



The Back Bay Beta

Beta Upsilon Chapter

Beta Theta Pi Fraternity • Massachusetts Institute of Technology

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

WINTER 2005-'06

Alumni Association President Reports:

With Main House Restored, We Focus On Pledges And Annex

The alumni association has been very active over the last year working with the chapter and MIT. While there are still some challenges ahead, particularly in recruiting new undergraduates, the main house renovations are done and our financial situation is very good.

Main House Renovated

We completed repairs to the main house that were necessary after the fire on January 16, 2004. As planned last year, we renovated the bathrooms while the house was unoccupied. All three bathrooms from the second floor on up were redesigned, gutted, and rebuilt as a group, improving the plumbing infrastructure in the process.

As the bathroom work proceeded, we authorized additional work on the main house to renovate the front rooms and improve the heating and sprinkler systems. The work on the front rooms included painting, refinishing floors, tearing out nonfunctioning built-in cabinetry and bolstering the baseboard heat. This work was substantially completed in early April, in time for Campus Preview Weekend (CPW) and the Alumni Weekend. The renovation expenses were financed by a \$300,000 loan from the Independent Residence Development Fund (IRDF). We remind all alumni that donations to MIT that are earmarked for the IRDF are fully tax-deductible and benefit Beta, sometimes directly in the form of grants.

The result is that most of the Main House is in excellent shape with improved heating, new windows (in the rear) and new copper sheathing.

The bathrooms are excellent, the dining room looks practically original, and there is new carpeting on the stairs. Some work is still needed.



From l. to r., Stephen Steger '08, Lyel Resner '07, Alex Bakst '08, and Jon Herrera '08 brave the cold and wind across the Harvard Bridge.

We are planning to replace the front windows, for example. The kitchen is overdue for complete overhaul, restructuring the basement area in the process. The stove should be replaced and the hood venting is on the margin of conforming to building code. Beta has owned and occupied the main house since 1946, so some major renovations such as these are long overdue.

Beta Recruitment Needs Revival

Beta pledge numbers have not kept up the pace set in 2003, when 10 were pledged and all came to live in the house. This year, only three of the seven pledges chose to live at Beta. The chapter is at its lowest level in

over 30 years: only 16 actives live at the house.

With such low occupancy, the cost of running the two houses and the meal program is making it difficult to keep house bills at a level commensurate with other fraternities on campus. For now, the actives are living only in the main house and have nearly filled the annex with boarders. Clearly, this area needs substantial work by the undergraduates. (See the article by Jacob Stultz on page two). The alumni are also supporting new recruiting efforts.

Plans For The Annex In Development

If we are to keep the annex, it will require renovation. Over the last year, there have been leaks due to the plumbing and the roof. The bathrooms can no longer be maintained properly and need major overhauls. The concrete floor in the basement front room is broken and should be replaced. Many rear windows are being replaced.

We Are Considering Housing Other MIT Living Groups In The Annex

Two groups that have expressed an interest in housing at Beta are Sigma Nu (SN) and Kappa Alpha Theta (KAT). KAT, a sorority, is staying in a dormitory where they have been for several years. We are also talking to the SN brothers because their lease to occupy the old FIJI house is terminating. To take advantage of such opportunities to obtain additional rent, we may have to
(continued on page three)

A Note From The President: Optimism Builds For A Full House

Life at the Beta Upsilon Chapter is going very well so far this semester, despite some initial setbacks. The contractors finally vacated the main house shortly after the start of the semester, and the members of the chapter are enjoying the new facilities very much. With our eyes now turned towards the annex, we will soon be making much-needed repairs on the rear windows of the house.

Having the main house back this year for rush was helpful; at the conclusion of the rush period we have six very enthusiastic and dedicated pledges. However, since we are in need of higher numbers in the house, we have recently elected new rush chairs, and they are putting plans into motion to rush a spring pledge class, with an ultimate goal of a total of 10 to 15 new members for the year.

