

P.E.O. Helps Old Friends Reconnect

In 1938 my family built a home and moved to Monrovia, California. Just three doors down lived a girl exactly my age. We soon became inseparable friends and as the years went by kept in touch with notes and occasional visits. During one visit she and I found out that we are both P.E.O. sisters. Two years ago my friend developed serious health problems and had to move. I had no idea where she was living. I emailed all the chapter presidents in her area and each lovingly replied. To my delight, the president of Chapter KH, Arcadia, California, Kay Meisch, knew my friend and located her for me by making additional phone calls. Now we can reconnect at least to the limits of my friend's abilities. Kay surely reflects the points of the star. She'll always be a star to me.

*Mary Lois VanSooy, OL,
Long Beach, California*

Building Bridges, Sharing the Bonds of Sisterhood

I loved Jamie Cromack's article in the January-February Record about "Celebrating Difference, Building Bridges." My six-year-old chapter consists of wonderful sisters from each one of the groups she described in her article. One way we have found to build bridges and share the bonds of sisterhood is introducing P.E.O. to our daughters, young friends and colleagues. In January, Chapter C.J. of Rochester, New York, initiated my 21-year-old daughter Alice DuBois into the P.E.O. Sisterhood after years of seeing the enthusiasm from her traditionalist generation grandmothers, and her baby boomer mother. We can build bridges within our chapter but also build bridges extending out to the young women in our communities and families!

*Mary DuBois, C.J.,
Rochester, New York*

"Membership Begins with Me" Taken to Heart

As a 54-year member of P.E.O. I am concerned about the low percentage of younger members in our sisterhood. A state convention souvenir badge on my desk that says "Membership Begins with Me" prompted me to do something about it.

In 2006 a sister chapter in my town, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, lost a dear charter member, Sonja Turner, to a terminal disease. It happened quite unexpectedly and was a shock to all of us who knew her. Sonja had three adult daughters—Kristen, Andrea and Tanya. After growing up in Bloomsburg they all moved to distant places. I decided my gift to Sonja would be to offer P.E.O. membership to her lovely daughters.

First, I wrote notes to each daughter to see if she was interested in P.E.O. In a short time they all wrote back that indeed they were interested. I then wrote to chapters in all three areas introducing the women with some of their backgrounds and suggesting they get to know these three young women. They all followed through with enthusiasm! It took about a year and a half, but I am delighted to report that we now have three lovely young P.E.O.s added to the Sisterhood. They are Kristen Turner, AT, Yardley, Pennsylvania; Tanya Turner Cain, C, Atlanta, Georgia; and Andrea



Norma Jean Ekey-Brobyn

Turner, EN, San Francisco, California. They all learned very quickly how caring P.E.O. sisters are.

*Norma Jean Ekey-Brobyn,
Past President,
Pennsylvania State Chapter*

Founder Franc Roads Mentioned in Documentary Film

I would like to draw attention to the book and narrative documentary about the Civil War letters between my great great grandparents, Jacob and Emeline Ritner from Mount Pleasant, Iowa. The movie "Love and Valor—The Intimate Civil War Letters" premiered in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on February 23, 2010.

Part of what makes the letters interesting is that they include a reference to Franc Roads, one of the Founders of the P.E.O. Sisterhood. On Friday, November 4, 1864, while Jacob was getting ready to participate in the Union Army's march from Atlanta to Savannah, 12-year-old Franc and her cousin Allie McClure went to Emeline's home to play with her daughters, including Eulalie, my great grandmother. Eulalie later became a P.E.O. member as well.

My cousin Charlie Larimer, who edited the book and does some of the narration in the movie, talks briefly about Franc Roads while standing in front of her grave in Forest Home Cemetery in Mount Pleasant. My great great grandparents are also buried in Forest Home, close to Franc Roads.

Both the book and the movie include many stories about life in Mount Pleasant during the Civil War, which helps give an understanding of what our P.E.O. sisters lived through as teenagers before the founding of P.E.O. in 1869.

You can find out more about the documentary at www.loveandvalor.com. You can also find the trailers for the movie on YouTube.

*Michelle Davis, A,
Burlington, Vermont*