

**REMARKS OF LENNARD RAMBUSCH ON THE OCCASION OF THE
CELEBRATION OF DIANE WOLKSTEIN'S 40 YEARS OF STORYTELLING.**

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I am Lennard Rambusch, Chairman and President of the Hans Christian Andersen Storytelling Center. We have sponsored storytelling at Hans Christian Andersen's statue in Central Park on Saturday mornings for the past 51 summers. We are very grateful for the support we receive from the Parks Department and from the Central Park Conservancy.

It is a pleasure to be here this evening to participate in this tribute to Diane Wolkstein.

Once upon a time there was a young woman who graduated from Smith College and embarked on a rather unusual career – that of a storyteller. She has succeeded in that career and has established her reputation, not only in New York, but around the world.

Diane Wolkstein is not only a storyteller of renown, she is also a teacher, an interpreter, an author of children's books, a collector of stories, a raconteur, a folklorist and, with respect to our HCA storytellers, a leader and a straw boss. My rock.

In addition to telling stories at the statue three or four times each summer, as our "Artistic Director", Diane coordinates our storytelling program. She selects the storytellers. She works with them. She puts together our summer schedule and sees to it that the program is a success.

We also support Diane in our efforts at the Hans Christian Andersen School on 122nd Street in Harlem. She attends each year to teach the kids about the namesake of their school and how to stand on their feet and tell a story. About two years ago, the Crown Prince of Denmark

and his wife were here to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Hans Christian Andersen's birth, and Diane prepared three students at the Hans Christian Andersen School and selected one to tell stories to the Crown Prince. He was so moved that he invited this young lady to Denmark to participate in Denmark's celebrations of Hans Christian Andersen's 200th birthday.

Our statute, our place in the park, has become rather a Mecca for storytellers. This is in large part due to Diane.

We thank Diane for her efforts and loyalty and for all she has done for HCA.

So I join in your salute to Diane and extend my very best wishes to Diane on this wonderful occasion.