



The Taproot

News for Tau Phi Delta Alumni

www.tauphidelta.org

Volume 17

Fall 2020 / Winter 2021



Society of American Foresters

A much-delayed reporting. **MARK WEBB** (Fall '71) was awarded the Society of American Foresters' (SAF) distinguished Presidential Field Forester Award during their 2017 annual meeting.



The SAF Presidential Field Forester Award recognizes foresters who have dedicated

their professional careers to the application of forestry on the ground using sound, scientific methods and adaptive management strategies; and presented to an individual who has displayed uncommon talent, skill and innovative methods to achieve a record of excellence in the application of forest management.

After leaving PSU, Mark worked in various capacities in the forest products industry. He's held various regional, state and national SAF leadership positions.

As a longtime owner of a successful forest consultant business, Mark R Webb & Co., he and his wife, Little Sister **BLARE (CRANE) WEBB**, reside in Union City, Penna.

"Awards 'R Us"



PennState
College of Agricultural Sciences
Department of Ecosystem Science
and Management

In early 2020, another Brother, **JOSEPH P. EICHERT** (Fall '60), was recognized with the PSU Forest Resources Alumni Group's Outstanding Alumnus Award.



Initially, Joe worked for the U.S. Forest Service on the Mt. Hood National Forest in Oregon and later for the Bureau of Land Management in Worland, Wyoming.

However, after graduate school Joe built a successful career in forestry, largely within the Idaho Department of Lands. This included his personal liaison with allied agencies, maintaining and improving the integrity of Idaho's natural resources, attending to the general interests of the public, and providing effective negotiations with business interests toward their resource needs. His many achievements and leadership were recognized and led to his advance within the agency.

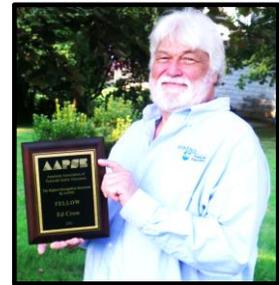
Throughout his career, Joe gained the respect and support of his fellow employees and together they expanded their services to the state of Idaho.

Originally from Orwigsburg, Penna. he and his wife, Lee, are both retired and reside in Orofino, Idaho.



American Association of Pesticide
Safety Educators

During the 2020 virtual annual meeting of the American Association of Pesticide Safety Educators (AAPSE), **EDWARD A. "EMHO" CROW** (Fall '78) was bestowed with their highest recognition: The AAPSE Fellow.



According to Kim Brown, AAPSE President, "I am honored to be able to recognize Ed. Throughout his time as a member, he has shown superior service to the organization and are thankful for his leadership. We greatly appreciate his experience and guidance within the organization. As a mentor, Ed brings a unique perspective having worked in both regulatory and university education."

Until his retirement in 2014, Ed worked for decades in management for the Md. Dept. of Agriculture Pesticide Regulation Section. He is currently a Penn State Extension Pesticide Regulatory Specialist.

The AAPSE mission is to provide a collective voice and forum for professional development, advocacy and collaboration in the development, delivery and advancement of pesticide applicator certification and safety education.

After leaving Annapolis, Md., Ed and Samantha now live in nearby Lewisburg, Penna.

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The **Taproot**

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online at: www.tauphidelta.org by
navigating to the "Alumni" page.

Blast to the Past

By Franklin Judd (Fall '64)
Former Phi, Grand National

The following is his reflection of
the April 1984 Tau Phi Delta
mortgage burning by the Phi of the
Grand National Chapter at the time.

Brothers. We can all stand a little
taller today. We have done it! With
a final payment in February 1984
of \$1.65 to York Federal Savings
& Loan, the mortgage on our
House at 427 East Fairmount
Avenue was paid in full. On
Saturday, April 28th, with some 250
Brothers, Little Sisters, family and
friends present, we burned it.
Fifteen years ago, who could
comprehend that this day would
ever get here; but it has.

The day was more than just an
event; it was a once-in-a-lifetime
experience. The Little Sisters
prepared breakfast at eight,
followed by much discussion and
anticipation of the ten o'clock
House Meeting. This had to be the
largest House Meeting ever held,
with an overflowing Brotherhood
crowded around the chapter room's
doors and windows. New
Corporation alumni board members
were elected in good order.

Br. Chuck Strauss, House
Advisor, gave his semi-annual
State-of-the-House address with his
usual flair. Dr. Chuck stated he
would skip his customary praising
of the Actives and, instead, would
inform us as to how these
"degenerates," were really doing.
He sarcastically noted they were
ranked sixth academically among
forty-nine fraternities, during the
previous fall semester, and,
financially, were managing to even
save some money from their
\$90,000-plus annual budget.
Membership is stable, with 40
Brothers living in the House and
twelve pledges accepting bids for
next fall. The members even
bagged two bears this past hunting
season, though by Chuck's

account, they were hardly
overgrown Teddy bears. Overall,
Dr. Chuck let the facts and the
excellent condition of the House,
speak for themselves.

Incidentally, the previously
installed oak paneling in the dining
and social area and the furniture
made by the most recent pledges
class displayed excellent
workmanship and evidence of
many hours devoted to the House.

After the House meeting, the
cocktail party started early. Our
ensuing appetites were more than
satisfied by Betty Tingle's equally
fine buffet luncheons.

Throughout our meal, numerous
door prizes donated by various
Alums were drawn and given out.
The luncheon and subsequent
ceremonies were conducted under
three large dining tents covering
two-thirds of the back lawn. It was
an impressive arrangement, to say
the least.

Ira Bull, the oldest Brother
present (1920s) and representing
the Pioneer Tau Phi Deltas, recalled
his experiences. The speaker
system enabled all present, and
those for several blocks around, to
hear every word. Br. Bull
recounted a number of truly
interesting and amusing times and
stories of the early years. Ira did
continually refer to all of his fellow
Brothers and Pioneers as "boys." I
wonder if he was trying to tell us
something?

Chuck Strauss spoke again, but to
a much larger audience this time.
Chuck referenced how various
women often affect Tau Phi Delta.
First, his mother, who was present,
had initially questioned whether his
joining our fraternity might not
lead to his ruin. Though we do not
dispute the predicted result, we are
certainly glad he joined. Secondly,
he recalled how his wife, Carol,
had first heard that the 427 East
Fairmount property was for sale
sixteen years ago. And finally,
Chuck went on (and on) to
compliment the fine work of the

our Little Sisters' program and suggested that maybe, someday, they, too, would be invited to the weekly Monday night House Meetings (Sit down Strauss!).

Before our keynote speaker, Br. Maurice Goddard, spoke, the Brothers were introduced by their "decade" classes. Every one of our five decades was well-represented that day. Then, the Active Phi, Br. Bob Ehrhart, also presented a few thoughts. Br. Mark Webb and I were spared the "opportunity" to speak as Phis of the Alumni Corporation Board and National Chapter respectively.

Doc Goddard, if you have never had met him, was an impressive gentleman. I can now understand how he had weathered the politics while serving under five Pennsylvania governors.

His discussion concerned two areas. On the formal side, he dealt with fraternities, their place and survival in today's collegiate atmosphere. He stressed the need for the fraternity system to continually justify and enhance its purpose within the university system, because our critics are many (Nothing has changed today).

More informally, Br. Goddard recalled his experiences with Tau Phi Delta. Many were surprised to learn that Dr. Goddard had been our House Advisor from 1938 until 1942; he was called into service for World War II. In a related matter, he recounted a gift from the House in 1940; a set of ten silver dollars equaling the number of active members. His wife had taken care of dispersing all but one. This one he kept, with the oldest date, as a permanent component of his wallet. It has been with him throughout the war, and as serving as the directors of the Penn State Mont Alto Campus and School of Forestry and as secretary of both the Pennsylvania Forest and Waters and Department of Environmental Resources. Today, he informed us, was the first time he had ever

mentioned this to anyone. Tau Phi Delta has been with him, and all us, a long time.

