

Central Area Vice Presidents' Chat
Conference Call, Tuesday, August 6, 2013

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

Actual Start Time: 7:16 p.m. Central Daylight Time

In attendance: Links Glenda Masingale Manson AVD; Kathy Wade, Central Area Communications Chair; Linda King, Ann Arbor, (MI); Wilma Bates, Central Illinois (IL); Fatiema Wilkerson, Charleston Institute (WV); Shelley Hamler, Cincinnati (OH); Yvonne Perkins, Circle City (IN); Darnella Robertson, Cleveland (OH); Regina Peal, Columbus (OH); Deidre Edwards, Cream City (WI); Valerie Jones, Dayton (OH); Mary Madison, Des Moines (IA); Shirley Johnson, Fort Wayne (IN); Mary Fields, Frankfort/Lexington (KY); Veronica Murff, The Great Lakes (MI); Amy Parker, Greater Wayne County (MI); Dana Thompson, Hoffman Estates (IL); Melonie Jones, Jackson County (MO); Paula Jones, Lake Shore (IL); Teresa Bingman, Lansing/East Lansing (MI); Nancy Matthews, Louisville (KY); Deborah Thomas, Madison Metropolitan (WI); Maxine White, Milwaukee (WI); Cheryl Anderson, Minneapolis-St. Paul (MN); Janice Baskerville, North Shore (IL); Winifred Green, Oakland County (MI); Teresa Harris, Quad Cities (IL); Veronica Chapman, Queen City (OH); Jeanette Abraham, Renaissance (MI); Jacqueline Lewis, South Suburban Chicago (IL); D'Anne Shelton, St. Louis (MO); Adrienne Green, Toledo (OH); Lisa Ingram, Tri-City (MI); Michelle Gentry Anderson, Tulsa (OK); Gina Eanes, West Towns (IL); Janice Rucker, Wilberforce (OH); Kimberly Yelverton, Windy City (IL); and Janice Beachum, Youngstown (OH)

Linkspiration: Link Nancy Matthews, Louisville (KY)

“People come into our lives disguised as angels. And sometimes angels come into our lives disguised as people. It is possible to see God everywhere. All it takes are opened eyes and ears and the willingness to see miracles. They are everywhere. God is as available as we are. Having friends that inspire us to rise to higher and greater levels is an awesome gift. Surround yourself with people that inspire you to do better and inspire your friends as well. It is a profound truth that people we spend time with, shape the path we travel.” Poems of Friendship

Central Area Vice Director's Report: Glenda Masingale Manson, Central Illinois (IL)

Thank you very much Link Nancy. I think that is something we will all keep in mind as we start out this New Year. This call is being recorded, so a copy of her Linkspiration will be sent out to all of you as the minutes of this meeting are forwarded. I have to remind you to mute your phones. It will be easier for us to share the conversation. And, please, hold your questions until the very end.

First of all, one of the things when I started these chats for all the vice presidents was to give another point of contact for information to be shared with your chapter. We are all different and some of us have chapters where the information is shared frequently and early and for some, sometimes there is a delay. Your job as Vice Presidents is to support the goals and objectives of your chapter as set forth by your Executive board and to be in support of your chapter President. Therefore, some of you may hear information twice since I will be giving you an overview of the presidents' chat. Then it will be our session for the vice presidents, just to make sure that everyone has the same information. In keeping with the presidents' chat format, as our Area

Director recognized the newly elected chapter presidents, if there are some of you who were newly elected, appointed, or took the place of an existing vice president, we would like to welcome you and hope that you will find these sessions beneficial.

