

Seattle Storytellers' Guild

Summer 1988, Vol. X, #4

First Northwest Storytelling Festival

by Donald Braid

Mark your calendars in ink! The first Northwest Storytelling Festival is taking place on Friday, September 30th and Saturday, October 1st at Lakeside School, 14050 First Ave NE, in Seattle.

We are pleased to announce the featured storytellers. They will be: Brenda Wong Aoki a Japanese American storyteller and performance artist from San Francisco; Naomi Baltuck, from Seattle, who tells original and folk material; Debra Harris-Branham, from Renton, a teller of trickster, participatory and Black American Tales: Johnny Moses, a native American shaman and storyteller of the Nootka and Saanich people; Cathy Spagnoli, from Seattle, a teller of world folktales many drawn from her travels in Asia; and the Wives' Tales Story Tellers a duo of two women (Nan Gregory and Melanie Ray) from Vancouver BC, who tell literary and folk stories.

Friday night from 7:30 to 10 pm there will be an "olio," –a chance for you to hear all of the tellers. This event is recommended for adults and children over 10. Saturday afternoon from 1 to 5 pm there will be three stages running simultaneously: a family stage (for all ages), an adult stage (including

children 10 and up), and a swapping ground which will allow interested festival attendees a chance to tell stories. Saturday evening there will be a Ghost Stories concert from 7 to 10 pm, again recommended for adults and children over 10.

Details

The festival will be interpreted for the hearing impaired. Full festival tickets will cost \$18 for members of the Guild and seniors and \$20 for the general public. Tickets for the evening concerts on Friday and Saturday are \$6. Saturday afternoon tickets are \$11 for adults and \$6 for children. Only full festival tickets will be sold in advance. For information about advance purchase please call 525-2560 or 527-2341.

Volunteers needed

To make this event a great successs, we're going to need the help of many volunteers. If you would like to host our out of town tellers, help with pre-festival publicity, registration, sales of concessions or resources, or any of a thousand other tasks please call our volunteer coordinator Sue Grizzell at 523-6919 after Aug 8.

At the Boiserie

by Donald Braid

Storytelling at the Boiserie coffeehouse continues this summer with a slightly altered format. Programs will have one featured teller followed by, an open mic. This will give listeners a chance to hear more telling styles in one evening and give opportunities to those who wish to tell stories themselves.

There is no program in July but August 14 will bring to the Boiserie Yitz Etshalom and "A Visit with the Rebbe." This is an opportunity to hear Chassidic and original stories and hear about the use of stories in that tradition. Some of you were lucky enough to hear Yitz at the Folklife Festival; those who didn't now have another opportunity.

The program, and date for September are not set as we go to press. You will receive a mailing. Or watch the newspaperfor details.

Come and enjoy the warm surroundings of the Boiserie and some good storytelling. Or tell your own. Recommended for adults and children over 10. Doors open at 6:30 pm, storytelling starts at 7 pm in the Boiserie coffeehouse in the Burke Museum on the U of WA campus (45th ave NE and NE 17th). There is always lots of free parking. For ticket reservations call 527-2341.



They say ...

"The continuing problem for me in performing is to try to represent my characters to people in a truthful way, and that's extremely hard. The great danger is that you will try too hard to please people. You can lose sight of what you are saying, lose sight of objective and emotional truth. As performers we are constantly being tempted away from the truth and toward what we imagine will make people laugh. You count on the audience to give you a genuine reaction; but sometimes they like you so much they will laugh when getting much less than they should. People are very polite and don't question much of what a performer does on stage, so a performer has to question it himself."

Garrison Keillor from The Story Bag Newsletter, San Diego

Call Us for Answers:

Naomi Baltuck, V. P., Membership Activities, 525-2560
Donald Braid, President, Program Dvlpt, 527-2341
Clare Graham, Secretary, Editor, In the Wind, 325-9409
Sue Grizzel, Coordinator of Volunteers and Mailings,
523-6919

Mary O'Leary, Coordinator NW Festival, 325-6597 Martha Smith, Grants writer, 522-8788 Eugene Vernon, Legal Advisor, 325-5864

	MEMBERSHIP FORM
Name:	
Address:	
Phone:	Date:
New	Individual, \$10 Family, \$15 Institutional, \$20 Donor, \$25 Liar, \$49.95
	Fairy godparent (lifetime), \$100 Muse (be creative & generous), \$
how I n	erested in volunteering. Please call me to discuss nay help. include my name on mailing lists for related events.
Mail to: Seattle S P.O. Box Seattle,	

In the Wind is the newsletter of the Seattle Storytellers' Guild, a non-profit organization, and is published quarterly (January, April, July, and October). Membership in the Guild includes a year's subscription. PLEASE CHECK EXPIRATION DATE ON YOUR LABEL.

