

*Portland Storytellers' Guild*

## Visit with A German Storyteller by Sarah Stein

In August I had the unique opportunity of meeting Martin Ellrodt, a German storyteller living in Nuremberg. I first heard about Martin when I read an article by him in a "Storytelling Magazine" (March/April 2002) devoted to international storytelling. Several years later when I was planning to visit Germany again, I took the liberty of e-mailing him and asking if I could speak with him when I was in Germany. I was amazed when he immediately e-mailed me back saying that I was more than welcome to visit him in Nuremberg and even spend the night at his home.

So on August 25, my husband and I met Martin at the train station in Nuremberg. We had lunch together and

then he asked me what I wanted to see. I said that I was especially interested in seeing the old Nuremberg, because it was one of the great medieval cities in Germany. It also had some of Germany's greatest painters like Albrecht Durer and many famous wood and stone-cutters, in addition to world famous Lebkuchen or gingerbread cake.

So began a 3 hour tour in English, in which I saw some of Nuremberg's greatest sights, made even richer by Martin's detailed commentary. Being a storyteller it was only natural that some stories would creep into his tour and they did. During a tour of a magnificent church called Saint Sebald, Martin said

that this saint, the patron saint of Nuremberg, was his favorite for telling stories.

St. Sebald was a hermit who lived in the woods surrounding Nuremberg and did many miracles. In one story, St. Sebald used icicles to provide heat for himself and his companion by miraculously lighting them since wood was not available.

A more morbid visit was to the hangman's tower, near a beautiful bridge. Martin told me that the hangman was not allowed to live within the city limits because of his unsavory profession. However, since they didn't want him to live too far away, in case they needed his services, he lived in a tower near the city walls. I asked Martin if he often gave



## Visit with a German Storyteller (continued)

they didn't want him to live too far away, in case they needed his services, he lived in a tower near the city walls. I asked Martin if he often gave tours of Nuremberg and told stories about its colorful history. Of course he had, but was now taking a break, because he had told these stories hundreds of times.

It was inevitable that I ask him if he told stories from Grimm. Martin said that he liked to tell them and did it regularly, often adapting them to the social conditions of the 21st century. This however evoked criticism from the members of the European Fairy Tale Association, who insisted on reciting these tales rather than telling them, so he simply did not tell Grimm to this specific audience. He also liked to tell Nuremberg legends, saint stories and myths. However, one had to be careful about telling German and Nordic myths, because they had been misused by the

Nazis for propaganda purposes and many Germans were still sensitive about that. He did say though that he and his wife, who played the harp, had presented a successful program featuring Scandinavian myths.

In the evening after a delicious lasagna dinner, we continued our conversation. Martin had many storytelling books in English, because not that many were written about the art of storytelling in German. One of his favorite books was "Who Says?" by Carol Birch, which touches upon the topic of whether there is a right or wrong way to tell stories. Storytelling in Germany was not as organized or popular as in the United States. German audiences were used to literary recitals than the intimate art of storytelling. However, interest was growing and he saw it as his mission, as well as the mission of other German storytellers to bring this art back to a country, which once was one of the great centers of storytelling. When I asked him how

I could thank him for his hospitality, he replied that the best way I could thank him was to offer the same hospitality to another storyteller.

I also had other opportunities to see storytelling events in Germany, including a fairy tale festival in the picturesque town of Steinau, where the Grimm brothers lived. In addition to puppet plays and music there was also storytelling by a storyteller with the wonderful name of Achim von (from) Wettesingen. There were also several storytellers at an art festival in my sister-in-law's village. So obviously storytelling is growing in Germany and Europe and it is people like Martin Ellrodt who are its driving force!

Contact Sarah Stein at:  
[ssteinstory@yahoo.com](mailto:ssteinstory@yahoo.com)

## Tcha Tee Man Wi Storytelling Festival – Corvallis, OR February

Coming in first weekend in February is the Tcha Tee man Wi Storytelling Festival in Corvallis, Oregon.

This year's festival features Alison Cox, Will Hornyak and Tim Tingle.

Storytelling concerts and workshops are free. Only the adult "Bawdy Tales" concert has a fee and tickets for this late evening event must be purchased in advance.

You can compile a mailing list from

business reply cards, customer information sheets, Business cards collected at trade shows, or membership lists. You might consider purchasing a mailing list from a company.

If you explore the Project Gallery, you will find many publications that match the style of your newsletter.

Next, establish how much time and money you can spend on your newsletter. These factors will help determine how

frequently you publish your newsletter at least quarterly so that it's considered a consistent source of information. Your customers or employees will look forward to its arrival.

Your headline is an important part of the newsletter and should be considered carefully.

In a few words, it should accurately represent the contents of the story and draw readers into the story.



Caption describing picture or graphic.

## Membership Cards due Out in February

Membership cards with your membership expiration date will be sent out in February. This way, you will know when your membership expires.

An email reminder will come out the month before your membership expires to help keep you notified.

Members that receive a hard copy of the newsletter via postal mail will have their membership expiration on the mailing label.

