

Maine State Organization



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS DELTA KAPPA GAMMA™

MAINSRING

Fall 2020

News from Maine State President Donna Kennison

As I sit here writing this article for the Fall 2020 Mainspring, I'm reminded that it has been almost a year since our last face to face meeting. I was able to meet with a few chapters before the virus raised havoc with our social lives. I have tried to send out newsletters every other month. These can be viewed on our Maine DKG website: <https://dkgmaine.weebly.com/> under newsletters if you missed them. Betty Morrell is doing a wonderful job keeping our website up to date and all of us informed as to what is happening in DKG. Somehow, even though I have stayed home most of the time, the months seem to just slip by. I sent out seventeen handwritten notes to members chapter presidents told me did not do emails. My plan is to send some out again in October. I feel that the tried and true method of connecting with each other is so important. Phone calls, snail mail, and yes even emails are easy ways to stay in touch.



I want to thank all the chapter officers who stepped forward to serve their chapters. These are uncertain times and it is important to keep our chapters alive. Many chapters are meeting via Zoom. Some have been able to find spaces to social distance and meet face to face. Maine State DKG has a Zoom account that has no time limit and can accommodate 100 participants. I'm willing to set up a meeting for any chapter or committee and I can assign a co-host. If you are unsure about using ZOOM go to the Maine State DKG website and see the tutorial post there.

We have decided to have our Spring to Fall convention go virtual on October 17, 2020. My theme for last spring was Grow your seeds, Share your talents. I am keeping this for our fall meeting, as I think we need to keep finding ways to grow DKG. What is your chapter doing To Grow Your Seeds? I have been doing a lot of sewing during this time, trying to empty my UFO (Un Finished Objects) basket, however, I keep finding new projects I want to do. Now is a time to share some of your talents. This could be done by sharing on our Maine Organization of DKG International Facebook page.

Our Executive Board meeting will be October 17 via Zoom. However, according to the last publication of the President's Page August/ September 2020, we can not conduct business as the following states. *The Constitution gives chapters the ability to conduct business electronically (Article IX) but not state organizations. State organization presidents should begin considering bylaws changes, if necessary, in order to be prepared for the unforeseen. As you move forward into the "new normal," feel free to reach out to your international leadership who stand ready to assist you along the way.*

Our virtual event is a great opportunity for all members to take part. There is no traveling, no lodging required, and no registration fees. All you need to do is to follow the ZOOM invitation that will be sent out to chapter presidents to share with their members. If you do not have ZOOM, you will be prompted to download it. If you know someone who doesn't have the internet invite them to safely join you. **Phyllis Hickey**, who was to be our International guest last spring, is preparing a powerpoint video for us. More specific details will be coming but please set aside October 17,2020 for our Virtual Convention, and support Maine State DKG.

The International Virtual Event was very well received and had many interesting presentations. They were grouped together as Learn About our Leaders 2020-2022, Develop Deeper Understanding of DKG, Be Inspired and Learn and Grow. If you did not view them during the event, or want to view them again, they are still available on the DKG website dkg.org. On the Home page click on Events, 2020 Virtual Event, View Highlights from the Event and all the choices are there.

One of the highlights for me was **Dolly Parton** becoming an Honorary member of DKG International. I was aware that she had written some children's books but didn't know about her Imagination Library she started in 1995 in her local community to provide books for children there. With sponsors, it now provides over a million children with one book a month. You can read all about it in the Learn and Grow section of the Virtual Event. For those of you who have an interest in Girl Scouts, DKG has partnered with them to provide activities to Empower girls. This fits right in with the Girl Scout program. I also have information on this program.

Finally, I want all of you to know you may reach out to me anytime with your concerns about your chapter, State, or International DKG issues.

Remember to check out our Maine DKG website and our Facebook page Maine Organization of DKG International for news and updates.

Until we meet virtually or face to face may you stay healthy and safe.

