



Alumni Report

Hello to each of you. Summer 2009 is upon us – an appropriate time to evaluate the past school year, perform maintenance on the Beta Xi Chapter House and prepare for next school year.

My name is Jonathan (“Jon”) Wolter, Beta Xi 1975, and I am President of the Housing Corporation. It is a pleasure for me to serve on the Board with Chris Danko, Ron Kahn, Taz Patel, Curtis Tongue and Rob Vantress. Candidly, our work on the Board has required significant energy and effort, but I am pleased to be able to give back to Kappa Sigma and Beta Xi, for I have benefited greatly from my membership in our fraternity.

Recent Activities – “where we’ve been”

During the past 18 months, we have made substantial improvements to the Chapter House. To be sure, they were needed, and here is a portion of what we’ve accomplished:

- Installed an integrated fire alarm system throughout the Chapter House – we are now compliant with all current code requirements
- Replaced the deck
- Renovated the living quarters on the second floor
- Remodeled the Varsity Room
- Remodeled the courtyard

The construction was, at times, unfortunately disruptive to the actives living in, and for this we apologize. Nonetheless, the Chapter House looks substantially better than it has in years and is certainly much safer. I encourage you to stop by and see it. Many of you did at our annual SMOKER last November, and I believe it was a rewarding and fun experience. And, I must take a moment to thank my predecessor as President on the Board, Tom Tedrick, who had the foresight and energy to start these projects. The work is now substantially complete and the Housing Corporation has financed the construction with secured debt of approximately \$750,000. Tom worked with our facility manager, Martin Smith of S&T Management -- we are fortunate to have had their assistance. Tom and Martin -- you have done an excellent job. Thank you.

Unfortunately, we have seen the Chapter membership decline in recent years. There appear to be multiple reasons for this. As a consequence of declining membership, we have seen the Chapter House operating with less than optimal occupancy and with brothers representing sometimes less than half the occupants, the remainder represented by boarders. Some other fraternities on the Berkeley campus, but certainly not all, are enjoying high rates of membership. Clearly, we need to address our “marketing” efforts and make the Beta Xi experience relevant and desirable for the quality students at Cal who we want to attract. I am certain that we can accomplish this.

Our Summer 2009 Efforts – “where we are”

The Chapter House is substantially renovated but Chapter membership is less than optimal. And, candidly, relations between the current Chapter membership and the alumni need to improve. We have observed that successful fraternities on campus, and indeed all healthy organizations, have a strong culture and presence in which individuals thrive in their personal and team efforts by working together. We believe that membership has declined in recent years because the Chapter is evolving as a confederacy of individuals rather than a fraternity of brothers who are committed to a common, worthy culture; the EC has most recently attempted to alter this behavior under the leadership of Brian Wright, but it is difficult for a handful of brothers to have the necessary impact. Therefore, it is time to invest our alumni effort to assist the current Chapter leadership in building a strong, vibrant and rewarding Beta Xi experience, and we are taking active, specific and sometimes formal steps to do so.

We believe that for the Chapter to be successful it must immediately:

- Reestablish the authority and prestige of the Executive Counsel (“EC”);
- Establish “critical mass” of live-in members so that the Chapter behaves and “feels” like a fraternity rather than a boarding house; and,
- Reestablish appropriate operating guidelines (codified in the Chapter’s by-laws) and adherence to established Kappa Sigma guidelines and ritual.

BETA BITES

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fornia. Please direct all news to:
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Undergrad Report

Beta Xi Alumni,

Good day to all of you Gentlemen. Before I begin discussing the status and operations of Beta-Xi, please allow me an opportunity and time to formally introduce myself to all of you. My name is Michael Chen. I am currently a third year majoring in Economics and Legal Studies at Cal. I pledged the Fraternity in fall 2008. I was Gamma representative as well as Rush Chairman last semester before my progression to Grand Master. My email is mikechen89@gmail.com. Feel free to contact me at any time. I welcome conversation and advice.

Onto the Chapter. Last year, split over the two semesters, a total of 12 new pledges were initiated into the Fraternity. This brings our total numbers to around 35 or 40 active Brothers. Regardless of number of actives, we all agree that Beta Xi Chapter performance can be improved. I believe that the main topics for improvement are stronger operating structure, Brotherhood, and most importantly, accountability. A lack of structure has weakened the Rush Program and Ritual, thereby the focus on Kappa Sigma values that, ultimately, has weakened recruitment. Consequently, Brotherhood can be improved so that Brothers work to help each other by sharing common goals and values. In my opinion, the lack of individual and Chapter accountability has weakened prior efforts of dealing with the previous two issues as well as building a strong Chapter. Therefore, accountability and responsibility are going to be my main point of emphasis this coming semester. To assist in solving these issues, a team of Jon Wolter, Curtis Tongue, and Will Tracy will be working actively with the Executive Committee for the next year. The Chapter welcomes this input. We are going to build a strong Chapter and we will start now. We are going to preserve 100+ years of Kappa Sigma history and tradition at Cal, and once again, we will start now. I believe that the previous Grand Master Brother Wright has already set this attitude in place and this year, we, the alumni team and the Executive Committee, will take the next steps to complete these changes. I hope that you, the alumni, will help us and we encourage you to contribute your effort, treasure or both. It will be a worthy investment that we will manage and cherish carefully. With all of your help, along with the cooperation between the alumni team and Executive Committee, I know that a strong Chapter is coming. A strong Beta-Xi that we are all proud of is coming.

