



ALPHA PHI INFORMER

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Feb. 7th meeting
- Legislative Activity
- Alpha Phi Member Information

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A Note From the President

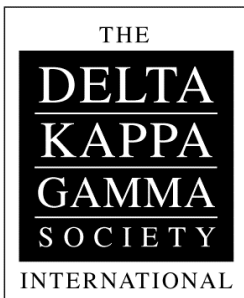
Happy New Year!

I cannot believe that we are already through the Christmas holidays and have marched most of the way through January already. Our last official meeting was our Christmas brunch on Saturday, December 8th. It was an awesome event, with good food, good fun and good gifts for Toys for Tots. Margaret Abernathy did an awesome job singing for us – it sure helped me get into the Christmas spirit. Jensi Souders shared a Christmas story. We were honored to have Kathie Harned, our Xi State president, in attendance with us. We were also honored to have our two mini-grant recipients with us as well. It was the perfect launch to the Christmas season, and I thank everyone who was involved and who attended. Please remember that our focus this year is to assist and recruit early career educators! Too many of these educators give up in the first three years of their careers. Within our organization, we have hundreds of years of teaching ex-

perience. That is a lot of experience that we can offer in friendship to young educators all over our area! I think our mini-grant program has the potential to be a great tool to assist these people. But nothing replaces personal friendships. One of the most important values of my involvement in DKG is the friendships that I have made and continue to make all the time. Be a friend to someone new!!!

Our next chapter meeting is February 7th at Red Bank Middle School. We have invited speakers from Hamilton County, and will have the opportunity to network, socialize, eat and learn! I hope I will see you there!

Bring a friend!



February 7th: Meeting with Mike Evatt and Margaret Abernathy

Make plans to attend our next meeting February 7th, at Red Bank Middle School. We will have Mike Evatt from the Hamilton County school board and Margaret Abernathy, the Hamilton County director of special education there to discuss what issues are being dealt with at the county level and how that may effect our active teachers. You will have opportunity to ask questions and interact with our guests. Dinner will be served and is being prepared by the retired members of the society. Our menu is soup, salad and dessert. We will be meeting in the media center at 5:30. It would be best if most people use the Leawood entrance as that one is a flat walk through the building with no stairs.

Meeting in March

March 9th, at 10:00 am, plan to attend "History / Growth of Alpha Phi Chapter". We will meet at Hixson United Methodist Church, 5301 Old Hixson Pike, Hixson, TN. Coffee and pastries will be served as we visit our past as a chapter and continue to grow with one another.

Welcome New Members

Welcome to Danita Clark and Amy Thompson who were initiated at our Joint Initiation in November.



Pictured left to right is Danita Clark, Amy Thompson and Jenisi Souders.

Membership Memo

Why are We Members?

Data from the Member Profile , completed by 29 of our 43 members since August, we have delineated reasons why we joined DKG and why we remain members.

The top two reasons for joining Alpha Phi were
Respect for those in the Society, and
Professional networking and support

Other reasons given were the honor of membership, invitations from family or friends, Society goals and international involvement, to help careers, the focus on women educators, and service to educators.

Overwhelmingly the most often received answer as to why we remain a part of the Society is *the fellowship and friendships made through membership*.

Other reasons for remaining a member include DKG's professionalism, leadership/educational opportunities, goals/activities/programs, keeping current in education, membership being worth the time and money, service to educators, personal commitment, networking, and scholarships.

“Stay tuned” for other results from our survey of members. Thanks to those who completed the survey. If you did not return one and wish to be a part of the results, email Jensi Souders at jsouders3@comcast.net and she'll send you a copy to complete.

Alpha Phi Member Information

- ~ **Lin Marten** is recovering from colon surgery on January 31st. She was in Memorial room 519 but may be home now.
- ~ Our Sympathy is extended to **Lena Lovelady** in the death of her brother this past December who lived in North Carolina.

If you let your membership lapse last year, all you have to do to re-join Alpha Phi is send in your dues (\$75) to Susie Westbrook. Her address is: 2320 Green Valley Road Soddy Daisy 37379

Legislative Activity by: Rachel Price

There is a great deal of legislative activity around educational issues this year even though the climate does not seem to be quiet as volatile as last year. As always, it is imperative for educators to stay in close contact with their respective representatives to let them know how you feel about pending actions. It is a simple process to send an email to your Congressman or Representative; simply go to the Tennessee Government website, find your representative and click on the link to contact him or her.

