

## IN MEMORY

We have recently learned of the deaths of the following brothers:

**Charles A. Roth '48**  
**Walter Harvey '66**  
**Gerald Plante '68**

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*Reflects gifts received as of March 16, 2011.*

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## CHAPTER REPORT

### Lambda Chi Continues to Excel in Recruitment, Scholarship and Community Service

By Joshua Didio

Overall this academic year has been going very well for Gamma Psi. We have excelled in many areas including scholarship and philanthropy, and we had a great rush. As this year comes to an end we hope to end strong and moving forward as we have been doing all year.

*“Efforts to obtain a diverse group by means of Cold Recruitment were legitimized with the addition of 17 new members, all displaying the seven core values of Lambda Chi Alpha: loyalty, duty, respect, service and stewardship, honor, intergrity and personal courage.”*

Coming into the spring semester of 2011, our brotherhood had desired goals set to accomplish during the rush period. After meeting and establishing relationships with prospective members in the previous semester, High Delta **Brian Clabby**, along with the rest of the chapter, was ready to reach these goals in obtaining an ideal group of new Associate Members. Throughout rush, these prospective members were taken out to multiple dinners, sporting events, paintballing and other traditional house events in order to better acquaint themselves with the brotherhood. Efforts to obtain a diverse group by means of Cold Recruitment were legitimized with the addition of 17 new members, all displaying the seven core values of Lambda Chi Alpha: loyalty, duty, respect, service and stewardship, honor, integrity, and personal courage.

So far this academic year, scholarship has been great. Our overall average GPA rose from a 3.156 last spring to a 3.212 this past fall, making for an average increase of 0.056. We held a faculty mixer dinner in the fall and soon

we will be hosting a barbeque in the spring held jointly with the sisters of Alpha Chi Omega. A library of study materials for classes was finally compiled, organized and is under lock and key in the library for brothers to check materials out when they so desire. The library has been made functional for the first time in years with a functional printer, two brand new desktop computers and an extra desk for working. Overall scholarship development has been going very well this semester and will continue to move forward as we approach the end of this academic year.

Additionally this semester, Lambda Chi has continued its dedication to philanthropy and community service. Along with supporting the Greek community and other Lehigh organizations in their efforts, brothers visit the Boys and Girls Club on a weekly basis to spend time with the children and strengthen our ties to the Bethlehem community. We will also be closing the semester with our second annual Casino Night on April 9<sup>th</sup>, this year hosted with Alpha Chi Omega.

Overall, this year has been a great one. Many progressive improvements have been made in many areas including scholarship, philanthropy and rush. We hope to continue making progressive improvements and advancing the chapter overall as this academic year comes to an end.

## Lambda Chi Paves the Way for Entrepreneurial Success

**Joe Giansante '76** came to Lehigh University to learn Mechanical Engineering but learned a great deal more, about interacting with people and creating life-long friendships.

"I was almost a bit of a legacy pledge for Lambda Chi," Joe said. "I didn't have any actual relatives who had pledged, but I came from a small high school in Pottstown, Pa. and two of the brothers had been at the same school years ahead of me – **Jerry Megasoa '73** and **Bud Jenske '74**. They were good guys and part of what initially attracted me."

There was lots of interest in the fraternity when Joe pledged because Lambda Chi was moving its house at the time, from off-campus on Delaware Ave. to an on-campus house.

"The new house definitely piqued people's interest, but to me it's all about the people. You'll be spending the greatest amount of time with your brothers, so it's important to choose well."

### **An Unexpected Kidnapping**

Joe also liked Lambda Chi's attitude toward hazing, which was more focused on theatrics and fun, not on really dangerous situations.

"I remember one night when we were freshmen I was in my dorm room and we were all worried that we would get kidnapped; in other words, the brothers pick you up and drive you to some unknown location and leave you there to try and find your way home," Joe said. "Then I heard a whole bunch of guys yelling in the hallway, where's Gino? They called me Gino back then. So, I tried to hide."

"Turned out, it was my fellow pledges. The brothers had kidnapped one of the other pledges – we called him Beggar because of his beard – and they had left him in the woods near Kutztown. Turned out he had friends in the area and went to visit some girls he knew. The other pledges needed me to drive so we could all go to a party with Beggar and these girls. That night we

felt pretty pleased with ourselves about pulling one over on the brothers."

### **Support in Brotherhood**

Joe's pledge class was particularly strong because it had a core group of young men who were from not far away Catasauqua, Pa. and knew each other. They called themselves the "Catasauqua Five" and Joe spent many times during the summer playing basketball with them and hanging out in their home town haunts.

