

# Kappa Kapers

**The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International  
Kappa Chapter, Virginia State Organization  
Blue Ridge Coordinating Council**

## President's Message

**November 2020  
Volume XXV, Issue 3**

---

### Inside this issue:

President's Message	1
Upcoming Meeting	2
Birthdays	2
From the Trenches	3
Membership	4
Mini Grant Application	5
Highlights from last mt	6
Officers	7
Web Sites	7

---

This crazy and memorable year is rapidly coming to a close and I'm sure that most of us can't see it go fast enough!! Seriously, we have learned to adapt and cope with so many difficult things since March and are stronger than ever. Keeping a positive outlook and being flexible are traits that teachers possess and we have had to employ those traits often this year. We appreciate the hard work that teachers are putting in to make their classroom and students successful. Thanks for sticking with it! Remember, Kappa Chapter is here to help you so don't hesitate to ask.

November begins our traditional holiday season but it will look different for many of us this year. Perhaps, no large family gatherings, not getting to hug our parents, children or grandchildren, no get-togethers with friends and neighbors, but we still have many things to be thankful for this November. I am thankful for all of you who have made my transition to president of Kappa as easy as possible. I still have lots to learn but appreciate the support given to me. Although we will probably still be meeting virtually for some time, there are some exciting things in the works for our chapter. For our next meeting on Tuesday, November 17, the program committee has arranged for Gail Goolsby to present our program. Gail is a DKG member, originally from Virginia and a student at JMU and has written Unveiled Truth, a book about her time as the principal of the International School of Kabul in Afghanistan. Her book gives an insightful story of her seven years there dealing with cultural differences and expectations (particularly of women). Don't worry, if you haven't had an opportunity to get or read the book, you will still enjoy her presentation. She will help us view Afghan culture in a new light and what she learned about responding to personal failures and difficulties (something that we all can learn from!) I will do better this month and make sure that the whole meeting will be recorded so it will be available for re-viewing or watching if you can't join us.

I wish you and your family a wonderful Thanksgiving and hope that you will be able to focus on all that you are grateful for this year. Our lives look very different than they did at this time last year. Remember that you make a difference in our community and are an important part of Kappa chapter and DKG. Thanks for keeping strong!

*Margaret*

# Upcoming Meeting

## Business Meeting and Program

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

6:30 PM - social time

7:00 – program starts

[Click here](#) to join the meeting by Zoom on computer.

OR One tap mobile

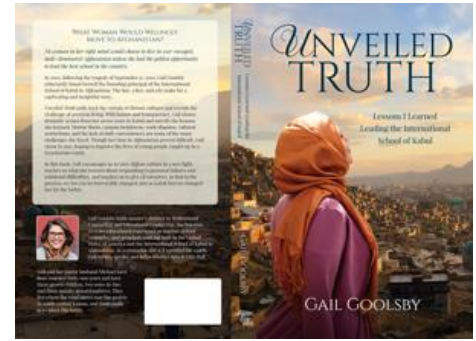
+13126266799,,86128731182#,,,,,0#,,028678#

OR just call +1 301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 810 1502 1467

Passcode: 951277

An additional email will be sent closer to date.



Program: Gail Goolsby, author of the 2020 DKG Educators Award, Unveiled Truth. It is based on a unique collection of experiences and memories when she lived in Afghanistan.

<https://www.gailgoolsby.com/buy-book/>

### Teacher as Reader Book Group-

You'll meet Gail in November as our featured guest presenter. Join members in a discussion of Goolsby's book, Unveiled Truth.

Date: Sunday, January 31

Time: 4-5 pm

Meeting format: Zoom

Facilitator: Laurie Niestrath

Note: Questions for consideration will be provided. Allow them to guide your reading, if useful.

No time to read right now? That's okay. Come and listen, ask questions of those who've read the book.

# Happy Birthday



## November

10 Laurie Niestrath  
21 Courtney Hallacher  
23 Kim Collett

## December

13 Cheryl Sams  
18 Angela Wilson  
21 Rebecca Cannaday  
31 Kathy Glass

I have been teaching virtually this school year with first grade. My class is split roughly in half and I teach them for an hour each on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. My hour is timed down to the minute for the district- 10 minutes for morning meeting and social emotional learning, 20 minutes three times a week for math and once for content, and 30 minutes for reading. What happens in reality is often not quite the same. Kids log in at various times- some come in 5-10 minutes early and some come in 15 minutes late. Others leave early. The fun ones pop in and out through the meeting as they play with the camera and mute buttons and accidentally hit the leave meeting button which is next to those other buttons. My first group is mostly ELLs- including one child whose family moved here this summer from Ethiopia and is literally learning English as I teach. This group requires constant repetition and showing what I want them to get. Their new English vocabulary consists of "whiteboards, markers, log in, password, Seesaw, and Clever". Many of these words I rarely used before in the classroom. We are learning shapes right now and I asked them to find something that is a circle in their home. Several students went and the others just stared at me. This was a new activity and new vocabulary. They had no idea what I wanted them to do. Thankfully, once other children returned with circular objects they finally understood what I wanted them to do and they raced to find something that would work.