DEADLINE FOR THE October-December NEWSLETTER IS Sept. 10.. Articles & queries should be sent to the Seattle Storytellers' Guild, P.O. Box 45532, Seattle 98145-0532.

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SSG At the Folklife Festival

by Sue Grizzell

This year's Folklife Festival was a great success for the Guild. The audiences for all Guild sponsored events were larger than ever, actually over-flowing the Pacific Arts Center Hall. Standing room only was more the rule than the exception, with listeners participating in "shifts" and moving in and out of the hall between tellers. All the tellers I spoke with were as impressed as I was with the attentiveness of the crowds, and the enthusiasm with which they greeted each successive story.

Guild events

The first Guild event, "Special Stories," on Saturday afternoon, featured tellers Pat Peterson, Donald Braid, Yvonne Young, Tom Galt and myself, with a guest appearance by Meg Philp, a teller from Brisbane, Australia.

Sunday night, Donald Braid hosted the infamous "Tale Tales Contest," a tremendously popular event. Bruce Wolcott of Seattle took first place with an outrageous original story involving Sasquatch, Mt. St. Helens and the biggest real estate deal in history.

Monday afternoon wrapped things up at the Swapping Ground. The turn out was amazing, we had so many tellers that unfortunately we ran out of time and had to clear the hall for the next group performing. Not to be stopped, however, the stories continued outside on the lawn for those determined to tell and to listen.

Apologies

I would, however, like to take this opportunity to apologize to the many people who came to the Swapping Ground expecting to have the stories signed for the hearing impaired. Due to events totally out of our control, we found out literally minutes before the Swap that no signers were going to be there. This is definitely something we do not want to have happen again, and in the future we plan to secure the signers ourselves.

More stories

This year's Festival featured several other storytelling events besides those sponsored by the Guild. There were two forums concerned with telling, as well as tellers on the children's and the Alki Room stages, and a program by Naomi Baltuck and Sharon Creeden was broadcast from the KUOW Radio stage in the Arena. All in all, a great year for storytelling at Folklife!

Summer Request

Want some challenging summer fun? Get off the beaches and off your boats and bikes and call up Greg Schmeider. Greg is the classroom aide for teacher Maryellen Buchanan at the Boyer Children's Clinic located in the Montlake area.

Greg knows some very special preschoolers between the ages of 2 and 5 who are developmentally delayed. These are children with Downs' Syndrome or Cerebral Palsey who function at a one to two year old level. And they would love to hear some storytellers this summer.

There's a morning class from 8:45-11:15 and one in the afternoon from 1:15-3:45. The summer session will be open between July 11 and August 11. For a very rewarding and different summer experience, give some of your time and your love. And give Greg a call at 325-8477.

Congratulations, Pat!

Pat Peterson has been chosen from the Northwest Region to perform at the Exchange Place during the National Storytelling Festival in October.

Ten tellers were chosen through a selection process sponsored by NAPPS and administered by members of the National Storytelling Advisory Council.

It's not too soon to make your plans to attend this year's National Festival. It starts October 7, in Jonesboro, Tennessee.

On the SSG Board

by Donald Braid, Clare Graham and Mary Mercer

This was a good year for the Guild! At our Annual Meeting we reviewed the many exciting and successful concerts and workshops held this year. We also elected new officers to the Board.

Donald Braid has been a dedicated and active member of the Board since 1983 and was elected our fourth President. He will also continue as Program Director.

Naomi Baltuck was elected Vice President and will continue hosting Story 'n' Snack, assisting with Second Sunday and lead our membership activities.

Clare Graham continues as Editor of "In the Wind" and will also serve as Secretary to the Board.

Other Board members who were reelected include Eugene Vernon, who sponsors the Eastside Storyteller events, Mary O'Leary who will be our Festival Coordinator and Sue Grizzell, the coordinator of Volunteers and Mailings.

