Special Ticketed Events Curator: Lani Peterson
- Marketing Manager: Heather Forest
- Donor Appreciation: Jo Radner
 - Jo now regularly sends monthly individual donation thank you emails to all donors

Administrative Staff: In 2025 Dot Cleveland continued as the HSA administrator managing bookkeeping and assisting Heather Forest with program marketing tasks. Since her hiring, Dot has accurately maintained HSA's bookkeeping on QuickBooks, produced monthly fiscal reports, maintained a monthly Mailchimp newsletter and contributed to overall program promotional outreach to listserves and Facebook pages. During Dot's short sabbatical from promotional work, Lee-Ellen Marvin temporarily stepped up and graciously managed our

Mailchimp Newsletter outreach. Heather Forest has acted as an “interim” executive director and assumed responsibility for overseeing the overall administration of the organization, the implementation of programming, program marketing, fiscal and administrative reports, and meeting agendas.

Collaborative Partner with NSN

In keeping with HSA’s initiative to collaborate with other like-minded organizations, HSA served as a collaborative partner to NSN and was included as such on the NSN Website:

NSN Collaborative Network

Organizations that work with NSN to Promote Storytelling



- As part of its commitment to supporting the mission of NSN through collaborative efforts, HSA representatives Jo Radner and Lani Peterson designed the *Healing Story* track for the NSN National Conference which took place in Atlanta, in July, 2025.
- HSA Board President, Heather Forest, utilized HSA’s experience with virtual programming and coordinated the 2025 NSN Virtual Conference which was successfully produced as part of the 2025 live National Conference
- HSA representatives, Lee-Ellen Marvin and Galen Brandt facilitated virtual Zoom meetings during the 2025 conference to build community between virtual attendees.

Our mission as stated on our website continues to be implemented!

Healing Story Alliance supports storytelling as a healing art. We provided dynamic programming and online resources to promote the healing of self, community, society, and the Earth. We welcomed everyone into our circle who is interested in the healing power of story to bring about positive change. We fostered collaborations with other groups and organizations who share our mission.

Keeping our mission central to all decision-making has distinguished the Healing Story Alliance from other storytelling organizations through our mission-driven programming and resource offerings.

Expanded Outreach

In order to provide access, education, and resources to the general public on the topic of healing story, HSA throughout 2025, worked to expand its outreach through multiple channels including:

The HSA Website: (www.healingstoryalliance.org)

- Our website has 100-250 visitors per day according to our website statistics program
- Dot Cleveland and Heather Forest have continually updated the website archives with Kind Stories program videos as an ongoing community service to our followers.
- Dot Cleveland and Heather Forest have continually updated the website with upcoming program information and easy access links to register for them.

The Mailing List

- Through repeated outreach and reminders, HSA has been growing its mailing list to now include 978 registered followers by the end of 2025. Our registered followers in 2023 were 705. We have increased our followers by 273 in 2025.

HSA Facebook Page

- As manager of the HSA Facebook page, Sara deBeer regularly updates our FB information and maintains outreach with eight other relevant FB pages. We currently have 1.3k followers, up 100 from 1.2k last year.



Please join our mailing list
to continue learning about HSA events!

Founded over 25 years ago, Healing Story Alliance is an alliance of artists and practitioners who view storytelling as a healing art. HSA currently offers dynamic programming and online resources that promote healing of the self, community, society, and the earth. We are no longer a member-based organization requiring dues. We welcome anyone into our circle who is interested in the healing power of story to bring about positive change. Join our mailing list to keep abreast of our offerings!

To Join our Mailing List Click Here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yu8btktv>

OARS in the WATER 2025

Chair: Galen Brandt

Keeping our Oars in the Water:
Gathering to bear witness to experiences
and stories of vulnerability and resilience



When a small boat meets turbulent water, the best way to maintain balance and stay upright is to keep your oar in the water. It will become your stabilizing rudder, enabling you to maintain course and steer your vulnerable craft towards safety. We are each like that small boat.

Now in its sixth year, the thriving OARS in the Water program continues to strengthen, deepen and expand its global reach in heartfelt and exciting ways. Unique among storytelling offerings in its mission and design, OARS offers all who attend a rich and meaningful experience of community gathering, honest reflection, and shared, theme-based conversation in which each person is welcomed, respected, valued and heard.

A nationwide and international family of devoted regular attendees, a steadily increasing number of new attendees, and a growing roster of dedicated co-hosts participate in online OARS sessions year-round from 7 – 8:30pm EST on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month, for a total of 23 OARS programs in 2025.

Again, this year, OARS has committed to and succeeded in increasing both the number and variety of its session co-hosts, including many drawn from outside the community. For each OARS, a pair of co-hosts work together to devise a theme that thoughtfully meets the moment and is designed to encourage both individual engagement and community discussion. Co-hosts present their theme in story, poetry, song, and musings, offer prompts for discussion in 20-minute breakout rooms, and then welcome attendees back for inspired community conversation.

This year, OARS hosts have offered themes that underscore the joy and resilience to be found in remembrance, generosity, chance encounters, youthful pastimes, delight in trying, and the mysteries and beauty of nature. In keeping with OARS' mission of helping attendees keep their oars in the water in stormy seas, hosts have spoken to meeting crossroads, quicksand and change with renewed perspective, persistence and hope.


Attendees celebrate OARS as a true family – a community of trust and compassion. Said one attendee of her OARS experience this year: “From the first time I came, OARS felt like home. I felt safe and supported at every level. In each session, OARS offers every person genuine warmth and care, a chance to participate, and a whole-hearted commitment to community-building. OARS has helped me remember where my heart is, so I can go out in the world with renewed strength to be myself and offer my gifts to others.”

