Greetings from Delta Chapter. I am pleased to report on the chapter’s recent news, as it has been quite an interesting and fun fall.

An excellent Work Week run by Michael Thilmont headed off the term. Actives came back in mid-August to prepare the house for the upcoming term, and we took on a number of projects, including constructing new furniture for the roof deck and securing our TV & XBox in commons. Most notably, we renovated the Lodge Room and moved some of the chapter’s historical documents there.

I won’t dwell on our success during rush since other articles cover it. Still, much work remains ahead of us. We’re beginning to recruit new members for the spring pledge class already, hoping to get an early start on other houses.

At the end of September we hosted Delta’s 21st annual CITGO Party. MIT’s risk management policy states that any publicly advertised party must be dry. We held both an open, dry party on Friday and a closed one on Saturday, just as we had first done several years ago before we were alcohol-certified with MIT. Our risk management policies evolve constantly, but they were followed carefully at these parties, and we all enjoyed their success.

For the first time in years, we have several boarders at Delta Chapter. Staying with us this term are Adrian McLymont, X455 (Ohio State), who transferred to Harvard and Aaron Wiles, BA843 (Southern Illinois University), who studies now at New England School of Law. It has been great to have them in the house, to hang out with them, and to hear from them about life at other chapters. With house occupancy reasonably low and the new pledges unable to move in for another year (excepting Esteban who has been living with us all term), their presence is especially welcome.

We also have a new chapter advisor, Chris Williams ’98, Δ965. He replaces Nate Kushman ’98, Δ964, who has served for several years. Chris knows the undergraduate chapter quite well already, has attended several meetings, and has been helpful in coming up with various ideas for the term ahead.

Although many things about our chapter are unchanged over the past few years—IM bowling and football, coffee night, the pledges’ blacklight party, hanging out on the roof deck—the chapter has changed markedly since I pledged in 2000. This is largely a result of having pledges live on campus instead of moving in immediately. And while it has not been easy to adjust to these changes, rising to the challenge has strengthened us, and it has strengthened the bonds between us.

You can expect to see great things from the chapter in the years to come. I hope you take a look inside to read more about the chapter and that you continue to support us in our endeavors.

Yours in the Bonds,
David Pritchard ’04, Δ1029
Chapter President

Visit Delta Chapter on the web:
http://theta-xi.mit.edu
Photos, Board Minutes, News, Events, Rush Information, Alumni Links, and more!

Help keep in touch by updating your contact information. For help, contact the webmaster at txi-web@mit.edu.

Delta actives and alumni with newly elected National President Steve Baker at the 139th Anniversary Convention in Charlotte, NC.
An Overview Of Fraternities At MIT In 2003

David N. Rogers, Assistant Dean and Director of Fraternities, Sororities, and Living Groups at MIT, wrote the following column for the Delta Digest.

This fall marks the second year that freshmen have lived on campus in residence halls instead of living in fraternity houses. And while the decision to move all freshmen on campus was met with a great deal of criticism, the sky has neither fallen nor has the earth opened up underneath us. Most chapters have been working hard to adapt to the new way of recruiting and have strategized ways to ensure their chapter house remains full.

Since Rush is no longer three sleepless days during orientation, fraternities have been modifying the way they rush and have taken to recruiting unaffiliated members through a mix of formal and informal events. While the rush period has generally remained formal, it is not limited to a certain number of days. Chapters have been flexible in offering a variety of recruitment events that have allowed unaffiliated members, mostly freshmen, an opportunity to meet fraternity members in less formal settings. This year, over 280 students, mostly freshmen, have joined fraternities. And with many MIT fraternities planning a spring rush, the number of new members to the community could easily surpass 300. In addition, many chapters have broadened their mindset of recruiting “just to fill the house,” since 80 percent of last year’s new members moved into recruiting population at MIT have had a rich history dating back to 1873, just 12 years after MIT was founded! However, just as MIT is evolving, so too must the FSILG community.

