

Gamma Alpha Bulletin

"The G.A.B."

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Reminders

- Check out our website at: www.migammaalpha.org for calendar, photos, awards, meeting information, forms and useful links.
- Next Meeting: **February 24**
William D. Ford Career/
Technical Center
36445 Marquette
Westland

4:30 Light Snacks **\$10**

We will be making activity bags for Cystic Fibrosis patients at Mott Children's Hospital. We will also have a speaker from St. Mary Mercy Community Outreach in Livonia to speak to our group about health related issues.

RSVP elsessl@yahoo.com by

Educators Should Save Receipts For Reinstated Deductions



The Internal Revenue Service advised teachers and other educators to save their receipts for books and other classroom supplies. They will be able to deduct up to \$250 of such expenses again this year, following recently-enacted legislation.

The Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004 reinstated the educator expense deduction, which had expired at the end of last year, for both 2004 and 2005. Expenses incurred any time this year may qualify for the deduction, not just those since the Act was signed on October 4.

The deduction is available to eligible educators in public or private elementary or secondary schools. To be eligible, a person must work at least 900 hours during a school year as a teacher, instructor, counselor, principal or aide.

An educator may subtract up to \$250 of qualified out-of-pocket expenses when figuring adjusted gross income (AGI). This deduction is available whether or not the taxpayer itemizes deductions on Schedule A.

The IRS suggests that educators keep records of qualifying expenses in a folder or envelope with a label such as "Educator Expense Deduction," noting the date, amount and purpose of each purchase. This will help prevent a missed deduction at tax time.

For more information, call the IRS Tele-Tax system toll-free at 1-800-829-4477 and select Topic 458.

Judi's Gems

Dear Gamma Alpha Sisters,

Maintaining our current membership is becoming a real problem for Gamma Alpha. We lost five members due to non-payment of dues or resignation. They are :



mem-
prob-

Garden City- Susie Miller, Elaine Opper, Judy Kolassa

Wayne-Westland -Carol VanHeest, Valerie Penn

Executive Board is concerned. What are the issues? Dues? Programs? Meeting day? Venue? Be prepared to share your ideas and concerns in February or e-mail any member of Executive Board with your ideas on how to cultivate and help our membership flourish in 2005.

See you on **February 24**. We are decorating 30 canvas activity bags for CF patients and filling them with activity pads, markers, etc. If you want to bring anything (Dollar Store items) to put in the bag, feel free to do so. We will also have a speaker for St. Mary-Mercy Hospital speaking to us.

Remember to **RSVP** to Lynne.

Judi

had light refreshments produced by Chef Tony. Members picked up yearbooks. President Fisher mentioned that 154 people attended the fall workshop. Several members spent an enjoyable weekend at Higgins Lake for Women at the Arts Weekend.

Barb introduced Juliana Cerra, a costume historian for Michigan State University. Juliana modeled Victorian costumes she made. During her presentation, she performed a modest Victorian **striptease** while explaining the ins and outs of corsets, chemises and petticoats. Juliana described a typical day for a woman of the upper class living between 1837 and 1901. We learned that it was hard for the women to preserve the material used in their clothing and that women were smaller in Victorian times. Meeting was adjourned after the presentation.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Smith
Recording Secretary

More Minutes in a Minute

*Minutes for January 27, 2005
Executive Board Meeting*

The Executive Board met at Steak & Ale on January 27 at 4:45 p.m. Judi, Barb, Marie, Chris. S., Lynne, Cindy and Jackie were present.

While eating, we decided we liked the food at Steak & Ale better than at the Career Center! We will investigate the possibility of meeting here next year. Yummy!

Five members resigned or were dropped for non-payment of dues. Names are in Judi's President Message. Judy Kolassa was Nominations Chairman. In September a new chairman will be appointed. This position presents a slate of officers for the 2006-2008 biennium. Past Presidents on the committee to help the chairman. If interested in this position, let Judi know.