As the newly elected president, in the interest of making this rush process (and house operations in general) go as smoothly and efficiently as possible, I am working towards a plan for organizing and fully specifying the roles of the various officers in the house. This will involve going over and revising the chapter by-laws (which

have not been updated since 1995), and meeting with each officer individually to discuss and clearly delineate their responsibilities and any goals they may have for the semester so that the house is actively improving, not merely maintaining. The ultimate goals of this process are increased accountability, house organization, and better communication and task delegation between officers. We have also been working to improve communication with the alumni board on house issues, for much the same reasons. At least one alumni board member has attended nearly every one of our chapter meetings this term, in an effort to give the board a better understanding of the operations of the chapter, as well as give the chapter a better understanding of the role of the board.

Overall, the chapter is very optimistic about the future and very excited about the drive to improve the house, get even more new members, and bring the size of the house back up to a more sustainable level.

Yours in ~kai~,

Jacob Stultz '07

Beta Rush 2005

Rush for Beta went well this fall. We gained six new pledges: four freshmen, one sophomore, and one graduate student from Cambridge, England. Rush began on Saturday, September 3, with a noon barbecue kickoff at Killian Court. After a short speech by the IFC Rush Chair, an announcement was made that the rush season had begun.

After the barbecue, Beta brothers returned to the Main House stoop where we played four square and had a chance to catch up with several of the freshman who stayed at the house over the Campus Preview Weekend last spring. Brothers gave house tours to a lot of freshmen, and the overall reaction to the new Main House was excellent.

That evening we hosted a concert in the Annex basement featuring a local band, Constants, whose members are good friends of the house. A lot of the men we had been rushing were musicians and there was a great turnout.

In the following week we went apple picking, "water-balloon-pirate-sailing" on the Charles, rented a projector to watch movies on the front of the Main House, started pickup games of ultimate Frisbee on campus, went to restaurants with prospective pledges, hosted a dinner at the house, and went bowling at Boston Bowl.

One of our more powerful assets during rush was Jonathan Kronos' position as a counselor for the Freshman Arts Program. This program is one of many pre-orientation programs that are offered to incoming freshmen. A few of the students we hosted over Campus Preview Weekend were involved and it was great to be in contact with them during the week before orientation. Several active Betas have been involved in the program in the past, as counselors and as freshmen.

While pledge educator Nick Lucero has begun the pledge program for these new pledges, we are working hard to continue rushing even more freshmen. We have elected new rush chairmen to start recruiting for spring rush this fall. We still have a lot of prospects who have not pledged fraternities, and we are meeting a lot of new freshmen all the time. The pledges we have so far are becoming very involved with the house and are very excited to take on officer positions later on in their time here at Beta. We are starting work now in preparation to rush a large number of freshmen for the spring and continue to increase population of the house with excited, contributing, future actives like the pledges we have so far.



Jacob Stultz '07 and Jake Bernstein '07 listen to music before classes.

Zach Rich '07

Sell 120 Bay State Road: Beta Theta Pi new owner

By Elaine Cravitz

The former freshmen women's dorm at 120 Bay State Road has been sold to Beta Theta Pi.

The old dorm was offered to various MIT living groups for \$35,000 in letters sent out by the administration. All interested groups submitted their replies in January. The names of these groups were placed in a hat and the winner was drawn at random.

BThPi, AEPi and Student House were the only living groups expressing interest. The drawing took place in the office of Frederic W. Waltriss, Assistant Treasurer and Recording Secretary on February 12, 1964. As winner of the drawing, the house was sold to BThPi at the pre-drawing price of \$35,000. The fraternity will receive title to the building sometime in March.

The fraternity bought the building so that all of the undergraduate active members and many of the graduate members would be able to live in the house, according to Gerald Burnett '64.

Clipping from February 19, 1964, issue of The Tech, the MIT student newspaper, telling how Beta came to own the Annex (120 Bay State Road).



When Women Lived In The Annex:

Bay State Road residents in 1954: Margolia Cohen Gilson '56, Fushi Tjian Ling '57, Ronnie Wahl, Phyllis Anthony '54, Cora Stackelberg '56, Wendy Drew, unknown, Cynthia Scheri, Dell (Lanier) Vanarde '55, Joyce Davis '55, Marilyn, Dorreta Binner Klein '56, Alicia Larde Nash '55.

