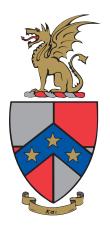
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NEBRASKA CHAPTER, THE ALPHA TAU OF BETA THETA PI



COVID-19 (again)

Editor's note: The spring and fall editions of The Dragon's Tale in 2020 included full stories on the impact the coronavirus has had on our chapter. (Past issues are available under the "Alumni" section of nebraskabeta.com.) Without repeating that information, the virus continues to impact our chapter, and many other individuals, businesses, organizations, and others around the world. Our chapter is affected by how we feed members, conduct meetings, and our everyday involvement in our usual social, philanthropy, and intramural activities to name a few. Chapter officer reports follow, and we will try hard to share meaningful updates without uttering, "We have no report." We are also looking ahead to celebrating the Beta and college experiences that have defined our chapter in the past.

CHAPTER PRESIDENT'S REPORT

am more than thrilled to be charged with leading this house for the next year. Before I go any further, I want to thank the active chapter for instilling their confidence in me to direct the house that they all call home and that we love so dearly. I also want to thank the executive team from last year—most of whom are still available to us as valuable resources.

A little about me: I am a sophomore finance student from Grand Island, Nebraska, where I attended Central Catholic High School. Taking on the position of president without prior executive team experience seemed like a daunting task at first thought, but I couldn't have a better support system around me. I want to first highlight Chapter Counselor Mike Wortman '67, who is always just a phone call away. Mike is a great soundboard for me and always provides applicable insight. Next, former president Erik Goodwin '18 has been an incredible resource for me, answering all of my questions from operating under Robert's Rules of Order in chapter meetings, to how to communicate effectively with our house cook and everything in between. Additionally, my older brother and former chapter president, John Pfeifer '19, has been supportive and shared the wisdom he gained from his time in the role. Lastly, my Experience Company mentor and former chapter president, Kurt Siebert '14, has shared many great bits of experience and advice he learned.

This leads me to the rest of my support system and the men that will be making the biggest difference in this house in the next year: our executive team. If there is a team prepared to take on the exciting challenge of leading the house without any prior experience, this is the group to do it. We cover the board with Pre-Medicine, Business, Journalism, Media Arts, and Architecture majors. We have a stable of intentional and devoted problem-solvers. I can't wait to see the strides these men make in their positions over the next year.

Serving as the Assistant New Member Educator last year, I had a front-row seat to the development of the newest initiates of the Alpha Tau chapter. We're proud of the development we saw from them as pledges and excited to have them wearing the badge alongside us.

Lastly, I want to thank the alumni for their generous contributions and continued interest in the men of 1515 R St. The active chapter is excited to engage with alums in person as we eye the re-opening of campus for the fall 2021 semester. Until that time comes, stay safe and Go Beta!

Yours in __kai___,

Dominic Pfeifer '20

president@nebraskabeta.com

House Corporation Report

Editor's note: In the spring 2020 edition of The Dragon's Tale, we wrote about some of the formal and informal groups that support our chapter. The Alumni Advisory Board was profiled in that edition (page 2), and in the fall and current editions there are stories about Zoom communications. There have been many articles in the past few years about The Experience Company. Support is offered in differing but important ways. There are several groups surrounding the men of the Nebraska chapter. In future issues we will profile other support groups, but one not given much thought is the House Corporation.

Nebraska, the House Corporation (or House Corp for short) is the entity that owns and operates our largest and most tangible asset, our beautiful Georgian Revival chapter house at 1515 R St.

The House Corp board is composed of seven Nebraska Beta alumni volunteers, roughly one representing each of the last six decades. Our role is to be good stewards of the chapter house, making thoughtful and sound decisions not just for today, but for the many decades we hope Beta continues to flourish at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Our mission is to provide a facility that offers high-quality, affordable, and safe housing for the 71 men we have beds for (reduced to 66 with the current pandemic guidelines) but also common spaces that support all men of the chapter as well as alumni and visitors. We meet twice a year in the summer and winter to conduct our business, with most day-to-day operational items managed by **Drew Stange '80** and **Mark Antonson '04**.

Our relationship with the chapter is not strictly that of landlord and tenant; we want the chapter house to truly be home to the men of the chapter, and we work closely with both the House Manager and House Director to ensure that we're meeting the needs of everyone. Sometimes the exact split of duties can seem confusing—for example, the House Corp is responsible for making sure the toilets work, but the men are responsible for making certain they're clean—and we work closely with the chapter on those responsibilities and expectations. We have similar expectations of the men as any other housing provider or parent—to treat the building as a home, to leave it in the same condition they received it, and to promptly let us know of any maintenance items before they turn into bigger issues.

We're also continuing to invest in the chapter house. Over the last several years we've done improvements such as installing large TVs in the living room, chapter room, and conference room; upgrading fluorescent lighting to LED; expanding the back parking lot; and installing fiber optic internet service. If you would like to make a donation to support the House Corp, tax-deductible gifts can be made directly to the Beta Theta Pi Charitable Fund at the University of Nebraska Foundation. Non-deductible contributions can be made directly to the Beta Theta Pi Alumni Association of Nebraska, P.O. Box 22251, Lincoln, NE 68542. I can be reached at mantonson@gmail.com.

Yours in ___kai___,
Mark Antonson '04

President, Beta Theta Pi Alumni Association of Nebraska

THE EXPERIENCE COMPANY REPORT

Mentorship - A Powerful Form of Educating

I thas been said that the past year will be most notably marked by critical moments of self-assessment and reflection. As Betas, the principles and values of our fraternity should stand as important fence posts in our directional focus of life; a hallmark of our friendship and fidelity.

Among the many programs of The Experience Company, none has held truer to the undeniable positive impact of our efforts than that of our mentoring program. Research has shown that strong mentoring relationships increase an individual's personal and professional growth, identity, self-worth, and efficacy. Important aspects at any point in time, yet further valued when consistently confronted with unknowns.

Amid the uncertainties of the past year, alumni mentors involved with The Experience Company recommitted themselves to the importance of relationships with younger Betas, often utilizing now-commonplace technologies to engage in conversations from navigating college coursework virtually to candid dialogs of physical

separations, social equities, and other personal impacts. Imagine the absence of such conversations and relationships in these young men's lives.

