Looking for a place to hear a variety of stories? Have a new tale that needs telling? Would you just like to meet and listen with other storytellers? Come and join the Circle on the 2nd Friday of the month at All for Kids Bookstore. We received requests for an informal place to share stories and information on storytelling in the Seattle area.

Many of you have attended the Tellers Night Out programs at All for Kids and told us you wanted more time to tell and/or visit. There will be treats—and tales. Please join us for our first gathering on Friday, January 13 at 7 pm at All for Kids Bookstore, 2900 NE Blakeley, Seattle.

GET SERIOUS ABOUT STORYTELLING
by Eva Abram

Beginning January 9, 2006, I will teach essential storytelling skills and techniques through Seattle Central Community College. This nine-week course offers thorough exploration and development of yourself as a teller. Whether you are a beginner or want to hone your existing skills, I invite you to join this fun and challenging course. By the end of the quarter you will have built your public speaking abilities, discovered how to let your personality come through in your presentations and you will know how to use the elements of telling effectively whether it be in the classroom or the boardroom.

To register call Seattle Central Community College at 206-587-5448 or see the college catalogue, page 73 for mail-in form. Nine weeks - $110.00

REGISTER EARLY for this non-credit course!
HUZZAH!!
A New Website Coordinator!

Mary Hobbs, a long time member of SSG, has agreed to assume the duties of Website Coordinator for the Guild. She will be adding information and material as she receives it and working with our website designer, Mark, in terms of updates and adjustments. Whether you are a teller already on the website interested in adding or changing material or someone interested in applying, please contact Mary at marykssn@earthlink.net. Also, if you have information which you think belongs on the website, please send it to her as well. (PS: Don't forget to send it also to the newsletter editor...)

ORACLE Awards Program - National Storytelling Network (NSN)

In 1995, the NSN Board of Directors with the support of the membership began to recognize individuals and organizations for their art as storytellers and/or for their work in the storytelling community. Over the years this program has become the ORACLE Awards. The presentation of the awards occurs at the National Storytelling Conference.

National Awards

Recipients of each national award are nominated by the general membership, reviewed and selected by the Awards Committee from nominations submitted by the general membership and confirmed by the board of directors. Individuals currently serving on the board of directors and/or the awards committee are not eligible to receive an award. There are five national award categories:

Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to individuals in the storytelling community who have dedicated their lives to the art form of storytelling and who have demonstrated meritorious service to the National Storytelling Network, as well as to the community of storytellers at large. The individuals who are nominated should be those who have expanded public awareness of the art of storytelling by virtue of their preservation of traditional art forms or the significant originality of their body of work.

Distinguished National Service Award is presented to those individuals, members or groups who contribute their time and energy in an exemplary manner on the national level to forward the work of the National Storytelling Network.

International StoryBridge Award was presented for the first time in July 2002. This award recognizes the exemplary work, dedication and spirit of those individuals or groups that promote the art of storytelling in their own country or promote the building of bridges between their country and other countries through the use of storytelling and/or storytelling events.

Talking Leaves Literary Award is presented to those members of our community who have made...
Changes—In the Wind
Notes from the President
by Pat Peterson

If you have been promising yourself to work on your storytelling or to become more involved with the storytelling community, winter is a fine time to do it. Connect with other tellers. Make the effort to attend the Story Circle at All for Kids or storytelling at Ravenna Third Place. Rummage through that pile of story possibilities and bring it along to share. We welcome you.

Come to Listen—Come to Tell...Story Circle or Story Swap. No matter what you call it, we welcome you to join us on the second Friday of the month at All for Kids.

Our format is changing. Instead of a featured teller, followed by an open mike, we are bringing the Story Circle back to the Seattle area. It will be very informal with time to present old favorites or maybe a work in progress. There will be time for visiting with other tellers.

If you are just curious as to what storytelling is all about, this is a time for asking questions. You wanted more time to share stories and we listened. Come join us!