Spring to Fall Convention 2020-2020

There are hopes to have **Spring Convention 2021 at Hilton Gardens in Auburn.**



I am pleased to announce that **Phyllis Hickey** is our International guest for our Spring to Fall virtual event. She was scheduled to be at our Spring Convention. When we canceled, Phyllis said she would be glad to come when we finally had our meeting. However, with all that is still going on she has agreed to prepare a virtual powerpoint presentation for us. Phyllis had the position of Business Director at International headquarters. She is now Strategic Outreach Director. This position was created in order to enrich the membership experience with partnerships and sponsorships which have become more of a focus for the society. She has been a member of DKG since 1986. I met Phyllis at my president's training in Iowa the summer of 2019. I'm sure you will enjoy her presentation.



News from 1st Vice President Mary Hyland

Greetings from Appleton Ridge - my little haven in this crazy world!

As First VP, one of my biggest responsibilities is to chair the Educational Excellence Committee. One of the biggest responsibilities of the EEC is to promote programs and projects for educational excellence. Thus, what are we to do about promoting programs and projects when we are barely figuring out ways to even gather together? That's a loaded question, isn't it? My answer goes in two parallel directions. 1) Recently, President Donna shared a document titled "Converting Challenges into Opportunities in the COVID Era." This is a compilation of what states and chapters all over the world are doing to move forward. The responses run the gamut – surprise, surprise - there is no one way to respond to COVID. Each chapter must determine what its members need and plan accordingly. Consider a W-I-D-E variety of meeting formats with opportunities for small group gatherings. 2) Once your chapter has its formats in place, think seriously about engaging programs! Quality programs lead to more members which lead to more revenue which leads to more quality programs which lead to more members which lead to more revenue... You get the picture. Creativity and collegiality go hand in hand.

Another aspect of our EEC work in Maine SO, as discussed at our work session last fall, is support for early career educators. Given the COVID protocols, in-person volunteering and on-site mentoring are not in the immediate future. But please do consider the types of things that CAN be done. Embrace what may be inconvenient. Imagine what could happen if every retired member paired up with a current teacher to assist with some of the more menial time-consuming tasks. Oh, the possibilities! Our International website has fantastic resources on this, do get cozy with those links.

The other responsibility I have as 1VP is to chair the Achievement Award Committee, and yes, we have been waiting too long to present the 2020 Achievement Award. That will give you one more reason to attend our virtual Fall Workshop on October 17th; you will find out the worthy recipient of this precious award! Also, do start thinking about nominations for our 2021 Achievement Award; that paperwork is right around the corner.

Be well – inside and out.

News from Priscilla McFarland 2nd Vice President

Membership Thoughts

Fall is making its presence known – chilly mornings, hints of color in the trees, early nightfall. This is the season when chapters are beginning to meet and make plans. A perennial topic to consider is recruitment and retention of new members.

Recruiting new members may be more challenging than usual this year because of all of the repercussions of Covid 19. It may not be feasible to conduct in-person presentations to groups, but if you “think outside the box,” you may develop some creative solutions. Your chapter may consider offering Zoom meetings to teachers during after-school hours to introduce our organization and your chapter. Maybe you could create a short video to share. Perhaps you could develop a newsletter or flyer and include several of your elevator speeches. Get the DKG name and your chapter’s name out there by publicizing your activities in newspapers and online. Provide a tray of snacks for teachers’ rooms in various schools, and leave some brochures with your chapter’s information. Offer small mini-grants to teachers to help them get needed supplies for remote teaching. Perhaps your chapter could sew masks and donate them to schools.

Vibrant, active chapters are more apt to attract new members. In spite of the restrictions caused by the pandemic, try to meet regularly as a chapter and plan for engaging programs and activities. Many chapters are managing to meet in person, staying socially distanced, wearing masks, and when possible, meeting outdoors in a public park or in someone’s backyard. My chapter plans to alternate in-person meetings with Zoom meetings. Ask one of your chapter’s working teachers to help set up a Zoom meeting if you need help. Don’t hesitate to contact me, also, if you need help with this. Build in volunteer opportunities, such as helping out at food pantries. Be a chapter to which someone would want to belong. Think about what your chapter can offer to other educators.

