



# THE DRAGON'S TALE

SPRING 2023

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

*Editor's note: Except for being Beta brothers, current Chapter President **Grant Auman '21**, Overland Park, KS, is no relation to the immediate past president, **Kyle Auman '21**, from Omaha, NE.*

## CHAPTER PRESIDENT REPORT



It is with great privilege and honor that I have been elected to serve as chapter president of the Alpha Tau chapter of Beta Theta Pi. This incredible institution, characterized by equally laudable alumni, outcomes, and history, has given so much to me in my first two-and-a-half-years. Along with my talented executive team, Chapter Counselor **Mike Wortman '67**, the rest of the advising team, and the generous alumni, I want to pay forward what this house has given me.



*The 2022 Alpha Tau executive team.  
Top row: Barrett Mooney '22, Luke Dempsey '21,  
and Conner Gokie '22. Middle row:  
Jackson Gaulke '22, Charlie Lorkovic '22, and  
Grey Gergen '22. Lower row: Nolan Connor '22,  
Burke Keane '22, Josh Mikus '21, and  
Will Henningsen '22. Front: Grant Auman '21.*

I am a junior majoring in Economics, Political Science, and Spanish and am from Overland Park, KS, where I attended Rockhurst High School. It is my goal to attend law school following my graduation from UNL. Last year, I served as the chapter's new member educator. I am thrilled to be serving a second term as an executive, along with brothers **Josh Mikus '21** and **Luke Dempsey '21**. Following our positive experience as executives last year in a term filled with growth and introspective change, we were inspired to continue to serve the house.

Just a few weeks ago, I attended the Chapter President's Leadership Academy in Chicago, IL. At this conference, I was joined by the chapter presidents of each Beta chapter from around North America. We discussed an array of topics, including cultivating a dedicated house culture, maintaining a safe and diverse chapter, and promoting mental health and academic success. Between the invaluable education I received and the opportunity to learn more about the history of our great fraternity, I was able to undergo an unforgettable experience that will guide me through this term. I am very grateful for the opportunity to attend this summit.

The current executive team is poised for a great year. As mentioned before, we are a combination of three returning members from last year's team as well as eight new members

from the fall 2021 new member class. These diverse perspectives and experiences will allow us to more accurately address the needs of the house while maintaining our standard of outstanding academic, philanthropic, intramural, and social achievement.

I want to extend a sincere and earnest thank-you to close friend and former president **Kyle Auman '21** for his unfaltering leadership over the last year. I learned so much about what it takes to lead a team through trials and tribulations from Kyle, and I am excited to continue his progress.

Finally, I want to extend my utmost gratitude to all those Betas who have come before me. Over the past year as an executive member, and even more so over these last few weeks as president, I have quickly noticed the unparalleled dedication and support from all of our alumni. Your efforts do not go unnoticed and are imperative to fueling the greatest fraternity in the country. I look forward to the year to come and I am beyond proud to be a Beta.

Yours in \_\_kai\_\_,  
**Grant Auman '21**, Chapter President  
[president@nebraskabeta.com](mailto:president@nebraskabeta.com)

## BETA MORTAR BOARDS

Mortar Board is a national honor society recognizing college seniors for their exemplary scholarship, leadership, and service. Mortar Board is represented on 233 college campuses and has been in existence for over 100 years. At the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, another senior honorary is the Innocents Society. Alpha Tau has had representatives in

both honoraries in the past, and in early March, it was announced that three rising senior Betas will continue that tradition through the Mortar Board. Congratulations to **Grant Auman '21**, current chapter president; **Kyle Auman '21**, immediate past chapter president; and **Carson Dettmer '21**, from Lincoln (NE) Southeast High School.

# HOUSE CORPORATION REPORT

It's hard to believe, but the 2022-23 academic year marks the 10th year of operation after the chapter house was renovated. For those of you who might not remember, the chapter house was completely remodeled in 2012-13 after a successful capital campaign that raised over \$3 million; the house reopened in fall 2013, coinciding with the chapter's 125th anniversary on UNL's campus. Students who moved in that fall of 2013 experienced a brand-new facility and viewed it as a huge improvement over the home just the prior year. Now, after 10 years, none of the current members know anything different than the current chapter facilities.

