



# The Bobcat Sig



Published by the Beta Rho Chapter of the  
Sigma Chi Fraternity at Montana State University

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## House Building Corporation

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## From the Chapter Editor Advisor

Here-in lies news and information critical to the on-going success of the Beta Rho Chapter of Sigma Chi. Make no mistake: the Chapter has been on a decline for the past few years, but we have a small group of dedicated alumni and young men in the active chapter who are working very hard to keep Beta Rho going. They are dedicated to the same goals and together they have done some remarkable things in the past months. As you read the following articles, please think about your individual role in continuing the traditions of our Fraternity and beloved chapter.

Manny Hoag, '66

## From the Chapter Advisor

Since taking over the Chapter Advisor position at Beta Rho this summer, I will admit that I have had my hands full. It took me awhile to get to know the chapter members and for them to get to know me. I have been very fortunate to have the help of the other alumni that are on the advisory board. The each advisor has been working with an individual officer being able to focus the specific tasks of the respective offices; with this involvement we are able help the officers with problems, planning and anything else that arises. The advisory board has met by tele-conference; and, during Homecoming was able to hold individual meetings face to face with the undergraduates. During these meeting we outlined goals and brainstormed on ways to communicate better.

Another area that I have been focusing on is the chapter's weekly meetings. I think everyone can agree that without productive and efficient meetings any organization will struggle to grow. Brothers Paul Boylan, Andrew Wharton, and Duane Ray have also attended meetings this semester to help on business issues that arise and to provide an alumni presence. So far this semester, the brothers have had good meetings and they are also holding each other accountable for their actions.

If you have any question, comments or interested in getting involved please do not hesitate to contact me 406-579-4539 or [jwishman@bobcatsigs.org](mailto:jwishman@bobcatsigs.org).

John Wishman, '04

Beta Rho Officers

Consul	Justin Mito	jhmito@comcast.net
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Quaestor	John Harrison	sigmachiharrison@gmail.com
Magister	Brett Christofferson	brentjc@gmail.com
Recruitment	Jason Jones	jones.jason.w@gmail.com

House Manager Report: Jake Range

A few of the things that we have been doing this semester include sheet rocking the basement, (getting rid of the small ceiling tiles), which makes the room look cleaner and nicer. We are working out a new system of duties to make sure that the house stays in a satisfactory condition. This includes having duties checked multiple times a week, and working on security from the outside. We plan to put lighting on the exterior, and will also be changing the pass codes for the doors every semester. We have converted the keg closet into a gun safe so that all guns are accounted for and kept in a safe place that can be accessed by everyone through myself or the risk manager, Jordan Hennessy. We have the sauna up and running again, using it frequently. Summer work projects include reworking of the first floor east wing with drywall, dealing with wiring issues, and sanding and refinishing the floor in the kitchen. I used to install and finish floors for a living and helped put that one in). If you have any further questions, call me at (678) 232-6345 or e-mail me at the above address.

My commitment to you as Grand Consul is that we will not change for the sake of change. We will do what is right, not just what is easy. We will LEAD, we will not follow. By being aligned, focused, and living our core values—friendship, justice, and learning—Sigma Chi will not only survive during the next 150 years, we will thrive.

Keith Krach, Purdue '79, 64th Grand Consul

Quaestor Report: John Harrison

We expect to exceed our projected cash balance at the end of the Fall Semester. This is due to making good progress on collecting past due house bills with the help of the Quaestor Advisors. To prevent past due amounts in the future, we are sending out timely statements to members, which indicate the amount due and the due date. In addition, we have a clear progression of actions to be taken by the Quaestor and Quaestor Advisor should an amount become past due.

Recruitment Chair, Chapter Editor, and Website Manager: Jason Jones

The Beta Rho Chapter participated in the Mission 365 Recruitment seminar for the Sigma Chi Fraternity. This day and a half event was very enlightening. The whole chapter is ready to start with a new frame of mind in regards to the recruitment process. Also, we would like to thank Curt Biller and all of the other alumni participating to make this event successful. The whole chapter is excited to see the Alumni being more involved in the recruitment process.

