



## in the Wind

Seattle Storytellers' Guild • Winter 1996 • Vol. XIX, Number 1



### Folklife Alert!

Seems like we just celebrated Folklife, but the application deadline for Folklife Festival '96 is fast approaching. January 10 is the deadline to get your application in for consideration. Selection committees request that you include an audio or video tape if at all possible. For an application, call 206/684-7300.

### Professional Development Assistance Program

The Professional Development Assistance Program (PDAP) is a new mini-grant program from the Washington State Art Commission. Artists and organizations can apply for up to \$300 to assist with costs of attending a structured, short-term learning opportunity. The deadline is six weeks in advance of the starting date of the learning opportunity. For guidelines, applications and information call: Bitsy Bidwell, Community Arts Development Manager, at 360/586-2421, or write WSAC-PDAP, P.O. Box 42675, Olympia, WA 98504-2675.

## SSG Member Wins Aesop Prize

The Children's Folklore Section of the American Folklore Society has awarded the Aesop Prize for 1995 to Sharon Creeden for her book, *Fair Is Fair: World Folktales of Justice*. The Aesop Prize is conferred on "the most outstanding book incorporating folklore and published in English for children and young adults."

The first collection of its kind, *Fair Is Fair* contains 30 world folktales about wise judges, clever lawyers and deceitful tricksters. Creeden follows most of the folktales with commentary on how the same legal issues are reflected in American law. For example, an Italian tale about a mistreated horse is followed by a discussion of the animal rights debate.

When selecting her book, the judges commented, "This is truly an exceptional book, one that deals with a perennial concern among young people and fills a decided but hereto unrecognized void in juvenile literature. Creeden, with her legal training and storytelling expertise, is uniquely qualified for the prodigious task involved in compiling and sourcing the superbly told stories, as well as providing access to legal commentary and references to relevant contemporary cases. Throughout she reveals her editorial decisions giving precise details of any changes she has made in her narratives and her reasons for doing so. The fascinating subject matter is handled in an original way and the text is structured to convey maximum understanding of cultural values embedded in the stories and the relevance of those messages to contemporary life."

Creeden is a former deputy prosecutor for King County. She joined the Seattle Storytelling Guild in 1982. After leaving law practice

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## Aesop prize...

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in 1983, she began telling stories for schools and law associations. "Without the Guild's help, I would have never written this book. Naomi Baltuck, Pat Peterson and countless Guild workshops provided me with advice and support. Without the Guild's help, I would never have won this prize. From the beginning, storytellers like Margaret Read MacDonald and Donald Braid taught me to respect the integrity of folktales. In *Fair Is Fair*, I tried to use multiple sources as the basis for my re-telling and not the change the contents just to suit my individual taste." She also took a folklore research class from MacDonald and relied extensively on her *Storyteller's Sourcebook*.

Creeden is writing her second book for August House Publishers: *In Full Bloom, Folktales of Women in their Prime*.

## Interested in a stories group?

Is anyone interested in forming a group centered around sharing personal experience stories? I have been interested in such a group for a long time and would like to hear from



others who are interested. I envision a small group where everyone shares brief, unrehearsed stories from his or her life. The leader would provide topics to help stimulate memories. For example: Did

you ever see or experience the presence of a ghost? Tell us about it. Describe a moment from childhood that was both thrilling and dangerous. Describe something special about your grandmother's house.

Each person would share a story. This would be a low-pressure group. Members would have the joy of sharing without the pressure of developing and rehearsing the story at home. What I like about this type of sharing is the feeling of community, the discovery of meaning in my own life, and the excitement of recognizing shared experiences. The group could invite experienced personal experience storytellers to visit the group to share tips and ideas.

If you are interested in participating in such a group, please call me, Martha Creech. I can be reached at 433-8721.

## From British Columbia

The second edition of the Canadian Storytelling Directory is out. To order a copy or inquire about being listed in the third edition, call Nan Gregory, 604/228-1450.

## Storyteller's Calendar

The prettiest, the liveliest, the most entertaining, the best calendar for storytellers and fans is The Storyteller's Calendar from Ruth Stotter. Make gift shopping easy on yourself and order several! Send \$12 (includes shipping/handling) to Stotter Press, P.O. Box 726, Stinson Beach, CA 94970.



And from member  
Meg Lippert's daughter:

## A Perfect World

The world is a giant musical. Everybody wanting parts and trying to be better than his friend.

But what will happen when the world falls apart and all the musicals end?

Look for the part that's meant for you; sing it out strong; sing it from your heart.

Don't try to beat somebody else, or try to show them who's better than who.

Just sing your part.

