

Central Area Vice-Presidents' Chat
Conference Call, September 9, 2014

Scheduled Start Time: 7:00 p.m. Central Daylight Time

Actual Start Time: 7:00 p.m. Central Daylight Time

Link Glenda Masingale Manson CAVD, Central Illinois (IL):

Good evening Vice Presidents. Welcome to the September Vice Presidents' Chat. This is Link Glenda and I look forward to having a good meeting tonight. On every agenda, in the comments section, there are Best Practices that we ask all vice presidents to chat. The most important one is to put your phone on mute. Right now we are hearing television noises and kitchen noises. We cannot conduct a meeting until your phone is on mute. My apology to those that hear this every chat, but it's very disconcerting. If some of you are driving in your car, if you have your phone on speaker you will hear an echo or feedback. So if you are driving and you have your cell phone on speaker it is going to cause feedback for the rest of us. I am working with an IT specialist to see if there is another way that we can conduct these chats to make sure that everyone is heard and for the ease of getting questions heard and answered. So, again, thank you for joining us and welcome to the second chat of the year.

Our *Linkspiration* tonight will be conducted by Link Sandy Haughton, who is from Tri City Chapter in Michigan. And her *Linkspiration* is "What Makes a Chapter Thrive." Link Sandy?

Linkspiration: Link Sandy Haughton, Tri-City (MI):

Good evening my sisters. I've chosen to share with you the *Linkspiration* entitled, "**What Makes a Chapter Thrive.**" There are ten traits which are essential to a strong healthy chapter.

1. **Commitment.** The most important trait in a strong healthy chapter is commitment; commitment to the chapter and commitment to each Link sister in the chapter. The attitude that I will forego my own immediate gratification to make sure the chapter is successful and to help my sister Links as they plan and implement programs which give service in the community.
2. **Appreciation.** Strong chapters focus on the strength of each other, not the faults. If your chapter needs improvement in this area, try serving a compliment frequently, such as, "You have a real talent when it comes to..." or "You did a great job with..."
3. **Time Together.** Healthy chapters enjoy being together. They work together and enjoy fun activities together. They may be very busy, but they plan time together.
4. **Communication.** To understand each other, sister Links have to be willing to invest the time necessary to share their feelings and opinions without talking and more importantly listening to each other. Links sisters can soon become strangers.
5. **Prayer.** Praying together as well as individual prayer for guidance in the mission of the chapter is very important. Moreover, worshipping together periodically is also a bonding experience.
6. **Having a Sense of Humor.** During tense troublesome moments, can defuse the tension and have an immediate calming effect.
7. **Share Responsibility.** Chapter members are willing to do whatever necessary to make programs successful even when the task doesn't happen to be on their list.
8. **Common Interests.** The more chapter members have in common, the more they tend to do together and work well together. Having similar interests and developing common goals give the chapter something to look forward to, to plan for, and to experience together. This trait is most important when initiating the member intake process.
9. **Healthy Chapters are Not Necessarily Problem Free.** They just admit to having problems and they get the help they need to solve them. The longer a problem drags on without a solution, the more discouraged members can become. Don't allow this to happen. Get the assistance you need from our own Organizational Effectiveness Team.

10. Service to Others. Sometimes the operations and the status of occupying a particular office in the chapter take the foreground. Let us not forget the reason for the existence of our great organization is to render service through outstanding programs which make a difference in our community.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: Thank you Link Sandy. What a wonderful way to start this chat. You are more than welcome to stay. But if you have something else to attend to I can understand. I think you have another conference call. Is that correct?

Link Sandy Haughton, Tri-City (MI): I will shortly, yes.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: Can you share something about your book that you had at the National Convention. My sisters, this came from the book that Link Sandy put together of *Linkspirations*.