Throughout 2025, OARS has honored its mission to serve as a place of comfort, connection, renewal and inspiration, and to offer its growing community welcome respite from the storms and sorrows of today’s troubled world.

Co-Hosts & Themes 2025


Jan. 8 Elisa Pearmain, Lani Peterson, (Tech: Heather): Theme: Community
Jan. 22: Laura Simms & Nancy Wang (Tech: Heather) Theme: Grief For Angela
Feb. 12: Sara deBeer & Arlene Angelmaier (Tech:Noa) Theme: Inspiration and Perspiration
Feb. 26: Elisa Pearmain & Lee-Ellen Marvin (Tech: Heather) Theme: Aging and Saging
March 12: Jim Brule & Dee Palanisamy (Tech: Lani) Theme: The Forest for Opening Hearts
March 26 Sara deBeer & Mary Jo Maichack (tech: Jim) Theme: The Roots of Remembrance
April 9 Lani Peterson (Tech: Heather) Theme: Our First Guides
April 23: Heather Forest & Nyanna Susan Tobin (Tech: Elisa-) Theme: Generosity
May 14: Joe Doolittle & Kate Dudding (Tech Lee Ellen) Theme: Smiles Remembered
May 28: Mike Seliger & Regina Ress (Tech: Jim) Theme: Signal Fires
June 11: Lee Ellen Marvin & Sara deBeer (Tech: Heather) Chance Encounters
June 25: Heather Forest & Kristin Pedemonti (Tech: Elisa) Theme: Youthful Pastimes
July 9: Elisa Pearmain & Karen De Mauro (Tech: Heather) The Language of Flowers
July 23: Jim Brule & Peter Blum (Tech: Elisa) Theme: The Mysteries of Caves
August 13: Heather Forest & Laura Simms Tech: Elisa) Theme: The Way of Listening
August 27th: Lani Peterson & Carol McCormick (Tech: Heather) Theme: Moving through Quicksand
September 10th: Liz Mangual & Bob Kanegis (Tech: Elisa) Theme: At the Crossroads
September 24: Joe Doolittle & Eileen Mark (tech: Lee Ellen) Theme: Perspective(s)
October 8: Sara deBeer & Robin Reichert (Tech: Heather) Theme: Delight in Trying
October 22: Galen Brandt & Mike Seliger (Tech: Heather) Theme: Persistence
November 12: Heather Forest & Lee-Ellen Marvin (Tech: Lani) Theme: Change
November 26: Penny Post & Karen Golden (Tech: Lee- Ellen) Theme: It's about Time!
December 10th: Sara deBeer & Vivica Deanes (Tech: Jim) Theme Giving Care, Receiving Care, Self-Care

