



# beta button

Beta Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity at MIT • Summer 2012

## Save the Date!

### Our 110th Anniversary is coming this fall!

It's been a decade since our centennial, and 90 years at 528 Beacon. Please mark your calendar, and plan to join us as we celebrate these milestones with a weekend of festivities.

#### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

##### Friday, October 12

- Dinner in Manchester-by-the-Sea at the estate of Cheryl and Harold Jones '67.

##### Saturday, October 13

- Class events, chapter house tours, and MIT campus visit
- 110th Anniversary banquet in Boston's Back Bay

##### Sunday, October 14

- Sunday brunch

Visit us at <http://ox.mit.edu> for more details and further updates as the date draws closer. *Official invitations coming soon!*

Email [thetachi@mit.edu](mailto:thetachi@mit.edu) if you'd like to join the planning committee or have ideas and materials to contribute.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

<http://ox.mit.edu>

## Theta Chi's 110th Anniversary Celebration: October 12-14, 2012

Before we know it, Beta Chapter's 110th anniversary will be here. The hundreds of brothers and guests who came for the 100th back in 2002 were richly rewarded with a very enjoyable weekend; the game plan for the 110th anniversary is to improve on that experience!

In fact, it would be great to pack the house at 528 Beacon with brothers, friends, and family once again. We won't need to take that phrase quite as literally as in the photo on the right—when 19 brothers were piled into the second-floor phone closet. This October, there will be many more spaces to admire at 528 Beacon, with all the recent construction work and a new roof deck. By then, the very last of the renovations—to the kitchen area—will be complete. All that will remain of the capital campaign (begun in 2008) is to repay the construction loan. With some luck, we may be able to retire that loan by celebration time!

During what should be a lovely New England fall weekend, you will have ample opportunity to explore the changes on the MIT campus. Brothers who have not been back to MIT for a while will be impressed by several of the new buildings on campus, and the fact that the area around the MIT campus is flourishing and hosting a whole set of high-tech industries—not the soap and candy factories of years gone by.

The weekend will start with a Friday night dinner in beautiful Manchester-by-the-Sea, at the oceanside home of Cheryl and Harold Jones '67. Saturday will be a very full day and will bring us back to MIT and 528 Beacon. Sunday will be time for winding down, and

we'll have a nice and leisurely brunch. We hope to make the weekend as accommodating to families, spouses, and significant others as we can.

And in any case, you can expect a formal invitation—via snail mail—later in August. So, please plan to be a part of our 110th celebration. Reconnect with the brothers of your era, meet alumni from other times, and greet the current actives. You will be among friends, old and new. And if you are planning to attend, have a question, or want to join the planning committee, drop a line to [thetachi@mit.edu](mailto:thetachi@mit.edu). We would love some help from alumni—especially from classes of the late 1950s and '60s—in identifying all the brothers piled up in the photo below!

M.I.T. In an oversized telephone booth in the Theta Chi fraternity house, 19 students are comfortably and "scientifically" stacked on top of one another while one in the middle of the pile actually makes a phone call to satisfy British rules.



Theta Chi brothers crammed into the phone closet!

# President's report sums up a great year for Theta Chi!

This past year has been a wild and fun ride. As I'm writing this, many of our brothers are finishing up the last of their schoolwork and finals, while others are getting ready to head off for the summer to exciting jobs or internships, visit family, or travel the world. I can say I'm proud to see all of my brothers excel academically and professionally, and I'm happy that we have had a strong finish to a great year.

In the fall, we welcomed 10 new brothers to our fraternity. They are a most outstanding and remarkable set of gentlemen. The quality of our latest pledge class is a direct result of the efforts of Krishna Esteva '13 and Geoff Dawson '13, as well as the rest of our brothers. At the time of this writing, Krishna and Geoff, joined by Haldun Anil '15, are preparing for our next rush cycle, which we predict will be another great success.

During the spring, we had our annual

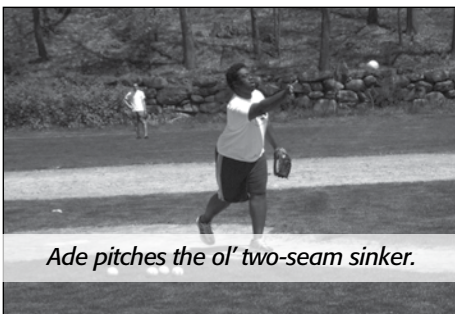
Alumni Weekend, put together by Leo Tampkins '13. Actives and alumni came together to socialize and celebrate our brotherhood. This year, the alumni stole the champion title at the annual alumni-active grudge match. The actives, who maintained a healthy advantage over the alumni for most of the match, were taken off guard by the alumni in the final inning when the alumni rallied for seven more runs behind the bat of Pedro Arrechea '04. We also had the chance to honor Ross Runnion '04 as our Alumnus of the Year for the leadership he's provided as president of Beta Corporation, and we are thrilled that he will continue his presidency for another term.

