Greetings from the Master

Brothers, Alumni, and Friends,

We at Beta Rho are coming off of an incredible and exciting year for our fraternity.

I would first like to thank everyone who came to Providence on the weekend of March 16 to 18 for our Tenth Anniversary celebration. After an uncharacteristically light winter for Providence, the most significant snowfall of the year happened to fall on that weekend. We are sorry that we missed some brothers who planned on attending but whose flights were cancelled. Despite this, we still had over eighty brothers and friends in attendance for Saturday night’s gala dinner, thanks to the hard efforts of many alumni and the long hours spent on 95 north to get into Providence.

And it paid off – the weekend was better than any could have imagined. Alumni who had not been at Brown or the house for many years were able to reconnect with their former home, and current brothers and alumni spent many hours in the lounge and basement rooms mingling, telling stories, and most of all, having a blast. What was most telling for me was the reaction of our Pi pledge class, who had just been inducted a week earlier. They were awestruck, surprised at how much work went into Beta Rho to make it what it is today, and amazed of how many people care so deeply about the organization – from current brothers to those that graduated years ago.

With the weekend, we commenced the Decade Project, Beta Rho’s capital campaign for the purpose of general house improvement. The results were outstanding. We kickstarted the campaign with over $900 in initial donations, and received pledges which averaged over $2200 per year. We thank all those that donated and made pledges – your commitment is truly appreciated and will make a considerable difference for the lives of our brothers and AEPi’s image on campus!

In fact, contributions are already being utilized. Just off the Xi pledge class’s recent bar room renovation, now making it one of the premier social places on campus, the Pi pledge class began our kitchen renovation project to turn the room into a downstairs social space. They built a beautiful bar that will serve the purpose of providing more space for brothers to cook. Our kitchen now has a casual place for brothers to invite friends for a meal, an area to organize supplies and keep the kitchen cleaner, and a way to section off the rest of the room, which will be used for social space, from the cooking area itself. Additionally, we made a few other minor house improvements this past semester, including buying a new, powerful sound system for our lounge and cleaning our storage spaces throughout the house.

So where do we go from now? As Founding Father Pete Cohen said at the anniversary,
“We do this for guys who are Kindergarten.” The Decade Project is a long term challenge to the fraternity, as we eagerly look forward to seeing our lounge filled with beautiful couches, our library having a full computer terminal, our kitchen transforming into a fun gaming room, and our basement rooms becoming some of the most premier spaces on campus – even if we won’t be undergraduates at Brown when they happen. For everyone who is part of the Beta Rho family, we want to hear your input. We want you to become an integral part of making our fraternity the best it can be. Because there is little more satisfying than looking at Beta Rho and saying, “I helped to make this, and never stopped doing so.”

On another note, I would like to wish warm congratulations to the fifteen members of the Pi pledge class. You guys have showed an incredible amount of excitement for AEPi already, and we are all looking forward to the energy and leadership you will bring to our chapter. You have a lot to look forward to in living in house next year – we have forty-three brothers living in Marcy next fall, one of our highest counts ever!

Finally, I would like to give a very special thanks to a few people who devoted themselves to AEPi and helped me personally in my role in this past semester – Lieutenant Master Paul Savitz, Immediate Past Master Steven Beckoff, and Past Master David Guttmann. And of course, a hearty congratulations to Incoming Master Tobias Cohen. We are all excited to see what you will bring to the fraternity and where you will take it under your leadership. Beta Rho is in good hands!

It has been an absolute pleasure serving Beta Rho as Master and an experience that will have forever changed me for the better. I hope you enjoyed yourselves as well; we have a lot to look forward to in the upcoming year!

Most fraternally,
Brother Master Jonathan Levin
Lt. Master’s Report

This past spring, I had the privilege of working with the best minor board a Lieutenant Master could ask for. I would not be exaggerating even a bit to say that they were the hardest-working, most dedicated, and handsomest group of people in the history of Beta Rho, nay, the world. Let us examine their accomplishments.

