



# The Florida State Organization of DKG

## Florida Rays

Vol. 69 No. 4

Florida DKG Actively Engaging in Advocacy

Spring 2024

### Update on District III Meeting Claudia McIvor, Chapter President, District III

Fresh from the DKG Florida District III Meeting on February 3, 2024, this biennial meeting gathered 98 of 101 registered individuals for business, learning, fun, food, and fellowship at the Highlands Church of Christ in Lakeland, Florida. Each of the two workshop sessions provided five choices from the following selections:

**Are You Prepared?** – An experienced Family Services Consultant answered questions on valuable, much needed information on end-of-life essential questions. Her presentation was filled with factual information on what should be in place for a funeral and/or cremation.

**Chapter Presidents' Training** – This 2-session workshop was essential training for incoming chapter presidents who left with great ideas, and much valuable information, to take back to their chapters.

**Dues are No Laughing Matter** – An exciting journey into chapter finances for all chapter treasurers.

**Know.Your.Worth.** – This program showed how one community in south Georgia came together with the school system to meet their needs specifically for preventing student suicides.

**Leadership, Lessons & Loyalty** – Highlights of the Jesslyn McBride Leadership Seminar brought this group together as they encouraged others to apply for this outstanding DKG leadership opportunity that will greatly enhance their leadership skills.

**Stayin' Alive** – A fitness instructor gave valuable information and tips that can make a huge difference in your life. Her demonstrations were most helpful.

**Your Chapter Can Thrive in 2024 – Beth Hess** gave 10 tips that are paramount in revitalizing your chapter growth. She stressed the need for us to embrace change. Time to meet her challenge to grow!

**Come with Me to Tallahassee!** – **Dr. Vivian Posey** gave the highlights of recent virtual and in-person meetings with our Florida legislators. She stressed the importance of our women standing strong together as they represent DKG at the state and national forums.



The large group assembly was introduced to the newly elected 2024-2026 District III Director, **Beth Hess**. Her chapter added 30 new members in one year! Beth will replace 2022-2024 District III Director, **Brenda Johnson**, who did a fantastic job during her biennium. During the handing-on ceremony, outgoing chapter presidents introduced the presidents-elect from their respective chapters. Members also heard valuable reports from state committee members.



The overall theme of the day was "Come with Me to DKG: Each One Bring One."

Members were requested to reach out, include, and adapt our ways for the younger generation of teachers. A few examples were to relax chapter business meetings, follow up on guests, and employ current ways of paying dues by using digital options. Small changes were suggested to make younger teachers feel valued. At the same time, honoring charter members and finding ways to acknowledge their steadfast contributions to both the chapter and the profession were stressed as being absolutely vital to DKG.

By the way, lest you think these district meetings are all work and no play, our entertainment after lunch was a stand-up comedy show by Jonathon Fontana (Mr. JonFon) who had the whole room in stitches with his teacher themed jokes. We enjoyed great food, much laughter, inspiring workshops, and of course the finale that always brings members to tears- all 98 ladies standing together in a large circle with hands joined singing the DKG Song!

**2023 - 2025  
Florida State Officers**



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**Mary Jo Holleran  
Selected for DKG International's Ignite**

Kudos to **Mary Jo Holleran** of the **Gamma Nu Chapter**. She applied and was accepted to attend the 2024 DKG Ignite: Leaders Empowering Leaders program in Austin, Texas in July. This is a week-long program dedicated to advancing leadership skills. Only 20 applicants were accepted. Mary Jo will learn a lot and bring the information and ideas back to the Florida State Organization of DKG. Congratulations, Mary Jo!



**Pat Litterick and  
Granddaughter Meg Nesi  
Enjoyed District III Meeting**

**Pat Litterick's granddaughter, Meg Nesi**, joined the **Beta Mu Chapter** of DKG as a Collegiate Member in 2022 when she was a junior studying Communication Disorders at USF. In 2023, she became an active member after securing a part time position as an SPL Site Facilitator in the Hillsborough County School District. She will graduate with her B.A. Degree in May and plans to attend graduate school at USF in Speech and Language Pathology while continuing to work in Hillsborough County Schools.





## FSO President's Voice



**Attention**, all women seeking to impact their lives and communities positively! The DKG experience is the perfect opportunity for you. Not only does it provide a platform for self-reflection and exploration, but it also allows you to connect with like-minded individuals who are committed to personal and professional growth. Members of the Florida State Organization (FSO) have shared some incredible insights into the scope of membership beyond the chapter level. As FSO president, I have heard these awe-inspiring comments while traveling around the state. It's time to recognize the remarkable contributions of **Jan Bennitt of District I**, who brought immeasurable value to the recent Incoming Chapter Presidents' Training. Her insights show the quality of online learning and town hall meetings through DKG's International offerings. Furthermore, DKG is the only professional organization that supports professional networking, personal and professional growth, and the fellowship created by bonding with like-minded women.

Join us in recognizing **Barb Davis and Mary Jo Holleran, Co-District Directors of District VI**, for their efforts to make this possible. Their request to hold a separate training session for their district's incoming chapter presidents was unconventional, but it set the stage for skill-building and conversation. I had the pleasure of leading this training, and it was a fantastic opportunity to learn from retired chapter presidents and presidents actively working in our schools and universities.



Thanks to **Wendy Gallegos** for sharing her experience as Migrant Student Coordinator for her district and simultaneously working on her doctorate. We encouraged her to apply for international and state scholarships to support this endeavor.

Finally, **Dr. Jackie Green, State Educational Excellence Committee chair** and a new incoming chapter president, provided valuable insights from a higher education perspective. This experience opened our eyes to understanding our working members' current conditions and increasing our understanding of the nuances of the profession and the needs of our members so that we can provide them with the support they need to succeed in their roles. DKG is an organization that supports our profession and offers networking with like-minded women.



