Tradition and change. These seemingly contradictory forces define organizations. The proper balance determines which groups are doomed to failure and which are destined for success. As the classes come and go, the faces of Beta Rho change and multiply, but the character of the fraternity remains resolute.

The last few months have been good ones for Beta Rho.

We have seen success in our philanthropy. Under House Manager Andrew Antar (Sigma ’12) the annual furniture sale raised thousands for a number of charities voted on by the brotherhood. Under the community service chairmanship of Dan Meropol (Tau ’13), we have continued to support the Rhode Island Blood Bank and, newly this year, had a brotherhood beach cleanup day. Additionally, thanks to the generosity of the entire brotherhood and the accounting prowess of Exchequer Leslie Maazel (Sigma ’12), we created a digital fundraising platform and raised hundreds of dollars for the Rhode Island Food Bank and Butler Mental Hospital overnight.

We have seen success in our social
efforts in large part thanks to the efforts of Social Chair Ben Aronow (Tau ’13), Public Relations Chair Grant Gurtin (Tau ’13), and Sentinel Eliot Tang-Smith (Sigma ’12). Continuing with tradition, we hosted the annual Body Chemistry party, this year on homecoming weekend, to a sold-out crowd lined up clear across Wriston. Additionally, building onto a new tradition, we hosted another successful Wriston Rising, a Halloween party outside in a tent in front of Marcy marked by an impressive music and light display thanks to Ian Gray (Sigma ’12) and Scott Linstone (Sigma ’12).

Additionally, we have seen success in strengthening the ties amongst us. This winter a contingent of brothers will be heading to Israel to participate in the Birthright program. This serves as a capstone to a semester of building a tighter-knit fraternity through events ranging from Shabbat dinners organized by Brother at Large Shae Selix (Sigma ’12) to the new Marcy Film Society founded by Bennett Meier (Sigma ’12). This year we rolled out a brotherhood opinion survey; overall satisfaction was rated at 95%.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the parents, alumni, and friends of the fraternity. Without your support, Beta Rho’s continued success would be impossible.

It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as Master this semester. I owe an additional great deal of gratitude to the rest of Fall Executive Board, particularly Scribe Eric Lewin (Sigma ’12), Rush Chair Jeff Herman (Sigma ’12), and Lieutenant Master Jeremy Ader (Sigma ’12), who made sure I did not screw up too badly. I am proud to pass the torch to Jeremy who will be serving as the spring Master; I have full confidence that he will do a fine job.

In closing, I am happy to assure that the state of the fraternity is sound.

---

Lieutenant Master’s Report: Jeremy Ader, Sigma 2012

Fall 2010 has been my favorite semester thus far living in Marcy House. As Lieutenant Master, I had the honor of leading an awesome minor board.

Athletics chair Adam Howard (Tau ’12) lead Beta Rho to its first intramural football low-division playoff victory in years. Music Chair Dan Rome (Tau ’13) spearheaded the construction of our new music room (in the same room as the kitchen), consisting of redecorated walls, a drum set, a half-finished stage and a broken but fashionable piano.

Community Service Chair Dan Meropol (Tau ’13) led Beta Rho to Narragansett Bay where we teamed up with Save The Bay to fill over 10 trash bags with beach litter. This great community service project would not have been possible without the help of Beta Rho alum Adam Yarnell (Pi ’10) who, despite sitting out the actual beach clean up, was kind enough to drive a carload of Brothers to the Bay.

Public Relations Chair Grant Gurtin (Tau ’13) and Social Chair Ben Aronow (Tau ’13) teamed up to throw great parties including Body Chemistry, Wriston Rising and our Holiday room to room (which emphasized Beta Rho’s focus on diversity as we celebrated holidays ranging from Chanukah to Christmas to Festivus).

Under Jewish Affairs Chair Nathan Weinberger (Tau ’13), Beta Rho hosted a Yom Kippur Break Fast, built a Sukkah in the middle of
Wriston Quad enjoyed two Shabbat dinners, and celebrated Chanukah by eating beer-battered latkes and coming together for all 8 nights to light the menorah together.