At the end of the spring semester, our chapter was honored with the Best Risk Management Program award by the IFC. Thanks to the many efforts of our brothers and alumni, our house has become much more risk-conscious, and we have made great progress in

providing a safer environment for our brothers and guests by having a clearly defined risk management policy of which all brothers are aware. We will continue these efforts to ensure that we improve our safety standards even further in the future.

This semester, I've seen brothers come together more than ever. I've noticed a shift in attitude in our house from when I first joined, and brothers are closer and more open with one another. We all have our good days and our bad days—in that respect, MIT is the same as ever. Now, however, I see brothers come together more often to celebrate the good days and help one another through the bad ones. If the trends observed this past year are any indication, Beta Chapter is headed in a very good direction for this upcoming year.

Love and respect your brothers,  
Rodrigo Muñoz '13



*Ade pitches the ol' two-seam sinker.*



*Ross displays a ball torn asunder by Pedro's bat.*



*Old Phil swings for the fences.*



*This year's combatants strike a pose.*



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# What will the undergraduate brothers be doing during summer break?

## Graduating seniors getting real-world jobs:

**MARIO SCOTT '11** is working at Steer Davies Gleave, a London-based transportation consulting firm, as an assistant consultant. He will be living in the Boston area and continuing his hobby of StarCraft.

**ADE ESHO '12** is working for GE in Louisville, Kentucky, as a process improvement engineer for the summer. When he finishes up here in August, he'll be moving back up to Boston to be a systems test engineer at Raytheon.

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## Undergraduates:

**RODRIGO MUÑOZ '13** is working for Facebook in Menlo Park, California. He's working with the Open Graph team, seeking to provide increased flexibility and functionality to the product.

**JEFF LIN '13** is working for the architect Frank Lloyd Wright at his firm in Chicago. He'll be helping to design and model a house for the Kaufmann family in Pittsburgh. He's excited to be working for such a famous architect and already has come up with a great name for the project, "Fallingwater!"

**ADRIAN CLARKE '13** is working at Kaz, Inc., within the Global Category Organization (GCO) group on specific projects related to innovation and patent management. This includes working with the GCO team to evaluate new product and technology submissions. He will be researching and testing new products and prototypes.

**JARED KATZ '14** is participating in a UROP at Sloan studying consumer behavior. He'll also be doing general maintenance around the house.

**TOKS FIFO '14** is working at Keter Plastics in Israel as part of MIT-Israel program.

**CARLOS GREAVES '13**, during the months of June and July, will be doing solar energy

research at the *Instituto de Energia Solar* in Madrid. Afterward, Carlos plans to travel for two weeks to Italy, France, and Germany.

**ALESSANDRO LIRA '15** is working on campus in the Space Systems Laboratory for a UROP. He's working on SPHERE satellites; especially on hardware that allows them to perform vision-based navigation.

**GEOFF DAWSON '13** has been working at Apple, Inc., since February as an iPhone supply base engineer and will continue to work there throughout the summer. He was responsible for designing the manufacturing process of the next-generation iPhone's cover glass, as well as a few other secret components. Based in Cupertino, living in San Francisco, and spending half his time doing business in China, Geoff is getting well acquainted with living in airports and bus terminals.

**FRANCO MONTALVO '13** will be improving a measurement and data collection tool for measuring wear on train wheels in San Sebastian, Donostia, Spain.

**STEVEN OJEDA '12** is a graduating senior in Course 16. He is working on the propulsion analysis team at SpaceX during the summer and will return to MIT for graduate school in the aero/astro department. His research includes mesh adaptation methods for coupled fluid and thermal models for high-speed applications. He will also be serving as the residence adviser for the house.

**VLAD KONTSEVOI '14** is working as a high-frequency trading intern at Tower Research Capital in New York City, with one of its trading desks, and enjoying the city in his spare time.

**JOSE BURGOS '15** is working on his UROP at the Plasma Science and Fusion Center. The project is focused on analyzing a nuclear material system that has potential for being used as piping in the extremely corrosive environment of liquid lead-bismuth cooled nuclear reactors.