As Br. Goddard neared the close of his thoughts, The Almighty provided a prelude for what was to come. As the thunder rolled and lightning cracked, we approached the end of a program started so precariously fifteen years ago. At one point, early on, the audience had been restless; but through Dr. Goddard's address, our attention and excitement increased. The celestial fireworks added to the drama of the ceremony. And who knows, whether it were sent by our Creator with some urging from our departed Brothers in His company.



Though the original mortgage is safely locked up, the representative copy was definitely burned. In one way, it was a little anticlimactic, for the sweat and strain were now over. But in another sense, it was one hell of a moment. And a remembrance to be cherished for a lifetime. Bros. Ehrhart, Webb, Bull and myself had the tremendous honor of participating in the ceremonial burning.

Additionally involved were Bros. Bommer, Pierce, and Strauss; representing the group of Brothers

who made the tough decisions, and "sweated the details," of the new fraternity house purchase—Bommer, Dress, DeTuerk, Murphey, Pierce, Strauss, and Wessel, were commemorated with a pewter plaque placed in the Chapter Room. Br. Norm Martin, Treasurer for the Alumni Corporation, was recognized for his 30 years of devoted and continuous service. He paid all those mortgage bills, as well as held off the State College tax collector, for an equal number of years.

With many of us close to tears, we aptly concluded with a rendition of the House Song. I was surprised to recall all the words. It was surely a day to be long remembered.

Besides taking the opportunity to inform each of you of the events of this very memorable day, I wish to make several comments on the overall "State of the Fraternity."

In meeting with the Brothers during that weekend, I was reassured of their continued interest in all aspects of House operations and the integrity of its membership.

The House now represents a composite of "majors" including Forest Science, Wildlife Science, Forest Products, Environmental Resources Management, Recreation and Parks, and another third of its membership from other Penn State colleges.

However, the central theme of Tau Phi Delta, represented by all of its members, is a strong vocational or avocational interest in the out-of-doors. And all members still



reference the House as the “Forestry Fraternity.”

Yes, and how about our Little Sisters! If you really want to know something about this female corps of hard workers, come back for Fall Homecoming. They are a large group (20 members) of very poised, involved young women interested in the social organization of Tau Phi Delta. They have their own pledge program and financial obligations to the House.

Additionally, they conduct their own fund drives to make specific improvement to the House and promote rush and other activities.

Why didn't we start twenty years sooner? Oh well! These women have found something at Tau Phi Delta worth working for, just as the Brothers have. They did a great deal of work on that Saturday in helping make the event happen.

Now, some 35 years later, and as a former Grand National President, I felt compelled at this time to express my overwhelming joy at seeing our Fraternity meet the many serious challenges of today and still manage to continue to grow and prosper. With new blood, I can rightly anticipate that the enthusiasm and vigor of our Brotherhood will prevail.

In closing, I salute us all. While some said it could not be done, we have succeeded where others have failed.

So, here's to Tau Phi Delta at



Penn State. May the Green and White continue to long wave over 427 East Fairmount.

The Honorable Phis' Reports

Grand National Chapter

By Dave O'Barto (Fall '90)

As you may not be aware, as a result of the most recent well attended January Tau Phi Delta Leadership Summit, a cohort of Brothers have been making plans, getting estimates and brainstorming the much needed renovation/revitalization of the backdoor entrance way, dining room, bar room, radiator components, electrical components, ceiling and floor. A fresh, new look and appeal are overdue and more importantly these improvements are essential to recruitment.

If you don't believe it, just look around downtown State College. All brand-new apartment complex skyscrapers built and being built; along with the campus dorm rooms being upgraded/rejuvenated, too.

While Greek life at Penn State has consistently been mandated to conform to new regulations from the University and the Borough, we have to be relevant and competitive with regard to housing conditions.

I know my view is biased, but I will say that Tau Phi Delta is more a way of life than that of a typical Greek fraternity—Having a common outdoor theme/interest where an individual knows, immediately, he's found a home at Tree House.

Unfortunately, as with everything, COVID-19 has slowed the progress of this major remodeling endeavor. However, a lot of thought is being placed into this project. While nothing is codified at the moment, a multitude of ideas are being evaluated, such as faux wood beams, live edge wooden slab window seals, stained concrete, refinishing the oak paneling.

All these items have to be code-specific, commercially durable and aesthetically appealing to our traditional “style.”

In addition, the 100th Anniversary of Tau Phi Delta will occur in 2022. So, clear your schedule and start planning for a return visit to take part in the fun festivities... Stay tuned for more details!

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Corporation Board of Directors

By Kody Unangst (Fall '12)

Greetings Tau Phis! What a time to be alive! I hope this letter finds you well and that you're looking forward to spending more time in the woods this fall and winter!

Life for all of us during the pandemic sure has been interesting and the good ol' Green and White is no different. While everyone's plans have been through the wringer, there are still some updates coming from TΦΔ.

First, the fall 2020 TΦΔ Corporation Board of Directors (BOD) meeting, traditionally held on Homecoming weekend, had to be canceled. This is due largely to regulations limiting visitation to the fraternity house. Looking forward to seeing everyone in the spring!

So far, our Brotherhood has weathered the storm fairly well. The Actives have been staying both vigilant and healthy. Together, the Actives and BOD did our best to prepare for the fall semester's start by supplying personal protection equipment, such as supplemental masks, thermometers, and hand sanitizer. Social activities were also limited and it seems we are faring well, overall.

Another big update: we are continuing to plan with other



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tau_phi_delta_psu

concerned Alumni for the downstairs renovation project.

With the uncertainty going into the 2020-2021 semesters, we decided to postpone the project. However, we are excited to get things going again in late spring/early summer 2021. As the Grand National Phi noted on page 4, this project will include the downstairs foyer, dining room, bar area and rear hallway. With the help of several Alumni, Actives, and outside contractors, we are planning for asbestos abatement, new flooring and ceiling material, improved lighting, electrical and heating upgrades, as well as refurbishing the oak paneling and new furniture.

Prior to the pandemic, the Actives have had several great semesters recruiting, and we hope this project will lead to even more interest in our House.

Starting in November, members of the BOD, Grand National Chapter and House Advisors will be performing bi-weekly visits to the fraternity house. It is our goal to help build relationships between the Active Brotherhood and the Alumni leadership. In addition to talking with the Actives, the visiting Alumni will also be performing an inspection of the house. The intent of the inspections is to help improve and maintain the daily cleanliness and overall functionality of the fraternity.

These times have been, well, both interesting and challenging, but I am beyond optimistic. I think the future is bright for Tau Phi Delta and am excited to be a part of it.

There have been, and will continue to be, some trials and setbacks, but we will continue to improve and overcome.

I would love to talk with you more about what is going on or getting involved with Tau Phi Delta. So, reach out anytime.

(484) 894-3012 /
kodyunangst93@gmail.com



House Phi's Message

By Aaron Sweger
(Spring '18)



Life at PSU During Covid-19 Era

The fall semester at PSU looked a little bit different this year. With COVID-19 protocols and changes, many of our Brothers are attending class virtually. Although many of us could have stayed home and completed our coursework online,

Tau Phi Delta continues to thrive. We have a full house this year (23 Brothers living in-house), plus four Brothers living nearby out of the house! Given the nature of these times, we have all had ample time to spend in the woods whether it be archery hunting, salmon fishing, or just taking a hike. However, we are all looking forward to group deer drives and, of course, our annual bear drives.

