

# The Far West Outpost

Volume 4 Issue 1 Spring 2004

## Conference Highlights

For those of us in the Far West, Daytona Beach, Florida, was definitely an excellent place to have this year's STD International Convention. The weather was a



sunny 80 degrees, and for one week Daytona had an eclectic array of things to offer: a

poetry reading by former US Poet Laureate Billy Collins, humorous observations by Sarah Vowell, the largest car audio expo in the US, sandy beaches, fiction by Scott Morris, dangerous rip tides, and the worst poetry any of us had ever heard. All in all, the Far West had 54 presenters, 10 moderators, and 15 chairs at the conference! Ten Far West schools were present and each represented very well! It definitely was a great time.

## From Your Student Representative

Greetings Far Westerners! My name is Ellen Feusahrens, and I am your newly elected Student Representative. Daytona Beach treated us all very well, and now we have Kansas City to look forward to! I am excited for the upcoming year. KalieRae and newly elected Regent Professor McKeever, as well as I have lots of ideas. We are all eager to plan a Far West conference as well as increase Far West chapter participation at national conference. I hope the three of us can encourage



all of you to apply to conference next year, as well as apply for the many awards and

scholarships Sigma Tau Delta has to offer. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns: feus6762@uidaho.edu

### **From Your Assistant Student Representative**

My name is KalieRae and I attend Southern Utah University in Cedar City, UT. I am a sophomore English Education major. I want to teach on a high school level but also plan on obtaining my Ph.D. following graduation. My interests lie particularly in writing center theory and rhetorical pedagogy. I work as a tutor and office manager of the SUU Writing Center. My passion is literacy, and I am currently at work to enhance literacy through service-learning. My favorite poet is Langston Hughes, but I love any and all kinds of poetry.

I am a seasoned performer and sing frequently for the SUU Theatre Department. I love Broadway and yoga and can twist myself into shapes that give new meaning to the word "pretzel." I am excited for this opportunity to serve the members of the Sigma Tau Delta Far West Region.



## **Chapter News**

### **Utah State University gives fun chapter activity ideas!**

The Rho Tau chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, located at Utah State University in Logan, Utah, has created a new tradition. In the Spring of 2003, presidency members invented a game called, "The Lit Wit Quiz Bowl." Sigma Tau Delta members had so much fun participating that in the Spring of

2004, we did it again! Both times were full of laughter and exclamations of "Really? I didn't know that!" Participants learned new things about literature.

The Lit Wit Quiz Bowl is a Jeopardy-style game show with categories like Shakespeare, Modern Poets, Beat Poets, Grammar, and Pop Culture. This year we added a bonus round

with questions about our department, like “Which award did the USU English Department recently receive?” The game was a large success and we hope to expand it more each year until the department teachers are involved in writing questions and judging, and all Literature Studies students attend. We recommend this game to all other chapters—participants can learn lots of new things. This year we learned that the movie “Strange Brew” is loosely based on *Hamlet*. Who knew?

Nicole Butler  
Sigma Tau Delta  
Rho Tau Chapter President  
Utah State University  
ndb@cc.usu.edu

### **Northwest College gets started!**

We are actually just getting started this semester. We had our first induction of our first members in the fall. We had a meeting in the fall where we talked about having 3 events in the Spring. However, our 5 members were only able to get together one event, a fundraiser. We're just starting out and we are looking forward to next fall!

Rebecca Wilson, Pres.  
Alpha Lambda Kappa  
Northwest College, Kirkland, WA

### **California State University-Chico notifies us of their exciting rebirth!**

The Alpha Kappa Tau chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, here at California State University, Chico, has but brief news to include. After two years of

neglect and near-inactive status, the chapter is essentially rebuilding itself from scratch. We are in the process of electing new student officers and determining a direction for the chapter. The good news is we will be inducting several new members into the organization this spring and plan to make next academic year a healthy, hearty one for the chapter.

