

SANDSPIEL

Newsletter of the Minnesota Sandplay Therapy Group

Volume X, Number 1

January 1998

Ages and Stages in Sandplay

Summer Sandplay Institute June 17-21, 1998

The Minnesota Sandplay Therapy Group announces with pride (and a little trepidation) the first-ever Summer Sandplay Institute, to be held from June 17-21, 1998 at the Carondelet Center in St. Paul. It will be co-sponsored by the Upper Midwest Region of the Sandplay Therapists of America and there will be two preconference events.

One motivating force behind the summer institute has been the requests from people living within a day's drive of the Twin City area for more "concentrated" training opportunities, allowing them to spend several days to a week studying sandplay therapy. Currently, MSTG sponsors periodic day long introductory seminars, a class in Beginning Sandplay Practice which usually meets for six to eight sessions

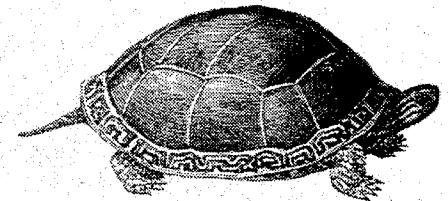
over as many months, and a monthly Advanced Sandplay Practice seminar. Joe Meyer and Barbara Weller also provide individual and group sandplay consultation. A related training program in attachment work, the three day "In Touch Again" workshops with membership in the In Touch Again network is also held at least yearly, and is coordinated by Nancy Hawkins. And individual sandplay process work usually occurs on a weekly basis, although accommodations can be made to concentrate it into two to five sessions over a shorter time period, with such visits occurring every month or two.

To better accommodate a wider geographic area, our first dream was a week of summer sandplay camp at a lake, but we decided that might be too ambitious for the initial attempt. (It's still in the dream file.) Instead, we will offer an intensive training experience spread over one week. The day long

Introduction to Sandplay Therapy will be offered on Saturday, June 13. ISST members will make appointment times available for individual sandplay sessions on Friday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, June 12-17, for those wishing to experience two to three sandplay sessions. Our usual fees will be waived for a special fee of \$50 per session for those attending the Introduction to Sandplay.

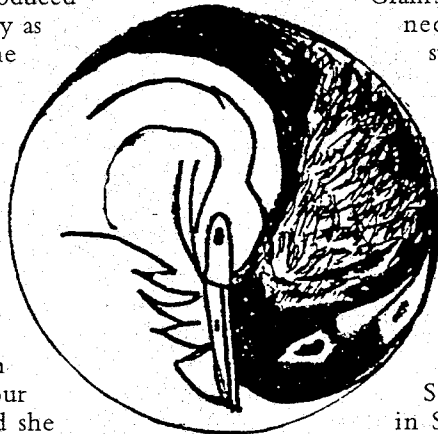
On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, June 15-17, The In Touch

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Egrets, Herons, and Other Long Legged Wading Birds

I met the egret first in the pages of bird books. My grandmother introduced me to wildlife as early as I can remember. She would tell me stories about birds and animals. Among the information she shared was about birds that had become extinct such as the Passenger Pigeon and the Ivory Billed Woodpecker which had vanished from our planet forever. And she told me about the whooping crane and the egret, how they had been so invaded by humans that they approached extinction. An image



which has haunted me for all these years is a picture from one of Gram's bird books of a long necked white bird, stripped of many of its feathers, lying in a pool of red blood. This Great Egret was a victim of the plume hunters.

How did I become drawn to egret as a symbol? I identify the conscious moment at the Sandplay Conference in San Rafael in 1992 when I observed a Snowy Egret each day I was there. In my own sandplay process, I brought in a white, long legged wading bird in my

fifth tray, about a year before the Conference. However, egret pictures had decorated my own home for years and images of egrets have been in my mind since early childhood.

Egret and heron magic have followed me in recent years. I have recorded various encounters in my personal journals, including some of the more numinous sightings which often occurred in conjunction with Sandplay experiences. The egret draws me by its beauty, its grace, its hunting prowess, its sociability, its angel-like appearance, and its survival of victimization by man. My experiences with the egret have symbolized connections, generation, creative energy, spiritual power, and messages from heaven. The egret has stood as an omen of good fortune. For me, she seems to have represented anima in dreams and in numinous

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Egrets . . .

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encounters with her.

Long-legged wading birds include egrets, herons, bitterns, storks, cranes, and ibises. They are considered indicative of longevity, generation, rebirth and are seen as "bringers of children." In heraldry, storks, herons, and cranes are often used interchangeably. Long legged wading birds often occupy similar habitat and most species are killers of snakes, which is seen as a very positive feature in the Christian tradition.

Hunting methods among wading birds vary but they include stealth, patience, quickness, alertness, and good vision. I have watched egrets stand motionless for extended periods of time before their serpentine neck strikes suddenly some unsuspecting prey. I have also seen them move slowly and quietly through the shallow water until they corner their dinner and make the lethal plunge. Sometimes they chase at great speed.

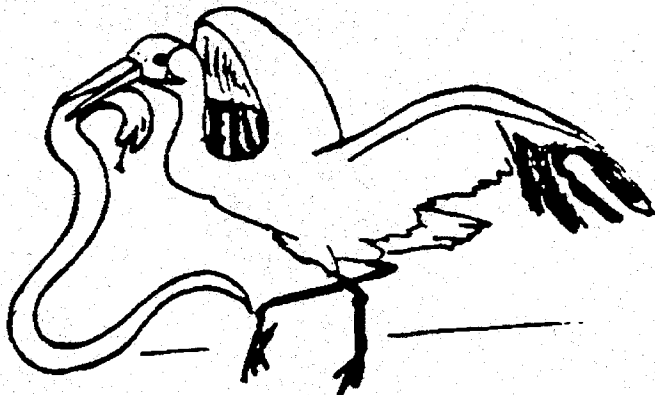
Because herons are adept at capturing their prey, they are associated with the warrior in Japan. In Iron John, a folk tale of the heron is retold: "The Japanese whose society has honored the

warrior for centuries, tell a story about a pond that had lost its king; uncertain what to do, the pond's inhabitants elect a heron (who is associated in Japan with the warrior) to be king. The heron eats up everyone in the pond." (Bly, Iron John, p 151) Bly goes on to add "when a warrior is in service, however, to a True King -- that is, to a transcendent cause -- he does well...." The Ojibway Indians of North America are reported to have Warriors select feathers of a white heron for their war path decorations.

