

# Eta Mu Musings

NEWS OF ETA MU CHAPTER AREA XVII DKG CA

*DKG CA - Crossing Bridges Together!*

JUNE - SUMMER  
2021

## In this issue

|                            |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| President's Message        | Page 1  |
| Eta Mu Events              | Page 2  |
| Members' News              | Page 4  |
| Upcoming Events            | Page 8  |
| Legislative Updates        | Page 9  |
| Area News and Local Events | Page 10 |
| Member Resources           | Page 11 |

ETA MU, DKG CALIFORNIA

*"DKG California –  
Educational – Professional –  
Making an Impact"*

[etamucaliforniadkg.org](http://etamucaliforniadkg.org)

[Eta Mu's Facebook Page](#)

DELTA KAPPA GAMMA  
SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Mission Statement:

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



Vision Statement:

Leading Women Educators  
Impacting Education Worldwide

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## Presidents' Message



Hello, Eta Mu sisters. Our chapter has been so busy since our last newsletter! A couple of us donated time to Love Modesto, seven of us built a Little Free Library, several attended the DKG California Virtual Convention, and twelve of us attempted to solve a murder at our Mystery Dinner. We'll finish the Eta Mu year outdoors with a lovely June Garden Party. More information on each of these events can be found in this newsletter.

The Eta Mu phone tree was also activated recently to check in on members, particularly those who are still sheltering in place. Technical help and transportation were offered to those who would like to get their Covid vaccinations, learn how to use Zoom, or come to a meeting. If you need assistance with any of these or in other ways, please let us know and we'll set you up with a member who will be glad to help you.

We were saddened to hear from Sheila Efflandt's niece that Sheila passed away on February 24th at the age of ninety-two. Sheila lived a full life and always had many adventures to share with her Eta Mu family. We'll remember her fondly.

Judy Trask and Linda Chrabas, Co-Presidents



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS

DELTA KAPPA GAMMA™

# ETA MU EVENTS



## Love Modesto April 24

### VOLUNTEER

Even with some Covid restrictions still in place, Eta Mu members took part in Love Modesto on April 24th. Debbie Mar volunteered in person at Catherine Everett Elementary School, and Kathleen Heinzinger signed up for and completed the *Love All Our Kids Birthday Kits* project. Kathleen donated blank birthday cards, stickers, and gift cards. Throughout the year a "birthday kit" will be distributed to a teen in foster care. If any other members participated in Love Modesto, please accept your Eta Mu chapter's gratitude for being part of the nearly 3,000 volunteers who worked to improve our city this year.

## Eta Mu Built a Little Free Library

Our April outdoor gathering took place at Theresa Foote's home, where Eta Mu members sanded and painted the Little Free Library that Theresa built for us. The purpose of a Little Free Library is to have a free book exchange in an easily accessible location. There is even a Little Free Library at the South Pole!

Denise Carlson-Nieto submitted the required paperwork to her school district, Stanislaus Union, for permission to locate the Little Free Library on the Agnes Baptist Elementary School grounds.

Eta Mu members donated K - 6 books to the little library, and the school's librarian plans to stock it with books as well. Book donations from members will be an ongoing part of this fun project.



## *JARED BOXES FINALLY DELIVERED!*

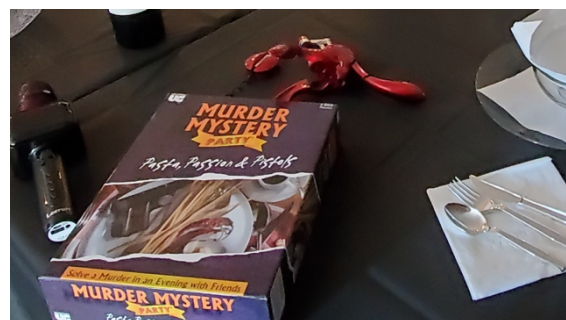
It was over a year ago that ETA Mu members assembled 30 Jared Boxes for children at Doctors Hospital. Then Covid restrictions kept us from delivering them, but not anymore! On May 12, we finally were able to turn over all 30 boxes to Jeremy Brown, the Doctors Hospital chaplain, who plans to share stories with us later about the boxes and the children who receive them. A big thank you to Eta Mu member Janice Freeman for connecting us with Jeremy.



