

THE NEW OREGON TRAIL

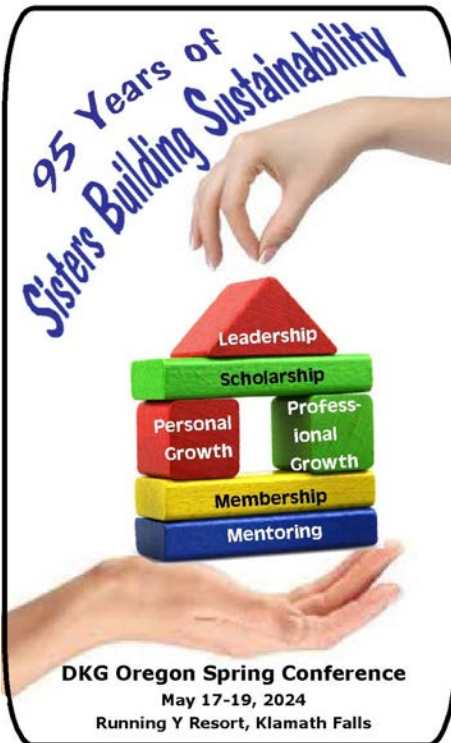


Mission: *The Society promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.*

Vision: *Leading women educators, impacting education worldwide.*

Vol. 48, No. 2

Winter 2024



The Oregon DKG Spring Conference is coming in May! Are you ready? Mark your calendars. Start saving your pennies. Find a friend to bring. Buy something pretty to wear—it will be spring in south-central Oregon.

When? May 17-19, 2024

Where? Klamath Falls, Oregon
Running Y Resort and Golf (Arnold Palmer Course)
5500 Running Y Rd.

Who? You, your family, colleagues, friends

What? Workshops galore—11 in place today. News from Int'l. A gorgeous venue. Baskets to entice you. Unique Boutique goodies to purchase. Introduction of new chapter presidents. Friends to greet or meet.

Why? To inspire, learn, laugh, dine, remember, share, enjoy

How? By car, by train, or by plane. You'll be welcomed by Alpha Chapter members no matter how you decide to travel. Bring chapter friends or colleagues along and plan your 2024-25 year as you travel.

Details? Tidbits and tastes in this issue. **Details: March 20 Trail.**



RESERVE YOUR ROOM AT THE RUNNING Y TODAY!

It's time! You can reserve your room for the 2024 Oregon State Organization 2024 Conference at the Running Y Resort in Klamath Falls today. **Here's how:**

May 17-19, 2024

First: Go to the following website and select which room you would like:

<https://www.runningy.com/accommodations/the-lodge>

OR

<https://be.synxis.com/?&hotel=67897&Rate=DKG>

Second: Call the following number: **541-550-5500**. Use the code **DKG**.

Cost: Rooms will be \$179 / night. Let's fill our block of rooms!

2023-2025
Oregon President
Darlene Cook



Happy New Year!

As I write to you, the ice, snow and cold have kept me apartment-bound for this past week! Although it has been warm and cozy inside: it is time to step outside, to welcome a new year, to spend time with and enjoy the bright, shining faces of my DKG sisters; and to celebrate the wonderful programs and activities our chapters provide to their members, schools, and communities.

Exciting adventures are happening in DKG: Avenue M; DKGIEF -- Women Honoring Women; Chapter-to-Chapter Exchange Community; Discovery Learning Centre; Membership Revival, Strategic Plan, and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, to name a few. If you are not aware of these programs, search this issue of *The Trail* and stay tuned for information.

What is Avenue M? Join us on Zoom: Saturday, February 3, from 9:00-11:00 a.m., to learn more about this International project and how the results can benefit our members and chapters in Oregon. Dr. Beverly Hall-Maughan, International Second Vice President and member of the Avenue M Task Force, will join us.

In March, the US Forum's **National Legislative Seminar** gives members an opportunity to discuss important issues and to practice advocacy skills in our nation's capital. Join our

Oregon delegation at Arlington Cemetery to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and on Capitol Hill to meet with our elected federal legislators. Guest speakers and member panels will discuss topics such as advocacy, artificial intelligence, mental health, retirement security, education and the arts, and issues affecting educators working in our classrooms. Register by February 23 and reserve your hotel room by February 6. Visit www.dkgusforum.org for registration information.

I will welcome you to our **Oregon State Conference** on May 17-19 at the beautiful and relaxing Running Y Resort in Klamath Falls. Please plan to attend. The conference schedule changed this year: All activities will take place on Friday and Saturday. This allows members to travel to Klamath Falls by Amtrak and enjoy the beautiful scenery on this train route! Besides great workshops on Saturday, two longer sessions and tours of Klamath Falls will be offered on Friday. Join us for the White Rose Ceremony, informative speakers, and a round table discussion with our Society guest, Dr. Lyn Babb Schmid, DKG International President 2014-2016. Check the conference schedule (p. 5) and making hotel reservations (p. 1).

At the conference, we will be recognizing our outgoing 2022-24 and incoming 2024-26 Chapter Presidents. Volunteer to take a leadership position in your chapter or *ment "her"* a future leader to follow in your footsteps. Working together on the chapter level is rewarding and fun!

Together we can make a difference. I look forward to working with you to strengthen our chapters and our Oregon organization. My best wishes for a successful, productive, and rewarding year!

Darlene

2023-2025
OREGON STATE
ORGANIZATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ideas? Questions? Contact us!

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SPECIAL NOTE:

Dr. Lyn Babb Schmid is our Society conference guest, Roundtable discussion leader, and Saturday evening keynote speaker. Dr. Schmid is from Pennsylvania and was International President from 2014-16!

RESERVE YOUR SEAT TODAY! RESERVATIONS ARE LIMITED.

AFTERNOON TEA, ANYONE?

Beta Beta members are preparing to host their 10th Biennial Spring Tea at **2 p.m. on Saturday, May 11, 2024, at Living Savior Lutheran Church in Tualatin.** We have missed hosting only once—in 2021 due to COVID.

The tea is one of the essential fund raisers that enable the Beta Beta Educational Foundation to fund the Margaret Nielsen Financial Awards to prospective outstanding women educators and other educational projects in our community. A majority of our active members help with the tea, and we have a great time! Working diligently to honor the tradition of “afternoon tea,” we set the tables with our best china, offer delicious food, and provide a choice of teas, and create a lovely ambiance with fresh flowers, live music, and an opportunity for quality time with friends and family.

We chose Saturday, May 11, because it is the day before Mother’s Day and that seems the perfect occasion for tea. **Tickets are NOW on sale for \$40.00.** If you would like to join us, contact Eloise Gibson at (503) 442-1710 or elog16@comcast.net.

OREGON’S UNIQUE BOUTIQUE

When you purchase from the Unique Boutique you are supporting the Boutique Treasure Stipend which offers money to first-time participants to Oregon State Organization and International Conventions/Conferences. What a fun way to support our sisters’ increased participation in DKG.

The application is on the OSO website under Scholarships. Applications due 30 days prior to the event you want to attend. For the 2024 OSO Conference in Klamath Falls, that would be April 13th.

Oregon’s Unique Boutique will be at the conference, but you can always shop ON-LINE!

We are easy to find:

1. Go to the home page of DKG Oregon State Organization <https://www.dkgoregon.com/>
2. Scroll down to our green graphic.
3. Click on the link <https://the-unique-boutique-100675.weebly.com> and you are there!



OREGON STATE ORGANIZATION SPRING CONFERENCE

Coming soon! Here are a couple of tasty tidbits to inspire your attendance. With the conference being in May this year, the Steering Committee is still hard at work to prepare precise plans for your enjoyment. Stay tuned! Meanwhile, read about the wonderful workshops listed below and peruse the proposed conference events on the next page.

WORKSHOPS

Times/locations are yet to be determined.

