



The Far West Outpost

Greetings from your Student Representative Fall, 2006 Newsletter

Hello, fellow Sigma Tau Delta members of the Far Western Region. I hope your semesters are going well and you've gotten over the stress of midterms. It's downhill from here, and for some of us it's extra downhill because we'll be graduating next May! I swore that I wouldn't get "senioritis," but I'm ashamed to say I have! That's not to say I'm slacking off or anything—far from it. I just want to be out in the real world, having fun as an editor/proofreader/copyeditor, earning lots of money so I can pay back my student loans, and reading books and magazines that I *choose* to read, not *have* to read. May can't come soon enough!

In the meantime, I'm getting ready to submit some poems to the Convention. Have you submitted anything yet? No? Then get to it! The postmark deadline is November 30th, so by the time you read this newsletter you'll have a few weeks to find that entertaining piece of fiction, that deep and enlightening poem, or that scholarly piece of literary criticism so you can send it off.

If you've never attended a convention where you have the opportunity to read and share your words with fellow writers, then you're missing out. The Pittsburgh Convention promises to be bigger than ever before and some wonderful writers will entertain and inspire us. So I encourage you, no urge you, to put yourself out there and submit something. You have nothing to lose, everything to gain!

Best wishes, Kim Lock
Boise State University



Important Deadlines!

● International Convention in Pittsburgh:

Postmark deadline for papers and panels is **November 30, 2006.**

Remember to have your chapter advisor sign your submission form, which you can download from:

www.english.org/pittsburgh/cfp_07.pdf

● Individual and Chapter Website Awards:

November 30, 2006.

www.english.org/pdf/awards/awd_web.pdf

● Regnery Awards:

January 30, 2007.

www.english.org/pdf/scholarships/schol_reg.pdf

● Regents' Common Reader Award

February 15, 2007

www.english.org/pdf/awards/awd_commRdr.pdf

I hate vulgar realism in literature. The man who could call a spade a spade should be compelled to use one.

It is the only thing he is good for.

Oscar Wilde

From *A Picture of Dorian Gray*



Message from Our Regent

As your regent, I'd like cordially to invite all Far Western chapter members to Sigma Tau Delta's 2007 International Convention, March 28–31 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The convention is a terrific opportunity for members to meet English majors and minors from all around the world, to present their creative and critical work, and to hear exciting contemporary writers discuss and read their writings. Sharon Olds, David Rakoff, and Jim Daniels will be in attendance. The theme for the 2007 Convention is "Confluence," and you can obtain more information about the program, guidelines for submission of your work, and getting to Pittsburgh by visiting www.english.org/pittsburgh/index.html.

Remember that chapters who send a delegate to the Far Western Regional Business Meeting at the convention receive \$200 to help defray expenses and support chapter activities.

If your chapter has not attended convention in the last two years, I can offer a small Travel Grant to help your members get to Pittsburgh. Email me at schneide@chapman.edu for more information on these grants.

I'll be looking eagerly forward to seeing you in Pittsburgh at the end of March!

Let me know if you need anything else, and thanks!

Matthew Schneider

REGENTS' COMMON READER AWARD

The common reader for next year's annual convention is **Sharon Olds's book, *Strike Sparks, Selected Poems 1980–2002***. The six Regents of $\Sigma\Delta$ invite individual chapters to organize and host a local event or activity around this text. Up to four chapters from each region are eligible to win an award of \$50.00. The Regents hope this award will be a way for chapters to share a convention-related experience and hope it will encourage creative, text-based activities and events.

For more details, please go to www.english.org/pdf/awards/awd_commRdr.pdf



2007 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION SPEAKERS

- Poet, Sharon Olds
- Writer, David Rakoff
- Poet, Jim Daniels

Check out the convention website for details about these fantastic writers.

www.english.org/pittsburgh/index.html



Chapter Reports—Spring, 2006

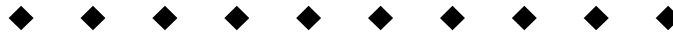
Alpha Kappa Tau at CSU Chico

Our chapter, Alpha Kappa Tau, started this year off on a strong and promising note. Working on promoting membership and gaining recognition from California State University, Chico and its community of students, faculty, and locals are holding an open-mic night at an innovative and new downtown art gallery: 1078 Gallery. Creatively charged writers and musicians will showcase their works. This promises to be an evening of intellectual stimulation and enjoyment.

In pursuit of our goal to become more connected with other societies and organizations on our campus, we look forward to volunteering on behalf of the St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital at a campus-wide event called “Up ‘Til Dawn.” At this event, we will hold a book drive for the children at St. Jude’s and write letters to raise money for the hospital. Later on in the term, we will go on a “literary mission” to the Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon, where we will celebrate dedicated chapter membership with theatrical entertainment, wit, and fun. Helping our international peers, several of our members are volunteering as “conversational partners” to help foreign exchange students with their English language speaking skills.

Many more creative events and ideas are sure to blossom in the following academic term. We will be holding our 2nd annual Student-Faculty Reading where a student reads his or her literary works with a faculty member who has a similar literary focus. We also plan on partaking in Kappa Delta Pi’s (Education Honor Society) “Spring Into Reading” where we will share literacy-aimed activities with the secondary students of our community. On behalf of all our members, I look forward to the dreams we will accomplish as a society this year and in years to come. Our societal goals continue to be shaped by Sigma Tau Delta’s motto: sincerity, truth, and design.