Long legged wading birds typically are highly colonial nesters. Egrets are especially sociable and will nest in communities consisting of egrets and other herons. The communal pattern is said to stimulate courtship behavior among adult birds. It also serves to provide protection of the flock from predators.

Long legged wading birds have the equipment to stand or walk in water in search of food. They often sleep on one leg which gives the impression of calm reflection and contemplation. Their long necks compensate for their stilts permitting them to reach the water with their bills to capture prey. Members of the heron family have a

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Interested in a Supervised Sandplay Practicum?

The Minnesota Sandplay Therapy Group is looking for clinicians who have done personal sandplay work and would like an opportunity to begin practice (or to hone their practice skills) in sandplay therapy. We are planning to set up a sandplay room in a Minneapolis charter school which serves an immigrant population for the 1998-99 school year. Clinicians who are licensed in their field of psychotherapy would agree to provide 20 hours of individual sandplay therapy on a weekly basis to two children. (An exception to the licensure requirement may be made for spiritual directors or others whose field of practice does not require licensure in Minnesota.) The clinicians would participate in bi-weekly supervision sessions with a teaching member of ISST/STA in a small group (4 persons) format. This would fulfill part of the requirements for both the supervision and seminar hours required for membership in ISST/STA. All equipment and materials would be provided. If you are interested, please contact Barbara Weller at 729-7084.

Calendar of MSTG Events

—JANUARY—

In Touch Again Network

Friday, January 16, 1998, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center

Sandplay Advanced Seminar*

Saturday, January 31, 1998, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

MSTG Birthday Party

Saturday, January 31, 1998

Home of Nancy Hawkins and the MSTG
Miniature Store

5:30 p.m. for shopping followed by 6:30 pot
luck dinner, meeting with board election
and annual "toy swap." We will also have our
group's astrological chart done.

—FEBRUARY—

MSTG Board and Education Meeting
(all members welcome)

Thursday, February 12th, 1998 at 6:30
Home of Barbara Weller, 36th Ave. S., Mpls.

Sandplay Advanced Seminar*

Saturday, February 21, 1998, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

—MARCH—

Sandplay Advanced Seminar*

Monday, March 9, 1998, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

MSTG Board and Education Meeting *
(all members welcome)

Thursday, March 19th, 1998 at 6:30

—APRIL—

MSTG Board and Education Meeting *
(all members welcome)

Thursday, April 16th, 1998 at 6:30

In Touch Again Network

Friday, April 17, 1998, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center

Sandplay Advanced Seminar*

Saturday, April 25, 1998, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

—MAY—

MSTG Board and Education Meeting *
(all members welcome)

Thursday, May 14th, 1998 at 6:30

Sandplay Advanced Seminar*

Saturday, May 16, 1998, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

—JUNE—

MSTG Board and Education Meeting*
(all members welcome)

Thursday, June 4th, 1998 at 6:30

Sandplay Advanced Seminar*

Saturday, June 6, 1998, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Introduction to Sandplay Therapy*

Saturday, June 13, 1998, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

"In Touch Again" Attachment Workshop*
Monday- Wednesday, June 15-17, 1998

Summer Sandplay Institute:

"Ages and Stages of Sandplay"

June 17 (evening) - June 21 (noon), 1998
Carondelet Center on the campus of the
College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN

—JULY—

Annual Pool Party and Picnic*

Friday, July 10th, 1998

5:00 p.m. Gather, buy toys, drumming,
Pot luck dinner, swim (bring a towel) and tennis
RSVP: Carol or Larry (612) 642-9417

In Touch Again Network

Friday, July 17, 1998

10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center

* Home of Carol Kindschi and Larry Greenberg
2129 Larpenteur Avenue W.

(NW corner of Cleveland and Larpenteur)
Falcon Heights, MN 55113. (612) 642-9417

Meet our new president- Barbara Weller

As the outgoing president of MSTG, I am pleased to introduce to you our new president, Barb Weller.

Of course, most Sandplay folk already know Barb, especially MSTG and STA members. The story begins in St. Cloud, Minnesota, where she was born. Although she lived briefly in Rhode Island and California, she has lived most of her life in Minnesota. She attributes her concerns for the mentally ill and her career choice in mental health to her early experiences with her father who had a chronic mental illness. Her education includes a B.A. in sociology and psychology from St. Catherine's College in St. Paul, a M.S.W. (specializing in child work) from Loyola University in Chicago, course work and personal analysis in Jungian Psychology here and at the Jungian Institute in Zurich.

After graduate school, Barb worked in Child Protective Services of Hennepin County from 1968-1970, then at Washburn Child Guidance Clinic from 1970-1976 where she honed her play therapy skills. Beginning in 1976, she worked primarily at the Ramsey County Mental Health Center in a general clinical practice, including adults. She also consulted in several community agencies, taught at the University of Minnesota, and had a part time private practice. In 1991 she entered full time private practice in Minneapolis.

