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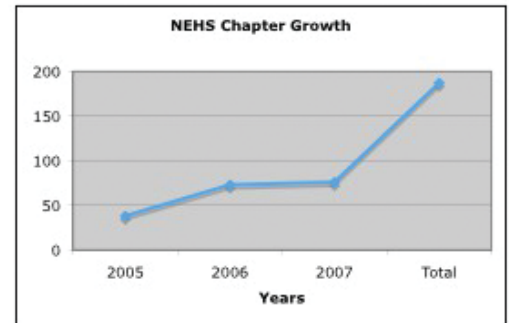


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www.NEHS.us

It Takes a Vision

Last year, I had the privilege of working with my students and a few other faculty advisors to start the Spiritus Mundi chapter of NEHS. We made it through the applications, and the voting, and the activity brainstorming, but just after the holidays we began to notice a lull in activity—our members were late to activities, some stopped coming and others began to commit themselves to other clubs and organizations. So, I did as any faculty advisor would and sent out catchy emails, created decorative posters to draw students back to our activities, and so on. As an advisor alone, I wasn't able to draw students into the activities. I met with the leadership, asked them to take over the "morale duty" and took the backseat. What a change! The student leaders from the literary magazine began to advocate for NEHS to the English classes and to the absentee members. Thanks to their hard work, the chapter inducted more than 65 members in its inaugural year, attracting plenty of freshmen and curious upperclassmen to activities and events. How grateful I was for their vision for the chapter.

When Dr. William C. Johnson began working to build the charter for the National English Honor Society, I am sure he began with a similar vision. But it wasn't until he began reaching out to his colleagues for ideas and collaboration that this vision could be realized. His hard work and the work of the National Advisory Council laid the foundation for the continued growth and success of NEHS. However, it is because you, just like my former students, have taken the vision and made it your own that NEHS can report shining success all over the country. In 2007, NEHS membership reached 7,767 and



counting and the number of chapters of NEHS has grown, in two years, to almost 200.

It is the commitment of the members, the dedication of the leaders and the shared vision of everyone, that brings people to a community. In this issue, we will look at some of the creative ways chapters have brought new members into the NEHS community. Be inspired and consider taking over morale duty for your chapter!

Thank you for sharing in the vision of NEHS—for all of your hard work, your dedication to your school and community, and your desire to encourage the discipline and art we all love so much. You bring honor to this honor society.

Jennifer Goen
Museletter Editor
nehs@niu.edu

"We shall by morning
Inherit the earth.
Our foot's in the door."

- from "Mushrooms" by Sylvia Plath

Chapter News

Chapter in Spotlight:

The Barbara Curry Chapter

Friona High School
Friona, Texas

Students at Friona High School in Friona, Texas, participated in a school-wide reading project in which all the students read legends and tales about King Arthur. Because our school is heavily multicultural, we chose this topic to examine a particularly rich part of British and American cultural heritage. King Arthur, the Holy Grail, the Round Table, chivalry, knighthood, and *Camelot* itself are often referred to in the news, in other works of literature, and in visual media. All the classes read the script to the Broadway musical *Camelot*.

Individual teachers chose to examine other parts of the story in different ways, including film clips, reference books, the “original” tales from Chrétien de Troyes and Thomas Mallory, Chaucer, John Steinbeck’s retelling of the stories, a little Walt Disney, and other sources. In addition, teachers added research projects about medieval ideas such as courtly love, the wheel of fortune, and the great chain of being. Some students designed shields and heraldry projects.

Teachers in other disciplines also participated in the activities. The physics class built a catapult. United States History classes studied the idea of the Kennedy Administration as *Camelot* and produced a visual project on that subject.



At the end of the day, students went to the football stadium to watch an archery demonstration by a local physician who spoke to the students about medieval weaponry, showing some of the weapons, such as spears and battle-axes, which would have been used in medieval hand-to-hand combat. Then he demonstrated the use of the bow by shooting a large artificial boar as a target. The school choir hosted a jousting tournament. Each class had four elected champions who competed on stick horses using pool noodles tipped with powdered chalk as lances.