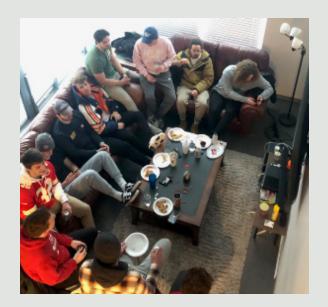
As said by **John Wooden**, *Purdue '32*, "Being a role model is the most powerful form of educating." If you have been considering involvement as a mentor with The Experience Company, the case for positive alumni relationships and the transformational impact for young men of the chapter has never been clearer.

It is with gratitude I extend appreciation to our current alumni mentors and ask each Beta to consider their involvement in making a difference for the young men of the Nebraska chapter.

Please reach me at <u>TMattox1@yahoo.com</u>.

Yours in ___kai___,
Todd Mattox '99

President, The Experience Company



NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION "PIZZA PARTY"

or the November general election, a group of alumni organized by **Bob Thacker**'67 again supported the undergraduate class that had the largest turnout of registered voters in the election. In this competition, the class with the largest voter participation rate was treated to a Super Bowl party paid for by donated funds. Due to COVID restrictions, there were a number of gatherings, but this picture of a group of juniors shows one of the events. From left to right: Peter Dunbar, Connor Remar, William Parish, Rylan Chaney, Joseph Stanley, Zachary Masters, Robert Lawton, Noah McCashland, Nicholas Billion, Jared Murray, and Liam Stanley. Thanks to all who voted!

A Better Man Because of Beta Theta Pi

Max Martin '64 Cherishes His Alpha Tau Experience

hile several aspects of fraternity and college life have changed since Max Martin '64 attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, he's been pleased to see that many traditions at Alpha Tau are still the same. Max is thankful that the brothers who came before him stressed academics and showed his class how to be Men of Principle. He has been proud to see hundreds of Alpha Taus, including his younger brothers, Sam Martin '67 and Jud Martin '72, follow in his footsteps and reap the rewards of the Beta experience.

"When I was in school, Alpha Tau was really one of the top fraternities on campus. They are today as well," Max said. "Everyone says they're the best, but when you look at GPA, participation in campus activities, intramurals, and things like that, we were always up there when I was on campus. The upperclassmen were the ones that really established that atmosphere and then we just perpetuated it."

Max was thankful to live in the chapter house for all three years of his UNL undergraduate experience and for the first year he was in dental school. He and his brothers had a blast winning the Kosmet Klub competition among UNL fraternities for all four years he lived in the house. While the brothers in Max's class came from various backgrounds, they all had similar interests and have bonds that are still strong nearly 60 years later.

As Max started his dental career in Lincoln, he found numerous ways to remain involved with Alpha Tau as an alumnus. Max has been an active participant in our mentor program. During initiation week, Max and his wife, Mary, hosted new members and their pledge fathers for dinners. He served on the Beta Alumni Advisory Board, played in numerous alumni vs. actives golf outings, and attended many Homecoming gatherings and Monday night chapter dinners at the Beta house. Max has enjoyed how his dental career and Beta experience have been intertwined.

"When I graduated from dental school, I became an associate of a Lincoln dentist and two years later, we formed a dental practice partnership," Max said. "In about 1980, we were looking for a third partner, so **Stu Lacey** '69 joined our practice. I retired 31 years later, so Stu and I practiced together all that time."

Max's decorated dental career included serving as the president of the Nebraska Dental Association and president of the American College of Dentists. While serving as the Nebraska Dental Association president, he became friends with a South Dakota orthodontist whose sons, **Ryan Fuchs '97** and **Rick Fuchs '00**, later became Alpha Tau Betas. Max is proud that Rick has established a successful dental career of his own in South Dakota.



Max Martin '64 with his wife, Mary, sister-in-law, Sue, and brother, Jud Martin '72.

Along with practicing dentistry, Max refereed high school football with one of his closest friends, **Roger Douglas '64**. Max and his wife now live in Montgomery, Texas, but they try to return to Lincoln each fall to see his beloved Huskers, visit relatives, and connect with Roger and his wife over a meal. The past year has proven that distance does little to separate Max from his Alpha Tau brothers.

"Interestingly enough with COVID-19, someone got the idea of having a Tuesday morning coffee Zoom call," Max said. "A lot of the brothers have enjoyed connecting with friends they hadn't talked to for a while that live all over the country."

You can connect with Max at mmmartinjr@hotmail.com.

DAVID KEMP KARNES

December 12, 1948 - October 25, 2020

The fall 2020 issue of *The Dragon's Tale* contained information on the passing of Dave. Due to printing and distribution timing, we were not able to offer a full tribute to Dave in that issue.

Dave was AT 1257, and was initiated into Beta Theta Pi on October 6, 1968. He served our chapter in many capacities, including chapter president during his senior year at UNL. Dave was also on a swimming scholarship at UNL, and after graduation in 1971 he was admitted to the University of Nebraska College of Law. Dave and Liz Lueder were married in August 1971. To this union were born four daughters. Dave and Liz were house parents to Alpha Tau in his second and third years of law school—and continued their impact on our chapter. Liz passed away in 2003. Dave married Kristine Dorn in June 2008, and Dave and Kris had two daughters.

Dave had an immeasurable impact on many Betas—young and also those of his generation. People are often judged by the content of their character. Dave had an immense amount of character. Some highlights of his career, professionally and as a Beta, include:

- Returned to Omaha after graduating from law school.
 Worked in private practice.
- Appointed as a White House Fellow in 1981. Only the second Nebraskan to have this honor.
- Worked with the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (Samuel R. Pierce Jr.) after Dave's tenure of being a White House Fellow was concluded.
- Appointed as U.S. Senator for Nebraska after the March 1987 death of Senator Ed Zorinsky.
- Returned to Omaha and employed by the Omahabased law firm of Kutak Rock. Was employed by Kutak Rock for 31 years and was still working at the time of his passing.
- Ran for the Senate position in 1988, but was defeated in the general election by former Gov. Bob Kerrey.
- General Counsel for Scoular Grain in Omaha.
- Was involved in numerous other business and civic interests in Omaha over the years.