It was in her own analysis beginning in 1975 that she first became acquainted with Sandplay. Soon thereafter she met Dora Kalf. Following her advice, Barb pursued her own Sandplay process with Kay Bradway in San Francisco. With consultation from Kay Bradway and workshops in California with Agnes



Barbara Weller

Bailey, Dora Kalf, Kay Bradway, and other Sandplay pioneers, Barb set up her first miniature cabinet and tray in 1981. She became a member of ISST in 1985 and a founding member of STA in 1987, serving on the Executive Committee and Board for many years.

In the mid-80's Barb provided play therapy consultation with a number of child specialists primarily from Children's Hospital in St. Paul. It was with a group of these colleagues that MSTG was begun in 1988 to promote and provide training in Sandplay in this area. While she was MSTG's first president from 1988-1992, the First National Conference of STA was successfully hosted in 1989 in St. Paul by MSTG.

From this remarkable beginning, she conducted and arranged for personal processes and training in Sandplay, bringing in a number of STA/ISST members, including Estelle Weinrib, Kay Bradway, Andreina Navone, Hayao Kawai, and Kaspar Kiepenheuer. She arranged for and hosted visits by Lauren Cunningham and Lucia Chambers who each provided four years of on-going consultations and seminars for MSTG members. In addition to the on-going In-Touch, Introductory, Beginning and Advanced Sandplay Seminars, Barb directed and supervised the innovative St. Stephen's Project, providing an opportunity for Sandplay interns to work with inner city children. More recently, with the other two local STA/ISST members, Joe Meyer and Grace Hong, she formed the Upper Midwest Regional Chapter of STA which is co-sponsoring with MSTG the first residential Sandplay Summer Institute here in June, 1998.

On a more personal note, Barb lives with her partner, Marg France, and their three cats in South Minneapolis and spends some of the winter in Akumal ("Place of the Turtles") on the Yucatan Peninsula in Eastern Mexico. In addition to camping, Barb enjoys bead work and is especially interested in the Native American use of beads. With her office in the inner city of Minneapolis, Barb is increasingly involved in community organization activities as an activist. Of course, in MSTG, Barb has set the standard for chocolate chip cookies.

As our new president, Barb is refocusing and concentrating her energies here to help us all renew our efforts toward providing community-based, affordable Sandplay therapy and training that is available to all, but especially to individuals from culturally diverse groups. We look forward to the coming busy and productive years.

—Larry Greenberg

Bradways Join MSTG for Talk and Tea



Kay and Brad Bradway

Kay and Brad Bradway joined members of MSTG for talk and tea on Tuesday, October 7 prior to their boarding the Delta Queen Riverboat for a cruise on the Mississippi river from St. Paul, MN to St. Louis, MO. The gathering also gave members an opportunity to congratulate them on their 50th wedding anniversary. Kay, who is a Jungian analyst and founding member of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco, the International Society for Sandplay Therapy and of Sandplay Therapists of America, has presented to MSTG on previous visits to the Twin Cities, where she was born and to where she admits a fond connection. It is always a delight to have them visit the Twin Cities, and since this was the first purely social event in quite some time, we were able to catch up on news and happenings over the summer and, for those who attended the International ISST meeting a chance to share observations and experiences with the MSTG group. (See related articles.)

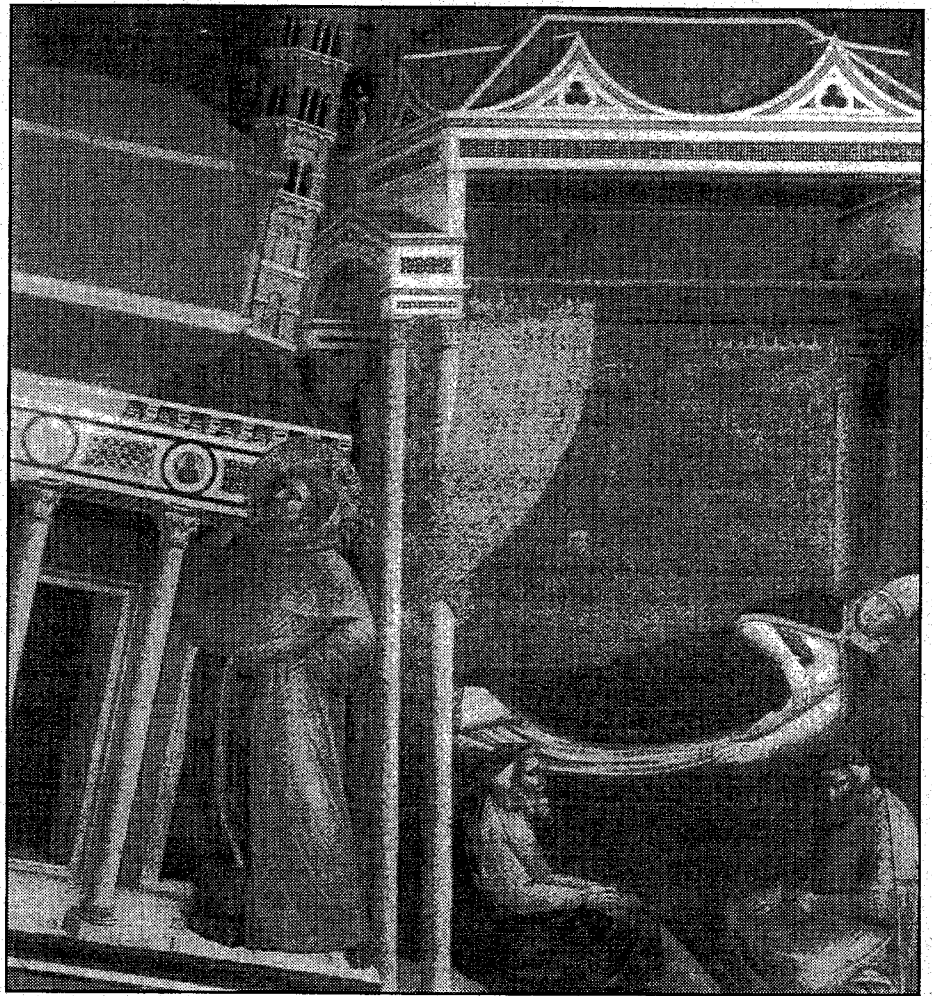
It was especially fitting for Kay and Brad to be here just prior to the start of this year's MSTG Advanced Sandplay course which will use her recently published book, *Sandplay - Silent Workshop of the Psyche* which she co-authored with Barbara McCoard. This book is highly recommended reading for those interested in Sandplay to serve as both introduction for those new to Sandplay and as a concise review of the history, theory and practice to those already experienced.

