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ΔΕΛΤΑ ΚΑΠΠΑ ΕΠΙΣΙΛΩΝ

THE LAMBDA DKE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

LAMBDA CHAPTER • Fall 2021

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

From Sam Adams '81, Lambda's New Alumni Association President

Brothers,

I hope this newsletter finds you well and that you are staying in touch with your DKE brothers. Our bonds of friendship stand the test of time.

It is an honor to serve as the next President of the Lambda Alumni Association,

and I am grateful for your support. I will be relying heavily on our retiring President, **Biff Butler '68**, who has served us all with great distinction and tireless energy. A round of clicks for Biff's help seeing Lambda through our recent challenges, and kudos to all who helped him. I'm lucky to have his wise and ongoing counsel.

I'm joined by our new VP, **James Asimes '11**, who has been actively engaging with actives and administrators and will be invaluable as we re-build our chapter. **Hewitt Heiserman '82**, remains as our Treasurer, presiding over your generous donations and making sure they are used wisely. **Phil Sheers '19** is our Secretary, which is important for our increasingly active Alumni Association. Finally, **Rob Bridges '86**, will serve on the Board and brings a wealth of experience from running the Alumni Association in the past. Please visit www.LambdaDKE.com to see all volunteers helping Lambda prosper.

The good news is that DKE is back on campus and has completed its Fall rush. We initiated three new members on November 11th, bringing our total chapter number to six. They are great guys and worthy DKEs. We will have another rush commencing early next semester and preparations are already underway for that.

Our current and new actives are optimistic they will bring in a good group of guys next semester. Take note that your generous contributions are playing an essential role in recruiting by supporting rush expenses, giving to the Shawn Kelly fundraiser, and covering initiation fees, among other things that attract new members. If you have not already done so,



please consider giving to Lambda on our website, or by using the enclosed form. Here's a quick summary of what is going on at Lambda:

Initiation: Initiated three new members, **Dylan Osimetha** of Dallas TX, **Nick Lewis** of Rockville, MD, and **Max Thesing** of

Columbus, OH.

New Patio and Firepit: The ground has been cleared and stones and firepit are ready to be laid at the Lodge as a place for brothers to gather and for rush events.

Dialogue with Administration: On initiation day, we met with President Sean Decatur, VP for Student Affairs Celestino Limas, and Director of Student Affairs Mick Steiner. It was a productive and friendly meeting during which the college expressed support for the return of DKE to campus. They gave assurances that DKE will return to the West Wing when we have the numbers, possibly next fall. It was a good start and our fingers are crossed.

Lodge Maintenance: The Lodge has been cleaned up some, but needs near-term work and a long-term plan including external storage. **Biff Butler '68** has proposed a Lodge Fund to capitalize ongoing maintenance and any big things that come up. We will pursue this with your support. There are also historic documents that need preservation. Biff has gotten some quotes and we will come back to you on this.

Lambda Hall of Fame: **Brother Gregg DeSilvio '74** has proposed a Hall of Fame award for outstanding Lambda DKEs. He is working on a list to consider. Please share your nominees, especially from classes in the last 20 years.

In closing, thank you all for supporting DKE at Kenyon.

ITB,

Sam Adams '81

Then and Now: A Look Back With Jim Pierce '78

We had the pleasure of hearing from **Jim Pierce '78** recently. He tells us about life since DKE, a career as an insurance broker, moving to Texas, becoming a grandfather, and much more!

Tell us briefly about your life since graduation - career, family, hobbies,?

I started work on Wall Street right after I graduated and have never changed careers. I think that makes it year 43 as an insurance broker!

My career has focused largely on helping energy companies protect their balance sheets and income statements through the purchase of specialized, individually negotiated insurance placements. My interest in energy took me to Texas in 1981, and I have called Texas home ever since.

Over the decades, I married and have four children, one of whom is now married. During COVID, my daughter Clemmie had her first child, a grandson named Pierce. He is 18 months old and a joy to be around.

From a hobby standpoint, I played squash for about 35 years, but my knees told me it was time to put the racquet away. My sport of choice now is golf, and I play as much as I can. I am a member of the United States Senior Golf Association, so I am able to play at wonderful venues around the country.

What was it about your time at DKE that inspires you to continue to give back?

My Kenyon memories are lasting ones and revolve around sports and DKE. On the DKE front, lifelong friendships were formed. I remain convinced that people who do not experience fraternity life miss some of what four years of college has to offer.

To this day, 25 of us communicate (at least once a day) via email. That kind of bond does not exist outside Greek life. I was pledgemaster my senior year and thoroughly enjoyed the role. Many of my pledges are friends today. I detest the attacks on Greek life that are so prevalent in the woke world of the academe. These assaults on Greek life take isolated examples of bad behavior and tarnish the entire system; a system steeped in history and philanthropic integrity. I try to do my small part to keep the tradition alive.



How have you stayed in touch and kept involved with DKE over the years - attend events, attend reunions, etc.?

