DKG International Society for Key Women Educators

Gamma Theta Chapter

August 2026 Volume XVI, Issue 1

Dianna Misich, *Editor*

Inside this Issue

President's Message 1
ADSOEF and International.....2
Spotlight on Members.....3-4
Gamma Theta Committee Reports.....5-8
Recommendation for Membership Form.....6
Gamma Theta Scholarship Form.....9
Looking Back/Looking Ahead.....10
Volunteer Opportunities.....11
Detailed Meeting Schedule.....12

2026-27 Programs & Events

~DETAILED INFORMATION Page 10~

ALL MEETINGS ARE HELD AT THE CONCORD COMMUNITY CENTER FROM 5:30-7:30 UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED BELOW

Sept.8th-Kick-Off, Stonegait Winery, Madison, 4:30-6:30

Oct. 13th-NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Illness) Speaker, Matt Selker

Nov. 14th-Initiation Luncheon, Redhawk Grill, 10:30-1:00

Feb. 10th-Membership Appreciation, Spats Cafe, 5:30-7:30

March 9th-Dyslexia, Speaker, Becky Malias from Riverside Schools

April 13h-Downsize and Thrive: Decluttering Speaker, Mick Jendrisak

May 15th-Tri-Chapter Brunch, Danita Harris, speaker Lake County Historical Center

Gamma Theta Executive Board 2026-2028

Barb Dolan, President
Linda Wood, First Vice-President
Pam Martin, Second Vice President
Pam Richmann, Recording Secretary
Dianne Cross, Corresponding Secretary
Annie Zahradnik, Treasurer
Jacinta Bertone, Assistant Treasurer,
Robin Echols-Cooper, Parliamentarian

President's Message

Dear Sisters-

At the beginning of July 2026, the term for the newly elected officers and executive committee members began. It is with great excitement that Barb Dolan has stepped up as President, Linda Wood as 1st Vice President, and Pam Martin as 2nd Vice President. This is the first time in many years that we have a full slate of officers. Again, thank you to Pam Richmann Recording Secretary, Dianne Cross as Corresponding Secretary and Annie Zahradnik as Treasurer. In addition to the Executive Board, we have great leadership in our committee leaders. Our Chapter is in good hands!

As their term begins and the 2024-26 term ends, I want to take this time as past President for the Gamma Theta Chapter to give a huge "THANK YOU" to everyone that made the four years serving as President of this organization a success. The former Executive Board was outstanding, bringing enthusiasm and excitement to the Board Meetings. Our membership remained steady with members willingly lending their hands to make our meetings and events successful. Remember it is because of the members that our Chapter is successful.

We also need to give a shout out to the following ladies that have taken their talents a step further and are serving at the State level either on the ADSOEF Board as a Director or Non-Director or on the OHSO Board:

Sally Rogus- OHSO State Membership Committee Member

Annie Zahradnik- ADSOEF Director, Fund-Raising Committee Member and Finance Committee

Barb Dolan- ADSOEF Non-Director member of the Fund-Raising Committee

Carol Vargo- ADSOEF-Non-Director member of the Educational Service Committee

Hannah Fairbanks-ADSOEF Director and member of the Nominating Committee and Finance Committee as well as a member of the OHSO Personnel Committee

Again, with many hands, make light work. Please lend your services to Barb and the Executive Board so that our Gamma Theta Chapter can only get better! Read and post the calendar of events. (See the last page.) Attend meetings. Find ways to extend your hand to present classroom teachers. Remember it's our year hosting Tri-Chapter. Having Danita Harris as speaker is wonderful news!

We hope to see you all at the Kick-Off Meeting September 8th at Stonegait Winery!

Sincerely,

Hannah Fairbanks-Past President

Barb Dolan-President- 2026-28

International Society for Key Women Educators
Delta Kappa Gamma
Ohio State Organization

DKG Mission Statement: The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.