## *Mystery Dinner: Pasta, Passion, and Pistols!*



It's a good thing we're educators and not detectives, because a criminal got away with murder at our May gathering. While we sat around a table dining on a



delicious catered Italian meal, our mystery facilitator assigned several of us to be suspects and one to be the murderer of a prominent restaurateur. The rest of us were family or friends of the suspects.

After getting details of the crime, we listened to the various suspects as they presented their alibis and proclaimed their innocence. There were accusations and plenty of clues, including some red herrings meant to sidetrack us from discovering the truth. Twists abounded, some alibis were supported by witnesses, and then it was time to solve the mystery.

Keep a close eye on Carol Vieira—not one of us guessed that her character was the guilty party!

Many thanks to Re:Form Pilates Studio for hosting this event for our members.





*Celebrate Being  
a DKG Woman*



A key to growing as a  
**TEACHER**  
is to keep company mainly  
with teachers who  
*uplift you,*  
whose presence  
**INSPIRE YOU**  
and whose dedication drives you.  
( Robert John Meehan )

***“DKG California  
– Educational –  
Professional –  
Making an  
Impact”***

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



*In Memoriam:*

*Sheila Efflandt - My Dear Friend and  
Colleague*

**By Adele Little**

Sheila Efflandt was passionate about many things – teaching, politics, religion, sailing, traveling.

She was feisty and fun-loving. She was always forthright, never holding back her genuine opinions, thoughts, and feelings. She was a stickler for the truth. I am always amused

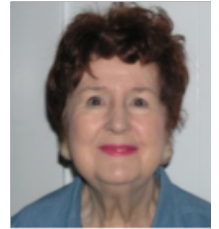
by one example: Stan and I were making a presentation on our trip to New Zealand to Modesto Institute for Continued

Learning (MICL) at Modesto Junior College where Sheila was a regular

attendee. As a slide appeared on the screen, I said, “This is where the

America’s Cup race was held.” A voice in the back of the room piped up. It

was Sheila. She said, “No, it wasn’t. I was there!” Sheila owned her own sailboat for many years and enjoyed sailing with friends.



- Sheila was raised principally by her grandmother on a ranch in Modesto. Her mother was an artist for Hallmark. Sheila was proud of her Irish heritage and close to her sisters and their children.

Sheila experienced tragedy in her life, enduring the loss of her three sons. But her indomitable spirit carried her through sorrow.

Sheila began her career teaching in a two-classroom school with her first husband, Ken Curnow. She became a teacher in the Sylvan Union School District where she initially taught first grade. Then she was assigned to be a reading teacher for Grades 1-3. As the reading teacher for Grades 4-6, I shared a classroom with Sheila at Sylvan School for six years. She was a wonderfully collaborative colleague. We worked closely together and always had a congenial relationship.

Sheila had a gift for teaching. She was highly engaged with her students. She was creative and made learning fun. After she retired, she taught in the StanRead Adult Literacy Program of the Stanislaus County Office of Education. She was an immediate hit with the adult students who loved her and learned quickly from her. In 2004, to honor her exemplary teaching of children and adults, Sheila was chosen to receive the Jean and Clyde Dunlap Award for Outstanding Contributions to Literacy given by the Literacy Network of Stanislaus County



Sheila's zest for travel took her to many parts of the world. She was on a trip in North Carolina when she was hit by a car and severely injured. She spent months in the hospital and rehabilitation facility. It was an accident from which she never fully recovered. She lived out her last years at Walnut Grove in Modesto.



I was proud to sponsor Sheila to membership in Eta Mu Chapter in which she was a valued member for 19 years. Rest in peace, dear friend.



## *Carol Wharton A Talented, Artistic Eta Mu Member*

**An Interview by Debbie Mar, V.P. Membership**



- ***You are one Eta Mu's earliest members joining in 1984. Can you tell me how you first learned about Eta Mu?***

I was teaching at Enslin Elementary School in 1984. My son was born in 1983. My principal at the time was Lana Truemler who was also an Eta Mu member. She encouraged me to join ETA MU while I was a young teacher. I respected her for being the best Room Parent and staying up late hours to prepare for her lessons. She is also the one who donated the ETA MU Crest for installations which we still use today. I was attracted to ETA MU for two reasons: Most of the women in the organization were my mother's age whom I could look up to as a 32-year-old teacher who was learning to converse. Another reason is because I was so impressed that everything Eta Mu did was done with such elegance, style, and pride.