While an active brother, Joe served as High Sigma, the scholarship fund chairman for Lambda Chi.

"We provided all sorts of support for each other when we lived together in house," Joe said. "At that time, about 75% of Lehigh University consisted of Engineering Majors and since you shared a house with brothers that were older than you, there was always someone who had taken the class before and could help you figure it out."

### **Building an Outstanding Career**

After graduation, Joe went to graduate school at MIT, and then on to work for the R&D division of GE. After four years in R&D, he decided to change coasts and went to UCLA to get his MBA, then worked in investment banking in the Bay Area.

Needing a new challenge, Joe went on to found a small software company, just him and two other guys, developing real estate software. His small company was bought out by Inuit, the makers of Quicken Financial Planning software, and he went to work with them for four years.

"It was in 1995, when I was working at Intuit that I saw my first web site. A buddy there was demoing this strange new thing called the Internet and he asked what site I'd like to see," Joe remembered. "Naturally, I said I'd like to see the Lehigh University web site, so that was truly the first web site I've ever seen."

Joe went on to become an Internet entrepreneur, developing an online

financial planning service which he sold in 1999.



*Joe Giansante '76*

### **Looking Back**

With his many professional successes, we asked if Joe attributed any of the needed skills in his time with Lambda Chi. He responded enthusiastically to the affirmative.

"We had a really good group of guys in the house," Joe said. "Going away to college is such a developmental experience for us all. You go away from what you know for the first time and learn how other people live and think. It wasn't as big a change as moving to California, but it was a great way to start to learn a balance between work and fun and how to get along with other people."

Today, Joe keeps in touch with a fair number of his Lambda Chi brothers.

"We all dropped off for about 20 years, which I think is natural as we all build our own lives. Then there's some inciting event that brings everyone back. For us, it was the 1,000th initiate. I was the furthest away out of anyone that came to the ceremony," Joe said. "Since then, email has kept us all communicating and a couple of years later, we did a golf outing. We're due for another outing this year and I can't wait for it to happen."

When asked what advice he had for current brothers, Joe laughed a little and said, "Study hard. Make memories with your fraternity brothers that will last a lifetime. And stay connected. It's worth it. Being a Lambda Chi brother is one of the best decisions I've ever made."

**Reconnect with Joe at [joeg@isnetwork.com](mailto:joeg@isnetwork.com).**

## Finding Strength and Individuality in Lambda Chi

**John Pfeiffer '88** runs his own successful online marketing services agency today and looks back on the opportunities and sense of individualism that the Gamma-Psi Chapter of Lambda Chi fostered in him and his brothers.

"I think what initially attracted me to Lambda Chi is a natural disdain for authority," John laughed. "Within the traditional fraternity structure between pledges and upperclassmen, the pledges have to go through huge ordeals, often six months to a year of often pointless drudgery to earn the privilege of being a brother.

At Lambda Chi, they have an Associate Member Program which is more of a graduated structure with less steep differentials of power between underclassmen and upperclassmen. Though still based on seniority, everyone has more of a say with fair input from underclassman. Once you become a brother, you find that everyone has duties and they all share the work fairly. In short, Lambda Chi lived up to the idea that you should treat your brothers like actual brothers."

In addition to Lambda Chi's unique approach, John felt a kinship with the brothers he met from the fraternity.

"There was greater diversity among the brothers and a stronger sense of individualism," John said.

John was active in the fraternity and had the opportunity to take on a number of leadership roles toward improving the house and serving the community. John lived in the house for three years and during that time he captained a number of house athletic teams, served as house manager and oversaw elements of house maintenance, and even took charge for a time of the Gamma Psi ritual of initiation.

"Working with the initiation ceremony appealed to me because it has

so much theatricality," John said. "Elements of the ritual have been handed down from generation to generation, but there is a sense of a right of passage that appealed to my artistic streak."

These experiences had important life lessons for John, helping teach him to manage people's time and work with a range of personalities, while building great friendships.

"I distinctly remember the camaraderie in the house," John said. "For us it was a stable and constant influence even as everything else around us was changing. After all, in college you spend most of your time not in class. So, you're likely to spend 50% to 75% of your time at the house – hanging out with the guys, studying, it all involved Lambda Chi."

Lambda Chi provided gave not only a sense of stability but a better balance in his own life and ultimately left him more poised for success.

"Lambda Chi provided a work/life balance for me," John said. "If you just stuck to the books the whole time your college experience wouldn't be as fulfilling. Lambda Chi was a source of stress relief, fun, entertainment and brotherhood you just wouldn't find living in a dorm or in an apartment."

