

The Back Bay Beta

Beta Upsilon Chapter

Beta Theta Pi Fraternity • Massachusetts Institute of Technology

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

DECEMBER 1990

President's Report: Beta Upsilon Honored At Convention

Betas from this chapter have always felt it is one of the best in the country, and events over the past year seem to indicate that others feel the same way, as the Beta Upsilon Chapter received several awards at the 151st General Convention of Beta Theta Pi.

The first award was the Sisson Award. Due in large part to the efforts of former President James Kalamas '91, who assembled the application, Beta Upsilon received this prestigious award for the second consecutive year. The Sisson Award is considered the highest chapter award and is given only to the most "outstanding chapters" that meet 18 criteria. The brothers' academic accomplishments were also recognized by the general, as we received both the regional and the "overall" Virginia Tech scholarship awards. Beta Upsilon boasts a GPA of 4.45 on a five-point scale, the best on campus and the highest of all Beta chapters. Finally, the Beta Upsilon Chapter was congratulated for successfully colonizing the University of Rhode Island. URI is considered to be the strongest colony in Beta at the current time.

The house is looking better than it has in years due to a large amount of work in the past nine months. There is a new banister on the first-floor staircase, new rugs and furniture in the living room, new flooring in the kitchen, and a new recreation room in the basement of the main house. I speak for all of the brothers when I say that through continued effort and alumni support, the condition of the house will continue to improve.

Yours in -kai-,
John E. Sell '91

Beta Upsilon Helps URI Become Colony

In the spring of 1990, our chapter began the colonization of the University of Rhode Island (URI). Thirty-two men who had already formed their own local fraternal organization at URI petitioned the general to become a colony of Beta Theta Pi. Starting as a pre-colony, these men

(continued on page two)

From The Alumni Association: Chapter News Is Upbeat

The chapter has been very good in reporting in our newsletter as well as in the Beta Theta Pi magazine all of the current happenings at the Beta house. As you have probably read, the news is very upbeat, and we are pleased with the general condition of the chapter.

From the alumni association's point of view, things are also going well. We have completed a \$25,000 rewiring of the main house as well as the construction of a \$20,000 recreation room and refurbishing in the basement of the main house. This was done with the help of our three percent loan from the IRDF, thus preserving our financial reserves. Additionally, we have been able to install handsome new doors on both houses, rebuild the staircase in the main house, and install new rugs and furnishings. The house is in good shape, and we hope you will visit when you can.

The flaky proposition recently offered by an ad hoc committee that all freshmen be required to live in the dorms (apparently offered in an effort to improve the quality of the dorms), appears to have been set aside, at least for the near term.

(continued on page four)



A good time was had by all at the annual alumni party last May.

Meet the new pledges – story on page three!



Betas and the URI colony playing football at the spring house trip.

Beta Helps Establish URI As Colony

(continued from page one)

pledged our chapter and began a rigorous eight-week pledge program. Pledge trainers for colonization, Mark Cooper '91 and Will Scruggs '92, with the help of Earl Watkins '90, chapter pledge trainer, and James Kalamas '91, president, created a pledge program including Beta songs, chapter and fraternity lore, pledge fathers from our chapter, a pledge sneak, and a lot of fun. Meetings with the pre-colony were held at both URI and the Beta house.

At the end of the two-month pledge program, the entire pre-colony spent a weekend at the Beta house. It was a fun-filled weekend including the house trip and ceremonies. The weekend culminated with initiation. Thirty of the original 32 pledges were initiated, claiming role numbers 873 through 902 (Francisco Beehara, URI class of '93, is 900).

At the 151st general convention this summer, the University of Rhode Island pre-colony became a full colony in good standing.

Yours in -kai-,
Will Scruggs '92

Beta Beavers Go Undeclared

After years of disappointing losses in playoff competition in A-league softball, last spring's softball team was on a mission. The Beta Beavers had their sights set on a championship title and all of the glamour and glitz that go along with it. As one member of the team put it, "We don't just want to win; we want to make a statement!" The club finished the season with a 9-0 record that included wins in playoff competition against Next House and a shellacking of Phi Delta Theta in the championship game, 16-8. Last spring's roster comprised the following players: Rob Mentle '88-P, Steve Hao '92-C, Randy West '93-C, Mike Duffy '92-1B, Mike McGovern '89-2B, Kevin Reed '93-2B, Dave DellaGrotte '90-3B, Nate Cultice '92-SS, Chris Sonne '91-OF, Andy Heitner '92-OF, Steve Ponzio '88-OF, Alex Virgilio '92-OF, and Jim Kalamas '91-OF. The A-league championship trophy as well as the championship ball are now proudly displayed in Beta Upsilon's trophy case. With the return of the entire team as well as some freshman prospects, this spring's team should prove to be just as overpowering.

