Escaping the Vacuum
Promoting Collaboration in the Built Environment

Named for the wedge-shaped element used in the construction of an arch, the Alpha Rho Chi Voussoirs Award acknowledges projects that result from exceptional collaboration between design consultants, builders, and the general public. “Thoughtful” and “edgy,” the inaugural winner is a mixed-use development known as CODO 241.

AARON FELDMAN

Bridging the Active-Alumni Gap

The Anthemios Alumni Association has launched an Alumni-Active Mentor Program to create more meaningful active-alumni relationships.

MARYBETH RADZIENDA

Preserving America’s Best Idea

The National Park Services’ Historic Preservation Training Center (HPTC for short) is charged with preserving and maintaining the historic structures found in America’s national parks—and is a great way to get some hands-on experience in preservation.

THOMAS A. VITANZA

From Cattle to Coinage (and Beyond)
The Evolution of Our Financial System and the Buildings That House It

Banking has seen its share of ups and downs over the centuries, and the past forty years have witnessed dramatic changes in the industry. Yet despite the current economic crisis, there’s reason to believe our country’s financial system will emerge “stronger and wiser.”

HOMER L. WILLIAMS

Brothers Marrying Brothers
The Couples of Alpha Rho Chi

Given that Alpha Rho Chi is a large group of coed, like-minded individuals, it’s not too surprising that many brothers have married “brothers.” Just how many of us are there?

DANIELLE SWANSON

Milestones in Our History
The Founding of Arcus Society

One hundred years ago, fifteen young men at the University of Illinois determined “to unite in a common bond of devotion to the arts... particularly that of architecture, to which they had dedicated their lives.” Their society would later become the Anthemios Chapter of Alpha Rho Chi.
This fall seems to be a time of new beginnings for me. At the time of this writing, I’ve just started another new semester teaching, with a fresh crop of faces in every class. My husband and I have another new house under construction. My ancient car just died and I’ve had to buy a new one. My five-year-old daughter is embarking on her own academic career and all the requisite extracurriculars. And on top of all that I’m contemplating yet another career change.

So when Rick Jenkins, Worthy Grand Scribe, asked what I thought about giving the Archi a little facelift, it only seemed in keeping with the trend. Why not? Change can be fun, stimulating, exciting…

It can also be disorienting, even overwhelming. Many of the changes in my personal life right now are positive ones, made entirely by choice. Others… not so much. And I know I’m not alone. So many people I know are struggling to adapt to new circumstances, professional, financial, or relational. So how do we adjust?

One of the things I love about Alpha Rho Chi is that so many of its members are so adept at looking both backward and forward. We love learning about the enterprising young men who first conceived of this organization nearly 100 years ago. We listen avidly to older alums as they regale us with tales of “the good old days.” And we revel in our own memories of student life and treasure the friendships we made.

But the people I know in Alpha Rho Chi—both personally and through my contacts as editor of the Archi—are far from stuck in the past. This is very much a forward-looking group of individuals, always striving to do things better, to make a difference in our communities, our professions, and our brotherhood. Whether it’s providing a framework to encourage and reward professional collaboration, such as the Voussoirs Award, or establishing a mentor program to improve the flow of ideas between students and alumni, the brothers of Alpha Rho Chi always seem ready to test out new ideas, looking to the future and trying to figure out better ways to do things.

It’s that spirit, that energy, that have allowed this fraternity to thrive and endure through so many generations. It’s that spirit I’ll try to keep in mind as I face the challenges and changes in my own life.

As I do, however, I’m afraid I need to give up one task I’ve truly enjoyed: editing the Archi. Saddened as I am to relinquish a position that has brought me into contact with so many wonderful people, I now need to focus my energies elsewhere—and to let someone new test out his or her ideas here. If you’re ready to embrace the challenge—as editor or in a supporting role—please contact Rick Jenkins, wgs@alpharhochi.org. And I’ll look forward to following, as a reader, the continued evolution of our little magazine.

Fidelitas, Amor et Artes.

Karen L. Marker
Archi Editor
“I don’t understand why the base of your model is so big,” remarked the juror. “Your building takes up such a small amount of it.”

