

# Presidents' Letters



## Chapters A-S 2022-2023

Chapter	Page(s)	Chapter	Page(s)
A	2-3	J	22-24
B	4-5	K	25-26
C	6-8	L	27-28
D	9-10	M	29-30
E	11-12	N	31-32
F	13	P	33-34
G	14-15	Q	35-36
H	16-19	R	37-38
I	20-21	S	39

Feb. 12, 2023

Dear State Officers, Chapter Presidents and Members of **Chapter A**,

We've had another wonderful year in P.E.O., despite our grave concerns that we did not have a base deep enough to field a full slate of officers. But you know what? Just enough women stepped in, and others led our fundraisers, and others visited those who needed visiting, and others took big roles in planning the 2023 Convention. I am filled with gratitude for the good work which flows from this teamwork of friends.

We are somewhat in the same position as last year, yet, I find that I have much more optimism about our ability to persevere and carry the torch of Chapter A forward. I've thought about this a lot, and I think what tilted the scales back to normal and to renewed energy, is the fact that three sisters, who had been unable to serve as officers in recent years, were able to step forward and join the team. Their addition to our team brought a new level of organization, thoughtful input, and just.....just plain old positive energy. Their perspectives are different. Their questions lead to better systems. Their expectations are high. Let us add one or two sisters to the team every year.

And though we do not yet have all of next year's officer roles filled, I believe we will fill in the gaps by March. Our current officers met and did a group online training session called, "Building a Pipeline of Future Officers." The takeaway is that we need to encourage our members to begin with, "helper," roles. I think we all worry that we will step forward and be caught up in holding the ropes in, "everlasting ends." Is that what we called that in our jump rope days? This can be efficiently resolved by a group effort to find a way for more of us to serve as a helper, then serve in the officer role for just one or 2 years, then finally as the exiting mentor who is in the wings to answer questions and sub in when needed.

This, "Pipeline," is one solution to our leadership gap; the other is to become more active in recruiting members. Let us invite more of our friends and colleagues to help us multiply the good work that we do. Talk with each other. Use the Franc's List tool from the PEO website to brainstorm a list of acquaintances who could... bring their talents to our table.

See how I did that?

Which brings me to our annual shout out regarding our successful endeavors. Our average monthly attendance continues at a small, but stable number of 11.5. I mention the .5 because it is an increase over last year. 'Love the data. We continue to generously contribute and raise money through our two annual fundraisers - our plant and garden sale which raised \$1753.00, and our Talent Table, which was moved into August ahead of the bustling Christmas season. The piloting of this new season for Talent Table raised \$4823.00, and had the advantage of allowing our teacher members the summer vacation days to plan and host. I am of the opinion that our event chairs may choose the time frame that works best for them, and Chapter A will gratefully follow their lead whether that is August again or the traditional November time frame, or something else entirely.

The money raised helped us contribute \$500 to each of the P.E.O. International Projects. The International Office honors our contributions by listing us as an Elf Legacy Chapter, a PCE Brighter Tomorrow Chapter, and a PSA Scholar Laureate Chapter. In addition to the International Scholarship programs, we also supported four local women through our University of AK SE campus Betty Myser Scholarship. Betty Myser was an early member of Chapter A, an artist, an educator and an advocate for empowering local women through education. Our four new scholarship winners are advancing their

degrees in the areas of nursing, education and social work, thus PEO's impact moves further out into the world.

We were pleased to continue our fledgling tradition of caroling at The Ketchikan Pioneer Home and at the hospital long term care unit. We warmed up with hot cocoa and tea at a local coffee shop following our music making.

Another favorite project is our support of an organization which brings military veterans to Ketchikan for fishing and outdoor recreation. We endeavor to add to their healing and respite by providing home cooked meals and desserts from our Chapter A cookbooks and pantries.

As I've mentioned in the past, the thing I most admire about Chapter A sisters, is the humble, on-going efforts to lovingly care for members who are confined to home or hospital. This is the embodiment of, "a determination to do all we can at all times to express loving concern." I am grateful that this is what we are about. As I was composing this letter, I was searching my mind for a quote that referred to these actions. I ended up turning to the internet. I don't know who said these things, but they all seemed relevant:

Caring about others, running the risk of feeling and leaving an impact on people, brings happiness.

The closest thing to being cared for, is to care for someone else.

The simple act of caring is heroic.

Yes, this is our true mission, and though it is hard, as a small chapter, to field our leadership roles, everything else about our chapter health is robust. We raise sufficient money to support International and local scholarships. We are active in the community. We are creative together. We care for our sisters in need.

We grieved the loss of two sisters this year, Barbara Hodgman and Jodi Aegerter. They lived wonderful, adventuresome lives. They were role models to us in their goodwill to others. They are missed.

Our current active membership number is 49. We did not initiate any new members this year, but we embrace this effort as one of our top goals. Friends, go out and find our new sisters!

And finally, I want to express my deep gratitude to our State Convention Chair, our Chapter A Vice President, Michelle Dyakanoff AND her very dedicated and hardworking Chapter A and Chapter H convention planning team. We are going to host an AMAZING convention May 5 through May 7 including a beautiful venue and events such as Golden Girls, Time of Remembrance and our Allen Marine cocktail Meet and Greet event. The decorations for Forest, Sky and Sea are very clever. And, if you have not yet jumped in for a work session for handmade items for the boutique, don't miss this fun opportunity. Judy Christensen is doing a beautiful job of leading this effort. Sign up now! The time and energy and creativity and teamwork of just this convention alone should be enough to say, "Dear Sisters of Chapter A, We have had a good year, and we have many reasons to be optimistic and excited about the years to come."

Sincerely,

Lori Ortiz

President, **Chapter A** – P.E.O.

## P.E.O. Chapter B / AK

Wendy Anderson, President  
510 Juneau Ave.  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Barbara S. Kraft  
President, Alaska State Chapter, P.E.O.  
12900 Monterey Circle  
Anchorage, 99516

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With great relief and caution, Chapter B began meeting in person in 2022 and chose as our theme, "A patchwork of sisters stitched together with friendship". Our goal was to rebuild the social connections and friendships we had maintained socially distanced for two years during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

In March, we celebrated Founders Day with close to 60 sisters from the Fairbanks area as speaker Somer Hahn spoke to us about Barn Quilts. In the summer we explored an art exhibition containing some of our talented sisters' work followed by an ice cream treat. Other social events that brought us together were, rock painting in the park, visits to holiday bazaars and a monthly coffee at a local cafe. The biggest social event of the summer was sister Ruth Knapman's 90th birthday party, held at a sports bar in honor of her very active life. We created a video of memories for her <https://youtu.be/unmnCy6eoEE>.

Our summer programs focused on getting us out and active. We learned about pickleball and the Borough Trail Challenge and toured Becky Hassebroek's amazing garden. In September, Organizer Barbara Burnett's visit was helpful and inspiring. It was also the day that we heard that our sister, Carol Romberg, had been murdered during a breakin at a local business, a terribly sad time for us.

Interesting programs before other meetings focused on P.E.O. projects, cranberries and Janene Dewey's adventures in Korea as a missionary. December's meeting was a Christmas celebration and a record setting 20 minute business meeting. In January, we called everyone on our list of active and inactive members, a fun time to reconnect.

Our second annual yard sale to raise funds for P.E.O. projects was held in July. Though not as successful as last year's, it was a fun way to spend time together, clean our closets and share treasures with the community. This enabled us to become a Star Constellation Chapter with a \$500.00 donation and, with help from an additional donation by a sister, to donate \$300.00 to all the other projects.

Our Star Committee chose an intelligent, enthusiastic, multi ethnic young woman, Kayla Hernandez as a Star Scholarship nominee. It was meaningful to choose a young woman some of us have known since she was a baby. We know she will be successful and hope a P.E.O. scholarship will help.

Through all of this, we held 4 initiations, two for new members and two for sisters who joined by affirmation. Our average attendance, both in person and virtual (which we continued to offer whenever possible) was 14 and as of this writing, it looks like we will have 37 members, one of which (Mary Hope Johnston) will be celebrating 50 years as a member!

We look forward to assisting our sister, Lynne Krizek as she leads the Alaska State P.E.O. as president next year.

All of these blessings were made possible by the leadership of:  
Teri Spires, vice president, Gena Horine, recording secretary, Mary Hope Johnston, corresponding secretary, Barbara Thoma, treasurer, Annie Colp, chaplain, Beth Julig, guard and active committee members at the state and local level.

Love,

Wendy Anderson,  
President, P.E.O. **Chapter B/AK**

Barbara Kraft  
Alaska State Chapter President  
12900 Monterey Circle  
Anchorage, AK 99516

February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Dear Barbara,

Greetings to you from **Chapter C** in Anchorage! The sun is now visiting us longer each day. In fact, as I write this letter, I see it peeking between the trees with its rays, teasing light onto my computer keys as if to say, “so much light to reflect, so much light to see, so much light to shine on.” It is true. It is the perfect time of year to reflect on our chapter and our sisterhood and notice where we shine, where we are tending to the light and where we need to make space for more.

The true spirit of the P.E.O. Sisterhood shines brightly every day in Chapter C. Our goal throughout the last year has been to keep each sister safe and healthy. We have offered hybrid meetings this year out of a loving concern. Most of our members have been attending in person with a few online to foster health and be safe in weather. Our Zoom skills continuously improve; however, we are happy to share that there is nothing quite like the joy of being together in person.

