

the back bay beta

BETA THETA PI AT MIT | JANUARY 2011



THE CHAPTER IS STEPPING UP TO MEET ITS GREATEST CHALLENGE

I am writing to let you know about some recent issues at the Beta Upsilon Chapter at MIT. The chapter has faced some serious challenges this semester and is working hard to get back on track. Your continued support is critical to the future success of the chapter.

For a while, it appeared as if the fall semester was off to a great start. The house was in excellent condition and the actives were highly motivated for a successful rush. Unfortunately, due to a risk management oversight, the chapter was sanctioned by the IFC and was unable to rush any incoming freshmen.

On the first Saturday night of rush, the chapter held a concert in the annex. At first, the concert seemed to be a success and went off without incident. As you may know, rush is completely dry at MIT and is strictly policed. Unfortunately, the chapter didn't make this clear to the band that performed at the concert. The band had been invited to stay the night when the concert was over and, unaware of the restrictions, brought a large quantity of alcohol into the house and entertained friends.

Although neither the Beta actives nor the prospective pledges were aware of this event, attended the event, or even saw the alcohol, the IFC was informed of the event by MIT students who were friendly with the band. The IFC inspected the house, discovered the alcohol, and shut down Beta's rush. The chapter faced a series of hearings during the first half of the fall semester to determine the extent of its sanctions.

Embarrassed by the incident and the lack of risk-management controls that it indicated, the chapter voluntarily voted to go totally dry in both the main house and the annex until it is once again in good standing with MIT and the General Fraternity. The chapter hoped that this preemptive self-sanction would show the MIT community that it was serious about risk management and self-governance.

In the end, due to previous risk-management incidents over the course of the past two years, the chapter received a significant social sanction through 2014. The chapter is able to hold recruitment and philanthropy events during this time, but no other social events are allowed. There-

fore, recruitment and philanthropy are now the central points of our social calendar, as you can read about in this edition of the newsletter.

With strong alumni support, the chapter is rising to the occasion in order to have a successful spring rush and to operate in its new environment. We have the opportunity to become stronger despite these sanctions, and the chapter is rallying to show that this will be the case.

Thanks to all of the alumni who have stepped up during this difficult time with increased support for the chapter. Your commitment of time and money will help us see our way past these challenges. And, if you plan to give to MIT, please mark your gift as supporting the Independent Residence Development Fund (IRDF), as this money is made directly available to the chapter for loans and grants. You can also pay dues and make gift contributions to Beta Upsilon online at www.beta-mit.org.

Yours in __kai__,
Mike Feinstein '82

President, Beta Upsilon Association

BROTHERS RETURN TO MIT FOR THEIR 50TH REUNION



Four Beta brothers enjoyed their 50th Reunion in Cambridge and Boston this past June. Among the highlights were the Pops, marching in the graduation procession, visiting the Beta House, and a reception hosted by President Hockfield at her house.

The group also visited with Brother Bill Widnall '59. Bill attended the class of 1960 clambake with his wife, Sheila Evans Widnall. Sheila is also a MIT class of 1960 graduate. The Betas first met Sheila in 1956, when she lived at 120 Bay State Road; at the time it was the women's freshman dorm.

Pictured at the left are Dick Oeler, Al MacLaren, Gerry Hurst, and Calvin Koonce. They are all saving their cardinal blazers for the next reunion.

PRESIDENT REPORTS ON POSITIVE CHAPTER CHANGES

Due to recent events, our chapter has faced a challenging start to the fall semester. After a re-evaluation of our core principles, I am proud to report that our fraternal brotherhood has reinforced our commitment to one another and to the cultivation of a principled, community-focused chapter. Through collaboration with our alumni advisory board, the Beta Theta Pi General Fraternity, and a newly mobilized group of recent alumni, we have built a reliable support structure to foster our chapter's pursuit of academic and philanthropic success, and to provide valuable insight and operational knowledge to current and future actives.

We hold high aspirations for our upcoming spring recruitment and are working closely with multiple campus organizations to host a number of benefit events this year. With the women of the MIT chapter of Sigma Kappa, we hosted a charity dinner to provide support for the Toys for Tots Foundation in early December. We enjoyed working with the SK sisters to prepare food and advertise the event. I am excited to announce that we are developing a charity CD—composed entirely of music written and performed by Betas—to aid in recruitment and to raise awareness and support for music education. This will be a great opportunity to showcase the abundant

talents and creativity that our house can offer to the MIT community.

I would like to thank the alumni of the Beta Upsilon Chapter for their unwavering support during these past few months. With thoughtful introspection and the guidance of our alumni and General Fraternity, we have reinforced the groundwork to ensure that Beta Theta Pi will be able to cultivate a strong and healthy chapter at MIT for many years to come.

