



# Gamma Alpha Bulletin

## The G.A.B. "Let's Talk"

### President's Message

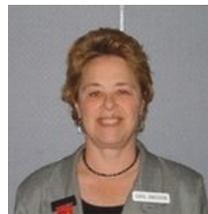
"Five little jack-o-lanterns sitting on a gate." If you teach (or taught) primary grades, you probably know this little poem. The kids like hearing it and saying it. Now we get a message that we should not use Halloween and other holiday customs in our teaching. Some of us may go along with the request. Others, like me, resent the idea that teaching about customs is unacceptable. Do we know what a jack-o-lantern is? It is probably a good idea for children to learn that people had to carry lanterns at night before flashlight were invented. They are amazed to find out that their great-great grandparents had to carve holes in a gourd and carry a candle in it. They love to hear about what a real jack-o-lantern is. We may be told not to talk about ghosts but The Legend of Sleepy Hollow is a wonderful piece of literature for older students. Is it on a forbidden list?

We are told what to teach and how to teach by people who have no concept of what it means to teach. We are told what goals to meet, how to meet them and when to meet them. Our experience tells us that the goals and the regulations and the standards are often unrealistic and unreasonable. Yet we know that we must work to meet the goals and follow the regulations. As Key Women Educators, we should use our voices of experience to inform legislators what the real facts are and what the real needs of

students are. No child will be left behind if the needs of every child are recognized. It hurts to see any child struggle to make barely average progress. Yet we know that barely average is the best that the student can do. It hurts to see the child who refuses to make any effort to struggle and learn. And yet, we educators are judged by their progress and we are told that they should all be making the same progress. We know that there is a lack of logic in these regulations. Now is the time to let our legislators know that the laws they make regarding education must be reasonable. Now is the time for Key Women Educators to approach our representatives and give them the facts and suggestions of how to improve the service that education can offer to all students. Now is the time to hop up on our horse like Brom Bones and toss that pumpkin off our head with a message to all the Ichabod Cranes who think they know what is best for us and for education.

So says the prez!

Carol A. Anderson, Chapter President



### Mission

*The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.*

### Vision

*Leading women educators impacting education worldwide.*

### Inside this issue:

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### Meeting Info



#### October 19

Meeting at Jackie's home 20158 Southampton Drive Livonia ( Take Farmington Road north to Seven Mile. Turn Left. First light is Gill Road. Turn Right. Go 2/3 of a Mile up Gill and turn right on Navin; then an immediate left on Southampton. Last house on the right on the corner of Southampton & Whitby.

#### October 21 - 22

Fall Workshop  
Registration in Summer  
*Wolverine* or  
[www.deltakappagamma.org](http://www.deltakappagamma.org)

#### December 7

\*Holiday Auction  
RSVP to Jackie at:  
[jackie@mymartfamily.com](mailto:jackie@mymartfamily.com)

**Don't forget these dates!**



**October 7-9, 2011**

Women in the Arts, Higgins Lake

Women in the Arts Retreat at Higgins Lake (Registration information is in the Summer *Wolverine* and online at [www.deltakappagamma.org/MI](http://www.deltakappagamma.org/MI))

**October 19, 2011**

4:30 p.m.



Refreshment Committee arrive at 3:30 with goodies

Jackie Smart's home

20158 Southampton Drive

Livonia (248) 476-8659

**Agenda:**

- Bring your candidate to an English tea at the home of Jackie Smart. If we have candidates, Colleen Retherford will lead a brief DKG orientation. FYI, initiation of new members will be held at the January meeting. If desired wear a hat a gloves to the tea!
- Teapot and Goody Bag Raffle \$5/ticket
- Speaker: Melissa McDermid will share her yearlong experience as a participant in the Fulbright Teacher Exchange program. Melissa, a Farmington teacher and member of Beta Eta chapter, taught in the primary grades in England.
- Auction Committee will plan following the meeting.