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(continued from page one)

improve the annex and allow the added students to eat with the Beta brothers.

As a historical note, the annex was the MIT women's dorm from 1945 to 1963, when it was sold to Beta after McCormick was opened. Beta won a three-group drawing to be offered the property at \$35,000. The other two groups were Student House and Alpha Epsilon Pi. According to a quote in *The Tech* (Feb. 19, 1964), Gerald Burnett '64 said that Beta "bought the building so that all of the undergraduate active members and many of the graduate members would be able to live in the house.

Alumni Association Finances Improve

Although finances are in decent shape, we should build up a financial reserve to make it easier to handle emergencies and important projects.

We just received an IRDF grant of over \$250,000 and operating expenses will be somewhat offset by an IRDF Educational Operations Grant (EOG) of order \$10,000 per year. I would like to thank Frank Leibly '93, for all his work handling the loan and grant applications over the past two years.

The alumni association and the board of the association in particular are suffering from a lack of volunteers to support various activities.

This past year required a lot of work on repair and renovation oversight but we still need more involvement in chapter affairs and more regular reviews of the physical

plant. Feel free to contact me by e-mail at hermanmarshall@alum.mit.edu if you are interested in volunteering.

Alumni attendance at the Alumni Week-end was better than the past few years but perhaps less half as many attended as during the 70s and 80s.

The Board of the Alumni Association now meets regularly by teleconference; all alumni are invited to call in to our open meetings, every three months, on the first Tuesday at 9:00 p.m. The next two are scheduled for April 4, 2006, and July 6, 2006. We will use the same call-in number and PIN for each one: (800) 882-3610, PIN: 2378416#.

Beta is well represented in the Association of Independent Living Groups (AILG) on campus. I have regularly attended AILG meetings and was elected to the AILG board. The AILG supports many activities that aim to improve conditions within and between living groups at MIT. The board began the IRDF grants as well as a cooperative purchasing company, which uses the MIT living group purchasing power to reduce costs for commonly used services. One new project is the Safety, Licensing, and Inspection program, which will keep track of living group inspections, among other tasks. Beta directly benefits from all of these programs.

Be sure to visit the Beta Alumni Association web site, <http://www.beta-mit.org>. Mike Feinstein '82 set up this website for all Betas to make it easy to keep in

touch and to have a ready reference of pictures and documents (such as a short Beta history).

Beta Will Continue At MIT

In summary, fraternities at MIT are suffering from the MIT decision to house all freshmen on campus and from the reduced number of male freshmen as women are admitted in equal numbers.

During the past few years that the freshmen housing policy has been in effect, fraternity rolls have dropped. Fewer pledges were initiated, and fewer initiates moved into the fraternities. The crisis deepened and it seems likely that more fraternities will close. We do not intend to close Beta, so it will be our challenge to improve finances and recruitment over the next year. Your continued financial support as well as increased volunteer participation will be key factors in the long-term success of Beta Theta Pi at MIT.

Yours in ~kai~,

Herman Marshall '78
President, Alumni Association



Seen Around Campus



Nick Lucero '06 relaxes on the grass with a Frisbee.



Mark Brigham '04 and Gary Dixon '06 find something to look at while walking along Bay State Rd.



Stephen Steger '08 works on a project for school.

The Back Bay Beta

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 390528, Cambridge, MA 02139-0006. Photos will be returned after use in the newsletter.

Introducing The Beta Upsilon Class of 2009

This year, Beta Upsilon welcomes seven pledges to our fraternity. We have high hopes that each will impart his unique character and passion on our house. As always, our pledges join us from all over the United States and the world. They are Daniel Burgess from Essex, England, Christopher Chronopoulos from South Barrington, Illinois, Adam Paxson from Trout Lake, Washington, Ryan Luersen from Kaneohe, Hawaii, Jesse Carr from Boxford, Massachusetts, Jake Muhleman from Rochester, New York, and Steven Russo from Humble, Texas.

