

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
AMERICAN DIALECT SOCIETY

# NADS 31.1

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**Vol. 31, No. 1    January 1999**

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*NADS* is sent in January, May and September to all ADS members. Send news and queries to editor and executive secretary Allan Metcalf, English Department, MacMurray College, Jacksonville, Illinois 62650, phone (217) 479-7117 or (217) 243-3403, e-mail AAllan@aol.com. Annual membership is \$35, students \$20. See p. 11 for membership address.

*ADS Web site* (Grant Barrett, webmaster):  
<http://www.americandialect.org/>

*ADS-L discussion list*: To join, send to  
Listserv@uga.cc.uga.edu the message:  
Sub ADS-L Your Name

From: AMERICAN DIALECT SOCIETY  
Allan Metcalf, Executive Secretary  
English Department  
MacMurray College  
Jacksonville, Illinois 62650-2590  
Address Service Requested

**FIRST CLASS**

CALLS FOR PAPERS

## REGIONAL MEETINGS, FALL 1999

### Rocky Mountain

In association with RMMLA, Oct. 14–16; Santa Fe, NM, DoubleTree Hotel.

**February 15** is the deadline for 300-word abstracts to **Mary Morzinski**, Department of English, Univ. of Wisconsin-La Crosse, La Crosse, WI 54601; phone (608) 785-8300, fax (608) 785-8301, morzinski@mail.uwlax.edu.

Topics are open and graduate works in progress are welcome.

Proposals must be sent on paper and on 3.5" disk (preferably IBM-compatible). Presenters must be RMMLA members and may not read papers in more than one session.

ADS Regional Secretary 1998–99: **Mary E. Morzinski**.

*Membership* in RMMLA is \$30 individual, \$20 student. Write RMMLA, Washington State University, P.O. Box 642610, Pullman, WA 99164-2610; phone (509) 335-4198, fax (509) 335-6635 ext. 54198; rmmla@rmmla.wsu.edu; <http://rmmla.wsu.edu/rmmla/guest/aboutmmla.asp>.

*Future meetings:* 2000 Oct. 12–14 Boise, Idaho, DoubleTree Hotel; 2001 Oct. 11–13 Vancouver, Sheraton Wall Centre.

### South Central

In association with SCMLA, Oct. 28–30; Memphis, Crown Plaza Hotel.

**March 15** is the deadline for abstracts to the meeting chair, **Lisa Abney**, Louisiana Folklife Center, Northwestern State Univ., Natchitoches, LA 71497; phone (318) 357-4332; fax (318) 357-4331; e-mail abney@alpha.nsula.edu.

ADS Regional Secretary 1998–99: **Charles B. Martin**, Dept. of English, Univ. of North Texas, P.O. Box 13827, Denton, TX 76203-3827; phone (817) 565-2149, e-mail cmartin@facstaff.CAS.unt.edu.

*Membership* in SCMLA is \$20 full professors, \$15 associate and assistant professors, \$10 instructors and students. Write Jo Hebert, SCMLA, Dept. of English, Texas

A&M Univ., College Station, TX 77843-4227; phone (409) 845-7041; fax (409) 862-2292; e-mail scmla@acs.tamu.edu; <http://www-english.tamu.edu/scmla/>.

### Midwest

In association with MMLA, Nov. 4–6; Minneapolis, Marriott City Center.

**March 2** is the deadline for abstracts of 100–200 words to the meeting chair, **Beth Simon**, CM 109, Dept. of English and Linguistics, IPFW, Fort Wayne, IN 46805; fax (219) 481-6985; e-mail simon@ipfw.edu.

ADS Regional Secretary 1999–2000: **Beth Lee Simon**.

*Membership* in MMLA is \$25 full and associate professors, \$20 other faculty, \$15 students. Write MMLA, 302 English-Philosophy Bldg., Univ. of Iowa, Iowa City IA 52242-1408; phone (319) 335-0331; fax (319) 335-3123; e-mail mmla@uiowa.edu; <http://www.uiowa.edu/~mmla/>.

*Future meetings:* 2000 Nov. 2–4 Kansas City, Missouri, Hyatt Regency Crown Center; 2001 Nov. 1–3 Cleveland, Sheraton City Centre Hotel.

### South Atlantic

In association with SAMLA, Nov. 4–6; Atlanta, Hyatt Regency.

**April 15** is the deadline for abstracts to **Guy Bailey**, Dean of Graduate Studies, Univ. of Texas, 6900 N. Loop 1604 W., San Antonio TX 78249; gbailey@utsa.edu.

ADS Regional Secretary 1999–00: **Michael Picone**, Dept. of Romance Languages and Classics, Univ. of Alabama, Box 870246, Tuscaloosa AL 35406-0246; mpicone@ua1vm.ua.edu.

*Membership* in SAMLA is \$35 individual, \$25 student. Write SAMLA, Georgia State Univ., University Plaza, Atlanta GA 30303-3083; phone (404) 651-2693; [www.samla.org](http://www.samla.org).

