Beta Upsilon Chapter



Back Bay Beta

Beta Theta Pi Fraternity • Massachusetts Institute of Technology

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

FALL 2003

From Our Alumni Association

The

Beta Adapts To Changing Times At MIT

t's been a long time since you've heard from us. We had hoped to publish *The Back Bay Beta* in the spring but weren't able to do so due to changes on campus as well as demands in our professional and personal lives. We will be increasing the frequency of these newsletters to either two or three a year starting with this one, and we will be setting up a website for our alumni house corporation that we'll encourage you to visit. As soon as we have something online we'll let you know.

First, congratulations go to the members of the Beta class of 1962 for their highly successful 40th reunion last year under the leadership of Class President Mead Wyman. This group's contribution, together with major capital gifts to MIT by David Koch '62 for the renaming of the biology building and by Tom Gerrity '64 for the new fitness center within the new athletic center, are literally cornerstones for the future. We applaud everyone who has contributed to MIT's capital campaign at all contribution levels!

I was wandering through the Tech Coop in Kendall Square recently and came across an interesting book titled *MIT Campus Planning 1960–2000, An Annotated Chronology* (ISBN 0-262-69294-5). I purchased the book in part because tracing campus development through four decades was fascinating. I also wanted to quote the first paragraph of its foreword for this newsletter.

"We are the stewards of a trust that requires meticulous planning to serve present and future generations of scholars. We must choose wisely to provide them with the resources to sustain world-class programs in education and research." That statement was made by MIT President Chuck Vest in 2001.

Likewise, the trustees of our Beta

Upsilon Association interpret our responsibilities very seriously, albeit it on a smaller scale. We actively attend and participate in meetings. We try to work with our chapter and have been working closely with the Beta General Fraternity in Oxford, Ohio (www.betathetapi.org), with several of our neighbors on Bay State Road, and with a number of trustees from other MIT alumni house corporations to try to navigate changing policies in these changing times. Much of what you experienced as incoming freshmen in years past has changed dramatically in terms of your initial college experience.

The major highlights to report are as follows:

The ideal model for how best to support a chapter of a fraternity includes an alumni house corporation responsible for the physical property (two in our case) and a separate group of advisors to help the undergraduates in matters of recruitment, new member (pledge) education, risk management, financial management, alumni relations, and overall chapter advising.

It has been a challenge for us to find enough people to fill these various roles. As it is, we still need to identify more people to serve as directors of the house corporation. However, the good news is that our general fraternity has stepped up to the plate and identified six Betas who graduated from other schools who now live in the greater Boston area and who want to help out as advisors. Certainly if there are MIT Betas who want to be considered for an advisory role with the chapter, they are welcome to approach us to discuss a role they can play. However, few have to date.

A big part of the delay in publishing this newsletter has to do with frustrations felt by many other alumni house corporations with how MIT has been making and implementing policy decisions in recent years. It has not been uncommon for alumni trustees to be virtually excluded from the process leading to important decisions that affect both students as well as our own decisions about possible capital campaigns for our facilities, recruitment of volunteers, etc.

It's fair to say many organizations have been unable to make long-term planning decisions because we've felt uncomfortable with both process and outcomes. A decision was made this spring to form a new task force to address shortcomings in MIT's current approach to working with the Independent Living Group system. One co-chair is Patrick Winston, a professor in the Artificial Intelligence Lab and a Phi Delta Theta alum. The other is Steve Immerman, who has been the director of enterprise services in the Office of the Executive Vice President. (I was actually on the student committee in the late 1970s that recommended hiring Steve as a business manager for the ILG system, and I was happy to work closely with him.) We're very hopeful that this new group will break new ground and help us set the stage for making some decisions of our own. You can read more about this committee at fsilg-task-force.mit.edu.

We've spoken at some length with a few organizations about either the decisions they've already made or what they sense their plans will be for the future. For example, SAE, which lost its chapter a few years ago due to alcohol violations, has sold both of its properties on the east side of Mass Ave on Beacon Street, set up a 501(c)(3) foundation, and is working with both MIT and a few other living groups to try to establish a new cluster of independent living groups in Cambridge.