BOOK REVIEW by Aarene Storms

Note: “Here’s a book that may be of interest to storytellers...not a ‘storytelling’ book exactly, but it’s great fun.”...Aarene

Anansi Boys by Neil Gaiman

“Fat Charlie” Nancy has always been embarrassed by his dad. When he attends his dad’s funeral, Fat Charlie learns that not only was his dad embarrassing...he was also a god. A trickster god, to be precise: Anansi, the African spider hero, who was the precursor to Brer Rabbit and many other mythic tricksters. In learning more about his estranged father, Charlie discovers that he has a brother, Spider, who has inherited some of their dad’s more exotic god-like abilities. Spider causes nearly as much trouble as Anansi himself, espe

continued on page 8

New Storytelling Venue in Everett
Leave it to KSER Global Griot hosts, Aarene Storms and Jim Beidle to find a new spot for storytelling. Aarene, a former SSG board member and librarian at Richmond Beach, Kenmore, and Lake Forest Park Libraries, and her Global Griot partner, Jim, presented their first concert, “Stories of Light and Dark” at Zippy’s Coffeehouse in Everett on Saturday December 3rd. Their next concert is:

Once Upon A Time, Stories of New Beginnings
Saturday, January 7, 8-10pm
Zippy’s Coffeehouse 1804 Hewitt Ave, Everett

For more info contact: aarenex@comcast.net or (425) 483-2287.

THE 2005 FOREST STORYTELLING FESTIVAL
by Mary Brugh

Once again the Forest Storytelling Festival delighted us. Against the setting of the Olympic Mountains and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, stories were told, songs sung, friendships rekindled, and new ones formed.

This year marked a major change in the management of the Forest Storytelling Festival. Josephine Pederson handed the organizational challenges over to Cherie Trebon, who was assisted by Pat Peterson. Josephine looked lovely and relaxed without the weight of festival responsibilities on her shoulders, and Cherie pulled together a fine festival of stories and songs by a variety of inspiring and amusing storytellers.

The featured tellers were Gay Ducey, Tim Tingle, Kathy Currie, Eth-Noh-Tec, and the singing cowboy Paul Williams. Not only did we have Paul’s songs as another way to hear a story, but Gay Ducey opened each of her programs, as well as her workshop, with group singing of old familiar songs. The rousing group singing really brought us together. Local tellers from the Port Angeles area opened for the featured tellers, and Pat Peterson was MC for the weekend. Concerts, workshops, and story swaps filled the weekend.

This is a high quality festival with a friendly intimate feeling. If you have never been, consider going next year. You won’t be disappointed.

In the Wind
A WORKSHOP FOR STORYTELLERS
AND THEIR TALES
with Jennifer Waldron, Ph.D.

All storytellers need a place to go where they can tune-up their skills and knack for telling tales: a place to freshen-up their style, receive productive feedback, and quite possibly engage their senses in a new way - kick things up a bit and see what happens.

In this small group setting, some of the things you'll experience are how to:

♦ warm-up your voice
♦ project your story without damaging your voice (or soften your sound if you are too loud)
♦ expand your vocal, physical and emotional range of expressions
♦ use rhythm and pacing to dramatize your story
♦ find the best pitch for your voice

You are the "book" for the class. The focuses are on how you create emphasis, express feelings, and establish mood - plus how to remove blockages that limit your performance.

Bring to the workshop the opening of a story you want to tell: one you have told many times or one you are currently working on. The length should be 2-4 minutes. This will be videotaped and serve as a format for everyone to learn from.

Enrollment is limited to a maximum of 8 and minimum of 6.

When: January 7, 2006 (Saturday)
10am – 2pm

Cost: $45
(Send check to address below by January 4, 2006)

Location: 5217 N.E. Forest Glade Ln.
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Please call to register and for directions to site by December 31, 2005. 206-855-1088

Jennifer Waldron, Ph.D. has studied and taught performance of literature courses at the college level and continues her private Speech Coaching practice for Radio and Television Broadcasters, lawyers, fundraisers, politicians, and those who want to develop their natural sounding voice (1978 to present). She has performed her own one-woman shows and produced "Art on the Edge," a monthly radio program that interviewed local artists. For more information, go to www.jenniferwaldron.com

Winter 2006

NEWS FROM PORT TOWNSEND
by Charise Diamond

In January the story gathering will be moved to the Hostel at Fort Worden and will be moved to the 4th Tuesday of each month. JANUARY 24th IS OUR FIRST SWAP AT THE HOSTEL. This gives you plenty of time to create/rehearse a story to share. There will be a potluck at 5:00 PM followed by the story swap from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

Please pass this information onto your swap group -- and anyone else you care to. We would like to set up an interswap party schedule and make the small swaps bigger, and get to know area tellers.

