

# Sigma Alpha Mu reborn

■ The fraternity hurdles an unofficial closing by recruiting new members.

By **KARL ANDERSON**  
Staff Reporter

The members of Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity have been looking for more than a few good men.

With help from alumni and a handful of dedicated new members, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Sigma Omicron chapter of Sigma Alpha Mu is trying to rebuild itself into greatness.

The goal of the chapter is to have 20 new members by the end of this semester. The house now has 10 members who all live in residence halls as the chapter house, 16th and Vine streets, awaits renovation.

Phil Piper, a freshman environmental studies major and chapter president, said membership so far has been accomplished by meeting people within the residence halls and on campus. He explains to them what it is like to be a part of the greek system, and what they can expect to gain as members of Sigma Alpha Mu.

Piper said the house looks for members who will contribute to the chapter, and who will in no way degrade the house or the greek system. A strong sense of responsibility and direction is important to its members, he said.

It is important that all members have a free voice in the chapter, Piper said. Members discuss all chapter issues carefully before casting votes,

## Involvement

and everyone is encouraged to express his opinion. House traditions also have an important place among members, he said.

The chapter conducts normal fraternity functions without its actual house. Monday night formal dinners are eaten in a private dining area in Selleck Residence Hall, and chapter meetings are in the Nebraska Union. Piper also has represented the house at weekly Interfraternity Council meetings.

The house remained open until spring of 1995. The members, however, seemed to be largely uninterested in what direction the house drifted, Piper said. The house was not run properly, and the rush program was not as strong as it should have been, he said.

The result was a low number of pledges, so membership in the house began to decline. With too few members available to run the chapter effectively, alumni stepped in and unofficially closed the house, although the chapter kept its charter.

Before Piper started his freshman year at UNL, Sigma Alpha Mu national headquarters personally selected him to reconstruct the struggling chapter.

A friend of Piper's from the Sigma Alpha Mu chapter at the University of Minnesota attended the Sigma Alpha Mu National Convention last summer. The friend knew Piper was interested in becoming a part of the greek system, but knew Piper was con-

cerned about which fraternity to join. Officers at the national headquarters called Piper and asked him to help restart the Sigma Alpha Mu chapter at UNL. Piper agreed.

"I was pumped up about it," he said.

A representative from the fraternity soon arrived at UNL and started working with Piper, answering questions about the house and finances, and assisting him as he began rebuilding the house.

Piper had no trouble gaining support from the Interfraternity Council.

Because the house was never officially closed, IFC had never stopped recognizing it and was eager to help the members. Piper also has been assisted by other greek chapters, as well as by Sigma Alpha Mu alumni.

Alumni have been working closely with the members of Sigma Alpha Mu, contributing time and money to re-establish the house.

Antonio Gonzalez, vice president of the chapter, said about 60 percent of all the help the house has received has come from alumni.

Gonzalez said the rebuilding has been a great opportunity for the house. Members benefited by once again becoming a part of the greek community and by learning responsibility.

Alumni have benefited with the satisfaction of recognizing a house in need and rebuilding it for future student generations, he said.

The greek system and Lincoln also will benefit through philanthropic and community involvement, Gonzalez said.

Piper said the past is irrelevant.

The rebuilding has gone well and the members have been extremely excited, Piper said. They have recognized the position they are in as a chance to start over from the beginning, and they consider themselves to be the new founding fathers of the chapter, he said.

# Fraternity faces disqualification

By **TED TAYLOR**  
Senior Reporter

For the first time in at least 20 years, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln greek house has been disqualified from homecoming activities.

In a special meeting Tuesday night, the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska Homecoming Steering Committee unanimously agreed the actions of four Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity members earlier in the day were enough to keep the house from receiving homecoming participation points.

"They're done," said ASUN First Vice President Amy Rager, a member of the steering committee.

Rager added that when the 11-member committee discussed the possible sanctions against the house, they thought it to be the first time ever that a student organization had been disqualified from Homecoming Week.

The sanctions are in response to four Sigma Alpha Epsilon brothers who were caught stealing \$110 worth of lumber from a local construction site around 2 a.m. Tuesday because they needed it for their homecoming float.

A police report said the four men were pulled over by an officer after he noticed a piece of wood fall from the back of their truck. After realizing the wood hadn't come from a lumber yard and had been stolen, the officer cited the four for theft.

The Homecoming Steering Committee's sanctions ruled that the house could have no lawn display on Sigma Alpha Epsilon property, it would receive no name recognition for homecoming and the fraternity

would receive no participation points for homecoming activities.

