Long time professor John Gaterud retires to pursue old passions

There are a lot of people in this world that like to draw attention to themselves, but John Gaterud is not one of them.

Gaterud quietly retired last spring after spending more than 20 years as a mass communications professor at Minnesota State.

“Restlessness, wanderlust, curiosity, dreams...these were among motivating factors, I suppose,” he said in an e-mail about his choice to retire. “Much of my life has been defined by periodic change. For me, it was time to go. I found myself spending more time than usual looking out windows.”

This “periodic change” also punctuated his time spent at MSU. Gaterud joined the faculty in 1981 after earning a Master’s in journalism from the University of Oregon in Eugene. There, he served as a teaching fellow while earning his degree.

He had also been a reporter and editor at a weekly newspaper in Colorado and Oregon, but it was during grad school he discovered he enjoyed teaching.

“Mankato State (as it was called then) hired me as an instructor in the Mass Communications Institute, and my wife, Cindi, and I moved that fall to Mankato,” he said.

But this need for change would lure Gaterud away in 1984, when he left MSU to begin The Minnesota Times with his friend and fellow mass comm professor Bruce Benidt.

“The Times was an ambitious project, and a terrific business education, yet the financial demands outran my editorial abilities to keep it afloat, and I folded the paper in 1988,” he said. “But I was always proud of the achievement. I’ve never been afraid to chase dreams, and the Times was...”

Lauters starts work in Nelson Hall

Dr. Amy Mattson Lauters joined the faculty of the Department of Mass Communications in fall 2008.

Lauters, a former print journalist and freelance web designer, got her bachelor’s degree in print journalism from the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire, her master’s in mass communication from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, and her doctorate in mass communication from the University of Minnesota. She comes to Mankato after more than two years as an assistant professor in the Elliott School of Communication at Wichita State University in Wichita, Kansas.

“The students, faculty and staff here at MSU are great to work with.”

Lauters published her first book, The Rediscovered Writings of Rose Wilder Lane, Literary Journalist, in spring 2007. Her...
Holed up in my office on a Friday afternoon, I am struck by the vivid contrast between the wide, white wall in front of me and the expanse of brilliant fall color and promise of change out my window. Education is much like this: we know little of the beauty, excitement and people in the world without teachers inviting into our minds the stimulating stories of countries, cultures and nature. I relish being part of this process and am thrilled when students realize the splendor to which an MSU education has exposed them.

One way to stay in contact with our students is to reach out with this electronic newsletter. Thanks to the efforts of our newest faculty member, Dr. Amy Lauters, students and friends of the department can now learn about the changes, news and plans of the Department of Mass Communications. I invite all of you to use your electronic voice to send me – and the rest of the mass comm faculty members – your stories of life beyond Nelson Hall.

There were significant changes to the department last year. Dr. John Gaterud, a faculty member whose passion for this field was apparent to nearly all who met him, retired in May. He left the department with plans to continue editing and publishing books in the vein of *Stardust and Fate: The Blueroad Reader*, his first volume in a collected series of new writing and art. Dr. Jinbong Choi, a professor who was hired a year ago, also left. Choi resigned to move to Texas with his family and teach at Texas State University in San Marcos.

Department faculty members are now in the midst of a search to hire a professor to begin in January 2009. Although it feels a bit like déjà vu because we conducted a search last winter, we can only hope that our search this year will have a similar result: We hired an outstanding assistant professor from Wichita State University. Everyone in the department – and the few lucky students who are enrolled in her classes this semester – is thrilled with Dr. Lauters!

Another change that will be significant to mass communications and the other departments and programs in the College of Arts and Humanities is the retirement in June 2009 of Dean Jane Earley. To say she has been dean of this college longer than anyone else has been a dean in the United States doesn’t begin to describe her influence on the hundreds of thousands of students, staff and faculty members who have looked to this college for expertise, guidance, collegiality and education. No one will be able to replace Dean Earley – only adopt her title, move into her office and begin a new era for our college.

