



The Golden Gazette

July 2004

Volume 50

Theta Sigma Tau / Sigma Nu (ζτ) Alumni Association - 262-692-9594

Fifty Issues of Nonsense!

"Hey, Dude; you're my benchmark for functionally insane. Never change!"
- Morgon Kelly to Pete Lenz (89)

"Abstinence makes the church grow fondlers."
- Unknown, found on the web

"It actually says 'Adam and STEVE.' That's what you get for reading a translation."
- God

On this fiftieth anniversary of the Alumni Newsletter, we thought we'd celebrate with one a little larger than usual. We also thought that we'd treat this as an opportunity to talk about the newsletter as a tradition.

Up until 1988 or 1989, it had been a tradition for the House to produce a newsletter every semester. The newsletter was sent to alumni to let them know what was going on with the House.

The Alumni Newsletter first made its appearance in 1989. It was made partly for fun and partly as a goose to the house, who had not issued a house newsletter that year. It was meant to be pretty much a one-shot gag. But it was fun to make and, whether due to lack of interest or poor organization, the House had fallen out of the habit of sending out their own newsletter. So more newsletters followed, most of them with fake alumni news stories, made up advertising, and sometimes original tales and poetry submitted by alumni.

In the sixth issue of the newsletter, The Lunar Lamplighter from September of 1992, the first Trivia Time quiz appeared. Trivia Time usually had 5 - 10 trivia questions about sci-fi, fantasy, and whatnot. The questions ranged from obscure to downright impossible. Trivia Time disappeared just in time for the 25th issue, The Silver Bulletin.

In April 1993's Extraterrestrial Examiner, volume #8, the first real news blurbs about alumni began to appear. These included marriage and birth announcements, personal news, etc. This continues to the present both on the alumni web site and in the newsletter.

In The Andromedan Express, From June of 1993, the Quotable Quotes first made their appearance. Up until recently they had their own section of the newsletter, but lately we've been interspersing them around the various pages of the newsletter as entertaining little asides.

In late 1996/early 1997 the Alumni Website made its first appearance, formally launching the Alumni Association. From that time to this, the newsletter has been available on the alumni site. Someday, earlier issues may be made available there as well.

With the growth and evolution of the website, the newsletter has seen changes as well. Gone are the occasional listings of members' email addresses, since they are available on the site. Tau Traditions (such as this one) now show up every issue. When we receive emails or letters from alumni who are serving with the US Military, we revive the "Letters From The Front" column.

Alumni still occasionally submit items of interest: artwork, stories & anecdotes, etc. These are happily accepted and published as time and space permits.

Beginning with the 45th issue, the paper newsletter went to a "paid subscription" status, since over 150 people were receiving it and the cost was becoming prohibitively large. The newsletter is still free for reading and downloading on the alumni site, so no one HAS to pay to get their hands on it, but if one desires a hard copy to be mailed to them, it costs \$5/year. The mailing list for the newsletter dropped from over 150 to about 15, so one assumes that some people get it off the website and others don't miss it.

Paper versions of the newsletter are still sent free of charge to a few people: members of the armed services stationed abroad, certain famous actor types, and anyone who submits material for a particular issue receives a hard copy of that issue.

Hopefully someone will have the opportunity to write another of these "Newsletter History" columns in six or twelve years.

- Plenz



The Nu Tau Rumour Mill

"It tastes like farts smell."

- Roxanne Ross (05)

re: *Sterling Beer*

"She's probably getting paid. The girl will do almost anything for money."

- Paul Karp (00)

re: *Brenda Bayard (03)*

"Mom's a virgin, Emily!"

- Ken Dillon (03) to

Emily Dillon (05)

The Alumni Association welcomes Ashley Batterman, Sheena Glaser, Katie Piccirillo, and Christy Robinson to full membership.

Ashley Batterman (04) is attending Moraine Park Technical College in Fond du Lac, WI, where she is majoring in accounting.

Brenda Bayard (03) is moving to St. Petersburg, FL, where she has landed a job with a hospital.

Andy Beswick (06) will be spending this fall in Bonn, Germany, as part of his major program. For the summer, Andy has been given the temporary position of Activities Director for the LSSI Peterson Meadows Retirement Community. Andy started there two years ago as a member of the waitstaff.

Richard "Wookiee" Dammkoehler (92) has been given the title of Supreme Overlord of Lower Left-Handed Messy-putamia. He says he will be visiting all left-handed people between 6 and 6.15 am on the fourth Tuesday of each month to discuss their special needs as left-handed residents. So, if anyone wants to discuss lefty-ness, they should stop by then.

