



beta button

Beta Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity at MIT • Fall 2016

Reunion Open House at 528 Beacon

This past June 3 was a festive time at 528 Beacon. A large number of Theta Chi Alumni Corporation (OxBetaCorp) officers and active brothers were on hand to greet more than a dozen brothers and significant others returning to MIT for their MIT Reunions. Back at 528 for the first time in a while were brothers like Tom Franzel '66, four from '71—Nick De Cristofaro, Joe Runkle, Rene Hass, and Jay Mackro—Frank Ruiz '76, Skip Hance '81, four more from '91—Dave Auerbach, Mike McComas, Marcelo Torres, and Dan Zimmer—plus several more spouses and others whom our reporter missed. These Reunion Open Houses seem to get bigger every year, and it is getting hard to figure out who was there—kind of like some of those parties of old.

In any event, these open houses—for returning alumni, significant others, and parents of graduating seniors—are now a June Commencement & Graduation Weekend fixture, so plan on visiting 528 Beacon when your turn comes out. You will see a lot that is familiar and meet some new brothers and friends you have not yet met!



Brothers hanging out at 528 once again!

ox.mit.edu

State of the Chapter Report: Beta's Better Than Ever!

Coming into my last year as an undergraduate at MIT, I have seen the house grow immensely in the last three-plus years. With our 11 new pledges, we are at more than 40 members total in Beta Chapter. When I came in as a pledge, it felt like people could claim a whole couch to themselves during house meetings; now, we have to make sure we have enough seats for everybody to fit in the library. Aside from our house growing in membership count, we have made some great accomplishments in the last few years. We received awards for "Most Improved Chapter" from MIT's Interfraternity Council for two years in a row (2014 and 2015), and the year after that received the award for "Best Scholarship Program." We have been steadily improving many aspects of our house, and that has been something great to see.

Other aspects of the house are running just as well. We recently went back to a paid chef since we weren't able to gather enough brother cooks to cook for the week, and the experience with that has been great. It has definitely been better than the last time we had a paid chef a couple years ago, and for cheaper, too. We have also been getting more creative with our semiformals; instead of doing the same old thing we used to, where we would simply go out to a restaurant, we are adding in other things like going to a play or watching an improv show after dinner. Changes like these have been the work of our great brotherhood chairs, who have been looking at

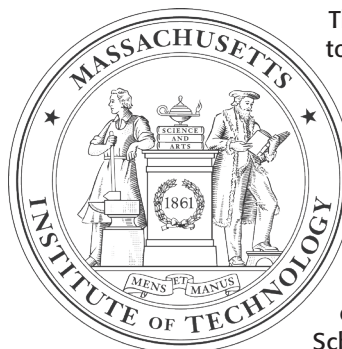
ways to improve general brotherhood events and to great effect. Academically, we are also doing great, well above the fraternity average.

Rush was once again successful this year, with 10 new pledges, including two Cambridge-MIT Exchange (CME) students. With four successful rushes in a row, we were able to grow as much as we have. This has all likely been the result of a concerted effort by the house to improve after an unfortunate rush four years ago. We have fully come back from that, and I can without a doubt say that in the years I have been around, our chapter today is in the best place it has ever been.

Looking forward, the class of 2017 will be graduating soon. As our time at the institute comes to an end over the next several months, we are in the process of handing off many of the responsibilities that we have held over the years. It has felt as if in our time here, the 2017s have had to take on a lot of the responsibilities in the house to make up for the smaller numbers of people there were when we came into the house. However, it is definitely time to hand off the baton to the other classes, who are more than capable of taking on the tasks. I have high hopes for what they will be able to accomplish in the years to come, and hope they are able to see different parts of the house continue to improve, just as I have been able to experience over these past years.

Gustavo Montalvo '17

Who Says Theta Chis Aren't Smart?



Theta Chi has done well academically, flying toward the top of the heap (as well as the bottom) at many different times. We all know many brothers who have nailed a 5.0 for one or more years. And today most alumni should appreciate that MIT is getting harder—and even more selective—every passing year. That is what makes the houses's academic performance this past spring 2016 semester so impressive. **The house GPA was a whopping 4.64!** This placed Theta Chi fourth overall among the 37 independent living groups, and earning our guys a well-deserved spot on this year's Scholarship Honor Roll. Well done!

Brotherhood Involvement Strengthens Rush Process

As the incoming freshman class started to arrive on campus, the brothers began preparing for arguably the most important week of the year for the continuation of our brotherhood. This year, before Rush even began, however, it was clear that many brothers couldn't wait to begin the process of getting to know many of the diverse and interesting members of the class of 2020 from the exceptionally large number of brothers taking on responsibilities as leaders of freshman pre-orientation programs. These programs give the upperclassman leaders an opportunity to get to know several members of the incoming class, as well as providing the freshmen with a solid group of friends right from the beginning of their experience at MIT. The enthusiasm for participating in these programs is not surprising, however, since it allows the upperclassmen who volunteer to take on these leadership roles to meet new, interesting people and expose them to a subject they are extremely passionate about. Brother participation in these programs has always been crucial for Rush, since it provides an opportunity to meet potential new members before Rush officially begins, and the large amount of participation this year was the first of several demonstrations of the high level of enthusiasm for Rush that made it so successful this year.

