

The 4:15*

Delta Omicron Chapter, #111, Dallas, Dallas County, Area 9, Texas State Organization, DKG Society International

Mission Statement: DKG Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.

Vision Statement: Leading Women Educators Impacting Education Worldwide



Texas State Organization



Volume 64, Issue 7, March 8, 2021
Marylin Nease, editor

*The 4:15? Delta is the 4th letter of the Greek alphabet and Omicron is the 15th. On a good day, 4:15 is the time we leave school and head to a Delta Omicron meeting!

President's Message



Dear Delta Omicron Ladies,
*Oh, the weather outside is frightful,
But the fire is so delightful.
And since we've no place to go,
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!*



I'm sure all of you are glad we got through our recent weather issue.

I am ready for springtime to appear really soon. We have a lot to look forward to in March. Daylight Saving Time is just days away on March 14th. St. Patrick's Day is on March 17th, followed by the first day of spring on March 20th. We also will celebrate Passover and Palm Sunday later this month.

Spring's warmer weather and increased daylight hours make it an enjoyable season. Spring is a great time to get outside. Taking walks, noticing the butterflies are back, and seeing flowers in bloom are also a part of why this season is so great!

Spring adds new life and new beauty to all that is.

Sending lots of hugs,
Katherine

Pres/Katherine Grogan
1st VPs/Elenora Asbury
& Kathy Rodriguez
2nd VPs/
& Margaret
Thompson
Rec Sec/Margie Rohde
Cor Sec/Susan Endicott
Treas/Leesa Cole
Parl/Julie Turnbow
Im P Pres/Lou McMillan

Save these dates
for our
business/program
meetings:
Mar. 8
Apr. 24
May 17

Chapter Website:
<https://deltaomicrontexas.weebly.com/>
Carolyn Power, Webmaster

Mon., Mar. 8, Zoom.
4:30 p.m., fellowship. 5:00 p.m., meeting.
Program: "Texas Trees Foundation"
(DKG Purposes 1, 6, 7)

CHAPTER PROGRAM NEWS

Our March 8 program is a presentation from “Texas Trees Foundation.”

Texas Trees Foundation statements to start us thinking about trees in the Dallas area...

“The Foundation’s strategic approach is based in research-driven data to mitigate the environmental challenges and related public health concerns that trees can alleviate.”



“Economic development in the absence of environmental integrity is not sustainable.”



“The Foundation sustains a tree-planting initiative for neighborhood parkways and medians, schools, and other public open spaces; a tree-growing facility to assure a healthy supply of trees for the future; and educational programs to teach the importance and benefits of maintaining a healthy urban forest.”

One project that “hits close to home” for many of us is the **“October 2019 Storm Relief Initiative.”** Its goal is “to assist the City of Dallas and its residents [to] recover after the October 2019 tornado that devastated parts of North Dallas,” which had 3,000-3,500 trees too damaged to save.

Another project we can relate with is **“Cool Schools.”** TTF describes the project this way: “We Plan. We Plant. We Educate. We Celebrate. Cool Schools connects students and teachers to nature by planting trees and creating fun and engaging outdoor experiential learning areas. These spaces cultivate children’s knowledge and awareness of the natural environment.”

[Click on this link to learn more. Texas Trees Foundation](#)



CHAPTER PROJECT NEWS

IN MARCH, let’s focus on giving to the NORTH TEXAS FOOD BANK as our TSO Week of Caring project.

The NTFB has a “Triple My Gift” opportunity through March 29. Use this link to donate online.

[NTFB, triple spring match](#) ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ←



Photos are from Delta Omicron’s August 2020 donations to NTFB. Members gave almost \$1,000 in food and cash. Pictured are Katherine Grogan, Vicky Hamilton, Kay Keeland, and Sherri Allinder.

CHAPTER PROJECT NEWS... We focused on these two projects in February. You can still donate.



What Is ASTEF?

The mission of ASTEF (Alpha State Texas Education Foundation) is

- 1. to provide funding for activities that support professional and personal growth of women educators in Texas, and
- 2. to promote educational excellence for Texas students.

