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Phi Kappa Theta, Mass Eta
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
web.mit.edu/pkt/peck/

ΦΚΘ Strives to Set a Model Example for Greek System



Alexander Hsu '09,
President

Recently, a number of events in the Greek community have brought scrutiny toward fraternities, and I would like to talk about how this is affecting Phi Kappa Theta and how we are addressing this attention. I would also like to take time to highlight some of the achievements of our brothers over the last year.

This year, MIT hired a new Dean of Student Life, Chris Colombo, to oversee all aspects of MIT student life including the fraternity system. His office has been watching the fraternities with greater scrutiny than usual because of his unfamiliarity with our system. In addition, there have been several problems associated with a few of the other fraternities at MIT, including issues related to parties and house maintenance. Although all of these fraternities were punished by the Interfraternity Council's (IFC) judicial system, the damage had already been done in the eyes of the Institute, and the new dean had become alarmed at this sudden surge in problems this year.

In addition, several of these problems were brought to the attention of the Boston Licensing Board (BLB) and the Cambridge Licensing Committee (CLC), the city organizations that grant fraternities their dormitory licenses. As a result, the fraternity system as a whole has also received a large amount of attention from city inspectors and the local police. While no concrete consequences have arisen yet, this has alarmed many of the members of the IFC.



Dave Reshef '09,
Marshall Scholar

I want to stress that through all of this Phi Kappa Theta has remained an upstanding member of the fraternity system and will continue to do so. None of the problems in the fraternity system this year were due to our house or any of our brothers. Both the officers and house presidents of the IFC, as well as the Assistant Dean of Fraternities, Sororities, and Independent Living Groups recognize the level of commitment that PKT has shown over the last few years to maintaining a responsible community.

Nonetheless, PKT has taken extra steps in strengthening our relationships within the MIT community. I have met with the other presidents to discuss the problems at hand and how we can best respond within our community. We also met with Dean Colombo over dinner in order to discuss his concerns about the fraternity system personally. Finally, the house had MIT President Susan Hockfield and other MIT administrators over for dinner as a sign of our commitment to the relationship we have with the rest of the MIT community. Regardless of what happens over the next few months, as the atmosphere and attitude toward fraternities changes and shifts, PKT will work to ensure that we represent the best that Greek life can offer.

Despite these difficulties in the last few months, Phi Kappa Theta is also proud to celebrate its accomplishments since the last Peck. Last Spring, not only did we win the IFC's award dedicated for academic achievement, but PKT was also awarded the David Rogers Ideals Award in recognition of our outstanding commitment to the values and ideals that guide our fraternity.

This year has been an equally eventful as well. Ryan Castonia '09 won the Balanced Man Scholarship, an award dedicated to MIT students who demonstrate excellence in a diverse array of activities. This is the third year in a row that a PKT brother has won this award. In addition, we are proud to say that one of our associate members, Owen Derby '12, was also a finalist in the Balanced Man competition. Finally, the house would especially like to recognize and congratulate our brother Dave Reshef '08 for being awarded the prestigious and incredible honor of being a Marshall Scholar this year.

It has been a pleasure serving as PKT's president over the last year, and I look forward to seeing the house continue its fine tradition of excellence. If you have any questions or concerns about the house, I invite you to reach out and contact me at alexhsu@mit.edu.



Ryan Castonia '09
Balanced Man Scholarship

Founder's Day 2009

Thompson Island Picnic

Saturday, May 2
12:00pm-5:00pm

Annual Alumni meeting:
6:30pm at the House

Coordinate with your Pledge Class
&
Bring your family

Contact Erik Hjerpe with RSVP, Questions
ehjerpe@L1id.com (978) 985-3049

Alexander Hsu '09,
President

Alumni Board Mends Walls, Railings, and Downspouts

Last fall saw the completion of three more major physical plant improvement projects at 229 Commonwealth Ave. totaling more than \$60,000 worth of improvements. The alumni board had considerable maintenance done on the masonry in the front and rear of the building. The rear railing on the roof was replaced, and the fire escape was repaired in three places. Complementing the new railing, a new section on deck was constructed. Last, the downspouts in front and rear were replaced.

Repainting the front and rear walls

The bulk of the recent work was conducting extensive masonry maintenance on the front and rear walls of the building. The rumor that the rear wall was falling away from the building was untrue, but the mortar between the bricks had worn away considerably in many places. In some places, it had become bad enough that bricks were loose. This is typical and is caused by water run-off or general weathering. The walls needed to be repointed – where the mortar is cut out and then replaced – or else more damage might have led to bricks falling out of the walls. This would have been both dangerous and considerably more expensive to fix.

