

in the Wind

Seattle Storytellers' Guild Autumn 1994, Vol. XVII, Number 4

Get ready for the 7th annual Northwest Storytelling Festival!



Plans have been finalized for the upcoming fall festival and it promises to bring together a diversity of styles and a host of rich tradition. Join us for a morning of invigorating workshops which will include Gene Friese enlightening us with ways to implement storytelling with children. His workshop is designed for teachers, librarians and others who work with children and will feature a wealth of resources and tips for unlocking a child's natural gift of telling stories.

Burien's star children's librarian, Sandra Ogren, will delight us with storytelling with the preschool crowd. Her

workshop will include activities and stories to take back and share with this active group.

Dawn Kuhlman and Camille Wooden, our lively dynamic duo, will share the secrets of successful tandem telling. They will include everything from story selection to perfecting the performance for those of you eager to try this exciting form of storytelling. Dawn and Camille have performed throughout the Puget Sound area and are dynamite tellers who perform both solo and tandem.

Our world renowned storyteller, author and children's librarian, Dr. Margaret

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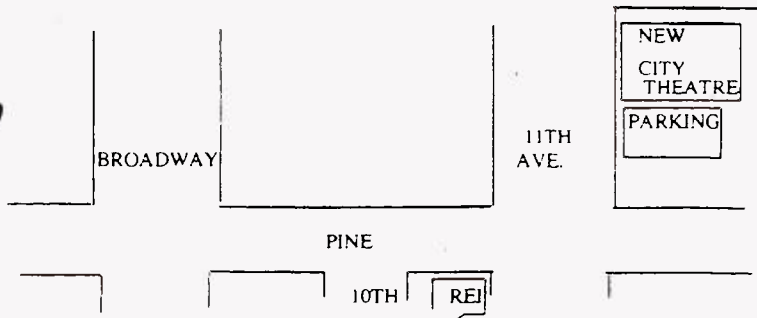
Tellabration! Tales to tell in November

Once again the Seattle Storytellers' Guild is proud to participate in Tellabration!—the national storytelling event held annually in communities across the country and extending into Canada and Europe. The mission of the event is to promote community storytelling, spotlight local and national storytellers and build appreciation for the art. The event also generates funds for local storytelling groups and for the National Association of Storytelling. Admission is reasonably priced at \$5 per person.

This year Tellabration! will be held on Saturday, November 19. The Seattle location is the intimate Shaefer Auditorium in the Lemieux Library on the Seattle University campus which is centrally located on First Hill on the corner of Broadway and James.

Once again we will offer a wide assortment of tellers: Vi Hilbert, Bonnie Anderson, Kevin Cotter, Dawn Kuhlman and Camille Wooden; as well as Sacred Circle Storytellers, Supaporn Vathanaprida, Peter Chelemedos and Edkar Matthews.

New City update



by Camille Wooden

It's been eight months since the Seattle Storytellers' Guild moved from the Burke Room on the U.W. campus to the New City Theatre on Capitol Hill. The move has revitalized our monthly programs, audiences have grown and we have seen more new faces at the open mike. If you haven't had the chance to join us in our new space yet, please consider doing so in the next few months. Our October and December programs will feature a potpourri of tellers. October's tales will have a chill and December's will be filled with the warmth of the season. In November, Canadian storyteller, Kate Stevens, will join us for tales of strong women in Chinese folklore. As always, there are goodies to be had and lots of free parking. Even at our new prices of \$4 for members and \$6 for non-members, we're still a bargain. Hope to see you at the New City as we settle in for the winter.

New Books by SSG Members

Eleven Turtle Tales: Adventure Tales from Around the World, by Pleasant DeSpain, Illustrated by Joe Shlichta. August House, P.O. Box 3223, Little Rock, AR 72203, (800) 284-8784; Hardback \$12.95, ISBN 0-87843-388-4.

Thai Tales, Folktales of Thailand, Retold by Supaporn Vathanaprida, Edited by Margaret Read MacDonald. Libraries Unlimited, P.O. Box 6653, Englewood, CO 80155-6633, (800) 237-6124, \$23.50 ISBN 1-56308-096-6.

