

WOLVERINE SIG

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

MARCH 2012

IN MEMORY

We have recently learned of the deaths of the following brothers:

Harry Begley '33

Donald Stewart Jr. '42

Buel Morley '43

Philip Tinsley '46

Laurence E. LeClaire '53

Theta Theta mourns their passing, and sends condolences to their families and friends.

2012 Wolverine Football

Sept. 1:	Alabama (in Arlington, TX)
Sept. 8:	Air Force
Sept. 15:	Massachusetts
Sept. 22:	at Notre Dame
Oct. 6:	at Purdue
Oct. 13:	Illinois Homecoming
Oct. 20:	Michigan State
Oct. 27:	at Nebraska
Nov. 3:	at Minnesota
Nov. 10:	Northwestern
Nov. 17:	Iowa
Nov. 24:	at Ohio State

Home games in **bold**.

ON THE WEB

Alumni Web Site
thetatheta.com

Undergraduate Web Site
www.umsigmachi.com

Undergraduate Facebook Page
www.facebook.com/
MichiganSigmaChi

Twitter
@UMSigmaChi

HOUSE CORPORATION REPORT

Remembering Our Storied Past with an Eye on the Future

By David Train ΘΘ '83 (dtrain@ckgppw.com; 248-640-7657)

Things are going well in Ann Arbor. The brothers had very good pledge classes and the house will have 40 men living in next year. The brothers take great pride in the house and are very interested in our long chapter history.

Over 110 years have passed since **Orla B. Taylor '86** and **Orville S. Brumback '79** endorsed the plans to build and finance the grand house at 548 S. State St. The lot had been purchased from the University in 1899 for \$12,500 when enrollment was 3000 students. The architect, George D. Mason of Detroit, prepared the plans and a Sigma Chi Building Corporation was founded. \$40,000 was raised including a \$25,000 first mortgage, \$15,000 in \$500 bond notes, and all present alumni buying at least one share of stock at \$100 in the new company. The corporation was honored with nearly 100% alumni participation.

The house construction was completed in late 1912, and the house was prepared for its first academic year occupancy in fall of 1913. A beautiful dedication ceremony and banquet was held on October 25, 1913, and many alumni and fraternity dignitaries attended. The house will celebrate its centennial anniversary next year and we are already making plans for the celebration.

Today, the house is in excellent structural shape and our financial footing is good. However, improvements need to be made in both: there are

first floor and exterior renovations remaining to be completed and the \$600,000 mortgage debt is a significant monthly cost to bear. We have our eyes on the future and are working on plans to address these issues and create a legacy worthy of a grand centennial celebration in October 2013. In 1899, the brothers set the bar high with lofty goals and tremendous alumni participation. I am confident our current alumni can measure up.

"We have our eyes on the future and are working on plans to address these issues and create a legacy worthy of a grand centennial celebration in October 2013."

Please contact myself or **Todd Halsted '84** (todd.halsted@aon.com; 248-737-0778) if you can join or lead our initiative. The house will be hosting a Homecoming and House Historic celebration this fall to commemorate the 100-year-old structure and get in the spirit for the 1913 Homecoming and Centennial Rededication. We invite alumni, family and friends to drop by anytime. More information on both will be on our web site and in future *Wolverine Sigs*. Feel free to contact me with any questions or suggestions and thank you again for your continued support.

OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Fall 2011 Initiates

Chris Beindorff
Jacob Bradburn
Matthew Brandewie
Matthew Case
Curtis Chu
Grand Demeter
Jacob DerHagopian
Jameson Duggan
Ethan Fitzgerald
Himat Gill
Corey Greenawalt

Eric Huebner
Noah Katzman
Tayler Leamon
Matias Lopez
Michael Miller
Austin Nafziger
Benjamin Nagle
Christian Provenza
DeVante Rollins
John Russo
Bruno Stortini
Ian Sullivan

Connor Toohey
Evan Yee
Matthew Vallade
AJ Vivian

Winter 2012 Pledges

Adnan Ahmed
Jesse Gold
Lon Jewlis
Barclay Oudersluys
Dylan Young
Will Zech

ALUMNI PROFILE

A Lifelong Sig Who Almost Wasn't

Bill Swaney '60 Recalls How Theta Theta Prepared Him for His Career and How It's Still a Big Part of His Life Today, Despite Being a PDT Legacy

Bill Swaney '60 has a storied history with Sigma Chi, and is proud of the wonderful friendships that have lasted 50 years. Bill also has had the honor of induction as a Significant Sig, but ironically, Bill almost never joined Sigma Chi in the first place.