The older women took me under their wing, sharing everything with me and taught me to do my best. These mentors were Betty Harrell, Bev DeBoer, and Nyla Rossiter. We used to meet at Baker's Square, a pie shop. Eventually, they encouraged me to become President, taking over for Nyla Rossiter's position as President for half a year and presiding as President the next full year. My secretary at the time was Adele Little and together we would do the Eta Mu monthly newsletter. I attended a leadership meeting at UOP and quite a few conventions. I recall getting on an elevator at the convention and hearing another educator remark that I was too young to be part of the convention. Nyla Rossiter defended me and said, "Not at all, she has a Master's in Early Childhood Education."

- ***What were some of the highlights of your teaching Career? What were some of the challenges?***

I started teaching at Shackelford Elementary School at the age of 23. While I taught the early elementary grades, after school I would teach chorus to 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. We would put on school performances for the other grade levels at Modesto High School singing John Denver songs. My 1<sup>st</sup> teaching partner was Genevieve Alldrin who is 93 now. We would decorate bulletin boards and make up songs for every letter of the alphabet. It became my goal to teach them songs that they could take into their future. Teaching music by reading lyrics also reinforced reading skills. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, by using the record player, the students learned to operate the record player, listen to the songs, then learned the words by reading.



I taught 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for more than a decade. Five of those years my grade level partner was with Marilyn Gresham. We began to transform the entire classroom environment from floor to ceiling depending on the theme of what the students were learning. The story of The Kapok Tree was one of the favorite themes with life size trees, Tarzan ropes and huge leaves adorning the classroom. The Solar System in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade was another colorful, vibrant theme. By this time, we were also doing performances, complete with costumes, art, and music, inviting other classrooms to come and watch. Some of the challenges included trying to keep up with the ever-changing technology. Always watching for bullying was an ongoing challenge. I once had a class with 22 boys and 8 girls. Trying to juggle them into cooperative groups was a struggle. I still have regret over one boy who just wouldn't cooperate with singing. I wish I could have sat him down and talked persuasively to him about the importance of allowing songs to enter his life.

- ***In addition to being a teacher, you also had extracurricular activities that you were involved in Art and Music. What were some of these activities? How have they blossomed now that you are retired?***

In 2007 I was encouraged to join Sweet Adelines International by my principal at Ensen Elementary School, Deborah Grochau. She invited me to a Friends and Family program where the local group River Lights Chorus was singing two numbers for a regional contest in Sacramento. I was so impressed that I decided to join them, rearranging my schedule to leave early after school to be a part of the chorus training. Learning how to sing in a 4-part harmony allowed me the opportunity to grow artistically apart from my classroom environment. I was involved in dual choruses with River Lights Chorus and Sacramento Valley Chorus, sometimes from Thursday to Sunday. I feel my teaching career had enhanced my music career. I now coach others in my home. Sometimes people come weekly from Sacramento, learning the songs at home, and then sending the recordings to the director or section leader. My office has become a recording studio to download on the computer.

My art has also developed from the classroom days of butcher paper art to yards and yards of phenomenal murals and paintings as we decorate the hall for our annual River Lights High Tea. I also joined the Mistlin Gallery traveling to different schools to teach and demonstrate forms of art and to explain the history of them. In addition, my backyard has become an Art Studio for teaching Art Lessons.



- **What advice can you give to a young teacher?**

I would advise her to relax. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Focus on the part of the curriculum you like the most. Consider this new situation an opportunity for you and your students to grow. You are brand new to them and they are brand new to you. Be positive-the sun is always shining. Allow your life to be filled with inspiration. There are always strong, powerful women you can tap into. And songs can bring you joy for every season.



## *Traveling in the Age of Covid*

Fully vaccinated, Stan and Adele Little took a two-week trip to Cabo San Lucas where they stayed at the Sirena del Mar resort situated on the shore of the beautiful Sea of Cortez. All covid-related precautions were taken at the airports, on the plane, and in Mexico. Masks were required in all public places; sanitation and social distancing practices were constant; a negative covid test (done at the resort) was a requirement for return travel to the United States. The weather and water were perfect as

was the famous Mexican hospitality. Good food and entertainment were in abundance. Travelers are returning to Mexico for which the natives who rely on the tourist industry are grateful.