George Johnson and Patti Beck-Johnson (98/00) have moved from North Carolina to Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. George will be in the Chemical Officer's Captain Career Course for the next six months. Afterward he will be deployed, he's uncertain as to where. If anyone wants to get in touch:
20491 Hartford Rd.,
Dixon, MO, 65459.
Home: 573-336-5849;
Cell: 910-494-9768.

Steve Johnston (03) will marry his fiancée, Nikki, in October. They plan to honeymoon at Disney World. Steve's niece, Rachel (daughter of Julie [Johnston] Milavec [01]) will be flower girl for the wedding ceremony. Steve still has the guys over regularly to game.

Lisa (Thone) Kopic (94) married Brad Kopic in Dodgeville, WI, on May 27th of this year. Two days earlier they closed on their first home near Spring Green, WI, ("spitting distance from the American Players' Theatre").

Amanda (Arloro) Leclair (93) has been accepted into the Master Trainer Program through FEMA. She will finish the program in the spring of 2006.

Peter and Viola (Martin) Lenz (89/02) announce that they are expecting their first child around the end of the year. Apparently the child is going to have many, many. MANY evil uncles and aunts... all of Pete's friends finally having an opportunity to revenge themselves for the traumas Evil Uncle Pete inflicted upon their kids.

Amy (Metz) Lowe (96) does volunteer work at her local animal shelter, assisting with the grooming and socialization of the animals. For those of you that remember her cat, Kesmer, he is still alive and well. After a wait of over a year, Rick has finally received his security clearance from Los Alamos National Laboratory in April (doubtless the delay was due to his affiliation with unsavory types from a certain Midwestern college...). Of course, his first job assignment after being cleared was a non-classified one. Rick also has a student intern working with him, so he's keeping busy.

Julie (Johnston) Milavec (91) has just passed her one year anniversary of being cancer-free, which is excellent news! Her kids, JJ, Rachel, and Luke are doing well. JJ starts second grade in the fall, and Rachel begins kindergarten. Julie and John just bought their third apartment building in May and have a two bedroom unit vacant if anyone is interested in living in Minooka, IL.

Alexia Natkin (01) is a trainer with Executrain. She loves her new job but laments the fact that they don't give her more opportunities to work with Macintosh computers. Lexie still maintains her website and is entertaining herself in the evenings by playing with a guy named Luke.



What Type of Tau Are You?

You find them on the internet and in magazines like Cosmo (so I'm told). They're little questionnaires that purport to tell you what sort of something or other you are. So we thought we'd come out with one of our own: What kind of Tau are you? Record your answers and then go to page 8 for the answer.

