



Totem Talk

A newsletter for the Women Educator Society International
British Columbia (BCDKG)

Winter 2023-2024



Volume 29 No.2

Editorial

In reading the articles in the winter issue of Collegial Exchange, I was reminded of the lines by Robert Browning in Andrea del Sarto "Ah, a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?" These lines in the poem, read in grade 11, became my mantra. They lead me to strive to not be too comfortable in what was easy but to look beyond horizons to challenge myself and others.

The Collegial Exchange is full of stories of women who have challenged themselves and continue to challenge others.

International has challenged us all to examine our commitment to DKG as we begin to implement the four phases of the Avenue M Report.

I hope that this issue of Totem Talk will do the same—challenge you to reach out beyond your grasp.

Karin Breuer, Editor

REACH OUT!



Happy New Year Women Educators!

As I sat in my small office with reams of papers strewn about, preparing for the first executive meeting of 2024, I began to appreciate the opportunities that DKG has given me. This amazing journey over the past six months as

your president has introduced me to many remarkable women educators in our Society that I might not have had the opportunity to meet.

You can read my full report on the website as part of the January 20, DKG BC Executive meeting minutes. Here are some of the highlights.

In September Nita Scott spoke to us through an *Inside International* ZOOM meeting about the upcoming convention in National Harbor, Maryland, July 9-13. I would encourage you to check out the information that is already available on the website, www.dkg.org (click on Events). Registration as well as the limited hotel booking information at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center is now open. The Go Ahead tour to Washington, D.C., lead by Past DKG International President, Cathy Doherty, scheduled at the end of the conference is also worth considering.

In October, along with meeting the Canadian DKG presidents, we met with Dr. Debbie LeBlanc, International

President who spoke to us about the Avenue M Report and the key issues facing our Society today.

A second meeting of *Inside International*, introduced Lisa Olson, a member of the Membership/Expansion Committee and Daphne Cagle of Sacramento California who spoke about the DKG virtual chapter where she is member.

On December 11 the Northwest regional presidents were introduced to Sandi Causey, who spoke to us about the funding possibilities for professional and personal growth as well as for projects in school through DKGIEF. It may be a great discussion in our chapters how we might individually or corporately benefit from the funds.

Many of you know Lorna Berlinguette, our Area Canada Representative, who made it possible for us to meet with the European chapters and again on January 13, with Europe and Alaska. This connection has been embraced by a number of our members who are corresponding with DKG members abroad.

We have great opportunities to reach out to one another in our Society; great opportunities to reach out to colleagues; great opportunities to stretch our skills. Begin today.

Helen Ballam, BCDKG President

In this Issue

- p. 1-2 President's report
- p. 2 Conference Info
- p. 3 Avenue M Report
- p. 3 Burst the Bubble
- p.3 International Convention Date
- p.4 Fraser Shores Report
- p. 7 South Vancouver Island Report
- p. 10 Update on Tlamacazapa
- p. 11 Vancouver Report
- p. 13 An invitation from DKGIEF to celebrate a woman who has made an impact on your life.
- p. 13 Dates of note.
- p. 13 Reach out to a non-driving member..
- p. 14 Nomination form for Woman of Wisdom and Passion
- p. 15 Aren't getting your **Collegial Exchange?**

Circle your Calendars! Invite a Friend!

BC Women Educators DKG International AGM and Conference.

Saturday, April 20, at New Westminster Secondary School Library. 8:30 – 3:00.

A ZOOM option will be available.

With International Guest Speaker: Dr. Renee Richler who will speak to us on the Internationalization of Education

Registration \$55 includes lunch and morning break snacks.

Door prizes for in-person attendees only

Basket Raffle; Lunch hour entertainment

Presentation of Woman of Passion

Avenue M Group Report

Our provincial president has formed an expansion committee to examine what steps we might take as a provincial executive to support existing chapters and possibly create a new chapter in the lower mainland. The committee is comprised of Helen, BCDKG president, Norma, past president, Donna-Faye, Heather and Karin. (*Contact Helen if you wish to join this committee.*) We will begin by reviewing the Avenue M Group Report which analyzed a series of questions posed to DKG members and non-members regarding their familiarity with the benefits of DKG and reasons for joining a chapter, remaining in a chapter or leaving DKG. The 103-page document was made available to members in December and will be discussed internationally by way of town hall style Zoom meetings.

