



# The Sig House

*A Newsletter from the Board of Grand Trustees*

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## First Impressions

There is an old saying "You never get a second chance at a first impression". This is never truer than at the beginning of the school year when major recruitment takes place. Besides organizing informative and fun events for the prospective members, the chapter house needs to be looking its absolute best. Effective cleaning and removal of excess furniture and too long stored goods is a must. Windows, doors, walls and floors should be repaired and spit shined. In a phrase, "Put on the Ritz!" You'll make a good and lasting impression on potential members, their parents, alumni, university officials, the neighbors and the whole community.

**Cleaning the Barn.** Move in condition of the chapter facilities is often a wildcard. Some chapter houses are relatively well maintained while others "need work" (a lot of work). To attract the best pledges, the facilities should be clean and in good repair. Question: If the chapter house is a pig sty, what kind or pledges will you attract? (Answer: Pigs.) Strive for the best condition that your money and sweat equity can muster.

**Rental Agreements.** Part of moving back in the chapter house involves the business of landlording. House corporations which administrate owned facilities need to oversee signing of rental agreements and collection of rent and deposits. In chapter owned houses, sometimes rent collection is handled by active chapter and sometimes directly by the house corporation. For privately owned facilities where the landlord is a private investor or the university, the active chapter brothers sign a rental agreement with those entities. Yet, consider that most actives have little

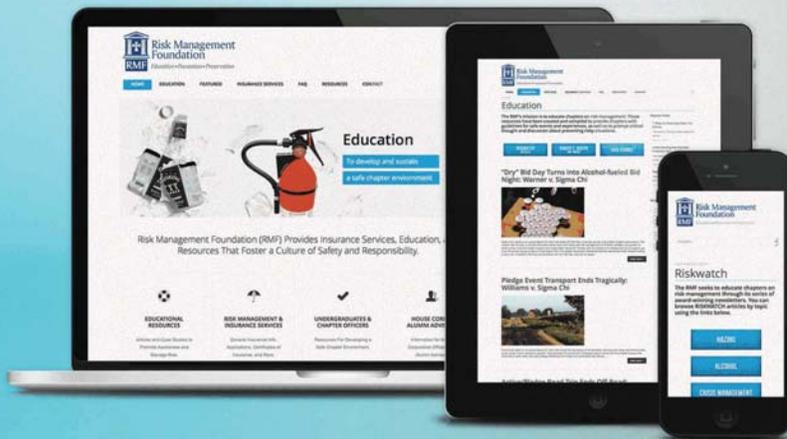
experience in Landlord Tenant law or the intricacies of real estate contracts. They usually appreciate the input from a caring and knowledgeable alumni brother who can assist in rental agreement review. If your chapter house is rented from others, do the active brothers a big favor and lend a hand in the rental process.

**Condition of Premises.** Whatever condition the facilities are in, a written Condition of Premises should be prepared by an experienced brother or property manager. That list should include a separate list for each bedroom and one for the common areas. A Condition of Premises specific to the bedroom occupied should be provided to each resident. The Condition of Premises for the common areas can be delivered to the Consul. Each one of these documents establishes a benchmark for measuring normal wear and tear which excludes broken windows, holes in the walls and doors and other damage not caused by normal wear and tear. It also documents if there are existing damages so that the tenant won't get blamed for something he didn't do. Upon move out, the Condition of Premises is used to compare move out with move in condition. If warranted, money can be retained from the security deposit.

**Security Deposit.** A reasonable amount of money should be collected from each tenant to secure payment of the rent and damage to the premises. This should be at least \$200 and more if you can get it. The security deposit may be inadequate to cover what is owed but at least it will help. You can press for formal collection of the balance if necessary.

**Rules.** A list of reasonable rules should be included in the rental agreement and

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clearly posted in the House including prohibitions on in-room appliances, smoking, candles, etc.

**Fire & Life Safety.** Evacuation routes and emergency procedures should be clearly posted and reviewed at the first active chapter meeting and again at the beginning of each semester. For owned chapter houses, the house corporation should perform at least quarterly inspections accompanied by the House Manager and Consul. Review the fire alarm system, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, exit signs and emergency lights for proper function. Hallways, stairwells and exits should be clear of obstructions.

**Cleaning & Maintenance Inspection.** At least every two months, the house corporation should inspect the facilities for cleanliness and repair. In particular, review the kitchen and bathrooms where unclean conditions are a health hazard. Take appropriate action.

