

# Marty's Boys

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## Thrivent To Play Integral Part in MEF

Just as they did at the 2004 National Convention in Schaumburg, IL, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans will be providing speakers, presentations, and goodies for those in attendance.

Joe Franklin, a Senior Partner from Fort Wayne, Indiana, will be presenting to all those in attendance on basic sales skills and techniques. This presentation include how to sell and how to present oneself.

Art Schroeder, a Financial Associate from Fort Wayne, Indiana, will be doing a small group workshop for Rush Chairman on advanced selling techniques, time management, and sales management.

Kristi Boso, a Recruiter for the Indiana Regional Office, will also be in attendance to talk to the group and answer questions about career and internship opportunities with Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

Thrivent will also be providing a bag of goodies to each person in attendance. (Marty isn't going to spoil the surprise, you will just have to show up and find



Art Schroeder

Joe Franklin

out what you are getting)

The 2005 Membership Education Forum will be held on February 12th at University Lutheran on the campus of Purdue University. If you are interested in attending MEF and would like more information please contact, Robert Brackman at [rbrackman@purdue.edu](mailto:rbrackman@purdue.edu).

## What's in this Issue

This issue contains many articles from the outside world. Included are 4 articles that deal with the recent changes at the University of Oklahoma following the death of a fraternity member caused by excessive drinking.

Also included is an article from the Chronicle of Higher Education that talks about how one fraternity member saved his chapter.

The purpose of these articles is to better understand the problems that others

face so that we as Beta Sig's can grow.

Marty's Boys will continue to follow these stories and provide updates in future issues.



## The Unrehearsed Program

Mark Heilman,  
National Pastoral Advisor

Do you remember being in a Sunday School or school program for Christmas. The program is usually laid out in writing to make sure everyone knows what he or she is supposed to do. A script is prepared for the children to practice their parts. Songs are sung over and over again. Costumes are made. Despite all the teacher's efforts and some extra rehearsals, something invariably goes wrong during the program--a child forgets her part, an angel's wings

fall off, or some toddler does wandering off looking for mom. For those



who worked so hard to plan such a program, it can be frustrating to see how things go wrong.

We would like to have everything well rehearsed in our lives. We would like to get the good grades we want, get the job in the major we are taking, and still have plenty of time and resources to have fun in college. However, too many things happen in life for which we can never rehearse. Just think how plans you may have had when the school year began have already changed just half-way through that year.

Over 2,000 years ago another Christmas program was done. But there was no rehearsal for Joseph and his wife Mary, or for the innkeeper, or for the shepherds in the fields. There was

no script from which to practice lines, no prepared set, no special groups, no makeup. Nevertheless, that program came off as planned by God. "She brought forth her firstborn son and laid Him in a manger." Jesus was born.

That program goes on in our lives. We are no better rehearsed for it than Mary, Joseph, or the shepherds. Plans will change and events will make us have to back up and start all over again. But as we fumble with our parts and make mistakes, God's plan comes true in us. The Infant Jesus comes to dwell in our hearts.



## What are you giving Baby Jesus?

As Christmas nears, most of us are still searching to find the perfect present for a friend, family member, or loved one; or you could be one of the few the proud the completed Christmas shopper.

But have you got a present for Baby Jesus yet. It would be safe to say that many of us have not yet gotten this present and probably didn't even think about doing such a thing until you started reading this article.

It's not too late to give Baby Jesus something for his birthday. In this

holiday season there are always many possibilities of what you can give your time and/or money to.

Just as the 3 Wise Men and the Shepherds gave Jesus what they could on the night of his birth, we as Beta Sigs should give what we can to those who need it, as well.

Beta Sig is always in need of time and money from its Alumni. If you haven't yet given a donation to your Alumni Chapter, Active Chapter or the Educational Foundation it's not too late to do so. Contact information for those or-

ganizations can be found on the National Website.

Your time is also greatly appreciated. Over the coming months all our chapters will need help recruiting, fundraising, and doing house repairs. If every Alum just gave a few hours, the possibilities are endless to what can be accomplished.

May your present to Baby Jesus this year, be in the form of helping Beta Sig.

## Things Going Great in Manhattan

By Ryan Flynn

Early in the fall semester, Zeta chapter had an unfortunate loss. Benny Gomez, our cook for the past five years, died in a tractor accident. The services were well attended by Zeta members. The Zeta house mom, Vangie Sutton, graciously stepped into the role of cook until the end of the semester and has decided to continue into the spring. We ask that your thoughts and prayers be with Benny's family.

Zeta chapter had a great success during homecoming this year. We won Wildcat Request Live, the annual Greek talent show. We also placed third in Pant the Chant, fifth for the homecoming float and tenth in yard

art. We did one extra event with our homecoming partners this year and rented a charter bus and went to Columbia, Missouri to watch the Wildcats pummel the Tigers (sorry Iota).