We must recognize and showcase our members' talents: visual arts, musical performances, authoring books, articles, and verse. **Cynthia Tehan**, a member of **District III**, is a perfect example of this. She edits/publishes her chapter's newsletter and serves on the FSO's Communication/Marketing Committee. Cynthia is also an artist (glass blowing/sculpture). She submitted her pieces to display at our biannual FSO Convention Gallery and most recently donated a piece to a raffle fund-raising effort. I placed most of my tickets in the box before this beautiful glass sculpture, and I'm thrilled to report that I won. Cynthia's generosity, commitment, and loyalty to our organization represent the quintessential DKG member.

So, join us at the upcoming events hosted by Districts II, IV, and V at the end of February, March, and the first week of April. These occasions help forge new professional and personal relationships, which lead to growth. Attending a DKG Conference in Arizona last summer allowed me to bond with **District II's Director Kim Baggs** and experience an unforgettable 6:00 a.m. horseback ride. Take advantage of these incredible opportunities!



Respectfully submitted, **Terry Stanilonis**

**Florida DKG State Organization  
 Registration Form and Automated Payment  
 September 20 - 21, 2024  
 Orlando Marriott Lake Mary**



**Please print or type one name per form: (Use black ink only)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Check all that apply:**  Member  First State Meeting  
 Current Chapter President/Designee  Past State President  
 District Director  
 State Officer or Related Personnel \_\_\_\_\_  
 State Committee Chairman (Name of Committee) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Special Dietary Needs (list specifics) \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Deadline: Postmarked on or before September 6, 2024**

<b>Member Registration</b>	<b>\$75.00</b> _____	(includes meeting costs & Saturday Brunch)
<b>Friday Night Dinner Buffett</b>	<b>\$15.00</b> _____	
<b>Guest Friday Night Dinner</b>	<b>\$30.00</b> _____	
<b>Guest Name:</b>	_____	
<b>Guest Saturday Lunch</b>	<b>\$35.00</b> _____	
<b>Guest Name:</b>	_____	
<b>Late Registration Fee</b>	<b>\$60.00</b> _____	
<b>Total Payment</b>	<b>\$</b> _____	
<b>CK#</b>	_____	

**Send to: Carolyn McGowan**  
 230 Overlook Drive  
 Clermont, Florida, 34711  
[mmcdm1@aol.com](mailto:mmcdm1@aol.com)  
 352-223-7773

**Make check to Delta Kappa Gamma**  
 or Zelle \_\_\_\_\_

**No refunds after September 12, 2024**

**Check online for Fall Meeting Schedule/Agenda:** [www.dkgflorida.weebly.com](http://www.dkgflorida.weebly.com)

**PHOTO RELEASE:** By your attendance at this event you are granting your permission to be filmed, videotaped, audiotaped or photographed by any means and are granting full use of your likeness, voice and words without compensation.

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**Automated Payment: Follow all three steps.**

1. To send registration monies electronically, you must have access to Zelle with your bank account.
  2. Send total registration fees to [drevelsdkg@gmail.com](mailto:drevelsdkg@gmail.com) using Zelle.
  3. Send your registration form to Carolyn McGowan as per instructions above.
- 

**Hotel Reservation Information:**

1. See the next page in this issue of the *Florida Rays* which has the information and form.
1. Visit our state website ([www.dkgflorida.weebly.com](http://www.dkgflorida.weebly.com)).
2. Watch for information to be sent from chapter presidents.

Florida DKG Fall Executive Board Meeting  
September 20-21, 2024

### Hotel Reservations

Orlando Marriott Lake Mary  
1501 International Parkway  
Lake Mary, FL 32746  
Phone 407-995-1100



DKG - Fall Executive Board Meeting/Workshop 2024 (Sept. 20, 2024, to Sept. 21, 2024)  
Reservations may be made via

Online: Booking Website: <https://book.passkey.com/go/DKG2024fallmeeting>  
OR

Phone: 800-380-7724 (available 24 hour/7 days) \*Please mention group name and dates

Reservations can be made starting Feb 8, 2024, at web address above.

Rates: Single - \$119.00 Double - \$119 Triple - \$119.00 Quad - \$119.00

**(Room rates do NOT include taxes and fees.)** These rates are also available on Thursday, Sept. 19 and Sunday, Sept. 20. Each reservation must be guaranteed with a first night's deposit or major credit card. Specify the group name (DKG – 2024 Fall Executive Board Meeting).

**Reservation cut-off date: September 2, 2024**

**Note: The rate given above will not be available once the limited number of contracted guest rooms (the block) are booked. This may be prior to September 2. Any reservation after this date is subject to availability and a new rate. Each member is responsible for her accommodations.**

**Refund Policy:** Cancellations, no shows or early departures without a 48-hour advance notice will result in forfeiture of one night's deposit or a charge of one night's stay to a credit card.

#### Directions from Turnpike:

Take I-4 Exit (Exit 259 Orlando/Tampa)

Merge onto I-4 East toward downtown Orlando (the new toll Express Lane is great)

Take Exit 101A (CR-46A, Sanford/Heathrow)

Turn left onto H.E. Thomas Jr. Parkway (CR-46W)

At 2<sup>nd</sup> light turn left onto International Parkway and turn left at 2<sup>nd</sup> driveway for Marriott

#### Directions from West side of FL on I-4

Take Toll Road 429 on west side of Disney Properties

Stay on 429 toward Sanford/Daytona Beach to Hwy 46/International Parkway

Turn right onto International Parkway

Travel through 6 stop lights and turn left at 2<sup>nd</sup> driveway for Marriott

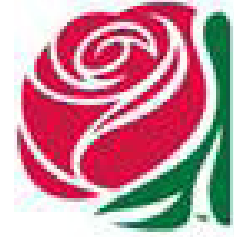
#### Directions from I-95

Take Exit 223 onto FL 46 (Sanford/Mims)

Travel west on FL-46 through Sanford to International Parkway

Turn left onto International Parkway and take second left driveway into Marriott Property