- Awarded the Distinguished Nebraskalander Award from the Nebraskaland Foundation in 2012 for his contributions to Omaha and Nebraska.
- Served Alpha Tau as honorary co-chair of the capital campaign for the chapter house remodeling.
- Was one of the founders of The Experience Company—the support arm of our chapter working with internship and mentors programs, and communications such as *The Dragon's Tale*.

Funeral services were held in Omaha on November 7. Dave's survivors include wife Kris and Dave's six daughters: Korey (Ryan) Huyler, Kalen (Chris) Strickland, Kara (Will) Mason, Laurel (Nathan) Murphy, Katharine Karnes. and Alexandra Karnes. Also surviving are two sisters, Liz's mother, Kris' parents, and nine grandchildren.

After consultation with Kris, it is our wish to honor Dave's legacy with our chapter through a memorial carrying Dave's name: **The Dave Karnes Leadership and Scholarship award** will be funded through contributions to The Experience Company, a 501(c)(3) entity. Kris, chapter, and alumni leadership will be involved in selection and distribution. It is our hope that TEC will have funds to permanently endow programs that are identified in Dave's name and honor.

<u>Checks payable to The Experience Company</u> may be mailed to P. O. Box 22251, Lincoln, NE 68542. Write "Dave Karnes Memorial" in the Memo section of your check.

Thanks in advance for your willingness to remember Dave for years to come. If questions, please let us know.

Yours in __kai__, Bruce McKeag, AT 1149 bm93558@windstream.net

Bill Dana, AT 1489
Bill Dana@me.com

Todd Mattox, AT 1986 TMattox1@yahoo.com

Chapter Officers

President

Dominic Pfeifer '20

Grand Island, NE

president@nebraskabeta.com

Vice President **Jarod Fox '20** *Grand Island, NE*

Treasurer
Nick Gay '20
Papillion, NE

Recruitment Chairman

Sam Rice '20

Lincoln, NE
(402) 405-9826
recruitment@nebraskabeta.com

New Member Educator Michael Smilko '20 Bellevue, NE

Risk Manager
Joe Dworak '20
Lincoln, NE

Secretary
Parker Miller '20
Overland Park, KS

Scholarship Chairman Gavin Struve '20 Gretna, NE

Social Chairman Jampe Gergen '20 *Lincoln*, *NE*

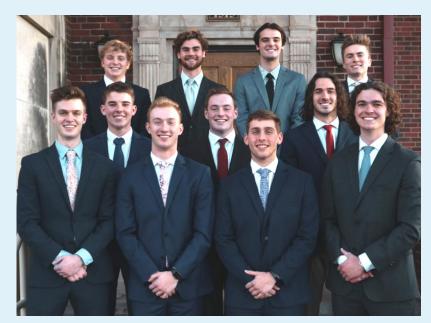
Philanthropy Chairman Max Seibolt '20 Overland Park, KS

Communications

Jack Patzner '20

Papillion, NE

alumni@nebraskabeta.com



Top row, from left: Nick Gay '20, Jampe Gergen '20, Gavin Struve '20, and Michael Smilko '20. Middle, from left: Max Seibolt '20, Joe Dworak '20, and Jack Patzner '20. Bottom, from left: Samuel Rice '20, Jarod Fox '20, Dominic Pfeifer '20, and Parker Miller '20.

SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

eta Theta Pi finished second academically among UNL fraternities for the umpteenth time last semester with an all-chapter grade-point average (GPA) of 3.457. This marks a measurable decline from the 3.63 from spring 2020. Last year's GPAs were inflated like all others across campus because of the implementation of the pass/no pass policy due to the emergence of COVID-19. Nonetheless, our fall 2020 GPA does trump the fall 2019 GPA of 3.442.

Additionally, our fall 2020 GPA again kept us first on the city campus. Nonetheless, it is below the fraternity standard of a 3.5 all-chapter GPA upon which we were recruited, and it is my goal to see our GPA again rise above that mark.

Last semester, we had 16 total 4.0s, our highest count in several years aside from spring 2020. This breakdown consisted of four seniors, five juniors, three sophomores, and four freshmen. Conversely, we had 15 members, including freshmen, who did not reach our minimum GPA standard. If a member gets below a 2.6 in a semester or below a 2.9 for two out of three semesters, he is placed on an academic assistance plan. This is intended to give needed structure to members who fail to make grades and consists of meeting with the scholarship chairman throughout the semester. If they fail to make grades during the semester

on academic assistance, they will receive a Trial by Chapter in which other members vote whether or not to allow members in the house.

Fortunately, none of the members on an academic assistance plan last semester were on this "probation-type" status before. None of the members on academic assistance plans this semester were on one last semester, and no trials were needed. The three second-semester pledges who failed to reach the 2.9 GPA mark last semester will have to attain that GPA this semester to be initiated.

I look forward to what will hopefully be a more normal academic year next fall, and in the meantime, I hope this semester's GPA will rise as members grow more acclimated to on-campus school during COVID-19. Next semester, we hope to reinstate freshman study hours at a location outside of the chapter house. Until then, the members of this house, including 28 newly initiated freshmen, will strive to uphold the high standards of this great academic fraternity.

Yours in ___kai___,
Gavin Struve '20

RECRUITMENT REPORT

Editor's note: The first semester of the 2020-21 school year saw the initiation of 28 new members into our chapter. The recruitment team in the summer of 2020 faced obstacles never before experienced. "Traditional" recruitment events were altered, changed, and/or canceled due to COVID. The group that was recruited has fully integrated into the chapter. Their grade-point average (GPA) was 3.553. This success is something on which we need to continue to build, and alumni and undergraduate support for this summer's recruiting class is paramount. Please be involved.

I am incredibly honored and excited to serve the Alpha Tau chapter as the recruitment chairman for the upcoming summer. I am a soon-to-be junior from Lincoln, NE (Lincoln Pius X High School), and am majoring in Emerging Media Arts with an emphasis in audio engineering and cinema production.

The Alpha Tau chapter has a strong reputation for recruiting the best young men on campus every year, and I recognize the weight of this responsibility. Emphasizing the importance of recruitment, the active chapter recently elected Assistant Recruitment Chairmen Ian Kubik '21, a finance major from Chaska, MN, and Luke Spethman '21, a finance major from Lincoln (NE) East High School. As a team, we recognize the importance of alumni input.

