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WKU Folk Studies Society

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STUDENT NEWS

Dan Steed graduated in May with an M.A. in Folk Studies. His thesis is entitled "A Folkloric Perspective on Traditional Auctioneering."

Vicky Middleswarth, David Axler, and Vaughan Webb have completed their degree requirements and will be awarded M.A. degrees in August. The titles of their theses are "A Folkloristic Approach to Storytelling Performances By a Contemporary Librarian" (Vicky Middleswarth); "Fandom is a Way of Life: A Folkloristic Ethnography of Science Fiction Fandom" (David Axler); and "Traditional Elements in the Selected Columns of Allan M. Trout" (Vaughan Webb).

Congratulations to Stuart Downs and Gayle Waggoner for passing the comprehensive examinations!

Several students associated with the Folk Studies Program have accepted full time jobs. Dan Steed, a recent graduate, has accepted a position at the Museum of Westward Expansion in St. Louis, Missouri. Hank Willett, formerly Folk Arts Coordinator in Decatur, Alabama, begins his duties this month as Alabama State Folklorist. Gayle Waggoner has received final approval from the Brazilian government for her research sponsored by the Fulbright Commission. She will begin her work in Sao Luis, Maranhao, Brazil in September. Becky Morse has accepted an English and folklore teaching position at Allen County High School in Scottsville, Kentucky. Barry Taerbaum has assumed the duties of facilitator with the Ethnic Arts Program which operates under the auspices of the Illinois Arts Council.

Three students have had papers accepted for publication. Gayle Waggoner's note, "They Made Us Dance in the Pig Trough" was published in the April issue of Western Folklore. Barry Taerbaum's book review of Veton Peabody's Tall Barney, Giant of Seal's Island recently appeared in the Kentucky Folklore Record. Becky Morse's article, "Rolly Holey: A Regional Marble Game" is forthcoming in the KFR.

On April 2, Barry Taerbaum was a participant on the panel for immigrant and ethnic beliefs at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Folklore Society. He presented a paper concerning Peter Zebich, a Serbo-Croatian folk hero of incredible strength.
Two students were recently awarded research grants. Gayle Waggoner received a Faculty Research Committee grant from Western Kentucky University. It provides funding for photography expenses connected with Gayle’s research in Brazil. David Taylor, Regional Historic Preservationist, was awarded a grant by the Traditional Arts Program of the Ohio Foundation of the Arts—funding twenty-five days of fieldwork in southeastern Ohio recording traditional fiddle music.

On June 1, Becky Morse presented a program of Kentucky music as a guest lecturer and performer for “Kentucky Day” at T.C. Cherry school in Bowling Green. During the summer, Becky is presenting weekly campfire programs of traditional music at Mammoth Cave National Park as part of the Volunteers-in-the-Park Program and the Summer Internship Program. She is also researching southern gospel quartet music and is currently working closely with the Sego Brothers and Naomi, a quartet based in Tennessee, interviewing the singers and video taping performances.

Marian Krontz and Becky Morse attended the Sixth Annual Reunion of the WWVA Jamboree U.S.A. in Wheeling, West Virginia in May. They tape recorded interviews with several musicians formerly and currently associated with Jamboree U.S.A. and made a video recording of the Saturday night performance which featured old-time musicians. The recordings will be deposited in the Folklore and Folklife Archives here at Western.

Congratulations to Tom Ayers for winning first prize in the New Jersey Monthly magazine tee-shirt slogan competition designed to upgrade the image of New Jersey. Out of 20,000 slogans, Tom’s slogan, “New Jersey in under-stated” won him $500.00. Folklore is not always confined to academia!

