

# MUSINGS



**IN THIS ISSUE:**

<i>From the Chair</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>Team Updates</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>Printed and Presented</i>	<b>4</b>
<i>The Grapevine</i>	<b>5</b>
<i>New Faculty</i>	<b>6</b>

**Dates to Remember**

- February 23: 32nd Annual Writers' Workshop
- February 24: Michael S. Harper's Keynote address
- February 24: Last day to withdraw with a "W"
- March 10: Winter Quarter Birthday Party
- March 17: Last day of classes
- March 21, noon: Grades due
- May 8, 6-9pm: Spectrum Awards
- May 25: Gary's Retirement party. Save the date.

## FROM THE CHAIR : 3/2

How lucky one is to be able to work in a field about which one truly has a passion. I guess I was unusual in knowing that I wanted to become an English teacher in the tenth grade in high school. I have talked with so many colleagues, classmates, and students who are not doing what they love. Here at Sinclair Community College I have been fortunate to love not only the teaching but also those with whom I teach. My colleagues have made my tenure here very enjoyable. When I have had failures here, I have found encouragement; when I have had successes here, I have found congratulations.

The culture at Sinclair has changed, but the hard-working and pleasant faculty has remained constant. Everyone here has his and her strengths; I have always believed that as long as I have been able to put into practice what I found to be my strong points then everyone and I would be happier and more productive. Of course, over the years there have been a few who did not see the situation as I did, but I will not dwell on the negative.

To be specific:

Chuck Wagner has always had a smile for me with a "How's it going?" He and I have been through many changes here, but I know that he would agree with me when I say that we have weathered those changes with distinction. His students always tell me how much they appreciate Professor Wagner. I only wish that I could have encouraged him more to transfer his love of Ireland into a course on Irish literature – I too love Joyce and Yeats and Beckett.

Dr. Mildred Melendez and I go back to the days of WOCTELA (The Western Ohio Conference of Teachers of English and Language Arts) that most have now forgotten. We worked on many activities for that organization. And her work on the genesis of the Writing Center truly inspired me to learn more about computers. Her students always mention her work with diversity and the computer lab. For many years she was the professor who introduced linguistics to our students. Her knowledge has been invaluable to me.

I mention Chuck and Mildred first since they have just retired. But there are so many other great

faculty members in the department that I will address them in alphabetical order now.

How fortuitous that Jack Bennett is first since I want to welcome him and congratulate him on being chosen by the department and administration to be the next chair. Good luck, Jack; you have an inspiring group of professors with which to work. Jack's strength has always been his ability to be rational about everything. He thinks through problems, addresses them, and then moves on. He has been a friend to me since the beginning when we used to go out to socialize. His students certainly respect him, as do his colleagues both full and part-time. His job as part-time coordinator has made my work so much easier. When I realized that the department needed someone to concentrate solely on the part-time faculty, I knew that Jack would be the one.

I always needed someone to temper my flippancy, someone to direct me toward doing the ethical and equitable thing, and Kay Berg has done that. I really appreciated her advice whenever a thank-you was needed, whenever a standard needed to be upheld, and whenever I needed someone to discuss English literature with me. Her level of being fair is remarkable. Her students always spoke of her dedication and knowledge. I hope that she will give me directions for my retirement.

Who would not want Susan Callender's energy to rub off onto you? Her optimism and positive outlook have been awe-inspiring. She always respects her students and calls them Mr. or Miss or Mrs., and her students respond accordingly. I will certainly miss her hugs, those cold hands (warm heart, of course) wrinkling my starched shirts, and her enthusiasm.

Unfortunately, I have known Adrienne Cassel only a short time, but her sweet demeanor has already influenced me. She has what I call "enlightened innocence," because no matter how innocent she looks, she certainly knows what is going on. We first became acquainted at poetry readings, and I know that we share that passion for poetry. Her addition to the faculty has been a very stabilizing one. Already her stu-

## FROM THE CHAIR (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

dents have endlessly praised her; just recently at my dry cleaners, who put that starch in my shirts for Susan to wrinkle, one of her students told me how much help she had received from Adrienne.

