

Long-Lost Relatives on the way

by Kayla Henderson
staff writer

“In novels,” says Barbara Tucker, associate professor of communication, “you can do whatever you want.”

A four-time novelist, Tucker knows the freedom that comes with writing fiction—and knows that the same freedom doesn’t come with writing drama.

Writing a novel, she says, “you don’t have limitations on characters, settings, or any of that.”

Writing a play, however, “you really do. You really have to be more careful about how many characters you use because there is such a thing as too many.”

Tucker has recently taken her first foray into this more limiting of the two genres, and audiences will get to see the results this weekend.

Dalton State’s THEA2100: Play Development is presenting Tucker’s *Long-Lost Relatives* as its fall play Nov. 20-23 at Dalton’s City Park Elementary School Auditorium. Jackie Daniels, assistant professor of communication and theater arts, will direct.

Tucker and Daniels both describe the play as a fast-paced farce, a mode DSC’s theater program has yet to attempt.

As *Long-Lost Relatives* begins, the play’s main character, Meredith Kendrick, is to get married in three days. Friends and family—

among them Meredith’s sister Madison and the girls’ mother Merilee—are running around in a frenzy.

Tucker says one characteristic that makes her play unique is its focus on women’s roles.

“Plays do not have enough female parts,” she says. “A lot of plays are not for women, and that’s really bad. I wanted to fix that.”

While the girls and their mother busily prepare for the big day, three long-lost relatives show up at the door, unexpected and uninvited. They claim they’re cousins, and even though no one recognizes them, they welcome themselves into the Kendricks’ home.

If the Kendricks thought planning a wedding was stressful, they really won’t be ready for what this trio will unleash.

“Everyone’s got their little subplots, secrets, and issues,” Tucker says.

Many wouldn’t be able to handle the ordeal of staging a play, but Daniels—who’s directed a THEA 2100 play each of the last five semesters—describes herself as an unflinching optimist when it comes to directing.

“It’s a really interesting process, and I love doing it,” she says. “Creating something out of nothing is rewarding . . . and exhausting.”

Daniels says that a variety of students, staff, and faculty have auditioned for roles.

“Being on stage is somewhere where you can be completely fearless,” she says. “Many people believe you have to be an extrovert to be able to get on stage, but that isn’t always the case.

“Shy people also love the stage. It allows them to create a new persona, one that’s often fearless.”

Every production has been a learning process, Daniels says, and each semester the cast and crew learn something new about what works on stage and what could be done differently.

“What have we learned? How to make a door work correctly—it takes rope,” she says, laughing. “We’ve learned that it takes a lot of coordination to have it off-campus and a lot of cooperation between Dalton State and Dalton Public Schools.”

Daniels says that THEA 2100 can teach students more than just how to act. She believes its benefits run deeper than that.

“There’s so much overlap with other subjects,” Daniels says.

“I’ve had students come tell me that taking drama helped them in their other classes. Plus, they learn how to perform.”

In addition to Daniels, the *Long-Lost Relatives* production crew includes sophomore Ryan Thomason, assistant director; Thomason, senior Joan Cate, freshman Hannah Badger, and sophomore Evan Kennedy, set design and construction; Badger, hair and make-up; Library Assistant Laurie Raper, costumes; sophomore Jasmyne Fletcher, properties; Micah Barton, lighting; and junior Tanner

(see *Long-Lost Relatives*, page 4)



Celebrated journalist speaks on campus

New York Times columnist Charles M. Blow spoke Thursday, Nov. 13, in Goodroe Auditorium as part of Dalton State’s fall focus on inequality. Blow is the author of the autobiography *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, copies of which he signed afterwards for the DSC community.



Dalton State audience gets the blues

by **Elise Wright**
contributor

She didn't need smoke or flashy lights. Blues guitarist E.G. Kight captured the Dalton State audience Friday, Nov. 7, as soon as she started strumming. And what she strummed was a Taylor acoustic—a nice one, but still, nothing flashy.

A powerful singer and skilled guitarist, Kight had the audience clapping along to her songs and laughing at the stories she told about them.

