



FALL  
2019

# BOBCAT SIG

THE BETA RHO CHAPTER OF SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY  
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

## STEADY IMPROVEMENTS FOR BETA RHO Look at What We've Accomplished

Over the past six years, the active chapter has improved in virtually every category of their brotherhood and their university education. These include the brothers' academic achievements, their philanthropy and involvement with the university and broader Gallatin Valley community, brotherhood bonding, and their chapter operations.

Many alumni have a close working relationship with the collegians and we felt it would be beneficial to list the key improvements from 2012 to 2019. Behind each of these items lies many hours of work by the active brothers, supporting alumni and chapter advisors.

### Alumni Support and Communication

- Alumni advisors attend several chapter/executive meetings.
- The Bobcatsigs.org website has been outsourced to Pennington & Co. and content is maintained by the house company and the active chapter.
- The Beta Rho contact database now includes undergraduates and alumni, including Sigs from other chapters living in the Bozeman area.
- Alumni and undergraduates produce two newsletters each year.
- The centennial celebration in 2017 was a huge success with over 225 alumni and 150 guests attending.
- To improve communication with alumni and parents, the active chapter is sending out Homecoming emails and monthly emails detailing upcoming activities and events.

### Relationship with Beta Rho House Company

- A formal lease agreement has been signed between house company and active chapter.
- Formal live-in agreements are required with all occupants of the chapter house.
- Funds were provided by the house company to ensure the chapter house is in a livable condition and the house company has hired a permanent handyman.

### Active Chapter Operations and Financial Health

- A financial manual has been prepared and is being updated yearly.
- To provide financial transparency to advisors and active chapter officers, QuickBooks in the cloud has been implemented.
- Closing the books and the issuing of monthly financial statements has been outsourced to an accountant.

- House bills are sent out two months in advance of each semester. All house bills are due on the first day of class with an incentive to pay early. House bills become past due 30 days after the first day of class and late fee is applied on day 31.
- The active chapter has been cash flow positive for the last 10 years with minimum bad debt write-off, is debt free, and has a sizable rainy day fund.
- The capital campaign committee has raised \$1.59 million to renovate the chapter house. The active chapter has contributed \$150,000 to this project.

### Brother Achievements

- President of MSU Interfraternity Council  
[Spencer Dahl](#) – 2014  
[Colton Coffee](#) – 2017
- ASMSU Senator  
[Dillon Haskell](#) – 2014  
[Colton Coffee](#) – 2017  
[August Thompson](#) – 2019
- MSU Homecoming King  
[Spencer Dahl](#) – 2014  
[Chris Eddlemon](#) – 2016  
[Jachike Madubuko](#) – 2017

In Hoc,  
Beta Rho of Sigma Chi House Company

## The Best of Beta Rho

### Membership

- ◊ Chapter size increased from 50 to 85
- ◊ Three \$1,000 scholarships granted to actives each year
- ◊ Members living in house increased from 18 to 32
- ◊ Ten Beta Rho officers attend KLTW training workshops each year

### Chapter Awards

- ◊ Most Improved Chapter Award – 2018
- ◊ Best Chapter Award – 2018
- ◊ Most Improved GPA – 2018
- ◊ Peterson Significant Chapter Award - six of the last eight years
- ◊ Huntsman Cancer Institute Award for raising over \$20,000 - 2019



*Sigma Chi members on the porch of their house, 1921*

## Sigma Chi International Enhances Communication Initiatives

This summer, Sigma Chi International made moves to expand the Sigma Chi brand and enhance two-way communication with our brothers and our extended communities. This included launching a new [Sigmachi.org](http://sigmachi.org) website to better connect with potential new members, undergraduate brothers, and alumni and their families. The purpose is to cast a vision of the good we aim to achieve as Sigma Chis.

Take some time to check out the new website and browse the various sections. Of particular interest to the writer was the first new Sigma Chi podcast at <https://sigmachi.org/home/news/sigma-chi-podcast>, which features a fabulous interview with [Keith Krach, Purdue University '79](#), 64th Grand Consul, Significant Sig, Order of Constantine Sig, and the recently confirmed United States Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment.

