

# The Southern Gazette

Southern Region, Sigma Tau Delta

Fall 2007

## 10 Good Reasons Why YOU Should be in Louisville this March . . .

Nellene Benhardus, Southern Student Representative

The International Sigma Tau Delta convention has become one of my favorite parts of the school year. Gathering together with English students from around the country, sharing work, and listening to internationally acclaimed authors is an amazing experience. As I look forward to this spring's convention, the reasons for attending are overwhelming. Here are my top 10 favorites . . .

10. We're in the South! The convention is in the Southern region this year. If you have never attended a convention before, this year may be the perfect opportunity to begin. The rest of us should take this chance to help Louisville show Sigma Tau Delta what Southern hospitality is all about.



9. The leadership workshop takes place yearly and provides chapters with information and suggestions about a wide range of topics ranging from fundraising to web page design. Attend the workshop for ideas about motivating and strengthening your chapter.

8. Every year, Sigma Tau Delta invites internationally known authors to speak at the convention. Sigma Tau Delta alumna and poet Naomi Shihab Nye will be speaking Thursday night and have a workshop on Friday.

7. Playwright Suzan-Lori Parks will speak Friday evening and also have a Q&A session on Saturday.

6. Author Kim Edwards will speak Saturday afternoon, followed by a workshop. Make sure to check out the common reader, *The Secrets of a Fire King*, as well.

5. Amazing things happen when hundreds of English students from around the country gather together in the name of literature and writing!

4. Many of us will present papers or creative works many times throughout the rest of our lives. Presenting at the International

Convention is not only a great experience in the professional world of presenting, but most of us discover that we enjoy sharing our work and hearing the work of our peers.

3. The convention also has many fun events such as the bad poetry contest and the awards banquet.

2. I was in Louisville this past September for the board meeting, and I am very excited for all that the city has to offer. See Regent Roger Stanley's article inside about some of Louisville's attractions.

1. The International Convention is the best time to see Sigma Tau Delta in action. Come and realize that you are a part of an amazing organization! I hope to see you there!



## Adventures in Louisville . . .

Roger Stanley, Southern Regent

Like any undergraduate (or graduate) student with a bent toward language and literature (and by implication a love of the arts in general), a good Regent might well want to explore the area beyond the Louisville Marriott—indeed beyond downtown—in the context of an early spring trip to Kentucky’s largest city. Here are a few of my finds, some explored during the September convention planning meeting, others encountered on a handful of other visits to this waterfront (Ohio River) bordertown (with Indiana), taken throughout my years of living in Tennessee:

\*\*\* **Carmichael’s Bookstore** is in the Deer Park/Baxter Avenue/Bardstown Road area of Louisville, easily accessed from downtown by public transit. I picked up Charles Wright’s latest book of poems there, though the overall selection is larger at Carmicheal’s other store on Frankfort Avenue, where most of its in-store readings are held. The Bardstown Road store boasts a **Heine Brothers**

**Coffee Shop** in the back, bidding me wonder whether the great German Romantic poet actually had sibling[s].

\*\*\* **Ear X-tacy**, the most evocatively named music store I know—and one of the nation’s best, is a few blocks down Bardstown Road. I upgraded a couple of my favorite artists by purchasing from the used compact disc bin here, replacing my archaic cassette tape format. There were also a few new releases tempting me. The store hosts periodic free in-store concerts by indie rock bands and solo singer-songwriter types.

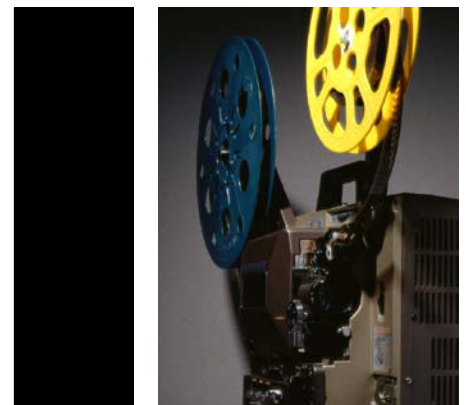
\*\*\* **Baxter Avenue Theatres** seems to be the pick of the litter as regards foreign or independent films in new circulation; I saw Cronenberg’s latest there. As an alternative, something called the **Village 8** on Dutchmans Lane seems to offer quality cinematic fare as well.

\*\*\* **The Speed Art Museum** on the University of Louisville campus proved a nice diversion (open late on Thursdays)

after slogging through a daylong ΣΤΔ board meeting. I saw an eclectic photography exhibit under the aegis of the George Eastman collection; the museum later landed the largest Frederick Hart exhibit in the country, though it may be showing elsewhere by the time of the spring convention.

Beyond that, be sure and pick up one or both of the independent weeklies *Velocity* and *LEO* upon your arrival in Louisville; a new one comes out each Wednesday or Thursday. Sites like the Muhammad Ali Center and the Louisville Slugger Museum are not just for sports fans only and can be found on the fringes of downtown, accessed via the city’s two trolley lines. Louisville is one of American’s most important theatre towns and houses the Actors Theatre, along with sponsoring the New Playwrights Festival.

See you in this delightful city!



## Focus on Poetry

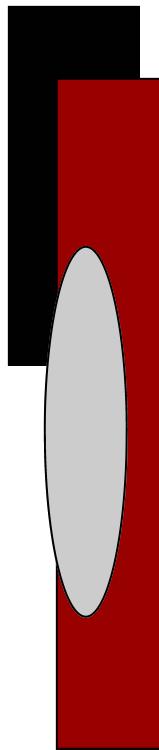
This fall, we are sharing the work of some of our region's members through a focus on poetry . . .

