



WOMEN IN LEISURE SERVICES

The Professional Connection for Women...

Founded 1935 *Celebrating 50 Years of Gamma!* **Chartered 1936**

Looking Back...

Chi Kappa Rho was created from the mind of one woman with a great idea. She believed that women engaged professionally in the various fields of recreation could come together to promote unity of purpose, high standards of achievement, and a better understanding and appreciation of related endeavors for the attainment of professional goals. Such a group could also provide an opportunity to foster friendship and sociability, stimulate mutual helpfulness and loyalty, and provide professional services.

In 1935 the woman, **HELEN I. PONTIUS**, shared her idea with several women at a Los Angeles Playgrounds Department Recreation Directors meeting. In 1936, Alpha, the first Los Angeles chapter, was chartered, and Chi Kappa Rho became a reality.

The organization grew slowly within California between 1935 and 1967. The first National Board was established in 1964, and in 1975, the organization became a California non-profit corporation.

In 1991, the membership voted to officially change the name of the organization from Chi Kappa Rho to **Women in Leisure Services, Chi Kappa Rho, Inc.**

Today, Women in Leisure Services, Chi Kappa Rho, Inc. is a national organization for professional women involved in the delivery of leisure and community services in public, private, non-profit and commercial settings.

A network of chapters serves administrators, supervisors, educators, therapists, and allied professionals in geographical areas across the nation. Each chapter provides an effective framework for women from a variety of

professional, leisure and community service fields to share ideas, broaden interests, sharpen skills, and influence the profession with the authority of a unified group.

The network of local chapters forms the base from which stems the National Board of Directors. Each chapter selects a delegate to represent them on the National Board. The National Board Delegate is the key person to facilitate the communication between the local chapter and the National Board. She attends the National Board meetings where she speaks and votes on issues in a manner that represents her local chapter members. She is responsible for reporting pertinent information to her chapter membership.

In addition to one board delegate from each chapter, the National Board consists of five officers, elected from across the nation who has had previous chapter board experience.

Constant input from each woman in our profession is needed and desired. It is up to each chapter to reach out to professional women in their area to form a local base from which to offer strength to our network and to help formulate the direction and growth of our national organization.

The name Chi Kappa Rho comes from the Greek letter X, K and P, which stand for character, knowledge and recreation. The symbols on the Chi Kappa Rho seal are the scale for justice and service, the lamp for enlightenment, and the wings for athletics.

X - Character
K - Knowledge
P - Recreation

1959 Original Board Members

Helen I. Pontius
Mazine McSweeney-Hjel
Cornelia Stevenson
Alma Wilson
Margaret Shull
Mary Wallace Wier
Minette Spector

50 Years Later...

Michelle Khzouz
Robyn Hockenhu
Lindsay Cutrell
Lydie Gutfeld
Jenny Hanlon
Allison Brammer
Adriana Moran
Danielle Valadez
Pearl Raya

WILS FOUNDERS AND HISTORY

Helen I. Pontius

The following is a transcription of a February 12, 1971 interview with Helen I. Pontius, founder of Chi Kappa Rho, taped at her home in Los Gatos, California.

"Greetings, to my dear sisters in Chi Kappa Rho and friends. This is indeed a heartwarming experience for me, to be able to speak to you via this medium. My only regret is that I am not able to be with you in person at this luncheon in Fresno, on the occasion of the 23rd California Pacific Southwest Recreation and Park Conference. Many of you I have known through the years, and the rest I know in name only. Each roster is sent to me and in this way, I keep in touch with your names and activities, and get the feeling of knowing each of you.

My mind still races on with plans and dreams for further expansion and development for Chi Kappa Rho, and particularly, now that we have crossed the Sierras and are heading east. This was always my ultimate dream, so let us keep moving on to the Atlantic.

This means contributions toward better programs and increased activities and most of all, the steady growth of Chi Kappa Rho, which will make this dream possible.

Motivation should be our theme for the future. The present day recreation center has come a long, long way from the days when recreational activities were offered at what was referred to as settlement houses. Such a center is where I had my first experience as a volunteer worker, and it was at Holland House in Cleveland, Ohio.

My second experience was with my dear friend, the late Jane Adams of Hull House in Chicago, Illinois. Recreation, as such, was

not offered as a subject at that time in colleges and universities. I'm speaking, you know, of more than fifty years ago.

It seems to me that we must concentrate on newer methods and activities in order to keep abreast of these changing times. Our sorority should be the leader for such changes since we are professionals in our field, and we are representatives of people in the field of recreation.

Before I say goodbye, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of Beta Chapter for their kindness in arranging this recording.

