



SPRING
2024

BOBCAT SIG

THE BETA RHO CHAPTER OF SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

\$1,000... YES, ONLY \$1,000

That's all that is standing between you and a refurbished chapter house at 722 S. Willson.

We have raised \$1.5 million from the brotherhood so far to make the required major renovations and upgrades to the house. But as you can see from the **background** and **present status** sections below, because of the COVID pandemic and rapid inflation over the past four years in the construction environment in Bozeman, we are at least \$1.5 million short of what we need to complete the renovation of the chapter house.

We have approximately 1,200 active Beta Rho alumni, and some 200 have contributed to this point to build the renovation fund (see bobcatsigs.org/donor-list for a list of brothers who have donated to date).

That leaves 1,000 brothers who have not contributed at all—so far.

If the renovation is going to happen at all, WE NEED YOUR ACTIVE FINANCIAL INVOLVEMENT in this project.

If all those alumni who have not contributed chipped in only \$1,000 each, we would have \$1 million which, along with additional contributions from the 200 original donors, would be enough to complete the renovation plan—a **complete stem to stern remodel as originally planned**—so future Beta Rho Sigs may continue enjoying the same experiences, opportunities, and lifelong bonds we have.

We **implore you to dig deep NOW** and donate to renew the 107-year legacy of Beta Rho of Sigma Chi at Montana State University. Donation instructions are at the end of this article.

BACKGROUND

In 2016-17, a core of alumni sat down to reflect on the first 100 years of Sigma Chi at Montana State and to create a vision for its future. Central to that vision was the chapter house built in 1961. Though the active chapter remains strong, the house has begun to show its age.

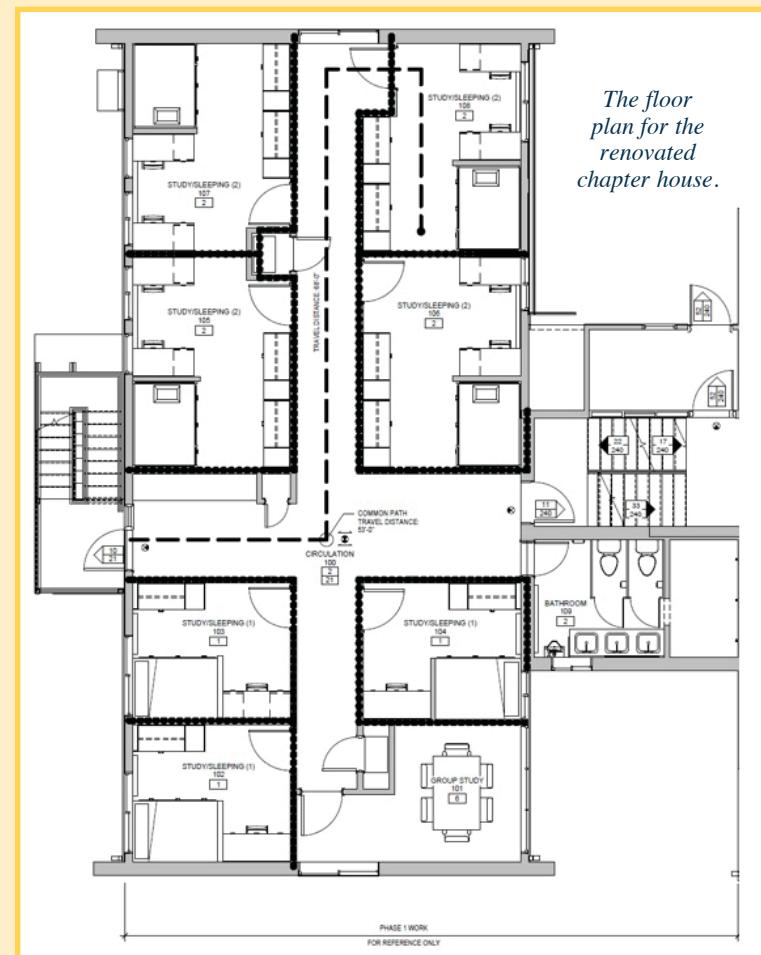
We embarked on an ambitious fundraising campaign for a large-scale renovation project. Many of us were the first generations of brothers to live in the new house, and we recall the fundraising efforts of alumni at the time. Looking back, perhaps we **already knew that one day we would be asked to return the favor to help secure the chapter's future for the next century of Sigs.**

In 2017, we began raising pledges from donors, collecting money, and working with architects to draft a set of plans for renovations. We spread out collecting pledges over a five-year period and anticipated breaking ground in 2021.