Into that new world, the Department of Mass Communications will continue to grow in popularity, in its use of technology, in size, in scholarly impact and journalism influence. I can assure you the department will continue to undertake changes to meet the challenges of an expanding (and fascinating) discipline and dynamic world.

Thanks for your interest in the Department of Mass Communications and enjoy your visit!

*Jane S. McConnell, Ph.D.*

*Chair*

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**ALUMNI:**

Send us your news, too!

Email your good news to Dr. Amy Lauters at amy.lauters@mnsu.edu, or call 507-389-5523.
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Ryan Paulson, Apple Valley
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Megan Priem, Holmen, WI

Summer & Fall 2006 Grads:
Shauna Riley, Arlington
Kaleb Roos, Eau Claire, WI
Bruce Rosendahl, Fergus Falls
Thomas Sedlacek, Richfield
Laura Skelly, Le Sueur
Bevin Smieja, Browerville
Jennifer Sorensen, Minnetrista
Jenna Stark, Utica, SD
Alison Stoltz, Mankato
Angela Truman, Eveleth
David Weinstein, North Mankato
Nicole Weyer, Coon Rapids
Debra Wohlferd, White Bear Lake

Spring 2007 Grads
Meredith A. Benson, North Mankato
STEphany A. Beshara, Rapid City, SD
Kellie J. Bigham, Mankato
Kimberly A. Broback, Apple Valley
William P. Brozak, North St. Paul
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Janelle Fischer, New Ulm
Madonna Flowers, Mankato
Michael J. Grdatus, Stillwater
Ryan J. Gehrke, Sleepy Eye
Bryanna M. Gerlach, Woodbury
Joanna L. Graf, Rochester
Michelle K. Grigware, Lenexa, KS
Marcia A. Hewitt, Brooklyn Park
Amelia J. Johnson, Beresford, SD
Colleen M. Kelly, N. St. Paul
Jamie M. Koerner, Lincoln, NE
Emily S. Kofoid, Mapleton
Julianne L. Koon, North Mankato
Richard H. Kubitschek, Jr, Lake Elmo
Dax M. Larson, Bloomington
Michael D. Leech, Mankato
Carly D. Listman, Deadwood, SD
Rebecca F. Maas, Waseca
Danielle J. Mann, Mankato
Masataka Matsumoto, Japan
Jaya c. Narayanna, TX
Masataka Matsumoto, Japan
Danielle J. Mann, Mankato

Grads

Spring 2006 Grads
Jennifer Ackerman, Faribault
Kathryn Benson, Lake Crystal
Alyssa George, Coon Rapids
Robert Gleiden, Mankato
Rachel Hansen, Mankato
Heather Hyvare, Coon Rapids
Chad Larsen, Eagan
Tricia Little, Faribault
Elizabeth Loen, Sioux Falls, S.D.
Jill Lueth, Young America
Sarah Mahlberg, Worthington
Lindsey Quick, Dawson
David Shun, Mounds View
Jennifer Van Loy, Sanborn
Alyssa Vaubel, Mankato
Devanie Vaene, Annandale
Allyssa Woodford, Mahtomedi

Summer & Fall 2006 Grads
Abbee Baker, Madison Lake
Arin Barnett, Lake Crystal
Elyse Biedscheid, Mankato
James Blekedast, Mankato
Kimberly Broback, Apple Valley
Jeffrey Brooks, North Mankato
Erin Burt, Bloomington
Marcus Claye, Sioux Falls, SD
Leslie Coulter, Mankato
Annie Culver, Bloomington
Emily Diets, Plymouth
Andrea Fox, chancellor, SD
Ryan Gehrke, Sleepy Eye
Bryanna Gerlach, Woodbury
Jeremiah Graves, Hartley, IA
Erin Grenz, Mound City, SD
Michelle Grigware, Lenexa, KS
Daniel Hansen, East Bethel
Chelsie Hoven, South St. Paul
Zachary Johnson, Bloomington
Tara Keith, Shakopee
Jacqueline Knutson, Mankato
Brandi Maahs, Brooklyn Park
April McCabe, Le Sueur