Our Chapter C was organized in 1948, has sixty resident members and thirteen non-resident members. The average attendance at our business meetings was twenty-three. Our socials continue in their creativity. We have hosted a spring Saturday morning social, a Birthday Luncheon, and a holiday celebration. We are lucky to keep connected through outside interest groups such as Book Club, Alaska Run for Women, Race Across Alaska, and smaller gatherings for coffee, tea, or lunch.

The sisters of Chapter C serve the P.E.O. Sisterhood in so many ways. I am grateful to the sisters who serve beside me as officers: Gretchen Day (Vice-President), Judy Burtner (Recording Secretary), Aniseh Burtner (Corresponding Secretary), Barb Dooley (Treasurer), Tara West (Chaplain), and Erin Dooley (Guard). Our own Susan West is serving on the Alaska State Board as Secretary. We are in awe of her work and support her every effort. Additionally, we are proud that 3 of our sisters, Cindy Tobias, Jackie VanDaff, and Kathy Haghighi serve on state committees (the State Amendments and Recommendations Committee, the State Projects Committee, and the State Membership Committee, respectively). We continue to mourn the loss of our sister Lo Crawford who entered Chapter Eternal April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022. She was 73 years old.

Stories of Lo continue to be heard throughout the PEO and greater community. She was a force for the betterment of our world.

Our theme has been “Taking Care of the Light”. Each program this year has been a reflection of our light; the light we can nurture by continuing to learn, the light we see and nurture in and the light we offer to our sisterhood through our work towards the projects and serving our

community. The programs have offered a wonderful blend of external and internal presenters highlighting the light they bring to women of the world. We have educated ourselves, laughed and been in awe of each other as we share and deepen the bonds of sisterhood.

Our Membership Committee has highlighted a member at each meeting on or close to the anniversary of their initiation date. The committee conducts an interview with the sister prior to the meeting and presents a Power Point presentation to the Chapter including history, pictures, a favorite quote and how each sister was introduced to P.E.O. This has been a beautiful way to shine light on a sister and learn more about each other.

Our Project Committees have successfully nominated women for P.E.O. funds to help them follow their educational dreams. Our IPS Scholar Zeina Abouelazm is from Egypt and is studying at American University in Washington D.C.. She is in her second year of her two-year master's program, studying International Development. We have been fortunate to have connected with Zeina by phone, email, snail mail, and Zoom. The Chapter held a special Zoom meeting with Zeina which gave us the opportunity to speak with her and learn more about her. She also gave an IPS presentation for the state on her current research and work which was well received. What an inspiring woman! We were happy to put forth the name and application of our STAR candidate Elaina Alfano from Dimond High School in Anchorage. We eagerly await to hear if she is a recipient. Our Enid Lesh Scholarships were awarded last June to Ciana Main, a student from Dimond High School and Ellen Haghighi, a student at Socratic Focus. There is no doubt that our projects shine the light of P.E.O. forward through celebrating, educating, and motivating women to achieve their aspirations. We were also very thankful to be able to donate to each project this year and for the generous donations made to the P.E.O. Foundation Lois Kenny Fund.

Sisters from Chapter C participated in our State Convention in Anchorage and shared time together at our Founder's Day Luncheon where we sold honey, socks, cookies (and cookie cutters), and pickles as a fundraiser. Other fundraisers include our Books, Bottles, and Plants Sale in June, our Rummage Sale at the Moose Lodge in October and our Bazaar in November. Each of these had wonderful attendance, funds raised, and spirits lifted. In fact, our fundraising goals were surpassed beautifully and I am confident that our giving will continue to serve the projects well. In addition, the Child Welfare Academy Fostering Futures Program continues to receive our material and monetary donations that support students aging out of foster care attending the UAA. Our work is clearly based on our founding values of Purity, Justice, Faith, Truth, and Love.

Many Chapter C sisters were present at the organization of Chapter S Palmer this past month. What a joy to celebrate new and transferring members to Chapter S and witness the creation of a new chapter. It only makes our own chapters that much more special. The hallmark of our sisterhood has truly been the loving concern we show for each sister and our community. We have rejoiced over the births of grand babies and celebrated the accomplishments of each other, our children and our grandchildren. We have been strong for each other during times of sadness: the illnesses, the injuries, the surgeries, the caregiving, the passing of loved ones from this life to the

next. We have delivered meals, offered prayers, attended funerals, and lived the unspoken understanding that sisterhood goes beyond words, into the secret places of our hearts.

In 1956, Edna Downing from Chapter C wrote in her President's letter "It never ceases to be a wonder to me that all P.E.O.'s must truly make the virtues symbolized by our star a part of their character. It matters not what happens, we can find sisterly love within each other and feel that our star is guiding us in the path of confidence and love". Our star provides light to guide us where we need to shine, reminds us where to tend to it more, and stretches us to make space for more. It has been an honor to serve as President of Chapter C and to take care of the light that is in each and every sister.

Thank you, Barbara, for your leadership as our Alaska State President, and to my sisters in Chapter C, it is with a joyful and grateful heart that I lovingly say – take care of the light, dear sisters, within you and within each of us!

Lovingly in P.E.O.,

Katherine Haghihi, President  
**Chapter C**

February 2023

Dear Barb and Susan,

Whoosh! Another year in P.E.O. has flown by. **Chapter D** has emerged from the pandemic and is settling into a “new normal.” We have embraced the hybrid meeting concept by providing a virtual attendance option via Zoom. It has been so very nice to be able to meet in person. Our average meeting attendance has been holding steady at 19 sisters, including our social gatherings. We have several potential new members who have not yet committed to joining our chapter but who have expressed a positive interest in becoming P.E.O.’s. I expect that 2023-24 will see an overall increase in membership.

We have held three fundraisers throughout the year. In June, we had our annual garage sale at the home of Susan and Niko Bus. In December we had a “Christmas Sale” at a local mall, and we enjoyed a Christmas Party auction in the warm and festively-decorated home of Sue Deems. The Christmas Sale was the brainchild of Bev Kelton. Sisters contributed Christmas decorations from their home collections. We also had a sizable donation of ornaments from the estate of Rosemary Hagevig, a sister of Chapter G. At least twenty-five of our sisters participated in this sale by making donations, baking cakes (like MaryLou Gerbi’s famous whiskey cake), and setting up and manning tables. Because we held this sale at a mall, we had lots of contact with the public. This venue provided a great opportunity to talk with people about P.E.O. and share information about its mission and projects in addition to making some money. Altogether our efforts raised about \$8,500. Our fundraisers allow us to fund our beloved chapter projects (three high school and three UAS scholarships at \$1500 each) and our donation of \$600 to the International projects.

In February, we had our first Founders Day since the pandemic. We celebrated with a tri-chapter luncheon, and Amy Lujan, who serves on the Alaska Projects Committee, presented a fun and informative program on Cottey College. It was really great to gather, and the ladies lingered for quite a while afterwards to enjoy conversation and fellowship. I think we are all hungry for society after the two years of COVID.

“Growth Through Learning” has been our theme this year. We have had many fine programs that embody this theme. Sally Smith developed an informative program about the Alaska State Constitutional Convention, something she knows a lot about having served as a State legislator in the 70’s and 80’s. We were visited by Kristin Garot, the principal of Juneau’s alternative high school Yaakoosgé Daakahídi. She talked about the needs of her unique student population to help us understand how we can better reach out to and encourage female students to continue their education and take advantage of local and international projects.

One of our sisters took on an amazing growth challenge. Alida Bus spent much of last year training for the Ironman Triathlon that was hosted by Juneau in August. It was an amazing event, and Chapter D sisters came out for it by providing support and cheers for Alida throughout the day. After swimming 2.4 miles in the cold waters of Auke Lake, biking 112 miles up and down hills, and running 26.2 miles (a full marathon!), she finished with a beaming smile

on her face and a bounce in her step. We were all very happy for her and in awe of her strength and endurance.

It's been an honor and a privilege to serve Chapter D these past 3 years. My Chapter D sisters epitomize the meaning of our letters and what it means to express a loving concern for each sister. They can always be counted on to provide support to one another in times of need—whether it be a monetary gift, a tasty meal, help with a challenging clean-up, an encouraging phone call, or a loving note or card. I so appreciate their kindness and devotion to one another.

I am also very grateful to my amazing officers: Lisa Lindeman, Vice President; Amy Lujan, Treasurer; Sharon Denton, Recording Secretary; Rita Klaudt, Corresponding Secretary; Nila Treston, Chaplain; and Beth Weigel, guard. Thank you for your service and devotion to our chapter and for your “can-do” attitude.

Lovingly in P.E.O.,  
Tina Pasteris, President  
**Chapter D-AK**

## President's Letter 2022-2023

Dear Sisters of **Chapter E**, Alaska State Officers and Statewide Sisterhood:

It has been an honor and privilege to serve Chapter E as President this year. I thought I would know a little more this year as it was my second year as president, but I have to confess that I was still doing “on-the-job training”, and depended on my sisters for knowledge. A big thank you to all my loving sisters and fellow officers who mentored me. I need to thank our Board Buddy, Lynne Krizek, Vice President P.E.O. Alaska State Chapter, for always being available for questions and keeping us in the loop.

Our first in person meeting after the pandemic was in March and we have continued to meet in person and also offer zoom/call in options. At this writing we have 34 resident members, (one less than last year), three non-residents, and 13 inactive members (two more than last year). Our average attendance this year was 13 (we have our share of snowbirds and loving grandma's who travel).

It was so nice to see our sisters in person at meetings, get hugs, catch up, etc. that we did not do formalized programs this last year (not sure a speaker would have been able to get a word in)!