Friday, May 17, 2024

- NAMI—National Alliance on Mental Illness
- Conscious Discipline

Saturday, May 18, 2024

- Kaye Jones (Kappa): **Leadership Seeking Leaders: The Nominating Committee** (DKG)
- Tanya Ward (Omega): **Essential Ingredients for PLC's** (Elementary)
- Brenda Kirk (Iota): **Global Volunteers' Service Mission to the Texas Border** (Personal Growth)
- Diane Lindeleaf (Sigma): **Rain Forests of the Ocean: Sustainability of our Planet** (Personal Growth)
- Kate Kelleher (Beta Beta): **Legislative Updates at the State and National Levels** (DKG)/ Personal/Growth
- Nancy Lewis (Beta Beta): **How to Run an Efficient Meeting** (DKG)/Personal/Growth
- Bonita Fillmore (Alpha): **Settlement of Malin** (Personal Growth)
- Dr. Wendy Hacke (Beta Beta), Daphne Cagle (CA) (Int'l Membership & Expansion Chair), and Barbara Clausen, (WA), Chair, Int'l *Ad Hoc* Leadership Discovery Centre): **Ment "her" ship: The Bridge to Membership and Leadership** (DKG)
- Dr. Wendy Hacke (Beta Beta) with Daphne Cagle (Genius Hour Teacher/Speech and Language Pathologist): **Self-care for Special Ed Educators** (All Grades)/Personal Growth
- Girlie Faith C. Twyeffert (Kindergarten Teacher): **How a Little "What If" Turned into A Dream.** (Elementary)/Cross-Cultural Connections
- Debbie Plummer (Retired Teacher) **Creative Writing Done Right** (Grades 3+) Personal Enrichment

DRAFT

DRAFT

SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

FRIDAY, May 17, 2024

*Closed during workshops

- 9:30-12:00 Tours
- 9:00-9:30 Registration*
- 12:00-5:00 Registration*
- 1:00-3:00 Workshops**
- 3:15-3:45 Kitchen Band Patriotic Performance
- 4:00-5:00 Round Table Discussion with Dr. Lyn Schmid
- 5:15-5:45 White Rose Rehearsal
- 5:00-6:00 Unique Boutique and Baskets
- 6:00-8:00 Dinner on Your Own (at the Lodge or in Klamath Falls with a group)**
- 8:00-10:00 Activity/Entertainment

DRAFT

SATURDAY, May 18, 2024

- 7:00-8:00 Breakfast (Hospitality Room)
- 8:00-9:00 Registration*
- 8:00-5:00 Unique Boutique and Baskets*
- 8:15-9:00 Welcome/Opening Session/International Update**
- 9:10-12:00 Workshops: (Session 1--9:10 to 10:00, Session 2--10:10 to 11:00, Session 3--11:10 to 12:00)
- 12:15-1:45 Birthday Luncheon Keynote Speaker Todd Kepple/Introduction of Chapter Presidents/Chapter Awards**
- 2:00-2:50 Workshop Session 4/Committee Meetings
- 3:00-4:00 White Rose Ceremony**
- 4:15-4:45 Board Meeting
- 4:45-5:15 Basket Winners Determined/Posted
- 6:00-7:00 Happy Hour (no host)
- 7:00-9:00 Dinner/Keynote Speaker, International Guest Dr. Lyn Schmid/State Awards/Welcome New Members/Longevity Awards**
- 9:00-11:00 Reception for International Guest/Chapter Presidents/New Members

DRAFT

SUNDAY, May 19, 2024

- 9:00-10:30 Breakfast (no-host) with OSO Leadership and Conference Hosts at Lodge

Safe Travels Home!

**DATES TO USE
INTERNATIONAL**

February 1, 2024

Int'l Scholarship Aps Due
Educators' Book Award Submissions

February 15, 2024

Int'l Arts & Humanities Gallery
Submissions Due

February 23

Registration Deadline for National
Legislative Seminar

March 1

Int'l Achievement Award Recs Due
DKGIEF Project Aps Due
Bulletin/Journal Submissions Due
Aps for Int'l Committee, Editorial Board, Arts & Humanities Jury due. See website.

March 8

International Women's Day

March 10-13, 2024

National Legislative Seminar
Sponsored by the US Forum

July 9 - 13, 2024

International Convention
Gaylord National
National Harbor, Maryland

**DATES TO USE
OREGON**

Psi Chapter presents:

Talk With a Legislator
Jan. 27, 9:30 a.m.
Cornelius Public Library

Zoom for Leadership

January 29, 7 p.m.

President 2 President

Feb. 3, Zoom, 9-11 a.m.

Scholarship Applications Due

March 1, 2024
August 1, 2024
December 1, 2024

Grant-in-Aid Applications Due

March 1, 2024

Applications due for

Service / Achievement Awards
Order of the Rose
Rosette Awards
March 15, 2024

Deadline for next **Trail:**

**March 20
Conference Edition!**

February 3, 2024

President 2 President Zoom

Join Darlene to meet with
Dr. Beverly Hall-Maughan
International 2nd Vice President
speaking about Avenue M.



For more **information on Avenue M**, go to International website:
www.dkg.org

Then go to the Search box. Type in "Avenue M." Choose "download the entire Avenue M report." Scroll down to the **Executive Summary** on page 3. That has the key information—and it's interesting.

Watch for upcoming town halls on Avenue M.

INSIDE INTERNATIONAL is an on-going opportunity to learn what's going on in Austin.

Join in:

February 6: 10:30 a.m.

March 5: 3:30 p.m.

April 2: 10:30 a.m.

May 7: 3:30 p.m.

Darlene's Travels

1/27	Psi Chapter Meeting	Cornelius
2/3	President 2 President	Zoom
3/10-13	Nat'l Legislative Seminar	Arlington, VA
4/6	President 2 President	Zoom
4/18	Beta Gamma Meeting	Canby
5/3	Alpha Omicron's Bunco de Mayo	Columbia City
5/11	Beta Beta Tea	Tualatin
5/17-19	Oregon State Conference	Klamath Falls
7/8-13	Int'l Convention	Nat'l Harbor, MD

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Has your chapter invited local principals, coaches, and counselors to join?

FALL 2023 DISTRICT MEETING REPORTS

DISTRICT 1: Iota and Zeta: Cancelled/postponed to a later date.

DISTRICTS 2 and 3: October 21, Grants Pass

Present: 14--Alpha, Chi, Omega, Sigma, Lambda, Guests, Speakers

Lunch: Babe's Bakery (Comments were "Delicious." "An enormous salad—enough for one the next day." And similar compliments were frequent.)

Presenters:

Robert Young, educator and author, conducts writers' workshops through the Lane ESD. His workshops for upper elementary students are well known in the Eugene-Springfield area. Robert recently moved to Medford where he has been collaborating with a musician partner. (from Priscilla Ing's introduction.)

Attendees experienced a sampling of his "Wordships for Kids" when participating in the activities. For DKG members not able to attend, information about Wordship and Robert's books are on his website. www.realwriting.us

"There is no better way to develop and enhance students' writing skills than through the mindful use of Wordship." ~~Robert Young

Michelle Gallas, owner and executive director of Imagine That...Creative Children's Center--"Where Children Are Inspired" (www.imaginethatcenters.com) shared her experiences in South Korea and presented slides of the Korean preschools and other sites which the group visited. Michelle received a Commemorative Award from DKG Oregon State Organization to travel with a group of Early Childhood Education Southern Oregon University students.

DISTRICTS 4, 5, and 6: October 7, Lake Oswego

Present: 26--Alpha Phi, Chi, Beta Beta, Psi, Alpha Omicron, Alpha Epsilon, Guests, Speakers.

Grace Pitzer and Jean Fairbairn had posted signs to guide us. Sandy Watts and Kathy Martell arranged snacks, Kathy registered guests and provided basic information.

