



GAMMA IOTA NEWS

FALL 2017

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New Class Rep Program (by Trustee Ken Johnson '73)

We all know that the first place any of us look when the new WPI Journal arrives is the Class Notes section therefore we are launching our own PTN "Alumnotes" section in this newsletter. Of course there cannot be a class notes section without your participation. If you enjoy keeping in touch with your SP/PTN brothers please become a Class Rep. A Class Rep simply collects bits of news and submits them before each newsletter. (BTW - they will not be asking for money.) If you wish to become a Class Rep or wish to contribute personal news directly please contact Ken Johnson via <https://www.psithetanu.org/user/111/contact>.



Ugh!! See Page 4

PTN President's Report (by Joe Staszowski '73)

First, my fellow trustees and I would like to wish you and your family Happy Holidays and best wishes for 2018.

This year, the life safety and critical physical improvements have been completed at the Chapter House, a sustainable maintenance plan is in place and the undergraduate brotherhood is strong, engaged and growing. Besides the additional physical improvements still needed, the trustees are now focusing our efforts on providing avenues for alumni to reconnect.

We developed strong bonds during our undergraduate years. As we moved onto the next phases of our lives, some of those connections have become weaker. Our plan is to provide vehicles and opportunities to strengthen those ties. We are:

- Developing a significantly improved website to keep you informed,
- Developing a class representative program, and
- Working towards organizing family-friendly social events around WPI as well as at remote locations where there is a concentration of alumni.

To accomplish this, we need your assistance. Any level of involvement will help us achieve these goals. We don't need to be local to become involved. Technology allows participation wherever you are. Consider:

- Becoming a trustee (meetings are quarterly with participation by teleconference available),
- Helping on a special project,
- Consulting on a specific issue, and/or
- Being a sounding board on a particular program.

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Reunion Dinner at Mezcal Cantina - June 2017. Trustee Don Petry '87; Gus Cunningham '87; Trustee Todd Becker '86; Trustee Harry Kasparian '73; Mike Hobson '85; Alison Cunningham (Gus' sister); Paul Gaynor '87; Douglas McCurdy '87; Jeffrey Lord '87 (far right, sitting next to McCurdy); Bill Martin '87 (end of table). Trustee Zo took the picture.

GAMMA IOTA NEWS

A Newsletter Published by the Psi Theta Nu
Alumni Club of Sigma Pi Fraternity; Paul
Exner '71 - Editor



Alumnotes

Harry Kasparian '73 writes that on October 5th, a bunch of guys from the 70's have begun what will become a tradition. It was before a PTN trustee meeting on a gorgeous fall day. Three retirees and one hooky player took in a round of golf at Cyprian Keys, back in our old stomping grounds. Harry was joined by Joe "Spaz" Staszowski '73, who sandbagged the foursome with his single digit handicap, Ken "Wolfman" Johnson '73 who ran a driving clinic with a borrowed driver, and Paul "Ex" Exner '71, who is working on his long game and who tried valiantly to correct his form which has now been dubbed the "walrus swing". The group wrapped up the afternoon with refreshments at a local pub and headed to the quarterly trustee meeting with smiles. The meeting was productive and not too lengthy! Harry says that he hopes to do this again next year and he'll put the word out ahead of time. All are welcome!

Edward "Zo" Nowak '86; now the VP of the PTN Board, says that he's been a ski Instructor for 25 years. He has been the owner of a small environmental and testing company since 2008. Zo is married to Jacqueline and has two children, Wyatt 21 and Rachel 18.

Ken Johnson '73 writes: "This past July I was fortunate to participate in my second RAGRAI: Registers Annual Great Ride Across Iowa. Begun in 1973 this is the longest and largest bicycle event of its kind in the world covering 420 miles in 7 days. Every year is a different route across the state. I had the company of nearly 20 thousand riders as we rode from Orange City in the west to Lansing on the Mississippi River across northern Iowa. This ride is often described as Spring Break for mid-lifers; but all ages are represented. If you enjoy small towns, camaraderie, food trucks, craft beer, camping, kybos, and long hours in the bike saddle, I highly recommend it."



