

To: Collegiate Chapters, Colonies, Alumnae Associations,
National Officers, Past National Presidents

From: The Grand Council

Date: February 2004

RE: Theta Phi Alpha 2004 National Convention
June 24 -27, 2004, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

We are pleased to announce that Theta Phi Alpha's 2004 National Convention, *Ever Loyal, Ever Lasting*, will be held June 24-27, 2004, at the Omni William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Please review the enclosed information with the appropriate sisters in your chapter, colony, or association. Please note that all Theta Phi Alpha sisters are invited and encouraged to attend National Convention.

The National Convention is the supreme governing body of Theta Phi Alpha. Business sessions are held during Convention to review and to act upon matters brought to the Convention body by the Grand Council, as well as by any chapter, association, or individual member. The voting members of the Convention body include each eligible chapter and alumnae association, the Past National Presidents, and the members of the Grand Council.

The business agenda will include voting on proposed amendments to the National Constitution and Bylaws, proposed changes to Fraternity Ritual and the election of certain national officers. Detailed information for the review and vote of the voting members will be sent in a later mailing.

In addition to business sessions, National Convention includes a variety of traditional events including Songfest, the Siena Medal Presentation, the Founders' Breakfast at which scholarships are presented to deserving sisters, and the Fraternity Night Banquet at which the national awards are presented. We will also have educational seminars and workshops on Fraternity programming areas including pledge sister education, standards board operations, NPC's new models of recruitment and general alumnae programming.

National Convention is also a time for all Theta Phi Alpha's, young and old, collegian and alumna, to gather together to share information, learn from each other, and celebrate our friendship and sisterhood. Plan now to attend!

This memo is quite lengthy and contains very important information for Convention delegates as well as for other attendees. Please read through the information carefully.

CONVENTION HOTEL

The Convention hotel is the Omni William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Hotel is located at 530 William Penn Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. The phone number of the hotel is (412) 281-7100. You can view the hotel's website at www.omnihotels.com.

CONVENTION TIME SCHEDULE

(Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania is on Eastern Daylight Savings Time)

Convention officially starts on Thursday, June 24, 2004, at 4:00 PM, with the welcome session, followed by dinner and evening social events.

All convention registrants are expected to attend all convention activities and events. Chapters are required to send a delegate and an alternate delegate to all convention activities.

Convention will end at NOON on Sunday, June 27, 2004.

REGISTRATION

Included in this mailing are five copies of the Convention Registration Form (one copy to National Officers). Completed Registration Forms AND fees are due to National Office and must be postmarked by May 1 to take advantage of the early registration fee of \$175. **ALL ATTENDEES MUST PAY THE REGISTRATION FEE.** Registration forms postmarked from May 1 to May 15 will pay the full \$200 registration fee. Further, registration forms postmarked after May 15 must be accompanied by a \$50 late fee, for a registration cost of \$225. Everyone, including collegian delegates, alternate delegates, and national officers, must pay the registration fee (including any applicable late fees). In the event that additional forms are needed by your membership, please make photocopies or request additional forms from National Office. You do NOT have to pay the registration fee if you are attending Fraternity Night Banquet only, but you will still need to register and pay the \$75 meal fee.

Note: For purposes of this memo, the word "delegate" only refers to the chapter or alumnae delegates and not the alternate delegate.

CONVENTION DELEGATES

Every collegiate chapter is required to send a delegate and alternate delegate to Convention. Chapters/Colonies are to send the Pledge Sister Educator of their Chapter as the Alternate Delegate for Convention. The delegate's transportation, lodging, and meals will be paid by the National Fraternity. Everyone, including Delegates, must pay the registration fee (and any applicable late fees). In addition, Theta Phi Alpha's travel coordinator will make air transportation arrangements for all delegates (not alternate delegates) who will fly to Pittsburgh. The alternate delegate's expenses will not be paid by the National Fraternity, but each chapter should be responsible for reimbursing the alternate's expenses. Any chapter or colony not represented by a delegate and alternate delegate to Convention will be assessed a severe penalty of costs and fines. Further, attendance will be taken and fees assessed for any collegiate delegate or alternate delegate missing or arriving late to any business session or convention activity.

Although alumnae associations are not required to send a delegate to Convention, it is hoped that every association will be represented by both a delegate and an alternate delegate.

