

September, 2010

Dear friends, near and far,

You are receiving this note from me because, at some time in the last ten months, you have helped ask the question, "Where is Bear?" Your support, expressed in countless ways, with compassion, generosity and a desire for justice, is the main reason I was able to get through the ordeal of my sudden departure from my beloved Castilleja in one piece and am now able to write to you from a good place.

Through the darkest days of the past winter, Alva and I have received such kindness and encouragement, topped by that glorious Celebration on January 17th. And with the spring came Alva's memorable birthday recital (forty-five years of exquisite musical composition, performed by a magnificent group of musicians). And then, in April and May, we both worked & played with a beloved theatrical ensemble in the return engagement of Joan McMillen & Sharmon Hilfinger's TELL IT SLANT, this time up in San Francisco's Fort Mason, with me back in multiple character roles and Alva helping with music direction. Then off to Rome and Florence, where we met up with siblings, for my 60th birthday trip-of-a-lifetime.

All the while, I have been doing a national and international search for a new Theater Arts teaching/directing job at an independent school. A number of you wrote wonderful letters of recommendation for me. We were both hopeful, and a little fearful.... for what if the right job came along, but in the wrong place... meaning we'd have to move away? Through the summer I put my videography skills to work, creating promotional and documentary pieces for local arts groups and a nonprofit that I hold very dear, GeoHazards International. And Alva and I began giving coaching in our respective fields, even as I worked to set up classes for this autumn.

And now, coming full circle from my childhood in Palo Alto and my mid-1980's return to the U.S. from Holland, I am quite suddenly back teaching and directing at the Palo Alto Children's Theatre. The Theatre's staff has given me a hearty welcome and I am signed on to do a number of projects this fall, and perhaps even more, come January. We shall continue living in our dear little Eichler (named Liefje) on Alvin Street and carry on teaching, learning, creating and recreating in this vital community that has done so much to foster all that I am and all I can be.

The year has changed me, and in no way more profoundly than in the deep affirmation of the goodness of this, my community, and my place here.

With deepest gratitude and the hope of continued contact,

Here is

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