You won't ever be the best at everything, so take your special gift and help it grow.

Everyone has a gift for something, and maybe that's the only thing they'll ever know.

That's how everyone's different deep inside,

And you have to find the gift that they may try to hide.

If it could be a world full of people like me and you.

Everybody would sing their song and not take two.

If everyone would just sing their own part, and share the gift that sets them apart,

Then it would be a perfect world.

—Dawn Lippert, 11

North Bend, Washington

[from LISTEN, December 1995]

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# True Wealth: Story, Poem, Song and Dance

by Marsha J. Eshelman-Smith

Anne Cameron, in her recent book *Dzellarhons*, writes of a girl whose village with all its contents has just been destroyed: "And she thought of the real treasure that had survived the volcano, of the songs and dances she had learned and still knew, of the poems and the stories she had remembered...to the other children she had in her lifetime, she gave the songs and stories of the people from across the sea...and she told them, these are the only true wealth any person can have." (Note: the people from across the sea are her own people.) As storytellers, many of us inadvertently imply that this wealth is dependent upon the story being new, exotic, unfamiliar to our audience by constantly seeking out new material, by telling foreign stories learned from books.

Yet there is wealth in stories, poems, riddles and rhymes that we learned almost accidentally. Often we have not repeated them with sufficient frequency to recall them easily and must resort to books to recover them. Often we erroneously assume that everyone knows them, failing to recognize the cultural diversity of our own country.

For example, I often use jump rope rhymes, especially in my all-Cinderella program. The rhyme I knew best on the playground was:

*Cinderella, dressed in yellow  
Went downtown to buy some mustard  
On the way her girdle busted  
How many people were disgusted?*

Only as an adult did I learn that "Cinderella dressed in yellow, went upstairs to kiss her fellow..." was a more common version. A number of variants are easily found; see, for example, Knapps' *One Potato, Two Potato: The Folklore of American Children*. Implicit in the use of this jump rope rhyme is the assumption that everyone knows "Cinderella"; that everyone knows, or should know, the story implies that the story is highly valued in our culture—that it is worth remembering and worth telling.

When I was a first-grader, my eldest brother tried to further my education by teaching me: "Did you ever think /

when the hearse goes by / that someday /you too will die?" My mother, to my continuing regret, put an end to this before I had all verses memorized. I was astounded when I learned that Pankakes' *A Prairie Home Companion Folk Song Book* attributes the song to British soldiers in the Crimean War—a full century before my brother's attempt at "education". That this humorous, deliberately disgusting, direct confrontation with death has survived informally, implies that it has real value. Its origin implies its value is in the recognition of our own mortality, not in the preadolescent enjoyment of grossness.

As a primarily immigrant people, many of us have a broken link in the oral chain of transmission. Some deliberately put aside everything they viewed as "not American." Others lost their stories because those stories told of a place and profession that had no meaning to their offspring. The American stories that replaced them tend to be regional. As a migrant people, such regional stories are subject to the same forces of loss as the stories from the old country. We would, perhaps, value our American tales more if we recognized them as adaptations of the old stories, as rare gems that have survived centuries of time and travel.

For example, several articles ago I noted that tales collected in the contemporary South such as calling the dog in to feel his fur rather than getting up to see if it is raining are found in Petrus Alfonis' tales. Petrus Alfonis wrote *Disciplina Clericalis* in the early 12th century, utilizing tales from his Jewish ancestry, his Muslim rulers, and his Christian faith; his Spanish melting pot of stories created/utilized stories still valued in our American melting pot.

Bernice Johnson Reagon, who produced the series *Wade in the Water* for National Public Radio in cooperation with the Smithsonian, in the liner to her own album "River of Life" gives us a method of reclaiming our heritage. In this album, Ms. Reagon sings multiple voices and for each she visualizes a particular person from who she learned something about the Afro-American religious music tradition, singing the part in a manner influenced by that person. Similarly, once we value our own tradition we can seek out materials from the place and time of those from whom we learned. If they give us no stories we can still learn the stories that fit their voice.





## Especially for Members & Friends:

# Second Mondays on the Hill

Brighten the winter and slide into spring with excursions to New City Theater on the second Monday of every month. Wonderful things are bound to happen when storytellers gather together. Resolve to be part of them in '96!

### January 8

#### Menage a Trois Plus One

The 1996 "Second Mondays" season kicks off with an eclectic combination. Kathy Sider tells mystic tales and personal stories that provide inspiration for the Menage a Trois improvisational team of Camille Wooden, Abel Hewitt and Louise Carnachan. Kathy, a naturalist as well as a storyteller, helps two-legged audiences see the world through the eyes of other creatures. Menage a Trois helps you see things you never would have imagined! Camille is the '95 winner of the Folklife "Liars Contest." Abel holds a brown belt in martial arts, has a day job in the state bureaucracy and is an actor by night. Louise Carnachan is an experienced improvisational performer.

