



# THE ILLINOIS SIG

Sigma Chi Fraternity | University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign | Fall 2017  
Alumni Relations Office | P.O. Box 80828, Atlanta, Georgia 30366 | www.illinoissigs.org

## From the Corporation President



**R**EADY, FIRE, AIM... that is what it feels like sometimes, but the more we work with the members of our great fraternity, the greater the bond to our fraternity becomes... and for that, the board and I are very grateful!

I would like to welcome **Dan Mackey** to the board.

Dan is a dear friend of mine and to many of the brothers from the mid '70s. Over the years, he stayed very close to the house and the friends he developed while an undergrad, like **Steve Sarovich '75**, **Harvey Seibold '76**, **Mark Anderson '77**, **Bill Runzel '78**, **Tim Schneider '77**, and many others. He started and coordinated our annual EX golf outing and "EX Christmas shopping day," which really is a night out on the town in Chicago with as many brothers as can attend.

As an alumni group, we petitioned to have him initiated, and in the fall of 2016, he became an initiated brother! We asked him to become a part of our board, and he enthusiastically accepted! He has been quite active and insightful and has been a great addition. He recently retired from Intel Corp. after 34 years as one of the top sales people. Congratulations to Dan!

*Let me bring you up to speed...*

**Corporation President** (continued on page 6)

## Alumni Spotlight: Neal O. Hammon '48

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** For this edition of The Illinois Sig, we're shining the spotlight on Brother **Neal Hammon '48**. From the hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, Neal graduated from UI with a degree in architecture. Now retired after 48 years in the field, he is enjoying working on his farm with his wife of 64 years, Barbara. Together, Neal and Barbara share two sons, Stratton and Scott. Neal served in the Navy for over four years and was in the reserves for over two years. He closed out his career as a JG (lieutenant, junior grade) and a WW II veteran. Neal has served several years on various historic-home foundation boards within the community, such as the Edison House, the Speed House, and Locust Grove. As an active chapter member, he was the chapter's cartoonist. A certified pilot, he would fly up for games and have lunch at the chapter house. For past fun, he enjoyed flying his Piper and Cessna 182, riding his brother's Harley, and skeet shooting and golf. Today, at 91, Neal enjoys reviewing his photography portfolio, reading, and watching Kentucky basketball.



Neal and his wife, Barbara, at a 2016 Kentucky basketball game.

### What is one of the most memorable moments from your time as an active member?

Living in the house was great. One night, I was hanging out with my roommates, and one of them accidentally flipped a lit cigarette butt into my sock drawer. Being a new member, a dispute broke out about who would retrieve the butt. The phone rang and interrupted the discussion, and the cigarette was forgotten. A fire started that night. Two brothers had to jump out of the third-floor windows and broke some roof tiles on the porch. We always laughed at the imprint they left and how lucky we all had been.



### When did you get called on for active duty?

I enlisted in the Navy during my sophomore year of college; it was the fall of 1943. After some additional college courses while in the Navy V-12 program, I went to midshipman school at Fort Schiler in New York. Once completed, I was commissioned as an ensign, USNR. From there, I was sent out to the Pacific to the cruiser *USS Montpelier*, CL57, and was in the Philippines and Okinawa, and then in the occupation of Japan after the war ended.

### How was life on a cruiser ship?

I served as a gunnery officer on the cruiser *Montpelier*; we were the command ship when occupying Hiroshima, and our duty was gunnery support. We discovered that the bomb had not damaged the brewery and that there was plenty of good, inexpensive beer for all the dry American sailors. We enjoyed the occupational duty. It made being on the ship a lot more tolerable during such a stressful time.

**Neal Hammon '48** (continued on page 4)

## Save the Dates! HOMECOMING 2017

### Illini Block Party

Friday, October 27, 5:00 p.m.

### Homecoming Parade

Friday, October 27, 6:00 p.m.

### Homecoming Pep Rally

Friday, October 27, 7:00 p.m.

### Illinois vs. Wisconsin Football Game

Saturday, October 28, all day



## From the Chapter President



Brothers, KAPPA KAPPA made history this past year. For the first time in 29 years, the Kappa Kappa Chapter earned the coveted Peterson Award. Not only that,

but we scored a 94% on our ritual, earning us our first Ritual Certification. All the ceremonies of initiation were done from memory with meaningful expression to give the newly initiated brothers the best initiation experience possible. We were also one of the few Sigma Chi chapters chosen to participate in the pilot program of the new PIT program called "Ritual for Life."

