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Literary Publication Expands to Hold First Monthly Poetry Slam

November 20, 2006

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - Tributaries, the Illinois Wesleyan University student group that since 1993 has published a fine art and literary magazine of student work, is expanding into the performance arena by establishing a monthly competitive poetry slam.

The first slam will take place on Wednesday, Nov. 29, at 7:30 p.m., in the Hansen Student Center, 300 Beecher St., in Bloomington.

The event will be free and open to the public.

The evening of poetry will begin with an open mic session, during which any audience member may read his or her work without the pressure of receiving a score. Afterwards, senior Steph Hollis and sophomores Kaelyn Riley and Dave Wendler will read their poetry.

The slam, which will follow the reading, will be the culminating event of the evening. A poetry slam is a type of competitive poetry performance first popularized in Chicago in the 1980s. Today, most major cities offer a variety of poetry slam venues and there is a national tournament.

Those wishing to participate in the slam may sign up when they arrive at the Hansen Student Center on Wednesday evening. Under the direction of the slam masters, senior Amanda ReCupido and first-year student Mike Whitfield, each participant will have three minutes to read a poem. After performing, readers will receive a score from three judges, who will be selected randomly from the audience. After all competitors have performed, the top three scorers will move on to a second round and perform again. Ultimately, one reader will be declared the winner of the slam.

Other upcoming Tributaries events include the publication of the fall issue of the literary magazine, which features the strongest and most original work by IWU students and will be available on campus in early December.

Also, on Feb. 23 and 24, 2007, Tributaries will host the third annual Tongue & Ink creative writing conference, which will feature writing workshops and another poetry slam, in addition to addresses by keynote speakers Kent Johnson, an American poet who published his own poems under the name of a fictitious Hiroshima survivor named Araki Yasusada, and Davis Schneiderman, assistant professor of English at Lake Forest College.

For additional information about the slam, contact ReCupido at arecupid@iwu.edu or Whitfield at dwhitfield@iwu.edu.

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