We celebrated our Chapter's 63rd birthday this year. At our birthday dinner we honored our very own Golden Girl, Cindy Cowling and our Golden Girl Plus, Diane Moore with 65 years. What shining stars they are for us and “Young Golden Girls, I am sure they snuck in before they were 18”!

Hannah Greene was awarded our Marybel Butler Star Scholarship of \$2500.00 this year. We got to meet this lovely young lady at our July meeting. Our chapter took a leap this year and voted to double our donations to the ELF and PCE projects, YAY!

Our Christmas Social was not without challenges, (as in a couple of feet of snow). We postponed a few days and decided who needed plowed roads! We put together “Snowman Baskets” for our ladies in the Baxter Center, Pioneer home and for Sherri Teeter. We wanted to recognize Sherri for her courage and all the hard work she has put in her PT/OT etc. this last year. We are so proud of the accomplishments she has made in this last year after her car accident.

The Daisy Dispatch listed a fund raiser suggestion that involved ladies bringing back something from their travels to auction. With our group of ladies loving to travel this has been something that really works for us.

Every chapter was asked to provide two baskets for Founders Day and I want to thank all the ladies that rallied to help this come about. The one basket that contained “all the talents we possess” was very special and highlighted our sisters' talents and hours of work.

The Book Club group is alive and well thanks to Bruce Kakel. This has proved at times better attended than meetings and is a great source to introduce prospective members.

In October we voted on Debbie Trask Thompson (a book club participant) and hope to initiate her in our February meeting. Also in October we were able to do the in-person initiation ceremony for Beth Norris who had been initiated by affirmation last February.

I want to recognize Marci Everson for not only being our very capable Vice President but also serving on the State Finance Committee.

I have so felt the love and support from my P.E.O. Sisters this past year and thank you again for the honor of serving as your president.

Lovingly in P.E.O.,

Beverly Fisk, President **Chapter E/AK**

PEO **Chapter F** President's Annual Letter 2023

Barbara Kraft

President, Alaska State Chapter

Dear Barbara and other members of the Executive Board of Alaska State Chapter:

2022-23 saw us emerge from Covid restrictions into a more relational year. We changed from zoom last winter, to in person in May, and now a hybrid mixture since fall. We meet on a regular monthly basis. Many of our members are snowbirds, so the hybrid option maximizes our attendance. Attendance at the monthly meeting has been an average of 11 women.

We continue to support two shelters in Fairbanks, including the Door, a shelter for vulnerable youth in downtown Fairbanks, and the Fairbanks Rescue Mission, which provides food and shelter for those in need.

Membership: 38 active; 25 inactive; 1 new, Dianne Sandberg; 3 chapter eternal, Marge Eagan died in January 2023; Carol Brice died February 2023; Jeanette Wrede Canada died February 2023. Following the Covid pandemic crisis, we have resumed the usual social meeting, which is the monthly Great Harvest Breakfast. We hope to host the BIL potluck again. We have hosted one Bed and Breakfast and hope for more. We are the host for Founder's Day, which we plan to have in June.

The Courtesy committee has continued to send cards on a regular basis.

The Educational Projects committee has provided a scholarship of \$1000 for Rachelle Ebbesson, who is pursuing a Master's of Clinical Mental Health Counseling. We have also supported an Alaskan Cottey College student with a goody bag.

Fund Raising has mostly entailed dues collection and small amounts raised by a monthly door prize and a fee if you have forgotten to wear your pin at a meeting.

Bylaws changes that were created at the 2021 CIC have been incorporated into our State Bylaws. The most notable is the chapter's choice of the Lord's prayer and the cessation of the password.

There were no Golden Girls this year.

We had a visit in September by Barbara Burnett, the PEO State Organizer and Lynne Krizek, our Board Buddy.

Our Theme was Sisters Shine in our Community. This year was a time to reconnect with our Chapter Sisters, since we had been separated by the Covid Pandemic the years before.

I truly thank all of my Officers and Chairs for all the work they do to keep our Chapter F active and productive. Those who have served alongside me as officers are Samantha Wuttig Royer, Vice President; Jan Gower, Recording Secretary; Mary Kay Teel, Corresponding Secretary; Marie Reid, Treasurer, (with Beth Chandler as backup); Barbara Johnson, Chaplain; and Dianne Sandberg, Guard.

We are Sisters in heart and spirit.

Lovingly in P.E.O., Jean Tsigonis, President **Chapter F**



P.E.O. Sisterhood, **Chapter G**

9229 Long Run Drive

Juneau, AK 99801

February 8, 2023

Barbara Kraft  
 President, Alaska State Chapter  
 P.E.O. Sisterhood 12900  
 Monterey Circle  
 Anchorage, AK 99516

Dear President Kraft,

Thankfully, this year we are beginning to put the Covid-19 pandemic behind us. Juneau's Chapter G has been meeting in person all year. We've added Zoom, when possible, for those who aren't able to attend. We've had many productive meetings with stimulating programs of interest. We are trying to follow our new theme for the year—Let's Get Back to the Future! We all have hopes of getting back to "normal" and moving toward the bright future.

We started the new P.E.O. year just waiting for spring to happen. New officers were installed and began working towards a successful year. Sadly, our dear sister, Rosemary Hagevig, passed away on April 7. She has been part of Chapter G for 15 years and participated in every way possible. Rosemary was a pillar in our community of Juneau and is remembered as a consummate volunteer and longtime community lynchpin. She is sorely missed.

In April, Anne Gruening attended the Alaska State Convention in Anchorage. She reported that it was a great gathering, and she was happy to meet such an energetic group of women. She read memorials for Barbara Pavitt and Dorothy Burnett during the Time for Remembrance. Anne also reported on the meetings, new state officers and that the next convention will be held in Ketchikan. We look forward to having a presence there to support Ketchikan and Southeast Alaska.

Our first big fundraiser for the year, a BIL Auction and Social, was held in May. It was a potluck dinner with a few items auctioned live, following the virtual auction earlier in the week. The event was a huge success with everyone visiting, eating, and eagerly bidding on auction items. Springtime is a highlight of our year, when we accomplish one of our biggest goals—helping women reach for the stars. Our Scholarship Committee did a stellar job with this year's selection of local high school scholarship winners. The recipients were Grace Hudson, Gabrielle George-Frank, and Neisha Calderon.

The Membership Committee continued presentations at our meetings on the new member process and provided a copy of the new member handout for reference. We also added pages in our yearbook to help

with the steps for recommending a woman for membership. We hope this will assist in recruiting new members. To that end, our goal for next year is to add at least two more sisters. To make our meeting time more convenient for working women, we started in May with our social time beginning at 11 am, program at 11:30 and business meeting at noon. After several months, that change didn't prove to be more convenient, so we went back to our original meeting times starting this month.

Summer was a busy time for our chapter, with monthly meetings, our big wildlife dinner cruise fundraiser, and summer luncheons. The cruise was a huge success that enabled us to meet and exceed the fundraising goal by \$4,000. Huge kudos go to our Ways & Means Committee and sisters for organizing, planning, and executing this successful event! In June and August, we were also able to continue our local tri-chapter social luncheons. Unfortunately, July's luncheon was cancelled due to COVID concerns. We hosted the August luncheon with a salad feast at Smith Hall at Chapel by the Lake. It is a congenial time for sharing and coordinating our local activities.

When our rainy autumn arrived, Chapter G sadly received word that our non-resident sister who lived in Washington had recently passed to Chapter Eternal. We were honored to hold an official P.E.O. memorial service for Sue Poor. There were warm words spoken about Sue and her contributions to our chapter since her initiation in 1999. Through fall we enjoyed our monthly meetings, programs, and social gatherings.

Winter arrived with cold and snow, to add to our festive holiday season. Many sisters were traveling during the holiday season, but we were still able to hold our wonderful Christmas potluck lunch celebration. It is always such a joyous, congenial time to be with each other and appreciate all we can do to help others. Contributions to our "giving" Christmas Tree made it possible to help provide for those most vulnerable in our community.

With our successful fundraising events this year, we were able to contribute \$500 to five P.E.O Projects, with \$50 extra to celebrate the PCE 50th anniversary. To meet our aim of influencing our community, we also fund three local scholarships for high school graduates and contribute to several local non-profit organizations.

We are ending the year with 42 members, a decrease in membership by two. That change reflects the addition of two delightful new members, Elizabeth Paris and Elizabeth Balstad, the passing of dear sisters Rosemary Hagevig, Sue Poor, and just two days ago Evelyn Beason, and the change to inactive status for Rosemary Gruening. We've had a steady attendance, with an average of 19 members.

As a first-time president, I have had to get lots of help and advice from other who held the office before me. I am truly appreciative of all their help and guidance. I am feeling more confident now, continuing in the new year as president. Thanks to all my Chapter G sisters for their help, support, and patience as I learn the ropes. I do think we spent the year as our theme suggested—getting back to the future!

I look forward to meeting you and the other state officers in Ketchikan. You have all been a big help to the local chapters this past year.

Lovingly in P.E.O.

Chris Carte President, **Chapter G**

February 22, 2023

Dear President Barbara Kraft,

For days and weeks we here in Ketchikan have had gray, snowy, rainy, freezing weather – the kind that makes you want to stay inside, cozy up, maybe surf the web or draft a President’s Letter for P.E.O.