“I wanted to show enough of the site to give my building some context,” Eric explained.

“But why? You’re only being graded on the design of your building.”

At the time—2002—Eric was a third-year architecture student and a fraternity brother of mine. I’d helped him create his site model base, complete with scaled contours carved out of chip board and architectonic trees made from twisted steel wires. Given that part of the assignment was to choose an appropriate site for a small artist’s residence on a large, sloping property, Eric had decided to enlist the help of a landscape architecture student in siting his building and creating a model to justify his decision. Since I was a fourth-year landscape architecture student—and since my room in the fraternity house was right next to his—I became Eric’s very first consultant.

Eric took me out to the site, where I explained Ian McHarg’s theories of analyzing a site by creating overlays that describe the many different environmental, technical, and social aspects used to inform design interventions. From there, we went back to the studio to build a site, one chip board contour at a time.

A few days after his critique, I went to visit Eric in his studio and was shocked to learn that he was the only one who had attempted to create a contour model in order to understand just how steep the site was. The models of his classmates, spread out all over the studio in various levels of completion, ranged from buildings resting on a completely flat plane to something sticking out of the side of a cliff, reminiscent of an Anasazi cave dwelling. Eric, obviously dejected, described the scolding he’d received for allowing himself to be constrained by the physical limitations of the site and told me he was going to scrap the whole thing and start over.

Academics will argue that a student’s time in college is his or her last opportunity to fully explore the extents of the imagination before the constraints of a career drag him or her back to reality. But when we approach education in this way, are we preventing students from different disciplines from working together to push the boundaries of imagination even further? Today’s world of architecture and its allied arts is mired with design and construction projects in which each consultant designs in a vacuum with little understanding or discussion of the other components of a building, plan, or product.

Just two years after Eric’s and my first attempts at cross-disciplinary educational collaboration, Rebecca Slenker was a fourth-year architecture student at Penn State, taking one of the university’s first studio courses that included both architecture and landscape architecture students.

“The studio class was taught by landscape architecture professors and the project was given to both the fourth-year architecture students and fifth-year landscape architecture students. The intention for this semester-long project was to collaborate on an urban design study... However, after initial site survey work and presentations, all group activity ceased and everyone proceeded with his or her own project.” While cross-disciplinary studios like this one are certainly a step in the right direction—away from the vacuum—we are still just scraping at the surface of true collaborative design.

After graduating with her degree in architecture, Slenker, also a member of Alpha Rho Chi, went on to work for Murphy & Dittenhafer, a small yet versatile architecture firm with offices in Baltimore, Maryland, and York, Pennsylvania. “M&D prides themselves on their broad spectrum of project types,” she says of her employer. “Because we do design for anything from the renovation of a small, historic mill, to the programming and design for a new university student center, we can’t possibly be experts on everything. We rely on the expertise of our consultants.” It was this very philosophy that would earn Slenker, her firm, and one of their recent projects—known as CODO 241—the inaugural Alpha Rho Chi Voussoirs Award.

The Alpha Rho Chi Voussoirs Award was
created as a statement against designing in a vacuum. Named for the wedge-shaped element used in the construction of an arch, theVoussoirs Award acknowledges those completed projects (built and unbuilt) whose product was the result of exceptional collaboration between design consultants, builders, and the general public. Just as each voussoir is necessary for an arch to stand, each member of a collaborative effort should be equally instrumental.

Named after the Codorus Creek, which runs through downtown York, Pennsylvania, CODO 241 is a 69,500-square-foot mixed use development that combines the adaptive reuse of an early 20th century auto parts store with a cutting-edge three-story steel-and-glass addition. “The CODO 241 project was born from a truly collaborative process,” Murphy & Dittenhafer states in their award submission narrative. “Team members worked together to select the site, architectural staff completing schematic design, construction staff completing cost estimate review, and property management staff developing probable return on investment... Finally, the team called upon local artisans to design specific pieces such as metal apartment identification numbers, stairway railings, and copper cladding, making CODO a uniquely community-driven product.”

