

BETA THETA CHATTA AND NEWS

March 9, 2024

9:30 AM

Parish House

Hummelstown, PA

Social Hour beginning at 9:00



Guest Speaker
Laura Feibush

Laura Feibush is Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Composition at Penn State Harrisburg, where she teaches first-year composition, public and professional writing, and writing across media. Laura earned her BA from Bryn Mawr College and PhD from the University of Pittsburgh. Her research, which focuses on listening as rhetorical praxis, has been published in venues such as Center Moves, Composition Forum, and Praxis: A Writing Center Journal.

Laura will be discussing the practice of "rhetorical listening," which was coined by Krista Ratcliffe in her 2005 book, *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness*. Rhetorical listening is a "stance of openness" that can help a person ethically navigate conflict or better understand a new text or cultural experience. Ratcliffe's work has paved the way for a new wave of scholars and teachers who prioritize understanding and accountability.

Beta Theta Chapter Meetings 2023-2024



February 20, 2024- 1 PM - Sewing Little Dresses/Dignity Kits, Home of Linda Geesaman

March 9, 2024- 9:30 AM- Regular Mtg. – Parish House- Corner of Rosanna St. and North Alley, Hummelstown, PA 17036

April 13, 2024- 11:30 AM- 1:30PM- Four Chapter Meeting – Gilligan's- 5002 Carlisle Pike, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

May 11, 2024- 9:30 AM- Regular Meeting, Parish House- Corner of Rosanna St. and North Alley, Hummelstown, PA 17036

June 19-21, 2024- PA State Organization Convention- Pittsburgh Marriott North, Cranberry Township (Information in The Keystonean)

July 9-13, 2024- International Convention- Gaylord National, DC Area, National Harbor, MD

FUTURE DATES

May 16-18, 2025- PA State Creative Arts Retreat - Waymart, PA

PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

March 2024

Growing and Going For Good



It's hard to believe that it's time for our March newsletter ... time really does keep "marching" on. The quiet winter months often offer time to slow down and take a

breather from the busyness of everything and recharge for things to come. The Executive Board met in January to finalize plans for the end of this biennium. Be sure to check out the calendar of events to make sure you have all dates marked on your calendars ... especially our Four Chapter Meeting coming up in April!

Since our last newsletter we:

- held our regular November meeting honoring veterans and learning about the Brethren Housing Association
- gathered to enjoy the holiday season at Leed's Restaurant
- met in February for the sewing of Little Dresses and Dignity Kits
- discussed great books at our monthly Book Club meetings

MARK YOUR CALENDARS for our meeting on March 9, 2024 at 9:30 AM at the Parish House in Hummelstown. Plan on bringing toiletries to donate to the Brethren Housing Association, supplies for our new teacher gift baskets next fall, and Books for Kids!!! All of these initiatives keep us Growing and Going For Good!! Get your orders ready for RaiseRight for our March meeting as well!

SAVE THE DATE – APRIL 13, 2024!!!! FOUR CHAPTER MEETING w/ State President Royce Boyd!!
Alpha Kappa, Beta Theta, Beta Iota and Kappa meet every other year ... you don't want to miss it ☺
Check out the article with details in this newsletter.

Be sure to note all of the other dates on the Calendar of Events as well. Looking forward to seeing you at all of them!

*I've heard it said, that people come into our lives
for a reason,
Bringing something we must learn,
And we are led to those who help us most to
grow if we let them,
And we help them in return ...
And, because I knew you, I have been changed
For Good.*

Cristal 

Re-Gift Raffle

Thank you to everyone who has supported our re-gift raffle fundraiser by donating raffle goodies and buying tickets.



Remember tickets are only \$1 each or 6 for \$5.

Our donation schedule is based on birthday months, but don't feel like you have to wait to donate if you're getting a jump on your spring cleaning!

The donation schedule for the rest of the year is:

March Meeting-January, February, and March Birthdays

May Meeting-April, May, June, and July Birthdays



Lynch Creek Wreath Fundraiser

Thanks to those who bought wreaths, we raised \$240! We hope that you enjoyed your beautiful wreath and know that you helped to make a difference.

Holiday Luncheon Recap



Beta Theta had a festive Christmas Party on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 12:00 noon with about twenty members attending. The holiday luncheon was held at Leed's Restaurant on Eisenhower Boulevard in Harrisburg, PA.