I am going to briefly review the Central Area Conference. For those of you who were in attendance, I think that you would back me up by saying it was a wonderful occasion. For those of you that were not in attendance, I hope that you've heard some positive things because the support and the work that was done for the Central Area Conference was outstanding. As Link Alice said, it was her first area conference and it exceeded all of her expectations. People came in with anticipation and left on the wings of friendship, learning new things to take back to their chapters. The Presidents' Leadership Forum will be held October 17-19, at the Gaylord National Resort in Maryland. The registration is \$325.00. I think Official information, has already been released within the last week. But, if you have not received information, you will be receiving it from the National Headquarters. This is not just for presidents only, in fact, it is a leadership forum for those individuals that are looking for the opportunity to hold a leadership position in our organization in the future. This will be conducted by Link Margot and her leadership team and Organizational Effectiveness Team. It should be a benefit to any of us that decide to attend. Thank you's were given to the eight chapters who participated with exhibits at our Central Area Conference. The work that was put into the exhibits was very well done and was reviewed by a large number of participants who attended the conference. The community outreach chapter support was an overwhelming success. There was outstanding participation and we had three community outreach activities happening all at the same time. We stuffed 1500 packets that were given to the Arkansas Red Cross. There was a walk, "Walk a Mile with a Child," where we had Links who walked with children from the community. Then, there were some Links who were part of the "Colgate Dental Van Screening." So, with those community outreach activities, we received outstanding media coverage. Link Alice was on seven or eight morning programs. I had the opportunity to be on a morning program. There were radio shows interviews. Needless to say, there was no doubt in Little Rock that The Links were definitely "In the house."

Our Area Director is asking that chapters continue to support HBCU Endowment Scholarship. The goal for the central area is \$100,000 and we have not reached that goal at this point in time. We are somewhat short for the last biennium, and are still accepting donations. She is asking that all chapters consider putting that in their budget line items. \$1000 has been the amount chapters have given in the past for this endowment scholarship. This continues the endowment that was set up for the central area, and we're carrying through on those promises by Link Teree Caldwell-Johnson.

We have a new activity for raising money, and it is "The Links Restore," and that is a new approach to fundraising. There was a workshop given to explain this, but basically, for those of you that watch realty television or *Home and Gardens*, there is a show that highlights a Restore, basically, in the St. Louis area where individuals come in, and because they are either in the public eye where they can't be seen wearing the same dress twice being photographed in the paper (Now I know Princess Kate Middleton, and first and foremost our First Lady, Michelle Obama have been seen wearing the same thing more than once, however, there still is a segment of the population that does not want to be photographed in the same outfit.), they have these high end clothes that they sell and you get great bargains. For example, and I'm going to send out a link to the store that's in

St. Louis <http://www.stlmag.com/St-Louis-Magazine/March-2013/Womens-Closet-Exchange-Gets-Ready-for-Prime-Time/> because right now I don't have it in front of me, where instead of paying \$4000.00 for that Prada purse you always wanted, you can get it for \$895.00. I'm glad you all are on mute because I don't want to hear the chuckling. But, our Links Restore is a new approach to fundraising. We've had eight chapter members who volunteered to work with this fundraising and their chapters will probably host the first round of restore weekends. A portion of the funds that are garnered from the Restore will go to the individual chapters who have participated.

There is a competition among the areas to raise money for The Links Foundation campaign. It is 1000 for \$1000. So, we are looking for a thousand links to donate \$1000.00 to the foundation campaign. This is the money that will be the principle that when we go out to corporations (money is very, very tight now) they will see that we have an endowment already in place.

If you have not seen, or gone out to the national web site, there is an icon on the web site where you "click here" to reveal that the 2014 history book is in progress. In fact, at their pre-sales that are going to be conducted, you can order the book at a reduced price now until December 31st. The price will be \$62.00 if pre ordered. Now, one of the things with the history book, which is very, very important, is that the Central Area is being asked to provide more information about your chapters that will be included in the book, and it will be in sync with information that was happening at the time; exactly what was your chapter involved with during that time period. There are guidelines for photos, but there is a request from the area that we need your immediate assistance to complete this portion of The Links 2014 History Book that is going to be going to press in the early Fall. Now, one of the things that is EXTREMELY important, is that the Central Area has always been considered as a "vanguard area." We lead the way in doing things that are new and innovative and usually taken as a program or part of national. And we continue to do that. Yet, our Area was lagging significantly in getting information from our area for this publication. Now, we have had two National presidents for the Central Area and the Area needs to shine. We know that we have some members that have those moldy boxes in their garages, and there is Links stuff under their beds. I will leave some of those details to Link Kathy, but that is what we are looking for immediately, a very robust support from the Central Area.

