



SPRING  
2021

# BOBCAT SIG

THE BETA RHO CHAPTER OF SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY  
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY



## A BETTER MAN BECAUSE OF BETA RHO

### *Dillon Haskell '15 Credits Sigma Chi for His Early Career Accomplishments*

**D**illon Haskell '15 was quick to note Sigma Chi's reputation as the top fraternity at Montana State when he first arrived on campus. As Dillon made numerous lifelong friends during his Beta Rho undergraduate experience, he was proud to help Sigma Chi maintain its claim as the number one fraternity at MSU.

The respect and trust that Dillon earned from his brothers were evident when they elected him to serve as Consul. The leadership skills he developed as Consul and throughout his time as a Beta Rho collegian have paid huge dividends for Dillon since graduating from MSU. Dillon went on to graduate from the University of Montana School of Law in 2018 before serving as a judicial law clerk for the Montana Supreme Court and U.S. District Courts in Billings, Montana. That all set the stage for him to become an attorney for the IRS Office of Chief Counsel in September 2020.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## COVID-19, ONE YEAR LATER BETA RHO SUCCESSFULLY MINIMIZES IMPACT OF VIRUS

**T**he abrupt transition to a purely online learning format last spring changed almost every aspect of our college experience. Given that the pandemic seemed to be out of our control, the best we could do was hope that things would settle down over the summer and that we could return to normal in the fall.

As the summer rolled on, it became more and more clear that the typical ways in which our school and community operate would not soon return. This meant that we needed to implement a plan for how the chapter would operate under the guidelines and restrictions of Sigma Chi, MSU, and our local health authorities. The goal of this plan was to reduce the spread of COVID-19 within the chapter and to work out a way to maintain key aspects of chapter operations. This planning was done over frequent meetings throughout the summer between our active executive team and the Beta Rho House Company.

The plan would affect all aspects of chapter operations. Procedures regarding how social events would look, how frequent the kitchen needed to be disinfected, and how the chapter would react to an internal active case were only a few of the things to consider. Recruitment was an area that many of the fraternities across campus struggled with during the fall. However, we did an excellent job in implementing COVID-compliant changes that still allowed us to recruit top quality men. Most of these changes included masks, overflow venues for recruitment events that would have otherwise exceeded group size restrictions, and conducting online interviews.

As cases throughout Gallatin County fluctuated and rose across campus, we succeeded in limiting our exposure and mitigating the spread within the chapter. Over the course of the semester, the chapter house only experienced two cases, and our brothers, in accordance to the implemented procedures, were able to prevent the virus from spreading further through the house. Our executive team met throughout the semester and winter break to refine and optimize our operating procedures to accurately address changes in local guidelines and to better fit goals as a chapter.

We are extremely proud of the perseverance and self-control that our brothers displayed throughout the fall semester as we carried out the execution of this plan. We look forward to a successful spring semester, and we hope everyone stays safe and healthy!

In Hoc,  
Beta Rho Executive Committee

# A BETTER MAN BECAUSE OF BETA RHO

(Continued from page 1)

"My experience with Sigma Chi was and is invaluable. When attending law school, my classmates were under constant stress and pressure," Dillon said. "Law school stress was nothing compared to being Consul. A Consul must balance interests of the chapter, university, community, and international fraternity. Often the different groups have competing interests, and the job can feel like walking a tightrope. Nevertheless, the experiences I had as an undergraduate prepared me well for life after college."

Dillon loved living in a chapter house where there was always something going on. From heading up to the mountains, camping trips, and bonfires at Hyalite Canyon to sororities pranks, skiing at Bridger Bowl, and working on Homecoming floats, Dillon never had a dull moment when he was spending time with his brothers during college. The special friendships Dillon formed through Beta Rho made it an easy decision for him to remain involved with the fraternity as an alumnus.

"I love volunteering as a facilitator for Krach Transformational Leaders Workshop and working with chapters to develop their strategic plans," Dillon said. "I've spent the last three years facilitating and hope I can continue volunteering throughout my life. I also recently took a road trip along the west coast and saw several alumni that I graduated with along the way."

