

12-16-2010

## Areté December 2010

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### Recommended Citation

Areté, "Areté December 2010" (2010). *Areté: Honors College at WKU Newsletter*. Paper 32.  
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# ARETÉ

THE SPIRIT OF ENGAGED EXCELLENCE – A PUBLICATION OF THE WKU HONORS COLLEGE

DEC. 2010  
VOL.6 ISSUE 2



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Suzanne Spalding and Inga Steenbergen enjoy the Honors Club Holiday murder mystery party. Photo Story Page 3

Honors students and faculty, Laurel Mallory, Shanna Downey, Dr. Roger Murphy, Jen Phillips, Bonnie McCullagh, Caleb Howard, Dr. Tony Harkins, and John Bennett Alexander, travel to Tennessee to study the Civil Rights Movement first-hand.

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## WKU Faculty Are Going Under:

### Dr. Motley and NCHC Faculty Explore Mammoth Cave

**KALI O'ROURKE**

*Areté staff writer*

Experience is the best teacher, and WKU faculty members will be taking that to heart this summer at the Honors Faculty Institute.

Co-sponsored by the National Collegiate Honors Council and the Honors College at WKU, the institute is a weeklong class for 10 to 15 faculty members from all over the United States. Training sessions are held several times per year, but this will be the first one held in Kentucky.

The focus of the program, dubbed "Seeing Beneath the Surface: Kentucky Cave Country," is a teaching method called "Place as Text." "Place as Text" is an experiential learning method, developed for Honors classes, where students get out of the classroom and explore an area. Students get out of the classroom and go somewhere. They

learn first-hand before returning to the classroom to discuss and write about their experiences.

"The text is really the place, itself, and what you've experienced in that place," said Dr. Clay Motley, assistant director of the Honors College and a facilitator of the program.

Motley worked for over a year to get approval for the institute, which will take place at Mammoth Cave. Faculty members will use "Place as Text" to learn to see the deeper meaning in an experience.

They will get to explore areas of the cave where people do not normally get to go. The towns around the national park will also be incorporated into the experience with an emphasis on music and how the cave has affected the region's culture.

"There's a culture involved with the cave being there, so it's kind of getting

people to see that," Motley said.

The institute will take place June 7-12, 2011. Other WKU faculty involved include Dr. Fred Siewers of the Geography and Geology Department and Dr. Erika Brady of the Folk Studies and Anthropology Department.

*"The text is really the place, itself, and what you've experienced in that place," said Dr. Clay Motley.*

## Honors Students Have Super Saturdays

**BETHANY RIGGS**

*Areté staff writer*

"One of my favorite things we have done was helping the students make homemade chalk to learn about, discuss, and display exothermic reactions," Winchester, Ky., Honors junior Whitney Montgomery said. "It was so much fun!"

Montgomery, a double major in chemistry and biology, worked her first Super Saturday class this semester.

Super Saturdays, created by The Center for Gifted Studies at WKU, are classes held for students in the surrounding communities that are currently in first through eighth grades. There are over 40 classes and several

subjects from which to choose. They are held four Saturdays each semester.

Many WKU Honors College students assist with these classes, especially in the Department of Chemistry. One of Montgomery's chemistry classes requires her to participate in order to satisfy the Honors component of the course. Montgomery enjoys working with the younger students and assisting them in any way she can.

Kate Gaines, a chemistry major from Owenton, Ky., has worked eight Super Saturday classes. Both Gaines and Montgomery said they are impressed with the positive classroom environment and the fact that the activities are always fun, unique, and hands-on. The