ASTEF members may apply for a Texas State Organization (TSO) state **scholarship**, participate in **leadership** events, and apply for **project** stipends.

To learn more about ASTEF, use this link. [Alpha State Texas Educational Foundation](#)

To donate to ASTEF, use this link. [ASTEF Contribution Form](#)

What Is Schools for Africa?

"The SFA mission involves

- 1. providing access to quality basic education for children, focusing on girls, orphans, and other vulnerable youngsters" in 21 sub-Saharan countries in Africa, and
- 2. DKG working in partnership with UNICEF USA (since 2010).

SFA individual donations: As of 2.24.21, 6 members have notified me that they sent personal contributions for SFA directly to UNICEF USA. 2 more members sent checks to me for a combined Delta Omicron check to SFA.
Leesa Cole

To learn more about SFA, use this link. [Schools for Africa](#)

To donate directly to UNICEF USA for SFA, use this link.

[SCHOOLS FOR AFRICA FLYER \(DONATION FORM 2020\)](#)



CHAPTER PROJECT NEWS...

In this most unusual of school years during the COVID-19 pandemic, encouragers—13 of our retired members—continue their efforts in THAT (Teachers Helping Active Teachers) to reach out to and support 13 other members of our chapter. This second group of 13 members are our chapter's working educators.

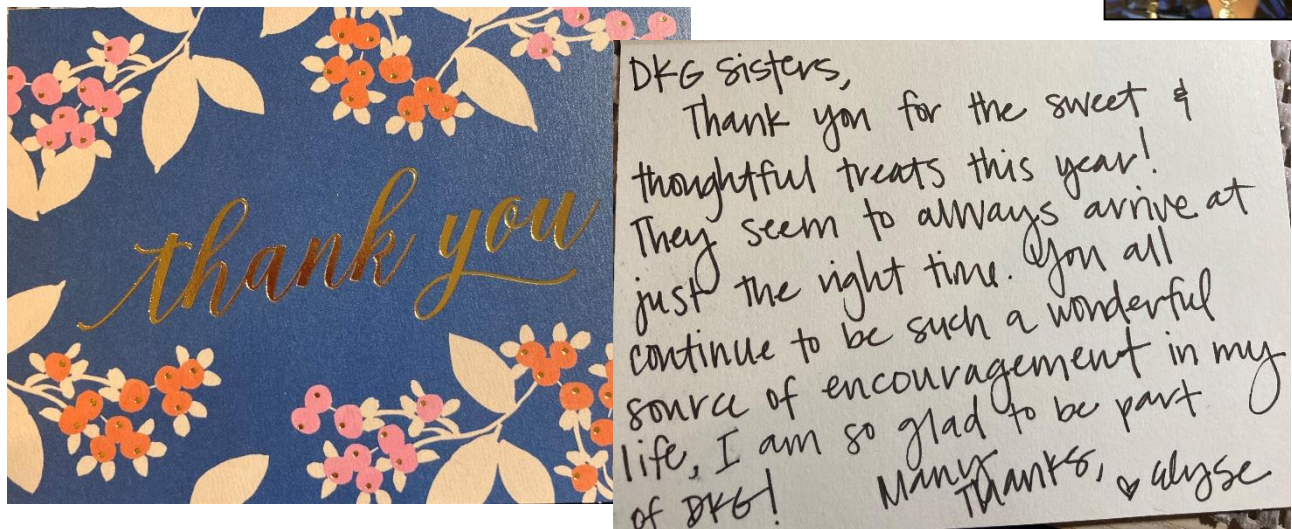


Dr. Elyse Griffin serves in Highland Park ISD as the McCulloch Intermediate School and Highland Park Middle School 504 and TAG Coordinator. Elyse is a ten-year DKG member. She recently wrote and mailed a thank-you card to "Marylin Nease/DKG."