Both the Maine State organization website and the International website have numerous tools that membership chairs and chapters can use for recruitment and retention. The Maine website (<https://dkgmaine.weebly.com>) is a good place to start. Under the tab “More,” click on “**Resources**.” There you will find a compilation of elevator speeches that you can use as is or can modify in your marketing efforts. The section called “Rules for Collegiate Members” will give you guidelines for adding undergraduate members. Under “Newsletters,” click on “Mainspring.” Browse through past issues to find inspiration in the membership column.

The International website (<https://www.dkg.org>) has a plethora of resources for membership chairs and chapters. From the Home page, click on the “Resources” tab. Click on “Chapter Tools.” Among the choices, you will see a “Membership Plan,” a “New Member Kit,” tips on “Keeping New Members Engaged,” and “Chapter Leadership Guidelines.” The Guidelines document has useful information about the responsibilities of member chairs. Of particular importance are pages 12-13, 21, 26, and 33-38. Also under “Resources,” be sure to explore the powerpoints about membership, the tutorials about virtual meetings, and the templates for brochures and business cards. Last, don’t miss the section on Communication and Marketing Tools.

I hope that you and your chapter have a satisfying year. Good luck in your efforts to strengthen your chapter with new members, even in these especially trying times!

News from Scholarship Committee

Brenda Sturdivant reports that because of the coronavirus, the First Timers to International scholarship was not given out. Therefore there is nothing new from the Scholarship Committee. Hopefully the Founders' Fund and our Maine State DKG Scholarships can be given out in the coming year. Brenda

Innovative Projects

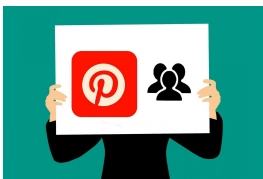
- Elaine Hendrickson invites you to enjoy



Fall Foliage at Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument

On October 3 and 4, 2020. Please go to <https://dkgmaine.weebly.com> and look under Professional Development Opportunities for more details including the Registration Form. There is a limit of 10 families so don't delay.

If you have any questions or would like further details contact Elaine Hendrickson at (207)-551-7706 or elaine.hendrickson@gmail.com



For those of you who like Pinterest there is a following for DKG with lots of educational ideas. <https://www.pinterest.com/DKGSi>. Check it out.



S-T-R-E-T-C-H Workshop News

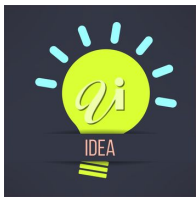
Elaine Hendrickson is working toward having this workshop in place for March 2021. Registration will be \$30. and early registration will be \$25. Some members from last year donated their registration fee toward this years' program in the amount of \$200.

Good news! The 2021 STRETCH workshop has been scheduled for **March 20, 2021** at the Hutchinson Center in Belfast from 9-2:30. All fingers are crossed that there will be an effective Covid-19 vaccine by then. Retired Teacher and author, Tom Wells, who was scheduled to be our keynote presenter last year has agreed to present this year. Tom will share with us the important role a teacher plays in his/her students' lives as outlined in his book: Dear Mr. Wells - His Students Speak. Last year's presenters will be invited to speak again this year, as well as new presenters scheduled as needed. Non-DKG members registered to attend last year will receive a \$5.00 discount on this year's registration fee. If we are not able to host the workshop in person, we will present portions of it virtually. Stay tuned as further information is available on our Maine State Organization website and Facebook page. If you have further questions, contact Elaine Hendrickson, elaine.hendrickson@gmail.com



What's Next? Goals 2025

As our chapters continue to navigate this new world of the 2020 Pandemic, we have found ourselves in a world of uncertainty. How can we keep our chapters alive to continue enjoying our fellowship and growth as educators? How can we keep our membership numbers from declining even more? In the Fall of 2019, as you recall, a group came together to begin to chart a course for Maine State DKG that has become known as Goals 2025. Unfortunately, due to the Pandemic we have not met again, but we can use the skeleton plan the group began to get a start in planning for our future. At the Be a Superhero! Virtual Leadership Training, held on September 19, each chapter has been challenged to choose one of the two goals and come up with at least one activity or method to work toward meeting it.



