

The Rho Chapter Crest

The Rho News

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Brothers,

I am pleased to write Rho of Delta Kappa Epsilon has made great progress towards achieving our strategic vision since the Fall 2009 edition of the Rho News. The most significant event is the signing of a new lease with the college. Our treasurer, Peter Carlson '02, worked closely with Mitch Wein, Lafayette College's VP of Business Affairs, to craft a new operating model for Greek organizations on campus. This new model grants our members control over their living quarters including the kitchen area. It strengthens the college's oversight for maintenance to the house, notably utility costs, electrical repairs and janitorial service. The lease also reaffirms the college's responsibility for capital improvements. We began operating under this new lease following the signing in January by Mitch, Annette Diorio (Dean of Residence Life), Peter, and me. Our undergraduate members report positive changes so far this semester indicating the college is fulfilling their obligations to our membership.

The college allocated Plant Operations \$60,000 for incremental improvements and annual maintenance for the DKE House this year. Our alumni VP, Sal Caiazzo '03, walked through DKE with Plant Ops, sharing with them our concerns and priorities above regular maintenance items. We requested replacement door frames, doors, locks, and repainting for each room in the house. Of course we are preserving the MarsScape mural in the second floor room to the left of the center stairwell. We also requested replacement of the front door and renovation of the gateway to the house including the windows and woodwork surrounding the front door. Over Spring Break, the college already refinished the wood flooring on the entire first floor. Along with recent improvements our alumni and undergraduates have made, we have already greatly enhanced the appearance of the DKE House. Building on this, we plan on replacing the dining room tables to provide our men a premier dining experience.

Special points of interest:

- New Lease Signed
- Current and future house improvements
- COMPASS update
- Alumni Essay "The DEKE House 60 Years Ago"
- Please visit our website www.rhodke.org to view historic DKE images from the college archives

The college agrees that our proposal for the replacement of all windows in the house is a necessary step towards bringing the DKE House up to Lafayette's standards for residential living. In addition to improving energy efficiency of the house it will also promote natural ventilation by providing our members with functional windows. We hope to have this project completed in 2011.

This new lease empowers our members to control their own financial status in living the Objects of Delta Kappa Epsilon. I believe one of the unsung contributions of the fraternity system to Lafayette College is the opportunity to run a business while earning an undergraduate degree. Students address the challenges of operating a business with the guidance of alumni, faculty, and administrators to achieve a form of learning unavailable in the classroom. As President Weiss recently wrote in his February report "Where the Real Learning Happens", such learning outside of the classroom is some of the most important, transformative learning that takes place at Lafayette. Hopefully each of you fondly remembers the transformative impact Delta Kappa Epsilon imparted on your life. Our operating

model ensures our members have access to this valuable learning experience.

The DKE Mentoring Program has had a successful pilot this year pairing each senior with an alumnus in a one to one mentoring relationship. We've received feedback from alumni and undergraduate participants on the program's strengths and what needs improvement. Notable changes for next year include making it an opt-in program open to all undergraduates, collecting information directly from undergraduates instead of through undergraduate officers, and setting expectations for mentees and mentors upon volunteering. So far the most successful pairs were those who shared similar career interests, although our hope is to extend the program beyond career advice. We will circulate additional information on the mentoring program for 2010 in the coming months. I strongly urge any alumni interested in connecting with our undergraduates to volunteer for this program as it provides a valuable service to Lafayette students.

Once again we received the highest possible rating of Excellent on COMPASS, the system Lafayette College uses to evaluate Greek organizations. This marks the fourth consecutive year DKE received a rating of Satisfactory or higher. I thank Marshall Massey '08 for providing alumni oversight and guidance to our undergraduates on COMPASS. At this point, I am confident we have institutionalized this process as part of our culture to continually meet or exceed the college's expectations.

I decided to begin publishing our COMPASS results on our website to provide our membership transparency into how we measure up to the College's standards. Each of you can read the evaluation to see the strengths of our chapter, the importance of sending undergraduates to national Greek leadership conferences, and hopefully find ways to contribute to our brotherhood. Reading our evaluation will also give you a flavor of the types of activities our men engage in on campus. If you would like to become a more active participant in our chapter operations, speak at the DKE house sharing your life experiences with Lafayette undergraduates, or provide feedback on our ideas, please contact me. Active alumni involved in chapter activities are critical to the continued success of DKE at Lafayette College.

