

The Tomahawk

Alpha Sigma Phi

"For the Good of the Society"

Dear Brother:

Being a Roman Catholic priest at a state university and being Grand Chaplain of Alpha Sigma Phi are two strikingly compatible roles. While an Alpha Sig at Stanford, the girls I dated occasionally remarked: "You Alpha Sigs are the only ones who refer to yourselves as 'the brotherhood'."

In hindsight, I do not want to depict Stanford in '61 as the eternal idea of fraternity life. Yet I do want to extol those of us for whom brotherhood was important. Although we dated quite a bit and had good parties, although a number had close girl friends, although some were class officers, newspaper editors and on and on, some of us felt a real need for and value in close male friendships — fraternity in its best sense.

I still feel this way. I belong to a community of priests — a fraternity. If I were married I'd still experience this same need for close and lasting friendships with men, with brothers.

As Easter and Spring approach, I encourage you to look at yourselves. We are in a period of religious fasting. For some it is a time of fasting and penitence. It is a period of reflection and new beginnings.

In wishing you a Happy Easter, I wish you too a few true Brothers, a memorable, growing experience of 'the brotherhood'.

Fraternally,

The Reverend Richard Byrne
Paulist Fathers

THE TOMAHAWK

of
Alpha Sigma Phi

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COVER

Brother Rich Byrne's letter reminds us again of what the "Old Gal" is all about — a concern for someone else, "Brotherhood."

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The lead article by Chuck Tramont, a senior at Missouri Valley tells the story of a Chapter putting into action one of the purposes of the Fraternity "——— to maintain charity ——." Chuck is one of three undergraduate advisers to the Grand Council, elected to that post by the Fraternity's Leadership Conference at Purdue last August.

RALPH F. BURNS
Editor

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The Editor's Desk

"Fraternities? With Changes, They'll Be Around a While," the story on page 5 was written by Raymond Jones from New Hope, Pa. A 1970 graduate of Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa. He is a member of Theta Chi Fraternity. Jones' article is from a six-part series written as a journalism class project while in graduate school at the University of Illinois.

The Brotherhood Weekend story on page three points up, at least one change, which one chapter is implementing.

Responsibility A Value!

Recently someone said, "I feel privileged to live in these remarkable times." He was asked, "why do you consider these times so remarkable?" His response was that the amazing technology developed in the last few decades, climaxed by our putting men on the moon, was a tribute to the intelligence and creativeness of man when properly applied. He said, "If this same creative intelligence could be systematically applied to helping man know more about man, we would certainly see great progress."

It is possible that the time is rapidly approaching (perhaps it is already here) when the welfare of man, mentally, morally, physically, and spiritually, will receive great attention.

Alpha Sigma Phi has been presenting the idea that man has a great potential to draw upon and that it is possible through free will to come to the place where our all-consuming goal is to express our very highest self. We know that progress in this field begins with the individual who is inspired to work, seek, grow, and make progress in his own consciousness.

Each Chapter and Brother has a great responsibility. We have been saying these things for a long time but perhaps we must become more articulate in saying them. We must also assume the responsibility of proving their value. Responsibility is a word (like discipline, diligence, or others in our language) that may imply a heavy burden to carry. Instead, let's think of it in terms of leading us to the expression of our creative potential.

I am responsible for me.

If I have talent, ability, or any potential that I have not been using, no one can cause me to use it but me.

If there are situations that frustrate, irritate, or become barriers to my happiness, I cannot blame my parents, my family, my brothers, my instructors.

I must assume responsibility for myself. But what is probably more important, if I say that there is a certain principle in my life that I profess to believe, then *I am responsible* for proving it — or it is only philosophical in nature, or an intellectual conjecture.

It is not new to say that each individual is responsible for proving the principles of life in which he believes, but it may be time to emphasize this more. Nothing so quickly takes a principle out of nebulous generality and puts it into focused reality as someone's willingness to assume the responsibility for proving its truth.

Instead of giving so much of our thought energy to considering the "evils" of the college or university, of a technological society would it not be better to consider the possibility of a great new surge of interest in man's spiritual evaluation? The Fraternity Chapter on the hundreds of campuses could be the vehicle through which this could happen.

