



Minnesota Chapter Penn State Alumni Association Annual Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has truly been my pride and joy to have served our chapter as President over the past 6 years. I am convinced that we have one of the top Penn State Alumni Chapters from around the world.

In July, I expect to be formally handing over the reins of the chapter to Emily Zuber ('04 Lib) as President and Rob Behler ('93 H&HD) as Vice-President. I have known Emily since she moved to Minnesota in 2004 - she has been an invaluable contributor to our chapter throughout the years and I know she is excited about this opportunity. While I have only had the pleasure to know Rob over the past two years, I promise you, he is one of the most energetic Penn Staters I know and his energy is contagious! I can assure you that the future of our chapter is brighter than ever with these two amazing individuals at the helm.

If you have been thinking about reconnecting with the chapter but just haven't found the time to do so, we hope you will consider getting involved this year in some capacity. Opportunities to engage with your fellow Penn State alumni, family and friends abound:

- Volunteer Alumni Admissions
- Meet up at TV Tailgates
- Attend the Annual Night Out on the Town
- Engage with the award of our annual endowed scholarship
- Join the Board of Directors
- Participate in community service events such as Second Harvest Heartland

Through my own personal experience, I have found that even the smallest interactions with the chapter can really get your juices flowing and have the love for Dear Old State come right back to you.

We have a lot to be proud of here in Minnesota with fantastic events that would not be possible without the terrific support of our volunteer Board Members. I

wanted to take this time to recognize everyone who has served on the Board with me over the past six years: *Chris Barrella, Rob Behler, Marilyn Binkley, Stephanie Brondani, Stacy Conti, Dean Creighton, Chris Dore, Megan Feeser, Matt Fisher, Julie Fisher, Dan Gordon, Kelly Gordon, Nancy Hammond, Aaron Hofstedt, Mike Houle, Sarah Houle, Jim Kaufmann, Mantha Petrovich, Brian Varner, and Emily Zuber.* They are all truly awesome in my eyes - thank you!

Lastly, I could not wrap-up my last President's Letter without giving special recognition to my wife, Marilyn. As many of you know, Marilyn served as President for the 3 years before me, and she has continued to be a great sounding board for my thoughts late at night. Over the years I have realized that serving two years in this role can be a chore, but you cannot truly do it by yourself for as long as we have without having great support for each other. During this time, we welcomed two wonderful boys into our family and yet we have always done the best we can to keep the chapter in the forefront - with both boys experiencing their first TV Tailgate before they were a month old and celebrating one of their birthdays at a Summer BBQ Picnic. It has truly been a family affair for my household - and for me, that makes it extra special. Marilyn, thank you for all your support over the years - I love you.

It has been an incredibly fulfilling experience to lead this chapter. I am truly grateful and look forward to staying involved for many years to come. I hope to see many of you at our BBQ Picnic / Student Send-Off in August and then again for our first TV Tailgate in September as we take on Kent State. 🐾

For the Glory,
Brian A Binkley
Brian Binkley '02

JULY 2016

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2016 Football Schedule:

09/03/16 vs KENT STATE
09/10/16 at. PITT
09/17/16 vs TEMPLE
09/24/16 at. MICHIGAN
10/01/16 vs. MINNESOTA
10/08/16 vs. MARYLAND
10/15/16 - bye week
10/22/16 vs OHIO STATE
10/29/16 at PURDUE
11/05/16 vs. IOWA
11/12/16 at INDIANA
11/19/16 at RUTGERS
11/26/16 vs. MICHIGAN STATE
12/03/16 vs. BIG TEN CHAMP.



Scholarship Endowment: Update & 2015-16 Recipient

The book value of the endowment fund on June 30, 2015 was \$71,062.11 with a market value of \$101,978.81. This does not include the \$10,000 we sent into the endowment in the fall of 2015.

Ten outstanding students applied for our chapter's Past President's Scholarship this year, making it difficult to choose a winner. The caliber of students Minnesota sends to Penn State is truly impressive. After examining each applicant's GPA, academic achievements, activities, and leadership positions, we selected Joshua Savitz from Minnetonka.

Josh was a junior in the Schreyer Honors College this academic year, majoring in engineering. His accomplishments in academics and extracurricular activities, particularly leadership positions, were truly impressive. In Au-

gust 2015, Josh was able to attend our chapter's annual BBQ / student send-off picnic along with his parents, where we were pleased to present him with the \$3500 award, given in honor of Past President Jack Yorkovich.

Several of our other applicants also attended the picnic with their families. All students who applied for the chapter scholarship were sent a gift card to the Student Book Store, and students who attended the picnic also received two care packages during the academic year from the chapter, one in the fall semester and one in the winter semester.

