

C709 Pensacola Professional Chapter
Submitted by Charlotte Schipman, Associate Counselor



Left to right: Rebecca Black, Mary Stanley, Wayne Tappan.
Members shared information about teaching and learning back in the "old days" at a meeting in January, 2008.

History and Heritage

Why was your chapter started at your college/university?

In February of 1953, the organizational meeting for the Pensacola Alumni Chapter of Kappa Delta Pi was held in the home of Mrs. Nellie Griffin. All Kappa Delta Pi members in the area were invited to attend. Dr. Mildred Swearingen, Florida State University, explained to the group the procedures required prior to submitting a petition to the National Council for the establishment of a new alumni chapter.

Officers for the Pensacola Alumni Chapter were elected in March of 1953: Frances McKenzie, President; Margaret Wickersham, Vice-President; Wayne Tappan, Secretary-Treasurer; and Occie Clubbs, Historian. Dr. Swearingen agreed to act as a consultant for the group. Formal approval from the National Council for the installation of an alumni chapter was received on April 20, 1953.

Are there any famous or notable members who were a part of your chapter?

The late Dr. Frank L. Wright, Executive President of Kappa Delta Pi, installed the officers of the Pensacola Alumni Chapter at a banquet held at Carpenter's Restaurant on October 21, 1953. Thirty outstanding teachers and administrators comprised the Charter Membership. During the years since then, our charter members continued to be educational leaders. Hellen Caro was honored when a new elementary school was given her name; when she retired from teaching, a scholarship fund in her name was started at Florida State University with contributions from family and friends. William Woodham served as District Superintendent of Schools and was honored when a new high school, which opened in 1963, was named after him. Another charter member, Wayne Tappan, remains a loyal and active member of the chapter.

Leadership and Membership

Who has been integral in the success of your chapter?

Many chapter members have contributed to its success. In addition to the charter members mentioned previously, Randall Broxton, Barbara Goggins, Rebecca Black, Mary Stanley, and current president Martha Simpkins have been outstanding members. They give countless hours to chapter business, arrange outstanding programs, and make sure members and the public know what we are doing. These are just a few of those who make Pensacola Alumni Chapter successful.

What are some of the unique benefits associated with membership or leadership positions in your chapter (beyond honor cords and letters of recommendation)?

Membership in the Pensacola Alumni Chapter affords opportunities for developing friendships with a variety of educational leaders. Our members teach at all levels and in a variety of educational settings. We have members who are active teachers and members who are retired. Some are in their seventies (and even their eighties!) and some are in their twenties. Where else can one find such a rich treasure of learning and knowledge?

When one assumes a leadership position in this chapter, one has the opportunity to work with this amazing pool of talent and energy. Communication skills, teamwork, planning, are enhanced. These skills are transferable throughout one's career and into retirement.

Programming

How has your chapter contributed to the community?

Pensacola Alumni Chapter was instrumental in the formation of a Kappa Delta Pi chapter at the University of West Florida. Although it has since disbanded, there is renewed interest in re-establishing a chapter on that campus. Since the establishment of a junior college chapter at Pensacola State College a few years ago, members of Pensacola Alumni Chapter have assisted in initiation of new members there, and some of those members MAY form a nucleus for the UWF chapter.

Pensacola Alumni Chapter members are actively involved in many facets of the community, serving in leadership roles in educational, civic, and religious organizations. We constantly look for opportunities to learn about what is happening at all levels of education in our community and the world at large. We encourage members to attend chapter meetings and to invite outstanding educators to join the organization. We believe in and try to practice the ideals of Kappa Delta Pi.

What is a tradition your chapter carries on?

During its first year, the Pensacola Alumni Chapter drafted its constitution and by-laws and recognized teachers retiring at the close of the 1953-54 school year. Other projects throughout the years have included: recognizing intern teachers in Escambia County, and sponsoring Future Teacher groups at local high schools. An ongoing project is raising funds and providing a scholarship grant to a deserving student who aspires to teach. The scholarship is named for one of our charter members, Jeannie Bell Parker.