*Future meetings:* 2000 Nov. 10–12 Birmingham, Ala., Sheraton Civic Center; 2001 Nov. 8–10 Atlanta, Peachtree Plaza; 2002 Nov. 15–17 Baltimore, Omni Inner Harbor.

## Annual Meeting 2000: First Call

If the millennium bug hasn't bit off more than we can eschew, that is, if the airplanes are still flying and the lights are still on in Chicago Thursday through Sunday, January 6–9, 2000, we'll be there then for our next Annual Meeting.

Our host and hearth-companions, once again, will be the Linguistic Society of America.

**August 16** is the final deadline for ADS proposals. If, however, you don't want to wait till August to confirm your place on the program, you can send your proposal to arrive by *March 29* for special early decision.

In either case, send the proposal to Executive Secretary Allan Metcalf (address on cover). E-mail is not only acceptable but preferred—it transfers easily to print. We're flexible about length and format; one concise page should suffice. (If your paper is accepted, you'll also be asked for a short abstract for the LSA meeting program.)

All proposals will go to **Dennis Preston**, our new Vice President and program chair. If you have an idea for a special session or something out of the ordinary, you're invited to get in touch with him in advance of the deadline. (His address is on Page 10.)

*Words of the Year, Decade, Century, and Millennium:* This is a once-in-a-thousand-years opportunity. We will discuss and vote on all four. (See the conclusion of the 1998 Words of the Year story on Page 5.) For detailed information on our previous choices for the decade of the 1990s, see the ADS website at <http://www.americandialect.org/woty.shtml>.

*Hotel:* LSA has chosen the Palmer House, in the Loop of downtown Chicago. Rooms will be available at LSA rates of \$83 a night, single or double. Reservations may be made by calling 1-800-hiltons or by mail to The Palmer House, 17 East Monroe Street, Chicago IL 60603-5605.

*Registration:* As before, we will be expected to register with LSA, at the LSA members' rate. In return, we get the Meeting Handbook and admission to all LSA meetings. For further information, go to the LSA website at [www.lsadc.org](http://www.lsadc.org).

*Future LSA meetings:* 2001 Washington, D.C., Grand Hyatt; 2002 San Francisco, Hyatt Regency; 2003 TBA; 2004 Boston, Sheraton.

### Proposals Invited for MLA Too

If you're a paid-up member of the Modern Language Association, you're invited to propose a talk for one of two ADS-sponsored sessions at this year's convention in Chicago Dec. 27–30.

One session will be a discussion of words of the century and the millennium; the other is open to any topic appropriate for ADS and MLA.

**March 15** is the deadline for proposals: to **Allan Metcalf** (address on cover) for the first session, and for the other to **Michael Adams**, English Dept., Albright Coll., PO Box 15234, Reading PA 19612-5234; [michaela@joe.alb.edu](mailto:michaela@joe.alb.edu).

*Future MLA meeting:* 2000 Washington, D.C.

### Name Society Calls

During the MLA meeting in Chicago, Dec. 27–30, the American Name Society will sponsor two MLA sessions, plus 12 to 15 concurrent sessions outside of MLA. Panels and themes will focus on names in literature, literary theory, philosophy, linguistics, geography, commercial, social or historical usage. Send abstracts (150 words max.) to **Michael McGoff**, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, State U. of New York, Binghamton NY 13902; [MMcGoff@binghamton.edu](mailto:MMcGoff@binghamton.edu). Deadline for MLA sessions is *March 5*, for others *Sept. 1*.

ANS will also sponsor sessions during the LSA-ADS meetings in Chicago, Jan. 6–9. Send 100-200 word abstracts of 20-minute papers by *Aug. 25* to **Donald M. Lance**, Dept. of English, Univ. of Missouri, Columbia MO 65211; [engdl@showme.missouri.edu](mailto:engdl@showme.missouri.edu).

**“E-” Wins with Ease for 1998**

It is just a single letter of the alphabet, but the hyphenated prefix “e-” loomed so large in American discourse last year that members and friends of the American Dialect Society at the recent Annual Meeting voted it Word (or perhaps Lexical Entity) of the Year 1998, as well as Most Useful and Most Likely to Succeed.

For top choice, “e-” edged out “sexual relations,” a term whose definition was much discussed and much in dispute last year, by a runoff vote of 31 to 28. In the initial vote for the grand prize, the two entities each garnered 16 votes. There were also 10 for “is,” whose meaning President Clinton memorably questioned; 4 for Viagra, the patented potent medicine; 3 for prefixed “rage,” as in “road rage,” “air rage,” and “Web rage”; and 3 for the not-so-new weather phenomenon “El Niño.”