- 1) Your major is:
 - a) Double major in biology and chemistry, with a minor in drama.
 - b) Mixology and alchology
 - c) Computer science (why the hell did you come to Ripon for that???)
 - d) Major? I need a major?
 - e) Art... the nude models... mmmm.
 - f) Physical education
- 2) You decide to take an on-campus job. Why?
 - a) It looks good on a resume, and I can take out less in loans.
 - b) Casing the joint for future... activities.
 - c) With a job at the computer lab I can get paid for playing Everquest!
 - d) Need cash for the stash!
 - e) Birth control is not cheap, even bought in bulk!
 - f) Dad cut off my allowance until I start getting Cs again.
- 3) What music do you usually listen to?
 - a) Only instrumental stuff, like Bach or Mozart. Anything else distracts me while I'm studying.
 - b) Floyd, Zep, Eagles, really classic rock & roll.
 - c) Final Fantasy XI theme music!
 - d) A true devotee of music has tastes too eclectic to categorize this simply.
 - e) Anything with a good rhythm that puts you in the mood!
 - f) Something I can trash a room to.
- 4) It's Friday night. What are you doing?
 - a) Working on my senior sem... yeah, I know I'm only a junior.
 - b) Breaking into my professor's office so I can reverse the location of everything in the room.
 - c) My party and I are stealthily exploring a dungeon infested with orcs, looking for the virginal and scantily clad princess Chesty O'Fellatio.
 - d) Hot-boxing 210.
 - e) The question isn't "what" but "who".
 - f) Making a giant snow penis on upper campus.
- 5) You're heading to the lounge to watch the tube. You're gonna watch:
 - a) ER or some other meaningful and sometimes poignant drama.
 - b) Red Dwarf, Dr. Who, or something else cool from the UK.
 - c) X-Files, Stargate SG-1, or something else on Sci-Fi.
 - d) The Simpsons or something else that makes me giggle when I'm "altered"
 - e) Jerry Springer! I feel such a kinship with the trash on that show!
 - f) Monday Night Football!!!!
- 6) It's Halloween! You're costume is:
 - a) A Freudian Slip.
 - b) Put together over a period of several months, certain to win a prize.
 - c) A video game or comic book character.
 - d) Damn! Forgot about a costume! Hmm... I could be Silent Bob with that trench-coat.
 - e) A school-girl, again.
 - f) A toga. Easy to make, easy to take off when the roofies kick in.
- 7) What's your favorite lounge game?
 - a) I never.
 - b) Mexican.
 - c) Slam Lord of the Rings.
 - d) Asshole.
 - e) Spin the bottle.
 - f) Piss in the Wop.
- 8) It's Porn Night!
 - a) You're in your room, finishing that paper that's due in two weeks.
 - b) You've picked a porn movie destined to traumatize a generation of Taus.
 - c) If it's not manga bukkake with tentacles, I'm not interested!
 - d) Slam orgasm rawks!
 - e) You show up half-naked and the party moves to your room afterward.
 - f) Masturbating with the guys! Now there's true brotherhood!
- 9) It's time for a house meeting.
 - a) You hold three offices and show up on-time.
 - b) You have prepared a defense for your actions of last week that resulted in the mobilization of the Wisconsin National Guard.
 - c) You bring your Magic cards so you have something to do.
 - d) Bart/The Pope would get lonely if you left it alone in your room, so you blow off house meeting.
 - e) You bring a blanket in case you're lucky enough to be able to get/give a blow job during the meeting.
 - f) We have to take up a collection for the most recent fines the IFC laid on us.
- 10) You're about to interview a pledge. Your interviews involve...
 - a) A long, get-to-know-you chat.
 - b) Stealing something for the house from either Boldt, another house, or the Ripon Police Dept.
 - c) A good round of 'Fisting
 - d) Slam checkers with tequila in the checker-shots.
 - e) Well, I know sex isn't SUPPOSED to be an interview, but...
 - f) Beating the naked pledge with a paddle and making them say "Please, sir, may I have another!"
- 11) Your turn to suggest a board game for the latest Pledge Activity Night.
 - a) Trivial Pursuit: Insanely Obscure Edition
 - b) Tau-Opoly, I'm in it!
 - c) Risk (can I use my own miniatures? They're cooler!)
 - d) Toke Chutes and Ladders
 - e) Taboo
 - f) We'd play Candyland, but no one understands the rules.
- 12) During Tau Trivia, have you ever:
 - a) Come prepared with a list of the hardest questions?
 - b) Been a Default Answer?
 - c) Gotten sore eyes from having to focus on things farther away than a monitor?
 - d) Not taught your little ANYTHING in order to get well and truly hammered?
 - e) Given or received a hand job?
 - f) What's Tau Trivia?
- 13) It's time for Tau Formal! Your date:
 - a) ... is your high school sweetheart.
 - b) ... one is in the dance hall, one is in the bar, and the third is sleeping off pre-formal sex in my room.
 - c) ... is your hand.
 - d) ... is passed out.
 - e) ... is your professor.
 - f) You weren't invited.



More Nu Tau Rumours...

Karen Derf-Reilly's (94) home in Floral City, FL, is finished and she is settling in. Karen was recently diagnosed with sleep apnea, and now that she is treating it she is feeling on top of the world. Karen teaches seventh grade language arts at D.S. Parrott middle school in Brooksville, FL, and was promoted to Language Arts Dept. Chair for the next school year. Her daughter, Amanda, is doing very well (you may remember that she was hospitalized at the age of one month and had to have major heart surgery). She recently had an extensive check-up and was declared VERY healthy and has no restrictions.

Andrew Rich (03) is moving to Scotland for the year, having been accepted into the Master's Program in Classical Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh. Drew will be spending the two months preceding the semester at Edinburgh on a dig in Central England. Brook Compton (01) may be joining Drew for the summer of digging.

