Black Fraternities and Sororities

9-17-96: Patron called regarding a black student who attended OSU in 1944- to 1946 and wanted to know how many black fraternities there were then. In this folder, a 5-30-85 Lantern article tells the name of the fraternities and sororities at OSU at that time, so checked the 1944-45, 1945-46, and 1946-47 directories to see if any of these existed back then. According to the directories there were three: Alpha Phi Alpha
Kappa Alpha Psi
Omega Psi Phi.

Phi Beta Sigma comes later.

Also checked the sororities and the two that existed in 1944-47 were: Alpha Kappa Alpha and Delta Sigma Theta. Zeta Phi Beta came later.
The first fraternity for colored college men has just been launched at Ohio State. The organization is know as Pi Gamma Omicron, and this is the Alpha chapter, which for the present will reign supreme as regards granting chapters and the general policy of the fraternity.

The founders anticipate a rapid growth and have already made some arrangements for installing chapters at various other schools. The charter members are: Richard Pettiford, Fremont; William Berry, Cambridge; W. E. Davis, Fremont; LeRoy Barnett, Zanesville; Elmer Shackelford, Kansas City, Missouri; Norman Thorne, Charleston, S. C.; C. C. Underwood, Xenia; H. A. Turner, Chicago; John Shavers, Columbus; Walter Williams, Chicago, and William Woodward, Columbus.

FRONT ROOM FOR RENT—at $10; also east side room for less. 205 W. Eleventh ave.
Pi Gamma Omicron Members

(Research done by Archives Student Assistant Michelle Brundige, March 2012)

Directory Listings:

Barnett, LeRoy-
   1905-1906: 208 East Eleventh Ave.
   1906-1907: 75 East Eleventh Ave.
   1907-1908: Law 1; 75 East Eleventh Ave.
   1908-1909: Law 2; 256 North Seventeenth Ave.
   1909-1910: Law 3; 75 East Eleventh Ave.

Berry, William-
   1904-1905: Arts; 208 East Eleventh Ave.
   1905-1906: Arts; 208 East Eleventh Ave.

Davis, W.E-
   1903-1904: Arts; 38 West Eighth Ave.
   1904-1905: Pharmacy 1; 155 East Eleventh Ave.
   1905-1906: Pharmacy 2; 208 East Eleventh Ave.
   1906-1907: Pharmacy 3; 75 East Eleventh Ave.
   1907-1908: Pharmacy 4; 75 East Eleventh Ave.

Pettiford, Richard-
   Not Listed (1903-1908)

Shackelford, Elmer-
   1902-1903: Arts; 1368 North High Street
   1903-1904: Law 1; 1368 North High Street
   1904-1905: Law 2; 1368 North High Street
   1905-1906: Law 3; 1493 Wesley

Shavers, John-
   Not Listed (1903-1908)
Thorne, Norman-
    1905-1906: Ag 1; 208 East Eleventh Ave.

Turner, H.A.-
    Not Listed (1903-1908)

Underwood, C.C.-
    1905-1906: Pharmacy 1; 1495 Wesley

Williams, Walter-
    1906-1907: Law: 1495 Wesley

Woodward, William-
    Not Listed (1903-1908)

Makio Listings:
1905-
    Davis, W.E.: p. 247 Company E

1906-
    Barnett, LeRoy: p. 251 Company C
    Davis, W.E.: p. 249 Company B
    Shackelford, Elmer: p. 85 Senior Picture

1907-
    Barnett, LeRoy: p. 275 Company D

    Williams, Walter (W.S. Williams?): p. 245 Electrical Engineering

1908-

1910-
    Barnett, LeRoy: p. 109 Senior Picture
Lack of funds and virtually no access to housing are the chief problems faced by black greek organizations, said Calvin C. Waters, a senior from Dayton and a three-year member of Phi Beta Sigma.

Many black greeks look at the fraternity and sorority houses on East 18th Avenue and wonder, "Why not us?"

Phi Beta Sigma is the only one of OSU's nine black greek organizations to own a house, Waters said. The house, on East 18th Avenue, was purchased through the members' hard work, said Greg Rutland, a senior from Cleveland.

Greek organizations are funded privately through membership dues, alumni support and fundraising events, according to John E. Dickhaut, a graduate administrative associate in the Office of Greek Affairs.

Black greeks, however, do not have these revenue sources, said Robert C. Ragins, a senior from Akron and former president of Alpha Phi Alpha. "We have no big memberships or alumni," he said.

"Financially, we are on different grounds."

"Contrary to myth," OSU does not subsidize fraternity or sorority housing, said Dean of Student Life Mitchell D. Livingston.

Because alumni support for black greeks is small and university financial support is non-existent, black greeks' best fundraising method is to sponsor dances, but that is difficult because of lack of money and space.

"We have no big houses so we use the ballrooms in the Ohio Union for dances and parties . . . , but prices keep going up, and we're being priced out," Ragins said.

Ohio Union ballrooms rent for $200 a day, according to the Ohio Union Business Office staff. And groups must also have police security, which is costly, Livingston said.

Ragins said a few "bad nights" can mean losses of $1,000 or more. "A black greek organization can't replace a loss like that," he said.

Because of OSU budget cutbacks, the Ohio Union must pass on its overhead costs to student groups using the facilities, Livingston said.

Another problem with using the Ohio and Drake Union is limited access, leading to "fierce competition" for the ballrooms, Ragins said.

Last year there were "outright physical conflicts" between two groups that wanted to use the facilities, Livingston said. One such conflict occurred last spring in front of Drake Union and ended in several arrests by OSU police.

Livingston sees all these problems as the result of a more basic problem: a lack of unity among OSU's black greek organizations.

Black greeks need to organize themselves, he said. Through organization, the black fraternities and sororities could improve their images and become more attractive to prospective members, which eventually would help combat their financial obstacles, Livingston added.

Black greeks also should become active in the Interfraternity Council and the Women's Panhellenic Association, groups that promote relations and coordinate events among greek organizations, he said. Although black greeks have been members of these organizations in the past, no black greeks currently are represented in either group.

