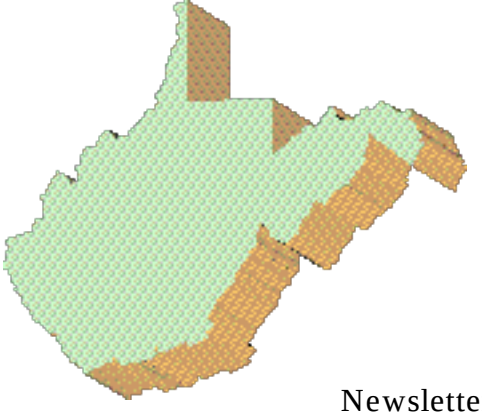

Mountaineer Pike

November, 2001

Newsletter of the Alpha Theta Alumni Association of Pi Kappa Alpha

Alpha Theta Retakes the Hill at WVU

Editor's Note: Brother Arnold Brigode, '62, was on the scene at one of the most dramatic moments in the chapter's history, the initiation of the new Pikes. The following is his story.

We heard a rumble rolling through the open back door. It was about 7:25 p.m., on a balmy Monday evening, October 22, at the dark end of Belmar Avenue. Bill Chittum ('62), Gary Earp ('65), Denver Atkinson ('66) and I had been at the boarded-up house since about 6:30 or so to make the final arrangements for the "Re-Colonization" ceremony. The rumbling heard from outside became louder and started to take the form of some sort of chanting--obviously male in its low, hearty tones. How many would be in this group.

Bill and our two Expansion Consultants from National (Dean Snihur-Lambda Epsilon and Beau Carlson-Alpha Phi) had come up earlier that day and set up candles, battery-powered lighting (mostly flashlights on bungee cords) and had hung the Pike flag in the second floor "living room" of the boarded-up chapter house. Bill had a key and we had decided last week that this would be an ideal location for the pinning ceremony. As Dean and Beau joined us about 7:10, we had checked out the lighting, ensured a clear (safe) path for the procession, discussed last-minute details for the ceremony, and I checked out my digital camera to see if we had any chance to capture some of the program to share with the alumni later on.

Meanwhile, outside, the sound became clearer with a distinct chant: "Pi-K-A, Pi-K-A, All the way for Pi-K-A." The seven of us inside were drawn to the back door as the "mob" turned the corner of the darkened house on Belmar and descended into the parking lot. "Dean," I asked, "what was that latest count?"

Back when I was an active member of the fraternity on 36 Campus Drive, the bright yellow house held about 25-30 brothers and Alpha Theta numbered (per the composite plus a few members whose pic had been left off--like mine) over 85 plus a dog, "Beast," and Mom Henderson, and an old American LaFrance fire truck by 1965. During this year's Alpha Theta Retreat (August, 2001), Justin Buck (Expansion Coordintor from Memphis HQ) had outlined an ambitious program that--he said--produced typical re-colonization of 65-70 members.

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