The concept of early-and-often collaboration has paid off in more ways than anyone could imagine. “The idea of bringing the subcontractors on board in the design process brought a lot of things to light that might not have been seen until during construction. Certain problems were avoided and innovative thinking paved the way for design ideas that aren’t considered the norm.” In addition to the time and money saved during construction, Murphy & Dittenhafer was able to forge lasting relationships with several of the consultants and subcontractors. A recently completed second CODO project involved many of the same players as the original one, and team members have called on each other for subsequent projects outside of the CODO development.

The project itself has garnered awards and commendations from several corners of the industry. One Voussoirs Award judge called the project “an edgy, thoughtful, contextual, well-crafted complex that merits award.” Another said, “The overall design is striking. Specifically the poetic use of materials blended with the old and new.” In addition to the Voussoirs Award, the project has won praise from smart-growth advocates such as 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania (“CODO 241 is a transformative and catalytic project that demonstrates the potential for Pennsylvania’s small cities”) as well as historic preservation groups (CODO 241 won the 2010 Preservation PA Commercial/Industrial Construction Project Award).

“This project was one of the first I had personally been involved with from programming through completed construction,” admits Slenker. “Having worked closely with engineers, contractors, subcontractors, and tradesmen, I was able to use this project as a learning experience.”

Although many of us—Eric and myself included—had to wait until we entered the working world to truly understand the concept and benefits of collaboration, it is a concept that is slowly becoming more commonplace. Instead of giving up after one lukewarm attempt at a collaborative studio, Penn State created the Stuckeman School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture in order to bring students of the two majors closer in their studies. Alpha Rho Chi continues to expand its membership, perpetuating the dialogue between planners, designers, artisans, and builders through programs such as theVoussoirs Award. Rebecca Slenker and Murphy & Dittenhafer continue to build on the success of their CODO 241 project with increasingly complex and beautiful work. And although Eric and I have yet to work on another project together, we both continue to learn as much as we can, trying our hardest to escape the vacuum.”
The Project
CODO 241
241 North George Street
York, Pennsylvania

Completed
2009
Size
70,000 Square Feet
Capacity
35 rental apartments, ground-floor retail
Cost to Construct
$12 million

The Team
Client
Codo LP
Architect
Murphy & Dittenhafer Architects, Inc.
Structural Engineer
Baker Ingram & Associates
Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing Engineer
Moore Engineering Company
Civil Engineer
RGS Associates, Inc.
General Contractor
Wagman Construction, Inc.
Property Manager
Sherman Property Management, Inc.
Community
The residents of York, Pennsylvania
Escaping the Vacuum
Bridging the Active-Alumni Gap

BY MARYBETH RADZIENDA, ANTHEMIOS ALUMNA (UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN)

Do you remember when you were an active, and it was so exciting when an event was coming up at which you knew alumni would be present? Alumni brothers were so cool. They were always fun, had the best stories of their days as actives in the house, and had great advice. We learned so much from them—not only about what to expect and get through in school, but also about our future careers and life. They were mentors to us.

This year the Anthemios Alumni Association launched an Alumni-Active Mentor Program. This long talked-about idea was finally brought to fruition with the help of Doug Milburn and myself. Over the last few years, many alumni brothers have been discussing the state of the active-alumni relationship. The fueling fire for developing this program was to create more active-alumni relationships based on active and alumni expressions of interest.

The enthusiasm for and existence of the treasured active-alumni relationships seems to have dwindled over the years. As we grow older and class after class of young brothers graduate, we are less and less familiar with the house and active brothers. The generation of young active brothers is a culture very different from that which we grew up in and from generations before. The dawn of new technology has brought extreme advances in means of communication with email, smart phones, and Facebook. Having said that, it is ironic that communications between actives and alumni are less than what they once were.

Actives have brought up the fact that they wish they saw more alumni more often. Alumni state that they wish they knew what was going on with the “kids” and the house. However, the numbers for alumni participating in Anthemios Alumni Association events and publications is less than desired. Life is busy for everyone. All have personal, family, social, and career obligations. How do we get more alumni and actives involved? How do we get more alumni and actives to bond? What about a mentor program pairing up alumni and active brothers? Would that work? Everyone can use a mentor. There is only benefit from it no matter what career path one is pursuing. Maybe, if we have mentor-mentee relationships established more brothers would participate in events like Homecoming and Founders’ Day. These events would provide an excellent opportunity to meet up in person.

