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VCMEP

Virtual Continuing Membership Education Program  
Kappa Kappa Psi National Honorary Band Fraternity

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<http://www.kkpsi.org>

## What to do over the summer

So many people think that Fraternity and band end at the end of the academic year. However, there is much yet to do.

This issue explores what you can do for your chapter or for your own musicianship over the summer. This is only the beginning – there are many other ways to

be an outstanding band leader all summer long.

Have a great summer, and I hope to see many of you at our upcoming Leadership Symposia!

Malinda

## Making the summer break work for you.

by Phil Rubin and Jen Murdock, Chapter Field Representatives

The summer break is a great time to relax, work, study abroad – any number of things. Because many bands are dormant for most of the break, our chapters are as well. However, summer can be an opportunity for your chapter to grow and plan, creating more time for service during fall and spring when the majority of students have classes. Consider the following as potential activities during down time:

### Create or Update Officer Guides

Do your officers keep guidebooks to provide to their successors? Officer Guides are not just notebooks or boxes full of papers, but actual documents that explain how to serve in specific offices in your chapter, what to expect, and how to be ready to face challenges that will arise. If your chapter doesn't already have guides for every office, spend the summer developing them with both the old and new officers. Tip: make them digital so that they can be backed up, shared, and updated with ease.

### Officer Goals and Strategic Planning

Are you an officer? If so, what is your plan for the next year? What do you want to accomplish? Have you actually sat down to plan, individually and as an officer corps? It's cliché, but completely true: if you fail to plan, plan to fail. Start the year with a plan in place that is

supported by your Director of Bands and Sponsor.

### Band Camp

Got a marching band? For most chapters, band camp is the first event of the year and it's often the biggest. Do you plan for it? Do you sit down with your director(s) and find out what they needed? Do you discuss how the chapter could improve service projects during band camp? Chapters handling major events, such as band camps, should have a written plan in place well before embarking on such a task. The time to plan is early in the summer, not toward the end or at the first meeting of the school year. Most excellent service projects require extensive preparation that involves multiple parties on your campus. Get the prep work done in advance so that you can focus on putting the plan in place during the event.

### Improve Your MEP

Great chapters learn from every experience. What did you learn from your last membership class? If you really want to make sure your process is excellent, examine it over the summer when you have more time to discuss potential changes and application of the program.

### In Closing

Summer is all about preparation. When you follow a complicated recipe, the first step is preparing ingredients – the actual cooking comes afterward. Running a great chapter is like cooking a complex recipe – get the ingredients ready when you have time. Why wait?



## Community band – what might that be like?

Reflections from Adam Cantlev, National VP for Student Affairs

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#### Bulletin boards? Display cases?

It is easy to forget that students, faculty, and visitors (including potential members) look at bulletin boards and display cases throughout the summer.

Make sure your presence is fresh for the summer, and looks recently tended. You may wish to include:

- What is KKPsi?
- Sample campus projects
- Sample national projects
- A contact website and email for more information.

I can remember it well, and I am sure most alumni members can remember the same event. It was my last concert with the WVU Marching Band. I wouldn't be doing an ensemble in the spring because of student teaching. I remember playing my last few notes, well, not really playing. I was mostly crying with my friends Joe, Kelly, and Tiffany while I tried to play.

That night as I was cleaning out my flip folder and packing away my horn. All of sudden I had a realization. "Would this be the last time I played in band?" I was sure I would get the wild urge to play in my room from time to time, but it just wasn't going to be the same. I knew I was not going to play professionally, and my degrees in biology and education had not prepared me for any type of musical career. Maybe, this was it, I thought. I shut my case, left my saxophone in the corner of my room, and headed to bed.

When I went home after graduation to pack up my belongings for Stillwater, I looked at my saxophone. I took it out to play, mainly to continue my packing procrastination, and decided it was making the trip to Oklahoma. After all, if I hadn't looked at my mom when I was 11 and asked for a saxophone, I would have never had the chance to be the CFR for Kappa Kappa Psi. So as Crystal Finch (a fellow Omicron Brother) and I loaded up my pickup truck, my saxophone was placed in the back with great care amongst all the boxes, tarps, bungee cords, and tie-downs.

We hit the road and that night when we stopped in Missouri, I took my saxophone out and placed it in the cab of my truck behind the seat. People could have my DVD player, clothes, and the rest of my worldly possessions, but they were going to have to work a little harder to steal my saxophone.

I got settled into Stillwater and unpacked my belongings. Carolyn, my TBS counterpart (Now NCD Counselor), noticed my saxophone, and said, "Oh good, you can play in community band with me." A flood of scary notes, boring music I didn't enjoy, and geriatric English horn player memories filled my mind from my days of subbing with a local community band in high school. I wasn't quite sure how to respond, but I mustered

a smile and said, "Sounds great!"

Later, with reluctance and a feeling of obligation, I walked into the Stillwater Community Center. I sat down and began to get out my horn. Suddenly, the rest of my section sat around me. I was shocked to see familiar faces. Val Chilton, an active Alpha brother I met on my first day in Stillwater, handed me my music folder, and asked if I would share my stand.

Suddenly, to my right, Alpha Alumni members Dale and Lisa Croston were taking their seats. I was so excited. The other two saxophone players that sat first and second chair were area high school directors. We began to warm up, and I soon realized why they were sitting first and second chair. Around me in the swirl of notes, I heard some great sounds and saw some more familiar faces. I thought to myself, "Maybe this isn't going to be so bad." I decided to look through my music and see my copies of "First Suite in E flat" and "Second Suite in F," and to my surprise, we were not only playing traditional music, but also musical theater numbers, marches, and some popular music. We began playing our first piece, and it was "music to my ears." The group sounded great. Sure we had our bobbles and bumps, but what group doesn't? That first practice was so great. I began meeting people, played some new music, and I was in a band.

The summer went on and the group matured and improved each time we performed. We had our regular concerts on the library lawn, we had a sold out show in nearby Ponca City Oklahoma, and a Fourth of July concert at Boomer Lake in Stillwater followed by fireworks. Every concert was a great time. I never grew bored of throwing on the white polo shirt to perform, and I will admit that by the end of the summer, even this Mountaineer knew all the words to "Oklahoma!"

The Stillwater Community Band gave me a chance to support music and promote bands after I was finished with college. Much like we tell high school students that there is life in band after high school, there is life in band after college. We simply must choose to seek it out and take the opportunity. I encourage all of you to play after college. After all, we took an oath for life to support bands and music, not just through college.