"Most of my friends had already committed to Sigma Chi (when I was in school)," he said. "I was a legacy for Phi Delta Theta, but at the last minute decided to pledge Sigma Chi."

Today, Bill is thankful for that last-minute decision, and reflects on how his life could be so much different had he not chosen Sigma Chi.

"Brothers should continue to engage with Sigma Chi in their alumni years to extend the bond of friendship they invested four years nurturing during college."

"My closest friends would certainly be different, and the leadership skills required at such a young age to be Consul probably had an impact on my career," he said.

Bill cites his election as Consul by his closest and best friends as one of his fondest memories of the fraternity. While the fraternity – and the position – provided him

with invaluable life skills, he also made some time for fun and games.

"During pledging, my pledge class and I kidnapped an active and sent him to Milwaukee with no wallet, no money and no credit cards," he said.

After graduation, Bill recognized the lifelong impact that Sigma Chi would have on his life, and organizes a reunion in Ann Arbor every two years. Brothers from his pledge class, the two classes ahead of him and the class behind him typically attend. This year, the group will reunite at the Michigan/Michigan State game.

"Weekends in Ann Arbor with the brothers and their wives are the best," Bill said. "Over the years the wives have bonded just as much as the brothers."

He encourages other brothers to follow suit to stay connected with Theta Theta in their alumni years.

"Brothers should continue to engage with Sigma Chi in their alumni years to extend the bond of friendship they invested four years nurturing during college," he said.

After graduation, Bill says he had a fantastic experience as Supply Officer on a



Bill Swaney '60

destroyer for his two years in the Navy because of NROTC at the university. Following that, he spent 35 years with the same company, building it from \$1.5 million in sales to \$850 million in sales, taking it public in 1991 and retired in 1998.

"Life today is good, I am in excellent health, have a fabulous wife, six great children and 17 grandchildren ages 8 to 24," he said.

He still recognizes his roots to

Sigma Chi.

"I would relive a weekend in Ann Arbor when the pledge class is initiated into the chapter because it captures all the special ingredients: bonding with new members, bonding with your active chapter during the ceremony and the closeness the ceremony brings to all the brothers," he said.

Bill's lifelong commitment to the chapter truly embodies the characteristics of being a Significant Sig. We are glad he made the last-minute decision all those years ago.

Connect with Bill at wcs@swaneyfamily.net.

CONSUL'S REPORT

Theta Theta Is Having a Successful Year

By Alex Hoffman, Consul, Theta Theta Chapter

With spring break fast approaching, the brothers of Theta Theta have been hard at work again balancing school, Sigma Chi and their numerous other respective endeavors. After another successful recruitment period led by **Matthew Sims**, Magister **Jeremy Summitt** has a solid corps of six pledges who are a few weeks into their pledging journey.

On the philanthropic side, Chairman **Adam Glanzman** has co-led a Relay for Life team with sorority partner Zeta Tau Alpha that has raised \$3,000 and counting for the

American Cancer Society. Theta Theta was honored to host the annual East & West Michigan Provincial Workshop for all nine chapters in the state at the University of Michigan, an event which couldn't have been nearly as successful without the efforts of past-Consul **Nick Lockhart**.

We hope all of our brothers have a safe and eventful spring break and return to Ann Arbor as energized as ever to round out the winter semester.



'40s

Fred C. Betzhold Jr. '43

(3124 Harriett Rd., Silver Lake, OH 44224-3112) The best memory I have from my Sigma Chi days is the J Hop in 1942, when my high school sweetheart stayed in the Big House during the fall and spring semesters. In 2009, I lost my wife of 66 years. She was my high school sweetheart. Life is hard without her. We went to many fall football games and stopped at the Big House.

Chuck Thatcher '43

(740 2nd St SE, Apt. 213, Milaca, MN 56353; elthatch017@gmail.com) It's hard to believe that I was initiated 71 years ago and have had so many wonderful "true-friendship" encounters with others in that time. My sincere thanks and regards to all those with whom I shared the grip. Each encounter was its own reward, but there was one which was exceptionally unique. It was some 30 or 40 years ago that the Theta Theta Sigs attending Workshop told me that the chapter had named the chapter dog Thatcher, after me. I rather doubt that any other Sig has ever been so honored!

What's New with You?