And now, goodbye dear children and may God bless each and every one."

Maxine McSweeney-Hjelte

"HOW IT ALL BEGAN"



Forty-eight years ago last week I first heard of Chi Kappa Rho. I happened to sit next to Helen I. Pontius at a luncheon meeting of recreation professionals. I didn't know Helen well, although we were both Recreation Directors in the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. Helen had been away on an extended sick leave. An auto accident left her unable to walk for more than a year. When she returned to

work, she walked with difficulty and leaned on a cane. But even leaning on a cane there was a queenliness in Helen's bearing. She was a beautiful woman, slightly taller than the average of that day. She had dark hair, combed in a classic Greek style, and eyes that glowed as if she was vitally interested in her companion of the moment. You could apply to Helen the comment friends made of playwright Moss Hart. They said, 'When Moss enters a room, everyone there seems a little nicer.' With Helen, we not only seemed nicer, we were nicer.

With perseverance Helen recovered from her injury so by the time of our luncheon meeting she stood with graceful erectness and walked with animated stride. She was soon to originate and conduct the program at the Department's Girls' Camp, a program that through the years brought happiness to thousands of girls.

As we chatted during our 1936 luncheon, Helen's blue eyes shone with increased friendliness. Very seriously she said, 'Maxine, I want the women in recreation to have a sorority. You know how much the fraternity means to the men. A sorority would mean as much to us. Will you meet with a few of us to plan such an organization?'

I was delighted, first of all, because of the association with Helen. She scheduled a series of breakfast meetings and asked six women to help her draw up a constitution and bylaws. We had to meet at eight o'clock in the morning because that was the only time all of us were free from work schedules.

She had already selected our name, the meaning of the letters,

WILS FOUNDERS AND HISTORY

and the design of our pin. She told the six of us that our pins would be set with diamonds to distinguish us as founders. We were not the founders. Helen was the founder. We six were a planning committee that helped her bring her dream to reality. And who were the six planners?

Cornelia Stevenson



One was Cornelia Stevenson, Executive Director of the Los Angeles Area Council of Camp-fire Girls. If you were typesetting Cornelia in a play you would cast her as an angel. She looked like one; natural ash blond hair, gentle blue eyes, and alabaster skin. And she acted like an angel. Motivated by the highest principles in everything she said and did, she helped our constitution reflect these same high principles.



What Things Cost in 1936:

Car: \$600

Gasoline: 19 cents/gal

House: \$6,200

Bread: 8 cents/loaf

Milk: 48 cents/gal

Postage Stamp: 3 cents

Stock Market: 180

Average Annual Salary: \$1,600

Alma Wilson

Then there was Alma Wilson, a true pioneer in the recreation movement. Even before 1920, she was a supervisor for camps for Los Angeles. You would cast Alma as a mother, because of her kindly concern for all her fellow humans. Her feet were firmly on the ground. When visionaries on the committee strayed from reality, Alma brought them back to earth with a calming "Now Girls".

Margaret Shull

Another pioneer in the movement was Margaret Shull, who had been a professional in recreation almost as long as Alma. She was Director of Barnsdall Playground. Her work included conduct of an indoor program in the distinguished Frank Lloyd Wright building that had once been the Olive Hill home of Aline Barnsdall. Where Alma was motherly, Margaret was more the gracious lady, a hostess, who often welcomed us to her center for our early morning meetings and she frequently served us fruit juice and sweet rolls.

Mary Wallace Wier

White-haired, like Margaret, was Mary Wallace Wier. She was the merriest of our group and probably the most experienced with organizations like ours. She was Director of Recreation at Children's Orthopedic Hospital where she supervised a large corps of volunteers.

She knew how to plan distinctive social events and made her most significant contribution when we reached the need for such events.

Mary Wallace, along with Minette Spector, probably did most to help Helen achieve the style and class she wanted for her new organization. Many of us knew Minette as Supervisor of Girls' and Women's Activities in the Los Angeles Department. She worked on the committee to see that our events were held in the best places and that all of us wore our best clothes.

Like most women entering the professions in the thirties, we hesitated to wear smart clothes lest we appear frivolous and lacking in dedication to our jobs. But Minette was different. She loved clothes and fashion as an art form, as well as a means of personal adornment.

For example, the style of the moment was a small head hugging hat with flirty little veil. I wanted one but refrained from buying because I thought I couldn't wear it to the monthly meetings of recreation personnel where all women wore hats. Then, at one of these meetings Minette appeared not only with a flirty little veil on her hat but with a violet corsage on each shoulder.

