Fraternity better's old tradition

(Continued from page 1)

ATO organized a Halloween party for the Margaret Fuller House in Cambridge and participated in the fundraising drive for the Eastern Massachusetts Shriver Fund for Retarded Children. During its "Help Week" last month, ATO did demolition work for the Riverside Cambridgeport Community Corporation, a non-profit group which rehabilitates abandoned houses for low-income families, and painted part of the interior of the Prospect Street Nursing Home.

MIT's Urban Action Program has especially helped ATO. Sarah Bingman '83 and Arunas Che-sonis '83 presently run the office, keeping track of community groups in need of volunteer work and putting them in touch with organizations which are willing to help. MIT's Community Service Fund provides funds for these types of projects.

National fraternities have gradually been transforming "Help Week," a time of hazing and harassing pledges into "Help Week," a period devoted to volunteer service in the community over the last thirty years.

Hazing, an established procedure in fraternities, is frequently justified by its supporters as a test in which the candidate for initiation proved his courage and stamina. The men who completed the test—in many cases regardless of whether they passed or failed—were initiated in the fraternity.

Bob Lollar, former president of the ATO chapter at the University of Indiana, decided in 1950 to have pledges do useful work during the final week of pledgehip rather than engage in the usual ordeal. The program was termed "Help Week."

As ATO spread the idea from campus to campus, reaching the MIT chapter in 1983, it was gradually adopted by other fraternities. Pre-initiation week energies were thus channeled away from useless and humiliating "Help Week" practices toward constructive campus and community concerns.

Whether working with children, the elderly, or just taking advantage of the manpower that fifty college students have to offer, ATO has committed itself to return something to the community.

Not only has "Help Week" benefited the many people the fraternity has helped, but it has provided the members of the fraternity with a chance to work together and increase their awareness of their community.

SCANDINAVIAN SEMINAR

Notes

Scandinavian Seminar is now accepting applications for its 1983-84 academic year abroad in Denmark, Finland, Norway, or Sweden. One semester programs in Denmark are also available. The 1983-84 fee, covering tuition, room, board, and all program-related travel in Scandinavia, is $6,200. Applicants may apply for interest-free loans and grants, awarded on the basis of need and academic merit.

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