THE WKU ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER #2 (October 12, 1981)

This newsletter is an internal biweekly publication to help keep everyone informed about activities related to English teachers and English teaching at WKU.

DATES
October 22 (Thursday) Departmental potluck in the Faculty House (social time at 6:00, dinner at 6:45)
November 16 Zephyrus will accept poetry and fiction through November 16. Works can be submitted in CH 135.
February 26-27 KPA meeting, Georgetown

ACTIVITIES
RON ECKARD attended the Fall Leadership Meeting of the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs held at the University of Maryland in College Park, October 2-4. As chairman of NAFSA's Region VI (Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio), Ron is a member of the NAFSA Regional Council, along with eleven other chairmen from across the country. The next meeting of the Regional Council will be held at the national conference in Seattle, May 24-28.

WARD HELLSTROM has an article ("A Perspective on the Eighties") in the CEA Forum (XII, No. 1, October 1981, 7-10). It's about the job market and its consequences. Also, Dean Hellstrom will speak at a "Workshop on Employment for Humanities Ph.D.s" at the University of Kansas October 29-31.

ANNA JO JOHNSON taught a Continuing Education course, "Clues to Rules or Improving Your Grammar," from September 15 to October 13. Participants ranged from legal secretaries to brokers to campus security personnel. The course was developed as the result of a questionnaire circulated by the departmental Public Service Committee.

BOB WURSTER participated in the ASG-sponsored Dialog '81 retreat of faculty, administrators, and students held at Camp Decker Oct. 2-3. Also, Wurster is one of thirty volunteers being trained for the hospice program started in Bowling Green. The training program, which lasts thirteen weeks, is preparing these people to work with terminally ill patients who are to be referred to the Hospice of Bowling Green. Bob is chairman of the volunteers in the program.

BEST TERM PAPER

QUESTIONS
Five questions from Ron Eckard: When did the word money cease to be a noncountable noun? And if it can be made plural (perish the thought!), why do journalists spell it monies and not moneys? What ever happened to good old American dollars and federal funds? Reaganomics? Could it be that the term monies should be reserved for those persons outside the private sector?

(over)
Two questions from Bob Wurster: (1) Why don't the members of the English Department who give lectures or read papers at professional meetings such as KCTE, NCTE, SAMLA, KPA, etc. be given an opportunity to give these on campus so the other members of our department and maybe members of other departments could hear them?
(2) Could our department sponsor these members in a mini lecture series?

RECOMMENDATIONS

"Everyone now working in this department should be promoted one notch." EDNA LAMAN

"Faculty members of the English Department who attend professional meetings using university funds should be asked/required to share with others in the department something they learned there." BOB WURSTER

"The administration, following the generous precedent set by the English Department, should reduce half its number of officials to part-time status. These individuals should work at 3/4 capacity yet receive 1/3 their previous pay." WALKER RUTLEDGE

WURSTER IS WILLING

BOB WURSTER is still interested in setting up some stress relief sessions for any group of people interested.

Bob Wurster would be happy to conduct a session in any of your classes on "getting stoned." Contact him if you are interested.

SUGGESTION FOR FRESHMAN ENGLISH

Having a person from the Learning Center and/or the Counseling Center speak to a freshman class can be a good learning experience. The students are required to take notes, a listening exercise; are allowed to ask questions and make comments, a good pre-writing exercise; and are asked to write an extended paragraph or essay on the center(s), a good writing exercise. The students get some valuable information which may be useful and helpful for them later in their university life. --Bob Wurster

PROFESSIONALLY SPEAKING

The WKU English faculty membership in the Kentucky Council of Teachers of English numbers twelve. Membership is $6.00 per year. Please make checks payable to KCTE and give them to GRETCHEN NIVA. Part-time teachers and graduate assistants may join for $3.00 per year.

As of September 28, 1981, WKU had eight persons listed as members of NCTE. All of us are looking for new and challenging teaching tips. These ideas appear monthly in College Composition and Communication and College English. Give NCTE membership your serious consideration. See GRETCHEN NIVA for membership applications.

INFORMATION ON NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

NCTE's goal is to serve the profession by improving the quality of English and language arts instruction in elementary schools, high schools, colleges, and universities across the U.S. NCTE sustains a National Relations Program to increase the influence of the English teaching profession on government officials and agencies, the mass media, and other professional organizations.
Information on NCTE continued:

Working with other educational organizations, NCTE has been able to support an expanded view of "the Basics" in Federal laws and regulations. The Federal concept of basics now includes not only reading and mathematics but also "effective oral and written communication."