On Earthquakes, Aftershocks, and Archetypes

Do you ever have times in your life when everything appears to turn upside down, inside out, some universal trickster seems to shake a dearly held belief or perception to its core...when you feel as if a central credo has suddenly turned hollow, when the face you thought was your own becomes cracked and you realize it was just another mask - just one more persona, and not the "real you" after all? I'd bet you have. I know some of you have come to sandplay because of such experiences ... some in order to have them, because going down into the deeps of the psyche tends to shake things up.

Like you, my life has had a number of those periods. But I've never had that internal experience occur in such an external way as it did when, following the ISST conference in Verona, I traveled to Assisi. The whole experience of Assisi had a magical, mystical aura, from the time we first began to plan the trip. I heard stories of Francis, "the Little Poor Man" from my partner, a former and still "in spirit" Franciscan, whose fund of such stories seems inexhaustible. We watched "Assisi Underground", a wonderful film set during the second world war in which Assisi rescues Jews who then rescue Assisi. On the train the conductor came to our seats several times to assure us it would be "soon now, soon." Finally he came to point it out from the window, with an amazing excitement from one who must have viewed the little city on the hills a thousand times - "There it is! Assisi! Up there - Look, look!" It was a fairy tale city, walled, with turrets and towers and church steeples and bells chiming the quarter hours. The taxi driver told us stories as he drove us from the station up the hill, gave us a map, wished us "Pace e Bene" ("Peace and Good", the standard greeting of St. Francis.)

We stayed within a two minute walk of the Piazza del Comune, the center of town, and spent three days roaming the narrow streets which opened onto piazzas in front of churches, and overlooking (more fairytale) groves of olives and exquisite patchwork fields. We were greeted with



Fresco painting by Giotto from the Assisi Basilica depicting Pope Innocent III's dream of Francis holding up the corner of the Lateran Basilica which is about to fall into ruin.

"peace and goodness" everywhere. The commercial qualities, the hucksterism of other tourist traps, was missing here. Yes, there were souvenir shops - but no one seemed to be urging us to buy - simply welcoming us to look if we wished. A woman embroidering the "Assisi stitch" shyly showed us her work when asked. Some of the churches kept a bit of the simplicity of the saint - San Damiano, where Francis first "rebuilt the church", and his own tomb in the crypt of the Basilica of St. Francis. We loved all of it.

And then we woke at 2:30 AM on Friday morning, the 27th of September, to the first quake. It felt as if we were on a train, with cars crashing at either end of our own. But when the shaking stopped, except for a few paint flakes from the ceiling, everything was quiet and I (Queen of DeNial) went back to sleep. There were a few aftershocks the next morning as we set about our last day's wandering and the "serious shopping" we had postponed

till then. We saw our friends off on a train, around 10 AM, and then started walking toward the Basilica. We had stopped to check out the Benedictine Cathedral of San Pietro (the only church there with NO statues of Francis or Clare) when the second quake shook at 11:34. I remember gripping the edge of the pew for a second, looking up in awe as shafts of sunlight showed rocks, dust, and bricks tumbling toward us, as if in slow motion. A grinding, roaring sound filled the church, and people began screaming, running for the door. One lovely gentle man ushered everyone else out and was the last to leave. On the piazza in front of the church, a few groups of people stood about as if unsure what had happened. A friar, talking to two young men, was laughing at us as we brushed off our clothes, shaking. We asked them if anyone spoke English or French, and could tell us if this sort of thing

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Earthquakes . . .

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happened often here. Translating for him, the young men said they didn't realize there was damage inside the church, and yes, earthquakes were fairly common, not to worry.

Still shaken, we continued our walk toward the basilica. Sirens began to yowl; fire engines, carabinieri and ambulances were screeching around narrow corners, heading in the same direction. Helicopter blades flapped overhead, as we realized everyone was on the way to the Basilica. In the lower parking area we saw a great crack in the pavement, and another friar - only this one was sobbing. He told us his best friend had just died under the altar when it fell on him. "He was so young, so good. Why did he have to die?" He didn't know yet how many others were dead or trapped inside.

Assisi shut down that day. Shops closed. People wandered about in shock, comforting one another. (No one was selling T-shirts saying "I survived the earthquake".) We spent much of the day on the hillside overlooking the Basilica, keeping vigil. The monument to "Il Poverello" which had stood for over 700 years seemed to be falling. Only the crypt, the simple little tomb area in the deepest cellar, we were told, was undamaged. We watched and prayed as bodies were removed, families cried, dignitaries were 'coptered in, mountains of rubble were trucked out and guarded for their precious bits of paint, paparazzi scampered about. We had cameras too, but took no pictures. The only ones we have are in our minds - the orange glow of the setting sun behind the puffs and clouds of dust and rubble; the near-silence broken only by wails as more news came, more gurneys were wheeled into ambulances.

The Piazza del Comune, center of the town, became a communications center for carabinieri that evening. They were the only ones who could communicate; phone lines in and out were jammed, and we couldn't get word to our friends that we were all right. Aftershocks continued to shake the town in small shudders as we made our way back to our room to spend a last night, longing to get on our plane and into the air above it all, and feeling terrible about leaving the people who had to continue to cope with the devastation.