Along with achieving immediate success after graduating from MSU, it's been rewarding for Dillon to see many of his brothers thrive early on in their respective careers.

"One interesting thing is that there has been a member of Beta Rho in five of the last six law school classes at the University of Montana (and notably no Beta Deltas)," Dillon said. "[Calder Thingvold '14](#), who was one of my pledge brothers, and [Eli Inabnit '12](#), who was Consul my sophomore year, each obtained federal clerkships in Billings and Missoula, respectively. Both remain close friends of mine."

The high Sigma Chi standard that was set at Beta Rho when Dillon was a freshman has only been raised in recent years. He's excited to see what's in store for the active chapter's collegians and future members and is thankful to be a better man because of Beta Rho.

"Beta Rho continues to be an environment where guys can grow and prosper, but even more importantly where they can have similar hilarious and fun experiences to the ones I had," Dillon said. "I hope to see that trend continue indefinitely."

You can connect with Dillon at [dillon.haskell1@gmail.com](mailto:dillon.haskell1@gmail.com).

# ALUMNI UPDATE

## CHAPTER ETERNAL

[Ed Keil '53](#) entered Chapter Eternal on May 31, 2020. He participated in football and wrestling at MSU, and in 1953 he left college to run the family farm. Ed and his wife, Barbara, raised three children on the farm, instilling a good work ethic and love of sports and animals. He was Deacon of the First Presbyterian Church of Conrad, 50-year Mason, president of the Young Democrats of Montana, and a member and leader of many agriculture organizations. He later married Karen Fisher, who survives him along with his children, grandchildren, and many more family members. Ed loved people and was known for his kindness and respect to all who crossed his path.

[David E. Street, M.D. '57](#) entered Chapter Eternal on March 18, 2019. He was a retired surgeon and a resident of Steamboat Springs, Colo.

[Thomas Corwin Albrecht '60](#) entered Chapter Eternal on February 27, 2020, in the loving presence of family members at 85. His active life included building bridges throughout Montana, flying his own airplane, waterskiing after a long day's work, riding motorcycles, and hunting elk in the Castle Mountains. Cor deeply cherished Thelma, his wife of 62 years, and their two daughters and four grandchildren. He spent his career building in Montana and Wyoming with COP Construction and later his own company, Construction Industries. If you've enjoyed the roads in Yellowstone Park, swam at Rose Park Pool, boated on Yellowtail Reservoir or crossed a bridge to your favorite fishing stream, you have benefited from his work.

[Jon Carlson '62](#) entered Chapter Eternal on June 20, 2020, from complications of Parkinson's. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Mary; son, Ross; and twin sister, Jean. Jon worked his entire career in the oil industry. Along with being a dedicated member of Sigma Chi, he was involved with Rotary and was an internationally respected member of the Society of Petroleum Engineers. Jon loved to fish, hike, ski, play tennis, and play the piano.

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## House Construction Timeline

**O**n the renovation front, we have collected the bulk of alumni pledges; all should be in by the end of this year. The Building Committee has begun work with a Helena architect, Scott Cromwell, to start down the detailed planning road. Scott led the architecture team that recently did the major renovation at the AGR chapter house, and he also did the architectural concepts for our fundraising brochure. His team visited Beta Rho in December to do laser measurements for every portion of the house, which has enabled them to get down to work and come up with some detailed options for the dorm side of the house.

It seems Bozeman is a hotbed of construction right now as the "virtual workforce" leaves the big cities and flocks to great lifestyle locations in the country. We had hoped to renovate the dorm side this summer, but with COVID-19 slowing down everything on the planning side

and the shortage of supplies and contractors in Bozeman, we now plan to delay the start of construction by a year.

Two major issues we are grappling with are ADA requirements and the amount of space that can be considered "educational."

As far as scheduling goes, the project will be divided into two stages. The plan is to do the dorm side of the house as stage one, likely during the summer of 2022. The rest is to be completed the following summer.