**Fall Executive Board Meeting**  
**Tentative Schedule at-a-Glance**  
**September 20 – 21, 2024**



**Friday – September 20, 2024**

3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Registration	Grand Foyer
3:00 – 5:30 p.m.	DKGFLEF Board of Directors	Orchid 2
4:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Finance Committee	Orchid 3
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Nominations Committee	Orchid 3
4:00 – 5:45 p.m.	Committee Meetings (Reserved Tables)	Grand Ballroom
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Awards Committee	Orchid 2

**SESSION A (3:30 – 4:20 p.m.) Breakout Sessions**

3:30 – 4:20 p.m.	Session I	Salon F
3:30 – 4:20 p.m.	Session II	Salon G
3:30 – 4:20 p.m.	Session III	Salon H
4:30 – 5:20 p.m.	Session IV	Salon F
4:30 - 5:20 p.m.	Session V	Salon G
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	First Timers Meeting	Salon H
7:30 – 8:30 p.m.	FLDKGEF Annual Members Meeting	Grand Salon

**Buffet (6:00 p.m.)**

**Saturday – September 21, 2024**

7:00 – 8:30 a.m.	Registration	Grand Foyer
8:30 – 9:45 a.m.	<b>Executive Board Meeting</b>	Salon D – E
10:00 – 10:50 a.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	Salons/Orchid
Sessions I – V		TBA
11:00 – 11:50 a.m.		Salons/Orchid
Session I – V		TBA
12:10 – 2:00 p.m.	Luncheon	Grand Ballroom



**Florida State Organization Fall Conference**  
**WORKSHOP PROPOSAL**  
**September 20-21, 2024**  
**LAKE MARY MARRIOTT**

**Instructions:** You may choose one of two ways to submit your proposal. 1) Print and send in the mail. 2) Scan the QR Code and complete a Google form. Send to: Nancy Bentz, [dkgkeywomeneducators@gmail.com](mailto:dkgkeywomeneducators@gmail.com) OR mail to 715 SW Rustic Circle, Stuart, Florida.

Name  Chapter  District

Address  City  Zip

Phone  Email

**Each breakout session will be 50 minutes.**

Session Information					
Do you have a session preference? (X)					
Session 1		Session 2		Either	
<p style="color: red;">Title and Brief Workshop Description</p> <p style="background-color: #e0ffe0; color: red; padding: 2px;">Consider - How does YOUR idea help advocate for DKG?</p> <p>Title: _____</p>					
<p style="color: red;">Equipment Needs and Room Set Up</p> <p>NOTE: Adaptors for MACs are not available as they vary depending on the computer.</p>					
Projector		Internet		PC Adaptor	
Special Room Setup Requests					

**Workshop Proposal**  
**Deadline: May 1, 2024**

PHOTO RELEASE: By your attendance at this event you are granting your permission to be filmed, videotaped, audiotaped or photographed by any means and are granting full use of your likeness, voice and words without compensation.



# FLORIDA JESSLYN MCBRIDE LEADERSHIP SEMINAR



**LEADERSHIP  
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NETWORKING,  
AND PERSONAL  
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OUR DKG  
LEADERS!**

Join us

June 16th-19th

at the Orlando



Marriott Lake Mary

*Application deadline:*

*April 6, 2024*



Learn more:

[dkgflorida.weebly.com/leadership-  
committee](https://dkgflorida.weebly.com/leadership-committee)

Apply online:

<https://forms.gle/pGX2AzmGpuQBMcwj7>





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

## Florida State Organization

### CHAPTER COMMUNICATION AWARD

The Chapter Communications Award is presented to chapters who use modern communication tools to market their chapter and to promote membership into Delta Kappa Gamma. The deadline to submit the award is March 15, 2025, and all chapters are eligible for the award.

Florida has 63 chapters and in the past biennium, only 17 received this award. That's 27% of our chapters. We recognize that there is no financial incentive linked to the award, but there is pride in knowing your chapter went above and beyond to promote its great work. The new Criteria is unveiled in this edition of the *Florida Rays*, and we encourage chapters to check it out. You will discover that the listed criteria are all very attainable. In fact, most likely chapters are already fulfilling the listed criteria, so it's just a matter of documenting what you are doing and submitting the documentation by the deadline date.



The documentation submitted for each criterion must be completed during the 2023-2025 biennium (July 1, 2023, to March 15, 2025) and chapters that earn 70 points or more will receive the award and be recognized at our Florida State Convention in the Spring of 2025.

Chapters may submit their documentation electronically or via the U.S. mail. For electronic submissions, chapters must email all information to their chapter's respective Communication & Marketing District Representative or to the Florida Communication & Marketing Committee chair Elinor Mount-Simmons at [emountsimmons@gmail.com](mailto:emountsimmons@gmail.com). If using the U.S. mail, send all documentation to the Florida Communication & Marketing Committee Chair at 317 Earl King Street, Apalachicola, FL 32320; however, it must be postmarked by the March 15, 2025, deadline.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact your District Communication & Marketing Committee Representative or Elinor Mount-Simmons, the Florida State Communication & Marketing Committee Chair.

Deadline: Submissions are due on or before March 15, 2025, for award eligibility.

