

Theta Lambda News

Winner of the 2011-2012 Five-Star Award

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November Meeting

Where: Home of Miriam Watson

When: Mon., Nov. 12, 2012
5:30 Refreshments
6:00 Business meeting

Hostesses: Catherine Hague
Stacy Frenchwood

Inspiration: Lillie Beth Wilson

Program: Open Gates Service Project

President's Message

"I don't think one parent can raise a child.
I don't think two parents can raise a child.
You really need the whole village." -Toni Morrison; July 1981

Dear Theta Lambda Sisters,

During our meeting at **Nancy Dobb's** lovely home, we had the opportunity to listen to **Mark Spilman's** description of needs for the **Open Gate Nurture Program at Bering Memorial United Methodist church**. He spoke from his heart which in turn captured our hearts for us taking action! We will take a huge role within the village to help these young adults on the streets of Houston! Let's take immediate actions! Please look at the list of items for the backpacks on our Theta Lambda website. Sign up and help us gather as many supplies as we can to stuff these backpack to meet some basic needs we take for granted.

We will dig in and work at our November 12th meeting at **Miriam Watson's** home! We listened and we accepted this challenge! **We need you to bring two things: (1)Please bring new or barely worn clean coats and (1)your items for the backpacks as we will stuff those items into large plastic bags and box them up to take to Bering Memorial!** Theta Lambda will purchase blankets from our \$100 budget to supply to the homeless. Of course, we will need more than what our budget allows, so if you see light-weight blankets on sale...please donate a few of those to the cause, too. If you have empty boxes we can place these filled plastic bags in for transporting to Bering, please bring those! Remember, Mark told us they plan for 75 backpacks! A trip to the Dollar Store would be a fun-filled field trip for you and your family!

Plan ahead! At our December 17th meeting we will conduct our famous auction filled with homemade goodies and gifts. What a great place to purchase holiday gifts! So our creative members...this is your time to "strut your stuff!" We have many, many talented members who will gladly contribute items for purchase! What a great place to purchase holiday gifts! For those not having time or the desire to make something for the auction...please bring your check-books! **Stacy Frenchwood** and her committee are working hard for this special holiday social meeting!

Thanks go to **Nancy Dobb** and **Alex Velazco** for bringing guests and potential members to our October meeting! Both the November and December meetings would be a great opportunity to bring guests to see what we are really all about!

Catherine Hague and her Program of Work Committee have an exciting, informative, and fun spring planned for us. I hope you will be able to attend as many of these functions as you can so you will be aware of how we will implement our goals. You will be kept informed through our Theta Lambda newsletter **Carol TenBrook** works so diligently on for us! Go to our Theta Lambda website plus read and respond to the Evites sent out.

Blessings,
Laura Downes

Meeting Highlights

Theta Lambda Chapter

Delta Kappa Gamma

October 15, 2012

Minutes of Theta Lambda Meeting, October 15, 2012

The Theta Lambda meeting was called to order at 6:05 by President Laura Downes. The meeting was held in the home of Nancy Dobbs. Robin DeLaRosa and Sandra McConnell were the co hosts.

Guests Jeannie Knierim and Sally Kubiak were welcomed by members. Lillie Beth Wilson, secretary, took attendance. There were eleven members and two guests present.

Jodi Knuppel presented the energizer. She read from the book, Chalk Dust, Prayers, and Meditations for Children.

Carol TenBrook was thanked for introducing members to the Evite invitation process.

Mark Spilman, chair of the Open Gate board, was the guest speaker. Mark is an educator in Pasadena ISD and talked to members about the volunteer services available through the Open Gate program. Open Gate services young people who often live on the street or in shelters. Seventy percent of the young people are from the foster care system who have aged out of the system. One focus of the program is to provide a traditional family style dinner on Sundays. Volunteers help in different capacities. Mr. Spilman thanked members who brought paperback novels for the young people served by Open Gate.

