

Speaker: Hazing unties instead of unites

By **Chuck Isom**
Staff Reporter

Hazing. For the Greek system at UNL and houses across the country, that word has meant legal difficulties, declining memberships and has led to an overall negative view of the greek system in general.

David Westol, executive director for Theta Chi International Fraternity, doesn't think it should be that way.

"Hazing is wrong," Westol told a combined audience of about 2,000 fraternity and sorority members Monday night. "You are playing with the physical well-being of young men and women. Hazing hurts your fraternity or sorority more than it could ever help it."

Westol gave two speeches, each titled "Hazing on Trial." Each speech lasted around an hour and a half.

During this time span Westol gave examples that hazing isn't what it appears to be. It's not the builder of a strong brother or sister or the forging of a solid house.

He spoke of the methods that some

fraternities used to "build unity," such as making all pledges wear the same clothes, an identifying symbol such as a pledge pin or a pledge paddle, or making them enter the house through a back door.

These don't create unity, Westol said, they destroy individuality.

"Hazing slowly erodes at the self-confidence of the pledges. They have people that they respect yelling at them, telling them that they are nothing."

"Hazers are bullies. If you haze then you are a bully," Westol said. "That's all a bully is. A person who is taking advantage of being in a place of power. Bullies are afraid of what they are picking on."

Westol said that if members in the audience had hazing in their houses and if they were so proud of it, they should mention it in their pledge brochures.

He also asked the students to think about the members of the fraternity or sorority who are the most excited about hazing.

"Are these the people who attend

all the chapter meetings? Are these the people who attend all the rituals? Are these the people who present a good image of the fraternity? More than likely not. The ones who believe in hazing are not the valued members of a fraternity."

Westol gave some suggestions how the Greek system can reduce the hazing incidences. He explained how some private institutions have eliminated pledging altogether or have shortened it to three weeks.

He said greek organizations should initiate members quickly, then educate members about the house throughout their collegiate careers.

Westol said he gave his speech 30 to 35 times a year. He said he enjoyed speaking at colleges. Westol, who admits that he was hazed in his fraternity and in turn hazed new pledges, speaks out against hazing. He asks students who are being hazed to speak out and try to find help.

"You can stand up to the individuals who want you to do something you don't want to," Westol said.

Visit

Continued from Page 1

he said. "The entire gang would just swarm you and beat you until they thought you had enough."

"After they were finished, everything was fine. They would help you up, straighten your jacket, brush you off and buy you a drink just like nothing ever happened."

Nelson said the victims of these attacks were chosen almost at random and often for trivial reasons.

"I once saw a guy get stomped just for accidentally bumping into a Mafia member on the dance floor," he said.

Nelson said he thought the most important lesson he learned on his trip was that Americans made terrible tourists.

"Whenever I saw other Americans in St. Petersburg, I would avoid them at all costs," he said. "They just don't realize how dangerous Russia can be."

Nelson said the ignorance of American tourists was made pain-

fully obvious when thousands of them flocked to St. Petersburg for the Goodwill Games last summer.

"People would stand out in the streets, just flashing huge amounts of cash, not even thinking about what could happen," he said.

"Police had to come in from all around to protect these people from muggers. But it was still a pretty dangerous situation."

Despite his bad experiences with both crime and the law, Nelson said he learned a lot and planned to return to Russia soon.

"The thing about most Americans," Nelson said, "is that they have a hard time learning the behaviors and adjusting to a foreign country. That is what usually creates the elements of danger."

Nelson said danger could be avoided with proper precautions. He said he learned his lessons during his stay in Russia and planned to stay safer on his next visit.

"It's all just a matter of using your head," he said. "I'm pretty sure I won't have as rough an experience next time."

American Heart Association

This space provided as a public service.
©1993, American Heart Association

UNL CULTURE CENTER PRESENTS

Harmony X^{10th anniversary}
open house reception

wednesday, september 28, 1994
1pm to 3pm

Culture Center 333 N 14th Street 472-5500 for information

Featuring the music of Kusi Tshid
Traditional Music of the Andes



Dance Contest
Every Tuesday
9 p.m.
1823 "O" Street
NO COVER



Room in New York, 1932,
Edward Hopper

20% off
all in-stock and
catalog posters in the
gift shop

Sheldon
Art
Gallery

September 27 only
Hours: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

"Simplify, simplify."

Henry David Thoreau

"Hey, that's not a bad idea."

AT&T



AT&T Universal MasterCard.
The credit, cash and calling card. All in one.

The AT&T Universal MasterCard. No annual fee—ever. Access to cash at over 350,000 locations. Plus an AT&T calling card. Because life should be contemplated. Not complicated.

Call 1 800 438-8627 to request an application.

