



The BATTLEFIELD SIG

Fall 2020

THETA CHAPTER OF SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY AT GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

GETTYSBURG COLLEGE SENDS STUDENTS HOME TWO WEEKS INTO FALL SEMESTER *240 Carlisle Street Empty Again*

It's truly been an unprecedented year in the history of the Theta Chapter. When I last updated you, we had high hopes that our undergraduates would be able to return to campus for a relatively normal semester.

Unfortunately, Gettysburg College made the decision to send home the vast majority of students on September 4 after ordering a campus-wide quarantine earlier that week. The goal of this action was to "dedensify" the on-campus population with the hope that COVID-19 cases that had recently spiked could be contained.

Students had returned to campus only two weeks prior, so it was quite disappointing that it had come to this after the college spent the entire summer planning on how to safely reopen. The chapter had just finished recruitment and was looking forward to beginning the new member education process, which is now on an indefinite hold. For the second time in so many months, 240 Carlisle Street sits empty.

One bright spot in an otherwise disappointing few months was the chapter's annual Derby Days fundraiser for the Huntsman Cancer Foundation. Despite the fundraising being completely virtual, the chapter raised over \$30,000. I would like to congratulate our undergraduates for this huge achievement. It gives me great confidence in their ability to endure as a chapter despite the circumstances that they (and the rest of the world) currently face.

For those of you wondering about the status of the brick paver project, we were planning on having our first installation during this year's Homecoming activities. As Homecoming is no longer occurring, this has been delayed. However, this does mean that there's still time for you to buy a brick and help support the chapter as it goes through these difficult times.

We are also in the early stages of a project to honor the late Brother **Gerry Royals '52**, who passed on to Chapter Eternal earlier this summer. We will provide more information on this as the project takes shape.

Stay safe out there.

IHSV,
Sam Blum '15
House Corporation President
samrblum@gmail.com
(301) 938-3150

ALL HONOR TO HIS NAME

It is with heavy hearts that we share the news that Brother **Col. Gerry Royals '52 (Ret.)** entered Chapter Eternal on July 6, 2020.

Anyone who met Gerry knew that he was larger than life. Active as an alumni brother with the chapter since our recolonization, Gerry was a constant fixture at 240 Carlisle Street. As undergraduates, we became familiar with the sight of his old Town Car parked in front of the house, complete with his signature Gettysburg College bumper sticker and Vietnam veteran vanity plate. It was clear to everyone: Gerry had arrived.



He retained the spirit of youth at every tailgate, barbecue, and alumni event that he could squeeze in when he wasn't at football games in Maryland with his daughter. He attended almost every chapter meeting, always giving wise advice and level-headed counsel to the undergraduate chapter. He gave his time selflessly, participating in the ceremonies of initiation every year. Brother Royals took those same ideals of selfless service to all parts of his life. He served his country with distinction, ending his military career as a colonel after serving in both Korea and Vietnam. He was a prominent and respected figure on campus and well-known in the community at large.

The impact that Gerry had on the Theta Chapter cannot be understated. For years he was a rock for the young men of our fraternity. He was truly engaged in making a genuine connection with each and every brother, ensuring they dedicated themselves to their academic pursuits and developed into well-rounded and principled men. He was a link to the rich past of our chapter, and happily shared his fond reveries and memories of times long since passed. At the end of each academic year he would pass along a special gift: a complete set of quarters from each of the 50 states, lovingly assembled for each graduating brother.

In the end, his life's work reflected compassion, care for friendships and family, and a commitment to the gratification of others, always before himself. He was an exemplary role model for our young men, a father figure and confidant to many, and a good friend and true brother to all.

All honor to his name.

Details regarding funeral arrangements for Brother Royals will be circulated via email as soon as they are finalized.

