



The Prodigal Canard

July 2003

Theta Sigma Tau/Sigma Nu Alumni Association

Volume 46

414-962-1469

Alumni Site News

Some changes were made to the alumni site in the last couple months. The major change of note is that the menus have been rearranged to better indicate which pages are "members-only." In making this change, a couple new pages were added and a couple pages were altered, permitting public and private members' pages, traditions pages, and relics pages. This allows us to display house and member information of a "sensitive" nature to members and alumni.

We have also added to the menus a link to "Tau-ster", the page where you can find pledge songs and other music that tends to be (or has been in the past) popular with the house and its members. This page is "members-only", of course, to minimize the possibility of the RIAA getting salty with us. Submissions of music that would be appropriate for Tauster are welcome. Hmm... that name may be slightly dated, should we call it Tau-Zaa now? ;-)

Of course, updates, corrections, and additions have been made frequently to the private Members' Directory, including pictures of some of the latest microTaus. If you would like changes or updates made to your own directory entry, let us know.

As always, submissions of pictures of house relics, additional info regarding traditions and relics are always welcome. So are suggestions for additional parts to the website.

We are still hoping to set up a "Forums" section of the site, but other demands have been keeping us from working on that. Not only does it entail setting up a much more dynamic interface for part of the site, but it will also necessitate individualized user names and passwords, which will take time to create and assign.

Tau/Nu Traditions: Fireside Chats

Stealing their name from the weekly radio addresses broadcast by President Roosevelt, Tau is well known for hosting their own Fireside Chat series. Faculty, administration, and other guests are invited to come to the house and hold informal discussions, usually preceded by some form of prepared opening presentation.

Recent guests have included: then-President Paul Ranslow talking about campus atmosphere; Dr. Bob Wallace of the Biology Department giving a pre-spring break presentation, complete with slides, on STDs; and Dr. Brian Smith of the Religion Department whose chat was called *Why Religion?* (and was the biggest crowd-drawing chat of the year).

The Fireside Chats are popular amongst the faculty and administration as they offer an opportunity to meet with students in an informal setting. It is also a forum in which the presenter can address topics that may not fit in with or be appropriate in the classroom setting.

The Fireside Chat series tends to range from highly successful years with many chats to years where no chats may be held at all. This is usually dependant upon the character and ambition of the person holding the office of Fireside Chat Coordinator.

Up until the early 90s, when the fireplace in the lounge was bricked up, the Fireside Chats were often held at the side of an actual fire. These days a video-tape of a fire in a fireplace is played on the 72" projection television. Perhaps they should be called Bonfireside Chats?

Latest Alumni News

"I was thinking that if I rubbed it enough it would get shiny and I would see myself in your pants."
- Tric Roll (02)

"I heard 'penis' and I had to come!"
- Lexie Natkin (01)
joining a conversation

"I think, as a matter of principle, one should always avoid eating one's friends."
- Rex Harrison as Dr. Doolittle

Chris Boydston (87) wrapped up work on her law degree in May. At the end of July she'll be taking the bar and will be an honest to goodness lawyer!

Dav Delikat (91) and his wife, Jody, along with their daughters Lydia and Myra, welcomed the newest addition to their family: Reyna Eleese. Reyna was born May 11, 2003.

Ken Dillon (03) will spend the summer in River Falls, WI, as a member of the St. Croix Valley Summer Theatre Festival at UW-River Falls. His professional debut will be on July 9. He is booked to appear in *You Can't Take it With You*, *State Fair*, and either *Greater Tuna* or *Story Theatre*. Once the festival's eight week run is over he will return to his new home in New Berlin where he will room with Brook Compton (01).

Sarah Hoffman (02) has "moved to Milwaukee, WI, where she is living with her boyfriend, Adam Terry (one of those loser Marquette alums), and working for Einstein Noah Corp."

1LT George Johnson (00), who has been with his army unit in Qatar since before the start of the war will be coming home with his unit as this goes to press. George's unit never entered Iraq, being assigned to serve as an emergency response team at the base in Doha, Qatar. They were to be ready to rapidly respond to emergencies such as fires, chemical attacks or contamination, etc. George was interviewed by Matt Lauer for the television program "Today" back in late March. George was showing the interviewer some of the steps involved in safely decontaminating a person in the event of a chemical attack.