**Florida State Organization**  
**CHAPTER COMMUNICATION**  
**AWARD**

**2023-2025 CRITERIA CHECKLIST**

Chapter Name \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

*Select the communication criteria from the list below. Include documentation where requested. Submit checklist along with documentation to your Communication & Marketing District Representative or the State Communication & Marketing Chair Elinor Mount-Simmons, emountsimmons@gmail.com. **The deadline for submission is March 15, 2025.***

No	Criteria	Points	Additional Information	✓
1	Chapter has a website	15	Website address:	
2	Chapter website has a compliance seal issued by International	5	Current DKG compliance seal is displayed on website. Website is linked with DKG International.	
3	Chapter has a social media page that shares information about their chapter	10	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.	
4	Chapter communicates with members via newsletters, email blasts, or websites a minimum of five (5) times a year.	20	Attach documentation	
5	Chapter documents how it maintains communication with members who do not use electronic means of communication.	10	Examples: telephone tree, newsletter, US Mail, etc. List Method(s) of communication:	
6	Chapter has an information board, a multimedia presentation, a collage, or other creative display depicting information about their chapter/Society.	10	The display may be presented at district meetings, a school, a district school board office, or other setting appropriate for communicating with non-members about the chapter/Society. Include photo of display/board with date.	
7	Chapter submits a minimum of one (1) article to the Florida Rays or the Collegial Exchange during the biennium	5	Attach article or date of publication	
8	Chapter submits a minimum of one (1) news release to newspaper or magazine	10	Attach article with date of publication	
9	Chapter has a communication chair or contact person who attends the Communications & Marketing Fall Workshop training or District Meeting	5	This person may be the chapter president. Attach documentation.	
10	Chapter communicates meeting dates and other events to the respective district contact for posting on the shared calendar.	10	na	
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>				



## Update from Your State Legislative Committee: Where We've Been and Where We are Going Next!

**Dr. Vivian Posey, Chair  
Legislative Committee**

Members of the State Legislative Committee, along with chapter members from as far away as Charlotte County, brought the concerns of DKG Florida to the state legislators in December as they were preparing to begin the 2024 legislative session. The visit to Tallahassee began with a Friday evening planning session and dinner, hosted by **Jan Bennitt** and **Amanda Wallace** of **Beta Phi Chapter** and the staff of Hartsfield Elementary School in Tallahassee. On December 12, a day long series of in-person meetings, DKG Day at the Capitol, with legislators from both sides was held. This event was another opportunity for the DKG Legislative Team to present the issues of DKG Florida members, learn about proposed education legislation for 2024, and strengthen relationships between DKG and our elected state representatives. Pictured standing at right is **Diana Brown** of **Gamma Delta Chapter** representing District IV on the Legislative Committee and her Representative Taylor Yarkosky. Seated is **Dr. Vivian Posey**.



## Florida DKG Educational Foundation Update

### Ann Tikka, Board of Directors

The Florida DKG Educational Foundation (FLDKGEF) Board anxiously looks forward to reviewing applications submitted for professional development awards and educational grants. Professional Development Awards are given to employed Florida educators to participate in professional seminars, workshops, lecture series, on-line courses, and other non-degree program opportunities that relate to an applicant's professional aspirations and/or current educational assignment. The maximum amount of this award is \$1,500. Educational Grants are available to be utilized by employed or retired Florida educators who design and conduct an activity to support educational excellence in Florida. This grant may be used to cover costs associated with but not limited to classroom activities, projects, materials, supplies, field trips, speakers, follow-up activities to support previous professional development, limited equipment to support classroom activities and/or other activities designed to be implemented in schools or communities. The maximum amount of this grant is \$1,000. Both awards will be granted this year for proposals that take place between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025. All applicants and recipients will be notified by April 1.

If you did not get a chance to apply this year, please consider the opportunity for next year as you learn about upcoming programs that will support your role in education. Information is available at <http://FLDKGEF.org>.

The planning process has begun for having a presence at each of the six district meetings.

**Dr. Beverly Helms, Deanie DeFelix, and Kathy Diesner** represented District I on January 20 in Tallahassee. District II on March 2 in Palatka was represented by **Roxanne Berger, Kathy Raiford, and Terry Stanilonis**. **Yvonne McShay, Dr. Elsie Gross, and Debra Graff** represented District III on February 3 in Lakeland. District IV on April 6 in Palm Bay will have representation by **Connie Kostyra, Diane Revels, and Vicki Simms**. **Carol Ann Casey** will represent District V on March 16 in Dania Beach. **Dr. Connie Besco and Ann Tikka** represented District VI on February 24 in Punta Gorda. Please seek out these Board members for any questions.



The terms of two founding Board members, **Connie Kostyra** and **Ann Tikka**, will expire in September 2024. Connie and Ann have served on the Board since inception in 2015. The Florida DKG Educational Foundation (FLDKGEF) will be replacing these Board members. If you are interested in serving on the Board, please talk to a Board member at one of the upcoming District meetings.



The Board would like to acknowledge and thank **Debra Graff** for being our Webmaster since the beginning. We do not know what we would ever do without her! Debra, you are certainly appreciated for your talent and expertise!

We thank members for their generous contributions to the Foundation this past year and to the chapters that have setup annual donations. This helps the organization thrive to give opportunities for educators in Florida to pursue professional and personal growth and supports educational excellence worldwide. The latest edition of the **Educator Express** is now available on the Foundation's website if you have not received it. We wish you a happy spring!

## Update on District Meeting

### District 1 Meeting



On January 20, District 1 held their meeting. Their theme was “With DKG, We Can Do It!” To open the meeting **Sarah Watters** introduced the history of the Woody Guthrie song, “This Land is Your Land.” We were led in chorus by Penelope Watters, Sarah’s daughter and accompaniment was provided by **Ann**



**Comforter**. It was a fun moment as members joined and were reminded of this beautiful nation we celebrate. There was a welcome by **Past Florida State Organization President Ann Lumsden**. She reminded us that meetings are fun because we meet other sisters there.

**Kathy Drake** shared an inspirational thought and reminded us of Confucius’ words, “The man who moves a mountain begins with small stones.” Her thought helped us to understand that sometimes we have big mountains to move as women in education, but we aren’t combative, we are careful to navigate in unity, and we see mountains move. She ended her thoughts with 2 quotes for us, “In a gentle way you can change the world” and “When life shuts a door, just open it. It’s a door.” Her last statement was met with laughter as it was both an unexpected ending and there is much truth in it.

