

UNL ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER & CALENDAR

Friday, December 1, 2006

Editor: Janet "I'm outta here" Carlson

Publisher: Joy Ritchie

"All the news we can beg, steal or borrow."

Bookmarks

Susan Belasco, co-editor (with Linck Johnson) of *The Bedford Anthology of American Literature*, is happy to announce that Volume 1 is now published (Volume 2 will follow next year). For more information go to www.bedfordstmartins.com/americanlit/preview/.

A number of current and former UNL faculty members and students have been involved in this project. **Tom Gannon** serves on the editorial advisory board for Volume 1. **Venetria Patton** is the editor of *Background Readings for Teachers of American Literature*, a collection of essays designed to accompany the anthology, and **Sharon Harris** is the editor of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, one of five newly-edited novels, also designed to accompany the anthology.

Several English-department graduate students (now alumni) contributed audiovisual units for the Instructor's DVD, including **Amanda Gailey** (Ph.D. '06), **Andy Jewell** (Ph.D. '04), **Darcie Rives** (Ph.D. '06), and **Jeanine Jewell** (Ph.D. '05). Current graduate students who have worked as research assistants at various times include **Jackie Cruikshank**, **Ramon Guerra**, and especially **Liz Lorang**, who served as a special assistant to the editors this year. **Janel Simons**, a former UNL English undergraduate (B.A. '04) and now in graduate school in English at the University of Florida, also worked as a research assistant.

According to Susan, "Linck and I could not have undertaken this project without the invaluable help and support of my generous colleagues at UNL, and we would especially like to thank **Grace Bauer**, **Bob Bergstrom**, **Steve Behrendt**, **Franz Blaha**, **Steve Buhler**, **Janet Carlson**, **Barbara DiBernard**, **Kwakiutl Dreher**, **Kalenda Eaton**, **Tom Gannon**, **Amy Goodburn**, **Melissa Homestead**, **Maureen Honey**, **Tom Lynch**, **Amelia Montes**, **Linda Pratt**, **Ken Price**, **Guy Reynolds**, **Joy Ritchie**, **Greg Rutledge**, **Gerry Shapiro**, **Judy Slater**, and **Nick Spencer**."

Recent & Upcoming Publications & Other Achievements

On Nov. 10 **Steve Behrendt** gave the plenary lecture at the annual meeting of the International Conference on Romanticism, held at Arizona State University, in Tempe. The title of his talk was "Romantic Practices – Practicing Romanticism."

Hilda Raz has six poems in the new issue of the *Paterson Literary Review* and others in *New Millennium Writings: 2006-2007*. Other poems will be published in the *Women's Review of Books*, *Blue Mesa Review*, *Salt*, *Cincinnati Review* and elsewhere. Her book with Aaron Raz Link, *What Becomes You*, will be published in spring in the American Live Series, U. of Nebraska Press. At the 2007 Association of Writers and Writing Programs conference (in Atlanta), Hilda will serve on two panels: "More Than One Way to Tell a Story" and "A Celebration of Robert Dana."

Ken Price gave a talk on "Edition, Archive, Project, Thematic Research Collection: What's in a Name?" at the Texas A&M Digital Textual Studies Symposium, held Oct. 19-21 in College Station.

Linda Pratt, member of the Department of English currently serving as interim executive vice president and provost of the University of Nebraska system, gave a talk to the Department of English at Western Illinois University on Oct. 26. Linda's talk, "English Departments in an Age of Accountability," discussed the implications of the Spellings Commission Report for the humanities. The chair of the WIU department is **David Boocker**, English Ph.D. from UNL (1988). Linda reports that David is doing well and has recently been appointed to a second term as chair. He sends his warm regards to friends and faculty with whom he studied.

Melissa Homestead attended the third conference of the Society for the Study of American Women Writers,

held Nov. 8–11 in Philadelphia. She presented a paper entitled "From Jewett to Cather to Chase; or, Mary Ellen Chase Constructs a Conservative Lesbian Literary Genealogy." Melissa is also membership and finances officer of the SSAWW.