As I gasped my admiration she said, 'Vogue reports that there's only one thing smarter than a shoulder corsage, and that's two shoulder corsages'. She cared about fashion and encouraged the rest of us to care.

WILS FOUNDERS AND HISTORY

Minette Spector



And Minette did more. She knew when to stop discussion and get a constitution article or a bylaw on paper. The article that generated the most discussion was membership. We could not make eligibility requirements too strict because there weren't many women in full time recreation positions. Most of them had majored in physical education and suggested eligibility for physical education teachers. Others of the committee thought if they were eligible they would soon out-number the members from the field of recreation. The resulting compromise admitted university physical education professors because they helped prepare students for recreation careers. But we excluded such teachers at the high school level. We wanted members who would be active, so we put in a clause that any member missing three consecutive meetings was out. We seemed motivated by the same consideration as the corporation that posted this notice: 'No employee will be granted a leave of absence to have an operation. If you work for us you'll need all of whatever you've got.'

Chi Kappa Rho soon amended that bylaw, or none of us would have been left. With constitution and bylaws completed after almost a year of work, we were ready for initiates and a party to welcome them. Each of the seven of us invited one new member - no questions asked beyond membership eligibility. The party would be a dinner at the Woman's Athletic Club on Flower Street (in Los Angeles). Although no longer in existence, this was a beautiful and exclusive membership facility. Mary Wallace managed our acceptance through the membership of one of her volunteers.

But I worried about the affair. What if it would be stiff, reserved, more like a meeting than a party? So I asked Minette if she thought it would be all right for me to suggest cocktails before dinner. You can't realize what a departure this would be. The country just coming out of years of Prohibition was only beginning the social custom of drinks before dinner. They were unheard of at any gathering of recreation professionals. But I felt our party was a celebration of an important beginning. It needed a symbol like the champagne toasts at a ship launching. I guess I felt like General Grant. When Sherman reported to him, 'General, we have taken Atlanta, we have taken Savannah, we have taken Charleston,' and asked, 'What is there left to take?' Grant replied, 'Sherman, let's take a drink.'

Minette thought my idea a good one so at the final party planning meeting I said, 'Do you think we could serve cocktails before dinner?' Silence.

I regretted ever mentioning the subject. Then one member spoke hesitantly, 'Maxine, do you mean tomato juice?'

We didn't have cocktails. But we didn't need them. The party was a minor gala. Members of our committee glowed with friendliness and engaged the guests in lively conversation. The new members showed their delight in being invited. We wore our best clothes. Mary Wallace wore black velvet. Margaret Shull wore lace. I had on a pink chiffon made with a fitted bodice and ruffled skirt. Although sleeveless it had a little shoulder cape scalloped around the edge and tied with a bow at the throat. But Minette was the star. Her dress had a halter top and widely gored skirt made of Homan striped taffeta. The dainty stripes were in autumn shades of orange, yellow and brown. I loved that dress.

One of the members admitted that night was **Mildred House**, invited by Margaret Shull. Mildred proved an asset from the start. A music specialist in recreation, she had a beautiful home in the Wilshire District. In a few months she made it available for a Sunday night supper to honor another contingent of new members.

She even wrote an initiation ceremony. All the members carried lighted candies with which they ignited candies carried by the initiates. While candles burned, the original seven made one minute talks to explain our purpose, the meaning of our letters and to present pins

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After extinguishing candle flames we stood in a circle with hands clasped and sang Auld Lang Syne as we swayed to the rhythm of our singing.

When we were ready for more members Mary Wallace thought she could get a movie star for our speaker. The Tom Selleck of the thirties was Tyrone Power. We didn't call him a sex symbol, but a matinee idol. Now, I hate to disappoint you. We didn't have Tyrone Power, but Mary Wallace got his mother. She entertained us with anecdotes about her famous son "Ty."

With thirty members and a tradition of sociability we were on our way. That planning committee made plenty of mistakes, as you, who worked with the constitution, soon learned. But our organization has been like hand knitted fabric. They say that if you look at old knitting you'll find no uneven stitches, none too tight, none too loose. Experts explain that this is not because former knitters were more skilled than present day knitters. Rather it's because time and use even out the stitches. So it is with us.

You never members have used time to correct our mistakes so we now have the glorious fabric that is today's Chi Kappa Rho."

(From the text of a presentation by Maxine McSweeny-Hjelte at the Chi Kappa Rho Luncheon held at the 1984 California Pacific Southwest Recreation and Park Conference in Fresno.)
Editor

Thank you to all of our founding members, we applaud your enthusiasim and foresight.