Society needs responsible young men who will fearlessly set out to express the highest that is in them. The community needs you, with your strength, faith, creativity and potential for expressing understanding. No one wants to feel irresponsible, for irresponsibility only obstructs one's progress. When we assume responsibility for ourself, there is a positive spill-over that makes us responsible toward all that goes on around us.

There is no question but that these are remarkable times in which we live. The important question we face is, "How many people are there who are ready and willing to assume their share of responsibility?"

Brotherhood Weekend—Action Behind Words

BY CHUCK TRAMONT, HSP

Missouri Valley College

Brotherhood weekend was designed and conceived to enhance the fraternity spirit and to re-dedicate its purpose. This is the story of how we did it.

First, Alpha Omicron, worked out a temporary plan of what the project was to entail and how to set out to do it. Mr. J. Leo Hayob, citizen leader and chairman of the Marshall Chamber of Commerce, was approached with idea. Originally, we planned to "take over" a section of Marshall's ghetto and through the help of businesses and college officials, rejuvenate the area. Mr. Hayob posed several problems, the initial one being that 80-90% of the city's ghettos were owned by persons who could, if they desire, make or pay for repairs themselves. The persons living in the ghettos were primarily renters and, by us re-conditioning their land (landlord's), the tenants rent would be raised proportionately. In essence, we would consequently be hurting the people we set out to help. Mr. Hayob went on to say that businessmen, be cognizant of the slum-lord dilemma, would not be as likely to contribute as if they were donating to privately owned areas.

This point proved to be our key; we had to locate a privately owned home. For this we contacted Mr. Mike Rodemeyer, Saline County Welfare Director, for assistance. He searched the files and discovered many such homes, one of which belonged to Mr. Andrew Poffinberger, an 83 year old, long time Marshall resident. Because of his physical state, his friendliness, and his need, we chose his home.

PLANS ARE MADE

Immediately, the Business Manager of M.V.C., the Maintenance Director and a few Brothers were asked to examine the property, and appraise its needs. Their findings were extensive. The property had no hot water, or shower-bath, and was in sad need of exterminators. The outside needed paint, gardening, wood-work, roof work, etc., while the interior called for paint, plumbing, light fixtures, wood-work, plastering, and extensive cleaning. In united agreement, we thought we could handle the job.

At this time, we introduced the "Little Sisters" of



ANDREW POFFINBERGER

our chapter to the project and their support was integral. Together, we began the long and arduous task of soliciting materials from community business and college concerns. An introductory letter was sent out and a week later we "hit the streets", shaking hands and introducing our project to the community. Requests for support were made by radio and newspapers, but our personalized confrontations yielded Mr. Poffinberger nearly \$600 worth of supplies; including over 30 gallons of paint, paneling, light fixtures, sinks, cupboards, cabinets, tile, lumber, tools, and on and on.

THE LONG WEEKEND BEGINS

At 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, a breakfast was served at the chapter house by our "Little Sisters" as a kick-off for the project. We then proceeded to Mr. Poffinberger's home where we worked, side by side, until nearly 10:00 p.m. Sunday, at 9:00 a.m. we began again to be completed by 10:00 p.m. Twenty-five hours of work yielded



paint-covered Brothers, Little Sisters with dish pan hands, but mostly some 50 Brothers and our "Sisters" with the feeling of accomplishment like most had never felt before.

The project which was in the planning for nearly 8 months was over, or so we thought. In actuality, we had not, and probably have not to this day, realized the impact Brotherhood Weekend had on us as Brothers of Alpha Sigma Phi.

WORDS OF PRAISE

Our faculty advisor states of the continuing praise of faculty, staff, and administration toward our project. The campus newspaper editor calls it the most outstanding service project while he's been in attendance here and probably for sometime before. Brothers have spoken of praise received as they entered local businesses with their Alpha Sigma Phi letters on. The local paper has hailed the project as a "splendid example of Brotherhood." Presently, our greatest reward was received by

our 83 year old recipient, "Poff," in his personal thank-you note written both in the local paper and on his face as he entered his new home.

