

2003-2004
Executive Board

Alpha Chapter of Theta Xi

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Alumni Association

Theta Xi Association of Troy, N.Y.
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Treasurer

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Chapter Adviser

William Knoth A1047
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March, 2003

Alphabet



Alpha Chapter • Theta Xi Fraternity • Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute • Troy, NY

Chapter

House

By Eric Maiorino A1543,
House Manager

House Repairs Made, More Needed

The age of this house has become increasingly evident to many of the brothers this past semester. We have made many repairs to the heating and plumbing systems, which are aging rapidly, and were required to purchase a new 50-gallon water heater to replace the nonfunctioning one in the basement. This water heater will also aid in the supply of hot water, the demand for which is ever-increasing due to the increased number of brothers living in the house.

A state-of-the-art fire system, a fire door and an emergency gas cutoff switch were also installed to bring the house up to fire code and make living in the house a little bit safer. A planned project for the upcoming summer is to renovate the chapter house's front steps, which are literally crumbling away, by using the money saved in our building fund. Hopefully once this project is completed we can start looking into replacing the windows with newer, better-insulated

windows, which would be more energy efficient and help decrease our heating costs in the very cold winter months here in Troy, N.Y.

With such projects at hand, the house manager budget is constantly being stretched thin, but the presence of a near-capacity chapter house helps to alleviate some of this pressure.



Chapter Advisor

Report

By Bill Knoth A1047

The House Needs Your Help

The Alpha Chapter is very much alive and well. A continued strong rushing program has provided the house with an active and vibrant brotherhood. Over the past two years, many fraternity houses have had serious problems with their neighbors. I am happy to say that Alpha was not one of them! Last year's successful outreach to enhance the house's relationship with the neighboring community has been carried over to this year with positive results. The neighbors like the house and believe that the brothers are doing their best to stay in their good graces.

The alumni association, under the capable leadership of **Ben Rosenthal A1427**, is following in the tradition of service established by **Roger Lunden A974**, **Mike**

Gass A1011, **Henry Malafronte A1020** and **Roland Cavalier A1060**.

On the not so positive side, the house is over 70 years old, and it is showing its age. The plumbing, electrical wiring and heating system all need replacing, as do the flooring and windows. The roof and foundation also need work. In other words, a total renovation is in order. Ballpark estimates from a couple of contractors range in the \$1,000,000 neighborhood. I know that this is not a good time for many, due to the state of the economy, but I have to believe that there are Alphas out there who are contemplating major gifts to RPI or other institutions. I exhort every brother to search his heart and see what he is able to contribute to saving our heritage.

Update

By Benjamin "Beaker" Rosenthal A1427

Report from the Alumni Board

First I would like to introduce to you the current alumni board. The board consists of myself as president, **Matthew Goss A1482** as vice president, **Chris "Norm" Baldauf A1487** as treasurer, **Bill Knoth A1047** as chapter adviser, and **Peter "Pile" Abren A1459** and **David Fowkes A1275** as members at large. The undergraduate chapter president and treasurer conclude the membership of the board.

We hold meetings at the chapter house every two to three months to discuss how the house is handling membership numbers, what major

repairs are needed and any other topics that come up. We encourage any interested alumni to attend. For meeting schedules, please e-mail me at **rosenb3@alum.rpi.edu**.

Our next goal is to collate our existing alumni information and begin updating addresses and contact information. There is a lot of repair work that needs to be done to our house, and we are going to need everyone's help to fix it up. During my six years living in the house (over the course of my bachelor's and master's degrees) it became more of a home to me than anything I have ever had. In fact, it's

still the longest I've lived in one place. It's no surprise to me that I've ended up back in the capital district helping out in whatever way I can. The house membership is the strongest I have seen in a long time, and they deserve to have a place to live that isn't falling apart on them. Look for specific details on what repairs we will be doing in the next issue.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our 6294 celebration on April 24. If you haven't been by the house in a while, why not stop out for a visit.

Next year, April 29 falls on a Friday. Please circle the date.

