

2014-2016 Biennium

The June 19, 2014, picnic meeting was held at President Sandy Deforno's home. In her president's report, Sandy discussed goals for encouraging active membership and thanked Valerie Ripple for all her newspaper articles on DKG meetings. It was pointed out that if the chapter gives scholarship(s), it could keep \$.40 of every dollar sent in dues to Alpha Alpha State DKG. Five members attended state convention in June: Sandy Deforno, Connie Marr, Denise Gamble, Rose Valasek and Lynn Sibley. Connie made and presented our chapter's student chair for the state project. The chairs represent missing students due to lack of funding for Head Start. Therefore, the new initiative for the state in the next biennium will be early childhood education. Next year will be Alpha Theta's 60th birthday. Two college juniors in education received \$500 scholarships from the chapter—Stephanie Gabrielchic (speech pathology) and Tiffany Smietana (home economics). Connie Powers reviewed the audit and an application for new member Erin Burkett was read.

Alpha Theta Chapter met on September 30, 2014 at the Free Methodist Church of Kittanning for their dinner meeting with President Sandy Deforno presiding. A memorial service was held for Madge Weber, a charter member of the chapter and longtime educator. Many had memories to share about Madge as both a friend and an educator. New, updated chapter standing rules were proposed by the officers and accepted through unanimous vote by the members. Erin Burkett, English and Spanish teacher at Ford City HS, was accepted for membership and will be initiated at later meeting. The annual fall auction for scholarship was held with Deborah Ceraso as auctioneer. Handmade crafts and homemade baked goods donated by members were sold. The sale money plus donations given totaled \$1374 to be used for scholarships for young women who have completed their junior year of college in an educational field. Members were reminded to nominate young women who meet the criteria for the scholarship to be awarded next spring.

The November 6, 2014 dinner meeting of Alpha Theta Chapter was held at the Kittanning Free Methodist Church. President Deforno reminded members of deadlines to apply for state scholarships and enrichment grants. There is also a new grant for members to be awarded by the state, called the Educational Foundation Project, which provides funds for classroom teachers for individual classroom projects. Members voted to provide Christmas gifts for a family specified by HAVIN. The program was provided by Pam Fouse and Marna Holzer who are employees of the Mechling-Shakley Veterans' Center near Cowansville. They conducted a question and answer discussion about the center, which provides a community-based residential treatment facility for homeless veterans needing rehabilitation and support. DKG members learned about the programs and services offered by the center to veterans. Members had collected a large variety of cleaning supplies, which had been requested by the center, and those plus cash donations were given to Fouse and Holzer. Throughout the next biennium, the chapter will find ways to continue to support the veterans' center.

On March 3, Alpha Theta met at the Kittanning Free Methodist Church for their first dinner meeting of 2015. Sandy Deforno called the meeting to order and Corresponding Secretary Barb Meleason read a thank you from the family we sponsored at Christmas. It was reported that Alpha Theta had 54 active members. The Alpha Alpha State Convention is June 12-14. Saturday's activities at the convention will include a celebration luncheon during which the chapter will be recognized for its 60th birthday. The chapter's 50th birthday picture, taken at Rural Valley Lodge in 2005, was passed around for all to see. A DKG member portal is available online through the state organization for all members use. Vice President Denise

Gamble introduced guests Corrin Linkes and Ashley Wasson. The evening's program was introduced by Connie Marr. Three high school students, one each from Kittanning High School, Ford City High School and West Shamokin High School, held a panel discussion on what education meant to them as well as some of the obstacles they faced now and potentially in the future.

Alpha Theta met at Kittanning Free Methodist Church on April 16, 2015, for a dinner meeting with President Sandy Deforno presiding. As the chapter is celebrating its 60th birthday, the hostesses decorated the room with a birthday theme and a birthday cake was eaten. Rose Valasek is asking for members to submit applicants for the chapter's scholarship for a college junior in education. Erin Burkett, Corrin Linkes and Ashley Wasson were accepted as new members. The chapter voted to donate \$1/member for a gift for outgoing state President Kay Stuart and to send a gift card basket to convention for the fundraising raffle. A memorial for Florence Crisman, who passed recently, was read by Denise Gamble.

A summer picnic was held on June 18, 2015, at President Sandy Deforno's home. Sandy reported that seven members attended the Alpha Alpha State convention at Penn State on June 12-14, where 43 chapters were represented by 243 members. Rose Valasek received the Album of Distinction Award from the state. Members are encouraged to receive the State magazine, The Keystonian, online as mailing it is a huge expense for the organization. There is a \$500 grant available for anyone who would like a classroom project funded. Margaret Long and Brianna Switzer were the chapter's 2105 scholarship recipients. Membership Committee Chair Denise Gamble reported that the chapter is reaching out to nonmembers by creating welcoming "bouquets" of teacher supplies to be placed in every school building throughout the district and the administration building. An open discussion was held on the possibility of redirecting the scholarship money for college juniors to a grant/s for early career educators. A Strategic Action plan has been approved by the executive board.

The Kittanning Free Methodist Church was the site of the September 29th meeting of the Alpha Theta chapter, DKG. The chapter voted to merge the Besse Ekis Barr Scholarship and the Grant in Aid into one account. The chapter has 58 members and dues are \$68. Quite different from 60 years ago when dues were \$7 in 1955! Thank you letters were read from the Mechling Center, Brianna Switzer, and Margaret Long. President Sandy Deforno reported that the chapter has received a birthday certificate from the state and she thanked all who helped with the outreach projects, which were well-received across the district. Rose Valasek talked about the new grants to be given from the Besse Ekis Barr account. Available are Enrichment grants for DKG members and teacher aid grants, for which any female Armstrong teacher, DKG member or not, who has been teaching less than 6 years is eligible to apply. Guidelines for the awards were explained. It was moved and passed that this new format for grants be accepted. The new state project is to support local libraries.

The chapter met October 22, 2015, at the Kittanning Free Methodist Church for their dinner meeting. Sister Janine Lazor provided a discussion of many interesting and items that are involved in the U.S. Forum through DKG.

For the March 31st meeting of Alpha Theta at the Kittanning Free Methodist Church the officers for the next biennium were elected. President-Connie Marr, First Vice President-Denise Gamble, Second Vice President-Trisha Dilick, Recording Secretary-Rhonda Reed, Corresponding Secretary-Barb Meleason, and Treasurer-Linda Van Sicklin. The auction was

held with the proceeds to be used to provide Grant-in-Aid for projects developed by new teachers to help their students learn in the classroom.

At the May 3, 2020 meeting a memorial service was held for Arlene Patcyk. Plans were discussed for attending the 2016 State Convention on June 10-12, 2016. The chapter has a website that has been certified by International. The website <https://alphathetapa.weebly.com/> is linked to the International and State websites with the goal of providing information for the chapter as well as an opportunity for other educators to learn of the organization locally.

Sandy thanked the officers and members for their support during the biennium. Installation of new officers was conducted at the conclusion of the meeting.