

The Alaska Nuggets

ALASKA STATE ORGANIZATION

THE DELTA KAPPA GAMMA SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL for KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS



FALL 2020 Volume XXXV No. 3

[www.http://www.dkgalaska.org](http://www.dkgalaska.org)

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ACTION ITEMS

- SAVE THE DATE!! DKG Alaska State Organization Spring Online Convention, April 17th**
- [Click here to get PDF of this newsletter to print](#)

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DKG NUGGETS?

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AK STATE ORGANIZATION

President, Cynde Hill
1st Vice President, Gara Williams
2nd Vice President, Cherilyn Ansley
Secretary, Gretchen Klein and Marlin Collins
Treasurer, Joan Lower

[TREASURER'S REPORT 6-30-2020](#)

Alaskan DKG Sisters,

I hope this issue of The Nuggets finds you and yours healthy and safe. Our current world is definitely different from anything we would have predicted a year ago, but after hearing from chapter presidents at last night's Executive Board Meeting, I am impressed with the different ways our Alaskan chapters are reaching out to one another, finding ways to support education, and continuing to learn and serve together. You are still the amazing women educators you've always been and I'm inspired by your resilience in the face of challenge.

I encourage you to look for ways to keep your relationships with one another strong, and to nurture one another. Be the one who takes time to write a text or make a phone call to brighten the day of a DKG sister – and your own day!

I am proud of our organization and for all it stands for in these times that have been characterized by divisiveness and discord. We can make a difference as we build unity and bridges that bring people together. Your chapters have traditions of serving in schools and where other needs are felt. I heard some great ways that the service continues, even when we have to wear masks and stand 6 feet apart to help! As other doors of activity have closed, I find it empowering to help others and make positive choices that are still possible.

I give my highest regard to the teachers, librarians, and other educational professionals who are stretching to embrace new competencies with online delivery of education and meeting daily shifting circumstances in the workplace. Further, these pursuits are done while meeting the growing responsibilities of parenting where children are also home, unable to attend school or play with their friends. Those teacher skills of resourcefulness, thinking on our feet, and meeting children's challenges with creativity and enthusiasm are really being put to use now, aren't they?

My best hopes are with each of you, that you will be able to find good cheer, positive solutions, and ways to truly flourish in our new climate.

Warmest regards,
Cynde Hill, Alaska State President

BETA

Chapter Report

Submitted By Eleanor Houts

Beta Chapter 2020-2021 school year began with an August social – a hotdog roast at member Claudia Hall’s hangar - hangar doors open wide, camp chairs positioned 6’ apart and smiling eyes peeking over masks. The weather was perfect for such an evening and we were entertained by our members playing and learning to play the marimba. Member Peggy Carlson, who leads several marimba groups, brought equipment for the enjoyment and learning experiences of all.

Our first order of business in our September meeting was to honor and profusely express gratitude to our phenomenal out-going Beta officers headed by Maryanne Allan. She and her board of Kathy Alton, Judy Jaspersen, and Judy Tolbert served for two consecutive terms and were an amazing and dedicated team.

Our September and October meetings were held in Claudia’s home with members masked while others “Zoomed in” to participate. We especially enjoyed having women who have moved out of state, and yet retained their memberships, be able to join us once again via technology.

September’s program focused on election considerations while October’s dealt with having personal financials in order. Both programs were well received and generated insightful discussions.

A member survey provided the executive board with new ideas and goals we might like to try as well as a list of reasons each of us enjoy our membership in DKG.

A goal is to keep each of our colleagues involved and active. Our plan is to hear from a panel of members who are actively teaching and learn of their experiences while we look for ways of assisting those who are under the constraints of the pandemic lockdown. We will also take part in supporting KUAC, our local radio station, in their annual fund-raising drive.

EPSILON

Chapter Report



ETA

Chapter Report

Eta is organizing activities that members can do at home but also with the group, for example a paint night or cooking night via zoom. We are planning on doing a night activity also like a zoo light walk or botanical garden light walk. If and when the weather permits, we wanted to do a pop up meeting also.

