

## Upcoming Events

**April 23** Blue-White Game and Founders Day Celebration

**Sept. 3** Home opener vs. South Florida

**Oct. 8** Penn State vs. Ohio State in Primetime at Beaver Stadium

**Oct. 29** Homecoming vs. Purdue

# Kappa News

[www.phisigpsu.com](http://www.phisigpsu.com)

April 2005



Kappa Chapter  
Phi Sigma Kappa at Penn State

## Alumni Corporation Report

By **Dick "Doc" Doherty '58**, President

### Fraternity Is Unique, and Worth All the Effort

To All Brothers,

Please take the time to read the column by brother **Robert "Bear" Koehler '58** and the profile of brother **Henry Nixon '35** in this newsletter. Between the two of them, they have spoken quite well about what the fraternity and the Kappa Chapter meant to them. Others may have some different thoughts, but I suspect these two are close to the mark for most of us — particularly when your hair is as gray as mine.

Many things are happening to keep the Greek brotherhood alive and well. The university is getting involved with the Greek system in a very positive way through their Greek Pride Initiative. For more information and updates on Greek life at Penn State, visit [www.sa.psu.edu/greekpride](http://www.sa.psu.edu/greekpride) and <http://live.psu.edu/story/9825>. Most of us who represent the Greek alumni, or more specifically the house corporations, have formed the Greek Council. This was done to better work with the university and the Borough of State College.

Within our own chapter, we are looking ahead to bring the physical plant up to today's standards, requirements and needs. We are also working with the undergraduate chapter to improve fraternity life and chapter sustainability. Some may wonder if all the work is worth it — even after reading the inspirational articles in this newsletter. But fraternity is unique. We have tried to distill it into a brief vision statement:

#### Vision Statement

Kappa Chapter is a 106-year-old undergraduate fraternity of the Phi Sigma Kappa National Fraternity at The Pennsylvania State University. The fraternity provides a place for young men to learn and grow in areas not provided in the classroom. In living and working together, they must learn to work as a team, accept work assignments, fill leadership positions, interact with the community at large and accept the students in a way not found in other aspects of college life. The goal is to produce responsible young men to take major roles on campus and in today's society. The students are running a business as well as a social organization with significant responsibilities.

I hope we have helped bring back some fond memories and shed some light on where we want to go in the future.

By the time you read this, there will have been an alumni social in the Philadelphia area, thanks to brother **Ben Jarmul '81**. We also are planning a big weekend on April 22-24 with a Blue/White game tailgate and a Founders Day celebration at the house. The early 1960s group is supporting this quite well. Thanks, **Don Schnure '64** and company. Then there is homecoming on the horizon on October 29 with Purdue. Stay tuned!

Have you had a get-together with your brothers recently? Let us know, and please send some photos.

**Hail the Ever-Growing Throng! ■**

## Alumni

### Profile with **Henry F. Nixon '35**

### After 70 Years, He's Still Cheering for Phi Sigma Kappa

What kinds of changes do you witness during more than 90 years? You see the difference between radios with a six-mile reception limit and satellite television. You see starting salaries rocket from \$15 per week for a college graduate to a minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour for unskilled laborers. You see computers everywhere. And if you're **Henry F. Nixon '35**, you appreciate the changes.

"Everything is automated now," he says. "Even farming is run by computers. You can be a dairy farmer today without ever touching a cow! It's unbelievable

what they're doing to make good, wholesome food available to people around the world." You can hear the pride and wonder in his voice as Brother Nixon speaks of the PSU College of Agriculture. "The school is huge, and one of the best in the country!" he reports.

Now approaching his 92nd birthday, Brother Nixon knows farming. He spent a career in the agriculture industry before retiring in 1978. He started as a laborer and salesperson at a small nursery outside Philadelphia, taught agriculture at the Hershey Industrial School, oversaw seed procure-

ment for the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Co-op and finally served as the director of the Department of Agriculture for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

"I was very fortunate," he says. "Every time I had to make a [career] move, something came up that allowed me to stay in agriculture, and always for the better."

It was for this remarkable career that Brother Nixon was recognized with membership in the Armsby Honor Society at Penn State. According to the College of Agricultural Sciences' Web site, the Armsby

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## Alumni Profile

### Henry F. Nixon '35 *(Continued from Page 1)*

Honor Society was created to “honor our alumni and friends who have demonstrated a commitment to the College of Agricultural Sciences.... Membership is offered to alumni and friends of the college who have served on the Ag Alumni Society board of directors or who have been honored with a college or university alumni award.”

