

POWER OF THE DREAM



“A History of ESA & ESA in Kansas
over the past Seven Decades

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For
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(To be read at her convention events)

April 23, 1999

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“Our ESA lives in America” History of ESA and ESA in Kansas

(The 1930s)

ESA began as a National Reading Society in 1929 by Adelia Prichard. It was a time of the roaring 20s and the fateful stock market crash which will plunge America into a deep and painful depression. Dr. M. Freeda Lotz was the very first president of a chapter chartered in Colorado. The depression didn't seem to hamper the growth of ESA as it reached 38 states with 400 chapters during the 30s. Although the depression will most profoundly impact the financial policies of the organization and most likely as a direct result of the economic situation ESA chapters began to donate a lot of time and money to philanthropic activities.

Nationally ESA members, like others, lived their lives under the New Deal in the 30s and 40s. It was a time for small advances for women as Frances Perkins became the first female Secretary of Labor on FDR's cabinet.

Kansas chapters were formed in the 1930s in Hutchinson, Salina, Topeka, and Wichita. The first chapter to be chartered was Omicron from Sauna chartered in 1930. Two of the original chapters still remain active today: Iota Kappa and Iota Mu in Wichita. Operating without a Kansas State Council, chapters of the 30s seldom, if ever, joined each other in group functions.

As a reading society, the 1930s membership was sure to pick up the Pulitzer Prize for Literature by John Steinbeck called, “The Grapes of Wrath.” Lady Lindy - Amelia Earhart - became an American Heroine by becoming the first female to fly the Atlantic solo. While the movie screens were filled with Shirley Temple, Greta Garbo, and John Berrymore, Adolf Hitler was winning widespread following for his National Socialists in Germany. “Babe” Didrikson and Jesse Owens, remarkable sports stars of the 1930s, will lead America to gold in the 1932 Olympics under the watchful & critical eye of Adolph Hitler.

Kansas has taken its place from the beginning supporting the efforts of the Epsilon Sigma Alpha. The original headquarters was established in Kansas City. The National convention was held in Kansas City at the Muehelbach hotel in 1938 where two of our local women were installed as national officers: Phillis Kimmell from McPherson, Kansas was installed as 2nd Vice President and Beulah Metz from Kansas City was installed as Recording Secretary. This was also the convention that May 1 was established as Founder's Day for ESA.

(The 1940s)

The economic situation continued to be hard as Americans opened the 1940s with the first selective service lottery, just a short year away from the Bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. ESA members turned their attention to the war efforts of America and addressing the devastation that war brings to everyone it touches. Dances for soldiers, relief programs for Italian orphans, working in VA hospitals, entertaining wounded service men, joining the WAVEs or other military institutions, working to replace our men at arms in the work place, and gas rationing pretty much replaced ESA in their lives.

After World War II ends, they will once again return to building ESA in their lives but there was activity in the 1940s. In 1941, Iota Kappa and Iota Mu will host the National Advisory Council convention in Wichita. Dixie and Bob Palmer will become associated with ESA. During WWH, The Palmer's will have a calming impact on ESA. The Palmer's ranch in Loveland will figure prominently in the decision to move the ESA Headquarters from Kansas City to Loveland, Colorado in 1941.

In 1944 FDR is re-elected for an unprecedented fourth term as President of the United States. Aging and ill, America's beloved President will pass away not more than a year from his inauguration. This is a devastating blow to Americans.

Moving into a new phase of growth, the Kansas State Council is established in 1946 at Hutchinson, Kansas. Zura Crockette-Dittman, Iota Kappa, will lead its efforts as President for the first two years. Pauline Cowger is elected President in 1949. Ms. Dittman will divide Kansas into eight zones where 46 chapters resided and were having a difficult time staying active since it was just following the War. In an effort to maintain contact, Kansas will start the first state publication called the "News & Views. In 1947 Kansas will select the Institute of Logopedics as its state philanthropic project.

In 1947 two more Kansas members will run for national office. Bethry Porter - Ingram will serve as Second Vice President but will be defeated when she runs for the office of national president. Faye Jordan, Iota Mu, would have served as her corresponding secretary. In 1948 the first International Council is established by the Palmers and they become the International Founders of ESA International.

