

Greek life at Behrend

"It's a great thing to be a part of."

By Danette Parrett
The Collegian

With the past week's activities, dizzy bat races, Greek sing, tricycle races, and many other fun and unusual activities, Greek life on Behrend's campus came into the spotlight. Along with this publicity, a lot of questions are being asked from those students who are not involved in Greek life.

What are Greek organizations all about? Who are the people in these organizations and what do they represent? How do I get involved?

By talking to various representatives from the social Greek organizations on campus, students can learn all they need to know.

To begin with, how does one get involved?

For sororities, at the beginning of the year there is a formal rush. During this formal rush, interested women sign up for the rush and are invited to three invitation based parties. The parties are followed by a preference party that each individual sorority holds. After these parties, the sororities determine together how many prospective members they can have, and which ones they will send bids to.

After the bids are sent out, each sorority has a initiation party for their prospective members during which the women receive their pledge pin.

Once the women have received their pledge pin, their pledge period begins. For sororities the pledge period usually last 5-9 weeks.

After the pledge period is over, the pledges are inducted and become sisters.

At Penn State-Behrend there are three sororities. Alpha Sigma Alpha (ΑΣΑ), Alpha Sigma Tau (ΑΣΤ), and Delta Phi Epsilon (ΔΦΕ).

ΑΣΑ consists of 23 members. They are active in the community by doing several fundraisers such as a Greek T-shirt sale, and a Bowl-a-Thon. The proceeds from these fundraisers benefit the Special Olympics and the S. June Smith Center. ΑΣΑ also holds the Mr. Penn State-Behrend pageant.

ΑΣΤ has 37 members. They participate in Adopt-a-Highway. They also clean the park, volunteer their time to help the Shriners, and have future plans to help at a soup kitchen. They have fundraisers that help the Pine Mountain School in the Appalachian Mountains. They were also this year's Greek Week champs.

ΔΦΕ has 17 sisters. They are

currently co-sponsoring the blood drive. They have an annual clothes drive. They have fundraisers that benefit the fight against cystic fibrosis and the Kineman Animal Shelter.

Janie Monaco of ΑΣΤ feels, "The friendships that you make—that's what most important to me."

In general, the members of these sororities find friendship a big part of their sisterhood.

"No matter where I turn, there's always someone there you know." Susan Kass, a member of ΑΣΑ, says, "In the sorority, I met people I might not have had an opportunity to meet other

that there is someone there for you."

Kass feels that anyone that is interested in joining a sorority should take time to see what they represent.

"Sororities are very different; but they are alike in the same way. You realize that it is a lot more than parties. It's not all fun and games."

Behrend also has nine fraternities: Delta Chi (ΔΧ), Kappa Delta Rho (ΚΔΡ), Sigma Kappa Nu (ΣΚΝ), Sigma Tau Gamma (ΣΤΓ), Tau Kappa Epsilon (ΤΚΕ), and Zeta Beta Tau (ΖΒΤ).

Fraternities differ from

Penn State-Behrend Pageant. This year they are also proud that they have the largest pledge class (19). Out of the fraternities, they had the largest GPA improvement last year.

ΣΚΝ has 43 members. They help North East with their Winefest. Several of the brothers help Tom Ridge with his campaign. They also raise money for the North East Chamber of Commerce with Cow Pie Bingo.

A unique quality about ΣΚΝ is that they are a local fraternity. They do have a Beta chapter at State College, but they are not national. This means that the

ΚΔΡ, feels that "being able to feel a part of a brotherhood or sisterhood is like having a family away from home."

Ginsburg also stresses the importance of the Greek system as a whole, not the individual elements.

"Our brotherhood focuses on the entire Greek system. We address all prospective members to rush all fraternities and choose the one they are comfortable with."

Stan Urban, a member ΣΤΓ, feels that his fraternity has given him a lot of useful characteristics.

"It has taught me leadership, responsibility, and communication skills."

Because Urban lives out of the United States he feels that his brothers show him a lot of guidance.

"I live in Saudi Arabia, so my brothers take care of me. They've done a lot for me. I know I always have a place to go, no matter how long."

Don Alpern, president of ΔΧ, feels that the responsibility that one gains is obvious.

"Greeks have a higher percentage of graduates. A lot of influential people are members of fraternities or sororities. You have a bond with all the Greeks on campus, in addition to your own special group."

Urban feels that "Greek life has one thing in common—bringing people together."

The fraternities and sororities would like to shatter the myth that Greeks just party.

Andrew Tisch from ΣΚΝ stressed that "there is a lot more to Greek life than just parties. It gives me friendship— but more—it goes past friendship. It's someone I can rely on. Someone who's always there for me."

Schultz of ΑΣΤ feels that "It gives you more of a sense of identity. People respect you."

For those who are interested in rushing a fraternity or sorority, Tisch recommends that you "talk to the brothers and sisters of the fraternities and sororities and ask what they are all about."

Jim Conlin, a member of ΖΒΤ believes that "Greek info night dispels a lot of the myths. You have to understand what's going on."

Dan Phillips, a brother of ΤΚΕ, feels that those who are curious about Greek life should "check into all of them and see which one is best for them."

To sum his view of Greek life Phillips said, "I figured it was just parties when I came to college. I found out it is so much more than that. I had to find out what actually goes on. It's a great thing to be a part of."



Mia Colabrese/The Collegian

Delta Phi Epsilon holds on in the Greek Week tug-of-war.

wise."

Carrie Schultz, a member of ΑΣΤ, echoes the same theme, "You'll meet people. You'll make the friends you will have the rest of your life."

The women in these sororities also feel you gain skills you'll need.

Kass says, "I got my best grades whenever I pledged because I learned time management."

"We have a lot of work. It gives you a sense of responsibility and leadership," says Monaco.

Equally important is the sense of family that the sisters receive. Rachel Eng, vice-president of ΔΦΕ, feels that "Greek life gives you a family away from home—a sense of belonging when you really need one."

Her fellow sister of ΔΦΕ, Chris Higley, adds, "If you ever need someone, you always know

sororities in their rush process. Instead of having a formal rush, where all prospective members seek information about all groups, they have a Greek information night. During this night, prospective members can sign up for the fraternities they are interested in. The potential rushees are interviewed by the brothers. After these interviews, the brothers vote on those who are rushing and the bids are sent out. Then, they enter their pledge period.

ΔΧ has 34 members. They have an annual Bowl-a-Thon that benefits the Harvest Food Bank. They also care for a local cemetery in Wesleyville.

ΚΔΡ has 22 brothers. ΚΔΡ is presently involved with the Health and Wellness coordinator in co-sponsoring Alcohol Awareness Week. The past 7 years they have put on the Miss

dues the brothers pay are spent solely on the corporation they run.

ΣΤΓ has 52 members. They participate in Adopt-a-Highway. They also have an Easter candy sale and carwashes for fundraisers.

ΤΚΕ has 24 members. They co-sponsor the blood drive with ΔΦΕ. They also have a 100-mile barrel roll to benefit the Erie Food Bank. They were the intramural point champs last year and also were this year's Greek Week champs.

ΖΒΤ has 32 brothers. Last year they raised over \$1000 during the walk to Pittsburgh to benefit the American Cancer Society. They also delivered over 3000 phonebooks.

The fraternities seem to echo the call that their brotherhoods give the members a sense of belonging and friendship.

Micheal Ginsburg, president of