

Pen & Ink: Notes from the NDSU Department of English



Greetings from the Chair—

Our fall newsletter gives us a chance to let you know about upcoming events, rather than just report on scholarship and awards won. We are particularly excited to be hosting Tommy Zurhellen during Homecoming, and we have every intention to make this the start of the annual *Lets Hear it for Homecoming* event.

We just arranged for another poet to speak on campus Thursday, November 3rd, 4:30-5:30. Hillol Ray, an NDSU alum and currently an engineer with the EPA will share some of his poetry, including "Earth Day," which is read nationwide every April 22nd. I hope to see many alums and friends of the department at these and other events.

Kevin Brooks
Department Chair
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College of AHSS Welcomes Dean: Kent Sandstrom

Kent Sandstrom was recently named Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at NDSU. He was previously department head of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology at the University of Northern Iowa and is also co-editor of the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*. His vita lists six books, 19 refereed articles and chapters, 10 chapters and essays, 11 book reviews and 56 professional presentations. Dr. Sandstrom earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota, Duluth; and his master's degree and doctorate in sociology from the University of Minnesota. He began his career as an instructor in the University of Minnesota sociology department.

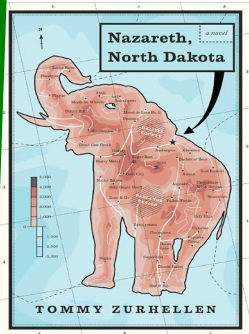
Among his honors are UNI's James F. Lubker Faculty Research Award, the President's Special Award from the

Midwest Sociological Society, Human Rights Leadership Award from the UNI Amnesty International group, UNI's Ross A. Nielsen Professional Service Award, UNI Regents Award for Faculty Excellence, UNI Outstanding Teaching Award and Distinguished Service Award and CSBS Outstanding Teaching Award from the Faculty Senate of the UNI College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.



Dean Sandstrom is interested in meeting current and former students; he can be contacted at Kent.Sandstrom@ndsu.edu.

Nazareth, North Dakota — a reading with Thomas Zurhellen



The Department of English welcomes Thomas Zurhellen, head of the Creative Writing program at Marist College in New York, for a reading from his new novel, *Nazareth, North Dakota*.

The reading will be held on September 27 at 7 pm in the NDSU Memorial Union. A public reception and gathering of the English Department, alumni, and friends will follow.

Zurhellen's presentation is a feature of the Department's first annual *Let's Hear it for Homecoming* book reading event.

Set in the Badlands of North Dakota, Zurhellen's novel is a modern retelling of the messiah story told through multiple points of view, including a chapter that weaves in Lakota history.

Readers can find links to both the book trailer and the author's webpage at: <http://english.ndsu.edu>.

Books are available for purchase on Zurhellen's website. The NDSU bookstore has a limited number of books available for purchase and signing for the event.

Flash Forward: Upcoming Events

September 2011

September 23-24: LCMND: Linguistics & Cultures Circle of Manitoba & North Dakota. Conference theme: Language and Power.

September 27: Tommy Zurhellen reading from his novel, *Nazareth, North Dakota*. Memorial Union Gallery, 7 PM. Marks the first annual *Let's Hear it for Homecoming* book reading. Alumni are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Sept. 26– Oct 1: NDSU Homecoming Week

October 2011

October 1: NDSU Homecoming: NDSU v Illinois St

October 6-8: MWACIS: MidWest American Conference for Irish Studies. Conference theme: Ireland & Its Global Influence: Past, Present, Future

October 20: National Day on Writing.

