



ALPHA PHI INFORMER

WINTER, 2013—2014 EDITED BY LIN MARTEN AND SHARON MCMAHAN

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A Note From the President

I hope your new year has been wonderful so far! I cannot believe that we are already through the holidays and have marched most of the way through January. Our last official meeting was our Christmas brunch on Saturday, December 7th. It was an enjoyable time for everyone, with great food, great fun and lots of food for the food bank. Jeni blessed everyone with beautiful hand-made Christmas ornaments. We watched a video on the candy bomber from World War II, which brought tears to our eyes. We laughed and sang together. It was an awesome way to celebrate the end of the calendar year. I thank everyone that came and enjoyed with us!

Our focus this year continues to be on assisting and recruiting early career educators! Last year, we had two recipients of our mini-grants, and one of them joined our ranks in November! This year, we again have two recipients. Many of you met our recent recipients at the December brunch. If you were not there, you will have an opportunity to meet them at upcoming meetings and find out what they are using our money for. Our other focus this year is improving communication within our organization. Sharon McMahan and I are both retired and we decided to take on both the newsletter and website as a team. This should allow us to produce more newsletters and tie the newsletters to our website. We are also looking at new technology tools to assist us as well. We want to facilitate the fellowship that we enjoy between and among members.

Our next chapter meeting is February 8th at Hixon United Methodist church at 11:00 A.M. We will have a nice lunch available for only \$5. Bring the money with you when you come. We will have valentine decorations, courtesy of Cami Mitchell's students, and lots of time for fellowship, chapter business, food and fun! I hope I will see you there!

— Lin

Member Updates

- * **Amy Wright** has a new baby: Georgia Lou Wright was born on February 27, 2013- our first child after 18 years of marriage! She is our JOY and about the only thing that has been on my mind this past year.
- * **Sandy Smith** will be a first time grandmother in February.
- * **Sandy Smith** has also recently graduated from the Holmberg Arts Leadership Institute.
- * **Ann Moore** will be a "new" grandparent. Her daughter is due with their second baby on July 6th and her daughter-in-law is due with their second baby on June 30th. Just a couple of years ago she thought she would not have any grandchildren, and now she will have 4!
- * **Faye Hitchcock** is recovering from heart surgery.
- * **Karla Riddle and Joann Smith** are both receiving chemo for breast cancer.
- * **Kimberly Elbakidze's** daughter is a candidate for Governor's School.
- * **Lin Marten's** husband is recovering from knee replacement surgery.
- * **Faye Hitchcock** had a heart valve replacement in April of last year, and her husband underwent prostate surgery in December.
- * **Maryjo Baughman** is expecting a grand-daughter at the end of March, Payton Elizabeth. Maryjo says that although she has no children of her own, she became an honorary mom in 1996 when her best friend lost her battle to breast cancer and asked her to take care of her then 13 year old daughter,
- **Dr. Lena Engstrom's** sixth great-grandchild was born Dec. 23, 2013, on her 84th birthday. His name is McCoy, who is named for Lena's husband, Dale McCoy Engstrom.

January Executive Board Meeting



and Remind 101. A link to the complete board minutes will be available on the website!

Executive board met on January 18th. They planned the February meeting, reviewed and approved the newly updated rules (which will be up for member vote at the February meeting), reviewed status of new officer nominations, and discussed use of new technologies, such as Google Docs



Education Forum

On October 3rd Alpha Phi hosted an area Education Forum. The meeting was open to all area DKG chapters and other interested guests. Members of the panel were Superintendent Rick Smith of the Hamilton County School System, Lurone Jennings from the mayor's office, Dr. Warren Mackey of the county commission and chair of the county education committee, and Dan Challener of the Public Education Foundation.

Jennings was asked by panel moderator Jeni Souders about the challenges facing the community to improve education. He responded that two of the biggest issues are poverty and crime. One of his goals is to get community churches involved to mentor young people. Challener said that we must support teachers to meet higher standards. Leadership matters and there must be changes in teacher preparation programs. The PEF Leadership Academy is an effort to promote effective teachers and administrators. When asked what was being done to nurture and encourage early career educators to remain in the profession, Supt. Smith answered that adequate professional development should be available as well as consistent salary increases. Mackey stated that jobs are important but we need to educate students to handle jobs and become productive members of a work force. All four panel members spoke of the need to use a variety of resources to meet student needs. Education must become a community effort, not just a teacher effort.

Perhaps the most significant outcome of the forum was that the panel members appeared to recognize that this was not a confrontational group but one genuinely concerned for the future of educators and the welfare of students. Alpha Phi had only seven chapter members there, but there was a total of 37 audience members.