As a teacher, I have been learning nonstop. At least once a week I meet online with the school tech and ask questions like how do I get the kids to look where I want them to on the screen? Thankfully, they usually have answers. There is an extension I can install on my computer to give me fun animal shaped cursors so I can change the size, shape, and color of my cursor to get the kids to look at where I'm "pointing". How do I get kids to all read the same word in the sentence when we're trying to read a book without some kids reading ahead? Working together we learn how to upload PDFs of books or take screenshots from online books and put them into Seesaw where I can make a rectangular shape to cover the words I don't want kids to read. As we are reading together I can move the rectangle to uncover letters and words thereby forcing kids to sound out words with me. That is, if they are still in their seat and looking at the screen and not eating snacks.... How do I motivate young kids to participate? The tech has no ideas for me. Thankfully there are online groups in Facebook of other virtual educators and I try various ideas to get my students excited about learning. Gone are the days of time outs or going to the office or finishing your work at recess. Children have to want to participate in their learning. Parent support is vital for those kids who would rather run around and show off their toys or play games in their bedroom instead of learning how to add and subtract.

Building relationships with families is crucial right now. Children are attending class in their homes and daycares. If they don't attend I get to be the trouble shooter and call families and ask what happened. Is the child sick? Did their internet go down? Is everyone in the family alright? Family and work emergencies happen. First graders cannot log in by themselves. They need help. So they might miss class. Parents couldn't pay the Internet bill this month so their service was cut off, but it should be back on in a few days. Headphones break and the daycare doesn't allow the child to have the sound on because it interferes with the daycare activities so the child watches without interacting. Parents are working from home in another room so the child runs to get snacks and toys and plays with them instead of participating. I have to take off my teacher hat and put on my social worker hat or my parent hat and be supportive and help families problem solve. Let me contact the school and see if we can get you an internet hotspot. Let's see if we can get you new headphones that work. You have a family member in the hospital, what can I do to support you and your child at this time? I drop off supplies weekly so that I can also check in with families and children in person. This makes it easier when I have to make the difficult phone call about behavior issues and kids not doing their work. Parents know that I am taking the extra step to help their children so they want to work with me. Children know who I am outside of a screen so they want to participate in class and do not want to disappoint me. I am a constant figure in their lives right now when the world is not a constant.

Work hours teaching virtually are infinitely different than teaching in person. I have less time with children but I still spend hours planning lessons and materials. Explaining how to do an activity or a handwriting page is just part of the day in the classroom, but online I need to create videos of me doing the activity. I need to model everything so my children who don't speak English or have parental support can complete the activity on their own. Everything is a video now: how to do a worksheet, how to play a math game, listening to a story....I have gotten over being self-conscious about how I look and how my house looks. Children are living in various home conditions so if they see my kids' toys littered on the floor they will realize I am a person like them. I have to take lessons that I have taught successfully in the past and figure out how to adapt it to an online environment with time and material constraints. Do children have the materials to complete this activity? If not, can I provide them with the materials? Will they need an adult to help them with this activity? If so, then I shouldn't do it because not all of my students have an adult to help them.

Learning online is a huge learning curve for families as well. At the beginning of the year and when I get new students I often have to visit a home or have the family come into the school so I can show them how to log in, find, and complete activities on Seesaw. Parents and children need feedback on all the activities and since my students can't read yet, I am leaving audio comments on their work and approving or sending it back to be corrected. Children are submitting activities up to 10:00 at night and then attending class in the morning. I have to mute my phone's notifications so I don't feel the urge to give feedback and "grade" an assignment right away. Trying to balance time with my own kids and "grading" work for students when it comes in all evening is a hard thing to do. It was easier when it was just papers I brought home from school and could pull out after my kids went to bed. Now I'm getting emails and notifications from devices constantly.

Virtual teaching has required a huge shift in the way I teach and interact with my students and their families. It has changed how they perceive and engage in their learning. There are definitely some positive things that will hopefully stay with us when we transition back to the classroom. There are also some things that I will gladly leave behind to see my students face to face every day again.

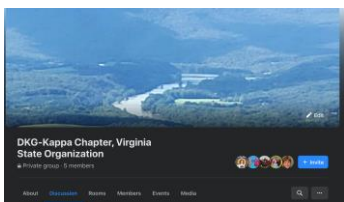
**Sarah Nicklas**  
**First Grade Teacher**  
 Stone Spring Elementary School

## Membership Matters

### Facebook



**Chapter Public Facebook Page**-We are now live with a chapter FB page. Join others in sharing Kappa with those in your Facebook Feed. When you like us, information about the group will automatically post to your page. The information on this site is for the public and is a way in which to showcase the work of the chapter as well as to welcome possible new members.