(continued on page three)

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

We wish to thank the following alumni for their generous support of Beta Upsilon Chapter during the 2002-2003 school year.

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A Few Good Reasons To Support Beta Upsilon

ach year, the president of the alumni association writes for your support. Last year, I wrote about my memories of life in the fraternity and how there are new students each year who have this same opportunity because of your generous support. I spoke of foursquare, intramural bowling, and visits to Wellesley and Simmons. Your time is precious, so I did not expound upon any of the many stories that provide more evidence of how living in the Beta house provided me with a sense of camaraderie that I had never known previously. Here are just a few examples.

Betas visited me while I was laid up in a hospital following surgery to repair torn knee ligaments. Afterward, my brothers helped me by driving me to classes on occasion (Steve, '77) and cheered me up by encouraging me to attend the Strat's Rats (where I met the woman I married 23 years ago). I went to many Beta weddings, and it is no surprise that I asked the entire fraternity to attend mine, that a Beta (Simeon, '77) was best man and another Beta (Mark, '78) was a member of the bridal party. There was also the time when the cook (Jimmy) quit while I was steward, and members of the chapter (such as Scott, '80) helped with the cooking until a new cook was hired.

When I think of why I continue to support the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Beta Theta Pi, I consider how many more young men will benefit from life in Beta. There are a great many difficulties arising now as MIT changes recruitment policies and removes freshmen from the fraternities, but I feel that these should not deter us from our goal to provide an opportunity for others to develop long-lasting friendships and enriching experiences.

I renew my call for involvement in the alumni association. We will be conducting a substantial fraction of our business online via e-mail and in monthly teleconferences, making it substantially easier to participate in the oversight and develop-



ment of the Beta house and the actives while so many of us are spread across the globe. We especially invite recent alumni to contribute time and thoughts. The general fraternity has picked chapter advisors who graduated from other chapters around the country because of the lack of volunteers

from the Beta Upsilon Chapter. Please consider such a role.

So, please help the alumni association in our efforts to maintain and improve the house. We offer profound thanks to those alumni who have financially supported the fraternity through dues and gifts. If your name isn't listed on the enclosed honor roll, we invite you to join this renewal of enthusiasm and generosity among fraternity alumni.

> Yours in – kai – Herman L. Marshall '78 President, Beta Upsilon Association hermanmarshall@alum.mit.edu

Beta Adapts To Changing Times At MIT

(continued from page one)

Following extensive outreach to their alumni, Sigma Chi has decided to stay in Boston and is investing a lot of money in its facilities. We previously reported that complying with new seismic standards would drive their renovation costs through the roof. It appears that information was reported to us in error, though the amount involved is still not insignificant. They are essentially trying to renovate their house over the course of 13 weeks during a summer to minimize impact to their students during the school year.

We've learned that building construction costs in Boston have been rising at the rate of 20 to 25 percent annually for the past several years due to the demand for workers on the central artery/third harbor tunnel project affectionately (or not!) known as the "Big Dig." It's unknown how this will change.



is will change. A few years ago, MIT started a new program called Spring Weekend targeted at high school seniors

who had been offered admission to encourage them to visit campus and immerse themselves in college life for a long weekend. Many have participated. In fact, MIT has seen a dramatic increase in the number of parents who accompany their son or daughter to campus. In 2002, over 700 parents did so. This indicates that parents are having increasing influence not only on where their children attend college but also where they choose to live. It's one of the biggest changes I've seen since I started volunteering as an educational counselor, interviewing prospective students for admission 23 years ago.

About every 10 years, Boston University is required by the Boston Redevelopment Authority to file an updated master plan detailing any changes it wants to make to its previous master plan. Our house corporation was not notified of this process, even though we have owned property on Bay State Road since 1946. Instead, I happened to bump into one of our neighbors on the subway who told me about an upcoming meeting of the BU Community Task Force, which I attended in January and at which I spoke.