We encourage all alumni to send in their recommendations as soon as possible. May 15 would be best, but not any later than June 15. A recruitment recommendation form can be found on page 12 of this issue.

We encourage all alumni to send in their recommendations as early as possible and **no** later than June 15 so we have enough time to be connected with potential new members. (A number of recruitment events are scheduled before June 15). While we cannot guarantee a bid, we will guarantee all new members recommended by alumni will be considered by the recruitment team.

Throughout the recruitment process, we want to recruit genuine young men that will continue the tradition Beta has of being the top house on Lincoln's campus. I am confident in our ability to connect with all potential new members in a personal way, ensuring that the young men we bid share the same values that we do as Men of Principle.

While COVID-19 has severely impacted our academic year, I am excited to say that the Interfraternity Council (IFC) does not intend on letting COVID-19 impact the recruitment process this summer. We will follow current state and local guidelines and those of our General Fraternity when it comes to holding recruitment events. During these activities, the chapter will

be able to connect with individuals and offer valuable insight throughout recruitment.

We are hoping to hold an alumni recruitment event paired with The Experience Company. With an alumni event, the hope is that potential new members will see the value and opportunity that Beta provides, highlighting the fact that Beta is a lifelong commitment. Scheduled recruitment events will be on the chapter website: nebraskabeta.com.

With all that has happened in the past year, Beta has a renewed focus on the topic of diversity. As Alpha Taus, we are committed to fostering an inclusive environment inside our chapter house. Regarding diversity, the Alpha Tau chapter became what it is today through the recruitment of a diverse coalition of personalities, and we are committed for this to continue.

I know I speak for the entire active chapter when I say how excited we are to begin the recruitment process. Finally, I simply would like to thank all of the actives for everything they do to aid in our recruitment process, as well as our alumni network for staying involved and showing the value of the lifelong commitment that is Beta Theta Pi.

Yours in ___kai___,
Sam Rice '20
recruitment@nebraskabeta.com

Communications Report

The current active chapter of Alpha Tau is in unprecedented times. Our chapter has not had this much of a "blank slate" since the mid-'90s when the chapter had difficulties. As COVID-19 appears to be nearing its end, we will begin resuming our chapter's normal proceedings. Our all-sophomore executive team is excited for the opportunity to reinstall and improve our traditions of old.

Due to the difficulty coronavirus presents with meeting in person this spring, I would like to have alumni involved with the active chapter with Zoom sessions. I am looking to host recurring meetings consisting of a small panel of alumni who specialize in a certain career or interest, which will be shared with undergrads also having an interest in that field. These short meetings would be beneficial to everyone. These meetings will require about 45 minutes of the participant's time and will be loosely structured to encourage open discourse. Beta alums: I will begin reaching out,

but if you would be interested in participating, please contact me at alumni@nebraskabeta.com.

We hope and fully expect normal chapter operations to resume in the fall. At that time, if you are interested in attending a formal Monday dinner, send me an email at least three or four days in advance of the dinner to ensure we have no conflicts such as pinnings, a speaker, or other special events. Each dinner starts at 5:30 p.m. You will be provided with a famous Scott Thorson (our current cook) meal, good company with the members, and the opportunity to speak about your Beta experiences. I am excited to work alongside the rest of the 2021 executive team and looking forward to a great year of new beginnings.

Yours in __kai___,
Jack Patzner '20
alumni@nebraskabeta.com

New Member Education Report

The Alpha Tau chapter of Beta Theta Pi recently added 28 new active members, and they're off to an amazing start. The young men have been getting used to the benefits that come with being activated, while also maintaining their responsibilities of school, social, and philanthropy of last semester.

Previous semester New Member Educator **Jack Schulenberg** '19 did a great job leading their class through a difficult semester and an exciting Initiation Week. I appreciate all the hard work Jack did, and he has led a great example for me and future New Member Educators from the newly initiated class to follow.

Many newly initiated members have taken positions within the chapter as we recently had our cabinet elections. (Cabinet positions are nonexecutive team support members where the executive position requires additional help.) I will keep working with this class as they continue to find their own identity with all of this new free time and opportunity. Specifically, three of the new members did not meet the requirements to be initiated. I will be working extra with this group to make sure they will qualify to be initiated into the chapter at a later date.

We also hope that COVID restrictions will lighten up and we'll be able to host formal dinners and invite leaders from across campus to meet with some of our new members. Each individual in this class has shown a great amount of personal growth, while also developing their relationships and the solidity of their class as a whole. I'm excited to see what their first semester as actives has in store for them.

Yours in ___kai___, Michael Smilko '20

SOCIAL REPORT

This semester, the social team has been continuing to follow COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions from the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department—while still holding a strong and respectable social scene during these unprecedented times. The gatherings we've held are still a great opportunity for the new members to meet others and enhance their social skills within COVID guidelines.

We have become creative this year as a team by hosting more outdoor activities and doing events that are still enjoyable for small groups. These events include co-ed volleyball and basketball games, mini-golf outings, and small sports event watch groups. With mandatory testing from UNL, we have been able to slowly but surely return to larger group social events while still following size restrictions and mask requirements.

Though we have not had formal dances this past semester, we are undergoing the process of starting these events toward the end of the 2021 spring semester. This will provide the new members who haven't experienced a formal dance the chance to meet more members of other Greek houses. The social team is excited and passionate about the opportunities that could be presented to us in the future if pandemic restrictions hopefully start to be lifted.

Yours in ___kai___,
Jampe Gergen '20

Philanthropy Report

The members of Beta Theta Pi have been steadily increasing our philanthropy scene in the restricted gathering world we are living in today.

Although we are not allowed to put on classic events such as Burger Bash, Backpack in Black, and Festa Italiana, we have been committed to bettering the world around us. Through weekly volunteering at Lighthouse (under COVID rules), a place for at-risk youth in the Lincoln area, these students obtain help with their schoolwork, play games, or just experience social interaction. Beta has kept up our outreach to the adolescents of Lincoln. Through online fundraisers such as our Collared Shirt Drive, we have been able to raise money for Lighthouse.

We are also planning events for I Have A Name, a group dedicated to raising awareness for Sex Trafficking; the Special Olympics; and helping to raise funds to build a cafeteria for the new cancer center at Bryan Health in Lincoln.