Derby Days was very successful. The weeklong series of events brought in over \$5000. It also brought the chapter closer by having nightly activities to bring focus on brotherhood. We can't wait until next year to do Derby Days again.

Over the past year, I have been working diligently on the new chapter website with the help of Alumni. This new site will be replacing the old site as of the middle of January. For those of you who would like to take a look at it before then, you can go to [betarhosigs.org](http://betarhosigs.org). Username will be "firstname.lastname" and your old password. All of what was in the old site will be present along with some new items such as current chapter notes and blogs. These are just a few of the enhancements that the site will have.

### Recruitment Advisor Report

The whole recruitment process at Beta Rho is improving significantly. We currently have 9 outstanding pledges and more are in the pipeline. The new Recruitment Chairman, Jason Jones, has brought to the office a much needed, strong sense of organization and planning which has slowly disappeared over the past several years in the position. We recently had a Mission 365 recruitment workshop presented by trained Mission 365 facilitators Curt Biller and Andrew Wharton. A special thanks for the participation of local alumni Paul Boylan, Mike Langhor, Phil Olsen, Ryan Donahue, Ryan Trapp, Duane Ray, and John Wishman. The purpose of Mission 365 is to focus on year round recruiting instead of "rush" recruiting. The chapter received this very well and is fired up to start implementing the new ideas and techniques they learned. As we look forward to the coming year we are going to rely heavily on alumni involvement in recruitment. We need alumni to actively recruit young men who adhere to the Jordan Standard and will be attending MSU. If any Alumni know of potential Beta Rho members please forward their contact information to Jason Jones at jones.jason.w@gmail.com. Also, alumni participation in events at the house and/or in the community will be needed. Community involvement will be a big push for recruitment and it is always great to see alumni at these events. With all of the changes that are taking place at Beta Rho and the energy of the brothers and involved alumni we expect to recruit at least 10 quality pledges each semester going forward.

Andrew Wharton

### House Building Corporation Report

We have established a live-in committee. The following local alumni are on the committee: Al Wagner, Tom Olson, Duane Denton, Jess Armitage, Russ Jones and Duane Denton. The purpose of the live-in committee is to manage and enforce the formal lease and live-in (sub-lease) agreements between the HBC and the active chapter/ and occupants of the house.

This committee will interview each occupant ensure that they understand the live-in agreement, the House Building Corp Rules and the Sigma Chi Code of Conduct prior to moving into the house. In addition they will perform the check-in and check-out procedures at the beginning and end of each semester to ensure that no damage other than normal wear and tear has been done to the applicable rooms. This process was started at the beginning of this Fall semester.

Perhaps the committee's most significant duty will be to manage the house during the Summer. Currently most of the active chapter brothers do not live in Bozeman and thus it is important for the alumni to manage the house during the summer to ensure that problems that occurred last summer do not reoccur.

I would like to thank Mike Langohr, Rick Dissly and Jake Range (current house manager) for their efforts in helping me get the house in a livable condition for the Fall semester.

Also, I am happy to announce that Michael Harter, class of "95" has been elected to the HBC and will focus on monthly inspections and ensuring that the major systems of the house (heating, plumbing and electrical) are functional. Welcome aboard Mike.

Paul Boylan, President

### House Manager Advisor Report

We had two directions we could choose from this semester and I can say we did not choose to run and hide from dilemmas the chapter is facing. The Alumni Advisory Board has made it clear to the undergraduates that we are here to support the officers and the leadership of the house, and without leadership, the house can only get worse. Starting this semester, no brother is allowed to live in the house without HBC approval. Faced with this sobering reality, we had a chance to make a dramatic change in the way the house was managed and maintained. The advisory board also felt the house manager needed to be an upper classman due to the broad range of knowledge and experience needed to manage the house on a daily basis. Jake Range has taken the helm as House Manager, and with his experience in facility maintenance, we had a good starting point. The younger brothers look up to him and his effectiveness as a leader is evident. Things are changing for the better; we are building the foundation for a promising future here at Beta Rho. We are ready for the challenge!

