



The Far West Outpost

April: National Poetry Month

Ted Kooser, Poet Laureate, at Sigma Tau Delta's Annual Convention



www.libraryofcongress.com

April is National Poetry month. In celebration, we would like to honor Ted Kooser, this year's key note speaker at the Sigma Tau Delta Annual Convention in Portland, Oregon.

Kooser is one of America's most highly regarded poets. He is a professor of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the author of eleven full-length collections of poetry, including *Delights and Shadows* (Copper Canyon Press, 2004) and *Weather Central* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994).

Although a man of great importance in both the literary and national eye, those who met him at the Convention left with the impression of knowing a man of little pretension and great depth.

Kooser touches on seemingly mundane subjects with a depth and clarity that rightly earned him the title of Poet Laureate for a second term.

Kooser's work is well known for its accessibility, a trait which extends itself to his personality.
- Damaris Saenz

At the Cancer Clinic

She is being helped toward the open door that leads to the examining rooms by two young women I take to be her sisters. Each bends to the weight of an arm and steps with the straight, tough bearing of courage. At what must seem to be a great distance, a nurse holds the door, smiling and calling encouragement. How patient she is in the crisp white sails of her clothes. The sick woman peers from under her funny knit cap to watch each foot swing scuffing forward and take its turn under her weight. There is no restlessness or impatience or anger anywhere in sight. Grace fills the clean mold of this moment and all the shuffling magazines grow still.

By Ted Kooser from *Delights & Shadows*, used with permission by Copper Canyon Press: Port Townsend, WA, 2004.

“Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality but an escape from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotion know what it means to want to escape from these.”

- Emily Dickinson



The New Far Western Region Student & Associate Student Representatives

Greetings from **Kim Lock** (*right of picture*) the new Student Representative for the Far Western Region.

As you may or may not know, I was last year's Associate Student Representative (ASR), and it was so much fun that I decided to run for this year's SR position. Seeing as no one else besides me was nominated for this position at our regional caucus, I got the job! Some competition would have been healthy and good, but I'm not complaining: I'm excited to be your new SR. Some of my duties include attending the annual board meeting, working with other SRs to develop the leadership workshop at the next convention, working at the convention, and keeping in close contact with our regent, **Matthew Schneider** (*center of picture*), and our new ASR, **Damaris Saenz Rosa** (*left of picture, and the wonderful person who formatted this newsletter*).

As I mentioned in an email I sent to all chapters recently, I want to create a sense of community within our region. Unlike some other regions, ours is really spread out geographically so being in contact via email will be important. One tool we could use is on the National website where the Bulletin Board offers opportunities for connecting with not only other regions, but with individual chapters and individual members (access the Bulletin Board through the News link). I recommend that each chapter have at least one

member signed into the Bulletin Board system and that person check the Bulletin Board weekly. This would be a good start towards creating connection and community in the Far Western Region.

Besides the duties I've listed above, my main duty as SR is to advise and support my region's chapters and members in any way possible. Please contact me at kimlock@mail.boisestate.edu if you have any questions regarding Sigma Tau Delta. Good luck with finals and getting your papers and portfolios polished and ready to hand in! I'll be in touch over the summer.



Congratulations to Far Western Members

Awards were presented at the National Convention in Portland, Oregon to the following Far Western Region Members:

Dahlie Conferido

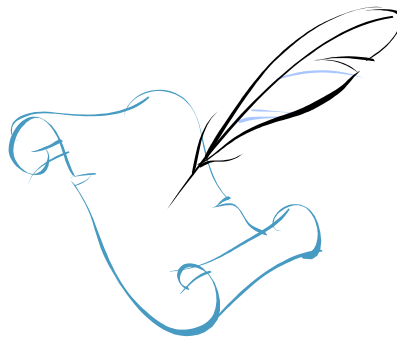
La Sierra University
2nd place, Creative Non-Fiction/
Personal Essay

Jessica Ramsey Golden

University of Alaska, Anchorage
Eleanor B. North Poetry Award

Danielle Pruitt

Azusa Pacific University
1st place, Original Fiction



Hillary Branman

Chapman University
3rd place, Original Fiction

Tiffany K. Boddie

Boise State University
Scholarly Paper (Graduate)



Farewell to Jennifer Ouellette, Former Far Western Student Representative

Future Destination: *ESPAÑA!*



Casa Gaudi - Spain

Thanks to Jennifer Ouellette our outgoing Student Representative!!!