Lisa (Flegel) Sottile (88) reports: "We're holding at 2 kids (barring divine intervention). Becca is 10 and going into 5th grade. She wants to be a veterinarian when she grows up. Anthony is 5 and going into Kindergarten in the fall. He wants to be a racecar driver. Both are working well above grade level while attending Woodlands School in Milwaukee. Craig is a computer technician with the Elmbrook School District, and is rebuilding video arcade machines for fun and profit on the side (anyone interested should contact us). I'm

still the House Manager for Next Act Theatre, plus I freelance as a Stagehand and run the household. We've been married for nearly 11 years, have never moved (and most likely will never move) and are finally building our first garage this summer. There will be a party when it gets done (probably not before summer party). We will be coming to summer party. Also, we're looking forward to seeing the new micro-Tau in December (January, whatever)."

John and Angie (Layton) Thompson (94/96) are living in Nekoosa, WI, with their two kids (Ellie and Jacob), three cats (Slick, Buddy, and Princess), and twenty or so gerbils. John and Angie celebrated their 11th year of marriage this year. John is employed by Rainbow Casino as a Lead Slot/Data Tech and will celebrate 10 years at Rainbow in January of 2005. Angie is looking into employment options now that the kids are old enough and spend a lot of time in school. Ellie is 10 years old and in fifth grade while Jacob will be seven in July and starting second grade.

2 LT Matt Woodard (03) recently dropped us a "Letter From the Front" (see the bottom of this page). We're glad he's doing well and came through the destruction of his vehicle in that attack. For those that would like to drop Matt a letter, a postcard, or better yet, a care package:

LT Matt Woodard
B Co. 27th MSB, 1 CD
APO, AE 09313

"I like all the tasty bits in my mouth."
- Viola (Marton) Lenz (02)

"I AIN'T losing it to a plastic thing!"
- Darlene Wulf (03)
re: her virginity

Letters from the Front: 2LT Matt Woodard in Iraq

6/25/04: Believe it or not it is quite warm in Iraq. 110 degrees is considered a cool day around here. There is always a wind though. Too bad it is so hot that it sometimes hurts the face. Plenty of sand blowing around and it seems to get into everything. Everyday I sweep out my room and everyday it is right back to square one.

This place is very polarized it seems. Great times and awful times. I have a lot of fun with all the people we work with. This place is ripe for practical jokes. Many a Tau prank could be easily recreated here in Taji, Iraq.

Taji sits about 20 miles or so north of Baghdad. My job, as a Transportation officer is to lead re-supply convoys into the city and deliver the goods at all costs. We've had a few vehicles destroyed in combat. To my dismay, I happened to be in one of them as an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) blew it clean off the road, leaving it a smoldering smoking hulk of metal. I cannot for the life of me figure out how I survived that attack.

Matter of fact, I came out of it without a scratch. Dumbass luck I guess.

The other bad things about my job include mortars and rockets. The insurgency here in Iraq will on occasion fire mortar rounds or rockets into our bases. You don't know they are coming until they've struck. Makes it very hard to sleep at night. I can't wait until I'm out of this country and can sleep one night's decent sleep.

This is by far the most diverse place I've ever been to. American and European soldiers; cooks and laundry workers from India, Pakistan, and the Philippines. Arabs as extra truck drivers and Iraqi Civil Defense Corps soldiers. A perfect combo for getting pretty much anything you can think of if the price is right. Hint-hint.

Looks like we are not coming home until March of 2005, but the time is going fast. Please feel free to ask questions or send letters. I miss Tau, I miss Ripon, and I miss all my friends. Take care,

Matthew



Sleep Apnea, by Karen Derf-Reilly (93)

Just a little over a year ago, I had a life-changing experience. After becoming more and more exhausted each year, having to drink 3-4 pots of coffee during the day, intense depression, constant headaches, stomach trouble, and finally concerned with falling asleep while driving (morning, afternoon or evening), I was sent to a sleep specialist.

This lovely man gave me an intense questionnaire covering everything from what I ate and drank to what I dreamed at night. A night at the hospital for a sleep study soon followed. The purpose of the study is to monitor almost of your bodily systems and see what happens when you sleep, and if you stop breathing at night and why. What I thought was a few minutes after waving "nighty-night" to the two-way mirror and trying not to pull my skin off with all the tape and wires stuck to me, my heroes (the technicians that had taped and wired me to the bed) rushed in and slapped a mask on my face that blew air like someone had shoved a hairdryer up my nose and turned it on high. It had been an hour and a half, they said, and they had never seen anyone stop breathing as much and as often as I had. I fell asleep again, and they woke me up in the morning, still masked and breathing- apparently I didn't move at all the rest of the night. I felt more refreshed, alert, and better than I EVER could remember feeling--EVER!