We just had our annual Zeta chapter gift exchange. It was a great success. The associate members got one of the best Christmas trees the house had seen in a long time.

This year for the holidays, Zeta chapter adopted a family. We adopted a needy family and bought them gifts based on its lists. When gifts were purchased and gathered up, we delivered two car loads of toys, gifts and



food to the family we adopted.

We successfully began our ten-week membership education period this fall with the initiation of six new active members. We look forward to the spring with four new associate members.

## Psi Alumni Chapter Chartered

On a cold, balmy November night, the newest addition to Beta Sigma Psi was created. The New York Alumni Chapter of Beta Sigma Psi was officially chartered on November 20 by National President Chad Pfister.

The Alumni Chartering Ceremony was held in conjunction with the Annual Psi Chapter Retreat and Activation Ceremony at Son Rise Ministries Camp in Pottersville, NY. Psi Chapter has been having a retreat at Son Rise since its inception as a colony in 1998. It is an opportunity for associate, active, and alumni members to interact and learn from each other.

The chartering event started with the traditional spaghetti dinner. During the dinner those in attendance talked about what they were thankful for this past year. In addition, National Presi-

dent Chad Pfister provided a few words about the chartering.

After dinner, 6 men became Active Members in an Activation Ceremony which was nicely put together and done by the active body. Immediately following the Activation Ceremony, the Alumni Chartering Ceremony was done with the assistance of Northern Regional Vice President Rudy Ristich, serving as Sergeant at Arms

At the conclusion of the Chartering Ceremony, a rousing rendition of Cross, Heart, and Rose was sung by all.

In all, over 25 Beta Sigs were in attendance including Na-

tional Senior Vice President Ben Bahr ( $\Psi$ ), National Publications Director Tanner Ehmke ( $Z$ ), and National Membership Education/Scholarship Director Travis Yee ( $\Psi$ ).



Some Founders of the NYAC – (l to r) Josh Rieker, Woody Holbert, Ben Bahr, Travis Yee, Steve Falotico, Adam Connor.





Zeta Celebrating a Football Victory over Missouri



Delta Alumni Basketball Team Resting at the 2002 National Basketball Tournament in Columbia, Missouri



Members from Psi work to accomplish a challenge during their retreat

Do you have pictures that you would like included in an upcoming issue of Marty's Boys? If so, e-mail them to [betasigpresident@verizon.net](mailto:betasigpresident@verizon.net)



Another Pic of the Alpha Guys urging on the Illini

## Beta Sigma Psi Basketball League

The first release of the Beta Sigma Psi Basketball League Standings are out and #1 Illinois is on the top of the standings with an undefeated record of 9-0. Kansas State is a surprise 2nd with a record of 6-0. Is Kansas State becoming a basketball school? Highly unlikely given their cupcake schedule so far. One hopes that Bill Snyder Syndrome has not been caught in the Basketball coached.

The first big match up of the season in the League will occur on Dec. 22nd when Braggin' Rights are up for grabs in St. Louis when the Tigers of Ol' Miz-zou take on the Fightin' Illini of Illinois. This game always proves to be a tough game.

In the month of January, there will be many matchups in the Beta Sig League. They are as follows:

- January 8th  
     Illinois @ Purdue  
     Iowa St @ Missouri  
     Kansas St @ Nebraska
- January 15th  
     Missouri @ Kansas State
- January 22nd  
     Missouri @ Nebraska
- January 26th  
     Iowa State @ Kansas St.

This season should be an exciting one, look back here for more news in upcoming issues.

Team	W	L	APF	APA
Illinois	9	0	83.3	63.3
Kansas St	6	0	68.0	57.0
Iowa St	5	2	72.9	66.1
UMR	5	2	58.5	52.0
Missouri	5	4	67.0	64.4
Nebraska	3	3	66.8	53.2
Midland	3	8	76.8	85.0
Purdue	2	5	59.6	67.9
CC-B	0	7	58.5	78.3

*Standings as of 18 Dec 04*

## Who is Rudy Ristich?

I am from Glendale Heights, IL, a suburb of Chicago. I began attending Purdue University in the Fall of 2000 to study Electrical and Computer Engineering. I joined Beta Sigma Psi because I felt that the men there had more integrity than those of the other houses I was rushing.

Beta Sigma Psi taught me many valuable skills that enabled me to succeed spiritual, scholastically and socially while in college. Pledging the house greatly improved my time management skills and the leadership opportunities have proven invaluable.

