

# ET CETERA

NEWSLETTER OF THE HOPE COLLEGE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

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## A WORD FROM THE CHAIR



David Klooster

The English Department has been on the move since the last issue of *Et Cetera*. We scattered to the four corners of the campus this summer, finding temporary offices in Graves, Martha Miller, Van Wylen Library, and, in some cases, guest bedrooms and corners of basements in family homes. A 76-day whirlwind renovation of Lubbers Hall over the summer created new spaces for us to return to in August—many more

offices with windows, a lounge area, a new department office, and updated building systems. (Many of us think the whole ordeal was worth it just for faucets that stay on while you wash your hands.) Come visit and see our new digs!

Our highly professional faculty have been on the move, too. Workshops, conference presentations, new publications, new class offerings—it's hard to keep up with this group of extraordinary writers and teachers. You'll find a brief sampling of their accomplishments elsewhere in this newsletter.

And our students continue to achieve in remarkable ways. Elene Valle spent part of her summer at the Iowa Summer Writing Festival. Jonah Ogles attended the prestigious

writing workshop at the Juniper Institute in Massachusetts. Brad Haveman and Elene Valle joined Kristin Olsen as published interviewers of prominent writers who came to campus with the Visiting Writers Series; Brad's and Elene's interview with Carlos Eire will appear in *The Writer's Chronicle*, a high-profile publication of the AWP. (see "English Majors in the News," p. 2.)

We welcome news from students and alumni. Please keep us informed of your accomplishments and your life stories, so we can share them in future issues of the newsletter.

Send your news to me at [english@hope.edu](mailto:english@hope.edu).

David

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- October 12—VWS, David Harris Ebenbach and Vievee Harris
- October 17—Department Colloquium with Jennifer Young and Julie Kipp
- November 10-11—Literary Critic Slavoj Zizek at Calvin College, co-sponsored by Hope English Department
- November 14—Department Colloquium with Natalie Dykstra
- November 30—VWS, Cornelius Eady

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## JACK RIDL HAS RETIRED

After 35 years of teaching writing, from Freshman English to Advanced Poetry Workshop, Jack decided it was time for a change, to spend time with his family, to concentrate on his own writing, and to relax with his kayak and canoe and dogs.

Jack would say he didn't teach writing. He'd say he coached students into becoming writers, into finding their individual voices. And he did. The list of Jack's students who have published their poems and gone on to graduate work in writing is impressive. (And Hope College believed that some of those students were good enough to teach in our own English department.)

Jack has an impressive list of publications—individual poems in over 50 magazines, eight collections of his poetry, and numerous anthologies. He's accepted many prestigious awards. But his poetry isn't all he is. He's a man who wears many hats—husband, father, teacher the most obvious. But to those who know him well, he's the best friend you'll ever have, one who understands you better than you realize, and who will listen to you for as long as you need him to. He opens not only his home to all comers at any time, but also his heart and soul. He's serious one moment, and a clown the next. He's not afraid to look silly. And he loves—



words, music, nature, his family, and his students.

We'll miss him.

--Myra Kohsel

*(Jack has kindly consented to teach 2 sections of poetry for us this year—355 this semester, and 455 next semester.)*

### FUN FACTS

THERE ARE OVER 125 ENGLISH MAJORS AND MINORS AT HOPE COLLEGE.

SINCE THE YEAR 2000, HOPE ENGLISH FACULTY HAVE PUBLISHED 30 BOOKS. SEE [WWW.HOPE.EDU/ACADEMIC/ENGLISH/FACBOOKS.HTM](http://WWW.HOPE.EDU/ACADEMIC/ENGLISH/FACBOOKS.HTM) FOR A COMPLETE LISTING.

WE HAVE 17 FULL-TIME AND 14 PART-TIME FACULTY MEMBERS IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

## ENGLISH MAJORS IN THE NEWS

Juniors *Bradley Haveman* of Jenison and *Elena Valle* of Marshall conducted an interview with National Book Award-winning author Carlos Eire that will be published in a forthcoming issue of "The Writer's Chronicle," the journal of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP), the primary professional organization in creative writing. The specific issue is still being determined.

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## FACULTY NEWS

**Kathleen Verduin's** article, "Updike, Women, and Mythologized Sexuality," is now in print (in the *Cambridge Companion to John Updike*, ed. Stacey Olster.) Kathleen's memorial volume about former department colleague A. James Prins will appear this fall.

**Jack Ridl** has been invited to give a poetry reading as a "Festival Poet" at the 2006 Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival Sept. 28 through Oct. 1 at Waterloo Village in Stanhope, New Jersey. Jack's new book, *Broken Symmetry* was published by Wayne State University Press in April.

**Marla Lunderberg** is the Hope Faculty in Residence at Meiji Gakuin University. Marla will spend the Fall semester in Japan with two of her children.

**Heather Sellers and Beth Trembley** have essays in *Fresh Water: Women Writing on the Great Lakes*, Michigan State Univ. Press. **Jackie Bartley** also has a brief piece in the book, and Hope grad Gayle Boss has an essay included as well.