Maybe Elyse's encourager, Margaret Arnold, a 28-year DKG member, has been operating anonymously. Marylin doesn't know, but she wants Margaret to have time in the spotlight. Below is a copy of Elyse's card. Thank you, Margaret, for all you are doing as Elyse's THAT encourager!

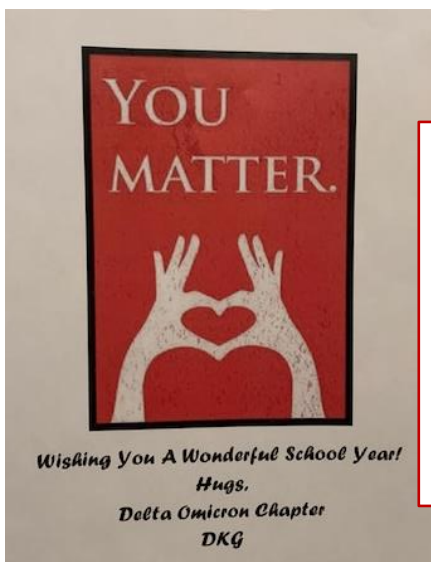


And many thanks to the other THAT encouragers whose thank-you cards from their working educators didn't find their way into Marylin's mailbox! 😊



Flashback to the Start of School, August 2020...

Sherri Allinder and Katherine Grogan assembled teacher gift bags and delivered them, with help from Leesa Cole and Margaret Thompson, to the homes of our chapter's working teachers.



Sherri Allinder and Katherine Grogan are under the masks! 8/15/20

You Matter!
Delta Omicron members delivered teacher bags to their members going back into the classroom. Inside the bags were school supplies and a Starbucks gift card that said, "Thanks a latte for being an awesome teacher. Here's a little gift to espresso our gratitude!"



MEMBERSHIP NEWS by Margaret Thompson



Now is the time to talk to your teaching friends and acquaintances about the benefits of joining Delta Kappa Gamma! Let them make the decision whether or not to consider joining our organization.

Complete the attached (in email) **Prospective Member** form, and email it to me – margaretmcthompson@gmail.com I can take it from there!

Remember, DKG accepts new members **all year long!**
See you at our March 8 meeting.



Happy March Birthday!

Carrie Parsons, 7
Janet Hogg, 9
Kay Keeland, 16



Member Moments...



with Susan Endicott

Q. A favorite teaching moment?

A. When asked to tell others about myself, what goes through my mind is always interesting. I think, well, I'm a daughter, wife, aunt, teacher, friend, lover of books. These are all things that can describe. I've loved being all of the above.

Some of the parts of who I am have been more or better than others at times. Cycles of one's life, I suppose. When I think of my teacher part, I have wonderful memories of children...children who read to me, shared their written word with me,

shared their laughter and love with me.

The year I turned 55, I was diagnosed with breast cancer, and my second-grade class that year saved my life. They were a part of the diagnosis from the start. They heard it all from me and a friend who had survived breast cancer. I wanted them to know survival was what we were all praying for, and they did...prayed for me, learned with me, read to me, wrote stories for me.

I continued working through the year. That December, they became the little elves of Christmas and dropped off all sorts of surprises at my home. They loved it, and so did I. I never knew who brought what, but it only made the "game" more fun for all of us.

The day I came to school after losing all my hair... we all wore hats! We wore them for the rest of the year. I think some of the boys would have shaved their heads, too! One little girl would sit beside me as I read and reach up into my hat just to feel my head!

Children...such wonderful creatures...beautiful, full of laughter and mischief...little packages chock-full of FUN!

So, the part of me that is teacher has many stockings full of memories that I can bring out and laugh and smile with all over again. Even though I'm now retired, I still think of myself often as teacher because the memories from that time of my life are such that I can still feel the love that was given to me. Teacher...a lovely word.

Delta Omicron, Chapter Meeting Minutes, February 15, 2021

Delta Omicron Chapter, Dallas, Texas, Texas State Organization, DKG International, met on Monday, February 15, 2021, 4:30 for fellowship, and 5:00 for program/business meeting, via Zoom.

