

# Alumni of the Sigma Alpha Chapter of **DELTA KAPPA EPSILON**



and DELTA KAPPA SIGMA P.O. Box 18231, Richmond, Virginia 23226

April 3, 2015

## Alumni Association/Chapter Update

*Dan Johnson, Alumni Board Chairman ('77)*

Dear Fellow DKE/DKS Brothers, Parents and Friends:

Welcome to the combined April Fools' and Easter edition of the VT-DKE Alumni newsletter. We still got all the news that is unfit to print. After a short hiatus, our award-winning *Page 3 Now and Then* column is back; penned by **Matt Wilson '13**. Since these guys have only been out for a year or two, it is pretty much just a Now recap. The chapter continues to grow, currently with 10 pledges in the Spring semester along with 37 active members. The actives are planning another Parent's Weekend during the Spring Game weekend with Open House and BBQ at the DKE House. All alumni in the area or attending the game are welcomed and encouraged to attend. More details below in the Active Chapter report. Never too early to plug the DKE Tailgates for this year starting out with a Labor Day night game against Ohio State and hopefully a return to VT football ACC dominance.

We have earmarked the Friday night game against NC State, on Friday October 9th as our annual DKE Alumni Reunion game larger expanded tailgate activities so mark it on your calendars. Also, we have the always interesting DKE Board of Directors elections this year so if you are so inclined to be nominated (and likely elected in a landslide) please indicate your interest on the information card enclosed. Next newsletter will contain a ballot with all nominees and we will even have a general alumni meeting and Open House prior to the NC State tailgate and game. Like all DKE elections, you can be elected in absentia! Join now and help plan the 45/75/105 year(s) anniversary DKE reunion extravaganza for 2016! The 40/70/100 was a smashing success and every five years we need help to get organized in advance to for this one!

The DKE House is still standing (at least as last reported from the Roanoke Street drive-by). We have the DKE House fully rented for next year with 11 residents signed up, so should be able to cover the mortgage debt, taxes and insurance for another year and afford a can of paint or two. We are planning (funds dependent - hint, hint) on at least starting on the DKE House kitchen revival this summer. We have posted some basic sketch drawings of the kitchen plans and scope of work on the [vtdke.com](http://vtdke.com) website to take a look at. We have finally received a budget estimate from our contractor (Atmosphere Builders) but given cost likely will have to do work in stages. Our plans call for "frat house/industrial class work" which ranks somewhere between flop house and prison grade work. We are counting on a few volunteers to help spearhead a DKE alumni kitchen revival fund raising effort to help pay for this venture. As a start (and a cheap one at that) we are once again holding our annual *Habitat for Inhumanity* weekend at the DKE House on the weekend of June 6-7 (this is actually 5 years running, albeit with somewhat dwindling numbers) We plan to initiate the kitchen renovation work (demolition phase!) and tackle a few other maintenance/repair jobs. We do need some participants (alumni/students/parents) and promise free beer, as well as multiple opportunities clean up the property and to make up for all that shoddy work you guys were responsible over the years. Just as important, we could use a few donations of materials/appliances/\$/sweat labor to help out on the cause. Better to add a few extra bucks to your DKE Annual Giving contribution now and then at least you can say 'I just gave an extra \$\$ this year for the kitchen, what else do you want?' We could really use your help. We got all kinds of stuff in our files that we can bring out. Not only old stuff from your days at VT that but also all kinds of current stuff. Snowden and the NSA files are nothing compared to our stuff. We picked up on an incredible rent-a-shipmate story out of the BVI, just last month that would make your gut split in half. However our silence can be bought!



Also forgot to mention in last newsletter some of the souls that bore the sub-freezing temperature at the UVA last November. With several space heaters in the enclosed DKE tailgate tent, a cauldron of chili (yep a cauldron, just like a witch would use), not to mention ingesting Fireball (they felt hot going down), we didn't lose anyone to frostbite prior to the game. Among the tailgate attendees was **Jim Koutris** W'76 finally making a long overdue appearance at the DKE Tailgate with his son Nick (Wahoo alum and ex-UVA defensive lineman now attending grad school at Wake Forest). Jim claimed he was in Charlottesville for previous 3 years watching Nick play. An acceptable excuse for those years but hard to justify missing the previous 25 years! Jim is still working with Marriott constructing hotels; so if during your next stay the shower pressure is too low and the door doesn't shut right you know who to blame. We also hear that **Charlie Webb** really, really, really is getting married 'this' summer.