The 1940s were filled with mixed emotions. The Manhattan Project was taking place in secret under football stadiums as Albert Einstein led America toward becoming a nuclear power. The Enola Gay will drop the first Atom Bomb on Hiroshima in 1945 to help end the war but unleash a generation filled with uncertainty. It will be the beginning of the Cold War as Winston Churchill

comes to America and tells us that, “M Iron Curtain has descended across Europe.” Israel will declare its independence and the Truman Doctrine will promise American aid in case of military threats to European stability.

It is an age of uncertainty and celebration. America has emerged out of the 1940s as the number one super power in the World and ESA is just beginning to realize “The Power of the Dream.”

(The 1950s)

One of the most significant technological developments for the ESA membership and America in the 50s was the introduction of commercial jet liners which will make air travel both faster and more affordable. ESA will make its ways through the friendly skies from the mid 50s on. And Boeing 707s will revolutionize air travel not to mention put a lot of ESA members to work in Wichita, Kansas. And remember those telephones? You had to switch between letters and numbers that turned on a rotary dial with your finger.

Hey fellas! Remember those nasty haircuts? Butch wax and Brylcream made men’s haircuts rather disgusting. Haircuts were cheap at the barbershop but you got what you paid for. Brylcream - “A little dab will do Ya.”

The great ladies who will lead the Kansas State Council in the 1950s were Grace Stoner, Mildred Keller, Jessie Little, Beryle Elliott, Faye Jordan, Kay Lavelle, Irene Ramsey, Hazel Hayes, Jerry Phillips, and Mary Booe. I am sure that they would be the first to tell you that petticoats were almost as great as an inhibition to sex as pantyhose were in the 60s. They also dealt with harsh, smelly, frizzy, permanents which made hair styling a nightmare.

In 1955 Faye Jordan and Lucille Harr Crossno will co-chair the International Convention at the Broadview Hotel in Wichita where Jessie McAdoo Little, a Kansas member from Alpha Alpha, Dodge City will be elected International President. Jessie was instrumental in the establishment of the Disaster Fund which aids ESA members in time of needs. The fund was begun with a request for 25 cent per ESA member. It has grown to become one of the most important aspects to the membership of ESA today. Philanthropic activities will reach an all time high in the 50s with chapter’s donation close to a million dollars to various philanthropic projects.

In 1957 the Kansas State Council joined the Kansas Council of Women. This council was made up of 29 other women organizations in Kansas and has national affiliations.

ESA dynamics and focus will be impacted by the times we live in. The SOs will see higher education change its social and educational patterns. Married student

housing makes education a family affair on campuses and curriculum demands were for more math and science. If you were a kid in the 50s and wanted to do something you had to get permission from both of your parents since both of them lived with you. And what about those bomb drills? They were really stupid in school because huddling under a Formica table wouldn't save you from incineration or radiation poisoning.

Thurgood Marshall will argue the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. And Rosa Parks will refuse to accept a place at the back of the bus ushering in a period of civil unrest across America.

I feel sure that it had to be an ESA member (although I can't find her name) that developed the design concept of the first shopping centers as suburban living takes over our lives. Many of our dream homes will be built with "bomb shelters" as a part of the basement and Dr. Jonas Salk develop the Salk polio vaccine in 1955. There were no videos so you had to go to a movie theater to see a movie, which had one screen and one movie for a month.

Television begins to replace the radio as the important source of information and entertainment such as "Father Knows Best" is the best known and most popular program. Lawrence Welk, Pat Boone and Ralph Edwards will become honorary members of ESA as Bob Hope and Howdy Doody fill the airways. Marilyn Monroe, James Dean, Georgery Peck, Dick Clark and the wonderful Elvis Presley will revolutionize our teenagers and the sexual revolution. But don't forget Ernest Borginine won an academy award and "Fats" Domino will combine rock en roll and rhythm and blues. Jackie Robinson will be the first African American to play major league baseball for the Brooklyn Dodgers as ESA begins to rim like a "well oiled" machine. ESA Week is designated as May 1 through May 7 in 1959 when Buddy Holly was putting Texas on the rock-en roll map when he decided to try to fly through an Iowa snowstorm.

