The Impact of English Majors on Our World
Marc Geisler and Katie Vulić

Last year’s Alumni Newsletter focused on the ways in which our English alumni have built bridges between their academic and professional lives; we also featured the ways in which faculty and current students, as well as faculty and alumni, collaborate to produce many kinds of work that benefit readers, businesses, and communities of all kinds. This year we are developing this theme even further to explore the ways in which graduates of our English program have gone on to make their mark on the world. Looking over the large number of updates on alumni we have been gathering over the past several months, we are struck by the diverse range of careers pursued by our graduates, and by the ongoing creative energy that is reflected in all of our alumni’s accomplishments. Academic advisors for our English undergraduates often state to job-worried students that the English major is ideal for training students in the critical thinking, writing, and speaking skills that allow them to hold many of the thousands of jobs that require these skills, and for which there is often not an obvious or direct training path. The exciting breadth of experiences among those whose stories you’ll find below is a testament to this as well. Some of our Alumni Profiles tell of alumni long-established in their careers; others tell of new jobs or unexpected opportunities that have led to lives of stimulation and fulfillment. We think you’ll be just as proud and impressed by the work of your alumni peers as we are of your accomplishments.

This year too we are hoping to encourage more of you to share your experience and insights in even more direct ways with each other and our current undergraduates. We had a chance to see many of you at last year’s Back 2 Bellingham alumni event, and hope to see many more of you at the 2011 gathering in the spring. We would like the upcoming Back 2 Bellingham alumni event to feature you, our alumni, and to give our current students a chance to speak with and learn from you as they contemplate making the leap from student to professional themselves. As we regularly discover when alumni come back to campus to talk to our undergraduates, our alumni greatly inspire our current students by being living examples of lives and careers after graduation. Do let us know whether you would be interested in meeting some of our wonderful undergraduates at this upcoming alumni event.

Whether or not you are able to travel back to Bellingham this spring, we hope you will keep in touch by emailing tina.nelson@wwu.edu with your news. We encourage all of you to continue to share updates of your accomplishments and life changes; we enjoy hearing from you and celebrating your news through this newsletter.
I work in editorial at Candlewick Press in Boston. If you are unfamiliar with Candlewick, we publish anywhere from 250 to 300 books a year for children and young adults. Some of our more recognizable titles include Where’s Waldo, We’re Going on a Bear Hunt, Guess How Much I Love You, Because of Winn-Dixie, and the ‘Ology series.

Every day is different from the next. Because Candlewick has a policy of not accepting unsolicited materials, my reading load is not as heavy as those whose company policies accept all submissions. Still, there are days when all I do is read. There are brief moments when I bemoan this fact, but then I remember, I get paid TO READ. When I get a manuscript, I have to very quickly understand its concept and story, assess its strengths and weaknesses, and determine if it’s something we want to publish or not. With every submission I read, I have to write a reader’s report for the manuscript, whether we choose to publish it or not. This report is used by me and others to craft a rejection or an offer to the agent or author. In these reports, I have to make a clear and compelling argument one way or the other for what I think we should do with the manuscript. I never would’ve thought that when I was at Western, the essays I wrote in Bill Lyne’s African American literature courses were preparing me for my work today. But here I am, getting paid to make an argument and show my supporting evidence. Of course, my creative writing classes have also helped immeasurably. When evaluating manuscripts, I consider what is and is not working in a given text. I owe the genesis of these skills to the fiction and creative non-fiction writing courses I took from Brenda Miller and Kate Trueblood where we’d workshop each other’s stories. I’ve hopefully gotten better at this over the years, but it’s from those early classes that I first learned how to talk about revising a story.

How did I get here? Well, after I served as the editor of Jeopardy Magazine my senior year at Western, I knew without a doubt that I wanted to work in publishing, though at the time I wasn’t quite sure exactly what I wanted to do. There were a brief couple of years where I fooled myself into thinking sales was the right fit for me while I worked as a textbook representative for a large international educational publisher. Finally I had to be honest with myself and look at the things that I loved doing, so that I could go after the things that drove me. And for me, what made me happiest was working with authors and talking about books. With kids’ books, not only do I read across genres and formats (board book, picture book, graphic novel, middle-grade, young adult, etc.), but I also love doing this reading. When I started reading these kinds of books as an adult, I discovered a passion that I didn’t know existed. I ended up going to grad school at Simmons College here in Boston so I could be closer to the East Coast publishing companies and to Candlewick in particular, which was my ideal workplace even then. I got my MA in children’s literature and graduated last spring. That same semester, I also interned in the editorial department here at Candlewick and, well, the rest is history. I clearly had my eyes set on Candlewick, so I did everything I could to get myself here, from reading much of their backlist to working as a part-time
I am currently a high school teacher at Sitka High School in Sitka, Alaska. I love my job, I love my students, and I’ve come to realize that teaching is an integral part of who I am. I use skills from my English major every day: I constantly refer back to literature I first accessed in the Wilson Library or to books that are covered with notes from critical theory. I use lesson plans that I first created in Bruce Goebel’s classes. I dig out my linguistics textbooks occasionally, too. The international phonetic alphabet chart even makes an appearance in my Introduction to Theater class!

I left Western feeling completely prepared to take on a high school teaching position. I student taught on Whidbey Island, spent the spring of that year substitute teaching, directing a play, and littering Washington State with applications for high school teaching positions. I ended up in Stevenson, Washington, in the heart of the Columbia Gorge, teaching high school English and theater. It was a dream come true for me: thousands of miles of hiking trails, a theater program, and the perfect little town to work in. After my first year at Stevenson High School, my position was cut because of the budget crisis, a situation in which too many young teachers are finding themselves. That next year I scooted over in the district to teach 8th grade English at the middle school. I left with the utmost respect for middle school teachers; they are the bravest of us all.

When I realized that there wasn’t going to be an opening for me in my current district and that the budget crisis affected districts all over Washington, my husband-to-be and I sat down to ponder where we saw ourselves in the future. We had both independently thought, “I think I could live in Alaska.” A great deal of internet research and one surprisingly simple application process later, I found another dream job. In a whirlwind of a summer, I finished a school year, packed up my classroom, produced a high school play, got married, rid ourselves of four cars and 80 percent of what we own, bought a boat, and took that boat up the Inside Passage to Sitka. Right now my husband and I are living on a 30
foot boat with a 100lb dog and two cats, working constantly, and enjoying the beauty of Southeast Alaska! I currently teach 10th grade English, Surveying Literature, Debate, and Drama, and I coach our state-winning Drama, Debate, and Forensics team. Come spring, I’ll be teaching Creative Writing and directing a production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*, too. While I admit that I dream of the day I’ll stay put long enough to teach the same class twice and imagine what it might be like to leave work before it is dark outside, I must say that I couldn’t be happier that my journey brought me here.

Western’s English program has shaped who I am and what I expect of my students. I am addicted to literature not necessarily for the escape it provides, but because of the questions it makes me ask. I leave a book with more questions than I started with and that has made me a voracious reader and thinker. This is exactly what I hope for in my students, and I’ve found the most success in my classroom reading books and discussing literature in the same ways I did in my classes with Kathleen Lundeen, Marc Geisler, Katie Vulic, and Bruce Goebel, to name only a few. My teaching reflects what worked for me, and my experience as an English major at Western was key in shaping that. I often talk to my graduating seniors about how much I wish that I could go back with the knowledge and confidence that I have now, to attend those classes again, to speak up more, and to have real one-on-one conversations about more than just the literature with those professors. But in the end, I am passing on handfuls of students that are ready to do just that.

Support the English department online:
[http://www.wwu.edu/give](http://www.wwu.edu/give)

I am currently an Associate Professor of English at the University of Tampa and am serving as the chair of the Department of English and Writing. I have twenty-four faculty members in my department who teach everything from first year writing to literature to creative writing. I teach largely seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British literature, women’s writing and culture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and women’s studies.

I love reading, writing, and researching. It’s all about finding the clues that pull the text together, isn’t it? As a student, I started out as a biology major and then switched to business because I thought that’s where the jobs would be, but my heart was always in literature, and so I switched majors and never looked back.