After having good food with good friends, the party concluded with a fun Gift Exchange Dice Game.



FOUR CHAPTER MEETING

With Alpha Kappa, Beta Iota & Kappa Chapters
Special Guest – State President Royce Boyd



Cost is \$31.50 per person which includes meal, beverage, tax and gratuity.

Cash bar available.

Please send check by April 1, 2024 to Linda Geesaman.

Menu Choices available (will be ordered from menu at the event):

Strawberry Salad Arugula, strawberries, slivered almonds, avocado and crumbled goat cheese tossed in a house honey mustard vinaigrette. Served with shrimp or salmon.

Lasagna Homemade baked lasagna. Served with side salad and garlic baguette.

Petite Filet Mignon Five ounce filet. Served with rice and salad.

Chicken Piccata or Marsala Lemon Butter sauce, capers, kalamata olives. Served with side salad.

Evites to be distributed soon!! Would love to see a strong representation from Beta Theta this year!!



Increasing Your Awareness/Voicing Your Concerns

Issues Affecting Education, Educators, Women, and Children

You may recall that the last line in the November '23 BETA THETA CHATTA / US Forum News stated: Mental Health appears to be a "hot topic" currently in Congress!

The message continues with: "Now is the time to contact your representatives and voice your support."

Would you agree that the time has come to do just that, by reaching out?

If so, here are some refreshers of congressional information regarding your Senators and congressional House Representative.

- Begin with Congress.gov
- If you are not sure of your congressional district or who your member is, type in your address.
- You will now have access to their committee assignments & what issues they are supporting.
- Write regarding the promotion of any of the bills listed, such as H.R.744, Supporting the Mental Health of Educators and Staff Act of 2023. [Be aware that this bill was introduced in 02/02/2023 and has yet to pass the House]. It may still serve as a starting point in making an initial contact.
- Means of contacting: a prepared meeting with your legislator; a written and emailed letter*; a message to their website; contacting their local district office often generates quick responses; a postcard.
- For every "5" constituents they hear from, action is taken.

* A completed example will be provided to you.

Where Are All the Kids??

At the December meeting of the US Forum Legislative Subcommittee, the topic of the rising rates of chronic absenteeism during the 2022-2023 academic year was discussed. Though teacher retention and compensation are still major issues for educators, the decline in consistent student attendance in K-12 classrooms has been noted by school administrators and policy experts as a significant threat to the achievement of all students. In addition to the rising rates of infrequent attendance across the US, an even greater concern is the number of students who never returned to school following the pandemic. The US has an estimated 240,000 students in 21 states whose absences have not been accounted for. These students did not move out of state, nor did they sign up for private school or home-school, according to publicly available data. In California, 87,000 students are unaccounted for. Along with California, New York and Louisiana have the highest concentration of unaccounted students in the nation.

Data from the studies suggest several reasons for the high rate of unaccounted students across the nation. These include students who are undocumented and fear deportation, students who may be home-schooled without providing notice to their school district, students whose families are experiencing homelessness, or have responsibilities of caring for families or siblings, transportation barriers, and lack of parental engagement.

At the current rate, there will be a half million students who will be chronically absent from school in 2031-2032. Proposed legislation such as HR 744, (Mental Health of Educators and Staff Act), addresses this crisis with funds for sensitivity training, family resource centers, additional resource officers, and attendance officers. Hawaii and California are working on ways to bring the community together, thereby increasing the likelihood of regular school attendance.

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Enter - the Washington Post's Department of Data:

"The school bus is disappearing.

Welcome to the era of the school pickup line."

Interesting data results, from the Federal Highway Administration, will provide more clarity at our March 9th Beta Theta meeting.



NOVEMBER MEETING SNAPSHOT

Our November meeting was informative and festive! Our hostesses and hostess committee outdid themselves with a Veteran's Day theme and we took a few moments to reflect on family members who have served – thank you all for your service!

We then learned a lot about the Brethren Housing Association and how we can contribute to their mission. Many thanks to Linda Geesaman for her connection to the BHA and to Jessica Johnson Vinton for sharing her time and knowledge. Don't forget to bring your donations to the March meeting! Seventeen members were in attendance.

