

The Lamplighter
Virginia State Council
Epsilon Sigma Alpha International

Fall Issue 2025

President Katrina Saunders

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As I reflect on the months since my installation as VSC President in May, I'm filled with gratitude for the collective energy and dedication of our members. This year has already proven that when we come together, we can accomplish remarkable things—because many hands truly do make light work.



July's IC Convention in Cary, NC was a joyful gathering of twenty-two VSC members. We celebrated, learned, and left energized for the year ahead. The laughter and camaraderie reminded me that shared experiences are the heartbeat of ESA.

We're also navigating change, especially in our fundraising efforts for St. Jude. Priscilla Browning will share more details, but I encourage everyone to update your Partner in Hope donations using the ESA link. If you need assistance, Priscilla or I are happy to help. Together, we can continue making a meaningful impact.

Looking ahead, IC President Celeste Webb has been working with Beverley Wright, Marie LaDuke, and the convention committees to reimagine our IC Convention. With "all hands on deck," we're preparing for an unforgettable event in Norfolk in July 2026. It's a big undertaking—but with many hands, it becomes a shared triumph.

September's Leadership Meeting, led by Mindy Boyd, was another beautiful example of teamwork. The venue was perfect, and the day was filled with learning and inspiration. Special thanks to Theresa Morris for introducing us to the positive potential of AI and to Kathryn Gerow for encouraging us to engage more actively on Facebook. Kudos to our Beta Kappa members for organizing the Team Virginia St. Jude Walk. Despite the weather, we raised significant funds—proof that dedication always shines through.

As this newsletter reaches you, I'll be returning from SERC in Myrtle Beach, SC, carrying generous donations from our Virginia Chapters for the stocking stuffing project supporting female veterans. It's yet another example of how our shared efforts create lasting impact.

As we enter the holiday season, I hope your days are filled with family, friendship, and meaningful service. Let's continue to lift each other up, lend a hand, and remember: many hands don't just make light work—they make extraordinary work.

Vice President Stephanie Hess

Happy Fall! It was great to see so many of you at the Fall Leadership. A big “Thanks” to Mindy for putting together an informative leadership. Bev and I have become each other's, “friend-first.” We are the blind leading the blind, but we have agreed there is always Ronnie to keep us straight.

Recent reports show that Virginia has 13 chapters and a total of 70 members. Other states are facing similar declines in membership. I hope you've met someone new to introduce to ESA and are planning events or activities to invite them. I am hoping we will receive positive results with Alpha Nu reaching out to all the MALs in the state. Please inform me of your chapter's plans or activities so we can share them.

I am currently seeking individuals interested in joining the Executive Board and Appointed Board for the year 2026-2027. Please let me know if you would be willing to serve as Treasurer on the Executive Board. And I will be sending out a sign-up sheet for the Appointed Board soon. Open positions include Awards Director, Educational Director, Historian, Social Director, Hope for Heroes and Lamplighter. If you know of a position you would like to try for the first time or reprise an earlier role, please let me know. I appreciate everything you contribute to your chapters, the VSC, and ESA—thank you for your ongoing support. We may be a smaller group, but we are still mighty. Wishing you all the best of the holiday season!

Pam Cook Treasurer

It was wonderful seeing everyone at the fall meeting! I'm honored to serve as your Treasurer and look forward to working hard. Thank you for your dues. Per my report at the meeting, I reviewed our September Statement, and we did not incur the \$5 service fee. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out. Let's make this a great year together as Many Hands Make Light Work!

Marie La Duke Disaster Fund Chairman

It was so good to see everyone who attended Leadership and the Fall Meeting in September. In spite of the rainy weather, we had a great weekend together.

I want to go back a little bit and say “thank you” for all the end of the year gifts I received last May at our State Convention. I have thoroughly enjoyed watching the various birds that visit my FeatherSnap feeder in my bak yard. Sometimes the birds seem to be looking right at me when I review the videos. It is amazing how detailed the pictures are seeing the seeds in their mouths and the patterns of their feathers. When it is raining, their feathers are pretty wet and not fluffy as you can see in the last of the photos I have included. There are also times when all I see is

tail feathers and the backside of the bird when they are facing away from the camera. I wanted to share a couple of the photos with you. See if you can identify the different types.

The first person to email me with the most correct identifications will receive a small gift from me at the Spring VSC Meeting.



