



THE BEAVER SIG

ALPHA THETA CHAPTER OF SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY



CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

SPRING 2003

Alumni President Reviews The 2002-'03 Academic Year

Brothers,

As summer gets into full swing (or likely has been for some time, depending on your part of the country), this issue of *The Beaver Sig* brings you a summary of events from this past academic year at Alpha Theta.

This past fall, Mark Curtiss '87 decided to step down after a great five-year tenure as president of the Alpha Theta Sigma Chi alumni corporation. With what started as a one-year commitment to the position, Mark continually extended his service and leadership to the chapter through some turbulent and changing times at MIT. Mark established and maintained new connections with the MIT administration and worked

with Alpha Theta's corporate board and the undergraduates to keep Sigma Chi at the top of the MIT fraternity system, as an excellent place to live, learn and belong.

Under Mark's leadership the board undertook a study of the chapter's long-term housing needs and initiated planning for a capital fundraising campaign, with the goal of ensuring that Alpha Theta Sigma Chi remain a strong, ongoing institution at MIT. And in spring 2002, Mark led the chapter to hold its 120th reunion, which was a wonderful success with excellent alumni turnout from all across the country. The chapter is grateful to Mark for the continuity, leadership, and service that he has con-

tributed over these past five years. Thank you, Mark!

In other news from this academic year, the chapter held its now annual "scholarship dinner" on Saturday, May 10. The event was an opportunity for alumni to show their support for the ideal of learning and to present two deserving undergraduates with scholarships: the Robert A. Swanson (1969) Memorial Scholarship (presented to Soojin Lee '05) and the Professor S. Curtis Powell Scholarship (presented to Eric Zhang '04). Roughly 70 alumni and undergraduates (plus MIT guests) were in attendance—with many of the alumni traveling in from across the country (California, Utah, Georgia, North Carolina, and elsewhere) just for the event. The evening started at the house with a reception put on by the undergraduates and was followed by dinner and presentations at the MIT Faculty Club.

In addition to moving presentations and reflections on the lives of Bob ("Chip") Swanson '69 and Professor Powell, a special treat was a speech by Alex d'Arbeloff, Alpha Theta Sigma Chi '49 and current chairman of the MIT Corporation. Alex reflected on his days at Alpha Theta, offered advice to the undergraduates for their time at MIT and beyond, and also revealed (to the horror of one undergraduate and great laughter otherwise) that he had done a spot check on the cleanliness of the brother's room during his visit to the house earlier in the evening—a good life lesson to always keep your room clean, as you never know who might stop by without warning.

In other news, the current economic climate has led to the decision to delay the launch of Alpha Theta's capital campaign. Please see Doug Bailey's ('72) update column for more information on

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Capital Campaign Update

War And Economic Uncertainties Slow Launch Of Campaign

In response to the world situation today and its impact on the general economy, Alpha Theta's capital campaign steering committee has decided to defer the campaign's launch. Our decision comes after consultation within the Sigma Chi corporation board and discussions with individuals in the development and fundraising community.

Because the success of this project is critical to Sigma Chi's future at MIT, we didn't feel we could possibly compromise its potential success by launching the project at a time when the focus of many alumni was distracted by global and economic uncertainty.

Even though the actual launch of the campaign has been put on temporary hold, we are moving ahead to organize our leadership team and to carry out discussions with individual alumni.

The Alpha Theta corporation board and campaign leaders remain totally committed to the project. Many significant changes are taking place at MIT that will affect fraternity life. Deferred rush will give freshmen more time to consider membership and to ponder the merits of the houses they rush. We must be able to offer both our members and our prospective members a living facility that will be an asset to their academic, intellectual, and social experience at MIT.

We will continue to monitor the economic situation and are prepared to move ahead as soon as we feel the time is right. If you have any specific thoughts you'd like to share about the project, please direct them to Campaign Chairman Doug Bailey at dougbailey@alum.mit.edu.