(The 1960s)

The great ladies that will lead the Kansas State Council in the 1960s are Lois Mayall, Betty Guthrie, Louise Woods, Bonnie Gunter, Velma Harness, Dee Quade, Katy Mills, Kathleen Lutz, and Gladys shook.

It was really cool in these days to let a cigarette dangle from your lip when a committee of experts appointed by the American Heart Association links smoking to cancer. You had to wait at the gas pumps for someone to gas up your car. And boxing was a real sport without ear biting.

The first IC Flag ceremony to open an IC convention was held and began a rich tradition into the 21st century. Other firsts in the 60s included the First Pearl

and Pallas Athene awards program and the Diana Award was introduced in 1969 to recognize female humanitarians outside the ESA membership. Dr. Jonas Salk was also taken into ESA as an honorary member of ESA for his humanitarian activities in 1969

Disneyland will open in California and Charlton Heston will be our religious teacher showing us what Ben Hur and Moses were like. The “gourmet food revolution” gave us escargot, fondue, and soufflés. Fresh vegetables were limited to lettuce and potatoes with everything else coming from a 303 can.

Kansas kept its interest in International involvement when Irene Ramsey was elected IC President in 1966 - 67. Irene’s involvement with the promotion of the Pallas Athene program was significant.

But most important fashion of the age was the new pointy bras and our 18 inch waist lines were achieved through the miracle of latex girdles. The most important theory of the day was: Sexual repression meant that J Edgar Hoover couldn’t wear a dress unless he was at home, but we didn’t know that for years.

(The 1970s)

The nation was still reeling from the assassinations of John Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Gandhi, and Robert Kennedy as we began the 1970s. President Johnson had taken America into the “Great Society” and the disastrous Vietnam War. It will be a harsh time for Americans as they struggle with our involvement in an unpopular war. Joan Baez was singing folk songs with lyrics of protest against social injustice and students will be killed at Kent State protesting the war. Nixon will be elected in 1968, get America out of the Vietnam War, open diplomatic relations with China, and bring the office of the presidency to disgrace because of Watergate in his second term. America was emotionally wounded during these years.

The great ladies that led the Kansas State Council in the 1970s were Lorita Von Niederhausern, Maxine McKeever, Anne Langenfeld, Jean Wells, Betty Spicer Hawkins, Dotty Keenan, Mary Daniels, Florence Ellis, Joan Friend and Opal Regier.

ESA will meet Danny Thomas in 1970 and make him an honorary member. This will be the beginning of a long love affair between Danny, St. Jude, and ESA. In 1972, IC will adopt St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and pledge to raise a million dollars. We will reach that goal in four years. Remember the Million Dollar Bike Rides? Our own (Jeri Benton will assist IC with these bike rides and ESA will be featured on the Mike Douglas show.

Significantly, IC President Barbara Skorney urges us to “make ESA relevant for

the modern woman.” This was the year that ESA coordinated its first nationwide project: A POW-MIA letter writing campaign to free Viet Nam prisoners of war. Over one million letters will be sent by members.

Firsts for ESA in the 70s included the addition of the Association of the Arts and the Certified Leadership Training Seminars.

Armstrong and Aldrin will be a bright spot as Neil Armstrong will become the first man to set foot on the moon. The space race was in full swing. International Relations improved with the Camp David Accords being a genuine breakthrough for Middle East diplomacy but the Ayatollah will hold American embassy people hostage for a year and Reagan will defeat Carter in 1980.

As ESA begins to prepare for the “Spirit of 76” - Bicentennial celebration, ground is broken on the ESA World Center. The ribbon cutting will be held in 1976 but the building will be sold in 1978. Although it had a rocky start the ESA Foundation will receive its 501 C 3 recognition from the IRS in 1971. It was led by Irene Ramsey from Wichita, Kansas that year as Chairman of the Board. The Foundation will establish the Women Helping Women, ADAPT, and the Scholarship Program will get a slow beginning in the 70s.

1979 will mark 50 years of ESA and the Golden Jubilee with 1600 chapters and 25,000 members. This same year Kansas ESA members receive the Martin F. Palmer award presented by the Institute of Logopedics for outstanding service and contributions given through concern for communicatively handicapped children and adults. At this point in time our members had contributed well over a half million dollars in money and gifts in kind to the Institute.

