



ALPHA *bet*

Theta Xi Association of Troy, New York | Summer 2009 | Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Alumni Relations Office | P.O. Box 80828, Atlanta, Georgia 30366 | www.alpha6294.com

Alumni Spotlight: Fred Preiss A925

Since his graduation from RPI in 1959 and then subsequently getting his Master's Degree from MIT, Fred has been part of an ever evolving world of architecture. In 1977 he started his own firm, Preiss Breismeister P.C., specializing in adaptive reuse projects, office buildings, and multi-family town house and flats. The firm is also noted for their several award winning houses.

When asked how the world of architecture has changed, especially with the increased reliance on technology, Fred replied, "During the last twenty-five years technology has played a significant role in assisting to design, coordinate, correct and rework the drawings and specifications required for contract documents. The profession today is totally dependent on technology to document design decisions and develop bid documents as well as manage the complexities of projects large and small."

He added, "In architecture you need to be able to work with others in a team environment. Theta Xi helped me develop those skills."

Preiss Breismeister has an impressive list of accomplishments covering a wide range of projects. Fred indicated that one he is most proud of, one of their most recent projects is the Stamford, Connecticut Superior Court House



Alpha brothers gather during a 2007 reunion in Williamsburg, VA. (from l to r) Bob Fajans A921, Joan and Fred Preiss A925, and Dick A924 and Kathleen Beshu.

and parking structure – the most modern and largest in the state.

Fred is not all about architecture. He remains involved in Theta Xi and keeps up with his fellow Brothers. Attending several RPI and Theta Xi reunions over the years, including the 10th, 45th and his "most memorable one" just recently in 2007 in Williamsburg, Virginia. "There were approximately 40 brothers and their wives/girlfriends there for a 3-day adventure. It included brothers from all over the country in the classes of '56 – '60. It was like we were back in the fraternity house."

Speaking of being back in the fraternity house, Fred was asked to share one of his favorite memories of his undergraduate experience: "In 1956, my sophomore year, we

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Matthew Hunter A372 Latest Brother Inducted Into RPI's Alumni Hall of Fame

The 2009 inductees for RPI's Alumni Hall of Fame include a 7th Theta Xi Alumnus. Alpha alumni constitute over 10% of all RPI Alumni Hall of Fame inductees (7 of 62). Matthew A. Hunter A372 joins his brothers **William H. Wiley A11**, **Mordecai T. Endicott A21**, **James Hall A38**, **Palmer C. Ricketts A84**, **Emil H. Praeger A272** and **Allen B. Dumont A349**.



Photo courtesy of RPI

For more information about Brother Hunter and other Alpha alumni, please visit our Alpha History at www.alpha6294.com.

State of the Alpha Alumni Association

by John Reinhardt, A1358, Alumni Association President, john@teamreinhardt.com



While trying to describe the past year I have found that this is one of those rare occasions where I am at a loss for words.

The difficulty is with trying to summarize all of the events and accomplishments by both actives and alumni without leaving anything out. It appears as if the Alpha chapter is starting to realize its true potential and that is exciting in itself.

Our 6294 celebration was once again a success with alumni of all ages returning to acknowledge all of the accomplishments over the past year. For those alumni not able to make it back, I encourage you to plan for next year's event so that you can see some old familiar faces and meet some new ones. Thanks to the efforts of the actives through both Fall and

Springs Rushes we were able to have 15 new brothers attend their first 6294.

The active brothers have carried on the legacy of Theta Xi by excelling at all aspects of their lives. Accomplishments both personal and chapter-wide included exciting co-op positions, outstanding sports teams, and leadership academies as well as obtaining the highest GPA of all fraternities on campus for the Fall 2008 Semester. Our younger brothers have really shown what it means to be a Theta Xi and also took it upon themselves to recognize **Carl Busta A1575** for all of his efforts by presenting him with the George M. Baker award.

Showing that brotherhood doesn't end after graduation some alumni have gone above and beyond in their efforts. **Paul Dalton A1512** received the Jim Lichtenberg A1203 Award for

all of his tireless, and sometimes thankless, work on house and alumni finances. Staying in contact with our alumni after graduation and throughout life is one of our greatest challenges and thanks to **Matt Glaccum A1324** we have reconnected with many lost brothers. His work vastly improving the accuracy of the Alpha membership database helped earn him the Distinguished Service Award from National. For years **Dave Fowkes A1275** has worked to strengthen our chapter and all of his efforts have not gone unnoticed as he was recently appointed as Director to the Grand Lodge of Theta Xi. David is running again this August.

