October 2002

Phi Delta Kappa

Professional Newsletter for West Georgia’s Chapter

Celebrating Teachers

Celebrating Teachers
PDK Officers: 2002-03

President:
Dr. Letitia Bridges
Email: lbridges@westga.edu

Vice President of Membership:
Dr. Jill Mizell
Email: jmizell@westga.edu

Vice President of Programs:
Dr. David Hulsey
Email: dhulsey@westga.edu

Secretary:
Dr. Cathleen Doheny
Email: cdoheny@westga.edu

Treasure:
Dr. Regina Gresham
Email: ggresham@westga.edu

Historian:
Dr. James Berry
Email: jberry@westga.edu

Newsletter Editors:
Dr. Robert Morris
Email: rmorris@westga.edu
Dr. Rosalind Duplechian
Email: rduplech@westga.edu

Foundations Representative:
Dr. Ronald Reigner
Email: rreigner@westga.edu

Delegate:
Dr. Terrie Kielborn
Email: tkielbor@westga.edu

Advisor:
Dr. John Myers
Email: jmyers@westga.edu

Area Coordinator:
Dr. Robert Hilliard
Email: rhilliar@westga.edu

ON THE COVER:
Pictures were taken from the following website:
http://school.discovery.com/clipart/category/tchr2.html

FEATURES:

President’s Letter
1 Dr. Bridges delivers her first letter of the year and highlights special people and events.

Report from Area Coordinator
2 Dr. Hilliard reports on general meeting held in September.

Special Features
3 Dr. Melissa Walker, professor and writer, visits UWG.

4 Dr. Jon Marshall provides a provocative editorial linking character education to Enron.

General News
6 Dr. Hilliard on the issue of PDK membership.

6 Dr. Doheny recounts recent membership luncheons at UWG.

7 Membership News

7 PDK Calendar of Meetings: 2002-03 School Year

 Editors’ Spot
From The President’s Desk…
By: Letty Bridges

Melissa Walker, author of *Living on Wilderness Time*, was the speaker for our first meeting. If you missed her, you missed a treat! Melissa spoke to the 50 Middle Grades Georgia Responds Program students from 5:30 to 6:15 and after at the PDK dinner meeting in Z6. Non-traditional students in the GA Responds Program, PDK members, and their guests could all relate to Melissa’s desire to do something just for her personal growth.

We have a very important person in our chapter - John Myers is the nominee for International Vice President for PDK for District VII. When the time comes to cast our vote, we want to help get John elected to this prestigious position in PDK. John, Bob Hilliard, and Terrie Kielborn attended the District VII Conference in Jacksonville, FL, September 27 – 29. John and Bob did a presentation on the PDK Foundations Program, which included Reavis Reading Centers, Writing Fastbacks, and A Sampler on Storytelling. We appreciate all the time and effort you put into representing our chapter at the conference.

Our Fall Initiation Ceremony and Meeting will be Tuesday, October 29th at 6:30 PM in Z6. Invite your colleagues and friends who have a commitment to excellence in education to become members of PDK. See Jill Mizell, jmizell@westga.edu, to get a membership application form. Remind all new candidates that the initiation fee needs to accompany the application for membership to be submitted at the time of the ceremony.

December 5th will be a holiday treat! A progressive dinner will begin at the home of Ron Reigner for appetizers, John Myers for dinner, then Letty Bridges for dessert. This dinner is a wonderful time to socialize and relax with friends and colleagues – no professional talk this night! Friends and family are invited to this special occasion, so mark your calendars.

I am always ready to hear new ideas, so let me hear from you!

Letty Bridges, President
Greetings from your Area Coordinator:

The District VII Conference, held this last weekend, in Jacksonville, Florida, was full of excitement that related directly to the West Georgia Chapter.

- The West Georgia Chapter was recognized for the following:
  - District VII - West Georgia was the **Outstanding chapter in Area 7O**
  - District VII - West Georgia earned the **Newsletter Achievement Award**.
    This was for the top newsletter in Area 7O.
  - **Foundation giving at 100%**. There were a total of 28 chapters in PDK to give at the 100% level. Nine of those chapters were from District VII. **West Georgia Chapter was of 28 100% Chapters!**
  - **Membership awards for 20/20 and 40/40**
    Only 90 chapters received 40/40 recognition. District VII had 33 of those chapters. **West Georgia was one of the 90 in PDK International.**

- Christian Cherau was elected to continue as District VII Representative
- Chapter Advisor, Dr. John Myers, was elected to represent District VII as a candidate for Vice President of PDK International.
  Dr. Myers will be an excellent candidate. Among his qualifications, he has been
  - a member of PDK for 26 years
  - has held chapter offices in Ohio, Tennessee, and Georgia
  - was Area 7O Coordinator for District VII
  - PDK Author Seminar-Lecture Program Speaker with presentations to 54 chapters across the US and Canada. Has a program scheduled in November in Montreal
  - He has three PDK Fastbacks published and one in press
  - He has received recognition with PDK awards for research, leadership and distinguished service and
  - He has leadership experience at local, state and national levels in middle grades education organizations.

