



# THE ALPHA PILOT

Alpha Pi Chapter of Beta Theta Pi at the University of Wisconsin

## High Expectations Remain at Alpha Pi in the Midst of COVID-19

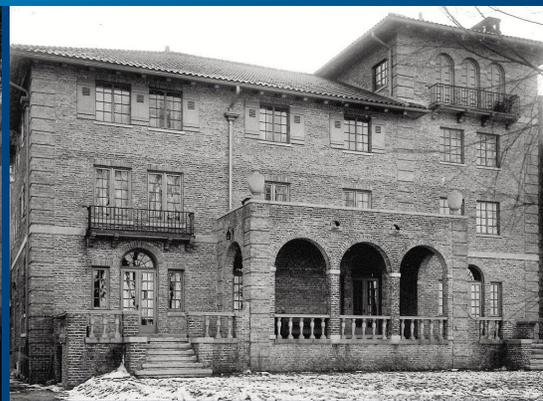
### *Beta Building Association Plans for Next Round of Renovations*

With the active membership still at record levels, we are expecting another full house for the 2020-21 school year and are taking precautions to make sure our members have a safe environment. While this means we don't know when we can gather again for tailgates and other events, we look forward to welcoming you back when it is safe to do so.

The Beta Building Association has been hard at work with planning for our next round of renovations, which you can read about in more detail in the article by **Bart Kocho '80**. I also encourage you to read the article by **Jim Egan '79** about **Tom "OB" Oberwetter '74** and his impact on Alpha Pi over his decades of service. We will be formally honoring OB at one of our future alumni events.

On behalf of the entire BBA, thank you for your continued support of Alpha Pi. As we live through these unique times, remember that "through light or darkness, shine the stars of Beta Theta Pi."

Yours in *\_kai\_*,  
**Max Lord, #1991, UW 2007**  
President, BBA of Madison



## POTTER LAWSON INC. PLANS TO RECAPTURE AMENITIES OF ORIGINAL CHAPTER HOUSE

### *Preservation of the Alpha Pi House Campaign Surpasses \$850,000*

Last fall, we shared the strategic effort that went into building our beloved chapter house in 1925-26.

- Choosing the finest architects available
- Recognizing waterfront setting as a desired location
- Understanding the value of immediate adjacency to UW property
- Selecting the Mediterranean Revival style to enhance the beautiful shores of Lake Mendota

To recapture the historic beauty of the original chapter house, we once again turned to the original architects, who now operate as Potter Lawson, Inc. We completed a comprehensive facility assessment that focused on the depth and urgency of infrastructure needs, safety and building code issues, and first floor renovation projects.

We are addressing each of the focus areas. A new boiler was installed and masonry repairs were completed in mid-August. Priority safety and building code issues have been scheduled for completion over the next year with several being tackled this summer. Three renovation projects will be completed in time for recruitment this September. The restored foyer, lobby, and stairs will better reflect the glamour and elegance of the original design. The kitchen and serving areas have

been redesigned to better accommodate a full house. Guests will once again have a first floor restroom option. The ongoing improvements will help the actives attract a new generation of young leaders.

Beyond the 2020 renovation, we will balance the need to update the infrastructure while simultaneously restoring the chapter house. Our next infrastructure project will involve updating air conditioning throughout the house. Future renovation projects suggested by Potter Lawson include restoring the fireplace mantle and adjacent shelves, rebuilding the billiards room with a UW Badgers theme, replacing the vinyl flooring, adding doors to the lakeside terrace, and reconstructing the original lakeside veranda.

A summary of completed projects and future plans will be provided in October. The capital campaign supporting the *Preservation of the Alpha Pi House* has raised over \$850,000, roughly half of what we need from our five-year campaign. To donate, checks can be made out to Alpha Pi Alliance and mailed to c/o Travis Lemke, 1254 Scenic Ridge Drive, Verona, WI 53593. If you have any questions contact me at [bkocho@wi.rr.com](mailto:bkocho@wi.rr.com) or 262-210-7035.

Yours in *\_kai\_*,  
**Bart Kocho, #1613, UW 1980**



[betawisconsin.org](http://betawisconsin.org)



Beta Theta Pi –  
University of  
Wisconsin



[beta\\_wisconsin](https://www.instagram.com/beta_wisconsin)



[linkedin.com/  
groups/1207295](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1207295)

# The Story Behind Beta's Legendary Hawaiian Party

Looking Back on the Legacy of Walter "Mickey" McGuire '33

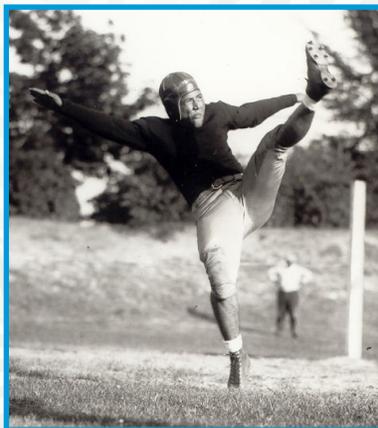
Fraternities are rife with traditions and lore, and some of them have to do with parties. Phi Gams have their Fiji Island Party, Sigma Chi has its Derby Day, but what about the Betas? Well, for decades, the men of Alpha Pi had the legendary Beta Hawaiian Party. Therein lies my tale.