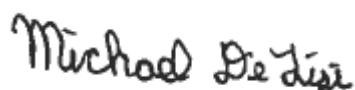
Several of our officers are participating in Alumni Interfraternity Sorority Board (AISB) working groups designed to craft policy for the Greek Community at Lafayette College. Our members are addressing the focus areas of Diversity, Judicial Process, Communication, and Alcohol. The college is undertaking a Campus Climate Study. As part of that effort, the college hired North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) to perform a third party evaluation of the Greek System at Lafayette. DKE actively participated at the alumni and undergraduate levels of this process. We will review the results of this study and incorporate them into recommendations for AISB.

DKE International and the Rampant Lion Foundation also made changes this year. David Easlick stepped down as Executive Director of the fraternity with Doug Lanpher Gamma/Vanderbilt '77 replacing him. The Board of Trustees of the Rampant Lion Foundation also removed David as a trustee. DKE Int'l posted notices of these management changes on their website. The Rho House Association has already contacted Doug and looks forward to working with the new leadership at DKE International.

Many alumni indicated they enjoyed the Rho News Archive and the historical photograph gallery on our website. Brother Ayers '51 wrote a piece "The DKE House 60 Years Ago" we've reprinted in this edition of the Rho News on p. 4. The full article can be read on rhodke.org under the Rho News Archive. If you have similar submissions or any alumni updates, please send them to Jason Zomick '02 at zomick@gmail.com.

Rho marked great progress this year thanks to the efforts of our alumni, officers, and strong undergraduate leadership. We look forward to continuing DKE's tradition of excellence with your help.

In the bonds,



Michael De Lisi '03
Rho House Association, President

THE TREASURER'S REPORT

Dear Brothers,

At long last, I can officially declare that we have signed our new lease with the school. This agreement sets the stage for the school to invest in our house, and has language that requires them to keep our house up to the standards of other living options on campus. The college has acted in good faith throughout the negotiation process and I'm optimistic about our future on campus.

We're currently working with the school to prioritize our renovations. Once we have a plan mapped out, we will be kicking off a fund raising drive to support the project that is most appropriate for alumni contributions. We should have this kicked off within the next year as the school's budget and priorities for our house become more clear.

Finally, I'd like to thank the 17 alumni who paid their annual dues last Fall, and the numerous alumni who contributed to our capital improvement account with the school. For those who missed the opportunity to donate directly to our House Association, I ask you to please consider paying your dues and giving a sinking fund contribution this year. The paypal subscription has been established to make this as pain free as possible, and you can contact me directly if you ever have problems. Our House Association account is still running a deficit despite draconian cost containment, driven by dues participation that has never risen above 7%. Your dues go towards the items listed below, and I assure you, are never wasted.

As always, I welcome any thoughts and feedback and am happy to address any questions or concerns you may have. Please contact me using the information to the right.

In the Bonds,

Peter Carlson '02

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ALUMNI DUES

Sign up for automatic dues payments with the NEW PayPal subscription service!

<http://www.rhodke.org/rhodke-dues.php>

0-4 years since graduation: \$25

5-9 years since graduation: \$35

10+ years since graduation: \$50

Your dues and donations are the sole source of support for our House Association sponsored events, *The Rho News* and other mailings and announcements, house property insurance, our website and other association expenses. Please make checks payable to: Rho House Association, and send c/o our Treasurer,

Peter Carlson, 3026 Wayne Road, Falls Church, VA 22042

Thank you in advance for your continued support of our great fraternity.



The DEKE House 60 Years Ago

By Donald C. Ayers '51

There it stood at the zenith of Sullivan Lane, a majestic, neo-Gothic, mangle-mangle of stucco, wood, and anxiety—the DKE house! Delta Kappa Epsilon, *Excelsior!*

This was the *original* Deke house (destroyed by fire), located across March Field from the present-day, magnificent edifice. Comprising about 25 rooms on three floors, the venerated original, housed 30 plus brothers. Another dozen or so roomed in campus dorms.

The era in reference (1946—1950) was directly after the end of World War II. College enrollment doubled in those years, balloon-

ing with returning WWII veterans.

