

HIGHPLAINS

fall 2007

Louisville, KY
/ 'lu:əvəl /



National Convention Necessary Contradictions

By Kristofer Adam Speirs - High Plains Student Representative

In March of 2008 there really is only one place to be for all the explication, interpretation, elucidation, appraisal, assessment, analysis, and downright judgement that you can muster or handle in a sequence of sittings. And this ain't no Norton Edition folks, this is coming at you live in high definition. Louisville, Derby City, Falls City, Gateway to the South, Looavull, Luhvul, Lewisville, Looaville, Looeyville, Louisville: your kind of place... anyway you say it. Yes, you do want to be there.

Along with the aforementioned you can expect to meet people from all over the country that not only share your burning passion for the English language but also your burning passion for talking about it with people you don't really

know. Poets and playwrights, erudites and linguists, all convened and begging for your ear. Well, not begging per se, but very much giving you the opportunity to listen. This is a convention.

This year the theme is Necessary Contradictions. What you will choose to do with it I have no idea, I'm still wrapping my noggin around it myself. But I will tell you this, the T-shirts are cool, the city is awesome (they have a system of sky tunnels that'll take you for blocks without ever touching pavement), and the lineup of featured speakers is inspiring. Not to mention the 21C Museum Hotel. But you gotta see that for yourself. ▲

One Fun STD Hastings College

By Neil Sorensen - Chapter Co-President

Last Halloween, Hastings College students and faculty huddled onto the expensive rug and in shadowed corners in the upstairs lounge of Perkins Library to hear Jim Fritzler, Associate Professor of Theatre Arts, read disturbing tales of men murdering their wives and forests where naked killers roamed and bunnies hopped unsuspecting. The scent of cookies and hot cider diffused through the packed room, and all of us were curious as to why bunnies seemed to make an appearance in every story (Jim told us afterward that it wasn't planned). Such was Halloween night last year when the Alpha Alpha Psi chapter of Sigma Tau Delta and Perkins Library staff held their annual campus-wide Halloween reading and raffle. This fall we plan on expanding the readers to a small group, as well as announcing the winners of a pumpkin-carving contest held by Perkins Library staff the preceding week.

For Banned Books Week—the other main event for us in the fall—students and faculty gathered in front of Perkins Library to read selections from their favorite banned literature, engage in a raffle (the prizes of which included modern banned books), and partake in refreshments. The readings included anything from children's books (such as Roald Dahl's *Witches*) to classics (such as *Fahrenheit 451*), to songs, and lasted over the 10am hour—a no-

class period on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays—so that more students would be able to attend. Each year the event grows in popularity, and we are excited to see a wide variety of students involved.

Our chapter also promoted and sponsored the Nebraska Writer's Guild Conference, which was held on our campus over the first weekend in October. The guest speakers were John Menaghan, a nationally acclaimed poet; and Sharon O'Brian, a memoir writer and biographer of Willa Cather. They spoke Friday evening and again Saturday about their inspirations, techniques, and gave advice to those entering or wishing to enter the writing scene. The events were a great success and offered both Hastings College students/faculty and the surrounding community a rare chance to read their work aloud, participate in writing workshops, and speak directly with published authors.

We are proud to add six members to our Alpha Alpha Psi chapter, three of whom are professors. They were initiated Sunday the 21st in the comfort of our English Department Chair Constance Malloy's home, after which everyone had a grand time eating, conversing, and—for some of us—playing with plastic swords. No one was injured, except for maybe a dust bunny or two. ▲

For those of you that are on **facebook**, there is a High Plains group available for online regional conversation.

You can find it by searching "Sigma Tau Delta High Plains" or through the following URL:

<http://mscd.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2368559771>

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

Sigma Tau Delta Members Play to be Produced Fort Hays State University

By the Members of the Rho Psi Chapter

Two members of Rho Psi, the Sigma Tau Delta chapter at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas, will see their plays in full production this November. The works of Christopher ("Topher") Rome and Theresa Kraisinger will be performed by the Fringe Theatre in a Student Play Festival on November 8, 9 and 10, 2007.

