

SAGA MONTHLY

SIGMA TAU GAMMA FRATERNITY

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SIGMA TAU GAMMA AND THE WAR - 1945

When the war started on December 7, 1941, a member of Sigma Tau Gamma was sitting on the roof of his barracks at Pearl Harbor. Hundreds of brothers were in training and in position in various parts of the world. Members of the fraternity met each other in Tokyo Bay when the time came for the final surrender.

All the way from Pearl Harbor to the Philippines, Africa, Italy, Normandy, India, China, Germany, the Aleutians, and Japan, more than three thousand members of the fraternity left their homes, their jobs, their colleges. More than one hundred never came back. Their blood is mixed with the water of the seven seas and the soil of six continents.

Unlike previous wars, World War II was fought with weapons, ships, planes, tanks requiring great technical training, and superior leadership. It took the full weight of every branch of the service and of every rank to do the job. It took men with experience and superior

education to serve as the leaders for this tremendous task. College men were in great demand and the percentage of commissions granted to members of Sigma Tau Gamma was very high, some chapters reporting as much as sixty to eighty percent of their members in service received commissions.

First lieutenants discovered that their second lieutenants were members. Pilots discovered that co-pilots were members and sang the fraternity songs together on their missions. Two members of the fraternity found each other and were out walking together one evening when they heard someone singing the "Rose of Sigma Tau." Orders for badges came in from all over the world. Letters came into the central office from every corner of the globe, expressing appreciation for the Saga, asking for the address of some member in service from the service files. They told of strange meetings in strange places, and all expressed the desire to get it over and come back home.

The chapters at home struggled along as best they could, with rapidly changing memberships and officers. Sometimes all members were gone, one or two members came back and lost no time in reorganizing. Campus members did their best to keep in touch with the members

away through the medium of chapter newsletters and personal letters.

Members on campus did many things to help with the war effort. Many held part time positions in defense plants. Chapters signed up for civilian defense work, gave blood, sold war bonds. Most of them were anxious to get into the scrap but were under age or physically disqualified. They were anxious to do all that they could and they did make a real contribution to the civilian effort. In various chapter homes and meeting places service flags went up and almost every chapter had its gold stars.

A member, Captain Leo J. Weber, Rho, flew his C-87 Liberator to chalk up the ten millionth mile flown on the "Fireball Express" between Miami and India. He had more than 2000 flight hours and thirty-six over water trips. Members crashed in the jungles and lived for weeks. Members were washed ashore on lonely islands and members felt the pain of German and Japanese treatment in prison camps.

The war is over, and we present this summary of our part in it in order that future fraternity historians will have information which is too well known to us all now.

THREE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT SIG TAU THIS MONTH

1

PILLARS FOR PURPOSE CAMPAIGN

The Pillars for Purpose Fundraising campaign is here! New for 2023, Pillars for Purpose focuses on six pillars that the Foundation helps support. Click [here](#) to learn more.

2

EXECUTIVE CABINET SURVEY

This month, executive cabinet members had the opportunity to help shape future resources through a membership survey.

3

WARD DEPARTS STAFF

After seven years, Director of Communications & SAGA Editor Greg Ward, Alabama, departs the Sig Tau Staff. Read more about his departure [here](#).

*Content in this issue has been re-printed from previous issues of the SAGA Magazine, including but not limited to copy, photos, and graphics.



SAGA MONTHLY

1

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TOP GUN: BETA PI CHAPTER ALUMNUS IS AIR FORCE FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR - 1995

As a pilot who has logged combat support time in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm, U.S. Air Force Capt. Steven L. Hopkins, Steve Hopkins WCMF, Beta Pi '85 (Frostburg State College), has had the opportunity to do something most of us have only dreamt about.



U.S. Air Force Capt. Steven L. Hopkins, WCMF, Beta Pi '85

As a C-130 Instructor Aircraft Commander, Capt. Hopkins, who served as Beta Pi Chapter President and Vice President of Membership as an undergraduate, currently trains new C-130 pilots for the United States Air Force.

The C-130 Hercules is the Air Force's premier theater airlift aircraft. The 100 feet by 133 feet plane weighs more than 150,000 pounds, and is capable of carrying 92 ground troops or 64 fully-outfitted paratroops and their equipment.

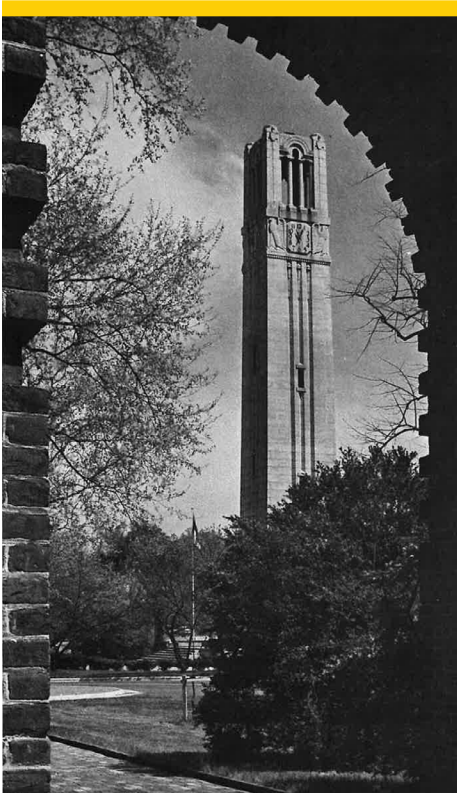
"Perhaps our most significant accomplishment was the movement of the 101st Army Airborne Corps and other supporting units to the western portion of Saudi Arabia during the first