During the remodel, one of the items noted that would need future attention was the condition of our masonry exterior, especially the limestone gutter system on the east (original) half of the house, as well as the east patio. While they weren't yet critical in 2013, time and the Nebraska weather continued to take their toll, and we wanted to make sure it didn't deteriorate to the point that repairs would be more extensive or even have debris fall off the building. We engaged with one of the architects who had worked on the 2012-13 renovation,

**Dave Erickson '69** with Erickson Sullivan Architects, who helped connect us to Dickey Sales LLC, a specialty masonry restoration contractor out of Paola, KS. Over the summer of 2021, Dickey completely restored the exterior of the building, removing many decades of grime and repairing and restoring any damaged areas. This included the partial demolition and rebuilding of the east patio. This work wasn't cheap at just under \$120,000 total, but the house corporation was able to finance it with help from **John Dittman '81** at Cornhusker Bank, and the result is a beautifully restored exterior.

We have also had some changes in board members and officers. **Mark Kratina Jr. '99** and **Pat Lusk '11** (secretary) both rolled off, and we thank them for their service. **Aaron Wiegert '01** and **Sam Brower '15** were both elected to join the board. Sam was elected secretary. Existing board members **Mike Wortman '67**, **Norm Hedgcock '70** (vice president), **Drew Stange '80** (treasurer), **Andy Mattox '96**, and **Mark Antonson '04** (president) were reelected for another term, along with their same officer roles.

The house corporation is in good financial shape with the rent from the active chapter covering operating expenses. We

are working to slowly build a capital reserve for future major expenses, hopefully reducing or eliminating the need to borrow in the future for projects like the masonry restoration. Student and Greek housing around the university continue to be competitive, and we want to not only maintain the current chapter house but also improve it to meet the continually changing needs of today's students. We rely on your generous contributions to fund improvements; if you are interested in supporting the house corporation, please visit [nebraskabeta.com/support](https://nebraskabeta.com/support) to make a gift today.

Yours in \_\_kai\_\_,

**Mark Antonson '04**

President, Beta Theta Pi Alumni Association of Nebraska



## Social Report

This semester, the members of Beta Theta Pi have been busy with academics, campus and community involvements, and social events. On February 10, we had our annual Crush Formal. It was great seeing everyone under the same roof, and the members were excited to enjoy the formal with their dates. On March 3, we had our first semiformal with a "Denim Country" theme along with two other houses.

For the back half of the spring semester, we have planned two out-of-town formals. Our new Chicago Formal will be taking us to the Windy City April 14-16. We are also extremely excited to be

returning to the Ozarks May 5-7 for the first time since 2019 and to celebrate the end of a great academic year.

Two of our freshmen were recently elected as assistant social chairmen, **Grey Friesen '23** and **Will Peterson '23**. These men will be assisting Alpha Tau chapter in coordinating fun and safe social events to expand our social scene and strengthen the bond between members. Social events are memorable and significant to our members, and we can't wait for what's to come in the upcoming fall semester.

Yours in \_\_kai\_\_,  
**Conner Gokie '22**



*Your Alpha Tau intramural football champions! Top, from left: Michael Smilko '20, Nolan Connor '22, Grant Auman '21, John Mcleay '21, Jampe Gergen '22, Jarod Fox '20, Nick Gay '20, Luke Spethman '21, and team member, Carson Haas. Bottom: Joe Sutko '23.*



# RAYMOND DANNER SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE

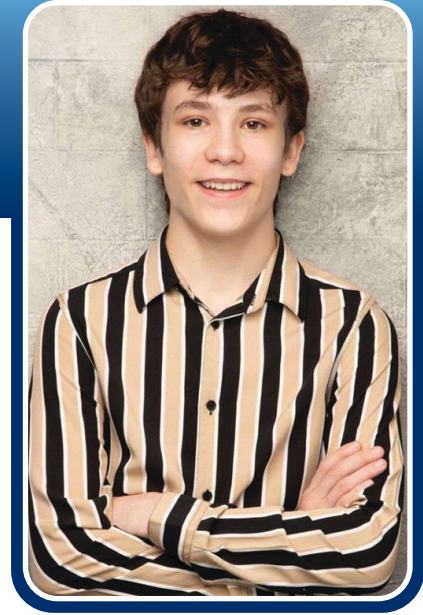
**A**lpha Tau places an emphasis on diversity throughout the chapter. Diversity comes in many different forms, and the chapter has been fortunate to benefit from it greatly this year. **Raymond Danner '23** is a new initiate with a unique background. His father, a physician, works in Germany, where Raymond was born. Raymond spent the majority of his childhood in Germany until he moved to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, at the age of 12. Raymond's father spreads his time between his practice in Germany and with Raymond and his mother, a lawyer, in Dubai. Danner's maternal family hails from Nebraska, which answers the all-too-common question, "*Why Nebraska?*" Raymond says coming to UNL is like an unspoken tradition in his family. He has older siblings who have attended the University as well, but Raymond is the first to participate in Greek life.

