

**SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:**

- Spring Board Meeting Highlights
- Grad School How, What, When, and Why?
- How You Can Help to Shape the Fresh Look of Sigma Tau Delta.

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# Midwestern Region

SIGMA TAU DELTA HONOR SOCIETY SPRING 2008

## SPRING BOARD MEETING AND CONVENTION

The Sigma Tau Delta Board of Directors and Spring International Convention met at the Downtown Louisville Marriot Hotel.

Here are some of the highlights and changes which will affect the chapters nationally, as well as regionally.

Micha Hicks continues to serve as the Senior Student Advisor this year. A new SA was elected to serve the 2008—2010 term of service as our beloved Lynzie Biggs slips on her apron with aspirations of grander post MA plans. Please welcome Stephanie Schiefelbein, your new Student Advisor to her post with a warm round of E-mails!

<SCHIEFSA@uwec.edu>



### Sigma Tau Delta is Getting a Fresh Look!

The Spring Conference participants were given a first peek at a radical new design and a new, but still traditional, design. Many of the participants chose to voice their opinions in an open, anonymous, polling of the present membership. The updated look will be unveiled soon with a brand new Sigma Tau Delta Website.

This website is part of a larger information project. It will increase the ease of chapter reporting, and facilitate both better and faster communication for all levels of Sigma Tau Delta. More information about this project will be released as the project develops with the help of the ever so talented Elfi Gabriel.

### WHAT DO OUR SYMBOLS MEAN TO YOU?

See Page 2 For How You Can Help Shape The Future of Sigma Tau Delta

## “But We Can’t Afford The Conference”

I have heard this statement from many of the small and mid-sized chapters in our region. I hear it from both the students, and from the advisors. I have to tell you my answer may seem unreasonable at first but it is the honest truth. You can’t afford not to attend the conference. This is more than just an invaluable opportunity for you to present papers, hear what other students in your field are doing, and network with professionals from all over the United States and beyond. The conference provides a

**YOU CAN'T  
AFFORD NOT  
TO ATTEND**

sense of community and raises the bar of excellence in a discipline many are claiming is over burdened in a glutted market. The international conference can be funded in a number of ways. Contact me for information and ideas. I will spend the time to help you find a way to join us.

Patricia Jones : pljwc2@mizzou.edu

—MW Regional Student Rep.

Here are a some tips to get you started:

Ask your on campus student

organizations and administration.

Look at the back page of this newsletter.

Each chapter that attends and votes at the caucus is given money for travel reimbursement.

New Advisors are eligible for a travel award.

Presenting members get discounted conference rates.

**YOU HAVE ALMOST A YEAR  
TO RAISE THE MONEY IF  
YOU START NOW.  
DON'T MISS OUT!**

### Regional Facebook Submissions and Regional Lit Journal

The Regional Facebook Sites have been real winners for those making use of them. Chapters have been able to make contacts, both locally and nationally, as well as keep up with community organizations that they have developed partnerships with. At this

time there are over 1000 members using the various regional facebook sites and chapters are beginning to develop their own as a way to keep in touch with Alum Members, send event notices and invitations, and help to develop a real identity as a chapter. In

addition to Facebook, there was a lot of buzz at the conference about the desire for regional journals. Some regions have plans to begin them online this year. If you are interested in a regional journal I encourage you to visit the facebook site and join the conversation.

**If the Midwestern  
Region wants an  
online Literary  
Journal, then let's  
talk about our  
needs and ideas on  
Facebook first .**

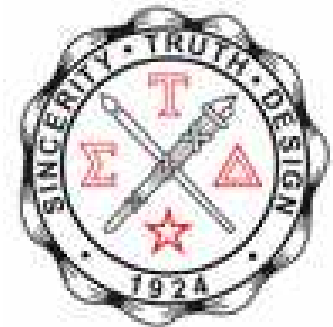
## What Do Our Symbols Mean To You?