Questions? Please contact Margaret Eng at [meng@mesd.k12.or.us](mailto:meng@mesd.k12.or.us) or at the newsletter address on the last page.

## How to Become an Active PSG Member

- Host a PSG story swap and potluck on the first Friday of the month at the Community Room.
- Write an article for the quarterly newsletter. For example, write a book review, reflections on a storytelling festival, a personal journey in storytelling, etc.
- Volunteer your services at storytelling events. We can always use help at the Oregon Zoo tellings at the Alaska Tundra Amphitheater.
- Bring friends to PSG concert events and help further knowledge about the art of storytelling.
- Contact the PSG board and offer your talents or services. Contact Anne Penfound, Rick Huddle, Lynn Fike, Lawrence Howard, Sarah Hauser, Terry Jordan or Margaret Eng.

**Winter Calendar****JANUARY****27 Alaska Tundra Amphitheater, Oregon Zoo**

Storytellers Lynn Duddy, Lawrence Howard, Anne Penfound and Anne-Louise Sterry tell stories from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Take a break indoors and enjoy the stories! Free with zoo admission.

**FEBRUARY****1 PSG Story Swap and Potluck**

Sarah Hauser hosts the potluck and story swap in the Community Room at McMenemy's Kennedy School, 5736 NE 33 Ave, Portland at 6:30 p.m. Bring an entrée and serving utensil. The guild provides plates, forks, and napkins. Come to listen or share a story! FREE!

**2-4 Tcha Tee Man Wi Storytelling Festival**

A weekend of great storytelling in Corvallis, OR. Featured storytellers are Alison Cox, Will Hornyak and Tim Tingle. For information

**10 Balancing Acts - The Art of Being Human**

Lynn Fike, Concetta Antonelli and Leslie Slape relate tales of maintaining your balance in relationships with fellow humans and our planet earth. Community Room at McMenemy's Kennedy School, 5736 NE 33 Ave, Portland at 7:00 p.m. Suggested donation: \$3 child, \$4 adult, \$10 family

**24 Alaska Tundra Amphitheater, Oregon Zoo**

Sam Butler, Sarah Stein and Story Harmonics (Lynne Duddy & Lawrence Howard) tell stories from 2:00 -3:00 p.m.,. Free with zoo admission.

**MARCH****2 PSG Potluck and Story Works**

Terry Jordan hosts the potluck in the Community Room at McMenemy's Kennedy School at 6:00 p.m. The potluck will be followed by an evening of stories at 7:30 p.m. from Ruth Ann Homan, Pam Maben, Jill Safran, Rita Jean Stochosky, and Julie Strozky. FREE EVENT!

**10 Tales of Spring Cleaning, Shamrocks Gleaming and a Bit O'Scheming**

Sam Butler, Anne Penfound, Anne Rutherford, Story Harmonics (Lynne Duddy & Lawrence Howard) spring into Spring with fresh starts, grand schemes, and stories from the Emerald Isles, Community Room at McMenemy's Kennedy School, 5736 NE 33 Ave, Portland at 7:00 p.m. Suggested donation: \$3 child, \$4 adult, \$10 family

**24 Alaska Tundra Amphitheater, Oregon Zoo**

Roger Coles, Ken Iverson, and Terry Jordan tell stories from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Free with zoo admission.

**29 Gentleman, Wise Woman & Fools**

Anne Penfound tells stories for the Seattle Storytellers Guild at Ravenna Third place, 6505 20 Ave NE, Seattle, WA at 7:30 p.m. For information call 206-525-2347

*"Thank you to  
PSG  
Contributors!"*

**PSG Newsletter Contributors!**

Newsletter Writers;

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Margaret Eng

Lawrence Howard

SPRING ISSUE  
DEADLINE : MARCH 15!

ONCE UPON  
A TIME

PORTLAND  
STORYTELLERS'  
GUILD

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.portlandstorytelling.org](http://www.portlandstorytelling.org)

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## Portland Storytellers Guild - Membership

With your \$15.00 membership, you will receive the quarterly newsletter, reduced admission to all Guild events and, if you are a storyteller, you will receive a free posting to the Guild website <http://www.portlandstorytelling.org>. But most importantly, you will have the opportunity to share in a community of people, like you, with a passion for storytelling.

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Please send the newsletter and other Guild information to my street address

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please send the newsletter and other Guild information to my email address

Please make checks out to: **Portland Storytellers' Guild**

Mail registration form to: **Portland Storytellers' Guild  
39125 Meinig Court  
Sandy OR 97055-8303**

### *About Our Organization...*

The Portland Story-tellers' Guild works to preserve the ancient tradition of oral story-telling in the modern world. We do not read, but rather, tell our stories. We tell myths, legends, folktales, historical stories and personal tales. We strive to discover and convey the universal themes and messages in our stories.

Oral storytelling is an interactive art, and we believe that the story happens not just in the mouth of the teller nor solely in the ear of the listener, but somewhere in between; the teller and the listener create the story together. The story is told face to face, eye-to-eye, and heart to heart. – Lawrence Howard

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