The doctor had to read the official report and when we met he told me that I had stopped breathing around 167 times in that hour and a half. He also told me that I had most likely had this condition (which was worsening) since high school. The bizarre dreams I had in high school and college (I'm not

possessed, really, but the dreams were about being choked, set on fire, smothered...all brain responses to lack of oxygen) were consistent with this condition. Also, because the body gets energy from two sources, oxygen or calories, your body will try to compensate if it's lacking in one. My appetite has decreased, as has my weight. While weight loss will help with some of the physical obstruction/loose tissue that can add to or cause this condition (that's why women will sometimes snore while they're pregnant-- extra and loose tissue in their throat)-mine was almost 90% due to my brain not telling me to breathe (no jokes, please).

Here's the rest of the happy ending- I sleep with the personal CPAP machine. I can go to bed 10-11 p.m. and get up between 5-6 a.m. without a problem. I am not depressed. I am losing weight. I have more patience with everything and have clearer thought- which is extremely important when you teach 8 classes of Language Arts to about 180 Seventh graders. I was also just appointed L.A. Department Chair for my school. If you snore, have headaches, are tired, depressed, need coffee, calories, and other attempts to solve your problem have failed, ask about sleep apnea. I know I soon would have gone to bed and not lived through the night without this machine. I could not do that to my child and my family. I truly wonder what my life would have been if I had this checked out earlier. It doesn't take care of your work or problems, but you can certainly focus and deal with your life and yourself in a much more positive way when you are not exhausted. Best wishes to you all, and to your families.



The 19th Annual Conclave of Evil

"... the sweating mother ... had come to the conclusion that getting a brat out was somewhat less amusing than getting one in..."

- The tale of the birth of Sir Percival from Rude Tales and Glorious by Nicholas Seare

The 19th Annual Summer Party is scheduled for August 12 - 15 of this year. It will be held, once again, near Langlade, WI, at the property of alumna Carol Shay Hornung's (88) parents.

The property is a peninsula extending into Sawyer Lake. We will have access to the lake and the Shay's cabin. This includes shower, toilet, kitchen facilities, and some crash space. Most people are asked to bring camping gear to ensure that there is crash space for those who may be flying in from the East coast or somewhere else far away.

We will have canoes available for use on the lake, an outdoor hot-tub (in a screened in gazebo), and plenty of space to hang out and visit.

Nearby there are places to go "white water" rafting (as white as the water in Wisconsin can get, anyway). The party is scheduled for the weekend of the Perseids Meteor Shower, and forecasts have it that this year's might be exceptional. Also, we often get a spectacular show from the Northern Lights during these Summer Parties.

Any Tau or friend of Tau is welcome to attend the party. If you want more information, directions, a list of suggested items to bring, etc, please contact the party organizer, Pete Lenz (89) either at plenz@ThetaSigmaTau.org or by phone: 262-692-9594.

And if you can't make it this year, the 20th Summer Party will be held August 11 -14, 2005.

Tau Traditions: Summer Party

Summer Party, also known as "The Conclave of Evil" is a tradition nearly twenty years old. The first summer party was held in August of 1986 in York, WI. York is the hometown of Barb (Thompson) Pamperin (89) and, in early August of every year, they hold the York Rodeo, which attracts people from all around the area.

Barb offered to host a summer get-together at her parents' farm where Taus, who had not seen each other all summer, could visit, catch up, and have a bit of fun at the rodeo. A second summer party was held at York the following year, with a few more attendants. After that, the party moved several times due to site availability.

For the last 8 years, and again this year, the party has been held near Langlade, WI, at the family property of Carol (Shay) Hornung (88). The location, while a bit of a drive from civilization, is

lovely, relatively private, and has many amenities that none of the previous parties had (such as showers, hot & cold water, and flushable toilets).

Any alumni or actives of the house, as well as friends of the house, have an open invite to attend summer party. One simply needs to contact the party organizers: Pete Lenz (89) [plenz@ThetaSigmaTau.org or 262-692-9594] or Carol Hornung (88) [chornung88@aol.com] for information and directions.

If you're unable to attend this year, think about coming next year for the Summer Party's big 20th Anniversary. We hope that it'll be a bigger than usual bash with a lot more people and taking an entire week and two weekends, rather than a single long weekend.

Theta Sigma Tau Store

The Alumni Association has set up a web-site store where members, alumni, friends, and pretenders of the house can purchase Theta Sigma Tau merchandise.

