



# THE BETA Piper

CELEBRATING 130 YEARS OF BETA PI

A PUBLICATION OF THE BETA THETA PI SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA

FALL 2020

## MAINTAINING A SAFE HOME FOR BETA PI Brothers Navigate the Pandemic Together

In these unusual times, the Housing Corporation's work to support the chapter and house continues unchanged. New challenges have arisen, and efforts are underway to improve our financial position.

### FALL HOUSING PROCEDURES

Starting last spring and continuing into this fall, alumni have been maintaining close contact with chapter leaders to ensure we are supporting the health and well-being of the brothers living in or visiting the chapter house.

The house has remained open throughout this period, and while some live-in members have moved home or to other locations, many have remained there while taking online classes and completing internships virtually. In summer, the lack of air conditioning across the building was a larger issue than normal, as the men remained in the house more hours of the day.

The active chapter has followed guidelines from the General Fraternity, the U of M, and

the CDC to ensure we are doing everything we can to keep members safe. Procedures at the house include regular cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces, increasing awareness around social distancing and hygiene, and quarantine protocols in the event a live-in member has a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Additionally, this August a commercial cleaning team was contracted to perform a deep clean of the common areas, bathrooms, and kitchen.

### CHAPTER HOUSE ROOF ASSESSMENT

Over the past year, the Beta Pi chapter house has experienced infrequent water seepage that is originating from the roof. Since the leaks were originally discovered, several repairs have been performed to address various individual areas of concern.

To get an overall assessment of the state of the roof, the Housing Corporation recently brought in a commercial roofing contractor. We also

gained an estimate for the measures needed to solve these issues on a long-term basis. Our group will be reviewing this proposal and making a decision about how to proceed and ensure that the house is protected from future leaks and other water-related damages.

### UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, NO ALUMNI EVENTS

Out of concern for our brothers, the society will not host any indoor alumni events until further notice as we collectively live through the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the spring, we canceled plans for the spring banquet. We certainly will not host a holiday dinner in December. We hope you and your loved ones stay in good health during these challenging times.

Yours in \_kai\_,

**Branden Peterson '05**

Beta Theta Pi Society of Minnesota  
branden@betathetapisocietymn.org

## Remembering Charlie Cunningham '49



The Beta Theta Pi Society of Minnesota is saddened to share the news that Beta Pi alumnus and Beta Theta Pi supporter **Charlie Cunningham '49** passed on to Our Mystic Shrine on July 6, 2020.

As we remember Mr. Cunningham, our organization will forever be thankful for the contributions and enduring impacts made to our Beta Pi Chapter and Beta Theta Pi. Charlie was also a generous supporter of the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota Orchestra, and other civic organizations. In 2014, he made the largest gift ever to the Beta Pi Chapter.

After his years at the University of Minnesota, Charlie had a long and successful career spanning more than 40 years at West Publishing in St. Paul. In 1959, Charlie married Kathy Nelson of Minneapolis, and they enjoyed over 60 years of marriage.

Charlie had a lifelong interest in Gophers athletics. He and Kathy were passionate fans of Gopher basketball, hockey, and football. Following the musical interests of his wife, Charlie and Kathy enjoyed attending Minnesota Orchestra concerts, holding season passes for many decades; they even traveled with them on a few overseas tours. Charlie and Kathy were active members of Mount Olivet Lutheran Church of Minneapolis. (Continued on page 2)





## Remembering Charlie Cunningham '49

(Continued from page 1)

### A Note from Jeffrey P. Greiner, SMU '80

*Jeff is the son of one of Beta Pi's most distinguished alumni, **Peter F. Greiner '51**, who served as former General Fraternity President of Beta Theta Pi.*

Charlie Cunningham was truly one-of-a-kind. A successful businessman who was an integral part of the leadership team that took West Publishing from its humble roots to its ultimate sale to Thomson Reuters. Charlie was also incredibly dedicated civically, and always in the most modest way—never wanting to be recognized.

Among his significant charitable beneficiaries are the Minnesota Orchestra, Gustavus Adolphus College, and, significantly, the University of Minnesota. Charlie was also an incredibly loyal and generous donor to Beta Theta Pi, including his unheralded lead gift to the Beta Theta Pi Foundation (with requested anonymity), which two decades ago established the Peter F. Greiner Leadership College that supports all undergraduates attending the annual Beta Convention—a gift that truly keeps on giving!