Our initial efforts were met with overwhelming support from ourselves and other alumni. In fact, we ultimately met our initial goals. However, over the past five years, the Gallatin Valley (indeed, all of Montana) has undergone unprecedented, explosive growth. If you still live in Bozeman or have visited recently, you've likely witnessed this firsthand. Once-open fields have been developed into condos, townhouses, and luxury apartments stretching from West Main to Four Corners and all throughout Gallatin Valley.

Beginning in 2020 during the pandemic, this explosive growth caused construction costs to increase at a fever pace. Unfortunately, these ballooning costs quickly outpaced and exceeded our initial projections. At this time, it became clear we had not raised enough funds to complete the entire renovation. We divided the plans into two phases with the first,

(Continued on page 2)



ONLY \$1,000

(Continued from page 1)

the North Phase, being the renovation of the dorm side of the house. At the same time, the Bozeman construction market became so tight that we could not find a contractor who would even bid on the North Phase of the project.

PRESENT STATUS

Fortunately, we recently found a contractor who will work with us for construction to start in early spring next year. Our plan is to renovate the entire house as originally planned. However, this really depends on whether we can raise an additional \$1.5 million. Any further delay will only increase the construction costs. If we cannot raise the \$1.5 million by June 30, the date we need to begin contract negotiations, we will be forced to significantly modify renovation plans.

We are at a critical juncture. We have discussed several options, but the only viable course that allows us to provide market-competitive housing for future brothers is through a focused, intensive, and short campaign to raise \$1.5 million by June 3, 2024.

The chapter house renovation project NEEDS YOUR FINANCIAL HELP NOW! DIG DEEP and send your donation TODAY to Beta Rho of Sigma Chi House Company.

There are two payment options:

- 1 Visit bobcatsigs.org/vision-2025/donate and follow instructions. Please add 4% to your contribution to cover the card fee.
- 2 If your donation is \$1,000 or above and you wish to avoid the card fee, send a check instead.

Make checks payable to **Beta Rho of Sigma Chi House Company** and mail the check to: **Rick Dissly**
6651 Leyland Park Dr
San Jose, CA 95120



REMINDER:

Donations eligible for tax deductions

If your donation is \$25,000 or above, you might be eligible to make a tax-deductible donation through the Sigma Chi Foundation. Contact Rick Dissly at rdissly@comcast.net for details.

In Hoc,

The Fundraising Team

**Paul Boylan '64, Rick Dissly '66,
Mike Langohr '73, Walt Smith '85,
John Hertz '89, Ryan Roseleip '97,
Dillon Haskell '15**

Collaborating for Success

Ron Lewis '88 on the Lifelong Impact of Sigma Chi

Why did you join Beta Rho? For **Ron Lewis '88**, he remembers the respect he held for Sigma Chi members and wanting to join such an admirable brotherhood. As a successful businessman today, Ron is grateful for the fraternal experience that prepared him well for life beyond college.

A Fraternal Foundation

“In business, you rarely can do something by yourself,” Ron said. During his undergraduate years, Beta Rho was Ron’s first exposure to a collaborative effort beyond high school sports. Sigma Chi gave Ron a better understanding of how like-minded individuals can achieve shared goals through a common vision.



The Lewis family. From left: Zach (son), Leanne, Nate (son), Chloe (dog), Taylor (daughter), and Ron Lewis '88.