"They (black greeks) just aren't interested in joining," said Interfraternity Council President Alan J. Brown. Brown, a senior from Grove City, said black greeks seem to feel that the
Black Greek system supports minorities

By Steve Jeffers
Lantern staff writer

Black students say they join fraternities and sororities which are primarily black because they feel outnumbered at a predominately white school such as Ohio State.

There are four black fraternities and three black sororities at Ohio State, and all are affiliated with national organizations.

The four fraternities are Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, Omega Psi Phi and Phi Beta Sigma. The sororities are Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta and Zeta Phi Beta.

Like other Greek-letter social organizations, these fraternities were founded with common virtues such as scholarship, fellowship and community service, said Barbie Tootle, coordinator of Greek Affairs in the Ohio State University.

She said the difference between them and other Greek organizations is that they were founded by black men and women in the early part of the century to cater to the needs of black college students.

"Blacks were not welcome in many organizations at that time and for those reasons their fraternities are deeply entrenched in black culture," Tootle said.

Tootle said it is likely that most prominent black leaders were or are black Greeks. She mentioned the late Martin Luther King Jr. and the Rev. Jesse Jackson as examples. King was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha and Jackson is a member of Omega Psi Phi.

"Black Greek tradition is heavily involved in community service and their alumni are very active in that regard," Tootle said.

Sylvia Lawrence, president of Zeta Phi Beta, said her sorority sponsors at least one community service project each quarter. She said past projects have included an opening party for underprivileged preschool children and a Valentine’s Day party for mentally retarded children.

"It's very important to seek out people who are like yourself and share the same backgrounds, values and traditions," Tootle said.

Tootle said there are also fraternal black sororities which are predominately Jewish or agricultural for the same reason.

Blacks were not welcome in many organizations at that time and for those reasons their fraternities are deeply entrenched in black culture.

--- Barbie Tootle, coordinator of Greek Affairs

Tootle said the small chapters are one of the biggest weaknesses on OSU’s black Greek system because "it puts too much responsibility on individual members."

Robert Kuebler, president of Phi Beta Sigma fraternity, said he felt the reason for the small chapters was because there is a declining number of black students at OSU. He also said the small numbers are deceiving because "there are a lot of brothers walking around campus who are not presently active members."

Lawrence said she has the same problems with her sorority.

"We have a lot of inactive sorority sisters and we are trying to get them back into it. We really need them to help us grow," Lawrence said.

Rasberry said another reason for the small chapters is because there is a bad reputation for stiff membership requirements and "that can scare away prospective members."

Rasberry also said some people may choose not to join because they fear being physically branded by having the fraternity's symbol or letters burned into their skin.

"All black fraternities brand. No doubt about it," Rasberry said. "But it is not mandatory, it is a free choice. I think a lot of people think we make them do it."

"I have always had an interest in public service for people — in particular black people — and those less fortunate than myself, and Omega Psi Phi is a vehicle for me to accomplish those goals for myself," Ball said.

Natalia said all the black Greek organizations at OSU have between eight to 20 members, making them small chapters compared to most of OSU’s other fraternities and sororities.

"Being a black at Ohio State made me realize there was a necessity to become a part of an organization. I felt there were limited opportunities for blacks in most student organizations so I decided a black fraternity was the way to go," Rasberry said.

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"I have a brand and I’m going to wear it as a symbol to show everyone how much I love my fraternity," Rasberry said.

Kuebler said he had a brand and "if I could do it again, I wouldn't. Your love and appreciation for your fraternity should be in your heart, not just in the brand."
Black Greek system
Leaders argue value of joining main governing bodies

By Steve Jeffords
Lantern staff writer 5–30–85

Black Greek leaders are in disagreement about whether or not their organizations will join the prevailing white Inter-Fraternity Council and Women’s Panhellenic Association in addition to participating in the Black Greek Council.

The Inter-Fraternity Council and Women’s Panhellenic Association are the governing bodies for the majority of the fraternities and sororities in the OSU Greek system. Roger Q. Ball, a member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity, said the Black Greek Council was recently formed to solve problems among black fraternities and sororities. It discusses problems such as participation, membership recruitment and the use of Ohio and Drake Unions.

Another goal is to resolve some of the animosity that exists between the groups caused by competition for new members from the small number of blacks at Ohio State.

Most black Greeks feel comfortable with the black council. Some said they did not see any movement toward a union with the rest of the Greek community.

“Frankly, I don’t see it happening in the near future, but I could be wrong,” Ball said. “The Black Greek Council has been formed and hopefully it will be able to work things out. I wouldn’t discourage anyone from joining, but that is my personal view on the issue.”

Ball said it would be advantageous for black and white Greeks to associate with each other because “it would provide more awareness on the peer group level.”

Lawrence Rasberry, president of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, said the Black Greek Council is composed of two representatives from each black fraternity and sorority and will meet on a regular basis in the Ohio Union.

“We want to be an advisory body and not a governing body,” Rasberry said. “We want everything to be fair and to help bridge the gap that exists between blacks and whites.”

Barbie Tootle, coordinator of Greek Affairs in the Office of Student Life, said the Inter-Fraternity council sent invitations to the black fraternities but has not had any response.

However, Delta Sigma Theta sorority has been a member of the Women’s Panhellenic Association for the past two years.

Delta Sigma Theta participated in the 1984 Greek Week and has an Inter-Fraternity Council partner to work with on homecoming activities this fall.

Tori Washington, president of Delta Sigma Theta, said her sorority is trying to improve relations between black and white organizations to broaden their horizons.

“I felt a little uncomfortable at the meetings at first because I was a minority in a predominantly white group. But, it is just a matter of getting used to being involved,” Washington said. “I can tell they really want our involvement.”

Washington also said she plans to bring up the issue of joining the white Greek system at the next Black Greek Council meeting.

Donald Bean, OSU-NAACP president and member of Kappa Alpha Psi, said the current separatism which exists between black and white Greeks is detrimental to both parties.