In the late 1920s, a young **Walter McGuire '33** earned enough money working in a pineapple canning factory on the big island of Hawaii to earn his fare, first by ship and then by train, to Madison for his freshman year at UW. You can replicate that trip today by air in about nine hours. Back then it took a week.

Walter was the son of a Honolulu milkman and a school teacher whose Chinese immigrant father had married a native-born Hawaiian. Walter was "discovered" by Wisconsin's legendary track coach Tom Jones at the 1928 Penn Relays in Philadelphia, where McGuire had journeyed with his high school track team. Coach Jones recruited him to UW as a sprinter, a role he would fulfill as a collegian, but not the one he would become famous in. Walter, better known as Mickey, would become an absolute legend of the 1930s Great Depression era in football.

Mickey picked up his nickname from a comic strip and starred as halfback and punter from 1930 to 1932. He led UW to a 17-7-3 record during that period. Mickey's senior season was his greatest, starting with the game-saving tackle he made against Marquette to preserve a 7-2 win in the home opener. He finished his stellar senior campaign with three touchdowns against a vaunted Minnesota team. Mickey set the tone against the Golden Gophers by returning the opening kickoff 85 yards for a touchdown. His last score capped the 20-13 victory.

At the end of that 6-1-1 season in 1932, Mickey was named Wisconsin's MVP after scoring 36 points. If you're wondering if he could even make



the team today, he led the conference with a 43-yard punting average, 3.3 yards *more* than Anthony Lotti averaged for the Badgers last year.

After graduation in 1933, Mickey returned to a life of distinction in Hawaii, serving five terms in their then territorial House of Representatives. He also served 30 years as executive director of the Hula Bowl.

Several generations passed, but Wisconsin never forgot Mickey McGuire. He was inducted into the UW Athletic Hall of Fame in 1996. In 2019, he was named No. 27 on the Camp Randall 100, a list of the greatest figures in sports, music, culture, and beyond to grace our stadium during its centennial celebration.

Alpha Pi never forgot Mickey either. For decades, we would hold a bacchanalian Hawaiian party every May that featured leis and decorations airlifted directly from Hawaii to 622 Mendota Court by Mickey. Walter F. McGuire was #798, initiated March 22, 1930. He became one of us 90 years ago. He still is today.

As luck would have it, I met Mickey in our bar room my sophomore year after the 1969 Homecoming game. He was wearing a suit and came up and enthusiastically greeted me with outstretched hand, saying, "Hi. I'm Mickey McGuire!" My then 19-year-old self responded with, "Hi, I'm Rod Taylor." Truth be told, neither of us had any idea who the other was, except that we were brothers. Later that day, I remember someone's visiting father joyfully telling people, "Oh my God, I just met my boyhood idol here! I shook the hand of Mickey McGuire!"

Welcome to the Beta house, I recall thinking.

Yours in *\_kai\_*,  
**Roderick Taylor, #1448, UW 1972**

## It's a Wonderful (Beta) Life

Giving Thanks to Tom "OB" Oberwetter '74 for His Impact on Alpha Pi

When putting together a few words to recognize the contributions **Tom "OB" Oberwetter '74** has made to Alpha Pi, I kept coming back to the movie *It's a Wonderful Life*, the story you are all familiar with of how George Bailey's actions over a lifetime changed the lives for the better of so many people in Bedford Falls.

I submit to you that OB's actions over the years had a similar impact on the lives of so many who became members of Alpha Pi. Without the impact of the actions that OB took, Alpha Pi as we know it might not exist today. One alumnus I spoke with had a great reflection on the last 40 years, saying that, just as **Ted Kellner '69** was the financial rock that made the Beta house what it is today, Tom was the emotional soul that held everything together.

Tom joined Alpha Pi in the early 1970s and served as the corresponding secretary for the 1972-73 academic year and then as president in 1973-74. Those were lean years for Alpha Pi. As president, OB made the unheard-of decision to withhold rent from the Housing Corporation in order to redirect the funds to focus on recruitment and rebuild the chapter with quality new members. The strategy paid off, as Beta had strong new member classes every semester from 1974 to '76 and beyond. By the fall of 1976, the house was full again and was also the leading UW fraternity in academics, intramurals (four Badger Bowls in five years), and of course, social events.