Brother Nixon credits his connections to Penn State as helpful to his career, but he credits his lifelong friendships to his membership in Phi Sigma Kappa, where he was known by his nickname, Fith. “It’s short for Fithian,” he explains. “I have this unusual middle name, so my brothers decided to call me by that name.”

Fith continues: “I had some great friends in the chapter. My roommate for three years was **Sedgwick Bennett [’35]**, and he was the best man at my wedding. I also remained close friends with **Harry DeWire [’35]** throughout his life. He was vice president the year I was president of the chapter.”

DeWire was also the house caterer, Fith reports, which meant he had to figure out the food to buy for the chapter on a Depression-era budget. The chapter had a cook who prepared the meals for the 25-30 young men who lived in the house at the time. Coat-and-tie attire was required for dinner, where they sat eight at a time at the dining room table.

Another brother Henry kept in touch with was **Bill Lenker ’33**, who was on the PSU boxing team and whose family owned a large farm in Pennsylvania. He played a unique role in Fith’s fraternity experience when he trained Fith to represent Phi Sigma Kappa in the inter-fraternity boxing matches.

“I was never interested in boxing but, as a freshman, you were required to do as you were told,” he says. “He trained me in the basement. I did okay in my first two matches but lost my third pretty quickly to a real athlete. That’s when I moved on to cheerleading!”

Fith was one of the five Penn State cheerleaders during his years on campus, so he enjoyed attending all the athletic events. One of his fond memories is from a few years after his graduation, when an older alumnus recognized him as a cheerleader when he heard Fith singing an old PSU song.

Freshmen had many other responsibilities too, including obtaining the house’s Christmas tree. “We weren’t allowed to buy it,” Fith reports. “We had to cut it down.” Fith and his roommate went out to the country and found an appropriate evergreen.

“The thing is, there was an opossum hanging in that tree, and my roommate was kind of a city boy. He was scared!”

Not one to live in the past, Brother Nixon keeps up with what’s happening on campus and admires the changes at Phi Sigma Kappa. “I think it’s tremendous what they’re doing for charities — raising money and helping other people. And their scholastic standing! That’s great! That wasn’t something we emphasized back in my day, but it’s something we should be proud of. The fraternity is definitely going in the right direction,” he says.

“We learned a lot about give and take [in the chapter house],” he adds. “That’s something you don’t learn when you live by yourself. And we learned the importance of loyalty, which is something today’s brothers can still get out of membership.”

These days, Fith keeps busy singing and playing golf. He’s a member of a local singing group called The Harmonizers and is part-owner of a golf course. “I play a lot of golf. I’m 91 years old and played more golf last year than ever before!” He purchased the course in 1963 with eight others. “It was a very good investment,” he says.

Fith married his wife, Sue, in 1938 and lost her after more than 60 happy years. Their son Bill died in 2001. Fith lives in Palmyra, Pa., and would love to hear from any brothers, especially those from his years on campus (1931-35). He has some great stories to tell. Ask him about the Model-A Ford he once used to deliver nursery stock...



*Three years ago this group started a quartet here at the Lebanon Valley Brethren Home, a complete retirement community where we all live. We have expanded to a group of 17, and call ourselves The Harmonizers. I have entertained many local senior groups. We sing for fun, and any contributions received are given to our Good Samaritan Fund, which is used to help defray the expenses of those who have run out of money at the home and can no longer meet their financial obligations. Last year we contributed \$800.00 to the fund.*

## Greek Life: 1935 Style

### **Where was the most popular hangout for PSU students?**

The Corner Room, at the corner of College and Allen Street. I know it’s still there and still popular. That’s where we’d go to hang out and have a Coke. There was no drinking in those days — State College was dry.

### **Which fraternity was Phi Sigma Kappa’s biggest rival?**

There really weren’t a lot of big rivalries, except for agriculture students. Alpha Zeta was where most ag students lived.

### **How many brothers lived in the house?**

I believe there were 25 to 30, because we sat eight at the dining room and had to have at least three shifts [for dinner]. [The house was] never completely full, and we had to work hard to

get pledges. During the Depression, people just didn’t have the money for college and fraternities.

### **What was the biggest campus activity?**

Football was popular, of course, just as it is today. Boxing and wrestling were also big. The Senior Dance was a big event. The college would bring in one of the Big Bands — we had Casa Loma one year and Guy Lombardo’s band another. Those were big, campus-wide events.