Congratulations to all of the actives and alumni who received these awards, your work

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CHAPTER NEWS

State of Alpha Chapter

by Jeff Kopera A1594, Chapter President, jeff.kopera@gmail.com



It has been a great year for the Alpha Chapter of Theta Xi. In the two years I have been here the progress the Chapter has made has been phenomenal. When I rushed in the fall semester of 2007, the house had fewer than 20 active brothers. In the time since then, membership has nearly doubled.

The Chapter had strong rushes in the fall and spring. Fifteen new members were initiated this past year, 9 in January and 6 more in April. In the upcoming year we will have 30 active brothers, 25 of whom will be living in the Chapter House. For the first time since I have been here every room in the Chapter house will be occupied, which will put us in very good shape financially. I am also proud to say that Theta Xi ranked first among RPI fraternities in GPA for the fall 2008 semester.

Our rush chairmen, **Ken Lee A1599** and **Joe Mahonchak A1604**, are ready to build on their great work from last semester and have a very strong fall rush.

The future looks bright for the Alpha Chapter of Theta Xi. The Chapter's membership is increasing, as is our GPA, and our reputation on campus is steadily improving.

On another note, our new house manager, **Dan Harris A1608**, has a big work week (August 22 – 30) planned for the beginning of the fall semester. Of course, all alumni are invited to attend. I hope to see you there!

Chapter Officers

- President – Mike Martin A1586
- Vice President – Bill Simmons A1598
- Treasurer – Ben McCarty A1596
- House Manager – Dan Harris A1608
- Steward – Marco Balducci A1613
- Secretary – Alex Meola A1602
- Scholarship – Ken Lee A1599
- Membership Educator – Ben McCarty A1596
- Social – Joe Mahonchak A1604
- Rush – Ken Lee A1599
- Joe Mahonchak A1604

Alumni Involvement Helping to Reap Rewards

by Chris Baldauf A1487
Chapter Advisor
chris.baldauf@gmail.com



It is hard to believe yet another academic year has passed us by. It continues to be my honor and privilege to serve as the Alpha Chapter Advisor.

This year we continued to see the Active chapter members doing a fantastic job - motivated, dedicated, and have really driven great results.

From the chapter advisor's standpoint, this is the payoff, due at least in part, from the hard work of alumni volunteers that give of their time, talent, and treasure to help see the chapter succeed.

Donations received this past year have helped to improve the look and operation of the physical building and provide programs that help to educate the current chapter members.

Over the last several years we have had volunteers give of their time to help run recruitment and renovation seminars. Alumni mentors also actively work with undergraduate leaders to teach and help to buffer seasonal turnover. This is critical for the long-term success of our organization and we would not be in the position we are in today were it not for those alumni giving so generously of their time.

It goes without saying that the alumni board also plays a critical and important role. Those alumni board members help to ensure that the fraternity remains stable, housing issues addressed and that Alpha continues to be fiscally responsible with your donations.

Obviously this couldn't be done without the actives, but the alumni help to create a solid foundation on which to build. I encourage each of you to get involved in some little way - a small donation, some of your time or expertise to help the chapter continue to grow and excel. Each is important and will go a long way for our future.



Spring class induction ceremony held in February 2009. This past school year, Alpha Chapter has initiated 15 men into the Bonds of Theta Xi.

Congratulations to our newest Brothers initiated this past school year!

January 2009:

- A1608 Dan Harris
- A1609 Sean Garvey
- A1610 Neil Longfellow
- A1611 Alex Quirk
- A1612 Jonathan Li
- A1613 Marco Balducci

April 2009:

- A1614 John Miner
- A1615 Jamie Tabanaco
- A1616 Matt Laird
- A1617 Graham Cabrey
- A1618 Eric Jordan
- A1619 Evan Rapoza
- A1620 Nick Senno
- A1621 Ethan Cohane-Mann
- A1622 John Ruppert



A group of Alpha Alumni relax at Chapter Advisor Chris Baldauf's home after a day of hard work at a recent summer work week.

We welcome alumni Brothers back to the chapter and encourage each of you to consider how you might be able to ensure that the next generation of Alpha Brothers can enjoy a truly positive and rewarding Theta Xi experience. Donations of time, talent, and treasure are always much appreciated.

6294 Dinner Recap

The 6294 Celebration was held at Jack's Oyster House in Albany NY. Highlights included awards given by the active chapter to **Carl Busta A1575** (George M. Baker outstanding active) and **Paul Dalton A1504** (Jim Lichtenberg A1203 outstanding alumnus). The Grand Lodge also presented the Distinguished Service Award (photo at right) to **Matt Glaccum A1324** for his efforts in Alumni relations and Theta Xi Alpha Chapter History.