Steve Johnston (93) is engaged to be married to Nicole Enders in October of 2004.

Rob Kinyon (98), who married Jaime Sherer on November 30 of 2002, announces that they are the proud parents of William David Wallace Kinyon, born June 3, 2003. Rob and Jaime were already parents, Jaime having brought with her to the marriage a son, Hunter (8), and twin daughters, Katie and Alex (5). Rob has taken a job with Bank One in Columbus, OH, as an analyst / developer. In February Rob and Jaime bought a home in Marysville, just outside of Columbus.

Matt Luepke (98) and his wife, Jamie, welcomed their second daughter, Lillian Mae, to their family on March 6, 2003.

Julie Johnston Milavec (91) reports that the past year has been great as far as work and family but less than ideal for health for her family. Julie's husband, John, has reinjured his back and so is dealing with a lot of pain. Their daughter, Rachel, has nystagmus, a neuro-motor dysfunction of the optic nerve. Rachel regularly sees a pediatric ophthalmologist and works to strengthen her eyes through exercises and drug therapy. Julie herself had to contend with surgery to get rid of cervical dysplasia: cancerous and pre-cancerous cells. The surgery was a success, and Julie is doing fine.

Catherine and Kimberly Plane, the microTaus of Mark Plane (86) and Eileen (O'Leary, Plane) Dolan (85) graduated from high school in June. Kim plans on serving with Americorps for the next year or so and then will be off to college, perhaps at UCLA, to study Marine Biology. Cathy is off to Suffolk University in Boston this fall to major in Communications.

Drew Rich (03) is living life as a nomad these days, traveling often between Downer's grove, IL, and Richland Center, WI. At the end of July he will be heading to England to spend three months working on an archaeological excavation.

At Ripon College on April 17, the Phillip A. Waitkus Technology Learning Laboratory was dedicated. Philip was a Sigma Nu, class of 1961. The laboratory is funded by the Frank G. and Frieda K. Brotz Family Foundation in Phillip's honor. It is located in a lower level of Lane Library in what was formerly an art gallery.

Letters from the Front:

Emails from 1LT George Johnson (00),
Serving with US Army forces in Doha, Qatar

Saturday, 5-Apr-2003

Subj: Wonders of Modern Technology

Um...did anybody know you can sometimes see through people's clothing with thermal imaging? I didn't...I thought it went up there with x-ray glasses and that shit. But in certain conditions thermal units can um...do that.

So we are doing a training decon at night. So we set up one of our thermal imaging units so we can see the whole decon despite the darkness. It looks like daytime, sometimes better. So I am looking through the thermal sight and there is this fast moving heat source shaped like a jogger running through the middle of my decon. Turns out this female was out for her nightly jog and ran through the middle of the decon line. OK number one that is rude. But number two she never asked what we were doing and why we were in our gear. I rank that as stupid. Usually when people go past my platoon training they look kinda surprised and slightly embarrassed/scared. I think it is a lot like the expression on a person's face when they are having that dream that they are at school and suddenly realize that they forgot to put clothes on that morning. Nope this lady sails through without a care in the world.

So I am watching her run through when I notice that her umm...well let's just say modern technology can be kinda neat. Now before anyone runs out and tries to buy one of these things let me caution you that thermal imaging technology of the quality we are talking about is very expensive. In addition you have to have the right combo of temperature, target temperature, clothing types and many other factors to get that effect. I dunno maybe I am a perv but it definitely was out of the ordinary and made the evening noteworthy.

George

Saturday, 19-April-2003

Subj: Playing with glue

We had our first Fire Department HAZMAT call out last night. Over in one of the warehouses they spilled a couple of barrels of this stuff you pour on dirt runways to keep the dust down. It looks like Elmer's glue but smells awful. It was not really toxic but the warehouse crew saw a couple of barrels of crazy smelling white stuff burst open on the floor and ran like crazy then called us. They did the right thing though they should know what it is though before they pick it up. We were throwing everything in the trucks, SCBAs, dry sweep, shovels, Level A suits (the big blue gummy suits). So we got the call around 2130 and got done at midnight or so. Oh well. All in a days work.

