

post parade

FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FALL 2009



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NOW

MIXED SIGNALS: TECHNOLOGY IN ENGLISH

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

This issue marks the fourth year in a row that the *Post Parade* has been produced by the students in ENG 385 Professional Editing, and I think you'll like what you see. As editor, I was fortunate to have a small but dynamic group of student thinkers, writers, designers, and editors.

This truly is THEIR publication. (Trust me—I would not have come up with a headline containing the word *Bomb-Diggity* on my own!) It has mostly been a matter of my offering a bit of guidance and then watching in amazement as they worked individually and collaboratively to bring you the newsletter you are now reading.

My special thanks go out to Adrienne Samia—dual English and Graphic Design major—who served as our design editor and is 99% responsible for the professional look of the newsletter.

Enjoy!

-Dr. Cheryl Hofstetter Duffy,
Professor of English

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Photo by Bob Duffy

Clockwise from left: Adrienne Samia, Keisha Williams, Dr. Cheryl Hofstetter Duffy, Michelle Webb, Alexandra Walston. Featured on cover: John Whitmer.

Post Parade Fall 2009

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Fort Hays State University is a thriving liberal- and applied-arts, state-assisted institution with an enrollment of about 10,000 students. It offers bachelor's and master's degrees in many fields and provides a wide variety of cultural and intellectual resources, not only for its faculty, staff, and students but also for the western Kansas region and beyond. FHSU occupies the southwest corner of Hays, KS, a city of about 20,000 people located halfway between Kansas City and Denver on I-70. The city and its people make their livings from across a wide spectrum of industries: agriculture, education, light manufacturing, medical care, oil, retail, and technology.

Farewell, Fall English Workshop

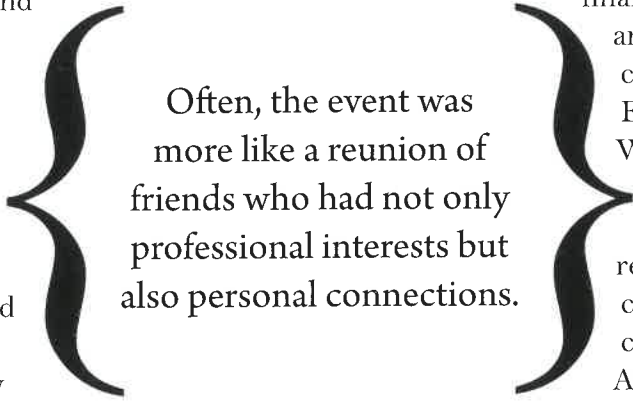
By Pamela Shaffer

As it had for forty-five years previously, the Fort Hays State University English Department's Fall English Workshop took place in September 2008, with relevant sessions for teachers and students on such topics as multimedia trends in the classroom, using the Freedom Writers Program, grammar games, and creative writing—with student readings featured after the luncheon. However, the 2008 Fall English Workshop was to be the last. The FHSU English Department has made the difficult decision to end the Fall English Workshop because of a combination of higher costs and lower attendance due to tighter school budgets and the state of the economy in general.

Those forty-six years hold many memories for current and retired English Department faculty and students, especially those former students who became teachers themselves and would return year after year to attend or make presentations. Often, the event was more like a reunion of friends who had not only professional interests but also personal connections.

In the early 1960s when it began, the Fall English Workshop was staffed by FHSU English Department faculty, who gave presentations directed largely to high school teachers, with little or no hands-on sessions. In the late 1970s, Dr. Richard Leeson

introduced a new practice of inviting teachers in the field to give presentations that focused on actual teaching methods relating to all aspects of English language arts. This approach proved very successful, with the attendees going back to their schools with new and practical ideas to use in the classroom. This format continued over several decades, and thus, year after year, excellent language arts teachers showcased and shared their innovations and teaching tips with other teachers.



Often, the event was more like a reunion of friends who had not only professional interests but also personal connections.

Over the years, to address those participating in the Workshop, department committees would invite speakers from the Kansas Humanities Council; well-known writers such as William Least Heat-Moon, Chris Crutcher, and Laurie Halse Anderson; at times less illustrious but equally entertaining speakers; and occasionally promising but actually boring or outrageously shocking speakers (two words: “skinhead Hamlet”). In the past few years, the Fall English

Workshop also featured sessions for secondary students, drawing adolescents with opportunities to write creatively, tour the campus, interact with Young Adult authors, and get acquainted with like-minded students from other schools.

With every workshop, the organizing committee would begin early in the year, taking up the challenging work of finding presenters, scheduling rooms, designing brochures, and possibly writing grants or requesting financial help from the provost and dean to help defray the costs of bringing speakers. Every year, as the Fall English Workshop approached, the committee chairs would check the mail closely for registration forms, trying to contain their anxiety as they checked last-minute details.

After the workshop was over, they would walk back across the campus, heaving sighs of relief that another workshop had ended in success—and smiling at having seen so many former students and engaging teachers eager to learn something new to take back and enrich their English classrooms.

The Fall English Workshop served Fort Hays State University and the teachers and students of Western Kansas for forty-six years, encouraging, inspiring, and teaching. It is with a mixture of pride and regret, then, that we bid it a fond farewell.

MIXED SIGNALS: Technology in English

By Michelle Webb

English students at Fort Hays State University learn in a significantly different environment from the one in which their professors scuttled about to get to class on time. Of course, pedagogical practices have evolved, and social situations surrounding those practices have shifted. But the most pressing transformation has hit hard, and it's here to stay: technology.