We closed off the semester with an unforgettable formal at Cafe Nuovo. Brothers and their dates enjoyed delicious hors d'oeuvres, entrees and desserts, and then danced the night away until the clock struck midnight - at which point we all celebrated Bennett "Golda" Meier’s (Sigma ’12) 21st birthday by lifting him up in a chair to the tune of the classic hit “Werewolf Bar Mitzvah.” The time and effort that so many brothers have put into the house in the past semester has fostered an incredible energy amongst the brotherhood that makes us all so excited to see what Spring 2011 will bring.

Brown’s pole dancing team, the Poler Bears. Steve Colacurcio (Tau ’13) is the star of the team. Many brothers tried dancing with the assistance of the team as the others cheered them on (and often laughed). The weekend continued with a Lasagna Party Saturday afternoon and a poker tournament Saturday night. The weekend was capped off with Indians, Pilgrims, and Togas, the first room-to-room of the semester. The party was run by Jeff Herman (Sigma ’12) and was a great success.

The highlight of the semester was Wriston Rising. For the third straight year, we set up an enormous 40x60 foot tent in the middle of Wriston Quad to throw the party of the semester. Grant Gurtin (Tau ’13) again led a successful advertising campaign, with the assistance of Jeremy Ader (Sigma ’12) on pre-sale tickets and Brian Bierig (Tau ’12) on tableslapping. Jeff Lisiecki (Rho ’11) led the setup of the tent, while David Gordon (Tau ’13) and Ian Brownstein (Tau ’13) hung a figure of Freddy Krueger from the house to show our Halloween spirit. Ian Gray (Sigma ’12) and Steve
Colacurcio (Tau ’13) set up a giant sound system that Ian used to rock the party so hard that a security guard told me that it was the best DJ she’d ever heard at a party. Mike Bohl (Rho ’11) took the prize for best costume of the night, dressed as Na’vi from the movie Avatar. A great time was had by all, as Beta Rho had a night to remember.

We finished the semester off with a holiday-themed room-to-room, celebrating Hanukkah, Christmas, New Years, Pastafarianism, and even Festivus. The brothers and our friends enjoyed eggnog, hot apple cider, the airing of grievances, and delicious spaghetti cooked by Will Miller (Rho ’11). This semester has been a phenomenal social success for the Beta Rho chapter. We are looking forward to another great semester of social events in Beta Rho, to be run by new Social Chair Steve Colacurcio (Tau ’13).

This semester, the highlight of Jewish Affairs was the celebration of the Jewish holidays. Celebrating the holidays as a brotherhood brought us closer together, allowed us to connect to the greater Jewish community at Brown, and helped create a meaningful Jewish experience for everyone who participated.

It started with our Yom Kippur study break, an event that has become an AEPi tradition. With a generous grant from national, we hit Sam’s Club hard, and served over 150 people bagels and lox, snacks, and drinks. There is no better way to break a 25-hour fast than with good food and good company, and by all accounts, that’s what AEPi delivered. Our next holiday was Sukkot. We set up our Sukkah right on Wriston, and even had a rabbi come make sure it was kosher. The Sukkah was open to any who wanted to celebrate the holiday by eating a meal inside, and many brothers took advantage of this. We had a delicious kosher pizza and fries event in the Sukkah, which many brothers attended.

The last Jewish holiday of the semester was Chanukah. Every night, brothers joined together to say the blessings, light the candles, eat some gelt, play a little dreidel, and just enjoy the holiday. On the first night, BP’s favorite rabbi, Rabbi Lurie, and his friend Moshe Moscowitz helped us put together a latke sampling for the brothers. It was an amazing and delicious way to start the holiday. On the last night, which was also the night before finals, we had a Chanukah study break. Brothers exchanged Chanukah Charry gifts (it’s Secret Santa, but for Jews), we ate homemade latkes - the best latkes this Jewish Affairs chair has ever tasted - and took a second to stop stressing about finals and celebrate the holiday with our friends, both in and out of the house.

