This year marks the 400th anniversary of the birth of John Milton, arguably one of the greatest poets who ever lived. The exact date of birth for the poetic legend is December 9, 1608. Everywhere the literary world is celebrating and UCA is no exception. Monday November 10 was dedicated to the literary idol beginning with a Marathon Reading of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and culminating with guest speaker Dr. Dayton Haskin’s public lecture entitled “Who Said Milton is Second to Shakespeare.” The marathon reading hosted by Dr. Frontain was performed continually from 8:30 a.m. till 4:30 p.m. The readers varied from Dr. Reynolds’ authentic performance of Eve to a very comic interpretation of a slithering Satan by Dr. Ruud. Students showed their support for Milton by also volunteering to read and appearing in an impressive attendance, sometimes filling the Student Center Lounge. While the majority of student readers were drawn from Dr. Frontain’s Milton class there was a very apparent attitude of appreciation from the UCA community. The peak of the Milton celebration was Dr. Haskin’s Public Lecture. Dr. Haskin is a revered Miltonist receiving a Distinguished Teaching Award from Boston College where he has taught since 1978. He has also been honored with the James Hanford Award by the Milton Society of America, and twice recognized by the John Donne Society for his work in Donne Studies. Dr. Haskin’s Renaissance renown is firmly secured with the publication of his two books *John Donne in the Nineteenth Century* and Mil-
Milton Continued
	on's Burden of Interpretation, along with over forty articles in journals, collections and encyclopedias. The title for his lecture comes from a literal question not a challenge against the most recognizable name in English literature. His research shows how the treatment of Milton juxtaposed to Shakespeare in the late eighteen hundreds till the turn of the century in universities directly affected the fame of both poets. The majority of the lecture was dedicated to how Milton was made to look in these classes which varies from a portrayal of hell fire and brimstone to an activist for intrinsic human rights. It was not until the late eighteenth century that colleges and universities started offering English as a major and it was Milton not Shakespeare that was a major inspiration. Milton became more credited with being a moral philosopher which was the direction most departments went in, while Shakespeare was part of drama. Either way most early literature classes devoted minimal time to Milton and whenever the poet made it to the higher ranks of a topic course he was usually dropped from the curriculum within a year. The Milton celebration was a major success in paying homage to one of the giants in the literary world. The support of the students and the faculty made this a memorable occasion.

Dr. Sommers

Dr. Sommers is a first year UCA professor joining the tenure track. He has twelve years of teaching experience, ten of which are collegiate. Before joining the collegiate world, Dr. Sommers held a variable smorgasbord of occupations. Some of the more interesting being bookstore manager, pizza boy, designer for online text books, advertising, and painter for a Victorian Frank Llyod Wright House in historic Oak Park. He received his B.A. from Marquette University, his M.A. from Missouri Western State, and a Ph.D. from the University of Kansas. The year he left KU the Jayhawks went on to win the Orange Bowl. He claims full responsibility for the victory and hopes to bring the Bears the same luck. Although he cautions he is not be held accountable for any losses. He chose the field of English because, “It’s hip and I dig what I do. I love working with the students.” His specialty is children’s and young adult literature, which is also one of his major goals for UCA. “I want to see children’s literature and young adult literature theoretically applied.” He is also excited about teaching more literary theory in his classes.

I get paid to do what I would do anyways and share with like minded folk.
Dr. Reynolds

Dr. Reynolds is moving from the position of Visiting Assistant Professor to join the tenure track faculty here at UCA. Dr. Reynolds originally hails from Ft. Worth Texas. She received her B.A. from Abilene Christian University in Theater and English and her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of North Texas. She says she chose English because, “I always had a love of theater and the two mesh well.” Her specialty is British Renaissance Drama, a mixture of her two major fields. Prior to working for UCA, Dr. Reynolds had a teaching fellowship from UNT and performed in many plays and even in some as a professional actress. She played Bianca in Taming the Shrew, Gwendolen in The Importance of Being Ernest, Anne in Richard III, and Maggie in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Dr. Reynolds has enjoyed teaching World Lit I because, “The student body is bright and hard working.” She is also excited about her English Drama 1660 to present course. She decided to stay on at UCA because, “the collegiality of the faculty” plus her family just got acclimated to Central Arkansas.