Link Sandy Haughton, Tri-City (MI): Yes. I provided *Linkspirations* for our chapter for many, many years. And, I decided to put them into a book. Now, the book contains a collect of short poems and essays that cover a variety of topics that are of interest to groups of people who were doing service. Some of the topics are characteristic and quality of friendship, the merits of volunteer service, interpersonal relations, some organizational principles, self-care, and spirituality. And those are the topics under which several *Linkspirations* are written.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: Wonderful! Thank you. We are combining the *Linkspirations* that we've had from these vice presidents' chats to all VPs in case they would like to utilize them in their individual meetings. So here's another resource for you, my sisters, if you are interested. I will make sure there is information on how to obtain this book put into our minutes, so you will be able to contact Link Sandy if you are interested. Thank you, again, Link Sandy.

Link Sandy Haughton, Tri-City (MI): You are very welcome.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson CAVD, Central Illinois (IL):

I'd like to change the agenda just a little bit because Link Monica Allen from the Windy City Chapter in Illinois would like to do a Programs update. And, her Program "Pearls" start at 7:26 central time. Link Monica are you on the line?

Link Monica Allen, Windy City (IL): Yes I am Link Glenda. How are you this evening?

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: I am fine, thank you. And, welcome.

Link Monica Allen, Windy City (IL): Excellent, excellent, and actually just a small correction. Our actual Program Team meeting is tonight. Our Pearls call is next Tuesday which I hope some of you will be available for. I first want to spend just a couple of seconds commending Link Sandy. Link Sandy is part of our Program Team. She works with the National Trends Facet. I would just say, again, congratulations on your book. I listened to the 10 type items that make the chapters thrive and I just recognize how common they are in programing as well. When program directors and program facet chairs are building the program in an organization in your chapters, many of these item come into play; relationships, appreciation, bonding together. So there are a lot of synergies in that area. It is just exciting to hear the exchange. Link Sandy, you may need to share that with our group on our Program Team call. I'm sure some would be very appropriate as we begin and as we're working together. We've been working together for the last three years, but I would say we're in the final year and we're planning for the Summit that's coming up which is what I'm going to share with you this evening as well. So, we may need to look

at sharing that. Our members need inspiration and uplifting as well as we go through these struggles together. I do appreciate that inspiration.

Link sisters, this evening I just wanted to share with you a few things related to programing. Hopefully, by now many of you have made your arrangements and have registered for the Central Area Summit. I believe the deadline is on the 15th. I'm sure Link Glenda will give you more information on that. I just in particular wanted to highlight some of the programing or what to expect from programing when you get there. We have programing available each day. We will be on teams in the round where we will talk about programing. We have four workshops that will be coming up. One will be a National Trends workshop that will talk about "Policy and Legislative Action to End Bullying." That's been a pilot and a program for us for a few years now. We are going to provide some updates and some hands-on on how you would take that information back into your community and have an opportunity to implement one of these bullying programs.

Another workshop that we are planning for, and this will be a first time for this, will be "The Art of Integration." We heard a lot about integration and we're all still trying to walk through this and figure out what it is and what it means for us and how we can implement it in our chapters. So, we will be joined by the National Trends and Services Facet, The Arts Facet, and International Trends and Services Facets. They will deliver a workshop that demonstrates integration; how to plan it, how to get started with it. So, we certainly welcome your attendance.

A third workshop that we are going to be having is from our Health and Human Services team. They will be presenting a Game Changer. We will be empowering our own Links to talk about different health disparities, but in particular, there will be some updates in the field of diabetes. One of the things in health care and what **Link Glenda Newell Harris** has mention to us many times is that in order for us to be healthy Links, for us to be able to provide health in our communities, we need to be healthy ourselves. So, we are taking some time to learn some things about diabetes well as the new hands only approach to CPR. So, that will be available through Health and Human Services.

The final workshop that we will be offering during the Leadership Summit is entitled "Program Enhancement." It's taking existing programs and learning how to make those programs great; how to assess, how to understand, what do we do next, we are in the middle, we are stuck, we don't know what's going on. We are going to help you figure that out. We are also going to help you understand and kind of deconstruct what program scores and what's that all about. I heard from some chapters that many times they talk about, we feel like we're almost there, se feel like we have a good program, but we can't quite get over the hump. So this is going to help you to get over the hump. It will give you the opportunity to do some exercises that will help you to be able to discern what makes a good program, what's missing. So that you can quickly begin to identify what needs to take place in your chapters to improve your programing. So we look forward to you all participating in all of those workshops.