Mike Wozniak '86. The Wozniak family home base is Alpharetta, GA, just north of Atlanta. Mike writes: "We've been here for 7+ years and enjoy the area, but miss getting together with our friends in the northeast. Daughter Kendra is a senior at Bentley, Rachel a sophomore at Xavier (Cincinnati) and Matt is a senior at Johns Creek High School. The kids keep Stacy and me very busy; but we wouldn't want it any other way - we're very blessed. Look forward to seeing my brothers soon."

(See Page 8 for more notes)

Genesis (by Trustee Paul Exner '71)

Some of us grey-beards have been having fun trying to identify the occasion and the participants in this old photo that Ken Johnson found. I sent it off to the email addresses of some of the old guys and received all kinds of great responses with Chuck Frery and Al Downs providing most of the detail with help from Charlie Proctor, Al Berg, and Ivan Beggs.

The consensus is that the photo was taken in 1965 at 34 Hackfeld Road to either celebrate the first initiation into Sigma Pi National or the closing on the new house at 17 Dean Street. All the guys are either the Class of '64 or '65.

The natty engineering students pictured; starting at the bottom center and proceeding clockwise are Bill Wharton, Dick Reynolds, ?????, Ken (Moose) Allard, Bob Towle, Jeff Cheyne, Wayne Eddy, Dick Stone, Chuck Frary, Allen Sweet, Paul Sroka, and John Stone. The guess is that Ken Brown took the picture.





The New PTN Website (by J. Banez '97)

We have revived the Psi Theta Nu web site. You can access it at <https://www.psithetanu.org>. It will be a way for brothers to catch up on what's going on with the House or share news and events that are of interest to the brotherhood. The web site is intended to be somewhere between LinkedIn and social media but let's keep it somewhat professional. Unlike those sites, we will not sell your information to anyone.

To maintain your privacy, some pages will require you to be logged in to gain access. Register at <https://www.psithetanu.org/user/register> to be able to access restricted pages. In addition to your contact information, you can add a brief bio, where you work, your web site to promote your company business, etc. We have to validate your information before your account will be activated - so please be patient.

Sigma Pi, Gamma-Iota Chapter LinkedIn Group (by Trustee Harry Kasparian '73)

Have you ever wondered....

- "What ever happened to..."
- "Does Fred look anything like I remember?"
- "What has Joe done since graduating?"
- "Where in the world is Ralph living these days?"
- "Are there any alum that live near me?"
- "I'm looking to make a career change or relocate.."
- "Do any alum work/live in the area?"



We've created a LinkedIn Group for our 700 plus alumni and we're encouraging you all to join.... don't be surprised if you get an invite!

If by chance you're not familiar with LinkedIn, here is some [LinkedIn background](#). For those of you ready to go, here are some tips for connecting with fellow Gamma-Iota graduates of WPI:

1. Join our alumni community. The first essential step is to become a member of the [Sigma Pi Gamma-Iota Chapter Alumni Group](#) on LinkedIn. Of course, we're assuming you have a [LinkedIn Personal Profile](#). The Chapter group is new and currently we have only 20 members, so we're looking to grow.

You may also want to become a member of the [WPI Alumni Group](#) which has over 9,000 members.

Once you join, you can introduce yourself and if you like, share your goals: "Hi brethren: I'm new to the group and excited to connect with fellow alums. I'm currently looking for a job as a nuclear physicist or ... I would like to arrange for us all to get together for our 30th reunion etc. - any interest? Thanks!"

LinkedIn permits you to send a message or connection request to anyone with whom you share a group on LinkedIn (as long as that person has opted to accept such messages).

