

The Growl --- March 1999

The *Growl*

The Monthly Newsletter For the Humphreys College Huskies, Stockton Campus



Internet Freebies

Jim DeCosta

The Internet is fast becoming an extremely important educational research medium. Such an important communications tool should be available to all, and that fact has not fallen on deaf ears. Free Internet Access is available throughout the United States, in most regions. One of those services is NetZero. NetZero maintains numerous access numbers for the state of California, including Stockton, Modesto, and Sacramento. To take advantage of NetZero, you must have access to a computer in your home that is equipped with a modem, and have access to a telephone line.

NetZero provides the free Internet service in exchange for the privilege of displaying an advertiser window that remains on top of your browser. You can resize the advertisement window to some degree, and you can move it around anywhere on your screen, but you must not disable it. In order to obtain NetZero, you must either download an executable file from NetZero, or obtain a backup of this file from someone who has a computer utilizing the same operating system as your home system. The URL for their site is <http://www.netzero.net>. Since many ISP (Internet Service Providers) provide free first-time setup charges and one month trial periods, any of these services could be used temporarily, and could provide the connection to the Internet that you would need in order to download the executable file from NetZero. NetZero also provides free email service with their free Internet Access service.

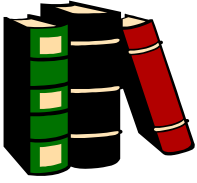
Don't have a computer at home? Do you still want Internet Access and Email? Free Internet Access is available on many computers in the public library and here at Humphreys College. There are four computers in the library that have Internet Access, and fourteen computers in the Computer Lab that also have access. Admittedly, times are limited on these computers, but many hours during the afternoon go by without these computers being used to their potential. *Remember a computer is a terrible thing to waste!*

Free Internet Email Without The Need of Your Own Computer

Anyone who has access to the Internet can have his or her own free email account. Even if your only access is here at Humphreys College, or at the public library. There are a number of free Internet email services, but in the opinion of PC Magazine the best is Netscape's WebMail. Not too far behind is the free email service offered by Microsoft.

Simply get online and go to <http://www.netscape.com> and click on the WebMail tab. Follow the simple instructions and you'll soon have your own Internet email account. From this account you can email your professors here at Humphreys College and even hand in that assignment at the very last minute. The email editor is very sophisticated; you even have access to an online spell checker. Give it a try!

See you in cyberspace!



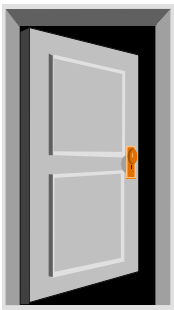
Why Can't Johnny and Jane Read?

Prof. C. S. Becerra

If you're a parent, the answer to the entitled question is because you aren't reading in front of Johnny and Jane. Don't blame it on the school, the teacher, or the media. Take responsibility now for your children's reading ability; it will pay off in the end. No matter what your children's ages, from one month to eighteen years, they can become interested in reading if you do the following:

1. Read to them at the earliest stage possible. (Some parents have even read to their unborn child.)
2. Read in front of them. Show that you derive both information and pleasure from reading.
3. Expose them to a variety of reading materials, from books to magazines to newspapers to brochures.
4. Try not to pass judgment on what they read. If Jane likes The Babysitter Club's Series of books, encourage her. If Johnny wants to read them, too, then let him. Also, if they want to read video or teen magazines, then purchase a subscription for them. Reading what they enjoy, not what you want them to, is important. They will develop literary taste if you continue to expose them to literary works of value. But if you force them to read *Of Mice and Men* or *The Secret Garden*, you are not allowing them to explore and discover their literary taste.
5. Set aside an hour a week or more for reading time. Turn off the television, activate the answering machine, and have each child just read. You can take turns reading to each other or just read in silence. The sharing will take place naturally, spontaneously.
6. Finally, don't be discouraged if Jane and Johnny don't seem all that interested in reading. Just keep putting reading materials before them and using yourself as an example.

Remember, each child is different, but each one can become an avid reader. Just be patient. My first son loved to be read to from the beginning and began reading early. But my second son thought that books were for teething, literally digesting a few, and later rarely read a novel—unless required by his teachers. Unlike his older brother who loved the classics, he read tractor brochures as well as video and computer game magazines. What did I do? I encouraged each of them in different ways. In fact, today I know more about Case and John Deere tractors than I ever thought possible.

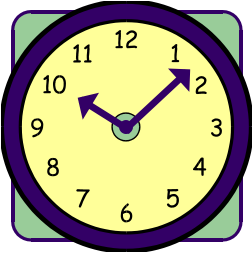


A New Beginning

Michael Duffett

By now, most of you know that we are in a new position at the very corner of the West Campus. We now have two rooms rather than one so that clients for our services (and remember it's free to all Humphreys students!) can be much better served.