I am looking forward to carrying our momentum from the previous years into this upcoming semester, regardless of COVID-19. I am excited to be a member of the executive team of the Alpha Tau chapter of Beta Theta Pi and I am ready to assist in the cultivation of turning our pledges into young men of good character.

Yours in ___kai___,
Max Seibolt '20

Beta Piano

ast fall, we were fortunate to have bought a piano for the chapter house. We want to thank the Parent Alliance and alumni for their generous support in making this purchase possible. The previous piano that had been in the house for over 60 years no longer played "good music" and was beyond repair.

In August, I began reaching out on Facebook looking for a new piano to adorn our living room. In Omaha, we located a Chickering baby grand piano to provide memories and entertainment for Betas in the years to come. We had the piano transported to Lincoln and it was tuned by a professional. We appreciate the support that made this a reality and are looking forward to seeing our alumni more with the easing of COVID-19 restrictions.



Here is a link to a video of some of us gathering around the new piano: http://bit.ly/BetaPiano. Or use the QR code by scanning from a smartphone.

Yours in ___kai___,
Sam Rice '20



THE DAY THE WORLD STOPPED

Editor's note: Today's average college freshmen were not yet born on September 11, 2001. They know of 9/11, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, and the Vietnam War through American history books and other media. This past January 28 was the 35th anniversary of the Space Shuttle Challenger explosion. To place some additional emphasis on this tragedy, **Jim Schaffer '68**, who was a "witness" to this history, shares his personal involvement in placing a teacher into space.

n Jan. 28, 1986, just 35 years ago, the Space Shuttle Challenger rose like a dream into a bright blue Florida sky. Seventy-three seconds later, the dream became a nightmare.

I had a small chance to be on that rocket. My opportunity for star travel came when President Reagan announced the creation of a "Space Flight Participant Program." NASA had decided to add a civilian passenger to its space shuttle crews on occasion—an artist, a musician, or perhaps even a teacher.

During the 1960s interest in space had been intense—President Kennedy challenged the nation to send people to the moon and we took up the cause. Everyone knew the names of the astronauts and when their flights would happen. The space race was on and Americans were determined to win.

Once we reached the moon, however, people lost interest quickly. By the 1980s a trip to the International Space Station was the only ride still going, and it was a destination that lacked poetry—no aliens, no robots, no monsters.

NASA leadership tried to think up ways to restore public support. When the agency chose a teacher to be the first space passenger, they

struck gold. Christa McAuliffe from Concord, New Hampshire, quickly became a familiar face on magazine covers and TV talk shows.

The Teacher in Space contest was a hit nationwide—more than 11,000 applied across the country. I was chosen as one of Nebraska's two representatives, along with an Omaha chemistry teacher. In my application, I wrote, "The space shuttle story has great human appeal and great intellectual attraction but no one has brought it down to earth yet for the average person."

But fate chose Christa McAuliffe. On that sad January day, I watched with one of my classes at Lincoln (NE) East High School as the Challenger rose into the sky and suddenly exploded into a ball of flames. It's hard to find something good in a tragedy, but making the effort is part of being human. In the case of Challenger, a long investigation led to important changes in how the shuttle was built and how decisions were made. Americans wanted to know what had gone wrong, fix the problem, and then move forward.

I continue to stay interested. Since the tragedy, I have given over 300 presentations to school and civic groups. Some were professional engineering organizations of engineers and

even defense contractors such as Brunswick, located just west of Lincoln, that built the heavy-pressure gas vessels carried on board the shuttle. Others ran the gamut from retired military officers' clubs to Cub Scout packs. I also got to know Barbara Morgan, a teacher from McCall, Idaho, who was able to complete Christa's mission in 2007.

Meanwhile, Dr. Gregg Wright, a physician and research associate professor at UNL, was inspired by McAuliffe's example to establish The Nebraska Christa McAuliffe Prize for Courage and Excellence in Education to recognize brave Nebraska teachers. According to Dr. Jim O'Hanlon, then Dean of Teacher's College, the award is one-of-a-kind because it honors courage in particular—something hard to define but easy to recognize when you see it. The winning teacher receives a \$1,000 stipend and a plaque presented at a banquet held in his or her honor. We continue to award that honor to this day.

One of my neighbors was so excited by my chance to go into space that he built a minispace shuttle for the kids in the neighborhood (my two daughters and I are in the photo).

Jim can be reached at <u>jrs@nebrwesleyan.edu</u>.

Alumni News

(If you have Alumni News to share, please send information to updates@nebraskabeta.com.)

Editor's note: For several years, a group of Lincoln-area Betas shared coffee and stories every Tuesday morning. This was discussed in the fall 2020 issue of The Dragon's Tale (page 7). For an update since the last report, Dan Wherry '62, Jim Rembolt '62, and David Buntain '67 shared their thoughts. On the Tuesday following the death of Larry Bornschlegl (see Larry's obit on page 10), about 20 minutes were spent sharing memories of him. The stories were humorous and healing.

"Reconnecting with Beta brothers via Zoom has been a welcome antidote to the social isolation of the last year. I enjoy talking with brothers from across the country and marvel at how strong our Beta bonds remain after so many years. I think other Alpha Tau alums would also enjoy doing these 'virtual reunions' with brothers from their era."

"Our weekly Zoom sessions have been gratifying as we've been able to see and share memories with Betas in Lincoln and around the U.S. It has allowed our weekly coffee group to include Beta alums from all over the nation. For the weekly Tuesday group, regular members generally include Alpha Tau Betas who were pledged in the years 1959 through 1964, but others are always welcome."

"The Zoom technology has allowed us to reconnect with brothers whom we have not seen in years, to share our memories as well as get caught up on each other's lives. Each week we generally get a report from Chapter Counselor Mike Wortman on the activities and achievements of the active chapter."

"I believe the Zoom sessions have caused our distant alums to feel closer to Lincoln and the active chapter, thus strengthening their Beta bonds! I see the sessions continuing into the future after the virus is gone. Other Beta alum groups might enjoy the Zoom experience."

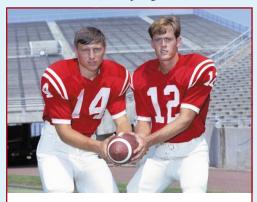
"Hopefully, we can resume meeting locally for our weekly Tuesday coffee sessions, but we are excited about the ability to invite Betas around the country to participate in Zoom sessions in the future."

