



The Florida State Organization of DKG

# Florida Rays



Vol. 67 No. 3

TOGETHER WE CAN!

Spring 2022



## Beta Omega Chapter's Silver Jubilee Fashion Show & Luncheon Benefiting *Take Stock in Children*

On February 19, 2022, **Beta Omega Chapter** in District III celebrated its 25th Annual Fashion Show & Luncheon. In 1996, their goal was to sponsor their first Pinellas County student scholarship under the leadership of chairperson **Petey Henning** and in collaboration with the **Pinellas Education Foundation**. The first scholar was selected as a fourth grader in May of 1998 and has graduated from college with a degree in Business Administration. This year's event raised \$3,200 through the sale of 114 luncheon tickets and the raffle of 23 member created baskets.

### Seven student scholars who Beta Omega sponsored graduated from college:

Rodrica D, 2012 graduate, Florida Southern College, B.S. in Business Administration,  
Leah R, 2015 graduate, St. Petersburg College, B.S. in Nursing,  
Zaria T, 2018 graduate, University of Florida, B.S. in Business Administration,  
Taylor B, 2019 graduate, Florida State University, Hospitality & Tourism Management,  
Courtney A, 2020 graduate, St. Petersburg College, B.S. in Educational Studies & Leadership,  
Marissa M, 2020 graduate, University of South Florida, B.A. in Communications, and  
Penelope R, 2021 graduate Galen College, B.S. in Nursing.



### Five scholars presently in college or university:

Angelina C, St. Petersburg College,  
Christina C, Rasmussen University,  
Kristen B, University of South Florida,  
Lindsey L, St. Petersburg College, and  
Sandy N, St. Petersburg College.

### Eight scholars currently in middle or high school:

Sarah R, Largo High, 12th grade,  
Heidy C, Osceola Fundamental HS, 11th grade,  
Hailey P, Tarpon Springs High, 9th grade,  
Nyasia R, Largo High, 9th grade, and  
Taylor L, Palm Harbor Middle, 8th grade.



The Pinellas Education Foundation's **Take Stock in Children** program selects recommended students whose families could not otherwise afford a college education for their children. These scholarships provide a four-year college education to any Florida college or university. The selected students are assigned a mentor who meets regularly with them to help them stay focused on their goals. These students are expected to remain drug and crime free.

Thank you to everyone who has supported and contributed to this annual event. Over the past 19 years, **Beta Omega Chapter** has given over \$47,000 to the Pinellas Education Foundation's Take Stock in Children. Through their involvement, they are investing in our future.

Hopefully, other chapters will be inspired to try a lofty ambition, too!



## 2021 - 2023 Florida State Officers

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roxanne.berger45@gmail.com

### First Vice-President

Terry Stanilonis  
t1stan@bellsouth.net

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### **Florida Rays**

ISSN: 0896-3711

Published 4 times a year  
by  
**Florida State Organization  
of  
The Delta Kappa Gamma  
Society International**

Spring 2022  
Volume 67, Number 3

Send address changes to

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## Florida State Organization Members

**Carrie Frye, State Executive Secretary**  
cfrye@att.net

Watch for the September Fall Executive Board Meeting registration form to appear on our state website (dkgmustateflorida.weebly.com). As soon as the registration form is finalized, it will be posted on the website, emailed to chapter presidents for distribution to members, and placed in the summer edition of the **Florida Rays**. Mark your calendars for September 24 - 25, 2022, and join us at the Orlando Marriott Lake Mary hotel. If you have questions, please contact **Carrie Frye** (cfrye@att.net) or **Roxanne Berger** (roxanne.berger45@gmail.com).

## 2022 International Convention New Orleans, Louisiana July 12 - 16, 2022



**Roxanne Berger, President**  
**Florida State Organization of DKG International**  
roxanne.berger45@gmail.com

Every member is invited to attend our International Convention. We need you to attend to collaborate as we discuss changes to enhance our future in DKG. It is always wonderful to reconnect with friends and to make new friends. There is always fun and fellowship as we meet with representatives across our 17 member countries. Please look at the international website for a complete lineup of events and activities.

There are two dynamic keynote speakers and many informative workshops, including one presented by our own **Terry Stanilonis, First Vice President of Florida**. Attending an International DKG Convention will CHANGE your life. Hope to see many Florida members in attendance. Prices increase after June 13th, so register early to take advantage of the lower price for registration and events.



Sign in to the DKG website to hear our **International President, Becky Sadowski**, invites YOU to attend.



## Florida State President's Message



**Roxanne Berger, State President, 2021 - 2023**  
**Florida DKG State Organization**  
**Roxanne.berger45@gmail.com**

Greetings Florida State Organization,



**“CHANGE is**  
**HEALTHY and BEAUTIFUL.**  
**Ask a Butterfly!”**

Big event coming in just 7 years. Delta Kappa Gamma Society International will be 100 years old in 2029! Get ready for a BIG celebration.

There are so many opportunities for growth and enrichment in the coming weeks and months. Hope you plan to attend your own District meetings. These meetings are always fun and informative.

Other opportunities include the DKG INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION in New Orleans, Louisiana from July 12 - 16, 2022; Florida's Jesslyn McBride Leadership Seminar in June 26 - 29, 2022; and our Fall Executive Board Meeting and Workshops on September 23 - 24, 2022.



You will see pictures and will hear, or read, reports of these functions. Stay tuned. Read the **FLORIDA RAYS** for a complete review of exciting activities. If you are not receiving the **FLORIDA RAYS**, check your email address with International. We have about 300 members who have not updated their email addresses.

During the active pandemic, we sought isolation, but now it is time to reach out to each other. Remember those who are not able to attend meetings. Send them a card or reach out by phone. Please also send birthday cards to members. Everyone appreciates being recognized on their birthday.