When I finished my undergraduate degree at Western, I decided to stay for graduate school. I thought I would study American literature, but Doug Park, who taught my eighteenth-century British literature class, suggested I think about studying British literature—and in England. I did some research
on schools and graduate programs, applied to and was accepted at several schools. With some trepidation, I chose the University of Wales in Bangor. I thought I would do my masters degree in Wales and then return to the US to find a job or perhaps pursue further graduate study, but that didn’t happen. Once I arrived in the United Kingdom and realized the opportunity I had, I knew I wouldn’t be going home for a very long time.

I owe a great deal to Professor Park for helping me to discover British literature and encouraging me to go overseas. I would not be where I am today without that gentle push. When I arrived in the United Kingdom, a whole new world opened up for me. I don’t think that would have happened had I stayed here in the US to complete my graduate study.

While Doug Park was the catalyst that launched me on the career path I eventually chose, all the faculty in English at WWU were fantastic. George Muldrow was my advisor. I particularly remember my women’s literature courses with Meredith Carey, who was one of the most supportive and encouraging of teachers. I loved the department, the campus, and my visits to the coffee shop first thing in the morning, where the coffee and muffins were fantastic (or perhaps it was simply the ambiance of the brick courtyard and the amazing sculpture that made the coffee taste so good).

I have returned on occasion to visit WWU, to walk the courtyard, to look out over the bay, and to climb the stairs to the English Department. I recommended WWU for graduate school to one of my fellow faculty members here at UT for one of his advisees, and that student should be about finished now. And I am sure that Western will always be for him, as it is for me, a very special place.

**For as long as I can remember, I’ve been perpetually excited.** After graduating from Western in 2008 with a BA in Creative Writing I remember thinking, “I can really do whatever I want now?” Almost immediately, I packed my things into a suitcase and accepted a job in Paris, France, where I talked with students about the history of the French New Wave cinema, and instructed a seminar on creativity as a lifestyle. Besides a nice year abroad, my year in Paris afforded me the time to mull over the future and organize my own creative aspirations. Making things, it came to me, was all I could ever want to do. When I left Paris at the end of May, I left with three new short screenplays ready to meet a production team.

Within a week of arriving back home, I set up a meeting with a friend of mine who had recently moved to Los Angeles, CA in pursuit of a career in cinematography, and we discussed my new scripts. By the end of the conversation, I had agreed to move to LA, and we began searching for a sizeable live-work space. Serendipitously, within a day of moving to Los
Angeles, my all-time favorite set designer/best friend moved in as well, along with her boyfriend, a savant costumer. With the addition of our cinematographer’s longtime friend, who had been working in LA as a television editor, by September, a production team had been assembled.

Collectively we call ourselves the Sirocco Research Labs, and our guiding logline is, “We are stronger when we are together.” We give each other complete autonomy in our respective facets of production, often guiding our products to surreal and beautiful ends. My responsibility to the Labs is developing our stories, and writing stories in reference to film history and theory is important to me. I feel empowered by my knowledge gained at Western in respect to film history and theory, and writing creatively as well. I feel indebted to professors in the English Department like Doug Park, Kaveh Askari, and Tony Prichard who were not only first-rate inside the classroom, but were also amazing outside the class. Not only were they eager to teach me about their passions, but they were just as excited to attend a screening of one of my student movies, or listen to me explain a new project I had been thinking about.

The Sirocco Research Labs has recently finished our first two movies, *Cleo in the Universe* and *Red Moon*. We are hoping to screen throughout the 2011 festival circuit. Currently we are in pre-production for our third short film, *The Dream Machine*, a movie about love, loss, and the atomic structure of the universe, and in January we will be doing our first for-hire job, a music video for the band Megafaun. It’s going great. We’re all very enthusiastic about the future.

It is difficult to imagine having not studied at Western (BA 01), and, indeed, I was in no hurry to leave. I stayed in town for one year after completing my studies in Creative Writing, working and auditing a graduate-level poetry seminar with Bruce Beasley. Alaska had always beckoned, though, and the ferry rarely left its Fairhaven dock for points north during those years without taking my imagination with it. When I finally left Bellingham, I went on a small sailboat, which I lived aboard and sailed to southeast Alaska and back. Eventually I moved to Anchorage, where I planned to explore, write, process my WWU education, and prepare myself for graduate school.

I completed my MFA in poetry at the University of Montana in 2007. During those years, I migrated seasonally to McCarthy, Alaska to work as a guide in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. The habits of linguistic and sensory attention that I began developing at Western served me well in both worlds, and my poetics and the time I spent outside thoroughly informed each other. Ideas and conversations with numerous mentors at Western stuck with me and provided a framework which helped me make sense of the world and to make choices about my path through it. I am indebted to Bruce Beasley, James Bertolino, Gary Geddes, Kathleen Halme, Pam Hardman, Nancy Pagh,
Suzanne Paola, Rodney Payton, and others for many lessons in and out of the classroom.

Not long after completing my graduate studies, I returned permanently to Alaska. I am the Executive Director of the Wrangell Mountains Center, a private nonprofit organization which fosters appreciation, understanding, and stewardship of wildlands and mountain culture in Alaska through scientific and artistic inquiry in the Wrangell Mountains. I earned a Certificate in Nonprofit Management through the Foraker Group/University of Alaska Fairbanks in 2009. The opportunity to facilitate meaningful environmental education, to support cutting edge scientific research and to bring that research to the public, to bring the arts to our remote region, and to foster important dialogues between disparate parties, offers the chance to bring many of the most positive aspects of my university experiences to bear upon a wild and grand natural and cultural milieu. My own efforts to maintain a disciplined, open stance of poetic attention toward both the world and language through writing are fueled by the fruits of that success. One of our annual programs at the WMC is the week-long Wrangell Mountains Writing Workshop, and we also offer a seven week upper division undergraduate college field course—last year, a Western student made it up for the summer semester, and talking with him about Bellingham and Western sparked many pangs of nostalgia. Fortunately, I usually make it back to Bellingham once a year or so, and I enjoy ongoing relationships with many friends and instructors I met during my time there.

In addition to publishing widely in print and online journals, producing stories for Alaska Public Radio, and organizing a reading and performance series in Anchorage, I have also co-founded a statewide literary nonprofit called 49 Alaska Writing Center, which supports, through programming and outreach, creative writers from throughout Alaska at all stages of their development while building an audience for Alaska literature.

It's strange to consider that this spring will mark a decade since I graduated from Western. I am indebted to the excellent faculty I had the privilege to work with, and to the examples of well-lived lives from the instructors and friends I have kept in touch with over the years; I am still learning from them. Even as I have settled elsewhere, Bellingham and Western feel like home each time I return, and neither are ever far from my thoughts. It's comforting to imagine my way southward down the long coast to Bellingham Bay and the first water-borne glimpses of the university there on the hill, and to remember what it felt like to be there as a younger version of myself, looking out at the water, thinking my way to Alaska.
I always thought I would use my English degree to teach literature or writing, but instead I have been teaching Pilates for the last ten years. I started at Pacific Northwest Ballet, teaching Pilates to dancers, and then opened my own studio, Young Pilates and Fitness, where I have been working along with my husband, David, for the last seven years or so. The fitness industry certainly isn’t where I thought I would end up, but it has been a lot of fun, given me a lot of freedom, and has kept me healthy, too.

Having a background in English is a big plus as a business owner. I did all the copywriting for our website and promotional brochures, and all the marketing language for advertisements and campaigns over the years. I think my background in English made me more creative in general, and I love creating the story of my business—my writing is often about creating a narrative of health and progress both for the business itself and for the clients.

I have written a large number of articles on health and wellness that are posted regularly on our blog, and these online articles are a complement to the work that the clients do in classes. Some of the subject matter addressed in the articles include Pilates for men; Pilates for before, during, and after pregnancy; the importance of eating whole, natural foods; and more. Writing these articles allows me to do what I love, which is write, and also to connect to my customers outside the studio, which I also love.

My interests in health and wellness have led me to begin other related projects. In the past few years I have been a contributor to Wino Magazine, an online magazine that is devoted to wine and wine culture in Washington State. As a frequent traveler to France, I have also developed a love of French culture, and have combined my love of cooking, wine, and travel in a blog called La Femme Cooks. The blog is about eating well every single day, supporting local food cultures, and I offer recipes that are accompanied by anecdotes from my life or my family history to make cooking more accessible and interesting.

I look back on my time at Western very fondly, and feel thankful for the education I received there. I wouldn’t change anything!