Terri Cox, Chapter Advisor
Barbara Curry Chapter

Members of the Barbara Curry Chapter in Friona, Texas get **NEHS Kudos!** for their great idea!

Here is what members of the Barbara Curry Chapter did to enhance their school's activity:

The King Arthur study culminated with a day of activities hosted by the Barbara Curry Chapter of the NEHS. During the early part of the day, NEHS members dressed as King Arthur, Queen Guinevere, and a herald visited classes. They knighted or “ladies” selected students in a ceremony that involved the traditional dubbing of a knight or presenting a lady with a wreath of flowers for her hair. As part of the ceremony, each recipient donned a T-shirt to wear the rest of the day with the shield of the Knight of the Round Table on the front and his individual story on the back. The ladies’ shirts had artwork representing their characters. Students also participated in a chess tournament and backgammon games. Some students spent time in the stocks.

NEHS members decorated the cafeteria with royal blue tablecloths with red and gold accents. English classes contributed the shields they made to decorate the walls. The meal, served by Society members on genuine foam pewter plates, was eaten with only spoons and fingers. The cafeteria staff duplicated a medieval stew and added baked chicken legs, breadsticks, and apple cider and a pudding for dessert. Two students wearing jester suits juggled while the musical *Camelot* played on the cafeteria televisions. Society members dressed as medieval servants served the other students as King Arthur and Guinevere welcomed them to the banquet.

Talk to your school or your English department about getting involved in an activity and find a way for NEHS to help out and make it even better.

Chapter News

Monthly Poetry Challenge at the Byzantium Chapter

Randolph-Macon Academy is a college-preparatory boarding school located in Front Royal, Virginia. Each month, the Byzantium Chapter of the National English Honor Society, through its Monthly Poetry Challenge, presents a classic or contemporary poem to students in grades 9 - 12. The students are invited to read the poem carefully on their own time. They may respond to the poem critically or creatively: They may write a brief analysis or they may write a poem of their own reflecting the themes and techniques of the selected poem. The comments and poems are submitted online to a class page at <http://www.turnitin.com>.



The best student responses to the poem win an off-campus lunch. A variety of these responses are posted in the poetry announcement board. The poem is also distributed to faculty and staff, who are invited to examine the poem and submit responses.

The goal is to encourage community dialogue on language as well as on intellectual and artistic matters. The program receives excellent participation each month. In addition, more students are writing poems of their own, which helps develop the school literary magazine.

Robert Davies, Chapter Advisor
Byzantium Chapter

Take your chapter to a new level with these technology tips:

- Create a blog for your chapter so members can post their writing or ideas just for fun!
- Use a site like <http://www.turnitin.com> to practice editing and for peer review.
- Ask your school for some web space and host a chapter web page.
- Ask for your literary magazine submissions electronically and start a 'zine for your school!

Here are some great ways chapters and English classes around the country are integrating technology into their study of English:

Check out the Cardinal Chapter's Webpage:

<http://chihi.chipfalls.k12.wi.us/nehs/> where they list meeting and activity announcements, recent member accomplishments and more!

New Chapter Reminder:

If your school has a web page with a list of clubs and activities, remember to ask the school administration to add NEHS to the list!


writing our hope
a 'zine of creative nonfiction by teenagers
on themes of hope, tolerance and equality

"Writing Our Hope" is a forthcoming web-zine that will publish selected works of creative nonfiction on the themes of hope, tolerance, and/or equality. Any student in grades 9-12 in Canada, the U.S. or Mexico may submit work for consideration. This web project is a follow up to the print anthology, "Our Hope: Writings and Photographs by Teenagers on Tolerance and Equality."

For more information or to obtain a copy of the print anthology, please see www.writingourhope.org.