If you, as vice president responsible for membership, know of members that did not receive their 25 or 40 year recognition, please forward that information to the Area Secretary, Link Sharon Gentry. Also carbon me, so we can make sure that those members will receive their recognition. Our Area Director, Link Alice, stated that we will mail them to the chapter presidents if the number(s) needed is provided.

We are now going into phase two of closing the achievement gap. Phase two is going to emphasize literary and mathematics. We have some chapters who have been a part from the very beginning, but we're trying to encourage full participation with this initiative that has already been integrated with the current facet work and programs in your communities. We have decided "If Not Us, Who" because our children are depending on us not to fail. If you have facets that are collaborating with other organizations that have a focus on children dealing in literary and mathematics, please consider integrating that work with what you have in place.

I think that you've noticed that I've asked Link Sharon to be engaged when it comes to sending out a pre save-the-date to make sure that you get all of the information and that no one is left out of finding out what is going on. It is up to you to ensure that she has your most current contact information. Link Kathy, may I ask you to jump in here with a Team 69 update.

Team Sixty-Nine Report: Link Kathy Wade

For those of you who are new and may not be aware of "Team 69." Each chapter should have a representative who basically is being trained to be your on-the-ground person when it comes to The Links brand and all things communication. There is a new Links Style Guide out which is available in the Membership Only section of the national web site. We encourage you to please download that and keep that close to your chest. I answered a question for someone from the Indianapolis chapter. It was based on what they read in the style guide, and they just needed some clarification. It is very easy to use, very simple. It covers everything from social media in your chapter, use of the logo, the color, all of the things that are very important in making sure that the brand is consistent, concise, and that we speak with one voice, with one brand. In terms of the history book, Link Glenda was very gracious, but the truth be told, we do need all hands on deck and I don't want to put too many people on this. I know that your presidents are very attune to what's going on with making sure that Central Area has its information submitted; all 69 chapters with all the same concise information. Just a little more detail, I don't want to confuse anybody. Basically, each chapter was asked to break their history out by decades and then send in representative photographs of what was going on in your chapter by that decade. It doesn't have to be every detailed, just an overview of the highlights of the things that was vital and important. It can be in terms of your chapter and in some cases in terms of individual members. If your past president during the fifties was selected the first African-American female mayor of their town, that is a significant piece that they want to capture in the history book. So, it's each chapter from Central Area from the time your chapter started.

The book is also going to feature African American history facts from each of the 17 states where we have chapters in the central area. So, it's really tying in what was going on at that time in the chapter, but also what was happening in your state, and it is an emphasis on African American history. Everything is being sent to Link Alice. It has been requested that everything gets to her by the 20th of this month, August 20, because it has to be to Link Sadie Winlock, the National Archives and History Chair, who is actually putting the book together by the 25th. We are the only area who has not completed this task. So, it's highly important that we all pitch in and make sure all 69 chapters are represented and represented well. I think that's it.

There will be a Team 69 meeting. I'm in direct contact with those folks in each of the chapters. I will mention that there is a deadline coming up for articles for the next E-Mag. There's a summer E-Mag that's just about finished, that's going to come out with highlights from the Central Area Conference. And, the next one will include the articles that will be coming in for the deadline of August 15th. There will be another one before September 1st with the highlights from Central Area. For those of you who were at the conference and had the opportunity to use the Central Area Conference app, it was very successful. And, in that updated E-Mag for the summer, we will have the information in there because you can still access all the information that was given out during the area conference through the conference app. For those of you who where there, any workshop

material that you want to implement, for instance, the piece on the second phase of closing the achievement gap on literacy and mathematics, you can download all that information that was in that workshop.