A senior English major and vice-president of Sigma Tau Delta at FHSU, Topher is the author of an original one-act play, *Grendel Lives in His Mother's Basement*. The play presents the same cast of characters as in the epic poem, but with a twenty-first century irreverent sensibility and references to contemporary popular culture. Topher's play is the main event in the Student Play Festival.

The plot of *Grendel Lives in His Mother's Basement* presents the middle-aged Grendel, feeling acutely uncomfortable after his mother's criticism, deciding to find a new abode than his mother's basement, and settling on Hrothgar's hall as a promising alternative. The play turns epic conventions topsy turvy in presenting Beowulf as the blowhard, pacifistic leader of the Flower-Danes, to whom Grendel must turn.

Theresa Kraisinger, a graduate student in English, served as an Associate Student Representative for the High Plains Region in 2006-07 and as chapter president in the 2005-06 academic year. In Theresa's ten-minute play "The Clinic," a couple is debating fertility treatments. Each person has a secret, the husband, the wife, and the doctor.

Topher and Theresa wrote initial versions of their plays in spring 2007 as part of a playwriting course with Dr. Daniel Kulmala. The Department of English presented a staged reading of the plays on April 26 as part of the university-wide Research and Creative Activity Week. The lively productions caught the eye of Fringe Theatre's advisor Dr. Kim Miller, who encouraged the writers to submit their work for consideration by the Fringe Theatre. An open call invited works by all students to be considered for the Student Play Festival, and students coordinated the selection, direction, and acting of the works.

Sigma Tau Delta congratulates Topher Rome and Theresa Kraisinger for their creative accomplishments. For more information or to get tickets, contact FHSU Fringe Theatre at (785)628-4225. ▲

know this

The deadlines for scholarship and awards applications have been extended to November 9, 2007.

This includes:

- Outstanding Chapter Award
- Service Award
- Project Grant
- Outstanding Literary Arts

Journal Award

- Delta Award
- P.C. Somerville Award for

Future Teachers

- Junior/Senior/Graduate Scholarship

• Henry Regnery Endowed Scholarship

• Sigma Tau Delta Scholarship

• Sigma Tau Delta Study Abroad Scholarships

- Scholarly Paper Awards
- Regnery Internship

Other dates of interest are:

• November 14 - Louisville Convention Call for Papers and Panels postmark deadline

• November 30 - Individual and Chapter Website Award applications due

• November 30 - Elaine W. Hughes Outstanding Sponsor Award applications due

• February 5 - Louisville Convention Early Registration Deadline

• March 5-8 - Sigma Tau Delta 2008 International Convention in Louisville, KY

Starting a Club Equals Your Best Internship Metropolitan State College of Denver

By Tameca Coleman - High Plains Associate Student Representative

Many students use club membership titles as resume fodder without gleaning valuable experience from those titles. This practice is dually beneficial and self-cheating. The student who utilizes titles will win employers' attention straight away. The student who gleans experience from such titles will be a more valuable asset in the end. Club titles can certainly bulk up a resume. An officer's appointment will make the resume even stronger. An active participant or officer, however, will gain valuable work experience that may be hard to find in a competitive workplace that demands experience from the beginning. Personal relations, organization, management of time, project management, networking and financial planning are some of the skills obtained as a club member or officer.

In college, students are given license to make mistakes that they would not be able to make in a job situation. Starting a club, or becoming an

active member or officer, can be the best internship. The student who does so will learn many of the arms that are inherent in a small business. The student plans events, recruits members, and plans fundraisers and advertising campaigns. In the case that the student comes upon roadblocks, or complete crashes in the road, he or she can seek out advice from the many professors and leaders on campus who have already experienced those roadblocks. From the school's Dean to the Student Activities administrators, information and advice abound.