This word encompasses an entirely new approach to the way English majors access and process what they learn. An answer to a question is simply a mouse click away, and information available to students is virtually limitless.

Technology has revamped the way English majors think about the academic world. Gone are the typewriters, card catalogues, and endless hours spent in the library searching for elusive article after elusive article.

Thanks to technology, many tasks and assignments are more convenient for English majors. They can access thousands of peer-reviewed articles, all from the comfort of their homes. Time spent in the library is minimal. When they are there, students simply type a subject of interest into the electronic library catalog and find several books on that topic within seconds.

Technology has certainly simplified methods used by FHSU English faculty when they were undergraduates, but technology has its drawbacks as well. Technology is a wonderful tool; however, it may replace some skills and practices professors deem critical for their students, especially in English.

One of the most critical tools

required of English majors is the ability to research and write academic papers, and today many students struggle with a crucial component of this process: finding a good, reliable source.

Anyone can create a Web site, and many times, the information on certain pages contains unreliable information. When students, especially in their early composition courses, must use sources in their papers, they often come across that unreliable information, which conveniently pops up in a quick internet search.

To Dr. Steven Trout, this inability to research effectively is a recurring problem because students are accustomed to the Google method of accessing the mass information on the internet.

"The downside to research in the internet age is that too many people think they can Google a topic and think that whatever they find is perfectly good," Trout said.

While Trout sees the quality of sources dwindling in some students' papers, he also observes a somewhat tragic phenomenon that has resulted from the technology explosion.

"I fell in love with libraries when I was an English major, and I don't see that happening as much today. I don't think very many students go to the library anymore."

This may not seem like a major problem, but to Trout, libraries carry invaluable information, which is lost to students today because they rarely set foot into a library.

"Despite these transformative changes in our discipline, we're still a book-driven discipline," Trout said. "Most of the important scholarship

is published in book form, and hardly any of that is available online. A lot of what actually drives our field is still available in print form."

Dr. Lexey Bartlett adds to Trout's concern about students who miss the library experience. She notes that students who use only electronic sources miss out on the process of discovery that takes place in a library.

"Sometimes you might have picked a book up for a particular reason, but when you look through the table of contents or the index, you might find things you hadn't thought about," Bartlett said.

"Or if you're looking for a particular book in the library stacks, you might come across an idea that takes you in a different direction. That kind of random discovery is harder on the computer because the searching is so precise."

While technology has some adverse effects on English students, it has also created many advantages, and Dr. Michael Meade is a fan.

"It's wonderful. There's not a moment I don't turn to the computer if I need information quickly," Meade said. "If I had had the computer during my PhD studies, in the time it took me to do one dissertation, I could have done three."

Technology has also allowed students to explore research on a whole new level. Brenda Craven "loves computerization." She is impressed with English students' abilities to approach the subject seriously, and she sees them dedicating a lot of time to their writing.

This is possible because students can spend less time researching and more time writing. Rather than spending so many hours in the library

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT 2009 - 2010 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

seeking books and articles, English majors can literally find these sources in seconds.

With access to millions of resources online, English majors, with enough guidance, can easily view and incorporate several ideas into a single paper. It is not difficult for students to locate numerous credible sources within a short time, so they can spend more time dissecting and analyzing each source.

This experience of searching through several sources is common for English undergraduates today, but that was not the case for Dr. Sharla Hutchison.

"When I was an undergrad, I was not required to integrate sources all the time," Hutchison said. "I was good at analyzing literature, but it didn't prepare me for grad school."

Hutchison said that English majors today can easily get their hands on research, and this is a huge advantage. These skills are critical in graduate school, and the FHSU English program helps prepare them to be successful graduate students.

Technology has the potential to enrich our academic lives by providing better mediation in the classroom, simple processes in typing papers, more access to more sources, and countless other advantages. However, sometimes we let technology take one step too far.

Though a fan of technology and all it has to offer, Craven expresses a critical point that goes along with the heavy reliance on electronic media:

Many students are missing out on an important part of being a college student.

"I don't see students sitting around the table talking for an hour or two

about issues or ideas as we did when I was an undergraduate. While our students do that electronically, I think there's so much to be said for looking eyeball to eyeball and reading body language and asking questions in real time."

Craven's observation raises a point that we should take into account. Technology provides increased access to knowledge and benefits us in several ways, BUT we should be cautious of giving up experiences and social interactions.

If you think back a few years, neighbors used to visit one another over the fence and talk for hours. Then the phone came along; they still chatted but less frequently. Email replaced the phone, and text messaging replaced email, taking us another step away from face-to-face interaction. It's fast, it's convenient, but it's replacing valuable experiences we used to take for granted.

Can you imagine an academic world in which students no longer experience the joy of cracking open a brand-new book? Or one in which office visits with professors, especially those visits that leave students feeling accepted and valued, take place solely on a screen?

We need to remember that technology has its place and is a tool. It can aid us in more ways than we can imagine, but it can not replace the joys and benefits essential to maintaining the experiences and relationships that make us human.

Check us out online!