Following the program, President Laura Downes led a discussion about the support for the Open Gate program. The specific way that Theta Lambda can help is by providing designated items for backpacks that the Open Gate program provides the young people. A motion was made by Jodi Knuppel for Theta Lambda to accept Open Gate as a service project for this year. Participation will focus on the collection of items for the backpacks. Lillie Beth Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

President Laura Downes requested that program committee members present programs during the year.

Sandra McConnell presented the Treasurer's Report and the report was printed in the newsletter.

Kristy Lookfong sent a note stating that she is resigning from Delta Kappa Gamma at this time.

Carol Hensley has requested to be placed on reserve status. Sandra McConnell made the motion to accept this request and Robin De La Rosa seconded the motion. The motion passed and Carol will be placed on reserve status.

Stacey Frenchwood's name was drawn as door prize winner.

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Lillie Beth Wilson

Laura Downes

Recording Secretary

President

Check out Theta Lambda's website at <http://thetalambda.weebly.com/> for more information.

Theta Lambda member, Catherine Hague, recently lost her mother, Patricia M. Shell on October 12, 2012. This story, written by Catherine before her mother's death, tells about the beautiful casket that Patricia had chosen to be buried in. It is a touching story that shows Catherine's talents as a writer.

A Tisket, A Tasket - Go Get that Casket

By Catherine Hague

"I'm not going!"

"Yes, you are!"

"No, I'm not going to Tennessee to get Grandmother's casket! How sick is that?"

"Sarah, think of the personal narrative you'll be able to get out of this. I can see it now. The teacher writes on the board, *How did you spend your summer vacation?* and you respond with a piece about retrieving the exact casket your grandmother wishes to be buried in. End of discussion. You're going!"

Although I refused to affirm it, I did understand my fifteen-year-old's hesitancy in being a part of this maudlin trip. It's one thing to get your affairs in order, but hauling a casket from Tennessee to Texas, isn't that a little extreme? Taking care of this sort of business is normally done while sitting in a comfy, upholstered chair across from the family lawyer. The importance of convincing myself this journey to Tennessee was normal "Ozzie and Harriet" behavior crept back into my mind. These thoughts had to be dismissed - we had a mission and a request to fulfill.

Two mahogany caskets sat undisturbed for 40 years in a relative's abandoned furniture factory; my mother intended on being in one when her number was up. How could we not honor her request? Bound with determination and love, we began the journey late one summer afternoon. After two days of driving, we arrived in Piney Flats, Tennessee. Even though we had not laid eyes on our father's homestead for over 40 years, we drove directly to the factory, which was nestled in the beautiful foothills of the Smokey Mountains. My sister and I questioned how our parents could have ever left the calmness and beauty of Tennessee. To my surprise, even Sarah retreated from her laptop and the world of *MySpace* to let the surroundings affect her.

An earthy, musty smell greeted us as we entered the Wolfe Brothers Furniture Factory. Our father's family had owned and operated this establishment from the late 1800's to the 1960's. As we looked around, it was obvious that some 47 years earlier, the owner, my uncle, bid the employees good night, locked the doors, and walked away. Except for the dust and dirt, the factory could have closed the day before - this was an unsettling feeling. Why hadn't our uncle cleaned this place out? Why didn't he sell the beautiful furniture that stood around us, rotting from years of neglect and exposure to harsh temperatures?

My eyes fell on the "baby" pews scattered in the showroom. We loaded 6 of them onto the UHAUL we had rented. Church furniture - pews, alters, alter railings, prayer kneelers - basically any furniture found in a church - was produced in this factory. The manufacturing of caskets only occurred for a two year period, and after much searching, we located the remaining two. The caskets were a mahogany mess needing to be refinished and reupholstered. And they smelled! But oh, we could see the possibilities. And so could our mother. Certainly this specific resting place for her physical being had significance beyond our understanding. Perhaps it held memories of her time in Tennessee with our father. They had over 50 years of marriage together before my father passed away in 1997.

