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Alfred University is the alma mater of Peter Jenkins, the young man who shouldered a backpack and left the upstate New York town to take, and write, *A Walk Across America*. The countryside near the university is rugged and particularly lovely in winter. The trees on the ridges poke through the snow like white knights on parade. In summers logging trails through the woods provide a serene landscape for joggers.

But danger can also lurk in the countryside. Death from hypothermia can waylay careless hunters or ice fishermen. Anyone who has read Jenkins's book recalls the chilling scene when Cooper, the author's half-malamute, snatches a northern copperhead from his master's path.

Jenkins's book also features an offbeat art teacher: John Wood came to class on a Bultaco bike in spring and on cross-country skis in winter. Apparently, such behavior was the norm, not the exception. The 1979 Alfred yearbook pictures an odd but intriguing faculty. An art teacher in a down vest plays darts, aiming at an unseen target. Four young women—one in a halter top—cling to another art professor, making him the stem of a human four-leaf clover. Conservatively dressed male teachers are the exception. Their duds look starchy and uncomfortable compared to the fatigue jackets, flannel shirts, and jeans favored by many male faculty members. There were too few women professors to generalize about their fashion taste. The 1979 faculty was overwhelmingly male: eighty-eight full-time men, only ten full-time women.

In 1979 the student paper, the *Fiat Lux*, asked Jenkins to reflect on his Alfred memories. He recalled turkey subs and all-night kiln firings, heated sidewalks in winter, snowball wars, beer chugging, and inspiring teachers. He confessed that Alfred's reputation made people "cringe," noting that it wasn't quite the same as saying you graduated from Yale. But he credited Alfred with making him do something with his life, inspiring him to want something better. Jenkins told the student paper that Alfred "is what you get from the place, what you take with you . . . when you leave the security of the valley."

But by 1979 the valley was insecure. Faculty attire may have been laidback, but the atmosphere in department meetings was anything but. Alfred released tenured professor Dmytro Sich—not because he was inept or immoral, but because the school had declared a financial emergency. History professor Stuart Campbell says that the concept of tenure at Alfred had "been seriously weakened." An untenured professor, timidly talking on condition of anonymity, questioned the strength of the tenure

concept at the school as well: "Tenure is a legal guarantee of employment, but how secure is that guarantee now?" Tenure at Alfred had become as valuable as a first-class upgrade on the *Titanic.* A prof-eat-prof mentality surfaced. An associate professor of German says an unfortunate situation developed: "Negative feelings exist; people aren't pulling together. A kind of competitiveness has emerged among the faculty."

A scene ripe for a Shane in academic regalia. None emerged. The faculty stewed and grumbled, but did nothing. Academics "are not a very heroic breed," Campbell told the student newspaper.

From its inception Alfred University has been a backwater college. Many students, alumni, and faculty love it for precisely that reason. Before acquiring the sophistication and academic standing that inspired *U.S. News & World Report* in 1985 to rank it the second-best (although most expensive) small comprehensive institution in the nation, Alfred's appeal was its isolation. Conservative parents sent their children to this educational mecca set amidst woods and pastureland to shield them from corrupting influences. Eileen Stevens might flinch at *The Sesquicentennial History of Alfred University,* in which one faculty writer describes a time when "Parents could be assured their children were in safe hands." The school promoted its tranquility and virtue to impress New York state parents who shuddered at the thought of the Sodom that was Buffalo, the Gomorrah that was New York City. Founded by Seventh-Day Baptists who revered learning and despised weaknesses of the flesh, Alfred gained its university charter as one of the first U.S. coeducational institutions in 1857, having operated as a Select School since 1836.

But, truth to tell, what Alfred may have on Buffalo and the Big Apple in sanctity, it certainly lacks in variety. The deep snows of winter that make students wisecrack that Alfred has but two seasons—winter and bad sledding—often create depression in those unable to make friends quickly. The size of the village is revealed by the number of its white pages in the local phone directory, only ten-and-a-half in 1989. "What I remember about Alfred . . . is a feeling of loneliness," poet Marvin Bell, a 1958 graduate, once said. "I know such moments were few, but they were deep, and, therefore, they linger."

No city of any size is less than an hour away, and if you don't like a steady diet of outdoor sports or the culture and entertainment imported to campus, the chilling loneliness can freeze your marrow. Daily life in Alfred is slow and stagnant as pond water for students and faculty who lack the initiative to keep up socially and intellectually. For many youngsters, the choice is to drink; for others, to go Greek. Many say that at Alfred these are really the same.

