



THE DRAGON'S TALE

SPRING 2026

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NEBRASKA CHAPTER, THE ALPHA TAU OF BETA THETA PI

ALPHA TAU CHAPTER HOUSE WILL BE 100 YEARS OLD IN NOVEMBER



Much of being a Beta is tied to relationships, rituals, and bonding experiences from our time as college students. But a big part of being a Beta at Alpha Tau in Lincoln, Nebraska, is the house at 1515 R Street.

Beta Theta Pi has a long history on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus. In 1888, the University had about 345 students, of whom one-third were Prep Students (high school age). At that time, there was a Beta chapter at the University of Kansas, which recommended that the General Fraternity grant a charter to our Nebraska Chapter. From its beginning, the chapter members called many different places home. At one point, chapter meetings were held in the Supreme Court room at the State Capitol. Between 1888 and 1911, Nebraska Betas lived or met at about ten different locations. In 1911, they moved to 900 South 17th Street and called that location home until 1925.

Fraternity members and alumni continued to look for a better building as close to campus as

possible. The fraternity owned land on North 16th Street, and the University traded that land to Beta for the site at 1515 R Street so the University could build women's dorms on the 16th Street site. The 1515 R Street location was "perhaps the finest site in Lincoln for a fraternity house," according to the brochure issued by the Building Association.

In March 1926, construction began, and on November 13, 1926, the house at 1515 R Street was dedicated at a banquet attended by Beta President **Francis W. Shepardson, Brown 1880.**

In 1963, the west addition, including the first-floor dining room and the chapter room in the basement, was added to the original house. In 2012-2013, the latest update brought the Beta chapter house to its current size and configuration with up-to-date technology, plumbing, heating, and safety standards. The Beta house is home to 71 collegiate students, 50 other collegiates living in apartments around Lincoln, and over 1,000 Beta alums who

consider the Beta house at 1515 R Street their home.

Mark your calendar to help us celebrate 100 years of Nebraska Beta at 1515 R Street this coming fall. We don't know exactly what that celebration will look like yet, but Beta alumni and actives are working together on it. Track our progress by visiting our anniversary page at nebraskabeta.com/100years and make sure you're receiving our monthly emails. If you are not, drop us a line at updates@nebraskabeta.com to get on the list.

Yours in __kai__



Mike Wortman '67



Mark Antonson '04

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am extremely proud and excited to have taken on the role of President of the Alpha Tau chapter this spring. Our chapter has provided me with extensive leadership training, career opportunities, and interpersonal development through its members and alumni. Our former Chapter President, **Nathan Siy '23**, who is also my pledge father, has provided the chapter and me with tremendous support and incredible leadership. I could not be more grateful for this role, and I hope to follow in the footsteps of those who came before me.

For those who do not know me, I am a junior computer science major with minors in math and national security from Woodbury, Minnesota. In my three years as a Beta, I have served as the Communications Chairman, Technology Chairman, and I also work on The Experience Company undergraduate team. All these roles have given me diverse skills and experience, and I hope to bring them to this year's executive team. I am also excited about the team's strong leadership, as **Ryan Beavers '24**, **Oscar Parizek '24**, and I are serving our second term on the executive team. This year's team has strong communication skills and extensive leadership experience through other campus involvements and Beta leadership opportunities. The election for this year's team was the most competitive we have had in my years as a Beta, and our house has taken tremendous pride in that. Since our team has taken office, we have greatly improved the documentation of our risk policy, installed all new chapter roles and positions, and scheduled out all activities for the spring semester.

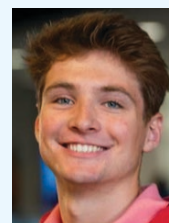
In the week leading up to the spring semester, **Grant Beutler '25**, **Charlie Deats '25**, **Mason Garcia '25**, and I all attended Beta Theta Pi's

Winter Leadership Conclave in Chicago. The conference combined individual officer training sessions for specific roles with sessions on improving ritual and overall chapter success. As a chapter, we learned how to navigate difficult conversations, manage and lead events, and mitigate risk. This experience motivated us and gave our executive team new ideas for running the chapter. The General Fraternity and its leaders have provided us with incredible support, and I cannot thank them enough for their efforts. The spring semester has been relatively quiet, with most of our events scheduled in April. We are extremely excited to return to Chicago for a formal weekend in April and to attend our annual trip to the Lake of the Ozarks following graduation in May. We are looking forward to our largest philanthropic event of the year, *Backpack in Black*, in April, alongside three other campus fraternities. The chapter hit the books hard last semester with an all-house GPA of 3.65, an improvement from the previous semester of 3.624, which now places us second among all fraternities at UNL. The chapter is extremely proud of this accomplishment, and we hope to carry the momentum into the spring semester ahead of summer recruitment.

Throughout the year, members of the executive team and the freshman class attend formal dinners in the chapter house every Monday night before chapter meetings. During these dinners, we try to invite campus leaders and former alumni as guests to introduce themselves and give a short talk about what they do and any advice they have. This semester, we are fortunate enough to have a guest almost every week. Notable alumni attending this semester are **Ryan Ragsdale '98**, **Karl Anderson '97**, **Ted Stuckey '08**, **Dave Nikunen '80**, and **Pete**

Allman '76. Alumni share incredible stories and offer advice to members of the chapter, and I cannot thank them enough for dedicating their time and effort to the house. We also had additional guests, including our UNL Fraternity and Sorority Life director, an assistant at UNL Counseling and Psychological Services, and a General Fraternity director. If you would like to attend a formal dinner and chapter meeting late this spring or next fall, please reach out to **Charlie Deats** or me, and we can find a time that works for you.

