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Students Outline Plans for Homecoming Weekend

By Kim Billings
UNH News Bureau

October 9, 2002

DURHAM, N.H. -- University of New Hampshire officials, representatives of UNH fraternities and sororities, and Durham fire safety and law enforcement officers met earlier this week to talk about Homecoming activities this coming weekend, Oct. 11 through Oct. 13, 2002.

The meeting was organized by the Greek community in an attempt to better communicate their desire for a safe homecoming weekend, and to outline their plans for a safe weekend. Among the steps the fraternity chapters will take:

- limiting for the fourth weekend in a row the number of parties that can be registered with the Interfraternity Council. Only four parties are allowed on Friday and Saturday nights;

- strictly enforcing I.D. checks to ensure that those people who want to attend a party are UNH students. Those at least 21 also will be given a special wristband to wear for identification purposes;

- working closely with Durham and UNH Police. Chapter presidents have designated specific chapter members to be a liaison to police during the weekend should problems arise; and

- contacting alumni who are returning to UNH for Homecoming to let them know of new guidelines.
"We're working very hard to make sure things go smoothly," said Sean Kay, at the meeting. Kay is student body president and president of the Interfraternity Council. "We know there's a different climate on campus now, and new expectations for us. We're prepared to meet those expectations."

If a fraternity house holds an event during the day on Saturday, the properties will be cordoned off with fencing. All registered evening parties will be held indoors, subject to regulations on the maximum number of people who may occupy the building. Each house has agreed to assign a clean-up crew to clean the property of garbage at regular intervals.

"I'm impressed with their efforts," said Kevin Charles, interim vice president for student affairs. "I think that they recognize that the university and the town want to see a real change in off-campus behavior, and they are taking steps in the right direction."

Steve Pappajohn, UNH coordinator of Greek Affairs, said there is renewed cooperation among the chapters to make positive changes. "I think the meeting this week represents evidence of that," he noted. "The chapters wanted folks in student affairs and academic affairs, in police and fire departments, to know what the plan is so we're all on the same page going into this weekend."

"It was evident at the meeting that the Greek system and fraternities in particular have similar concerns as we do," said Durham/UNH Fire Chief Ron O'Keefe. "Safety and positive behavior needs to be a priority. Bringing everyone together like this sends the right message to the student body that there needs to be a proactive responsibility for behavior."

"They deserve credit," said J. Gregg Sanborn, executive assistant to the president, who attended the meeting. "An effort is being made. The guidelines that have been developed have been developed by the students; they have not been imposed on students by the administration. If activities go well this weekend, this could be the beginning of a real turnaround."

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