

TAU TOPICS



TAU CHAPTER OF THETA CHI FRATERNITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

FALL 2014

Continue Your Support of Theta Chi

Brothers, it is a pleasure to write to you for the first time as president of the Realty Board. It is truly an honor to represent all Tau alumni as a steward of our Chapter.

This past year has been filled with triumph and challenges. In typical Theta Chi fashion, we have taken our successes with humility and faced our challenges head on.

We are addressing our challenges and using them as an opportunity to make what I believe will be longlasting changes that will ensure the future success of the Chapter. The undergraduate Chapter has adopted a revitalized new member program and has rededicated themselves to the sacred purpose that brought all of us into Theta Chi during our time at UF. This change in culture will ensure that brothers continue to find Tau Chapter as a place where they can flourish as men and leaders.

Despite the challenges faced this past year, the undergraduate Chapter remains strong. Our new Chapter House is the envy of chapters both at the University of Florida and across the country. This house will serve as a home to countless men over the next century and is a foundation for success that will take us into our 100th year as a Chapter and beyond. We

enter the fall semester with over 120 undergraduate brothers and expect another strong recruiting class this fall. Our brothers continue to serve in leadership positions across campus, highlighted by **Garrick Harding '08** serving as President of Florida Blue Key and **Joey Michaels '11** serving as Senate President Pro-Tempore.

I want to thank all of you for your steadfast support of Theta Chi and Tau Chapter. You are the lifeblood of this Fraternity and your contributions to the Chapter cannot be overstated. When you find yourself back in Gainesville, please stop by the house and meet the undergraduate brothers. Your ability to be role models and mentors is vital to the success of our Chapter.

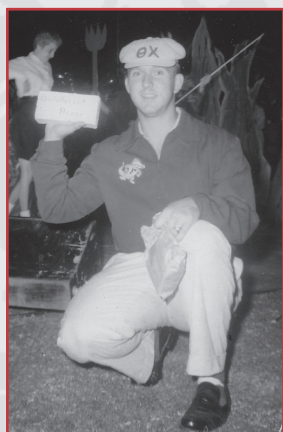
I look forward to seeing everyone this fall at our Homecoming reunion Saturday, October 18, 2014. Thank you again for your support and commitment. Go Gators!

Fraternally,
Kevin Reilly '04
Realty Board President

**SAVE THE
DATE FOR
HOMECOMING**

See page 4 for
more details.

Theta Chi Mourns Brother Ron Acree '57



Ron during his undergraduate years at Theta Chi.

Theta Chi Brother **Ron Acree '57** passed away on April 27, 2014, after a battle with a rare form of cancer, sarcomatoid differential of the bladder. In celebrating Ron's life, memories of his time as a Theta Chi were plentiful. Tau Chapter was important to Ron, and he stayed very involved over the years, including working on the *Celebrating the Legacy, Forging the Future* campaign. Ron's wife, Bunny, has shared some of Ron's memories of Theta Chi.

*Ron's memories of fraternity days as a Theta Chi were cherished ones and shared many times. The house was relatively new in 1957, so according to **Wes Kirkpatrick '58** and **George Nielson '57**, Ron made sure the guys worked hard to keep it cleaned up even if it wasn't a work day. He would drive the Winter Haven group home for a round trip ride of \$1. More importantly Ron developed leadership and integrity as he helped the other brothers.*

*A bond of friendship developed between his Theta Chi brothers, **George Nielson '57**, **Wes Kirkpatrick '58**, **George Lanier '58**, **Bob Lancraft '60**, and **Charlie Sauls '60** which continued over 50 years. Most of the times together revolved around the great University of Florida football games! Ron was eager to urge brothers to contribute to the new Theta Chi building and a number of trips were made to see what was going on during the construction. He was so proud when grand opening time arrived with all the festivities and was able to pass on some of his own memorabilia. He was heard in the hallway that day encouraging the younger Theta Chis about the importance of keeping their new building in good shape.*

Ron is survived by his wife, Bunny; his son, Rick; daughter, Teri; and three grandchildren, Hannah, Coleson, and Chloe. Ron will be greatly missed but always remembered by Tau Chapter.



Lifelong Theta Chi friends Ron and George Nielson '57.

Kevin Reilly '04

Thankful for Theta Chi's Leadership Opportunities

Kevin Reilly '04 came to the University of Florida with a drive to branch out and meet new people, eventually finding a home at the Tau Chapter of Theta Chi. "I met some brothers and they talked about what a great place it was. Theta Chi was known for its diversity, good friendships, and great leadership development."

Theta Chi helped Kevin develop his interest in leadership opportunities, which proved very helpful in his pursuit of a bachelor's degree in political science and eventually his masters of science in business management. "Thanks to Tau Chapter's active membership and involvement in activities, I became very involved in student government, which allowed me to get to know a lot of people in politics and government, and it gave me an outlet and avenue to pursue government. Theta Chi was a great resource." Kevin served as Chapter president as well.