The question came up at the board meeting and spread through the convention like wild fire. The reason for the question is far more simple than the answer: Sigma Tau Delta is unifying our look in order to provide a more professional appearance as we continue to grow and expand in

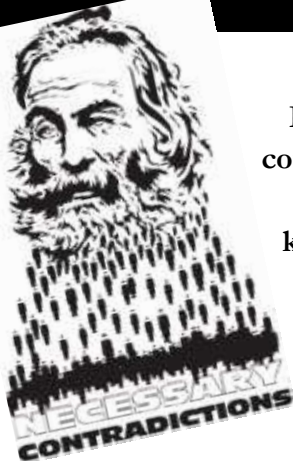
the public spotlight. This is your opportunity to speak up and let the board know what you think of when you think of the three symbols, which appear on our logo:

**Star — Pen — Torch**

You Can Comment on the Facebook Site or Email your Regional Rep at [pljwc2@mizzou.edu](mailto:pljwc2@mizzou.edu).



## Spring 2008 International Conference



How  
could she  
have  
known?

The South in Springtime —  
visions of Magnolia trees in  
bloom, sweet green grass, and the  
ladies dressed in their best for  
some late night blues under a star  
speckled sky filled my head as I  
boarded a plane 16 hours early to  
avoid a snowstorm destined to  
close the St. Louis Airport.

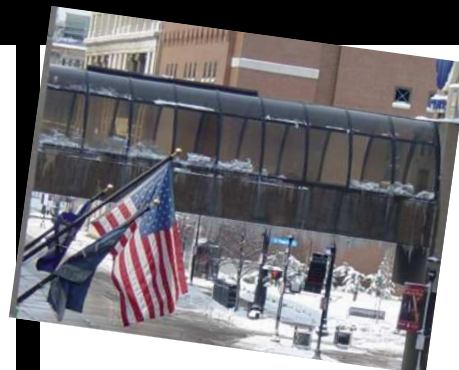
**IT FOLLOWED ME.**

Fortunately for us the city was  
built with human habitrails,  
connecting the Marriot with the  
convention center, other hotels,  
and the Fourth Street Live area;  
which we only used for CVS and  
Kinkos copy service, ignoring all  
of the amazing night life and  
Borders book store, really!



But honestly now, all  
the really crazy stuff  
happened at the  
convention. It's great to  
have access to a neat  
city to explore with  
friends but most of the  
convention is more exciting than  
anything outside.

We had a great time at  
the Rectangle Readings,  
both Naomi Shihab-Nye  
and Suzan-Lori Parks  
were phenomenal  
speakers.



The Student Readings are  
always my favorite part of the  
convention. Beyond our usual  
sessions we hold the open mic  
night. This year I stayed after  
the official time was over since  
we had a free space, a mic, and  
members who were still eager to  
share. We listened to poetry,  
prose, and even some lyrical  
spoken work until well after  
midnight.

Naomi Shihab-Nye held a



poetry workshop, and Ms. Parks  
participated in an interview with  
Micah Hick and Lynzie Biggs.



## Elections and Appointments for 2009

There will be an election for both the Student Representative Position and the Associate Student Representative Position at the Minneapolis Conference. Additionally, a seat is opening on the board for one Student Advisor. Please check the handbook available online for more details about the positions and bring your forms for the SR and ASR positions to the Informal Regional Caucus at the conference! Making a difference in Sigma Tau Delta has made a large and lasting difference in my life. Let it make one in yours.

Patricia Jones, MWSR

## Regents' Common Reader Award

For the 2009 Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Common Reader is Michael Perry's *Population 485: Meeting Your Neighbors One Siren at a Time*. In this dryly humorous but also serious memoir, Perry writes about going home to reconnect with his roots after 12 years away. With a nursing degree and experience as a fireman, he is quickly added to the NAAFD—the New Auburn Area Fire Department. Through his experiences with the fire department, Perry tells the story of this small country town: New Auburn, Wisconsin; population: 485. In a review of *Population 485*, Hope Magazine states, “[Perry] cuts through bullshit like a buzz saw, and he’s not gonna fret over the mess. Most surprising and wonderful is Perry’s occasional sentimentality ... he’s a master of tension and contradiction. When he’s done herding the words around the page, what you have left is a finely crafted, hard-to-come-by honesty.”

Perry, still an active firefighter and emergency medical responder in rural Wisconsin, will be one of the speakers at the 2009 convention. To learn more about Michael Perry, go to his website at [www.sneezingcow.com](http://www.sneezingcow.com). Be sure to read this delightful memoir and don't forget to send in your essay about Perry's 2009 Common Reader.