We take great pleasure in welcoming to the Board Martha Smith, a poet and writer with a master's degree in Buddhist studies who works as a systems analyst (talk about a New Age-Renaissance woman!) Martha's volunteering her skills as a successful grants writer. Welcome, Martha!



notes from the Netherlands by Cathryn Wellner

Another cherished myth bows to reality: Tulips do not grow all over Holland. As a matter of fact, the bulb producing part of the country is quite small, reaching approximately from the North Sea on the west to Lisse on the east, Haarlem on the north to Katwijk on the south (all within twenty miles of our home). Though the colorful fields draw hundreds of thousands of visitors, bulb growing is more than a tourist attraction. In fields designated for bulb production. flower heads are clipped by hand as soon as they are in full bloom. Elsewhere, men with large, flat wheelbarrows cut tightly budded bouquets whic will be sold at auction the same day. This time of year, the North Sea's fierce winter winds give way to softer spring breezes, giving dune grass another chance to try to pin the shore in place.

I write you this time from the land of Grimm. So much scholarly attention to the oral tradition here, but where are the storytellers? A new German friend with theatre connections is pursuing the search fro me, but so far I've found no one reviving the art Jakob and Wilhelm recorded in their Household Tales.

On the other hand, I met a historian who charms his students with stories (along with the German and American teachers for whom he leads tours of Stuttgart-area sites). One of the nearby castles was saved by women. When the enemy attacked after a long siege, the women mounted the ramparts, lifted their skirts and showed their cheeks. The attackers saw all those

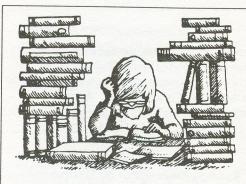
plump backsides and fled. Any castle in which people were still that fat after such a long siege

would be able to hold out longer than the enemy.

Another castle fell to invaders, who took the men hostage. The women were allowed to leave with only what they could carry on their backs. So they picked up their men and left the castle.

Between tours of DoDD (Department of Defense Dependants) schools in Germany and England, I'll be in Paris, city of ten million stories. And that's only counting current population. Who was the inventive Parisian who named "La rue du chat qui pêche" (street of the cat who fishes)? Or "La chaussée de la muette" (was the woman silent by choice)?

One of my favorite recent encounters was with an American first grader. Lisa met me at the train station in Stuttgart. Her face fell to find that the storyteller was so ordinary. While the grownups began a get-acquainted conversation, Lisa withdrew behind a concrete post to draw pictures. Ice cream lured her back to the table in the leafy courtyard outside a restaurant, but it also made her cold. A few bites of my warm soup loosened her tongue and her shyness. She began telling stories. Yellow Ribbon, Blue Beard...I listened in growing amazement as she spun tale after tale, with a style and vocabulary that were evidence she had heard a talented storyteller. Her mentor turned out to be the young girl who babysits her. The future of storytelling is in good hands.



Sources

about stories and the folks who tell them by Margaret Read MacDonald

With Washington State's Centennial year on the horizon, many of us will be looking for ways to weave the state's history into our storytelling. Naomi Baltuck offers us an excellent example in her recently released cassette, "The Land of our Hearts' Desire" (Woodmont, PO Box 98553, Seattle 98198). Drawing her material from diaries and letters of pioneer women, she has assembled vignettes which draw the listener into an immediate empathy with these children and young women of 100 years ago. Her collection will be invaluable to Washington's teachers and children's librarians as it is one of the few sources we have which shows the thoughts of the child in the westward movement. Walking barefoot beside the wagon trains, pulling their full share of chores on the new homestead, these forgotten young pioneers now speak through Naomi, sharing their unique vision of the western wilderness.

The interpretation of historical voices through story and drama already has a proud tradition in our state, with such fine groups as The Co-Respondents (Olympia) and The Shoalwater Storytellers (Oysterville), who have been bringing Washington history to life for audiences for several years. And locally, several of our own Guild members, such as Seattle Sass (Sharon Creeden and Pat Peterson) have been creatively

adapting reminisces and historical material for storytelling audiences.