“e-” has been around in “e-mail” for nearly two decades, but it has recently multiplied its lexical connections with business in terms like “e-business,” “e-commerce,” and “e-tailing” (retailing on the Internet). A week after the ADS vote, on Jan. 15, the mantric power of “e-” was exemplified in a Dilbert cartoon where two venture capitalists say, “You’ll get no more funding unless you mutter empty Internet words that make us swoon,” and “e-commerce” knocks them over.

The significance of “sexual relations” was also reinforced about a week after the ADS vote, on Jan. 16, when the editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* was fired for publishing an article whose subject was the meaning of “sex” as understood by college students.

Before the vote for the Word of the Year, the assembly chose winners in eight categories. Votes were by show of hand and are approximate.

1. *Most Useful*: “e-” 35 votes. Others: “senior moment” (11) momentary lapse of memory due to age; “multislacking” (5) play-

ing at the computer when one should be working; “open source” (2) source code of software programs available to all.

2. *Most Unnecessary*: the entire Monica Lewinsky word family, 28 votes. This includes “Big She” as a synonym for M.L., and the verb “Lewinsky,” to engage in what might be sexual relations. Others: “phone family” (19), group of people with the same phone number in different area codes; “Big She” (7).

3. *Most Likely to Succeed*: “e-” 25 votes. Others: “rage” as in “road rage,” etc. (18); “moment” as in “senior moment,” “Kodak moment” (12).

4. *Least Likely to Succeed*: “compfusion” (26) confusion over computers. Others: “explornography” (22) tourism in exotic and dangerous places; “Ruth-Aaron pair” (4) two consecutive numbers the sum of whose prime factors is equal; “jiggy” (2) as in “get jiggy,” be active.

5. *Most Outrageous*: “Ejaculation Proclamation” (41) the President’s confession. Others: “wrong-site surgery” (7) surgery on the wrong side of the body; “Lovegety” (5) electronic transceiver of love receptiveness.

6. *Most Original*: “multislacking” (30). Others: “angst bunny” (20) young woman with black clothes and lots of body piercing; “Preslyterianism” (4) cult of Elvis Presley in the South; “bililoquy” (1) conversation with one’s alter ego.

7. *Most Euphemistic*: “senior moment” (22). Others: “symmetry failure” (16) another name for “wrong-site surgery”; “controlled flight into terrain” (6) airplane crash with a good pilot and good plane; “demographic fatigue” (6) problems caused by overpopulation; “sexual relations” (5).

8. *Brand new* (coined during the year, not previously attested): “-agra” or “-gra” (26) suffix denoting substance prompting men to perform unusually, as in “Directra” that causes men to ask for directions, from the drug name Viagra. Others: “PPD” (16) or politics of per-

## WOTY, WOTD, WOTM, etc.

(Continued from preceding page)

sonal destruction; "MAD" (14) or millennial anxiety disorder, distress at the end of the millennium; "dot" (6) to strike someone with light from a laser pointer.

Categories and the list of nominees were determined earlier in the day at an open meeting of the New Words Committee, chaired by **Wayne Glowka**. The starting point was lists provided by Glowka, **David Barnhart** (editor of the *Barnhart Dictionary Companion*), and **Gareth Branwyn** (contributing editor, *Wired*; author of *Jargon Watch*).

On January 7, 2000, we will have quadruple duty, choosing not only words for 1999 but also those for the decade of the 1990s, the 20th century, and the second millennium. Everyone is invited to propose candidates, either on ADS-L or by sending them to Glowka at Dept. of English and Speech, Georgia College and State University, Milledgeville GA 31061; e-mail [wglowka@mail.gcsu.edu](mailto:wglowka@mail.gcsu.edu).

## Four Students Honored

At the Annual Meeting, outgoing ADS President **Walt Wolfram** announced his award of Presidential Honorary Memberships 1999–2002 to **Allison Burkette**, Univ. of Georgia, nominated by William Kretzschmar; **Clare Dannenberg**, now at North Carolina State Univ., nominated by Wolfram; **Margaret Ronkin**, Georgetown Univ., nominated by Peter Patrick; and **Mary Rose**, Stanford Univ., nominated by Robert Bayley.

The four-year complimentary memberships are intended to encourage interest and participation in our field by outstanding students, graduate or undergraduate.

Nominations are now invited for next year's Presidential Honorary Memberships. All that is needed is a letter of recommendation, although supporting material is also welcome. Send nominations to the new President, Ronald Butters, at English Dept., Duke Univ., Box 90018, Durham NC 27708-0018; [RonButters@aol.com](mailto:RonButters@aol.com).

## Committee Invites Nominations

At the start of the year 2000, only one ADS office is to be filled by election at the annual meeting: a four-year membership on the ADS Executive Council. For this position the Nominating Committee welcomes your suggestions, either of others or of your own willingness to serve.

The nine-member Executive Council makes most policy decisions for the Society. Members meet in person once a year during the ADS Annual Meeting. At other times they communicate by e-mail, letter, and phone. There is no pay or reimbursement for Council members; their honorarium is the honor of being selected and of doing good works.