Of the transition to America, he says, "Wasn't bad at all." He credits an already solid support system and welcoming culture for making the move to the United States easier. Raymond says he was nervous about his first recruitment event during the summer of 2022, but that the chapter made him feel welcome and included. The positive experience Raymond had at Beta events was the main reason he decided to choose Beta. Now that he has initiated, and with a semester of college under his belt, he has had time

to reflect on the past several months. "My favorite part of joining Beta is the lifelong friends I've gained and the feeling of brotherhood it gives me," he stated. He also cites independence and socializing with new friends as his favorite parts of being in college.

A Finance major, he looks to stay involved on campus and with Beta throughout his four years in the house. Taken in by his new member class, he has become a respected and well-thought-of member of Alpha Tau chapter. His unique story is yet another example of the diversity Beta Theta Pi values in each of its new member classes.

Yours in \_\_kai\_\_,  
**Barrett Mooney '21**



## CONGRATULATIONS, NEW INITIATES



*Top row: Carson Ahlers, Ben Gregan, Aidan Miller, Cooper DeWolfe, Brian Kardell, Angel Morales, Raymond Danner, Joe Sutko, Brennan Fitzgerald, Calvin McCarville, and Nate Zuroske. Middle row: Joe Stratman, Tyler Schur, Grant Tobaben, Colin Sibbernson, Luke Burger, Cash Niroomand-Rad, Grey Friesen, Tyson Dettmer, Will Petersen, and Sam Weyeneth. Front row: Nathan Siy, Amani Mfinanga, Brad Clark, Kevin Muir, Drew Gleason, Will Wooden (honor initiate), Brad Clark, Aidan Aldana, Alex Eifert, Jack Redd, and Cole Mitchell.*

**Will Wooden, AT 2608**  
**Kevin Muir, AT 2609**  
**Drew Gleason, AT 2610**  
**Grey Friesen, AT 2611**  
**Nate Zuroske, AT 2612**  
**Nathan Siy, AT 2613**  
**Brian Kardell, AT 2614**  
**Joe Stratman, AT 2615**  
**Joe Sutko, AT 2616**  
**Carson Ahlers, AT 2617**  
**Cooper DeWolfe, AT 2618**  
**Tyson Dettmer, AT 2619**  
**Aidan Miller, AT 2620**  
**Ben Gregan, AT 2621**  
**Raymond Danner, AT 2622**  
**Brad Hall, AT 2623**

**Colin Sibbernson, AT 2624**  
**Aidan Aldana, AT 2625**  
**Jack Redd, AT 2626**  
**Grant Tobaben, AT 2627**  
**Will Petersen, AT 2628**  
**Angel Morales, AT 2629**  
**Brennan Fitzgerald, AT 2630**  
**Cole Mitchell, AT 2631**  
**Amani Mfinanga, AT 2632**  
**Cash Niroomand-Rad, AT 2633**  
**Calvin McCarville, AT 2634**  
**Alex Eifert, AT 2635**  
**Sam Weyeneth, AT 2636**  
**Brad Clark, AT 2637**  
**Tyler Schur, AT 2638**  
**Luke Burger, AT 2639**

*Hands on the  
honor pledge,  
Will Wooden.*



# THE EXPERIENCE COMPANY REPORT

*Editor's note: The following article has references to **Grant Gregory '60**. Note the separate article about Grant in the Alumni News section.*

## GLENARBOR LEADERSHIP RETREAT

In August 2022, members of the undergraduate chapter and a group of dedicated alumni carried on The Experience Company (TEC) tradition of participating in an annual leadership retreat hosted by **Grant Gregory**. This year's retreat was hosted at GlenArbor Golf Club in Bedford, NY, allowing attendees to spend a few days working and collaborating at the club's world-class facilities.

The purpose of our annual retreat is to conduct strategy sessions and establish a plan for the year ahead while being able to play multiple rounds of golf at one of the finest courses in the country. Past and present members of the chapter executive team were present at the retreat, allowing undergraduate members to gain exposure to successful alumni while expanding upon their leadership skills. With the entire TEC undergraduate team in attendance, the group established go-forward plans around recruitment, internship and career coaching, mentorship, and marketing.

We are very grateful to Grant for sponsoring this event, and we look forward to continuing this great tradition in the future.

