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Have any interesting news items about faculty, staff, or students in your department? Submit them to Linda Steele ([lsteel@frostburg.edu](mailto:lsteel@frostburg.edu)) for the next issue.

## Philosophy Faculty Member Presents at International Workshop

Skott Brill (Department of Philosophy) presented his paper, "Sick and Healthy: Benatar and the Logic of Value," as part of an international workshop, taking place November 23-24, 2011 at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa, on South African Philosopher David Benatar's recent defense of the view that coming into existence is always a harm and its implication that procreating is almost always immoral (*Better Never to Have Been*, Oxford, 2006). Dr. Brill's paper will be published in a special issue of the *South African Journal of Philosophy*, one of the most long-standing philosophy journals in Africa, accredited by the ISI (Institute for Scientific Information).

## MCA Conference Draws Crowd

FSU's Department of Communication Studies hosted the 27th annual Maryland Communication Association conference, "Communicating Politically, Engaging Civilly," at FSU in mid-October.

At the conference reception, former Gov. Robert Ehrlich was the featured political communication practitioner. The reception highlighted cross-disciplinary collaboration with the Departments of Communication Studies (CMST), Mass Communication (MCOM), Music and Political Communication as well as the J. Glenn Beall, Jr., Institute for Public Affairs. With piano performance by music professor **Dr. Joan DeVee Dixon**, a singing performance by communication studies professor **Sheri Whalen** with music major **Erin Wheeler** on piano, and a fiddle performance by Walker Magrath, the event showcased the outcomes of experiential learning projects and honored local Appalachian culture.

The conference also brought together more than 80 MCA members from 24 colleges and universities from within and outside Maryland for academic panel, roundtable and debate sessions. The keynote address was by Dr. Ted Sheckels, a political communication scholar.

CMST alumna **Shavonne Shorter '08** received MCA's first graduate student Founders' Scholarship. Shorter is working on a doctorate in communication studies with an emphasis on organizational communication at Purdue University.

Company sponsors were McGraw Hill, Pearson, Bedford/St. Martins, Cengage Learning and RC Theaters.

For info on the conference or MCA, go to [www.marylandcomm.org](http://www.marylandcomm.org), or the CMST major/minor, [www.frostburg.edu/dept/cmst](http://www.frostburg.edu/dept/cmst).

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## Appalachian Festival Grows with More Dance Performances and Demonstrations

The sixth annual Appalachian Festival was held at FSU on Sept. 16-17. The event kicked off with the symposium, "Building Sustainable Communities Through Community Engagement and Activism," offered in partnership with the Sierra Student Coalition and FSU's Learning Green Living Green Initiative. The program featured speakers from the Keeper of the Mountains Foundation CitizenShale, and the Chesapeake Climate Action Network with a musical performance by Jay Smar.

The Festival itself was held on Saturday, with activities including two music stages, artisans, storytelling, living history, hands-on workshops, discussions, and multiple children's activities. New this year was the addition of Horn's Punch and Judy Show, a children's entertainment experience, to the daytime lineup. The capstone concert was presented by the renowned Irish group, Buffalo in the Castle. Festival Director Kara Rogers-Thomas was pleased with the event, stating "Despite the cool temperatures, this year's FSU Appalachian Festival was wonderfully successful. I was especially pleased with the caliber of programs and presentations we had focusing on the Appalachian Environment. Our Friday Symposium focused on that topic and we were delighted to see so many FSU students attend those talks. From an organizer's perspective, the 2011 event was particularly challenging because our capstone performers traveled from Ireland for this single performance, and working with an international group requires a tremendous amount of paperwork and coordination. But their concert was simply amazing and their performance encouraged us to incorporate a greater variety of traditional dance performances and demonstrations into this year's event. Those programs were incredibly well received. With six years of the Festival behind us, programmers are beginning to hear from teenagers who tell us they've grown up with the event and look forward to it every year. That bodes well for the future, as our 2012 event will be part of the City of Frostburg's Bicentennial Celebration."

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## Creative Writing Center Hosting Wide Range of Fall Programs

The Frostburg Center for Creative Writing kicked off its semester in September with Appalachian poet Irene McKinney as part of the 2011 reading series. Other readers this semester included South Carolina fiction writer Michael Griffith and nonfiction writer Lee Gutkind, who Vanity Fair deemed the "godfather of creative nonfiction." The center's reading series received an expanded audience with an average of sixty audience members at each reading.

The annual Western Maryland Small and Regional Press Festival, featuring local and regional independent presses and book fair, also expanded this year with over 100 participants in the day-long event of the book fair and panels on different genres of writing and various publishing outlets. Over twenty-five independent presses from Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Ohio were represented.

A five-week creative writing workshop for elementary and high school students was established with the Frostburg Public Library as part of the center's after school program series. Workshops were facilitated by FSU alumnus Darcy Gagnon and local poet Nina Forsythe; workshops offered this opportunity to twenty-seven students between the two classes. Two, five-week sessions are planned in the Spring.