The store is currently small, having only a few things including a Frisbee, a t-shirt, a travel mug, a stein, a license plate frame, and a thong. As time permits, more items will be placed in the store, including lunch boxes, other t-shirts, and a miscellany of other stuff.

Items will bear images of the crest, the house letters, and perhaps other text and logos that may be deemed appropriate.

The customization options are such that one could even order items that bore one's pledge name or some other personalized image. Contact Pete Lenz (89) [plenz@ThetaSigmaTau.org] for details on this sort of customization.

Links to the store will be found on the alumni site at: <http://alumni.ThetaSigmaTau.org/store.html> . There are links to this page on all pages of the website.

Proceeds from sales of these items will go to defray the over \$800 in operating costs that upkeep and operation of the website incurs.

"Fifteen years in France can teach a man to hate!"
- Phillip of Burgundy;
from Black Adder I, vi.



Ken's Comics Review

Kickers, Inc. issues #1-6 (of 12)

Marvel Comics, 1986

Created by Tom DeFalco and Ron Frenz

You know, experimentation is one of the more fun parts of life. Taking two things that are good on their own and trying them together produces wonderful combinations, like chocolate and peanut butter, or Irish car bombs.

Unfortunately, the same can't be said for football and comic books. While each is great on its own, the two have never, and probably will never, combine together to produce anything other than a heaping pile of crap.

And standing proudly at the top of the dung heap: Marvel Comics' *Kickers, Inc.*

• History- Back in 1986, Marvel tried to revolutionize the comics industry by launching the New Universe, a completely separate universe, different from traditional Marvel continuity, with an entirely new cast of superheroes. A fine idea in theory, but unfortunately, it sucked. Hard. Every title in the New Universe was cancelled within a year and a half of the first issue. And with "superheroes" like *Kickers, Inc.*, it's not at all difficult to see why.

• The Plot- Jack, "Mr. Magnificent" Magniconte is an all-star quarterback for the New York Smashers. His brother, Steve, works at a sports science lab, basically, BALCO. One day, Steve reveals to Jack that he has perfected a machine he calls "The Intensifier" that will "artificially stimulate an increase in muscle mass! Sort of like steroids..." only without the violent rages and small winkle. Somehow this also has the potential to decrease Jack's reaction time. Steve wants to use the machine on Jack before the NFL finds out about it and it has to be submitted for FDA testing. (Because, as the BALCO scandal has taught us all, it's not cheating until it's been officially forbidden by pro sports. Otherwise it's ok.)

The machine works far better than anyone anticipates, and Jack is turned into a superhero, capable of bench-pressing a couple tons, running at a top speed of around 40mph, and apparently bullets now bounce off of him. The reasoning behind all of this is never actually explained in any of the issues I own, which is especially odd because the machine fails to have any effect on ANY of Jack's teammates who also try it out. Jack's wife is dubious, but Jack can't wait to try out his new found powers...by playing football? Two pages later, Jack gets morose because his powers make the game too easy, but he continues to play, because, well, the whole premise of the comic is that he's a football playing superhero. Talk about writing yourself into a corner right off the bat.

Steve is then killed by the loan sharks that he owes money to when he fails to convince Jack to shave points in the Smashers next game. (Actually, Steve never even asks Jack, because...um...damn, they never say why...) Jack then decides that with great power must come great responsibility, and tests the machine on a select group of his teammates: running-back "Suicide" Smythe, receiver "Dasher" Corbin, and lineman "Brick Wall." The machine has no effect on them, but they decide to become a superhero team anyway, because, as Dasher puts it, the foundation would have tax-exempt status.

Well, hell, you've convinced me. I was skeptical when you were just wanting to help people, but if it'll help grossly overpaid athletes cheat on their taxes, then by God, what are we waiting for? The foundation is set up to help people with "offbeat problems," which by the way is the most articulate explanation of the premise of the group in the entire run of the series, because the creators didn't really bother with any of those "fundamentals" of writing like a "storyline" or a "clear concept." Fuck that noise! And people say jocks are dumb...

Thus *Kickers, Inc.* is born. Now, you'd think that with a new universe of superheroes popping up everywhere, there'd be plenty of supervillain-scale bad guys for the good guys to test their mettle against. You'd be wrong, though, because this comic sucks, remember? In issue 2, the team answers a call from an old lady in the Bronx whose rose garden has been trampled. Uh...okay. The lady claims some giant robot trashed her garden. She's right, it turns out, and a fight breaks out. Well, not so much a fight as Jack is doing all the dangerous stuff while his non-superpowered teammates kinda alternate between standing around doing nothing and getting their asses kicked. This is without a doubt the most non-team concept for a team in the history of comics. Only ONE of them is any use whatsoever! Jack eventually beats the robot with a blast from a fire extinguisher (Eat your heart out, Superman!) and manages to somehow black out half of NY in the process. Nice going, guys.