Attending were 22 members: Maureen Baker, Barbara Clinton, Grace Delatour, Susan Endicott, Marta Finlay, Mary Gill, Katherine Grogan, Barbara Harris, Mary Carol Hughes, Katy Kunofsky, Liza Leggett, Penni Lewis, Lou McMillan, Carolyn Miller, Mary Louise Milliorn, Marilyn Nease, Carolyn Power, Margaret Thompson, Jean Wallace, Mary White.

One guest attended: longtime Ohio friend of Penni Lewis.

OPENING:

Katherine Grogan **called the meeting to order** at 5:08 p.m. and recorded it so that members unable to attend could view it later. Maureen Baker gave the inspiration.

PROGRAM:



Marilyn Nease and Carolyn Power presented a safari-themed, PowerPoint program to inform members about Schools for Africa, DKG's first international project.

Marilyn and Carolyn began by donning their safari jackets and hats. Marilyn introduced members to useful Swahili phrases so they could begin the safari to Africa, not to photograph or hunt big game, but **to learn about the lives of children in 21 sub-Saharan countries where SFA operates.** Marilyn also introduced members to **five guiding questions** for their safari.

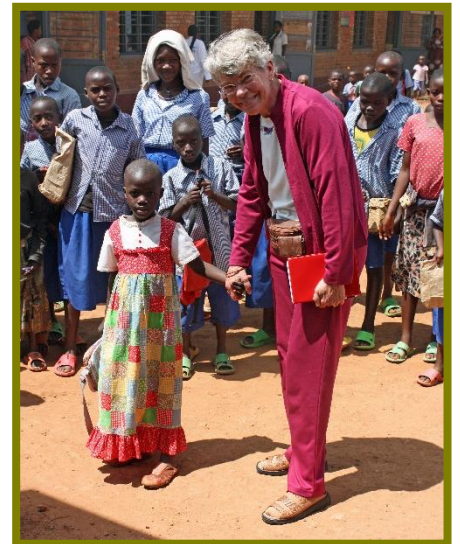
Carolyn explained to members that while, yes, we in Delta Omicron do focus on supporting children in our Dallas area, such as through the North Texas Food Bank and the Vogel Alcove School, we can also **help to educate**

children in our global village.

She told members that SFA became DKG's first international project at the **2010 DKG International Convention in Spokane, Washington**, when **attendees presented the idea, discussed it, and voted approval for the project.**

Marilyn said that she attended the 2019 DKG International Convention in Asheville, North Carolina, where she met **Cathy Daugherty** (photo on right), the **2018-2020 DKG International president.** Cathy is the **only DKG member ever to go to Africa to see our SFA project in action—** the only one because of the expense to DKG and because of safety issues. Cathy taught Marilyn that DKG members send their money to UNICEF USA instead of trying to administer SFA themselves because **UNICEF has been working in Africa for over 70 years and already has the manpower and infrastructure in place to successfully administer the program.** In other words, UNICEF knows which local leaders to work with so our DKG money is used responsibly. Cathy also presented a PP of her trip to Africa to show that **SFA is making life better** in the 21 countries where it exists.

Carolyn talked about our "guides" in Africa: the **United Nations, UNICEF, and UNESCO.** She also spoke about the leadership of **Nelson Mandela** in bringing quality basic education to children in Africa. Mandela's guiding principle was that "Education is every child's right."



Carolyn showed a **map of Africa** with the **names and locations of the 21 SFA countries** indicated. She also shared the **connections of three of our members with Africa**. **Joyanne Burger's grandfather**, Dr. E. R. Kellersberger, was a medical missionary in Belgian Congo, now called Democratic Republic of the Congo. Dr. Kellersberger's patients and other villagers called him Dr. Not Afraid for his work with patients who had leprosy. Second, **Margaret Thompson's son**

Third, **Lou McMillan's son and her daughter-in-law** work with a Christian school in Tanzania. They took Lou to visit the school in 2017.