I want to end my report by thanking everyone who has supported me and this chapter. The leadership, advice, and accountability provided by this chapter will guide me throughout the rest of my life. To the active members, I appreciate all you do, and I cannot be prouder of each of you. You are all my closest friends, and you push me to work hard every day. To the active and eager alumni, I thank you for your contributions to something bigger than yourself. Supporting the chapter as an active member is one thing, but dedicating your time and effort to it after your time on campus speaks volumes about your character. To friends and family, thank you so much for your support and dedication to what we do. I hope that the lessons and leadership we have instilled in your sons have made an impact at home.



I look forward to the rest of the year, and I am extremely proud to be a Beta.

Yours in __kai__,
Aiden Makovicka '24
president@nebraskabeta.com



Executive Officers

Seated: **Aiden Makovicka '24**.

Back row, from left:

Oscar Parizek '24, **Jack Hessel '25**,
Kaden Bachman '25, **Theo Schmidt '25**,
Charlie Deats '25, **Grant Beutler '25**,
Ryan Beavers '24, **Luke Hamilton '25**,
Braden Leach '25, and **Mason Garcia '25**.

New Member Education Report

This January, Alpha Tau initiated 33 members. This class had success both academically and in its transition to college. The freshman class ended their first semester with a 3.83 GPA, breaking the previous freshmen class GPA record of 3.77 set two years ago. Our chapter could not be prouder of its first-semester achievements, and we are excited about what it can accomplish in the future.

The chapter recently elected two members of the freshman class as Assistant New Member Educators for the coming year: **Joe Simon '26**, and **Cael Verzani '26**. Both men are very approachable and passionate about Beta. I look forward to working alongside them this semester and throughout next fall with our new member class.

The Alpha Tau chapter was lucky to implement a third year of our ALEC 102 course as a part of the new member program. ALEC (Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication) is part of UNL's general education requirements. This three-credit-hour course, proctored by the University, helped us meet the new members' ACE requirements and helped them develop their interpersonal communication and leadership skills. Former New Member Educator **Derrien Gatchel '24** led the course to success. Derrien helped the course run smoothly in its third year, with the support of our advisor, **Pete Allman '76**, who was the instructor every Tuesday night throughout the semester.

Pete is also the founder of Lighthouse in Lincoln, NE. Lighthouse is an after-school program in Lincoln for middle and high school students that offers academic support and a safe place to go outside of school hours. The new members get the opportunity to serve 20 hours at Lighthouse throughout the semester, allowing them to give back to a community much greater than themselves.

My background: I am a sophomore from Beatrice, Nebraska, majoring in chemistry with a minor in Spanish. I also plan to attend optometry school after graduating from UNL. I could not be more excited and honored about the opportunity to be the next New Member Educator. My time as a new member was very meaningful, and I looked up to the position as a major role model in my introduction to college and, to some extent, as an anchor. I am excited to be that anchor for incoming members, to provide mentorship and guidance to the next generation of Men of Principle, and to contribute to the enriching journey of the Beta new member program.

Yours in __kai__,
Luke Hamilton '25

RECRUITMENT REPORT

I am incredibly grateful and excited to have been given a role on the recruitment team this summer, now serving as the Recruitment Chairman. I am soon to be a junior from Lincoln, studying economics on a pre-law track.

Being involved in recruitment last summer was one of my most rewarding experiences, and I am excited to build on that experience to bring in a class of men who will continue to strengthen and build our chapter. The Alpha Tau chapter has a spectacular reputation not only as a premier house at UNL but also as a premier chapter nationally. We will make a concerted effort in the recruitment process to uphold and improve our standing. We have elected **Tug Daulhauser '25** and **Val Sewell '25** as Assistant Recruitment Chairmen. Both will work closely alongside me throughout the upcoming summer.

We aim to recruit high achieving, dedicated, talented, and intelligent young men who reflect the values and standards of our brotherhood. One of the most valuable ways we can accomplish this goal is for alumni and undergraduate members to recommend potential new members. Recommendations can be submitted through our website at nebraskabeta.com/recommend-someone. Please have recommendations submitted by **May 5**, although we may continue accepting submissions through **June 14**.

Beginning on May 10 and continuing through early July, we will be hosting open-house events at the chapter house (usually on Thursday evenings), and lake and pool events at the homes of active members and alumni in the Lincoln and Omaha areas. We will showcase everything this chapter offers at these events, including The Experience Company, the ALEC 102 course, social events, chapter sneaks, the chapter's overall brotherhood, our commitment to scholarship, and much more. We excel in our active members' involvement and dedication to the recruitment process, and this summer will be no exception. Our recruitment schedule will be posted on Instagram. The chapter account is **@beta_unl**.

With the support and resources provided to us and my experience, I am incredibly confident in our ability to once again attract a high-achieving group of men who reflect our chapter's values.

Yours in __kai__,
Braden Leach '25
recruitment@nebraskabeta.com

SOCIAL REPORT

My name is **Oscar Parizek '24**. I am a junior currently serving my second term as Social Chairman. This year, we welcomed two new members as Assistant Social Chairmen, **Aidan Nachi '26** and **Cadillac Niroomand-Rad '26**, who will support the planning and execution of our chapter's social events. This semester, our chapter is hosting two out-of-town formals for the first time. In April, we will travel to Chicago for a Spring Formal weekend, including a Chicago Cubs game and time to explore the Windy City. Following the conclusion of the semester,

we will again host our annual Lake of the Ozarks formal. For the first time, however, this event will take place after finals exams. It will serve as a well-earned celebration of our members' hard work throughout the academic year. I am excited for the year ahead and the new opportunities these events will bring to our chapter.