OARS in the Water Themes 2025



OARS in the Water
January 8th
7 - 8:30pm EST

OARS: A Sharing Caring Community



Hosted by
The HSA Program Committee



OARS in the Water
January 22nd
7 - 8:30pm EST

For Angela:
Joy, grief and
dying,
a compassionate
conversation



Hosted by
Laura Simms & Nancy Wang



OARS in the Water
February 12th
7 - 8:30pm EST

**INSPIRATION AND
PERSPIRATION**



Hosted by Sara deBeer &
Arlene Angelmaier



OARS in the Water
February 26th
7 - 8:30pm EST



AGING AND SAGING

HOSTED BY
ELISA PEARMAIN & LEE-ELLEN MARVIN




OARS in the Water
March 12th
7 - 8:30pm EDT

**THE FOREST FOR
OPENING HEARTS**




Hosted by Jim Brulé
& Dee Palanisamy



OARS in the Water
March 26th
7 - 8:30pm EDT

The Roots of Remembrance

Hosted by Sara deBeer
& Mary Jo Maichack



OARS in the Water
April 9th
7 - 8:30pm EDT

**Our
First Guides**



Hosted by
Lani Peterson



OARS in the Water
April 23rd
7 - 8:30pm EDT

Generosity



Hosted by
Heather Forest
& Nyanna Tobin



OARS in the Water
May 14th
7 - 8:30pm EDT

**Smiles
Remembered**



Hosted by
Joe Doolittle
Kate Dudding



OARS in the Water
May 28th
7 - 8:30pm EDT

Signal Fires



Hosted by
Mike Seliger &
Regina Ress



OARS in the Water
June 11th
7 - 8:30pm EDT

**Chance
Encounters**



Hosted by
Sara deBeer &
Lee-Ellen Marvin



OARS in the Water
June 25th
7 - 8:30pm EDT

**Youthful
Pastimes**



Hosted by
Heather Forest &
Kristin Pedemonti



OARS in the Water
July 9th
 7 - 8:30pm EDT

The Language of Flowers

Hosted by
 Elisa Pearmain
 & Karen De Mauro




OARS in the Water
July 23rd
 7 - 8:30pm EDT

The Mysteries of Caves

Hosted by
 Jim Brulé &
 Peter Blum




OARS in the Water
August 13th
 7 - 8:30pm EDT

The Way of Listening

Hosted by
 Laura Simms &
 Heather Forest




OARS in the Water
August 27th
 7 - 8:30pm EDT

Moving through Quicksand


Hosted by
 Lani Peterson &
 Carol McCormick




OARS in the Water
September 10th
 7 - 8:30pm EDT

At the Crossroads

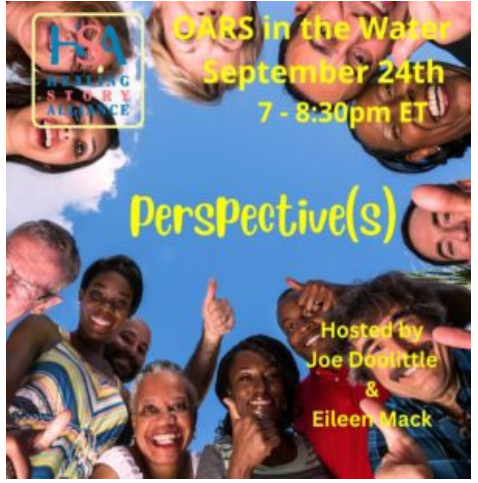
Hosted by
 Bob Kanegis &
 Liz Mangual

OARS in the Water
September 24th
 7 - 8:30pm ET

Perspective(s)

Hosted by
 Joe Doolittle
 &
 Eileen Mack




OARS in the Water
October 8th
 7 - 8:30pm ET

Delight in Trying

Hosted by
 Robin Reichert &
 Sara deBeer




OARS in the Water
October 22nd
 7 - 8:30pm ET

Perseverance

Hosted by
 Galen Brandt
 &
 Mike Seliger




OARS in the Water
November 12th
 7 - 8:30pm ET

Change

Hosted by
 Heather Forest &
 Lee-Ellen Marvin




OARS in the Water
November 26th
 7 - 8:30pm EST

It's about Time!

Hosted by
 Penny Post &
 Karen Golden




OARS in the Water
December 10th
 7 - 8:30pm EST

*Giving Care,
 Receiving Care,
 Self Care*

Hosted by
 Sara deBeer &
 Viveca Deanes



OARS GRAPHICS
 DESIGNED
 by
 Heather Forest

KIND STORIES IN CONCERT 2025

The Kind Stories in Concert Committee chaired by Sara deBeer working in tandem with Lani Peterson and Elisa Pearmain continued the Kind Stories in Concert Series in 2025 with six outstanding programs featuring a wide range of stories of kindness given or received. In October and December this series began to evolve to relevantly meet the turbulent times we are in by shifting thematically to stories of Social Justice in Action for the last two events of the series.

The leadership model of the Kind Stories in Concert programs also evolved to having individuals step forward to manage individual events instead of the Kind Stories Concert Committee managing all aspects of production. Lee-Ellen Marvin took the helm for a Kind Stories of Community in October and Jo Radner managed a Kind Stories of Social Justice in Action in December. These programs were so well received HSA has launched a new free series to be carried forward in 2026 four times a season called Social Justice in Action. We are currently investigating ways for the stories in the original Kind Stories series to be carried forward as a free healing story video service for hospital patient viewing.

THE HEALING STORY ALLIANCE PRESENTS

KIND STORIES IN CONCERT

LISTEN, SHARE, AND REFLECT ON STORIES OF KINDNESS GIVEN, KINDNESS RECEIVED

Emcee

**SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 2
7-8:30PM EST**

Community Tellers

JENNIFER MUNRO

DAVID NOVAK

LIZ MANGUAL

D'MARIE SKY-KING

DANIELLE BROWN

RENEE SPEARS EMANUEL

Free: Registration Required
Donations Welcome!

THE HEALING STORY ALLIANCE PRESENTS

KIND STORIES IN CONCERT

LISTEN, SHARE, AND REFLECT ON STORIES OF KINDNESS GIVEN, KINDNESS RECEIVED

Emcee

**SUNDAY
MARCH 2ND
7-8:30PM EST**

Community Tellers

DR. JOEL YING

ARLENE ANGELMAIER

ELAINE SHAPIRO

PENINNAH SCHRAM

GWENDOLYN NAPIER

JEEVA BAGHUNATH

Free: Registration Required
Donations Welcome!

THE HEALING STORY ALLIANCE PRESENTS

KIND STORIES IN CONCERT

LISTEN, SHARE, AND REFLECT ON STORIES OF KINDNESS GIVEN, KINDNESS RECEIVED

Emcee

**SUNDAY
APRIL 6TH
7-8:30PM EDT**

Community Tellers

JIM BRULE

RAFFINI

KIM WEITKAMP

JOHN HAMILTON

AGENT POEMS

JIM MAY

Free: Registration Required
Donations Welcome!

THE HEALING STORY ALLIANCE PRESENTS

KIND STORIES IN CONCERT

LISTEN, SHARE, AND REFLECT ON STORIES OF KINDNESS GIVEN, KINDNESS RECEIVED

Emcee

**SUNDAY
MAY 4TH
7-8:30PM EDT**

Community Teller

DENISE PAGE

NAZIA JAMAL

SUFIAN ZHEMUKHOV

JASMIN CARDENAS

CHERYL HAMILTON

Free: Registration Required
Donations Welcome!

THE HEALING STORY ALLIANCE PRESENTS

KIND STORIES IN CONCERT

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

Emcee

**SUNDAY
OCT. 5TH
7-8:30PM EDT
ON ZOOM!**

Community Tellers

LEE ELLEN MARVIN

JIM BRULE

JESSICA PISCITELLI

RISHI NIXON

Also featuring two Community Tellers who will share anecdotes of community kindness from their lives and work.

Free: Registration Required
Donations Welcome!