The other area that I just wanted to mention to you, and this is a first for us in our Leadership Summit, we've done this sometimes in our area conferences. We are going to be providing a community service project. You will be getting information. We were on the Presidents' Chat Sunday and we shared the information with them. The title of the project is called "We Care, Wrap-up for Winter." We will be going to an organization called the Sojourner Truth House in Garry, Indiana. We will be collecting donations in our own chapters of hats, scarves, gloves, and socks. We are asking chapters to begin announcing in their chapter meeting in the month of September for collection in October those items. We prefer new items because we feel like the opportunity for some of these members who are a part of this organization have been homeless. They've been through a lot, and so we felt like we are fortunate enough to be able to provide new items. So we really would prefer that you provide new items. Those items will be presented on Friday morning. And, we will actually provide service at the Sojourner Truth House Center. I am going

to forward this to Link Glenda so she can post it along with the notes from this particular conference call. You will have an opportunity to collect items and bring them on the plane or if you are driving, we also have an area where you can ship things ahead of time. And, you will see dates related to those. If you decide that you don't want to collect anything, you don't want to go to the store and buy anything; you can also send a monetary contribution. We will have Link sisters on the ground here in the northern Indiana and the Chicago clusters will join them. We will go out and purchase those items. This organization services about 2000 women, men, and children, monthly. They are in desperate need of all kinds of things. As you know we were hit hard last year with that Chicago winter and northern Indiana was part of that. So, we just want to think ahead and begin gathering items to help make their lives just a little bit easier. So you will receive more information about that, but I just wanted to share that information with you this evening. And when I say soon, I mean, if not tonight, tomorrow. You will within the next 48 hours, if your chapter hasn't already received it, you will receive information about how this program is going to work.

So that's it for me Link Glenda. I don't know if there are any questions that I can answer quickly.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: Are there any questions Link sisters? [No response] Well, you did such an outstanding job Link Monica, I think that it's clear. And, also, I don't think it was just the Chicago winter. I think it was the polar vortex that had everybody frozen.

Link Monica Allen, Windy City (IL): So, we look forward to you making donations and making purchases, and being a part of a first; a community service project that's never happened at a summit before. I thank you for your time and look forward to talking with you all soon.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: Thank you Link Monica. One of the things that the executive board discussed last weekend while we were in Merrillville is what a great idea this is for those Link sisters of ours that have not been able to make it to an Area recently or within their one-in-five time period. And therefore, has missed out on the opportunity of being a part of the join service project, or have not made it to a National Assembly in time to participate in the service project. This will give them an opportunity to be a part of the footprint that we leave in the community that we go to for the Leadership Summit.

Also, for the Summit, each Link attendee will have the opportunity to earn 13 service hours if they participate in the service project. That is an additional three hours that can be earned. So that's information that you can share with your chapters that may help those members that, at times, have a problem with getting their 48 hours.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson CAVD, Central Illinois (IL):

I'd like to briefly go over the highlights of Presidents' Chat for those of you that have not, at this point in time, received the information from your president.

- First of all, there is still a move for legislative initiative to stay involved as we move toward the mid-term elections this fall. The concept is that the mid-term elections are crucial for our nation and for the Links sisters who serve in the United States House of Representatives. The move is to return the nation to the people. In other words, to make sure we elect those individuals that will take our message and our needs and desires and have them acted upon instead of relying on individuals that do not have a deep interest in the communities that we represent and live in.
- Also, a reminder about the ABCU Endowment Scholarship; remember to include the scholarship program in the budgets for donations prior to the 2015 Central Area Conference that will be in Cincinnati.