1. Twenty percent of our state membership will be women actively working to educate others.
2. To ensure that the educational community and general public recognize DKG as a professional organization of leading women educating others.

At your next chapter meeting, continue or begin brainstorming ideas that may help your chapter and other chapters design activities/methods that may help Maine DKG, not only survive, but thrive! (For further information, contact Elaine Hendrickson, elaine.hendrickson@gmail.com)

Be a Superhero! Virtual Leadership Training

On Saturday, September 19, 2020, 34 chapter officers from around the state participated in **Be a Superhero Virtual Leadership Training** via ZOOM under the guidance of past state president, Elaine Hendrickson. Based upon their own unique leadership qualities, each attendee chose a Superhero name for herself using alliteration based upon her first name. Her new name was written on a piece of paper which she held up and shared with others in the group, by way of introductions. Some of these included: Sincerely Supportive Sarah, Loyal Limitless Laura, Joyous Joy, Athletic Alice, and so many awesome names! Rather than break out into smaller groups, the Maine State officers decided to do short presentations to the group as a whole.



Presenting were Donna Kennison, state president; Mary Hyland, first vice president; Priscilla McFarland, second vice president; and Kathy Sticht, treasurer. This way all members could understand the role each office plays in the organization of the Maine State DKG and its chapters. Following the presentations, time was given to ask questions. The meeting ended with a homework assignment for chapters to develop an activity/method to address one of goals developed by the Goals 2025 committee. See article, *What's Next: Goals 2025*) A thumbs up to all of our ME DKG Superheroes!

CTAUN MEETING at the United Nations 2020

“War No More”

Goggle: CTAUN

Here you will find the report about: CTAUN - 2020 UN - “War No More”



Nancy Grover
Liaison to United Nations
Alpha Psi Maine

ngrover@roadrunner.com



Clara Soule

Dawn reported that the Bakeless Bake Sale brought in \$1000. from 6 chapters. It's not too late, your Chapter can still contribute to this virtual event.

Zoom tutorials are available through our website:



<https://dkgmaine.weebly.com>

Theme - Grow your seeds, Share your talent



ZOOM Virtual Event

October 17, 2020. The invitation will be sent to the Executive Board, this includes chapter presidents who are requested to share it with their members, and Past state presidents.

9:00 A.M. sign in time- President's greeting

9:20- 10:30 A.M.- Executive board meeting, including a powerpoint presentation by Phyllis Hickey, our International guest.

10:35- 12:00- Mary Hyland discussing the achievement award, Priscilla MacFarland recognizing our 40 & 50 year members, and celebration of remembrances for those who have passed. Possibly an hour lunch break then sign back in at 1:00 P.M. until 3 for professional and personal presentations, depending how many come forward to present. Those who join in will receive certificates of attendance.

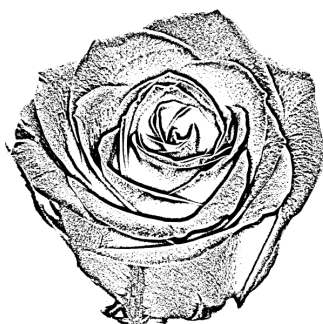
A Reminder for Chapter Presidents:

Report of the Death of a Member (Form 6)
should be prepared by the chapter president
or membership chair immediately upon the death
of a member. Copies are to be sent to:

International (mem@dkg.org)

State Treasurer Kathleen Sticht
(cashkatstate@gmail.com)

State Membership Chair
Priscilla McFarland
(pmcfarland1227@gmail.com)



Remembering Those Who Left Us

Epsilon

Barbara Pearson, a long time kindergarten teacher in Searsport, died on May 12, 2019. She was a member of DKG for 53 years.

