

BROTHERHOOD

Our Substance of Choice



A Special Publication of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity

A letter from the president



*Dr. Robert B.
Deloian,
president, Phi
Delta Theta
General Council*

“We want to give renewed strength to the core principles of our founders. Abuse of alcohol among college undergraduates endangers these principles.”

YOU MAY WONDER WHY THERE IS A SPECIAL PUBLICATION in your mailbox this month. You’ve no doubt heard the news that Phi Delta Theta will have alcohol-free chapter facilities in the year 2,000, and we wanted to get the details of this announcement to you, a member of the Phi Delta Theta family. The General Council and I believe that we must get the Fraternity “back to the basics” and forge a brotherhood that exemplifies our principles of friendship, sound learning, and rectitude. We want to give renewed strength to the ideals and principles that our Founders thought necessary in men.

Unfortunately, fraternity life today is an alcohol-dominated culture. It has received a very negative image that – in most cases – is deserved. Fraternities have so much more to offer, and can play a vital role in student development. We need to focus on the positive aspects of friendship, leadership, scholarship, brotherhood and community involvement.

At the General Council’s meeting in February, we decided to move forward with a plan that will change the nature of our chapters’ living facilities. This plan was enthusiastically endorsed by our General Officers. Alcohol-free living will allow our chapters to have cleaner, safer facilities that will be conducive to living our founding principles.

We recognize that this major change will create challenges and concerns along the way. We will need to be flexible and evaluate individual situations as they occur, but our goal will not change. Many of you are concerned about recruitment, drinking and driving, and the ability to attract members to live in the house. These are all legitimate concerns. It is our hope that our implementation, and educational programs over the next three years will be of great value to our members’ understanding of this policy.

The comments from alumni and undergraduate members have been very positive. The news media has embraced our bold step with a great deal of coverage and praise. University officials are 100 percent behind our effort and have vowed to give us all the support necessary for success.

Sorority support and endorsement is strong, as you can imagine. Other major fraternities are watching us with great interest, and it is our belief that many of them will also make similar policy changes in the near future.

Please take a close look at this educational publication. This is the first step in the process of preparing our membership for this historic change.

Together our love and commitment to Phi Delta Theta will help preserve our future.

Why alcohol free?

By Marc S. Mores

THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF PHI DELTA THETA UNANIMOUSLY voted in February to eliminate alcohol from chapter facilities by the year 2,000. In making its decision, the Council cited a strong desire to return to Fraternity values and respond to the needs of today's students. The following are major findings the Council looked at when making its decision and help explain why Phi Delta Theta is moving in this direction.

Fraternity life today is an alcohol-dominated culture

According to the Harvard School of Public Health, 86 percent of men who live in fraternity houses are binge drinkers. Binge drinking is defined as having five or more drinks in one sitting. We do not operate in a culture of service, leadership, and brotherhood. Our best chapters are groups who do not allow themselves to be defined by alcohol.

The common problems that result from the alcohol-dominated culture include poor scholarship, deterioration of our chapter living facilities, increased liability insurance costs, image problems, poor retention rates of new members, sexual assaults, date rape and hazing. Studies show 90 percent of campus rape cases are alcohol related and most hazing cases involve alcohol. Three undergraduate Phis died in the past four years because of alcohol-related incidents. Recruitment totals are declining. On some campuses, the best men are no longer pledging fraternities – they are too motivated and want more than a drinking club.

“Our best chapters are groups that do not allow themselves to be defined by alcohol.”

Poor scholarship performance

Alcohol is affecting our undergraduates' ability to adhere to the mission of the universities and one of the purposes of Phi Delta Theta — sound learning. Statistics from the fall 1996 semester show that 64.7 percent of our chapters were below the all men's average at their respective institutions. A study by Columbia University's Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse reports that alcohol is a contributing factor in more than 40 percent of all academic problems and 28 percent of all drop-outs.

Deterioration of chapter houses

Chapter living facilities are steadily deteriorating due, in part, to large social events. Alumni are not willing to donate money to a chapter house that is not maintained properly. Two of the greatest threats to the existence of Phi Delta Theta are property losses and chapter house fires. Life safety and loss control have been hot topics as a result of several fraternity house fires which have resulted in the loss of life. Members can

still have fun at our chapter houses, but not while damaging property and risking lives.

