

The Phi Sigma Tau

Bulletin

A Publication of the Department of Philosophy, Southwest Texas State University

Fall 1999

Celebrating the SWT Centennial: 1899-1999

Issue 10

The Department of Philosophy

in cooperation with the San Marcos Public Library and
with funding from the Texas Council for the Humanities
Presents

Environmental Ethics and the Stewardship of the San Marcos River

A community reading/discussion
group based on
Eugene Hargrove's *Foundations
of Environmental Ethics*
October 4-14
San Marcos Public Library

A public lecture by
Eugene Hargrove
ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS
October 21 (Thursday)
Evans Auditorium

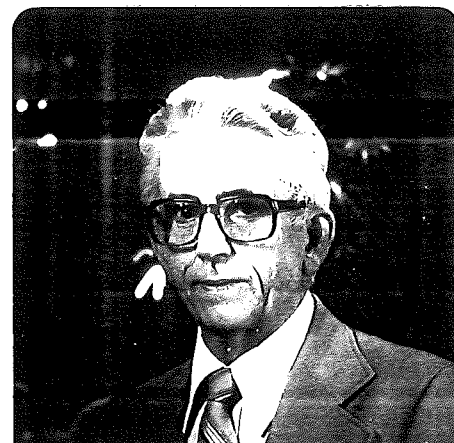
Eugene Hargrove of the University of North Texas will give a public lecture on Environmental Ethics in Evans Auditorium on October 21st. A reading/discussion group of interested persons outside the academic community will meet in advance of Professor Hargrove's visit to discuss his book, *Foundations of Environmental Ethics*, and to identify the values that should guide stewardship of the San Marcos River.

Members of the Philosophy faculty of SWT will serve as discussion leaders for the sessions which will be held in the San Marcos Public Library's general meeting room. Participants will have the opportunity to meet Professor Hargrove on October 20th. There is no registration fee. Discussion materials, including a copy of Hargrove's book, will be provided free of charge. Registration is limited to twenty-five individuals who will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis.

To register or obtain more information, call 245-2285.

Calendar of discussion group meetings (San Marcos Public Library):

- October 4 (Monday 7:00-8:30pm) "Land use attitudes"
- October 7 (Thursday 7:00-8:30pm) "Wildlife protection attitudes"
- October 11 (Monday 7:00-8:30pm) "Nature preservation"
- October 14 (Thursday 7:00-8:30pm) "The superiority of natural beauty"
- October 20 (Wednesday) 7:00-8:30 dialogue with Eugene Hargrove
- October 21 (Thursday 7:30-9:00pm Evans Auditorium)
a public lecture by Eugene Hargrove "Environmental Ethics"



Emeritus Professor James "Seamus" Treanor, beloved friend, teacher, and colleague, died June 20 in Austin. Treanor was a founding member of the philosophy department at Southwest Texas State University and taught here for 27 years before his retirement in 1994. He was also the first advisor for the *Delta* chapter of *Phi Sigma Tau*, the philosophy honor society, which was established at SWT in 1982.

Treanor's unique persona combined a flair for storytelling with scholarly erudition in a way which made philosophy a memorable experience for his students.

A funeral service in Austin on June 24 was followed by an Irish wake and burial in Carrickroe Church Cemetery in his native county Monaghan, Ireland.

Professor Treanor is survived by his wife, Betty McKee Treanor, a professor of interior design at SWT.

Faculty Notes

Ethics in the Public Service: The Moral Mind at Work, by Dr. **Dean Geuras** of the Department of Philosophy and Dr. **Charles Garofalo** of the Department of Political Science, has recently been published by Georgetown University Press. The book attempts to apply philosophical ethics to public administration. It also attempts to dissolve the differences among the traditionally separated notions of teleology, deontology, virtue theory, and intuitionism.

New and Old World Philosophy, an introductory text which highlights contributions to philosophy by the American pragmatists Pierce, James, Dewey, and Adams and edited by Professors **Vince Luizzi** and **Audrey McKinney** will be published by Prentice-Hall this fall.

Professors **Lynne and Gil Fulmer** were elected Vice-President and President, respectively, of the New Mexico and West Texas Philosophical Association in Albuquerque last year. Gil will give the Presidential Address at the conference in Fort Worth in April, 2000.