I am in touch daily with many brothers, mostly through the email chain referenced. I haven't attended reunions per se, but will say that three years ago, when Lambda was arbitrarily and capriciously given a four year death sentence, about 20 of us flew to Kenyon to plead the DKE case. We did, ultimately, succeed in reducing the suspension to two years, but getting things back to some semblance of normal has been a slog, and we still have some distance to travel.

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What would you say to other alumni who may be considering donating, but have not done so yet?

Remember your time at Kenyon and how much of it was DKE related. It is too easy to fall back into a comfort zone and say "that was a long time ago...not my issue anymore." Well, it is our issue, and complacency is a scourge! Every Lambda DKE should dig deep and help the cause.

Were there life lessons you learned at DKE, and if so, can you recall instances where those lessons helped you?

It may sound old fashioned, but playing varsity sports and being a member of DKE gave me

four solid years of being part of a team, whether on the field or off. There is no better way to learn how to succeed than to learn the importance of being there for other people.

Which brothers do you keep in touch with, maybe see on a regular basis?

The list is too long, but includes, **Sam Adams, Mark Robinson, Howard Sutherland, Doug Holmes, AJ House, Joe Hagin**...there are many more.

Fraternities can sometimes get a bad rap these days, but why do you believe they're still an important part of the college experience?

There are recent studies showing that males are increasingly struggling to find meaning while attending university. These attacks on Greek life (based on wild innuendo and highlighting the few miscreant acts of a distinct minority of members) are leaving a huge hole in campus lives; one that won't be filled without that sense of belonging that comes with a fraternity.

Can you share a few of your favorite memories of your time on campus?

Well, sports were a big part of my four years, but as regards to DKE, other than forming lifelong friendships, it was definitely hell week. Now, to be sure, what we experienced no longer exists, and I have no doubt that some of the things I did would land me in trouble today! But the fact is that no one got hurt, and we all experienced bonding memories that we still laugh about today. I think it is a shame that some of the traditions have been discarded or banned by those who think they know better.

One final, random, question - do you have any famous relatives in politics?

As far as politics, my father was Barbara Bush's older brother, so George H.W. Bush (41) was my uncle and George W. Bush (43) is my first cousin. I have immense respect for 43 and enjoy my occasional visits with him. The fact that he has become a latter day Churchill and achieved a status as a pretty darn good painter makes him even that much more interesting!

After Three Years and Endless Dedication to Lambda Chapter, Biff Butler '68 Steps Down as Alumni Association President

It was the first week in October 2015 when Lambda DKE Alumni gathered on campus for their Annual Meeting (back when such a thing was allowed). We were halfway through our fundraising campaign for Lodge improvements and **Biff Butler '68** was elected Board Chair for what he thought would be a one-year term...two at the outside.

Of course, during his second year (and preparing to step down at the 2017 Annual Meeting and turning the reigns over to Vice Chair **Sam Baker '13**), the College sanctioned the Active Chapter for violations related to "endangering behavior, hazing, and dishonesty." As we look back today, we now know that the Chapter had been "set up" by parties unknown, as its registered Pledge event was far from the reported "scene of the crime." But the College was undeterred and put the Active Chapter on probation.

Biff quietly emerged himself into the process, meeting with countless College officials to lift the sanctions. To be sure, he had assistance from several Brothers through the ensuing three months...but it was Biff who drove to Gambier from Louisville several times during that dark period to negotiate with College officials.

During that time, he negotiated a DKE Internship Fund designed to assist Actives with summer internship costs through the College Foundation. As relations were still tenuous with some members of the



We will be forever grateful for Biff's perseverance in challenging times.

Administration, it was agreed that Biff should stay on for a third term to preserve continuity of leadership.

Then, in the Spring of 2018, our world was turned upside down when an anonymous letter to the College accused the Actives of forcing members to be "branded." College officials were apoplectic, despite celebrating the Kenyon Swim Team getting brands in the Alumni Bulletin years before. And again, the charge was untrue. Juniors and Seniors could elect to be branded...but no one was ever forced or coerced. Once again, Biff was on

campus, attempting to inject sanity into the process.

As we all know, the sanctions from that charge were finally lifted in the Fall of the COVID-year of 2020. Throughout it all, Biff Butler was our leader in working with the Administration to keep Lambda viable. To be sure, he was assisted mightily by **Jim Irwin '69** and **Doug Lanpher** from DKE HQ and a host of other Brothers. But, as **Sam Adams '81** recently said, Biff was our Virgil, guiding us through the seven layers of the Inferno.

And, as the Active Chapter has scored Pledges in the latest Rush (more on that in next month's e-newsletter...which you can subscribe to on our www.LambdaDKE.com website), Biff has turned the page on a 6-year odyssey in which he led us all through the Valley of Death. At the virtual Annual Meeting in October, Biff stepped down from the President's post and Sam Adams was elected President.

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Biff, you have this Chapter's eternal gratitude for your selfless devotion to keeping the Chapter and Lambda alive. Expressing our thanks will never be enough.

ITB
Bill Geist '76

INTO THE MYSTIC CIRCLE

A Sad Goodbye to Brothers We Lost

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of several brothers into the Mystic Circle. We want to extend our deepest sympathies to their families, friends, and loved ones.