“Everyone seems to be scared to socialize with people from different races. A definite phobia exists and it needs to be addressed. I can’t understand why 10 or 21-year-old people can’t get together to resolve these issues. We all need to be more racially and culturally educated,” Bean said.

Rasberry said the reason he did not see the need to join the Inter-Fraternity Council is because the council is not “tailored to our needs.”

He said most of the council’s business concerned chapter houses and issues which “don’t concern us and might limit the way we operate.”

At present, under the existing membership requirements, all black Greek organizations not presently members would be eligible to apply for council memberships and the financial obligations are relatively inexpensive at about $5 per member per year.

Robin Lampkin, president of Alpha Kappa Alpha, said her sorority is looking into joining the Women’s Panhellenic Association.

“We don’t know too much about it and we’re not sure whether it would be in our best interest,” Lampkin said. “I’m sure the move would be supported by our national office though.”

Rasberry said a move to join the Inter-Fraternity Council would take time and initiative and “enough people willing to give it a try.”

“Everyone’s waiting for someone else to take that first step,” Rasberry said.

Sylvia Lawrence, president of Zeta Phi Beta sorority, said she thought it was unlikely that any other black fraternities and sororities would decide to join the Inter-Fraternity Council or Panhellenic Association, but was still hopeful it might happen someday.

“So many people look up to the Greeks. If we can start something like this I think it would be a good influence on the whole campus,” Lawrence said.
Black greeks hold meeting

By Ken Torisky
Lantern staff writer

Black students interested in joining the OSU greek system can learn about black greek activities at "Meet the Greeks," a meeting at Siebert Hall tonight.

The meeting, in the dormitory's lobby from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. will feature a panel of students involved in black greek organizations.

The meeting is being sponsored by Black Students Together As Residents (BLACKSTAR).

The organization is for blacks in the Bradley, Siebert, Patterson, Mack and Canfield dormitories, said Phillip Pempton, a junior from Cleveland and president of the group.

"Our main function is to promote activities that blacks can participate in," he said.

Pempton said an example of their previous activities was a dance held at the Ohio Union.

"It wasn't a real success but it wasn't a real flop either," he said.

Pempton said the panel will have representatives from the eight black fraternities and sororities, as well as Iota Phi Theta, a black greek organization not officially affiliated with the university.

"It is an information dissemination program," said Denise Gowin, Patterson Hall director and BLACKSTAR adviser.

Gowin said the panel members will discuss what each greek organization stands for and will answer questions from students.

"Last year they discussed issues the non-greek students saw as problems with the system," she said. "It was often very lively."

Gowin said the meeting is important for two reasons.

"If a student is interested in joining a black greek organization, this gives them a way to look at them all at one time," she said.

"It is also good if you're just interested in hearing what the organizations are like and how they fit in with the rest of the university," Gowin said.
Black greeks: Community

By Bob Payne
Lantern staff writer

The goal of OSU black greek organizations is to promote community service and this separates them from the white greek organizations, said representatives of the university's black fraternities and sororities.

"I believe that white greek organizations place more emphasis on the social aspects of being a member, whereas the black groups are more concerned with providing service to the community," said C. Suzanne Cuttle, a representative of Alpha Kappa Alpha.

"About 50 black students attended a mixer in the Selbert Hall lobby, sponsored by Black Students Together, as Residents, to hear from these representatives and to learn more about the activities and concerns of the black greek system.

Cuttle said this aspect is the major reason black greek organizations are not affiliated with the white groups through the Interfraternity Council.

"We don't want to compromise our integrity" by joining the Interfraternity Council, said Trevor Coleman, a member of Alpha Phi Alpha. He said because of the concern on the part of the white greek groups for the social aspect, the council would be geared in that direction also. This means it would not address the concerns of the black groups, he said.

Members of the Interfraternities Council could not be reached for comment.

Coleman said he wanted black students to know the organizations providing most of the activities for them on campus were black greek organizations.

"We should appreciate the things these organizations do in providing activities for black students," he said.

When asked whether they thought the black greek organizations furthered segregation, several of the representatives said no, because they believe blacks are in the groups to benefit society as a whole. Also, the people in the groups are friends they would associate with even without the groups.
Greeks disturbed about divided system

By Cynthia L. Quigley
Lantern staff writer

Society today is integrated, for the most part. But one sector of OSU society is not integrated — the greek sector.

"Yes, it's unfortunate. It reflects who we are as a society," said Mitchell Livingston, dean of student life.

Livingston said the university seems to have two greek systems, white and black.

The white greek community is even segregated within itself, based on preferences, Livingston said. Livingston cited Jewish versus non-Jewish fraternities and sororities as examples.

What happens in the greek system is an extension of what happens in society,

Livingston said.

Livingston said for the two greek systems to work together, each system must accept what the other has to contribute. "When we start appreciating these differences, we will be able to start breaking down these isolated communities," he said.

At Ohio State, there are 34 predominantly white fraternities, 18 predominantly white sororities, 4 predominantly black fraternities and 4 predominantly black sororities.

The greek system has three governing bodies: The Interfraternity Council and the Women's Panhellenic Association, which are the two coordinating bodies for the greek system; and the Black Greek Council, the governing body for the predominantly black fraternities and sororities.

The national governing bodies for these organizations are the National Panhellenic Conference, National Interfraternity Conference and the National Pan Hellenic Council, said Barbara Shell, coordinator for Greek Affairs.

The National Pan Hellenic Council is the governing body for the predominantly black chapters. She said this council was formed in 1929 because blacks were not allowed to join white chapters.

The main difference today between the National Pan Hellenic Council and the other two organizations is that the

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This is the first in a three-part series on segregation in the greek system.
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National Panhellenic Conference and the National Interfraternity Conference chapters are not allowed to admit members of the opposite sex, Shell said.

Shell said there are differences and similarities between black and white organizations.

"But, there are more similarities than differences in what they attempt to do," Shell said.

Currently, Delta Sigma Theta is the only predominantly black sorority that is a member of the Women's Panhellenic Association. No black fraternities are a part of the Interfraternity Council.

