May 2010

And just like that, another year was over. It’s been a good one for the English Department. Students and faculty alike have been busy, designing new courses, telling life stories, eating hotdogs, wearing robes, helping victims of violence, preparing for new adventures ... but I’ll let you read about it. Enjoy, and have a great summer.

~ Jill Bergman, Department Chair

Service Learning Comes to English

by John Jepson, Graduating class of 2010

A new course in English took students out of the classroom and into the lives of residents at the Bee Hive Assisted Living Homes last semester. The course integrated creative writing skills and service learning as each student was paired with a resident to collect information and create an anthology of oral histories. Instructor and course designer Erin Brown gave her students in-class training and then sent them out to apply what they had learned. According to Brown, “The students spent roughly two hours [per] week visiting with (cont. p. 3)

Faculty Activity: Presentations and Publications

Nancy Cook presented “Living and Working in a Man’s World: Women and Glacier National Park 1918-1988,” at “History and Memory: Glacier National Park’s Centennial Year Symposium,” held at Flathead Community College in Kalispell. The conference is sponsored by the O’Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West.

Prageeta Sharma and student Lindsey Wallace have poems in Starting Today: 100 Poems for 100 Days, an anthology out now from University of Iowa Press. (Lindsey is day 36; Prageeta is day 96.)

Kevin Canty’s latest book, Everything, described by Stephen Amidon as an “unforgettable journey into the wilderness that lies between loss and redemption,” will be out in July.
**More Presentations and Publications**

**Beverly Chin** chaired and presented the session, “Using Formative Assessments to Improve Writing Instruction,” at the OPI Assessment Conference in Helena in January. She presented a session on “Writing Assessment as Collaborative Professional Development” at the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in San Antonio in March. She was a featured speaker at National Catholic Education Association in Minneapolis, where she spoke on “Teaching Meaningful Revision: Strategies that Improve Students’ Writing.” **David Moore** published an essay on Gerald Vizenor (“Cycles of Selfhood, Cycles of Nationhood: Authenticity, Identity, Community, Sovereignty”) in a collection of essays (Native Authenticity: Transnational Perspectives on Native American Literary Studies) edited by Deborah L. Madsen and put out by SUNY Press. He is also presenting a paper on Debra Earling’s *Perma Red* at the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association in Tucson later this month.

**Joanna Klink**’s latest collection of poems, *Raptus*, is now out from Penguin. It has been praised for its “Everywhere, a forceful, scrupulous intelligence,” “luminous diction,” and range of cadences.”


**Random Acts of Professionalism**

**Beverly Chin**’s annual Montana University System Writing Assessment scoring workshop was a great success once again, with over 100 educators from local school districts, the COT, and UM, along with student teachers. The event garnered an impressive article in the Missoulian (March 12, 2010). In January, 2010, **Professor Chin** conducted a week-long writing institute for secondary teachers in New York City.

**Katie Kane** serves as a volunteer with the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti this month. Her work includes: helping interview victims of gender violence in the camps in Port-Au-Prince and write up the reports in English; helping to write petitions for Humanitarian Parole, documents that will allow families who have suffered physical and psychological trauma to come to the US for treatment; and interviewing Haitians who are engaged in grassroots, non-NGO work, for a media series called “Nou pa Mouri” (“We are Not Dead” in Kreyol). IJDH hopes in telling these stories to combat global narratives about Haitian victimhood.

**Faculty Awards and Recognition**

**Casey Charles** was awarded New York University’s 2010 Washington Square Award for his poem, “The Orb’s Prayer.”

**Prageeta Sharma** was awarded the 2010 Howard Foundation Grant of $25,000 to work on her poetry.

**Greg Pape**, Montana’s former poet laureate, has been chosen for the Provost’s Distinguished Faculty Lecturer Series next year. Stay tuned for the schedule!

**Kate Ryan**’s co-authored article (with Tarez Graban), “Theorizing Feminist Pragmatic Rhetoric as a Communicative Art for the Composition Prac-ticum,” which appeared in *College Composition and Communication* in September 2009, has been awarded the 2009 Elizabeth A. Flynn Award for outstanding feminist scholarship published in the field of rhetoric and composition.
their partners….They spent this time getting to know their partners and creating a relationship.” This allowed the students to get to know a member of the community; according to Linda Bennett, “I know a lot more about what it is like to be ninety and residing in an assisted living facility. This personal knowledge isn’t available from a text.” Or, in the words of student Shannon Janssen “This project helped me…to appreciate the strength of a small town ranch woman who can still smile and laugh after [experiencing a great deal of hardship]. It makes student loan payments a little more tolerable.” Conor McNamara, another student, had this to say about his experience, “I think it will impact the rest of my studies in the sense that I have a deeper connection to Missoula and its residents…. This experience changed my outlook on The University of Montana.”

Alumni News

Jason MacLeod (MFA ’09) had poetry accepted to the Dos Passos Review. It will appear in the June 2010 issue. Miles Weggener (MFA ’01) was published in the 1999 - 2008 Academy of American Poets Anthology: New Voices, edited by Mark Doty. Aryn Kyle’s (MFA ’03) collection Boys and Girls Like You and Me: Stories has just been published by Scribner. Emily Danforth (MFA ’06), and Diana Spechler (MFA ’03) have each recently had books accepted for publication. Lucas Farrell’s (MFA ’08) first full-length collection of poems just won the 2010 Juniper Prize for Poetry and will be published by UMass Press in April 2011, and his newest chapbook is now officially available for pre-order from Caketrain <http://www.caketrain.org/>.