In addition to our time spent in the woods, we have also been pursuing potential pledges. As far as the fall semester goes, it has been very difficult to attract rushes to the House. This was due to the fact that we are not allowed to have any outside guests to the fraternity house per Borough/University COVID-19 guidelines. So, all recruitment efforts were held virtually this semester.

Unfortunately, this yielded us with zero pledges for this semester.

However, we have had a significant number of freshmen reach out to us on social media or contact us via the website to express their interest in joining next semester which will keep us right on track in terms of membership numbers.

The most recent pledge class, Spring '20, was recently initiated due to COVID setbacks last semester which resulted in our semester being cut short. We welcomed 11 new TΦΔ Brothers! They included: Alex Shafley, Andrew Roland, Brayden Clair, Derrick Wenrick, Devin Gilmore, Elijah Ayers, Ethan Kilian, James McCreery, Keith Cullen, Nick Secosky, and Sean McCann.

We are continuing to be recognized by the University as a "Chapter In Good Standing," thanks to the Actives and House Executive Board made up of (along with me as Phi) Alpha Phi - Steve Flis, Tau - Eric Kemper and Sigma - Tristen Bressler. We are striving to do well in the classroom and participate in numerous philanthropic and community service events even in these trying times.

Thank you so much to all the Alumni for your continued support in these times of uncertainty. We all wish that the corona virus pandemic was not our main focus. However we will continue to find ways to improvise, adapt and overcome to keep the Tau Phi Delta traditions alive.



Also, should you know of any young men—either currently or soon-to-be enrolled at Penn State—who you think would like to experience what TΦΔ has to offer, please let us know.

If you have any questions or advice to offer, please feel free to give me a call or email me.

Stay safe and good luck with all your hunting endeavors.

(717) 802-6123 / ams8707@psu.edu

Note: Effective January 18, 2021, the new Active Phi will be Matthew Bellia (Spring '19).

(724) 581-3909 / mxh5974@psu.edu

Supporting The Taproot

The Taproot continues to provide news about the Actives and Alumni of Tau Phi Delta through the support of our alumni. The "Alumni Update" section of this issue includes many entries provided to us through emails or with the return of the insert from last year's issue.

Each year our loyal readers, many are individuals or groups of Brothers and Little Sisters, have provided financial contributions so the printing and mailing of *The Taproot* is not a financial burden on the Actives or the Alpha Chapter.

The following Brothers, a Little Sisters, and a spouse of a deceased Brother have donated \$20 to \$100 for a total of \$620 toward the cost of printing and mailing last year's issue of *The Taproot*. This fell quite a bit short (about 50 %) of our print and distribution costs.

Stan Arner	Dick Ausherman
Carie Atterberg	Wade Bartley
Joe Bartnicki	Tom Breslin
Carl Galanti	Bill Herb
John Herr	Gregg Horvat
Earl Hower	
Rose (Manglion) Alligood	
Bill Mitchell	Wade Nutter
Patricia Wilson-Schmid	

We thank you for your continued support of *The Taproot*; however, your contributions have come up short of our goal to support the printing and mailing of this issue. Please support *The Taproot*!

Please take a few minutes to complete the yellow alumni update sheet inserted in this issue (Or download one found online at www.tauphidelta.org) and return it.

Also, sending a check for any amount to support *The Taproot* would also help and would be much appreciated!

You also can send an update by emailing Bill Herb, Editor, at: m.b.tailfeathers@gmail.com.



Foundation's Good News

By Kory Enck
(Fall '86)

The day that I wrote my report from the low-rolling hills of Lancaster County in what appears to be a dismal, drippy and foggy October day, I don't like it and apparently neither do the deer! Wondering if I can we blame COVID-19 on this, too?

It is with great pleasure that I announce the Tau Phi Delta Foundation's recipients of this year's scholarships – Each will be receiving \$1,000. Congratulations goes out to Bros. Aaron Sweger, Evan Buck and James "Keefer" Marshall. We wish them the best in their academic pursuits.



In what might be the biggest and best Jim Evans Memorial Golf Tournament ever, with 84 golfers in attendance, we raised nearly \$3,000 in mid-July.

We would like to thank Bros. Jim Cowan, Gavin Collins and Jeff McElrath for a job well done! You guys went above and beyond making this event the success that it was. COVID-19 be damned!

The next Golf Tournament is slated for July 10, 2021. Please plan to attend with your golf clubs!

Currently, we are also looking forward to holding another reunion in the future. Who will it be? Brothers from the 60s? Or, from the 90s? Perhaps, those Millennials? Let us know. We would be happy to help you plan something.

Finally, we are always looking for donations to the endowment funds, as well as for scholarships. If you would like to help, please reach out to me.

Speaking of, we still have available spaces for engraved patio pavers. If interested, please email Ben Hoffman at:

ben.hoffman@outdoorsg.com

We thank all who have given and support the efforts of our foundation!

(717) 405-7566 / kenck@nrahq.org

Advisors' Corner

By Martin McGann (Fall '72)
Co-Advisor

In case you were wondering, here's how things are going at the House and how the Brothers are doing in this 'wonderful' time of COVID-19.

To be perfectly honest I have been staying away from our fraternity house simply because the younger generation feels, as many previous younger generations have felt in the past, that they are invincible and even if they catch something, it will not be quite as bad as if some old guy catches it. I will be able to relate some things of a mundane nature to you, mostly they relate to the condition of the House.

Late this summer, I had to visit the fraternity to follow up on a large water leak we had in the dining room. This was related to a makeshift pool that was set up therein which developed a large leak and essentially flooded the lower floor and basement. During this inspection trip, I noticed there were several other things that should be corrected.

As such, we instituted "Operation Clean Sweep," which was an attempt to rid the fraternity house of a lot of garbage that had been collected over the years and not disposed of. This involved hiring a 60-foot roll-off dumpster and parking it out along the chapter

room to accept a lot of the material that was alongside of the fraternity house in and around the existing archery range. At the end of a week, we had over filled the dumpster when the provider came by to pick it up. Needless to say, that portion of the yard looked a lot better as it had given us a chance to remove some of the eyesores that populated the exterior of the House.

Next, a licensed electrician installed two LED lights on the basement level, one in the boiler room and one in the small workroom. I also encouraged the Brothers not to store a bunch of miscellaneous crap in either one of these rooms and essentially to keep an open walkway from the bottom of the steps into the workroom and then into the boiler room, something which had not been done in previous years.

My impression that the periodic inspection program that our Alumni Corporation Phi, Kody Unangst, has implemented will be a good thing in that it will get Alumni into the House on a regular basis to assess what needs to be tended to.

Thinking of things that need to be tended to, we had held several meetings over the summer to discuss improvements to the first floor. There were many good suggestions that were proposed. However, with the uncertain situation with COVID-19, it was decided not to proceed with those improvements just yet.

Given this situation with all those three areas, some improvement needs to be done in the very near future if we want to maintain the House and make it look presentable to those who are considering pledging.

Lastly, it is truly unfortunate that things are the way they are on campus with many of the classes being held remotely. Normally during change of classes, it was hard to drive through some of the

intersections because of the number of students moving across campus.

Yes, there are students on campus. And yes, they are wearing masks but to some degree. However, there doesn't seem to be a lot of them.

During the few home football games, it was hard to tell it was a football weekend because there wasn't a lot of traffic; there weren't a lot of people.

The State College Borough has been keeping a lid on things, especially after the first game when there were some very large parties at some of the apartment complexes. There probably are parties going on, but they're much more low key, as there are significant fines for people who ignore the current regulations concerning limiting the size of get-togethers, social distancing and wearing masks.

Bottomline: There doesn't seem to be a whole lot of local enthusiasm about anything in Happy Valley.

As of now, it appears that the classes this spring will be similar to those this fall and that some of them will be remote, some of them will be in-person and some of them

will be a combination.