As always, we appreciate all of you for your consistent support of our local Nittany Lions, especially in the area of scholarship donations. Because of your generosity we have been able to award over \$30,000 in student scholarship funds for Minnesota students attending Penn State. 🇺🇸

Second Harvest Heartland Community Service Event

On February 27, 2016, chapter members joined together to work at Second Harvest Heartland. SHH is a large local food bank that collects food from donors and distributes it to food shelves across Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Twenty-two chapter members and their families volunteered to prepare food to be sent to those in need. The chapter also donated \$100 to SHH. This is the third consecutive year that the chapter has organized a community service event at SHH. After working our shift, many of us gathered at a pizza restaurant for lunch provided by the chapter.

On April 23, chapter members again joined together, this time with ten other Big Ten Alumni Chapters / Clubs. All together, 79 Big Ten alumni packaged 9,710 lbs of apples and 3,550 lbs of animal crackers.

The Second Harvest Heartland community service event has become very popular with members and their



We're very proud of the 5,569 pounds of food that our 22 volunteers helped pack for Second Harvest on February 27, 2016.

children, so look for this again late next winter. Thank you everyone for your support! 🇺🇸

From Rob Behler, Social Chair

As Brian announced at our annual dinner, I am filling a new "official unofficial" role of Social Chair for the chapter.

My first goal is to build out an annual calendar of events for our chapter to host. We will always host traditional events like our Student Send-Off Picnic and Annual Night Out on The Town, but the intent is to create a calendar with enough varied events of interest to engage all of our alumni members throughout the year.

We've settled on three types of events:

(1) sports: either live or televised games for Penn State athletic teams; our TV Tailgates are a great example of this type of event;

(2) philanthropy: events that will allow us to promote support of charitable causes such as our work with Second

Harvest Heartland; and

(3) general interest: various seasonal or other events that provide opportunities to gather as a chapter; these could be speaker events, outings, group dinners.

As this is OUR alumni calendar, I want to ask for your feedback on events that may be of interest to our alumni. There are no wrong suggestions; anything (within reason – no alumni-sponsored Carnival Cruises) is open game. Based on logistics and timing, not everything may make it to the calendar immediately, but we will build an inventory of events that we can choose from for the future.

Please submit your suggestions to me via email to rob.behler@psumn.com. I look forward to hearing from you all and seeing you at an upcoming event. 🇺🇸

Annual Night Out on the Town: April 17, 2016

On Sunday, April 17, 2016, 37 Penn Staters gathered for dinner at the Minneapolis Marriott Southwest in Minnetonka to hear a talk by Kate Daley, a 2009 PSU grad and head coach of the national champion PSU women's rugby team.

The evening's festivities began with a "We Are" cheer led by chapter President Brian Binkley. Brian provided information on the chapter's finances, including our recent \$10,000 contribution to our scholarship endowment. He noted that our scholarship fund now has a market value of approximately \$90,000.



Brian introduced the current Board members, noting that volunteers are always welcome to serve the chapter. He also noted with sadness the passing of two longtime chapter members, Walt Rohmann and Al Starkey, who will be sorely missed. Two recent PSU grads were introduced and welcomed to the chapter: hockey player Max Gardiner and lacrosse player Jacob Gluckman. We hope to see a lot of them at future chapter events.



With Brian's remarks concluding, Board Vice President Emily Zuber presented Brian with a gift recognizing his many years of service to the chapter, particularly as its President. The desktop Nittany Lion statue was set on a base bearing a plaque inscribed "To

Brian Binkley, in appreciation of his service to our chapter." Brian received a well-deserved round of applause. He is stepping down as President but will remain on the Board so that the chapter can continue to benefit from his experience.

Next, Board member Rob Behler (a former PSU rugby player himself) introduced the evening's keynote speaker, Kate Daley. Rob noted that she has been involved in Penn State women's rugby as a player, coach, and now its first officially paid head coach. As a player, she was a 4-time All-American, leading PSU to 2 national championships (being named MVP in both championship games). As an international player, Daley has played in over 20 matches, including 2 World Cups. Daley had the distinc-



tion of captaining the US World Cup team in 2014.

Coach Daley began her remarks by noting she's an Indiana native but decided to attend Penn State for both its high-caliber rugby team and also its Smeal School of Business. PSU gave her "so many opportunities," she said, adding that it was the biggest life-changing event in her life. At Penn State, she learned the value of discipline and training. She believes that Penn State does a better job of preparing leaders, especially athletically, than any other school she knows of. She said she appreciated being invited to speak at our dinner. The existence of Penn Staters all over the United States, showing their PSU pride, makes her want to be the best coach she can be and add the Penn State legacy.