Plans are currently in the making to reveal the project to Kansas City and St. Louis papers in an outward rejection of "Slum Lord" dilemmas existent across our land. This chapter takes pride in being a part of this rejection and hopes it can be an equal part of poverty's resolution, not only in Marshall, or Missouri, but nationally as well.

WE'VE ONLY BEGUN

We as a chapter of this Fraternity have taken precedence on campus and in our area to practice what we as a chapter have preached for 25 years. Charity as a cardinal virtue and Brotherly love as our founding precept. We do not for one minute claim to have lived up in total to our ideas, that would be hypocrisy. Rather, we have opened the door to the seventies with the key labeled realism.

TRY IT — YOU'LL LIKE IT!

1972 CONVENTION — August 23-26, 1972

University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

**"ALL YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW
ABOUT BROTHERHOOD BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK"**

Fraternities? With Changes, They'll Be Around a While

Is the fraternity system sick, verging on collapse — a victim of its own shortcomings?

You can get arguments on that question, but a study of conditions here and nationally indicates that any tolling of the knell just now would be premature, and that the system will live on, though in substantially altered form.

Furthermore, it's a good bet that change will bring demonstrable enrichment.

One has to concede that, in this age of increasing independence and political activism, fraternities often seem only vaguely relevant. Traditional Greek imagery and the aura of enhanced social status no longer exert their old allure.

But does this foretell collapse?

Certainly not in the opinion of David Bechtel '67, administrative dean for fraternities on the Urbana-Champaign campus.

Partial to the system because of his own productive association with it (he pledged Alpha Gamma Rho more than eight years ago), Bechtel nonetheless is in a good position to make an objective evaluation, and he's convinced that fraternities will be around for a long time.

"They're not growing here," the young administrator says, "but in general I would say they are in as good shape as they've ever been."

Acquainted with other Big Ten schools because of his travels as coordinator for the Interfraternity Council, Bechtel is also in a good position to evaluate what some have labeled "the national fraternity crisis."

ILLINOIS LOSES TWO HOUSES

Illinois has lost two houses in recent years, but these were national combinations, and one has since re-emerged. So the system here, comprised of 56 houses, is still the largest in the world.

Other campuses — some of them at least — have had less luck. Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin are, according to Bechtel, commonly recognized as the

schools whose fraternity systems are in deepest trouble, and every other school in the conference except Purdue has lost at least one house.

On the other hand, he observes, fraternity chapters are being born and are growing rapidly in the new state schools and in the existing institutions which have come of age in recent years.

The overall problem seems not to be a decline in interest but normal attrition — 90 per cent of it attributable to economics. When complicating factors arise, repercussions are more severe, and this has been the situation at Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Though lacking precise evidence of the correlation between "liberalism" and the demise of fraternities, Bechtel feels certain that "differences in student clientele" account in large part for fraternity problems at Wisconsin. Houses there, he summarized, have traditionally been purely social groups, not unlike those at most other large Midwest schools. When social pre-occupations of students began to dissipate, the houses failed to change, thereby losing their attractiveness to ever greater numbers.

At Michigan two factors combined to disrupt a well established Greek system: More liberal rules permitting students to live off campus, and the recent dissolution of Interfraternity Council at Ann Arbor.

A unified, functioning IFC is a necessity on a large campus, Bechtel feels. "You have to have some place where everyone comes together."

MONEY'S A PROBLEM

At Minnesota, nearly 70 per cent of the students commute, doing away with the rather superficial need for fraternities as housing. The need for refuge and identity as part of an integrated whole also is reduced.

Here at Illinois, the old bugaboo of finances remains the most common problem. The trouble can result from either poor management or declining membership, but both of these seem to be cyclical.

Most houses can abide with such difficulties for

from one to three years before facing a serious show-down. Historically, this has usually provided enough time for some kind of spiritual, if not economic, renaissance to occur.

A house must then sort out luxuries and necessities: Is a beer blast a necessity? What must be done to make the lodge more than just another rooming house? The manner in which a brotherhood answers a whole assortment of such questions ultimately determines its rise or fall in the economic cycle.