The rush chairmen slightly reorganized the schedule of events this year to employ a strategy that has given us much success in

previous years. This strategy involves hosting events early in the process that attract a large, highly diverse group of potential new members and then holding smaller events later in the week that allow us to really get to know the ones with whom we share a mutual interest. For the third year in a row, the strategy proved to be effective as we concluded the process with 10 new pledges.

While careful planning and strategizing by the rush chairmen is critical for a successful Rush, the outcome is, of course, heavily dependent on the active members' participation in events and getting to know potential new members. Historically, we have found that the members of the junior class, having experienced Rush as brothers once already but closer in age to the freshmen than the seniors, have been the most significant contributors to Rush, to which the members of the class of 2018 were no exception. More so than in the past, however, the most recently initiated class contributed quite significantly to their first Rush as brothers, making up for what they lacked in experience with the excitement they brought to the house. Several of the sophomores, particularly Arjun Mithal '19 and John Li '19, showed exceptional commitment to Rush this year despite their frequent preoccupation with academics and other responsibilities during the semester. The senior class, too, was quite involved, and their experience made their contributions incredibly

valuable. Nikko James '17 and Sean Lowder '17 were as eager as ever to meet the most recently admitted MIT freshman class, and former rush chairman Christian Richardson '17 actively provided advice and assistance to the current rush chairmen whenever he could.

Not all of Rush went as originally planned, though. To our disappointment, the place that we go to play whirlyball, an event that has historically been successful and a brother favorite, was in the process of moving locations during Rush this year. Rush Chairman Quinn Johns '18, however, was able to turn the situation around by filling the empty event slot with a high ropes course, accurately representing our house's enthusiasm for adventurous outdoor events.

We would, of course, like to thank several alumni for their support during Rush, especially Joe Hardy '03, for giving us access to the rock-climbing gym he owns to host one of our most successful Rush events. Ultimately, however, the success of Rush hinges on the active members' ability to come together as a house as we work through the intense, highly competitive process that is formal recruitment at MIT. While we are quite proud of our new pledge class, Rush was also quite valuable for our brotherhood because the current brothers' shared enthusiasm for the process really brought us much closer together as well.

Damon Berman '19

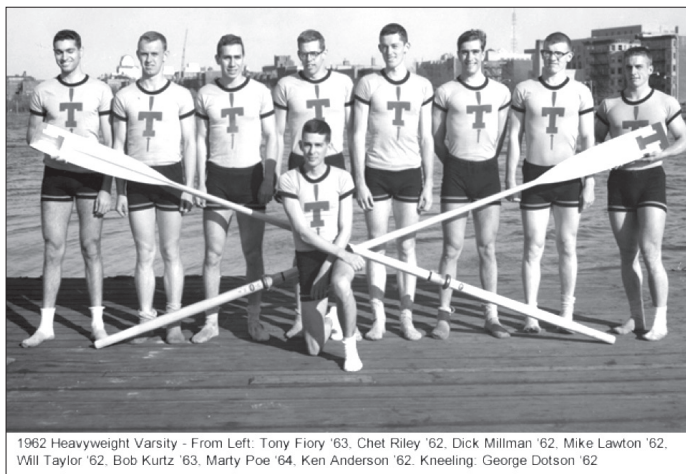
Theta Chi Rowing

Earlier this year, MIT crew and U.S. rowing lost a great oarsmen, coach, and friend, Jack H. Frailey, at the age of 90. A memorial for Jack was held at MIT in June the Sunday of graduation weekend, a tribute to his MIT life. While MIT is not a perennial rowing powerhouse, MIT has made its mark and Theta Chi oarsmen were there. Few other sports at MIT let you participate at the highest collegiate and international levels. A few years ago Daniel James Brown wrote "The Boys in the Boat," the story of the University of Washington's heavyweight crew, which won gold in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Why do I mention this? Well it was the stroke, James McMillin and the coxswain Robert Moch from that boat who came to MIT to coach rowing. Maybe that's why the predominate racing shells in the boathouse for many years were Pococks, built in Seattle from Washington cedar. One of their young rowers in 1941 was Jack Frailey.