Many chapters are finally getting back to in-person meetings. It feels so good to get back to work in DKG.

My chapter in St. Augustine, **Gamma Gamma**, will celebrate 50 years this spring. Do you know who, when, and where your chapter started? It is interesting to review international, state, and chapter beginnings. I have all the Florida history books and can send you information on your chapter. It is fun to look back and see how far our chapters have come in the years.

Florida has always had a large number of members attend the international conventions. Will you step up this year and attend the convention in New Orleans, Louisiana? I hope to see you there. Look on the DKG website for all the information. Put July 12 - 16, 2022, on your calendar and plan to attend the convention. It will change your DKG life!

## Sharing Our Vision- Strengthening Our Society In Loving Memory of Merle Stiller Jones September 22, 1936 - February 8, 2022 Florida DKG State Organization President, 2013 - 2015

This article is written to reflect or recognize a living past state organization president. However, due to the sudden and unexpected death on February 8, 2022, of our dear and beloved Merle Jones, I have taken the liberty of moving what I had written to honor her and her biennium later this year, to this issue. Thank you for understanding.

Merle was inducted in 1986 as a member of Phi Chapter. In 1994 when Phi birthed Delta Theta Chapter, Merle was one of 25 charter members of the new chapter. Merle served as its president from 1998-2000. She has also served as District I Director, Recording Secretary, Second and First Vice Presidents, and President of the Florida DKG State Organization from 2013 - 2015. She was also Treasurer of the Southeast Cookbook Committee during the 2005 - 2007 biennium, and a staunch advocate for desirable legislation in the interest of women, children, and youth at the state and national levels.

Two significant actions were taken during Merle's tenure as president of the Florida DKG State Organization. The state headquarters property in Deland was sold and the Florida DKG Educational Foundation was established. During Merle's biennium she was assisted by fellow officers and related personnel, including **Gerry Hacker, Carol Ann Casey, Dr. Nancy Henning, Dr. Peg Dunn Snow, Beverly Stagg, Fay Murphy, Bonnie Kelley, Judith Mix and Missy Jones**. Her appointed chairs included **Barbara Van Diepen, Ruth Pridgen, Elizabeth Youngs, Sandy Byars, Beatrix W. Wilbur, Sheila Knoche, Carrie Frye, Dr. Ann Lumsden, Dr. Carleen Spano, Peggy Ducose, Beverly Kelly, Stephany Eley, Ann Blossfield, and Dr. Elsie Gross**.

Florida hosted the Southeast Regional Conference in Orlando in 2013 at which time, **Dr. Beverly Helms**, a friend, and member of Merle's chapter, was also International President. The International Convention was held in Indianapolis, Indiana in July 2014. **Ruth McCrary** was named Florida's "Star of the Southeast."

At the 2014 Fall Executive Board/Workshop, the name of the Mu State Leadership Seminar was changed to "The Florida Jesslyn McBride Leadership Seminar." There were 241 members and 38 first timers in attendance.



The Florida DKG State organization held its convention in April 2015, with 223 members registered and 26 first timers. **Dr. Kay Clawson**, 2014-2016 Northeast Regional Director, was the international representative. (Kay subsequently moved to Naples and was Chair of the Florida DKG Educational Foundation until her untimely death on April 24, 2021.) **Ruth Pridgen** and **Ruth McCrary** were selected as the recipients of the Sara B. Ferguson Achievement Award. Merle, herself, was awarded the Achievement Award in 2019. Members inducted into the Hall of Fame at the Convention were **Kathy Avery, Pat Eckstein, Debra Graff, Pat Litterick and Dr. Carleen Spano**.

Thank you, Merle, for your friendship, vision, leadership, generosity, integrity, and passion for DKG. Your career and life were highlighted by appreciative, successful students from your 30 years as a teacher; grateful colleagues during your nine years as an administrator; and a multitude of admiring "sisters" from your 36 years of devoted dedication to The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. We love and miss you and will see you again!



**It's time for you  
to consider facilitating  
or presenting a workshop  
for the following FL DKG events:**

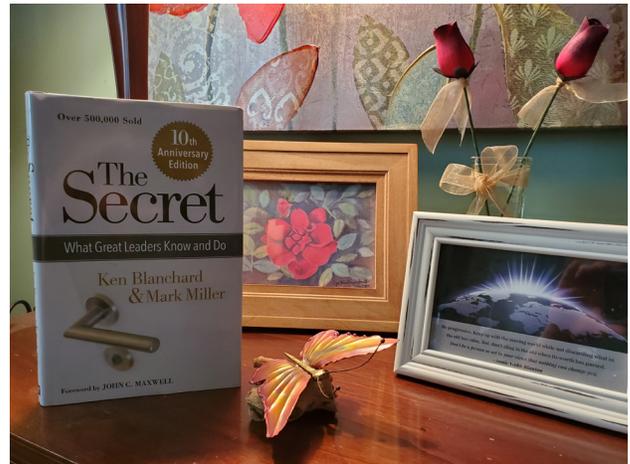
**Florida State  
Fall Executive Board Meeting –  
September 23 - 24, 2022**

**Florida State Organization's  
Florida State Spring Convention –  
April 28 - 30, 2023**

**The Workshop Proposal Forms  
are available  
on the Florida State Organization's  
website starting April 2022.**

**Contact  
Terry Stanilonis  
for information via  
TerryStanilonis@gmail.com**

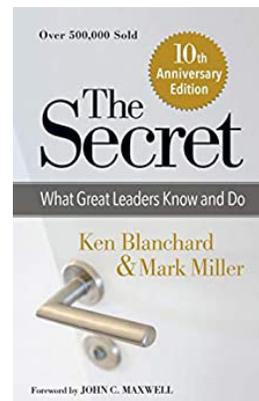
## Statewide Virtual Book Talk



**Terry Stanilonis, First Vice-President  
Florida State Organization  
TerryStanilonis@gmail.com**



The previously scheduled statewide book talk is back on schedule for Fall 2022. The title is ***The Secret: What Great Leaders Know and Do*** by Ken Blanchard and Mark Miller. The revised schedule (dates/times) will be published in the summer edition of the ***Florida Rays***. We hope you join us!