Original Charters:

CHARTER	AREA SERVED	YEAR ESTABLISHED
ALPHA	Los Angeles County, CA	1936
BETA	San Francisco/Oakland, CA	1955
GAMMA	Los Angeles/Orange/San Bernardino Counties	1959
DELTA	Southern Orange/San Diego Counties	1967
SIGMA	Seattle Washington	1968
ZETA	Greater Minneapolis/St. Paul Area, MN	1970
W.I.L.S.	San Francisco Peninsula, CA	1973
CHI	Eugene, OR	1976
KAPPA	Spokane, WA	1977
LAMDA	Fresno County, CA	1978
RHO	Miami, FL	1978
R.O. W.	Austin, TX	1978
N. PLAINS	North Dakota	1980
OLYMPIC	Southwestern Washington	1981
O.W.L.S.	Central Washington	1981
S.M.I.L.E.	Southern Minnesota	1981
NEW YORK	New York State	1986
CAMELLIA	Sacramento, CA	1990

2009 National News:

Save the date of Wednesday, March 10 for the National Luncheon in Palm Springs. And, the following day Thursday, March 11 for special 75th Anniversary WILS event. National will be hosting a wine and cheese event in Palm Desert to kick off our organization's 75th Anniversary.

WILS now has a presence on Facebook. If you're a Facebook fan, you might want to check out the WILS info that National created. If you'd like to check it out, please do and join us! [facebook.com/group.php?gid=155283407987](https://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=155283407987)

Presidents Message:

With the holiday's quickly approaching, I'm reminiscent of the year we've shared together. Gamma members have celebrated weddings, births and our biggest event of the year, our 50th Anniversary. If you missed the celebration, don't worry, photos are on the website now! It was an incredible evening co-chaired by *Shelly Myers*, City of Cypress and *Karen Plantz*, City of Lakewood. A huge thank you to both of these ladies and their staff for an amazing evening! I'd also like to thank *Valarie Frost*, City of Lakewood for organizing the 50th Anniversary table and to all our volunteers who assisted throughout the evening.

In just a few short weeks, Gamma will be celebrating another long standing tradition by recognizing our Past Presidents and Life Members at our annual Holiday Breakfast. This year, the City of Lakewood will be hosting us in their brand new community center Mae Boyer Park! Chair *Shawntee Holland*, City of Irvine, and her committee have been putting the final touches on the event themed Deck the Halls. I heard a rumor that Grandma Betty might be making some biscotti for all those fans out there!

Mark your Calendars! As we enter the New Year, Gamma will be hosting two incredible workshops. The January Workshop "Networking in the Workplace" hosted by *Lydie Gutfeld*, City of Irvine, will be held on Wednesday, January 13. February will not be brining Cupid but Chair *Jenny Kucera*, City of Rancho Cucamonga, will be hosting an incredible workshop "Leveraging Female Talent for your Competitive Advantage" on Wednesday February 10. Look for more information shortly.

And finally, Gamma Ladies~ I wish you all Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year! May 2010 bring you joy, happiness, love and laughter!

Cheers,
Michelle Khzouz

Members in the News:

Lisa Lynn with the City of Hermosa Beach has taken up with new Management, her two beautiful daughters. Lisa recently left the city to become a stay at home mom. We congratulate her and wish her all the best in this new chapter in her life!

Congratulations to NEW Life Members Kathy Sorensen, City of Signal Hill and Susan Jones, City of Yorba Linda. ENJOY retirement!



***New Member - Pamela Phillips, a City of Cypress employee since 2006, is a new member of WILS, having joined the organization this year. Her current position is Secretary to the Director of Recreation and Community Services, a position that she loves. When she's not busy assisting the director and Cypress staff, Pamela can be found indulging in her favorite hobbies and pastimes: birding, hiking, baking (especially cheesecakes!), and reading. The City of Cypress is happy to have her and we would like to welcome her as a new member in Women in Leisure Services. Make sure to introduce yourself to her the next time you see her at an event!

Member Birthdays:

December:

Susan	Hunt	12/10
Donna	Georgino	12/11
Lisa	McPherson	12/11
Lizet	Olmos	12/13
Nicole	May	12/15
Nancy	Hogan	12/17
Kimberly	Powell-Albarian	12/18
Stephanie	Konrad-Stabio	12/20
Janet	Cates	12/27
Janet	Martell	12/28
Laura	Murphy	12/29
Danielle	Valadez	12/31

January:

Morgan	Gonzalez	1/3
Jana M.	Ransom	1/3
Martha	Baez	1/6
Nikki	Sassenus	1/7
Marsha	Coolidge	1/15
Nancy	Hitt	1/16
Adriana	Moran	1/24
June	Anderson	1/25
Barbara	Anderson	1/27

Save the Dates!

