

Communications From International

August, 2014

PACKETS ARE ON THE WAY!

Vice-President packets and Recording Secretary Kits have been mailed. Officer packets are in progress and will be mailed soon.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION NEWS

Convention Rates Set: Registration fees for the 2016 International Convention in Kansas City, Missouri (Aug. 4-7, 2016) are now set. The rate for members and female guests is \$300. The rate for male guests is \$200 (they will have all meals with members except the continental breakfast on Friday and the brunch on Saturday). Bus transportation and tours of the International office are included in the fee. Additional tours to historic, shopping and entertainment destinations may be available on a “pick and pay” basis.

As a reminder, we need to obtain a better idea of how many guests plan to attend, as this may affect room rates. If you wish to attend (and we hope you do!) we'll need a full \$100 deposit by Feb. 15, 2015. We can't guarantee your attendance if we don't have your full deposit by that date. However, you can reserve a spot immediately by putting down at least \$20 in the meantime, provided you pay the full deposit by Feb. 15, 2015. As many of you who have hosted conventions know, your early deposit is extremely helpful for planning purposes.

You can make a hotel room reservation with the Westin Kansas City at Crown Center through the 85th Anniversary Convention page on our web site. Please do not call the hotel directly.

BSP Express: California sisters have organized a “BSP Express” train trip from California to Kansas City to attend the 2016 International Convention. The train leaves Los Angeles on Tuesday evening, Aug. 2, 2016, and will arrive in Kansas City on the following Thursday morning. Sisters can board at various stations along the route through California, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Kansas. We already have some 75 sisters signed up! A \$50 deposit will hold your place on the train, but we won't know exact group rates until Aug. 2, 2015 (exactly a year prior to departure). To learn more, please see the August 2014 issue of *The Torch*, or email Janice Scheible, California Torchbearer Delta, Bakersfield, at BSP-KC-Train@att.net.

GIFT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Officer Pins: Newly designed chapter officer pins have arrived! Be sure to order some for your chapter. You can view the latest Gift Catalog in the August issue of *The Torch*.

BSP Cookbook Sale! The Gift Department is having a blowout sale: the 2009-10 BSP Cookbook is now only \$5 plus shipping and handling. It's the perfect gift for anyone who loves to cook!

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EXCITING NEWS FROM THE RUSHING DEPARTMENT

Winners of 2013-14 Rushing Contests: The winner of the contest for a Convention Registration is Jane Johnston of Alabama Laureate Rho, Jasper. We can't wait to find out which convention she chooses!

The Rushing Department will sponsor the same contest for the 2014-15 sorority year. As a member, each time you encourage a new pledge to join, you and the pledge will be entered to win a convention registration (up to \$200). The drawing will be on June 1, 2015. Please note that Honorary Members do not qualify.

Some other contest winners:

- Legacy \$25.00 Gift Certificate: Jennifer Durham Illinon Psi Omicron, Eldorado
- Envoy \$25.00 Gift Certificate: Joyce Keller, Florida Laureate Epsilon Theta, St. Petersburg
- Envoy \$25.00 Gift Certificate: Lois Smith, Alabama Eta Nu, Mobile

Congratulations to our winners! Be sure you're included in this year's gift certificate drawings by enrolling our Legacies, Envoys and Envoy IIs this sorority year.

Friendly Venture Wall of Fame: The Rushing Department at International now features a Friendly Venture Wall of Fame. Each new Friendly Venture chapter that is established will have its chapter name and organizer's names permanently written on a brick on the west wall of the Rushing Department. We know this will become a commemorative place to visit for anyone who was involved in the creation of that chapter!

New VP Rushing Charms: A new gold rushing charm is also available for ice Presidents. It is in the form of a torch and is sent to a chapter Vice President when she successfully adds three pledges to her chapter in the same year. If she adds seven or more pledges, all the officers of her chapter will receive the gold rushing charm and the chapter will become an automatic Four-Star Yardstick rating for the sorority year! And that's not all. Each Vice President who acquires five pledge or more for their chapter will not only be featured in *The Torch*, but will also have their name, chapter name and location in a framed Document of Achievement which will be permanently displayed at International for all future visitors to see.

EXCESS DEGREE MONTHS

If you had excess lower degree tiem, it was automatically moved to the next degree level for all active members. This process should be finalized by Fall 2014. If you have any questions, please contact your Division Chairman.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE PROGRAM CREDITS

Any member who has member-at-large time may make up any of those months by completing one program report per month of Member-at-Large time. There is no time requirement on how long it must take to earn those months – it's up to you how quickly you wish to do this. It takes 12 programs to make up one year. Program outlines are online. To access them, go to the More Members Only tab on the drop-down menu and pick the program you would like to use.

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Go through it thoroughly and do the research as you would in a traditional program. When you are ready, click on the Members Only tab and on the drop-down menu, select Fill-In Forms. There you will find a Program Report Form. Fill in the form and submit it to earn one month of progression time. If you're not sure how many member-at-large months you have, or if you have any other questions about this process, please call your Division Chairman.

TORCH CHAPTER SUBSCRIPTION CHALLENGE

The Torch Chapter subscription challenge is going well! Remember that if only one member from each chapter subscribes to the print edition of *The Torch*, the magazine will thrive for years to come. The chapter copy can be shared with members, clipped for scrapbooks, and so on. Best of all, you'll notice in the last few issues *The Torch* has featured a "Torch Chapter" each issue. We select the chapter by randomly drawing one subscriber name. Her chapter becomes the Torch Chapter for that issue, with a page devoted entirely to them or the subject of their choice.

DO YOU KNOW A CELEBRITY?

The Torch is currently seeking a celebrity or other well-known individual to judge the 2015 Valentine Contest. Do you know someone suitable? Ask them if they'd be willing to hear from us, and let *The Torch* know! If you help us obtain a celebrity judge, you'll win free copies of our new large-print *Book of Beta Sigma Phi* and *Invitation to Life*!

LARGE-PRINT BOOKS

At the request of our members, International is working to make available large print versions of the *Book of Beta Sigma Phi* and *Invitation to Life*. These will be available on a print-on-demand basis through Amazon. The books are currently in the final proof stage and should be available by the end of August. Please call Seann McAnally at (816) 444-6800 or email torch@betasigmaphi.org if you have any questions about the large print books, as they are *not* handled through the Gifts Department.

ATTENTION CANADIAN MEMBERS

Just a reminder that ALL Canadian mail leaves International on Fridays only. Please plan accordingly when you order ritual supplies or other materials. Thank you!

POSTAL INCREASE

As of January 26, 2014, the U.S. Postal Service has increased all charges. Therefore, due to circumstances outside of our control, the base shipping cost for gift and office merchandise is now \$3.50.