



beta button

Beta Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity at MIT • Fall 2023



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

In a heavily contested election for MIT undergrad student body president last spring, Brother Andre Hamelberg '24 was elected president of the 55th Undergraduate Association by a margin of five votes. Andre ran on the slogan "Bring Back MIT," which addressed bringing back a sense of community and affordable, accessible food options to the campus. The mission that was put forth and that he leads by is "Empowering the MIT community. Advocating for diversity and inclusion. Enhancing student life." Andre was previously president of Theta Chi and decided not to run for re-election in an attempt to run for UA president. In his few months in office, Andre has been holding campus-wide community events that have helped engage the student body and allowed for students to interact with one another outside of the classroom and their living communities. Also, he has been working to be extremely transparent on the inner workings of the UA. He consistently provides updates surrounding progress on initiatives proposed to administration. Follow Andre's journey as UA president through their new instagram: @mit_undergradassoc.



Dankwa Buckle '24
House President



Andre Hamelberg '24
UA President

Save the Dates!

April 26–28, 2024:

Annual Alumni Weekend

May 31, 2024:

*MIT Commencement and Tech open house
at 528 Beacon Street*

June: A Good Time for Theta Chi Gatherings!

The month of June is a very propitious time for Theta Chi gatherings. The traditional open house right after the Friday commencement at 528 Beacon was back in full force after the pandemic. It was attended by a flock of brothers and significant others: some coming to MIT for Reunions, others just local alums and, of course, the graduating seniors and families. This is always a very special occasion.

After the open house, several Theta Chis from the mid 1960s headed to the condominium of Pat & Jim Poitras in the North End: Jim & Lois Anderson, Bob & Deena Ferrara, Bill & Betsy Jessiman, Bob Kurtz & Tasha Austin,

Lou Thompson, Chet & Diane Riley, and of course, Pat & Jim. They had a memorable time, with recollections from their days at 528 and with celebrating the 60th anniversary of the class of '63. They plan to do it again in another five years! The first picture below is taken from the Poitras's condo (note the Theta Chi flag on the back wall). The second was taken at dinner in a nearby North End restaurant.

Two weeks later, several brothers of the late '60s and '70s and their significant others spent the weekend at the Cape Cod summer home of Sandy and Nick De Cristofaro '71.



From left to right: John Stempeck '70, Val Livada '70, Harold Jones '67, Sue Livada, Deena Ferrara, Sandy De Cristofaro, Sheila Stempeck, Bob Ferrara '67, and Nick De Cristofaro '71.

Class of 74 Reunion: Wayne Stargardt Reports

I am definitely planning to attend the 50th reunion. I already have my hotel reservation. I have the jacket order form sitting right here, while I try to figure out how to verify my sizing. Even worse, in my zeal to reconnect with all things MIT after my retirement, I have volunteered for the 50th Reunion committee. I am not responsible for anything important, thankfully (like planning the dinners), but I will be making a bunch of pestering phone calls to you and others if you haven't already registered for the Reunion. You have been warned.

I am going to be in Cambridge three or four times this fall on MIT-related business and hope to visit the house.

I still have my Theta Chi mug (see picture). It sits in a place of reverence in our library (aka, my wife's office). (Reference the recent brief house tradition of brothers leaving their mugs on the dining room mantle. Guess this has stopped; the mantle is full.)

As for what is bringing me to Cambridge: first, earlier this year, I beat the ranked-choice voting system and got elected to the MIT Alumni Association steering committee (AASC). I know Buzz voted for me (or he says he did), and I thank any of the rest of you who did also. That means I came to Cambridge for the Alumni Leadership Conference (September 29–30), as well as for the AASC meeting where we picked the new board members (October 12).

But the real activity that has me focused on MIT is that I was selected as this year's president of the MIT Free Speech Alliance. At over 1,100 members, we are the largest independent organization of MIT graduates and still growing. I know that Buzz is a member, and shame on the rest of you for not joining. On September 14, we held our first annual in-person conference, and of course, I will be there as the leading figurehead. We are also launched our new website at the end of September, so I am staying pretty busy for someone who is nominally retired.

I will be at the 50th Reunion, and I truly hope to see all the rest of you... decked out in our scarlet blazers!

