

Spring 2012

# The English Broadside

English Department Newsletter

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## Making Myracles: Author puts *Shine* in Spring Festival

Lauren Myracle Shows Her Sunnyside at Kennesaw State University



**L**auren Myracle is too quick to share her bubbly smile and flash her deep, brown eyes over the crowd of college students, local school teachers, and professors who have gathered to see her speak in the large auditorium at the KSU Center. She is unquestionably one of today's most popular writers of young adult literature, and as such, Myracle could have compelling reasons to be elsewhere on this warm, spring Friday evening. However, what brought her to appear on campus, aside from an eager invitation from KSU English Education professor Dr. Aaron Levy, is her enthusiasm for the younger members of this audience, adolescents and pre-teens who are here to see one of their favorite authors.

Myracle looks like a teenager herself, dressed casually in a t-shirt and a pair of faded blue jeans, and a tattoo of tiny leaves delicately curls around her upper arm. Her long, dark hair sweeps mindlessly back and forth over the shoulders of her tiny frame as she talks and laughs, but despite her petite stature, she easily captivates the audience as soon as she begins speaking. She's perfectly at ease before the crowd despite the fact that her own parents, who live in Atlanta, are watching her from the back of the auditorium. It is abundantly clear that her enthusiasm for writing and her feelings for her young readers are irrepressible, as are, it seems, her boundless reserves of energy.

She dances blithely around the podium answering questions about her writing life, the ideas that influence her stories, and the ways her young readers have touched her just as much as she has touched them.

Myracle's impressive accomplishments belie her youthful appearance. She grew up in Atlanta and graduated from the Westminster School. After she obtained dual under-

graduate degrees in English and Psychology from UNC, Chapel Hill, she went on to earn her M.A. at Colorado State University and then received her MFA at Vermont College. Despite her impressive academic dossier, it may be her experience as a Gwinnett County middle school teacher that gave



Dr. Aaron Levy (right) and Dr. Michelle Devereaux (left) host New York Times best-selling author Lauren Myracle at the KSU Center during the English Department's Spring Festival events.

her the skill and understanding she needed to "channel" the characters that populate her hugely successful novels. She talks about how many of her books involve aspects of adolescent problems that many adults just understand anymore. "Things like shame, vulnerability, making connections and disconnections," she says about the issues with which her characters struggle. "Books can help get us through the pain. Books are windows and books are mirrors that help us see that we are all vulnerable. Even me," she laughs. Recently, Myracle was reminded that adults, too, are still susceptible to feeling vulnerable or somewhat "outcast," when her latest novel *Shine* met with some criticism and rejection by the literary community.

Myracle, continued, page 2



## English Education in Action

—Contributed by Joy Hearrington

**T**he Kennesaw Mountain Writing Project ushered in a new era in 2012. This past fall, Dr. Jennifer Dail was selected to lead the KMWP program and maintain the relationship with the National Writing Project. In January Dail officially took the reigns as director of KMWP.

This new era brings exciting programs for Summer 2012. This year's Invitational Summer Institute includes twelve local and two international fellows. School districts represented in this year's institute are Bartow, Cherokee, Cobb, Floyd, Fulton, Henry, and Marietta City, The Walker School, and KSU. The international fellows are from our partner schools in Ecuador and Costa Rica, Colegio Menor and Country Day School respectively.

Due to the success of last summer's Youth Writing Academy, we have expanded the program this year to include four different offerings for middle and high school students. Rising middle school students can participate in Creative Writing for Middle School, and

rising ninth and tenth grade students can participate in Write from the Beginning, an academic writing course. Any rising high school student can participate in Creative Writing for High School and the Teen Writers' Studio. These four academies are still accepting registrations, and all details can be located at [kmwp.org](http://kmwp.org).

During 2012 KMWP has also established a partnership with Cobb County School District's Area Two schools. This institute will take place with a four-day intensive in July and include three follow-up workshops stretched over the school year. This partnership increases positive-growth in the educators' skills, increases practical use of methods modeled, and ensures effective results to improve student achievement.

The Kennesaw Mountain Writing Project is excited about these enhanced programs and looks forward to continuing in this new era as strongly as before.