Ideas for donations for Brethren Housing Association:

Toiletries
Cleaning Supplies
Tampons/Pads
Shampoo
Conditioner
Soaps
Laundry Pods



SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND BOOKS FOR KIDS



Bring donations for our special projects to the March Meeting at the Parish House:

Brethren Housing Association donations

School Supplies for New Teachers

Books for Kids

Cottage Meeting Reminder

February 20th, 1:00-3:00 is set for our spring Cottage Meeting at Linda Geesaman's home. See the directory for the address. We will be sewing little dresses and making dignity kits. There are sewing and non-sewing tasks. It's always a fun and productive afternoon with time to chat as well. Supplies will be provided, but it is helpful to bring a good pair of scissors. Hope to see you the 20th!



Calling All Hostesses

*Bon Appetit!

It is time to think spring, but first a warm thank you to our November hostesses...Heidi Tobias, Suzanne Long and Tammy Feeser.

The following are our springtime hostesses:

March 9: Anna McDonald and Stephany Davidson

May 11: Anna Franco, Donna Winch and Jeannette Thomas

Enjoy this sweet spring treat at your Easter dinner!

Pretzel Salad...

from the kitchen of Pat Ethridge



2 c. crushed pretzels
3 tsp. sugar
3/4 c. melted butter

Mix above ingredients and put into 9 x13 pan. Bake at 400 degrees for 5-8 minutes. (Do not overbake.) Let cool.



Beat Together:
8 oz. cream cheese, softened
1 c. sugar
8 oz. Cool Whip
Pour onto pretzel mix.

Topping:
1 large box strawberry Jell-o

2 (10 oz.) frozen strawberries or fresh berries

Dissolve Jell-o in 2 cups boiling water; add strawberries and juice. When Jell-o begins to set, pour on top of cream cheese layer. Refrigerate. Serves 12. Enjoy!



Book Club News

2024

Monday, February 19, 2024- 10:30 AM

The Star-Crossed Sisters of Tuscany by Lori Nelson Spielman

Monday, March 18, 2024- 10:30 AM

The First Ladies by Marie Benedict and Victoria C. Murray

Monday, April 15, 2024- 10:30 AM

The Cruellest Month by Louise Penny

Monday, May 20, 2024- 10:30 AM

Killers of a Certain Age by Deanna Raybourn

Monday, June 17, 2024- 10:30 AM

The Marriage Portrait by Maggie O'Farrell

Monday, July 15, 2024- 10:30 AM

The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store by James McBride

Our Book Club meets at 10:30 am at Panera Bread located at High Point Commons-Harrisburg -4659 High Point Blvd. 17111. Please join us, even if you haven't read the book. We always have a lively discussion!



Officers for 2022-2024

Cristal Sheaffer- President

Stephany Davidson- Immediate Past President

Laurie Kirkscey and Gaye Hicks- First Vice Presidents

Susan Davis and Dr. Norma Mateer- Second Vice Presidents

Cindy Kerstetter- Secretary

Suzanne Long- Parliamentarian

Linda Geesaman- Treasurer

Kathy Woodbridge- Communications and Newsletter Editor

Donna Winch- Webmaster

Business Meetings

Saturday, March 9, 2024- 9:30 AM Parish House, Hummelstown, Pa.

Saturday, May 11, 2024- 9:30 AM Parish House, Hummelstown, Pa.

Cottage Meetings and Social Events

February 20, 2024- 1 PM-Sewing Little Dresses/Dignity Kits- home of Linda Geesaman

Four Chapter Meeting

April 13, 2024- 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM- Gilligan's Bar & Grill- 5002 Carlisle Pike, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050. Come celebrate with Kappa, Alpha Kappa, and Beta Iota chapter members. Evites coming soon!

State and International Dates

June 19-21, 2024- PA State Organization Convention- Pittsburgh Marriott North, Cranberry Township (Information in the *Keystonian*)

July 9-13, 2024- International Convention, Gaylord National, DC Area, National Harbor, MD

FUTURE DATES

May 16-18, 2025, PA State Creative Arts Retreat - Waymart, PA



The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International
Beta Theta Chapter Meeting
Parish House, Hummelstown, PA

Saturday, November 11, 2023

Seventeen members attended the regular business meeting of Beta Theta.

President Cristal Sheaffer welcomed everyone. Amid patriotic decorations to celebrate Veteran's Day, attendees shared remembrances of the veterans in their families.

