



Gamma Alpha Bulletin

The G.A.B. "Let's Talk"

President's Message

Where has the summer gone? We ask it every year. And the answer is the same. All the signs are telling us it is nearly Fall. The high school kids are running in groups along the sidewalks, getting ready for cross-country. The football fields have already had that first game. Cheerleading practice has been going on for weeks. We hear the band out on their practice field. Moms and kids are in the stores stocking up on new shoes and shirts and backpacks and pens and calculators. Teachers have been in their classrooms decorating and setting up and preparing to meet this year's group of challenges. For teachers, this is a new beginning every year, every Fall. For many of us who have retired, the feeling is still there. We still get the feeling that something is starting anew. For all of us, active teachers and retirees alike, there is a new year starting and it allows all of us to do something together as educators. Through our DKG membership, we will have a year of helping students and fellow educators. The activities we have planned keep us all in the loop as the new school year starts and Fall officially opens.

I hope that your summer was pleasant

and enough of a break that you are ready to start over. Did you have a chance to visit other parts of our country? Did you go overseas? Was it a quiet time or did you have a rousing visit with friends and family? Did you read any good books, see any good movies, attend any good concerts or any plays? Did you have a garden? Whatever you did, I hope that it gave you pleasant memories and a feeling of satisfaction.

Now we are back to work and the ten month cycle of a school year can begin. Let's enjoy each others' company and friendship as we start out the 2011-2012 year for Gamma Alpha. Let's have some fun even as we work to show that we are the Key Women Educators of Gamma Alpha.

So says the prez!

Carol Anderson



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Meeting Info



September 21

First Meeting

October 7 - 9

Women in the Arts

October 19

Meeting at Jackie's home

October 21 - 22

Fall Workshop

Lansing Lexington

RSVP to Jackie at:

jackie@mymartfamily.com

*See calendar for meeting details.

Mission

*The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International
promotes professional and personal growth of women educators
and excellence in education.*

Vision

Leading women educators impacting education worldwide.

Don't forget these dates!



September 21, 2011

4:30 p.m.

Hayden's Grill and Bar

39895 Ford Road

Canton (east of I-275)

Agenda:

- Bring your dues to the meeting \$75. If you are writing a check, make it payable to Gamma Alpha. If mailing your dues, send to: Cindy Dietz 7329 Gilman Westland, MI 48185
- Service Project: Early Career Educator Bags
- Vacation Souvenir Raffle. Remember to bring your vacation souvenir for the raffle. Include a brief statement on a 3x5 card about how you spent your summer vacation.
- 50/50 raffle (Esther will be selling tickets.)
- Update our contact information and yearbook biographies
- Cider and apple orders from Gamma Alpha's Lynda Neuroth, owner of Ostbaum Orchards. Delivery will be at the October 19th meeting.
- Can you part with a few books that you've finished reading? Bring them to our meeting in September. \$1 for hardcover books or \$.50 for paperbacks. Leftover books will be donated to 'Friends of the Library.' Bring books every meeting except the Holiday Auction.
- Bring your **Recommendation for Membership** form filled out and your candidate to the meeting. Orientation will be in October.
- Speaker: Judy Foster, State Legislation & U.S. Forum Chair; Vice President of MEA-R; will keep us up-to-date with what is happening in Michigan regarding the latest legislation dealing with children, education, and women.

October 7-9, 2011

Women in the Arts, Higgins Lake

Women in the Arts Retreat at Higgins Lake
(Registration information is in the Summer *Wolverine* and online at www.deltakappagamma.org/MI)

October 19, 2011

4:30 p.m.

Jackie Smart's home

20158 Southampton Drive

Livonia (248) 476-8659



Agenda:

- Bring your candidate to an English tea (dinner) at the home of anglophile Jackie Smart. Colleen Retherford will lead a brief DKG orientation for candidates for membership. FYI, initiation of new members will be held at the January meeting.
- 50/50 Raffle
- Book Sale
- Speaker: Melissa McDermid will share her yearlong experience as a participant in the Fulbright Teacher Exchange program. Melissa, a Farmington teacher and member of Beta Eta chapter, taught in the primary grades in England.

