

THE BETA Pi

CELEBRATING 130 YEARS OF BETA PI

A PUBLICATION OF THE BETA THETA PI SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA

SPRING 2023

Your Alumni Dollars at Work!

Who turned off the hot water?! Members found an unwelcome surprise when the chapter house's water heater suddenly died in late January. Showers and sinks went very cold, very quickly.



Alumni volunteers on the Housing Corporation swiftly worked to get quotes, make a selection, and install a new commercial-grade system within weeks for a total cost of \$8,620. The high-efficient Navien system is now serving the house's needs—and at a lower cost per month compared to the older, 80-gallon water heater. It will require annual cleaning, but it has the potential to last longer than the old tanks (and should be easier to repair, when needed).

The society paid for this unexpected project (and two other recent plumbing repairs) using our cash savings on hand, but it depleted our available savings significantly. **Thanks to recent alumni donations and chapter-paid rent collections, we are keeping up with these types of expenses.**

Financial Update

Our Housing Corporation continues to service our debt and do our best to keep up with our expenses, which mostly go toward maintaining the property at 1625 University Ave. SE. We have \$12,541 in cash on hand, and our long-term debt totals \$505,191.

Thank you for your support!

Advisor Update

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME!

Tom Johnson '15 has transitioned into the chapter counselor position, which oversees the advisory board. The advisory board is a group of volunteers who serve as a resource to the active chapter.

If you have an interest in filling a vacancy on the advisory board, reach out to Tom at betapi1819@gmail.com.

Thank You, Loyal Alumni!

We Appreciate Your Support of Beta Pi

We extend our sincere gratitude to our brothers for their commitment in donating \$3,371 to Beta Theta Pi's fall annual campaign. These alumni continue to be Men of Principle and are dedicated to ensuring brothers of today and tomorrow will thrive. Our alumni remain an important part of the success of Beta Pi, and your support will go a long way.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Gerald T. Carroll '55 | Richard L. George '66 |
| Kingsley R. Ondich '56 | Morgan K. Nelson '67 |
| Donn P. Barber '56 | David L. Mitchell '69 |
| Charles H. Christensen '58 | William L. Laakso '69 |
| Charlie Champlin '60 | E. Walt Slibeck '70 |
| Bruce E. Johnson '61 | Jeffrey D. Ohm '70 |
| Roger N. Johnson '62 | Aaron Jastrow '87 |
| Jan F. Ebbert '63 | David F. Servais '92 |
| J. Dixon Tews '63 | Brad Christ '97 |
| James D. Acers '64 | Ryan A. Marek '12 |
| | Joe Viavattine '16 |

Look inside to see what else your brothers are up to!



In December 2022, brothers young and old came together for our first official alumni gathering since the start of the pandemic. Approximately 15 alumni attended to reunite, meet the chapter members and, of course, sing some Beta songs!

Support Beta Pi Today



gift.beta.org/CSiDonate/Give.aspx/U2GHL85P#

SCAN TO MAKE A GIFT



Success in the Ring and Beyond

JUMPIN' JIM BRUNZELL '71 COUNTS HIS BETA BLESSINGS



Wrestling fans may know **Jim Brunzell Jr. '71**, former AWA tag team champion, from his nearly 30-year career in the ring. Those of us receiving this newsletter have the privilege of calling him a brother. What some may not know, however, is that his career and his path to Beta Theta Pi were influenced by the same person.

When Jim was a freshman, his football teammate Greg Gagne attended a rush (now recruitment) event at Beta Pi and invited Jim to join him. Greg later decided not to pledge, but Jim stuck around, enticed by the many football teammates living there (including College Hall of Famer **Bob Stein '69**) and the quality location on campus.

The brothers shared a common bond through athletics and social events, and Jim gained valuable life experiences from interacting with many great Betas. Once such brother was Jim's former roommate, **Bill Tilton '69**, who went on to be a successful medical malpractice lawyer.

"They gave me a family outside of my family, and it brightened my world," Jim said.

Jumpin' into the Ring

Jim played football at the University of Minnesota for three years, followed by a year playing semi-pro football in Wisconsin. As he prepared to return to UMN, Jim got a call from Greg inviting him to his father's pro wrestling camp. "Jumpin' Jim" Brunzell debuted as a wrestler in 1972.

"If somebody told me at age 18 that I'd have a 27-year career in pro wrestling, I would have said they were crazy!"