2. Tap the LinkedIn Alumni tool. The [LinkedIn Alumni](#) tool provides you with information about where your fellow alums work, what they do and where they live. The tool pre-fills the years you attended a school [listed on your LinkedIn profile](#) and shows you the classmates who attended at the same time. For a broader search, you can enter additional graduation years.

You can look at the big picture of where people work and live, and then you can narrow the results. You can scan the list of "Where they work" to find where your fellow alums are employed. LinkedIn Alumni will then show you the exact profiles of the alums that fit your criteria.

So, many benefits and surprises... [click and join now!](#) You may be surprised to find that several alums live within a few miles of you or work near you!



Improvements Everywhere - And Toilet Stalls!! - And a New Chef (by Trustee Paul Exner '71)

House renovations since 2014 include both sprinkler and alarm systems, a new dining room floor, a complete electrical upgrade, a code compliant egress system, the renovation of the city-side bathroom, the installation of a new ADA compliant first-floor bath, new porches with ADA access, the replacement of the 1986 windows, insulating the attic, new bedroom doors, refurbishing the fire escape, installing a laundry in the city-side basement, and installing a new gas heating and domestic hot water system. **Craig Lazenby '71** has been working at the House as a contract property manager and handyman.

Kitchen Renovation Needed

There are many needed upgrades at the Chapter House, but none greater than the remodeling of the commercial kitchen. Our new Chef Kelly is making do with what she has, but it's a struggle without modern equipment. The dishwasher and commercial refrigerator are less than 10 years old; but the stove and hood are vintage '60s and '70s. Much of the entire setup does not meet modern codes; but is grandfathered until we make changes.

The cooks we have employed have all asked for a walk-in refrigerator/freezer with considerable more capacity than we have currently. That allows them to buy food in bulk quantities with the associated volume discounts. And, of course, there's the Roy Lindblad memorial stove that was installed in 1972 and the aluminum fume hood and fire suppression systems.

Our architect has formulated some conceptual designs and we have priced the equipment replacement. We estimate that the entire project will cost in the vicinity of \$100,000. The Board is working on ways to finance the effort.

Welcome Chef Kelly



The new cook is **Kelly Ignasiak**. She has worked in restaurants in some capacity starting at ground level for 30 years. She has been an independent catering company owner and chef and is now a chef at Sigma Pi with Campus Cooks. Kelly commutes to the Chapter House from her home in northeastern CT. She is getting rave reviews from the Chapter.

Kelly has a big heart as demonstrated by her 2007 Hunger Leader of the Year and 2008 Humanitarian awards from End Hunger, CT.

Kelly is passionate about Silky Terriers. Her own dog, Abby, is 16 and unfortunately blind. Kelly serves Silky Terrier Rescue which is a national organization that rescues the breed. She is a dog rescue foster parent herself.

Kelly is tough too. She has worked with the CT Dept of Correction as a Correctional Lieutenant. She is a Marine vet and is now very active in the Marine Corps League. She has also been a member of the Woman Marines Association for 27 years. *Semper fit!*



Two Powerful Gas Furnaces



Coin-op Laundry



Toilet Stalls



Some Viagra®



Wall-hung Individually-adjustable Radiators



Alumni Giving (by Trustee Bill Medeiros '72)

As you may know, the Chapter House has gone through extensive renovations over the last few years. This has been accomplished through the generosity of Gamma Iota alumni, remortgaging, and an increase in the rent received from the undergraduate brothers. The undergraduate brothers have responded with an increase in membership, community service, and academic excellence. But there is still work to be done. The kitchen is in desperate need of renovation. Donations are a key part of keeping the House and members active and thriving.