Is your chapter using technology in a unique way at your meetings or events? Write to the Museletter at nehs@niu.edu and tell us about it!

Chapter News



Top NEHS Service and Fundraising Activities of 2007

1. Sponsor a “Book at the Movies” night and show movies that are associated with books. (i.e., *Pride and Prejudice*, *Jane Eyre*) You can’t charge for the movie, but you can sell refreshments for the event.
- Treasure Island Chapter in Indian Trail, NC
2. Poetry reading at a local park (with s’mores and hot cocoa) or make it a Holiday Story time.
- Aquila Bellica Chapter in Conroe, TX
3. Host a “Poetry Slam” or “Spoken Word” event at school. Invite a well-known poet and ask local radio shows to attend. Perhaps you can perform on the radio, at local coffee houses, in your school’s media center or with collaboration with local poets. If you want, make it a school-wide contest!
- Prometheus Bound Chapter in Durham, NC
4. “Adopt” schools in South Africa and/or other African countries. (Ask your district supervisors to see if you have any pre-existing ties to schools in other countries—you might be surprised.) Send them books, school supplies, and perhaps start a letter-writing campaign with some of their students.
- Beta Gamma Chapter in Woden, TX
5. Connect with and visit a nearby Sigma Tau Delta chapter at a university. Perhaps their officers could take your officers on a tour of their campus and share information with them about advanced English degrees and career opportunities.
- Kawliga Chapter in El Paso, TX
6. Design and sell T-shirts or hold a “Senior Celebration” to honor two or more years of involvement.
- Virgil I. Grissom High Chapter in Huntsville, AL
7. Produce poetry and spoken word albums to sell. Consider starting or working with your school’s literary magazine.
- Spiritus Mundi Chapter in Gainesville, FL
8. “Adopt” elementary school students at a local school and partner NEHS members with younger students in ongoing literacy activities.
- The Lyceum Chapter in Winter Haven, FL
9. Hold a “book drive” and restock the library at a local homeless shelter or hospital.
- Coral Gables Senior High Chapter in Coral Gables, FL

The Museletter would like to thank all of the chapters and advisors who sent in the Annual Chapter Reports for sharing all of their great ideas!

Induction Ideas

- Hold an Induction Luncheon to increase visibility of the chapter at school. Dress it up and make it an event students want to attend.
- Induct students at a school-wide assembly. They will feel the honor of the event.
- Reserve the library or other large setting for a more formal induction at night. Invite a local author or English professor to share with students and parents. Send formal invitations and print programs for the event. Hold a reception afterwards to honor the inductees. (Tablecloths and candlesticks can add a nice touch).

“This year we have a wonderful, hard-working board that is coming up with some wonderful ideas. We have some new talented members who are already writing a play for some of the nursing homes and the after care students. The students plan on making their own costumes and scenery.”

- Arlene Mandel
Everglades High School

Chapter News

NEHS Members Serve their Community and Encourage Literacy for All Ages



The Woodlands High School Chapter of NEHS has a membership of fifty students. These members have continued the high standards set by those of the previous year's members. Through recognition by the school, the principal, and by the superintendent of this district, membership of actively involved people is growing. The biggest activities are community service-oriented and have drawn members of the school community to seek membership in greater numbers. The community services of TWHS NEHS are Reading Buddies and Forum Friends.

Reading Buddies involves another school, Wilkerson Intermediate School. Here, our members are matched with fifth and sixth graders who have been identified as being weak in reading. Our members go to the school at least twice a month at a minimum. There, they share reading skills and companionship with tentative readers. We have done this for several years, with astonishing results. The younger students improve immensely in their reading capabilities and, probably through having a high school Reading Buddy, their self-images improve.

Forum Friends meet with members of a retirement community, once a week, for an hour. The students who are involved in this community service play word games and share their time with elderly people. These people are always glad to have our young people share time with them. They are energized by the activities and the fellowship our students provide. It is interesting to look at these two projects together. The groups are at opposite ends of the life perspective, but offer much the same service, fellowship and encouragement.