Send your ideas to the committee chair, past ADS President **Lawrence M. Davis**, Dept. of English, Wichita State Univ., Wichita KS 67260-0014, [davis@wsu.uc.twsu.edu](mailto:davis@wsu.uc.twsu.edu). Other members: Past President **Walt Wolfram**, North Carolina State Univ., and elected member **Natalie Maynor**, Mississippi State Univ.

## Coming in PADS

The current year promises to be the busiest in the history of our *Publication of the American Dialect Society*. Tentative schedule:

No. 81: *Dialect Change and Maintenance on the Outer Banks* by **Walt Wolfram**, **Kirk Hazen**, and **Natalie Schilling-Estes**. Softcover. Univ. of Alabama Press. (Put in the mail Feb. 5.)

No. 82: *An Index by Region, Usage, and Etymology to the Dictionary of American Regional English, Volume III* by **Luanne von Schneidmesser**. Softcover. Duke Univ. Press. (Late spring or summer 1999.)

No. 83: *Dialect of Warren County, North Carolina* by **Kirk Hazen**. Softcover. Duke Univ. Press. (Later in 1999.)

No. 84: *Small-Town Values and Big-City Vowels: A Study of the Northern Cities Shift in Michigan* by **Matthew Gordon**. Hardcover annual supplement to *American Speech*. Duke Univ. Press. (Fall 1999.)

## Executive Council Appoints, Budgets, Reflects

Early in the morning of January 8, the ADS Executive Council held its customary annual meeting. Since the Council conducts most of the Society's business, all interested in the Society's business were encouraged to attend. On this occasion in the Los Cerritos Room of the Bonaventure 17 were present, including seven Council members. President Walt Wolfram presided, finishing his term unimpeached.

Last year the Council considered the monumental matter of a new publisher for our journals. This year's most monumental matter was **Dennis Preston's** display of the first image in the ADS version of Mt. Rushmore, namely the new T shirt portraying Pioneer of the ADS **Charles Grandgent**. The committee of Preston and **David Barnhart** also announced that next year's second in the series would depict *American Speech* co-founder and ADS president **Louise Pound** on a bicycle.

The Council took these actions:

1. Reappointed regional secretaries for two-year terms 1999–2000: South Atlantic, **Mike Picone** (U. of Alabama); Midwest, **Beth Lee Simon** (IPFW).

2. Appointed **Michael Linn** (U. of Minnesota, Duluth) to replace the late Thomas Creswell for a three-year term 1999–2001 as trustee of the Hans Kurath Fund for the Linguistic Atlas, as recommended by Editor William A. Kretzschmar, Jr.

3. Appointed to the *American Speech* advisory board for three-year terms, as recommended by Editor Connie Eble: **Cynthia Bernstein** (Auburn U.), **Daniel Long** (Osaka Shōin Women's Coll.), **Donald Winford** (Ohio State U.) and **William Kirwin** (Memorial U. of Newfoundland, emeritus).

4. Approved the customary ADS co-sponsorship and \$500 grant in support of the Methods X conference in Newfoundland, August 1–6, 1999.

5. Appointed **Sonja Lanehart** (U. of Georgia) as ADS liaison to the National Council of Teachers of English Commission on the English Language.

6. Appointed **Allan Metcalf** (MacMurray Coll.) to chair an ADS session on Words of the Century and the Millennium at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association in Chicago, Dec. 27–30, 1999. Appointed **Michael Adams** (Albright Coll.) to chair another ADS session at that meeting.

7. Discussed the audited financial reports for 1996 and 1997 and the preliminary unaudited report for 1998.

8. Discussed and approved the estimated budget for 1999. Because the large number of new issues of *PADS* and the cost of buying back issues of *PADS* from the University of Alabama Press, expenses will be unusually high; because of the uncertainty of how the new arrangements with Duke U. Press will work out, expenses will be unusually hard to predict. Still, we can afford it.

<i>PADS</i> 81, 82, 83 .....	15,000
Back issues of <i>PADS</i> .....	4,000
Editorial at Duke .....	4,000
<i>Newsletter</i> .....	3,500
New Words Committee .....	1,100
Annual Meeting expenses .....	1,000
Executive Secretary travel .....	1,500
Office expenses, including computer ....	4,000
ACLS and NHA dues .....	900
Grant in support of Methods X .....	500

**Total expenses ..... \$35,500**

9. Discussed the cost of audio-visual equipment for the annual meeting and agreed to continue the discussion next year, with the new program chair (Dennis Preston) keeping a watchful eye.

10. Heard reports from the editors of our journals, **Ronald Butters**, **Connie Eble** and **Charles Carson**. For 1999, the first year with Duke U. Press, *American Speech* will keep its familiar look. For 2000, the journal's 75th anniversary, it will be redesigned.