There is a great deal more light (we hope in a metaphorical as well as a literal sense) in the new location of the Center so please, whether you need help or whether you are a high-flying 'A' student headed for the Dean's List, come on by and see what we have to offer.

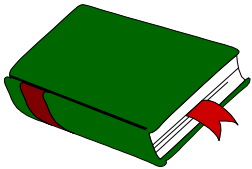


Ain't No Time No More

Dr. Chabot

There just isn't enough time anymore, though I prefer to mumble the phrase given in the title of this piece. Where did the time go? Rather, I should rhetorically ask, "Where did my time used to come from?" All of my free time, my ability to sit back and relax and enjoy my son, work on the car, look for old rock 'n roll records, all of those fun things, came from my wife. My wife stayed home and cared for our son, prepared many (though not all) of our meals, and kept the house clean. She gave me breathing room. Then she was taken away by this thing called work. Now we have to juggle transportation, childcare, meals, and many other things that were taken for granted. Now I have to get up earlier, spend more time with our son doing simple things that add up to a lot of time, and a thousand other activities and errands that make me mumble: ain't no time no more. No time for a movie; no time for TV; no time for window-shopping; no time but for those things that must be done. Even to read a newspaper article related to one of my classes requires that I pry the time to read from what is already a tight schedule. Living, and making a living, has become tough. This is nothing new to most students at Humphreys, who have children and families and work as well as classes and homework.

While I have always been in awe of single parents who care for children and work without support of a spouse, I now experience a little more of what the working parent must endure. My hat is off to all of you who are reading this while also running to make it to childcare and then the store and then to make dinner before rushing off to class. Not that this excuses you from turning in your homework on time. But at least you know that my empathy and support are sincere.



What Are They Reading Now?

Every three months, *The Growl* publishes a representative sample of what the faculty are reading. Pick up one of these books and read it.

- Cynthia Becerra Currently, I am reading *Love Poems* by Nikki Giovanni, who recently did a presentation at U.O.P.

I also just finished John Grisham's *The Street Lawyer*, and you will find my review of it on amazon.com.
- Jim DeCosta *The Lost Realms*, Zecharia Sitchin, his fourth book of the Earth Chronicles series. His research is good, but his conclusions are a bit of a stretch, that must be why I enjoy his work.
- Dr. Humphreys *The Source*, by James A. Michener. The story of the development and evolution of religion, especially the Jewish religion, throughout the ages. The story begins in 9000 B.C. and details, through stories of individual people and cultures, how humans discovered, became aware of, and created their religions and gods. Historically accurate, this is a very interesting book...a real page-turner.

Revealing the Edge of Time, by John Gribbon. A description in layman's terms of Einstein's Theory of Relativity and its implications as to the nature and behavior of time. In easy to understand language, this book lets the scientific novice in on the secrets of Black Holes and other unusual aspects of the universe.

What Are They Reading Now? cont.....

- Rowena Walker *Ex-Friend*, Norman Podhoretz. This book reads like a novel, although it isn't one. It's an account by the retired editor of *Commentary*, of his journey from his one-time radical pro-Communist sympathies to his present conservatism. A large group of his former friends did not make the same journey—they were radicals in the 1950s and 60s and stayed there. He tells of his eventual and sad "falling out" with Allen Ginsberg, Lionel Trilling, Lillian Hellman, Hannah Arendt, and Norman Mailer. All of these people were prominent in intellectual – especially literary – circles during that time period. Truly fascinating history!
- Michael Duffett Since I've just started teaching Spanish here, I'm reading and re-reading a lot in that language. Two Nobel prizewinners, the wonderfully evocative *Book of Questions* (Libro de los Preguntas) by the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda and the Colombian Gabriel Garcia Marquez whose *Nobody Writes to the Colonel* is a very moving account of courage in poverty. In English? A book about one of favorite writers, the Russian Nabokov. I am reading *Nabokov: Criticism, Reminiscences, Translations and Tributes*.
- Don Hubbard *Federal Taxation 1999*, Kramer & Pope. The title speaks for itself.
- Jess Bonds *Literature Lost*, John Ellis. This insightful book identifies the underlying impetus for recent changes in how and why college literature courses are taught in colleges across the country.



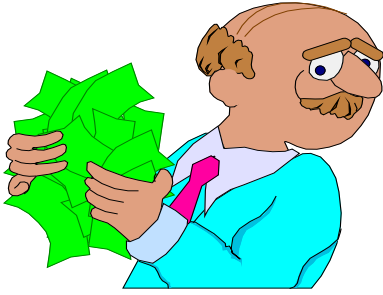
Learn About The World!