Many internships at colleges cost tuition. Some are paid. Many internships use their interns to push paper, or fulfill menial tasks. This type of internship can leave a student disgruntled, since the idea behind such an activity is to glean work experience. The only way to be sure that work experience is gleaned, is to make an opportunity, or utilize the opportunities that are available. ▲

The High Plains Region:

50 in total

Montana - 4

Carroll College at Helena
Montana State University - Billings
Montana State University - Bozeman
University of Montana - Western

Wyoming - 1

University of Wyoming

Colorado - 11

Colorado Christian University - Lakewood
Colorado State University - Pueblo
Fort Lewis College - Durango
Mesa State College - Grand Junction
Metropolitan State College of Denver
United States Air Force Academy - USAFA
University of Colorado at Boulder
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
University of Denver **Welcome back!**
University of Northern Colorado - Greeley
Western State College of Colorado - Gunnison

North Dakota - 4

Dickinson State University
Minot State University
University of North Dakota - Grand Forks
Valley City State University

South Dakota - 8

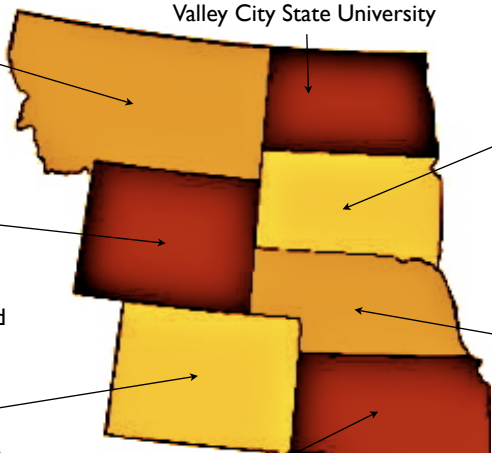
Augustana College - Sioux Falls
Dakota State University - Madison
Dakota Wesleyan University - Mitchell
Mount Marty College - Yankton
Northern State University - Aberdeen
South Dakota State University - Brookings
University of Sioux Falls
University of South Dakota - Vermillion

Nebraska - 13

Chadron State College
Concordia University - Seward
Creighton University - Omaha
Doane College - Crete
Hastings College
Midland Lutheran College - Fremont
Nebraska Wesleyan University - Lincoln
Peru State College
University of Nebraska at Kearney
University of Nebraska at Lincoln **Welcome back!**
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Wayne State College
York College

Kansas - 9

Baker University - Baldwin City
Emporia State University
Fort Hays State University
Friends University - Wichita
Kansas State University - Manhattan
Pittsburg State University
Sterling College **Welcome back!**
Washburn University - Topeka
Wichita State University



for more info visit:
http://www.english.org/reg_highplains.shtml

as of October 26, 2007

Regional Elections

Don't forget folks, at the convention we have regional caucuses for electing regional officers. If you are interested in becoming more involved on a national level, this is the way to do it.

For more information on the subject, visit: www.english.org/student.shtml or email me at speirs@mscd.edu.

Common Reader

This year's Common Reader is *The Secrets of a Fire King* by Kim Edwards.



The main purpose for a common reader is to inspire activity on a local level built around the interactions we individually have with the text, whether it be merely sharing a new topic of discussion with those around us, or employing the text as a thematic buttress to a community movement. Write about your dialogue with the text and submit it to the convention under any of the presentational genres. Or just note thoughts and questions to bring up when you can ask Kim Edwards herself in Kentucky. For more information on the Common Reader, please visit: www.english.org/louisville/reader.html

This Year's Featured Speakers

In addition to the presentation and workshop led by Kim Edwards, you will also have the opportunity to attend presentations by Suzan-Lori Parks and Naomi Shihab Nye, both award winning writers.

For more information on the featured speakers please visit: www.english.org/louisville/speakers.html.



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Banned Book Week

Regent Miller and several students at Metropolitan State College of Denver discuss censorship.

What We're Doing Metropolitan State College of Denver

by the Members of the Alpha Psi Chapter

It's been a fun year at MSCD so far. We're building the runway for an online Literary Journal we hope to launch early next spring in tandem with our efforts to develop a chapter website. Besides participating in events such as Banned Books Week, we are fostering a monthly book club and a library sciences club. Many of our members are also officers or hold

membership in other honors societies and clubs (Linguistics Club, Phi Alpha Theta - History Honor Society) which allows us to pool intellectual resources and develop some really interesting interdisciplinary events. For instance, in November our book club will be meeting for discussion with a professor teaching a course on Native American Literature, as well as members of the Native American Student Alliance. ▲