- Drs. Myers and Hilliard presented information on the Reavis Reading Centers. Dr. Myers talked about writing for publication, especially for PDK and presented (with Dr. Hilliard) excerpts from their PDK Fastback on Storytelling.

District VII unveiled a new PDK banner that will be displayed at all chapter meetings. Don’t miss a chance to see it at future chapter meetings.

In June, PDK International held a Constitutional Convention that will, in some instances, radically change the current PDK constitution. Voting will take place in January or February. More on those possible changes in a future newsletter.

Dr. Robert Hilliard
Associate Professor of Education
State University of West Georgia
Email: rhilliar@westga.edu
Dr. Melissa Walker is a writer who resides in Atlanta, GA. She was once a teacher as well as a professor at Emory University. She has written journal articles, essays, and environmental textbooks. After spending 120 days in America’s wilderness areas, she has written her first fiction novel, “A Wilderness in Time”.

Dr. Walker visited the University of West Georgia on September 23, 2002. She shared her experiences with some of our students and with the members of PDK.

If you are interested in finding more information about Dr. Walker, her email and website addresses are as follows:
Email: lisiwalker@aol.com
Website: http://www.upress.virginia.edu/books/walker.html
CHARACTER EDUCATION: The Foundation for Excellence in Schooling

I’m going to start with the premise that teaching for character is essential for the success of a democratic society. A democratic society is based on the ideals of respect for others, regard for fairness and justice, concern for the common good, and voluntary participation in helping others. These ideals can, and should be taught in our schools.

We have seen in the past year the mass destruction that happens when these ideals are debased. When companies Enron shareholders billons of dollars are lost, people loose their financial security including pension plans, and confidence is lost in our way of doing things. All of this chips away at the very freedoms we hold dearly.

In schools and universities, when we Enron students by providing less than a high quality education, accrediting agencies by falsifying and back dating work, or taxpayers by failing to provide them the services expected, we fail the public trust placed on us. This can be seen in schools with unhealthy environments where staff are cocooning, becoming disruptors, and leaving.

The research (see Owens, 1995, Organizational behavior in education, Allyn & Bacon) on organizational culture from the 1970s and 1980s affirms that the ideals of respect for others, regard for fairness and justice, concern for the common good, and voluntary participation in helping others are the foundation for high quality workplaces. Student learning thrives in schools where there is respect and trust among faculty, staff and students, and where parents, spouses and others volunteer their time (Pritchard and Marshall, 2002, Professional development in “healthy” vs. “unhealthy” districts: Top 10 characteristics based on research, School Leadership & Management, 22(2), 113-141). This has been called a culture of pride and climate of success (Kanter, 1983, The change masters: Innovation and entrepreneurship in American corporations, Simon and Schuster).

Character education is the process through which this culture of pride and climate of success are developed within a school. It is the ideal of bringing together educators, parents, community, and students to establish the constancy of purpose that fosters the emergence of healthy school environments. Such environments support the total education of students in a community of respect, safety, and spirit resulting in optimized student learning. Character education is the foundation for school improvement.

The development of high quality character education in schools is based on the following 10 essentials (Marshall, Caldwell, McKay, and Owens, 2002, Character education evaluation, St. Louis: CSD):

1. **Community participation** in determining the common ground that is essential for developing and maintaining character education in the school.
2. **Character education policy** written, approved by the school board, and widely distributed that becomes part of the leadership of the school and community. The policy must be affirmed and supported at the school and classroom levels.

3. **Identified and defined character traits** are agreed upon by parents, teachers, community members, and students. These traits are highly visible throughout the school and community.

4. **Integrated curriculum** is implemented in all classrooms. Character education is an integral part of the curriculum so that students see how traits figure into stories, science, and elsewhere.

5. **Experiential learning** is implemented through the school. Students are given many opportunities to experience character traits, see them in action, and feel them through learning processes such as service learning, cooperative learning, and peer monitoring.

6. **Evaluation** is an integral part of program planning and implementation using the Plan-Implement-Refine developmental process.

7. **Adult role models** interact with the students on a daily basis. People “learn what they live,” so it is imperative that teachers, parents, community, and others provide good role modeling for students.

8. **Staff development** time and resources are available for discussion of character education, development and sharing integrated curriculum, and creating a climate that character education is the “way we do things in our school.”

9. **Student leadership** is supported by parents, staff, and students. Students are involved with age-appropriate activities and connect character education to their learning, decision-making, and personal goals.

10. **Sustaining the program** is a priority throughout the system including a district level staff development and curriculum person, high quality development activities, and support system for teachers.