## KARNES LEADERSHIP AWARD

Alpha Tau alumni and beloved member **David Karnes '68** was not only a distinguished United States senator, but also an accomplished attorney and businessman. His remarkable legacy has inspired generations and will continue to do so through a Beta scholarship fund that is established in his name.

Last year marked the inception of this annual award, as a deserving undergraduate member of the Beta house was selected to receive this prestigious scholarship. It is awarded based on outstanding character and exceptional leadership qualities. The inaugural recipient of this esteemed award was **Jarod Fox '20**, who served as vice president of the chapter as well as finance intern for TEC. Jarod's outstanding contributions to his community and exceptional work ethic align perfectly with Dave's vision of excellence and dedication.

The David Karnes Leadership Fund serves as a reminder of the positive legacy left behind by an inspirational member of our fraternity. It is an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of young leaders and will encourage future generations to strive for excellence.

## MENTORSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

This past fall, members of the fall 2021 new member class were given the opportunity to be paired with alumni mentors through TEC mentorship program. All 26 members of the class elected to receive a mentor. The members of the new mentee class have spent the last few months getting to know their mentors, and the relationships are off to promising starts.

Two of those pairings are highlighted here: **Miles Schmidt '22**, a Finance major, was paired with **Kevin Wilhelm '15**. Kevin was able to assist Miles in obtaining a job interview with the University of Nebraska Foundation, which Miles looks forward to pursuing. Another pairing is **Jackson Gaulke '22** and **Larry Johnson '64**. Jackson says, "I am very grateful to Larry for providing me with many opportunities through his connections, both at the United Nations and

through other former Alpha Tau attorneys." Jackson is a Political Science major and plans to use this opportunity to prepare himself for law school and his future career.

## TEC RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE

The Experience Company continues to believe the Alpha Tau chapter distinguishes itself from other fraternities around North America by focusing relentlessly on talent and recruiting. New members often cite TEC as one of the reasons they joined Alpha Tau. As such, a new initiative has been set in motion that will continue to enhance the recruitment capabilities of Alpha Tau by focusing on identifying high-potential candidates before they step foot on campus.

Through a data-driven, comprehensive approach, TEC is working hand-in-hand with the recruitment team to gather information on Merit Scholars, Honor Roll members, athletic standouts, valedictorians, class presidents, and others who have the potential to be future members of Alpha Tau chapter. This initiative has been spearheaded by alumni including Grant, **David Nikunen '80**, and **Alan Davis '16**. Additionally, **Mark Antonson '04** has been instrumental in this process by supporting the modernization of The Experience Company contact and recruitment database as well as producing updates for the Alpha Tau website ([nebraskabeta.com](http://nebraskabeta.com)).

The Experience Company is a 501(c)(3) entity. If you are interested in supporting TEC, there is a link on the chapter website.

Yours in \_\_kai\_\_,  
**The Experience Company Leadership Team**



Back row: Mike Wortman '67, Bruce McKeag '65, Bill Dana '76, and Jarod Fox '20, winner of the inaugural Karnes Leadership Award. Front row: Todd Mattox '99, Steve Andersen '60, and Kris Karnes.



Members at the GlenArbor retreat.

For alumni having updated  
contact information or  
questions about TEC,  
send an email to  
[updates@nebraskabeta.com](mailto:updates@nebraskabeta.com).



# Alumni News

*Editor's note: This story was originally featured in a January email sent to AT Betas with an email address on file with our chapter. Grant was the impetus behind the founding of The Experience Company, and last fall, Grant sponsored a retreat at the GlenArbor Golf Club in Bedford, NY, for select members of the Alpha Tau executive team and alumni to further improve our chapter. A link to the entire article from the Greenwich Sentinel can be found here:*

[greenwichsentinel.com/2023/01/20/raising-the-bar-on-the-fight-to-cure-pancreatic-cancer](https://greenwichsentinel.com/2023/01/20/raising-the-bar-on-the-fight-to-cure-pancreatic-cancer)

**Grant Gregory '60** is a retired chairman of Deloitte (one of the Big Four accounting firms), a well-known businessman, and an Alpha Tau Beta. He was recently honored by the Greenwich (CT) newspaper for his efforts to bring a cure to one of the deadliest cancers—cancer of the pancreas.

The pursuit began two years ago at GlenArbor Golf Club at its annual fall Berenberg [Bank] Invitational charity golf event. For nearly a decade the event raised funds to fight cancer while featuring legendary golfers. But after pancreatic cancer recently took the lives of the wives of both Gary Player and Tom Watson, the focus of that fundraising has shifted to pancreatic cancer.

