

Beta Bits



Volume 81, Issue 2 – October 2019

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International • Beta Chapter • Alpha Epsilon State

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.

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Dates to remember:

- ❖ **Saturday, November 2**
Council VIII
Luncheon,
11:00 a.m.
Woodstock Club,
1301 W. 38th
Street
Reservations due October 20!
- ❖ **November 15-16**
Fall Arts Retreat
- ❖ **Tuesday, December 10**
December
Meeting at
Serenity Tea
room

The President's Perspective

Dear Beta sisters:

The weather has finally turned to autumn. This is the last week for corn and tomatoes at farmer's market. And though we may be sad to part with summer's pleasures, autumn in the Midwest also has abundant delights.

We changed up our September meeting and conducted it this year at Bravo's. The ice-breaker before the business meeting and waiting for our meals afterwards gave us a chance to catch up with each other after the summer hiatus. The meeting included a program where members were invited to get more involved in our chapter by joining a hostess team for one of our 2019-2020 programs. Thank you to Jill Alsop and Mindy Armstrong and their hostess team for celebrating the society with a delicious cake and for an ice-breaker that helped bring warmth, joy, and festivity to our gathering.

At our October meeting, Beta member Susan Hintz gave a moving tribute to her friend Susan Jordan, a former school principal who devoted her life to uplifting and empowering children; on January 26, 2016 she ultimately sacrificed her life to protect the students at Amy Beverland Elementary. Beta is honored to have the founder and first principal of Amy Beverland, Susan Hintz, as our 2nd Vice President and Susan Jordan as a former member of our society. Thank you to Karen Braeckel and Lori Schneider for working behind the scenes and in full view to make sure the projector worked. As we teachers know, technology introduces uncertainties; we are grateful to have supportive chapter whose members are ready to help out when needed.

At the State Executive Board meeting in September, State President Jo Jones informed us of an upcoming dissolution of an Indiana chapter of DKG. She held back tears as she shared the news; losing a chapter for her is losing a member of the family. Beta is fortunate to have a large and active chapter, and we want to keep it that way. Please begin thinking about what you love about our chapter and also ways we might make it even better; we'll be eliciting that information from you some time in the future.

The President's Perspective - continued

We will meet again for a luncheon at Woodstock on Saturday, November 2nd. It will be a joint meeting with Council 8, the four DKG chapters in Indianapolis. Shannon Anderson, a nationally known children's book author, will be our guest speaker. We hope you will join us!

Nancy Goldfarb

Going 'Across the Pond'

Congratulations to Michele Lefkovitz for receiving a Travel/Study Grant from DKG! Michele traveled to Ireland, and we are looking forward to hearing about her trip!

If you wish to apply for a scholarship or Travel Study Grant, please go to <https://www.dkgindiana.org/> where you will find additional information and application forms.

Going Back to School!

Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, is the site for the 2020 Spring Conference on Saturday, April 25, 2020. The meetings will be held at the L.A. Pittenger Center. For those of you who attended BSU, you may be surprised at how much the campus has grown in the last several years. It's not your mother's (or grandmother's) Ball State Teachers College!

The host committee invites DKG members to submit applications for presenting a workshop. Forms are available at <https://www.dkgindiana.org/>. The deadline for applications is October 31, 2019.



Going Visiting . . .

Nancy Hoff recently visited 49-year Beta member Roleen Pickard at her new home. She reports that Roleen is doing well, but she would enjoy cards and notes.

**Roleen Pickard
730 N. Spring Road
Apt. 234
Westerville, OH 43082**

Beta Back Story:

She Earns an 'A' for Advocacy

This month's Beta Chapter member spotlight honors Roni Embry, whose generous heart and capable practicality have made a difference in many lives. She was invited into Delta Kappa Gamma by Sheila Baker. Roni jumped in working to increase membership in Beta each year. In ten years of membership Roni has served as Beta Chapter's treasurer and as legislative chair at chapter and state level.

Roni was honored at state convention last spring as a DKG Indiana State 2017-19 Woman of Distinction for her work as an advocate for teachers and public education in the Indiana State Legislature as well as leadership in women's organizations in Indianapolis, including being recognized as the 2019 Friend of School Social Work from the Indiana School Social Work Association for her work on trauma-informed approaches.

Roni was an only child with fun-loving parents, Wiley and Valentine Embry. She was born in Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, while her father was in the 101st Airborne. She lived in many places and grew up around ball parks as her father was a professional baseball umpire. Roni's mother, Val, was a homemaker who eventually became a professional caterer. Her mom was named after her great grandfather's Broadway stage name. Roni learned to live life to the fullest from her father Wiley, a pioneer heart transplant recipient, as well as one of the longest survivors. At one time he was the world's fastest in swimming, running and long jump competition in the World Heart Transplant Olympics. Roni graduated from Southport High School in Indianapolis. She excelled athletically on the Southport girls' basketball team that won a state championship! As a high school cadet teacher, Roni coached Special Olympics at Rise Learning Academy and was a weekly mental health peer mentor at Central State Hospital.