Another alum also provided some feedback, and a "joint" response from him and his wife who is within earshot of the Zoom calls: "She told me she enjoys our laughter when I'm on Zoom every Tuesday. Being able to see brothers coast to coast that you have not seen in years—and reliving the fun we had—is really special. While I think

many of us keep in contact with some Betas, Zoom has given us the opportunity to expand our circle—and I guess that sums it up."

150 Notable Nebraskans. The Lincoln Journal Star newspaper recently republished an article from Nebraska's 150th birthday celebration on "150 Notable Nebraskans." A five-person panel, using the characterizations of "notable" and "significant" as their guide, came up with a listing of those whose influence extended beyond Nebraska's borders. Their list included three Alpha Tau Betas: Telephone pioneer Frank A. Woods 1890 was 93rd on the list; Hall of Fame football player Guy Chamberlin 1914 was 138th; and world-renowned jazz drummer and composer Victor Lewis '69 was 141st. The complete listing can be found with this link: https://journalstar.com/news/state- and-regional/nebraska/150-notable-nebraskans/ collection_74266db1-1963-5943-9678-3f7f8306e19a.html

Past issues of *The Dragon's Tale* have featured stories about Guy Chamberlin (spring 2017) and Victor Lewis (also spring 2017).



Van Brownson '69 was inducted into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame in December. Van was one of two starting quarterbacks for the Cornhuskers during their 1970 and 1971 championship seasons. Seven Huskers were inducted on the 50th anniversary of their first national championship, and *The Dragon's Tale* team congratulates Van on this significant accomplishment. He can be reached at vbrowns1@cox.net.

In the picture above, Van is #12. Jerry Tagge was the other starting quarterback, and Jerry is #14.

Mike McGahan, M.D. '72 has worked for CHI St. Francis Hospital in Grand Island, NE, for several years. Grand Island just opened a new hospital, and Mike has switched employers to the Grand Island Regional Medical Center. Mike was Alpha Tau chapter president in the mid-'70s

and is a Grand Island native. Congratulations to Mike on this new opportunity. Mike can be reached at hosek@msn.com.

Kirk Trofholz '78 is the new CEO of CapStone Technologies, a Lincoln company that makes robots for mass mail-handling operations. Kirk is a food industry veteran and a 1981 UNL graduate, and has spent his career in the consumer-packaged goods industry. He was introduced to CapStone by Bill Dana '76 and Kirk described his CapStone position as "very different than the food business!" Kirk maintains a Lincoln apartment, but his primary residence remains in Illinois. He can be reached at kirk.trofholz@gmail.com.

Bill Buntain '81 has been involved in entertainment management for most of the last 30 years. He travels from eight to 11 months a year, but due to COVID, his last day of work was March 11, 2020. Bill described this as the "longest work break" he'd ever had, and during this time he split time between Las Vegas, NV, and Key West, FL. He has worked extensively with Cher and Pink (P!nk) over the years, but has bought a condominium in Lincoln for his future. Bill added that he has been "lucky with my job and have been able to work with some great performers, and what started as a fun way to travel and see the world ended up turning into a serious job." Bill can be reached at billbuntain@mac.com.

Barry Kubat '84 and his wife, Michelle, are the proud parents of the 2020 Homecoming Queen at UNL. Lauren Kubat is an accounting major and a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma as well as other University groups. She was crowned outside the Wick Center during the half-time of the Nebraska-Penn State football game on November 14. (It's the COVID-19 era.) Barry described him and his wife as "very excited, flattered, and extremely proud" of Lauren. Congratulations to Lauren and the entire Kubat family. Barry can be reached at bkubat@battentl.com.

Kevin Wilhelm '15 provided an update on his additional schooling. This was written in mid-February when Texas (and many other states) were slammed by a winter storm.

"When moving to Houston in 2020 to work on my Ph.D. in genetics at Baylor College of Medicine, I never thought I would have to deal with snow. After a couple of inches of snow and ice, Houston shut down and left us without power and running water for a week. That did not, however, stop the busy life of a Ph.D. student. Once I finish my Ph.D., I hope to (Continued on page 10)

Alumni News

(Continued from page 9)

join a biotechnology/medical consulting firm to assist companies in strategy and product development. If all goes well, I hope that a few from my pledge class would be interested in starting our own consulting firm, merging our diverse experiences and talents to create a business bonded by years of brotherhood. That is one of the biggest motivating factors for me: to be able to build something great with my lifelong brothers in ___kai___." Kevin can be reached at kwilhelm95@gmail.com.

Ben Krull '17 has a position as Compliance Assistant at West Gate Bank in Lincoln. Ben joins Garrett Kraus '15 as a bank employee. Garrett heads up the data analytics and IT in the bank's loan department. Three current undergraduates also are employed at the bank: Michael Parrish '19, DJ Pfeifer '20, and Nick Gay '20. West Gate Bank is a rapidly growing financial institution with seven offices in Lincoln and three in Omaha. Carl Sjulin '80 is the chairman, president, and CEO of West Gate Bank. Ben can be reached at benkrull98@gmail.com, and Garrett can be reached at garrettkraus3@gmail.com. (Editor's note: As this alumni update was being prepared, Carl said, "Our HR director says our Beta hires are the best employees. They are without exception top-notch in every way from the cultivation of their intellect to the content of their character. We would love to hire more. We hire around 20 new employees each year, and talent acquisition is the most important thing we do.") Carl can be reached at csjulin@westgatebank.com.

When a group of Betas graduate from UNL and don't attend law school, medical school, dental school, etc., that does NOT mean that studying is over. Many professions offer or require further education, and Chase Caverzagie, Michael Kardell, Cole Meister, and Alex Ober (all initiated in 2016) are currently employed as actuaries and following up on their college majors. Chase and Michael have completed enough exams to have obtained their Associate of the Society of Actuaries (ASA) designations, and Cole is reasonably close to obtaining his ASA. Alex is employed in the Property and Casualty industry and working on his Associate Casualty Actuarial Society (ACAS) designation. Chase stated, "So in all, there are four from our pledge class working on actuarial designations." Congratulations to all and good luck from The Dragon's Tale team! Chase can be reached at chasecaverzagie@ gmail.com; Michael at Michael.kardell@yahoo. com; Cole at colemeister2015@gmail.com, and Alex at <u>alexober16@gmail.com</u>.