**December 7, 2011 (FLYER in Newsletter)**

4:30 p.m. Dinner/Holiday Auction *Arrive 4:00 for set-up*

Laurel Manor

39000 Schoolcraft Road in Livonia

*(Prepayment of \$25 is necessary for this event.)*

**Holiday Auction Reminders**

1. For the smaller items, we will sell raffle tickets and have people put tickets into cups and winners will be randomly selected.

2. Some of the larger items will be in the "silent auction" format with pad, pen, a starting bid, and a time cut-off for bids.
3. And lastly, some items will be put on the auction block.
4. Members still need to bring a 3x5 card for each item they donate. On the card, they should describe the item, list the value, and name of the donor. Members should try to bring more than one donation so we will have a variety of auction items. We need to guarantee Laurel Manor at least 50 will be in attendance, so we encourage you to bring guests so we meet our quota and so we aren't the only ones spending money!

Auction committee meeting following October meeting.



**January 18, 2012**

4:30 p.m. Please arrive on time.

Hayden's Grill and Bar

39895 Ford Road

Canton (east of I-275)

Executive Board (President, 1st, 2nd, Vice Presidents, Recording and Corresponding Secretaries, and the Treasurer) will meet prior to the meeting at 3:30 to complete biennial reports.

**Agenda:**

- 50/50 Raffle
- Book Sale
- Initiation of New Members (if any)

Speaker: Maria Dismody is a primary teacher in Plymouth-Canton and author of "The Juice Box Bully" and "Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun." Maria stated that in today's society, it's important to remind children that, although we are different on the outside, we are very much alike on the inside. Unfortunately, bullying has become a major problem in the United States. It's not only painful for children, but occurring at an increasingly young age. Both of her books are meant to empower children to positively handle tough situations through their timeless messages. Books will be available for purchase.

Whether or not you are currently teaching this is still a very important issue so please plan on attending.

**March 21, 2012**

4:30 p.m.

Hayden's Grill and Bar

39895 Ford Road

Canton (east of I-275)

**Agenda:**

- 50/50 raffle
- Book Sale
- Flower Orders (More information in future newsletters.)
- Speaker:

Community gardens are "hot" ideas, especially after the attention they received on *60 Minutes* and by the First Lady. Not only do community gardens defray the rising cost of produce, but the freshness of your crop is superior to anything you can buy at the grocery store. A portion of the harvest is donated to local pantries and community gardens help our country go green.



**April 21, 2012**

Metro Coordinating Council Luncheon

More information will follow in future newsletters.

**April 25, 2012**

4:30 p.m.

Hayden's Grill and Bar

39895 Ford Road

Canton (east of I-275)

- 50/50 Raffle
- Book Sale
- Discussion regarding our Service Projects and donations

Speaker: In Michigan, the lottery is big business. So, why is there still a barrage of school closings and major cutbacks, including layoffs? When you buy that lottery ticket, how much goes to fund education? Our speaker is a representative from the Michigan Lottery will give us the lowdown on the lottery and education.

**May 4-6, 2012**

Alpha Iota State Convention

Radisson Plaza in Kalamazoo

Convention and hotel registration will be available in the Winter *Wolverine* and in future newsletters. Please plan on attending.

**May 16, 2012**

Gamma Alpha Birthday Dinner

4:30 p.m.

East Side Mario's

31630 Plymouth Road in Livonia

**Agenda:**

- Chapter Birthday Dinner
- (Pre-payment of \$20 will be necessary)
- Honor Friend of Education
- Honor Retirees
- Award Grant-in-Aids
- Installation of New Officers
- Recommitment Birthday Ceremony

**June 23, 2012**

Planning Meeting

All of our programs are planned by the membership. Be reminded that this meeting is **not** just for Executive Board, but for members who wish to make our chapter vital. Come to our planning meeting armed with ideas **or** suggestions you want Gamma Alpha to be involved with for 2012-2013. Let us know where you would

*I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think. ~Socrates*

like our meetings to be held. If you know of a speaker, please bring the contact information. The more cooks in this case the better the soup!

