

April 1, 2016

Loyal Bill Johnson Birthday Club Brothers,

Just about the time I sent my last update, a few days later, fate struck in the form of a collapsed sewer line underneath the dining room. Unfortunately this occurred only a few weeks into the school year (things like this never happen when the house is empty). A mess...you better believe it! A little historical background, as many of you will recall, the south-side of the structure is the "old house", in 1991 when the new North Tower was completed, they ran a main sewer line from the old house to the new tower, covered it with rock and dirt and paved over the distance between the two towers. Then in 1994, when the 3-story center tower was constructed connecting both towers, more rock, dirt and concrete were added as a foundation...thus entrenching the 3-year old sewer line about 8 feet below...This caused the kitchen and north tower to be shut down for about 5 weeks...thankfully the south-side was fully functional and usable for showering and restroom facilities during this time. Our commercial plumber and general contractor were called (along with our insurance man), THANKFULLY insurance green-lit a full excavation and replacement...However, for 5 weeks, the dining room was sealed off and a trench 8 feet deep, 5 feet wide, running the entire distance of the dining room was dug...imagine pictures of WWI trenches and you will have an idea of what it looked like. Dirt and rock piled high, almost to the ceiling and...well....pictures of the collapsed pipe itself are a bit too graphic to share, but you can imagine...

Not all bad though, insurance paid for the entire \$70,000 bill, which with some number crunching allowed us to replace the pipe (insurance required us to replace it with a '100 year' fix, quite the engineering spectacle), light fixtures, paint, woodwork, shutters and most importantly BRAND NEW commercial flooring to replace the carpet. Mighty convenient since we had planned to replace the carpet in the dining room this upcoming summer. KU was helpful during this whole incident, they provided a "dining card" to each student and they could get all of their meals at any of the dining facilities on campus, breakfast, lunch and dinner. Insurance picked up to the tab, even better.

I'll be honest with you, our house is in GOOD shape, but as modernity catches up with us, we're beginning to fall behind in the amenities, comforts and conveniences this generation is seeing in the dorms, other fraternities and off-campus housing; private landlords in/around campus have gotten wise to these expectations and have made significant investments in their properties, especially in what was once known as the "student ghetto" near the football stadium, KU Union and the Wheel. You will be hearing more in the coming months from **Nick Reddell** (House Corporation President) and **Greg Smith** (Endowment Association President). Luckily, our sheer size (35,000 sq ft) and location of our house is somewhat insulated, but allows us to properly and effectively plan for the future. Your yearly Bill Johnson Bday Club donation, **DIRECTLY** impacts the physical structure and upkeep of our house and staves off problems when unforeseen expenses arise, the yearly upkeep and enhancements we have made over the years is directly tied to why we have stayed relevant all these years...**THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU**, BJ would be so very proud...

A special thank you to **John Ziegelmeyer** for his continued dedication to the physical structure of our chapter house. His presence in Lawrence is invaluable to Esther, the chapter and the rest of the House Corporation board. I can tell you, without your support and annual contributions to the Bill Johnson Birthday Club, even the small projects would be difficult, and certainly the larger ones would be unrealistic and we would be unable to maintain such a fine physical presence on campus...**I thank you so very much for your continued support**...high, high, high.

The Chapter wrapped up an eventful Fall semester and after the grade report was released, what appears to have been a semester filled with studious activities. I'm happy to announce the Chapter had a **Fall 2015 overall GPA of 3.17**. The Chapter has definitely seen how much smoother life can be when everyone is working hard to achieve common goals and continue to be a positive influence on themselves and the KU Greek community. We on the House Corporation and here at the Bill Johnson Bday Club are so very proud of the direction **THEY** have chosen. In mid-March, Greg Smith and **Johnny Stephenson** (Endowment Association Treasurer), presented over \$10,000 in Grade Scholarship check to individual undergraduate Brothers, please join me in congratulating them...

In February 2016, after the boys returned to KU, 30 Pledges became Brothers in our humble fraternity...you will recognize a few last names (**7 Legacies**). I have had a chance to meet many of them, wonderful additions to our Chapter Roll Call, you would be proud.

Now, on to Rush, the Chairs are doing a fantastic job this year, and with the ever-changing KU Greek rules about "when you can officially sign a candidate", we're happy they are narrowing down the best possible Pledge Class. Next Fall, the incoming Pledges (anticipate signing 40 pledges) will be joined by 30 Sophomores and 31 Juniors, along with 32 OHBs (Out of House Brothers) all led by Chapter President **Dan Zima**. If you have a potential Rush candidate, please contact House Corporation Alumni Representative **Ben Cohen** and the Chapter Rush Chairs IMMEDIATELY, spots are filling up fast. You will find their contact information below. If the past few years tell us anything, all incoming Pledge spots will be filled by June 1.