We have had a recent trend of attracting musicians to Beta Upsilon, which continues this year. Daniel is a DJ and

already begun to form a reputation for his skills. Word of mouth has already provided him with quite a few gig offers around the Boston area. He is also beginning to do some DJing with fellow British Beta DJ, Lars Blackmore '05. Chris dabbles in a variety of instruments. He is most notable for his skills on the guitar and drums. Adam is an amazing classical pianist. His talents have proven therapeutic for many Betas, as his renditions can often be heard emanating from our piano and through the Main House. Ryan and Jesse are both gifted guitarists. They put on impromptu jam sessions in our Main House lounge on a regular basis.

The Pledge Program is now in full swing and there are many challenges and

adventures to be had for our pledge class in preparation for their initiation. So far, each of them has shown a strong level of dedication to Beta Upsilon. They have been prompt, enthusiastic, and up for anything. Our actives have been working alongside them to make their transition into the house as smooth as possible. Along the way, many strong friendships have been formed and the pledges are now beginning to cohere into a unit. The Pledge Sneak is on the horizon and all actives are hoping that they have as amazing and life-changing experience as all of us once did.

Nicholas Lucero '06
Pledge Trainer

INBOUWS

NORMAN C. BEDFORD '38 lives at 124 Lincoln St., Hingham, MA 02043. Norm is retired; he was the CEO and president of the Beckwith Elevator Co. Stay in touch by e-mail at ncbedford@attbi.com.

IRA H. LOHMAN '38 writes, "My wife, Louise, and I are living in a nice retirement center called The Forum at Rancho San Antonio, about 20 miles south of San Francisco. Our son, Guy, and his wife and daughter live less than two miles away and we see them often. Our daughters, Judy and Dale, also live nearby. Daughter Linda lives in Scarsdale, New York. We still have hope that she and her husband will see the light and move west. We're always glad to see old friends. If you are going to be in the Bay area, please look us up." Reach Ira at 23600 Via Esplendor, Cupertino, CA 95014.

DONN W. BARBER '42 reports, "I had a note from PAUL SOMMER '42. He's still active, traveling and duck hunting. He hopes to see JOHN LACY '42. I will also see John when I visit my daughter in New Hampshire; we speak often. He's still sharp, but getting around is a problem. I also had a note from JACK CRANDALL '42. That's the news from the Forty-Twos!" Keep in touch with

Donn at 1207 Greenbriar Ln., West Grove, PA 19390; e-mail to evdoba@aol.com.

WALTER E. BORDEN '45 lives at 23 Pine Haven Ln., Brandon, VT 05733. He writes, "I now have recorded over 5,100 world birds. In July, I spent a week on the *Lois McClure*, an 88-foot replica of a sailing canal schooner. For two summers I helped build her. She then sailed on a grand trip down the Champlain Canal and Hudson River to New York City and back. I served as an interpreter for visitors. I still work for Habitat For Humanity and have worked on over 50 houses." Stay in touch with Walt by e-mail at birdweb@juno.com.

ROBERT F. DANNER '47 resides at 48 Seabury Point Rd., Duxbury, MA 02332. He reports, "After many years of a happy and productive retirement from Raytheon Co., I find that I am still too busy to 'stop and smell the roses.' This summer I was out at sea for five weeks on a 34-foot catamaran, participating in three different week-long yacht club cruises. When visiting the Bahamas last spring, I found a cottage named 'LISDIN,' which stands for 'Life Is Short: Do It Now.' Pay attention!" Send e-mail to rdanner@thecia.net.

JOHN C. KERN '50 writes, "Last summer, while in town for my Class of 1950's 55th Reunion, a Phi Delt buddy and I with our wives walked over to Bay State Road and stopped in first at my friend's house (wow, what a sad state of repair it was in, without a fire to fix it up!), but I want to report that we were received with open and friendly arms at the Beta House! I only wish I could remember the names of those who greeted us, especially the curly-haired guy who had been moving furniture around and took a special interests in showing us all over the house and introducing us around. I have been trying to get myself over to the house on my several-times-a-year visits to MIT for some time, but just hadn't made it till now. My reaction was most positive, and I wish you all well in filling out your pledge class and somehow getting #120 fixed up as well. Yours in ~kai~." Stay in touch with John at 189 E. Lake Shore Dr., #8, Chicago, IL 60611; send e-mail to johnkern@alum.mit.edu.