The English department is on the Web! Visit <http://www.fhsu.edu/english> for a list of the faculty, a recent issue of the *Post Parade*, news about Sigma Tau Delta, and profiles of alumni. The easy-to-use website also offers information about the Writing Center, undergraduate concentrations, summer MA degrees, the MLS with a concentration in English, English Club, and the *Lines* journal.

alice mcfarland scholarship
Sheridan Thompson

roberta stout scholarship
Andrew Bauer
Meredith Musil
Colleen Pennington
Michelle Webb

michael marks scholarship
Paige Kincade

non-traditional student
scholarship
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elizabeth jane "betty" lenz
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"Fellership" in China

By John Whitmer

During her childhood in Hays, Kansas, Pat C. Fellers never imagined traveling to a foreign country halfway around the world to teach, yet her tenacious, adventurous spirit has always driven her to travel and share her knowledge. Her outgoing attitude and love of teaching led her to obtain her BA and MA degrees in English at FHSU, and later she completed many post-graduate hours in English and education. For eighteen years, she taught in the Hays School District, then transferred to El Dorado High School and Butler Community College, where she taught English and composition for fourteen years.

During this time the superintendent and the principal in El Dorado invited Fellers to be an exchange teacher in China. She thought it would be an excellent opportunity to learn from a culture radically different from her own, so she volunteered. Unfortunately, she was unable to follow this dream until years later, when Dr. Cheryl Hofstetter Duffy, Director of International Composition for the FHSU English department, invited her to join the faculty at Sias University in China as an English Composition instructor. She would be part of a dual-degree program FHSU has offered in Xinzheng, China, since 2000.

Fellers decided that the time was right to undertake something new and exciting and promptly accepted. However, few of her friends agreed with her decision for fear of her safety. Also, they did not want the great distance to



Photo by Cheryl Duffy

Pat Fellers discusses a draft with a student at Sias University in Xinzheng, China.

diminish their friendships with her. She determined that sending out bi-monthly email updates containing positive, informative accounts of her experiences would help keep in touch with them. Thus began her journeys through China.

From September 2008 until June 2009, she worked with 85 Chinese students, including college sophomores and juniors. At first, she scared her students with her assertive teaching methods such as speaking rapidly in English and using "big words." After this initial shock, her students truly were eager to learn and wanted an expert in English to educate them in formal essay writing and critical thinking. Throughout the first semester, Fellers strove to reveal the many similarities Chinese students have with their American peers. She believed that her grading methods and hands-on treatment of essays should reflect how

her Chinese students were on the same level as students who speak English as a primary language. As such, she has found that her students truly wanted to do well so they could surpass the accomplishments of students in the United States.

Fellers indicated that the greatest challenge in arranging coursework was "working with ESL students and showing them how to achieve success in a timely, orderly manner, using as many shortcuts as possible." These shortcuts included using a variety of weekly, in-class, cooperative learning techniques while allowing the students to cooperate on many assignments. This does not mean that one student in the group does the work for everyone, but that each person is responsible for assuming a piece of the whole. Teaching students to work as a team, "think outside the box," and maximize their

achievement is a great thrill for Fellers, who enjoys seeing the sudden recognition in her students' eyes when they master a difficult assignment.

Throughout her months of teaching, she has had many eye-opening experiences and learned much from Chinese culture. She has attended auspicious events such as Chinese operas *Liang Zhu* and *Turandot* and traveled to a great many places. Some of her most memorable events include celebrating the Chinese New Year and Lantern Festival with fireworks, visiting her co-worker's family, and editing a Chinese cookbook full of traditional recipes, origins, and family anecdotes.

Throughout the many activities in which she has taken part, she has found most Chinese people to be curious, polite, and hard working. In general, she states, "Chinese people do not like face-to-face

different and non-confrontational."

Although she doesn't have much knowledge of the Chinese language, Fellers can understand a remarkable amount through Chinese body language. Greeting Chinese people with an energetic "Ni Hao," or Hello, ensures a good laugh when they realize that she has no idea what they are saying in response. She has gone the extra mile to observe Chinese customs. For example, she brought gifts such as scarves, purses, and other items to those who welcomed her into their homes. These gestures show that she has a real respect for their 5000-year-old way of life.

Though the Chinese cultural outlook and language were difficult to get used to at first, Fellers has had no trouble falling in love with authentic Chinese cuisine. She has become, as she says, "chopstick-almost-perfect," after much practice. She has much wisdom to

share with fork-bearing Westerners. First, don't ever stand chopsticks upright in a bowl of rice, as this means death. Next, don't chew on your chopsticks because you need a good point of contact to pick up paper-thin meats such as beef, mutton, squid, pork, and chicken; tofu; and

fresh vegetables, which regularly include spinach, lettuce, cauliflower, cabbage, mushrooms, and carrots.

Whereas she enjoys trying new recipes, her favorites being fennel and pork dumplings, she avoids

the very spicy Sichuan dishes. Since the hot peppers included in these dishes effectively clear one's sinuses and many Chinese people are extremely health conscious, they are often used liberally on vegetables and meats. Fellers advises visitors to China to request less-spicy versions of their food orders lest they experience the same breathtaking surprises that she did.

Fellers encourages all English graduates or teachers who are qualified to teach writing to consider traveling to China. Like her, it would help to be a positive person who views barriers, such as language or culture, as an opportunity to "address the situation and overcome the problems that may be present. Teachers in China must set their expectations high, remain competent, and realize they have much to learn from the Chinese people and their culture."