In an article from the *Greenwich Sentinel*, Grant noted that pancreatic cancer is the most lethal form of cancer with a 95-percent mortality rate. When you get pancreatic cancer, you're already in Stage IV. It's already terminal. And no one has ever stepped up before and said they're going to create a center of excellence for early detection and eventually the cure for it." Grant is working with the sponsoring Berenberg Bank, the University of Nebraska Medical Center, and the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center. They have raised almost \$1.5 million in just two annual events.

"As you know," Grant continued, "at GlenArbor we've been involved in a lot of research with prostate cancer. And that has been a long-standing charity that has been very successful. The bank has now adopted pancreatic cancer research as its cause.

Thanks to Grant and many others for working on a cure for pancreatic cancer. Grant can be reached at [wgg@gandhinc.com](mailto:wgg@gandhinc.com).

**Steven M. Williams, M.D. '72** retired in 2022 after 40 years of practicing Family Medicine at the Nebraska Methodist Physician's Clinic in Omaha, NE. He held many leadership positions at the hospital and clinic throughout his tenure. When he joined, the clinic had 26 physicians; he helped it grow to more than 400. Steve continues to be active in his garden and has been in the Nebraska Master Gardening Program at the Henry Doorly Zoo for 15 years. He is also active in the Nebraska Academy of Family Physicians and will continue to serve as one of the Nebraska delegates for the American Academy of Family Physicians. Steve can be reached at [smwmd@mac.com](mailto:smwmd@mac.com).

**Initiation Week** is a lot of effort on the part of the active chapter, but many alumni are also involved. We would like to thank those alumni who held "alumni dinners" with the new members and their pledge fathers—either in a Lincoln restaurant or their Lincoln homes. Several alumni were also involved in the interviews of the new members prior to their formal initiation. Some did both dinners and interviews. Thanks to **Pete Allman '76, Karl Anderson '97, Mark Antonson '04, Jeff Beavers '00, Greg Brockmeier '96, Sam Brower '15, BC Christenson '67, Bill Dana '76, Kyle Danielson '03, Kaleb Duncan '15, Nolan Johnson '11, Garrett Krause '15, Theresa Luensmann** (a member of our Alumni Advisory Board), **John McCollister '67, Bruce McKeag '65, Kenton Moore '06, Neil Moseman '80, Kurt Siebert '11, Duane Sullivan '68, Cole Wellman '17, Kevin Woolworth '17, and Mike Wortman '67** for their continuing efforts in being involved as chapter alumni.

If you have information about Alumni News for a future edition of *The Dragon's Tale*, send an email to [updates@nebraskabeta.com](mailto:updates@nebraskabeta.com).



## Recruitment Report

I am truly honored and thrilled to serve as recruitment chairman for Alpha Tau chapter this upcoming summer. I am a soon-to-be junior studying Mechanical Engineering and a graduate of Westside High School in Omaha, NE. I am eager to take on this role and contribute to the success of our chapter.

Our chapter is widely recognized for recruiting the best young men on campus each year, and I am fully aware of the responsibility that comes with this task. Emphasizing the importance of recruitment, the active chapter recently elected **Nolan Connor '22**, a Biochemistry major from Omaha Skutt High School, and **Joe Sutko '23**, a Marketing major from Lincoln Pius X High School, to join the recruitment team. Both individuals will be invaluable assets to our efforts.

As we embark on the recruitment process, we are looking for driven young men who are positive contributors to their communities, schools, families, and various other organizations. Our focus is on identifying the best of the best in terms of leadership and academic achievement, and we hope that these new members will become the next generation of great leaders in our chapter.

As a team, we recognize the importance of alumni input and encourage all recommendations to be sent in as soon as possible. The deadline for recommendations is **June 15**, although **May 15** would be ideal. This will give us sufficient time to connect with potential new members. While we cannot guarantee a bid, all new members recommended by alumni will be considered by the recruitment team. Our goal is to have most of our incoming new member class signed by mid-July. A recommendation form is on the back page of this newsletter, or they can be submitted on our website: [nebraskabeta.com/recruit-someone](https://nebraskabeta.com/recruit-someone).

We are excited to host barbecue recruitment events at the chapter house every Thursday night during the recruitment process. Additionally, we plan to organize lake and pool events on most Saturdays in the Lincoln and Omaha areas. These events provide a great opportunity for potential new members to meet and interact with our active chapter. This will allow them to gain valuable insight into our chapter and the character and values represented by the men of Beta.