Yours in -kai-,
Jim Kalamas '91
Beaver Manager

Betas Excel In All Areas

It's another school year, and the brothers of the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Beta Theta Pi continue to excel in all endeavors and are leaders both on campus and in the General Fraternity. Two areas in which this trait has been most visible are academics and athletics.

Last semester was record-breaking for the Beta Upsilon Chapter in academics, as brothers' hard work and perseverance gave them great success in their studies. The chapter had an average GPA of 4.45 of five, which was the best of all the fraternities at MIT and also the best of all the Beta chapters. Many individuals also gained academic recognition. Frank Aguirre '91 and Alex Chachkes '91 have been invited to join Tau Beta Pi, the honorary engineering fraternity. Steve Ponzio '88 has received a National Science Foundation scholarship in order that he may further pursue his studies in electrical engineering. John Sell '91 was named a wrestling academic All-American. The list goes on and on....

Betas are not solely interested in academic life, however. In addition to the vast array of intramural sports Betas participate in, several compete on varsity teams. The following Betas and pledges are members of varsity rosters: Godard Abel '93, crew; Kevin Frye '94, crew; Christian Hamer '94, water polo; Mike Bowers '92, sailing; John Sell '91, wrestling captain; Randy West '93, wrestling; Rob Ullman '94, volleyball; Chris Sonne '91, basketball captain; Mike Duffy '92, basketball; Ken Chay '91, lacrosse; Todd Simson '91, lacrosse; Will Scruggs '92, soccer; Mike Schmanske '94, rifle. May all Betas be successful!

Yours in -kai-,
Erik Abernathy

Beta Basement Undergoes Recreation Room Construction

For the past five weeks, the Beta house basement has been undergoing a facelift. Thanks to the generosity of the alumni, and in particular brother Everett S. Coldwell, a founding member of Beta Upsilon, we have been able to transform the basement from one of the least desirable places to be into one of the most attractive places in the house.

It all started this past summer when our district chief, Robert Clarke, and his contracting firm gave us the lowest bid to replace the broken sewer pipes and to refinish the basement and kitchen floors. The work revealed several problems that we had been unaware of. In addition to several lengths of sewer pipe being rusted through, the workmen also discovered that both Woody's Head and the grease trap were not hooked into the sewer system. The result of this was over two inches of solid waste that collected underneath the house. After the completion of the work, the kitchen was made free of the characteristic odor that we had all become desensitized to.

In the late summer, after both brother Robert Danner and brother Jerry Cole reviewed our plans, Clarke Inc. started the construction of the new recreation room in what was formerly basement front and the wrenchman's closet. Transforming these two rooms into the new larger room actually optimizes the utilized space in the house. No one had lived in basement front for quite some time due to the stench and the proximity to the kitchen, and the wrenchman's closet had become a dump for tools and old supplies. Now, with the wrenchman's closet being moved into the basement of the annex, and after four weeks of work, the recreation room is nearing completion. We expect it to be completed before the end of October and to be used quite frequently for socializing.

Yours in -kai-,
Mike McDermott '93

Beta Rush '90

Due in large part to a strong summer rush and a lot of alumni support during rush week, once again the Betas boast the best pledge class on campus. The 10 pledges represent a variety of interests that add diversity to the house.

Summer rush was a huge success, as proven by the fact that we first met 70 percent of our pledge class during this time. Summer weekends found Betas in Baltimore, New York, Columbus, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Los Angeles. These summer rush events were well attended, and we thank the hosts, the hosts' families, and all of the alumni present.

This year's rush week events were changed from those of years past to accommodate MIT's dry rush week policies. Events included not only the traditional weekend parties and the trip to George's Island, but also a steak and lobster dinner at the house of Robert Ramstad '90 and brunch at Boston Billiards Pool Hall.

On behalf of the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Beta Theta Pi, I am proud to present the pledge class of '94:

David Samuel Joshua Alexander West Nyack, NY
 Christopher Marlowe Barchak Lake Charles, LA
 Albert Goodwin Coulson Logan, OH
 Kevin Michael Frye Eliot, ME
 Christian David Hamer Venice, FL
 Steven Michael Levis Hackensack, NJ
 James Robert Meneghini Los Angeles, CA
 Lowell David Samuel Waterville, ME
 Michael Anthony Schmanske Glenshaw, PA
 Robert Andres Ullman West Newton, MA

Yours in -kai-,
 Michael A. Duffy '92
 Rush Chairman

Work Week '90 A Success

The brothers of Beta made a tremendous effort to restore the house to its original grandeur this past work week. Work really began the day after finals last term with the reconstruction of the main banister and the annex vestibule steps. The house saw many other improvements over the summer months. The plumbing in the basement was repaired as well as the kitchen floor. Several brothers living in the house worked hard to take up the old carpet in the living room and refinish the hardwood floor to prepare for the new area rugs.

