

## Winnie MacKay: The Heartbeat Of New York Zeta

For those of you who know her, Winnie MacKay is a very special person. When I first met her I was extremely intimidated, but as time wore on, I found Winnie to be some of the best company I have had.

When I was a phikeia, Winnie was the dictator of the kitchen. Her rules were the only rules, and if the job was not done in a certain manner, you could be assured of a swift, blunt correction. Needless to say, I worked very hard to please the New York Zeta master of the kitchen. Through my hard work and dedication to my assigned job, something happened between Winnie and me that I cannot put my finger on to this day. Call it a bond, call it a platonic relationship, but as soon as we became involved in an in-depth conversation on the philosophy of nature, I knew that she was much more than the woman who cooks my food.

Now, as a Phi, I regard Winnie MacKay as a second mother, as I am sure many of my fellow brothers who read this article have done. In return, Winnie treats me as a second son, reprimanding me if I do not complete my class work, congratulating me if I achieve an important goal, and, most importantly, being a good friend. The entire character of this house would be severely altered if Winnie had never been with us, and I thank the Phis who first welcomed her to our house in 1964. Because of our respect and love for her, the mantelpiece that hangs in the dining room is her first composite.

Even though Winnie attributes her rapidly graying hair to our fraternity, she still finds time to work the late shift at the Hourglass Bar in downtown Hamilton. She is a tough bouncer, but always has time to share a water with a lemon if you happen to be out for the evening. You can tell when she is working by the large red Ford F-150 parked in the street outside.

Currently Winnie lives about one-quarter of a mile away from the house in a cozy log cabin, onto which she is currently building an addition. At home, her company is two dogs: her dog, Peeper, who doubles as an effective car alarm, and her son Tim's dog, Beaker, who doubles as an effective alarm clock, so she says. When Winnie is not working or visiting friends, she often relaxes in a rather comfortable recliner so that she can get some sleep during the day. She says that she does not have the opportunity to sleep much on most nights due to her rigorous schedule.

Winnie is very pleased with both the physical structure of the house and the brothers living within. She feels that many beneficial projects have been done and has mentioned that if any brothers have not seen her new kitchen or the renovations done on the first floor, they should stop by for some milk and cookies. As for future house projects, Winnie feels that the bathrooms need a lot of work and that also "we still need a replacement for our old flagpole." Winnie feels that "the current undergraduate brothers take great pride in the house as

well as in the brotherhood itself," a proud tradition that she feels has been around just as long, if not longer than she has been.

Her son, Tim, has been to truck driving school and now drives tractor trailers from Hamilton to Texas to Florida and everywhere in between. We all get to see him every month or so, but Winnie talks to him almost daily on the telephone. Despite a few isolated doctor visits for her high blood pressure, which she also attributes to Phi Delt, our wonderful, loving cook is doing very well and encourages all of our alumni to visit her as often as possible.

Although Winnie MacKay has admitted growing older and meaner, she still cooks the same food, chews out the waiters, and gives every ounce of love she has to our fraternity. I think that we all owe a lot to this wonderful woman. We brothers may be the flesh and blood of the New York Zeta Chapter of Phi Delta Theta, but Winifred MacKay is most definitely our heartbeat.

Frederick Chuck Baser '99



Winnie MacKay—always in command.