



# THE ILLINOIS SIG

Sigma Chi Fraternity at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign | Winter 2023-24 | Alumni Relations Office | P.O. Box 876, Ithaca, NY 14851-0876 | www.illinoissigs.org

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

WINTER 2023-24

### "What Makes Sigma Chi an Enduring Force in One's Life?"



WOW, what a loaded question to answer! Everyone will have their own opinion or feelings but since I am the president of the House Corporation, I guess I have the "floor"...

What is it that helps answer this question?

#### Is it the Jordan Standard where we are looking for and developing men of:

- Good Character
- With ambitious purposes
- A congenial disposition
- Possessed of good morals
- Having a high sense of honor
- In addition to a deep sense of personal responsibility

#### Is it the Ritual where we find the true meaning of the White Cross?

#### The Three Great Aims:

- **Friendship** – We all seek true friendship; where do we find it?
- **Justice** – Where we believe in fairness, decency, and goodwill.
- **Learning** – Not only academically but also about character, leadership, and service.

#### The 7 Values or non-negotiable principles that define us:

- **Courage** – If you do not stand for something, you will fall for anything.
- **Wisdom** – Wisdom comes from true reflection on your acts, understanding, and adaptation.
- **Integrity** – Our greatest power in life is CHOICE. Integrity (doing the right thing) is a choice. People with integrity realize that everything they do defines who they are.
- **High Ambition** – exhibiting energy and effort in every task, every day. Champions in life never take a day off!
- **Self-Control** – We were taught never to dull the whiteness of our cross

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## Alumni Spotlight

## The Herleman Family A Kappa Kappa Legacy

**William Herleman '42** and **Charlie Herleman '81** have a special bond as father and son in the brotherhood of Sigma Chi. In this edition of *The Illinois Sig*, we are shining a spotlight on the Herleman family. William's wife, Terry, and children, Christine, Cynthia, and Charlie, remain dedicated to his memory.



Charlie and Bill after Charlie pledged ΣΧ, fall 1977.

William Herleman attended UI on the GI bill and met his wife, Terry, a UI Kappa Alpha Theta, to whom he was married for 71 years.

A First Lieutenant World War II Veteran serving in the Asian Pacific Theatre in the Philippines as an infantry unit commander in the US Army, he went on to graduate with a degree in business administration and marketing. William spent his professional life in various roles including serving as CEO and President of Wurlitzer and, after retirement, working alongside Charlie for many years as a consultant. He was honored as a Significant Sig in 1973 and was a lifelong advocate for Sigma Chi who embodied the values of the organization he so cherished.

Charlie graduated from UI with a degree in business administration and marketing and earned his MBA at Denver University. He currently owns his own company in Denver where he resides with his wife. He enjoys hosting Sigma Chi brothers who visit and traveling to see his two sons, Tim and Luke. Charlie recalled many fond memories of his father including spending time at family cabins in Wisconsin hosting over 100 guests, fishing and talking on the boat in Key West, celebrating family milestones at Beachcomber Restaurant in Chicago, and the time his father made friends with an Arabian Prince on his flight back from Germany.

Charlie described William as the backbone of his family for him and his two sisters. He described his father as someone who felt the deep meaning of brotherhood during those four treasured years at Kappa Kappa. That Sigma Chi brotherhood bond went with him after graduation. He connected with many brothers over the years from other chapters of Sigma Chi and was always willing to introduce Charlie and help other brothers network as well. William kept in touch with many KK brothers and enjoyed returning to the house to enjoy events such as Homecoming and

reconnecting with alumni and actives alike. He was an honorable and humble man who loved people, his country, his wife, his children, and Sigma Chi.

### CHARLIE'S INTERVIEW

#### How do you stay in touch with your brothers today?

Mainly we stay connected through email. Keeping in touch is so much easier today with technology than it has ever been.

#### How has your experience as an undergraduate shaped your career post-graduation?

Sigma Chi provided a chance to network post-graduation once in Denver with brothers from other chapters of the national organization. Philanthropy is such a dedicated part of Sigma Chi and being involved on campus instilled a passion for giving back to the community.

#### What type of work are you doing today?

I own my own company which I started with my son, called Small Office Solutions, an IT support company assisting with database and firewall security.

#### What advice can you give to alumni and young undergraduate brothers about career growth?

It's best said by way of a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson: "To laugh often and much: To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children, to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others, to leave the world a bit better whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you lived. This is to have



Bill and Terry Herleman on their wedding day, August 1954.

