



NEWS FROM THE

# TREEHOUSE

Winter / Spring 2025 Edition

Tau Phi Delta Fraternity – Penn State Alpha Chapter

427 East Fairmount Avenue, State College, PA 16801-5711 • [www.tauphidelta.org](http://www.tauphidelta.org)



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Phi:** Jack Valzania  
**Alpha Phi:** Mason Coon  
**Tau:** Christian Allen  
**Sigma:** Nicholas Pacella

## STANDING COMMITTEES

**Membership (Rush):**  
Zachary Jaap & Harrison Rudick  
**Social:** Jackson Brion,  
Derick Lentz & Zachary Jaap  
**New Member Education**  
**(Pledgemaster):** Dominic Starr  
**(Pledge) Test Giver:**  
Ashton Demorat  
**Academic:** Kevin Beers  
**Finance:** Sean Farrell  
**Alumni:** Nicholas Pacella  
**Jolly Friar:** Pat Lee  
**Forest Ranger:** Harrison Rudick  
**Activities:** Matthew Heffner  
**Lawn:** Harrison Rudick &  
Jared Pechart  
**Philanthropy / THON:**  
Ethan Snyder, Kevin Beers &  
Ashton Demorat  
**Co-Webmaster:** Ethan Snyder  
**Little Sisters:** Sean Farrell  
**Scrapbook:** Nicholas Pacella  
**(Fire) Wood:** Jared Pechart &  
Matthew Heffner  
**Risk Management:** Kevin Beers  
& Zachary Jaap  
**Crime Watch:** Harrison Rudick  
& Adam Harbaugh



## Honorable Phi's Report

**Jack David Valzania (Spring '23)**

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I am incredibly excited to be starting my role as Phi and have high hopes for this upcoming year. The House has made a great deal of progress the last year, and we have been able to make connections with a lot of other Penn State organizations and positively spread our Fraternity's name.

First, throughout the past year, we set much of our focus on developing relationships with some of the other organizations and sororities on campus. For example, last spring, we hosted a successful Parent's Weekend event with the THON organization Trilogy, and I am happy to report that we are hosting the same event with them this April. Hopefully, we can continue these external efforts and solidify relationships with them and other organizations.

We recently had some representatives from *MeatEater* (a hunting/fishing lifestyle media group) come to the House to interview some Brothers, as well as film a tour of TΦΔ. We hope to see this footage published on their future podcast, as they have a very large outdoor-oriented fanbase.

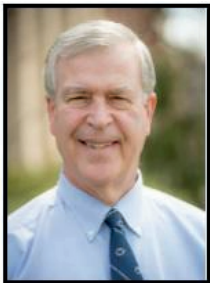
Keeping the theme of looking for more like-minded individuals, we plan on making a trip to Penn State Mont Alto to meet with their Forestry Club, which has expressed interest in our Fraternity. With students transferring from Mont Alto to University Park all the time, this would be a huge opportunity for us to once again develop this recurring source for recruitment for the House.

While recruitment was very slow and only brought us four pledges this semester, we learned that most other Penn State fraternities had a similar issue, with not many students registering for rush this semester. Nonetheless, the four young men (see more about them on the next page) that did accept bids are eager to become part of this Brotherhood and we look forward to teaching and eventually initiating them.

One challenge that we have always faced is recruiting; however, I think that the work we are putting in now will benefit us in the long run. Which is what this Fraternity needs.

I would also like to personally thank the Alumni, especially our Advisors, the Corporation Board of Directors, and Foundation Trustees, with all their help and understanding as they worked with us to provide scholarships to the Actives, plus offered buy-out loans for some of the out-of-the-House Brothers with apartment housing contracts. While we continue to operate the fraternity, recruit new members, and maintain a social schedule under the challenging regulations and increasing austerity of Penn State University's Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life and Interfraternity Council, our efforts to succeed would not be possible without the support from all these Tau Phis.

It is greatly appreciated here at the House. We are looking forward to taking advantage of all these opportunities presented to us right now!



## House Advisor's Notes

Martin "Bear" McGann (Fall '74)

I am happy to report that the House survived another semester and that, in fact, things went pretty well, and I believe this is due in part to the Brothers on the current executive committee that we had over this past year. I owe them a debt of gratitude which made my job easier.

As you will most likely read about in other parts of the newsletter, we are still very light on Actives living in the House. There are still a significant number of Actives that are living out-of-the-House – many due to binding apartment and dormitory housing contracts – and this does not help our financial situation that much. Steps have been taken to try and remedy that situation. I am hopeful that in the upcoming 2025 – 2026 school year, we will see a marked improvement in our in-house Actives.

There have been a couple of hiccups such as penalty "points" assessed from the State College Borough for things like violation of the noise ordinance and trash in the yard. Much, but not all, of the latter is caused by pedestrians tossing debris in the front yard, along alley ways, and onto the rear gravel parking lot. These can be solved by having the Actives be more aware of what is and is not permitted and reaching out to those who are close to crossing the line and reminding them they need to dial things back. This has been a problem recently, and I hope that we can gradually make things better with more oversight by the people living in the House.

I have been involved with the Lion Fraternity Alumni Association and have found them to be a valuable source of information and guidance when dealing with the University. It is also a good clearinghouse for information from other Penn State fraternities as to what they have tried and what has worked or not worked when dealing with the typical fraternity problems. The biggest problems with all fraternities are mostly generated from social activities and those persons who are not members and from outside their fraternity house creating problems. It appears that in certain circumstances, persons will arrive at a social event and are already "three sheets to the wind." This coming spring semester I hope to provide guidance to the House on how to deal with some of these problems.

We are also working on trying to get the Collegiate Sportsmen and Women's Coalition at Penn State (see page 17 in the current issue of *The Taproot*), a new campus student club, up and running so that we can cast a broader net to people that might be interested in the activities at the Tau Phi Delta.

It is more than likely that the club will be reaching out to several Alumni to come in and do a presentation for the club at various points this spring. The purpose of the club is to engage college students in becoming active in managing and participating in outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting, and trapping, just to name a few.

I am hoping that we might be able to have a work party this summer to address some of the deficiencies and improvements at the House. I'll try to send out information about this sometime in the next month or two pending the approval by the Corporation Board of Directors.

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Shaun Doran / Pennsylvania DNCR Bureau of Forestry (724) 944-2462 • [smd277psu@hotmail.com](mailto:smd277psu@hotmail.com)

## Membership Update

On February 9, 2025, after TΦΔ gave out multiple bids, four were accepted. The Spring 2025 Pledge Class includes: **Sam Leone** (Morgantown) Mechanical Engineering, **Luke Wagner** (Danville) Forest Ecosystem Management, **Louis Neri** (Boonton, New Jersey), Electrical Engineering, and **Will Lund** (Tully, New York) Agribusiness Management.

On the evening of December 11, 2024, we welcomed our newest Brothers, when all five of these young men were duly sworn in during the Brotherization ceremony: **Kevin Beers** (South Lyon, Michigan) and **George Mertz, IV** (Reading) both Mechanical Engineering, **Jared Pechart** (Mechanicsburg) and **Michael Harrison Rudick** (Sparks, Maryland) both Agribusiness Management, and **Jayden Stoltzfus** (Morgantown) Communications Arts and Sciences.

Congratulations are in order to these new Brothers and well wishes to the Pledges!