Character education is not an option. It is not a project, nor a new program. Rather, character education is the establishment of a culture of pride and climate of success within a school. It is the development of a healthy school where staff are highly committed and competent and students are engaged in high levels of learning. It is a school where the ideals of respect for others, regard for fairness and justice, concern for the common good, and voluntary participation in helping others is *the way we do things.*

Dr. Jon Marshall  
Professor of Education  
State University of West Georgia  
Email: jmarshal@westga.edu
Dr. Hilliard on PDK Membership:

This past year, PDK identified 51 of the top teachers in the United States and Puerto Rico. Wal Mart provided $5,000 to 50 of those teachers and $10,000 to the top educator. The money was to be used in their classrooms. That is the good news. The bad news is that only two of those teachers were members of PDK. Two others were former Kappas, and no one had ever asked the others to become Kappans!

The moral of this story is that we are all guilty. We are guilty of knowing colleagues who are excellent teachers and who make a difference in the lives of children on a daily basis. We need to recognize them. They can tell us no, but they need to be asked to join.

PDK is a unique organization that has no agenda other than to help educators reach out to each other and to children. We are not identified by a particular teaching field or grade level and welcome all persons interested in education into membership. Ask a colleague. Membership forms should be available at every chapter meeting and are yours for the asking from the editor of this newsletter. You may even make yours a group request. Ask everyone on your faculty!

If we are to raise our membership and to continue the tradition of sharing and collaboration, we need to make all chapter meetings and projects worthwhile. That is not the whole responsibility of the program chair. Chapter success depends on the participation of each member in planning projects, meetings, and sharing of accomplishments. If you, individually, or as a group have something special going on, share it with the editor of this newsletter. If you were accused of being a member of PDK, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

Dr. Cathleen Doheny: PDK Membership Luncheon

West Georgia Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa hosted a luncheon to introduce new faculty to the organization on September 17th and on October 9th. Members and guests ate lunch in the Executive Dining room at Z-6 cafeteria, on campus. David Hulsey, Vice President of Programs, welcomed guests and presented background information about the organization. Jill Mizell, Vice President of Membership, extended a warm invitation for guests to join PDK and become involved in chapter activities. Bob Hilliard, Area Coordinator, presented a brief history of PDK and talked about how the West Georgia chapter is linked with other chapters nationwide. Other officers, Ros Duplechain, and Cathleen Doheny, welcomed guests from several different departments in the College of Education. Lunch for new members was courtesy of PDK!
The power of kind thought, action, and prayer are needed…

As some of Kappans may (or may not) know, Pauline Gough has cancer. Pauline has been the editor of the Kappan since 1988 and has been a true friend of PDK and education. Pauline’s brain tumor has been identified as malignant and aggressive. George Kersey, Executive Director for PDK International, writes that “she is truly at peace with her circumstance and draws enormous pride in the support her children are providing and will continue to provide. She is also most appreciative to PDK--staff, board, coordinators and chapter officers--members for the many cards, emails, etc. that have come. Please continue to convey your support and be upbeat in everything you do. Pauline's address--she is staying with her daughter in Carmel, Indiana--is 13611 Singletree Court; Carmel, IN 46032.”

Dr. Kersey asks that we believe in miracles and remember Pauline and her family in our thoughts and prayers. I believe that her spirits would be lifted if we collectively and/or individually could remember her with a card. She doesn’t have to know us personally to know that we appreciate all she has given to our profession and to the difference she has made in the lives of teachers and their children. Bob Hilliard, Area Coordinator 7O.

PDK Calendar of Meetings: 2002-03 School Year

Tuesday, October 29, 2002  First Initiation Night  6:30pm  UWG – Z6
Friday, December 6, 2002  Progressive Dinner  6:00pm  Email/Call for details
Monday, January 27, 2002  Second Initiation Night  6:30pm  UWG – Z6
Tuesday, March 4, 2002  General Meeting  6:30pm  UWG – Z6
Thursday, April 10, 2002  Awards and Installation Of Officers Night  6:30pm  UWG –Z6

***PDK memorabilia will be available at each meeting for those members who are interested in purchasing these

Come and join us.
We’d love to set a place for you.
Dear PDK Member:

Dr. Robert Morris and I are the PDK Newsletter Staff and we need your assistance.

The theme of this year’s newsletter is "Celebrating Teachers/Teaching". In keeping with this theme we would like to invite you to share with us stories that we could publish in the newsletter. To this end, we welcome any thoughts (1 paragraph in length) on the following topics:

a. "A Funny Thing That Happened at the Beginning of School..."

b. "An Insightful Thing That Happened..."

c. Tips for Administrators

d. Special Projects that are going on in your school or classroom

e. "Biggest Lesson or Two That I Learned As a Beginner Teacher was.."

f. Ode to Our Profession (Any teacher you'd like to pay special recognition to OR any peak experience in teaching you'd like to share).

g. Why do you teach? Why do you stay in teaching? Why should anyone stay in teaching?

Ideally, we would like your ideas to be accompanied with any of the following information that you feel comfortable sharing:

a. Your name

b. A picture of you and/or your students

c. How long you've been a member of PDK

d. Name of your school

e. Your response to any of the above topics (a-g)

You can contact us at rduplech@westga.edu.

Thanks for your time. We look forward to hearing from you and wish you a successful school year.

Sincerely,
Bob and Ros