## Our New Books: Vampires, Family Names, Creole, Codes, Japan

If you have recently published a book, send pertinent information to Executive Secretary Allan Metcalf (address on cover), and we'll mention it here.

**Leonard R.N. Ashley.** *The Complete Book of Vampires*. New York: Barricade Books; London: Souvenir Press, 1998. 366 pages. \$12.95. Earlier books by this author in this series include *The Complete Book of Superstition, Prophecy, and Luck* and *The Complete Book of Spells, Curses, and Magical Recipes*.

**William J. Kirwin.** Corrected edition of *Family Names of the Island of Newfoundland*, by E.R. Seary with the assistance of Sheila M.P. Lynch. McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1998. ISBN 0-7735-1782-0. liv + 573 pages. Cdn \$49.95. Seary's 1977 book, now newly reset, provides documented evidence of the history of nearly 3,000 surnames, since the seventeenth century, together with linguistic origins in the British Isles and France, locations in the island, and statistics on name frequencies.

**Thomas A. Klingler,** Albert Valdman, Margaret M. Marshall, and Kevin J. Rottet. *Dictionary of Louisiana Creole*. Indiana University Press, December, 1998. ISBN 0-253-33451-9. 672 pages. Cloth \$75. Compiled from written sources dating back to 1850 and from material collected in Bayou Teche, the German Coast, Pointe Coupee, and St. Tammany Parish. Includes a grammatical sketch, contextual examples with identification of where they were collected, French-Creole and English-Creole indexes, and many examples of folklore, traditional medicine, religious beliefs, and agricultural practices.

**Carol Myers-Scotton,** editor. *Codes and Consequences: Choosing Linguistic Varieties*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998. ISBN 0-19-511522-8 (hardcover), 0-19-511523-6 (paper cover).

**Takesi Sibata.** *Sociolinguistics in Japanese Contexts*. Edited by Tetsuya Kunihiro, **Fumio Inoue**, and **Daniel Long**. Mouton de

Gruyter, 1999. ISBN 3-11-014979-6 3110149796. xvi + 489 pages. DM 248. Contributions to the Sociology of Language, 81.

### Bilingual Education, Official English at GURT

The 50th anniversary Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics May 6–8 has the theme "Language in Our Time: Bilingual Education and Official English, Ebonics and Standard English, Immigration and the Unz Initiative."

Speakers include Shirley Brice Heath, Anna Uhl Chamot, **Deborah Tannen**, **Walt Wolfram**, Ralph Fasold, **Roger Shuy**, **Salikoko Mufwene**, Roger Bowers, Ronald Scollon, Tom McArthur, Peter Brimelow, **Donna Christian**, John Rassias, G. Richard Tucker, JoAnn Crandall, **Maggie Ronkin** & Helen Karn, Reinhold Freudenstein, Shaligram Shukla, Edwin Thumboo, Anne Pakir, Bernard Spolsky, Denise Murray, and Leanne Hinton.

Special presentations include

—a plenary panel on bilingual education with Stephen Krashen, Univ. of Southern California; Mauro E. Mujica, U.S. English Foundation; Delia Pompa, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, U.S. Department of Education; and Rosalie Pedalino Porter, Director, Institute for Research in English Acquisition and Development.

—tutorials with Stephen Krashen and John Rassias.

*March 31* is the preregistration deadline.

For more information, go to [www.georgetown.edu/conferences/gurt99](http://www.georgetown.edu/conferences/gurt99) or contact Dr. James E. Alatis, Chair or Alison McArdle, Coordinator, GURT 1999, Georgetown University, International Language Programs and Research, 519-B Intercultural Center, Box 57-1045. Washington, DC 20057-1045; phone (202) 687-5659; fax (202) 687-0699; [gurt@gusun.georgetown.edu](mailto:gurt@gusun.georgetown.edu).

## LOOKING BACK

### A Century Ago in the American Dialect Society

At the turn of the last century, as now, ADS undertook monumental projects that were not always finished as soon as anticipated. The big project of 1896–1900 was a comprehensive dictionary of “College Words and Phrases.” **Eugene H. Babbitt**, a professor at Columbia and secretary of the Society, headed a committee of “the New York branch of the American Dialect Society” that, after a preliminary survey, sent a circular listing some 300 items to the heads of English departments at every college and university in the United States, as well as to those at a number of preparatory schools. From about 100 replies to about 400 circulars, Babbitt compiled a 50-page “word-list” that was published in *Dialect Notes* Vol. 2, Part 1, intended for 1898 but finally published in 1900.

Babbitt’s 19-page introduction to the word-list includes these remarks:

“The vocabulary of American students, as compared with that of German and French students, shows a very high standard of private morals. The American student is not prudish; he calls a spade a spade with the greatest frankness. . . . but, for instance, there is nothing peculiar to students in the slang referring to the drinking habit or to sexual immorality. For every word sent in concerning the latter there were several referring to the legitimate social intercourse of young people on the old American free and self-respecting basis. . . . Respect for women is shown in a high degree, as is especially exemplified in the college words from co-educational institutions.”