Another member who has that needed enthusiasm is Liz Christensen. From the beginning we have been giving each other advice, and especially now that we both have grandchildren. She gives a hundred percent to her students and is always concerned with doing the right thing. Her expertise with so many aspects of education – from globalization to business models – has been important to her student and the department.

Creativity is one of the most important traits of the department, and Ed Davis certainly exemplifies that. As a matter of fact, all of the faculty demonstrate creativity in everything that they attempt. Ed's autobiographical fiction has enlightened us. His work with the Creative Writing contest was exemplary. His students have been successful in composition and fiction writing because he is an effective writer. And thanks, Ed, for everything that you have done for Yellow Springs, for the environment, and for that recent hug.

Jamey Dunham's idealism as junior faculty has been infectious. His students love him for it. His work on our literary magazine has made it into a very respectable journal. I appreciate his sense of humor, have benefited from his knowledge about the prose poem since I took his class, and have really enjoyed all the jokes that he has played upon us in the main office. And how could I forget introducing us to our departmental mascot – even though many didn't know that we had one – the lemur.

"Quiet presence" comes to mind when I think of Chuck Freeland, because he is very thoughtful before he speaks and then speaks depths, and because he is an effective force in the department for good reasoning. He has always been ready to assume any job and do it well. His presence is filled with a poetry that his students have commented upon in glowing terms. Whenever I became busy, I always considered his approach.

We did not go wrong to hire Kate Geiselman from the ranks of our part-time faculty. Before I even knew her, I knew her students' evaluations of her, which were excellent. That enthusiasm, those standards, that adaptability – all traits a department needs, and she has gracefully become one of us without incident. Just to volunteer immediately to handle this newsletter was a great gift to the department and the college. And now to work on one of our most important tasks – to recognize good student writing through our Spectrum

Awards – just goes to show how excellent she is.

Furaha Henry-Jones is our newest member, but already she has become active. I know that her pleasant personality and her dedication will be valuable assets to the department in the future. Good things will come from her participation.

When the former Vice President for Instruction, Dr. Karen Wells, told me that Sarah Kiewitz was our new faculty member those several years ago, she recommended her so highly that I was impressed before Sarah even began working. And the department has not been disappointed. Like everyone, she initiates programs and projects and courses on her own. She has made sure that we have stayed in contact with the Development English Department and with assessment trends. I always enjoy her laugh when I hear it in the departmental office and know that's why her students like her so much; it's her concern and attitude.

We always needed a counselor's perspective upon our students and that's what we received when we hired Sally Lahmon. You are probably getting tired of hearing me say "enthusiasm," but that's likely the most important trait within the department. Sally has proved invigorating as a teacher – so many students have told me that – and has always cheered me with her attitude. As a matter of fact, with so many outstanding younger faculty, the department cannot go wrong.

William Loudermilk was a student of mine in the freelance writing class many years ago, and I knew that he was special. As one of our annually-contracted faculty he has already made important contributions to the department and has been especially good in providing all of us with thanks and mementoes. Our other annually-contract faculty is Becky Morean – wow! She has been so important to the department in so many ways from her grant writing (and course) to her organizational skills to her blue post-it notes. I wish them both luck (though their skills need no luck) in the search process.

Carol Nancarrow has expertly continued the good work of the Writing Center. Her work with distance learning has taken the department a long way. And her students always comment upon her concern for them. Her detailed work has made all of our work easier but has also given us vision for what's ahead. And I love her Texan laugh.

Many probably do not know that we have our own "egg lady," and that is not an allusion

(continued on p. 6)

*"In the depth of winter,  
I finally learned that  
within me lay an  
invincible summer."*

—Albert Camus

## FROM THE TEAMS

**The Composition Team** has a number of goals to complete by the end of this academic year. Through the great ideas and input from a number of part time faculty who worked with us, we planned and executed a successful winter inservice. We will also be writing a grant for needed funds to sponsor the first GED writing workshop at Sinclair during fall quarter (for about 100-120 participants) and an essay contest. This is an exciting endeavor. Since we will need the help of our colleagues for the workshop, we'll keep you posted on our progress. Also, you should be able to access excellent classroom activities and ideas online by the beginning of spring term. If you have any questions, you may contact Adrienne Cassel.

