Profile: 
Janet 
St. Laurent
A
dventures in Learning has a 
new program assistant.

Janet St. Laurent is no 
stranger to the ins and outs of 
Colby-Sawyer administration, 
having been on the staff of 
the college for over 10 years, 
most recently, as senior staff 
assistant to the vice-president of 
student development and dean of 
students. Now her duties include 
registration for Adventures in Learning classes, handling 
membership enrollments, and 
dealing with the considerable 
paperwork that goes with these 
tasks. She will also work with the 
AIL Public Relations Committee 
and coordinate the publication of 
the newsletters and catalogues.

While 35 
hours of her work 
week are devoted 
to Adventures in Learning, 
five hours are 
set aside for her part-time job as 
recycling program coordinator on 
campus. She is very enthusiastic 
and committed to the recycling 
concept. While only four buildings 
recycled at first, Janet is proud to

Winter Lecture Series Planned
A
highlight of the upcoming winter term will be an eight-week 
lecture series on the Enlightenment, an 18th century move-
ment that emphasized reason and the scientific method as a means 
of seeking truth. Great advances in philosophy and the sciences took 
place during the Enlightenment, and the movement eventually led 
to the American and French Revolutions. The lectures, which were 
arranged by Ben Acard, are as follows:

1. Voltaire—the Heart of the Enlightenment

Julien LeBourgeois will lead off with a lecture on Voltaire, one 
of the period’s great thinkers. A founding member of Adventures in Learning, Julien was co-leader 
of the popular course on the Civil War and has twice taught a course on Napoleon.

2. Mozart and the Magic Flute

Robert Simon will discuss Mozart with special emphasis 
on his opera “The Magic Flute.” Bob, who is very active with 
Opera North, led an opera appreciation course for AIL last fall.

3. Economists of the Enlightenment

Sheldon Boege will lecture about Adam Smith and other econo-
mists of the period. Sheldon has taught several AIL courses, including 
“Economics from Adam Smith to Credit Cards” in the fall 2004 term.

4. Science and the Enlightenment

Bob Eckenrode’s lecture will highlight key Enlightenment figures 
who contributed to changes in scientific inquiry, laying the ground-

See Profile, Pg. 2

See Winter Lecture Series Planned, Pg. 2
Adventures in Learning at Colby-Sawyer College

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Adventures in Learning Update, published three times annually, highlights the courses and happenings of the Adventures in Learning program at Colby-Sawyer College.

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**Profile: Janet St. Laurent, from Pg. 1**

Janet says with a smile, “I am lucky enough to have two jobs that I love and two great bosses.” She works for Sharon Ames on Adventures in Learning responsibilities, and her recycling supervisor is Judy Muyskens, the college vice-president for advancement.

A native of Cambridge, Massachusetts, Janet grew up in Somerset, Massachusetts. She graduated from Southeastern Massachusetts University and taught first grade for seven years in Somerset and then kindergarten for 14 years. Now she and her husband, Bob, who teaches fifth grade in the Winnisquam Regional School District, live in Grafton, New Hampshire. They live in the woods and enjoy bird-watching and have taken a number of bird-watching trips.

In her spare time Janet enjoys cross-stitch embroidery, rug hooking, and a very intricate art form called paper quilling. In the winter she and Bob go snowshoeing and skiing, both cross-country and downhill. In warmer weather, they go kayaking, often on Messer Pond in New London.

—Heidi Beckwith

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**Winter Lecture Series Planned, from Pg. 1**

5. **The Scottish Philosophers**
   
   Morris Edwards, leader of a popular course on “The Early Kings of England,” will analyze why tiny Scotland produced so many great philosophers during the 18th century, and he will assess the impact these men had on America’s Founding Fathers.

6. **The European Philosophers**
   
   David Pook, teacher of European intellectual history at St. Paul’s School in Concord, will delve into the works of John Locke, David Hume and Emanuel Kant and discuss their influence on philosophical inquiry.

7. **Art and the Enlightenment**
   
   Ellen Robertson will describe the many changes that took place in painting, sculpture and architecture during the Enlightenment. Ellen taught art appreciation to elementary school students and has worked as a docent at the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

8. **Closing Lecture**
   
   In this closing lecture, David Pook will draw conclusions about the Enlightenment and explain the impact the movement has had on our lives today.

   Watch for the AIL catalog and sign up early to be sure you don’t miss what promises to be a provocative and fascinating series.
A Posse in Vigilant Pursuit of Poetry

Sometimes participants in an AIL course find so much meaning and pleasure in the subject matter that they continue to meet on an informal basis. A year ago, we reported on a group that grew out of the “Journal Writing” course. Following is a report on another ongoing group, which meets to read poetry.

In December 2003, a dozen of us from the AIL study groups “Dynamics of Faith,” “Robert Frost: A Lovers’ Quarrel” and “A Sampler of New England Poets” gathered hearthsides with a glass of sherry to read our favorite poems aloud to each other. A tradition was initiated that afternoon.