I would also like to congratulate **Charlie Spring** for winning our Brother of the Year award for the 2016–2017 school year. Charlie served as Derby Days and philanthropy chairs and helped our chapter raise almost \$15,000. He also initiated a philanthropy hockey game between Sigma Chi, Alpha Tau Omega, Pi Kappa Alpha, and Sigma Alpha Epsilon that raised almost \$4,000 as well. All proceeds went to the Huntsman Foundation.

Our undergraduate brothers continue to be involved on campus. We have a variety of brothers on the club baseball, soccer, hockey, and swim teams. Brothers are also

**Chapter President** (continued on next page)

## Chapter Spotlight: Charles M. Spring

**Editor's Note:** Representing the chapter in the spotlight is Brother of the Year **Charlie Spring**. From the hometown of Winnetka, Illinois, Charlie is in his junior year at UI, pursuing a degree in communications with a minor in informatics. On campus, he is president of the Illinois Sales and Marketing Association, and a member of the Illinois sailing team. For the chapter, he serves as Derby Days chairman and previously was philanthropy chairman. Charlie recently completed an internship with Accuity Inc. in Evanston. For fun, he enjoys sailing, hockey, and dining out.



### What led you to join the chapter?

I could tell that all of the guys in the house had a nice balance of school and fun, so I knew it would be a great experience. My dad, **Richard Spring '88**, is also a Kappa Kappa, but he didn't influence me to join the house that much. I fell in love with it on my own, but now I really appreciate being able to share the experience of being a Sigma Chi with him.

### How do you feel about being selected as Brother of the Year?

There are a number of other guys who could have easily won this award, but it feels good to be selected for this award. It's special because it proves that you don't need to have a leadership position within the chapter to make a difference.

### What type of sales work have you been doing for Accuity?

My position in the summer was primarily a business development role. The solutions my team sold were mostly data and software for

financial institutions. Next year, I hope to land a sales internship for a large IT company.

### Do you have any plans yet for fall philanthropy projects or Derby Days?

Derby Days will take place during the last week of September, so follow our social media pages for updates. We will be collecting donations at [us-p2p.netdonor.net/223/derby-challenge](http://us-p2p.netdonor.net/223/derby-challenge).

### Outside of school, what do you do for fun?

Outside of school, I like being a below-average golfer, sailing, and listening to all types of music.



Charlie '19, Maggie '17, and Rich Spring '88.



Sigma Chi '19s with ΔΓs at Anchor Bowl.

### Connect with Us!

Check out our new website:  
[ILLINOISSIGS.ORG](http://ILLINOISSIGS.ORG)



"Sigma Chi Kappa Kappa Network"  
[www.linkedin.com/groups/12032790](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/12032790)



Search for "University of Illinois  
Sigma Chi - Kappa Kappa Chapter"



## Philanthropy

Sigma Chi participated in its first philanthropy hockey game in March with Alpha Tau Omega, Pi Kappa Alpha, and Sigma Alpha Epsilon.

Sigma Chi played a major role in the organization of the philanthropy hockey game, hosting and planning the entire event from start to finish. With this being said, all the proceeds raised from the event went toward the Huntsman Cancer Foundation. Money was raised by selling tickets and T-shirts, as well as by having

the other fraternities pay to play in the philanthropy game.

Leading up to the philanthropy hockey game, the Kappa Kappa Chapter raised around \$10,000 for the Derby challenge, which was generated from Derby Days alone. The philanthropy hockey game raised a total of \$3,573, which puts us right under \$14,000 so far for this year's Derby challenge.

Nicholas J. Bleidorn

## Chapter President (continued from previous page)

represented on numerous student organizations on campus, holding executive positions, including three student-body presidents.

We initiated 32 brothers in December, and nine more deserving brothers in April. The pledge class of 2020 exemplifies the Standard in every way, and we are proud to call them our brothers. Preparations for fall rush are currently underway, with our first recruitment event at Arlington Racetrack in early August.

I would like to congratulate **Mike Church '05** on becoming Sigma Chi's executive director. His commitment and service to Sigma Chi in his post-grad years sets a phenomenal example to our undergraduate brothers in the house. His

proven dedication to our fraternity is what every Kappa Kappa Sigma Chi strives to emulate.