The college's namesake is not an English butler nor a pet cat as some snide souls joke, but King Alfred, the ninth-century ruler and music-loving savant of the West Saxons. There is dismal irony in a youth's perishing at Alfred in a house of men he wanted for brothers. King Alfred translated

the works of classic Roman writers, such as Boethius, into Old English. In one translation he rhapsodizes "how happy would this mankind be" if absolute friendships were possible. Alas, Alfred concluded, such bonds are impossible, except in the abstract. Men are too frail, too weak, too flawed to allow a perfect friendship to bloom for eternity. He who suffers most is the man whose belief in true friendship leads to his own destruction.

The village of Alfred and the school have supporters who won't allow themselves to be uprooted even after a scandal as nasty and as enervating as Chuck Stenzel's death. Donald H. King, the dean who called Chuck's family, is a career administrator with a yen for jogging and watching contact sports. He may not be a pillar of the community, but he is certainly part of its mortar. Its safe, caring environment keeps him there.

"You can't understand this place until you're immersed in it," says King, whose office has the wood paneling and subdued paint of an elegant restaurant. "What has drawn me to this place [is] what it stands for: the personalization, the individual attention that is given to people. . . . In this community, nobody locks doors. We had a rash of burglaries one year in the village, and people were really concerned. It wasn't serious, but people had to buy locks for their doors. We have trouble getting students to lock their doors in the residence halls. The tendency is that people are trusting. Those are the kinds of things that attracted me and keep attracting me to a place like Alfred—even though there've been difficult times."

But ask Sergeant Randy Belmont of the Village of Alfred police how nice, how safe Alfred is. He'll give you the same look he'd give if you asked if he's overpaid.

One of his worries is the tradition of the annual snowball fight between prestigious Alfred University students on one side of Main Street and those average Joes from the State University College of Technology on the other. In December of 1987 it took three officers to clear rioting students near the Delta Sigma Phi house. The fight resulted in twenty-three arrests. The 1986 fight brought only six arrests although snowball hurlers broke fifty-eight windows on campus and damaged four automobiles.

More serious were mysterious attacks upon students in 1985. After six were assaulted, the school and village police advised everyone to walk in pairs. Townsfolk still recall a brawl after two A.M. in September 1985, when Gamma Theta Gamma from State swapped knuckles with Alfred's Delta Sigma Phi, sending one youth to the hospital with head injuries. Then there was the incident in January 1986. A lone student said that a marauding gang of fifty youths pummeled him with their fists and snowballs.

Randy Belmont doesn't have King's idyllic view of Alfred.

"A lot of people don't want to admit that urban America has come to Alfred," explains Belmont. "We have all the problems that the big cities do—on a smaller scale, of course. Thefts and drugs—but no murders, thank God. People want us to solve problems the way they did fifty years ago, and that just doesn't work."

The village's longtime police chief Lldon "Tiny" Jamison has an opinion that lies somewhere between King's and Belmont's views. "It depends on one's terminology of the word *safe*," he says. "Compared to New York, Buffalo, and Rochester, it's a safe place. Now it's also true that we have isolated instances [of crime]. While there've been no real serious attacks, I'm not going to make this place sound like a monastery either."

Belmont is a muscular man with a tad of flesh over his gunbelt. Working in a town where policemen aren't favorites of drunken college kids, he's had to adjust his thinking from the noble goals he had in mind when he became an Alfred cop in the early seventies. "But I've gotten more used to it," he says. Tranquil nights can turn into riots if the right snowball hits the wrong fraternity man. Belmont has often had to leap into frays that look more like a *West Side Story* rumble than a good old American fistfight. "Other [policemen] break up fights of one or two," he claims, blowing cigarette smoke while he talks. "When we have a fight, it's fifty or seventy-five guys."

One of the more infamous street battles in Alfred history occurred in January 1977. The brothers of Klan Alpine engaged in a savage fistfight with another local fraternity. Don King blasted the Klan participants and put the group on social probation for nine months, but the dean made no public announcement of the disciplinary measure. Whose responsibility was it to tell Chuck Stenzel, other prospective Klan pledges, and concerned parents such as Roy and Eileen Stevens? "It was the responsibility of the [Klan] house to tell them," King told the student newspaper.

When the probation ended, King expected the fraternity's behavior to be angelic. Not quite two months later, Chuck Stenzel—Eileen Stevens's son—lay dead on Klan's beer-marinated floor while the brothers wailed and cursed their misfortune.

The night of February 24, 1978, was pandemonium in Alfred. In addition to the normal wanderings of drunks hopping from bar to bar on Main Street, it was Tapping Night, the term for the sodden spectacle that celebrates the entrance of initiates into the Alfred Greek system. "Throngs of people were on the street," recalls Randy Belmont. They were "drinking, drunk, or just or'nery."

No major brawls erupted, but Belmont and his partner Bruce Razey had to keep little fires from turning into conflagrations. Both anticipated a long night of minor arrests. "Monday morning is going to be like a zoo," they told each other, thinking about the scene when friends and lovers bailed out collegiate jailbirds.