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An Open Letter to John Paul II

John Paul II
Vatican
Rome, Italy

Your Holiness:

I was among a group of Americans who had come to Italy for a professional conference. After the meetings were over we did some touring, ending up in Assisi.

On September 26, we were awakened about 2:30 a.m. by rumblings. Did you feel the tremors in Rome? I was just wondering, because I know that, in the past, Roman Catholic leaders have had to contend with rumblings that started in Assisi.

At 11:34 a.m. some of our entourage was at the train station in Cortona. Two of us had stayed in Assisi and were at the Church of San Pietro, one block from the Basilica of St. Francis. I'm sure you know that was the exact time that the earthquake hit, when the roof collapsed at the Basilica. Being a Franciscan in spirit, I began to reflect on the meaning that the collapsed roof might have for the larger Church. Francis of Assisi, after all, was the one to whom Jesus spoke from the crucifix, "Rebuild my Church, for as you can see it is falling into ruin." Francis, the little poor man of Assisi, appeared in Pope Innocent's dream, holding up the corner of the Church of St. John Lateran. How ironic that the roof would collapse on a church built to honor a man who had spent his life rebuilding. What caused the roof to give way? You probably read it in the papers—rigidity. The wooden roof was replaced, in the late 1950's, with concrete. There is no give, no flexibility, to concrete.

Could it be that your rigidity is causing ruin in the Church today? I don't believe you were always rigid, because you used to ski. Rigidity as a skier would be hazardous to your health. You have to be able to adjust for gradations on the slope, for snow conditions and changing weather conditions. There is a sense of play in skiing. And if you're blazing a trail, there is a sense of wonder and creativity. So, when did you become rigid? When was the last time that it was all right for you to adjust to an unexpected situation? When were you last surprised? What new trails have you blazed in the Church? When was the last time you were able to laugh at your own foibles? My hope for the institutional Church rests on you remembering what it was like to ski.

When I look at the Church as the People of God I am much more hopeful. We know that the earth itself is flexible; that's what causes earthquakes. We see the subtle humor in the creation of the papacy. Jesus said to Peter, with a wink, "You are Rock (Cephas) and on this rock I will build my Church." The rock is on the earth. Jesus knew that the earth would continue to move and shake. I think He expected His followers to get used to movement, to change, to new perspectives. I think he was also well aware that, through the centuries, the successors of Peter may be tempted to act as if rocks have roots. So earthquakes have been sent throughout the life of the Church; one was named Francis.

Outside of the Basilica, there was a crack, a schism if you will, in the pavement, caused by the earthquake. Pavement cracks of course can be caused by other things, for instance, by vehicles that are too heavily loaded. When bigger cracks begin to appear in the Church, do you think it will be a sign that you were the earthquake sent by God, or will the schism be from overload?

A Person Feeling the Tremors,

Margaret France

cc Sandspiel

Verona Reflections

As I reflect on the ISST conference in Verona, I am reminded of a kaleidoscope, an instrument through which one views constantly changing, symmetrical patterns, created by bright pieces of colored glass and reflected by mirrors as the tube is rotated, so many bright pieces, yet creating an integrated whole! Soft colors and taste of gelati, the smell of noisy Vespas cruising by, the rough feel of ancient Roman walls, sampling excellent pastas, watching energetic people in the square, the sound of elevating music, tangy lemoncello, and, of course, the multitude of sandplay images presented at the conference; these all merge into my recollections of Verona.

Rina Porat and Bert Meltzer from Israel in their presentation titled "Images of War and Peace" discussed the two concepts of trauma and stress, suggesting that trauma evokes earlier helplessness and stress comes from trying to survive in a disturbing environment. They stated that probably everyone in Israel is affected by an uncertain future. "Between the wars in Israel, time is spent preparing for the next war." The Middle East is in a chronic state of war, so peace as the absence of conflict evokes stagnation,

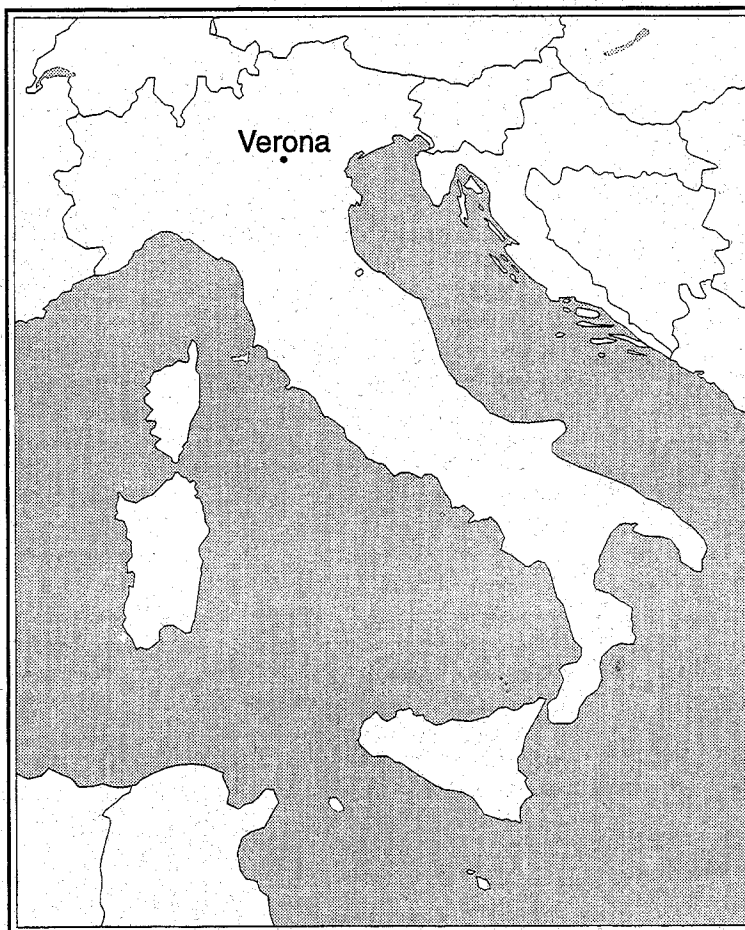
while paradoxically war as an image serves the diverse elements of change and conflict. While Porat and Meltzer's work with patients incorporates helping them in their processes of growth, development of consciousness and individuation, their first work is in the healing process. Healing implies a wounding has taken place and "there is practi-

cally no one in Israel that is actually free from physical, emotional or psychic wounds, created by life events." Sandplay work, combining sand and water, miniatures, and an atmosphere of freedom, protection and empathy holds the potential for both healing and transformation.