OB became the alumni advisor in 1976 and held the position for the next 20 years. He also served on the Beta Building Association board from 1978 until the mid-1990s, the Wilken-Harding Educational Foundation beginning in 1980, and as a district chief for the General Fraternity from 1996 to 2000.

When OB took over for **Tom Brader '56** as the alumni advisor, times were changing. Housemothers at 622 Mendota Court were a thing of the past and chapter leadership had to take on more responsibility, sometimes with less than desirable outcomes. OB was always available to lend an ear, provide words of wisdom, or sometimes do whatever it took to keep a brother from spending a night at the local Iron Bar Hotel. OB was a leader, a mentor, an advisor, and, most importantly, a friend.

The Beta renaissance on the UW campus that we are experiencing right now is the result of the contributions of several dedicated alumni and undergraduates. The contributions in time and treasure never failed to materialize during the darkest hours and time of greatest need. OB provided inspiration for many who went on to become significant and found a way to pay it forward.

Yours in *\_kai\_*,  
**Jim Egan, #1574, 1979**



# Alpha Pi Undergraduates Continue to Hold Their Heads High

## Brothers Look to Carry Over Spring Success Into Fall Semester

Despite the uncertainty we've experienced these past few months, the active brothers made the most of their spring semester at 622 and are excited to see what's in store this fall. In February, the executive board enjoyed a trip to the annual Keystone Conference, where techniques on effective leadership were learned and implemented upon our return. A spring new member class, successful social events, and a brotherhood event at a Milwaukee Bucks game rounded out the schedule before the COVID-19 outbreak.

While the majority of the active members returned home to complete the spring semester virtually, the bonds of brotherhood remained intact. We collaborated with the Beta Building Association on a slate of home improvements that have made our return to school even more gratifying. I was been impressed by how each individual has faced unique hardships and supported each other along the way. What we've observed certainly speaks to the type of men we let through our doors and illustrates the benefits of fraternity life.



I hope this letter finds you in good spirits and look forward to providing you exciting updates from the fall semester in the near future.

Yours in *\_kai\_*,  
**CJ Adourian, #2216, UW 2022**

## A President's Manifesto

### John Boosalis '20 Reflects on His Experience as Chapter President

I was honored to serve as president during my time in Alpha Pi. My presidential duties were certainly challenging at times, as I am sure you all can picture how difficult it was to manage the 140 college-age men in our chapter. Despite this, I cherished every second of my time as president and I am immensely proud of everything this house has accomplished in the past year. Perhaps the most notable house achievement is that our chapter size has steadily increased every year since I joined. This is primarily because of the brilliant and driven recruitment chairmen who have spent their summers planning out every detail of fall recruitment. A recruitment statistic that I find to be particularly outstanding is that in the fall of 2019, we gave out 36 bids and 33 of them were accepted. This unequivocally shows the demand to be a part of our brotherhood as well as our selectiveness for entry. These are two essential qualities of a strong and vibrant house.

At the end of the day, the cornerstone of this chapter is the brotherhood. The importance of brotherhood makes all other aspects of fraternity life seem completely insignificant. I am confident that there is no other fraternity house on campus, or even in the United States, that has the strength of brotherhood that we do here in Alpha Pi. The bonds formed within the walls of 622 Mendota Court are truly exceptional. I am infinitely

*(Continued on page 4)*



## The Show Must Go On

### Humorology 2020 Goes Down as One for the Ages

Humorology: the largest student-run fundraising effort in the Midwest. It has only been a part of my life since the spring of 2019, but it has been a beloved tradition in the UW-Madison community since 1948. Never once in 70-plus years has it been canceled mid-semester until this year. Due to the consequences of COVID-19 our DGPhiBeta (Delta Gamma, Gamma Phi Beta, and Beta Theta Pi) cast had to cut our show and efforts short of displaying the final product to the world. Thankfully, the final show wasn't going to be all we had to show for all our hard work! Our cast raised \$40,000 in five short months, which contributed to demolishing our community goal of \$250,000. Altogether, Humorology 2020 was still a huge success with a grand total of \$335,000 being raised.

Our cast comprised more than 130 dedicated and talented students, who practiced for 12 hours a week in addition to fundraising on their own time. There was never a doubt that our DGPhiBeta cast would have some awards to show for that work. **Joseph Elert '23** won best male lead actor for portraying what life is like for new college student. Our cast also won the awards for best dance and the best music. The best music award is my personal favorite because all our music was written and created by the directors. The award is a testament to all their hard work. Even though it was cut short, the DGPhiBeta Humorology show is one that I will never forget. I was the philanthropy director for our cast and, despite not having the biggest role in producing the show, it was a blessing to see our cast grow throughout the year and work so incredibly hard to put out the best show possible.