Although Jewish Affairs centered on celebrating the holidays, that wasn’t all we did. From two Shabbat dinners, to brothers’ involvement in Hillel, to the first and only meeting of the Jewish Culture Night (a tradition that I hope will be continued next semester), Judaism was always present in some form at BP this semester. And with the enthusiasm that the brothers showed for Jewish events this semester, next semester is sure to be great also.
I was a Tau. It was my first semester living in the fraternity, and despite pledge education the previous semester, I was plagued with questions of identity and duty. What was my role within the house, and what were my obligations to my brothers? This knowledge could not be learned from a book, not even from an educational film.

Fortunately, the Beta Rho chapter of Alpha Epsilon Pi has a unique strategy for quelling the qualms of its virginal members. Many of my fellow brothers in the Tau pledge class were given responsibilities from the outset, forcing us to immediately engage with and become a crucial part of the organization we had just joined. My team of Taus and I made up the minor board, under the able auspices of Jeremy Ader (Sigma ’12), now Master, and were each given a distinct and necessary job to perform in the house.

Community service has always been a foundation of AEPi and the Jewish faith, and as Community Service Chair it was my responsibility to make sure we continued this tradition of giving back. Luckily for the fraternity, I had spent my high school years honing my talents as a master delegator, the principle skill in accomplishing community service work.

Every fall, AEPi and the Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority assist the Rhode Island Blood Bank in operating two blood drives on campus. While Rhode Island Blood Bank administered the drives, we managed promotions, making sure every eligible Brown student either gave blood or felt guilty about not donating. While I speak of overly-aggressive promotional tactics only in jest, both blood drives were extremely successful. In the first drive in particular we managed to collect enough blood to help 1008 patients in the community. The true collaborative effort of the fraternity shone as the majority of Brothers donated their time to getting others to donate their fluids. The Rhode Island Blood Bank was so pleased with our work that they offered to buy pizza for the whole frat! They obviously were not aware of how voracious we are, in our consumption of food as well as of knowledge.

In November, AEPi volunteered with an organization called Save the Bay, whose mission is to restore the ecological health of the Narragansett Bay region. Despite freezing cold weather, we packed two cars full (to an illegal degree) of enthusiastic volunteers. After spending a couple of hours cleaning the shorelines of Oakland beach, removing over a hundred pounds of litter and debris, we thawed over fish, chips, and friendship at a family restaurant off the shore. Not only did we beautify our community, but there are not many more effective bonding experiences than picking up trash together. We owe a big thanks to the car-owning capacities of Adam Yarnell (Pi ’10), an AEPi alumni who truly lived the mantra “once an AEPi, always an AEPi” by driving many of us across the state. Another thanks to brothers Andrew Antar (Sigma ’12) and Leslie Maazel (Sigma ’12) who provided pastries that warmed our stomachs during our cold work. Fittingly, this day happened to be National Family Volunteer Day, because afterward I felt, more than ever, that I belonged to this family we call Beta Rho.
The Furniture Sale this year set the bar higher than ever before. Together we raised $4000 for various charities around the world: Save a Child’s Heart, Limitless Horizons IXil, Rhode Island Urban Debate League, and the Wounded Warrior Project. For the Spring pickup, I employed a new electronic form-based website that allows community members to request a furniture pickup electronically. This then populated a database of furniture pickup requests. We received over 80 pickup requests thanks to Grant Gurtin (Tau ’13) who used his social viral marketing techniques to push the link to as many people as possible and Brown Morning Mail.

During the grueling hot weeks leading up to commencement, brothers and I woke at 7 am to rent U-Haul trucks and schlep furniture down from 4th floor apartments for pickup orders with only the incentives of Dunkin Donuts and Brotherhood. We completed over 60 pickups all around Providence and Pawtucket from freshmen to professors. Seniors were grateful to have a team of brothers unload their apartments for them and not have to worry about a thing. We even learned to get the right insurance policy after a couple run-ins. Even on the last day of Commencement weekend, during the AEPi Alumni Commencement BBQ, brothers and I were out on the U-Haul truck doing pickups drenched in the pouring rain. We slowly loaded up every room in the basement until the entire bottom floor was filled to the brim.