If you wish to work up your own historical program, begin by listen-

ing to Naomi's "Hearts' Desire" and try to catch some of our local historical performers in action. Each has made specific moral decisions about how to create drama from their historical sources while remaining faithful to the words of those whose lives they are recreating. A chat with tellers who have been working with historical materials could help you on your way. Next step -your own library research. The University of Wahington's Northwest Collection is an obvious place for research, but much can be found in more accessible collections, such as the Downtown Seattle Public Library or the Northwest Room at the Burien Library.

To begin researching, you might consult Robert E. Wall's <u>Bibliography of Washington State Folklore and Folklife</u> (published for the Washington State Folklife Council by the University of Washington, 1987). Look at "Oral History," "Legends", "Folktales" or more specific subjects in its index. This annotated bibliography, with its fairly detailed subject index, is a useful browsing tool for anyone wanting to explore the folklife of our state.

Changing faces

It's with great love and appreciation that we say "Thank you!" to five outstanding Board members. Even though no longer active members of the Board, these members will continue to be involved Seattle Storytelling Guild programs and activities.

Suellen Adams has been a dynamic and enthusiastic President for the past three years. She was the third President of the Guild, a media magician, fundraiser and producer of three Mid-winter Storyfests.

Sharon Creeden, teacher, performer and organizer of storytelling at the Northwest Folklife Festival has been on the Board since 1986. Sharon, Naomi and Pat Peterson intitiated the free Beginning Workshop for members this past year. Sharon will continue to coordinate the Guild's mailing list on her computer.

Janice Dahl, warm and wonderful Volunteer Chairman, has been on the Board for two years. She will continue to promote storytelling every Tuesday on KBCS by coordinating the tellers.

Gene Friese, our Grants Writer and Secretary prepared meeting minutes that relflected his humor and love of order.

Mary Mercer, has been a dedicated Publicity Coordinator and Membership Chairman whose recruitment techniques would put the Army to shame. Mary was a Board member in 1983 and has helped place the Seattle Storytellers Guild on the map by helping in every conceiveable way.

You will be missed! Each of you has contributed tremendous time and energy to make the Seattle Storytellers' Guild what it is today. Your legacy will be continued!

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Stories around the campfire, stories told in schools, family stories heard at reunions, and stories from the stage. These forums for stories we all know and love. But how about stories told over the airwayes?

Over in Bellevue, there's a listener supported community radio station sponsored by Bellevue Community College and staffed by over a 100 volunteers. It's where you can hear stories told on Tuesday nights at 7 pm.

Mary Jane Bundren is the KBCS Program Director and she loves stories! If you've got a good antenna, you can tune in KBCS at 91.3 on your your FM radio dial and listen to some of the Northwest's finest storytellers.

The following programs are all lined up:

July 19 July 26		Cynthia Orr Katy Houston
August 2 August 1 August 2 August 3	6 3	Maggie Bennett Eugene Vernon Jim Wika Sue Grizzell Roger Herz

If you're interested in telling on the radio, call Janice Dahl at 523-8591, or Clare Graham at 358-8981 for details.

Cathy's stories from India

Cathy Spagnoli, much admired Northwest storyteller, has recently returned from 6 months in Asia This is the second of a two-part article on her reflections of storytelling in India. —Ed.

Storytelling in India is indeed a challenge in many places. There are usually very large groups, microphones are often very shopworn, and powercuts occur so frequently anyway that the mikes are useless. Settings are outside or in large halls and seem well endowed with distractions. And language is of course a major challenge. There are English speaking schools and groups but in many of them English is a second language and comprehansion skills vary greatly. Since I can speak some Tamil, a South Indian language, I did dare to tell to non-English speaking groups too, relying as well on sign language, dramatic expression, and their good nature.

There were moments in my telling, however, that I suspect could only have happened in India. One I will always treasure occurred at a beautiful residential school in Andhra Pradesh (South India). The day had started with an assembly outside under the trees -songs and prayers from all religions, to help create an integrated India. I felt the magic of the place -its quiet power and beauty and so very happily started telling stories to about 400 primary students under the same trees. However, I had just arrived from Madras by overnight train with my 15 month old son, Manu, and during the telling had quickly handed the tired child over to an older woman for babysitting. Suddenly in the midst of a story I heard his wails coming closer and closer. I turned in mid-sentence to see Manu running to me, with the woman trailing helplessly behind. He jumped into my arms, I finished the story with one hand gesturing, one hand holding and two voices shouting. But when I tried to give him back to the woman, he cried so despairingly that I, feeling most unprofessional, truly did not know what to do. And then, the principal spoke from the seat next to all the other guests of honor from the nearby town.