“It is hard for immoral young men to get into college, and still harder to stay there.”

Here are just a few of the entries, with the institutions where they were attested:

**balloon-juice**, n. Empty, noisy talk. (Yale.)

**belly-wash**, n. Any soft drink. (U. of Chicago, Harvard.)

**bicycle**, n. A translation used to assist in getting lesson, or in class. (Baker [Baldwin, Kansas], Wesleyan [Connecticut], Western Reserve.)

**chimney**, n. A person much addicted to smoking. (U. of Rochester.)

**clean shave**, n. Passing examination in every subject. (College of the City of New York.)

**fish**, n. A freshman. (Randolph Macon.) A person easily fooled. (Indiana, Phillips Academy.)

**dead**, adv. Very. Used generally.

**gad-fly**, n. Professor who makes his students work hard by witty remarks at their expense. (Talladega.)

**haze**, v.t. To annoy or subject to personal indignities as a sort of traditional initiation to the college; practised formerly almost universally upon freshmen by sophomores, but now generally given up or growing milder. (More than three dozen institutions.)

**joe-wad**, n. Toilet-paper. (Hamilton, Hotchkiss School.)

**lush**, v.i. To drink to excess. (Michigan, Minnesota, Tufts.)

**mash**, n. Infatuation, liking. (More than two dozen institutions.) In phrase ‘make a mash,’ to please a professor, i.e. give him a favorable impression of one’s ability. (Five institutions.)

**niggle**, v.i. To hurry. (Elmira.)

**quail-roost**, n. The dormitory for women. (“Mh.”: Muhlenberg?, Tufts, Wesleyan, Wyoming Seminary [Pa.] )

**scab**, v.i. To study overtime. (Pennsylvania State.)

**suck**, v.t. To curry favor. (“Mh.”)

**towny**, n. A town resident not a student. (Baker, Bucknell, Cornell, Hamilton, Hotchkiss, Phillips Academy, Wesleyan.)

**woolly-goat**, n. A gay time. (Mt. Holyoke.)

## Half a Century Ago: Planning the Society's Dictionary

*(From Publication of the American Dialect Society 11, April 1949: Secretary George P. Wilson's report on the New York meetings)*

For the first time in its history of fifty-nine years the Society held two meetings the same day. One was a conference and the other the general (annual) meeting. Both were held at the Pennsylvania Hotel Wednesday, December 29.

The conference, 2:00–3:30 p.m., was on “Planning the Dictionary of the American Dialect Society.” The discussions were led off by short talks on three questions:

1. “To What Extent Can We Check Each Lexical Item in all Parts of the Country?” **Frederic G. Cassidy**, University of Wisconsin.
2. “Should the Transcription in Our Dictionary Be Phonetic or Phonemic?” **James B. McMillan**, University of Alabama.
3. “What Are the Prospects of Getting Financial Backing for Our Dictionary?” **Atcheson L. Hench**, University of Virginia.

Most of this meeting was taken up with discussions centering around the three questions. The entire proceedings were recorded on wire tape, and typescripts were made of the recordings for distribution. Among the thirty-eight participants were some of the leading lexicographers and linguists of the United States and Canada.

The general meeting was held at 3:45–5:15 p.m. By count, 157 persons attended.

The following papers were read:

1. “Consonants in Alabama English,” **James B. McMillan**, University of Alabama.
2. “Methods and Problems of Collecting Dialect in Wisconsin,” **Frederick G. Cassidy**, University of Wisconsin.
3. “Dialect in American Literature,” **Louise Pound**, University of Nebraska.

*(Also in that issue of PADS is “A Word-List from West Texas” by James Nathan Tidwell and “A Word-List from Colorado” by Marjorie Kimmerle and Patricia Martin Gibby. DARE now incorporates that material through the letter O. Here are some samples from later in the alphabet.)*

### WEST TEXAS

**poor boy:** n. Chili con carne.

**pushency:** n. Necessity; emergency. “it’s a case of pushency.” Uneducated.

**rinktums:** interj. A word which, if said before the owner of a new haircut can say “Venture rinktums,” entitles the one who says it to initiate the new haircut by rubbing his thumb forcefully up the back of the owner’s head.

**spidgen:** n. A very small amount. “We don’t have a spidgen of sugar.”

**talk to (one’s) plate:** phr. To say grace before meals. One of my Oregon friends reports the use of *brag the potatoes* in the same sense.

**Yankee dime:** n. A kiss.

### COLORADO

**parking (strip):** n. The strip between the sidewalk and the curb.

**piggid:** adj. Helpless, bound hand and foot.

**rackabore, ragabore:** n. A mythical animal whose right legs are longer than its left legs (or vice versa) from running on steep mountain slopes. Also *ridge runner*.