Yours in _kai_,
Ari Miller '11, 1120
President

THE BETA BEAT: BROTHERS RECEIVE MUSICAL ACCOLADES

The brothers of Beta Theta Pi have always had a passion for music. To satisfy that passion, the Beta brothers actively maintain a full stageroom in the basement of 120 Bay State Road, equipped with a Rhodes piano, a complete drum set, numerous guitars, and professional-grade speakers. Over the years, the Beta stage room has housed several local bands and also given rise to more than a few Beta original bands. Technicolor, composed of brothers Ari Miller '11, Paul Jaffe '12, and alumnus Robert Boyd '10, received accolades from the MIT press for their funky rhythms and unique electro-rock vibe. The driving bass of songs like "Play Along," combined with Robert's passionate vocals, captivated audiences within the MIT community and

the local Boston area. In the spring of 2010, Beta was honored to have the homegrown Technicolor win the MIT battle of the bands, bringing home \$500 in cash (most of which was subsequently donated to charity).

Other musical endeavors abound in Beta. Brother and singer-songwriter Jabari Holloway '12, who recently landed a gig at All Asia in Central Square, as well as Jake Brown '13, who is building a 3000-watt subwoofer to literally blast the bass, can stand as examples for our talented brotherhood. Brothers Ari Miller and Paul Jaffe have recently embarked on a new ambitious funk-project, incorporating MIT vocalist Krista Speroni as well as musicians from the other schools in the Boston area. The unnamed band has al-

ready had two performances, one at MIT and one at Tufts, covering classic Stevie Wonder songs such as "Sir Duke," as well as a number of original compositions.

Beta's contribution to the MIT music community is always a talking point on campus. Indeed, brothers Jabari, Ari, and Paul are all members of the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble, and other musical groups with participating Betas are frequently found performing around campus. Beta Theta Pi's future musical plans include making an all-Beta music CD, holding philanthropic concerts to benefit local charities.

Yours in _kai_,
Paul Jaffe '12, 1128

BETAS BOND TOGETHER AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY

Top – On the left, brothers bond outside 119 Bay State Rd. At the right, Jim Griffin '12 at the Wooden Institute for Men of Principle, a national Beta leadership event.

Bottom – On the left, Maximus St. John '12, Ari Umans '13, Drew Lamson '11, Tristan Delaney '11, Victor Nevarez '12 and Dion Cabeche '11 visit George's Island. In the middle, Betas pose for a group photo. On the right, brothers play skee ball outside the house.



the back bay beta

Published regularly by the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Beta Theta Pi at MIT. News, address changes, and photos are welcome and should be sent to Beta Theta Pi at MIT, Alumni Records Office, P.O. Box 390528, Cambridge, MA 02139-0006.

CHAPTER FOCUSES ON SERVING THE COMMUNITY

The task which requires the greatest amount of creativity—and above all else, tenacity—on the part of a community service chairman has nothing to do with planning for, setting up for, or facilitating an event. The most difficult part of any community service event is trying to get an entire house of 20-something-year-olds out of bed to work at a community service event on a Saturday or Sunday morning. I've tried so many things: taping people's doors the night before so they cannot close their doors properly to lock me out of their rooms; dragging people out of their beds 10 minutes before we need to be on campus; and (my favorite) running through every room in the house banging a metal pot with a wooden spoon at 9:00 a.m.

Despite the tricks that I need to resort to in order to get brothers to come to our events, I'm proud to say that the house has greatly improved its commitment to community service. Last semester, we partici-

pated in a Back Bay cleanup event, raised \$400 at a charity barbecue, and co-hosted (and won!) a battle-of-the-bands tournament during CPW. This year, we are looking for new things to do, and we are reusing and improving some old ideas to serve the community. Earlier this semester, we helped the MIT chapter of the Society of Women Engineers run Brownie Days, where local Girl Scouts from the Greater Boston Area visit campus to learn about the wonders of science. It was a great morning, filled with plenty of fun science experiments for the girls and, fortunately for us, plenty of breakfast snacks for the Betas. At the end of the event, I dressed up like Tim the Beaver and took plenty of pictures with the girls—after which, I was harassed for nearly an hour. I was repeatedly hit, tripped, tagged back (seriously, whatever happened to “no tag-backs?”), and at one point I was dragged around by the tail by six elementary-school girls.

Looking into the future, you can bet that community service is going to be a big part of Beta for the rest of this school year and (hopefully!) for many years to come. As I write this, Ari Umans



Tristan Delaney '11 is Tim the Beaver!