Mike McBride, a member of Alpha Tau Omega and president of Interfraternity Council, said black fraternities were once part of the Interfraternity Council.

"They withdrew because of lack of interest on their part; they no longer found it necessary," McBride said.

Keith Herron, president of Alpha Phi Alpha, a predominantly black fraternity, said the Interfraternity Council does not deal with things that interest black greeks.

"They talk about housing, we don't have a house, and regulations about rush that we don't agree with," Herron said.

Jeff Price, liaison between the Interfraternity Council and Black Greek Council, said he has noticed more integration in the greek system.

In 1983, a party to promote integration was held on the Beta Theta Pi lot. Two white sororities, two black sororities, two white fraternities and two black fraternities participated in this event dubbed an "eight-way" party, Price said. The party was a success and Price said he would like to see another such promotion soon.

McBride said the OSU council has been working with Ohio University. The Ohio University greek system has been sponsoring similar parties which have been successful.

Price, a member of Delta Tau Delta, said for the greek system to exist, greeks must be willing to diversify.

"It's time for the separation to end," Price said.

Lori Miller, president of the Women's Panhellenic Association and a member of Delta Gamma, said although one predominantly black sorority is a part of the Women's Panhellenic Association, the others choose not to be a part of the association.

Vonda Keeles, president of Black Greek Council, said her sorority, Zeta Phi Beta, broke away from the Women's Panhellenic Association a few years ago because the business discussed at the meetings did not concern her sorority.

"They talked about housing and bills. We don't have a house so it didn't concern us," she said.

But Zeta Phi Beta did participate in the Greek Week children's carnival this year because it was a community service that transcended color.

Jill Parrish, president of Delta Sigma Theta, said her sorority became involved in the association because it gives sorority members a chance to meet other greeks.

"We get to know how the greek system works and we get new ideas," Parrish said. "Even though many things discussed don't apply to us, we get out of it what we can."

Parrish said her sorority shares ideas with the other sororities in the association.

"We let them know how we are too. It's a mutual curiosity," Parrish said.

Delta Sigma Theta participated in the first round of sorority rush two years ago and it intends to participate next fall as well, said Evie McCord, secretary for the Women's Panhellenic Association/Interfraternity Council office.

Parrish said Delta Sigma Theta did not participate last year because the sorority was focusing on reorganization at that time.

Marlene Harris, an OSU graduate and member of the predominantly black sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha, said she knew a black woman who went through sorority rush. One of the housemother took the woman aside and told her there are two greek systems at Ohio State and the woman should join a sorority for blacks, she said.

Although serving the community is a similar goal of both communities, Keels said the black greek system is different from the white system because the black system has fewer members and a smaller income.

"Our income comes from dances we sponsor in the Ohio Union," Keels said. "We have to make $500 just to break even."

"(Segregation) is kind of sad, but it's just the way it is," she said.

The purpose of Black Greek Council is to unite black members of the university together, Keels said.

Keels said she doesn't think the university community is ready to accept blacks joining the predominantly white chapters.

"It's the double standard. We all want equality, but you're damned if you do and damned if you don't," Keels said.

Susan Glennon, a member of Delta Zeta, said, "It doesn't say much for the greek system here, because Ohio State is such a big school and there are so many different kinds of people here. You would think the greeks would be a little more open-minded."
OSU not alone in segregation of greeks

By Cynthia L. Quigley
Lantern staff writer

Segregation in the Greek system is not limited to Ohio State.

Kristy Dills worth, vice president of programming for the Panhellenic Council at Michigan State University, said there are blacks and minorities in the Greek system at Michigan State. She said there are also predominantly black fraternities and sororities independent of the Greek system by choice.

Although the black chapters are independent of the Panhellenic Council and Interfraternity Council, they participate in Greek Week and are included in the Office of Greek Affairs, Dills worth said.

"Overall, I don't think the Greek system is that segregated," she said.

Steve Campbell, rush week chairman for Interfraternity Council at the University of Minnesota, said there are three predominantly black fraternities on Minnesota's campus and none of them are members of the Interfraternity Council, he said.

Campbell said there are no race problems in the Greek system and there are minorities that are members of Interfraternity Council fraternities.

"We don't go out of our way to attract minorities, but we don't discourage them either," Campbell said.

Adelon Jorgenson, adviser for the Woman's Panhellenic Association at the University of Illinois, said there are four predominantly black fraternities and four predominantly black sororities that are members of Black Greek Council.

Mary Beth Seller, adviser for the Woman's Panhellenic Association at University of Michigan, said there is one predominantly black fraternity that is a member of the Interfraternity Council. She said Michigan is hoping to increase activities between the black and white chapters.

Assistant dean of students at Purdue University, Paul DeWine, said there are no black fraternities that are members of Interfraternity Council and two black sororities are members of the Woman's Panhellenic Association.

In the past, the black fraternities have not been interested in joining the council, DeWine said.

However, there have been joint projects between black and white fraternities, DeWine said.

Acacia, Phi Kappa Tau, Sigma Phi Epsilon and Alpha Phi Alpha sponsor "Ebony and Ivory" week to promote relations between blacks and whites.

Most white fraternities have minority members, Dewine said.

"But, there is peer pressure on blacks not to pledge a predominantly white fraternity."
Frat member ignores ‘taboo’

By Cynthia L. Gugley
Lantern staff writer

A psychology major and participant in campus activities, Phil Baskerville leads a life much like other students at Ohio State.

But, he has broken a university taboo — he is a black member of a predominantly white fraternity.

Baskerville, a senior from Prospect, Conn., is a member of Acacia fraternity.

He said he was drawn to the predominantly white greek system because he was already familiar with many of the fraternities and sororities. He received literature in the mail from the Interfraternity Council about the greek system and decided to participate in fraternity rush.

Subsequently, Baskerville was invited to join Acacia.

He said he had never really heard of the predominantly black greek fraternities. “The first time I was exposed to the predominantly black greeks, was at Ohio State.”

Baskerville said he is aware there is segregation in the greek system.

