

April 7, 2019

Loyal Bill Johnson Birthday Club Brothers,

First, let me apologize for the lengthy delay...it's been a while...my plan was to send out a Letter and Yearly Dues at our February 2019 Founder's Day event in Lawrence....of course mother-nature struck, and we had to cancel due to severe winter weather.

It's been, as usual, an eventful year at 1602 w. 15<sup>th</sup> Street (Mom's Weekend just wrapped up on Saturday)...I'm happy to report 32 new members to our humble fraternity were initiated this year, on par for our expectations. Several Legacies continuing familial ties and names you would recognize, but also a majority of new blood. Phi Kappa Psi President **Nick Reddell '01** and I take a survey at the beginning of each academic year, and more and more our New Members are coming from families without any previous Greek affiliation, which we deem a good sign of growth and diversity, but more importantly expansion and longevity.

You might recall, over the past 2 summers, we've (House Corporation) embarked on some cosmetic and much needed enhancements and physical "facelift" of our main floor and half the bathrooms in the house. We'd love to do it all in one swoop...but with only about 12 weeks in the summer to take on such endeavors, time disappears quickly. Our luck has been strong, no major unexpected capital costs, our planning and diligence remains at the forefront of what we do each year. Last summer we solved our 2-Middle patio/roof/water leaking back into the house problem....FOREVER. I know many of you have visited the house and seen the improvement, essentially, we installed a permanent roof over the outside patio, redirecting gutters and the roofline....the boys love it, the easternmost wall consists of 3 glass-paneled garage doors, creating a 3-season porch effect, for as you can imagine lots of quiet, reflective study-time.

The current Capital Campaign: **Keeping the Tradition of Excellence**, remains in full swing....I want to personally thank all those who have already committed. For those of you seeking additional information, please see the link below, or reach out to myself, Nick, any member of House Corporation or the Kansas Alpha Endowment Association, led by Brother Greg Smith.

<https://contributions.omegafi.com/contributions/product/1493-phi-kappa-psi-kansas-alpha/>

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 and the next 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 Kaye Page (Housemother), 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...! **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 2018 overall GPA of 3.28**. 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...

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 32 Sophomores and 24 Juniors, along with 28 OHBs (Out of House Brothers) all led by Chapter President **Lucas Adel**. 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. If the past few years tell us anything, all incoming Pledge spots will be filled by July 1.

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.

Brother **Jeff Maher** will once again host the annual Wheat State Alumni Golf Tournament on **Saturday, September 14**. A magnificent and beautiful September day will play host to the annual Golf Tournament. The tournament will return to the same venue this year, **Canyon Farms Golf Club in Lenexa 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....

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 110 active members....I would love to surpass that this year.

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.

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 Lucas Adel** and the rest of the undergraduates...coming soon to a mailbox near you (probably late Spring 2019)
- 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,

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