Jen did a great job as Student Representative of the Far Western Region. We will miss her and we all wish her much luck. Jen is about to embark on an exciting journey. Here's what she has to say:

"I'm currently finishing my English Literature major and English as a Second Language minor here at the University of Idaho, and then I'm off to Spain this fall to finish my Spanish major.

I plan to take a year off before attending graduate school, and would like to work with a program teaching English abroad during that time. I'm currently

interested in a graduate study of literature and cultural/minority studies...in any way that I can mesh the two! I believe that literature can be used to effect social change, and would like to work with both."

Jennifer, we hope to see you again and hope you may, in one way or another, continue sharing your gifts of leadership with Sigma Tau Delta. We bid you a fond *adiós* with the following words...

I can no other answer make, but,
thanks, and thanks.
~ William Shakespeare



Guggenheim - Bilbao, Spain

Chapter Reports - Spring 2006

Report from Zeta Upsilon Chapter at Boise State University

We've been very busy this past semester. Fundraising for our trip to the convention was a major priority. Another yard sale brought in \$300 - half of what we made in the fall, but not bad considering the inclement weather. Over Christmas we held a Body Shop sale where we received 25% of sales thanks to a local Body Shop rep with a philanthropic urge to support our poor chapter. We netted \$480 and those who sold the most got free goodies! Our standby fundraiser - judging essays at three academic decathlons - added \$450 to our coffers. With all these funds being matched 2-for-1 by the Boise State student organization board, we were all set for Portland! And we five members, plus two guest had a great time. Besides attending the Convention and supporting each others' presentations, we went to see *Cirque du Soleil*. If you get a chance to see this amazing act, GO! I don't think my eyes and mouth could have gotten any wider than they did. Truly amazing acrobatics! We have just gathered all of the entries for our annual Poetry Contest. Open to all undergraduates at BSU the contest attracted a record 75 entries. No doubt the prize money of \$250 for first, \$175 for second, and \$125 for third inspired our poets. Our volunteer judges are quite overwhelmed at the thought of reading 200 or so poems in a week. The prizes will be handed out at Recognition Day, an event that recognizes the achievements of English Department faculty, staff and English majors.

- Kim Lock (President)



Report from Alpha Gamma Omega Chapter at University of California Los Angeles



UCLA Sigma Tau Delta has just begun our annual Book Drive! We will be working with *Better World Books* to gather textbooks and anthologies from our undergraduates and professors to donate to **Books for Africa** <http://www.betterworldbooks.com/>. Since our English department is moving to a newly renovated building in June, we hope that many of our wonderful faculty will seize this opportunity to do some early spring cleaning! We are also currently recruiting new officers for next year, and planning our Spring Induction ceremony.

- Jennifer Lee (President)



Chapter Reports - Spring 2006 continued...

Report from Alpha Theta Delta at Washington State University

The WSU chapter is off to a pretty fair start this semester after several years of inactive participation. We really only started to have organized events beginning in March, but here is a run-down of what we have accomplished thus far. In March, Professor Will Hamlin joined our meeting and discussed graduate school opportunities, and in April, Professor Michael Delahoyde joined our group to discuss the Shakespeare authorship controversy. Aimee Phan, MFA creative writing professor, joined our group to discuss how to get our writing published. We also hosted a coffee night social at a local coffee shop and students brought their term papers for a peer review session. A few members met to attend the play "Street Car Named Desire." We have many ideas for the Fall semester, and I will keep you up to date as things happen.