If you would like to learn more about any of these issues, drop me a line.

In Hoc,

[Norman C. Achen '65](#)

[norm@normanachen.com](mailto:norm@normanachen.com)



Brothers at the chapter house.



Sigma Chis volunteering at the food bank.



## SPRING 2021 EXECUTIVE TEAM

CONSUL [Weston Danley '22](#)

PRO CONSUL [Alec Good '22](#)

QUAESTOR [Jason Pichette '22](#)

MAGISTER [Cole Good '22](#)

RECRUITMENT CHAIRMAN [Shannen Courtney '22](#)

ANNOTATOR [Brenner Adams '23](#)

HOUSE MANAGER [Tyler Kitch '22](#)

KITCHEN MANAGER [Jared Boharski '22](#)

SCHOLARSHIP CHAIRMAN/RISK MANAGER [Owen Hunter '23](#)

PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIRMAN [Tate Hoeffler '22](#)

PHILANTHROPY CHAIRMAN [Jesse Denk '24](#)

TRIBUNE/EDITOR [Grant Davidson '23](#)

# The Same Strong Brotherhood

## *Active Brothers See Major Success in Tough Times*

This past fall semester proved to be very different than what many of us are used to here at MSU. Despite the adversities that we went through, we are proud of what we were able to accomplish. Our goals to improve our chapter, campus, and community remained among our top priorities.

Throughout the semester, our brothers participated in several community service events that were very beneficial for our relationship with organizations around MSU and Bozeman. One of our favorite events each semester is a litter cleanup over the stretch of Highway 191, which is dedicated to our fallen Brother Waarvik. We also partnered with one of MSU's clubs, Circle K, to perform a campus-wide trash cleanup. In addition to raising over \$4,000 for the Huntsman Cancer Institute, we strive to support our local Bozeman Cancer Support Community by providing them yardwork to help improve their campus.

An event that we are happy to do alongside the MSU student body is the "Can the Griz" food drive. This year, we donated over 250 pounds of food to Bounty of the Bridgers Food Bank on campus. Each semester, we are proud to host the Red Cross at our chapter house for a community blood drive. This semester, we gave an outstanding 32 units of blood. The brothers of Beta Rho are always glad to help, and we look forward to hosting and participating in future events that benefit our campus and community.

One area that our chapter is very proud of from this fall is recruitment. Despite COVID-19 restrictions and using new recruitment strategies, we initiated 17 new brothers into our order. This was the highest count from any fraternity on campus for the fall. In academics, our chapter GPA was 3.04 and we had 30 members make the Dean's List (3.5 GPA or higher). We are extremely excited to see such high performance, especially as the largest fraternity on campus. It's a big deal to outperform the all-fraternity undergraduate male, and all-undergraduate GPAs.

Overall, the brothers of Beta Rho are very proud of what we were able to accomplish over the unprecedented nature of this past semester. We are excited to continue our momentum and progress this spring.

Throughout this semester, we planned several philanthropy events, including a raffle, a March Madness bracket fundraiser, and a car wash. We also look forward to volunteering at Bozeman's food bank, Habitat for Humanity, and hosting another blood drive.

Beyond philanthropy, another way our brothers will have an opportunity for self-betterment is through the many programming events scheduled for this spring, such as a Values-Based Decision Making workshop from a Sigma Chi representative. Some others include MSU's "Hour of Power" leadership seminar and our campus Voice Center's discussion on healthy relationships. Finally, our chapter's overarching goal is to continue our recent improvements to our academics.

In Hoc,

**Weston P. Danley '22**

Consul | westonnparkd@gmail.com

# ALUMNI UPDATE

(Continued from page 2)

**R. Flint Taylor '62** entered Chapter Eternal on February 27, 2021, on his favorite ski run in New Mexico. He was one-of-a-kind: a loving husband, Vietnam vet, and distinguished veterinary pathologist. He is survived by his wife, Rosemary; daughter, Tanya (Tom); son, Dylan; brother, James (Barbara); and sister, Anne (Richard).