RJ Waggoner

As each of you is aware, the Beta Rho Chapter is in the midst of a major turn-around effort. The two main problems are: the age/condition of the chapter house, and the current low undergraduate membership numbers (19). Surrounding that situation, but also related, are some poor business practices of the past, some deadbeat members, some bad habits among the rest, undergraduate leadership challenges, and a negative trend for the Greek system in general (both on campus and nationally) that is not our friend—among others.

We are addressing these issues, at both the undergraduate and alumni levels, and much has been done, but the outcome is neither quick nor predictable—the fact of the matter is that we may not survive this under our current business model.

Last summer, a major intervention was conducted, with very significant results. Certain active members were asked to leave, a new set of house rules was implemented (positively embraced), the house was thoroughly cleaned, and several heating, electrical, and plumbing problems were repaired. Several alumni spent a great deal of time at the chapter house making these changes and without their efforts, things would now be much different. This effort was spearheaded by Bro. Rick Dissly. Many others, including Bros. Paul Boylan, and Mike Langhor, were also deeply involved. Our heartfelt thanks go to these brothers who have done so much, and without whom the Chapter as we know it would probably not now exist.

Other positive events and efforts follow, some previously touched upon:

- Bro. John Wishman has stepped into the Chapter Advisor Role.
- John and/or other local alumni are attending weekly chapter meetings.
- Nine outstanding pledges will become active in December.
- The nationally facilitated recruiting training seminar (Mission 365) was held, setting recruiting goals and training local alumni and undergrads on recruitment techniques.
- Renewed efforts to keep the house clean, repaired, and in a livable condition.
- Proactive participation from all alumni advisors.
- Derby Days activities raised \$5,000 to support the Chapter.
- Homecoming Reception and Dinner were held and awards presented.

We are currently working towards a more effective Executive Committee weekly meeting process. Key house operations pulse points are being defined to bring focus on the right things to the weekly meeting. In conjunction with this effort is a one page business planning approach for each Top Five officer based on the book "The One Page Business Plan." Lacking at this point is an overall chapter strategic plan. Feedback from the Pro Consul indicates that the new House Rules that were put into effect at the beginning of Fall Semester, including no drinking in the house, are seen as a positive improvement by the majority of the chapter members. He indicates that incidents requiring disciplinary action have been minimal under the new rules.

We cannot stress enough the importance of ongoing oversight to the situations addressed herein, and also cannot stress enough the efforts of the HBC and Chapter Advisor Board members. You are now asking what you can do to help. Perhaps the most important is recruiting. Numbers have fallen to a dangerous low—without more members, the chapter cannot financially cover the costs of operating and maintaining the house and function operationally. There are too many duties and functions requiring the time of the active members.

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It is extremely important that each alumnus actively recruits young high school grads from his local area—all of us know some of these young men. You may say that you live too far away, yet each of you has a network of friends and family to draw from. Do not be shy. Several alums attended the Mission 365 recruitment workshop and are now better equipped to serve.

The operational and fixed costs of the house require that a minimum of 18 members live in the house. In Fall Semester, only 14 members lived in, and the HBC reduced the rent to keep the Chapter viable. We expect that the Spring Semester will be also under 18 members. We are asking all alumni to contribute \$25 to \$50 each to the HBC. This will give us the chance to increase membership in the Spring and turn the situation around.

Come to Homecoming in 2009—renew old friendships, meet the young men who are now in the active chapter, and see what is happening. You will be rewarded.

Take a few minutes and visit the Sigma Chi website at [www.sigmachi.org](http://www.sigmachi.org) and review the history of the fraternity and the seven founders. Renew your awareness of the rich traditions that have made this fraternity what it is. Think about what it was that attracted you to Beta Rho of Sigma Chi and what the fraternity meant to you. Visit the Chapter Website as well. You will realize that we do not want this chapter to fall by the wayside.

