



## **EUFORIA**

### **EDITION NO. 34**

### **OCTOBER 2010**

Dear Members of DKG Europe Region,

This is my first opportunity to write to you as your Regional Director. I feel honoured that you have given me this opportunity and responsibility. Please know that I am here for you, and to work on your behalf. I hope to represent Europe within the Society so that I am conveying your thoughts, ideas and wishes to the Administrative Board. I also want to help, advise or support you in any way that I can.

In Europe we are a very diverse group, with nine different languages and cultures. However, the one great thing we have in common is our love for, and interest in, education in our own countries and across the world. In a recent message to State Presidents, our new International President, Jeni Souders, writes about 'sharpening our focus': *....we need a common focus. Just as other organisations are known for an emphasis on one major project, so can we become known by gathering all our efforts into one unified effort. ....I hope we will find that common focus through supporting early-career educators.*

Our International President's theme for her biennium, 'Embracing our Vision • Designing Our Future', covers two ideas which are important to all members of DKG. 'Embracing our vision' connects with the Society's vision statement 'Leading women educators, impacting education worldwide'. I hope you can see how we can all make an impact by supporting teachers who are at (or near) the beginning of their careers? We can do this at every level, and especially within our chapters.

The second part of the theme, 'Designing Our Future', depends on all of us accepting a common vision. Working together, we will be unified in our commitment to the newest generation of teachers. This, in turn, will have an impact on the future of education and the future of DKG. As William James put it: "Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does!"

I would like to pay tribute to recent leaders who have had a very significant impact on our Society:

Birgit Svensson, our previous Regional Director, has done a fantastic job during her biennium. I would like to thank her, on your behalf, for her dedication, good humour, charm, patience, and ability to cope with everything with equanimity and sound common sense. Hers will be a difficult act to follow. Birgit, I thank you on behalf of **all** DKG members.

I also would like to record my thanks and admiration for the work, vision and leadership of our outgoing International President, Carolyn Rants. She has worked tirelessly for our organisation

and its members, even moving to Austin temporarily to do so! Our new International President has written: *“My hope is that you will see a seamless transition from President Carolyn Rants to me and that our goals remain constant even as we approach those goals from some new directions”*.

In early September I was in Little Rock, Arkansas. I met and worked with the other Regional Directors and, later, with members of the Administrative Board. Later still, we were joined by the chairs of Forums and International Committees. We all received a thorough initiation into the details of the tasks we are required to carry out on behalf of you, the members. Some of our learning involved active participation - I can assure you that a lot can be learnt from forming a team to make paper aeroplanes! Outside our meetings, we enjoyed meeting the world-famous Peabody Ducks which are residents at our hotel. Twice a day, they march to the music of Souza's 'King Cotton'. On our final day, two DKG members were Duck Masters in the afternoon. All work and no play isn't good for you!



Duckmaster certificates were presented to  
Lace Marie Brogden and June Bowers



The ducks begin their evening march .

Please note some dates for your diary now: **3 – 6 August 2011**. This is when the European Regional Conference will take place near Baden-Baden in Germany. I'll be attending a meeting with the Steering Committee in October, but I already know the area. The venue is a college, set in beautiful surroundings, with views to vineyards and the edge of the Black Forest, and many places to visit in the area before, during and after the conference. Accommodation will be at the college and also in nearby guest houses and hotels, which are within walking distance of the college campus – there is plenty of choice. Please visit the website for Germany [www.dkggermany.com](http://www.dkggermany.com) . From there, a short video can be accessed, via a web link, about Baden-Baden and its surroundings.

(The Germany website can also be accessed from the main DKG website at [www.dkg.org](http://www.dkg.org) )

**Kate York**

#### **INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEES 2010-2012**

##### **EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIVES**

###### **Appointed:**

**Communications and Publicity** – Gisela Baronin von Engelhardt (Germany)

**Constitution** – Gitta Franke Zoellmer (Germany)

**Expansion** – Janny Kisteman (Netherlands)

**Finance** – Monica Tengling (Sweden)

**Leadership Development** – Siofi Sigurbjornsdottir (Iceland)

**Membership** – Hertha Jonsdottir (Iceland)

**Elected:**

**Nominations** – Anna Handeland (Norway)

**Society Mission and Purposes** – World Fellowships-Gudrun Nylander (Sweden), Educator's Award-Johanna Einarsdottir (Iceland), Educational Excellence-Ria Bleeker (Netherlands)/Sigridur Ragnarsdottir (Iceland), Golden Gift-Marika Heimbach (Germany), I.S.F.-Kate York (Great Britain), Scholarships-Anne-Marie Salonen (Finland).