**The Creative Writing Team** reports that the deadline for the Annual Creative Writing Contest was Feb. 1st, and as always, many faculty members have volunteered to serve as judges. The deadline for judges' decisions is Friday, March, 3rd. The Annual Writers' Workshop is being held in conjunction with the city-wide Paul Laurence Dunbar Memorial Poetry Prize this year. The workshop is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 23 with presenters Sandra Gurvis, Erin Flanagan, Crystal Echols, and our own Gary Mitchner. Poet Michael Harper will give the keynote presentation on Friday, Feb. 24. The latest and greatest issue of *Flights* came out Winter quarter, thanks to editor Jamey Dunham. Nominations are ongoing for the Spectrum Awards for Excellence in Student Writing. Nomination forms are available at the English department website and in 5143. Submissions may be put in the Spectrum Awards mailbox in the English office, or emailed to Kate Geiselman at [kathryn.geiselman@sinclair.edu](mailto:kathryn.geiselman@sinclair.edu). The deadline for submissions is April 1, with the awards banquet to follow on May 8.

**The Library / English Liaison Team** will meet later this quarter to prepare information to share with the English faculty regarding the upcoming transition to the renovated Library space. One obvious change involves the name. Please delete any references to the LRC in your syllabi and handouts and replace them with "Library." The renovation is expected to be completed in May, with opening and full use for Fall Quarter, 2006. In Spring Quarter, the team will provide you with a list of information that relates directly to our students' use of the library.

**The Literature and Scholarship Team** has compiled a rationale for the courses our department offers beyond the composition series (ENG 111, 112, and 113), which are being re-

ferred to now as our "gatekeeper courses." Currently, we are being encouraged to offer as many sections of the gatekeeper courses as possible, in the most popular time slots, as a way of attracting more students and meeting the demand for those courses.

While we comply, we naturally do not want our other courses, which are offered much less frequently, to be neglected. Hence the rationale. The document is a joint effort by several faculty members.

On behalf of the **Satellite Campuses Team**, Adrienne Cassel visited the Huber Heights and Englewood satellite campuses on Friday, February 3. Both sites will be attached to the local YMCA. The Englewood site has walls and windows, but it is not yet completed. Adrienne was hoping for a classroom tour, but there are no classrooms — yet. The Huber Heights site is not started yet, but building materials were stacked outside. According to Dan Brazelton, Dean of Corporate and Community Services (he's the one in charge of the satellite campuses), both the Englewood and Huber Heights sites will contain eight classrooms and an additional computer lab. No word on Warren County. Adrienne will keep the department posted about any new developments.

The **Assessment Team** completed drafts of changes to the composition sequence master syllabi over coffee (and tea and other tasties) at Sally Lahmon's house during Christmas break. The team enjoyed discussing teaching and hopes all of you will join the dialogue over the potential syllabi changes by answering the outcomes surveys (112 and 113 are now available, if you've already completed the 111 survey). To find them,

- log on to your [my.sinclair](http://my.sinclair.edu) page,
- click on the community tab at the top,
- choose the English department organization site,
- and select outcomes surveys.

The surveys will ask you to respond to outcome changes and give ideas as to what you think should be included in a teaching syllabus to give to all new faculty.

If you are not enrolled in the organization (in other words, there is no English department organization under your community links), e-mail Sarah Kiewitz at [sarah.kiewitz@sinclair.edu](mailto:sarah.kiewitz@sinclair.edu). If you do not teach the composition sequence, or don't teach various courses, you needn't take the survey(s).