THE HEALING STORY ALLIANCE PRESENTS

KIND STORIES IN CONCERT

SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ACTION

Emcee

**SUNDAY
DEC. 7TH
7-8:30PM EST
ON ZOOM!**

Community Tellers

JO RADNER

NICK SMITH

ANABELLE CASTAÑO

SUE O'HALLORAN

ALANA SHAPIRO

ELLA REZNIKOVA

Free: Registration Required
Donations Welcome!

SPECIAL EVENTS OVERVIEW 2025

Chair: Lani Peterson

HSA has continued efforts to remain solvent through offering fee-based specially curated Special Event Programming to its followers through its third year of independent nonprofit status. Each special event was carefully chosen to support our mission of providing programming and resources to promote the healing of self, community, society, and the Earth. All events are priced with a sliding fee scale to ensure accessibility to people of all levels and means. Need-based scholarships are also available.

Presenters and facilitators are consulted prior to their engagement in a discussion of fair compensation, leading each special event to result in income for both the facilitator as well as for HSA. Over the course of 2025, 585 people purchased tickets to participate in one of The Healing Story Alliance's Special Ticketed Events resulting in a financial gain of \$7022 in box office sales. Every presenter in 2025 agreed to have their event recorded, resulting in a secondary viewing ticket, allowing ticket holders to view the special event at their leisure. Some viewing tickets were also made available for sale to provide ongoing access and to provide an additional income source for both HSA and the facilitators/presenters.

Types of Events

Special events can include concerts, workshops, lectures, interviews, panels, or webinars in the healing story areas of applied health and healing for the mind, body, spirit, social justice, community building, environmental/nature connections, and creativity and healing. Additionally, we have expanded our focus to collaborate with peer organizations who share some portion of our mission combining storytelling and healing. Within the 2025 time period, HSA produced eight special events, including one concert, one workshop, three collaborative concerts, and three author interviews. Below are summaries of the events and their impact.

2025 LINEUP OF SPECIAL EVENTS

BROKEN MIRROR: The Poetic Mosaic of a Broken Mind



We opened our 2025 season with a powerful fundraiser featuring the spoken word artist Anubis. In his one-hour performance, Anubis shared his one person show entitled ***Broken Mirror: The Poetic Mosaic of a Broken Mind***.

This production takes audiences inside today's contemporary Black man's heart, mind, and fears. Fusing theater and improv into his technique, The Artist Anubis grapples with

defining himself as a son, lover, and father—all while in the presence of his therapist. At times, his eloquence feels as if the artist is grasping for sanity and, at other times, his humanity. His introspection reveals the shadows and all that is light as he fights his way back to his mental wellness.

About the Artist

Luther "Anubis" D. Isler, poetically known as The Artist Anubis, is a spoken word poet, published author, cultural curator, and community cultivator. Anubis founded Harlem Bomb Shelter, a spoken-word and literary arts organization that presents open mics, showcases, workshops, teen programs, and mentorship.

Anubis is an historic Harlem Writers Guild member and an AUDELCO Award Honoree. He has published an original anthology "My People Burn and Other Visions." He is an accomplished Off-Broadway producer including "What Would You Do? A Poetry Play" in 2017 and, in 2024, completed an Off-Broadway run of his one-man show "BROKEN MIRROR: A Poetic Mosaic of a Broken Mind" which was nominated for 2 AUDELCO Awards.

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS

In the course of 2025, the Healing Story Alliance produced three author interviews bringing in a gross total of \$1,650.00 before presenter fees.

Overviews of the featured authors and their interviewers

THE HEALING POWER OF STORYTELLING WITH ANNIE BREWSTER

HSA
HEALING
STORY
ALLIANCE

*When Storytellers
Write about Healing*
An Author Interview Series
VIDEO RECORDING

An Interview with author
Annie Brewster, MD
about her book
***The Healing Power of
Storytelling***
Facilitator: Lani Peterson
Viewing Ticket \$ 16.50

Feb. 23.2025

*The Healing Power
of STORYTELLING*
Sharing Personal Narrative to
Cope with Illness, Trauma, and Loss
ANNIE BREWSTER, MD
RACHEL ZIMMERMAN

On February 23, Lani Peterson facilitated an interview with Dr. Annie Brewster, author of **The Healing Power of Storytelling**.
About the Author:

Dr. Annie Brewster is an Assistant Professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, a practicing physician at Massachusetts General Hospital, a writer and a storyteller. She is also a patient, diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in 2001. In response to the disconnection she experienced in healthcare, both as a

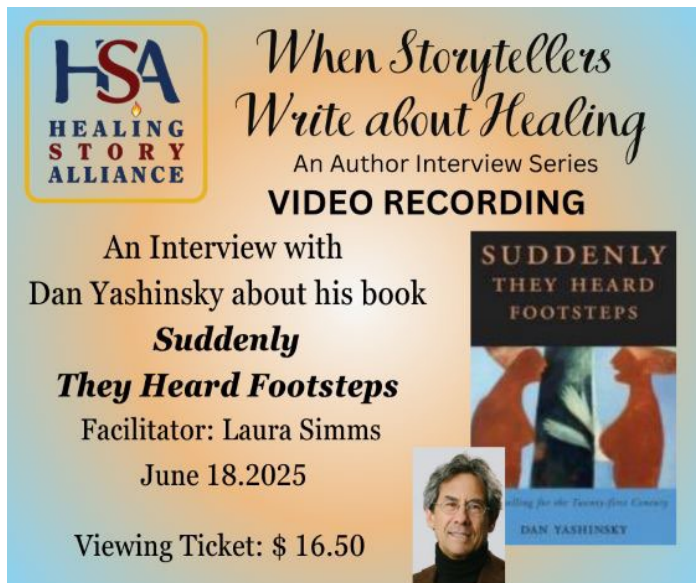
patient and a provider, and motivated by her belief in the power of stories, she started recording patient narratives in 2010. Integrating her personal experiences with research supporting the health benefits of narrative, she founded the nonprofit Health Story Collaborative (HSC) in 2013. HSC is committed to empowering patients and their loved ones, building community, strengthening patient-provider connections, and ultimately transforming healthcare through storytelling. Annie is widely published in the press and

is author of *The Healing Power of Storytelling: Using Personal Narrative to Navigate Illness, Trauma, and Loss* (2022).