Sara Wright—MWASR

Apart from panels and individual presentations on Michael Perry or on *Population 485: Meeting Your Neighbors One Siren at a Time* at the 2009 convention in Minneapolis, the regents invite individual chapters to organize and host a local event or activity around this text. Up to four chapters from each region are eligible to win an award of \$50.00. In order to apply, a chapter must submit to its specific Regent the following three documents, postmarked on or before February 15, 2009:

- a cover letter, signed by the chapter sponsor, confirming that the activity or event took place,
- a narrative, not to exceed 500 words, describing the activity or event, and
- a list of all participating persons or groups.

This award is open to all active chapters of STD. It is completely separate from convention submissions. Results will be announced simultaneously both at the convention and by e-mail.

The regents hope that this award will be a way for chapters in each region to share a convention-related experience even though not all of us are able to travel to Louisville. We hope it will encourage creative, text-based activities and events. And, last, we hope that it will give many of us space to reflect on the power of words both in our own lives and in the lives of others.

Gloria J. Hochstein,  
Midwestern Regent  
[hochstgi@uwec.edu](mailto:hochstgi@uwec.edu)

English Department University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire  
Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004

## From The Regent's Desk

In Portland, Oregon, at the 2006 Sigma Tau Delta International Convention, I was elected Midwestern Regent. Serving on the Board of Directors of Sigma Tau Delta continues to be exciting, time consuming, interesting, enjoyable, and a great honor. I look forward to the challenges and the satisfactions of the next year on the Board.

For those of you who are new to Sigma Tau Delta, here's a bit of biography: I have traveled extensively around the world and all around the US, and I did my master's work at the University of Arizona in Tucson, but I was born in the Midwest and have worked in the Midwest for most of my life.

So it is fitting that I am the Midwestern Regent to Sigma Tau Delta and that I am the convention chair for the 2009 Sigma Tau Delta convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

I grew up on a farm in southwestern Minnesota, did my undergraduate work at Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, worked on my doctorate at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, and have been teaching English at the University of

Wisconsin-Eau Claire for three decades.

I love teaching, and I love working with students, so, at UW-Eau Claire, I am the faculty advisor to several student groups including the Theta Zeta chapter of Sigma Tau Delta and the English Festival Organization (which puts on a large language arts conference each spring). I especially enjoy teaching science fiction literature and English grammar and usage (not necessarily in the same course).

If you want to know even more about me (though I cannot imagine why), you can go to my website: <http://www.uwec.edu/hochstgj/>

Many opportunities are available to you as members of Sigma Tau Delta. Please consider applying for some of the numerous awards, grants, scholarships, and internships. Sigma Tau Delta gives out nearly \$60,000 annually in scholarships, awards, and grants, including a couple of scholarships worth \$2500 to \$3000 to the students who win them.

**The deadline for applications for awards and scholarships is October 30. Why not work on your applications this summer?**

In addition, your chapter may request some modest funding from your Regent (me) to support chapter activities that involve other chapters.

If you are nearing graduation and dread leaving Sigma Tau Delta behind, don't be forlorn. You are a lifetime member of Sigma Tau Delta, and you can stay in direct contact by joining the Alumni Epsilon chapter and hearing directly from the newly elected Alumni Representative, Dan Hardy.

I continue to work to develop more opportunities for student involvement and to encourage more participation in the opportunities that exist; I want to be a resource for sponsors so we can share ideas about how to develop our chapters more and how to increase membership. I am here for Sigma Tau Delta students and sponsors. I will answer all of your questions or refer you to someone who can answer your questions. Please feel free to email me anytime at:

[HOCHSTGJ@uwec.edu](mailto:HOCHSTGJ@uwec.edu).

I look forward to another enjoyable year and I hope to see you in Minneapolis.

Gloria J. Hochstein

**“The deadline for applications for most of the awards and scholarships is October 30. Why not work on your applications this summer?”**

**“Sigma Tau Delta gives out nearly \$60,000 annually in scholarships, awards, and grants, including a couple of scholarships worth \$2500 to \$3000 to the students who win them.”**

## ***Reflections:*** Minneapolis, Minnesota, March 26-28, 2009: The Sigma Tau Delta Convention.

Growing up in the farm country of southwestern Minnesota, I learned early that the “Land of 10,000 Lakes” actually had twice that many lakes (if we counted the little ones), surrounded by millions of trees for Paul Bunyan to cut with his gigantic axe. I learned that the Great Lakes were formed by the hoof prints of Babe, Paul Bunyan’s Blue Ox. I also learned that my new saddle shoes could survive the ten inches of water that covered them when one of my brothers pushed me into the stream that becomes the great Mississippi River.