## *MEMBER TO MEMBERS*



☪ **DUES ARE DUE.** Our Treasurer, Lynn Lysko, is collecting dues. Please pay your dues of \$100 for the upcoming year, July 2021 to June 2022 by June 30.

☪ Julie Kelley and her family recently moved to Texas! Her husband received a promotion with his company, based out of Dallas. They are settling in and love the area so far. Julie says, "I will really miss getting to know the DKG ladies more and appreciate the warm welcome you all gave me. Thank you for your kindness! Wishing the Eta Mu chapter much love and many blessings."

☪ Former Member Fran Dieu, passed away on May 19. She suffered a series of strokes and was in a care facility in Sacramento for the past several years. Fran and her husband Joe spent most of their retirement years in Sequim, Washington before relocating to Sacramento to be near one of their children. Fran was a member of Eta Mu for several years.



## Upcoming Events

Look for Evites for locations and RSVP online

### Chapter Events

June 5 🌱💧🏡🎉  
Garden Party

September 🍁  
Kickoff TBA

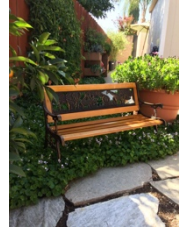
October 🍊  
Area XVII Fall Luncheon



## NEWS ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS

### JUNE GARDEN PARTY 🌂

Eta Mu's end of the year meeting will be June Garden Party on Saturday, June 5. It will be a time to enjoy getting together as well as the end of year business meeting.



**DUES ARE DUE.** Our Treasurer, Lynn Lysko, is collecting dues. Please pay your dues of \$100 for the upcoming year, July 2021 to June 2022 by June 30. You can give your dues to Lynn at the Garden Party.



### It's Time to Plan for the Upcoming Year's Events for Eta Mu

Let your chapter officer's and committees know what you would like to see for programs and events for 2021-2022. Look for information about the planning meeting.

## Annual Fourth of July Celebration

Now organized by the Modesto Kiwanis Club, Modesto has celebrated July 4th annually since 1874 with a downtown parade. The Independence Day parade begins downtown at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday the 3rd of July.

### Farmer's Market 🍅🌽

On 16th street, adjacent to the library, between H and I, you will find the freshest produce the Central Valley has to offer, handmade cheeses, jams, jellies, locally sourced honey and even kettle corn! The Market runs on Thursdays and Saturdays from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. View the [Modesto Certified Farmers Market website](#) for more information.

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Greetings Sisters! Here are a few Legislative Updates ("Nonaca's News!") that I'd like to share with you:  
**5/6/2021 DKG CA, Educational Law and Policy News:**



1. **CA Legislative Report:** Our Legislative Advocate, Martha Zaragoza-Diaz, gave a presentation at Convention. To view her presentation, go to <https://tinyurl.com/6d2t8u89>

2. **Legislative Study Session: June 22-24, 2021, Sacramento, CA:** You can register at this link. <https://tinyurl.com/4kjah2zx> There is a registration scholarship available: Application must be submitted by June 15, 2021. <https://tinyurl.com/25nverm7>

The 2021 A.J. Haywood **Legislative Study Session** is virtual this year

## Join us June 22-24, 2021

- Session begins Tuesday afternoon and ends Thursday at noon
- Interact with legislators
- Hear speakers update us on current legislation
- Share advocacy information
- Receive participation certificate

- Register on the DKG CA Legislative/Advocacy website:  
<http://www.dkgca.org/ed-law-policy.html>
- Early Bird deadline - June 15
- Fee - \$20
- Stipends available from the DKG CA Scholarship Committee
- A Zoom invitation will be sent to registered attendees

3. **Bill Tracking:** DKG CA is currently tracking 16 Bills. To view the positions our bill evaluators have taken on these bills, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/n83vw62w>

\*AB: bill originated in the Assembly \*SB: bill originated in the Senate \*You can find more information about each bill at this website: <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billSearchClient.xhtml>

You have the right to request that DKG take action on any proposed legislation that aligns with our Legislative Platform. If you have input on any of the bills above, or have other bills in mind that you want DKG to explore, you can let me know or you can contact our Legislative Coordinator, Hazel Powell, directly at [teampowell@aol.com](mailto:teampowell@aol.com)

### DKG U.S. Forum Connection

1. May 19, 2021, 7 p.m. EDT, 6 p.m. CDT, 5 p.m. MDT 4 p.m. PDT

The U.S. Forum Steering Committee Presents: "Voting: A Right for Everyone"