The 2006 pledges—Adam A. Miller, Brian P. Guerrero, Ethan G. Rigel, Bryan De Leon, Joseph J. Sikoscow, Phillip W. Hum, Jin Suk Calvin Kim, Alex Chernyakov, and Mark E. Vodhanel—smile for a photo after a great night at the sweetheart formal.

New Rules, But Rush Will Be Successful

By now almost everyone knows that MIT has made a big change requiring freshmen to live on campus during their first year. This change has been heavily anticipated, and our previous rush chair, Josh Soong, has been successful in the beginning year of the transition at MIT. The biggest change was that rush was no longer right after orientation, but was instead pushed back several weeks and extended. Still, fall rush remained much more important, with very few freshmen in spring 2002 pledging.

In order to continue our success, we must keep changing and have the will to continually adapt to this new system. We must ask what kind of long-term effect MIT's new policy has on rush at MIT. There are two things that we must acknowledge and understand in this new rush era. First is the importance of

a year-long rush. This inevitably brings us to the second point that spring rush will gradually become more important.

The importance of a year-long rush has always been emphasized, but seldom has it been practiced because rush has always happened before anyone really has a chance to get to know anyone else. But this is changing now, and we must truly take to heart what a year-long rush means. Not only must we practice the values we stand for, we must actively search for men who share our creed and convictions. We must be outgoing and become leaders in our community. With this in mind, we can not give up rush in the spring. I know that our undergraduate brothers will work hard to make this spring rush a success.

In Hoc,
Daniel Kim



Left: Phillip W. Hum takes his bid and decides to become a pledge on the Harvard Bridge overlooking MIT.



Left: Joshua Soong's badge, worn proudly during introspection week.

Fall Rush Nets 10 New Members

The 2002 fall rush was a learning experience for the MIT fraternity system. Coming in, upperclassmen knew that the new requirement for freshmen to live on campus would change everything. Rush methods would have to be reformulated. Some houses would succeed, others would not.

It might have been easy to stick with old ideas and blame the new system for any failures, but the brothers of Alpha Theta rose to the challenge and triumphed with the acceptance of 10 new members as the pledge class of 2006. They are, in pledge order, Joseph Sikoscow, Bryan De Leon, Philip Hum, Ethan Rigel, Brian Guerrero, Mark Vodhanel, Adam Miller, Jin Suk Kim, Sergio Navarro, and Alex Chernyakov. The active brothers were very pleased with the successful rush, especially given the increased competitiveness engendered by the new rush system.

Eight of the ten pledges live in the new dormitory, Simmons Hall. Mark, a transfer student from Rutgers University, is the only pledge residing in the house. He occupies three large back, a room that has this year been set aside specifically for the pledges. The spare desks and beds are available for them to do homework or stay the night.

Despite early concerns that keeping nonresidential pledges involved in the house and interested in Sigma Chi could be troublesome, the class of 2006 has found its feet well. The high level of interaction that comes with living in the house will have to wait until next fall, but brothers and pledges are nevertheless getting along well. In addition to fulfilling their pledge responsibilities, pledges stop by the house regularly for dinner or during free time, participate in house social events, and play on intramural teams.

Initiation of the new pledge class took place at the end of January just before the new semester began. The upperclassmen eagerly await the contributions of the class of 2006 and the ways in which they will reshape the chapter as brothers in the years to come.

Will Stockwell '05
Assistant Magister

A Few Highlights From The Fall Semester

The brotherhood reunited in August after a very active summer for both individual brothers and the house. Work week followed soon thereafter. Led by Tae Won Kim '04 and Rory Edwards '03, we polyurethaned the floors, put new countertops in the bathrooms, refinished our front door, retiled the zero floor, and redid the showers. While redoing the showers, brothers found it easiest to shower out on Beacon Street with the garden hose. Needless to say, we got a few honks.

During work week, Matthew Christain Sither joined our brotherhood and moved into the house. Matt, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester, just transferred to MIT and is studying electrical engineering and computer science.

After work week, we tackled rush

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this critically important initiative.

And finally, this past year also saw the major change in rush that has been anticipated for a number of years. For the first time, all MIT freshmen were required to live in dormitories, meaning that Alpha Theta's freshmen did not live in the house this past year. While this clearly is a very significant change for MIT and Alpha Theta, initial indications are that the house is managing this transition well.