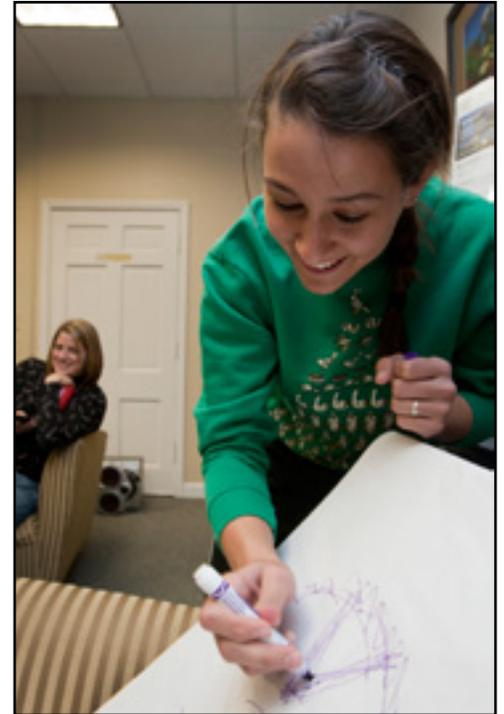
activities really give students a different perspective from their typical school classrooms.

"Being able to see the students so excited and passionate about learning is the best part," Gaines added. "I think that they all have bright futures."

*"Being able to see the students so excited and passionate about learning is the best part," said Kate Gaines.*

# Honors Club Celebrates the Holidays with a Murder Mystery

PHOTOS BY SAM OLDENBURG



## **BETHANY RIGGS**

*Areté staff writer*

Mrs. Claus was the culprit! This year on Dec. 3 at the annual Honors Club Holiday Party, the theme was a murder mystery. About 25 students tried to answer who killed Santa. The students, dressed in tacky holiday sweaters, interrogated the suspects that included Rudolph, the Gingerbread Man, Scrooge, and Mrs. Claus. In addition to the murder mystery, the event included light refreshments and holiday games. Admission cost \$3 to benefit the ALIVE Center and Teen Angel Tree.

## A Field Trip to Remember

**LAUREL MALLORY**

*Areté guest writer*

Justice, crime and punishment are the themes for this semester's Honors American Studies course. The class visited the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tenn. on Nov. 7. This trip came after extensive discussion of racial justice and served as a poignant reminder of the real people involved in struggles of justice.

Housed in the Lorraine Motel, the site of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination, the museum showcases the endeavors of the Civil Rights Movement.

The extensive history exhibit is divided into smaller displays that highlight people involved in these efforts. Both sides of the movement are shown through propaganda typical of that time. Signs by the KKK shock many people today, reading things such as:

"Know your enemies," "Unite together, now America needs you," and "Only the truth will survive."

In juxtaposition with those images, other signs read, "Right is of no sex. Truth is of no color" and "One is the Father of us all, and all we are between."

In the end, one comes out of the museum with a feeling of hope for the future. The museum demonstrates that a small group of people really can change society.

"The Civil Rights Museum exposed me to our country's history and the struggles different minority groups went through," said Honors senior Bonnie McCullagh.

This experience was very educational and was made possible by the Honors College's support. Thanks to its funding, the class was able to make an inspirational journey.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY LAUREL MALLORY  
*Students in the American Studies course visited the National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel.*

## Colloquium Engages Students in Global Sustainability

**NANCY GIVENS**

*Areté guest writer*

Students in Nancy Givens' Honors 301 Colloquium: Sustainability and Responsibility have been examining global sustainability issues through an ethical lens. Key topic areas included energy, water, waste, and food systems. To provide insight into possibilities for local action, two guest speakers presented to the class.

On Oct. 5, Jim Embry, Director of the Lexington-based Sustainable Communities Network and contributor to the Sustainable World Sourcebook, came to speak about what he called "The Great Unraveling." Climate

change, natural resource depletion, and toxic pollution buildup made up some of the topics for his speech. Jim Embry's most famous phrase is "and what about our future?"

Embry has been a community activist for more than 40 years. His career began as a civil rights campaigner in 1960 when he was 10 years old. In his talk, he emphasized all earth systems, which are vital to life, are in decline.

On Oct. 26, Judy Petersen, Executive Director of Kentucky Waterways Alliance, came to speak about KWA's work to protect and restore Kentucky's waterways. Her talk was organized into four sections: A Voice for Your Watershed, The Clean Water Act, Advocating for Our Waterways, and the

impacts of mountaintop coal mining on water quality.