I do feel bad for the seniors, as this is a heck of a way to end your time at college by viewing your classes online, not going to football games, and not having any large social gatherings with their friends.

Stay safe!

Fraternity Co-Advisors

Martin McGann:

(814) 863-7595 / mrm19@psu.edu

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We Are ... Family!

In the past, we have had many "legacy" Brothers and Little Sisters with combinations of fathers and sons/daughters, grandfathers and grandsons, brothers, cousins – just to name a few.

It was discovered that recent Br. **ELIJAH AYERS** (Spring '20) is the nephew of Little Sister alumna **ANNETTA (EGLY) AYERS** (Fall '95). Young Elijah is following his aunt's footsteps and is majoring in Forest Ecosystem Management (once called Forest Science).

Annetta is currently the manager of the Penna. DCNR Bureau of Forestry's Penn Nursery.

Alumni Updates

RICHARD "DICK" AUSERMAN (Fall '65) reminisced that after Tau Phi Delta, Uncle Sam required his help to screw up Vietnam.

After 27 months in Army intelligence in 'Nam, he returned to Grove Brothers Lumber Co. in Chambersburg as a foreman in a mulch production plant. He then designed and laid out their pallet manufacturing facility.

Ten years later, Dick needed a break, so he decided to cut a little firewood to pay the bills. "Until I could find something better. To this day, I am still driving a chain saw."

Being self-employed at home has

been a great life, and he is still using his skills to help friends and neighbors remove dead and dying trees. "Chain saw therapy is good mentally and physically. It also keeps the house warm!"

WADE "BIG WADE" BARTLEY (Spring '88) and wife, Little Sister **CARIE (ATTERBURG) BARTLEY** (Spring '87) have three daughters: Katelyn, age 20, is a junior at Grove City College, Paige, age 18, is a freshman at Geneva College in Beaver Falls, and Ruth, age 12, is a home-schooled 7th grader.

Wade is an operations manager at a metals plate finishing facility.

JOE “BART” BARTNICKI (Fall '60) had the opportunity to travel to Argentina in December 2019 to fly fish Jurassic Lake and on the Barancossa River.

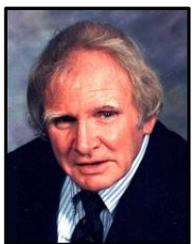


Bart said, “This fishery may be the premier rainbow trout fishery of them all!”

Seasoned anglers have made the statement, “I caught a ton of fish there!” And at Jurassic Lake, that is a distinct possibility. An average day for Bart consisted of catching as many as 40 fish, mostly in the 8 to 10 pound range. His largest was 17 pounds (see photo above).

The downside of the trip was the constant presence of heavy winds (As 30 mph winds are considered calm). Wind gusts can get up to 70 mph. “These winds hindered getting to the small airstrip at the lake. We were lucky when they arrived by aircraft. However, at departure, the winds were so heavy we had to take an eight-hour drive to the nearest airport. Meanwhile about four hours into the trip, we stopped at a restaurant-bar in a very remote area.

It just so happened to be the very building where outlaws Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid once hid from the local law during their South American escapades. Overall, it was a great trip!”



ROBERT L. BENNETT, SR. (PSU '56) died on January 26, 2018. After graduating from PSU with a forestry degree, he worked at Pine

Grove Furnace State Park near Mont Alto and later founded Penn Forestry Co., a forest consulting business located in Biglerville, Pa. in 1960.

Sad news for the TΦΔ Brotherhood, as **ROBERT “BOB” BOMMER, JR.**



(Spring '54) had died on December 4, 2019. After earning his B.S. in Forestry (1956), he served as a U. S. Navy officer and aviator for 10

years and later his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Baltimore School of Law (1965). His forestry work was initially in state government and then private industry.

Bob helped TΦΔ purchase our current fraternity house and served as the Grand National Chapter Phi. He was named Alumni Centennial Fellow of Penn State Mont Alto (2004) and received the PSU School of Forest Resources Outstanding Alumni Award (2005).

Bob founded his own consulting business in 1971, known as R.H. Bommer, Jr. Inc., Forest Consultants.

After his retirement (2003), his company, now Bommer-Geesaman & Company, Forestry Consultants, was operated by the new owners **CARL GEESAMAN** (Spring '69) and **LARRY GEESAMAN** (Fall '77).

His daughter, **MARY KAY (BOMMER) CAMPBELL** (Fall '77), is a Tau Phi Delta Little Sister alumna.



TOM BRESLIN (Fall '53) met up with another Mont Alto Penn Stater, John Westlake, at the

meeting of a national organization that acknowledges the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's known as the CCC Legacy, based in Edinburg, Va. (www.ccclegacy.org).

The meeting was at Letchworth State Park near Castile N.Y. (www.letchworthparkhistory.com). Tom finished his career at this state park and long recognized the work done there by the CCC.

“I was sorry to hear of the passing of **KEN TYSON**. He and I were roommates when I was a pledge. It was good to hear **CHUCK STRAUSS** and **CARL WOLFE** are still in touch with the House. They were both pledges when I was an Active.”



As reported in the recent issue of *PSU Forest Resources Alumni Group News*, **LAWRENCE “LARRY” CUPKA** (PSU '54) West Leechburg, Penna. died on October 23, 2019



As was reported in the 2019 issue of *The Taproot*, a few Tau Phis funded a Veteran's Marker for Honorable Br. **JEAN CHOIVET** (Fall '41). This memorial—dedicated during a Veteran's Day ceremony—is located at the Mont Alto Campus Veteran's Flagpole Memorial found in front of Conklin Hall. First Lt. Choivet was killed in action in Germany during a February 1945 assault on retreating Nazi forces. He died in attempting to rescue others from a burning tank. He posthumously received a Silver Star for his prior heroic actions in during the Battle of the Bulge.

JAMES R. “JIM” CLARK (Fall '69) reports that they were in Texas and the Western Caribbean for two weeks in late November and early December of 2019. He reported that through the many years of living in York, he only ran into the late **BOB BOMMER** maybe three or four times.

As reported in September/October 2020 *Penn Stater*, **R. LESLIE “LES” COWAN, JR.** (PSU '56) of Ridgway, Penna. died on April 1, 2020.

After graduation, he fulfilled his ROTC commitment rising to the rank of captain in the U.S. Army until the end of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

Les started his forestry career with the U.S. Forest Service and he eventually settled in Elk County.

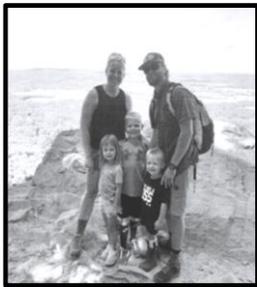
According to his younger brother and longtime hunting partner, **JAMES “JC” COWAN** (Fall '76), “Les retired after 40 years working for Penntech Paper in Johnsonburg.”

Sadly, we recently discovered that **ROBIN S. DUNN** (PSU '85), last known



address in Rockville, Md., died in June 2018. Robin was buried at his hometown back in Sheffield, Penna.

GREG "CHAMP" FLEMING (Fall '96) recently started a new job as Wildlife Biologist Migratory Game Bird Regulations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services in the Washington, DC area.



JOSH GALLAHER (Spring '05) is the owner of a successful landscaping business in central Penna.

His family is shown here during a recent Appalachian Trail day hike. He and his wife, Mallary (PSU '08), live in New Cumberland with their sons, Easton (age 6) and Knox (age 3) and daughter Hadley (age 5).

josh@gallaherlandscaping.com



After retirement, **DAVE "GOOSE" GRAY** (Fall '73) moved to S. Dak..

He since has opted to now "winter" in Alaska.

