



Northern HORIZONS

SPRING/SUMMER 2006

THE MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Summer Reading

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Writing at NMU—alive and kicking

At a time when writers are increasingly being referred to as "content providers" or "bloggers" and the language itself is being stripped down to the bare consonants and vowels of instant-message speak, the English language seems precariously perched at the edge of a cliff or drying its delicate wings in preparation for a wonderful new journey—all depending on your perspective.

However you feel about the wild lifestyle of words (there's no shortage to be sure: 10,000 new ones were added to the latest update of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*), if you're reading this you must care about them, even if, like a parent, you may be hesitantly accepting of their transformations. It's the same at Northern, where language continues to be lovingly taught, nurtured, molded, manipulated and set free.

In this issue, you'll get a glimpse of a few of the literary works created by NMU alumni, students and teachers, and see some of the books making appearances on class syllabi (we've come a long way from *Beowulf*). In NMU's continuing metamorphosis in the English department, the dreaded Writing Proficiency Exam has been dropped in favor of a minimum grade of "C" in EN 111 and 211. The MA and MFA programs are flourishing and attracting promising writers from across the nation. The faculty continues to impress with awards for published books, poems and papers and grants for completing fascinating works in progress. Beverly Matherne, for instance, is researching and writing a bilingual book of poems about the founder of Detroit, and Ron Johnson is penning a novel about three generations of ranchers. The department keeps reaching out to the community, with children's writing contests and summer writing camps for kids on such subjects as gnomes and mystical creatures, comedy writing and even a course in constructive complaining. Area adults can read and discuss the best of Caribbean and Japanese literature, learn how to write their memoirs or listen to an acclaimed author visiting NMU. And the new One Book One Community program encourages university members and county residents to read and talk about a common book and enjoy themed events. *The Tortilla Curtain* by T.C. Boyle is the initial offering.

My own journey into English began here at NMU, when as an alienated psychology student from U of M I came back to my hometown for the summer and soon found my passion for poetry and the juxtaposition of words in Phil Legler's class. Twenty years later, I return to Northern as your enthusiastic new editor of *Northern Horizons*. I lay out the welcome mat to your ideas and input for this magazine.

I think we've provided you with some good summer reading for your shady front porch, your sunny strip of beach or a lazy Sunday morning in bed. Turn the page, you never know what's ahead...

—Rebecca Tavernini



HOMECOMING 2006

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29-30

Schedule of Excitement

Friday, Sept. 29

- 8 a.m.-4 p.m. NMU Alumni Association Board of Directors Meeting
- 5:30 p.m. Homecoming Parade on Third Street
- 6:30 p.m. NMU Sports Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony*
- 6:30 p.m. Class of 1955, '56 & '57 reunion dinner*
- 6:30 p.m. College of Business alumni reception (Landmark Inn Skyroom)
- 9 p.m. Alumni reception at Shamrock Irish Pub



Saturday, Sept. 30

- 10:30 a.m. NMU Alumni Association Awards Brunch*
- 1 p.m. 1956 football team reunion at Superior Dome*
- 3 p.m. Homecoming block party outside the Superior Dome: Food, music, games, pictures with Wildcat Willy, bungee races, mechanical bull riding, music and tug-of-war competition
- 5 p.m. NMU Football vs. Ferris State
- 7:30 p.m. Fifth quarter reception at the Holiday Inn
- 7:35 p.m. NMU Hockey vs. University of Toronto (exhibition) at Berry Events Center

*advance registration required

Homecoming activities are sponsored by the NMU Alumni Association. If you are not a member, consider joining today.

PLEASE JOIN US!

Learn more or register: contact the NMU alumni office at 1-877-GRAD-NMU or alumni@nmu.edu

Complete list of up-to-date activities: www.nmu.edu/alumni



Northern Michigan University

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



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joining the
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Our love of the Upper Peninsula goes hand in hand with our love of Northern Michigan University. We met while students at Northern and what has followed are many wonderful years which have included summers in Marquette. In fact, we love the area so much we bought property there and will someday make it our home once again.

Northern was where we had the opportunity to find out who we were and who we wanted to be as adults. Our professors left indelible marks, helping to shape and form the people we are today.

Love for Northern is infectious; just check out our children. We don't have to do any arm-twisting to get the kids to wear NMU apparel; it's their favorite attire. Summers in the U.P. give our children the opportunity to take advantage of NMU's College for Kids, where they spend time on campus while sharpening their math and science skills. They always have a great time and talk about Northern all year long.

As college students, Northern was a safe campus with a wonderful outdoor environment and wide open spaces where we could explore, discover, grow and change. Our children are now taking advantage of the same opportunities we did many years ago. As parents, we can't ask for anything better.

If you had a positive experience at Northern, it's time for you to give back. Appreciate the role Northern played in your life, and when time and opportunity present themselves, come back, get involved and stay connected! We have, and NMU continues to be a great asset for us. We're hundreds of miles away but our hearts are always there.

**Joseph '81 BS, '83 MA and Joy '82 BS Evans,
Helen, 11 years old, Emma, 9 years old,
Owen, 7 years old.**

**Joe and Joy are lifetime members of the
NMU Alumni Association since 2004**



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