Learning Life Values

Aaron Lawson '10 Reflects on the Lessons He Learned at Theta Chapter

Q: *What made Sigma Chi the right fit for you?*

A: The alumni. Obviously, those of us involved in bringing the chapter back to Gettysburg's campus had a huge role in shaping the chapter's culture, and we were always going to try to create a space in which all of us felt comfortable. Alumni brothers like **Bill Sapoch**, **Richard Krisch '73**, and **Joe Santacroce** made sure that we were always operating within the right framework, and that our work developing a chapter wasn't a total free-for-all. They kept us focused on the things that make Sigma Chi itself important, rather than letting our project devolve into a caricature of Greek life, and I think that really benefitted us in the end. We always had a clear goal, and a decent map for how to get there, because of the alumni who helped us out. And since we had that foundation, we were able to create a space with room for the types of personalities we had in the group.

Q: *How has being a member of Theta Chapter helped shape you as a person?*

A: I think the biggest thing is that Theta gave me a sense of place and belonging at Gettysburg that really allowed me to flourish. It also introduced me to people who really challenged me and some of the assumptions I had developed in high school about how the world worked.

Q: *How have Sigma Chi's core values of Friendship, Justice, and Learning influenced your life as an alumnus?*

A: I'm much more of a seven virtues kind of guy, to be honest. When I think of how I'm measuring my own life and career, I am thinking of courage, wisdom, and high ambition, mostly. It's always good to have a reminder to be courteous to all and faithful to friends. Courtesy, especially, is something that's easy to forget about when you have a packed, stressful schedule. For instance, I am not instinctively courteous toward people who schedule 8 a.m. conference calls. But the seven virtues are very much the yardstick by which I measure my life.

Q: *What are some of your favorite Theta Chapter memories?*

A: There was a night involving Little Italy and Times Square in New York City that really stands out to me. The Far Hills Hunt in either 2008 or 2009 was also a fun time. Possibly the most fun nights, though, were the random nights we spent at Mamma V's when our crew was just hanging out and enjoying each other's company.



Q: *What degree did you receive from Gettysburg College?*

A: A bachelor of arts in history and philosophy.

Q: *What is your profession, and how did you get started in that field?*

A: I'm an attorney. I went to law school at the University of Michigan after leaving Gettysburg, and then clerked for two years in Chicago before taking my current position as an associate at a small plaintiffs-side shop.

Q: *What are you most proud of in your career and personal life?*

A: That I've got a dog who is happy and has a healthy sense of what matters. Living out here near Silicon Valley, you meet a lot of people who are very early in their careers but are already doing big things and making lots of money. This environment seems to do a few things to people pretty consistently. First, so many of the people I meet are restless, for lack of a better term. They don't have much grounding and don't know what they want from life. They're in this grinder that is the mythical tech-world, but they're still searching for something. I've never felt that way—I think in part because of my time at Theta Chapter. I won't say I've always been content; I haven't and I don't know if that even would be particularly healthy. However, I've always had a good sense of what I am looking for and how to find it. I think I can thank Sigma Chi for a good bit of that. The other thing I encounter out here is people with an unhealthy relationship with money. Obviously, one needs money to survive and thrive, but it isn't an end unto itself. Your values, your relationship with people, and your relationship with the world are more important, and that's something I've never lost sight of. Again, thanks at least in part to Sigma Chi.

Q: *What are the top five things you learned from Sigma Chi?*

A: How to know when you've had too much to drink; to value your weekends and friends; to give forward to the next generation; not to rest on your laurels; and that someone will always have my back.

Aaron lives in San Francisco, California, and can be reached at jaaronlawson@gmail.com.

CHAPTER OFFICERS

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Pro Consul
Mike Hreben '21

Annotator
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Quaestor
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Magister
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Jack Edelson '21

Kustos
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House Manager
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IFC Representative
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Scholarship Chairman
John Nathaniel Moore '21

Social Chairman
Alex Bobeczko '21

Brotherhood Chairman
Paul Ivans '21

Health and Wellness
(COVID-19) Chairman
Kevin Michael Isky '21

Philanthropy Chairman
Jack Lueddeke '21

Peterson Award Chairman
Samuel Jagolinzer '22

Ritual Chairman
**Matthew Giacomo
Urbano '21**

THETA CHAPTER CREATIVELY AND SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING UNCONVENTIONAL SEMESTER

11th J. Dwight Peterson Significant Chapter
Awarded by Sigma Chi Fraternity



The Seven Rooms recruitment event was held outside this year due to the COVID-19 safety restrictions.

