

GAMMA + Rho ver

PER CRIGEM CRASGENS
GAMMA-RHO MEMBERS
CELEBRATE 100 YEARS — PG.2

ALUMNUS SPOTLIGHT — PG.3

HISTORY OF
THE CHAPTER HOUSE — PG.4

LOYALTY FUND
CONTRIBUTORS — PG.5

WITNESS TO OUR
QUIESQUE

A LAMBDA CHI ALPHA ALUMNI PUBLICATION

◆ UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA ◆

FALL 2009

Sigma Phi Performs Maintenance in Preparation for Chapter House's 80th Birthday

- ◆ Undergraduates win the President's Trophy
- ◆ House receives new kitchen equipment, flooring, basketball court, and updates to air conditioning and roof

Change is inevitable. We all experience change of various types, such as Oklahoma's changeable weather, which played havoc with my garden this summer (poor tomatoes and okra), and yielded to an early fall. I don't mind those changes when they result in better weather for Sooner football games.

Some things don't seem to change. An example of this is another outstanding year for our Chapter, including triumphs in intramurals, academics, and campus involvement. All this paid off when AXA was named the outstanding fraternity on campus by virtue of winning the President's Trophy for the third time in five years. We are sure to see this tradition continue with the signing of another outstanding class of associates for the 2009-10 school year. Our level of excellence is only maintained by



the hard work and dedication of the Chapter, its officers, advisers, house-mother, and alumni support groups.

A change that has affected many of us this last year is the economy. While change can bring enhanced opportunities, it is often accompanied by a trade off in other aspects of life. My business travel has increased,

which left me with less time to tend to our annual summer repairs at the Chapter House. Of course, the other great members of our housing board took up my slack and we completed several much needed improvements to keep 904 College a fitting residence for our outstanding young members.

One thing that doesn't change as much as we would like is the level of upkeep our aging mansion requires. While we receive constant compliments for our house's striking presence on campus, we pay the price in annual maintenance. As our fraternity continues its centennial celebration, our Chapter House prepares for its 80th birthday this year. Last summer, Sigma Phi, in conjunction with the Mom's and Dad's Clubs, made significant and necessary upgrades, including new kitchen equip-
(Continued on page 2)

Lambda Chi Alpha Excels Once Again at the University of Oklahoma

Gamma-Rho Zeta completed an excellent school year, winning the President's Trophy for Most Outstanding Fraternity at the University of Oklahoma. During a ceremony at the Museum of Art, University President David Boren presented brothers from Gamma-Rho Zeta the traveling trophy, the permanent trophy, and a \$5,000 award. The brothers voted to donate 10 percent of

their award to a philanthropic cause and use the remainder for Chapter House improvements. Lambda Chi Alpha has won the President's Trophy four out of 13 years and has placed in the top three the other nine years.

Capping off a great academic year, Gamma-Rho Zeta finished the spring semester with an overall 3.12 G.P.A.
(Continued on page 3)



High Beta Michael Nash, GP 2253, University President David Boren, Housemother Carol Roberts, High Alpha Christian Bester, GP 2255, and former High Alpha Yousef Essali, GP 2252 accept the President's Trophy. We are proud to say that Mom Roberts has been our housemother for 17 years and plans on many more to come.

Sigma Phi Performs Maintenance in Preparation for Chapter House's 80th Birthday

(Continued from page 1)

ment and flooring, a new basketball court, and major work on air-conditioning units and roofing. All of this was in addition to normal painting, furniture refinishing, and carpeting. The house looks great for the upcoming academic year, and I hope all alumni stop by and visit when you're in town.

This installment of the *Gamma Rho* details some of the Chapter and individual accomplishments of last year, recaps alumni activities, and contains information regarding upcoming events. We look forward to football tailgates at the house, the White Rose banquet in the winter, and, of course, the Loyd Harris Alumni Golf Tournament next spring.