### February 12

#### Cherie Trebon: "That's the Story of Love"

Cherie tells a contemporary story and a folktale as well as a personal story that has been three years in the making. Songs weave these Valentine tales together. Learn more about this fine teller in our "Storyteller Profile."

### March 11

#### Avis Jobrack and Karen Haas: Just Duet: Tellers Times Two

Avis and Karen are The TattleTales...a new storytelling team composed of two good friends who are also seasoned performers. Avis' performance career began on the airwaves of public radio station WBGO in Newark, N.J. where she had roles in many radio dramas. Her personal

favorite was the character Little Red Feather whom she played in "Ride the Wind." Karen hails from Chicago by way of Montana. She plays the piano and guitar and sometimes uses music in her stories. Now settled in Tacoma, Karen is a frequent teller throughout Pierce County and for the King County Public Library system as well. Avis and Karen plan to have fun on March 11 and you will, too!

### April 8

#### Playback Theater Northwest: Interactive Theater

This unusual group specializes in improvisational enactment of personal story, inviting members of the audience to share a moment from their lives. The ensemble recreates that moment through the magic of

music, movement, imagery and dialogue. Playback Theater was formed in 1989 and has played in many venues including Folklife, Seattle Fringe Festival, Bailey-Boushay, Boeing Human Resources Department and the 45th Street Clinic. Don't miss this unique performance!



Second Monday storytelling evenings are held at the New City Theater, 1634 11th Ave. on Capitol Hill. Free parking available. Stories begin at 7 p.m. An open microphone is available for unscheduled tellers after the featured performance. If you would like to tell an "open mike" story, please give the emcee your name when you arrive at the theater.

SSG members: \$4

Non-members: \$6



## Storyteller Profile:

### Cherie Trebon

The first time Cherie Trebon performed as a storyteller she began her story standing at the front of the stage and ended it with her back pressed to the wall behind her. "I was so scared I think I was trying to get as far away from the audience as I could!" said Cherie. Cherie's debut marked more than the beginning of her storytelling career. It was the moment when the power of a story and the need to tell it overcame an enormous fear of public speaking.

Cherie Trebon, known to many Guild members as the hostess of "Story and Snack," spent years unable to speak before any group—sometimes even family or her own staff. Like many of those who have this disabling fear, she also felt the frustration of not being able to tell the stories she wanted to share. It was the mentoring of another teller that helped Cherie past the barrier of stage fright. Her break-through began in an Experimental College class taught by Catherine Wellner. There, in the nurturing environment created by the instructor, Cherie began to find her way to storytelling. Working with Catherine Wellner she learned how to turn the terror of public speaking into the energy to perform before many people.

She also credits the "Story and Snack" storytelling evenings held in Guild member Naomi Baltuck's home as an important source of confidence for her. Because of these experiences, Cherie is pleased to carry on the tradition of monthly "Story and Snack" evenings in her home. For the past four years new tellers have been able to try their wings in the safe, encouraging environment of Cherie Trebon's living room. She says that Guild members and others come to these evenings for many reasons. Some want to learn to tell for their children or grandchildren while others have ambitions to perform before larger audiences. Experienced tellers occasionally

try out new material on these evenings and many people come simply because they love stories. All are welcome.

Cherie describes herself as a revivalist storyteller who likes to bring back old stories of myth and legend. Like most tellers she spends a lot of time in the library where she looks for two or three versions of a story she can absorb and revise for her own telling. Although during difficult personal times Cherie's storytelling career was on hold, her creative spark never faltered. Today her career is flourishing with so many requests for stories coming her way she says, "It's starting to feel like a job!" There is no doubt that it's a job she loves and one that brings great pleasure to all who hear her work.

Cherie Trebon invites members to "Story and Snack" evenings and to bring friends with them. Her next storytelling performance for the Storytellers' Guild is on February 12 at New City Theater. Check the calendar in this issue for dates and times.

#### Tales of a Winter Evening *Eastside Storytelling Concert*

Sponsored by the Kirkland Arts Center

620 Market St., Kirkland

Saturday, February 3, 7-9:30 p.m.

Featured tellers: Kevin Cotter, Debbie Dimitre,  
Scott Allen, Cherie Trebon

Admission \$5 for adults, \$2.50 for children. Program not suitable for children under 5 years of age. Reservations recommended: call 822-7161.