October 21-22, 2011

Alpha Iota State Fall Conference

Fall Conference will be held at the Lansing Lexington Hotel in Lansing. There are many great sessions offered. It is only about an hour away from Livonia (no need for hotel unless you want to get away for the night) and inexpensive (registration fee includes lunch.) Fall Registration information is included in the Summer *Wolverine*. You will also find information on the state website www.deltakappagamma.org/MI

December 7, 2011

4:30 p.m. Dinner/Holiday Auction

(Arrive 4:15 for set-up)

Laurel Manor

39000 Schoolcraft Road in Livonia

(Prepayment of \$25 is necessary for this event.)

Holiday Auction Reminders

1. For the smaller items, we will sell raffle tickets and have people put tickets into cups and winners will be randomly selected.
2. Some of the larger items will be in the "silent auction" format with pad, pen, a starting bid, and a time cut-off for bids.
3. And lastly, some items will be put on the auction block.
4. Members still need to bring a 3x5 card for each item they donate. On the card, they should describe the item, list the value, and name of the donor. Members should try to bring more than one donation so we will have a variety of auction items. We need to guarantee Laurel Manor at least 50 will be in attendance, so we encourage you to bring guests so we meet our quota and so we aren't the only ones spending money!
5. Suggested items or services that could be donated:
 - Gift certificates
 - Baked goods (homemade or purchased)
 - "Theme" Baskets (holiday, cooking, movie, teacher, grandma's activity,
 - Holiday items/ decorations/plants
 - Theater, movie, or game tickets
 - Best seller books or books on tape
 - Crafts
 - Massage/haircut/manicure/pedicure
 - etc.

January 18, 2012

4:30 p.m.

Hayden's Grill and Bar

39895 Ford Road

Canton (east of I-275)

Executive Board (President, 1st, 2nd, Vice Presidents, Recording and Corresponding Secretaries, and the Treasurer) will meet prior to the meeting at 3:30 to complete biennial reports.

Agenda:

- 50/50 Raffle
- Book Sale



- Initiation of New Members
- Speaker: Maria Dismody is a primary teacher in Plymouth-Canton and author of "The Juice Box Bully" and "Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun." Maria stated that in today's society, it's important to remind children that, although we are different on the outside, we are very much alike on the inside. Unfortunately, bullying has become a major problem in the United States. It's not only painful for children, but occurring at an increasingly young age. Both of her books are meant to empower children to positively handle tough situations through their timeless messages. Books will be available for purchase.

March 21, 2012

4:30 p.m.

Hayden's Grill and Bar

39895 Ford Road

Canton (east of I-275)

Agenda:

- 50/50 raffle
- Book Sale
- Flower Orders (More information in future newsletters.)
- Speaker: Our own Colleen Retherford will speak to us about the community garden she was instrumental in starting in Ann Arbor. Community gardens are "hot" ideas, especially after the attention they received on *60 Minutes* and by the First Lady.



Not only do community gardens defray the rising cost of produce and the freshness of your crop is superior to anything you can buy at the grocery store. A portion of the harvest is donated to local pantries and community gardens help our country go green. There may be a book discussion as well. More information later.

April 21, 2012

Metro Coordinating Council Luncheon

More information will follow in future newsletters.

Gamma Alpha Bulletin

April 25, 2012

4:30 p.m.

Hayden's Grill and Bar

39895 Ford Road

Canton (east of I-275)

- 50/50 Raffle
- Book Sale
- Discussion regarding our Service Projects and donations
- Speaker: In Michigan, the lottery is big business. So, why is there still a barrage of school closings and major cutbacks, including layoffs? When you buy that lottery ticket, how much goes to fund education? Our speaker is a representative from the Michigan Lottery will give us the lowdown on the lottery and education.

