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Our Alumni Corporation President Examines Recent Events

Dear Brothers:

As MIT's independent living groups (ILGs) dive into the uncharted waters of a completely revised set of rules by which new members must be recruited, it is becoming apparent that not all fraternities will flourish as in the past, and some may indeed perish. Reports following MIT's "official" rush period of late September/early October cite pledging rates across the spectrum of ILGs as high as 21 individuals in one case but as low as no individuals in other cases—not a staggering triumph for the Greek system.

Where does PKT fit into this picture? Before it was over, 14 people had accepted the bids extended to them and pledged our fraternity! Our undergraduate brothers did a remarkable job of planning and working around the constraints of a new rush system, and I congratulate them on their perseverance, spirit, and success. They have done their part in ensuring the short-term survival of our house.

Now it's our turn to step up to the plate. The long-term survival of PKT depends on the continued generous support of alumni. Despite the past success of our undergradu-

ates in filling the house with top-rate new brothers every year, they had to endure a significant increase in rent this fall—an increase driven by soaring property taxes and insurance rates and the maintenance costs of an aging physical plant. Thank you all for your support in the past, and please continue to consider Phi Kappa Theta among your charitable causes.

Yours in the bonds,
Erik D. Hjerpe '83
Alumni Corporation President

Mass Eta Brothers Overcome Challenges Of Revised Rush, Look To Future

Since the time nearly five years ago that the MIT administration directed that all freshmen live on-campus, everyone had been waiting anxiously for the fateful 2002 rush. Planning began nearly two years ago with the launch of the non-residential pledge program. Within the past year alone, we revolutionized our recruitment approach. However, with an entirely new two-week format, elimination of the Clearing-house system, and the burden of schoolwork, nobody knew what to expect. The odds were certainly stacked against us, but our strength and resilience yielded 14 topnotch pledges.

Learning from the 2001 rush, PKT left a strong impression through pre-orientation and orientation programs. With Nathan Meng '04 as the co-chair, the Freshman Urban Program featured Alexander Chang '02, David Von Strohm '03, and Benjamin Su '05. Not to be outdone, Christopher Vu '04 participated as counselor for the enormously popular Freshman Leadership Program. John Suh '03 and Kaliq Chang '05 pitched in as orientation coun-

selors, generously sacrificing their time to enhance our rush. So, even before classes started, PKT had become a household name among the newly entering class. PKT's Smoothie Night, held during orientation, turned out to be a huge success with over 200 guests (roughly the size of one of our small parties).

With orientation complete, PKT now entered a new interim period, a consequence of the new rush's officially starting on September 20. To first promote the Greek community, PKT participated in Greek Week 2002. However, because of the lack of restriction on recruitment in the past, other fraternities continued to meet and interact with freshmen openly. By now, classes had started,

and the logistics of organizing recruitment events with strong showings became a bit more complicated.

To expand our list of freshman contacts, we held several small social/rush events. Following tradition, PKT opened the school year with an amazing Friday the 13th party. Less than 12 hours later,

PKT participated in a Texas barbecue with Chi Phi and McCormick (the all-girls dorm), establishing a strong campus presence. Social Chair Kaliq Chang '05 organized this stunning one-two punch, which left freshmen begging for more, setting the stage for the official recruitment period.

With the new format, rush 2002 was scheduled to begin on September 20, with bidding on October 4. Largely unstructured, the new system included few restrictions and placed the impetus for rushing on fraternities. Whereas the old system involved large groups of freshmen taking the initiative to explore the fraternities, the new format demanded that fraternities now take the initiative to seek out prospective recruits. Even the traditional Killian Kickoff was abandoned for a smaller Kresge Kickoff. So with the words "Let the rush begin!" rush 2002 commenced.

At PKT, the larger recruitment events were held on the weekends, with smaller, more personal events during the weekdays. Recruitment featured, among other events, the traditional lobster dinner, going to play mini-golf and use batting cages, and Italian dinners. The stream of freshmen through the house was steady, but the highlight of the weekend came on Saturday night. After a scrumptious hickory barbecued ribs dinner, the Jim Show provided entertainment. After the show, PKT managed to keep the freshmen occupied through the entire night

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The new '06 pledge class.