



FALL  
2022

# BOBCAT SIG

THE BETA RHO CHAPTER OF SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY  
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Where We Stand

### UPDATE ON THE CHAPTER HOUSE RENOVATION PROJECT

You will see in the report from Consul **Bobby Beers '24** on page 3 that we are blessed with an outstanding group of young men who are doing their utmost to live the values of Sigma Chi. Among other honors, Beta Rho Chapter has been selected as the Outstanding Chapter at Montana State University and the Big Sky Province Chapter of the Year.

We, as alumni, have much to be proud of in the continuum of the brothers of Beta Rho over the past 10 years. Their commitment to being among the best in the Greek system is paramount, and their pledge selection process is doing a fabulous job each year.

To support this successful chapter, the alumni of Beta Rho have committed to renovate the 60-year-old chapter house. At this point, we have approximately \$1.3 million available to start construction.

The construction committee has agreed on the design concepts for Phase 1 (principally the dorm side of the house), and our architects have produced a "contractor package" of drawings and specifications to present to contractors in the area. Selecting a contractor is not without its challenges. The Gallatin Valley area is one of the hottest new-construction areas in the country, our project has a tight, three-month maximum timeline (May 15 to August 15), and there are only a few contractors who have the resources to complete this complex job in a short period. We should know by the end of this year whether we have a contractor and what the approximate price might be. We know that there has been significant construction cost inflation across the country (and particularly in the Bozeman area), so we will be managing this situation closely.

It is NOT too late to send an additional contribution to help in the renovation of this historic property.

Please make your check payable to "Beta Rho of Sigma Chi House Company" and mail it to:

Rick Dissly  
6651 Leyland Park Dr.  
San Jose, CA 95120

The brothers thank you for your support.

In Hoc,  
**Norman C. Achen '65**  
norm@normanachen.com



## Duane Ray '00 Inducted into Order of Constantine



**D**uane Ray '00 pledged Sigma Chi in September 1996 after being recruited by **Bernie Ellingson '57**, and was initiated in February 1997. As an undergraduate, Duane held many offices, including Quaestor and Consul. As Consul, he led Beta Rho to the first of three consecutive Peterson Significant Chapter awards, the first three-peat in Beta Rho's history. While attending Montana State, Duane met **Mike Dunn, Utah State '75**, past Grand Praetor of the Big Sky Province and later Grand Quaestor. At the 1999 Grand Chapter, Duane met **Ken Kvalheim, South Alabama '76**, Grand Praetor of the Alabama Province. Due to Ken and Mike's influence, Duane developed a desire to become involved with the fraternity at the international level. He graduated from Montana State in 2000 with a degree in computer engineering.

Upon graduation, Duane served as a Balfour Fellow at Beta Rho Chapter for two years, helping the chapter improve its academic standing. He organized the Big Sky Province Conference in 2001. In March 2003, he assumed the responsibilities of Grand Praetor of the Big Sky Province and was formally elected to the role in June of that year.

Since that time, Duane has overseen the largest Province in Sigma Chi, both in number of chapters (currently seven chapters and one colony) and in geographical area (covering Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Alberta), traveling thousands of miles a year to and from these chapters. Accompanying Duane on many of these chapter visits, as well as mentoring him throughout the years, **Loren Butler, Idaho '61** has provided unmatched guidance and support. Duane has also served as the Dean of the Praetorial College. During his tenure as Grand Praetor of the Big Sky Province, six of the seven chapters have won Peterson Significant Chapter awards with five chapters winning multiple times.

Internationally, Duane has enjoyed helping chapters improve accountability and Ritual. As a member of the inaugural class of Ritual peers, Duane has been certifying chapters ever since. He was part of the Ritual team for Boise State's installation and a BLTW initiation, the latter being the largest attended initiation in Sigma Chi's history. For the reinstallations at San Diego State and Tennessee, Duane served as the Assistant Ritual Director. Duane has participated in multiple Sigma Chi chapter membership reviews throughout the U.S. He has been a member of BLTW faculty and has been appointed by the Grand Consul to multiple committees, including Pledge Education and Chapter and Membership Accountability.

Duane resides in Bozeman, Montana, with his lovely wife, Carly, and three beautiful daughters: Charlotte (5), Nora (2) and Ella (11 mo.). He is employed as a Software Engineer for Oracle. Active in his church, Duane also spends time assisting at his family farm in Big Sandy, Montana.

The following excerpts were taken from the letters of recommendation nominating Duane for this honor:

(Continued on page 2)



# UNEXPECTED BONDS

## Spencer Dahl '15 Shares His Formative Beta Rho Years

It's far from uncommon for college students to join the same fraternity or sorority as a family member. **Spencer Dahl '15** did just that, though unintentionally—it wasn't until after joining Beta Rho that he learned his father was a Sigma Chi as well!