In the midst of a minor confrontation around midnight, Belmont noticed flashing red lights about three blocks down on the south side of Main Street. "I wonder what's going on," he mentioned to his partner. But they couldn't leave. Another fracas had broken out near the town's traffic light.

The red lights were flashing in front of the Klan Alpine house at 61 South Main Street. The fraternity was often in conflict with the community. Neighbors frequently called the police to quiet Klan down. Labeled an animal house long before the movie was filmed, the Klan had no trouble living up to its reputation for wildness. Of course, Klansmen were often sharp in the classroom. Some studied harder than they partied. Several faculty rather liked having Klan members in their classes. According to Scott Sullivan, who was fraternity president in 1977-78, one member at the time of Chuck's death later became class valedictorian. But Sullivan admits too many others pledged Klan and flunked out a semester or two later.

"They weren't the same type of boy you saw in other fraternities," recalls Judith Archer, then a director of student plays, who rented the octagonal house bordering the Klan's backyard. "They were students by day and vikings by night."

In the months before the Stenzel incident rocked Alfred, Archer observed the hearts of both darkness and sunshine in her young neighbors. Without payment the Klan trimmed the Archers' hedges in summer and shoveled their walk in winter. "They were good neighbors," says Archer, although she also remembers mountains of open garbage outside Klan, a magnet that drew rats to the neighborhood.

During the day the Archer preschool children often cavorted on the basketball court with the hulking Klansmen. The Klan brothers stopped their games in mid-drive whenever the Archers' two-year-old wandered into the action.

"Give the baby the ball," one of them would say. The little boy looked like a dwarf carrying a medicine ball. When he tried to throw the ball back, the Klansmen would howl with laughter.

This sweet, private image faded on the nights the brothers had been drinking. "They had a rough-rider image," says Archer. "They were crude. You could walk by, and [a Klansman] would be urinating out the door or off the back porch."

Klan members snubbed their noses at authority figures they could not respect. The group's leaders were bright and independent, destined to become professionals or to form their own companies instead of working for someone else. Others, however, were jocks in the worst sense of the term, recruited because they looked good in Klan shirts and brought notoriety to the house. At their best, members were loyal to one another and their college, donating gobs of money as alumni. At their worst, they were student vikings, black hats. To those who failed to see their good side, they were arrogant, convinced of their own invincibility, braggarts, heavy partiers, coarse, sexist, and contemptuous of all not their own kind. Father Flanagan of Boy's Town said there were no bad boys. But he never observed a Tapping Night at Klan. Even in appearance Klansmen were different: long-haired, shirtless in summers, preferring macho-casual dress with just the right rips in their jeans and sweatshirts.

Judith Archer says, "They were big, they were handsome, they were intelligent." They were also sometimes exceedingly dangerous. A reckless initiation custom was to make their name synonymous with all that is bad about fraternities. What Klan regarded as an initiation, many called hazing—though not by law. That legislation was still two lost lives away in New York state.

Dave Schwert, a faculty member and volunteer with the local ambulance crew, was the first person to come to Chuck Stenzel's aid. When Schwert entered Klan Alpine that night, he blinked in disbelief.He felt as if he were seeing the lowest level of Dante's hell. The smell of stale beer overpowered him. A falling rope of urine issued from a young man on the nearby stairwell. Schwert reminded himself to stay composed. "Nothing made sense," he said later. "Nearly everyone had been drinking."

Schwert had taken one of six calls that went out to the emergency team. "One of the brothers at Klan had called—I'm not sure which," he says. "I went to Klan out of a sound sleep." Because his home was closest, he went on foot while others picked up the ambulance. Klan members later estimated that he arrived five or ten minutes after their initial call.

Schwert fought his emotions. He wanted to help, but he was in the middle of chaos. Some of the brothers and pledges were belligerent; more than a few were disoriented. The sober ones, who recognized the seriousness of the situation, were unnerved by the motionless body lying face up on a mat in a second-floor bedroom. It didn't take Schwert long to learn that someone was in serious trouble, but those he questioned either didn't know what had occurred or stonewalled him. Some brothers who didn't know Chuck well were afraid he had taken drugs. They couldn't comprehend that alcohol alone could kill. Schwert still didn't know what had happened when the rescue team arrived. "For three minutes the whole world was a blur," he says.

When the others arrived, Schwert warned them that he had found bottles of Sominex and Vivarin, both over-the-counter drugs. In the midst of drunks and panicked men, he told the crew that an overdose or tampering might have occurred. Without being completely certain what had transpired, the husband-wife rescue team of Dick and Margery Sands got to work. They hoped without hope that their CPR could revive the blue-purplish husk that was some mother's son.