2016 Campaign was a Great Success

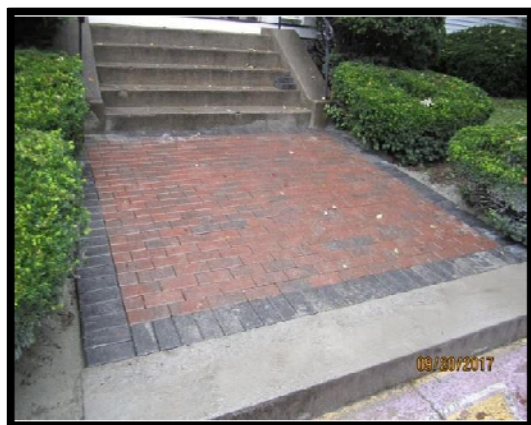
The 2016 fundraising campaign actually began at the 50th anniversary party when Fr. Mike Hobson received a commitment for a \$5,000 donation and an additional commitment of \$10,000 in matching funds. During the following spring we received a second \$5,000 donation and commitment for another \$5,000 in matching funds. Many alumni made contributions ranging from \$100 to \$15,000. When the dust settled we had received donations totaling about \$55,000 and our goal of generating \$80,000 for a new heating system was in reach. The additional money came from two sources: first, we used \$10,000 from the Depreciation Fund; and second, we obtained a four-year, zero interest \$25,000 energy loan from Commerce Bank. With full funding in hand we began the project early May and completed the work before the Brothers returned in August.

Another Anonymous Alumnus Steps Forward with \$10,000 Matching Donation!

Our ambitious, long-term goal is to raise enough money not only to start the renovations, but to complete them. When we have reached the first \$10,000 that amount will be matched by an anonymous Gamma Iota alumnus. Your gift of any amount toward this initial goal will help to assure that the Sigma Pi Chapter House and its undergraduate brothers will continue to thrive as a vital part of the WPI campus. Please make your checks payable to Psi Theta Nu and mail your donations to Bruce Hillson at 193 Lexington Road in Glastonbury, CT, 06033.

Memorialize Your Name--or that of a Brother who has passed-- on the House Sidewalk!

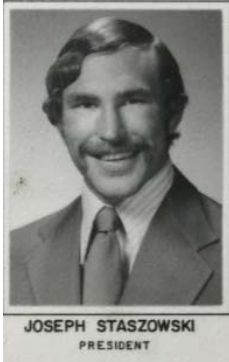
The Dean Street walkway leading from the sidewalk to the House steps has been replaced with a walkway constructed of 4" X 8" bricks. For a minimum donation of \$150, you can have one of these bricks replaced with a brick bearing your name (or the name of a Brother who has passed on). There is room for laser engraving your name and year of graduation. Donations for the engraved bricks that are received before April 30th will have their engraved bricks installed before WPI Alumni Weekend of May 31. Let us know of your interest at psithetanu@gmail.com.



A Pleasant Corner of the Kitchen - Ugh!



PTN President's Report (Continued from Page 1)



JOSEPH STASZOWSKI
PRESIDENT



JOSEPH STASZOWSKI
PRESIDENT AGAIN

Wanted - Email Addresses of "Lost Alumni"

As the Trustees work to provide avenues for PTN alumni to reconnect, we have found that many of our email addresses are "not delivered".

You can help! Email psithetaNU@gmail.com with the current email addresses of alumni you know so we can check our database and get them this and future newsletters. Also, if you're talking with them, have them check their spam folder and tag our address as not spam (hopefully they feel that way).

Email us at psithetanu@gmail.com and let us know how you would like to help.

Our four (some longer) years at WPI and the Sigma Pi - Gamma Iota Chapter helped build the foundation for our careers through learning and life experiences. Our planned effort will provide PTN members opportunities to rekindle friendships and help to provide a sustainable physical plant to aid current and future Sigma Pi Gamma Iota brothers to have a similar experience. Consider giving a little time to help us achieve this.

As discussed in more detail in this newsletter, the kitchen renovations are next in line for much needed refurbishment/upgrading. An anonymous alumnus has pledged \$10,000 in matching funds for this work. Please consider a financial donation to support this project. You can also buy a commemorative walkway brick.

