

APRON STRINGS

Dear Mom:

Hurray!! The dates finally been set for O. U.'s famous "Moms' Day" celebration and your Beta son is looking forward to having you spend it with him at 800 Chautauqua.

Although its been a long time since we've been home, its been an even longer time since you have visited the Beta house and let us show you off!!

A great deal of preparation has gone into your May 3rd and 4th visit and among these preparations has been an extensive clean up program which we're sure you will heartily endorse.

Now don't you worry about us!! Your sleeping in our beds won't bother us at all. We can find a place, even if it is on the game room floor. The main thing is that you attend the Moms' weekend and help support your sons in our surge for the house with the most Moms attending and the University Sing trophies.

So you won't feel like a stranger when you walk through those grey, stone pillars, we think you ought to know of a few of the achievements that your sons have accomplished, along with highlighting the school life of a few of our more "serious" brothers.

We'll narrow it down to a brief account, leaving it necessary for you to come to the good O'l Beta Barn and find out all the details.

MOM AWAY FROM HOME

For the first time in the history of its publication, APRON STRINGS will be dedicated to the person every man at 800 Chautauqua deems the most valuable, friendly and helpful person living within the walls of the Beta house.

That person could be no one but our wonderful "Mom Away From Home," Mrs. Vick. "Mom," as we call her, is not only the best house mother on the OU campus, she is also the person we all turn to for needed advice, leadership, medical aid for our little aches and sprains, and a fourth for bridge.

When the weekends roll around, we're all anxious to take our girls to the Beta house so Mom can pass judgement on them, but it always turns out that they are as proud of her as we are.

The biggest treat you Freshman mothers will have is meeting and talking to our "Mom Away From Home."

BETA WINS SCHOLARSHIP FOR 7th STRAIGHT SEMESTER

This year, once again, Beta proved its superiority over all others in the brains department, by taking the coveted Interfraternity Council Scholarship cup for the seventh straight time. The house overall average was a sizzling 2.734, and the pledges, who also won the pledge trophy, had an equally hot 2.716, based on the 4.0 system. This winning assured us of a new trophy, as we had retired the old one, after winning it three straight semesters. By winning it once more, the seniors will be able to graduate without ever seeing someone else hold the cup, and as far as the rest of the house is concerned, all efforts will be made to never let the metal prize out again.

DISTRIC DAY

District Day, which is the gathering of chapters from Oklahoma State, Southern Methodist University, Texas and Oklahoma, was held this year in Dallas on the 22nd of March. Due to activities here on campus, our number was limited there, but those who attended enjoyed a good time and gave a wonderful account of themselves for Gamma Phi. As usual, the chapter won the trophies for chapter and pledge scholarship, sweeping both fields by a wide margin. The chapter presidents were asked to give a report of the past year and Bob Webber, our president, left the audience, which included National President Bonney, limp with his superior report. After the luncheon, there was a groundbreaking for the new SMU chapter house and a fine party was held that night in the Hotel Statler Hilton.

BETA WINS SOONER SCANDALS

Sooner Scandals was a complete success this year and one of the acts which made it so was put on by Beta. Under the directorship of Hack Newman, Beta rose to the occasion and went running away from all of its disappointed competition with first place. The idea for the act was so original that the people in the audience were not completely convinced that they were not seeing a film. The setting was an old time movie, complete with flicker, a heroine played by Les Conner, a villain, portrayed by Grover Ozmun, a drunken father played by Bryan Medlock, two policeman and a Salvation army band. Dolly DoGood, the Salvation Army lass, is robbed of her purse, her life threatened and finally is saved by her old father. As the show progressed, Hack Newman flipped cards and Brent Berlin tinkled old style music on a tinny piano.

BETA TAKES HOMECOMING HONORS

On perhaps what is considered the blackest day in the history of the state and Oklahoma University, this campus had its homecoming, playing host to a powerful Notre Dame squad, which completely wrecked OU's hopes for another National title. To make the day a little brighter for us, however, we took second place in the homecoming decorations competition with an outstanding float. The whole chapter had united under the leadership of Sam Wilhite and had made a huge replica of a covered wagon, complete in red and white, driven by a little man by the name of "Bud" and chasing a green little man from Notre Dame. The wagon was hitched to a huge atom, and the theme of the decoration was "Hitch Your Wagon to an Atom".