### **What was the most popular trend in clothing?**

Well, I can tell you what was not: As a freshman, I showed up wearing Plus Fours, which were knickers. I got laughed at and never wore them again! Dinks were required of all PSU freshmen. I don’t know what happened if you were caught without one, but they were pretty strict about requiring them. [A “dink” was a kind of beanie or skull cap.]

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# Chapter Report

By John Eppensteiner '06

## Exciting Times for Kappa Chapter

This year has been busy for Kappa Chapter. After wrapping up a successful Dance Marathon in February, we are looking forward to the rest of spring semester.

Phi Sig Superstars will be held on April 16. Superstars is our annual philanthropy, at which we raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. To date, we have contributed \$275,000 to the Vincent Scott Sandoe Fund for Leukemia Research.



**Kevin Flynn '05, David Phillips '07 and John Eppensteiner '06.** *Phi Sigma Kappa raised \$13,000 for Thon in 2005, which is \$3,000 more than last year. Penn State students raised more than \$4.4 million for the Four Diamonds Fund this year, a charity benefiting children with cancer.*

the Kappa Chapter. They are **Phil Stout** from Iota Septaton Chapter at Penn State



Altoona, and **Nick Rivadeneira** from Kappa Deuteron at Georgia Tech. We welcome them to our brotherhood!

During the fall 2004 semester, Phi Sigma Kappa won the intramural football championship, beating Delta Sigma in the finals. During homecoming, Phi Sig placed fourth in the float competition. The GPA for in-house brothers for the fall semester was 3.03.

I welcome alumni suggestions or comments at any time. Feel free to contact me at [jwe127@psu.edu](mailto:jwe127@psu.edu) or 732-841-0432. I hope to see you at Blue-White Weekend! ■

## A Word from Bear

### We've All Left Our Mark

By Robert "Bear" Koehler '58

Much of who we are resulted from our education at the Phi Sig house. We moved through leadership positions and served on committees. We assumed risks because the personal costs were small, and we were oblivious to the organizational costs. At 20 years old, we thought we were invincible. Did we make mistakes? Sure! But we learned from them.



Chapter meetings were workshops in human relations. We learned communication skills. We learned that some ways of persuading were more effective than others: A teaspoon of honey went farther than a tablespoon of vinegar.

Interestingly, educational theory has evolved into case studies and team projects. In case studies, students live vicariously. Phi Sig was our case. We did not have to pretend. We really had to acquire new members, get along with our brothers, and work together to plan the parties, clean the house, plan the menus, keep to the budget, pay the bills, etc.

The house can be likened to a large canvas. Over the years we have all had a brush, and we have all left marks.

We now have an opportunity to help keep the process alive so that future generations of Phi Sigs may enjoy the type of education we received even though we may not have realized how important it was at the time.

**We've All Left Our Mark ■**

## Who Were You in Phi Sig?

Were you the life of the party? Were you the guy who had a camera at every event? Did you plan social events with sororities?

Why not put the skills you learned in Phi Sigma Kappa to use as an alumnus? The alumni association could use your help on various projects to grow our organization. Even by just attending events or regularly logging into our alumni Web site, you are helping the bond of brotherhood become stronger. You can make the difference!

### How You Can Help:

- Tell us what's happening with you by completing the enclosed form. We'll publish your news on the Web site and possibly in an upcoming issue of *Kappa News*.
- Volunteer to work on a special project: Serve on a committee to plan an alumni reunion, use your writing skills as a contributing editor to the *Kappa News* or help keep the Web site current.
- Call some Kappa friends in your area

for a happy hour, or a lunch or dinner get-together. All it takes is a few phone calls! You can obtain contact information for alumni in your area or from your era on [www.phisigpsu.com](http://www.phisigpsu.com)

- Be a mentor. See the Web site for more information. Thanks to **Bill Rebarick '64** for getting things started!
- Return to Happy Valley to see old friends at upcoming alumni events and meet the undergraduate members.
- Post your news and photos on [www.phisigpsu.com](http://www.phisigpsu.com), and check out the updates from your brothers!

If we all work together, we can make being an alumnus of Kappa Chapter enjoyable and rewarding. There are many ways you can get involved that won't require much of your valuable time. If you're interested in working on a special project, contact alumni corporation president **Dick "Doc" Doherty '58** at [cosdoherty@riva.net](mailto:cosdoherty@riva.net) or (410) 757-6324. Or, check the appropriate box on the enclosed form for more information. ■

*Kappa News* is published for the alumni and friends of the **Kappa Chapter of Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity at The Pennsylvania State University**. Address changes, news items, photographs and contributions may be submitted through [www.phisigpsu.com](http://www.phisigpsu.com) or mailed to **Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity, Alumni Relations Office, P.O. Box 296, State College, PA 16804-0296**. ■

# Alumni UpDates

## William J. DeMauriac '31

(2907 Central Ave., Ocean City, NJ 08226-2236) I managed 12 generating stations for the Philadelphia Electric Company during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. In 2000 I suffered a stroke.