The website features an enhanced news section where you can keep up to date on notable developments in the fraternity and Sig world at <https://sigmachi.org/home/news>. You will note one of the news items details how Sigma Chi won a coveted Brandon Hall Gold award for our Preparation for Brotherhood pledge education program.

Also, our new 71st Grand Consul, [Steve Schuyler, University of Arizona '79](#), a Bozeman native, has begun a series of weekly messages on current issues targeted at all Sigma Chis via Facebook. Read them here at [www.facebook.com/SigmaChiGrandConsul](http://www.facebook.com/SigmaChiGrandConsul).

In the first week of August, Sigma Chi International hosted its revamped and newly endowed leadership workshop, the Krach Transformational Leadership Workshop, at Bowling Green University. By all reports, the workshop featured excellent programs and information.

## Capital Campaign Stalled *We Really NEED Your Help*

It is very surprising, but the *Honoring Our Past 100 Years: Beta Rho's Vision for 2025* capital campaign has received only a few pledges in the past six months. At present, we are at \$1.58 million in pledges from 212 brothers. What is going on with our Beta Rho brotherhood?

We will need over \$2 million to complete the required renovations to bring the house up to date and provide healthy and safe living accommodations for our active brothers. Our chapter has a storied 102-year history with over 1,200 living alumni and it is surprising to us that more brothers have not risen to the occasion to support the renovation of the 60-year-old chapter house.

Your gift at any level matters. At this stage in the campaign, we need several of the 1,000 brothers who have not contributed to rise and say, "I do care about the future of Beta Rho. I do care about the active brothers and the chapter house. And I will support the campaign."

We need all alumni to pitch in to reach our \$2 million goal. Several alumni have established a matching fund to encourage new and additional pledges. Thus, all new donations will be matched dollar for dollar.

### HOW TO DONATE

If 50-75 brothers contributed \$5,000 (only \$1,000 a year) or \$2,500 (only \$500 a year), we could start the detailed planning for the project.

- Donate online at [www.bobcatsigs.org/visions-2025/donate](http://www.bobcatsigs.org/visions-2025/donate).
- We have included a pledge form and return envelope for alumni to mail it with your first installment.

Campaign details can be found on the Beta Rho website at [www.bobcatsig.org/vision-2025](http://www.bobcatsig.org/vision-2025). Contact [Rick Dally '66](#) at (408) 348-4337 or [rdally@comcast.net](mailto:rdally@comcast.net) with any questions.

Please make your pledge TODAY. Our future Beta Rho brothers will be very thankful for your support of Beta Rho and this capital campaign.

In Hoc,  
**Norm Achen '66, Rick Dally '66**  
 Campaign Chairmen

# More Than \$1.58 Million Committed to Honoring Our Past 100 Years

## MANY THANKS TO OUR DONORS

We are deeply grateful to the 212 donors listed below for committing \$1,589,008 to the *Honoring Our Past 100 Years: Beta Rho's Vision for 2025* capital campaign. These brothers recognize the importance of ensuring the future of Beta Rho and have demonstrated a sense of gratitude for their personal experience. Commitments are still needed from the rest of our alumni to achieve our goal and complete this critical project.

Contributors of \$1,000 or more will be recognized in campaign publications and contributors who give \$5,000 or more will be displayed at the appropriate giving level on prominently displayed signage in the chapter house, unless otherwise requested. A 50% tax deduction is still available for contributions of \$25,000 and above. If an error has been made in recording your gift, or your name has been mistakenly omitted, we sincerely apologize. Please advise our campaign coordinator at (785) 843-1661 or nedwards@penningtonco.com.

