Behind the Scenes

Reinstalling Pi KA on the WVU campus was inevitable but no one expected it to happen this early. That is, unless one looks at some of the factors that impacted that decision.

First and foremost, the national office in Memphis had to have been impressed with the speed and dynamics with which an Alpha Theta Alumni Association took form. Under the leadership of Doug Ladish, a great deal of energy was expended (mostly through the Internet) to locate brothers, tell them what had happened to the fraternity in Morgantown, and enlist their support in working towards a rebuilding of the chapter we all loved.

We organized. We talked. We met in Morgantown (twice), and newspapers and TV reports showed an aging group of brothers surveying a damaged house with determination to fix things. We voted people into positions that clearly showed resolve in never letting things get out of hand again once the chapter reformed.

The National Fraternity was doubly impressed most recently when Doug let them know that Alpha Theta alums weren't about to let the house on Belmar go. Responses to Doug's March 25th email were very positive, and Doug fed those responses to Dan Corah, head of alumni relations. It was soon after that when Doug received a message that a new colony would be formed in September of this year.

We may even be a little guilty of underestimating just how important a strong alumni group is in swaying such decisions. It was clear to all involved that the huge groundswell of interest from individual alums would serve a new chapter well. Memphis liked that as did University officials in Morgantown.

The University is still glowing in its happiness over the Delta Tau Delta turnaround. The Delts were booted off campus in 1990, reformed in 1996, and in just five years, took top honors at WVU for public service and academics. It's a tough act to follow, but the Delts' success made it easier for the University to look at the Pikes with new hope.

As Doug points out, housing issues are still up in the air, renovation being the key issue. But we now know that a strong alumni can push decisions, and as we get ready to embrace a new chapter, an enthusiastic and active alumni group will take on even greater meaning.

We must continue to grow. Locating brothers is a never-ending challenge. A core group of alumni in and around Morgantown must represent the rest of us by keeping close tabs on the chapter. And the rest of us must get back to Morgantown when possible to show our support. The commitment is to a good cause. It's our Fraternity. None of us liked what happened, but maybe something good will come out of it.