In one of the extreme ironies of living in southeast Alaska, today, as I sit at my computer finalizing my President’s letter, the sun is shining, the sky is bright blue, the mountains are snowcapped, and the waves on the water sparkle like jewels. It makes it hard to even *see* my computer screen, let alone reflect on the last twelve months. \*sigh\*

Chapter H’s theme this year was “Moving Forward,” in hopes that we would be able to slowly return to something resembling “normal” or whatever “normal” was to become.

Although Covid 19 remained in the forefront of every mind, Chapter H resumed meeting in homes when possible, with masks optional and hugs allowed. The Sisters were so happy to see each other, chat, and catch up, that it took several extra minutes to bring the first few meetings to order, but it was so worth the wait! Because of ongoing concerns with Covid, many meetings were still held in the fellowship hall of the Ketchikan Presbyterian Church at 2711 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, where we had plenty of space to spread out. Our thanks to Grace Kinney for making this possible. Good food, bright decorations, friendship, and Sisterhood attended every meeting. Even with Covid concerns, our attendance numbers remain high, averaging 20 members per meeting, and trending up as the P.E.O. year comes to a close.

In addition to the regular schedule of events and activities, we added working closely with you, the rest of the State Executive Board, and Chapter A to prepare for and host the 2023 Alaska State Convention May 5-7, here in Ketchikan. As first-time hosts, we have appreciated your direction and guidance, bringing to life your theme of “P.E.O. Visionaries: See It. Be It.”

In May, five Sisters from Chapter H, and representing Chapter A, attended the 2022 State Convention in Anchorage to officially invite all Alaska Chapters to the 2023 Convention. With boos and enthusiasm, and to the tune of “Hello, Dolly,” PSP Dean Nordvedt, Kathy Ford, Margie Thynes, and I sang “Hello, Sisters,” beautifully accompanied by Christa Bruce on the piano. Many thanks to Kathy Ford for her thoughtful rework of the lyrics, and Christa Bruce for the many rehearsals, suggestions, and piano accompaniment.

Due to a local outbreak of Covid, our end-of-year meeting and Birthday Celebration in May had to be rescheduled twice and ended up happening in June. The upside of this was that several Sisters who have not been able to attend due to health issues, or who live out of state, were able to attend, including Hazel Dima, Shirley Johnson and Kathy Fleenor.

In August we sadly said farewell and best wishes to our dear Sister, Jan Ross, who moved to an assisted living center in Scottsdale, Arizona. We know she is regaling her new neighbors with tales

of a long life lived on the shores of Ketchikan, Alaska. The Sisters of Chapter H stay in touch and send her our love.

Although the Convention Planning Steering Committee met full speed throughout the summer, Chapter H continued the practice of not meeting regularly during the months of June July, and August – after all the fish are jumping, there are people and places to visit and there are visitors to host. It makes the joy of returning to P.E.O. in September all the more special.

We were excited when P.E.O. International announced that full in-person Initiations would return in the fall, and that Sisters accepted by Acclamation during the pandemic would be eligible for full initiation. Rae Adams graciously agreed to host our initiation for three such Sisters in her lovely mountainside home. At our regular Business Meeting on September 28, Barbie Yoder, Cynthia Amylon, and Rebecca Brown were formally initiated into membership in the beautiful ceremony, followed by elegant refreshments organized by Rae, Marge Dwyer, and Judith McQuerry.

Along with reinstatement of the full Initiation ceremony, P.E.O. International added two new clothing options to the traditional robes. Chapter H elected to allow the Initiation team to decide which option to use, and for both ceremonies this year, the team elected to wear white tops and black bottoms, which gave solemnity and grace to the event.

With great excitement and trepidation, we hoped for, planned for, and expected to have a full, in person Talent Table in November. Many factors had to be considered, including whether the church hall we have used in the past would even allow such an event, whether there would be new restrictions on its use, Covid 19 infection rates, P.E.O. restrictions and frankly, whether or not our guests were ready for an in-person event. We knew that many factors, foreseen and unforeseen, could, right up to the last minute, require us to change or cancel our plans. Fortunately, our Ways and Means Committee of Margot Miller, Dean Nordvedt, Pearl Amylon, Joani Steffen, Kathy Lapinski, Regina Foreman- MacDonald, Rhonda Pickrell, and Kim Falvey, was up to the challenge. With the help of all of the Sisters who so generously donated items and spread the word of the event, we need not have worried. As RSVPs came in, we could see the community was ready.

On the day of the event the church hall was bustling with warmth, smiles, hugs, delicious smells, and a beautiful room, decorated with boutique items, auction items, a wine raffle, white lights and trees, and beautifully set tables. The mood was electric, and we enjoyed visits with new and old friends, and a delicious meal of pork roast and strawberry spinach salad, followed by a lively auction. Among the many auction items was an original painting donated by Margot Miller and her husband, fabulous artist, Dick Miller. The afternoon was a huge success as an event, and also from the point of view of raising funds. As a result, Chapter H was able to once again fully support all six P.E.O. International Projects, as well as scholarships to Kayhi, and UAS, and donations to other charitable organizations including to the police department for Halloween candy, and parks and recreation for hanging flower baskets in the port area.

With the requirement for business meetings reduced from 15 to 13 starting this year, and after

the huge effort of reinstating an in-person Talent Table, the Chapter decided to keep our annual Christmas Party to a simple, strictly social event at a local restaurant. This allowed us to avoid issues with privacy and allowed prospective members to attend. Thank you to Judith McQuerry and Kathy Ford for logistics, the lovely fresh greens as centerpieces, and for leading us in a spirited game of trivia based on *A Visit from St. Nicolaus*.

Talent Table and the holidays behind us, we turned our full attention to the 2023 State Convention. Many of the Sisters of Chapter H had been working with Sisters from Chapter A for months on various Convention planning activities, and now the final frenzy began. This has been a wonderful time to fellowship with our Sisters from Chapter A. Although we celebrate Founders Day together each year, and generally know each other in the community, months of working together on a combined large event has enabled us to get to know each other even better.

Forty-two women attended Founder's Day on January 21, including Sisters from Chapters H and A, and many prospective members. Good food, laughs, a skit, and a presentation of my experience as a recipient of a P.E.O. loan rounded out the program, hosted by Judith McQuerry (H) and Michelle Dyakanoff (A). The skit, "They Were Teenagers," written by a Chapter A Sister many years ago and read by Kathy Ford and Joani Steffen of Chapter H, and JoCarol MacMillan and Margaret Lynne of Chapter A, imagined hilarious and serious conversations that may have been had between the Seven Founders.

In February, Molly Pihl graciously hosted the Special Meeting for the Initiation into membership of Debi Stidd and Michele Zerbetz-Scott, in her beautiful seaside home. After the meeting, we enjoyed a lovely Valentine's Day social, with wonderful salads and delicious appetizers, and even a going-home treat.

Three additional new members are scheduled for Initiation before Convention, and several other potential invitations to membership are being considered.

Next month, March 2023, is registration month for the State Convention, where we will finally find out how many Sisters will make the somewhat complicated journey to Ketchikan from other parts of Alaska. We look forward to hosting a fun, educational, productive, and memorable weekend.

In addition to these events, Sisters continued to support the community in a variety of ways, through churches, food programs, libraries, and service organizations, in outreach to the young, to the arts, and by use of all the talents they possess - living daily the true meaning of the P.E.O. Sisterhood.

At the beginning of this, my first year as President, Past President Margie Thynes said if she could recommend one thing it would be to keep short notes and look through past President's Letters for things to include in what would be my President's Letter. As I read through the older letters, many on tissue paper and carbon copied, I found it interesting to see how the Chapter has grown and developed through the years. Occasionally, I read a letter from a past Chapter President at our business meetings. This was even more meaningful with the passing of our former Sister Sandra Kathryn Ensley. Sandra transferred to another state and Chapter many

years ago, but her President's Letters from 1992 and 1993 brought back many memories for those who knew her.

Many thanks and much love go to Chapter H Past Presidents Margie Thynes, MarJean Zeiser, Joani Steffen, Grace Kinney, Michal Beth Elerding, Dean Nordvedt, Kathy Ford, and Margot Miller for their unfailing guidance and enthusiastic support this year.

Many thanks and hugs also go the Chapter H 2022-2023 officers: Vice President Judith McQuerry, Corresponding Secretary Pearl Amylon, Recording Secretary Rhonda Pickrell, Treasurer Molly Pihl, Chaplain Marge Dwyer, and Guard Kathy Lapinski. In addition to their specified duties, each has worked tirelessly to ensure everything runs smoothly, gaps are filled, and I stay on track before, during and after meetings.

It has been a distinct honor to serve as President of Chapter H, following in the footsteps of so many loving Sisters.

In P.E.O. Sisterhood,

Pamela S. Duran President,  
**Chapter H**  
5145 Shoreline Drive  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

## President Letter Chapter I

Dear Barbara Kraft and Executive Board:

2022 has been a successful and enjoyable year for **Chapter I**. We continue to meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. We gather at 12:30pm for snacks and visiting. The business meeting starts at 1:00pm. We are 44 members strong with 40 residents and 4 non-residents. We have 2 evening meetings a year so our sisters who work during the day can join us. Meetings were hybrid with most people on Zoom the first few months of the year. In April we started meeting in Sister's homes in person. We were so happy to see each other again. Meetings continue to be hybrid with Zoom for Sisters who are snowbirds or traveling. The monthly program continues to be "Meet in the Middle". A Sister who has been a member for a long time and a Sister who joined recently give a short presentation on their lives and why they are a P.E.O. Sisters enjoy the stories and knowing more about each other. We all agree meeting in person is the Best! Thank You to a Sister who updated and published the Bylaws and Standing Rules in the yearbook.