As an active member I was fortunate to hold several executive board positions, some several times. Among those positions were Rush, President,

Treasurer, and Membership Education. Each of those experiences built upon on one another and have taught my skills that enable me to be more effective every day. I find my experience at the chapter to be far more beneficial than any thing I learned in the classroom or lab and I anticipate that it will have much great longevity as well.

I am excited to be able to serve the fraternity on the National Board. I look forward to drawing on my experiences as an active to help advise the current active members and to the opportunity to improve my skills by conducting the business of the fraternity in a larger scope.

I am currently employed as a Network

Security Analyst at the LURHQ Corporation in Chicago, IL, an awesome job I landed through Beta Sig contacts, and am a Regional Vice President for Epsilon, Alpha Alpha, and Delta Colony.



### Schedule of Events

- Dec 20—National Board of Directors Conference Call
- Dec 24—Christmas Eve
- Dec 25—Christmas
- Dec 31—New Year's Eve
- Jan 6—Epiphany
- Jan 11—National Board of Directors Conference Call
- Jan 17—MLK, Jr. Birthday
- Jan 31—Deadline for submission of Winter Semester 2005 Paper-work

# January 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

## Beta Sigma Psi Football League

Well the Beta Sigma Psi Football League had so much promise at the beginning of the year. After the first release of the standings all but one team had 2 wins and no more than one lose. But since that time, only Purdue has had a winning record going 5-4. It was pretty early in the season when "We Want Round Ball" was heard throughout Beta Sig Land.

Unfortunately neither Iowa State or Missouri was able to win the Big XII North. Missouri ruined Iowa State's

chances with an overtime interception.

This season's champion will not be crowned until after the Bowl Season. Iowa State plays Miami Univ. on the 28th in the Independence Bowl and Purdue plays Arizona State on the 31st in the Sun Bowl. While Purdue is virtually locked to winning the League, crazier things have been known to happen. Look to the next issue for the crowning of the 1st Beta Sigma Psi Football League Champ

Team	W	L	PF	PA
Purdue	7	4	358	179
Iowa St	6	5	229	246
Missouri	5	6	256	215
Nebraska	5	6	275	298
Midland	5	6	237	298
Kansas St	4	7	326	337
Illinois	3	8	240	323
UMR	3	8	254	509

# OU President Proposes Dry Campus

Oklahoma Daily  
December 2, 2004  
Kendal Kelly—Staff Writer

OU President David L. Boren announced Wednesday a series of initiatives to combat alcohol abuse, including making fraternities and residence halls dry, implementing a "three strikes and you're out" policy and increasing enforcement and punishment of alcohol violations.

Boren presented 15 major elements of the new alcohol policies Wednesday during a press conference.

The new policies will be presented to the OU Board of Regents for adoption during their meeting Dec. 6. If passed, the policies will be implemented at the beginning of the spring semester.

Boren formed an alcohol advisory committee shortly after the alcohol-induced death of freshman Blake Adam Hammontree at the Sigma Chi house Sept. 30. After several meetings with the committee, in which it studied various alcohol policies of colleges and universities around the nation, Boren developed a series of policies to implement at OU.

The policies are not meant as a punishment, but as a means of furthering the safety and well-being of students, he said.

"One of the most painful experiences of my life was to sit down with the parents and the sister of a very fine young man who tragically died on our campus, Blake Hammontree," Boren said. "I hope that I never again have that

experience...These are tragedies we must find a way to prevent."

Several studies, including those by the National Institute of Health and Harvard University, found that students living in wet residences are four to five times more likely to binge drink, Boren said.

"There was such a clear correlation between binge drinking and wet residential settings that I simply did not feel it would be responsible not to take this action," he said.

The dry policy is one which is growing on campuses all across the country as they recognize the clear relationship between alcohol abuse and wet housing, Boren said. Oklahoma State University, Texas Christian University and the University of Kansas have dry policies, he said.

Boren said the implementation of the three strikes policy is necessary to curtail alcohol abuse both on and off campus.

Under the policy, whether an alcohol violation occurs on or off campus, such as a citation for having alcohol in the residence halls or a DUI, it will be counted as a strike.

Upon the first strike, a student's parents will be notified and the student will undergo alcohol education. The second strike will result in the notification of parents, as well as a punishment, such as community service. The third violation will result in automatic suspension from the university for a semester.

"In talking with community leaders, I have found them very supportive of this policy because it makes clear we're treating alcohol violations off the campus with the same level of seriousness that we treat the violations of alcohol policy on the campus," Boren said.

Enforcement of alcohol violations and punishments for them will also be increased, he said. Harsh fines will be levied against campus groups who violate alcohol policies, Boren said.

Although the details of enforcement are not yet worked out, it will also be more strictly administered, he said.