Initially wanting to be a social worker because her father was in foster care as a youth, at DePauw University, Roni found her career path with a B.S. degree in psychology and elementary education. Later, Roni earned her M.A. from Butler University

Roni's first teaching position was in fifth Grade at Harrison Hill Elementary in MSD Lawrence Twp. Her 22-year career in Lawrence schools included teaching positions in second through fifth grades, as well as middle school special education. Her philosophy was teaching her students to see the best in themselves and to make their corner of the world better by being kind. Roni devoted herself to her students and to other teachers with caring professionalism. She was a building representative, negotiation team member, insurance chair, grievance chair, and president for the Lawrence Educators Association.

Roni also was on a statewide political action committee for the Indiana State Teachers Association, which led to a second career. Roni worked as a UniServ Director for two different ISTA units in northeast Indiana representing teachers, then transitioned to Public Education Advocacy Coordinator for ISTA. Roni reviews and helps write public policy for laws, testifies and meets with legislators and elected officials. She builds community partners with friends of education from local school boards, statewide and national offices. Member education and training how to lobby for legislative action also is part of Roni's position. She mentors a high school student on policy each legislative session. Her focus of advocacy and leadership at the state legislature is building coalition and legislation for mental health support services in schools and communities with trauma informed practices.



Continued on next page

Beta Back Story: Continued

Roni met her husband, Tom Burns, doing Lawrence Educators Association work and lobbying. They have three sons: Nic Rusher, a hospital administrator, Brandon Higgins, a social worker at Horizon House, and Josh Higgins who has passed. One of the fondest memories of her career was adopting her former fifth grade student as her son.

A 38-year connection with a German exchange student who stayed with Roni's family one high school year has given Roni a family to visit every August in Germany. They are working with Syrian immigrants whom Roni has grown close to. Roni helped design a campaign for daily work program which has given immigrants something viable to do as a dignity issue. Pictured below is one of the Berlin Buddy Bears which she brought home from her 2019 trip to Germany. She fell in love with the Buddy Bears because they stand with raised arms to indicate friendliness and optimism, two characteristics Roni strives to exemplify.

Some of Roni's other involvements in our city are volunteering at The Propylaeum, being on their board of directors as the May Wright Sewall Women's Series Chair. She is a co-president with Sherry Watkins of the Indianapolis chapter of American Association of University Women. Roni is a member of the Indianapolis Women's Council and an ISTA-Retired chapter. In her spare time Roni enjoys gardening, reading, traveling, swimming, helping her mom with catering, and time with her rescue westie named Josie.

Beta Chapter thanks you, Roni, for your heart and hard work towards improving people's lives.



Buddy Bears are painted, life-size fiberglass bear sculptures developed by German businesspeople Klaus and Eva Herlitz, in cooperation with sculptor Roman Strobl. The raised arms of the standing Buddy Bears are intended to indicate friendliness and optimism. The first bears were displayed at an artistic event in Berlin in 2001.



Celebrating DKG With Cake & 'Birthdays'

Our September meeting included feasting on Italian food, a celebration of DKG milestone birthdays, and a preview of the year's programs.



Without a hostess team, there would be no meetings – or really “boring” ones. The hostess team for the September meeting inspired us to enthusiastically **Celebrate DKG** for this biennium!

Team members were Mindy Armstrong, Michele Lefkovitz, Ruth Simmons, Carolyn Cook, and Jill Alsop, team captain.



At the September meeting, “birthday roses” are presented to Karen Braeckel (35 years), Sherry Watkins (35 years), Amy Karas (25 years), Karen Brantingham (25 years), and Lori Schneider (5 years).



Celebrating their milestone DKG birthdays at the October meeting are Roni Embry (10 years), Paula Miller (10 years), and Maureen Murphy (20 years).

Not pictured are Cindy Martz (20 years), Marilyn Knox (25 years), and Bonnie Benson (30 years).

Celebrating DKG: Honoring One Who Gave All

Susan Hintz remembers Susan Jordan, whose life was taken too soon.



On January 26, 2016, former Beta Susan Jordan was fatally injured while on bus duty when a school bus jumped the curb and struck her. Susan, however, is remembered as a hero as she pushed several students to safety. A long-time teacher and principal in Lawrence Township, Indianapolis, Susan touched the lives of thousands of students over the years. Second vice-president Susan Hintz, a longtime friend and mentor to Susan, presented a memorial program at our October meeting.