In the Q-A session, Daley hit on various points in response to audience questions. Here are a few: The Penn State women have not lost a rugby game to a collegiate team since 2011. Rugby is the only non-varsity team sport at PSU; this means less financial support from the university. The players pay dues (about \$200 per semester) to play on the team. Coach Daley would like to see rugby become a varsity sport in 5 to 10 years, as part of her legacy. Also as part of her legacy, she would like to see her graduates remain in rugby in some capacity (as coaches, referees, etc.) to keep the sport growing. She encourages people to put their children into sports. Sports are great for developing confidence, leadership, and resilience in girls. In rugby, for example, you're always picking yourself up off the ground.

Kate Daley's talk was well-received. We can all be proud that "she is" Penn State. The chapter thanked her for her appearance with a chapter t-shirt and a gift card to the Corner Room in State College. Thanks again, Kate!

The buffet-style dinner included a variety of splendid offerings, including tasty dessert choices. All plates were filled, and all palates pleased. We look forward to seeing everyone at our next chapter dinner. 🍷



TV Tailgates

Once again this past fall, a number of alumni attended our Penn State Football TV tailgates at the Medina Entertainment Center. Local alumni, family, friends, and even a few alums traveling in the area and looking for a place to call home for a Saturday joined together to enjoy good food and fare, share memories of old State and, most importantly, cheer our Nittany Lions on to victory. We also played our traditional LIONS game (our version Penn State Football Bingo, from which we also draw an annual prize) and distributed other PSAA swag.

We rounded out the season on January 2, with 41 of us at the Taxslayer Bowl party at Dave & Busters in Maple Grove. Tracy McConnell won the season-ending LIONS drawing, which she used to attend the annual dinner.

We are looking forward to an exciting 2016 season as the Nittany Lions return with last year's freshman sensation Saquon Barkley and a re-tooled offense, while the defense looks to replace defensive line stalwarts Austin Johnson, Carl Nassib, and Anthony Zettel, who will be playing on Sundays in the NFL.

We are reviewing plans for the tailgates and would appreciate any feedback from our chapter members, specifically: What did you like / not like about the tailgates? What could we do to get you to attend any/more tailgates? Are there any locations you would like to recommend for hosting the tailgates? Please email comments to rob.behler@psumn.com. 🗣️



It's Time to Join or Renew Your Chapter Membership

Chapter membership runs from July 1 of the year through June 30 of the following year. Enclosed with this newsletter is a chapter membership form, please complete the form and send it in with you dues, as directed on the form. At only \$25 per household, it's a great deal! Forms are also downloadable at www.psumn.com.

The form also provides an opportunity to donate to our scholarship fund, THON, and/or Prevent Child Abuse MN. You can also order chapter shirts (details at psumn.com).

Finally, the reverse side of the membership form (for those of you receiving this newsletter in the mail) contains a survey we're conducting to get a better idea of our members' thoughts, so we can keep improving our chapter. We appreciate your honest and open feedback to help us improve the Chapter. Thank you! 🗣️

Summer BBQ and Student Send-Off, 2015

On August 16, 2015, we had our annual summer barbecue and student send-off.

Roughly 40 Penn State alumni and students again gathered at Dan Gordon's home in Plymouth. The weather was a bit variable, with showers around 5 PM chasing everyone indoors or under the tents, but attendees had a good time nonetheless. The picnic featured hot dogs, brats, pulled pork sandwiches, salads, and desserts provided by the chapter.

We were pleased to see so many new alumni attend this event. Five new incoming freshmen were in attendance as



well as many of their family members. The incoming freshmen had an opportunity to meet alumni, recent grads, and current students at Penn State. They were also invited to sign up for free fall and winter "care packages" to be sent to their campus residence. In October, a care package was sent to each student who had signed up for one, with another sent in February. The package included Minnesota food and candy, coffee mugs, and various other items useful in the dorm. ☺



Save the Date: The 2016 BBQ/Send-Off Will Be On August 7!

Details to come via our e-Newsletters, Facebook and website – but for starters: we will be joined by special guest, Paul Clifford, the new CEO of the Penn State Alumni Association!

Also: Have any unwanted PSU knick-knacks, books, home furnishings, or other items? Bring them to the BBQ and donate them to the chapter. The chapter will price and sell them to other chapter members, with the proceeds going to our scholarship fund. For more information, contact Marilyn Binkley – marilyn.binkley@psumn.com ☺

Mail Call for THON

On January 31, our chapter hosted its second THON Mail Call event. Mail Call is something that happens during THON weekend. When it's time for Mail Call, THON dancers are given letters and packages from friends, family, and supporters to inspire them to keep dancing For The Kids. Mail Call typically occurs in the early hours of the last day of THON, when dancers really need a pick-me-up.

