

John W. Crawford—Continued from page 1

On Sept. 11, 2012, this headline and a story by Joe Phelps appeared in the *The Daily Siftings Herald*: **"33 Minors Involved—Former professor faces 33 counts."** The full context is online at <http://www.siftingsherald.com/article/20120911/NEWS/120919905> and excerpts are given here.

... Dr. John Crawford, 76, was arrested early Friday for numerous counts of contributing to the delinquency of a minor and theft by receiving.

"According to Sgt. Roy Bethell, criminal investigator for the Arkadelphia Police Department, the arrest was the result of an ongoing investigation stemming from 'numerous complaints of alcohol being served' at the Phi Sigma house, a private residence that formerly housed a Henderson fraternity.

"Crawford was arrested for 33 counts of distributing alcohol to minors, and 33 citations were issued to minors at the residence for minor in possession of alcohol, Bethell said. Additional citations for others at the residence included disorderly conduct, fleeing and public intoxication

. . . . "Crawford, the owner of the residence, was on the scene when authorities arrived, Bethell said As for Crawford's theft by receiving charges, Bethell said 'numerous stolen street signs were located inside the residence.'

"About 100 people were at the residence — in the front yard, inside or in the back, fenced-in yard — when authorities carried out their sting, Bethell said. Crawford was arrested and transported to the Clark County Detention Center without incident. He later was released on bond

"Bethell added, 'We're not done with this investigation. We're looking into other matters with a high number of activities taking place at colleges on various nights. We're getting a lot of fight calls and alcohol-related calls at these types of places.

" 'If we're doing our job, maybe we'll save somebody's life '."

My findings & questions

The Arkansas poet who advised me of John's arrest asked, "Will he lose his Senior Poet Laureate's title and have to return his award?" To find out, I contacted John W. Crawford to check my hunch that he was a scapegoat. It appeared, and still seems, my suspicion was right. John told me that as owner of the house rented to the fraternity, and as the fraternity's adviser, he was held as responsible adult. I did some digging and discovered an apparent on-campus conflict involving fraternities was then in progress at Henderson State University (HSU).