Friday, 25-April-2003

Subj: Fire

We had our first real fire last night. We were done for the day, it was about 8:15 PM when we got a call of the electrical boxes in one of the buildings smoking and spitting sparks. We raced to the scene (it was across the street) and lo and behold the people in the building had turned off the power and zapped the flames with a hand-held extinguisher. My soldiers were crestfallen. They really wanted to take one of the 3000 pound truck mounted extinguishers and bury the machinery room under a couple hundred pounds of Purple-K. PFC Kirby was also pretty keen on Axing the door open. Unfortunately the door was already open.

Still it was good practice, the soldiers reacted very fast and were in their bunker gear complete with SCBAs and hoods in no time. Good training.

George

“...did anybody know you can sometimes see through people's clothing with thermal imaging?”

Letters from the Front (continued)

Friday 25-April-2003 - Subj: ANZAC Day

Today is ANZAC day. My platoon lives with the Australian contingent we all share an 80 man tent. They invited me to their ANZAC day observance this morning.

On April 25, 1915 the Australian New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed at Gallipoli in what is now Turkey in the first large amphibious attack of the 20th century. They were locked almost immediately in vicious combat with the soldiers of the Ottoman Empire. The prize was control of the Dardennelles,

In the fighting to follow the ANZACs had over 6000 troops killed in action before being forced to withdraw from Gallipoli. But they had established a reputation for being determined and resilient fighters. By the end of the war ANZAC's battle record was a heartbreaking proof of its loyalty to the empire. With a population of 4 million, Australia sent 600,000 men to fight in WWI. 60,000 would never return. Including wounded and missing, 400,000 of 600,000 troops would become battle casualties.

This reputation of service has continued. The ANZACs fought in WWII, Malaya, Korea, Vietnam and the two Gulf Wars. They have been in countless peacekeeping operations including East Timor, Rowanda, Bosnia, The Sinai Peninsula and Cambodia. You don't hear about it much but the Australian Army has been very busy ever since its inception. Nor was WWI its first action. Australian forces fought in The Boxer Rebellion and The Boer War.

The ceremony this morning included an honor guard, the Australian national anthem, a prayer and comments by the head of Australian forces in the gulf. We also had a "gunshot breakfast" which is biscuits and coffee laced with rum (given to soldiers before going over the top in WWI to give them courage). In typical Australian fashion there was a certain streak of irreverence even in this solemn event. The final part of the ceremony was playing "2 Up" A gambling game of coin tossing with bets made on the outcome. During the most solemn day in their military a bunch of senior officers and non-coms were all shouting and laughing and tossing large sums of money around over the flip of some coins. It was great fun.

Unfortunately there were no Kiwis (New Zealanders) at the ceremony today. They elected to sit this war out. In further observance of this solemn occasion the Aussies are going to Bar-B-Que and drink beer tonite. I like these guys.

George

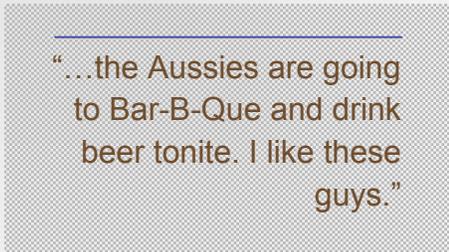
Thursday, 1-May-2003

Subj: More fire

When it rains it pours. After that electrical fire the other day we have been deluged with missions. We took care of a pilot who hit his head preflighting a helicopter, did a couple of fuel spills (no big deal just time consuming) and put out two dumpster fires. Those are the most fun. Some moron tosses a cigarette in a dumpster and the next thing you know all the trash is burning. We have to wear our air packs because most garbage these days is plastic.

The aerosal cans cook off also, very exciting. Its an excuse to stretch out the hoses and spray water.

George



...the Aussies are going to Bar-B-Que and drink beer tonite. I like these guys."

To save room and paper, the rest of George's emails over the last three months are in his Membership Directory on the Alumni site. Look him up on the membership directory and click the "About me" button.

Comic Strip Corner



Mapes Renovation

This summer our beloved, well-remembered shambles of a dormitory building will be undergoing a major renovation.

The building layout will be changed somewhat, as will the distribution of rooms and building access for both students and non-students.

The only door one will be able to use to enter the building from now on will be the central set of doors across from the middle lounge. These doors will be key-carded, there will be a campus phone nearby for visitors to use.