## District I Weekend: "Let's RENEW in 22!"

January 21 - 22, 2022  
Port St. Joe Elementary School

Ann Comforter, District I Director  
anncomforter@gmail.com

Our Delta Kappa Gamma District I meeting is officially in the history book. For the early arrivals, the weekend began with a delightful dinner and a lot of laughter at Port St. Joe's CAT 5 Raw Bar and Grill overlooking our beautiful St. Joseph Bay. We had ordered up one of our stunning sunsets, but the weather did not cooperate and the clouds got in the way. There were 31 (with 3 handsome husbands) in attendance. The food was delicious and the companionship was exceptional. We were so happy to be together again.

In order to keep our attendees as safe and comfortable as possible, our meeting was held in the Port St. Joe Elementary School auditorium. This facility gave us plenty of room to socially distance and a sense of security from the pandemic. We were officially welcomed by the Gulf District Schools Superintendent Jim Norton. Mr. Norton's mother and aunt were both long time members of our organization, so he was thrilled to be able to officially welcome us.

**Dianne Miller, Beta Beta Chapter**, led our chapter presidents in Art Linkletter's explanation of our Pledge of Allegiance. After a recitation of the pledge, "America the Beautiful" was led by **Vanessa Pinto, our state music representative**. **Kathy Diesner, Delta Theta Chapter**, gave the "Thought for the Day" with plenty of smiles. After the introduction of our State leaders and guests from other districts, the Procession of Presidents occurred. The Outgoing presidents were introduced and received a chocolate rose. They were able to say which counties they serve and the incoming presidents were introduced and given a beautiful red rose.

**State President Roxanne Berger** reminded us that "Change is Beautiful," we should read the *Florida Rays*, and we should adopt a new member for 5 years. **Sue Gannon, our registrar**, reported that we had 77 registered with 60 in attendance. All chapters were represented except one.

**Sarah Watters, Alpha Lambda Chapter** was elected as the **District I Director** for 2022-2024, and **Kathy Diesner, Delta Theta Chapter**, was elected to the **State Nominations Committee**.



After the two minute committee reports, the chapter presidents and treasurers were dismissed to their official workshops while the attendees stayed in the auditorium to listen to the presentations. In trying to keep everyone as safe as possible, the format of the meeting was changed from two 45 minute workshops to a condensed form of the information in a 12 - 15 minute presentation. Our theme was RENEW, but first we needed to remember. The Big Bend Coordinating Council presented "Remembering Our Founders" in a zoom presentation. All of the presenting committees were willing to condense their workshops, so our attendees were able to hear all of the reports instead of just two. Our goal was to give our District I attendees as much information as possible.

After enjoying Paul Gant BBQ, members were treated to keynote speaker Melissa Hancock, former Vice Chancellor at the Department of Education. A former administrator with Gulf District Schools, Hancock came home to deliver an uplifting message. After remarks by our new **District I Director Sarah Watters**, **State President Roxanne Berger** presented her with the official Director's pin. Our **state music representative, Vanessa Pinto**, led the attendees in the DKG song and **Director Ann Comforter** closed the meeting.



## District II Meeting: DKG Linking Globally February 5, 2022 Mandarin Presbyterian Church

### District II Co-Directors

**Terrye Mosley, Mosleyterrye55@gmail.com**

**Kathy Raiford, kathynole1@comcast.net**

After many months, days, and hours of planning and preparation, the day had finally arrived for our grand world tour! We had passengers from the four corners of the world. What a delightful experience it was! We boarded for our departure at Mandarin Presbyterian Church on February 5, 2022. Ninety-one passengers booked the flight, only six were unable to make it.

Prior to our Saturday meeting, some of our members met and dined at St. Mary's Seafood Restaurant where the only thing on the agenda was to relax, catch up with old friends, meet new ones, enjoy the delicious seafood and drinks, and each other's company. We knew we had to limit our time and the wine, because some of us had to rise and shine at 7:00 AM to make ready for the big day.

The ground crew had done their jobs earlier on Friday to make sure all systems were go. They checked the cabins, wiring and technology equipment, raffle tickets were prepared, signs were in place, tables were up and covered, food stations were set up, and registration packets were ready! **State President Roxanne Berger, State Executive Secretary Carrie Frye, 1st Vice-President Terry Stanilonis, Immediate Past President Nancy Henning, and Past State President Carol Ann Casey** were there to lend a helping hand. We were so grateful for their support! Our committee and sisters from **Alpha, Alpha Beta, and Beta Mu Chapters** had boots on the ground and hands on deck to make for smooth sailing during our journey.

The morning started out wet, windy, and dreary, but we were not going to let anything rain on our parade! Upon entering the room, you were welcomed by our lovely greeters. Our guests arrived bringing books to donate, beautiful centerpieces for their tables, and many wore the most splendid costumes imaginable! What a sight to behold! Registration was a piece of cake thanks to the eye for details of **Linda Zeiler** and the support of our chapters. Oh, my! The souvenir bags were filled with goodies! How special! **Ruth Burrell** and her team provided us with a wonderful continental breakfast—something for every taste.