Deck the Halls , A Holiday Breakfast

Tuesday, December 15, 2009

8:30 am Check in

9 am Breakfast

9:30 am Past President & Life Member Recognition

\$20 per person on or before Monday, December 7

\$25 per person Tuesday, December 8 or at the door

(No shows will be billed)

Mae Boyar Park
6701 Del Amo Blvd.
Lakewood, CA 90712

Breakfast includes:

Confetti Scrambled Eggs , Rosemary Roasted Potatoes,
Hickory Smoked Bacon, Breakfast Sausage Patties,
Fresh Baked Petite Pastries, Orange Juice and Coffee

RSVP to Morgan Gonzalez: mgonzalez@cityofirvine.org
by December 7th

January Workshop

Brush up on old skills and learn new ways to Network! Join us for a fun and interactive workshop on Networking. Break through Networking, INC. will be presenting on networking hot topics such as Ways to network, who to network with, online networking and networking etiquette. The workshop will improve your networking skills and help take you to the next level. Continental breakfast included in registration price. Open to non WILS members for \$20. We encourage you to invite your staff and peers to join us for this workshop!

Wednesday, January 6, 2010

9:30 am - 11am

Lakeview Senior Center

20 Lake Road

Irvine, CA 92604

\$15 – WILS members

\$20 - NON-members

February Workshop

“Leveraging Female Talent for your Competitive Advantage”

Presented by Dr. Tammy Wong, author of *The Hourglass Effect, Leveraging Female Talent for Your Competitive Advantage*

Wednesday, February 10, 2010

Time and Location to be determined.

Do you have Gamma bucks?
Don't forget, they can be used for
registration costs or membership dues.

Reminder! The most updated and
information on events and
programs can be found on our
website. Pictures of past events can
be viewed as well.
www.wils-gamma.com

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EST. 1959 CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF GAMMA



What was it like in 1959?



COST OF LIVING 1959

How Much things cost in 1959

Yearly Inflation Rate USA 1.01%

Average Cost of new house \$12,400.00

Average Yearly Wages \$5,010.00

Cost of a gallon of Gas 25 cents

Average Cost of a new car \$2,200.00

Movie Ticket \$1.00

Loaf of Bread 20 cents

Kodak Movie camera \$67.50

Ladies Stockings \$1.00



POPULAR CULTURE

- The US Grammy Music Awards Started
- The last musical from Rodgers and Hammerstein "The Sound of Music" opens on Broadway
- The chartered plane transporting musicians Buddy Holly, Richie Valens, and the Big Bopper goes down in an Iowa snowstorm, killing all four occupants on board. The tragedy is later termed "The Day the Music Died," popularized in Don McLean's song, "American Pie."
- The Film Ben-Hur premieres in New York City
- Mattel's Barbie Doll is launched
- Alaska becomes the 49th State of the United States
- Hawaii becomes the 50th State of the United States

Popular Singers

- Doris Day
- Frank Sinatra
- Connie Francis
- Jim Reeves
- Cliff Richard
- Ella Fitzgerald

Popular Films

- Ben-Hur
- Some Like It Hot
- Anatomy of a Murder
- North by Northwest
- Sleeping Beauty

Popular TV Programs

- Bonanza premieres on NBC, the first weekly television series broadcast completely in color
- Juke Box Jury premieres on BBC Television
- The Huckleberry Hound Show



50 years later in 2009?



Popular TV Programs

1. House
2. NCIS
3. Smallville
4. Heroes
5. Grey's Anatomy
6. Supernatural
7. Family Guy
8. Gossip Girl
9. Dexter
10. South Park

POPULAR CULTURE

- Mary Travers of Peter, Paul & Mary dies at the age of 72 to cancer
- Michael Jackson dies at the age of 50 cause of death is unknown
- Farrah Fawcett dies at the age of 62 to cancer
- Country is in a recession
- McDonalds leads in the fast food industry

Popular Singers

1. Lady Gaga
2. Beyonce
3. Ray J
4. Rihanna
5. Lil Wayne
6. Britany Spears

Cost of Living 1959

Cost of Gas \$3.29
 Average Cost of a new car \$27,958.00
 Average cost of a new house \$500,000.00
 Average Salary \$39,000.00
 Loaf of Bread \$2.49
 Movie Ticket \$11.00

Popular Films

1. Harry Potter & the Half Blood Prince
2. Public Enemies
3. Star Trek
4. Watchmen
5. X-Men Origins: Wolverine