How did participants from three different study groups get together to read poetry in the first place? It all began with the AIL class “Dynamics of Faith.” A poem was read each week as an introduction to that day’s topic, and several class members discovered a mutual interest. Many of these poetry buffs met again in the course “Robert Frost: A Lover’s Quarrel.” After that, it was almost inevitable that two members of the Frost course would offer “A New England Sampler of Poets” the next fall. At its completion, poetry was at the center of our lives.

Since December 2003, we have continued to meet regularly, and our group eventually was dubbed “the Poetry Posse.” Sometimes members read their own new poems, and we frequently read the work of America’s modern poets. Billy Collins was an early favorite, having served as poet laureate of the United States from 2001-2003. We often select poems by Nebraska’s Ted Kooser, present poet laureate and author of Lights and Shadows, the Pulitzer Prize poetry winner for 2005. We began reading Walt Whitman this year, the 150th anniversary of the first edition of Leaves of Grass.

We also share among ourselves our individual experiences: reading Jane Kenyon’s poetry at her tombstone in Proctor Cemetery, visiting “The Stone House” in Shaftsbury, Vermont, where Frost wrote “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,” and reading at the Frost family gravesite in Bennington.

We returned to Bennington College to hear Robert Pinsky read Frost and journeyed to Plymouth State College to hear Donald Hall of Danbury, Charles Simic, and present New Hampshire poet laureate Cynthia Huntington of Dartmouth. Others traveled to Derry, New Hampshire, to hear Leslie Lee Francis read her grandfather’s poetry written on the Frost farm. Many of us have heard Maxine Kumin in several settings—at Colby-Sawyer; in Strafford, Vermont; and more recently in Concord and at the Fells. We’ve heard Donald Hall in the AIL course “A Sampler of New England Poets” and at the New London Historical Society, as well as Christopher Brookhouse at Colby-Sawyer and in “Sampler” class.

A couple of us heard Stanley Kunitz, Billy Collins, Robert Pinsky, Rita Dove and Lori Graham at the Library of Congress. Never shall those of us who drove to Lawrence, Massachusetts, forget the evening Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney read Robert Frost in Frost’s high school, where he met his wife Elinor White. Our lives are enriched by having so many renowned poets close to home, including Galway Kinnell and Richard Wilbur.

There are lots of good trails laid out for a trek such as ours. We would commend Garrison Keillor’s Good Poems; Americans’ Favorite Poems and An Invitation to Poetry edited by Robert Pinsky and Maggie Dietz; Poetry 180: A Turning Back to Poetry by Billy Collins; and Ted Kooser’s The Poetry Home Repair Manual. May your journeying be as adventuresome as we find ours!

— Nan Vulgamore
Adventures in Learning is delighted to offer 11 stimulating courses that will help brighten the dark days of winter. The term begins Monday, January 16, and ends Friday, March 10, 2006. The winter catalog will be mailed during the week of October 24, and the registration period will open on Monday, November 7, and close on Friday, December 2. Here is what you can look forward to:

From *Emma* to “Clueless”
Under Charlotte Spencer’s direction, participants in this mini-course will read Jane Austen’s 1816 novel *Emma*, view the 1995 movie “Clueless” (based on the Austen novel), and discuss how the leading character has changed over almost 200 years.

Cuba and Castro
After a brief review of Cuban history, this course with Gil Peirce will study the political career of Fidel Castro: his rise to power, his achievements and failures, his adventures in Latin America and Africa, and his relations with Russia and the United States.

The Decline and Fall of the European Empires
Joe Kun returns to lead a four-week mini-course that will examine the political, economic and social forces that led to the fall of three great dynasties that dominated Europe for hundreds of years: the Habsburgs, the Romanovs and the Ottoman Sultans.

Victorian England: An Age of Paradox
Julie Machen is following up her outstanding course on Revolutionary Virginia with a class devoted to Victorian England. Julie will use lecture, video and slides as she focuses on varying points of view in the interpretation of the Victorian age.

The Elements of Life
For years, scientists have been exploring the mysteries of life on our planet. This course with microbiologist Judy Bohn will help you understand how life functions on a molecular level and answer some of your questions about the elements of life.

Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Lives On!
Under the direction of Chuck Kennedy (an experienced G&S performer), this class will watch and discuss three Gilbert and Sullivan classics: “Trial by Jury,” “H.M.S. Pinafore,” and “The Mikado.”
Paul of Tarsus: His Life and Teachings

Only by placing Paul in the context of his time and place can we begin to appreciate what he was trying to do and teach. This class with Les Norman will examine the culture in which Paul lived, read his letters and address the issues he raised for our life today.

Mathematics and the Wow Factor

Those who have studied beyond the basic courses know that math and science can evoke feelings of joy and amazement. Dick Little will present some easy examples of elegance and beauty in the sciences so that the class can experience the “Wow!” sensation that is so familiar to professionals.