Our program began with **Directors Kathy Raiford, and Terrye Mosley** presiding. A welcome from the directors was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, Words of Inspiration, and the Committee Reports. **Carrie Frye** conducted the election for Nominations Committee. **Ruth Burrell**, pictured on the right in the photo, was voted upon as the District II Representative to serve on the Nominations Committee. **Kim Baggs**, pictured left in the photo, was elected as our District II Director for the next biennium.

Following the morning session, we began Adventure 1. At that time, members went into various workshops to learn about the programs and operations of DKG, both International and Florida State. These workshops were led by our State Executive Board members.

During Adventure 2, there was a myriad of workshops where members got to choose one. The workshops were exciting and informative. Some were mind bending and others body bending. Thanks to all our presenters!

Then it was time for lunch. We had a lovely, international lunch catered by CeCe's Catering Company. During our meal, **Allison Stephenson** awarded pretty, red bows to all chapters participating in the costume contest, as specified by categories.



**District V Meeting:  
"Onward & Upward!"  
February 26, 2022**

**First Baptist Church of Ft. Lauderdale**

**Debbie Sack, District V Director  
debsack@aol.com**



On Saturday, February 26, District V fulfilled our goal of moving Onward and Upward at our District V Meeting held at First Baptist Church of Ft. Lauderdale. We were pleased to have over 80 sisters participate in our General Meeting, training for incoming presidents and treasurers, and a variety of workshops. We also had a continental breakfast and a delicious luncheon. It was uplifting to see and spend time with other members, many we hadn't seen in person for several years.



We'd like to thank all our District V members who were there, as well as the State Officers and other District Directors who attended. Thanks to those who conducted our trainings for presidents and treasurers, as well as those who provided eight other workshops.



Special thanks to the members of the many chapters who accepted the challenging tasks that went into making this day a success. **Omicron** handled the treasury, registration, Basket Raffle Auction, and several other things. **Xi Chapter** created our beautiful Programs. **Beta Alpha** made our beautiful centerpieces and arranged for the South Florida Cloggers to provide us with entertainment. They were terrific!

**FL DKG Educational Foundation**

**Vicki Simms  
District IV  
vickis@cfl.rr.com**



It's Spring and a time for renewal. To that end the Florida DKG Educational Foundation Board is preparing to review the grants and awards applications that were submitted by February 1. We anticipate an increase in submissions as we turn a corner from the constraints of two pandemic years. Notifications of winners will be made by April 1. To date, the Foundation has provided 9 professional development awards and 12 grants totaling \$19,828.24. Should you have missed the application deadline this year, do not fail to review the proposals of the award winners. They will be posted on our website at [www.fldkgef.org](http://www.fldkgef.org).

Last year's proposals provided materials and equipment to support integration of physical fitness and literacy in Cyd Heyliger-Browne's elementary school classroom. Kathleen Poe provided instruction on organizational skills using time management materials and working with autistic and learning challenged students. Melissa Whitson compiled a high interest contemporary library for her middle school students. Paula Nelson-Shokar will use her new Apple iPad to take her classes off-site for science field studies. Details of their projects and others are contained on the FLDKGEF web site.

We encourage you to attend your district meeting. Members of the Board from the FLDKGEF will be in attendance to answer questions and provide contribution forms and copies of the Educator Express. A brief presentation will be made to outline the many ways you can support the Foundation and continue to implement the wonderful ideas and projects proposed by our talented state members.

One of the ways you can involve yourself in the Foundation's work is by considering becoming a director of the Foundation. We will be adding 3-4 members to fill vacancies that will occur. Representation in each district allows for better communication of the Foundation's work.





## FL DKG Communications & Marketing Committee Report

**Pam Pierce, Chair**  
**chillpierce@comcast.net**

How and when do you communicate as a DKG chapter and member? Our committee recognizes the importance of public and member relations at all levels throughout our organization. You are critical to getting the GREAT news about DKG out to our members, as well as our state and national organization and the communities that we live in. We are blessed with abundant resources to support us in sharing the good news about DKG.

Here are some critical steps to sharing the good news.

1. Get your sign-in information to access the internal news about DKG. You may use the "Contact Us" tab on the website menu for assistance to help you sign in.
2. Look at our DKG WEBSITE both on the international, state and local chapter level. Use the tab on the website menu for RESOURCES to find Presentation Material, videos and PowerPoints to assist your group in learning more about DKG.
3. Watch the Communications and Marketing Modules and Roundtables to learn how to market our Society using DKG Resources. These resources will improve your comfort level with newsletters, websites and current technology. These resources are available for your use.
4. Use the young members in your chapter to guide, assist and train you on ways to improve chapter communications.
5. Grow your knowledge of communication resources and grow your chapter.
6. Read your Florida Rays and submit articles to the Rays to share the good news about your chapter.

All of the ladies listed below are willing to assist and guide you and your chapter in learning more about Communications & Marketing.

### The Communications and Marketing Committee

**District I - Elinor Mount-Simmons**  
**District II - Pam Pierce, Chair**  
**District III - Yvonne McShay**  
**District IV - Vicki Coats**  
**District V - Gussie Sakowicz**  
**District VI - Gale Carter**  
**Webmaster - Missy Jones (IV)**  
**Florida Rays Newsletter Editor - Bonnie Kelley (III)**  
**Corresponding Secretary - Sharon Wallen (V)**  
**Angie Wright - Nash (III) Consultant**

## Necrology Report

**Bonnie Ignico**  
**Necrology Chair**  
**vbignico@gmail.com**



Death is inevitable but the loss can be devastating. Each year many of our chapters lose members. If you lose two or three it can affect your chapter in a big way. These are women who served DKG in many ways until their passing. Please honor them by continuing to send Form 6 with a PICTURE. The picture is particularly important for the newsletter. It allows everyone the opportunity to remember the woman by her face as well as her name.