The Music and Writing Workshop, Community Writers Workshop, and the Creative Reading Book Group continued this semester, offering free participant workshops on writing music reviews, using music as a muse to create new work, lyric writing, reviewing and editing creative work effectively, and reading books like a writer. The center hosted three contests including the Scary Story Contest, a Poetry Slam and a Story Slam.

The semester ended with the "Manuscript for Murder" Murder Mystery Dinner Theater Fundraiser which attracted 74 participants. "Manuscript for Murder" is a murder mystery script written by FSU staff member Ann Buskirk and was directed by FSU faculty member Mary Ann Chapman. Cast members included Keith Schlegel, Stacey Utley-Bernhardt, B.J. Davisson, Scott Turner, Shelby Herbert, Jill Morris, and Tom Bowling.

For more information about the Creative Writing Center programs, visit their website at <http://www.frostburg.edu/cwcenter/>.

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## "Hateful Things" Exhibit Generates Powerful Reaction

From October 21 to November 9, the Stephanie Ann Roper Gallery presented the exhibit "Hateful Things," a 39-piece traveling exhibition representing nearly 150 years of anti-black/racist material. The objects and images within the exhibit portray the cruel reality that the African-American culture endured during the Jim Crow era, and silently voice African-Americans' struggles for racial equality.

The "Hateful Things" exhibit is a sampling from a museum at Ferris State University College of Arts and Sciences. The exhibit was created by Dr. David Pilgrim, a Ferris sociology professor and museum curator, as well as Carrie Weis-Taylor, coordinator of Ferris' Rankin Center Art Gallery.

Those who viewed the exhibit were struck by its powerful message. Terry Burroughs, President of the FSU African American Studies Association, felt that "the exhibit really showed how African Americans were portrayed through the media as if they were another species and merely amusement for others." Bryan Knox, a member of the Black Student Alliance, stated, "The exhibit is something I believe everyone needs to see in order to understand the past, and what took place in order to understand why a better future must be made."

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## Celebrate the Holidays with CLAS

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will host a get-together at USMH for the holidays on Wednesday, November 30 from 5PM to 7PM. The event is open to current students, prospective students and their families. This is a time to mingle and discover the many opportunities CLAS has to offer, including the Undergraduate Journal, Sociology Club and newly formed

Psychology Club, as well as student achievements from the fall semester.

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## PAC Undergoing Sustainable Stage Lighting Transformation

The Performing Arts Center is in the process of a major lighting overhaul. University personnel are replacing old lighting equipment with much more efficient LED's and incandescent fixtures that, at best, cut the energy use for some fixtures from 3600 watts per fixture to 125 watts per fixture. If both the new lighting package and the old lighting package were used at full capacity for a four hour show, all at one time, the new system would save 1260 kilowatt hours, translating into approximately \$112. To put this into perspective, the new equipment, if used at its full capacity, would save enough energy to provide the daily electricity usage for almost 10 houses PER HOUR.

Depending on the amount the lights are actually used, the payback on the investment from the new lighting fixtures could be as short as two to three years. The initial idea, concept, and research, was done by Conrad Maust. With Jason Hill's help from FSU's Physical Plant, an Empower Maryland rebate was secured to cover some of the costs through a program with First Energy Corporation (formerly known as Allegheny Power). The last phase of the project will consist of replacing the remaining incandescent house lighting, the remaining stage lighting, and less efficient florescent still left in the building. This final phase will be completed once additional funding can be secured.

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## CLAS Alumni Collaborate on Feature Film

Two CLAS alumni are finding success with a new feature film on which they collaborated. JW (John) Myers ('89) and Ty DeMartino ('90) teamed up for the uplifting family drama "Doughboy." DeMartino, an English major, wrote the script and Myers, a Theatre major, directed the patriotic film that is billed as "a story for today's generation about the price of freedom."

"Doughboy" tells of an apathetic, teenaged boy's journey from New York City to a small W.Va. town where, after vandalizing a WWI statue, he's sentenced to perform community service at a local veterans' home. There, he meets veterans who try to teach him about patriotism and sacrifice. The young boy's faded memories of 9/11 are rekindled as he re-discovers what it was like when "we were all together...united in our grief and love for this country."

The movie had a very successful limited engagement run in the state of W.Va. (where the movie was shot last March) and was held over in theaters for several weeks. The audience and critical acclaim landed the movie a national distribution deal slated for early 2012. It was also shown locally at the Cumberland Theater during the recent "Cumberland Goes to War" event.

DeMartino worked for years as the director of news and media services at FSU before leaving to pursue playwriting and screenwriting full-time. Myers moved to Los Angeles immediately after his graduation to pursue acting and directing and recently relocated with his family to New Holland, Ohio. Myers and DeMartino met in a production of "The Foreigner" at Frostburg



and recently, they created Route 40 films. In addition to "Doughboy," they shot the independent feature "Special School," which DeMartino wrote and Myers both starred in and directed.

For more information on "Doughboy," visit [www.doughboythemovie.com](http://www.doughboythemovie.com) or [www.facebook.com/DoughboytheMovie](https://www.facebook.com/DoughboytheMovie).