Ron’s Sigma Chi influence went beyond just his chapter, attending conferences that showcased the national scale of the brotherhood. He encourages today’s Sigma Chi undergraduates to take advantage of the greater opportunities presented to them in today’s fraternal landscape.

Career Endeavors

While pursuing a master’s degree in business at Northwestern, Ron stayed involved with Sigma Chi for five years, working for the international fraternity in Illinois. He would go on to work in the agricultural industry for Cargill, relating back to his younger years growing up on a farm.

“I’ve always wanted to be a bit of a global citizen,” Ron said. While he maintains a drive to work for global companies, Ron always remembers his hometown roots. “My grandmother gave me a picture of the family farm with a clipping from our newspaper in Lewistown, which said: ‘No one ever gets very far in life without remembering where they come from.’”

“Meaning drives happiness. Lessons you learn as a young man in Sigma Chi are not ephemeral—they last a lifetime.”

Ron spent several years as an executive for Coca Cola in Europe, and he is currently the chief operating officer of Ball Corporation. Throughout his career, Ron has been honored to lead teams and manage their collaborative efforts. In each job he’s held for the past 15 years, Ron had the privilege to develop a team member to be his eventual successor.

Beta Rho Bonds

Back in 2017, Ron had the chance to rekindle fraternal bonds at the Beta Rho centennial celebration. He was glad to see fellow alumni have gone on to do great things in their lives, and they should be proud of the men they became through Sigma Chi.

“The anniversary was another one of my fondest fraternity memories, of which there are many,” Ron added. He urges today’s undergraduates to enjoy shared Sigma Chi experiences while following the fraternal values that give brothers meaning throughout their lives.

You can connect with Ron at ronald_lewis@hotmail.com.

FOCUSED ON OUR COMMUNITY

Beta Rho's Recent Events



Members gather for a brotherhood event at JumpTime in Bozeman.

This fall, we were placed on social probation with MSU and have been working to ensure that we continue to follow the ideals laid out by our founders. Together with our administration, we have revamped our risk management policies, will work closely with our Chapter Advisor and Grand Praetor regarding future social events, and will continue to ensure that the lessons from Preparation for Brotherhood (P4B) carry forward into active membership.

PHILANTHROPY SUCCESS

Regardless of these setbacks, we have dedicated ourselves to maintaining the status quo of continued excellence at Beta Rho. In the fall, we raised more than \$20,000 for Huntsman and are continuing to uphold the values of Sigma Chi. We aim to reach \$35,000 by the end of this year.

In four days, we raised more than \$3,000 with Shave It or Save It. This involved asking the community for donations to either shave or shave the hair of brothers who volunteered to participate, and the side with the most money decided. We were also featured on local news station KBZK alongside an article online. Thanks to social media marketing and the work of brothers, event proceeds doubled last year's. This was a great way to show the community more of who we are as an organization and how we are breaking the fraternity stereotype.

COMMUNITY EFFORTS

Every semester, we clean up our adopted stretch of highway up Gallatin Gateway. This year, we had a great chapter participation and made a huge impact in preserving our environment.



Brothers host a coffee/hot chocolate giveaway on campus.

Before finals week in December, we spent hours on campus giving out hot chocolate and coffee to students and faculty. Having a chance to have conversations with our community in a casual, no pressure setting had a great impact on further improving our image on campus. This event had a huge turnout, and fellow students enjoyed the gesture.

In early April, we are hosting our second semesterly blood drive through the Red Cross. We are always blown away by community participation and enthusiasm surrounding this event. The blood drives give us a chance to welcome community members into our chapter house and work together to benefit those in need.

Before the semester concludes, we are working to organize a public relations event hosting our neighbors, the university police department, and the Dean of Students office over to our house. We are hoping to have a neighbor's band play in our side yard and strengthen our relationships with these groups.

In Hoc,
William Hyatt '25
 Consul
 william.hyatt.mt@gmail.com



Jon Shultz '27 takes a leap at our ski jump recruitment event.