Although there has been some concern that some chapters will not be able to adapt to the changes, no chapter will be without the assistance from MIT in order to assist them in facilitating change within their organization. This three-year financial support will allow groups to adjust and modify their planning and areas of focus. Secondly, the Fraternity, Sorority, and Living Group Office continues to offer workshops and has contracted with consultants who have worked with individual chapters on strategic planning, assessment, and leadership development, with a focus on building a curriculum around the organization’s values. Other examples of support and assistance include regular roundtables for chapter officers, and financial assistance towards retreats for councils and presidents. Furthermore, the FSILG office will be attending every fraternity’s chapter meeting to hear from the students and to discuss short-term and long-term strategic planning and assist chapters in developing action plans.

Finally, President Vest recently chartered a task force to look constructively at the FSILG community to document the important contributions the fraternities, sororities, and living groups have made to the Institute. The Task Force will assess key dimensions of the FSILG community and recommend actions that will help the FSILGs with shortfalls to reach higher standards. In addition, the Task Force will look at the roles of the various stakeholders and focus on the refinement of these roles and the redirection of efforts on behalf of the FSILG community.

The Institute recognizes the contributions the FSILGs have made and embraces the level of support and development each FSILG gives to its members. The emphasis MIT has placed on the student life experience is evident by its commitment to supporting the FSILG community and securing its future at MIT for the next century.

Financial Update: Your Gifts Will Immediately Benefit The House

With occupancy of 64-66 Bay State Road at 23 this fall, a dangerously low level, house finances demand attention like never before. The house has an annual budget of about $200,000. Some $60,000 is allocated to the commissary, with the house providing self-help breakfast and lunch seven days a week. The house recently joined a new co-op for MIT’s independent living groups, which should help to reduce day-to-day expenses and streamline bookkeeping.

Term bills this semester are $2,950. That figure reflects the benefit of near-market-rate rent from summer boarders, as well as a subsidy by MIT to the tune of about $250 per man per semester. MIT introduced this subsidy to ease the transition to the new rules of rush; it phases out next year. The term bill compares favorably to the average student budget rate for room and board of about $3,350.

The Corporation has some $250,000 in savings. Most is in the Building Fund, essentially our rainy day fund. Normally term bills include a substantial payment to the Building Fund, but the Board suspended that line item this year to help attract new pledges across the river. Thus, for the time being we have ceased saving, and we are just dipping into our reserves. This remains a major concern for the Board.

On the fundraising side, the house took in 46 formal gifts totaling just over $4,000 last year. These gifts were paid via the regular return envelopes that accompany our mailings. Considerably less was paid directly to the Corporation (e.g., cash gifts tendered at 6294). With the costs of our mailings and other alumni services running some $4,500/year, fundraising results fall short of costs. Please consider an annual “dues” payment to the house to help defray the cost of communications. Gifts above and beyond that amount can be put to immediate good use for the benefit of the house and the active chapter.

Finally, 54 gifts to MIT’s IRDF (Independent Residence Development Fund) by Theta Xi alums totaled almost $7,700 last year. That’s down from $12,700 in FY02. If you give to MIT, please designate your gift to the IRDF, since it enables low-cost loans and grants to support capital improvements to the chapter house.

The house will need considerable work over the next few years. IRDF funds and your direct gifts will play a major role, just as they have in the past.

Tom Davis ’84, ∆807
**We Welcome Our Fall 2003 Pledges**

Esteban Aladro is from State College, PA, but he grew up in Miami, Florida. He enjoys music and photography. Esteb is currently a photo major at the Art Institute of Boston, and he hopes to be an independent photographer or to work for an alternative press magazine in the future.

Jeffrey Borowitz is from Hereford, Maryland, where he played both soccer and tennis very well in high school. Jeff is considering majoring in management or mechanical engineering.

John Gardner is from Frederick, Maryland. His interests include juggling, soccer, and improv comedy. John is planning to major in electrical engineering and possibly physics.

Andrew Harlan hails from Peoria, Illinois. His interests include tennis, photography, film, and music. At MIT, he likes to spend his free time playing trumpet in concert band, playing the piano, lifting weights, and talking with friends. Andrew plans on pursuing either mechanical engineering or computer science.