October 27: *Dead Author's Reading*—Spirit Room, Fargo, 8pm

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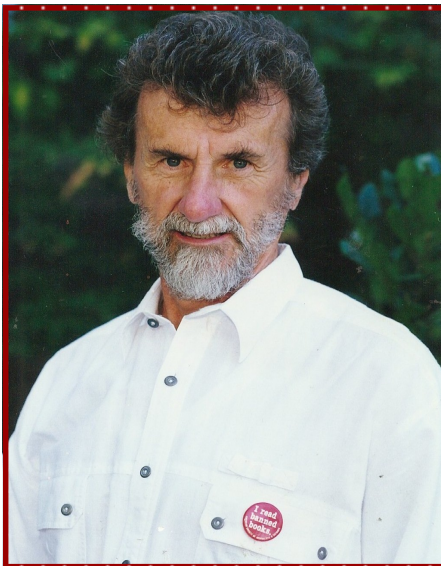


Where is ... ? Bill Cosgrove

Faculty, students and alumni searching for Bill Cosgrove could find him in any of his typical haunts. One could look for him on a tennis court, riding a bicycle, playing “handyman from hell,” teaching origami, reading and writing, reporting from a court room, and if looking on a stage, one might find his or her, mark. Mark Twain, that is.

On June 1, 2006, after an illustrious 36-year career, Bill Cosgrove retired from NDSU as Professor of American Literature. He and his wife, Peggy, decided it was the right time to move on and be closer to family. “I would have stayed longer, but if we were going to move, 70 seemed really old to be moving.” Yet he’s stayed on the move. Cosgrove’s retirement goal is to remain as active as possible, noting “I’ve left nothing behind, only the location.”

Bill loves the freedom of retirement declaring, “my schedule is of my own making, and I do nothing I haven’t decided for myself to do. I’m condemned to freedom.” He’s not a routine person; he gets up when he has to, and goes to bed when there is no one left to stay up with. But he doesn’t hover around the house, and for that his wife is thankful. “I do what the spirit moves me to do.” Nothing more, nothing less, which leaves him free to do everything he did



while a professor.

While living in Fargo, Cosgrove spent many hours working at home playing “handyman from hell.” He hasn’t given that role up, but because their new home is low-maintenance, he has become the handyman for his daughters’ homes.

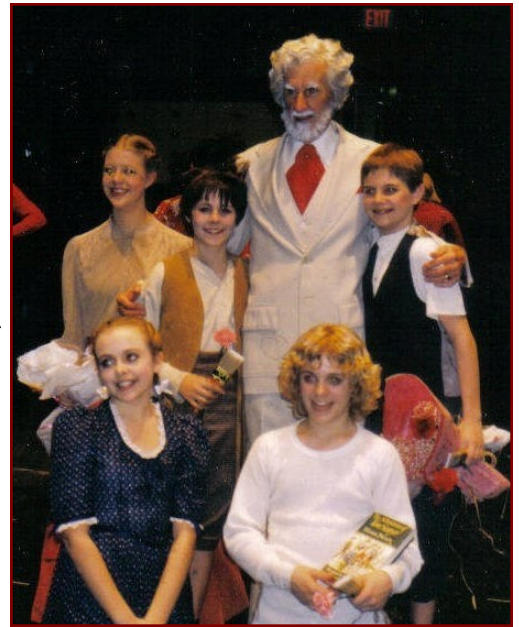
He continues to ride bicycle and play tennis. Not just backyard tennis, mind you, but United States Tennis Association tennis. In 2009, Bill and five others, won their league and went on to compete in the USTA National Championships in California. His team finished second in their flight, but he casually states that he and his partner “won all of our matches. I’d like to do that again.”

He still teaches, only now it’s professional origami workshops at institutions like St. Ben’s University, University of Minnesota Marshall, and U of M Mankato. He always loved the university classroom and feels that being part of a “college campus lends a certain vigor to you.”

“I’m condemned to freedom.”

Cosgrove continues to portray Mark Twain on the stage. In fact a few years back, Mark Twain was seen teaching origami at the opening of the Mississippi Room at the Science Museum of Minnesota. A little over a year ago, Mark Twain made an appearance at a Gala for the Landmark Center in St. Paul. In February 2012, one can see him in his Twain persona in the Performance Series Twain shows at the Bloomington Center for the Arts. It seems that as of late, Twain has become quite enamored with the northern Mississippi area.