I would like to express my gratitude to the active chapter for their commitment to the recruitment process, and to the alumni network for their ongoing support and dedication to upholding the lifelong values of Beta Theta Pi.

I am confident that we will continue to recruit the best men available to our chapter and maintain Alpha Tau's position as one of the best chapters on our campus and throughout the North America.

Yours in \_\_kai\_\_,  
**Will Henningsen '22**  
[recruitment@nebraskabeta.com](mailto:recruitment@nebraskabeta.com)

## Philanthropy Report

There is strong excitement throughout the chapter surrounding our traditional philanthropy events for the spring 2023 semester.

First up this year was March Fratness with Phi Delta Theta, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, and Sigma Phi Epsilon. Proceeds for this basketball tournament benefit the Malone Center, which works to help youth through its basketball program and academic tutoring. An exciting new addition was presented this year with the inclusion of non-Greek organizations for participation.

Our second and largest philanthropy was Backpack in Black, a battle-of-the-bands concert at the Royale Grove to raise money for Bryan Health Center. We are combining efforts with Sigma Phi Epsilon, Phi Delta Theta, and Pi Kappa Alpha to benefit the new April Sampson Cancer Center dedicated to cancer research.

The third philanthropy was Festa Italiana, a tradition with Tri Delta. This festive pasta feed at the Tri Delta house benefits the youth of Lincoln Lighthouse.

I would like to take the time to recognize and thank **Pete Allman '76**. Pete is the founder of our main philanthropy organization Lighthouse, an after-school program that offers academic support, evening meals, and individual growth to underprivileged middle and high schoolers in the Lincoln area. Pete has been a focal contributor to the philanthropies of the chapter and a strong mentor to its members.

Additionally, I would like to extend a special thanks to **Bruce McKeag '65**. In the past two years, fraternities have been working together to fundraise for Bryan Health with the goal of \$150,000. Each fraternity has been given a financial goal based on the number of members in the house. Due to the efforts of Bruce in contacting many alumni, we were able to surpass our goal of \$9,000. Thanks to all the alumni who contributed to Bryan Health!

As a chapter, we remain focuses on positively impacting the community of Lincoln through our involvement with Lighthouse and activism in philanthropies.

Yours in \_\_kai\_\_,  
**Burke Keane '22**

## SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

After a successful academic year, our chapter has continued to excel academically, achieving its highest GPA for the third consecutive semester. In the fall 2022 semester, Alpha Tau recorded an impressive cumulative GPA of 3.57, making us the top-performing fraternity on city campus, second among all fraternities and seventh overall among all UNL Greek life houses. Notably, first-year students set a high standard in the house, achieving the highest cumulative GPA of 3.68. Nine new members had a 4.0. We attribute this achievement to our weekly grade check-ins, which replaced our previous practice of only having conversations with new members three times a year. This change allowed the scholarship chairman and new member educator to monitor not only academic progress, but also the mental health of new members. By addressing mental struggles, we saw a positive impact on both academic performance and discipline. Another noteworthy achievement of the new member class was that all members met the 2.9 GPA

requirement to initiate into our chapter—a **first in our chapter's history**.

We are also proud to announce that 26 members achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA last semester, up from 15 in the previous semester. These exceptional achievers will be rewarded with the prestigious "Princeton Dinner," a formal dining event paid for by the chapter.

Looking ahead, we are committed to promoting academic excellence and have put new plans in place to expand our success with new members. In the fall 2023 semester, we aim to support and motivate our members toward professional achievement by helping them develop and refine their résumés, optimize their LinkedIn profiles, and access job databases. We remain committed to fostering a culture of academic excellence and are excited to see what the future holds for our members.

Yours in \_\_kai\_\_,  
**Jackson Gaulke '22**

## NEW MEMBER EDUCATION REPORT

This January, Alpha Tau initiated 32 new members into the chapter. This class found terrific academic success and handled the transition to college with ease, as shown by their class GPA of 3.68. The class consists of a variety of well-rounded individuals who have demonstrated leadership, intellect, brotherhood, and more. In February, two members of this class were elected as assistant new member educators: **Nathan Siy '23** and **Drew Gleason '23**. I couldn't be more thrilled to have these individuals as assistants. We share the same goals and visions for what the new member program should look like.