Chapter I is represented at the State Level by one member on the Membership committee and one on the Financial committee. Chapter I was represented at the State Convention in Anchorage by a delegate. Our chapter was visited by the Organizer, Barbara Barnett, in September. During her visit we had an exemplified Initiation Ceremony. She also met with our chapter Executive board. Barbara had several good suggestions for conducting a meeting and performing initiation. She commented that we were doing a good job. We appreciated her visit and advice.

We attempt to keep in touch with all our sisters by emailing a summary of the meeting to all members soon after it occurs. One member faithfully sends birthday, condolence and other appropriate cards to members. Sisters are encouraged to contact members who are not attending regularly to offer support and encourage attendance.

Gatherings outside of monthly meetings included:

We met close to Memorial Day at the cemeteries to remember our Sisters in Chapter Eternal.

The annual June Family picnic was smoked out. We will try again this year. Chapter I hosted the All-Chapter Tea in July. The Hosting Sister shared her collection of lovely teacups with the group. Sisters gathered and painted daises on rocks for favors at the Tea and will place them on gravesites at this Memorial Day cemetery visits.

Chapter I had 4 Sisters who had been admitted by Affirmation during the time we were meeting on Zoom. We formally initiated 3 of them and a new initiate in August. The 4th sister admitted by affirmation was formally initiated in November. One of the new Sisters is the granddaughter and niece of established Sisters. Another new Sister is the daughter and granddaughter of established members. We are happy to have these new Sisters and enjoy learning about their experiences and talents.

A donation of \$325.00 was sent to five international projects. A \$550.00 grant was sent to the

International PCE project. This donation will qualify Chapter I as a Brighter Tomorrow chapter. Cards and a gift have been sent to the Alaska Cottey college student. A student at the University of Fairbanks received a \$1000 scholarship for the spring semester. A student at the Community and Technical college received a \$500 scholarship. The scholarship committee voted to change the name of the program to Local Education Support Committee.

These community donations and educational scholarships can occur due to generous fund raising and personal donations of Sisters. Fundraisers included: Virtual drawing by sending funds to a Sister who then drew names from a basket to win donated prizes.

A Luncheon with donation for the lunch.

Silent auction at the All-Chapter Tea.

Donations at the Christmas Party.

A Sister from the Memorial Committee selects two Sisters from Chapter Eternal to remember and honor at monthly meetings. We sadly lost Sister Jan Flodin to Chapter Eternal this year. The P.E.O. Memorial Service for her was held at the November meeting. Chapter I donates \$50.00 to the memorial designated by the family of a departed Sister.

Chapter I supports our community by donating healthy snacks to the Bone Builder program at the Foodbank. We also prepared casseroles to freeze at the Foodbank for emergency distribution. We donate funds to SOAP (homeless teen program) for snacks. In the fall, we have an intake of warm hats, gloves and socks for Angels in Motion (a street mission).

Chapter I Executive Board and Standing Committee members, which includes all Sisters, make Chapter I a thriving and successful Chapter. A big Thank You to each Sister for their support which makes the President job such a pleasure. Remember we are only a phone call or text away if any sister needs us.

Lovingly in P.E.O.

Ann Fleenor

**Chapter I**

Barbara Kraft, President  
P.E.O. Alaska State Chapter  
12900 Monterey Circle  
Anchorage, AK 99516

February 28, 2023

Susan West, Secretary  
P.E.O. Alaska State Chapter  
3100 Seaport Circle  
Anchorage, AK 99515

Dear Barbara and Susan,

Greetings from **Chapter J**/Anchorage!

After dealing so long with COVID constraints, I longed to see my Chapter J sisters again. Ever optimistic, I chose the theme, "Reenergize! Refocus! Reconnect!" While moving through the year, it was sometimes hard to see our progress, but as I construct this letter, I am very encouraged for the health of Chapter J.

Chapter J will start our 2023 year with 55 members, 43 Resident and 12 Non-resident sisters. Our average attendance was 18, up one from last year. Because zooming provided opportunities of participation for sisters not in Anchorage for our meetings and gave greater flexibility for sisters who wanted to serve the chapter but spend much time away, we committed to making every meeting hybrid. This was not universally popular, but I felt it was important for inclusivity and providing options for participation. It helped fill our slate of officers and chairs.

We lost one sister as a transfer, Michelle Robinson to Chapter BL in Arizona. Sadly, 5 sisters entered Chapter Eternal: Active sisters Janice Campbell, Pat Kruse, and Charleen McBratney (who was just months from being a Golden Girl;) and Inactive sisters Shirley Pope, and Ginny Gerboth.

Heather Tauschek and Karen Baker, both sisters who were Initiated by Affirmation in 2021, experienced the gift of a Ceremony of Initiation. Irene Stewart, Laura Scanlon, and Kathleen Pugh chose to become Inactive, but we will continue to express a loving concern for them. Happily, we initiated Lynn Thomas and Liz O'Brien this year!

We kicked off 2022 by moving from zoom to hybrid meetings, beginning with meeting at a church where we installed our new officers and eased into in-person contact again. What a blessing to be in the physical presence of our sisters, and what a gift to be able to still connect on line with those not comfortable to be in person or who are far away. Beginning in June, we reinstated our Salad Potlucks in homes, a welcome return after 2 years of brown-bag lunches due to the pandemic. We were pleased to be in homes for all but one meeting the rest of the year. It was a real challenge for our extraordinary zoom-master, VP Sydney Reed, to adjust to all the different settings.

One big success was our Chapter Birthday Party in May. Kathi Moon made a fanciful garden-themed cake as a tribute to our gardening sister Sarah Schierhorn who was relocating to California. Kim Suddock promoted the party, encouraging sisters to give for the Projects to honor our chapter. 21 sisters and guests celebrated Chapter J, many giving donations. At the party we awarded \$1000 to Erika Weese, our exceptional yet unsuccessful STAR candidate who joined us for the luncheon.

Thanks to the leadership of Jean McKnight and a tireless team of sisters, our yard sale was a smashing success. Some larger items were sold on-line. Audrey Faulkner has a wonderful yard, and sisters loaned canopies and tables. It was a day of fellowship and fun! We had handouts explaining the Projects for interested shoppers, inviting them to recommend candidates we should consider. (See attached flier.) Unsold household items were delivered to the Ukraine refugee relocation ministry in Anchorage. Other items were given to alternate agencies.

Debby Deal chaired our Christmas Bazaar and luncheon. Beautiful themed baskets, homemade goodies, creative handmade treasures, and a delicious lunch made for good fellowship and a time to meet friends of sisters, as well as some sisters from other chapters. Our drawing for wine was a popular item. The heavy snow kept some away, but those who came were most generous and went home with many special treats. At every meeting, sisters were encouraged to brag and support drawings, adding to our coffers.

Chapter J made significant contributions to the Projects this year, awarding \$5500 in undesignated giving, plus \$1500 to our Chapter J Cottey scholarship, and \$1500 to Chapter J's PEO Foundation Fund. Happily, we expect to award our first Foundation scholarship next year! We also gave \$500 to the Feed Me Hope Bakery, a project of the Downtown Hope Center in Anchorage, a job training/life skills program for women. Additionally, we gave \$50 to the Children's Lunchbox and \$50 to UA Alaska Native Science & Engineering program for our two BIL's who we lost this year.

Our Courtesy and Outreach sisters sent birthday cards and expressed loving concern as needed for sisters with special circumstances. We also were honored to host the reception at the funeral for Janice Campbell.

Mary Hughes is keeping up with our Cottey student. Barbara Baugh sent gift cards and notes to our IPS student. Camellia Buschman and Ann Norman recommended Meredith Schwartz as our STAR candidate. We had a picnic to celebrate the graduation of our PCE recipient, Kira Despina, who completed her nursing program in Homer spring 2022.

Our programs, fieldtrips, and socials included a tour of the historic Orthodox cemetery at Eklutna, lunch at O'Malley's on the Green, touring the newly remodeled Anchorage Senior Activity Center, a garden tour at the home of one of our Master Gardeners, Heather Tauschek, an update on a missionary working with Ukrainian refugees in Poland, several coffees around town, and, inspired by donations from Cathy Rasmuson, we learned about kimonos, complete with a mini fashion show by Heidi Schulz.

It was a delight to finally have our Christmas social in person again. We enjoyed good food, carols, and special Christmas readings from Kerry Madden. Pam Brady's home was warm and cheerful on another heavy snow day.

We enjoyed connecting with sisters across Anchorage for the Founders Day celebration. We love that we are not just our chapter, but a larger sisterhood. The meeting with Organizer Barbara Burnett was quite informative.

The state board, especially our Board Buddy, Susan West, has been encouraging and supportive throughout the year. Along with Chapters K and L, we hosted the 2022 State Convention in Anchorage April 28-30. Chapter J coordinated housing and had a very successful sale at the Marketplace, selling beautiful arrangements of flowers and herbs, headed by Debby Deal and Heather Tauschek, and bowl cozies, headed by Madge Oswald.

Four sisters went to Palmer to attend the organizational meeting of Chapter S. What a thrill to watch P.E.O grow!

Several officers have graciously agreed to serve another term in their positions, and I am so grateful. Sydney Reed will move from VP to President, and is ready to lead Chapter J in the coming year. Our yearbook is more complete than in recent years as sisters feel more able to plan; the constant need to be flexible due to pandemic constraints was exhausting, and it showed in the participation and commitment of some sisters.