DONALD B. MILLER '53 lives at 1111 Highway 7 dbmatchatuge@alltel.net 5 North, Hiawassee, GA 30546; send e-mail to dbmatchatuge@alltel.net.

(continued on page six)

Community Service At Beta

Beta has been experimenting with a new-look community service program over the course of the last year to broaden its service repertoire, one that features a communal house project as well as the strong encouragement of fulfilling a minimal individual service requirement. The communal service project will take place through *Habitat for Humanity*, a nonprofit national organization that builds homes for poor families. The opportunity to give back as a group should be both fulfilling and fun, and many members of the house have already expressed their enthusiasm for the project. Additionally, some of the brothers organized and helped run the Big Brothers of Massachusetts Bay-MIT Recruitment and Awareness Barbecue.

The incentive to do work within the community, however, should not stem from the assurance that it will be either fun or

fulfilling. It should result from recognition and appreciation of how uniquely fortunate we are in our abilities and the opportunities that we've had as MIT students and throughout our lives. Regular and widespread participation in mentorship and teaching based programs are gradually moving to the forefront of community involvement at Beta. These types of activities embody that appreciation, and constitute the new Beta service initiative. There is no more appropriate way for an MIT Beta to give back than through involvement in mentorship and education. Each member of the house has been strongly encouraged to participate in two to four hours of this type of service each month. The suggested requirement may be fulfilled through a number of outlets both within the MIT community and within the greater Boston/Cambridge community. Many

Betas have already taken on these new service recommendations, and have participated in a variety of programs: iMath, a technology-based math tutoring program for eighth-graders in Cambridge; SciPro, a program that matches mentors with middle and high school students who work together on a science-fair style project; and Big Brother, to name a few.

The new initiative is having some appreciable success in fostering in each brother a permanent and affecting genuine gratitude for the great privilege and overall fortune they've enjoyed in their lives, and a subsequent and forever lingering commitment towards helping those who have not had as favorable of circumstances.

Lyel Resner '07
Community Service Chair

NEWS

(continued from page five)

JOHN T. SUTTON '55 writes, "Kati and I greatly enjoyed the 50th Reunion at MIT, including opportunities to see Brothers DON EVANS, PETE SEAGLE, and AL WECHSLER (all 55s) and their wives. We're sorry that the busy Reunion schedule didn't let us get over to 119 Bay State Road, but we look forward to that on a future visit to Boston. Glad to know that the main house restoration is complete." Stay in touch with Jack at 559 West Rd., Belgrade, ME 04917; e-mail to jtsutton@prexar.com.

ALFRED WECHSLER '55 has a new address: 7 Wainwright Rd., #77, Winchester, MA 01890. He reports, "I've moved again—but only two miles this time—to a condo. I'm still not fully retired, but thinking about it. Lots of travels to keep me busy: to Texas, California, and Washington State to visit children; to Europe and Asia on holidays. I enjoyed my 50th MIT Reunion. It was good to see several of my Beta classmates there." Keep in touch with Al by e-mail at aewechsler@aol.com.

ARTHUR A. WASSERMAN '51 lives at 422 E. Ravine Baye Rd., Bayside, WI 53217. Art writes, "I completed my law degree (J.D.) at Marquette University Law School in May 2005 and was admitted to the Wisconsin Bar by the Wisconsin Supreme Court. I joined my wife's law firm and am taking public defender cases as a private attorney, concentrating on adult and juvenile misdemeanor cases and cases involving children in need of protective services (CHIPS). It's a new adventure with a steep learning curve, but I hope to be able to help some people who need legal assistance." E-mail Art at aawasserman@stritch.edu.

EDWIN C. BELL '58 has a new address: 625 Biltmore Way, #804, Coral Gables, FL 33134; send e-mail to edwincbell@aol.com.