We put together a survival kit for the currently working members, and will touch base with them to see what other items they may need when the students return to the classroom next month. Additionally, we made individual phone calls to the members to see how they were doing and gather ideas for what they were interested in for the year’s program.

A second survival kit was made to give to our currently working members to hand out to another teacher with information about Delta Kappa Gamma as a way to possibly gain new members.

Members expressed an interest in retirement, pre-retirement planning information. Other program interests were to invite future political candidates to attend meetings, continue to advocate for educational funding, find an activity through “justserve.org” or other agencies to help support, and continue our support of the CIT/H program within ASD through making pillowcases.

IOTA

Chapter Report

Submitted By Jan Love and Marcia Hirai



Iota Chapter in Sitka got off to a great season with the initiation of 4 new members: Meggan Turner, Cherie Creek, Ariel Starbuck and Diana Twaddle.

Initiation-in-a-Basket was delivered to one of their homes where the four gathered. They were provided with a photo to follow how to set up the table with the supplies provided. The rest of the chapter joined them on Zoom. It was a joy to welcome these outstanding women educators to our chapter.

Iota was also able to award five more mini-grants to local educators. The goal of these mini grants was to help with needs created by the Covid protocols required in all classrooms. We were able to help with online reading programs, technology tools, books related to emotional/social learning and organizational aids. Another way we like to show support is by providing home-baked goodie trays to each school in our town during American Education Week in November, but alas, this year we needed a new plan. So, a couple of our sisters have decorated snack boxes for each school, and we will fill them with individually wrapped store-bought goodies. The presentation has changed, but our appreciation for teachers, administrators, and support staff is just as sincere.

Iota will continue with a theme of caring throughout the year. We have programs planned to inform and encourage financial, personal, family and community care. The first event will feature a local financial planner. In this time of isolation, we are feeling support in seeing our sisters faces through our zoom meetings. It is a challenge and a joy to find ways to adapt to our new normal.

NU

Chapter Report



OMICRON

Chapter Report

Submitted By Amy Budge

Our year has started bumpy due to COVID 19. Members have stayed in place at home unless they are actively teaching. The August meeting was skipped because we could not meet in any group or facility. We held a very brave September Zoom meeting, which did not have a quorum because not everyone was able to get on.

At the end of October, we will try another ZOOM. It has been discouraging to go from such a vibrant group to wisps of people. This year we have 24 members divided into 4 committees. Each committee normally is responsible for two meetings a year, which includes the program and a meal. We have not started this yet, as we normally meet at a town elementary school to provide year round access to parking and easy access to the building. Currently, we are waiting on this and trying the Zoom. We still meet the last Monday of the month from 5:30-7:30 pm. Our chapter wants our programs to be built on the mission and purposes of DKG, but we have only attempted a group greeting and not a serious program. We are limited by time on our Zoom account, and still keep member contact through email by sending agendas, minutes, announcements and birthday celebrations.

Our service projects revolve around the Homer Food Pantry, our community food outreach program. We were unable to provide backpacks filled with student supplies in the Fall, but were able to give some supplies to one of the local elementary schools. We do not want to lose this program.

Omicron is very concerned about the stress our active teachers are carrying trying to teach both face to face and remotely. We are concerned about the

physical health of our members, and are trying to hold ourselves together. I am keeping this photo as an inspiration for our future of what we can be...together.



THETA

Chapter Report

Submitted By Marlin Collins



Coyote Trail Farm & Fiber Mill (CTF&FM) welcomed six members of Theta Chapter to go on a tour of the mini-fiber mill owned by Kate Wattum in June.

Kate started us off at the receiving door for the fiber that has been brought to Coyote Trail Farm & Fiber Mill for processing.

As their website states, "The whole mini-mill process is based in the concept of 'value-added'." The wool does not come from other people, but most of what Kate had in the tubs was from her own sheep and alpaca that she raises. She also receives qiviut from Nunivik Island, sheep, alpacas, and dogs, etc. Kate supplies a needed service for Alaska.



This is the machine that washes the fiber. It can wash 3 different colors of fiber per load. It is completely automatic, but, unlike a household washing machine it does not

agitate. The detergent loosens and floats away the oil and dirt. Using very hot water is needed to soften and dissolve the lanolin and other sticky oils.



