Kappa Alpha Theta: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow
A Journey Through Delta Sigma Chapter

A Creative Project

by

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Abstract

Different groups in society reflect the cultural history of certain time periods. Therefore, in our opinions, it is important to keep accurate records no matter how small the group or section of society. At present, the archives of the Delta Sigma Chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta consist of a few scrapbooks and files of pictures, cards and other papers. For the most part, this information is unorganized and hidden in the back of the closets in our chapter facility.

By completing this project — creating a multimedia presentation that reflects chapter photographs, letters and interviews with both active and alumnae members — we will help preserve the history of our chapter and be able to give back to a group which has given us so many opportunities throughout our college careers.

My Background: Sarah Greiner

I am a senior magazine journalism major, planning to graduate in May 2003. So far, I have taken courses in magazine writing, design, production and publishing, along with my core curriculum. I have written for The Ball State Daily News and Expo magazine, and I currently work in the Department of Journalism office as a student secretary and at the Academy of Model Aeronautics as a design assistant. In all my media-related work, however, I have not had a chance to do much with multimedia design. That is one reason I decided to undertake this project.

The other reason, of course, is my involvement in Kappa Alpha Theta, a social sorority that has been on Ball State’s campus since 1970. Since I joined the Delta Sigma Chapter in 1999 as a freshman, I have served as editor, recruitment chair and vice...
relatively short amount of time. We figured we could contact several alumnae who would be willing to discuss their involvement in the sorority and the impact it had on their lives. Apparently, we were much too confident about the amount of information available on campus.

Our first stop was our chapter facility. All Ball State sororities have suites located in the residence halls. The Kappa Alpha Theta suite seemed like a logical place to begin. First, we pulled old scrapbooks out of cabinets. Unfortunately, the scrapbooks we thought were going to contain the majority of our photographs and information, turned out to be from years few and far between. Each year, the chapter’s archivist/historian is supposed to create a scrapbook highlighting events. This practice must have been ignored for several years, as we were only able to find six or seven scrapbooks from the 1980s and 1990s.

Initially, we had planned to look through files in our suite. These records turned out to be nonexistent. As of right now, we are not sure if any paper archives exist for our chapter.

Unable to find much in the suite, we contacted Lynda Malugen, the adviser for Ball State’s Panhellenic Council. She recommended that we visit Bracken Library. We did, but the only information they had was a very tiny file containing our charter.

So, we contacted Kappa Alpha Theta’s national headquarters in Indianapolis. The librarian there had four newspaper clippings that she sent to us via e-mail. She also asked for a copy of our completed project.

We were back to square one. We sat down and started writing down a list of every alumna we had contact information for. We came up with a list of questions and a letter,
president of membership. This project is just one more way to give back to an organization that has given so much to me.

My Background: Sara Heimann

I am a senior journalism graphics major, also planning to graduate in May 2003. I have taken courses in newspaper and magazine design, visual editing and new media, along with my core curriculum. I have been a designer for The Ball State Daily News and have served as a design intern with Campus Programs and Publicity and the University Program Board. I’m a visual person, not a writer, so I was excited to do this multimedia presentation for a creative project.

I am also a member of Kappa Alpha Theta. I was initiated into the Delta Sigma Chapter in 1999 and have served as recording secretary, vice president of development and chapter president. Theta has been a priority in my life for the past four years, and I hope this project will educate others about this incredible organization and what it has to offer college women.

Research

Research was one of the most difficult aspects of this project. To compile information for use in our multimedia presentation, we searched through chapter archives and scrapbooks, visited Bracken Library’s Special Archives, and contacted numerous alumnae and active members.

Starting out, we thought it would be a simple task to find information about Delta Sigma Chapter. After all, it has been on Ball State’s campus for just over 30 years, a
which we then e-mailed to each of them. Fortunately, Kappa Alpha Theta’s Web site contains a limited database, so we were able to get additional names and e-mail addresses from that list. We began to receive considerable feedback – one woman even sent her scrapbook – from alumnae and our fellow chapter members.

Creation

Even after these efforts, we still did not have an overabundance of information. We had to decide how to create an informative presentation with little material.

We had already decided to create our final presentation using software called Flash MX. Prior to putting together a presentation, we scanned pictures, compiled quotes from alumnae and active members, and debated how to organize our material.

After some discussion, we decided the best way to present what information we did have was to divide our project into five decades – 1870, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000.

The first decade – 1870 – contains a history of the sorority’s national founding at Asbury College (now DePauw University) in Greencastle, Indiana. We felt this information was important because it gives our viewers a representation of the vastness of this organization. Yes, it has only been on the Ball State campus for 33 years, but it has been a national institution for much longer.

The second decade – 1970 – discusses the beginnings of Kappa Alpha Theta at Ball State University. In the fall of 1968, two women, Beth Nagel and Linda Yanez, began the process of creating a new local sorority. After two years of hard work, the members of Kappa Theta Rho petitioned Kappa Alpha Theta for membership. On January 27, 1970, the 100th anniversary of Theta’s national founding, delegates at the
Centennial Convention in Indianapolis voted to accept Kappa Theta Rho’s petition for membership. Thus, Delta Sigma Chapter became the Centennial Chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta.

The information contained in the remaining three decades – 1980, 1990 and 2000 – demonstrate how the Delta Sigma Chapter has only become stronger over the past 30 years.

Our final presentation gives the viewer a glimpse into each decade through quotes, pictures and a little historical information. The project will be burned to CD and given to the Ball State Honors College, Kappa Alpha Theta’s national headquarters and Delta Sigma Chapter. The presentation also will be uploaded onto Delta Sigma’s Web site, www.bsu.edu/theta. We will then contact the alumnae and chapter members who helped us throughout our project to let them know that the project is available for online viewing.

**Conclusion**

This presentation has the potential to be used in a variety of ways. First, chapter leaders could use it as a recruitment tool to demonstrate the group’s longevity and national reach. Second, the new member educator could use it as a fun way for new members to learn chapter history. Third, the chapter and national headquarters could keep CD copies for archival purposes. Finally, a copy could be posted to the chapter’s Web site so anyone could learn more about the organization.
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