In closing, I would like to note that our annual alumni update form is enclosed. I urge

all alumni to take time to fill this out and send it in (especially with updated e-mail addresses). Feel free to include comments about the *Gamma Rho*, its contents, whether you like it, hate it, or just have some suggestions. If you have any communication or announcements you would like to send out to classmates about reunions or just to say "hi" send these along, as well. Also, please review the lost brothers section for anyone you know the whereabouts of so we can update our contact list.



In Z.A.X.,
Bob Canfield, GP 876
President, Sigma Phi
rcanfield@fdic.gov

GAMMA-RHO ZETA SIGNS RECORD CLASS

A record 770 men participated in recruitment this year, with 550 accepting bids to various chapters. Lambda Chi Alpha associated a record number of 75 outstanding young men, including 12 members of the President's Leadership Class. Almost half of the class came to OU with a high school G.P.A. of 3.8 or higher. Now if they can just play basketball, sing, and dance!

Special thanks go to the recruitment team that worked tirelessly, beginning last spring and continuing through the summer.

GAMMA-RHO MEMBERS CELEBRATE 100 YEARS WITH GALA WHITE ROSE BANQUET

To kick off the centennial celebration for Lambda Chi Alpha, the men of Gamma-Rho Zeta, the AXA Mom's Club, and the Sigma Phi Holding Company partnered to host the White Rose banquet on February 29 in Norman at the Holiday Inn. More than 300 actives, parents, and alumni attended.

Our guest of honor was Grand High Alpha Ed Leonard. The evening was hosted by OU Alumni Association Director **Rennie Cook, GP 1547**. Brother Leonard gave the keynote address, which was followed by several alumni giving brief presentations on the his-

tory of the Chapter House and life in the house during different eras. High Alpha **Christian Bester, GP 2255** provided an update on the Chapter, then everyone gathered for a rousing version of "We're All Good Brothers" and "Hip Hip Hooray" before dancing began.

A good time was had by all. Please mark your calendars the date of February 27, 2010, for the next White Rose banquet at the University of Oklahoma Ballroom, where we will celebrate the 80th birthday of our Chapter House.



Frankie Medina, GP 2175,
Louis Medina, GP 911, and their guests



Mrs. David Cameron shares a dance with her
son, Max Cameron, GP 2239.



Grand High Alpha Ed Leonard, Mary
Sherman, and Sigma Phi President Bob
Canfield, GP 876, mingle before the banquet.

Lambda Chi Alpha Excels Once Again

(Continued from page 1)

Campus and community involvement played a large role in the Chapter's success this year with many brothers winning individual awards, including Outstanding Sophomore, Outstanding Junior, Big Man on Campus (Junior), Big Man on Campus (Senior), Homecoming king, and Outstanding Senior Man in the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Chapter also won the intramural championship for the fifth year in a row. Gamma-Rho Zeta outdistanced the second place fraternity by more than 200 points.

In Z.A.X.,
Rodger Lalli, GP 1894
High Pi

Congratulations to 4.0 Students

The following brothers earned perfect G.P.A.'s last spring:

Christian Bester, GP 2255

Ben Bigbie, GP 2148

Brandon Coates, GP 2250

Robert Elliott, GP 2305

Eric Hale, GP 2295

Travis Johnson, GP 2286

Darwin Roman, GP 2311

Brian Russell, GP 2158

Patrick Ryan, GP 2310

Brandon Smith, GP 2259

Sam Summers, GP 2233

Patrick Westerheide, GP 2164

Lee Woodside, GP 2267

Zach Wszolek, GP 2172

Aric Yarberry, GP 2266

Years of Laughter and Lambda Chi Alpha Memories

SPOTLIGHT ON LARRY BLEDSOE, GP 465

It has been a lifetime full of understanding and entertaining others for **Larry Bledsoe, GP 465**. Though he was an entertainer in New York and in advertising for nearly 40 years, Larry points to his years as a member of Lambda Chi Alpha as the years full of mentorship, pride, and friendship.

Larry began his University of Oklahoma experience with close friend **Curt Schwartz, GP 465**. "The two of us decided to go to OU and pledge the same fraternity. Lambda Chi Alpha was our top choice and, in the midst of recruitment week, it felt like home. It was a comfortable and restful environment that felt like a place where you could really kick back."

