Chips   Fall 2011 Staff

Chips is a student publication of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. The paper is designed, composed, edited and managed entirely by Luther students. It is published weekly during the academic year, excluding the month of January.

The opinion section is designed to provide a forum for Chips, its staff members and the Luther community. Opinions expressed in articles, editorials or columns do not necessarily represent the views of the Chips staff. The author is solely responsible for opinions expressed in Chips commentary.

Chips will not accept submitted articles or campus announcements.

Submissions for letters to the editor should be submitted as a word document to chipsedt@luther.edu with “Letter to the Editor” as the subject line. Letters to the editor are subject to editing without changing the meaning of the letter. Authors will not be notified of changes prior to publishing. Letters must be signed, 300-400 words and submitted by Sunday at 5 p.m., the week before publication. Publication of all letters is at the discretion of the editor.

Letters to the Editor

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by Mark Z. Muggli, Professor of English

Two announcements and a meditation:

“Random Acts of Shakespeare”

I’m adding a new wrinkle to the “Our Shakespeare” project: an opportunity for any and all of you to release your kooky side in some kind of Shakespeare experience. All you need to do is to do it and to let me know you did it. Some possibilities:

• Recite your favorite three lines of Macbeth’s “Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow” soliloquy as you’re strolling along the Seine on a dark night in January.

• Say “What’s in a name?” A rose by any other name… even if you’re just sitting in a Turkish restaurant enjoying a food whose name you can’t pronounce.

• See “Taming of the Shrew” in London and say out loud to a friend, “This is a lot more feminist than I had ever imagined it would be.”

• Read Sonnet 116 — “Let me not to the marriage of true minds Admit impediments” — to your newest loved one, in the shower, or in a flashy, urban-each Eau Claire, Wis., restaurant.

As you can tell, I’m thinking that January internships and study abroad might offer some special opportunities. I’ll post your acts on my website (If they’re really random, and you want them to remain anonymous, that’s fine too). And in spring I’ll be giving away some free books — Shakespeare, of course — to the most random of the random acts.

2. “Sounding the Sonnets” FINALE

Friday, Dec. 9, 11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m. at Benthal-Chammons — Acme-on-and-going, with hot cider, cookies and some free books.

Speaking of random acts, my daily sonnet reading ritual is drawing to a close. I thought weather would be the big story. “Sonnets Delivered in Diving Steet Storm” Reader and Listeners Survive! In fact, there was serious rain one day and drizzle on another, but otherwise it’s been sun and drifting clouds and chirping birds and cracking piles of leaves.

A bigger story has been the crowds. Over thirty people on some crisp October days, and not a single day without a writer, thanks, especially, to Janelle, Kristin, Jenna, Luke, Diane and others. A shock, because I totally expected to be alone out there half the time.

Still, the biggest story has been the revealing intensity of reading these 154 sonnets in sequence. (Actually we’re only up to 136 by this Thursday). I’ve read the sequence a good number of times before, but I’ve never before had the experience of this day-by-day building of the story, this rise and fall of emotions, such ecstasy and despair, anger and love, all so evenly metered out across time.

If I were a poet, I would write a sonnet about how it’s felt. Instead, I’m hosting a small celebratory hot cider and cookies party on the final day of classes. To provide some leisure, I’m repeating the usual five minutes (12:05-12:10 p.m.). Mon-Fri to a half hour, 11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m. In addition to the cookies, I’ll be bringing a box of the “Complete Shakespeare Sonnets” to give to those of you who will know yourselves as the most faithful attenders. I labeled this reading sequence a “ritual performance happening.” Bring your friends and feel some of the “happening” yourself.

A meditation

Sonnet 87

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thy value was not less
Than thou desirest, being dear to those
Of thee which more than me desirest.

Sonnet 87 is one of my very favorite sonnets. A poem of resemblance and contemplation, this iteration of the theme of this sonnet is a meditation on the nature of our experience of Shakespeare sonnets.

The opinion section is designed to encourage the expression of voices from the Luther community, including students, faculty, staff and alumni.

For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?
And for that riches where is my deserving?
Therefore, my love, of thee I shall demand
So much, because I give thee more than that I owe.

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Dear Editor,

Dr. Phillip Reitan, Professor Emeritus of Biology, posed some questions about Luther’s wind turbine project in a letter to the editor published in the Nov. 17 edition of Chips.

We are grateful that Professor Reitan has initiated dialogue about the wind turbine project, its role in Luther College sustainability efforts, and its potential as a learning opportunity regarding renewable energy. We agree that sustainability is not a passive or inconsequential commitment; individually and as communities we must investigate issues so that we can make the best choices and compromises to achieve sustainability goals. This letter provides a response to Dr. Reitan’s questions.

Question #1: Is the wind turbine project sustainable, or in other words does it cost more than we can ever get out of it?

The $3.3 million it cost to purchase and install the wind turbine will be made back in less than ten years. All debt will be repaid and all of Luther’s annual cash investment will be recovered in this amount of time. In addition, the turbine is projected to save the college an additional $3.7 million in electricity purchases over the 20-year life of the turbine.

Question #2: Is wind energy environmentally friendly, that is, is it green when compared to other forms of energy, coal, natural gas and nuclear?

Wind energy is more environmentally friendly than power generated through the combustion of fossil fuels because no carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, or mercury are released through the operation of a wind turbine. Wind turbines do contain large amounts of steel and copper as well as some rare earth elements, and fossil fuel energy is used to extract the related ores from the ground. A recent life-cycle study published in the journal “Renewable Energy,” found that wind turbines similar in size to the one Luther has installed emit the amount of carbon associated with their production in about three months and generate the amount of energy used to produce all of the components in a wind turbine in just over five months. See Martinez et al., “Life-cycle assessment of a multi-megawatt wind turbine,” “Renewable Energy” 34: 667-673 (2009).

With regard to nuclear power, the Nuclear Energy Institute reports the following on its website: “Numerous studies demonstrate that nuclear energy’s life-cycle emissions are comparable to renewable forms of generation, such as wind and hydropower, and far less than those of coal- or natural gas-fired power plants. For example, a University of Wisconsin study found that nuclear energy’s life-cycle emissions are 17 metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalents per gigawatt-hour. Only wind and geothermal sources ranked lower, at 14 and 15 metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalents per gigawatt-hour, respectively.” See http://www.nei.org/environmentalprotection/energyconsumption/energymortality.

Question #3: Are there global consequences — that is, will it lead to a more peaceful world?

Insofar as renewable energy technologies utilize energy that is available and other European nations to make major investments in renewable energy systems. It is reasonable to assume that greater measures of energy systems. It is reasonable to assume that greater measures of energy systems. It is reasonable to assume that greater measures of energy systems. It is reasonable to assume that greater measures of energy systems....

Readers interested in learning more about Luther’s wind turbine project can find additional information at: http://www.luther.edu/sustainability/energy/windturbine.

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