



NEWS FROM THE

# TREEHOUSE

Winter / Spring 2024 Edition

Tau Phi Delta Fraternity – Penn State Alpha Chapter

427 East Fairmount Avenue, State College, PA 16801-5711 • [www.tauphidelta.org](http://www.tauphidelta.org)



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Phi:** Adam Harbaugh  
**Alpha Phi:** Allen Clapp  
**Tau:** Sean Farrell  
**Sigma:** Jack Valanzia

## STANDING COMMITTEES

**Membership:** Derek Lentz & Eric Lawler  
**Social:** Eric Lawler & Andrew Krawczyk  
**Philanthropy/THON:** Sean Farrell & Jett Kelley  
**Activities:** Jack Breen  
**Community Service:** Jai Ghude  
**Risk Management:** Matt Hefner, Christian Crabtree & Nick Pacella  
**Alumni:** Nick Pacella  
**Website & Social Media:** Jacob Schneider  
**New Member Educator (Pledgemaster):** Nick Hogg  
**Little Sister:** Tom Smith  
**Academic:** Jacob Schneider



## Honorable Phi's Report

**Adam T. Harbaugh (Spring '22)**  
(717)521-8380 • [ath5383@psu.edu](mailto:ath5383@psu.edu)

Throughout my time as a Brother at Tau Phi Delta there have been some large obstacles we have had to overcome as a Brotherhood.

First, it was the December 2022 flood that caused the House to shut down with tens of thousands of dollars in water damage and the resulting relocation of many Brothers during the Spring 2023 semester.

Next the current obstacle we are facing is the upcoming graduation and departure of almost half of the Active Brothers. At the end of last semester, it was very clear to all of us that in order to keep the House operational and in order, we would need a larger pledge class than we have obtained in recent years. It was undoubtedly on our minds 24/7 and would frequently be a topic of conversation throughout the Brotherhood.

In the current spring semester the time had come to recruit as hard as we could for the future of Tau Phi Delta. Our first major event of recruitment was our Zone Day—where potential new members could come throughout the day and get a tour of the House. During that day we had over 50 potential new members come through. We're all very excited and had a great feeling about the potential size of the Spring 2024 pledge class.

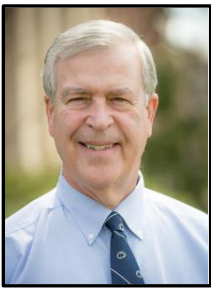
Our next recruitment effort was during Rush Week, a total of five days where potential new members would be invited down to socialize with the Brothers. During this time, we had a group of about 20 potential members consistently coming to the House throughout the week. As a result of these recruiting efforts, we decided to send out 18 bids to those we believed would be great additions to the TΦΔ Brotherhood.

What I find is true through these hardships is the resiliency of Tau Phis.

From the Alumni and all the support and hard work they put in to open the House for the Fall 2023 semester and the Actives with a great recruiting effort for the Spring 2024 semester. All these actions were very crucial to the future of Tau Phi Delta.

In other news the Brothers have been busy at the House with their woodworking skills. The Fall 2023 pledge class—with the help of a few skilled Brothers—has built three new wooden tables for the dining room as its pledge project. The new tables have been a great addition, allowing Brothers to gather and eat meals together, as well as playing some poker. Which typically leads to a couple Brothers going home with empty pockets ... including me.

The future of Tau Phi Delta looks bright for the remainder of the semester and future semesters to come. Now, with a large pledge class this spring we are looking forward to passing along the great history and tradition of our beloved fraternity. With that being said, the resilience and determination of the Brothers of Tau Phi Delta has kept this fraternity alive for over 100 years. I have no doubt that it will continue for another 100!



## House Advisor's Notes

Martin "Bear" McGann (Fall '74)

As the last semester started, we looked back on an interesting and stressful year brought on by the Great Flood of 2022. I'm glad to say that the House opened on time this fall semester and welcomed back the Brothers that had been dispersed to all corners of State College. The reopening of the House was made possible by everyone working together to solve the problems. Additionally, our work with contractors made sure that every need was addressed.

My personal observations from this last semester, are that everyone was glad to be back and I truly feel that they appreciated the effort that went into this reopening.

During the fall semester and up until today, as I am writing this, I am constantly comparing the House to myself. You see I am 71 years old, and I think the House and I are of a comparable age, and both have the same type of issues in front of us. We are both slowly falling apart. I think the House is lucky in that there is a lot we can do to improve the physical plant and the aesthetics moving forward. The Development Committee in charge of proposing improvements, both pre-and post-Centennial, was dealt a bad hand since many of our plans for improvement were put on hold and the money set aside for those improvements, had to be used for more important things such as the new furnace.

Some of you might have seen the architectural sketches (See page 15 in current issue of *The Taproot*) that were done for the Centennial showing new interior amenities. It is my hope that sometime in the very near future we can encourage our alumni to make contributions that will help us to upgrade many parts of the House including the kitchen overhaul, new flooring on all levels, new ceiling and wall treatments in the dining room and bar area, just to name a few. These are all key elements in our effort to improve the House.

But there are other things, small things, such as the bedroom doors which need to be replaced in order to meet State College Boro fire code. Each door costs nearly \$1,400 apiece (installed) and, for those of you with a good memory, there are 23 of those. We got a start last year in replacing doors in the basement, on the main stairwell, and in the front foyer. There is still much more that needs to be done. I hope we have the will and drive to accomplish this.