Twain himself remarked that “teaching is a fine, grand thing.” Twain also joked, “it is noble to teach oneself, but it is nobler still to teach others (and a lot less trouble).” In keeping with his favored author, Cosgrove has extended his love of teaching into the realm of giving, saying he is so appreciative of what “I, we, my family received from spending one-half of my lifetime at NDSU, I want to give it back in some way.” Thus, the Cosgrove Scholarships and Cosgrove Seminars have become a way to “pay it back to those people who were there, and for what they gave to the students, and to me and my



Cosgrove as Mark Twain with cast of Tom Sawyer

family.”

What remains on his bucket list? “To see *Bucket List*.” His major goal is to finish the writings he is working on, those being a novel and a collection of short stories. Will they be written in the vein of his hero Mark Twain and his contemporaries? Sadly, they don’t contain the humor inherent in Twain. Instead, they are based on the close observation of life, specifically the famous Dru Sjodin murder trial he covered for *The Forum* in 2006.

“Retire to something, not from something.”

In Bill’s own words, “I’m doing everything I did before I retired, only more of the things I enjoyed.” His philosophy on life and retirement has always been, “Retire to something, not from something.” He observes that a person “can’t go 60 mph for an entire lifetime, suddenly stop and spend the rest watching TV. That’ll kill you.” So he hasn’t stopped. His life may slow down on a day-by-day basis, but he doesn’t stop. If you believe you have the energy, you can catch up with Bill Cosgrove via his email address: bill.cosgrove@ndsu.edu.

(Re)Introducing Dr. Amy Rupiper Taggart



professor saying, “here’s a book some people are using.”

In fact, it was this lack of formal teaching instruction that motivated her to learn so much about teaching while she’s been at NDSU. It also sparks her passion and appreciation for helping others not only learn the teaching process, but also to succeed in life, proclaiming, “I am most proud of being a part of developing professionals’ lives.”

Craig Rood, a recent graduate of the English MA program, is a prime example of her pride in others’ accomplishments. Rupiper Taggart explains “I first taught Craig Rood as an undergraduate and encouraged him to look into Grad School. He attended here at NDSU and excelled, and now he’s at Penn State working on his PhD, and I know he will be successful. I love having a role in that success.”



Rupiper Taggart with MA Graduate Craig Rood

Her work on the development and implementation of the NDSU Faculty Senate is also personally and professionally satisfying. Formerly, NDSU had a University Senate with two subordinate but separate Senates for Students and Staff. All three groups: faculty, staff, and students had representation at the University Senate but the Faculty had no place apart to deliberate over faculty focused issues.

Under the new configuration, a Coordinating Council will see that specific governing issues are distributed to the appropriate Senate bodies, i.e.: Faculty, Staff or Student. This allows each group to preside over issues that impact them, rather than deliberate as a

whole group over issues that may only pertain to Staff, for instance.

“I’m most proud of being a part of developing professionals ‘lives.’”

Rupiper Taggart recently gave a presentation on “Managing Transitions: Institutional Crisis Offers Governance Opportunity” at the American Association of University Professors Annual Conference on the State of Higher Education in Washington, DC. Her presentation was a discussion on the need for, and her role in, the creation and implementation of the NDSU Faculty Senate.

The Senate work, Rupiper Taggart declares, “was surprisingly fun. It fit with my skill set and leads me to think I might like higher education administration further on in my career.” She is considering whether she might like to be a college dean at some point, but then she wouldn’t get to teach. For her, that’s a big consideration.