The outgoing presidents were honored as **Sarah Watters** shared the accomplishments of each chapter. The incoming presidents were introduced and **Terri Stanilonis, Florida State Organization President of DKG**, gave a message of encouraging words. Each committee gave reports followed by the election of **Dr. Monica Hayes** as District 1’s next District Director. She received unanimous approval. Congratulations, Monica!



The morning meeting was followed with workshops offered by our members and community experts from Florida State University, Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System (FDLRS), and a licensed mental health specialist. There were several options from which to choose. Each workshop provided valuable information and insights into current education matters. Workshops included:

**Presidents 101,  
Visual Supports for the Classroom  
Difficult Conversations about Race;  
You CAN Advocate for Change,  
Leadership, Lessons, and Loyalty  
DKG Treasurers CAN Do It,  
Communicating with Gen Z,  
Hands-Only CPR  
You CAN Prevent Burnout  
Recruit-Retain-Reinstate, and  
Support; and Communications Award.**

Each workshop offered a unique perspective and participants enjoyed and found value in the sessions.

The workshops were followed by a wonderful lunch, basket giveaways, and remarks from our **State President Terry Stanilonis**. To end our time together, **Ann Comforter** and **Vanessa Pinto** led us in the Delta Kappa Gamma Song where we enjoyed uniting with our sisters and once again pledging our loyalty to one of the most noble institutions, education.

# Sharing Chapter Experiences

## Alpha Kappa Chapter

Alpha Kappa Chapter began a relationship with the Southern Scholarship Foundation's (SSF) Lundquist-Hovda House residents on Stadium Drive, next to the Florida State University (FSU) campus, in 2017 under the presidency of Susan Womble. Susan was a resident of the SSF FEA House in the mid 1970's. Nancy Watson, who followed Susan as president, was also a resident of the SSF Pilot House in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Both members attributed their success in being able to achieve a higher education to the SSF and were excited to give back some measure of assistance to the students who followed. Nancy and Dr. Felecia Jordan Jackson, professor at FSU, have served as the co-chairs of the Alpha Kappa's Lundquist-Hovda Champions Project since 2020. They meet regularly with the house liaison, elected by the house members, and the house manager to plan fellowship opportunities and ways to support the residents.

The Southern Scholarship Foundation provides scholarships for students with high academic ability but with limited funds and/or resources for pursuing a higher education. Students who are granted a scholarship are provided a rent-free, cooperative living situation in one of the SSF houses. The residents maintain the house, purchase and prepare meals, and establish house rules, while attending classes at local colleges or universities. The Southern Scholarship Foundation currently has 26 houses in Florida- 16 in Tallahassee, 8 in Gainesville, and 2 in Ft. Myers.

Alpha Kappa Chapter became the Lundquist-Hovda Champions, in a relationship to assist the residents with items for the house, packing the pantry with dry goods and cleaning supplies to help reduce their operating costs, and mentoring residents in areas, such as resume writing, thrifty shopping practices, and providing local contacts for possible internships or employment. The chapter meets socially with the residents twice a year. The house liaison and Champion chairs meet regularly throughout the academic year to discuss house needs and resident requests for mentorship.

The seven-year relationship between the Alpha Kappa Chapter and the Lundquist residents has proven to be a rewarding project by promoting strong relationships with the residents and chapter members through our shared interest in education.

## Beta Sigma Chapter

Beta Sigma Chapter celebrated a Holiday Party at the beautiful home of our **Chapter President Susan Mc Keown**. Members brought delicious treats to share, and we all enjoyed time outside by the pool overlooking the scenic canal.



We celebrated with member **Martha Sinclair** on her upcoming 90th birthday. She shared some interesting stories with us about her many adventures in her journey in education. Pictured above is Martha and her daughter Sherry, also a Beta Sigma member.



The chapter president's husband, Kevin, treated us to a tour of his classic car collection which impressed us all! Then he gave us a tour of his model train room which was a passion of his for many years. He added to his collection to make an entire town surrounded by the train traveling around it! The day was not only enjoyable, but it was memorable for all of us.

## Gamma Delta Chapter

Gamma Delta has been off and running since our initial meeting in September. Committees worked in groups to plan their programs for the year. In October, the Arts Committee provided quite the spread of salad items. It looked like the salad bar buffet at Sweet Tomatoes or Golden Corral, and boy was it delicious! Our members made gift card holders for our main fundraiser, **Kids Central**. Each year our members donate gift cards to give to their teenagers. Our annual goal is to obtain \$1,000 in gift cards. This December, our members went above and beyond with their generous donations! We surpassed our goal by \$600 for a total of \$1,600.

Gamma Delta held its annual holiday party on Wednesday, December 6, 2023, at the home of our recording secretary, **Jennifer Fulmer**. The World Fellowship Committee provided an array of food which included appetizers, fruits, cheese, crackers, meatballs, and Chick-fil-A nuggets. There was quite a rich assortment of homemade desserts. We concluded the evening with a variety of Christmas songs including **The Chipmunk Song Christmas, Don't Be Late**. A great time was had by all, and we look forward to our holiday party in 2024.

The Educational Excellence Committee provided "breakfast" for dinner on January 16, 2024. From breakfast casseroles to quiches to good ole grits, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the meal. **Denise Burry**, Executive Director of Forward Paths Foundation, and daughter-in-law of **Gail Burry**, Gamma Delta member, spoke about the foundation. Besides being a mom to eight children, she volunteers her time at the foundation. Forward Paths Foundation has taken exciting steps in their pursuit of improving the lives of Lake County's homeless, unaccompanied youth and youth aging out of foster care. Currently, the lack of safe and affordable housing is a huge barrier to a youth's ability to achieve self-sufficiency. Forward Paths' goal is to build a micro-community designed to meet the unique needs of our youth. The micro-community will host 450 - 600 square foot cottages for youth, a community room, and garden. The First United Methodist Church of Eustis has donated a one-and-a-half-acre lot to help us meet this goal. Her program was definitely an eye opener!

On February 20th, the Personal Growth Committee provided food and a program called, **Laugh for the Health of It**. We're all intrigued by the theme and can't wait for the program.