Dr. Janet Emmons
The Woodlands High School Chapter
The Woodlands, TX

Reviews for Reading Buddies and Forum Friends

"The reading program at Wilkerson directly impacts us as a school as those students will enter high school better prepared as a result of the Reading Buddies. It also provides an environment in which students can celebrate the study of the English language. NEHS promotes through its membership an atmosphere of academic success."

- The Principal at The Woodlands High School

"The impact of reading buddies has an effect on the mentor. My daughter, Stephanie, has mentioned what a rewarding experience it has been for her to see her reading buddy improve over the school year. It gives the teens involved a sense of what they can do."

- The Wilkerson School Nurse,
a NEHS Reading Buddy Parent

"She made me happy and excited and ... she knows a lot of words so she helped me with the words."

"As a volunteer in the National English Honor Society [and] as a participant in the Reading Buddies program at our local intermediate school, I have seen how much a difference one person can make, especially to a young child. Within just 20 minutes of reading with each other, my Marco was starting to feel more confident and started reading in funny voices. He dove into the story and got so into it that I didn't have to read every other page anymore, he just read for me. My calendars are permanently marked in red marker on Mondays with "Reading Buddies." It's the best way to start the week."

- Colleen, NEHS Student



Dollars for Scholars

Thinking of college? It's not too early for seniors to begin your application for NEHS college scholarships. Through the generosity of our parent organization, Sigma Tau Delta (honor society for English students at four year colleges and universities), and from Sigma Kappa Delta (for English students at two year colleges), several scholarships are available, ranging from \$500-\$1500 in value. Academic accomplishment, chapter involvement, and writing ability, are the criteria.



Check the NEHS website (www.NEHS.us) for full details and directions.



Planning for College?

Bookmark

<http://money.cnn.com/pf/college/> and keep up-to-date on the changing world of college tuition, applications and rankings.

A New Organizational Tool Makes Searching for Colleges Just a Little Bit Easier

One bit of good news for busy high school juniors and seniors is the newly revamped United States Department of Education website –it's student friendly and easy to use!

College Navigator is a free consumer information tool designed to help students, parents, high school counselors, and others get information about nearly 7,000 post-secondary institutions in the United States.

Using College Navigator, students can:

Search

- by programs or degrees offered
- institution type and/or institutional mission (historically black colleges and universities, single-sex)
- price
- selectivity
- distance from home
- school size
- extended learning opportunities for adults (weekend and evening degree programs)
- intercollegiate athletics programs offered

Compare

- up to four institutions in one view, and maintain a list of favorite institutions from different searches.

Save

- sessions and receive an email with a link taking them back to where they left off.

Export

- search results to easily-used formats, such as Excel.

The College Navigator was developed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the Institute of Education Sciences. NCES plans continuing improvements in the content and function of the site, and there are plans for a Spanish version in the coming months.

Visit College Navigator: <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

Words, Words, Words

Wit and Wisdom

“Inject a few raisins of conversation into the tasteless dough of existence.”

- O. Henry

“An idea is a feat of association.”

- Robert Frost

“A cynic is a man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.”

- Oscar Wilde

“Dreams are the touchstones of our character.”

- Henry David Thoreau

“The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.”

- Robert Maynard Hutchins

“Language is the light of the mind.”

- John Stuart Mill

“All good things which exist are the fruits of originality.”

- John Stuart Mill

What do You Wonder?

Our ability to inquire, to wonder, to observe is powerful. It is perhaps one of our greatest human abilities and the source of most of what we learn. Words themselves exist because of the need to express an idea that began somewhere as the seed of a thought in the mind of someone willing to explore their wonderings.

Curiosity, or simply even a desire to learn more about something, is the beginning of wonder. And it is wonder—that feeling aroused by something strange or surprising—which leads to creativity and exploration.