Also at SSAWW was **Wynne Summers**, who delivered her paper "Walking the Line In-Between: Gloria Anzaldua's Borderlands and the Omaha Women Elders." She and **Amelia Montes** were both on the panel "Doing Work that Matters: The Impact of Gloria Anzaldua in the Academy, in Our Teaching and Personal Lives."

Guy Reynolds was "interrupted mid-flow" by fire alarms during his presentation for the panel on "New Directions in Cather Criticism" at the 2006 Midwest Modern Language Association conference, held earlier this month in Chicago. His hot topic was "Cather and *McClure's*: The Writer as Editor." Other (perhaps less inflammatory?) department colleagues on the panel included **Andrew Jewell** ("The 'Meat-ax' on the Desktop: A Digital Edition of Cather's Early Journalism") and **Michael Schueth** ("Writing into Celebrity: Cather and the Mary Baker Eddy Biography").

Benjamin Vogt was at the MMLA conference, too, and gave a presentation entitled "Literature in the College Composition Classroom: Pleasure, Community, Process, Efficacy" at the panel on Using Literature in the Composition Classroom.

Congratulations to **Razia Sultana Khan**, whose short story "The Beggar" has been selected for inclusion in *Best New American Voices 2008*.

Timothy Schaffert's interview with Lee Briccetti, poet and director of Poets House, the nation's largest poetry library, appears in the January 2007 issue of *Poets & Writers*. In May, P&W will publish Tim's article on book cover design. He also has personal essays forthcoming in spring 2007 in *Brothers and Beasts: An Anthology of Men on Fairy Tales* (Wayne State University Press, Detroit) and *When I Was A Loser: True Stories of (Barely) Surviving High School* (Simon & Schuster). His third novel, *Devils in the Sugar Shop*, will be out from Unbridled Books in June.

Congratulations to **Derek Driedger** on being selected by the College of Arts & Sciences Faculty Instructional Development Committee as one of three recipients for a College of Arts & Sciences Graduate Teaching Assistant Award. Derek and the other recipients will be honored at the college's annual Honors Convocation Ceremony next April.

Zachary Schomburg and **Mathias Svalina** will

publish a print issue of *Octopus Magazine* in the coming weeks. The issue will consist of eight separate chapbooks by eight different poets and will be the first publication of their forthcoming small poetry press, Octopus Books. Please see Mathias or Zach if you're interested in supporting Octopus by buying one or more of these chapbooks, or go to www.octopusbooks.net.

Zach's first full-length book of poems, *The Man Suit*, will be published by Black Ocean Press (Boston) next February, and a chapbook of his poems, *Abraham Lincoln's Death Scene*, will be published by Horse Less Press (Providence) in December. He has poems forthcoming in *Denver Quarterly*, *Absent, the Hat*, and *Same Storm*. At the AWP conference next spring, he will be presenting on a panel entitled "Virtually Infinite: The Broad Reach and Vast Potential of the Online Literary Journal."

Mathias will have poems in the next issues of *Laurel Review*, *LIT*, *Pindelyboz*, *Lungfull!*, *Columbia Poetry Review*, *Forklift*, *Ohio* and *Denver Quarterly* and in the online journals *H_ngm_n*, *Sawbuck* and *Diagram*. He will also be included in the forthcoming anthologies *Outside Voices Anthology of Younger Poets* and *The Bedside Guide to No Tell Motel*. His first chapbook, *Why I Am White*, is forthcoming from Kitchen Press in the spring.

Pascha Stevenson's article "Reader Expectation and Ethnic Rhetorics: The Problem of the Passing Subaltern in *Who Would Have Thought It?*" came out in a recent issue (28:2) of *Ethnic Studies Review*. Pascha also has a forthcoming publication in *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* (spring or summer 07). It's called "Dreaming in Color: Race and the Spectacular in *The Agüero Sisters* and *Praisesong for the Widow*."