Even in the metropolitan area known as “The Twin Cities,” or just “The Cities,” where half of Minnesota’s over five million people live, the waters dominate. The Mississippi River originates in northern Minnesota at Lake Itasca, but by the time it reaches The Twin Cities, the Mississippi is a wide and magnificent river that both joins and divides Minneapolis, “The City of Lakes,” from its twin, St. Paul, the state capital of Minnesota.

Those waters and the worlds reflected in them are behind the 2009 convention theme of *Reflections*. The state of Minnesota takes its name from the word the Dakota gave to the Minnesota River, *Minnesota*, which means “water that reflects the sky.” On a literal level, *Reflections* refers to the relationship between the sky and the sky-blue water, between the natural world and the human-made world. On a figurative level, *Reflections* refers to the contemplative meditations on the individual and on society often experienced in the presence of natural wonder. Furthermore, *Reflections* opens up the theme to ways of seeing how human endeavor and creativity are influenced by the natural world.

Minneapolis, “The City of Lakes,” also has a very lively metropolitan life, the Mall of America (the largest enclosed mall and recreational space in the world), the famous Guthrie Theater, the Walker Art Center, the Orpheum Theater, and dynamic artistic, dramatic, and music scenes.

In 2009, we will be staying at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on the Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis. For eleven blocks, wide sidewalks flow on the Nicollet Mall in front of shops and dining establishments, with only taxis and buses allowed down the middle of the street—a pedestrian’s delight, on the street or in the skyways. For only \$1.50 (\$2 during rush hours), the Hiawatha light-rail line and the Metro Transit buses connect the Nicollet Mall to all parts of the Twin Cities, including the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America. Even better, the buses cost only 50 cents in the Downtown Zone.

**Come to Minneapolis for the 2009 convention and share *your* reflections.** Henry David Thoreau could have been writing about gliding on the Mississippi in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*: “Two men in a skiff, whom we passed hereabouts, floating buoyantly amid the reflections of the trees, like a feather in mid-air, or a leaf which is wafted gently from its twig to the water without turning over, seemed still in their element, and to have very delicately availed themselves of the natural laws. Their floating there was a beautiful and successful experiment in natural philosophy, and it served to ennoble in our eyes the art of navigation; for as birds fly and fishes swim, so these men sailed. It reminded us how much fairer and nobler all the actions of man might be, and that our life in its whole economy might be as beautiful as the fairest works of art or nature.”

*Gloria J. Hochstein*  
*2009 Convention Chair*  
*University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire*

## Resources On The World Wide Web

### Conferences

Here is a great resource for keeping up on those calls for papers: <http://calls.eserver.org/>

This site explains abstracts: <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/abstracts.html>

A worldwide list of English conferences : <http://www.conferencealerts.com/english.htm>

### Writing and Publishing

Poetry Publishers accepting online submissions: <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~lcrew/pbonline.html>

A very large Freelance Writing resource: <http://www.fwointl.com/>

A New Launch From One of Our Own: Novelletum: <http://www.novelletum.com>

## What Are We Reading and Writing ?

### OUR FAVORITE TEXTS



**MILTON IS MY HERO !!!**

**POST COLONIAL  
THEORY CAN BE VERY  
READER FRIENDLY!**

**SHAKESPEARE IS TIMELESS!**

**TELL US  
WHAT YOU  
PLAN TO  
READ  
OVER  
THE  
SUMMER  
AND STAY IN  
TOUCH WITH  
YOUR FRIENDS ON YOUR  
REGIONAL FACEBOOK SITE!**

**GRAPHIC NOVELS  
ARE NOT  
COMIC BOOKS!**

### THIS SOUTHERN NIGHT

This Southern Night

when I was hero under  
a sky-shell black and breaking  
the moon gleaming through the cracks

of this warm wind  
boiling the long grass under my  
feet, bare between the shapes spinning  
around me, long-haired cousins squealing  
with laughter behind the cracking,

the splitting of the skillet-dark cloud canopy  
rocking my ears, the booming of the light  
strobing into a film-strip projection of cool dark  
night-DAY-night  
the porch like an island of tea-twinkling amber and the chink  
of ice on glass poured into a smooth ocean of sky  
split by day

the laughter of the children, the murmur of the porch, the  
ice, the glass,  
the grass wind clouds dark light breaking

The world shattered and I was left rolling in the pieces  
of this Southern night.