DELEGATE DESIGNATION FORM

A Delegate Designation Form is included in this mailing for all chapters and alumnae associations. Please complete these forms and return them to National Office. This form is required for your delegate to receive proper voting credentials for business sessions, as well as for our travel coordinator to book travel arrangements for the collegiate delegates. **FOR CHAPTERS AND ALUMNAE ASSOCIATIONS TO BE ELIGIBLE TO HAVE A VOTE AT CONVENTION, ALL FEES OWED TO NATIONAL OFFICE MUST BE PAID BY MAY 15, 2004. IN ADDITION, ALUMNAE ASSOCIATIONS MUST COMPLETE AN ANNUAL REPORT FOR BOTH YEARS OF THE BIENNIUM.**

DELEGATE ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

All collegiate delegates and alternates are required to stay at the Convention hotel. Hotel room arrangements for collegiate delegates and alternates will be determined by Theta Phi Alpha's Convention Committee and cannot be changed. All other Convention registrants may indicate their roommate preference on the registration forms. Collegiate delegates and alternates will be assigned to guest rooms with delegates and alternates from other collegiate chapters.

TRAVEL COORDINATOR

Our travel coordinator, Becky McLaren, is willing to make flight arrangements for any sister who is traveling to convention. If you wish to have her make your arrangements, please email (tpapenquin@aol.com) her the following information: name, address, phone number, email, departure date with airport/city, return date with airport/city, preferred seating, preferred airline, and credit card information. Please put "Theta Phi Alpha Convention" in the subject line. If you wish to call Becky with your credit card information, her number is (305) 252-8570 (please do not call after 9 pm EST). **Note for National Officers and alternate delegates:** It is preferred but not required that you have our travel coordinator make your travel arrangements.

CONVENTION COSTS

Costs for collegiate delegates

Every collegiate chapter is required to send a delegate and alternate delegate to Convention. The delegate's transportation, lodging, and meals will be paid by the National Fraternity. Delegates are responsible for paying the registration fee (and any applicable late fees). In addition, Theta Phi Alpha's travel coordinator will make air transportation arrangements for all delegates (this does not include alternates) who will fly to Pittsburgh. The alternate delegate's expenses will not be paid by the National Fraternity, but each chapter should be responsible for reimbursing the alternate's expenses.

Costs for persons other than collegiate delegates

Convention costs include the registration fee, hotel room, and meal package. As previously noted, the registration fee for Convention is paid by every attendee. You must be registered in order to attend business sessions, workshops, and social events, and to receive Convention materials. Persons who are not registered will not be eligible to take advantage of the Convention lodging rates or food packages. Please note that a discount is provided to those sisters whose registration forms are postmarked prior to May 1. Late fees are assessed for persons registering after May 15. The only event that may be attended by non-registrants is the Fraternity Night Banquet (see the descriptions of the meal packages below).

Hotel

Lodging will be billed to you directly by the Convention hotel at a cost of \$104 per night per room, plus applicable tax (for a total cost of approximately \$120 per room per night). The room cost is divided by the number of persons staying in the room. If four people stay in a room - Thursday through Saturday nights (three nights) - the hotel bill for each person will be approximately \$90. For two people in a room, the cost for the same three nights would be approximately \$180 per person. Please indicate on your registration form your desired roommates. If you do not indicate roommate preferences, roommates and number of people in a room will be determined by the Convention Committee.

Meal Packages

Various meal packages are available. All meal packages include tax and gratuity. Because of our tight schedule, as well as the numerous announcements and presentations which take place at meals, it is recommended that Convention participants buy the meal package which coincides with their length of stay at Convention, rather than attempting to eat somewhere else on their own.

The full food package includes a full dinner and speaker on Thursday night; three meals and one wellness break on Friday; two meals on Saturday; and Sunday breakfast. Note: Saturday lunch is not included in the meal plan. The cost of the complete meal package is \$235.

An alternative meal package includes only the Saturday and Sunday meals (two breakfasts, and Fraternity Night Banquet), and costs \$100.

Finally, you can choose only to attend Fraternity Night Banquet, at a cost of \$75.

Sisters who have attended five or more Conventions are invited to the Compass Club Ceremony and Luncheon at noon on Saturday, at no additional cost. To register for this luncheon, you must check the box for Compass Club on the convention registration form.

For the Fraternity Night Banquet, attendees will have a choice of dinner entrees – Prime Rib au jus with roasted onion bread pudding, Chicken Wellington – breast of chicken topped with a mushroom duxelle wrapped in puff pastry then baked and topped with zinfandel wine sauce or Filet of Sole with diced tomatoes, mushrooms, and parsley in white wine sauce.

Vegetarian, kosher, and other special meals are available; please indicate these preferences on the registration form.

All meals will be served in banquet rooms. Food cannot be taken from the dining areas into the business sessions.

CONVENTION AGENDA OVERVIEW

Here is a brief overview of the agenda for Convention.

Thursday: Welcome Session; Dinner; Workshops; Ritual Rehearsal and social events. Andrea Mosby will be the opening program of the 2004 Convention.

