

The Pearl Necklace

Celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the re-formation of our fraternity under its original name

A Quarterly Newsletter for the alumni, actives, and associates of Theta Sigma Tau fraternity of Ripon College, WI.

Issue # 55: April 1, 2006

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The newest Tau tradition, conceived and designed by a democratic committee of interested actives and alumni..

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Challenge Coins

New Tradition

The tradition of challenge coins is derived from a military tradition in which members of a unit are issued with a token of membership. When a fellow member of the unit displays their coin to another, that "challenged" person must meet the challenge by producing their own coin. If they cannot, they must buy the challenger a drink.

Challenge coins have found their way into many civilian organizations, including fraternities, sororities, clubs, etc.

Pete Lenz (89) suggested the idea of a challenge coin on the alumni exploder and then used email as well as a couple of custom-made web surveys to poll alumni with regard to level of interest and then to design the coin.



Theta Sigma Tau actives and pledges at Pledge Party, January 2006.

A large group of alumni designed a coin that reflects the house of the past 30 years, an excellent idea since this is the 30th anniversary of post-Nu Tau. The coin is a silver colored alloy, 1.75" in diameter.

One side of the coin (see image to the left) bears the house name, the crest of the house in 1976 (when we reformed after Sigma Nu left) and the three important dates in Taus's history: It's founding, its re-founding, and the year it went co-ed.

The flip side of the coin (right) bears the current crest of the house along with the five virtues represented by the five stars that have always adorned the crest.

The alumni site has information about ordering coins for those alumni who are interested: <http://alumni.thetasigmatau.org/coin.html>

Coins for new members

This spring a new tradition was started at Activation: the gifting of a Theta Sigma Tau Challenge Coin to each newly activated member.

When the challenge coin was designed and the initial order placed, many of our very generous alumni opted to purchase an extra coin or three to be donated to the house. Because of the number of donations received, every active member and every activated pledge this spring received a coin as a gift to them from the alumni. Additionally, there are enough remaining donor coins to ensure that the next several pledge classes also receive a coin upon activation.

These donated coins will eventually run out, but the house is discussing various ways in which the house itself can continue to fund coins for new members so that, from this year forward, every member receives a coin when they are activated.



Amanda Arloro (93) is no longer Amanda Leclair. Amanda and Randy completed their divorce in January, at which time Amanda reclaimed her maiden name. Amanda lives in Kennebunk, ME, with her son, Gregory Truman, and her hunka hunka burning love, Dan.

Brook Compton (00) is deep in talks with the owners of Chimera Gaming of Fond du Lac, WI. If they can work out the details, Brook will be opening and managing a branch of Chimera Gaming in Milwaukee.

Richard Demas (92) and his wife, Anne, are mourning the loss of Griffin. Griffin was born on February 17, 2006, 17 weeks premature. Due to his prematurity, his organs had not all developed sufficiently and so, despite the best efforts of the medical staff at Lenox Hill Hospital, he passed away quietly on February 22nd. Rich and Anne placed a memorial in the Sunday, March 5, edition of the New York Daily News, reprinted here with Rich's permission: "Griffin Theodore. You entered this world for 3 short days, but your mother, father and brother, Parker will miss you for eternity. Grandmas Kit & Jane and Grandpas Roger & James will miss all the hours of joy you would have brought them. You will always be in our hearts. Mom and Dad"

In an ironic twist of fate, Ken Dillon (03) has been cast to play Han Solo in Milwaukee's Theatre X dramatic adaptation of Star Wars: A New Hope. "The adaptation is an interesting one," Ken says. "The exploration of the gay relationship between Han and Chewie is edgy and different. My only complaint is that I've been getting hairballs ever since dress rehearsals began."

Debbie Halvorson (90) is getting married to Daniel Bakken on May 6 of this year. Dan and Debbie live in Trempeleau, WI, with Dan's two children: Jordan and Jasmin.

