BETA THETA PI AND DUKE

Just the Facts, Please:

On February 18, 2008 Oxford, over the objections of the active chapter, the Gamma Rho alumni, and the Duke Administration, closed the Beta chapter at Duke.

As the decision was being made by Oxford to close Gamma Rho an Oxford spokesman “expected a swift return [of Gamma Rho to Duke] in -2 years”

On July 5, 2012 Oxford filed with Duke an application to reopen Gamma Rho containing three conditions that the reopened chapter would have to meet:

1. Be a service type organization.
2. Absolute prohibition in the living facility.
3. Payment to Oxford of $40,000.00.

Oxford has done little follow up with the appropriate officials at Duke or with the Duke IFC since it filed the application over three years ago.

Since Gamma Rho has been closed Oxford has been very active in North Carolina, establishing a chapter at High Point, a colony at NC State, and a colony will start at Elon in January 2016.

At the meeting of the Duke Greek Advisory Council on October 3, 2015 Clarybel Peguero, Director of Fraternity Life Sorority Life at Duke, said that she not had any recent contact from Oxford officials and was surprised to learn of the upcoming colony at Elon in January 2016.

The conditions set by Oxford for new and reopened chapters such as Duke have not set well with many, if not most, Gamma Rho alumni.

No Gamma Rho alumni have come forward to lead the charge. The latest to try was Geoff Mason # 472 who was awarded the Oxford Cup (Beta’s highest honor) at the 2015 General Convention in Orlando. He had hoped to use the occasion to get support from Oxford for a Beta return to Duke. He reported to TDB afterwards, “To be perfectly frank – and I spoke with several of the people who (I assumed) might be able to give me some comfort – dead end. Nada. Nothing.”

Current Conclusion:

It has now been almost nine full years since Oxford closed Gamma Rho. It appears that Oxford is not going to make any real attempt to reopen a chapter at Duke unless and until there is an outpouring of alumni support for them to do so (and perhaps not even then). In any event there has been so such outpouring for whatever reason. No one Duke Beta, or group of Duke Betas, has come forward and said, “I (or we) will make this happen”.

Surely there is a Duke Beta who will provide this leadership. No question but what it will be work and will take time, contacting others to help, working with Oxford, attending all gatherings of Duke Betas, staying in touch with the appropriate people at Duke including the IFC officers, and so on. Many things have to be worked out, particularly with the Oxford requirements, and it is not going to be easy.

Anyone interested?

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UPCOMING EVENTS

2016 Duke Reunions:
April 15-17, 2016

2016 All Duke Beta Tailgate Party
Date and Football Game TBA
ALUMNI NEWS

Rick Bagel #1291 reports that sales are going well with his different type of real estate development in northern Durham County, Wetrock Resources. He and his partners are developing a hundred plus high end lots with a 100 acres conserved and a working organic farm. If interested he can be contacted at rick.bagel@gmail.com.

Jay Larson # 1274 is pleased that “things are going really well with Tunapanda here in Kenya”. He continues to be interested in discussing how Gamma Rho might be revitalized by focusing on international exploration, technology, etc. Contact him at Jay@tunapanda.org.

The antiques formerly owned by Tom Gray # 602 are still making news. Blank Auctions of Asheville, NC, which handled the sale of much of his collection including a Chippendale Cellaret which had sold at the auction for $165,200.00 featured it in an advertisement in a recent Duke Magazine.

Redge Hanes # 590 says his debut novel, Billy Bowater, which tells the story of a young man growing up with the burden of expectation based on his heritage, is based on some of his own experiences. Check out www.echanes.com for more about the book which is available on Amazon.

Apparently Dave Carpenter # 427 still admires what was once called House H, longtime the section housing Gamma Rho. He laments that Duke saw fit to rename all the sections. House H is good enough for him.