David Lin is originally from Taichung, Taiwan, but spent most of his life in Auburn, Alabama. His interests include tennis, football, ultimate frisbee, ping-pong, fishing, and trading stocks. Dave is a sophomore and is currently majoring in material science and management.

Dustin Short-Santellanes was born in Austin, Texas, and is currently from Tempe, Arizona. He enjoys outdoor photography and procrastination. After graduation, Dustin hopes to work in the automobile industry or the CIA.

Kurt Stiehl is from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He loves to build things and is interested in becoming a mechanical engineer. He has made everything from an eight-foot tower made of wood (weighing 150 pounds) to a few short films. When not building, Kurt enjoys philosophy and everything related to music.

**Eight Men In – Recruitment 2003 Is A Great Success**

Undermanned, Delta Chapter worked hard for six weeks this fall to get a fine group of gentlemen to join Theta Xi. Rush no longer takes place during orientation; it is held the week after classes start. But as we learned last year, informal recruitment can begin before the formal rush activities commence.

In 2003, our Work Week ended before orientation, and the brothers used their free week before the semester to play sports and to participate in orientation activities on campus. We could not interfere with MIT’s orientation program, but we were welcome to hang out with freshmen during their free time. Some brothers camped out all night with some freshman in front of Fenway Park to get tickets to the Yankees/Sox game.

Once rush began, actives and local alums kept the energy high at Theta Xi. Rush week was a mixture of old favorites such as BASH and our canoeing trip as well as new events like the semi-formal cocktail party where bids were given out. The morning of pledging we had six pledges in 15 minutes. “I don’t know who was more excited about pledging, the actives or the soon-to-be pledges.” Two more pledges joined in the next week via the traditional pledge-and-run method. One was found in an MIT parking lot juggling fire. The brothers kept the energy going strong enough to win many of the cross-rushes we entered with other houses.

I feel very comfortable graduating and leaving the house in the hands of these eight fine young gentlemen; they are all eager to help the house in intramurals, social activities, maintenance, and getting a spring pledge class. There is a lot of momentum for the house right now, and I anticipate that lasting through spring rush.

Camilo Aladro ’04, Δ1024
(Rush Chairman)
Move To Cambridge? Maybe Someday, But Not Now

As many of you are likely aware, the Delta Chapter of Theta Xi has been investigating a potential move from our current location on Bay State Road to a new complex to be built on campus. As of this moment, any potential move to Cambridge is on indefinite hold. Let me take this opportunity to explain the background of the potential move and the current situation.

In 1998, MIT made the decision that all freshmen would live in MIT’s dormitories starting in 2001 (this was later pushed back to 2002 because of delays in the construction of Simmons Hall, the new MIT undergraduate dormitory). Shortly after this decision, Theta Xi (along with a small group of other Boston-based fraternities) began exploring the possibility of moving from Boston to Cambridge. At that time it was obvious that Theta Xi needed to increase its competitive edge if recruitment after 2001 was to be successful. As anticipated in 1998, Theta Xi currently faces two disadvantages with regard to recruitment: (1) our houses are old and in need of refurbishment, and (2) our distance from campus is a potential negative for many freshmen who have spent a year living on campus. Moving into a newly constructed house on campus would simultaneously solve both of these problems.

From 1998 through 2000, Theta Xi participated in a series of meetings trying to persuade MIT to investigate moving interested Boston-based houses to on-campus locations in Cambridge. These meetings resulted in the contracting of a financial feasibility study to investigate the construction of a new multi-house independent living group complex on the MIT campus. This study was supervised by Steve Immerman, MIT’s Executive Director of Enterprise Services, who hired a local architectural firm to provide a preliminary design and cost analysis. The study, completed in early 2001, concluded that a new complex on MIT land was financially feasible for both MIT and the houses involved.

Upon the completion of the feasibility study, and after a long and careful study of the issues, the Theta Xi Corporation Board came to the conclusion that moving to Cambridge was in the best interest of the fraternity. We joined a group of three other fraternities and a sorority that jointly approached the MIT administration and expressed a commitment to move forward with the fraternity complex project.