BEER BOWL

Our outstanding pledge class fought their hearts out on the turf of Owen Stadium against the pledge class of Kappa Alpha, but found themselves outclassed and came out on the short end of a 39-0 score. Fraternity coaches were Skip Ritcheson, Fred Tillman, John Gibson and Rick Matthews, whose efforts were greatly helped by the experienced tutelage of varsity coaches Bill Noble and Tom Emerson. The game was as colorful as usual, with amusing halftime entertainment being provided by the all Beta band and the crowning of Beer Bowl Queen, Pat Law. The cheerleaders-Gordon King and Dee Ermin, Bryan Gillespie and Bobette Watson, Owen Wilson and Mary Beth Donnell and Jim Drake and Suzanne Whitley-cheered the whole game as hard as the team fought.

SPRING ELECTIONS

New officers have been elected this spring and with their election Beta is promised of another outstanding year under capable leadership.

The newly elected officers are: President-Don Park, Vice President-Hack Newman, Pledge Trainer-Ken Carpenter, Song Leader-Les Conner, House Manager-Sam Wilson, Corresponding Secretary-Bill Athey, Alumni Secretary-Bob Casey, Recording Secretary-Monte Bratcher, Social Chairman-Robert Osborne, Rush Chairman-Grover Ozmun, Scholarship Chairman-John Griffith, Intramural Chairman-Bob Clapp, Interfraternity Council Representative-Bill McKay, Beta Lore Chairman-Bill Reeburgh, Yard Manager-Doug McDonald, File Room Manager-Pat Law, Treasurer-Phil Kyle, Assistant Rush Chairmen-Pat Law and Skip Ritcheson, and Kitchen Manager-Joe Bell.

OUTSTANDING FRESHMEN ARE NAMED

Due to his outstanding work for Beta during his pledge year, Bob Barr was named outstanding pledge for Gamma Phi Chapter of Beta Theta Pi. He will be presented with the Ralph Gordon Thompson Memorial Award next fall. The award consists of a beautiful gold Beta ring and his name will be engraved on a plaque in the game room to stand as a goal for all future Beta pledges.

Elected to represent Gamma Phi, along with Hack Newman, at the National Convention was Freshman Don Carey. The two men will travel to Pennsylvania this summer to the huge meeting of all the Beta Chapters in the nation.

BETA STRONG IN INTRAMURALS

Under the strong guidance of Jim Drake, Beta also made itself known on campus due to its intramurals. Our football team went far in the sport but was finally nipped out of the playoffs in the last games. Beta basketball teams showed up very well but the "A" team fell in the final round of the playoffs to a powerful, undefeated Sigma Nu team, which clipped them by one point. The volleyball team also went to the playoffs but were defeated by Phi Kappa Psi in the final round of play. At the time of writing the softball, tennis and ping-pong tournaments are not over, so the results are not known. As of now, Beta ranks third in the intramural ratings, a marked improvement over previous years.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR

VICTORY PARTY

Beta started out its 50th year of brotherhood with a rousing victory party held in the Beacon Club in the City, bringing to a close a very successful rush week. Our new pledges were a little confused by all the activity of a fraternity party and were also highly amused by the antics of Hack Newman, then the social chairman, and his date, E. J. Palmer. A good time was had by all and after the party was over everyone started preparing to come back to school for another year.

SEMI CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

The next blast of the year was thrown at the Persian Room of the Hotel Skirvin in Oklahoma City, as Gamma Phi rolled out the red carpet for its semi-centennial celebration. Alums came from as far as Alaska to enjoy a fine dinner and dancing to the music of Ralph Flannegan. During the banquet, some speeches were given and some very important people were introduced, such as Brother T.E. Mathews, number one on the chapter roll. One of the funniest points of the evening was donated by Jerry Fronterhouse, our president at that time, when he said, in announcing a party for the following evening, "We are going to have a party tomorrow night in the chapter house if any of you are able to make it."