Welcomes!

Jean thanked those who had made this possible and had prepared for us, especially Grace and Eloise for the use of the Nathman Building at Mary's Woods.

Darlene noted that our districts have 8 of the 15 Oregon chapters, and she reminded us that we are welcome to attend the District 2 & 3 meeting on the 21st in Grants Pass.

Remember to invite friends and colleagues to the next chapter meeting so that new members can enjoy the privilege of membership, friendship, and DKG support as we all have. This was a lovely meeting—good company, excellent information, and a great venue.

Trifold Displays: Three chapters brought attractive trifolds: Alpha Phi, Beta Beta, and Alpha Epsilon. Each one chose a speaker to tell the audience which activities were represented by the pictures and paragraphs on the boards—and how much each project had contributed to their communities. Nice work, ladies!

Program: The District 4-5-6 Steering Committee chose to provide information that supports the US Forum project, which is focusing on better mental health for educators. The US Forum Mental Health Steering Committee presented information at the three International conferences in 2023. They discussed HR 744: the federal *Mental Health for Educators and Staff Act of 2023*. The Mental Health Subcommittee also sponsored a webinar: *Improving the Wellness of Educators Through Advocacy*. That one is available to chapters. To access it, contact Darlene.

The steering committee chose **Healthy Minds for All** as a topic, then identified a speaker who could provide current statistics, accurate information, and resources for families and educators in Oregon.

Keynote Speaker, Gary Marschke
Clackamas County NAMI
(National Alliance on Mental Illness)

Following a brief discussion on the basics about mental health, Gary presented myths, truths, and facts. According to NAMI, as many as one in five people may have a mental health problem, with one in six having two to eight conditions. Major among those are ADHD, depression, and anxiety. Not all people with mental health issues are violent, and causes vary widely. Among frequent causes are finances, housing, and childhood trauma. Gary noted that most mass shooters are seeking “fame.” NAMI is in high schools and community colleges, where it is often student-run.

Suicide needs to be addressed if it is suspected. Parents and educators should learn the signs that a person may be considering suicide, as the condition is a cascading trauma that strengthens over time. Gary provided recommended actions, tactics, and resources to use if you suspect someone is considering suicide. Among the best tactics are: (1) Recognize, validate their feelings, guide them to a solution, help build a relationship, use “reflective listening”—restating in your own words what they say and your reaction to it. (2) Validate feelings, get more information as you go, try to change their approaches—usually children’s mental illnesses are caused by a trauma they experienced.

- **Call 988** for crisis help anytime, from anywhere.
- In Oregon: **Contact Alliance for Life**, which is fully funded and staffed, with many resources, and is accessible.
- Call NAMI for advice or go to www.nami.org
- Clackamas: 503-344-5050 or www.namicc.org

Statistics show that of 988 calls in a year, 96% are managed by just talking and, in those cases, only 1% (yes, one percent!) required police presence.

SOLUTIONS

1. **Change the conversation.**
2. **Change the language.**
3. **Change the perception.**
4. **Change the Outcome.**

RESOURCES:

- There is a list of programs, both online and in person, on the NAMI website. There are support groups for peers and for families—online
- An LBGTQIA2+ group begins 11/2 at www.namicc.org.

[org](#) and check out the following:

- Check out “The Living Room” for LBGTQ services.
- Check out “Youth Area.”
- Check out “R U OK” from Australia.

Reality: You cannot help those who are not willing to accept help, those who won’t seek or join in when help is offered, and those who won’t follow through.

Following lunch—eaten on the covered patio on a sunny day with a delightful breeze--we had time to ask questions.

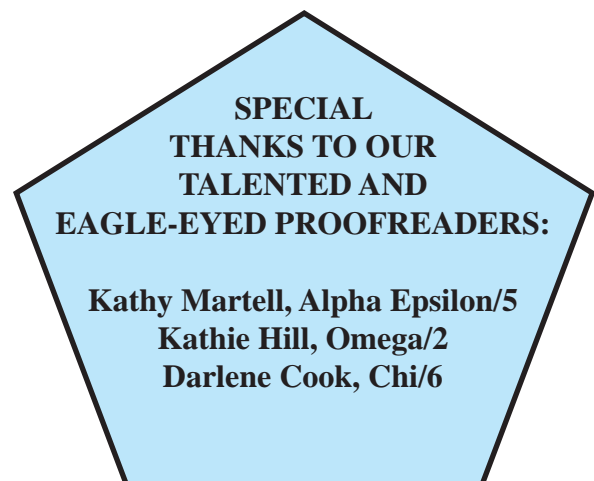
After lunch, discussions included a US Forum Update from Darlene, who serves on the International US Forum Committee. Upcoming webinars of interest were noted--all relating to mental wellness. For more information about such events, contact Bev Johns, NE Representative to the US Forum. (beverleyjohns@gmail.com)

Legislative issues, such as HR 744, sponsored by Representative Suzanne Bonamici, OR, has a companion bill in the Senate: SB 2530, sponsored by Senator Robert Casey, PA. Contact your representative or senator to support those efforts if you agree that the topic is of value.

Darlene urged us to sign up for Forum newsletters and to follow what they are doing as it is posted on the website. She recommended the National Legislative Seminar in March as a stimulating experience. More info is in later articles.

International Convention:
July 9-13, 2024, National Harbor, Maryland

Start saving \$\$\$\$ now so that you can attend. The conventions and seminars are informative professional experiences. Watch the International website for registrations and details.



CATCH UP TO COMMITTEES

WHAT DO COMMITTEES DO?

From *The Standing Rules (2023) of the Oregon State Organization of DKG.*

IV. DUTIES OF STATE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND SPECIAL SERVICES PERSONNEL

State committee chairmen and special services personnel shall:

- Prepare brief oral and/or written reports for state meetings as directed by the President.
- Send communiqués to chapter chairmen with copies to the state president.
- Respond promptly to all correspondence relating to committee or special services personnel.
- Maintain a current list of chairmen in the chapters having comparable committees.
- Keep an accurate accounting of all expenditures.
- Send a copy of the minutes of all committee meetings to the state president.
- Attend, or send a representative, to state conventions / conferences and, when possible, attend International conferences / conventions.
- Prepare and submit a budget request to the Finance Committee.
- Prepare and update committee and special personnel duties and activities for the *Oregon State Organization Guidelines for Standing Committees and Special Services Personnel* by February 15 of odd-numbered years as directed by the president.

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Brenda Jensen, Chair

1. UNESCO STATISTICS!

Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General

Some interesting information regarding the cost of educating students in our schools. However, teaching a person to read is priceless!

The illiterate adult population has been reduced by more than 100 million people between 1990 and 2012.

However, 775 million adults, including 122 million youth between the ages of 15 and 24, remain illiterate.

The average cost of back-to-school supplies for elementary students around the world in 2023 is \$341.

In 2023, K-12 schools in the U.S. spent about \$612.7 billion annually, approximately \$12,612 per pupil.

The average cost to build a school is \$89 per square foot.

The actual cost to teach a kid how to read is zero.

Literacy not only changes lives: it saves them!

2. WORLD FELLOWSHIP IN ACTION: From Mongolia to Seattle

Brenda Kirk, Educational Excellence Committee

From Mongolia to Seattle, across nine time zones and over 5,000 miles, Bulgan Tsolmonbaatar is at the University of Washington, earning a Master's in Educational Leadership and Policy. Bulgan is the third Fulbright/DKG World Fellowship recipient I have had the privilege of meeting. What is different this time is that Bulgan has her family with her: husband Nandin, son Erkh (14) and daughter Sissi (6).

One weekend last August the family drove to my home in College Place, WA, for a weekend visit. Unfortunately, the Walla Walla Valley was filled with smoke from Canadian wildfires, hiding our beautiful Blue Mountains. We still enjoyed a walk around Whitman Mission National Historic Site and compared our Native American genealogy as related to Mongolian roots.