OUR MYSTIC SHRINE

(If you have news to share about the death of an Alpha Tau Beta, please send the information to updates@nebraskabeta.com.)

Editor's note: In the past, this section has reported deaths of Betas from other chapters where there was a "relationship" of that Beta to the Alpha Tau chapter, or if that Beta has strong ties to Nebraska. At the end of this tribute section, we report the passing of Richard Roth from Washington in St. Louis, and Wallace Richardson from the University of Kansas.

Charles E. Wright '51 entered Our Mystic Shrine on February 24, 2021. He was AT 854. Charlie was a prominent Lincoln attorney. He grew up in Scottsbluff, NE, and was a pitcher for the University of Nebraska baseball team. Charlie served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, obtained his law degree from the University of Nebraska College of Law, and spent over 50 years practicing law—first in Denver, then returning to Lincoln to join Cline-Williams law firm. He practiced corporate, banking, university, and non-profit entity law.

Charlie was active in many civic and business organizations, was the first president of the Nebraska Continuing Legal Education organization, and the first president of the Great Plains Federal Tax Institute. His true passion was Native American history and Native causes. He wrote a book titled *Law at Little Big Horn: Due Process Denied* and established a scholarship for Native Americans at the UNL College of Law.

He is survived by his wife, Suzy, whom he met while both were attending UNL, and two daughters and their families.

Charles P. Meehan '52 entered Our Mystic Shrine on November 13, 2020, in Creve Coeur, MO. He was AT 872. Charles grew up in Lincoln but graduated from a Jesuit high school in Milwaukee, WI. He returned to Lincoln to study business at UNL. After his graduation, he served a stint in the military and began his business career with Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. He moved to St. Louis in 1980 and continued his business career there as CIO and CFO for Sunnen Products, launching a company called Sales Kit Software. He retired as Director of Information Systems and Technology at Insituform.

Charles and his wife, Jane Ann, were married for 49 years prior to her death, and they raised nine children. Other survivors include his wife, Colleen, and a sister.

Richard Reische '54 entered Our Mystic Shrine on December 2, 2020. He was AT 901 and lived in Wilton, CT. He was a cancer survivor for over 14 years. Dick was born in Beatrice, NE. In high school, he was a star running back on the football team and was also a track and field athlete known as "The Rocket." Dick was president of the Alpha Tau chapter and was enrolled in the Navy ROTC program. After serving his country as a U.S. Navy officer, he moved to New York and joined what is now Morgan Stanley investment banking company. He spent over 30 years with that firm. After his retirement, Dick founded Vineyard Capital Management, an investment advisory firm he headed until a few months before his death. His obituary stated, "The phrase most often used to describe him by friends and colleagues is a 'true gentleman." Survivors include his wife of 58 years, Diana, and their two sons.

William T. Bedwell '54 entered Our Mystic Shrine on February 27, 2020. Bill was AT 909. *The Dragon's Tale* and the General Fraternity were not aware of his death until a memorial obituary was posted in February 2021.

Bill was a native of Falls City, NE, and was an All-Metro football player for Falls City High School. At the University of Nebraska, Bill was president of Kosmet Klub and a member of the Air Force ROTC program. Following his UNL graduation with a degree in Electrical Engineering, he married his wife, Linda, and they moved to Biloxi, MS, to fulfill Bill's position as a flight instructor at Keesler Air Force Base. They returned to Nebraska in the early 1960s and Bill worked for Northwestern Bell Telephone Company in Omaha. He was an active member of the Omaha community for many years, and obtained his master's degree in Business and Management Information Systems at the age of 57. He was preceded in death by his wife. Bill is survived by their four children and many other relatives.

Gale McCall Olmsted '60 entered Our Mystic Shrine on March 20, 2020. "Mac" was AT 1025 and a resident of Collinsville, OK. He served in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. Mac is survived by a relative, Robert J. Olmsted, AT 939.

Larry Bornschlegl '62 entered Our Mystic Shrine on February 12, 2021, near Kearney, NE. He was AT 1080 and a resident of Lincoln. "Bornie" was a scholarship letterman on the University of Nebraska basketball team from 1962-64. In a time of multi-sport athletes, he was also a catcher for the UNL baseball team and was a member of the Second Team All-

Big Eight Conference honorees. Larry was First Team catcher for the 1965 Beta all-school baseball team. With his high level of interest in sports, Bornie was a referee for high school basketball games for over 45 years and was a referee in 10 state tournaments and for eight state championship games.

Larry was a gifted athlete and was inducted into both the Nebraska Baseball Hall of Fame, and the Nebraska High School Hall of Fame in 2017 for his contributions as a basketball official. (Please see the expanded article in the Spring 2017 issue of *The Dragon's Tale*.) The baseball hall website (nebaseballhof. org) offers an interesting history of baseball in small-town Nebraska, and Larry (and Ron **Douglas '61**) are part of the website's video. Larry once said, when talking about his time as a basketball referee, "In those days, which was the early '60s, intramural basketball games at the University paid you two bucks a game to referee it. And I'll tell you, I didn't have much money... I worked five games a night just to pick up 10 bucks. Big money," he said with a laugh.

He continued his interest in the Alpha Tau chapter and for the last several years was instrumental (with Steve Andersen '60) in the annual alumni/undergraduate trap shooting outing held in Lincoln. Bornie also attended the Tuesday morning Beta alumni coffee group in Lincoln.

Professionally, Bornie was involved with education and was a principal in the Genoa, Fairbury, and Hastings public school systems in Nebraska. He returned to Lincoln in 2016. Larry is survived by his wife, Shirley, and two children, a brother, and other relatives.

Roger D. Leitner '66 entered Our Mystic Shrine in Denver on December 21, 2021. Roger was AT 1162. He was a McCook, NE, native and during high school was a Super All-State basketball player. He attended UNL on a basketball scholarship where the 6' 6" Forward played for Coach Joe Cipriano. He majored in Construction Management and following his graduation went to work in Chicago and was involved in building homes. He returned to Nebraska and accepted employment with the Madden Company. When the company moved its headquarters from Omaha to suburban Denver, Roger followed. He eventually became self-employed and used his education and work experience to coordinate work between architects and construction companies. Several years ago, he semi-retired and was active with his wife, Cynthia, in the Museum of Outdoor Arts (MOA) in Denver. At the time of his death, he was the owner of Roger Leitner Stone Carving Company in Littleton, CO.