Lynne and Gil will be attending the Society for Utopian Studies conference in San Antonio, in November, 1999. Lynne is *de facto* deputy arrangements chair, and she will be reading a paper, "Catherine MacKinnon's Feminist State: Utopia or Dystopia?". Gil organized a panel, "B.F. Skinner and Utopian Values," and will present a paper, "Skinner's Values After Twenty Years--A Re-Evaluation," co-authored with Prof. Eddie Vela, Department of Psychology, California State University, Chico; Dr. Vela is a former philosophy minor at SWT, and student of Gil's. The paper is a re-examination of issues in Gil's paper, "Skinner's Values," published in *Journal of Value Inquiry*, 1976.

Lynne and Gil will be attending the Popular Culture Convention in New Orleans in April, 2000. Lynne will be reading a paper, "Moral Bankruptcy: Advertising and Popular Culture." Gil has submitted a paper (not yet accepted), "Can the Past Be Changed in Wilson's *Darwinia*?"

Professor **Jo Ann Carson** will attend the Midwest Philosophy of Education Society conference at Loyola University Chicago in November, where she will present a paper, "Learning and Reciprocity."

Professor **Peter Hutcheson** was promoted to Professor of Philosophy this fall.

Professors **Audrey McKinney** and **Sylvia Elguea** have received a grant from the Texas Council for the Humanities to help fund "Environmental Ethics and the Stewardship of the San Marcos River," a community reading/discussion group which will meet during October at the San Marcos Public Library. The group discussions will be based on Eugene Hargrove's *Foundations of Environmental Ethics*. (For more information see page 1.)

Professor **Rebecca Raphael** is organizing a fall symposium in which a group of campus and local ministers, drawn from various faith traditions, will discuss the connections between our religions and our environment.

Paul Wilson has recently released a CD *All Things Considered*. Known to students and faculty as the intrepid coordinator of the Critical Thinking Lab, Paul is also a popular performer on the local music scene. His style has been described in the *Hill Country Sun* as "an up tempo kind of 70's retro rock with strong, bright harmonies." Paul's CD is available at local music stores or by ordering online at www.sanmarcos.net/paulwilson.

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News from the Delta

from the president

This semester, I enrolled in a class called Modern English Syntax. For those of you unfamiliar with the course, Modern English Syntax devotes itself to the 'parsing' of the English language (our instructor likes to use the word 'parsing'), and students must learn how to identify and mark accordingly the different parts of speech and clauses, etc., etc., and do a stylistic analysis of their own writing. The exams, the first of which I recently completed, consist of eight quite verbose sentences plucked from a work of prose. In this case, the professor chose sentences from a recent article in the New Yorker entitled "No-Brow Culture". After an hour and 15 minutes of 'parsing', I turned in the exam, and discovered that I couldn't remember anything about the content or meaning of any of the sentences. Needless to say, I have found that taking this course produced some mixed results in my own attempt to understand our language. For example, the same day, I took a test in my Faulkner class (I'm 'bulking up' on English classes this semester), and I couldn't help but examine his unconventional writing style and force it to fit into the structure of Modern English Syntax. I pondered over how many dependent and independent clauses were in a beautiful 3-page passage in *The Sound and the Fury*-- a passage which, I should say, contains neither any punctuation nor capitalization. Needless to say, I became frustrated and concluded that Faulkner had either never taken Modern English Syntax or had just failed to pay attention. The same day, I was reading a passage in a work by G.E. Moore, which put me into another, similar dilemma. In his essay, "A Defense of Common Sense", Moore writes a sentence which is approximately 300 words long, and, as far as my limited training in the course allows me to be able to tell, grammatically 'correct' according to the rules of Modern English Syntax, even though I had no idea what point Moore was trying to get across. What has this course taught me so far? That I have become neurotic and obsessed with 'proper' grammar to the point where I almost feel too self-conscious to complete this entry in the newsletter (but, apparently, not obsessed enough since this passage, and this sentence, in fact, contains its own errors). If nothing else, Modern English Syntax has given me a set of rules to break, so that I might make my own writing more 'Faulkner-esque' or 'Moore-like' if I decide. Now I must face myself with the task of determining which style my professors prefer. I'm not sure if this class has helped or harmed my studies in philosophy, but I would like to think that understanding how a language works can be helpful in analysis of philosophical texts...

