

LOOKING IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR

I have been searching and searching, but I am not finding what I am looking for. I am convinced that somewhere in the Bible, it says “Roll out those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer, those days of soda and pretzel and beer.” Obviously, God created the summer months so that we would have a time to kick back and relax and forget about the stress and strain of the workplace. If God created summer for that reason, surely these powerful words must be somewhere in Holy Scripture!

I think many college graduates sing a variation of these words upon receiving the diploma from their institute of higher learning. They graduate from college or university, and then move on, and those old college days are put behind them. Perhaps the words of the old “Whiffenpoof Song” are a better indicator of how graduates really feel:

*“From the table down at Mory’s to the place where Louie dwells,
To the dear old Temple bar we loved so well, ...
We will serenade our Louie while life and voice shall last,
Then we’ll pass and be forgotten like the rest.”*

Too many graduates feel that the higher education experience is simply that – an experience in which one gets involved for four or five years, and then life moves on. For those who think they will be forgotten, the college development and alumni relations offices often have a different idea! Letters and electronic communications come barreling down upon the graduate reminding them that they are a graduate of a fine institution and now they have a responsibility to support that institution so that others who follow can get the same fine education.

At Alpha Chi Rho, we see it a little differently. We say “Once a Crow, Always a Crow!” not to pile on another responsibility for an undergraduate or graduate Brother, but to remind ourselves of the privilege of calling ourselves a Brother of Alpha Chi Rho. When we say “Once a Crow, Always a Crow”, we are reminding ourselves that we are different from other men who have walked the same campuses we have. We are men who live by Landmarks, Landmarks crafted by our Revered Founding Brothers over a century ago. These are Landmarks that have stood the test of time. In spite of societal changes, our Landmarks and the ideals which we hold dear have stayed constant.

If you’ve not thought about the Landmarks in a while, allow me to refresh your memory:

1. Membership from among those who are prepared to realize in word and deed, the Brotherhood of all men.
2. The insistence on a high and clean moral standard.
3. The paramount duty of Brotherly love among members.
4. Judgment not by externals, but by intrinsic worth; no one is denied membership in Alpha Chi Rho.

Imagine if every man stepping off of a college or university campus lived by these Landmarks! Imagine of every man treated a fellow man with the dignity and respect that we expect from each and every Crow who wears the badge of our Fraternity.

If you are a recent graduate, and you are looking forward to the lazy days of summer and not looking back on how your Fraternity experience enriched your life, please review the Landmarks listed above and think about how they can shape your life in service to others. We say “Once a Crow, Always a Crow” to remind ourselves that our pledge to the Bond is not just some empty words, but like the words spoken at a baptism, a bar mitzvah or a wedding, they are life-changing words, words of commitment and privilege.

You can demonstrate your commitment through a financial gift to the Fraternity or the Education Foundation. You can demonstrate your commitment through service to your Chapter or a Chapter near where you live. You can demonstrate your commitment by attending the Convention in Pittsburgh. You can demonstrate your commitment in the easiest way possible – live your life according to the Landmarks of our Fraternity. The world will be a better place for that, not just during the lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer, but throughout the entire year. As you move forward in your life, don’t forget to look back and reflect on those Fraternity Landmarks that shaped you and made you the man you are today. You will be blessed and the rest of us will be blessed through your commitment.

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