Right now, the major discussions are centered on changing the position of assistant principal to that of “business manager”. This initiative apparently started in west Tennessee when Memphis City Schools asked for funds to hire business managers to run their schools freeing the principals up to become more effective instructional leaders. One has to wonder if the next step is to hire administrative assistants for teachers to handle the mountains of paperwork that now supersede our ability to plan and deliver instruction. Neither one of these would appear to be necessarily evil in purpose or scope but with increasingly dwindling financial resources for instructional materials and equipment, oh and teachers’ salaries, it begs the question of where is the money going to come from?

There are also ongoing discussions on the hill around the evaluation process and tenure. Current proposals are looking at allowing teachers who score a 3 for successive years to be considered for tenure where the original law requires that a teacher score a 4 or better. This appears more reasonable on the surface, but again begs the central question; if the evaluation process is flawed, shouldn’t it in fact be fixed instead of merely bandaged?

I am not learned enough to attempt to present a full reporting of legislative activity, and at best this is merely an op-ed piece on conversations and news items I have encountered over the last few weeks. I do hope it encourages each of you to subscribe to some outlet that reports on political actions in your respective areas. I hope it encourages you to become fully engaged in politics and to come to the realization that “there are more of us than there are of them”. We do not have to settle for having things done to us; as professionals we are obligated to make policy for our profession, not simply react. Along those lines, the one statement repeated over and over at the legislative symposium was a call to educators to fill political vacancies on both sides of the aisle! How about that for a true educational reform initiative?

Legislative Activity cont.

Update: January 31, 2013

As the TEA TSSB liaison for District 3, I have had the dubious privilege of attending the past two State School Board meetings. While most of the issues discussed concern policies or procedures that the State School Board and/or the State Department of Education have jurisdiction over rather than legislative issues, it is nonetheless the fact that troublesome legislation often gets its birth in these meetings. To understand how this is so we only have to remember that our State school board members are appointed – there is a strong political affiliation or obligation, if you will, in most if not all cases. The current issues that have the potential to be troublesome are:

Renewed and vigorous discussions on merit pay or pay for performance as opposed to the current step schedule. Commission Hoffman's cadre has done extensive statistical elaborating to show that there is an inverse relationship between student achievement and teacher experience and advanced degree attainment. The troublesome part of this statistical analysis is that only 33% of ALL teachers have TVASS data. Then of course there is the fact that no consideration is given to how teachers with more seniority are used, i.e. moved to more difficult settings, assigned more duties, given the advanced or honors courses

Undercurrents of real support for moving to total privatization of Tennessee schools within 5 to 6 years

RTI as a mandated full component of each teachers' responsibilities and accountability – with little to no training planned to implement this move. Williamson county is being used as the benchmark

A move to have all exceptional education students count on the general education teachers' TVASS

Even more emphasis on achievement as the only or strongest growth measure for teachers

A move to include student survives as a component of each teacher's overall evaluation score

Renewed and ongoing discussions over changing the TCRS from a defined benefit plan to a 401K package

And more, but this is it in a nutshell.

Please consider attending the Legislative Symposium February 19 at the Maxwell House Millennium Hotel in Nashville. The symposium is free. If you want to stay over for the breakfast on Wednesday morning, the fee is \$20, and I need your reservation yesterday. There is the possibility that you can still get the DKG room rate if you call now!

As of now there are four or five of us attending!

If you can't make the symposium, please consider sending a question or two you would like posed to the panel, and we will do our best to get it heard. Send your questions to me at rprice69127@aol.com or price_rachel@hcde.org.

Happy Birthday to our Members

January

Cami Mitchell — 5th
 Dr. Judy Nixon — 6th
 Mary Jo Baughman — 15th
 Lin Marten — 30th

February

Mary Starnes — 3rd
 Teresa Wilhoite — 3rd
 Marjorie Ogle — 9th

March

Dianne Kelehear — 3rd
 Patsy Woodham — 3rd
 Sharon McMahan — 26th

April

Karla Riddle — 3rd
 Mary Ann Voss — 3rd
 Sherrey McCullough — 13th
 Joy Hudson — 26th

Alpha Phi Calendar

- ~ March 9th: 10:00am History / Growth of Alpha Phi Chapter; Hixson UMC
- ~ April Founders Day: TBA
- ~ June 6th—8th: Xi State Convention Sewanee

Find us on the web:

- www.alphahidkg.com
- www.dkg.org
- www.xistate.org
- Find Xi State on Facebook

Begin NOW making plans to attend the
Xi State Convention June 6-8, 2013
University of the South, Sewanee
 and

South East Regional in Orlando
July 10-13, Gaylord Palms Resort.

Once you attend the conventions,
 you begin to see the big picture
 as well as the impact of DKG on
 education around the world!