

# The Well-Turned Word

Newsletter of the **NC Conference of English Instructors**  
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*Turning New Pages*  
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## Join These!

- **CEI**: Annual dues: \$15, full-time faculty; free, part-time faculty. To join, complete and mail the [application form](#).
- **TYCA-Southeast**: Annual dues: \$25, full-time faculty; \$10, adjunct faculty. To join, complete the and mail the [application form](#).
- **NC Faculty Association**: If any group can succeed in pushing toward higher salaries for us, this is it! Please join and support the Faculty Association. To join, complete the [online application form](#).

## CEI Officers and Reps

### Officers:

- Anne Helms, Alamance CC, president
- Melissa Byrd, Lenoir CC, vice-president
- Deana St. Peter, Guilford Tech, secretary-treasurer
- Megan Simpson, Guilford Tech, membership chair
- Carol Marion, Guilford Tech, newsletter editor
- JoAnn Buck, Guilford Tech, past president

### Western reps:

- Tom Hearn, Caldwell CC
- Jessica Saxon, Caldwell CC
- Scott Temple, Cleveland CC

### Central reps:

- Kerry Cantwell, Durham Tech
- Alexandra DeSiato, Alamance CC
- David Watson, Central Carolina CC

### Eastern reps:

- Deborah Doolittle, Coastal Carolina CC
- Kim Turnage, Lenoir CC
- *Open*

According to the [CEI Constitution](#), the duties of a regional rep are as follows: "Regional Representatives will communicate with faculty within their respective regions; represent faculty within their regions; attend regularly scheduled Executive Board meetings, as well as annual business and regional meetings; work with the

## President's Corner

### Gathering Our Climbing Gear: A CEI Conference in the Making

I don't have to point out to any of you that this has been a challenging year that followed another challenging year. For most of us, the economy has ushered record numbers of students to our campuses, dramatically raising numbers of sections, class sizes, grading loads. At the same time budgets are tight—more and more to accomplish with fewer and fewer resources. Beyond the normal ongoing challenges, many of our colleges are somewhere in the serious years of the SACS accreditation process. Many of us are converting our online/hybrid/supplement materials to Moodle. Sometimes we look up from the piles of work on our desks and in our book bags and ask, "How much more?"

In the survey that CEI did last fall, you asked for specific topics to help you to survive these challenging times:

- Ideas for teaching ENG 111
- Strategies for managing the paper load
- Help for keeping up with changing technology
- Tactics for managing disruptive classroom behaviors

CEI has always been focused on providing practical sessions on the topics faculty need most, ideas and handouts that we can take home and insert into our classrooms the week we get back. Even though budgets are still tight, the CEI Board voted unanimously to move forward with a conference this fall, October 24-26. The less time we have for getting away for a conference, the more we really need to do so.

The survey respondents listed their biggest concerns about attending a conference as these

- Cost
- Time out of the classroom

Board to nominate representatives when vacancies arise." We need to fill the open position. If you are interested in serving, please contact Anne Helms at Alamance Community College.

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### A Word from the Editor

Attending professional activities is a challenge these days with demanding schedules and limited financial support, but maybe you could arrange something for your own department by utilizing your FT and PT instructors. While I know that bigger schools may have access to more opportunities, I also know that all of us are creative people and good problem-solvers. If you can't get administrative support for off-site professional activities, try creating your own in-house gatherings. It doesn't have to be elaborate or expensive. We have scheduled gatherings where we ate pot-luck as we shared experience and perspectives. We have met on Saturday mornings, during department meetings, and sometimes during the "school day," but we can usually find time for mutual support. Whatever you arrange to do, be sure to sign up for PD credit. Here's what we recently did:

Last week, the English department at GTCC held its own professional day-long seminar that garnered about 40 participants. Being the radicals that we are, we decided that we knew best what mattered in the English classroom, so we polled our department (including our adjuncts) for ideas on presentations and set up our own conference. We arranged the space at a local church and had a beautiful spot for very little cost. The day began with small-group breakout sessions in which we shared favorite teaching tips, activities, assignments, strategies, etc. Everyone who attended brought a copy, so although we talked in smaller groups, everyone went home with about 39 new ideas. After a break, we had the chance to select from three concurrent presentations—I chose the session on "ORID: What is Literature?", but other topics were also available. Then, of course, we had lunch, which we bought with department funds (Papa John's \$10 pizza deal helped us on that score). After lunch, we had another set of concurrent sessions (my pick was "Using Music in

- Distance of the travel
- Coverage for the classes

We can't solve all of these problems, but I want to make several commitments to you right now

- To keep this conference as inexpensive as we can
- To keep you informed about the sessions that will be offered well in advance so that you will know that you will be attending sessions you need and so that you can make a good case to your administration for attending.
- To have a conference that justifies your time away from the classroom and your efforts to find coverage for your classes and to travel.

In exchange for my commitment, I need commitment from you. I need your commitment

- to join this organization (\$15 per year for full time, free for adjuncts)
- to write the CEI conference time on your calendar begin planning to attend a conference next fall right now
- to begin thinking about a presentation that you could make that would help your fellow English faculty on one of the topics listed previously
- to send in a proposal for that presentation when the request goes out in April

I'll see you in New Bern,

Anne Helms  
CEI President

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### News from the Front

- **Now you can find us in new places!**



- **And another change coming soon:** Electronic membership and renewal! Yes, we are working on a link and PayPal payment system that will allow you to join and renew without paper (pending approval).
- Soon, we will be setting up a recruiting blitz that will include visits to non-participating campuses.

the Classroom”) and we ended the day with a large group discussion of challenges facing the department. We began around 8:30 and dismissed around 3:15—it was a good day for everyone.

We had a day off campus, we got professional development credit, and had a chance to work with colleagues, many of whom we rarely get to see due to conflicting schedules. Of the 40 participants, we had full-time, adjunct, and faculty-in-training folks. It would be safe to say that we not only enjoyed the day, but came back to work feeling rejuvenated from the experience.

Have you got a similar experience to share? Send it to me and I'll include it in a future newsletter.

***P.S. We need your help! Please share news from your school, tips for the classroom, experiences for growth, ideas for professional development, etc. We want to hear from you and make you a part of this publication.***

### **Call for Proposals: CEI for Fall 2010**

As requested in the President's Message above, we need proposals for presentations, workshops, etc. for the fall conference. Please submit your ideas in April when the request goes out. Of course, you are invited more whole-heartedly to submit proposals earlier than April—your commitment helps us all.

#### **UPDATE:**

### **“There will be a Big Time in the Old Town”**

Come celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of North Carolina's second oldest town. This October, CEI is holding its conference in New Bern, North Carolina. The original seat of power in North Carolina, New Bern offers Tryon Palace as one of its many historic venues. Every year, the historical society features some of the oldest homes in New Bern in its Old Homes Tour. In addition to the Haunted House Walking tour, New Bern boasts some of the best eateries in the area, offering

#### **News from the Front (cont.)**

We need your help to accomplish this. If you are willing and able to volunteer some time to visit CC's in your area (or within an easy drive), please forward your name and identify the schools that you are willing to recruit. We need to revitalize membership at participating schools as well. Any location is a good location, so tell us where you are willing to go.

### **Podcasting Your Way to Easier Online Instruction!**

By Alexandra DeSiato at Alamance

Podcasts, or voice lectures, are a quick, easy way to build content in online Blackboard or Moodle classes. All you need is an inexpensive digital recording device, and you can record yourself giving a lecture, explaining a piece of literature, or extrapolating on the merits of using MLA for citation purposes. Aside from having to cringe at the sound of your own voice, creating voice lectures for online students has no real drawbacks. I've used them for about a year now. Here are some tips you may find useful.

#### **Podcasts:**

- Are easy
- Are re-usable
- Are helpful for students because they serve as a supplement to or alternative to reading course notes.

#### **I Use Podcasts:**

- *Primarily in online classes.* This semester, I began using them in supplemented courses.
- *As a supplement to written course notes,* not as a stand-alone assignment. Unless you can be certain that your students have access to Windows Media Player (or something similar) and computer speakers, it's impossible to require students to listen to the voice lectures.
- *To clarify or add to materials* already posted in the course. For instance, recently in one class, when a few students had questions about a new writing assignment, I posted a new podcast to clarify. In literature classes, I generally offer lectures that are very similar to the written lecture, so students who

everything from great breakfasts to superb seafood and steaks—with quaint tea houses and funky hot spots in between. Check out the New Bern bears scattered around the city, and note the creatively painted fire hydrants. New Bern also has wonderful shops downtown, from gifts to galleries, classic toys and apparel, and dog treats to pottery, you will find something to tickle your fancy. The best part is that some of the best dining and shopping is just a block or two from our hotel within easy walking distance. New Bern knows how to throw a party, and this year, the party lasts all year long. Don't miss the opportunity to join your friends and colleagues in New Bern for the CEI Fall Conference, coming in October.

can only read the materials won't miss much information.

**Tips!**

- *Keep them short!* 10 minutes is a LONG podcast. I aim to keep my voice lectures under 5 minutes long.
- *Don't record classes;* these podcasts are too long and clunky. I've heard instructors consider this; I don't think students could sit through a podcast that long and filled with disruption from the main source of information—you!
- *Talk quickly!* They can always look at written notes or listen twice. Keep things zippy and snappy if you want them to listen to them!
- *Create interesting titles and teaser lines.* I usually write something like "Listen to this if you really want to get Rossetti's use of imagery in 'Goblin Market.'" Try to get students interested, so they will hit that "play" button!