Pat Bryant, wife of Bill Bryant # 276 and Bill Graham # 322 are the Co-Chairs of the Duke Class of 1956 at Duke Reunions 2016, April 15-17. With a Duke Beta and a Duke Beta Sweetheart running things Betas should be well represented.

GEOFF MASON # 472 AWARDED OXFORD CUP

According to the Beta Theta Pi official web site beta.org/about/oxford-cup/ in 1983 the Board of Trustees agreed to establish an award that would recognize Betas of achievement. In 1984 the Oxford Cup was developed and an award ceremony written known as the Oxford Cup ritual. The cup is a smaller version of the Loving Cup presented to John Riley Knox, Miami 1839 and his wife on their golden wedding anniversary.

At the 176th General Convention of Beta Theta Pi held in Orlando August 6 – 9, 2015 Geoff Mason # 472 became the first and only Duke Beta to receive this very prestigious award. He joins some very elite company including Governors Mabus (Mississippi), Moore (West Virginia), Martin (North Carolina), Basketball Coach John Wooden, Banker Hugh McColl, Sam Walton of Wal-Mart, Senators Lugar (Indiana), Hatfield (Oregon), and Warner (Virginia).

Holly Jones, daughter of Neil Jones # 360 is running in the primary for the Democratic nomination for Lt. Governor in North Carolina. She currently is a Buncombe County Commissioner.

Sam Colwell # 371 finally made rank. Shown here with his wife in a very recent picture.

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2015 ALL DUKE BETA TAILGATE PARTY RAINED OUT

For the first time ever this annual event was rained out. We all know it rains in Durham in the fall, however. Hosts Jean & Bill Losee #361 will set the date for the 2016 party as soon as the football schedule comes out. Now that Duke football is no longer an embarrassment this annual event will continue. Watch your email for the 2016 date.

ROLL # 911 MYSTERY SOLVED (TDB HOPES)

Douglas Michael Maguire was initiated into Beta Theta Pi the spring of his Freshman year at Duke on April 20, 1984 along with the other members of his Pledge Class and assigned Roll # 911 on the rolls of Gamma Rho according to his recollection, which he has verified with other Duke Betas. He then spent his sophomore year abroad before returning to Duke and graduating in the Class of 1987.

As far as can be determined at press time his Initiation information was never properly transmitted to Oxford. In any event he is not on the rolls of Beta Theta Pi as a member. The currently official roll as kept by Oxford skips Roll # 911 and until he inquired of The Duke Beta as to why he was not listed in the Gamma Rho Roll Call section of the web site after a call to him from another Duke Beta he did not know everything was not in order.

Hopefully, Oxford has the records and can figure this all out and if he was not on the list knows how this can be straightened out and once again Douglas Michael Maguire can be Douglas Michael Maguire # 911. If anyone can be of assistance contact him at DMaguire@BHFS.com.

TDB wishes him luck in this and he has promised to give a full report after he has discussed the matter with the proper officials at Oxford.

HELP KEEP TDB ALIVE

TDB is frequently called upon for location info for a Duke Beta. While TDB welcomes these requests oftentimes it is several days before TDB can get back with the answer. Try going to www.dukedirectory.com first. This is the Duke Alumni office site for info on all who attended Duke. Probably give you more info than you ever wanted. Great resource. You have to get a password and sign in, but if you want to find someone this is a good place to start.

DEATHS

Since publication of our last printed newsletter we have learned of the deaths of:

Jason Russell Crane # 991 10/30/2013
Michael Murrow Stevens # 943 10/15/2015
Thomas E. Turner # 494 9/8/2015
Robert Earl Weaver # 367 8/19/2015
John Alton Reed, Jr. # 272 2/1/2015
William Ronald Schaffer # 266 5/2/2015
Joseph A. McClain, III # 194 5/3/2015
Edward Leroy Koffenberger # 141 9/21/2014
William Morton Ludwig # 15 1/23/2015

Gamma Rho of Beta Theta Pi mourns their passing and extends condolences to their families and friends.