Her set list included original compositions like “Trouble with a Capital ‘T’” and “It Takes a Mighty Good Man,” along with covers of personal favorites, among them the folk standard “House of the Rising Sun” and Johnny Cash’s “Folsom Prison Blues.”

When she began singing “Trouble,” she took a quick break from strumming to form a capital T with her arms. Audience members soon joyfully followed along, making the capital T themselves during the chorus.

Katrina Autry, who took her daughter to the show, called it a “perfect” night out. “It had been a while since my daughter and I had been able to just go have some fun.

“We sang and danced in our seats,” Autry said, laughing.

Introducing “House of the Rising Sun,” Kight identified the song as one of the first she learned.

She then began strumming the chords, softly at first, her raspy voice echoing through Goodroe Auditorium. The volume increased with each verse, demanding that the audience listen.

In her second set, as she began “Folsom Prison Blues,” she identified it as a song she played on her first guitar for fourth-grade show-and-tell.

In an interview before the show, Kight said that that first guitar had been a gift from her uncle Jimmy. He had a band that rehearsed at her grandmother Mintie Clements’s house in Dublin, Ga., and as a little girl, Kight “would sit

in awe, watching and listening to them.”

She learned guitar from that same grandmother, who babysat her every day while her parents worked. She said that Clements played piano and guitar and started “showing me some chords” when she was only four or five years old.

Kight described herself as a little girl with the usual interests, plus one: “You could see me in

“A few years back,” she said, “I opened for Merle, doing my blues songs. I was concerned that he may not like me singing the blues as his opening act, so I mentioned it to him before the show.

“He loved the idea. He told me that he was playing the blues before he started in country. Up until that point, I didn’t know he loved the blues, too.”

Among her other achievements Kight numbered “Getting to work with all these tremendous artists; having Koko Taylor . . . record some of my songs and sing a duet with me on one of my albums; and having multiple nominations for the Blues Music Awards and the Blues Blast Awards.”

All, she said, “have been milestones for me.”

At the same time, she said, “my biggest accomplishment has really been connecting with, and having the support of my fans. I get emails, Facebook messages, and notes in the mail about how my music has helped them through cancer treatments, divorces, loss of a loved one, and even falling in love.

“It touches my heart to know that I’ve helped someone through a tough time or been an influence in some way for them. And it’s an amazing feeling to know my music has been with them through the happy times, too.”

Kight clearly connected with still more fans as the DSC audience began requesting favorite songs. “We might be here all night,” she joked, but the audience begged for still more.

Asked before the show what she hopes listeners get out of her music, Kight said, “Hopefully my music will take them away from everyday stresses, whatever that may be, and bring a smile to their faces. Blues music is a *feeling* thing, and if I make someone feel something, then I’ve done my job.”

She clearly did her job that night at DSC.

“I would definitely like to see her come back to campus,” Autry said. “She gave me chill bumps a couple of times.”

“Blues music is a *feeling* thing, and if I make someone feel something, then I’ve done my job.”

— **E.G. Kight**

the yard most any time with a doll in one hand, dragging a guitar with the other.”

Playing “Folsom Prison Blues,” she implied just how far she had come since her early days with that first guitar as her fingers ran up and down the fret board with ease. The audience clapped along as the rhythm increased.

Music clearly runs in Kight’s family—in addition to her uncle’s and grandmother’s backgrounds, her mother, a talented gospel singer, was once offered a recording contract—but she cited more than just family members as inspirations.

One of her biggest influences was blues performer Koko Taylor. “She would feel her music, and make the listener feel it, too,” Kight said before the show.

“Koko had that quality, and it made me want to deliver a song that way, too.”

Kight clearly seemed to enjoy playing DSC—the show was her third here in the last five years—but Goodroe Auditorium’s is far from the biggest stage she’s played. Earlier in her career, she opened for artists including George Jones, Conway Twitty, Merle Haggard, and Jerry Lee Lewis.



Savannah Nelson: “volleyball is life”

by **Triston Ledford**
contributor

“I don’t know if this is going to work out.”

