

# 2009 State Convention in Topeka, Kansas "Free To Be Joyful"

Presiding State President - Joy Thornbrugh  
April 30- May 3, 2009

A "Joyful" time was had by all at the 64th Annual Kansas State Convention at the Ramada Inn in downtown Topeka. The convention committee and members of District A hosted a wonderful weekend full of celebrating the accomplishments made this year after accepting President Joy's challenge "Free To Be."

Thursday, April 30, 2009



It is a time for the gathering and preparation for the events to come. The registration chairman, Linda Schmidt, prepared the registration table for over 200 members and guests to attend the convention. Ann Johnson (left) prepared the credentials for the voting delegates. The Executive Board met for one last time to celebrate the achievements of the year and finalize convention activities. Mostly it is just a relaxing social time



together. The candidates that ran for office gave 30 minutes of their time to practice for the infamous candidates skit that was to be presented at the Friday night mixer. You never want to practice too much because it would take the fun out of being unprepared. (Pictured right) There will be a mystery guest or two that stumbles into a luncheon or some other event to make life interesting.

Friday, May 1, 2009



Convention activities begin in earnest Friday morning. Display rooms for Association of the Arts, Scrapbooks, Yearbooks, and Educational notebooks open to check in exhibits and prepare for judging. The final Kansas State Council meeting of the year will be held in the morning followed by the Board of Director's luncheon. It is a time to say

thank you for all the work that was accomplished by the board in 2008-2009.



## First General Assembly

The First General Assembly was opened with a beautiful flag ceremony presented by Maureen Wells, Lamplighter President. Among special guests introduced were Rose Pasillas, IC Treasurer and IC Representative and former Kansas State Council member Jan Faulkner, 2008-2009 North Carolina State President.

Sue Friedel presented the 2009 Junior High Youth Award Winner, Nicole K. Yau. Nicole read her winning essay. This young woman is a very outstanding youth we can be very proud of in Kansas. Nicole is pictured on the right with her parents.

## Leadership & Dinner Workshops

Three workshops were given in round robin style for members to attend. Rose Pasillas, IC Treasurer presented, "Feel the Joy ... A Fun Workshop"; Verneene Forssberg, State Technology Director, presented, "Free to be ... a Technogeek"; and Bonnie Templeton, State Workshop Coordinator presented, "Free to be Creative ... Make-n-take". All three workshops were hands-on type presentations.



Chapter Presidents, District Chairs, and Lamplighters gathered in assigned rooms for dinner workshops. (Right)

The incoming State President, Pat Josey, presents to the incoming chapter presidents on the right. They learned how to conduct their office and lead their chapters in the coming year.

## Mehl wins the St Jude Children's Research Hospital Benefit Tractor Races



After dinner everyone moved to the Atrium Area for the Benefit Tractor Races for St. Jude Children's Hospital. Riding children's tractors are not as easy as it looks, especially the ones that "buck" you off. As you can see from



the group photo many of our ESA members were brave enough to give it a try. Even some of the men couldn't resist the fun but the worst part of the event was when our Texas IC representative drove her tractor across the line while leaving our State President peddling far behind. (Oh, the shame of it all - losing to Texas!) (Pictured Left with Brenda Love) The Event winner was Brandi (Wilson)Mehl. (Pictured right with Brandi) The Second place was Sherry Biddle from District C. This event made \$2,120 for the children and the hospital. It was all great fun and the hotel guests were quite amused with the festivities as well.



### Friday Night Mixer - Free to Be Best Friends"



The mixer followed with candidates lip-syncing to music associated with the office they were bidding for. On the left, best friends, Pat Josey and Judy Ahrens portray Sonny and Cher and sing "I got you Babe". Pat doesn't look too bad with a mustache. On the right our IC representative from Texas brought the house down with



her rendition of "These boots were made for walkin." The Ways and Means committee completed the evening by auctioning off donated baskets and giving everyone a chance to bid on many silent auction items.

Saturday, May 2, 2009

### Second General Assembly

President Joy called the second general assembly to order on Saturday morning where candidates for office were introduced and nominations were made from the floor for two candidates running for Workshop Coordinator: Crystal Collinsworth and Barbara Smithl. While voting was in process the St. Jude Circle of Life presentation was given by ALSAC representative, Niki Leonard. She expressed her appreciation for the work of ESA and then introduced the St. Jude family. It was difficult to determine which of our speakers was the most motivational after a touching story from our St. Jude patient. (Right) Little 11-year-old Taylor Heersche stood before the convention without notes and gave a speech thanking ESA for her life that made your heart stand on end. She was absolutely wonderful. Taylor



was accompanied by her grandparents, Mr. & Mrs. John and Millie Hastings from Derby, Kansas. Taylor lives in Mulvane, Kansas and takes her cancer treatments in Wichita. She shared how she discovered she had leukemia, the protocol for her treatment and her progress. She loves to attend Camp Hope every year where she encourages other children with cancer. Taylor is what our work for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is all about. This is a truly outstanding young lady and she has a bright future ahead of her.