I think that's it for now and thank you Link Glenda.

Central Area Vice Director's Report (continued): Link Glenda Masingale Manson

Thank you Link Kathy. I appreciate it. For those of you who were not able to attend the area conference, our immediate past Area Director, Link Teree Caldwell-Johnson had a conversation with Link Kathy Wade about the possibility of developing an app for the Area to use at the Central Area conference. Link Kathy, a self-identified geek took the concept and ran with it. The app which was unveiled at the conference was a hit with up to date information and pictures. You all should have received an e-mail from our Executive Director, Eris Sims, with a survey about smart phones and tablets and how do you use it. That is a direct response from the national leadership coming to our area and seeing so much excitement and the use with the app. If you did not attend, you can still go to the iTunes store and download it on your iPhone or android phone and look at some of the wonderful photographs. And, you are able to have a little mini session of Facebook for those of you who are into Facebook (I'm into Facebook) and write your Link Sisters notes right while you were in the meeting. Link Kathy we appreciate your help with that also.

I am going to take just a moment to get something from the Area Secretary, Link Sharon. I did get a note from her. She has a work responsibility and she is in the air as we speak.

You are the keeper of correct and concise or accurate and concise membership information. As the Vice President of Membership, if there is a concern about one-in-five, if there is a concern about induction date, if there is a concern about anything; the death of a member, you are the lead person for that. Please pay close attention to those records. Link Sharon is there to assist you with anything that you may come in contact with that has fallen through the cracks or gap that can help move the business of your chapter forward.

I have received a copy of the Notice of Non-submission of Dues for the past year, and there has been a question presented by a chapter in the area that I will be bringing up tonight at my 8 o'clock meeting with my peers from the other areas and the National Vice President. A question came from Central Illinois Vice President, Link Wilma Bates, if there can be a portal for membership materials to be presented because we talk about being paperless, but we end up with so many copies to give to perspective new members. If there was limited access where they could go in and actually pull that down themselves and print it, it might be beneficial and cost effective. I will be presenting that tonight on the National Membership Team's call.

We are going to be reviewing tonight the Exit Interview form. There are times when Links are no longer a part of chapters and we need to know why. We need to have feedback. There is a form that is being presented to the executive board for acceptance and review that will go out to members who have forfeited their membership so we can learn from that.

A Honorary Induction Ceremony, which will be held Friday, October 4, in Palo Alto, California. That is when The Links, Incorporated will be inducting Condoleezza Rice as an honorary member in our organization. There is a request that you register if you are interested by September 4, because seating is limited.

The next thing is, I'm beginning to take this personally because there was a technological hiccup for my presentation at the Area Conference on the Linktorian Express that will be on the web site or in the app that Link Kathy was talking about earlier. If you would like copies of the actual card, so you can make copies for your chapter members, I will be happy to send it to you because we want to reinforce that it is an honor and a privilege, not necessarily a right, to be a member of The Links, Incorporated.

I'm going to jump ahead just a bit, since I started late, to get everything in. First of all, we highly encourage you, again, to put at the bottom of every agenda that you have your chapter meetings, those dates that are important to remember, those dates that can help keep your chapter members on target so there won't be any surprises with one-in-five. There have not been any exceptions made for the one-in-five qualifications in the Central Area because the onus has been put on the chapter members and the individual members to insure that they are accurately recording their attendance at an area or national meeting. The National Leadership Summit, again, is in Washington, DC, October 17-19, and that is on your agenda. The National Assembly is in Washington, DC, also at the Gaylord in June of 2014. We don't have that date as of yet. We are looking at having a Central Area Leadership Summit that will be hosted by the Northern Indiana Chapter in Gary, Indiana. We are looking to see if the National Leadership Summit will take the place of the one that has already been designated for our area. So there is more news to come if we will actually have an Area Leadership Summit. I think most of you who have been Links for a while know that after the area conference in the fall, there is a leadership summit that we try to get as many members, who are not able to attend, the latest information. That will be held in October. Link Alice is trying to see if the National Leadership Summit will take the place of our area summit. I will get back to you on that. Our Central Area Conference will be held June 17-19, 2015, in Cincinnati, Ohio. And ladies, believe it or not, your area executive board will be going to Cincinnati that latter part of August to begin work on the 2015 conference. We don't have too much time to bask in the glory of having a great conference. You have to take those learnings and get in contact with your next cluster that's going to be rolling out the 2015 Area Conference. So, get ready and I really, really hope that you will be attending.