- The Central Area Leadership Summit - October 24-26, Merrillville, Indiana at the Radisson Hotel. The early bird registration ends on the 15th of this month. The presidents were asked to encourage officers and members to attend, especially those members who are interested in leadership opportunities. There will be information that they can have that can assist them in making their decisions.
- Nominations for Central Area officers are all online. The deadline is October 15th. If you have any members of your chapter who are interested in running for Central Area offices, please direct them to the e-nominations that are online. They will go on our National Web site under "Members Only" and that's where they will be able to find them.
- Closing the Achievement Gap: There is still a need and desire for chapters to be actively engaged in the Closing the Achievement Gap forums in your respective communities. Literacy and Mathematics Initiatives are being hosted, of course, by the Kettering Foundation. The Central Area Program Team will assist you and your chapter in moving this initiative forward in your hometown. **Link Alice Strong-Simmons** is very passionate about children and her emphasis is the alarming rate of our children being retained at the 3rd grade level. I don't know, but you've probably heard in some instances that states utilize the number of prisons that they are going to be building in the future based on the level of 3rd graders that fail and are retained and will not move forward. So, this is the time for use to get more engaged in raising the awareness of levels of what's happening to our children, and getting parents and other community advocates for children involved and into action.
- What's exciting for us on the vice president's level is the Central Area was recognized for bringing in the most new members under the age of 40 last year across Linkdom. We'd like to have that trend continue; the excellent recruitment of new members who will ensure that we continue the legacy of The Links. Now is the time that the presidents were reminded to begin your chapters recruitment or looking at new members. Link Alice said to host public Teas and include in your invitations women who you would like to invite to membership so the current chapter members who don't necessarily know them can interact with these perspective members. Of course, this is still a selection process were the potential individuals do not know that they are being looked at. But, by encouraging them to support The Links programs and activities being sponsored by your chapters in the future is an opportunity to see how these potential new members share in the work that the chapter already does in the different communities.
- The Area Secretary **Link Sharon Dixon Gentry** has prepared a calendar to send out to all presidents. I'm asking her for a copy so that the vice presidents can have a copy that they can utilize for planning with their chapters. She has already included on that calendar the dates of our Vice Presidents' Chats. So that's a part of the business that needs to be attended to by all chapters. She's also included any upcoming webinars. She has requested the conference call information from the Program Team and from Team 68.
- Our Area Treasurer **Link Jackie Morrison** is reminding all chapters to get in their 990 Tax Forms and to finish their budgets. There is an emphasis from our new National treasurer to update the Financial Handbook. There was a question presented by a president that there are different conference calls for leaders in the chapters, but there is not one yet for treasurers. That is being worked on and developed. The National treasurer would first like to make sure that Financial Handbook is updated.

- **Link Kathy Wade** who is our P.R. & Communications Chair is setting up the upcoming Team 68 meeting which will go out to all chapters to make sure that there is a person that knows about news releases and the branding of your chapters within the Central Area.
- The Central Area Conference will be in Cincinnati, Ohio, June 17 -20, 2015 at the Westin and the Hilton Hotels.

So that is the most recent information that your presidents have received from our Central Area Director.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson CAVD, Central Illinois (IL):

On the agenda tonight, Link Jacqueline Lewis of the South Suburban Chicago was going to discuss and share information about membership strategies. She had a conflict with the Closing the Achievement Gap that came up rather suddenly, but she will be sharing those strategies with the VPs in our October session. I requested that if you had creative strategies that you please submit them to me. I did not get a lot; however, I did contact a few of the chapter vice presidents who had asked for creative recruitment ideas. I'd like for us to have a conversation about it if possible tonight.