So, for the two of us, the House and me, I guess I have it fairly easy. If I have something that needs to be fixed, all I have to do is wait six months for a doctor's appointment to open up and in the meantime, I can take all sorts of fun medication that the doctor prescribes for me. I'm going to be an expert in what meds go best with Irish whiskey and which ones go best with vodka.

Yes, it is not easy to keep up something like our fraternity. Kind of like the parent who needs nursing care, and you can't believe that it costs \$15,000 a month. However, you find some way to do it because you care a lot about them. That's the way I think about the House. It's not pretty but it means an awful lot and there are lots of good memories there and a lot of good memories still to be made.

**Co-Advisors: Martin McGann / Penn State University (814) 574-5821 • [mrm19@psu.edu](mailto:mrm19@psu.edu)**

**Shaun Doran / Pennsylvania DCNR Bureau of Forestry (724) 944-2462 • [smd277psu@hotmail.com](mailto:smd277psu@hotmail.com)**

## Membership Update

In February, TΦΔ gave out 18 bids and all but four accepted the offer. The Spring 2024 Pledge Class, with 14, is the largest class to pledge at TΦΔ since Fall 1977.

Included are: **Mason Coon** (Easton); **William Gomez** (Lansdale); **Ethan Snyder** (Seven Fields); **Tommy Hourvitz** (Pittsburgh); **Pat Lee** (Honeybrook); **Aston DeMorat** (Cogan House); **Christian Allen** (Sterling Heights, Mich.); **James Gillot** (Jefferson Hills); **Andrew Rizzuto** (Upper Dublin); **Jack Rodgers** (Mays Landing, N. J.); **Emery Guldalian** (State College); **Zachary Jaap** (Glenelg, Md.); **Benjamin Knapp** (Roaring Branch); and **John Putzu** (Alexandria, Va.).

On the evening of December 7, 2023, we welcomed our newest Brothers, when all five of these young men were duly sworn in during the Brotherization ceremony: **Derek Lentz** (Lancaster) and **Jackson Brion** (Liberty), both Forest Ecosystem Management; **Gavin McCanna** (Pequea) Recreation Parks and Tourism Management; **Eric Lawler** (Newport) Finance/Business Law; and **Matthew Heffner** (Harleysville) Secondary Education/History.

Congratulations are in order to these new Brothers and well wishes to the Pledges!



## 2024 Annual Jim Evans Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament

Sponsored by Tau Phi Delta Foundation

### Here Are This Year's Event Particulars ...

**Tournament** – Four-person scramble (Best ball)

**Date and Time** – **Saturday, July 27, 2024** with a 9:00 am shotgun start  
(Please arrive a half hour or more prior)

**Location** – Skytop Mountain Golf Club • 350 Freestone Lane, Port Matilda, PA 16870

**Fees Per Golfer** – \$85: For alumni/guests \$60: For actives/students

**Proceeds To Benefit** – Tau Phi Delta Foundation Scholarship Fund

**Skill Contests** – Includes closest to pins, longest drive, a hole-in-one contest (With a prize of a new four-wheeler ATV), prizes for the winning team, a 50/50 drawing, and much more!

### Rules –

- Respect the rules of the course (i.e., No carts off course trails and on putting greens).
- Must have your own set of clubs – No sharing clubs!
- Wear collared or polo shirt – No sleeveless or tee-shirts!
- Wear sneaker or golf shoes – No flip flops or logging / hunting boots!
- Inebriated golfers will be denied admission and / or will be asked to leave the premises – Then paid fees will be non-refundable.
- No driving under the influence or joy riding golf carts – Brothers will be policing our ranks!

**To Register** – Email Jim Cowan at [jamesmcowan66@gmail.com](mailto:jamesmcowan66@gmail.com) or text (814)571-1813 with names of your foursome. Do not mail payment in advance, but show up early with your check(s) made payable to: Tau Phi Delta Foundation.

**Note** – A light meal will be provided after the round at the course. Bring your own beverages.



**Also** – Please try put together a foursome or be a part of a foursome and, if at all possible, not show up as a single or twosome. This will make things run a lot smoother the day of the tournament.

Remember, not everyone on your foursome has to be a TΦΔ Brother. So, bring a spouse, friend, or relative, but let's try again and have a BIG showing of golfers!

**Sponsorship Opportunities** – For a little as a \$100-donation payable to the Tau Phi Delta Foundation, you can sponsor a golf course hole and help underwrite the expense to run this tournament. Perhaps you, your employer, your business, your pledge class, or even your registered foursome would like to support our cause. Sponsors will be further recognized with a posted sign at each sponsor's hole. To donate, contact an Event Co-Organizer.

**More Information:** Jim "JC" Cowan (Fall `76) and Gavin Collins (Fall `14), Event Co-Organizers  
[jamesmcowan66@gmail.com](mailto:jamesmcowan66@gmail.com) / (814)571-1813 • [gcollins573@gmail.com](mailto:gcollins573@gmail.com) / (571)308-4027



## 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).

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

\$10  \$20  \$30  \$50 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 21620-4001

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](mailto:m.b.tailfeathers@gmail.com).