

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH *Lingua*

News from the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
Spring/Summer 2010



French students perform a scene from Samuel Beckett's play, "Waiting for Godot."



Two German students present a reading of the poem "Die Lorelei"

Language Department Hosts End of Year Celebration

Foreign language students and faculty gathered for the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures' annual End of the Year Party on Thursday April 25.

The event started with achievement awards given out to students in the French, German, Japanese and Spanish programs. Special awards were presented to Spanish instructor Liliana Sciarrotta and German student Ken Norby, and special recognition was

also given to the department's administrative assistant, Kathy Lutzke, who recently won the Spring 2010 College of Letters & Science Service Recognition Award. Lutzke has worked at UWO for 26 years.

The awards were followed by student presentations. Several French students acted out a scene from Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" and a shortened version of "Antigone." Two German students presented Henrich

Heine's classic poem "Die Lorelei," followed by a brief Japanese lecture on the award-winning documentary "The Cove." The student contributions were wrapped up with a reading of Pablo Neruda's "Poem 20" in English and its native Spanish.

The evening ended with a potluck meal provided by the staff, with various dishes offered while students and instructors had a chance to socialize.

Spanish Instructor Wins Excellence Award

UW Oshkosh Spanish instructor Liliana Sciarrotta received an Excellence in Teaching Award from the UW Oshkosh chapter of the National Society of Leadership and Success on April 25.

The UWO National Society of Lead-

ership and Success gives out three Excellence in Teaching awards every year to instructors who demonstrate a dedication to encouraging students to succeed. Sciarrotta was nominated by Elizabeth Hayward.

"I am very proud of being part of the

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh," Sciarrotta said. "Every day here is an opportunity to learn and to give the best of myself."

Sciarrotta has been teaching at UW Oshkosh since 2008. She is originally from Buenos Aires, Argentina.

German student wins Raaf scholarship

Between writing German fairy tales about magical sneezes to winning scholarships, Ken Norby has kept busy during his time at UW Oshkosh.

UWO senior and German major Ken Norby was recently awarded the Daniel W. Raaf scholarship, an academic award for students in the College of Letters and Science.

In addition to receiving the Raaf scholarship, Norby also won the Outstanding First-Year Student award from the German program during his freshman year.

Norby started taking German classes as an elective in the 8th grade. He was inspired by watching his older brother studying for high school German classes with his mother. He was also impressed by his brother studying abroad in Germany and wanted to do the same.

In high school Norby participated in a German exchange student program near Nuremberg. A standout memory from that trip was the impression made by the school system there.

"It was interesting because I went to some of the classes with my peers and they were learning things from a few grades up in American schools," Norby said. "Their school system just seemed more advanced."

With this interest in schooling, it's no surprise that Norby was attracted to an education major. After attending a forensics meet at UW Oshkosh during his sophomore year at Hamilton High School in Sussex, Wisconsin, Norby decided that UWO was the place for him.

After taking an entrance exam in German, Norby's five years of language study placed him in the 300 level.



German student Ken Norby says his German professors were among the best he's had at UWO.

Even though he intended to be an Education major with an emphasis in math, Norby said he, "couldn't justify not being a German major" with his years of experience and love of the language.

Norby says he has enjoyed both the content and the structure of his German classes at UWO.

"Not only are they challenging enough for someone who's been taking German for nine years, but they're hard enough to be interesting," Norby said.

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Checking in with UWO alumna Terry Moeller

Oshkosh native Terry Moeller has traveled around the globe and up the corporate ladder, all after making the choice to attend UW Oshkosh.

Terry Moeller transferred to UWO after attending UW Eau Claire her freshman year. She knew she wanted to major in Spanish, but came to Oshkosh because of the international studies program, which was the 8th highest ranked in the country at the time.

Moeller double majored in International Studies and Spanish and took up a minor in French as well as an emphasis in Economics. During her time at UWO she was active in both the campus and the Oshkosh community.

"In addition to the wide variety of classes which all helped me grow and develop in different ways, I also had a great experience participating in the Model Organization of American

States during my last two years of college." Moeller says. "My outreach to the community through organizations like the Northeast Wisconsin World Trade Association began during my time at UW Oshkosh and continued throughout the first 10 years of my career."

After graduating from UWO in 1990, Moeller worked for SNC Manufacturing as an international sales coordinator. She then worked at Barr Equipment, Inc. and then Norstan Communications.

In 1999 Moeller began working at Schreiber Foods, Inc., a multinational company that produces private label dairy products. She started as a global trade business sales manager and worked her way up through the company; she was recently promoted to Director of Marketing and Product Strategies.