**Fund Raising.** With rising cost of

operations, many chapters fall way short in rent revenue to address ongoing maintenance and repairs. Fund raising should be part of every house corporation's purpose. Even universities are constantly fund raising. Where do you think all those new dormitories and buildings come from? Fraternities are no exception. Fund raising has many benefits:

- ▶ Provides the money necessary to effect repairs.
- ▶ Provides a sense of higher purpose for the house corporation. Long term goals and execution is much more satisfying than short term crisis management.
- ▶ Creates a volunteer "magnet". Successful brothers like being part of a successful and visionary purpose.
- ▶ Rallies the alums. Even though many alums don't make it to Homecoming every year, newsletters showing them the good work their donations have facilitated do make a big impact

and reinforce the staying power of Sigma Chi.

As you enter the new school year, rally your house corporation to handle the business of effective chapter house management. Making a great first impression is worth its weight in gold and success breeds success. [HSV](#)

## Suspended Chapter Asset Management

Some house corporations may face a time when the active chapter charter is suspended by the general fraternity. This event leaves the house corporation with assets that must be managed without an active chapter to pay the carrying costs. There are typically both funds and real estate to deal with.

If a decision is made to sell the chapter house, what should happen to the sale proceeds and other funds held by the corporation? There are provisions of Sigma Chi Governing Law that may apply and the house corporation may

## Sigma Chi Fraternity's



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have specific requirements pertaining to sales proceeds. Review the articles of incorporation and bylaws for specifics. That notwithstanding, consulting with a knowledgeable tax attorney, CPA or your Grand Trustee is highly advisable.

Does this mean the chapter house of a suspended chapter always be sold? The answer varies. If the house corporation holds title to a property in good repair that could be leased out until the chapter can be re-chartered, then it may make sense to follow that course of action. However, if the house is in need of significant repair, structurally unsound or unsafe, the best course of action may be to sell. Regardless of the circumstances, the house corporation is charged with prudent action so consulting with a CPA and an attorney is highly recommended.

There may be significant tax consequences when a house corporation sells its house. Regardless of a corporation's non-profit status, the sale of house corporation-owned property may be subject to capital gains and other

taxes. A tax-free exchange under the IRS code might be a means to minimize a taxable event. A knowledgeable real estate attorney or CPA can explain available options.

While a charter suspension is a disheartening event, it often also provides another chance to do it better when rechartering can be accomplished. We commend you who serve unselfishly to provide safe and adequate housing to our undergraduate brothers.

By *Harvey Silverman* [IHSV](#)

### Summer Security

It's that time of year again. If the chapter house will be vacant for the summer, it's time to secure the building. Do a walkabout and:

1. Check all doors and locks; secure all windows and remove all personal valuables from the chapter house.
2. Arrange to have the house checked at least weekly during the summer to make sure all is in order. Make sure to

leave emergency contact information with all neighbors.

3. Turn off the water and natural gas supply.
4. Have a certified heating professional inspect your furnace operation, automatic shut-offs and venting.
5. Remove all combustibles such as paint and spray cans from the furnace area and store in a cool, dry place.
6. Empty all garbage and ensure no combustible items such as trash and paper are left in any public areas.
7. Make sure no electrical outlets are overloaded or potential fire hazards are left unattended. [IHSV](#)

### 2016 Outstanding House Corporation Awards

Each year, the Board of Grand Trustees honors those Sigma Chi house

corporations that demonstrate superior business practices in these 15 areas:

1. Have a minimum of 3 board members
2. Hold a minimum of 2 board meetings each year
3. Have adopted written bylaws.
4. Current with state/province reporting requirements.
5. House corporation funds are segregated from chapter funds.
6. Use a written rental agreement for each tenant.
7. Charge a tenant security deposit.
8. Have at least a weekly janitorial service.
9. Have a plan for replacing major building components.
10. Have a fire sprinkler system.
11. Have a professional property manager.
12. Publish at least 2 newsletters per year.
13. Maintain an alumni database.
14. Maintain a website.
15. Have an active fund raising campaign.