After the fiber has been washed, it goes to the dryer to be dried on its own dry rack.

The Carder is the heart of the fiber mill. It separates randomly placed fibers from each other and

individually aligns these fibers, presenting them in the form of a continuous web at the output end.

After the Carder is the draw frame which further aligns the fibers, running them side by side, a process called parallelization, making a stronger, more consistent roving. Combining multiple rovings and stretching them 2 1/2 times their original length, improves the consistency from spinning at the spinning machines.

The spinner draws in rovings and directs them through a controlled system, outputting an extremely consistent fiber stream. You can see the spindles down at the bottom.



The winder creates a measured circle of fiber which when removed from the winder is hand twisted into a compact skein of yarn that Kate is holding.



We did enjoy the time Kate took with us in explaining what the process is and answering our questions.

September and October meetings were hybrid meetings - in person and via Zoom. September's program was hearing from Ron Inouye, Pamela Flory and Glenn Potts about their fantastic trip on a SilverSea cruise from Nome, Alaska to Tromsø, Norway. The slideshow was superb!

October's program was Bud Marschner's presentation on the Sandhill Cranes of Creamer's Field, which was so very informative and the photos amazing.

ZETA

Chapter Report

The women of Zeta continue to strive even in the face of a global pandemic. We continue to support each other personally and professionally as we have all found ourselves delivering our instruction in this "new" normal and are faced daily with the possibilities of change. As a collective, we are actively looking for ways to think outside the box. Taking this challenge as an opportunity to refine and enhance our communication with each other and our community. We will strive to continue to make, build, and maintain our community supports to meet the diverse and changing needs of the community we serve as we move through this pandemic as a collective.

Our current committees will be moving forward with efforts but not limited to maintaining and increasing membership, providing community outreach, giving scholarships to aspiring educators, enhancing communications and technology; because we all know that this one will be vital, and of course looking for creative ways to be a volunteer and give back. All while maintaining a solid financial base to support our efforts

As an executive board we met on Monday, October 19th and set our yearly calendar of Zoom meetings and will continue to have our traditional pre-meeting social gathering to strive to maintain some sense of normalcy. This included setting our late spring meeting as an outdoor gathering in hopes of good weather to get some much needed face-to-face connecting time.

Although our meetings and interactions will be limited and modified, we will continue to strive to keep our members recharged and energized.



SCHOLARSHIPS

By Tanya O'Brien

We are happy to award our DKG State Scholarship to Noana (Peaches) Wallin, President of Epsilon Chapter in Ketchikan.

She is currently enrolled in Western Governors University pursuing a degree in Special Education and leading to a K-12 special education certification. Her experience, recognition for

achievements and dedication and service to DKG makes her an excellent candidate for this scholarship. There were no other applicants.

Tanya O'Brien, chairman
Gayle Hammons
Mary Ann Curtis



Alaska Chapter Presidents 2020-2022

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Message From Gayle Hammons Alaska State DKG Member

I love this quote: *“Being challenged in life is inevitable. Being defeated is optional.”*

In these current times, I try to keep this in my head. I have taken to wearing the masks that allow others to see my mouth, so they can see my smile. I say “thank you” and “Enjoy the rest of your day” as often as I can---I know my fellow DKG sisters do the same.

But my major concern these days deals with the state of education, of teaching in the midst of this world pandemic. If schools become boring as they add safeguards, they might as well close their doors. Even if distance learning is all that is possible, I know that DKG members can make distance learning fun too.

If I had a classroom today, that quote would be above my door in the hallway. But I taught high school and college kids when I had a physical classroom—maybe there is another similar quote for the little ones to learn and take to heart that you can search for, one that means much to you as well.

All of this has been in my head since last spring, when this all began in earnest. Here in Sitka, only high school kids in the SSD attend a physical classroom every other day — every other child is participating in distance teaching. It is going OK. But there is still a great deal you can do, even if you are sitting at a computer, for hours at a time.

What are you doing to enrich the day as much as you can as you teach in these incredibly difficult times?