Working statewide since 1993, KWA is a nongovernmental organization that has won better protection for Kentucky's waterways through community-based efforts, advocacy, and educational outreach. Its work is making a positive difference in the quality of life for all Kentuckians "one victory at a time."

In the final weeks of class, students will design and implement an energy-related, local project using the Earth Force Community Action and Problem-Solving Process. Through this hands-on, real-world opportunity, Honors students will demonstrate their commitment to the earth.

## Anthropology Students Travel to India in Search of Documentary Updates

**CAMERON FRANEY**

*Areté staff writer*

In the early summer of 2011, about 12 students, some of which are Honors students, will travel with Dr. Lindsey Powell of the Folk Studies and Anthropology Department and Dr. Chunmei Du of the History Department to Northwestern India to produce ethnographic videos.

These videos, used in an educational setting, will be an update of the 1987 documentary film *The Bharvad Predicament* by Roger Sandall and Jayasinhji Jhala. One video will be shown

after screenings of the original film as an update of the people in the region. Another video will be a standalone documentary that includes parts of the original *Predicament*. The documentary follows a group of villagers in India, discovering the problems the villagers have between the cattle herders and the cotton farmers. It also documents how the Jhala clan, the princely group of the region, is involved in mediating troubles.

The hosts for this trip, the Jhala clan, will be boarding Dr. Powell, Dr. Du, and the students in their palace with full amenities, while providing them with

transportation throughout the region.

The students will be involved in the process by helping with the equipment, such as cameras, boom microphones, and reflectors, all while learning observation, documentary, and research methods.

"It's my first time in the field," said Hallie Collins, an Honors sophomore from Murray, Ky. "I'm really excited to get my feet wet and to do applied work."

Dr. Powell hopes the trip will not only include intense moments in the documentary process, but also enjoyable times with sightseeing and casual research.

## Philanthropy through Food

**AUDREY GEARHART**

*Areté editor*

On Nov. 21, 2010, Honors senior Caley Foster hosted a Thanksgiving dinner for a cause at the Catholic Campus Center at WKU.

The traditional Thanksgiving meal of turkey, stuffing, green beans, mashed potatoes, sweet potato casserole, corn, and pies benefitted Eat So They Can, an international fundraiser for global volunteer networks.

Foster raised about \$80 to help reach a local \$20,000 fundraising goal.

"I think it is very important to help those who need it, and oftentimes during the holidays, it is easy to stay focused on our families and difficult to remember to help those who need it," said Foster.

Eat So They Can donates funds and supplies to pre-existing programs in

countries all over the world. Eat So They Can raised money for orphaned and vulnerable children, women's empowerment, anti-trafficking, and emergency relief programs this year.

WKU alumna and Eat So They Can ambassador Kayla Clausen works in Kentucky and California to reach her \$20,000 fundraising goal. Clausen sponsors proceeds dinners at local restaurants, sells benefit calendars, and has planned a benefit concert for Feb. 17, 2011 with The Band Perry. Tickets will cost \$18 through Omega Phi Alpha and \$19 through WKU's ticket office. If Clausen achieves her goal, she will be rewarded with a trip to one of the benefitting organizations in Kenya, Vietnam, Haiti, or Peru.

"I went with them [Eat So They Can] two years ago to Vietnam," said Clausen. "I got to see some of the program funds at work. I got to see where the money was going, and I wanted to get involved."

In addition to her Thanksgiving meal, Foster also hosted a hotdog grill-out with her sorority, Omega Phi Alpha, and the WKU chapter of Beta Alpha Psi. The organizations raised about \$380 together.

Foster hopes to accompany Clausen on the distribution trip. She is working with Clausen to raise awareness for the benefit concert. She also continues to host events and raise money for a worthy cause.