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## FROM THE CONSUL



*Brothers,*

Hello, my name is **Brendan Gibbons**, and I am a '26 from Woodridge, Illinois, where I attended Downers Grove South High School. I am the newly elected Consul for the Kappa Kappa chapter, and I am very excited about my upcoming term. In the past, I have been the philanthropy chair and held multiple assistant positions within the fraternity. I am currently majoring in accounting and plan to pursue my CPA. I am looking forward to furthering the interests of the fraternity and it is an honor to be representing my brothers as Consul.

### I am pleased to introduce the **2024 Council of Kappa Kappa**

**Ethan Robert**  
*Pro Consul*

**Josh Novak**  
*Magister*

**William Coutré**  
*IFC VP of Membership  
Development*

**Tyler Helbing**  
*Risk Manager*

**Jackson Gentges**  
*Annotator*

**Charlie Van Etten**  
**James Bently**  
*Social Chairs*

**Nick Panico**  
*Kustos*

**Jack Willsey**  
*Steward*

*In hoc,*

**Brendan Gibbons '26**  
*Undergrad President*

## KAPPA KAPPA FALL '23 RUSH

This fall, the Kappa Kappa Chapter was able to initiate 36 men into the chapter, the largest pledge class by a wide margin since before the pandemic. The '27s pledge class was initiated on October 28, and every one of them has been proven worthy to be a part of our great brotherhood. Many of the new initiates were direct legacies of people still in the house or who just recently graduated, proving that this house fosters amazing values that are visible to siblings, parents, and everyone else in the community. Spanning majors that range from business and biology to communications and engineering, our recruitment committee chose men from all different backgrounds and walks of life to develop into soon-to-be leaders, not only on campus but when they enter the workforce. We are truly proud to be Sigma Chi's.

*Pictured right: The Guerin family legacies.*



## CHAPTER NEWS



Derby Days, our signature fall philanthropy event, was again a major success. We raised money in a variety of ways including paid sorority participation in events, T-shirt sales, car washes, and fundraising within the Kappa Kappa families. All of this totaled over \$17,000 in donations toward the Huntsman Cancer Institute, and our annual blood drive provided a record 85 pints of blood, helping over 250 people in need. The theme of this week-long event was Hawaiian and/or beach attire. Sororities who signed up participated in four days of friendly competition, including a volleyball tournament, jousting, tug-of-war, obstacle course relay races, and a hot-dog eating contest. Everyone had a great time, and it was a close competition from start to finish. For the third year in a row, Delta Delta Delta sealed the victory, with Kappa Alpha Theta taking second place and Delta Zeta coming in third.

## Alumni News

## Taylor Mason Awarded Significant Sig Award

**Taylor Mason '81**, appeared at The Moonlight Theater in St. Charles, Illinois, on December 9, 2023. Taylor was our alumni spotlight in the 2019 Illinois Sig and was pledge son to **Cliff Jones '81**. With over 20 Kappa Kappa Sigs in attendance, Taylor was awarded his Significant Sig Medal by **Mark Anderson '77** of our chapter after his show. Taylor is a comedian and ventriloquist with a storied career. Combining stand-up comedy, ventriloquism, music, and audience interaction, his act is impossible to define. He's a comedy lifer who has performed in almost every possible venue around the planet, including Carnegie Hall and The Sydney Opera House. He has shared the stage with show business royalty like Tina Turner, Jay Leno, and Jerry Seinfeld and has appeared on *The Tonight Show* with Jimmy Kimmel and is quite well known within his circle of talent.





## Alumni Spotlight HERLEMAN FAMILY

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succeeded.” Also, keep in contact with your brothers because they are the key to opening doors. They are people who can help you as you move in your career or to a new city. It’s easier now than ever to stay in touch!

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

When we are not traveling to see the kids and grandkids, I volunteer with Foresight Adventure Guides for the Blind in Vail, Colorado. We teach the sight impaired to ski during the winter and during the summer, we work with kids at their summer camp to teach them to build confidence and increase self-esteem through activities such as paddle boarding, rock climbing, horseback riding, and more. The most rewarding experience is watching kids accomplish amazing feats and grow.

## TERRY'S INTERVIEW

### Can you tell me a bit about William?

He grew up on a farm in Quincy, Illinois during the Great Depression. His love for nature stemmed from that. He was an avid fisherman all his life and purchased a fishing camp in Wisconsin. In the summer of 1947, he drove tour buses through the mountains of Glacier National Park in Montana and took the utmost pride in doing so. William had an entrepreneurial spirit that started at the age of eight when his father took him to help sell crops from the farm at the market. He was a hard worker: he started working in retail at 15 selling men’s clothing and worked throughout college as well. His motto was “always forward,” and he lived his life that way. William would be described as honorable, humble, helpful, faithful, caring, and dedicated in everything he did.