First, think of one thing that you **could** and would change about school, whether face to face or distance, almost instantly that would make you and your students happier? Would your fellow teachers be willing to do this too? Would this improve the atmosphere at your school? You are a DKG member—this is in your power!!

Think of a ritual or a once a week FUN activity that everyone, or the different subjects classrooms could do as a building!! Or, have a competition between grades or subjects. Does your principal “stand at the front door” (on camera) and greet every student as she or he can? Kids can remember this one little gesture for a lifetime.

But what can you do now??

MOVE. If you are standing, stretch your arms as high as you can, and then bend over loosely and shake those hands as if you wanted them to fall off.

If you are sitting, stretch your legs out as far as they can go and wiggle your feet AND your toes. Stretch your arms up and then side to side, twisting them so your hands are upside down at your wrists. Wiggle your fingers--- pretend to shake them off. Twist your wrists. Take hold of a shoulder, and twist it forward if you can. Then wriggle your spine a bit, sitting where you are.

Now, stretch your face muscles— make an exaggerated frown, and then a smile, and then open your mouth as much as you can, silently. Move your jaw so you can hear it move. If you can wriggle your ears, do that. If you can raise your eyebrows, do that, then shut your eyes tightly, and then open them widely. You are using sleepy muscles actively, waking them up, and.... you are waking up your brain!!

Is there a bit more energy now?

Have you tried using music in your classroom or at home? Obviously, choice is important. Sorry, but acid rock and the like just do not work. There is a great deal of music out there that is free to stream that does work. Look for music to study, but with no lyrics---soft, nature music and classical music works best here. An art or reading activity can have a background nature music played low and softly. If what they are doing is a group activity, and everyone is moving, then try some 50's or 60's music, again, not loudly, so that conversation can still be heard!

Ritual is very important to instill in any school. When your students begin to enter your classroom and leave create a ritual for everyday. Stand at your door as they enter and greet them with a cheery “Hi!” or high five each of them. Just saying the little word “Hello,” can make or break a student’s day.

Does the school have a morning ritual? A closing ritual? Work with administration to create one or both of these. Again, doing this can change the tone of the entire school population, all the way down to the janitors and aids!

We all have a tendency to think that only deskwork can be done in these challenging times. You can work in groups virtually or outside, or in the hallways or the MPR or?? If you make arrangements ahead of time, possibilities are almost endless. I once had two of my sci fi classes go out in the parking lot, and create a sci fi gadget or addition/change to every car in the lot. They returned, and wrote a justification for what they had created, and why/how it would boost the car’s value. Drawings were encouraged. Then we offered any car owners later that week to drop by and see if their cars had been chosen over the course of the two classes (90% were, at least,) and see what their cars had as “additions.” For weeks after this, the kids were still talking about this activity.

So, how could you have your students do this in the virtual classroom? Certainly, the Net is full of pictures of car models. Or airplanes, or??? Or, have them go outside and look at a car nearby. Just going outside for 5 minutes of fresh air is soooo healthy AND it wakes up the fuzzy brain!! Even if deskwork is necessary, have every other student turn his desk around somehow, or have everyone freeze, pick up their work, and sit on the floor to work for 15 minutes, and then have them return to their desks, and the others do that. Or, have the students sit in the desk next to them for the class, or activity, or the one behind them or in front of them. Or, have them move the computer 90 degrees, if possible, or???

What is coming in as light in your “class”? What is on your walls for visual stimulation, or hanging from your ceiling? There are special hooks for school classroom ceilings available on Amazon—and they work great!! Have your kids make mobiles!! There are also colored inserts for tiled ceilings that are reasonably priced, meet fire codes, and are easy to install!---Are there fun activities for “extra credit” hidden among the grammar or spelling or math rules posters?? (Every teacher owns all the extra credit in the world---what she does with that is her choice!! Regardless, kids of all ages love extra credit!!) When the kids walk in, what do they see and hear and feel?

For those of you who are so computer-savvy that changing the background, or music, or desktop pictures is like second-nature, share that expertise with others. Everyone could benefit from a change in scenery, even if it is only for 5 minutes.

You each can come up with so many more ideas to lift spirits in your classes and buildings. Just make them happen!!