According to rumour, the fraternity lounges will all be locked; the officers of the houses having keys. To achieve this without restricting movement in the building, the lounges will be changing shape slightly, becoming a bit smaller. Rumour also has it that the new carpeting in the lounges will be customized for each living group to have their house letters actually IN the carpeting of the lounge.

It is also very possible that the first floor rooms will no longer be separate rooms, either becoming a single apartment or being used for something else. Unsubstantiated rumour has it that the new Quad Security Office will be located in or just off of Mapes' middle lounge. THAT might put a damper on parties!

"It's a big ol' sperm chicken."

"It's like it has a fuzzy schlong hanging from it."

Sarah Hoffman (02) and Lexie Natkin (01); re: the crest on the 2003 formal glass.

Theta Sigma Tau/ Sigma Nu Alumni Association

3955 N. Murray Ave., Apt.
304
Shorewood, WI 53211

Phone:
[414-962-1469](tel:414-962-1469)

E-Mail:
TauMagi@ThetaSigmaTau.org

Website:
Alumni.ThetaSigmaTau.org

"Making things up
as we go."

House History: Donating to RC

A few years ago I heard a rumour that our house, including all members of Sigma Nu and Theta Sigma Tau, was one of the largest donor groups on campus. If this were true, I thought, it would certainly be something to talk about. I decided to make some inquiries and have news to report.

The good news is that we do, indeed, have a generous group of alumni. Over the lifetime of the house, 1910 - the present, 334 alumni of Sigma Nu, The Elms, and Theta Sigma Tau have given a combined total of \$696,924.30. This is quite a respectable number, averaging over \$2000 per donating member.

It is not, as the rumour would have it, the most of any group. Not by a long shot. The sad truth is that we only beat Alpha Delta Pi, Societas Trezvost, and Delta Psi Delta (if one only considers groups currently active on campus).

The house that beats all others by an amazing margin is our beloved neighbour, Phi Delta Theta, having had 526 members donate \$8.8 million over the lifetime of their house (an average of over \$16,800 per donating member). Rounding out second and third places are Sigma Chi (\$2.9 million) and Merriman (\$2.5 million).

Obviously, short of Harrison Ford (64) deciding to make up with Ripon and endow a few faculty positions or build a few buildings, we're not likely to catch up with those "super-givers." However, as our house's 100th anniversary in 2010 nears we might consider coming up with a donation goal for that year to give our numbers a shot in the arm.

Any suggestions about how we might tie a donations boost to the anniversary can be sent to plenz@ThetaSigmaTau.org and they'll get listed in a future issue.

SETI@Home and Team Tau SETI

The SETI@Home project is a project in which people around the world can assist in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence by donating processing on their home computers. One downloads the program, which is small and offers an interesting screen saver that shows the processing it is doing. Then, when one's computer is idle, it will process data obtained by the Arecibo Radio Observatory as it scans the heavens. The software looks for anything in the data that might indicate an intelligent origin.

One needs to have internet access, although it only requires access once in a while, it stores the data it is analyzing on one's computer while it works on it.

The organization records volunteers' efforts, keeping a tally of the amount of time and number of data units the volunteer has processed. Volunteers can form teams and their efforts get pooled for the team. There are no other real rewards for taking part other than the knowledge that you're participating in such a large and innovative project. However, if you happened to process a work unit that eventually turns out to provide positive proof of extraterrestrial intelligence, you get listed as a co-discoverer!

Team Tau SETI has been around for over three years, the team members using their computers' idle time to assist in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI). By the time you receive this the team will be closing in on 45,000 data units processed: the equivalent of one computer working for over 77 years. Not bad for an effort that started a mere three years ago!

Sadly, however, participation has been dropping of late. There are currently 23 registered members of the team, but only 10 of them have computers that are still actively participating. The other registered members, while having participated in the past, are no longer running the software.

Whatever the reason for the change in participation (and we think it likely that in most cases the member simply forgot about it or got a new computer and forgot to install the software), we'd like to encourage idle members to take part again. We would also like to invite everyone else to join the team and the search!

One can read more about the project at <http://setiathome.ssl.Berkeley.edu>. There is a link to the Tau Seti team page on the alumni site, where you can see who is participating and what sort of progress they have made.