This year we also decided to allow brothers to store their personal belongings in Marcy House so no one had to go through the hassle of personal storage and not having their stuff at Brown on-time when they came back in September. To offset the space in the house given to brothers, we rented a large storage unit to handle additional furniture.

With the house loaded up for the summer, we prepared for the Fall Sale. As the school year started, brothers brought furniture up to the porch and lounge. Brown students came from everywhere to give us money for furniture we picked up for free! The sale went really well and we even sold a huge dresser to Lionel Butterfield, a Brown police officer and now our ally in the field. AEPi Furniture Sale: another successful Beta Rho endeavor.

As many recent graduates may be able to attest to, the kitchen lounge was in dire need of a makeover at the end of Spring 2010, and I, along with many other brothers, wanted a Music Room (the Tau pledge class in particular is chock-full of music concentrators). Thanks to the furniture sale (which, by the way, went very well this year), the room was cleared of its old hodgepodge of furniture, and once the stench had cleared and the flies had gone away, we commenced our mission to bring a room full of music and joy to the basement of the house.

It began with the drum set. Luckily, Andrew Antar (Sigma ‘12) happened to have a top quality drum set sitting around his house that he was willing to donate to the music room. The set required only one minor part that was ordered and installed by Dan Meropol (Tau ‘13) and me. A few of us then took a minivan down to one of Antar’s professors’ houses to fetch a few old couches that he wanted to get rid of.
They are two simple, white, 1970s lounge-style couches, and they are amazing. After that, we laid down a few carpets, including a shag rug and some other quality leftovers from the furniture sale, and then amps, guitars, posters, and keyboards began finding their way down to the room.

A short time after the Music Room became actualized, Aaron Clayton-Dunn (Tau ’13), Ben Aronow (Tau ’13) and I decided that we wanted a piano. After scouring Craigslist for hours looking for a free upright piano, we found one that seemed suitable for our needs. Actually, the advertisement said it cost fifty bucks, but Ben didn’t seem to notice the price tag and therefore brought no money to pay the poor woman. Nonetheless, she let us take the instrument, as several brothers (including Aaron and Ben) had already rented a U-Haul truck to go pick it up. After a long journey back to campus, the U-Haul was backed onto Wriston during a downpour of rain. We covered the piano with a blue tarpaulin and slowly rolled it into the Music Room. A short time later, we hired a piano tuner, who brought the piano as close to being in tune as he could without breaking its rusty old springs. Unfortunately, it’s still just over a whole step flat.

Unfortunately, the combined hidden costs of the “free” piano, including the U-Haul truck and the tuner, left us with a set of bills that, some brothers have argued, has exceeded the number of utils that have been gained by the “free” piano itself. Others have argued that, though the piano is not suitable to be played in a group setting or by anybody with perfect pitch, it is still fit to practice on. Though I have remained neutral on the matter, I will say that throwing a fundraising event on Wriston Quad to cover the costs of acquiring and tuning the piano, in which students could pay five dollars to hit it with a hammer and ten dollars to smash it with a sledge hammer, would be awesome. All costs aside, however, it is fantastic to have a piano in the house to add to the musicality of the room.

Future plans for the room include an earplug dispenser, soundproofing, a stage for the drum set, ordering a new seat for the drum set, vacuuming the carpets, new drapes to replace the frilly green ones, and thoroughly cleaning the kitchen side of the room. Though some brothers have spoken against the room, most brothers have been very supportive and helpful. The room has a long way to go, and there is much work to be done. My vision is that the Music Room will continue to grow into a haven for musically inclined brothers. Next semester I plan on holding weekly jam sessions (on Friday evenings, if any alums are interested in stopping by) and conquering a few more of the daunting tasks that will hopefully earn the Music Room its tenure in our collection of basement facilities. Feel free to stop by.

Entering this school year, one of the things that I was most excited about was living in the house. Having set this expectation, I was in no way disappointed. From the day I moved in, I was reminded why exactly I decided to join AEΠ, because I would be living with some of my best friends.