I attribute much of the success of the recently initiated class to the hard work of our former new member educator and current president, **Grant Auman '21**, as well as last term's scholarship team. Being a part of Grant's new member education cabinet gave me the opportunity to experience some of the position's responsibilities while receiving mentorship and guidance, and I'm ecstatic to get to work. Grant and the scholarship team laid the framework for a successful new member program, and my goal will be to continue these successes.

As a chapter, we are constantly looking for ways to adapt and optimize our new member program. Year in and year out, this usually comes with the addition, removal, or adaptation of activities within the program. This upcoming fall, I'm looking to add a UNL course to the program. The course will be three credit hours and fulfill an ACE 2 objective, which is a graduation requirement for all students at the university. It will likely teach a combination of leadership and interpersonal skills with lore specific to the Alpha Tau chapter mixed in. Though the organization and implementation of the course are still in their early stages, I'm very excited to see the opportunities it has to offer.

Yours in \_\_kai\_\_,  
**Charlie Lorkovic '22**



# In Our Mystic Shrine

**LeRoy "Lee" Arthur Hefflinger '54** entered Our Mystic Shrine on July 19, 2022, in Yakima, WA. He was Alpha Tau 904, and Beta Tau (University of Colorado) 939. Roy was born in Omaha, NE. In his younger years, Lee and his sisters traveled between Omaha and Toppenish, WA, as his father managed businesses in both states. In high school, Lee was a three-sport athlete, playing football, basketball, and baseball at Benson High in Omaha. High school activities included the ROTC—proudly raising the American flag each morning. He played Legion ball for three years.

Lee met his future wife in high school and would smile while telling the story of how Carole June Wickman asked him out first for the "Vice Versa Dance." According to his obituary, that spark of love never faded. They dated, went to different universities, and were married in 1956 in Omaha. LeRoy then graduated from the University of Colorado in 1957 with a business and finance degree. Shortly thereafter he entered the United States Air Force (commissioned as a second lieutenant) and received his pilot's wings at Big Springs, TX. Lee and Carole traveled through various assignments with the Air Force, where Lee flew jets and helicopters in rescue squadrons. He enjoyed telling stories of his helicopter flying adventures (like pulling downed F-100 pilots out of the ocean) and said he liked being able to "fly sideways and backward." He was promoted to captain during the Cuban Missile Crisis and honorably discharged in 1963 after serving for six years.

After leaving the Air Force, LeRoy moved his family to Washington state to honor a request from his dad for help with the hop farming business. As foreman and business manager, Lee helped improve the farm's operations in many ways. Lee also served the hop industry in many ways. He was a member of the Hop Growers of Washington, the Hop Administration Committee, the Hop Growers of America, and represented the USA at the International Hop Growers Congress. He was awarded the "Ordre du Loublon" (Order of the Hop) in Zalec, Yugoslavia, for his accomplishments internationally in the hop industry.

In 1997, Lee and Carole both ended their successful careers to enjoy a retirement filled with family, scuba diving, and travel. In retirement, he continued to serve his community, church, and the hop industry. He is survived by his wife, four sons, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

**Robert Klas '57** entered Our Mystic Shrine on January 4, 2022. He was AT 961. He grew up

in Scottsbluff, NE, and first attended Denver University. He then transferred to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. After graduation, he had a career in finance and accounting in Colorado, New Mexico, Nebraska, and California. Bob was an entrepreneur at heart and had various business ventures before purchasing and operating a retail candy store. He developed this store into a popcorn manufacturing and distribution business in Fort Collins, CO, for 15 years. Bob was then employed as a rural mail carrier in Berthoud, CO, and retired from the Postal Service in 2009. Survivors include three sons and a daughter.

**John W. W. Hilton, M.D. '62** entered Our Mystic Shrine on March 6, 2023, in Point Loma, CA. He was AT 1070. John was a Lincoln, NE native, but attended prep school at Shattuck Academy in Faribault, MN.

During his senior year at UNL, John lived in the chapter house with three other upperclassmen. It was unusual for a "Lincoln man" to live in the house during the mid-1960s. As a medical student, John and a friend paddled a canoe 1,500 miles downstream on the Missouri River and followed (backward) some of the path of Lewis and Clark. During their trip on the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans, they lived on rattlesnakes and fresh-caught fish. One of John's Beta brothers, when informed of his passing, remarked, "I remember the summer he paddled from the origin of the Missouri River to New Orleans... and how he looked upon his return." Another brother recalled a cold winter night when John and two other Betas drove around Lincoln with the top down on John's VW convertible. That same VW took John and two other brothers to New Orleans during Spring Break.