As I install the new officers on March 1, I leave the office of President encouraged for the life of our chapter, and so honored to have had the opportunity to learn more about the sisterhood at large and grow closer to my sisters in Chapter J.

Lovingly in P.E.O.,  
Mary Britton, President, AK **Chapter J**

Laura Vidrine, President  
P.E.O. Chapter K/AK  
3905 Helvetia Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99508

February 28, 2023

Barbara Kraft, President Alaska State Chapter  
Susan West, Secretary Alaska State Chapter

Dear President Barb and Secretary Susan,

It has been an honor to serve as president for the women of Chapter K, Alaska. I bring you their greetings and well wishes. The past year of P.E.O. has been one of pleasure and energy as we were able to gather in person for each meeting and continued to include sisters online using hybrid technology. Our yearbook theme, "A Year to Appreciate," was realized in the service our members gave for successful meetings, socials, fundraisers, city-wide responsibilities, and a loving concern for one another.

I wish to thank Shannon Jones, Maggie Wilkinson, Jodee Jones, Jaimini Reeve, Sally Stribling and Sandra Hanson for their service to our chapter as officers. I also wish to pay tribute to every member of Chapter K for giving of their time, talent and resources to support our projects and each other.

March through April saw many hours of service devoted to the State Convention planning and hostessing alongside Chapters J and L. We did, indeed, form meaningful connections as we worked together. The sisters of Chapter K provided marketplace sales items and clerks, online registration, name tags, guards, teller, convention treasurer, president, and a no-charge raffle quilt basket. Sixteen chapter sisters attended convention and two were honored as Golden Girls, Betty Berry and Joanna Walch.

In August we conducted the ceremony of initiation for our four members who were previously initiated by affirmation. Barbara Burnett, state chapter organizer, observed the ceremony for three of the initiates during her official visit which was accomplished workshop style. We appreciated her time and suggestions.

Our focus on membership this year has been mentoring the four newest sisters. We hope to inspire a strong connection to Chapter K as they learn about P.E.O. One of these members accepted the role of corresponding secretary and includes highlights of the Daisy Dispatch as well as International correspondence in her engaging monthly reports. Average meeting attendance this year was 13.27, over a quarter person more than last year. We had one member move from Anchorage and assumed non-resident status. Our membership chair extended many invitations to non-affiliates to join us for socials and meetings. So far none have attended, but some have written back indicating possible attendance for future events.

At the conclusion of each meeting, a name is drawn to be our Member Highlight. What fun this has been! We have learned about such things as ancestries, travels, employments, hydroplane racing, mini-skirt wearing, and bear shooting. Suffice to say, Chapter K sisters are fascinating!

The social events of the past year included sisters and guests. We enjoyed a pre-meeting appetizer gathering in April. In July we had a salad luncheon with beautiful views at Toby Hurlburt's home. Our annual Christmas social and bazaar fundraiser was held at Leah Hoffman's home. In January, fourteen members enjoyed the city-wide Founders' Day luncheon. Chapter K reinstated our monthly coffee socials, trying several locations in town. These social opportunities

are always fun and personal connections are made between sisters.

We did not put forth candidates for the projects this year, however, through fundraisers and generous donations, we were able to fund each of the six projects at award levels. We are also celebrating the "Alaska Chapter K Scholarship Fund" within the P.E.O. Foundation. Many sisters donated to this fund, and we look forward to its continued growth. We will be able to access the funds this year. Our 2021-22 STAR candidate was not chosen as a recipient in April, but Chapter K gave her a monetary gift for her use at Gonzaga University. We sent gifts in February to the Alaska girl attending Cottey College.

As a chapter with a designated IPS student, it has been a joy connecting with Kateryna Minkina, a graduate student attending Villa Nova University. "Kate," as we now call her, is from Ukraine and was very receptive to our greetings and a gracious recipient of our care packages. She has written back on several occasions, providing insight into her life and gifts of ribbons and chocolates. In November she provided our program, joining us via Zoom, and she was pleased to see members wearing the ribbons she had sent.

In December, we participated in providing a holiday craft project and refreshments for children at the AWAIC center in Anchorage. Additionally, Chapter K adopted an ongoing project of donating peanut butter and other non-perishables to F.I.S.H., a local food pantry which supplies food to people in our community when an emergency arises. F.I.S.H. was the subject of one of our year's programs.

When I review this letter, my heart is filled with pride to say I am part of a community of women who selflessly give of themselves for the P.E.O. mission. This was Chapter K's 55-year anniversary. To create a daisy word cloud, resident and non-resident members were asked to submit words and phrases they felt exemplified our particular chapter. After all submissions were tallied, the largest word was "Support," followed closely by "Laughter" and "Love." I guess that sums us up very well.

Yours sincerely and lovingly in P.E.O.,  
Laura Vidrine  
President, **Chapter K/AK**

February 28, 2023

TO:

Barbara Kraft, President Alaska State Chapter Susan  
West, Secretary Alaska State Chapter **Chapter L**  
Sisters

**Chapter L** is composed of a vibrant group of women. We have 45 Active Members and average 15 attendees at our meetings and our age span is from mid-20's to young 80's. Our meetings are hybrid for those out of state or unable to attend. Snowstorms forced us to go completely remote on two occasions. We initiated one new member this year but lost two. Becky Black transferred to her Wisconsin chapter where she lives full time and charter member Cathy Crew joined the state's newest chapter - Chapter S in Palmer.

Our sisters' lives are busy, one sister (Ida Dailey) moved out of state, another one completed her residency in family medicine and moved back. Members had babies, got married, switched jobs, got including being appointed to a judgeship, we traveled, welcomed grandbabies, and sadly lost family members in the last year.

Helping Women Reach for the Stars: Our annual garage sale still serves as our biggest fund raiser and our December social also provides a significant amount of revenue for our projects. We were pleased to give \$4,500 divided equally between the International PEO projects and our local North Star scholarship of \$750 was awarded to Amy Hatter, a daughter of one of our members. Amy is pursuing a physician's assistant degree in Idaho.

We were delighted to learn in April that the PEO Star Scholarship candidate we sponsored in the fall of 2021 was chosen to receive a \$2,500 scholarship. In November we sponsored another member's daughter for the PEO Scholar Award and anxiously await hearing the results this spring.

We sent care package comfort boxes to members daughters and nieces attending college as well as to the Alaska Cottey student, our Star recipient and our IPS student.

Chapter L was one of three Anchorage chapters tasked with hosting the state convention in the spring of 2022. Our group held a bean pickling party to create dilly beans which we sold at the convention to help defray costs. We also partnered with a local high school culinary program and provided the meals for convention. Connie Pargeter and Becky Black were recognized as Golden Girls Plus! Chapter L members served as teller and two of the six guards at convention and of course we had a large contingent on hand to see Barbara Kraft sworn in as the State President.

In September we performed the Ceremony of Initiation for three sisters we had welcomed during remote COVID. Two officers came down with COVID right before the ceremony, but our resilient and cooperative sisterhood pivoted and stepped up to fill the officer positions.

While Chapter L continues to show love and offer grace and understanding to our sister, we do have work to do re-establishing connections and including our BIL's. To that end we have started pop up events where all members are invited to a community activity one or two other members are going to. We envision these events as a way to support one another, reconnect and bond.

It has been an honor to serve as President of Chapter L and I am forever grateful for Chapter L's love and support.

*Eva Welch*

**Chapter L, Alaska**

February 20, 2023

Our theme this year was *The Unity and Diversity of the World's Culture*.

The word Unity is such a lovely word. It imbues harmony, solidarity, identity, agreement, consensus... coincidentally those words also describe PEO. Many parts. One Body! Our values... our differences... our commonalities... our individual gifts... our enthusiasm... along with the joy of communal purpose... we move forward.

Oh, the joy of having sisters! Our intertwining sisterhood circles link us as we work to make our world a better place. In thinking of what being a P.E.O. Sister means... and how the life of our chapter has been this year... these quotes from Sisters from International help to tell the story.

Justice: While it is not always the easy or popular thing to do. It is always right to stand up for what is equitable and fair for all. Our shared humanity depends on compassion and mercy for others and maintaining the same treatment for everyone. - Patricia Brolin-Ribi, International Chapter

This year we increased our giving to projects and to our local scholarships. We are anxiously waiting to hear the results of our Star Nominee and voted to award her a \$100 award in honor of Kelli Stroh. We added two additional awards to our most recent KPC High School Scholarship recipient in honor of Brearly Wilson and Lisa Thomas.

Truth: The golden thread of truth is woven up and down throughout our lives. Reality, clear vision, and the truth help us to tackle each day. Lifting each of us up. Good. Better. Best. - Brenda Atchison, International Chapter

We are so fortunate to be able to meet in person again for most of this year. It is good to be together again, to renew and build new friendships, to brainstorm and create opportunities to help our local young women. We are planning high school visits and college fair tables to talk about Cottey College and project and scholarship opportunities. We want people to say – “Hey, isn't that one of those P.E.O. ladies!”

Purity: Purity is defined as clarity freshness. A freedom from contamination. The purity of P.E.O.s spirit shines through our sister's generous emotional support of each other and our philanthropic project recipients throughout joy and sorrow. Especially in these challenging days, blessed is each P.E.O. - Alix Smith, International Chapter

This year the body of our chapter sisterhood has been prominent. Our year was dotted with celebrating each of our 9 new sisters and the energy they bring and celebrating the gifts of love who are our 3 sisters now resting in Chapter Eternal.