Brother (and my next door neighbor!) **Floyd Adams Jr.** '56 sent in a link to a VT Corps Review alumni magazine article penned by fraternity brother and fellow classmate **MAJ (Ret.) Randall V Everett III** featuring his own illustrious military career and life since leaving VT. A link has been posted up on the vtdke.com website. Our website is still undergoing a 'rebuild/upgrade' since we moved servers a few years back in a cost saving move. Given the high level of web traffic measured in the 'tens of views' per year or so, we could use some traffic. To see if anyone is actually been on the website we suggest you take a look and hit the 'like' button on Brother Everett's article. It will also be a test if you actually read the newsletter this far down or chucked it in the trash.

Of even more worthless news, yours truly has been appointed as a Director of the DKE International fraternity (an obvious sign of my advancing age and growing senility) and now I have a first-hand view of how screwed up things can get with fraternities across the country (and into Canada too). Fraternities are (and will always be) easy targets for PC righteous school officials to blame problems on (many deservedly, but some not); and under siege for just about everything. For example, at Wesleyan College in Connecticut, the DKE chapter charter was recently terminated as the school is requiring all fraternities, and their houses, to become coed as the solution to stop college kids from having sex/drugs/rock-n-roll and whatever may happen at frat houses there; while at the same time the college there provides a separate dorm/residence living opportunities for every imaginable group segregated by nationality, religion, sexual persuasion or other belief. Throw in the controversies around the country and the Rolling Stone article regarding fraternity life at UVA, (which turned out to be a fabrication); life as a fraternity man has come under siege. Risk management is paramount in today's Greek Life everywhere.

Overall the business plan hasn't changed over the history of your DKE chapter. We are a social fraternity, and every year, a group of 18-21 year-old men elect a 20 year-old peer member to run the DKE chapter in Blacksburg. This group of scholars, gentlemen and jolly good fellows sometimes always don't do the smartest things. Sometimes, just like us back when we were there, they do dumb shit. And nowadays, with smart phones, email and social media, etc., lots of this dumb stuff gets recorded, unlike in years past. I reckon in today's world, that our once infamous 'penny-a-pound' entry fee program would be considered demeaning to some; instead of an innovative, very sound economic practice directly relating revenue to beer consumption costs.....but what do I know. Meanwhile, the chapter has not had any ticketed noise complaints, and beyond warning letter(s) complaining about the garbage build-up in the driveway is staying out of trouble. The chapter is in its fourth year of a five-year suspension from being a VT student organization and member of the IFC. While the chapter intends to apply for reinstatement next Spring, it unfortunately will mean another drought year without a DKE float being entered in the homecoming parade.

One last reminder to get involved; join the VT-DKE alumni association board; help organize our 75-year reunion; show up at the Habitat for Inhumanity weekend; come to a DKE tailgate in Lot 4; stop by the DKE House at 302 E. Roanoke Street; make a donation of money, time or materials (can never go wrong with a case of beer or even a case of toilet paper); look up you old pledge brothers and say hello (we can help with addresses and numbers); write a Page 3 column for the newsletter (that way you get rewrite history) or simply put your feet up, pop a cold one and toast ole D-K-E.

FFTHF, Dan Johnson



## Now and Then – Pledge Class Year 2009-2010

### *Matt Wilson, Fall '09*

The Fall '09 pledge class consisted of ten people that miraculously all made it through pledging. With an epic pledge party involving way too many highlighters, Halloween celebrations dressed as Spartan warriors, and Homecoming (Fun Fact: we are the last class to be involved with Homecoming before being placed on Double Secret Probation), there were plenty of shenanigans to showcase us being gentlemen, scholars, and jolly good fellows. Spring '10 consisted of five people who made it through pledging and they each could hold their own in the ways of being a Deke. While a few of these brothers went inactive not long after pledging, from these two classes also came a core group of brothers who would remain active and involved with DKE throughout college.