Jack's education and rowing was interrupted by the war and after a few years of designing jet fighters and directing New Polaris Missile Program at Lockheed Aircraft in Califor-

nia, he returned to MIT in 1954 to coach the lightweight team, which won the Eastern Sprints and rowed at Henley on the Thames. 1962 was another championship year at the Eastern Sprints and Henley with Chet Riley '62, Will Taylor '62, and Bob Kurtz '63 leading the way. Chet and Bob spoke at Jack Frailey memorial. This was also the last crews to beat Harvard.

Rowing is a great sport especially at MIT. While a few students may have rowed at Prep School for the majority, everyone is starting from scratch. I had an opportunity to watch the alumni crews row from the boathouse. While I noticed the paint was peeling from the siding and some of the trim wood was rotten, the boathouse was jammed full of rowing shelling, oar sets, and more rowing machines than I could count. When I rowed in the '70s, we had



1962 Heavyweight Varsity - From Left: Tony Fiory '63, Chet Riley '62, Dick Millman '62, Mike Lawton '62, Will Taylor '62, Bob Kurtz '63, Marty Poe '64, Ken Anderson '62. Kneeling: George Dotson '62

a starboard and a port rowing machine and that was it. But we were one of the first crews to get a fiberglass boat, the Howard Johnson or "HoJo" for short. Now it is hard to see a wooden shell. The bay is full of Resolute and Vespoli fiberglass and composite shells. The rowing tank was still there, which is used during the winter to simulate on the water rowing.

The spring is the collegiate season rowing with 2,000 meter races, the Eastern Sprints

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Alumni, Please Welcome Our 10 New Pledges!



Kevin Foley '19
From Greenville, South Carolina
Course 6-2
I'm on the men's gymnastics team, and I also really enjoy climbing, hiking, and anything in the great outdoors.



Jason Necaie '20
From Jackson, Mississippi
Course 8 or 18C
I'm from a place where science and science education are not important. To a lot of people, knowing "fancy math" is pointless and not worth learning when you could instead be doing something like making money. The irony comes from the fact that learning fancy math is an incredibly effective way of becoming a better complex problem solver, an attribute that can make money much quicker than many others. I want to get a degree in fancy math and its implications before hopefully returning to Mississippi to change an education system that doesn't reward academic seriousness nearly enough.



Henry Hanlon '20
From West Haven, Connecticut
Course 2
I am a cadet in the Army ROTC Paul Revere Battalion. I enjoy the outdoors, Shakespeare, robotics, and rucking.



Pete Boothroyd '18
Chester, United Kingdom
Course 6
I'm a current exchange student from Cambridge, United Kingdom, here for academic year 2016-2017, specializing in information engineering.



Cody Winkleblack '19
Littleton, Colorado
8-Physics
I transferred to MIT from Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. I enjoy playing jazz guitar/bass and running in my free time. After graduating, my dream job is to study astrophysics.

Colt Hermesch '20
From San Antonio, Texas
Course 22
While not originally from Texas, I believe that "y'all" and "howdy" are perfectly fine



words. At MIT I am also involved with the crew team where I walked on as a lightweight and Navy ROTC where I am on scholarship. My plans after school are to work on submarines for a while and then after retiring from the military, work on the design of the reactors that go into submarines and carriers.



Hamish Lamotte '18
Edinburgh, Scotland
Course 5
Cambridge-MIT Exchange
A scientist at heart interested in most technical fields involving problem solving with specific interest in the energy sector but still openminded to other sectors. I enjoy outrageous social activities particularly those involving alcohol and am into sailing, skiing, running, and traveling. I have brought a set of bagpipes to the U.S. and look forward to educating the brothers on British and Scottish culture.



Riley Steindl '19
Greenwich, New York
Course 2A-6
I'm a second-year Air Force ROTC cadet who enjoys sleeping, eating, and relaxing. I hope to use my major to work in computer hardware design. I also enjoy cozying up with a good book by a fire and long walks on the beach.



Robert Upton '20
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Undecided
I think I am going to become an aerospace/astronautics major, but I am also considering math/economics in order to focus on either astronautics or development. I love track and field, and am a pole vaulter and member of Army ROTC. I will do almost anything for a good set of baby back ribs.



Juan Ortiz '20
Aguascalientes, Mexico
Course #: Undecided
Although unsure about his major, he is currently in the path for EECS and hopes to learn how to build cool stuff. He enjoys eating peanut butter pretzels and building things—especially those involving fire in some way.

Wedding Season!

This year, Beta Chapter has been blessed with a number of brothers tying the knot.



Last October, Bill Magnuson '09 and Jen Lewin were married on a remote ranch in Montana with a large group of Theta Chi alumni in attendance. The entire wedding party stayed in luxury tent camps along the Blackfoot River and managed to stay on the staff's good graces despite a number of late-night kitchen break-ins to cook bacon, and an incident that involved burning out the resort's entire speaker system. Extra props go to Matt Gattis '07 for setting up an emergency sound system on the last night to keep the party going.