**Chapter Group Facebook Page**-Please join others from this chapter in a private group chat. You can do so by sending a request to join through Laurie Niestrath on FB or by sending an email to her.

[laurieniestrath@gmail.com](mailto:laurieniestrath@gmail.com)

### DO YOU KNOW?

Do you know that there are DKG chapters in 17 different countries?

### In recognition....

President Margaret Shifflett gave a "Stepping up" award to Karen Fansler-Ryan for her donation of pillow cases to the journey bags.



## KAPPA CHAPTER

The Kappa Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma is offering mini grants not to exceed \$50.00 for current members who are still teaching. You can apply for consumables, books, wipes, sanitizers, markers, crayons, zip lock bags, etc. It is whatever you need for your classroom to be successful during this coming, 2020-2021, school year. Kappa Chapter realizes each of you are facing new challenges in teaching this year and these grants will help you get the supplies you need. Kappa Chapter is excited to help current educators.

Please fill out the short application below and email it to Susan Schuckman at [slschuckman@aol.com](mailto:slschuckman@aol.com). Questions, let me know!

### APPLICATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of what you need: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Approximate Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Kappa Chapter Stipends**

Greetings! The chapter has had two requests for supplies! The supplies requests were for ear buds, paintbrushes, magnify glasses, play dough, etc. Remember, all you have to do is fill out the application, which will take you two minutes top! Send it to me at [slschuckman@aol.com](mailto:slschuckman@aol.com) and I will work with Sandy Proctor, Treasurer to get you a check! You don't need to turn in receipts, etc. Email your application soon! Kappa Chapter is here to help you!

Susan Schuckman,  
Chair Education Excellence Committee

## From the Educational Excellence Committee:

Thanks to the retirees for "adopting" a working teacher! I have had some wonderful comments from the working teachers! If you are a retiree and still would like to participate, please let me know at your earliest convenience! You can contact me at [slschuckman@aol.com](mailto:slschuckman@aol.com).

Susan Schuckman

## Highlights from our last meeting...



October Educator Wellness Presentation- As promised, here is the introduction that Kathleen submitted for this presentation:

Kathleen is the owner/founder of Interwoven Wellness, a holistic health coaching practice. She is an Integrative Nutrition Health Coach, Reiki practitioner and Consultant for Beautycounter. She mentors women who are entering menopause to develop a healthy dialogue with their bodies so they can feel fit, vibrant and healthy again! Kathleen helps her clients embrace the "Not Another Diet Lifestyle".

Prior to becoming a health coach, Kathleen was in the field of education for 23 years in both public and private schools in the Charlottesville area . She was a classroom teacher, new teacher mentor, department chair of history and team leader. Kathleen taught at risk preschool (both Bright Stars and Head Start), Kindergarten, 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th and briefly co-taught the graduate class Inquiry in the Arts through Mary Baldwin,

To stay in touch with Kathleen, join her fb group, Interwoven Wellness Thriving Together for free resources and workshops. Or go to her website, [Interwovenwellness.com](http://Interwovenwellness.com)

Laurie



## 2020-22 Officers

### President

Margaret Shifflett  
1206 S. Dogwood Dr.  
Harrisonburg, VA 28801  
540-421-3094  
[mhshifflett@gmail.com](mailto:mhshifflett@gmail.com)

### Immediate Past President

Susan Schuckman  
1225 Goldfinch Dr.  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802-4492  
540-433-1502  
[slschuckman@aol.com](mailto:slschuckman@aol.com)

### First Vice-President

Susan Doughty  
606 David St.  
Staunton, VA 24401  
540-849-6166  
[hueandsue@comcast.net](mailto:hueandsue@comcast.net)



### Second Vice-President

Cheryl Sams  
35 Lea Drive  
Fishersville, VA 22939  
540-910-1192  
[csamsmathlady@gmail.com](mailto:csamsmathlady@gmail.com)

### Corresponding Secretary

Scarlett Kiser  
45 Avon Ave.  
Waynesboro, VA 22980  
540-949-0559  
[scarlett.kiser@gmail.com](mailto:scarlett.kiser@gmail.com)

### Recording Secretary

Emily Petkus  
66 Martin Luther King Jr Way  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801  
708-269-3632  
[emilypetkus@yahoo.com](mailto:emilypetkus@yahoo.com)

### Treasurer

Sandy Proctor  
206 Hudson Ave  
Staunton, VA 24401  
540-885-9769  
[proctorsk@gmail.com](mailto:proctorsk@gmail.com)

### Parliamentarian

Bea Morris  
2669 Ralston Road  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802  
540-867-5109  
[beam1340@verizon.net](mailto:beam1340@verizon.net)

International website:

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

VA State Organization is on Twitter #DKGVA

Chapter website address

[www.vakappachapter.weebly.com](http://www.vakappachapter.weebly.com)

VA State Organization website:

[www.va-state.org](http://www.va-state.org)

Facebook: search "Virginia State Organization, Delta Kappa Gamma Society International"