Storytelling and the Smash Mouth Culture
(Editor's Note: The following remarks were made by Amy Gutmann, President of the University of Pennsylvania at a commencement address at Wesleyan University in 2005.)

“We are living in a smash-mouth culture, in which extremists dominate public debate to the point of highjacking it....Nowadays public language seems to wear jack boots and trample whatever gets in it's way.... That's an alarming prospect for our children.

And that's where the stories we tell to the children of our communities become more important than ever. There is a mutual non-threatening engagement between the storyteller and the listener, whether they be friends, family, or mere acquaintances. There's nothing accusatory about a story; it builds empathetically on neutral ground between the teller and the listeners, allowing for various kinds and degrees of acceptance and interpretation. It is, in a way, a civil discourse carried on through metaphor...."
Editors Note ... by Jill Johnson

The last few months, for me, have been full of changes. I remember standing backstage at a Cameroonian theater in October, listening to a talented young musician/storyteller onstage playing his mvette, a traditional African instrument. The stage was bathed in blue light, the audience was hushed - it was magical. As I began to tell, I felt like Anansi, spinning a web.

Then, a family situation forced me to come home a week early. I barely got my bags unpacked when my mother fell and broke her hip. I spent most of November in Connecticut. Back home, as I frantically tried to catch up — with work and performances, I received word that two of my dear Jonesborough storytelling friends — a couple - had died — within a week of one another.

How am I to interpret all this? I don’t know. The only thing I do know is that the work I do — and the storytelling community I am part of — are absolutely essential in dealing with it.

In this issue, Doug Lipman talks about the blessings of being a storyteller. As part of that world, I do feel blessed — and grateful. Storytelling equips me with resources which years ago I never even knew existed. In this season, may you be blessed as well.

Folklife: How Performers are Chosen
By Pat Peterson

Each year Northwest Folklife receives thousands of applications from people who want to participate in the festival’s programs. The staff spends the better part of the year running applications through the selection process. Performers are organized into genres or categories. Those in categories with many applicants are often rotated every other year so that new performers may be included.

Northwest Folklife is still accepting performer applications for the 2006 festival. All applications received after November 1 will be processed on a space-available basis. Notification letters are mailed in March.

If you are a storyteller who would like to apply, go to www.nwfolklife.org or call 206-684-7300 to obtain an application.

Book Review
by Pat Peterson

Telling Stories to Children
National Storytelling Guide
Betty Lehrman, Editor
National Storytelling Network

If you tell stories to children, this is a book for you. If you are a storyteller, librarian, teacher or parent who wants to share stories with children, this book will provide you with tips and techniques to entertain, inform and educate.

The contents include articles on how to choose age-appropriate stories, the elements of successful programs, techniques for learning and performing, challenges and considerations and using storytelling for other purposes. The Storyteller’s Bookshelf lists a selection of story collections and advice on telling to children. The Websites of Interest will provide information valuable for searching out stories, guides for teaching and tellers on video and audio.

All of the articles are written by practicing storytellers.

Talented members of the Seattle Storytellers Guild are well represented. Jill Johnson and Sharon Creeden serve on the National Storytelling Press Committee and spent time bringing this valuable book together. Naomi Baltuck, Elizabeth Falconer and Meg Lippert contributed articles reflecting their expertise.

You can order the book from the National Storytelling Network www.storynet.org.

The Guild has some copies available for purchase at Guild events. The book lists at $12, and we are offering for $10. Tax included.

In the Wind
THE FIVE BLESSINGS OF A STORYTELLER

by Doug Lipman

Sometimes, weary with the struggle for recognition, we’re likely to snap at the next well-meaning stranger who asks, “You’re a storyteller? Does that mean you get paid for lying?”

But we have plenty to be thankful for. I feel so lucky to have discovered this art form. To be alive during a great storytelling revival. To be able to make my living doing work that I enjoy with my whole being. To be able to interact with so many wonderful people around the empowering subject of stories - including the stories of their lives.