## Mu Chapter

Mu Chapter's third business meeting was held on January 27, 2024. With 21 members present, two via ZOOM and three guests, it was a productive and packed meeting. Our chapter is robust and full of activities and all committees report at each meeting. Member recognition and support for working chapter members are two initiatives on which our chapter focuses. At each meeting, **Chapter President Michelle Josey** presents a member with a "Rose of Recognition" for their contribution and value. At this meeting, **Kelli Hayes** received the "Rose of Recognition" for always bringing a spirit of fellowship and laughter to our meetings.



The guest speaker was **Mary Murphy** from Beta Xi Chapter via ZOOM to present **Be a Cyberninja**. After attending this workshop at the April 2023 State Convention in Lake Mary, I knew it would be a hit with our multi-generational chapter! Mary was as dynamic on ZOOM as she was in person, and the ladies gained so much valuable information. I encourage other chapters to look for opportunities to invite presenters from other chapters to their meetings, our sisterhood circle is larger than our local chapters!

## Beta Omega Chapter

Since 2020, Beta Omega continues to hold monthly Virtual Book Club meetings on the last Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. Members unable to attend regular chapter meetings actively participate using this venue. The following list of books were recommended by chapter members:

January: **Someone Else's Shoes**, Jojo Moyers

February: **The Wedding Dress Sewing Circle**, Jennifer Ryan

March: **Keeper of the Hidden Books**, Madeline Martin

April: **Bookwoman's Daughter**, Michele Richardson

May: **America's First Daughter**, Stephanie Dray & Laura Kaye

June: **Homecoming**, Kate Morton

July: **The Lions of Fifth Avenue**, Fiona Davis

August: **Good Night Irene**, Luis Alberto

September: **Engineer's Wife**, Tracy Emerson Wood

October: **Tom Lake**, by Ann Patchett

November: **One Perfect Summer**, Brenda Novak  
*Thanks, Judy Cook, for chairing this committee!*

# THE ARTS



## Florida Artist Featured in 2023 Betty Thornton Arts Exhibition



**Paper Crafts  
by Carolyn Lang  
Delta Xi Chapter**

Carolyn (Lyn) Lang is currently a member of Delta Xi Chapter (District IV). She was initiated as a member of Tau Chapter, Harford County, Maryland in 1991. Her most relevant positions in Maryland included Tau Chapter president and Maryland State President in 2007 - 2009, member and chair of numerous chapter and state committees, and steering committee chair of the Northeast Regional Conference in Baltimore in 2015. In Florida, Lyn has served on the State Educational Excellence Committee and is the President-Elect of Delta Xi Chapter for the 2024 - 2026 biennium.

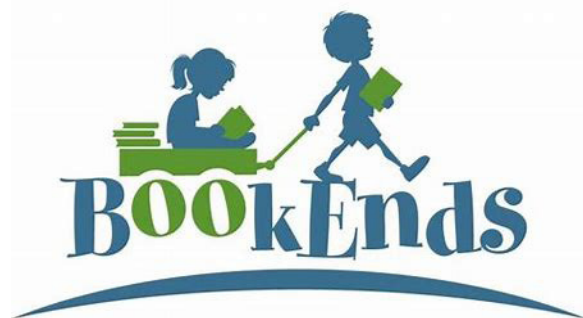
Lyn taught for 32 years in Harford County, Maryland, enjoying 26 years of classroom experiences with 2nd, 3rd, and 5th graders and later Grades K-5 Gifted and Talented. After retirement, she was employed as a Professional Learning Consultant with the Great Books Foundation for ten years, having the pleasure of training both teachers and students with the Shared Inquiry Method throughout the United States. Her final retirement was in 2015, bringing her to Florida.

Lyn has always been interested in art, spending time making porcelain dolls, painting, and now constructing Cricut projects. Work with the Cricut began when Lyn was creating paintings for Gilded Matilda's shop in Wildwood, and the owner of the shop requested that some of the paintings have sayings or slogans added to them. Having no talent whatsoever for lettering, Lyn's daughter suggested she use a Cricut to cut the letters to add to the paintings. From there, Lyn took on-line courses to learn about the many uses of this versatile machine, and in addition to paper crafts, she has made tee shirts, faux leather jewelry, ornaments, pop up greeting cards, and other amazing things. She is fascinated by the creativity and ingenuity of the designers of the projects and loves finding new, interesting, and increasingly challenging projects to do. All of the projects submitted to her arts display are made out of card stock.



Pictured clockwise above from top right are a Valentine Gift Bag, Layered Cross, Layered Easter Egg, and Lace Lantern.





### Linda Smock of Kappa Chapter Releases Children's Book:



### *Just Call Me Honey*

Kappa Chapter Member Linda Smock has written and released a new children's book, ***Just Call Me Honey***. A personable little bee nicknamed "Honey" by her mother, the queen, talks to the children and tells them about her busy life. She shares about her family, her environment, the different kinds of bees, and her life cycle. Early readers also learn about how bees make honey and beeswax.

Smock visited with beekeepers and researched extensively to make sure the information shared was correct. A natural science professor and beekeeper reviewed the book to ensure the information was accurate. It is available on Amazon. Preschoolers enjoy having it read to them, and elementary children practice their reading skills as they learn and have fun with ***Just Call Me Honey***. Interactive pages allow them to learn about mathematics and science.

The book begins with an overview of bees and the many species of bees, including the western honey bee. It next focuses on the homes of bees and their life cycles. The honey bee then shares how she and her sisters make honey and beeswax. It is interactive with children tracing, drawing, and thinking about math problems. Preschool children will enjoy listening to the story, and elementary children will enjoy reading and doing the activities.

An excerpt from the book reads, "Hi, my name is Busy Bee. You can just call me 'Honey.' That's what my momma does. She's the queen. She tells me to act like other bees. She says that means to work hard. Our work is essential. That means our work is needed for people to live."