Charlie was forever loyal to the Beta Pi Chapter at the University of Minnesota. I think it is fair to say that the recent chapter house renovation would never have happened, or, certainly not at the scale which we proceeded with and completed, had Charlie not committed to an early six-figure lead cash gift, also anonymous. Charlie's gift was instrumental in enabling the Housing Corporation to proceed with and complete this most ambitious million-dollar project, which has maintained what is probably the preeminent fraternity house on campus.

Charlie's legacy will live on in Beta Theta Pi as he truly paid it forward in spades!

Yours in \_kai\_,

**Jeffrey P. Greiner, SMU, Roll #783**  
**Minnesota, Roll #1933**

## FINANCIAL UPDATE

**T**o improve our society's financial position in the lower-than-normal interest rate environment, the housing corporation is working to consolidate multiple debts into a new mortgage, while also continuing to pay down our 15-year U of M Foundation Greek Housing loan. This will reduce our monthly debt obligations, and give our society more financial flexibility to address house repairs.

As of September, the society holds assets of around \$10,000. Our total debt amount is \$458,000.

We intend to further reduce these obligations, and you can help! Gifts of all types and sizes are welcome, and we encourage you to give what you can. To make a gift online, please visit [BetaThetaPiSocietyMN.org](http://BetaThetaPiSocietyMN.org).

Whether supporting the Housing Corporation as we seek to eliminate this debt or supporting new improvements to the house, please consider making a gift before the end of the year.

Thank you for your support.



*The winning golf team: Lech Literski '06, Bryan Patrick '06, Scott Heineman '03, and Aaron Docken '06.*

## BETA PI SPONSOR GOLF OUTING HITS 25 YEARS

### Thank You to All Alumni Who have Participated

**O**n Sunday, September 13, a strong crew of Beta Pi alumni gathered to play golf and celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Beta Golf Sponsor event. As a fundraiser for the chapter house, brothers' contributions raised \$2,100 this year.

Started in 1995, **Brent Anderson '85** organized brothers to raise funds for urgent kitchen and boiler repairs. In the years that have followed, new alumni have joined the original set of players to golf, socialize, and give back to Beta Pi on an annual basis.

Funds raised in the annual event have primarily been used to fund a wide variety of needed house or equipment improvements.

In total since that first year, we estimate that the event has raised at least \$35,000 to support

Beta Pi. The players and their gifts have made a meaningful impact to the house and the alumni society, in addition to giving them a chance to gather and reconnect.

This year, we moved the event back to Les Bolstad Golf Course at the U of M. Twenty-four brothers played at the recently renovated course and enjoyed a near perfect late summer afternoon.

The winning team consisted of **Lech Literski '06, Bryan Patrick '06, Scott Heineman '03, and Aaron Docken '06.**

We'll be out again in 2021, and we look forward to seeing returning players as well as some newcomers! The event is casual in nature, and all are welcome. Thank you to all alumni brothers who participated, and we look forward to seeing you again next summer!





**Left:** Brothers fought the COVID blues by going skydiving. **Right:** Brothers returned to Colorado to cross off two more mountains of 14,000 feet elevation from their bucket lists.

# PRACTICING PROPER PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITY

## Active Chapter Stays Safe and Sane on Campus

**D**espite all the unique challenges of this summer, many brothers were fortunate to participate in internships and accept job offers at companies like Amazon, Microsoft, Target, Piper Sandler, West Monroe Partners, EY, and others. We are very proud of all the work our brothers do to further themselves and others.

This fall, the active chapter is happy to be back on campus and is organizing more informal brotherhood and social events in alignment with university and CDC policies. We are happy to offer brothers a much-needed social outlet during this time of remote learning, remote work, and social distancing.

### COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES

Beta has not had any large events since this past spring break; we believe that this decision helps to protect our brothers and our community. The chapter house has 21 live-in brothers, which allows most of them to have a single room. One room is set aside as a quarantine room;

if a brother in a double is exposed, he can separate himself from his roommate to prevent additional transmission. We have hand sanitizer throughout the house, and brothers are required to wear masks in the basement during the day when Deb, our chef, is in the house. Meals are being served by the plate as opposed to buffet style. These changes and others allowed us to prevent an outbreak in the two situations where brothers in the house have tested positive for COVID-19.

### FALL RECRUITMENT

At the time of writing, fall recruitment is underway with five bids out and an intended 20 more to send. Recruitment has largely been informal and virtual due to COVID restrictions, making it much more difficult. Even so, we are excited about the men we have spoken to and look forward to adding to our brotherhood.

Yours in \_kai\_,

**Jacques Frank-Loron '21**, Chapter President  
fran1002@umn.edu

### CHAPTER STATS



Chapter size:  
58 brothers



Spring 2020  
GPA: 3.63

# Betas Are Leaders on Campus

**W**e are very proud to have many leaders in our chapter, both inside and outside of Beta. The following brothers hold notable student leadership positions at the University of Minnesota.

**Carter Ridl '21**  
IFC Vice President

**Peter Gontarski '22**  
IFC Treasurer

**Wes Lideen '23**  
IFC Campus Safety Officer

**Chris Tadros '24**  
Regional Diversity Taskforce  
Member

**Carter Ridl '21 and  
Ethan Dorn '22**  
Aurora Center Violence  
Prevention Educators

**Ames Olson '22**  
Ballroom Dance Club  
Vice President

**Nate Twardock '23**  
Engineers Without Borders  
Project Lead



# Got a Story Suggestion or Feedback?

We welcome a future story idea or feedback for this newsletter; they help us improve! Email them to **Branden Peterson '05** at [branden@betathetapisocietymn.org](mailto:branden@betathetapisocietymn.org).

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## Alumni Volunteer Opportunities

Got time and talents to give back to Beta Pi? Our alumni society welcomes new volunteers to contribute to our efforts to support the undergraduates, help with the chapter house, and assist with alumni relations activities. Reach out and share your interest via email to [betathetapi.minnesota@gmail.com](mailto:betathetapi.minnesota@gmail.com).

## Visit Us Online



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



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## ALUMNI UPDATE

### OUR MYSTIC SHRINE

**John Greenman '44** passed on to Our Mystic Shrine on July 5, 2019. Shortly after Pearl Harbor, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps where he piloted a B-24 named Roger the Lodger, flying in 22 missions out of Cerignola, Italy. In April of 1945, he and his crew were shot down over Austria and imprisoned for 10 days. After the war, John married his wife, Virginia, in 1950. The two had a 66-year marriage, raising five children together. He spent the majority of his career with Wells Fargo and was active in human rights and social justice causes in his community. John will be missed by his friends, family, and Beta Theta Pi brothers.

**Donald Edward McGrath '55** passed on to Our Mystic Shrine on June 21, 2020. Don was a US Navy veteran, successful businessman, active community volunteer, and loving husband, father, and grandfather. Always active in the community, Don was affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America for the better part of six decades. He is survived by his devoted wife of more than 63 years, June, his four children and nine grandchildren.

**Bradford "Buddy" Lewis '70** passed on to Our Mystic Shrine on August 27, 2019. He graduated from Marshall High School where he played football, hockey, and baseball. He is survived by his brother, Herbert Lee Lewis, and sister, Nona Lynn (Lewis) Thomas, and their families.

### ALUMNI NEWS

**Mark Schneider '64** retired in 2008 from a 40-year career as a fishery biologist and manager. He spent the first half of his career in applied fishery research; the rest he served as a resource manager focused on restoring the Columbia River salmon population, as well as a few years working in southern California and Nevada. Mark lives in Portland, Ore. "It's been a good life." Email: [marksbj8@icloud.com](mailto:marksbj8@icloud.com)

**Jeff Ohm '70** and his wife, Diane, live in Minneapolis and have five grandchildren who keep them busy. Jeff has a handyman business, Fixing Things and Problems. "I am at your service," Jeff says. "I always find it interesting; you never know what you are walking into." Email: [jeffrey.ohm96@gmail.com](mailto:jeffrey.ohm96@gmail.com)