This semester, the philosophy department and *Phi Sigma Tau* have become involved in a few activities directed towards student involvement. For the second year, SWTSU will send a team to the state-wide "Ethics Bowl" at St. Mary's University in San Antonio. Last year, I was fortunate enough to participate in the competition in which our team was required to propose answers to 'ethical dilemmas'. Although we would have liked to argue more with the other teams, and although we were accused of 'name-dropping' by one of the judges for basing our answers on the moral systems of particular philosophers, the competition was an entertaining way to spend a Saturday. I encourage any students interested in participating to do so. As we discovered last semester, if you have no background training in ethics, you shouldn't be discouraged from participating. In fact, the more ignorant you are of various ethical theories, the better off you probably will be in the competition. This semester, I have begun the process of 'de-educating' myself in all the ethical theories I have learned, which has resulted in a form of moral subjectivism which should be more appealing to the judges this year. I also look forward to seeing more students at the department's philosophy dialogue series. Good luck to everyone this semester.

James Hulgan
President, *Phi Sigma Tau*, Delta

CALL FOR PAPERS

Southwest Texas State University
Philosophy Symposium
March 4, 2000
Deadline for submissions:
January 15, 2000

The SWT philosophy honor society
invites participation in our third annual
philosophy symposium.

For information contact Jo Ann Carson at
(512) 245-2285 fax (512) 245-8335
e-mail: jc28@swt.edu

Officers

James Hulgan, President
Melissa Lomax-LeBeau, Vice-President
Justin Glowney, Treasurer
Jo Ann Carson, Chapter Advisor

***Phi Sigma Tau* Fall Initiation**
Friday, October 22
3:00 p.m.
The Glade Theatre

The following students will be
inducted into *Delta* chapter:

Devon Athans, Sam Brannon
Christy Cooke, Clinton Hopper
Jason Simus, Shawn Souci
Jacob Rolls, Michael Vaclav

Phi Sigma Tau Eligibility Requirements: 9 hours of
philosophy with a B average and an overall GPA of 2.75

Tribute

James (Seamus) Treanor, 1929-1999

In memoriam

The course was called Humanities 3201 and when Jim Treanor was hired, he and I and that course were all there was to what has become a rather large and diverse philosophy department. Humanities 3201 was the poor step-sister in the English Department when Bob Walts, the chair of English, and I made the decision to hire Jim. It was a good decision since he brought to us a thorough background in the history of philosophy, a love for teaching, and an Irish wit. He was a kind and gentle man. When my two children were small he would sometimes "borrow" them and walk with them down to the Dairy Queen to buy treats. They fondly remember how special he made them feel.

Jim had high standards that he expected from his students and the university. He had little patience with students who tried to cover up their lack of effort by spouting nonsense; he had little patience with the actions of the system in which he worked when it did irrational things.

And you should have seen his Irish anger in situations like the following: When, because workmen were making so much noise in and around his classroom, he decided that for the next meeting of that class he would change rooms. Prior to the next class he put a notice on the original classroom's door directing students to the new location. He, of course, went to class in the new location but students did not show up. Now you must try to imagine the reaction when he finally went to the original classroom to see if anyone was there. He found no students and he found no note on the door. The note may have been still on the door, but it was of little use since workmen had removed the door from its hinges and taken it away! Of course, the next time he left his office I removed his office door and hid it, just so I could see his reaction when he came back.

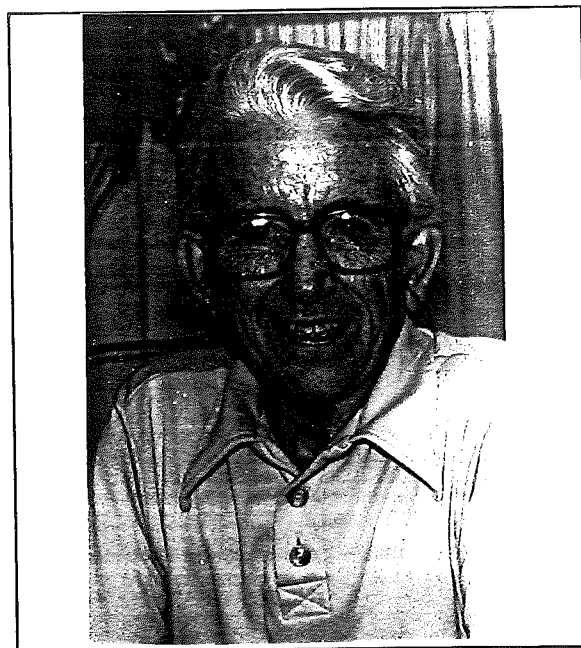
We all miss him.

