

Alumni of the Sigma Alpha Chapter of **DELTA KAPPA EPSILON**



and DELTA KAPPA SIGMA P.O. Box 18231, Richmond, Virginia 23226

April 12, 2012

Alumni Association/Chapter Update

Dan Johnson, Alumni Board Chairman (Spring '74)

Dear Fellow DKE/DKS Brothers, Parents and Friends:

The active chapter currently has 33 members and 13 pledges, and according to my math that represents 46 members assuming everyone makes it in. With only 6 members graduating, should result in 40 members at the start of the next year! It has been sometime since the chapter has been this size and congratulations are in order to all the leadership team. If anyone actually read the strategic plan we made up several years ago, we stated that for the fraternity to remain vibrant and financially sound, the fraternity needs to maintain an active membership of 40 to 50 brothers. Vibrant has never been the problem, but the added numbers will surely help with the active chapter finances (and social budget!) beginning in the Fall. This is even more impressive considering the chapter is in its first year of a five-year suspension from the University. But then again, in our history as Delta Kappa Sigma, we clearly built the legacy of DKE in Blacksburg and actually thrived as a non-recognized organization.

Speaking of legacies, the current pledge class of 13 includes two DKE/DKS legacies, Brett Fortin and Mark Lenzi. Apparently, these two young men got bids to join *despite* what is known about their fathers **Eric Fortin** (Class of 86) and **Joe Lenzi** (Class of 70) (and of course the small detail that they had to commit for their fathers to make donations as a condition of their initiation). **Joe Lenzi**, as I understand it, was one of the four DKS brothers that were on the original title of DKE House when it was acquired in 1967. I do recall from the fabled DKE history lore that **Billy Vineyard** (F'63) was on the original lease and the house purchase was financed through his father. Not sure what the criteria for the other three title holders were: [Wanted: Owners of property legally responsible for 15 college student residents hosting keg parties on weekly basis – for perpetuity]. Of course the first move they made as landlords upon buying the property was to convert the kitchen into a bar, undoubtedly a top priority for any new homeowner! (HINT: would make a great story for our next newsletter page 3 column).

Our page 3 column is penned by **Ed Owens** (F'60). Special thanks to Ed for answering the bell. Ed and his wife Suzanne attended the 70th DKE/DKS reunion last Fall and gave his rendering of Tales of 60's. Ed's daughter, Denise, was a DKE Little Sister in the mid-1980's. As part of his emcee duties for the reunion **Theta Bowden** (F'70), organized the guest speakers and noted to Ed in a pre-reunion email that he remembered Denise and her roommate from their VT days and described them as "capable partiers". In retaliation for exposing her well-kept Owen family secrets, Denise supplied a photo of Theta, complete with fifth of Wild Turkey in his hand in a return email, from which anyone would likely question Theta's memory facilities during that time.

In other alumni news, we had a note from **Steve Williamson** (Class of '54) commenting on that he enjoyed the newsletter but was disappointed in that there wasn't any news from his old gang. So if you are part of the Gang of '54 please get a hold of Steve. No email was provided, but Steve can be reached at 5930 E Ashland Ave; Nashville, TN 37215. We are looking forward to an update of the Gang, which we can share with others in an upcoming newsletter. Likewise, we heard from **Jeff Spigel** (S '75) stating that; "FFTHF did not apply to him since **Dana Lewis** (F '74; died in 1994) was allowed to blackball his brother when he pledged"; asking us to print his response and requesting that he be removed from the mailing list. We did send Jeff a personal note and have honored his request.

As for VT-DKE Alumni Association news, we have a couple of calendar items for your attention. The 2012 football schedule has been posted. We open on September 3rd at night against Georgia Tech, so look for the DKE Tailgate Club's 5th season to start off with a bang. Tailgate Club sponsors/helpers/volunteers are always needed. If you are



interested in helping out please indicate on the enclosed card and/or simply contact **Charlie Webb** at cwebb@benefitsgroup.com. We are also looking to take show on the road on September 29th at FedEx Field for the game against Cincinnati. More details to follow over the course of the summer.