The first thing is to ask each chapter member to provide a minimum of three names for potential candidates for consideration. By requesting a minimum of three to five names, you can start a data base. As your chapter decides how many individuals you are going to look for intake, those names can be added to, reviewed, and brought up when it comes time for increasing your membership. If the chapter is having an event where women can be asked to participate, this will give the chapter a chance to see how the women work in a larger group with a purpose. What we hear a lot in corporate America, it's almost become a catch phrase, is that individuals sometimes do not play well in the sandbox. Of course, that has different meanings for different individuals. But then, you do find individuals who are very consensus building and they like to get in the sandbox and work very closely with other individuals for resolution or for some goal. So, I think having potential candidates who can be a part of your events during the year, starting out a year ahead, will give you an idea of what they're interested in. Also, you cannot negate the fact that if there are potential individuals who already have a track record of working in other organizations that provide public service and have been very good at that, that is important to take into consideration because they then know what is expected of them and are willing to learn something new by being a part of a new organization. Names for consideration should have that kind of track record.

One of the questions that continues to come up is we need to look at people, we need to find new individuals, so let's just get some bodies in here. But that's not the case. Lowering the standards for new members coming in is not a solution for building a strong engaging chapter. If the individual has had problems in the community or problems in other organizations, you can almost guarantee that they are going to have similar or maybe the same types of issues if they join our link of friendship. So, lowering the standards to increase the membership is not a viable option. In looking for members under the age of 40, there are usually concerns from those young women being considered about time or link-family balance or work-life balance. Our new National president joined The Links under the age of 40, and she was very active in the organization for children, Jack and Jill of America. Her Links chapter wanted her to be a part, even though she was committed to her boys. She said they actually sat her down and said we understand that Saturdays you have Jack and Jill and you have soccer games at that's the same time we have our meetings, so we are understanding if you come in your sweat suit or you're not dress as the standard is for the chapter because this time period will not always last. She felt encouraged and supported by her chapter members who wanted to support her as she went through raising young boys who were involved in children's activities.

Also, look at creative ways for the financial responsibilities for younger women. Now, that is not a problem of consideration for some young women that are out there. But, we need to work on and presently are looking for as much input as possible on what is the return on investment for a young woman being a part of The Links, Incorporated now. There are a number of activities and organizations where they actually see the intrinsic value of being a part. Perhaps we haven't been clear enough on how that translates to where they are in their life journey right now. Link Sandy talked about having fun together, even going to a movie night and inviting potential new members. Some chapter members have Mani-Pedi nights where they take over a nail salon that serves milk and cookies or wine or campaign and they talk and they chat and they get a chance to know each other. That would be a unique place to invite these individuals. So, those are some of the strategies that have already been presented to me. Is there anyone out there whose chapter has done something unique that you would like to share with the rest of us?

Link Annita Bridges, Oklahoma City (OK): We've been wrestling with, of course, the same issues concerning candidates that other chapters have. One of the things that I'm going to talk about with my membership committee in about an hour and fifteen minutes is we've come up with what we call Tea Talk. Our chapter has approved us having a forum. We're just going to invite members and some potential candidates to what we are calling Tea Talk at, in this case, my home on a Sunday at the end of this month. We will just talk about women's health issues. It will give us an opportunity to interact with some of the potential candidates as well as giving them an opportunity to see us. Hopefully, they will see some value in belong to an organization such as the Oklahoma City Chapter of The Links. And also, do what you have suggested here; give us an opportunity to see how we all interact with each other, how they interact with us, how they might contribute, and how they might work within the framework of our organization as it currently exists. That's one thing that we thought about that we are planning to implement.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: Thank you, Link Annita. I think that is a wonderful idea. I like what you said about operating within the framework that already exists. Sometimes you can bring in a member and once they get in they decide that they are not on board or in sync with the goals and objectives of The Links, Incorporated, and they want to do it their way. What's very, very important is to make sure that they are aware that we have been established since 1946. We are evolving and these are the goals and objectives that we adhere to, believe in, and are our standards. It is not a sorority. You do not have to be a college graduate to be a member of The Links. You have to be committed to the continued viability of your community and how it affects, not only, the African Americans in this country, but internationally. I appreciate that. Anyone else?

