



# B.A. DEGREE

Beta Alpha Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha  
at Pennsylvania State University

State College, PA  
Winter 2008-'09

## Comments from the Building Corp.

The members of the Building Corporation would like to thank the undergraduates for a dramatic improvement in the operation of the house and their high level of interest in becoming one of the premier fraternities at Penn State. The officers of the house are committed to continued improvement, rushing only those they believe will continue to carry on the mission in the future, and zero tolerance for those who are a negative influence to the chapter.

Special thanks to Henry Eickelberg, who has been our chapter advisor for the past two years. Henry was a Pike at Virginia Tech and is working on his law degree at Penn State. He has demonstrated a tremendous talent in working with the brothers and helping to set

priorities to make the house financially stable and a great place to be for the brotherhood.

I also want to thank the many alumni who have supported the "Preserving the Brotherhood Capital Campaign." We are still in need of about \$350,000 to finish off the remodeling of the house and another \$150,000 to set up an ongoing capital campaign. We are in tough financial times, but we would like each and every brother to see if you can help secure the future of your Beta Alpha Fraternity.

Fraternally,  
Rick Ward '68  
Building Corporation President  
215-628-8429 ext. 117

## Fall recruitment pulls in 15 quality men

The Beta Alpha Chapter's fall recruitment program was a success in every aspect of the word. Recruitment Chairman Matt Slamowitz '11 handed out 30 bids, and as he expected, 15 quality men accepted. His goal was to focus primarily on the S.L.A.G concept, looking for men who would make the Beta Alpha Chapter the best it could be. Compared to previous years, it can be said that Matt ran a very selective recruitment program. "There are a lot of nice guys out there who will show up to our rush events, make small talk with the brothers, and show genuine interest in our fraternity," Matt commented. "This year, showing up simply wasn't enough. I was considerably more concerned with quality than quantity, and I wanted to be positive that every man who received a bid embodied the qualities of a true Pike."

Last spring, the recruitment program suffered a devastating blow when only five men accepted their bids. Matt Slamowitz was committed to recruiting a solid pledge class in the fall, one that would have people forget about the previous program. In order to do this, Matt structured a well-organized program that was comprised of different and entertaining events. These events were designed to show recruits what being a Pike is all about. They were invited to watch Monday night football with the brothers, attend a semiformal steak dinner, barbecue with the brothers, watch a live performance of the fraternity's band, enjoy social events with sororities, and more. "At all of these events, I could see the interest growing in the recruits," said Matt, "and I could see them beginning to understand why they should join our fraternity."

Penn State's new recruitment policies created an interesting challenge to all fraternities on campus. In previous years, the recruitment program was practically a free-for-all. Freshmen would be informed of when recruitment started and ended and then bounce aimlessly from one fraternity party to another. At these parties, the brothers would take down their name at the door, then call them out to the next party or rush event. This year, freshmen weren't allowed at parties for the first two weeks of rush. Instead, fraternities were divided into zones, and during the first week, freshmen would go to whichever zone was scheduled for that day. They would mingle with the brothers and exchange information. This presented a new challenge to Matt and his committee because they had to create and plan events to accommodate the new program.

Fraternally,  
Matt Slamowitz '11

## Homecoming is a week of fun

Homecoming week is one of the busiest fun-filled weeks for Pi Kappa Alpha. This year, we were paired with the lovely ladies of Alpha Sigma Alpha. The week consisted of various competitions, float-building, social activities, the parade, and, of course, the football game.

Nittany Pursuit is a campus-wide scavenger-hunt competition. Racing building to building following clues and gathering items was the challenge. A couple of brothers and new pledges competed and finished the course in less than 40 minutes. This earned us third place out of all the teams in the field.

We designed the Homecoming float to reflect the New York theme. A twelve-foot tall Empire State Building along with a "Big Apple" was made during the course of the week. The pledges of Pi Kappa Alpha and Alpha Sigma Alpha put in some long hours

to create the float. With two trips to Lowes, a few thousand pomps, and four gallons of glue, we created a little taste of the Big City skyline on the float. In the parade, we had a sister dressed as the Statue of Liberty and a brother as King Kong climbing the Empire State Building. With music playing and people dancing on the float, we were a crowd favorite with onlookers cheering and taking pictures.