Communication

By David Fowkes A1275, dfowkes@seaburygroup.com

Revitalizing Alumni Participation

In my association with Alpha of Theta Xi as an undergraduate and now as an alumnus for 15 years, there have always been a few given facts: The Zoo is likely to be on social probation for some reasonable portion of your time as an undergraduate, nobody plans 6294 until it is too late to get a decent place, the house is looking a little ratty around the edges and the chapter/alumni association is still doing a poor job of communicating with the alumni.

The alumni association is proactively addressing the last two issues as we approach a couple of meaningful anniversaries. The chapter house at 1490 Sage Avenue will be 75 years old in 2006. Our chapter and fraternity will be 150 years old in 2014. Both dates provide an opportunity to organize an effort to address the physical needs of our chapter house. The last major renovation was completed in 1985-86, and the house is showing its age again.

The alumni board, under the leadership of **Benjamin Rosenthal A1427**, has started the ball rolling. We need to first reach out to reconnect with alumni and reestablish a consistent dialogue with the brotherhood with a professional-quality communication campaign. This AlphaBet issue is an early by-product of this effort.

To help locate and systematically track our alumni, we have compiled a database of available contact information from RPI, National and Alpha Chapter, for all 1570 brothers (thanks to **Nick Constantine A1451** for the initiative and a tremendous job of pulling it together). Much of the information is out of date, but we have a strong start and will now be able to effectively update and maintain our chapter contact information.

Finally, we have begun to pull together the network required to establish and maintain strong alumni communication.

The alumni communication network will consist of:

A chairman responsible for the development, oversight and tracking of the plan and coordination of decade captains.

Decade captains, one graduated from each decade (the

1990s, 1980s, etc.), responsible for obtaining commitments from and coordination of annual coordinators from their decade.

Annual coordinators responsible for initiating/retaining contact with all alumni who graduated in their year.

Once we have the organization in place (including 20 or so hours of phone calls to reestablish contact with brothers assigned to you), there will be no more than a quarterly or semi-annual commitment to pass information along to your contact list (via phone calls or e-mail).

A number of brothers have already stepped forward to volunteer to help. Ben has asked me to act as the chairman. We have commitments for three decade captains: **Ralph Buoniconti A1270** for the 1980s, **John Reinhardt A1358** for the 1990s and **Paul Dalton A1512** for the 2000s. They are already at work targeting annual coordinators.

How can you help?

We need decade captains for the earlier years; please let me know if you or anyone you know may be interested. We also need annual coordinators; please contact me if you are interested. We need to update our contact database. If you get the AlphaBet, but nobody calls or e-mails, this means we likely have incomplete information. Please e-mail or call to update us.

For alumni who joined the house after the most recent renovation, it is our turn to show our commitment. Please consider annual participation in the house fund. Consider giving some multiple of your Alpha number to the house every year (whether it is \$12.75, \$127.50 or some other amount), starting this year.

For alumni who gave to the 1985 renovation campaign and continue to support the house — thank you. We ask that you track our progress. We plan to earn your sustained participation by proving that more recent alumni are willing to step up and do our part. We will continue to provide you updates of work done toward the renovation and progress with the alumni network. Please let us know what else we should be doing to regain your support.

Excellence

By Nate Falkiewicz A1548,
Scholarship

Theta Xi Maintains High Standard of Scholastic Achievement

Theta Xi maintained its high academic ranking for the fall 2003 semester with a cumulative GPA of 2.94 and a term GPA of 2.96, for a ranking of 10th out of 30 fraternities.

Out of the top 10 fraternities, we are the second-largest chapter, with a member count of 56. The cumulative GPA was 2.86 for all fraternities, 2.89 for all Greeks and 3.02 for all males. Though we dropped from a cumulative GPA of 3.048, I am hopeful that this semester we will reverse this trend.

Among those with excellent GPAs, we had eight members with a term GPA of 4.0. These members are: **James Chenard A1527, Paul Dalton A1512, Nathan Falkiewicz A1548, Benjamin Haynes A1526, Alexander Pelli A1506, Justin Scaduto A1537, Joshua Weisbrot 1554 and Daniel Williams 1545.** Congratulations, and keep up the good work.

