

Shining Light

“A shining light tree...the light of knowledge and training for tiny blind children”



Seventy years ago, Bettie Stupp Kohl led a group of Delta Gamma alumnae to launch what is now called the Delta Gamma Center. Their goal was to establish a nursery school for children with visual impairments and provide support to their parents.

Bettie, the first chair of the board, had the idea of running a tree lot to raise funds needed to operate the newly formed charity. Bettie took the lead as the tree lot chair and Pat Gilbert was sales chair of the first Shining Light Tree Lot in 1951.



Bettie and Pat did an amazing job of planning and publicizing the lot and organizing a sales force of 220 DGs and many husbands to sell 3,400 Christmas trees during the inaugural season.

Over 100 DGs made ornaments, wreaths, candles, yule logs, mistletoe cages, candy canes for door decorations, and more to sell at tree lot that first season.

A season that brought the worst weather in 20 years – sleet, hail, freezing rain, snow, temperatures down to zero – also brought net profits of \$5,400!

And this festive venture has been integral to our success ever since.

We are excited to recognize the efforts of Bettie and Pat, as well as the many hundreds of DGs who launched and have supported the Delta Gamma Center since 1951.

In keeping with the 70th anniversary of the Shining Light Tree Lot this year, we have named our higher quality trees after Bettie Stupp Kohl and Pat Gilbert.

Naming our finest Fraser Firs, The Bettie, and our finest Balsams, The Pat, is a fitting way to remember and recognize our founding by dedicated volunteers.