On game day, the brothers grilled hot dogs and burgers and prepared for the game. We all sat together and watched the Nittany Lions beat up on the Wolverines. After the game, much celebrating went on at the house, and good times were had with many alumni in town for the weekend.

Fraternally,  
Steve DeSandis '11



From left: Brothers Kyle Walsh '11, Steve DeSandis '11, and Joe Lutes '11 rode on the New York City-themed float during the 2008 Homecoming parade.

## Chapter works to set new fundraising record for this year's Thon

Following a record year for Thon, the brothers of Pi Kappa Alpha began this year with the most successful canning trip in recent years, raising \$16,000 in a weekend. With our new partners, the sisters of Alpha Omicron Pi, we traveled to different towns and stood in various places to raise money. Last year, we totaled about \$60,000 in donations, which went directly to help financing children's cancer treatments.

With our new partners, we hope to sur-

pass this number. We plan to have new rules such as mandatory canning trips and increase our letter-sending and phone-soliciting efforts. There are seven brothers on the Thon committee, each with a different responsibility. Because of their combined efforts, we plan on seeing great success this year.

Fraternally,  
Eric Vissichelli '09

# OUR ALUMNI WRITE

**Quentin E. Wood '48** sends greeting from Ponte Verda Beach, Florida. Drop him a note at P.O. Box 3657, Ponte Verda Beach, FL 32004.

Get in touch with **Harrie P. Bragg '49** at his new mailing address, 1987 Reading Blvd., Wyomissing, PA 19610.

"I have received the *B.A. Degree* for many years and thoroughly enjoy it," remarks **Norman Neilson '50**. "I think, finally, I have an opportunity to use it. My second wife, Susan Burkhart Neilson, died on July 3, 2008. She had just turned 70 years old on June 30, 2008, and we were married for almost 15 years. My first wife, Ruth Reed Neilson, is the one that my roommates will remember. She enjoyed coming to the house and was a frequent guest at our many social events. Those who remember me will remember Ruth as well. On a lighter side, **Quentin Wood '48** was in residence at the house the same time I was. He lived in the main hall, parallel to the street, in the center of the building. At that time, he had a 1940 or '41 black convertible Buick that was usually parked out front. He serviced and maintained his vehicle with a great deal of care. I specifically remember his putting antifreeze in the car early in the fall before temperatures dropped to -14 degrees F. I am currently living in a retirement community at the following address: 783 Spring Lance, Lansdale, PA 19446; telephone number: 215-368-0158. I spend my summers in Maine at 50 Spaulding Point Rd., Belgrade, ME 04917; telephone number: 207-465-4235. Please feel free to call."

**Dick Hufnagel '59** writes, "After 48 years in the investment business, I retired on April 15, 2008. Future plans are to travel more, day-trade my personal account, and look

for a way to stay involved in the industry, as the sedentary life is not for me! See you all at Homecoming!" Dick can be reached at 40 madison St., #105, Denver, CO 80206; huf1@comcast.net.

"I am entering my 10th year of retirement from teaching physical science," reports **Dale A. Habel '62**. "Most of my time involves music. I play first chair euphonium in two area bands and at two yearly conventions of the Windjammers Circus Band. I also sing in my church choir, a gospel quartet, and a barbershop chorus. Family, gardening, photography, and travel are also an important part of the mix." Catch up with Dale at 24 N. Marmic Dr., Holland, PA 18966; dacjh@msn.com.

**Peter G. Hoffman '63** resides at 10719 Keystone Bend, Austin, TX 78750. Drop him an e-mail at phoffman@austin.rr.com.

Find out how **Richard J. Ward '68** is enjoying his new home at 703 Abbeydale Ct., Ambler, PA 19002.

**Gary R. Feige '74** also recently moved. His new mailing address is 2015 Via Esplanade, Punta Gorda, FL 33950. E-mail him at gary.feige@us.nestle.com.

"I published my first book in August," reports **Bryan Christy '85**. "*The Lizard King: The True Crimes and Passions of the World's Greatest Reptile Smugglers*. It's been well-reviewed in *The New York Times*. Since leaving my law firm in 1995, I've been working for *National Geographic* and *Playboy*. I can be reached at [www.bryanchristy.com](http://www.bryanchristy.com)."