**ALEX MARTINEZ '15** is home, working at Kumon and spending time with friends and family. For the last few weeks of summer, Alex will be returning to Boston.

**PRESTON THOMPSON '14** is working as a technology associate intern at Bridgewater Associates in Westport, Connecticut. He plans to spend his free time touring New York City and making some weekend trips to Boston.

**WILL GAVIRIA '13** will be working in the nanofabrications lab at the University of Minnesota—Twin Cities. He will be working for the NNIN REU program as a summer undergraduate researcher.

**MICHAEL DESANKER '13** is researching in the Nocera Inorganic Chemistry Lab at MIT. He is using hangman dipyrins to reduce carbon dioxide through proton coupled electron transfer. He hopes this can be applied to other small molecules such as water.

**JEFF LIN '14** is an operations intern at Amgen (Rhode Island facility). He is looking at the big picture of drug manufacturing, and working to increase the efficiency of the later steps of the manufacturing process.

**OLIVER HUANG '14** is doing sales and trading for Morgan Stanley. He expects to spend his free time hanging out with other interns in New York.

**ADRIAN OROZCO '14** is spending this summer working as a software developer at Amazon in Seattle, Washington. He hopes it's a useful experience to learn about working in the industry. There should be a lot to do in Seattle with nice weather this time of the year.

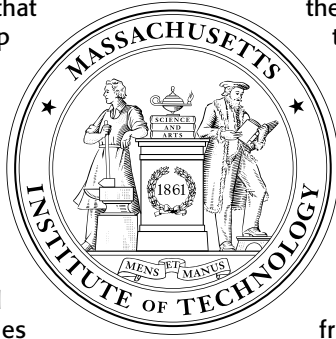
**KRISHNA ESTEVA '13** will be working as a summer associate at Altman Vilandrie in Boston. He will also be serving as "Superman" and preparing for rush in the fall. He will be living at the house this summer ... shenanigans will ensue.

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## Beta Chapter improves the community and its brotherly bonds

This past term, our brothers wanted to participate in a community service event that offered a hands-on, high-impact experience. Fortunately, we came across a great opportunity that allowed us not only to help our community, but also to build stronger bonds within our brotherhood.

On Friday, April 6, we traveled to Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, and worked with Community Servings to package and distribute food for individuals and families in need. Community Servings is a nonprofit food and nutrition program whose mission is to provide meals to those with critical and chronic illnesses. They strive to help people and families maintain their health, dignity, and integrity



with the assistance of volunteers.

Before getting started, we had to sit in on a 30-minute orientation to learn about the rules of the kitchen and the plan for packaging and distributing the meals. After we washed our hands, put on our hair-nets, and tied on our aprons, we all jumped into the kitchen and got to work. There were hundreds of meals and desserts that needed to be separated, stacked, bagged, and placed in the freezer. While dancing and singing to some tunes, we formed an assembly line where we could quickly and efficiently package the meals. Some brothers were in charge of removing trays to make more food available, while others wheeled a shopping cart of food into the

large freezers. It was great to see everybody working together and demonstrating effective team work. The staff even commented on how quickly we were able to go through the cycle.

About an hour and a half later, once we finished the last bag of meals, I could tell that people were feeling pretty hungry. Lucky for us, the staff baked many chicken nuggets for us to enjoy as a reward for our hard work and service. The laughs and stories that transpired while working and eating had clearly helped to strengthen our brotherly bonds. I was happy to see that everybody thoroughly enjoyed their time there, and I'm glad to know that our brotherhood now has a stronger appreciation for community service. I can't wait to see our house continue its efforts to help our community in the future.

Steven Ojeda '12  
Community Service Chair



*Shown here is most of the Theta Chi class of 1962 visiting Pat and Jim Poitras's ('63) home in Florida this past March. There were only four brothers in the class—all of whom helped with the renovation fundraising. One brother, Will Taylor, passed away in December 2010. The other three are shown here—Bob Brady, Chet Riley, and John Rollwagen—along with Jim Poitras '63.*

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# I am: Art Brownlow at Theta Chi from 1951 to 1956