~ADSOEF and DKG International News~

A Message from Dr. Molly

Focused on Leading

A Salute to Our Chapter Officers

As chapters across Ohio begin the 2026-2028 biennium, the Focus Team expresses our sincere appreciation to all chapter officers, both newly elected and those continuing in leadership roles. Your willingness to serve strengthens your chapter, the Ohio State Organization, and Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.

Strong leadership blends fresh ideas with valuable experience. New officers bring enthusiasm and fresh perspectives, while returning officers provide continuity. Chapter members contribute their wisdom and shared memories of cherished traditions. A community of belonging is fostered where every member is seen, heard, and valued.

Chapter officers do much more than run meetings and manage business. They foster meaningful member engagement and help connect members to OHSO and DKG's broader work. Through their leadership, chapters become more relevant to today's educators, more responsive to member needs, and more effective in advancing DKG's mission to promote the professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.

As the Focus Team strengthens connections among the 66 chapters, the state organization, and DKG, chapter leaders play an essential role. Chapter officers help bridge those connections by prioritizing tasks, delegating required work, sharing accurate information, mentoring emerging leaders, and promoting opportunities beyond the local chapter.

Leadership is most effective when it is shared. We encourage all members to support their officers by contributing ideas, volunteering their talents, and actively engaging in chapter life. Together, officers and members build vibrant chapters that enrich lives and strengthen the impact of OHSO and DKG.

A heartfelt salute and thank-you to all chapter officers for your dedication, leadership, and service. The Focus Team is committed to supporting you throughout the new biennium as we continue to learn, lead, and grow together.

Leadership is about making others better because of your presence and ensuring that impact lasts in your absence. - Sheryl Sandburg

Energetically,
Dr. Molly Helmlinger, Beta Kappa
OHSO State President

Article from "The Voice" July 2026

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA
Ohio State Organization

ADSOEF News:

ADSOEF will offer the Biennial Seminar event on June 16,17, and 18, 2027 in Toledo, Ohio. There will be 55 spots available, and the cost is very modest. Be ready to register when the event registration opens. Have a great time exploring the history behind Toledo, Ohio.

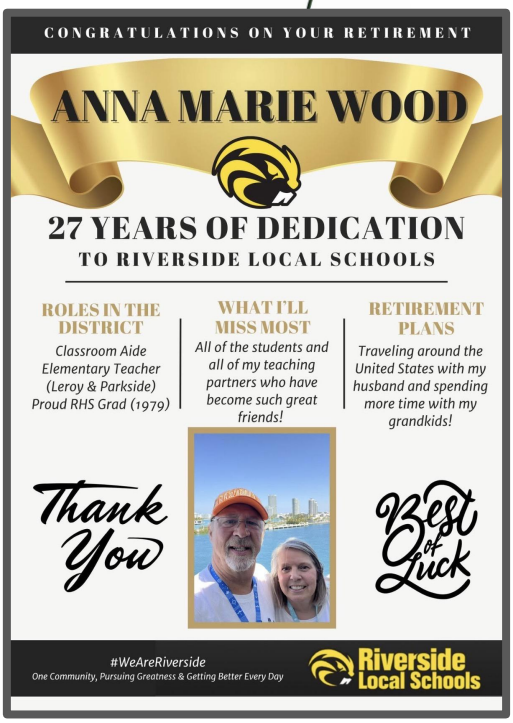
ADSOEF also has money to give away in opportunities for Scholarships, Student Teaching Scholarships, Leadership, Lifelong Learning, International Studies, and the Woodward fund. **Check out these opportunities through Carol Vargo, on the ADSOEF Web Site, or through the "Foundation Matters" monthly publication. Visit their website to find out more about all the opportunities! https://adsoef.org**

International News:

Have you visited the DKG International Website? Gather all that has happened at the International Convention. I heard the food was great, hotel wonderful, and the program has some great presenters. Please make sure you visit the website below to find out more. https://www.dkg.org/DKGSI/DKGSI/Home-Page.aspx