## **GERMANY**

I can't believe two months have already passed since the International Convention in Spokane. Some 1700 attended, over 40 of them from Europe; from Germany we were 6 to get inspired, enlightened, informed and to "carry the torch home" to those who couldn't attend (some due to not have holidays yet). Spokane proved to be a good location despite its not being exactly central and rather small compared to others previously. It was "walkable", well organized and very professional, with interesting workshops and informative/inspirational speakers. We succeeded in voting on the mammoth change of Constitution and Standing Rules without needing an extra night shift – it was very well prepared by the committee and the sessions were expertly conducted with lots of tact, flair and good humour by Dr. Carolyn Rants. The workshops offered were so varied that it was really difficult to choose. An absolute uncontested highlight for me was the convention choir – incredible what these ladies accomplished in such a short practice time – absolutely fantastic voices and gifted songwriters/lyricists that gave us food for thought and a good laugh. Our hostesses in their pretty outfits were most helpful, very friendly, and made this big event unforgettable.

We were delighted when Kate York was elected European Regional Director – we had been crossing fingers ever since nominations took place – congratulations! We are looking forward very much to the Steering Committee Meeting with her in Fulda during the last weekend of October. Do check our website ([www.dkggermany.org](http://www.dkggermany.org)) after that for details on the upcoming European Regional Conference 2011 in Baden-Baden/Steinbach! We are looking forward very much to seeing many of you there, especially as there are so few of us to shoulder this big event and we will rely on your support and contributions!

Congratulations, too, to a German member – I was so pleased to discover in the September *Tip of the Month* that our own Gisela Baronin von Engelhardt was appointed to the International Communications Committee!

Our State Meeting on the first weekend of June in Baden-Baden/Steinbach will be dedicated mainly to last minute preparations for the Regional Conference, so it will be rather "on the modest side", thus making sure that people will save their pennies for the big event two months later.

***Brigitte Wichmann, State Organisation President and Steering Committee Chair***

## **GREAT BRITAIN**

It was a great honour to carry my country's flag into the International Convention in Spokane, along with other State Presidents from Europe, U.S.A. and Canada, and to retire it again at the end. I also walked along a red carpet for the first time in my life to be presented, with every State President including all those from the USA, at the President's Banquet. Those of us coming from Europe had all had very difficult journeys to get there, but it was worth it! The

Convention was a mixture of hard work and fun – a memorable week indeed. I particularly enjoyed singing in the 150strong choir, both at the very moving Celebration of Life and at the President’s Banquet. There are some outstanding musicians in the Society, and throughout the proceedings they played a very active part. It was good to be swept along with the music, and to feel the very strong sense of fellowship it generates. We are all looking forward to that same feeling when we meet in Baden Baden next year.

The Spokane River was a beautiful backdrop to the week, and Evelyn and I enjoyed a walk alongside it on one of the few spaces in our timetable. We saw this thought-provoking engraving on our walk along the bank:

“As waters of the river nourish earth, trees and vegetation,  
Education enriches the heart, mind and spirit of a community.”  
(Gonzaga University 1887).

A suitable subject for discussion!

**Diane Billam, State President**

## **ICELAND**

**Our Executive Board meeting** was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September. It is a custom that the new chapter presidents are informed about the Society and best practice at their first meeting and all the State Committees’ presidents introduced their committees. The Membership Committee along with the Ad-hoc Handbook Committee gave excellent workshops. Sigrún Klara Hannesdóttir was our guest and informed us about the international aspects of the Society and the new constitution along with our Parliamentarian. We went over our goals and plans this year and had a very good discussion. Once again we have an excellent group leading our Society here in Iceland in the next two years.

**A new chapter** is going to be established in Reykjavik this autumn. Lambda-chapter will be our 11<sup>th</sup> Chapter. We are very excited about this and the Expansion committee, lead by Ingibjörg Einarsdóttir, is doing an excellent job, This task is very time consuming but, as they say, a very pleasant one as well.

**Leadership seminar** will be held September 24.-27. We are looking forward to have Barbara Whiting from Minnesota with us, former chairman of the international Leadership Committee She will lead the seminar, but we got a grant from the Lucile Cornet Awards Educational Foundation last year to help us with the financing of this.

I was so fortunate to attend the **Golden Gift Seminar** in Austin, Texas this summer along with Heli Piikkila from Finland. We were two from Europe in a group of 30 privileged women from all over the USA and enjoyed this excellent seminar enormously. I highly recommend European women to apply for this seminar which is held every other year.