Helen, Norma and Karin were able to attend a Town Hall Meeting. In addition to International sending a survey to individual chapters to assess their needs, we learned that International will be redoing the website to make it more user friendly to both non-members and members to acquaint them with the benefits of membership through the **Bursting the Bubble** campaign **beginning February 1**, which will launch a broad-based marketing campaign on a number of social media sites. In addition they will create a pilot program based on Mastermind concept to engage members in personal and professional growth with like-minded professionals.

In support of the initiative **Bursting the Bubble** your executive voted to allocate \$90 to Totem Talk to run a **game** in each of the three issues this year, beginning with this issue. Look for the challenge, respond to your editor and become eligible to win a BC bottle of wine (or equivalent)—first prize--a coffee and donut from Tim Hortons—second prize--and have your response published in the next issue of Totem Talk.

Burst the Bubble Game

The purpose of our game is to acquaint you with many of the opportunities – besides our amazing fellowship with one another – provided to DKG members.

On February 1, on the International website, www.dkg.org the first **bubble of opportunity** will be burst. So here are the steps to play the game:

1. Go to the website and sign in as a member. (Your DKG number is your username; enter your password. If you can't access your password, you can access "chat" to give a hand.
2. Go to **About** and click on it. Click on **Benefits**.
3. Write down the name of the bubble that was burst **and one** thing you learned about the opportunity.
4. Email your answer to editorttdkgbc@gmail.com

International Convention

Start planning to attend the International Convention this year held in National Harbor, Maryland, **July 9-13**.

Information can be found on the DKG International website www.dkg.org

Plan to stay a few days, take a tour, visit museums and enjoy the food and shopping.

CHAPTER REPORTS

FRASER SHORES

On November 6, we met in Ellen's home for our meeting which included two guests. We began with a social time over refreshments and engaged in a connecting game where we were asked to reveal to a paired partner a story of our name (first, middle, last or nickname—our choice). We each had 2 minutes to talk and then we told the story we heard from our partner to the whole group.



FIRE SAFETY

Protect yourself and your family



The program for the evening was Fire Safety in our home, presented by our president, Gloria using the Power Point program provided to us by the Surrey Fire Department. Gloria asked us to first write down the things we already knew about being fire smart but there were points that we didn't think about living in a city such as a "grab and go bag", or simple things such as sliding a lid or cookie sheet over a stove-top fire and planning two escape routes from each room in the

house. Gloria forwarded the Power Point to each member as well as our guests along with the Power Point presentation on Emergency Preparedness provided by the Surrey Fire Department.

The business meeting centered on the connection we made with a sister group in Sweden. We decided to meet on Zoom on a Saturday morning and discussed sending their chapter photos of us along with some information about us as individuals as well as a chapter.

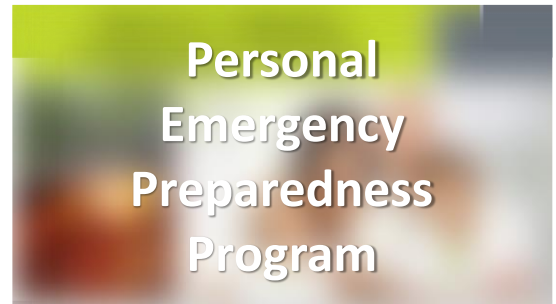
Information on the provincial plans for the spring conference was given and requests made to help with the planning.

Following the treasurer's report, we voted to send \$100 to assist the teachers at Hazel Trembath Elementary School in Coquitlam, after the devastating fire.

We also received information that \$200 from the Provincial Executive Board was sent to the school to purchase new library books.

Our next meeting will be held on Saturday, Dec 9 at Gail's home to fill toiletry bags for Women's Shelters & St. Barnabas Church

We ended the meeting at 5:45 and enjoyed a wonderful dinner courtesy of Ellen and Gloria.



Reaching Out

Ellen, Orrie and Karin took up the offer presented by our Area Canada Representative to connect with a DKG member outside our province. We are connecting with members of a Swedish chapter.

December 9 at Gail's Home

Present: Gloria, Sarah, Orrie, Ellen, Phyllis, Gail, Siiri and Barbara.

While this wasn't a "business meeting", your secretary took some photos which I have included. In the meantime, we have received a few responses of Thank-You's from our donations. They were sent out in separate emails.