Although black and white fraternities are basically different, there are some similarities. One goal of the Women’s Panhellenic Association and the Interfraternity Council at Ohio State is to bring the black and white fraternities and sororities together, especially for philanthropic projects, since community service is a common goal of both organizations, Baskerville said.

He cited some of the differences between black and white fraternities and sororities in areas such as pledgeship, general running of their organizations, and housing.

When asked if he would choose the predominantly white greek system if he could do it all over again, Baskerville answered, “Yes.”

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Baskerville’s feelings for Acacia run deep.

“Acacia holds for me a place I can call my home away from home. I have my brothers, people I can rely on in times of need.”

Baskerville said he hasn’t been treated differently because of his color.

He has been an active member of Acacia — holding the offices of song chairman, vice president and president.

As well as being active in the greek system, Baskerville has been a Buckeye cheerleader for three years and a member of the Men’s Glee Club.

John Mazor, a junior from Highland Heights and president of Acacia, said Baskerville has contributed to the fraternity.

“He’s an outgoing and friendly guy,” Mazor said. “His image of being a cheerleader is good for the fraternity and he has brought a lot of prospective members to the house.”

Baskerville said he has plans to go to graduate school after getting his undergraduate degree either this coming winter or spring quarter.
Black greek membership low, recruitment efforts increased

By Maggie Hermant
Lantern staff writer

Black fraternities and sororities have seen a decrease in membership in the last few years, but members say they do not think the trend will continue.

Theodore Brown, vice president of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, said the number of men pledging his fraternity has decreased over the past few years, but said more blacks are now expressing interest because they realize fraternities are a good way to get involved in community service and campus activities.

Brown said his fraternity has been involved in many charitable activities, including projects for UNICEF and co-sponsoring a campus basketball tournament with Budweiser.

Brown said he wasn't sure how many members were in Kappa Alpha Psi, but there are now four black fraternities on campus and the largest has 15 members.

"Many years ago a lot of blacks were not allowed to join white fraternities, so they had to establish their own. Together they formed a unity that we still try to stress during pledging today."

"Now we have to prove to be that much better to compete on the same level," Brown said.

Darline Bush, president of Delta Sigma Theta, said black sororities are also experiencing a loss in membership and attributed the decrease to a lack of commitment to the system.

"When the number was larger, the girls that pledged wanted to see it work. Now (because we have fewer members) we say we strive for quality not quantity."

Delta Sigma Theta now has four members, but Bush predicted that number will increase because more women are expressing interest in the sorority.

Bush said despite its low membership, her sorority still manages to do a considerable amount of charitable work.

Melvin Woodberry, president of the Black Greek Council, said the council has realized membership has decreased in the past few years and is now involved in recruitment efforts.

The council is sponsoring an open house Oct. 17 and a talent show during United World Black Week in February to make the campus more aware of the Black Greek system.

Currently black fraternities and sororities do not have permanent houses because there is a lack of money Brown said.

Sororities and fraternities now receive most of their financial support from their alumni and ours haven't been able to put a lot of money back into the system, Brown said.
Black fraternity joins city's march for King

By Lydia Hill
Lantern staff writer

A campus organization of 25 black men intends to show its commitment to brotherhood by participating in one of the city's activities honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity will honor King, their fraternity brother and slain civil rights leader, by participating in Monday's march, funded by City Council.

The march, which will begin at 6 p.m., will start at City Hall and will go through downtown to the Ohio Theater. Following the march, Martin Luther King III will speak at 7:30 p.m. at the theater.

"It's a way to let people know that we, Alpha Phi Alpha, didn't forget what Dr. Martin Luther King has done for us," said Eric Dozier, fraternity president.

King's struggle for equality made it possible for a "black fraternity to exist on a predominantly white campus," said Dozier.

The Kappa chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha was founded January 13, 1911, making it the first black fraternity to become organized on the OSU campus and the first black fraternity in Ohio.

Roland Osborn, a cousin of King's and member of Alpha Phi Alpha, said the march is an act of remembrance.

"We want to let white America know that we remember the ordeal we went through," he said.

In 1963, the fraternity took 300 students to Washington D.C. to march on the Capitol.
Black fraternities smaller by choice

By STAFF Correspondent

The fraternity system at Ohio State remains divided down distinct lines: black and white. But some say this isn’t a bad distinction.

Of the 52,880 students at the Columbus campus, 2,357 are black, according to the Office of the University Registrar. There are about 6,000 students in fraternal organizations, and about 500 of them are black. There are 60 social sororities and fraternities at Ohio State, and about 15% of them are black, according to the Office of Greek Affairs.

Size

The average black Greek organization has about 15 members, said leaders of the groups. The average white Greek organization has about 60 members.

Sororities, presidents of the all-black Phi Beta Sigma, said the site of the chapter is partly dictated by the small number of black students at Ohio State, but if they can, they are also small by choice.

“The pool of black men to draw from isn’t as large,” said a Phi Beta Sigma leader. “We also require a 2.3 grade point average to join.”

Phi Beta Sigma, which has 15 active members, prefers to recruit for quality instead of quantity, according to the leader.

Therefore, Brown, president of all-black Kappa Alpha Psi, said he feels that his group also prefers quality to quantity.

“We want young men who are trying to become leaders,” Brown said. “Kappa Alpha Psi has 15 active members.”

Vonda Kelso, president of Zeta Phi Beta, said she thinks the pressures of school work keep blacks from going “off-campus” (pledging) as sororities, as well.

“I think there is a new breed coming in, and it’s for them,” Kelso said. “But it would be a shame if they would look beyond the books to the options a sorority can bring.”

Zeta Phi Beta has six active members.

Housing

A distinguishing trademark of the predominantly white social system is the house. The house and surrounding yard often mirror the personality of the organization.

The house is also a place for the chapter to have meetings, socialize and conduct much mischief.

But none of the black fraternities at Ohio State have houses.

“A house is extremely expensive, and blacks in general have a lower income,” Booker said.

“Many of the black fraternities at Ohio State are single,” said a Phi Beta Sigma leader. “They don’t have the money to spend on a house.”