Mu

Rebecca Skilling passed away on October 16, 2019. Becky worked for the Auburn School Department for 36 years. She was a member of DKG for 19 years, and it is believed she was a third generation member.

Past State President **Madelyn Linscott** of Winthrop and Brunswick, whose biennium was from 1971 to 1973, left this world on May 25, 2020. Her teaching career in Maine and Virginia spanned 30 years. She was a member of DKG for 61 years.

Alpha

Frances M. Strout, who taught for most of her career at the Vine Street School in Bangor, died on June 24, 2020. She was a member of DKG for 45 years.

Beta

Pauline Levin, a resident of Scarborough, left us on August 10, 2020. She taught elementary and middle school in New York for 25 years and was a past treasurer of the New York state DKG organization. She was a member of DKG for 46 years.

Eta

Kathleen Boynton of Brunswick passed away on September 2, 2020. She taught for 40 years in the Brunswick School System and at Saint John's Catholic School. She was a member of DKG for 5 years.

Chapter News

COVID-19 Mainspring Information from Alpha Chapter.
Submitted by Lisa Sawyer and Fawn Condon Co-Presidents of Alpha Chapter.

ALPHA NEWS

On April 13th of this year we surprised and celebrated Thelma Merritt's' 99th Birthday. With the help of Phillip-Strickland Facility, home to Thelma, they were able to hold her cards, flowers, and gifts from Alpha members until her birthday. Thelma also received many cards from members of the Maine State DKG Organization.

Due to our lives with Coronavirus, we have communicated with every member through countless emails, letters, cards, and numerous calls. This is such a wonderful way for the Presidents' to truly know their members and learn about them, as well as understand how COVID-19 has affected their lives.

Much thought and planning went into the agenda for our 2020-2021 programs. Many members contributed to ideas and information about educational programs for the group.

The Finance committee gathered on June 16th at Carol Brooke's home in Brewer with social distancing to finalize the budget for 2020-2021.

On July 18th the Executive Board met in Thalia Webb's barn in Newport following the CDC distancing recommendations to discuss committees, educational services, programs, committee responsibilities, as well as the What-Ifs due to Covid-19. Will we be able to meet at our usual meeting place? Cancellations of meetings and options?

With saddened hearts, on June 24, 2020, our dear Alpha Sister Frances Strout passed.

We are so fortunate to have our Fellowship Committee which communicates through various cards and floral remembrances with our Alpha Sisters. The Clara Soule Committee also does a wonderful job communicating with members and the community.



An informal gathering of former co-workers and/or Alpha Sisters gathered for a picnic in Cascade Park on a beautiful sunny July day.

On September 14th, Alpha Chapter celebrated with our 50-year member, Thelma Merritt.

Due to restrictions, we were able to celebrate this very happy event from the sidewalk outside of Phillip-Strickland Facility with the help of the Activities Director, Linda Nickerson. Thelma, placed on the second-floor balcony facing York Street where her Alpha

Sisters took turns sharing information about her.

Various gifts provided by the Chapter were presented to Thelma throughout the ceremony by the Activities Director.



The ceremony began with Barb Cloutier's Welcome, then Thelma's biography was read by Fawn Condon, Linda Morris then made personal remarks and a red rose was given to Thelma. Esther Bushway honored Thelma with the 50-year red and gold pin which represents her 50-year commitment to the Maine State Organization of Delta Kappa Gamma. Sue Gauthier read and presented the 50-year certificate, Shirley Ellis acknowledged delivery of the letter addressed to Thelma from International. Lisa Sawyer read a

personal reflection and presented a "Chocolate" cake, Thelma's favorite. Thelma then received numerous acknowledgments for her 50-year accomplishments from Alpha members.

In closing, Alpha Chapter's commitment to communicating has proven to be successful.