Planning meeting and pot luck luncheon will be held at Carol Anderson's at 11:00. Bring your favorite potato, pasta, fruit, or green salad to pass. We will need rolls and some healthy snacks to munch on while we are meeting. Carol will have dessert and beverages for us. Carol lives in Canton. Take I-275 to Ford Road (west.) She is off Ford Road approximately 2 miles west of I-275. The sub is Nottingham Forest between Lilley and Morton Taylor Roads. From Ford Road turn north on Willow Creek and then left on Wedgewood. Her address is 5855 Wedgewood. Carol's house is on the left. (734-981-3741) Please RSVP your intentions and what you are bringing to Jackie:



jackie@mysmartfamily.com

## Reminder

Auction Committee will be meeting after the October meeting to discuss assignments. If you signed up to work, plan on being at the meeting or contact Mary Jo at [dreffsmjr@aol.com](mailto:dreffsmjr@aol.com) or (248) 437-9754.



*Each player must accept the cards life deals him. But once they are in hand, he alone must decide how to play the cards in order to win the game.*

*~Voltaire*

## Birthdays

### October

21 Alice Duke

23 Lisa Austin

### November

2 Debbie Ervin

5 Amy Wainwright

10 Sherry Green

17 Pam Emerson

24 Chris Smith



## Top Ten Reasons to Attend the State Fall Conference

Come to the Lexington Lansing, Hotel for Fall Conference on October 21-22, 2011.

Why should **YOU** come?

1. Enjoy the companionship of key women educators
2. See our state government buildings
3. Listen to the expertise of Alpha Iota State presenters
4. Be inspired by our keynote speaker
5. Shop at the numerous outlet malls on the way home
6. The Lexington Lansing Hotel's pool
7. Visit the Michigan Historical Museum
8. Visit the Women's Historical Museum
9. Tour the Lansing Art Gallery
10. Earn SB-CEUs

## Teacher Evaluations



The debate about how to evaluate teachers has been raging since at least the time of Socrates and is unlikely to be definitively settled any time soon. That is because teaching is a highly complex activity that requires many skills. There are no universally accepted, specific methods of teaching, and there are no universally accepted, reliable ways to measure student learning. Teachers worry that if they are wholly evaluated through the observation of their principal, then subjectivity and favoritism could become too much of a factor. At the same time, evaluations that rely wholly on measures of student learning - especially when the measure is standardized test scores - may not take into account the level of skills with which students arrive, or the conditions under which teachers teach. Meanwhile, as teachers seek a fair system that supports them as they grow professionally, the public demands that teachers be "held accountable" and terminated quickly when students fail.

All of this makes the creation of a fair evaluation system a challenge. The good news is that there is a growing consensus about the limits of any single measure of a teacher's work and a growing consensus also that the purpose of evaluation is not to simply identify struggling teachers and dismiss them summarily. Good evaluation systems actually further our profession by offering opportunities for continued growth and support. And, good evaluation systems ensure fairness (i.e., due process) in high-stakes employment decisions such as dismissal and tenure. So, how do we "evaluate" evaluation systems? There are five questions we can ask. Does the evaluation system:

1. **... advance a common vision of what good teaching looks like by providing professional teaching standards?** Good teaching standards capture the best teaching practices without constricting teachers to prescribed methods of pedagogy. They also can serve to discourage evaluators from judging teachers based upon personal prejudices or gut reactions. Professional teaching standards might focus on the level of student engagement for example, the teacher's content knowledge, or the teacher's ability to create an effective environment for learning.
2. **... include multiple measures?** Teaching is too complex to be caught in a snapshot observation or a snapshot of student test scores. And no single source of information should hold excessive sway over the fate of teachers. A combination of measures is a fairer way to evaluate teachers, so long as the limits of each individual measure are properly understood. Measures might include supervisory and/or peer observations as well as student learning. If student learning is included, then test scores should not be the sole measure of that learning.
3. **... consider the teaching in terms of its professional context?** Teaching and learning conditions vary widely from school to school, even within the same neighborhoods. Teaching should be evaluated in relation to the conditions that teachers cannot control, such as the support for planning and instruction provided by the school system; the facilities and resources of their school; the level of empowerment and the quality of the school leadership; the school's level of safety and order; and the teacher's opportunity for professional growth.
4. **... provide a way to support and enhance the skills of all teachers - or does it only serve as a vehicle for termination?** Teachers never stop learning, and they never should. A system of professional