John commented that although the brothers weren't focused just on academic success, it was nice to "have everyone pulling the rope in the same direction" with the brothers similarly focused on getting good grades or finding jobs.

John found his own success since graduating from Lehigh. He achieved his Masters Degree in Finance and after working for a time for advertising



*John Pfeiffer '88 with his family*

agencies on Madison Ave. in NYC and in San Francisco, he moved with his family to Boulder, Colo. where he founded his own agency.

"We had always talked about moving to Boulder as we thought it would

be a great place to raise kids. It has a simpler way of life, lower cost of living; we loved San Francisco and may move back some day but it's difficult to have kids there.

I needed a new venture in Boulder, this was around the economic downturn, and I noticed there were lots of mid-sized and small companies in that area, so I founded an agency that can serve them with search engine optimization and social media marketing."

John feels that the experience he gained working with a range of people and developing leadership skills have helped him in his entrepreneurial venture, to say nothing of his marketing degree from Lehigh, but wishes to remind active brothers that the Lambda Chi experience has many different kinds of benefits.

"You're developing lifelong friendships in Lambda Chi," John said. "Enjoy your time there but don't take those relationships for granted. I can't make it back to the East Coast as often as I would like, but I have memories that will last a lifetime."

John isn't able to make it back to Bethlehem for the golf outings and Lehigh v. Lafayette games as he did before moving to the West Coast, but he has found a number of brothers on Facebook and has enjoyed reconnecting online.

***Reconnect with John at  
jjpfeiffer@yahoo.com.***

***Do you know of a Gamma Psi alum who would make a good profile subject? If so, contact our editors at  
content@affinityconnection.com (mention "The Gamma-Psider Press" in the subject line).***

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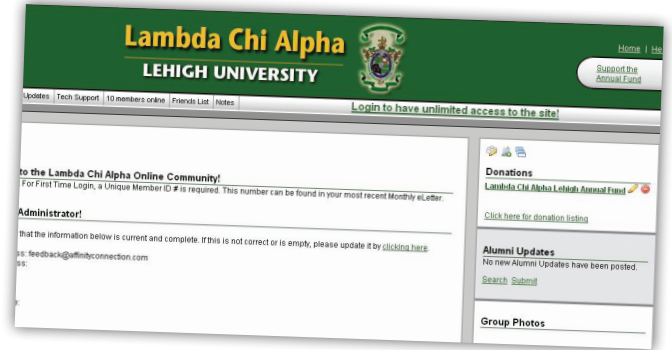
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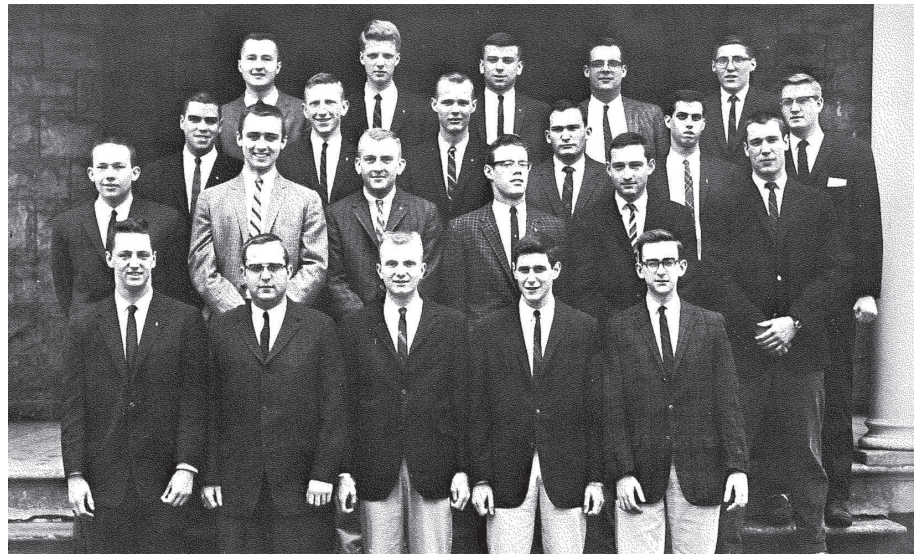
## FROM THE ARCHIVES

### *Love Old Photos?*

So do we! That's why we need your help to preserve the best Gamma-Psi moments that have been captured on film.

Send the best pictures from your era to [content@affinityconnection.com](mailto:content@affinityconnection.com) (mention Lambda Chi at Lehigh) or mail them to the return address on this newsletter. We'll feature the best submissions in future newsletters and eLetters.

**In this photo:** Lambda Chi brothers in 1963. *From Epitome.*



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