Twelve to fifteen pledges were corralled each fall—many at gun point. At that time, many of the pledges were returning service men (me, too), so the usual hazing and a maniacal harassment was somewhat curtailed. Pledges' uncontrollable sobbing and the attendant wetting of tightie whities were minimal.

As to the daily Deke diet, it could be likened to a Charles Dickens' orphanage. Most meals consisted of a bowl of gruel and a growl of gloom. (Actually, the meals were quite good!) The weekly charge for each brother for meals (three a day, week-days only) was \$12. I waited on tables and washed dishes in the house for free meals. Waiters worked at least one hour during each meal—which pencils out to us getting the equivalent of 80 cents an hour! Not a bad deal in those antediluvian days.

Our in-house weekend parties, with dates, consisted mainly of kegged beer, dancing, group singing (old college songs), and just general camaraderie. The basic thrust was to get a little loose and have a good time. Just high—on youth and life!

There were no such things as “recreational drugs” back then. No meth. No coke. No ecstasy. No acid. No poppy derivatives. No cannabis. (*No cannabis? You must be kidding!*) Psychoactive drugs just didn't exist in college life 60 years ago. How naïve! How lucky for us!

Back in the day, the house was one of the many party centers on campus. Often on Friday nights we would throw beer bashes in the basement bar. Only sweaty males in those days. No enticing co-eds. What a waste of youthful libido!

Back then there were long weekend parties, dances and picnics—with each brother importing a date. And let me assure you, all female weekend guests would stay in downtown hotels, mainly the Easton. No in-house overnights for female guests were permitted or tolerated. There was no hanky-panky allowed in the house. Well, maybe a little panky! Certainly some minor-league canoodling took place. But even in the downtown hotels, personnel policed the elevators, barring students from going up to their dates' rooms. I'm *serious*!

The big fall weekend parties would start on Saturday mornings with our dates arriving by train or car. Saturday afternoon was spent at the football game. A reception at the house followed the game, with numerous alumni in attendance. These esteemed brothers, high on fraternal spirit but hazy on facts, would regale us with Deke history ... like “D’ja know that Abe Lincoln was a Rho Deke?” Another alumnus jumped in and said, “Yup, that’s right! And Babe Ruth, too!” A third added, “Don’t forget Gandhi. Gandhi was a *dandy Deke!*” In those magical moments, the really believed their fuzzy historical facts. And so did we.

Saturday night was often a huge dance in the gym. All students invited. Formal attire was required. So we all rented

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scroungy tuxedos. Our dates were resplendent in floor-length evening dresses. Big “name brands” were hired for these galas. And get this—you danced actually *holding on to your partner!* Honest! Imagine!

The next day, Sunday, was often occupied by a fraternity picnic in a farm field north of the campus. Kegged beer and informal touch football games prevailed with the brothers and dates taking care to avoid the ubiquitous cow plops. Actually, the effort to clear the playing area of heaps of indigenous dung led to the invention of a famous world-wide pastime. You see, as some of the brothers started picking up these round, dried-out droppings and scaling them far away, one playful bro caught one of the sailing dung discs and deftly threw it back. Another frolicsome brother caught it and flung it skyward. Almost instantly, the pristine Pennsylvania sky was rife with high-flying cow doodoo. And there you have it—the *invention of Frisbee!* How it went on to develop into a world-famous plaything, I’m really not sure. But I was there the day *the Dekes invented Frisbee!* That’s right! We tossed the poop—and then we just washed our hands of the whole matter. Uh, we *had* to!

Lion Marches. We had them often, usually on party weekends with our dates joining in. Single file with one hand on the shoulder of the person ahead of you and your other hand handling a beer, we’d snake around through the house, upstairs and down, singing “A Band of Brothers” and usually ending up on the front lawn for the three “lion roars.” I remember leading one march through the whole house one party weekend—with probably 50 people in tow. Just for chuckles, I led the line into a small first floor powder room. The entire line had to make a U-turn directly in front of the single john—which just happened to be occupied at the moment by a young lady. She handled it demurely by pulling her skirt over her knees and waving to the long line of marchers.