Congratulations also go out to the following fall 2003 and spring 2004 initiates:

Initiated fall 2003: **Mike Baron A1555, Tim Kelly A1556, Steve McAnanny A1557, Matt Coccoli A1558 and Mike Gerstenhaber A1559.**

Initiated spring 2004: **Carl Leikhram A1560, Tim Wise A1561, Jake Woudenberg A1562, Mark Black A1563, Bob Steciuk A1564, Justin Hanlon A1565, Dave Egglestein A1566, Andrew Zudans A1567, Mike Ranbom A1568, Arthur Fruchtman A1569 and Bryan Fink A1570.**

Report

By Danny Philyavanh A1546

House Going Strong Financially

As treasurer of the Alpha Chapter of Theta Xi, I am glad to announce that the fraternity is in good financial standing. The success of recent rush periods and increased membership has helped us to collect enough money to make living in our house very enjoyable, and with a predicted increase in the number of brothers living in the house next year it seems that this trend will definitely continue.

With 33 people living in the house this semester, we have been able to increase budgets for multiple activities. The additional income has allowed us to purchase higher quality meals from caterers, install a new washer and two dryers, and complete some much-needed maintenance, and also has allowed for brothers to participate in more social activities. The increased membership has also supplied enough money to allow us to set some aside for future repairs to the house.

The influx of brothers living in house has also, unfortunately, increased the amount of physical stress on our 72-year-old house. This semester we used some of the building fund to install a brand-new fire detection system as required by both RPI and our insurance company. The system detects any fire that might occur and reports the signal to an outside monitoring service that automatically contacts emergency personnel if needed. A major project planned for late spring and summer is to fix the front stoop, which is in dire need of repair.

Several alumni have made generous donations that include numerous gifts to the building fund, airfare to send our current president to the president's academy in St. Louis, Mo., and an additional dryer which has had a significant increase on the laundering habits of our brothers. The undergraduate brothers appreciate and thank the alumni whose time and dedication have made the present-day standing of our fraternity promising.

Brotherhood

By Mitchell Weiser A1513, President

This semester has thoroughly tested the mettle of our beloved fraternity. At the end of last semester, the Dean of Students Office put us on social suspension for what they felt was an infraction of the university's party policy. However, the social suspension was conditional — with the terms of the agreement being the fulfilled, the suspension would be repealed. The terms included the hosting of a traveling alcohol awareness presentation, a formal plan to prevent minors from obtaining alcohol at events at our house, the entire membership had to be TIPs trained (alcohol awareness), and the entire membership was required to attend an alcohol and liability seminar.

I am extraordinarily proud to say that not only did we accomplish these tasks, but we did so in such an expeditious manner and with such authority that the Greek dean Brian Dominguez was impressed enough to consider us one of the top three houses on this campus.

Our dedication and commitment to this undertaking were, and I quote, "far beyond the greatest expectations." He went on to say how proud he was of us, and that he would not have assigned this project to any other house because he knew that only we could possibly complete all that was assigned to us.

His congratulations are a testament to the quality of our brotherhood. I would also like to congratulate all the undergraduate members of our fraternity. They thoroughly deserve all the praise bestowed upon them by the Greek dean. I am prouder than ever to be a Theta Xi.

Much of the success of our fraternity can be attributed to the strong sense of responsibility and unity found currently in our brotherhood, particularly among the younger brothers. Our high role number now rests at 1570, and we hope to continue to instill these same core beliefs that have allowed for our current successes in all future brothers so we can ensure the prosperity of Theta Xi for many years to come.

Fortunately we have had a consistently stable financial status that has allowed us to keep our house in working condition despite the added strain from our increasing numbers. We continue to make small improvements to the living space as we can afford them, and we hope to have saved enough money soon to rebuild the stoop on the front of the house.

I encourage alumni to visit us and see for themselves the quality of our brotherhood. Our door is always open.



NEWS Briefs

Zoo Has Perfect Football Season

By Josh Weisbrot A1554, Sports Chair

Theta Xi has had a remarkable fall IFC sports season. This fall in league play our softball team went 2-1 while our football team went 7-0. Currently our basketball team is 3-2 while our volleyball team is off to an undefeated start. Floor hockey is a first for us this semester and, our team has been competitive and remained in high spirits despite not having won a game yet.