Our next annual meeting is Saturday, June 2, 2018 during WPI's Alumni Weekend. Special events will be held on campus; particularly for classes with years ending in "3" and "8" <https://www.wpi.edu/news/annual-events/alumni-weekend>. A PTN social event is being planned for that weekend. Save the date and stay tuned for more details. Challenge your fellow classmates to see you at the House. Also, our next PTN Board meeting is January 18th. Feel free to participate. Our current Board is comprised of the following volunteers:

President - Joe Staszowski '73, Vice President - Ed "Zo" Nowak '86, Treasurer - Bruce Hillson '71, Secretary - Anthony Lawinger '17, House Manager - Paul Exner '71, Todd Becker '86, Ken Johnson '73, Harry Kasparian '73, Don Petry '87, and Bill Medeiros '72.

PTN Treasurer's Report (by Bruce Hillson '71)

It has taken us a couple of years, but we have achieved a balanced cash flow where the annual income is equal to the annual operating costs. Our operations income is derived from the rent we charge the Brothers living in the House (presently \$150,000). This pays our operating costs which include three mortgages (\$77,381 per year), property management and general maintenance (\$29,100 per year), depreciation (\$24,000 per year); inspections, fire alarm monitoring, taxes (\$9,500) insurances (\$4,500), social and incidental expenses.

The three mortgages have allowed us to make major improvements to the House while consuming more than half of our annual income. While there are still some capital improvement projects that need to be done (e.g., kitchen), we do not presently have the ability to borrow additional money to pursue this work. It will probably be several years before we can pursue additional funding. Our goal at this time is to continue doing general maintenance to protect the House and to build the depreciation account to a more comfortable level (present balance is about \$25,000). If near term improvements are to be considered, they will need to be funded by donations from our alumni.



Undergraduate Report (by Sage Chris Hammer '18)



The undergraduates returned to campus this fall to find that our chapter had received the Gold Standard of Excellence award from Nationals. This award ranks us amongst the top 10 chapters, and has served to motivate our brothers to try and win the Grand Sage Cup this coming year.

This year we continued our "Amazing Day with Sigma Pi" event, which, working with the Amazing Day Foundation, raises awareness for college depression and suicide. We worked with the Student Counseling Department to provide information on both national and local resources that students in need could reach out to and together got over 300 students to participate. We also continued our partnership with Donate Life, and helped register nearly 100 students as organ donors this year.

We are currently 52 undergraduate brothers strong after saying goodbye to 30 graduates last year. The brothers have been hard at work on their academics averaging a 3.55 over the last year, placing us top amongst all Sigma Pi chapters. We would like to congratulate those who graduated last year as they move forward with their careers and great companies like Pratt and Whitney, Electric Boat, Kayak, Optum, Amazon Robotics and Fidelity.

As of writing, we are currently about half way through the rush process at WPI and are looking at strong turn out and interest despite a lower number of students rushing this year. We look forward to introducing Pi class in our upcoming winter undergraduate newsletter.

Our campus involvement has skyrocketed in the past two years. Brothers now hold the positions of Ultimate Frisbee captains, Student Government Vice President, president of the local chapter of IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers), president of the Motorsports Club, and even the president of the Cheese Club. Our brothers have been getting involved all across campus and continue to strive for self-improvement.



Brothers grilling during our Amazing Day with Sigma Pi Event to raise awareness for college suicides and depression



A photo from our Car Smash event with Alpha Xi Delta and Chi Omega



A photo from our Community Service rush event co-hosted with TKE



More Alumnotes

Joe Staszowski '73 writes that he retired from Eversource Energy in 2016 as Director of ISO and NEPOOL relations. Wanting to coast out of his career rather than stopping cold turkey, he is currently working as a part time consultant for the regional power operator in New England, ISO-NE. On the home front, he and his wife Jane are blessed with three children (two sons and a daughter). Their children are all married now and they have eight grandchildren who they see as much as they can. Joe says that he continues to play golf, much more now that he's semi-retired; however his scores have not improved much.