R to L: Lurone Jennings, Immediate DKG Past President Jeni Souders, Xi State President Bev Smith, Rick Smith, Dan Challener, Dr. Warren Mackey

Meeting Calendar

February 8th 11:00—12:30 Hixson UMC

Co-hosts: Cami Mitchell and Laura Belue

Program: Business and Fellowship

March 13th 5:30—7 pm Bright School on Hixson Pike

Co-hosts: Ann Moore and Amy Thompson

Program: Bunko

April 26th TBA Founders' Day

Initiation of New Members

We initiated three new members on Tuesday, November 12th, at Brainerd United Methodist Church. Our new members are: Kathy Cox, Christina Neighbors and Amy Wright. Right is a picture of all Chattanooga initiates from the meeting. Kathy is back row, far right; Christina is front row, 2nd from left; and Amy is front row, third from left. See “Membership News” in this newsletter for more information on these impressive young women. Make a point to meet them at upcoming meetings!



Kids on the Block

The following Alpha Phi members participated in wrapping gifts for Kids on the Block before Christmas: MaryJo Baughman, Pat Hartline, Mary Holland, Joy Hudson, Lin Marten, Sherry McCullough, Sharon McMahan, Barbara Northcut, Jensi Souders, and Amy Thompson. That’s a great turn-out! Thanks to all of our sisters!

This fundraising effort raised almost \$19,000 for CKOB to continue its mission of educating children on social concerns and providing them skills to stay safe and healthy!

Mini Grant Information

At the December meeting, Alpha Phi awarded two mini grants to early career educators. The grants were in the amount of four hundred dollars (\$400) each to be given to educators in their first three years of teaching. Lindsey Gaddis, a first year kindergarten teacher at Rivermont Elementary, was the recipient of a grant to purchase hands-on learning tools that will enhance guided reading. Tira Robinson is in her first year of teaching and is an educator at Dalewood Middle School, an “at risk” school in Hamilton County. Tira will purchase BrainPop and Flocabulary to foster better reading comprehension in her sixth grade science classes. Each recipient will present a brief talk at the March chapter meeting to discuss the outcomes resulting from the grant award.

Shown in the picture are Lindsey Gaddis, Alpha Phi president Lin Marten, and Tira Robinson.



Membership News

Welcome to Our Newest Members

Kathy Cox, Christina Neighbors, and Amy Wright were initiated in November at our four-chapter joint initiation. They were among 14 women educators who were initiated.

Kathy Cox is in her second year as a special education teacher. She works in the Rhea County School system. Kathy was one of our mini-grant recipients last year.. You may have met Kathy when she attended our September meeting to report on how she spent her mini-grant. Cami Mitchell and Sharon McMahan are her sponsors.

Christina Neighbors, sponsored by Ann Moore, teaches second grade at Bright School. This is her fourth year in education. She is a big sister with Big Brothers/Big Sisters. While at Chattanooga State Community College as a student, Christina received the Presidential Award and was a member of the Student Government Association and the Education Association.

Amy Wright has been a Catoosa County, Georgia, educator, for more than 15 years. She is the librarian at Ringgold Primary School. She and her husband, Tracy (band director at Ringgold Middle School) are the proud parents of one-year-old Georgia.

Plan to be at the February meeting so that you can meet these outstanding educators and get to know them first hand!

Special congratulations to Dr. Lena Engstrom, who received her 40-year pin at our meeting in September.



Thanks to Members Who Helped Complete Our Chapter Profile

All but six of our active and reserve members completed a member profile as we worked to prepare our chapter profile for Xi State Organization and International. Jensi Souders, Membership Chair, says thanks to all who participated.

You will receive a report on our chapter, based on the profile, at the February meeting. Be there to learn where we need to focus our efforts for membership in the near future!

Jensi

Misc

Save Those Pop Tabs!!

Please continue saving pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald house.

Alpha Phi is in charge of decorations for Founders' Day. We need volunteers. Contact Lin Marten or Sharon McMahan if you can help.

Officer Training Dates

Following are the tentative dates for the spring chapter officer training.

East TN: March 29 / Middle TN: April 12 / West TN: April 26

These dates are somewhat later than trainings in the past so chapters have ample time to get the new slate of offices in place. Although the specific list of those who will be trained is not definite, the following positions are being considered: presidents, program/education excellence chairs, treasurers, membership chairs, rules chairs, planning chairs, communications chairs, and webmasters. Please, "save the date!"

Happy Birthday to our Members

December

8th Jensi Souders
16th Jeanette Underwood
23rd Dr. Lena Engstrom

January

5th Cami Mitchell
6th Dr. Judy Nixon
15th Mary Jo Baughman