Our undefeated football season was characterized by outscoring our opponents 100-37. We played some very exciting games coming down to the last play. Two of our games were won with last-play defensive holds to preserve victory and another was won on a go-ahead touchdown with no ticks left on the clock.

The onfield action certainly was exciting, but we also had many loyal supporters. We had the most spirit of any team, as each game turned into our own tailgate party for our spectators. Unfortunately, we lost to the eventual champions 6-0 on a chilly night in the playoffs.

Vice President's Report

By Justin Scaduto A1537,
Vice President

One of the Top Fraternities

In the past few years the Alpha of Theta Xi chapter house has grown to one of the top fraternities on the Rensselaer campus, in size and in academics. This semester has been no different as we have initiated 11 great new members into our ranks of our now 48 undergraduate brothers, all of which I am proud to be associated with.

Also the state of the house has improved; we have fixed many physical and aesthetic problems with our house and have plans to make more improvements in the near future.

On another note, Alpha played host to the annual Northeast Regional Convention. Representatives from the eight chapters in our region converged on Troy for a weekend of united brotherhood. We also had a very special master of ceremonies for the convention, our very own national executive director **Jim Vredenburg**. After leaving Troy, all the attendees felt that their bond to Theta Xi was strengthened after visiting the Alpha Chapter and experiencing a true 140 years of Theta Xi tradition. I believe that the convention helped the brotherhood understand how privileged they are to be members of the Alpha Chapter.

Making the Scene

By Brad Spencer A1517

Social Update for Theta Xi

This semester has gotten off to a slow start from the social suspension we were put on after last November's Cider Party. We have successfully completed the conditions for lifting the suspension, and we are about to get into party mode, full swing. I have contacted the sorority social chairs to set up mixers after spring break, and our big registered party was on Saturday, March 20, with a "spring break" style theme.

The date for this year's Founders Day celebration, 6294, is set for Saturday, April 24. As of this printing, we have a couple of options for places to hold it. Our current options: Captain J.P. Cruise Lines would include a cruise along the Hudson River with dinner and dancing on the boat; Eagle Crest Golf Course, which is also a possible location for the annual golf outing; and Mario's or The Loudon Room, both in Latham.

More information will be available on times and location in the coming weeks. If you would like further information, or to make a donation, or to RSVP, please e-mail me at spencb@rpi.edu or call 1-518-258-7107. If you would like information on the Alumni Golf Tournament, please contact **Rohun Gholkar** at gholkr@rpi.edu.

Creating a

Legacy Is There a Mentor in You?

Have you ever been responsible for hiring someone? If you have, you know that the process can be complex and something not to be taken lightly. In fact, often several people are involved in the process.

As we think about building a strong, progressive chapter, the quality of our team is just as critical. So, why leave it all up to the rush chairman? Why leave the undergraduates responsible for squeezing in these priorities among the countless others they already have? Why not help?

Rush — or recruitment — was once considered to be a process that lasted only a few weeks and left a chapter in a very reactive position. In attempts to become more proactive and in control of the results, we are appealing to you — our brothers — to play an integral part in the growth and sustenance of the chapter. No matter where you live, you can make a difference.

Have you considered referring potential rushees to our chapter? Often chapters struggle to find quality men through their existing recruitment processes. Potential members may live in your neighborhood, attend your church or sleep

in the bedroom right down the hall. Make sure to offer recommendations in a timely manner and help potential brothers get the exposure they need.

As a mentor, you may attend recruitment events and assist younger brothers in understanding the value of their lifelong connection to the fraternity. Or you could host recruitment functions or invite prospective rushees to your home. A great place to start is by contacting your chapter to see if there are men enrolled who are from your city. This is an excellent way to help these potential prospects relate to a brother — even without your stepping one foot on the campus.

Your contributions don't have to stop there. Most definitely, you have other talents from which brothers — pledges and undergraduate members — can benefit. Whether you can help with academic support, job networking, life skills, leadership or other areas, please contact us and let us know.

"Hide not your talents, they for use were made. What's a sun-dial in the shade?"
— Benjamin Franklin