Yours in *\_kai\_*,  
**Andrew Rukavina, #2256, UW 2022**

## CHAPTER OFFICERS

President **CJ Adourian '22** (adourian@wisc.edu)

Vice President **Andrew DesMarais '22**

Treasurer **Matthew Prondzinski '22**

Alumni Relations Chairman **Dennis Kelly '22**

Risk Managers **Chase Clark '22, Ryan Oppegaard '22**

Secretary **Charlie Eggleton '22**

New Member Educator **Nathan Radkte '22**

Recruitment Chairmen **Azad Saadegh-Vaziri '22, Henry Still '22**

Social Chairmen **Jack Allen '22, Wylie Boelter '22**

House Manager **Patrick Conta '22**

Philanthropy Chairman **Ryan Tully '22**



# BECOMING MEN OF PRINCIPLE

## Brothers Make the Most of the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to numerous changes in the lives of Alpha Pi's active members, many of whom spent the remainder of the spring 2020 semester at home following spring break. Once classes and finals concluded, brothers were left with the question: What now? I asked a handful of our brothers that exact question, and this is what they were up to and how their daily lives changed.

**Jake Kaplan '23** is a freshman from Maryland and spent much of his spring and summer finding creative ways to earn money while at home. He started working for his mother's doctor's office completing online paperwork during the day and then delivering food for DoorDash at night. When Jake wasn't working, you could find him on the newly-opened golf courses.

**Andrew Muenster '23** was a spring new member and spent the majority of quarantine in Madison discovering several new hobbies. He improved his cooking skills so he didn't have to rely on frozen meals for dinner. Andrew also honed his artistic abilities between painting and customizing shoes with friends. On a larger scale, he took the lead on a lot of the new murals in the house that have sprung from multiple brothers using their newfound free time to leave their mark on the Beta house.



**AJ Weiss '20** is one of our older brothers and has been a big part in the chapter's overall success. He used the extended free time to spend time with his friends. AJ enjoyed lake activities and long-boarding in Madison and his hometown.

**Dennis Kelly '22** spent a lot of time with his family after going home to Minnesota. After classes shifted online, he spent a lot of time at his cabin working on miscellaneous house projects. He built a new fire pit from scratch with his older brother and twin as a gift for their mom. Dennis also began learning to skateboard and hopes to keep up with his friends with school back in session.

Yours in *\_kai\_*,  
**Nick Krienke, #2232, UW 2022**



# THE ALPHA PILOT

## BETA THETA PI

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Verona, WI 53593

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## A President's Manifesto

*(Continued from page 3)*

confident in the sincerity, support, and loyalty of every single young man in this house. I know that no matter how many years have passed, or miles have been traveled, my brothers will always be there for me, and for each other. That is all that really matters.

As a senior nearing graduation, writing this is a bit of a melancholy experience. My time in the Alpha Pi chapter has been one of the most

memorable and formative parts of my life. I am so lucky that I had the opportunity to join, and contribute to, this brotherhood. I could fill up a book rambling on about all the great memories I have made over the past few years, but all I really need to say is this: Damn Glad.

Yours in *\_kai\_*,  
**John Boosalis, #2203, UW 2020**

## BETA SHAPE THAN EVER

### ALPHA PI WINS INTRAMURAL HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP

With a backyard so perfectly fit for various activities, it is no wonder that at any time you can find brothers out there playing basketball, football, throwing a Frisbee, etc.

What's more, our brothers have excelled athletically outside of the fences of 622 Mendota Court.

Our intramural hockey team has been a force to be reckoned with in recent years. This past year, it seemed as though the Beta team were men playing among boys. They made it through the semi-finals of playoffs in not exactly barn-burning style with a 12-2 victory. The only game left was the championship game. Since the matchup for the final game was against another fraternity, Theta Chi, there was just a little more pride on the line that night. Our brothers packed the stands for this Tuesday night matchup, as did Theta Chi. Despite not having any data to back it up, I believe it had to be one of the most attended intramural hockey



games in Madison history. As expected, the Beta squad emerged victorious with a satisfying 3-0 victory. With so much great young talent, a dynasty may just be in the works here.

Of course, there are triumphs for Alpha Pi in other spheres besides hockey. Six brothers completed the Madison

half marathon in November with the help of brothers cheering them on along the way. The flag football team had a second-place finish in the fall season and the basketball squad had a promising undefeated season of only mercy-rule victories cut short in the spring semester. Perhaps it is the time spent playing games behind the Beta house that strikes up such excitement for competition evident in the brothers of Alpha Pi.

Yours in *\_kai\_*,  
**Dennis Kelly, #2250, UW 2022**