By now, I think you know what having the IC Disaster Fund available to our members means and how important it is that we support it. It could be one of us who needs assistance one day.

Claims are paid after being reviewed to help a member in good standing with the ESAMC. First of all, in order to be in good standing, you must pay your dues.

Virginia made a very good start to our donation to the IC Disaster fund at our Fall Meeting. Thank you so much for your generosity. I hope to receive your personal and chapter donation made payable to the "IC Disaster Fund" before the end of the year. See you at SERC or in the Spring.



Association of the Arts Pam Henry-Sievert

Hi, I am Pam Henry-Sievert. I am a member of VSC's Delta Rho chapter. I am excited to be appointed to chair the Catherine Gorham Association of the Arts for the May 2026 VA State Council Convention to be held in Front Royal, VA. All members, start to think about what you would like to submit to be judged in the following categories: Fine Arts, Literature, Visual Arts, Folk Art, Wearable Art, Fine Needlework, Original Pieces, or Chapter Crafted Pieces. Looking forward to working with everyone. Entry forms need to be submitted no later than April 15th. Forms will be available on the ESA website. Email- pam.henry.sievert@gmail.com

Easter Seals Chairman Bev Scott

I'd like to thank you again for supporting the Camp Easterseals Benefit Barbeque. As I told you at the meeting, there was flood damage to the Camp in the spring, and one of the director's wrote a sweet note that indicated the donation from the Benefit helped greatly with the extra expenses.

Repeating the information from IC by the Easterseals representative, all donations should be sent to the local office so that it will be used in Virginia. The mailing address for the Roanoke area is Easterseals Office, 201 E. Main St, Salem, VA 24153 or you can send it to me and I will send it in for you. (88 Lakewood Forest Circle, Moneta, VA 24121.) If you send it in yourself for the Chapter, please keep a record for the end of the year.

Another is the Chef Fest March 25, 2026, 6:30 pm at the Town Point Club, 101 W. Main St, Suite 300, Norfolk, VA 23510.

Alpha Nu submitted by Sue Stone

We of Alpha Nu depend on our members to provide information for our column in The Lamplighter, and this time we have two educational programs to share. Our ESA members enjoy traveling.

Pat Holtsclaw presented an interesting program on her and Jim's trip to Scandinavia. She included pictures of local points of interest.

Theresa Morris shared stories of her and her family cruise to Alaska, including learning about the indigenous population in the area, particularly the Raven and Eagle Clans. She explained that totem poles are actually called "story poles" because they were used to communicate family stories and legends before written language existed.

For those not in attendance at the September VSC meeting, the Roanoke area ESAers have booked a hotel for the 2027 VSC Convention May 21 – 23rd. The Holiday Inn, 4468 Starkey Rd., Roanoke, VA 24018 has offered a room rate of \$129.00 (plus tax) per night. No events are scheduled for Friday night. However, Registration, the PPA Meeting and the Executive Board Meeting will be held Friday afternoon May 21st. Additional information will be published as it becomes available.

And again this Holiday season, Alpha Nu members look forward to participating in the Adopt-A-Family program sponsored by ASK. With that in mind, we send our wishes to all our ESA friends for a Happy Thanksgiving and Blessed Christmas.

Beta Kappa submitted by Lou Ann Wyer

Beta Kappa thanks everyone who came to the 2025 VSC Convention in Harrisonburg! You all helped make this event Mer-mazing and a great success! We also want to thank everyone who participated in the Easterseals fundraiser. Together, we raised \$1046.00 for the Easterseals Culinary Kitchen in Virginia Beach!

Deana and Lou Ann attended IC in NC in July. We had a great time and were excited to represent with so many of our VSC friends too!



Lou Ann continued to work at the St Jude Dream Home ticket office until August when the home was given away. The home was in Chesapeake, VA this year and 15,550 tickets were sold.



Ginny and Lou Ann attended Cocktails with a Cause fundraiser for the REACH, Inc. Program. REACH, Inc. promotes literacy for children throughout coastal Virginia through access and ownership of books.

Deana led our Backpacks project again this year. Her granddaughters helped shop for school supplies to stuff the backpacks. Together Beta Kappa raised \$1275 and filled 24 backpacks for ForKids, Inc.

ForKids, Inc. was founded in 1988 and is the largest homeless service provider in the state. ForKids' mission is to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty for families and children. They work towards that mission via housing assistance, adult and children's education, and wrap-around services.



