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Special points of interest:
Robert Penn Warren Centennial Celebration.
Annual Kentucky Writers Conference.
Kentucky’s Poet Laureate: Joe Survant.
Annual Undergraduate Literature Conference.

The hundredth anniversary of Robert Penn Warren’s birth was honored by a celebration which began on April 21 in the Kentucky Museum. There was a photo exhibit, with a reception following. On April 22 a U.S. Postal Stamp Ceremony was held in Guthrie, Kentucky, the birthplace of Warren. There was a reading of “The Ballad of Billie Potts,” Warren’s famous poem on April 23. There was also an essay contest, book sale, and art gallery in the Mass Media and Technology Hall on April 24. Souvenirs and refreshments were provided. The event was a huge success and many Western students learned more about the famous Kentucky writer.

Warren Essay Contest
The winners of the Robert Penn Warren Essay Contest read their essays at the Undergraduate Literature Conference on April 15. Also, all winners were given the honor of attending the President’s Dinner on April 22. Cash prizes were awarded to all winners.

The winners of the College Division were:
1st - Allan Miller for “Time, Out of the Wild, Wilderness in the Works of Robert Penn Warren”
2nd - Kelly O’Bryan for “Amantha’s Ambiguity”
3rd - Craig Mullins for “Truth and Responsibility: A Resolution of the Conflicts in ALL THE KING’S MEN”

Kentucky Writers Conference and Book Fest
The annual Kentucky Writers Conference, held in conjunction with the Southern Kentucky Book Fest, was held at the University’s South Campus April 14-15. Several members of the faculty were involved with the planning committee. Dr. Tom Hunley was emcee for the poetry slam. New York Times bestseller Teresa Medeiros, Western’s own Elizabeth Oakes and Jane Olmsted, along with Denise Roberts McKinney, lead panels. Songwriter and English graduate student Mark Meloan was also included on a panel.

The Southern Kentucky Book Fest was held April 15-16, at Bowling Green’s Sloan Convention Center. Participants included mystery writer Sue Grafton and children’s author Sharon Creech.
Faculty Achievements

Faculty Publications and Presentations

Dr. Elizabeth Oakes recently won the Pearl Poetry Prize for her volume, *The Farmgirl Poems*. The book will be published in the fall of this year. Also, Dr. Oakes and colleague Dr. Jane Olmsted published the third volume in the Kentucky Feminist Writers Series, *I to I: Life Writing by Kentucky Feminists*. WKU professors Mary Ellen Miller, Charmaine Mosby, and Nancy Roberts all have work featured in the book.

Dr. Tom Hunley has been very active this year, presenting at conferences and publishing. Among other projects, he presented his paper, "Excuses, Excuses, Excusest" as a part of the pedagogy forum at the Associated Writing Programs annual conference in Vancouver, BC. He also published his book, *My Life as a Minor Character*, through the Pecan Grove Press.

Dr. Hughes presented a paper entitled "I am Obnoxious to Each Carping Tongue": Anne Bradstreet and New World Femininity" at the Spanish Association of American Studies Conference held in Jaen, Spain.

Nancy Roberts's book *Crossing the Great Divide* was published by Wind Publications this year.

Judith Szerdahelyi's paper "The Place of Multimedia Literacy in the English Curriculum: Lighting Techniques for Digital Imagination" was accepted for presentation by the Kentucky Council of Teachers of English.

Dr. Nikolai Endres's paper "Roman Fever: Petronius' Satyricon and Gore Vidal's The City and the Pillar," was recently published. It is the result of his Junior Faculty Fellowship.

Dr. Ted Hovet received a grant to develop a course in Japanese cinema that will be offered at WKU in the fall of 2005.

John Hagaman presented his paper "Providing Connections and Growing Teacher Leadership in Rural Areas through Continuity Programs" at the National Writing Project’s annual meeting in Indianapolis.


Kentucky’s Poet Laureate:

Joe Survant, WKU Professor

Dr. Joe Survant, Western Kentucky University professor, was Kentucky’s Poet Laureate from 2003-2005. He takes pride in being the common man’s poet, and his modest demeanor belies the richness of his work.

Presently, Dr. Survant is teaching at WKU in partial retirement and working on his third book in a trilogy of Kentucky’s rural past, entitled *First West*, following *Anne & Alpheus and Rafting Rise*.