"We will be increasingly active on our own staff in dropping in unannounced, making appearances and trying to determine that these rules will be enforced," Boren said.

In addition, campus-affiliated organizations will only be allowed to host parties in which alcohol is served on Friday and Saturday nights, Boren said.

The policy is intended to increase academic performance and strengthen the sense of community at OU, he said.

"I think this will have a great positive impact on the life of our university community because it means instead of packing your suitcase and going home on the weekends, there will be a lot of activity that will keep students here together, getting to know each other better, strengthening friend-



## OU President Proposes Dry Campus (cont.)

ships and strengthening bones of community," Boren said. He also announced an expansion of alcohol education programs. Attendance at alcohol education programs will be mandatory before any student will be eligible to participate in sorority or fraternity recruitment.

"Alcohol education is very important," Boren said. "Sadly, we have found that it is not enough by itself."

Boren said Hammontree had gone through alcohol education programs shortly before his death from alcohol poisoning.

Other policies Boren announced include strengthening and enforcing city ordinances in Norman to shut down "party houses," increasing transportation to and from off-campus parties sponsored by campus-affiliated student organizations, creating an enhanced hazing statement and anonymous hazing hotline, asking InterFraternity Council to consider adopting a mid-October rush program modeled off the University of Mississippi, ending unregulated summer rush for fraternities, seeking the cooperation of student leaders, requiring student organizations to present an annual plan prior to any sponsored events in which alcohol will be served, establishing licensed alcohol counselors at OU and enhancing the SafeRide program.

Boren said while he expects the plan he recommended to become a model for colleges around the nation, it is an

unfinished product.

Boren's alcohol advisory committee will meet during the spring to look at the impact of the policies and again before the fall semester 2005, Boren said.

"We'll continue dialogue with the student, faculty and staff leaders on the university campus and with our partners in the Norman community to see how these policies are working, and we will be prepared to make changes, additions and revisions in these policies as we go along to make them work better," he said.

On Monday Boren introduced these 15 elements of the new alcohol policy:

1. All fraternities and residence halls will be dry.
2. Enforcement of campus alcohol violations and punishments will be increased.
3. A mandatory "three strikes and you're out" policy will be enforced. A final strike will result in automatic suspension for at least one semester.
4. The university will support strengthening and enforcing city ordinances in Norman to shut down "party houses."
5. Parties sponsored by campus-affiliated organizations in which alcohol is served will be restricted to only Friday and Saturday nights.
6. These parties must include design-

nated driver or bus transportation to and from the event. Those who attend in private vehicles will be required to check car keys at the door and pass a sobriety test before leaving.

7. An enhanced statement prohibiting hazing activities will be developed and implemented.

8. An anonymous, confidential hazing reporting hotline will be created.

9. Alcohol education programs will be expanded.

10. Unregulated "Summer Rush" fraternity activities will be strictly prohibited.

11. A proposal to move rush activities to mid-October will be considered.

12. The cooperation of all Greek bodies with OU chapters will be sought.

13. Campus-affiliated student organizations will be required to present an annual plan for sponsored events in which alcohol will be served.

14. The university will establish a formal relationship with licensed alcohol counselors for immediate referrals.

15. The university will enhance the SafeRide program by seeking to establish a voucher system with a local taxi or public transportation company.



## Some OU Students Surprised, Others Not

Oklahoma Daily  
December 2, 2004  
Sara Ganus and Meagan Mackin -  
Daily Staff Writers

Some were expectant and others were surprised to hear OU President David L. Boren's decision to implement a dry housing policy on campus. Fraternity members in particular had strong opinions about the dry housing and "three strikes and you're out" policies.

One fraternity president said Boren's decision to go dry was very surprising.

"I would assume the whole Greek system would be in shock. I know I am," said Josh Bishop, president of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and advertising junior. "I know my members are shocked by this decision, and I would assume the rest of the Greek members feel the same way."

After hearing Boren's decision to implement the dry policy, Bishop said the community will now feel the impact.

"I think if the city of Norman was upset before, I can't imagine what it's going to be like now," he said. "It's just a total shock to the Greek community, especially to fraternity members."

Trey House, InterFraternity vice president and finance and Chinese junior, said he expected all of the changes Boren made.

"It will require some lifestyle adjust-

ments, but I don't think the social scene will be affected that greatly," he said.

House said he agrees with all of Boren's resolutions.

"I'm confident that Greek leaders and the university can come together and work something out," he said.

Danny O'Connel, Kappa Alpha member and finance senior, said he was also not surprised but agreed that the problem will now be pushed off campus.

"I don't know if it necessarily addresses the problem of underage drinking," he said. "It's now becoming a Norman problem and being transferred into the Norman community."