Soon after this move, Dave successfully hunted for Alaskan interior grizzly bears.

goose1395@aol.com

Greetings from the Tuscarora State Forest! **ADAM "HIGGINS" HEGGENSTALLER** (Fall '95) recently joined the weekly "PT" sessions of three other Tau Phis

They often take the rigorous climb on the Flat Rock Trail to the 1,873-foot summit in preparation for their upcoming western big game hunts during this fall.



Shown above (L to R) "**HIGGINS**", **KEN WOLF** (Winter '76), **GENE ODATO** (Fall '73) and **DAVE GUSTAFSON** (Fall '96).

WILLIAM J. "BILL" HERB (Fall '65) and Marian are surviving the pandemic on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Due to COVID-19, they did cancel their planned trip to Greece and Turkey. So, they had to settle for West Virginia's Paw Paw Tunnel (it is over 3,000 feet long, has no lights, but does have snakes!) and Lake Erie in northwest Penna. Since the pandemic, alcohol consumption has increased markedly.

m.b.tailfeathers@gmail.com

After years of living outside of State College, **DR. JOHN "BEN" HERR** (Fall '79) and his wife, Lisa, sold their Purdue Mountain home and moved south to a small farm (Giles Co., Va.) located near another college town of Blacksburg.

johndavidherr@gmail.com

"Salmon matters!" was the motto during these successful young Tau Phis' 2018 fishing expedition on the Oswego River in upstate N.Y.



These happy TΦΔ anglers who loved showing off their catch are (L to R) Bros. **AARON "BATMAN" HOLLENBACH** (Spring '14), **JAMES OSTERGAARD** (Spring '15), **WILL JOHNS** (Fall '16) and **ANTHONY "KASH" KASHIWSKY** (Fall '12).

GREGG "WIDGET" HORVAT (Spring '98) and his wife, Laura, live in the Charlotte, N. Car. area. This fall, Gregg hopes to go back to his role as co-captain of the TΦΔ Team A+ Bear Drives in Forest County, Penna.
Gregg.horvat@gmail.com

EARL HOWER (Fall '77) was recently elected chair of Town of Leesburg Tree Commission. He has been busy leading the efforts to research and write a "Ten Year Tree Canopy Health/Loss Report" for this fast-growing northern Virginia town.

Editor's Note: Could this explain why this issue of *The Taproot* is arriving so late?

After nearly four decades, **ANDY KYLE** (Fall '78) recently announced his retirement from the Penna. Dept. of Environmental Protection. Located in the office north of Harrisburg, he was an Entomologist directing the vector management program. Andy and his wife, Linda, live in York and have two PSU graduate daughters.

aklk1@comcast.net

PATRICK M. LANTZ (Fall '53) died on May 30, 2019. A U.S. Army veteran, he retired from the Penna. Bureau of Forestry and moved to Henderson, Nev.



Little Sister **ROSALIE "ROSE" MAGLIONE** (Fall '71) is now Rosalie Alligood. She retired after 42 years working in federal, state, and local tax law, and currently lives in Northern Virginia.

Palli14145@aol.com



This sad notification regarding **JOHN MAZA** (Spring '78) came in from the Penna. Bureau of Forestry. "We regret to inform you that John Maza passed unexpectedly [on December 13, 2020] at his Dickson City home.

If you knew John, you certainly remember his friendly smile, warm spirit, and long commitment to stewarding our forests for current and future generations.”

John recently retired from the Pinchot State Forest District as an assistant district forester. His son, **JULIAN MAZA** (Fall '12), is a forester for the Delaware State Forest District.

Rumor has it that **CLARK MCCOLLY** (Fall '04) recently bought his dad's forest consultant business: Forest Land Services, Inc. Now, **ROBERT MCCOLLY** (Spring '69) works for his son.

WILLIAM MITCHELL (Fall '60) says that they moved from Phoenix, Ariz., to Ocean View, Del., two miles from the Atlantic Ocean, in March 2016. They enjoyed seeing old friends in Va., Md., and Penna. and their daughter in Fairfax, Va. Sadly, his wife, Karen, was diagnosed with pancreatic/liver cancer in 2017. She died peacefully on May 15, 2018.

In September 2019, he moved to a CCRC in Springfield, Va.. Leg issues are now cramping his urges for hiking and fishing. “I am thankful to still mobile and able to drive.”

(623) 262-3595

Williammitchell2@cox.net



Little Sister **TERESA “TERRI” MONN** (Spring '89) joined the Penn State Mont Alto Campus development staff

in 2016. Terri proudly displays her TΦΔ pledge paddle in her office and invites “all Tau Phis to come visit Mont Alto!” *tjm152@psu.edu*



GORDON “GORDIE” MORTENSON (PSU '57) passed away in Buffalo, N.Y. on September 21, 2020. He worked for the National Fuel Gas

Company for 36 years before retiring in 1984 as superintendent of operations for western N. Y. and northwestern Penna. He and his wife

of 63 years, Jean, spent their retirement years as snowbirds wintering in The Villages, Fla.. Born in Kane, he was buried near his childhood home in Sheffield.



DR. DAVID W. PATTERSON (Fall '63) of Monticello, Ark. passed away on April 2, 2020. He worked in

academia and research at the University of Arkansas (1996-2010).

A professor emeritus of forestry, he earned his M.S. (Colo. State, 1973), along with a Ph.D. (Texas A&M, 1983) and authored/co-authored over 60 research papers on wood science/forestry.

Dave was preceded in death by his younger brother, the late **FRANK L. “BIG LEE” PATTERSON** (Fall '72).

DAVE “BIG DAVE” RAGANTESI (Spring '87), senior regional director for the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, shared this impressive photo of a proud group of Tau Phis who attended and volunteered at the RMEF Harrisburg Chapter's February 2020 fundraiser.



(L to R) Bros. **BEN HOFFMAN, CHAD HARTZELL, KORY ENCK, SHAWN CABLE, KEN WOLFE, MARTY ZUKOVICH, GENE ODATO** and **DAVE RAGANTESI**.

In late May, **DAVE RUPERT** (Fall '77) reported that, “Our wedding plans have gone to the dogs! Due to the corona-virus pandemic, our local parish was unable to host the 150 invited guests in our parish hall. Our church was limited to immediate family members only, so a small reception was held in our backyard.”

He and his new bride, Lina Milligan, were after all married in a small ceremony in Kittanning, Pa. on June 6.

Congrats to Mr. and Mrs. Rupert!



Originally from Phoenixville, Penna, **JAMES A. SAKAL, JR.** (Fall '79) unexpectedly passed away on June 15, 2020 at his home in Portland, Conn.

LANCE SCHUL (Fall '91) is living the dream in the Rocky Mountains. After years of applying, he recently had success in September. Lance was lucky enough to draw a rare mountain goat tag.



Lance shot this nanny at 207 yards with his .7mm-08 near Grays Peak on the Front Range in Summit County, Colo.

He's a senior police officer for the Westminster, Colo. Special Events Division as a Motorcycle Officer. *lanceschul@gmail.com*

Also reported in a previous issue of the *Penn Stater*, **JAMES R. “JIM” SPAID** (PSU '58) died on September 7, 2019. At the end, he had suffered from Alzheimer's and had been in a longterm care facility in N.Y., when his wife alerted **ED BROWNING** of his death.



(L to R) **ED BROWNING, CHUCK STRAUSS** and **JIM SPAID** at their 50th Class Reunion Mont Alto.



DR. CHARLES “DR. CHUCK” STRAUSS (Fall '56) didn't do much fly fishing this spring due to the COVID-19 setting on his favorite trout stream. But he got an early start on his flower gardens, New Guinea impatiens and wax begonias. Then, the drought arrived and Chuck was watering every day.

However, by late September, Chuck had his crossbow tuned and his camouflaged pop-up blind located at a real promising setting.

Now the question is, can this ol' geezer get-up by 4 AM and slip into his blind well before sunrise?