**Jay "Scott" Karaffa '74** entered Chapter Eternal on June 16, 2020, at 68 due to natural causes. Following his graduation from Montana State, he returned to Great Falls and worked as a surveyor at Thomas, Dean, & Hoskins, the assistant to the public works director for the Public Works Department of Great Falls, as facilities director at Great Falls College Montana State University, and as a project manager at Boland Construction before he retired. Scott was also a proud lifetime member of Sigma Chi and the Fraternal Order of the Elks. He spent time as a ski coach with Eagle Mount, and enjoyed golfing, bowling, fishing, camping, and playing cards with his many friends. He loved yardwork and took great pride in his yard.

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Gilbert Yost '50** is retired and nearing the age of 100. He lives in East Wenatchee, Wash.

**John J. Cassidy, Ph.D. '52** has been retired from the Bechtel Corporation in San Francisco since 2004 and is approaching his 90th birthday. After retiring from Bechtel, he spent 15 years as a private consultant on water-resource projects in the U.S. and some other countries. During the 20 years he spent with Bechtel, he traveled much of the world visiting company projects. Altogether, he has been to 53 different countries. His wife, Alice Willman (Alpha Gam 1955), who passed away in 2005, was able to travel with him much of the time. John hasn't been in contact with his Beta Rho brothers, but he does have a few Sig friends from other chapter living with him in independent living condos in Walnut Creek, Calif. John has three granddaughters, one grandson, and a great-granddaughter, Gia. Email: jjcassidyhydro@comcast.net

**Charles McCahill '52** is sad to report the passing of his father, Perry McCahill, on November 27, 2019. He joined Charles' mother, Charlotte, who passed away in 2017. He and his children all miss them tremendously. Charles lives in Roswell, Ga.



# BOBCAT SIG

## Beta Rho Chapter of Sigma Chi

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**Joseph D. Brookshier '59** is living in a senior living facility in Billings and shared that Brother **Don Glynn '52** also lives in the same facility. He's still active with the Montana Federation of Public Employment union. Email: [j\\_brkshr@yahoo.com](mailto:j_brkshr@yahoo.com)

**Jesse G. Armitage '65** has been in the electrical contracting business for 27 years. He is still doing some horse clinics and gives lessons periodically. "Life is good, health is good." He lives in Bozeman, Mont. Email [jesse@armitageelectric.com](mailto:jesse@armitageelectric.com)

**Thomas D. Fulton '69** spends his summer in Bozeman and winters in Meza, Ariz. He still flies, skies, golfs, and plays pickleball. He also remains involved in Warriors and Quiet Waters. Email: [bentom@gmail.com](mailto:bentom@gmail.com)

**John M. Green '70** and his wife, Sandra, are semi-retired in Mesa, Ariz. They celebrated 50 years of marriage in 2018. Last year marked John's 50th anniversary as a brother of Sigma Chi. "Living the dream, as we always have!" Email: [ssqueen@wwdb.org](mailto:ssqueen@wwdb.org)

**Gerald L. Pitzer '70** is enjoying retirement in Highland Heights, Ky.

**Duane A. Walker '79** says, "Keep up the good work on campus!" He lives in Great Falls, Mont. Email: [duane@walkerdesigngroup.com](mailto:duane@walkerdesigngroup.com)

**Mark W. Peres '81** left Fluor after 15 years to be the vice president of engineering at Kairos Power, where they are designing a fluoride salt-cooled, high-temperature nuclear reactor as a clean solution to protect the environment and improve people's quality of life. Mark and his lovely wife, Laura, enjoy spending time with their 8-year-old twin grandsons. They live in Greer, S.C. Email: [mark.peres@att.net](mailto:mark.peres@att.net)

**Attention:** This newsletter is intended for alumni and parents. If your Sigma Chi son is still attending Montana State University, he will receive a copy at the chapter house. If he has graduated, please send us his permanent address to update our records. Thank you.