'13 and I are working with the girls of Sigma Kappa to organize our Toys for Tots charity dinner in early December. We hope to get a lot of toys for underprivileged children in the area and show off the culinary skill of our very own Chef Myles to the MIT community.

Yours in _kai_,
Tristan Delaney '11, 1121
Community Service Chairman

BETA MORALE IS ON THE RISE AND ALUMNI REMAIN INVOLVED

As you are all aware, this term got off to a rocky start. Morale was low after our excitement for rush was built up and then taken away from us. Although improving accountability and distributing responsibility more evenly throughout the house are responsibilities and continued priorities of the vice president, a lack of excitement and enthusiasm for Beta among brothers was an additional burden this term. I am glad to report that the brothers have rebounded and are now as motivated as ever to make this place great.

This was in part due to a very successful

Eye fairly early in the term. Brothers talked about many aspects of their lives as always, but the house was also a topic addressed by all. It helped remind us what we love about Beta and that it is a house full of people who truly connect with one another.

Another morale booster was the increased presence of alumni. The local alumni have shown a remarkable level of support for the house that they love so much. Many have shown up for weekly Friday pizza nights, and they have been working with our executive committee to ensure institutional knowledge is passed on to the

younger generations of Betas. Personally, I owe a lot of my Beta enthusiasm to alumni. I love it when they stop by the house to recount stories and ask about how things have changed. I am always impressed by how incredible our alumni are, and how the spirit of Beta has endured in this way for so many years. Meeting the Betas that have come before me, who created this haven for me to live in, makes me even more proud to call myself a brother of Beta Theta Pi.

Yours in _kai_,
Brian Basham '12, 1130

BROTHER SEEKS ADVENTURE TOURING THE COUNTRY ON A BIKE

I have found the best way to spend MIT breaks: bike tours. You can travel slowly enough to get an intimate feel for your surroundings, stopping and camping at whim, but quickly enough to actually get somewhere and see a serious breadth of the country. The simplicity of spending weeks outside, meeting people, exercising, and eating every-



Ben Judge '11 on his West Coast bike tour.

thing you can find is addicting. I think it is the best way to see the country, and there is nothing better than taking off after finals on a bike to explore some of the United States.

My first tour, in the summer of 2009, was a blast. It had the advantage of being conveniently based outside of Boston, and I got to see a good chunk of the East Coast. Throughout the trip, my fellow participants kept raving about the beauty of the West Coast, especially touring along California's rocky shore and the Pacific Coast Highway. For the summer of 2010, I decided I had to give that coast a shot as well. I reached out to some recent Beta alumni and received overwhelming support in coordinating my trip from those based in California. Specifically, Mike Haimes '09 and Jacob Stultz '07 allowed me to base my trip from San Francisco, where I was also greeted by Zach Rich '07. California supposedly has consistently nice weather, but I was drenched in

cold rain heading through Santa Cruz. Fortunately, Jim Griffin '12 had a warm shower and a meal for me, and Greg Vargas '10 met us for breakfast that morning. I continued along the 500 remaining miles to Los Angeles, where Jake Muhleman '08 gave me a final place to crash and took me out around UCLA to celebrate before I broke the bike down and headed back to Boston.

I can't thank the Betas who helped me enough for making this trip a success. So many brothers offered their support as California residents, including Chris Chronopolus '09, Joe Goldbeck '07, Robert Boyd '10, and my pledge brothers Tristan Delaney '11 and Jon Mendoza '11. Their responses exemplify the culture of support that makes me proud to be a Beta Upsilon.

Yours in _kai_,
Ben Judge '11

alumni updates

BETA UPSILON BROTHERS SHARE THEIR NEWS AND NOTES WITH US

"I'm almost retired, but occasionally I still do some consulting," writes **Alfred E. Wechsler '55**. "My wife and I now spend most of the winter in El Paso, Texas, where one of my daughters lives. I still enjoy traveling and visiting my children and grandchildren in Texas, Washington, and California as well as going to Europe and Asia for vacations." Catch up with him by writing to 7 Wainwright Rd. # 70, Winchester, MA 01890; or awechsler@aol.com.

Reconnect with **Edwin C. Bell '58** at his new address: 625 Biltmore Way #804, Coral Gables, FL 33134.

We have an update on the most recent reunion from **Gerald Hurst '60**: "Four class of 1960 Betas who attended their 50th Reunion came to the open house: **Calvin S. Koonce, Alan J. MacLaren, Richard Oeler, and me** (see the photo below). **Mike Feinstein '82** and a number of undergraduates greeted us and showed us around the house. We look forward to the 100th anniversary celebration." Write to Gerald at 25 Grey Wing Pt., Naples, FL 34113; or e-mail hurst@wharton.upenn.edu.