## **MOST VIVID MEMORY:**

On the evening of the first nice, warm spring day of 1954 (probably) many of the guys in the fraternities on our section of Beacon Street were outside enjoying spring fever and a beautiful evening. Among other activities, a few people got the idea of dropping water bombs from the roofs and windows of the houses. There was a hotel opposite Charlesgate with some kind of formal dinner going on. Unfortunately, a water bomb hit near or on a prominent judge or politician who was going into the hotel. Shortly thereafter a huge number of Boston policemen came roaring down the street and charged into the fraternity houses. Most of us at Theta Chi escaped when we saw them coming. Thus, the police entered 528 and found no one. At that moment, however, several of our brothers were coming in the downstairs back door, returning from crew practice and other activities across the river. They never knew what hit 'em! The police grabbed all of them and unceremoniously took them off to jail. They were there most of the night until bail could be arranged. They didn't really know what happened until they returned to the fraternity. I later heard a rumor that one of the arrestees was denied a job with the CIA because he had an arrest record. In any case, it was a memorable night.

## **THE HOUSE:**

Everyone slept on the top floor ("the Ward"). One morning, a brother woke up and couldn't get out of his top bunk. The bed had been raised during the night so he was wedged up against the ceiling. After that, no one wanted to sleep in the upper beds. The study rooms held three or four people. Usually two freshmen were paired in a room with two upperclassmen.

Angie was the cook, and Frank Ford was the jack of all trades. We used to kid Frank about all his "lady friends" of which—according to him—there were a large number. Maintenance on the house was done during the summer and Work Week prior to the fall Rush. For meals, we all took turns serving as waiters, there actually was a schedule. Sunday night, we were on our own for food; no formal meal with the refrigerator providing some nourishment.

There was a dress code for dinner, coats and ties; some very disreputable coats

and ties were usually present. After dinner (and before) bridge was a popular activity. During finals, some of us each semester scheduled an all-night bridge game—the partners who were ahead at 8:00 a.m. the next morning were the winners. We would have a break in the action at about 3:00 a.m. and go to the Howard Johnsons in Kenmore Square for a snack. We also had a pingpong table and pool table, which were in use most of the time. Quiet study time began at 8:00 p.m. Some people went to bed early and got up early to study; others (the majority) did the opposite. One night, I went to bed at 4:00 a.m. and passed my roommate, who was getting up to study. Our house meetings were always interesting; the two main topics tended to be food and social activities. One time, a brother started an intense discussion of the quality of the house toilet paper.

## **ACTIVITIES:**

We were very involved in sports and had a reputation as one of the best in the various intramural sports leagues. We had very good football and basketball teams. Our main rival was SAE. We always had several people on the MIT crews. In 1954, the varsity lightweight crew was good enough to go to the Royal Henley Regatta held on the Thames River in England. Crews from around the world were involved and not only lightweight crews. There were 32 entries and, after several elimination heats, the only two left were the Royal Navy Crew and MIT. In the championship race, the Navy took the lead, but MIT overtook them and won. The MIT group thus became world champions of the Thames Cup. The MIT coxswain was Jerry Waye '54 of Theta Chi. Many of the intramural leagues had volunteer managers who scheduled games, checked equipment in and out, etc. Many of these jobs were passed down from year to year in our fraternity. Control over organized athletics was vested in the Athletic Association, and several of our brothers served as officers over the years. Dave Scott '55 was president of MITAA in 1954–1955. Theta Chi brothers were active in other areas of student government. We had people serve as class officers, and on the activities council, or various other committees such as the Student-Faculty Committee.

## **SOCIAL:**

We had (of course) a lot of parties

each year. Most were purely social, but there was also an annual Kid's Party for underprivileged children. Brothers managed to find dates for parties at all the schools in the area and also other places such as nurses from the local hospitals. Some brought girlfriends from home to our major parties. Most of the women were governed by strict rules, particularly as to when they had to be back at their dorms. We didn't always make it on time, and they were penalized in various ways with some penalties appearing pretty severe. There were also some very confining dress codes. We were all born 20 years too soon!

A big part of the parties involved groups singing rowdy songs. The bar was in the basement and a major traffic area. Late in the evening, there was dancing to records. A popular activity was watching TV with your date in the darkened TV room. I always wondered how that worked since the TV was usually off. Some (small) parties were held at the apartments where some brothers lived since not all could live in the house. Brothers lived in apartments on Beacon Street and on other nearby streets.

Five to 10 brothers had cars at any one time. They were often loaded with riders for the trip to classes in the morning. I remember one trip in an overloaded car with doors that didn't work well. Several brothers were spilled out on Memorial Drive as the car went around a corner (no serious injuries but all awake for class that day). Most of the time, we walked across the bridge four times a day, coming back to the fraternity house for lunch. It got pretty cold in the winter with the wind blowing down the Charles River. Several brothers got married during their senior years or after graduation. We always had good attendance at these affairs. For example, 20 brothers went to New Jersey for the March 1955 wedding of Audrey and Dick Rush '55.