In a Facebook tribute, the MOA said, "The MOA has lost a member of its own wonderful family. Roger Leitner, husband to MOA Co-Founder, Cynthia Madden Leitner, left this world on the winter solstice. He was an integral part of MOA throughout our nearly 40-year history and lent his expertise to innumerable sculpture and exhibition installations over the years. We are grateful that he has left some amazing sculptures behind for which Roger will be remembered. He will be missed by so many."

Roger passed away due to COVID-19. He had a history of stage IV Malignant Melanoma and the development of diabetes caused by his cancer treatments. He could not overcome being infected with COVID-19. He is survived by his wife, four children, and grandchildren. Roger was a member of the U. S. Army Reserves and honorably discharged in 1975. His memorial service will be August 7, 2021, in Colorado by the Grand County (CO) American Legion Post.

William Duven '76, AT 1480, entered Our Mystic Shrine on November 15, 2020, in Monument, CO. Bill was born in Iowa and grew up in Lincoln. During his time as an undergraduate, Bill was the chapter social chairman and recruitment chairman. He had undergraduate and law school degrees from UNL. He opened his own law office in 1983 in Colorado Spring, CO, and specialized in criminal defense and landlord-tenant law. Bill was a highly successful attorney and was regarded as a Top Attorney for seven consecutive years in Colorado Springs. He had kept his Alpha Tau connections with those in school at the same time, and with his involvement in our own mentor program. Four of his pledge brothers traveled to Colorado Springs for his funeral to support Bill's wife, Susan, and their three children. Bill's published obituary noted that "he was a proud member of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity where he made countless life-long friendships." One of Bill's pledge brothers said that his "love of his Beta brothers, and their love for him, confirms the everlasting bonds that were forged at 1515 R Street."

The American flag at the El Paso County Courthouse in Colorado Springs was lowered to half-staff in Bill's memory. This honor at the courthouse is very selective and was a well-deserved tribute to Bill and what he meant to the Colorado Springs community. In the Colorado Springs newspaper, it said this honor was due to Bill being a "longtime Colorado Springs Teen Court mentor. He exemplified the 'mentor' of volunteering as a mentor attorney and was always willing to help provide guidance to every teenager he worked with. His energetic, lively spirit resonated with every kid....and always brightened everyone's

day with his sense of humor and his incredibly contagious laugh. Courthouse colleagues remembered him as an advocate to many."

In Bill's professional life he was also a Beta District Chief for an area of Colorado. "For 30 years, Bill traveled to different cities in our country to meet up for long weekends with his pledge brothers and brothers. Bill was always the life of the party and brought '__kai__' energy to all activities and events," according to another pledge brother.

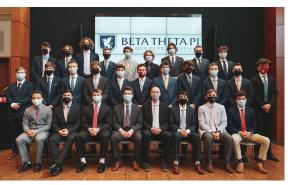
Wallace A. Richardson, Alpha Nu '58 entered Our Mystic Shrine on November 19, 2020. Wallace was a Lincoln attorney for 51 years. He was an undergraduate at the University of Kansas and was Alpha Nu roll number 966. According to his obituary, after undergraduate school, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. Following his service to our country, he obtained his law degree from the University of Michigan Law School. He moved to Lincoln in 1963 and was the first Nebraskan to be elected to the American College of Real Estate Law. Wallace served as the managing partner of his law firm, Knudsen, Berkheimer, Richardson, and Endacott, for several years, and was active in many Lincoln civic organizations. His obituary stated at the University of Kansas, "He formed lifelong friendships, especially within the Beta Theta Pi fraternity." He is survived by his wife, two daughters, and a brother.

Richard Roth, *Alpha Iota '60* entered Our Mystic Shrine on January 19, 2021. He and his wife, Carol, were natives of St. Louis, MO, and both attended Washington in St. Louis. Dick was a member of that Beta chapter and was Alpha Iota roll number 634.

Dick pursued a career in law enforcement starting with the U.S. Army as a military policeman. He later joined the U.S. Secret Service and worked in President Eisenhower's security detail for four years. His last stop in the Secret Service was the Omaha office. In 1971, with their children grown, Dick and Carol moved to Washington, D.C., where he was the agent in charge of the Secret Service Foreign Protection Detail and responsible for many foreign dignitaries. These included Golda Meir of Israel, Willy Brandt of West Germany, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, and King Hussein of Jordan. They returned to Omaha where Dick was eventually elected sheriff of Nebraska's largest county. He served four terms as sheriff of Douglas County until 1994. Carol passed away the day following Dick's death.

Survivors of Dick and Carol include **Robert Roth, M.D.** '69 of Lincoln, and another son and daughter.

CONGRATS TO OUR NEW INITIATES!



Top row: Luke Dempsey, Jakob Pilker,
Grant Auman, Caleb Richards,
Ethan Mustard, Justin Rohrig, Ian Kubik,
Drew Samuelson, James Eshleman. Middle row:
Zach Main, Will Kelley, Sam Thomas, Jacob
McNamara, Luke Rodriguez, Reis Jensen,
Ben Pick, Will Tolly, Carson Dettmer,
Joe Vacek, Sam Johnston. Bottom row:
Rashad Woods, Cameron Niroomand-Rad,
Jack Larson, Carson Swartzbaugh,
Kyle Auman, Honor Pledge,
Luke Spethman, Tate Kiehn, Josh Mikus.

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The Dragon's Tale

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RECRUITMENT RECOMMENDATIONS NEEDED!

lumni, we value your input on membership selection. If you know someone who would be an asset to the chapter, please send the information below to Recruitment Chairman Sam Rice '20 at recruitment@nebraskabeta.com. Recommendations should be submitted as soon as possible. May 15 would be best, but not any later than June 15.

Prospect's name:
Prospect's cell phone, if available:
Prospect's email:
Home address:
High school attended:
Intended major:
Activities:
Parent/guardian phone:
Phone:
Email:
Is prospect a Beta legacy? If yes, provide full details:
Reference submitted by: