



THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION OF THE UNITED STATES
Education. Scholarship. Understanding.

CENTRAL FLORIDA

BRANCH NEWS

P.O. Box 758, Winter Park, FL 32790-0758

Website: www.ESUus.org/centralflorida

Email: centralfl@ESUus.org

November 2019

Issue #3 - 2019-2020

President:

Barbara W. Hughes

Executive VP:

Socky O'Sullivan

Vice Presidents:

Jan McClure

Gilda Gomez

Reta Jackson

Ginger Bryant

Treasurer:

Jackie Abrams

Asst. Treasurer:

Open

Secretary:

Deborah Williams

Past President:

Frank Paul Barber

Advisory Council:

Diane Sandquist

ESU National Board

Member:

Donna Miller

Parliamentarian:

Kenneth Hubble

Directors:

(2019-20)

Michael Kakos

Max Reed

Robert White

(2019-21)

Brett Carrier

Elaine Laegeler

Curt Dedge

(2019-22)

Reta Jackson

Ginger Bryant

Sheri Hjelm

National Patrons:

Vice Chairman's Circle

Donna Miller

Sponsor

Elizabeth Brothers

Michael and Aimee Kakos

Donor

Barbara W. Hughes

Loreta R. Jackson

Mr. and Mrs.

Kenneth D. McArthur

Lisa Vimmerstedt

Monday, November 11 Program 3:30 p.m. - The University Club of Winter Park



As soldiers write about their service, their personal experience becomes part of a nation's history. To commemorate Armistice Day, Dr. Matthew Forsythe will discuss the soldier-poets who fought in the first World War.

To celebrate Veterans Day, he will present a piece of his own nonfiction, "In Praise of Quiet Soldiers," that honors his father, grandfathers, and others who have served.

Dr. Forsythe is an Assistant Professor in the English Department at Rollins College, where he teaches classes in creative writing, American literature, children's literature, and editing.

He is the Director of the First-Year Writing Program and the recipient of the Walter E. Barden Distinguished Teaching Award.

Dr. Matthew Forsythe

War Writing: The Public and The Private

DREY ENDOWMENT NEWS

Educating the Educators

Four high school English teachers have received grants to attend the 2019 National Council of Teachers of English Annual Convention in Baltimore in November. Cavel Austin, Jones High; Nicole Alvirez, Colonial High; Rachel Schmitt, East River High and Paola Cavallaro, Lake Mary High will be headed to one of the most widely-respected education conferences in the world, bringing together famous authors and educators and attracting attendees from the U.S. and many other countries. This is the fifth year we have awarded four \$2000 grants to local teachers, helping them to expand and enrich their knowledge and teaching strategies for thousands of students.

Jan McClure, VP Drey Endowment

A Sublime Opportunity

The Central Florida ESU is proud to present an opportunity for a drawing that will thoroughly enhance the life of one branch member. This drawing is for an All-Expenses-Paid Trip to England to attend the "From Page to Stage: Text to Theater" T-Lab in Stratford-Upon-Avon, July 2020.

Immerse yourself in the language and world of Shakespeare. Through theatrical performances at the world-renowned Royal Shakespeare Company, lectures with eminent scholars, exclusive behind-the-scenes tours, and museum visits, you will explore Shakespeare's family homes, enjoy the sites and shops that make Stratford-upon-Avon a unique destination, and gain a new perspective on how the Bard legacy continues to shape our lives today. The 2019 Royal Shakespeare Company performances included "The Taming of the Shrew," "As You Like It," "Measure for Measure," "The Provoked Wife," and a performance at Shakespeare's Globe. The 2020 play schedule has not been posted.

This travel-learning experience is perfect for anyone interested in cultural exploration, lifelong learning, or just having a unique English experience. It's also an excellent opportunity for English, social studies, and theater teachers of all experience levels (including pre-service and retired), and others who are eager to engage in study with world-class scholars and educators in a historic setting.

Any Central Florida E-SU member interested in entering a drawing for this trip...

1. Must be a paid-up member of the Branch since 2017. Not eligible: current Branch officers, Teacher T-Lab Scholars from 2017-2019. If selected, you will not be eligible for a 2020 T-Lab Scholarship.
2. Must hold a valid passport and be free to travel to England in July, 2020.
3. Must be able to participate fully in a weeklong travel-learning experience with a moderate level of physical activity, i.e., international air travel, bus transfers, walking tours, museum visits and theater experiences.
4. Must send an application before midnight, January 8, 2020. The application will be posted in the November and December Branch Newsletters and available at the November 11 and December 2 meetings.
5. Must be present to win a drawing on January 22, 2020 during the 4 pm Branch meeting at the University Club, Winter Park. If your name is drawn, but you are not present, we will draw another name. A winner and an alternate will be selected.
6. If selected, must meet with a Branch officer to complete course registration details, including signing an ESU waiver of liability.