Once Belmont and Razey solved their downtown fracas, they were dispatched to the Klan Alpine house. A citizen detained them with a minor complaint after they were already in their car. They spent several seconds extricating themselves. Then over the squawkbox came the clincher. "The coroner is on his way," the disembodied voice said. The squad car sped away.

The disorder they encountered astounded the police officers. "It was an atmosphere you could cut with a knife," says Belmont. "It was hostile."

Two young men danced around them like pit bulls. "Get the fuck out of here!" said one. "What the fuck do you want?" demanded another. A pledge clad only in a blanket joined the harangue, cursing and threatening the officers.

Belmont flexed his biceps and looked over at a group of gawking brothers. The profanity bothered him, but he was used to it. Whenever he passed a fraternity house with ten or more people on the porch, he expected to be cursed. He had long ago stopped vaulting out of his car to confront these animals. What was he going to do—arrest the whole crew? They simply stared at him, insolent as magpies, when he demanded, "Who said that?"

Belmont flagged down a couple of sober brothers. He wanted a muzzle on the bobbing, cursing, angry pledge. "Control him or I will," he promised.

They controlled him.

Two state troopers barged through the door. "The coroner is going to be mad as hell," they told Belmont. "We didn't wait for him."

Belmont grimaced at trooper J. J. Cosgrove and pointed to the floor. It was sloppy, stinking, sticking to his shoes. "Nice place, huh?"

Cosgrove nodded. "It was a shithouse," he recalls. Chief Jamison puts it more delicately. "A damn pigpen," he says.

Chuck Stenzel became friends with a few Klan Alpine members after transferring to Alfred from Doane College in Nebraska in the spring semester of 1977. He had several friends already at Alfred, and he and a buddy, Jimmy Arnoux, enrolled together even though they weren't able to be roommates. In May 1977 Arnoux gave up on his nursing studies and left Alfred. Chuck decided—against his family's urgings—to work that summer and through the fall to bank some money before returning to school.

In February 1978 Chuck re-enrolled at Alfred. This time he was able to choose his roommate—a straightforward, earnest kid who belonged to Klan Alpine, someone Chuck and Arnoux had hung out with the previous year. Although his parents didn't know it, Chuck had even had too much to drink at a couple of parties, including at least one Klan Alpine function. If Eileen and Roy had had even an inkling of the peer pressure to overindulge in alcohol at Alfred, they would have taken action. To them, both light drinkers, three drinks for students is tantamount to drunken revelry. At Alfred the party often starts Thursday night and ends Tuesday morning. But there are also students—including Klan brothers—who spend four years at Alfred stone-sober.

At the time of Chuck's death, Don King told the Rochester evening newspaper that five percent of the student body could be classified as alcoholics. The owner of Short's Liquor Store in Alfred told the paper that it wasn't unusual for fraternities to purchase sixty dollars' worth of liquor. "Yeah, they drink a lot," said Janet Short. "I personally think it's because they don't have enough to do in Alfred. . . . These kids aren't alcoholics.

. . . They just want to party for the . . . four years they're here. Most of them won't ever party again like this. Their stomachs wouldn't take it."

Eileen and Roy had no reason to suspect Chuck. After all, he had always been open with them. At Doane he had written his parents letters on three occasions when he had had too much to drink. One of those times he had been with a friend's parents at a football game. One Klan Alpine member who attended Alfred in 1978 says that Chuck was "not a virgin with alcohol," but not a drunk either. An Alfred administrator says there were two alcoholics in the spring 1978 pledge class. Chuck was not one of them.

Thus, when Eileen later began to tell packed audiences of Greek students that "It wasn't Chuck's experience with alcohol, but his inexperience, that killed him," she was partially correct. The relative inexperience of most Klan Alpine members with alcohol—although they beat their chests and claimed the opposite—was truly responsible for her boy's death. "At the time you think you're fairly indestructible," says Klan's Carl Pelcher. Pelcher speaks out so that others might be spared the hell he went through after Chuck's death. "Our problem was drinking. Drinking was fun and drinking was a manly thing to do. The more you could drink, the more in you were and the more one of the guys you were. But you're not indestructible—that's the main thing. Even though you're eighteen, nineteen, you're just not indestructible. You have to use some common sense."

Why did Chuck want to join this particular fraternity? Eileen Stevens has pondered that question a million times and likely will ponder it a million more. But the answers seem relatively simple. For one thing, he probably wanted to cement a bond with his new roommate, particularly since his relationship with his last roommate—Joe Bachman, a *Fiat Lux* writer—had been tortuous for both young men. Another possibility was that sports-loving Chuck saw Klan as an opportunity to try out for varsity lacrosse. Several members of the team—including one of the ten best goalies in America that year—belonged to the fraternity. In any case, it was the lacrosse players who vouched for Chuck a few days later when he put his signature on a Klan sign-up sheet. "He's a good guy," they said at a special meeting held in the Klan's Chapter Room. That testimonial was enough for the majority of brothers who didn't know Chuck by name or sight since he had not been on campus the previous semester. No one suggested he be blackballed—the fraternity method of rejecting a prospect—and he was assigned to be the little brother of one of the lacrosse players.