Along with the typical cleaning and touch-up painting, some larger projects were completed during work week. The front fire escape was wire-brushed and painted. A large portion of the paint buildup on the first flight of stairs was removed. Several rooms, including the second-floor bathrooms of both houses, received a thorough revamping. A few finishing touches, such as a planter in the main house vestibule, new drapes and furniture for the living room, and several new rugs (donated by brother Ken Chay '91) for rooms, have made our house more genial.

The construction of a new recreation room in the basement of the main house is nearing completion. Several walls have been knocked down or modified to allow for a large space toward the front with a smaller alcove where the old wrenchman's closet used to be. The wrenchman's closet has been moved to the back storeroom of the annex basement.

The brothers are proud of the work that has been done and would like to extend a welcome for any Betas to stop in and visit. We think you will find the house the way you would like to remember it.

Yours in -kai-,
 Michael Bowers '92



Betas before a ceremony (left to right): Randy West '93, Mike Duffy '92, Mike McDermott '93, Andy Obst '91, Andy Heitner '92, John Sell '91, Jerry Waicukauski '90, Kevin Reed '93, Phil Johnson '91, Chris Shutts '93, and Erik Abernathy '93.

Beta Upsilon Upholds Community Service Tradition

Beta Upsilon has a long tradition of commitment and dedication to community service. We are upholding this tradition by providing valuable support for several worthwhile causes. Last term we participated in two projects. We worked with the Habitat for Humanity organization and the Walk for Hunger.

Habitat for Humanity is a private group that builds low-income housing units. The organization provides funding and planning, but it does more than provide low-cost housing. It allows the families to participate in the construction of their own homes, thereby instilling a special pride in their homes, which will encourage them to maintain the condition of their homes. We worked alongside other volunteers and the families, constructing and painting two-family housing units.

In May we marshaled the Walk for Hunger, an all-day event in Boston that raises money for the homeless and hungry in this country. Thousands of people participate in this event each year, and therefore it is necessary to have marshals to ensure their safety. Almost half the house turned out for this event, and we all got to keep our bright-yellow marshal T-shirts, as well as whistles. We received special thanks from the organizers for our efforts, since we provided more support than any other fraternity.

This term we plan to continue our work within the community. As we have for the past few years, we will work for the Margaret Fuller House, a home for underprivileged children in Cambridge. In what has now become a Beta tradition, we will set up a haunted house on Halloween for the kids in the house and the community. This event entertains the brothers and pledges as much as the kids. Pledge Frye is organizing the pledge class community service, and he plans to continue our work with Habitat for Humanity. Beta's enduring commitment to community service is as strong as ever and will undoubtedly continue to flourish in the future.

Yours in -kai-,
 Godard Abel

THE BACK BAY BETA

Published regularly by the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Beta Theta Pi at MIT. News contributions, address changes, and photos are always welcome and should be sent to Beta Theta Pi at MIT, Alumni Records Office, P.O. Box 575, Cambridge "A," MA 02139-0575.

Our Beta Alumni Write

Retiree DONALD R. TABER '25 writes, "I had a fine time at my 65th reunion. No others from my Beta delegation were there, but I did see ALDEN CUSHMAN '24 and YARDLEY CHITTICK '22, who are both in good health. Mrs. Taber and I also enjoyed three days at MIT last August as guests of President Gray. We saw and heard a great deal about MIT in 1990." Send your greetings to Don at Apt. 519, 401 E. Linton Blvd., Delray Beach, FL 33483.

ALFRED B. BOOTH '41 reports the sad news of the death of his second son, who was killed when he crashed in his private plane in February of this year. "He left behind a wife and two daughters. We are still devastated but are slowly recovering." "Albie" and his wife are attending the 150th national convention with L. WALTER HELMREICH '40 and his wife. "We are looking forward to the 175th." Send condolences to the Booths at 17 Harding Lane, Westport, CT 06880.

"I retired from the navy last year and have moved back to the Puget Sound area, where I grew up and my parents still live," reports KARL M. DUFF '57 from 6112 Wynn Jones Rd. E., Port Orchard, WA 98366. "I have written three books this past year, which are due to be published this fall—one of which will be distributed nationally by Spring Arbor. I have also been developing a horse ranch for my wife, Gretchen. I do a fair amount of sailing and salmon fishing and went on a wild, six-day mountaineering trip in the North Cascades National Park." Karl adds, "DICK McLAUGHLIN '58 is still the mayor of Canal Fulton, Ohio. We hope to lure him and Ann out here for a boat trip to Canada next summer."

Congratulations to WILLIAM S. WIDNALL '59, who won back the world championship in his sailing class—the International One Design class. "This is the ninth time I've won this—the first time was in 1967 in Norway. I enjoyed receiving the prize from her royal highness, Princess Anne!" Get details of the event by contacting Bill at 22 Summit Rd., Lexington, MA 02173.

