



beta button

Beta Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity at MIT • Spring 2017

Reunion Open House at 528 Beacon: Friday, June 9, at 3:00 p.m.

This event has become a very enjoyable annual event, which brings together graduating seniors, their parents, Reunion-bound alums, local Boston-area alums, and several actives living at 528 Beacon Street over the summer. All these folks are invited and encouraged to visit 528 Beacon on Friday, June 9, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

This occasion affords returning alumni a chance to relax and see the house and all the improvements over the last several years. Local alumni and parents of the graduating seniors also are invited and they add a lot to this gathering. We think you will be pleased with the house and especially with the strength and diversity of the actives, who had another good Rush last fall. A number of brothers from the alumni corporation, as well as the undergraduate summer officers will be on hand to greet people. You can expect lots of conversation and memories from various eras, as well as ample snacks, drinks, and refreshments.

We hope to see as many brothers and families as possible on Friday afternoon, June 9. **If you are sure you are coming, just RSVP to thetachi@mit.edu.** You can expect a warm welcome.



ox.mit.edu

Beta Continues to Thrive on Campus

In the years since I have joined the house, our fraternity has seen inspiring growth and development. We have continued with the momentum of our recruitment process, expanding our membership to include 40 men, and repeatedly gained a dozen new brothers per recruitment period. As the Rush process continues to be fine-tuned, our recruitment chairs each year create innovation and improve the process, helping to ease the strain on brothers and encourage new members to join. At the same time, our Marshals maintain their excellence, helping new members to acclimate to the house and leading to near-perfect pledge retention the last three years running. The fears of failed rushes, of missing the national minimum, and of too few brothers living in the house are worries of a bygone era.

Internally, the men of the chapter grow closer to one another with each passing semester. Our brotherhood chairmen and vice president of health and safety have lead the charge, transforming their positions from sidelined minor roles into the glue that holds the house together. They have identified those activities that seize the interest of the house and facilitated such events, from hiking trips to wings and football. This has provided opportunity, unprecedented in my tenure, to join together in fellowship and grow in our fraternity.

A solitary, inexpressible improvement in the house has been the recent hire of Chef Katie. While the brothers who cooked had our heyday, not even the best among us could rival what Katie is able to prepare. Regular, delicious meals have reinvigorated dinner as a time when the house can come together, and we have grown closer as a result.

Externally, Theta Chi continues to build campus presence. We have brothers in almost every arena at MIT, from athletes with the rowing, gymnastics, and track program to actives in each branch of the MIT ROTC, to house representation on the IFC Executive Committee. The campus leadership and initiative in the house grows, while at the same time our interfraternal relations and community hold strong; we are regularly in support of our Greek brothers and sisters.

The Beta Chapter is in a place of strength and confidence. While we have seen improvement in every aspect of our chapter, our brothers are never satisfied and continually strive to be the best version of themselves that they can be. As our house grows in numbers, in presence, and in fellowship, I am engaged and excited to see what the future holds.

Quinlan Johns '19

Alumni Weekend Was a Huge Success

The 2017 Alumni Weekend gathering on April 21–23 had one of the highest turnouts we've seen in recent years. Thanks to everyone who came.

Friday night saw a competitive game of poker, and a somewhat wet Saturday morning featured a softball game in Brookline. The actives took an early lead in that game, but the alumni were simply too powerful and cruised to an 18–12 victory.

The annual meeting of the alumni corporation was held on Saturday afternoon, and included the election of two executive positions. Jason Ku '09 was elected to his second two-year term as treasurer, while Ken Schumaker '12 was elected as vice president, replacing John Helferich '79. Alumni President David Baumgartner '08 and Corporation Secretary Ryan Andrews '10 each have one year

remaining in their respective terms.

Pre-dinner, we visited the replacement for the now-closed Crossroads: Beacon St. Locale. At dinner, the actives recognized Axel Martinez, the alumni corporation house manager, presenting him with the Alumnus of the Year award.

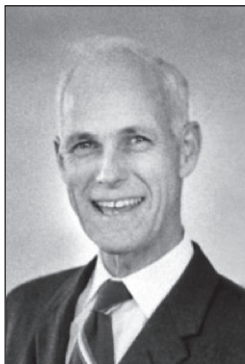
Sunday featured brunch in Kenmore Square, followed by a trip up to Andover, where we visited the brand-new Oak & Iron Brewing, co-founded by John Helferich '79. The brewery is in a spectacular space along the Shawsheen River just steps from the center of town.

Thanks again to everyone who was able to attend, and I hope to see even more of you next April.

David Baumgartner '08
Alumni Corporation President

MIT Honors the Memory of IRDF Founder Reid Weedon '41

Reid Weedon '41 was a very, very special member of the MIT community. His name may be familiar to many because Reid helped to found the IRDF more than 50 years ago, and this fund has been vital to the success of so many fraternities and sororities here at MIT. Reid was an MIT Corporation life member emeritus, global businessman, inspiring mentor, lifelong sailor and outdoorsman, and outstanding fundraiser for the institutions he loved. He was a very devoted member of Phi Beta Epsilon (though I wish we, Theta Chis, could have claimed him).



Reid died at his home in Cohasset, Massachusetts, on November 2 at the age of 96. He left a lifetime of service to the institute and the world. Until the last year of his life, he was actively volunteering and working at MIT, and kept an office on the MIT campus. His contributions to the MIT community spread far and wide. MIT President L. Rafael Reif wrote that he doubted "there has been anyone more instrumental than Weedon in building a culture of giving at MIT, and the benefits of this are everywhere around me." In particular, the members of every one of MIT fraternities, sororities, and independent living groups—or FSILGs as we know them now—have been direct beneficiaries of one of Weedon's great legacies, the IRDF Fund. Our house, for example, has received close to a half-million dollars in loans and grant in the last decade.

Thanks to many alumni like you and me, each passing decade has seen gifts to the IRDF increase in number and value. This past year, more than 600 alumni were donors. Because the donations are gifts through MIT, they are fully tax-deductible and also count toward class totals during Reunion years and, for houses undergoing major capital campaigns, toward the educational portion of project renovation grants.

The IRDF has been an essential contributor to the financial health of the FSILG community. As one who has been privileged to be a member of the Independent Development Residence Fund (IRDF) Grant Advisory Board, it has been a joy to see how much the IRDF does for our community. Since its founding by

Reid and others back in 1964. The fund has disbursed the following amounts to MIT's FSILGs since:

- More than \$25 million in loans for renovations and construction
- \$4.5 million in direct grants to FSILGs for educational and safety improvements
- \$5.7 million in annual operating grants for FSILG upkeep
- More than \$5 million in FSILG community-wide for state-of-the-art computer network upgrades and compliance with new state safety regulations

The IRDF has enabled MIT's FSILGs to continue to maintain and improve their facilities, and impact others in many different ways. No other university has such a large, comprehensive resource at the disposal of its fraternities, sororities, and independent living groups. To mark the 50th anniversary of the IRDF, a major celebration was held on April 26, 2014, with Reid and his wife, Estelle, as guests of honor.

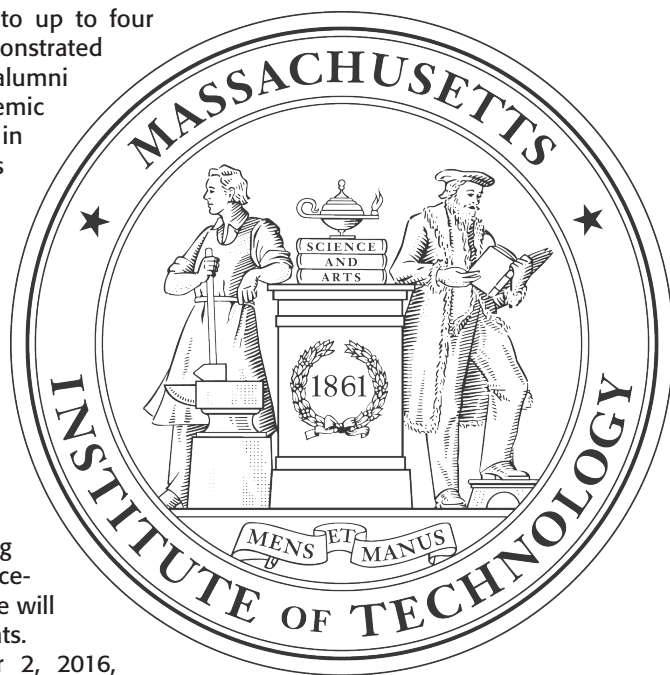
Many in the FSILG community are also familiar with the D. Reid Weedon Jr. '41 Award, which Reid endowed back in 1995 to encourage FSILG student outreach to their alumni/ae. The award has been annually given ever since to up to four FSILGs that have demonstrated the greatest effort in alumni relations for the academic year—we won it back in 2005! The competition is spirited, since first place now includes a \$7,500 cash prize. Especially to help groups seeking to build their alumni relations programs, this past fall the alumni association developed a companion Weedon Grant Program. In the inaugural round, seven FSILGs received grants ranging up to \$1,000, and henceforth each semester there will be similar rounds of grants.

On Friday, December 2, 2016,

several hundred people gathered in the MIT Chapel to celebrate Reid's life, including President Reif and his wife, Christine; many MIT Corporation, Alumni Association, and MIT staff members; alumni; and students of Weedon's beloved fraternity Phi Beta Epsilon. After the chapel, most attendees went the Phi Beta Epsilon house, where Reid's fraternity brothers hosted on a warm reception. The PBE brothers offered tours of their magnificent house, which had a recent \$7 million renovation in large part due to Reid's help. There was a brief ceremony honoring Reid's contributions to the fraternity and the larger community. I was honored to be asked to speak and to give Reid's wife, Estelle, a framed picture of Reid, which was signed by dozens of his MIT friends and admirers, and framed by the MIT Hobby Shop. Estelle loved the portrait and insisted it be hung in the fraternity so that brothers who come after may better appreciate his legacy. The fraternity renamed the new tool-filled "makerspace" on the second floor the D. Reid Weedon '41 Makerspace and that's where his poster now resides.

Theta Chi alumni and all the others of the FSILG community can be grateful for Reid for all he has done for us and for MIT, and how his legacy continues to contribute in tangible and intangible ways, even after his passing.

Bob Ferrara '67



A Tribute to the Class of 2017

When this year's senior class joined Theta Chi as freshmen, they entered a small house often struggling to stay afloat. They joined a disparate group of individuals, and in four years they helped to build a cohesive and tight-knit community of brothers. Entering a small house pushed them into positions of leadership and responsibility; they rose to the occasion and have been role models and mentors to those of us who now succeed them. The class of 2017 had been one of strong and resolute men, and we wish them each the best in their future pursuits.

Henry Aspegren intends to further his MIT education, pursuing a Master's of Engineering here on campus and maintaining his connection to the Greek community by

(hopefully!) serving as the graduate residence adviser for another chapter.

Christian Richardson remains undecided between pursuing a doctorate in biological engineering at the University of Washington (Seattle) and remaining in the MIT-Cambridge area to pursue a gene-editing start-up.

Gustavo Montalvo is making up his mind between several options in the software technology industry. However, he intends to relocate to Chicago, Illinois.

Sean Lowder will be working next year for the U.S. Navy in Washington, D.C., as a part of Naval Reactors, the group responsible for everything involving nuclear power for the Navy.

Next year, **Oliver Dodd** will work full time at his biotech startup, Remora Therapeutics. Remora aims to create the first platelet-based drug delivery technology, to enable better treatment of a wide variety of conditions, including cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis, and more.