Ginny collected supplies for the NoShame.Period projects for the schools. 68 Period packs and 32 pairs of panties were collected and delivered.

NoShame.Period's mission is to eliminate the shame and stigma of menstruation for this generation of students in Hampton Roads and beyond. No shame. Period was created to provide period packs, pamphlets, and pants to school nurses to share with their students and help them get what they need and get back to class comfortably and confidently. This nonprofit currently organizes over 150 volunteers and has compiled and delivered more than 8,000 period packs to schools all over southeastern Virginia.



Beta Kappa collected over \$250 in food items for a local food pantry. Beta Kappa has supported this pantry for several years and the community needs continue to rise.

We held our September meeting at Sue's new home. It is beeeautiful!!! We held our installation and awards ceremony after a wonderful potluck supper.

Deana, Sue, Tammy and Lou Ann attended Leadership in Richmond. Mindy organized an excellent! program, and we enjoyed being together again.

Tammy presented Marie with her memory book.

Thanks to all the speakers and for the activities over the weekend.



Beta Kappa is gearing up for the holidays as we gift a family each year. We will have fundraising activities and then a wrapping party. It is always a good time with good friends, good times and good works!!

Beta Sigma submitted by Susan Caldwell

Beta Sigma said goodbye to our 2024-25 year by toasting our achievements, our philanthropic projects, and the fun we had.



Beta Sigma is so proud of our members serving on the VSC Executive Board
Pam Cook Smith, VSC Treasurer and Marie LaDuke , Jr. Past President

Beta Sigma President's theme for 2025-2026



PHILANTHROPIC PROJECTS

Of course, we want you to hear about our service to the area community. Marie LaDuke serving as our Philanthropic Director highlights a different philanthropic project for each month as well as our long-term projects.

Chesterfield County Food Bank Distribution Events—On the second Saturday of each month for 4 years come rain, shine, hot temps, and/or beautiful days, Beta Sigma members and families

volunteer at Reams Road Elementary School. On average, food is provided to 140-175 clients each Saturday.



Ronald McDonald House Charities—Snack bags for patients and family members while receiving treatment at VCU Pediatric Outpatient Hospital in downtown Richmond, VA.



Looks like our next educational needs to be on how to take a better selfie.

Although June through October has been a difficult time for several of our members, we have persevered as we supported each other. We're looking forward to hearing about so many new things and ideas while sharing time together.

Beta Tau submitted by Sandy Reed

In spite of my broken ankle, I really enjoyed the 2025 VSC convention hosted by Beta Kappa. Thanks to Doris loaning me a walker, so I was able to get around.

We didn't get together over the summer except we met for Doris' birthday on July 31st when I treated her to lunch. A check that Doris sent for our SERC donation was caught by someone who knew how to ink out the amount and make the check out to him for \$2,000.00. Needless to say, Beta Tau didn't have that much money in the account. The bank had to close the account, so we went on July 31st to reopen an account.

On September 16 – 19 we went on a Falls Run bus trip to Chattanooga, TN. The tour took us to Rock City where we hiked up to Lookout Mountain where you can see seven states. Then we went for a ride on the Incline Railroad which goes straight up and down the mountain. Unfortunately the train went slowly or it could have been a roller coaster ride. The day was finished after a sunset cruise on the Southern Belle. The day before we left we had a ride on the

Blue Ridge Railway and had lunch at McCaysville, GA which had a blue line in the middle of the street which was the TN line. Then the tour ate a delicious dinner family style at Bea's. On the way home the bus stopped at Buc'ees which will be coming to Virginia shortly.



Incline Railroad



Doris at Train Station



Lookout Point

Doris and I both enjoyed the VSC Leadership Conference. Mindy did a terrific job of getting speakers and having a delicious lunch served. The Saturday night dinner was great also.

In December we are going on another Falls Run bus trip to the Biltmore in Ashville, NC. These bus trips are great because we don't have to drive and get to see interesting places.

Delta Sigma submitted by Sheen Childress

Greetings from Northern Virginia! Delta Sigma is already gearing up for a fun, productive year!

In July, we hosted a grab bag bingo fundraiser at a local brewery in Manassas. Thank you, Delta Rho, for the idea! We had a great turnout, and our friends had a good time. We also "road tripped" to IC Convention in Cary, North Carolina. It was wonderful spending time with so many sisters and brothers from across the country. We are all looking forward to hosting IC next summer and catching up with everyone.