Photo by Cheryl Duffy

Fellers confers one on one with a student at Sias University.

confrontations. When things don't go right or don't sound right, it is always because it is the Chinese way. No one likes to feel embarrassed, and this seems to be the Chinese way of dealing with embarrassment. It's not wrong, just

TEACH IN CHINA!

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- Chinese work visas now require that you be under age 60.
- Spread the word among your colleagues!

Contact Cheryl Hofstetter Duffy for more information:
<cduffy@fhsu.edu>
785-628-5317

S Pamela Shaffer has taken on the duties as Director of Composition and also serves as the Director of the FHSU Writing Center. She is also the co-sponsor of both the Psi Rho Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta and the English Club. This spring she enjoyed teaching Modern Grammar and Usage, and Literary Analysis and Theory. In her spare time Dr. Shaffer likes to read crime books and bake bread.

S Samantha Scott, who received a BA and MA from Fort Hays and pursued PhD work at the University of Oklahoma, sponsored the Sigma Tau Delta trip this year. She is working on two pieces for submission to a journal: "Multivocality and the Female Bildungsroman and Homosocial Gays" and "Triangulization of Desire in Jane Austen's *Emma*."

H Since last summer, Sharla Hutchison has attended the South Atlantic MLA Conference, where she presented an essay about Mina Loy and Futurism. She also published a book review concerning rural humor and its effects on popular culture. An article she wrote about Marianne Moore is currently under review. Additionally, sunny days find her in the quad walking her lovely and talented dog, Sweetpea.

W Brad Will is editing another Star Wars book, *Galaxies at War for the Star Wars Role-Playing Game*. He presented "Dr. Strangemath, or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Quantitative Analysis" at the Writing Program Administrators Conference, is the coordinator of the cross-campus writing assessment, and is on the board of directors for Kansas Next Step.

B When Lexey Bartlett wasn't focusing on English-related projects, she was quite literally traveling around the world. In the past year, she had a publication in a book collection about developing gender (Cambridge Scholars Publishing). She also presented two papers that explored gender issues at the National Popular Culture Association/American Culture conference and at the 12th Annual Red River Conference of World Literature. Her interest in mythology has influenced two trips: the trip to Ireland she led during Spring Break 2009 and the trip to Greece she hopes to lead next May. (Alumni are welcome to participate in English-sponsored trips.)

FACULTY

C Amy Cummins has enjoyed teaching classes in Young Adult Literature and African American Literature. She serves as the English department's Director of the Master of Liberal Studies (MLS) Program, which allows her to work with graduate students across the country. She has also published some poetry as well as an article on teaching literature. Her cat, Ginger-Nut, has been named so by her husband because he reminds him of Ginger-Nut from Herman Melville's "Bartleby, the Scrivener."

T Steven Trout taught American Fiction from 1920-1930 in addition to War and Memory in American History and Literature, a well-received course team-taught with Steven Kite in spring 2009. He finished his most recent book, *After the Crusade: The First World War in American Memory, 1919-1941*, and feels it is his best work. He presented the keynote address at the Kansas Association of Historians Conference at FHSU on April 3-4.

W Sharon Wilson read nearly 300 Young Adult books over the summer, including the first three books in the *Twilight* series by Stephanie Meyer, to see which were ideal to use in her Young Adult Literature class. Paging through these novels was made more difficult after she broke her arm on May 22, 2008. If anything, that experience taught her to be more compassionate, understanding, and proud of those who suffer disabilities yet strive to live their lives to the fullest. That said, she still enjoys Techniques of Teaching English, where she works with classroom leaders to change the focus in schools to critical thinking skills and independent thinking.

Y N E W S

W Brett Weaver is excited to teach Creative Nonfiction to graduate students and teachers in the fall. Although his current writing focuses wholly on screenplays, entering Hollywood is a slow and arduous process. Last spring, he taught a 5-hour Creative Writing seminar to 90 middle-school students in Oakley, Kansas. He also engineered the visit of Robert Day, author of *The Last Cattle Drive*, to FHSU. Caring for his mother, who is suffering from Stage IV lung and liver cancer, and his father, who has early-onset dementia, has encouraged him never to get old. This mindset has led him to exercise regularly by cycling and avoiding mirrors.

L Eric Leuschner had a busy year. He completed an essay about Ellen Glasgow, which will be published in *Women Writers and the Artifacts of Celebrity in the Long Nineteenth Century*. He presented a paper on *Tristram Shandy* and eighteenth-century dance at the Midwest American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Conference. He also published a review, "Remapping the Rise of the European Novel," which appeared in the fall 2008 issue of *SHARP News*. Though impressive, his fine work does not trump his and his wife's most significant event: the adoption of Emmaline Miao Johnson Leuschner, whom the proud parents met in June 2008.

L Christiane Luehrs retired from FHSU in 2006 but continues to teach online and on-campus classes. This past year she taught Composition I and II and World Literature. Online she has taught Religion, Heresy, Magic, and Myth. She has been a scholar of the Talk about Literature in Kansas (TALK) program for the Kansas Humanities Council for ten years. In her spare time she refinishes antique furniture.

C Brenda Craven has invigorated her Composition 102 courses, encouraging students to explore energy-related topics with innovative research methods. This semester also finds her teaching Technical and Professional Writing. Always civic minded, she attended the yearly Michael Tillford Conference on Diversity and Multiculturalism and participates as a book discussion leader for the Kansas Humanities Council. Her hobbies include visiting her delightful sons and grandchildren.