Celebrate the World: Twenty Tellable Folktales for Multicultural Festivals, Margaret Read MacDonald. The H.W. Wilson Company, 950 University Ave., Bronx, NY, 10452, (800) 367-6770, \$40, ISBN 0-8242-0862-5.

ALERT!

New Seattle Storytellers' guild T-shirts and sweatshirts will be on sale at the Storytelling Festival, October 15!



Storytelling Festival

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Read McDonald, will present playing with story: audience participation folktales. This workshop will be equally enjoyable and helpful to both the novice and experienced teller and will focus on enticing the audience to participate in the story through songs, chants and movement.

After the morning workshops enjoy a deli lunch of submarine sandwiches, chips, veggies, cookies and the beverage of your choice. This is a repeat of last year's popular menu and again will cost only \$5.

Anyone can spin a tale and many do at our post lunch swapping ground. Be sure to be on hand to listen or share a tale of your own at this event hosted by our energetic Tom Galt.

Our afternoon program beginning at 2:30 will feature delightful stories the whole family is sure to treasure. The enchanting tales will captivate children but are told for the child's imagination in all of us. This event is free of charge to all, so bring as many children of all ages as you can. Come and enjoy tellers Ann Roush, Kathleen Currie, Elizabeth Yee, Tom Galt and Karen Haas.

Prepare to be held spellbound and transported to the magical world of stories during our evening olio. Our featured tellers, Debbie Dimitre, Avis Jobrack, Kathleen Sider, and UW Professor Emeritus Spenser Shaw bring us their unique style blended with wit and wisdom. They are sure to touch and inspire us all.

This is a *not to be missed* event. All for Kids will once again be providing us with wonderful storytelling resources for sale. Mark your calendars and plan to attend, we look forward to seeing you. For more information call festival directors Debra Harris-Branham at 772-0415 or Phyllis Silling at 246-7636.

The Winners of the 2nd Anne Izard Storytellers' Choice Award

This award honors storyteller Anne Izard, who died in 1990. The Westchester County Library system established this award to remember her many years as its Children's Services consultant. The award is intended to promote distinguished titles published in the field of storytelling, and bring the riches of storytelling itself to a much greater public recognition.

Bryan, Ashley; *The Ox of the Wonderful Horns and Other African Folktales*, Atheneum.

Davis, Donald; *Jack Always Seeks His Fortune*, August House.

Fleishman, Paul; *Bull Run*, Laura Gerringer/Harper Collins.

Goble, Paul; *Love Flute*, Bradbury Press.

Hearne, Betsy; *Beauties and Beasts*, Oryx Press.

Kimmel, Eric; *The Spotted Pony: A Collection of Hanukkah Stories*, Holiday House.

McDermott, Gerald; *Zomo, the Rabbit*, Harcourt Brace.

Pelton, Mary Helen and Jacqueline DiGennaro; *Images of a People: Tlingit Myths and Legends*, Libraries Unlimited.

Reneaux, J.J.; *Cajun Folktales*, August House.

Walker, Barbara, *The Art of the Turkish Tale: Volume Two*, Texas Tech University Press.

Walsh, Jill Paton; *Matthew and the Sea Singer*, Ferrar Straus Giroux.

Williamson, Duncan, *Tales of the Seal People*, Interlink.

Zeitland, Steve J., Amy J. Kotkin and Holly Cutting Bakes; *A Celebration of American Family Folklore*, Yellow Moon Press.



The family story



by Martha J. Eshelman-Smith

In reviewing *No Other Tale to Tell*, Ellen Arkin observes "it's the mystery in the ordinary that makes things interesting, and requires not silence but telling." The telling of the ordinary as a way to unite and separate was apparent at our recent celebration of my parents' 60th wedding anniversary.

It is the use of story within the family as I observed it at the celebration I wish to share. Two facts regarding my family are essential to understand the use of stories. First, my family has twice as many "unrelated" relatives as blood relations—for generations we have taken in "strays." Second, in the year preceding the celebration, my parents became the last of their generation and hence the center of the extended family.