The repointing job overall turned out satisfactorily. The cost totaled \$44,000 since masonry work is labor intensive. The walls should not need attention for many years though. Although the project was repeatedly delayed for various reasons, it went relatively smoothly

once it begun as problems were resolved quickly.

Bringing the roof deck railing up to code

As something of a follow-up to replacing the roof in August 2007, the rear railing on the roof needed to be replaced. A new railing was built and mounted on the edge of the decking, which was moved closer to the edge of the roof. The new railing was also necessary to meet architectural codes and new building regulations. This project was bundled with necessary fire escape maintenance and was completed in September at the cost of \$10,130. The end result left the fire escapes and railing sturdy, functional, and elegant. Complementing this project, Rob Block '10, the house manager, led a work week project to build another section of deck on the rear of the roof.

Replacing the downspouts

One of the causes of the masonry damage was that the downspouts were in a horrible state of disrepair allowing water to run down the brick walls. The downspouts in front and rear were replaced to eliminate this problem. Pursuant to the Back Bay Historic District architectural codes, the pipes were replaced with 4" copper pipe which, along with labor costs, resulted in the cost of \$8,200.

Craig Wildman '03, Alumni Board

36 Window Replacements Slated for This Summer



Those seniors are just...so... butch... Anyway, see the piece of wood "locking" the window in the top-left corner of the picture? The windows have not locked properly in years.

The Phi Kappa Theta Alumni Board is planning two more physical plant projects for next spring and summer to finish all of the pressing exterior maintenance issues: repointing the chimneys and replacing the windows.

First, the masons working on the walls convinced me that the chimneys needed repointing very soon. One had even deteriorated to the point that it is visibly leaning over. We were not prepared to tack on \$18,000 to the cost of the masonry project last summer so this was delayed to the upcoming spring.

For many years, the windows have been in poor enough shape that

insulating some of the bedrooms properly was hopeless. In the last few years, deterioration has only accelerated. In many cases the sashes no longer slide or latch properly. The panes are broken on some of them. The frames on some of the sashes have fallen apart. Window casings and sills have rotted further. The casings have deteriorated to the point that we had missing casing pieces replaced just to get some of the windows through the winter.

The Alumni Board is currently working to finalize plans to replace almost all of the windows in the building. While many details still need to be settled, the general plan is to replace all of the windows in the bedrooms and all of the windows in the first floor except the large one near the pool table, which was replaced in 2003. Replacing the windows means replacing the wood casing as well as the sash. The windows to be used will closely resemble the current ones; there are only two choices that the Boston Architectural Commission will approve. The new windows will be much lighter and will not need ballasts to ease movement. They should also insulate the rooms much better.

Based on received bids, the project is estimated to cost approximately \$130,000. One driver for the high cost is that the windows need to be custom fabricated, and fabrication alone will cost approximately \$900 for each flat window and \$3000 for each curved window. The Alumni Board will take out a loan from MIT to cover the bulk of the cost of the masonry work and new windows. MIT's Independent Residence Development Fund (IRDF) will contributed money to cover 15% of the cost of the job. According to Nate Kelley, the Alumni Board treasurer, the Alumni Board is in a reasonable position to service debt on a loan of this size. The permitting process should commence this winter with window construction done off site during the spring. Installation is targeted to start on June 1.

Craig Wildman '03, Alumni Board

I Finally Made the Right Choice

Thursday, August 28, 2008. I anxiously woke up around 9:00AM, and I couldn't help but think, "God, am I really making the right choice?"

Maybe today will be the day that my life changes completely! I can lay here in bed, call Jacob and tell him that I'm no longer interested, but then I will always wonder, "What would have happened if I pledged Phi Kappa Theta?" Or I can shower, get ready to meet some of the brothers and possibly fall in love with the fraternity or completely hate it. Ultimately, however, I would never know unless I moved from beneath my sheets to find out for myself.

I met with Jacob that day and he introduced me to some of his "friends" who happened to be wearing cardinal-purple shirts, assembled on the steps in front of the Student Center. After introducing myself to about fifteen brothers, Jacob, Ken Warnock, and Rob Block walked with me from the Student Center to the house and it was then that I realized two things. First, this house is already not for me! I do not walk long distances, especially when it's really cold outside and windy while walking across the bridge. Second, walking to the house was a strategic attempt to get me better acquainted with brothers since I wouldn't be there for the first two days of Rush. As a sophomore, I started to evaluate some of the strategies of Rush and how obvious it was. As a freshman, I just didn't see it.