Larry pursued a degree in theater with the driving desire to break into the world of entertainment always on his mind. "Being a member of Lambda Chi Alpha meant learning a higher level of confidence, a broader set of social skills, and becoming comfortable interacting with people of different backgrounds. For me, this manifested in the confidence to work towards entering the entertainment business in New York."

While his years at Lambda Chi provided a multitude of memories, Larry recounts that Mother's Day of 1957 is one of the best.

"Mother's Day of freshman year, Curt and I entertained the mothers and then had to perform at a campus variety show. What we didn't know was that the show was a competition. Well, we ended up winning the prize and **Rod Cutler, GP 405** had to accept the trophy on our behalf. On top of a trophy, the win meant that Curt and I would travel throughout the conference, representing the University of Oklahoma at the Big Eight talent show. It was those times at OU, with the men of Lambda Chi Alpha, which are some of the fondest memories I have."

Larry keeps busy playing golf, traveling, and volunteering at his church. He and his wife, Nanette, have one daughter, Tiffany, and two grandchildren, Graham and Bennett. E-mail: lbledsoe@ubokc.com

RECRUITMENT RECOMMENDATION

Prospect's name _____

Parent(s) or guardian(s) _____

Home address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

High school attended _____

Is prospect a AXA legacy? _____

Reference submitted by _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

SEND TO: **Daniel Jones, GP 2300**, Gamma-Rho Zeta • c/o McClain Bank •
P.O. Box 722800 • Norman, OK 73070-9131

A History of the Chapter House at 904 College

Gamma-Rho Zeta Home Approaches 80th Year on Campus

In 1915 Greek life at the University of Oklahoma consisted of six national fraternity chapters. During the boom decade of the 1920s following the economic expansion of World War I, enrollment at OU increased by 100 percent and by 1929 the number of social fraternities had grown to 20. These new groups were formed primarily by students that organized local fraternities and petitioned national organizations for a charter. Two local student organizations joined and petitioned Sigma Phi Epsilon for a charter in 1925 but were turned down. Undaunted, they petitioned the new national Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity for membership, and in 1926 the Gamma-Rho Zeta was installed on the OU campus.

In the 1920s most fraternities had houses in the neighborhood on the north/south streets of Asp, Debar, and University. Established fraternities constructed houses between 1910 and 1920. Newer fraternities purchased or rented existing homes.

A building boom in 1929 and 1930 produced seven three-story mansions in a variety of architectural styles. All but one was located in the developing neighborhood west of campus on Elm, College, and Chautauqua Streets. This also marked the development of what would become the south oval at OU, with construction of the new library in 1929 at the north end of the south oval.



Gamma Rho's first Chapter House was built on land donated by Loyd Harris south of Lindsey Street.

The exception was Lambda Chi Alpha. Lambda Chi Alpha founder **Loyd Harris '22** donated prairie land and our new house was the first constructed south of Lindsey Street. Aerial photos from 1930 show the striking profile of this new structure, jutting up from undeveloped land. The only university buildings south of the north oval at that time were the library and Oklahoma Memorial Stadium.

With the onset of World War II, drastic changes occurred on college campuses across the nation. At OU, enrollment decreased by 66 percent over the years as college-age men joined the war effort. All fraternity chapters deactivated, and the chapter houses operated as women's housing during the war. The Lambda Chi Alpha house at 904 College served as housing for student nurses and as a teaching infirmary.

After the war, students returned to complete their educations and Lambda Chi Alpha was reactivated in spring 1946. The post-war years were boom times for America's colleges. At the University of Oklahoma, enrollment increased by 200 percent from 1946 to

1957. This caused a housing shortage, and temporary student housing, nicknamed Sooner City, was constructed south of Lindsey. This period also saw development of university buildings on the south oval.



After World War II, OU enrollment and fraternity membership increased exponentially, forcing the Chapter to add a wing and kitchen facilities to the house, doubling the capacity.

For OU fraternities, the increase in enrollment generated a similar increase in fraternity membership. Older houses were quickly outgrown and a new building boom for fraternities ensued. Most fraternities elected to move to the new "fraternity row" development south of Lindsey on College and Elm Streets. Nine fraternities abandoned their original houses and built in this area in the 1950s.