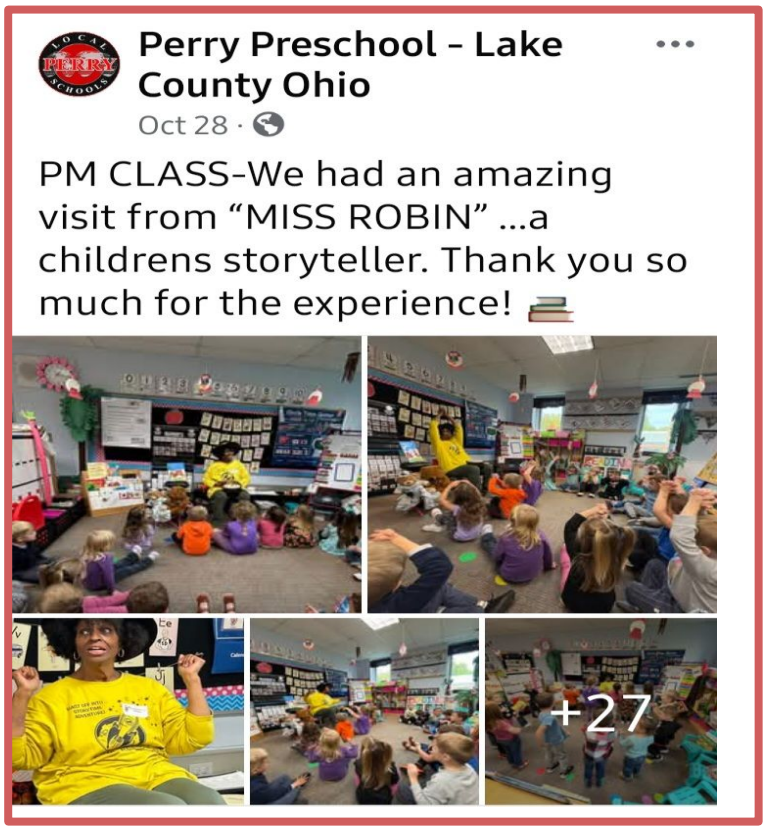
~Spotlight on Gamma Theta Members~

Congratulations Retirees...



Gamma Theta member, Robin Echols Cooper is a storyteller, and her mission is to inspire children to read, reach, imagine, and create through storytelling, creative movement, sound effects, puppetry, and music. She had the wonderful opportunity to present her Storytime Adventure program to Aimee Darnell's Peeps program at Perry Elementary, as well as Jacinta Bertone's second grade class at South Madison Elementary. The children were engaged in the interactive programs from start to finish as they donned imaginary spacesuits and blasted off in their rocket ship for a Storytime Adventure.

Robin retold the story *Corduroy* by Don Freeman and incorporated creative movement featuring shoppers, an escalator, a flashlight, and moving doors. She also retold the story *I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Pie* by Alison Jackson, using a homemade puppet with a see-through stomach complete with food. After retelling the stories, she shared the books and asked the students questions to check their comprehension. They concluded the session with creative movement set to music and sound effects.



~Spotlight on Gamma Theta Members~

With recent cuts to public education in Ohio, there have been many changes to help reduce spending, yet keep our schools operating proficiently. South Elementary in Madison, Ohio was previously a K-5 building and will be the Madison Primary School this fall, housing the Pre-School and Kindergarten through second grades. Theresa Solar, Principal and Melissa Schultz, Assistant Principal are both members of Gamma Theta Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma. They have been involved with the planning and implementation of some of the new changes in the district.

Pictured below is a structure being created by Dylan Fairbanks and his father in front of Madison Primary School. Dylan is the grandson of former Gamma Theta President, Hannah Fairbanks. This flower bed will have its own watering system and solar lighting at night. It is being dedicated to the memory and honor of those who have gone before to make the Madison Local Schools what it is today. Carol Vargo, also a DKG member and retired SLP instructor from South Elementary, is writing the message on a plaque to be placed on the stones. Watch for the completion of this project in our next issue!