Another important responsibility I need is for your President to send in the Necrology 2021 Annual Report. The deadline was February 1, 2022. I have only received five forms from the whole state. I want to have an accurate list when creating the Memorial Service program so PLEASE still send the form in.

Just a reminder from our last newsletter: Please write your district number on the form and add a telephone number or email address for the relatives. Thank you!



## News from Legislative Committee!

**Dr. Vivian Posey, Chair**  
**vivposey@gmail.com**

Following the successful Virtual Rally with Florida Legislators in November 2021, the dedicated members of the Legislative Committee began preparing for the opening of the 2022 Legislative Session in Tallahassee by studying the proposed legislation, contacting legislators from their home districts, and meeting frequently to discuss the safest and most effective way to engage with lawmakers during a time of increasing COVID spread. After postponing the originally scheduled date for an in-person visit to Tallahassee, it was decided that only a few

representatives from DKG would visit with legislators on February 8th (DKG Day of Advocacy) to discuss the Issues of Concern of DKG members.

Each committee member then agreed to “follow” virtually the activities of selected House and Senate committees and to report on the legislation that was moving through these committees in order to inform members of our advocacy efforts. The committees and the DKG members following this legislative activity are as follows:

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEES

### DKG Member and District

1. Education & Employment
2. Education & Employment:  
Early Learning & Elementary Education Subcommittee
3. Education & Employment:  
Secondary Education & Career Development Subcommittee
4. PreK-12 Appropriations
5. Health & Human Services:  
Children Families & Seniors Subcommittee

**Ruth Paine-District II**  
**Beth Hess-District III**

**Donna Heald-District I**

**Deanne Ugalde-District V**  
**Maria Metge-District VI**

### FLORIDA SENATE COMMITTEES

### DKG Member and District

1. Education
2. Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
3. Children, Families, & Elder Affairs

**Diana Brown-District IV**  
**Nancy Bentz-District V**  
**Carrie Frye-District IV**

The Florida legislative session ends on March 11th. Members of the DKG Florida State Legislative Committee are providing updates on legislation related to the DKG Issues of Concern at each of the district meetings. DKG members are encouraged to contact their representative on the Legislative Committee for questions or concerns related to pending legislation and to continue to advocate with their elected officials on issues related to women, children, and education during the remaining weeks of the session.



## Sharing Chapter Experiences

### Delta Beta Chapter



**Delta Beta Chapter** recently held its Educational Partnerships Meeting at the beautiful Christina Hammock Clubhouse in south Lakeland. **Emily Mistretta, chairman of the Educational Partnerships Committee**, invited Don Selvage to share his role and experiences in the birth of the new Lakeland History and Culture Center. Don's career as a 30 - year veteran of The U. S. Marine Corps made him a perfect leadership choice for this endeavor. Of course, his marriage to a teacher endeared us to him immediately. (Pictured above from left to right are Emily Mistretta, Educational Partnerships Chair; Don Selvage, Vice Chair of the Advisory Committee; and **Pat Smith, Delta Beta Chapter President.**)

Don explained that the Lakeland History and Culture Center grew out of a vision to acquire a single location to house Lakeland's unique history. With the support of community leaders, City Commissioner Phillip Walker presented this idea to the City Commission back in 2019. After Lakeland's main library was chosen as the place to house the endeavor, an advisory committee was formed. Led by former Mayor Gow Fields, the committee then determined how to change the vision into a reality. By serving as the Vice Chair, Don Selvage has overseen almost every aspect of this project. Our own Delta Beta sister, Yvonne McShay, has worked closely with the group as a committee member. Yvonne is a Professor Emerita from Polk State College, a past Delta Beta Chapter president, and a past District III Director. She represented one of the many unique groups who have contributed to Lakeland's diverse history.

Lakeland has been described as a quilted masterpiece representing a variety of cultures and ethnicities. The exhibits will cover 1,400 square feet of space in the main library. The Inaugural exhibit is

scheduled to open in May of 2022 and will outline the importance of the railroad and its impact on Lakeland's early history. As the public enters the exhibit, Delta Beta's chapter contribution can be located in the Platinum level of the donor wall. As educators, we feel privileged to be a part of this exciting project.

### Gamma Delta Chapter



Approximately 21 **Gamma Delta** members and 2 potential members attended our annual Christmas gathering on December 7, 2021. Our theme was "Christmas under the Stars" which was held in member **Susan Gant's garden**. There was a plethora of food and beverages. It was a tad bit chilly that night so a rip roaring fire was going in the fire pit. We even had s'mores over the fire! One of the highlights of our annual Christmas gathering is that our members donate gift cards to the teens at Kids Central Inc.



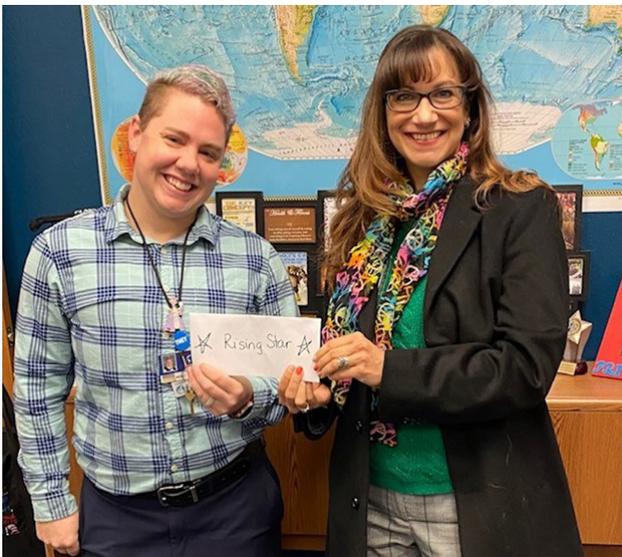
## Chapter Experiences

This year our members donated \$1,005.00 to Kids Central Inc. an organization that is very near and dear to our hearts. We ended the night singing Christmas carols led by our own Kristin Bolden. A fantabulous time was had by all.