On top of sending eight brothers to Balfour this summer, Kappa Kappa will be represented by **Alex Thomas** and **Nick Bleidorn** at Horizons as well. We have high hopes of them using the knowledge they learned at Horizons to help better our chapter for the following school year.

Lastly, I encourage and welcome our alumni to visit our chapter house. Our brothers look forward to meeting you, as do I.

Guard well,  
Jordan Meadows '19

## Join us during the 2017 Football Season Oskee Wow-Wow!

**Iowa Hawkeyes**  
Saturday, October 7, 11:00 a.m.

**Rutgers Scarlet Knights\***  
Saturday, October 14, TBA

**Minnesota Golden Gophers**  
Saturday, October 21, 2:30/3:00 p.m.

**Wisconsin Badgers (HC)\***  
Saturday, October 28, 11:00 a.m.

**Purdue Boilermakers**  
Saturday, November 4, TBA

**Indiana Hoosiers\***  
Saturday, November 11, TBA

**Ohio State Buckeyes**  
Saturday, November 18, TBA

**Northwestern Wildcats\***  
Saturday, November 25, TBA

**Big Ten Championship Game**  
Saturday, December 2, 7:00 p.m.

\* Home games in Memorial Stadium





## Chapter Executive Board

### CONSUL

Jordan Meadows

### PRO CONSUL

Riley Myles

### ANNOTATOR

Jack Mahoney

### HOUSE MANAGER

Liam Griffin

### QUAESTOR

Andrew Martineau

### MAGISTER

Joe Chignoli

### RISK MANAGER

John Lampros

### STEWARD

George Deligiannis

### SOCIAL CHAIRS

Luke Ortegel Tommy Abrams

### SCHOLARSHIP CHAIRS

Rick Hatton Ben Jones

### MEDIA DIRECTOR

Nicholas Bleidorn

### RUSH CHAIRS

Peter Paxinos Anthony Greco  
Charlie Yale Tommy Abrams  
Justin McGowan Joe Garibotti

### DADS' DAY CHAIRS

Eric Ziegler Anthony Bellanca

### HISTORIAN

Quinn Julian

### DERBY DAYS CHAIRS

Charles Spring George Deligianni

### PHILANTHROPY CHAIRS

Tucker Goebeler Eric Ziegler

### HOUSE IMPROVEMENT CHAIR

George Deligiannis

### BROTHER AT LARGE

Angelo Feola

### BEN C. FISHER SCHOLAR

Ben Trepel

## Neal Hammon '48 (continued from page 1)

**What was it like coming back to Illinois after WW II?**

It was very nice seeing old friends on campus again, but there were so many Sigma Chi brothers that we had to open a second house next door to the main chapter house to accommodate everyone. Bidwell's was always a comfort. Significant Sig **Ruck Steger '48** was a friend of mine, but being a vet from WW II, I was recalled for the Korean War, and we did not see each other much after that. If you like great stories, here is one about Ruck...

Back in 1947, Illinois played and beat UCLA in the Rose Bowl. Ruck was on the first team. When we all got back to school after the Christmas-New Year's break, he told us fellows who did not get to see the game about something that happened to him. Ruck said that the team had a play where they faked the ball to him, and he started around tackle pretending to be the man carrying the ball. Each time they used that play, it worked out very well, and they were making good yardage, and so they kept using it, and every time they used it, a UCLA linebacker would tackle Ruck. Finally, near the end of the third quarter, the UCLA linebacker tackled Ruck again, and as they were getting up, he looked over at Ruck and said "Ain't you got the ball again?" Ruck and all the Sigma Chi brothers thought that was very hilarious.



*Ruck Steger & his wife.*

**After graduation, how did you stay in touch with your chapter brothers?**

I enjoyed dropping by the school to visit the chapter house. In 1949, not long after I had graduated from college and was working as a civilian, I drove up to Illinois to visit some friends after their exams, and on a whim, several of us ΣΧs decided to visit New Orleans for Mardi Gras. One of our Phi Delt friends was with us, but somewhat inebriated, and decided to come along. The next morning, driving thru Memphis, the Phi Delt woke up, and he remembered that he had an exam that day. It was either hitchhike back to school, or continue the trip with us. He chose the latter.

**In your career, what did you enjoy most as an architect?**

I enjoyed designing buildings, but in most cases, I was restrained by economic factors. My clients usually wanted a better building than they could afford. The most difficult part of architecture was keeping up with all the government regulations pertaining to the building design. It seemed like every year we had to acquire three or four books because of the new building codes.