"He needs you now," said the man patiently. "We can wait, but how can we let him be in such distress. Go, take care of him, and then come back. We're in no hurry, we'll still be here." And so I followed some lovely lady teachers to the girls' hostel, where I nursed my son and rocked him to the sleep he so desperately needed. Soon after, much at ease myself, I returned to find the children all sitting and waiting. The show then went on with smiles all round!

Stories are loved in India and attention spans are longer -those unable to read the printed word can listen carefully to the oral word. I frequently finished what would have been a long enough program for American audiences, only to have my Indian listeners say, "That's all???" and so, I'd go on and on. And of course, after telling stories I usually was able to hear and collect more stories and even some delightful modern Indian jokes. I'll end these brief reflections for now with one of my new favorites on the resourcefulness of Indians, from 14 year old Rajalakshmi:

A Russian, an American and an Indian were in a workshop one day. They looked around at the beautiful tools and materials and thought of creating something. The Russian began to shape and then polish a superior looking sword blade. When it was finished, he handed it with a flourish to the American. The American, not to be outdone, picked up some wood and crafted that into a finely carved sword handle. He attached the blade to the sword and passed it to the Indian. The Indian, looking a bit perplexed, searched quickly for something to add. Then, with a grin, he picked up a sharp writing tool and slowly engraved on the sword the words "Made in India"!

Classes

Storytelling for Educators, taught by Naomi Baltuck. Acquaints participants with techniques, resources and uses of storytelling in the classroom. Assists in identifying and selecting good storytelling material, designing a plan for its use, and implementing the plan. August 15-19. 2 credits, \$42. Register for Ticket #5107, EDUC 5481, through Seattle Pacific University, Division of Continuing Studies, 281-2121.

The Story Circle, taught by Naomi Baltuck. Whether spinning a traditional yarn or telling from your own personal experience, there is joy in the sharing of a story. Would you like to know what makes a story work? When and where to tell a story? How to choose, learn and tell a story? Add spice to your life at home, on the job and person-to-person by recognizing and bringing forth the storyteller in you. Taught by a professional storyteller. Northgate. Tuesdays, 7-9:30pm. August 16 - Spetember 6. \$25 instructor's fee. \$8 supply fee. Register through ASUW Experiemntal College, 543-4735.

Learning the Art of Storytelling, taught by Sharon Creeden. A two-day workshop for senior adults designed to teach the basics of telling folktales. Begin to collect, learn and tell stories in a supportive group setting. October 17 &18, 10am-2:30 pm, S. Seattle Community College in West Seattle. \$2 fee. Call Mary Fogh, 764-5339.

Passing the Torch, taught by Sharon Creeden. A two-day workshop for senior adults who want to preserve their family histories through the oral tradition. Games and activites will help stimulate memories and inspire stories about family members and events. Topics: Who Wants to Hear My Stories?, How to Plan Family Storytelling Activities, How to Make a Library of Audio Tape Histories. \$2 fee, Spice Program at Madison School, 3429 45th SW in West Seattle. Call Mari-lynn Whatley for registration and lunch arrangements, 281-6145.

Beth Jacobson: In Memoriam

by Naomi Baltuck

She was a small white-haired, sort-spoken woman with round wrinkled cheeks and eyes that sparkled. She had just come to her first "Story 'n' Snack", the Guild's monthly story swap.

We went around the story circle, each of us spinning a yarn or just introducig ourselves to the group. Beth Jacobsen could not have chosen a better introduction for herself, than the simple story she shared about growing up as a little girl in old Seattle. That night we watched as her father cleared the land to build one of the first homes in Wallingford. We had salmon instead of turkey for Thanksgiving dinner, and went out to gather wild cranberries for the sauce. We dreamed along with a little girl so hard that we were all granted our dearest wish.

Those were just the first of many memories shared by Beth. I came to look forward to long afternoon talks between two friends as well as to the stories she told at our monthly meetings. Beth touched the hearts and minds of many people in her quiet way, through her stories and thoughtful conversation. She was a natural storyteller and she seemed to know instinctively which stories were at the heart of human experience.