The two points of contention I made were about the meeting notification process itself as well as to express strong opposition to BU's desire to reverse the direction of traffic on the section of Bay State Road directly in front of our houses. Not only would it inconvenience those who live on that section of the street, but it would also create a potential public safety hazard with one-way streets coming together in front of Lambda Chi as well as set the stage for a possible walking mall further up Bay State Road. My comments, together with those of several neighbors, prompted BU to withdraw this trafficrelated request at a follow-on meeting. It also helped a number of non-BU property owners on the street meet each other for the first time.

There are a few websites you may want to visit to poke around. One is the site for all MIT living groups, which is web.mit.edu/life/category/lg. html. From there, you can click on the link to our chapter's website, beta.mit.edu. We've been urging the chapter for the past few years to construct a site to help you learn more about Beta Theta Pi at MIT today. I suggest you send e-mail to president@beta.mit.edu to express your thoughts.

You can also learn more about Yardley Chittick '22 from his family's website, at www.chittick.com. Yard will be attending another Beta convention in Ohio in July.

We hope all is well with you and look forward to more frequent communications. Proud to be a Beta.

> – kai – Mike Johnson '80 Clerk, Beta Upsilon Association MikeJohnson@alum.mit.edu 617/641-8480

News From The Actives, Spring Semester 2003

President's Report

As the newly elected president of the fine group of men in the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Beta Theta Pi, I can see that I have a bit of work cut out for me. However, I am optimistic about the near and far future of the house. As a chapter we have had to adapt to some recent changes within and without, just as I have had to adapt to the responsibilities of office. Because of changes in MIT's rush system, our brotherhood has been a bit smaller this past semester, which I think has brought us all closer together.

This semester's house trip to a cabin in Maine was very relaxing and fulfilling. Our participation in house functions and in intramural sports such as soccer, basketball, and hockey has been stellar so far this semester. Brothers have been great at helping each other out, as well as giving me great feedback on my duties and actions as the rookie president. In addition, we have many Betas involved in varsity sports from sailing to crew to men's gymnastics. One brother is a member of the jazz band; another is a host for MIT's radio station WMBR 88.1.

One of our main focuses as of late has been our next rush. A less radically restrictive rush system has been accepted by MIT this year, which will mirror our old system more closely. Rush will now begin one week after the start of the fall semester and continue for one week before bids can be given out and subsequently accepted by freshmen. I have been keeping close contact with MIT administrators and working closely with our new rush chairmen, Kevin Chen and Eric Scarborough, to maximize the effectiveness of our rushing opportunities. Further guidance from our consultant, Eric Eickhoff, should help to bolster rush in a new way.

Just a few things that we are looking forward to in the remainder of the semester will be the initiation of our pledges, our 90th annual alumni party the first weekend of May, and the formation of the alumni advisory board to help our house officers make the most of their house offices. I expect all will be successful and fun. Our alumni association is also investigating options for restoring and renovating the main house, which has us all excited.

I'd like to thank all of the alumni who support our house and help out the brotherhood in times of need as well as times of prosperity. You are the paradigm of fidelity.

> Yours in – kai – Jason A. Martinez 1062

Brother Spends Spring Break In Spain

This past spring break I had the pleasure of traveling to Spain, visiting the cities of Madrid and Sevilla. It was an interesting glimpse into a different culture, and I thoroughly enjoyed experiencing such new and unusual things. In Madrid I visited the Prado, renowned for its collection of paintings by Goya and El Greco. It was easy to spend an entire afternoon just walking through the museum's halls. The building of the museum was a converted palace, which was beautiful even on its own. I also went to the other major museum in Madrid, the Sofia. It had a more modern spin to it, housing famous works by Dali and Picasso. While in Madrid, I was also fortunate enough to attend a bullfight as well. Though the bullfighting season does not actually start until late spring/early summer, my visit

coincided with a special festival, and I was thus able to catch the late afternoon matinee. The experience was initially gruesome, but I quickly grew to appreciate the art and skill that the matadors exhibited. By the end I was shouting "¡Olé!" along with everyone else.

