



Gamma Alpha Bulletin

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

President's Message



January. That is what the meteorologists are calling it. I had wondered what was happening when winter failed to make a real entrance. I know we have had a few snowy days but they all seemed to disappear as fast as they came. I am no fan of cold weather but there is some comfort in having to deal with the expected rather than the unexpected. I haven't had a chance to do any snow shoveling and my husband has run the snow blower only once. As Mr. Phil of Punxsutawney makes his appearance I can only hope that spring is just around the corner.

Other things seem to be out of their normal rotation as well. Presidential candidates have been plastering themselves all over the news as if it were somewhere near an election time. I dread the fact that I must listen to these guys for more months on end. What good news might I wish to hear? Maybe someone can come up with a way to finance public education that actually does make education an even opportunity for all students. Maybe that same someone can make sure teachers are paid for the work that they do and are evaluated on merit that is based on the reality of their jobs. Oh, what a dreamer I can be!

I know that no politician will solve the problems of education. I know that no politician will solve the problems of healthcare. I know that no politician will solve the problems of poverty, etc. Only we the

people can solve the problems.

Teachers are the only ones who can solve the problems of education. We must take back the issues of teaching and learning and show that we can make education an issue that everyone looks at with pride. No child will be left behind if teachers are in charge of teaching and are in charge of their students' accountability. If we are able to find a way to have students take pride in their learning we have won most of that battle. For some time now it appears that teachers and parents have been on opposite sides of a battle over who can make the bigger impression on students. Partnerships are needed to win battles, whether they are battles over education, battles over poverty, battles over healthcare, battles over anything. We who are key women educators have a responsibility to lead in this battle. There is little use in taking it to the politicians. There is a need to take it to the public, the parents whose children we teach. Hopefully we will be able to find that elusive sharing of influence. If we find that sharing, that partnership, we will all know what success is. We will see it in the next generation of our country's leaders. Oh, what a dreamer I can be.

So says the prez!

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Meeting Info



March 21

Community Gardens
See calendar for details.

April 21

Detroit Metro
Coordinating Council
Luncheon
See calendar for details.

April 25

Michigan Lottery Speaker
See calendar for details.

RSVP to Jackie at:
jackie@mysmartfamily.com

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!

March 21, 2012

4:30 p.m.

Hayden's Grill and Bar

39895 Ford Road

Canton (east of I-275)



Agenda:

- 50/50 Raffle - Esther
- Book Sale - Carol P.
- Bring Service Projects donations for MCV
- Flower Orders - Amy
- Speaker: Colleen

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, but 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. Colleen will speak briefly about the community garden she helped start in Ann Arbor

April 21, 2012

Metro Coordinating Council Luncheon

1:00 at Antonio's 26356 Ford Road in Dearborn Heights.

\$24 prepayment. Check payable to Gamma Alpha to Cindy by March 30

April 25, 2012

4:30 p.m.

Hayden's Grill and Bar

39895 Ford Road

Canton (east of I-275)

- 50/50 Raffle - Esther
- Book Sale - Carol P.
- Bring Service Projects donations for MCV
- 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. See Kalamazoo-zoo-zoo blurb on page 11.

May 16, 2012

Gamma Alpha Birthday Dinner

4:30 p.m.

East Side Mario's

31630 Plymouth Road in Livonia

Agenda:

- Chapter Birthday Dinner
- (Pre-payment of \$20 will be necessary)
- Honor Friend of Education, Honor Retirees
- Award Grant-in-Aid
- Bring Service Project Donations for MCV
- 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 2012-2013. 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 Anderson'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



Colleen and members shared pride in the big picture about DKG with initiate Carole Lower.

January Initiation Ceremony

1929 when Dr. Annie Webb Blanton and her colleagues established the first chapter, they had a distinct vision in mind. At that time, women educators faced many hardships including unequal pay and the lack of freedoms we enjoy and take for granted today as women educators.

Just as a new school community selects a mascot and a slogan, in order to build community spirit and a sense of belonging, Dr. Blanton and her colleagues selected colors to symbolize their courage and loyalty in the face of opposition, symbols, a key pin, a motto, a song, and Purposes to bind them together with a common focus.