The decision to join a fraternity probably wasn't as momentous for Chuck as it is for many young men. He was anything but shy, and he had dozens of friends, both male and female, not only at Alfred but at nearby St. Bonaventure University. He wasn't joining out of loneliness. He wrote at least three letters in the ten days prior to his death, and in none of them did he mention Klan. He did, however, say in two letters that he had had enough of partying and was excited about the biggest decision he had

made in his young life. Stu Campbell's classes had set him on fire intellectually, and he now knew what profession he wanted to pursue. "Chuck was just getting his feet wet, and he didn't know what direction he wanted to go in," says Roy Stevens. "He had decided that he wanted to become a history teacher."

In the days after Chuck's death the Alfred University administration would take the standard legal stance common to nearly all administrators and institutions in the wake of a fraternity death: although they deeply regretted the tragedy, etc., they could accept no responsibility for what had happened. Nonetheless, Klan Alpine and all other Greek organizations follow school guidelines for checking out prospective members at parties and social gatherings, known in their parlance as "rush." In 1978 those guidelines were determined by King, as dean of students, and the Pan-Hellenic Council, a representative body made up primarily of Greek presidents and designated advisors from each fraternity and sorority. Among other things, King and the Pan-Hellenic Council issued a memo that was photocopied and placed on bulletin boards all over campus. One purpose of King's involvement was to ensure that no fraternity or sorority gain unfair advantage by jumping the gun on rushing potential members.

Alfred rush parties were relatively mundane compared to the elaborate theme affairs some fraternities concoct. For example, the Tulane chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon turned rush into a houseboat party in 1971. It resulted in the death of seventeen-year-old Wayne Kennedy. At Klan Alpine the basics were the order of the day: beer flowing from kegs and male chitchat about sports, school, and women, as members checked out prospects and vice versa.

Chuck telephoned his family around nine P.M. the night before his death. For several minutes he teased his little sister Suzanne—he alone was permitted to call her Sue—because she had gotten a cat for Valentine's Day despite Eileen's allergies. When Eileen got on the phone, Chuck's conversation focused on Roy and Eileen's upcoming vacation in the Bahamas. He said nothing about Klan Alpine, possibly to avoid his mother's questions—a tendency he kidded her about. His last words to his mother were "Have a great trip to the Bahamas, Mom."

After talking to his family, Chuck went to a local tavern and bought shots of liquor for some Klansmen. His last evening—Tapping Night—was the next day. Alfred yearbooks from the sixties and seventies provide a graphic idea of what Tapping Nights are like, says Gary Horowitz, who, in 1978, was not only a history professor at Alfred but also the village mayor. The 1971 book, for example, contains a close-up of a blonde youth vomiting over the Klan house's porch rail while another member holds onto his jacket to keep him from pitching over the side. The theme of Chuck's Tapping Night was "Don't Stop 'til You Drop."

Klan is an old, established fraternity at Alfred, having celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1968. From the beginning, the group preached the advantages of nonsectarianism, allowing blacks, Jews, and Catholics into

its ranks when many fraternities practiced racial and religious discrimination. The early brothers of Klan Alpine knew that the actions of a few could destroy them. "Every man . . . should remember that his every act is one that will reflect credit or discredit upon his Fraternity," was a cherished credo in 1922.

According to a 1921 statement, the purpose of Klan is to "promote the ideal of the brotherhood of man, that each may be a broader and better man, better enabled to carry on his life work." The 1922 yearbook says that Klan "stands first, last, and always for scholarly ability, social equality, good fellowship, mutual helpfulness, and athletic progress." Another early motto was appropriated from the poet Kipling: "The Strength of the Pack is the Wolf and the Strength of the Wolf is the Pack." Initiated Klan members inherited such secret traditions, be they fact or fiction, that the fraternity is descended from Klan McAlpine, a staunch and ancient brotherhood from the days when bands of men called clans clove to one another for protection. A group of men who referred to themselves as Clan Alpine dined together at Burdick Hall in 1908 and possibly earlier.

The day of his death Chuck cashed a check for ten dollars and waited in his dormitory room at Openhym Hall after the dinner hour as a Klan member had instructed. Klan members who qualify their remarks as hearsay indicate that he had "maybe two or three beers" in his room, but no one recalls where that information originated. Sometime after seven P.M., Chuck greeted his big brother at the door. The lacrosse player appeared glum. He was sorry, he said, but the membership had voted, and a couple of guys thought Chuck wouldn't fit in. Sorry about that, guy, he said in effect, and departed.