Link Linda King, Ann Arbor (MI): We had a wine and hors d'oeuvre on a Sunday afternoon and invited potential members and the husbands. We actually had it at a wine shop and the oenologist spoke about the different wines and did some humor and jokes. It was just an hour and a half of just interaction. It was a nice way to have the husbands participate and meet potential new members.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: That's a great idea Link Linda. One of the things our new National president is very adamant about is the inclusion of Connecting Links and Heir-O-Links. There was a time in our organization when the Connecting Links had as much or more fun than we did going to national assemblies and area conferences. That has since, died down. There are chapters that know certain Connecting Links and others are on the outer circle either for a lack of interest or a lack of interest in the organization, only supporting, perhaps, what their wives are doing, or not having a sense of connection with the other Connecting Links. So, any opportunity to have our Connecting Links a part of what we do or new Connecting Links is a great idea. A personal point of privilege, I was at work one day early and was having breakfast. A gentleman was sitting down and he asked me to sit down, he said come join us. When I got up and left, I went and told one of my friends, "I just met a great potential Connecting Link."

And, she said, “We’re not looking for Connecting Links.” I said, “I know, I have to find out who he is married to.” And sure enough, his wife was inducted and he came in and was actually a breath of fresh air interacting with the other men in the chapter, so a great idea, Link Linda.

There was another vice president that had a suggestion. I didn’t hear the name.

Link Wilma Bates, Central Illinois (IL): I wanted to share that during our National Friendship Month in November, our chapter has what we call Harvesting Friendships. It is a way for us to give back to our service areas by putting together baskets for families and organizations that are in need. But, what makes this an activity for potential members, their spouses, and children is that we invite everyone to be a part of it. So we have activities for the children that attend. We have food. We have refreshments. The Connecting spouses, last year, were the judges of the baskets we put together. So it was a great way for the current members to get a chance to work with potential members because it is about service and seeing how well they can get along and understanding the mission of the organization. It’s a lot of fun. We do it typically on an evening or Saturday afternoon. We can have anywhere between 30 - 40 people that come. So, it’s another activity as a way to engage potential members see exactly what our organization is about.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: Thank you, Link Wilma. Is there anyone else that has something that they would like to have documented as a creative strategy for recruitment ideas?

Link Veronica Simms, Des Moines (IA): We have done something a little different. We went and identified some of our past members that had resigned for personal reasons. The ones that we thought were positive and were good workers we invited them, their husbands, and along with guests to a movie event. We want to get them involved again with us. We just wanted to see how they feel and hopefully some of them will return to us because they were very good workers.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: Very good. That is important to look at individuals who have left your chapters for various reasons. It might be a time, especially if they were positive and good workers, to invite them back. So, I appreciate that. That is a creative strategy.

Let’s talk about the elephant in the room. Heretofore, it is stated that we are an organization primarily of women of African descent, and our interests are in the viability of African-American families. However, some of us live in communities that do not have a large African-American population. Has there been any discussion from any of your chapters about looking at your chapter reflecting your community.

Link Deborah Thomas, Madison Metropolitan (WI): We’ve had discussions starting last year. There are some individuals who have a strong interest in our organization, but they are primarily women who have African-American children and have been very anxious with the chapter. There is a feeling by some individuals that we don’t want someone else to come in because we are focusing on us and we don’t need to dilute what we are doing. The people who have been recommended are very strong in the community and have contributed a lot of time and effort to the chapter. So, it’s a heart change that might need to occur. And then we have Hispanics who also have African roots and relate more to the African-Americans, especially the ones from Brazil, because we have people from all over the world who live here. So, we have potential people, but there is a fear of losing our identity by inviting people who don’t look exactly like us. So, that’s a heart thing. We have to keep looking at that so that people will be willing to think about it more.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: Okay. Thank you, Link Deborah. Anyone else?

Link Cheryl Anderson, Minneapolis-St. Paul (MN): I just have a comment regarding the sister Link in the reinstatement when she stated that they would go and ask sister Links to come back. That's kind of a sticky one because the chapter has to vote. She has to follow the same intake process. If you go and ask someone to come back, and then, you go before your chapter and they're not voted back in, than what?

Link Veronica Simms, Des Moines (IA): This is Veronica who mentioned that. We have not asked them to come back. We have just observed them. We will discuss that later. They don't even know that we are considering it.