ESA will turn into a worldwide sisterhood, spreading too many corners of the globe over the years. Chapters in 15 countries have come and gone with only Australia remaining as our international link where there are 30 chapters today. The last international chapters were established in the 70s in New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Mexico, and Scotland. These chapters were preceded by chapters formed in Canada, Holland, England, Scotland, Mexico, Alaska and Hawaii (pre-statehood), West Germany, Denmark, Guam, Peru, and Australia.

(The 1980s)

As the 1980s began, the profile of the ESA member was a woman working outside the home, most of us came from a small town, and we were highly educated women. Thirty percent of us were professionals, 13% were in management, 11% were small business owners and 5.7% of us were in sales.

ESA will make its first million dollars in a single year which was a fitting celebration for our Golden Jubilee held in Denver Colorado. The first man on

the moon, Neil Armstrong will recognize ESA accomplishments with a signed Lithograph entitled “Nothing is impossible.” Six of the oldest active chapters of ESA are recognized in Denver that year. Three of them were from Kansas: Omicron, Salina; Iota Kappa & Iota Mu from Wichita. Our own Pauline Cowger, Omicron chapter will receive her 50 year pin. And Our IC candidate, Florence Ellis will be elected to the office of IC Parliamentarian.

The great ladies that led the Kansas State Council in the 1980s were Joyce Mans, Jean Beetem, Judy Ary, Marilyn Herren, Geri Benton, Joan Bourn, Kay Ross, Verneene Forssberg, Shirley Campbell, and Coleen Cape.

ESA discovers VOLUNTEER - The National Center for Citizen Involvement in the 80s. Volunteer promoted and developed volunteer sectors with expertise in citizen mobilization, leadership training, organizational development, network building, information exchange and public awareness. Kansas will establish the Kansas Roadrunner Volunteer program headed by Joan Bourn. ESA fits right into this dynamics as it recorded 639,106 hours and \$1,989,287 in philanthropy in 1980. Members also helped their own to the tune of \$43,650.

Kappa Rho, Dodge City will gain recognition for their “Indian Harvest” festival which raised money for the needy and celebrated Native American heritage. In 1982, Doyleene Freizen, Sonya Allen, Ceillia Miller, and Pat Hickok of Sigma Tau make history as they lead Zone 5 in a record breaking radiothon, raising \$40,000 for St Jude. It was the highest amount raised for a radiothon and the fourth highest amount raised for a single St. Jude event. Theta Pi Jetmore will be recognized for distributing Lifesaver tags for children with information about the child in the event of an emergency.

The Omnibus Reconciliation Act signed by President Carter will prohibit programs like Medicare and Medicaid from reducing payment to hospital which receive grants, gifts, and endowment not designated for a specific use. This made the money ESA raised for St. Jude and other hospitals mean more. It was in 1982 when Joan Friend, Plainville Kansas, who was serving as the IC Philanthropic Chairman, will announce that ESA reported giving \$3,047,786 philanthropically. This same year the International Council will adopt Easter Seal as a second philanthropic project.

Kansas was proud once more in 1983; Joan Friend will be elected IC Parliamentarian, taking the first step to the IC Presidency in 1988-89. Joan Bourn will serve as Corresponding Secretary. We were equally proud of our Kay Foster as she led national efforts to support St. Jude as an IC St. Jude Circle of life coordinator. Kay will proudly announce to a cheering crowd of ESA Members that we had raised \$10 million dollars for St. Jude. Verneene Forssberg will also serve two years as Membership Director at the national level in the 80s.

In 1985 the PIPC auxiliary will recognize a Kansas Sister for 55 years of active participation. The Kansas delegation rose with pride at the IC convention as Pauline Cowger was given special recognition and an honorary membership in ESA by Mike Bums. This will be the same year ESA's Dixie Palmer will pass away and Dixie Palmer Founders training seminars will begin for the purpose of forming new chapters.