When asked what the most common response to the book is, Smock said, "Adults respond with, 'I learned something!' They often add that even though it is a child's book, they think adults should also read it."

Smock was at the Lealman Honey and Arts Festival in St. Petersburg on February 10, 2024, for a book signing. She read her book to the children present at 3:00 p.m.

She will be at the Chipley Friends of the Library meeting at noon on May 2nd to share how and why she wrote the book and will have books available for purchase. She can be contacted at [ismock1@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:ismock1@tampabay.rr.com) for potential speaking and book-signing events.

### About the Author

Linda Smock has been a resident of Pinellas County, Florida since 1969. She grew up in Florida where she attended Chipola Junior College and Florida State University. She later attended the University of South Florida.

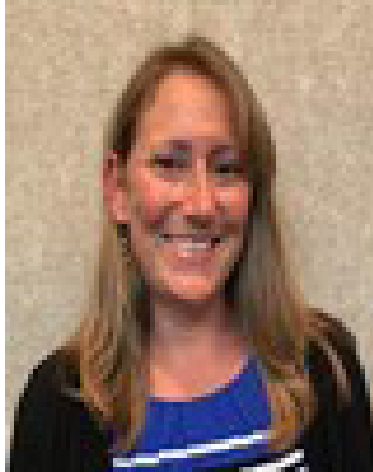
She spent over 3 decades in public education as a teacher and curriculum supervisor. She also authored textbooks and worked 12 years in Christian education. She has been a Sunday school teacher for over fifty years.



Her hobbies include plants and gardening, watching butterflies and birds, and writing. She is a master gardener with certification from the University of Florida. She is also the author of ***Homespun Devotion*** (Westbow Press), ***More Homespun Devotion*** (Amazon), ***Even More Homespun Devotion*** (Amazon), ***Homespun Prayers*** (Westbow Press), and ***Homespun Gratitude*** (Amazon).

# Poetry

Thank You, DKG!



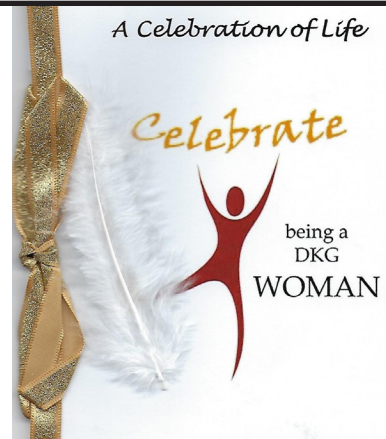
by Jaime Baize

What is old is new again! As Mu Chapter was scanning chapter newsletters and converting them to digital files, they found an article from the 1980's. Mu Chapter used to draw a name from the working members present at a meeting for a \$100 mini grant to support their school/teachers. The educator who wins must give a report at the next meeting to explain how the funds were used.

**Jaime Baize, Assistant Principal at Homosassa Elementary**, won the drawing in December, and she purchased items to provide her staff with a "Welcome Back from Break" breakfast. In true Jaime fashion, she prepared the poem below as her report, and her friend and fellow member **Kelli Hayes** read it.

Thank you, DKG, for the generous donation  
That provided Homosassa Elementary  
With a "Welcome Back" breakfast celebration.  
I bought eggs, bacon, grits, fruit, juice & pancake batter,  
So our leadership team could cook  
And show our staff they really matter.  
Breakfast was a hit!

I couldn't have spent the money better  
Than to create this morale booster  
As we started the second semester.  
Happy New Year!  
And thanks again to my sisters of DKG.  
I appreciate the support of our school  
At Homosassa Elementary!



**Martha Ann McComb  
McCaskill**  
Beta Phi Chapter  
District I  
December 14, 2022  
Tallahassee, Florida



Martha Ann McCaskill, 88, passed away peacefully at Westminster Oaks on December 14, 2022. She was born on January 24, 1934, in Florence, South Carolina.

She graduated from Winthrop College and married Ralph Emerson McCaskill on December 23, 1955. Together they ministered to Presbyterian churches throughout the Southeast. During those years, Martha Ann was constantly volunteering with school and church groups, the arts, and non-profit organizations such as American

Heart Association and the American Cancer Society.

Martha taught school in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina, where she was named Teacher of the Year for the state. Martha became a DKG member on November 12, 2006. She served her Beta Phi Chapter on various committees and provided inspiration and leadership to its members.

Momee, as she was known by her grandkids, loved to tell stories of her youth and of her adventures with "Pop." She loved to tell these stories to anyone who would listen. She was always ready to go with whomever was going anywhere. Her thirst for adventure was unquenchable.

**Patricia Bazil Segrest**  
**Phi Chapter**  
**District I**  
**January 7, 2024**  
**Graceville, Florida**



Patty Segrest passed away peacefully on January 7, 2024, at Northwest Florida Community Hospital in Chipley, Florida. Patty was born on June 26, 1937, in Troy, Alabama. She lived in Mobile, Alabama until seventh grade when the family moved to Bonifay.

She graduated from Holmes County High School. Patty graduated with a B.S. degree from Flori-

da State University and a Master's from Troy University. She worked at the Florida Welfare Department followed by many years in education.

Her years of teaching were at Graceville High School, Cottondale High School, and Houston Academy. She was an administrator at Graceville High School, Graceville Elementary School, Cottondale High School, and Poplar Springs High School. Patty was the first female secondary administrator in Jackson County.

Honors that she received through her life included Graceville High School Teacher of the Year, Cottondale Teacher of the Year, Jackson County Teacher of the Year, and Graceville Woman of the Year.

Patty was married to Hugh B. Segrest for 51 years. She and Hugh lived in Graceville all their married life. They had two daughters- Nancianne and **Julie Young** who is also a DKG member.

Patty was very active in the city of Graceville where she served as a city commissioner for 12 years. She was the first elected woman mayor of Graceville.