O'Connel said he thinks the policy is completely counterproductive to what the university is trying to accomplish. "This isn't going to eliminate underage drinking," he said. "It's just going to force individuals to do it elsewhere where there's less control and fewer people to monitor it."

Kari Jacobson, Panhellenic president and public relations senior, said sororities are affected by the policies in different ways than fraternities.

"President Boren didn't have a direction to go with the improvement [of sororities]," she said. "We don't have summer rush. We don't have alcohol within our homes. Sororities are already doing those things. I think that what the sororities are doing, in es-

sence, is working, so he wants the whole system to work as a whole."

Jacobson said she thinks the three strikes policy will affect students the most.

"I think that it's fair, and I think that it's a positive policy," she said. "I believe that it's a good thing simply because what President Boren says is true. He really is looking for the safety of the students."

Ryan Pillman, Housing Center Student Association president and finance senior, said he supports Boren's decisions.

"My first reaction is that hopefully this will make the residence halls a safer place to live," he said. "It's good to see that the university is taking such a hard stance on this important issue."

Pillman said he hopes students will support and respect the decisions that Boren has taken.

"He has the experience and the knowledge, and he has been advised by students from different areas all around campus," he said. "I met with him last week, and I know he was very concerned with student opinions."

Other students had both positive and negative reactions toward Boren's announcements.

One of the main concerns students expressed was that the dry policy will only be a temporary fix.

## Some OU Students Surprised, Others Not (cont.)

"I think either way, drinking will go on," said Landon Curtis, University College freshman. "Some changes should have been made, but [the policy] won't change anything."

"I don't think it'll solve problems of underage drinking, but I think it'll bring about accountability, so you'll be less likely to do it on campus," said Aaron Israel, business finance sophomore.

Others felt the new policy was an extreme solution to the underage drinking problem.

"I don't know about totally abandoning [drinking on campus], but maybe moderation will be better," said Shan Wang, economics senior.

"Abandoning it seems like too much."

While many expressed unhappiness about the new policy, one student saw positive aspects about it.

"I think it's a good idea," said Sarah Israel, journalism sophomore. "There are so many underage drinking problems."

Israel said she saw Oklahoma State University as an example of a dry campus that has been successful and said this policy could help lower the number of MIPs issued.

## Oklahoma Daily Editorial

New alcohol policies: steps in right direction  
Our View

OU President David L. Boren announced today a 15-point plan to help deal with OU's alcohol problem (see story, page 1).

Each point is a step in the right direction, if to varying degrees. For example:

\* Increased alcohol education, even for 100 percent of campus, won't effect any lasting change on a group bent on drinking hard, but may influence some students.

\* A dry campus, greek houses included, will force transparency on unsanctioned parties and offer stiffer penalties for infractions.

\* The three-strikes policy will, it is to be hoped, not lead to massive suspensions because most students don't even get one violation. The policy will, however, create a system of expectations and consequences, as well as a mechanism for identifying potential alcohol problems and intervening in them.

And not counting a verdict of innocent as a strike preserves the idea of innocent unless proven guilty.

\* Suggested delayed fraternity rush is not really a policy. Yet the benefits of a dry campus have been explored more thoroughly than the benefits of late rush. Perhaps leaving that decision to the Interfraternity Council is prudent--give the group the opportunity to self-regulate. The university would only step in if IFC could not police itself.

Blake Adam Hammontree made clear OU's alcohol problem. Boren has acted to fix the problem. This is a worthwhile effort.

Now, it's up to the students to take their own initiative and start drinking responsibly.

# Alcohol Removed from OU Fraternity Houses

Associated Press  
December 16, 2004

## Students Begin Compliance Measures After Alcohol Ban Approved

NORMAN, Okla. -- Alcohol was being removed from fraternity houses at the University of Oklahoma this week in keeping with restrictions enacted after a student's drinking death.

University regents approved the ban on alcohol from fraternities and residence halls effective with the new semester. This is the last week of school before winter break.

"Some of the guys are calling it 'party's over week,'" said Sergio Andre, president of the Sigma Nu chapter at OU.

"We already cleaned the house for the

semester and by the time members leave for Christmas we will go through and make sure their room is clean and there is no alcohol. I just told them to take it home and don't bring it back."

Bill Ross, president of the Kappa Sigma chapter at OU, also said he is telling members alcohol will not be allowed in the house when they return.

"As you're telling them to move out, tell them to get all of their alcohol and alcohol-related things out of the house now," Ross said. "We want to try to keep alcohol out. I've learned that change is the hardest thing to deal with. It's not going to ruin our college lives. It's just going to alter it."

Andre said his fraternity takes a positive view of the new alcohol policy. He

said the house will stay cleaner and members will save money.