Consider ways in which you could encourage the members of your community to express their wonderings.



“Wonder is the feeling of a philosopher, and philosophy begins in wonder.”
- Socrates

Interesting and Important Events this Winter

December

1 - World AIDS Day
10 - Human Rights Day

January

National Poverty Awareness Month

Check out: www.dosomething.org to see what your school or chapter can do to raise awareness!

February

Black History Month
Library Lovers Month
22 - Thinking Day

March

Women’s History Month
2 - National Reading Day
8 - International Women’s Day

Do some research as a chapter and think of creative ways to express the purpose behind the events we celebrate as a country...perhaps even plan an event of your own?

Words, Words, Words

Words from Afar

This edition of Words from Afar is a focus on words from a long way off—the past! Catachresis is the drift of meaning. Meaning can change for unknown reasons, possibly due to usage errors or deliberately mixed metaphors. For this reason, surprisingly often, the meaning becomes its opposite. Consider the use of the phrases “*That’s bad*” or “*That’s so sick!*” today.

Sometimes old meaning is preserved in a phrase or expression. That it is with “neck,” which was once used to describe a parcel of land. Now, the same meaning is preserved in the phrase “*neck of the woods.*” Also “*tell*” used to mean to count, a meaning which is still used in the term “bank teller.”

Words can also change by becoming more specific. For example, “*starve*” originally meant to die before it took on the more particular sense of to die by hunger.

Mishearing, without correction, has also contributed to the changing of words over time. Buttonhole was once “*buttonhold,*” sweetheart was once “*sweetard*” and asparagus was, for 200 years, “*sparrow grass.*”

How words are made...

- **Error**—the word “*dord,*” which never existed before it showed up in the 1924 dictionary as another meaning for density.
- **Backformation**—the word “*pea*” was originally “*pease,*” mistakenly thought to be plural and “*pea*” was the assumed singular.
- **Adoption**—“*ketchup*” from China, “*potato*” from Haiti, “*sofa*” from Arabia, “*slogan*” from Gaelic, “*boondocks*” from Tagalog (Philippines)

Many words are made up by writers.

Shakespeare used 17,677 words in his writing, of which one tenth had never before been used. These included: critical, leapfrog, monumental, majestic, obscene, frugal, radiance, dwindle, countless, submerged, excellent, fretful, gist, hint, hurry, lonely, summit, pendant and about 1,685 others.

Who Knew????

Counterfeit- once meant a legitimate copy

Brave- once implied cowardice

Crafty- was once a word of praise

Enthusiasm- was once a term of mild abuse

Garble- once meant to sort out, or fix

Harlot- once a term for any boy

Girl- in Chaucer’s day, any young person, whether male or female

Manufacture- once signified something made by hand

Politician- was originally a dirty word for someone (maybe still is!)

Notorious- famous, with no negative connotation


Nice- recorded in 1320 to mean stupid and foolish

“When James II first saw St. Paul’s Cathedral, he called it amusing, awful and artificial, and meant that it was pleasing to look at, deserving of awe, and full of skillful artifice.”



- The quotation and information for this edition of “Words from Afar” was taken from *The Mother Tongue: English and How it Got That Way* by Bill Bryson. This book is a wonderful resource for English teachers or anyone interested in learning about the history of our mother tongue or fun facts about the English language!

