



The Sword & Shield: an e-Newsletter from Warren G. Lee, Jr., 38th Grand Basileus

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"I will continue to focus on Excellence without Excuse."

GOING FORWARD...

DEAR BROTHERS OF OMEGA PSI PHI,

It has been almost a year since my re-election as Grand Basileus of this esteemed Body. In the interim, we have been focused on honoring the mandates of the Grand Conclave and continuing to position our Fraternity for the future.

As I mentioned in my State of the Fraternity address, our goal is to develop and sustain a Balanced Organization. I will continue to focus on Excellence without Excuse. We have labored long and hard in our community vineyards, and we know first-hand that WE can do much better!

It is late, and it is early. We are at the end of an era...and the beginning of a new one. Changes are happening all around us very quickly, and because of the speed and intensity of the change, we have to react faster than we ever have...in the middle of this socioeconomic tornado, it's more important than ever that our decisions be correct.

In September 2008, we publicly declared our support for Senator Barack Hussein Obama as president of the United States. In November, we voted in unprecedented numbers. He won.

We have carried that same level of intensity to our Fraternity programs. Here are some of the things we have done since the Conclave.

Facing the greatest economic downturn in the history of the republic, I have asked the Supreme Council to support several cost cutting measures. The goal is to reduce costs by \$600,000 for this fiscal year.

Primary emphasis is placed on reducing IHQ operational costs.

1. All travel has been limited to events that are mission critical.
2. For this year (2009), The Oracle will be published online only. On July 1, we will post the Spring 2009 edition of The Oracle to our website.
3. We are using Free Conferencing rather than our usual conferencing service.

Some of the other key measures implemented are:

In support of our mentoring efforts, I have appointed Brother Charles Matthews, 2007 Big Brother of the Year, as our primary liaison for our new partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Brother Matthews will

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challenge each chapter to embrace the program and our youth.

In response to the Grand Conclave's approval of a new Lampodos Program, we have initiated plans to migrate from MSP to the Lampodos Program. Training will begin in Las Vegas during our Leadership Conference. The conference will be held July 23 – 26, 2009 at the Las Vegas Hilton Hotel and Casino.

The Organizational Assessment mandated by the 2008 Conclave, has been completed. We employed a disinterested third party to perform the assessment. Soon after our leadership is briefed and they understand their role in implementing the results, the assessment will be shared with you.

I believe these decisions were the right thing to do. You can demonstrate your agreement by supporting these initiatives.

National Pan Hellenic Council

Effective January 2009, all chapters of Alpha Kappa Alpha, Alpha Phi Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Zeta Phi Beta, Iota Phi Theta, Kappa Alpha Psi, Sigma Gamma Rho, Phi Beta Sigma, and Omega Psi Phi shall be affiliated with a local NPHC Council.

The Council of Presidents (COP) has appointed members to the NPHC Executive Board who will ensure collaborative programming is carried out in a consistent and meaningful manner tied to this year's theme "Education/Economics – E2 = The Power of Nine".

In doing so, the NPHC Executive Board decreased from approximately 25 members down to 13 members. NPHC leadership believes this new structure including a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and four committee Chairs/Vice Chairs supported by an NPHC Executive Director will effectively address the needs of our collective community.

Centennial Celebration

Planning for our Centennial is well underway. Former Grand Basileus, C. Tyrone Gilmore, has orchestrated the design and production of our centennial jewelry through **Josten's** – one of America's oldest and most reliable jewelers. A Centennial Celebration will be held in Washington, DC in July 2011. Follow this link to Josten's website. While there, you can design your own memento.



<http://shop.jostens.com/catalog.asp?CID=274397&PFID=2008063013314736793&GID=&mscssid=TKAF9DMXGL269K5UGP4K4CJ5HAUL1QQ9>.

Strategic Plan/Brand

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity is one of the oldest networks of community based effort in the country. It is also one of the most recognizable brands in the world. Brother Dr. Vroman Wright is leading our efforts to build a viable strategic plan and to utilize and capitalize on our brand.

What's in a Brand?

Branding is bigger than just a logo. The brand is the Fraternity's promise. The process of branding is built over time by supporting the Fraternity's programs and activities.

Think about it like you think about yourself as a person. Our personal "brand" is all that makes up the uniqueness of YOU. It is not just your clothes, which can change with the styles of the decade. It is your character or personality (your brand traits) and the core of who you are (your promise).

To successfully build a brand, all Members must work together as ambassadors of the brand—this means being consistent in how they present the brand to each other, as well as to the community and partners. By representing Omega in a consistent and meaningful way, you establish a promise and an expectation in the marketplace that helps build awareness, loyalty, and continued support.

Can you say Black people are better off because of something SPECIFIC you did? Not thought, **DID**? Not said, **DID**? Not intended to do, **DID**? If you can, well done! If you can't, get busy.

Reader's Corner



Our book for this issue is "The Agitators Daughter By Sheryl Cashin".

Sheryl Cashin is the daughter of John Logan Cashin, Jr., one of the founders of the National Democratic Party of Alabama. She writes a memoir about her "emotional inheritance" of a passion for political activism and love of family. Of particular note is chapter nine...in it, Sheryl recounts her father's desire (and ultimate decision) to become an **Omega Man**. She makes some very interesting observations about her father and our Fraternity in this section. If you are interested in personal stories about public events or just another perspective of the events that shaped the Civil Rights era, I highly recommend it.