"I expected to have a lot of problems with it, but everyone in the house has been very supportive," Andre said.

The alcohol ban grew out of the alcohol poisoning death of Blake Hammontree, 19, a pledge to Sigma Chi fraternity.

The Phi Delta Theta chapter at OU made the decision a few years ago to ban alcohol. The current president, Kelsey Pierce, said the fraternity has few problems enforcing the ban.

"When you move in, you sign a housing contract that states you will not have alcohol in the house," Pierce said. "You are bound to that. It has not been a problem at all."

## Marty's Boys Feedback Form

Please answer the following questions and provide comments about Marty's Boys. Responses can be e-mailed or snail mailed to Chad Pfister (contact info on page 16)

Do you like the current form of Marty's Boys?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Undecided

How often should Marty's Boys be released?

- ☐ Once a Month  
☐ Twice a Month  
☐ Once a Week

Comments:

I would like more coverage of:

- ☐ Active Chapters  
☐ Alumni Chapters  
☐ Individual Brothers

Did you vote in the 2004 Presidential Election?

- ☐ Yes, in person  
☐ Yes, by absentee  
☐ No

Name

Address

Chapter & Year

E-mail

## Caption Contest



Can you come up with a caption for this picture? If so, submit your caption to Chad Pfister by January 22, 2005. The winner and runner-up will be announced at MEF and receive prizes.

## Four Rules for Saving a Fraternity

The Chronicle of Higher Education  
ELIZABETH F. FARRELL

After taking over as president of the Theta Chi fraternity at Linfield College last fall, Justin Samples lost 15 pounds and the ability to sleep through the night. That is what the constant stress of trying to rein in an out-of-control fraternity will do to a 20-year-old.

So it was a surprise that last year on Halloween, a night known for pranks and mayhem, he dozed off at 10 p.m.

His slumber, however, was brief. At 2 a.m., Jubari Sykes, another Theta Chi member, called to tell him that the fraternity's vice president, Peter Munro, had just been caught stealing a digital camera and a laptop from the neighboring Delta Psi Delta fraternity house. Mr. Munro, who was drunk at the time of the incident, had brought along a pledging member to assist in his prank.

Mr. Samples learned that the pledge was missing, the police were everywhere, and Mr. Munro was behind bars. Mr. Samples says that as he walked over to meet Mr. Sykes early that morning, he felt "betrayed and ticked off" by Mr. Munro. He realized Theta Chi had "hit rock bottom." He also knew what needed to be done.

He pulled Mr. Sykes aside and said, "Pete's out, and we should go alcohol free." Mr. Samples recalls that Mr. Sykes "just kind of stepped back and said, 'What?'"

Following a spate of alcohol-related

deaths at fraternities across the country this fall, many fraternity leaders are in a predicament similar to the one Mr. Samples faced last year. Their members have reputations for being drunken troublemakers, and they have squandered the good will of administrators and local police. Many of their chapters are on the brink of extinction.

Some have already folded. This month, for instance, Sigma Nu closed its chapter at the University of Oregon despite the recent efforts of some members to overcome the house's persistent problems, which included alcohol violations and legal battles with the university. This fall, two fraternities at universities in Colorado have been closed indefinitely following alcohol-related deaths at their houses, and many other chapters across the country are under pressure from police and administrators to shape up or shut down.

According to experts on Greek life, most fraternities in such a predicament fail to make the improvements necessary to survive. "Complete cultural change is quite difficult," says Dan Bureau, president of the Association of Fraternity Advisors, a group that provides guidance on handling Greek-life issues to its membership of more than 1,300 college professionals. "For a fraternity to succeed in going from one end of the spectrum to another, they usually have to close down and then reopen after some time."

McMinnville police had already declared Theta Chi a "public nuisance"

before the Halloween incident and were ready to board up the fraternity's house, which is located off the campus. Administrators at this 2,500-student liberal-arts college had put the chapter on probation, forbidding the then-40-member fraternity from holding any social functions until it could prove that it had cleaned up its act.

Saddled with that baggage, Mr. Samples defied expectations. Over the next four months, he and other house leaders kicked out six members, put an end to Theta Chi's epic beer bashes, and doubled their recruitment. In July, McMinnville's police chief awarded Mr. Samples -- who had stepped down as the fraternity's president in June -- the citizen's police medal for his efforts.

Barry Tucker, director of multicultural programs at Linfield, admits that he thought the Theta Chi brothers were too irresponsible to save their fraternity. "They proved me wrong," Mr. Tucker says. "Justin was very persistent. He doesn't back down for anybody."

Theta Chi's self-styled makeover is the type of swift turnaround that many colleges would love to inspire in their own Greek systems. At a time when many administrators are trying every rule and sanction imaginable to force troubled fraternities to improve, the story of one house's revival shows that sometimes the only way to save a fraternity is for the students to do it from within.