Increasing liability insurance rates

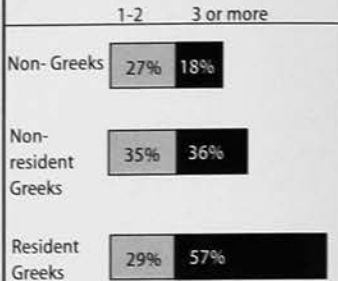
Phi Delta Theta has seen liability insurance rates continue to increase each year as a result of alcohol. Of all the insurance claims filed against Phi Delta Theta, 53 percent are known to be alcohol related. Furthermore, 81 percent of those claims which result in payment are alcohol-related which has resulted in over \$5.5 million being paid out since 1978. Our insurance underwriters are forced to increase the premiums each year because they have suffered losses. At \$140 per man, our undergraduates are faced with paying the highest per-member insurance cost in the fraternity world. Meanwhile sorority liability rates average around \$20 per member. Their low rates are due to the fact that they have substance-free chapter houses. Sororities have limited claims due to limited exposure. Their members often socialize at the fraternity houses. When sororities do have events where alcohol is served, they use third party vendors off the premises.

Today's students

Today's student wants to make friends, do well academically and have leadership and service opportunities. The Astin Study from UCLA shows that during the past 15 years the number of students who do not drink has increased. This is especially true with freshman — 47 percent of freshman did not drink according to a 1994 report. Parents want living options for their children that reinforce values and scholarship. A third of all entering college students would chose to live in a substance-free environment if it were offered. Phi Delta Theta needs to change the culture of our chapters from focusing on entertainment to self-development and service.

Alcohol in the house

Number of drinking binges reported by male students within the past two weeks:



Member attitudes

Percentage of male students who agree with the statement: “drinking alcohol is important.”



Souce: Harvard University

Binge drinking: How much is too much?

By Rob Pasquinucci

COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE OFTEN TYING MORE THAN A FEW ON. THE undergraduate who spends every night in the bar is not as common as it once was, but many students drink heavily only on the weekends. Experts warn this “binge drinking” by students can result in something more than a diploma when they graduate: a lifelong alcohol problem.

A study released in 1994 by the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) reported alcohol use on American campuses is down, most likely because of a higher drinking age and increased enforcement of driving under the influence laws. But students who do drink engage in “binge drinking” — defined by most experts as having more than five drinks during an evening for males and four drinks for females, and most of the binge drinking occurs in fraternity houses.

The study, which looked at research generated by 3,100 four-year schools, found 42 percent of all college students engaged in heavy drinking during the last two weeks, while only 33 percent of their non-college counterparts did the same.

“Basically, the college community has split in two divergent groups — those who do not drink at all or rarely drink, and those who drink to excess,” the CASA study says.

The CASA study reported:

- Students living in fraternity and sorority housing drink three times as many drinks as other students, averaging 15 drinks per week versus five drinks per week.
- One in three college students drinks primarily to get drunk.
- Each year, students spend \$5.5 billion on alcohol, more than they spend on soft drinks, tea, coffee or books combined.

In all, 50 percent of men and 39 percent of women on college campuses can be considered binge drinkers, according to the CASA study.

Jeff Pollard, Ph.D. is director of counseling and health services at Denison University in Granville, Ohio. He says the results of the CASA study didn't surprise him.

“From 17 to 23 years old, people inevitably consume more alcohol than any of the years of their life,” Pollard says.

Pollard and other experts say the binge drinking culture prevalent in most colleges can be dangerous to students, especially those who have a history of alcoholism in their families.

“If I come to campus with that problem and am exposed to a binge drinking culture, it will pull out that problem very quickly,” Pollard says. “There is a very good chance that my disease will flower.”

Dr. Anderson Spickard, Jr., *Vanderbilt*, '53, is the director of Fighting Back, a program to reduce demand for illegal drugs and alcohol. He says family history plays a key role in whether someone will develop alcoholism during their college years.

“If I had a mother or father who was an alcoholic, I'd never drink a drop of alcohol,” Spickard says. Research indicates alcoholism can be transmitted genetically.

“So many times, the whole family has an alcohol problem,”



Spickard says.

“Students are often unaware of a family history of alcohol problems, and come to college not knowing they need to be cautious of alcohol use.”

Sometimes, parents will cover up the problem to hide it from the kids to save them from potential embarrassment. Pollard says this is a mistake.

“These are things students need to know,” Pollard says. “Boy, I wish they would (talk to their children about alcohol problems) as a junior or senior in high school.”

Pollard also warns families with a history of depression problems to alert their children of this before they go to school, since depression can lead to alcohol use to “self medicate” the problem.

Cheryl Presley, Ph.D. from Southern Illinois University conducted another study on campus alcohol use as part of the Core Institute headquartered there. She says society needs to develop better guidelines for alcohol use.

