

**Bethany Chapter's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Remarks**

June 19, 2010

By Jonathan J. Brant, *Miami '75*

THANK YOU, PAUL. PRESIDENT MILLER, BROTHERS, BETA SWEETHEARTS, AND FRIENDS OF BETA:

FIRST I WANT TO SPEAK DIRECTLY TO YOU PRESIDENT MILLER AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP OF A MOST SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT AND ATMOSPHERE FOR MEN'S AND WOMEN'S FRATERNITIES TO THRIVE! THANK YOU!

IT IS A PRIVILEGE AND A PLEASURE TO BE WITH ALL OF YOU TONIGHT.

IT'S GRATIFYING TO KNOW THAT BETAS EVERYWHERE ARE GATHERING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR FOR FRATERNAL FELLOWSHIP AND CELEBRATION OF OUR LASTING BROTHERHOOD. I ENJOY BEING WITH BROTHERS AND FRIENDS OF BETA, LIKE YOU. BETA GATHERINGS SUCH AS THE ONE WE ARE EXPERIENCING TONIGHT ARE SYMBOLIC OF BETA'S GREAT VALUE OF LIFELONG BROTHERHOOD.

I BRING GREETINGS FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE IN OXFORD, OHIO AS WELL AS THE VOLUNTEER BOARD MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL FRATERNITY AND FOUNDATION.

The Board of Trustees is comprised of some incredibly talented volunteers – and I stress the term volunteers – all from different schools, backgrounds, age-ranges and regions of North America. (Made note that Bill Newton, Psi '75 is the brother of Trustee Jeff Newton, Miami '77) Like you, each of the Trustees has a love and passion for Beta Theta Pi. As you can imagine, keeping up with 6,814 undergraduates and 123,083 alumni....to be exact, is no small task!

Your Psi Chapter of Beta Theta Pi knows that loving and passionate spirit well, because for generations you have exemplified it. "THINGS OF THE SPIRIT" IS THE PSI CHAPTER MOTTO. AND FOR 150 YEARS YOU HAVE BEEN DETERMINED TO HAVE A BETA CHAPTER AT BETHANY.

YOUR CHAPTER'S GREAT HERITAGE REMINDS ME OF A STATEMENT BY WILLIS O. ROBB, *OHIO WESLEYAN* 1879. HE WAS AN EARLY EDITOR OF *THE BETA THETA PI* MAGAZINE.

ROBB WROTE "AND WE CANNOT DOUBT THAT IN THIS, AS IN OTHER RESPECTS, OUR 'FUTURE WILL COPY FAIR OUR PAST," AND THAT IN THE WORLD OF FIFTY YEARS FROM NOW, AS IN THAT OF YEARS AGO – AS IN THAT LIES AROUND US TODAY – THE FIRST MARK OF A BETA WILL BE HIS BETA SPIRIT."

And tonight, we are celebrating a span of three times fifty years. It's just an awesome span of Beta spirit to think about!

I found that in Oxford, the Beta Museum and Archives includes a letter written by Psi Brother James H. Anderson, dated April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1872.

Undergraduate Brother Anderson writes as Psi Chapter's corresponding secretary, "We are a new chapter, started only a few months ago, and are as yet small in number, though strong in our faith and we need all the requisites to keep us going along smoothly. I don't know whether or not you know how it is with a new chapter just started, but there is nothing more encouraging or that tends more to increase the prosperity of a new chapter than to have catalogues and all such things that they need in the exercises of their chapter. We have only four men at present,

but they are all filled with the true Greek spirit, and work with a will, in anything that may pertain to their great order.”

You and I should be motivated by that Beta spirit identified by Brother Robb, or that spirit of being a “universal man” as proclaimed by the Greeks and Brother Anderson – only this motivation should be directed toward a worthy purpose.

Yes, Beta Theta Pi is a Brotherhood – however, it must be more to be relevant to Bethany College. Beta Theta Pi must be a Brotherhood with a worthy purpose!