May 4-6, 2012

Alpha Iota State Convention

Radisson Plaza in Kalamazoo

Convention and hotel registration will be available in the Winter *Wolverine* and in future newsletters. Please plan on attending.

May 16, 2012

Gamma Alpha Birthday Dinner

4:30 p.m.

East Side Mario's

31630 Plymouth Road in Livonia



Agenda:

- Birthday Dinner
- (Pre-payment of \$20 will be necessary)
- Honor Friend of Education
- Honor Retirees
- Award Grant-in-Aids
- Installation of New Officers
- Recommitment Birthday Ceremony

June 23, 2012

Planning Meeting

All of our programs are planned by the membership. Be reminded that this meeting is **not** just for Executive Board, but for members who wish to make our chapter vital. Come to our planning meeting armed with ideas **or** suggestions you want Gamma Alpha to be involved with for 2011-2012. Let us know where you would like our meetings to be held. If you know of a speaker, please bring the contact information. The more cooks in this case the better the soup!

Planning meeting and pot luck luncheon will be held at Carol's at 11:00. Bring your favorite potato, pasta, fruit, or green salad to pass. We will need rolls and some healthy snacks to munch on while we are meeting. Carol will have dessert and beverages for us. Carol lives in Canton. Take I-275 to Ford Road (west.) She is off Ford Road approximately 2 miles west of I-275. The sub is Nottingham Forest between Lilley and Morton Taylor Roads. From Ford Road turn north on Willow Creek and then left on Wedgewood. Her address is 5855 Wedgewood. Carol's house is on the left. (734-981-3741) Please RSVP your intentions and what you are bringing to Jackie:

jackie@mymartfamily.com



September Birthdays

9 Cindy Dietz

19 Helen Mate

30 Jackie Smart



Illiteracy: The Downfall of American Society

Widespread illiteracy not only leads to lower education and employment rates, it is also linked to increased crime and incarceration and a high social and economic cost. Read on to learn more about the terrible effects of illiteracy on society and what you can do to help.

What is Illiteracy?

Most people think of literacy as a simple question of being able to read. But while a young child who can work her way through a basic picture book is considered to have age-appropriate literacy levels, an adult who can only read at the most fundamental level is still functionally illiterate. The world requires that adults not only be able to read and understand basic texts, but also be able to function in the workplace, pay bills, understand legal and financial documents and navigate technology - not to mention the advanced reading comprehension skills required to pursue postsecondary education and the opportunities that come with it. As a result, when we talk about the effects of illiteracy on society, we're talking primarily about what happens when you have a large number of adults whose literacy skills are too low to perform normal, day-to-day tasks. However, it is worth keeping in mind that childhood illiteracy is, of course, directly correlated to adult illiteracy.

Illiteracy Around the World

In 2003, the United Nations launched the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) with the slogan, 'Literacy is freedom.' Operating under the premise that 'literacy is a human right,' the initiative aims to improve literacy efforts, increase global literacy levels and reduce poverty.

According to the UNLD:

- Worldwide, one in five adults cannot read or write
- In low-income countries, only about 61% of adults are literate
- In high-income countries, almost 99% of adults are literate

Illiteracy in the U.S.

Compared to the rest of the world, the U.S. is doing well. According to the latest International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), between 19% and 23% of American adults performed at the top levels for each of the three literacy scales: document literacy, prose literacy and quantitative (number) literacy. Sweden is the only country that scored higher. Yet many Americans are being left behind. The same survey found that between 21% and 24% of U.S. adults performed at the *lowest* level for all three scales, a figure echoed by the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS). So what effect does this have on society in the United States?

Poverty & Employment

On average, adults at the lowest levels of literacy:

- Earn about \$230-\$245 per week
- Work only 18-19 weeks each year

(Continued on page 11)



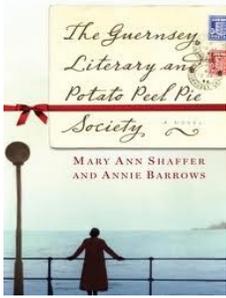
Pam, Grace, Mary Jo, Fran, Jackie, Amy, Helen (Ev's sister) and Ev attended the trip to the Methodist Children's Village in Redford. Carol Anderson was there but didn't make it for the picture. We are standing in front of the fireplace with hand made tiles depicting events in children's stories.