Shampoos, et al.



The food table!



For the kids bags.



Orrie, Siiri and Gloria
Sarah and Barbara at the kid's
packages table



Some of the toiletry bags we put together were taken to St. Barnabas Church in New Westminster. Reverend Emily at St. Barnabas wanted to thank everyone from Fraser Shores chapter for the wonderful toiletry bags. She was grateful to receive the gift bags which will be used to help members in her community. She also wished us all a very Merry Christmas!



Gail and Barbara were given poinsettias for their wonderful hospitality.



All the workers and the assembled work!!



Plus the children's boxloads!!

Thank you to Gail for organizing everything we needed to put the toiletry and children's bags together!!

Thank you Siiri and Linda Delparte for helping us. And many thanks to Barb and the sewers.

Best wishes for a safe and wonderful Christmas everyone!

Ellen

Upcoming Events

Monday, Feb. 9: Right to Food

Saturday, April 20: BCDKG AGM & Conference

May (TBA): Changing to an Indigenous Library system; guide dogs or Orpheum Theatre tour.

June (TBA) Pot luck end of year celebration.

Suggested Reading

DKG PUBLICATIONS JOURNAL FLIPBOOK

Read the *Bulletin: Collegial Exchange* in print, right from your mailbox—or online in Flipbook format.

Read the *Bulletin: Journal* online in Flipbook format.

SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND



For the Winter Totem Talk 2024 from S.V.I. chapter Greetings. We have **two celebrations** to report. Near the end of November eight of us gathered at Gisela Wolf's new condo to listen to Doris Maddaford share her experiences in Malaysia/Philippines over the years. Doris shared the work of an organization called **Precious Jewels** that helps children struck by poverty disasters. We were all touched when

she spoke about those living on garbage dumps. The gratitude and love given and received was an uplifting true story to hold close to our hearts.

After the scrumptious meal we were treated to (thanks to Gisela), the **Silent Auction** kept going. We had crafts knitted and crochet, jams and jellies, aprons and vests, baskets, and with the amazing help of all plus a few donors, who were not present, we were able to send \$490.00 to support the work in **Tlmacazapa**.



Here we are:

Cathie, Lennor, Heather, on right

Doris at head of table

Gisela B. with Gisela W, our hostess hiding,



and Beatrice, a guest.

Above: Our two Giselas. We celebrated Gisela Braniff's birthday following the luncheon.

(Darlene took the photos)

Gisela B. and Lennor posing in front of the entrance of VNFC.

On another day she and I went to volunteer at the **Victoria Native Friendship Center** to help serve lunch to the Elders and all who show up at this community event. Some Fridays we have 125 or more people attend. It is always rewarding to chat with the Elders and friends.

On **Dec.13th St.Lucia Day** we had the wonderful opportunity to zoom into the **European Member countries** to see what special items to celebrate the season were being prepared. This was the third time these countries were sharing like this as was explained by Maria Hubers who gave the introduction.

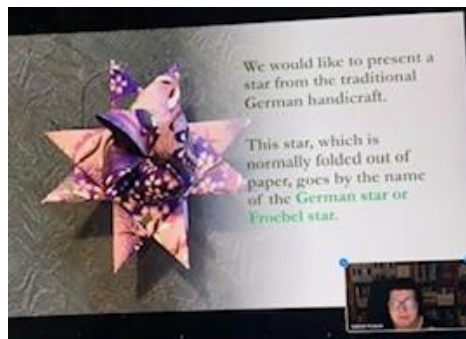


Estonia showed us straw, beeswax and wool ornaments and shared that making cards in the 1920s was special.

E



Finland had 7 people cutting out snowflakes or window stars. They showed us bird houses in the snow and demonstrated star making while another window showed us 8 friends together by candle light and cookies.