Hildegard Weinrich from London presented the case history of a woman in the 50's, entitled "Transition to a New Life." Of particular interest were the impact of varying life religious experiences and cultural conflict as she attempted to integrate Eastern experiences with her European heritage. Weinrich described her psychological process as "developing along classical alchemical lines, starting in a deep nigredo, passing through dismemberment and albedo until she finally confronted her basic pyrophobic during the rubedo stage of her development." Her patient was thus able, in therapy, to deconstruct her consciousness in order to generate a healing through more complex self organization

These are parts of the sparkling glass that contributed to the bright and elegant images in my Verona kaleidoscope.

—Marya Hage



Earthquakes . . .

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Denial didn't work too well that night. At 5 AM we were up to meet Mario, our taxi driver/tour leader. Mario spoke no English and only a little French, but somehow we communicated quite clearly on the drive to the station. We understood from him that the quake was worst in Assisi and in Foligno, that many homes had fallen, people were afraid. He himself did not live where the quake was bad, but he felt pain for all his neighbors - all the people of Umbria. As we left, he took us by the hands, hugged us, wished us a good voyage, and "Pace e Bene".

Marg and I still pause and wonder every time the ground shakes from a truck or bus. We still have dreams. The earth beneath our feet does not seem the same solid, dependable earth we had taken for granted all our lives - stable, stodgy Minnesotans that we are. It moves. We know that now.

Other things have moved in my life since returning. I think of those two friars the one who laughed at us, the one who sobbed and told of his friend's death. I came home to find changes in my neighborhood. The incipient crime problems were worsening. Shots were being fired. No one is dead - yet. But I think it is time not to laugh it off, as did Friar #1. It's time to cry and scream in protest, and start digging ourselves out.

That's one of the changes for me...a return to activism, doing something, every day, to yell in protest, to push for change. I echo many of the reflections in Marg's letter to the Pope, in another part of this newsletter - at what price stability? When we build monuments (and organizations), do we forget what it was we wanted to preserve and remember and hand on to others? If Poverello urged us to simplicity, to the poverty of spirit which never lets a material thing come between us and our neighbors, our God. Perhaps the earth is telling us to let the monuments crumble, and return to the message. . . and to spend our lives trying to discern what that message is.

—Barbara Weller

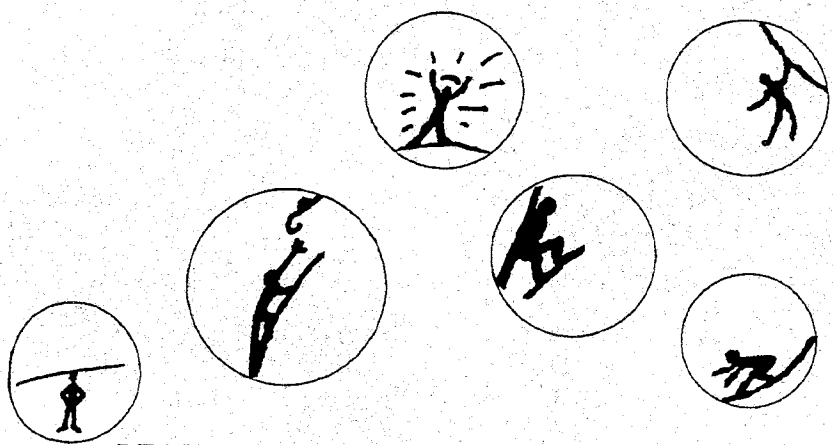
MSTG Birthday Party Marking our first decade!

We are ten years old as an organization and will be celebrating on Saturday, January 31, 1998 at the home of Nancy Hawkins (1012 Hyacinth Ave. E., St. Paul, Ph: (612) 778-1389) which also is the new home of the MSTG Miniature Store. All members and guests are invited to any or all of the events. The store will open at 5:30 p.m. for shopping followed by 6:30 pot luck dinner furnished by the MSTG board. There will be a members meeting with board election followed by an organizational astrological chart reading given by Roseann Giguere. Of course the evening will include the annual "Trash-and-Treasure-gift-swap-game" so please bring a wrapped item that you no longer want to hold onto and are willing to pass along to another unsuspecting player.