About the Interviewer:

Lani Peterson, PsyD, is a psychologist, storyteller, and story coach who has been teaching about the power of story at universities, organizations, hospitals, homeless shelters, and prisons for over 25 years. She is known for telling and encouraging personal stories, has a specialty in story exploration as a healing art and change agent. She holds a doctorate in psychology from William James College, a master's in counseling psychology from Lesley University and an undergraduate degree in literature from Smith College. She has taught Effective Organizational Communications Skills for Non-Profit Leaders in the master's program at Wheelock College as well as Healing through our Stories in the Expressive Therapies master's track at Lesley University.

SUDDENLY THEY HEARD FOOTSTEPS WITH DAN YASHINSKY



On June 18th, 2025, Laura Simms facilitated an interview with Dan Yashinski, author of **Suddenly They Heard Footsteps**.

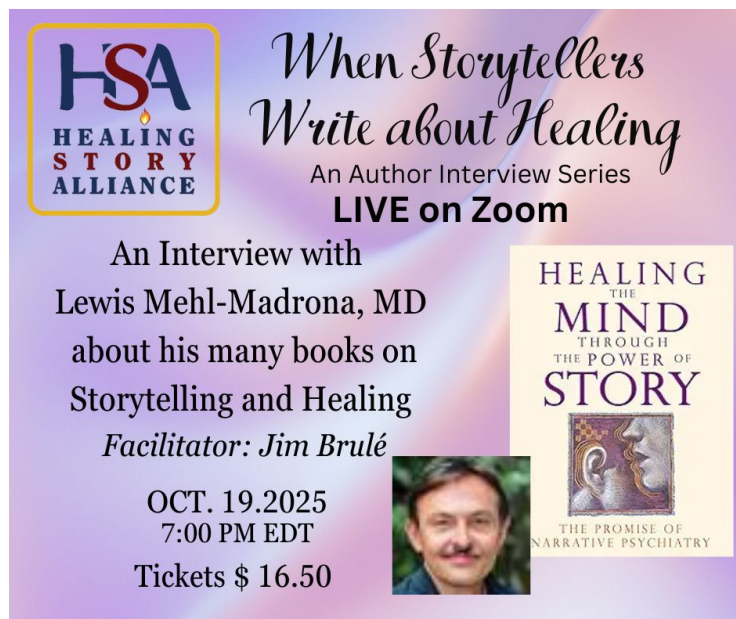
About the Author:

Dan Yashinsky is a well-known Canadian storyteller, author, and community organizer. He received, in 1999, the first Jane Jacobs Prize to honor his contributions as a storyteller to enhance Toronto's cultural life. He also received a 2009 Chalmers Arts Fellowship from the Ontario Arts Council. Dan founded the Toronto Festival of Storytelling (in 1979) and co-founded the Storytellers School of Toronto. He also began the longest-running open session in North America: 1,001 Friday Nights of Storytelling (in 1978). Dan has performed at festivals in Israel, Sweden, Norway, Holland, England, Wales, England, Germany, Brazil, Austria, France, the U.S., Singapore, and Ireland, as well as all across Canada. He is the editor of four acclaimed collections of Canadian storytelling (*Next Teller – A Book of Canadian Storytelling*; *Ghostwise – A Book of Midnight Stories*; *At the Edge – A Book of Risky Stories*; *Tales for an Unknown City*) and the author of *Suddenly They Heard Footsteps – Storytelling for the Twenty-first Century* (Knopf Canada), which won the 2007 Ann Izard Storytellers' Choice Award, and *Swimming with Chaucer* (Insomniac Press). His recent books include: children's book *The Golden Apples* (Running the Goat Books & BroadSides), which received a starred Kirkus review; and *I Am Full – Stories for Jacob* (Signature Editions).

About the Interviewer:

Laura Simms is an internationally acclaimed storyteller, writer, and educator, advocating engaged storytelling as compassionate action for personal and community transformation. In these unprecedented times of climate change and increased aggression, she offers in-depth classes coaching, and powerful performances of stories that address the most pressing issues of our times with dignity, and joy.

HEALING THE MIND THROUGH THE POWER OF STORY WITH LEWIS MEHL-MADRONA




HSA
HEALING
STORY
ALLIANCE

*When Storytellers
Write about Healing*
An Author Interview Series
LIVE on Zoom

An Interview with
Lewis Mehl-Madrona, MD
about his many books on
Storytelling and Healing
Facilitator: Jim Brulé

OCT. 19.2025
7:00 PM EDT
Tickets \$ 16.50

**HEALING
THE
MIND
THROUGH
THE POWER OF
STORY**
THE PROMISE OF
NARRATIVE PSYCHIATRY



On October 19th, 2025, Jim Brulé interviewed Dr. Lewis Mehl-Madrona, author of **Healing the Mind through the Power of Story**.

