

## Is the Music On?

Some years ago, when “talking” with friends over email from our offices across the nation, we all shared that we could tell when something wasn’t right in our lives, or at least in our day, if we had forgotten to play some music as we worked. We could tell if we were not at our best by simply asking, “Is the music on?”

In this issue, we discuss ways to make sure the music is “on” for your chapter, and that you are finding a variety of ways to incorporate music into all aspects of the life of your chapter.

This set of suggestions may inspire your own thoughts and ideas for incorporating music into every aspect of the life of Kappa Kappa Psi. As you generate those ideas, send them to me and to your district officers. These can be a great start of your district’s year, and if we gather enough ideas, we’ll do another issue with those additional ideas.

We’re in the home stretch of the year. Keep striving, and keep those questions coming!

Malinda

## Why is it important to keep music at the center of what our chapters do?

While some would think that being “National Honorary Band Fraternity” is enough for our musical obligation, but that is only the very beginning.

Why to we care about keeping music in our other activities?

- We keep our Fraternity mission at the center of our activities and plans.
- We remember what brought us

together, and where we first met the Brothers around us.

- Music brings fun and stress relief. I don’t think there is a Brother out there that doesn’t need both.
- Musical focus in our activities sets our Fraternity apart as unique. At a time when so many campus organizations look generic or similar, we should take special pride in our musical focus.

## We play in band. Isn’t that enough?

Playing in our bands is obviously the most important activity of Kappa Kappa Psi. However, our membership is called to not just show up like any other band member, but to truly lead.

Keeping a musical focus in other chapter activities helps your band performance in many ways:

- *Exposure to a wide variety of genres and performances* will help your performance and interpretation. You’ll understand more of the literature and of your director’s guidance.
- *Practice in listening is important.* Just as performance technique requires practice, so too does listening technique. You’ll become a quicker study.

- *Inspiration to elevate your performance* is vital to your band’s success. Hearing great performances can be the motivation you need to put an extra hour (or even an extra 15 minutes) into your preparation.
- *You arrive at rehearsal and performance ready to excel.* Music, like any academic language or athletic skills, is forgotten if you don’t keep up your skills through repetition.
- *Others see your dedication.* Whether they watch you at live performances or in preparation or not, your fellow band members can tell if you have spent time taking in more music. They know if you have the music on.



## Kappa Kappa Psi

PO Box 849  
Stillwater, OK  
74076-0849  
800-543-6505

Malinda M. Matney, Ph.D.  
National Vice President  
for Colonization and  
Membership  
mmatney@umich.edu

*Strive for the Highest*

---

We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.kkpsi.org](http://www.kkpsi.org)

---

### *Special Fraternity music: Kappa Kappa Psi songs and works*

Many chapters treat our Fraternity Song and Fraternity Hymn as afterthoughts, and the result sounds like it. If you have ever tried to sing with a group that didn't know the words or melody, and did not know why to care, you understand how painful this can sound.

A focus on learning the performance of our songs, and the history of other Kappa Kappa Psi music, can enliven your continuing membership education program:

- *Learn and practice the songs, including the harmonies.* The immediate impact of a half hour spent mastering this material will be evident.
- *Learn about other Kappa Kappa Psi music.* Kappa Kappa Psi has

worked, on its own and with Tau Beta Sigma, to commission many works. Our national commissioning program has added to the band literature substantially, and our chapters have also commissioned a variety of works.

- *Prepare to be a part of the next National Intercollegiate Band.* This program is a great way to meet Brothers and Sisters while making great music.
- *Come back to the songs, and reflect on the lyrics.* Our songs are a reflection of who we want to be: excellent leaders in bands who are woven into a lasting Brotherhood. Music ties us across all kinds of differences into one lasting fraternity.

### *What chapter activities can we do specifically related to music?*

This is the fun part of this issue: describing ways to bring music to chapter life. Some of these ways can be shared in more public settings, and some can be ways for your Brotherhood to bond in constructive ways.

- *Recitals.* Recitals can take many forms. The chapter can choose to have a recital for itself, enjoying how each Brother is growing as a musician (or even making internal goals for performance). The chapter may choose to host a recital for the band or for a larger audience. Whether just Brothers perform or a wider group performs, this provides both a fun musical outlet and a nice social event.
- *Have a performance at each meeting.* Throughout the year, a Brother or a group can perform small works at each meeting.
- *Share your favorite music with each other.* We all have those tunes or larger works that at the moment we are listening to repeatedly. Maybe we are living through an experience that makes us listen to certain songs. Sharing these with your

Brothers can give insight to what inspires you musically or what concerns you in your personal life.

- *Create a listening list at each meeting.* While you may not have time at each meeting to talk about each other's music at depth, you can create a list of one piece from everyone. This way, everyone carries a part of each Brother musically between meetings.
- *Turn other campus concerts into social events for Brothers.* Not every Brother is in every band at most campuses. Use these concerts as great social events. Enjoy the music as a group, and enjoy each other's company before or after the concert.
- *Put a suggested tune on the agenda of each meeting.* By listing one Brother's listening recommendation on your written meeting agenda, you add a common musical experience for the chapter.

Music can be added to the chapter life in large and small ways. Enjoy a variety of approaches!