



# *Sigma Tau Delta*

## *High Plains Spring Newsletter*

Spring 2004

*"Any healthy man  
can go without  
food for two days  
- but not without  
poetry"*

*~Charles  
Baudelaire*

### INSIDE

- News from your SR, ASR, and regent
- Regional chapter information
- Info about KC convention in '04!

## Greetings from your Student Representative...

Hello! In my email soliciting news for this letter, I told you a little bit about myself, but it was the boring information that doesn't really give you a good idea of me, RaLynn Schmalzried. So, let me tell you a little more about myself: I grew up in Northwest Kansas, 52 miles away from a movie theatre, a mall, or Wal-Mart. For some of you, I'm sure this may be hard to imagine. I moved 300 miles East for college so that I would be someplace relatively close to civilization. Baldwin City is 15 miles south of Lawrence and the University of Kansas and about 20 miles southwest of the Kansas City suburbs.

My strange fetishes are birthdays and middle names. Its usually one of the first questions I ask people when I meet them. I am also interested in the rehabilitation process of people with disabilities or who have suffered a traumatic brain injury. After Baker, I hope join a graduate school program in rehabilitation or cognitive psychology and work with people with disabilities. I worked at a camp last summer for people with developmental disabilities or high support needs, and I volunteer at various Special Olympics events in the area. I really enjoy working with older adults.

I've been told that the freshmen on campus know me as "the girl who loves Baker." My explanation for this "fame" is that I am very involved in practically everything on campus. I served as the executive public relations officer in Student Senate this year and last year I was elected the Executive secretary. I also play clarinet and bass clarinet in the symphonic and marching bands, I sing in the choir, I am the copy editor for the Wildcat yearbook, and I teach in the freshmen First Year Experience program - just to name a few. It keeps me busy, but it also keeps me out of (most) trouble.

Thank you to all of you who submitted chapter news for this newsletter and for updating me with your email addresses. It has been a great start to what I know will be a fantastic year.

## Getting to know you...

### **Meet your Associate Student Representative**

My name is Amanda Syljuberget, a mouthful, I know, and I am the newly elected Associate Student Representative for the High Plains Region. I am a junior at Montana State University pursuing an English degree with an emphasis in both literature and teaching. I am also completing a library media k-12 minor. I am a film buff, and enjoy watching and reading about movies (I was actually a film major for a year before switching to English). I also love music, in fact I own over 170 albums. In my spare time I read everything I can that was written by or about J.R.R. Tolkien. I work two part-time jobs as well as participating in many on-campus organizations. I am currently working on putting together a grant for the MSU chapter of Golden Key Honor Society that could bring us \$1000 to begin our voter registration recruitment. I look forward to working hard this year for all of you and being a great representative!

## Greetings from the High Plains regent, Elizabeth Holtze from Metropolitan State College of Denver

Daytona had lessons to teach,  
With scholarship, seagulls, and beach.  
And now the High Plains  
Can continue these gains  
With our focus on all things English . . .

Whew! I am glad to be back at MSCD, back to the quotidian matters of teaching and learning after a busy convention week in Daytona Beach, Florida. I heard wonderful presentations and was glad to become acquainted (or reacquainted) with delegates from Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, North Dakota, and Montana. Special thanks to all of you who attended the convention for "a pleasant walk, a pleasant talk." It would be wonderful if we could have delegations from each of the states in the High Plains region for next year's convention in Kansas City--and more delegations from the rest of the region.

Now that I am relieved of the responsibility of being convention chair, I hope to be able to become a more active Regent. Please help me achieve this goal by getting in touch with me with your questions and concerns.

A brief poll of the chapters attending our business meeting generated the following questions/concerns:

*"How can we get more than the same six folks active in our chapter?"*

*"How can potential members be encouraged to join before it is too late (just before graduation) to be really active?"*

*"How can we pace the activities and work of the chapter more evenly throughout the school year?"*

*"How can we include all English majors in activities while still maintaining the integrity of our honor society?"*

*Let me hear from you if you have ideas about any of these issues and I'll share your response with the other High Plains chapters.*

With your help, I can be a better Regent (and a better writer of limericks).