When Beth told a story from her own childhood, years and distance melted away. Her stories became a mirror in which we saw ourselves as children again and looked at the world through children's eyes. When Beth told of the child's love gifts she'd presented to her mother at the turn of the century, she awoke and refreshed my memories: not only of the wild violets and dandelions I gathered in the back alleys of Detroit for my mother, but of the deep feelings with which those tired little posies were given. WhenBbeth told stories about "little things", they somehow managed to illuminate values with a wisdom and depth that belied their simplicity.

Beth never stopped questioning, searching for meaning in her life. After 87 years, she was still able to look at the world with a sense of joy and wonder and reverence, and pass that on to others.

Beth passed on this spring. She said she was going to throw away the old garment she wore, but no longer needed, to join the great totality.

Whenever I miss her too much, I try to remember the West African story that tells how one is never really dead until one is forgotten. Then my mind is filled with pictures. I can see Beth rolling her hoop (clickety-clickety click) down the wooden sidewalk on 45th Street or marching with dignity into Mr. Pease's grocery, a diaper tied around her head. I can see that little girl pondering the meaning of life and death while picking at the splinters on her back porch.

Then I know comfort; Beth lives on.

Calendar

JULY

- 14-17 National Story League 32nd Biennial Convention, The Great Southern Hotel, Columbus, Ohio. \$77 for registration including banquet, luncheons and brunch. Hotel rooms from \$56-86. Call Betty Menear (614) 228-3789 for information and registration.
- 15-17 Fourth Annual Sierra Storytelling Festival. at the North Columbia Schoolhouse Cultural Center, north of Nevada City, CA. A \$30 ticket covers all events. Write to 17894 Tyler-Foote Road, Nevada City, CA 95959 or call (916) 265-2826 for more information.
- 18 Kate Miller and Terre Poppe tell original stories: "Mermaid's Bay" by Marian Michened and "How the Earth Reclaimed Her Own" by Terre. Red & Black Books, 430 15th Avenue East, Seattle, 7 pm. First part of the evening features stories for young children; second part is for children of all ages. Call 322-READ.
- 28 Story'n'Snack is back! Potluck dessert and story swap. Bring a story and a snack. 7:30 pm., 846 NE 98th Street. For more information, call Naomi Baltuck or Thom Garrard at 525-2560.
- 29 Sharon Creeden tells animal tales at the Wolfhaven "Howl-in", Tenino, WA. 7 pm tour of wolf compound and campfire entertainment. \$4, 1-264-HOWL.
- 31 Sharon Creeden tells stories for Solo Series, University Unitarian Church, 6556 35 NE, 7 pm, \$5, 935-2850.

AUGUST

- 3 Julie Hinton tells and reads stories on Wednesday morning at 10:30 at the Secret Garden, 7900 Greenlake Dr. N., 524-4556. Julie always brings a friendly bear or two and encourages you to do the same.
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- 14 At the Boiserie. "A Visit with the Rebbe," featuring storytelling Rabbi Yuitz Etshalom from California. Performance begins at 7 pm. in the Burke Museum Coffee House. Admission \$5. Seating is limited. Lots of free parking. Ticket reservations, call 527-2341 or 525-2560.
- 17 Julie Hinton tells and reads stories on Wednesday morning at 10:30 at the Secret Garden, 7900 Greenlake Dr. N., 524-4556.
- 20 Naomi Baltuck tells stories from the age of chivalry at the Camlaan Medieval Faire. Noon, 2:30, 4 pm. For more information, call 788-1945.
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SEPTEMBER

- 3 Naomi Baltuck tells stories for the whole family at Bumbershoot. The Kid's Theatre. 1pm.
- 9 The Myth of Sisyphos. A lecture by Dr. Verena Kast, Jungian analyst from Zurich, showing how myth expresses basic existential experiences and exploring the nature of the images with which modern man reacts to this myth. Seminars Northwest, 2408 Nob Hill North, 7:30 pm.
- 10 The Use of Fairy Tales in Therapy by Dr. Verena Kast, Jungian analyst from Zurich. 10 am. to 5 pm. call Seminars Northwest, 2408 Nob Hill North, 285-1111
- 14 At the Boiserie To be announced.
- 19 Merna Hecht tells Feminist Stories at Red & Black Books at 7 pm. 430 – 15th Avenue East, Call 322-READ for more information.
- 30-October 1 Northwest Storytelling Festival!

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