



THE DELTA KAPPA GAMMA SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL



# PENNSYLVANIA STATE ORGANIZATION ETA'S GAMMA RAYS

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## A Message from Your President

Hi Sisters,

I hope you had an enjoyable Thanksgiving in spite of restrictions. I was not able to celebrate with my family. My intended guest list included my children and their families and my brother and sister-in-law. Well two of my grandchildren were exposed to COVID at their babysitter's house and have to quarantine from Nov. 24-Dec 8. Since they had been here previously, my immune compromised daughter and sister-in-law decided to stay home. During these unprecedented times, counting blessings is what has helped my mental health.

One of my personal goals for this biennium is "Connection and Celebration." I am looking for ways to both connect and celebrate members. One of the ideas we talked about at our meeting in November was to activate the Love committee to keep us all updated on happenings with our members, birthdays, happy events and just touching base. With that in mind, I would like to ask you to answer a few questions (optional, please don't feel obligated if you don't want to share). Look for the questionnaire and email your responses to me.

Making connections with our community, specifically teachers, was discussed in September. A letter of thanks and gratitude was composed and was to be sent to all school districts, private schools and schools of higher learning with a request to forward to all teachers. With the recent spike in COVID cases and schools being in flux, it was decided to hold off sending until after the Christmas holiday. The reason for this is that we want to make sure teachers actually receive our thanks and that our letter doesn't get lost in cyberspace.

Our next scheduled get together (other than book club) was to be a meeting and fundraiser at Isaacs. We aren't sure if Isaacs is even doing this now, but erring on the side of safety, it was decided that we would look into just having the fundraiser during the date decided without gathering to meet or socialize. More information will be sent out when plans are finalized.

Last Sunday was the first Sunday of Advent. The candle of HOPE was lit. It certainly resonated with me that HOPE is exactly what we need right now. In addition to the HOPE that your faith brings, let's HOPE that kindness starts to spread as fast as a virus across our country. Let's HOPE that the virus begins to die down and let's HOPE that in the near future we can get together again without fear.

Blessings to you all,

*Janys*



*As we each do our part to stay safe and to keep others healthy, may we all look forward to once again filling in our calendars in*

*2021*

*With many opportunities to grow and glow as Eta Sisters.*

*Better Days are surely Coming!*

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*

## The Joy of Collecting Presidential Memorabilia

By Eta Member Gayle Brass

My interest in politics was inherited from my mother who was Executive Secretary of the Worcester (MA) County Republican Club for years. In 1983 when I received my doctorate a friend had a ceramic elephant made for me with grooves for pencils in the back of it since I was a teacher. It started my collection of elephants (stuffed elephants too) and to date I believe I have 300 or so, all sizes; many friends have given me them through the years.

I have hundreds of things in my Presidential Memorabilia collection. I have a few favorites in my collection. The first is "Cocktails at the White House," a work of art which I bought at the Jersey Shore when I retired. Each President and his wife are depicted and after each election, the artist adds the new Presidential family. Second is a bracelet music box that plays "The Anniversary Waltz" on the 50th Anniversary of the Eisenhower's. A large collage of FDR compiled by the old Thomas McCann Shoe Co. is also a favorite. I also have a replica of the mourning watch that Jackie Kennedy wore for a year after her husband was killed.

I have mountains of Presidential and political books that I have collected through the years and I cannot name a favorite.

Through the years I have attended Presidential libraries as follows: Richard Nixon's in Yorba Linda, CA (3 visits); Ronald Reagan's in Simi Valley, CA (2 visits); FDR's in Hyde Park, NY; Franklin Pierce's in NH; George H. W. Bush's at Texas A&M; LBJ's in Austin, TX and JFK's in Boston (3 visits). I have also visited the graves of several Presidents. This past summer three friends and I drove down to Berkeley Springs, WVA to visit the birthplace of James Buchanan and visit the mineral springs that George Washington frequently visited. I have visited the homes of Ike and Jimmy Carter and LBJ's ranch in Austin. I have always loved history and feel that a Presidential collection is well worth the effort it takes to collect and maintain it.