Support the English department online: [http://www.wwu.edu/give](http://www.wwu.edu/give)
Panel on Careers for English Majors
Features Department Alumni

Kathy Lundeen, Brenda Miller, and Katie Vulić organized a special event in the spring term to help current students see examples of the flexibility and versatility of an English major out in the work force. On Monday, April 5 the English Department hosted a forum on Careers for English Majors for which we invited five alumni, all of whom received a degree in English from Western, to tell how they secured jobs that draw upon the skills they acquired as English majors. Included in these alumni was Jordan Hartt, Director of Programs at Centrum in Port Townsend (who was featured in last year’s alumni newsletter). The following alumni also shared their stories with our undergraduates.

Stacey Lawlis is the Owner/Operator of Lawlis Creative, a copywriting and design studio in Seattle. She first came to Western in 2001 and was originally a Communications major. She was in a car accident in her junior year, and as a result she needed to take a break from school. From 2003 to 2006, Stacey worked as a legal secretary and then worked in an advertising company as a project manager. She then came back to school to finish her degree in English. “It wasn’t important to me at that point to get a job that was directly an English job…. I knew that I liked writing, I knew that I liked thinking and reading and I knew that I liked being around other people who valued those sorts of things.” She explained that she worked for someone who had her own graphic design company who offered Stacey work to help with the overflow, and from her Stacey learned the ins and outs of working independently. As clients referred her to other clients, Stacey eventually carved out a niche for herself working on the independent copy for websites. She calls the process of her business growing “organic,” and she said that her business is continuing to grow, even in this economy. Now located in Issaquah, Lawlis spoke to the potential for successful self-employment, even in the midst of difficult times. You can learn more about Stacey’s work at http://lawliscreative.com.

Kristin Fender is a Technical Writer for Microsoft. She graduated in 2005, having come to Western with an Associate Degree and intending to be a Vocal Performance major. She picked English as a second major, and then took Professor Bill Smith’s horror film class, which inspired her to take other classes with the same professor. It turned out that Professor Smith was teaching technical writing the next term, and Kristin said she really enjoyed the course. From that point she ended up taking every class that was available in technical writing. She gave a temp agency in Seattle a portfolio of her work that included a variety of projects she’d completed in her technical writing classes (for example, a brochure she created for an adoption agency, a website she’d helped develop for Sehome Hill Arboretum, and other assignments she’d done for
(continued)

Careers for English Majors

Carter Hasegawa

English Majors

Gwen Weerts, who earned her MA from Western in 2007, is a Production Editor in Bellingham for SPIE Publications, the publisher of a photo-optical engineering society. Though her work focuses on science and math publishing, Gwen acknowledged that she had no background in science or math, but rather she was trained in Nonfiction Creative Writing for her MA at Western. Despite being trained in a different discipline from that in which she currently works, she knows that her graduate school experiences directly prepared her for her current work. Gwen interned for the Bellingham Review while an MA student, and this experience gave her the knowledge to speak about the profession of publishing—she knew the language of the job. She taught Freshman Composition while an MA student, and she credits this experience for showing her how to work directly with authors on improving their prose (even when those authors are experts in their own specific scientific subfields). Today Gwen copyedits and manages authors, freelancers, typesetters, printers, and reviewers. She feels like she uses her degree in a literal way: “I know the details of grammar in ways I wish I didn’t, and I have the Chicago Manual of Style memorized.”

Cassidy Patnoe, who graduated with his BA in 2009, founded Famulus Consulting, a grant writing firm. Never having intended to become a grant writer, Cassidy said he had applied to work for a local internet service provider which ultimately hired him not for the work he applied to do, but to help write grants. One of his successful grant applications was for money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, a particularly difficult grant to get due to the length of the application and the density of the language involved. The success of this grant led to him being noticed (and eventually recruited) by the local Economic Development Council. He worked from home, cooperating with different agencies within his county to identify needs and raise funds. He saw a strong relationship between his English studies and his grant-writing work: “The research skills that I have from researching papers and being able to distill down information from any given written piece have become invaluable in that job.” Referring to an earlier comment that sometimes the empty page scares some people, Cassidy commented that he’s found “the filled page frightens people even more, because actually going through and pulling out the information they need to find on the page can be really difficult,” and Cassidy felt that his major gave him the skills to understand exactly what a given grant was hoping to accomplish so that he could articulate the connection between the needs he perceives and the grant’s goals. “I think an English major is a sort of Jack of All Trades in terms of the Liberal Arts field, because you have to touch on so many fields to analyze a work of literature and to really understand the concepts…and that flexibility which I think you develop over time as an English major becomes invaluable in any job you’re going to have.”
English Graduate Students Publish Research Article On English Professor William Smith

William Smith is the subject of a research article in the December 2009 issue of “College Communication and Composition,” a peer-reviewed journal. The article, “Close to the Heart: Teacher Authority in a Classroom Community,” has another Western connection: It was written by a team of WWU students in an English graduate seminar.

The seminar, Professor Steve VanderStaay’s “Research in the Teaching of English,” presented students with current debates in the teaching of English and composition. After reviewing each debate, students decided to investigate the “problem” of teacher authority in the teaching of composition.

Beginning in the Civil Rights era, teacher authority within composition was criticized as an oppressive impediment to students’ development as writers. More recently, however, theorists have argued that teacher authority also may function to empower and enable students. However, no real-world description of an empowering form of teacher authority existed in the research.

To fill this gap, four graduate students decided to study teacher authority in a “best-case scenario,” a writing class widely recognized as enabling and empowering. They instantly thought of William “Bill” Smith, an award-winning and widely-respected writing teacher in the Department of English. After securing necessary permissions, students observed two of his technical writing classes over the course of a term, interviewing students and comparing their own observations with recent theory. Noting that Smith taught with great authority, they studied its sources and asked students about it. The team found that Dr. Smith’s authority was “professional,” rather than “bureaucratic,” or derived from the professor’s power over the students’ grades. In this case, they concluded, teacher authority was not so much imposed upon students as “granted by students who affirmed the teacher’s expertise, self-confidence and belief in the importance of his work.”

The student authors are Beverly A. Faxon, Jack E. Meischen, Karlene T. Kolesnikov and Andrew D. Ruppel.

Support the English department online:
http://www.wwu.edu/give
Faculty Participate in 2011 Chinese Expulsion Remembrance Project

Two members of our faculty, Ning Yu and Christopher Wise, are participating in activities that are part of the upcoming 2011 Chinese Expulsion Remembrance Project; their research and creative activities are having a significant impact on the community outside of the university. The Chinese Expulsion Remembrance Project has reconstructed the history of the Chinese throughout the Puget Sound region, seeks to raise awareness of the history of Chinese immigrants in the region, and is particularly concerned with the events of 1885 and 1886, during which time thousands of Chinese immigrants were driven out of some of the major cities in Western Washington and elsewhere on the West Coast. Professor Yu has been studying the treatment of the Chinese in Bellingham and in other Washington cities as well, including Port Townsend (which did not expel its Chinese population) and Tacoma (the only port city on the West Coast that does not have a Chinatown). Professor Yu and Suzanne Blaise of Black Doc Films have been researching and fundraising for a film that will document the story of the Chinese Expulsion. To learn more about the Chinese Expulsion Remembrance Project, please visit http://iexaminer.org/cerp/.

Professor Christopher Wise has written, and will perform in, a ballet entitled Emerald Bay, which is set in Bellingham in 1885, the year that the Chinese were expelled. This ballet, performed by the Northwest Ballet Theater, follows the fictional story of two lovers, a Scottish-Irish woman and a Chinese sea captain, and explores the very real cultural background and political tensions that characterized this region in that era. The ballet also seeks to showcase local music, dancing, and history from the late nineteenth century. The ballet also includes as some of its characters a number of the region’s best-known historical figures: Fairhaven founder Dirty Dan Harris; the Chinese businessman Goon Dip, who contracted Chinese labor for Bellingham’s Pacific American Fisheries cannery; and Mark Twain, who visited Bellingham in the 1890s. Professor Ning Yu has served as Cultural and Artistic Advisor for the ballet and will be performing in it as well, in the role of Goon Dip. This ballet is sponsored by the Classical Ballet Club (of which Professor Wise is the Faculty Advisor), the English Department and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences here at Western, and American Ethnic Studies; it will premiere in June 2011 at Meany Hall on the University of Washington campus in Seattle. The ballet will also be performed later that month at Mt. Baker Theater in Bellingham and McIntyre Hall in Mt. Vernon.
Let’s Keep In Touch:
WWU English Department
Accessible Through Newly-Designed Website, Facebook, and Twitter

Website: The English department website has a new look this year, thanks to four students who took on the project of improving the website in an internship they undertook through English 402, a technical writing course taught that quarter by Mark Sherman. Our Department Chair, Marc Geisler, and our Degree Coordinator, Linda Flanagan, were the clients with whom the students worked to assess the website’s existing strengths and weaknesses, and now this website is a part of the portfolio of the students who designed it. There is a tab on the home page banner just for alumni so that you can see recent copies of the newsletter and let us know more about what you are doing these days. See http://kerouac.english.wwu.edu/~newenglish/ for more information.