David and Alys Humfleet (03/03) are doing well. Dave, having finished his training (with the honor of "Distinguished Honor Graduate") in Finance Management, has shipped out to Fort Lewis, WA, for his first duty station with the US Army. Dave is staying with his brother, Dan, until he can find a place for he and his family to live. Alys is a sales consultant with The Pampered Chef, an organization that sells cooking and kitchen supplies (<http://www.pamperedchef.biz/chefalys>). This enables her to stay home with their son, Stephen, and still have interactions with adults. Stephen turned one year old on April 1. He's walking, babbling, and enjoys kicking during baths... getting water absolutely everywhere. Alys & Stephen are living in Beaver Dam, WI, until the move to Washington.



Julie (Milavec) Johnston (91) & family

Paul Karp (98) recently passed a few tests in his pursuit of a career as an EMT (or in a related emergency service field). Paul is now a licensed EMT - IV Technician. He also recently passed the test to become a 911 dispatcher. Paul lives in Little Chute, WI, but is planning to relocate to Milwaukee this year.

Spc. Bryan Kuhn (99) recently graduated from boot camp and is awaiting his first posting to Iraq. "I just realized that Iraq was a place the US needs to be and I wanted to do my part to further the cause of democracy abroad and the Bush Administration's policies at home!"

Viola (Vin) (Martin) Lenz reports that she "is now a certified pharmacy technician (CPhT)! I took the exam in November and found out I passed around Christmas. I did not even have to pay as my workplace reimbursed me! Basically, I am a Smart Pharmacy Tech, but now I can sign things "Viola Lenz, B.A., CPhT."

I am still working at Columbia Hospital, weaving my intricate webs to take over all the technicians and then the world! The fools even gave me power of attorney, and I can now sign the 222 forms for the DEA. I can order narcotics. Yes, a Tau in charge of GOOD drugs!"

Dan Mattson (95) works for Reserve America, a subsidiary of Ticketmaster, selling reservations to various events and places to customers who call. Dan lives in an apartment just off of State Street in Madison, WI.

Julie (Johnston, 91) Milavec reports: "John and I will celebrate our 10th (is that really possible???) wedding anniversary in July. Doing pretty much the same stuff - John still has his HVAC business and I'm running the local library. Kids are happy, healthy, smart, and sassy. JJ's in 3rd grade and now insists on being called John in public. Rachel's in 1st and already in gifted classes. Her vision is still within the range of normal and her null point (point of best vision) is closer to center than ever. Luke is in preschool and he's the Mischief of the family."



Ed Shaw (92) & Kecia Cornelius

Karen (Derf) Reilly (93) announces that she is expecting her second child. She and Kevin are thrilled, although since this is "birth control baby #2" she is getting "fixed" as soon as this baby arrives. Their daughter, Amanda, wants the baby to be a boy so their family is more like the one on Dora the Explorer.

Christy Robinson (05) self-published her first novel: The LeFay Chronicles. It is currently undergoing an editing review, but will soon be available at <http://www.lulu.com>.

Ed Shaw (92) is engaged to marry Kecia Cornelius on April 28, 2007. Kecia is a graphic designer at The Artist's Enclave at I-Park in East Haddam, Ct. Ed is completing his dissertation at the University of Connecticut where he works as a German Professor. Ed and Kecia live in Manchester, NH with their two cats, Cleo & Fat Toni.

Trisha Shafer (08) is pleased to announce that she is engaged to Theodore Beres. Their wedding is scheduled for October 17, 2009.

Calvin Simmons (88) is a successful podiatrist with a practice in Detroit, MI. Calvin also enjoys volunteering to teach courses in Biology at the St. Mary Womens' College in nearby Inkster, MI. "I really get into working with my students," Calvin says.

Torii Swader (98) has been utilizing his free time lately in an attempt to create a Macintosh computer virus. Tired of Pete Lenz's (89) taunts about the plethora of PC viruses available and the dearth of Mac viruses, Torii is attempting to make a "Doomsday" virus that will target only Macs.

