

## FOUNDER'S DAY

### A Recipe for a P.E.O. Year

*It is with great gratitude to Clara Slocum of Akron, Ohio, from whose original paper I have taken the greater part of the material, which I will read to you, that I begin this Founder's Day Program. She will, I trust, forgive the changes and additions I have made to it.*

Take 12 fine, full-grown months; see that these are thoroughly free from all the old memories of bitterness, rancor, hate and jealousy. Cleanse them completely from every particle of clinging spite and pick off all specks of pettiness and littleness. In short, see that these months are free from all the past. Have them as fresh and clean as when they first came from the storehouse of time. Cut these months into 30 or 31 equal parts. This batch will keep for just one year. Do not attempt to make up the whole batch at one time, as so many persons spoil the entire batch in this way, but prepare one day at a time as follows:

Into each day put:

- 12 parts of faith,
- 11 of patience,
- 10 of courage,
- 9 of work (some people omit this ingredient and spoil the rest),
- 8 of hope,
- 7 of fidelity,
- 6 of liberty,
- 5 of kindness,
- 4 of rest (leaving this out is like leaving sesame oil out of the salad. Don't do it.),
- 3 of prayer,
- 2 of meditation, and
- 1 well-selected resolution.

If you have no conscientious scruples, put in about 1 teaspoonful of good spirits, a dash of fun, a pinch of folly, a sprinkling of play, and a heaping cupful of good humor. Pour into the whole a liberal amount of love and mix with vigor. Cook thoroughly in a fervent heat, garnish with a few smiles, and a spring of joy. Then serve with quietness, unselfishness, and cheerfulness, and a Happy New Year is a certainty.

The past seems significant only as it contributes to the present and future—so please turn sidewise that we may have a view of all three.

The story of the seven girls who founded P.E.O. at Iowa Wesleyan many years ago is a familiar one to most of us. Why has that story become so familiar, and what way is it important to us now?

Seven girls, six seniors, one junior, organized a group. We realize they must have had two or three years of a very intimate relationship. We find ourselves a group of people

who have as many interests as there are members, separated for the most part, by family, and other responsibilities, except on the occasions definitely set aside for meeting together. This difference suggests a problem. To just what extent does a successful chapter depend upon the intimacy of its members? Our founders shared one another's daily lives. A duplication of such circumstances is neither possible, nor desirable.

They had other things to share, such as ideals, hopes and abilities. (It seems to me that our chapter is enjoying this year as a very good example of sharing, not only of our own talents, but also of some of the best of our city as chosen by our thoughtful program committee).

Is it not significant that these girls organized as seniors? Surely they must have felt that each had something to contribute that the others needed and wanted. Is this true of your Chapter? Exactly what do we offer a new member that she cannot get through other organizations? The only answer I have been able to find is "Ourselves", and it is up to each one of us to make that a worthwhile thing.

In this connection I should like to offer an idea that has grown as I have considered it. To what extent are we responsible for the personality others of our group are able to offer members, new and old? Surely these Founders were much like us, a human mixture of faults and virtues. Yet, as we look back we are ever reminded only of their virtues and successes. I believe if I knew that fifteen outstanding women thought I was Just, Pure, Loving, and Faithful, I should feel so honored that I could never do anything to make any of you feel otherwise. If this is true of one, might it not be true of each? Our ritual says, "Have Faith in Your Sisters' Opinion of You." Can we make that opinion so fine that no one will ever disappoint the others? P.E.O. would then indeed be giving to each something that no other organization except one's own family can give.

Our Founders could not have felt the tremendous possibilities that actually existed in their organization. But we, each chapter, each individual, know we are but a part of a long chain, whose strength is determined by its weakest link. What a responsibility!

Our Founders created for us a beautiful ritual, inspired by them and revised by various needs and circumstances that have constantly changed. A little group of seven college girls has grown into a national organization that includes thousands of women, personally unknown to one another, but bound by the intangible ties of loyalty to a common ideal.

We arrive, the first of the year at Inventory Time, and that is a challenge. You may no longer say, "I didn't do it last week, but I will next", for it is either done or undone and the result is set down for one's appraisal.

Among our liabilities we list our chapter's obligations to International and Ohio State Chapter, our responsibility to Cottey College and our more personal obligations to

P.E.O. standards. These are more than offset by our assets under which may be listed high ideals, unselfishness, our desire to be really helpful in an educational plan, our kind thoughts and good wishes for one another; but let us check on the advertising department. Do people in general know we have these assets? Or perhaps the delivery department is not functioning very well. Maybe these kind thoughts never reach the person for whom they were intended. Prompt service is quite essential. If our inventory showed any supply on hand of jealousy or pettiness, these no doubt are special orders that were never called for.

We have splendid personnel, and our good will is not to be measured on a balance sheet.

Our Founders had:

Faith – in themselves and one another.

Love – to cover a multitude of sins

Purity – of thought

Justice – in all their dealings

Truth – a shining shield and flaming banner.

May these virtues be so vitally incorporated into our daily lives that they shall shine like rays from our beautiful star.

As I finished reading Clara Slocum's paper, I opened the January RECORD and the quotation from Browning caught my eye and seemed particularly fitting:

“The year is closed, the record made,  
The last deed done, the last word said,  
The memory alone remains  
Of all its joys, its griefs, its gains.  
And now with purpose full and clear,  
We turn to meet another year.”

And reading further in the same RECORD, it seems most proper to me to close this Founder's Day Program with the closing paragraph of the address given at the Iowa Grand Chapter convention at Oskaloosa in 1900 by Mary Allen Stafford, one of our Founders.

“And our chief joy and greatest pride is in the thought that our Sisterhood has proven and shall prove, aside from its inner circle of truest and purest and holiest friendship, and evangel of multitudes of people, young and old, who have never entered and will never enter within its golden circle of plighted love and loyalty to each other. How far it shall yet go as an evangel of good or as the Eve-angel to bless

the world with deeds of kindness and pledges  
of sympathy and helpfulness to those in distress  
and need, no one can tell, but I am sure wherever  
it shall form a circle of the pure, the true, the good  
it will be reaching out helping hands.

Author Anonymous