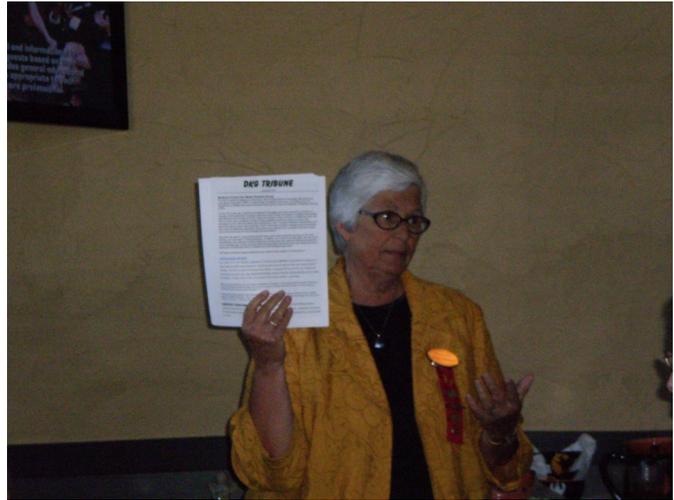
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## Gamma Alpha Bulletin



Carol Anderson and Judy Foster pose for a photo after Gamma Alpha's first meeting of the 2011-2012 calendar year.

Judy Foster holds up the *DKG Tribune* that she publishes monthly. It is available on the Alpha Iota website at:  
[www.deltakappagamma.org/MI](http://www.deltakappagamma.org/MI)



Our first meeting of the year helped to fulfill our DKG Purposes 4,6, and 7. Speaker Judy Foster, past state president, state Legislation chair, and vice president of MEA-R shared insights on the Michigan Legislature's devastating blow to teachers of all ages and students. She spoke to us about what's going on in Lansing. She told us about lots of bills NOT supporting teachers and asked us to contact our legislators. Whether or not you are currently teaching we REALLY need to do this. Call or email whatever works but let them know teachers are not deserving of the treatment we are getting.

Judy writes an information flyer that is posted on the DKG website. This also speaks to legislation issues and urges members to contact their senators and representatives and share their views with this. Members were given tips on how to contact and information about "Talking Points" for specific bills was handed out.

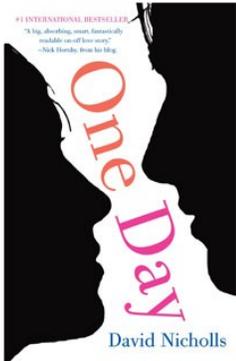
We were encouraged to read and respond to the following emails:

- MEA Capitol Comments - gives up to the minute legislation and actions; including a call to action by you with access to legislators email addresses.
- NEA Women's Caucus - addresses women's issues in the U.S. and the world.
- On Sunday mornings at 11:30, "Off the Record" discusses current issues facing Michigan in a civil debate.

Judy message resonated to us. Get involved. If we don't like what is happening in the political arena - vote. If we like how things are being handled - vote.

*Contributed by Mary Jo Dreffs and Pam Emerson*

**Good Read**  
**One Day by David Nicholls**



Did you like *When Harry Met Sally*? David Nicholls' plot is pretty similar in his novel *One Day*. But the British novelist has a gift for description and emotional empathy. I borrowed this from my daughter and it was an unexpected treat. I thought it would be a light beach read and turned out to be a nuanced love story.

Here's the scoop: On the night they graduate from the University of Edinburgh on July 15, 1988; brainy, working-class Emma and posh Dexter Mayhew share a bed; and almost recognize the powerful chemistry in their unlikely pairing. Almost. The point is they don't, because Emma and Dexter haven't lived enough yet to know who they really are. That part takes time - 20 years. Dexter wastes most of the opportunities the universe showers on him. Emma, a writer in the making, clings to her belief that she deserves only the universe's castoffs.

