

The Delta Penn

Pennsylvania Delta Chapter of
Sigma Phi Epsilon
University of Pennsylvania
Established 1904
Spring 2009



First Undergraduate Editor — Stuart R. Trottmann Jr. '39

www.PennSigEp.com

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ON THE WEB

Reconnect Online

There are lots of ways to reconnect with Penn Delta alumni online!

Find old friends on the following sites:

www.pennsigep.com

Facebook

LinkedIn

MsgMe

Visit www.pennsigep.com for more details on all of these great interactive sites.

What's My Member ID?

You can find your Member ID, required for First Time Login at www.pennsigep.com, above your name and address on the envelope of this newsletter.

ALUMNI REPORT

Our So-called Economy, the University and Penn Delta Moving Forward with "Plan B" Expansion of 4028 Walnut Street

By Brett Danko '90

President, Pennsylvania Delta Foundation

Dear Penn Delta Alumni and Friends,

First, the "good news." The chapter is doing well, we think we have weathered a rough economic time, and the alumni have re-grouped and adopted the proverbial Plan B for the expansion and rehabilitation of our house at 4028 Walnut Street.

There really isn't any "bad news," per se.

Like every other institution in these interesting times, the University has had to take a look at goals and aspirations and the planning process, and so has Penn Delta.

"We have a chapter of strong historic significance and our undergrads work to strive for higher and higher personal, academic and civic standards."

The University will not authorize any construction project unless a sound plan for funding is in place. We at Penn Delta have adopted a similar policy.

This means the following for us:

1. We asked our architects to advise us on a three-part project, which we can complete in stages as funding becomes available.
2. Because the number and quality of undergraduate sleeping quarters generate yearly rental income, we have decided to construct the bedroom addition first. When that phase is completed, we expect to have a significant enough yearly cash flow to support a bridge loan to complete the subsequent two phases, which, in shorthand, require us to reconfigure

the "atrium" as a new entry to the chapter house, and a thorough reconditioning of the rest of the "old" house.

3. This means that Penn Delta will continue to raise funds for the next decade as well as developing a financial instrument akin to an interest-yielding mortgage supported by future bedroom rental income.

Currently, we are exploring a \$1,000,000 fund, with investment portions of \$50,000 to \$100,000 shares.

We have begun conversations with the University and will soon engage the SigEp National Housing Corporation in Richmond in completing the bridge loan process.

Meanwhile, Penn Delta fund raising will assume 3 distinct tracks:

A. First, we ask all our alumni and friends to support the Pennsylvania Delta Foundation's dues program.

Our dues support the publication of the *Delta Penn* and other events and programs which engage the chapter and alumni. Our traditional dues form is enclosed with priorities outlined. (Make your check payable to "Pennsylvania Delta Foundation"; not tax-deductible.)

B. Second, we ask that those of you willing and able to contribute to our construction fund with the University, and that you consider extending your yearly payments for the next several years.

Presently, we have a pledge balance approaching \$1,200,000 and an actual cash received balance of just over \$500,000. (Make your check payable to "Trustees, University of Pennsylvania" and earmarked for SigEp Const.

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ALUMNI REPORT

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Tax-deductible.)

For those of you who have not yet participated in the Capital Campaign, now is the time.

C. Finally, we maintain 4 funds in Richmond which are described on the enclosed dues form. Our highest priority among those funds remains the Balanced Man Scholarship Fund, which is so fundamental in introducing Penn Delta to the freshmen and their parents. (Make your check payable to the "Sigma

Phi Epsilon Educational Foundation"; tax-deductible).

Upon completion of arrangements for a mortgage-like bridge loan, we will be in a stronger position to announce the beginning of construction and will let you know, of course.

Meanwhile, on behalf of our undergraduate chapter and alumni, may I thank each of you for your interest, your support, and your participation with Penn Delta. We have a chapter of strong historic

significance and our undergrads work to strive for higher and higher personal, academic and civic standards.

Those of you who came back for Penn alumni weekend in mid-May saw for yourselves.

With continuing strong alumni commitment, we will begin our construction project with full confidence that the opportunity we present to a Penn SigEp will be relevant, contributory, personally engaging, and lifelong.

CHAPTER NEWS

SigEp Wins Four Awards at The Penn 2009 Greeks Awards Ceremony

On Thursday, March 26th, the Penn Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs (OFSA) hosted the 2009 Greek Awards Ceremony in Houston Hall's Bodek Lounge. The chapter received four individual rewards at the Ceremony.