*"The balance of nature is reached when heating the house costs as much as going south for the winter."*

—James H. McGavran

## PRINTED AND PRESENTED

**Carmel Morse** will be presenting at two conferences this spring. She'll present "Patssi Valdez: Redefining the Domestic" at the Women and Creativity 8 Conference at Marquette University, March 23-25; and will present, "Keeping Women at Home and Between the Covers: Romance Magazines of the 1960s" at the 2006 Popular Culture/American Culture Conference in Atlanta on April 12-15.

**Gary Mitchner** judged the Kettering/Oakwood Martin Luther King, Jr. Poetry Contest as well as the St. Anthony School Annual Spelling Bee. He continued to serve on Celebrate Dunbar! community-wide committee. Please visit the Celebrate Dunbar! website for more information: [www.celebratedunbar.org](http://www.celebratedunbar.org).

**Ed Davis** kicked off his new novel, *The Measure of Everything*, with a reading at Epic Bookshop in Yellow Springs on December 9, the night after the first big snow. Despite the weather he had a full house, including many former colleagues who braved the elements to attend. He made the front page of the Yellow Springs News for the first time when a local reporter interviewed him about the book and its relationship to the Whitehall Farm auction in 1999, on which the book is based. Finally, local folk-rock band The Fries joined Ed for a reading-concert at The Emporium in downtown Yellow Springs on February 17.

**Tim Waggoner's** novel *Like Death* was named one of the ten best novels of 2005 by the Horror Reader website. He has signed contracts for the following projects: Books 2 and 3 in the *Blade of the Flame* series for Wizards of the Coast, young adult novel *Monarch of the Moon* for Actionopolis, and an essay on the three CSI TV series for a volume in Benbella Books Smart Pop series. He also wrote the introduction to Brian Knight's novella *King of Souls*, forthcoming from Earthling Publications, and he recently turned in *Darkness Wakes*, his third horror novel for Leisure Books. Tim is currently serving on this year's Additions Jury for the Bram Stoker Award, presented by the Horror Writers Association.

On February, 9, **Liz Christensen** presented "Embracing Diversity: Working in a Global Marketplace" for Global Awareness Week.

**Lisa Tyler's** article "Towards a Postmodern Understanding of Crisis Communication" was published in *Public Relations Review* in 2005.

**Adrienne Cassel** attended The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Lilly Conference on College Teaching, November 17-20, 2005, at Miami University. The theme this year was "Teaching So *Everyone* Learns." She had a marvelous time and recommends the experience to anyone who believes having fun and learning to be a better teacher can be synonymous activities. Many of the people she met are regulars who take the opportunity to reconnect with friends they have made at previous conferences, so, to quote Adrienne, "there was much partying going on."

**Jamey Dunham** had his work nominated for the 2005 Pushcart Prize, and has poetry upcoming in a few journals and in two new anthologies: *PP/FF: An Anthology*, a collection of contemporary prose poems and flash fiction pieces; and a collection of prose poems written by American poets that includes commentary about craft and how the poems were written. It will appear in the U.S. and Britain in an English text and a separate text will be published simultaneously in Japanese. Jamey will also be visiting Centerville High School this winter, where he will teach a poetry workshop to an AP English class and work very hard to watch his mouth.

**Furaha Henry-Jones** will be facilitating a session of the Woman to Woman conference for inmates of the Franklin Pre-Release Center on April 1. The session is titled "Encouragement for the Soul" and she will be perform and facilitate a poetry writing activity.

**Richard Martin** is working with famed Indianapolis 500 legend Salt Walther on a book about Salt's wild life. Salt was horribly injured during the 1973 Indianapolis 500 but, despite burns on over 50 % of his body and losing most of his fingers in the crash, was able to get back to racing the following year. Rick says that he hopes the book will be out later this year.

**Carol Nancarrow** will be leading two sessions about small groups in Spring Institute on Mar. 21. The morning session, "Planning Effective Small Group Activities," will focus on preparing a small group activity, including time for participants to write an activity and get it peer-reviewed. The afternoon session, "Effective Facilitation of Small Groups," will include planning the facilitation of your activity, including assessment and evaluation. Carol and the participants will share tips and tricks for success with cooperative learning. If you liked the sampler about small-group activities at the English department workshop, maybe you'd like to come back for more!