When I arrived on campus, I went to get my key, then excitedly went up to my room, put in the key, turned it, and the key broke. Half of it was left in the door, and I was left with no way to get in, as my roommate was out and about at the time. After managing to pull half of my key out of the door, I stood there for a few minutes wondering what to do, when I turned around, knocked on the door across the hall, where my brothers were glad to hold on to a few bags of mine while I went to get a replacement key. Then once I got back, they were more than willing to come help me get all of my
Stuff from my car to my room. I instantly knew that I had made the right decision to be in a fraternity where everyone is so helpful to each other.

Even after everyone said their post-summer greetings and told various stories about their adventures and misadventures during the past few months, I continued to have an incredible time in the house, constantly feeling welcomed by others. From the multitude of meals shared with brothers, to seeing the house come together to put on some incredible parties, to fun antics in the hallways, and of course, weekly film screenings, this past semester, my first in the house, was as incredible as I expected it to be, and only makes me look forward to the rest that are to come.

“Greek” Life: Sam Holzman, Rho 2011

During the Spring Semester, I took some time off from Brown Greek life and got to experience the real Greek life, in Athens. Although I sorely missed the Striped Room and the PiLi, the Parthenon and Stavros’ Ouzeria in Pangrati certainly made up for it. During my four months abroad I visited seven islands, three protests, three hospitals, innumerable archaeological sites and museums, made a three day pilgrimage to an exclusive Greek Orthodox monastery, and skinned a lamb with a serrated steak knife. Besides grilling octopus on the beach and swimming in the Aegean, I also found time to read the Iliad in Greek, study the art and history of the Greeks in the very birthplace of Western civilization, as well as observe the modern country in the throes of financial collapse. Greece is so jam-packed with cultural heritage, both ancient and modern, that it’s hard to go anywhere without stepping on a relic.

For example, I went to hear a Gorillaz concert in Faliro, which is just a discus throw away from where the Athenian navy defeated Xerxes in 480 BCE, but is now home to the defunct Olympic Tai Kwon Do stadium. I also watched first hand as protestors stormed the acropolis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to hang a protest banner – not to mention the Molotov cocktails and teargas grenades of Syntagma Square, which occasionally interrupted my daily walk to class.

The ancient Greeks themselves had organizations similar to fraternities, called hetairiai, but most modern Greeks mistook my Greek letter sweatshirt as an unfamiliar soccer team. However, the modern American fraternity is much more based on Victorian educational ideals, which held Greek texts among the most prestigious forms of literature. These days most students aren’t well versed in Greek and Latin, but I’d like to think that we can learn a thing or two from the modern Greeks. Indulge yourself in food and sunlight, and violently hug all your friends! Although maybe you should pay your taxes. Meh!

I certainly had a splendiferous time (as Zorba would put it) and I strongly encourage all brothers to visit one of the most fascinating and lively countries in Europe, and if you do, say hello to Stavros for me.
FALL 2010 OFFICERS

Master: Danny Hyman, Rho 2011
Lieutenant Master: Jeremy Ader, Sigma 2012
Immediate Past Master: Jeff Lisiecki, Rho 2011
Rush Chair: Jeff Herman, Sigma 2012
Scribe: Eric Lewin, Sigma 2012
Exchequer: Leslie Maazel, Sigma 2012
Sentinel: Eliot Tang-Smith, Sigma 2012
House Manager: Andrew Antar, Sigma 2012
Brother-at-Large: Shae Selix, Sigma 2012

SPRING 2011 OFFICERS

Master: Jeremy Ader, Sigma 2012
Lieutenant Master: Ian Gray, Sigma 2012
Immediate Past Master: Danny Hyman, Rho 2011
Pledgemaster: Will Miller, Rho 2011
Rush Chair: Dan Rome, Tau 2013
Scribe: Bennett Meier, Sigma 2012
Exchequer: Brian Bierig, Tau 2012
Sentinel: John C. Walsh, Sigma 2012
House Manager: Ian Brownstein, Tau 2013
Brother-at-Large: Andrew Antar, Sigma 2012