Faith: It is very important to me that PEO's are women of faith. I love that about us. Our faith is such a beautiful virtue. It comforts the frightened and reminds us that we are loved by God. Let us keep faith together. - Cathy Moss, International Chapter

Change, heartache and joy have touched our chapter this year... through it all, the solidness of our faith carries us... and our genuine love and concern for each other gently cushions us.

Love: Love is much more than something you feel. Love is something you DO. Love is not a passive word. It is a dynamic word. When we speak of charity in our Objects and Aims, we are talking about Love in Action. What have you done lately to show love for one another? Reach out to your sisters with Love. - Katheryn Ebert, International Chapter

This year we have started a new endeavor to connect regularly with our homebound sisters and to address needs of sisters whose world is teetering a bit.

Our social committee has been active creating opportunities for fellowship and fun attending local community theatre and lunch outings.

We are discerning ways of staying connected to our sisters who are faraway. "The welfare of our sisters is at the heart of who we are" What a perfect quote and what a wonderful truth.

This past year could be compared to the snow melting around many tiny green shoots... and now we are looking forward to the full bloom of opportunity that our sisterhood will bring in the upcoming year.

Thanks Be To God

Nelma  
**Chapter M**

February 12, 2023

Barbara S. Kraft  
President, P.E.O. Alaska State Chapter  
12900 Monterey Circle  
Anchorage, 99516

Dear Barbara,

Greetings from **Chapter N** in Juneau.

Many thanks to you and the State Chapter Board for the guidance and assistance we have received this year, with a special thanks to our Board Buddy, Lynne Krizek. We have always received timely responses to our questions and needs, as well as kind words of wisdom and encouragement.

Congratulations to the State Chapter Board on the successful IN PERSON convention last spring. I was Chapter N's delegate and found the event to be educational, moving, and FUN. Several other Chapter N sisters attended the convention, either as an officer, a committee chair, or as an attendee.

Our theme this year is "*We're All In This Together*", *working together to reach our goals*. A core group of participating Sisters has embraced this theme. Do you remember the Dr. Seuss classic, "Horton Hears a Who"? In it, Horton the Elephant hears a very small community declare their existence by shouting out, "*We are here! We are here! We are here!*" I think those words also apply to Chapter N; in spite of COVID, RSV, flu and other bugs, aging, injuries, surgeries, and other challenges, **WE ARE HERE!** And we're working on building a "new normal".

Chapter N started the year depending on virtual Zoom meetings for most of our business and social gatherings. By the summer, some of us were beginning to feel a little more comfortable meeting in person. Our regular meetings are now Hybrid, allowing Sisters the option to attend in person, or virtually from anywhere. We are again deeply indebted to member Helen Mehrkens, for her support and provision of our Zoom links. We discussed ways to find the best time and place to meet in person; we're now meeting at Chapel by the Lake at 10:30am on Mondays. This has shown to be a good choice with plenty of parking, accessible, and we can finish our meeting in time to go out to lunch! We have amended our Standing Rules to reflect this change. We average 13 members attending our regular meetings, but our numbers are increasing—16 attended our last meeting.

We invited two potential members to join our chapter, but although both are very interested, they have both decided to postpone joining until they have more time to participate in P.E.O..

This year we were happy to be able to meet socially in person:

In June, Chapter N hosted Juneau's first Tri-Chapter summer luncheon since 2019! It was so nice to see our Sisters in person again.

In January, Chapter N participated in the Founder's Day Celebration, which took on a new format that may be continued: instead of our long-standing tradition of trying to find a restaurant that could accommodate our chapters, this year the event was held in a church and one chapter provided the meal.

The Juneau chapters are now considering having two summer tri-chapter luncheons and the Founder's Day Celebration on a rotating schedule.

We currently have 34 active sisters. Two of our long-time sisters, Lenore Honsinger and Joyce Landingham, passed to Chapter Eternal.

Our Ways and Means Committee, now called "Fundraising", was quite successful, even though we have discontinued holding our traditional tea. We had our annual Jams, Jellies, and Crafts sale, where an assortment of homemade and handcrafted items were sold and auctioned. We also had a sales table at the Founder's Day event. We were able to auction a week of condo use in Hawaii, thanks to a very generous donation by a Sister. We are exploring new ways to expand our fundraising.

Chapter N continues to support all of the International Projects, including a \$500 donation to Cottey College, and also contributes to our Chapter N Foundation.

Chapter N survives; *WE ARE HERE!*

Sincerely,  
*Elaine Loopstra*  
Elaine Loopstra  
President, **Chapter N**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT CHAPTER P 2022-2023

It is hard to believe another year is nearly behind us; seems like just yesterday we were forced into virtual meetings and lack of contact. I'm so proud of how the chapter has weathered this challenging time. We transitioned to meeting in person again for socials and will hopefully be able to fully implement hybrid meeting in this coming year. It has been so good to be able to connect with sisters who might not otherwise have been able to join us, and we don't want to lose that connection.

Our year brought back our traditional socials and the return of the hiking group and chapter book club. Monthly hikes happened rain or shine and based on the reports a good time is had by all. Book club has settled into its own rhythm at Diane's house with sisters having so much fun the time flies and we end later and later. These smaller social times are key to giving us a chance to really get to know one another and to build the true bonds of sisterhood. We made a special trip to see chapter charter member, Gay Stewart; what a joy that was. I expect we will continue to have challenges to fully return to pre-Covid interactions, but if we respect one another and are sensitive to sisters' health challenges we will be able to meet together and have our socials – maybe even spontaneous meetups.

Our spring Empty Teacup was held in March for St Patrick's day with the raised funds going to "Let Every Woman Know", a group which focuses on helping women be aware of all the forms of cancer that specifically effect women. We learned of screening tests and resources available locally. We raised \$315 that along with chapter matching funds of \$250 was sent to support them in their mission.

After a long wait... Sara's house was completed, and we celebrated her return to her home with our annual chapter potluck. We were fortunate to have special guest in our Davnie award winner and her mother present. We also welcomed Karn, who has since accepted our invitation to join P.E.O Chapter P. The summer flew by with sisters doing various fun things like trips to the Kenai and one on one time. By November it was time to celebrate our chapter birthday and we invited unaffiliates and BILs to join us for a simple Pie Social at Village Inn. As the holidays approached, we chose to support a family again through Catholic Social Services. Thanks to all who gave. Our holiday potluck social rounded out the year back at Sara's house. Thanks to Sara for hosting these large group gatherings.

Speaking of fundraising, it has changed so much in recent years. While we lost our Kempton Hills garage sale venue, we did have the holiday bazaar hosted at St Mark's Lutheran. Founders' Day this year was a big success with our annual "Old Bag" auction and the citywide basket auction. Between those two things and Shannon's Facebook sales later that day we cleared over \$1200 for Founders' Day. Well done to all those who donated items and those who reached out to local vendors for items. A special thank you goes to Shannon's husband for making his fabulous candies and to Becky for her faithfulness in baking our shortbread. I also want to acknowledge Sara for handling online sales and Carolyn for her amazing artwork turned sale items. So many serve behind the scenes and you should each pat yourselves on the back for making our fundraising a success this year. We can set ourselves a challenge to increase what we raise for the projects over the next few years.

In late summer we had our official Organizer visit. Officers met with the Alaska State Organizer and

voiced concerns for the health of P.E.O. if it doesn't make the changes to adapt with the advances in technology. It is my sincere hope that the concerns voiced were heard and taken as action items at the State Executive Board level. Know you do have a voice and there are ways to help bring about change. One way is to become involved in the state A&R committee which proposes changes to be taken to a vote at Convention of International Chapter. The process is long, but you can make proposals.

As another part of returning to pre-Covid policies and procedures we did the formal in person Initiation during our organizer visit of Kimberly Price who had joined us by affirmation in 2021. We have also received the acceptance of Karn and look forward to her initiation in the coming weeks. While we have gained, we also have lost long time member, Betty Metz who has joined a local chapter in McMinnville, Oregon following a move there last summer. We also had a sister go inactive. While it is sad, we need to understand their needs and continue to stay in touch with them, hoping that when commitments change, they can reengage. Till then we hold them in our hearts as the sisters they are.

We did put a star recipient forward for projects last year, but she was not selected. I know it can be disappointing, but helping those we hear about to advance in life through the project's support for education is a large part of our sisterhood. I challenge you this year to find candidates for the projects. We all know someone who knows someone who would benefit.

I would be remiss if I forgot to mention our return to in person P.E.O. State conventions. This was a great opportunity to meet/mix with sisters from across Alaska. The training session on member engagement and the general session with the Hopper family leading us in dances and some sing-alongs were highlights. At the banquet we learned that though we're small, we gave with hearts as big as Alaska.

We are all been busy and the next few weeks are no exception in chapter business. Online end of year reporting has been fully implemented for 2022-2023. The nominating committee is contacting sisters about servings as officer. Our budget is being proposed tonight and the audit will be done in early March. Yearbook committee is looking to finalize committee sign-ups, program/hosting people for the monthly meetings and socials, as well as, making sure we have the best contact information. I hope we continue to find ways to work together and get to the finish line of another year.

A few final thoughts: We need to actively pursue investing in technology and ensuring we have sister who can help those of us with challenges so we can have hybrid meeting. As we continue to have busy lives, we should be looking for ways to connect with sisters. Maybe make it a goal to get to know one you don't know well; drop a card, make a call, or meet for coffee or a meal. Let's commit to reach out to sisters we haven't seen lately and not leave it to a committee or think a social will help sisters feel valued. Each sister is amazing and has so much to share if we can just connect.