About the Author:

Lewis Mehl-Madrona, MD, graduated from Stanford University School of Medicine and trained in family medicine, psychiatry, and clinical psychology. He has been on the faculties of several medical schools, most recently as

associate clinical professor of family medicine at the University of New England. He has worked with Indigenous communities to explore how to bring their culture and healing traditions into health care. He is interested in what Indigenous cultures and practices can bring to contemporary medicine and psychology.

Lewis is the author of ***Coyote Medicine***, ***Coyote Healing***, and ***Coyote Wisdom***, a trilogy of books on storytelling and traditional healing as it intersects with modernity. He has also written ***Narrative Medicine***, ***Healing the Mind through the Power of Story: the Promise of Narrative Psychiatry***, and his most recent book with Barbara Mainguy, ***Remapping Your Mind: the Neuroscience of Self-Transformation through Story***. Lewis currently works as a residency faculty and attending physician at Northern Light Acadia Hospital and with the Family Medicine Residency at Eastern Maine Medical Center. He is also Founder, Executive Director, and Board Chair for [Coyote Institute](#).

Lewis has studied traditional healing and healers since his early days and has written about their work and healing process. He aims to bring healing back into mainstream medicine and transform medicine and psychology through Indigenous wisdom coupled with dialogical and narrative traditions. Lewis has written scientific papers in these areas and continues to do research. His current research interests center around resilience in the lifespan.

About the Interviewer

Jim Brulé is a *maggid* – a transformational storyteller, teacher, and mentor with a very diverse background: he has advanced degrees in clinical psychology and artificial intelligence. His online school – Transformational Storytelling – trains spiritual storytellers from multiple traditions to tell stories that inspire healing and spiritual growth.

Jim has launched numerous online storytelling series including “Stories for Healing” which saw over 75 stories told by over 50 storytellers worldwide, “Diving Deeply into Stories,” which each month brought stories from different cultures and traditions to an online audience, “Dancing with Dying and Living,” which examines end-of-life issues, “Welcoming the Other,” which uses storytelling to help create a visceral experience of what it is like to be the “other,” and, he led a storytelling and study group for over a year comparing Jewish, Muslim, and Christian scriptures and stories.

As a death doula, Jim works with families, individuals, and caregivers. He is a member of NEDA – the National End-of-Life Doula Alliance and he is also an interfaith chaplain in hospital, prison, and jail settings. He has served on the boards of Northeast Storytelling (as President), Artists Standing Strong Together, and (currently) the Healing Story Alliance. He has been an invited workshop leader and storyteller at the International Storytelling Festival in Marrakech, Morocco (2023 and 2025), National Storytelling Network’s annual conference, Northeast Storytelling’s Sharing the Fire, and the Kallah Biennial.

COLLABORATIVE EVENTS

In 2025 Healing Story Alliance expanded its programming to produce three events in collaboration with other mission aligned organizations.

CLIMATE STORIES: EMPOWERMENT IN TIMES OF DESPAIR

The poster features a scenic background of rolling green hills under a blue sky. On the left, the HSA logo is displayed in a yellow-bordered box. Below it, text reads: 'A Fundraiser for TH!RD ACT a community of Americans over sixty determined to change the world for the better.' In the center, a portrait of Bill McKibben is shown. To the right, the event title 'Climate Stories: Empowerment in Times of Despair' is written in large, bold letters, followed by 'An Evening Talk with Bill McKibben'. Below this, the date and time are listed: 'Sunday, March 16th, 2025 7:00-8:30 PM EST'. At the bottom right, there are two smaller portraits of women, with text identifying them as 'Plus a debrief with Storytellers/Climate Activists Judith Black & Elisa Pearmain'. At the bottom left, the ticket information is given: 'Tickets: Pay What You able \$25-\$50'.

On Sunday, March 16th, The Healing Story Alliance collaborated with Third Act to present an evening of climate stories and discussion with Bill McKibben.

Following Bill’s talk of approximately 40 minutes, Judith and

Elisa led a 45-minute debrief sharing their short climate action stories and inviting participants to cull from their broad and collective experience stories (folk, historical and

contemporary) that address some of the issues heard about. It matters who is telling the stories, and what stories are getting out into the world. Help us be a force for truth and active hope!

About the Presenters

Bill McKibben is founder of Third Act, which organizes people over the age of 60 for action on climate and justice. His 1989 book *The End of Nature* is regarded as the first book for a general audience about climate change, and has appeared in 24 languages. He's gone on to write 20 books, and his work appears regularly in periodicals from the *New Yorker* to *Rolling Stone*. He serves as the Schumann Distinguished Scholar in Environmental Studies at Middlebury College, as a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and he has won the Gandhi Peace Prize as well as honorary degrees from 20 colleges and universities. He was awarded the Right Livelihood Award, sometimes called the alternative Nobel, in the Swedish Parliament. *Foreign Policy* named him to its inaugural list of the world's 100 most important global thinkers.

McKibben helped found 350.org, the first global grassroots climate campaign, which has organized protests on every continent, including Antarctica, for climate action. He played a leading role in launching the opposition to big oil pipeline projects like Keystone XL, and the fossil fuel divestment campaign, which has become the biggest anti-corporate campaign in history, with endowments worth more than \$40 trillion stepping back from oil, gas and coal. He stepped down as board chair of 350 in 2015, and left the board and stepped down from his volunteer role as senior adviser in 2020, accepting emeritus status. He lives in the mountains above Lake Champlain with his wife, the writer Sue Halpern, where he spends as much time as possible outdoors. In 2014, biologists credited his career by naming a new species of woodland gnat—*Megophthalmidia mckibbeni*—in his honor.