Since October of 1975, Patty was an active member of DKG. She served as Phi President from 1986 - 1988, District I Director, mentor to new members of her chapter, and member of several state committees.

**Belva Norene Slate**  
**Alpha Sigma Chapter**  
**District II**  
**July 6, 2023**  
**Lake Como, Florida**

On the day Belva Norene Slate joined Delta Kappa Gamma in 1973, her fellow members probably had no idea of what a keystone



of the organization she would become! Over the years, Norene served in numerous capacities for Putnam County Florida's Alpha Sigma Chapter. She served as chapter president, chapter vice-president, and chairperson of numerous committees. She wrote and distributed the **Alpha Bits** newsletter for a number of years, made countless courtesy meeting reminders, and even sent out the group's email notices back when email was new. She tantalized our tummies at countless bake sales, brightened our meetings with her creative crafts, and represented the chapter at district, state, and national conferences.

Norene, or "Miss Belva" as she was sometimes called, helped promote professional growth of women educators and excellence in education.

Following retirement, Norene continued to play a vital role in DKG as well as in her community. She volunteered her time at a thrift shop while active in her church and an art group. She was also a talented photographer, and many of her photos were featured in the **Palatka Daily News** for the community to enjoy.

In 2023, Norene attained "DKG Golden Girl" status by completing her 50th year of DKG membership; however, in failing health, she soon thereafter gently slipped away to heaven.

**Helen Miller Wilcox**  
**Beta Omega Chapter**  
**District III**  
**December 31, 2023**  
**Largo, Florida**



Helen Wilcox was born in Jacksonville, Florida, on February 29, 1932, which was leap year. A 1950 Clearwater High graduate, Helen began dating Albert in 1949 while they both were in high school. Helen graduated from Maryville College in 1954 with a B.S. in Biology.

Helen and Albert began their married life in Valdosta, Georgia, where Albert was stationed at Moody Air Force Base. Helen taught in a one-room school house and drove a "Bingity-Bangity" school bus to work. They returned to Clearwater after Albert was discharged from the military and spent the remainder of their married life in Pinellas County.

Mrs. Wilcox was a secondary science teacher for 20 years at Clearwater High School in Pinellas County Schools. She taught advanced Biology with great passion and extraordinary dedication. In October of 1984, Helen joined the Beta Omega Chapter of DKG and remained an active member until her death on December 31, 2023.

Retired astronaut Nicole Stott was one of her former students. When invited to attend Beta Omega's Remembrance of Helen Wilcox during their January chapter meeting, she replied, *"I'm really saddened to learn of Mrs. Wilcox's passing. And makes me sad to know she wasn't doing well before this. She was a very special person in my life - someone I mention often when I speak about the people who helped lift me up along the way. She was awesome and I was so happy to get back in touch with her when I was flying the space missions. I'm sorry I haven't been in contact with her recently. I'm also sorry that I won't be able to attend your meeting in her honor. I will be out of town supporting an education forum in KS. I hope there will be a time when we can meet again. Thank you for thinking of me."*

**Gladys Nichols "Nick"**  
**Williams**  
**Phi Chapter**  
**District I**  
**September 27, 2023**  
**Graceville, Florida**

Gladys Nichols "Nick" Williams, 97, of Graceville, Florida went home to be with her Lord and Savior on September 27, 2023, at Shands Hospital. She was born in Dothan, Alabama on August 24, 1926.

She grew up in Graceville and was a graduate of Graceville High School with Salutatorian Honors. She attended and received her bachelor's degree in Math education from Florida State University in Tallahassee. She received her master's degree from both Florida State University and Troy University in Guidance and Counseling and Administration and Supervision.



Her passion was teaching her students as exemplified by her 49-year career in education. She worked 24 years teaching at Graceville High School. She spent 25 years at the Jackson County School District Office working in Administration and Supervision, where she worked with education leaders from school districts all over Florida.

Nick was a member of Phi Chapter of DKG and served as District I Director for 2 years. She was also elected as an outstanding Woman of the Year at First United Methodist Church in Graceville. She was honored to be appointed to the Chipola College Board of Directors.

She was proud to be elected as the first woman president of the Association of Student Services Administrators, member of the First United Methodist Church of Graceville, Graceville Woman's Club, Graceville Garden Club, and winning at Bridge-a-rama and bridge clubs.

She loved passionately her family, friends, former students, and co-workers. She loved life and lived it to the fullest.





**Florida  
State Organization**

### Contribution Form

Checks or money orders and this completed form should be sent to:  
**DKG Florida State Organization Treasurer**  
**Beverly Stagg**  
**7407 Lillie Lane**  
**Pensacola, FL 32526**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment by:  CHECK \_\_\_\_\_  MONEY ORDER \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks or money orders payable to: **DKG Florida State**  
 This contribution is designated for: (check one)

- Emergency Fund
- Leadership Growth Seminar
- Scholarship
- Legislation events – State and US Forum

**GIFT IS FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of individual or group Chapter

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(The above will appear on the notice sent to family or honoree.)

**IN MEMORY OF** \_\_\_\_\_

Send card to \_\_\_\_\_  
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**As directed by the Internal Revenue Service, it is my duty to inform you that this is not a tax-deductible contribution.**

### 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



National Legislative Seminar  
Washington, D.C.  
March 10 - 13, 2024

Florida Jesslyn McBride Leadership Seminar  
Deadline April 6, 2024

District IV Meeting: April 6, 2024  
Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church  
Palm Bay, FL

Florida Scholarship Deadline  
April 15, 2024

DKG International Convention: July 9 - 13, 2024  
National Harbor, Maryland - Gaylord National,  
Washington, D.C. Area

Florida DKG State Fall Executive Board Meeting  
September 20 - 21, 2024  
Orlando Marriott Lake Mary

DKG International Convention  
June 30 - July 4, 2026  
Aurora, Colorado - Gaylord Rockies



### Information Sources

DKG Florida Website  
<https://dkgflorida.weebly.com>

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

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

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

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

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