After a few days, I took the bullet train to Sevilla, a city very different from Madrid. Where Madrid was very modern and exceptionally clean (the city has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on cleaning the city, as part of a bid for the Olympics), Sevilla largely showed its age. Its buildings were old and its streets were rough, but the city definitely had charm. The huge Gothic cathedral and the gorgeous palace of Alcázar were fantastic, though, for me, the highlight of the city was its cuisine. Sevilla is famous for its tapas, and I found out why. Instead of having to choose a single dish for a meal, I could choose four or five small, tasty dishes for the same price.

Betas Take A House Trip To Maine

On the weekend of March 7, over 20 Betas trekked through New England for this semester's house trip. Organized by Vice President Mark Brigham, the trip featured hiking, snowboarding, and sitting by the fire in Mark's cabin in Maine. It was also the first house trip in recent years in which we stayed the night to enjoy a second day with the brothers.

Despite busy course loads, many of the brothers took the weekend off to make the several-hour trip. We left on Friday after the weekly pizza night and made it before midnight. Most of us were tired after a long week of school and ride up there, so we made ourselves at home and rested for Saturday.

On Saturday the brothers split up for several activities. A few woke up early to drive to the nearest ski slopes and snowboard the whole day. Others hiked several miles around the cabin, admiring the wilderness. Many of us took the opportunity to escape from the school setting and sat around a large bonfire created in the backyard, catching up with each other and enjoying our freedom while we still had it.

That night, we regrouped and drove back down to the house, informing those who could not make it what a great time we had. Overall, it was a much-needed and much-enjoyed house trip. Thanks to Mark and his father for setting it up and letting us stay in their cabin.

> – kai – Andy Kutas 1068

My visit also happened to coincide with the start of the war in Iraq, and I encountered huge protests in both Madrid and Sevilla. One protest in Madrid involved 40,000-plus people and included anti-American slogans spray-painted on the windows of McDonald's. It seemed as though everyone everywhere was wearing pins that read "No a la Guerra," and students, adults, and the elderly were all involved. My week in Spain provided me with much insight into world opinion about the conflict in Iraq, as well as into the daily lives of the people in Spain. It was a week to remember.

> – kai – Kevin Chen 1072

SEND US YOUR ADDRESS BEFORE YOU MOVE:

Beta Upsilon Welcomes New Pledges

s the rush chairs this year, we are pleased to report that the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Beta Theta Pi had an extremely successful rush this fall. We received 10 new pledges, plus another who pledged in the spring. The format of fall rush was different this year, as the administration tried to improve upon last year's controversial three-week rush system. Rush officially began the Friday after classes started, and bids could be extended as soon as the following Friday. This minimized the amount of time that rush would affect our academic commitments.

We held many events during rush that attracted freshmen and also provided an opportunity for Beta brothers to get to know them. One of these events was a trip to Gloucester for deep-sea fishing. About 30 Betas and freshmen made the trip to Cape Ann for an afternoon of fishing on the open water. Several people managed to catch sizable fish, but Mark Brigham '04 was the hero of the day, snagging a 16-pound cod. Afterwards, we returned to the Beta house and grilled up our catch for a delicious dinner.

Another popular event was our annual trip out to George's Island in the Boston



Ghost of pledge parties past: Austin Tarranta sings with the band at a party in March.

Harbor. We took a harbor cruise out to the island, where we played ultimate Frisbee, grilled burgers, and launched water balloons at each other. As usual, there were also several heated games of croquet. The weather could not have been better, as we enjoyed a perfect late-summer day of warm breezes and sunshine. After a solid (but long) weekend of rush, the day at George's Island boosted the spirits of everyone on the trip. We also held various other activities during rush week, including a trip to a Billy Idol concert at the FleetBoston Pavilion, midnight sailing on the Charles, a party featuring live music from Actual Proof, and The Big Lebowski projected onto the side of the house.