Much of her research focuses on service learning, literacy studies, and teacher preparation and her publications reflect those interests. Rupiper Taggart is putting the finishing touches on a second edition of the textbook, *Research Writing*, co-authored with Rebecca Moore Howar, of Syracuse University. Yet her “most exciting project” is a second edition of the Oxford UP *Guide to Composition Pedagogies*, with Kurt Schick and Brooke Hessler, which for her brings together her scholarly and teaching interests. The book provides a map of the research on teaching writing through the eyes of the field’s luminaries in each area, so that new teachers can quickly situate themselves in the best knowledge about teaching and learning.

*Would she change anything?
“I’d be way cooler.”*

Rupiper Taggart exudes happiness in her position as Associate Professor of English and as Director of the Writing Program. Would she change anything? “I would be way cooler!” Really, what’s cooler than pedagogy?

Dr. Amy Rupiper Taggart joined the Department of English faculty directly from her PhD studies at Texas Christian University. For Rupiper Taggart, the deciding factors were: “one, I wouldn’t have to run the entire Writing Program my first year on the job and two, NDSU had Rhet/Comp colleagues I respected and liked.” She stressed, those two rationales carried enormous weight, as other options offered better financial compensation.

Originally hailing from northeastern Iowa, Rupiper Taggart spent her undergraduate years attending the University of St. Thomas in MN where she double-majored in English and German, after which she spent a year in Denver, CO doing full-time volunteer work for the non-profit “Women’s Bean Project.” There she worked with women in transition, helping them acquire the skills necessary to re-enter the workforce. She admits that much of her service learning emphasis stems from her time spent there working with women who wanted to make substantial changes in their lives.

And teaching is still the favorite aspect of her job. All but glowing, she declares, “I love that I get to teach all levels of writing, I love teaching teachers. I love helping people through what can be a tough experience.” Rupiper Taggart knows first-hand how tough that experience can be. She had little teaching education before she was put into the first-year writing classroom, only one theory-heavy composition pedagogy course in the year prior to teaching. The typical teaching practicum course wasn’t an option — it wasn’t even offered. She laughingly grimaces that her official Teaching Assistant training consisted of a

Summer Successes

Governor's School 2011

The Governor's School English Studies program saw its first full term (six weeks) this summer in a highly successful third year. High school students from across the state received a crash-course in multiple disciplines within English Studies, visited and participated in undergraduate and graduate-level classes, and completed intensive independent projects in a discipline of their own choosing. They also created two online magazines from the ground-up, conceiving, designing, editing, and writing for these publications in processes very close to those of real-world designers and scholars. Instruction and coordination came from all levels of the English department.

Help spread the word — the NDSU English Department's newly expanded Governor's School is open to North Dakota high school students. Those interested can find more information by contacting Cindy Nichols, the Governor's School Coordinator, or by visiting the department website:

Cindy.Nichols@ndsu.edu

ndsu.edu/English/conferences and events/governors school/

Red River Valley Writing Project

The Fargo branch of the Red River Valley Writing Project held its first Open Institute August 1-4. The theme of the four-day, one-credit Open Institute was **Writing in the STEM Disciplines**. The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) program was held at the STEM Middle School in West Fargo. Eleven teachers completed the Institute—five teachers from Turtle Mountain High School, four teachers from Clara Barton Elementary in Fargo, a West Fargo high school math teacher, and a Fargo elementary Gifted/Talented teacher. We had ND teacher of the year, Fred Strand, from Hatton, ND present on math strategies; Molly Bestge, who runs the STEM boot camp at Mayville for teachers, presented on the Engineering Design Process and Writing; Karen Taylor, a Moorhead middle school teacher, discussed collaborative writing in the content areas, and Lori Hieserich, a Circle of Nations middle school teacher, focused on Smart Board writing. RRVWP teacher consultant Alissa Helm assisted Fargo co-director, Kelly Sassi, to facilitate the workshop. The Red River Valley Writing Project (RRVWP) supported the Institute by providing each teacher with a \$100 stipend and by providing snacks, coffee, a free book, and materials. NDSU will host the RRVWP Summer Institute in 2012.