FACULTY NEWS

On April 4 Lyn Montell conducted two classroom presentations on oral history and a college-wide presentation on folk oral history and regional studies at Union College in Barbourville, Kentucky. On April 14-15 he served as a consultant to the Appalachian Museum at Berea College, and on April 20-22 Dr. Montell made a university-wide presentation on The Saga of Coe Ridge and research in black oral folk history at the University of Wisconsin Lakeside Campus in Kenosha. He also made two classroom presentations on regional folklore while there. Lyn is the recipient of a grant awarded by the Kentucky Oral History Commission to initiate a project involving oral history fieldwork with black politicians of southern Kentucky.

Burt Feintuch and Bruce Greene have applied for a grant for a project which will culminate in a set of recordings documenting the traditional music of south central Kentucky. The project is sponsored by the Bowling Green-Warren County Arts Commission; Burt and Bruce are seeking funding from the Kentucky Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts.
We welcome Dr. Bob Teske and his family to Bowling Green. Dr. Teske will assume his duties as Associate Professor of Folk Studies in August.

Marilyn White will join the faculty of the Center for Inter-cultural and Folk Studies this fall as Director of the Afro-American Studies Program and Instructor of Folklore and Afro-American Studies. Ms. White received her B.A. in English from Hampton Institute and her M.A. in Folklore from Indiana University. She is currently working on her dissertation from the University of Texas at Austin.

Ms. White spent two years at Central Washington State where she taught courses in Folklore and Literature, Black Non-Fiction, and Native American and Chicano Folklore. Her interests include oral history and the ethnography of speaking. We are looking forward to having Ms. White at the Folk Studies Department.

FOLK STUDIES SOCIETY NEWS

On March 31 Dr. Charles Perdue of the University of Virginia Department of English presented his film, "Come Day, Go Day, God Send Sunday," which depicts the religious and social life of the black community of Rappahannock County, Virginia. Dr. Perdue led a discussion on film-making and fieldwork methodology following the presentation.

Sol Korine, a video-maker from Whitleyville, Tennessee, presented his recording, "Showdown at the Hoedown: The Smithville, Tennessee Jamboree," on April 26. Korine's tape was aired on PBS May 19. It depicted the annual festival in Smithville which features all types of country music including bluegrass and novelty numbers.

INFORMATION FOR NEW STUDENTS

There will be a meeting of all Folk Studies graduate students on Sunday afternoon August 21 at 3:30 in Gordon Wilson Hall Room 308. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss registration procedures and course offerings and requirements. As Dr. Montell will not be available for lengthy consultation during registration (August 22-24) it is imperative that all incoming students attend. Following this meeting there will be a meeting of all students who received graduate assistantships for the 1977-78 school year.

New students are urged to begin securing housing in early August. Apartments will be scarce by the week preceding registration. Anyone interested in living with another graduate student should write Dr. Montell stating this intention so that he may contact other students interested in this arrangement.

On August 27 beginning at 9:00 there will be a house-raising at Lyn Montell's. All persons interested in helping raise a 1822 saddlebag log house should plan to attend as there is a job for everyone. A special invitation is extended to all incoming students. Southern fare and traditional music will be furnished in the early
evening for all weary laborers. Anyone planning to participate in the day's activities should contact Lyn so that he may secure food for all.

FALL COURSE OFFERINGS

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OTHER NEWS

The Bowling Green-Warren County Arts Commission is initiating a folk artists-in-residence program in the Barren River Area Development District which will serve the area's public schools, providing programs and other learning experiences for students.

The Kentucky Museum is currently preparing traveling exhibits which emphasize folklore and folklife which will be available on two-week loan to schools and other organizations. Ira Kohn, Curator of Exhibits and graduate of the Folk Studies Program, is designing and constructing the cases. The educational materials which accompany the exhibits, including activity sheets and cassette tapes keyed to various age levels, are being prepared by Ann Johnston, Nana Farris, and Vicky Middleswarth. Nana and Vicky are both associated with the Folk Studies Program as well as being museum employees.

THIS NEWSLETTER

Comments, queries, and suggestions concerning this newsletter should be sent to Sara Barker or Becky Morse, Folk Studies Society Newsletter, Center for Intercultural and Folk Studies, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101