**By Micah Dean Hicks**

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GRAD SCHOOL

### SOME THINGS THAT IT IS

- EXCEPTIONALLY CHALLENGING WORK
- AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRACTICE RESEARCH
- REAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE
- A PLACE TO EXPLORE TOPICS IN DEPTH

### SOME THINGS IT IS NOT

- A GUARANTEED JOB IN ACADEMIA
- A FREE RIDE FOR A FEW MORE YEARS
- A PART TIME COMMITMENT
- THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR EVERYONE

JUST AS NO TWO ENGLISH MAJORS ARE ALIKE, NO TWO GRADUATE SCHOOLS OFFER IDENTICAL PROGRAMS, DESPITE MATCHING AREAS OF EMPHASIS. OF THE MANY WAYS THAT STUDENTS LOOK FOR GRADUATE SCHOOLS, ONCE (AND IF) THEY DECIDE TO GO, THERE ARE TWO WHICH ARE VERY POPULAR, AND EQUALLY AS DICEY; CHOOSING A SCHOOL FROM A GENERIC 'TOP TEN' LIST AND HEADING FOR THE CAMPUS CLOSEST TO HOME. WHILE THERE IS NO WAY TO COVER ALL THE QUESTIONS ABOUT GRADUATE SCHOOL IN THIS ARTICLE, I WILL DO MY BEST TO GIVE YOU A GOOD OVERVIEW OF CHOICES YOU MAY NOT HAVE KNOWN ARE OUT THERE.

### TYPES OF GRADUATE SCHOOLS

- UNIVERSITY PHD PROGRAMS
- COLLEGE PHD PROGRAMS
- TWO YEAR MA PROGRAMS
- ONE YEAR MA PROGRAMS
- TECHNICAL WRITING SCHOOL
- EUROPEAN ONE YEAR MA
- EUROPEAN PHD PROGRAMS
- CREATIVE WRITING MA
- CREATIVE WRITING MFA
- CREATIVE WRITING PHD
- LOW RESIDENCY PROGRAMS FOR CREATIVE WRITING, TECHNICAL WRITING, AND LITERATURE PROGRAMS.

### SOME AREAS OF EMPHASIS AVAILABLE

- AMERICAN LITERATURE
- BRITISH LITERATURE
- CARIBBEAN LITERATURE
- AFRICAN DIASPORA
- FOLK LORE
- LATINO/A LITERATURE
- MEDIEVAL STUDIES
- RENAISSANCE STUDIES
- VICTORIAN STUDIES
- HOLOCAUST STUDIES
- GENDER STUDIES
- FILM STUDIES
- COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC
- TECHNICAL WRITING

### FINANCING GRADUATE SCHOOL

- FELLOWSHIPS OFFERED BY YOUR SCHOOL
- GRADUATE FEE WAIVERS
- SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED BY YOUR DEPARTMENT
- PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIPS
- PART TIME WORK ON CAMPUS
- PART TIME WORK OFF CAMPUS
- GRADUATE SCHOOL LOANS
- SUMMER INTERNSHIPS
- PEACE CORPS
- MILITARY
- OTHER EXTERNAL FUNDS

THE INTENTION OF THESE LISTS IS NOT TO PROVIDE YOU WITH A SIMPLE CHECKLIST. SELECTING A GRADUATE SCHOOL THAT MATCHES BOTH YOUR PROGRAM NEEDS AND YOUR PERSONALITY AND STYLE IS A COMPLICATED AND TIME CONSUMING PROPOSITION. NO MATTER WHAT CHOICES YOU MAKE, THEY SHOULD BE MADE FOR THE RIGHT REASONS. IF YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO DO RESEARCH BEFORE YOUR GRADUATION AND THE APPLICATION DEADLINES, THINK ABOUT TAKING THE TIME OFF TO DO SO. GRADUATE SCHOOL IS NOT THE PLACE TO BE WONDERING IF YOU MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE.