

# RCAA Newsletter

February 2011

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## President's Note

*Jake Bendel, P1031,  
RCAA President*

The beginning of a new year usually means resolutions and changes for everyone. This year is no different, especially for the Rho Chapter actives.

The 2010 fall semester had its share of good news and bad for the members of the active chapter. Difficult decisions had to be made in regards to the TKE house forcing major changes in their every day way of life and routine, as well as unfounded misconduct allegations that brought upon an additional disruption for the active officers, members and new initiates.

The important fact is that the chapter was able to overcome these obstacles and maintain their streak of unprecedented growth in the form of twenty three new initiates in the fall.

The chapter has demonstrated their true beliefs and brotherhood by turning these negative events into positive ones by keeping morale high and forging forward. I'm proud to say that we continue to grow and work towards a goal of top TKE chapter in 2011.

The New Year brings additional challenges and opportunities for our active chapter and alumni base. We will be holding RCAA elections leading up to RCB, and hope to leverage our positive momentum with some new energy and excitement. Now, more than ever Rho Chapter can use the support of its

alumni base. I urge you to nominate fellow alumni, both old and new.



Finally, we look forward to seeing everyone at the 2011 Red Carnation Ball, held on April 9th at de Lazy Lizard. I encourage everyone to attend – more details are included later in this newsletter.

## Active Chapter Update

*Will Carswell, P1136, Prytanis*

Rho chapter is off to another great start with the spring 2011 semester. We opted to go with quality over quantity this spring and turned a few candidates down to ensure we had a solid group of young men. On Friday January 28<sup>th</sup> we accepted 6 pledges into our newly redesigned pledge process to bring the total to 92 active members.

Elections have now been completed for the upcoming 2011-2012 school year, congratulations to the following new officers:

**Eric Bechtel**, Prytanis  
**Jake Springer**, Internal Epi-Prytanis  
**Peyton Bartlett**, External Epi-Prytanis  
**Joshua Cooper**, Hypophetes  
**Donnie Redman**, Crysophylos  
**Nicholas Sagginario**, Hegemon  
**Alex Rist**, Pylortes  
**Brendan Jobin**, Grammateus

\*Elections were cut short and the Histor will be voted into office on Sunday February 6<sup>th</sup>

This semester we will be continuing our community service work with Spencer Stemple, and will be pursuing opportunities with the Humane Society and Habitat for Humanity. We look forward to a very exciting semester and hope to do well in Greek Week as well as all of the sorority philanthropies.

Morale is at an all time high and Rho chapter is very excited for the rest of the school year.

## New Member Education Initiative

*Will Carswell, P1136, Prytanis*

The Rho Chapter has partnered with TKE Nationals to redesign its new member education program to better align the program with the principals of TKE. Carswell says “we have also managed to keep a lot of Rho Chapter traditions intact, and overall we are very excited to begin the new process”

The redesign is a valuable endeavor, driven by an unfortunate incident. Last semester, TKE Nationals received anonymous calls claiming allegations of hazing at the Rho TKE house.

TKE Nationals visited the WVU campus to investigate Rho chapter’s new member processes, traditions, and practices. After a week of interviews and meetings, Nationals did not find hazing, but concluded that some things the chapter was doing were “not in line with the principles of TKE”.

For the findings, Rho chapter is serving one year probation and is being asked to complete a series of tasks, including revamping the new member education. Nationals will periodically check back with the chapter to ensure completion of the required tasks.

## Housing Update:

### *New Owner and University Management Pending*

*Matt Brady, P945, Housing Chairman*

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus wrote “The only constant is change.” For the TKE house of Rho chapter that seems to be the case.

It is with mixed emotions that I inform you our Fraternity house located at 692 North High Street has been sold by Frater Justin Byers P.967.

Justin Byers owned the property for nearly a decade and personally undertook the reconstruction of the house our chapter resides in today. As you may be aware the construction of the current house went over budget which ultimately forced the sale of the property.

As a part of the sale, two key stipulations were included in the contract. The first is the property must remain a Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity house as long as the TKE’s remain on campus and are in good financial standing with the new landlord. The second is Frater Byers has first right of refusal if the property is ever put up for sale. Both items help insure the longevity and stability of our chapter at 692. North High Street.

On behalf of the Alumni Association and the Active Chapter I would like to recognize and thank Frater Byers for the years of sacrifice and commitment he has made to Rho Chapter. Thank you!

The new owner of 692 North High Street is Mike Pinion, a real estate broker and business owner in Morgantown. In his short time as new owner, Mr. Pinion has performed numerous improvements such as replacing light bulbs in the basement,

securing all exterior doors, patching all holes in the wall, and replacing doors/sinks/fixtures as needed in individual rooms.

He also sends workers to shovel and salt sidewalk and driveway every time it snows. He plans on painting the hallways and basement as well as finishing the basement floor, all before May. The chapter feels he has been a very good landlord thus far.



### *University Management*

The new landlord is in the process of finalizing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with West Virginia University to manage the day to day operations of the property beginning May 2011.

Once executed, the MOU means the University will be responsible for all rent collection, property maintenance and residential services. Additionally, the chapter will no longer be allowed to hold in-house parties (unless approved by the University) and will be required to have a live in Resident Assistant (a.k.a. House Dad).

The Resident Assistant is typically a graduate student at WVU.

The actives are aware of the change in ownership and of the pending University management. In speaking with the current Prytanis Will Carswell P.1136, the chapter is taking everything in stride and embracing the transition.

## Red Carnation Ball

April 9, 2011  
Morgantown, WV

### Tickets

Tickets are \$70 for members & \$95 for non-RCAA members, dates are no-charge. Please pay by March 31. Use Pay Pal on the RhoTKEAlumni.org website, or pay by check. Go to the "[Dues & Donations](#)" page for details.

### Lazy Lizard

RCB will be held upstairs at "Da Lazy Lizard Lounge" on High Street and features dinner, drinks, and dancing. Events begin 6pm.

### Hotel Morgan

Make reservations at the near-by Hotel Morgan, call them at 304-292-8200. Alternatively, try the nearby Waterfront Place Hotel at 866-782-9974.

### Alumni Meeting and Officer Coronation

The semi-annual Alumni Meeting will take place at 2pm Sat. April 9 at the TKE house, 692 N. High St. All alumni welcome.

### Golf Outing

Saturday, you are invited to join an active-alumni round of golf with tee-times beginning at noon. Reservations required. Nine-hole cost with cart is \$40/per. If you'd like to play, email Gabe at [gibellino.gabe@gmail.com](mailto:gibellino.gabe@gmail.com).

Mr. Pinion has contacted with the University manage the property. TKE will now be one of 11 (out of 14) fraternities on campus now under University management or ownership. There has been a shift underway for years on campus from Nationals or Alumni-owned houses to University ownership or management.

Residential models without University involvement are a dying breed. The University's ultimate goal is to operate and/or own all fraternity houses on campus.

Rho Chapter Alumni Association is already engaged with the University to make sure the Tau Kappa Epsilon's best interest is at the forefront during this transition and will continue to take an active role in the residential well being of our active members.

On a related note, on Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> at the Erickson Alumni Center in Morgantown, the WVU Student Organization Services department and West Virginia University officials hosted a "WVU Greek Alumni Housing" seminar during which the University shared their strategic vision for the future of Greek housing. Myself and other RCAA alumni officers participated by phone. I will share my takeaways from the meeting in the next newsletter.

## RCAA Officer Elections

Gary Bass, P775

March is the time for Alumni Association officers and Chairman nominations. All Alumni are encouraged to nominate themselves or another Alumni Frater(s) or for an position of leadership in the RCAA organization. Please volunteer to take a leadership role in the association, and make your nominations today. The Officer positions are:

**President:** Serves as head of the Alumni Association and organizes the meetings and topics to be discussed, calls the meetings, delegates the duties to the appropriate people, and makes sure that things get done on time.

**Vice President:** Serves as the liaison to the Active Chapter to coordinate

anything that needs done between both groups, runs meetings when President can't be there, helps to keep Chairs organized and performing duties on time.

**Secretary:** Takes the minutes of meetings and post them online for viewing, communicates with Internationals when needed and other duties as necessary.

**Treasurer:** Keeps the books in order, handles the bank accounts, collects dues and other funds, makes deposits, handles payments to others.

## Chairmanships

**Membership recruitment:** Job is to actively recruit old and new members to join the Alumni Association, and pay dues.

**Activities:** Job is to organize the Alumni Tailgate at Homecoming, work with the Active Chapter on RCB, and work on an event during the summer for Alumni members.

**Scholarship:** Job is to keep the two scholarships alive and going for years to come, ask and collect donations from Alumni Fraters, keep track of donations and have the donation plaques engraved, keep track of Active members grades and other standards in order to present scholarship awards at RCB, and have award plaques engraved, work with Treasurer to keep track of all monies coming in and making deposits as needed, communicate with Internationals to check on status of our Scholarship Fund at Internationals, follow up on donations made to the Teke Educational Fund in Rho Chapters name.

**Housing:** Work with Chapter to see what needs done around the house to make it better, seek donations from Alumni in order to improve the house or purchase a new house down the

road, work with the WVU Greek housing people when needed.

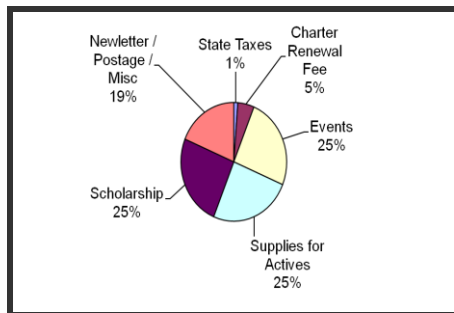
**Networking:** New Chairmanship started this last year, so it is a work in progress. Job is to organize a committee that will seek out Fraters in the working world who will let us know what jobs their companies are hiring for, organize a site where new Alumni and other Alumni can go to post resumes, Come up with literature that can be given out to Seniors about how to write a resume, tips on looking for a job, tips on how to interview.

## Dues

Just \$25 a year helps RCAA sponsor events and keeps the organization running. April is the month all annual dues are collected for the fiscal year of April 2011-2012.

If you are a WVU TKE alumni or transfer, please consider becoming and RCAA member this year by sending your \$25 donation.

Your membership pays for: alumni events, the scholarship funds, chapter support, alumni communication and mail campaigns to find alumni. And you will receive a RCAA Membership Card.



While joining or renewing your membership, add a \$25, \$50, \$100, or \$1000 donation to your dues payment to help RCAA reach its housing and scholarship goals.

To pay dues now using Pay Pal or Check, click "[Dues & Donations](#)" to go to the Rho TKE Alumni website.

\* For Paypal add 1.25 for services charge.

\* For checks, make out "Tau Kappa Epsilon Rho Chapter Board of Control, Inc." and send to Daniel Long, 45582 Trestle Terrace, Sterling, VA 20166

## Thanks Cooks!

The Alumni Association wants to thank those who brought food to the Alumni Tailgate at Homecoming to supplement the RCAA spread. Special thanks to Gary Welsh-Bass and his wife, and Jeremy Johnson (an ETSU TKE) and his wife. It was great food and great reunion of friends.

## Stay Connected

### Rho Chapter Web site

[www.rhoTKEalumni.org](http://www.rhoTKEalumni.org)

Find alumni association news, find brothers' addresses, pay dues, view pictures, get event information, read past newsletters, and more.

### Facebook RCAA Fan Page

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

Register free on this social networking site and Search for "Rho Chapter Alumni Association". Keep up with your friends, including TKE alumni. Post pictures, tell people what you've been up to, and invite friends to join your network.