## Four Rules for Saving a Fraternity (cont.)

### #1: Be Persuasive, Not Preachy

Banning alcohol was a tough sell to many members of Theta Chi who considered the fraternity their "drinking club," according to Mr. Sykes. Because so many of the upperclassmen were staunchly opposed to going dry, Mr. Samples took a low-key approach to promoting the ban. He also did some politicking among the younger members, telling them about his idea and then asking, "What do you think of it?"

When all of Theta Chi's 40 members gathered to vote on the ban last November, Mr. Samples told them that every problem they had as a fraternity stemmed from alcohol. He urged them to vote in favor of banning booze in the house. Although the law in Oregon, like all states, forbids anyone under 21 from drinking alcoholic beverages, drinking behind closed doors is hard to prevent at many institutions.

"You can't sell it as 'Hey! This is awesome!'" says Mr. Samples. "So I tried to go for shock value, saying, 'Just think how far the chief's jaw will drop when I tell him we're going dry.'"

Theta Chi bylaws require a two-thirds majority to pass any rule, and when the members first voted, the measure failed. Fraternity bylaws forbid a second vote in the same meeting, so Mr. Samples adjourned the gathering.

Mr. Samples says he was "livid," but he kept his cool, calmly expressing his disappointment. He asked mem-

bers to reconsider. He commenced a new meeting five minutes later. This time, the measure passed by one vote.

Despite the stress of the ordeal, the challenge of changing his brothers' minds intrigued him. "Something about seeing what makes people tick fascinates me," says Mr. Samples, a senior majoring in business. "I really like to rally people together and see what I can do to get the best out of them."

With a trim, muscular build and well-defined jaw, Mr. Samples looks the part of a lifelong athlete, and says sports have given him leadership opportunities since his grade-school days as captain of the flag-football team.

Ryan Monagle, now a junior in charge of rush recruitment, says he and other members were motivated by Mr. Samples's determination, and his willingness to do everything possible to improve Theta Chi, including quitting the football team at the beginning of that semester to devote more time to the fraternity. "It's really hard to not help out and back him up when you see him there on his hands and knees scrubbing floors," says Mr. Monagle.

### #2: Redefine Loyalty

As difficult as it was to persuade members to approve the alcohol ban, the real hurdle was enforcing it. Not surprisingly, the Theta Chi members who had opposed the ban were the same ones who were getting into the alco-

hol-related trouble. They refused to change their behavior.

"Things ended up escalating in the house," says Mr. Samples. "There was a certain faction of brothers who said 'screw this' and were basically giving the finger to the police."

Kicking out the disruptive members was not an easy decision for any member. Ultimately, Mr. Monagle says, they had no choice but to remove the disruptive members, whom he refers to as a "cancer." Still, he says he felt "kind of like I was stabbing them in the back."

The principles of loyalty and brotherhood are a double-edged sword: They can either inspire a fraternity to improve or precipitate its downfall. The problem with organizations that form such strong bonds among members is that they sometimes defend one another even when it contradicts the best interest of the group.

"They're young kids and maybe it's the first time they've felt like a part of something," says Carl Swanson, the Greek adviser to Linfield's four fraternities and four sororities. "A lot of them want to belong and don't want to be the first to say something, even if they think what others in the group are doing is wrong."

The tide of peer pressure, however, is reversible. In Theta Chi's case, Mr. Samples and members of the fraternity's executive council held separate votes on each problematic member,

## Four Rule for Saving a Fraternity (cont.)

six in all. "With the first person we suspended, the vote was a lot closer than it should have been," says Mr. Samples. "But then, with each subsequent member, it got cumulatively less close."

Amid what members describe as a "civil war," they trusted Mr. Samples's leadership. Mr. Monagle, who is still good friends with some of the former members, says they were "not bad people, just good guys who made some bad decisions."

One of the students they voted out was Mr. Munro, who had stolen the electronics equipment on Halloween night. Although he insists that he left voluntarily, and remains on good terms with many of his friends in Theta Chi, he still faults members of the fraternity for their lack of loyalty.

"With brotherhood, the bottom line is you don't sell out your brothers, no matter the cost," says Mr. Munro. He calls the theft "a prank that got out of control." Theta Chi members, he says, "made me look like I was a horrible person, and made me the scapegoat for all the house's problems."

A month after getting arrested, Mr. Munro says he withdrew from Linfield in an effort to stop drinking. (He says he now does so only occasionally.) And some members took his move as a wake-up call. Without the convenience of free-flowing beer in the house, they did not imbibe nearly as often.