D Cheryl Duffy presented on community-based writing at the National Council of Teachers of English Conference. Her presentation at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, "Teaching Comp. in China," complemented her work as Director of International Composition, a role that took her to China in March. She did not, in fact, break her knee this time. Teaching Professional Editing was a new challenge; she oversaw this issue of *Post Parade*. And she was admittedly "giddy with excitement" at no longer being department chair, which did not alter her strange but fitting squirrel obsession.

M Michael Meade received an award this past year from FHSU and the governor for 40 years of service as a State of Kansas employee. The European Studies Conference published his 2007 paper entitled "Goethe's TORQUATO TASSO: The Conflict between the Ideal World of the Poet and the Real World of Politics and Commerce." In 2009 he plans to present a paper to the ESC entitled "Bildungsroman" about German traditions. Outside of FHSU, Dr. Meade loves his collies and yardwork.

S Carl Singleton, English department chair and professor of English, presented his paper on Asian culture at the Popular Culture Association's national conference in New Orleans in April. Dr. Singleton will also be publishing an essay referring to *My Revolutions* by Hari Kunzru in *Magill's Literary Annual*.

K Daniel Kulmala, the recipient of the Outstanding Faculty Service Award, keeps himself busy. He taught eight classes this past year, developed pilot classes, and served on more than 13 committees. He will be presenting his paper "Got GLS?" at the ITC e-Learning conference and has several essays under review.

ALUMNI UPDATES

S In Memoriam—Rex Lee Schwein, who completed his teaching credentials in English at FHSU in 1938, died February 27, 2009, in Blue Springs, Missouri. He taught four years in Johnson, Kansas, and taught English and Spanish for thirty-six years in Atchison, Kansas, where he and his wife, Margaret (FHSU BS in Education, 1939), raised their five children.

N Ray Newton (BA 1957) of Prescott, Arizona, was a national coordinator for *Reader's Digest* Writing Workshops. A professor-administrator emeritus from Northern Arizona University, Newton retired in 2000, having authored scores of scholarly publications as well as trade and consumer books and articles. A book he edited, *Damn the Rejections—The Bumpy Road to Getting Published* by Maralys Wills—was recently named the top winner in the 2008 USA Book News National “Best Book” category for Business Publishing and Writing.

B John Baetz (BA 1999) of Lincoln, Kansas, owns and operates the *Chapman & Enterprise News-Times* and *Lincoln Sentinel-Republican* community newspapers as well as the *Kansas Pregame Football Magazine*. He employs three full-time and four part-time staff members, as well as a number of freelance writers, photographers, and graphic designers. He is also the president and publisher of Sixteen 60 Publishing Company.

M April Morrissette (BA 1997) of Greenwood Village, Colorado, graduated from the Denver School of Law in 2002 and is now a practicing attorney at Ray Lego and Associates in Greenwood Village, Colorado.

E Tom Elliott (BA 2004) of Shenyang, China, is working on his master's degree during the summer months and teaching English Composition at one of FHSU's partner schools, Shenyang Normal University, during the academic year. Before coming to Shenyang he was a Grant Writer/Philanthropy Coordinator for AmeriCorps VISTA.

V Ralph Voss (BA 1965, MA 1967) of Birmingham, Alabama, retired this past June after thirty-one years as a Professor of English at the University of Alabama. He is at work on yet another book—this one about Truman Capote and *In Cold Blood*.

H Jeri (formerly Dawson) Hintz (MA 1993) of Kirksville, Missouri, is the Education Coordinator at the Still National Osteopathic Museum. While she does lead the occasional educational tour for school children, she spends much of her time on more “English-y” pursuits such as writing newsletters, conducting research, editing documents, and writing grants.

Help us include YOUR information next year: return the form on page 17.

REVEALED!

By Alexandra Walston

August 2020 – The writer of this article sits at home in her easy chair, eagerly awaiting this year's issue of the *Post Parade*. She receives it and leafs to the faculty news. But alas, her hopes of catching up on Sharon Wilson's various and sundry ethnic literature classes are dashed. A new regime of teachers has taken over, and she knows none of them. Where are her professors?

Dear readers, you do not have to hang your head like this future reader, for this issue of the *Post Parade* includes faculty news from retired faculty—faculty you may well love and remember.

Current Hays resident and former American literature professor **Cliff Edwards**, who helped establish the summer master's program, spends his retirement traveling, exercising, making music, reading, and spending time with his family. His favorite memory from Fort Hays involves sticking it to an atheist history professor by writing and presenting an essay that was subsequently published in *Christianity Today*.

Paul Gatschet, professor of rhetoric and composition, recently retired from another career, as well. He spent 2002 through 2007 as a security officer for the Hays Regional Airport. He still lives in the Hays area. While he is more than happy to send a ten-dollar bill to a student interviewer, telling her to use it to enjoy "The Taco Shop," he insists that "there is nothing more boring than listening to a retired person delivering advice."

Al Geritz, erstwhile professor of Shakespeare and British fiction, now lives in Kansas City, Missouri. He retired in 2004 after 28 years of service. His typical day consists of walking around the Plaza, visiting museums, and attending plays and concerts. He can also be found watching large construction projects that rejuvenate the KC landscape. He looks forward to a possible trip to Shanghai and Hong Kong with his daughter, Laura.