Twitter: Last year the English Department started to use Twitter to keep students apprised of recent developments ranging from course offerings, registration information, department readings and other events, and so on. You can follow our Twitter feed on our department home page, or you can subscribe at http://twitter.com/WWUEnglishDept.

Facebook: We would like you to join us on Facebook, where we have a group entitled Western Washington University English Department Alumni. We envision this site as a career-oriented site where alumni can network with each other and with current students. Many alumni and faculty are already signed up. Please look for us there and let us know how you are doing! You can find us at http://www.facebook.com.

Back 2 Bellingham:
Now an annual alumni event to which we invite you!

When the Back 2 Bellingham Alumni and Family Weekend was launched last spring, it was a rousing success; over seven hundred alumni returned to campus to enjoy a weekend of revisiting old haunts, catching up with former faculty and classmates, and enjoying the best of what Western and the larger community of Bellingham have to offer. Several departments, including the
English Department, held reunions that weekend to provide an opportunity for our alumni and faculty to reconnect with each other.

At our English Department alumni reunion event that weekend, several members of our faculty spoke about their current teaching, which demonstrated the evolving nature of classroom instruction and course development. After the faculty finished introducing their recent courses, they invited input from alumni about the kinds of classes they would like to see taught in our department. We enjoyed a lively discussion with our alumni and were pleased to see so many of you at this event.

Because the 2010 weekend was so successful, the Alumni Association is making this a yearly event. The next Back 2 Bellingham weekend will be May 13 to 15, 2011, and an ever-growing program of events (http://tinyurl.com/2ag4u5c) is being updated frequently as new activities, entertainment, speakers, and reunions are added. The English Department would like to invite you to join us at this year’s event. As part of our English Department reunion, we are organizing a networking event at which our alumni will be able to meet with our current students and offer information about their careers. We will be following a “speed networking” model; students will speak one-on-one with several different alumni in turn, rotating every three or four minutes, and in this way our students will be able to learn about several different careers. Following the rotation session, students and alumni will be able to mingle freely and hold deeper conversations if they wish. We would like to invite you to participate in this event so that our alumni can introduce our students to as many different careers as possible. If you would be interested in participating in the reunion weekend in general or the networking session in particular, please contact us at english@wwu.edu.

Your Foundation Contributions at Work: Improving Undergraduate and Graduate Education

Alumni donations do much to enhance the experience of student education, especially in the midst of economic hard times. As our faculty strives to deliver the highest quality teaching with the best possible learning experiences, alumni have partnered with us to enrich the classroom experience. For example, Laura Laffrado took her English 423 class on Hawthorne to see a movie inspired by The Scarlet Letter, Easy A (which Professor Laffrado recommends as a good time); Marc Geisler has taken his students in English 530, a Shakespeare and Music class, to see a number of musical and dramatic performances, including seeing performances from around the world broadcast
Improving Education

live into local theaters; Lysa Rivera took her students of her English 310, African American Slave Narrative, to see a theatrical performance of *The Color Purple*.

Students uniformly express the strong impact these activities have upon their learning. For example, Jessica Turek, a student in Lysa Rivera’s class, commented, “Although we’ve been discussing these topics all throughout the quarter, seeing *The Color Purple* exposed them in a new way. The English Department was so kind to allow our class to attend this event. It is so important for students to be able to experience plays and other media outside of class because it takes our learning outside the classroom and makes room for learning in a whole new light. Thank you.”

Some students use alumni-donated funds to help them professionalize by presenting their work at conferences. Current graduate student Joseph Volk shares this eloquent description of attending a conference whose travel was supported by a Foundation travel grant: “Over spring break this year, I was able to use departmental travel funds made available through the generosity of our alumni to travel to San Diego to participate in ‘Nurturing the Prophetic Imagination,’ an interdisciplinary conference in theology, philosophy, cultural studies, and sociology hosted at Point Loma Nazarene University. I presented a paper that I had written on my own titled ‘Apocalyptic Politics as Inoperative Politics: David Toole’s *Waiting for Godot in Sarajevo* and the Non-work of Christian Community.’ I presented on a panel entitled ‘Disrupting Empire’ alongside a PhD student from the University of Nottingham (UK) and three faculty, including two department chairs, from other universities. The panel was very well attended and I ended up facing the frightening prospect of presenting to over 100 people, including many professors I had as an undergraduate. Despite my nerves, my presentation went very well and I was able to engage in stimulating conversation afterwards with several graduate students from other schools, a professor from another school who had recently written a book on my general topic, and several of my undergraduate mentors. I received many generous compliments on my work. Everyone I met was also very impressed that I had been not only encouraged to do interdisciplinary work but also fully financially supported by an English MA program and I feel that I was able to represent our graduate program here very well to many people who had never heard of it before. For me, both the experience of being able to present a well-attended and interdisciplinary conference session and the department’s decision to support me in presenting work that I had done independently working with some contemporary thinkers were absolutely irreplaceable boosts to my confidence and growth as a scholar. I am deeply thankful to our alumni donors for providing such valuable contributions to the thriving and diverse culture of scholarship we enjoy here in the English MA program!”

From all of us in the English Department (and from the students whose educations are enhanced through these experiences), thank you to all those alumni who help make these enrichment activities possible.
PUBLIC BENEFITS—PRIVATE COSTS

You have to look pretty long and hard to find something today that costs the same as it did twenty years ago.

One of the prevailing myths about college is that its cost has skyrocketed over the years. Whenever Time or U.S. News & World Report turn their attention to higher education, there is a lot of talk about the runaway cost of college.

While this alarm may have some relevance to private universities, it generally doesn’t tell the truth about public universities and certainly isn’t true of Washington’s public universities. We spend about $14,000 per student, the same as we did in 1991.

Educational cost continues to shift to students while total funding remains constant

What is true in Washington (and pretty much everywhere else) is that the price (tuition) of college for students and their families has been surging steadily upward. This is, of course, because public support for our public universities has been shrinking. While the whole state budget has been cut, public university budgets have been cut more. Ten years ago, Washington’s state universities received about 6.3% of the entire state budget. Today, that percentage has been reduced to 4.2%.
State government has systematically defunded higher education in Washington. With our current projected state deficit of over $5 billion, and the passage of Initiatives 1053 and 1107, the trend is likely to continue.

So twenty years later, with our universities still living on 1991 money, we’re left with two questions: twenty years from now, will we still have public universities and will regular people be able to afford them?

The problem that universities like Western have going forward is as much political as it is fiscal. We need to convince Washington voters and our elected representatives that high quality, accessible, affordable public university education is worth public investment. If you would like to join us in that effort, please go to the links below:

http://www.fyipac.org/
http://www.ufws.org/mail/mail.cgi/list/ufwssub/

--Bill Lyne, President of the United Faculty of Washington State and Professor of English at Western Washington University.
is now available for free on iPad. Thumbnail nonfiction editor Evelyn Sharenov has been featured in an upcoming Oregon Public Broadcasting interview. The second issue was published in November. Michael is also freelance editing and volunteering for the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library & Museum at the University of Texas.

**Matt Atwood (MA 2008)** lives in Amherst, Massachusetts, where he is working as an administrator at a new K-5 elementary school in Springfield, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence.


**Colleen Louise Barry (BA 2010)** is currently living in Brooklyn, working as a Social Media and Development Assistant at a non-profit org called LitWorld (www.litworld.org), which is working on various ways to make books and literacy available to everyone. She also writes articles about Art Openings for the Art Blog/Magazine Oakazine.com.