I first noticed the use of story when a nephew who had been out of the family for nearly 20 years arrived with his wife. My parents welcomed him back into the family by asking him if he remembered his attempt to rebuild a horse skeleton; Dad then launched into a humorous account of a 10 year old and a wagon retrieving a skeleton from a ditch and spending a week trying to reassemble it with baling wire. Suddenly 20 years evaporated and the relationship picked up again with the nephew slowly telling stories of his life adopted "out of the family." The exchange of stories quickly showed his wife something of her husband as a young boy and also served to welcome them back to the family.

Before the reception we had dinner for "immediate family"—for us immediate meant children, grandchildren (twice as many unrelated as related), nephews and their family, and two couples without family who my parents have "adopted". Ours is one of the few families where "immediate family" not only has to introduce themselves but try to describe their relationship (usually convoluted) to the family. The kids and grandkids gave a short program in honor of our parents—stories and poetry, naturally.

My brother told of family picnics—a tale that included all the cousins; of driving Grandma to picnics—a rite of passage for male cousins; and of our infamous rockpile picnic—a nuclear family experience that the mere word "picnic" always elicits at least a reference to if not the full story in someone's version. Observing the faces of the listeners one could see the common bonds between various subsets of the guests—that expression of "Oh yes, I remember; I thought I was the only one who felt that way," or of "Yes, that's an Eshelman for you."

I went for cowdog humor, calling to mind uncles, Dad's cousins, and others long since dead through the quirks of their dogs, real and imaginary. The cousins proceeded to add actual dog tricks—successes and spectacular failures—to the conversation. Through story, the family evoked the memory of common ancestors but with humor and affection rather than grief.

Yet stories did more than mold the family into family with a common identity. One grandson appeared with his children but not his estranged wife. Stories of his own father's first bumbling attempts as a single parent who needed cookbook instructions to boil water for instant coffee, served both to reassure him that he could succeed and to give advice in a palatable manner.

Driving back to Seattle, I recalled how Dad raised us with story—assured us of our competence by telling of his redoing the family water system at age 12; instilled

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Sources: About Stories and the Folks Who Tell Them

by Margaret Read MacDonald, King County Library System

I just discovered a luscious series of books which had escaped me up until now. Bernard Evslin's series *Monsters of Mythology* is a rich and lively treatment of 25 mythological characters. The series was published by Chelsea House Publishers in 1988 and 1989. The book design is open and inviting, illustrated throughout with full color reproductions of pieces of art which are chosen to somehow evoke the themes of the stories. Some are ancient pieces which depict an artist's vision of the mythological being, but many are simply selections from modern or ancient art which show birds, seas, forests, etc. suitable for illustrating various passages. A strange approach at bookmaking, attractive and interesting, although not always successful in illustration. However, the bright pictures on each page do open the book up and lead the reader on. Evslin's energetic text would not let you stop reading anyway. He breathes a remarkable vitality into these old bits of myth, tying all known story pieces about each being into one long narrative. He has done our story research for us, searching out, for example, all the interactions between the Cyclops and the Gods and putting them all together to tell the Cyclops' full story.



A most useful tool for any storyteller hoping to prepare a piece based on mythology; even if you are not using the figures he treats, his style might interest you. Perhaps these books will inspire more folks to carry on with the wonderful tradition of retelling myths which Joy Anderson led us toward so delightfully.

And as you begin your research don't forget the dense, 347 page bibliographical essay by Ron Smith, *Mythologies of the World: A Guide to Sources*, published by the National Council of Teachers of English in 1981. This will lead to stacks of bibliographical leads which you will probably have to get through inter-library loan. But such is the nature of research.

Monsters of Mythology: The 25 volumes

Hellenic:

Amycus
Anteus
The Calydonian Boar
Cerberus
Chimaera
The Cyclopes
The Dragon of Boeotia
The Furies
Gerycon
Harpalyce
Hecate
The Hydra
Ladon
Medusa
The Minotaur

The Nemean Lion
Procrustes
Scylla and Charybdis
The Sirens
The Spear-birds
The Sphynx
Norse:
Fafnir
Fenris
Celtic:
Drabne of Dole
Pig's Ploughman



Out of the mouths of babes

by Gene Friese



Children are natural storytellers! They know how to tailor a story to fit a variety of audiences. Just listen to renditions of the same account as it is shared with friends, family, teachers or *the principal*. But, in front of a classroom or an auditorium most young people pale and wish they might magically disappear.