***"Oftentimes during the holidays, it is...difficult to remember to help those who need it," said Caley Foster.***

# Honors Faculty Spotlight: Mac McKerral

**AUDREY GEARHART**

*Areté editor*

A dim office is warmed by the starlit vista on a glowing Macintosh computer and a small desk lamp. Comics depicting journalistic humor adorn the walls along with baseball memorabilia. Gordon D. McKerral, known by his students and colleagues as “Mac,” sits at his L-shaped desk patiently awaiting his interview. Mac serves as a member of the Honors Development Board and has taught Honors sections of Introduction to JOUR 202: Media Writing and JOUR 301: Press Law and Ethics for five years at WKU.

Q: What led you to WKU?

A: I had taught at Troy for 10 years, but I was really missing the full-time newsroom. I took some time off. I decided if I went back to teaching it had to be in a good program in a good place. The main thing was I had heard good things about the School of Journalism and Broadcasting. I have really enjoyed my time here, but I always have to get my writing and reporting fix during the summers.

Q: What do you do for the Honors Development Board?

A: We try to keep up with everything that’s going on in the Honors College. We make suggestions, but we don’t have binding decision-making. I serve on the Travel Abroad Grant committee. We make decisions on how much money we give people. For Fall 2010 applicants, we had about \$14,000.

Q: What’s new with the Honors Development Board?

A: With regards to the Honors College, it’s a work in progress. We are working on hiring designated Honors faculty. We are attracting talented students. I never fail to tell them about the Honors



PHOTO BY THE ADVOCATE-MESSENGER

*Gordon “Mac” McKerral, Associate Professor in the School of Journalism & Broadcasting and a member of the Honors Development Board, said his students probably view him as “old style,” the name of a typeface.*

College.

Q: How else are you involved with the Honors College?

A: I frequently serve as a CE/T thesis advisor. In the past three years, I have been first reader for four or five projects. I have also been a second and third reader several times.

Q: What makes your Honors sections different from your non-Honors classes?

A: They are more creative and a little more challenging than normal classes.

I don’t feel like I should add to the pile-on. I want you to have a good learning experience, and I want it to be rigorous.

I frequently say, “Don’t confuse nice with easy.” I’m a nice guy but that doesn’t mean I’m easy.

Q: What advice would you give to students?

A: A lot of what I try to do is based on my experience. What are things I tried to do that stuck? One of the things that I think is most important is trying new things. Students should do a lot of exploring after they get their degrees. When you are young,

when you aren’t locked into families and jobs, you should try to do it.

***“They [Honors classes] are more creative and a little more challenging than normal classes,” said Mac McKerral.***

# Swapping Spit for a Cause

**NICOLE COOMER**

*Areté staff writer*

Honors junior Alex Kimura organized a bone marrow drive for Nov. 16-18 at WKU's Preston Center. The drive helped 450 people register as potential bone marrow donors.

WKU students, faculty, and members of the Bowling Green community came to have the inside of their cheeks rubbed with four cotton swabs. The cheek swabs allowed each participant to have his or her DNA typed and added to the bone marrow registry.

This was not Kimura's first experience with a bone marrow drive. She organized another drive in her hometown of Louisville, Ky., where 700 potential donors joined the registry. Kimura wanted people to be aware of the bone marrow registry after her younger sister

was diagnosed with aplastic anemia, a rare bone marrow and blood disorder.

Her sister's best method of treatment was a bone marrow transplant, but a match could not be found. This inspired Kimura to advocate the bone marrow registry and organize bone marrow drives for patients like her sister.

"It is really rare for people to find a match, about one in a million," said Kimura, "so having more people on the registry allows for more matches to be found and more lives to be saved."

Honors junior Katie Knecht volunteered to help out with the drive when Kimura asked if anyone wanted to contribute.

"I decided to help out with the drive because I had been looking for a way to get involved in a non-profit organization," said Knecht. "The drive was a little bit different, but it is such an

easy way to potentially save a life that it seemed perfect."

Knecht helped Kimura organize and create flyers. There was a steady flow of participants coming in and going out for all three days. Knecht donated every spare moment she had to help the participants fill out forms and swab their cheeks correctly.

"It was so awesome to see people being so selfless and joining the registry," said Knecht who plans on organizing a bone marrow drive in Paducah, Ky., her hometown, over winter break.

Kimura's sister is doing better, but Kimura still continues to promote the bone marrow registry.