**Zachary Beare (MA 2010)** is the Writing Coordinator at the University of Washington, Tacoma’s Teaching and Learning Center. His essay “Michael Field’s Renaissance: An Examination of Paterian Influence, Gender Play, and the Use of the Ekphrastic Form in Sight and Song” was recently published in a special double issue of *The Pater Newsletter* on “Pater and Cosmopolitanism.”

Zach is currently developing a course on “Writing Center Pedagogy and Praxis” and is working on a research project which (re)examines the role of reading in the writing center and which explores the vocational, epistemological, and ontological dimensions of reading and the relevancy of such dimensions for writing center work and tutor education.

**Lori Brack (MA 2009)** has been a finalist for the Pilot Books chapbook series and a semi-finalist for the Concrete Wolf chapbook competition, both in 2009. She has had three poems published in Issue 2 of *The Packingtown Review*, which was published in January. Her first chapbook of poems, *A Fine Place to See the Sky*, was published by the Field School, New York; this work was originally commissioned as performance art by artist Ernesto Pujol, and was based on Lori’s grandfather’s farming journal of 1907-1918. A writing exercise she developed, “Make Use of Disruptions to Keep Writing,” is forthcoming in January in *Creative Writing Demystified*, McGraw-Hill, edited by Sheila Bender (Lori developed this exercise with Western’s Writing Instruction Co-Inquiry Fellowship with Suzanne Paola, 2008-2009).

**Trina Burke (MA 2009)** has published a chapbook of poems, *Great America*, through Dancing Girl Press.

**Sandy Cato (BA 1996)**, a language arts teacher at Black River High School, was named Teacher of the Month by the Rotary Club of Renton.
Ian Chant (BA 2007) is currently enrolled in the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism. He also works part time as an Associate Features Editor at PopMatters.com, and freelances as a blogger, reporter and photographer. Before graduate school, Ian freelanced as a marketing writer, PR consultant and reporter, and was the Editor-in-Chief at Seattletest.com. He’s had pieces appear in Newsday, The Modesto Bee and he is working on a piece for Mental Floss.

Renee Chase (MA 2006) has just begun her dissertation on gender and sexuality as subversion in Harlem Renaissance literature as part of her PhD work at University of Denver.

Neva Coats (MA 2010) teaches 10th grade English at Blaine High School; having served as a TA for Freshman Composition at WWU, Neva developed keen insights into the expectations for student writing in college classes, and so has been able to reinvigorate her teaching with college goals in mind. Neva is also particularly enjoying being able to introduce students to analytical methods and theorized readings of texts that she studied as a graduate student.

Elizabeth J. Colen (MA 2005) published her first book, Money for Sunsets (Steel Toe Books 2010), a collection of prose poems. Her work has earned the Steel Toe Books Prize in Poetry, Judge’s Choice award.

Becca Dunnavan (BA 2009) is currently working at City University of Seattle (Bellevue campus) as an Administrative Assistant III.

William Durden (MA 2008) teaches literature and composition classes full time at Clark College. Will also serves as a faculty advisor for the queer student club and as a member of the composition committee. He stays current in attending conferences and is collaborating with a colleague on a piece exploring online queer writing spaces. His essay “Public and Private Responsibility: Christianity and Politics in Carl Schmitt’s The Concept of the Political” is scheduled for an early 2011 publication in Christianity & Literature.

Spencer Ellsworth (MA 2009) has short stories appearing in two forthcoming anthologies, 2020 Visions from M-Brane Publications and Human Tales from Prime Books. In October 2010 he attended Viable Paradise, a by-audition writers’ workshop on Martha’s Vineyard taught by John W. Campbell Award winners John Scalzi and Elizabeth Bear. He currently teaches for Argosy University and the University of Phoenix.

Jennie Friedrich (MA 2010) enrolled in the PhD program in English Literature at the University of California, Riverside, where she is studying medieval literature. She was offered a TA position and tuition grant.

Darla Goodroad (BA 2007) was admitted to the MA program in Literature and
Writing at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio, in the summer of 2010. She has been awarded a full Graduate Teaching Assistantship.

**Ida Hsiang (BA 2006)** is enrolled at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM). Ida has had several poems published and blogs about fashion at http://www.stylehive.com/person/idabone.

**Cumi Ikeda (MA 2009)** is a full-time lecturer at the University of Washington, Tacoma, where she teaches academic writing and coordinates the first-year Core curriculum as the Core Coordinator in the Office of Undergraduate Education. She recently presented at the TYCA (Two-Year College English Association) conference with Nick Potter, a fellow Western English graduate, on “The Imagined Meta-Classroom: Exploring How Digital Student Knowledge and Transparent Understandings of Classroom Vulnerability Lead to Empowered, Organic Learning.”

**Christopher Janus (MA 2010)** is teaching English 101, English 126 (writing about literature), and developmental reading at Green River Community College.

**Kyle Jensen (MA 2005)** is Assistant Professor of English at the University of North Texas.

**Richard Jenseth (BA 1978)** has done graduate work in New York and with the Iowa Writer’s Workshop, and then went on to earn a PhD at Iowa. He has been on the faculty of Lehigh University and is currently at St. Lawrence University in New York, where he is an Associate Professor.

**Reid Kerr (MA 2008)** is teaching at Whatcom Community College and playing music throughout the Northwest (he sings and plays guitar, harmonica and piano/organ). His website is www.reidkerrmusic.com.

**Lynn Kilpatrick (MA 1998)** has just had her second story collection, *In the House*, published by Fiction Collective 2.

**Kelsey Klecktenteger (BA 2010)** is enrolled in the Book Publishing MA program at Portland State University.

**Justin Lawlis (BA 2008)** is a Fraud Analyst at T-Mobile.

**Kate Lebo (BA 2005)** has published a handmade ‘zine, *A Commonplace Book of Pie*, a cross-genre collection of facts (both real and imagined) about pie, which has been co-sponsored by Richard Hugo House, a center for the literary arts. Kate’s poetry has appeared in *Crab Creek Review, Smartish Pace*, and *A River and Sound Review*, and also has poems forthcoming in *Poetry Northwest*. 
This year she was awarded a grant from 4Culture, a Soapstone residency, and a Shotpouch Creek residency. She is an associate poetry editor for Filter, a literary journal made entirely by hand, and lives in Seattle, where she worked for Richard Hugo House for many years. She is currently an MFA candidate at the University of Washington. She blogs at [http://goodeggseattle.blogspot.com](http://goodeggseattle.blogspot.com).

H. Lee Lewis (BA 2010) is attending his first year of law school at Seattle University School of Law. In addition to his studies, Lee sits on the board of the Seattle University Trial Lawyer’s Association and is a member of the Law School’s Wine and Beverage Society.

Alyssa Von Lehman Lopez (BA 2000) earned an MA in English from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CO in 2007, and she now works at Metropolitan State College of Denver as a grant writer.

Bethany Maines (BA 2001) has published her debut novel, Bulletproof Mascara, with Atria Press, an imprint of Simon & Schuster.

Jimmy Marble (BA 2008) has directed two short films, “Cleo in the Universe” and “Red Moon,” in collaboration with his film collective in Los Angeles. Jimmy is taking these movies on a tour of the Northwest, and has included Western among the places where he will be showing his work. Movie teasers are available for viewing on the film collective’s website, [www.siroccoresearchlabs.com](http://www.siroccoresearchlabs.com).

Jacob Massine (BA 2008, MA 2010) is working as an English Instructor at Beijing Primary School No. 2 in Beijing, China.

Allison Jane McCorkel (BA 2009) is in the MA in English program at West Texas A&M University in Canyon, TX, where she also serves as a TA in composition. She has recently published in Legacy, WT’s literary magazine.

Barbi McLain (MA 2010) is a Writing Instructor in the Academic Learning Skills Department at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon.

Rachel Mehl (BA 2002) graduated from the University of Oregon with her MFA in 2006. Her MFA thesis (a full length poetry collection entitled “Why I Hate Horses”) and her chapbook “Letter to Amber in November” have both been finalists in national competitions. Her poetry has been published in such journals as Alaska Quarterly Review, Los Angeles Review, Portland Review, Poet Lore, and Willow Springs. She works as the Volunteer Literacy Program Coordinator at Skagit County Community Action in Mount Vernon, WA.