"...winter had given the  
bone and sinews to  
literature, summer the  
tissues and the blood."

—John Burroughs

## THE GRAPEVINE

Mark your calendars for **Gary Mitchner's** Retirement Parties: May 25, 2006, at 6:00 in Smith Auditorium: "Poetry As Music, Music As Poetry." Hosting the gala will be Mistresses Of Ceremony, *The Communication Sisters* (Dr. Cleary, Dr. Disbrow, Dr. Zakel), with performances by Dr. Johnson, Dr. Ruckman and others, and poetry readings by Ed Davis, Kay Berg, Jamey Dunham, Jack Bennett, Chuck Freeland and more. A Student Roast is planned for May 26, 2006, at 2:00 in the Green Room.

A fond farewell to **Chuck Wagner**, who retires at the end of winter quarter after 35 years at Sinclair, and 41 total years in the classroom. It's hardly newsworthy that Chuck plans to enjoy a bit o' Guinness in his retirement, but he does plan on doing a few other things with his free

time as well. Since he and his wife own an older house (c. 1839), there's always lots of work to do. He loves "projects" and travel, and plans to spend plenty of time on both in the short term. As for the long term, he's not quite as certain, although he's considering a run for the vice presidency, since, to quote Chuck, "it seems as if I could mess up and get by with it." He says that at the last department meeting, he looked around the room and thought, "the department has loads of good people in it, and I am proud of them." Chuck's warm smile and hearty greetings will be missed by all, and we wish him all the best.

**Caroline Simmons** had a baby girl on Saturday, November 26th. Sabine Bowie Reynolds weighed 7.13 and was 21" long.

## A DIFFERENT KIND OF PEER REVIEW

Last quarter, one of my 111 classes had several young, especially chatty students. On the first day we set some ground rules (thanks for the idea, Sally), and among them was "no side conversations; one person speaks at a time." That good intention didn't last long, however. Soon I was using all the old tricks to quiet the side chatter: pausing, strolling over their way, shushing them, speaking to them privately. One day I even used the poor mouse as a gavel, rapping it sharply on the podium.

But the thing that worked best came out of the blue. At the end of the fourth week, I passed out index cards and asked them to write down,

anonymously, one thing they liked about the class and the way we were proceeding, and one thing they didn't like, or would like to do differently. Then I collected the cards and read them out loud. In the class with the biggest mouths, three students wrote that they disliked "immature interruptions," "rude side comments," and "people talking during class when the teacher or another student is talking."

As I read those cards, without comment, the talkers quieted down, and in the next activity were attentive and contributed to the discussion in a useful way. Enough said, I hope.

Kay Berg

*"Maybe I'll run for the vice presidency of the country, as it seems as if I could mess up and get by with it."*

*—Chuck Wagner (on his retirement plans)*

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Becky Morean has joined as a member of SPIN on behalf of the English Department. SPIN is sponsored by the Office of Institutional Advancement and is a service that screens foundation and funding opportunities daily. The program hits on key words and then forwards foundation summaries, complete with home page links. If you have any suggestions as to words for key searches, please forward them to [rebecca.morean@sinclair.edu](mailto:rebecca.morean@sinclair.edu). Finally, if Becky is contacted with a possible funder for a project she knows you are working on or an area of interest you have, she will forward the link directly to you. Please feel free to contact her with possible project ideas or other comments.