Committee Reports

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Treasurer's Report

Annie Zahradnik, Chairperson

Thank you everyone for your prompt response to getting your dues in. This makes my job as treasurer so much easier. I have a number of forms that need to be filled out and having everyone's dues in makes this a simple task. Thank you to Linda Wood who served as the treasurer's assistant and financial committee chair. Her duties included auditing the books, reviewing the monthly reconciliation statements, writing vouchers, serving on the finance committee, collecting any monies, and keeping meticulous track of the checks. Having another person looking over my shoulder helps me remain accountable to all members and allows me to focus on the fiscal health of our chapter.

Jacinta Bertone will become the financial committee chair and treasurer's assistant. Linda will be the first vice president for the next two years. Thank you, Jacinta, for stepping up and willingness to learn about the financial part of our chapter. Be assured you will have the support of the officers and executive board as you step into your new role!

Finance Committee

Jacinta Bertone
Mary Ann Bittner
Linda Wood

The Finance Committee continues to work closely with Annie, the treasurer, in a supportive role. A monthly check of the account reconciliation, provided by Annie is reviewed throughout the year. Fiscal year 2025-2026 closed on June 30, 2026 and an audit of all the funds in the Checking and Savings have been accounted for. Once all dues have been collected, work will begin on the budget for fiscal year 2026-2027.
Annie and the committee will meet to discuss the budget before presenting it to the Executive Board and then to the membership at the September meeting for a vote of approval.

The Committee wants to thank Annie for her dedication to the position of treasurer, her accurate records keeping and her willingness to meet to discuss Chapter Funds with us. We look forward to continuing to work closely together.

Gamma Theta Grant-In-Aid Memorial Scholarship

Sally Vaidean Lauer, Chairperson

STAY TUNED…Find out soon how you can help to foster the education of one of tomorrow's educators!

Photo from Pixabay.com

Committee Reports

Membership Committee

Mary Battung
Mary Sleeman
Co-Chairpersons

Bring a friend and win a prize! Our September 8 meeting at Stonegait Winery is a perfect time to introduce a prospective member to DKG. You will both have a chance to win a special surprise!
The Nomination Form that is included in the Newsletter on the following page can be mailed or emailed to:

Terri Martin
97 Grand Harbor Dr.
Grand River, OH 44045
martint90@gmail.com
(PLEASE NOTE: IF EMAILING THE FORM TO TERRI, PLEASE TYPE "DKG NOMINATION" IN THE SUBJECT BOX.)

All forms must be received by October 2, 2026.
The Initiation Luncheon will be held Saturday, November 14, at Red Hawk Grille in Concord. More information to follow.

If you have any questions regarding membership, please contact Mary Battung, Mary Sleeman, or Terri Martin.

Community Outreach/Service Committee

Becky Suran, Chairperson

Free Image from pixabay.com

The Community Outreach Committee has chosen as the Chapter's project for this year to make donations to End 68 Hours of Hunger. This is a public non-profit effort to confront the approximately 68 hours of hunger that some school children experience between the free lunch they receive in school on Friday and the free breakfast they receive in school Monday.

We will be donating specifically peanut butter and jelly. Donations may be brought to the September and October meetings. PLEASE make sure your donations are in plastic jars or non-breakable tubes (NO GLASS). The donations will be taken to the center and then distributed to the children to carry home in their book bags. The goal of the organization is to collect 700 jars of both peanut butter and jelly. We hope to make a "dent" in that number of donations!