I look forward to serving you all as president of the Alpha Theta Sigma Chi alumni corporation. Please feel free to contact me with your suggestions, thoughts and questions at kbuttner@alum.mit.edu. Best wishes for a great summer.

In Hoc,
Karl Büttner '87

The Beaver Sig

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with a vengeance. The month of September was devoted to meeting new guys and was filled with many events, ranging from small hangouts at the house to a fun day out at F1 Boston Raceway. This year's pledge class of 10 is as solid as ever, and we are all very proud of them.

During the month of September, Jeff Burkett, our leadership consultant from headquarters, visited the chapter for four days. We had a pleasant time getting to know Jeff and learned much about a few initiatives at headquarters. He gave us a good deal of inspiration and insight into how to approach the new rush system. The Saturday of his visit Jeff hosted a risk management seminar that was attended by BU Sigs, an RMF representative, and one of two international sweethearts, Mary Kay Howard. Mary Kay Howard is currently studying at Harvard, and her sister—the other international sweetheart—is currently studying at Yale.

Parents Weekend proved successful as many brothers had the chance to meet the parents of our new pledge class. We also had the chance to meet and catch up with parents of our fellow



Brothers Brady Young, Rory Edwards, Leonard Chung, and Kevin Wang smile with sweetheart Bo Kim and friend Dian Chen at Formula One Racing in Boston.

brothers. The festivities were highlighted by another visit from international sweetheart Mary Kay Howard at our annual Parents Dinner. We also held a brunch the Saturday of Parents Weekend that was well attended. Thank you again to all the parents who stopped by during Parents Weekend.

The term was very successful, with each day presenting a new opportunity to enrich our lives here at Alpha Theta and MIT. The chapter concluded the term with strength and vigor, ready for whatever the next term might bring.

Compiled by Raudel S. Rodriguez '03
Consul, Fall 2002



Brian Guerrero '06, David Kiser '69, and Rolf Brauchler '69 chat in the library during the reception for the scholarship dinner.

Brother Broadens Horizons With Semester Abroad

Throughout history, people like me have been writing, painting, sketching, loving, and dreaming of Europe. This past fall, I spent a semester abroad in Oxford, England. However, I didn't always study, and I had the opportunity to visit England, France, Belgium, Italy, and Greece. While I felt like a tourist, I did not do the touristy things. I ate at local restaurants, tried to learn the local language, walked from place to place, and immersed myself in the culture. All the while, I took many photos to help me remember the journey.



Along the way, I acquired some interesting stories and fond memories.

In September, I left MIT for a semester abroad at Oxford University. I arrived in London at the end of September and visited Coventry before I ended up in Oxford. Oxford is a very small town northwest of London. Its quaint location on the Thames River (the river that runs through London) made it a great place for manufacturing. In fact, Oxford was very well known for manufacturing the famous Cooper Mini cars.

Knowing that Oxford attracts many American students each year, I was not surprised when I found a fellow Sigma Chi brother from Michigan who was pursuing a graduate degree. It was wonderful to feel the brotherhood that extended beyond the geographical bounds of the USA or even of 532.

While I really enjoyed the English beer, I really hated all English foods. I

attempted to eat out a few times with my roommates at Oxford, but the oily, preserved, pungent foods were not good on my stomach. I found myself longing for American food, which in itself is not the most appetizing. Soon enough, I found an open market in Oxford and began the process known as learning to cook. It was a fantastic time, and I experimented with everything from portobello mushroom pasta to marinated baked pork loin. My roommates were especially happy as my cooking (and sometimes my mess-ups) provided a welcome alternative to fish and chips every night.

My Oxford transcript says I took three courses, but it doesn't mention my four amazing trips throughout Europe. London was a key place to be because many charter flights left London for places like Paris, Brussels, Athens, Rome, Frankfurt, etc. These charter flights ran small airplanes that served secondary air-

ports of these large European cities. While a bit more bothersome, the tickets were a steal: \$30 per person including tax. Thus, Josie (girlfriend) and I took trips to many places, of which Paris was the first stop. After two weeks of school, Josie and I felt that we needed a vacation and did just that by taking a flight to Paris.