Under Genghis Khan, Mongol tribes united to form the world's biggest land empire. Nandin explained an old Mongol saying of how their horses could drink from Pacific flowing rivers in the morning and then Atlantic flowing rivers that same night, as the empire spanned the continent of Asia.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, 1990 saw the first free multiparty elections to be held in Mongolia. Today, sandwiched between Russia and China from which virtually all manufactured goods come, Mongolia stands firm in remaining a democracy.

About the size of Alaska, Mongolia has a population of around three million, 40% of whom live in the capital



Sisi, Nandin, Brenda Kirk, Bulgan, Erkh

city, Ulaanabatar or “UB” for short. The average temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit, making UB the coldest capital city in the world; however, 250 sunny days a year have earned Mongolia the nickname “Land of the Blue Skies.” Sheep, goats, cattle, horses, and camels number 56 million. Nomadic living is still a tradition in Mongolia, and they are famous for their cashmere and copper mines. Seventy percent of the population is under the age of 35. Wrestling, horse racing, and archery are very popular. Mutton is a dietary staple, along with fermented mare’s milk as a drink.

I am always curious as to how we Americans are perceived by international visitors. Nandin told me he was amazed at how much sugar we eat and that we put condiments on our meat.

The Mongolian diet consists of a lot of meat which they enjoy sans ketchup, BBQ sauce, etc.

The family speaks English very well. Nandin said he began learning English in 1990 once American television programs were allowed to broadcast in Mongolia. He also attended a language school in Malaysia and received a scholarship to study in Australia. Bulgan also learned English from American television.

I contacted Bulgan last week, and she said they had wonderful Christmas and New Year celebrations. She is back in class at the University of Washington. She’ll graduate in June, then she and her family will return to Mongolia where she will teach at the college level. Bulgan is grateful for DKG’s part in making her US education possible.

3. OREGON LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

*Kate Kelleher
OSO Legislative Liaison*

As our Legislature gathers for a short session this year, 35 days from February 5 to March 10, priorities have already emerged. Our DKG focus is on women’s issues and education, but you might find the the League of Women Voters’ list of priorities: www.lwvor.org of interest, too.

Measure 110, which decriminalized the use of hard drugs, is high on the list for change. A joint committee has been meeting since October to look at Oregon’s addiction problem and responses. The Governor has already stated that she will ask the legislature to spend \$600 million on housing and homelessness. As a response to the Portland teachers strike, revisiting the funding formula is a priority for her, especially how funding flows from the state to school districts.

Some new laws from the 2023 Session have taken effect in 2024. Tax breaks for kids, called the Oregon Kids Credit, is HB 3235. It returns \$1,000 for every child under six, if the family income is under \$25,000. HB2984 gave a green light to conversions of commercial buildings for housing in cities with a population of at least 10,000. A couple of safety bills were passed regarding the ability to enforce prosecution of those with extremist/terrorist tendencies: HB 2572/ HB 2772. These bills were in reaction to the issues in Portland with the well-publicized riots.

4. MEMBERSHIP & EXPANSION COMMITTEE

Recruitment, Retention, & Revitalization

Committee Members & Goals

*Dr. Wendy Hacke, Chair, Beta Beta/5
Audrey Cant, Zeta/1
Heidi Gorka, Beta Beta/5
Mariann Jones, Kappa/3
Sandy Rysdam, Zeta /1
Liz Simmons, Chi/6*

This committee serves as liaison between the International Membership & Expansion Committee and Oregon chapters. We support chapters as they work to strengthen their sustainability through recruitment, revitalization, and retention.

2023-24 meetings on the importance of increasing and retaining membership:

1. The first meeting featured **Debbie Le Blanc, International President**, speaking of the urgency for looking at our chapter critically and considering the future. Chapter leaders then worked on a Logic Model and thought about discussions their members needed to have regarding maintaining the sustainability of their chapter.
2. A January meeting featured **Barb Clausen**, speaking about what her chapter has done in Washington that has resulted in increased membership. The remainder of that meeting focused specifically on creating chapter Smart Goals to meet membership needs.
3. The final meeting of this year will occur at the Oregon spring conference, where we will review the progress chapters have made toward achieving their goals and discuss next steps for the second half of the biennium.

Goals for the 2023-2025 Biennium:

- To mentor a chapter membership chair/president to help with

recruitment, revitalization, and retention.

To communicate with chapter membership chairs/presidents to offer support, guidance, resources and build connections.

To research ways to increase the number of chapters by exploring opportunities to establish virtual chapters and collegiate chapters to ensure the sustainability of the Oregon State Organization of DKG.

MEMBERSHIP Leadership Smart

Goal: *Daphne Cagle, CA and Dr. Wendy Hacke, OR*

Chapter Name: OSO Membership

SPECIFIC: Oregon chapters will increase membership so chapters will be sustainable.

MEASURABLE: Monitor progress. Check regularly; e.g., every two months from January to July.

ATTAINABLE: Choose actions to achieve your goal: 2 workshops done; 3 planned for conference. Membership leaders will check with chapters and assist as needed.

RELEVANT: Workshops will support membership chairs in helping chapters gain members.

TIME BOUND: By May 17, 2024, all chapters will be implementing SMART plan goals.

- **SMART GOAL:** By May 17, Oregon chapters will implement their SMART goal plans to increase membership, resulting in more sustainable chapters.
- Members Present/Positions: Chair: Wendy and Mentor: Daphne
- Email Form as an attachment to wdhacke57dkg@gmail.com

Other resources are available from the committee, and more are on the Int'l website at www.dkg.org Membership and Expansion committee members have many answers, so contact us with questions or requests for support.

- Wendy Hacke can be reached at 408-421-9860 or wdhacke57dkg@gmail.com;
- Daphne Cagle from the International Membership and Expansion committee (who is mentoring Wendy) can be contacted at 916-207-4041.

We really do want to hear from you!

RECRUITING MEMBERS THROUGH REINSTATEMENT: "Annie Calling"

The International website (dkg.org) offers a fun idea to reach out to former members.

Developed by the Texas State Organization, it has been successfully used for over ten years, resulting in reinstatement of many members who had dropped. It's affectionately named *Annie Calling* after beloved founder, Annie Web Blanton. *Annie Calling* is listed under "Membership Resources" and is an easy way to talk to former members of DKG who may be just waiting for an invitation to return to membership.

Chapters start by compiling a list of former members with current contact info. They then assign current members a group from the list for each to telephone. Chatting with DKG friends is easy, and it is made even easier by an Annie Calling Map of reasonable responses. The map offers a conversation aid to various excuses offered by former members. It's on the Int'l website.

The map includes a script of how to start the conversation. Next, invite them to attend upcoming meetings or events. Make sure to welcome them and make them feel valued by assigning a buddy sister to them (their "rose bud"). **CONTINUES, p.12, Blue box.**

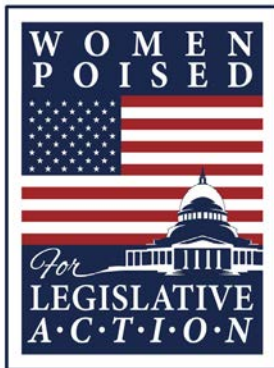
“ANNIE CALLING”

- 1. What is it?** A fun way to reach out to your former members and encourage them to return to DKG.
- 2. How is it done?** Phone calls are placed by current members to former members, assuring them they are missed, telling what is happening today in their chapter and in the Society, and inviting them to return to membership.
- 3. When is it carried out?** At the discretion of your local chapter: It can be a blitz of one week or an on-going project. Chapters may choose to do it monthly, yearly, or once each biennium.
- 4. How does a chapter get started?** Compile a list of former chapter members with current contact information. Assign current members a set group from the list for each to telephone. Chatting with old friends is easy. For your use, a map of reasonable responses is included as a conversation aid when various excuses are offered by the former member.
- 5. Resources:** Here’s the link to the “Conversation” map, mentioned above: [membership.annie_calling_discussion_map_2017_versi \(1\).pdf](#)

Calling ALL Oregon DKG Members!