If you are unable to attend one of the two meetings, please contact someone on the committee to arrange for drop off/pick up of your donation. We thank you in advance for your generous donations to this very worthy cause. Thank you to our team on this project: Cheryl Behnke, Aimee Darnell, Debbie Green, Roberta Kalb, Marcia Searson, and Annie Zahradnik

Recommendation for Membership

Instructions:

Please complete and return this form to the appropriate level Membership Committee. For information about qualifications for membership in The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, refer to sections on membership in the *Constitution* and the *International Standing Rules*. ***Submit by Oct. 2nd***

Type of membership:

(check one) Chapter Active ____ Chapter Honorary ____ State Honorary ____ International Honorary ___

Name of Person recommended:

_____

(Title) (First) (Middle) (Last)

_____

(Street, Route, P.O. Box)

_____

(State and Country)

_____ __(____)_____ ___(____)_____

(E-Mail Address) (Telephone Number) (FAX Number)

Current position title:

_____

Employer: _____Total years as professional educator _____

Highest educational degree granted: _____ Year: _____ Field: _____

Professional accomplishments: Include items such as professional development presentations, campus or department leadership roles, published materials, offices in other organizations, honors and/or awards. (A brief professional resume may be attached to this application.)

Community activities:

Endorsed by one or more members:

Signature Required | Chapter | State | Date

_____

Optional

_____

Optional

_____

Committee Reports

Gamma Theta Scholarship
Sally Jo Rogus

Free image from Pixabay.com

Gamma Theta would like to help get the new school year off to a good start for active DKG teachers. At the beginning of each of new school year $100 scholarships can be awarded to active DKG educators. Scholarship information and an application follow on the next page of this newsletter. **Complete and return the Gamma Theta Scholarship application to Committee Chairperson-Sally Rogus (mailing address is 390 West Main Street, Madison, OH 44057) no later than October 15, 2026. She will respond to you when she receives it. If you do not get a response, please contact Sally. Scholarships will be announced at the Initiation Meeting in November.** Committee members include: Carol Vargo, Pam Richmann, Betty Jo Malchesky, Anita Daniels, Angela Smith, and Sally Jo Rogus. Barb Dolan and Annie Zahradnik are also represented. **Here's to wishing our sisters a wonderful and successful school year!**

Successful Gamma Theta Fundraiser

Gamma Theta Chapter filled the Goodwill truck in Madison, Ohio, in three hours on a Saturday with the help of the Open Door Coffee shop, members of Gamma Theta and their many friends who want to support local women educators in Lake County. Thank you to Park Methodist Church for allowing us to use their parking lot and facility. Thank you to Esmond and Shawn from Goodwill who helped load the truck. We sincerely appreciate the many people who dropped off their wares. It was an overwhelming great team effort!! We believe we met our goal of $1,500 towards Gamma Theta scholarships for active teachers in our organization!

~FUNDRAISER TO BENEFIT ACTIVE TEACHERS~

Please join us at **Chick-Fil-A in Mentor on Wednesday, October 7, 2026 from 4:00 to** 8:00 PM. Proceeds will go toward Gamma Theta active teacher scholarships. More information is coming.

Gamma Theta Scholarship Application

Please submit by October 15th.

Actively teaching members of Gamma Theta are eligible to receive the **$100.00 scholarship.**
Briefly complete the information below and return to the Gamma Theta Scholarship Committee.

Purpose: To provide assistance to our currently teaching sisters for anything needed within the classroom environment or for Professional Development.

The following things are examples of but not limited to what the money can be used for:

Classroom books, storage containers/bins, dry erasers, white boards, stickers, treasure box items, snacks/candy, folders, binders, chair bags , art/craft supplies, office supplies, special project items, and professional development fees not covered by the school district.

Name: Address:

Position: School:

Phone: Email:

Date:

How or what will the money be used for?

Application was approved: Date:

DKG Theta Meetings

Looking Back~Going Forward

Education, Fellowship, Service

***The Annual Membership Appreciation Night held Tues., Feb. 11th** with a Valentine's theme was a huge success! Thanks to the team of Barb Hogan, Linda Lanese, Karie Matejka, Kathy Watson, and Linda Wood for planning the event.

***The March 10th meeting was relaxing. Leading us with Chair Yoga was Maria Petrasko, SLP in Painesville Schools.** Being a breast cancer survivor has taught her the importance of relaxation and the appreciation of life.