Jory Michaelson (BA 2009) enrolled in the MFA program in Creative Writing at the University of Idaho. He was offered a TA position and full tuition grant.

Danica Miller (BA 2000) teaches Native American Studies at the University
of Connecticut and is finishing her dissertation on post-colonial readings of contemporary Native American literature at Fordham University.

**Peter Moe (BA 2005)** graduated with his MA in Composition and Rhetoric from Eastern Washington University and has begun PhD study at the University of Pittsburgh, where he is enrolled in the Literacy, Pedagogy, and Rhetoric program.

**Alexa Morris (BA 2010)** volunteered in the summer at the Clark County Event Center (where she taught the event marketing team how to use social media—specifically Facebook), and recently accepted a Community Director position with the March of Dimes, South Sound Division.

**Keith Moul (MA 1971)**, after leaving Western, attended the University of Iowa and then the University of South Carolina, where he earned his PhD in 1974. He worked in business for many years and now lives in Blaine, WA. He has recently published a chapbook of poems entitled *The Grammar of Mind*, published by Blue & Yellow Dog Press.

**Heidi Norgaard (BA 2008)** is an Administrative Assistant for Grantmakers in the Arts. Administrative Assistant, Grantmakers in the Arts Before joining Grantmakers in the Arts in 2010, Heidi worked for Seattle’s leading computer gaming company, Big Fish Games, and volunteered her time with local arts organizations including the Richard Hugo House, the Burke Museum, and Artist Trust.

**Amanda Ooton (BA 2010)** works for the Washington Reading Corps developing literacy programs for Island View Elementary School in Anacortes, WA. She is part of a team led by Russ Ritchie (BA 2009).

**Jennifer Overman (BA 2010)** has recently been hired as the Advertising Coordinator for Skagit Publishing in Mount Vernon, WA.

**Jeremy Pataky (BA 2001)** graduated from University of Montana in 2007 with an MFA in poetry; he has also earned a Certificate in Nonprofit Management from the Foraker Group/University of Alaska, Fairbanks in 2009. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Black Warrior Review, The Southeast Review, Northern Review, Alaska Public Radio, Left Footed Bird, Cirque, High Country News,* and many others. A permanent resident of Alaska, he founded and curates the Still North Reading and Performance Series, and he is a founding board member of a statewide literary nonprofit called 49 Alaska Writing Center ([www.49writingcenter.org/index.php](http://www.49writingcenter.org/index.php)). He is the Executive Director of the Wrangell Mountains Center ([www.wrangells.org](http://www.wrangells.org)), a private nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering appreciation, understanding, and stewardship of wildlands and mountain culture in Alaska through scientific and artistic inquiry in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.
Cassidy Patnoe (BA 2009) moved onto a boat in South East Alaska. He is working as a grant writer and administrating a program to provide after-school programs with the aim of improving academic performance for local students.

Russell Ritchie (BA 2009) worked after graduation for the Washington Reading Corps at an elementary school in Mt. Vernon and now works as Program Assistant for the Reading Corps.

Jamie (Tyo) Rogers (MA 2010) is currently attending the PhD program in Comparative Literature at University of California, Irvine. She received the Murray Krieger Endowed Fellowship in Literary Theory.

Brisja Sternquist (BA 2004) earned her MA in December 2009 in English Composition at the University of Massachusetts—Boston, where she currently teaches Freshman English.

Antonio Tang (BA 2004) earned his MA in Composition & Rhetoric at Washington State University after graduating from Western, and is now enrolled in the PhD program in English at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

A.J. Tigner (BA 2009) currently works as a gofer for a law firm, and writes for the Seattle Weekly’s blog. He is beginning to do DVD reviews for PopMatters, and writes trivia questions for the pub quiz franchise Geeks Who Drink.

Eddy Troy (BA 2007, MA 2010) is attending the Comparative Literature PhD program at the University of California Riverside, where he received full funding.

Amber True (BA 2008) is attending the MA program at Michigan State University, and has a full research assistantship for which she works with both the journal Contagion and the American Indian Studies book series.

Julie Marie Wade (MA 2003) is the author of three recently-published or forthcoming publications: “Without,” a poetry chapbook (Finishing Line Press, 2010), “Wishbone: A Memoir in Fractures” (Colgate University Press, 2010), and “In Lieu of Flowers,” a collection of lyric essays (Sarabande, 2011). Julie is a doctoral student and graduate teaching fellow in the Humanities program at the University of Louisville.

Katie Wiese (BA 2009) moved to Cambridge, MA for a job in a progressive online organizing firm, and then began graduate work at Lesley University, where she is studying creative nonfiction. She is currently working on a collection of personal essays, teaching an undergraduate English class at Lesley, serving on the Sufi Ruhaniat Board of Trustees, working at an art store in Cambridge and doing a bit of freelance web work for various nonprofits and Sufi organizations.

Joshua Marie Wilkinson (BA 2000) has published two books in 2010. The first, Selenography, is a collection of poetry accompanied by polaroids by Tim Rutili; it was published in April by Sidebrow Books. His second book, Poets on Teaching: A Sourcebook, was published in August by the University of Iowa Press. He is an assistant professor of English at Loyola University Chicago.

Samantha (Swenson) Wright (BA 1998) has published her first novel, Superstition, with Champagne Books in April 2010.

Rachel Wolf (MA 2008) is completing her second year of a PhD program in English Studies with an emphasis in Creative Writing at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and is also pursuing a concurrent Graduate Certificate in Women’s Studies. She was awarded a four-year fully-funded Graduate Assistantship position for which she teaches English 100 and introductory literature courses; she also TAs in the Women’s Studies department.

Brooke Hoffard Young (BA 1997) has her own very successful Pilates studio in Seattle, writes all the material for it, writes for an online wine magazine, and has a food blog.

Josh Young (BA 2007, MA 2009) wrote the feature film Do You See Colors When You Close Your Eyes? that his brother Caleb directed. They have shown their film at the Pickford Cinema in Bellingham and are currently submitting the film to festivals. His website is www.labfilms-nw.com.

Tommy Zurhellen (BA 1999) is publishing his first novel, Nazareth, North Dakota through Atticus Books in Spring 2011. He is also Associate Professor of English at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY.

Support the English department online:
http://www.wwu.edu/give
OUR COMMUNITY OF WRITERS

Christopher Wise
The Timbuktu Chronicles

Lyn Kilpatrick
In the House

John Purdy
Writing Indian Native Conversations

Bethany Maines
Bulletproof Mascara

Kate Lebo
A Commonplace Book of Pie

Anne Lobeck & Kristin Denham
Linguistics for Everyone

Anne Lobeck & Kristin Denham
Linguistics at School

Kristin Mahoney
Hubert’s Arthur
Carol Guess
Love Is A Map I Must Not Set On Fire

Elizabeth J. Colen
Money for Sunsets

Joshua Marie Wilkinson
Selenography

Christopher Wise
Being Arab

Julie Marie Wade
Wishbone: A Memoir in Fractures

Michael Dean Anthony
literary magazine--

Joshua Marie Wilkinson
Poets on Teaching

David Wheeler
Contingency Plans

Keith Moul
Grammar of Mind
Kaveh Askari’s article “Early 16mm Color from a Career Amateur” was published by the journal Film History. His article “An Afterlife for Junk Prints: Serials and other ‘Classics’ in 1920s Tehran” is forthcoming in Border Crossings: Silent Cinema and the Politics of Space (Indiana University Press). He is also working with Michael Falter, the Program Director of the Pickford Cinema, on programming, researching, and presenting weekly classic films on KVOS.

Bruce Beasley has published numerous poems over the past year, including “Sunrise Insomnia Service” in Image, “The Scale by which the Mapped Concerns the Map” in Denver Quarterly, “Like Unto a Merchant Man Seeking Goodly Pearls” and “Hippomonstrossesquipedaliaphobia” in Free Verse, “Pilgrim Deviations” (a sequence of nine poems) and “Reading the Not-Written” in Kenyon Review, and many more.

Nicole Brown has published “The Remediation of Album Art: Neil Young’s Green Dale” with the Museum Tusculum Press, 2009 and has submitted an article on “Visual Rhetorics and US Casualties in Iraq.” She is currently working on a book entitled Sowing Words, which establishes a history of technical communications in a historical context of sustainability studies, countercultural initiatives, and the free and independent press/media.