Methodist Children's Home Society Trip

On August 16, a small group of Gamma Alpha members visited the Methodist Children's Home Society or the Methodist Children's Village. Here is a little background regarding the Society. It was originally named Methodist Child Care and was founded in 1917, a year in which Detroit factories were busy turning out war material for the conflict in Europe. Many families had moved into the metropolitan area from all over the country, leaving behind their extended families. When a disastrous epidemic of influenza hit the city, children whose parents died were often left without friends or relatives to care for them. Such was the plight of numerous children discovered by members of the Order of Deaconess of the Methodist Church when making their rounds in the residential sections of Detroit industrial areas. Working with children at Metropolitan Methodist Church, Anna Kresge (wife of Sebastian Kresge) was also concerned with the needs of the larger community of children. Together with Sophie Sprague, Superintendent of the Deaconess Home, and members of the Women's Home Missionary Society, Mrs. Kresge persuaded Presiding Bishop Theodore Henderson of the need for a haven for children without families or for those receiving inadequate care in their own homes. Mrs. Kresge and Mrs. Sprague were responsible for the purchase of a small house in the Highland Park neighborhood of Detroit and for arrangements necessary to care for 10 children. In 1922, a larger home was built on a farm in what is now downtown Farmington. Frances Knight was appointed its Director, and the agency became a charter member of the Child Welfare League of America. In 1926, the agency's name was officially changed to Methodist Children's Home Society, and the endowment was created. Methodist Children's Village is now a private, non-profit, non-sectarian child-care agency, which has a long history of caring for children. The agency's primary focus is to care for children who have been subjected to physical, psychological and sexual abuse or severe neglect. MCV offers residential care for 70 boys, ages 10-17 that are in need of highly structured intensive environment. MCV provides for the needs of abused and neglected children by providing an array of housing, educational, clinical, and therapeutic services. It was an informative field trip.

Good Read

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society



Mary Ann Shaffer's novel opens in postwar London in 1946. Shaffer was an American librarian from West Virginia who visited Guernsey in 1976 and became fascinated by the wartime occupation of the Channel Islands, and during the course of her research she heard tales of terrible cruelty and great courage.

At the start of the novel, Juliet Ashton, the central character, is a writer. She receives a letter from an islander who has, by chance, acquired her old copy of Charles Lamb's essays. They exchange more letters; and she learns about how **The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society** began. Juliet visits Guernsey to do research about a book she will be writing and falls in love with the people and the island.

Something I found interesting was the moral confusion that arose among people forced to live an ordinary daily existence alongside "the enemy". In such circumstances, a degree of collaboration was almost inevitable. In the novel, a relationship develops between a German captain and an islander, Elizabeth McKenna. Although Elizabeth never actually appears in the book she is, none the less, its heart. It is funny, moving story and makes me want to visit Guernsey.

Shaffer's niece Annie Barrows, contributed to the work once Shaffer's health began to decline.



He who opens a school door, closes a prison.
~Victor Hugo

If there were no schools to take the children away from home part of the time, the insane asylums would be filled with mothers.
~Edgar W. Howe

More Ways to Attract New Members

- Create “goodie bags” to give to newer educators in local school districts. Include a recently designed chapter brochure, a brochure on membership obtained from International Headquarters, and other small items.
- Celebrate community members who contribute their time and talent to education; consider them for chapter honorary membership.
- Develop a chapter website to acquaint possible new members with the Society and the local chapter.
- Think “outside the box” and look for new members who are technical career professionals.

We are doing many of these things!



Merit Pay is a Terrible Idea

Here are ten good reasons why merit pay for teachers is a terrible idea.