Jim wrestled in about 5,000 matches throughout his career, from local circuits and the WWF to the independent circuit in his later years. His highlights include wrestling as "The High Flyers" with tag-team partner Greg, followed by "The Killer Bees" with partner Brian Blair. Jim's 2015 book, *MatLands*, includes stories from his career as well as his upbringing from school years—plus photos of Jim and his family with people like Hulk Hogan, Andre the Giant, and even Bruce Springsteen! In 2013, Jim was inducted into the George Tragos/Lou Thesz Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame in Waterloo, Iowa.

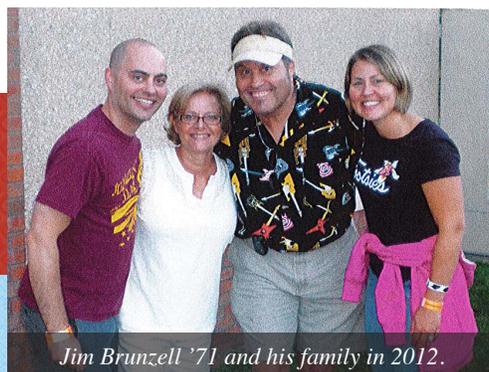
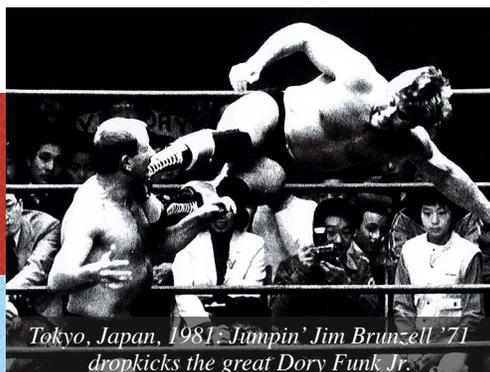
Family, Friends, and Fans

"I'm glad I survived my career—because a lot of guys didn't," Jim said of the wrestling world. Many wrestlers have lost their lives or families to addiction and other health issues. Jim gives most of the credit to his wife, Mary, for looking after him and their family through the years. "Not only did she run my gym while I was away but she also did a wonderful job bringing up our two kids."

Their daughter, Jennifer, and son, Jim III, have both excelled in school and their careers. Their two grandsons are both avid soccer players, and Jim loves spending time with them and following their games. "Although I've taken a beating physically, I'm still cognitive enough to appreciate my blessings."

After retiring, Jim spent 10 years raising funds for his church's maintenance committee. He also attends comic-cons around the country and enjoys the opportunity to meet fans and take pictures with them.

You can connect with Jim at jimbrunzelljr@gmail.com.



Jim's main advice to today's brothers?

Study hard and play hard. "I was good enough to get by, but I wish I would've got my degree. And who knows, I still might!"

I was very fortunate to walk into the Beta house and be welcomed, grow as a student, and grow much more as a person. I'm forever indebted to and proud to be a Beta."

Chapter Goals

- 1 Secure a substantial new member class in the fall (20-25 members).** This will be completed through recruitment outreach and emphasizing informal recruitment during the summer.
- 2 Continue and improve upon our academic success.** While our chapter excels in academic performance, we feel there is always room to grow. New strategies to further our success in academia might include reoccurring grade checks and scheduled study meeting locations.
- 3 Open new forms of revenue for the chapter.** Ideally by increasing the number of chapter house live-ins in the upcoming academic year.

CHAPTER OFFICERS

Chapter President Jacob T. Polzin '25 polzi104@umn.edu	Vice President of Communications Joseph A. Burgess '25	Vice President of Ritual Thomas J. Wolfe '23
Vice President of Brotherhood Connor B. DeJong '23	Vice President of New Member Education Simon C. Horning '24	Vice President of Programming Daniel J. Peters '25
Vice President of Finance Zachary S. Ahearn '25	Vice President of Risk Management William K. Allan '24	Vice President of Recruitment Owen B. Ratgen '24 ratge006@umn.edu



DOING OUR PART

Beta Pi Supports Brothers and Community Members in Need

Beta Pi has remained steadfast in providing for our local community this year. Brothers **Jacob Polzin '25** and **Adam Castella '23** successfully organized our annual Light the Row event last December, raising nearly \$3,000 to support the Aurora Center and prevent sexual violence on campus. Additionally, Brothers **Simon Horning '24** and **Paul Goff '26** have continued this longstanding relationship through their volunteer efforts as Aurora Center Violence Protection Advocates.

