Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

The glory days for sororities (and fraternities) at Riverside City College were from the post-World War II years until the late 1960s. Sororities coordinated their activities through a Panhellenic Board with each one carving out a special function for itself. The four dominant sororities during this time period were Zeta Phi, Delta Chi Delta, Gamma Nu and Sigma Phi Kappa. The first sorority to have a continuing presence was Zeta Phi forming in 1945. This is how the 1946 "Tequesquite" yearbook described their activities:

"Zeta Phi sorority opened its second year at Riverside College with a tea honoring a group of rushies. Nine pledges underwent initiation which was followed by an impressive candlelight ceremony at which they took their pledge oaths. Other highlights of the year included a food sale on the campus, backstage dance, and a successful progressive dinner, followed by a theatre party. The greatest event of the year was the week spent at Laguna Beach during spring vacation, with the girls enjoying luxury of complete laziness."

Below is a photo of the sorority from the 1945 yearbook.

In the 1955 yearbook, the activities of the sorority were described as:

"ZETA PHI-This is the oldest organization on the campus. Sponsorship of an annual football banquet highlights a social season that includes dances, participation in campus events such as parades, and fund-raising programs for charitable work."

Below are two Zeta Phi functions documented in RCC yearbooks, a Speakeasy Dance from 1949 and a Football Banquet from 1957. In the 1957 photo, Zeta Phi's Mary Golden and Juanita Seid salute Bill John in honor of his being proclaimed King Football.
The end for the Zeta Phi sorority came in 1957. That year’s yearbook described them as:

“GRIDDER’S FRIENDS: Zeta Phi has a long established tradition of assistance to the football team. The group also has sponsored its share of dances and service projects.”

In the 1957 photo below, only four members (Toni Largo, Mary Golden, Jean Wiffer and Lyvern Foggin) were pictured.

Zeta Phi’s responsibility for the annual football banquet was passed on to the Delta Chi Delta sorority. Delta Chi Delta was founded in 1951. In 1955, the yearbook described their activities as:

“DELTA CHI DELTA-Participating in all campus and civic programs, Delta Chi Delta sponsored their Pledge Dance, Turkey Trot (after game dance), and a Christmas benefit family.”

Below is a 1952 yearbook photo of the sorority.

The 1957 yearbook reported their accomplishments as:

“CINDER-SISTERS-Delta Chi Delta this year “adopted” the track team, honoring the athletes with a banquet at the end of the season. Other activities included their pledge dance at the Chi Chi Club in Palm Springs and the gathering of baskets of food for a family at Christmas.”

The upper left hand corner of the 1959 yearbook photo below, shows Delta Chi Deltas (Barbara Olson, Nancy Miller, Charlotte Hicks and Harriet Hughes) making sandwiches for the football team. The two remaining photos are from the next year’s football banquet. In the photo on the right, Delta Chi Delta representative Donna Fawcett presents a
gift to Jerry Allen for his contributions to the team. The young girl is the sorority mascot Robin Abbott. In the third photo (left to right) are Delta Rosalie Marseilles, Head Football Coach Howard White, Delta Sharon Pease, RCC President O.W. Noble and Football Line Coach Dick Corrick.

The 1966 yearbook said of the sorority:

“The purpose of Delta Chi Delta sorority is to maintain high academic standards, to promote friendship, and to render service to RCC and the community. Delta’s colors are maroon and white, and the traditional flower is the violet. Delta sponsors the football team and honors them with two banquets during the season. Around Mother’s Day they have the annual Mother-Daughter dinner. This year the Delta’s have worked at the County General Hospital, ushered at school programs and community projects, and held Bake Sales at the school.”

In 1968 the Gamma Iota Alpha fraternity held a “Slave Auction” in the Quadrangle “Pit”. The “merchandise” was sorority women. In the top photo below, the two women on the left (Marsha Anderson and Judy Nelson) were Delta Chi Deltas. The two women on the right (Cathy Hale and Janelle Bahr) were Gamma Nu’s. They were all wearing GIA jackets and were lined up for inspection by their “owners”. In the bottom photo Marsha Anderson is shown again carrying out her “duties” of transporting briefcases and books.
By the end of 1968 the Delta Chi Delta sorority was no more. Next week, photos of the Gamma Nu and Sigma Phi Kappa sororities.

It is 2 years and 7 weeks until RCC’s 100th Anniversary on March 13, 2016.

The Riverside City College Instructional Media Center is bringing you this five year countdown to RCC’s 100th Anniversary. Our intention is to give everyone a weekly glance at the many people and events that have been a part of the college.

Our thanks go to the RCC Digital Library Archives and the District’s Office of Strategic Communications and Relations for allowing us to use their photo and newspaper collections. Thanks as well to all of the RCC students and Faculty Advisors that were a part of the yearbook and newspaper staffs. Thanks also to Tom Johnson and Gilbert Jimenez who wrote “the book” about RCC’s history. “Riverside City College 1916-1981- A 65 Year History” is available in the RCC Digital Library.

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