Rob Davidson, Faculty Adviser  
California State University, Chico

### **Concordia University (OR) details their chapter's involvement, membership, and fundraising ideas!**

The Alpha Beta Rho chapter at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon served as aides to the 8th Annual Edward de Vere Studies Conference at CU in April and raised money for future activities by a most successful bake sale during the conference. Kiersten Brady, the chapter president, addressed the conference and introduced the latest film from the UK on the Shakespeare Authorship Question. The chapter inducted several new members, elected officers for the forthcoming academic year, and discussed the possibility of an autumn excursion to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon.

### **Christian Heritage College plans to publish literary magazine and tells us of their Literary Contest!**

As the advisor for Sigma Tau Delta at Christian Heritage College in El Cajon, California, I can tell you that we have run a successful

Literary Contest, and we are sponsoring the Writer's Cafe on April 30th where the winners of the contest will read their entries to an enthusiastic and supportive audience.

For summer 2004, we plan to publish a literary arts magazine, and we will keep you updated on its upcoming publication in fall of 2004. The outgoing chapter president is Amanda Gervasi, and we will elect next year's president at our last meeting on April 27th, so you will receive notice of that as soon as that election happens. Wish you all the best in your new leadership role.

Ms Ledri  
Faculty Advisor for Sigma Tau Delta  
Christian Heritage College  
El Cajon, CA

**California State University-Fresno details a successful panel discussion as well as a campus book drive!**

[...] Last semester, I thought of organizing a series of Careers in English panels, which have worked out quite well this semester. All of us got together over the break and decided on the number of panels, as well as what we would hold them on. On behalf of our chapter, I invited members of several neighboring chapters to attend, and we have met three very nice people from Univ. Ca Riverside. Unfortunately, many of the Sigma Tau members of neighboring chapters who were excited about coming couldn't make it at the last minute either due to rain or school concerns (the panels are held on

weeknights). The graduate students from UCR aren't Sigma Tau members, but have contributed much to our discussions.

The first panel was on Education. We invited English majors to discuss their career choices. One speaker is the current head of the credential program through the English Department, another is an instructor at CSUF who also teaches at a community college part-time and is currently finishing work on her doctoral thesis at Claremont College, and, finally, we invited the Assistant Dean of our school (Humanities and Social Sciences) to speak. He majored in English as an undergraduate, but then went into student services, and is currently completing his doctoral thesis in education administration. Students responded particularly well to him because he made them aware of a career option in education they had not previously considered.

The second panel was on Writing--both creative and technical. What is the connection there, you ask? Well, technical writing can finance a person's serious devotion to creative writing (though there certainly are people who love technical writing as well. Praitis, one of our faculty members who recently published a chapbook, spoke about being true to our desire to write. She said she feels we have a responsibility to our gifts and talents; this is a perspective many students enjoyed hearing. Dr. Mirshafiei, the head of our scientific and technical writing program, spoke on careers in technical writing. Many students

who attended found his advice and the resources he provided useful.

The last panel is scheduled for April 27, and will be on journalism and publishing. We're looking forward to a good turnout.

This semester, inspired by what was done at the convention, we're planning to hold a campus-wide book drive for children's books which will begin when we return to school on Monday, after our spring break. Also in the works (but not completed or done yet, so you may not want to publish this just yet) are plans to read to children at the local libraries and local children's hospital.

Tanaz Billimoria  
Chapter President  
CSUF Chapter

**Southern Utah University tells of its involvement in the recent national conference!**

In its second year of rebirth, the Alpha Eta Nu Chapter has experienced some exciting successes. Eleven of the pieces submitted by students were accepted for reading at the conference, two of which were nominated for a conference award in the Creative Non-Fiction category. Six students attended the conference in beautiful Daytona Beach due to some successful fundraising and faculty support. Some of the most successful fundraisers included a book sale by faculty, a free reading/flute performance by SUU faculty members (where donations were

gladly accepted), business solicitation, and sale of student and faculty chapbooks. Alpha Eta Nu looks forward to electing next year's presidency and continuing to be involved—especially at next year's conference in Kansas City, which has served as great publicity for recruiting new members and reactivating old members.