During winter break, several executive team members attended the Keystone Regional Leadership Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. At Keystone, these members developed

essential leadership skills while meeting Betas from across North America. Upon returning to school, we welcomed home Brother **Nathan Twardock '23**, who returned from his study abroad trip to Sweden. We are also excited to see Brother **Matthew Basken '24** return to school this fall after a dedicated rehabilitation process following his severe injury last year.

Continuing our fervent dedication to scholastics, Beta Pi earned a 3.42 GPA last fall, again ranking in the top five in the IFC. Academic Chairmen **Joey Burgess '25** and **Gabriel Baggot '23** have committed the members to attend weekly study events to further our academic achievements this year.

With 13 graduating seniors, we are excited for the journey our brothers will soon commence. These men have ardently embodied our chapter's five core values and will continue to do so as they transition into the professional world.

Hearty thanks to the alumni who attended spring initiation, helping guide new members through their journey into Men of Principle. We look forward to seeing more of you for golf, Homecoming, and beyond!

Yours in __kai__,
Jacob T. Polzin '25
Chapter President



*Betas abroad!
Brothers visited
Cabo San Lucas
this past spring
break.*

*The chapter
watching a
movie during
our Spring 2023
weekend that
was generously
hosted at
the home of
Brother Simon
Horning '24
in Shakopee,
Minnesota.*



*Beta Pi holding
a celebratory
dinner for
brothers who
qualified for the
dean's list in
the fall.*

Welcome, Spring 2023 New Members!

Connor V. Graf '26 | *Sleepy Hollow, Ill.*
Vincent T. Nguyen '25 | *Plymouth, Minn.*
Lucas D. Ramey '26 | *Champlin, Minn.*

Recruitment Referrals Needed

**Alumni like you can
help with this year's
recruitment goals!**

If you know any potential Men of Principle at (or soon attending) the University of Minnesota, we'd love to get in touch. Please send their information to VP of Recruitment **Owen Ratgen '24** at ratge006@umn.edu.

Featured Alumnus Inside

Read about Jumpin' Jim Brunzell's wrestling career and lessons from Beta!



HOMECOMING 2023

Homecoming Week will take place this year on **September 24-30**. Look forward to communication over the summer regarding details about gatherings with Beta brothers and visits to campus!

Why Beta Pi Was Worth It 2023 Graduates Speak Up

"Beta provided me with lifelong friends and confidants. I look forward to keeping in touch with everyone I have had the pleasure of knowing in my time here."
—Nathan L. Dirkes

"I experienced much personal growth during my time at Beta. Coming from California, I immediately felt accepted and included in this fraternity and will never forget what the place has taught me about myself and others."
—William M. Gustafson

"Beta taught me to be myself. I always feel supported here and will cherish the memories it has cultivated." —ManHinRichard Li

THE

CELEBRATING 130 YEARS OF BETA PI

BETA Pi

Beta Theta Pi Society of Minnesota
Dinkytown Station-P.O. Box 13225
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Address Service Requested

PRSRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MAILED FROM
ZIP CODE 66044
PERMIT #570

-  betathetapisocietymn.org
-  [@BetaPi_UMN](https://twitter.com/BetaPi_UMN)
-  [@beta_minnesota](https://www.instagram.com/beta_minnesota)
-  [Beta Theta Pi – University of Minnesota](#)
-  [Beta Theta Pi Alumni – University of Minnesota](#)
-  [Beta Theta Pi Alumni – University of Minnesota](#)

Join the Housing Corporation!

Do you like visiting the chapter house? Would you enjoy getting to know other alumni and chapter members and working with them on chapter house improvements? **The housing corporation needs you!**

Multiple opportunities are available to join our group and become a voting member.

Key Things to Know

- All eras and ages of alumni are welcome. *This is a great opportunity for recent graduates or empty nesters/retirees!*
- All skills and experience levels are welcome. In particular, we need more help/expertise with the society's finances (treasurer duties), building/property repairs, and risk management.
- Meetings are held on campus only a few times per year.

For more information, contact:

Scott Heineman '02 at hein0219@umn.edu or **Branden Peterson '05** at bp1681@gmail.com