The author charts the maturing of these two Gen-Xers by the calendar, marking July 15 as the day to check in on Emma and Dex, year after year. Nicholls is able to let the reader know how it feels to age. He creates new poignancy from the old truth that a life is just a stack of days, but *One Day* can truly make a difference.

*Contributed by Jackie Smart*

*In a completely rational society, the best of us would aspire to be teachers and the rest of us would have to settle for something less, because passing civilization along from one generation to the next ought to be the highest honor and the highest responsibility anyone could have.*

~Lee Iacocca

**More Ways to Attract New Members**

- Broaden your chapter's horizons by inviting medical professionals as new members.
- Have each new member bring a friend/colleague as a prospective member to a chapter meeting or event.
- Communicate with chapter grant recipients, thus keeping them in mind as prospective chapter members when they meet the membership requirements.
- Have a reunion potluck and invite all chapter members, prospective new members, and former members who may now wish to be reinstated.
- Utilize a chapter meeting to brainstorm about membership: which categories/ages/schools/other educational institutions? Then create a plan with everyone involved.



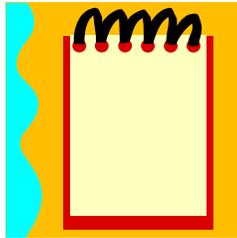
**T.H.A.T.**

Teachers Helping Another Teacher (THAT) is a program that chapters can use to nurture early career educators. Each chapter is being urged to keep track of the time members volunteer in classrooms and money spent on early career educator projects. Chapter presidents will report the volunteer time and monetary donations. DKG President, Dr. Jensi Souder, will present a mock check at the International Convention in NYC representing the amount of support that our Society has given to education.



## Minutes

September 21, 2011



The meeting was called to order by Carol at 4:30. We began with an Opener with Happy/Sad news from the summer. We heard lots of Good News and (some sad news) and earned a few dollars! Cindy collected dues and we approved the minutes from the Birthday Dinner. If you weren't able to attend this meeting remember to send your dues to her as ASAP. Jackie updated us on some correspondence we've received from The Methodist Children's Home Society requesting anyone interested in tutoring some of the boys for reading support. Jackie and Amy have further information if this seems like something you'd like to do. We also heard from Seedlings about a grant from Art Van Furniture we can help them win (Jackie has already sent us info on this) and about an upcoming night to dine out to support them. We had lots of goodies to "bid" on at our Vacation Auction. Our ladies seemed to do lots of traveling this summer and brought back some wonderful treasures! We earned \$35 from the 50/50 raffle and \$25 from Happy/Sad News. We sold \$11.50 in used books. The Vacation Auction made \$132. Thanks for your generosity, members.

We discussed the upcoming programs we have scheduled for this year. Please check the monthly calendar for details. We've really got some fun things to look forward to!

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jo Dreffs for Carol Palk, Recording Secretary



## Music and Magic

Sunday, October 9, 5 p.m.

Schoolcraft College

PE Building Pool

Admission \$5, Children 12 and under are FREE

Come watch Fran Saenz, or as we call her Esther Williams, do her synchronized swim routines at Schoolcraft College.

## Volunteer Opportunity

If you are interested in a volunteer opportunity working with the boys at the Methodist Children's Home Society in reading for two hours weekly (M/W or T/Th from 3:30 - 4:30) please contact Heather Karschner, Development and Marketing Associate at (313) - 531-7462. When you help a child you change a life!

## You Might Be a Michiganiaan...

- If you have ever gotten frostbitten and sunburned in the same week.
- If you think Alkaline batteries were named after a Tiger outfielder.
- If someone asks you if you have ever been to Europe and you answer, "No, but I've been to Ann Arbor."
- If octopus and hockey go together as naturally as hot dogs and baseball.
- If traveling coast to coast means going from Port Huron to Muskegon.
- If you bake with "soda" and drink "pop."
- If you don't have a coughing fit from one sip of Vernors.
- If "thumb" is a geographical rather than anatomical term.
- If you can't decide whether the road you're driving on is paved or not.
- If fudge and bicycles remind you of your honeymoon.

