



# THE D.C. AREA

## PHI BETA KAPPA ASSOCIATION

*Founded on December 6, 1913*

[www.dcpbk.org](http://www.dcpbk.org)

### NEWSLETTER

[suggestions@dcpbk.org](mailto:suggestions@dcpbk.org)

November 2016

#### Connect with DC PBK Online!

"Like" the new DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association [page](#) and follow us on Twitter at [@DCPhiBetaKappa](https://twitter.com/DCPhiBetaKappa)!

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## Upcoming Event

### DC PBK Annual Holiday Party

'Tis the season for mirth, merriment, and maybe a little mead (or wassail). Join us for a celebration of the holiday season, Phi Beta Kappa's 240<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and DC PBK's 103rd anniversary!

**Who:** Local Phi Betes and friends

**When:** Sunday, December 4, 4:00-6:00 p.m.

**Where:** PBK Headquarters, 1606 New Hampshire Avenue, NW (just 2 blocks from the Dupont Circle Metro station north exit)

**What:** Please bring a dish of finger food to share (either savory or sweet), and \$5 cash to cover the cost of drinks and dessert.

This is always a festive event, so don your holiday apparel, and be ready for good conversation, delectable comestibles, and seasonal drinks. We'll also be kicking off our Keys to Action Week. Please visit <http://www.dcpbk.org/Events/329> to register.

## Recent Events

### Salon at the Home of Christel McDonald

On Saturday, November 4, Christel and John McDonald hosted a lovely salon at their apartment, with Dr. Marc Sebrechts of Catholic University speaking on the topic of "How Technology Changes Our Minds." Dr. Sebrechts began by framing his work in the context of psychology as a discipline—the field has moved beyond psychoanalysis and behaviorism into an exploration of how outside stimuli change the physiology of our brains. For example, those who learn to juggle experience a growth in white



matter in their parietal lobe when they gain this new skill, while a professional violinist has more brain capacity in the area that controls the fingers of his left hand.

Dr. Sebrechts went on to discuss how today's technology plays a key role in shaping our lives, and therefore our brains. He explained how recent advances in technology require us to "multi-task," as our world continues to operate at a faster pace. Our brains are not necessarily built for this environment. In most cases, so-called multitasking involves switching between tasks rapidly, rather than focusing on more than one task simultaneously. We have also become more accustomed to receiving information in smaller pieces, and are becoming less capable of digesting lengthy passages of text. Dr. Sebrechts' talk culminated in an intriguing question—technological advances have provided many benefits to society, but should we be wary of losing important skills as our minds are changed by the world around us?



Phi Betes and friends enjoyed the insightful comments of Dr. Marc Sebrechts (top row, sixth from left) at the lovely home of Christel MacDonald (top row, left).

The afternoon also featured lively discussions and questions, and it was delightful to have a number of new young people in attendance.

## **Young Professionals Network Oktoberfest Dinner**

On Wednesday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, the Young Professionals network gathered to celebrate Oktoberfest at Cafe Berlin, a popular restaurant and bar in the Union Station area. More than 20 people attended, and spent the evening meeting one another and enjoying each other's company. The event included both happy hour and dinner for participants, the latter consisting of a wide variety of German foods.



## **DC PBK Meets with New Society President and Local Chapters**

On November 9, board members of the D.C. Area Association met with Fred Lawrence, the new Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, and members from local Phi Beta Kappa chapters, including Georgetown University, George Washington University, Howard University, and the University of Maryland. The D.C. Area Association shared its program successes with the Mentorship Program, the Annual High School Awards, and the Young Professionals Network and how we are hoping to grow in the years ahead. We also enjoyed learning more about how the chapters are run and what challenges they face. We are looking forward to working more with the Chapter representatives going forward. It was a great opportunity to connect with other PBK leaders and be reminded of the mission of lifelong learning that motivates all PBK organizations.

## **Regular Events**

### **Book Club Meetings**

#### **October Book Club Meeting Recap**

The Book Club gathered on Thursday, October 20th to discuss the novel *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin. The group enjoyed the book, which managed to be simultaneously lighthearted and deeply emotionally touching. The story line, which follows a book store owner and the personal inter-relationships of a small island community, was a perfect pick for bibliophiles. We discussed our own book selection habits, the characters' motivations and personalities, and our personal connections to their trajectories.

#### **November Book Club Meeting**

On Wednesday, November 30th, the Book Club will meet at Nagomi Izakaya to discuss *Goat Song: A Seasonal Life, A Short History of Herding, and the Art of Making Cheese* by Brad Kessler. During the meeting we'll also be voting on selections for the January-June 2017 series, based on recommendations submitted by recent Book Club attendees. I'll be taking suggestions until Nov. 20th, and then attendees at our November Book Club meeting will have a chance to vote on their favorites. I'll compile the votes, and the new selection list for spring will be available starting in the December invite and DCPBK website event posting.

Here is our final selection for this calendar year:

December: *The Odyssey* by Homer

**Kate Hannon** is our Book Club Coordinator; you can reach her at [bookclub@dcpbk.org](mailto:bookclub@dcpbk.org).

## **Announcements**

### **Open Volunteer Position**

#### **Fundraising Coordinator**

The DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association seeks a Fundraising Coordinator to help focus and renew our fundraising goals, to organize a potential fundraising campaign, and to manage any fundraising campaigns with which we decide to move forward. A detailed description of the position can be found by visiting [www.dcpbk.org/volunteer-positions](http://www.dcpbk.org/volunteer-positions). To apply, please send your resume and a statement of interest to [mentorship@dcpbk.org](mailto:mentorship@dcpbk.org).

## **Board Meetings**

Meetings of the DC PBK Executive Board are open to all members in good standing. The next meeting will take place on Saturday, January 28, 2016, from 2:00-5:00 p.m. at the PBK Society headquarters, 1606 New Hampshire Avenue, NW (just two blocks from the Dupont Circle Metro's Q Street exit).

## **Find Us on Social Media!**

Please be sure to "Like" the new DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association page on Facebook to follow our updates! You can also find us on LinkedIn, and follow us on our Twitter page at @DCPhiBetaKappa!

## **DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Board**

### **2016-2017 Officers**

**PRESIDENT: Elizabeth Marshall** (Lawrence University, 2009)

**1<sup>ST</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT: Paul Lubliner** (University of Oregon, 2006)

**2<sup>ND</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT/PROGRAM COORDINATOR:**

**Carol Bontempo** (University of Connecticut, 1962)

**SECRETARY: Dan Rosenberg**, (George Washington University, 2014)

**TREASURER: Pat Cascio** (Denison University, 1969)

### **Executive Committee Members**

**Mary Fay** (American University, 2012) – Past Second Vice President

**Chelsea Rubin** (Arizona State University, 2011) —High School Awards Chair

**Eleanor Hudson** (Auburn University, 2015)

**David MacDonald** (University of Chicago, 2009)—Immediate Past President

**Sarah A. Neely** (Indiana University, 2009) – Mentorship Program Manager

**Kathryn A. Sullivan** (University of South Carolina, 2012)

### **Advisory Council**

**Deirdre LaPin** (Agnes Scott College, 1967)—Past Vice-President

**Christel G. McDonald** (George Washington University, 1986)—Past President

**Andy Steigman** (Princeton University, 1954)—Past President