Featured Speaker: Alma Couverthie, National Organizing Director of the League of Women Voters. Register by May 18, 2021: <https://tinyurl.com/4t7se3y9>

*Heather Nonaca, Area XVII Legislative Chair*

*Bill Evaluator*

*Eta Mu Chapter, Area XVII, Five Star Chapter*

*California State Organization*

*Delta Kappa Gamma Society International*

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*209-324-3837*

*"One child, one teacher, one book and one pen, can change the world." -Malala Yousafzai*



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS

## DELTA KAPPA GAMMA

## AREA XVII NEWS and LOCAL EVENTS

The Area XVII Director for the 2021-2023 Biennium will be Pat Elston. Pat has been on the Area XVII Board as Program Co-Chair and has served on the Communications and Technology Committee for DKG California. She is looking forward to working with the chapters in the area and planning area events. The Area Leadership Team is working on plans for a luncheon with a speaker in the fall. Look for more news as we head into summer.

### AREA XVII EARLY CAREER EDUCATOR AWARDS

Area XVII recognized three Early Career Educators, teachers in their first to third year of teaching, who are doing an outstanding job in education. Each recipient will receive a certificate and a check from Area XVII funds and be recognized by the nominating chapter. Congratulations to these fine young educators

**Ashley Estaque** is in her first year of teaching Art at Riverbank High School. She really loves the support and comradery from her fellow teachers being a first year teacher. She is a real go-getter and wants to redo the curriculum!! Before becoming a teacher, she was a Park Ranger in Yellowstone National Park and also worked for a nationwide and then a statewide nonprofit organization where she created educational programming for children and adults. Her favorite color is orange because its bright and vibrant and loves eating her favorite food of fried chicken!!! She was born in South Carolina and has two children. Ashley was nominated by Epsilon Nu.



**Hanna Kasik**, English teacher, has done an absolutely outstanding job transitioning to distance learning. Throughout Distance Learning, Hanna created meaningful lesson that helped to keep students engaged. Additionally, she has gone above and beyond to help her students who have IEPs: making sure they have all the necessary accommodations, reaching out to student and families, and working closely with the students' case carriers. Overall, Hanna has done a fabulous job during the 2020-2021 school year! Hanna was nominated by Zeta Rho.



**Alexa Duran** has done an outstanding job of creating a warm welcoming classroom environment for kindergarteners during hybrid learning. Her lessons are engaging as she presents them to both students in their classroom seats and those at home behind their laptops in a manner that shows she cares and has high expectations for learning. She has helped create lessons using technology that capture students' interests. She presents lessons that provide for the foundational skills, works with small groups for extra support, and has made individual kits of materials to comply with Covid standards. She is a natural teacher and regarded highly by the staff at Sipherd Elementary. Alexa was nominated by Eta Mu.





## DKG CALIFORNIA CONVENTION NEWS

The 2021 Convention was a success. There were many excellent speakers and interesting topics. If you missed the DKG California State Convention, you can go to the DKG California website, [dkgca.org](http://dkgca.org), and view the [digital scrapbook](#) and other parts of the event.

*Visit DKG  
Websites for  
more  
information  
on events and  
opportunities*

*[dkgca.org](http://dkgca.org)*

*[dkg.org](http://dkg.org)*

### Donate to LIFE's (Learning Is For Everyone) Virtual Silent Auction

This year, the LIFE FOUNDATION will hold a VIRTUAL Silent Auction the **first week of October**.

We seek donated items that are brand new, almost new or gently used. Please only list items you would love to bid on and love to have. The minimum value of each item should be \$20.

To donate an item(s), send a photograph of the item(s), a description, and the minimum bid to Donna Fleischer at [dkgca.life1@gmail.com](mailto:dkgca.life1@gmail.com). Please include your Name, Area, Chapter, phone number, and email address.

THE DEADLINE TO DONATE IS **AUGUST 15TH**.

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## MEMBER RESOURCES

### *DKG California Scholarships and Awards*

The Spring deadline is coming up for DKG California Scholarships and Awards. DKG CA offers active members (initiated at least 2 years prior to June 1 or December 31 of the year of application) a Ph.D./Ed.D. Scholarship (\$4,000) or a Master's Degree Scholarship (\$2,000). For more information and the Google application form go to the [DKG California Scholarship](#) information page. Google forms must be submitted before June 1.