Professor Glenn C. Joy

He had a lot of wit. We used to have coffee together early in the morning in his office before classes started. When there was not anything else to discuss I asked him for Limericks, and he could make them up on the spot. Unfortunately I do not remember a single one. I just remember that they were funny and witty. He also was a good person with whom to talk things over. I surely do

miss him, the old Treanor, as he was when he was still here in the department.

Professor Ise Kalsi



I knew Jim Treanor since I came to SWT in 1971. In all of that time, Jim was a fine friend, a fine philosopher, and a fine human being. But for Jim, all three were identical. One could not separate Jim the friend from Jim the philosopher or from Jim the human being because Jim himself refused to separate them. He is best described by his favorite philosopher, Aristotle, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*:

Now those who wish well to their friends for their sake are most truly friends; for they do this by reason of their own nature and not incidentally; therefore their friendship lasts as long as they are good—and goodness is an enduring thing. And each is good without qualification and useful to each other.

Aristotle adds that such friendships are infrequent because such people are rare. Jim is among them.

Professor Dean Geuras

Thinking about Treanor in these days since his

death, I keep returning to a day in August of 1978 when I was standing in a long line on the 7th floor of JCK, desperately trying to register for a philosophy course. "Desperately" here is not hyperbolic; I *needed* to take a philosophy course, a need that had nothing whatever to do with degree plans or curricular requirements.

Somehow it never occurred to me that all the classes might be closed—not being a regular student, I had been given a late registration time—but that was the unwelcome news I received when I finally queued my way to the front of the line. Disappointed, I found a chair some ways across the room and began to search through the course schedule. Should I take another government course? How about an English course? One can never get too much of great literature. No, I had come here for philosophy and it was going to be philosophy or nothing, and it looked like nothing was the order of the day. In retrospect I am embarrassed to think how dejected I must have looked. I seem to recall a certain head-in-the-hands posture. But just as I was standing up to leave, a tall figure approached with some news: "I just wanted to tell you that we have opened up Professor Treanor's class, if you'd like to register for it." And I did.

What a character he was. Even the lines in his face could tell stories.

He had clear likes and dislikes. A short list of his dislikes: pretense, self-promotion, the English (as a collective—there were a few exceptions), bureaucrats, empty abstractions, dogmatists who use venerated traditions to oppress others. (He had some experience with the latter.)

He liked people who liked both philosophy and poetry and refused to see any incompatibility between the two. He was a bit of a rebel, though a gentle one, and he therefore had patience with the rebelliousness of youth. He himself could understand and even flirt with iconoclasts like Nietzsche, yet he always came back to the moderation of Aristotle and the reasoned faith of Aquinas. He was a staunch defender of (philosophical) libertarianism, and if curses and blessings have any efficacy, John Hospers is burning in hell while C.A. Campbell is sipping ambrosia. It was fun to watch him argue with his good friend and sometime tormentor Dean Geuras about whether or not Aristotle was a determinist. He liked creative subversion and irreverence. Here, for example, is how he would handle Biblical literalism: "Did you know Jesus was elastic? You didn't? Well, we learn from Matthew that he tied his ass to a tree and went into Jerusalem."

He did achieve a kind of wisdom, which, I think, consisted in this: ideas are important, but individuals are more important than ideas. And that's why, even though I don't like big classes, I let in one extra student each semester.

Professor Jo Ann Carson

*The Soul: Seek out reality, leave things that seem.
The Heart: What, be a singer born and lack a theme?*
(Yeats, "Vacillation")

During the years that Jim Treanor taught his aesthetics course in the Department of Philosophy at Southwest Texas State he frequently asked me to be a guest speaker, suggesting that I ground his students in the history of art so that they could have that particular backdrop against which to balance various theories of art and art appreciation to which they had been introduced.

I remember the interest Jim showed in my comments and the examples of works of art which I had selected, interest which led him to ask specific questions. His questions or observations often encouraged the students to ask questions of their own. I remember thinking that this slender, white-haired philosophy professor was the most serious student in the class. He was still learning.

