

# The Alpha Xi Messenger

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International  
Pennsylvania State Organization

February, 2024



## The President's Message



Hi DKG Ladies!

This spring will be a busy and exciting time of year for our chapter!

At our March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting at the Clubhouse we will be able to meet our three enrichment grant winners and hear the plans for their awards. We'll conclude our school supply project but continue to collect for Dress for Success through the end of the year. We will also have the opportunity to hear from a speaker whom we've enjoyed in the past, Carleton Young, and our meal will be a delicious buffet dinner.

We can discuss plans for our tri-chapter meeting that will take place in May when our chapter will meet with members of Theta and Alpha Phi chapters as well as the State President, Royce Boyd. It will give us an opportunity to learn about each other and share ideas for programs and projects.

Our upcoming state convention will be held at the Cranberry Marriott in June, and our chapter is excited for the chance to attend and get involved. We hope that many of our members will take advantage of these exciting opportunities!

See you soon, Paulette



## The 2023-2024 Program Calendar – Remaining Meetings

Date	Location	Program	Meal
Wednesday, March 13, 2024	The Clubhouse, Rt. 8 in Gibsonia	Speaker – Carleton Young Discovering a Family History	Buffet dinner
Saturday, April 27, 2024	The Springfield Grill in Seven Fields	Celebration of Life Ceremony Musical Performance – Josh Morton, Duquesne University, violin	Luncheon
Saturday, May 18, 2024	South Hills Country Club Brownsville Road	State President, Royce Boyd installation of chapter elected officers Alpha Phi, Alpha Xi, and Theta	Luncheon

Check out our article about Alpha Xi on the PA state website [HERE!](#) Articles should remain on this webpage for 3 months! Thanks to Karen Ulrich for writing the article!

**Newsletter Editor and Web Manager:** *Melody Hannegan*  
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## Membership/Teacher Enrichment Grants

Jeanne Vendeland – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and Committee Chair

Spring is in the air which means it's time to plan how to help Alpha Xi thrive heading into next year. And that means encouraging others to join. By far the best way to grow our membership is through recommendations from our current members. If you can think of anyone who would be an asset to our organization, invite her to a meeting. We always have interesting programs and delicious meals, not to mention a friendly and talented group of women!

I hope you can attend our meeting in March to welcome this year's Teacher Enrichment Grant recipients: Kathleen Elder from Shaler, Meredith France from North Hills, and Kerri Ruffennach from North Allegheny. It will be fascinating to hear how these accomplished educators plan to use the funds to enhance their students' learning.



Alpha Phi member, Louise Biddle, is turning 100 years old this spring, so her chapter is collecting cards for her. Please bring a card to the March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. Melody will provide some unused cards, in case you forget!

## The Program Committee

Phyllis Jenny, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President and Committee Chair

Our next DKG meeting is on Wednesday, March 13, at the Clubhouse on Route 8. We will have a buffet dinner of hot foods, salad, rolls, dessert, and beverages. The room is available from 4:45 to 7:45, so please do not plan on arriving before 4:45.

The speaker, Carleton Young will present the program "Discovering a Family History, from the Famous and Heroic to the Infamous and Notorious". I'm looking forward to hearing his very interesting family history.

Our guests will be this year's grant recipients from the North Allegheny, North Hills, and Shaler school districts. Join us in welcoming and congratulating these women educators. Hope to see you there.

## TO DO LIST

- ✓ Mail the RSVP and check 3-4 days before the due date
- ✓ Donate school supplies (March)
- ✓ Bring money or cleaning products (either March or April)
- ✓ Buy birthday card for 100 year old DKG member (March)
- ✓ Select and bring in items to illustrate your hobbies or interests for display at the tri-chapter meeting (either)
- ✓ Donate items for Dress for Success (either)
- ✓ Biographical Form to Paulette (any time)

*The February Meeting is brought to you by the North Hills teachers!*

# PROJECTS



## **ONGOING: SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND DRESS FOR SUCCESS**

Phyllis Jenny and Shari McGill

School Supplies and Clothing Donations will be collected at the March meeting. Clothing can also be brought to the April meeting!



## **GRADY GETS GLASSES PROJECT**

Terry Klein

Last August, our Alpha Xi chapter lost Dede Rittman, a valued, creative member of DKG. Dede was the author of two books, one on Student Teaching and one on a delightful bunny named Grady, who was helping young children appreciate how cool it was to wear glasses.

After her passing, I kept thinking about the books and stuffed bunnies Dede used when she visited schools to talk to elementary classes about bullying and to present to older students about becoming an author. There were bins of these books and bunnies in her basement.

Fearing that the books and toy bunnies would be lost when the house was cleared out, I asked the family if I could take them and donate them to charity in the name of DKG. And that is how bins of books and bunnies were delivered before the holidays to North Hills Community Outreach, Mars Children's Home, and Glade Run in Zelienople, formerly known as the Lutheran Children's Home. I also donated copies to my local library where bookplates were attached, memorializing Dede. All of these organizations were excited and grateful to receive these donations.

In some small way, Dede's legacy lives on in the hands of the many youngsters who now have Grady bunnies to hold while reading about his adventures. I know how pleased she would be.

## **UPDATE ON ONE OF LAST YEAR'S PROJECTS:**

### **Sew Powerful and The Olive Branch**

Jeanne Keys

Sew Powerful, an International Organization, collected 29,475 purses in the U.S. in 2023. The Olive Branch contributed 651, which ranked among the highest individual contributions in the U.S. They wanted us to know how grateful they are for the help we gave them last year. It is nice that many young Zambian women will have the opportunity to attend school, and that we helped a little bit toward this goal.



## STATE CONVENTION RAFFLE BASKET

Executive Board

Each chapter donates a raffle basket for the state convention. Our chapter will be making a basket of household cleaning products. You may participate by making a monetary donation which will be used to purchase these items, or you can bring cleaning products to put in the basket. Please do not bring in any giant sized items that would be difficult to put in a basket and/or be difficult to carry.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

**March 1<sup>st</sup>** – deadline for Album of Distinction (state) and DKGIEF Project (international)  
**June 19-21** – PA DKG Convention in Cranberry Township  
**July 9-13** – International Convention at National Harbor, MD

## Member News

It's been busy and also wonderful for **Jade Leung** since the last meeting. On Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, she participated in the International Lego Day Event with Pgh. Steel City LUG (adult Lego group) at Ross Park Mall and showcased a Lunar New Year Lego theme display. Darlene even visited! Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>, she attended the woman's basketball game Teacher Appreciation Celebration as part of my role on Duquesne University's School of Education Alumni Council. On Feb 10<sup>th</sup>, Jade also performed a new nunchuk pattern at a Lunar New Year community event in Fox Chapel.



**Marg Foster** is feeling better and is hoping to attend a future meeting soon.

**Paulette Hemmings** is scheduled to have her long-awaited knee replacement surgery on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Shari McGill's** son, Paul, is the choreographer for the Tick, Tick, Boom performances at the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts in D.C.

**Melissa Costantino-Poruben** had an incredible super week in Washington, DC with the National Education Association. The highlight was meeting Minority Speaker Hakeem Jeffries, and Education International Executive Secretary, David Edward, who is a graduate of Slippery Rock High School! He now works in Brussels, Belgium for Education International, but he has family in Belle Vernon - small world! She is also working on the Hadley Haas campaign for the state's 44<sup>th</sup> legislative district. Finally, Melissa will be presenting at the NEA Leadership Summit in Chicago on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Lots of exciting things happening right now!



It's always good when **Bob Stakeley**, Educational Director for the Heinz History Center and Shaler Alumnus speaks at our meetings!