This year, 31 house corporations submitted applications for this prestigious award. The winners are (drum roll please):

### Gold Award (20-25 POINTS)

Bradley University  
 Clarkson University  
 DePauw University  
 Embry-Riddle-Daytona Beach  
 Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
 Kettering University  
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
 Oklahoma State University  
 Pennsylvania State University  
 Southern Methodist University  
 Syracuse University  
 Texas A&M University-Commerce  
 University of Arizona  
 University of Cincinnati  
 University of Denver  
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 University of Michigan  
 University of Minnesota  
 University of Montana  
 University of Pennsylvania  
 University of Texas-Arlington  
 University of Texas-Austin  
 University of Washington  
 University of Wyoming

Virginia Polytechnic Institute

### Blue Award (15-19 POINTS)

Clemson University  
 University of Arkansas  
 University of British Columbia  
 University of North Alabama  
 University of St Thomas

Congratulations to these hard working and effective house corporations. **IHSV**

## House Corporation Training Webinars

Based on the overwhelming success of our November 2015 Fundraising 101 Webinar, more webinars are planned for 2016. Watch your Inbox for registration information! **IHSV**

## House Corporation Resource Directory

### ARCHITECTURAL & PLANNING SERVICES

**Aynesworth Architects & Consultants 512.328.2272**  
 G. Tim Aynesworth [tim@aynesworth.com](mailto:tim@aynesworth.com)  
 PO Box 161434, Austin TX 78716 [www.aynesworth.com](http://www.aynesworth.com)  
 Architectural design and construction management.  
 Texas Registered Architect, Certified by National Council of Architectural Registration Board.

**Hug & Associates, LLC 678.297.2929**  
 Mike Hug [mhug@HugArchitects.com](mailto:mhug@HugArchitects.com)  
 5250 Avalon Blvd  
 Alpharetta GA 30009 [www.HugArchitects.com](http://www.HugArchitects.com)  
 Specializing in the design and renovation of fraternity housing.

**Reid Studio Architecture LLC 217.390.7403**  
 Rod Reid [rod.reid@comcast.net](mailto:rod.reid@comcast.net)  
 Chapter house renovation and construction design; collects data, analyzes project requirements, develops cost estimates; assists locating design and construction team members.

### CHAPTER HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

**Pierce Education Properties, L.P. 619.297.0400**  
 Matt Maruccia, VP for Acquisitions  
[www.PierceEducationProperties.com](http://www.PierceEducationProperties.com) National developers, buyers, owners and operators of student housing with specific expertise in Greek Housing acquisition, disposition, development, finance, etc.

### CHAPTER HOUSE FINANCING

**Constantine Capital, Inc. 816.300.0604**  
 Bob Schock [robert.schock.zo@sigmachi.com](mailto:robert.schock.zo@sigmachi.com)  
 Affordable financing to Sigma Chi house corporations for chapter house purchase, life & safety upgrades, new construction, renovation and loan guaranty

### CHAPTER HOUSE RENOVATION & DESIGN

**LAUNCH Interior Design 916.660.9856**  
 David Leinberger [launch@starstream.net](mailto:launch@starstream.net) [www.launchinteriordesign.com](http://www.launchinteriordesign.com)  
 C 916.769.2464  
 New construction and renovation for cost effective and efficient design selections including paint colors, furniture, lighting, window & floor coverings and more.

### FINANCIAL & DATABASE MANAGEMENT

**GreekBill, Inc. www.greekbill.com 800.457.3816**  
 Web-based billing and financial management service

enables billing, collecting, budgeting, reporting, online payment options

**OmegaFi www.omegafi.com 800.276.6342**  
 Chapter and alumni management tools to bill and collect dues and rent, manage rosters and records, pay bills and employees and file tax returns.

### FOOD SERVICES

**Campus Cooks 847.309.1859**  
 William Reeder [wreeder@campuscooks.com](mailto:wreeder@campuscooks.com)  
 Comprehensive program: on-site cook plus management of staffing, payroll, food and supply ordering, menu preparation. [www.campuscooks.com](http://www.campuscooks.com)

### College Chefs

Jordan Wigton [jwigton@collegechefs.com](mailto:jwigton@collegechefs.com) **217.369.7267**  
[www.collegechefs.com](http://www.collegechefs.com) We provide trained professional chefs to prepare delicious meals and maintain a spotless kitchen.

### Culinary Consultants Purchasing Services

Stan Faulkner [Support@infoccps.com](mailto:Support@infoccps.com) **314.422.3407**  
 Brian Heider [www.infoccps.com](http://www.infoccps.com) **847.566.7533**  
 National buying program exclusively for fraternity chapters with food programs. Instant cost savings with no major changes to existing food program.