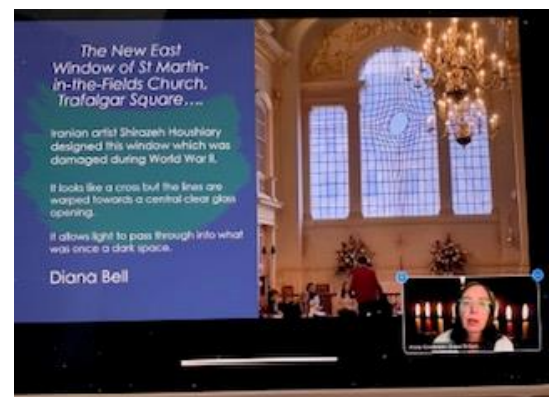


Germany had Sabine Krause tell us about the Froebel Star and demonstrate how such a beauty is created. Froebel started the first Kindergarten in 1840...(check him out to learn more). **Friedrich Wilhelm August Fröbel** or **Froebel** (German: [ˈfʁiːdʁɪç ˈvɪlhɛlm ˈʔaʊɡʊst ˈfʁøːbl̩] ⓘ; 21 April 1782 – 21 June 1852) was a German **pedagogue**, a student of **Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi**, who laid the foundation for modern education based on the recognition that children have unique needs

and capabilities. He created the concept of the **kindergarten** and coined the word, which soon entered the English language as well. He also developed the educational toys known as **Froebel gifts**.



Great Britain had Anne Goldstein bring us Hanukkah greetings with many poems and images of light. She also spoke about the new window in St. Martins-in-the-Fields Church at Trafalgar Square.



Iceland's Christmas tradition of making snowflake bread, Laufabrau, stems from the notion that children should eat bread.

All family members come together to help make the leaf bread.

Norway had filmed high school students in a small village prepare julenøys for birds. We saw the video. Straw bundles are gathered and hung.





Sweden, the country of St. Lucia, had Karin G have glitter in her hair. We heard the Goat stories...legend of Thor's Goats, Yule Goat gift bringer, Jul Goat made of straw.



We saw the fun that was had with gingerbread baking.

Netherlands treated us to various Nativity Scenes that are created.

It was truly a gift to learn that so many wonderful traditions bring families and friends together and Christmas is not just worrying about 'shopping' and such.

Wishing you all a Happy New Year 2024 is
Lennor Stieda, from all of us in South Vancouver Island Chapter.



Then and Now!

Since last year a shadow has hung over the village Because Xchotil is in prison wrongly accused and in spite of good evidence her case has not been dismissed as yet.

Dr. Susan Smith wrote that Atzin is in needs of funds for this continuing legal battle but also for all the other established and new programs in health and education.

You can read more and donate on the Atzin website.

<https://www.atzin.org/atzincanada>



This photo is from my visit to Tlamacazapa in 2007. The young women are being trained as Promoters and are standing with a volunteer in the center. Xchotil is on the right.

VANCOUVER CHAPTER

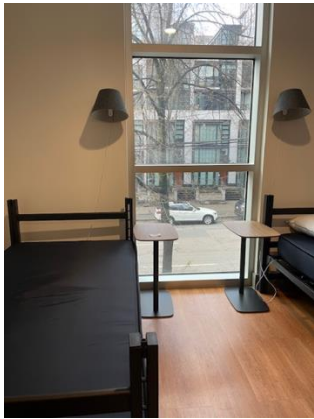
Lunch at Cactus Club and Visit to Covenant House

Wednesday, November 22, 2023

On November nine members of our chapter started out with a leisurely lunch at Cactus Club before walking over to Covenant House.



This year we were surprised to be ushered into a board style room for a meeting with Mark and the newly appointed CEO Deb Lester, coming to greet us. Each year Mark is able to give us more good news as the site grows and a wider range of youth can be engaged in the programs and support.



There is an art therapy room with a very well qualified therapist. We learned more this year about the very popular programs and activities offered to groups and individuals. Some groups are open to all and some are specific to a group such as those who identify as indigenous or LGBTQ2spirit. In addition to new programs up and running since last

year we heard about a new program, Sanctuary that will be housed in the newly renovated building soon. All this is dependent upon funding as with all non-profits. This new direction for Covenant House will address the need for low barriers for street entrenched youth including ones who will need community support for addictions.



From its modest beginnings in 1997 providing beds for 12 youth to the present where 250 youth coming and going every day, Covenant House has served 90,000 youth since it opened its doors.

Left is our group with Mark Savard after he had given us the latest information before we had a tour.



Christmas Party at Charles' Heritage Home Tuesday, December 12, 2023

This December we once again had the good fortune to be able to have our meeting at Charles' Heritage Home located a block from Stanley Park. Charles is the uncle of Leslie our Co-president and his home is decorated beautifully with Antiques and tasteful Christmas decor. Charles even decorated one of his Christmas trees

with a Candy Cane theme.