### A Few Limericks by Jay "Slant Rhyme" Cardens

(A Baker University graduate who read these at the '04 banquet)

Since we're at an English convention,  
I just thought it proper to mention:  
A limerick's form  
Is a recognized norm.  
Meter IS an important intention.

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We've had this problem in past years.  
Though I'd hoped, you've confirmed all my worst fears.  
A dependence on slant rhyme  
indicates that you can't rhyme,  
Or at least that is how it appears.



## Unheard Melodies of 2005

Kansas City! Kansas City here we come...(you've got the crazy English majors there and I'm 'gonna get me one!) Mark your calendars now for the 2005 Sigma Tau Delta convention March 16-20 in Kansas City, Missouri at the Westin-Crown Center hotel. Keep checking the national website for more information! It may not be the beach, but Kansas City has a lot to offer: the County Club Plaza, just minutes from our hotel, is patterned after Seville, Spain and features over 180 unique shops and nationally-known stores. Crown Center, which is attached to our hotel, is the International headquarters for Hallmark cards and has a seasonal ice-skating rink. Kansas City is also known for its frill-free barbeque, hundreds of fountains, and jazz music. Come and find your own unheard melodies in the beautiful city next year! For more information, see [www.visitkc.com](http://www.visitkc.com)

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## Regional spotlight: chapter news

### Alpha Kappa Zeta

#### Montana State University - bozeman

Montana State University sent four students and one professor to the Sigma Tau Delta National Convention in Daytona Beach, Florida this year. Zach Tomazin, Nancy Nix and Amanda Syljuberget were a panel on the mythologies and interpretations of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. Andy Fahlgren presented his essay on James Jones's novel *From Here to Eternity*. Both presentations received great feedback and sparked wonderful discussions. The MSU College of Letters and Science funded our trip after each of us applied for and received a research and travel grant. Our advisor, Dr. Gwendolyn Morgan, and I are planning an informational tea for English majors who may be interested in joining STD. We look forward to the new members!

### Alpha Alpha Chi

#### South Dakota State University

The Alpha Alpha Chi chapter at South Dakota State will induct five new members on April 25. This is our spring induction (we always have a fall one, too).

Members volunteered to help at the 28th Great Plains Writers' Conference on March 22 by introducing speakers, assisting at the book sales table, and reading their works from Oakwood, the university literary magazine.

For a project this spring, we solicited from English faculty and TAs their ideas of what books incoming, freshmen English majors should have read as preparation for collegiate studies. They were asked to list five items in categories such as Drama, Short Fiction, Poetry, British Literature, American Literature, Literary Non-fiction, World Literature, and Other. This list will be distributed to those inquiring about majoring in English and to new students registering in summer and fall.

# Alpha Psi

## Metropolitan state college of Denver

This Spring 2004 semester the Metropolitan State College of Denver's Alpha Psi Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta has twenty-seven new members. Our Spring Induction Ceremony will be April 29, 2004. Our chapter sponsored and provided volunteer staffing for the Young Adult Literature Conference on April 3, 2004. Past Andrew MacPhail introduced the key note speaker Laurie Halse Anderson and member Shannon Edwards introduced Don Gallo. We held a week-long book sale to raise funds and promote reading in the academic community.

In conjunction with the Golden Key International Honour Society, Sigma Tau Delta collected food for the "Food Bank of the Rockies." During the food drive we accumulated 220 pounds of food for this worthy cause.

Our chapter outings included attending three plays, Stories on Stage (readings by prominent Denver actors), and touring the backstage of the Denver Center Theatre Company. Three of our members went to the conference in Daytona Beach. One member, Hannah Ellison, was published in The Rectangle. Member Rene Moore edited a published collection of stories which our chapter honored with a book signing reception.