### Myrale, cont.

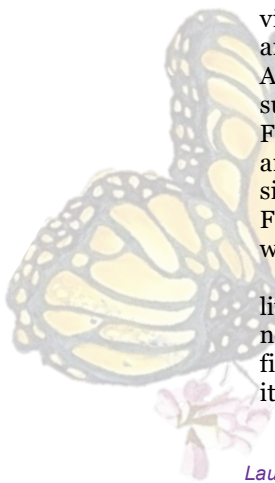
Myracle's latest novel *Shine* (2011), tells the story of a teenage girl's attempts to stop prejudice toward her homosexual friend who has been victim of a hate crime in a small, southern town, and it was short-listed for the National Book Award in October 2011. However, it was suddenly "unnominated" by the National Book Foundation (NBF) days after the titles were announced because of some confusion over a similar sounding title called *Chime*, which the Foundation said it had inadvertently mixed-up with the title of her book.

She dramatically describes watching the live, on-line announcement of her book's nomination: "I was so tense I chewed off all my fingernails, and when they announced my name, it felt like a big bubble of champagne. A beautiful,

glorious, bubbly feeling!" But then she was told that the NBF had made a horrible mistake: "that big bubble just burst!" she exclaimed.

However, Myracle graciously acquiesced to the NBF's request to rescind the nomination, and despite her disappointment, she realized she had to take to heart the optimistic messages that exist in most of the books she writes. She admits, though, that at first she didn't see things in a very a positive light: "I thought they were saying, 'keep your crappy book off the list,'" she said. Then she took her own advice: "Don't let people tell you you suck because it's not what people tell you but how you feel about yourself."

There was a happy ending for Myracle and her novel *Shine*. After she decided to voluntarily remove her book from the nomination list, she asked the NBF to perform a reciprocal "voluntary" act. She suggested the NBF donate money to the non-profit Matthew Shepard Foundation, which assists troubled teens and communities struggling with discrimination issues. The NBF agreed, and donated \$5,000 to the Shepherd Foundation, proving that out of mistakes "Myraclases" can still *Shine* through.



Lauren Myracle signed books and posed for pictures with young fans when she visited the KSU campus this spring. Right: Myracle with one of her young fans.



## English Composition Program Can Fluff Its Feathers

### Composition Contest Hatches Hootin' Fine Nest of New Writers

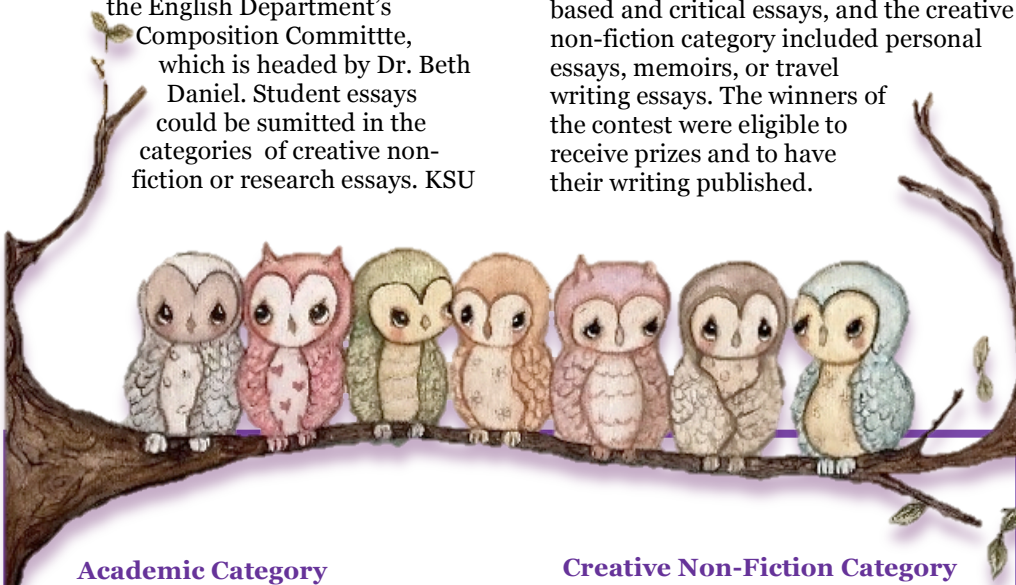
**K**ennesaw State University's First Year Composition (FYC) program sponsored an "Emerging Writer's Contest" for students who were enrolled in English 1101 and/or 1102 composition classes in the Spring or Fall of 2011. All FYC students were invited to submit essays in the writing contest.

Eligible students submitted essays to the English Department's Composition Committee, which is headed by Dr. Beth Daniel. Student essays could be submitted in the categories of creative non-fiction or research essays. KSU

writing instructors volunteered to read and select essays to be submitted to national judges.

The judges for this year's contest were Dinty Moore, a professor of creative writing at Ohio University, and Kristen Pond, an assistant professor in English at Baylor University.

