

H A R P E R

The

insider

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A Publication for Employees of William Rainey Harper College
Volume 13, Number 1
January 1998

inside

2

Phil DeMarois

President's Message

3

John A. Knudsen

4

Departmental
Developments



Teaching + Excellence = DeMarois

Philip DeMarois, Associate Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science, displays the Teaching Excellence Award for the Midwest Region from the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges (AMATYC). DeMarois was honored for his outstanding contribution to mathematics education. See story on page two.

Phil DeMarois

It's not by chance that Philip DeMarois was awarded the Teaching Excellence Award for the Midwest Region. After 22 years as a mathematics instructor, the last four focusing on developmental math courses, DeMarois knows that helping students learn how to become independent learners is key to their success.

Statistically, there is a high rate of failure at the college algebra level. DeMarois believes that emphasizing analytical and problem solving skills rather than just procedures is particularly helpful to students who have a history of math failure. DeMarois explains, "One of the problems when studying mathematics is that often the skills are taught without any understanding of why things are done. If there are no 'whys' attached, it becomes disconnected knowledge that isn't very useful."

DeMarois and some of his colleagues have decided to attack the problem by redesigning the curriculum, making better use of technology and using different instruction approaches. This is reflected in the atmosphere of DeMarois' classes, where the classroom is considered a cooperative community. Students are encouraged to help each other learn the materials. In addition to tests and traditional problem set exercises, students also turn in journals, projects and self-evaluations. All of these are done to help students identify their strengths and weaknesses.

DeMarois meets individually with students several times each semester to discuss their progress. "Having multiple kinds of assessments helps me to hit the different learning styles of individual students."

Another goal DeMarois has set for his students is knowing when and how to use technology. "The students need to be comfortable with technological tools. Ideally, they will be comfortable using tools, but they won't use them for everything. Searching for the right mix will give them the best results."

By helping his students develop their analytical skills, DeMarois hopes they will be better prepared for the next level of mathematics, since that requires an even more abstract way of thinking. "If the meaning isn't there, the procedures will fail them completely."

In March, DeMarois is scheduled to complete his Ph.D. in mathematics education from the University of Warwick, Coventry, England.



President's Message

As we launch a new year and enter the semester which completes our 30th academic year, it is time to look to the future. What will the role of community colleges, in particular, Harper College, be in the next 10 to 20 years?

Michael Dolence, in a presentation to the Association of Community College Trustees last October, gave a startling snapshot of where learning is currently taking place. He presented

the following statistics about adult learners:

- 76 million actively engage in some learning activity
- 40 million of those learners (over half) are in work related courses/programs
- 60% are experiencing their learning in some business environment
- 20% are learning in post-secondary environments
- 11.5 million are seeking a credential, such as degree, certificate or diploma
- 1 million are "on-line" learners

With the expanded number of options and choices each potential adult learner has, Harper College will be challenged to move toward a more open curriculum, toward a model that is competency and outcomes based - not semester time based.

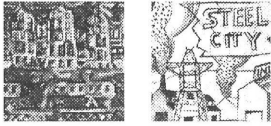
According to Terry O'Banion, President of the League for Innovation in Community College, we must become learner centered with time and place not limiting factors.

Paul N. Thompson
President



Reflections on 30 Years

One word describes retiring professor John A. Knudsen: original – artist, entrepreneur, faculty member. John Knudsen reminisced about art, students and his 30 year career at Harper, with his son, Harper graphic designer Michael Knudsen.



MK: What events in your life have had the greatest impact towards your career as an artist and educator?

JK: I always knew what I wanted to do, but some incidents were especially meaningful. Certain people can make positive comments and affect your life very much.



For example, my first grade teacher, Miss Soderman, took one of my paintings and hung it in front of the class and subsequently sent it to the state teachers' conference in Lansing, Michigan, where it got very good reviews. Miss Soderman died while I was in first grade, and I always remember her as a wonderful teacher. The class planted a tree in her memory by the side of the school house.



I was a very average high school student. Upon graduation (from Austin High School) the principal handed me my diploma and said, "keep up with your artwork." With a student population of about 5,000 I was surprised to learn that he even knew I existed.

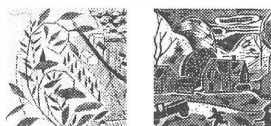


Teachers should be aware that they may make a comment that may seem unimportant at the time but could be taken very seriously by any student that you might have. Always be positive in your criticism and whenever praise is deserved give it freely.



MK: What were influences beyond high school?

JK: During my undergraduate years at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, I studied with Orville Running, a very important artist. Eugene Ludins taught me a great deal about painting, and I studied printmaking with Mauricio Lasansky, who was an internationally known artist.

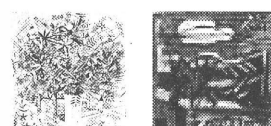


I was really able to get into my element while attending graduate school at the University of Iowa. All of a sudden, I was surrounded by people who shared my same interest in art and my same intense desire to make art and were serious about it. So graduate school was where I wanted to be, but I didn't realize it until I got there. This was a big turning point in my life. Iowa was one of the best art schools in the country at that time.



MK: Are there any artists who have influenced you during the past 30 years teaching at Harper?