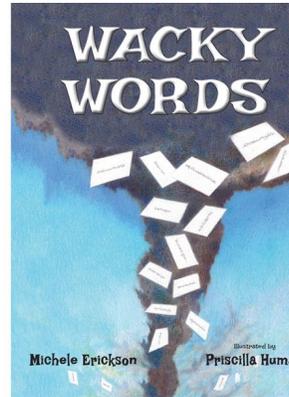
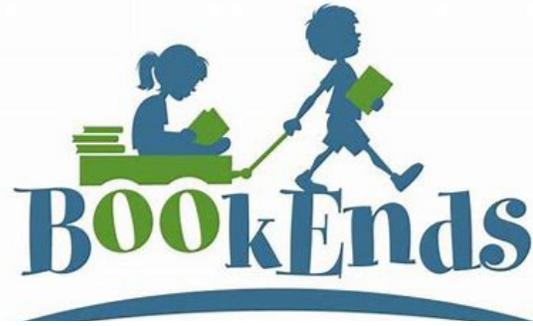
Our January 15th meeting was held via Zoom and 13 members were in attendance. Unfortunately, we weren't able to have the program that was scheduled because in person participation was needed. We're hoping to have that program in the fall.

**Gamma Delta** has been busy getting ready for the District IV meeting in April. Our chapter also appreciates the help of the other chapters in District IV to make the meeting successful. There will be a \$5.00 BBQ at Diane Revels' home/pool on Friday, April 1st with the District meeting being held on April 2nd at First United Methodist Church in Clermont. Please feel free to contact Diane @ 407.468.7073 or via email @ dcrevels1@gmail.com for additional information. The deadline to make a reservation for the BBQ and meeting is March 15th.

### Lambda Chapter



On January 27, 2022, the **Lambda Chapter** of DKG in Florida was proud to present its annual Rising Star awards program via Zoom. This program recognizes an outstanding beginning teacher nominated by their principals from our Polk County Schools and awards each of them \$50. This year there were 21 winners. Shown above is Phoenix Moody receiving her award from principal **Lana Tatom, President of Lambda Chapter**.



### Wacky Words by Michele Erickson

Author **Michele Erickson**, a **Gamma Gamma Chapter** member and teacher in St. Augustine, published a children's book entitled **Wacky Words** that is now available on Amazon. Her mom, Priscilla Humay, illustrates the story with colored pencil and CP mixed media illustrations.



A teacher's writing lesson turns into a whimsical learning experience for her classroom of students. The children discover a mysterious box filled with words, and learn the true meaning of the words through figurative language and the use of idioms. A twist of events unfolds as they perform a parade of wacky words as a surprise for their teacher.

"This delightful story offers a new and exciting twist to a learning adventure in the classroom. Words are just words, until you give them meaning is a fun 'out of the box' lesson. The 'frosting on the cake' is each cleverly illustrated idiom- bright and funny drawings that children will love, **Wacky Words** shares the excitement of learning." by Hanneke Jevons, Colored Pencil Society of America.

# THE ARTS



**Featured Artist  
from Florida's Betty Thornton  
Arts & Crafts Gallery:**

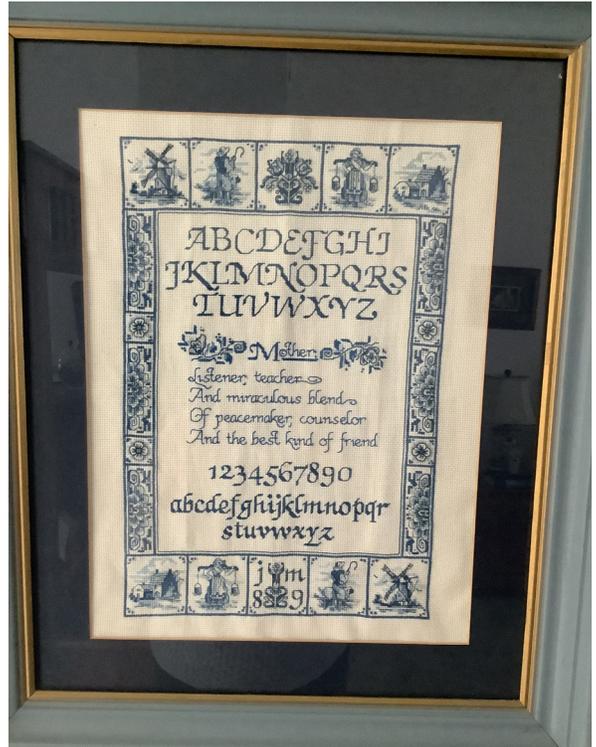


**Janet L. Allison**  
**Gamma Delta Chapter**  
**District IV**  
janetlouise@cfl.rr.com

**Janet Allison** made this counted cross stitch picture out of love for her mother. It contains four shades of blue and took her a year to complete and frame. This is one of her many hobbies that keeps her busy.

An educator for 41 years, **Janet Allison** taught in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Connecticut before moving to Clermont, Florida. She taught second grade at Clermont Elementary for 17 years before retiring. She now substitutes and volunteers in 3rd grade with the students deficient in math.

