



Spring Quarter, 2007  
Issue 8

## *A Word from the Director:*

<i>A Word from the Director</i>	1
<i>Faculty Updates</i>	2
<i>Scholars Week 2007</i>	2
<i>Scholars Week— The Student Perspective</i>	2
<i>Dr. Weiss' Assistant</i>	3
<i>The 2007 Outstanding Linguistics Student</i>	3
<i>Linda Kimball's Retirement</i>	3
<i>Club Updates</i>	3
<i>Alumni Updates</i>	4
<i>Program Updates and Announcements</i>	4
<i>The Linguistics Program &amp; Club Picnic</i>	4

We are nearing the end of another academic year and the linguistics program has been as active as ever with many activities and events. The activities of the linguistics club are exceptionally noteworthy. The club has hosted another successful linguistics conference this quarter and as a newly implemented series, has also sponsored several of our faculty as guest speakers this year including Drs. Gynan, Weiss, Douglas, Lobeck, Denham, Underwood, Tuxill, and Vajda. These have been all exceptionally well-attended. As usual, we have had student colloquia each quarter as well as four poster papers presented as part of Scholars Week activities (more info in separate articles). The linguistics faculty have also been visibly active, both Drs. Lobeck and Denham have returned from their sabbatical leaves, Dr. Gynan is spending this quarter in Paraguay where he is engaged in doing research and giving guest lectures all over the country. An affiliate of our faculty, Dr. Abou Bai-Sheka, plans to have eight books published by the end of this year; among those already available are books on Creole and a book on French grammar. We have, however, also had a couple of set-backs: Dr. Ngom has accepted a position at Boston University beginning fall quarter; he will be doing research and also teaching in the area of Afrikan languages. In recognizing his superior research he was awarded a Senior Fulbright Award for the coming year. Reflecting another loss to our program, Dr. Linda Kimball, a longtime supporter of our program since its inception, is now officially retired (more in separate article).

Other newsworthy events include the selection of this year's Outstanding Student: congratulations are in order for this year's winner, Nathan Hamlitsch, who is graduating with an almost perfect GPA of 3.98 (more in separate article).

I would also like to extend a personal thanks to our alumni who have generously donated money to our Western Linguistics account during the year. This help is genuinely needed and is very much appreciated.

In addition to the newsletter this spring, we have also created a new colorful brochure for the linguistic program. Andrew Blick has spearheaded both these projects and has completed the year with record accomplishments as the assistant to the Linguistics Program.

Please, drop us a line or two if possible updating us on your linguistics and other adventures ([linguistics@wwu.edu](mailto:linguistics@wwu.edu)). We'd love to mention them in prospective newsletters. We would also like to thank the Western Foundation in their support of publication costs for the newsletter.

With warmest regards,

Dr. Rudi Weiss, Director

## Faculty Updates

This quarter has been a very busy for us in the Linguistics Program. The faculty has been working on multiple research projects and giving presentations on various topics.



Dr. Janet Xing, professor of Chinese Language and Linguistics, has recently completed an edited linguistic volume titled "Studies in Chinese Linguistics: Form and Function," which includes eleven articles contributed by scholars from the United States, Australia, Taiwan, and China. The volume is now under review by Hong Kong University Press.



Dr. Meredith Josey, professor of English Linguistics, French and TESOL, has been working on an article from her dissertation titled "A sociolinguistic

study of phonetic variation and change on the island of Martha's Vineyard." The article concentrates on variation of the /au/ diphthong in the speech of men on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. Tentative title is "Whatever happened to /au/?": A case study in the speech of Martha Vineyard's men."



Trish Skillman has been teaching English to adults and school-age children in the United States and internationally for over twenty-five years, and has trained over 1,000 ESL/EFL teachers. For the last nine years, she has served as Director of the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Program at Western Washington University's Woodring College of Education.

Currently, her main area of research is in effective methodology for teaching academic English language skills. Trish regularly teaches three TESOL methodology courses, which focus on social language (BICS) development, academic language (CALPS) development, and the incorporation of work on English structural patterns into academic content classes. Trish is active in presenting at state and national conferences for TESOL, and her publications include a listening and speaking strategies book entitled, *Springboard to Success*, Prentice Hall Regents, 2000. Trish is passionate about cross-cultural education and language teaching and believes it can make a difference in our world. Trish has begun study of her fourth language and is raising her children bilingually and biculturally.