Lastly, it has been a privilege to serve you and to represent you at the local presidents' council. I do hope you can "Catch the Dream of P.E.O." or renew within yourself what drew you to this Sisterhood!

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Marcia S. Eskridge*, **Chapter P** President

Barbara Kraft  
Alaska State Chapter President  
Anchorage, AK

February 2, 2023

Dear Madame President,

This year has brought us to a comfort level on hybrid meetings and the joy of meeting in person. Our connections continue to buffer us in times of sorrow and change as well as happiness and success. The web of love we build gives us both hope and strength.

**Meeting Time:**

Our usual meeting at 6:30 pm at the Senior Boardroom has been adapted to accommodate the sisters for the three, dark, wintry months, (December, January and February), so that they do not need to drive on ice at night. In addition, for our three, lovely, summer months, we will meet in the homes of sisters at 6:30 pm.

**Membership:**

We are especially excited to have sponsored the new Chapter S, knowing that the hard work done to pull a new chapter together will be rewarded. Our roster ebbed and flowed this year, with one new member and one May transfer into the chapter, and two-three sisters who moved found chapters where they relocated. We were able to hold an initiation in September for two new members who had been affirmed and for one new initiate. All three have now been fully initiated into Chapter Q.

**Roster:**

Our theme for the year is "Reconnecting with our sisters, our community and the world." Average attendance this year stayed at 19. We currently have 46 members. Seven of the ladies are out of state, but we continue to see most of them on Zoom calls in our meetings. Looking at the future, we know that 5-6 of our sisters will be transferring to Chapter S, but our intention is to include them in socials and stay connected. Once a sister, always a sister.

**Projects:**

Our raffle fund-raising has been successful for us, and we were able to fully fund all the projects this year. In addition, the generosity of our sisters allows us to once again grow our endowment to support our local scholarships. Chapter Q was not able to find an applicant who fit into the parameters for the projects, but we were able to fund two local scholarships of \$500 each and one continuing education local scholarship for \$500. The chairs of the projects continue to search for eligible applicants. Additionally, gift cards were sent to the university daughters of our sisters. Chapter Q's IPS recipient was sent a gift in late fall and our Cottey student will be sent a box in April.

**Community Service:**

We have several continuing community service projects that are dear to our hearts. One is the municipal garden we plant and maintain in our local area. We often see people enjoying the flowers at the park and get encouraging comments from the community. And the sisters enjoy a gathering after we plant, and after the garden is taken down in the fall. We also support the local women's prison by keeping a stream of usable clothing that is given to the women upon their release from Hiland. We celebrated "Thankful November" by redoubling our efforts for the women's prison with a big delivery of winter socks,

underwear, boots and coats.

Social:

Book Club, led by Suzanne Marcy, continues to meet once a month. The choices are informative and educational and some simply beautiful reads. We met in April for a breakfast at a local eatery and to meet a new woman prior to her name being submitted for membership. When the municipality tore the garden down for us, our post garden breakfast turned into a social. An annual summer BBQ was well- attended in August. Also, the BnB opened in August. Our annual cookie exchange was cancelled due to abundant snow in December. We expect to increase our number of socials as the weather becomes more cooperative.

Recognition:

We have reason to celebrate our sisters in Chapter Q. Joelle Hall was honored this year as one of few Athena Businesswomen of the Year. She also holds the position of President of the Alaska AFL-CIO. Our own Donna Steinfort was appointed to hold a position on the Alaska State Board.

Finally, it is with a broken heart that I communicate that our dear sister, Jane Barnes, who was a faithful and devoted Chapter Q sister, has joined Chapter Eternal. We will all miss her beautiful smile and personality. She loved P.E.O. And we follow her example by loving our sisters. In 1 Peter 1:22, we read that we are to “purify ourselves by obeying the truth so that you may have sincere love for each other, and love one another deeply, from the heart.” Jane loved us deeply from her heart.

Humbly submitted, Kathie Steele

**Chapter Q** President

February 16, 2023

Sue Magyar PO  
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907-491-0244

Re: 2022-2023 **Chapter R** President's Letter

Dear Barbara, Alaska State President, and Susan, Alaska State Secretary,

This past year has seen changes in Chapter R. We were delighted when we heard that Brandii Holmdahl would be transferring back to Seward for work, and we began the year with Brandii as our president. The choice could not have been more obvious. Since she brought P.E.O. to our community, she was one of the main people who saw the creation of our chapter to fruition, which was no small feat. Her leadership inspires us to step up our game and give more. Brandii is very creative and has remarkable insight, just two more qualities we admire in her. Unfortunately, work was the reason she had to move out of Seward at the end of the year. This was heartbreaking for her, as well as all of her Chapter R sisters. I have filled in as President for the remainder of the year.

Our Annual Retreat is an amazing day of brainstorming, putting our heads together in sisterly love, and reconnecting, not only to what's important to our Chapter, but to each other. We established our new theme for 2022-2023: Amazing Grace: "Grace is the face that Love wears when it meets imperfection." Three of the goals stemming from this were to 1) make direct connections with the Alaska Native Population on the Kenai Peninsula, 2) Strengthen internal support systems, and 3) Develop Courtesy Committee. Other items on the agenda were Budget, Philanthropy, Ways and Means, and Leadership/Membership.

Our membership decreased by 1, because a member went inactive. There were no new initiations. Our average meeting attendance 8.5. We have had mostly hybrid meetings, and some that were strictly Zoom.

Our budget again allowed us to give \$1000 to projects, \$500 each to PCE and STAR. Continuing on with our local giving, \$625 went to our local high school graduates. Shelby Sieminski was our 2022 recipient. Along with Shelby, Selma Casagrande and Sophie Dow are also still attending college, so are still receiving scholarships. We submitted Kat Sorenson for PCE and Aly Guernsey for STAR. Kat Sorenson got her PCE grant this year, and we haven't heard yet about STAR. Fingers crossed!

Our efforts to highlight P.E.O. in our community went well. We had an International Women's day event, March 8th, to highlight women and P.E.O. Two of our sisters spoke about P.E.O. history and projects to Seward Rotary, to raise awareness of P.E.O. and the projects.

Fundraising went well this year. We participated in the Halloween carnival, fun community event for kids, also raising awareness of P.E.O. Other fundraisers were our Garage Sale, Cinnamon roll sales for Easter, and a Thanksgiving pie sale.

None of our sisters are resting on their laurels. Many of us, besides work and family, are doing great things as members of other organizations. A couple individual accomplishments this year among our sisters: Amanda received a Fulbright Distinguished Teaching Award to Uganda for the Fulbright Teacher Exchanges Project: Leveraging Blended Virtual and In-Person Learning to Empower Ugandan Schools. Amanda will be in Uganda all of June and most of July. Kristi Ellsworth and family welcomed a new family member, Conan Joseph.

We struggle a bit to gain traction after our summer off every year, and have had other struggles to confront. This coming year we hope to be able to look clearly at ways to deal with things that are blocking our success as a chapter, and discover and utilize tools to help us move forward, grow, and heal. Circling back to last year's theme-Amazing Grace - "Grace is the face that Love wears when it meets imperfection". None of us are perfect, but we are strong, resilient, and have a common thread in our mission. We have great things to accomplish, and we shall do so, by standing together with grace and love. With the able and loving hands of this fabulous group of women, I have faith that we will rise above the wall and soar to new heights.

Lovingly in P.E.O.,  
Sue Magyar President  
**Chapter R**

February 12, 2023

Sue Turquette

President, **Chapter S**

Speech given at Organization of Chapter

The journey of Chapter S began in the winter months of 2021 when my Palmer sisters, Carolyn Hayes and Christy Andrews, began to encourage me to create a PEO chapter in the valley. Several attempts had been made in the past but to no avail. I was hesitant because I was 14 years older than when I created a Texas chapter, and Alaska does not have a large population of valley PEOs to work with. I received many encouraging words from my Q sisters and decided to proceed.

To help our beloved PEO to grow and flourish is such a privilege. Carolyn and I met with state officers Barb Kraft, Barb Burnett, Susan West and chapter Q President Kathie Steele to map out a course of action. We received lists of active and inactive PEOs and began communication efforts. We phoned, texted, emailed, and sent personal notes to many women and, frankly, were discouraged by the first response. Barb Burnett, our Organizer, and Barb Kraft, our Grand Poobah, guided our efforts and attended many meetings.

As we began to get acquainted, the sisters and sisters-to-be began to relax and bond as sisters do. We were able to adopt bylaws, to start work on the yearbook, to create a slate of officers, to set up meeting times, to sign up to hostess, cohost and present programs, and to volunteer for committees. These S women are incredible. Hmmm, does S stand for Super?

Thank-you so much to Barb and Barb and Donna and Susan for their help and patience. Thanks to those who helped us “find the others.” Thanks to the Super women of the soon-to- be-Chapter S. Thanks to the sisters who had tried to start a valley chapter in the past. Your efforts really paved the way for the organization of Chapter S today. Thanks to the Founding sisters who created PEO in 1869. Thanks to Chapter Q, our Mother chapter, who provided the refreshments for yesterday’s Pre-Organization meeting and the decorations and refreshments for this Organization meeting today. Several PEO sisters paid for other expenses and the initiation and reactivation fees of our charter initiates. We appreciate all of your help. But most of us, thanks to God who strengthened and guided all of us all of the way. We are truly blessed. Thank-you.

Sue Turquette

President, **Chapter S**