Lambda Chi Alpha elected to remain at 904 College. To solve the space problem, a wing was built to in 1956, doubling capacity and adding new kitchen and dining facilities. The structure remains the same to this day, with only minor cosmetic changes.

Of the more than 20 original fraternity houses on campus, over 75 percent have been demolished. Only three remain in use for their original purpose and one of these is scheduled for demolition. The remaining two are the Beta Theta Pi house at 800 Chautauqua and the Lambda Chi Alpha house. Now, at 80 years old, the house has been the only residence for the chapter, housing all of its members. We are the only fraternity on campus able to make such a claim. So as you look at these pictures, or the next time you are in Norman, think about the history of this grand structure and all who have called it home.



The Chapter House, which has accommodated all Gamma-Rho members, will celebrate its 80th birthday this year.

GAMMA RHO LOYALTY FUND CONTRIBUTIONS

Thank You, Alumni

Thank you to all alumni who have contributed to the Gamma-Rho Loyalty Fund. The fund supports the publication of the newsletter, contributes to summer recruitment expenses to keep our Chapter competitive on the OU campus, contributes to our scholarship funds as needed, in addition to other support for our Chapter and the Chapter House.

The donors below have contributed to the Loyalty Fund and are listed in their cumulative giving level. We have updated the list to reflect previous sponsors and donations to our annual Loyd Harris Golf Tournament. We recognize the importance of this event in fostering alumni involvement in our Chapter.

Thank you again for your generous support of Gamma-Rho Zeta. It is making a difference!

Pearl Level

(\$5,000 and up)

Gold Level

(\$1,500 to \$4,999)

Brooks A. Ratzlaff, GP 1316
Erik T. Nickel, GP 416
Timothy A. Heefner, GP 1467
Edward W. Eckart, GP 1503
John A. Hagle, GP 1601
Jason B. Willeford, GP 1720

Green Level

(\$500 to \$1,499)

Donald N. Sherman, GP 374
Virgil W. "Bill" Stone, GP 593
* Jerry J. Ransom, GP 612
James P. Cates, GP 1127
Matthew W. Hamilton, GP 1168
Marty G. Cain, GP 1220
Gregory N. Tomlinson, GP 1226
Barry T. Feuerborn, GP 1349
* Dr. Kevin M. Hook, GP 1427
B. Paxton Gray, GP 1439
Coby C. Greenhaw, GP 1441
Nathan A. Lockhart, GP 1518
Richard C. Parrish Jr., GP 1541
Rennie R. Cook, GP 1547
David J. Magstadt, GP 1612
John P. Treat, GP 1614
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Mark D. Shirley, GP 1622
John M. Benson, GP 1630
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Jay A. Eshelman, GP 1647
David G. Folmsbee, GP 1715
Rodney N. Alles, GP 1753

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(Up to \$499)

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* George W. Ingrum, GP 167
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Eugene W. Chapman, GP 260

Jimmie Lee Litton, GP 290
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Willard E. Durkee, GP 337
* Harry A. Wright, GP 345
Ronald G. Maples, GP 357
* John T. Van Loon, GP 410
Theo M. Seikel Jr., GP 430
Thomas O. Bush, GP 451
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Todd R. Neaves, GP 1350
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William D. Staedke, GP 1402
Thad C. Farmer, GP 1458
Timothy D. Clay, GP 1466
Dr. C. Shane Hume, GP 1469
* James M. Waites, GP 1471
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Jon T. Hayes, GP 1497
C. Michael Bitsche, GP 1499
Brendan M. Costello, GP 1500
Dr. Sean M. Costello, GP 1501
Jeffrey S. Morton, GP 1508
Kirk E. Johnson, GP 1509
J. C. Norvell, GP 1531
Dr. John R. Barnes, GP 1535
Kevin B. Ambrose, GP 1540
Drew P. Leakey, GP 1545
Dr. C. Tate Woodward, GP 1562
* Robert W. Semler, GP 1548
Patrick S. Byerly, GP 1553
Ross N. McElroy, GP 1560