The House: This spring the house activated six new members! We would like to welcome Carl Abraham, David Casper, Ryan Greene, Stephanie Lassen, Josh LeGreve, & Dustin Zuelke to the family!

THE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

For the last 15 or so years this newsletter has been published at irregular intervals in order to keep people in touch with each other and the house as well as to entertain and annoy. However, the alumni newsletter has not always been as it is now.

The first edition of what evolved into this newsletter was a joke, a three page newsletter concocted in 1989 by Pete Lenz (89) and Carol Shay (88) while they sampled the new and passing fad of "dry" beers.

As their conversation meandered, they fell to talking about the house and the fact that the house had not published a newsletter for the past couple years. Prior to this, it had been a tradition for the house to mail a newsletter to its alumni detailing their activities and accomplishments. But this tradition seemed to have fallen by the way. So Carol and Pete decided to make up their own, filled with completely fabricated "class notes," news, and a song making fun of Summer Party.

Following the acclaim and excitement this Alumni² Newsletter caused (i.e.: none at all) the idea lay dormant for a while.

In 1991 Pete revived the alumni newsletter, mainly because he had moved to Massachusetts and wanted to stay in touch with the Taus back home. So, he would gather together what information and material he could and publish a newsletter every three months. Sometimes they were rather sparsely populated with information, other times they were bursting with news and fun.

In 1995, having moved back to Wisconsin for grad school and suddenly having access to the world wide web and the ability to make a website, Pete started working on the alumni site as a supplement to the newsletter, a situation that has now reversed.

Up until 2002 the newsletter was mailed free to any alumni for whom Pete had a snail mail address. But, sadly, as expenses went up and the number of alumni grew, the cost of printing and mailing 150+ newsletters became prohibitive. So the free version of the newsletter went to "web-only" status: upon completion, an Adobe Acrobat file of the newsletter is posted for free download to the alumni site. Those who still wish to receive a paper edition are asked to pay a small subscription fee to cover costs.

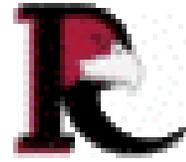
The name of the newsletter changes every issue. Sometimes it involves a play on words that involves the name of the house somehow, sometimes there is a theme of sorts. The title of this particular issue intended to celebrate Tau's 30th anniversary of becoming Theta Sigma Tau in 1976. The double entendre of the name is just happy coincidence.

Pete Lenz (89)

Porch Party

Laura Wolf Storzer (89) suggested inclusion of this tradition.

These days at Ripon, the house celebrates the beginning of a new school year with First Party. Usually held before classes begin, First Party is just that, the first party of the year. But, in the days before the administration became psychotic about security and enforcing meaningless rules and restrictions, First Party was known as Porch Party. On the autumn



day before classes began, we would haul our couches, chairs and tables out to the "porch", that lovely and stylish cement block servicing the East Mapes entrance. We would sit around, drink, cook-out, chat, relax, sometimes someone would play music on an instrument or we'd simply have a radio playing. We were always very welcoming to folks wandering down into the quads (an excellent way to meet the usually bewildered frosh).

This had to come to an end, alas, because the college forbade students from bringing furniture outside of the building. Perhaps it is time to revive Porch Party. If the house were to purchase some cheap lawn chairs, perhaps a couple coolers, a grill, and a table or two (rummage sales would be perfect for finding all of these), they could again celebrate the return to Ripon, old style.

Open Bar Party

The change in 1985 of the drinking age in Wisconsin from 19 to 21 sounded the death knell for parties like this one.

Open Bar Party was a fall party that invited attendees to briefly take over the role of bartender. Each person who wished to could share their favorite recipe for a mixed drink with the rest of the crowd. Or they could try making up something new. Of course, in these latter cases, many of the concoctions that resulted from drunken experimentation were vile to say the least.