As an American college fraternity, and for you as a fraternity chapter, one of our most important priorities is the promotion and advancement of Beta's highly successful *Men of Principle* initiative. As your Psi Chapter has experienced, in just 12 short years, we have reclaimed our position as the fraternity known for leadership development. We have won many interfraternal honors for our new leadership programs, and our commitment to fostering collaborative relationships with university administrators and faculty is second to none.

What is the "State of the Fraternity." I offer you my heart-felt belief ... **Beta Theta Pi** continues down a values-oriented, leadership- development-driven, brotherhood-centered, fun-yet-safe fraternal path. Do we have challenges and hurdles to clear? Of course. But, rest assured, Beta has never been more focused and determined to lead North America's Greek communities. Here's just a sample of your Fraternity's progress:

- As of 2009, our average chapter size has increased from 49 to 58 undergraduates.
- We are currently expanding or recolonizing four campuses per year and our 6,814 undergraduates are found on 119 college campuses.

- In 1998, we had an average of just under two alumni serving as advisors to each of our chapters. Now, we average close to seven advisors per chapter – many of whom are women and non-Betas. This increase has been among the most important factors in effecting positive change in our Fraternity. Thank you, Psi Chapter advisors!
- In 1997, the Fraternity-wide GPA was 2.8. In 2008, Beta Theta Pi's Fraternity-wide GPA again exceeded 3.0. As our GPA results for 2009 are reported in the coming weeks, we hope to once again exceed the 3.0 mark!
- In 1996, the Beta Theta Pi Foundation sponsored four young Betas to attend a major national leadership conference or program. At the time, we thought that was a big deal. Today, however, we have, The John and Nellie Wooden Institute for Men of Principle, The Miller Nichols Chapter Presidents Leadership Academy, The Hugh E. Stephenson Jr. Leadership Summit, The Peter F. Greiner Leadership College, Advisory Team Conferences, The Men of Principle Scholarship Grant Program, the Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute, Futures Quest and the Keystone Regional Leadership Conferences. Now ... listen carefully. Last year, your Fraternity provided 1,571 major undergraduate leadership experiences!

That, my friends, is an objective testament to the good things that are happening in Beta Theta Pi.

THESE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE PROMOGATING BETA'S THREE GREAT PRINCIPLES, MOVING THE FRATERNITY CLOSER TO THE DAY THAT WE HAVE UNIFORM, EXCELENT BETA EXPERIENCES IN ALL CHAPTERS.

BWC - OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP AND HARD SKILLS ARE COMBINED WITH A FOCUS ON THE RITUAL OF BETA THETA PI). THE BWC EXPERIENCE IS REALLY A METAPHORE FOR EARNING OUR BETA BADGE EVERYDAY. AS HAROLD MELCHERT WROTE:  
*“LIVE YOUR LIFE EACH DAY AS YOU WOULD CLIMB A MOUNTAIN. AN OCCASIONAL GLANCE TOWARD THE SUMMIT KEEPS THE GOAL IN MIND, BUT MANY BEAUTIFUL SCENES ARE TO BE OBSERVED FROM EACH NEW VANTAGE POINT. CLIMB SLOWLY, STEADILY, ENJOYING EACH PASSING MOMENT, AND THE VIEW WILL SERVE AS A FITTING CLIMAX FOR THE JOURNEY.”*

IN FACT THE ARRAY OF BETA LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS PROVIDE THAT SLOW, STEADY TRAIL FOR THE BETA JOURNEY! BUT TOWARD WHAT GOAL?

OUR GOAL IS REPRESENTED IN BETA'S THREE GREAT PRINCIPLES!

1. MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

NIC'S COMMISSION ON VALUES AND ETHICS DEVELOPED THIS BASE STATEMENT FOR ALL OF ITS SUBSEQUENT WORK, ENTITLED "WE ARE FRATERNITY."