### Beta Rho Circle

**(\$100,000 and above)**

Beta Rho Undergraduate Chapter  
David O. Kem '67

### White Cross Circle

**(\$50,000 to \$99,999)**

Brian H. Loucks '64  
Richard L. Dally '66  
Bruce W. Burkitt '72  
Michael A. DiFronzo '91

### Jordan Standard Circle

**(\$25,000 to \$49,999)**

Edward T. Gossack '59  
Conrad C. Smith '61  
C. Larry Walker '61  
Alan D. Nicholson '62  
Douglas B. Allan '65  
Duane A. Denton '65  
Larry W. Ferguson '65  
John Waggoner '65

In memory of  
Duane M. Douglas '65

In honor of  
Robert J. Waggoner '01

Norman C. Achen '65  
William A. Johnstone Jr. '66

Michael D. Langohr '73

Barfknecht Family Gift  
Col. James F. Barfknecht '49

James H. Barfknecht '74

In memory of  
Jerry Uhlrich '71

James H. Darfler '76

Stephen J. Spencer '79

Walter H. Smith '85

Ronald J. Lewis '88

John D. Hertz '89

Russell W. Wilcox '91

Shane P. Coleman '95

Ryan W. Roseleip '97

### Life Loyal Sig Circle

**(\$10,000 to \$24,999)**

Anonymous

Bill Poppie '61

Paul F. Boylan Jr. '64

Bill Gum '66

William H. Yunck '66

Don E. Watson '67

Ritchie W. Secor '71

Webb C. Mandeville '72

Lee R. Taylor '74

John L. Hansen Jr. '75

Robert M. Fitzsimmons '77

Ted L. Rowland '77

Lon R. Taylor '77

Dahl Family Gift

Todd Z. Dahl '79

Spencer Z. Dahl '15

Dean A. Stensland '80

Gerald W. Steinbrenner '81

Larry V. Larsen '82

Robert B. Morton '82

Dean A. McSweeney '87

Logan Good '88

Steven R. Ramberg '88

Marla and Bret Schroeder '90

Gerrit B. VanOmmen '90

Erik A. Bostrom '01

### Bobcat Circle

**(\$5,000 to \$9,999)**

Trisha Gum

In memory of

Bob Gum '63

Norman "Barry" Kamhout '56

Gary L. Dusenberry '62

Dennis M. Osgard '62

Curtis O. Zook '62

Kenneth M. Bodner '63

Col. Darrel T. Charlton '64

Robert F. Hardgrove '64

David L. Seibel '64

In memory of

Dennis Seibel '69

Charles R. Klimas Jr. '65

Robert J. Cebull '66

Craig N. Hudson '71

Steven T. Dodds '75

Bruce L. Shively '76

In memory of

David W. Shively

James R. Granger '77

Chris King '77

In memory of

Mike Neilsen '76 and

Tim Kelly '77

Daniel P. Shue '78

Jerry A. DeMars '79

Kelly Harrington '79

Tristan P. Renz '79

Brian B. Johnson '80

In memory of

B. Kenneth Johnson '49

W. Harvey Crist '81 and

Steve Clair '81

Bruce T. Moog '80

John S. Rennie '80

Mark L. Macek '81

Roy A. Ewen '82

Daniel E. Stovall '82

D. Craig Peterson '83

David J. Waldenberg '83

John J. Earll '85

Curtis R. Biller '87

Kevin L. Greteman '87

William R. Brace '89

Ronald W. Yates '90

Kevin L. Good '91

Bruce J. LaMeres '91

Brian G. Olsen '94

Benjamin W. Johnson '97

Dillon Haskell '15

### Centennial Circle

**(\$2,500 to \$4,999)**

Anonymous

In honor of

Mike Langohr's work

Miles L. Swan '50

In memory of

LR Swan

In honor of

Lee R. Swan

Charles K. Hanson '58

Wallace D. McRae '58

Marshall B. Bennett '60

Jon R. Carlson '62

In honor of

Barney and

Ross Carlson '06

Ronald E. Fatzinger '62

Steven G. Hamilton '62

Robert T. Dolan '64

Larry L. Barber '65

Gary A. Secor '68

Peter B. Nelson '70

Richard D. Morris '73

Michael J. Madison '75

John T. Lepley '76

Dwight T. Holman '79

Jay A. Ritland '79

Scott K. Urquhart '79

Kirby G. Granger '81

Rick D. Jackson '82

Paul L. Kirkpatrick '82

Daniel B. McClure '82

Morley D. Malek '83

Richard "Sam" Phillips '83

Bryan K. Henson '84

David R. Weller '85

Gary C. Erickson '88

Bradley R. Johnson '92

Scott E. Swenson '92

Brian A. Brown '95

Daniel K. Conway '96

John E. Wishman '04

Pierson Family Gift

Bradley D. Pierson '07

Kathlene B. Pierson '07

(Beta Rho Sweetheart 2005)