Much of this "party" was done in a presentation & audience style, with the bartender of the moment showing off his or her recipe or creation (and bartending style or lack thereof) while the crowd looked on.

In the mid-80s the federal government began pressuring states to raise the legal age for drinking and Wisconsin capitulated in 1985, raising the drinking age to 21. The last Open-Bar Party was held in the fall of 1985, and it has been missed.

Pledge Names

*"Kroeger, your Delta Tau Chi name is Pinto."
"Why, Pinto?"
"*belch* Why not?!"*

*"What's MY Delta Tau Chi name?"
"Dorfman, I've given this a lot of thought. From now on you name is Flounder."*

The tradition of Pledge Names at Tau is relatively new, considering the age of the house. In the past, members would often have a nickname of some sort, but the formal assignment of pledge names began with the pledge class that graduated in 1992.



The assignment of pledge names takes place at the meeting after Pref Party, when the house has a group of potential pledges to vote upon. Once all of the applicants are accepted or rejected, the first order of business is to assign each of the pledge a big sister or brother. Following that comes the assignment of a pledge name.

Generally, pledge names are humorous nicknames that gently poke fun at the pledge. In some cases a pledge name might be determined, in part, by the lineage of the pledge. For example: there was a tradition in one of the branches of House Theta that there always be at least one active whose pledge name was that of a deity from some mythological tradition, the God Line of Theta. Another influence upon pledge names can be the spirit of wackiness infecting the membership that particular morning. For example, a recent pledge class were all awarded "Care Bear" pledge names: names that ended in "Bear." The pledges that semester also received hand colored Care Bear pictures for their dorm room doors.

Some pledge names are short and to the point, others are long, meandering, and drawn out (much like this sentence...). The shortest pledge name of an active or alum, to date, is Sully Sheahan's *Ren* (of *Ren & Stimpy* fame). The longest is Aimee Kucera's: *Drinker of the Dirty Bong Water; aka: A Thick-Necked Woman named Gunta*. That's quite the name to remember!

Pledge names make excellent fodder for Tau Trivia during Live-In Weekend. One can go easy on the pledge: "What is your big's pledge name?" Or, one can be cruel: "Name your family line back five generations by their pledge name!"

One might notice, in looking over the family trees, that alumni from the era prior to pledge names are often listed with a pledge name. If the alum had a well known nickname while they were at Ripon, that name has been unofficially pegged as their pledge name.

Letters From the Front

Capt. George Johnson (00), pictured giving the reenlistment oath to SPC Witherspoon, recently finished a year long assignment in Afghanistan

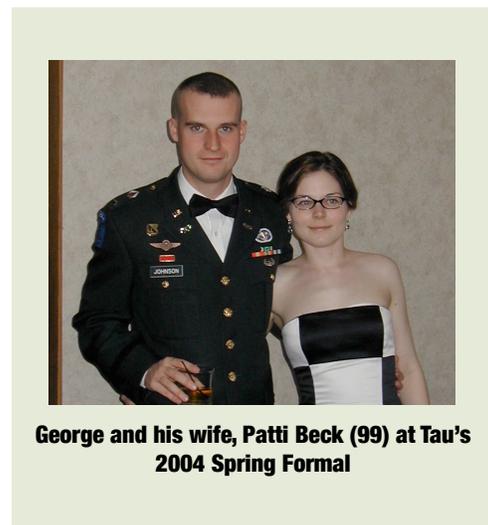


George Johnson was stationed in Afghanistan as a member of Operation: Enduring Freedom until March of 2006. He recently returned to the states meaning that, until another of our brethren finds themselves serving in the field, our Letters From the Front segment will be on hiatus. Let us hope that it is a LONG hiatus.