Richard Leeson was blessed in his 25-year tenure to have taught all of his specialties: American literature, English teaching methods, English romantic poetry, and the Bible as literature. He now lives in Kansas City, Missouri, and is glad to live closer to an international airport, as it is easier for him to travel to such exotic

locales as Dallas to see King Tut exhibits and Chicago to see extravagant theatre productions.

Since retirement, **Bob Maxwell**, American literature and folklore professor, has had more time to devote to his passion for local legends. He lives in Hays and considers himself an expert on the "Blue Light Lady," a ghost who is said to haunt Old Fort Hays carrying a blue light and generally being creepy. His favorite memory is of instituting "The Hootenanny." He is disappointed that this musical extravaganza does not exist on campus anymore. He would also like to remind both professors and students to try not to be "high and mighty" and to keep things "low-key."

American literature professor **Nancy Vogel**, developer of the Young Adult Literature course, spends her days in Lawrence, Kansas, reading the newspaper, occasionally writing for newspapers, and hearing speakers at KU. She fondly remembers Fort Hays as a place that "embodies generosity, friendliness, and hospitality—*gemütlichkeit*."

Grace Witt, a retiree of 18 years and current resident of Drury Place in Salina, spends her days chatting with her neighbors and reading. She spent her 22 years on the faculty teaching Shakespeare, vocabulary, and English Composition I and II. Teaching Shakespeare and working with her colorful boss Verna Parish are among her fondest memories. Since retirement, she has also learned to speak Spanish fluently and has used that knowledge in her travels to Mexico and Europe.

All retired faculty mentioned that their favorite memories from FHSU involved students. Convinced that direct contact with students is fruitful both scholastically and socially, they also voiced concern that the move to more online classes could reduce that important professor-student interaction. While retirement certainly has its charms for the faculty members interviewed, they all regard times spent with students as some of their best times at FHSU.

Editor's Note: The department learned of the death of **Alice McFarland** in late May 2009. We plan to have a feature article about her career in next year's *Post Parade*.

Diff'rent Strokes: Innovative and Bomb-Diggity Pedagogy

By Keisha Williams

Every class period professors face the challenge of fostering students' passion for the subject matter. Professors in the FHSU English department are therefore willing to try different approaches to get their students engaged with writing and literature. While all professors have their own techniques for reaching out to their students, here we present our examples to illustrate the "flava" of the FHSU English department.

Dr. Amy Cummins's unique ideas flow well with regular assigned lectures. For her English Composition II courses, she has her students read *Everything Bad Is Good for You* by Steven Johnson so they can obtain a new outlook on how society is being questioned not only by themselves, but by others who have researched the downfall of society. Dr. Cummins also taught an African-American literature class last spring, and she had her students present a portion of history to her classes either through a paper or with a poster. She left it up to the students to decide how they would present their topics to the class and let them be as imaginative and creative as possible. Also, in the same course, she had her students choose a song that represented the difference between today's musical world and that of Harlem back when black music started to become popular. For this assignment, some students used music videos to present their songs to the class.

Dr. Cheryl Hofstetter Duffy has her Advanced Composition class complete a Community-Based Writing Project, for which her students

choose a non-profit organization and write several assignments for the project. First, the students write Agency Profile papers in which they discuss what their agencies are about. After that, they write short research papers on issues related to their agencies. Finally, they complete Public Writing assignments such as a feature article, brochure, newsletter, etc. For example, for the spring 2009 semester, some students volunteered for the Smoky Hills Public Television on-air auction and wrote scripts for the auctioneers. The Community-Based Writing Project allows students the opportunity to gather more information about their community and also gives them practice meeting and working with organizations on their own.

Dr. Steven Trout likes to use technology in the classroom to help his students learn more of the background in which the novels they are reading take place. Because of Dr. Trout's love of artifacts, he shares first editions with his literature students. He also likes to use the document camera to show his students pictures of houses, cars, fashion, etc. so they have some help imagining how the characters in the story looked and what they experienced. He believes that knowing the culture and background of the era surrounding a story can help students focus on the story. Another approach that Dr. Trout likes to use is interdisciplinary courses, where two subjects, such as English and history, come together and are taught by two professors, one from each field. During the spring semester of 2009, he taught such a class with history

professor Dr. Steven Kite entitled "War and Memory in American History and Literature."

Dr. Lexey Bartlett uses literature circles and dramatization group projects to teach her students. She assigns a reading for her class and lets her students talk among themselves in groups about what they learned from the story. In her general education courses, such as World Literature and the Human Experience, she has her students branch off into groups of three or four, and they then discuss the story. Dr. Bartlett then assigns certain groups to present their ideas to the class, usually through drama. In one of her fall 2008 classes, some students staged a Jerry Springer show for a novel they read about incest while another group presented a live version of Dr. Phil for a 20th-century Middle Eastern story. Not only do these assignments bring amusement to the classroom, but they also help the students to express their opinions creatively about the story. Dr. Bartlett does these sorts of activities in her general education courses in order to show her non-English majors that reading literature can be fun.

Though these professors have different techniques and styles, many professors all over campus put their own twists on the subjects they teach. Certainly, all professors must deal with the ever-changing demand of how to keep a student focused and educated at the same time. We salute all educators in the world for trying so hard to keep student minds focused on classroom discussions and not daydreams.

Something about Visiting Writers...