“We've normalized the use of alcohol,” Presley says.

“We don't dialogue about it enough. What's safe drinking?” Students “don't have any sense of what these things are until they get to college,” she adds.

Without guidelines, students often binge drink and face deadly consequences. The Fraternity is committed to helping its members see the dangers of binge drinking and the other dangers of alcohol use. Over the next three years, the General Headquarters will provide more resources to members for this effort.

“From 17-23 years old, (people) consume more alcohol than any other years in their lives.”

—Jeff Pollard

How alcohol-free saved a chapter

By William F. Laut



File photo of Indiana Alpha's chapter house.

ON JANUARY 19, 1995, THE CHARTER OF INDIANA ALPHA — THE oldest continuous charter in the Fraternity — was placed in escrow by the General Council. With that action, part of what had become tradition at Indiana Alpha came to a screeching halt. That tradition — the consumption of alcoholic beverages in the chapter house — ended that day, as Indiana Alpha became a substance-free chapter.

For many of our members, the response was anger, disbelief, and outright hostility towards the General Council. Some young men chose to leave the Fraternity rather than embrace the new policy. Others reluctantly agreed to adhere to the policy but sought alternative housing the next school year. After hiring an executive director, who did not meet the housing board's expectations and instead exacerbated hard feelings, the situation at Indiana Alpha looked grim. The House Corporation Board was polarized, with part of the board recommending closing and recolonizing the chapter, while the others disagreed with that recommendation.

By April of 1995, it appeared that Indiana Alpha would not survive. Our only chance would require several major changes in attitude in both the undergraduates and alumni.

What brought Indiana Alpha to the brink of death? And more importantly, how did Indiana Alpha not only survive, but position itself as a leader among the fraternities at Indiana University, in less than two years?

There are many reasons for the near death of Indiana Alpha. First, a shift in social mores occurred over the past thirty years. Many things which were considered immoral or shocking on college campuses are common today. Second, the physical facility of the chapter house was showing its age, and due to a lack of funding, major renovations were not possible. As the building became more and more worn, there was less interest in taking care of it. Third, there has been a well-documented increase in drinking by college students within the past decades. Fifteen years ago, a party at Indiana University consisted of a fraternity and sorority, with two or three kegs of beer (despite I.U. officially being a "dry" campus). By the time Indiana Alpha was failing, parties of six to eight chapters and 30 kegs were not uncommon.

The biggest factor leading to Indiana Alpha's near extinction was: lack of involvement by the alumni of Indiana Alpha. Because of a desire to allow the young men to develop their leadership skills, the alumni of Indiana Alpha were not deeply involved in the operations of the chapter. Instead, alumni relations were basically nonexistent. Alumni did not feel welcome

at the house, and in turn, the undergraduates felt abandoned by the alumni.

Indiana Alpha, faced with the prospect of closing its doors, faced the challenge and changed its operations. By the fall of 1995, a group of 27 dedicated men returned to a chapter house built to hold 70. An alumnus of the chapter, Brett Lane, returned to campus as our executive director. The Corporation Board was restructured to involve more of the alumni, and most importantly, was responsible for alumni relations. The undergraduates agreed that the substance-free policy was in the best interest of Indiana Alpha.

The result of these changes? The chapter dramatically improved their scholarship, moving from 27th to 4th among the 32 fraternities. Rush, despite rumors of Phi Delta Theta closing its doors, had remarkable success. For the first time in many years, Indiana Alpha held a Golden and Silver Legion Ceremony on an alumni weekend. And, Phi Delta Theta was the victor in the "Little 500" bicycle race.

During the past summer, the chapter house began to be renovated. These renovations would not have been considered in the past due to the atmosphere of the house. Now, instead of walking into a chapter house that reeked of stale beer and that suffers from members' lack of pride, the men of Indiana Alpha have a house that is clean and they are proud to call home. Best of all, the charter is back from escrow — in an alcohol-free environment.

Adopting a substance-free policy was painful. We lost several members of the chapter who could not or would not change to meet the times. Our alumni were angry — at the General Council for placing the charter in escrow and at the undergraduates who were the custodians of the charter at that time, even though the alumni drank their fair share of alcohol in the chapter house at one time or another.

Now, two years later, adopting the substance-free policy was a "bitter pill" for Indiana Alpha, and it had a terrible taste at the time. But, two years later, we have no doubt it led to improved health for the patient. As an early adopter of the policy, we are pleased to see the Fraternity extend it to all the chapters, and we stand ready to assist our brothers with any help they need in adopting the policy.