Congratulations to all of our award winners and thanks for all who attended. Remember to save the date for next year's 6294 dinner, April 24, 2010.



Clockwise, starting at top: (1) Distinguished Service Award that was presented to Matt Glaccum; (2) Alumni, undergraduates, and guests gather at the chapter house prior to departing for the Annual 6294 Dinner. (3, 1 to r) David Fowkes A1275, Duncan Sparrell A1160, Matt Glaccum A1324, Mike Anderson A1265 and Dane LeBlanc A1192.; (4, 1 to r) Adam Kiel A1463, Alumni Association Member-At-Large Chris Blanc A1404, Rob Rivera A1464, Mike Petronino A1359, Alumni Association President John Reinhardt A1358, and Alumni Association Vice-President Mickey Mossaidis A1391 gather prior to dinner.

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and efforts are appreciated by all. Beyond these awards we have all been given a very important honor. Thanks to the specific efforts of **Dave Fowkes A1275** and all of the qualities the Alpha chapter has shown, we have been given the privilege of hosting the 150th Anniversary Convention. It is a great honor to have Theta Xi come full circle after 150 years and something that will require effort on all of our parts.

With all the work that needs to be done for the chapter house and the convention please take a look at your schedules and see if you can find some time to help out. This could

be as simple as a donation, a work weekend at the chapter house, or some online/email support as the actives work on various tasks. If you would like to help out in any way feel free to contact myself or anyone on the alumni board.

Thank you again to all who have contributed to get us to where we are today and I look forward to working with more of you in the future.

YITB,

John Reinhardt A1358

Frank R. Lanagan A196: Order of the Unicorn Recipient

By Matthew Glaccum A1324, Alumni Historian,
mglaccum@geosphereinc.com



Frank R. Lanagan A196 (center) being congratulated by Edward P. Hamilton A206 (left) and C. Leonard J. Ager A327 (right) at the chapter house in 1946.

Frank R. Lanagan A196, Class of 1905, is remembered for his efforts on behalf of the Theta Xi national organization as well as his involvement with the chapter. He not only acted as National Secretary to the Fraternity, but also during his time as deputy city engineer and later city engineer of Albany, NY, he served as the first secretary of the newly incorporated alumni association of Alpha Chapter. In this latter capacity, he helped spearhead the first efforts in 1910 to raise monies for a chapterhouse that Alpha could call its own. His also had a strong sense of civic duty typified by his being the Republican nominee to represent the former 28th Congressional District of New York State in 1932.

For his dedication to the Fraternity, Brother Gillette was elected to the Order of the Unicorn on September 7, 1946, the second brother from Alpha Chapter so honored.

For more information about Brother Lanagan, please visit the Alumni website at www.alpha6294.com.

2008-09 Alumni Association Officers

President: John Reinhardt A1358

Vice President: Demetrius Mossaidis A1391

Treasurer: Paul Dalton A1512

Chapter Advisor / Member at Large:

Chris 'Norm' Baldauf A1487

Member at Large: Chris Blanc A1404

Member at Large: Rohun Gholkar A1515

Member at Large: Jamie Smith A1492

CALENDAR

August 28-30 is the end of work week/second work weekend at the Chapter House.

October 2-4 is RPI Homecoming and Reunion Weekend, Friday reception at the house 5:00 pm, Saturday afternoon BBQ.

April 24, 2010 is the Annual Association corporation meeting and 6294 celebration, location TBD.

Late July or Early August 2014 is the 150th Anniversary Convention - Troy, NY - details to come.

CLUBS

Albany, NY Club - Brad Spencer A1517. Next event will be Saturday August 15th, at the Saratoga Race Track. Email Brad at bspencer1517@gmail.com if interested.

Chicago Club - Inaugural event 8/7 at Cubby Bear North in Lincolnshire, IL in conjunction with 145th Anniversary Convention. Contact **Ron Trucks G1203** - Ron@thetaxi.org if interested in future events.

Boston Club - Chris Blanc A1404-Theta Xi pool night at Flat Top Johnnie's (flattopjohnnys.com) on Thursday, 10/15 at 6 p.m. More information please contact Chris at cblanc@gmail.com.

NYC Club - David Fowkes A1275 - NY club meeting, 9/10, 6:30 pm, Mustang Harry's, 352 7th Ave, NY, NY. Please send an e-mail to david@rfowkes.com for more info.