Attend the US Forum’s 2024 National Legislative Seminar, March 10-13!

The US Forum Steering Committee has planned an exciting and informative seminar in Washington, DC. Please join us for this signature event, offered only to DKG members every two years.



This National Legislative Seminar takes place at the Holiday Inn National Airport, Crystal City, just a short distance from the sights and sounds of our nation’s capital. It gives you an opportunity to learn from experts on key issues identified by DKG members, to hone your advocacy skills, and to discuss solutions with members from across the country and with your own congressional representatives in the House and Senate! You’ll meet some Senators and Representatives from Oregon at the

“Day on the Hill” event, Tuesday, March 12!

Registration for the seminar is \$340 and includes all meals. You can register and pay online or download the registration form and pay by check. Go to www.dkgusforum.org to complete your registration and find out about reserving your hotel room. Just a reminder that the **deadline to reserve a room** at the seminar rate of \$129 is Tuesday, **February 6!** The hotel phone number is on the registration form and on the US Forum website: www.dkgusforum.org.

A schedule of engaging speakers and activities, both at the hotel and in Washington, DC, is planned for you. **Did you know that during the National Legislative Seminar, you can:**

- Participate in a wreath laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery?
- Learn about women and education issues in the upcoming legislative session?
- Understand how the federal government is helping to improve mental health services for all Americans?
- Gain ideas of the ways that artificial intelligence (AI) systems will soon impact teaching and learning?

Attend this amazing opportunity to join with fellow DKG members to learn, grow, and advocate for women, children, and education in our nation’s beautiful Capital! Register now at www.dkgusforum.org

See you in DC in March!

Darlene

RECOGNIZING OUR SISTERS



RED ROSES

Inducted Since April 30, 2023

Honoring Our Newest

DKG Sisters

New Members

Tanya Ward--12/2/23 Omega/2

Arvella Kokkeler--12/7/23 Lambda/3

Vicki L. Swanson--10/22/23 Lambda/3

Tara Heikila -- 9/18/23 Alpha Espilon/5

Melanie Mobley--1/5/24 Psi/5

Heidi Green -- 11/2/23 Alpha Omicron/4

Amy Corris --11/2/23 Alpha Omicron/4

Erika Kunders --12/7/23 Alpha Omicron/4

Collegiate Member

Jordyn A. Krake--7/13/2023 Psi/5

Reinstated Member

**Karreen A. Ghena--12/1/18 Omega/2
Reinstated 7/10/23**

More complete introductions and photos of our new members will be published in a special *Membership Edition Trail* next spring and will be featured at state conference in May 2024.



WHITE ROSES

Joined Chapter Eternal

After April 30, 2023

Remembering Our Sisters Who Have Passed

Patricia Gibson, Chi/6

Mar. 29, 1847 - Sept. 19, 2023

MEd, Oregon State Univ.

Librarian, Lake Oswego

Dr. Edythe Leupp, Beta Beta/5

Nov. 27, 1921 - Oct. 26, 2023

DKG Oregon President 1985 - 87

Principal, Duniway Elementary

George Fox University

Dr. Janice Anderson, Psi/5/

(11/20/23)

Graduated OSU. Taught in West Linn and Forest Grove.

Title I Reading. Bilingual English. Psi Secretary.

Sheila Kleinheinz, Beta Beta /5

(6/22/23) --See Fall 23 Trail for details

Judith Kieser, Beta Beta/5

(7/22/23)-- See Fall 23 Trail for details

Beverly Emmons, Lambda/3

(7/3/23)--See Fall 23 Trail for details

Patricia Howard, Chi/6

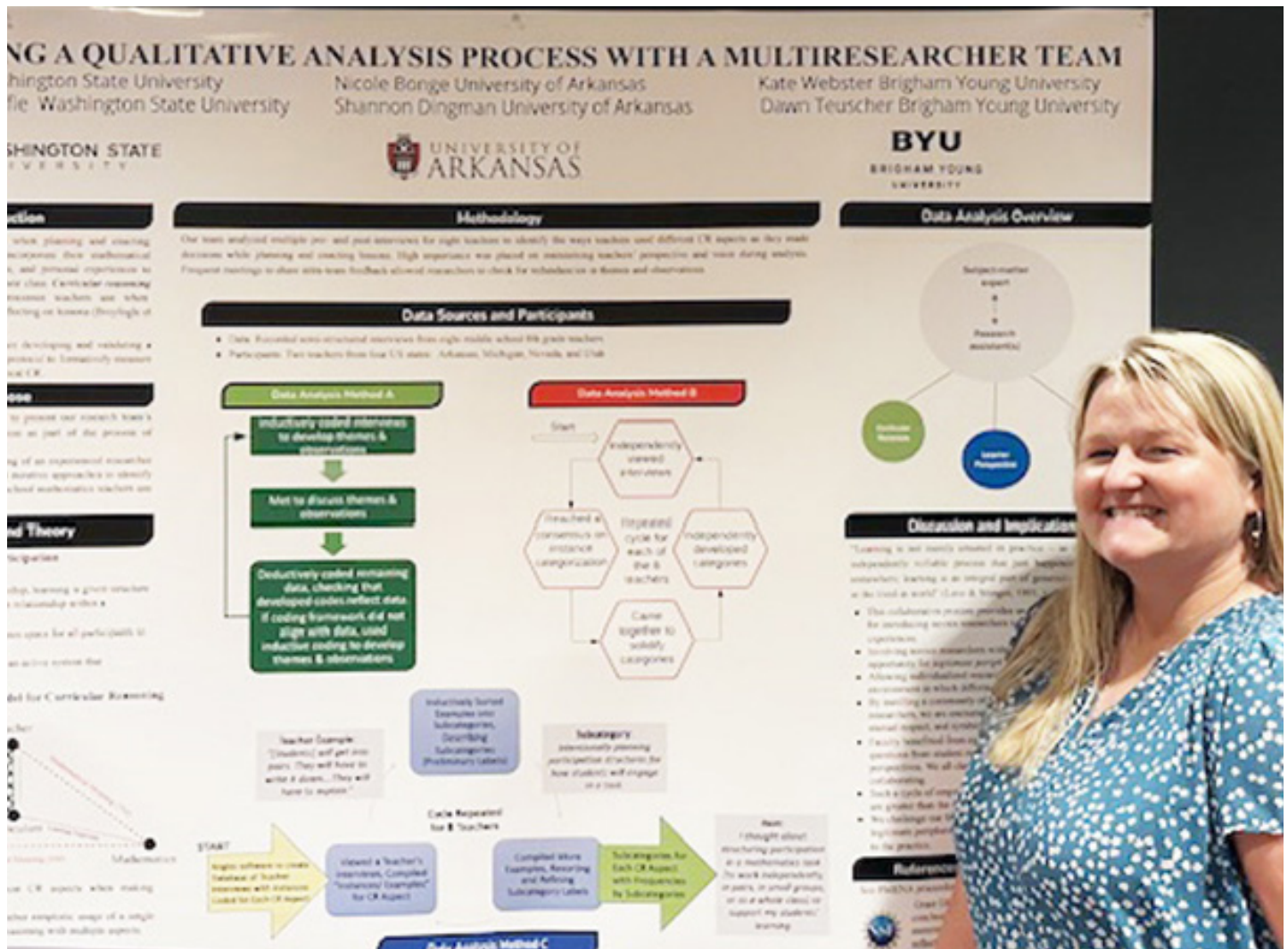
(8/24/2023) --See Fall 23 Trail for details

Complete obituaries and photos will be published in the White Rose Ceremony --and in a special *Membership Edition Trail* next spring.

