

Marina Conference Thoughts
January 25-27, 2019

Opening Thought (Board)

It is hard for me to believe that another new year is upon us. Even though I'm still writing 2018, 2019 is here. In fact, we are already almost 1/12 of the way through it.

"Where does the time go?" That was one of my grandmother's favorite phrases. As a child, I couldn't understand her concern. Time never went fast enough for me, especially in January when I was already mournfully counting the days until the next Christmas holiday. But now that I'm the age of my grandmother, I understand her concern completely. Where *does* the time go?

Someone once compared the passage of time in one's life to a roll of toilet paper. When we are young, the roll is so big and full, it's hardly able to turn in its space. A handful of sheets carelessly used up is barely missed, and it seems to take forever to make a dent in that roll. But as we get older, the diameter gets smaller. The roll turns easier, faster, and we see that taking even a few sheets now has a much more noticeable effect. By the time the roll nears its cardboard core, each sheet that slips oh-so-quickly by becomes precious, indeed.

Having reached the point where my roll of toilet paper is spinning faster than ever, I am cognizant of using each sheet wisely. As Elaine from "Seinfeld" vehemently declared, I can't spare a square.

So let's make every minute count this weekend and our time together fun, productive, and meaningful. Because all too quickly, the conference will be over and we'll be saying, "Where the sheet did the time go?"

Opening Thought (Marina District Conference)

Good morning! I am so happy to be here with you, my fellow teachers. After I was elected to be state chaplain, I went back to my chapter and was given a wonderful gift by one of my ADK sisters. It seems that Florence Hendricksen, a former state president and member of our Gamma chapter, had compiled a booklet of inspirational thoughts for Alpha Delta Kappa chaplains. And even though she did this in 1966, many of the selections are still perfect for today, albeit with a bit of updating.

The passage I'm going to share with you comes from this treasure trove and was written by Wilferd A. Peterson. It's entitled:

A Tribute to the School Teacher

A teacher was once asked what subjects she taught. Puzzled, she answered that she did not teach *subjects*, she taught *students*.

Teachers with this spirit are our greatest servants. They mold the nation by molding the plastic clay of youth. They do more than *fill* minds, they *free* minds. They do more than teach facts, they inspire growth. They do more than prepare students to make a living, they stimulate them to build great lives. They do not teach students *what* to think, they teach them *how* to think. They teach them to seek, to find, to expand their horizons. They help them to discover the world, and they teach them to live in it as world-citizens.

The wise teacher knows that the finest contribution she can make is to help children help themselves. She strives to pass on to them the joy of mental conquest. She shares the treasury of her knowledge of books and beauty with them. She strives to awaken sleeping spirits, to lift up the discouraged, to point the way upward. To her, the students who sit before her in class have tremendous potential and possibilities. She believes in them! They are a challenge to her to help build, through them, the character and leadership needed by the nation and the world.

Unknown and unsung, the teacher does the noblest work of the earth. She discovers the tiny seeds of genius and cultivates them that they may blossom forth in all their glory. She lights candles of greatness to dissolve the darkness of ignorance and fear. She is a quiet worker building the foundations of tomorrow.

I am proud to be a teacher, and I am proud to be a member of an organization like Alpha Delta Kappa that honors excellent teachers such as you. Enjoy yourselves today!

Lunch Thought (Conference)

I know you're probably hungry, so I'll keep this thought short.

Joanne Grimm, also known as Miss Poppy and our State Chaplain from 2014-2016, is well known for her wit and wisdom. She has said that nothing, not a warm handshake or even a hug, establishes friendship more forcefully than eating together. In her opinion, friendship is catching up over good food, and a good meal is time for us to enjoy who and where we are.

So let's take Joanne's advice and forge some friendships over this delicious meal. And just in case you need a bit of help getting the conversation started at your table, the 1891 Cookery Book by F. H. Curtis suggests the following: "Observe the courtesies of society at the table. Bright conversation, fun, and witticisms are the best aids to digestion."

Have a lovely meal!

Closing Thought (Conference)

In case you hadn't noticed, it's a new year. According to Oprah Winfrey, now is the chance to start again because, as we all know, January is famous as the time when people choose to make a change in their lives.

But the reality is, whether we choose it or not, change is inevitable. And no matter what the time of year, everyone must cope with that change.

The world is constantly changing around us. Life doesn't stand still. Often, just as we start to feel secure and comfortable with how things are, it pushes us in a different direction.

Our beloved Alpha Delta Kappa is facing changes, too. And even though it feels wrong to give up the old and familiar, we must now look forward to the new with eager anticipation. It won't necessarily be easy, but once we've adjusted, we will realize that change can actually be good for us. In the words of early day California poet and teacher Edwin Markham,

Yesterdays are the shells we shed;
The best is always up ahead.
There's always some new world for winning,
And every end is a new beginning.

So I challenge each of you to think of ways you can change your chapter for the better. Take the enthusiasm you feel now back to your next meeting and share it with your group. Perhaps you can suggest a program or project, or ask a friend or two to visit and potentially become new members. Whatever you choose, go back to your chapter with the resolution to make the changes that will allow it to thrive and grow.

Reconvening Thought (Board)

_____ While searching through my ever-trusty Thoughts to Live By-Inspirational for Alpha Delta Kappa book, I came across this poem by Ralph H. Dumont.

New Year's Thoughts

What is a year? A group of days
That may be used in many ways.
A year may be a priceless boon--
Alas, that it is gone so soon!

And yet we need not feel forlorn,
For now another year is born.
Our days and years are wisely planned.
They lie within a master's hand.
So with glad hope and right good cheer,
We welcome this, another year.

Here's to another great year with our Alpha Delta Kappa board!

Closing Thought (Board)

All too soon, it's time for us to end another board meeting. Another conference is history. Where did the time go? As some wise person somewhere must have said, time flies when you're having fun with friends.

Thank you, my friends, for another wonderful time together. Your friendship means so much to me. As Joaquin Miller said:

The fairest flower in the garden of life
Is the fellowship of friends.
Time but glorifies its beauty
With a fragrance that never ends.
No cloud can dim its loveliness,
No storm its petals part.
For the flower of friendship dwells forever
In the shrine of the human heart.

Have a wonderful and safe trip home, and I'll see you soon in San Diego!