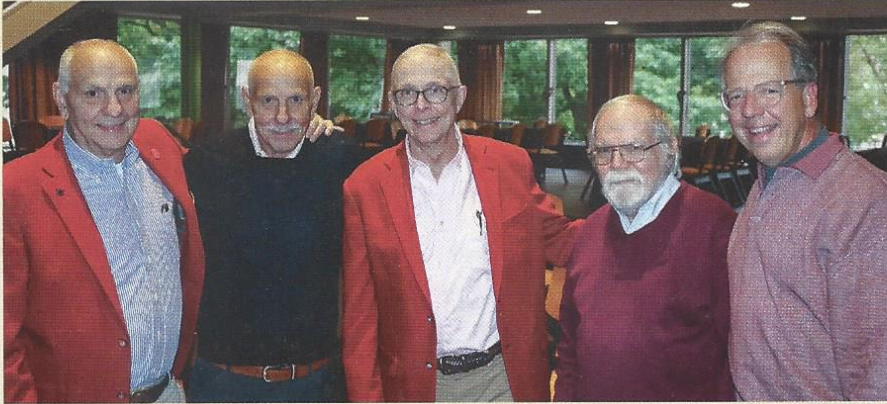
Brotherly regards!
Wayne Stargardt



This article is reprinted from The Rattle. Beta chapter alumni are encouraged to (re)read the unabridged version of the article, which appeared in the fall 2022 Beta Button. You can find a PDF of this and many other Buttons by visiting ox.mit.edu/alumni#button.

Beta/MIT Celebrates Chapter House Centennial

BY RYAN ANDREWS (BETA/MIT 2010)



*Our house is a very, very fine house:
Beta alumni return to MIT to celebrate
528 Beacon Street.*

From September 30–October 2, 2022, nearly 100 brothers of Beta Chapter and guests gathered together to celebrate 100 years of their chapter house—a century of brotherhood in the same four walls of its beloved brownstone at 528 Beacon Street. Rain and cloudy skies didn't put a damper on the festivities in Boston.

The weekend began with an informal reception, with alumni from the 1960s–2020s in attendance. Collegians were eager to show visiting alumni all the renovations that had been completed over the past 10 years, including a totally rebuilt roof deck and brand-new third-floor bathrooms and showers.

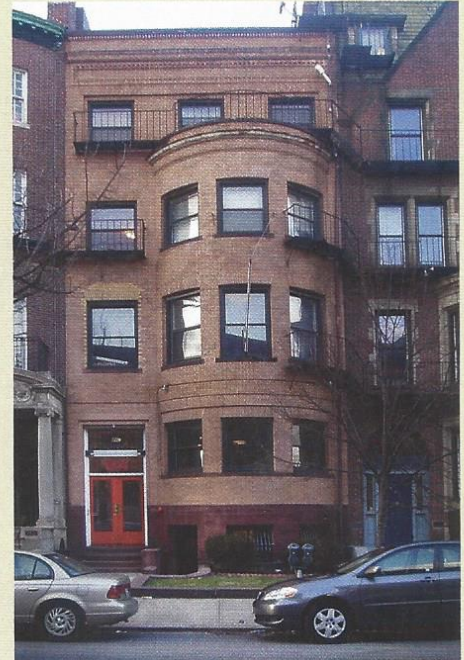
On Saturday, a small group of dedicated alumni toured the MIT campus. One of the newest additions to MIT is the nanotechnology laboratories. Outside of the lab space are large mosaics of the MIT Great Dome and the MIT seal. At first glance, these seem purely decorative, but at a closer glance, you will find the names of over 320,000 MIT faculty, staff, students, and alumni who were at MIT from 1861 to November 2020! After the MIT tour, the festivities continued with lunch at a local Mexican restaurant.

The highlight of the weekend was the cocktail hour and dinner at the MIT Lobdell Dining Hall attended by nearly 75 collegians, alumni, and special guests including MIT Associate Dean of Fraternities, Sororities, and Independent Living Groups Liz Jason, Sr. Editor of the *MIT News*, Alice Dragoon, **International Secretary Al Copeland**, **International Chaplain Dr. James Black**, **Chief Development Officer John Berghoff**, and *Rattle* Editor Ben Hill. Beta Chapter was represented by brothers ranging from the class of 1957 to the class of 2025.