HONORS & AWARDS Received by Members

- **Kathy Martell**, Alpha Epsilon/5 rode on the Marion-Polk Early Learning Hub/Rotary float in the Salem Holiday Parade. She dressed as Dolly Parton.
- **Brenda Jensen**, Alpha/2, has art work featured in the Arts and Humanities Gallery. See page 15 for the letter from International and her photos, courtesy of Brenda.
- **Brenda Kirk** submitted an article to the Collegial Exchange. As of 1/19/24, it has been accepted for inclusion in the next edition, pending minor revisions. Congratulations, Brenda!!
- **Emily Tarbell**, Alpha Epsilon/5, is one North Salem HS delegate to Kawagoe, Japan, for a trip with students this summer. She's learning Japanese!

Alpha Epsilon Chapter, Salem: Member Recognition



LOOK WHAT TARA HAS BEEN DOING!

Alpha Epsilon's newest member, Tara Heikila, was presenting at the Psychology of Mathematics Education / North America (PME-NA) meeting in Reno, Nevada, the weekend of October 6-8. You may not be able to read the team of participants who worked on this project, but they are listed at the top, right under the title: Developing a Qualitative Analysis Process With a Multi-Researcher Team. The six women listed represent Washington State University, the University of Arkansas, and Brigham Young University. What Tara presented was about "how we worked together as a group of researchers at different times and spaces in our careers: It's all about community," she said. PME-NA is part of an international group of mathematics educators. Tara went on to say, "I think it's great to share what we do. That's how I learned about my program—hearing about another amazing woman's journey." ~~~Photo provided by Tara Heikila

CONGRATULATIONS TO PAST STATE PRESIDENT BRENDA JENSEN!



October 17, 2023

Dear Brenda Jensen,

Congratulations! The DKG International Arts and Humanities Jury thanks you for being among the DKG Gallery of Fine Arts entrants of the August 15 – September 15, 2023, submission period. Your photos, Buster Brown Whatz Up, and Frost Bite, have been accepted into the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.

An announcement will be sent to your State President, Webmaster, and Editor. Please inform your Arts & Humanities liaison (if you have one). There is also a press release attached for your use in your local newspaper.

We anticipate the unveiling of the new DKG Fine Arts Gallery by mid-November. Your work will be displayed in the gallery for six months, after which it will be archived for two years. Another opportunity for showcasing your accepted work is at the DKG International 2024 convention or 2025 conference Expo. If you are interested in participating in either of these events, please complete the Google form that will be available in the Spring of 2024 on the DKG website under the convention page. You are encouraged to submit additional works during the submission period from January 15 – February 15, 2024.

We have had great interest in the Art Gallery and consider it to be an especially important venture for the Society. Again, congratulations for your accomplishment.

Sincerely,

DKG International Arts & Humanities Jury
Irene Maskaly, Chair
Roxanne Lagarde
Dr. Linda Eller
Heidi Ragsdale

Winterscape
by Brenda Jensen



“Buster”
by Brenda Jensen

ALPHA RHO FOUNDATION

Oregon members wanted to create a fund that any educator could apply for and, by working with lawyers, ARF was established. From the funds available, we reserve \$3,500 each year for projects to non-members to allow them to enhance education at any level.

If you are planning to donate for 2024 tax purposes, consider the Alpha Rho State Foundation. It is an avenue for donations that help educators and students around the state.

Donations to this 501(c)(3) foundation are deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

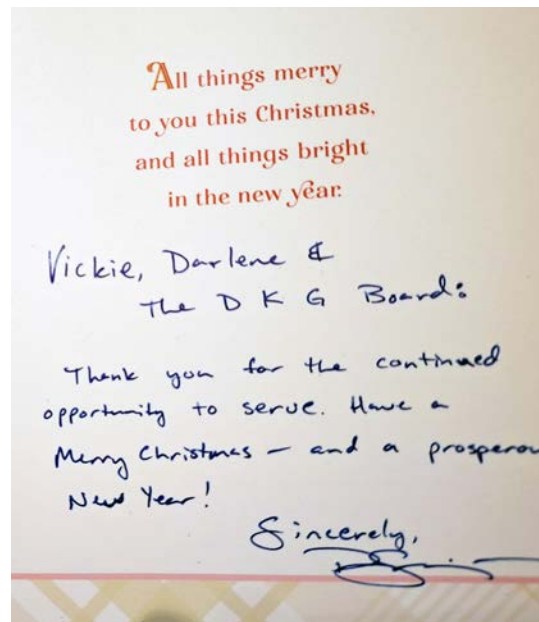
Interested? Contact:

Vickie Jackson, Treasurer
235 Southeast C St.
Madras, OR 97441-1732
dandyjackson@gmail.com
(541) 475-7252

A **THANK YOU** from Phillip Smith for your investments. The card came to the ARF Board and was forwarded to the OSO Executive Committee. As a reminder, contributions to ARF, our 501(c)(3) foundation, are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. Keep that in mind as you are doing taxes or planning your will.



Cover of card & message



How Are Your Dues Processed?	
DEADLINES FOR STATE ORGANIZATION & CHAPTER TREASURERS	
DATE	-----ACTIVITY-----
2023—For your information	
June 30, 2023	Members submit dues to Chapter Treasurers.
July 14, 2023	Chapter Treasurers submit dues and Form 15 to State Treasurers
September 1, 2023	State Treasurer submits Form 16 to International..
September 30, 2023	Dues finalized in the portal to avoid members being dropped.
October 1, 2023	Unpaid members dropped from membership.
November 15, 2023	All US Organization Treasurers: Last day to file IRS Form 990N.
2024	
January 1, 2024	New inductees pay HALF of International dues for half of 2023-24 year.
March 1, 2024	Dues Portal closes.
April 1, 2024	Dues Portal reopens.
April 1, 2024	New inductees pay International dues for 2024-25 fiscal year (only).

DKGIEF

Women Honoring Women

International Women's Day is March 8, 2024. DKGIEF is launching a fundraising initiative to support our mission of educating the world. Will you consider making a \$25 donation to honor a woman who has had a significant impact on your life or career? For each \$25 donation received between March 1, 2024, and April 15, 2024, DKGIEF will send the donor a specially designed card and pin to personally present to the woman being honored.

The UN established [International Women's Day](#) in 1977 as a day when women are recognized for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic, or political. It is celebrated yearly in many countries worldwide and focuses on a theme. The 2024 theme “#inspire inclusion” is focused on closing the digital divide and increasing the representation of women and girls in science and technology.

DKG programs support the aspirations and achievements of women from around the world. DKGIEF, through its philanthropy, supports future generations of women across the globe in their professional journey to become leaders in their communities. By donating to recognize someone who made a difference in your life, you will be making a difference in the lives of many.

Donations may be made to any of the nine DKGIEF funds.

Online Donation

1. Go to the [DKGIEF Donate webpage](#) (go to DKG.org>DKGIEF>Donate)
2. Click on the fund you select for your donation
3. Follow directions on the page to make a credit card donation.
4. Be sure to select “Yes” under the question “Is this donation a tribute?”

Mailed Donation

1. Complete and print [Form 43](#) (go to DKG.org>MyDKG>Forms>Contribution>Form 43)
2. Mail Form 43 and a check made to DKGIEF with the designated fund listed on the memo line.

Donations must be submitted or postmarked no later than April 15, 2024.