The academic essays were research-based and critical essays, and the creative non-fiction category included personal essays, memoirs, or travel writing essays. The winners of the contest were eligible to receive prizes and to have their writing published.



#### Academic Category Judged by Professor Kristen Pond of Baylor University

**1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner:** Paige Ferrara-Rodgers for "Clearing the Air with Open Air Preachers: An Analysis of the Issue of the SOAPA Preachers on Kennesaw's Campus"

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner:** Alden Lathrop for "Touch of Grey: The Interplay of Environment and Genetics on Substance Abuse"

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner:** Ashley Scripka for "Hearing the Cries in the Dark: Responding to the Root Causes of Child Prostitution"

**Finalist:** Mary Miller: "Technologies in Physical Therapy for Treating Spinal Cord Injuries"

**Finalist:** Allison Stephenson: "The Little Five Points Philosophy of Acceptance"

#### Creative Non-Fiction Category Judged by Professor Dinty W. Moore of Ohio University

**1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner:** Julie Jones, Jason Wilkins, Madison Hernandez, Julie Ngo, Brittany Adkins for "Our Journey...Their World...Our Canvas"

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner:** Paige Ferrara-Rodgers for "Untitled"

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner:** Meaghan Goodman for "Protected Protesting"

**Finalist:** Bailey McAlister for "Television in the Age of Terrorism"

**Finalist:** Lindsay Harper for "Sex is Not Everything: It is the One Thing that Can Wait"





## ΣΤΔ Begins New Traditions & Assumes Old Customs

—Contributed by Julie Fowkes  
ΣΤΑ President, 2011-12

### Literary Festival

**S**igma Tau Delta hosted KSU's Literary Festival in April in conjunction with the English Department Spring Festival. The English Honor Society celebrated literature across the globe with a whole week worth of activities and readers.

The week began with a birthday celebration in honor of the great bard, William Shakespeare. KISS (Kennesaw Improv Society Stupid) entertained on-lookers with their performance while Sigma Tau Delta members handed out free t-shirts and birthday cake. Monday's Shakespeare celebration concluded with a host of volunteers reading their favorite Shakespeare sonnet.

Guest speakers during the rest of the week's literary celebration included faculty members Cindy Bowers, Ralph Wilson, Komal Patel, Jenny Sadre-Orafai, Kyndall Klym, Ellen Taber, Jeffrey Stepakoff, Margaret Walters, and Aaron Levy.

### Student English Hour

Sigma Tau Delta organized the first Student English Hour, which provided students the opportunity to experience presenting an English paper in a semi-formal setting. Congratulations go to Glenn Beetschen and Mallory Cooper whose papers were selected this semester from a number of quality submissions. A special thank you to the English Department for supporting the Student English Hour with a lovely lunch, organized by Barb Witt.

### Induction Ceremony

Sigma Tau Delta added 15 new members to its ranks at this Spring' Induction Ceremony. The Induction Ceremony is always a special occasion for new inductees as the Society recognizes exceptional students committed to English and English Education. This semester's guest speaker, Linda Stewart, gave an inspirational speech on the importance of the imagination.

*Top: KSU students gather to enjoy sonnets Shakespeare's birthday cake  
Middle: Dr. Cindy Bowers at the Shakespeare Birthday Celebration  
Bottom: Rosalie Masoero, VP of ΣΤΔ, at the Spring 2012 Induction Ceremony*







**Left:** Dr. Cindy Bowers supports  $\Sigma TA$  events during Spring Festival week.



**Right:** Students in Dr. Bowers's English class perform a scene from "The Horsemen."



**Right:** English student Ian Weise reads one of the Bard's sonnets



**Far Right:** A crowd gathers to watch the English Spring Festival activities at the campus gazebo.



**Above Left:** Members of K.I.S.S. (Kennesaw Improvisational Student Studio) play up themes in some of Shakespeare's plays. Students,  $\Sigma TA$  officers, and Dr. Bowers watch the improvisations.



**Above Right:** The officers of  $\Sigma TA$  orchestrated a week of English Spring Festival activities: President, Julie Fowkes, Vice President Rosalie Masoero, and the honor society's secretary and treasurer.

## April Showers Brings National Poetry Month to KSU

### Southern Poet Jake York Drops in for Poetry Reading



**A**ward-winning poet Jake Adam York visited the KSU campus on April 19, to read poems from his work as part of the English Department's annual Spring Festival. York's poetry collects the ghosts of America's Civil Rights era and creates a forum for these specters to speak to the post-modern world from beyond their graves.