1. Standardized Test Scores May Be Unreliable
2. Student Performance is Also a Poor Gauge
3. It's Not Fair
4. Some Teachers are Punished
5. It's a Cheap Gimmick to Award Cronies
6. It Encourages Cheating
7. The Definition of 'Merit' is Too Broad
8. It Hasn't Worked Well in the Past
9. Merit Pay Does Very Little for the Students
10. There Has to Be a Better Way

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GAMMA ALPHA CHAPTER FINANCIAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2010 – JUNE 30, 2011

CHECKING ACCOUNT (Balance on 7/1/10) \$ 670.93

INCOME

DUES	\$2850.00
TRANSFER FROM SAVINGS	500.00
INTEREST	2.98
DINNERS (AUCTION, B'DAY, ETC)	2401.00
SILENT AUCTION	141.00
BOOKS, PINS, CONTRIBUTIONS	26.50
50/50	391.50
GOOD NEWS	70.00
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$6382.98</u>
	\$7053.91

EXPENSES

DUES	\$2447.00
SUPPLIES	137.65
PRINTING	0
POSTAGE	0
CONFERENCES	116.92
GRANT-IN-AID (1@\$500)	500.00
DINNERS	2403.08
CONTRIBUTIONS	250.00
FALL WORKSHOP	75.00
MEETING EXPENSES	47.00
EMPATHY	53.75
WEBSITE	29.94
NEW MEMBER BAGS	126.56
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$6186.90

BALANCE ON JUNE 30, 2011 \$867.01

SAVINGS ACCOUNT (balance on 7/1/10) \$6620.89

AUCTION	+1877.00
INTEREST	+ 30.40
	\$8528.29

GRANTS-IN-AID TRANSFER - 500.00

BALANCE ON 6/30/11 \$8028.29

TOTAL ASSETS \$8895.30

SAT Scores No Longer Important to Some Colleges

Many students struggle under the pressure to perform well on college entrance exams like the SAT and ACT. However, more and more American colleges and universities are implementing test-optional policies for admissions, acknowledging that test scores do not necessarily correlate with college success.

The vast majority of high school students take the SAT or ACT when preparing for college. Colleges and universities traditionally expect a certain score on one or both of these exams for admissions, with the minimum score varying depending on how competitive the institution is. This can create a lot of pressure, even for the best of students. Many individuals contend that these exams measure test taking skills rather than academic ability, and are therefore not necessarily good predictors of academic performance.

Based on this premise, the National Center for Fair and Open Testing (FairTest) released a study on test-optional admissions at U.S. colleges and universities. They found that over 800 American postsecondary schools have chosen not to require SAT or ACT scores for admissions, including both 2-year and 4-year institutions. The reasons that institutions cite for moving toward test-optional admissions vary widely. Some have found that test scores simply do not have predictive validity, and therefore aren't useful. Others note that these tests tend to favor students who attend affluent high schools with the resources to prepare students for the tests, thus putting low-income students at an even greater disadvantage in the college process. Many of these institutions have discovered that by relying on classroom performance instead of test scores to measure academic merit, they can attract a more diverse and successful pool of freshmen. This is great news for students who struggle with standardized tests.

Education-Portal.com "Making Education Accessible" Hot Topics in Education, July 2011



Seedlings Braille Books for Children Update

Cuddle Alert!