US FORUM

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SEMINAR

March 10-13, 2024 -- Nitty Gritty Details

The US Forum Steering Committee has been busy planning an outstanding National Legislative Seminar (NLS) for 2024, and it is coming soon! Here is some important information about the seminar:

- **Dates:** Sunday, March 10 (2 p.m.) -Wednesday, March 13 (12 p.m.)
- **Location:** Holiday Inn National Airport Hotel, Crystal City, VA (1 mile from Washington, DC, and Reagan National Airport)
- **Registration Deadline:** February 23, 2024
- **Hotel Reservation Deadline for DKG Special Rate: February 6**
- **Registration:** \$340 (All meals are included)

If you have not yet made plans to attend the US Forum 2024 National Legislative Seminar (NLS) in Washington, DC, now is the time to do so! This incredible event is designed not only for DKG women who are experienced advocates, but also for members who want to know more about becoming an effective communicator and supporter of causes that are important to women, children, and education.

The National Legislative Seminar includes outstanding speakers on the issues most important to DKG members, a wreath laying ceremony at Arlington Cemetery, meetings with your elected senators and representatives, opportunities to discuss critical issues with fellow DKG members, and visits to the museums and monuments in Washington, DC. Mark your calendar now!

- For more information, watch for the next issue of the **US Forum Connection** newsletter on our website, www.dkgusforum.org, or on the DKG International website, www.dkg.org website (see ABOUT/LEADERS/FORUMS), or contact Nancy Sheng, nancysheng@gmail.com.
- **Register NOW online** at www.dkgusforum.org

See you in DC in March 2024!

Nancy K. Sheng, NW Region Representative

CHAPTER CHATTER

District 1

Zeta (Union County): Zeta started the year with a visit from State President, Darlene Cook. She shared her vision and concerns for the OSO with us. Recruiting new members is essential for the continuation of DKG. Darlene announced that Sharon Hohstadt has been appointed District One Coordinator.

Pictured below: *Sandy Rysdam and Darlene Cook.*



In October we welcomed Union County's first-year teachers by giving them a "Carmel Apple" gift Pack.



Above: *far left: Marta Naughton and Sandy Rysdam. Standing: Judy Martin. Sitting: Charlene Cousell and Mary Jo Lemon's arm (red).* Packing apples!

Zeta, along with the Eastern Oregon University Foundation, created The DKG Education Scholarship Fund. This will allow the university to offer Zeta's scholarships to a wider pool of applicants.

District 2

Omega (Josephine & Jackson Cos.): Omega hosted a Meet and Greet at Taprock NW Grill on Sept. 19, with

11 Omega members and guests present. Thank you Rosie Clifton, Christina Fredriksen, Leslie Henriques, and Tanya Ward for joining us!

Below: Lynn, Cari, Lise, Tanya



Co-President Lise introduced DKG as beginning in 1929 with women leaders, evolving in the 1950s as formal, and today as practical, time-worthy, and important to us all. She emphasized that part of what we do is work for others, and invited educators and collegiate guests to join or present. She discussed the schedule, dues, and benefits of membership, including scholarships and travel. We discussed budget items and prepared for the October 21 Districts 2 & 3 conference, which we co-hosted with Alpha.

Our October program featured *Financial Peace*, by Katie Rico, Omega member. She discussed Dave Ramsey's tools to work for financial stability. Detailed information is available on his website.

She discussed his Seven Easy Steps, which include setting up an emergency fund—something that has been in the news lately after recent disasters. Since many Americans live paycheck-to-paycheck, planning and budgeting are vital to financial stability.

District 3

Lambda (Lane Co.): Lambda welcomed two new members this fall, as **Vicki Swanson** and **Arvella Kokkelr** joined in September and October,

respectively. They will be formally inducted in April, at which time we install new officers.

Vicki works for the UofO program "Early Childhood Cares" and is an early childhood special educator and interventionist. Arvella opened a private preschool in 1969 and taught there for 14 years. She taught at O'Hara Elementary for 11 years and Marist High School for 2 years before retiring.

Lambda members gathered for a holiday event organized by **Cecelia Brands** on Dec. 16 in the Camelot Village clubhouse. We were joined by OSO Vice President **Dr. Wendy Hacke** for a potluck lunch and several interactive games. Cecelia challenged participants to "Name That (Christmas) Tune" when given scrambled titles with no vowels. She had come up with 17 song titles, ranging from fanciful to hymnal. Next, those present placed tags with monetary amounts for the Twelve Days of Christmas, indicating what the cost for each gift would be in today's market. A third activity gave each person a holiday movie title on a tag that was hung behind the back, with others then giving clues to the title. The person wearing the tag had to guess the title. A final game required a person to "sing" a given Christmas song, repeating only one or two words given to her in the tune of the song. Others guessed the name of the song.

In addition to food and fun, we donated items for Hosea Youth Services, a facility in Eugene that aids homeless youth by providing clothing, personal hygiene items, shelter materials, some

Sigma (Bend, Redmond, Central Oregon): Sigma has three projects, plus a related extra for Christmas:

1. We provided 50 free books to take home, staged at the Jefferson Health Office.



2. Members stuffed gift bags for new teachers in our school district.
3. Sigma catalogs elementary books into reading levels for Warm Springs Academy's library.
4. We ordered Christmas bilingual books to give to the district's bilingual program.

The picture above shows Sigma's work party at the Jefferson County Library in Madras. A potential transfer member from Tennessee joined us at the table to help with our project,

We are small, but we recognize the need for reading materials for students.

District 4

Alpha Omicron: Columbia Co.

Alpha Omicron recently inducted three new members. In October, Heidi Green (below left), an educator at McBride Elementary in St. Helens, and Amy Corris (above right), a teacher in the Beaverton School District



who lives locally, were inducted. In the center is Linda McCoy, our Membership Chair) In December, Erika Kundert (below), a teacher at McBride Elementary, was also in-

ducted. We are excited for their fresh perspective and positive enthusiasm!



This year Alpha Omicron focused teacher grants at the 4th grade level: 13 fourth

grades in the St. Helens and Scappoose districts created wish lists for which we granted up to \$100/classroom. That \$1,300 was spent to purchase sets of novels, bussing for a field trip, an in-house OMSI field trip, and supplemental packs for science programs.

One of our new members, Heidi Green, was presented the Staff Community Impact Award by her district at the December board meeting. She was recognized for her "commitment to the well-being and success of all McBride students." We are proud of you, Heidi!

District 5

Alpha Epsilon (Salem & Polk Co.):

Five of us had a wonderful time at the Districts 4, 5, and 6 Fall Meeting at Mary's Woods in Lake Oswego. We had perfect weather, a nice ride up and back, and plenty of time to enjoy with our sisters as we learned about ways to address and deal with mental health in ourselves and in our families.

In November, we hosted a guest speaker—Ame (*Ahhh-mee*) Manon

representing Parrott Creek Child and Family Services in Oregon City. Ame,



from a multi-tribal family, discussed changes in education from pre-colonization to the present. Her coverage included the disastrous effect of "Indian" schools established between 1800 and 1980, including discussion of Chemawa School in Salem. She provided resources for future study and research.

We ended 2023 with a holiday social and gift exchange at The Yard Food Park, always a great opportunity to have fun and good food. January '24 brought a Zoom meeting on environmental issues, a most pertinent topic, and Darlene joined us, giving an update of state and Int'l events.

Psi (Hillsboro, Beaverton & Washington Co.):

Psi has planned a legislative visit for members and friends of local chapters on January 27 with Oregon Representative Susan McClain. Ms. McClain will update us on relevant topics and is prepared to address your concerns and questions.

District 6

Chi (Clackamas): Chi members celebrated the Christmas season with dinner at the home of Jean Fairbairn on Dec. 13.

Chi chose to honor the deaths of Pat Howard and Pat Gibson by reviewing the past three months and the ten charitable projects that received coats and clothing, food, fabric, home furnishings, bedding, Christmas décor and books as a result of the help Chi members gave the families while preparing their homes for sale This unique Celebration of Life has spread through

several communities. Chi included a Christmas collection of personal hygiene items (78.5 lbs.!), warm clothes, and \$45 in cash to assist the Wichita Family Center. *Liz Simmons*



(pictured above) is sorting and sacking. It has indeed been a season of sharing and caring for others!