### #3: Make Friends With the Police

One of Linfield's top administrators says Greek students on the campus often think everyone is out to get them. Local police officers complain that students "act like they're their own lawyers," arguing about their legal rights instead of taking responsibility for their actions, says Wayne McFarlin, McMinnville's chief of police.

Yet Mr. Samples sought to build an alliance with the authority figures many students considered their enemies.

He admits that the specter of sanctions from the police and college "forced us to deal with problems in a very abrupt fashion, a lot faster than I would have liked."

Instead of rebelling against authority, however, Mr. Samples set up weekly meetings with Linfield's student-life adviser, the Greek-life adviser, and his fraternity's faculty adviser. He asked many former Theta Chi leaders and alumni advisers for advice, and consulted with the executive director of Theta Chi's national office, David Westol, in a series of telephone conversations during the reorganization.

He also met with Chief McFarlin at least once a month.

He even followed Chief McFarlin's suggestion to erect a fence bordering Theta Chi's property, to keep inebriated students from wandering into the fraternity's yard. His openness to such

ideas pleasantly surprised Chief McFarlin, and it played a large role in earning Mr. Samples the citizen's police medal.

"His leadership was something I really wanted to capture," says Chief McFarlin. "He took a lot of personal risks. Nobody, not even police chiefs want to do something that makes people upset with them, but he understood that sometimes the mission takes precedence over personal feelings."

### #4: Change Your Image

The most demoralizing effect of Theta Chi's problems was the treatment its members received on the campus and around town. Wearing Theta Chi letters, they say, was like having "Kick Me" signs on their backs. Mr. Samples recalls walking into a 7-Eleven in his Theta Chi shirt, which prompted the clerk to remark, "You guys are in a lot of trouble, huh?"

Both the campus and local newspapers had reported all of the fraternity's misdeeds. So Mr. Samples started off his fraternity's image makeover by writing a letter to the student newspaper, *The Linfield Review*, in which he apologized for Theta Chi's behavior and explained what its members were doing to improve.

Mr. Samples also helped pass a new rule that required every Theta Chi member to increase his community-service commitment from 4 hours to 10 hours per semester. That paid off with some good press: Local newspapers published articles about Theta

## Four Rule for Saving a Fraternity (cont.)

Chi members volunteering at local tutoring programs and co-sponsoring a Toys for Tots drive with the McMinnville Fire Department.

Recognizing that a handful of bad apples can spoil an entire house's image, Mr. Samples and other members of the fraternity examined their recruitment practices and decided to become more selective. "We paid for the recruitment mistakes of other classes," says Mr. Samples, "because the emphasis was on getting large numbers of people instead of focusing on quality members."

That approach is often a result of financial pressures -- without enough members, expenses, including hefty mortgages and party costs, can become prohibitive. Sometimes that means that house leaders do not carefully consider how dedicated each student will be to their organization.

But instead of hurting its popularity, Theta Chi's new membership requirements, including a minimum 3.0 grade-point average for new members -- based on high-school grades for freshmen -- and demonstrated leadership skills, increased interest among prospective members, attracting the largest pledge class ever the following fall, with 22 members compared with an average of 6 for each of the previous four years.

The image overhaul has changed perceptions of the house on the campus. "They used to be bad, but are getting better," says one Linfield student of the fraternity.

Administrators at Linfield are impressed by Theta Chi's progress, though they qualify their praise by noting that the fraternity has plenty of room for improvement. Under Linfield's new Greek Standards Program, fraternities are assigned points in four categories: academic performance, financial responsibility, community service, and member education. Theta Chi, like all the college's fraternities, falls short of the minimum requirements, meaning it cannot hold more than two social events per semester. The Theta Chi house will also retain its status as a "public nuisance" unless no complaints are filed with the police until next August, according to Chief McFarlin.

As of late November, Theta Chi had only one noise complaint for the whole semester.

"They are doing a really nice job managing their property," says Chief McFarlin, who was so impressed by the improvement that he sent a letter to Linfield College's president in early November commending Theta Chi -- and other Linfield fraternities -- for their progress.

Mr. Samples says he does not mind if his brothers drink -- as long as it's not in the house. Even though he is no longer Theta Chi's president, he still patrols the halls of the fraternity house at 2 or 3 a.m. on weekends, to make sure residents are following the rules.

Despite his diligence, his brothers sometimes break the rules. On a re-

cent Friday afternoon, for instance, a 24-pack of Busch beer and unopened bottle of Bacardi rum sit on top of the mini-fridge in one member's room. Upon hearing about it, Mr. Samples shakes his head. But he is not surprised.

"It makes me mad," he says. "But going dry is an ongoing process, and we have to remind everyone each week that we are still an alcohol-free house."

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