Adam Lewin excelled as Community Service Chair, coordinating our most impressive Relay for Life ever. We have ambitious goals for next semester, and Adam is working with our incoming Community Service Chair Jason Ziplow to accomplish them.

Rush, as we know so well, is the lifeblood of our chapter. Rush Chair Devin Cohen, then, was a strong and healthy heart, pumping the life-giving energy of fifteen hemoglobin-rich freshmen into the circulatory system of pledging, thus nourishing the organs and tissues of Beta Rho. Metaphorically speaking. Brothers got to know rushes over wings and pool, Family Guy episodes, casino night, and late night bowling. From the outset, we could see an enormous amount of leadership potential from these young men, and we were thrilled to welcome them into our pledge program.

Max Chaiken, our Jewish Affairs Chair planned and led one of my favorite nights of the semester: the AEPi Seder. Only days after brothers returned to campus from Spring Break, Max was able to organize a second night Seder in the AEPi lounge for more than fifty brothers and guests. We had all the good food we could eat, and then some.

Brett Cropp helped keep brothers relaxed and entertained in his role as Study Breaks Chair. In December, he planned the Chanukah study break, where brothers feasted on latkes and apple sauce, and he continued the fine tradition of proving what good goyim we can be, with our third annual Christmas study break a few nights later. During the following semester, he helped observant brothers stay sated during Passover by planning a kosher L’Pesach study break, complete with macaroons and plenty of goodies from the kosher aisle at the supermarket.

Ryan Gise was a rock as Social Chair—parties ran smoothly, preparations were made in plenty of time, and AEPi continued to uphold its reputation of throwing some of the best parties on campus. Brothers dressed the part during our 50 Cent-themed party “Get Rich or AEPi Tryin,” sporting mock-bulletproof vests so realistic you almost didn’t notice the spray paint and fiberglass insulation. No one left an AEPi party unsatisfied.

We finished the year in style, holding our Spring formal at the excellent CAV Restaurant. After wining and cheesing in the AEPi lounge with some good jazz music, just under one hundred brothers and significant others (and just plain old others) boarded the big yellow school bus for the short ride to the restaurant. Dinner was to die for, and the tiramisu was made fresh, from scratch. During a break in the after-dinner dancing, the Nu, Xi, and Pi pledge classes treated us to musical samplings of Mandy Moore, the Beastie Boys, and Beyoncé Knowles, before the dancing resumed.

Serving as Lieutenant Master in such a fine organization as the Beta Rho chapter of Alpha Epsilon Pi was a pleasure, a learning experience, and an honor. I am grateful to those who came before, who afforded me the experience. I take pride knowing that others, years ahead, will share in the fun.

Paul Savitz (Nu ’08)
Lt. Master
Community Service

This semester was a strong one for AEPi’s community service projects. We kicked off the semester by playing a leading role with Kappa Alpha Theta in advertising for a blood drive in February, which brought in 284 pints of blood to exceed the Rhode Island Blood Center’s goal of 270. Brothers stepped up to help poster around campus, tableslip at the V-Dub, and man a table at Ratty meals to help spread the word. Fueled by the reward of pizza for our work for the first blood drive, we repeated our efforts at the beginning of May to create an even more successful drive, bringing in 303 pints! Since one pint can potentially save three lives, AEPi brothers helped to gather enough blood to save up to 909 people, a stunningly high number. The Pi pledge class and its community service chair, Ben Rome, were instrumental in this effort.

The highlight of the semester for community service, however, was Relay for Life. Fundraising for cancer research proved to be a monumental success, as our two teams collectively raised $6,173.00, more than any other group on campus. Our new Brother Master Toby Cohen personally raised $1,504.00, the third most of all Brown participants. This money will go directly to cancer research, a very noble cause and a worthy community service project for the fraternity.