D. Forrest Granger '08

David E. Cavanaugh '10

Justin H. Mito '10

Alexander J. Kaul '13

### Supporters Circle

**(\$1,000 to \$2,499)**

Anonymous

In memory of

Bob Schuyler '72,

Dave Goldsworthy '75,

Cary Old Coyote '76, and

Dick Kildahl '79

George W. Wallis '42

In memory of

Sigs killed in action

Martin W. Crennen '57

Frank R. Landon '57

Vernon H. Robertson '57

Jerome D. Siderius '57

Robert L. McIlhattan '58

Joseph D. Brookshier '59

Dan P. Eacret '60

Robert "Skip" Ritner '61

William H. Erwin Jr. '64

Thomas A. Overturf '64

Duane L. Robertson '64

William P. Breedon '65

David C. Moulton '65

Thomas G. Albrecht '66

In memory of

Charley Wood

Frederick C. Buckingham '66

Manny K. Hoag '66

### Campaign Status

#### At-a-Glance

As of November 5, 2019

**Total Raised**

**\$1,589,008**

**Goal**

**\$2,000,000**

**Number of Contributors**

**212**

**Number of Active Alumni**

**1,245**

Henry C. Hofeldt '66

Michael S. Steele '66

In memory of  
Rick Buckingham '66

Joseph B. Zeiler '66

Dr. Gary L. Cook '67

Michael F. Evans '69

David E. Kalberg '69

Walter C. Backer '72

Jack P. Cowlishaw '74

Robert C. Matthews '75

In memory of

Curt J. Simmons '77,

Calvin J. Gilgore '78, and

Robert L. Byrtus '80

Mark E. Bahnmiller '79

Tyler W. Corder '79

Mike Kirkpatrick '79

Duane A. Walker '79

In memory of

Mark E. Bahnmiller '79

Thomas F. Heck '80

Bruce H. Dunkle '81

Allan M. Schneider '81

J. Kern Stevenson '81

Robert C. West, D.D.S. '81

David J. Marshall '84

David M. Stensland '85

Mark E. Lovely '88

William H. Rambo Jr. '89

Jeffrey D. Hardegger '91

Mark S. Bentson '92

Jeremy N. DeVries '95

Rock W. Hardgrove '95

Kevin S. Leland '97

Joshua T. DeVries '99

Eric J. Granrud '99

RJ Waggoner '01

Nick A. Newgaard '03

Andrew J. Wharton '06

# SERVING SIGMA CHI

## Meet Matthew Sonnichsen, *College of Idaho '04*, Beta Rho's New Chapter Advisor

**M**atthew Sonnichsen, *College of Idaho '04*, comes from a small school of only 750 students. Greek life was just as small with a mere three chapters on campus. Finding a home at Kappa Lambda Chapter of Sigma Chi, Matt developed a dedication to leadership as a collegian that would carry on years after graduation. Taking on a larger campus and chapter, he serves as the chapter advisor for Beta Rho.

"Coming to a school with more than 10 to 20 times the student population is an interesting dynamic," Matt said. "It's a challenge, and something I am learning more about day by day."

Matt was motivated to take on the role of chapter advisor for Beta Rho after the Grand Praetor called to ask if he was available to take the position. "I had been waiting to get involved so I jumped at the opportunity," Matt shared. As a former member of the advisory board for the University of Montana, he was excited to hear that the Beta Rho position would be a one-man operation.

It didn't take long for his hard work to make an impact. During the spring semester, Beta Rho won a Peterson award—the highest honor an active chapter can receive. Matt set his new goals for the chapter high, aiming



to help the chapter attain the Peterson Gold award this year along with Chapter of the Year at Montana State by improving their relationship with other fraternities on campus.

Beyond undergraduate awards, Matt plans to help connect local alumni back to the chapter. Events such as Homecoming will be used to entice alumni to come back, visit the chapter house, and get to know the active members. "I'm really trying to get in contact with more alumni to see what they want," Matt said. "Not only do I want to strengthen alumni members' relationships with the chapter, but also amongst themselves." He is hopeful to begin building some of these bridges during the fall semester.