June 20- A lunch meeting will be held at Judi's



Minutes in a Minute

Minutes for October 28, 2004

President Judi Fisher called meeting to order at 5 pm at the William Ford Career/Technical Center. We

home at 1 p.m. Executive Board, Committee Chairmen **and** interested members should attend prepared with ideas for next year's programs. In case you forgot, the following are Committee s and Chairs:

- Membership- Marie
- Nominations-
- Finance- Cindy
- Research-
- Professional Affairs- Marge
- Personal Growth- Barbara
- Service Projects- Esther
- Music-
- Legislation- Cindy
- Birthday Dinner- Gina
- World Fellowship- Carol H.
- Grant-in-Aid Mary Jo
- Yearbook- Colleen R.
- Newsletter- Jackie
- Empathy- Carol A. & Nancy
- Historian- Sherry (?)

As you can see, there are open chair positions that have been vacated by resigning members. If you would like to be on a committee or perhaps chair an open one, please let Judi know. Executive Board is there to help you. Also, if you have an idea for a meeting or activity that you think the membership would enjoy please attend or email Judi with your thoughts.

Service Projects will be purchasing activity materials for the Cystic Fibrosis bags on February 24. If you would like to pick up any inexpensive items from the Dollar Store to add to the bags, feel free to do so. We are making 30 bags.

There will be no March meeting. A new date has been added to the calendar. On **April 7** we will be making some pre-Mother's Day projects at Elliott Elementary. Service Projects will sponsor the meeting and provide light refreshments. Grace will teach interested members how to make garden stepping stones. At the Holiday auction, we discovered that Nancy is a wonderful crafter. Nancy will guide us through a project.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Smith
Recording Secretary

December Birthdays

- 6 **Laura Barrett**
- 12 **Barbara Broadley**
- 28 **Amy Story**
- 30 **Judi Fisher**

January Birthdays

- 1 **Carol Anderson**
- 7 **Donna Colaianne**
- 13 **Mary Jo Dreffs**
- 31 **Marie Canzoneri**

February Birthdays

- 29 **Marge Braun**

(If I left you off the birthday list, please let me know.)



International Update

The power of the brain to enhance learning and to improve the aging process are explored in the TWO books named 2004 Educator's Award winners. Find out more on the international website.

www.deltakappagamma.org



Black History Month

The MEA reminds us that the month of February provides an open invitation to engage in and learn about the contributions of African Americans in American History. This is a time to help all students understand and revere the rich heritages that are theirs individually and collectively. John Hope Franklin, professor, author and chairman of the advisory board for One America: The President's Initiative on Race, said, "We must go beyond textbooks, go out into the bypaths and untrodden depths of the wilderness and travel and explore and tell the world the glories of our journey."

That is what Carter G. Woodson believed. The son of former slaves, he spent his formative years in the coal mines of West Virginia—working to make a living for his family and himself. Woodson taught himself English and mathematics and later studied in colleges and universities in the United States and abroad. He became known as "the father of Black History." Woodson dug deeply into the black experience, like the coal miners of this time, to extrapolate the richness of his people, culture and history. "Truth comes to us from the past like gold washed down from the mountain," he said. He believed that one had to look back in order to move forward. It was these ideas and experiences that, in 1926, led him to initiate what was to become Black History Month.

Below is a list of Web sites that you can use in your classrooms with your students, parents and friends. Although the list is not all inclusive, the information contained herein has been developed to provide reliable resources, both printed and electronic, to help you to learn and teach students about the lives and accomplishments of African Americans, past and present.

Websites:

<http://search.eb.com/blackhistory/>
Encyclopedia Britannica guide to Black History Website

www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/BHM/afroam.html
Includes six Web sites on Black History

www.blackfacts.com
Various facts about Black History

www.enchantedlearning.com/history/us/MLK/cloze.shtml
Black History learning activities

www.creativefolk.com/toolkit/home.html

January 18, 2005 *MEA Voice Today*

Holiday Auction Update

Cindy informed Executive Board that we made enough from our Holiday Auction to award two Grant-in-Aids for women seeking a degree in education. We think Chris Smith spent enough at the auction to pay for one of the grants herself! For convenience, the application is on our website:

www.migammaalpha.org

If you know of someone working towards a degree in education, please run off the application and send it to Mary Jo or bring it to the next meeting.