sugarlabs@ndsu: connecting the local and global

In the summer of 2010, Kevin Brooks and graduate student, Chris Lindgren, began a community pilot project with educators at Madison Elementary that introduced 4th and 5th graders to a free, open-source software platform, called Sugar (sugarlabs.org). Sugar is an innovative software that allows children to not only explore concepts in math, language arts, science, and social science, but also computer programming. It is an extension of the One Laptop per Child (OLPC) program, as Sugar was originally developed for the XO laptop. It is Brooks' and Lindgren's goal to bring the technical learning initiatives and skills of these programs to the Fargo community.

They established a partnership with Madison Elementary because of its unique demographic to the area. The school is located within a low-income neighborhood with 80% of the students qualifying for free or reduced priced lunches. Madison is also comprised of a diverse set of families, many of which are refugees from Sudan, Somalia, Burundi, Rwanda, Iraq, and Afghanistan. These qualities align with their initiative to provide access to technology to children that might not typically have the opportunity to use computers as a learning tool.

One of the project's main objectives is to estab-

lish a smart computing culture within Fargo that encourages children to program, rather than be programmed, as well as participate in global education projects, such as Sugar and OLPC. Throughout the 2010-2011 school year, Kevin and Chris formed an after-school "Tech Team" at Madison that served as a means to check the functionality of Sugar in an educational setting. Bringing their project to this level was made possible by assessing the educational value of the activities that promoted an early understanding of the procedural skills needed for computer programming.

Their project was awarded the NDSU Community Project Grant for \$20,000, and they are taking a cue from the OLPC program by coordinating the deployment of the Sugar platform on a flash drive (Sugar on a Stick) to all of the students enrolled at Madison. Recently, they became an official member of the Sugar Labs community, establishing their own Sugar Labs@NDSU, and have also just been approved to receive ten XO laptops from the OLPC program to utilize in the department to teach hardware and software documentation. All of these relationships and project developments work toward the long-term goal of training a support team to aid in the large-scale deployment of laptops in the newest country in the world, South Sudan.

They have created some strong working relationships with NDSU's Computer Science (CS) Chair, Dr. Brian Slator, as well as CS undergraduate Davin Loegering and Adam Helsene, who is the Systems Administrator for the CS department. Loegering is developing a flash drive that can run Sugar simultaneously with an operating system, such as Windows, and Helsene has implemented a 3D virtual collaborative space, OpenQwaq, for the international Sugar Labs community to use for their meetings.

In the 2011-2012 school year, Brooks and Lindgren will be deploying the Sugar sticks to Madison, running the after-school Tech Team, and organizing some computing competitions at Madison. They encourage any other students (at either the undergraduate or graduate level) to consider becoming involved with this project. There are numerous opportunities for research and engagement with the local and global communities, using these innovative technologies.

If interested in learning more about the project, you may contact Brooks or Lindgren via email or visit their project blog at:

fargoxo.wordpress.com
kevin.brooks@ndsu.edu
chris.lindgren@my.ndsu.edu

Walking through the Belly of a ~~Beast~~ Beauty

Her face is marred. Her mouth is obstructed. Her entries and exits are hampered. She emulates a chained beast whose belly is an ever-changing den of activity. Her hallways snake within, like forever-moving entrails from which escape seems unlikely. She emits a sense of struggle, as if pondering whether to spit you out. She is Minard Hall.

While walking through her corridors in early September, she exudes the essence of an aging beauty. One who is undergoing both cosmetic and structural changes to surpass her former glory.

Entry access is currently limited, and those daring to be swallowed, must use the north entrance, as the east entry (along with the elevator access) is blocked to passersby.



Once inside, the open stairwell is flooded with sunny northern light cascading through the large arched windows featured on all four floors. Wall sconces supplement and complement the natural lighting. One can't help but notice the unfinished flooring, walls, and railings, but light draws the eye upward to focus on windows that remain true to Ms. Minard's original period and style.