**At what point did you embrace the farming life?**

I finally took the big step a year after I returned from Korea. I married Barbara Bidwell, who was a Kappa Delta at the University of Kentucky. After the birth of our first child, I bought a house using the GI Bill; as a veteran, we were allowed a low interest rate, so the mortgage payments were very reasonable. After a tornado destroyed one home, and a lightning strike burned down the rebuild, we decided maybe it was time to move out to the country.

**When did you develop an interest in writing?**

All architects must be able to write. On each job, we prepared a book (called architectural specifications) that contains between 120 to 300 pages, depending upon the complexity of the building. I was always interested in history, particularly subjects that others had ignored.

*(continued on next page)*



*Neal, just out of the US Navy, with a fellow Illinois student. Theta house in background on right side of photo and campus down at the end of the street.*



## Grand Chapter: Report of the Executive Director (excerpt)

June 24, 2017

To the members of the 81<sup>st</sup> Grand Chapter

The fraternity is now just shy of 335,000 all-time initiated Sigs across 288 chapters, 242 of which are currently active. There are about 16,500 undergraduate Sigs who will return to our chapters this coming fall. There are a few hundred more pledges spread out across our six colonies. We are just north of 250,000 living members of our fraternity. There are almost 60,000 all-time members who have joined the ranks of the Life Loyal Sigs, 40,000 of whom are living. There are about 3,000 men who donate their time to making Sigma Chi better every year and about 6,000 men who donate their treasures to make the work of the Sigma Chi Foundation possible.

But what do we do really well? Alumni involvement and leadership development education.

We are doing incredible things in Sigma Chi. New challenges pop up every day, some we can control and others we can't. I truly believe that the success

of Sigma Chi will always hinge on one basic construct: we will only get better when good men (and women) choose to act to make it so.



Mike Church addresses the 81<sup>st</sup> Grand Chapter. Also pictured: 69<sup>th</sup> Grand Consul Michael Ursillo (left), Grand Consul-elect Tommy Geddings (far left), and Parliamentarian Nathan White (right).

## Neal Hammon '48 (continued from previous page)

After Korea, I began writing articles on various subjects of interest and really developed a passion for writing about pioneer history. So far, I have had six books and one CD published and have four others in the cupboard, which I am trying to have published. I think my best book was one I wrote with co-author Richard Taylor, called *Virginia's Western War, 1775-1786*. *My Father Daniel Boone* is the best seller. *Daniel Boone* is available digitally. I am currently

working on *Following Boone's Trace*.

### What advice can you give to the alumni and young actives about maintaining a relationship with your chapter brothers?

The experience of being a Sigma Chi Kappa Kappa was one of the most important parts of my life. Looking back, I acquired some of my best friends, and I gained a better understanding about human nature. Sigma Chi is for life.



Neal in his other mode of transportation.



Neal out on his farm. "Look at that tall corn!"



## Bradley David Stock Golf Brings out the Best

On Friday, August 11, Sigma Chi brothers, friends, and family participated in the fourth annual BDS Memorial Golf Outing. The event is held in honor of **Bradley David Stock '13**, who passed away in December 2013.

The event was held at Indian Boundary Golf Course in Chicago, Illinois; 58 golfers participated, and 88 attended a dinner reception following the event. Sigma Chi raised \$3,700 to fund a scholarship in Brad's name and to support Erika's Lighthouse, a Chicagoland organization to educate teens about depression.

The event brought out the best of Sigma Chi, bringing brothers of all ages together for an afternoon of brotherhood.

Please stay tuned for more information about how you can get involved in next year's event!



**Robert S. Larson '83** – My company is Innovative Senior Living. We have three properties of Assisted Living/Memory Care in the Tucson, Arizona, area.

**Willard P. Thomson '55** – The older we get, the more we cherish fond memories at 410 E. John.

### Have Alumni News?

*We want to hear from you!* Send your personal updates, accomplishments, adventures, and photos to our account manager, Kasey Breedlove, at [kbreedlove@elevateims.com](mailto:kbreedlove@elevateims.com), or simply fill out the tear-away form at the bottom of your cover letter and return it in the mail. We want to share it in the next issue of *The Illinois Sig!*

## Corporation President (continued from page 1)

**LEADERSHIP:** Our fraternity has improved tremendously in this area under the guidance of **Jordan Meadows**. He is quite an impressive individual, balancing school, fraternity life, and the Marines! He is a legacy and has provided the necessary leadership that every fraternity craves.

