

## Alumni Newsletter, Spring 2004

Hello, everyone. Here's the latest buzz from Stockton.

We've been enjoying getting to know Stockton's new President, Dr. Herman Saatkamp. He has been meeting with all of the divisions, faculty members, and students to share his vision for the college, and to discuss with us ways to enhance the quality of the educational experience at Stockton. If you haven't seen it yet, read his welcome message on the Stockton homepage (<http://president.stockton.edu/>). While you're there, check out the newly redesigned college seal.

### Goings-on in the LITT program

The program hosted three lively and well-attended events last term: our annual "Meet and Greet" for new students (with a focus this time on precepting), a Career panel featuring Stockton alumni Kevin Hutchins, Dianne Robbins and Pam Wirstad, and our very first Faculty Lecture featuring Lisa Honaker on Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*.

We have several events scheduled for this Spring as well:

On March 9th the Literature Program welcomed back alumni for a graduate school / teaching panel. David Floyd, Dan Rigano, and Thea Tichaz returned to talk with current students about their graduate school and teaching certification experiences. On April 8<sup>th</sup> Tom Kinsella will be giving a lecture on bookbinding with the invigorating title: "Following the Evidence: Bookbinding in Colonial Williamsburg Reconsidered." The lecture is free and will be held in the Townsend Residential Life Center starting at 4:30. And, as always, we'll be holding the **Really, Really Big End-of-Year Lit/Lang Bash** –this year on Friday, April 23, from 4:30-6:00 pm. We'd love to have you join us.

Congratulations are in order for the twenty-nine students from the Literature program who were awarded Bachelors degrees in the Fall 2003 commencement. A special mention goes to four students who graduated with Academic Honors: Gretchen Essel and Robert Schmitt (Summa Cum Laude), and Bridget Gage-Dixon and Elaina Given (Cum Laude).

Faculty were busy during the fall term, and currently pursuing a variety of projects.

Deborah Gussman is very happy to report that she applied for and was awarded tenure at Stockton this fall. She's looking ahead to teaching some new classes (including Lit Research for the first time next fall), editing and finding a publisher for an out-of-print novel by Catharine Maria Sedgwick, and presenting a paper on American Indian writer and activist William Apress at the American Literature Association conference in San Francisco this May.

Tom Kinsella continues to work on his history of colonial American bookbinding.

Scott Rettberg recently participated in "Joint Work," a reading of collaborative fictions at Kelly Writer's House at Penn. He'll be reading with the Unknown at &NOW: A Festival of Writing as a Contemporary/Conceptual Art at Notre Dame University in April, and will read from *Kind of Blue* at the trAce Incubation Conference at Nottingham University in July.

Along with Nick Montfort, Rettberg is writing *Implementation*, a novel about terror, identity,

and American imperialism that is being published in monthly installments on sheets of stickers. Readers of the novel then post the stickers in public places and photograph them. The resulting documentation is published on the Web at:  
<http://nickm.com/implementation>.

This spring, Rettberg will publish "Games, Gaming, and Simulation in a New Media (Literature) Classroom" in a special issue of *On the Horizon* on computer games and postsecondary Education, and, with Jill Walker, an interview with Josh Carroll, Robert Coover, and Noah Wardrip-Fruin, on the Cave writing workshops at Brown University, in *The Iowa Review Web*.

For years Ken Tompkins has wanted to teach an Advanced Shakespeare class; this term he got the chance. The class is reading 6 plays: *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night*, *Timon of Athens*, *Coriolanus*, and *Richard III*, and studying the Renaissance context of each play; this means reading legal, moral, religious and cultural materials and then placing the play within these contexts to better understand the dramatic texts. Ken says that the class is somewhere between his regular Shakespeare class and Senior Seminar. Ken will also attend the annual Medieval Conference at Penn State this April; the topic this year is the Medieval Mill.

Lisa Honaker spent the winter break reading proofs for two upcoming articles-- "Jessica Mitford" for the *Dictionary of Literary Biography: British Literary Humorists* and "'You're a Man, John': Long John Silver and the Shifting Character of Victorian Boys' Fiction" for *JNT: the Journal of Narrative Theory*. She spent a very productive fall semester in Lit Research, with the class producing a hypertext project they were very proud of, a version of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* at <http://caxton.stockton.edu/hod/>.

Sigma Tau Delta, the Literature Honor Society has been meeting regularly. On the agenda is the development of a Literature Club that would be open to all majors. Once the club is formally approved, activities such as a Fellowship of the Rings Book-to-Movie night will be organized.

### **In Memory**

The Stockton community was deeply saddened by the unexpected death of our colleague, teacher, and friend, Dr. Joseph Marthan, in December. Dr. Marthan, a professor of French at the college since 1990, had a distinguished career that included a book, as well as numerous essays and articles, on French literature and culture. His love of teaching and his rapport with students and fellow colleagues was exemplary and extraordinary. We will miss him.

To honor his memory, the Joseph Marthan Memorial Fund to purchase French Language books or videos was established. Carolyn Gutierrez, from the Stockton Library organized this fund, and will accept donations until the end of March. If you wish to contribute, you can forward your check to her in the Library E177d. Please make checks out to the Richard Stockton College of NJ Foundation and note on the check that it is for the Joseph Marthan Memorial Fund.

**Finally . . .**

We thank you for your emails and calls and visits, and hope that those of you who have been out of touch will let us know how you are and what you've been up to. We do love hearing from you!

In peace,

The Literature Program