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NORTH CAROLINA BETA DATA

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

CHAPEL HILL, N.C.

FALL 2017

FEATURE PROFILE

An Unlikely Reunion

Former Roommates John Eakin '77 and Craig Chapman '76 Happen to Take Ski Vacations at the Same Time

When **John Eakin '77** took a ski trip last winter to Vail, Colo., he couldn't have imagined that he'd run into his fraternity brother and former roommate from 40 years prior, **Craig Chapman '76**. Both men live in separate cities, John in Nashville and Craig in Montgomery, Ala. but the stars were aligned when they happened to be in Vail at the same time.

The coincidences didn't end there, though. The two had time to get together for dinner with John's wife, Lake. It was at dinner where they discovered that their sons share a connection, too.

"It is a small world, as Craig's son, Chap, lives across the street in Nashville from my son, Bill," said John, "and they have become great friends."

Forty years ago, John and Craig spent two years as roommates living in the Phi Delt house. At dinner in Vail, they caught up on stories from UNC and discovered that their sons know one another.

While many years have passed, John says that the time hasn't diminished the friendships. Prior to this chance meeting, John and Craig hadn't seen one another for 10 years.

"While I don't get back as much as I would like to, I always enjoy running into Phi friends from UNC at weddings and other events in the South," he said. "Hard to believe that I graduated 40 years ago. It seems like yesterday."

When asked about some of their favorite



John Eakin and Craig Chapman at a college formal in 1975.



Craig, Lake, and John at dinner in Vail last winter.

memories from UNC, it's difficult for John to pinpoint just a few, but Craig recalls a specific time when his brothers were there for him.

"Too many to select a few," said John, "but the band parties were some great memories."

"John and I had a great time as Phi Delt at Carolina," recalled Craig. "The fraternity was like family for me, especially when my father died during college."

John and his wife have been married for 34 years. They have three sons, ages 28 – 31. Sons Bill and Rob live in Nashville and work for John's company, Eakin Partners, a successful

commercial real estate business where John has been working with his partners since the 1980's. His other son, Jack, is married and lives in New York city. Together, the family enjoys outdoor activities like water skiing, snow skiing, and hiking.

Craig has lived in Montgomery for over 31 years where he works as an otolaryngologist in private practice. He and his wife, Susan, recently celebrated their 33rd anniversary. Their son, Chap, lives in Nashville and works in freight logistics. Their daughter, Huntly, works in advertising.

Knowing the Eakins are also in Nashville will make it much easier to keep in touch.

"I look forward to getting together with the Eakins much more now that my children live in Nashville," said Craig.

ALUMNI REPORT

Phi Delta Theta Remains a Top Fraternity on Campus

Your Ongoing Support Will Help to Keep It That Way

As NC Beta enters our 132nd year at Carolina, we want to give you an update on the fraternity. By any measure, we remain one of the two best fraternities on campus, and many would say Phi Delta Theta is the strongest fraternity at Carolina. The average Phi Delt GPA for the last school year was about 3.3 or fourth out of a total of 24 fraternities on campus! Sixty-eight brothers returned this fall, and we welcomed a pledge class of 23.

Over the last 17 years we have had two major capital campaigns. Some of the active brothers helped with the last campaign. The 88-year-old house has benefitted greatly from the \$2.5 million spent on improvements, upgrades, new equipment, and roof and HVAC replacements.

All parents love the fall Parents' Weekend and annual participation at the Carolina Inn usually exceeds 300 people, including brothers, dates, and parents.

A rush brochure is printed each year to tell the Phi Delt story to potential rushees, two annual newsletters are sent to alumni, and a number of alumni events have been held at the house. We also help provide for pre-football game brunches at all home games.

The strong NC Beta Foundation Board meets several times a year to provide guidance and support to the fraternity. There are three full-time permanent employees, including our cook and general house manager. Imagine 85 people eating, partying, and living (18 bedrooms) in a large old home and it looks, generally, better than it did 20 years ago.

Although we have had consistent financial support for the two capital campaigns from our older alumni from the 1950-1980s, our more recent Phi Delt alumni have been less generous. Out of 1,000+ current active alumni only 89 participated in the last annual request, for a total of \$18,000. Our goal for the upcoming year is increasing the overall participation to 200 alumni with a dollar goal of \$35,000. Many younger Phi Delt benefitted greatly from the major recent house improvements and we really need those brothers who graduated within the last 30 years to reflect on their positive fraternity experience and give more generously to our annual giving. A \$200-300 check would be greatly appreciated, but we will gladly accept any amount.

Your contributions will help to build up a house reserve for future major capital needs,

help support ongoing improvements to the house like the recent expanded patio in front of the house and the new floor in the great party room area, and in general help to maintain the ambience we have created at 304 South Columbia Street.