APATHY CAN CRIPPLE

A much more serious problem is dealing with the crippling effects of apathy. Ultimately, most fraternal difficulties — even the economic ones — stem from a falling off of interest and, consequently, of membership. Hence, when one hears of a “fraternity crisis” it is not so much due to technical errors in self-regulation as to a general decline in the appeal of the system.

Let's look at the statistics to gauge the popularity and status of the system at Illinois. Has there really been a decline in membership accompanying the decline in hoopla surrounding fraternities?

Total membership dropped from 3,462 in 1969 to 3,343 in 1970, a loss of 119. The number of men living in fraternity houses dropped from 2,736 to 2,591 — a loss of 145 and a decline from 95 per cent of capacity to 90 per cent.

The loss is spread unevenly, and suffering especially are the houses more than 10 below capacity; there are 11 such houses this year as opposed to 8 last year.

Taken alone, these figures can lead to some pessimistic conclusions. In a broader context, however, they show no clear-cut downward trend. In the fall of 1960 fraternity membership stood at 3,008, in 1965 at 3,277, this year 3,343 — that's a net increase of 255 in a decade, and this year's decline was the first in five years.

The number of men pledging this year increased, and Bechtel said only four of the houses in financial trouble last year were still in difficulty. All this hardly adds up to a “fraternity crisis.”

But there are changes. Fraternities like many other traditional institutions are being re-examined by a new breed of students more prone to skepticism than to unquestioning acceptance, more prone to individual than to collective enterprise.

Dave Bechtel says student values have changed so much in the last decade that many cliches such as the Saturday night date, the “Illini Tribe” or getting grades for the sake of the house have ceased to be meaningful. The self-perpetuation of various images or personality types has largely dissipated. Purposeful recruitment of “jocks” or “gradesmen” has toned down.

Fraternities tend to value diversity more highly, Bechtel concludes, and they're getting it. A prevalent attitude seems to be, “I should try to know all people as best I can, despite any differences which may exist.”

Greek and Independents refer to one another as “frat rats” and “GDI's,” but their differences are more semantic than antagonistic. For the most part, fraternity projects which have been eliminated were abandoned more because of large-scale apathy than anything else.

Fraternities still face charges of irrelevance. In this age of political activism many consider them too inward-looking. Concern for the welfare of humanity has usurped concern on such a limited level as that of a fraternity, and rituals are considered meaningless hold-overs from the past.

Students' attentions are keyed to the dilemmas of war, racism, poverty, discrimination. Consequently, a system which is discriminatory by nature seems hardly alluring or exemplary. The new student is interested in “brotherhood,” but considers the brotherhood of man a more relevant ideal than fraternal brotherhood.

QUIET CHANGE CONTINUES

The thing the doom-sayers overlook is that fraternities have changed, not so much by a deliberate process but through the almost unnoticed changes of the members themselves.

It is easy to overlook the fact that fraternity men, as students, reflect as much as anyone else the current thoughts, ideas and fashions. And, the houses “most likely to succeed” are those with a strong sense of group recognition and cohesiveness but also a blend of both individualism and brotherhood.

One significant change in most houses is the new approach to pledging. (At least one house has even banished the term; yesterday's pledge is today's “associate member.”) The old shenanigans are being replaced by an organized educational “affiliation period” during which the newcomer learns about his chosen house.

Dean of Students Hugh Satterlee feels that fraternities must alter their goals and values, but that they must decide for themselves how they want to change. “The system certainly fulfills a need, but it should be a need that the students describe, not something we describe.”

Dean Satterlee, who views fraternities “primarily as an extension of university service, one which is representative of the student body,” has found the system helpful. “In times of stress, as in last year's student strike movement, the fraternities have come to us with concrete, reasonable suggestions. They conducted themselves in a logical manner.

“I think the University would suffer without fraternities. I would not like to see this disappear.” And, he sees no reason to fear they will.

Another optimistic view comes from Alpha Tau Omega's director of chapter services, Layne Triplett, a member of the national headquarters staff in Champaign. Citing ATO's record of ten chapters added and only four lost in the last two years, Triplett says that though he is concerned about the present situation, there have been no alarming statistical downtrends.