Share your news for publication in our next issue of *Wolverine Sig* and/or our monthly eLetter!

Ideas include:

- News of engagements, weddings, babies, careers, etc.
- Funny or fond memories from your Sigma Chi days
- Stories and photos of recent reunions with Theta Theta brothers
- The best pictures from your college years

Send your submissions to our editors at content@affinityconnection.com (mention SC Michigan), mail them to the return address on this newsletter, or upload them to www.thetatheta.com.

Winn L. Taplin Jr. '46

(4468 Calle Serena, (Prestancia), Sarasota, FL 34238-5641; winn.ej@juno.com) In 1946, I met my wife "On the Diagonal!" We got married in Ann Arbor in 1949 and are still married after over 60 years. Today I am the president of the University of Michigan Club of Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte, Fla. I am too old for this kind of responsibility.

Robert Harrison '49

(13405 NW Wax Myrtle Tr., Palm City, FL 34990; rharrison@troxel.com) I am happy the chapter has been reinstated and I look forward to the day when Sigma Chi will once again be a campus leader.

'50s

Joseph L. Hardig Jr., Esq. '51

(P.O. Box 488, Walloon Lake, MI 49796-0488; jhardigjr@aol.com) During my Sigma Chi days, I had great roommates: **Bob Macgregor '50, Phil Timvan, Bill Sadler '53** and **Fred Breidenback**. I remember "Snow Bowl" football game at Ohio State with Sigma Chi "Stick Williams." I also had wonderful professors and Pretzel Bell. Today, I am still practicing law, going to the Masters with **Jack Maddox '55** and trying a case in front of Brother Judge **Charlie Stark '55**.

David L. Neisch '51

(5605 Holze Circle, Waco, TX 76710-1276; mgobloune@aol.com) The best memory I have from my Sigma Chi days is dating my brown-eyed sweetheart since our first day of biology lab in 1947. The Former Ruth Oestreicher, an Ann Arbor girl, is now my wife of 59 years. I pray and wish that Theta Theta chapter could return to the greatness of our chapter in the not-too-distant future.

Dr. Don E. Woodard '52

(P.O. Box 270830, Ft. Collins, CO 80527-0830) My best memories from my fraternity days are great intramural athletic teams, lasting friends and great weddings.

Col. L. John Fortenberry, USAF (Ret.) '54

(446 Marion Drive, Niceville, FL 32578-1749; jonanom@aol.com) Sigma Chi was the most rewarding part of my college training. I am getting older and enjoying my wonderful family especially my dear wife of 55 years. She is an Alpha Chi Omega from Florida Southern. We have three children, 14

grandchildren and three great grandchildren. I like playing golf and shooting my age.

Gerald (Jerry) J. Prescott Jr. '56

(2724 Aspen Court, Ann Arbor, MI 48108-9778; jerryprescott1@aol.com) The front yard at the Sig house looks the best it has in years. I am delighted!

Rev. Frederick R. Trost '57

(1 Cedar Lane, Elkhart Lake, WI 53020 US; fredericksot@yahoo.com) I liked chapter meetings in the darkened basement with seating according to seniority. I remember Cosa Copvich, the cook, and her magnificent cinnamon rolls served with butter, and in the evenings the "Sandwich Man" would arrive. My favorite times were the wonderful fellowship, rush meetings and mothers' weekends. Recently I received an honorary doctor of theology degree from a Protestant Seminary in Germany for contributions to understanding between churches in Germany and the United States.

'70s

Douglas H. Wright '77

(9401 64th Ave. East, Bradenton, FL 34202-9621; douglashwright@eaton.com). During my alumni years, I have been distant from Theta Theta. *The Wolverine Sig* is my only connection. My membership in Sigma Chi makes me the most proud of the alumni. They are all very successful and caring people.

'80s

Kurt J. Le Vitus '85

(29 S La Salle St. Suite 940, Chicago, IL 60603-1562; levituslo@aol.com) The best memory from my Sigma Chi days is football Saturdays and walkouts (road trips).

'90s

Terrence R. Babe '98

(930 West Agatite Ave., Apt. 3, Chicago, IL 60640-4059; tbabeum@yahoo.com) I have too many memories to choose from during my Theta Theta days. Bid week was always exciting. Derby days and beach parties were always a great time. My wife, Carrie and I are proud parents of Tyler Reid, born March 14, 2011. We look forward to meeting up at Sigma Chi for pregame action this fall.