*“WE, AS FRATERNITY, BELIEVE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT. THE WAY IN WHICH THE HUMAN SPIRIT IS DEVELOPED IS THROUGH THE RELATIONSHIP WE HAVE WITH EACH OTHER, OURSELVES, AND WITH GOD. THOSE RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE ESSENCE OF OUR IDENTITY. IT IS THROUGH FRATERNITY WITH OTHERS THAT WE KNOW WHO WE ARE. A PRIMARY SOURCE OF UNHAPPINESS IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF THINGS AND EVENTS, BUT RATHER THE ABSENCE OF POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS. THEREFORE, WE AS FRATERNITY, MAKE ONE BASIC STATEMENT. WE BELIEVE IN EACH OTHER. IT IS THROUGH THE VALUES EXPRESSED IN THE RITUAL THAT WE SHARE THIS BELIEF. IT IS THROUGH OUR ACTIONS THAT WE EXEMPLIFY THIS BELIEF.”* MUTUAL ASSISTANCE!

2. CONFIDENCE AND TRUST (PARAPHRASED FROM THE CPLA ILLUSTRATION BY BOB COTTRELL, MIAMI '54)

TO THE UNDERGRADUATES:

I ENVY THE POSITION YOU ARE IN!

- YOU ARE YOUNG.
- YOU OBVIOUSLY HAVE LEADERSHIP SKILLS THAT HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED BY YOUR PEERS.
- YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN, BY BETA THETA PI, FIRST CLASS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE UNIQUE WITHIN THE FRATERNITY SYSTEM.

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, YOU ARE BRINGING THESE TALENTS INTO THE ADULT WORLD AT A TIME WHEN THEY ARE BADLY NEEDED.

NEVER BEFORE HAS THERE BEEN A GREATER NEED FOR COMPETENT LEADERSHIP THAN EXISTS TODAY; LEADERSHIP THAT IS BUILT UPON ROCK SOLID PRINCIPLES AND THAT PROVIDES AN UNCOMPROMISING FOUNDATION TO ACHIEVE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

BEING A CHAPTER LEADER IS NOT JUST AN HONOR, IT IS A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.

AND I SUBMIT TO YOU THAT THE SAME CAN BE SAID FOR EACH OF US... THAT BEING A "BETA" OR "FRIEND OF BETA" IS NOT JUST AN HONOR, IT IS A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY!

. . . LEADERSHIP REQUIRES THE ABILITY TO PROJECT CONFIDENCE AND TRUST. BY ALL OF YOUR ACTIONS YOUR TEAM MUST KNOW, WITH NO UNCERTAINTY, WHAT YOUR BASIC PRINCIPLES ARE AND MUST, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, SEE THEM DEMONSTRATED IN ALL OF YOUR ACTIONS.

SO AS A MAN OF PRINCIPLE, YOU APPLY THESE PRINCIPLES IN EVERYTHING YOU DO, WHETHER IT IS IN THE CLASSROOM, WITH YOUR FAMILY, IN THE TEACHING OF YOUR CHILDREN, YOUR WORKPLACE . . . WHEREVER YOU GO.

YOU WANT TO BE SURE THAT WHAT OTHERS SEE YOU “DO” REFLECTS WHAT YOU SAY YOU ARE. OTHERWISE “WHAT YOU DO SPEAKS SO LOUD THAT I CAN’T HEAR WHAT YOU SAY.”

SOCRATES SAID, “MAY THE INWARD AND OUTWARD MAN BE ONE.”

### 3. CULTIVATION OF THE INTELLECT

PSI CHAPTER’S EFFORTS TO DESERVE THE W. KIRK WOLLERY AWARD FOUR OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IS EVIDENCE OF THE HIGH REGARD YOU PLACE ON THIS GREAT PRINCIPLE. LET ME ENCOURAGE US ALL TO THINK OF CULTIVATION OF THE INTELLECT AS EVEN MORE THAN GRADE POINT AVERAGES, RATHER A LIFELONG CURIOSITY!