## MEET THE NEW FACULTY

### Faculty and Staff

- Chair:

Gary Mitchner

- Secretary:

Fortunate Finley

- Faculty:

Jack Bennett

Kay Berg

Susan Callender

Adrienne Cassel

Liz Christensen

Ed Davis

Jamey Dunham

Chuck Freeland

Kate Geiselman

Furaha Henry-Jones

Sarah Kiewitz

Sally Lahmon

William Loudermilk

Mildred Melendez

Becky Morean

Carol Nancarrow

Vicki Stalbird

Lisa Tyler

Tim Waggoner

Chuck Wagner

- Tech support:

Doug Greathouse

- Student worker:

Malintha Gundawardana

- *Musings* Editor:

Kate Geiselman

**Furaha Henry-Jones** earned her B.S. in Secondary Education English from Penn State, where she also studied Spanish as an exchange student at the Universidad de Salamanca, Spain. Currently, she is a participant in the Grow Our Own Program, and a graduate student at Wright State. Primarily she has been a teacher of high school English since 1993; however, she has also taught in migrant education, English as a Second Language, adult education, and career-based instruction programs in Santa Barbara County, California and in the Miami Valley. Locally she was an English teacher at Kettering Fairmont High School and at Mound Street Academies in Dayton.

Since starting her graduate studies, all hobbies have been suspended, but at some point she hopes to return to haphazard knitting projects, eclectic poetry readings, and harried Cub Scout volunteering. Furaha is the mother of a nine-year-old son, and a newlywed. As of New Year's Day, she is also mother to Aurora Marie Henry-Jones, who weighed 7pounds 12 ounces at birth. Aurora's photo is posted on the Kettering Hospital Baby Photo Gallery at : [www.kmcnetwork.org](http://www.kmcnetwork.org).

**William Loudermilk**, our new ACF, started his academic adventures at Sinclair way back in 1988 as a beginning undergraduate student. William says that "It was at Sinclair that I first learned that I enjoyed researching and writing. At Sinclair, I also discovered that I enjoyed ex-

ploring literary texts." He notes that "when I eventually transferred to Wright State I knew that I wanted to continue my academic study as an English major."

He went on to earn an MA in English from Wright State University, an MA in Communication from Regent University, a BS in Secondary English Education from Wright State University, along with an AA in Theatre Performance from Sinclair.

Along the way, William completed a good deal of course work in Composition, Literature, Film Studies, Script Writing, Theatre Studies, and Communication Studies. He is particularly interested in both the study of writing and the study of dramatic texts ranging from Shakespeare to Horton Foote and David Mamet.

In addition to his academic pursuits and interests, William has also taught English Composition and Literature for several other local colleges and received a SOCHE Award for "Innovative Use of Technology" in teaching.

When he can find some spare time, William enjoys playing the piano and singing, and participating in academic and community theatre. He can readily be found working in the Sinclair Library, taking a lunch break in the Tartan Market Place and occasionally working out in the PAC. He concludes, Sinclair "was a great place to begin" and it is a "great place to continue..."

## FROM THE CHAIR (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

to The Beatles' "I Am a Walrus." Vicki Stalbird has done a lot more than bring me fresh eggs from her chickens. Just her work on technical composition and computers in the classroom has provided the department with a positive reputation. She also reminds us to be aware of the women in our lives through her work on Women's Awareness and her course Images of Women in Literature. My wife thanks her for that.

An English Department should have a resident scholar, and Dr. Lisa Tyler has taken that beyond the normal expectations. Yet she also works with business students and offered one of the first distance classes. Years ago I did not have to convince her to accompany me to Jesus College, Cambridge, though I did have to convince her to come out of her room, since she was always studying. I still remember walking along a highway with her in San Antonio as we prepared to

read Advanced Placement exams. I will miss her thoroughness.

One of my passions was the Writers' Workshop, but after my burn-out, I knew that Tim Waggoner would do a great job. Not only the workshop, but the Spectrum Awards, the League Literary Competition – all have been in his capable hands. Thanks, Tim, also, for dressing up so many times for those League Information Technology Conferences. Students have loved his creative writing classes because he's a true professional teacher and writer – not a "horror."

And, of course, the department would not have run so smoothly without great help from Fortunate Finley, Doug Greathouse, and our many wonderful student workers, including, according to him, the "fabulous" Malintha Gundawardana. I, who am about to retire, salute you all.

Gary Mitchner