"Seeing the alumni news about seven of my contemporary brothers in the spring newsletter prompted me to write," writes **Gary W. Bickel '61**. "I finished my technical career with a four-year stint with Boeing as a troubleshooter for fiber-optic components for the International Space Station (ISS). Actually getting to work on and in some of the ISS modules somewhat fulfilled an adolescent fantasy. My current activities consist of hiking and backpacking. I hike nearly every Monday and Wednesday with a group of mostly retired people, and I lead these hikes some of the time. I am an instructor for the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter Wilderness Travel Course and an instructor/examiner of navigation certification for advanced leaders in the chapter's outings program. My last

backpacking trip was in August '09; I led a three-day trip to Mount Langley. Our son Geoffrey started his own company providing artistic and technical design services as well as operations support for large-display media in the Las Vegas area (his website is www.signwavedigital.com). He and his wife have three children. My daughter Kathryn works for an environmental consulting firm and is deeply involved in carbon inventory assessments worldwide. She and her husband have two little girls who, along with their cousins, are their grandmother's delight (and grandfather's too)! My daughter Sarah is working on a doctorate in environmental science and policy at University of California Berkeley and has chosen a thesis topic which could land her right in the middle of the coming water wars in California." Write to Gary at 3761 Holden Circle, Los Angeles, CA 90720; or e-mail gwbickel1@verizon.net.

Leslie "Bud" Boring '64 sends his greetings from France, and writes, "This past year, I finally decided to retire, so to speak, and focus my activities on painting and my interest in the history of impressionism. Last year **Fred Luconi '64** and I formed a French-American artist group with another Boston-area artist and three French artists, called Les Artistes des Deux Fleuves ("The Artists from Two Rivers," i.e. the Charles and the Seine). Along with a Boston-area photographer, we organized our second group exhibition last May, here in the city hall of Le Pecq—where my wife, Annie, and I live—west of Paris. One of Fred's paintings was chosen by the mayor's office as the showpiece for the exhibition poster. Fred and his wife, Sue, were here for the show. Classmates **Richard Carpenter '64** and **Michael Lardner '64** also joined us, along with Mike's wife, Nancy, and several other Boston-area friends. In addition to painting, I am beginning to organize more than 30 years of my personal research regarding the sites painted by the Impressionists into a coherent format. I have begun to lecture on the subject; this past year I was elected to the technical advisory board of the Museum of the Grenouillère, a museum devoted to the riverside leisure club and dance hall where Monet and Renoir worked on similar paintings side by side in the summer of 1869. I had four articles on sites painted by Alfred Sisley published this past August. Additionally, I am an adviser for a London film company that is producing a four-part series on the origins of impressionism for the BBC. We shall see where this leads. **Richard Hortor '62** and his wife, Dorothe, traveled

through Paris on their way to a river cruise in the South of France in early September; we enjoyed a terrific lunch together. Richard had a summer job in 1960, in Texas, and was the Beta who came to meet my family and me on a pre-rush visit to my hometown, Quanah, in August of that year—now half of a century ago! That marked the beginning of meeting the Betas of MIT, and forming friendships with close and enjoyable contacts over the years that carry an importance I never could have imagined at the time, and for which I am everlastingly grateful." Write to Bud at 12 rue de Seine, 78230 Le Pecq, France; or lmbinternational@aol.com.

"A Lot has been happening lately," writes **Paul Haines '78**, now working for Noah Consulting as a senior principal and subject matter expert. "Suzie and I downsized and sold our house in Katy, outside of Houston. We are living close to downtown Houston now, an area called 'The Heights.' Our younger son, Zach, quit his job as a high-school French teacher and tennis coach to work full time on renovating old houses (circa 1920) for resale. He also got married November 2009. I am still having fun and working hard as an information management consultant and subject matter expert." Write to him at 1434 Dorothy St., Houston, TX 77008; or send him e-mail at paulhaines@comcast.net.

"I left my job at the Dow Chemical after 20 years," writes **Ken Bryan '88**. "I am taking a 'gap year' to travel and decide what I want to do with the next 20 years. I've had several months of freedom already ... and I could get used to this lifestyle!" Catch up with him at 760 Labrador Lane, Coupeville, WA 98239; or kenbryan05@gmail.com.

"After a good 17 years in Detroit, my wife, Denée, and I moved back to Southwest Missouri and the Ozark Mountains," writes **William M. Scruggs '92**. "We were sorry to leave our friends, but the homecoming was very nice for us. We are just north of Branson, so anyone hitting the country shows should drop us a line." Write to 5036 S. Greenbriar, Springfield, MO 65804; or wscruggs@alum.mit.edu.

DECEASED

We regret to announce the death of:

Russell L. Law Jr. '48
May 26, 2008