- Michael Church (President)



Report from Upsilon Sigma at Whittier College

We recently went to see a rendition of Shakespeare's "As You Like It" at the Pasadena Playhouse with Sigma Tau Delta members and our beloved English professors. Also, one of our newly tenured professors, Sean Morris, wrote a screen play of Beowulf which was performed by our theatre department. Sigma Tau Delta sponsored this event and students were able to spend time talking with Professor Morris about his play, have some desserts and coffee, and then we all went to see Beowulf together. Professor Morris did a wonderful job and the talk was very successful because he is extremely animated and one of the most popular professor on campus. We also inducted eight new members into our chapter right before Spring Break and had a lovely initiation dinner at Professor Anne Kiley's house. It is a tradition that each of the English professors cook something for the students, and then we all enjoy a potluck dinner, drink wine, and spend some quality time with our professors outside of the classroom. Last but not least, our annual Literature Review is coming out next month.

- Jenn Lang (President)



Report from Alpha Delta Gamma at Loyola Marymount University

The 2005-2006 school year for our chapter has definitely been exciting here at Loyola Marymount University! We increased our membership from eight returning members to more than forty-five after our induction ceremony! To increase our chapter's visibility around campus we created our own Sigma Tau Delta t-shirts which we wear with pride at each meeting. With such a large chapter, we've been working hard on many new activities.

At Christmas, we coordinated a book-drive in the English department, eventually donating over one hundred books to a local charity. At our monthly meetings, we've created a book club and have also formed a "Sigma Tau Delta Recommends..." book list as summer reading for our members. At each meeting during the past year we've nominated a "Teacher of the Month" who receives a special plaque for their contribution to the English department. Next year, we are looking to add many new social and service oriented activities along with author visits to enrich our community.

- Maria Judnick (President)



**WELCOME TO A NEW CHAPTER:
ALPHA XI ZETA AT NEVADA STATE COLLEGE!**





Overcoming Writer's Block



By Kim Lock

At the beginning of last semester, I experienced the worst case of writer's block ever. I spent hours sitting at my computer hating everything I typed. My delete key almost wore out!

What has pushed me through this "dark night of the soul!" is first, writing two pages of whatever comes out the moment I wake up. I just sit up in bed and write without editing or stopping to think until two letter-size pages are full.

By writing these "morning pages" I clear out all of the frustrations, hang-ups, fears, and concerns that tend to clog my mind during the day, especially while I try to compose poetry or non-fiction. The other tool I use to get unblocked is doing some of the composition and revision exercise recommended in "Adios Trunk and White" by Gary and Glynis Hoffman.

This book contains amazing strategies for getting to the heart of your writing.

I've found that doing the exercises has made my writing blossom. I now feel confident about my writing abilities and actually look forward to the prospect of exploring and writing about new topics.

So if your creative juices are all dried up, try writing morning pages every day and read the Hoffmans' book—you'll feel like a new writer!

Websites for



Shakespeare Fans

I took a Shakespeare class this Spring and became a fan of the Bard—so much so that I have a number of Shakespeare websites listed in my Favorites file. If you're a fan too, check out these links:

The Complete Works of Shakespeare online: <http://www-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/>

The Shakespeare Authorship page dedicated to the proposition that Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare: <http://shakespeareauthorship.com/>

All you need to know about Shakespeare's life: <http://shakespeare.org.uk>

A complete annotated guide to the scholarly Shakespeare resources available on Internet: [Http://shakespeare.palomar.edu/default.htm](http://shakespeare.palomar.edu/default.htm)

If you have links to favorite websites that have to do with literature, books, poetry, writing (you know, all the stuff we Sigma Tau Delta types love) email them to me and I'll list them in the Fall newsletter (after I check them out, of course!).

National Sigma Tau Delta Scholarship Deadlines

May 30, 2006:
The fall 2006 Regnery
Internship applications

All applications and entry forms are available at <http://www.english.org/calendar.shtml>

Far Western Region officers:

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Associate Student Representative

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