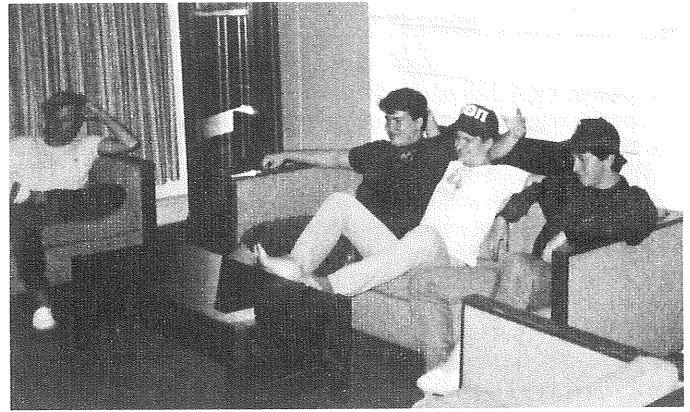
"Jackie and I are enjoying our contemporary home in the woods on the St. Joe River (1601 Echo Valley Dr., Niles, MI 49120)," pens JAMES W. GIFFIN '64. "We also enjoy mountain biking and cross-country skiing. Oldest son Doug is a junior at Cal Berkeley and is studying civil engineering. He has started a snow board team, which now has 16 members. Youngest son John is an active seventh grader."

WILLIAM G. ROESLER '65 of 955 Harbor Island Dr., #145, San Diego, CA 92101, reports news of fellow alums: "B. GREG BROWN '62 is publishing in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, RICHARD W. TSIEN '65 is now at Stanford after many years at Yale, and JOEL G. ROGERS '65 is at the University of British Columbia."

Travel agency owner/publisher/author LAWRENCE A. KING '66 can be reached at P.O. Box 20667, Seattle, WA 98102. Larry has published a new book entitled *Travel for Fun and Profit*.

The president of Stewart Glapat, WILLIAM T. STEWART '69 pens, "I recently applied for my first patent, involving the use of an extendible conveyor to handle 2000-pound pallets into and out of over-the-road truck trailers. Our company is not a giant, but we continue to innovate quite effectively." "Stew" and his family live at 2775 Martin Rd., Zanesville, OH 43701.

E. TIMOTHY O'BRIEN '73 writes, "I enjoy watching my one-year-old grow and am eagerly awaiting the birth of our second child next spring." An adjunct assistant professor at Duke University, Tim is keeping busy figuring out how microtubules work and teaching microanatomy to medical students. Write to him at 2230 Whitley Dr., Durham, NC 27707-2220.



Left to right: Todd Simson '92, John Springsteen '91, Cliff Merchant '91, and Nathan Cultice '92 "hanging out" in the living room.

Congratulations to Nancy and CRAIG C. KATZ '79, who celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary this past September. Craig writes, "We remain committed residents of our nation's capital, with an open invitation to those who would visit us at 1113 G St. SE, Washington, DC 20003. KEN SCHOENDORF '81 and wife Tommie recently became neighbors, as Ken took a job with the public health service." Craig reports news of other alums: "BOB KNECHT '78 is doing well in Lexington, Massachusetts, with an adorable two-year-old daughter. ERIC RAEFSKY '76 and wife Toni are living in Nashville, where Eric has recently joined a medical practice."

Reporting a change of address is MICHAEL G. FEINSTEIN '82: 78 Ridge St., Arlington, MA 02174.

JOHN K. BARTHOLOMEW '86 writes, "We finally did it! Kimberly Foss and I got married on July 21, 1990. Among those in attendance were STEVEN SILBERBERG '83, JOHN CHISHOLM '84, ANDREW LEVY '84, KEN SHINE '85, and ROBERT RAMSTAD '90. Our best man was MICHAEL STRAUB '86. We are looking forward to Michael's wedding in June! We spent three-and-a-half weeks traveling through France, Italy, and England for our honeymoon. I am gainfully employed at Mentor Graphics Corporation, and my latest band, The Reason Why, is doing well in the Portland music scene. Kim is returning to school to finish her nursing degree. Life in Oregon for the past two years, with our two dogs, has been good to us. We invite any traveling Betas to stop by for a while. We can be reached at 2924 NE 21st Ave., Portland, OR 97212, or call 503/282-4695."

DECEASED

We regret to inform you of the death of the following alumni:

MAURICE R. EVANS '43
ABBOTT L. JOHNSON '22, September 8, 1990
HENRY C. STEPHENS '18, August 9, 1988

From The Alumni Association

(continued from page one)

We very much appreciate your continued financial and moral support and hope that you recognize what a very worthwhile cause this is. The fraternities in general and the Betas in particular make a very worthwhile contribution to the students involved and to the institute as a whole.

Yours in -kai-,
Bob Danner '47