Savannah Nelson still recalls the Red Bank Middle School volleyball coach wondering whether she should put the gangly sixth grader on the team.

What Nelson remembers more vividly, though, is the assistant coach’s reply: “Give her a chance. . . . Give her some time.”

Nelson had already tried nearly every other sport—softball, basketball, and gymnastics among them. “And nothing fit,” she says.

But then, when the assistant coach talked the head coach into letting Nelson join the volleyball team, she found a sport that fit.

“I just knew volleyball was my sport,” she says. “It was natural.”

Eight years later, the Dalton State middle blocker describes volleyball as a “huge part of my life.”

Nelson played all three years at Red Bank Middle, then all four years at Red Bank High.

“I loved it,” she says. “I loved

the girls I played with and the excitement of the games and the heart we all put into it.”

Nelson also admits enjoying the attention. “I was in the paper every day for records, stats, and pictures. I’d never felt famous before, and I know high school volleyball isn’t the Olympics, but it was still pretty cool to see my name in the paper.”

One of the photos Nelson remembers best is of an October match against Signal Mountain during her junior year of high school.

“I had just tipped the ball right over the block,” she says, “and it hit the middle of the court, and all the girls from Signal Mountain are diving and hitting the floor.”

The photo ran Christmas day as the *Chattanooga Times-Free Press* sports photo of the year.

The Red Bank Lady Lions went to the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association state tournament all four years Nelson was on the team. In 2009, Nelson’s freshman year, they won it.

“I miss high school. I miss it bad,” she admits. “I remember

on game days, another girl on the team and I would always run down the hallway yelling, ‘IT’S GAME DAY, GAME DAY.’”

She finished her high school career with a blocking record of 590. In her senior year alone, she scored 97 points, becoming the number-three hitter in Hamilton County and once being named a “volleyball leader” by the *Times-Free Press*.

When Nelson wasn’t playing for Red Bank, she was playing with the Choo Choo City Volleyball Club, a traveling team whose season followed Red Bank’s.

“It was volleyball 24/7 for four years,” she says. “I had a month off for Christmas, and then it was back to volleyball. When I was playing for Choo Choo, I was on the road every weekend.”

During her senior year at Red Bank, Nelson left Choo Choo to play with the Ocoee Heat Volleyball Club. But surprisingly, perhaps, she admits not planning to play in college.

“But one day,” she says, Ocoee coach Bryan Bramlett came to

practice and said “there’s a small college, it’s 30 minutes from here, and they’re starting a volleyball team.”

Bramlett went on to tell his team that Bruna Langner, whom Nelson knew from area volleyball camps, would be the head coach.

Still, Nelson says, “I was a little iffy.”

But a few months later, when Coach Langner offered her a scholarship to Dalton State and a spot on the roster of DSC’s first women’s volleyball team, “I couldn’t resist.”

Now, two seasons later, Nelson admits she’d been thinking recently about moving on after her second year as a Roadrunner.

She wants to work one day as a news anchor, ideally at CNN, but as DSC offers only an associate’s in communication, she was planning to transfer—which could have meant giving up the sport she loves.

But then came Nov. 13-15 and the Roadrunners’ trip to Montgomery,

(see Nelson, page 5)



ROADKILL

I wish students at this school didn't automatically assume that they deserve to pass a class because they showed up and slept through four months of lectures.

I hate it when Public Safety officers stop side by side in the middle of the road and force you to drive around them.

I have had really positive experiences here with classes, professors, and the overall atmosphere of the school.

Why does every class here have that one guy who's completely unaware that the rest of the class continually laughs at his stupidity? It couldn't be the same guy, could it?

Veterans Services continuously exceeds expectations to ensure that veterans have a positive experience at Dalton State, assisting with paperwork and helping us take advantage of scholarships and other benefits.

Dalton State needs to offer more upper-level classes at night. Too many upper-level classes are held during the day, while we non-traditional students are working.

The Oakwood Café charges too much for food. They also pour out the sweet tea too early, even though they stay open until 6 p.m. and students have classes until then and beyond.

Dear Public Safety: I'm not speeding. I never have been. My car is just loud.