Link Cheryl Anderson, Minneapolis-St. Paul (MN): Okay.

Link Deborah Thomas, Madison Metropolitan (WI): We had four people to come in last year, and two of them were past members and two were new members. Because of the length of time that they had left, of course, they had to go through the whole orientation session once they were voted in. And there are some more that are considering coming back because things have changed in their personal lives too. Depending on the length of time that you've been gone, if it's just been a year or two years, I think it is a little bit different than being gone for four or five years. Things have changed a lot and people need to know what we are doing now with the business model, etc.

Link Glenda Masingale Manson, CAVD: Absolutely. Good point. Thank you. Anyone else would like to add?

Link Glenda Masingale Manson CAVD, Central Illinois (IL):

Okay, it is 7:51 p.m. and I'm going to move forward on two things.

1. Many of you probably don't know this, but I had opened up, in the spirit of transparency, and made lines available in case some of your presidents were interested in listening in. This year, I have changed that and made a line available only for the vice presidents. I want to assure you that this chat is a safe haven, an opportunity to share information and ideas that will make your chapter stronger and also support your presidents. I think, perhaps, there was an impression that if a chapter brought up something that was a concern or not necessarily positive that it was reflecting poorly on that chapter. That is not the case. Ladies, there is so much work to be done in general. I don't know any of any of my peers that sit back and say, "Oh this chapter is doing something terrible or whatever." That's not the case. If there is an idea, we can learn and be stronger, I think that's a great idea. For example, and it's a constant learning process, those chapters who take in new members and they don't identify the individual who submitted their name, it is just presented so there cannot be a conversation where in some cases there have been chapters that would block a person coming in based on who brought the name in. Well, that was presented last year, which was a wonderful suggestion for those who are having a difficult time getting new members in. Also, if there are strategies or ideas that can be utilized, Central Area is on the cutting edge of bring new things to the forefront, we want to be able to share it without a doubt that it will be taken and replicated which is the sign of a really, really good program.
2. I would like to develop, what I call either Pods or Groups, where there would be chapters in groups of five or six, some a little larger. Each Pod will have an award winning chapter in it, a chapter with low numbers, and high numbers, so we can support each other in suggestions and ideas. At the first meeting, 36% of the chapters called in which is a relatively low number out of 68%. What we are looking for is 100%. Therefore, those chapters who have never been on a call, who may not have the benefit of hearing the suggestions that we heard tonight, they can be brought up to speed also. The minutes are going to be reviewed and ready to be put out on the Central Area Web site the Monday after our sessions. We are working on that this year. Reading

the minutes can be flat sometimes and not hearing the conversation can just leave a void. So, if there are those of you who are friends that would like your chapters to work together, I would appreciate you letting me know and I will do my best to get you in the same Pod. As a part of that, each VP will receive a score card of their involvement and engagement during this year's chats. We are looking for the underwriting for monetary awards because it has been proven that chapters who have the information and are engaged are award winning all the way around, not only in programs, but getting in new members and retaining them. Also, we will be focused on mentoring. The South Bend, Indiana Chapter has submitted their mentoring booklet they use for their chapter. I would like to solicit any other ideas you may have so we can put together a booklet or pamphlet so everyone can see them. The retention of new members and existing members is also very important. So those are the kinds of activities that I'm looking forward to being a part of working with a Links sister in Tennessee to maybe work on the ability to have some meeting where we can actually see each other. Now, I know some of you are going to say, "Oh no, I don't want to do that", but we will be like that old cartoon in the Jetson's where she had a mask where her hair and make-up were perfectly done and she looked wonderful all the time. So, we will think about that also.

The new Basileus of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority is **Link Dorothy Buckhanan Wilson** from the Cream City Chapter (WI). Congratulations to her. That is outstanding.

The new Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (EVCAA) at Indiana University is **Link Jann Joseph** from the Ann Arbor Chapter (MI). Congratulations to her also.