"It was the people in Sigma Chi that made it a great fit for me," Spencer explained. "I met so many fun and welcoming brothers during recruitment who showed me the positive environment their fraternity had cultivated. Learning about my shared family experience has led to a deeper connection with my dad as well."

*"Sigma Chi had an inexplicable way of developing friendships between hipsters from Washington, farmers from Montana, and people from the Midwest."*

Spencer's reasons for joining centered on the community and getting to live with great new friends in the chapter. It only took a semester to realize that he'd become part of something greater than himself. This motivated him to serve as Kustos, Magister, and Consul in the chapter house.

"I learned an immense amount about leadership styles and personal development, and working with different personalities is a critical skill in my personal and professional life." His favorite memories, however, came simply from spending time at the chapter house in college; no matter the time of day, someone was always ready to talk or hang out.

"Sigma Chi had an inexplicable way of developing friendships between hipsters from Washington, farmers from Montana, and people from the Midwest. Despite the many different ideologies and life experiences, it gave them a bond and a common ground."

After graduating in chemical engineering, Spencer worked for a pharmaceutical

development company in Bend, Oregon. Working to develop various drugs inspired him to continue a research development path, so he went to graduate school at UC Davis, studying nanomaterials for lithium-ion batteries to improve their performance. Spencer completed his Ph.D. in September and moved back to Bozeman to be near family; he now works at Aesir Technologies, developing new battery material chemistries.

Another thing Spencer now shares with his dad: both have maintained close Sigma Chi friendships as alumni. "He's been friends with his Beta Rho brothers for 40 years now, so it's exciting to see that it really does last a lifetime." Spencer also gives back to the fraternity as a member of the Officer Training Academy's Consul division, helping undergraduate brothers transition into the role of Consul at their chapters.

"Sigma Chi has a unique way of giving more back to you the more you put into it," Spencer said. "The fraternity was critical in my personal development, and I continue to learn more about myself by reflecting on the values I learned at Beta Rho."

You can reach Spencer at [spencerzdahl@gmail.com](mailto:spencerzdahl@gmail.com).

### SPENCER'S ADVICE TO BROTHERS

The best advice I've been given is to stay positive and optimistic regardless of the situation. As you progress into the world after college, your life will grow busier and more complex as you start a family and progress in your career. Embrace the complexity and learn from every situation you encounter.

You should definitely take advantage of the opportunities at the university to gain experience and learn as much as you can during your time at Beta Rho. That, of course, includes lots of fun and some Bridger Bowl powder flu days.

## Duane Ray '00 Inducted into Order of Constantine

(Continued from page 1)

"Duane was resolute in his commitment to recruiting only students of fair ability, as set forth in the Jordan Standard ... the experience showed me what it means to make decisions based on integrity and values, even when they aren't the easy ones." —**Ethan Reeder, Idaho '22**, Consul

"I marveled at Duane's connection with undergrads, his subtle teaching style that nurtured the undergrads to come to the right answers, and the grace with which he included me. The attention to detail was terrific, and the undergrads clearly were running their initiation (as it should be), but the trust they had in Duane and his approach was on display; he was their safety net when challenges arose. This leadership is borne out of a love of Sigma Chi, serious dedication to studying Ritual, depth of character, and a sincere desire to connect with college men." —**Joe Beers, Arizona '83**, Grand Praetor, Grand Canyon Province

"If a Praetor is judged on the success of his chapters, then there is no more successful than Duane. His chapters annually win Peterson Awards and many undergrads from the Big Sky Province have served on fraternity committees, including at least two undergraduates who served on the Executive Committee as Undergraduate Reps." —**Dr. Michael Codina, California-San Diego '93**, Grand Historian

"Duane has a knowledge of the fraternity and Ritual, which is very important in his role as the Big Sky Province Grand Praetor. I have observed this when, during our travels, he has interacted with the chapters in the province. Several times, I have been on a call when there has been a chapter problem. Duane will ask questions and involve them with deciding on how to solve this problem instead of telling the chapter what they should/must do. This allows chapter leadership to become involved and use their critical thinking skills to take ownership and make the desired decision." —**C. Loren Butler, Idaho '63**, Sigma Chi Foundation Board of Governors

## EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Consul (President)  
**Bobby Beers '24**

Pro Consul (Vice President)  
**Tom Caron '24**

Quaester (Treasure)  
**Jackson Thorn '24**

Magister (New Member Educator)  
**Trevor Carl '24**

Recruitment Chairman  
**Jason Kwasny '25**  
[j.kwasny27@gmail.com](mailto:j.kwasny27@gmail.com)