Outside of his involvement with Sigma Chi, Matt is an attorney by trade with two daughters, ages 4 and 7, who keep him busy. He says, "Finding time for oneself to relax is key in maintaining a healthy work-life balance." Some of Matt's favorite ways to relax include going on walks, clay pigeon shooting, exercising, and playing video games.

If you have questions for Matt, or would like to share your ideas on alumni events, he can be reached at matt.sonnichsen@oracle.com.



## A SALUTE TO PAUL FUNK II '84



*Outgoing Training and Doctrine Command General Stephen J. Townsend, center, passes the flag to Army General Mark A. Milley, left, as incoming Commander General Paul Funk II '84, second from left, waits during a change of command ceremony.*



*Incoming Training and Doctrine Command General Paul Funk II '84 high-fives his grandson, Jack Brown, during the change of command ceremony at Ft. Eustis on June 21.*

**G**eneral Paul Funk II '84 takes command of Ft. Eustis and Army Training and Doctrine Command in D.C.

# Beta Rho Celebrates 2018-19 Accomplishments



Our Derby Days chairmen with the 2019 Derby Doll, Abigail Zimmerman.



Brothers at our biannual philanthropy car wash at the chapter house.



Brothers clean up our adopted two-mile stretch of Big Sky Highway.



Tom Hanratty from the Huntsman Cancer Institute spoke with the MSU community about cancer research.

This semester has been very busy for the men of Beta Rho. Our members are pushing to be the best we can be after the record 2018-19 year. We are proud but not satisfied.

This summer, our chapter was recognized at the 2019 Krach Transformational Leadership Workshop. The Beta Rho Chapter has again received a J. Dwight Peterson Significant Chapter Blue Award. We have received this award five out of the last six years. The Peterson Significant Chapter Award is the highest honor that Sigma Chi bestows upon an undergraduate chapter. The Huntsman Cancer Institute also presented us with an award for raising over \$20,000 for research this year. Additionally, we received the Most Improved Chapter award.

## INVOLVEMENT

Our brothers are committed to being well-rounded and involved leaders. We hold the offices of president and vice president on the MSU lacrosse board and captain of the MSU lacrosse club team. We also have representation in student government, IFC, Wildlife Society, Investment Club, Engineers Without Borders, Pre-Health Professions Club, Order of Omega Leadership Society, and many more.

## PHILANTHROPY

Our contribution to and passion for the Huntsman Cancer Institute continues to grow like wildfire; we raised an academic year total of over \$13,000. We raised these funds through our semiannual car wash, Derby Days, and Parents Weekend. Our goal this year is to raise a chapter high of \$25,000. Beta Rho believes our commitment to the HCI goes beyond a financial contribution. We created patient care baskets and delivered them to the local cancer center at Bozeman Deaconess Hospital this semester. For the first time ever, we invited a representative from the HCI, a local business owner and cancer survivor, and the MSU Dean of Students to speak at a presentation that we created on campus. This effort will be a large contribution to the new, seven-year, \$20 million pledge

that Sigma Chi International has made to the HCI for women's cancer research and care.

## COMMUNITY

We continue to support the campus and community by giving many hours of our time to events such as dorm and living complex move-ins, highway litter control, and MSU orientation. We have also utilized the resources that our campus and community graciously offer. The Montana State University Police Department came to our home and provided members with information regarding our safety and that of our guests. The university also put on a workshop on violence prevention that provided our members with additional knowledge. Being present in the local community goes beyond going through the motions; it is a true commitment to service and creating a safer, healthier, and friendlier place to live.

## ACADEMICS

Academics are our primary focus, even with all the other endeavors our men take on. Last spring, our chapter earned a 2.92 GPA. The undergraduate male average was a 2.79. Success in the classroom, involvement outside the classroom, and leadership have given our members honor and distinction. Our members have earned the MSU Presidential Scholarship, the MSU Premier Scholarship, Jake Jabs School of Business and Entrepreneurship Scholarship, Norm Asbjornson College of Engineering Scholarship, and more.