I believe that NOT acknowledging our gifts is a form of arrogance. So I’ve gathered my top five storytelling blessings. I am thankful:

1. For the Tools of Storytelling

Can you believe it? Whether in coaching or performing, I reach people with the simplest of tools. I happen to admire doctors, filmmakers, and inventors. But I am grateful that I don’t need an MRI machine, a pro TV camera, or a lab filled with equipment.

More than that, I don’t require the millions of dollars and hundreds of helpers it can take to make a film, a TV show, or a new product. In particular, I don’t require financial backers who can provide millions of dollars - and who might want the control over my storytelling (and even my life) that such investors often expect.

Using an object to reach people can be wonderful: I love what a violinist can do, or a computer programmer, or an architect plus a construction crew. But to help people turn toward their deepest selves, I need use only elements that are part of me: my voice, my body, and my creative intelligence. As Casey (one of my favorite college-student friends) says, “How cool is that?”

2. To Be a Tradition Bearer

My father was Jewish, but passed along no overt Jewish tradition. We only went to synagogue for the Bar Mitzvahs of my cousins.

But my father filled our lives with stories: The jokes he learned on the bus ride home from work. The stories of books he had loved as a child. His adventures as a young man during the depression, World War II. Anything could prompt a story. A question. (“Dad, what does ‘dilemma’ mean?”) A complaint. (“I don’t have any friends, Dad.”) Reading the newspaper. (“Say, Doug, do you know what this columnist just wrote?”) Or just sitting around on a summer evening in our modest apartment, wondering, as he said, “what the poor people are doing tonight.”

Winter 2006

As an adult storyteller, I went once to a workshop led by Rabbi Schlomo Carlebach. I noticed, of course, how unlike my father Reb Schlomo was. Carlebach was deeply religious. His speech was sprinkled with Yiddish expressions. He played the guitar and got people up dancing. But my overwhelming feeling in response to that evening was “familiarity.” Reb Schlomo used stories for everything: To make a point. To open up our hearts. To bring us together. That was how my father used stories! That was a magnificent part of Jewish tradition, that I had received along with the air I breathed.

I feel grateful for the particular stories that have nourished my imagination and my heart. I feel grateful for being a link in the chain, able to pass along those stories I have loved. Able to pass along, too, a Jewish style of weaving storytelling into any gathering. Able to pass along, overtly and intentionally, everyone’s ability to tell and respond to stories.

3. For Those Who Support Me

Recently, at a party someone asked me the common question, “How do you support yourself?” I noticed what an absurd phrase that is, “support yourself.”

I don’t support myself. I am actually supported by a web of relationships - ranging from my closest loved ones; to my dear, long-term colleagues; to you, the readers of this newsletter; to those whose names I don’t even know, but whose turning toward story makes it possible for me and others to do this good work.

The question I would like to be asked is not, “How do you support yourself?” Instead, I want to be asked, “How are you supported?”

And right after that, I might ask myself, “And do I remember to be grateful for being supported?”

4. To Be Able to Use My Whole Self

In college, I majored in mathematics. I enjoyed the challenge of math and physics. But I also loved history, literature, linguistics, and music. In that environment, however, being a generalist was a distinct disadvantage, since it kept you from advancement in any one field of study.

In the early 1970’s, I began to perform as a folk-singer and music educator. To my surprise, I encountered another form of restriction. I naturally told stories along with my songs, but people complained. “Too much talking,” they said.

But when, a few years later, I began to call myself a storyteller, I found a place for all my loves. At story telling performances, no one objected to my breaking into song or using instruments. Even more, I was able to let my love for history lead me to discover inspirational stories from the past. I used my love of science and math to create stories that conveyed some of the joy of
Blessings, continued

intellectual discovery. More recently, I’ve even been able to use my love of computers in the service of spreading storytelling via email and the web.

All in all, storytelling is a home in which I can use all my gifts. Who wouldn’t be thankful for that?

5. To Be Part of a Hopeful Community

I’ve watched one of my friends struggle with her work environment. She’s a fantastic teacher in an elementary school. She gains many satisfactions from her students, their parents, and her colleagues. She knows that she has helped hundreds of students to discover some of their own intelligence, creativity, and ability to cooperate.

But she has come to hate the teacher’s room. The teachers in her school system, like those in so many places, have very little control over their working conditions. In spite of their strong union, they are subject to the arbitrary whims of their principal and superintendent. Every day, they see the effects on their lives of reduced school budgets, higher class sizes, and public fighting between competing constituencies and philosophies.