Alpha Psi requested funding for the annual "Write of Spring" contest. This contest is available to all students with submissions in fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama. The contest winners will be announced by faculty judges on May 5, 2004. In collaboration with Metro's English department, we promoted Leif Enger's "Peace Like a River" as the One Book, One Denver read-a-thon selection.

# Alpha Alpha Psi

## Hastings College

In the fall, we had a banned books reading in conjunction with a used book sale.

Several of our members are giving their senior talks and shows: Michelle Schrad in art, Katie Anderson in English, Megan Otter in history, Sam Evans in music.

For our service projects, we have donated \$100 to the AIDS project in Africa for supplies to be used in a hospital there. We are also painting Willa Cather's childhood home in Red Cloud, Nebraska, on April 17, in preparation for the annual Willa Cather Conference held there.

Spring initiates are Schrad, Jenny Keown, Jaclyn Jelkin, Amber Haschenberger, Megan Friesen, Katie Krause, Jessica Holes, Ian Campbell, Shelli Byrkit, Deidre Maser, Dustin Ploeger, Kelli Still, Kendra Bargen, and Heather Parker.

In conjunction with the college library, we will have a huge used book sale on Friday, April 23.

# Epsilon Sigma

## **Baker University**

"If you are an English major, you get to travel the country," one professor said after the Epsilon Sigma chapter of Baker University took three students to the national Sigma Tau Delta conference in Daytona Beach and six students to Ogden, Utah for the National Undergraduate Literature Conference the following week. Seniors Jay Cardens and Corie Dugas along with junior RaLynn Schmalzried traveled to Daytona Beach, where Cardens read his fiction work, "Lightning" and Schmalzried read a critical paper, "Unforgettable: the Wife of Bath and her Critical Thinking." Dugas was a conference runner-up with her Creative Non-Fiction piece, "Tearing Down the Wall." The chapter was also able to triple its membership this year after initiating four new members in the fall and eight new members in the spring, who all look forward to what the next year holds!

# Zeta Psi

## **University of Northern Colorado**

This semester has been packed full of fun things for the Zeta Psi chapter. We had a love/anti-love gathering for readers and listeners around Valentine's Day called "A Little Night Music: The Valentine's Edition." Then, one Friday night a month, our chapter gets together and watches a movie. This semester we've watched Monty Python sketches and the Holy Grail movie, The Maltese Falcon with Humphrey Bogart, and for Shakespeare's Birthday we're going to treat ourselves to Ten Things I Hate About You.

Every year, Sigma Tau Delta has an awesome book sale. We have tons of books donated from local bookstores and faculty members in the English Department. We just set up a table in the University Center and sell books!

This year the sale went on for two days and was an enormous success.

Count Worley's Grammar Night-Our faculty sponsor, Lloyd Worley, gave UNC students the privilege of hearing his 'flawless grammar in twenty minutes' presentation. It was fun, quick, and painless. Thank you Dr. Worley!

A chapter favorite was a science fiction (SF) Panel with Connie Willis, Ed Bryant, Catherine Cooke-Montrose, and Wil McCarthy It was a blast hearing these authors talk more about how they write and why they write. The evening was entitled "Mars and Beyond: Why They Write What They Write". :)

In Mid-April, we had an Open Mike Night at the Union Colony Brewery-This was a small gathering of Sigma Tau members and others who are interested in reading their poetry. We met at a local restaurant where they had sectioned off a corner of the room for us. We just used a high bar chair to read from. Everyone who read was very talented--there was even one man who writes epic poetry and sonnets!

The chapter will also have a Formal Induction and a Symphony Night later this semester.

It has been a fantastic semester with great turnouts for our events. Some numbers of attending students have even doubled! We've had a great time and are looking forward to planning our spring induction as well as the upcoming year!