Yours in __kai__,
Oscar Parizek '24

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

I am honored to serve as the Communications Chairman for the Alpha Tau chapter. Our alumni network remains one of our greatest strengths, and I am grateful for the continued support and engagement that sets our chapter apart on campus.

The Experience Company continues to play a pivotal role in our members' professional development efforts. Its mentorship structure and alumni integration provide our members with meaningful guidance as they prepare for their careers beyond graduation. The impact of this program is tangible, and its continued growth reflects the strength of our alumni base and involvement.

I would like to specifically thank **Will Wooden '23**, **Joe Sutko '23**, **Aiden Makovicka '24**, **Fletcher Kelly '24**, and **Quinten Kreikemeier '25** for their leadership and dedication this past year. Their commitment

to strengthening alumni connections and expanding professional opportunities has directly benefited our active members.

As I step into the role previously held by Aiden, I want to congratulate him on his election as Chapter President. During his time in this position, Aiden organized an alumni tailgate at the house on November 1 that brought together active members and alumni in a meaningful way. The event was a great success and served as a powerful reminder of the strength of our network. I look forward to continuing this tradition, as its benefits to both alumni engagement and member development are substantial. I am excited to work alongside Aiden and the rest of the new executive team, and I am confident this will be another exceptional year.

Yours in __kai__,
Charlie Deats '25
alumni@nebraskabeta.com

Philanthropy Report

I am a sophomore from Omaha pursuing a degree in biology, and I am incredibly grateful to serve as the Philanthropy Chairman. Throughout my first year at Beta, I have come to realize that the true measure of our chapter's strength is not the personal benefits we receive as members. It is the collective impact we can make when we turn our efforts outwards. This realization has fueled my passion for philanthropy and shaped my understanding of what it truly means to be a Man of Principle. It is more than just personal integrity; it is an active commitment to the mutual assistance we pledge to our brothers and, by extension, our community.

Stepping into this role is a significant responsibility, particularly as I follow in the footsteps of **Josh Rohrig '24**. His recent appointment as the IFC Philanthropy Delegate for the University is a testament to the high standard of leadership cultivated in our house, and I am excited to build on that foundation during my term.

Our signature philanthropic event during the spring semester, *Backpack in Black* scheduled for April 10. We will join forces with Sigma Phi Epsilon, Phi Delta Theta, Pi Kappa Alpha, and FarmHouse at the Bourbon Theatre

for our annual Battle of the Bands showcase. With an ambitious goal of raising \$20,000, we look forward to continuing the Alpha Tau tradition of charitable giving and support. (The exact amount raised and charity given to will be featured in the fall issue due to printing deadlines.)

Beyond this multi-fraternity collaboration, Alpha Tau remains focused on our own long-lasting partnership with Lighthouse of Lincoln. Co-founded by **Pete Allman '76**, this after-school program provides mentorship and academic support to at-risk youth in the Lincoln community. While we take great pride in volunteering our time there during the fall semester, we also look forward to hosting our annual Burger Bash philanthropy. This event serves as a cornerstone of our fall schedule, with all proceeds raised going directly to support Lighthouse and its mission.

I look forward to a successful year of philanthropy and am proud to serve Beta in this way.

Yours in __kai__,
Jack Hessel '25

INTRAMURAL REPORT

Intramurals have always been a source of pride and camaraderie for the brothers, as competition on the court and field brings out the best in Beta. This fall was no exception, with the house enjoying another strong semester of success. The sophomore class led the charge, capturing the 3-on-3 basketball championship and showcasing depth, chemistry, and grit throughout the tournament. (*Editor's Note: See their picture to the right.*) The sophomores are carrying that momentum into the spring season, with teams active on the 5-on-5 "A League" and the co-ed 5-on-5 league with a group of Kappa Kappa Gammas. The all-house indoor soccer team also secured a tournament championship after an impressive playoff run. With strong



The first-place Beta 3-on-3 intramural basketball team (with one substitute) consisted of (from left): Juan Rojas Jr. '25, Tug Dahlhauser '25, Jakson Bartling '25, and Josh Rojas '25.

upperclassmen leadership and key contributions from new members making their first appearances in Beta intramurals, the teams demonstrated the brotherhood's strength and unity.

The spring semester looks very promising for the Betas as well. Each class has a basketball team in its grade, and all have winning records at press time. All four classes are looking to bring another championship back to Beta. The men of Beta look forward to continuing this momentum and representing the chapter with pride throughout the semester.

Yours in __kai__,
Tug Dahlhauser '25

SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

The men of Beta Theta Pi had a phenomenal fall semester, earning a 3.65 all-house GPA.

This high achievement gave us the highest GPA on the city campus. (*Editor's Note: FarmHouse was No. 1, but only .003 ahead of Beta.*) We were second among all fraternities and fourth among all Greek life on campus. All this thanks to an amazing scholarship team last semester, led by **Jack Healy '24**, with **Jack Naujokaitis '25** and **Tyson Klein '25** as Assistant Scholarship Chairmen.