"I would love to continue to host drives here and at other college campuses," said Kimura. "Spread the word about how easy bone marrow donation is, and how everyone should be on the registry."

## "Unsure"

**SHAWNA FELKINS**

*Areté guest writer*

"I threw up today."

"I know."

Your body tenses. You weren't expecting this reply.

"How?"

"You were gone a long time and I didn't see anyone else come out of the bathroom."

"Oh... are you mad?"

"Of course not, baby. I know this is a slow process, but we can do this."

"I hate that I'm lying to you."

"I know."

"You deserve so much more than this and I just don't think this is fair to you. I feel like it would be for the better if..."

His body tenses against you, and you roll over to face him.

"What?"

## An excerpt from Honors sophomore Shawna Felkin's second person short story "Unsure"

Tears have started to well up in his eyes, and his shoulders have started jumping up and down.

"This isn't fair to you. You deserve so much more..."

"No no no no no no no no," he says covering his head with his hands, "no no no no no no no no."

He's rocking back and forth with tears streaming down his face. You do the only thing you can think of. You hold him.

"Baby baby baby baby. I'm sorry. I didn't mean it. I didn't mean it. I'm just scared is all. Baby baby baby baby baby."

He pulls away to look you in the eyes. They're pleading with you.

"Please don't leave me."

"I'm not going to leave you."

"I can fix this. I'll do whatever it takes. I can fix this."

"I know."

You pull him close again, cradling his

head under your chin. He stops crying as you stroke his hair.

"We can do this together. I can help you beat it."

"I know."

"I'll go to rehab with you. I'll take you to a counselor. I'll do whatever it takes to make you better, just please don't leave me."

"Baby, I'm not going to leave you."

"Promise?"

"Promise."

He reaches for your hand and you lace your fingers through his, hoping he doesn't say anything to cut through the silence. He draws in a breath, and you clench your eyes knowing he's getting ready to speak.

"Everything's going to be all right."

You're not so sure.

# English Honor Society Combines Class and Club

**MEGHAN KENNEDY**

*Areté staff writer*

“I didn’t want it to be one of those things where students show up once and then put it on their résumé for the rest of their lives,” stated Walker Rutledge, sponsor of the English Honors Society for WKU and teacher in the WKU English Department. Thus, the half-a-credit English 202 Honors Forum was born.

It welcomes students from all majors who share a love for language and literature. Unlike other classes, English 202 meets for one hour every other Wednesday. Also unlike many other classes, this class/club hybrid is a fun, informal setting for roundtable discussion amidst tea and cookies.

This semester’s theme is “The Hero in Literature” and has afforded students a chance to learn about the heroes in western literature from

experts: WKU professors in the English Department. Thus far, students have had the opportunity to learn about the Greek hero from Dr. Niko Endres, the Anglo-Saxon hero from Dr. Alison Langdon, the Renaissance hero from Dr. Beth Weixel, the Victorian hero from Dr. Katherine Green, and the Romantic Hero from Dr. Lloyd Davies. Next semester, the club will study literary chronology.

Enrolling in the class does not require students to join Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society, but there are some perks for those who do. For a small, one-time fee, students may become lifetime members of the organization, gain access to a myriad of scholarships, and have the opportunity to be published. Sigma Tau Delta also hosts an annual conference, allowing members from around the nation to

present their writing. Nine students from WKU had works accepted by Sigma Tau Delta at the March 2010 conference in St. Louis, Mo.

Shawna Felkins, a sophomore in the Honors College, went on the trip to read her short memoir and called the experience “absolutely amazing.” She also said that the conference featured “a variety of pieces, from analytical to creative, which also made for an interesting event.”

When asked if she would repeat the experience, she said, “I am going to submit two pieces for this year, and I really hope I get accepted to go back.”

This year’s conference will be held in Pittsburg, Pa. Interested in joining Sigma Tau Delta? Check them out at [www.english.org](http://www.english.org) or hit up the “Sigma Tau Delta International Honor Society” Facebook page.



Published monthly by students in the Honors College.

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