

TWO WEEKS INTO YEAR THREE

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As I send this, we will be 2 weeks into the new semester and the start of my 3rd year as House Director for the Miami Chapter of Alpha Delta Phi. When I started, I said I would like to do 4 years and see a class go from freshmen through graduation... halfway there!

The almost-post-Covid year has started relatively smoothly. Student must wear masks while in class and the University has issued an edict that all must be vaccinated by the end of October. The city has issued mask requirements for businesses and indoor public spaces, and the requirement to prove vaccination in some bars has led to some creative documentation... and they thought it would just be fake ID's! But when it comes down to it, we're a lot more "normal" than last year. That means parties and gatherings are no longer subject to mass gathering restrictions and the off-Campus scene is a lot more active. One of the unforeseen side effects of Covid has been the movement to off-campus houses for some activities... last year parties were smaller and "split" between multiple sites. That's what's happening this year as well.

Miami policy says that any off-campus residence with more than 4 Frat Brothers is officially an "annex" and the House is responsible for anything that happens there. This is unrealistic and unfair... after all they don't say that about sororities, the football team, band, Glee Club or any other student organization, so why fraternities? I have consistently maintained to the Fraternity office, "We have no annexes." That does not mean that I'm unhappy when the guys party there instead of here!

The new crop of in-house Brothers is a good one. We have great leadership in our Exec and a really solid and responsible House Manager in Sam. He understands that his job is not to clean everything, but to make sure everything gets done. We've had 2 Sunday clean-ups and despite weekend parties and guys bringing food in (no weekend meal program), it's almost as clean by Sunday night as after Joy cleans on Thursdays. We're off to a good start...

Now that doesn't mean there isn't room for improvement! We have some habits that seem to show up every year... for example, putting something outside your room door does not mean you've taken care of it! Want to take a plate or glass upstairs? Fine, as long as you bring it back down... never make a trip downstairs without carrying something...! And remember "Ross' Rule of Cubic Footage"... breaking down Amazon boxes, water bottles and empty beer / seltzer cases means more recycling and less trash!

Of course, Jackie is back in the kitchen. She does a great job of serving the guys healthy meals that they completely devour... biggest concern sometimes is making sure each guy just takes his share so there's enough to go around, but overall we're good. There is always fruit, a salad bar and a diverse enough menu to challenge all tastes. Best part of Jackie is her "ownership" of the process... her kitchen, her "boys" and she does everything she can to take good care of them.

One of the lines I have used with the guys is true of all organizations... 20% are "all in", and 20% are "mistakes" who will never help out or care about anything but themselves. The issue becomes how the 60% in the middle swing... if they respond to the responsible guys, things are great! And so far this year

we are leaning to the good! (BTW... I think it was our Academic Advisor Rocco who told me I was stealing this theory from Jack Walsh of GE who used the numbers 30-60-10! I didn't know I was smart enough to steal it... but whatever the numbers, the theory works!)

A couple good steps in the right direction... we had two officers from the Oxford Police come to a Chapter meeting to discuss the "do's and don't's" of noise, litter and general behavior. The guys have agreed to re-start the Alpha Delta Phi Speaker Series and we are moving that forward. And we were able to award a \$ 1,000 scholarship from the Miami University Alpha Delta Phi Scholarship account to a Brother who has had to work 2 jobs to stay in school... felt good for the guys to take care of one of their own. BTW, Alumni Brothers donated over \$700.00 to that fund as part of the Move-In Miami Campaign in August.

For me, my routine has been pretty consistent... set out continental breakfast in the morning and make my rounds of the House... have to make sure we maintain our reputation as the cleanest front yard in town! Then it's Pickleball on Monday – Wednesday – Friday, sneaking out to the golf course once in a while, helping Jackie with food shipments, and "puttering" about the property to make sure we're in good shape. We have the usual flow of contractors upgrading locks, plumbing and electrical... and we just finished a major upgrade of our WiFi... really important for the modern college student!

I've also made a decision to travel more this year. I'll be here for the important events like Greek Week, Homecoming and Dad's Weekend, but I'm also going to be more willing to take time for golf trips and to visit family, things that were limited last year. Part of the reason is I feel very comfortable with the guys this year... they've bought into "owning" the House and take pretty good care of it. I can leave for a weekend and know everything will be OK when I get back... that feels like progress.

In my 2 years here, I've watched guys complete their education and move into the "real world", but this year will be the first class of guys that I actually "lived with" in the House. We learned a lot together as they adjusted to the "old guy" and I figured out my role. In one regard, I am like all teachers and coaches who watch their students and players move on with their lives. They are gone and the faces change, but our tasks remain... it's like the Paul Simon line from "The Boxer" ... "After changes upon changes we are more or less the same"... pretty good summary for my world.