### How did you meet William?

While William started college in 1942, he served in WWII and came back after his deployment. I met William at the beginning of the semester in 1946. As a favor to a friend, I was the running stand-in date for one of the brothers, Al Gold, since his fiancé lived out of state. We met for hamburgers at Bidwells to discuss that semester’s social agenda for Sigma Chi and William walked in and sat with us for hours catching up with Al since they had not seen each other since before the war. William didn’t realize that I wasn’t dating Al and when he discovered it the next day, he was at the Theta house by that afternoon calling on me.

William’s two daughters, Christine and Cynthia, have always referred to their parent’s relationship as a love story. A love story that began in those Kappa Kappa chapter years and lasted 71 years together. Their father embodied morals and integrity, faith, family, country, and helping others.



Bill Herleman receiving Significant Sig Award, June 1973.

### How did Sigma Chi impact William professionally and personally?

He was totally, enthusiastically, and wholeheartedly a Sigma Chi through and through. William stood by and believed in everything Sigma Chi stood for. He lived and breathed the values and held them as a standard as to which to live his life. Professionally, Sigma Chi was integral in networking. He met some of his most cherished lifelong friends and business partners through the national organization. He loved to help people and was honored to be a member of the organization. He was proud of his affiliation and was never seen without his Sigma Chi ring! He had written a personal mission statement that embodied who he was and how he strived to live his life.

*To find fulfillment, meaning, and value in living – I, Bill Herleman will –*

**LEAD** a life centered around the principles of honor, integrity, trustworthiness, patience, humility, and caring about others.

**REMEMBER** that what’s important in life is to have a purpose in life and a sense of accomplishment, own myself, be loving and caring, and ensure the financial security of my family and others; I will also remember the importance of health, sincerity, and maintaining a positive attitude and sense of humor.

**REVERE** the admirable characteristics in others, such as being enthusiastic, industrious, and principle-centered, and attempt to implement similar characteristics like being proactive, self-reliant, and trustworthy into my own life.

**RECOGNIZE** my strengths and develop my talents as an articulate person, a philosopher, a counselor, self-disciplined, energetic, hard-working, intelligent, and imaginative.

**HUMBLE** myself by acknowledging that I can be a procrastinator, tedious, and inflexible, and constantly strive to transform my weaknesses into strengths.

**ENVISION** myself as always, without fail, to be a person who is courageous, principle-centered, courteous, positive, cheerful, industrious, caring, and a doer.

## PRESIDENT’S LETTER

(continued from page 1)

- **Courtesy** – Be the “sunshine” in all the lives you encounter.
- **Fidelity** – Being true and loyal so in the end you may exclaim, “I have fought the good fight. I have finished my work and above all I have kept the faith.”

On March 11, 2005, a poem (see below) was written that I hold dear to my heart that reflects much of what is said above:



### Proud to be a Sigma Chi

*You’ve got values, goals, and courage  
To fight through it all,  
You’ve got morals, standards, and perseverance  
To get up every time you fall,  
You’ve got the spirit of youth, wisdom, and fidelity  
To take your every way,  
You’ve got faith, hope, and love  
To take the bad away,  
You’ve got ambition, genuineness, and manners  
To guide you to the top,  
You’ve got logic, smarts, and kindness  
To keep you from a drop,  
You’ve got leadership, strength, and honor  
To store up in your heart,  
You’ve got brothers who love you most of all  
That you will never tear apart,  
You’ve got the White Cross to don your heart  
To keep the ideals close by,  
And with pride, humility, and loyalty  
You can say you’re a Sigma Chi.*

With Love,  
**Peter Steger II '08**

Written during Indoctrination Week  
Initiated March 12, 2005

The answer to the question? My wish, brother... is that upon reflection you will “feel” the answer!

*In hoc,*

**Peter F. Steger '79**  
President, Kappa Kappa of  
Sigma Chi House Corporation



## Clifford (Cliff) Jones '81

November 22, 2023

Cliff Jones was a member of the Kappa Kappa class of '81. Many of you knew Cliff or knew of him. And to many of you, he was known as "Ferd." When he was diagnosed with cancer in October, over 100 brothers from numerous eras communicated with Cliff in some fashion. That's because he epitomized many of the traits we strive to attain to be a good brother. He was unfailingly supportive of house functions, as well as individual brothers and he was always good-natured.