**Peter Schakel and Jack Ridl** have been asked by St. Martins/Bedford to prepare second editions of two of their textbooks, *250 Poems* and *Approaching Literature*.

**David Klooster** presented, with Patricia Bloem, the keynote address, "Writing in the Global Community," at the Michigan Reading Association Summer Conference, Gaylord, Michigan, in July.

**Rhoda Janzen** has placed three poems in *Poetry*, one of the most prestigious publications on the poetry landscape. Her poems "Ormesby Psalter," "Whisk," and "Strongly Scented Sonnet" will appear in an up-coming issue.

**Dianne Portfleet** received the H.O.P.E. Award (Hope's Outstanding Professor Educator), voted by the graduating class, at Commencement in May 2006.

**Julie Kipp** presented "Oranges and Lemons: Henrietta Battier's Pamphlet Wars and the Debate over Scots-Irish Radical Alliances in the 1790s" at a conference sponsored by the Society for the Study of Nineteenth-Century Ireland, "Across the Water, Ireland and Scotland in the Nineteenth Century," at the University of Ulster, Magee, on June 16-17.

See "Faculty News" on next page —

## INTERVIEW WITH ELENE VALLE

Elene Valle spent part of the summer in Iowa City. Heather Sellers asked her about her time there.

*You've been to the Iowa Summer Writing Festival twice. What about this program has been most helpful to you?*

Something I've especially enjoyed about the program is that it allows you to connect with writers from so many different backgrounds. Instead of being in class with other college students, you're turning in pieces for workshop along with a retired policeman, a college English professor, a doctor, a children's bookstore owner, a Venezuelan woman waiting to be able to practice law in the United States. My first summer there, the ages in my class range from nineteen to mid-seventies. This past year, many of the people in my class were on their second, third, or even fourth novel. It's wonderful to meet writers who are at all different stages in their lives and careers.

*Can you describe the novel class you took this year?*

My class this summer was with Susan Taylor Chehak on revising your novel. Although I wasn't finished with my novel yet, I knew that I would be in a few months, and so I wanted to learn how to go about revising it during the coming year. We met for about four hours every afternoon, and our teacher spent the first part of each class lecturing on the structure of the novel, beginnings, character arcs, and plot outlines. During the second part of each class, we workshopped two or three ten-to-fifteen-page sections from students' novels. We also gave our entire manuscripts to our teacher, who read them (all twelve novel drafts!) in time to meet with us individually during the week. It was all extremely helpful. I definitely recommend the Iowa Summer Writing Festival to anyone looking for a summer writing workshop.



## HOPE COLLEGE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

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## Faculty News, continued

**Natalie Dykstra** has signed a contract with Houghton Mifflin for publication of her book, *Clover Adams: The Final Years of Art and Loss*.

**Stephen Hemenway** gathered students, alumni, college officials, and Austrian dignitaries in Vienna this summer to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Hope College Vienna Summer School. Stephen has been the director of VSS for 35 years.

**Carla Vissers** has been appointed Coordinator of the Visiting Writers Series.

**Heather Sellers** will have a poem in the forthcoming issue of *Prism*, and the first chapter of her memoir *Face First* is in the new issue of *Alaska Quarterly Review*. She appeared on NBS's *Today Show* this summer to talk about face blindness. Heather has had two presentations accepted for the AWP conference in Atlanta this spring.

**Curtis Gruenler** has been appointed Director for the Cultural Heritage program at Hope. He has also agreed to serve another term as Chair of the Campus Life Board, one of the three main internal boards of the college.

We welcome two new colleagues in the department this fall. **Susanna Childress Banner** and **Daniel Hoolsema** have joined us in part-time roles in the English 113 program.

## ALUMNI, FRIENDS CONTRIBUTE TO JACK RIDL FUND FOR CREATIVE WRITING

Jack Ridl celebrated his retirement after 35 years of teaching at Hope with a reading in the Visiting Writers Series on September 13.

Nearly 1000 people packed Dimnent Chapel to hear Jack read his poems, tell stories, and celebrate the beginning of another year of VWS readings.

Jack's reading marked the first annual Tom Andrews Memorial Reading. Tom Andrews was a student of Jack who went on to a brilliant career as a poet before his untimely death in 2001 at age 40. Tom's parents endowed a reading in Tom's

honor, to be part of the VWS each year, and they were pleased that Jack would be the first poet to present the Tom Andrews Reading.

The evening concluded with the announcement that friends, colleagues, and former students had contributed over \$58,000 to the Jack Ridl Fund in Creative Writing. The fund will provide an endowment to support the VWS into the future. Since Jack and his wife Julie founded the VWS in 1982, an endowment to insure its support is a fitting retirement tribute. And the fund makes it possible to rename

the VWS in his honor. From now on, it will be known as "The Jack Ridl Visiting Writers Series of Hope College."

Contributions to the fund are welcome from current or former students, and from friends of the department. Write a check to "Hope College—Jack Ridl Fund" and send it to either the English Department or the College Advancement Office.

HOPE COLLEGE  
VISITING  
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SERIES