Link Mary Clark of the Huntington Chapter (WV) was recently offered and accepted a position at Belmont University in Nashville, TN. She's the first full-time director of the Bridges to Belmont program, which is a scholarship/diversity program that specifically recruits students from the Metropolitan Nashville Public School district. Congratulations to her. That's outstanding.

I ask that you send your telephone number from whatever phone you use to call-in as a part of the scorecard. I'm able to see when you get the Constant Contact who opens them. We haven't had but one e-mail bounce back which means that they are being sent to your e-mail address that we have on file. If you do not get anything, please check your spam or junk folder because that's probably where it is. I don't want to bombard you with a lot of additional information, but you will get a letter and an invitation to the conference call.

Did you all receive the Constant Contact that had the links to the National Vice President and the Bonding that was sent out? If you had any problem with the links, please make sure that you drop me an e-mail and I'll get back to you.

Roll Call: Link Glenda Masingale Manson CAVD:

Well, ladies, this was sort of a long chat. I did more talking than I anticipated. That won't happen in October. I'd like to take the time to do the roll call if there are no other announcements or good news.

In attendance: Links Glenda Masingale Manson CAVD; Link Krishmu Shipmon, Youngstown (OH); Link Lynette Murphy, North Shore (IL); Link Vera Chatman, Nashville (TN); Link Tiffany Johnson, Music City (TN); Link Deborah Thompson, Madison Metropolitan (WI); Link Brenda Henderson, Lansing/East Lansing (MI); Karla Houston-Gray, Greater Kansas City (MO); Christina Clark, Detroit (MI); Link Veronica Simms, Des Moines (IA); Link Alma Ivey Clarke, Dayton (OH); Link Edna Verna, Chattanooga (TN); Link Janice Rucker, Wilberforce (OH); Link Gina Eanes,

West Towns (IL); Link Linda Holoman, Tri-City (MI); Link Dara Davis, Shelby County (TN); Link Jan-Nee Sheats-Mathis, Parthenon (TN); Link Terri Sanders, Omaha (NE); Link Linda King, Ann Arbor, (MI); Link E. Smith, Archway (MO); Link Karen Williams, Charleston-Institute (WV); Link Jacqueline Lewis, South Suburban Chicago (IL); Link Risa Davis, Chicago (IL); Link Shelley Hamler, Cincinnati (OH); Link Yvonne Perkins, Circle City (IN); Link Sheree Dallas Branch, Cream City (WI); Mary Fields, Frankfort/Lexington (KY); Link Edna Harper, Springfield (OH); Link Margaret Rogers, Jackson (TN); Link Helen Gordon, Kent Area (OH); Link Avis Reid, Knoxville (TN); Link Paula Jones, Lake Shore (IL); Link Kimberly Post, Memphis (TN); Link Renita Harris, Topeka (KS); Link Wilma Bates, Central Illinois (IL); Link Sandra Leconte, Harbor Lites (IL); Link Dana Thompson, Hoffman Estates (IL); Link Mary Clark, Huntington (WV), Link Larnell Burks-Bagley, Indianapolis (IN); Link Lana Nayles, Little Rock (AR); Link Maxine White, Milwaukee (WI); Link Cheryl Anderson, Minneapolis-St. Paul (MN); Link Annita Bridges, Oklahoma City (OK); Veronica Chapman, Queen City (OH); Link Barbara Thompson Smith, Southern West Virginia (WV); Link Kimberly Beasley, Tulsa (OK), Link Martha Bester, Twin Rivers (OH); Link Kimberly Yelverton, Windy City (IL); Link NaShawnda Thomas, River City (TN); Link Darla Ball, Columbus (OH)

There were 49 chapters present on the conference call.

Closing Remarks: Link Glenda Masingale Manson CAVD

Ladies, thank you very much. I appreciate all that you do, and look forward to our meeting in October. Have a great rest of the week. Get out there and get those new members. Bye-bye.

End Time: 8:10:02 p.m.

Minutes by Link Carol M. de la Cruz, Central Illinois (IL)