"Hand in hand, our loyal band, Forward," social distancing hopefully not forever!

Election Day is around the corner and absentee ballots are available.



Delta Chapter News



Delta members held our first in person meeting on September 1 at an outdoor pavilion at Mantle Lake in Presque Isle wearing masks, socially distanced, and enjoying picnic suppers each of us brought. When asked to jot down what members had done during the summer of Covid, the answer was nothing! **Betsy York** is a part time librarian at MSAD #20 (Fort Fairfield), the secretary of the Central Aroostook Historical Society, and a volunteer for Meals on Wheels. **Rena Kearney** distributes food at the Mars Hill Food Pantry and has taken on a first grader as a tutor. **Michelle Tardif** has moved to a kindergarten position at Pine Street Elementary School taking over for **Debbie Wright** who retired in June. After 38 years in the classroom, our Delta president, **Carrie Reed**, is the Title I Literacy Leader at Limestone Elementary School and only works four days a week! **Julie Gardner** spent time learning more about Google classrooms so it applies to teaching Science and ELA to eighth graders both in person and virtually,

while finding time to work at the Ashland Food Pantry. Our prospective new member, **Sarah Sines**, a first-grade teacher in Washburn, was an online instructor for Camp Invention this summer. **Elaine Hendrickson** helped distribute books to local Aroostook County schools through the 2020 Maine Books Challenge sponsored by Educate Maine who raised over \$20,000 this spring and summer to provide free books to students across the state.

Gamma Chapter News

DKG-Gamma ZOOMS ahead!

To say that 2020 has been a crazy, topsy turvy year would be an understatement. We continuously hear words like unprecedented and that we have had to stop everything to stay safe at home. Very few things have continued as “normal”, including the work of DKG and Gamma. One of the first victims of our new reality was the cancellation of our DKG Spring Stretch workshop, followed shortly after by Gamma’s spring workshop featuring Sharon Gallant. Business as usual came to a halt. However, time marches on and we need to think about the future. If Gamma members hoped to plan for the 2020-2021 year, we were going to need to depart from our traditional practices since meeting in person, at least for now, was out of the question. Enter ZOOM. This online meeting structure had quickly become all the rage, used by organizations, schools and individuals alike to provide a mechanism for bringing people together. ZOOM is an online platform that creates a web meeting allowing participants to see and hear each other live.

Gamma leadership decided we would give this new platform a shot and scheduled a meeting for May 13th. We planned our first ZOOM meeting with time for participants to explore for the first half hour. This provided members with a chance to get assistance with key tasks, such as logging on and maneuvering through the site. So many new things to learn, including logging in, muting (and more importantly unmuting!), raising your hand to speak and the difference between speaker and gallery view. When the time came to begin our meeting, it was exciting to see that 9 members were able to join in and we were able to tackle our agenda without too many hitches.



Gamma is fortunate to have several members already familiar with ZOOM, so we helped each other. We even agreed to try to include ZOOM as an option for a while as we gradually transition to meeting in-person. In fact, we gave this option a trial run for our planning meeting in June. Five Gamma members were able to meet in person, all appropriately spaced to meet social distance requirements. Other Gamma members were able to join in online via a ZOOM meeting led by Melanie Ruark and Rachelle Tome. This option proved to be tricky and took some clever maneuvering, but ultimately, members were able to construct a proposed calendar for 2020-21.



While we all would certainly prefer to meet in person, having ZOOM as an alternative may enhance our ability to reach out even after the restrictions from COVID have been lifted. This may be especially true for members who want to stay connected but may have challenges with transportation.

Theta Chapter News

Theta's Inez Weaver, a Spanish teacher at Sumner Memorial High School, recently completed her CAS (Certificate of Advanced Study) in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment at the University of Maine. She is currently near the end of the arduous process of applying to work on her Ph. D. and developing her thesis proposal.