Another brother stated, "John was a kind and gentle soul. His parents adopted our new member class and invited us to use their pool and have parties at their home; we all stayed there one night when we exited the Beta house for some reason. A special family!!"

Following the professional path of his father, John graduated from the University of Nebraska Medical Center and was a radiologist in San Diego, CA. His years as a physician were marked with service, including as an officer in the United States Navy and a volunteer in West Africa.

John's survivors include his wife, Sarah, four children, four grandchildren, two stepchildren, and three stepgrandchildren. In television commercials many years ago, Sarah was one of the Wrigley Doublemint chewing gum twins.

**Hon. William Riley '65** entered Our Mystic Shrine on January 27, 2023. Bill was a Federal judge from Omaha, NE, and retired from the bench on August 31, 2017. He was featured in the fall 2017 issue of *The Dragon's Tale* upon his retirement from the Federal bench. Here is that link (page 6): [nebraskabeta.com/sites/betathetapi/files/Dragon%27s%20Tale%20-%202017%20Fall.pdf](https://nebraskabeta.com/sites/betathetapi/files/Dragon%27s%20Tale%20-%202017%20Fall.pdf)

Bill had been nominated for the judgeship by President George W. Bush in May 1991, and upon Senate approval (a vote of 97-0) two months later, became President Bush's first circuit court nominee to be confirmed. Bill was in private practice in Omaha before being appointed to the judiciary and served as Chief Judge of the 8th Circuit from 2010 until taking Senior Status on July 1, 2017, and retiring two months later. During his time on the bench, Bill served on several committees, including as the long-range planning coordinator for the entire federal judiciary. Bill served as an adjunct professor of law at both Nebraska Law School in Lincoln and Creighton University School of Law in Omaha until 2016.

He was a graduate of Lincoln (NE) High School and was inducted into their Alumni Hall of Fame for his career achievements. He earned both his graduate and law degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Bill was married during the semester break of his freshman year. He and his surviving wife Norma were married for over 57 years. When informed of his passing, several Beta brothers made comments. One had done some biking with Bill, and said he was, "a first-class individual with a gentle soul." Another noted, "He was such a great guy, and I could go on and on."

Judge Riley was a fellow and past state chair with the American College of Trial Lawyers, a member and former state president of the American Board of Trial Advocates, and a counselor and charter member of the Robert M. Spire Inns of Court. He was a former president and executive council member of the Omaha Bar Association, House Delegate and former Ethics Committee chair with the Nebraska State Bar Association, and chair of the Federal Practice Committee for Nebraska. Bill was Board Certified in Civil Trial Advocacy by the National Board of Trial Advocacy.

In addition to his wife, Bill is survived by two children. His eldest son preceded Bill in death. Nine grandchildren and one great-granddaughter are also among his survivors.

If you have information about the death of an Alpha Tau Beta for a future edition of *The Dragon's Tale*, send an email to [updates@nebraskabeta.com](mailto:updates@nebraskabeta.com).



# THE DRAGON'S TALE

Beta Theta Pi Alumni Association of Nebraska

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## RECRUITMENT

### RECOMMENDATIONS NEEDED!

**A**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 **Will Henningsen '22** at [recruitment@nebraskabeta.com](mailto:recruitment@nebraskabeta.com) or visit [nebraskabeta.com/recommend-someone](http://nebraskabeta.com/recommend-someone). Recommendations should be submitted by **June 15**, although **May 15** is ideal.

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: \_\_\_\_\_

## Communications Report

**I** am very excited to begin my term as the communications chairman for the upcoming year. **Sam Rice '20** did an incredible job in his time holding this position, and I plan to carry on the success he cultivated. This spring, we are very excited to welcome our mothers for Mom's Day on April 29. Mom's Day will be different this year, as the chapter will be attending the Nebraska vs. Minnesota baseball game on Saturday, April 29.

Please feel free to reach out to us if you aren't receiving the monthly newsletter at [updates@nebraskabeta.com](mailto:updates@nebraskabeta.com). **Be certain we have your email address on file.**

As always, the active chapter would love to have alumni attend our Monday night formal dinners and chapter meetings. If you are interested in spending the evening with us, please contact **Mike Wortman '67** or me. Visit [nebraskabeta.com/alumni](http://nebraskabeta.com/alumni) to keep up on chapter news and updates.

Yours in \_\_kai\_\_,  
**Barrett Mooney '21**  
[alumni@nebraskabeta.com](mailto:alumni@nebraskabeta.com)