At our chapter's Mail Call event, 15 of us put our artistic and inspirational skills to work to create Dancer Mail for our fellow Penn Staters. We made cards and wrote notes, and sent them off in time for delivery to dancers during

Mail Call. There is no doubt that our hard work put smiles on some Penn Staters with very tired feet.

The THON 2016 weekend ran from February 19 through February 21, and this year THON raised \$9,770,332.32 to support the Four Diamonds Fund. Our chapter says Thank You again to everyone who participated in our Mail Call event, and we look forward to seeing even more members at next year's event. Start thinking now about the notes you'd write to weary Penn Stater who've been dancing all weekend in the fight against pediatric cancer. For the Glory, For the Kids! ☺

Treasurer's Report, from Dean Creighton

The current balance in the chapter's checking account is \$2925.20, and the balance in our savings account is \$500.72. Through fiscal 2015-2016, we received donations for our scholarship fund totaling just under \$2500. We also received \$1515 in dues payments.

In November 2015, the Board voted to submit \$10,000 to our scholarship endowment fund. This was monies we had been saving for this purpose. The success of last year's "The Joe We Know" event was very instrumental in allowing us to contribute that large of an amount to our fund.

The Board also contributed \$500 to the Roger Williams scholarship endowment fund to recognize all that Roger had done for the alumni and University as the former Executive Director of the Penn State Alumni Association.

In addition, we donated \$250 to Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota in honor of Helene and Jeff Slocum, in recognition of all that they have done for the organization. More recently, we donated \$100 to the Second Harvest Heartland food bank to assist those in need upon completion of our community service event. ☺

Tale of a Lion, Loyal and True

By Stephanie Brondani (Individual and Family Studies, 1982)

My Penn State story goes way back to 1963, when my family moved to State College so my dad could begin his academic career as a professor in the Department of Speech and Communication at Penn State. I was just 3 years old, and have virtually no memories of the years we spent prior to the move living in Pittsburgh, where Dad got his PhD from the University of Pittsburgh, so in my mind I've been a Penn Stater forever. In addition to being a Penn State alum, I'm what's euphemistically known among students as a "townie." There is no place I'd rather be from than Happy Valley.

State College has changed dramatically since my family first set up shop there. The town was dry, for one thing, and trips had to be made to Bellefonte if my parents wanted to have anything in their liquor cabinet. What has not changed, however, is ardent support for Penn State athletics. We grew up following football, of course, but we also attended gymnastics meets, and I dreamed of one day being either the Nittany Lion mascot or a Penn State gymnast.

I grew up knowing that I would go to Penn State after graduating from State College High School; there was never any doubt that I would be a Nittany Lion. It was the only school I even applied to. I majored in Individual and Family Studies, and while a student there, I was an occasional babysitter for the infant son of the then-newly-arrived Dr. Graham Spanier, a young professor in the College of Human Development.

In my sophomore year I joined Delta Gamma sorority, and because of that I lived all four years in on-campus housing, which I never regretted. Never having to prepare my own food was something I fully appreciated! As a DG, I was involved in our many service projects, including the annual Anchor Splash, where we raised money for cancer research. Some of my favorite memories are around Greek activities: the Acacia Road Rally (where, in our hurry to finish first, the car I was a passenger in accidentally turned the wrong way down Beaver Ave.), the Phi Psi 500, socials with various fraternities, and of course the Dance Marathon (see photo, next page). I danced as a senior, back in the day when it was held in the White Building, and lasted a full 48 hours. Those were the days before dancer mail and

extensive morale committees. Anyone who wanted to come watch could come in at any time, and we abided by very strict break rules: we got one 5-minute break every 8 hours. When it was our appointed time for a break, we would run as fast as we could to the bathrooms, spend as little time there as possible, and rush back to throw ourselves down on the mats and get a body rub with whatever time remained. It was an experience I'll never forget.

Attending Penn State football games was the highlight of the fall term – we did not switch to the semester system until several years after I graduated – and something I was only rarely able to do, as I worked most Saturdays at Penn Whelan Drug Store (which used to be on the corner of Allen St. and Beaver Ave.). It was much easier to get tickets to football games and to other sporting events back then, and I made the decision my senior year to give up my drug-store job and get season tickets. I loved watching the games, but even more, I loved watching the Blue Band. I still feel a thrill when they take the field before the game and at halftime. Though I have followed Penn State football religiously, I haven't been back to see a live game since I graduated. This coming Labor Day weekend, however, I'll finally go back to see a game in Beaver Stadium with my two sisters, also Penn State grads, and our husbands.