Some colleges have university-sponsored housing for Greek organizations, where the school rents a chapter at a lower rate than a traditional landlord, Booker said.

Brown said that fraternity histories have not prospered economically.

“A lot of the white Greeks have alumni donors who can help pay for some of the house costs,” Brown said. “Blacks in general do not have as high incomes, so the economic burden isn’t there.”

Kelso said, “Houses don’t really make any difference. We don’t have to live up to show people we like each other and can get along.”

Because the black Greeks don’t have houses, they have to rent space for activities such as dances. Usually, the space is the Ohio Union, and there has been trouble with fights in the past. During the most recent incident, in February, campus police were called after a fight broke out.

Brown said these incidents are magnified because the dances are at the union and are easy to see and get to.

“There are incidents at Ohio State all the time,” Brown said. “But you just don’t hear about them as much.”

Hazing

Black sororities and fraternities have gained a reputation for hazing and rituals.

“Don’t think thinks are as widespread and rampant as it used to be,” Brown said. “Since there aren’t as many black sororities and fraternities, the issue is magnified. People only see from the outside in. One person may see it as hazing, and another wouldn’t.”

Tanya Simmons, assistant director of Black Student Programs, said many of the fraternity members have their Greek letters tattooed on their arms, and some people think they are forced to do it.

“Branding is optional,” Simmons said. “No one makes these
gents get a brand.”

But despite their sororities and fraternities are sometimes criticized for hazing when pledges are seen wearing similarly clothing or when they are seen marching in a line.

“People don’t understand our way of pledging,” said Jerome Gullford, a member of Alpha Phi Alpha. “We see it as brotherhood and unity, but some people think it is hazing.”

Booker said that Phi Beta Sigma offers these activities as an option to their pledges, but he thinks hazing is wrong.

“I don’t see the necessity for hazing,” Booker said. “Physical and mental harassment may be the easiest way to see if someone has the mettle to join an organization, but the easiest way isn’t always the best way.”

Booker said he doesn’t see anyone marching in the like line of marching in a line a form of hazing, but as a form of building pride, similar to the armed forces.

The February issue of Newsweek on campus said black Greek organizations “criticize” any they promote camsity . . . , but the black Greeks at Ohio State want to promote pride in their culture and support a system to fall back on.

“We can’t integrate into the University community or the world-wide community until we integrate into ourselves,” Booker said.

Separate organizations

“I think it would be good for us and white systems,” Booker said. “But our purpose is different.” Brown said. “We let members know about their heritage and the struggle that black Americans have had. There is a lot of tradition, and once you’re a member, you’re always a member.”

If you don’t know where you’ve been, how can you know where you’re going?” Brown said.

Gullford also said that black and white organizations should mix more often, such as on TV and in the world of sports that other colleges have, where whites go to black parties and blacks go to white parties.

Separation is in Ohio State, but it would be fine if we were mixed under the right circumstances,” Gullford said. “The purpose of a fraternity is to get to know each other. We want to integrate.”

Booker agrees with the idea of separate organizations under the right circumstances.

“Fraternity is for the purpose of brotherhood and psychology,” Booker said. “If a person feels more comfortable pledging with a different culture, that’s fine.”

Booker said the Bowling Green chapter of Phi Beta Sigma recently pledged a white man.

“He grew up with blacks and he felt uncomfortable around a group of white guys,” Booker said. “But he shouldn’t join because he feels like doing something different as an individual.”

Scott Nelson, president of the predominantly white Phi Rho Alpha, said his fraternity has had a black member and two black pledges in the past.

If someone black wanted to join my house, I would be for it,” Nelson said. “If I had two systems I would make sure we give ourselves back to the community.”

Kopek, president of the black Alpha Phi Alpha, said he thinks the systems should be for a combination.

I think everyone is making more efforts toward common interests and goals,” Booker said. “I think there needs to be better understanding now than there has been.”

Kelso said the systems are different because the organizations help the community in different ways.

“Make sure we give ourselves back to the community,” Booker said. “We don’t just sit around. Alpha Phi Alpha usually donate money.”

Problems with the system

In general, black Greeks don’t see problems with the Greek system, but with the university community in general.

There are too few cultural and social activities for black students at Ohio State,” said Booker. “I would like to talk with the administration and officials to get more activities, then we can concentrate on studying, minority enrollment and public image. If the university would fulfill the socialization problems we wouldn’t have to do it ourselves.”

There is also a generalization by the administration against the actions of all black, but one black fraternity or sorority reflects the actions of all,” Booker said. “That’s not true, and the stories are blown out of proportion.”

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Black Greek Council included in charters

By Stacey Auferheide
Lantern staff writer

The Inter Fraternity Council and the Women's Panhellenic Association voted Sunday to include the Black Greek Council in three major parts of their constitutions.

WPA President Andrea Ferguson said the BGC was added because it is a greek organization. There is no reason not to include them, she said.

She said, "Traditionally, WPA and IFC have held hands in their constitutions." Now the BGC will be added to the IFC/WPA constitution wherever one mentions the other.

According to the changes in the constitutions, BGC members will be able to apply for Greek Week Steering Committee positions, become members of the Order of Omega Honor Society and join the Junior Executive Board.

"We will still be three separate entities," said Philip Sutton, IFC president, but BGC members will share in all of the Greek Week responsibilities.

Sutton said members can also be honored for community services, campus activities and scholastic achievements.

Arthur Lard, BGC president, said he was approached by Ferguson and both felt the idea would be a good step for the greek community as a whole.

"We like helping out the community," Lard said. By joining the other greek councils, the community can only benefit from the added support.

"We feel that this is a positive step toward what the greek system will eventually become," Sutton said.

Ferguson said, "We feel we are being more progressive than the rest of the community, because racism is an issue on the campus and we feel we are promoting cultural understanding."

Although it has not been determined how decisions will be made among the organizations, all three council presidents said they expect no problems and look forward to the future."
Greek system unified by change

By Gail Speedy
Lantern staff writer

"(This will) bring the greek community closer to unity."