We do not expect another major capital campaign for about 15 years (Steve Bell has said he will not be available to lead another \$1+ million campaign at that time). Other fraternities are making improvements and your Beta Foundation Board is determined to keep NC Beta the top fraternity. Please help us with a generous gift. Also, you are encouraged to visit the house or plan an event there with your pledge class and perhaps other classes.

Make your gift at www.uncphidelt.com or by mailing a check to the return address on this newsletter.

written by:

Mark Griffin, Class of 1977
Doug Monroe, Class of 1978
Shoff Allison, Class of 1998
Durant Bell, Class of 2002
Scott Gunn, Class of 2010

UNDERGRADUATE PROFILE

Country's #1 Track Recruit Finds a Home at Chapel Hill, Phi Delt

Kenny Selmon '19 Qualifies for World Championship, but Puts Career Opportunities First

By Badham Dixon '19

Kenny Selmon '19 came to UNC as the #1 track recruit in the nation, but UNC was not a top track school at the time. Other powerhouses like FSU and Texas A&M had the best programs in the country, but Kenny turned them all down to come to Chapel Hill. Kenny told me, "I knew I couldn't run forever, and I wanted to leverage athletics for better academics so I could best prepare for my future outside of sports."

Kenny has been able to do both: compete on the national stage in the 400M hurdle and pursue a career in business. The list of his accomplishments in the 400M hurdle event are overwhelming. He came in 1st in the ACC Championship with a time of 48.7 seconds. He then scored in the Top 12 in Regionals in late May in order to advance to NCAA Nationals for the 400M hurdle. At Nationals Kenny posted a new personal record: 48.6 seconds. That time would shatter UNC's twenty-two year-old record for the event and earn him 4th place on the national stage. Hurdles coach Steve Rubin would remark, "He had probably the deepest, fastest 400-hurdle final in the history of the NCAA meet."



Kenny Selmon '19

With such an incredible year, it only made sense for Kenny to run in the World Championship, which he qualified for after his finish at Nationals. But he decided to instead pursue his passion for business at the corporate headquarters for Coca-Cola in Atlanta, Ga. After a rigorous application process, Kenny was selected to be a Commercial Leadership Intern. He worked in the marketing and sales department, focusing on commercializing Coke's new platform to strengthen the brand's relationship with its customers. Kenny said the decision to not run in the World Championship and pursue his career was symbolic of the way he lives his life. "I've always tried to be a very wholesome and well-rounded person," he remarked.

Kenny says Phi Delt has played a huge role in the way he lives his life, remarking, "my interactions with my PDT brothers allows me to see people with high academic and professional success on a daily basis; this motivates me to extend my horizons past athletics." Kenny says he has enjoyed being in a fraternity with a group of guys who will support him in both his athletic and academic endeavors.

Alumni News & Musings



Gene Brigham (right) receiving the UNC Track & Field Evans Award in 1952.

Gene Brigham '52

(5000 S.W. 25th Boulevard Unit 3115, Gainesville, FL 32608; gene.brigham@cba.ufl.edu)

From the Editor (with excerpts from *Carolina Cornerstone*): Though he lived in the “track and field house” instead of the Phi Delt House, Gene has a deep affinity for all of his experiences at UNC. An avid runner with an impressive undergraduate athletic career, Gene made a generous contribution to endow an annuity for track operations at UNC. “Athletics is very important—and very beneficial—to a lot of students, and I just concluded that helping to fund the track program on a ‘forever’ basis would do things that I wanted to see done,” said Gene in a recent edition of *Carolina Cornerstone*, a newsletter for legacy donors of Carolina athletics.

As a senior, Gene received the prestigious Evans Award given for outstanding performance and achievement in track.

According to a June 1952 *Daily Tar Heel* article written by Jonas Kessing, Gene was the first person in university history to win an event in the Southern Conference Championships without ever having won that same race during the regular season. Originally a quarter-miler, Gene was asked to run the half-mile during his senior year. He barely made the finals at the Southern Conference meet, but he was determined to bring home the gold. And that he did! He beat out Maryland’s Art Buehler, who had won the three previous conference championship half-miles. A few weeks later Gene was recognized for his accomplishment with the Evans Trophy and recognized by Coach Ranson as “one of the finest half-milers in UNC track history.

After graduation, Gene went on active duty with the Navy and served in the Korean War. After earning his MBA from Cal Berkeley, he worked in finance in two years before enrolling in Cal’s finance and economics PhD program. He became assistant professor of finance at UCLA’s School of Business at the age of 32, and three years later he was asked to co-author a revision of *Essentials of Managerial Finance*, written by legendary financial expert J. Fred Weston. Gene then authored or coauthored several undergraduate and MBA finance textbooks which are still best sellers today, including the successor to the Weston and Brigham revision, *Financial Management: Theory & Practice*. It has stood the test of time and is in its 14th edition. Gene’s textbooks are used at more than 1,000 universities and more than 5 million copies have been sold in multiple languages.

Gene retired from the University of Florida in 1995, but continued to teach, do research, and consult for a few more years.