BARN DANCE

Beta went western for the week as the Barn Dance rolled around in November. The weekend party, highlighted by the front yard being decorated like a barnyard, opened with a picnic Friday night at a farm outside of town. The next night, the party came back to the campus and the "Pillared Barn" rocked and rolled from 6 to 1 a.m.

SENIOR DINNER

The next activity of the year was the Senior Dinner, held just before the Christmas holidays. The Seniors and their dates took the pledges and their dates and migrated to the house, where each of them had a whole turkey, most of which turned out to be very stubborn birds to carve. Following the dinner, the whole chapter attended a fine dance held from 9 to 12 p.m. in the house.

PLEDGE FORMAL

Following the first week of the second semester, the Pledge Formal was held in the Lockett Hotel in Norman. The pledges and their dates were treated to a banquet in the house and then the entire chapter danced away the evening to the music of the Ramblers in the ballroom of the Lockett.

SPRING FORMAL

The last party of the year was the Spring Formal. Robert Osborne, newly elected Social Chairman, received his first work of the year in arranging the party and did an excellent job. The party was held in the luxurious Oklahoma Golf and Country Club in Oklahoma City. Music was supplied by one of the City's finer bands, Al Good, and a relaxing and enjoyable evening was had by all.

BETAS ACTIVE ON CAMPUS

STUDENT SENATE

The Beta house has been fully represented this year in the Student Senate by having Steve Beckman, Jim White and Jared Hazelton holding down major positions. Steve Beckman is the past President of the Senate, Jim White is the present Vice President and Jared Hazelton is now serving the Senate as Treasurer.

SEVEN BETAS MAKE BMOC

Seven Betas have walked away with Big Man On Campus honors. They are Jared Hazelton, Bob Webber, Bob Casey, Ted McCarter, Jerry Fronterhouse, Steve Beckman and Jim White.

NEW PE-EIS ANNOUNCED

Thirty minutes before APRON STRINGS went to press, Jim White, Jared Hazelton and Bob Casey were named to PE-EI, senior mens' honor society. Ten men are selected each year and Beta is proud to claim three of them.

BETA REPRESENTED ON STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Neil Stanfield has served this year as organizations editor of the Sooner Yearbook and has recently been named the 1959 editor. Steve Cathey has held the positions of staffwriter, assistant sports editor, sports editor and news editor of the Oklahoma Daily Student Newspaper this year.

SMITH AND CASEY HEAD SOONER SCANDALS

Brothers Bob Casey and Jerry Smith were very active in this year's highly successful Sooner Scandals. Brother Casey was the student director and Brother Smith headed production. If things run true to form, Jerry Smith will be the next student director.

SEMROD IS PREXY OF SENIOR CLASS

In a walk-away election last fall, the members of the OU Senior Class named Joe "Politician" Semrod as their president, a job he has ably filled throughout the year.

BETAS ELECTED TO ODK

Placing the highest number of men from any single fraternity, Beta saw five of our brothers go into Omicron Delta Kappa, national leadership society for junior and senior men. Those elected to membership were: Bob Casey, Bob Clapp, Benton Clark, Jim White and Jared Hazelton. Steve Beckman is currently president of the organization.

BOB BARR MAKES PHI ETA SIGMA

Bob Barr qualified for the national scholarship fraternity for freshmen, Phi Eta Sigma, by making a 3.5 grade average or better. These type of men are the back-bone of our freshmen scholarship program, knowing what they came to college for.

SMITH AND O'NEAL ARE OUTSTANDING FRESHMEN

Jerry Smith and John O'Neal, presently of the sophomore class, were chosen to be among the ten top men in the University's freshmen class of 1956-57. The members of Gamma Phi are very proud of having such a large percentage of the top freshmen.

DOTA AND DASHES ON HOUSE PERSONALITIES

The game of bridge is losing its grip in the Beta house. Gin Rummy has taken over. Biggest enthusiasts of the game are Owen Wilson, who never wins and John Gibson, who just can't seem to manage to lose.

Rooky Dykes flirts with death every time he goes into the kitchen. He seems to rub one of the cooks, Mrs. Jones, or Jonesy as she is fondly known around the house, the wrong way. Jonesy retaliates by chasing him around the kitchen with a 14-inch butcher knife in her hand. Mrs. Reed, the other capable Beta cook, tries to keep peace but will someday probably be run through for her efforts.