After helping MIT's squad to a close second place in this year's Team Ninja Warrior: College Madness competition, **Charlie Andrews** intends to take gap time and return to the individual American Ninja Warrior for a shot at the million dollar grand prize.

Carlos Cuevas hopes to enter the aerospace industry, pursuing a career in avionics.

"Each Brother Be He Far or Near": Regional Meet-ups

Over the past few months, we've begun piloting a series of regional gatherings for alumni in various cities across the country. We see this as a way to facilitate connections between alumni on a regular basis, especially among those who can't make it out to Boston for Alumni Weekend each April.

Our first at these were held in Baltimore and Boston in December, and in New York City in March, with others being planned right now in San Francisco and Chicago. The meet-ups are held at a local restaurant, and Theta Chi alumni of all ages get together to reminisce, reconnect, and make new friends. These events have been a lot of fun, gathering alums from many decades into a single room. See the pictures for a look at the smiling faces of those who attended.

Keep a lookout for further announcements about upcoming meet-ups around the country. If you are interested in helping organize a Regional Meet-up in your city, please let Alumni Corporation President David Baumgartner '08 know at davidsb@alum.mit.edu.



James Thompson '79, his wife Jane Thompson, Ryan Andrews '09, and Gina Norato at The Life of Reilly, which Ryan has dubbed the "Crossroads of Baltimore," for the Baltimore Meet-up.



Illka Suvanto, Rick Gander, Nikko James, Ken Schumaker, Dave Dewan, David Baumgartner, Dave Kress, and Bob Ferrara at Crossroads for the Boston Meet-up in December.



Oliver Dodd, David Rich, Eric Miller, Eric Hankwitz, Jim Titus, and Andrew Borkowski at the Regional Meet-up in Boston.

our alumni send their news

"Nice job getting the *Button* out," writes **Jim Poitras '63**. Get in touch with him at 3100 Springhead Ct., Saint Cloud, FL 34771.

Steve Piet '78 reports, "Retirement is great! No more kowtowing to politically-minded managers." Catch up with him by writing to 173 Spring Wood Ln., Idaho Falls, ID 83404

or by sending email to rxfn56a@prodigy.com.

MORE NEWS NEXT TIME ...

The strength of this newsletter depends in part on alumni news. Please fill out the enclosed newsform and let your brothers know what you've been up to for the next issue of *Beta Button*!

deceased

Dana W. Mayo '52

November 26, 2016

Richard A. Jacobs '56

December 18, 2016



(from right to left) Greg Wilson '79, Joe Healey '77, Owen Clements '84, Dave Summa '81, and Greg Alexander '78



Friends Remember Dick Jacobs '56

Brother **Dick Jacobs '56** passed away in late December. Dick was a great Theta Chi and MIT citizen, including service as the MIT Alumni Association president in 1993-'94. We were able to contact some of his friends before this *Beta Button* went to press and here are some memories they shared:

From **Nelson Disco '57** (and class of '57 vice president), "I remember that Dick had a great sense of humor, dry and very witty. I think he might have done some writing for *The Tech* or *Voodoo*. He was from Portland, Maine, where his father was editor of the newspaper."

From **Gordon Bell '56** (and a famed computer pioneer), "Dick and I were class of 1956 (the most sought after one), and Theta Chi roommates our first term. Over the four years, I enjoyed Tricky Dick's stories, warmth, and wry humor. After graduation we disconnected, except at the 25th and 50th. It's so good to hear of all the lives he touched ... not at all surprising."

From **Joe Collins**, longtime alumni association executive, "Dick was a special friend, beginning in 1976 when I joined the MIT Alumni Association. I remember his warm hospitality when I first came to Chicago, and Dick was President of the MIT Club there. He was always kind, gracious, and thoughtful in his many MIT leadership roles—Alumni Fund Board chair, president of the Alumni Association and member of the MIT Corporation, I felt comfortable sharing thoughts and ideas as we worked together on behalf of the institute."

Thanks to Nelson, Gordon, and Joe for sharing these thoughts.