

A sorority enriches college minus the hazing

Dear Abby: I would like to tell "Possibly Paddled Pledge" (Jan. 13) joining a sorority was one of the best parts of college for me. It taught me about interpersonal communication, the importance of philanthropy and academics, and net-



JEANNE PHILLIPS Syndicated columnist

working. I learned skills I would not have gained had I not joined. My sorority had paddles. We decorated them with our symbols and Greek letters, and they were displayed on the wall. We NEVER used them to hit anyone. Our national organization, as well as our university would

have been furious. Hazing is illegal and should not be tolerated. I say, give the Greek life a try, but if someone ever lifts a finger toward you, report her to your panhellenic organization and the dean of students immediately. Sororities are supposed to lift you up, not beat you down. — Jennifer in St. Louis

Dear Jennifer: Readers unanimously agreed paddling should not be tolerated, and stressed being a legacy does not guarantee acceptance or that a pledge will have a good experience in a particular sorority. My readers comment:

Dear Abby: My daughter is currently in a sorority, but her experience has been very mixed. She was not automatically welcomed by my sorority. She found the process to be difficult and judgmental. However, she did find a wonderful group of women in a different sorority.

As a sophomore this year, she is on the other side of recruitment (rush) and again felt hurt by how rude some of the new girls were. "PPP's" letter spotlighted the snobbish, elitist attitude that turns many eligible young women away from sororities. To say a group is the best-of-the-best and exclusive is offensive. I hope more girls will look beyond the glitz and glamour and give a second hard look to all of the groups. — Jane in Akron, Ohio

Dear Abby: My first month in college was wonderful. Then came sorority rush. What followed was hell. I got a paddle with the Greek letters, though it was only a "memento." Far worse was the social fragmentation of the women there. We immediately began to segregate into our little pledge classes, wore pins that identified our group and were typecast from the very beginning.

After wrestling with this psychological social dilemma — even becoming an active member, which would preclude me from ever joining another sorority — I finally deactivated, switched to a much larger school with less emphasis on the Greek system and happily sailed through the rest of my college life with honors. — A Happy Independent

Dear Abby: As a member of a sorority, I have never heard of a sorority that used paddles to hit members. What bothers me is the apparent acceptance by "PPP's" family members of this practice.

As a prosecutor for nearly 30 years, I do not condone in any way the use of a paddle, either in fraternities or sororities.

A sorority is more than academics and whispers about hazing. "PPP" should visit each chapter on the campus, attend rush and make her own decision. Only she can decide which sorority is right for her. If she pledges as a legacy, she'll be in a unique position to actively stop this practice if, in fact, it is occurring. If she's kicked out for not letting them paddle her, then she can shout it from the rooftops and maybe something will finally happen.

"PPP" stand up for what you believe. Choose a sorority you like, with women you would be proud to call your sisters, and you will have lifelong friends.

Table with columns for Broadcast Channels, Public Television, and Cable/Satellite Channels, listing various TV shows and their times for March 22, 2012.

Rosacea looks a bit like acne but it's not

Dear Dr. Donohue: I am 63 years old and currently suffering from rosacea. Yes, suffering. It's ugly. This is the second time it has erupted. I first had it more than 10 years ago. Is it unusual to get it at my age? What triggers it? What's the cure? I am currently taking doxycycline and MetroGel. I have treated it now for 10 days and see only a small improvement. I am going out in public because of my appearance. — Help

Dear Help: The first outbreak of rosacea (rose-AY-she-uh) most often takes place between the ages of 30 and 50, but no age is off limits. You were close enough to

50 to fit in the common age bracket. Rosacea is a chronic illness. In a way, you are unusual; for 10 years, it lay dormant without any treatment. Most often, it requires constant treatment.

Triggers are spicy foods, alcohol, sunlight, extremes of temperature and emotional situations that cause blushing. Rosacea appears mostly on the

cheeks, nose, chin, forehead and eyelids. The skin turns red in all or some of those places. Pimple-like eruptions are found in the same areas, as are telangiectasia (tell-ANN-gee-ek-TAY-zuhs), purplish-red small blood vessels that look like threads in disarray.

The cause of rosacea is unknown. It might be due to an attack on the skin by the immune system. "Cure" is too strong a word to use with rosacea. Containment and control are more appropriate. You are getting standard treatment. MetroGel (metronidazole) is applied directly to the skin. Doxycycline is an antibiotic usually taken in doses less than those

needed for the standard treatment of infections. They're not the only treatments, but you're rushing things by expecting clear skin in 10 days. Be a lot more patient.

Rosacea can affect the eyes, reddening them and drying them. They feel like sand has been thrown onto their surfaces. An eye doctor handles this aspect of rosacea.

Contact the National Rosacea Society at (888) NO-BLUSH or online at rosacea.org. The society will provide you with the latest information on this not-uncommon condition.

imbalance. The booklet on these subjects explains them and their treatment. Readers can obtain a copy by writing: Dr. Donohue — No. 801, Box 536475, Orlando, FL 328536475. Enclose a check or money order (no cash) for \$4.75 U.S./\$6 Can. with the recipient's printed name and address. Please allow four weeks for delivery.

Dear Dr. Donohue: I have a slightly leaky heart valve, and I have an ejection fraction of 65. What is the ejection fraction? Is 65 good or bad? I am 85. — A.K.

Dear A.K.: It's more than good; it's excellent. It means that with each heartbeat, your heart pumps 65 percent of the blood in it. That's a very good pump you have. Not many people your age have such an ejection fraction.



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