At the April 14th meeting, Ernie Richmann discussed living with Type I and II diabetes. He shared the important role of caregivers and keeping active.

Maria sharing relaxation techniques and fellowship with DKG members.

Earnie Richmann Educates DKG members by sharing his experiences with Diabetes.

DKG SEPTEMBER KICK-OFF MEETING

The Gamma Theta Executive Board wishes to invite you to our Kick-0ff meeting at Stonegait Winery at the corner of Bates Rd. and Rt. 307 in Madison, Ohio. This "meet and greet" get-together will be Tuesday, September 8th from 4:30-6:30 in the large room in the back. Pizza, water, and cookies will start to be served at about 5:00. You will be responsible for your own drinks. Please RSVP with an email to Sally Rogus by August 28th: sally.rogus060@gmail.com. Looking forward to a great event/year!

Sally Jo Rogus

~SAVE THE DATE~

On Saturday, May 15, 2027 we will be hosting the May Tri-Chapter Brunch at the Lake County Historical Society in Painesville Twp. Many details will be coming to you over the next few months. We ask that all Chapter members participate in this event with donations and by attending the brunch, where you will have the chance to win lovely baskets, eat delicious foods, to hear Danita Harris, WKYC news anchor and visit with all your fellow sisters from not only our Chapter but also Chapters from western Lake and Geauga County.

ALL of the money raised from the sale of tickets for the basket bonanza goes directly to the Gamma Theta Memorial Grant-in-Aid. This fund is then used to award grants to juniors and seniors majoring in education at an accredited college or university. The money we will raise must last for three years until we once again host the event.

Please be thinking of how you would like to participate with a donation for the basket bonanza. You may make a donation in one of three ways:
1. Make a complete basket alone or with a friend valued about $25-$75.
2. Gather Items for a basket and give it to the committee to arrange into a basket.
3. Make a cash donation and the committee will go out and do the shopping to create a basket.
Sign-up sheets will be available at the meetings or you may contact a member of the committee to let them know of your willingness to make a donation. Thank you. See you on May 15, 2027!
Dianne Cross, Pat Hall-Miller, Barb Hogan, Pam Martin, Dianna Misich, and Linda Wood

Gamma Theta Volunteer Opportunities to Help Support Active Teachers

.

The following are specific requests from active Gamma Theta teachers. Please contact the teacher(s) directly if you can volunteer in their classroom. It is our hope that, together, we can meet the needs of our active teachers.

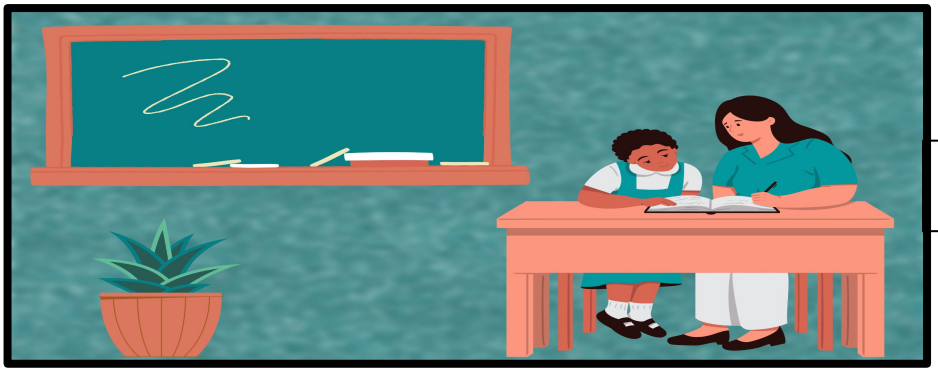
***Gretchen Baptie** would love to have volunteers to read with students and practice math facts. She could use help with cutting, assembling, and sorting projects. She would welcome donations of snacks and the small disposable bottles of water for the classroom snack cupboard!