Contribute an article to this newsletter—let others know what you are doing and where you are. It is a goal of the editor to include short notes from alums. The next Bobcat Sig will be published in the Spring of 2009.

Let me know what you would like to see in the future. You can contact me at [mannyh@3rivers.net](mailto:mannyh@3rivers.net), or call 406 788-3254. Thank you. Manny Hoag, Editor

A Certificate of Appreciation from the General Fraternity was presented to brother William E. Grabow, '50, in recognition of distinguished service to Beta Rho, his community and the nation. Brother Grabow, a past chapter advisor, is the architect who designed and oversaw the 1962 construction of the chapter house. In doing so, he was highly successful at coordinating the realities of limited funding, future chapter solvency and high membership expectations. Over the 46 year service-life of the house he has continued to provide architectural services at free or greatly reduced fees. The house has stood the test of time well, sets the standard among fraternities at MSU and is a fond memory for the many undergraduate Sigs who have called it home over the years. Among many other lifetime accomplishments, Brother Grabow was a combat infantryman in WWII with Patton's Third Army and is a past Mayor of Bozeman. He has a son and grandson who are Beta Rho Sigs.

**Beta Rho Contribution Form**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**E-mail:**

**Contribution Amount:**

**\$25** \_\_\_ **\$50** \_\_\_ **\$100** \_\_\_

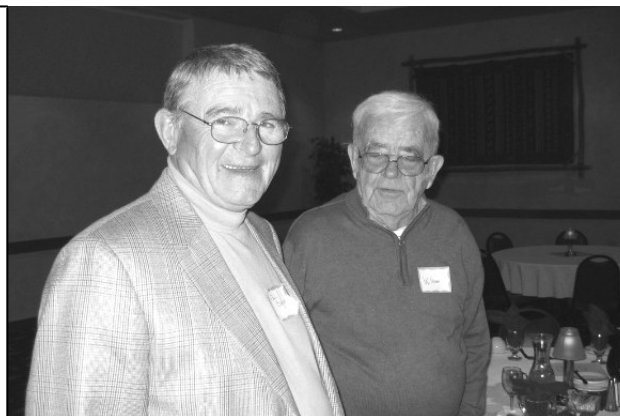
**\$250** \_\_\_ **\$500** \_\_\_ **Other** \_\_\_

**Beta Rho Sigma Chi House Bldg. Corp.**

**Attn: Bro. Rick Dissly**

**6651 Leyland Park Drive**

**San Jose, CA 95120**



Bro. Paul Boylan, HBC President, and Bro. Bill Grabow as Bro. Grabow receives his Certificate of Appreciation.

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## THE “SIGNIFICANT SIG” AND “ORDER OF CONSTANTINE” AWARDS

The Significant Sig award is presented to a Brother who has served his profession honorably in the past. This year the award was presented to “Chip Erdman” for service to his country in his capacity as lawyer and judge from 1975 to the present. He has served on the Montana Supreme Court, in Europe on the Organization for Security and Cooperation and the Office of High Representative in Bosnia and was appointed Chief Judge of the Bosnian Election Court, and serves on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, hearing criminal appeals from the U.S. Military Justice System. He served as a Judge Advocate General officer in the Montana Air National Guard and retired from the Air Guard in 2002.

The Order of Constantine Award is given each year to a group of 14 Sigma Chi Brothers for their commitment, dedication, and service to the Fraternity. The Order of Constantine is the highest honor the Fraternity can bestow upon one of its members. Bro. Curt Biller was chosen this year to receive the award. He has been active with the Fraternity on both the national and international level. He served for seven years as Grand Praetor for the North Central Province and is a long time facilitator for the Balfour Leadership Training Workshop and has participated in 21 workshops. He is a Master Facilitator and curriculum developer for the Cornerstone Initiative and is a facilitator for Mission 365.



*Left: The Honorable Charles “Chip” Erdman receives the Significant Sig Award from Bro. Tom Bivins at the Homecoming Banquet in October.*

*Right: Curt Biller receives the Order of Constantine award from Significant Sig Phil Olsen. Our congratulations extend to each for their service.*



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