After our business meeting, we enjoyed a scrumptious lunch organized by Gaye.

Later we had a makeup presentation by Sara Au Yeong, the founder of Amaterasu Beauty.

<https://amaterasu.ca/collections/all>

This was followed by our annual gift exchange. Donna did a great job mixing things up, thanks to an early Christmas present she received.



This was a wonderful event that was enjoyed by all.

Granville Gardens Retirement Residence Wednesday, January 10, 2024

We enjoyed a wonderful dinner at Granville Gardens and a presentation by **Dr. Lauryn Oates** the executive director of an educational



organization called "Women for Women in Afghanistan".

This an organization dedicated to providing gender equitable education and improving human rights conditions in Afghanistan. Lauryn has worked in various leadership roles with CW4WAfghan, lastly as the Programs Director, before becoming Executive Director in 2018.

She holds multiple degrees which, cumulatively, are well suited to her career path. These include: BA Honours in International





Development from McGill, an MA in Human Security and Peacebuilding from Royal Roads, and a PhD in Language and Literacy Education from UBC.

Laurn has worked with a variety of development organizations, multilateral agencies and governments designing, planning, evaluating or



implementing programming in education and gender equality, particularly in war-affected countries. In addition, Laurn is the recipient of several awards and distinctions, including a Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal awarded by the province of BC.

Laurn was just an excellent speaker! Thanks to Frances for organizing this!

Report prepared by Helen Ballam and Leslie Chang

+++++

Do Something Different for a Special Woman Educator

DKGIEF invites you to try out something new for **International Women's Day** on March 8, 2024. It is launching a fundraising initiative to support its mission of educating the world. Consider making a \$25 (US) donation to honor a woman who has had a significant impact on your life or career.

For each \$25 donation received between March 1, 2024, and April 15, 2024, DKGIEF will send the donor a specially designed card and pin to present personally to the woman being honored.

(information taken from DKG News, Jan/Feb 2024)

Dates to Remember

Feb. 1 Bursting the Bubble

Feb. 6 10:30 a.m. Pacific Time – **Inside International** with International President, Debbie LeBlanc. Zoom access through DKG International Website, Events tab.

Feb. 13 – deadline for Spring Gallery Submission.

Mar. 15 – Nominations for Woman of Wisdom and Passion due.

Reach Out in your Car

Leslie Chang, Vancouver Chapter's co-president, spoke to us about an easy way to get to know chapter members and ensure they are not left behind. She has car-pooled members who no longer drive to meeting destinations. She said it was a great way to get to know some very wonderful women.

Woman of Wisdom and Passion Nomination Form

The criterion includes the following:

1. A woman who has worked diligently to improve the life of others in the local, national, or international community.
2. She has inspired others through her work and the passion she has for her work.
3. She does not have to be a member of Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.

Candidate: _____

Nominator(s) _____

Date: _____

Please complete the following information about the candidate:

Note: Point form is preferred.

Current Community Involvement:

Previous relevant community involvement:

Briefly outline the key reasons you are supporting this nomination. You can include other awards or recognition earned, special accomplishments or honours. Point form is preferred.

Signed: _____

Please ensure that the nominee knows that you are nominating her, and is in agreement with the nomination and willing to have a press release distributed concerning the nomination.

Forms must be submitted to the BC DKG president by March 15th.

I'm not getting my Collegial Exchange Magazine

On the last Town Hall meeting, one of the participants stated that a number of members in her chapter were not receiving their Collegial Exchange. The problem appears to be in having an incorrect address in **MyDKG**. The addresses on our personal DKG site are the ones used by International to send mail and email. Once a magazine has been returned due to wrong address, no other ones are sent.

Thus, if you also are not receiving your Collegial Exchange please go to www.dkg.org and sign in; that will bring you to your personal webpage. Click on MyDKG and then on My Account. You will open a page that has all your information on it. Check your phone number, email address and farther down, your home address. You can make changes by clicking on the pencil icon on the right of the information. You can also indicate how you wish to receive your Collegial Exchange and your DKG News. If you are technology challenged, invite a friend (or as in my case, a grandchild) to help you. I vow that grandkids are born with computer chips in their brain. They go to technology as a duck to water.

Hope that this will help any of you struggling with getting your information. *Karin*