In his early years, Cliff grew up on a grain farm in the tiny town of Bourbon which is thirty miles south of Champaign. He attended Chaminade College Preparatory in St. Louis for high school where he was an outstanding athlete in football and basketball, a member of many Christian and social action groups, and traveled to England for a special student interaction program.

At Illinois, besides being a member of Sigma Chi, he played on the U of I football team as a kicker. A lasting memory for his brothers was that immediately before each kick-off, he always held up a special hand signal for their benefit. Cliff was one of the last of the straight-on kickers. He wore a square toe, kangaroo skin, tied-up kicking shoe which can be seen in the picture below right. In those days a tomahawk sticker was awarded to him for each touchback achieved by his kicks out of the end-zone. His helmet was covered in stickers. He was also the assistant rush chairman, assistant social chairman, and assistant magister at Sigma Chi. Further, he was an assistant manager at the renowned campus bar, Kams.

He remained in the Champaign area where he was involved in the farming industry in several capacities for almost 40 years. He was an avid Illini fan, staying at all times up to date on Illini news and attending 100s of events over his lifetime. And being very



Clifford (Cliff) Jones '81

social, he will always be remembered for hosting numerous parties and cook-outs for his friends and Sigma Chi brothers. During his college years, he hosted the memorable "Jones Jam," named after Willie Nelson's "Farm Jam" of the time. It took place for several years at the family farm in Bourbon where hundreds of pork chops were served.

He was involved in an eclectic mix of activities: he served on the board of the U of I Varsity I Association, he was a member of the Knights of Columbus, he was a wood-working hobbyist, he owned a boar named "Butkus" that was used for breeding, he liked to travel and he set foot in almost every state in the continental U.S., he worked in several roles at St. Vincent de Paul catholic church, and he was a youth coach at the Champaign Park District. In addition, he attended almost all the events for his daughter and son at St. Matthew Catholic School and The High School of St. Thomas More. As Brother **Dave Hoffman '80** whimsically stated after reading his obituary, "Cliff wasn't only a great guy; he was a Renaissance man."

In his final month and after his death numerous stories surfaced that remembered Cliff as being positive, enthusiastic, and always with a smile on his face.

Pledge son **Robb Sackett '83** recalls that "Cliff was always supportive and uplifting and would repeat the same quote on numerous occasions: 'What are you going to do?' In other words, whenever bad things were happening that were outside of your control, keep moving forward and you'll be able to work things out."

**Kevin Young '82** remembered, "One of the earliest memories I have of Cliff was at halftime of a football game when Ferd's then-girlfriend who was an Illinette and I brought food down to the sideline for him. He came over to us and acted like we had just done the cleverest and nicest thing in the world. It was the middle of a Big Ten football game, and he was thanking me many times for doing that (though he was no doubt mortified and may have thrown it in the trash because of possible player rules)."

**Casey Welch '84** shared: "I'll always remember a gloomy late February afternoon when I was a pledge



Cliff as the Kicker on the U of I football team.



Legacies on "Jones Porch".



## Chapter Eternal

We are saddened to learn of the passing of the following Kappa Kappa brothers:

**Clifford Jones '81**

November 22, 2023

**Richard McWard '60**

October 31, 2022

**Michael Houston '68**

April 10, 2023

**William Herleman '48**

December 1, 2021

**Edward Koenig '42**

August 17, 2021

heading back to the house from class. Walking by Kams I saw Cliff, who I barely knew. He was heading into Kams to work, and he invited me to come in. We talked off and on for over an hour and he was sincerely interested in everything I had learned about the house to date and he gave me all kinds of constructive advice regarding pledgship. From that point on I never hesitated to seek his advice and I made a lifelong friend."

**Frank Simonetti '83** recalled that at informal rush, "Ferd was the first Sig I met. I was early, so Ferd came up to me, introduced himself, and took me to lunch. He didn't have to do that. He then introduced me to several Illini cheerleaders and football players. He was such a stud to me as a high school senior and still is a stud to me today."

There were countless other stories that brothers recalled. Many of us will remember our own. Those of us who were lucky enough to know him will always remember Cliff. Cliff was the son of the late **Bill Jones '53**, the brother to **Chip Jones '83**, and an uncle to **Daniel Gartrell, HQ'18**.

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## Have Alumni News?

We want to hear from you! Send your personal updates, accomplishments, adventures, and photos to our account manager, **Melissa Stanton** at [MStanton@elevateims.com](mailto:MStanton@elevateims.com), or simply fill out the back of the enclosed gift form and return it in the mail. We want to share it in the next issue of *The Illinois Sig!*