### Gill Grilling

**443.822.0264**  
 Brian Gill [brian@gillgrilling.com](mailto:brian@gillgrilling.com)  
[www.gillgrilling.com](http://www.gillgrilling.com) Equipment consultation & purchasing, Nutritional analysis, payroll, custom menus. Serving Maryland, Massachusetts & Alabama.

### Greek Kitchen Management

**623.565.8289**  
 Justin Rolnick [info@greekkitchenmanagement.com](mailto:info@greekkitchenmanagement.com)  
[www.greekkitchenmanagement.com](http://www.greekkitchenmanagement.com) Kitchen management program: staffing, ordering and food preparation. Cleaning products: cleaning chemicals, supplies & paper goods

### FLOORING

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 Greg Woodman [greg@affinityconnection.com](mailto:greg@affinityconnection.com)  
[www.affinityconnection.com](http://www.affinityconnection.com) Database management, website hosting/management, newsletter production, e-newsletters, fundraising assistance, donation processing

### Member Planet

**888.298.8845**  
 Patrick Terrian **C 310.590.4413**  
[pterrian@memberplanet.com](mailto:pterrian@memberplanet.com) [www.memberplanet.com](http://www.memberplanet.com)  
 Email newsletters and text messaging, chapter websites, member database, donation sites.

### Pennington & Associates

**785.843.1661**  
 Patrick Alderdice [palderdice@penningtonco.com](mailto:palderdice@penningtonco.com)  
[www.penningtonco.com](http://www.penningtonco.com) Capital campaign coordination, gift management, alumni relations programs, website development

### The Laurus Group

**770.903.3987**  
 Bill Paris [bparis@thelaurusgroup.net](mailto:bparis@thelaurusgroup.net) **C 404.441.9630**  
[www.thelaurusgroup.net](http://www.thelaurusgroup.net) Fundraising consulting specializing in capital campaigns, gift management, alumni communications, annual funds

### HOUSE DIRECTOR SEARCH & SCREENING

**Greek House Resource 361.450.0818**  
[greekhs@gmail.com](mailto:greekhs@gmail.com) [www.greekhouse.net](http://www.greekhouse.net)  
 Screen, interview and placement for chapter house directors.

### INCORPORATION ASSISTANCE

**Grand Trustee Harvey Silverman 703.319.8806**  
[harveyas@aol.com](mailto:harveyas@aol.com)

Do you provide a product or service for Sigma Chi Fraternity chapter houses? Get listed in The Sig House Resource Directory! Email [rich.thompson@sigmachi.com](mailto:rich.thompson@sigmachi.com)  
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Missing: Dan Harrop





# LIFE LOYAL SIG

Life Loyal Sigs are part of a brotherhood of young and old alumni who continue to reap the benefits of Sigma Chi membership long after their college years are over. Life Loyal Sigs exemplify the prosperity, achievement, idealism and deep sense of personal responsibility that we all wish for ourselves and our families. A Life Loyal membership is the best way for members to take part in the enduring spirit and heritage of Sigma Chi.

The first Life Loyal Sig was William “Pop” Henning, **DEPAUW 1890**, who is most commonly known for leading the Fraternity through the difficult years of the World War I era. Since that time, more than 58,000 brothers have become Life Loyal Sigs.

A Life Loyal Sig membership allows brothers to;

- **Stay in Touch**
  - Receive a subscription to *The Magazine of Sigma Chi* and learn of the lives and achievements of the Fraternity’s more than 240,000 living members.
  - Gain special recognition in both *The Magazine of Sigma Chi* and The Sigma Chi Fraternity Membership Directory
- **Save Money**
  - Save 5% at the SigmaChiStore.com
  - Additionally, save 18.55% each month on select exclusive Life Loyal Sig items
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  - Save 15% at Signature Announcements personal stationary and gifts
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- **Advance the Fraternity’s Mission**
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  - Personalized membership card
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  - A limited-edition gift only available to new Life Loyal Sigs
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- 12 monthly installments of \$35 (credit cards only)

**Special Semi-Century Subscription plan**

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*\*Make checks payable to Sigma Chi Fraternity\**

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- MasterCard
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CV Number \_\_\_\_\_ (The three digit number shown on the back of your credit card)

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Where you would like materials shipped:

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**Mail completed forms to:**

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C/O Life Loyal  
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Evanston, IL 60201**

For any questions please contact headquarters at 847-869-3655 ext. 255 or email [lifeloyal@sigmachi.org](mailto:lifeloyal@sigmachi.org)