

The Sword & Shield: an e-Newsletter from Warren G. Lee, Jr., 38th Grand Basileus

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FRIENDSHIP IS ESSENTIAL TO THE SOUL

DEAR BROTHERS OF OMEGA PSI PHI,

As we get closer to celebrating our 100th birthday, it is important to remember that Omega Psi Phi was founded on the idea of Friendship. WHY? Well, first, because our Founders were friends and they incorporated that ideal into the Fraternity's motto and purpose. Secondly, we will elect a new Grand Basileus at the next Conclave and most of the current candidates have argued that Omega men must come together to restore Friendship- in word and deed- as a corner stone. Lastly, as I prepare to pass on the mantle of leadership, I want to talk about what, I believe, it means to be a friend *and* why promoting a common understanding of such is critical to our continued growth and development.

"We should continue to focus on Excellence without Excuse."

What is a Friend? What does it mean to call another Friend within the context of Omega Psi Phi? What implications, if any, do these questions have for sustaining our Fraternity for the future? If you were to ask 20 Brothers what it means to be a friend, you are likely to get 20 different responses. Age, district, year of initiation, educational attainment and economic status are all factors that are likely to influence a Brother's response. For example, we all have friends who are not members of the Fraternity. Many of these folks we've known since we were kids! It doesn't matter whether we see them on a regular basis or not. We still call them friends. However, that might not connote the same level of friendship as "tight man" or "homey" in the Fraternity. The point: many of us have different points of view and therefore different meanings of friend.

BUT.....

I believe that the Founders shared a common notion of FRIEND/SHIP that was based on their upbringing and education. First, the Founders were versed in bible teachings as part of their home training. The *Dreer* history book makes reference to each of them as having been raised in Christian households. From the Bible they learned about the love and friendship shared by Jonathan and David in the Old Testament. And they also learned about unconditional/charitable love, *agape*, that is described by the Apostles John (3:16-18) and Paul (1 Cor. 13:4-7). Secondly, they were trained in traditional liberal arts education. At Howard University they all studied classical philosophy! They learned about Aristotle's discussion about friendship. He argued that there are three kinds of friendship; only one of which is essential. A person can make friends based on convenience of circumstances such as mutual business interests. One could also cultivate friendships around 'hanging out' or other recreational interests. These two types of relationships would last only as long as both parties could derive some benefit. Once the benefit was gone, so were your friends! According to Aristotle, however, the most important friends are those who help us to be our best morally, ethically and spiritually. This kind of friend challenges us to do our very best as human beings. This more virtuous (and therefore more lasting) friendship is represented by the *philia* in our fraternal motto. A "good friend" demonstrates the following on a consistent basis: a tendency to desire what is best for another Brother; sympathy and willingness to aid in times of trouble; honesty, perhaps in situations where it may be difficult for others to speak the truth; and mutual understanding.

As we enter another century of service, it is important that our recruitment, retention and leadership development activities seek to identify only those men who demonstrate the promise, potential and/or past performance to forge cooperative and supportive relationships that are based on mutual interests, esteem, affection and respect for Omegas' creed. So, be careful how you choose our FRIENDS.

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*It is not what we eat
but what we digest
that makes us strong;
not what we gain but
what we save that
makes us rich; not
what we read but
what we remember
that makes us
learned; and not what
we profess but what
we practice that gives
us integrity.*

Francis Bacon

NEW LAMP OF OMEGA PROGRAM

Recently, the Supreme Council voted to delay implementation of our new program to bring in new members. We will maintain the current MSP through July 2010. In the interim, we will train our leadership to implement the new program; recruit and train members for our new Omega Training Cadre and publish our new program materials.

As stated in our last newsletter, "The new and improved program will not only inform about our great organization, it will also add value to each candidate's growth experience. Sessions on leadership, etiquette, protocol, and community service will add a new dimension to our intake program. We are also adding a new instructor's manual and resource guide. We want to ensure that Omega Psi Phi Fraternity is presented uniformly to each candidate." We appreciate your patience as we try to get our Conclave mandate right.

THE 2010 76TH GRAND CONCLAVE REGISTRATION INFORMATION IS NOW OFFICIALLY AVAILABLE!



Please visit our website at www.oppf.org for the Conclave, Quette, and Que Kids registration forms. The preferred registration method is via the online lockbox system. There are also links available to print and mail the registration forms. Quette/Que Kid registration is not available via the online lockbox system and must be printed and mailed.

There is also a link to make your hotel reservations.

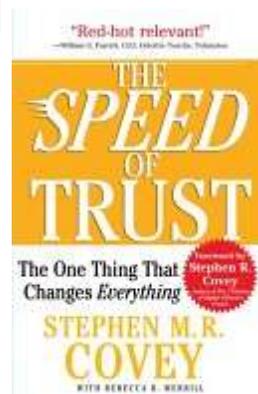
CONGRATULATIONS BROTHER RONALD C. MACHEN, JR.

Please join me in congratulating Brother Ronald C. Machen, Jr. (Alpha Mu chapter (Stanford) '91 and currently active in Theta Mu Mu), having been appointed by President Barack Obama and confirmed by the United States Senate, is now the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia. Brother Machen is truly a model for all Omegas to follow.



READER'S CORNER

The Speed of Trust by Stephen M. R. Covey



From Stephen R. Covey's eldest son comes a revolutionary new path towards productivity and satisfaction. Trust, says Stephen M.R. Covey, is the very basis of the new global economy, and he shows how trust—and the speed at which it is established with clients, employees and constituents—is the essential ingredient for any high-performance, successful organization. For business leaders and public figures in any arena, The Speed of Trust offers an unprecedented and eminently practical look at exactly how trust functions in our every transaction and relationship—from the most personal to the

broadest, most indirect interaction—and how to establish trust immediately so that you and your organization can forego the time-killing, bureaucratic check-and-balance processes so often deployed in lieu of actual trust.