With my parents both gone, and my sisters living elsewhere, I rarely made it back to State College until our daughter Julia became a Penn Stater in 2008. The four years she spent there afforded me multiple opportunities to be back in my beloved hometown. I'll never forget moving Julia into her freshman dorm. When I parked the car in one of the isolated lots at the edge of campus and set off to walk back to East Halls, I was overcome by the strongest sense of *déjà vu* I have ever experienced. The sense of freedom and possibility I had experienced when I was a freshman myself came sweeping over me, and it was exhilarating. I owe Penn State and State College so much, and feel incredibly proud to call them home. 🍷

How I Got to Penn State

By Jim Kaufmann (English, 1972)

My father was a high school dropout. WWII was winding down, and he didn't want to miss it. So, at 17, he persuaded his parents to sign for him so he could enlist in the Marine Corps. He got to the Pacific too late to see any action; the war ended as his unit was preparing for an invasion of Japan that fortunately never happened.

Like so many others of his generation, he came back home, got a job and got married, and became the best family man he could. A dream of his was for his firstborn, his namesake, to go to college. But he didn't know anything about college.

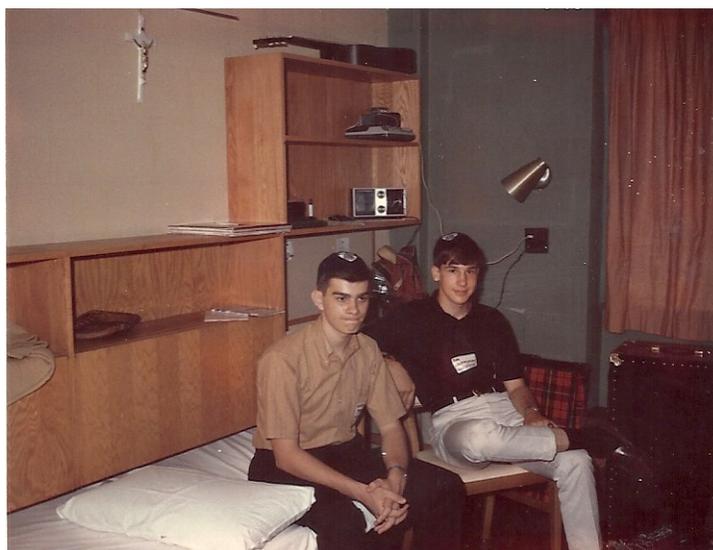
What he did know was this: He worked for one of the smartest men he knew. And that man had a daughter he loved more than anything. And that man sent his daughter to Penn State. So, in the mid-1960's, when it came time for me to think about college, there was only one school on the list: The Pennsylvania State University. (He always made a point of telling people, "It's THE Pennsylvania State University.")

My high school grades were only so-so. My grades were in the 90's when I applied myself, but often I settled for 75's and 80's, leading to an overall average around 82, as I recall. Not bad, but hardly what you'd call great. Perhaps sensing the possibility I'd get rejected by the only school on the list, or perhaps just wanting to make sure, my father asked a lawyer he knew to go through contacts he

had to see if my application to Penn State could be supported by someone in elected office. He provided information not only about my grades but also about my extracurricular activities and a couple of minor distinctions I'd received.

Long story short, PSU's Director of Admissions received letters on my behalf from Pennsylvania's Lieutenant Governor, Raymond Shafer, and one of the state's U.S. Senators, Hugh Scott. I still have copies of the letters. Mr. Shafer indicated he "would sincerely appreciate favorable consideration" of my application; Senator Scott said "I think you will find his record worthy of your attention." I was granted early admission so, with my college admission secured, my senior year of high school was less anxiety-ridden than it might otherwise have been.

My father thought it would good for me to start college during summer term (fewer distractions). So, in June 1967, five days after high school graduation, I and a high school classmate of mine moved into our University Park dorm room (209 Cross Hall; see photo below — that's me on the right) to begin our Penn State experience. Through placement testing, I had already been given an A for an English course. That summer, I earned B's in my courses (plus an A in Phys Ed), and I was off to a good start. My father was a happy man. The rest would be up to me. 🌐



Mark Your Calendars!

August 7: Student Send-Off/ Annual Picnic

August 28:  Softball Tournament

September 3: PSU Football vs Kent State (TBA) – Season Opener!

February 3-4, 2017: PSU Men's Hockey at Minnesota

February 17-19, 2017: THON 2017!



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