Continued on page 4
Internships

Spring 2006 Internships
Jennifer Ackman-Ruth’s House of Hope, Faribault
Arin Barnette-Carlson Craft Business Solutions, Mankato
Kathryn Benson-MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Stephany Beshara-South Bend Tribune, South Bend, IN
Krista Erickson-Women’s Inc., Fairmont
Janelle Fischer-MSU International Programs Office, Mankato
Alyssa George-Clear Channel Communications, North Mankato
Robert Glieden-Mankato Free Press, Mankato
Alex K. Koch, Gaylord
Jim L. Ta, Waconia
Julie R. Vukovich, Ironwood, MI
Brian R. Wolfin, Canby

Summer & Fall 2007 Grads
Jenna R. Allewa, Red Wing
Regina A. Barna, Farmington
Tyler J. Bettin, Truman
Corey J. Butler, Jr., Rosemount
Nicholas C. Conrad, Vadnais Heights
Kathryn C. Crandall,
Sue E. Draayer, Owatonna
Joseph D. Faust, Brooklyn Park
Sara J. Foss, Mankato
Rebecca L. Guadagnoli, Hanska
Christopher H. Hinkey, Melvin, Iowa
Christopher P. Holmberg, Brandon
Andrew W. Johnson, Edina
Brian D. Johnson, Mankato
Aimee L. Kirchoff, Oakdale
Melissa Kjolsing, Mankato
Eliza A. Koch, Gaylord
Jamie M. Koerner, Lincoln, Nebraska
Julianne L. Kroon, North Mankato
Sarah M. Kuebler, Sleepy Eye
Candace J. Laaekmann, Fulda
Sarah E. Lawrence, Mankato
Carly D. Listman, Deadwood, South Dakota
Brandi L. Maahs, Brooklyn Park
John H. Maires, North Mankato
Benjamin P. Marti, Sleepy Eye
John F. Muesing, Mankato
Daniel S. Myers, Mankato
Jason D. Norton, Apple Valley
Angela M. Olson, Mankato
Shelby L. Peacock, Rosemount
Sarah F. Roterling, New Ulm
Jennifer Schwartz, Savage
Jon C. Swedien, Mankato
Kathryn A. Tolle, Lino Lakes
Alison M. Trolldahl, Mankato
Heather M. Tukua, North Mankato
Jamie L. Whitmore, Cottage Grove
Tamara S. Wilberding, Madison Lake
Laura B. Yager, New Ulm