The front porch and the side yard are no longer a safe place to stand or sit. "The Phanthom" (not to be confused with the Phantom) has come out of hibernation this spring with his funny (?) practice of throwing water bombs out of the windows. In case any of you Moms don't know what a water bomb is, it is a little plastic bag, available at any laundry, filled with nice cold water and heaved with unerring accuracy at some poor victim.

Joe "Politician" Semrod has moved out of the house. His hand became inflamed and swollen due to excessive handshaking.

Mothers, if you see any strange looking bugs crawling around the house, be sure and pick them up and take them down to Hack Newman. Seems as if he is taking a course in bugs this semester and would appreciate any help he can get, as he is a little short of time with having to take care of Jan and classes too.

If you hear any strange sounds coming from the salt mines at about four in the morning, you can be sure that it is Bob Slocum, the famous Beta Guitarist. It seems that this is the only time that he has, as his evenings are taken up going to shows and rock and roll programs.

Frank Robertson has finally achieved the feat of getting a monopoly of the laundry business in the Beta house. This puts him one step ahead of Larry Goff, who has not yet reached his goal of obtaining a majority of the world's money.

Richard Fellrath is still sending people away from the bridge table tearing their hair, gnashing their teeth and crying. Just a few days ago, he pulled the unforgivable sin of jumping his partner with extremely insufficient count and left the poor soul in six hearts, doubled and redoubled.

Sam Pangburn and Joe Love were recently elected unanimously to represent the chapter in the campus pie eating contest. Victory should be assured if the way they eat in the dining room is any indication.

Larry Witherspoon and Johnny Van Aken were tabbed the "Bobbsey Twins" during Beer Bowl as they were both hobbling around on crutches due to broken bones. Seems that Larry got a broken ankle in practice and Johnny received a broken toe when he attacked a door.

Joe Bell and Bill Reeburgh have been carrying on an active correspondence via the bulletin board. The messages are from President Eisenhower and are being picked up by Pledge Charles Starkweather.

Gamma Phi is always sure of being well represented by President Don Park. He is a man of many talents. A demonstration of one of these talents was given at District Day in Dallas, when he charmed four Beta Chapters and their dates with his famous Arkansas Hog Call.

Dick DeVoe (nicknamed Dooley) recently tried to conquer the house with his new form of government, Dooleyism. After a few publications of the party's newspaper, the house saw the danger and opposing forces united and stamped out this menace.

Two of the newest faces to appear on the television and movie screen are little Rooky Dykes and Jamey Schwartz. They are currently starring in their own production, no one else would produce it, of "We were Phanthoms for the Grubby Crew."

Sam Wilson, the newly re-elected house mouse (house manager) is spreading his policy of terror over the pledge class. The pledges and new initiates live in mortal fear of the demon which slips around in rubber soled shoes. Sam is hindered in his work by a bad case of asthma, but fights this with a little plastic bag which contains "Sam's Miracle Cure-All".

Robert Osborne is promoting good will between the Betas and Kappas. He recently "Fished In" with a very nice looking Kappa by the name of Carol Cashion. In case you mothers don't know the term "Fished In", it simply refers to one of those who has been "hooked".

For you mothers who know Grover Ozmun, you may not recognize him when you come down on May 3. His face is a little stretched from all the smiling he has done at the rush parties.

In case any of you mothers want to know about the TV schedules while you are here, simply ask Bob Gates. Since the good programs are well distributed throughout the week, the TV room is sort of a small show, with Bob being able to give the full curriculum for the evening on a moments notice.

There is an IL in the house. That stands for International Lover. It seems as if Gordon King and Dee Ermin carried on a long distance romance while he was in the United States and she was abroad. And when this tender love story broke in the Oklahoma Daily, Wooglin smiled!!

This, Mom, is but a fraction of the activities Gamma Phi chapter has had during the past year. Come on to Mom's Day. We invite you again just in case you've forgotten the invitation you were given at the beginning of this letter.

Come lasso us with those apron strings and have fun with us at 800 Chautauqua.

With All Our Love,
Gamma Phi Chapter of
Beta Theta Pi

Steve Cathey
Rick Matthews,
Correspondents