As one of the few still surviving Tau Phi Delta World War II veterans, **JEAN HARRIS “SONNY”**

THORSELL (Fall '42) of Charles Town, W. Va. passed from this life at age 93 peacefully at home on September 27, 2018. Born in State College, Jean was a U.S. Navy veteran (1943-45). He was a crane and heavy equipment operator most of his life following his military career until retirement.

FREDERICK A. UMHOLTZ (Fall '51) of Carlisle, Penna. died June 28, 2020. Fred had been employed as a forester by Union Camp Paper Corporation, Savannah, Ga. and later with several forest products firms in N. Y. and Penna. – last working for years at Meiser Lumber Company until his retirement.

KODY UNANGST (Fall '12) and his wife, Kate, announced the arrival of the newborn daughter, Joanna, born on October 22, 2020. She is the first grandchild for “Grandpa” **ROGER UNANGST** (Fall '84)!

ROBERT J. “BOB” WALLEY (Spring '78) of Mt. Juliet, Tenn., passed away at his home on April 15, 2019, surrounded by family after a long struggle with cancer.

Originally, from in Reading, Penna., Bob was a House Phi and after leaving PSU, had been employed by the Bridgestone Corp. for 25 years.



ROBERT W. WILKINS (Fall '50) of Dexter, Mich. passed away on July 7, 2018.

Originally a Pittsburgh boy, his education was interrupted thanks to his hometown draft board. He served in the U.S. Army as an instructor with the 10th Mountain Division during the Korean War. He later returned to Penn State to complete his degree in 1956. After Bob's retirement at Matrix Systems Inc. in Dayton, Ohio, he remained an active community leader serving on his local school board and city zoning commission.

TOM WOLF (Fall '67) wrote in November 2019 that he just got back from a cold and snowy Wyo. wilderness. He was on a deer hunting/camping trip with a few Bros. from his era (See below group photo).

Some of them hunted and some of them just chilled out (literally) in camp. “A good time was had, but no fresh back straps were consumed.”

Wolfte109@verizon.net



(L to R) **RICK CLAGGETT, HOWIE FEDDEN, STEVE GEHRINGER, KLAUS WEICKMANN, TOM WOLF** and **MIKE MCNAMARA**

One of the original editors of *The Taproot*, **TOM YORKE** (Fall '61), sent this update to all Tau Phis.

“I hope this finds you all safe and healthy! Jeannie and I have been very cautious only seeing our family and friends in outdoor settings or virtually via Zoom in 2020. We did not see our kids and grandkids for a year, but we recently made a quick trip north to visit them before heading south for the winter.”

Starting out from their northern Virginia home, they made a recent multiple roadtrip stops; first in Philly to see daughter Barb and her family with a socially distanced backyard dinner. Then onto Burlington, Mass. to visit with daughter Christa and her kids at the hotel where she works. “Here, we were provided with blankets, strong beverages and pizza around the fire pit in the hotel courtyard.” On their return south, they stopped in Scranton to have a picnic with grandson Chris – a freshman at the University of Scranton. “All 1,200 miles were accomplished over a short weekend!”

“We are doing well for 77- and 78-year olds. Jeannie has a new pacemaker and is dealing with the side effects of some medications. I am semi-bionic with two artificial hips and two new eye lenses. I play golf a couple of times per week. I still do some contract work with the international community developing methods and equipment for measuring rivers and groundwater. I am president of our HOA in Naples, Fla. Both jobs will end soon in 2021.

“Looking forward to seeing everyone at the 100th anniversary in 2022.”

waterman2000@comcast.net

This continuing feature of The Taproot is where Brothers of years gone by can share what life was really like at the old fraternity house at 238 East Fairmount Avenue.

Old House Heritage

“Vehicles Can Have Character—Part II” By Bill Herb (Fall '65)

While this series is about “tales from the old house,” some of these events actually occurred very soon after the move to 427 East Fairmount.

Vehicles can have character, and characters can have vehicles. This is a reminiscence of one such vehicle and one such character.

Please note that this article contains simulations of adult language, and may be unsuitable for impressionable children, or for that matter, impressionable adults.



The vehicle in question was probably a World War II military surplus jeep, possibly a CJ2. It was a shocking shade of blue with a black canvas top, a very low-ratio rear end and a replacement engine under the hood.

This article is as continued from the Fall 2019 issue of *The Taproot* ...

At some point, Dirty Ed replaced his regular tires with a set of wide tractor-tread tires that promised even more ability to go dumb places and do dumb things.

We had some protracted snow in the State College area, and that seemed to be a good time to try out this new capability. We headed out for a spin and were having a fine time until another idiosyncrasy raised its ugly head.

As I mentioned previously, the original Jeep motor had been replaced with a more robust Buick V-8. However, the radiator was still the puny one used by the original Jeep 4-cylinder.

The new motor had a tendency to overheat if used too vigorously for too long. After driving for a while, we suspected that we were spinning the tires a lot in the snow and were not getting enough forward speed to cool the motor.

We divined that the tires were oriented such that the tread encouraged spinning due to limited traction. In the middle of a field somewhere, we switched the four wheels around (that trusty jack again) so that the uni-directional tread was oriented in the opposite (and hopefully, proper) direction, and took off. The situation must have improved, because we confidently started up a one-jeep-width trail running upward along the side



of and onto a long timbered ridge.

In spite of our mechanical adjustments, I believe the heating problem recurred, and we stopped to

let the engine cool. When we got out of the Jeep to stretch our legs, take a leak, or something like that, we discovered, to our horror, that we were not driving on the road itself, but, thanks to the flotation provided by the fat tires, on top of about three feet of drifted and solidified snow above the road. We had gone several miles, and had the horrified vision of breaking through the crust and having to shovel several miles of three-foot deep snow to get out of the predicament.

We were reluctant to go further, the one-lane trail was too narrow to turn around in, and we did not relish a couple of miles in reverse with an overheating powerplant.

Once again, the bumper jack came to our rescue. We found a log or something that would support the jack on the snow, and jacked up the front end a bit, gave a push, and rotated the Jeep by several degrees. After doing this innumerable times, we were facing back down the hill, and proceeded back to civilization. Highway speeds seemed to provide sufficient cooling.

I believe I can report on the final adventure, because the statute of limitations has expired. Forty-five plus years is probably sufficient. But just in case, remember, this is only fiction!

The time and date of this is fairly easy to determine. It was in June 1972, and Tropical Storm Agnes had been pounding the entire northeast—including State College—for several days. Most forms of indoor entertainment had been

exhausted; even beer drinking and card playing were getting old. We had a bad case of cabin fever, and had to get out, even though it was raining like a two-bladdered cow peeing on a flat rock. What could we do? It was dark and it was raining. The answer was to go duck hunting.

It was raining hard enough that even self-respecting ducks were indoors. However, we knew where there were some ducks with no self-respect. What other kind of ducks would hang out at the State College Borough Water Authority's sewage treatment plant?

They were obviously dumped off, most likely once local family's unwanted Easter novelty pets.



They were fat, lazy and they were perfect prey. Even better, they were white and stood out prominently in the dark.

The first problem was bypassing the chain that blocked access to the treatment plant property. Through some innocent previous visit to the scene—probably as part of an educational trip—it had been noticed that the chain was designed to keep out only honest people, because there was adequate room to drive around.

However, after about 15 inches of rain had fallen, what type of vehicle could be trusted to handle this type of mission? Of course, the blue Jeep was just the vehicle; it could go anywhere.

And the rain, and the chain, would discourage unwanted attention from the general public, the plant staff and various and sundry law enforcement officers, who were probably elsewhere, conducting critical swift-water rescues.