Arthur Lard,
president of BGC

The link-up of the three greek councils, Black Greek Council, Women's Panhellenic Association, and Inter Fraternity Council, will not substantially change the constitution of the organizations but will allow for better communication and participation in greek events, said Arthur Lard, president of BGC.

Lard said the BGC did not change their constitution at all and that the only changes made to the other two constitutions were to permit BGC participation in events.

Lard said the link-up occurred after BGC asked how they could become involved in Greek Week events. The BGC has been involved on a limited basis for a couple of years, but wanted to fully participate, he said.

"(This will) bring the greek community closer to unity," Lard said.

He said he hopes that this unification will also unify the whole campus community.

BGC did not have any reservations about linking with the two other organizations, but now is waiting to see if there is going to be any problems, Lard said. The problems can be solved if they are handled in a business-like manner, he said.

Phillip Sutton, president of the IFC, said he had noticed interest in coordinating events and spoke to the WPC president, Andrea Ferguson, about doing so. Sutton said they then took the BGC proposal one step further and offered participation in The Order of Omega Honor Society and Junior Executive Board.

Sutton said the decision was a strong 'yes' to BGC participation, but not a unanimous one. He said any reservations were because of a lack of communication and many people did not understand how much change was involved.

The goal of this link-up is to break down stereotypes and promote unity, Sutton said.

Ferguson said she was concerned that it might appear that the WPA and the IFC were pulling the BGC in, instead of offering participation. She said this was only an invitation and that there had been no pressure on BGC to become involved.

One problem with the link-up may be the size of the organizations, she said. Because IFC and WPA are much larger than BGC, costs for certain events may be unfair and participation could be limited for BGC. Ferguson said these were really only logistics problems and not unsolvable.

She said they were also trying to come together and not trying to invade cultures and that is one of the reasons not to completely melt these organizations.

"We have to work together toward the goals we are already developing. Together we can pool more resources," she said. Several selections procedures are running in both the fall and the spring this year as a way to insure participation of BGC in the Order of Omega and the Junior Executive Board. This is the first time for BGC participation in these groups.
Shootings spur dance cancellations

Black greek organizations hit hardest by shutdown

By Kristen Baird
Lantern staff writer

All dances scheduled in the Ohio Union for the remainder of Winter Quarter were cancelled Tuesday in response to the Saturday shooting of two OSU students outside of the Ohio Union.

Russel J. Spillman, vice provost for student affairs, said the dances were cancelled because of concern for the personal safety of everyone in the university community.

The cancellation will affect many students, but mainly black greek organizations, which sponsor 90 percent of all dances at the Ohio Union, said David Mucci, director of the Ohio Union.

According to Ohio Union officials, every weekend for the remainder of the quarter was reserved for black greek organizations with the exception of a 4-H Club dance planned for this weekend.

The Ohio Union is the major social outlet for black students, Spillman said. Mucci and Spillman agreed that there are few, if any, alternative sites for dances.

The cancellation is a temporary move, allowing time for students and the university to work more closely in finding a creative solution, Spillman said.

Mucci said Ohio Union dances have a history of violence resulting from internal problems such as arguments and fights between students.

He said the university now is dealing with a whole new situation.

There is speculation that the violence that erupted Saturday night outside the Ohio Union following the United Black World Week dance involved assailants not affiliated with the university.

Two OSU students were shot on the west side of the Ohio Union by an unidentified group of males less than an hour after security provided by OSU Police left the UBWW dance.

Calvin Curry, 19, shot in the upper-left thigh, and Willie Nelson, 21, shot in the left arm, both were treated and released according to OSU Hospitals representative Gregor Beatty, 20, fell while running from gunfire and was treated for a laceration on his head, police reports said.

Following an outbreak of violence during a December Ohio Union dance involving OSU and Columbus police, OSU President E. Gordon Gee appointed a panel to review the university's dance policies, Spillman said.

He said a revised identification policy is one example of a recent dance policy improvement.

In order to be admitted to an Ohio Union dance, a student must present a valid OSU identification, Spillman said. The policy allows each student to bring one guest.

The panel, chaired by David Williams, OSU associate professor of law, now will examine the events of Saturday night to determine the need for any additional or revised policies. The hope, Spillman said, is to create a safer and more enjoyable environment for students both inside and outside the Ohio Union.

Williams said meetings will be conducted to determine if the existing dance policies are followed and if they are effective.

He said possible solutions or alternatives will result from discussion and evaluation of current policies and recommendations from students and the university.
Leaked OSU student survey reveals nine out of 10 students believe that the university was not transparent in its decision-making process.

"We need to be more transparent," said OSU President Dr. Juan Carlos. "We need to hear from our students and faculty about what they think is best for OSU.

OSU’s senior leadership team is currently reviewing the survey results and will release an updated plan for the university’s future in the next few weeks.

"We need to listen to our students," said Dr. Carlos. "We need to make sure that their voices are heard and that their needs are met."
Black council awards leaders

By Erin Watterson
Lantern staff writer

The Black Greek Council recognized outstanding students, faculty, administration and special contributors in the black community at an awards ceremony Monday night.

Black Greek Council President Anthony L. Brown cited the Black Greek Society at Ohio State as having "the richest tradition in greek history."

Special Recognition awards were given to Randy Ayers, Jim Jackson and the OSU Men's Basketball Team for their outstanding achievement this year.

Police Chief James Jackson also received a Special Recognition award. Brown said "the Black Greek Council recognizes Jackson for finding the courage to overcome the odds and stand strong through all the slack."

Chief Jackson said, "I'm in no way tired."

State Representative Raymond Miller was also recognized for helping the black community, Brown said.

The chapter of the year awards went to Kappa Alpha Psi and Alpha Kappa Alpha after a long deliberation.

A program of the year award went to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority for their drug awareness program at a local elementary school. Alpha Phi Alpha also won a program of the year award for a program that encouraged high school students to continue their education.

Alpha Phi Alpha was also recognized for 80 years of service to Ohio State. An additional award was given to Alpha Kappa Alpha for their 70 years of service.

