

President's Letter 1968  
Chapter BL, Madison

January 8, 1969

Dear Barbara and members of Chapter BL:

To all of us, 1968 has been a year of uncommon, unpleasant historic events. The tragedy of the assassinations, the war in Vietnam, the race riots, the campus disturbances, the unrest among peoples all over the world--all these--have affected each of us personally as well as collectively. So it is with a feeling of sadness that we look at ourselves, our nation, our world in 1968.

It was not until Christmas Eve that a light shone again in the sky to brighten the doldrums of a sad earth. The light was not as bright as the Star of Bethlehem which shone down on a lonely manger, but the light of Apollo 8 orbiting the moon gave us hope that the science, techniques, and knowledge of men today may bring good. The story of the Creation read from the Bible by our astronauts as they circled the moon united all people on one small earth.

In keeping with the year, Chapter BL chose for its theme the Centennial Star--"we reach for the stars."

The Yearbook Committee planned a variety of programs including serious discussions of our P.E.O. goals and ideals, to gay old-fashioned potluck and birthday parties. The many talents of our members showed again in music, leadership, and programming.

We number 37 active members and 11 non-resident members. The average attendance at our meetings is approximately 22-25.

Virginia Malmquist came back to us from Chapter HN, Illinois, and Frances Kingery demitted from CN, Illinois. Fran had been inactive in P.E.O. during the years her husband was very ill. She is our Bess Weber's daughter. Edna Reimen became an active member of BL, returning to Madison from Florida. Helen Sivertson, BI LaCrosse, is in the process of demitting to BL. Her husband joined the U.W. medical faculty this summer.

A new bright star was added to our Chapter on November 20 when Ruth Katz became a P.E.O. She is Helen Tower's sister, and there were sparkles and glistens in their eyes as we took our mutual vows.

We adopted Irene Robertson, Chapter DG, Illinois, this year while her husband Rev. Robertson was acting pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church. She attended all of our meetings, so we felt that she belonged to us for this interim period.

Our non-resident list of members increased by three. We were so sad to say "farewell" to Ruth Thomas, Polly Erickson, and Mary Alice Rarick. However, we know that their husbands have received wonderful promotions in their careers and we could only wish them well on their way. Ruth's husband, Russell,

is advisor to the President of Ralston-Purina Co. in Krefeld, Germany; John Erickson is the new manager of the professional Basketball Club of Milwaukee, and Lawrence Rarick has a new professorship at Berkeley, California.

The letters we receive from our non-resident members are a joy and they keep us posted on their many activities and family happenings. Mary Beth Wedemeyer Engberg, a non-resident member living in Whitefish Bay, gave birth to a daughter, Sarah Louise, on July 23. Carole Jochimsen and Virginia Zimmer, both non-resident members, have been invited to demit to other Chapters and we are in the process of granting these demits.

Chapter BL had a relatively busy year: A Tupper Party on April 29 for our members and P.E.O. friends netted us \$100.00 to donate to the Centennial Building Fund. Our contribution will designate as honoree Gail Frasier, a dearly loved charter member who was killed in an auto accident in 1961. We were pleased to support our P.E.O. projects with contributions of \$40.00 to I.P.S., \$20.00 to the Educational Fund, and \$100.00 to Cottey College.

At a morning coffee in June, at Jean Clausen's home, Chapter BL honored two members' daughters who were summer brides (Santha Sarig and Carol Wedemeyer). Also during the summer, we entertained our B.I.L.'s at dinner at the Nakoma Country Club. Social chairman, Betty Land, and Virginia Malmquist made the arrangements. Charles Wedemeyer showed slides and movies of the Wedemeyer Safari in South Africa.

The Welfare Committee headed by Nancy Ragatz planned and executed a "resale" this fall which proved to be very profitable in fun and fund.

Chapter BL participated in Reciprocity Board activities. Charlotte King is corresponding secretary, and Chapter BL acted as hostesses at the Open House Reception for Madison unaffiliates on October 30.

This is my resumé of our membership and our activities in 1968. We wish we could have done more to promote general improvement in all things, but we maintain a strong desire to grow and to improve.

A message from Apollo 8 tells us man can do many things; a small gold P.E.O. star worn on our hearts reminds us women must have love and hope; and the great star of Bethlehem assures us that the potential of man (and woman) is measured by his love of God and his fellowmen. So my wish is that 1969 will be better than 1968, and that because we have seen the star "it will illumine not only our own life but the lives of all those with whom we associate."

Yours in P.E.O.,

*Mildred B. Wedemeyer*

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