While this school year has been full of change, the brothers of the Sigma Chi Theta Chapter have taken the new circumstances in stride.

Our biggest challenge has been finding ways to adapt our traditions so that they may conform to Gettysburg College's health guidelines. Weekly chapter meetings, Derby Days, the recruitment process, and initiation are just some of the events and rituals that we have had to creatively adjust in order to maintain social distance and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

To begin, our chapter meetings are now held virtually, and even though it can be difficult to connect with brothers online, the virtual meetings have been marked by full attendance and an impassioned brotherhood. Such consistent communication among brothers is what helped us achieve a successful and safe Derby Days. With a new online-only format, Theta was able to continue its long history of philanthropic excellence, raising nearly \$30,000 for the Huntsman Cancer Institute despite a tumultuous ending to the spring semester. For our efforts throughout the year, the chapter



Gus Brouillard '22 at Gettysburg Valley of Death battlefield.



Theta Chapter members ready to extend bids to worthy men.

was awarded our 11th J. Dwight Peterson Significant Chapter Award since 2009 by the International Fraternity.

Upon our return to campus this fall, our recruitment team constructed events that demonstrated our values and interests to potential new members. Most notably, our traditional Seven Rooms event was held outside in school-sponsored tents to implement proper physical distancing between brothers and potential new members. All of the hard work and inventiveness paid off, and we were happy to welcome 16 new pledges into our ranks.

Shortly following our successful recruitment week, Gettysburg College decided to "dedensify" the campus community, only retaining roughly 900 first-year students and a handful of approved upperclassmen. As a result, the Theta Chapter house is once again vacant, and the majority of our brothers have returned home for another remote semester.

While this outcome is demoralizing, especially for our senior class, our successful transition last spring is an indicator of the chapter's dedication and motivation to excel no matter where in the world our brothers reside. Knowing what it takes to accomplish greatness during uncertain times, the Theta Chapter will once again be prepared to overcome these obstacles.

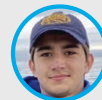
In Hoc,

Justin T. Letizia '21
Consul
letiju01@gettysburg.edu

Welcome to the Brotherhood



Palmer Anderson '23
Morton, Pa.



Nick Cox '23
Purcellville, Va.



Connor Elliott '23
Media, Pa.



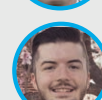
Zac Evans '23
Egg Harbor Township, N.J.



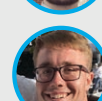
Jeff Gier '23
Oyster Bay, N.Y.



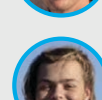
Peter Halsey '23
Essex, Conn.



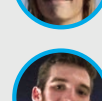
Connor Heath '23
Huntingdon, Pa.



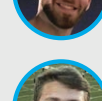
Ronnie Lentz '23
Lewisburg, Pa.



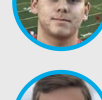
Erick Miller '23
Newtown, Pa.



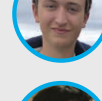
Josh Myers '23
Herndon, Va.



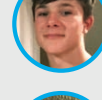
Matthew Rau '23
Castle Pines, Colo.



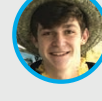
Ben Ropiak '23
Greenwich, Conn.



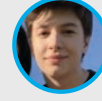
Ken Spadaccini '23
Cresskill, N.J.



Paul Szanto '23
Fanwood, N.J.



Brett Travis '23
Leola, Pa.



Andrew Weinbrum '23
Weston, Conn.

SIGMA CHI BRICK PAVERS SUPPORT THETA CHAPTER HOUSE CORPORATION

Your contribution will directly support the House Corporation's efforts to fund scholarships, travel stipends, workshop expenses, and housing improvements for the undergraduate chapter.

Leave your lasting mark today!

Bricks can be engraved with up to three lines of text with a total of 15 characters per line which includes spaces. All engravings are subject to approval by the House Corporation Board.

Bricks are currently priced at \$150 until the end of 2020.