## Donald F. Keck '49

(1605 Northview Cir., Fairfield, OH 45014-3530; dnjkeck@fuse.net) I would like to see my pledge class of 1947-48.

## Elwood R. Wertz '50

(301 Penrose St., Harrisburg, PA 17109-3929) I am past president of the Central Pennsylvania Chapter (4,000 members) of the Pennsylvania Association of Retired State Employees. I would like to hear from

## Jack Ricalton '50.

## S. Joseph Aita '66

(282 Kaanapali Dr., Napa, CA 94558-1523; sjadea@sbcglobal.net) Donna and I are retired and loving it in Napa. I would love to hear from **Charlie Preece '66** and **Joe Burt '66**.

## Jeffrey A. Curry '87

(2635 Bowling Green Dr., Vienna, VA 22180-7029; curry703@verizon.net) I'm living and working in the D.C. area as an independent computer network consultant. I'm currently in my seventh year of self employment. The former Kathy Weber and I have been married for 15 years, and we have two children (Joseph, 7, and Caroline, 2). I still play Ultimate Frisbee a couple of times a week, and I occasionally run into Dingle, **Matthew Esserman '88**, **Jon Hillis '87**, Shrooms and Zilla.

## Brian M. Pierce '91

(1436 Plantation Dr., Hudson, OH 44236; bmpierce@adelphia.net) I have two children: Colin Lions Pierce, born November 10, 2003, PSU class of 2024; and MacKenzie Lobbe Pierce, born August 16, 2002, PSU class of 2023.

## Robert B. Uglow '95

(215 Ashwood Ln., Orchard Park, NY 14127-4851; buglow57@hotmail.com) Hey fellas, give me a call if you're ever in Buffalo, need a place to crash after a Bills game, or need someone to collect you from a Canadian border patrol agent, at 716-667-3337.

## Adam Graswick '00

(618 Aldershot Rd., Columbia, MD 21045; adamgraswick@comcast.net) I got married on October 2, 2004, and bought a house a week earlier. Things are starting to settle down a bit. I look forward to seeing the brothers again soon.

## Thomas A. Conley '01

(400 Mass Ave. N.W., #1008, Washington, DC 20001; conley231@yahoo.com) I know the Web site is new and confusing for some, but the brothers from the 2000s have no excuse for not updating their profiles! Let everyone know what you are up to, and where you live, blah blah blah! It is very easy to post an update! Anyway, I'm off to the desert soon for a couple months on a mission for democracy. To Qatar, to be exact. Should be interesting, especially for my first deployment. After pilot training, the Air Force gave me the best assignment I'll probably have during my career, and sent me and Devon to Andrews AFB in the D.C. area. We'll be here until the beginning of 2007, so all must visit and hang out! Dev and I are going to the Blue/White game

this spring and have plans to attend Arts Fest. I'm thinking about a massive Fourth of July party here in D.C. this summer... anybody like rooftop pools?

## Todd Dolbin '01

(100 Jakes Ln., Warriors Mark, PA 16877; tid101@hotmail.com, tid101@psu.edu) I am teaching English in Kanazawa, Japan. Would love to hear from folks, so send me an e-mail.

## Jack Richard Spallone '02

(jspallone33@hotmail.com) I didn't even know the Web site existed until today. Sorry, Conley. Anyway, quick update: I work for American Airlines at the Tulsa, Okla., Maintenance and Engineering Base. Best job I've ever had. Where are the rest of the Pintos? ■

## Alumni Profile

(Continued from Page 2)

### What was the most fun party hosted by Phi Sigma Kappa?

Absolutely it was House Party Week-end, which took place every spring in the chapter house. At the time, PSU had only one co-ed for every 10 men, so we had "imports" come in from our hometowns. We got them rooms, and they stayed on campus Friday through Sunday. Saturday night was the big event: We had a formal dinner and dance. The men wore tuxes and the women wore gowns, and we hired a full orchestra to play. One year, one of the brothers convinced some members of a Big Band to come and hold a special jazz session in our house. ■

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**Phi Sigma Kappa at Penn State**  
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*"The house can be likened to a large canvas.  
Over the years we have all had a brush,  
and we have all left marks."  
Bear*

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