Rowena Walker

There's no doubt that most students go to college with the hope that they will come out of college with all kinds of skills to get the good jobs. And believe me, we hope that will happen! But, the real question is, is that the only thing college is about—that is, is that the only thing that an education is about? I don't think so. I believe that one should hope that a college education would help make one an "educated person." Now, what in heaven's name does that mean?

I believe that an educated person has, above all else, a curiosity—the type of curiosity that moves that person to find out about as many things as can be crammed in the head! One great place to start is to find out about the world beyond one's own borders, and the best place to start is with the history of the world, or at least part of it.

Where am I headed with this great advice? I am suggesting that you sign up for Dr. Perkner's History of Western Civilization II class (no, you don't need to have Western Civ I first) or Dr. Chabot's Modern Asian History class. If you've been learning only about your own country, it's time to get beyond! There are wonderful people, places, and their (our) history out there, and it won't be like taking medicine or doing just what's good for you. It will change your life! Do it!



Meet Your Teacher -- Asst. Professor Jess Bonds

Interviewed by Dr. Stanislav Perkner

I found Jess up to his elbows in a computer; the monitor was off to the side, wires were hanging down, and the guts of the computer were strewn across the table. I thought it strange that the Coordinator of the Liberal Arts Department and English instructor would be engaging in such activities, so I asked, “What are you doing up to your elbows in a computer?”

I wasn't accepted to medical school, so I operate on machines instead. Just kidding.

Is this a regular part of your job at Humphreys?

Yes. Part of my job includes managing the college's administrative computer system.

How is it that you came to Humphreys College in the first place?

I took 99 south to Hammer and followed the signs.

I'll come back to that question. What do you like most about working at Humphreys College?

I enjoy watching the light go on in the head of a student who struggles to understand, who continues to ask questions, who continues to push me to explain something in a different way or from a different perspective; and at that point where knowledge and understanding meet, there is a spark, and that's the light I see, and that's what I enjoy. But you notice, it takes two – the student and the instructor – working together to cause the reaction. Students can't sit there passively and expect fireworks; they have to get involved. Likewise, instructors can't dump a load of data on students and expect magic.

How is it that you came to Humphreys and, other than teaching, what do you like most about the college?

How I came to the college reminds me of a scene in the film Never Cry Wolf. A scientist was sent to the far reaches of Alaska to study wolves. He was utterly alone in a vast wilderness, and he pondered how it was that he was the one chosen to go. And he imagined that his name was on a piece of paper in the middle of a stack of documents on some bureaucrat's desk. Coffee was spilled, papers were shuffled, and his name ended up on top. It's kind of like that, only I don't believe in accidents. It seems to me that all order would turn to chaos if events were not under the spell of synchronicity. That's half my answer. Having said all that, I hear reports about what occurs in the government colleges. And the more I hear, the more I'm convinced that we have something they don't have. Primarily, we have well-qualified faculty who sacrifice the benefits of a government job so that they can be part of the action and reaction at Humphreys. That should be a clear indication to our students that if they put forth the effort, then they'll get their tuition's worth. It's the faculty's dedication to teaching, to turning the lights on, that motivates me as a coordinator. If they wore sandals, I'd wash their feet.

Interview cont.....

What people have greatly influenced your life, in terms of direction and outlook?

My dad, my mom, Jung, Jesus, Dylan, and an embattled, retired Methodist minister.

Are there things they said to you which you've always remembered and which have helped you through various stages in your life.

Yes. My dad once asked me what my goal in life was. I told him what it was at the time, and he asked what my plan was to achieve my goal. I didn't have one, and he said "A goal without a plan is just a wish." That's huge. That has stayed with me. Dylan said a lot of things. One line in particular seems appropriate today. In the 60s he sang, "Even the President of the United States sometimes must have to stand naked." Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am." That statement got him executed. It just shows you the importance of communication. If you say the right thing at the right time, you could die for it. That's the power of words. There's a whole book about him somewhere.

What hobbies or interests do you have?

I like to work in the garden, doing landscaping. Backpacking. Fishing. Going on trips with the family.

This interview is getting pretty long.

Yes, well, we have to fill up the rest of this page.

You have a master's degree in English with a concentration in the teaching of writing. What can students do to become better writers?

Well, writing really is a reflection of thought. What goes down on paper says something about what goes on in the head, to a large extent. So if students want to become better writers, they should become better thinkers. Being able to analyze an issue, or topic, and identifying the structure of the thought, and then duplicating that structure on paper – that's what needs to happen. On top of that, students need to have a firm grasp of English grammar. Language is gargantuan. And if you don't have a firm grasp on it, then it will be out of your control. See, I just shifted my pronoun reference.

Thank you.

Thank you.

We almost made it to the end of the page.

Just about.

***Dr. Perkner is teaching Western Civilization II in the Spring Quarter,
1st Period – sign up NOW!
He has a very unique perspective that you can't get anywhere else!***