Last December, Theta member Diane Bonney traveled to Germany to visit her former exchange student and her new baby girl. They enjoyed visiting the Christmas Markets, including Dresden. In January, she and her husband went to Juneau, Alaska to visit their daughter and her family. Diane ended up staying until June to homeschool her two grandsons while their parents worked. She did get to camp and hike while there.

Priscilla McFarland has been enjoying her first few months of retirement after 39 years of teaching. A highlight of the summer has been weekly hikes with other retirees on various scenic trails around Hancock County.

On March 5th, Theta held a joint meeting with Downeast Business and Professional Women and Hancock County American Association of University Women at the Moore Center in Ellsworth. After a wonderful potluck supper, we enjoyed a presentation from the Ellsworth Historical Society. Vice president Linda Grindle and President Bill Fogle spoke about the activities of the EHS, including Ellsworth's plans for Maine's Bicentennial. Those plans have since been put on hold, at least until 2021. They also presented an informative slide show about historic buildings that are still in use around Ellsworth.

Theta and the other two groups are unable to have their joint meeting as planned in October because our meeting place is unavailable and because meeting in large groups is risky. The presenters who had been scheduled spoke on the same topic in early September in a Zoom broadcast sponsored by the Southwest Harbor Library. Several Theta members joined the Zoom meeting. The enlightening presentation on "The Struggle for Women's Suffrage" by Ann Luther and Shelia Nataraj Kirby, Ph.D. told the complicated history of the journey to achieve women's right to vote. The engaging talk and slideshow "highlight[ed] some of the compromises that split the movement and the consequences of this split, which left many voters without the right to vote."

Kirby has worked with RAND, a nonprofit think tank for over 30 years. She was also a graduate school professor at George Washington University for 25 years. Luther is the treasurer of the League of Women Voters Maine and was previously the vice president and president. She hosts a monthly radio show, The Democracy Forum, on WERU.

Theta has been collaborating with the BPW and the AAUW for both a fall and a spring meeting for the last several years. This has enabled us to have an ample audience for a number of informative and interesting speakers.

We were unable to have our April, May, and June meetings because of the Covid crisis, but we were pleased to gather on the deck of Judith Bragg's home on September 10th. Judy graciously provided a scrumptious supper before our meeting, in which we planned our activities for the year. We then assembled 30 "Welcome Mugs" to distribute to brand-new teachers in the area schools. The mugs were stuffed with supplies, such as pens, highlighters, and sticky notes. They also contained some edible treats, including chocolate and granola bars. Theta has been doing this project for new teachers ever since Julie Burr and Priscilla McFarland got the idea at the New England regional conference in Portland, Maine a number of years ago.

Mu Chapter News



Susan Cornelius, Mu chapter has been the "one women" show for organizing our Christmas Project for many years. Each fall she contacts the Loaves and Fishes Convent in Sabattus, to get families in need. In 2019 we "adopted" 5 families, a total of 14 people. There were 7 children, 3 single parents, 1 couple, and 1 set of grandparents who had custody of their granddaughter. Susan has each "adopted" person fill out a form asking for sizes for clothes, foot wear, color preferences, toys, games and needed items. At our November meeting we sign up on the sheets for what we will purchase, we get a copy of the sheet to keep for shopping. We all bring in our items to the December meeting, wrapped and tagged with only the person's first name. Susan has large clear plastic bags with each person's name on the , we put our items in the correct bag. According to the signup sheets 90 gifts were signed up for –BUT over 120 packages were in the bags. Each family was given a family Pre-Christmas gift bag/large stocking with things such as Christmas candy, a jar of jam, puffs tissues, calendars, new Christmas cards, wrapping paper, a puzzles, a family game, coloring books, etc. (about 50 plus more gifts.) Throughout the year we put money in a coffee can at each meeting so each bag had a Hannaford food gift card for a total of \$315.00 in food cards. Susan and her husband Ruben purchase items that were not signed up for and Pre-Christmas items. They deliver everything all sorted and labeled to the convent for the families. Susan is our Santa Claus ! Ruben is a great elf.