Spring 2008 Grads
Douha S. Abd El-Fatah, Egypt
Jenna M. Anderson, Osseo
Jennifer L. Armon, Blue Earth
Cathryn E. Arnt, Shorewood
Brita J. Askoveld, Granada
Regina A. Barna, Mankato
Jeremy S. Behnke, Minnesota Lake
Bridge A. Berg, New Ulm
Jennifer M. Brooks, Maple Plain
Starrla G. Cray, Mankato
Sheena C. Curry, Chatfield
Alex J. Dow, Eden Prairie
Megan M. Ecker, Mankato
Stephanie M. Eischens, Silver Lake
Sarah M. Erickson, New Brighton
Timothy B. Green, New Prague
Alyssa George-Clear Channel Communications, North Mankato
Robert Glieden-Sport Pix, Mankato
Heather Hyvare-City of Mankato and Mankato Area Schools, Mankato
Zachary Johnson-MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Rick Kubitschek-Nashville Sounds, Nashville, TN
Chad Larsen - MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Jessica Lawrence-MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Tricia Little-Café Ambrosia, North Mankato
Elizabeth Loen-Applauze Magazine, Mankato
Jill Lueth-KMNS/KMSK Radio, Mankato
Sarah Mahlberg-Headlines, Worthington
Tom Selleck-Healthy Communities Healthy Youth, New Ulm
David Shun-On Campus Booking, Inc., Minneapolis
Adam Stern-District 465 Community Education, Mankato
Kellie Bigham-The Creative Company-Mankato
William Brozak-MSU Media Relations Department, Mankato
Nicholas Burns-MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Leslie Coulter-KEYC-TV, Mankato
Thomas Dean-Static Magazine, Mankato
MaDonna Flowers-Static Magazine, Mankato
Bryanna Gerlach-Office of Governor Tim Pelenty, St. Paul
Michael Gedatus-Kozina Marketing Companies, Burnsville
Michelle Grigware-MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Marcia Hewitt-The Merely Players, Mankato
Amelia Johnson-Midwest Wireless, Mankato
Colleen Kelly-MSU Media Relations Office, Mankato
Dax Larson-MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Rebecca Maas-KMSU/KMSK Radio, Mankato
Danielle Mann-Centered Magazine, Mankato
Jernaiah Graves-KEYC-TV, Mankato
Erin Grenz-MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Chelsie Hiemstra-S. St. Paul Parks & Recreation Department, So. St. Paul
Tara Keith-Hydrologic, Plymouth, MN
Emily Kofoid-KMSU/KMSK Radio, Mankato
Rick Kubitschek-Nashville Sounds, Nashville, TN
Chelsea Olhefski-MSU Department of Theatre, Mankato
Ryan Paulson-Alexandria Gazette Packett, Lebanon
Curtis Peterson-Greater Mankato Area United Way
Bronte Pettitt-KSMQ/Public Television, Austin, MN
Bruce Rosendahl-Walker Elektra Atlantic Records, Minneapolis
Jennifer Schwartz-Tow Fish Studios, Mankato
Thomas Sedlacek-Bourne Brave, Monument Beach, MA
Jenna Stark-WNAX Radio, Yankton, SD
David Weinstein-UPS, Minneapolis, MN

Spring 2007 Internships:
Kellie Bigham-The Creative Company-Mankato
Dax Larson-MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Jennifer Schwartz-Tow Fish Studios, Mankato
Tom Sedlecek-Healthy Communities Healthy Youth, New Ulm
Kati K. Pioske, Gaylord
Jeremiah Graves-KEYC-TV, Mankato
Erin Grenz-MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Chelsie Hiemstra-S. St. Paul Parks & Recreation Department, So. St. Paul
Tara Keith-Hydrologic, Plymouth, MN
Emily Kofoid-KMSU/KMSK Radio, Mankato
Rick Kubitschek-Nashville Sounds, Nashville, TN
Chelsea Olhefski-MSU Department of Theatre, Mankato
Ryan Paulson-Alexandria Gazette Packett, Lebanon
Curtis Peterson-Greater Mankato Area United Way
Bronte Pettitt-KSMQ/Public Television, Austin, MN
Bruce Rosendahl-Walker Elektra Atlantic Records, Minneapolis
Jennifer Schwartz-Tow Fish Studios, Mankato
Thomas Sedlacek-Bourne Brave, Monument Beach, MA
Jenna Stark-WNAX Radio, Yankton, SD
David Weinstein-UPS, Minneapolis, MN