International Secretary Al Copeland and International Chaplain Dr. James Black presented a resolution adopted by the Grand Chapter in honor of the Beta Chapter House Centennial and then bestowed a brick from Theta Chi's founding site at the Old South Barracks in Norwich, VT, to the officers of the Beta Chapter Alumni Corporation to install within the chapter house as a way to further connect Beta to Alpha Chapter and the Founders. Following some additional remarks, attendees returned to the chapter house for a dessert reception and additional reminiscing.

On Sunday, **Ricky Ramirez** (2009) and **Ryan Andrews** (2010) combined forces to cook a copious amount of high-quality brunch food, which was enjoyed by all.

Overall, the weekend was a great success, and we encourage all alumni to return home to 528 Beacon Street!



528 Beacon Street in Boston.



*International Chaplain James Black presents
a resolution from the Grand Chapter honoring
the chapter house's centennial.*



Rush

This past rush, the brothers had a lot of fun participating in various events and meeting some of the new faces at MIT. We started out with some house tours during kickoff, where we got to show the community the work that we put in during work week, two weeks prior. Some of our best and most popular events were paintball, Iron Chef, and Hot Ones.

Even though MIT as a whole had a rough year in terms of rush numbers and bids given out, we were still able to get seven amazing pledges!

Dankwa Buckle '24

Meet Our Newest Members!



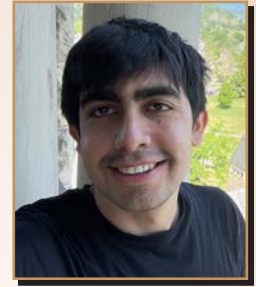
Maxwell Sun '26

My name is Maxwell Sun '26. I am studying mathematics with computer science. I am passionate about solving math problems and puzzles, and I like going to the gym.



Ashwin Prabhakar '27

Ashwin Prabhakar '27 is a freshman from Madison, Alabama. As a result of growing up near "The Rocket City," he plans to major in course 16-ENG. His hobbies and interests include building Lego sets, playing tennis, supporting Manchester United, and watching F1 races.



Ali Backour '26

I am Ali Backour '26. I am majoring in computer science and math. I enjoy hiking, taekwondo, and rowing.



Josh Randolph '26

My name's Josh Randolph '26. I am a course 2A-6, and some of my interests include robotics, linguistics and languages, playing sports, and watching Formula 1.



Claudio Banjai '26

My name is Claudio Banjai '26, an international student. I'm 18 years old (turning 19 soon). I was born in Portugal but lived the first 16 years of my life in a small country in West Africa called Guinea-Bissau. I transferred from Berkeley City College all the way to the other side of the country. In my free time, I enjoy playing video games, watching movies and anime, and reading manga. I'd like to pursue course 1 (civil and environmental engineering) at MIT and maybe to minor in computer science if possible.



Sebastian Losada '26

My name is Sebastian Losada '26, a sophomore studying course 18C (math and computer science). I like to go to the gym, to wrestle, to play Minecraft, and to participate in hectic shenanigans with my boys.



Mateja Vukelic '27

Hey, I am Mateja Vukelic '27, and I am a freshman studying mathematics and computer science. In my free time, I usually play video games or go rock climbing.

Brotherhood

As a fraternity, we decided that it is very important to focus our resources on having more brotherhood events rather than pure social events for the community. Because of this, we have a lot of fun brotherhood events planned for this year, as well as some that we have already had. From October 13 to October 15, the brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity went up to Maine for a weekend retreat, where we played lots of games, drank lots of water, of course, and enjoyed ourselves on hikes and in hot tubs. Some brothers also went to Ireland during a four-day weekend, where... let's just say they experienced a lot. Some other events that are planned for this semester are OXlympics, GoKarting, more random game tournament days, and others. We are very excited to bring the brothers together for more inclusive bonding.

Brotherhood Team '24



Theta Chi's in Maine.