Chapter Officers

Consul
Will Hyatt '25

Pro Consul
Forrest Christian '25

Quaester
Jonny Hoefig '25

Magister
Andrew Harness '25

Recruitment Chairman
Tyler Lara '25
 tylara31@gmail.com |
 (541) 606-3131

Annotator
William Caron '26

House Manager
Soren Wade '25

Kitchen Managers
Thomas Middleton '26
Jack Poskey '26

Risk Manager
Drake Dagli '25

Tribune and Chapter Editor
Calvin Dinh '26

Scholarship Chairman
Gage Robinson '26

Public Relations Chairman
Tristan Schuyler '26

Philanthropy Chairman
Thomas Kopchains '25

Sentinel
 (Mental Wellness
 Chairman)
Brandon Cabaniss '26

SAVE THE DATE

Beta Rho Homecoming 2024

Be a part of Beta Rho's memorable alumni Homecoming weekend.

As usual, many Beta Rho Sigs will return home to honor longstanding traditions, rekindle nostalgia, and meet brothers and friends.

As we did last year, the Friday reception and celebration will be held at the chapter house on the afternoon and evening of **October 4, 2024**. More details to follow.

Chapter Goals

- Earn the J. Dwight Peterson Significant Chapter Blue Award
- Earn a chapter GPA of 3.15
- Raise \$35,000 for the Huntsman Cancer Institute

Welcome, New Members

Noah Allee | Laguna Hills, Calif.

Brandon Campbell | Juneau, Alaska

Frank Fredrick | Centennial, Colo.

Ryan Grubb | Centennial, Colo.

Andrew Hayles | Pasco, Wash.

Ryan Karlsgodt | Centennial, Colo.

Dylan Lee | Albuquerque, N.M.

Ephraim Mackenzie | Wenatchee, Wash.

Nick Purswell | Hermiston, Ore.

Christian Schlee | Leesburg, Va.

Evan Schuna | Lake Elmo, Minn.

Evan Sherfey | Kennewick, Wash.

Zac Smith | Fort Collins, Colo.



BOBCAT SIG

Beta Rho Chapter of Sigma Chi

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Alumni Update

Chapter Eternal

George Wallis '42 – December 27, 2022

Thomas Kuhr '52 – January 28, 2023

Don Glynn '55 – July 11, 2023

Thomas Birkeland '56 – May 21, 2023

Bill Poppie '61 – November 17, 2023

Donald Martin '65 – February 28, 2023

Dean Stensland '79 – February 28, 2023

Alumni News

Harrison Fagg '54 is a semi-retired architect living in Billings, Mont. Harrison kayaked the Smith River at age 87. Email: hfagg@cox.net

Larry Leonard '68 served the Montana Army National Guard for six years after graduation. He later became a teacher and freshman football and wrestling coach in Sidney, Mont. Larry became the head wrestling coach in Glasgow for 13 years, winning two state titles and four runner-up placements. He continued to teach for 37 years. Larry lives in Billings, Mont., with his wife. He stays busy with church activities, volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, and various endeavors. Email: moehelga@gmail.com

John Green '70 shared that his 57-year love story ended this year following Sandra's passing. John and Sandra met when they were both pledges at MSU, and he appreciates everyone who has been a part of their story along the way. John resides in Mesa, Ariz. Email: jsgreen@wwddb.org

Webb Mandeville '72 retired at the start of 2024, and he stays busy as the mayor of Columbus, Mont. He is also involved with his church and other local organizations. Email: webbmandeville@hotmail.com

Jim Phillips '75 moved to Boise, Idaho, in 2022 from Butte, Mont. In his retirement, Jim enjoys fly fishing every week, and he regularly visits the Bahamas to fly fish in the spring. He also scuba dives in Cozumel, Mexico, every spring. Jim spent three weeks in Italy and France last fall. Email: jimmer59701e@yahoo.com

John Burton '85 retired from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department in March 2023, now loving every minute of his retirement while living in Chino, Calif. John plans to return to Montana in 2028, after his youngest graduates from nursing school at Cal Baptist. Email: jhburton63@yahoo.com