After Paris, we went to Brussels and Brugge. In fact, we had no idea where Brussels was. I suggested Brussels because there was an internet special on airplane tickets that cost \$60 for both of our

tickets. I immediately booked the tickets, and we found ourselves in the capital of the European Union. Brussels is known for its famous chocolate, lace, and mussels. Josie and I drooled at the fresh seafood that lined "Seafood Street." As we walked down the street, every restaurant attempted to entice us in for a meal. In fact, almost all of the restaurants believed Josie and I were Japanese. I heard many Japanese phrases thrown at me, and I had to tell them that I was American. The faces they made after I made this comment were hilarious. Perhaps they have had way too many Japanese customers and not many Chinese American ones.

As our feet gained more mileage after trekking throughout Brussels, our cameras were filling up with pictures. I learned a very interesting feature on my digital camera, which allows me to take

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Athletics: An Integral Part Of Life At Alpha Theta

The brothers of Alpha Theta Sigma Chi had a wonderful time participating in the fall 2002-2003 IM leagues. With the departure of some of our key players in soccer, basketball, and hockey and with the addition of new brothers, the season was marked by learning and team building.

In soccer, our captain, Rory Edwards, led us through some tough times. Playing against some of the tough teams in our league, the brothers were able to duke it out and provide the opposing team with some good play. Although our season ended without a venture into the playoffs, we were able to see that the newly initiated brothers of 2006 were highly talented in soccer, and many of the older

brothers have high expectations for the soccer team once the new brothers understand each other's playing style. The future of soccer for Alpha Theta looks bright.

Similarly, the basketball team experienced a rough season. With the departure of point guard brother Woojin Choi and center brother Vikram Gottam, the team lost the coherence that got them to the semifinals last year. Co-captains Tae Won Kim and Manoj Viswanathan tried to regain the unity, but to no avail. However, the future does look bright for Alpha Theta. The new additions of brother Adam "M-zilla" Miller and Matt "Long-Armed" Sither provide a higher level of talent; once mature, they can take us to

the top.

Lastly, our IM hockey team, captained by brother Raudel Rodriguez, did well. Although the IM hockey league fizzled due to administrative problems, the brothers of Alpha Theta showed that they were able to tough out the close games and play through the physical stress.

Overall, the fall 2002-2003 IM season was one associated with rebirth and future growth. None of the brothers are discouraged about the results because we all have faith that our teams have the potential to win it all. It's only a matter of time.

In Hoc,
Tae Won Kim



Chef Raudel '03, renowned for his culinary skills, cooks up a delicious meal.

Brother Broadens Horizons

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timed photos. By propping up my camera and setting the timer, I was able to take photos of me and Josie together. While walking through the Belgium National Park, I saw a giant reflection pool [photo on page four]. So I asked Josie to stand on the opposite side while I prepped my camera. I wanted to take a picture with her in this scenic spot. If you look closely, you can see Josie standing directly opposite the pool—and me running like a madman on the left side of the picture.

The experience abroad was a very worthwhile learning and growing time. True, I missed Boston, MIT, and the brotherhood. But I found myself changed by every place I visited and every person I spoke with. Overall, I found that my experiences as an individual and as a brother added to our fraternity by the stories, the memories, and possibly the budding interests of underclassmen interested in studying abroad. Many people have heard of these stories or seen the pictures, but few have actually lived their dreams and aspirations. Traveling is a wonderful thing, and studying abroad allowed me to travel. Why not get away from MIT for a while and enjoy the cultures and peoples who are out there?

Eric Zhang '04

Sigma Chi Changes With The Times

New rules have made it tough for all the new members of MIT's Greek community. However, we have been successful in initiating nine new brothers. They are, in pledge order, Joseph J. Sikoscow, Bryan De Leon, Phillip W. Hum, Ethan G. Rigel, Brian P. Guerrero, Mark E. Vodhanel, Adam A. Miller, Jin Suk Calvin Kim, and Alex Chernyakov. Their interests vary, as do their tastes in music, sports, and TV shows, but the common bond of brotherhood is vibrantly visible.

