

Festival Brings Stories & Songs to Life

Story & Song Center for Arts & Culture will present the “Amelia Island Festival of Stories & Songs” February 2-4, the latest addition to the many festivals hosted on Amelia Island throughout the year. The programs highlight the art of storytelling, featuring professional storytellers and musicians whose songs tell stories.

For thousands of years, stories have been carved, scratched, painted, printed or inked. But they come to life when spoken. Today, there is a renaissance in stories told in a personal, authentic way, bringing people together to remind us of our shared experience. There are now storytelling festivals in dozens of states around the country, including the Florida Storytelling Festival in Mt. Dora. As an indication of their popularity, more than 10,000 people travel to Jonesborough, Tennessee for the annual International Storytelling Festival.

At the “Amelia Island Festival of Stories & Songs,” you’ll have the opportunity to be entertained by bestselling author Carl Hiaasen, a Miami-based author whose books for grown-ups and kids alike provide a riotous look at the Sunshine State. Professional storytellers who are also singer/songwriters include Michael Reno Harrell, Paul Strickland, and Kim Weitkamp, and they will entertain the audience combining their many talents.

Children and families will be enchanted by Shana Banana (aka Shana Smith) who will perform with storytelling and music, engaging children and inspiring creativity all while having fun. For those who wish to learn or fine-tune the craft of storytelling, a storytelling workshop will be facilitated by Paul Strickland, who will share tips and techniques.

The Festival will be the official book launch for *Life on American Beach: Stories from the Dunes*, a collection of memories from twenty writers. Several will tell their stories at the Festival, and signed copies of the newly released book will be available for purchase. In partnership with the Amelia Island Museum of History, we’ll learn about the Island’s rich past and learn the stories of found artifacts held in the Museum’s collection. And storyteller Diane Johnson will portray Harriet Tubman, best known for her rescue missions with the Underground Railroad.

The mission of Story & Song Center for Arts & Culture is to enrich the lives of Amelia Island residents and visitors with experiences that inform, connect, celebrate, and inspire community vitality. For more information, visit storyandsongarts.org/festival or call 904-601-2118. To arrange media interviews, contact Robin Cormier, Executive Director, Story & Song Foundation, at exec@storyandsongarts.org or 703-635-0730.

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