Kyndra Elizabeth Meusel (President)



From Alpha Theta Delta at Washington State University



At the end of the spring 2006 semester, we successfully recruited three members! Two graduated in May, so we are currently working to build the membership again. Thus far we have five potential members who have expressed interest in joining ΣΤΔ. Our fall calendar is looking great. Here’s a run down:

Service:

We held a book drive to help build a collection of books for the Sacagawea Middle School in Spokane, WA. The school library was destroyed in August by arson. Our chapter set up a local bank account for cash donations, and worked with local merchants to place bins in their businesses for book collection sites. The event ran October 9–27.

Social:

- On the first Friday of each month, our chapter sponsors a “Lunch with Professors” series. English department faculty, staff, and students gather for an informal lunch to get to know each other outside the classroom.

- We hold a monthly “Coffee Night” at a local coffee house. Bad poetry readings, games, and peer review of term papers are some of our activities.
- We attended a performance of Sam Shepard’s play, *A Lie of the Mind*, on October 12th.
- Medieval Potluck: October 28th. We had readings of medieval poetry and writings, and enjoyed great food and camaraderie.
- We host other informal gatherings throughout the term.

Fundraisers:

Bake Sale: Our chapter will be selling baked goods and hot beverages at three Visiting Writers Series meetings this fall. The series brings nationally acclaimed authors to our campus for readings of their work.

Other:

- Professor Will Hamlin joined our meeting on September 26th to discuss Graduate School opportunities in English studies.
- On October 10th Professor Michael Delahoyde joined our group for his intriguing and very informative *Shakespeare Authorship Controversy* presentation.

Michael Church (President)



Chapter Reports—Spring, 2006 continued...



Twelve of thirty new members of the Zeta Upsilon Chapter were inducted on September 14th in a celebration held on the grounds at Boise State University. Chapter president Kim Lock presided over the proceedings and started off the occasion with a little history about Sigma Tau Delta. She then discussed the projects and events Sigma Tau Delta organizes each year.

Jacky O'Connor, our chapter sponsor, presented each new member with a membership certificate and a lapel pin. And our treasurer, Terry Allen, gave each inductee a red rose, Sigma Tau Delta's official flower. Following the ceremony, family and friends joined the inductees for a picnic on the last day of perfect summer weather.

At the end of October, three new members became officers—Kelly Kirk, vice president; Bridgett Vanderwalker, Secretary; and Jessica Upson, Treasurer—and they are all excited about their new roles.

We are looking forward to a lunch/movie “date” in December at a locally owned, artsy cinema called “The Flicks” where independent films are shown. In January we will attend a theatre showing of *A Complete History of America, Abridged*. It's a PG-13 comedy that takes a crack at American history and leaves no hero unscorched!

On the fundraising front, we will have a Valentine's raffle where the main prize is a gift basket of Valentine's goodies, and we will hold a yard/bake sale in the spring. Coming up will be the first of three academic decathlons at which we judge the literary essays written by junior high-school students.

Kim Lock (President)



FEATURED AUTHOR—TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS

BY KIM LOCK

“Tonight I watched the sun sink behind the lake. The clouds looked like rainbow trout swimming in a lapis sky. I can honor its beauty or resent the smog in this valley which makes it possible. Either way, I am deceiving myself.”

From Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place

I had the privilege to hear Terry Tempest Williams read a few days ago. She was the keynote speaker at the Western Literature Week hosted by Boise State University. Williams read excerpts from a number of her books including *Pieces of White Shell: A Journey to Navajoland*; *Coyote's Canyon*; *An Unspoken Hunger*; and her most famous book, *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place* which chronicles the rise of the waters of Great Salt Lake in 1983. The ensuing floods wiped out the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, and the loss paralleled Williams's own experiences with family members suffering from cancer.

According to writer Louise Erdrich, *Refuge* is “a record of loss, healing grace, and the search for a human place in nature's large design. Terry Tempest Williams's courage is matched by the earnest beauty of her language and the keen compassion of her observations.”

Williams was charmingly nervous at the start of her reading but after a few deep breaths she settled and her soft voice filled the auditorium. It wasn't until the last part of her reading that I realized why she had been so anxious. She told the audience that she would read from a draft of her next book which recounts her recent visit to Rwanda. She went there to witness and write about the creation of a memorial to those who died during the genocide in which an estimated 800,000 to 1,071,000 ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed during a period of 100 days in 1994.

Erdrich is right—Terry Tempest Williams is a courageous writer. She said that, initially, she didn't want to go to Rwanda because she knew how harrowing it would be. But she went despite her fears. Her words were moving, and the images she described overwhelming—many in the audience, including me, had tears in their eyes. And by the end of her reading, it looked as though she did, too. She received a much-deserved standing ovation.

Terry Tempest Williams is a Utah native and is currently the Annie Clark Tanner Fellow in the Environmental Humanities Program at the University of Utah. Here's a link to her website: <http://www.terrytempestwilliams.com/index.html>.



ΣΤΔ National Service Project

Book Drive for the Homeless Children's Education Fund in Pittsburgh, PA.

Please take part in this worthy cause and donate items at the 2007 Convention in Pittsburgh. A cash donation will be made to the HCEF in the name of one donating chapter (to be selected by a drawing).

Items needed for children in pre-kindergarten to 6th grade:

- Books that depict diversity and urban life
- Reading books (age appropriate)
- Beginning readers
- Picture books
- Bookmarks
- Art supplies
- Crayons
- Pens/pencils
- Colored pencils
- Construction paper

For more information about HCEF, please visit www.homelessfund.org

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