Annotator  
**Will Hyatt '25**

House Manager  
**Nolan Copper '24**

Kitchen Manager  
**Austin Wheeler '24**

Risk Manager  
**Michael Shannon '24**

Tribune and Chapter Editor  
**Sean Royal '24**

Scholarship Chairman  
**Forrest Christian '25**

Public Relations Chairman  
**Tyler Lara '25**

Philanthropy Chairman  
**Jack Evanko '25**

Sentinel  
**Owen Mercer '24**





Left: Brothers Riley Holmes '25, Wyatt Berg '24, Paul Ryan '24, Parker Robertson '25, Miles Sumner '25, Tyler Lara '25, and Nolan Copper '24 on the Homecoming parade float.



Right: Brothers Thomas Gamblin '24, Cody Chew '24, Brock Mehrer '24, and Anthony Meader '24 hiking the Bangtail Divide Trail.

## Reaching for New Heights

### BETA RHO EMBRACES COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

#### CHAPTER GROWTH

This fall, Beta Rho enjoyed an incredibly successful recruitment season. Over 250 potential new members came to recruitment events, and Recruitment Chairman **Jason Kwasny '25** conducted 91 interviews. This was the largest incoming freshman class in Montana State history and, in turn, one of the largest classes of PNMs across Fraternity and Sorority Life. This allowed our chapter to raise its standards regarding grades, leadership experience, and other credentials before extending invitations. Throughout pledgship, 22 men showed their potential to benefit the chapter and were initiated on October 15. These new brothers have been actively involved since their initiation, and we're excited to see all they'll accomplish!

#### PHILANTHROPY

The brothers are especially proud of their efforts this semester. We have raised over \$23,000 this fall for the Huntsman Cancer Institute and are well on our way to meeting our goal of \$35,000 over the course of the academic year. So far, Beta Rho has hosted a car wash, a Parents Weekend auction, a spikeball tournament, several restaurant fundraisers, and Derby Days. We greatly increased community involvement during Derby Days and hosted a fundraiser rock concert to end the week and thank everyone

who participated. Additionally, our sweetheart, Allie Darling, is competing in the Huntsman Sweetheart Challenge. She is in third place for money raised by a sweetheart across Sigma Chi, with \$1,671 raised to date!

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE

This fall, Sigma Chi has given back to the community in a variety of ways. We hosted two blood drives with the Red Cross and cleaned up the section of US-191 we adopted, having a significant impact on the cleanliness of this stretch of highway. We worked as valets for Eagle Mount's annual fundraiser and as crossing guards for trick-or-treaters at Story Mansion on Halloween. We also have a food drive and a toy drive coming up to end the fall semester. Additionally, we created a new award for the brother who completes the most community service hours each semester.

#### HOMECOMING

Homecoming weekend was a smashing success! We kickstarted the weekend with another alumni banquet to honor **Risk Dissly '66** and his induction into the Order of Constantine. The next day, we participated in the Homecoming parade with Pi Beta Phi. Thanks to the generous help of our Pi Phi partners and Dave and Beth Ford, we won the best Homecoming float for the second year in a row. It is always an honor to show off

our letters to the community and participate in the parade. Looking forward to next year!

#### LOOKING AHEAD

We are excited for the spring semester and have lots of innovative plans to improve Beta Rho Chapter. Our focus for the spring is improving academics and community service. We are excited for a new recruitment cycle and have many ideas on how to improve our existing recruitment process.

There will be a busy schedule for philanthropy as well, including something big still in the works. Beta Rho is also exploring community event opportunities, both for our neighbors and the University Police Department. Additionally, Beta Rho is looking into more ways to volunteer with the Bozeman Cancer Society to support local cancer patients and increase the amount of overall community service hours brothers complete.

The entire chapter is motivated toward achieving our goal of a Gold Peterson Award this academic year, and we're excited to see what we can achieve in the spring.

In Hoc,  
**Robert Beers '24**

Consul  
bobbears2020@gmail.com | (602) 510-0201

## Welcome, New Members



Newly initiated brothers along with Magister Trevor Carl '25 and Kustos Brock Mehrer '24.

**Craig Brett** | Florence, Mont.  
**Brandon Cabaniss** | Albuquerque, N.M.  
**William Caron** | Boxford, Mass.  
**Calvin Dinh** | Helena, Mont.  
**Samuel Duerr** | Hamilton, Mont.  
**Brendan Faulkner** | Centennial, Colo.  
**Bridger Hardgrove** | Meridian, Idaho  
**Thomas Kopchains** | Daniel Island, S.C.  
**Thomas Middleton** | Kennewick, Wash.  
**Sean O'Melia** | Littleton, Colo.  
**Ryan Petr** | Poway, Calif.