In keeping with the new definition of basics, an NCTE committee created a set of "standards for basic skills writing programs" which are being distributed by the U.S. Office of Education to states and local school districts seeking grants to improve basic skills instructions.

For many years, NCTE's stand against censorship has had impact at all educational levels. The Council has provided support and assistance to numerous individuals and schools coping with censors in their districts. NCTE's publication Students' Right to Read, which pioneered a method for making would-be censors accountable, is the most imitated and influential anti-censorship resource in the U.S.

ARTICLE OF INTEREST

Professor Ken Davis of the University of Kentucky in "Coaching Writing" (Freshman English News, Winter 1979) describes the use of "workshop" sections of English 101 at UK. These sections feature few reading assignments, most writing done in class, and extensive one-to-one interaction between teachers and students. The instructors for these sections--all the new, inexperienced Teaching Assistants and a few experienced volunteers--are called "writing coaches."

The composition instructors are invited to think of themselves not as "teachers" but as "coaches"--not only in the sense of a football or swimming coach, but also in the sense of a voice or drama or childbirth coach. The coaches observe the learners' actions and the results, and point out what the learners cannot see for themselves.

Davis explores the "coaching" metaphor. First, coaching is performance-oriented; the coaches succeed only as those they are coaching succeed. Emphasis on the teachers as coaches reminds them that the teaching-learning enterprise is a shared one. Second, the coaching metaphor keeps teachers aware that "writing is an activity, not a subject."--Recommended by Gretchen Niva

ECKARD'S BIASED LIST OF LITERARY SUPERLATIVES

(published here for the first time as a challenge to his colleagues to continue the list in the next issue of this illustrious publication)

1. Worst Novel by Philip Roth: Professor of Desire
2. Best Collection of Short Stories: Flannery O'Connor
3. Worst Novel by Stephen King: Firestarter
4. Best Novel by Mary Gordon: Final Payments
5. Most Underrated 19th Century British Novel: Daniel Deronda
6. Most Conceited Poet: all of them
7. Worst "Novel" by Kurt Vonnegut: Breakfast of Champions
8. Most Gullible Author: Norman Mailer
9. Novel that Tries the Hardest and Fails the Most to be Like Faulkner's: If There Be Thorns
10. Most Famous Soap Opera Written Under "Divine Inspiration": Uncle Tom's Cabin

(over)
Eckard's List continued:
11. Most Overrated American Novel: The Old Man and the Sea
13. Best Movie Adaptation of a Literary Classic: Zeffirelli's Romeo and Juliet
14. Worst Movie Adaptation of a Literary Classic: The Bible
15. Classic that Best Fits Mark Twain's Definition: Ulysses
16. Most Verbose Novelist: Henry James
17. Second Most Verbose Novelist: Charles Dickens
18. Third Place Winner: Joseph Conrad
19. Most Obvious Example of Literary Burn Out: a toss-up between Tennessee Williams and Truman Capote

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS IN NEWSLETTER #1

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT HEADS AT WKU
1908 - 1926 Dr. M.A. Leiper
1926 - 1929 Dean F.C. Grise was Acting Head
1929 - 1959 Dr. Gordon Wilson
1959 - 1972 Dr. Willson E. Wood
1972 - 1979 Dr. James Heldman
1979 - Dr. James Flynn
(sources: conversation with Dr. Willson E. Wood and A History of the Western Kentucky State Teachers College, by Dr. James P. Cornette, written as a doctoral dissertation at Peabody College for Teachers in 1938)

BETWEEN YOU AND I
"All debts are cleared between you and I"--Shakespeare,
"Merchant of Venice," Act III, Scene 2
"Let us go then, you and I"--Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

GRAFFITI
If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.
Tolkien is hobbit-forming.
"I was here. Where were you? Be back soon." Godot

REMINDER
next deadline for submitting material: Friday, October 23 (noon)
next publication: Monday, October 26

THANKS AGAIN
Thanks to those of you who have offered words of praise and gratitude for the first issue of the newsletter. If you wish to address "Letters to the Editor" for publication in the newsletter, please indicate this wish on your letter and send it to me. RM(oore).