The event itself was also a huge success. We established ourselves as the dominant Relay for Life team by setting up our sukkah on the main green complete with our AEPi flag as our “home base.” We brought our grill and barbecue for dinner as brothers began to walk their laps around the green. Our presence was felt throughout the evening, as various brothers were performers in the entertainment section of Relay. In the very late hours of the night, we commandeered a projector in Sayles and set up our own Nintendo 64 entertainment center which kept us going for the remainder of the night. After the awards ceremony, which we were a large part of, the 11 of us remaining took a house-subsidized trip to Loui’s—the perfect end to such a fun night. Overall our contributions to Relay this year were better than ever.

The future of community service at Beta Rho looks bright, and this semester was a prime example of the excellence we are capable of. In addition, the past few months proved that our brothers know full well how to have fun while doing some good.

Adam Lewin (Omicron ’09)
Community Service Chair

How Much?

- 2nd and 4th place teams
- AEPi raised $6,173, more than any other group on campus
- Toby Cohen raised $1,504 -- ranking #3 for all individual students
There is only one word to describe the 2006-2007 AEPi Athletics season: Disgrace.

Sure, the Pi’s proved to be perhaps the most athletic incoming class ever. Sure, the Lions won 44 games compared to 16 last year. Sure, the Lions finished 2nd in the Campus Points Race by the narrowest of margins. And sure, the Lions in this one year doubled the fraternity’s championship output from the previous ten years combined.

But the fact of the matter is that it took entering eight intramural leagues to capture just those two measly championships. Now tell me, is that UNFORGIVABLE?

As the indoor soccer season kicked off, the bar had been set high by Lions of an earlier era, whose ‘05 championship banner hung high up in the rafters. Despite losing star forward Matthew Slen ’09 for the season with a devastating knee injury, the Lions looked to have enough talent to take the championship easily. Teaming up with standout defender Adam Lewin ’09, the stellar play of recent pledges Joel Cohen ’10 and Dan Block ’10 immediately put them among the league’s premier players. Yet nonetheless, despite a deep roster of 17 strong, the Lions found themselves on the verge of a monumental choke job, losing 3-2 with five minutes left in the Indoor Soccer Finals. Luckily, the Lions caught a big break with a game-tying penalty shot that sent the game into overtime, where a sudden-death golden goal by the Lions sparked the 10,000 strong in attendance into complete pandemonium. Yes, a championship had been won (many called this the greatest intramural game ever played), but disaster had been only narrowly avoided.

All three spring teams plowed through undefeated regular seasons before collapsing painfully in the end. Led by Danny Scheinerman ’09 and Matthew Cline ’09, the frisbee team routed its opposition throughout the regular season, only to blow away a 7-3 lead in the first round of the playoffs. Furthermore, along with the new deep threat provided by Joshua Pascual ’10, Alex Dowd ’10, and Zachary Beauchamp ’10, the brilliant line play of Troy Shapiro ’10 and Toby Cohen ’09 enabled the Lions to secure the #1 playoff seed on the back of their historically prolific offense, coined by intramural coordinator Dan Mahoney as The Greatest Show on Turf. In the end, however, the Lions choked and gave up the go-ahead touchdown with 11 seconds left in the first round of the playoffs, no doubt allowing rival Blitzkrieg an easy path towards the championship.

In no sport were the Lions’ failures more evident than in softball. Behind the all-star play of second baseman Matthew Drooyan ’08, the emergence of prospect Benji Asher ’10, and the unexpected clutch pitching performances of Canadian right-hander Brett Crop ’08, the Lions were awarded a first-round bye and looked determined to avenge their loss in the Fall Softball Finals. Yet, despite an emotional walk-off victory over a rival fraternity in the semifinals, the Lions were soundly defeated in the Finals for the second straight season.

With the end of the athletic season, of course, many senior Lions will lose their intramural athletic eligibility. This off-season, the departures of two individual athletes will hit the team particularly hard. In addition to his leadership and vision on the frisbee field, who will forget the image of David Guttmann ’07 prehistorically prancing around second base on the way to a clutch game-tying three-run homerun, thereby preserving the Lions undefeated season? Moreover, how will the Lions replace the all-around playmaking ability on the football field of Adam Kamyl Bazbaz ’07? The heart and soul of the football team, “Baz” was considered by many players to be their greatest teammate, and all lamented seeing him graduate without hoisting that prized football trophy.