Then, Carolyn gave **examples of what donations can purchase for children assisted by SFA**. For instance, \$14,000 will build a school, \$1,000 will buy four School-in-a-Box kits with materials for 195 students, \$500 will outfit a school with desks, and so forth. We discussed how these prices compare with the costs of school buildings, teaching materials, and desks here in the Dallas area.

Next, Marilyn circled back to the five guiding questions and asked members to respond with answers.

#1. What is DKG's first international project? Schools for Africa.

#2. Who are the guides working with SFA? United Nations and UNICEF

#3. What are the names of the 21 SFA countries? Botswana, Burundi, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda

#4. Who said, "Education is every child's right."? Nelson Mandela



#5. What are some ways our money can help children in the 21 SFA countries? Constructing schools and providing **school-in-a-box kits (pic on left)**, learners' kits, clean water and sanitation facilities, teacher training, school supplies, and so forth.

Finally, Marilyn asked, "As we end our African safari, what can we DKG members do to make a difference?"

Answer: **Contribute to SFA**—to save lives and futures through educating children in Africa!

Marilyn then discussed the **two ways members can contribute by mail**—since we can't meet in person to pass a basket for donations. Marilyn said she would email the instructions to members following the meeting. Carolyn

explained that we would like to have a headcount of contributors (not amounts donated) to have an idea of our members' participation in supporting our SFA project.

CURRENT PROJECTS:

Marilyn Nease, Communications and Publicity chair, stated that in addition to our **SFA project**, we are encouraging donations to ASTEF during **ASTEF Giving Month**, which is February. Marilyn explained ASTEF: it stands for Alpha State Texas Education Fund; was established as a non-profit charity at state convention in 2010; and funds scholarships, leadership, and projects. She named our chapter's past scholarship recipients, Leadership Seminar attendee, and project stipend awards. She encouraged members to apply in the future for a scholarship, Leadership Seminar, and project stipend and gave the deadlines. She showed the donation form and said she would email it to members after the meeting.

BUSINESS:

The members **approved the amended minutes** from the January meeting as printed in the newsletter. Leesa Cole, **treasurer**, was unable to attend. Her report is in the February newsletter.

Margaret Thompson, **Membership** Co-Vice President, urged members to continue recruiting candidates for membership.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Susan Endicott, **Corresponding Secretary**, stated that she had sent a card to Joyanne Burger.

ONGOING BUSINESS:

Marta Finlay and Marylin Nease, THAT members, stated that one new team has been added to our **THAT Project, which is Teachers Helping Active Teachers**. They are Margaret Thompson (encourager) and Ivy Lassiter (active teacher).

Carolyn Miller, **Coordinating Council of Dallas County** chair, reminded members that the CCDC luncheon is April 24 at 9:30 at Lakewood Country Club. Dallas County's 14 chapter-presidents will be honored, along with 25- and 50-year members, and a Friend of Education. Cora McFarland Scholarship recipients will be recognized. \$38 reservations are due to Leesa Cole by March 30.



NEW BUSINESS:

Marylin Nease, Communications and Publicity chair, explained our new initiative: **Connection Circles**. Each circle will have five members, and each member will make one phone call, text, or email a week to a designated member of her circle to get better acquainted, make a wellness check, and pass along chapter updates.

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEES, MORE ON THE PROGRAM'S "GIVING MONTH" THEME:

Carolyn Power, **Global Awareness**, displayed and discussed a document to inform members that the money they donate goes directly to SFA, not to other UNICEF endeavors.

Mary Carol Hughes, **Research**, said (1) December is most often the "giving month," according to Google. February is ASTEF Giving Month. (2) The best fundraising time seems to be year's end because people are feeling charitable and give to non-profits. (3) Households with incomes below \$20,000 give the most to charity. Next is income levels of \$100,000 and more. (4) Giving peaks at 61-75, when 77% of households donate, perhaps having more savings, time, and motivation to help others.