Fall Internships 2006
Meredith Benson-Two Fish Studios & Static Magazine, Mankato
Jeff Brooks-Static Magazine, Mankato
Anne Culver-MSU Athletic Communications, Mankato
Emily Dietz-MSU Media Relations Office, Mankato
Daniel Hansen-Walker Elektra Atlantic, Minneapolis
Jacqueline Knutson-Static Magazine, Mankato
April McCabe-March of Dimes, Mankato
Megan Priem-Applauze Magazine, Mankato
Shauna Riley-Two Fish Studios, Mankato
Kaleb Roedel-Mankato Free Press, Mankato
Bevin Smijer-Clear Channel, Minneapolis
Jennifer Sorensen-KQRS – FM/ABC Radio, Minneapolis
Nico Weyker-Tow Fish Studios, Mankato
Summer 2007 Internships
Kimberly Broback-Belle Plaine Herald
Nicholas Conrad-Thomson-West Findlay, Eagan
Emmeline Elliott-Picture Window Books (Coughlin Pub.), Mankato
Joseph Faust-Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Bloomington
Eliza Koch-Lime Valley Advertising, Mankato
Jamie Koenner-Seward County Independent, Seward, NE
Julianne Kroon-Blue Earth/Nicollet Co. Humane Society, Mankato
Sarah Kuehler-Faith in Action in Brown Co., New Ulm
Candace Laackmann-Midwest Wireless Civic Center, Mankato
Sarah Lawrence-Xclusive Fitness Professionals, LLC, Albuquerque, NM
Carly Listman-Adobe Systems Inc., San Jose, CA
Breana Mack, McNair Achievement Program, Mankato, MN
Masataki Matsumoto-MSU International Student Office, Mankato
John Muesing-Clear Channel Radio, Mankato, MN
Shelby Peacock-Creater Mankato Area United Way, Mankato
Sarah F. Rotering-Minnesota Senate, St. Paul
Jeff Sand-St. Paul Saints, St. Paul
Thomas Schultz-50 Entertainment, Inc., Minneapolis
Alison Trolldahl-Greater Mankato Area united way, Mankato
Julie Vikovich-KSMQ Television, Austin
Tamarra Wilberding-Womeninc., Fairmont
Jamie Whitmore-Computer Integration Technologies, Inc, Woodbury

Fall 2007 Internships
Jenna Alleva-MSU Media Relations Office, Mankato
Regina Barna-KMSU, Mankato
Tyler Bettin-Minnesota Pork Board, Mankato
Sara Foss-Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center, St. Paul
Joanna Graf-Clear Channel Radio, Mankato
Michael Hanzelka-New Ulm Journal, New Ulm
Molly Kaul-Minnesota Valley Broadcasting, Mankato
Cathryn Arnst-Sensible Land Use Coalition, Mankato
Brita Askevold-MSU Dept. of Theatre & Dance, Mankato
Kasey Wassenaar-The Outdoor Campus, Sioux Falls, SD

Lauters:
Lauters will teach a variety of courses for the department, including Publications Layout, Magazine Article Writing, Specialized Writing, Ethics and Press Criticism, and Introduction to Mass Communication.

Online:
The Reporter
http://www.mseureporter.com/
Gaterud:

one of the great ones (still is, Bruce and I say)."

With the experience under his belt, Gaterud returned to MSU in the late 1980s as an adjunct for both mass comm and English, then in 1991 returned full time to the mass comm department, where he stayed until his retirement in May 2008.

During that time, he earned his doctorate in American studies and journalism from The Union Institute in Cincinnati and worked on several projects including a cultural history of American road stories, a series of commentaries on the life and times of writer Sherwood Anderson, and researching the Cherry, Ill. mine disaster of 1909.

It was also during this time that he again considered the idea of launching a publication, this time something related to The Road. So in 2007, he – along with his daughter Abbey, who lives in Portland, Ore. – founded Blueroad Press, a small literary publishing company, and released the first book, Stardust and Fate: The Blueroad Reader, which has since received several regional and national writing and design awards.

“It is this pursuit – that is, my love of books, design and stories well told – that currently absorbs my attention,” he said.

Gaterud added that Blueroad Press is publishing its second book next spring, a collection of poetry about jazz in Chicago by Minnesota writer Philip Bryant, then following with Volume 2 of The Blueroad Reader featuring new writing in fall 2009.

According to Gaterud, leaving MSU brought mixed emotions.