During her presentation, Susan related the many ways Susan had positively affected the lives of her students and the many honors she received.

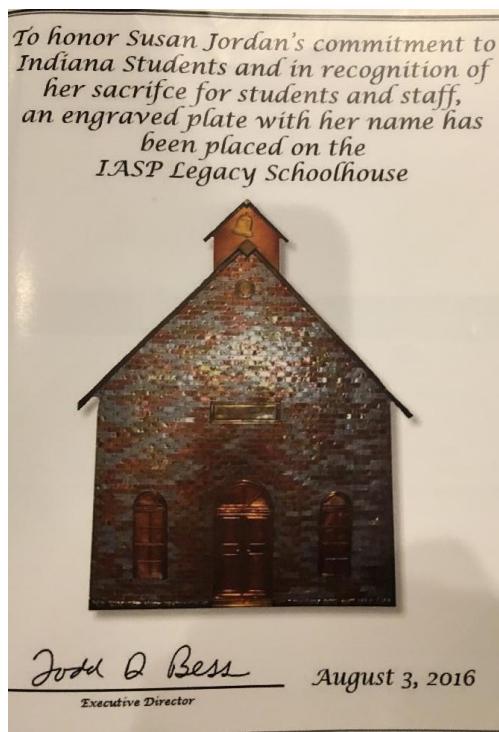
Following the meeting, Beta members donated in Susan's memory to the Lawrence Township Foundation. This was in addition to a donation from Beta Chapter.



The National Association of Elementary School Principals established a Tree of Life Memorial in memory of Dawn Hochsprung, the principal who was killed in the Sandy Hook School tragedy.

The Tree is located at the Association's headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, and "honors elementary and middle school principals who have made an extraordinary sacrifice teaching, educating, preparing, and protecting our most cherished resource."

On March 13, 2016, this leaf was placed on the Tree in honor of Susan in recognition of her contributions and sacrifice for the students of Amy Beverland Elementary School.



Susan was also remembered by the Indiana Association of School Principals.

D.K.G.-COUNCIL 8

Annual Luncheon

Saturday, November 2nd, 11:00 am
Woodstock Club, 1301 W. 38th Street, Indianapolis



Shannon Anderson

Children's Book Author/Teacher

Shannon currently teaches 3rd grade in Rensselaer and is the author of seven children's books on subjects such as perfectionism, underachievement, positivity, poetry and coping with physical issues, etc. She has worked with different editors, publishers and illustrators and will share a little about her writing process. She has been recognized by the NBC Today TV show, Chicken Soup for the Soul, cover of DisruptED Magazine, Intern. Literary Assoc. Person of the Year, published in Highlights magazine, presenter at Nerd Camp (MI), Regional Advisor for Ind. Soc. Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, serves on the board of Indiana State Literacy Association, and publishes a monthly blog. Her books will be available for sale (great holiday gifts!) and to be autographed before/after her presentation. Learn more about her at shannonisteaching.com



Lunch choices will be:

A. **Grilled Vegetable Crepe** -

marinated portobello, asparagus, carrot, red onion and squash in twin crepes (crepes can be eliminated for those who are gluten free) and sun-dried tomato coulis

B. **Hot & Creamy Chicken Casserole** (The Bridge Plate)- baked with golden breadcrumbs and crispy fennel slaw (breadcrumbs can be eliminated for those who are gluten free)

All meals are accompanied by sticky buns, mini-dessert and coffee/tea/lemonade

The price for speaker, either entrée/drink/dessert, plus tip and tax is **\$27.00**.

Please make checks payable to your chapter and mail to your chapter treasurer by **Oct. 20th**.

PGP points
available for attending!

Please see page 8 for reservation form.

Celebrating DKG: Celebrating Us!



President Nancy Goldfarb and Beta Bits editor Barbara Moser display the *Five-Star Newsletter Award* the chapter received for 2018-2019.



Holding her *Women of Distinction Award*, Roni Embry poses for a quick picture with Ruth Simmons and Nancy Goldfarb.

Reservation form for Council 8 Luncheon:

(Please cut off and send with your reservation to Jan Good. We need a final count by Sunday, October 20, 2019.)

I, _____, can attend the November 2, 2019, Council 8 luncheon. Enclosed is my check for \$27.00, payable to DKG, Beta chapter. I prefer this lunch choice:

Grilled Vegetable Crepe Chicken Casserole Please circle one.

Please mail your RSVP and check to Jan Good, 315 E. 10th St., Indianapolis, IN 46202.

Remember to email janmgood@sbcglobal.net or call or text (317) 371-1172 Jan when you mail your check!

(Sometimes letters take special side trips and excursions without extra charge!)