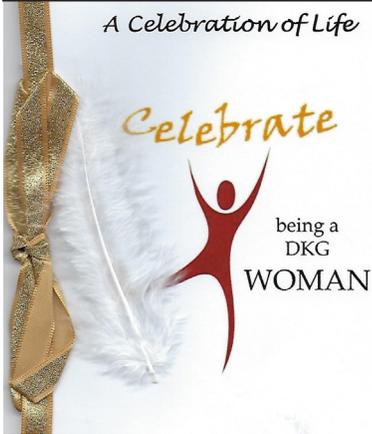
Janet was inducted into **Gamma Delta Chapter, DKG** in 2015. She has had perfect attendance for all seven years, been an active member of the Arts and Crafts Committee and a member of the District IV Planning Committee for 2020 and 2022. **Karen Metalonis** helped her make masks to sell for one of the chapter projects. Janet is the incoming Chapter Corresponding Secretary. In Janet's free time she sews, does cross stitch



and crafts projects. She also enjoys swimming and water aerobics, playing cards, visiting family and their cabin in the mountains of Pennsylvania, reading and going on cruises with DKG sisters. Janet also sings in The Village Pop Chorus, performing 3 concerts each year. Janet has one married son and a grandson.



**I will teach you in a room.**  
**I will teach you now on Zoom.**  
**I will teach you in your house.**  
**I will teach you with a mouse.**  
**I will teach you here and there.**  
**I will teach you because I care.**  
**So just do your very best.**  
**And do not worry about the rest.**



**Frances Elaine Baumgart**  
**Beta Nu Chapter**  
**District V**  
**December 30, 2021**  
**Avon Park, Florida**

Frances Elaine Baumgart, age 86, passed away on Thursday, December 30, 2021, in Sebring, Florida. She was born on October 9, 1935.

Fran had a B.S. and M.S. in Elementary Education. She taught first through third grade, but her favorite was first grade.

Since joining DKG on September of 1977, Fran served as Beta Nu's Chapter President and a member of the International World Fellowship Committee. At the State level, she was State First Vice-President, State Corresponding Secretary, and District V Director. She served on and was chair of several state committees. She was in the State Hall of Fame and received the State Achievement Award.

Fran is survived by three daughters, one son, and four grandchildren.

**Cynthia Brison**  
**Beta Nu Chapter**  
**District V**  
**October 6, 2021**  
**Okeechobee, Florida**

Cynthia Brinson passed away on October 6, 2021, just five months after joining DKG on May 15, 2021. Her mother, **Charlotte Vitale**, is also a member of Beta Nu, so Cynthia looked forward to being a member too!

Cynthia taught fifth grade for two years, and she was teaching third grade math and science this school year.

In addition to her mother, she is also survived by her husband Dennis and their children.

**Dr. Elizabeth Golden**  
**Culleton**  
**Alpha Delta Chapter**  
**District VI**  
**January 1, 2022**  
**Cape Coral, FL**



Elizabeth Golden Culleton, age 77, died peacefully, surrounded by family at the Hope Hospice House on January 1, 2022. Liz was born in Passaic, New Jersey, on May 28, 1944. Elizabeth was an only child, but she grew up alongside a whole host of cousins.

Liz graduated from DePaul High School and later Montclair State University. She taught home economics in Lee County, Florida, for 29 years, at both North Fort Myers and Mariner High Schools.

Liz served on numerous committees at the school and community levels to support student success. Liz had many happy memories of being a teacher and maintained amazing friendships throughout her career.

Liz was known for frequent entertaining, daily mass attendance, and her sparkling Irish eyes. Her greatest joy was derived from long talks with her loved ones and her close relationships with her daughters and husband.

Since April 5, 2008, Liz was an active member of Alpha Delta Chapter serving as Recording Secretary for eight years. She assisted in helping to plan yearly events and secure some outstanding speakers/guests. Her ability to attract new members was an amazing quality. Liz was an integral member of the organization.

In November, Liz was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive cancer. Her suffering was minimal, and she was happy to spend her final weeks in deep talks with her loved ones. Final arrangements were provided by Fuller Metz Funeral Home. There was a viewing on January 6, 2022. A Catholic Funeral Mass was held on January 7, 2022, at St. Andrew's Catholic Church in Cape Coral, followed by the burial at Sarasota National Cemetery on January 11, 2022.

**Merle Jones**  
**Delta Theta Chapter**  
**District I**  
**February 8, 2022**  
**ChIPLEY, Florida**

Merle Stiller Jones, age 85, of Chipley, Florida, passed from this life on February 8, 2022, at Flowers Hospital in Dothan, Alabama. She was born on September 22, 1936, in Washington County, Florida.

Merle was a member of Wausau United Methodist Church, the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, Wausau Garden Club, and Washington County Friends of the Library.

Her educational experience spanned 38 years, primarily within the Washington County School District. She began teaching at Wausau Elementary School prior to the completion of her degree. She taught at Kate M. Smith Elementary School for twenty years. During this time, she completed coursework in FSU/UWF Cooperative Doctoral Program.

After her tenure as teacher at Kate Smith Elementary, Merle served as an assistant principal at both Kate Smith Elementary and Roulhac Middle School. She was principal of Vernon Elementary School (1993-1995) when she retired. During her educational career Merle also served as an adjunct professor at Chipola, the University of West Florida, and Florida State University.

Following her retirement, she served as a volunteer consultant and worked briefly at Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative. Her experience as an educator made her a tireless advocate for desirable legislation impacting children and youth. Unbeknownst to many, Merle's career also included teaching swimming, summer athletics, Physical Education, and Adult Education.

Merle was very active in many organizations locally and internationally. At the time of her death, she was serving as Vice President of the Washington County Friends of the Library. She was a 36-year member and served as President of the Florida State Organization of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International from 2013-2015. She was also member of both Phi and Delta Theta Chapters of the

DKG organization since her induction in 1986. As Florida DKG State Organization President, Merle was the catalyst for the creation of the Florida DKG Educational Foundation and served as a member of the Board of Directors since its beginning. She received the Sara B. Ferguson Achievement Award in



2019, the highest honor bestowed by the state DKG organization. She was also very active at the regional and international levels of the organization attending numerous international conventions within the 17 member countries.

