

ΦΑΘ NEWS

JANUARY 2023



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Colleagues in Phi Alpha Theta!

Greetings from Albuquerque, where we are holding what is certain to be a thrilling, stimulating, and, most importantly, enlightening time together! For those of you who cannot attend, there will be ample opportunities to experience the highlights of the week, particularly through all our social media channels—and, thanks to our brilliant Social Media Coordinator's efforts, participants in the Biennial will be able to contribute their own photos and experiences to the collective coverage.

You may have noticed that, in the last Newsletter, I highlighted a clue from Jeopardy! This was due to the fact that I was studying particularly hard—for my OWN appearance on the show! I have tried for over a decade to be considered worthy to appear on that program, and I have gone through, twice, all the exams, interviews, and rehearsals to be picked. And my dream finally came true this December, when I competed, in the Culver City, California, studios—on the famous Alex Trebek Stage of Sony Picture Studios. I wore an appropriately colored suit (and you'll notice the Phi Alpha Theta colors there?), and our green room, where we spent a very anxious day waiting for our names to be called, was the Wheel of Fortune set.





While I cannot share the details of how it went, before the airing date of Thursday, 9 February (they generally tape the episodes two months in advance, and five episodes are taped within one day), I want to share something that may be relevant to all lovers of History. Ken Jennings told us that hundreds of thousands of people

each year take the first-round test to qualify for the show, and only about 400 people per year (depending on how many “super-champions” emerge during the season) are picked to appear.

However, it happened that all three of the people randomly chosen to compete in my game had been History majors, and all were now working in History professions! In addition to myself, one was a History podcast researcher and the other was a high-school History teacher. I was so proud to appear alongside these very talented people, and I felt a great joy that History seemed to prepare all of us for this moment in our lives.

However, scholars, presidents, and leaders of all types have always known the importance of historical study, far beyond the needs of a televised quiz show. On one occasion, after he had been reading Plutarch’s *Parallel Lives of the Greeks and Romans*, President Harry Truman said, “The only thing new in the world is the history you don’t know.”

I wanted to share all this news, and please feel free to email me, at perryjs@usf.edu, after the show airs in February—especially if you want to castigate me for missing some of the answers, or, uh, questions? This is my final Newsletter address, as Executive Director of this organization I love, and I have greatly appreciated the opportunity to share my thoughts with you, over the past 16 months. Please continue to press on in your historical studies, and continue to marvel, as President Truman did, at the pleasure of learning something new!

Jonathan S. Perry

SEE YOU IN *Albuquerque!*

If you're joining us for the Biennial Convention,
we look forward to seeing you very soon!

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

DAKOTA

University of South Dakota - February 23 - clehmann@usd.edu

ALABAMA

Auburn University at Montgomery - February 25 - mburger1@aum.edu

CAROLINA

College of Charleston - February 25 - covertlp@cofc.edu

CALIFORNIA SOUTH

California Lutheran University - March 25 - dnelson@callutheran.edu

UTAH

University of Utah - March 31 - janet.theiss@utah.edu

PENNSYLVANIA EAST

Marywood University - April 1 - jrich@marywood.edu

VIRGINIA

University of Lynchburg - April 1 - crutchfield_ll@lynchburg.edu

GEORGIA

Columbus State University - April 14-15 - Newhall_Caroline@ColumbusState.edu

NEW JERSEY-NEW YORK

Dominican University New York - April 29 - christopher.libertini@duny.edu

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