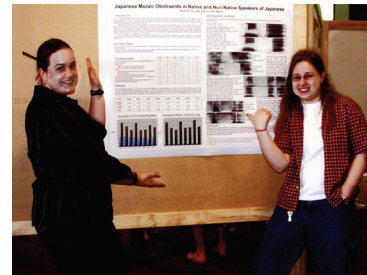
## Scholars Week

-Dr. Kristin Denham

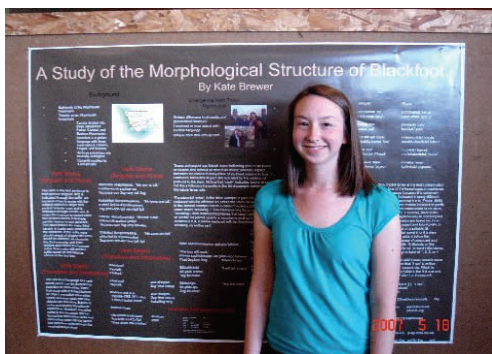
The Linguistics Program once again highlighted some of our best student research by inviting four of our linguistics students to participate in the University's Scholars Week. Scholars Week is an annual celebration of undergraduate research and creative activities at WWU which "celebrates the contributions of undergraduate stu-

dents to enriching the intellectual environment of Western, and society in general." Our students participated in the university-wide poster session. The poster by Jennifer Mankin and Katie Douglas was entitled, "Japanese Moraic Obstruents in Native and Non-Native Speakers of Japanese;" Eriko Tsuji's was "The Long Vowel

and the Super-long Vowel in Japanese;" and Katherine Brewer's was "A Study of the Morphological Structures of Blackfoot." We are proud of these students' accomplishments and of the chance to share their scholarly achievements during Scholars Week.



*Jennifer Mankin and Katie Douglas with their project 'Japanese Moraic Obstruents in Native and Non-Native Speakers of Japanese'*



*Katherine Brewer and her project 'A Study of the Morphological Structure of Blackfoot'*

## Scholars' Week— The Student Perspective

—Katherine Brewer

Scholars Week was such a great experience for me. It is an incredible tribute to undergraduate work put on by faculty mentors, students, and WWU administrators alike, portraying the high quality work Western students are capable of producing from all the departments represented.

The week showcased the many accomplishments Western students have achieved throughout the year and makes me proud to be part of this academic community.

As an ambassador for the Linguistics Program, I am honored and privileged to

share a project I am proud of and worked hard on, especially since so many great projects are produced by linguistic students every quarter.

## Dr. Weiss' Assistant

-Samantha Wray



Samantha Wray

This quarter Professor Rudi Weiss had an assistant to help him out with the little stuff so that he could focus on larger duties. Samantha Wray, a Linguistics major (English focus), helped Prof. Weiss with whatever he needed. This included the scan-

ning and typing of the older edition of his German phonetics book into a digital copy so he can add new information and publish a new edition, data entry for an upcoming research project concerning changes in German students' vowel perceptions, cata-

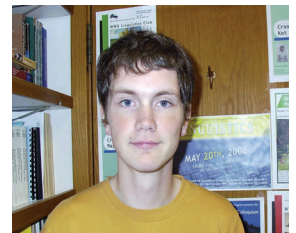
logging the many books he plans on donating, and various copying and errands. She was very thankful for the opportunity to work in the program and hopes to continue doing so.

## The 2007 Outstanding Student Award

-Nathan Hamlitsch

I graduated from Whatcom Community College in spring 2005 with a General AAS degree and transferred to Western Washington University in fall 2005. At Western I majored in Linguistics, minored in Japanese and received my TESOL Certification.

In July, I'm going to Japan to teach English via the JET Program. I will be doing this for at least one year. After completion of the program, I plan to go to an international university for further linguistics studies.