## **THE WORLD:**

The Korean War was going on at the start of the 1950s. Senator Joseph McCarthy was making news in Washington, D.C. In 1954, a major hurricane hit the Boston area. Elvis Presley became popular starting in about 1956. The civil rights struggle began to intensify. John Kennedy was elected as Massachusetts senator in 1952 and became more popular in the country throughout the 1950s.



# our alumni send their news

"June, 1944: Beta Chapter Rush Week. Has to be completed before classes start. 17 of us pledge. We will be in the class of 2/47," writes **Kenneth M. Prytherch '49**. "As of today (April 2012), seven have gone to the 'big chapter in the sky.' I was able to hook up with Robert 'Bob' Pollard III '47 in Florida, in March. We hadn't seen one another in 68 years. Needless to say, we had a grand old time reminiscing (including the infamous Doc Humes fiasco!)." Reconnect with Ken via email at [kmprytherch@alum.mit.edu](mailto:kmprytherch@alum.mit.edu), or with Bob at [pollard@earthlink.net](mailto:pollard@earthlink.net).

**William R. Freeman Jr. '51** reports that he has four children, 12 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Catch up with him by writing to 60 Morehouse Rd., Eaton, CT 06612; or by sending email to [mcfwrf@aol.com](mailto:mcfwrf@aol.com).

Send greetings to **Thomas M. Boucher '85** via his new postal address: 2179 River Dr., King George, VA 22485.

## AND NOW FOR SOME REALLY GOOD NEWS ...

Two Theta Chi brothers were erroneously reported as deceased in our previous issue of the *Beta Button*. We are delighted, therefore, to retract the death information published last February for **Edward A. Ort '52** and **Alan H. Friot '55**. Both men are alive and well (with, we hope, their senses of humor intact). We regret and apologize for the mistake, a database snafu on the part of our alumni records office.

## ED ORT'S RESPONSE ...

*The previous edition of the Beta Button reported the demise of Ed Ort '52. This surprised Ed, who wrote the response below. Ed*

*is very much alive and was at the house this June for a great Reunion party.*

"During this time of Easter, Dick Aquadro, class of 1952, sent me his copy of the *Beta Button* (Winter 2011–2012). It reports my death, June 11, 2011. Because of this listing, I guess I was not sent my copy. He wanted to know if I was the second coming of the Messiah. I would appreciate it if you would see to my resurrection so I can stay active. The explanation would be that I reported the death of Ric Davis on June 11, 2011, this past year. Someone must have pulled this information and so the mistake went. Dick and I plan to visit 528 when we attend our 60th Reunion. We want to see the refurbishments. Theta Chi is listed on our class activities for Friday, June 8, from 3:00–5:00 p.m. I hope someone will be there. We stopped on our 50th and I saw someone at the chapter room window, but no one came to the door."

## deceased

**Scott C. Rethorst '36**  
March 1, 2011

**Warren Carpenter Jr. '44**  
September 5, 2011

**David Palamountain '57**  
April 17, 2009

**Ryder Pratt '39**  
December 9, 2011

**Donald R. Eaton '48**  
January 30, 2010



That 70's Show: Theta Chis celebrating after winning the intramural hockey title in 1971.

## House Report

This summer, the renovation project will be completed. Kitchen renovations will be finished, we'll get a new front door, and the stairs will be re-carpeted.

To date, 194 alumni and 30 actives have contributed \$566,694. Along with \$60,000 from our Vanguard Funds, \$2,000 interest, and a 30-year \$250,000 IRDF mortgage loan, the total income since September 2008 is \$878,694. The unpaid mortgage currently amounts to \$239,000, to be paid off at \$3,400 per quarter. We, of course, hope to pay the loan back more aggressively than that.

So far, expenses have amounted to \$824,104, and the summer will result in expenses of approximately \$40,000; that's a combined total of \$864,104. That will leave about \$14,000 in the renovation account.

The original budget was \$900,000, which we stayed under. We were able to add several things not in the original budget—such as the roof deck, a fifth-floor bathroom, new front door, new front windows, and the entire kitchen renovation—and still remain below budget. The 110th celebration this fall will be a great finish to this project. I believe you all will be proud of the accomplishment.

Chet Riley '62  
Alumni Treasurer