The ESA Foundation will continue to progress during the 80s with cosponsorships and the first Perpetual Scholarship Endowments were established. Sue Peckham, Beta Epsilon - Frankfort and Charlene Hansen, Beta Theta -Horton will serve on the Board of Directors and on committees to aid in the growth of the Foundation's projects. Anne Langenfeld a past Kansas President will devote 14 years to the progress of the Foundation. Although we had lost her to the New Mexico State Council by this time she was still a Kansas product. The motto, "Serving the World Community - Because We Care" will be adopted in 1989.

ESA will establish its "doctorate" degree by announcing the 6th Degree Pallas Athene for members who want to achieve beyond the 5th degree. And ESA expands its membership to the collegiate level when the first chapter is chartered at Indiana State University. Kansas was not far behind as Verneene Forssberg chartered Gamma Delta Phi, the second collegiate chapter at Pratt Community College. Followed by Collegiate chapters at Barton County Community College, Kansas State University, and Independence Community College

Our relationship with the Institute of Logopedics continued to grow through the years with the membership contributing more in money and gifts in kind for the residential shower and classrooms at the Institute each year. Kansas will ask and receive approval to add Dr. Frank Kleffner to the honorary membership roles of ESA International. In 1985, the Adopt a child program was added giving members an opportunity to work individually with an assigned child. In 1987 the Kansas State Council broke ground on the ESA Court on the campus of the Institute of Logopedics giving ESA in Kansas recognition for their many years of financial and emotional support for the children of the JUL.

ESA members in Kansas have had a history of participating in politics in the 80s as well. Enice Lesser, Zeta Phi in Junction City became the city's mayor with a unanimous vote serving three terms. Kay Ross will become a probate judge in Plainville and continue serving into the 90s. Kansas was the first state to allow women to vote in municipal elections way before they had the national franchise so we consider ourselves ground breakers in the area of politics.

(The 1990s)

The 90s will begin without B. Robert Palmer. Passing away in January of 1989, Palmer had contributed greatly to the strength and scope of ESA and its many projects. It was the end of a grand association. The 1990s have been a time for conservative politics as the republicans won control of both houses of congress but lost the presidency to the Democrats and Bill Clinton. President Bush will recapture American pride and brought an end to the crisis of confidence with the Persian Gulf War in 1991. ESA headquarters will create the Vision Award to recognize people of vision.

The ESA Foundation will celebrate its 25th Anniversary and stand proudly with its accomplishments of an outstanding Endowment program. Kansas has two fully endowed scholarships it financially supports: The Kansas State Council Endowment and the Linda Cronin/ Epsilon Eta Endowment. Many Kansas Students benefit from the Foundation's endowment program which is supported by over \$600,000 in assets. The new ADAPT grant will support teacher training and a new and revised Women Helping Women program is now actively used by the membership.

The great ladies that led the Kansas State Council in the 1990s were Kay Foster, Charlene Hanson, Margaret Shook, Donna Dawson, Shelya Goyer, Susan White, Mary Hill, Helen Stitt, Karen Lowery and our current state president Cindy Rodman.

The homeless and welfare issues plague us and our own craft impaired BJ Clark puts us to work making hats for hope, to insure that little children and adults can keep warm. ESA's Warm Welcome Program made a multitude of Baby blankets made and donated so a child could be brought home from the hospital in a blanket instead of wrapped in a newspaper. Instructions for good parenting are included which was also a definite sign of the concerns of our time.

NAFTA, gun control, health care, and a balanced budget dominate the political scene but a scandal ridden Clinton administration will draw to an end with the impeachment of an American president. BOY! Were we tired of OJ Simpson's trial, Monica-gate! Whitewater-gate! Filegate! Campaign-fund-gate! and pieces of tailgate! So our members got on with the business of being of service. But remember, "It's the economy stupid!" and the economy was good.

How proud the Kansas Delegation was when our President, Susan White walked to the stage in 1994 to accept recognition for Kansas becoming a million dollar state for St. Jude over the past 20 years.

BJ Clark, Executive Director of ESA asked us to say "Yes! To our Best" as we selected what it was we did the best and made ESA better because of it. "Fling"

leadership training marks the 90s as ESAer's pull out the stops to improve the best we have to offer. We even got into weight loss and physical conditioning to go along with the bike ride challenges. We enrolled our daughters into the Desa program and then our relatives and friends into the legacy program to help our membership growth for the future. Associate Members will give ESA recognition in the corporate world and alien us with a valuable human resource. And ESA will go on the INTERNET spreading its philosophy to America and the world. Kansas is among the first states to develop a website thanks to Joy Pierson, Susan Winters, Deb Wonderlich, Erin Metters and Kim Logbeck.