On Sunday, February 28, 2016, the **Wheat State Alumni Association and Wheat State President Greg Sims**, hosted the annual Phi Kappa Psi Kansas Alpha Founders Day Brunch...50 brothers, spouses, undergraduates and friends of PKP attended, updates were provided by the House Corporation, Chapter, Wheat State Alumni Association, Endowment Association, Esther Wolfe and a very special award was given for the first time. Two years ago Brother **Jim Aust** and the family of Bill 'BJ' Johnson, with the guiding help of former Endowment Association President **John Brown** started a merit-based scholarship award for deserving members of the Kansas Alpha Chapter of Phi Kappa Psi who demonstrate the high principles and values our great fraternity was founded on and on which BJ lived his life. BJ's wife, **Patty** and members of her family, were in attendance and presented the winner and scholarship award to Sophomore **Cole Baber**. Cole was joined by his proud parents, Carol and Jerry Baber.

If you, or anyone you know, is interested in setting up a scholarship, please contact Greg Smith or myself and we can make that happen.

On February 1, 2016, the day I have been dreading since I joined the House Corporation board years ago happened, Esther Wolfe, our amazing Housemother, announced her retirement after 18 years of service. With growing grandchildren and a desire to start a new chapter in her life, she bids us adieu on June 1st. Thankfully she is staying in Lawrence and will be available to transition roles and responsibilities to the new House Director. A search is well underway for her replacement (which is almost impossible given her 18 years of knowledge), thankfully the House Corporation has received many recommendations and applicants (word of mouth goes a long way). We expect to have a candidate identified in the upcoming weeks and extend an offer of employment. A special thanks to Brothers, **Kevin Will, Bill Guerry, Ben Cohen, Billy Santoro and Blake Shuart**. On Sunday, June 12, 2016 in Lawrence, we have a special celebration and retirement party planned for Esther, her family and friends...information to come via, traditional mail, email and social media...we want to make this a BIG celebration, 18 years is a whole generation of boys that she helped mold into men....more to come...

For those of you attending the National Phi Kappa Psi conference (**GAC**), be on the lookout for your fellow Kansas Alpha brothers, along with the Chapter Undergraduates in attendance. GAC is being held in New York City the week/weekend of July 6, still time to register, check out the National PKP website or the latest edition of the Shield.

<http://www.phikappapsi.com/programs/grandarchcouncil2016>

Brother **Jeff Maher** will once again host the annual Wheat State Alumni Golf Tournament on **Saturday, July 23rd**. A magnificent and beautiful July day will play host to the annual Golf Tournament. The tournament has a change of venue this year, **Prairie Highlands Golf Course in Olathe Kansas**, will play host. We have old familiar faces and some encouraging new blood entering to compete for the prestigious trophy cup. Brother Maher dedicates himself and his time to a wonderful cause and we all appreciate his hard work and sacrifice...Thank You Jeff!!! Please send your RSVP and/or 4-some to him using the contact information below, more information is being sent out in the upcoming months....

For the last 10 months, on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm CST, I have been joining our **Phi Kappa Psi National President Scott Noble** for his newly created monthly **President's Conference Call Series**. It's been an absolute joy to hear straight from the National Leadership about their plans for the future of Phi Kappa Psi. This conference call is open to ALL ALUMNI...please join me....more information can be found on the front page of

<http://www.phikappapsi.com/alumni/presidentsconferencecall>

The **Bill Johnson Kansas Alpha Birthday Club** numbers are a little down from last year....I encourage you to spread the word about our little club within a club. Last year, right at the end of December we hit 100 active members....I would love to surpass that this year. Please take a moment and check the email attached roster link and see if your name has an "X" in the 2015 column. If not, I encourage you to send in the dues stub for this year. For those of you who have sent in your 2016 annual dues...THANK YOU so very much.

On a final note, **Greg Smith** (EA President) and **Nick Reddell** (HC President) are always looking for great volunteers who would like to help in the direction of our Alumni **Endowment Association and House Corporation** respectively. Please reach out to them to participate....the minimal time commitment pays forward in many aspects and a job well done is always ensured.

Finally, if you ever need anything, please feel free to reach out, as a volunteer myself; I look forward to hearing from Alumni (besides my own Dad).

- Be on the lookout for an **Alumni Letter from Chapter President Dan Zima** and the rest of the undergraduates...coming soon to a mailbox near you (probably late Spring 2016)
- Look for the latest edition of **The Rag** featuring an update from Endowment Association President Greg Smith
- Do you have any referrals/recommendations for NEXT year's Pledge Class? Email me the name and contact information and I will make sure it gets to our House Corporation Alumni Liaison **Ben Cohen** and the Chapter Rush Chairs...KU changed the Bid Card/Signing Date rules this year

In the Bond,

Adam W. Dolski...

Phi Kappa Psi House Corporation Treasurer

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