We invite all of you to join the Facebook page and visit our website at [bobcatsigs.org](http://bobcatsigs.org) for more updates.

In Hoc,

**Brandon Olsen '21**

Consul

[brandonholsen@gmail.com](mailto:brandonholsen@gmail.com) / (407) 406-6921

Consul Brandon Olsen '21  
Pro Consul Ian Muir '21  
Quaestor Nathan Vanderbeek '21  
Magister Harrison Cebulla '21  
Annotator Jason Pichette '22

Recruitment Chairman Weston Danley '22  
[westonparkd@gmail.com](mailto:westonparkd@gmail.com) • (406) 210-5718  
House Manager Finn Vaughnkraska '21  
Risk Manager Paul Korotish '21  
Scholarship Chairman Alec Good '22

Kustos August Thompson '20  
Tribune/Chapter Editor Brandon Baier '21  
Philanthropy Chairman Jack Swann '22

## CHAPTER OFFICERS

# CHAPTER ETERNAL

**Miles Swan '50** entered Chapter Eternal on May 26. After attending MSU for one quarter, Miles returned to the ranch to assist with lambing during the winter. He joined the U.S. Army in 1944 and translated Japanese and later Soviet radio code. After being promoted to sergeant and receiving an honorable discharge, he returned to MSC, earning a degree in animal industry in 1950. Miles married and returned to the ranch to work with his father, and became partners with his brother-in-law. He also served in the state House of Representatives for three terms. Miles and Doris, his wife, enjoyed travel and visited most U.S. states and several countries in Europe and South America.

**Harry Cosner '51** entered Chapter Eternal on May 31. He served in the Navy during WWII from 1943-46 and graduated with an industrial engineering degree from MSU. Harry pursued a career with different mining companies before retiring as general mine manager at Cyprus Copper Company in Bagdad, Ariz. He enjoyed skiing, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, training retriever dogs, training horses, and playing card games.

**Lowell "Ronnie" Cloninger '60** entered Chapter Eternal February 20 after complications with cancer. He was a resident of Missoula and Swan Lake, Mont.

**Louis Spain '63** entered Chapter Eternal on June 11. Lou was enlisted in the Army from 1958-66 as a reservist and in the National Guard. He was chairman of the College of Business advisory council and president of Bobcat Club. Lou was the owner of Ownhouse Ace Hardware in downtown Bozeman, Mont., and operated the store for over 40 years. He was dedicated to his community, serving as president of the Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter, Bozeman Area Chamber of Commerce, and Bozeman Senior Booster Club. Lou enjoyed the outdoors and climbed Mt. Whitney, Mt. Kilimanjaro, Mt. Fuji, and trekked through Nepal to Mt. Everest Basecamp with National Geographic Expedition host Peter Hillary.

**Gary Tavenner '63** entered Chapter Eternal on February 26. Gary graduated from MSU with majors in accounting and economics. He built custom homes, and owned and operated Pioneer Hardware in Deer Lodge. Gary started a new career with ASCS/Farm Service Agency that brought him back to Missoula. He was an encouraging swim, basketball, cheer, and life coach to his daughters. He was also a construction foreman and a Mullan Road historian.

**Bill Yunck '66** entered Chapter Eternal March 27. Bill worked as a claims adjustor in Great Falls. After moving around Montana,



# BOBCAT SIG

## Beta Rho Chapter of Sigma Chi

Montana State University  
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Lawrence, KS 66044-2100

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**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.

he ended up in Whitefish and married Mary Jane Westermark. In Whitefish, he owned a construction company and ran it with his son. Bill was an avid alpine skier, swimmer, diver, and enjoyed golfing, target shooting, and boating.

**Don Breedon '69** entered Chapter Eternal on March 9. Don received a B.S. in mechanical engineering from MSU in 1973. He was a lifetime member of the Montana State University Alumni Association, a Corvette enthusiast, and an avid Bobcat Fan.

**John "Jack" Truscott III '76** entered Chapter Eternal on March 15 at his home. While attending MSU, Jack intermittently worked construction. He loved the outdoors and was an avid hunter and fisherman. He worked in the telecommunications industry and started his own business, Valley Telecommunications Consultants, out of Billings, Mont.



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