These men continued to instill the academic standards to which Beta holds its members, guiding new members through weekly study hours and fostering a competitive, high-achieving environment. These gentlemen set aside hours of their week to ensure the new members would get a good start to their college careers.

While the chapter as a whole did exceptionally well, the men of Beta also saw great individual performances, with 33 members earning a perfect 4.0. The new member class truly stood out, setting a new record with an incredible 3.83 class GPA. This shatters the previous high mark of 3.77 set just two years ago by our current junior class. Furthermore, 12 of those freshmen achieved 4.0 GPAs, leading the entire house. These fine scholars will continue to be rewarded with our Princeton Dinner, a formal dining event held each spring and funded by the chapter to celebrate academic excellence. This is an exciting event that we hope will continue for many years to come.

As the spring semester gets underway, the brothers continue to hold themselves to rigorous academic standards. To build on this momentum, the scholarship team is working closely with the Kai Committee this semester. This collaboration ensures any members who might start to fall behind receive the support and accountability needed to get back on track and continuously meet our chapter's grade requirements of a 3.0 GPA. Walk through the basement study area or the library on any given night, and you will still find members hard at work studying and collaborating, especially utilizing the new computers provided by our Parent Alliance.

Finally, I would like to congratulate our newly elected Assistant Scholarship Chairmen, **Tomas Thielen '26** and **Colin McCammon '26**. Both Tomas and Colin have proven themselves to be academic leaders in their class. They will be instrumental in helping guide the next new member class as our chapter strives for even higher levels of academic success, hopefully surpassing their own classes' great achievements!

Yours in __kai__,
Theo Schmidt '25

INITIATION WEEK 2026 REPORT



Carl Sjulín '80 gave the keynote address at this year's banquet. Carl is the Chairman, President, and CEO of West Gate Bank in Lincoln.

Initiation Week requires significant support from the chapter and alumni. This year's chapter Vice President, **Owen Crone '24**, was supported by many alumni who interviewed the new members and hosted alumni dinners. I-Week does not just happen. (See the separate article and picture of those new members who were initiated into our chapter in January.) Thank you to those alumni who hosted dinners for the new members and their pledge fathers during I-Week. It is an excellent opportunity for alumni to give back, receive updates on the chapter and, for some, to "reengage" with our chapter. In alphabetical order, the support offered by the following will create lasting memories for new members, their pledge fathers, and alumni: **Pete Allman '76, Karl Anderson '97, Mark Antonson '04, Jeff Beavers '00, Andy Bock '79, Greg Brockmeier '96, Josh Burks '12, Andy Cunningham '68, Bill Dana '76, Ryan Duell '03, Mike Franken '15, Dan Gleason '93, Tim Gleason '86, Ben Joekel '12, Garrett Kraus '15, Todd Mattox '99, Josh Mikus '21, Neil Moseman '80, Jim Pflug '82, Grant Rathje '13, Steve Roberts '86, Carl Sjulín '80, Sam Skokan '15, Bryan Tuma '74, Kevin Woolworth '17, and Mike Wortman '67.**

Jon Wendt '65 was a member of the 1964 pledge class. After his death almost three years ago (see our fall 2023 newsletter), Jon provided a gift for Beta in his will. Following a discussion with Jon's family, a \$500 stipend is given to the Honor Pledge each year. This year's recipient of the **Jon Wendt Honor Pledge Award** is **Colin McCammon**, a chemical engineering major from Chesterfield, MO.

Welcome, New Initiates



Back row, from left: Brady Douglass, Maddox Furst, Sebastian Morales, Aiden Corr, Lewis Cockle, Sam Spisak, Xander Jochim, Trey Cech, Tomas Thielen, Eli Schneider, and Aidan Nachi. Middle row: Will Callahan, Ben Healey, Joe Simon, Callan Zegers, Caleb Lefebvre, Jacob Heffelfinger, Tyson Wathor, Connor Holt, DeRuyter Woods Jamison, Cadillac Niroomand-Rad, Carson Tappa, and Samuel Lindsay. Front row: Nicholas Phelan, Hudson Merkel, Peter Rygg, Monte Faris, Dylan Lukken, Colin McCammon, Cole Randall, Mikey Randa, Cael Verzani, and Ethan Nguyen.

Colin McCammon, AT 2714 (*Honor Pledge*)

Nicholas Phelan, AT 2715
Joseph Simon, AT 2716
Cadillac Rad, AT 2717
Aidan Nachi, AT 2718
Ethan Nguyen, AT 2719
Tomas Thielen, AT 2720
Ben Healey, AT 2721
Dylan Lukken, AT 2722
Caleb Lefebvre, AT 2723
Peter Rygg, AT 2724
Connor Holt, AT 2725
Michael Randa, AT 2726
Cole Randall, AT 2727
Cael Verzani, AT 2728
Will Callahan, AT 2729
Monte Faris, AT 2730

Tyson Wathor, AT 2731
Sebastian Morales, AT 2732
Brady Douglass, AT 2733
Carson Tappa, AT 2734
DeRuyter Jamison, AT 2735
Callan Zegers, AT 2736
Eli Schneider, AT 2737
Jacob Heffelfinger, AT 2738
Lewis Cockle, AT 2739
Aiden Corr, AT 2740
Xander Jochim, AT 2741
Trey Cech, AT 2742
Hudson Merkel, AT 2743
Sam Spisak, AT 2744
Maddox Furst, AT 2745
Sam Lindsay, AT 2746

PAST PRESIDENT'S OBSERVATIONS

(*Editor's Note: Charlie Deats, our Communications Officer, was approached by the immediate past President about the possibility of including one last report from him. Charlie accepted. This is Nathan's "swan song."*)

I am writing to you all about one month after my term ended as the Alpha Tau Chapter President. In this time, I've had the opportunity to reminisce and reflect on my time as president and my (soon-to-be-over) time as an undergraduate Beta. There are a few common questions that I've been asked numerous times since my term ended: "Are you glad to be done?" and "Would you do it over again?" To the former, my answer is a resounding "Yes." My thoughts on the latter are a bit more long-winded.