In September, Katrina and Kathryn traveled to the VSC Leadership conference and VSC Fall meeting. They reported the Leadership conference was wonderful. They learned a lot and had a great time. Of course they missed Sheen who was busy riding camels in Egypt. ;-)

In October, we participated in the Alzheimer's Walk in Manassas. This event is near and dear to our hearts, and we look forward to participating every year.

Now we are busy working with Delta Rho, planning an exciting state convention for you in May. More information to come!



Zeta Nu submitted by Bev Scott

Hello from Smith Mountain where the trees are all vibrant shades of orange, red and yellow! Best time of the year for a boat ride around the Lake! Zeta Nu celebrated its traditional “Unbirthday Party” in June, where we celebrate everyone’s birthday at the same time. Birthday decorations and cake are served as dessert after a delicious dinner! After the dining part of our gathering, we exchanged “Secret Sister” Unbirthday presents. This is certainly one of our favorite events of the year.

At that meeting, we decided to have a “Christmas in July for the Franklin County Animal Shelter”. Each member selected items from the Shelters much needed list and brought them to our Meeting. The items included dog, puppy, cat and kitten food-both bagged and soft. Cleaning products, office supplies, toys etc. were donated along with checks to cover additional required supplies. When the car full of goodies were delivered, the volunteers were most appreciative.

In July Stephanie and I traveled to Cary, NC, to the International Council Convention. The most exciting part was this was Stephanie’s first IC as a Zeta Nu member and VSC’s Vice President. The meetings, meals, workshops and fun events were terrific. Twenty-two Virginia members attended which added fun and fellowship.

We sent our Hope for Heroes donation to Tunnel to Towers which we have supported for several years, and was a big part of the time I served as the State H4H chair. This year 2025-26, I am serving as IC Hope to Hero Chair with the goal of introducing Tunnel to Tower to International Council.

Last, but not least Leadership by Mindy and the VSC Fall meeting was attended by Stephanie and myself where we took part in the virtual St Jude Walk.

Yes, it has been a BUSY time! Why slow down as we look forward to SERC in Myrtle Beach the end of October?? Looking forward to seeing VA and SERC sisters again soon.

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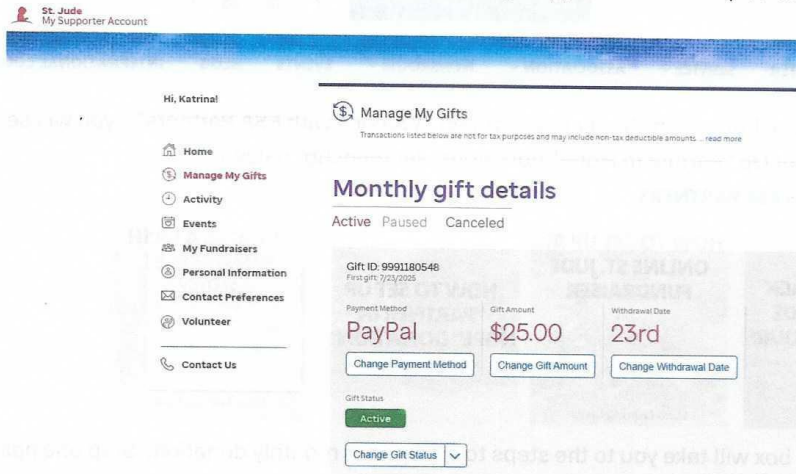
St Jude Walk 2025, Team ESA Virginia

Lou Ann organized the St Jude Walk again this year. There was no live event scheduled in the area so we decided since the National Walk was scheduled for September 27th, why not bring our own walk to VSC during Leadership weekend? Unfortunately, the rain kept us from walking at the Midlothian Mines Trail, but we still made the best of it with a video challenge to other states to beat their goals, just like we did!! As of today, our ESA Virginia team has raised over \$3000! Thanks to all who donated!