The depth of meaning in York's poetry is not only present in his poems but is also reflected in the titles of his books: *Murder Ballads*, *Murmuration of Starlings*, and *Persons Unknown*. His elegiac poetry gives new form to bodies sacrificed for Civil Rights, but the power of his poems is formed by voices of the dead who speak for themselves in the pages of his books.

His poetic ballads are not lamentations for the lost; instead, his work breathes new life into the sacrifices that others suffered before us. KSU Professor Tony Grooms coordinated York's recent visit to the campus through the English Department, and writes that York's poems, "broaden the limits of American imagination on the subject of Jim Crow, as an era as worthy of mythologizing as the War for Independence or World War II."

York was born in Florida but grew up in Alabama. He takes his some of his inspiration from Alabama history and the state's commemorative memorials to fallen Civil Rights leaders. He is an associate professor at the University of Colorado, Denver, but is currently a research fellow at Emory University.



*Poet Jake Adam York visited KSU campus as part of April's "National Poetry Month" and presented some of his award-winning poetry as part of the English Spring Festival. The poem reprinted with the author's permission.*

#### On Tallassee hatchee Creek

*In November 1813, Andrew Jackson sent 1,000 men to destroy the village of Tallassee hatchee, in eastern Alabama, killing nearly 200 of the 300 Creeks living there by burning them in their homes.*

Clear till it hits the bend  
where we work the village  
out of clay, where post-molds graph  
the longhouses' outlines in ash

we broke through days ago.  
Inside the lines, the ground is smooth  
with the fat of those  
who burned alive, the man who pulled

himself into the fire, gunshot legs  
behind, the woman Crockett said  
strung arrows with her feet.  
Tomorrow, we should hit the cellars

whose cooked potatoes the soldiers ate  
once the ashes cooled,  
maybe some cache of bones or greasy tubers,  
something to confirm the tale,

but nothing strong enough to keep  
the earthmovers from moving in.  
In a month, the bank becomes the angle  
of Azalea Dogleg, the creek

gives up its name to Hazard  
and the town's elusive grammar,  
the *village captured by the stream*  
turns under fertilized greens.

Here, where the water darkens, red,  
where we sift the earth for sherds,  
I wash an arrowhead  
into the sun's steel-white gleam,

then sieve fists of rock through my hands  
till I finger something strange—  
a tiny ball of polished iron,  
shot-metal distilled from clay.

When the chief sends me back  
for detectors and finer screens,  
I thread in quiet the subdivision maze  
of streets already named,

Arrowhead Drive, Ember Lane.

—JAKE ADAM YORK







"Many's a live wire that would be dead without his connections."—Wilson

## What's The Buzz?

### Faculty Accomplishments and Accolades

#### Keith Botelho

Dr. Botelho was awarded one of five CHSS Faculty Summer Research Grants. Dr. Botelho will be using grant funding to continue working on his second book, entitled *Little Beasts: Bees, Man, and the Renaissance Culture of the Hive*.

Dr. Botelho was also part of the seminar entitled "The Nonhuman Renaissance" at the annual Shakespeare Association of America conference in Boston in April, where he presented a piece from his bee book.

In April, Botelho gave a talk on listening and the Renaissance as part of the program "Hearing 1611: The Power of Renaissance Listening." The program was sponsored by the Department of Museums, Archives, and Rare Books and was in collaboration with actors from the Shakespeare Tavern!



#### Helen Cauley

Helen Cauley graduates with a dual concentration in Composition/Rhetoric and Creative Writing from the MAPW program, and she has been accepted into the English PhD program at Georgia State. She is thrilled to continue her studies and would like to thank the fabulous faculty and staff of the English department who have made the last three years a joy.

#### Rob Chambers

Dr. Rob Chambers' new book, *How to Write Parodies and Become Immortal* was published via CreateSpace in March, 2012. It is a light, non-scholarly companion volume to its more sober bedmate, *Parody: The Art That Plays With Art* (Peter Lang, 2010). For more detailed information, visit [www.parodybychambers.com](http://www.parodybychambers.com).



#### Beth Daniel

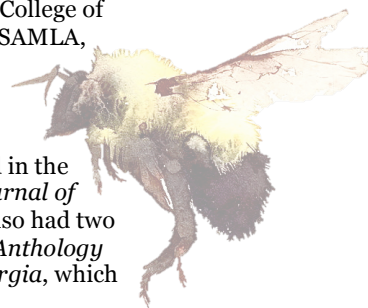
Dr. Daniell's work has recently appeared in several publications and at conferences: Her review article, "Literacy, Rhetoric, Agency, and Identity," appeared in the March 2012 issue of *College English*. The article reviews two books:

*Writing From These Roots: Literacy in a Hmong-American Community*, by John Duffy, and *Spiritual Literacy in John Wesley's Methodism: Reading, Writing and Speaking to Believe* by Vicki Tolar Burton.