Despite this season’s colossal failures, the Lions have reason to believe that next year will be more promising. Boosted by the young foundation of the recently-initiated Pi pledge class, the Lions will return essentially the same roster in the fall of 2007. In fact, the entire softball starting lineup will remain intact, giving the Lions yet another opportunity to finally get over the hump and will that elusive softball championship. With vivid images of Team Chan and Team Taco fresh in their memory, the Lions will no doubt have the motivation to fuel them on during for their grueling off-season training regimen.

Morning workouts start the Monday after graduation. See you at 5 am.
Brother at Large

From memorable off-campus outings, to competitive in-house tournaments, to innovative traditions, the brothers of AEPi enjoyed an action-packed spring semester of fun, immaturity, and adventure. There were always a wide variety of activities posted on the weekly brothers’ schedules in the bathrooms, and in the case of the second floor, brothers even used these schedules as a forum for jokes, debauchery, and friendly (yet heated) debate. The close fraternal bonds of Beta Rho were most aptly demonstrated by the large attendance at the weekly brothers’ dinners in Ratty Room 6, which has since been legally renamed “the Seis” on urbandictionary.com.

To begin with, Laser Tag at Radical Rick’s always left players drenched with sweat, and although the game against the SWA Yankees was rained out, many brothers picked up softball tips while catching a PawSox game at beautiful McCoy Stadium. In addition, the astounding success of the midnight “One in the Red” showing received rave reviews from film aficionado Noah Pohl ’07, and the new official AEPi Frolf course spanning the entire campus was greatly enjoyed as well. Within the confines of Marcy House, no one was surprised when Noah Blitzer ’09 took home the belt for his victory in the Big/Little Bro Beirut Tournament. Such fierce competition was also displayed by Michael Field ’08 during the in-house Pool Tournament, as he brilliantly executed what has come to be known in these parts as the Field Maneuver.

In addition, captured on camera by Adam Robbins ’09 and posted on YouTube for the entire world to see, the 1st Annual Mario Kart Tournament brought a level of competition and ferocity that Providence had never seen before. With many members of the fraternity in attendance, the 4-player final bracket was ultimately won by Toby Cohen ’09, who displayed a remarkable ability to skeet bananas at every bridge and turn in sight. Perhaps the highlight of the afternoon, though, came when Caleb Miller ’09 inadvertently changed the course of the tournament by allegedly “zapping” Scott Seiver ’07 during a pivotal race around hallowed Wario Stadium. The semester-long play of this video game on the appropriately-titled Mario Kart Machine spawned the use of many novel terms which have since been defined on the Wiki: nutting, mowing the lawn, tax evasion, Itis Kart, Alerhand Effect, and many more.

Of course, no soul could forget the memorable battles at P&L Paintball, which many brothers likened to the “300” movie showing at Providence Place Cinemas. There was one battle in particular that left graduating seniors Scott Seiver ’07 and David Guttmann ’07 with paint on every inch of their bullet-ridden bodies. In a game called Kings, these two brave Spartans were pelted repeatedly by enemy combatants as they dared to cross the treacherous terrain of Thermopylae to reach safe harbor. Despite a now-infamous betrayal by Seiver, his musketeer Stephen Alerhand ’08 courageously shielded his warrior king from assault, taking an endless array of bullets from the firing weapons of Adam Lubitz ’09, Jonathan Levin ’08, and Zachary Beauchamp ’10.

The now-famous Last Stand, above all, was the one battle that will live on forever in the annals of AEPi lore. Led by their brave captain, Martin Bell ’10, the Lions invoked the spirit of Leonidas’ great army as they tactically employed the phalanx formation against a Persian army of Massachusetts townies wielding AK-47’s and other automatic firearms. Outnumbered and outflanked, the Lions succumbed honorably in the end. Yet, the world soon came to know that few had stood against many, and that 300 Lions fought for their freedom – and gave their last breath to defend it.