Despite the commitment expressed by these five independent living groups, the project became a victim of the nation’s economic downturn. In 2002, MIT declared a moratorium on all new capital projects. Thus, the new fraternity complex project is currently on indefinite hold. Over the last several years MIT’s endowment has lost over $1 billion in value and MIT as a whole is expecting to cut $70 million from it 2004-2005 fiscal year budget. Given the current budget difficulties faced by MIT, there is no way of knowing when or if MIT will be prepared to move forward with this project.

As a result of this decision by MIT, the choice between staying in Boston or moving to Cambridge has been taken out of our hands. Under these circumstances, the Corporation Board has decided that we cannot rely on MIT to help improve our housing situation. Because we will be remaining in our Bay State Road houses indefinitely, we are moving forward on long overdue capital improvement plans.

T. J. Hazen ’91, ∆882
(Corporation Vice President)

Delta’s Own Steve Baker Now Leads National Theta Xi

At last summer’s national convention Theta Xi delegates from across the nation elected Delta’s own Steve Baker (∆814, ’84) president of the national fraternity. Delta Chapter now benefits from having the inside line on all fraternity affairs of national importance. More importantly, we benefit from the visibility Steve has to fraternity issues on other campuses and from his interactions with leaders of other national fraternities.

Steve held his first Theta Xi leadership role as a freshman Assistant House Manager. As a junior he served as House Manager. Then, as a senior, Steve was elected Clerk of the Corporation, and thus commenced his real ascent through the ranks. Steve served as Delta’s Corporation Treasurer through most of the ’90s, then as Vice President (’97-’99) and as President (’99-present).

Steve drew the attention of the fraternity’s national leadership while serving Delta as Chapter Advisor in the early ’90s. He was appointed to fill an open seat on the Grand Lodge in ’94, serving in a succession of roles at the national level since then. He was elected Vice President in ’01, preparing the way for his election to President this year.

Through his involvement at the local and national levels, Steve has become quite expert on practical matters of fraternity law and relevant tax issues. Perhaps more importantly for us, however, Steve has been in a position to see fraternity systems evolve on other campuses as well as at MIT. He can put our current situation in perspective:

“There are some broad trends out there… one is difficulty filling fraternity houses. We are not alone in this,” according to Steve. He confirms that recent demographic changes we’ve heard about from MIT’s admissions office affect all campuses. “Today’s students are more team-oriented and community minded. Some evidence is anecdotal, but if you look, you will see it. I think we need to focus more of our attention on recruiting brothers who have some interest in service… to the community, to the university, or to the fraternity itself.” Steve confirms that today’s students have a greater expectation for amenities in their living situations – from high-speed internet connections to better food to exercise facilities. On the down side, “Fewer of today’s students know how to use a hammer or fix a leaky sink.” This impacts our maintenance costs!

Though one might wonder how he squeezes work into his busy schedule, Steve co-founded Baker/Wohl Architects in 1993. Since then the firm has established itself on the Boston architectural scene. The firm designed the recently opened Woburn Regional Transit Center, and it’s working now on stations for the new Fairmont Commuter Rail Line. Steve and his firm have also designed retail and theater spaces, as well as several multi-family residences.

Congratulations to Steve. His accomplishments are a positive reflection on Deltas everywhere.
2003 Grads… Where Did They Go?

Patrick Kiley lives in Cambridge and works in a biology lab at MIT.

Chris Sae-Hau lives in Allston and plays a great deal of poker.

Aneal Krishnan graduated in December 2002 with a double major—in electrical engineering/computer science and in management, as well as a minor in economics. He was then commissioned as an Infantry Officer in the National Guard. He went to Ft. Benning Georgia for Infantry Officer’s Basic Course and graduated with honors. Aneal is now living in Manhattan working for Goldman Sachs Investment Banking, Financial Institutions Group.

David Bailey works in Redmond, Washington, for a large software company. In his spare time, he continues to play frisbee.

Jimmy Jia lives in Cambridge and is pursuing his Masters of Science degree in Material Science and Engineering at MIT.