I am also impressed with the other Executive Committee board members of the house. The culture of leadership, responsibility, respect, and involvement would make Isaac M. Jordan proud!

**Our chapter won the Peterson Award** at the recent LTW workshop! This is *the award* to win for any chapter!

We had eight attendees at LTW this year, a tremendous sign of responsibility and commitment to our great chapter.

**GPA:** The spring 2017 GPA was an impressive 3.22+ for the house, vaulting us to a #11 ranking! Our new GPA policy has had an impact, requiring a minimum GPA to remain an active member of our fraternity.

**FINANCIAL:** I want to take my hat off—not my hair; it is already off!—to **Jim Escobar '95**. He has done a great job as we continue to improve our financial oversight and budgeting. He attended LTW recently, which shows his level of his commitment to our cause!!

**PROPERTY:** **Jason Detweiler '08** continues to do a yeoman's job on the board as head of our property management. His untiring efforts working with our property management company and house manager is unbelievable.

**MOM'S CLUB:** *Wow*, they continue to help

and support our great chapter house. We meet and communicate regularly with the Mom's Club. The enthusiasm and commitment is very impressive, and we want to say *thank you!* They have helped us with certain house improvements: new basketball hoop, couches and other furniture, fans, kitchen countertops, and other upgrades!

### COMPUTER/GROUP STUDY ROOM (BASEMENT) AND THIRD

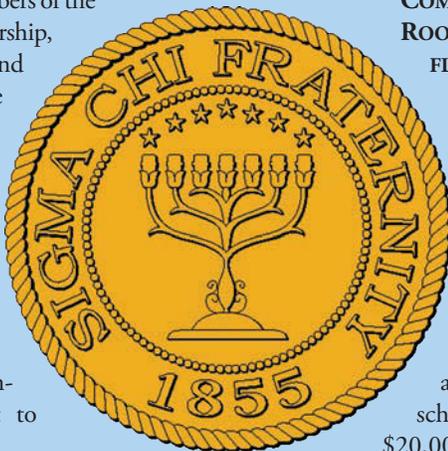
**FLOOR COMMON ROOM:** The members have responded positively to the changes and financial commitment we made to improve this area of the house. They love the group study room.

### CHAPTER PHILANTHROPY:

Derby Days was a resounding success last school year, raising close to \$20,000 for the Huntsman Cancer Center. In the spring '17 semester, they hosted a fraternity hockey tournament to raise money. Visit the updated webpage at [us-p2p.netdonor.net/223/derby-challenge](http://us-p2p.netdonor.net/223/derby-challenge).

**"MOTHER SHIP" – THE HOUSE:** We continue to "work" on the house, and we are developing a formal five-year capital-expense plan. There will be more to follow. It has been a couple of decades since our last major investment in the house. Many of the fraternities have taken on major renovations or have built a new house. Competition is tough as new apartment buildings are going up and a recent property-tax increase is the new battleground. The house will be *full* this fall, with 67 brothers living in!

**RUSH:** We continue to improve and compete in this area. It is nice to see more legacies come



through and pledge/initiate. There was a recent summer rush event at Arlington Park, where many of the 80+ candidates already identified attended! We are ready for a new school year to begin!

**MEDIA:** We are launching our new web site very soon! You may take a look at [www.illinois-sigs.com](http://www.illinois-sigs.com). **Tom Munger '13** and **Nick Bleidorn** have led the way. Our media platform will be improving and expanding, because this is the way of the future: to keep everyone connected and networking together. This has been a goal of the board: to get all phases of media covered, be it website, Facebook, Linked In... there will be more to follow! I am excited about connecting all our Kappa Kappa Sigs!

**PREPARATION FOR BROTHERHOOD:** Our new pledge program has been a great success story. Change can be challenging, but our members have embraced the change. Our new program is now eight weeks long with an emphasis on interactive learning and commitment to our founding fathers' ideals! Mark Anderson laid the groundwork for our more impactful program, which we believe will lead to more involvement by our brothers beyond the four years at college.

Brothers, our focus is guiding these young men to live a life-long commitment to the three great aims and seven virtues that identify us a Sigma Chi brothers!

Your House Corp. President,



  
Peter Steger '79