Issue #3 has our heroes battling a coven of wanna-be witches on a college campus, eventually turning the main bad guy over to a...mob hit squad so he can be executed? What the hell? Apparently it's ok because, according to Jack, the mafia, like *Kickers, Inc.*, are "Just another of the people who go through life inventing their own rules instead of obeying the ones that bind the rest of us." Makes perfect sense to me.

Oh, and some new kid named Hawkins is threatening to take away Dasher's job as starting wideout, what with Dasher getting old and being distracted and...what the hell ever.

I realize that my reader's digest versions of these issues may not make a ton of sense, but trust me, the comics aren't any better. By issue three, Tom DeFalco had given up writing the book, and was now the plotter (which in comic book speak means he didn't really do much, but he wants his name in the credits anyway), turning the bulk of the scripting duties over to Jo Duffy, who, in a fit of good taste, bailed on the book the very next issue, leaving poor Terry Kavanagh to script this mess. Ron Frenz, the other creator, would also leave the title after issue three, and the revolving door of creators gets into full swing. You know, it's a really, really bad sign when the guys who co-created a comic character can't be bothered to stay with the creative process past the third issue. This is like having an ugly baby, then leaving it some someone's doorstep as soon as you take it out of the hospital.

In issue four, Hawkins is crippled for life on a dirty late hit during a preseason game. The guy who hit him is unapologetic, and Jack agonizes for a few pages over whether or not to get revenge on the field during the regular season by unleashing his monstrous strength on the bastard, and hopes to find another way. Jack tries intimidation but, when that doesn't work, he beats the crap out of the guy during a game until Hawkins, from his wheelchair, asks Jack to have mercy on the bastard. Yeah. I'm pretty sure that if some asshole crippled me during a friggin' PRESEASON game for no reason other than to be an asshole, I'd never get tired of watching my friend beat the shit out of him. Mercy is for pussies, and apparently the Comics Code. It should be noted that at no point in this issue does anyone actually get any help from the *Kickers*.

Issue 5 has YET ANOTHER new scripter, Mark Gruenwald, and a new artist, Paul Ryan. Geez! I think by this point members of the Marvel Bullpen were kept in line when they misbehaved with threats of "If you don't shut up, I'll make you write *Kickers, Inc.*"

Well, it'd make me behave. Anyway, #5 is a crossover with another lame-ass New Universe title, "DP7" and I don't have the time, patience, or energy to get into it. Some crap happens, and the teams fight each other, then leave. The End. Let's just say it's twice the suck for half the cost and move on.

And in issue #6, we get still another creative change, with Terry Kavanagh and Ron Altaville shouldering the scripting burden and Rod Whigham pencilling (and the fact that I've never heard of anything else most of these guys have done should speak volumes to you about how good they are)

Jack is late getting to a football game, he and his wife bitch at each other, but with a twist. See, usually, Jack gets all mopey and wants to quit football and being a superhero cause they're not fun, and his wife convinces him that he must go on with both. This time, and for no explained reason, they reverse roles, with the wife (whose name I can't remember, but I'll call her Bitch from now on, because the only consistent character trait she has is that she's a horrendous shrew) wanting Jack to quit, and Jack being all, "Look, Bitch, I have to do this..." Jack then "accidentally" slaps his wife while reaching for the steering wheel, causing a car accident. Some more shit happens, they get on a plane, the plane gets hijacked, Jack saves the day, but in the process may have accidentally revealed his superpowers to the rest of the world when a bullet bounces off of him right in front of a little girl, rebounding back into the face of the woman who shot him in the first place. Oops. Far from being traumatized, the little girl thinks this is the coolest thing she's ever seen, and tells the nice cop on the scene all about it. Finally, by issue #6, we're seeing the groundwork laid for some semblance of an ongoing story, as Jack is also so late he misses most of the game and is benched by his coach for not giving 100%.

Sadly (?) my collection ends there, but the title went on for six more issues before finally being taken out behind the barn and put down like a lame horse.

• Personal thoughts- This is far from the worst comic book I've ever read, but it's trying really hard to convince me that it is. It's certainly the lamest superhero team idea I've ever heard of. When even the Superfriends laugh at you and call you names, you really would be better off just killing yourself.