# C ❖ A ❖ L ❖ E ❖ N ❖ D ❖ A ❖ R



- 8 Second Mondays on the Hill (see page 4)
- 10 Application for Folklife due. Call 206/684-7300.
- 13 Kathy Murphy and Bob Christian, Family Storytimes at Rainy Day Books, 240 N.W. Gilman Blvd., Issaquah. 2-2:45 p.m., free, 392-8303.
- 13 Kathy Currie starts the wintry season with a warm blast. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.
- 20 Elaine Grinnel: Native American tales from the Olympic Peninsula. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.
- 25 Story 'N Snack dessert potluck and story swap. Call Guild for info: 621-8646.
- 27 Pat Peterson: stories to warm the fingers, toes, head and heart. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.
- 28 Story Corner with Kathy Currie, 1:30 p.m. at Bellevue Regional Library, 1111 110th Ave. N.E., 450-1775.



- 3 Eastside Storytelling Concert: Tales of a Winter Evening. 7-9:30 p.m., Kirkland Arts Center, 620 Market St., Kirkland, WA (for age 5+). 822-7161, reservations recommended.

3 Phyllis Silling: tall fables and spirited myths chase away the chills. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.

10 Cindy Easterson: lots of love and laughter for Valentines Day. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.

10 Kathy Murphy and Bob Christian, Family Storytimes at Rainy Day Books, 240 N.W. Gilman Blvd., Issaquah. 2-2:45 p.m., free, 392-8303.

12 Second Mondays on the Hill (see page 4).

17 Sandra Ogren: delightful stories of whimsy and wit. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.

29 Story 'N Snack dessert potluck and story swap. Call Guild for info, 621-8646.

24 Kathie Vitz: dramatic and exciting, wild and wonderful. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.

25 Story Corner at Bellevue Regional Library, 1111 110th Ave. N.E., 1:30 p.m. Teller T.B.A. 450-1775.



2 Debbie Deutsch: fabulous fables "march" in like a lion? Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.

9 Suzy Irwin: stories to brighten the rainy winter blues. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.

# C ❖ A ❖ L ❖ E ❖ N ❖ D ❖ A ❖ R

9 Kathy Murphy and Bob Christian, Family Storytimes at Rainy Day Books, 240 N.W. Gilman Blvd., Issaquah. 2-2:45 p.m., free, 392-8303.

11 Second Mondays on the Hill (see page 4).

16 Avis Jobrack: storytelling magic and mythical moments. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.

23 Workshop with Diane Wolkstein, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Seattle area, \$80. To register call Pat Peterson, 206/935-5308.

23 Rosemary Adamski: stories filled with surprises and sunshine. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.

24 Story Corner at Bellevue Regional Library, 1111 110th Ave. N.E., 1:30 p.m. Teller T.B.A. 450-1775.

28 Story 'N Snack dessert potluck and story swap. Call Guild for info: 621-8646.

30 Jamie Dahlgren: tall tales, short stories for listeners big and little. Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island, 11 a.m. (1/2 hr., ages 3+), 232-6920.



8 Second Mondays on the Hill (see page 4).

9 Diane Wolkstein performs in Seattle at Elliot Bay Book Company, "Tricksters, Fools and Esther," 7 p.m.

## Out of Area

### March 26

Victoria, B.C.: Diane Wolkstein performance of "Psyche and Eros," 7 p.m. Contact Pat Carfra, 604/479-9118.

### March 28

Vancouver, B.C.: Diane Wolkstein performance of "Psyche and Eros," 7:30 p.m. Contact Michael Bertrand, 604/732-3212.

### March 29-31

Vancouver Storytelling Festival. Contact Helen O'Brien, 604/876-2272.

## Diane Wolkstein to Perform and Teach in Seattle

Well-known storyteller and author Diane Wolkstein will be in the Seattle area this spring. On March 23, she will lead a workshop. Participants are encouraged to bring a story they love that is about five minutes long. Diane will discuss approaches to developing your storytelling talents. There will be group and individual sessions. The cost is \$80, and the workshop attendance is limited to 14 participants. The workshop will be held near the University of Washington in Seattle and we'll have a group potluck for lunch so we can visit and keep telling our stories. To register or for more information, call Pat Peterson at 206/935-5308 before 9 p.m.

On April 9, Diane will give a performance at the Elliot Bay Book Company at 7 p.m. Come listen as she tells us of "Fools, Tricksters and Esther."



**Seattle Storytellers' Guild**  
**621-8646**

President: Dawn Kuhlman (939-7117)  
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**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 winter issue is March 1, 1996.

Newsletter design by Nancy Blanton, 937-1343

## 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 list for related events.

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

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