The Math Department has moved from the third to the fourth floor. Their former location on third floor now hosts a major portion of the construction activity where asbestos removal is the primary objective.



As her inner turmoil continues,

prior to the Fall 2011 semester, a portion of Modern Languages returned to her third floor. Spanish professors Dr. Carlos Hawley and Dr. Carol Pearson seem happy with their return. Pearson declared, "it's more office space than I've ever had, and I have windows."

The newly remodeled home of Modern Languages is bright and colorful. Alumni who recall the dark paneling found in Minard 321 and the

English Department will gladly welcome walls freshly painted in shades of golden beige and bold russet.

The offices are spacious and have a sense of airiness, despite non-operable windows. High ceilings and natural light from the bow front windows help to create this sense of openness. The new offices have false ceilings to disguise pipes and ducting, yet since the dropped ceilings don't junction with the outer walls, it offers added dimension and height to the rooms.

Extra headroom is always a plus for tall inhabitants, like Dr. Hawley who chose an office on the north wall.

Hawley noted, "I let others pick their offices first. Some seemed skittish about the offices on the north wall, but I'm not wor-

now part of a brand new classroom, and finds that Psychology and Modern Languages inhabit the former Communications Department. Continuing on, office residents and students alike will surely appreciate the addition of the third floor restrooms. Further down the hallway, visitors are forced to snake west toward the south annex, as the Mathematics Department is now closed to general traffic.

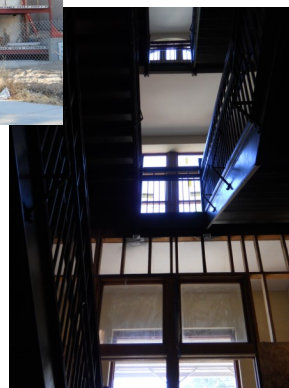
Yet a sneaky photographer wanders east to document whether the Minard transformation timeline is realistic. Though her final completion will remain at large for a number of years, the English Department is slated — and hopeful — to occupy the former Math Department space by summer of 2013.

When Ms. Minard can finally throw off the confines of the beast, her beauty will once again offer visitors areas for interaction and corners for respite. Then, Ms. Minard will exude the inner peace she is desperately struggling to achieve.



ried, and I like the windows."

It's exciting, yet a bit strange, to stroll down the third floor corridor in the midst of construction. One discovers that the south section of Minard 321 is



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For Further Reading: Publications

Birmingham, Elizabeth. "Making and Playing Cooperative Games: Feminist Aesthetics and Values in Prairie Prose." *Feminist Media Studies* 11.2 (2011): 20-26.

Hayes Mellem, Rebecca. "Activist Scholarship: Antiracism, Feminism, and Social Change." Eds. Julia Sudbury and Margo Okazawa-Rey. *Radical Teacher* 91 (2011): 67-69.

Helstern, Linda Lizut. "Museum Survivance: Vizenor Before and After Repatriation." *Gerald Vizenor: Texts and Contexts*. Eds. Deborah Madsen and A. Robert Lee. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010. 231-48. Pub. 2011.

Mara, Andrew and Miriam Mara. "Irish Identification as Exigence: A Self-Service Case Study for Producing User Documentation." *Computer-Mediated Communication across Cultures: International Interactions in Online Environments*. Eds. Kirk St. Amant and Sigrid Kelsey. Hershey, PA: IGI Global, 2011. 173-186.

Mara, Miriam and Andrew Mara. "The Efficacy of Faculty Student Interaction within Faculty-In-Residence." *Innovative Higher Education* 36:2, April, 2011. 71-82.

Sassi, Kelly. "Are We Aligned Yet? Opportunities and Misgivings in Working with the Common Core Writing Standards." *English Leadership Quarterly*. October 2011.