From the outside, a fraternity executive position can look like a thankless role that demands a lot of time with little recognition. The truth is, these positions will teach you more about leadership, communication, and yourself than you'd ever imagine. As Mike Wortman often says, "1515 R Street is a leadership lab that believes in the power of self-governance." My experience on the executive team was transformative. I leave it as a more responsible, more caring, and more confident individual. To all undergraduate Betas, run for the executive team. To all alumni, parents, and friends, thank you for supporting this chapter. You are truly helping create great young men. In short, my answer to the second question is also an undeniable "Yes." I would not change a thing.

Thank God that I'm a Beta,
and yours in __kai__,
Nathan Siy '23

BETA PARENT ALLIANCE REPORT

The Beta Parent Alliance made a very popular and much-needed large purchase for the Beta house, made possible by funds raised during the silent auction and by coordination with **Mark Antonson '04**. Over winter break, brand new computers and docking stations were installed in the Beta study room, replacing equipment from 2008. This upgrade included three docking stations, one Apple computer, two Dell computers, related hardware and software, and a new whiteboard. The announcement was shared during both mealtimes at the Winter Formal and was met with enthusiastic applause and cheers from the young men.

In addition, two new coffee makers were purchased to replace the old, non-repairable one. Parents also volunteered to decorate the house for the holidays before the Winter Formal and to take down decorations in January. On December 7, pizza was provided to help fuel the young men through the last week of classes, and an energizing treat will again be

offered during spring final exams to support them through the end of the academic year.

The Beta men are currently planning a Mom's Day event on April 11. Planning for next year's Fall Auction will begin over the summer, and parent feedback has already been shared with the Beta exec board.

Please don't hesitate to reach out at parent.alliance@nebraskabeta.com with any questions. We wish the Beta seniors all the best and thank them for partnering with the Parent Alliance to enhance the UNL Beta experience for the entire fraternity.

Respectfully for The Parent Alliance,
Julie Feist

OUR MYSTIC SHRINE

If you have alumni news or information about the death of an Alpha Tau Beta, for a future edition of *The Dragon's Tale*, email updates@nebraskabeta.com. As noted below, the notice about the deaths of two of our brothers is delayed, but we still believe the information is relevant.

Robert G. Pierce '48 entered Our Mystic Shrine on October 29, 2019, in Wheat Ridge, Colorado. He was AT 796. *The Dragon's Tale* was only recently informed of his passing.

Bob was born during the Great Depression, and as a child, his family frequently moved around Nebraska and Colorado, then back to Nebraska. From kindergarten through sixth grade, Bob attended a different school every year—sometimes more than one in a single year. According to his obituary, the difficult economic times formed the rest of his life, giving him an appreciation for the sacrifices necessary to persevere.

A gifted athlete, Bob found great success on the basketball court, having an exceptional high school, college, and semi-pro career. His high school career was capped by Most Valuable Player honors on a 26-0 Lincoln High School 1946-47 state championship team. Bob entered the University of Nebraska in 1947 and played basketball for the Huskers. In his sophomore year, Bob played on the varsity team, which tied with the University of Oklahoma team for the conference championship. In his junior year, Nebraska tied with Kansas and Kansas State for the conference crown. His success on the court was recognized in 1993 with his induction into the University of Nebraska Basketball Hall of Fame.

Bob graduated from UNL with a degree in mechanical engineering in 1952. He then worked for Phillips Petroleum in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and played for the Phillips 66ers basketball team. The team played in the 1952 U.S. Olympic basketball playoffs to determine the members of the U.S. Olympic team, which would go to Helsinki, Finland, for the Olympics. In New York's Madison Square Garden, the 66ers lost in the semi-finals to the Peoria, Illinois, Caterpillar team. Bob continued playing basketball into his 70s and snow skiing well into his 80s.

Bob graduated from the University of Denver Law School in 1957. He practiced law in Colorado for 58 years, and after time as a government attorney, he and another attorney established a law firm and practiced together for over 50 years. Bob and his wife, Shirley, raised two children, who survived him at the time of his death.



Garland Lempka '55 entered Our Mystic Shrine on August 19, 2025, in Bel Air, Maryland. Jerry was AT 927. He was born in Tecumseh, Nebraska, and graduated from UNL in 1959 with a degree in business.

After college, he enlisted in the United States Navy and was admitted to Officer Candidate School (OCS) in Newport, Rhode Island. After graduating in 1960, he received his commission as an ensign. Later in life, he continued his education and obtained a master's degree in government contract administration.

He spent 27 years in the Navy at various duty stations in the United States and overseas. His final duty station was in New Orleans as commanding officer of the Defense Contract Management Agency, where he oversaw the government contract to build the external fuel tanks used on the space shuttles. He also oversaw the National Strategic Petroleum Reserve stored in underground caverns around the Gulf Coast.