Farmey Joseph, Rahul Agrawal, Jason Hickey, and David Simmons all live in Cambridge and are also graduate students at MIT. Farmey is studying Aeronautics and Astronautics, while Rahul, Jason, and David are each working towards Masters of Engineering degrees in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.

Hail To The Chef!

A year ago, and after much consideration, the active chapter decided to replace its cook of 21 years, Chay “Michael” Thach. Chay’s cooking had deteriorated to the point that few brothers were eating at the house. Besides the financial impact on the actives, this hurt the closeness normally achieved by brothers dining together each evening.

After a bit of searching, we hired Marc Campbell. Marc brings to the table more than 15 years of experience in fraternity cooking. And, as a contractor rather than an employee, the financial burden for the Corporation is diminished.

With the change of personnel has come a cultural change as well. First of all, Marc, rather than the steward, does most of the food ordering, thus reducing the hands-on work for the steward.

We also dine later now… at 8:00 p.m. instead of 6:00 p.m. This better accommodates brothers’ academic and extracurricular schedules. We found last year that it allows two-thirds of the active chapter to attend nightly dinner rather than one-third or less. This was a popular change and shows no sign of dying in our second year of the new tradition.

From planning rush events and formal dinners to making our daily dinners, Marc excels in serving food that the house enjoys. As we work through our first week of quizzes and tests, it seems that this year is shaping up to be a great one, gustatorially speaking. With Marc as our new chef and dinner at eight, food services at Delta Chapter should be in ship-shape for the rest of the year. Please feel free to join us for dinner any time you’re around!

Rocco Pigneri ’05, Δ1043
(Steward)
ROBERT J. KINGSBURY ’38, Δ391, retired back in 1980 and is now residing in the Manor Care Nursing Home. You can write him there at 5563 Cape Aqua Dr., Sarasota, FL 34242.

KENT HYATT ’47, Δ442, lives at 1040 Carriage Lane, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006. Keep in touch with Kent by e-mail at kenthyatt@aol.com.

CURTIS H. BARKER ’51, Δ470, lives at 101 SW 50th St., Cape Coral, FL 33914. He writes, “In the past 15 years, my wife, Lois, and I have visited the British Isles, Western Europe, Scandinavia, Russia, China, Japan, Thailand, Iberia, Morocco, Australia, New Zealand, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Egypt, Jordan, Greece and Turkey. We have also enjoyed 8 cruises (Panama, Mexico, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Alaska, Hawaii, and various Caribbean Islands.) And that’s what it’s all about! We’re aiming for Prague, Budapest and Eastern Europe next spring and summer.”

ERIC J. SWENSON ’80, Δ778, has moved to 650 Hidden Valley Rd., Soquel, CA 95073. He is now a systems architect for SONY corp. You can reach him by e-mail at eric@swenson.org.

CHRISTOPHER T. HIBBERT ’80, Δ780, resides at 1195 Andre Ave., Mountain View, CA 94040. Chris writes, “The Silicon Valley startup I helped start nine years ago is still alive, if just barely. We’ve cut back to a skeleton staff while we try to get a few sales of our product so we can start growing again. Last winter I took a beginner ice hockey class and I’m now playing in a novice-level league. I still remember how to skate from all those Sunday nights at Steriti Memorial Rink, but I’ve discovered that I didn’t know anything about playing the game. Since I’m a relatively good skater at this level, I’ve been playing defense. It’s a lot of fun and great exercise.” You can send Chris e-mail at hibbert@mydruthers.com.

JEFFREY T. EVERNHAM ’91, Δ884, has a new mailing address: 106 Arbor Dr., Swedesboro, NJ 08085.

JUSTIN J. CORVINO ’94, Δ920, lives at 152 Lansdowne Rd., Warwick, RI 02888. Justin writes, “Our first child, William Anthony, was born February 19, 2003, just two days after the blizzard. Two others in my pledge class, CHARLIE KO ’94 and JED MACOSKO ’93, also had sons within a two-week span!” Feel free to send Justin congratulations at jcorvino@alum.mit.edu.