Tim Coray  
Chapter President  
Southern Utah University—Alpha Eta Nu Chapter

For up to date  
information, literary  
trivia and chapter  
spotlights, check out  
Sigma Tau Delta's  
Website!

[www.english.org](http://www.english.org)

**Congratulations to the following awardees from the Far West!**

- **Olga Kuskova**, Santa Clara University, 1<sup>st</sup> place, critical essay
- **Nate Meyer**, University of Idaho, 1<sup>st</sup> place, poetry
- **Holly Mueller**, Brigham Young University, outstanding essay on Convention Theme
- **Joan Hill**, California State Polytechnic University, \$2,000 scholarship

## Poetry Spotlight: Nate Meyer, University of Idaho.

Nate Meyer is a senior at the University of Idaho. His excellent poetry has been awarded top prize this year and we are honored to feature one of his poems:

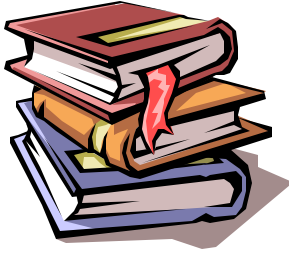
### Hel i o c e n t r i c

To prove that the sun was the center of the universe, Copernicus asked himself three questions. One, does the sun revolve around the earth? Two, or is it the earth that revolves around the sun? And three, what does all of this mean?

The first two were easy enough, no and yes respectively, answers found in the flat tounge of math, but for the third he worried, sure that his discovery would change both the meaning of heaven and of earth, and rearrange the world for everyone.

Yet he was wrong. Had he, instead, looked to the lovers to solve this one, he would have seen that he shot his arrow of truth too low. For those of us like Romeo, or Sappho, or even me, Already know that the dawn holds no light without a lover nearby, and had Copernicus asked us, he might have come to understand what we have known all along: that his question was answered long before it was asked, that it is the lovers who are the sun, and the earth has always revolved around them.

--Nate Meyer



## *From the Regent:*

Of course, T.S. Eliot rightly told us that “April is the cruelest month,” a line quoted so much by us English folks that it has become almost clichéd. Colleges and universities are extremely busy at this time of year, what with scholarship decisions to be made, all sorts of awards ceremonies, graduating seniors rushing around taking care of last minute details, the last push before final examinations, and, for some of us, catching up after returning from the Sigma Tau Delta National Conference! On the other hand, this wave of activity prefigures that great moment when our seniors “walk,” often to the strains of “Pomp and Circumstance,” played by college and university orchestras that are profoundly better than those fledgling high school bands that marked that previous rite of passage. Faculty members and students alike express their fondness for this great rite, marking the crowning achievement that constitutes completion of the first tier of higher education. And how great it is to see students cross the stage with the Sigma Tau Delta honors cords and red satin shawls draping their shoulders!

As our seniors graduate, new members join the ranks of Sigma Tau Delta. For all of us, the challenge is to form chapters that are vibrant and fun at the same time that they create an atmosphere of caring that is translated into service to the department, larger academic community, and external community. Doing so requires creativity, organization, and, of course, a little sweat. However, the rewards of our efforts are great: ask any faculty sponsor what it feels like to watch a student stand up with pride to read his or her work at conference, or to accept an award. We watch with gratification the completion of a service project—and students, think of how wonderful you feel at these achievements! Service is, indeed, its own reward.

Over the next few months, I encourage sponsors to get in touch with me if you need ideas or if you need guidance of any kind. I hope to have some programs formulated in early summer that will help sponsors with chapter activities. As well, we have two great student representatives who will contribute a significantly to our efforts.

So enjoy the spring! Walt Disney’s *Fantasia* reminds us that the great violence and cruelty of spring yields magnificent beauty; may your spring yield such beauty for all of you.

Best wishes, Kerry McKeever