ALUMNI PROFILE

Sigma Chi: So Many Great Memories

Bob Zahm '85 is Proud to Be a Sig

The guys **Bob Zahm '84** shared his college years with make him the most proud of his involvement in Sigma Chi, saying, "Every time I hear about a brother and what they've done, I'm glad to be able to say that we're both Sigma Chis."

Why did you join Sigma Chi as an undergraduate? I joined Sigma Chi because I was impressed with the quality, interests and involvement of the guys in the house. While Sigma Chi has high standards and a gloried history, it is the guys with whom you will share your college years that are the reason to join.

What is the funniest memory from your Sigma Chi days? There are so many great memories, some of which are probably inappropriate at this point, because they center on a vice of some sort, however two ideas come to mind. There was the time **Fred Schuler '82** was driving golf balls inside the house. Of course, he had to repair the damage he caused. Then there was the beach party where we took turns eating gold fish – not sure, if

it was to impress the girls or to see who had the stronger stomach. My kids find it hard to believe that their dad could ever have eaten a living goldfish, let alone two.

What is the single fondest memory you have shared/will share with your children and grandchildren? I haven't shared it yet, but the part of our weekly chapter meetings where we all had a chance to say what was important to each of us – the comments ranged from the mundane to operational of the house to heartfelt thanks for some expression of brotherhood.

How do you stay connected with your brothers as an alumnus? I have not stayed as connected, as I would like. Turns out that **Dave Geraciotti '85** married the daughter of my neighbor – which we found out after moving to Rye. I have not been able to get the Christmas party timed right yet. There is also **Ed Steins '84** who moved in to the town next door to where we live. Our sons have been in cub and boy scouts together which has been cool.

What makes you proud about being a Sigma Chi member? It comes back to the guys – both the other brothers and my pledge class. There have been many accomplishments – large and small. Every time I hear about a brother and what they have done, I am glad to be able to say that we are both Sigma Chis.

How would your life be different today if you had never joined Sigma Chi?

Memories of my time at Michigan would not be as positive. Undergraduate was tough and Sigma Chi provided a respite that made a real difference.

Where has life taken you since graduation? What is new in your life today? There is nothing new today, but I am often traveling internationally for work and pleasure as well as contributions to my community. I also take a lot of pride in my family.

Connect with Bob at bobzahm@gmail.com.

David Nyren '86 Remembers the Long-Lasting Relationships He Made at Sigma Chi

Thank you to **David Nyren '86** for participating in this Q&A.

Why did you join Sigma Chi as an undergraduate? I had a great feeling about the guys who were in the house at the time. I knew one of the guys from my high school, **Jim Flanagan '85**, and he took me under his wing and made me feel very comfortable. I am glad he did.

What is the funniest memory from your Sigma Chi days? **Rob Bentley's '86** 21st birthday. There are too many details to go into, but it was memorable. Let's just say Mr. Goodwrench was Rob's buddy for the night.

What is the single fondest memory you have shared/will share with your children and grandchildren? I would share the overall great times I had in the house and the long-lasting relationships I made while at Sigma Chi. Having my dad, **Marvin Nyren '57**, and his buddies from his days at Sigma

Chi attend my initiation was a day I will never forget. To see how all of those guys stayed so close over the years, to this day as well, was very cool.

How do you stay connected with your brothers as an alumnus? With many of my friends not in the Chicago area, it is difficult, but we speak often and try to set up golf trips or get together at football games at Northwestern or in Ann Arbor. In Chicago we have the Sigma Chi golf outing.

What make you the most proud to be a Sigma Chi? I am proud of how it has provided me with such good friendships that I expect to last me my entire lifetime.

If you could go back and relive one moment from your Sigma Chi years, what would it be and why? I would relive Derby Days; it provided me with some of my best memories.

Where has life taken you since graduation? What is new in your life today? I am married to Carolyn and have three children: 17, 15 and 11. My oldest, David, just was accepted to the University of Michigan. It would be very exciting if he were to attend.

Who do you stay connected with in your alumni years? **Steve Fretty '86, Rob Bentley, Mike Shields '86, Braden Slezak '86, Mike Chew '86, John Christopher '87** and **Kreg Keesee '87**.

Why would you encourage other brothers to engage with Sigma Chi in their alumni years? It keeps your relationships from your undergraduate years alive.

What is the best thing about your alumni experience? Keeping the great relationships that we built through college going strong.

Connect with David at david@amdcapital.com.