The problem is self-confidence, and that is where parents, teachers and librarians can make a difference. Teaching youth narrative skills is a process of building self-esteem, illustrating story structure and demonstrating techniques. These steps are easily adapted to a variety of family activities, library programming and classroom curricula. It requires patience and goal setting by both the teacher and the teller.

Storytelling is a natural ingredient in every area of the curriculum and can become a project for students across the span of grades. Even children who cannot yet read are able to tell tales from a traditional repertoire of stories through the use of the many beautiful picture books available in school and public libraries. Storytelling is not the memorization of a printed text but describing the illustrations that accompany the story. Telling the pictures in our mind or on the page is a linear approach that simplifies the narrative process. The pictures represent a ready-made story board. By showing each illustration and discussing the characters, setting and action it depicts, the listener becomes the teller as the coach closes the

book and asks what has happened. Children easily respond with the story in their own words and handily learn the sequence of the scenes. Details of the story are expanded by the details the artist has included. Seeing becomes telling.

For students who are readers, the whole world of folklore and literary tales opens before them. Early readers will find the Aesop fables a convenient place to begin, for each of those tales contains the basic structure of a beginning, a middle and an end. Individual creativity can add characterization, unique setting or adaptation to a new time and place.

Margaret Read MacDonald and Pleasant DeSpain are two Northwest tellers and authors with collections that, although directed toward adults, can move young tellers into longer stories which still feature concise structure and, in Margaret's books, suggested techniques and background information. Paperbound copies of Aesop and DeSpain are inexpensive enough to take apart, and each story can be placed in its own plastic sleeve to create a file of more than 300 stories for the beginning teller's resource. Important phrases or actions can be highlighted with washable pens to help the student take the story apart and rebuild it with a personal touch.

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Having students work in teams produces an atmosphere of cooperative learning and coaching. They reinforce each other and may even develop tandem telling for longer, more involved stories. Matching young people from different ethnic or cultural backgrounds builds understanding and empathy as they work toward a common goal.

Practice takes time and supervision, and preparation and place are important. One of the difficult techniques to teach is body and hand movement. Nervousness often causes the young teller to pace, but sitting solves this problem easily. Suggesting an imaginary circle limits performance space and visualizing balancing glasses of water on feet reduces leg swinging. Hands are more difficult to control. Demonstrating restrained hand motion and coaching seems to be the most positive methods when applied with good humor and a reassuring smile.

Since storytelling is first a communication tool, the audience becomes an indispensable ingredient. The classroom or the storytelling club may be the most immediate listeners, but finding venues beyond the local circle is very important to take the skill out of the frame of instruction into the realm of performing. The self-esteem that this builds carries over to the larger educational experience.

There are several handbooks to help design a storytelling program in a school or library system with a festival as a culminating event. Remember that parent groups, Friends of the Library, community clubs and school boards are anxious to recognize and reward accomplishments of youth.

Good teaching always begins with high expectations, and one is constantly amazed at the individuals from a group who emerge as the tellers carry the tradition of storytelling on into their families and the community. The narrative art requires dedication and discipline on the part of the teller and the coach. The results, however, keep alive an art form that began in our ancestral caves and will survive the speed bumps and potholes on the information super highway. Story gives us identity and context and allows us to sift through the barrage of nuisance information and connects us, once again, with our humanity.

References:

DeSpain, Pleasant. *Twenty-two Splendid Tales to Tell From Around the World*, Volumes One and Two. August House, 1994.

MacDonald, Margaret Read. *Twenty Tellable Tales*. H.W. Wilson, 1986; and *When the Lights Go Out*, H.W. Wilson, 1988.

Griffin, Barbara Budge. *Students as Storytellers*. Griffin, 1989; and *Storyfest*, Griffin, 1989.

Hamilton, Martha, and Mitch Weiss. *Children Tell Stories*. Richard C. Owen Pub., 1990.