How Osama Bin Laden tried to keep me from going on leave

January 8, 2006 - Here is the tale of how Osama tried to ruin my leave. One of my fellow Captains and I were preparing to go on leave, we were scheduled to leave in the evening. We were packed and we were due to go to the helicopter pad in an hour. I was on my way to the shitter for a final movement before movement when I heard a loud BANG just north of Salerno. When the siren went off I hoofed it back to my hooch (our rooms are made of reinforced con-

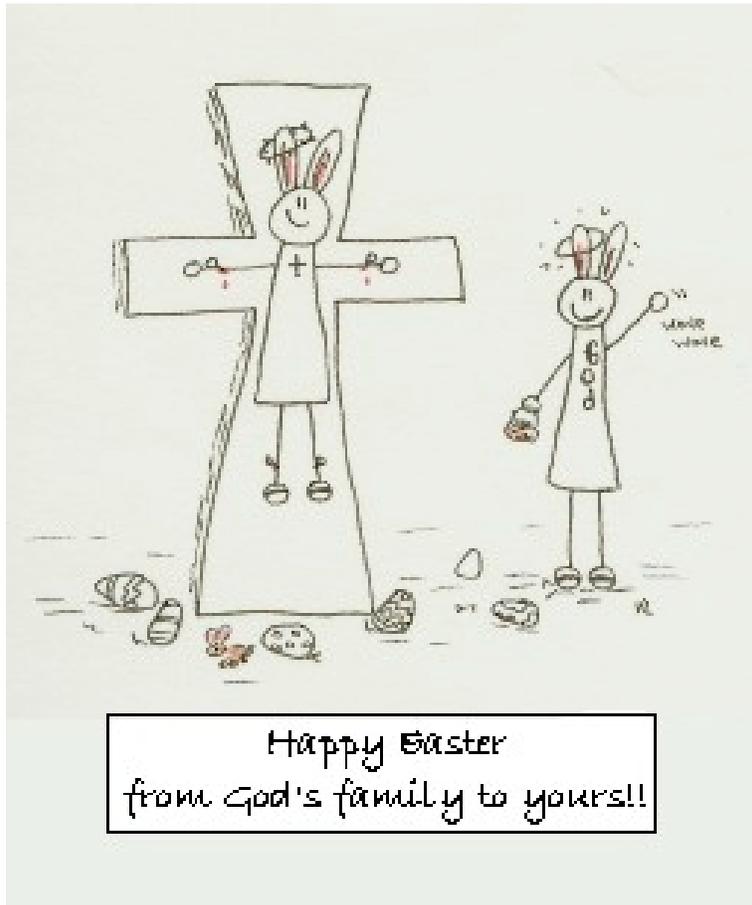
crete so we don't have to go to a bunker if we are in there). I ran into my fellow CPT there and we stood around outside the hooch with the door open trying to figure out where the rocket landed when we heard the rippling/tearing sound of another rocket, your hair stands on end before your brain identifies it as a rocket. We scooted inside quickly and as it exploded about a kilometer away in a deserted section of the FOB we looked at each other and wondered aloud, "Is this going to delay us going on leave?" As it was the aircraft was late but we still got out that night. No one was injured thankfully and damage was minimal. But that is the great tale of how Al Queda tried to keep me from going on leave.



George and his wife, Patti Beck (99) at Tau's 2004 Spring Formal

Adventures of God Comics

Brought to you courtesy of
 Viola (Martin) Lenz (02)
 All rights wronged.
 All wrongs revenged.



Sudoku - Easy

			6	7				
				2	8	1	5	
8								9
	3							1
	5						4	
1			2	9	6			7
9				4				2
		3		2				
4		8		1			9	7

For those familiar with the relatively recent (and already apparently dying) craze, sudoku is an interesting hybrid of the magic square and the crossword. The basic idea is that you need to fill in the blanks. The numbers 1-9 may only appear once in each row and column and also only once in each 3x3 block. For example, in the sudoku puzzle above, on the right hand side: there is a '9' in the rightmost column on the third row. There can be no '9' anywhere else on the row it is on, the column it is on, or that 3x3 set of squares in the upper right hand corner. We include a few puzzles here just for the hell of it.