### Father Abraham

Racheal Pressnell

Theta Omicron, Union University

Homespun cotton skirts and black jackets  
Whirl 'round, in and out, heavy feet  
Stomp and clap to homespun melodies.  
At the back of the room, the magicians  
Work a spell of breathless flight.  
One old patriarch of the dervish  
Takes his thin violin in hand and wrings  
The stars of their sacred song.  
Silver slip the violin veins,  
Flash and ripple under broad, brown  
Hardened hands of the bearded farmer.  
Clay feet beat the earthen floor,  
Leaping and pounding with the heartthrob  
Of the simple, growing earth.



### Captivating Charm

By: Danielle Gibbs

Rho Gamma, Louisiana Tech University

'Twas a tribe of gypsies that I spied  
keeping rhythm with the tide,  
dancing near the riverside  
just beyond the moon-lit ridge,  
'neath the shadow of the bridge.

There, robed in regal hues,  
of deepest plumbs, fine golds, and blues  
responding to the fire's snapping cues,  
they cast into the jasmine night  
a lively charm meant to delight.

Enchanted, I cut short my ride  
and sought a safe, dry place to hide  
behind an elm that had grown wide,  
a bit before the old stone bridge,  
half way up that fertile ridge.

Seven couples, thrice 'round the fire spun  
'til all were seated, all but one.  
She danced in wine rich cinnamon,  
as if upon a golden storm cloud  
in the very center of the crowd.

Blue eyes gleaming like the sun,  
on winged heels she seemed to run  
until, at last, her romp was done.  
With breathless smile she turned and bowed  
to an applause that would make thunder proud.



## Rooted in Literature

**Sarah Louise Smith**

Rho Gamma, Louisiana Tech University



Where Lantana vines once grew unkempt and uncared for by anyone other than a colony of moths, pansies and rose bushes have been planted and will soon spring up under the protection of a pair of Pear trees. These varieties of plants and bushes make their home in the Spanish-style courtyard garden that is located in the center of George T. Madison Hall on Louisiana Tech University's campus. Although this particular area has served as a quiet place for many students to sit on the steps, eat lunch and chat, the members of the Rho Gamma Chapter of the Sigma Tau Delta Honor Society are excited to enhance the significance of this tranquil 'sanctuary.' We plan to accomplish this task by transforming it into a literary haven that will serve as a tribute to William Shakespeare.

Over the past few months, Dr. Dorothy Dodge Robbins, a faculty member and the advisor of this local chapter, along with a group of dedicated members, has been working tirelessly to clean away the wild troublesome weeds; however, that time-consuming project is only the first step in this entire process. So far, we all plan to work every Saturday morning until each of the flower beds will contain many of the flowers and plants that appeared in the collection of Shakespeare's poetry. For example, the first flowerbed will be the "rose garden." Then, the second flowerbed will be known as the "dream garden" because it will be inhabited by plants that appeared in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; therefore, everyone who will visit this particular flowerbed may be inspired to let their imaginations roam uncharted territory and reach new heights. The third flowerbed will be decorated with herbs that were popular and abundant during Shakespeare's lifetime, and the "herb garden" will also be reaching up to protect a bust of William Shakespeare himself.

The members of the Rho Gamma Chapter not only want to remind Louisiana Tech's current students about the wonderful atmosphere and educational opportunities that they have enjoyed, but they also want to create a landmark attraction that will appeal to the students who will think about attending this institution in the future. We all plan to roll up our sleeves and help in any way that is needed so that the Shakespeare Garden can be unveiled on April 23, 2007, which will commemorate William Shakespeare's birthday. Furthermore, with the addition of this spectacular gift to show our appreciation to a poet whose abilities have influenced many lives and withstood the test of time, we also will be hosting our second annual celebration.

## From your Favorite SR and ASR . . .

### Greetings from Nellene

Hello fellow Sigma Tau Delta members! I hope that everyone is having a good semester and beginning to enjoy the autumn season. I am having a wonderful, though busy, fall semester as I complete my senior year of college and apply to graduate programs.

As your student representative, I attended the national board meeting this past September. Plans for Louisville are coming together quickly, and the SRs are planning what should be a fun and helpful leadership workshop. As you can see from the cover article and the feature on Louisville, we are very excited about the International Convention. Hopefully, we'll see many of you there. The deadline for submissions is November 14. See [www.english.org](http://www.english.org) for more information.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. Lauren and I are here to help your chapters and the region in whatever way possible!



### *A Message from Lauren*

Greetings, friends! Summer is gone, the leaves are beginning to turn, and already the cold has set in. Like many of you, I have been 'on the go' since school started, and it has been absolutely delightful! I always look forward to the fall season—the chill on the air, the festivities, and the haunted houses make October such a thrill. The '07-'08 school year marks a new beginning for me as my first year in graduate school at Louisiana Tech University, but it also represents a continuation of growth for Sigma Tau Delta. It's exciting to see my own chapter developing a flavor all its own and gaining momentum through the cultivation of a Shakespeare garden. And yet, I also anticipate even more 'flavor' when melded with the region and the nation at next year's convention. The upcoming convention, themed "Necessary Contradictions," will be hosted in Louisville, Kentucky—the northernmost Southern city. Louisville claims famous individuals such as Johnny Depp, Hunter S. Thompson, and Diane Sawyer. It is also home to the largest collection of Victorian homes in the United States. Perhaps during my down time, I'll mosey down to Fourth Street Live!—a \$70 million entertainment district close to the majority of downtown Louisville. Or, if I can find any other history lovers, I might take a trip to the Frazier International History Museum. All of the excitement in Louisville is not limited to the numerous attractions the city has to offer; it extends to interacting and networking with Sigma Tau Delta students from all over the country. I anticipate meeting with you in March 2008, exploring the city, and finding out the truth behind one of the most well-known contradictions, *E Pluribus Unum*—"Out of many, one."