Dr. Tom C. Williams
Department of Art & Design

Rev. Peter McKenna of St. Ann's Catholic Church

La Vernia was one of Treanor's lifelong friends. The two attended grade school together in Ireland, leaving home before daylight to travel seventeen or eighteen miles by bicycle on unpaved roads. He told newspaper columnist Mike Kelley of their experiences:

"We kept in touch on the roads, leaving early on frosty, cold, wet mornings on bicycles that were not very dependable," McKenna said.

Treanor, he said, "had a marvelous sense of humor and was a great storyteller about characters in his life. He and I grew up with the little people on the roads and the farms and their peculiar ways of handling life's situations in sometimes very laughable ways. He was able to recapture and remember those stories."

He remained attached to his homeland, McKenna said.

"I think the Irish blood ran in his veins constantly and always," McKenna said.

"Although he never had any particular political leanings, he did like to sing Irish rebel songs, just because he knew them and he had a good voice."

(From the *Austin American-Statesman*, June 24, 1999)

Lab Report Fall '99

This semester many events are taking place in the Lab and Dialogue Room. Three groups of student volunteers from the large sections of Philosophy 1305 are meeting weekly to watch and discuss films with philosophic content and sharpen their critical thinking skills. I am being assisted with these groups by Sylvia Elguea, visiting philosopher from Mexico and friend of the SWT Philosophy department.

The Dialogue Series promises to be another fascinating one. We have our regular cross section of disciplines and speakers from other departments, and a special visit from UNT's Eugene Hargrove in October. Our topics this semester will include Environmental Ethics, Aesthetics, Kant, Philosophy and Technology and Philosophy and Religion. We will also spend a week with our star philosophy majors discussing contemporary ethical issues in preparation for the Ethics Bowl at St. Mary's in November.

If you have any questions about the Critical Thinking Lab or the Dialogue Series, feel free to contact me at 245-2403 or via e-mail at pw08.

Paul Wilson
Critical Thinking Lab Coordinator

Alumni News

Carlos Armintor received his master's degree from American University in Washington, D. C. and is now working for the Democratic Party.

Dan Bisett has been teaching English in Korea since last spring, and at last report was planning to travel to Australia.

Francisco Gomez has finished film school and is working for a film company in Canada. He will marry Whitney Alison Crowe in Fredericksburg on October 22. Congratulations and best wishes!

Stephanie Reyes is working for the Women's Resource Center at TSTC in Waco. Her short story "Bad Debts/Vindictive Women" will appear in *Fantasmas*, a publication of Arizona State University Press.

Paul Stearns is teaching Texas history GT (gifted/talented) classes at a jr. high magnet school in Houston. The school has many immigrant students from 71 countries. He will also be incorporating logic and thinking skills into the curriculum, and reports that having a degree in philosophy rather than history helped him get the position.

Roel Trevino began law school at The University of Texas this fall.

Teague Lecture Set for November 11 "Human Freedom and the Chinese People's Courts"

The 5th annual Marvin O. Teague Lecture in Applied Jurisprudence has been set for Thursday, November 11 at 1:00. This year's lecture will feature a joint presentation by Professors Rui Zhu and Vince Luizzi of the SWT Philosophy Department on the Chinese people's court system. Luizzi and Zhu traveled to Beijing and Shanghai for two weeks in June to study how the Chinese courts, many of which were opened to the

The Phi Sigma Tau Bulletin

Editor..... Jo Ann Carson (JC28@swt.edu)

Technical Assistant..... Beverly Pairett (BP06@swt.edu)

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Telephone: (512) 245-2285

Fax: (512) 245-8335

Philosophy Courses - Spring 2000

Phil 2312 History of Philosophy Since 1600
Modern philosophical thought through the 19th century.
200644 0251 M-W 3:30P-4:45P USC 216-B Fulmer, CL

Phil 2330 Elementary Logic
A study of the nature and forms of correct reasoning, both deductive and inductive.
200645 0251 MWF 11:00A-11:50A LA 118 Hutcheson

200646 0252 T-H 9:30A-10:45A RM ARR Joy

Phil 3315 Contemporary Philosophy
Selected readings in late 19th century and 20th century philosophy: existentialism, positivism; also analytic philosophy, phenomenology, and pragmatism.
200647 0251 MWF 9:00A-9:50A USC 215 Zhu