Dekes pretty much ran the college magazine, the Marquis, 60 years ago. It was a quasi-humor periodical comprised of short stories and cartoons, contributed by students. I was Editor for two years and many of the masthead department positions were filled by Dekes. We endeavored mightily to make the Marquis better; more sophisticated than the typical college magazines of those days (like “The Alabama Rammer-Jammer”). We tried to emulate The New Yorker magazine! Anyway, several times a year, the house was frantic—editing, laying out, piecing together and producing issues of the college magazine. Valuable career experience for many of us.

Memorable moments (non-academic). During one Saturday night party in springtime, we formed an impromptu marching band in the house around 2 A.M. About twenty of us, including dates, managed to find the musical instruments (a trumpet, saxophone, trombone, snare drum) and amateur instruments like pots, pans, cow bells. A few of us were actual musicians so we were able to play some semblances of famous marches. We marched all over the quad, then south of Pardee and through a few dorms. And no one complained!

Early one Sunday morning after a house party, several of us were still awake and feeling slightly frisky. We noticed that many of the living room chairs and sofas were occupied by sleeping male guests. We got the brilliant idea to transport all the furniture—plus the snoozing guests—out onto the front lawn. No sooner had we artfully arranged all the furniture, replete with mouth-breathing guests, on the lawn, when Dean Hunt, driving by on his way to church, stopped his car in front of the house. The Dean leaned out of the window and said, very calmly, “Okay, gentlemen, move everything back in the house. Right now, please.” Of course we complied immediately. But here’s the beauty part. None of the friends napping on the furniture ever woke up during the moves—out or back in!

Late one school night, I was awakened by a light clamor of voices in the upper hallway. Curious, I went out to discover that a group of the brothers had brought back to the house several female acrobats from a traveling circus—still in leotards and full makeup. The marauding brothers had a plan. They would sneak into a sleeping brother’s room, have one of the girls sit on the edge of his bed—and then switch the lights, “Surprise!” - the revelers would yell! The startled sleeper would open his eyes to see, inches from his face, a grease-painted dolly in a skintight body suite—and become perplexed, transfixed, and transmogrified. This whole delightful charade was captained and choreographed by the late, William E. Simon, who moved on years later to become the United States Secretary of the Treasury.

My frequent date during college years was Lynn Townley of Westfield, N.J., an ever-sweet young buttercup—and *stacked!* She’s still my date today, 60 years later. We were married in June of 1950 just before my senior year. We lived in “Vet Village”, a row of tawdry, one-story, former Army barracks, renovated into small apartments and located precisely where the present DKE house stands. Lynn worked as a private secretary in Pardee Hall for Professor Eaton, head

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of the Engineering Department—for the sumptuous salary of \$30 per week (that's \$6 bucks for a day, folks!). Out squalid three-room, barracks-apartment became sort of a Deke house annex. It was one hell of a fun year!

After graduation memory. There was a core group of eight to ten Rho brothers that gathered every (almost) Friday for lunch in New York City. We met at the famous Irish pub, P.J. Clark's, in mid-town. It was always a happy gathering, boiling with laughter. This ritual Friday meeting went on for more than *35 years!* The brothers married, had children—and then, grandchildren. They changed jobs, addresses, and several changed wives—but somehow they made it to our Rho lunch meeting every Friday—for *35 years!*

Alas, the original, revered Deke house burned to the ground on December 3, 1959. But today, these many years later, thousands of warm memories still radiate from the ashes.

The writer is a retiree. He had been an Executive V.P. — Creative Director and Board Member of J. Walter Thompson Co., the largest U.S. advertising agency

ALUMNI UPDATES

Let's congratulate **Jared Harvey '02** on the birth of his daughter, Luna May, weighing in at 7 pounds 2 ounces. He married his wife Karen in July 2009 and they are enjoying their blessing at home in Beverly, MA.

Let us also congratulate **Alex Ackemann '96** on the birth of his son. As he put it: "Baby Ackemann has arrived, a boy weighing in at 7 pounds, 7 ounces born last night. He and GG are great - in recovery after a late cesarean. I'm biased, but I can tell he's a badass already."

PLEASE SEND ANY UPDATES FOR THE NEXT RHO NEWS TO: ZOMICK@GMAIL.COM

THE RHO NEWS

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