DAVID GIFFELS By Dan Kulmala

The rubber and tire industry, the punk/progressive rock group Devo, and a dilapidated mansion. What do all three of these have in common? They are the topics of three books written by visiting writer David Giffels. David and I attended the University of Akron together as undergraduates, both studying English, so when I saw David Giffels on CBS's *The Early Show* last summer promoting his new book, *All the Way Home: Building a Family in a Falling-Down House*, I not only got my hands on his book but soon devised ways to get him to FHSU. My opportunity to teach a class on the personal essay afforded me the perfect reason to teach his book and bring him here.

Having honed his writing skills as a journalist for the *Akron Beacon Journal*, David had daily practice on his craft as a writer, skills honored by five nominations for the Pulitzer Prize. And he had other opportunities for writing—like MTV's *Beavis and Butt-Head*. Combining both of these writing experiences made it easy to set up two events for members of the FHSU community to discuss writing and the writing profession: a Friday afternoon discussion of his recent book and a Friday evening event discussing his experience with MTV and *Beavis and Butt-Head* creator Mike Judge.

Among the highlights of David's visit were words of advice about writing. One statement remains firmly engrained in the minds of my own students: "Make it stupider." Mike Judge gave David this advice while he wrote scripts for *Beavis and Butt-Head*. But the advice has worked for David in other ways throughout his career. Too often, our ideals get in the way of telling a good story, so we need to keep it simple and get to the truth. Only English majors can be so inspired by such paradoxes: On the path to enlightenment, one must make it stupider.

In mid-October 2008, FHSU welcomed Robert Day, who is most famous for his novel *The Last Cattle Drive*, which became a Book-of-the-Month Club selection. Day's short fiction has garnered several awards, including a Pen Faulkner/NEW prize, two Seaton prizes, and inclusion in *Best American Short Stories* and Pushcart stories. His nonfiction has been widely published and praised. He is currently a member of the Prairie Writers Circle.

For a day in mid-October, Day visited Lynn Anne Huntington's journalism class and Brett Weaver's creative writing class. Day is an extremely good listener as well as talker; however, for some questions he left his seat and stood by the questioner after stating that he had bad hearing caused by an incident too romantic for any reasonable person to believe. He possesses that rare quality in a teacher—he is an adjunct professor at Washington College in Maryland—in which students remain at ease despite the fact that they may be struggling for an answer and are embarrassed. In the creative writing class, he explained his philosophy of writing and left the class with one writing exercise that, he said, no student had ever delivered upon: to go home, find a great story, and write it out word for word on a computer or typewriter. That way, students could experience what that famous author endured when he or she composed those words in that particular order.

After a hearty and quite liquid meal at the brewery, Day gave two well-received readings in the Black and Gold Room. The first reading concerned the hilarious journey of his *Cattle Drive* novel through the circus of Hollywood with its agents, producers, and movie stars. The journey entailed hope and its joined-at-the-hip sister, false hope. He ended the evening and his FHSU visit by reading a short story set in France, a place he has often visited.

ROBERT DAY By Brett Weaver

GRADUATES

SUMMER 2008

Anne Renee Heskett, MA
Jaclyn Elizabeth Naster, MA
Wendy Dawn Pope, MA
Jami Lea Salas, MA

FALL 2008

Richard L. Byquist, MLS
Gwendolyn Ann Houston, MA
Cynthia Marie Martin, MLS
Amanda M. Nelson, MLS
Jacquelynne N. Hollan, BA
Tamera E. McGinness, BA
Stacie M. Rupp, BA
Phillip Van Horn, BA
Jennifer L. Waldron, BA

SPRING 2009

Amy Leigh Beecher, MLS
Patricia Fuiava, MA
Theresa Kraisinger, MA
Danton Joe McDiffett, MLS
Catherine Moroney, MLS
Karen Elizabeth Ostrowski, MA
Gene Shepard Wheeler, MLS
Catherine F. Edwards, BA
Andrew P. Gwennap, BA
Kara Heit, BA
Meredith Musil, BA

SUMMER 2009

Debra A. Moninger, MLS
Arleen M. Quinn, MLS
Toni C. Williams, MLS
Catherine M. Wishart, MLS
Aubrey D. Bittel, BA
Justin P. Brown, BA

Lexey "O'Bartlett" Leads Ireland Trip



Photos by Adrienne Hays

Left: Dunluce Castle stands nobly. Below (from right): Destiny Saffer, Heather Miller, Tami McGinness, Ryan Frederick, and Nathan Brown battle the wind on the Cliffs of Moher.



By Adrienne Samia

Over spring break 2009, twenty members of the FHSU student body, FHSU faculty, and Hays community experienced Ireland on a trip organized by Dr. Lexey Bartlett.

The idea for the trip originated when Bartlett showed photos from the trip she took to Ireland in 2006 to her students in World Mythology.

"Some of them had just been on the trip to England in the fall of 2007 that the English department sponsored, and they said, 'Let's go! When are we going to Ireland?' I had, of course, no idea of planning the trip at that point. Then, I thought, well, maybe I should. Maybe we should go to Ireland," Bartlett said.

However, rather than keep the trip within the English department, Bartlett made it available to anyone who wanted to go. Of the seven students, four are English majors: Dominique Weismiller, Tami McGinness, Colleen Pennington, and Destiny Saffer.

The students' reasons for taking

the trip varied. Weismiller, who took her mother, Deitre Colgan, with her, and McGinness, who had traveled to England with the English department fall 2007, both felt compelled to go by the interest they have in their Irish ancestries.