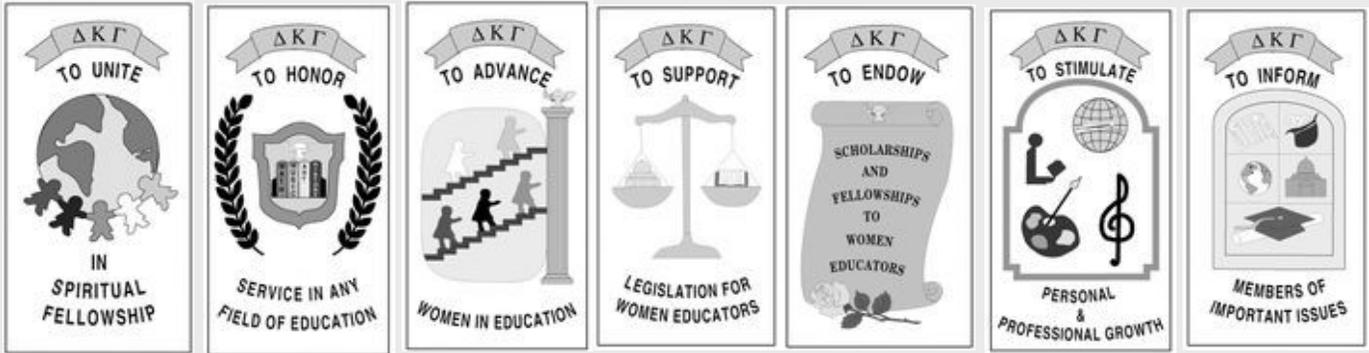
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Seedlings is teaming up with Chuck Gadica, Channel 4 News Meteorologist and
⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	WOMC radio personality. Chuck will be selling his books, "Tommy Starts Something
H	I	J	K	L	M	N	Big" and "Cuddling is Like Chocolate" along with his "Cuddle Bear" teddy bears at a
⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	kiosk at Laurel Park Place during November and December and a portion of the
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	proceeds will benefit Seedlings. Make sure to stop by the kiosk during your holiday
⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	shopping and purchase a book or bear for your special loved ones and help support
V	W	X	Y	Z			Seedlings too!
⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠			

Holiday Cards/ Tribute Cards

It's that time of year again! We placed our order for Holiday cards and are very excited to have added new selections of cards once again this year. Both Holiday Cards and Tribute Cards are currently available for purchase in our office. You can view them on our website at: <http://www.seedlings.org/donate.php>

Often, when I am reading a good book, I stop and thank my teacher. That is, I used to, until she got an unlisted number. ~Author Unknown

Seven Purposes of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International



Gamma Alpha Executive Board & Committee Chairmen

Executive Board

President	Carol Anderson
1st VP/Program	Mary Jo Dreffs
2nd VP/Membership	Colleen Retherford
Recording Secretary	Carol Palk
Corresponding Secretary	Jackie Smart
Treasurer	Cindy Dietz
Parliamentarian	Fran Saenz

Committee Chairmen

Personal Growth & Service	Amy Wainwright
Professional Affairs	Lynne Elsesser
US Forum/Legislation	Pam Emerson/ Cindy Dietz
Grant-in-Aid	Debbie Ervin
Birthday	Esther Loskowske Helen Mate
World Fellowships	Esther Loskowske
Yearbook/Newsletter	Jackie Smart
Sunshine	Donna Colaianne & Nancy Chiasson
Finance	Judi Fisher
Nominations	Amy Wainwright
Holiday Auction	Mary Jo Dreffs

(Continued from page 5)

- Are more than three times as likely to receive food stamps (17%-19% as compared to 4% of those who read at the highest levels)
- Are almost ten times more likely to be living below the poverty line (41%-44% as compared to 4%-8%)

Incarceration

- Between 31% and 40% of prisoners read at the lowest literacy level, which is at least ten percentage points worse than the national average
- Only four percent to seven percent of the prison population reads at the highest two literacy levels, compared to 18% to 21% of the rest of the population

As the above statistics show, illiteracy can be closely correlated with low earnings and high incarceration rates. Individuals who cannot read struggle to function in society, which can cripple their lives and increase the burden on state prisons and economic support systems.

How You Can Help

Although illiteracy seems like an overwhelming problem, there are many things that individuals can do to help. You can help prevent illiteracy by becoming a tutor at a nearby school or going to a poor neighborhood and offering literacy support at a local school or community center. You can also help adults overcome literacy challenges by volunteering at an adult basic education center where you can teach adults to read and help them with basic life skills.