**roamer:** n. A man who never stays long on a job.

**wasty:** adj. Too fat all over, not well developed in muscle. Said of steers and people.

## T-SHIRTS

### Another PADS: Pioneers of the ADS Has a Grand Genesis

At the recent Annual Meeting, **Dennis Preston** and **David Barnhart** unveiled the first in a series of T shirts commemorating Pioneers of the American Dialect Society. At press time a few were still available at \$15 each (plus shipping) from Preston at Dept. of Linguistics and Languages, Michigan State Univ., East Lansing MI 48824-1027; e-mail, preston@pilot.msu.edu.

Next year's shirt will depict **Louise Pound**, late of the U. of Nebraska, former president of ADS and noted co-founder of *American Speech*. Considering expansion of its offerings, Committee T asks: Would you pay \$25 for a sweatshirt?

A purple sheet prepared by Preston is included with each Grandgent shirt. It declares:

"This T-Shirt honoring **Charles H. Grandgent** (the first Treasurer of the Society and the recording secretary at its first planning meeting) is the first in a series planned to honor our distinguished predecessors.

"Charles Hall Grandgent appears to have been among the first to have had the creation of our Society in mind. In *Dialect Notes* Vol. 1, Part 1, p. 1 (1890) we find this: 'In January 1889, the proposition was made out of which has come this society. The plan was well received when spoken of by the present Secretary [i.e., Grandgent] in conversation with several persons, and a meeting was called to consider the question of establishing a Dialect Society. The meeting was held in No. 35 Sever Hall [at Harvard University], and twenty-eight persons were present.'

"The important words here are, of course, 'when spoken of by the present Secretary,' which would seem to suggest that Grandgent himself began discussions with colleagues on this matter. If so, the very idea of our Society may be laid at his feet.

"This first number of *Dialect Notes* goes on to provide an account of how a 'Committee on Organization' met several times after the January meetings, leading to the organiza-

tional meeting on March 13, 1889, but Grandgent was the person who provided the 'earliest' history of the Society in his report to the first Annual Meeting on December 30, 1889.

"The discussion from that first annual meeting (December, 1889) was summarized in full by the Secretary (E. S. Sheldon), and we find in it one contribution from Grandgent: 'Mr. Grandgent mentioned the risk of assuming that dialect forms always come from the standard English forms, while the former may be the older. Analogy must also be considered; *kittycornered* (*kiti*)—a form unknown to him—would be an easy development from *catticornered* (*kæti*), the only form he knew (= *catercornered*)' (p. 8).

"ADS is grateful to Charles Grandgent, of Maynard, Massachusetts and great-grandson of our distinguished early colleague, for making his portrait available for our shirt."

#### MORE ON GRANDGENT

Further information may be found in Louise Pound's "The American Dialect Society: A Historical Sketch" (*PADS* 17, April 1952) and Harvard University's memorial notice, reprinted in our *Dialect Notes* 6.19 (1939): 743-6. A bibliography of his writings is in *PMLA* 47: 911-914.

Pound writes: "The American Dialect Society, like the American Folklore Society, had its genesis at Harvard. . . . Its establishment was suggested by Charles Hall Grandgent, then an instructor at Harvard and director of modern languages in the Boston public schools, later a distinguished professor [of Romance languages] at Harvard" (4).

From the Harvard memorial: "Charles Grandgent had an infinite capacity for friendship. . . . He expressed himself easily in verse, whether familiar or stately; he could furnish the *mots justes* for a house-warming or for the Phi Beta Kappa stage. Grandgent was the prince of toastmasters. There was humor and charm in his very voice" (744-745).

## Lexicography at MLA

March 15 is the deadline for one-page abstracts of 20-minute presentations on "The Dictionary and the Classroom" for the Lexicography Discussion Group at MLA this December. **M. Lynne Murphy** seeks work relating to the creation of dictionaries for school settings or the use of dictionaries in school settings. Presenters must be MLA members. Address Murphy at Dept. of English, Baylor U., PO Box 97404, Waco TX 76798; e-mail [M\\_Lynne\\_Murphy@baylor.edu](mailto:M_Lynne_Murphy@baylor.edu).

## DSNA: Berkeley in May

Our close friend the Dictionary Society of North America holds its biennial meeting of the Dictionary Society of North America at the University of California, Berkeley, May 27-29, 1999.

Information is available at DSNA's website <http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dsna/index.html>.

Or write DSNA XIIth Biennial Meeting, Dept. of Linguistics, Univ. of California, Berkeley CA 94720-2650.

## Ex-Slave Recordings on WWW

Jeutonne P. Brewer of the Univ. of North Carolina, Greensboro, announces a Web site with sound clips from ex-slave recordings:

<http://www.uncg.edu/~jpbrewer/remember/>

Brewer explains: "One of the producers of the radio documentary, 'Remembering Slavery,' asked me to create a Web site for the project. As part of that work, I wanted to make examples of the ex-slave recordings available to faculty and students. You will also find a brief explanation about the background of the WPA narratives and the Archive of Folk Song recordings.