I will make sure that in the minutes, even though it is being recorded, to include some of the specifics that you need to be aware of as far as the information for the history book. For example, we are asking for original photographs, which is a little unusual because you hear, "Oh no, don't send the original, send something embedded," but not in this case are not asking for that, so make sure you have the guidelines for that. And, in the forfeiture list of the 2013-2014 dues, there are only 17 members in the Central Area. We are not the highest, so that makes me feel really good.

I want to make sure that these sessions are beneficial to you. Last year, I talked about wanting to look at chapters partnering in groups of two or four to make sure that we are helping each other; extending the hand of friendship, helping each other with our deadlines and guidelines so we can maintain the engagement and the role that we are on as an area. Some of you have outstanding

membership engagement programs, and I like to make sure they are all shared so we can spread the wealth and the joy of being an active member in The Links, Incorporated. And, if any of you have a Best Practice that you would like to share, so that everyone can see it, I'd be more than happy to do that and place that in the minutes, so you will know exactly where it came from. There is a contact person for any questions that you may have and any suggestions, really, for making it better. There are two chapters that are working in collaboration for Friendship Month, which of course is coming up in November. So, if you haven't began to put on your thinking hats, please do so because we are always looking to highlight that in our central area order, as far as we are proud of you and we want to make sure everyone knows that.

Congratulations to all of the chapters who won awards on the area level too. It was very heart warming and it was exciting to see the depth and the breadth of the different types of awards, and how hard you have been working in service to your community. So again, heartfelt Congratulations. You will be receiving notification that we have co-chairs for this next biennium in programming, Link Monica Allen and Vicki Brooks. They are going to be contacting chapters, so you will have the opportunity to talk about programs also, which is very important. And no, it's not always about winning awards, even though they are fun and exciting and you get money for extended programs, but also about ideas for services in your community. Please stay engaged.

Do any of you have anything that you would like to share for the good of the order? I know I was talking a little fast. Hopefully, Free Conference won't kick us off. I always extend the time. I'm going to start it early next time, just in case this happens again. Do any of you have any Best Practices that you would like to share at this point in time? And, I'm not going to call any names like I usually do and put people on the spot like Link Avice, my favorite person to pick on, and Link Nancy.

Okay, well with that in mind, Link Sharon is not here, but I have asked my chapter member, Link Wilma to please call the roll. And if you remember, I asked you not to hang up until roll call is completed.

Roll Call: Link Wilma Bates on behalf of Link Sharon Gentry

There were 39 chapters present on the conference call.

Closing Remarks: Link Glenda Masingale Manson

Thank you my sisters. I want you to know that I think I through out a couple of challenges last year. I got a response, but they did not meet the deadline, so we're going to try that again this year. There will be monetary awards for the chapter and this time I'm going to say how much. I think that will help because some of our competitive sisters really get into and I appreciate that very much.

I look forward to working with you this year. If you have any problems, questions, concerns, please don't hesitate to call. I am reinstating trying to get back to you within 48 hours if possible. And if not, I will let you know that I will not be able to. We're going to have a great year. Central Area is going to be a vanguard again. Thank you very much and have a great August. We will send

out a save-the-date for our September meeting, which is always the Tuesday after the Presidents' Chat unless there is a holiday, but you will have advance notice. Hopefully, we can get 100% participation. Thank you and have a great evening.

End Time: 8:25 p.m.

Minutes transcribed for Link Sharon Gentry, Central Area Secretary, by Link Carol M. de la Cruz (Central Illinois, IL)