

Farewell to English teacher leaves several vacant classes

Teachers undertake unmanned classes following Regina Chambers' resignation

By: Brandi Dickerson

One lesson we never fail to learn is that life moves on, whether we're walking beside it on our own two feet or roughly thrown over its shoulder. We could be leading, or we could be riding along, but life will never stand still.

As many students were informed last year before the start of summer break, English teacher Regina Chambers accepted a position at St. Xavier High School.

"I felt that my philosophy of education was more in line with St. Xavier's approach to education," said Chambers. "Also, as a Catholic, I looked forward to being in a religious environment"

But during her twelve years here at New Richmond, she contributed to bringing somewhat of a culture to the high school: Poetry in Rock Music, a class that allows students to study the poetic devices in the lyrics of generations of rock, and Mythology, which give students an educational insight on Ancient Greek culture.

Believe it or not, Mythology was taught here once before. "I wanted to bring [Mythology] back because electives are fun... and there's a much more relaxed environment for the teacher," said Chambers. "I started

poetry in spring of 2006 because Ms. Spinnati asked me to come up with a class that I wanted to teach and that kids would enjoy."

Luckily, the classes didn't leave along with Chambers. Poetry in Rock has grown in popularity throughout the student body since it was started in 2006, and it was kept on the class schedule.

"Fun class!" As soon as she heard it was up for dibs, journalism and English II teacher Sue Griffin volunteered to teach Poetry in Rock. But even after taking a summer class on the course, knowing the teaching criteria comes with experience; something Griffin said she might not have yet. "Right now, since it's the first time I've ever taught [Poetry in Rock,] it's a lot of day by day planning. In other words, I'm flying by the seat of my pants," she said. "It is sometimes hard to figure out what video to watch, when students should be writing, and when they should be listening, this is a class that has a lot of different media, and trying to fit it all together is a little tough."

But overall, Griffin said Poetry in Rock meets up to her expectations of it being an interesting class. "It's fun to teach and introduce students to the roots of rock and show them how

older music contributed to more modern music," she said.

Advanced English I was another class Chambers left teacher-less. Fifty inexperienced freshman split between two classes? Sounds like a challenge.

English and creative writing teacher, Michelle Menefee, said she was up for that challenge. "I see it as an opportunity to teach a new course and to expand on my teaching repertoire," she said.

This year, Menefee said she plans on taking advantage of the Cincinnati Enquirer's Newspaper in Education (NIE) in order to incorporate a literary culture. "I would like to find a way to connect [current events] to the literature we read and study in the classroom," she explained.

Menefee also said she holds "high expectations" for those enrolled in her class. "All students need to take a level of responsibility for their education, and ownership and pride in their work and performance," she said.

A text book four inches thick, hours of homework, and more books to read than a bookshelf can hold: what could possibly be more fun than AP English?

Despite the increased paper load

and prep work, English and Brit Lit. teacher Nicole "OWiseOne" Parker, said she enjoys teaching Chamber's old class. In fact, she said she "loves it!"

"When I volunteered to teach AP English, I was both excited and apprehensive," said Parker. "Chambers left big shoes to fill, and I want to mirror her passion and dedication to this class. And I think it will be fun, honestly, because the content is fun."

This year, Parker turned the AP course from a lingual study to a literary study. The year will be divided into small sections that focus on different aspects, such as novels, drama, poetry, short fiction, and research papers.

There are only eight students in the class this year, but Parker said she still has high expectations. *Really* high. "I expect commitment, which I see," she said. "I see so much potential in these eight people; I think this class will be very successful."

And last but not least, Mythology, a class that allows students to explore ancient Gods and study Greek history, is taught by English teacher Malissa Cornette.

So far into the 2007/08 school year, all the teachers said they were con-

tent with their positions. Especially Chambers. "I have three sections of English I, one section of English III, and a junior homeroom," she said. "My homeroom and I actually engage in activities together—one being that we collect for missions each week."

And even though Chambers said she misses her students and the American Heritage dictionary that still stands on a podium in room 300, only teaching four out the eight periods has its advantages. "I really like that I don't have to be at school until 9:00 am; I can put my kids on their bus. I was never been able to do that in the past," said Chambers.

As for the New Richmond English department faculty, they're reaping the benefits as well. Between new adventures of culture, higher levels of literature, and increased experience with freshmen, the teachers all expressed content with their new classes.

As Mrs. Parker put it, "It's always good to challenge yourself with something new." And from the responses of the English department faculty, they're all up for the challenge.

Seasoned educators and green horns alike find their way to NRHS

New Richmond welcomes several additions to the staff of 2007-2008

By: Joanna DeSalvo

Bells ring, friends hug, clothing is assessed. Schools back, and at New Richmond High School, it's brought friends with it. Comrades in the form of new teachers and staff: Jamie Utendorf, Laura Prescott, Brad Hatfield, John Frye, and Dan Scholz. Some of the new additions are sea-

soned in their knowledge (i.e. Frye, Prescott), while others (i.e. Utendorf and Hatfield) are still learning the ropes of the New Richmond student population.

New mathematics teacher Jamie Utendorf claimed that there really wasn't anything wrong with NRHS.

"While this is the first school I've taught at, I really do think it has marvelous students. Several of t h e

teachers have been very helpful, too. Mrs. Griffin, Mr. Harris, Mrs. Corpuz, and Mrs. Corbin especially," she said.

However, according to new Assistant Principal Frye, they've got it easier than the teachers of NRHS 17 years ago. "This will be my thirtieth year in the academics business. I must say, I much prefer the New Richmond students of today than those of seventeen years ago when I was last here. They seem nicer to each other and very businesslike in school. The faculty, however, is just as wonderful today as it was then," he said.

Another relatively new teacher to be put on staff was American history teacher Brad Hatfield. Hatfield declared, however, that this is not the

first school he's taught at.

"I taught at Amelia High School; I've been a teacher for about two years," he said. "I like New Richmond's overall learning environment better, and the students seem better, too," he added.

An additional seasoned teacher was found, however, in the form of new science teacher Laura Prescott (a woman who's spent 11 years in academics) who claimed that NRHS rings a bell with her of another school.

"I really love it, it's great, and I'm very glad to be here. New Richmond kind of reminds me of Takawanda, and I

loved it there," she said.

Unfortunately, as Mr. Dan Scholz is a new gym teacher and prone to activity, *The Messenger* staff was unable to secure any information. Sorry, Mr. Scholz!

So as new teacher faces appear in the hallways, new experiences are had. From being pointed down the wrong staircase by a wayward student on the first day, to unknowingly breaking the wrong rules at the wrong time; to all the newcomers, welcome to New Richmond!




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Foliage plants will all be in pots; grasses will be ready to plant
Prices range from \$3-\$10
Sale begins at 5:30 on the sidewalk between the high school and the stadium
Volunteers will carry plants to your car
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For more info, call Sue Griffin at the high school, 553-3191, 876-3349 or 604-5522