For the immediate calendar we have our second annual "Habitat for Inhumanity" scheduled for Saturday, April 21st prior to the Spring Game. Will take on a few house improvements tasks with the local chapter members and then quit in time for pregame tailgate in Lot4. We are looking for donations of used goods suitable for 'frat house' use of any kind. Tools, painting supplies and bar stools are always needed. You can always become immortalized and donate your old DKE paddle to the house for mounting on the wall. And of course your donations are always welcomed. Finally, **Mickey Hayes** is still leading effort to get DKS/DKE alumni and their friends to relocate your football parking pass to Lot 4 and expand the size and/or nearby presence to the DKE Tailgate Club location. Please contact Mickey at mickeyhayes@live.com if you want to coordinate your move. Seating and parking reallocation is expected to happen soon, so don't delay.

Again we do thank you for your support or your fraternity. Go Dekes! Go Hokies!

FFTHF, Dan Johnson

Active Chapter Report

Jeff Rose, Chapter President (Fall '08)

We held new officer elections in March and elected a pro-tem slate of officers for next year to overlap with the existing officers. New chapter officers include: **Kevin Buchanan**, President; **Steve Mattoon**, Vice President; **Andrew McLaughlin**, Secretary; **Joey Loess**, Treasurer; **Chris Hotaling**, Member-at-Large Risk Management; **Dave Marshall**, Social Chairman; **Matt Wilson**, Rush Chairman; and **Corey Caulfield**, Pledgemaster. Our chapter is in good hands for next year. This year we have effectively doubled the size of the fraternity. I would like to pay special thanks to our graduating seniors (including a few redshirt seniors) for their roles in leading the fraternity. We have six members on track to graduate and all are active members of our current leadership group including: **Jeff Rose**, President; **Wesley Johnson**, Vice President; **Tim Sweet**, Treasurer; **Florian Mayer**, Rush Chairman, **Colin Reef**, Pledgemaster; and **Jason Spooner**, Social Chairman. The bonds we have formed as fellow members of DKE will last our lifetimes. We have all witnessed the formation of the DKE Tailgate Club and met hundreds of DKS/DKE alumni of which we are soon to be proud members also. We have reaped the benefits of the generosity of our alumni over the past 4+ years and would like assist in supporting the brothers we leave behind. As graduating members we have all agreed to make VT-DKE Alumni Association donations this year prior to leaving Blacksburg.

On March 31st, we participated in the Big Event where we assisted local low-income families with gardening and landscaping to improve their homes. The chapter members are again supporting the Relay for Life charity event to raise money for the American Cancer Association during the Ut Prosim weekend. Also in conjunction with Delta Gamma Sorority we are managing the "Run for Ryan" which raises money for the Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndrome (SADS) foundation in honor of the late Ryan Lopynski.

Our social calendar has remained active (without any noise violations!) and the DKE House became the post-concert after party following a concert in February. We have our Spring formals planned for the weekend before exams. Time has flown by and I have had a blast. Best of luck to Kevin and the incoming Executive Committee. We leave the place in your trustworthy hands. And I will give you the same advice as every DKE alumnus has given me. "Have a good time, but don't screw things up!" and, "Can't you keep the House clean? It was never this trashed when I lived here". As usual the house is always open to alumni. Make a point of visiting whenever you are in town.

FFTHF, Jeff Rose (F '08)



Now and Then: Memories of the Early 60's

Ed Owens (Fall '60)

"Those were the days my friend, we thought they'd never end.....". The DEEK house on Main St., off campus fraternities, Ed Thornley's hearse, Meredith's Diner, The Guzzle Cup, the War Memorial Gym, Davidson's Charwood Shop, I could go on and on!

1960/61 was a great year to be a DKS brother. We had the best of both worlds....no wars and a free reign to operate the fraternity under our own rules (good & bad!). The house was on Main St. was an old 3 story brick "mansion" (now the site of a McDonalds), with a great basement for parties. The place was heated by coal and the furnace required stoking on a regular schedule in winter. Those of us who lived in the house had the luxury of a cook who came in during the week to prepare dinner. We were on our own the rest of the time.