Elisa Pearmain has been a professional storyteller for 39 years, including as Storyteller in Residence in the Boston Public Schools. She is the award-winning author of two collections of world tales. As a founding member of Green Hudson, and the Chair of the Plastic Reduction Committee, Elisa has helped to educate people and to ban single use plastic in her town. She is a card-cutting member of Third Act.

Judith Black has performed 14 times at the International Storytelling Festival, and venues in S. Africa, Sweden, Israel, France, and Freedom, NH. She is also a committed climate activist who has stood on the tracks trying to stop coal trains from reaching their destinations, been arrested protesting Citibank's fossil fuels investments, and fasted for 8 days to bring attention to a new fossil fuel Peaker plant in her neighborhood. With Fran Stallings and Sheila Arnold under the egis of ASST, she launched CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS: Science and Stories in a unique approach to public engagement and consequential action related to our climate crisis. Prior to death, she hopes to bind story and climate so that it creates a fire for action in everyone's heart.

www.storiesalive.com storiesalive@gmail.com

HSA
HEALING
STORY
ALLIANCE

Climate Chaos
FIRE, FLOOD, DROUGHT!
What's it all about?

LIVE on ZOOM

Tales as Tools
A Free Storytelling Workshop with Judith Black!

Registration required

Sunday, March 23rd 2025
7:00-8:30 PM EDT

On March 23rd a free follow-up workshop was offered by Judith Black providing examples and insights into creating climate stories. It was attended by 61 participants.

SUN DAY WORLDWIDE STORYTELLING CONCERT

HSA
HEALING
STORY
ALLIANCE

Sun Day
Virtual Worldwide
Storytelling
Concert
September 21, 2025
7:00pm-11:00pm
FREE
Live on Zoom

ECO
THIRD ACT

Healing Story Alliance & NSN's Eco-Tellers are joining together with Third Act! to celebrate Sun Day-- An International Day of Arts & Action for Renewable Energy.

Featuring Stories by:
Fran Stallings, Diane Edgecomb, Bowen Lee, Jackson Gillman, Elisa Pearmain, Judith Black, Heather Forest, Valentina Ortiz, and many more....

On Sunday, September 21st, The Healing Story Alliance collaborated with NSN Eco Tellers and Third Act to produce a **Sun Day Virtual Worldwide Storytelling Concert**.

Storytellers from around the country and world joined affiliated climate groups from all over the U.S., and beyond to celebrate Sun Day, a day of action to celebrate solar and wind power and the movement to leave fossil fuels behind.

SUNBRELLA AWARD FUNDRAISER

YES
Youth
Educators,
&
Storytellers

The Angela Lloyd Sunbrella Award

Fundraising
Concert!
Sept. 27th
ON ZOOM!

8:00pm EDT/
7:00 CT/6:00MT/
5:00pm PT
Emcees
Karen Golden
& Kevin Cordi

Featured Tellers:
+ Donna Washington, Laura Simms, Noa Baum, Eth-Noh-Tech, Ed Stivender, Heather Forest
Speakers: Michael McCarty, Carol Birch, Zoot Velasco, John St. Clair, Adam Mellema, Sam Payne,

On September 27th, HSA collaborated with NSN and the Special Interest Group YES (Youth Educators and Storytellers) to produce **SUNBRELLA**, a storytelling

fundraising concert in honor of Angela Lloyd to support the funding of The Angela Lloyd Creative Mentor Award in her honor.

Angela Lloyd was an accomplished, unique, brilliant, thorough artist educator, oral storyteller, musician, and visual artist who spent her life encouraging, inspiring, and mentoring children from Pre-K through twelfth grade. She was a master of improvisation whose spontaneity and wild, joyful spirit had a methodical side that made her a master educator. Angela was also a fierce advocate for the art of storytelling, who was uniquely herself with no apologies. This award is in honor of her life's work. The \$1,000 award will be granted annually to recipients who work primarily with youth, whose primary art form is live, oral storytelling

Storytellers who performed at the fundraising concert included: Laura Simms, Zoot Velasco, Noa Baum, heather Forest, Michael McCarty, Eth-Noh-Tec, Carol Birch, Adam Mellema, John St. Clair, Ed Stivender, Donna Washington, Sam Payne. Emcees Kevin Cordi and Karen Golden led the way.

The Sunbrella concert raised \$2,293.00, the total of which was donated to the memorial award.

COMMUNITY PLATE WITH KARL SCHATZ



A portion of the revenues from this event will be donated to Feeding America

Community Plate
An interactive discussion with its founder Karl Schatz.
Sunday November 9, 2025
7:00pm-9:00pm EST
on Zoom! Tickets \$25

Bringing People together over food & stories!

On, Sunday, November 9th, Kaarl Schatz, co-founder and Executive Director of Community Plate facilitated a workshop exploring the connection between building community through sharing food and stories. A portion of the Proceeds from this event were donated to FEEDING AMERICA!

Description of workshop

Food connects us to the people and places in our lives, and our food stories help us form connections with others. This workshop will explore the power of sharing food stories to create personal connections between teller and listener, build trust, and address social disconnection. Attendees will learn about Community Plate's philosophy and methodology around sharing food and stories, and the food-focused story prompts that we use to encourage sharing, listening, and facilitate connection. If time allows, we

will break out into small groups and attendees will share their own food stories based on Community Plate story prompts (or by creating their own prompts). Afterwards we will examine the ways we find community and connection through our shared humanity around food and stories.