Two DKG sisters in Iceland, An-Dao Tran from Gamma chapter and Anna G. Eðvaldsdóttir from Iota chapter got **scholarships** this year and we are very proud of them. Also we have four Icelandic sisters on International Committees next biennium and Sigrun Klara is on the Editorial Board for the next 4 years.

## **A Year for Commemoration**

This year marks the anniversary of many achievements in Icelandic women's rights. This year marks 95 years from women's right to vote, 80 years from the establishment of Kvenfélagasamband Íslands (*Federation of Icelandic Women's Societies*), 40 years from the establishment of the Red Stockings Movement, 35 years from the first Women's Day Strike, 30 years from the election of Mrs. Vigdis Finnbogadóttir as president of Iceland, 20 years from the establishment of Stigamót (*Education and Counseling Center for Survivors of Sexual Abuse and Violence*), and 15 years from the approval of the Beijing Platform for Action, to name a few major events related to women's rights.

To honour these occasions many clubs and associations related to the women's movement have joined hands to plan an international calendar of events for October 24-25, with the slogan: Women Strike Back 2010, <http://kvennafri.is/en/int-conference>

**Skottur** is the sponsor of the Women's Day Off 2010. This unique platform is an executive body formed by all major women's movements and organisations in Iceland to sponsor joint equal rights campaigns. The name "skotturnar" refers to "skott-húfa", the head wear of the Icelandic national costume for women. DKG women will participate in that event along with most Icelandic women..



But there is more to celebrate: **The first DKG Chapter was established in Iceland 35 years ago** which can also be considered under this umbrella. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 1975 the Alpha Chapter was established. We are therefore celebrating the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Delta Kappa Gamma in Iceland this year. Alpha Chapter is planning this anniversary on 13<sup>th</sup> November with a seminar and other activities.

This is just a brief view of what is on our agenda and around us and it will be a very exciting year indeed.

**Ingibjörg Jónasdóttir, Iceland State President**

## **NORWAY**

Our State President, Mette Heiberg, returned very enthusiastic from the International Convention in Spokane. She was deeply impressed by all she had experienced. And at our first executive board meeting she gave a full report and inspired us all!

One of the main responsibilities in our Society is to get new members. In the latest issue of the biggest teachers' trade union magazine in Norway, Mette gave an interview and told about DKG and why teachers should join us and all that the Society has to offer. We are hoping for many new members!

In Norway this year all the chapters will have the next Regional Conference in Baden-Baden 2011 on their agenda. We will convince our members about the importance of attending such a meeting by learning more about the Society, seeing old friends and making new ones.

As the Chair of the 2009 European Conference steering committee, I know what a great effort our German sisters will make to give us the best Conference ever! They really deserve that we all will go to Baden-Baden!

Our former Regional Director, Birgit, emphasised the importance of networking throughout the European membership. Delta chapter in Baerum has invited Chi chapter in Sweden to a weekend on November 12-14. They have made a wonderful programme, among other things a visit to see a ballet performance in the Oslo Opera House. Delta has extended the invitation to all the Norwegian members as well.

I know we in Norway will have a fine DKG autumn with very interesting programmes which cover a wide field, from going to the theatre to lectures about how to teach immigrant children in Norwegian classes.

**Barbro Sommerset, member of the Executive Board**

As an enthusiastic Conference/Convention member I was happy to join President Mette in Spokane. The modern Conference Centre was set in beautiful surroundings, on a river with wide lawns and beautiful trees on either side. As a member of the Nominations Committee I had a duty to perform but was, as everybody else, free to pick and choose from a full programme. Again, our American sisters impressed us with a smooth running of the event, owing, no doubt, to thorough preparations. Again, as so many times before, I was astounded by the vast choir (who had had very little time to practise). Beautiful! But some time I would like to hear the European members' impressions of one or two of the keynote speakers...

New York City next – in 2012!

**Anna Handeland, Epsilon**

## **FINLAND**

The summer in Finland was surprisingly warm. Our members have enjoyed the hot summer so activities have been very few during the summer months. I myself spent almost all summer with my daughter's family in Annapolis, MD taking care of my 3 year-old granddaughter. After that time I really know what hot and humid summer means.

In the Spokane convention there were 6 members present from Finland; they were very pleased with the conference. Some of them had been in these conventions before but for some this was their first time. The first-timers were telling how warmly they were welcomed. I also remember the warmth I received in the San Diego convention in 2006. I was proud to be a part of large, international group of women and to receive recognition for my doctoral thesis as the first Finnish woman. It is very inspiring to belong to this organization which also rewards its members.