The application is included as an insert in this Newsletter.



AN AWAKENING J. Rick Rodriguez - Oxford 2019

I'm fond of telling my students that the depth of a course cannot be reached by reading a textbook or watching a video, but rather through immersion. The learning that I engaged in at Oxford went far beyond the texts and seminars. Initially, I was excited that I was going to learn in-depth about the Middle East and refugees in a seminar format. Professor Gareth Winrow, my tutor for the Middle East course, is an expert on Turkey and recently released a book on Amazon. Dr. Mark Levene, my tutor on refugees, presented a fascinating history on refugee movements and is an expert on climate change. Both of my professors were exceptional in their depth of knowledge and ability to engage us. I learned so much about those topics. I even wrote a paper in my Middle East course. But as the first week progressed, I began to network. It was this aspect of the experience that is the true nature of learning.

The conversations with other participants were invigorating. I met people from other universities in the United States as well as from around the world. Being a teacher, I became that annoying little kid who constantly asked all sorts of questions. Colleagues from Syria, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Colombia, and Canada gave me a different perspective regarding culture and global events. One example illustrates this. I had been thinking about which topic I would write about in my History of the Middle East seminar. During dinner at the fabulous dining hall at Exeter College, I was introduced to Rasa by another student whom I had just met. As we conversed, she mentioned that she was from Egypt, and I began to ask her questions. I was fascinated by her story. She was a teacher, a mother, a wife, an actress, and a revolutionary! She was excited and proud to share her story. I found out that she had been one of millions to have participated in the Arab Spring, which was the people's attempt at democratization in the Middle East. I was told how she and her family had marched into Tahrir Square in Cairo, armed with the greatest weapon of the people in the 21st century, their cellphones. I was fascinated, and the idea for my research paper was born. I would write about the Arab Spring and social media. In fact, my tutor loved not just the idea but also the title of my paper: *Virtual Squares and Inverted Pyramids: Social Media and Citizen Journalism in the Arab Spring*.

As an educator, I know that knowledge is infinite. The biggest fool out there is the one who believes he knows everything. I quickly found out I knew less. That was the greater insight during my stay at Oxford. My thirst for knowledge as an educator had been reawakened, and now I get to annoy my students with that knowledge once again.

Celebrating October

The ESU Dinner

Combine ESU members with delicious appetizers, libations, and food courses; then provide the scene with an accompaniment of showtunes, and the product is guaranteed to be an evening full of delights.



From Left: Elaine Laegeler, Ginger Bryant, Shirley Daiger, Carole Hinshaw, Elenita Brodie



From Left: Barbara Hughes and Brett Carrier

Celebrating October, continued

On October 23rd, members of the ESU were entertained with a lecture from Susan Rosoff, a Winter Park art historian who was Curator of Education at the Orlando Museum of Art. Rosoff seamlessly connected the dots between muses and artistry. The program was rich with visuals that will surely echo in the minds of our members for years to come!

From Left: Barbara Hughes, our President; Susan Rosoff, Program Speaker; Lynn Schiffhorst, Program Leader; Jerry Schiffhorst



REMINDER

Please contact Gilda Gomez, VP Membership, with any address, phone number, or email changes so that we may update your contact information. Please email any changes to esucfbmembership@gmail.com.

BRANCH BUSINESS



If you would prefer to receive your ESU newsletter via mail carrier, please notify Rebecca Van Horn at esu.rebeccavanhorn@yahoo.com, OR send a letter to ESU Rebecca Van Horn P.O. Box 758, Winter Park, Florida 32790-0758, OR sign your name on a list that will be at the check-in tables at the September meeting. **If you do not indicate that you want your newsletters sent by U.S. mail, you will receive it by email only.**

A SCHOLAR'S UPDATE

Jeff Cook - University of Edinburgh 2019

Much like David Greigg's title character, Prudencia Hart, I found myself approaching the task before me at the University of Edinburgh with interest and trepidation. Whereas Prudencia was a fan of the old Border Ballads, I was a fan of old school learning, but here we both are strangers in a new land, and so much the better for it.