William F. Laut, Indiana '80, is the president of the Indiana Alpha House Corporation Board.

Alumni: We need your support

By Rich Fabritius

FOR SOME OF US, THE General Council's new policy on alcohol-free housing is a major change. For others, it is a return to the way it once was. Depending on your graduation date, alcohol-free housing, and its pending effects, may not be that drastic of a change. In reality, alcohol has only been part of the chapter house for the last 30 years.

Since California Alpha occupied the first Phi Delta chapter house in 1874 and up to the tumultuous sixties, alcohol was not part of the living facilities of our young men. So for those who were undergraduates in this era, this is a return to the way it used to be!

For alumni whose experience consisted of alcohol in the chapter house, this is a big step at first glance. But, is it really? Think about the changes that have occurred within our Fraternity in the last few decades.

We addressed hazing. We said it was wrong, and we continue to work on eliminating it in our chapters. Hazing is contrary to the very mission of the Fraternity. It breaks men and chapters down, creating a segregated chapter and a warped sense of brotherhood.

Dry rush? This is Another one of the changes in Phi Delta Theta. A change which prompted the naysayers to predict our demise once again. At the time, many members couldn't comprehend recruiting men without alcohol. Now, on many cam-

pus, our members can't comprehend recruiting with it.

No more kegs. Remember that one? The end of Phi Delta, people exclaimed. What a

"Binge drinking is out of control in our chapters and on campus. We've lost respect for the immortal pillars upon which we were founded."

shock for so many of us. But, we continued to operate and continued improving, working within the new policies.

What, we can't buy alcohol with chapter funds? Now here was a big one. You mean the chapter can't buy alcohol? We weathered the transition and are better for it.

When you review the movements of the Fraternity and the changes which have occurred, identifying their catalysts is relatively easy. In the sixties, we reworked our membership requirements due to the civil rights revolution and the maturing of our organization's conscience. We addressed hazing due to the scars it was leaving both symbolically and physically. States we're addressing hazing by passing laws prohibiting it. We realized that if you recruit a man with alcohol, alcohol is what he'll come to solely expect from his membership. Not hard work, leadership development and

service to others.

Drinking laws changed. Our membership is comprised mostly of men under the drinking age. We needed to change our organization to



reflect this development. We are learning, and the Fraternity is growing. These changes are an illustration of this evolution.

Now substance-free. The General Council looked at Phi Delta Theta today and saw the low grades, the poor condition of our chapter houses, the negative image of our association in popular culture and on campus, the loss of life and the injury of our members and their guests and the rising cost of liability insurance. Membership experiences all too often defined by alcohol. Binge drinking is out of control in our chapters and on campus. We've lost appreciation and respect for the immortal pillars upon which this organization was founded and have moved away from our purpose.

These are the reasons for this change. If we don't change now, we may not get a chance in the future. It is time once again for our brother-

hood to evolve. If not now, when? If not us, who?

Yes, this will be tough. Many of the experiences you may participate in at the house will change. Socials on the property will be without alcohol. Homecoming at the house will not have alcohol. Founders Day at the chapter facility will not, either. It is a big change for many of us and we need your support and help to be successful.

We have strong indications that many of the other fraternities will make similar changes in their organizations. Sigma Nu has already committed to alcohol-free housing by the year 2,000 and many groups are interested in making a similar move. Phi Delta Theta is truly on the cutting edge of this change in the Greek world.

Being in a fraternity is about change. Our host institutions and members pride themselves on being leaders of change. We evolve as people, and so too must we evolve as an organization. This bold step took character, leadership and strength – traits which we hope to instill in each and every man who signs *The Bond*.

Membership in our organization is about brotherhood. It is about providing positive experiences that comfort us throughout our days. It is about making men better because of their association with other Phis. As alumni, we have lived through many changes. This is yet another one of the steps in the evolution of the world's greatest fraternity: Phi Delta Theta.

Responses to Phi Delta Theta's new policy

"A chain is only as strong as its weakest link, you might hear an active tell a pledge during his first semester in the fraternity. Drinking makes weak links," -William Thomas Burdette, opinion editor, The Skiff, Texas Christian University's student newspaper.

"This is a courageous move, and I congratulate you and your leadership for making a decision that will be in the best interest of the undergraduate members." - Robert C. Khayat, Mississippi '60, Chancellor, The University of Mississippi

"Having a substance-free house gives us a chance to focus more on other things we do such as scholarships, community service, and campus and community involvement" -Collin Boetger, president, Ohio Lambda chapter (Kent State)

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The Standard for Brotherhood

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