*Submitted by Esther Loskowske  
Thanks for the giggle, Esther!*

## The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International Gamma Alpha Annual Holiday Auction



**December 7, 2011**

**Register/Set-up/Cocktails/Social 4:00**

**Hors D'Oeuvres 4:30**

**Dinner 5:00**

***Auction Following dinner 6:00***



It's here! Gamma Alpha Chapter's Annual Holiday Auction. You can do your Christmas shopping early this year! Proceeds will be used in part for scholarships given to women continuing or seeking a degree in education, for Early-Career Educators, and for our community service projects.

### **Laurel Manor Banquet & Conference Center**

**39000 Schoolcraft Road**

**Livonia, Michigan**

### **Plated Dinner Entree \$25**

**Garden Salad w/ Ranch or Italian Dressing**

**Homemade Bread**

**Chicken Boursin**

**or**

**Vegetarian Choice: Baked Tronchetto w/ Vegetable**

**Potatoes Anna**

**Bean Medley**

**Peppermint Stick Ice Cream w/ Fudge Topping**

**Coffee, Tea, Decaf**

**Cash Bar (Wine and Beer)**

1. Indicate entrée choice: Chicken Boursin or Baked Tronchetto.
2. Make checks payable to "Gamma Alpha."
3. Send to treasurer, Cindy Dietz, by November 23, 2011.
4. Please list names of guests and their entrée for name tags.
5. If you fill a table (8) we can reserve the table for your party.

**Cindy Dietz  
7329 Gilman  
Westland, MI 48185  
(734) 427-9399**

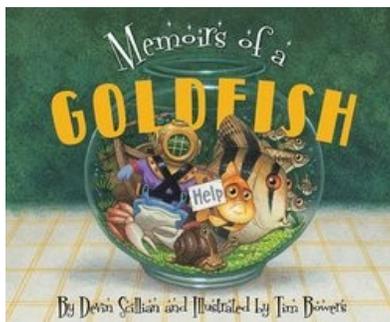
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support (including appropriate professional development opportunities, access to the latest research, and opportunities to share knowledge) is at the heart of good teaching, and no system of evaluation should be designed without including a plan that gives teachers opportunities to refine their craft.

5. ...**include a mechanism by which the system can be monitored and then revised?** Conditions change. What's more, evaluation systems - even when well-implemented - do not always work out as planned. A good evaluation system includes a mechanism that allows all parties to review and evaluate how well the system is working, and make improvements as needed.

<http://www.uft.org/teaching/hot-topics/teacher-evaluation>

### Michigan Reads Program



The Library of Michigan is pleased to announce "Memoirs of a Goldfish" by Michigan author and WDIV newscaster, Devin Scillian (Sleeping Bear Press, 2010) as the featured title for the 2011 "Michigan Reads! One State, One Children's Book" program. The program is sponsored by the Library of Michigan Foundation in partnership with Target. The "Michigan Reads!" program recognizes the importance and value of libraries in providing quality books, programs and services to children and families in Michigan. These books and services provide a foundation for literacy, enabling future school success.