Nathan Hamlitsch

## Linda Kimball's Retirement

-Dr. Rudi Weiss

Dr. Linda Kimball, one of our program's most ardent supporters since its inception some 15 years ago, has retired from Western. Dr. Kimball established herself as a fine scholar of international stature. She was our very strong linguistics representa-

tive and official adviser of all students opting for a concentration in anthropological linguistics. We very much appreciate her unwavering support of the program and her many contributions to the successful development of our program. We will miss

not only her active participation in the program, but the enthusiasm and positive demeanor which she typically and consistently exhibited in virtually all linguistics events. We wish her all the best in her retirement.

## Club Updates

-Anna Talvi

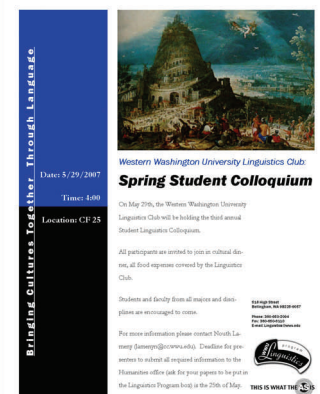
Spring Quarter has been a busy and productive one for members of the Linguistics Club. In addition to hosting the highly attended Crash Course language series with presentations on Yucatec Maya, Guarani, Portuguese, Basque, and Ket, the club has been preparing for the upcoming student colloquium. Student colloquium coordinator Nouth Lameny

has been delegating responsibilities to volunteers from the club. The theme for the student colloquium is "Bringing Together Cultures through Language."

In addition to hosting events and planning the colloquium, the Linguistics Club hopes to hold elections for next year's leadership positions. President

Andrew Blick and Vice President Anna Talvi have been actively encouraging club members to become more involved by running for officer positions.

This year has proven to be a great success for the Linguistics Club thanks to the participation of students and faculty alike.



The flyer for the Linguistics Club Student Colloquium

WWU Linguistics Program  
516 High Street  
Bellingham, WA 98225-9057

Phone: 360-650-2094  
Fax: 360-650-6110  
E-mail: [Linguistics@wwu.edu](mailto:Linguistics@wwu.edu)

---

## *Alumni Updates*

Thank you very much to the alumni who sent us their updates!

Sonja Thoma is finishing her second year at the University of British Columbia's doctoral program. Her main focus is First Nations languages, and is currently working with several elders from various bands in the region.

Liz Goodin-Mayeda is currently a graduate student at University of California: Los Angeles, in the department of Spanish and

Portuguese, where she is studying Hispanic Languages and Literatures. She finished taking her Ph.D. examinations this quarter, and currently has A.B.D. (All But Dissertation) status. Her dissertation project deals with the perception of nasalization.

2005 graduate Jason Rudd received his Master's of Science in Neurolinguistics from the Universities of Potsdam (Germany) and Groningen (The Netherlands) last December. His thesis was on

productive tense and agreement morphology in Finnish-speaking agrammatic aphasics.

If any of you other alumni are working on current projects, have had life-changing experiences, or just would like to keep your ex-professors up to date. Please send us an update at: [Linguistics@wwu.edu](mailto:Linguistics@wwu.edu)

We're on the web:

<http://www.linguistics.wwu.edu/>

---

---

## *Program Updates and Announcements*

As the academic year comes to a close, the Linguistics Program is preparing diligently for next year.

A recent addition to the program to be implemented in the upcoming year, is the addition of a zero credit class for the Colloquium. This course will be titled Linguistics 099: "Senior Research & Presenta-

tion" and will be modeled after the Music department's presentation and concert attendance course. With the addition of this course, it is hoped that Linguistics majors will be able to complete their degree evaluations with more ease, and allow for the Linguistics faculty to have a record of all the presenters.

This Spring quarter was filled with Linguistics activities, such as a Program Colloquium, the Linguistics Club Colloquium and Scholars Week (as described in the article on page 2). For a complete list of the presentation topics and presenters check out the "Colloquia" tab on the Linguistics Program website: <http://www.linguistics.wwu.edu/colloquia.html>.

---

## **Attention all Linguistics Faculty, Students and Alumni!**

On Friday, September 28th, the Linguistics Program and Club will be sponsoring a picnic! The picnic will take place at Lakewood from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. All are welcome to attend; if you are interested in coming please contact the Linguistics Program at [Linguistics@wwu.edu](mailto:Linguistics@wwu.edu) for more information.