As I stated earlier, I welcome conversation and advice. If any of you have any suggestions for me to help this rebuild this Chapter or just want to chat, please feel free to email me or call me at (909) 967-6850. I look forward to learning from all of you who have so much more experience than I do. This Chapter means a great deal to me. Thank you all for your time and I look forward to seeing or talking to you all soon.

AEKDB,

Michael Chen '08

Alumni Report Continued...

Therefore, at the direction of the Kappa Sigma Supreme Executive Counsel (“SEC”), we have established an alumni team to work directly and actively with the Chapter and the EC; the alumni team now participates as an active decision-maker with the Chapter EC leadership. The alumni team currently consists of Curtis Tongue (House Corp Member), Will Tracy (District Alumni Advisor) and me. This summer we will accomplish the following with Michael Chen, Chapter Grand Master, and his recently elected EC:

- Establish sound fiscal operating guidelines and codify them in an updated set of by-laws for the Chapter;
- Establish a comprehensive Rush Program, with which we are seeking assistance from the National Kappa Sigma fraternity, to be in place for the beginning of the Fall 2009 school term.

Fall 2009 and Ensuing School Year – “where we’re going”

We plan to have a renewed and enforceable focus on basic Kappa Sigma values and a coherent, organized Rush program in place for the beginning of the Fall 2009 semester. The alumni team will continue to actively operate the Chapter’s activities with the EC.

And, on another very positive note, with our renovated Chapter House, we are looking forward to hosting several significant alumni events in Fall 2009. Several separate alumni groups are planning reunion parties at the Chapter House during the Fall Football Season – we are assisting with the arrangements for these events as many of the returning alumni are coming from out-of-town. Please stop by the Chapter House when you are in Berkeley, particularly if you visit for a football game. And, if you want to arrange an event with other alumni, friends and family please contact me. We are happy to assist in arranging your event so as to make it easy, efficient and successful for you.

I will be providing you performance status reports in the future. Until our next report, do not hesitate to give

me your observations and questions – I am reachable at jon@flgpartners.com and at 415-999-5868.

Warm personal regards to each of you and Go Bears!

AEKDB

Jon Wolter ’75

BETA-XI ANNUAL FUND

The House Corporation is dedicated to creating a first class living environment at the Beta-Xi Chapter House, and they have largely succeeded. With this effort we also need to solidify the foundation of the chapter – alumni support. We understand that many of you are unable to volunteer your time, but our hope is that you can show your support through your participation in the Beta-Xi Annual Fund program.

Remember your days at Cal when you joined the Beta-Xi chapter – the leadership, organizational, and social skills you developed, and lifetime friendships you made? Your donation will help ensure that future Kappa Sigs will enjoy these same incredible experiences.

Our goal is to help the undergraduate chapter achieve and maintain a level of excellence that continues our great tradition. To do this, we need to raise at least \$15,000 annually to meet the expenses associated with invitations, newsletters, our website, and events. We also need to substantially decrease our House Corporation debt to manageable levels, while increasing funds to support educational and scholarship programs.

Annual dues have been set at \$100, but fortunately the great majority gives more. Please enclose your donation in the pre-addressed envelope included with this mailing. You can also donate online through our website (www.CalKappaSigma.org) by clicking on the “Donate” link.

We thank you in advance for your loyal and continued support.

MANY THANKS TO OUR DONORS FROM 2008

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Smoker – The Best Yet



Dear Brothers,

That hallowed time of year is fast approaching us: Cal football. We had our ups and downs last season, but one thing we could always count on was the camaraderie and BBQ of our Beta-Xi chapter for each home game.

The highlight of last season's Beta-Xi alumni events was one of our most successful Smokers yet. 25 alumni from '51 – '07 joined us at the newly renovated Chapter house on the Friday before The Big Game against Stanford, in which we rightfully reclaimed The Axe. The evening was filled with stories of our chapter's history and Big Game armchair quarterbacking, fueled by the perfect combination of cigar smoke, appetizers and Jack Daniels.

We welcome you to the '09-'10 season of Cal Football, and we hope to see you all there. More information about this year's Smoker event is forthcoming as the date approaches, and if you have any questions about this season, please call me at 415.717.0322.

Go Bears!

AEKDB
Curtis Tongue '03
Board of Directors, Beta-Xi Chapter