Although I tried my hardest to not get too close to the brothers of Phi Kappa Theta, my first impressions of them were genuine, down-to-earth people who shared some important interests of mine, such as Christianity, medicine, and music. I tried to convince myself, "Jason, this is what happened last year. You met one guy who was cool, and then I got roped in without really evaluating the environment." The

only difference this year was that at Phi Kappa Theta, it wasn't just one guy with one common interest. I kept meeting more and more brothers who I could talk to without having a stagnant conversation. As the week progressed, I honestly fell in love with the house. I wanted to be stubborn and tell myself to slow down and attend other fraternities. But by Wednesday, I was already determined to become a part of the fraternity, Phi Kappa Theta, and I couldn't fight it anymore.

Phi Kappa Theta offers an environment where I can grow in the different aspects of my life that I hold closest to me such as my religion and faith, my academics and career pursuits, and the growth of my character. I have brothers who serve as role models to inspire me to grow as a Christian. I have brothers in the house who, just by their presence, cause my optimism to flourish because their happiness is contagious. I have brothers who by their achievements and successes, motivate me to become a better student and role model for others. What Phi Kappa Theta has done for me is placed me into an environment where God can now do a new work in my life, expanding my dreams and gifts in unforeseen ways.

As a pledge of Phi Kappa Theta, I have held the ideals closely to me, as my parents have raised me in a similar fashion, though not explicitly stating each ideal and its definition. However, even after leaving home, I can still look to the ideals and the way I uphold them as a maturing process. I believe that even after I have been initiated into the fraternity, my journey to become a better person, abiding by the ideals that represent a life of righteousness through Jesus Christ, will take a lifetime to do so. Phi Kappa Theta has become more than a fraternity to me but a lifestyle, an eternal commitment to myself, my family, society and my lord, Jesus Christ, to whom be glorified.

-Jason Ashe '11



Jason Ashe '11 wears his letters with pride.

The Old German Beer Comes of Age

At Phi Kappa Theta, we learn deep respect for the history of the fraternity and those who came before us. We seek out lore from our elders about how things were, and we occasionally go digging around the house for clues regarding times past. One such discovery in the 1990s revealed a treasure in the form an old bottle of beer called "Old German Beer." Not just any beer, it had an ancient message on it that read as follows:

*And there descended from heaven an Angel of Glory,
And it did speak unto J³ in a most heavenly voice,
And it spoke, "In 20 years you must this froisbiere drink"
And there was much rejoicing.*

*This beer is a holy relic. Do not remove it or otherwise molest it,
lest you face the wrath of God."*
Mo 9/8/88

The brothers were first ecstatic to score such a great archeological find. Once the excitement settled a little, many questions emerged. Who is J³? Who is Mo? Didn't they have better taste than to buy Old German Beer brand? The greater question emerged: "Whatever shall we do with this holy relic?" Fearing the wrath of God, the brothers placed it on the mantle above the fireplace in First Rear and protected the relic

with their lives. And waited for the 20 years to pass.

Erik Hjerpe '83 helped us younger folks out with filling in some of the mystery. As he recalls, Old German Beer was used in the Mug Lift of 1978. He reminisced that it was "really nasty swill that people were forced to drink." Not all of the beer was consumed though. This bottle was discovered behind the Chapter Room door in the mid-1980s. JJJ was John Joseph Juliano '86, and Mo was John "Mo" Lester.

The details of what exactly happened that night at 229 Commonwealth Ave. remain obscured, but two facts are clear. First, John Juliano must drink the beer after 20 years. Second, that 20 years has now passed. Let this Founder's Day, Saturday May 2, 2009, be the day that John Juliano pops the top of this ancient brew. Let the brothers of that era come back to join him. Let us all rejoice in the fruition of the ancient message.



The bottle in question

Craig Wildman '03, Alumni Board

Hey all you Peckers, Way to Go!

John Stenard '80 writes glowingly on the Phi Kappa Theta brotherhood

I saw the latest e-Peck newsletter and was delighted and very touched to see such brotherly action.

Ben, your generosity in dedicating the new front door is pure class. It is the perfect exemplification of the life-long bonds of our brotherhood. You honor Erik directly, and you honor all of us and our Brotherhood indirectly, by your shining example. It was very generous of you, and very fitting, to honor our esteemed brother Erik for his twenty-plus years of tireless, visionary, and inspirational leadership. Way to go!