The week culminated in the bid night formal, for which Jim the cook prepared a delicious three-course dinner for Betas, prospective pledges, and their dates to enjoy. We extended bids to the freshmen throughout the course of the dinner and celebrated new beginnings while dressed in our best. After dinner we moved to the chapter room, where we lounged about for the rest of the night amid live bossa nova music. It was an extremely pleasant night that capped off a very successful rush.

We expect great things from the members of the class of 2007. Their unity as a pledge class was already evident during rush, as eight of them pledged at the same time. The class includes athletes, musicians, chefs, and more, and we are proud to see them continuing our tradition of diversity. We look forward to incorporating this outstanding pledge class into the Beta Upsilon Chapter.

> – kai – Kevin Chen (1072) and Eric Scarborough (1074)



WALTER E. BORDEN III '45 is an avid birdwatcher and a volunteer with Habitat for Humanity. Drop him a line at 105 Alder Circle, Saint Simons Island, GA 31522.

When we last heard from JOHN C. KERN '50, he was hoping many of his classmates would sign up for the minireunion trip to France in October 2002. On the itinerary were Normandy (including Omaha Beach, where John landed in 1944), Paris, and points south. To find out how it went, write to him at 189 E. Lake Shore Dr., #8, Chicago, IL 60611, or at jck@kernfdn.org.

RONALD L. McKAY '54 writes, "I've been retiring from my architectural acoustics business in small steps since January 2000, but I continue to work part time for symphony orchestras and architect friends. Sally continues to work, too, at the Pacific-Asia Museum in Pasadena about three days a week. We are mixing work with travel, having recently been to France, China, Japan, and various U.S. destinations—and this year it is Mexico and England." Ron adds that he hopes to see many classmates at their 50th reunion in 2004. Ron and Sally live at 5811 Kentland Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367.

ALFRED WECHSLER '55 is retired from Arthur D. Little, Inc., but still does some independent consulting. He travels to visit his children in Texas, California, and Hawaii and spends holidays in Italy, Scandinavia, Asia, and elsewhere. Al writes, "I hope to visit some of my Beta classmates on these travels, and those still in New England." His address is P.O. Box 9, Hampton, NH 03843; aewechsler@ aol.com.

Drop a line to WILLIAM P. CALVERT '56 at calvertb12@aol.com or at 5409 Overseas Highway, #351, Marathon, FL 33050. WARD HALVERSON '56 (halv@ att.net) lives at 25 Hutchinson St., Cambridge, MA 02138.

"My wife, Annette Stiefbold, and I enjoyed a 13,000-mile car trip around the U.S. [in the summer of 2002]," writes ED-WIN C. BELL '58 (633 Camilo Ave., Coral Gables, FL 33134; edwincbell@ aol.com). "We particularly enjoyed hiking in Glacier and Grand Teton National Parks as well as at the north rim of the Grand Canyon. We were pleasantly surprised by how much we enjoyed tent camping on numerous occasions. The trip also provided an opportunity to connect with several Betas. I enjoyed lunch at the Marrion Cricket Club with GARY BLAKELEY '58 and chatted briefly with his wife, Mary Lynn. We enjoyed a delightful cookout and overnight with Nan and STAN GRAVES '58 in Wilmette. STEVE YERETSKY '59 and his wife, Lynn, and I got together for lunch in Houston. It was interesting to (continued on page six)



(continued from page five)

discover that although Gary, Stan, and Steve are ostensibly retired, all are actively working as consultants." Ed adds that he and Annette would enjoy seeing anyone who is traveling in south Florida.

An economic development specialist at the Mesa Verde Country Economic Development Office, BRUCE A. JOHNSON '60 can be reached at bajohnson@cityof cortez.com or at 16434 CR 28.3, Dolores, CO 81324.