Washington DC - Dan Daly, Beta Omega 187 - The Washington DC Alumni Club has a happy hour the first Friday of every month. For more information, please contact Daniel Daly, DC Alumni Club President at dand187@gmail.com.

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had formal jacket and tie dinners each night (except Sundays). We had a great cook, Ben, who later became an honorary brother. Ben was like a house 'Uncle' figure to the new brothers."

Fred added, "My memories extend well into alumni status. I have been able to stay in touch with several brothers since graduating,

especially **Ed Buchtell A930 (BArch '59)** who recently died."

His Theta Xi experience has helped Fred succeed both personally and professionally. When asked about advice for current and future Theta Xi Brothers, Fred had this to say, "**Be disciplined as RPI will require it. Be open minded and creative. Be**

conscious but balanced. Have a sense of humor. Stay connected with your friends and family. Love life."

Truer words could not have been spoken. Thank you Fred for your dedication, support and words of wisdom.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Fund - Tough economic times and associated reduced charitable giving are affecting our ability to continue to move forward with renovations as quickly as we have been at Alpha chapter. Donations to the alumni association are down significantly, both by number and dollar amount (down over 60%, please see the table on the back of the enclosed letter). Our fixed costs for the year have been covered by donations received to date. Any additional donations will be applied directly to additional house repairs as discussed in the house repair section which follows.

House repairs - The 2008-2009 school year saw significant work completed to the "systems" of the house. The tremendous rush success of the actives filled the house and highlighted a need to catch up on repair and maintenance of the house heating system (last major repair work was completed in 1986 and we needed to repair or replace 13 radiators throughout the house). The boiler continues to be in good shape.

The active brothers tell us that the systematic renovations completed to date are having a direct effect on the house, both in improving the in-house living experience and as a positive rush tool.

We've planned for a few projects to complete next as funds allow. Potential projects include replacing the 23 year old shower stalls with tiled showers (the old stalls are simply worn out), replacing the storm windows in the first floor public areas (also 23 years old, many missing or cracked) and continuing asbestos remediation. The cost of the projects range from \$20,000 per bathroom for shower replacement (3 showers per bathroom), \$3,500 for new storm windows and various costs for remediation depending on specific location.

Any donations will go directly into house renovations. Please consider making a donation to the Alumni Association if you have not done so yet this year and if you have the ability. Every donation helps. 279 different brothers have contributed to the annual fund over the past few years. 221 of those donors have not yet made a donation this year. If a fraction of you brothers make a donation we will be in a position to complete at least one more of our target renovations before the active brothers return for the fall semester rush.

Alumni Association News - This year, the Alumni Association proudly celebrates 100 years of existence. Incorporated in late 1909, the Theta Xi Association of Troy, New York sought to "promote social intercourse and mutual improvement," "acquire and hold real property," and "to erect, improve or furnish, manage and operate a

building or buildings thereon for the occupancy, use and benefit of its said members." It took more than twenty-years of effort to realize the goal of a permanent home for Alpha Chapter culminating in the building of the chapterhouse we all know at 1490 Sage Avenue. To learn more about the early work of the Association, please visit: http://www.alpha6294.com/history_house_construction.php

Alumni Networking - Please visit www.alpha6294.com/Alumni_networking.php to find out more about networking with Theta Xi. Are you a recruiter for your company? Please get in touch.

LinkedIn.com - Join the Alpha Chapter group on <http://www.linkedin.com/e/gis/95974/613485187C67>

Facebook: Look for the Alpha Alumni Association and get "social". Search for "ThetaXi TroyAlumni".

Volunteers Needed - Want to help out but not sure how? Contact **David Fowkes** (david@rfowkes.com) to find out what you can do to help the chapter organizations continue to grow.

Get Registered on the Alpha Alumni Website - Have you visited our new Alumni website? Have you updated your contact information so we can continue to send you your *AlphaBet* and electronic newsletters? Please visit our website at www.alpha6294.com and register today.

Find Alpha Alumni - Looking for Alpha Alum? Please sign in/register at www.alpha6294.com and look for the Google Maps logo and search field. Type in any address and a Google map will provide you with a listing of all Alpha Alumni living near that address.

Call for Photos/Yearbooks - WANTED: Alpha Chapter composites for pre-1958, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1969 to 1978, miscellaneous pictures or any yearbook that you would like to donate or scan for the chapter's collection. If you have one of these, please contact **Matt Glaccum** at mglaccum@geosphereinc.com

Address Updates - As mentioned in past newsletters, address updates will be forwarded to RPI and Theta Xi National Headquarters unless you choose the option not to share your contact updates. For more information, please log on or register on the website to review your privacy options.