Worst of all, my friend says, they have begun to live their despair. They’ve stopped trying to “make a mark” and have settled for “marking time” until they can retire. Even their postures seem to say, “What’s the use?”

I believe (like my friend) that it’s possible to change even the most rigid and storm-tossed institutions in our society. But my friend is surrounded by folks who’ve “given up.” And that tarnishes even the shiniest of apples.

I am thankful that my work keeps me in touch with folks who are hopeful. They make it so much easier for me to remember our human possibilities, even in the face of setbacks and discouraging developments. To imagine a happy ending to our story.

It may not be “ever after,” but it sure makes for a life filled with blessings.

A Midwinter Night’s Dream

By Lynne Duddy

January is the time of endings and beginnings, of looking backward to the past and forward to the future. It is a fine month to tell stories of cold and snow and deep silence; of ripe red strawberries and precious flowers hidden beneath the killing frost; of snow maidens and of Great-Grandfather Frost; of babushkas in fur coats and wolves howling in the Russian night; of hunger, and night, and the stars.

Come and hear Concetta Antonelli, Leslie Slape and Lawrence Howard tell tales of the midwinter season on January 21, 2006, at 7:00 PM, in the Community Room at McMenamin’s Kennedy School, 5736 NE 33 Ave., Portland, OR at 7:00 p.m.

If you want to tell a story yourself, please come at 6:15 PM for the Open Mic (6:15-6:45) and tell your holiday story before the 7:00 p.m. concert. Stories should be 5-7 minutes in length and appropriate for older children and families.

THE JEWEL BOX THEATRE
PRESENTS...

Bards By The Bay and the Jewel Box Theatre will once again be presenting an evening of storytelling. “Stories For A Winter Night” will be Saturday, January 28 from 7 to 9 pm. Elizabeth Erving, Elizabeth Shepherd, Liz Falconer and Jill Johnson will be performing wonderful stories of strong women, winter nights, fairies and trolls. Come cozy up to a warm story on a cold night. Tickets are $10 at the door. For more information call Kathy Currie at 360-779-3037.

In the Wind

Editor’s Note:

Doug Lipton’s article from the fall issue, “Are You Using Your Gifts,” will be continued in a later issue.
outstanding contributions to the literary body of storytelling as authors, editors or collectors

Circle of Excellence Award is presented to artists who are recognized by their peers to be master storytellers who set the standards for excellence and have demonstrated, over a significant period of time, a commitment and dedication to the art of storytelling.

Regional Awards

Recipients of the regional award are nominated by the general membership, reviewed and selected by the state liaisons from a particular region from nominations submitted by the general membership and confirmed by the board of directors. Individuals currently serving on the board of directors and/or the awards committee are not eligible to receive an award. Each region may present up to two awards annually:

Regional Leadership and Service Award is presented to individuals or organizations that have made a significant contribution to their local or regional storytelling community and/or have used storytelling to make a significant contribution to the larger community in which they live.

Nominating a potential award recipient:

Please submit all materials by Midnight EST, January 31st, 2006. Nomination forms may be downloaded at www.storynet.org - click on "Oracle awards programs" and e-mailed to awards@storynet.org.

Supporting documents and letters should also be e-mailed. Nominations may also be mailed in to NSN's home office. All mailed submissions can be mailed to: 132 Boone St., Suite 5, Jonesborough, TN 37659. Nominations are kept on file for two years. Nominees from the previous year are automatically included if they did not receive an award.

You may send updates for the files before the January 31st deadline.

Notification

The executive director of NSN will notify the recipients of the national awards no later than May 1st. The regional board representative will notify the recipients of the regional awards no later than May 1st. Nominators will receive a thank-you letter from the awards committee for participating in the process by May 1st.

Note: This information was submitted by Marilyn Milnor – WA State Liaison – and adapted from the NSN website.

Book review continued from page 3

Suddenly, Fat Charlie's life goes from boring and ordinary to fabulous, scary, and magical. Fat Charlie will need to learn to harness his own magical ability if he ever wants to take charge of his life again. But there are other mythical creatures who prefer that he—and Spider—don't survive long enough to do that.

