

# Marina District Conference Thoughts

January 24-26, 2020

## Executive Board-Opening Thought

The other morning, I was shocked to see my mother's face staring back at me in the mirror. And when I looked down, there were her hands gripping the edge of the sink. It was a bit eerie, to say the least.

Of course, this was not a supernatural visitation. Instead, what has happened is the wrinkles, age spots, and white hairs that I so long associated with my mother have gradually found their way onto my face and hands. And for some reason, on that morning, I noticed them more than usual. Just one more way the universe is reminding me that time is flying.

I don't know about you, but writing 2020 as the current year is a bit weird. 2020 is a sci-fi date, one that I expect to see in a Star Trek episode, not on the check I just wrote. And before we know it, we'll be writing 2021, then 2022, and so on.

Yes, time is flying. The biennium I feel like we just began is rapidly coming to a close, and no matter how much we might want to slow it down, we know that we can't. The only thing we can do is enjoy the time we have now. As the famous quote goes:

Yesterday is history.  
Tomorrow is a mystery.  
But today is a gift.  
That's why it's called the present.

I am greatly looking forward to the gift of spending time with you dear ladies once again this weekend.

## Opening Thought-Marina District Conference

Good morning! You might have noticed that another new year is upon us. Yes, 2020 is here, and with it has come all the hopes and possibilities every new year brings. Will this be the year that Doc Brown invents a flying car that is powered by garbage? Will first contact be made with an all-knowing, all-caring alien species that will guide us to strange new worlds, with new lives and new civilizations, where we can boldly go where no person has ever gone before? Will politicians master the golden rules of Kindergarten: play fair and do what's right, and if you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all? Will I finally lose the baby weight I gained 36 years ago? Who knows? Anything is possible with a new year.

But one possibility all of us can attain is to use our 2020 vision to make this the year of Alpha Delta Kappa. Let's inspire other women by sharing all the things that make our organization the special entity that it is. We know that we excel in service, altruism, and worthy causes, and that we honor excellent educators, but do other people?

For instance, how many times have you said to someone that you are going to an Alpha Delta Kappa meeting only to have them ask, "What's that?" How exciting would it be for them to say instead, "I've heard wonderful things about that group. How can I become a part of it?"

We need to be the trailblazers who spread the word so that Alpha Delta Kappa stops being the woman educator's best kept secret and instead gets the recognition it deserves. Share the great things your chapter does, and encourage others to join you on this adventure. After all, you became and, more importantly, stayed a member for a reason. Give others the opportunity to experience what you've enjoyed about your chapter.

So as you spend this morning riding the wave of inspiration and replenishing your well of Alpha Delta Kappa enthusiasm, think of those who could and should be here next year. And make a note to invite them to become part of the best kept secret for women educators.

## Lunch Thought (if needed)-Marina District Conference

What an inspiration these trailblazing women are! Thank you so much for sharing their amazing stories with us.

Because of my office as State Chaplain, I'm always on the lookout for inspirational messages. Fortunately, for the last several weeks, I've been doing GATE testing at various schools, and I have discovered that there is no shortage of inspiration in our school district. At every school I visited, principals started each day with inspiring thoughts broadcast schoolwide over the PA system, and the walls of every classroom were plastered with even more inspiration.

Now, we're all teachers. We know that even though we try our best, our good advice, both verbal and in poster form, may or may not always be noticed by the students. And I thought, what a shame that all this inspiration is most likely being ignored. So I decided to honor the efforts of these hard-working educators by sharing their words of wisdom with people who will actually listen and appreciate them. You.

Here are just a few of the inspirational thoughts I saw or heard:

In a world where you can be anything, be kind.

Your attitude determines your altitude.

Integrity is doing the right thing when no one is watching.

Think positively, and positive things will come your way.

Do what's right. It will gratify some people and astonish the rest.

A few kind words can help a person more than you think.

To have a friend, you must be a friend.

With great privilege comes great responsibility.

And perhaps my favorite: Put your name on your paper.

I hope these thoughts have given you the necessary inspiration to enjoy this delicious lunch and to carry you through the rest of your day.

### Closing Thought: Marina District Conference

This has truly been a morning of inspiration. Thank you again for providing us with a conference to remember.

Recently, my family and I were lucky enough to spend three days at the happiest place on Earth: Disneyland. We drove from our home near Fresno the night before and stayed at a nearby hotel so that we could start our days of fun bright and early.