Clarence Williford, Jr. '56

(113 Lake Ridge Drive, Smithfield, NC 27577 USA; wheelsanddealssmfd@earthlink.net) I’m still selling cars at Wheels & Deals of Smithfield.

Richard Vinroot '63

(325 Cherokee Place, Charlotte, NC 28207; rvinroot@rbh.com)

Most meaningful tradition? My encounters with the unforgettable, and loveable “Dr. Reet” – Matthew Mason! He was one of the truly great, and most memorable, people

in my fraternity life, and I loved him very much.

On leadership: Nothing particular, except that if you’re surrounded by good people (as I was at PDT), their good qualities will rub off on you. They did for me.

Funniest fraternity memory? Too many to pick one, but almost all involve Dr. Reet, one way or another.

How do you stay connected? Annual Spring “Beach Weekends” with five of my pledge class members and their families for more than two decades, and periodic get-togethers over the years ever since then.

What’s new? I’m getting old pretty fast; not much else to report.

John Wester '68

(1647 Hertford Road, Charlotte, NC 28207; jwester@rbh.com)

Most meaningful tradition? Meals and social functions.

Funniest fraternity memory? Too much competition for this.

How do you stay connected? My son joined Phi Delt. Reunion gatherings have been terrific.

Capt. David Weeks '75

(9230 Woodriver Lane, Charlotte, NC 28277; dsweeks53@gmail.com)

My oldest son, Elliott, is 34 in NYC with JP Morgan. He has infant twins and a 3-year-old girl. His wife Lauren with *InStyle* Magazine.

Michelle and I have two children, Libby (21) and Carter (18), both at NC State University. Michelle is a very successful real estate broker with Helen Adams in the Ballantyne area in Charlotte. I am still senior captain (39 years) with USAirways, now American Airlines, formally flying all Europe routes, but just transitioned to the new Boeing 787 Dreamliner flying Asian routes to China, Japan, Korea, and Australia and New Zealand.

Hugh Nunnally '91

(1389 Wesley Cir NW, Atlanta, GA 30327-1821; Nunnally@myclubdrive.com) I’ve been asked to sit on the Board of The Institute for the Arts and Humanities at UNC.

What’s new with you? Share your updates, stories, and photos at www.uncphidelt.com!

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What are the chances?

Two former roommates go on the same ski vacation at the same time—unbeknownst to each other! Read their story inside...

CHAPTER REPORT

Phi Delt Continues to Be a Leader on Campus

Top GPA, Quality Phikea, and \$100,000 Philanthropy Fundraiser Top List of Chapter Highlights

By John Gabianelli, Outgoing Chapter President

The time has come to elect a new group of officers to take over our shoes, and with a bittersweet heart I am passing on my responsibilities as president to **Hardin Lucas** of Charlotte. I am extremely confident in the new group of officers, and I wish them the best in the coming year. The strength and abundance in leadership to choose from has made all the difference in the past few years, and I believe it is a testament to the direction Phi Delt is headed.

We are consistently ranked in the top five fraternity GPAs and number one in the big four, and our membership has slowly

“The strength and abundance in leadership has made all the difference...”

grown to 91 brothers (including current Phikeia) from all over the United States, with one brother from Scotland. Our main philanthropy event, the Eve Carson Memorial 5K, continues to be the largest 5K in Chapel Hill and raises an unparalleled amount of money (over \$100,000) for a cause we all hold close to our hearts.

With all the successes outside of the house,

we still remain one of, if not the most, socially prominent fraternities on campus, and we had a very successful recruitment process this past fall. We currently have 26 Phikeia, and we could not be happier with the new class. With members from all over North Carolina and the United States as well as three Robertson Scholars and two varsity athletes (wrestling and lacrosse), the new class continues to exemplify the leadership qualities we look for in potential new members.

The outgoing officers are confident and excited for what is to come, and we hope to see you soon.

LIFELONG CONNECTIONS

Class of 1967 Celebrates 50 Years of Friendship



Thank you to **Steve Bell '67** and **Jim “Birdman” Adams '67** for sharing this photo of their recent 50th reunion. A group of nine pledge brothers got together for the UNC-Notre Dame game in early October, followed by golf in the North Carolina mountains.

Jim said, “One of the nicest bonding experiences we had was Brother McChesney—an amazing historian—leading us through a look back at our fellow brothers. We had a 1966 Phi Delt composite photo of our class and three other classes. We went over most of the brothers in the composites and came up with stories on each—either what they had

done since leaving Carolina or some memories of them while at Carolina (a number involving food fights).

“What a special time sharing with friends we had lived with during four of the best years of our lives,” he added. “Every class should arrange a reunion.”

Read the full story from the reunion at www.uncphidelt.com.

Call Steve Bell (336-232-1905) if you would like to utilize the Phi Delt house or secure a block of hotel rooms in Chapel Hill for your own pledge class reunion.