**Delta Kappa Gamma, TN State**

**Iota Chapter News**

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 *Joy Branham, Editor*

Chapter website*:* [*http://iotaxistateweeblycom.weebly.com/*](http://iotaxistateweeblycom.weebly.com/)

Iota Facebook: [*https://www.facebook.com/groups/173164679376911/*](https://www.facebook.com/groups/173164679376911/)

**The mission of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International is to promote professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.**

***President’s Corner***

Dear IOTA Sisters,

 Alas, this is my last message as President.  I couldn’t have done it without help, guidance, and encouragement from all of you. Special thanks to **Joy Branham, Jane Bowlin, Debi Pelow,** and **Beth Gilbert**.  Although I have truly enjoyed being your president, I will be glad to sit back, relax, and let others take over.

 I look forward to installing our new slate of officers who will do an excellent job. At our next meeting:

              Thursday 7 April 2022

              5:00 pm

              Press Room

 Don’t forget to bring cash to contribute toward our **basket** for the state convention; Jane Bowlin will prepare the basket for us.

 Also, our **dues of $75.00** are due at this time. Our meal will cost **$12.00**. Aren’t you glad that teachers are so well-paid?!

 Hope to see everyone there!

 **LaMerle Francisco**

**Iota Chapter Officers 2020-2022**

PRESIDENT LaMerle Francisco

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Recording SECRETARY Pat Cox

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YEARBOOK Linda Fontaine

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***Next meeting 5:00 PM, April 7th at Press Room***

 We will install new officers for the 2022-24 biennium. Also remember that next year’s dues of $75.00 are due. Our menu will be the Sandwich Buffet with Assorted Croissant Sandwiches, Pasta Salad, with Cookies and Brownies for dessert. **Hostess Group 2** is in charge of table decorations.

 Our speaker for this last meeting of the biennium will be **Judy “Butterfly” Farlow!** Storyteller, Author, Entertainer and More! A woman of many talents and personalities but one purpose--to educate and entertain.

 From backyard picnics to the **White House in Washington, DC,** Judy has enthralled audiences everywhere. A masterful performer with tales ranging from a heart wrenching story about the mother who watches her daughter hang to hilarious stories about Georgia redneck heaven. Her versatility and passion is unmatched and her audiences charmed. Stories of strong women, spine-tingling scary tales and laughter are her trademarks. She shares an endless and diverse stock of stories for all ages.

 Judy "Butterfly" Farlow is a **National Award Winning storyteller**, who lives in Kingsport, and some of her many accomplishments are:

* Performing member of the **Jonesborough Storytellers Guild**
* Participated in the **Wytheville Chautauqua Festival** for almost twenty years
* Participated in the **Virginia Renaissance Faire**
* Performed with **Smoky Mountain Tales & Tunes** in Gatlinburg, TN in June/July 2016
* Participates with the National Storytelling Network

 Her website is: <https://jbutterflyfarlow.com/>

***Highlights of Our March Meeting—***

* Tennessee State President Elaine Vaughan attended.
* Jeanne Cline presented the program on Mardi Gras and some of her experiences in Louisiana.
* New officers for the 2022-24 biennium were voted on and will be installed in April.
* Voted to bring money at the April meeting to equip a basket for the Silent Auction at the TNSO convention at Sewanee. Jane Bowlin will be in charge of arranging the basket.

***Personal Growth and Professional Development—***

 Whether actively teaching or enjoying retirement, each of us needs to occasionally take stock of our mental health**. “Teachers Mental Health Tips You Can’t Afford to Ignore”** is a website offering tips for teacher well-being during the summer break. As teachers, we often focus on children’s physical, emotional, and mental well-being, and because we are nurturers by nature we put others first and our own well-being often falls off the radar. **Only when we take care of ourselves can we fully support our students and our families.** To read more about this issue go to: [www.teachstarter.com/us/blog/world-mental-health-day](http://www.teachstarter.com/us/blog/world-mental-health-day)

***Legislative News from Joy—***

 There is a lot going on in the seats of power right now, both in Nashville and in Washington, D. C. However, too much of it leaves me with a bad feeling of foreboding.

 **On the state level** there is currently a new funding proposal for completely throwing out the BEP method of funding schools and replacing it with a new formula that Gov. Lee calls the TISA—**Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement.** Unfortunately, about the only result will be to increase local taxes, not teacher pay or student achievement.

 Tennessee’s legislature is also sending a school library bill to Gov.

Bill Lee’s desk aimed at scrutinizing **library materials** for “age appropriateness.” The legislation would require each **public school library to publish the list of materials in their collections** and periodically review them to make sure they are “appropriate for the age and maturity levels of the students who may access the materials.” Sounds good, right? **The sheer immensity of that job is mind-boggling**. When I was teaching, my library contained 14,000 items. I was one of the lucky ones—my catalog *was* available online. However, that’s an expensive program and many, many schools in Tennessee can’t afford it. Gov. Lee and the legislators who sponsored this bill have no idea what they’re asking. This stems from a couple of cases that have made headline news recently—the firing of Matthew Hawn in Kingsport for using uncomfortable materials in his discussion class and the withdrawal of the **Pulitzer winning graphic novel *Maus*,** about the Holocaust, from the McMinn County school curriculum. I personally consider all these things simply “knee jerk” reactions.

 **Country music star John Rich** probably has made one of the more blatant attacks on education in a while. In February he spoke before the **Criminal Justice Subcommittee** in the Tennessee General Assembly, equating teachers and librarians with “pedophiles.” This has been interesting to read about. There has always been a fine line between censorship and freedom in schools and libraries. As a librarian, I’m for freedom. As a child advocate, I’m for a little common sense! But I resent being called a pedophile.

 **I attended the East Tennessee meeting of Tennessee Retired Teachers in Knoxville** a couple of weeks ago. It was daunting to hear TRTA Executive Director, **Donna Cotner,** talk about the bills that are currently threatening our school systems and also our retirement benefits. I urge you to look at the Tennessee legislator site <https://www.capitol.tn.gov/legislation/> to see what bills are up before the Legislature and how your local legislator is voting. I believe you will be flabbergasted!

 I also met with **1st District Congresswoman Diana Harshbarger** last week for a question-and-answer session at the Renaissance Center in Kingsport. I had followed her voting record and knew that we didn’t see eye to eye on some things, although we did on many. I came away with the impression that this was an honest and no-nonsense woman who is doing the best she can.

 She is a member of the **Committee on Education and Labor.** I did NOT get a satisfactory answer to my question about privatization of schools, to my sorrow. I would like to be able to say that honest people vote their consciences rather than the party line, but it isn’t always true.

 In closing, I would urge you to keep abreast of developments in both the state and federal legislatures that affect all of us. **And pray for America!**

