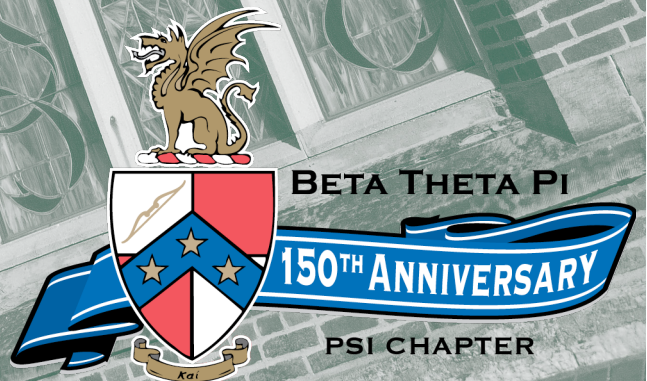


*Beta Theta Pi 150th Reunion*  
*President Scott D. Miller*  
June 19, 2010



BETA THETA PI

PSI CHAPTER



Good evening and welcome back to Bethany College, your alma mater and the source of your ongoing legacy as part of the Beta brotherhood.

It is a special pleasure to welcome home Bethany's Betas this weekend. I am thankful for the opportunity to congratulate you personally on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Beta Theta Pi's founding here as Psi chapter — established on December 8, 1860.

Fraternalities have been important features of Bethany life throughout its history — fostering friendships that last well beyond their beginnings here on the mountaintop. Beta Theta Pi is no exception, with a mission to build men of principle for a principled life. The Beta brotherhood builds intellectual excellence, high standards of moral conduct and responsible citizenship — features that characterize its members for a lifetime.

During even the most challenging times, Beta brothers have banded together with tenacity and resourcefulness.

According to College history, Bethany's Psi chapter — which had been established for less than a year — remained active even through the intensity of the Civil War. And the Bethany brotherhood continued to grow, even in the face of some of the nation's most intense challenges.

Moving into the “Roaring 20s” Post World War I era, Beta (along with the College's other fraternities and sororities) flourished. By then it was firmly established as a key source of fellowship and friendship for Bethany students.

Betas have long embodied a certain creative spirit — especially one of philanthropy, and examples of their service span across the generations. In 1957 an auction was held to help raise funds for World University Service, an organization designed to help subsidize needy students. Members of the Beta Theta Pi Fraternity paid \$10 to receive breakfast in bed, served by a faculty member. More recently, our Beta brothers have been a dedicated part of Bethany's Hands to Haiti efforts, raising funds for those in urgent need of help and relief.

Of course, Betas also know how to have fun — sometimes gaining international recognition in the process. In 1977, 10 members of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity became known around the world. After playing basketball for 75 continuous hours, they set a record for the Guinness Book of Records for the longest game. Final score: 4,966 and 4,958.

You have no doubt noted some changes on campus since your days as a Beta as we continue a series of transformative initiatives to position Bethany as a vital institution for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond, building on a proud and historic foundation. You each have been and continue to be an integral part of this change and of Bethany's innovative history.

Bethany's Psi chapter was born just 20 years after the founding of the College. And much of our chapter's remarkable past mirrors that of the College itself.

As some of you know, Bethany turned 170 years old this year and, much like Beta, it has seen its share of trials and tribulations.

Of the more than 660 small liberal arts colleges founded in the “golden age” of American higher education



from 1830-1860, fewer than 20 percent, including Bethany, have survived the tumult of wars, economic depression and changing demographics.

Describing several precipitous eras of struggle and subsequent renewal, one biographer writes that the college at times has survived on “soul and grit.”

The same might be said for Beta Theta Pi, who saw more men serve in the Civil War than from any other fraternity. Many chapters across the nation didn't survive the threat to the brotherhood. But the strength that the Psi chapter developed in a time of crisis would allow it not only to persevere, but to grow and flourish into the brotherhood we celebrate this evening.

It's been more than a century and a half since Alexander Campbell established this mountaintop campus, the oldest institution of higher education in West Virginia. Campbell proved to be a visionary leader at a time when there was just a relative handful of colleges in the entire nation, providing both the land and the funding and serving as Bethany's first president. Likewise, Bethany's Psi chapter has demonstrated integrity, loyalty, and vision throughout its long and proud tenure at Bethany.

The Psi chapter has been recognized consistently — both nationally and within the College — for its members' superior academic performance. Just this year our own Beta Randal Stuckwish was presented with Bethany's Oreon E. Scott Award, given annually to the graduating senior with the highest academic standing. Without your efforts, Psi Chapter would not have received the Woolery Cup for the men's highest GPA on campus, exceeding 3.0.

Numerous Betas have gone on to serve in essential leadership positions — at Bethany and throughout the world. Supreme Court Justice Joseph Rucker Lamar — an 1877 graduate — is just one example among many. Many Betas have served and now serve on Bethany College's Board of Trustees – playing a crucial role in our continued success as a small college of national distinction. Betas currently serving on the College's Board are Greg Jordan, Neil Christman, James Companion and Gary Novak. Some of our Beta Emeriti Board members include O. John Alpizar, Frederick Bloemke, Rodney Hurl, Robert Ponton, William Ryan and Harold Watkins.

The leadership of Beta men at Bethany successfully paved the way, in fact, for the ongoing central role that Greek organizations play on campus to this day, with ten such organizations and nearly half of current students now holding membership.



On December 8, 1860, when the Psi chapter was founded, the town of Bethany was still a part of Virginia. Abraham Lincoln had been elected President only a month before. And in 12 days South Carolina would secede from the Union, sparking a chain of events that would lead to the start of the Civil War in April 1861. At the dawn of the Industrial Age, our nation was overwhelmingly rural and only a tiny percentage of Americans — almost all upper-class Caucasian males — went on to higher education at all. When a college degree was still a distant dream for most of the population, and the future of our very nation was at stake, your Beta founding brothers became world-class leaders, establishing the first fraternity west of the Allegheny mountains.

Though much has changed throughout Bethany's rich history, like the incredible vistas that surround our campus, much about both Beta Theta Pi and Bethany College has remained the same. Today, I am happy to say, the College's essential character — emphasizing intellectual freedom, diversity, personal growth, leadership and a close academic community — has continued to flourish, as has the Beta Theta Pi Psi chapter.

Alexander Campbell envisioned a liberal arts college that would prepare young scholars for positions of leadership and influence.

Against the odds, our founder pursued a vision that has led to a “small college of national distinction.” More than 22,000 alumni have gone forth to become national and international leaders.

They include a World Court justice, Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist, CEO of UBS the America's, Play by Play broadcaster for the Seattle Mariners, a New York Times Columnist and, of course, the Global Managing Partner of the 15<sup>th</sup> largest law firm in the world, to name just a few.

Similarly, Betas continue to demonstrate their commitment to lives of excellence, just as your founders had hoped.

Bethany Betas' award-winning involvement in leadership programs and superior academic achievements, which distinguish Psi chapter Betas even from other Beta chapters, demonstrate that you've done just that.

I want to congratulate Blake Rowe and his committee for doing such an outstanding job with the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. It is typical of Betas volunteering their time, talent and energy for the greater good. I am pleased to have all of you back on campus this weekend and am even more pleased that you have a reason to return—Psi Chapter is the model fraternity on campus. And, I would like to thank Jonathan Brant and Brian Webber from the National Beta Theta Pi fraternity for celebrating this milestone with us tonight.

Congratulations on 150 years of Beta brotherhood, and best wishes for many, many more!



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