JAK: Yes, I like some major painters like Camille Pissaro, I also like Seurat and his color theories and paintings. German and French expressionist painters; and American folk art like John Kane, Emma Jean Cady, who probably did only two paintings in her life, but they were both masterpieces. Joseph Pickett is also good and he paints like I do...ha ha! I also like Bill Traylor, a black artist who was very important and was a slave.



MK: Which period in the history of man produced the greatest artistic expression?

JAK: I always liked the early stages of any development. For example, in architecture, Romanesque is very exciting and has very primitive and simple carvings. Some of the early churches were primitive and reveal primitive folk artwork in the carvings, which I find very interesting.

The High Renaissance, such as the Raphaels, Michaelangelos and DaVincis never interested me. I always preferred the 14th and 13th century masters because they were the ones that started painting. I always look for the beginnings of any development.

In printmaking I enjoy 15th century engraving because that, of course, is the beginning. I enjoy Albrecht Durer and the earlier engravers before him.

And then you see Toulouse Lautrec in lithography who brought it to its finest level when he made the posters which were made as advertising, but he brought his genius to bear and created great masterworks.

The German expressionist woodcuts that are also very powerful and exciting.

MK: What do you see as the direction for the art department at Harper in the next 10 years?

JK: We've always had an excellent art department in part because we placed the emphasis on drawing and design. We stress the basics and that is also our strength.

MK: How have students changed?

JK: In the '60s and '70s students were thinking about the moment, during the Vietnam war they weren't as interested in the future and the work reflects this in that it's more experimental

The emphasis now is on training for specific jobs so students try to conform, but the result is they often miss the freedom to explore.

MK: Tell me about your plans for the future.

JK: Well, I'm planning to take courses in ceramics, bronze casting, jewelry and learn the violin. I've always been interested in learning so I'll just become a student again. I've always believed that a good teacher is a student and that a good student can teach. I've planned a painting trip to Europe in the spring and a fall painting trip to Maine. You can also find me at my gallery in Union Pier, Michigan where I currently exhibit my own painting, woodcuts and prints.

MK: What would you have the Harper community think about?

JK: If the northwest suburbs is the universe, then Harper is the center of that universe. Harper's faculty is as excellent as any university. I hope people are aware of how much Harper has to offer, its many programs and services. I think it is just a jewel.

Departmental Developments

Ardus Bradley, CE, was named most inspirational teacher by an incoming transfer student at Western Illinois University.

Architectural historian, Melvyn Skvarla, LIB ARTS, was featured in a September 26, 1997 Pioneer Press article. Skvarla documented the authenticity of an Alexandar Calder mobile sculpture, one of only four Calder mobiles accessible to the public outside of museums in the Chicago area. The sculpture is now on display at Marshall Field, Northbrook Court.

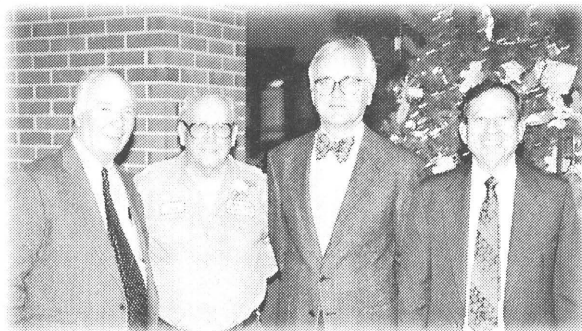


◀ For the past eight years the departments in the AE/LS Division have been experiencing the joy of giving by adopting less fortunate families from Palatine Township. Faculty, staff and students from Adult Educational Development, English as a Second Language and Linguistics, Learning Achievement Program, Sign Language Studies and Sign Language Interpreting Program, Success Services, Tutoring Center, Writing Center and the division office have purchased food, clothing, toys and household goods to help these families have a brighter holiday. But the Harper staff have really found that it is truly more blessed to give than to receive as they have participated in this annual event of sharing. Pictured at left are Janet Smith, Lynn Secrest, Louise Bez, Ania Loniewski, Jean Louise Gustafson, Barb Singer, Judy Longmore.

Lorel Kelson, PRINT, received her Master of Arts in Communication Studies from Northern Illinois University.

Cheryl Brandt, AE/LS, was awarded a graduate teaching assistantship for the spring semester from the department of political science, University of Illinois, Chicago.

The College honored Tom McCabe, TM/PS, Joseph Stehle, PHY PLT, John Knudsen, LIB ARTS, Eugene Magad, BUS/SS, at a retirement celebration in December.



In November, Carole Lissy and Pat Setlik, BUS/SS presented *Business Simulation: A New Model for Business Classes* at the Third Annual Conference on Learning Communities and Collaboration in Frankenmuth, Michigan.

Welcome to the following new Harper employees: Thomas Deimel, IS; Patrick Cunniffe, ADM SER; Donna Harwood, STU AFF; Rachel Canter, ADM; Frances Foley, TMPS; Lynne Lutman, ADM; Bhavin Patel, IS; John Weil, PHY PLT; Evelyn Holm, STU DEV; Denise Kavin, CSD; Brian Posdal, BKST; John Carvajal, BKST; John LeBrun, BOX OFF; Urszula Woronko, PERS; James Johnsen, PHY PLT; Richard Vix, PHY PLT.