The Family Story

From page 4

responsibility with his tales of watching the cattle in the Simcoes with his older brother (9 and 12 year olds alone for two week stretches); reassured us we would survive our foolishness with tales of being robbed, hopping trains and hitchhiking holding onto the back of fuel trucks all in a mad dash to see our mother. Dad molded and corrected us not only through discipline—his attempts at discipline make a very humorous story of utter failure—but through story.

As storytellers we need to remember that story arose in the family, the clan, the tribe, the economic community. In our love of story, in our placing story in the classroom and on the stage, we need to recognize that we are extending the place of story and in so doing must take care not to cut it from its roots. We must nurture storytelling in its native habitat if we are to share its beauty elsewhere.



Calendar of Events

October

1 **George Shannon**, University Book Store Bellevue store, 11 a.m.

6 **Storytelling with Deborah Hudson**, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

10 **Second Mondays on the Hill**, Seattle Storyteller's Guild monthly storytelling event. A Chilly Wind - A potpourri of local tellers, old and new, help usher in the fall season with shivery yarns. 7 p.m. New City Theatre, 1634 - 11th Ave., Seattle. \$4 SSG, \$6 general.

13 **Storytelling with Deborah Hudson**, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

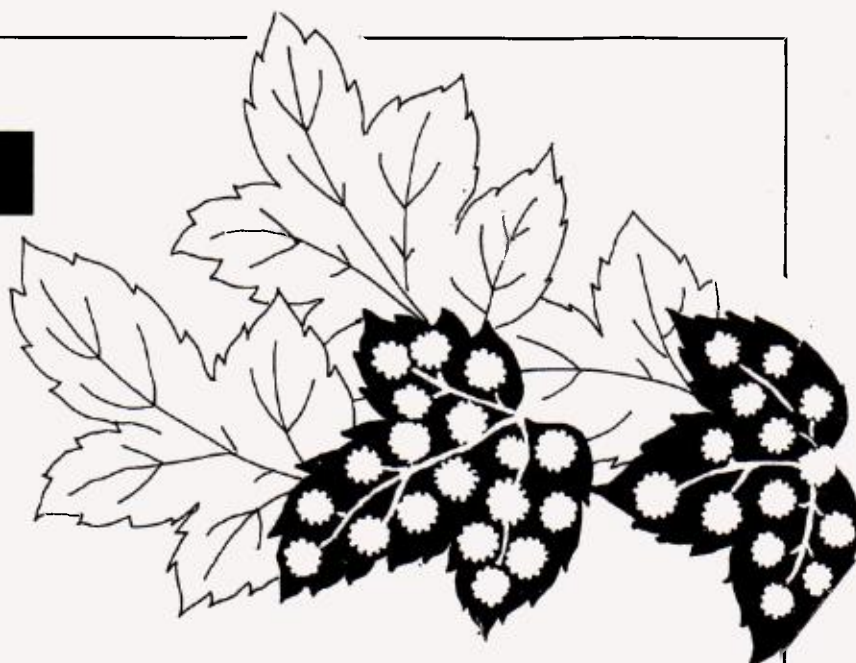
15 **Debbie Dimitre**, University Book Store Bellevue store, 11 a.m.

20 **Storytelling with Deborah Hudson**, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

22 **Stacia Keogh**, University Book Store Bellevue store, 11 a.m.

27 **Story 'n Snack** potluck dessert and story swap. 7:30 to 10 p.m. For information and directions, call 621-8646. Halloween tales.

30 **Story Corner with Jack Prelutsky**, Bellevue Regional Library, 1111 110th NE, Bellevue, 450-1775, 1:30 p.m.



November

3 **Storytelling with Deborah Hudson**, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

10 **Storytelling with Deborah Hudson**, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

12 **Allan Hirsch**, University Book Store Bellevue store, 11 a.m.

12 **Storytelling with Ann Roush**, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 10:30 a.m.