At Alpha Theta, the long continued love for learning has been visible in our academic accomplishments. Our combined GPA was highest among fraternities and second overall among the living groups at MIT. However, academics is not the only area in which we have excelled. We have been successful on the soccer fields and basketball courts with impressive intramural results. Our brothers continue to endeavor in varsity sports such as skiing, soccer, swimming, crew, and track. Our voices are heard with the committees and offices we hold in the Undergraduate Association, MIT's student government, and Interfraternity

Council. We continue to debate world issues at the Model United Nations and help kids realize some of their dreams as tutors in the Boston Public High Schools and local community centers. Also, we help out the homeless at the local shelter. We participate in fine arts.

At the end of the day, we come together to talk, eat, and hang out. We hold social mixers and parties that are extremely well attended. In coming together we strengthen our brotherhood, and each of us grows stronger, tougher, more compassionate, more refined, more well-mannered, smarter, and, most of all, more Sigma Chi worthy.

It is my great pleasure to say to everyone that Alpha Theta Sigma Chi is alive and well. We hope that when we greet you in the outside world, you will be able to notice us right away because of the self confidence, peace, love, and moral character that we display to the world outside of MIT.

In Hoc,
Jin Suk Calvin Kim '06
Chapter Editor

Social Chairs Deliver Lively Social Semester

The 2003 spring semester has been an exciting and lively time at the Alpha Theta Chapter. Social Chairs Matt Sither '04 and Mark Vodhanel '06 continued the strong tradition at 532 Beacon Street of providing a lively social scene to break up the stresses of MIT life. Things got under way just before the semester kicked off with our post-initiation week party celebrating the official welcoming of the '06 pledge class into our brotherhood. The newly initiated brothers, energized by their accomplishment, responded the following week by throwing a small hangout party honoring the Sigma Chi brotherhood.

The open party during the last weekend in February proved to be one of the most successful themed open parties in recent years. "White Party" posters raised eyebrows all across MIT, Harvard, BU, and Wellesley, but the theme was simple: everyone was to wear white. The house was decked out in blacklights, and highlighters were given out at the door. The idea was to write messages on others and have them write messages on us. The fluorescent glow of the highlighter on our shirts under the blacklights created a striking visual effect. Overall, the party was a blast, and the campus was buzzing that Monday about Sigma Chi's "White Party."

The following weekend was our mixer with the Sigma Kappa Sorority. Despite a few overly crispy crusts, the pizza-making theme was fun for everyone. Our closed party after the event ended was a great time for all as well.

The last weeks of the semester should be equally action-packed. We are having a mixer with the Alpha Phi sisters at one of our Wednesday teas and hope to make it our wildest tea of the year. We're also looking forward to the spring formal. This year, the social chairs decided to hold the event aboard the *MV Samuel Clemens* replica steamboat. The three-hour cruise will navigate through Boston Harbor and will include a formal dinner and dancing. Our final events for the spring term will be the post-election consul's room party on the second weekend in May, followed by the scholarship dinner—a formal event with alumni, involving a reception at the house and dinner at the MIT Faculty Club.

The brothers look forward to an enjoyable end of the semester, and we encourage any alumni to stop by our events!

In Hoc,
Mark Vodhanel and Matt Sither
Social Chairs

Our Alumni Report Their News From Far And Near

E. NEIL HELMERS '48 makes his home at 78 Streeter Hill Rd., North Falmouth, MA 02556.

"I'm keeping busy bringing streetcars back to Dallas to serve our reawakening core," writes OTTO K. WETZEL '48, whose address is 4250 Westway Ave., Dallas, TX 75205 (ottowetzel@aol.com).

The president of Toledo do Brasil, RICARDO E. HAEGLER '52 can be reached at haegler@toledobrasil.com.br or at Rua Utinga, 658, 04644-060 Sao Paulo, BRAZIL.