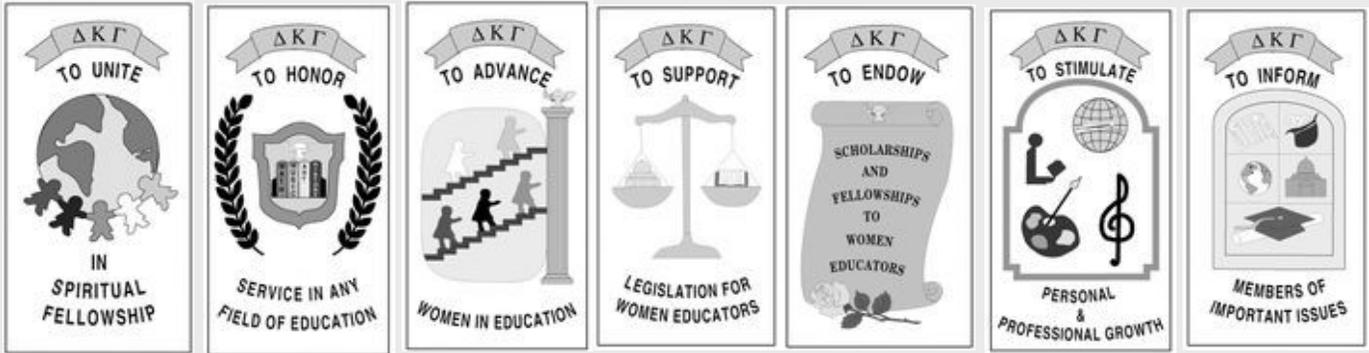
*Memoirs of a Goldfish* presents a charming view of life from inside a small glass bowl! With his bowl to himself and his normal routine, Goldfish loves his life, until one day... intruders arrive and it looks like things will never be the same. But time away from his new companions gives him a chance to rethink the pros and cons of a solitary life and discover what he's been missing. The book is filled with clever rhyming text and the message about friendship accompanying the bright illustrations will captivate readers of all ages.

As a result of Target's support, the Library of Michigan will provide a hardcover copy of the book and programming materials to all public libraries, elementary schools, Head Start and Michigan School Readiness programs across the state. In addition, Scillian will tour Michigan libraries and schools. The "Michigan Reads!" program provides librarians, early childhood educators, parents, and caregivers with ideas to help children develop literacy skills through play-based activities.

*If a doctor, lawyer, or dentist had forty people in his office at one time, all of whom had different needs, and some of whom didn't want to be there and were causing trouble, and the doctor, lawyer, or dentist, without assistance, had to treat them all with professional excellence for nine months, then he might have some conception of the classroom's teacher's job.*

*~Donald D. Quinn*

## Seven Purposes of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International



### Gamma Alpha Executive Board & Committee Chairmen

#### Executive Board

President	Carol Anderson
1st VP/Program	Mary Jo Dreffs
2nd VP/Membership	Colleen Retherford
Recording Secretary	Carol Palk
Corresponding Secretary	Jackie Smart
Treasurer	Cindy Dietz
Parliamentarian	Fran Saenz

#### Committee Chairmen

Personal Growth & Service	Amy Wainwright
Professional Affairs	Lynne Elsesser
US Forum/Legislation	Pam Emerson/ Cindy Dietz
Grant-in-Aid	Debbie Ervin
Birthday	Esther Loskowske Helen Mate
World Fellowships	Esther Loskowske
Yearbook/Newsletter	Jackie Smart
Sunshine	Donna Colaianne & Nancy Chiasson
Finance	Judi Fisher
Nominations	Amy Wainwright
Holiday Auction	Mary Jo Dreffs

### On the Lookout for Speakers and Programs

The Program of Work Committee is putting together the schedule of events and sessions for the state convention to be held May 4-6, 2012 in beautiful Kalamazoo. We are on the lookout for dynamic speakers and program ideas. Along with sessions pertaining to Society business, we would like to offer presentations on topics of both professional and personal interest. We would like to showcase the skills and talent of Society members, and we are asking chapter presidents to let us know of women in their group (including themselves) who would be willing to present a workshop session. In addition, please let us know of speakers in your community whose area of expertise would be of interest to our members. We would particularly like to find presenters on the following topics, but there are many other intriguing subjects as well. Zumba Gold or Tai Chi, Autism, Women's Health, Internet Safety, Local Places of Interest (Kalamazoo area or Michigan) Personal Safety/Self Defense, The Economy: Impact on Families and Students, Classroom Technology. Thank you for your help!

Please send ideas and names to me at:

*svanwesten2@Yahoo.com*

***Liz VanWestenburg - First Vice President***