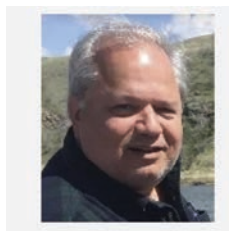


Jeffrey Scott Taylor '78

Jeffrey Scott Taylor (known to all as Hambone) '78 passed away April 27, 2021, after a long battle with

liver disease. He was 64. Mr. Taylor was born in Lynchburg, VA and spent his early years in Greensboro, NC. He was a graduate of the Hun School of Princeton, and Kenyon College, Class of 1978.

He began his post-DKE career working for his parent's business in Greensboro. "Hambone" is remembered as a humble, warm person with a sweet disposition, generous spirit and a big heart.



Clay Capute '81

Richard Claiborne "Clay" Capute, an employee benefits consultant and standout athlete, died April 21 of COVID-19

complications at the University of Maryland St. Joseph's Medical Center.

He earned a bachelor's degree in history from Kenyon College, where he won lacrosse awards and was co-captain of the team.

Clay joined Williams, Thatcher & Rand, an employee benefits firm in downtown Baltimore. He later worked at for 30 years in employee benefits consulting at Turner Benefits, RSM McGladrey and Verisight. He retired in 2017. He remained a sports enthusiast who followed football and attended Super Bowls with friends.

GIVING BACK

Holiday Head Start Celebration Returns

For 26 years, the Actives of Lambda staged the annual Shawn Kelly Memorial Holiday Party for disadvantaged youth in Knox County. The event is in memory of **Shawn Kelly**, a DKE and award-winning swimmer at the college who passed away in 1990.

Despite it being an exceptionally heartwarming and generous event that benefited over 400 Knox County families in need, due to sanctions the past few years, the Actives were prevented from hosting the Holiday Party. Past events included a spaghetti dinner and holiday craft making for the kids (such as creating snowflakes and reindeer-food). And, of course a visit from Santa.

And, the Jolly old St. Nick (who, rumor has it, is a Lambda Alumni) would never disappoint, as every child went home with a present purchased with donations from students, faculty, staff and alumni. Powered by



good old fashioned face-to-face fundraising, the Chapter had just gone digital with their ask, setting up an online GoFundMe page that allowed alumni and other off campus individuals to contribute, helping to push the total raised in 2016 to over \$3,000. What money remained after the Brothers bought the presents was then gifted to the Head Start organization.

We are excited to report that the Actives are bringing the Shawn Kelly holiday event back this December. With the help of Theta Delta Phi, the event is scheduled for December 2nd and 3rd. Unlike past years in which the event was staged in Gund Hall, the Actives planned a COVID-era outdoor event with food to go, a synthetic ice skating rink, Santa and some other activities.

If you'd like to help, this year's GoFundMe page can be found at

gofundme.com/f/shawn-kelly-winter-festival

CHAPTER UPDATE

DKE Returns to Kenyon - Heroic Actives Welcome New Initiates

The Lambda Chapter of DKE is back at Kenyon, thanks in no small part to the patience and resourcefulness of its three actives, who took the Chapter embers this fall and built a flame. They are Brother Beta **Andrew Eric Kotler '22** of Skillman NJ (a Political Science major), Brother Pi **Nathan ("Nate") Louis Saindon '21** of Takoma Park, MD (a Chemistry major), and **Winston Chadwick Reid '22**, of Los Angeles CA, who is a History major. On November 11th these actives initiated the 162nd Lambda class: **Dylan Michael Osimetha '23** of Dallas TX (Political Science), **Maxwell ("Max") Allen Thesing '24** of Columbus OH (Economics), and **Nicholas ("Nick") Marion Lewis '23** of Rockville MD (Economics). All three initiates are gentlemen and outstanding athletes. They will help the chapter attract others with similar character and commitment.

Commenting on the growth at Lambda Brother Kotler said: "The recruitment process this year was different, especially since Nate, Winston, and I took the year off from school

last year. We did not really know many of the sophomores or juniors when rush started. However, we ended up talking with Dylan, Nick, and Max and explaining to them the possibilities about bringing DKE back and how they could help shape the next chapter of DKE, and that appealed to them. The three newest Brothers are all fantastic guys who are on sports teams (Dylan and Nick are on the basketball team, and Max is on the soccer team), and they all have a wide range of interests beyond sports. We are really looking forward to having them in the brotherhood."

Addressing Lambda's alumni, Brother Kotler said: "Alumni engagement has been crucial to our success, and for that we all want to thank you. Without your support, we would not be back, and we certainly would not be in a position to keep growing, as we are now. We all want to meet as many alumni as possible, so feel free



ABOVE: Winston Reid '22, Nick Lewis '23, Dylan Osimetha '23, Max Thesing '24, Andrew Kotler '22, and Nate Saindon '21

to swing by Gambier when possible".

A hearty round of clicks to Brothers Kotler, Saindon, and Reid, and to our newest Brothers Osimetha, Thesing, and Lewis! We hope to have a reunion in the spring and meet you in person then.