The story is playful, the embedded stories are nicely re-told, the action is non-stop and the overall narrative is laugh-out-loud hilarious. Even if you've never heard an Anansi story before in your life, you will enjoy the antics of the African spider god and his children and their enemies and rivals. Not nearly as dark as Gaiman's award-winning American Gods, this book is a quicker read with wonderfully enigmatic characters.

Recommended for ages 14 and up; some (mostly offstage) drinking and carousing, some (mythic and weird) violence, minimal cussing.
January

7 Aarene Storms and Jim Beidle, Once Upon A Time: Stories of New Beginnings, Zippy's Coffeehouse, 1804 Hewitt Ave, Everett, 8-10PM. Contact: aarenex@comcast.net or 425-483-2287.

7 Jennifer Waldron, A Workshop for Storytellers and Their Tales, 5217 NE Forest Glad Ln, Bainbridge Island, WA, 10am-2pm. $45. Contact: 206-855-1088.

9 Eva Abram, Storytelling Course (opening session), Seattle Central Community College. 206-587-5448.

11-14 Jill Johnson, Barnstorming (premiere), Whidbey Island Center for the Arts, Langley, 7PM. 360-221-8268.


21 Concetta Antonelli, Leslie Slepage, Lawrence Howard, A Winter's Dream, McMenamin Kennedy School, 5736 NE 33rd Ave, Portland OR. 7PM. Story Swaps: 6:15-6:45 PM

24 Charise Diamond, Port Townsend Story Swap, Fort Worden, 6-8PM. chariseherself@peoplepc.com.

24 Jill Johnson, Little But Oh My! Yelm Public Library, Yelm, 7-8PM. 360-458-3374.

26 Maggie Bennett, Ravena Third Place, 6505 20th Ave NE, 7:30 pm. 206-525-2347. Love, Legends and Lyrics of the Irish: Folklorist Maggie Bennett relates the rich folklore of the Irish through songs, stories, and the recounting of traditions. She provides her own accompaniment on the Irish harp, autoharp, and mountain dulcimer.

28 Elizabeth Erving, Elizabeth Shepard, Liz Falconer, Jill Johnson, Stories for a Winter's Night, Jewel Box Theater, Poulsbo, 7PM. KandMCurrie@aol.com.

February

10 STORY SWAP: all tellers welcome! Story Night Out, All for Kids Bookstore, 2900 NE Blakely, 206-621-8646. 7PM.

23 Mary Brugh, Ravena Third Place, 6505 20th Ave NE, 7:30 PM, 206-525-2347. Mary will transport you to an Irish cottage where folks come in from the cold to gather round the hearth and listen to stories of other times, stories of enchantment. Sometimes the storyteller will stop for a moment and the melody of a jig or a reel can be heard, and then the story continues ...


March

4 Kim Pearson, Your Own Life is a Story: you made history. Workshop and lunch, All for Kids Bookstore, 2900 NE Blakely, 10am - 1PM. Contact: storykim@comcast.net.

10 STORY SWAP: all tellers welcome! Story Night Out, All for Kids Bookstore, 2900 NE Blakely, 7PM. 206-621-8646.

30 Leslie Creed, Ravena Third Place, 6505 20th Ave NE, 7:30 pm, 206-525-2347.

Ongoing Events

Sundays
Global Griot, KSER 90.7 fm Broadcasting 8-11 Sunday mornings, live online at www.kser.org. Three hours of stories, music, poetry, culture, and myths from around the world.

Third Mondays
Story Circle of Whidbey Island meets at 7 pm at the Golden Otter Bookstore in Langley. Call Jean Gervais at 360-331-1273.

First Tuesdays
Frog Rock Story Circle 7 pm, 9702 Sands Avenue NE, Bainbridge Island. Call Alyson 206-842-5293 or Ed at 206-842-4562.

Fourth Tuesdays
Port Townsend Story Swap -- Fort Worden. 6-8 PM. All are welcome. Please contact chariseherself@peoplepc.com for more information.

In the Wind
Seattle Storytellers Guild

for updated information see
www.seattlestorytelling.org
or call 206-621-8646

2005-2006 Board

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Membership Form

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Today’s Date ____________________________

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Seattle Storytellers Guild
PO Box 45532
Seattle, WA 98145-0532

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