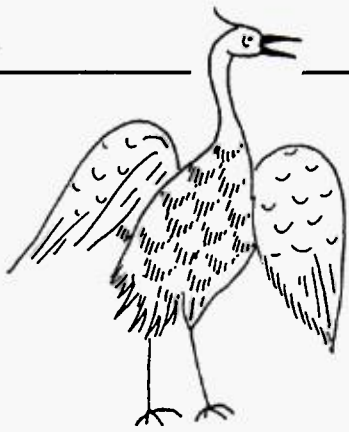
14 **Second Mondays on the Hill**, Seattle Storytellers' Guild monthly storytelling event. Canadian storyteller, Kate Stevens, joins us for a special evening of Chinese folktales. 7 p.m. New City Theatre, 1634 - 11th Ave., Seattle. \$4 SSG, \$6 general.

10 **Storytelling with Deborah Hudson**, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

20 **Story Corner with George Shannon**, Bellevue Regional Library, 1111 110th NE, Bellevue, 450-1775, 1:30 p.m.

23 **No Story 'n Snack.**

26 **Kathy Lightstone**, University Book Store Bellevue store, 11 a.m.



December

1 Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

8 Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

10 Special storytelling and signing with Su Vathanaprida, Thai Folktales, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 10:30 a.m.

12 Second Mondays on the Hill, Seattle Storytellers' Guild monthly storytelling event. A Season of Light - a potpourri of tellers share stories to make your holiday season merry and bright. 7 p.m. New City Theatre, 1634 - 11th Ave., Seattle. \$4 SSG, \$6 general.

15 Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

18 Story Corner (teller TBA), Bellevue Regional Library, 1111 110th NE, Bellevue, 450-1775, 1:30 p.m.

22 Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

28 Story 'n Snack potluck dessert and story swap. 7:30 to 10 p.m. For information and directions, call 621-8646. Holiday tales.

29 Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond, 885-6828, 11 a.m.

January

28 Story 'n Snack potluck dessert and story swap. 7:30 to 10 p.m. For information and directions, call 621-8646.

Continuing

October 5-Dec. 31 People of the Sun and Wind Historical Exhibit and Handicraft of the Reindeer People, Nordic Heritage Museum, 3014 NW 67th Street, Seattle, WA 98117, 789-5707.

Out of Area

The Victoria Storytellers' Guild presents **Stories at Fern Street**, at 1831 Fern Street, Victoria B.C., 7:30 p.m., \$3 suggested donation. October 17, contact Lindal at (604) 598-5662. November 21, contact June, (604) 595-8600. December 12, contact Elsie and David, (604) 598-8404.

Heads and Tales, an inquiry into storytelling in education, Madison, WI, November 2-6. Northlands Storytelling Network. Contact Mark Wagler, 602 Wingra St., Madison, WI 53715, (608) 258-8833.



Big Ben's Boots

John Braden Dashney's *The Ballad of Big Ben's Boots* is available from John at 1932 Cherreketa NE, Salem, OR 97301.

It has lots of his great tall tales, including the incredible "Sam Samson's Simlated Sheep," which he told at the NAPPS conference last summer.

Co-Presidents: Cherie Trebon (525-0382) and Dawn Kuhlman (939-7117);
 Vice President: Margaret Read MacDonald (827-6430);
 Secretary: Gene Friese (284-9469);
 Membership and Festival Directors: Debra Harris-Branham (772-0415) and Phyllis Silling (246-7636);
 Newsletter Editors: Susan Veltfort (322-2385) and Julie Miller (935-1471);
 Publicity: Kathleen Sider (524-1485);
 Volunteer Coordinator: Avis Jobrack (206-863-5025);
 Programs: Camille Wooden (854-2909).

In the Wind is the newsletter of the Seattle Storytellers' Guild, a non-profit organization, and is published quarterly. Membership in the Guild includes a year's subscription. Please check the expiration date on your label. Deadline for the Spring issue is March 1, 1995.

*Design by Julie Reimer
 634-0813*

Membership Form

Name:	
Address:	
City:	State:
Zip Code:	
Phone:	Date:

New: _____ Renewal: _____
 Individual, \$15
 Family, \$20
 Institutional, \$30
 Donor, \$35
 Lifetime, \$150
 Muse, over \$150
 I am interested in volunteering.
 Please call me to discuss how I may help.
 Please include my name on mailing lists for related events.

Mail to: Seattle Storytellers' Guild, P.O. Box 45532, Seattle, WA 98145-0532.

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