Stephen Alerhand (Xi ’08)
Brother At Large
New York, L.A., Miami... Providence?!? Few times in history has a city been so dramatically affected socially by so few people ready to have a good time. This semester at Brown University, AEPi set new standards in class, elegance, and, of course, style. The party scene had not been this hot since most of us had our Bar Mitzvahs. Through organizing successful cocktails, swinging room to rooms, and always keeping Marcy House a fresh and happening place to be, AEPi has only increased the expectations of all of Brown's students when it comes to taking a break from studying and letting loose.

Our first cocktail in late January attracted so many guests that our stereo system became over-worked to the point of breaking down. Yet, even when disaster struck and our party lost music, the atmosphere was so friendly and exciting that many students stayed anyway to enjoy each others' company. Our own resident musicians, Dan Gradess and Mark Grabiner, kept the dance scene alive with bongos and guitars that forced the party late into the night. The after party, which once again had the benefits of a stereo system, rewarded the guests that stayed with a night that many would not forget.

In the spring, the Pi pledge class threw a party that would define AEPi for the rest of the semester. Through the expert party planning of Martin Bell and the entire class, with the help of local musicians Grow, many point to this event as one of the best they've ever experienced at Brown. Between the turn tables and the Parliament-style funk that would echo across Wriston throughout the night, many students were sadly turned away because Marcy House just wasn't big enough to accommodate everyone who wanted to get down and stay funky fresh.

Over Spring Weekend, Marcy House once again lived up to its reputation by being the preeminent spot to enjoy Rage on Wriston, featuring our own Evan Stone, as well as the legendary Dave Binder. Our final party of the semester, a late night entitled “Get Rich or AEPi Trying”, was dedicated to resident socialite and departing senior, Adam Kamyl Baz Baz. Through donning make-shift bulletproof vests and keeping it “gangsta”, this Fifty Cent themed party ended the year the right way and kept everyone dancing throughout the night.

This semester of excellent parties would not have been possible without the dedication of Social Chair Ryan Gise and Master Jon Levin, who’s presence and effort made the house an exciting place to be. The bar is set high for next year, but at least we know we’ll have fun trying to match it.
The Pi Perspective

Going into the pledging process for the Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity, I was told that it was a fairly serious time commitment, and looking back, I guess it was. But while experiencing pledging for myself, I had no idea how much time I was really devoting to pledge activities; I was too busy enjoying myself. I was completely unaware that I was working hard due to the fact that I was meeting and befriending the remarkable people of AEPi that would soon be my brothers along with doing activities that enabled me to learn more about them as well as the fraternity as a whole.

As far as pledging went, I had no idea what to expect. Would it be a couple-month-long drinking binge? Would it be a stint of time where I would be harassed by the brothers in their attempt to “initiate” me into the ways of AEPi? Shortly after beginning the pledging process or maybe even during rush, after getting to know even just a few of the brothers, I realized that neither of these situations would be the case. I looked at the people with whom I was choosing to associate myself and realized that they would never take part in a society that demanded physical and emotional abuse. I learned to trust my future brothers based only on the actions of the few that I knew at the time, something that became the pinnacle of my pledging experience.

Learning that AEPi is a community and that the actions of a few represent the entire group was one of the most important ideals that I took away from the pledging process. I had dealt with this concept a bit during high school when someone in my class would unknowingly cause the entire class to get extra homework or something for their foolish behavior. However, I had never experienced this sense of responsibility to others that came with a choice I had personally made in joining a particular group. But this sense of responsibility did not deter me from continuing on in the pledging process. Quite the contrary; it became a highlight. The sense of responsibility I felt toward my future brothers, to carry on their traditions in a manner upholding the ideals of AEPi, allowed me to feel a sense of brotherhood and self-worth that I will keep with me always.

Jason Ziplow (Pi ’10)