Faculty Awards

This year's faculty awards were presented to:

Dr. Kelly Reames, Wood Fellowship Winner

Dr. James Flynn, Traditions Award Winner

Recent Retirees

- Charmaine Mosby, Ph.D. University of North Carolina
- John Reiss, M.A. University of Louisville
- Joseph Survant, Ph.D. University of Delaware
- Joseph Millichap, Ph.D. Notre Dame University
- Joseph Glaser, Ph.D. University of Texas
- John Spurlin, Ph.D. University of Louisville
**GRADUATE HAPPENINGS**

**Graduate Awards**

This year’s Graduate Awards were given to the following students:

- Molly Gibson, Wood Award
- Rosemarie Wurth, Gladly Award
- Leigh Johnson, Outstanding Graduate Student in English and co-winner, Potter College Outstanding Graduate Student

**The Writing Center**

According to Dr. Jane Fife, the Writing Center’s coordinator, the center plans to add an undergraduate peer tutoring program (next year, we hope) to expand the hours they are available to work with students. Expanding their availability by adding undergraduate tutors will, of course, benefit the students who use the center, but it also promises to benefit the tutors themselves. Research conducted on the subject of peer tutoring has found that undergraduate peer tutors describe their writing center work as some of the most helpful professional development they experienced while in college. They say it made them better communicators, listeners, and collaborators. Tutors hope to begin online tutoring to help students who are limited in the time they can spend on campus.

**Alumni News**

Several of the department’s alumni have continued their careers at Western as graduate students. These students include Thomas Johnson, Derek Holt, Carrie Stewart, Mark Melloan, Aubrey Videtto, Crystal Fodrey, Catherine Colvin, and Corey Alderdice.

**Ph.D Candidates**

Several former graduate students have continued their educations in Ph.D. programs across the country and around the world.

- Praichon Intanujit-University of Cardiff, Wales
- Olivia Smith-Emory University
- Janay Crabtree-University of Georgia, Athens
- Eric Stalions-Bowling Green State University
- Margaret Morris-Purdue University
- Yingqin Liu-University of Texas, Austin
- Lisa Ferguson-University of Alabama, Birmingham
- Anthony Rafalowski-University of Missouri
- Cindy Britt-University of Louisville
- Lyn Scharf Hunter-Tulane University

**Master’s Candidates**

- Jack Bryant, M.A. in Film Studies at Boston University
- Rebecca Butorac, M.F.A., University of Iowa

**Graduate Presentations and Conferences**

Many current graduate students have been busy presenting papers at conferences around the country. Molly Gibson read her paper “Ordered Flight: Power Inside and Outside the Hive in Plath’s Bee Poems” at MTSU’s Women and Power Conference. The Kentucky Philological Association, held at Northern Kentucky University, heard papers from two WKU graduate students. Thomas Johnson read “Sometimes Strangely Beautiful: The Failure of Rebecca Harding Davis’ Life in the Iron Mills.” Josh Henderson read his “Bottom to Top: Refiguring Process as Trajectory.” Aubrey Videtto and Corey Alderdice both read at the University of Louisville’s Twentieth Century Literature Conference. Aubrey read a paper entitled “A Communal Discourse of Salvation or Destruction in Morrison’s Beloved and Faulkner’s Absalom, Absalom.” Corey read “Surviving the Invisible Monster’s Lullaby: Personal Responsibility in the Novels of Chuck Palahniuk.” Kate Matheny read her paper, “Old Men and Progress in Flannery O’Connor’s ‘The Artificial Nigger’ and ‘A View of the Woods,’” at the 2005 Graduate Student Conference on Language and Literature, held at the University of Louisiana, and won best conference paper. Leigh Johnson presented a variety of papers at numerous conferences.
Goldenrod Poetry Festival
The English Club hosted the Goldenrod Poetry Festival in January 2005. The festival featured a reading by the poet Mark Yakich (Penguin) and by the winners of the WKU Goldenrod Poetry Contest. The event was one of the most successful activities the club has ever sponsored and organized.

English Club
The English Club of WKU meets bi-weekly and hosts a multitude of events such as used book sales, writing contests, open-mike readings, film nights, and workshops.

Senior Reading
The English Department’s Annual Senior Reading was held April 26 in Cherry Hall. Dr. Tom Hunley’s Advanced Writing Workshop capstone class presented their projects that they worked on diligently throughout the course of the year. This was also a chance for all English Department Seniors to showcase their talents and projects as well.

Zephyrus
The Zephyrus is WKU’s annual student publication. Submissions are judged anonymously by a student editorial board. Dr. David Lenoir is the faculty advisor. There are annually four awards for writing and one for art. You can pick up your copy of the Zephyrus free of charge in the English Department.

Undergraduate Literature Conference
This was the fourth year for the Undergraduate Literature Conference. This year the name was changed to the Undergraduate Conference on Language, Literature, and Culture in order to reflect the wide variety of submissions received. According to Dr. Ted Hovet, the conference coordinator, “The conference is designed to reward excellence in student academic writing and to give students practice in sharing their work in a professional setting.” The conference was held on April 15. Panel topics included literature, film, and documentary ethics. Congratulations to all students chosen.

If you would like to make a donation to Western’s English Department, please visit the website at http://www.wku.edu/Dept/Academic/AHSS/English/, or call Dr. Karen Schneider at 270-745-3046.

Stacy Clarke, Karie Hampton, Danielle Underwood, Jessica Bennett, and Georgie Gidcumb compiled and edited this newsletter as a project in Dr. Lenoir’s Editing and Publishing Class.