several weeks of the 'air war' for what was known as the western flanking maneuver," Hopkins said. "We were flying more than 100 troops per lift, and were spaced only 15 minutes apart, 24 hours a day for more than two weeks. About a day later I was put on a mission to transport amunitions into Iraq to destroy the remaining runways at southern Iraqi Air Force bases," Hopkins said.

Perhaps the next best thing to having God as your co-pilot is having a Sigma Tau Gamma brother flying shotgun. In what later became the only documented exchange of the Fraternity grip over Bosnia, Hopkins discovered that copilot Todd Morey is a 1989 alumnus of Beta Theta Chapter (Purdue University).



EXPANSION PROGRAM SHOWS FRUIT - 1978



Fred Philips went through a list of male students at the University of North Carolina - Greensboro. From it, he selected the best men he could find, men who had demonstrated their leadership abilities and character through the course of study and their student activities. Together with Joe Musselli, he visited with each of them and soon 22 men started the first colony of a national fraternity at Greensboro.

The Greensboro colony represents part of a renewed emphasis on expansion in Sigma Tau Gamma, an emphasis that has resulted in the chartering of three new chapters in the past academic year, the reorganization of two others and the organization of three additional colonies.

Greensboro also represents the domino affect of an expansion program because the story of the Greensboro colony really starts four years ago when Joseph Musselli was hired as Sigma Tau Gamma chapter services director. Brother Musselli had just graduated from Southern Illinois University where he had served as chapter president and

where he had captured the attention of Executive Director William Bernier with his effective chapter leadership and his commitment to the Fraternity. While still a chapter president Brother Musselli had set as his goal the formation of a new chapter at the Illinois State University.

Brother Musselli was successful at Illinois State largely because he had recruited another exceptional leader, Michael Matznick. Brother Matznick served as president of the new Gamma Psi Chapter and, after his graduation, he replaced Brother Musselli as chapter services director. Brother Musselli was, in turn, promoted to the new position of director of expansion.

An active and alert professional staff, a concerned and committed group of alumni, and a little bit of luck had turned that first colony at Illinois State into a string of four new groups with two having achieved chapter status. The alertness of two Sig Taus also played an important part in the formation of a colony at Duquesne University that was recently chartered as Delta Beta Chapter. Brother John Paul Fink, of Beta Iota Chapter at California State College in Pennsylvania, helped his friend Greg Donolo get in touch with the national office after Greg had expressed an interest in forming a group at Duquesne. In addition to sending the professional staff on several visits, the national office contacted Regional Director Bernie Durkin who lives in Pittsburgh. Brother Durkin went to work immediately to help the new group and was a key influence on their successful organizational effort. It wasn't the first experience in expansion for Brother Durkin. He had played a key role in the organization of Gamma Upsilon Chapter at Point Park College in Pittsburgh several years earlier.

Not all colonies are started in this chain link fashion. At the University of Texas - Austin, Brother Musselli obtained an invitation to colonize after sending to the campus material prepared in the headquarters office. He spent many weeks organizing the group that was to charter as Delta Gamma Chapter on April 22 with 59 men.

It took a presentation to the IFC, each local chapter president and each local sorority chapter president in addition to the university administration to obtain an invitation to colonize at the University of

South Florida. An invitation was received in April and Brother Musselli immediately went to the school and organized a colony after spending a week there.

Brother Musselli's visit was followed by a visit by both Brother Musselli and Brother Matznick to recruit more members for the colony and to establish management programs. The national office had also recruited a volunteer, Brother Dave Kenyon, HON, Rho Chapter, to work with the group as regional director. Brother Kenyon lives in Jacksonville.

The Fraternity was able to start the colony in the spring, enabling the group to begin working toward a charter in the fall, because of extensive background work and preparation that allowed the professional staff to move quickly once the invitation to colonize had been received. Most of Sigma Tau Gamma's chapters are at the smaller state institutions in the mid west and south central regions. This is a legacy from the Fraternity's early history as a "teachers college" fraternity.

The time has come, Bernier says, to emphasize major campuses because Sigma Tau Gamma recognizes that having chapters on a state's major campus aids the recruiting strength of its chapters on all other campuses in the state.

The development of an expansion program requires a lot of background work, Brother Bernier says. In starting the current expansion program the headquarters office has put together a new expansion portfolio to send to colleges and universities in an effort to obtain invitations to colonize. Brother Bernier praised the work of Brother Joseph Musselli who joined Fraternity Composite Co. recently after two years as expansion director and two years as chapter services director. He also noted that Brother Michael Matznick, who has served for two years as chapter services director, has worked closely with Brother Musselli on expansion and will serve well as Sigma Tau Gamma's new expansion director.

The **SAGA**
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