I have also attended many Presidential events. My favorite political event has to be my first Presidential Inauguration, Pres. Reagan's. I had received a personal invitation to attend all of the functions and brought my daughter who attended the Young Republicans' functions. My dear friend, Roberta, who has since passed away, drove down from New Jersey. It was a blustery cold January and some outside events had to be indoors. Another highlight of my life is attending Pres. Obama's Inauguration, our first black President

I felt that it was history in the making and I was proud to be there with my daughter on another cold, blustery day. I have also attended George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush's Inaugurations and even Bill Clinton's. My son-in-law's niece works at the Pentagon and she got us tickets for the latter.



A sad event I attended was the lying in state of Pres. Reagan at the Rotunda. A friend from York and I drove to VA and took a train into DC. We waited in line for 2 hours and were at the Rotunda at 12 noon. Robert Dole was standing next to me (I had met him in New Orleans). Another special event was attending the Impeachment Trial of Bill Clinton. I read in the paper that Rick Santorum would give tickets to anyone interested in going. I had just moved to York and contacted his office. He sent me four tickets. When we were leaving, he informed us that no one was in the public line so we returned for the closing arguments. That was another "history in the making."

I have met two Presidents and their wives personally, George H. Bush and Barbara, and Jimmy Carter and Roslyn. The Bush family came to New Jersey and I have met the Carters in Plains, GA twice belong to the Jimmy Carter's Political Collectors and attended to conventions in 2009 and 2019. A highlight was attending President Carter's sermon at Maranatha Baptist Church where he has taught Sunday School for years. In 2019 I met the Carters after church exchange greetings. In 2019 I got to shake the President's hand when he left his 95th birthday party in Plains. Margaret Truman's son was the guest speaker and he was autographing some of his mother's books that I had. The Carters were at his table and left while I was talking to Mr. Daniels. The Carters are super people. (I failed to mention that I value the many Jimmy Carter books that he has signed for me).

When Richard Nixon came to Monmouth Mall, NJ in 1967 or so I took my daughter in her baby carriage to see him in person. In Palm Springs, CA I sat at a corner at the Palm Springs Airport for 2 hours for Barack Obama to pass in his limousine. In Rancho Mirage/Palm Desert, CA I attend the home churches of Gerald Ford and Ike.

(Continued on page 3)

**The Joy of Collecting continued:**

Each Christmas I decorate a small tree with all of my White House ornaments. This year I have a large live tree which is patriotic. My Christmas elephants and wooden patriotic ornaments adorn it.

Some day trips I would recommend for our Chapter are: Wheatland, Lancaster, John Buchanan's home; the Gettysburg Farm and the Presbyterian Church in Gettysburg where Abe Lincoln prayed (his pew is curtained off); the trip to WVA; and the Capitol and Governor's Mansion in Harrisburg. I would be happy to co-chair any of those trips. Some years I have attended the re-enactment of the Gettysburg Address at the cemetery on Nov. 19. One year Steven Spielberg was there; his movie, "Lincoln," came out that year. It is usually quite cold so you need to "bundle up."

I was at the Reagan Library the day of the First Issue of the Reagan stamp and just missed Nancy Reagan. My only regret is that I missed meeting JFK and Jackie when he was a Senator in MA. He came to dedicate a new dorm at Becker, my junior college in Worcester, MA, and I did not go to see him. Who thought that he would become President! Woodrow Wilson's summer home was on the campus of another of my alma maters, Monmouth, in W. Long Branch, NJ. Monmouth published all of those presidential polls this year.

I was the first Republican woman to be elected to the governing body in Colts Neck, NJ and served for 11 years. In 1985 I became the first female Mayor and served again in 1990. When I moved to York in 1998, I later became President of the York County Republican Women for 2 years.