Dr. Daniel also presented at the March 2012 4C's convention in St. Louis, MO in March. Along with Dr. Mary Lou Odom, she presented a session called "Starting from Below Scratch: Building a WAC/WID Program in a College of Humanities and Social Sciences" at SAMLA, which was held in Atlanta, 2011.

#### David King

Dr. King had three poems published in the inaugural issue of *Flycatcher: A Journal of Native Imagination*. Dr. King has also had two poems selected for inclusion in the *Anthology of Southern Poetry--Volume 5: Georgia*, which will be published this fall.



#### Nina Morgan

Dr. Morgan is traveling to Russia on a grant to study the Russian Diaspora. As part of her study, she will interview some of Russia's billionaires in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Dr. Nina Morgan will also be the general editor of the May issue of the *Journal of Transnational American Studies* (Stanford/UCSB).

#### Bill Rice

Bill Rice published a story named "Knowing" in the February/March 2012 issue of *Sporting Classics* magazine. His essay "Spring Awakening" appeared in the April 22nd issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

#### Ralph Wilson

The *Sierra Nevada Review* has accepted Dr. Wilson's poem "Sustenance," for publication. His poem, "Halloween," will appear in the spring/summer issue of the *Texas Review*.



## Getting into the Roots of the Community

—Contributed by Dr. Rochelle Harris

Dr. Rochelle Harris's English 1102 Honors class, during Fall 2011, has been working in collaboration with the Root House Historic Site and Museum in Marietta to develop a presentation for 8th graders on a Reconstruction-era tour of the home of the Root family. The Roots were a middle-class, merchant family who came to Marietta in 1839, stayed through most of the Civil War, and significantly helped to rebuild the city of Marietta. Mr. Root was a local pharmacist and shop owner, and he, along with his wife and daughter, served variously as school board members and officers in local church congregations. The Honors students have toured the site, communicated regularly with curator Jenny Goldemund, studied 8th grade performance standards, and reviewed the Root House's mission. This project required the students to conduct extensive research at the

Georgia Room of the Marietta Public Library, search for material in online databases, gather information from Cobb County clerks, and interview the community members of African Zion Baptist Church. At the request of the Root House curator, the students were to focus on emancipated men and women, specifically in the areas of labor and education, who were connected to the Root family. Their investigations allowed students to discover strong information about literacy laws, origins of African-American schooling in Marietta, and labor issues from 1865-1871. Based on this research project, the honor students wrote a 45-minute, first-person tour script from seven points-of-view for Root House docents to present to middle school students starting in Fall 2012.



## KSU's First World Literature Conference

The English Department's World Literature Committee held its first conference on global literature on March 16-17, 2012, which was chaired by Dr. Khalil Elayan and co-chaired by Dr. Larrie Dudenhoeffer. KSU presenters at the conference included Ms. Melissa Keith, Dr. Amy Sandefur, Dr. Cherif Diop, and Dr. Ruth McIntyre.

The committee invited scholars to present papers that took interdisciplinary approaches to the reading, interpretation, translation, and teaching of World Literature, particularly in view of the international changes, such as the "Arab Spring" and "Jasmine Revolution."

The conference sessions addressed a wide variety of epistemological, pedagogical, and philosophical, and cultural topics present in written and visual representations in world literature.

Dr. Elayan noted, "I have to say that KSU's First International World Literature Conference was a great success. We had good audiences for all the presentations, including the keynote speaker, Dr. Fouad Moughrabi."

## Parting Shots ...



**Top:**  
Dr. Sergio Figueiredo will join the KSU English Department in the Fall as an Asst. Professor of Social and Digital Media classes. Figueiredo has most recently been teaching English and Media studies classes at the University of Ohio, Miami. (Left: Figueiredo attending a digital software workshop at Clemson University where he obtained his PhD.)

**Bottom:**  
Dr. Laura Dabundo and English undergraduate Julie Fowkes attended KSU Honor's Day.\* Dabundo named Fowkes for the "Outstanding Undergraduate Student in English" award. Fowkes named Dabundo her most influential professor. (Left: Dabundo, in doctoral regalia, and Julie Fowkes).

\*Dr. Mary Lou Odom named Imani Marshall as "Outstanding Graduate Student" in the MAPW master's program.