

Preparing Oregon Alpha for the Next 100 Years

By: JANET UHLENHAKE CLAY, Oregon Alpha

Nearly seven years ago, I found myself in a new town, divorced with grown children. I needed a connection, and I found it in Pi Beta Phi. By chance, I met Oregon Alpha SHARON LOOMIS GREIG. She asked if I might want to help on the Chapter House Corporation (CHC) for the Oregon Alpha Chapter at the University of Oregon. I had extensive career experience as a developer and property manager, and I thought it might be a good fit.

Since then, my CHC role has become a big part of my life. I've even served as CHC President for five of the last seven years. How great is it to take the gifts and talents you have developed over a lifetime and use them to create something of meaning and value?

Right now, the Oregon Alpha CHC is working on three initiatives to add meaning and value to the chapter. First, we are conducting a capital campaign through Pi Beta Phi Foundation with the goal of raising \$350,000 toward our building project. Second, we are working on a \$1.35 million addition and renovation to the chapter house. Third, we are helping plan the Oregon Alpha Centennial Celebration that will take place this September in Eugene, Oregon.

How can we do all this, you might ask? One simple formula: a strong CHC and a shared love of, and commitment to, the Oregon Alpha Chapter. (Coincidentally, all of our CHC members are also alumnae of Oregon Alpha). SHARON LOOMIS GREIG is responsible for making our CHC a pillar of financial strength. MARGARET BRENNAN STEVENSON makes sure we pass every inspection with flying colors and is our in-house project manager, ensuring every contractor does exactly what he or she is supposed to do. MERRY HUMPHREY MELONAS brings her long-time expertise in restaurant management to upgrade the kitchen. PAM STOUT BORGMAN, a college counselor, heads our capital campaign and keeps our social media humming. NANCY PIAZZA COBB is an interior decorator with an incredible sense of taste and value. KELSEY JENSEN LEWIS is a CPA who chairs the Centennial Celebration and brings the older ladies on the CHC, like myself, up to speed with technological innovations allowing us to do more with less.

The best part of serving on Oregon Alpha's CHC is that we have the opportunity to help create a wonderful Pi Phi



From left, Project Superintendent Tim Jacobs and Oregon Alpha Chapter House Corporation President JANET UHLENHAKE CLAY, Oregon Alpha, break ground on the chapter's building addition.

experience for the Oregon Alpha collegians. In recent years, the chapter's membership has grown from 100 members to more than 200, meaning most collegians do not live in the house and only come to the house to study and socialize. That meant our CHC needed to facilitate a renovation focusing on both safety and added space to accommodate the increased number of members.

After the renovation is complete, the Oregon Alpha Chapter house will have a first-floor library addition, an expanded dining room and a state-of-the-art study lab in the basement. It also will have additional stairways and exits to safely accommodate more occupants as well as a walkway and first-floor bathroom that is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Lastly, the renovation includes an upgrade to the House Director's quarters, including a kitchenette, office and bathroom. We cannot wait to see these new spaces when they are completed this fall. We hope they not only provide the chapter with more physical space, but also provide the space for many Pi Phi friendships to bloom. ↪