Program

Jessica Johnson Vinton, a representative of the Brethren Housing Association, shared information about the non-profit organization. It provides a nurturing environment and supportive services for families experiencing homelessness to learn the skills necessary to attain greater independence. BHA equips families with the knowledge and tools that will help them achieve their goals. Beta Theta member Linda Geesaman is a volunteer for BHA. She helps to clean, furnish, and decorate apartments for incoming families to have a safe place to call home. Linda will be Beta Theta's liaison to help BHA. We plan to help clean apartments and donate supplies of non-food items.

After the program, President Cristal called the meeting to order at 10:42 a.m.

Reports

The minutes from the September 9, 2023 meeting were approved, after a motion by Nancy Thompson and a second by Pat Ethridge.

Linda Geesaman presented the Treasurer's Report. There is a balance of \$4615.61 as of October 31, 2023.

Note of Thanks

Suzanne Long's card of gratitude for the gifts she received at the May meeting for her 50 years of membership in Delta Kappa Gamma was shared.

Committee Reports

Hostess Committee—Sherry Welty announced that there are hostesses signed up through the May 2024 meeting.

Sherry reminded attendees to sign up for the Christmas luncheon to be held at 12:00 noon on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at Leed's Restaurant (750 Eisenhower Boulevard, Harrisburg). There will also be a \$10 gift exchange.

Book Club—Gaye Hicks announced the upcoming Book Club meeting on November 20, 2023, will be at 10:30 a.m. at Panera Bread at High Pointe Commons.

Ways and Means

Boscov's Shopping Passes—Gaye Hicks reported that we have made \$450 by selling these. All money collected for shopping passes is 100% profit for Beta Theta.

Raise Right— Geneva Reeder—The chapter will now only be organizing a group order once a year instead of quarterly, as was done previously. Orders will be taken each November. You will receive your order at the Christmas luncheon. Remember, you may order on your own online (raiseright.com) anytime you wish. Contact Geneva or Cristal for the code to use when ordering on your own.

Lynch Creek Farms—Marcy Sharpe reminded members that the last date to order to receive by Christmas is December 15. Beta Theta receives 15%. She also announced that donations can be made on the website. Contact her if you need any help.

Mission and Purpose/ Community Outreach

School Supplies for New Teachers and Books for Kids—Gaye Hicks announced that these were delivered to the schools on November 2, 2023.

Little Dresses and Dignity Kits—Linda Geesaman and Laurie Williamson—Linda will host this cottage meeting at her house on February 20, 2024, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Bring a sewing machine (if you have one) and a good pair of scissors. There are tasks to making these that don't involve sewing, so please come!

Unfinished Business

Four Chapter Meeting—Cristal announced the date will be Saturday, April 13, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The location selected is Gilligan's at 5002 Carlisle Pike, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050. Our State President Royce Boyd will attend. The next responsibility Beta Theta has is to prepare invitations to send. If interested in helping with this, contact Cristal.

Chapter Rules Change Update—At the September meeting, Beta Theta voted to change the check writing signatures requirement. Cristal said that the Chapter Rules have been updated. She also said that the State organization has requested we make some changes to our Chapter Rules. That will be done in the coming months.

Beta Theta Website

Upon the resignation of our webmaster Heather Lister, Donna Winch has volunteered to be our new webmaster.

New Business

May 11, 2024 Meeting—President Cristal announced that she will be unable to preside at Beta Theta's May meeting due to a family event. Suzanne Long has agreed to preside in Cristal's absence.

Cristal announced that State President Royce wanted our members to be aware of the upcoming State Convention (June 19-21, 2024) in Pittsburgh. Album of Distinction Nominees should be made soon. Cristal encouraged Beta Theta members to think seriously about nominating a Beta Theta member who is making a difference outside of our chapter.

Royce also wanted to make Beta Theta members aware that the International Conference (July 9-13, 2024) is in National Harbor, MD. Noteworthy events consist of a Washington, DC tour and the Keynote Speaker will be Margaret Shetterly, author of "Hidden Figures." Also, if you wish to present a workshop, applications are due December 15, 2023.

Re-gift raffle winners were announced.

President Cristal adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Addresses for Websites:

Beta Theta: <https://betathetapa.weebly.com/>

PA State: <https://dkgpa.weebly.com/>

International: <https://www.dkg.org/>

A DKG Beta Theta Facebook group has been created.

Cindy Kerstetter

Secretary