The big brother allowed Chuck to fret over his supposed rejection for a few minutes. Then he knocked on the door again. Surprise, the joke's on you. We want you after all. He gave Chuck a gray tee-shirt with "Klan" in black letters and also handed him a bottle of congratulations, a pint of Jack Daniel's whiskey. After Chuck put on the shirt, the brother led him outside. The temperature that day varied between eight and twenty-seven degrees Fahrenheit. On the trip to Klan Alpine Chuck had to ride in the car's trunk.

Either before or after Chuck was picked up, the big brothers of two other pledges fetched their men from Kruson Hall. If Chuck was picked up last, the other two pledges waited in the cold trunk while Chuck's big brother pulled the ruse. If the other two were picked up afterwards, Chuck waited in the trunk. (A longer stay in the trunk could have affected Chuck's behavior. In October 1980 a University of Michigan student was placed in the trunk of a car and kept outside for ninety minutes, dramatically lowering his body temperature.) "The most dangerous thing you can do is stick a freezing creature—a lung breather—in a trunk like that because it's not sealed off from the exhaust," says the doctor who assisted at Chuck's post-mortem. "If it is well sealed, they may run into excess CO_2 as well as CO. If they're drunk and they're cold, it will kill them faster."

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It is unclear whether the car, an old blue Chevrolet, was running with the heater on to keep the Klan brothers inside warm. The car eventually left for the fraternity house. According to confidential documents, the pledges in the trunk with Chuck later told authorities that he chugged not only his pint of whiskey but also most of another pledge's pint of Scotch, but a Buffalo *Courier Express* story printed the Monday after the incident cited an unidentified police source who said that Chuck was given "a quantity of whiskey, beer, and wine." To this day Eileen believes the *Courier* account, which says Chuck was given a pint of Jack Daniel's, a six-pack of beer, and a quart of wine. Klan's Rocky LaForge says that "the pint of Jack Daniel's is true; the six-pack of beer and quart of wine is inflated." A confidential document reveals that a lie detector test confirmed Chuck's roommate's statement that Chuck drank his pint and three-fourths of another.

The ride to the Klan house took fifteen minutes, according to one brother, although Eileen suspects it was longer. Once in the driveway, the driver opened the trunk and Chuck and the other pledges scrambled out. At that point, according to Klan accounts, the three toasted each other with what was left of their individual bottles. Chuck's precise condition at that point is unclear. According to a confidential document, the roommate's lie detector test is inconclusive because, while he answered all other questions truthfully, "he had trouble" with a question addressing Chuck's condition when he got out of the trunk. Scott Sullivan would insist in a deposition that Chuck didn't stagger when he left the trunk—in spite of his having allegedly downed nearly two pints of sipping whiskey. "There's no way he passed out in the car," said Joseph van Cura, an Alfred alumnus present at the house the night Chuck died.

Somehow Chuck walked or was helped into the fraternity house between eight-thirty and nine-thirty P.M. Inside were twenty-five to thirty members. No women were present until after the drinking games ended. Then a girlfriend or two showed up. In the entranceway stood a table loaded with full twelve-ounce glasses of wine—a variation on a one-time fraternity tradition in which members drank from a cup to celebrate their pledging. In 1978 van Cura said that Chuck chugged two glasses. Sullivan agrees, saying Chuck's "festive" mood matched that of the brotherhood.

Chuck either staggered or was assisted downstairs. In the barroom, for an undetermined time, he played a game, traditional to the Klan, called "races." The object was to grab a beer from your big brother or another member and gulp it down before the other pledges could down theirs. The pledges were also drinking in competition against the brothers, which would help account for the large number of drunken members that the police and rescue crew found on their arrival. However, some seniors pretended to drink and tossed their beers over their shoulders, making pledges think that they had drunk larger quantities than they actually had. The object was to fill a trash can, up to a line marked on the outside, with vomit.

That neither the school nor the fraternity chose to talk about this game is significant. Chuck's chugging alcohol by himself in the trunk is one thing. Visualizing Klan members handing beers to a fully intoxicated Chuck, then hanging all over him like ants on a picnic lunch some two hours before his death, is another. Horowitz, the 1990 Klan advisor, and Sullivan, the Klan president at the time of the death, were both surprised to hear that Chuck's blood alcohol content was .46—more than four times the legal limit. "If it had gone to trial, it sounds like negligence," says Horowitz.

Eileen Stevens is repulsed by the vision of drunken pledges sliding in beer and vomit while brothers gleefully tossed more beer all around. One Klan member later insisted that Chuck went to the bar on his own and grabbed his own beers off the counter. If true, this is contrary to Klan's Tapping Night tradition. Rocky LaForge says that Chuck "certainly was not forced to drink," and Don King says his investigation supports that statement. But apparently no member felt either the legal or ethical responsibility to say stop, that's enough—an omission that haunts many Klansmen.