Now, I've been to Disneyland several times in my life, so this was not a new experience for me. But in spite of this, I still got that wonderful feeling of excitement and child-like glee as I walked through the turnstile and beheld the wall of flowers topped by a train station. I actually gasped in anticipation and got a bit teary-eyed. I was at Disneyland!

As we walked into the park, I saw smiling people who were just as thrilled as I was. Everyone seemed to be having a good time and didn't let the normal annoyances of being in a large crowd bother them. Accidentally bump into someone? No problem! "Here, let me help you with that stroller." Even the employees were pleasant and helpful. "Your grandson spilled his bucket of popcorn? Have another one. Free!" And no matter that we stayed until closing, and I was exhausted, and my feet were killing me, I left the park each night with a wonderful feeling of wanting more and looking forward to my next visit.

Now you may be thinking, that's a really nice story. But what does it have to do with Alpha Delta Kappa? Well, think about it. What if every Alpha Delta Kappa member entered their chapter meetings with the same excitement and anticipation I felt entering Disneyland? What if they knew they were in for an entertaining time where they felt special and valued?

And what if everyone left each meeting already looking forward to the next one?

I'm not suggesting that we make each meeting a visit to an amusement park, but I do think we can replicate the feelings one has there to some extent. We can have interesting speakers, visit fascinating places, foster a feeling of camaraderie and sisterhood. We can be pleasant and make every meeting so enticing, no one will want to miss it.

I understand that it is inevitable that people will bump into each other's feelings now and then, and that sometimes we will drop our bucket of enthusiastic popcorn. But instead of complaining or holding grudges, we can do what the Disney employees do and find a way to make things better.

Will this be easy? It can be. Greeting everyone with a warm smile is just one way to help all members feel like a part of the group. And we can get to know our sisters, especially the ones we might not normally seek out. Remember that the ones who need the most love often ask for it in the most unloving of ways, so don't be put off if they resist your friendly overtures at first or if they seem grouchy or unapproachable.

I think we can all agree that there is already more than enough negativity and sadness in the world today, so I challenge you to turn that around. Make Alpha Delta Kappa the safe, welcoming organization it should be, and go back to your chapter and make every meeting you have the happiest place on Earth for your sisters.

### Executive Board-Reconvening Thought

I don't know about you, but I had a lovely day at the conference today. The stories were inspirational, the ladies were delightful, the food was yummy, and the venue was beautiful. So many things combined to make it special. But it doesn't always have to be so eventful for a day to be lovely. Sometimes the simplest of things make it perfect, as the poem entitled "A Lovely Day" by Helen Lowrie Marshall explains. It goes like this:

Actually, I couldn't say

What made this such a lovely day.  
The air was chill, the clouds hung low,  
Yet it was lovely--that I know.  
Perhaps it was because someone  
Smiled my way and brought the sun;  
Maybe it was only that  
A friend stopped by for a little chat;  
Or that a neighbor passing by  
Called a warm and friendly, "Hi!"  
Possibly its special glow  
Came from helping one I know--  
Not much really--just a hand  
To let him know I understand.  
Nothing happened, actually,  
To set this day apart for me.  
Things just went the usual way--  
But oh, it's been a lovely day!

And let me add just a few more lines:

My day began with my good friends,  
And with them, too, it also ends.  
I know I'll have a lovely day  
When I'm with my pals from ADK!

#### Executive Board-Closing Thought

While searching for pithy thoughts, I came upon this essay by Wilferd A. Peterson. It is entitled, "The Art of Happiness". It states;

You can't pursue happiness and catch it. Happiness comes upon you unawares while you are helping others.

Happiness is like perfume. You can't spray it on others without getting some on yourself.

Happiness does not depend upon a full pocketbook, but upon a mind full of rich thoughts and a heart full of rich emotions.

Happiness does not depend upon what happens outside of you but on what happens inside of you. It is measured by the spirit in which you meet the problems of life.

Happiness doesn't come from doing what we like to do but from liking what we have to do.

Happiness grows out of harmonious relationships with others, based on attitudes of good will, tolerance, understanding, and love.

Happiness is found in little things: a baby's smile, a letter from a friend, the song of a bird, a light in the window.

Thank you for all the happiness you have brought and continue to bring into my life, and I wish all of you true happiness, too.