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Kappa Pi serves 48th holiday lunch

By Haley Jones hjones@thelancasternews.com

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Lancaster Police Department officers and staff enjoy Kappa Pi's annual holiday lunch Dec. 22 at A.R. Rucker Middle School. From left are Carlie Mingo, Capt. Dwayne Davis, Erin Tindal, Capt. James Whitaker and Donnie Sims.

photos by Haley Jones

Kappa Pi, Lancaster's local chapter of Omega Psi Phi fraternity, celebrated its 48th annual Christmas luncheon for Lancaster County officials and senior citizens Thursday, Dec. 22.

The luncheon is paid for by fraternity dues, as a way for the organization to give back to local public servants.

Chapter chaplain Bennie McMurray, who has been a member for 40 years, said even though the luncheon is just a one-day affair, the group spends all year planning it as their way of saying thank you to the Lancaster community.

“At a time where a lot of people are going without, if we can just get somebody -even if it’s just the one day – to feel good, have a healthy meal, that’s what it’s all about,” he said.



Al Barnes, former chapter president and dessert coordinator for the luncheon, has been a part of the chapter for 45 years. He brought his twin 4-year-old grandsons, Cadin and Bralin Scott, to the event.

“It’s a different world because now we give some back to the community,” Barnes said. “This is one way that we try to share. Being around the Christmas season is the ideal time for this. And as you notice, folks are going to be steadily coming in, and we just serve until it all runs out.”

Frederick Thomas, chapter secretary, said this event holds meaning to the chapter, because it honors brothers who have passed away, and keeps the legacy for generations of brothers who are still active members. Kappa Pi is a graduate fraternity, allowing members to stay active and involved for life.

“This fraternity started doing this (luncheon) nearly 50 years ago,” Thomas said. “A lot of the present brothers are second-generation. My dad passed away, there are three or four other brothers who my dad was in the fraternity (with) when I started.”

Thomas said the chapter house has a wall with pictures of members who have died, and events like the luncheon honor their work, but also remind current brothers to stay involved, on behalf of those who no longer can participate in events.

Gloria White’s husband, Floyd White, is a member of Kappa Pi, and a retired assistant principal at Lancaster High School. The Whites have been coming to the luncheons since they first started 51 years ago. The chapter had to cancel the event for three years due to the pandemic, and this year’s gathering was the first one since before COVID-19.

“My husband is one of the Omega men,” Gloria White said. “And I am just glad to go somewhere, and I enjoy the meal. My husband came to join this (organization) in 1965, and we have been coming to these ever since.”

Thomas said the national chapter, Omega Psi Phi, is a “wonderful organization to be in in school when you’re younger.”

He said people get involved in college, because it’s fun, but as people grow older, they stay members to serve others and the community they live in.

“We’re glad to see a lot of law enforcement here because they take a beating sometimes in the press,” Thomas said. “We appreciate what they do, and this is our way of showing it.”

Haley

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