## **HA! HA! HA! - HO! HO! HO! - HEE! HEE! HEE! Laughter aerobics for Healthy living"**



Judy Young, convention keynote speaker, shared the benefits of laughter without humor for convention attendees. Young is rapidly becoming known as “the expert” on laughter research. She offers a vast array of experiences in training, public speaking, business management, sales and marketing. Young has helped many achieve their goals of increased productivity through her training programs. She has developed and implemented several training programs in communication skills, conducting classroom training and workshops for skills enhancement. Young is a member in good standing with the National Speaker’s Association and a Certified Consultant for Prairie View.

"Laughter not only helps fight disease it boosts quality of life by improving sleep, reducing stress levels and aiding pain management, just to name a few of its benefits." According to Young, laughter can help a person in many health related ways:

- Those who laugh most often have a significantly lower risk for heart disease.
- Research shows that your blood chemistry can be changed to protect against disease and depression.
- Blood flow is increased by 22 percent during laughter
- Laughter engages the brain – stimulating both creative and analytical capacities at the same time.
- Laughter lowers blood sugar in people with Type 2 diabetes.
- Laughter lowers stress and the body’s ability to fend off viruses and bacteria



Put through the laughter exercises, ESA members not only learned a lot about how to laugh aerobically, they had a lot of fun also. Young brought the house down with her laughter exercises.

### Celebration Luncheon - "Free to be Adventurous"



Pictured left: Alyssa Buxman, the Kansas Outstanding Senior High Youth winner was honored at the Awards luncheon. Alyssa was also named the International Outstanding Youth Award Winner for Epsilon Sigma Alpha International. Alyssa Buxman is the daughter of Scott and Annette Buxman. She is from Ulysses and was nominated by Delta Delta, Ulysses. She will attend Washburn University in Topeka this fall and major in elementary education. This young woman is truly outstanding and has a great

future ahead of her. ESA is proud to select her for this wonderful youth recognition program. Everyone in Kansas is thrilled to say the least that this year's International Youth Award goes to one of its own.

Mistress of ceremonies, Kerri Cole, Awards and Celebrations Chairman, led the Awards celebration giving many awards to chapters and individuals. Clara and her "membership bee's" honored 79 new members to Kansas ESA along with many other awards. Our convention photographer Jerry Hymer took many pictures and groups attending the luncheon. *(To order convention photographs go to his website at [hymmerphotography@msn.com](mailto:hymmerphotography@msn.com) and go to the Kansas State Convention).* All awards given this year are listed on the Honors page.



### Installation & Banquet - "Free to be Elegant"

Immediately following the luncheon it was time to get ready for the evening banquet and installation of officers. In place of a dance again this year, the Sunflower Harmony Sweet Adeline's provided the

entertainment by singing several songs from their collection. The newly elected officers and District Chairman were installed. The Kansas Lamplighters in attendance take a moment to get their photo taken as well. Newly elected President Pat Josey, from Overland Park, gave the keynote speech. She introduced her new theme for the year, "ESA, the Sweet Life."



Sunday, May 3, 2009

**Third General Assembly - "Free to be Sweet"**



Sunday morning came bright and early with the Celebration of Life Service, conducted by Chaplain Crystal Collinsworth. Pat Josey and crew were busy handing out board packets to the incoming Board of Directors in the atrium and everyone was getting ready for the morning brunch.



Joy called the third and final assembly to order as everyone enjoyed a brunch and more awards. On Sunday morning service awards for 25 years and up are honored. (left) Shelah Goyer will get her pin for 40 years of service. (right) A 25th Anniversary Renewal Ceremony was held in honor of Delta Epsilon, #5041. Delta Epsilon was chartered on October 27, 1983 in Rose Hill



Kansas, with 15 charter members. Three of the original members remain active today: Cindy Rodman, Sue Tanner and Claudia Richardson. Delta Epsilon currently has 18 members!!! They renewed their vows to ESA on Sunday. The highlight of the convention is always the anticipation of the most prestigious award: Outstanding Chapter for the year. This year's winner was Beta Beta, Andover.

The meeting was closed with all joining hands and reciting the closing ritual. Preparation is already beginning for next year in Olathe. Make plans now – you don't want to miss it.