



Eta Epsilon Chapter Newsletter

Summer Short 2019

VOL. 10 ISSUE 3

Passing The Baton: SKD Sponsorship Changes Hands

The Passer: Thank You Dianna Hyde!

SKD co-sponsors, officers, and members alike would like to thank Dianna Hyde for her leadership to our college's chapter. Dianna has been an asset to the organization, and we all look forward to her still being one of the co-sponsors!

SKD's former sponsor,
Dianna Hyde



- What is your favorite SKD memory? *Two favorite moments come to mind. One was being part of the Pioneer Day team with Blake, Brooke, Ben, and Danita. Collectively, we ran, hopped, wobbled, tugged (of war), fumbled, answered trivia questions, and ate a gross concoction in the name of fun and teamwork--a true Word Herd! It was equally fantastic to watch Ben and Danita (both of whom acted as proxy for Austin) accept their well-deserved writing awards at the SKD National Convention in St. Louis over Spring Break. Eta Epsilon was in the in the house, baby!*
- What did you like about SKD during your time as leader? *I really enjoy the spirit of community in SKD among the sponsors, officers, and active members. It truly is a One-For-All and All-For-One organization, united in the love of the word.*
- What are your plans going forward with SKD? *I am happy to be a supporting member of SKD representing the Shelby Campus. I love to interact with students, so I'll gladly promote the membership drives and help plan/stage/support events such as PiCon and the Red Mountain Reading Series.*
- Any parting words of wisdom? *Jacob will be marvelous (love his wordy vibe!) but my parting advice is to keep your eye on the details--not my gift!*

The Receiver: Meet Jacob Melvin!

- What is your degree concentration in? *Creative Writing*
- What are your hobbies? *I like to write, play music, participate in story slams, and travel.*
- How long have you been with Jeff State? *9 years*
- What is your favorite type of literature or favorite book, and why? *I love modern poetry (Ted Hughes, Sharon Olds, and Ocean Vuong in particular). Bluets by Maggie Nelson is my favorite book. It's a lyric novel; every sentence is gorgeous and heartbreaking. I read to understand my life, and to also empathize with others.*
- What do you like about teaching at Jeff State? *I like seeing my students engaged and passionate about words.*
- What do you want to see for our college's SKD chapter? *I want SKD to have the largest student presence of any group on campus. Additionally, I want to push for more growth and involvement, while also continuing the excellent national reputation this chapter already has.*
- Any life words of wisdom? *Probably Ray Carver's "Late Fragment." It goes:*

*And did you get what
you wanted from this life, even so?
I did.*

*And what did you want?
To call myself beloved, to feel myself
beloved on the earth.*

SKD's new
sponsor,
Jacob Melvin



Jefferson State Community College

Jefferson State Community College follows equal opportunity admission policies and employment practices. College facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities.



Pioneer Con 2019

By: Katie Boyer

Pioneer Con 2019 will take place on October 17 and feature keynote speaker Jon Padgett, author of *The Secret of*

Ventriloquism. This collection of linked short stories was selected as the 2016 Best Fiction Book of the Year by *Rue Morgue Magazine*, and it won the 2016 Golden Ghou! Award from *The Cult of Ghou!* website in Serbia. Though each story works from a different structure and point of view, they all experiment with the themes of ventriloquism, free will, and altered bodies.

Built around Padgett's story collection, Pioneer Con will explore the theme "tales of the weird." Part comic-con and part academic conference, Pioneer Con give students, faculty, and members of the community the opportunity to celebrate all things geeky. Activities will include panels and roundtables analyzing science fiction and fantasy literature, film, and television. There will also be opportunities for table-top gaming, and cosplay is encouraged.

The day-long event is sponsored by Sigma Kappa Delta and is open to all, free of charge. It will take place at the Shelby-Hoover Campus from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Updates will be posted to the Pioneer Con website, <https://jsccpioneercon.wixsite.com/home>.



Photo with *Matilda* article:
A purple backlit stage showcases *Matilda*'s name written on chalkboard squares

Matilda: Live at Red Mountain Theater

By: Ashley Kitchens

From the moment I discovered musical comedian Tim Minchin years ago, I was awestruck. His musical talent was the perfect platform for his rather direct humor, and I marveled at the videos of his sold-out performances in many cities in England. Not a few months after finding him and watching all I could, I read that he was in the process of writing music and lyrics for the upcoming stage play *Matilda*, based on the book by Roald Dahl. The play was going to start in theaters in England, and I thought maybe one day it would make it to the states.

Fast-forwarding a few years after this, I saw that *Matilda* had indeed made it to the states, and not long after that, I was surprised and excited to see that Birmingham's own Red Mountain Theater Company had picked it up. I reserved tickets for me and SKD co-sponsor and colleague Jamie King in September of 2018 for the July 2019 performance!

The performance was over and above what I had expected. The musical score and lyrics, done by Tim Minchin, were right up his alley. The upbeat music was highlighted by words that both delighted the audience in laughter and silenced the audience with anticipation. The stage props were incredibly dynamic as they were used for *Matilda*'s family's house, the school classroom, schoolyard, and Trunchbull's office, and the library. Walls were movable and aided in creating a visual for *Matilda*'s storytelling; other walls held secret panels for hidden props for multiple scenes. The acting was the most incredible part of the play. For a cast that was a good half adult, half youth, not even Broadway could have compared. The youth actress cast as *Matilda* was brilliant in her presentation of a British accent, her emotive ability, her delivery timing, and her vocal performance. When I read in her biography in the program that she had been acting since she was three-years-old, I could see it in her whole performance; she rivaled most professional actors and actresses I have seen. Other youth individual characters and ensemble characters were equally as professional. I saw not one young actor(ress) miss a beat in many of the difficultly choreographed singing and dancing scenes. The adult roles were nicely played as well. My favorite adult role was Agatha Trunchbull, played by a male actor who gave the part the traditional testosterone-filled angry school principal personality the part calls for. Other adult roles played highlighted each character's personality from the Roald Dahl tale, and the combination of all made the play extremely believable.

Overall, this was one of the most well-rehearsed and brilliant works I have seen come out of Red Mountain Theater. I enjoyed the night immensely.

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