John Hecox, vice president of the fraternity, called the sanctions "more than we expected right off the bat."

He said the committee's decision sent a wave of disgust through the entire house.

"It dampens the spirit in the whole house," he said. "It puts everyone in a bad mood."

He said the house has not yet decided whether any action would be taken against the four members involved in the incident.

"They're really good people," he said of the four brothers, "but they made a bad decision."

The magnitude of the sanctions did not escape the committee when making their decision, Rager said.

"This is a huge deal to them," Rager said. "Floats seem to have (fraternities') pride and joy in them. That's why you see them making floats bigger than their houses."

The house will now help the other two members of their homecoming triad, Alpha Phi Sorority and Chi Phi Fraternity, in constructing a lawn display. They have also enlisted the help of the newly reformed Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity.

"They were tickled to death that we asked them to be a part of it," Hecox said of the 10-member fraternity.

Rager said the decision to let them help build a float, although not on their property, was made with the other houses in their triad in mind.

"We felt it was important for them to uphold their responsibilities to the other two houses," she said.

Sigma Alpha Epsilon members met with alumni Wednesday evening to discuss the incident and how they are going to handle it,

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# Clinton tapes released

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full of donors on May 13, 1996. "At the time, neither one of us could afford the ticket to this dinner."

Just months later, the Democratic Party would be forced to return \$3 million in donations — most of it raised by Huang or Trie — because of concerns the money came from foreign or other improper sources. Trie left the country and Huang has cited his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination in refusing to be interviewed by investigators.

Most of the footage released Wednesday involved fund-raising events at hotels and other traditional settings, and shed little light on a central question being posed by Justice Department and congressional investigators: Was the White House illegally used to raise money?

But one clip immediately garnered attention — a May 21, 1996, dinner for Democratic donors inside the White House. The tape shows Clinton telling the audience that "many of you have been very generous, I thank you for it." He follows with a veiled pitch for their continued support.

"This thing could get away from us in a hurry," Clinton said. "It's very important to remember that the 20th century has not been kind to Democratic presidents."

Federal law prohibits soliciting donors in government offices.

White House special counsel Lanny Davis, who presided over the White House showing of the tapes to reporters, said Clinton did not make an explicit appeal like the one captured on a recently surfaced video-

tape of President Reagan asking supporters for help inside the White House.

"The president says 'thank you.' He didn't say 'I ask your help' as Ronald Reagan did at a White House event," Davis said.

Many in attendance at the events on the tapes were "soft-money" givers whose donations to the party can be unlimited in size but cannot be used directly to assist a federal candidate like Clinton.

At the time, the party was using soft money to run a massive ad campaign to define issues. At the May White House event, however, Clinton credits the ads for benefiting his own campaign.

"The fact that we have been able to finance this long-running television campaign where we have been always framing the issues ... has been central to the position I now enjoy in the polls," Clinton told donors.

One area that congressional investigators are now probing is whether the White House directed the soft-money ad campaign to benefit Clinton despite the legal prohibition.

Davis said the Democratic Party ads were "absolutely legal" because they didn't expressly advocate Clinton's re-election. "Our ads were vetted by lawyers," he said.

Other footage shows Clinton attending an Asian-American fund raiser on Feb. 19, 1996, at the Hay-Adams hotel in Washington — an event at which Republican investigators allege donors were reimbursed with foreign money.

"I'd like to thank my longtime friend John Huang for being so

effective," Clinton tells the audience. "Frankly, he's been so effective I was amazed you were all cheering for him tonight after ... his aggressive efforts to help our cause."

The president greeted supporters and well-wishers with hugs and handshakes. He put his arm around Huang after the taping of one radio address. At another, the president gave fund-raiser Johnny Chung a big hug before being introduced to a delegation of Chinese businessmen.

Clinton aides converted a fourth-floor auditorium in the Old Executive Office Building into a screening room for reporters, who watched segments of the tapes that were turned over to congressional committees and the Justice Department Tuesday night. Another batch was being sent Wednesday.

"The popcorn stand is open in the back," Davis said.

Down Pennsylvania Avenue, Senate investigators provided their own showing of tapes that they found significant.

One clip had fund-raiser Terence McAuliffe telling donors at a May 1993 White House reception that it was the reward for their donations to an earlier fund raiser that had been canceled at a Little Rock, Ark., hotel.

"We're glad we did not ask for our checks back because, no offense to Little Rock, but this sure beats the Little Rock Excelsior," McAuliffe is shown saying.

Only 28 of the events on the tapes occurred inside the White House. In some of those, Clinton could be seen lecturing on the history of the ceremonial rooms they visited.