“It’s hard to surrender security, yet for the restless part of my heart and mind, change was increasingly necessary,” he said. “Chasing another dream – this one borne of wanderlust in the form of The Road – became irresistible; so despite the risk, I’ve jumped into the unknown once more.”

Gaterud said he’s never forgotten the advice, “Change is good,” said by one of his favorite teachers, John Livecchi, who taught English in his New Jersey high school.

With this in mind, Gaterud and his wife Cindi are following their dream of building a cabin in British Columbia, and many were called in that Saturday to salvage art department equipment, supplies and resources. Mass Communications faculty offices were largely unaffected, though the chair’s office also required salvage and construction work.

The main offices were closed for nearly a month, with staff operating out of the untouched mass communications faculty and adjunct offices. Staff were allowed back into the main offices Oct. 17.

Flooding makes Nelson Hall a construction zone

Art and Mass Communications offices underwent construction in October after flooding on the floor caused extensive damage to baseboards and walls on Sept. 12.

According to campus security, taps in the women’s restroom on the main floor were left on on that Friday afternoon. The sinks clogged, overflowed, and several inches of water flooded the main floor before it was noticed and stopped.

Art faculty offices were affected, and many were called in that Saturday to salvage art department equipment, supplies and resources. Mass Communications faculty offices were largely unaffected, though the chair’s office also required salvage and construction work.

The main offices were closed for nearly a month, with staff operating out of the untouched mass communications faculty and adjunct offices. Staff were allowed back into the main offices Oct. 17.

‘Sometimes you have to push off and not look back,’ he says. ‘Otherwise, what are you doing with your life?’

where they’ve been going for vacations for nearly two decades. The couple has two children, Abbey, who Gaterud said his students from the 1980s will recall was a baby, and their son Alex, who is a sophomore at the University of Minnesota.

“I’ve always enjoyed carpentry, which, I find, is similar to writing or publishing,” he said. “There’s something about designing, crafting and erecting a structure: whether piece by piece for a cabin, in this case, or word by word for a story.”

But Gaterud added he will always have “fine memories” of MSU, including wonderful friendships cultivated over the years with other professors and staff on campus and especially with students, “who remain dear in my thoughts.”

“Countless mass commers, as well as English and honors majors, made being a teacher worthwhile, even on challenging days,” he said. “I always had a soft spot (too soft, some of my colleagues probably thought) for my friends in the classroom, where I believed having fun was as important as any ‘knowledge’ I was supposed to impart.”

He added that he tried to treat students with respect for their intelligence, maturity and important aspirations.

According to Gaterud’s former student and current sports writer for the Star Tribune Myron Medcalf, he did just that.

“He forced us to pay attention to good journalism and great writing,” Medcalf said. “He always offered a very genuine perspective on whatever you were doing.”

Medcalf added that while Gaterud was a “tenacious and delicate editor,” he was also very complementary when he felt something had been done well.

“His classes were all about thinking like a professional journalist, whether it was the discussions we were having or the books he assigned, he wanted you to think like you were really doing this,” Medcalf said.

Mass comm professor and longtime friend of Gaterud Ellen Mrja, who has been in the mass comm department at MSU since 1978, was also saddened by his retirement.

“I find it hard to describe what a great fellow coworker he was,” she said. “He encouraged all of us to have some intellectual curiosity. Instead of pretending to have all the answers, he allowed us all to just ask questions and find out for ourselves, and that is so rare.”

‘Sometimes you have to push off and not look back,’ he says. ‘Otherwise, what are you doing with your life?’

Quiet-natured as he might be, Gaterud is a fierce advocate of change and following dreams.

“My brother-in-law, who used to live on a sailboat in a marina in New York, likes to tell the story about how his neighbors in the boatyard just sat around and drank and talked about all the places they were going to go, and how that’s all they ever did. Just talked about it, never left,” Gaterud recalled. “Sometimes you have to push off and not look back,” he says. ‘Otherwise, what are doing with your life?’”

-Rachel Heiderscheidt