Ms. Mosby is a consultant who discusses the "relation between good decisions and personal success." Through her presentation, she teaches students to "make decisions that are in alignment with their values and goals." Using the acronym D.E.C.I.S.I.O.N.S., Ms. Mosby creates a guide for decision making that students can use in any situation. With over seventeen years of experience in speaking with students, she is sure to have the participants viewing challenging decisions in a different, more positive manner.

Friday: Convention Opening; Seating of Delegates; Speeches from nominees for elected positions; Opening Business Session to vote on proposals; Workshops on a variety of topics (including pledge sister education, women's health issues, recruitment, ritual, standards board operations and many others), and Songfest.

Saturday: Founders' Breakfast at which scholarships are presented; Business Session to vote on proposals; election of certain national officers; the Compass Club Luncheon for those sisters who have attended five or more National Conventions; Town Meeting talk with Grand Council; Convention group photo; and the Fraternity Night Banquet, at which national awards are presented.

Sunday: Catholic Mass (optional); Memorial Service; installation of the Grand Council; and Convention Wrap-up. Convention ends at noon on Sunday.

FRATERNITY BUSINESS

The proposed changes to the National Constitution and Bylaws and Ritual, will be voted upon during the business sessions. Your chapter or alumnae association should discuss these matters fully, to enable your delegate to properly represent your group's position. **All information on proposals to be voted on at convention will be sent in a separate mailing.**

CONVENTION CHOIR *New to convention!*

Sign up now to be a part of a new convention tradition - the first Theta Phi Alpha Choir. You will be included in several rehearsals and will perform with fellow sisters from across the country as we raise our voices in the largest Theta Phi Alpha singing event ever! Choir participants will learn some newly discovered songs from the early days of Theta Phi as well as some favorites with new harmonies. Cathy Billoni, National Song Chair, will contact you approximately one month prior to convention. Questions can be directed to her at cathy.billoni@fds.com or (954) 442-3066.

ATTIRE

With the exception of Songfest (which is more casual), attire for Convention business sessions, workshops, meals, and presentations is business attire. Clothes which would be suitable in a professional office are appropriate. Jeans, sweat pants, jerseys, letter shirts, or casual shorts are not permitted at Convention activities. Fraternity Night Banquet, which is the awards dinner on Saturday night, is dressy (semi-formal). Sisters are encouraged to wear Theta Phi Alpha letters and/or colors for Songfest on Friday night.

MERCHANDISE

The Penguin Shoppe will sell Theta Phi Alpha merchandise at various times throughout the Convention. Chapters, colonies, or alumnae associations may also sell Theta Phi Alpha merchandise to Convention attendees. Contact National Office if you wish to reserve table space in the Penguin Shoppe.

Also, a professional photographer will take photographs during the Convention. Copies of these photographs will be available for purchase.

T-SHIRT RAFFLE

The traditional T-shirt raffle will be held during Songfest. This is an opportunity to share Theta Phi Alpha T-shirts, letter shirts, jerseys, hats, and other paraphernalia, donated by chapters and sisters. Items donated to be raffled can be brought to the Convention Registration Table. Raffle tickets will be sold throughout the Conference for \$1 each (6 for \$5). All proceeds from the raffle will be donated to the Founders' Foundation of Theta Phi Alpha, Inc.

HELP NEEDED

We will need approximately six (6) marshals during Convention business sessions. These sisters help distribute relevant documents and facilitate communication among women attending Convention. Delegates are ineligible to be marshals. However, if other members of your chapter, colony, or alumnae association are attending Convention and would like to help, please indicate on the Registration Form. In addition to marshals during business sessions, we also welcome help from sisters willing to serve as hostesses or volunteers.

SMOKING POLICY

No smoking will be permitted in any meeting rooms or dining rooms during Convention.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

An ecumenical memorial service honoring our Founders and other members of Theta Phi Alpha's Eternal Chapter will be held on Sunday morning. There is a Catholic church within walking distance from the hotel. This information will be provided in your confirmation packet.

SPENDING MONEY

Bring enough funds. Be sure to bring enough cash, travelers' checks, personal checks, or major credit cards in order to pay for your hotel bill, photographs, merchandise, raffle tickets, souvenirs, and transportation to and from the airport, and other incidentals. Also, remember that the Founders' Foundation Roll Call will be held during the Fraternity Night Banquet, during which sisters are asked to donate a monetary amount for each year since their initiation (e.g., \$1 per year, \$2 per year, etc.).

As you can see, we have a busy Convention. This will be an occasion where you can really learn from your sisters, share information with each other, and establish friendships that will take your Theta Phi Alpha experience far beyond what you may have encountered at the chapter level. We encourage you to get involved and make the most of it.

Please contact National Office if you have any questions. See you in June!