Awards were given to students recognizing their scholarship and achievements within their organization and the university.

The scholar of the year awards went to Kristin M. Ward and Mark Young. Tracey Johnson and Anthony Brown were elected sister and brother of the year for their extensive involvement in their organization and dedication to the university.

Ten students received outstanding senior awards, and there were ten student awards given for their achievements.

Students receiving Special Achievement awards were Tosha M. Pierce, an OSU student who is a national champion synchronized swimmer, and Shiola Fuga, who is on the Board of Trustees.

Linda F. Callahan, assistant professor of journalism, was recognized as an outstanding faculty member. She said "this is my academy award."

Callahan said that this award was special to her because it came from students.

The Council also recognized staff and administration at the university that were helpful to students.
Black greeks begin rushing this autumn

By Holly O'Connor
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State's Black Greek Council will begin rush sometime in the fall, Greek Affairs Coordinator David Strauss said.

"There is no organized process such as the rush in which IFC, the Interfraternity Council, and WPA, the Women's Panhellenic Association, participate in," Strauss said.

Rush for fraternities and sororities belonging to the Black Greek Council is handled differently from chapter to chapter, Strauss said. It is an informal process with members being recruited on campus, he said.

Strauss said the rush process takes place all-year and the chapters take lines, or pledge classes, about two times a year.
African-American greeks to join Greek Week festivities this year

By Leslie A. Waddell
Lantern staff writer

After evaluating a successful trial run by Delta Sigma Theta sorority in 1990, eight of the nine African-American greek chapters have decided to participate in the 1993 Greek Week festivities.

This marks the first time in the 60-year history of Greek Week at Ohio State that the Black Greek Council has participated, said David Strauss, coordinator of Greek Affairs.

“We wanted to foster relations with the entire greek community and increase multicultural diversity within the system,” said Shaletha Mitchell, president of the Black Greek Council and member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority. The Black Greek Council declined participation in the past because members did not feel included in the planning aspect of Greek Week and because the activities seemed “white-centered,” Mitchell said.

“We felt as though a week of competitive events was a total waste of time,” Mitchell said. “Large organizations should come together for the community, so we did not become involved.”

This year, African-American greek chapters were given advance information on Greek Week and an opportunity to serve on the various planning committees, Mitchell said.

The Intrafraternity Council and the Women’s Panhellenic Council made an effort to include the Black Greek Council in the planning of this year’s events, said Yvonne Fenik, Greek Week coordinator.

The majority of this year’s Greek Week events are philanthropic, which might have appealed to the service orientation of the Black Greek Council, Fenik said.

Mitchell agreed that the implementation of more community involvement during Greek Week was a major incentive behind the Black Greek Council’s interest, she said.

This year’s community benefits include Greeks Involved in Volunteer Effort (GIVE) and a carnival for local children.

“For both the GIVE program and the carnival, we made sure that African-American as well as other diverse groups be included,” Mitchell said.

Fenik said the help of the Black Greek Council was needed for the events and well appreciated.

“Because BGC is so service oriented, they knew who to contact. They were helpful in finding children and organizations to give our time to,” Fenik said.

Committed leadership on the part of the Black Greek Council, the Intrafraternity Council, and the Women’s Panhellenic Council, as well as the encouragement of faculty advisers, spurred the participation, Strauss said.

With the exception of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, all of the Black Greek Council will be represented in every activity during Greek Week.

The Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority is not participating this year because of commitments to previously scheduled events that conflict with Greek Week, said Chonnetta Jones, president of the sorority.

Fenik is encouraged by the cooperation and sees a number of positive implications coming from a successful Greek Week, she said. “We are hopeful that this unity will spur future cooperation,” Fenik said. “We’re hoping that next year someone from BGC applies for a position on Greek Week Steering Committee so we can make more changes.”
Black Greek Step Show promises to be bigger and better

Ethnic celebration moves to The Jerome Schottenstein Center

COLUMBUS – After an overflow crowd of nearly 1,500 people was turned away last year because of a packed house, one of the most popular events of the African American Heritage Festival is moving to a bigger venue.

The 15th Annual Pan-Hellenic Black Greek Step Show kicks off Friday evening (5/17) at 7 p.m. in Value City Arena at The Jerome Schottenstein Center. Tickets are $12 and available at the Schottenstein Center ticket office, 1-800-GO-BUCKS, and all Ticketmaster outlets. The performance is just one of several events being celebrated this week as part of the 2002 cultural celebration.

"Since Mershon reached its capacity of 2,500 people and 1,500 were turned away at the door, it was necessary to take the step show to a bigger venue," said Pan-Hellenic Council member and student co-chair Columbus Cotton II, a junior majoring in construction systems management. "The Schottenstein Center is ideal because of its size and performance setting."

Comedy performances by hosts Ms. Pat Brown and "Lav Luv" Lavender of BET's Comic View are included in the show. Rounding out the bill is WCKX (107.5 FM) Radio personality "Sly Tay," who will be on hand from 6 to 7 p.m. to meet and greet guests.

The art of group stepping is an African tradition popular in collegiate circles among African American fraternities and sororities. The theme for the Heritage Festival is Fahari, Swahili for pride, and organizers have worked hard to incorporate the theme into every event.

"The step teams that are performing produce their own shows and choreography," said co-chair Tara Hawthorne, a junior majoring in criminology. "This takes a lot of time and dedication. There are some late nights and weekends -- basically whatever it takes to make the performance perfect."
Step Show – 2

Kai Landis, coordinator of student involvement in the Office of Student Activities, expects all nine historically black Greek organizations at Ohio State to perform.

“The step teams have 12 minutes to perform and will be rated by a panel of guest judges in seven different categories,” she said.

Following the show, guests will be able to cap the evening just across the street at “Rock the Mike” Part I, which will be held from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. in the French Fieldhouse parking lot, 460 Woody Hayes Dr.

*For a complete list of events on the 24th African American Heritage Festival log on to:*
*http://www.osuheritagefestival.com*

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- more -