It took all four of us to load the casket. It was heavy - but a burden - no. When I relay memories of this trip to my friends, they laugh, raise their eyebrows, and shake their heads. It was indeed an unusual request on my mother's part. But none of that matters. When we returned home,



my daughter, truly touched by the journey, told her grandmother, "I think it's really cool you want to be buried in that casket. I love you, grandmother." Ozzie and Harriet would be proud.

Patricia M. Shell, November 4, 1925 - October 12, 2012

Leading Women Educators Impacting Education Worldwide:

Explore the Possibilities: Let Our Vision Light the Way

Explore: *Discover, Develop, Implement*

Possibilities: *Growth, Potential, Choices*

Vision: *Foresight, Concept, Ideal*

Light: *Brilliance, Insight, Enlightenment*



As key women educators we must use our energy to strengthen the fulfillment of our purposes. We must find new paths to impact education throughout the global society and beyond into communities around the world. The lighthouse and its light represent our vision! The most important part of any lighthouse is what goes forth...the ray of light. We must be that light which guides the way toward our society's visions.

In this biennium how do we use the ray of light to serve our quest of accomplishing our vision? It takes discovering and exploring possibilities, developing and strengthening the potential that we find within ourselves and within our own chapter! Theta Lambda had this opportunity by appreciating and nurturing growth, having the foresight for taking risks with new ideas and choices for reaching our vision. The brilliance of the ray of light is our insight to what we learn by exploring either alone or together! Let's explore together!

Open Gate Backpack Program

Here is a list of all items that have been signed up for as of Sunday, November 4. If you have not already signed up to bring something, please take a look at the open slots on the list and consider bringing 75 of any item or two.

If you wish to sign up for something and are unable to access the Sign Up Genius site, please email me and I can take care of that for you.

Contact: Carol TenBrook at ctenbrook@pwarch.com

Tampons	✓ Catherine Hague	Granola Bars	✓ Sandra MacConnell
Insect Repellant		Raisins	✓ Sandra MacConnell
Sunscreen		Oatmeal packets	✓ Nancy Dobbs
First Aid Kits and Supplies		Instant hot cereal	
Batteries AAA or AA	✓ Catherine Hague	Juice boxes	
Disposable Razors	✓ Carol TenBrook <small>Mary Herlitz is bringing these</small>	Gatorade bottles	
Shaving Cream		Capri Suns packets	✓ Nancy Dobbs
Deodorant		bottles of water	✓ Lillie Beth Wilson
Combs/Brushes (new)		Snack size Cereal boxes	
Bar Soap	✓ Stacy Frenchwood	Powdered Milk (individual size)	
Shampoo	✓ Jan Randolph	Fruit Roll Ups or Fruit Snacks	✓ Stacy Frenchwood <small>fruit snacks</small>
Hand Sanitizer		Peanut Butter Crackers	✓ Alexandra Velazco
Bath Towels		Jerky	
Washcloths	✓ Laura Downes <small>plus extra large ziplock bags</small>	Trail Mix	✓ Catherine Hague
Duct Tape	✓ Catherine Hague	Nuts (indiv. packets)	
Baby Wipes		fruit cups	
Shoe Insoles		pudding cups	
Foot Powder		Hot chocolate packets (add water)	✓ Jodi Knuppel
Lotion		Cup-A-Noodles	
Socks		Instant soups	
Condoms		Instant Mac and Cheese	
		Instant coffee	



November Birthdays

- 11 Martha Jenkins
- 14 Mary Herlitz
- 26 Ramona Nance

TREASURER'S REPORT

November, 2012

TREASURER'S REPORT

November, 2012

Balance reported at October meeting		\$ 2554.06
<u>Receipts</u>		+ \$ 205.54
Dues Collected	\$ 178.00	
Area Workshop Fees	12.00	
Fund Raiser (raffle)	12.00	
Donations	3.00	
Oct. Dividend	.54	
<u>Disbursements</u>		- \$1383.00
State/International Dues	\$1360.00	
Website Set-up/Certification	15.00	
Yearbook Postage	8.00	
Current checking account balance		\$ 1376.60