Sandplay Training Update

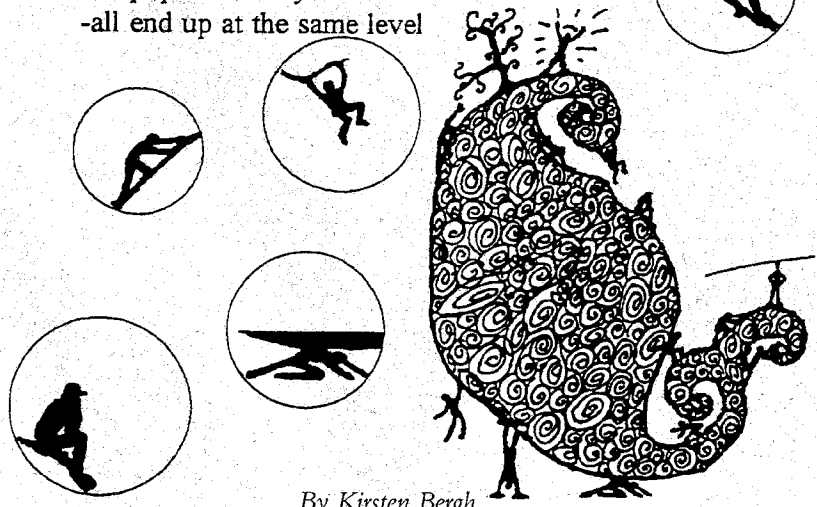
The main focus for sandplay training this year has been on the Advanced Seminar, held on one Saturday morning each month, and on preparation for the 1998 Summer Institute. (See article and brochure elsewhere in this newsletter.) The advanced seminar, with 13 participants, is focussing on the case of an adolescent for the entire year, and will be followed next year with an even more complicated late adolescent. Participants take responsibility for presenting on a theme of their choosing which is related to the case under study. Last year's seminar was so successful that we are working toward a presentation about the seminar, using that case, at the next national conference on sandplay to be held in Austin, Texas in 1999.

Beginning Sandplay Practice can be offered as soon as there are at least three persons who have completed their personal sandplay work and wish to use sandplay in their practices. An Introduction to Sandplay, for those unfamiliar with it, is available upon request to agencies or professional groups wanting a half-day summary. A full day will be offered June 13, 1998. For information on any of the above, or case consultation for individuals or in small groups, please contact Barbara Weller, 7297084.



REASONS WHY PEOPLE ARE LIKE BUBBLES

- all different sizes but all are basically the same
- all filled with rainbows
- all reflect their environments
- some go up in pairs, some stay single
- all begin at the same place
- all go different places
- most float up as high as possible for them
- some hit bottom
- some last longer than others
- some won't pop when touched; some will
- all pop eventually
- all end up at the same level



By Kirsten Bergh
reprinted with permission from "She Would Draw Flowers"

In Touch Network Continues to Meet Quarterly

The In Touch Network, the professional support meeting for therapists trained in the In Touch Again approach, will continue to meet quarterly at the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center in Minneapolis. Meeting dates for 1998 are: January 16, April 17, July 17, and October 16. Meetings are from 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. and include lunch. A \$10.00 donation is suggested. For more information, please call Nancy Hawkins at 612-929-9478.

Egrets . . . continued from page 2

comblike middle claw to help them preen their feathers. When one observes a long necked egret in the act of preening, he is reminded of the Uroboros. Jung mentions the idea of the bird eating its own feathers as a Uroboros variation (C.W. 14 par. 637). Although the Uroboros is most commonly depicted as a serpent eating its tail, it is sometime represented by a long necked bird. The Uroboros symbolizes the idea of Cosmic unity, fertility, the continuity of life, and eternity. (de Vries, Dictionary of Symbols and Imagery).

Many of the long-legged wading birds are striking in their beauty. Egrets are among the most photogenic birds in the world and often grace the pages of magazines which feature bird and wildlife photography. They stand out because of their white feathers, their stature, their flowing lines including the distinctive S curved necks (which characterize herons in general), and their aigrettes (the courting plumes worn by the males during mating season and from which egrets derive their name). Cranes also are endowed with rare beauty. Cranes are tall and stately. Unlike herons which tuck their necks in while flying, Cranes fly with necks extended. Ibises are also pleasing to the sight.

While wading birds symbolize longevity, their own existence has been threatened by man. In the late 1800's and early 1900's Snowy and Great Egrets attracted plume hunters because their aigrettes were in high demand to decorate women's hats. The beauty of the long, delicate, immaculate nuptial plumes excited human greed. The threat from plume hunters was stopped in the early part of the nineteenth century, due in part to efforts of the National Audubon Societies which formed in 1905 and which have adopted the Great Egret as their symbol. However, the threat to wading birds is still significant due to human destruction of habitat. Furthermore, wetlands are important for human survival as well as preservation of beautiful long legged wading birds.

While egrets are threatened by wetland loss, they seem to be more adaptable than many of their long-legged cousins. Egrets have expanded their ranges in North America and seem to be doing well in many areas.

The egrets' history of survival sug-

gests resurrection. Indeed, herons symbolize regeneration of life. According to Egyptian mythology the Bennu bird (which is an imaginary bird with the appearance of a heron) sprang from the heart of Osiris. According to Roman legend, after Aeneas had captured and destroyed the city of Ardea, a heron rose from its ashes. (de Vries) Jung describes a dream by one of his patients where a black bird dives into a fire, is consumed, and flies out of the ashes transformed into a white bird (Jung, C.W. 14 par.396). Although Jung related this story to the Phoenix bird, I think of the egret rebounding from the brink of extinction. Nevertheless the symbolism of transformation and rebirth is clear.

The Great Egret has been referred to a Angel Bird, probably because of its pure white plumage and its magnificent, broad wingspan. Indeed, in many of my observations of egrets I have been reminded of angels, not only by the features of the birds but also by the context of their appearances. The association of birds with the heavens is world-wide and dates back to ancient times. A white bird is especially symbolic of the soul and the spirit of life. Many long-legged wading birds are high flyers which reinforces the idea of their ability to reach for the heavens. As

"an angel," the Great Egret represents a mediator between heaven and earth and a message bearer from the gods.

In mythology and heraldry Stork, Crane, and Heron are very similar in their symbolism. They are birds of the Sun in many cultures as well as birds of water. On the other hand, the Ibis in particular is connected to the moon. The Ibis includes black species and white species suggesting the Yin and Yang symbol. In China and Japan the white heron is seen in conjunction with the black crow for solar/lunar energy and the counterbalancing forces of Yang and Yin.