Sometime during the races, Chuck's speech became slurred. He began to make muttering sounds. Because he was soaked with beer, his big brother and Sullivan decided to give him a shower. Whether Chuck had soiled his clothing—a sign that the involuntary organs are in deep trouble—is not known. Since a member's girlfriend washed his clothes before returning them to Eileen, it may never be known. At one time Sullivan thought he put a clean pair of underwear on Chuck after toweling him off, but this is doubtful unless rescue workers removed them. He was naked when funeral director David Gardner dispatched his body to the morgue. Someone thought of forcing vinegar down Chuck's throat, presumably to make him vomit. No one did, however, because he was already unconscious, and they were afraid he might choke.

Instead of taking Chuck to a hospital, where he almost surely would have been saved, the big brother and Sullivan placed him on his stomach with his face to one side. Apparently they had seen enough pledges pass out that they thought he would sleep it off. The university said that he was put to bed but neglected to mention that the "bed" was an uncovered tick mattress.

Chuck started snoring immediately. His body's vital organs were in trouble, but no one recognized the snoring as a danger sign. Also in the room was another pledge, who had passed out and had been dumped on another mattress. Sullivan left to check on other pledges, including his real-life brother, and came back fifteen minutes later to check Chuck and the other unconscious pledge. He then departed with another brother for a sorority party, leaving LaForge to tend his little brother and a drooling Chuck.

LaForge slipped away to take a shower, returning about eleven-thirty P.M., the time of death listed on Chuck's death certificate. He observed

that Chuck was barely breathing and that his fingernails had turned blue, but he believes that Chuck was still alive at that time.

LaForge called out. Carl Pelcher came into the room.

"I don't think he's breathing too well," said LaForge.

Pelcher turned Chuck over. He saw that the upper part of his body was blue-purplish. There was a strange red mark on Chuck's chest that mystifies Pelcher to this day. His body felt cold. Another brother entered the room at this point. None of the three men knew CPR or resuscitation techniques, another detail that haunts the Klansmen. Nor could these three sober brothers get much help from pledges and other members too drunk to do anything. "I have a mellow head in a crisis situation while other people panic," says LaForge. "If you don't help, get out of the way." But in a short while, after Chuck was pronounced dead, LaForge's emotions got the best of him.

Pelcher ran to the phone and dialed the operator. "This is an emergency," he said. "Give me an ambulance." The call went immediately to rescue crew members.

Dick Sands and his wife labored to save Chuck, one doing the compression, the other the breathing while performing CPR. They worked without much hope. They found no vital signs. His eyes were fixed and dilated. But ambulance personnel are not competent to judge whether a victim is deceased, so they worked as if he were still alive. They squeezed a goodly amount of liquid from his body while waiting for a physician to pronounce him dead.

By twelve-thirty A.M., or shortly thereafter, Don King and university president Richard Rose arrived separately at Klan Alpine. Dave Schwert had phoned King. Rose had been listening to the ambulance call on the CB radio in his Checker automobile while driving back from a meeting in nearby Hornell.

Rose asked if all pledges were accounted for. Finding that they weren't, he ordered the house searched. In the confusion, Klan Alpine members ran this way and that. The pledge class had eleven men, and only ten pledges—including Chuck, the other unconscious pledge who was receiving first aid in LaForge's room, and a basketball player who failed to show up for Tapping Night—could be accounted for.

The Alfred village police were angered when Rose, an ex-Marine, tried to take over and reminded him that he had no jurisdiction. "The university officials were out of bounds," says Randy Belmont. This tift gave rise to rumors rampant in Alfred that Rose had commanded students "to clean up this pigsty," inadvertently destroying evidence. Since both the state troopers and the Belmont-Razey team arrived right after the ambulance and before Rose, there was little time for anyone to destroy evidence. Four witnesses at the scene, including Tiny Jamison, say that rumor is untrue.

Finally, the unaccounted-for pledge was discovered curled up in a locked closet. Rose remembers that the door had to be forced open. The

ambulance crew found a slight pulse on the youth and went to work. The pledge who had been in the room with Chuck also had a tremendous amount of alcohol in his bloodstream and added to the confusion by screaming when he came to his senses. Both of these men were taken to Bethesda Hospital in Hornell, halting what Rose and Eileen Stevens believe might easily have been a triple tragedy. Dave Schwert was distressed by what he saw but not surprised. Alcohol overdoses have happened too many times in Alfred to shock him. "This type of thing was very normal for Klan Alpine," he says. "In a college community with two campuses, it's several times a year we respond to calls like this. Of course it was extreme where you had a fatality and two near-fatalities."