"German isn't a real language, it's just a bunch of French people barking at each other."
 - Ken Dillon (03)

Medium

9	7		1		3			4
	5			8				
						2	7	5
	8							
2	9				8			
1		7						9
	1		7		5	6		
7				6	2	9		
							8	7

"I want sparkly balls in my K-Y Jelly."
 - Emily Dillon (06)

"Last night I lost my shoes and my pants... and my underwear!"

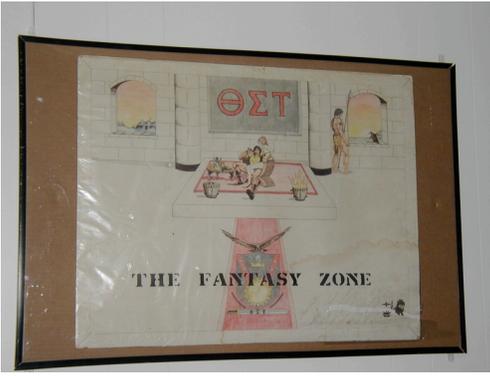
- Stephanie Lassen (09); the morning after activation

"Do you wanna keep this? It's what I sprayed you with last night."

- Matt Biwer (08) to Stephanie Lassen (09) handing her the empty champagne bottle he used at activation.

Hard

			8					
		9						4
	3	6	1			9		
			9	2		6	3	1
	1							7
		4	6					8
		7		5	6			
		3						
1				7	9	8		



A relic of the house, donated in 1989 by "The Wanderer."

"I've got cheesy balls!"
 "Maybe you should get that checked out ..."
 - Emily Dillon (06) & Colleen Rosin (08)

"I told you: she can 'fist, but that's it!"
 - Viola (Martin) Lenz (02) to Pete Lenz (89); re: their daughter & gaming.

"Andy's very protective of his ~~vajina~~ vagina."
 - Jessica Fuoco (07)

"I just tried to spell ~~vajina~~ vagina with a 'j'"
 - Kali Jankovich (07) after writing down the previous quote.

"... and I did it again!"
 - Kali Jankovich (07)... still screwing Jess' vagina up...

"MRS degree = Masters of Residential Sciences. I'd like to teach that course, especially the lab practicals... 'No, no, less teeth.'"
 - Rich Demas (92)

Summer Party #20

"How many people have a pumpkin nose where your penis goes?"
 - Josh LeGreve (09)

"So, what is the first thing a that blonde does after sex? Open the car door!"
 "I don't get it."
 - Unknown/Cyndi Pinkus (08)

"I've spent too much time on my knees."
 - Darlene Wulf (03)

"I just remember hearing a pop and then there was something warm and wet on my back."
 - Ken Dillon (03); re: Activation

"Hey Cyndi! What's a shout out?"
 "It's when you're doing the thingy and you say a friend's name."
 - Paul Karp (99) & Cyndi Pinkus (08)

The Taus that attended the Swader/Pavlovic wedding in August '05

Quotes from that mind like a rusty steel trap:
 George W. Bush!

"No question that the enemy has tried to spread sectarian violence. They use violence as a tool to do that."
 - George W. Bush, 3/21/06

"People don't need to worry about security. This deal wouldn't go forward if we were concerned about the security for the United States of America."
 - George W. Bush, 2/23/06; re: handing US port security to a UAE company.

"It is in our country's interests to find those who would do harm to us and get them out of harm's way."
 - George W. Bush, 4/28/05

"I have a record in office, as well. And all Americans have seen that record. September the 4th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget."
 - George W. Bush, 10/18/04

"The truth of the matter is, if you listen carefully, Saddam would still be in power if he [Kerry] were the president of the United States, and the world would be a lot better off."
 - George W. Bush, 10/8/04; During the second presidential debate.

"Too many good docs are getting out of the business. Too many OB-GYNs aren't able to practice their love with women all across this country."
 - George W. Bush, 9/6/04