What is the purpose of a mentor? When I asked Alumni Brother Mark Ethun to comment on his experience as a mentor thus far, he said something that hit the nail on the head:

“I believe the mentor/mentee relationship is essential to an architectural education. It goes back to the very earliest forms of training to be an architect, where the apprentice shadows the master. In many ways the modern world has stunted this traditional model of education. I believe that the knowledge and wisdom imparted by the “older” genera-

“This is an excellent opportunity to be able to provide, from a distance, something like what I got from all of the alumni that were around the house when I was an undergraduate,” says Mark Ethun. “It serves an energizing and nostalgic purpose for me.”
tion of architects to those in training is our legacy. In college, APX teaches us through our fraternal lessons that being an architect is a higher obligation than simply designing buildings. Our profession can survive only if those ahead of us share in the glories and the pains that we encounter daily in our profession. The mentorship program has re-ignited in me this obligation and I am extremely honored to be taking part. I am very proud of our fraternity and the things we do to enable and enhance the architectural educations of our brothers over an entire lifetime.

Although Mark’s response is architecturally directed, the essence applies to any related field.

After several months of calls for Anthemios alumni mentors through e-newsletters, emails, and Facebook, seventeen alumni brothers of varying career backgrounds volunteered to be mentors. I compiled a list of these mentors, each with a short biography stating contact information, involvement while an active in APX, place of employment, and brief description of work experience. Then, we sent the list off to the active chapter’s Worthy Architect (president) to pass on to the chapter. The actives would then be in charge of choosing which mentors they found appealing, contacting those mentors (copying me on initial correspondence in order to keep track of the program’s progress), and pursuing those relationships to the degree which they required. We hope the mentor program will grow, adding mentors to the list, publishing the list each semester, and allowing actives even to switch mentors in order to create a well-rounded networking experience.

To date, the Anthemios Alumni-Active Mentor Program has two successful relationships. Active Will F. Brennan, class of 2014, a student of industrial design, contacted Anthemios Alumni Association President Danielle Swanson, class of 2004, an industrial design graduate currently working as an account service representative at Grafik Marketing Communications in Alexandria, Virginia. Danielle had the following to say about her experience in the program thus far:

The mentoring program has been a great way for me to form a close relationship with a recent initiate, and I believe for him to have a close relationship with an alumni member. We communicate pretty frequently via text, Twitter, and Facebook, and the occasional email. He also visited me while I was in Chicago doing the Avon Walk this summer. There is no set communication standard thus far, so we communicate when we need to or when we just want to say hello. Initially I tried to ask more questions about his schoolwork and the chapter, but he knows he can come to me with other questions as well. I also go to him when I have questions about what’s going on with the chapter, or what’s going on with the latest technology (as he’s always ahead of the game).

I feel we’re helping to bridge the gap and the mystery between alumni and actives, and help the actives see the alumni are real people. It takes some of the anxiety away from contacting someone a decade older than you, and vice versa.

Will commented on his experience:

I view the mentor/student relationship as a great way to get an idea of where one might be ten years down the line. Danielle occasionally sends me internship opportunities that she hears about, and it’s always from somewhere I would never think to look. Beyond that, though, the great thing about it is that she and I are almost like family now. I ask her for advice on things and keep in
touch about family goings-on, etc. I think that the mixture of personal and professional is what makes the mentor program so rewarding, because it allows a working and friendly relationship, when so often the two are exclusive.