The two state troopers still waited downstairs, observing a madhouse that grew worse when grief and rage overcame the Klansmen. The troopers kept picking their feet up and down to unstick their boots from the floor. One says he watched King and Jamison confer. He knew what was coming when they approached him. He and his partner were, in effect, told that the investigation was under control and not in their jurisdiction and that their presence was no longer necessary or desired. They left.

Jamison's investigation may have been more intensive than those conducted by the school and district attorney. "They had been doing a lot of drinking—that was evident," Jamison says. "There were kegs of draft beer. We confiscated several bottles. There was lots of Jack Daniel's. Stenzel drank a helluva lot." Through the night and early the next day, village police interviewed many Klan Alpine members present at the party, obtaining signed depositions. By the following week, they may have completed interviews with all witnesses.

But signed depositions were, unfortunately, not the only source of information at work in the community. Will Archer, Judith's husband, signed a statement saying he had no personal knowledge of alcohol's being poured down the throats of Klan Alpine pledges. Nonetheless, a rumor to the contrary found its way to Eileen and Roy Stevens in Sayville. That rumor, and others, such as one that said Klan members defecated into a hole in their party room, angered Klansmen such as Rocky LaForge. "It was total b.s.," he says. Despite his deposition, on the morning after Chuck's death, even Archer repeated false statements he heard from students. Without question, these rumors did additional, undeserved damage to the school's reputation.

As late as 1983 the wife (now widow) of dismissed Alfred faculty member David C. Jillson, a loser in an age discrimination suit, repeated an untrue statement about Klan Alpine.

"They got [Stenzel] drunk," Grace Jillson told the Boston *Globe,* which printed the remark unchallenged on August 24, 1983, "and when he was unconscious they poured the last drops of whiskey down his throat. . . . It got into his windpipe and killed him."

Randy Belmont says the rumors made his job harder because "the gruels and drools"—as he terms his critics from academia—got on his

case, even though none of them had any facts. The police were unable to prove that Klan members tried to revive Chuck on their own before calling an ambulance, but in Belmont's opinion there could have been a delay before help was summoned. "It's not uncommon to cover up before [fraternities] call anybody in these instances," he says. Klan members deny that there was any such delay on the night of Chuck's death.

Tiny Jamison is a sturdy, smart old cuss whose uniform sleeves are too short. He gets to the point in few words, and although his speech is gruff, he's a kinder soul than he'd like to let on. His hair is thick; his eyes hold contact. His desk is covered with paperwork, but he puts his hands on anything he needs without much delay. A *Saturday Evening Post* poster of a benevolent cop hangs over his head. In Jamison's view Klansmen are "decent" and "different people when sober." On the street when he talks to them, they look the part of the all-American boy. "When they get in the booze, they're unresponsible asses if you want my opinion. But this is true not only of Klan, and not only fraternities, but society," he says. Jamison calls Chuck's death a waste.

Robert A. Heineman, a professor at Alfred since 1971 and the advisor to Klan until the previous September, hurried into the house about one-thirty A.M. A fraternity member had summoned him when he couldn't reach Steven Peterson, the current advisor and a one-time student of Heineman's at Bradley University. Heineman—an Alfred village official—was distressed by the scene he observed, never having attended a Tapping Night during four years as Klan advisor.

"Where is the boy having difficulty?" he asked a bystander.

"Upstairs."

Outside the room where Chuck lay, Heineman encountered Russ Johnson, an ambulance crew member. "Where is he?" he asked.

"In there."

The professor peered inside. The room was in disarray. Chuck's desert boots and a coverlet with a snowflake pattern lay on the floor. A partially filled case of pop and an empty beer case filled with schoolwork were conspicuous, as were a jacket, a pair of jeans, a heavy belt, a coffee cup, and a pitcher. A plaid couch, a chair made of phony, cracking leather, some files, and a six-drawer dresser with one glass replacement knob were the main pieces of furniture. A Buffalo Bills poster, a dartboard, and a poster depicting a semi-truck passing a church adorned the walls.

"Is he dead?" asked Heineman.

"Yes," said Johnson.

"Who's in there with him?"

"Dr. Eisenhardt."

Dr. Robert Eisenhardt, a physician who lived a mile out of town, was inspecting the body. It was he who first pronounced Chuck dead at 1:45 A.M. and released the rescue crew from their efforts.

Don King entered the room. The physician asked the dean if he could identify the body.

King looked. "No," he said.

Joseph van Cura, the Klan alumnus who came back to the house to be with the boys, was upset. He gave an interview to the Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle* and expressed his hope that people wouldn't get the wrong idea about what had happened at Klan that night. "The initiation ceremony has been pretty much the same since the fraternity started," he said. "I'm afraid people will look at this and think about closing down the fraternities, not only at Alfred but around the country, and at Alfred fraternities make up the social life for many students. These things make it look like fraternities are really bad, and that's not an accurate picture."