CAUGHT IN BACKLASH

"What we are suffering from is a backlash against all 'establishment' institutions," Triplett says. "We are not suffering as a 'fraternity system.' Clubs, honoraries, organizations in general are declining. It's all part of a cresting wave of individuality."

Fraternities have a good chance to endure this convulsion because their own members are an integral part of it.

One difficulty is that people may not realize this. Fraternities are principally inward- rather than outward-looking groups, which exist to be of service and value to their members.

While fraternity men tend to be as well informed and as deeply concerned as any, they are rarely activist in the currently fashionable manner. Neither the individual lodges nor the IFC do the kinds of things that make headline news, and this situation adds to the problem of image. The pennant-waving, beer-guzzling imagery of the past hangs on, despite the widespread alteration of values which has in fact occurred.

Amid all the optimism, it must be conceded that, proportionate to enrollment, fraternity membership has slipped. It has not come anywhere near keeping pace with campus growth.

One reason for this, in the opinion of Sammy Rebecca '52, director of housing, has been the improve-

ment in housing facilities. "Residence halls and the fraternity system have come closer together," Rebecca says, "and the old imbalance has disappeared."

The halls now provide a viable social outlet. Residence hall units, some with well established names, have actually become fraternities of a kind. On big weekends, alumni often return to their old floors for reunions.

Bechtel sees these "rez hall" units literally as fraternities under a different name. "In sports, in social activities and in personal acquaintanceships, they are fraternities in a rudimentary state."

WHY WE'LL LIVE ON

Attrition will continue to claim Greek houses now and then, particularly those which refuse to adapt. But, as long as there is a need for people to become aware of and learn about one another in a small group relationship, there will be a need for some kind of fraternal organization.

It is this need which is universal — not a particular set of Greek letters or 19th century rituals.

Fraternities rarely live up to the highest ideals of their creeds. Brothers rarely have a full awareness and appreciation of what it is they are experiencing.

But the concept and need, the values and manifestations of brotherhood, remain constant. If they didn't, people wouldn't keep on pledging.

Spending the Summer in Washington?

If you are working on the Hill, or taking a course in Washington, D.C., this summer, check with Beta Chi Chapter regarding a place to stay — a real bargain — \$170 for June 1 to August 31 or any part thereof. Accommodations include a double room, bunk bed, and the chapter is located in the northwest section of Washington.

WRITE: House Manager, ΑΣΦ
Box 77, American University
Washington, D.C. 20044

fraternity supplies



FRATERNITY TIE — Little do some people know, the fraternity tie is a very smart looking tie. It is pure silk repp, with regimental strip design in the manner of the classic club ties. The narrow stripes are cardinal and stone on a rich black background. Plus it is a wide tie, for \$6.00 postage paid.

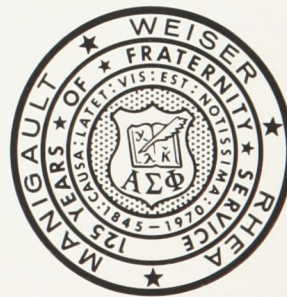


FRATERNITY CHAIRS — If you want to say you're off your rocker . . . then you better buy one. The Adult Boston Rocker, available with seal and fraternity coat-of-arms is \$36.00 plus freight charges upon receipt. It is harmonious with any decor. If you don't want to be off your rocker then the Adult Arm Chair with seal or coat-of-arms set in gold is what you want. With cherry arms it is \$48.00 and with black arms \$46.75 (plus freight upon receipt). Both chairs fit either traditional or contemporary decor.

Christmas delivery not guaranteed on orders received after Nov. 5, 1971.



RECORD ALBUM — There is still a supply of albums of beloved songs of our fraternity. The 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ stereo recording can be obtained for \$5.00 (shipped postage paid).



COMMEMORATIVE SEAL

— It is an accomplishment for an organization to say it has existed as a service to mankind for 125 years. Alpha Sigma Phi can be proud of this fact. To

Commemorate this momentous occasion a Seal has been created . . . reflecting our motto, founders, and purpose. This attractive seal pictured above has been made into a silver plated paperweight. The 3 inch diameter weight can be obtained for \$5.00.

All these supplies can be obtained through the Fraternity office at 24 W. William St., Delaware, Ohio 43015.