Why doesn't somebody put up a red light at the intersection of College Drive and George Rice Drive? Maybe then we could get out of here in under 15 minutes.

There just aren't enough librarians on staff to help all the students looking for books, not just sitting in the so-called study rooms, tapping away on their phones. (Just kidding.)

Dalton State is the best place for those returning to learn and further their careers. The professors are understanding yet firm, so students learn what they need to succeed. I appreciate the opportunities Dalton State has given me.

The Financial Aid staff is rude and has made me feel dumb for asking for help. If you're going to work around people, you need to be a people person, put a smile on your face, and at least try to be approachable.

The steps leading up to Peoples Hall are going to give someone a heart attack. But so will the 12-mile-long sidewalk you can take instead.

Dalton State needs more online classes and more classes at more times.

A love letter to Roberts Library

by **Tanner Blackton**
contributor

Last Monday began as a gloomy, chilly morning, one with an overcast sky and soggy ground. It wasn't quite cold, but there was enough of a nip in the air to make me wish I had worn a heavier sweater.

It got me thinking about my job as a student assistant at Roberts Library almost two years ago and especially about how much I miss it.

Roberts Library is toasty, inviting, and quiet. Nobody rushes around, and nobody hurries through conversations about research paper deadlines or hastily formulated answers to mundane questions as they walk to their next class. "How are you?" "LATE!"

The trek to the library always makes my heart beat faster because I know that inside is a world of literature, of reference and research and knowledge. As you walk through the doors, a calm sets in.

Immediately on your left is the front desk, where smiling faces greet you and will later, upon your exit, scan your books and stamp them, reminding you that you're borrowing these little slices of the college and must eventually return them so other students can access the information they house.

Newspapers, magazines, children's books. The help desk, where an eager librarian waits to assist you in finding just what you need. Librarians know that the massive amounts of information can be hard to sift through. No one can possibly go it alone.

In the back, on the left, are the reference books, books you can't check out, but still they sit there stolidly waiting for you to pore over their pages. The government documents reside in the back right-hand corner, full of information suited for history or political science majors.

The Learning Commons sits in the front right-hand corner, a haven for students who forgot to print at home or want a quiet place to do their best thinking.

But upstairs. Oh, upstairs. It's worth climbing those stairs to enter the warm and inviting mecca of seemingly endless possibilities. I remember the top level of the library like I remember the roads of Dalton.

To the front-left, visual references, DVDs and video cassettes for professors to borrow or for students to watch on the TVs in the back.

The back-left holds shelves and shelves of books about hobbies; I distinctly remember seeing books on pastimes, on knitting, on painting and archery and sports. Behind them are medical references for biology and nursing, an unending supply.

To the right, you'll find books on plants, birds, mammals. Farther right, toward the middle, you'll find law, government, sociology, psychology.

In the center are my favorites, books about the arts: about the Renaissance, music, famous artists, film, theatre. The back-right has fiction, anything from classic authors to Stephen King and Dean Koontz.

Then there's the right-front corner. History. World history, European history, American history toward the front. To the sides are the study rooms, curiously empty for most of the semester but jam-packed toward the latter half.

And then there's the back of the building, the section that faces the trees.

There are armchairs but also long, shiny wooden tables. Cherry-wood tables where I've spread out my books and papers countless times to study for tests or write research papers.

It's usually only at these tables that I can fully focus on my task, commit to putting my words on paper, churn out my assignments. It's there that I let myself be enveloped by the sweet quiet, embrace the somewhat frantic silence of others getting down to it and finishing their work.

We all have deadlines, and we all come here.

What I love most is the view. In the springtime, you can see the lush, green trees and feel a sense of hope, of renewal and rebirth.

In the fall, you can see the calming burnt orange and muted yellow and crimson of the leaves as they settle in, waiting for their journey to the floor of the woods.

I yearn for the quiet, for the smell of the library. The smell of lignin mixed with the coffee I sip out of my insulated travel mug. The cheery hellos from our lovely and helpful library staff.

The comfort of knowing that your answer, your idea, your inspiration, lies somewhere inside the pages of the thousands upon thousands of books housed in Roberts Library.