The heron and other wading birds have come to symbolize intelligence. Ancient writings refer to the heron as henne, the wisest of birds. Cranes have the reputation of extraordinary intellect as well. The Bennu bird, with its long beak, is a symbol of wisdom in Egypt -- and also curiosity as it pokes its beak everywhere. Legend also recognizes the cleverness of long legged wading birds. The sly crane tricks fish and eats them while pretending to save them. A Russian fairy tale describes trickery of the long legged bird in the story of the Fox and the Crane (which Aesop told as the Fox and the Stork). After the fox served food to his feathered friend in a shallow dish, the bird later retaliated by

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Ages and Stages

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Again three day course on attachment therapy will be offered by Carol Kindschi and Nancy Hawkins. Participation in the course then automatically insures membership in the In Touch Again network with its quarterly follow up meetings.

A concentrated training in intermediate level of sandplay therapy, designed particularly for those who have had personal experience in their own sandplay process and an interest in use of it in their clinical practice will be held on Wednesday evening, June 17, through Sunday morning, June 21. Large and small groups will meet with three Teaching Members of The International Society for Sandplay

Therapy/Sandplay Therapists of America, and focus on three sandplay cases. The first will be a child's case, presented by Joseph Meyer, who will also lecture on the beginning stages in sandplay therapy. The second, an adolescent with an eating disorder, will be presented by Donna Johnson, of Knoxville, Tennessee. Donna is a nationally recognized speaker in the area of eating disorders and is an art therapist, as well as a Teaching Member. She will lecture on the middle stages of the sandplay process. The third case will be that of an adult struggling with residual issues from a bitter divorce, presented by Barbara Weller. The focus of her lecture will be the termination phase of the sandplay process.

In addition to lectures and group discussion of the sandplay material, the workshop will offer opportunities to experience art materials, drumming, dancing and storytelling as additional aspects of the creative healing process. The ritual aspect of therapy will be a part of the workshop, led by Cil Braun, a spiritual director and advanced sandplay training candidate.

The institute will be limited to 35 participants. Bed and breakfast accommodation is available at Carondelet Center for \$20/day for 20 participants.

For further information and registration materials, please see the brochure enclosed in this newsletter, or phone Barbara Weller, (612)729-7084, or Ethel Griggs, (612) 429-0064.

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Renew (or begin) your MSTG membership today!

The Minnesota Sandplay Therapy Group was formed in January, 1988, to support the work of the International Society for Sandplay Therapy at a local level. Its interests include public education, professional training, and research in sandplay. It supports the guide-lines for the professional practice of sandplay therapy as established by the ISST.

Benefits of Membership include:

- * Priority in MSTG seminars and workshops
- * Discounts on MSTG seminars and workshops
- * Priority for individual sandplay hours with visiting ISST members
- * Discounts on books, toys, and miniatures purchased through the MSTG
- * Special members events

Regular Membership is offered to:

1. Persons holding membership in the ISST
2. Persons holding licenses or certification in the discipline which has included training in psychotherapy such as psychiatry, psychology, social work, psychiatric nursing, pastoral counseling, and others as approved by the MSTG Board.

Associate Membership is offered to:

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2. Persons interested in and supportive of sandplay therapy.
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Egrets . . .

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providing soup in a long necked vessel when the fox came to dine at the crane's house. In India the Crane is a symbol of betrayal and malice.

The "treachery" of the long-legged wading bird was suggested by the bird's tipping off the enemy where to ford a creek or river. Such birds are also seen as helpers to foil one's enemy. Jung refers to a story of a Greek poet who is murdered by thieves. The robbers are caught when a flock of crane flies over their heads. As cranes had also flown over the crime scene, the guilty ones reacted to the appearance of the birds and betrayed themselves to their pursuers.

Courtship patterns of long-legged wading birds have found their way into mythology and cultural traditions. Egrets and other herons exhibit spectacular plumage and displays during their breeding season. Cranes, herons, egrets, and storks are nurturing and protective of their young, though adult birds seem to allow the sibling rivalry which can be fatal to the smaller and weaker birds.

Egrets, herons, ibises and cranes have characteristics that are masculine and others that are considered feminine. They are associated with fire and air (masculine) and water and earth (feminine). Birds are generally ambiguous with respect to sexual symbolism. In the above analysis, many of the psychosexual associations with the herons, cranes, storks, and ibises have been implied. Most have been masculine but not so clearly as to rule out feminine associations as well. In my own experience, the egret has had a feminine emphasis. Jung points out that birds can appear in dreams as an anima figure (Jung C.W. 9 par.365).

Long-legged wading birds naturally inhabit the sand. I have noticed them among clients' Sandplay creations from time to time. When they appear, I observe them to usually offer a powerful spiritual connection and a positive sign for transformation. Where they appear will make a difference to their meaning. I have seen them in trees or arranged above the tray suggesting an aerial view. They often show up in the water suggesting the feminine, the deep and the connection with the moon. They may appear as sentries or protec-

tors reflecting their solar energy. They may be positioned in the sand, on an island, or on the shore, emphasizing their earthly connections. And like other birds, when they appear, they likely signify a spiritual quality and communication with the "great spirit" or the Self. Yet they do have their dark side and one should not disregard their potential for treachery.

—Stephen W. Olmsted



Sandspiel is the newsletter of the Minnesota Sandplay Therapy Group, 3616 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55407, Tel: 612-724-0854. *Sandspiel* means "Sandplay" in German. The MSTG was formed in 1988 to provide education and training in the area of Sandplay; developed by Dora Kalff of Switzerland. 1997 board members: Lawrence Greenberg, President; Priscila Braun, Regina Driscoll, Ethel Griggs, Carol Kindschi, Joe Meyer, Jackie Weisma and Barbara Weller. Editorial Staff: Regina Driscoll, Lawrence Greenberg, Carol Kindschi, Doris Meyer and Sherry Machen. Typeset and Design: Clay Schotzko.



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