INDIVIDUAL STATE AWARD NOMINATIONS for SERVICE AWARDS (aka “Achievement Awards”)

The Oregon State Organization of DKG has many outstanding members who deserve to be recognized. **March 15, 2024, is the deadline** to have your nominations in for the individual awards of Service to Society, Service to Education, and Service to Community.

On the state website at <https://www.dkgoregon.com/forms.html>, the info you need is at the bottom of the left column.

Look at the list of past recipients, then find different members (ones who have not won an award in previous years) to nominate for these three awards. They do not have to be in your chapter, but the chapter is a good place to start looking. Please send your nomination forms to Sandy Watts, sandywatts269@comcast.net or Kathy Martell, kkm4dkg@gmail.com before the deadline listed above.

ROSETTE & ORDER OF THE ROSE CHAPTER AWARDS

Hopefully, your chapter has been filling out your form all year for the Rosette and Order of the Rose Chapter Awards as you accomplished certain tasks. If not, you can find the form and the requirements on the same website page where you find the Individual State Award Nominations Form.

1. Go to [dkgoregon.com/forms.html](https://www.dkgoregon.com/forms.html)
2. Look down the left column till you find State Awards and you will find the forms for the awards mentioned above plus a list of past recipients for the Individual Awards.
3. The Individual State Award Nominations go directly to Sandy or Kathy **by March 15.**
4. The Rosette and Order of the Rose Chapter Awards **forms should be sent to your District Coordinator** (see the list below) by March 15, and the District Coordinator will send the forms on to Sandy or Kathy by March 30.

District Coordinators:

1. Sharon Hohstadt
2. Lynn Hughes
3. Priscilla Ing
4. Sandy Watts
5. Kathy Martell
6. Jean Fairbairn

**SEND YOUR
RECOMMENDATIONS
&
APPLICATIONS NOW!**

Find the forms now and plan _____ time to fill them out so you can send them _____ to the right person by March 15. **It takes all of us working together to acknowledge and recognize all the hard work members are doing each year.**

ALPHA EPSILON: SALEM GOES ALL OUT FOR LITERACY

Kathy Martell, Alpha Epsilon Co-President

Alpha Epsilon has promoted literacy for years and has received several grants from International to help our literacy efforts. In February 2019, a member visiting Salem Hospital saw a red wagon in the lobby with a sign saying, “New Book Collection for NICU Babies!” She drew my attention to it, and Alpha Epsilon collected some new books to add to the wagon. I added information about DKG and Alpha Epsilon Chapter to the book collection, and this started our partnership with the NICU. Kacy Bradshaw, Lead NICU Nurse Practitioner, thanked us for the books, and we started communicating about their reading program for babies and their families under NICU care. (NICU is the Neo-natal Intensive Care Unit,)

I asked about a NICU program for a chapter meeting. Kacy said “Yes” to a Zoom program and enlisted Shannan Murphy-Brown, an OT nurse and the head of their reading program, to do a Power Point™ program. After the program, Alpha Epsilon member Deb Freels volunteered to serve as our chapter NICU Book Coordinator. This partnership continues.

Two plus years later, when it came time to develop a steering committee for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, Kacy was one of the first people I asked to join. Kacy not only coordinates with our chapter, but we both partner with the Marion and Polk County Early Learning Hub. The Hub is our 501(c)(3) partner [required by the Dolly Parton Imagination Library] and affiliate.

Debra Freels, Alpha Epsilon NICU Book Coordinator

In 2022-23, Alpha Epsilon Chapter began a partnership with the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) of Salem Hospital. In a chapter program, we learned how the NICU team is working to make their unit more family friendly and less clinical. Kacy Bradshaw, a neonatal nurse practitioner, told us that having a baby in the NICU is stressful for the parents, so hospital staff work to make the environment family friendly. Parents holding and talking to their baby is very important.

Kacy said that parents are encouraged to read aloud to their newborn. In doing so, the parents feel comforted that they are helping their new son or daughter. Meanwhile, the baby is feeling their parent’s skin and is hearing their mom’s or dad’s voice. Some babies are premature and have missed hearing their parents’ voices during the time they would have been in utero.

The NICU has shelves of new books for the parents to



*Kathy Martell, Deb Freels, Kacy Bradshaw
Holding two of the latest books donated to NICU.*

select from to read to their baby. When the infant and mom are discharged, they may take one new book home with them. When we learned of this practice, our chapter decided to donate new books to the hospital. During the last year and a half, Alpha Epsilon has donated over 100 books to the NICU. Not only does this help the parents and the babies with their start on life, but it also educates parents on the importance of literacy and how their involvement is very beneficial.

Kacy Bradshaw, MN, NNP-BC Lead Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Salem Health Hospitals & Clinics

Preterm infants spend weeks-to-months in the NICU, all during a critical period of brain development. Auditory exposure is critical to brain development during the last trimester in utero, as this is an important time when brain connections are developing!

- 24-25 weeks gestation: Cochlea to the brainstem
- 30-31 weeks gestation: Temporal lobe to the auditory cortex

Historically, when compared to full-term infants, preterm infants showed poorer auditory discrimination, reading difficulties, poor vocabulary, less expressive language, and lower receptive understanding when entering school.

Today, premature infants who are exposed to more language interactions, demonstrate more vocalizations before NICU discharge and higher scores on tests of language abilities in early childhood. Meaningful language exposure in the NICU is associated with better developmental outcomes (motor, social / emotional, and language). When a parent holds a child and reads to the child, that fosters a positive emotional/attachment with a clear correlation between parent presence/holding and

language exposure. By age 2, children who are read to regularly, display greater language comprehension, larger vocabularies, and higher cognitive skills than their peers.

In a recent NICU study, 69% of parents reported that reading helped them feel closer to their baby, and 86% reported it was enjoyable. Parents reported an increased sense of control and normalcy and increased intimacy with their infant. Staff commented that: “At the Salem Health NICU, every baby admitted gets their first book from us, and we encourage families to read to their babies often. Some families read simple board books, and others bring in the Harry Potter series. We really don’t mind what they read to the baby, as long as they jump in and do it!”

Kathy Martell

Kacy, as an active member of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library Steering Committee, is helping us enroll more newborns--basically every infant who leaves the hospital. A book a month until they turn five will help ensure that they grow to love books and reading. This will increase the number of children being ready to learn when entering kindergarten. In my ideal world, every newborn in the state would automatically be enrolled in the Imagination Library. Since the Oregon legislature passed a bill to go state-wide with the program and providing a 50% match of funds, this just might happen if they continue the funding after this biennium.

We’re all working together, promoting literacy in Marion and Polk Counties--and Oregon.

UPDATE ON DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY

The Marion and Polk Early Learning Hub celebrated with their Steering Committee for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library on Friday, Oct. 20. The program registered the first children on July 29, 2022, and now, 16 months later, all of Marion and Polk Counties are covered, except for Dallas in Polk County. By March, Dallas may also be covered! As of January 22, 2024, there are 4,825 children enrolled in the Marion and Polk County Early Learning Hub Affiliate!

A big Thank You!! to the Marion/Polk County Early Learning Hub for being a local partner with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

Tori VanCleave sent this picture (right) of her daughter getting her first book from Dolly Parton. She loves it! (*Permission received; photo provided by Ms. VanCleave.*)



Kathy as “Dolly” before the Salem Christmas parade. By the end of the parade, she was totally drenched!



RETURN ADDRESS

The New Oregon Trail is a publication of the Oregon State Organization of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.

c/o

Vickie Jackson, OSO Treasurer
235 S.E. C St.
Madras, OR 97741-1732