THE BETA THETA PI MAGAZINE IS A GREAT SOURCE OF CONTINUOUS LEARNING. TAKE A LOOK AT THE “BOOKS BY BETAS” SECTION. I AM FORTUNATE THAT I CAN UTILIZE THE JRK MEMORIAL LIBRARY, WHICH IS NEARBY MY OFFICE. THE BOOK, MR. LINCOLN’S T-MAIL BY TOM WHEELER, OHIO STATE ’68 IS A GOOD EXAMPLE.

BROTHER TOM WRITES, “THERE WERE OVER 135 BILLION EMAILS SENT EVERY DAY IN 2005... WE HAVE PROUDLY PROCLAIMED THAT WE ARE AT THE DAWN OF THE

'INFORMATION REVOLUTION.' EXAMPLES OF THIS ARE EVIDENT EVEN IN THE CURRENT ELECTION IN TERMS OF HOW POLITICAL FUND RAISING WAS BOLSTERED ELECTRONICALLY TO THE RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT (RECENT ARTICLE) THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL NOT HAVE TO GIVE UP HIS "BLACKBERRY." FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE PRESIDENT CAN USE E-MAIL. DESPITE THE HYPE, HOWEVER, THIS IS NOT A REVOLUTION THAT BEGAN WITH THE PRESENT GENERATION. THE BIRTH OF THE INFORMATION AGE WAS ANNOUNCED TO THE WORLD BY DOTS AND DASHES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY. THE TELEGRAPH WAS THE E-MAIL OF THE 1800S AND ITS IMPACT BACK THEN WAS EVEN MORE PROFOUND THAN TODAY'S 'INFORMATION REVOLUTION.'"

"WHAT IS OF COURSE IMPOSSIBLE, BUT IF WE DID IT, THAT WOULD MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE?" – FUTURIST JOEL BARKER

THE TELEGRAPH REPRESENTED THE "IMPOSSIBLE" AND THESE "MESSAGES BY LIGHTNING CHANGED THE WAY PEOPLE THOUGHT. THE AXIUM THAT DISTANCE SLOWED THE SPREAD OF INFORMATION CHANGED OUR MINDSET. IN METEOROLOGY, WEATHER WARNINGS COULD BE SENT AHEAD. NEWS COULD REACH THE CITIZENS MORE RAPIDLY THAN EVER BEFORE. THE TELEGRAPH COMBINED WITH THE GROWTH OF THE RAILROAD CHANGED MARKETS AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS.

I WANT TO SUGGEST A PARRALLEL BETWEEN EMAILS THE TMAIL RELATIONSHIP AND THE RITUAL AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT.

MR. LINCOLN USED THE TELEGRAPH TO EXPAND UPON HIS LEADERSHIP INSTINCTS, NOT TO TRANSFORM THEM. IN A SIMILAR MANNER, BETA THETA PI IS USING



VANGUARD LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES AND PROGRAMS OF THE MEN OF PRINCIPLE INITIATIVE TO EXPAND INFLUENCE OF THE FRATERNITY'S THREE GREAT PRINCIPLES, NOT TRANSFORM THEM.

CLOSING

REGARDLESS OF OUR AGES, WE HAVE THE PRIVILEGE AND OPPORTUNITY, IF NOT RESPONSIBILITY, TO EARN OUR BETA BADGE EVERYDAY!" THIS INVOLVES LIVING THE THREE GREAT PRINCIPLES OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE, CULTIVATION OF THE INTELLECT AS WELL AS CONFIDENCE & TRUST.

LET'S REMEMBER THAT "THE FIRST MARK OF A BETA, IS HIS BETA SPIRIT!" AND JUST AS YOUR CHAPTER'S MOTTO ADMINISHES, LET US REMAIN DETERMINED WITH THE FAITH AND WILL TO WORK FOR THE NEXT 150 YEARS TO ENSURE PSI CHAPTER IS MADE OF VALUABLE "THINGS OF THE SPIRIT!" I AM PROUD TO BE A BETA! THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO JOIN IN THIS GREAT CHAPTER'S CELEBRATION!