**Fall '09:** **Kevin Buchanan** was the guy who became President from this group, a tall task for even the heartiest of Dekes, but it somehow all worked out our senior year. He lives in southern Maryland where he works at NAS Patuxent River as a mechanical engineer for NAVAIR. **Steve "Roker" Mattoon**, **Chris Hoteling**, and **Tim "Candy Bars" Sweet** were 3-year residents of the Deke house and were at the center of all happenings at the house during that time. They truly embodied the "Deke or Die" attitude and bled our fraternity's colors. Steve works in Rochester as a software engineer developing monitoring equipment for the power industry. Tim lives in New York City, works in advertising, and thinks he's a big shot. We'll all be sure to get his autograph at the next tailgate. Chris lives in Long Island working for a medical equipment company and is an assistant manager at a private barn. He is also currently applying to go back to school and get an engineering degree. **Josh Keri**, **Andy Gregory**, and **Connor Jarrendt** weren't able to stay active after a few semesters, but on occasion they would grace us with their presence at Deke parties and we would always welcome them with open arms. Josh got married in May 2014 and is working and living in Harrisonburg, VA as an industrial process and safety engineer. He and his wife Ashley are expecting their first child in September. Andy currently lives in Waynesboro, VA where he works with Innovative Refrigeration Systems (the IRS?) as a project manager. He still finds time to go to concerts and keep up with the alumni brothers, and overall says he's doing great. Connor is currently in his first year of pharmacy school at MCV/VCU. He and his friends are starting up an organization to help out veterans in VA (Veterans Affairs) medical centers with drug therapy. He was also recently awarded the S.B. "Jack" Clement scholarship for the year. Despite these nice accomplishments, Connor still manages to keep his priorities straight and maintains his Friday nights consumption whenever possible. **Dave "Stan Dash" Marshall** was and is quite the Deke. Whether it was trying to swoon the Freshman girls with his guitar playing, or having 40's on the veranda, Marshall was never too far from the rumblings happening at the halls of DKE. He currently lives in Charlottesville (we'll try not to hold that against him) and is looking to apply for medical school. **Mike Knowles** was an interesting situation in our pledge class. A childhood friend of Brother **Jason Spooner**, he ended up living in the fraternity house despite not going to VT. Nonetheless, he was a Deke through and through. While he dropped off the face of the Earth after one semester, he is now an airplane mechanic and will be heading to Afghanistan in August with the U.S. Navy. Despite this, I like to think he continues to live in a Deke house, traveling from chapter to chapter and thinking he has to keep pledging over and over again. As for myself, **Matt "Fratty Ice" Wilson**, I am currently working in Richmond, VA as a marketer pushing smokeless tobacco for Altria, and have had the opportunity to travel quite a bit for my job. I still find time to stay in contact with our brotherhood and get into the occasional shenanigans although I'm not going quite as hard as I used to (which is probably a good thing for both my health and sanity).

**Spring '10:** **John "Big John" Surotchak** was the resident country boy. He often wore his DKE letters (sleeves cut off, of course) and was a damn good bouncer at parties. He is a Business Representative for a chemical company and is in the agricultural crop protection industry. He lives in Delaware and works across Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey. **Peter "Pedro" Corrales**, who always made his presence known at parties, works and lives in Arlington, VA for Arlington County's Department of Parks and Recreation as a Recreational Assistant. **Scott Biegert**, **Elias Saljuki**, and **Geoff "Gee-Off" White** weren't able to stay active long after pledging, but they too



would make occasional surprise visits to the house and partake in the celebrations with their brotherhood. Scott lives in Indiana and works for Cummins. He is about to buy a house and will be getting married in October. Elias lives in DC and works in corporate finance. While I haven't heard much from Geoff lately, I can only assume he is continuing on as a gentleman, scholar, and jolly good fellow.

All in all, it is great to see our brotherhood and this particular group of alumni doing well. Being one of the smaller fraternities at Virginia Tech, we had the advantage of truly living the ideals of a brotherhood. We have been fortunate with most of us being able to still stay in touch after graduation. We've had several opportunities to get together and party the only way Dekes can. I look forward to seeing them, and everyone else associated with our great fraternity, again. Hope to see you all at a tailgate!

FFTHF, Matt

## Active Chapter Report

*Will Adams '15, Chapter President*

Spring semester is well underway and the active DKE brotherhood has had a rewarding semester with much more to come. The biannual House Appreciation Day, new officer elections, socials, and philanthropies have highlighted the semester thus far. Anxiously, we await our Spring formal trip to Myrtle Beach, Virginia Tech's Relay for Life, the Spring Game/Parents Weekend, and the unveiling of our first annual "Shrimpfest for MS" philanthropy event benefiting the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

The DKE House saw a complete makeover during the semester. The brotherhood showed its appreciation for our beloved chapter house by each of us putting in over five hours of work and over \$700 in house repairs and aesthetic improvements. We focused our time, energy, and money into a few major house improvements and much needed aesthetic touch ups. We put our carpentry skills to the test in a complete reconstruction of the garage doors and the repair of the basement storm door entrance. Other key improvements included painting the first floor men's bathroom, patching the potholes in the driveway with concrete, planting trees along Penn Street, repainting the entire basement, and a thorough cleaning of the house.