Lasting eight days of Spring Break, the trip began on the first day with a visit to Newgrange, a Neolithic passage tomb, and Monasterboice, the ruins of a roundtower and monastery cemetery.

On the second day, the travelers visited Dublin, the capital of Ireland, and Glendalough, a monastery with buildings dating back to the eighth century AD, before stopping

in Cork, where the group stayed on the third day.

On the fourth day, en route to Galway, they visited two natural sites: the Burren and the Cliffs of Moher, a memorable spot for the group.

"The Cliffs of Moher will always stay with me as the most beautiful place I saw on my trip. The Cliffs are hundreds of feet high above a crashing ocean. It's so windy I felt as if I could fly. I stared out to the sea for a good thirty minutes, just soaking up the sea and the beauty of my ancestral home," Weismiller said.

The following day, they enjoyed a guided tour of Carrowmore, a mega-



Photo by Adrienne Hays
The Cliffs of Moher made an impact.



lithic cemetery, and drove through County Sligo, which is also known as Yeats country, before stopping in Derry.

On the morning of the sixth day, the group explored the Free Derry Museum, finding information about the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland as well as information about Bloody Sunday, which took place January 31, 1972. Afterward, they received a political walking tour. The day continued along the north coast at the Giant's Causeway.

The final few days of the trip took

place in Belfast, and then the group flew home.

Looking back, Bartlett, Weismiller, and McGinness all remember with fondness the good times they shared with the group. McGinness specifically enjoyed the company of her peers.

"It sounds cliché, but the people I met on this trip were the best part. Without my new friends, the trip wouldn't have been as entertaining," she said.

Heather Miller, an English minor, enjoyed the different characters

among the group.

"We were all varying in age and majors, but we all got along great and were able to joke and be sarcastic with each other," Miller said. "It was also great to talk and get to know the older generation that went. They were able to give advice or had great stories to tell."

Some of the advice was especially beneficial to Miller.

"I had not been out of the country before this trip, so I was extremely nervous, which is where the advice from other trip-goers was helpful," said Miller, who also admitted that she had nightmares before leaving about forgetting her passport or a book to read.

Although this trip wasn't Weismiller's first out-of-the-country excursion, she claims that this time was much, much different.

"I had only ever been to Mexico on day trips before Ireland. Although I had fun on those trips, I was back in the United States by night. In Ireland, I could see and hear the country all day, every day, for almost two weeks. I'm changed, and, as cliché as it sounds, I won't ever be the same," Weismiller said.

Needless to say, Weismiller, as well as McGinness, has very positive opinions about traveling out of the country and would encourage more trips like this.

"This trip was totally, totally worth every penny!" Weismiller said. "I highly suggest international travel for anyone who wants to see the world and learn about it at the same time!"

McGinness added, "Just get your passport and go!"

And taking a similar trip may be as easy as McGinness makes it sound. Bartlett has a prospective destination chosen for next year.

"I'm teaching classical mythology this spring, so I was thinking about arranging a trip to Athens and the coast of Turkey next May," Bartlett said.

Minneapolis Welcomes Sigma Members

By Alexandra Walston

Sigma Tau Deltans united this year in the chilly paradise of Minneapolis, Minnesota, March 25 through 28. Students Katie Edwards, Meredith Musil, and Alexandra Walston and faculty members Samantha Scott and Dr. Pamela Shaffer took a Fort Hays minivan the twelve glorious hours to their literary destination. Having arrived early in the evening, the quintet unpacked and explored the Hyatt Regency, which played jarringly terrible and loud music in all public areas.

The next day, after invigorating leadership seminars in the morning, our intrepid representatives enjoyed other people's presentations. That evening, Dr. Shaffer slipped off to visit her daughter, who lives in the Twin Cities, while the others enjoyed the bad poetry competition.

On Friday, Meredith Musil presented her paper "Racial and Sexual Bias in the Writings of Nella Larsen and Zora Neal Hurston," and later, Alexandra Walston presented her critical paper "Riches to Rags: Dr. Jekyll's Lower Class Transformation." The group then enjoyed Neil Gaiman's witty musings on story-telling and fairy tales.

On Saturday, writer Michael Perry also spoke to the art of story-telling in a well-received session at noon. Later that day, Katie Edwards presented her critical paper "Off with His Head: The Symbolic Overthrow of Traditional Power in Stoker's *Dracula*." Simultaneously, Walston presented her nonfiction paper "Best of the Worst: The Bottom 10 Christmas Songs."

At the awards banquet that night, the FHSU English department's *Lines Literary Journal* won second place for literary journals. The real winner of the night, however, was Katie Edwards, who received a prestigious scholarship and was a runner-up for Most Outstanding Student Leader.

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PROFS' PETS

make a match

You receive no prize for correct answers, but that shouldn't stop you from participating in this little quiz. We suggest that you wait until you're finished to check your answers with the correct answers we've listed below, but we understand if you're impatient.

A. Carl Singleton
B. Lexey Bartlett
C. Brenda Craven

D. Sharla Hutchison
E. Brad Will
F. Cheryl Duffy

G. Eric Leuschner
H. Chris Luehrs
I. Michael Meade



1. ABBY



2. SPOT



3. BOGGLE



4. CALLY



5. KAI-PO



6. BOBO, LITTLE RED,
MARKO, & SIR



7. MOLLY



8. SWEETPEA



9. CHANCE

ANSWERS A9, B7, C5, D8, E4, F2, G1, H4, I6



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