

Time to sit down for a good story

Winter Festival continues today

By Desiree Belmarez, Camera Staff Writer
February 13, 2005

The sound of children chanting and drums beating filled the auditorium of the Boulder Public Library as storyteller Sondra Singer took the stage Saturday.

Singer, who recently returned from a trip to South Africa, took her audience on an interactive and imaginary tour of Africa as she retold African folk tales in her presentation of "A Tour of Africa in Story, Rhythm and Song."

"We are going to visit Africa but we are going to do it in our imagination," Singer said. "Sometimes the best way to visit a place is in our imagination."

Singer is one of 28 storytellers showcased at the Winter Festival of Stories at the Boulder Public Library Saturday and today. The event is funded by the Boulder Public Library Foundation and the Rocky Mountain Storytellers Guild.

Reily Pond, 4, of Denver kept time with her foot and bobbed along as she listened to the drums in Singer's presentation.

"I like the music of the drum, but I like it more when they are singing," Reily said.

The Boulder Public Library has hosted the Winter Festival of Stories for five years. The annual event began after Linda Batlin, co-president of the Rocky Mountain Story Teller Guild, decided to bring storytelling to Boulder.

"Storytelling is an important way for people to connect," Batlin said. "It touches everyone's life because everyone has a story."

Carol Heepke, special programs coordinator at the Boulder Public Library, said storytelling in libraries has grown over the past 20 years and provides audiences with "insight that they can't always get from a book."

"We are proud to be holding an event that perpetuates one of the world's oldest art forms," Heepke said. "The library is a natural place for that."

Taking advantage of the numerous opportunities to hear stories was Mallory Craft, 8, of Boulder.

"I have been to all the stories, and I like them a lot," Mallory said.

Mallory played with fairies and elves and learned whether or not rainbows shine in winter in storyteller Diana Crow's "Smiley Tickles."

"Smiley Tickles was my favorite because we learned how to care and share and play fair," Mallory said.

Although some of the stories attracted a younger crowd like Reily and Mallory, the festival also appealed to a more seasoned audience, such as storyteller Sunny Hackman, 52, of Lakewood. Hackman spent her Saturday listening to stories.

She will present "A Winter Garden: A Floral Affair in Story" from 4:10 to 4:40 p.m. today in the auditorium of the Boulder Public Library.

"What better way to spend a day than to hear a good story," Hackman said. "Storytelling makes you question the places you have been and the places you want to go."



WHAT: Winter Festival of Stories

WHEN: 1 to 5 p.m. today

WHERE: Boulder Public Library Auditorium, 1000 Canyon Blvd., Boulder

CALL: (303) 441-3196 or visit www.boulder.lib.co.us/calendar/

MEDICAL AID FUNDThe Winter Festival of Stories this weekend is dedicated to storyteller Opalanga Pugh of Denver, who has been stricken with cancer and doesn't have medical insurance. Donations may be made at the festival or mailed to: Friends of the Opalanga Fund, Zion United Credit Union, 6700 E. Colfax, Denver, CO 80220.