

Professor Irwin Corey said in 1914: "If we don't change direction soon, we'll end up where we're going." At the University of Illinois, we are asking ourselves where is it that the Anthemios chapter is going? We are at a crossroad in our history, when we have the choice to be complacent and go along with the flow, or we can stand up and actively address our current challenges. Instead of waving off these opportunities, we the actives of Anthemios are embracing them as a chance to build on our rich history and propel our chapter into the 21st century.

We are truly at a turning point in the 90-year history of Alpha Rho Chi. Within the next 5 and 10 years we are laying a plan to renovate the chapter house and improve life safety and comfort for active members. In the years to come, we will install a sprinkler system, upgrade the wiring and technological systems, renovate the rooms and kitchen, and repair the roof and gutters.

The chapter has set up a committee, working with Greg Hargus and Doug Milburn, to investigate ways to improve the physical chapter house. Codes and policies have necessitated the installation of a full house sprinkler system throughout the house, as well as a complete overhaul of the roof and gutters. At the same time as this construction is taking place, we are investigating a kitchen remodel, air conditioning, a computer lab and studio, an exercise room, more furniture, and the hiring of a cooking staff. Over the past year, we have begun the renovation of the rented rooms. Five of these have been improved through plasterwork, refinishing of the floors, permanent furniture, and repairs. Also, to boost the income of the property, we are investigating ways to allow more people to occupy the space. These include a possible loft space on the top floor and features to make the chapter house more desirable. Finally we are looking at ways to utilize the house over the summer, so that it does not sit empty for three months. The University of Illinois' summer 'Discover Architecture Program' for high school students potentially entering the University would be an excellent way for us to rent the space, while acquainting future students with the Fraternity.

With all of this thought to the future, we must not forget the present greatness of our active chapter. Our current members are the force within the Fraternity, and we must not focus so much on future improvements that we lose sight of the actives. Thus, this year we have focused on spending our time in Chapter Meetings on events related to the actives, rather than future projects.

2004 was a time in which we have spent much time spreading the name of Alpha Rho Chi into the University community. Most recently, we hosted the ARUPLA (Architecture, Urban Planning, and Landscape Architecture) Open House lunch at our chapter house. This was an excellent opportunity for our actives and alumni to meet and greet about 30 students and their parents from the Chicago area, who might attend the University next year.

Our Faculty Holiday Banquet in December was held this year at the Erlanger House in Urbana, an architecturally significant modernist house by local architect Jack Baker, and owned by the University. Students created a fantastic presentation of food and live music to set the backdrop for interaction between staff and students.

Our many younger members have been busy this semester with sophomore studio, and older members have frequently visited them to share their knowledge and experience with desk critiques, and provide much needed late night snacks.

To get more involved in the community, the Anthemios actives have participated in several volunteer opportunities. We have worked a children's carnival at a local school, have collected food, and have showed off our athletic skills in a charity soccer and broomball tournament. After Spring Break, we will open our house as one of the Artist Friendly Venues for the Boneyard Art's Festival in town. We will display art by University professors, staff, and students, to encourage interaction between the community and members of the student and staff population.

Other events thus far in the 2004-05 school year were the White Rose Formal, held in the fall at the Raintree Resort in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin. We took our minds off the cold, snow, and classes with a weekend at the indoor waterpark, dance and banquet. Over Homecoming weekend, despite the mediocre football season, many alums returned to campus to relive campus days, discuss current issues at the Alumni meeting, meet other graduates at a school barbeque, and play a game of actives vs. alums football! Our Dad's Day celebration was also a great success this year. Many dads and families participated in the campus wide events as well as a lunch and fundraising poker tournament at the house.

House trips have been very popular over the last few years, and this year has been no exception. From camping in Indiana, to European vacations, the destination is made more enjoyable by traveling with brothers. Over winter break, four of us went to Belgium and France to visit our brothers studying in Versailles this year. The trip culminated with the engagement of another Anthemios couple. Other Anthemios are currently traveling to Arizona, Florida, and Las Vegas. This summer another group will visit Italy to visit brothers who will partake in the Rome Summer Program.

Our fall Rush program was one of our most successful recently. We had a lot of interest in Alpha Rho Chi, and we initiated a class of nine enthusiastic actives in January. The pledge semester was exciting, and successful. This last spring rush was also exciting. We ended up with a pledge class of 3 people, who I am sure will make excellent actives in a few months. We have also begun the planning for the Fall 2005 Rush program. We hope to have all incoming freshmen in Architecture and the Allied Arts over for a barbeque and open house at the beginning of school to introduce them to the actives, and encourage them to consider the Fraternity.

In the upcoming weeks and months of the school year, the Anthemios chapter will focus on our pledge class, and help them to become good actives. We will participate in the Boneyard Arts Festival, have a Mom's Day Open House and lunch, we will participate in desk crits. and reviews of our peer brothers so that we may have success in our studio projects. Finally, we will begin the exciting process of updating and upgrading our house for the 21st century so that it may be more profitable and comfortable. While we are at a crossroad in our history as a chapter, it is clear to our actives that the path to take is one not toward the flat monotonous planes, but toward the rising sun of change and success!

Fraternally Submitted,
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Worthy Architect
Anthemios Chapter
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