**Matt Brashears '95** (234 SW 129th St., Burien, WA 98140) writes, "I recently participated in The Mustache March with **Matt**

**Biagioli '95**. We grew mustaches every day in March. Biagioli ended up with a nacho libre and I ended up with a Wyatt Earp."

**Don Bodnar '99** reports, "I just bought a new home and am beginning some remodeling and an expansion to the house. I also rejoined Merrill Lynch as an investment associate earlier this year. Prior to that, I was working for a hedge fund as their director of business development." Drop Don a note at 2833 Georgian Dr. E, Atlanta, GA 30341; don\_bodnar@yahoo.com.

"Kara and I welcomed our third son, Colin, into the world on February 27, 2008," announces **James Sturges '99**. "He joins big brothers Jake (5) and Robbie (2)." Send congratulations to Jim and his family at 133 Claymont Dr., Collegeville, PA 19426; jsturges@comcast.net.

## deceased

*We regret to report the deaths of the following alumni:*

**John P. Livezey '31**  
January 2008

**Joseph F. Decker '38**  
March 5, 2008

**Richard L. Wamsley '42**  
April 30, 2008

**William J. Grancey '50**  
March 27, 2008

**Albert G. Dietz Jr. '69**  
October 15, 2007

## PiKA strives to capture Bischoff Trophy

The fall IM season is under way, and Pi Kappa Alpha has again established itself as a competitive force within the fraternity division. Over the past three years, Pi Kappa Alpha has finished in the top four among the overall IM fraternity division standings. This season, Pike has competed in every offered sport, maximizing our chances of winning the coveted Bischoff Trophy (fraternity all-year champion).

The 2008-2009 fall IM season started with softball. During this three-week league, Pike posted a 3-1 record and was at the top of the division. However, a late season loss eliminated us from playoff contention. Jumping from the diamond to the tennis court, Pike's performance in tennis singles was solid, with multiple brothers advancing past initial matches and competing deep into the tournament.

Flag football was next, and the brothers of Pi Kappa Alpha made sure to prepare for

this competitive sport. The first game was a true test of the team's endurance and will: A Pike penalty set up an Acacia passing TD, forcing college-rule overtime. After a Pike score, it came down to the defense to end the game; three tackles and one pass deflection later, Pike pulled out a clutch OT victory. Since the season opener, Pike has gone 2-1 and is currently competing for a playoff spot.

Pike has also participated in one-day sporting events such as golf and cross country. Pike earned fraternity points toward the Bischoff Trophy in both of these events. Volleyball is currently one game into the season, and Pike stands at 1-0.

Closing out the fall season strong is very important for Pike's momentum going into the spring 2009 season. As the fall 2008 IM season winds down, the midterm report looks impressive, with Pike earning IM points in every available sport.

Bobby McFadden '11

## Brotherhood prepares for Greek Sing event

Greek Sing has become an increasingly big part of fraternity life at Penn State over the last few years, and the brothers of Pi Kappa Alpha maintain a high level of seriousness regarding this event. This year, the brotherhood paired up with the sorority Sigma Kappa and the triad partner Alpha Sigma Phi. They decided on the Broadway classic, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, a play about a young woman trying to make her way in New York City during the Roaring Twenties.

After winning best short performance with last year's rendition of *The Wiz*, the brothers hoped to make this show better than the last. There were many rule changes to this year's Greek Sing, though. Many dates were pushed up and more events were added for all of the groups to earn spirit points. When the situation got more difficult, more than 10 brothers volunteered to learn the songs and dances to help keep the show running smoothly.

This year, the brothers qualified for a long performance and did well enough at the dress rehearsals to receive praise from all of the committee's judges. Anthony Sung '11 and Matthew Gases '11 served as chairmen of the event after performing as leads last year. Both brothers said that the hard work and commitment by the brotherhood and everyone else involved would make Greek Sing 2008 the best one yet.

Matt Gases '11



*The brothers of the 2008 Pi Kappa Alpha football team finished the season with a 4-1 record.*