September Boston Meetup

On September 28th, the Beta Corporation held a meet-up for Boston-based alumni at Cornwall's Pub in Kenmore Square. One of the highlights of the evening was the fact that the alumni were joined by nearly the entire senior class of 2024. Aside from our annual alumni weekend, this was the first large alumni event held post-pandemic, and by all accounts, it was a great success. Over a smorgasbord of appetizers and beverages, alumni and undergraduates shared their memories about their time at the chapter house and MIT, spanning nearly 60 years (1965–present). Since it was a Thursday night, there was also a fair bit of ribbing and discussion of the Lions versus Packers game that was on TV.

As we continue to emerge from the social isolations of COVID-19, the corporation plans to return to regular alumni events. If you are interested in having the corporation sponsor a meet-up in your area, please contact us at OXBetaCorp@googlegroups.com to discuss the details. Also, please mark your calendars for the Alumni Weekend and Commencement events that Beta Chapter will be holding in the spring. The details are on the front page of this Beta Button

We hope to see you soon!



Active and Alumni Brothers
at Cornwall's Pub in Kenmore Square.

Ryan Andrews '10
Treasurer

Alvin Richman '57: Thank you for the recent Beta Button and repeating my "time perspective" on the last page. There's a part of me that longs to revisit 528 Beacon Street. Perhaps in April. Is there space at the house for two or three days for alumni writers?

James Middlekauff '60: Retired. My company was acquired by Pfizer. Moved to Asheville six years ago. Enjoying the great weather and scenery. Have five adult children and seven grandchildren. I manage to work out at Golds Gym every day.

Richard Nixon '64: Raise the roof!

Terrance Chinn '65: God used my freshman year at MIT as a pivotal year in my life! I instead went to medical school and became a psychiatrist! But, I recall my time at Theta Chi with fondness and a bit of envy for all of you who have (or will) complete a course of study there! Wishing you my best.

Thomas Moebus '69: Became active during early COVID in several projects. Ricc-Guangai Scholars is a US-China virtual education program for high-school juniors and seniors that meets bi-weekly on Zoom since September 2020, aiming to create a cadre of cooperative young people to work on climate issues. Early success will incorporate and grow this year. Shift workshop was a six-hour virtual training for small business to help them survive and thrive through the pandemic. Delivered 15 cohorts of this program through Stonybrook U. Serve as president of a chorale society in Connecticut, where I live, and on several boards. In 2022, celebrated 20th anniversary of Octane, a So-Cal-based innovation ecosystem I co-founded to inject MIT DNA into that region. Octane has had nice success, helping launch more

than 1,500 innovation businesses, helping them raise \$4.6B in capital and creating 28,000 jobs in the region. Happy New Year to all.

Roy Lydon Jr. '73: Next year will be 50 years since I left the house in 1973. I retired from Raytheon in 2018 as director of Six Sigma and chief of staff for Global Business Services. My wife, Mary Paula, and I have four married children and 11 grandchildren. We still live in Norwood, Massachusetts, but also have homes on Cape Cod and in Bermuda. I still keep in touch with Dennis Intravia '73, Bill Billing '73, and Wess Grandmont '73.

Ronald Fox '74: Last Christmas, I attempted to fly out of Chicago to see my daughter, her wife, and the grandkids in Wakefield, Massachusetts. On Southwest—long story short—after several hours and a cab ride from Midway to O'Hare (\$80), my wife and I, but not our luggage, flew United into Manchester, New Hampshire, where our daughter picked us up. We stayed there five days but never did get our luggage. It got shipped back to our house two days after we got home. Our trip out there over spring break (she teaches physics at Malden High School) was fun and much less eventful. My daughter does have an MIT connection; she coached women's softball there for a couple of years! We had some good seafood meals while we were out there and saw my oldest brother, who lives with his old high-school girlfriend out on the Cape. I'm still working; the money is good, the health insurance is good, and it's not like I'm digging ditches. Apparently US-born network engineers are hard to come by, and we have government contracts that specify that only U.S. citizens can touch their systems. Still a scout leader, and still singing tenor for www.chicagomastersingers.org. Wishes for good health to all!



Chapter Eternal

We regret to inform you of the deaths of the following brothers:

Robert Pollard III '47

November 17, 2023

Norman Masse '54*

January 16, 2006

**Delayed notice from MIT*



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