Phil 3318 Reason, God, & Nature
An analysis of the concept of God, terms predicated of God, and theological propositions. An attempt to determine the nature of religious utterances in comparison with those of everyday life, scientific discovery, morality, and imaginative expression. (Capstone)
200648 0251 M-W 2:00P-3:15P LA 218 Fulmer, G

Phil 3322 Business and Professional Ethics
Study of major topics in business and professional ethics, including what a profession is, whether it differs from business, and what is involved with the moral education, social responsibilities, and ethical standards of professionals and business people. (Capstone)
200985 0280 T-H 6:30P-9:15P RAN Staff A
ABOVE COURSE MEETS 2ND EIGHT WEEKS IN SAN ANTONIO

Phil 3340 Symbolic Logic
A study of the logic of propositions through prepositional calculi, formal proofs, first-order functional calculi. Also included is an investigation into the axiomatic method as used in logic and mathematics, including the concepts of completeness and consistency.
200649 0251 T-H 11:00A-12:15P USC 215 Kalsi

Phil 3350B Philosophy and Literature
The course will be offered under the following sub-title: B., Philosophy and Literature. The course is intended to explain the relation between philosophy and literature. (Capstone)
200650 0251 MWF 10:00A-10:50A USC 215 Gueras

Phil 4351 Philosophy of Education
Study of major philosophical theories on nature, value, and purpose of education.
200651 0251 T-H 2:00P-3:15P USC 215 Carson

Phil 4355 Philosophical Theory of Science
A study of the major theories concerning the nature and value of science and the scientific method. (Capstone)
200652 0251 MWF 1:00P-1:50P FH 130 Hutcheson

Phil 5301 Applied Philosophy
Practical application of methods and teaching of philosophy to such major areas of human experience as religion, science, morality, politics, art, or literature. The study of one or more of these areas will demonstrate how philosophy contributes to the identification of issues as well as their resolution.
200655 0251 M 6:30P-9:15P USC 215 McKinney

Rel 2310 Old Testament
A critical, historical, and interpretive study of the literature of Isreal, covering the entire Old Testament.
200699 0251 T-Th 12:30P-1:45P FH 129 Raphael

Rel 3360 Comparative Religions
An interpretation of the fundamental insights, concepts, ideals, and customs of the major living religions of the world.
200700 0251 T-Th 9:30A-10:45A Rm ARR Raphael

Hon 2391W Introduction to Logic - Lewis Carroll
200947 0251 MW 2:00P-3:15P Psy 130-B Joy

Hon 2390D Old & New World Philosophy
200944 0251 T-Th 11:00A-12:15P Psy 128 Luizzi

Hon 3391L Philosophical Exploration in Film
204559 0251 T-Th 11:00A-12:15P Psy 130-B McKinney

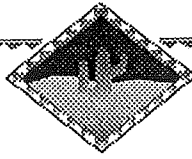
STUDY IN BEIJING
北大哲学

The mini session at Beijing (Peking) University is a part of one of the most prestigious international exchange programs in the Far East. The course is offered for PHIL 1305 and PHIL 4388 (independent study). The students will stay in the Peking University Dormitories and have classes from May 12th to May 29th. Several renowned experts in Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism will be invited to give talks. Our students will also meet students from Peking University. Two weekend field trips to the Great Wall, the Forbidden City and some Buddhist and Taoist Temples will be arranged. This mini session will be the unique feature in the cultural activities between the East and the West. All students in the US are encouraged to attend.*

*program approval pending

For further information, please contact Rui Zhu at the Philosophy Department 245-2285.

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PHILOSOPHY WEB PAGE
www.swt.edu/acad_depts/philos

WORDS FROM THE CHAIR

The memorial tribute to Professor James Treanor in this issue of the newsletter contains some of the many reminiscences we've shared since his passing away in June. Prof. Treanor was a professor at SWT for 27 years and a founding member of the Philosophy Department. Fond recollections of him, his wit and story-telling abound and serve well to keep his memory alive. I am pleased to announce that plans are under way to create another way for us to keep Prof. Treanor in our thoughts. An anonymous donor has pledged an initial contribution of \$500.00 to establish a scholarship in Prof. Treanor's name. Donations to this fund may be sent directly to the Philosophy Department.

Vade; vale, Magister Treanor!