ROBERT W. TEMPLE '55 stays in touch with many of his Sigma Chi contemporaries. He writes, "JOE BRAZZATTI '54 is still recovering from a stroke suffered last July. JOHN LUNSFORD '53 is in Los Alamos, New Mexico, trying to find a cure to his lung problems acquired probably while working at the labs. HARALDO FALCAO '50 is recovering from prostate surgery at his home in Fortaleza, Brazil. CHAN STEVENS '55, still in Mansfield, Ohio, has had some heart problems, but I don't know his latest condition. Too many of us are showing signs of aging, including me. I had a retina reattached (right eye) last June. Doing well with my sight now. BARNEY SILVER '55, always creative and always concerned for the well-being of mankind, has started another new venture from Salt Lake City. AL WARD '54 has turned the reins of his company over to his son in the Bay Area. We regularly hear from BILL BRANDON '57 (in New England) and MALCOLM JONES '57 (in Colorado). Both have the joys of winter, while we in Texas are starting to be concerned with how soon the grass will need to be cut." Drop a line to Bob at rwt@ev1.net or at 14134 Bluebird Lane, Houston, TX 77079.

BRUCE TARTER '61 and KEN NILL '61 joined ALAN BRENNECKE '61 at Al's place at Kiawah Island, South Carolina, for a golf weekend last October. "Money changed hands," writes Al, "but Ken's wife, Gale, ended up with most of it! Other golf outings are planned for the future." Write to Al at 865 Cathcart Rd., Blue Bell, PA 19422; abbottbrenneke@cs.com.

JOHN B. ADGER '66 reports that he had lunch with ROLF BRAUCHLER '69 last November. A senior consultant with the Liberty Consulting Group, John can be reached at 100 Warrenton Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20904, or at lcjadg@aol.com.

"I am very thankful to God for bringing me to Alpha Theta Sigma Chi in the same class as JIM CARTER '67," writes JOHN FITTZ '67 (6 Yale Circle, Bloomfield, CT 06002; joxnfittz@alum.mit.edu). "When I was looking for the next work opportunity and nothing opened up in Connecticut, I found a subcontracts administrator position in Marlborough, Massachusetts, on the Raytheon website, and then found out that Jim is the VP over that operation. I called him, and he graciously offered to forward my resume to the supply chain guys and HR. Within a few days I received a call to arrange an interview. Raytheon offered me a job, and I began work on September 16, 2002."

DAVID S. BRODY '77, his wife, Joanne, and their two children, Nick (17) and Kim (14), continue to enjoy life in rural New Jersey. They have founded the Chiapas Project and bring together American and Mexican volunteers to provide free medical and dental care to the indigenous Zoque people of Chiapas, Mexico. Twice a year they spend a week in Chiapas and treat approximately 1,500 people each trip. Meanwhile, Dave has five acres on the

Mexican Caribbean, "waiting for us to finish educating our kids or hit the right six numbers, whichever comes first." Their address is 3 Romney Court, Lafayette, NJ 07848 (divedoc@nac.net).

DENNIS SON '96 has just moved to L.A. to start his residency in radiology at USC. Brothers in the area can look him up at 3100 Riverside Dr., #364, Los Angeles, CA 90027.

After leaving J.P. Morgan in 2001, SAMUEL T. TOWELL '00 joined the (successful) campaign of Governor Mark R. Warner. "I served as his special assistant to the Secretary of Finance for eight months and am now getting ready to switch gears again. Next up: law school at the University of Virginia. In my Sigma Chi life, I've just rolled off of my two-year stint on the executive committee and will work with the University of Richmond Chapter (Epsilon Rho) as a Balfour Fellow." His address is 3111 Sunset Ave., Richmond, VA 23221; stowell@alum.mit.edu.

DECEASED

We regret to report the death of the following alumni:

DAVID W. BROWN '48

HAROLD E. JAKES '45

July 7, 2002

CARROLL McCULLOH '31

HOMER R. OLDFIELD '38

June 2000



Left to right: Bruce Tarter, Al Brennecke, and Ken Nill, all class of '61, at Kiawah Island, South Carolina, in October 2002.