Laura Madeline Wiseman has the short story "How to be a Wife" in the newest issue of *Kiss Machine* and a poem in *Paper Street*. She also has poems forthcoming in the February release of *Poetry NZ* and elsewhere.

Work by **Carrie Shippers** has recently been accepted by *Meridian*, *Roanoke Review*, *Southern Humanities Review*, *Southern Poetry Review*, and *Crab Orchard Review*.

Carmel Lee Morse has two poems, "Art Lesson with Aunt Emma" and "Flight Zero from 35,000 Feet," in the Fall 2006 edition of the *Fairfield Review*, to be published in mid-December.

Lew Kaye-Skinner's essay, "Inheritance," has been accepted for publication in *Nebraska Life* magazine.

It's a personal narrative about growing up with his grandparents on a farm in south-central Nebraska.

Mike Kelly will be part of a panel titled "[Re]Presenting Threshold People: Negotiating Liminal Identity in Writing Communities" at the 2007 Conference on College Composition and Communication, to be held March 21-24 in New York City.

Linda Mahloch reports that English department members responded to the Food Bank drive with four boxes of canned goods, pasta, toilet paper, dish soap, coffee, and diapers, along with several checks. Many thanks for your contributions.

Acclaims & Counter Acclaims

So it's Nov. 14 and we're approaching the end of a our office-staff meeting when the department administration in the persons of Chair Joy Ritchie and Vice Chair Debbie Minter announce that they need our assistance with a situation in Bailey Library, and we all dutifully troop across the hall to render said assistance. (Some of us suspect we're going to "assist" with the "situation" of presenting an Applause Award to Elaine, so we play along, "nudge, nudge, wink, wink.")

We're greeted by a bunch of faculty members noisily waving little white clapper hands (no doubt causing a light somewhere to flash on and off at eye-crossing speed), and a table full of – what's this? – "Acclaim" award plaques ("What's an Acclaim Award?"). Turns out these new awards were dreamed up by the department administration, the faculty and the Dean's Office to reward us for helping out the ESL program and the Classics department in their hour of need. And it's not just plaques, it's money and other gifts too. Holy cow. Just goes to show you can't trust the administration.

But you can *love* 'em, and the faculty too. We want to thank you all for the completely unexpected, unnecessary and unforgettable thoughtfulness and generosity on your part in conspiring to give us those awards and those gifts. You went above and beyond. Acclaim to you too.

– **LeAnn Messing, Linda Mahloch, Sue Hart, Kelly Grey-Carlisle, Elaine Dvorak, and Janet Carlson**

As for **Elaine Dvorak**, she's now known as the Energizer Bunny throughout the College of Arts & Sciences, thanks to the nomination materials (eight nominations, by the way) emailed to everyone in the college. She's also known as cheerful, helpful, happy,

eager, skilled, and kind – but then you already knew that. She's also a couple of hundred dollars richer. (But we'll have to chip in to get her a massage at Campus Rec. The Applause Award no longer includes that perk.) Anyway, congratulations, Elaine – few people are so obviously deserving of this award.

Upcoming Events

Dec. 1, 4 p.m. – A Special No-Name Reading at Sur Tango Bar *et* Café, 1228 P St. For more information go to <http://www.unl.edu/noname>.

Dec. 1, 5 p.m. – Julia Schleck sings with the newly formed UNL Chamber Singers at the Sheldon Gallery's "Winter Festival," in the Great Hall.

The singers will perform Benjamin Britten's "Ceremony of Carols" with harp accompaniment along with other seasonal pieces. Admission is free; there will be appetizers and a cash bar "to further enhance the music and the gallery's art collection."

Dec. 5, 12:30 p.m. – Mock Job Talk, "Pauline Hopkins, the Fantastic, and Post-Reconstruction African-American Identity," by **Darcie Rives**

Sponsored by the Teaching and Research and Graduate Committees as well as the Placement Group, this talk is the inaugural event of a new departmental series designed to provide our job seekers with the opportunity to practice one of the most important aspects of the job market process. Please do come and support our graduate students. Bailey Library.