Crowne Plaza Grand Rapids Delta Kappa Gamma Convention April 15-17, 2005

Rates: Single Occupancy: \$99.00 Double Occupancy: \$99.00
*Rates are subject to applicable sales and hotel taxes, currently 13%.

Please mail or fax this directly to the Crowne Plaza before March 22, 2005. Reservations made after this date will be subject to rate and space availability.

ATTENTION RESERVATION STAFF:

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Number of Adults: _____ Number of Children: _____

Name of Other Adults Sharing Room: _____

Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____

Room Request: _____ King _____ 2 Double Beds
 _____ Non Smoking _____ Smoking

(Subject to Availability)

Reservations must be guaranteed by first night's room and tax deposit or

Credit Card No. _____ Exp Date _____

Reservations will not be processed without a form of guarantee.

*Hotel cannot guarantee that group rooms will be located near each other.

*Check-in time is 4:00 pm; Check-out time is 12:00 noon

*Reservations may be cancelled by 6:00 pm on the day of arrival without penalty.

5700 28th Street S.E. Grand Rapids, MI 49512 Phone: (616) 957-1770 Fax: (616) 957-0629

<http://www.grandrapidscrowneplaza.com>

Make checks payable to Delta Kappa Gamma

Dietary Needs: Requirements must be listed with this registration form to avoid duplicate costs. Special tickets will be provided in the registration packets of those who indicate the following needs:

Vegetarian _____ Diabetic: _____

Handicap Assistance: There is elevator service to guest rooms. There is elevator service and a hallway ramp to the workshop floor functions. If you require special guest room accommodations, please notify the hotel staff directly when you make your reservations.

Please mail this form and payment to:

**Kristen Miles--Registrar
1043 Beechwood St. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505-3732
(616) 365--1817
MilesKri@comcast.net**

Cancellation: A person having to cancel will receive a refund provided her written request is post-marked by March 31, 2005. (Standing rule 7:01 of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.) Requests for cancellations must be sent to the same person to whom the registration form was sent.



NCLB: Test Yourself

You live it every day, but how much do you know about the so-called No Child Left Behind law? Stan Karp, an NEA member, developed a test for *Rethinking Schools* magazine. www.rethinkingschools.org Go to the archives. The entire test is in the Fall 2004 issue. Here are some questions for you to ponder.

Which of the following does NCLB specifically provide funds for:

- A. Smaller class sizes. B. Multicultural education. C. Full-day kindergarten. D. Test research.

In which area has the Bush Administration mandated strict adherence to "scientifically proven" research?

- A. The teaching of evolution. B. Global warming. C. Phonemic awareness. D. Stem-cell research.

NCLB obligates schools that don't make "AYP" for three years to provide "supplemental tutoring" services. Which of the following was a result of this provision?

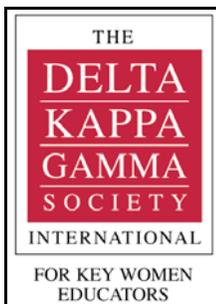
- A. States have identified more than 1,400 "approved providers" of supplemental services.
- B. 63% of these providers are private companies.
- C. Some districts have had to eliminate their own supplemental tutoring programs in order to pay for more expensive private programs that serve fewer kids.
- D. One example of this is Southtown, Ill., where the district eliminated a tutoring program that served 250 students with certified teachers in small classes of 10 and replaced it with a more expensive program where Sylvan Learning Center will serve 50-60 students.
- E. Tutors for private supplemental-service providers do not have to meet the same "highly qualified" standards as public school teachers.
- F. All of the above.

Gamma Alpha Executive Board 2004-2006

Empowerment Through Literacy and Numeracy

Judi Fisher:	President
Lynne Elsesser:	First Vice President
Marie Canzoneri:	Second Vice President
Chris Smith:	Recording Secretary
Jackie Smart:	Corresponding Secretary
Cindy Dietz:	Treasurer
Grace Morgan:	Past President

Gamma Alpha Newsletter, Photos, and Archives at:
www.migammaalpha.org
Contact Jackie with information/corrections/accolades



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