What is the weapon of choice for such a midnight adventure? Since it was going to be in the borough limits, on borough property, shooting from a vehicle, using an artificial light, we might as well use a .22 rifle. It was quiet enough to be muffled by the noise of the storm and would create a hat trick (at least) of legal transgressions.

When I finally disposed of that rifle 40 years later, following a misguided attempt to “improve” the trigger pull, it retained some rust from that adventure.

Dirty Ed successfully negotiated the access around the chain, and we found ourselves in complete control of the treatment plant property. The oversized tires on the Jeep allowed us to drive across waterlogged fields and lawns without leaving a trace (or at least it seemed that way to us). The mobility provided by the Jeep along with the headlights and auxiliary light provided by a six-cell flashlight, allowed us to find and dispatch a couple of those sorry-looking white Muscovies and one poor cottontail that had probably been flooded out of its burrow and was only too happy to be put out of its soggy misery.

The next day, we treated the stragglers who were in summer school to a duck and rabbit dinner. It looked great, but the ducks were tough as old boots, and tasted vaguely (or so it seemed) of both sewage and poor judgment.



Yes, That Was What Life Was Like At 238 East Fairmount

Editor's Note: Here is another duck-hunting story that did not involve a Brother's jeep. However, it did occur at the State College Borough Water Authority's sewage treatment plant—also known locally as the, “Boro Sh*t Plant.” Just ask anyone who lived downwind at the University Terrace Apartments!

In the late 1970s, some Brothers were duck hunting nearby farmland streams but without any success. The hunting was slow, so they stopped mid-day at the infamous local duck pond for some grins. They spotted a half bag of popcorn and a loaf of stale bread in a trashcan under a willow tree. Then with little coaxing, they successfully baited some wild mallards up from the water, towards their truck and inside onto the floorboard. They closed the truck door and quickly covered their wild ducks with a blanket. Careful not to harm the ducks, they gently stuffed them live into a camouflage hunting coat's zippered game bag.

When they got back to the 427 East Fairmount fraternity house, they called the lunch crowd to the rear patio window to proudly and gleefully show off as their bag limit “rose from the dead” and flew off.

We are not sure, but there might have been a possible federal migratory waterfowl violation here?

This continuing feature of The Taproot — is a place much like the oaken walls of our fraternity — where Brothers can share their successes and failures, in the great outdoors. Send us your tall tales and any related photos for future edition.

Tau Phis in the Great Outdoors

The forest and fields and fish-filled waters are our playground

“A Brotherhood of Deer Hunters”

By Earl W. Hower (Fall '77)

Illustrations by Steve Torok (Spring '86)

After hunting the big woods in God’s Country (northern tier of Pennsylvania) for over 40 years, the “Red Gods” have finally smiled upon me—and in big way! It happened during the second week of the 2009 deer season. I was hunting with three other Tau Phis: Karl Imdorf, Tim Holtz and Billy Johns and his then-teenaged son, Will—who eventually also became a Brother seven years later.

How It Began – However, the story really started back in 1974, when I met Karl in Conklin Hall at the Mont Alto Campus. It took some persuasion, but I convinced him to give hunting a try. I mentored Karl who was at first, at the very least, a non-hunter with perhaps some anti-hunting leanings. Through the years, he and I became close hunting partners. It was not long until I exposed him to the rigors of tent camping in snow and deer hunting on the Susquehannock State Forest. His interest in hunting quickly grew. He became a fanatical outdoorsman, a crack shot and soon filled his share of many buck tags. In 1979, he became the first Brother to tag a bruin on the first of many successful modern day TΦΔ bear hunts.

A few years after graduation, Tim had become a forester for Hammermill Paper Company and eventually the co-owner of the Northern Appalachian Log and Forestry Company in Coudersport—in the heart of Potter County. It should be of no surprise that the woods and waters of the northern tier have become his playground.

In 1980, I convinced a few other Brothers to take on a Saturday road trip from State College to deer hunt the big woods of Potter County. Billy was one of them and was amazed at the massive size of the forested countryside and the number of

deer we saw that day. Years later, his career led him to become head procurement forester for Emporium Lumber and he bought and settled on a farm in southwestern Potter County. Billy, during his younger years, did most of his deer hunting in the suburban counties near Philly. However, he adapted quickly and became a regular deer slayer in the mountains of the Allegheny Plateau.

Memorable Tau Phi Deer Hunts – Through the decades, Brothers Freeman Johns and Jeff “Kid” Patten—to name a few—have joined in and became the regulars at our annual TΦΔ deer hunts.

Others included Brothers Roy Siefert, Dave Domin, Joel Boogher, Troy Shaw, Ed Crow, Kevin Horner, Howard Wurzbacher, Dave Ragantesi, Ben Herr, Steve Warner, Dave Messics, Frank Downs and the late Dennis Brehm.

There were plenty of crazy memories from our many deer hunts, such as someone shooting the testicles off a running buck. Another was shooting a hole through the ear of a fleeting buck. Both bucks were eventually properly shot and tagged.

We once conducted a very successful deer drive filling the back of a pickup truck with eight doe. How could we forget that during this same hunt, two injured posters each shot a deer; one while sitting on a cooler filled with our lunch and another on an orange folding lawn chair?

There once was a young deer shot (actually a late dropped fawn) that was so small that it was carried out of the woods in a game vest.

One time, after being shot, a buck lost both its antlers upon impact. It took over 20 minutes to locate them in the wet, fallen leaf litter.

On the other hand, there was the time one hunter dropped his very sharp gutting knife and it landed pegging his foot straight through his hunting boot.

Deer camp life was also something to behold.

Once when we stayed at Tim’s house, a stomach virus wiped out the entire camp in three short days.

Then there was the time when at Roy’s house, after a late night of celebrating a great hunt, we discovered a white weasel hiding in one of our deer carcasses hanging in his garage.



In 2003, after a few decades of “camping” at either Tim’s or Roy’s house during the deer hunting seasons, eleven Tau Phis invested some of their children’s inheritance and built a cabin in Potter County. Called the Twin Valley Hunting Club, it became our permanent base of operation for deer hunting the northern tier.

Friday, December 11, 2009 – On the second-to-last-day of the 2009 gun season, I was hunting with Karl, Tim, Billy and Will. Through Billy’s business connection, we had access to a large tract of private forestland. We were hunting a remote area, located about five miles from a hard road in southeastern McKean County (just across the Potter County border).

When we left the cabin on that morning, the thermometer read five degrees and there was a thick crust of ice on top of the snow. According to the NOAA weather station on the radio, with 30-mile wind gusts the wind chill made it a “cool” minus ten degrees.

There were only five of us. Having to deal with noisy, crusty snow and a steady wind, we opted to do some short drives. The first was with two drivers and three posters. I agreed to post along with the Johns boys. Will, who, as a junior licensed hunter, had to sit with his dad, Billy. Not long into this drive, we heard a few deer running ahead of the drivers and they slipped out the side of the drive and crossed the main logging road into the next block of timber.

After we completed that quick drive, Billy and Will moved ahead on foot on the main logging road. They were to post with a command view along a side slope of this block of timber. This time three of us would drive a section of older select cut timber. Ground cover was thicker, and the wind was wrong and blowing off the posters towards the drivers.

Tim split off to our right to start the drive on the lower side of the slope. As Karl and I crossed the logging road, we found a fresh set of deer tracks.

Of the four deer, one was extremely larger than the others and with a distinct drag mark. These tracks almost dwarfed the



others. We quickly agreed that it was a deer worth tracking.

Karl said he would split the middle of the drive. I was to walk the left flank near the top of the ridge, stay on the fresh tracks, and stalk them if I could. The more I examined this large set of tracks, I soon realized it was the front right leg making a very distinct drag mark across the snow.

Not far into the drive, the fresh tracks shifted to my right and angled downhill and in front of Karl’s directional walk. I climbed on top of a stump and whistled to Karl. Getting his attention, I motioned to him with hand signals and pointed toward the new direction of the deer tracks.