Creative Corner



The Second Chance of Life

Here we stand with statue and grace
As senior students
We set the pace
The time will come we'll have to choose
Where we go and what we do
Life is here life is now
And it's the little moments that make us go wow!
...
Graduation is here
cap and gown are on and it is real,
We've learned we've grown and now we know,
Up the aisle and across the stage
This is the time to fly away.
Say goodbye to our friends
Realizing that this is the end
Hoping just to meet again.
To never forget the times we've had
Good, bad and in between.
Moments that will stay with us forever,
Pictures, talk and so much more
Will remain until there is no more.
Hoping to never forget what we once had
We have had it so easy now it shall change
We will go to college and make a change.
As we sit in our dorm rooms
making new friends
Wishing it all didn't come to an end.
Thinking of the old memories we have had,
Laying all alone in our beds
reflecting back on memories inside our head
oh so confused.
We will think, we will cry and then decide
there is no second chance for this
It happens once and that is it.
I'll do it now and I'll try to fit
this new little world that we have made
To learn and grow
This is our time to glow.
We prepare ourselves to go out in the world
To work, and mature in the natural world
All of that we will learn
Find a way to stick with it.
We will have no more chances to work it out
This is it,
The final straw
So do it now and have a ball.

*Cassandra Gip and Courtney Donovan
The English Enlightenment Chapter
Whitehall Central School*

What is Poetry?

“All slang is metaphor, and all metaphor is poetry.”

- G.K. Chesterton

“I wish our clever young poets would remember my homely definitions of prose and poetry; that is, prose = words in their best order; --poetry = the best words in the best order.”

- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

“Poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history”

- Aristotle

“Every poem is a new metaphor inside or it is nothing. And there is a sense in which all poems are the same old metaphor always.”

- Robert Frost

“Poems are hymns of praise to the glory of life.”

- Edith Sitwell

Where Do You Get Your CREATIVE INSPIRATION?

Do You:

1. Sit with a journal and wait for beauty to flow?
2. Start with an outline and work your way to the end?
3. Grab the nearest utensil and tablet and begin to write whatever comes out?
4. Sit with a book of photos or images from a magazine until you feel moved to express them with your words?

Creative Corner



Old Man Obsolete

There he sat- there he sat as he became the bench.

Cracked hands, rough skin, strong back his crusty shield.

Against the world he sits.

Those smooth, those capable, those unbelievably clear eyes the only exchange. What does he see? Just what does he see?

He sits

There in his failures, in his mistakes, in his disappointments- and he becomes dirty, becomes crusty.

And in that squalor he is wise. Wiser than the smallest creature or the biggest believer. But who is there to see that he is wise?

For people, oh, how so many people pass by!- and pass by without consciousness the only being that is awake.

Yet there he sits sunken in in his defeat and astutely eyes the people who are so blind. He hides from the world that rejects and years form a crust so that he may be safe. Against time he sits and he sits so broken, so battered but yet so intact.

For he is wise.

Elena Thomas
Spiritus Mundi Chapter
Eastside High School

*“How do I know what I think
until I see what I say?”*

- E. M. Forster

Starting Anew

Looking back on their past it seemed so distant and blurry,
With a mother and father filled with much fury.
Many new homes filled with violence and hate,
No wonder the two young girls grew up and left too late.

Their Mother was sick, tormented each and every night,
Sent to the hospital so she would not end the fight.
Hitting her daughters trying to lessen the pain,
Making them feel as if they were drowning in the rain.


Their father was never around,
Having another family that was where he was bound.
So to make it all better a new man stepped in,
He taught those young girls how to love again.

A few years would pass, as more problems would arise,
Those two young girls were given The Grand Prize.
For their pain and suffering they received a second chance,
The Prize was a new home and life to enhance

Their second chance would let them grow,
They would spread their wings and their hearts would glow.
Given a new life with much to learn
They would walk straight to the future and never return.

Crystal LaRock
The English Enlightenment Chapter
Whitehall Central School

*The Museletter is NEHS' biannual
newsletter written by and for
both student members and
faculty advisors.*



*Chapter members and Faculty Advisors are
invited to submit brief items for publication
consideration. All submissions must be
made through the Faculty Advisor and then
submitted via electronic format. Prose pieces
should not exceed 200 words (excluding
the author's name, school and chapter
name). Poems should not exceed 125 words
(excluding the author's name, school and
chapter name).*

***Deadline for the spring issue is
March 25, 2008.***

*Send all submissions to editor Jennifer Goen
at nehs@niu.edu.*