After retiring from the Navy and settling in Bel Air, he pursued a second career at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, where he was instrumental in procuring parts for the Cassini Spacecraft. He permanently retired in 2001. While attending OCS, he met and married the love of his life, Denise. They remained married for 48 years until her passing in 2009. Jerry is survived by their three children, several grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and other relatives.

William Cumberland '59 entered Our Mystic Shrine on October 29, 2019, in Georgetown, Texas. *The Dragon's Tale* was only recently informed of his death. Bill was AT 1007.

Bill was born in Norfolk, Nebraska, and met his wife of 60 years, Margaret O'Brien, in elementary school. Bill graduated from Geneva (Nebraska) High School and went on to graduate from UNL in 1962. He worked for IBM as

a computer programmer and later as a manager. His employment with IBM took them to several cities, including Georgetown, where they put down roots and never left. According to his obituary, no matter where Bill lived, he never forgot his Nebraska heritage, and he was proud of it. He was a lifelong, die-hard Cornhusker fan.

Bill and Margaret had three children and traveled, eventually buying a cabin in Ohio City, Colorado, where family and friends would gather in the summer. At the time of his passing, he was survived by his wife, two sons, one daughter, and several other relatives.

Douglas Deeter '72 entered Our Mystic Shrine at his winter home in Rancho Mirage, California. He was AT 1381.

According to his obituary, Doug "attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he was a member of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity, forming lifelong friendships and memories that remained important to him." Following his time at UNL, Doug entered the family business, Deeter Foundry Inc., a manufacturer of iron castings. Doug eventually served as president and CEO until the business was sold in 1998.

He was an "avid golfer and found great happiness hunting alongside his beloved black labs." Survivors include his wife of 50 years, Leslie, two children, three grandchildren, and a sister, Jane (**Craig '74**) Pohlman. Doug was a Charter Society member of our capital campaign to renovate the chapter house in 2012-13.



Ervin L. Williams '08 entered Our Mystic Shrine on February 16, 2026. He was AT 2194. He passed away in Owensboro, Kentucky.

Erv did not follow the normal route in becoming a Beta. A native of the Winston-Salem area of North Carolina, he started working for the UNL Women's Basketball program as Director of Operations in 1997. In the summer of 2003, he learned of an opening for the House Director position in our chapter. He applied and was offered the job. During his time living in the chapter house, he remained employed by the athletic department. As the House Director he attended all the Monday Night Dinners and gave advice to the men in the chapter. He lectured them on responsibility, service, and gentlemanly conduct. In his role as an event management specialist for the Husker Athletic Department, he offered temporary job opportunities to many Betas. Chapter members helped with event parking and other duties that did not require a regular 20-hour work week. Erv was described as more than just a "simple house parent." He had truly become a friend to all the chapter's members by offering his wisdom in times of need. *The Dragon's Tale* noted that "Erv had such a deep compassion for our beloved house that we voted to initiate him." On April 26, 2008, Erv became a member of Beta Theta Pi. When asked what the initiation meant to him, Ervin responded with, "It is an honor and a privilege to be inducted into such a strong brotherhood. It warms my heart that these men, whom I have come to know so well, would accept me as their brother."

Erv retained his position as House Director and lived in the Lambda Chi Alpha house during the chapter house remodel. He was a contributor to our capital campaign. When asked why he supported Alpha Tau, Erv said he feels like he is a part of a big Beta family. "I want to see the chapter house improve because they deserve the best. They are the best on campus, and the chapter house needs to be modernized to reflect that. We have to invest in the chapter to attract quality young men in the future." *TDT* described Erv as "not your typical father-figure because of his stature. He was 6'5" and over three hundred pounds of passion and fire. One of the things that set Erv apart was his cooking. The men of the Alpha Tau chapter loved it when Erv was behind the grill cooking with his southern barbecue sauce. He hosted Super Bowl parties where he gave up watching the game to grill for the men of the chapter."

At the 170th General Convention in 2009, Brother Ervin L. Williams was named House Parent of the Year. In 2013, after almost 10 years of serving our chapter, the men were saddened to see Erv end his tenure as the Beta House Director. It was noted that "he had an impact that will never be forgotten. Ervin accepted a position as director of basketball operations at Western Kentucky. We wish him the best of luck!" Erv is survived by six siblings, many other relatives, and a host of Betas who knew him as "Dad."

ALUMNI NEWS

Jim Schaffer '68 was a witness to the history of the Challenger Space Shuttle disaster. January 28, 2026, marked the 40th anniversary of the shuttle's explosion. For a look back in history, see Jim's story in our spring 2021 issue, where he shares his personal involvement in sending a teacher into space. <https://nebraskabeta.com/sites/betathetapi/files/Dragon%27s%20Tale%20-%202021%20Spring.pdf> Jim can be reached at jrs@nebrwesleyan.edu.

Dave Firestone '72 has retired from the Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest but remains chairman of the board. Dave was one of the original four owners who started the firm in 1987. Commonwealth is a full-service electrical and low-voltage contractor headquartered in Lincoln, serving locations in Arizona, Iowa, Nebraska, and Utah, with over 1,000 employees. Dave can be reached at dffirestone@commonwealthelectric.com.



Jon Pfeiffer '77 provides this update: He is an experienced entertainment attorney practicing in Santa Monica, California. Jon has successfully litigated disputes involving over 120 motion pictures and has tried over 65 cases to conclusion before juries, arbitrators, and judges. Jon's clients have included Oscar, Emmy, and Grammy-winning creators, producers, and performers. He is also the host of *The Creative Influencer* podcast. A significant portion of his practice is devoted to representing YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok Influencers.