We had just about ended the long, silent stalk-drive through a bunch of small hemlock and laurel patches, upturned stumps and blown down trees, when I again saw Karl to my right frantically making hand signals of antlers with his fingers on his head. Then, with his hand, he motioned for me to move forward quickly and swing far left.

Even though we had radios, I knew something was up. As it turned out, he had no time to alert me any other way. Later, I found out that he had just jumped four deer and spotted several sets of antlers moving through the brush ahead of him. They had turned to his left and they ran diagonally in front of me. The wind direction was blowing even harder into our faces and coming off our two not-so-distant posters sitting ahead.

I turned hard left and jogged as fast and quietly as I could. I came upon a corner of an old clearcut with pole-sized trees and with very few whips and saplings on top of ridge and heading downhill toward the end of the drive. I recognized the cut from a previous hunt and knew I ended up in a great position. It was the perfect place to scan the distance and on an edge of very two distinct and different foliage and ground cover.

About that time, I heard a shot below coming from where Billy and Will had posted. Their distance and exact location off the lower logging road were unknown. I paused and scanned the distance for their location with my binoculars.

Suddenly, to my left inside the edge of the old cut, I heard an odd sound that turned out to be a deer trotting in snow crust. I spotted its body and it was dragging its front right leg scraping it across the top of the snow crust.

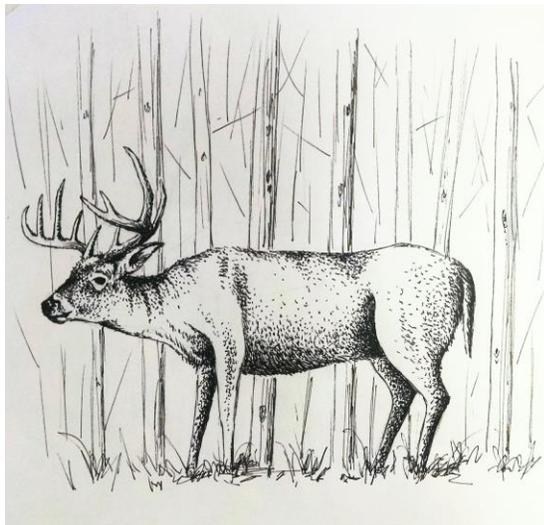
My thinking was that it might have been a deer wounded by our posters, so I raised my rifle to find it in my scope. At the same time, I saw and quickly counted one-two-three points on one side.

Recalling the new antler restriction, I made my next move. I released my safety and took the shot. But, I missed it at 75 yards as it dodged into a clump of trees.

It was closing in on an angle to my left toward the ridge top. In my haste, I quickly shot again into the pole timber and missed it at maybe 60 yards.

I spotted a break in the clearcut to my hard left at 40 yards above me. I swung the rifle forward and waited until the buck came through the hole.

The wind suddenly shifted and was now behind me blowing uphill. The buck put on the deer brakes in that opening to smell danger. It stood still there bewildered and lifted his nose in the air, offering me full view of his shoulders.



As it slightly turned its head looking downhill directly at me, my 7mm Remington Magnum hit its shoulder. So I thought. Jumping like a wild rodeo bronco, it lowered its head and bolted off uphill for the ridgetop. It was then that I got my first true glimpse at the tall antler tines.

I assumed that it was doing a death dive on the run, so I did not shoot again.

As this deer disappeared, I got sick to my stomach. I second-guessed myself while remembering my two previous missed shots, thinking it got away and that I messed up by not taking another fleeting shot.

Then on the crest of the distant ridgetop, I spotted flying snow and fallen branches lifting from the ground. I smiled in relief at that moment.

I slowly came to the ridgetop and spotted a rear deer leg straight in the air from within a slight ground depression. I stood there with rifle ready, when I then saw the exposed right side of its rack and counted five points. It was at that moment I

felt faint, but I gathered my wits and approached my buck for a closer look.

Hearing my shots, Karl approached me from below. I was sitting in the snow with my head in my hands. I think I was hyperventilating. I blocked his view of the buck's massive rack. As I turned my head to Karl, my response to him was. "My God, you're not going to believe this!"

With his eyes wide open, he gave out a loud cry of joy of a modern-day mountain man.

Then I smeared some deer blood on my face. This is an alternative to taking a bite out of raw, warm deer liver. This was my way of paying homage to such a magnificent animal that gave its life to me.

Later, I backtracked to examine and realized that Karl and I both had been tracking the same deer with the large hoof prints with a very distinct drag mark almost from the beginning of that drive.

As it turned out, the single shot I heard near the end of the drive was young Will. It was not long until Karl and I heard the others approaching us. Will and his dad were dragging a fat fork horn buck. While his was by law considered a protected buck, it was an acceptable legal harvest for a youth hunter.

It was Will's first buck and he was so proud, but then he was startled when he saw my buck.

I, on the other hand, was far happier and more excited about his deer than I was about mine. I recalled my first deer taken when I was a teen while standing next to my father.

We took turns dragging my buck out on the deep snow using its wide antlers rather than a rope.

Back at the truck, it was time for a tailgate lunch, some storytelling, reflection of the day's hunt and spending some quality time with my brothers and lifelong friends. Best part of any hunt!

I had hunted as a child for whitetails in the northwoods of Pennsylvania with my family since 1967. However, it was not until a few years into college when the deer hunting only got better.

Why? Because I had the fortune of discovering Tau Phi Delta fraternity, connected with a great bunch of guys and joined a brotherhood of deer hunters!



Editor's Note: Just how big was his buck? It had ten symmetrical points with a 17-inch inside spread and nine-inch long G-3 points. It scored with a Boone & Crockett measurement of 130 inches and weighed 143 pounds field dressed ... Tasty, too!



TΦΔ ALUMNI UPDATE & TAPROOT SUPPORT FORM

Please take a few minutes and tell us about yourself and your family so you can be included in the "Alumni Updates" section of the next issue of *The Taproot*.

Name and Nickname

Pledge Class (i.e., Fall 1922) _____ **Graduation Year(s)** _____

Phone Number(s) (To be printed) _____
(Specify home/work/cell)

Email Address (To be printed) _____

Quotable comments and other information about you, your family, your career and interests outside of work (If need be, continue on a separate sheet).

Enclosed is my contribution to support the continued printing of *The Taproot* alumni newsletter:

__ \$10 __ \$20 __ \$30 or \$_____ (Specify amount).

Please make your check payable to: Tau Phi Delta Foundation (Add to memo: The Taproot)

Then send this form and the check to: **Bill Herb**
9780 White Swan Court
Chestertown, MD 21620

You may also send an alumni update and suggestions for future newsletter articles by email to the editor, Bill Herb, at: *m.b.tailfeathers@gmail.com*

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Future TΦΔ Scheduled Events

THIS YEAR:

- **Spring 2021 Corporation Board/Foundation Trustees/Grand National Meeting**
CANCELLED due to current government COVID-19 restrictions!
A virtual business meeting is tentatively planned for in April.
Date and time is to be determined; details will be posted online: www.tauphidelta.org
- **Alumni Directory Solicitation and 100th Anniversary Appeal Mailing**
Look for it in your mailbox later this summer!
- **Annual W. James Evans Memorial Golf Tournament • July 10, 2021**
For more specifics contact: Jim Cowan or Gavin Collins, Event Co-Chairmen
jmc4con@verizon.net | gcollins573@gmail.com

PLAN AHEAD:

- **2022 is Tau Phi Delta Fraternity's 100th Anniversary Celebration Year.**
Seeking volunteers to help organize events. More details to follow.
Contact Dave O'Barto, TΦΔ Grand National at: obarto@comcast.net