

A Reason to Be Proud:

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE KAPPA CHAPTER OF PHI SIGMA KAPPA

Phi Sigma Kappa Penn State P.O. Box 7007 Albert Lea, MN 56007-8007



FURTHER DETAILS ON KAPPA CHAPTER

- I have served as the Chairman of the Reason to Be Proud Campaign since it started in 2005, and have served as Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Alumni association (officially called the Phi Sigma Kappa Association of State College).
- We started the Campaign in the mid-2000s to save our Chapter House, which as many of you know was in extremely poor shape, from a combination of little money to do comprehensive repairs (so we had a patchwork of “band aid” repairs that were barely sufficient), poor maintenance by the Actives and the lack of any major repair to the 80 year old house for thirty years. The place was a rat hole and was not an attractive venue for any rushees. We were in a death spiral, declining membership: down to the low to mid 20s at one point - because the place was in such bad shape; reduced revenue because we could not attract good, top-flight young men; the inability to turn the Chapter around with a demoralized group of Actives, abusing the house with excessive parties; and a 80 year old infrastructure that was crumbling beneath their feet. Because of the poor physical condition and the extreme lack of up-to-date safety standards, we were within three years of being closed by the Borough of State College. The official name of the Association is the Phi Sigma Kappa Association of State College.
- You likely know all that from newsletters and other correspondence about the Campaign over the last five years. But you may not know that many in the Campaign leadership, including newer Board members, were some of the biggest critics of the condition of the House and the Chapter. We answered Dick Doherty’s challenge to take action to rescue the House and Chapter, instead of just complaining about it and allowing it to be closed.
- We now have close to \$1.2 million in pledges, most of which are paid over five years. A number of you made a pledge and have been paying the installments. WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT. We financed a \$ 1.7 million renovation project, which includes \$ 1.4 million spent on construction and renovation. Please contact Dave Hyland (dhyland@ecanet.com), who headed our Building Committee, for details on the renovation project.
- Please consider making a \$ 50 per month contribution for five years, which amounts to \$ 3,000. This can be done very easily through an automatic ACH deduction from your bank checking or savings account.
- During the last 5 years, we have listened to you and our other Brothers from all eras, and have taken steps to implement much of the helpful advice offered.
- Many said we needed to establish clear Standards of Conduct by which the Actives’ conduct would be measured. We did so. In fact, the Actives not only agreed, but participated in the drafting of the Standards, which Brother Ron Hedges took the lead on.
- Many also said that we need to enforce the Standards when appropriate. We have done so. There were two times last year when the House was not kept up the way it is supposed to be. The Board sent in a cleaning crew, and the Actives were assessed the costs of this cleaning efforts. They paid this in addition to their rent. NOT ONE DIME of Campaign or Alumni Board funds went toward paying the cleaning crew that cleaned up the mess that violated our Standards of Conduct.

- We also have a state-of-the-art Lease, which Brother Mark Rudulavage prepared for us. We thank Mark for all his continued help in this area. Under the Lease, a violation of the Standards of Conduct constitutes a breach of the Lease. Also, the Actives MUST live in the house, unless they are over the 36 Active level. If they are, then the more senior Actives are permitted to move out, based on seniority rules that they set. But no one can move out if they are at 36 or lower. Actives participating in student teaching, externships, internships and other bona fide university functions that require living outside of State College are permitted to move out.
- Many complained when we contacted them during our fundraising that we no longer have Homecoming and Founders Day celebrations. We heard you and have re-established those traditions. We wish more alums would come back to visit during these celebrations. Per above, **Founders Day is Saturday, March 20, 2010**. PLEASE ASK BROTHERS FROM YOUR ERA TO ATTEND. We would love to see you. Virtually all the Actives have participated in our recent Homecoming and Founders Day celebrations, and they really want to meet more of our alums.
- If you cannot make it back Homecoming or Founders Day, please let us know when you will be in the area. We will arrange a tour of the house with one of the officers or other Actives. Just contact Fred DeCock (fred.decock@comcast.com) or me (billdegrandis@paulhastings.com) so we can arrange a tour and visit.
- If you see anything that does not satisfy the high standards of Kappa Chapter, please let us know right away, by contacting Dick Doherty (cosdoherty@verizon.net), Fred DeCock or me, and we will follow up. Please let us know the date and time of your visit, and which Actives you talked with.
- We have an outstanding Chapter Advisor in Mike Martin. Mike has facilitated some excellent discussions between the Actives and the Alumni Board.
- Old habits are sometimes hard to change, but we have had oversight over all aspects of the House. But please do not just get frustrated if you see messy conditions or anything else that is not right. Let us know right away.
- We have a special effort to ensure the House is properly maintained and cleaned. Brothers Gary Best and John Benedict are leading this effort. Gary runs one of the most profitable Maid Brigade franchises in the U.S. We are very fortunate to have someone like Gary overseeing the cleaning and maintenance of the House, given that he has been so successful in operating a major house cleaning franchise. Gary was one of my pledge brothers and his son Alex is an Active and currently serving as Vice President. John Benedict lives in Port Matilda and has served on the Board. John is a good local presence and he regularly checks the House.
- We have had some large, high-quality pledge classes since the house re-opened for the Fall 2008 semester. They are enthusiastic and want to do things right. By next Fall, 2/3 of the Actives in the house will be from these two recent pledge classes. Dick Doherty, Dan Stearns and Mike Martin recently met with new President, Ryan Kirsh and the Active Exec Board. Dan and Dick thought they were organized, dedicated and well-focused.
- We conducted interviews of each Active as a condition to their living in the house. We covered key points of being an Active member of Kappa Chapter, and key elements of the Lease and Standards of Conduct. The interview questions and format were prepared with assistance from our National Chapter. Interviewers were all Kappa Chapter alums, many of whom have served on the Board or who were in our Campaign leadership.
- We are planning a Kappa Chapter sports weekend. This will be a good time to play golf, go fishing or enjoy other recreational activities with your Kappa Chapter brothers. This is in the early stages of planning, and more detail will be forthcoming.

Dick Doherty
610-323-3888, cosdoherty@verizon.net
President of the Board of Directors

Bill DeGrandis '77
202-551-1720, billdegrandis@paulhastings.com
Chairman, Reason to Be Proud Campaign
Vice President of the Board of Directors