Chris Dicenso '86. Chris and his wife Jackie are in their next phase of life; the quieter phase. One daughter has graduated from college and is working at Hubspot while the other is a junior at Loyola University in Baltimore. Chris leads a strategy consulting firm he started in 2003 after spending years at Deloitte, Grant Thornton and PricewaterhouseCoopers. Chris takes his dog Boomer bird hunting here and there but is trying to find a way to 'lose' the 4 cats. Overall, life is good in Marshfield, MA.

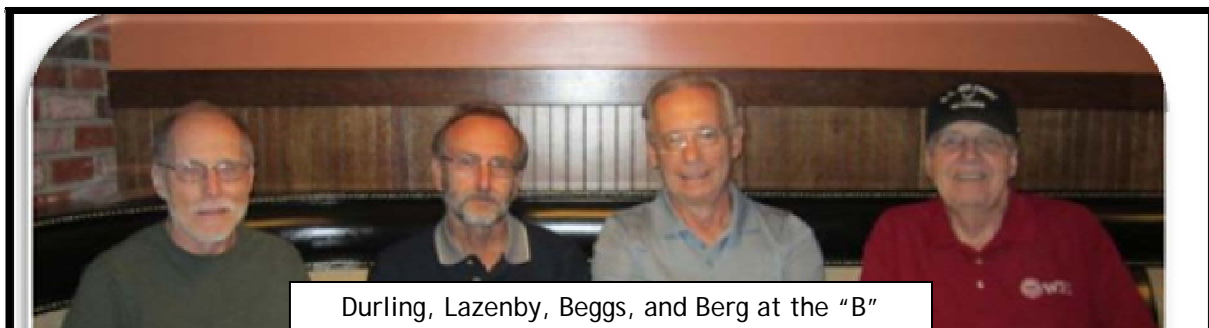
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/christopher-dicenso-71393111/>
<https://www.facebook.com/christopher.dicenso?ref=bookmarks>

Todd Becker '86. Todd and his wife Susan are officially "seasonal empty nesters" with daughter Madison working for WDW in Orlando after graduating from Ithaca College last May, and son Harrison studying video game development at, believe it or not, Becker College in Worcester. Earlier this year, Susan jumped back into the work force to help Todd with his various tech start-up ventures. They're both deep into cloud computing, mobile apps, and the "internet of things" ... developing and commercializing "smart, connected devices" for companies, large and small.

Bob LeBlanc '87. Can you imagine Bobby LeBlanc as a grandfather? Bob and his wife Julianne "married off" their elder son Justin, and now the newlyweds are expecting in May! Bob continues to work in the aerospace industry as a director of sales in the aircraft turbine division of Woodward. Besides loving his wife, kids, and life in Connecticut, he has no news to share! :-)

Craig Lazenby '71 writes: "One day at the end of August, I was focused on fixing the shower light and exhaust problem in the 2nd floor city-side restroom. I was up the step ladder with my head above the suspended ceiling. In the hallway, I heard what seemed like a house tour, with someone saying, 'Well, that wasn't here when I was. Wait - let me look in here. Toilet stalls! We didn't have those when I was here, either!'

"I climbed down the ladder, poked my head out the door to hear the conversation turn to the fire escape, and heard 'and that wasn't here either'. I asked, 'Who are you?' So, it turns out to be my big brother, Ivan Beggs! He was passing through town, and just stopped in. We had a brief chat, and then I returned to work and he continued on the house tour. He indicated that he would be again passing through town in a few days and would like to meet up with any other local old-timers. Ivan contacted Al Berg and Eric Durling. We met at the house on September 1st and then wandered to the Boynton for a delightful reunion. Ivan, Al and Eric are all members of the class of '68, and I believe (in Sigma Pi, a fellowship of ...) that the next WPI reunion weekend in June will focus on the class of '68 as well as the other classes ending in 8 & 3. And so I think we should plan to get together again at that time - as well as the rest of the class of '68."



Durling, Lazenby, Beggs, and Berg at the "B"