About the Presenter

Karl Schatz is the co-founder and Executive Director of Community Plate. He is an award-winning journalist and storyteller, who has worked at ABC Television, Time Magazine, Reuters and the Associated Press. Together with his wife and Community Plate co-founder, Margaret Hathaway, he has published seven books on food, farming, and community, including two volumes of the award-winning Maine Community Cookbooks. These books, plus 20 years developing a philosophy and practice around hospitality and community building, provided the inspiration and foundation for the creation of Story Sharing Potluck Suppers. Karl's work with Community Plate has been featured on NPR's Weekend Edition Saturday, The National Civic Review, The Boston Globe Sunday Magazine, The Chronicle of Philanthropy, and NBC Nightly News. He was featured by Reimagine's Making Connections web series as one of 25 innovators tackling the loneliness epidemic in 2025.

OUR 2025 FISCAL STORY

Dec 31, 2025 marks the end of HSA's third full year of operation as an independent 501 c 3 c not-for-profit cultural arts organization. We attempted to meet our expenses with box office, collaborative events' shared income, donations, and volunteerism. Total HSA income was \$10,865.89. Total HSA expense was \$12,473.82. Net for the year was a loss of -\$1607.93. Total end of year assets in the bank are \$18,426.18. Fundraising concerts are planned for early 2026 to recover our losses.

Healing Story Alliance, Inc. Financial Statement (January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025)

UNEARNED INCOME

Donations	3,762.39
• HSA Donations	
Kind Stories in Concert	1,350.00
OARS in the Water	310.00
Special Events (extra donations)	624.00
General Donations	1,478.39
TOTAL UNEARNED INCOME	3,762.39

EARNED INCOME

Box Office	7,022.00
• Special Events	1,783.00
Broken Mirror	475.00
Community Plate	250.00
Midwinter Mirth (2026)	1,020.00
Firebird (2026)	38.00
• Interview Series	1,650.00
Brewster	577.50
Yashinsky	676.50
Mehl-Madrona	396.00
• Collaborative Events	3589.00
Climate Stories (Third Act)	2,626.00
Sun Day (ECO)	963.00
Recording Sales	81.50
Simms Interview	15.00
Yashinsky Interview	35.00
Anger-Love	50.00
TOTAL EARNED INCOME	7,103.50
TOTAL EARNED & UNEARNED INCOME	10,865.89

EXPENSES

• Bank Fees & Ticketing Service Charges	521.25
• Office	205.91
Fees	3.43
Gifts	202.48
• Payments to individuals	8,856.57
Dot Cleveland Bookkeeping Services	4,096.54
Story Arts Administrative Services	3232.00
Presenters	1406.78
Reimbursements	121.25
• Donations to Collaborative Partners	1,859.00
Climate Stories Donation (Third Act)	1,159.00
Sun Day Donation (ECO)	700.00

• Technology	1,031.09
Subscriptions.....	657.90
MailChimp.....	318.00
Zoom	259.90
Quickbooks software.....	80.00
Website	373.19
GoDaddy	23.19
Kinsta Hosting.....	350.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	12,473.82
OVERALL NET	-1,607.93

2025 INCOME and EXPENSE TOTALS

Cash Income	
• HSA Donations	3,762.39
• Box Office & Recording Sales.....	7,103.50
Total Cash income 2025	10,865.89
Total Cash Expenses	12,473.82
Net	-1,607.93

2024--2025 Net Worth Cash Flow

Assets Dec. 31,2024	20,034.11
Assets Dec.31,2025	18,426.18
Net decrease.....	-1,607.93

OUR FUTURE STORY

As of Dec.,31,2025 we have successfully completed our third full year as an IRS 501 (c) 3 cultural arts organization. With our dedicated team of committee members, volunteers and a small paid office staff for bookkeeping, marketing, and administration (Dot Cleveland providing fiscal services and Heather Forest as interim executive director), Healing Story Alliance is well positioned to continue its service work in 2026.

The free *OARS in the Water* program will continue bi-monthly in 2026. *Kind Stories in Concert* will evolve into a concert series devoted to Social Justice in Action Stories and will have four events scheduled on different themes such as Stories of Courage & Resistance, the Kindness of Stories and more.

New Special Ticketed Events are also on the horizon. As well as being mission aligned, these ticketed events contribute to our sustainability and produce additional income beyond our ongoing flow of small individual donations. Upcoming will be a fundraiser featuring a large group of nationally recognized tellers sharing comical stories entitled: *Midwinter Mirth: Laughter is the Best Medicine*. A solo fundraiser by noted storyteller Megan Wells on the theme of The Firebird is planned and will also add to our coffers.

Aspirations for 2026 include:

- Continuing the Author Interview Series in 2026. An interview with Susan Perrow, and Christina Baldwin are already in the planning stages.
- Continuing to expand the base of co-hosts for OARS by drawing from the regularly attending community members.
- Looking ahead to expand our Special Ticketed Events to include a wide range of mission driven topics such as self-care skills, social justice, and the environment.

We are looking forward in 2026 to continue the projects and programs we have already successfully started. Plus, we are looking forward to developing a video pilot to utilize the video archive of Kind Stories in hospital patient settings. To that end we will be moving the Kind Stories archive into a newly established HSA Video Archive on Vimeo.

Looking ahead to secure our organizational sustainability, we aspire to document our leadership practices in an organizational manual and to explore more diverse fundraising opportunities.



2025 Annual Report Submitted by
Heather Forest, President of the HSA Board