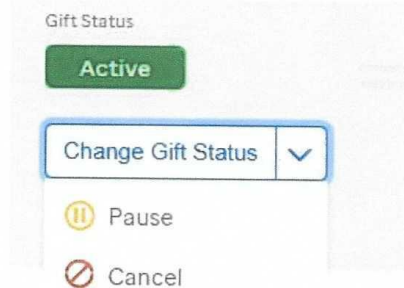


How to change your St Jude Partner in Hope donation so your donation counts for ESA

1. Go to www.stjude.org/give/supporter-profile
2. Log into your St. Jude account.
3. You should see the screen that says: St. Jude My Supporter Account (see screen shot)



4. Your Gift Status button should be green and say Active.
5. Click the drop down button that says: Change Gift Status (see screen shot)



6. Choose cancel,
7. You have cancelled your St. Jude donation.
8. Now you are ready to create a new donation using the ESA link (directions on next page)

1. Go to ESA Member Center – www.epsilonsigmaalpha.org/member-center
2. Log into your account
3. At the top of the screen – under My Account – you will see options – Choose Education Center (screen shot below)



4. Scroll down on the Education Center page. Under “Working with ESA Partners” – you will see a box titled: How to Set Up “Partner in Hope” donations. (screenshot below)

WORKING WITH ESA PARTNERS



5. Clicking on this box will take you to the steps to set up your monthly donation. Step one has a link you need to click. (see screenshot below)

Setting Up "Partner in Hope" Donations

INTRODUCTION

Becoming a Partner in Hope means making a monthly commitment to support the lifesaving work of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. When you set up your donation through the correct ESA portal, your gift will be tracked and recognized as part of ESA's national fundraising impact.

LESSON

Steps to Set Up Your Monthly Donation

1. Visit the ESA Donation Page: Go to stjude.org/esa
2. Click "Donate Now". This will open the official ESA donation form powered by St. Jude.
3. Choose "Monthly". Click the "Monthly" option so that it's highlighted in blue. (This ensures you're enrolled as a Partner in Hope.)
4. Enter Your Donation Amount. You can select a suggested amount or type in your own.
5. Select Your Payment Method. Choose from available payment types (credit, debit, PayPal, etc.).
6. Fill Out Your Information. Complete the form with your name, address, and payment details.
7. Click the Red "Donate" Button. That's it! You're now a Partner in Hope through ESA.

6. This link takes you to a page at St Jude dedicated to ESA. Click donate now. I can't provide screenshots for these steps because it would require me to make another donation. The steps are pretty clear cut
7. Choose your monthly amount along with your payment preference.
8. You are providing your email when you set up the new payment. This links the payment to your St. Jude Supporter Account. You should be able to log back into the St Jude Supporter Account and see that the donation is active.

ADS FOR THE VSC 2026 CONVENTION BROCHURE



If you would like to purchase a page to support your candidate, or tell your chapter President what a great job she did this year, or just to make someone's day, we have a place for you to do that!

_____	\$75 full color page	(\$67.50 by 3/31/26)
_____	\$40 half page	(\$36 by 3/31/26)
_____	\$25 quarter page	(\$22.50 by 3/31/26)

10% off for ADs received no later than March 31, 2026.

Name _____

Chapter _____

Please send your artwork ready to print to Katrina Saunders at
cookekc1964@gmail.com no later than April 15, 2026.

Send the check made out to 2026 VSC Convention to

Sheen Childress
10812 Haggie Court
Manassas, VA 20112

Thank you for your support of this project.

If you have a business that would like to advertise in our convention booklet - please share this form with the business.

Please join Delta Rho and Delta Sigma for...

Seasons in the Valley



2026 Virginia State Council of ESA International Convention

May 15-17, 2026

Double Tree by Hilton Blue Ridge Shadows
111 Hospitality Drive, Front Royal, VA 22630
540-631-3050

Make reservations directly with the hotel under **ESA Virginia State Council Convention**
or online at [Double Tree by Hilton Blue Ridge Shadows Front Royal](#).

Room Rate: \$144 + tax

Room Block Expires 4/13/26

Name _____ Chapter _____
Address _____ City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____
Non-member/Guest _____

____ Current VSC Elected Officer
____ Chapter President
____ First Convention

____ Appointed Officers
____ Voting Delegate
____ Member-At-Large

Convention Registration

Member	\$150.00	\$ _____
Non-member/Guest	\$ 90.00	\$ _____
Postmarked after May 1st	\$ 30.00	\$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

*Any form postmarked after May 1st or on-site registrations will not be accepted unless the attendee has given the convention chair 7 days prior notice (May 8th).

The registration fee includes the Friday Night mixer (heavy hors d'oeuvres), Saturday Lunch, Saturday Banquet, and Sunday Brunch).

Food Allergies? _____

Mail registration form and check, payable to **2026 VSC Convention** to:

**Sheen Childress
10812 Haggie Court
Manassas, VA 20112**