The internal fraternity structure and Sigma Alpha By-Laws were also amended to bring chapter management practices up-to-date with other DKE chapters. A Judicial Review Board consisting of five brothers was created to ensure a behavioral, financial, academic, and participation standard will consistently be met by all brothers. Additionally, because of the chapter's increased philanthropy involvement and continually expanding roll of the Philanthropy Chair, the position was added as a non-voting member of the Executive Council. The terms served by elected Executive Council members was also changed from academic year to calendar year. The changing of terms will allow for an elongated transition period of officers in which the previous officer will be available for consulting and mentoring for a whole semester. The new terms will also help prevent the "Senior Slide" that we all know so well. The changing of Executive Council terms however gives us an uncharacteristic transition period next semester into the new structure. As a result the recently elected officers will be serving for only one semester in the fall. The new officers are as follows: President-**Evan Miller**, Vice President-**Garrett Godshall**, Secretary-**Dan Karch**, Treasurer-**Daniel Joye**, Member-at-Large (VP of Risk Management)-**Henry Mauk**, Social Chair-**Bobby Ross**, Pledgemaster-**Connor Sterne**, Rush Chair-**Will Adams**, Chief Justice-**Julian Gaasche**, and Philanthropy Chair-**Kyle Hawkins**.

The chapter is up to 37 active members with a fine pledge class of 10 bright and hardworking young gentlemen. We're excited to see our chapter at the largest it has been in decades at the conclusion of the semester. Unfortunately none of the pledges this semester are legacies, which we love to see, but two of them do call California their home, which is rare for Virginia Tech. A few brothers have seen their academic efforts take them to new heights. **Ben**



**Brisley**, an architecture student from the Spring '14 pledge class, has the honor of designing a new public library of the City of Winston Salem, NC. The project will hopefully see groundbreaking construction within the year. **Mark Lenzi**, a biochemistry and chemistry student from the Spring '12 pledge class received a grant from the Department of Defense for his mosquito trap design in which he's in the process of applying for a patent. The mosquito trap will be used by the Armed Forces to explore insect populations in potential military occupancy zones.

In closing, I would like to remind all the parents of our second annual Parents Weekend corresponding with the Virginia Tech Spring Game on April 25<sup>th</sup>. We would like to take that time to show our appreciation for your continued support and share with you the projects we have been working on outside of the classroom. Saturday's highlighted events include tours of the house, catered lunch from 12:30-1:30 p.m., President's speech at 1:30 p.m., Spring Game at 2:00 p.m., and then an open house following the Spring Game. We ask that you RSVP the number of family members attending with your son or the President, **Will Adams**, at [willa4@vt.edu](mailto:willa4@vt.edu). It's looking to be an exciting and eventful weekend and we hope you all can make it. All alumni are welcome also.

On behalf of the Sigma Alpha chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon,

Will Adams

## Treasurer's Report

*Mike Beam, Alumni Treasurer (Winter '85)*

A brief summary update of the VT-DKE Alumni Association, Sigma Alpha Properties LLC (the housing corporation), and the Rampant Lion Foundation - Sigma Alpha Fund [our 501 3(c) educational fund] is best described as per the following combined simplified balance sheet as of 3/31/2015 (unaudited of course).

### ASSETS

Cash (operating accounts VTDKE-AA and SAP)	\$ 7,300
Restricted Cash (RLF-SA Fund)	\$ 33,000
Investment (DKE House Notes held in RLF-SA Fund)	\$ 85,000
Real Estate - DKE House (current assessment)	<u>\$ 337,900</u>

<u>Total Assets</u>	\$ 463,200
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### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

#### **Liabilities**

Accounts Payable	\$ 3,600
Notes Payable	
Demand Loan	\$ 60,000
RLF-SA Notes (second mortgages)	\$ 85,000
Mortgage (primary)	\$ 221,000

#### **Equity**

Equity (assets over DKE House assessed Value)	\$ 93,600
<u>Total Liabilities and Equity</u>	\$ 463,200

Now a couple of interesting things can be gathered from this simplified balance sheet as the devil is in the details.

1. The assessed value of the DKE house provides no value of the grandfathered zoning of the property as a Fraternity House a rare and valuable asset in the Town of Blacksburg.
2. The asset of RLF notes asset and liabilities offset each other. We are effectively investing in ourselves.



3. We have excessive debt. The mortgages and demand loans exceed the assessed value of the property.
4. The DKE House is one big money suck, with over \$400,000 in capital upgrades made in last 10 years.

The 2015 DKE Annual Giving Fund is off and running. So far we have received donations from 27 alumni totaling over \$9000 and need an extra push for this year to allow the kitchen upgrade work to start. The DKE House operations are self-funding as the rents collected from the actives living in the house continue to cover the basics (mortgage, insurance, taxes, etc.), but your donations support the major maintenance and capital improvements (and the DKE Tailgate Club), scholarships, and moral support for our Active Chapter (most of us Alumni are a lost cause, but these you men still have a chance!). As always, your comments and donations are welcomed using the enclosed card. I hope you have a chance to make it out to the DKE House and attend a DKE Tailgate. Your support is what makes it happen!

FFTHF, Mike

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