Leadership opportunities were very important to Kevin throughout his college experience, which culminated with his election as University of Florida's student body president for 2008-2009. "One of my greatest memories was being elected student body president, which I would not have been able to do without the support of Theta Chi." Kevin is thankful for the many alumni who stayed involved and had a positive impact on him and the Chapter. "There were many alumni who stayed engaged, gave me great advice, and taught me a lot about leadership and progressing in that realm."

Kevin still sees his Theta Chi brothers around the country and remembers many of the good times they shared in the Chapter House. To today's undergraduates, he has this advice: "Enjoy the little moments. Four years go by quickly and there are lots of memories that seem insignificant at the time, like sitting around the Chapter house with friends talking about life, but when you look back those are the ones you remember the most."

Kevin and his wife, Andrea, live in Tallahassee, Florida, where Kevin works in legislative affairs for a state agency. Kevin comes back to campus and the Chapter House often for football games and recently began serving as president of the Realty Board. He can be contacted via e-mail at kevin.f.reilly@gmail.com.



"There were many alumni who stayed engaged, gave me great advice, and taught me a lot about leadership and progressing in that realm."

ALUMNI, VISIT AND SUPPORT THE COLLEGIANS

Undergraduate Chapter Strives for Change and Improvement



Brothers Erich Krzyzak '12, Bobby Finigan '12, Patrick Tully '13, Jake Burks '10, Grant Sinnott '13, Kyle McIntosh '12, Drew Howard '13, Brian Basnight '13, Justin Poon '13, Kyle Rodriguez '11, and Brenden Collins '13 participated in Dance Marathon.



Kyle McIntosh '12, Jesse Sands '12, and Kenny Heidegger '13 attended the Theta Chi National Convention in Minneapolis, Minn.

The past two semesters have been a time of introspection and bonding, bringing the undergraduate Chapter closer than it has been in recent years. We hope to rise from this difficult time as a Chapter reborn with purpose and meaning. Rather than continue with business as usual, avoiding any further mishaps, we are striving to bring back the culture of success and passion that embodies what it means to be a brother of Theta Chi.

A culture change is well underway at Tau. We are refocusing and working harder to channel our energy into positive change. This all begins in the newest generation of brothers to be. With the help of our alumni, we have revitalized the new member program to ensure proper values are being instilled from the very beginning. We are also revamping our philanthropy. We hope to increase participation and awareness of our philanthropy and meaningfully increase the amount of money we raise. Carrying on with this change, we are becoming more involved in the community. In cooperating with the goals of the Interfraternity Council, we will double our number of community service events per semester. These are but a few of the changes you can expect to see from the undergraduates as we look to restore honor to a Chapter quickly approaching its 100th anniversary.

In addition to these goals, my personal goal as Chapter president is to reunite the undergraduates and alumni brothers. With this in mind, I now ask for your help. I ask that you make your way to our beautiful new Chapter House. This new home was only achieved with your help, and we would be honored to host you and your family at our dinner tables. I am also hoping to host one brother every month that would like to share some words with our Chapter, whether they are personal or professional in nature, as a part of a new personal development program we are beginning this semester. If this interests you, please reach out to me through my contact information listed below.

In this time of unlimited potential and positive change, it is a truly exciting time to be a Theta Chi.

Fraternally,

Jesse Sands '12

Chapter President

(386) 795-1042

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Volunteer as a speaker for the new personal development program!

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SAVE THE DATE FOR HOMECOMING 2014 OCTOBER 18 - UF vs. MISSOURI

We will host either a brunch or BBQ depending on TBA kickoff time.

RSVP by October 1, 2014, to ThetaChiTauRSVP@gmail.com.

We have less than 100 football tickets left for \$40 each. Limit four tickets per brother.

Complete payment and secure your tickets two ways:

- PayPal: Through PayPal send \$40 for each ticket to uf.thetachi.alumni@gmail.com then e-mail **Jake Shonkwiler '08** at jacob.shonkwiler@gmail.com.
- Check: Make a check out to Theta Chi Realty Board of Gainesville and mail to Jake Shonkwiler, 5896 SW 66th Street, Unit 6, South Miami, FL 33143

We cannot reserve your ticket until your check is received.

Questions? Please visit the Tau Chapter Alumni Facebook page for more information or contact Jake at jacob.shonkwiler@gmail.com.

Attention: This newsletter is intended for Theta Chi alumni and parents. If your son is still attending the University of Florida, he will receive a copy at the Chapter House. If he has graduated, please send us his permanent address to update our records. Thank you.



Undergraduate

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Alumni

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