Much has changed in our world since 1929: our mode of dress, modern conveniences, technological advances, and more. Much has changed in Delta Kappa Gamma as well. Our Society is well established, with approximately 95,000 members and 2600 chapters in 17 countries. We focus less on the colors and symbols and more on the values they represent: courage, loyalty, learning, perseverance. However, we are still bound together by a common vision: bringing together qualified and diverse women educators serving in a broad spectrum of educational fields, strengthening them, and pursuing worthwhile projects that make a difference in communities around the world.

It is our hope that you will take pride in the big picture of our Society: that you will realize the intrinsic value of membership, including making life-long friends; that you will enjoy the support our members show for one another's passions, personal triumphs and sufferings, professional accolades, and difficult decisions; that you will benefit from the personal opportunities for scholarships, grants and leadership training; that you will experience DKG's educational impact, in the community, state, province, country and world.

January Minutes

Our January meeting began at 4:30 pm at Hayden's in Canton. The minutes from the last meeting we amended and accepted. We welcomed a new member, Carole Lower. Colleen led the initiation ceremony. Carole is a Dearborn teacher. Judi Fisher sponsored her as a member. Our membership count is now at 36.

Debbie Ervin wants us to know that no one has yet applied for our Grant in Aid scholarship as yet. Jackie informed the group that last year's recipient intends on reapplying for the grant-in-aid. Seedlings will have their Bowl-a-thon on March 24th. So mark that date if you want to help or bowl. More information will be in the newsletter or group emails.

Amy brought us up to date about the Methodist Children Home Society. Last spring we stuffed duffle bags. This fall we donated graphing calculators and school supplies to the home. We also donated the fee for a Tai Chi class. Our spring service project for the home will be working on helping the young men who "age out" of the system. These young adults will be setting up housekeeping. Amy had a list of apartment and housekeeping supplies which members signed up to purchase. Our donations will help give the young men a "housewarming shower." If you would like to donate something contact Amy. If you signed up to give something please bring it to any meeting (March, April or May). Thank you in advance for your generosity.

New slate of officers were presented and voted on.

President - Lynn Elsesser

1st VP - Mary Jo Dreffs

2nd VP - Colleen Retherford

Recording Secretary - Carol Anderson

Recording Secretary - Amy Wainwright

February

19 Carol VandenBrul

29 Marge Braun\March 1

March

11 Nancy Chiasson

13 Esther Loskowske



Happy Birthday, ladies!

Congratulations to all.

We had a wonderful speaker, Maria Dismondy. Maria is an elementary school teacher who also writes stories about how to deal with bullies. She was bubbly and enthusiastic. Her books are available at Barnes and Noble or you may contact her at mariadismondy@mac.com.

Reminders:

- Metro Council Luncheon - Antonio's 26356 Ford Road in Dearborn Heights, 4/21/12 at 1pm. Cost \$24.00. Checks to Cindy payable to Gamma Alpha by March 30. Plan on attending.
- Birthday dinner Eastside Mario's in Livonia, May 16th. See calendar for details.
- Please remember to bring any books that you would like to share with your fellow members.

Submitted by Carol Palk

Carol Palk, Recording Secretary



January Guest Speaker on Bullying

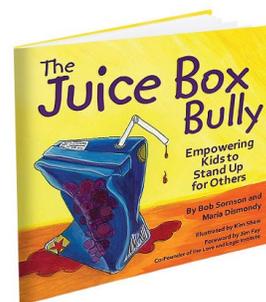
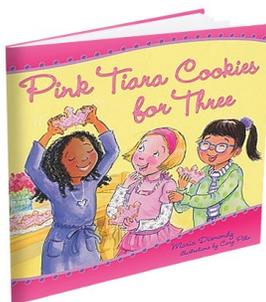


President Carol and Maria at Hayden's.

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. This was Maria's message throughout her presentation. We all know that bullying has become a major problem in the United States. It's not only painful for children, but occurring at an increasingly young age. Maria's books are meant to empower children to positively handle tough situations through their timeless messages. Maria was a wonderful speaker despite the competing noise from the restaurant patrons.