CLOSING:

Katherine Grogan used a PowerPoint to display the lyrics to "The DKG Song" while she played the recorded music. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Margie Rohde Recording Secretary
(Substituting in March: Marylin Nease)



Treasurer's Report, March 2021, By Leesa Cole



Bank balance as of 2/24/2021: \$5,002.39 (not reconciled)
Area 9 portion of this balance: \$717.02
Delta Omicron portion: \$4,285.37 (not reconciled)

Income Feb.

Budgeted: Members' contributions to Schools for Africa

Expenses Feb.

Budgeted: Reimbursement to Membership Chair

Anticipated income Mar.

Budgeted: Chapter's & members' contributions to Schools for Africa
Possibly CCDC lunch reservation fee

Anticipated expenses Mar.

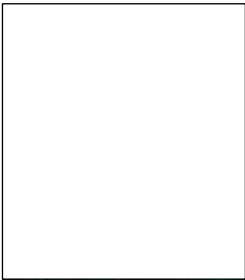
Budgeted: Reimbursement to Membership Chair
Chapter contribution to Schools for Africa
Possibly members' contributions to Schools for Africa

***Before May 30:
Make plans to pay
membership dues--
details forthcoming.***

NEWS FLASH! Electronic payment option: Delta Omicron has a Venmo account.
If you use Venmo, you can send money to pay for the CCDC luncheon or to pay dues.
Venmo name: @DeltaOmicronTX
If you are not yet a Venmo user, instructions and help sheets are forthcoming.

FYI, Zelle is not an option for our chapter: we have a business account, and Zelle is available to personal accounts.

Legislative Committee



Legislation News, 2-23-21

This year, the Texas Retired Teachers Association (TRTA) Convention will be a virtual meeting from Monday, April 5th - Thursday, April 8th. In order to attend, you must RSVP to "Zoom to the Capitol" by visiting this link. Remember to wear "red" to the meeting.

Please use this link. https://portal.trta.org/imis15/DAC/Event_Details.aspx?WebsiteKey=2d9511da-6422-4970-bbe3-51ae45f7a632&hkey=7dec8771-a6b9-4b62-abba-d1fed6512b0c&EventTabs=3#EventTabs

Numerous bills have been filed pertaining to educators. For instance, (1) one bill requests the revision of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP); (2) another one states that the state is not liable for any debts or other obligations of a retirement system. Please click on this link to see others. <https://legiscan.com/TX/legislation/2021>

"Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) Executive Director Brian Guthrie reported that the pension fund is actuarially sound. According to Guthrie, two criteria must first be met for a Cost of Living

Adjustment (COLA). (1) TRS must be actuarially sound. (2) Any benefit enhancement would need to be authorized by the Texas Legislature. Please click this link. <https://trta.org/house-appropriations-committee-discusses-trs-funding/>

Please continue writing letters (preferably handwritten), and make sure they arrive in Austin the week of March 29th. If you did not receive a red envelope, just use a regular one. Send two letters: one to your state senator and one to your state representative. Let them know that you are concerned about your pension and healthcare. Please see first website above.

<https://portal.trta.org/imis15/DAC/Home/DAC/Home.aspx?hkey=7e8cc252-7bad-435d-8ac6-00230b72d7ca>

Coordinating Council of DALLAS COUNTY



By Carolyn Miller, CCDC Chair

**Calling all Delta Omicron members:
We want YOU to be a part of our CCDC annual luncheon!**

When: Saturday, April 24, 9:30 a.m.

Where: Lakewood Country Club

Why: Fun, fellowship, food, and inspiration from our **State President Patti Belknap!**

How: Address your check for \$38 to Delta Omicron, and mail to Leesa Cole by March 30.



Hopefully, we will all have our vaccinations by then, and we can celebrate!

Personal Update



One Season to Another

By Marilyn Nease, one of a series of personal essays recording my once-a-month caregiving weekends with my older sister

Thirty miles before the end of my non-stop, 194-mile drive from my sunny home in Dallas, Texas, to my older sister's home in Chickasha, Oklahoma, I entered Winter, complete with snow-covered fields as far as I could see on both sides of the highway.