Dan Olson '99, former Chapter Counselor, received the award for Outstanding Alumni Advisor, presented to him by Director of OFSA, Scott Reikofski. Dan served as chapter counselor from the spring of 2000 through the spring of 2008. He has seen a number of brothers grow into responsible adults and has helped provide the chapter with his insight, leadership, and sense of brotherhood to guide the chapter toward success.

Brett Merves '04, Alumni Housing Board Officer, received the award for Outstanding Alumni Housing Board Officer, presented to him by OFSA Associate Director for Chapter House Administration, Beth Schnitman-Malm. Brett has been very active in maintaining the overall appearance and facilities of the chapter house. He's been leading the charge into making sure the necessary improvements and furniture are kept up-to-date, so that the chapter house is an appealing place to live.

Anthony Cangioli '10, current Chapter House Manager, received the award for Outstanding House Manager, presented to him by Beth Schnitman-Malm. In only

his only second semester as house manager, Anthony has built an impressive relationship with OFSA and has done an excellent job maintaining the house facilities, organizing chapter clean-ups, and coordinating activities with our Alumni Housing Board Officer, Brett Merves.

Lastly, former Chapter President **Stilianos "Stel" Plakas '09**, received the award for Outstanding Greek Leader, presented to him by Scott Reikofski. Stel was a dynamic President that helped build SigEp's reputation on campus among the IFC, Panhellenic Council, and Multi-Cultural Greek Council.

ON THE WEB

Give Us the Gift of Email

With the cost of paper and printing on the rise, and the price of a postage stamp now at 44 cents, it costs a significant chunk of our annual fund contributions to mail each edition of our printed newsletter.

We'd like to begin sending more electronic communications to save some of our publication costs. If you haven't been receiving our monthly e-Letter, please update your email address today! You can do so by

verifying it on the enclosed form, by updating your online profile at www.pennsigep.com, or by emailing our alumni relations office at feedback@affinityconnection.com.

By providing us with or updating your email address, you are helping us to save money by building our email database for future electronic publications. Please update your email address and other contact information today. Your email ad-

dress will be used solely for Penn Delta communications, and won't be traded or sold.

Did you know that we're missing email addresses for 65.6% of our alumni? Help us to update the email addresses of other brothers! Review the Lost Email List at www.pennsigep.com. If you are in touch with any of these brothers electronically, please follow the instructions on the page to update our database.

The Life and Times of Costo

Remembering Brother Robert John Costomiris '85

By Tim Games '84

On April 2, 2009, Brother **Robert John Costomiris '85** died at the age of 45 after a battle with cancer.

Bob's obituary reflects that he was born and raised in Queens, received a bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering from Penn, an MBA from the University of Chicago, and enjoyed a distinguished professional career as a portfolio manager with Wells Capital Management, and before that, Strong Capital Management. But what Bob's obituary won't tell you is Bob's favorite roulette number (28, if anyone feels lucky), or his many Sig Ep nicknames: Costo, Costoplenty, Bobby Cino, Bobby C-Note, Bobby Flagpole, just to name a few. And with each nickname comes a story, and rather than mourn his death, we celebrate his life, and the powerful imprint left by one of the original "Quad Four."

"...with each nickname comes a story, and rather than mourn his death, we celebrate his life, and the powerful imprint left by one of the original 'Quad Four.'"

Alan Abrams '85 recalls that during senior year, Bob would post his many rejection letters on the wall, then blast Elvis' "I Did It My Way" and read them out loud. Alan can still hear Bob accompanying Elvis with "Dear Mr. Costomiris, thank you for your interest in Air Products..." Needless to say, Bob got the last laugh, as a highly-rated fund manager who was frequently seen on CNBC and Bloomberg TV, and received regular mention in Barron's, including this comment in a March 5, 2007 edition: "Bob Costomiris manages money the way he crosses the streets in New York City: He likes to leave the crowds at the curb."

Craig Mills '84 remembers Costo's nocturnal lifestyle. It was rare for Costo and Niles to turn the music down before 2:00 a.m. These late night jam fests, while

welcomed by some, were unwelcomed by the ROTC brothers who had to rise for 6:00 a.m. drill. We can report that repeat attempts to awaken Costo at 6:00 a.m. as payback were completely unsuccessful. Costo always liked to do it his way, whether it was allowing 15 minutes for a 30 minute walk to class, or refusing to wear anything but a bathrobe before dinner. He also was a great physical comedian, and used to entertain us with own unique form of stomach exercises, and worried concerns that he was developing a side-Danno.