"You don't need a special program or plugin to your browser to play the sound clips. You only need a Java enabled browser, that is, Netscape 3.0/Internet Explorer 3.0 or a later version of these browsers.

Research assistant Timothy Flood helped create the Web site.

## Preston for Tamony XIV

**Dennis Preston** of Michigan State will speak on "The American English of Real Americans" in the 14th annual Peter Tamony Memorial Lecture on American Language at 3:45 p.m. Friday, April 23, in Ellis Library Auditorium at the University of Missouri, Columbia. A public reception will be held immediately following at the Western Historical Manuscript Collection offices across the hall.

The lecture commemorates the gift to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection of the voluminous clippings of slang and colloquialisms collected and neatly organized by Peter Tamony of San Francisco during his long life (1902-1985).

For further information, contact Nancy Lankford or Sue McCubbin at Western Historical Manuscript Collection, 23 Ellis Library, Univ. of Missouri, Columbia MO 65201-5149; phone (573) 882-6028; e-mail [LankfordN@umsystem.edu](mailto:LankfordN@umsystem.edu) or [McCubbinS@umsystem.edu](mailto:McCubbinS@umsystem.edu).

## Journals, Billing Move to Duke

As of 1999, Duke University is the home of ADS journals and locus of billing for membership. But we're not quite there, even though the calendar reads 1999. There are still two 1998 issues of *American Speech* and No. 81 of *PADS* to be issued by the University of Alabama Press before the transition is complete.

Till then, memberships and payments for 1998 are still to be arranged with Executive Secretary Allan Metcalf. But even now, 1999 arrangements are to be made with Duke, and soon all will be. Here is the address:

Marsha Emmons

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## DARE Hunts for Roman Cannon, Saddlebag House

If you can help with any of the following words, please send your information (including date and place of use) to *DARE* Associate Editor **Joan Hall** at 6125 Helen White Hall, 600 N. Park St., Madison WI 53706, or by e-mail at [jdhall@facstaff.wisc.edu](mailto:jdhall@facstaff.wisc.edu).

**pegger back** (or **peg 'er back?**)—Given by a single Wisconsin informant as the name of a bat-and-ball game for a small number of players. Does anyone know this, and can you describe it?

**pen(-type) barn**—Four informants, all from Michigan and Wisconsin, gave this term. It appears to refer to a barn without stalls, in which the animals can roam freely. Can anyone give a more precise definition?

**penny pup, penny dog, penny feist**—“A small dog; a noisy, worthless person; a tag-along or toady.” Our evidence is mostly from the Appalachian region. We would like to have more data on the distribution of these forms and their meanings. Is anyone familiar with any of them as a verb?

**perch bug**—Two NY state informants offered this, one as a term for dragonfly and the other for a dragonfly nymph (used for fish-bait). Does anyone else know this term? Is it really applied to the adult insect as well as the larva?

**Persian apple**—“Rhubarb.” We have 19th century evidence for this; does anyone know if it is still in use?

**Peter's mudhole**—Four informants, all from Georgia and three of them Black speakers, used this term in reference to storm clouds, rain, and wind. Can anyone give us more information on what this means and how it is used?

**red pea**—Does anyone know this as a specific term for a type of pea—perhaps a black-eyed pea?

**Robin Adair**—“Jack-in-the-pulpit.” This was given by a single Indiana informant and is apparently unknown to the botanical literature. Has anyone heard this?

**Roman cannon**—A firework; presumably the same thing as a Roman candle, but none of our informants states this explicitly. Does anyone know this term?

**runout**—This term is used repeatedly in a 1953 book about life on the Mississippi, apparently to mean a flash flood in a tributary stream. Can anyone supply further information?

**saddlebag house**—Our earlier quotations (1934→) apply this term to a dogtrot house—i.e. one consisting of two main rooms under a single roof, but separated by an open breeze-way. A number of later quotations—which may, however, reflect the terminology of architectural historians rather than the folk who live in such houses—apply the term to a house consisting of two main rooms arranged around a central chimney. If you know this from experience rather than books, please tell us what it means to you.

**salad pea** (or **sallet pea**)—“Green pea with an edible pod.” Our only evidence comes from the Smoky Mountain region. Is it known anywhere else? Is it so called because it is put in salads or because it is eaten as a “sallet” (an edible green)?

**Shrimp moth**—A *LAGS* informant from central Louisiana says that these fly for two days, then return to the water and become grass- or river-shrimp. An Arkansas informant mentions, without further details, a shrimp fly, which may be the same thing. Has anyone heard either of these terms or heard this remarkable metamorphosis attributed to an insect known by some other name?

### No more pink slips

Members who owe dues for the current year are used to getting pink notices in their January newsletters. No more! From now on you'll hear from Duke University Press. And don't worry, you still are on time to pay for '99. See story on Page 11.