Dec. 5, 4 p.m. – Arts & Sciences Annual Holiday Celebration and Annual Applause Award Presentation, Hewitt Place, 1155 Q St.

Come support **Elaine Dvorak** in her bid to win the 2006 Annual Applause Award (her name automatically went into the hat when she won the monthly award). And don't forget the always terrific food and beverages. And don't forget that Linda Mahloch (Rossiter, at the time) once won a television in the drawing. You have to be there to win, so let's all go, okay?

Dec. 6, 3:15 p.m. – Faculty meeting – Note the early start! Bailey Library

Dec. 11, 2-4 p.m. – End-of-Semester Celebration, Bailey Library

Featuring musical entertainment by **Steve Buhler, Jack Vespa, Kwakiutl Dreher, and Julia Schleck**, this festive moment is also your opportunity to bring in your favorite seasonal desserts and treats. Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you grade.

Dec. 23 (Sat.) - Jan. 1, 2007 – Holiday Closedown
(offices closed)

Jan. 8, 2007 – 2ND-SEMESTER CLASSES START

Jan. 10, 2007 3:30 p.m. – Faculty meeting, Bailey Library

Jan. 12, 4 p.m. – No-Name Reading featuring **Zach Schomburg** and **Joel Tomfohr**. At Sur Tango Bar *et* Café, 1228 P St.

Farther Down the Road

The Teaching and Research Committee is planning additional brown bag events in the spring term:

Feb. 6, 12:30 p.m. – Recovery Work in English Studies

With **Amber Leichner, Julia Schleck, Steve Behrendt**, as well as **Eric Turley** and **Whitney Douglas**.

Mar. 5, 12:30 p.m. – New Trends in 20th- and 21st-Century Studies

With **Marco Abel, Aaron Hillyer, Steve Ramsay**, and **Amelia Montes**.

Bring your lunches and good ideas to the Bailey Library!

Mar. 23 - Apr. 5, 2007 – "Retrospective of Contemporary German Cinema," hosted by the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center and curated by **Marco Abel**.

Over the course of two weeks, the retrospective will feature 12 contemporary German films. Two directors – **Christoph Hochhäusler** (*Milchwald [In this Very Moment]*, 2003) and *Falscher Bekenner [Low Profile]*, 2005) and **Benjamin Heisenberg** (*Schläfer [Sleeper]*, 2005) – have agreed to fly in from Germany to attend the event.

American Life in Poetry: Column 088

By Ted Kooser, U.S. Poet Laureate, 2004-2006

This wistful poem shows how the familiar and the odd, the real and imaginary, exist side by side. A Midwestern father transforms himself from a staid businessman into a rock-n-roll star, reclaiming a piece of his imaginary youth. In the end, it shows how fragile moments might be recovered to offer a glimpse into our inner lives.

My Father Holds the Door for Yoko Ono

In New York City for a conference
on weed control, leaving the hotel
in a cluster of horticulturalists,
he alone stops, midwestern, crewcut,
narrow blue tie, cufflinks, wingtips,
holds the door for the Asian woman
in a miniskirt and thigh high
white leather boots. She nods
slightly, a sad and beautiful gesture.
Neither smile, as if performing
a timeless ritual, as if anticipating
the loss of a son or a lover.

Years later, Christmas, inexplicably
he dons my mother's auburn wig,
my brother's wire-rimmed glasses,
and strikes a pose clowning
with my second hand acoustic guitar.
He is transformed, a working class hero
and a door whispers shut,
like cherry blossoms falling.

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(She made me put this in. --Ed.)

Publisher's note:

Janet Carlson will be on "on leave" from her editorial duties during the spring semester. Janet is one of the most eloquent, graceful, and witty writers in the department, and I know we all appreciate the time and effort she's given to the newsletter. **Gerry Shapiro** has generously volunteered to stand in for Janet beginning in January.