Professionally, my biggest takeaway has been that there is a revolution underway in theatre today. It is no longer necessary to create plays and performances that fit the traditional model. The description that has stayed with me is "theatre without walls." There is this idea that performance is for the audience. Therefore it should be taken to the audience, wherever that may be, an old church, a bus, a flat, a pub, or even in an actual theatre. Another important aspect of contemporary theatre is the lack of adherence to the traditional timelines. Today's British and Irish playwrights are creating well-crafted stories that are told in as little as fifty-minutes. Most of the plays I read and/or saw never ran longer than eighty-minutes. The other big takeaway is regarding who has the right to tell the story, or who owns it? Theatre professionals need to ensure that the voice we hear is the voice we should be hearing. Now, as a teacher, I feel like I have permission to encourage divergent story-telling.

Personally, I have struggled in the past with the title of playwright. Even though I have written plays that have been produced, I didn't consider myself a writer. Well, guess what? Spending two-weeks in Edinburgh during the International Festival and the Fringe Festival taking in shows from around the world has told me one thing: I am. I am a writer, and I am a playwright. The sheer volume of work available to be seen—over 4000 shows—proved this to me. Turns out this old school learner is actually a part of the revolution. I do not write plays for the theatre. Instead, I write plays for the audience. I will continue to write, I will continue to look for inspiration around me, and I will help others tell their own stories.

Moving forward, I have so many ideas about how to use what I learned from the SUISS experience. First off, I am writing a new play. I plan on reaching out to my fellow theatre teachers to share what I've learned in a professional development session, including the incredible resources that SUISS has made available. Also, I have reached out to a local producer and we are discussing the possibility of producing one of the plays from the program here locally as a part of the Fringe Festival.

To the members of the ESU: when I am asked about the experience you so wonderfully provided me, the only word that I can find to offer it any justice is "transformative." I am not the man I was before, and I can never again look at the world through his eyes. I feel as though a veil has been lifted and like Prudencia Hart, I belong to this new world where old and new are in harmony.

Central Florida Branch ESU Programs for 2019-2020

All meetings are held at the University Club unless noted

- **Monday, November 11, 2019** – Veterans’ Day – “War Writing” -Matthew Forsythe (Rollins) 3:30-5 p.m.
- **Monday, December 2, 2019** – “When Ruthless Power Collides with Art: The Amazing Story Behind One of the World’s Greatest Paintings” – Lynn Schiffhorst 3:30- 5 p.m.
- **Wednesday, January 22, 2020** – Scholars’ Reports 4- 5:30 p.m.
- **Monday, January 27, 2020** – Dinner- Winter Park Racquet Club – Orlando Big Band 6-9 p.m.
- **Sunday, February 2, 2020**– Scholars’ Reception 2-4 p.m.
- **Monday, February 24, 2020** - Shakespeare Competition 4-5; 5 Reception 5:30 Awards
- **Monday, March 9, 2020** – “England and the American Civil War”
History Professor Wayne Bowen, UCF 3:30-5 p.m.
- **Monday, April 6, 2020** – “John Singer Sargent in England” – Jan Clanton
3:30- 5 p.m.
- **Monday, May 11, 2020** – “Shakespeare Scandals and Scoundrels” - Andrea Mays
and Annual Meeting 3:30-5:30 p.m.





The English-Speaking Union

Central Florida Branch
Post Office Box 758
Winter Park, FL 32790-0758

**THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
CENTRAL FLORIDA BRANCH
Membership Application**

- ☐ I wish to become a member of the English-Speaking Union, Central Florida Branch.
- ☐ I wish to renew my membership of the English-Speaking Union, Central Florida Branch.

Please send a check for \$45 (single membership) or \$60 (couple membership) to the **English-Speaking Union, PO Box 758, Winter Park, FL 32790-0758**.

Name and Spouse's Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone, Fax, and Email _____

Visit the E-SU Central Florida website at www.E-SUus.org/centralflorida for more information.



Central Florida English-Speaking Union

Entry form for January 22, 2020 Drawing

All-Expenses Paid Trip to England, July 2020

***Stratford-Upon-Avon
From Page to Stage: Text to Theater***

Submission of this application will enter the member in a blind drawing, January 22, 2020, 4pm at an ESU meeting at the University Club, Winter Park.

MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN

Member's name _____

Member since _____

E-mail that is checked every day _____

Phone _____

Email to janmcclure407@gmail.com by midnight, Jan. 8, 2020.

OR

Mail to Jan McClure, 2260 Deloraine Trail, Maitland, FL 32751 and **received by Jan. 8.**