Kansas will experience some changes in the 90s as the Institute of Logopedics will change its name to Heartspring. Although Heartspring will remain as the state project, the Kansas State Council will add the element of a President's project to support. Our Zones will become Districts as we have to relearn the ABCs and the Roadrunner Program which began in the 70s as a part of the association with VOLUNTEER will cease their work in 99.

Several Kansas Women will work on the International level in the 90s. Joan Bourn, Eta Phi, Wichita will make her way through the offices on the IC board to become President in 1998-99. Kay Foster will serve as her corresponding secretary along with what we have come to jokingly call the slave crew or administrative assistants: Charmaign Nicoles, Sharon Rubenich, and Linda Bottom. Coleen Cape will serve as Membership Director, Circle of Life Coordinator, and then run for IC office making two Kansas Women serving an elected position on the International Council at one time. Kansas hopes to install Coleen as an international president in the 21st century. Verneene Forssberg will be elected to serve two terms on the Board of Directors of the ESA Foundation serving two years as its Chairman, Treasurer, State Counselor's Director and Scholarship Director.

We did captures for kids to help ESA meet and surpass the \$4.7 million dollar mark in 1998 for St. Jude. It was truly phenomenal to be a part of the cheering, waving, weeping crowd that celebrated this event in St. Louis.

AH Yes! The ESA women of the 90s were up and moving into the new millennium without looking back! The power of the dream is still very much alive!

A look to our Future as we enter the 21st Century

As you have read of seven decades of the dreams of our past, several points should have become apparent:

- ESA has an enduring quality that transcends not only the good but not so good times we live. It gives its members something that endures.

Although we go through times when the membership goes down it always has met the challenge to reinvigorate to become involved with what each new age brings to challenge us. We face no greater challenge than the 21st century.

- Second, ESA has rubbed elbows with the greats throughout the past seven decades. No one fails to see that the work we engage in is worthy of their attention. ESA has always been a class act no matter what generation we talk about because ESA cares about people. In each decade we have found new and exciting ways to reach out to help people where ever the need was found. This is the life blood that gets us going and provides the energy that seems to never end.
- Third, Kansas has been an active part of each of these seven decades of ESA International. Kansas Women have wanted to be a part of the energy and excitement that is ESA. We have boosted of four International Presidents with another one on her way. ESA has evolved through the ages and Kansas has never left its side or been left out of the excitement.

We now sit on the threshold of the new millennium; it is an age of limitless potential. In order for us to become a dynamic part of the 21st century we must engage the power of our dream to the vision of our potential. The danger that we face is that we hold so tight to what we love that we don't allow it to realize its potential. We must give ESA away in order for it to thrive into the 21st century. We must reach out to the young woman of today and give her our blessing to take ESA forward into the new millennium.

We must continue to provide them the rich and wonderful heritage knowing that it will serve as a shining example for tomorrow. However, we must have the courage to let go, make room for new ideas and new ways of doing things for the daughters of ESA. Our younger members must be allowed to take the reins and lead us into the future. As IC President, Barbara Skorney said in the 70s, "We must reevaluate our involvement with ESA to make it relevant for the modern woman." There is nothing more important to us today as we face the 21st century. We must connect our vision to the possibilities to be realized in this new and exciting time.

We must continue to be or to become women of vision. We must not only grow within but this growth has to occur outside ourselves becoming the most dynamic women's organization of the 21st century. At the beginning of this decade, Margaret Shook demonstrated such vision as she led in the development of a long range plan for Kansas. President Cindy continues that vision today but we must be bold enough to take ownership of that plan and evolve into this technological age. We must seize the dreams of our future and have the courage to make them a reality.

This is not a time for the faint of heart. Sisters - it is the time to realize that the TIME is NOW to make ESA relevant for new millennium women. The power of the dream is alive in you and me!

(The next decade will be added soon.)