



**Epsilon Sigma Alpha
Southeast Regional
Council
2023-2024**

DECEMBER 2023 News

From the President Laura

Hello beautiful people! I'm so humbled to be your SERC President. My theme this year is "Reach with your Heart"; thus, our newsletter is named "Heart to Heart". I wish to increase our level of communication. We cannot "Reach" too much. I want to hear your voices. Share, share, share! I've set up a Facebook SERC page, check it out and join in the communication. I want to hear your voice, your good works, your social events...I, no, WE want to hear about YOU!

I encourage you to Reach with your Heart and let someone know they are beautiful, they are worthy, they are a light, they are gifted, and they are loved. Random acts of kindness, some may say...but when they come from the heart, they reach SO much deeper.

Our Chaplain, Joy Lynn Tynes, awaits your Joys and Concerns. Please contact her at cjtynes@bellsouth.net.

As we approach the holidays, I love to hear Christmas music. My favorite song is "Mary, do you Know?" by Pentatonix. What is your favorite holiday song? I realize not everyone celebrates Christmas, but it doesn't mean you don't have a favorite holiday tune.

As a young kid with a last name of “Gnewuch”, I was teased that I was straight out of a Dr. Seuss book. Which one? Well, The Grinch, of course. In my high school Spanish class, I wrote about “The Gnewuch that Stole Christmas”.

Can you hear the music?

You're a mean one, Mr Grinch

You really are a heel

You're as cuddly as a cactus

You're as charming as an eel

Mr. Grinch!

You're a bad banana

With a greasy black peel!

He then realizes that the holiday has a deeper meaning that he never considered. Inspired, he stops the Whos' belongings from falling off the edge of the mountain, and in the process, his heart grows "three sizes". He returns all the gifts he stole and gladly takes part in the Whos' Christmas celebration.

From 1st Vice President Tammy

Hello SERC friends! I hope you all made it home safely from our SERC Conference in Pooler, GA. It was so nice to be together, celebrate our accomplishments over the year and make plans for the future. Thank you to our GA membership, for being such a wonderful host. During the Thanksgiving season, I spent time reflecting on the things in my life that I am most thankful for and ESA was among them. I am thankful for the friendships, the opportunity to serve and pride that comes along with being a part of such a wonderful organization.

I am sure your home is all a buzz with the excitement of the Christmas Holidays. My boys are giddy with the holiday spirit. Our elf, Big Country, arrived on December 1 and officially rings in the Christmas holiday for my crew. The Christmas parades, school and church chorus performances, cookie decorating, Christmas shopping, countdown to Christmas break, Christmas cartoons, movies and songs, baking, house decorating, gift wrapping – my little fellas are up for it all! And I love it and will soak it in while they are still young. I hope you have time

to soak up the magic of the holidays and take the time to see it through the eyes of a child – it doesn't get any better than that!

I am excited and honored to be serving as your 1st Vice President. There is a lot of planning and recruiting to be done and I hope that you are up for the challenge. I am looking for members to serve on my appointed and executive boards. I hope you are willing to share your time and talents with our organization and be willing to serve in the coming year. The Willing to Serve and Nomination forms can be found on our SERC website. You may also email me at tammyjo21@yahoo.com or call me at 864-483-1538. I would love to chat about opportunities that interest you and how we can put your talents to work!

From my crew to yours, I hope you and your family have a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

From 2nd Vice President Dawn

I am Dawn Middleton and am serving as SERC 2nd Vice President. Savannah/Pooler hosted a great conference. It was so much fun. I suggest if you haven't been to a conference (or it has been a while) to please consider going. Also talk to your state about hosting SERC. We would love to visit. As holidays approach I want to wish everyone the best.

From Parliamentarian Casey

Season Greetings from your Parliamentarian! I am Casey Hoffman from Mississippi, and I am honored to serve as your Parliamentarian. I grew up in a military family and we lived a life of service. 32 years ago, I was invited to join ESA and my life of service continued! It is a blessing for me to be involved in all of our philanthropic endeavors. I will be sending out reminders to review our bylaws and consider changes that may be appropriate, but for right now, I wanted to share a tasty and easy recipe from my heart to yours. This is a great recipe for the holiday season and one that is fun to make with children.

Pecan Pie Balls

2 ½ cups chopped pecans 1 cup graham cracker crumbs

1 cup light brown sugar 1 tsp vanilla extract
½ cup maple syrup 6 tbsp melted butter
1 (24 ounce) pkg chocolate almond bark (or melting chocolate)

Combine pecans, graham cracker crumbs, brown sugar, vanilla, and maple syrup. Stir to combine. Add the melted butter and mix until it comes together and can be shaped into balls. Shape the mixture into 1-inch balls. Place the balls on a parchment (or waxed paper) lined baking sheet. Place in the refrigerator or freezer for at least an hour. Melt the chocolate according to the package directions. Dip the pecan pie balls into the melted chocolate and put them on more parchment or waxed paper. You can cover them with sprinkles if you choose. Let them set. That is it! So easy. These can be kept at room temp for about three days. Keep them in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a month. You can also freeze them for future use.

I wish you all a happy holiday season. May your days be merry and bright.