I am a member of the APIC, the American Political Items Collectors, and feel that a political collection is a trip through history. I collect anything that is political, mostly Presidential. It has been worth the time and effort searching for items through the years. My favorite Republican President is Reagan and my favorite Democratic President is JFK. My favorite Republican First Lady is Barbara Bush and my favorite Democratic First Lady is Jacqueline Kennedy. I was instrumental in naming my first granddaughter Jacquelyn and since her last name is Oberdorf, I call her "Jackie O."

I enjoyed having the ladies at my home. Thank you to Jan for the beautiful flowers she brought me along with a Dan Quayle coin that I did not have and a George Bush commemorative plate. Also, thank you to the members who sent me lovely notes after their visit. I am so happy to be a member of Eta Chapter.



## What I Want You to Know

*The filling out of this questionnaire is optional. If you would like to respond, please submit to president Jan Kercher, whose contact information is available in your Eta Membership Directory.*

- 1 Birthday \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Favorite hobby/activity \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 What motivates you \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Topic you wish you knew more about \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Where have you worked? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 Do you have pets \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Fun or interesting fact about yourself \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Something you'd like us to know \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 What devices do you use (needed to plan for future virtual events) Circle please

I phone IPod Android PC Laptop Mac

**Eta Chapter, The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International**  
**Minutes of Chapter Meeting - November 4, 2020**

Eta Chapter met on Thursday, November 4, 2020, at the home of Gayle Brass.

There were 15 members total in attendance at the two sessions.

President Janys Kercher called the business meeting to order at 3:04 P.M.

Recording Secretary- Minutes - The minutes of the September 10, 2020 meeting were approved as distributed via email.

Treasurer's report - Chris Runk, treasurer, reported a balance of \$5270.97. Red box contributions toward the Melhorn/Stetler Recruitment Grant total \$135.00.

**Committee Report**

Pam Wible will be chairing the committee to plan Eta's 75th birthday celebration to be held in 2022. She will be assisted by Jo Anne Peters and Terri Stetler. Others interested in helping are encouraged to volunteer.

**Business**

Eta's initiative to encourage teachers during the stresses of COVID 19 was discussed. A letter of appreciation for their efforts has been written by Pam Wible to be mailed to districts in York County. It was decided that the letter would be distributed to all public school districts, private schools and institutions of higher learning. Judy Sabaka volunteered to help with the mailing of the letters.

Discussion was held about the possibility of activating the "Love Committee" as a way of keeping in touch with members on a more personal level.

Discussion of future meetings

It was decided to continue with plans for our Christmas dinner at the ODCC. We were assured that they will socially distance us at the tables.

Due to COVID restrictions, gift wrapping at Margaret Moul Home and caroling at Normandie Ridge have been cancelled.

Possible venues for future meetings were discussed. The use of Zoom or Facebook Live offer safe gatherings.

Sue March will contact Isaac's to check on the possibility of holding our February fundraiser for the Recruitment Grant. If we can't meet in a large group, it was suggested we could hold an all-day fundraiser, with people dining in small groups throughout the day, or ordering for take-out.

Special thanks were extended to Gayle for hosting us to view her extensive collection of presidential memorabilia and for sharing her amazing encounters while pursuing her passion!

**Dates to Remember**

**December 2, 2020** - Christmas Dinner - OCC - 6:00 PM.

Mail checks made to Eta Chapter and send to Gayle Brass by Nov. 18

**February** - TBD Isaac's Fundraiser/short meeting - Sue March checking on availability

**April** - Four Chapter meeting – TBA

**May 11, 2020** - Jan Kercher's home - view DKG International Convention Speaker Jane Golden - American artist and director of Mural Arts – Philadelphia

**TBA** - Walking Tour of York's Murals

**June 2, 2021** - Planning meeting/Picnic - location TBA

**June 11-13, 2021** - State Convention - Scranton, PA

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 PM.