*Reach out to **Aimee McCracken** if you are available to be a senior reader! She will send out the orientation information for this unique program. Aimee would also welcome members that want to share their experiences or expertise to volunteer to work with her and her students on various projects.

*Get in touch with **Kathy Quick** if you are interested in volunteering in her classroom and helping with constructing small-group hands-on activities and/or working with struggling students. She would love our members to support her school by donating to the library, sponsoring the walkathons, and helping with Bingo events.

***Terri Martin** would love for DKG members to volunteer in her classroom by reading with students, serving as mystery readers during library time and providing extra one-on-one support during literacy activities. She shared that DKG could make a wonderful impact by volunteering to read with students in the primary grades and supporting schoolwide literacy initiatives. Perhaps we could help by sponsoring and helping staff a literacy night or sponsoring a shelf/display case in the school with books of interest for both students and parents.

***Jacinta Bertone** shared that the grants she received through ADSOEF and DKG were much appreciated and she looks forward to applying for and receiving more grants in the future. This is encouraging to other teachers.



Free image from pixabay.com

Gamma Theta DKG Monthly Calendar Of Events for 2026-2027

Month and Date	Event	Location	Time	Organizer(s)
September 8,2026	Kick-Off Meeting Bring a Guest to be entered into a drawing. Pizza Provided Cash Bar	Stonegait Winery 4275 Bates Rd. Madison, Ohio	4:30- 6:30 P.M.	Sally and Executive Bd. Members **R.S.V.P. your name and guest name to Sally Rogus at Sally.rogus060@gmail.com** **Community Service Project:** **Bring PB &J to the meeting** **No Glass containers.**
October 13, 2026	Meeting at Concord Community Center NAMI Speaker-Matt Selker (National Alliance on Mental Illness)	Concord Community Center 7671 Auburn Rd. Painesville, Ohio 44077	5:30-7:30 P.M.	Pam Martin **Community Service Project-Bring P,P&J items to meeting.** **No Glass containers!**
October 19,2026	New Member Orientation	TBA	4-5:00 P.M.	Barb Dolan and Executive Committee
November 14, 2026	Initiation- Program: Christ Child Program and Style Show. **Cost $25.00**	Redhawk Grille 7481 Auburn Rd. Painesville,Ohio 44077	10:30-1:00 P.M.	Membership Committee Send reservations and payments to: **Jacinta Bertone** **1027 Skinner Ave.** **Painesville, Ohio 44077** **Deadline:** **Oct. 31, 2026**
January 23, 2027	Executive Meeting	Ana's Attic	10:30-Noon	Barb Dolan and executive Committee
February 9, 2027	Membership Appreciation Fun Night	Spats 9853 Johnnycake Ridge Rd. Mentor, Ohio 44060	5:30-7:30 P.M.	Angela Smith and Madison Team
March 9, 2027	Topic-Dyslexia Speaker: Becky Malias, Riverside Educator	Concord Community Center 7671 Auburn Rd. Painesville, Ohio	5:30-7:30 P.M.	Pam Martin
April 13, 2027	Topic: "Downsize and Thrive" (Decluttering) Speaker, Mick Jendrisak Prepare for the June 5th Fundraiser!	Concord Community Center 7671 Auburn Rd. Painesville, Ohio 44077	5:30-7:30	Pam Martin
May 15, 2027	Tri-Chapter Speaker: Danita Harris Topic:TBA	Lake County History Center- Heritage Hall 415 Riverside Dr. Painesville, Ohio 44077	10:00-1:00	Pam Martin- Send reservation and payment to: **Jacinta Bertone** **1027 Skinner Ave.** **Painesville, Ohio 44077** Amt. $25.00 **Make sure to include the chapter name, Gamma Theta, on the memo line.**
June 5, 2027	Teacher Grant Fundraiser -Goodwill Collection	Park Methodist Church in Madison 31 Park St.	1:00-5:00 P.M. Free Pastries at noon!	Sally Rogus