From Jr. Past President Theda

Hello everyone! Hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving! I know I did! One of my duties as Past President is chair of the Disaster Fund. We all know that this fund has helped so many members in SERC and we have to keep the fund going. Why not start now and have a fundraiser in your own state or chapter—You can have a contest, draw numbers, spin the wheel or drop ping pong balls in muffins tins to find out how much you owe. Use your imagination. This is a fun way to raise some money for the IC Disaster Fund. Every little bit helps our members. Some of you may not know a lot about the IC Disaster Fund. Well, it was started at the 1956 IC Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico and its purpose is to assist an ESA member who has encountered some nature catastrophe such as a fire, flood, hurricane, etc, and their home or personal belongings have been destroyed or damaged extensively. Or it could be a member who has incurred a debilitating illness or accident, which involves the member or their spouse or immediate family who resides in the home due to physical or mental impairment whom they have legal guardianship over and are legally responsible. The Disaster Fund is for Active members (90 days or more), members at large (MALS) who are in good standing with Headquarters and, Life Active Members.

The maximum amount given is \$8,000. You can apply by using the ESA IC Disaster Fund Application which is found on the website. Once this is completed and signed by the member, the application form and any additional information (e.g., proof of the reason for the claim) is sent to the International Council Disaster Fund Chair (currently the IC Junior Past President, which is Denise Holdaway). To find the form and guidelines, google Epsilonsigmaalpha.org – Member Center – and click on Disaster Fund.

Here's wishing each and everyone one of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

From Georgia State President Susan Garner

Hello SERC family,

What a great SERC conference we had in Pooler/Savannah. Georgia State Council enjoyed hosting and we hope everyone that attended had a great time. Congratulations to the newly installed Executive Board. I know Laura Gnewuch and her board will have a wonderful year!

We send our heartfelt wishes to you and your families for a safe and joyous holiday season. May there be peace on Earth and good will towards men.



From Kentucky State President Diana Cohen

I am a 2nd year State President and the current SERC Awards Chair. I have been in ESA for 34 years and am a member of Kappa Psi, Louisville. I am a retired Information Technology professional. I have been married for 22 years to my wonderful husband, Harvey. I have two sons. My oldest, Jonathan, lives in Murray, KY with his wife Daisy, and Korra (7), Levi (13), Emma (15), and Aiden (17). My youngest, Justin, lives in Louisville with his wife Carrie (also in Kappa Psi) and Dorian, a freshman at ECU.

In addition to ESA, I sing baritone in a women's barbershop chorus, Bluegrass Harmony. We recently competed on the international level and finished 8th out of 29 choruses. We perform locally at festivals and elder-care facilities. I especially enjoy the smiles of the people when we sing songs from the 50s/60s and they sing along.

I also volunteer at a local Charity Thrift Store, managing all donations for books and crafts. I grew up reading almost any book I could get my hands on. I am always reading a Kindle book and a "real" book at the same time. It brings me joy seeing persons of every age going through the shelves to find reading treasures. When I see a school-age child sitting on the floor going through my books, it really makes me smile.

Members of Kentucky ESA reach with their hearts for St. Jude. Managing the ticket office for four Dream Homes from May - October, is truly a labor of love. Showing the Dream Homes at Open Houses, brings a sense of satisfaction, knowing all the good that will come from the ticket sales. Whether it is a Math-a-thon, putting money into a jar at meetings, or selling homemade crafts, it is ALL of us reaching out with our hearts for the children and St. Jude.

From Virginia State President Priscilla Browning

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving complete with Turkey and all the trimmings with your family and friends; if you are so inclined you then did some shopping and caught deals on Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday. The Christmas season is here and may we remember the true meaning of Christmas is the Birth of the Christ Child.

The months just keep clicking by here in Virginia. Beta Sigma one of our Richmond Chapters will be hosting a ZOOM Trivia Night, the point of contact if anyone is interested is Marie LaDuke at marieladuke@comcast.net, her address is 2201 Cardiff Court, North Chesterfield, VA 23236. The cost is a \$20 donation that will benefit ASK and SPECIAL LOVE both organizations offer assistance to children and their families who have had Cancer. The game night is a perfect time to put a team together and sharpen your Trivia skills, fix your favorite snacks and beverages.

A thank you from Theda Hall

For those of you that attended the SERC Conference in Pooler (Savannah,) you saw the look on my face when Meghan Good presented the Robert & Theda Hall Scholarship to me. Never have I been at a loss of words. I am humbled and thankful for all your donations. And, Robert as well. I couldn't have been given a more appreciated gift. To know that this scholarship will help someone in the SERC states is a dream come true. THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Meghan Good and myself are meeting next week to fill out the paperwork and get started on building the scholarship. We will need \$5.000 to start it and then with donations we will build it up so we can begin to give a scholarship to qualified students. Again, I want to say that this is the most cherished gift I have ever received. I am still writing thank you notes to the names that have been given to me. And, if you just gave cash, please accept my thanks. I am so blessed.

Many students would not be able to pursue their education without the help of organizations like the ESA Foundation. I can't wait to hear the stories of those we have helped with this scholarship. Again, thank you!