Sassi, Kelly and Ebony Thomas. "Plagiarism and Ethics in the Digital

Age." *English Journal*. July 2011.

Rupiper Taggart, Amy and H. Brooke Hessler. "What's Stalling Learning? Using a Formative Assessment Tool to Address Critical Incidents in Class." *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 5 (January 2011).

Rupiper Taggart, Amy and Margaret Lowry. "On Program Transitions and TA Training: What TAs Say Makes the Difference." *WPA Journal*. (Spring 2011): 89-114.

Totten, Gary. "Geographies of Race and Mobility in Carl Rowan's South of Freedom." *Riding/Writing Across Borders in North American Travelogues and Fiction*. Ed. Waldemar Zacharasiewicz. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2011. 169-83.

---. Rev. of *American Travel and Empire*, ed. Susan Castillo and David Seed, and *Writing, Travel, and Empire: In the Margins of Anthropology*, ed. Peter Hulme and Russell McDougall. *Studies in Travel Writing* 15.2 (2011): 213-15.

---. Rev. of *The Brave Escape of Edith Wharton: A Biography*, by Connie Wooldridge. *Edith Wharton Review* 27.1 (2011): 23.

---. Rev. of *Edith Wharton and the Making of Fashion*, by Katherine Joslin. *Modern Fiction Studies* 57.1 (2011): 349-51.

2011 Awards, Honors, and Recognitions

We are pleased to announce that

Athanassia (CeCe)

Rohwedder, a graduate student at North Dakota State

University, has been awarded the Louis Owens Prize for her essay, **"The Human Animal: Posthumanism in John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*."**



at the University of California, Davis at the time of his death. Rohwedder was born and raised in Thessaloniki, Greece, and she first encountered the works of Steinbeck in Greek translations. Later, in North Dakota, she pursued a dual emphasis in science and literature in her undergraduate studies, and has just finished an MA in English at North Dakota State University. She and her husband live in Fargo, where she serves as Assistant to the Vice President for Information Technology at NDSU.

Rohwedder plans to continue her work on Steinbeck as an independent scholar. She attributes her love of literature to her mother. "My mother had a substantial and eclectic library that she built piece by piece over time. Growing up in an occupied country during World War II and during the hardships of the

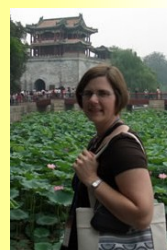
recovery years after the war ended, when money was a scarce commodity, she used whatever she was given to buy books—often instead of food. Each book was more than a prized possession, it was a treasure beyond description, and every time I opened one I felt I had just been given a gift. She had most of the classics, and I read them all, but Steinbeck is the writer who spoke to me loudest and clearest, both as a child and as an adult, both in Greek and in English. There is an honesty in his writing, a celebration of life in all its joyful and painful aspects, a complete lack of pretense, an acceptance of every one and every thing, and a profound love for America and Americans. Every time I read one of his works, or scholarship of them, and every time I write my own contribution to that scholarship, I feel I have just been given one more gift."

Dr. Elizabeth Birmingham received the Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation Fellowship award from the Society of Architectural Historians in New Orleans, LA which is granted to a paper on Women in 20th Century Architecture. Birmingham was the April 2011 recipient for her work, **"Feminist Scholarship and Disciplinary Discourse: A Case Study."**



In June 2011, **Dr. Amy Rupiper Taggart** presented her work, **"Managing Transitions: Institutional Crisis Offers Governance Opportunity"** at the American Association of University Professors Annual

Conference on the State of Higher Education in Washington, DC. Her presentation was a discussion on the need for, and her role in, the creation and implementation of the NDSU Faculty Senate.



This annual award, presented by The Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies, for the best undergraduate or graduate student essay on Steinbeck was established in memory of Louis Owens (1948-2002), scholar and novelist, who was Professor of English and Native American Studies and Director of Creative Writing