For the past 20 years, Jon has also been an adjunct law professor at Pepperdine University in Los Angeles County. He taught media law and twice received the Outstanding Adjunct Teaching Award. This fall, he told his students that this would be his last semester of teaching. Three of his students immediately said, "We need to have a party!" Students brought a cake to his last class and sang "Happy Last Day to You." Pepperdine University posted the following on LinkedIn: "Congratulations, Jon Pfeiffer, on an incredible 20-year journey at Pepperdine! Your impact on students, colleagues, and the field will be remembered for years to come. Wishing you all the best in this next chapter."

Jon has been active in Alpha Tau's mentor program and can be reached at pfeiffer@pfeifferlaw.com.

*(Editor's Note: Interesting Fact? There are two Alpha Tau Betas sharing a similar name. **Jon Pfeiffer** [above], and **John Pfeifer '16**. I sent both an email, and they are now connected via email. Both were Mortar Board members at UNL.)*



During the first week in February, four brothers from the pledge class of 1980 gathered at the WM Phoenix Open. In the picture (from left) are **Max Mumby**, **Dave Nikunen**, **Kirby Scott**, and **Tim Brown**. Tim is a member of the Thunderbirds, the hosts and sponsor of the golf tournament held at the Stadium

Course at TPC Scottsdale. The Thunderbirds are a non-profit charitable organization that has raised over \$225 million since 1937. Tim is dressed in traditional Thunderbird garb.

Miles Hunke '06 has recently joined UNICO as a Benefits Advisor. UNICO is an insurance broker headquartered in Lincoln, Nebraska. Miles will work out of their Omaha office and has worked in the industry for over 10 years. Miles is active in our mentor program and can be reached at miles.m.hunke@gmail.com.

Tyler Carpenter '11 was recently promoted to Director at CFGI, a global finance and accounting advisory firm. He resides in Olathe, Kansas, with his college sweetheart, Sarah, and their three daughters (ages 8, 5, and 10 months). Reflecting on his time in Alpha Tau, Tyler offers these thoughts: "I'm deeply grateful for the enduring friendships and the high-caliber men who inspired me to pursue personal and professional excellence. If your organization

has any finance or accounting needs, I'd love to reconnect and explore how we can support one another." Tyler is involved in our mentor program and can be reached at tyler.carpenter74@gmail.com.

Gage Mruz '16 is an audio engineer, producer, and influencer marketing manager living in Los Angeles. Gage served as the Assistant Recruitment Chairman for two years, the Alumni Relations Chairman during his senior year, and then spent one year as the House Director starting in fall 2020. Gage (and many others) were impacted by the LA wildfires of January 2025, where he lost his primary source of income, and he stated that, "Last year was a long, tumultuous journey getting back on my feet from the wildfires. Fast forward a year, and I'm living in Vietnam for a few months, traveling around, working on music. What a wild life we get to live."

Gage said, "I have been active in our mentor program as both a mentor and mentee to my wise counterpart, **Pete Allman '76**. It has been a pleasure serving on the alumni advisory board and helping during Initiation Week." Gage can be reached at gagemruz@gmail.com.

(Editor's note: As undergraduates, both Tyler and Gage worked on the production of The Dragon's Tale. Thanks to both of them for their updates.)

Alex Bernhardson '16 is an aviation project manager at Alfred Benesch & Company (Benesch). Benesch is a prominent engineering firm with 47 offices and over 1,200 employees across the United States, headquartered in Chicago. One of their key offices is in Lincoln, Nebraska. The Lincoln airport has always been a critical airport for commercial service in eastern Nebraska and is home to the Nebraska Air National Guard 155th Air Refueling Wing and U.S. Strategic Command. Improvements at the airport this year will center on the 12,900-foot runway, with a full reconstruction to enhance its safety and reliability for the foreseeable future. Some of the runway dates back to the 1950s. Benesch is responsible for construction, inspection, and management on this project, which is led by Alex. He is active in our mentor program and can be reached at abernhardson@benesch.com.

Nico Orti '16 lives in Portland, Oregon, and is now employed by the music licensing agency Marmoset in their headquarters, where he is the "A&R coordinator." The artists and repertoire coordinator acts as the bridge between artists and a record label, assisting in talent scouting and supporting the creative recording process. Nico handles both new and existing relationships with artists and labels and helps with the ingestion of new music. He is also a music creator, primarily producing and mixing hip-hop. His music can be found on all major streaming platforms under "Bolo" or on Instagram @**bolo.beats**. Nico also helps with music for ads, commercials, films, etc. Marmoset works with everyone from small local indie filmmakers to large companies like Google and Adidas. Nico can be reached at nicoorti9@gmail.com.

As a UNL undergraduate, **Tate Kiehn '21** served as the chapter's Technology Chairman and Vice President. Tate will obtain his master's of science degree in finance in May from Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana. He is also working remotely as an Investment Banking Analyst with Blitzer, Clancy, & Company, a worldwide leader in investment banking, growth consulting, and investment advisory services. Tate will work out of their Washington, D.C., office upon his graduation. Tate's email address is tate@kiehn.net.