One of our Finnish members in Spokane, Heli Piikkilä from Zeta chapter attended the 2010 Leadership/Management Seminar at the McCombs School of Business, University of Texas, Austin in this summer. She told us that this intense educational training was taught by world-renowned experts in the field of leadership and management. It was an outstanding ten-day seminar. After this once in a life time experience we, Pearl Girls, can support each other and use our new-found skills and abilities in the future.

Finnish members thought that the program in Spokane convention was very professional and inspiring. They also enjoyed the possibility of meeting new people and old acquaintances from around the world. Conversations usually dealt with the high level of Finnish education system and students' achievements in it. The PISA research has given Finland lots of good publicity, although it must be said that our school kids are not feeling well in school. Finland got yet more praise in the world media when Newsweek magazine declared Finland to be world's best country to live in. Criteria in this study were health, dynamic financial sector, education, political environment and quality of life.

Our chapters haven't been completely on holiday during summer. Alpha chapter for example did a trip to our neighbouring country Estonia and got to know about the old mansions that Estonia has eagerly renovated during past years.

Now that the fall is here again there will be more activities. We aim to focus on gypsy children's culture by inviting a gypsy woman to visit our meetings, and by reading literature on the matter. The Epsilon chapter is celebrating their 30-years anniversary in the convent of Valamo in Eastern Finland. My Beta chapter is responsible for organizing the annual meeting and seminar so the planning is well under way.

**Pirkko Karvonen, State President, Finland (since 1. 7. 2010)**

## **SWEDEN**

Last summer included an American adventure for me. It started in Washington DC with 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration and ended up in Washington State with the seminar "Nature meets art" in Tacoma and the DKG International Convention in Spokane. I was a "first timer" attendee at the International Convention. It was a great experience, and a privilege, being on the International Executive Board. Among more than one thousand women at the Convent we were about 40 DKG sisters from Europe. I believe in strengthening the European profile of DKG, as I said at the European breakfast in Spokane, when I thanked Birgit Svensson for her time as European Director. At the same time we welcomed Kate York as our new European Director. She, as well as Birgit did, will be working on the European profile. I am looking forward to be the Swedish representative in European Forum. The Regional Conference in Baden Baden in Germany next year is another event of great importance for DKG women educators in Europe.

My board and I have held education meetings for two days, leadership education and specially designed education for new chapter officers. It was much appreciated. The meeting was closed with Delta Kappa Gamma song. We decided to try to start more singing in our chapters, a way to express joyfulness.

**Catherine Bringselius Nilsson, DKG State President Sweden**

## **THE NETHERLANDS**



**Dear friends,**

One of my favourite writers is an American woman named Maya Angelou, she is one of the big voices of African-American literature. In her autobiographic novels she writes about her exciting life. She also writes poems, plays and is a conductor and a dancer as well as an actor. Moreover she is an important voice in the African-American civil rights movement. One of the beautiful titles of her books is: "All God's children need travelling shoes". This title came to mind when I visited the international conference in Spokane during the workshop for state presidents. There we shared our experiences as state presidents. In the group I was part of, we were very eager to understand each other, but four of us spoke Spanish and four did not. The translator worked hard to get the right contact between us. It was a great experience. Life is a journey and if you want to be part of life you have to travel. And so did many of us. The international Convention in Spokane was a magnificent opportunity to meet women from all over the world. The convention was a treat, there were interesting lectures, good workshops, nice outings and a lovely gathering at the river. Unfortunately, Carolyn Rants had to leave as our international president. She worked hard for an active spirit in our communication. But moreover, we liked her better because we got acquainted during her visit to Holland. The European breakfast was one of my favourite ones, the organisation made many friends feel at home there. Birgit did an excellent

job, we appreciated that. I am sure Kate, as her successor will do a good job as well. We all know her and have much confidence in the way she works for the society.

Now we are entering our own society year, the last one of this biennium. So we have to finish what we intended. But above all, there is one thing we really want: more members. We have already got more, but some of the older ones left. . So how do we get more new ones? Indira Gandhi said: "The biggest mistake people can make is to try to harvest in places where they did not put seeds." We should think about this and plant new seeds where we forgot to put them. This will be a great challenge for the year to come.

From Holland with love,

**Riet Smits, state president 2009 – 2011**

My thanks to all who contributed to this very lively and thought-provoking edition, I feel sure members will enjoy it. EuForia 35 will be published early February 2011 so the deadline for contributions is 24<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Best wishes to you all,

**Joan Carroll, Editor**