Larry Harding '85 recalls the trials and tribulations of living with Costo, **Dave Jehn '85** and **John Cunniffe '85** in the Quad junior year. With living space in short supply, the Quad Four did their best to convert a small two bedroom into a four bedroom. It didn't work because there was not enough space for four beds, so some lofts were constructed, and accommodations made. **Mark Friedman '84** notes that there was always someone sleeping - and always someone awake - in the Quad. It was a good place for a late night bull session, an early morning cup of coffee, or a chance to watch Costo do his Bill Murray imitation from Caddyshack, muttering, "Whose your buddy, whose your pal?"

Costo was a great pool player, and won the house pool tournament on occasion, the only brother to beat **Joel Kellner '84**. Many feel that Costo had an unfair advantage because he did not let class work interfere with his training.

Shortly after Costo died, brothers exchanged some of their favorite Costo stories over the Internet (thankfully nothing was censored). These stories not only sparked some favorite memories, but celebrated the life and times of a SigEp legacy.

After reading the emails, **Mike Ward '85** commented. "I find it quite difficult to 'follow' in this email trail of wonderful thoughts and great wittiness (especially Marty!). Bob was a 'one of a kind!' The

stories you all have recounted bring smiles to my face, laughter to my heart, and tears to my eyes. As I read some of your emails at our company meeting yesterday, I kept getting very odd looks from those around me as I would start to laugh during a speech for no apparent reason."

"Bob was a 'one of a kind!' The stories you all have recounted bring smiles to my face, laughter to my heart, and tears to my eyes." – Mike Ward '85

We will miss Costo, but we will remember him, and we will pray for his wife Karen and two children, Zoe and Liam, as well as his mother, Mary, sisters Susan and Jodi, and numerous other relatives, that they find peace in his passing, and comfort in knowing that he touched the lives of so many in such a wonderful way.

Share your best memories and funniest stories of Costo online at www.pennsigep.com!

IN MEMORY

Since publication of the last newsletter we have learned of the deaths of the following brothers:

William Roberts Esq. '34

Charles Fox '36

Henry McDowell '39

John Mosch '41 (11/19/07)

Charles Fischer '45 (7/31/06)

Michael Blischak '48

Louis Errickson '48 (10/1/08)

ALUMNI EVENTS

Twentieth McCron NYC Gathering Goes Back to Its Roots

At our April 2nd alumni-undergraduate gathering at New York City's Penn Club, **Ray McCron's** daughter, Trudy Cox, her husband Bill and their son, high school junior Rob Cox, joined us.

Earlier this year, Trudy McCron Cox had Googled her father and found a reference to the McCron Dinner. She inquired the Pennsylvania Delta Foundation President **Brett Danko '90**, and Brett invited Trudy and her family to join us.

A special surprise for Trudy was the

presence of **Warren Monsees '43**, a classmate of Ray's and a fellow entrant in "Brothers in War," the book published in 2004 which included excerpts from monthly Delta Penn letters from Penn SigEp servicemen during WW II, so ably compiled and edited in the '40s by **Henry Pope '43**.

Trudy, Bill, and Warren had a warm conversation about Ray, the War, the University and SigEp in particular.

As is custom, about 25 undergraduates

attended from Philadelphia, and, again, as usual, Warren Monsees was our senior brother present. Warren was introduced to freshman members of the class of 2012, and the most senior/most junior brother circle, for this year, was completed.

"This is a special gathering which undergrads look forward to every year," said Chapter President **Kyle Srivastava**. "It is inspiring to see the interest and commitment of alumni, and it's nice to put faces to names, too," Kyle added.



OLD PHOTO ALBUM

Share Your Best Penn Delta Photos Online

We want to feature more great pictures from our chapter's history in *The Delta Penn* and in our monthly e-Letters. If you have great photos from your days in SigEp, please send them to our editors for consideration! You can either submit them via mail using the enclosed form, or email them to content@affinityconnection.com (mention Penn Sigep in the subject).

In this photo: Class of 1952.



ALUMNI EVENTS

Penn Alumni Weekend Brings Alumni to 4028

Saturday, May 16th marked Penn's Parade of Classes for alumni who graduated in years ending in 4 and 9.

For the past ten years, at least, Penn Delta has sponsored a Saturday mid-afternoon alumni gathering during the break time between the close of the Parade and various class and other alumni dinners.

This year, a special effort was made by classes which graduated before and after 1984 to remember and honor **Bob "Costo" Costomiris '85**, who succumbed to cancer earlier this year. (See article on page 3). Several mid-80s Penn Delta alumni gathered at the chapter house as the day picked up steam, and many were able to stay together in

the evening for a special tribute to Costo.