**Jack Poskey** | Tulsa, Okla.  
**Gage Robinson** | Windsor, Colo.  
**Jackson Schingeck** | Parker, Colo.  
**Jonah Schlee** | Ennis, Mont.  
**Tristan Schuyler** | Missoula, Mont.  
**Tristin Shanks** | Great Falls, Mont.  
**Scott Sherlock** | Highlands Ranch, Colo.  
**Ryland Swarthout** | San Clemente, Calif.  
**Aide Waller** | Seattle, Wash.  
**Zachary Wheeler** | Orondo, Wash.  
**Zach Zimney** | Scottsdale, Ariz.



# Alumni Updates

## CHAPTER ETERNAL

**Harry J. Hyatt '59** – January 5, 2022  
**Robert J. Cebull '66** – May 24, 2022  
**Patrick J. Comstock '67** – November 13, 2021  
**William D. Davis '68** – May 5, 2022

## ALUMNI NEWS

**David E. Sloan '60** and his wife, Helen, moved from Morgantown, Calif., after 46 years. They now live in Lincoln, Calif., where they enjoy travel and fun with their family.  
Email: dhsloan2970g@gmail.com

**Steve Gene Hamilton '62** is retired from Alaska Airlines, where he oversaw the legal department. Steve has been married to Karen (Pi Beta Phi) for 61 years. They have two children and six grandchildren and enjoy living in the beautiful wine country of Napa, Calif.  
Email: ksbadgett@icloud.com

**Neil E. Keyes '64** and his wife, Pat, are getting older and surviving. For fun and relaxation, they enjoy dinner parties, card and domino games, and short vacation trips with their many church friends. They reside in Blanchard, Okla.  
Email: neilpat51ok@gmail.com

**David C. Johnson '76** retired in 2001 from a 25-year career in the United States Marine Corps. He's now the sole owner of a bustling little law firm in Virginia Beach, Va.  
Email: djohnson@vabeachlawgroup.com

**Mark W. Peres '81** is the proud grandpa of 10-year-old identical twin boys. He recently left Kairos Power, started his own LLC, and returned to school to complete his Ph.D. in nuclear engineering. Mark lives in Greer, S.C.  
Email: mark.peres@att.net

**Kevin L. Greteman '87** moved back to Bozeman and plans to visit the chapter house. "I remember in 1986, **Jon Hogenson '88** and I stayed in the house with only a couple others. Great summer!" Email: klgreteman@comcast.net

**Matthew E. Scott '94** moved to San Tan Valley, Ariz., after four years in Oregon. He's recently engaged to Sabita, and they will marry in March 2023. Mark's kids, Chace and Sophia, are busy with school and sports and growing up rapidly! Email: mscott.or@comcast.net

**RJ Waggoner '01** and his wife, Anna, have two kids: a daughter who will be 13 and a son who will be 10. They live in Lewistown, Mont., where RJ is on the rural fire board, serves in leadership at his local church, and owns and operates a crop insurance agency in Lewistown, Mont. The family enjoys camping, golfing, hunting, and four-wheeling as a family.  
Email: rjwaggoner33@hotmail.com

**Dylan S. Cardon '20** moved to Seattle and is working in the yacht industry.  
Email: dylancardon@gmail.com



# BOBCAT SIG

## Beta Rho Chapter of Sigma Chi

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## Meet Our Fall "Better Call Paul" Winner!



**R**ecently, I was selected to be the second annual recipient of a housing grant that holds special meaning to Beta Rho Chapter and its brothers. The Better Call Paul award honors Beta Rho alumnus, House Corporation President, and Order of Constantine Sig **Paul Boylan '64**. It commemorates Paul's dedication of service and steadfast love for Sigma Chi. The executive committee selected me to receive this award to applaud my enthusiasm toward the chapter, involvement in its duties, and sincere respect for all the chapter has provided me with.

Firstly, I would like to thank Paul for his extraordinary commitment to the chapter as it is today and far into its future. I would also like to thank **Rick Dissly '66**, **Bill Gum '66**, **Ryan Roseleip '97**, **Steve Nash '99**, and the Boylan Family for their kind donations to the award. Finally, I would like to thank **Bobby Beers '24**, **Tom Caron '24**, **Jackson Thorn '24**, **Trevor Carl '25**, **Jason Kwasny '25**, and **Matt Sonnichsen '04** for selecting me as the recipient of this year's award. My gratitude for receiving this honor is immeasurable, and I hope to do great things for Beta Rho as my commitment continues.

In Hoc Signo Vincas,  
**Forrest Christian '25**