All you have to do is look.

Long-Lost Relatives

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Blackton, Communications Manager Misty Wheeler, Instructor of Digital Design Scott Bertram, and Administrative Assistant Donna Hendrix, publicity.

The *Long-Lost Relatives* cast includes senior Katherine Fromm as Merilee Kendrick; sophomore Hannah Fromm as Madison Kendrick; freshman Mollie Crawford as Meredith Kendrick; freshman John Harrelson as Bryant Kendrick; junior Scott Reese as John Ross Kendrick; Assistant Professor of Spanish Nancy Mason as Jeanne Dubose; sophomore Sean Self as Kevin Sutton; junior Lowell Chappell as Tony Hawkins; sophomore Roniqua Wright as Tiffany Forrester; freshman

David Moss as Jasper Dubose; sophomore Jamie Steadman as Luza Dubose; freshman Savannah Cross as Cherry May Dubose; senior Josh Beard as Todd; freshman Travis Ford as the reporter; sophomore Ryan Thomason as the police officer; and sophomore Jasmyne Fletcher as the EMT.

Long-Lost Relatives will be performed Nov. 20, 21, and 22 at 7 p.m. and Nov. 23 at 2 p.m. in the City Park Elementary Auditorium (405 School St.).

Entrance is free for Dalton State faculty, staff, and students, and \$5 for the public.

To get involved in DSC's theater program, sign up for THEA 2100 (CRN 20167) in the spring or email Jackie Daniels at jdaniels@daltonstate.edu.

Nelson

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Ala., site of the Southern States Athletic Conference volleyball tournament.

Ranked fifth during the regular season, Dalton State placed third, upsetting fourth-ranked Brenau University, a team they'd never beaten.

So Nelson decided to stay.

"Being in the tournament changed everything," she says.

"After finishing in third place, I have more of a drive to get that conference championship ring. I have a state ring from high school, but having a conference ring would be a nice way to end my volleyball career."

Placing third out of the ten teams in the conference is "a big deal," she says, "especially for our first year. Next year we're going to be a real threat."

Needless to say, she's happy to continue her volleyball career.

"Volleyball is life," she says. "If I'd have to give it up, I know I would have missed it. It's been seven or eight years of my life. That's a big part to me."

Take a minute and 'Thank a Teacher'

Is there an instructor on Dalton State's campus who has gone above and beyond to help you learn?

The Center for Academic Excellence is the entity on campus that helps professors improve their student engagement and instruction through providing workshops and resources. This semester the Center is holding an initiative to allow students, alumni, and other employees to send a note of thanks to faculty members.

If you get an email about "Thank a Teacher," follow the link. You can write a note of thanks for that teacher who helped you get your brain around a concept, spent extra time with you, made learning

enjoyable, inspired you, gave you some helpful advice, or opened you up to new ideas. You can remain anonymous or identify yourself on the form.

After you submit the form, it goes to an office where it is printed on stationery and sent to the faculty member. So far, 139 letters have been delivered, but there are lots more thanks to extend.

If you want to go ahead and write your note without the link, you can look for the Center for Academic Excellence webpage under the Academics menu on the college's website. There you will see "Thank a Teacher" on the left side of the screen.

HELP US FILL THIS SPACE (AND MUCH BIGGER ONES)

If you're interested in writing or photography, e-mail Dr. Keith Perry at kperry@daltonstate.edu or sign up next semester for ENGL 1111.



Adrian Berrospe -- editorial
cartoonist

Sarah Blevins -- staff writer

Kayla Henderson -- staff writer

Jonathan Schwan -- staff writer

Meagan Standridge -- staff writer

Dr. Kris Barton -- sports editor

Dr. Keith Perry -- faculty advisor

Interested in writing a guest column? Have an opinion you'd like to express in a letter to the editor or an entry in **ROADKILL? E-mail us at roadrunnernews@daltonstate.edu.**

Interested in becoming a staff writer or photographer? E-mail Dr. Keith Perry at kperry@daltonstate.edu or sign up next semester for ENGL 1111, Student Newspaper Practicum.