Moeller says that her education at UWO was invaluable in furthering her career.

"To say I have relied on my language skills throughout my career would be an understatement," Moeller says. "The reality is that my ability to effectively communicate in Spanish, and to a lesser extent French, has often been the differentiator that got me the position in the first place and throughout my career those skills have helped me through difficult negotiations which I would not have wanted to trust to an interpreter."

Moeller also points out that having studied the structure of two foreign languages has helped her to speak English in a more neutral way that is easier to understand for non-English speakers.

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Moeller (cont. from page 2)

Moeller says that while language skills are invaluable in an increasingly competitive job market, today's graduates need to offer still more.

"Language studies alone are not enough," Moeller says. "I think it is critical to combine those language skills with something else whether it is business, medicine, education or law."

Moeller uses her own children as an example; even though they have become bilingual through living in Mexico for three years, they will continue to study languages.

"My 14 year old is already studying French and I would expect that [my children] will each need to speak at least two foreign languages if they want to be able to differentiate themselves when they hit the workforce," Moeller said. ¶

Norby (cont. from page 2)

Another important part of Norby's UWO experience has been his professors. Having taken numerous classes with Drs. Elizabeth Wade-Sirabian and Alan Lareau, Norby comments, "They are hands down two of the top professors I've had at UWO."

Norby intends to graduate in spring 2011 with a degree in Secondary Education with emphases in German and math. ¶

Former French professor, chair of dept., moves on to VA

After a one-year hiatus, former French professor and chair of the Foreign Languages and Literatures Department Simon Sibelman has headed east to pursue a different aspect of academia.

During Sibelman's 2009-2010 leave of absence from UWO he worked with the Virginia Holocaust Museum, the London Jewish Culture Centre and the Centre d'Histoire de la Résistance et de la Déportation in Lyon, France, as an educational and cultural consultant while encouraging the three organizations to collaborate on several joint ventures.

At his new position as the Assistant Executive Director at the VHM he is currently working on a one-year program focusing on France and the Holocaust for the 2011-2012 season.

"The theme we shall explore in exhibits, films, lectures and educational seminars will be 'the Righteous Among the Nations,' namely those non-Jews who saved Jewish lives during the Holocaust," Sibelman says.

"We shall have art and photographic exhibits from Poland, the UK and New York. The entire season will kick off with a special event to which we

have invited the ambassadors of 16 nations whose diplomats saved Jewish lives during the Holocaust."

Sibelman is originally from Richmond, VA. He holds a BA Summa Cum Laude in French and Russian from the University of Richmond, an MA from Georgetown University and a PhD in French from King's College at the University of London.

Sibelman first taught at UWO from September 1990 until 1996, then returned again in September 2000. He served as coordinator of the French Program for a number of years and was co-chair of the department in his final year. Sibelman instated the DFLL End of the Year Party as well as the French Ciné Club. He also served on more than a dozen different committees over his years at UWO.

In 1995, the university awarded Sibelman its Distinguished Teaching Award, and he was also awarded the TRISS Endowed Professorship and then the John M. Rosebush University Professorship.

Sibelman says his favorite thing about teaching is seeing students synthesize and understand the material.

"What I love most about teaching is

the ability to feed students' desire to learn," Sibelman says. "When they learn a new language or expand their existing knowledge about another language and culture, you can sense both the enthusiasm and the momentum as each student digests new materials and begins to put them into their linguistic memory."

He also appreciates the impact education has on the one teaching.

"Teaching another language also inspires the professor. You need to be aware of changes in language and culture; you need to touch hearts and minds; you must drive yourself and continually demonstrate your own passion. I find all of that to be wonderfully energizing."

In addition to his work at the VHM Sibelman will have three articles published this year, as well as a book slated to come out in 2011. He has also participated in multiple conferences and will continue to teach French at a local community college and a graduate-level course on Holocaust film and literature.

"Needless to say," Sibelman says, "I shall be a bit busy for some time to come." ¶

Spotlight: Club Nippon

A look at UWO's Japanese Club (Photos courtesy of Mai See Xiong)

Club Nippon hosted UWO's Japan Week celebration from April 5-9, 2010.



Above: Members of Club Nippon demonstrate Yosakoi, a unique style of dance that pairs traditional Japanese dance moves with modern music.



Above: The St. Louis Osuwa Taiko, brought in by Club Nippon to cap off Japan Week, performed for a crowd of students during the Titan Nights program in Reeve Union.



Above: Club Nippon hosted a taiko performance and demonstration as part of their Japan Week celebration.



Above: Students gathered in Reeve Union to learn traditional taiko drumming techniques from the St. Louis Osuwa Taiko group.

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