When I pulled into her driveway and saw six inches of snow and ice, I thought, "I should have worn my boots." Then, I noticed someone had shoveled enough of the driveway and sidewalk that if I backed up and re-parked my car, I'd have a safe path into her home. "Thank you," I said to my nephew, though he was no longer on the scene.

Carrying my suitcase from car door to house door, I reveled in the beauty of snow blanketing flowerbeds and trees, transforming them into a personalized winter wonderland. After dark, my sister and I gazed in awe through the windows wrapping three sides of her sun room. The Christmas lights' red, green, blue, white, yellow, orange, and purple made January 1, 2021, a gift; and reflected in the rippling water of the koi pond, the hues multiplied. We looked and looked and still were drawn to the picture beyond the windows.

“My sons worked hard arranging the lights. I’m proud of them!”
“You should leave them up all year, not just during Christmas!”

After we took refuge in the house Saturday and Sunday, shortly after noon on Monday, I carried my suitcase to my car and discovered we’d entered another season.

“Wow, you won’t believe how glorious the weather is today after our wintry weekend,” I said to my sister. “Let’s go outdoors and look at everything! The sun’s out, the wind’s not blowing, and most of the snow’s melted. We can stay on the sidewalks so we don’t step into the flowerbeds—they’ll be muddy. Want to?”

A lover of outdoors, she needed no persuasion. Soon, she bundled herself into coat, hat, and gloves, stepped onto her outdoor electric scooter, turned the key, and sped ahead down the first sidewalk, exploring and enjoying every sight and sound. I walked behind, enjoying the same sights and sounds, and even more, enjoying her joy.



From Friday to Monday, our world had changed from Winter to sunshine, from snow-blanketed flowerbeds to awakening ones. We stopped at a mahonia bush, drawn by bees that sang and danced gently around its pale green berries. We paused at a bird’s song, understanding its happy tune. Here and there, the green tips of spring bulbs emerged. In a flowerbed south of the house, we spotted my sister’s first daffodil in bloom, along with two Lenten roses in bud and bloom.

On we wandered through the labyrinth of her gardens, appreciating the natural rhythm of Winter’s snow giving life to coming Spring. Always in tune with Nature, my sister blossomed. In the winter of her own life, she understands that harsh Winter is a time of rest that, at its own pace, will give way to Spring’s new life.



**Texas
State Organization**

TEXAS STATE ORGANIZATION <https://www.dkgtexas.org/>

TSO Newsletter
[Winter 2020 Lone Star News](#)

**Alpha State Texas Education Foundation (ASTEF) –
Scholarship, Leadership, Projects**
[ASTEF Donation Form](#)



2021 TSO 92nd Convention - Denton



92nd Texas State Organization convention will be held in Denton, Texas. Activities will begin with the Children's Art Show and Leadership Seminar Reunions on Wednesday evening, June 16, and will conclude with the Celebration Brunch on Saturday, June 19.

[2021 Convention Website](#)

Unifying Project for 2021 TSO Convention? Gift cards* for CASA of Denton County

Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Denton County serves children who are in foster care due to abuse or neglect. Trained community volunteers advocate for the best interests of each child. CASA's vision is to provide a safe, permanent, loving home for every child. CASA also provides various needed resources that give every child the opportunity to grow and learn in a happy, healthy environment.

*Please bring Walmart or Target gift cards in dollar amounts not larger than \$50. Thank you!



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA™

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

Conventions/Conferences

Portland, Oregon, **July 7-10, 2021**

San Antonio, Texas, **July 21-24, 2021**

Tampere, Finland, **July 28-31, 2021**

Emergency Fund

Did your home sustain damage during February's extreme weather week? If so, DKG's Emergency Fund assists members with a \$500 check following damage from a natural disaster. The process is quick and easy. [Use this link to apply. Emergency Fund](#)

Photos: Patti Belknap, Leesa Cole, Cathy Daugherty, Dr. Elyse Griffin, Katherine Grogan, Kay Keeland, Marilyn Nease, Pixabay, DKG.

Graphic Art: TSO, DKG, Pixabay, UNICEF.