Moby Dick

What was Herman Melville up to when he wrote his ambiguous novel about a mad sea captain bent on revenge against a whale? Was Moby Dick more than a creature of the sea? Was Ahab insane or a towering tragic figure? This class with Jim Bowditch will explore these and other questions about one of America’s literary masterpieces.

Who Are the Celts?

William Tighe will take the class on a journey from 1500 B.C. to the present day as he explores the culture, lifestyles and conquests of the Celtic peoples.

The Enlightenment

This eight-week lecture series will examine many aspects of the Enlightenment, the 18th century movement that profoundly affected art, economics, science and philosophy. (See article on page 1 for more information.)
By mid-August, 55 members had responded to the 2005 membership survey. With responses dwindling down to one a week, Ben Acard and Art Rosen decided it was time to tabulate the results. Following is a report on what you had to say about Adventures in Learning.

1. Overall view of the AIL program

One hundred percent were positive. Eighty percent felt it was excellent/wonderful/enjoyable; 28 percent specified adult education benefits; 22 percent specified community benefits; and 13 percent cited social benefits.

2. Quality of course leaders

Of the 50 replying to this question, 72 percent were altogether positive using words like “extraordinary,” “excellent,” and “super.” Twenty-eight percent said the study leaders were fair to good or that they were an uneven mix. Responses to the question about how quality might be improved varied considerably. Several suggested selecting people with public speaking experience; a number suggested attracting local authors, retired faculty or Colby-Sawyer faculty.

3. Course offerings

Of the 44 replying to this question, 95 percent said that AIL has succeeded in its course offerings. Only two felt improvement was needed. When asked what new courses they would like to see, American history and New England history were noted by 11 people and history of arts or sciences by seven people. The rest were spread over 20 or so other categories.

4. The lecture series

Of the 49 replying, 98 percent felt that the lecture series was a useful addition. Topics proposed for future programs ranged over 20 or so subjects. Terrorism/international issues received five votes, perhaps being top-of-mind due to the current ILEAD program on terrorism.

5. Mini-courses

Of the 50 replying, 88 percent felt that the mini-courses were worthwhile; 12 percent disagreed.

6. Evening courses

Of the 25 replying, 80 percent said that their friends and family were not interested in evening courses; 20 percent said that they were interested. When asked whether evening courses should be undertaken on a trial basis, 39 percent said, “No,” 37 percent said, “Not for me/maybe for others,” and 24 percent said, “Yes.”

7. Presentations by course participants

This question asked if members enjoyed courses that required them to prepare presentations and papers. Of 52 replying, 46 percent said, “No,” 23 percent said, “Yes,” 17 percent said, “Not by me, perhaps by others,” and 14 percent said, “It depends upon the subject and the presenters.

8. AIL administration

Of the 47 who replied, everyone was positive and 48 percent said that administration of AIL was excellent. When asked what changes they might like to see, the only response made by more than one person was “No change is needed.”

9. Over-subscribed courses

Of the 49 responding, 77 percent suggested that oversubscribed courses be offered in a subsequent semester and eight percent suggested that a second section be offered in the same semester.

10. Public relations

Of 37 responding, 97 percent felt that public relations materials were issued on a timely basis and 100 percent of those replying felt that the reach was broad enough. When asked what else AIL might do in this area, the most frequent response was “Nothing, you’re
doing just fine.” Among those with suggestions, eight people suggested more activity in local media and five mentioned distribution of materials through realtors or Welcome Wagon.

11. Special events
Of the 46 replying to this question, 83 percent said that they were interested in special events/day trips. Suggestions included out-of-town theater and museum trips.

12. Travel tours
Of 50 replying, 56 percent felt that AIL should not sponsor travel tours. The principal reason was that this is already being done by alumni organizations, ILEAD, travel agencies and Elderhostel. Among the 44 percent who favored travel, destination preferences were largely in the U.S. or Canada.

—Art Rosen
Calendar of Upcoming Events
Open to the Public

PSYCHOLOGY AND LAW SYMPOSIUM
Monday, October 10
at 7:00 p.m.
Clements Hall
Curtis L. Ivey Science Center
Colby-Sawyer College

GROWTH AND SPRAWL IN NH
A Forest Society discussion
Tuesday, October 25th
from 6 to 9 p.m.
Clements Hall
Curtis L. Ivey Science Center

CSC FALL THEATRE PRODUCTION
“Wonder of the World”
by Davis Lindsey-Abaire
November 3-5 at 8 p.m.
Sawyer Fine Arts Center

CSC SINGERS HOLIDAY CONCERT
Thursday, December 8
from 7 to 9 p.m.
Sawyer Fine Arts Center

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS
Communication students’ video showcase
Tuesday, December 13
at 7 p.m.
Wheeler Hall
Ware Campus Center

“THE CASE OF THE CHRISTMAS KEY”
A holiday whodunit by Jason Anderson
Saturday, December 17
at 8 p.m.
Sawyer Fine Arts Center