Tejus Kothari '06 married Dr. Ajanta Patel in a large Indian wedding ceremony in Birmingham, Alabama, on May 14. Several Theta Chis were there to help celebrate. Ajanta is a pediatric pulmonologist at the University of Chicago, while

Tejus works at the Boston Consulting Group where he serves a range of public sector and education clients.



Also in May, Jason Ku '09 and Hojung Park were married in Seoul, South Korea, in a traditional Korean wedding ceremony. The couple met in 2012 at a conference in Seoul. Jason was teaching, and Hojung was his translator. Many of Jason's friends and family were able to attend the wedding, including David Baumgartner '08 and Kevin Wang '10.

Jason Ku '09

our alumni send their news

"Moved from California to Colorado to be closer to family," announces **Donald A. Buell '45**. "Thrilled with my granddaughter's recent graduation from MIT!" His new address is 9090 Big Canon Place, Greenwood Village, CO 80111.

As the oldest U.S. veteran living in Rowley, Massachusetts, **John D. Winninghoff '48** led the 2016 Memorial Day parade there this past spring. He recounts the years beginning in September 1942, when he entered MIT: "Joined the Army ERC fall 1942, pilot training WWII. Flew eight combat missions as a B-29 pilot. Back to MIT July 1946. Graduated October 1948. Alcoa sales engineer for two years [continuing a fascination with aluminum that began in the classroom, according to his website, winninghoff.com], recalled October 1950, Korean conflict." Jack worked for seven companies before founding a custom aluminum boat company, Winninghoff Boats, which he still owns and operates today. He adds, "Have recently contact MIT hoping to teach part-time and possibly go for a Ph.D. Some interest has been expressed." Winn writes and

reads a lot. Contact him at jdwwinninghoff.com or 55 Warehouse Lane, Rowley, MA 01969.

William R. Kincaid '49 writes, "Shirley, my bride of 65 years, and I can be reached at 1763 N. Mountain View Place, Fullerton, CA 92831. Email Bill at wrk1927@gmail.com.

"Retiring in July," announces **Timothy M. Gilmore '70**. "Plan to work locum tenens until it's not fun anymore." Tim reports that his three daughters are all "buying homes and having babies." He sees **John Stempeck '70** several times a year for "golf and grins." "Jackmore" lives in Seattle at 1512 N. 39th St., 98103. Email him at tim_gilmore@alum.mit.edu.

After 35 years at USC, **Michael G. Safonov '70** became professor emeritus when he retired in June 2014. He adds, "I still keep an office and write a few research papers with students. This summer I will visit Europe and take a Mediterranean cruise." Catch up with him at michael.g.safonov@gmail.com or 329 S. Peck Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212.

Since graduating from MIT, **Steven M. Ojeda '12** has spent two years with SpaceX developing a propellant-management device for zero-g flight of the Dragon crew capsule. Find out more by contacting "Smo" at smojeda7190@gmail.com or 11929 Courtleigh Dr., Apt. 306, Los Angeles, CA 90066.

deceased

Robert L. Sundblad '44

July 20, 2016

Robert M. Murray '48

March 28, 2016

Kenneth M. Prytherch '49

March 27, 2016

William H. Shenkle '51

May 22, 2016

Joseph W. Hurley '54

June 14, 2016

William J. Maczko '61

October 5, 2014

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John Preston Jr '68
William Pritchard Jr '78

Steven Rappaport '79

Alvin Richman '57

Otto Robinson '60

Mario Scott '11

Virginia Siller (*in memory*
of Donald Siller '49)

Earl Smiddy '58

Noel Spishak '75

Morris Tao '00

Richard Waldt '50

Ben Weintraub '92

Gregory Wilson '79

THE CAVERN

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Benjamin Dann '48

Kenneth Kreischer '76

Waciuma Maina '10

Steve Ojeda '12

Thank you!

Theta Chi Rowing (cont'd.)

in Worcester, and the Intercollegiate Rowing Association championship in Syracuse. In 1975 MIT's junior varsity won with Brian Wellendorf '77 at stroke and Joe Healey '77 at 3 at the IRA. In the fall is the Head of the Charles a three-mile, upstream, single-file time race. The head was started in 1965 and MIT's boathouse being at the start of the race played a big part getting this event started. In 1974 by chance Theta Chi had its own pair row in the head, Bob Sherrill '75 and David Campanella '76. Over the years this event has grown from a few races on Saturday morning to a full weekend affair with crews coming from all over the world and thousands lining the shore all the way to Watertown. This year on a rainy day with strong 15-30 mph head winds Stephen Townsend at 7 and Quinn Johns at 5 rowed 16:27.672 to come in 7th out of 37 only a second behind last year's time which was rowed on a sunny day. Stephen and Quinn are looking forward to a great season in the spring.

David Campanella "Campy" '76