CREIGHTON G. BELLINGER '58 has a new address: 6423 Merlin Dr., Carlsbad, CA 92011. Send e-mail to crouton@csi.com.

S. RICHARD McLAUGHLIN '58 writes, "Surfing the net, I ran across a December 16, 1955, copy of *The Tech*. The

bush leaguer column named the intramural football all-stars. Betas on first team offense were BOB EDMONDSON '59 (guard), FRITZ HERMINGHAUS '57 (guard) and BOB MACDONALD '56 (halfback). I was second team offense and defense. It sure brought back some great memories of teammates and our success." Stay in touch with Dick at 5380 Hawthornden Ct., Dublin, OH 43017; e-mail s-mclaughlin@sbcglobal.net.

GARY BICKEL '61 reports, "Although still on contract to Boeing as a fiber optic troubleshooter on the Space Station and Delta IV projects, I am essentially retired (no significant work in over a year). My current life revolves around hiking and my kids and grandkids. My son, Geof, manages the daily ops of Fremont Street Experience in 'Lost Wages,' and has provided three grandkids, while daughter Kathryn just provided the latest addition a few months ago in DC where she just recently switched from the USDA to the EPA. Daughter Sarah is finishing up a year with the Forest Service in DC. I am an instructor for a Sierra Club wilderness travel course, and am in the process of becoming and intermediate-level leader. I hike in the local mountain ranges twice a week. In 2003, I managed to summit ten 14,000-footers in Colorado in just over three weeks. Last year was limited to just Mount Shasta. If you're coming to Southern California and would like to hike, let me know." Reach Gary at 3761 Holden Cir., Los Alamitos, CA 90720; gbickel@socal.rr.com.

BRUCE H. COTTMAN '79 writes, "My oldest daughter, Sarah, just graduated *summa cum laude* in nursing. However, we have another 18 years with our youngest, Rebecca, before she graduates! I was retired and dabbling with micro-sensors when I took a small two-week consulting contract in Paris in March 2004. Before I knew it, this 'short gig in Europe' became a company of eight staffers, located in Prague. In case you did not know, Prague is fraternity party heaven. If you think you can hold up and your significant other will let you, drop by for a long weekend. The company has a couple of apartments and we can put you up." Reach Bruce by e-mail at bcottman@hpkinetics.com.

KENDALL R. BRYAN '88 has relocated to China, where he works for Dow Chemical. Reach Ken at 41 Hengshan Rd, Xuhui District, Shanghai 200031 PRC. Send e-mail to kbryan@dow.com.

MICHAEL G. CASAGRANDE '89 has moved to 6814 Pinehearth Ct., Spring, TX 77379. He writes, "Stacey and I are happy to announce the birth of our fourth child, Noah. I'm working as a solo family practitioner. E-mail casagrande6@sbcglobal.net."

MICHAEL W. MILLER '96 writes, "It was good reading Association Treasurer FRANK LEIBLY's letter in the last *Back Bay Beta*. I'm glad the IRDF is being used for grants in additions to loans. I'm still happily married to my wife, Hillary, with two kids who seem to grow like weeds! Harrison is now two years old and is the spitting image of his dad at that age, while Ava (3) is an accomplished havoc-wrecker. I've just moved into the marketing organization at Motive, where I have been for seven years. If you are ever in Austin, drop us a line!" Stay in touch with Mike at 6201 Spicebrush Cv., Austin, TX 78759. Send e-mail to mikem@motive.com.

NICHOLAS J. TORNOW '98 has moved to 1593 Kingman Ave., San Jose, CA 95128; e-mail to ntornow@gmail.com.

MICHAEL H. VOGEL '02 invites everyone to enjoy a vacation in Montreal at his place. Contact Mike at 3505 Rue Ste. Famille, #1406, Montreal, QC H2X 2L3 CANADA; michaelhenryvogel@yahoo.com.

DECEASED

We regret to report the death of the following alumni:

RALPH HAYDEN '33
on January 31, 2005

ROBERT E. STORRS '44