Oliver de la Paz’s has published two books of poems in 2010: Requiem for the Orchard, published by the University of Akron Press, and Post Havoc: a Fable, published by the Black Warrior Review. He has also published a number of articles in H_NGM_N, The Laurel Review, The Southern Review, The Collagist, and Diode Poetry.

Kristin Denham has completed Linguistics at School: Language Awareness in Primary and Secondary Education, a collection of essays co-edited with Anne Lobeck, published by Cambridge University Press in 2010. Her essay “Linguistics in a Primary School” is also in this essay collection. She has also published a new textbook, Linguistics for Everyone, co-authored by Anne Lobeck and published by Cengage in 2010; this textbook has been nominated for the Linguistics Society of America Bloomfield Award. She is currently working on a book entitled English Grammar: A Guided Tour which she is co-authoring with Anne Lobeck and which is under contract with Wiley-Blackwell.
**Dawn Dietrich** is a nominee for the Peter Elich Award for Teaching Excellence. She has participated in the “Plagiarism as Art” panel, sponsored by Whatcom Reads and has spoken on “Media Literacy: Reading Graphic Novels” at the Western Scholars Invitational. She has proposed a paper to the Society for Literature, Science and the Arts entitled “School Daze: The Migration of Exploitation Film Techniques from the Grindhouse to the Public Schools, 1940-1970.” She is working on using more multi-modal writing in the class and is creating a new course in electronic literature using a hybrid model.

**Geri Forsberg** presented two papers in June 2010 at a conference at the University of Maine: “Alfred Korzybski: A Founding Figure in Media Ecology” and “Korzybski’s Theory of Abstraction: Language, Television, and Culture.” The first talk came from a paper she published in *ETC: A Review of General Semantics* (Vol. 67, No. 2) in April 2010. The second talk came from a paper that has been accepted for publication and is forthcoming. She attended the National Communication Association Conference in San Francisco in November.

**Marc Geisler** was invited to present his paper “The Question of Coherence” at the Association of Departments of English Summer Chairs Conference in Claremont, CA; at this conference he showcased the past ten years’ worth of curriculum innovations in Western’s English Department and he argued for further enhancements in advising. His paper was solicited for publication by the editor of the *ADE Bulletin*. He has also presented a paper on “Shakespeare, Music, and Teaching at a Comprehensive University” at the Northwest Pacific Renaissance Conference in Victoria B.C.

**Allison Giffen**’s article “‘Let No Man Know’: Negotiating the Gendered Discourse of Affliction in Anne Bradstreet’s ‘Here Followes Some Verses Upon the Burning of Our House, July 10th, 1666’” has just been published in the latest issue of *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*. She is currently working on a scholarly edition of the nineteenth century novels *Elsie Dinsmore* and *Holidays at Roselands* by Martha Finley. She is also working on an essay, “Honored Instruments: Rethinking the Sentimental in Martha Finley’s Elsie Dinsmore Series,” chapter three of her book-in-progress, *Family Values*.

**Bruce Goebel** has published “Comic Relief: Engaging Students through Humor Writing” in *English Journal*, and has published “Parody through Poetry” through *Classroom Notes Plus*. His book *Humor Writing in the Secondary Classroom* will be published by the National Council of Teachers of English in August 2011.

**Carol Guess** has published a book entitled *Love Is a Map I Must Not Set on Fire*, and has had another book, *Doll Studies: Forensics*, accepted for publication. She has also had a chapbook published of work from *Doll Studies: Forensics*. She has had two book chapters published in anthologies, has had an essay accepted for publication, and has had forty-one poems published or accepted for publication.
Lee Gulyas’s poem, “Lightning Hits Preacher After Call to God” was published in *Barn Owl Review*.

**Nancy Johnson** has completed a Curriculum Guide on the works of Newbery-award winner Richard Peck and has recently published “Talking with Author/ Illustrator Gerald McDermott” in BOOK LINKS. She has delivered over half-a-dozen papers at national conferences and was a recipient of one of this year’s Teaching and Learning Academy Awards. Nancy is also in the midst of her first of two years of teaching at the Singapore American School (you can follow her experiences on her blog: http://nancyjohnson.com/blog/).

**Meredith Josey** has published “The /ay/ Diphthong in a Martha’s Vineyard Community: What Can We Say 40 Years Later?” in *Sociolinguistics*, edited by N. Coupland, N. and A. Jaworski, A., published by Routledge Press in 2008. She has also recently given a talk entitled “A sociolinguistic study of phonetic variation and change on the island of Martha’s Vineyard,” part of the Fall Colloquium Series of the Department of Linguistics here at Western in November 2010.


**Anne Lobeck** has completed *Linguistics at School: Language Awareness in Primary and Secondary Education*, a collection of essays co-edited with Kristin Denham, published by Cambridge University Press in 2010. Her essay “Educating Linguists: How Partner Teaching Enriches Linguistics” is also in this essay collection. She has published a new textbook, *Linguistics for Everyone*, co-authored by Kristin Denham and published by Cengage in 2010; this textbook has been nominated for the Linguistics Society of America Bloomfield Award. She is currently working on a book entitled *English Grammar: A Guided Tour* which she is co-authoring with Kristin Denham and which is under contract with Wiley-Blackwell.

**Kathleen Lundeen’s** essay “Wordsworth and the Whatcom Lightcatcher: Reanimating the Museum when the Past is a Thing of the Past” was published in the online Interdisciplinary *Themes Journal* (http://www.interdisciplinarythemes.org/journal/index.php/itj/article/viewFile/31/34). In August she presented a
THE LATEST FROM YOUR FACULTY

Carter Hasegawa

English Alumni News Winter 2011

(continued)

THE LATEST FROM YOUR FACULTY

paper titled “Through the Eye of a Telescope: Mechanical Vision and the Fate of Romantic Culture” at the annual conference of the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism, which took place in Vancouver, BC.

Bill Lyne is currently serving as the president of the statewide faculty union, the United Faculty of Washington State, and is also Faculty Associate to WWU President Bruce Shepherd. He has recently published an article in Science and Society on race and class in James Baldwin’s writing entitled “God’s Black Revolutionary Mouth: James Baldwin’s Black Radicalism.”

Kelly Magee’s recent publications include “Orlando Speaks to Jesus,” published by Artful Dodge; “Oregon Convinces Straight Men,” published by Diagram; “Columbus Cuts the Cord,” published by The Journal (runner-up in the Alumni Flash Fiction Contest); and a chapbook of flash fiction, A Guide to Strange Places (runner-up in the Black Lawrence Press Fiction Chapbook Contest). She is working on a novel entitled The Family Shadow, on second families.


Cathy McDonald’s essay “Magic Canvas: Digital Building Blocks” has just been published in Writing and the Digital Generation: Essays on New Media Rhetoric.

Mary Janell Metzger was invited to present a paper, “With Mild and Effectual Persuasions: Reflections on the Pedagogical Work of Huston Diehl,” at the Symposium in Honor of Huston Diehl in Iowa City in May 2010. She has submitted an article on “The Value of Simplicity: Teaching Analytical Writing and Developing Metacognition in Novice Student Writers” to the Journal of Curriculum and Instruction. She has presented on “Ways to Effectively Evaluate Student Work” at the Western Washington Center for Instructional Innovation Panel on Effective Grading in April 2010. She has a book manuscript in process: What, How and Why: Teaching Literary Analysis.

Brenda Miller has had work published in New Ohio Review, Brevity, Zone3, and the Seattle Review. Her work has been anthologized in the textbook Fourth Genre: Explorations in Creative Nonfiction. She has been interviewed about her recent book Blessings of the Animals by Dinah Lenny for the Los Angeles Times.

Suzanne Paola is currently completing work on a book on adoption, combining research and personal narrative, for W.W. Norton. She has also published essays recently in Orion, Brevity, Seneca Review and Image, and had work reprinted in several anthologies: A Moment in Nature, forthcoming from Orion Books, and What’s Your Exit, Word Riot Press. She also just served as keynote speaker at a
(continued)

THE LATEST FROM YOUR FACULTY

conference on disabilities and the arts at Hobart and William Smith College.