In 2018, Merle was selected by the Girl Scouts of the Florida Panhandle as a Woman of Distinction. The organization identified Merle as someone of courage, confidence, and character who truly makes the world a better place. All who knew Merle would confirm that she made the world a better place because of her presence and contributions.

Funeral Services were held on February 18, 2022, at Brown Funeral Home, and interment was held at Wausau Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Wausau, Florida. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Shriner's Hospital, United Methodist Children's Home, or Florida DKG Educational Foundation.

## Reminder from Florida's State Editor



I hope that you enjoy reading the *Florida Rays* newsletter to stay up to date with the happenings in the Florida State Organization of DKG! This official quarterly publication is a benefit for being a member of our professional organization.

To ensure that current members receive this publication, I download the current member database from the International website and upload it to Constant Contact which is our bulk email provider. When I sent the Winter Issue, 166 members had undeliverable email addresses, so their email message bounced back.

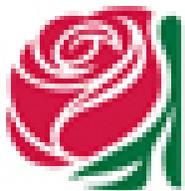
Every DKG member needs to have a current email address listed at International. If you change your email address, please update it yourself at the International website. To update your current personal information, please follow the directions provided on page 16 in this current issue of the *Florida Rays*.

If you need help, please contact your Chapter Treasurer to make the change for you. She already has access to the International database.

## Directions for Setting Up Your DKG Log-in & Profile

You will need your membership # to log-in!! This can be found on your membership card, DKG publications, or contact your chapter president or treasurer if you need assistance finding your number. You can also use the Chat feature on the DKG website to ask for your membership #.

1. Open *Google Chrome* or *Firefox* on laptops or desktops or *Safari* on iPads.
2. Go to [www.dkg.org](http://www.dkg.org)
3. Click "**Sign In**" tab near top of page
4. Click "**Username**" and enter your DKG I.D.# (from membership card or DKG publication)
5. Click "**Password**" and enter the generic password **dkg2014society** OR click "**Forgot My Password**" (*If you choose **Forgot My Password**, a new window opens. Enter your DKG I.D.# and International will send you an email with a link to change your password.*) OR click on the chat feature and ask for a reset of your password.
6. Click "**MyDKG**" or **your name** at the top.
7. Click "**Change My Password**" and enter a password of your choice!!
8. Complete the "**About Me**" information by clicking the small pencil icon. This opens text boxes where you can type phone #, email address, & birthday. Scroll down to "**My Address**" and click pencil icon to change your address.
  - \* Be sure to click the **SAVE** button!!
9. **IMPORTANT Step:** Click "**My Participation**" tab near top of page.
  - \* Scroll down to "**Communication Preferences**" near bottom of page. Select the check boxes for how you would like information from DKG International to be sent to you. **If you do NOT check **Yes, Include my DKG Profile in the Online Directory**, no one will see your information!!**
  - \* Be sure to click the **SAVE** button!!
10. **OPTIONAL!!** If you choose to enter a detailed profile, click the **DKG Profile** button near the top left side of "Communication Preferences" page.
  - \* A YouTube video on creating your profile can be found at:  
[http://www.dkg.org/DKGMember/Committees/Society\\_Business/Communication\\_Publicity\\_Assets/Video-Profile.aspx](http://www.dkg.org/DKGMember/Committees/Society_Business/Communication_Publicity_Assets/Video-Profile.aspx)



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS  
**DELTA KAPPA GAMMA**

### Florida Rays

Members are encouraged to email information to be used in the **Florida Rays** to Bonnie Kelley at [MuStateEditor@gmail.com](mailto:MuStateEditor@gmail.com)

December 1.....Winter  
February 1.....Spring  
May 1.....Summer  
August 1.....Fall



### Florida State Organization's District Meetings

- District IV      April 2, 2022      First United Methodist Church, Clermont
- District VI      March 19, 2022      Carlisle Inn, Sarasota



**Myra Santos World Fellowship Award Application for Chapter Recognition**  
Due March 1, 2022

**Florida Jesslyn McBride Leadership Seminar**  
(Applications postmarked by March 15, 2022)  
June 26 - 29, 2022  
Orlando Marriott Lake Mary

### Information Sources

**DKG Florida Website**  
[www.dkgmustateflorida.weebly.com](http://www.dkgmustateflorida.weebly.com)

**DKG Florida on Facebook**  
<https://www.facebook.com/DKG-Florida-State-Organization-128818413969052/>

**DKG Florida on Twitter**  
[@DKGMuState FL](https://twitter.com/DKGMuStateFL)

**Florida DKG Educational Foundation Website**  
[www.fldkgef.org](http://www.fldkgef.org)

**Florida DKG Educational Foundation on Facebook**  
[www.facebook.com/FLDKGEF](http://www.facebook.com/FLDKGEF)

**Florida DKG Educational Foundation on Twitter**  
[@FLDKGEF](https://twitter.com/FLDKGEF)

**DKG International Convention**  
July 12 - 16, 2022  
Sheraton New Orleans, Louisiana

**Florida State Organization's Fall Executive Board Meeting & Workshops**  
September 23 - 24, 2022  
Orlando Marriott Lake Mary

**Florida State Organization's Florida State Spring Convention**  
April 28 - 30, 2023  
Orlando Marriott Lake Mary

**DKG International Convention**  
Summer of 2024  
Gaylord National, D.C. Area  
National Harbor, Maryland

**DKG International Convention**  
Summer of 2026  
Gaylord Rockies  
Aurora, Colorado