Dr. Coleman

Dr. Coleman is another professor moving from the position of visiting professor to the tenure track. He has been at UCA since fall 2005. Originating in Biloxi Mississippi, he received his B.A. from the University of Southern Mississippi. He later obtained his M.A. and his Ph.D. from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. His focus is in Arthurian Medieval Literature. As an undergrad, Dr. Coleman originally set his focus on chemistry in which he had a natural aptitude, but eventually gave in to the lure of English. He said he chose English after contemplating the mundane nature of repetition, “I thought what kind of job could I do day after day and still find a balance between doing the best I can and still enjoying myself.” Although Dr. Coleman has always been involved in the academia of a university, he did hold a job as a Tai Chi instructor while in Fayetteville. He accepted the position at UCA because, “This department and UCA in general are a good fit. You are a teacher first and a researcher second.” He is truly excited about his classes in general English and hopes students starting out in their English career will enroll in one of his survey courses.
Dr. Marrotte headed up a new event this year with the guest speaker being an essayist from MAMA PhD (both book and conference share this name). The book MAMA PhD is a collection of essays from women who have experienced the joys and pains of balancing the world of academia with responsibilities of motherhood. The celebrated guest speaker, Dr. Hainie, has received numerous awards for her dedication to teaching and her writing. Besides motherhood in academia her areas of interest include the 19th century British novel, Literary criticism, popular culture in literature, humanities, and her daughter. She has also been published in places like the Victorian Institute Journal, Literary MAMA, Radical Teacher, and Free Verse. She best described the juxtaposition between the academic world and motherhood by the lettering of the book’s cover, MAMA being in fun colorful block letters and PhD a professional script.

The essays range from the embarrassment of lactating in front of students to the pressures of reaching tenure while balancing a domestic life. The more colorful essay titles include “Motherhood is Easy: Tenure is Hard,” “That Mommy Thing,” and “I Am Not a Head on a Stick: On Being a Teacher and a Doctor and a Mommy.” The inspiration for the conference came from what Dr. Marrotte noticed as a “community of mothers.”

The full day event included two sit down meals with the guest speaker and two readings with a Q & A session. The sessions closed with the audience relating their own personal stories to those of the essayists in Dr. Hainie’s book. Dr. Hainie’s interest in being a mother and an academic was first piqued when she noticed the dropout ratio of male and female students with children. The chances of a female student dropping out due to having children is extremely high in comparison with male students. Dr. Hainie also made another observation. Forty-two percent of Ph.D. recipients are women yet very few of these women work in universities and four year colleges and even fewer work in Ivy League universities. The majority of women with Ph.D.s work in Community Colleges or as Adjuncts. Hainie believes part of the problem is the lack of understanding of pregnancy and parenting issues faced by not only females but all parents in the university. The best remedy for this is to have their personal stories told. Dr. Hainie says, "Telling one’s job story is like telling one’s birth story. It’s your identity."
The UCA English department and the English Honor Society, Sigma Tau Delta hosted the second annual Banned Books Week. This week is dedicated to the celebration of the intrinsic value of the book, especially those once deemed corrupt and immoral. The tribute began with a three-day reading of banned books. There were readings from every genre including books once banned but now canonized like To Kill a Mockingbird and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn to more modern books And Tango Makes Three and The Adventures of Captain Underpants. These public readings were held in the center of campus near the Student Center where any UCA faculty, staff, or student was invited to sit and listen. The readings were performed by faculty and students. The celebration also included two panel discussions entitled “I’ll Teach Anything for Art, But I won’t Teach That: Instructors Discuss Hot Topics in the Classroom” and “Don’t Mean to Offend, But… Does Political Correctness Inhibit Academic Freedom?” where faculty panels led group discussions. To finish the festivities two films were shown: Lolita which was followed by a discussion based on the question “Do provocative books lead to even more provocative movies?” and A Clockwork Orange with a discussion following the same question. There was overwhelming support from UCA students and faculty at all the Banned Books Events.
Graduate Conference

UCA’s Graduate Conference is issuing a call for papers for the third annual Graduate Conference. The Theme this year is “We are One People”: Writing America. There are many “Americas” and many American voices. This conference hopes to create a place where those voices may be heard as we consider the idea and ideal behind the United States motto: *E pluribus unum*, “Out of Many, One.”

Though the conference theme centers on America and its literatures, we welcome submissions on any topic related to all genres of literature, theory, culture, and film, as well as creative submissions of poetry, fiction, and drama.

250 word abstracts and or proposals for panels must be emailed to cbane@uca.edu or mrmarotte@uca.edu with the presenter’s name and “Conference Submission” in the subject line. The Conference will be held at UCA from April 9-10 2009.