Fraternity prepares parade float for homecoming competition

**Alpha Zeta hopes for win**

*By Teresa Jascob*

Lantern staff writer

Hard work and pride may bring the Alpha Zeta fraternity its 12th straight first-place award in the 1995 homecoming float competition.

Alpha Zeta creates attractive floats that keep with the theme of homecoming and display its commitment and spirit in Ohio State, said Eric Barrett, president and a senior in animal sciences.

"The float competition is about upholding the traditions of past brothers, and it's us being a part of the university," Barrett said.

Over the years, Alpha Zeta's floats have carried a variety of themes and ideas. The floats always include moving parts and usually try to incorporate Brutus Buckeye in one way or another, Barrett said.

Last year, members created a replica of an eagle carrying a melting pot over Ohio Stadium. Another year a moving Pegasus was created for the homecoming theme, "Make Your Dreams Come True."

According to Barrett the process of creating its award-winning floats begins about a week before homecoming with a three-member design team.

Each night for a week five members build the frame of the float and wrap it with chicken wire.

Next it puts crushed squares of tissue paper, or "pomps," over the entire surface of its floats.

"We take pride in working together, and winning together."

— John Brien

The finishing touches occur the Thursday night before homecoming weekend, from 7 p.m. to 4 a.m. in the Plumb Hall arena, where the men of Alpha Zeta and their partners, this year the women of Sigma Alpha, complete the project, Barrett said.

The project is being overseen and managed by Alpha Zeta's homecoming committee chairman, John Brien, a sophomore in agronomy from Kenton, Ohio.

Brien is responsible for putting ideas and materials together and getting people together to complete the float.

Alpha Zeta spends about $300 a year on the float, money that comes largely from local sponsors such as ABN radio, an agricultural station, and The Anderson's Corporation, Brien said.

"We take pride in working together, and winning together," he said.

Peter Spike, adviser to Alpha Zeta and associate professor of animal sciences said the float competition is a matter of pride for the fraternity and a way of showing spirit to the university community.

The number of hours Alpha Zeta spends building the floats is the major reason it has won the competition for so long, Barrett said.

This attention to detail and the hard work of all the members is what sets Alpha Zeta's floats apart from its competitors, he said.

Alpha Zeta is secretive about its float this year, but it will follow along with the homecoming theme, "125 Years and Still Kickin'"