Grant Auman '21 has been featured in past issues of *The Dragon's Tale*. Grant is a former chapter President, and in last fall's issue, his job as a staff assistant in the office of Idaho U.S. Senator Mike Crapo was detailed on page 9. <https://nebraskabeta.com/sites/betathetapi/files/Dragon%27s%20Tale%20-%202024%20Fall.pdf> Grant remains in Washington, D.C., and is now a legislative assistant at the U.S. House Committee on Ways & Means. Grant is also attending Georgetown University Law Center. Grant can be reached at grantauman@gmail.com.

(Editor's note: In an email dated January 10, Tate said, "I spent last night and today with Grant Auman, graduating class of 2024 from NU Beta. Such a cherished relationship we all have with each other via Beta.")

Help Us Find Our Missing Brothers

Alpha Tau chapter members, we love being able to share what is going on with your undergraduates and alumni alike. Through *The Dragon's Tale* we get to highlight our brothers while in school and outside of it, and we want to make sure we reach as many people as we can!

Please review the list below for those brothers we do not have valid mailing addresses for (though we may have their email) and let us know if you have an updated address for them.

You can send updated mailing addresses to updates@nebraskabeta.com, and we will make sure our mailing list gets updated!

Thomas W. Cullinan '70
 Jack A. Galloway '70
 H. D. Jacobs III '70
 Leslie O. Gossman '71
 Scott J. Kalkowski '71
 Bruce F. Meyer '71
 Jeffery D. Deitemeyer '72
 Charles R. Doty '72
 Daniel J. Lieberth '72
 George H. Liggett III '72
 William C. Littlejohn III '72
 Craig H. Northrop '72
 Terry L. Sonderup '72
 William J. Thiemann DDS '72
 William D. Coffey '73
 Roger J. Rocke Jr. '73
 Larry T. Schone '73
 Phillip A. Wheeler '73
 Michael C. Wilson '73
 Gregory A. Dollis '74
 Thomas F. Fowler '75
 Timothy J. Kalthorn '75
 Patrick J. Powers '75
 Jay M. Sonderup '75
 Brian M. Mumaugh '76
 Douglas A. Drago '77
 Steven M. Frei '77
 Terrence E. Kalthorn '77
 Mark E. Vondenkamp '77
 William P. Wixon '77
 Rick D. Dunagan '78
 Kirk J. Trofholz '78
 Thomas H. Burton '79
 William J. Givens '79
 Brent L. Jones '79
 Scott A. Miller '79
 Brent A. Peterson '79
 John W. Voelker '79
 Lawrence A. Weinandt III '79
 Gregory Q. Gerhard '80
 Robert W. Knigge '80
 Timothy S. McGrath '80
 Max M. Mumby '80
 Kirby L. Scott '80
 Kris K. Sonderup '80
 David J. Gerhard '81
 Barry M. Loeffelbein '81

Neal P. Wickersham '81
 Daniel W. Bunde '82
 Robert W. Carpenter '83
 Stephen M. Mariucci '83
 Matthew S. Hagan '84
 Richard H. Hoch Jr. '84
 Michael D. Holcomb '84
 Timothy A. Lyons '84
 Paul E. Meyers '84
 Robert P. Salerno '84
 Patrick A. Campagna '85
 Craig E. Hemke '85
 Gregory G. Holm '85
 Daniel W. Martz '85
 J. B. Oltman '85
 Michael K. Bydalek '86
 Daniel G. Dolan Jr. '86
 Bill J. Jandric Jr. '86
 Sean M. Martin '86
 Stephen P. Moylan '86
 Michael L. Schley '86
 Andrew J. Agena '87
 Vincent E. Carlson '87
 Jim Corrigan '87
 Mark W. Kildow '87
 Matt S. Kluver '87
 Christopher C. Costello '88
 Charles L. Dawes '88
 Roger L. Grandgenett Jr. '88
 James D. Nesci '88
 Thomas P. Phelan '88
 Steven W. Wills '88
 Charles F. Youngblood '88
 Andrew B. Haggart '89
 James T. Macnamara II '89
 John D. Nesci '89
 Jeffery J. Bauman '91
 Thomas A. Egbert '91
 John P. Gartner '91
 Jeffrey R. Serfass '91
 William W. Webster III '91
 John J. Ferneau '92
 Korey K. Olsen '92
 Ryan S. Otterberg '92
 Patrick J. Reefer '92
 Thomas M. Rowen '92
 Thomas R. Emery '93

Matthew J. Kennedy '94
 Benjamin J. Tomasello '94
 Patrick D. Phelan '95
 Justin W. Findlay '96
 Jay L. Tindall '96
 Jeffrey M. Barwig '97
 Ryan M. Fuchs '97
 Andrew T. Thompson '97
 Anthony M. Bock '98
 Aaron F. DuPree '98
 Ben Peterman '98
 Aaron P. Scheibe '98
 Richard E. Huffman '99
 Brice E. Liesveld '99
 Travis N. Robinson '99
 Matt D. Stahl '99
 Jared A. Hardy '00
 Jared D. Carlson '02
 Matthew A. Gartner '02
 Jeffrey J. Richardson '02
 Timothy J. Wardell '02
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 Joshua M. Heinke '08
 Michael J. Sullivan '08
 Steven D. Ebers '09
 Stephen J. Hilger '09
 Cooper J. Overcash '09
 Giacomo Panizzolo '09
 Ben M. Wilson '09
 Robert D. Borvan '10
 Jordan M. Broekhuis '10
 Kramer C. Hyland '10
 Nathan Jones '10
 Michael J. Mumaugh '10
 Taylor M. Ott '10

Landon K. Stahmer '10
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