English Students Bound for Graduate Programs

Michael Bartch, Univ. of Connecticut (PhD)  
Dean Clement, Univ. of South Carolina (PhD)  
Yvonne Hammond, West Virginia Univ. (PhD)  
John Jepsen, University of Montana (MA)  
Dan Mollet, Portland State Univ. (MFA)  
Andrew Nance, University of Iowa (MFA)  
Alison Riley, University of Montana (MFA)  
Clare Sutton, University of Pittsburgh (PhD)  
Lisa Teberg, Portland State Univ. (MFA)  
Laura Wright, University of Connecticut (MA)  
Jenna Williams, Vanderbilt University (MFA)
The English Department welcomed faculty, staff, undergraduates, graduates and families to our second annual picnic on May 14. Sixty burgers, six Boca burgers, and fifteen hot dogs were consumed on a gloriously sunny afternoon in Kiwanis Park. Though we missed watching Casey, Phil and Robert playing wiffle ball as they did last year, several students and their families enjoyed Frisbee and catch. A couple of adventurous undergraduates plunged into the Clark Fork to cool off. Everyone seemed content to enjoy the weather, the company and the excellent food. Judy Blunt worked tirelessly to provide pasta and potato salads as well as some incredible desserts. If you weren’t there for her apple pie and strawberry-rhubarb crisp, you can consider yourself truly deprived (or depraved; it was really that good). Laura Wright manned the grill with assistance from Judy and Nathan Yrizarry. She was eventually pried from her post to refuse a speech and to accept a lovely gift from the department (in recognition for her fine service to the department and her upcoming nuptials). The event was well-attended and appreciated. Parents had an opportunity to meet their children’s instructors and taste the Montana summer. Faculty and staff got to unwind out-of-doors and away from computer screens. Students were able to relax and enjoy the end of another semester. For many students, this day under the Big Sky marked the end of their last semester at the University of Montana. We are grateful they were able to spend it with their families and with the English Department.
Finishing the Year: Commencement

Departures: Jocelyn Siler Retires
Jocelyn came to the University of Montana in 1975 as a graduate student in the English Department’s Creative Writing program. After earning her MFA 1977, she became an adjunct instructor and then made her way through the ranks to Full Professor in 2001. In addition to being a very popular teacher, Jocelyn distinguished herself as the Director of Composition, direction that was instrumental in establishing this program’s centrality to the mission of The University of Montana. Jocelyn has been an active scholar in the field of Composition and Rhetoric, publishing three composition text books and several articles, and presenting her work on the teaching of writing in local, national, and international venues. She has been and remains an active writer as well, publishing a number of poems and stories. In her retirement, Jocelyn will continue with her writing, working on several longer works she has in progress. Sources tell us she will also do a substantial amount of traveling. We will miss Jocelyn, but lucky for us, and thanks to a post-retirement contract, she will teach Spring 2011 and 2012.

Departures: Laura Wright Moves On
This year brings the departure of two valuable members of the English Department community. Laura Wright graduated in 2008 with a double major in English and Fine Arts and a minor in Japanese. She distinguished herself as a University Scholar, earning high honors. Current students know Laura as the Department’s highly capable Academic Advisor for the past two years. She is, simply put, a superhero in the department. She has forged strong, supportive relationships with many of our students and has capably and compassionately guided them through their curriculum. (The faculty, of course, help in this process, but we would be less than honest to deny the role Laura has played in guiding faculty as they guide students.) Laura leaves us this summer for graduate school. She was a highly competitive applicant, aggressively wooed by a number of schools. She has chosen to pursue her Master’s degree in literature at the University of Connecticut. (She is also getting married to one of our graduate alumni this month—many changes on the horizon for Laura!) We are grateful for Laura’s generous contribution to the Department of English and are sad to see her go.
Student Accomplishments

MA student Lise Lalonde will present “Poetry in Revelation” this June at the Conference on the Author-Translator in the European Literary Tradition, Swansea University.

Bill Hartman (whom you’ve seen working the front desk this year) was inducted into the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

MFA student Lehua Taitano has a series of poems coming out in TinFish, Issue 20 (http://tinfishpress.com). Lehua also has two short stories, “Better Than No Mother” and “Makahna,” accepted for publication in USO’s on Freeways: An Anthology of Pacific Islander Writers in the Continental U.S.

Graduate Students from English made an impressive contribution to the annual Graduate Student and Faculty Research Conference. Benjamin Adams, Elizabeth Boeheim, Samantha Dwyer, Joshua Harteis, Mark Matthews, Marley McKenna, Nicholas Myers, Doron (Robby) Nadler, Aaron Schneeberger, and Jessica Zephyrs all presented papers. Ben Adams was awarded a prize for his paper, “Text and Context: Some Ideas on Paul de Man’s Wartime Journalism.”

Undergraduate Students from English, Jeff Bartelli, Jacob Kahn, and Samantha Steven presented their work at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, hosted by UM this year.

Congratulations to This Year’s Scholarship Recipients!

Kate Jaffe: Alice Passano scholarship
Nathan Miller: Mansfield Scholarship
Kelsey Fanning: Rose Southworth Megee Scholarship
Jacob Kahn, Jamie Rogers, and Ellen Kolf: Helen J. Olson Scholarships
Chery Sabol: Walter N. King Scholarship
Troy Smith: Freeman Award
Lehua M. Taitano and Laura Scott: Nettie Weber Creative Writing Award
Maren Vespia: Greta Wrolstad Travel Award
Alice Bolin: Goedicke/Robinson Scholarship
Mehgan McKenna: A.B. Guthrie Memorial Fund
Laura Scott: Margaret Beebe Memorial Scholarship
Kristin Ferebee: Alice Passano Hancock Davidson Scholarship
Hannah Soukup: O’Leary/Cardinal Scholarship in Creative Writing
Mark Mayer, Zachary Carlsen, Brett DeFries, and Ted McDermott: Bertha Morton Scholarships and Fellowship (awarded by the Graduate School)

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