Payments may be made via online at <http://givebutter.com/aBdT8r> or via check payable to: Theta Chapter House Corp.
2106 Poplar St 19130
Philadelphia, PA

For any questions, please contact **Alec Cottone '17** at cottal01@gmail.com or **Sam Blum '15** at samrblum@gmail.com.



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THETA CHAPTER OF SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY AT GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

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Lawrence, KS 66044-2100

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Alumni Update

CHAPTER ETERNAL



John J. Inch Jr. '48 entered Chapter Eternal on June 25, 2019. He was preceded in death by his wife, Patricia, and his sons, Christopher and Wallace. He is survived by his daughter, Deborah, and son-in-law, Bob Foehring; daughter-in-law, Martha;

three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews. John flew several missions over Germany during World War II. When his plane was shot down he became a POW; severely wounded, he was not expected to live through the night, but his determination, grit, and sense of humor saw him through. He was awarded several medals, including the Purple Heart and the Air Medal with Bronze Cluster. He earned his degree from Gettysburg College after the war and worked for Insurance Company of North America (now CIGNA) as an insurance executive in special risks management for 35 years. In retirement, he enjoyed gardening, computing, and daily swimming. As a disabled American veteran, he also served as an associate chaplain for the Disabled American Veterans in Philadelphia.



Charles D. "Chuck" Thomas '53 of Newark, Del., entered Chapter Eternal on February 9, 2019. He is survived by his wife, Marie; his four children and four stepchildren; 12 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and his sister. Charles was drafted into the

United States Airforce Medical Service (flight surgeon) as a captain and was stationed in

Amarillo, Texas. After his military service, he moved to Delaware and completed his residency at the former Delaware Hospital in 1961-63. He had his own private practice in Newark, specializing in pediatrics. After retiring, Charles worked part time in medical clinics. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, working on cars, home improvement projects, and traveling with wife and friends.



Dr. George C. Newman II '65 entered Chapter Eternal on July 21, 2019. After graduating from Gettysburg College, George completed his Ph.D. in experimental pathology and an M.D. at SUNY Buffalo. He then completed his residency at

the University of Virginia where he earned the School of Medicine James E. Kindred Teaching Award. He was the founding partner of The Newman Group in Hagerstown, where he practiced medicine for 43 years. Additionally, he volunteered at the Community Free Clinic for 18 years where he was a member of the board for 10 years. He is missed by his patients, friends, family, and Sigma Chi brothers.

ALUMNI NEWS

David C. Mattheiss '60 and his wife, Catherine, celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary in February 2020. They have been blessed with three children and their spouses, as well as eight grandchildren, two of whom are married and have made their lives even happier with two great-grandchildren. David and Catherine live in Irvine, Calif., and he retired in 1999 as a sales manager for Liberty Mutual. Email: dcmattheiss@sbcglobal.net

Carl G. "Pete" Yingling '62 retired in 2000 and lives in Gettysburg with his wife, Nancy. Their three children and eight grandchildren also live in Gettysburg. Both of their sons are Sigma Chi alumni of West Virginia University. Pete still drives part time for Gettysburg College, taking people to airports, sporting events, and field trips. His favorite spare time activities are hunting, golf, fishing, and following the Philadelphia Eagles. "Life is good." Email: pyingling@embarqmail.com

Gary M. Bootay '63 and his wife, Edie, live in Hummelstown, Pa. They have two daughters and two sons, as well as five grandchildren. He retired in July 2003 as an IT specialist and database administrator for the U.S. Navy and Department of Defense. Email: bgootay@comcast.net

Ron Bailey '67 retired from practicing dentistry in 2017. He and his wife, Nancy, live in Connecticut where they play golf, garden, and exercise. Their grandson plays AAU basketball for the Riverside Hawks and their granddaughter competes in equestrian events. During the winters, Ron and Nancy spend three months in Sarasota, Fla., and enjoy spending time on the beach with friends. Ron loves seeing **Rich Renza '67** in Florida or at Penn State games. Email: rjdmd@gmail.com

John C. Eiche Jr. '78 has been married to his wife, Barbara, for 40 years! They live in Marlton, N.J., and they have three children and five grandchildren. John is active in his parish and the Knights of Columbus. He's employed by MaGrann Insulation as an estimator.