Mark J. Revels, GP 1563
Ryan M. Smith, GP 1575
Roland P. Schafer, GP 1596
J. R. Conrad, GP 1603
Jeffrey S. Moen, GP 611
Andrew M. Gunn, GP 1617
Mark A. Hackney, GP 1618
Todd A. Kahoe, GP 1619
Aaron M. Shockey, GP 1620
Brad A. McCollum, GP 1621
Steven F. Clynnh, GP 1628
Blaine A. Coffman, GP 1638
C. Bradley Goddard, GP 1641
James C. Buchan, GP 1658
Dr. Stephen D. Confer, GP 1665
Dikran A. Tourian, GP 1669
Cale M. Coulter, GP 1675
Daniel P. Kubitz IV, GP 1678
Ben Woodward, GP 1683
Jeremy T. Clark, GP 1686
Scott C. Weatherholt, GP 1700
Charles D. Richardson, GP 1722
Michael R. Hunter, GP 1743
Kendall W. King, GP 1744
Bart C. Brewer, GP 1746
Joseph S. Stauffer, GP 1757
Jacob R. Haxel, GP 1762
Michael W. Kimbrel, GP 1776
Jeff T. Roberts, GP 1781
James C. Bratton, GP 1800
Austin T. Pollard, GP 1828
Eric A. Moen, GP 1860
Benjamin T. Gibbs, GP 1873
T. Jacob Tullius, GP 1905
Michael S. McCoy, GP 1966
Blake T. Rambo, GP 1971
Brandon R. Dewan, GP 1980
* Paul K. Travis, GP 2008
Kyle M. Cervi, GP 2049
Adam M. Doty, GP 2064

* Denotes donor to the
spring 2009 appeal

SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER 31

- Alumni tailgate at the Kansas State vs. Oklahoma football game
- Before the game if kickoff is after noon/after the game if kickoff is before noon

FEBRUARY 27, 2010

- White Rose Banquet at the University of Oklahoma Ballroom
- Information will be sent out prior to the event

MAY 1, 2010

- Loyd Harris Alumni Golf Tournament at the University of Oklahoma Jimmy Austin Golf Course
- Information will be sent out prior to the event

GAMMA Rhover

Gamma-Rho Zeta

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Attention: This newsletter is intended for Lambda Chi Alpha alumni and parents. If your son is still attending the University of Oklahoma, he will receive a copy at the Chapter House. If he is no longer in school, please send us his permanent address to update our records. Thank you.

Loyd Harris Alumni Golf Tournament a Great Success

The annual Loyd Harris Golf Tournament was held on April 26 at the Jimmy Austin University of Oklahoma golf course. A record-number 144 alumni participated and enjoyed a day of food, fun, and fellowship. The tournament has become our premier alumni event and is due to the hard work of the golf committee and the generous contributions of our many sponsors. A new benefit was added this year as money raised through the event was donated to the Gamma-Rho Scholarship fund maintained by the OU Foundation. These funds provide scholarships for deserving active members.

The weekend began Friday evening at the Chapter House with a reception sponsored by the Sigma Phi Holding Company and hosted by the Chapter. Attendees enjoyed great barbeque and refreshments, and many alumni toured the house to see their old rooms, now populated by another generation of Lambda Chis.

The tournament teed off the next day at noon with great weather and record-setting scores. Following golf, the participants sat down to dinner and the awards presentation.

Many thanks to the golf committee for their hard work. Plans are underway for the 2010 tournament, which is tentatively scheduled for May 1.



Carmen and Greg Vlahos, GP 972, Don Sherman GP 374, Mrs. Harris and Allen Harris, GP 541



Eric Boeke, GP 950, Russ Gibbs, GP 968, Tom Vogt, GP 964, Fred Mckenzie, GP 963, Ken Applegate, GP 926, and Ben Malone, GP 953 reminisce before the tournament.



Alumni gather on the basketball court at the house for the Friday night reception.



Craig Parrish, GP 1541, and Todd Kahoe, GP 1619, organized the tournament.