

**The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International
Minutes of the European Forum Committee
Held in Freudenstadt, Germany, on Friday 5 and Saturday 6 November**

Present: Denmark – Ruth Hjorth-Nielsen
Estonia – Anu Ariste
Finland – Eija Paukkuri – in the chair
Germany – Christa Dunker-Hopferwieser
Great Britain – Diane Billam
Iceland – Ingibjorg Jonasdottir
The Netherlands – Vivian Repko
Norway – Mette Heiberg
Sweden – Catherine Bringselius Nielsson
Kate York – European Regional Director – ex officio
Diana Bell – Immediate Past Forum Chair

Friday 5 September

1 Opening of the meeting: Eija opened the meeting by welcoming all those present. Diane and Anu agreed to take the minutes. It is important that the Forum finds ways for members to convey their ideas, and give them a chance to have their say. All the Forum Committee information should be copied to State Presidents, Webmasters and State Editors.

2 Duties and roles of the representatives: Ingibjorg asked about the purpose of the Forum. It was felt that we should try to formulate an idea of what DKG in Europe is about, and to do this in our own way. The meetings should represent everyone, and take ideas forward. Christa emphasised that if we are representatives of our State, we should ask our members what they want. Diane pointed out that in between meetings of this Committee; we also have meetings of all European members present at the International Convention and Regional Conference, when members can be asked their opinion.

- Eija said that we are different from other regions as we incorporate different countries, languages, cultures. As we are the smallest region we should try to expand our membership. Kate pointed out that Sweden and Iceland are growing, and should pass on their knowledge to the rest of us. We have not developed a coherent programme across Europe on membership. We need to share ideas. Membership is a key to many towns in the USA and our member European states, and we should use this to help get new members, as well as ensure existing members feel valued. Everyone has something to offer.
- Kate will soon learn where she is being sent next year, and will then try to get to as many other State Conferences as possible. Diana reminded members to send the date of their State Meeting to Eyglo for the website, and file a report afterwards, with photos.
- Eija asked how the website had been developed. Diana said that five people had been nominated in Spokane to take the Euro website forward. Eyglo has asked that members send news and other information for the website. As soon as we have information about the Regional Conference in Baden-Baden it should be put up on the website. Two hours can be set aside at the Regional Conference for a Forum meeting.
- Kate said countries notify if they feel ready to host a Regional Conference. After this is agreed, they become the host state, and organise the European

night. The Chair of the Steering Committee nominates people for all the tasks, and seeks endorsement by the Regional Director. Kate said she had written out job descriptions for what needs doing. The Regional Director has to take responsibility, as she represents the international level for funding. Workshops are also the responsibility of the Regional Director, not the Chair of the Steering Committee. In addition, the regional director has to find first rate keynote speakers to attract members to the conference. The International Director has stipulated that one day must have a sharp educational focus, while other days can have a wider focus. There was discussion of whether the Holocaust was an appropriate topic for speakers and discussions, but it was felt it might be better to hold this in Amsterdam and use the Ann Frank museum.

There was discussion on using the DKG Network, forming a secure group within it. Ingibjorg recommended GoToMeeting. Linda Eller is the HQ contact, and Virginia Pearson the facilitator. Eija suggested we use this medium for the Forum, say 3 times per year.

3 Minutes from Spokane: Diana presented the minutes from Spokane and summarised the financial accounts. Vivian is willing to continue as Treasurer. There is €315 carried over to add to the \$3000 we get from HQ. This must be kept separate from the funds we raise ourselves. There was discussion of the contributions to the Regional Director's expenses. Catherine said that the Swedish view is that HQ should pay these expenses as they give Regional Directors their tasks. This issue will be raised by the Swedish Treasurer who is on the International Finance Committee. Sweden will pay the €25 towards the Award. Kate was also asked to raise the matter of Regional Director funding with the Administrative Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.40 pm

Saturday 6 November

4 European Achievement Award: This is awarded every second year at the Regional Conference. We collect €25 from each country, to be awarded to a member who has made a special contribution to Europe. Members considered the nominations and made a decision which will be announced in Baden- Baden.