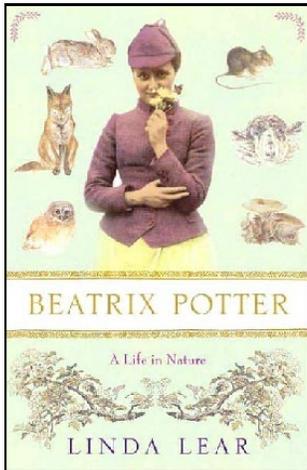
Maria has written three books which .

- Her first book, *Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun*, is based on events that happened to her as a child. The book teaches children to respect each other's differences while dealing with adversity with self-confidence and courage.
- Her second book is *The Juice Box Bully*. It shows children that strength can come in numbers. By encouraging community in Mr. Peltzer's classroom, children help a new student learn the ropes.
- Her newest book is *Pink Tiara Cookies for Three*. It is about three little girls who eventually become friends.



Beatrix Potter: A Life in Nature

By Linda Lear



Here is another Educator's Award book. Beatrix Potter led a far more interesting life that I could have imagined. Raised as a proper young lady, she was assigned by her parents as the manager of their household. She was in charge of the servants and responsible to be sure that everything was done properly and well. So while she was doing this, she studied by herself and became a rather renowned mycologist, making the breakthrough observation that lichens were a symbiotic relationship between fungi and algae. She was proposed to be a member of the student body at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew. But, of course, as a mere female she was turned down. So beginning to make some drawings, and writing a few stories she became the J.K. Rowling of her time when she published a book 'The Tale of Peter Rabbit.' She went on to publish another 22 books, and to create a merchandising empire about the characters. Making yet another switch in later life, she became a gentleman farmer raising prizewinning sheep and cattle. Ms. Lear has done a splendid job in writing this book.

State Project: 10 Interesting Women

Our state project, *10 Interesting Women - Finding a Way to Connect* is accomplishing our goal of encouraging teachers to stay in the profession. Mu Chapter, Flint, Michigan, continues to find new teachers who are pleased to have the help and support of DKG members. Other chapters are starting groups. Please tell us your stories. Remember, it just takes five of your chapter members who are willing to invite five currently working teachers and/or administrators to meet after work for a light dinner. Please download the 10 Interesting Women PowerPoint Presentation or the module from the state website for help in making the groups successful.

Dorothy E. Sample, PhD, State Project Chair, 2nd First Vice-President, Alpha Iota State DKG

U.S. Forum Update

At the Regional Conferences during the summer of 2011, an overwhelming number of our members expressed interest and concern about Social Security and Medicare both on the questionnaires filled out at the conferences and in their questions to the presenters. Due to the member interest, this issue of the U. S. Forum Connection will deal solely with Social Security and Medicare.

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO PROTECT SOCIAL SECURITY & MEDICARE (NCPSSM)

There is one organization which is totally dedicated to issues concerning Social Security and Medicare. This is the National Committee to Protect Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM) which has been in existence for about 30 years. NCPSSM presents some facts which are given below. NCPSSM emphasizes that Social Security and Medicare are not entitlements, but they are earned benefits which citizens have paid into for years through payroll taxes.

FACTS

1. Social Security's trust fund currently takes in more money through the FICA tax and interest on the bonds held for Social Security than it pays out in benefits. Even in the current troubled economy, the total accumulated surplus is in

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the trillions of dollars and will continue to grow for the next dozen years.

2. Current projections show Social Security able to pay benefits for another 25 years.
3. Beyond 25 years, the actuaries project a relatively modest gap between taxes collected and benefits paid, but there are reasonable, solid, relatively modest adjustments that would ensure the viability of Social Security for many years to come.

*The source for the above information is the National Committee to Protect Social Security and Medicare. For more information you can go on line to www.ncpssm.org or phone 1-800-966-1938.