Many people blame Tom DeFalco's tenure as Editor-in-Chief at Marvel for much of the company's downfall and eventual bankruptcy, which I think is a bit of a harsh and unfair criticism. It's not all Toms fault - when you're stupid enough to hand full editorial control of the biggest comic book company in the world over to a guy who created crap like *Kickers, Inc.*, you're really asking for every bad thing that happens to you, up to and including the dreaded Spider-Clone saga.

If anyone has the rest of the series, or any other comic they would like me to review, contact me at swtrilogy@hotmail.com.



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killing trees and
counting.*

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See us at:

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What Type of Tau Are You? The Results!

If you haven't taken the little survey dealie on page 3, go do that before reading any further.

Done? Good.

Okay, it's pretty simple... count up the number of each letter you chose. If you have mostly one letter, look below for that letter to see what kind of Tau you are. If your top two are roughly the same, you must be a bit of both. Yeah, this thing was pretty transparent, but it's just for fun. That goes for the answers below: they are meant to poke fun at everyone.

Mostly As: The Studious Tau. You're one of the members that kept the House GPA above 1.0. You actually graduated, probably cum laude or better. Of course, with a liberal arts degree from Ripon College, you'll be asking "Do you want fries with that?" for a long time. Your role while in the house was to hold multiple offices and try to keep everything from falling apart.

Mostly Bs: The Legendary Tau. Once you left Ripon, stories of your illustrious exploits persisted for years, growing to mythological proportions. You should return soon, incognito, and hear all about your amazing adventures... you'll wish you had actually done some of them! Your role in the house was to provide it with a colorful history and a reputation for criminality, deviancy, or out-and-out wackiness.

Mostly Cs: The Gaymer Tau. You spent most of your time at Ripon either rolling dice, throwing down cards, or planted in front of a computer. Once you left, things didn't change much, just the faces and names, but you'll miss Middle Lounge and all the Taunie Gaymers (if you haven't become one). Your role in the house was to get hauled away from your computer or cards occasionally when House meeting needed one more person to make quorum.

Mostly Ds: Drinker/Stoner Tau. Your time at Ripon is veiled in a pharmaceutically-induced haze. Your fate will either be to reinforce the ranks of the Taunies or to go on and become a world-famous actor. Your role in the house was to bulk up the membership numbers and mix the drinks at the parties.

Mostly Es: Promiscuous Tau. You've slept with most of the Taus you went to school with (and quite a few you didn't go to school with). You would be a "nexus" if anyone decided to do the "Six Degrees of Penetration" (the 'family trees' that show who "did" who). Your role at Tau was to disturb your neighbors with the loud moans and groans emanating from your dorm room (or the shower, the library, from under that blanket during house meeting... wherever). After leaving Ripon (and possibly before arriving there) you may have been or may have become a porn star, a prostitute, or a member of the US Armed Forces.

Mostly Fs: Merriman or Phi-Delt. You weren't a Tau; you were in one of the "jock" fraternities. Your contact with Tau was probably minimal at best, and that was probably for the best for all concerned.

About the Theta Sigma Tau / Sigma Nu Alumni Association

The Alumni Association, its website, and its newsletter, are maintained for the purpose of keeping the members and alumni of the Theta Sigma Tau co-ed fraternity of Ripon College, Ripon, WI, in touch with each other, their alma mater, and their house. Having previously been a chapter of the national Sigma Nu fraternity, we recognize and welcome the Zeta Tau chapter alumni.

The Alumni Association website is maintained by donations from the membership as well as other fundraising activities such as the Alumni Store (<http://alumni.ThetaSigmaTau.org/store.html>). Donations can be sent to the order of Pete Lenz at the address above, or made through PayPal via any of the "PayPal - Donate" buttons on the alumni site. We are not a recognized non-profit organization (despite never having made a profit of any sort!), so donations are not tax deductible. Sorry!

The Alumni newsletter is provided free of charge, in electronic form, on the alumni site. To receive a paper copy every three months, subscriptions are \$5/year and should be sent to Pete Lenz at the address above. One can also use the PayPal buttons on the site for this, simply indicate that the money is for a newsletter subscription... and include a mailing address!

Suggestions, requests for access to the password protected parts of the site, changes or updates of personal information, news or items for the newsletter; all of these things should be sent to Pete Lenz at [plenz@ThetaSigmaTau.org].