Our get-together attracted two members of the stellar Penn Delta class of 1955, **Vince Rettew** and **Clarke Glennon**. **Hank Wilewski '59**, Civil War reenactor and lawyer from Fredricksburg, Va., attended with his wife, Kathy and engaged in a spirited Civil War discussion on the porch.

Among those present from the mid-80s included **Sid Bakst '83**, **Tim Games '84**, **Ivan Kessel '84**, **Nick Calabrese '84**, **Jon Case '84**, **Marty Black '85**, **Tim Wilson '87**, **Mike Logan '87**, **Joe Halprin '87**, **Paul Puleo '87**, **Eli Brill '87** and **David Jehn '85** and **Pat Barry '85**, who spearheaded the effort to get so many of their era back to

honor and remember Costo.

A thrill went up the spines of certain "key" alumni when **Rick Thompson '94**, and his wife and two children came through the Red Door. Those who recall Rick's recruitment leadership remembered that he and his era were instrumental in bringing us the class of '96, which rivals the class of 1955 in participation and loyalty to Penn Delta.

Currently a heart surgeon in Lancaster, Rick said that he intended to be as present and as active an alumnus as he could and extended an invitation to any undergraduate who may be contemplating medical school to spend a day with him at the hospital.

The SigEp Network grows.



Above: left to right, Keith Lotman '99, Sam Farhang '99, Randy Hsia '99, Dan Rosen '99, Dan Olson '99 and Dan VonShacky '99.



ALUMNI UPDATES

We want to know what's new with you too! There are three ways to submit an update:

1. Write on or attach your update to the enclosed form.
2. Email our editors at content@affinityconnection.com.
3. Online at www.pennsigep.com.

Matthew Mackie Jr. '53

(1221 W. Grove St., Clarks Summit, PA 18411-9502) Whenever I want an uplift, I think of my days at Penn with special emphasis on the various brothers with whom I had a special relationship.

Vincent Rettew Jr. '55

(290 Dover Dr., Walnut Creek, CA 94598-3322; ashrettew@astound.net) I returned for the May 2008 reunion and enjoyed the SigEp House and saw many alumni. Conrad and I sang for the Fraternity group and later went to dinner with Clarke Glennon, Bob Johnson, Aram Jerrikan and Don Sontag. A good time was had by all.

Charles Cain '92

Wanted to announce the birth of our second child, Allison Rachel Cain, on February 17, 2009.

Joshua Krotec '01

I graduated from Penn (again) after earning an MBA. Josh spent the past twenty-four months in Wharton's MBA Program for Executives thanks to a sponsorship from his company, Aerospace Products International, Inc.

Andrew Brody '88

(311 Tappan St., #5, Brookline, MA 02445-5340; andbrody@yahoo.com) We're delighted to announce the birth of Jordan Brody on December 23, 2008 at 5:01 p.m. Jordan is 20.5 inches tall and weighed in at 9 lbs. 4 oz.



ALUMNI NEWS

Now THAT'S Funny!

Several Penn SigEp alumni came out to support **Alex Barnett '89** as he took the stage as a stand-up comic in New York City. Pictured are (L to R): **Jose Ibieta-torremendia '90**, **Seth Popper '88**, **Conrad Eberstein '65**, **Alex Barnett '89**, **Brett Danko '90** and **Eric Nadler '90**.

Read more about Alex's career online! Find a link to more stories about him in the Archived News section at www.pennsigep.com.



ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

Delta Penn Alum Tackles Robbery Suspect

Ed Skyler '95 is No Stranger to Public Service, as He Manages Several NYC City Agencies

New York Deputy Mayor **Ed Skyler '95** took a hands-on approach to stopping crime Tuesday evening—he tackled an apparent mugger after he heard a woman scream that she had been robbed, according to New York police.

New York Deputy Mayor Ed Skyler aids Mayor Michael Bloomberg in managing several city agencies.

Skyler confirmed the incident saying he was walking to dinner in midtown Manhattan when he heard a woman screaming, "They're robbing me, they have

my stuff!"

He said he saw a young man running down the street towards him, so stepped into the man's path and tackled him. The man was able to get away, Skyler said, but Skyler called police from his cell phone and then went back to check on the woman.

New York police said the 41-year-old woman's cell phone was taken, but it was dropped during the scuffle and ultimately recovered.

While the apparent mugger and as

many as four teenagers with him all got away, Skyler looked at the incident with a sense of civic pride.

Skyler is the deputy mayor for operations. According to the city government Web site, he aids Mayor Michael Bloomberg in managing the police and fire departments, and he oversees agencies including the departments of transportation, buildings and sanitation.

Article from CNN.com.