

## A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

From the ages of ten to fifteen, I went to Camp Green Cove in Tuxedo, North Carolina – not far, Robert Morgan tells me, from where he grew up. Every summer, upon returning to Louisiana, I would tell my parents that some day I would live in North Carolina. Was it a “be careful what you wish for – you might just get it” moment, then, when I found myself living in *eastern* (mountainless) North Carolina? I remember flying over North Carolina on my way to interview at ECU and wondering, as we continued east, where the mountains had gone. North Carolina meant mountains to this Louisiana native, and the terrain I found myself in was much more like my home state’s geography – “water, water everywhere . . .”

In my nine years here, I have rediscovered my Louisiana connection to that water and spent much time on the various banks of rivers, bays, and sounds, and of course, the shore of the ocean. I have come to love the Outer Banks, particularly Ocracoke, which I visit several times a year. Hence the inspiration for the special feature section of this issue, which gives readers an opportunity to explore the literature of the Outer Banks so that, when unable to visit there in person, we can still drop in through the pages of a book. I was not surprised to find that, indeed, the Outer Banks has inspired writers since the earliest North



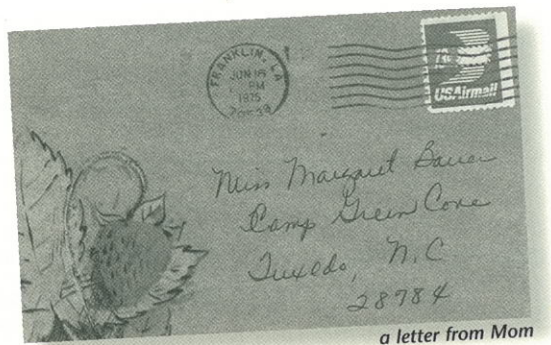
10 Franklin, Louisiana, girls attended Camp Green Cove my first year, 1973.

Carolina writing, writers of a variety of genres (poetry, fiction, drama, creative nonfiction, nature writing, music). You will find all of these genres represented in the pages within. We are reprinting, for example, a Carolina Playmakers play set in Ocracoke, most likely introducing the playwright, Patricia

McMullan, for the first time to many of our readers. We thank Bryan Giemza for introducing this play to us. And we thank Bland Simpson for sending us the music of the title song of *King Mackerel and the Blues Are Running*. Bland tells me that this is the first sheet music publication of any of the show’s songs!

Besides the exciting contents of the special feature section, we also have an interview with Greensboro writer Michael Parker, in our Flashbacks section. Parker, who published essays in early issues of *NCLR*, talks to former students of his about a source of his literary imagination – a chicken house – where, instead of sitting in front of a computer, he and his siblings played make believe as children.

As usual, I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to *NCLR*’s associate and assistant editors, interns, and editorial board members; ECU’s English



Department, for its contribution to our budget and editorial staff; the office staffs of both the English Department (especially Brenda Woolard) and the Thomas Harriot College of Arts & Sciences for their help with managing our budget; and ECU’s Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association for continued financial support.

I would also like to call attention to this issue’s various graphic designers (listed on the staff page), including, especially, our Art Director, Stephanie Whitlock, now Dicken, who married last year shortly after we went to press with the 2004 issue, as well as Mary Thiesen, former Art Director and cover designer since the 1998 issue, and Dana Gay and Rob Puckett, who continue to bring their unique visions to our layout. Shannon Tyson returns for a second year of designing the issue’s poetry, and we welcome Dave and Pamela Cox of Five to Ten Design to the “team” with their design of the W.O. Saunders article.

We look forward to these designers applying their talents to our next issue, featuring North Carolina children’s and young adult literature, as well as the issues to follow (see list of special feature sections on page 2), so in order to keep receiving this unique publication, **subscribers should check their mailing labels for their subscription expiration dates.** If your subscription expires with this issue or if other readers would like to subscribe to *NCLR*, please go to our website for a subscription/renewal form. While there, you might want to check out the back issues link. We are running low on some of these popular back issues, so now is the time to purchase copies to complete your set. Your renewal, new subscription, back issue purchase, or donation helps to ensure the continuation of this publication. (Donors will be added to our list of “Friends,” which appears in each issue; see page 179.) We appreciate your support.

We have appreciated, too, the e-mails and letters from readers who have enjoyed previous and current issues and who have sent us ideas for future issues.

Let us hear from you,

Margaret D. Bauer

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Editor