Donna Qualley was guest editor for the journal Reader: Essays on Reader-Oriented Theory, Criticism, and Pedagogy, for which she also wrote the introductory essay, “Introduction: Ways of Teaching Reading in English.” She also has an article in that journal issue, “CLUSTERF*%#!: CFP Categories and the Remixing of Convention(al) Knowledge.” She presented a paper, “The Teaching of Writing: What’s Fixed, What’s Nixed, and What’s Eclipsed in the Conference Cluster Remix?”, at the Conference of College Composition and Communication in Louisville, KY.

Lysa Rivera has published an article entitled “Los Atravesados” in Aztlán: Journal of Chicano Studies in spring 2010, and is finishing an article that focuses on innovative new directions in Chicano/a literature of the 21st century. She is also completing her book manuscript (under contract with the University Press of Mississippi) in which she constructs a literary history of African American science fiction from the post-Reconstruction to the present and suggests new directions in African American and Science Fiction studies that read the genre specifically through a critical race theory lens. She has presented papers at the following literary association conferences: Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. She served as a panel organizer at the November 2010 PAMLA Conference.

Bill Smith has contributed the foreword to Orthographic Spelling Demons, forthcoming from Roan and Littlefield, and presented “The Accessible Parking Space as a Barometer of Social Justice” at the Western States Rhetoric and Literacy Conference on Social Justice in Salt Lake City. He also has had a paper, “From Cluster F@#K to WTF: A Rhizomatic Reading of CCC Program Clusters from 1992 to 2010,” read at the Conference of College Composition and Communication in Louisville, KY. His interview “On Art and Aging, Series and Stereotypes: A Conversation with Duane Niatum, Northwest Poet” has just been published in Weber: The Contemporary West.

Scott Stevens has published an essay, “Yield: Taking Measure of the Land” in On Second Thought, the journal/magazine of the North Dakota Humanities Council. His book chapter, “Who Stole Our Subject?” has been included in the essay collection Who Owns Writing?, under consideration at Utah State University Press. He presented a paper, “Taking Form,” at the Conference of College Composition and Communication in Louisville, KY. He is in the process of reworking Sustaining Words: Readings in Complexity and Consumption, Responsibility and Renewal (which is currently a custom book for Western’s
English 101 program) for a national market.

**Kate Trueblood** had a summer teaching grant in 2009 and is currently writing *The Medicated Marriage and Other Stories* while on a three quarter sabbatical awarded for the 2010-2011 school year.

**Kathryn Vulić** is co-editor of Readers, *Reading and Reception in Medieval English Devotional Literature and Practice*, co-edited with C. Annette Grisé and Susan Uselmann, forthcoming from Brepols Press. Kathryn has an article in this collection entitled “Speculum vitae and ‘lewed’ reading.” She is currently completing a word study of the Old English term faelsian for consideration by the journal ANQ.

**Christopher Wise** has co-edited *Being Arab: Arabism and the Politics of Recognition*, published this year by Arena Publications, co-edited a related double-issue of *Arena Journal* (likewise entitled “Being Arab: Arabism and the Politics of Recognition”), and has written many of the articles in those volumes as well. His book *Chomsky and Deconstruction: The Politics of Unconscious Knowledge* is forthcoming in February 2011. He has written and will perform in the ballet “Emerald Bay,” which will be performed in Seattle, Mt. Vernon and Bellingham. He is also coordinating the Chinese Expulsion Remembrance Project with Ning Yu, a project with events taking place in Olympia, Tacoma, Seattle, and Bellingham (for more, see http://iexaminer.org/cerp/). His translation of *The Timbuktu Chronicles* is forthcoming, and he is organizing a faculty-led study abroad course in Senegal for the Summer of 2011 (http://www.acadweb.wwu.edu/eesp/summer/senegal/index.shtml).

**Ning Yu** is working on a documentary film on Bellingham Chinese American History, and is coordinating the Chinese Expulsion Remembrance Project with Christopher Wise, a project with events taking place in Olympia, Tacoma, Seattle, and Bellingham (for more, see http://iexaminer.org/cerp/). He is currently translating four hundred Tang Dynasty poems and has been conducting research on each of the hundred and forty poets of these poems. He is presenting his work, “Cultural Sustainability: Tang Poets Reflection on Sustainable Lifestyles” at the Fifth International Conference on Sustainability in New Zealand in January 2011.

Support the English department online: [http://www.wwu.edu/give](http://www.wwu.edu/give)
WITH THANKS TO OUR DONORS!

The following are members of the English Honor Roll, donors for the period of December 1, 2009 to November 30, 2010:

Anonymous
Debbie Adams
Darren Russell Aho
Bruce Allen
Ashley Andrade
Ann and John Andrews
Curt Asher
Suzanne Avery
Donald and Roberta Barnhart
Katherine Barnum
Vivian Bearden
James Matthew Bell
Susan Beller and Steve Alamin
David Loras Berens
Alberto Betancourt
Dennis John Bexell
William and Chris Biljan
The Boeing Company
Gary and Deborah Bornzin
Jeffery and Francesca Bouck
Stephen Boyer
Lyle C. Bradley
Wilma E. Breivik
Patricia Bruneau
Michael and Margaret Buckholz
Pam Buckley
Valerie Burgess
Jim and Lisa Burkhardt
Mischa and Danielle Burnett
Judy Cain
Nancy Carlsten
Sara Castner
Christopher Cellini
Bob and Tamara Cesena
Yvonna Christensen
Daniel Clark
Julie Collins
Mike and Wanda Collins
Samantha J. Cooper
Bradley and Stacey Crabtree
David and Judy Dahlberg
Harold and Christina Davey
Robert Dieckmann
Paul Dyer
Linda Easley
Heather Ebert
Gary and Mary Emslie
Martha Ennes
John Eret
Jonnel and Duane Fagergren
Karen Finnigan
Dawn Fischer-Blanton
Barbara Fredrickson
Bonnie Frunz
Eugene and Barbara Garber
Larry Gasser & JoAnne Boucher
Connor and Aurora Geraghty
Charles Gordanier
Geoff and Jacki Gouette
Peggy-Joyce Grable
Gale Greene
Mark and Linda Grinter
Mary T. Grobman
Lisa Hansen
Donna Hanson
Gaylord Hart
Bradford and Patricia Hastings
Stephen and Kastel Hennesy
Charles Hensler
Jill Marie Huentelman
Caroline Ann Hughes
Anthony and Joanna Idczak
Nancy Johnson
Jonathan and Debra Kime
John and Alexandra Klein
Robert Knife
Michael and Denise Kowalski
Chester and Clara Lackey
Laura Laffrado
Traci Lange
Jean Leonard
Mary and Terry Lohnes
Thomas Lun and Yin Ling Man Lun
Arthur Mafli
Chad David Marsh
Lloyd and Sandra Martindale
Thomas Alan Martinsen
WITH THANKS TO OUR DONORS!

Laura McCracken
Carol McKissick
Estate of William McNeill
Lisa McVay
Kathleen Mollick
Katherine Morris
Bryan Morrison
Paul and Marilynn Moses
Mary Murray
Caitlin Nash
Richard and Linda O'Brien
Elizabeth O'Herlihey
Randall and Debra Olson
Bruce and Ingrid Osborne
Elizabeth Partington
Victoria Peters
Steven James Pickens
Anatoly and Nancy Podolsky
Mary Polikowsky
Precor Inc
Jason and Renee Reece
Weston Renoud
Paige Reynolds
Merrill Ringold
Bryan Allen Ritter
William Patrick Roach

Matthew Campbell Roberts
Stephen Robinson and Vickie Farmer
Joann Rooms
Dale Rutan
Thomas Sante
Tej Santwan
Rebecca Saxton
Dana Schmeller
Jennifer Kay Scott
Monica Scott
Jill and Scott Segel
Brandon Shaw
Laura Shelby
Penny Sherwood
Jorja Starr
Vicki Toyohara-Mukai
Lisa Christine Villar
Solveig Vinje
Melva Walser
Robert L. White
Susan Wickstrom
Lucille Winn
Steven and Tina Yentzer
Christopher and Maya Zeller
David Zoeller

Kathryn Vulic
Mark Sherman
Marc Geisler

Support the English department online:
http://www.wwu.edu/give

Pam Race and Tina Nelson

To receive additional Western news, please visit
http://www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/WWH/homepage.cgi to “Update Your Info” with your current e-mail address.

Update your latest news for this English Alumni Newsletter by emailing us at english@wwu.edu