The weekend parties were something to behold. Probably tame by today's standards, but rocking none the less. The stuffed Gnu head over the bar, with cigarettes dangling from its mouth, saw much that cannot be repeated. I am sure **Ralf Mast's** famous "Gotcha's" made an impression on the dead beast! Occasional visits by the Pabst Blue Ribbon rep kept us in bar signs, etc. and sometimes a free keg. Needless to say PBR was the beer of choice!

When **Dan Johnson** asked me to do a report on our Brothers during that era, I had visions of each giving me a good story they remembered and a brief update of their lives since. Wishful thinking! I forgot that these guys are in their 70's now and probably couldn't remember yesterday! No response from any of them, so I will do a quick report (keep in mind I am also 72 and suffer from CRS!).

Ralf Mast lives in Richmond, retired from commercial real estate, wife Diane, son & daughter, numerous grandkids. Ralf liked to bare his butt at parties and gave numerous gotcha's from the bar! **Ron Campbell** also lives in Richmond, retired financial planner, married to Jean. Not sure of Ron's number of kids, but did meet one son. Ron was laid back and basically was a good guy who kept the rest of us in line. **Jay Smith** lives with the Stars in LA, a most successful engineer and designer, assume now retired. Jay has been honored by the University for his accomplishments (not your typical DEKE, for sure). I know Jay is married, sorry I cannot recall all of his family. **Vince Kohlbecker** is in the San Diego area. Not sure what Vince did for a living. I've met his lovely wife before, but her name slips me. Vince was a party animal, as I recall and smart as hell! Seems to me he also was a good poker player. **Bucky Shell** is a retired educator, Superintendent of Schools in Amelia. Wife Jane. Bucky was our star on the Guzzle Cup team, which was an annual beer drinking contest with Sigma Lambda. Knew how to party and take your money in poker! **John Pully** is retired from Newport News Shipbuilding. Saw John at our 50th Class reunion after many years, but not sure of his family numbers. John was also a steady force in the fraternity and could be counted on to keep us on the right path. I, **Ed Owens**, am retired from Insurance & Financial planning. Married to the lovely Suzanne for 46 years. Three daughters, six grandkids. We have lived in Virginia Beach since college. I lived in the house for four quarters, shared a room with **Tom Whittier** and spent way too much time partying. Would do it all over again, like most Deeks/Dekes!

The rest of the guys I have lost touch with or they have just dropped out of sight...**Tony Solomon** (the ladies' man from South Africa), **Jim Fitzgerald** & wife Happy, somewhere in South Carolina, **Jerry Ballengee** (regular DKE contributor I am told), **Jerry McNichols**, aka Jerry Mac, appears occasionally at DKE outings, then disappears during the night. I am sure I have missed some guys, or misstated others, but 50+ years was a long time ago! I did take the opportunity to attend the 70th reunion since the founding of Delta Kappa Sigma last October. Friday night festivities a Hotel Roanoke, an open house/BBQ at the DKE House located at 302 E. Roanoke Street in Blacksburg; the DKE Tailgate under the circus tent at Lot 4 with several hundred fraternity alumni, family and friends; and a forgettable shellacking of VT by Clemson. I urge all of you to visit the DKE House when you are in Blacksburg.

Ed Owens - Class of 1961



Treasurer's Report

Mike Beam, Alumni Treasurer (Winter '85)

We are a business. We own a \$500,000 property (mortgaged to the hilt) and lease rooms to individual DKE members as tenant on an annual basis. Our rents cover the mortgage, taxes, insurance, and minor upkeep but we depend on your generosity to make capital upgrades and support the VT-DKE Alumni Association. We have secured leases for next academic year. Beyond capital upgrades, communications (newsletters and website) along with social (DKE Tailgates and Reunions) are our major expenses. Last year 76 alumni/friends supported the DKE Annual Giving Fund to the tune of \$28,408 in cash and in-kind donations. A full listing of donors can be found on the vtdke.com website. Please take the time to fill out the enclosed card and support *your* fraternity with a tax-deductible donation to the 2012 DKE Annual Giving Fund to the Sigma Alpha Chapter of DKE in Blacksburg. We all thank you.

FFTHF, **Mike Beam**

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