RETIRESAFE

A second organization which has concerned itself with Social Security is RetireSafe. This organization is currently pushing for a Constitutional Amendment to protect Social Security. This amendment would contain the following:

1. No Benefit Cuts
2. Guaranteed Annual Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)
3. End of Trust Fund “raids” (For years Congress has been borrowing from the Social Security Trust Fund to fund other projects – mostly so-called pork barrel items.
4. Pay Back Social Security (The Trust Fund is full of IOUs that have no real cash value and only represent a promise to pay. The proposed amendment calls for Congress to repay the more than \$2.56 trillion it has taken from the Social Security Trust Fund.)

* The source for the above information is RetireSafe. Additional information about this organization and its proposals can be found at www.retiresafe.org.

U.S. GOVERNMENT CONTACT INFORMATION can be obtained through Congressional Switchboard 1-866-327-8670 (this is a toll free number). You can contact your Congressman and Senator through this number without paying long distance charges.

<http://www.house.gov/> for members of the House of Representatives
<http://www.senate.gov/> for members of the U.S. Senate
White House 1-202-456-1111

STATE GOVERNMENT CONTACT INFORMATION

<http://www.emailyourgovernor.com/> Information available at this site allows contact with governors, members of the state legislature, state supreme court, congressional delegation and state agencies such as the Education Department, Attorney General, Motor Vehicles Department and Voter Registration. PLEASE NOTE THAT SOME OF THIS INFORMATION MAYBE OUT OF DATE

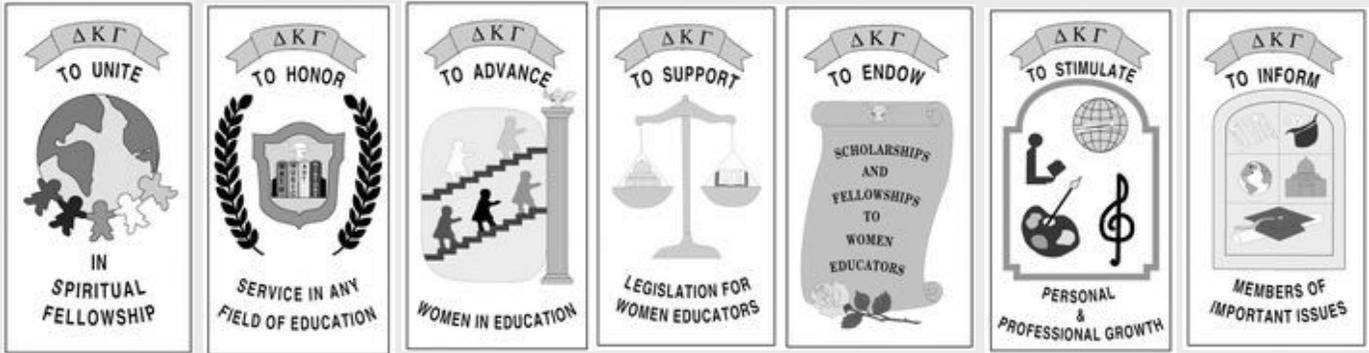
INFORMATION ON HOW YOUR CONGRESSMAN VOTED ON KEY BILLS

<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/congress/111/bills>

Five constituent contacts will cause a legislator to pay serious attention to a given issue.

Dr. Angela O. Bedenbaugh, The University of Southern Mississippi
118 College Drive #8466
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
Office: (601) 266-5718, (800) 814-4673

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

Kalamazoo-zoo-zoo is Calling You, You, You!

Why should you attend the State Convention in Kalamazoo-zoo-zoo in May 2012?

You can:

- Celebrate being a key woman educator with other key women educators from around the state
- Enjoy the fellowship and camaraderie of Society and chapter members throughout the weekend
- Earn SB-CEU's toward re-certification
- Return home and to your chapter energized and full of new ideas and information you learned in varied workshop sessions
- Find out what State Committees are doing and how they can assist you at the chapter level
- Remember our sisters who have passed on at Sunday morning's "Celebration of Life" ceremony
- Strengthen the personal bonds with chapter members and those you've met at other Society functions
- Shop in world class boutiques and stores
- Enjoy wonderful meals

The registration form is included in the Winter *Wolverine*.