Erik, Ben's tribute is right on. I personally view your leadership, hilarious wit, and vision as the main reason that Mass Eta of Phi Kappa Theta is

the exceptional Chapter that it is today. You have captained it through all manner of challenges and stresses imposed by MIT policy, economic pressures, the Back Bay neighborhood, and the aging physical plant, and have overcome all obstacles, leading our Chapter to the fine place that it is today. The results speak for themselves - three Founder Awards for the Best National Chapter, citizenship awards from MIT, an above-average Chapter GPA, excellent Varsity athletes and IM teams, a large and vigorous undergrad enrollment, a lively undergrad social schedule, and strong relations between the Chapter and the matriculated brothers. Perhaps most important of all, through your leadership and initiative, Mass Eta of PKT is a great place to mold and develop young men into responsible, high-functioning members of the larger society. No one could have done it better, and I join Ben and all the other brothers in thanking you, immensely.

PECK!

YITB, JKS



The new door stands as a symbol of the brothers' love for the house and for each other.

Mass Eta Alumni Write from Near and Far

BOB L. MUHR '64 writes that "I attended MIT for one year in 1964 and got a BSME degree. I transferred from RPI (PKT Sigma) where I was in management engineering. During my year in Boston and at MIT, $\Phi K \Theta$ was a bastion of sanity. I'm grateful for the socialization." Please write him at his home in California: 5561 Camino Cerralvo, Santa Barbara, CA, 93111, or call him at 805-964-7330.

ABRAHAM HSU '05 would like some brothers to visit him, or at the very least get some mail in his mailbox. He is living at 1 Settlement Rd, Ithica NY, 13760. You should probably contact him before you arrive, so he has adequate time to clean up his place—his number is 617-515-1426 and his email is madentai@alum.mit.edu.

PHILIP M. LALLY '48 just attended his 60th class reunion at MIT. He reports that several MIT fraternities were open for alumni visits, but sadly, PKT was not among them. He is sorry to say that the last time he had visited 229 Commonwealth was in 1953. Contact him at 728 De Soto Dr, Palo Alto, CA, 94303. You can also call him at his home phone 650-321-5472.

VITO "BUDDY" CARAVITIO '62 can be reached at his address: 2912 Eldon Dr., Uniontown, OH, 44685. You could also drop him a line at 330-699-0382, or email him at v_caravito@neo.rr.com.

JAMES CHOUNG '95 is now a published author! He writes: "Hey brothers, I have a new book that has been published titled *True Story*:

A Christianity worth Believing In with InterVarsity Press." Check it out on Amazon if you are interested! You can also contact him at his address: 9114D Regents Rd, Lo Jolla, CA, 92037. You can also call him on his phone 858-344-0682 or email james.choung@gmail.com.

ALPHONSE GRAFFEO '39 is pleased to report that he celebrated his 90th birthday on September 12th. He is in good health and recognizes each day as a gift—he hopes to be here when he turns 100! He sends his best to all the brothers at PKT. Suffice it to say, we also hope to see him in 2018! Alphonse lives close by to PKT in Medford: 25 College Ave, Medford MA, 02155.

ROMAN ULANS '36 says that "I continue to 'hang on.'" He still lives at 8 Almond Cluster, Doylestown, PA, 18901. Contact him at 215-340-7196 or riulans@alum.mit.edu.

DAVID HILDE '06 has a whole bunch of new information to add about his current whereabouts. He is now living at 6363 11th Rd N in Arlington, VA 22205. He is working as a Development Associate for Clark Reality Capital. If you would like to contact him (and he really hopes you do), shoot him an email (david.hilde@gmail.com) or call him at 240-672-4723.

AARON WIPPOLD '05 would like to announce that he has finally wrested the reigns of "The Peck" from **CRAIG WILDMAN'S '03** clutching fingers. Under this new regime, expect feature stories to highlight the history and brotherhood of our house—thoughtfully researched and painstakingly combed through for typos and grammatical errors. However, he will need submissions from alums... think of it as an historical preservation project. If you have a good story about house lore (Pranks, traditions, favorite memories of brothers, etc.) please send them to me at aaron.wippold@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

We Mourn the Passing of...

We regret to report the passing of **BILL GLICKMAN BUG '84** on May 20, 2008. Bill was employed by the University of California as a consultant on leading-edge work in the field of neuroscience, bioinformatics, and the semantic web. Bill is survived by Amy Ritzenberg Bug (MIT PhD '84), sons Murphy (18) and Moses (11), brother Joel Glickman, and mother Terry Wallace Glickman. He was a loyal PKT brother and he will be missed.

PAUL HURNEY '49 regrets to inform us on the passing of his wife in 2006. He now lives in Assisted Living Youville Place in Lexington, MA. He is the brother in law of **MATHIAS LEUPOLD '49**.

Please email Aaron Wippold '05 aaron.wippold@gmail.com with comments about The Peck or with requests for your picture or letter to be published.