5 The Award Pin: Eija will contact Ria Bleeker to commission a suitable design within the budget, and get it completed.

6 Budget and Finances: Eija reported that she had received \$3000 (€2110 after conversion) from the HQ. We also had €315 carried forward from last year, giving a total of €2425. The budget would carry the same items as last year: Committee Board and Lodging €250 (to Christa for hosting), Travel costs to State representatives @ 75%, Website annual cost €31. Funds would be needed for European Forum speaker, administration and Conference Booklet printing, but there was no charge for the Room hire for the seminar at the Sportschule. Eija said each State should consider whether to refund the remaining 25% of travel costs to their representative. If so, it must be included in the State budget. The sum of €1 per member from each state (apart from Sweden) was given towards the Regional Director's expenses.

7 Agenda – Aims, Goals and Strategic Planning for 2010-2010

World Teachers` Day: this is held on 5 October this year. Eija said that in Finland roses and cards are exchanged between teachers. In Estonia, students become teachers for some lessons, including one to the teachers themselves. We should have a project for ideas for World Teachers` Day in future. For 2011 we should share ideas on the website. This will be announced to all states. Ingibjorg said this needs to be introduced on the Euro website, and State Representatives should spread the news. The DKG Network is another way of keeping in touch: all email addresses must be correct.

The Media: We should explore how to involve the media to publicise our activities. For instance, our hosts for the Regional Conference, Steinbach Sportsschule are willing to use their contacts to promote our conference. Finland have a project for women`s micro banking in which American members have shown an interest. Christa has been working with illiterate people, helping to write important letters etc. She has been working with an adult education organisation which finds a DKG member to undertake this work. Iceland celebrates Women`s Day and works towards equal pay for women, and against abuse. DKG was involved and gained publicity. Netherlands has a similar event. With the UNICEF project on Schools in Africa, Sigrun Klara has enabled DKG Iceland to contribute directly and get publicity. Finland holds fund-raising events and will try to gain publicity for DKG. Sweden is part of a group involved in lobbying on behalf of women. Iceland used to monitor and comment on educational issues, and intend to start again with Parliament etc which will be another means of publicity. We should use every opportunity for publicity. Ingibjorg suggested we use the DKG network for publicity. There was discussion of Facebook, on which opinions vary.

Exchange Programme: Christa said that when introduced before, Americans had offered to host but would not come to visit. Emphasis should be on visiting rather than exchange, so that-members can be seen in their own environment. Do we need someone in each State to organise? Ruth suggested we publicise on the website. Catherine mentioned contact between a Swedish chapter and one from the Netherlands. It was agreed that each Forum representative would act as the contact for their state, although we should be careful about this. Focus should be on coming to a meeting, joining in with the activities of the chapter.

GoToMeeting: Planning for online conferences. Ingibjorg will set us up with GoToMeeting. First try-out and learning about this tool on November 18 or 25.

Planning for Pre-Regional Conference Seminar: takes place on Tuesday, 2 August, from 9 am – 5 pm. Suggestions for themes: media awareness; educational policies, gender differences; literacy (why are books not read as much these days?); status of disabled students: inclusion or exclusion?; what happens in times of financial crisis; abuse, violence and bullying; integration of students from migrant families; classes with students from different religious backgrounds; integration: examples of good practice. **For a workshop, we need examples from each country. It was decided we settle on topics of gender differences, literacy and teaching students with different social backgrounds.** Suggestion for the title of the seminar “**Educational challenges in the 21st Century:** `Haven`t you heard, Miss, us boys don`t read´. Send us examples of good practice and names for workshop holders. Deadline to go to press by 15 January!

The European Forum meeting is on Saturday , 6 August for 2 hours.

Date and Venue for Next Meeting: Ruth invited members to Aalborg, Denmark, on 4 and 5 November 2011.