JAMES S. DRAPER '62 writes, "In honor of our Beta brother JAMES E. CUNNINGHAM '57, who died in the early '80s, the Cunningham Scholarship for Women in Engineering was established and now supports four undergraduates one each in electrical engineering, aero/astro, chemical engineering, and civil and environmental engineering." Stay in touch with "Pox" at jsd@photon.com or at 18 Bellevue St., Newton, MA 02458.

WILLIAM G. ROESELER '65 works for Boeing and lives at 12625 94th NE, Kirkland, WA 98034. Send e-mail to Billy at wm.g.roeseler@boeing.com.

DAVID PENNY '66 is president of The Master's Dredging Co., Inc., in Lawrence, Kansas. He writes, "I had a great time visiting with BILLY ROESELER '65 while we tested some high-speed technology to destroy tidal cordgrasses in the state of Washington's bays, which are destroying their oyster and clam businesses. Billy is working to recruit my sons and me to work with his Canyon Space Team, which is going for the suborbital X-prize. They have a little capital but a great team and probably have the edge on the competition. Billy worked with BILL KOCH '62 to win the America's Cup several years ago." Mail reaches David at 643 Tennessee St., Lawrence, KS 66044, and e-mail at dpenny @attglobal.net.

At 55, WILLIAM T. STEWART '69 continues to run Stewart Glapat Corporation, which makes materials handling systems. He also teaches at a branch of Ohio



Russ Law '48, Bill McEwen '48, and Art Davis '48 are harmonious in the brotherhood during a party in the late '40s.

Do you have some old photos to share? Send them to us at the address below!

University and substitutes at the local high school. An avid golfer, "Stewey" enjoyed a dream golf vacation in Scotland in the summer of 2001: He played all the British Open courses and managed a 78 on the Old Course at Saint Andrews. His address is 2775 Martin Rd., Zanesville, OH 43701; bstewart@adjustoveyor.com.

Please note this new address for EDWARD W. RICH '72: 2014 N. Saginaw Rd., #114, Midland, MI 48640.

EDWARD G. INSEL '82 lives at 46 Center St., Clinton, NJ 08809, and e-mail reaches him at ed_insel@msn.com.

"In December 2001, Sheila and I welcomed our first son, Edward, into the family, joining sisters Alice (5) and Beth (3)," writes MICHAEL FLANAGAN '85 (196 Valley Rd., Needham, MA 02492; michael. flanagan@alum.mit.edu). "Eddie is a world-class eater and weighs 16.5 pounds at four months." He adds that he recently helped JOHN O'LEARY '84 celebrate his 40th birthday, along with TONY DIPESA '86, SETH DAVIS '83, KEN SHINE '85, and long-time friends of Beta Kim Dow and Joyce Waller.

A resident in orthopedic surgery at the University of Virginia Hospital, HANS P. OLSEN '94 can be reached at hpolsen@yahoo.com or at 67 Court Place,

THE BACK BAY BETA -

Charlottesville, VA 22901.

Write to JEFFREY G. REICHBACH '99 at 925 Oakes St., East Palo Alto, CA 94303, or at j_reichbach@hotmail.com.

RANDALL GRAEBNER '00 (randyg @alum.mit.edu) lives at 4915 Chimney Oaks Dr., Mableton, GA 30126.

Stay in touch with CHETAK RESHAM-WALA '01 at 26 Bunker Hill Rd., Shrewsbury, MA 01545 (chetak@ alum.mit.edu).

DECEASED

We regret to report the death of the following alumni:

ROBERT D. BUCK '44 July 14, 2002 PRENTISS I. COLE '27

March 20, 2002

CHARLES DOWNING '53 June 8, 2002

ROBERT Y. JORDAN '37 December 6, 2002

C. ARTHUR MAYO JR. '36 June 23, 2002

HARRY D. STORER JR. '50 August 23, 2001

DONALD R. TABER '25 March 10, 2002

Published regularly by the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Beta Theta Pi at MIT. News contributions, address changes, and photos are welcome and should be sent to Beta Theta Pi at MIT, Alumni Records Office, P.O. Box 390575, Cambridge, MA 02139-0007. Photos will be returned after use in the newsletter.