Active Laura Trainor, class of 2012, student of architecture, contacted Mark Ethun, class of 1999.5, an architecture graduate and project architect with TFF Architects and Planners in Greensboro, North Carolina. Mark stated the following regarding their relationship:

I now live in North Carolina, so my access to the chapter and alumni association is limited. This is an excellent opportunity to be able to provide, from a distance, something like what I got from all of the alumni that were around the house when I was an undergraduate. While I have not met Laura in person, I have spoken to her several times through email. I wish it could be a weekly occurrence, but our schedules make this interaction something that happens about once a month. I most enjoy hearing the types of things that Laura is doing in school and in APX. It serves an energizing and nostalgic purpose for me as I enjoyed the time I had at U of I and at the APX house. From Laura’s perspective:

All of our communication has been done in the format of long emails. We’ve emailed back and forth about 10 times so far I would say. Mark has been very thorough and quick with getting back to me, so in that way it has been really helpful. I have sent him my resume, old portfolio, and selected works documents and he has offered suggestions for improvement. I also had a tricky decision regarding which job to accept for the summer and his advice played a big part in my ultimate choice. In other words, the relationship has been very helpful so far. Since I started IDP this summer, maybe he could end up being my actual “mentor” for the program. We haven’t discussed it yet. And of course I’m diving into the grad school application process at the moment and will probably end up seeking his advice in the near future with regards to that.

These mentor-mentee relationships are exactly what we had hoped to see come of this program. Now, we need to get more participating in it. The next step to push this along will be to assign mentors to actives. After discussions with the alumni association board and some active brothers, we feel that providing the match will get the ball rolling. We then hope that the remaining actives not paired with a mentor will see the benefits and take the initiative to choose their mentors at the next issue of the mentor list, which we also hope will grow.

Mentoring is an essential part of any career or life path. We have a special opportunity for mentoring built into our brotherhood. As brothers, we have a bond with those of the past, present, and future generations. We must always strive to perpetuate our valuable relationships, passing on wisdom, sharing experiences, and learning from the younger generations.

NOTE

Any Anthemios alumni who would like to participate in the mentoring program should contact Marybeth at mbradzienda@gmail.com or 773-729-0737. “I have heard about other chapters attempting to start up mentor programs,” Marybeth says. “I welcome any and all input, suggestions, and recommendations—we can learn from each other’s struggles and successes in our separate chapter programs. Please do not hesitate to contact me.”
Preserving America’s Best Idea

From an interview with Thomas A. Vitanza, RA, AIA, NCARB, Metagenes Alumnus
(Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg)

Disheartened by the condition of the lodge, Vitanza and other local preservationists began urging the owners to do something about it. “It’s taken about a year,” he reports, “but starting this fall we’ll be doing an emergency stabilization of that building. We’re just trying to get it buttoned up for winter. We’ll put a temporary roof on it; secure the windows and doors that are sitting there, not very well protected; pump out the basement, which was flooded; deal with the hazardous materials; take care of all the collapsed interior plaster—you know, kind of clean up the building, let it sit there and dry out for a bit so we can really see what’s going on with it. “And then we’re going to embark on a general rehabilitation and preservation project,” he adds, sounding pleased. “I’ll be the architect for that, so we’ll be doing the building assessment, making repair recommendations, preparing the drawings and specs, and hopefully my office will then submit a proposal and be selected to actually do the repair work.”

HPTC

Vitanza’s “office” is the National Park Services’ Historic Preservation Training Center—HPTC for short—where he serves as Senior Historical Architect. The center’s purpose is two-fold: to preserve and maintain the historic structures found in America’s national parks, and to provide training to the Park Service personnel who run those parks so that they can continue

On the banks of the Potomac River, just northwest of Washington, DC, an old abandoned lodge stands beside the Dalecarlia Reservoir, which supplies drinking water to the nation’s capital. The lodge, like the reservoir itself, was designed by Montgomery Cunningham Meigs, the Civil War army officer and engineer who figured out how to get fresh water into the city via a series of reservoirs.

The Dalecarlia lodge is in poor condition—and thus far, efforts to improve it have only made things worse. “In an effort to improve the building,” says Tom Vitanza, who first visited the site a little over a year ago, “about 10 years ago [the Washington Aqueduct System, which manages the reservoir,] put a beautiful copper standing seam roof on it. Unfortunately, about five years ago someone stole the roof right off the building and left it there with just the underlayment exposed. So the ice-and-water shield is basically the only thing keeping water out of the building right now. Plus, when the thieves were tearing the copper off to sell as scrap, they put a lot of holes in this underlayment, so water’s been pouring into the building for something like five years, and it’s incurred a lot of damage on the interior.”

The caretaker’s lodge at the Dalecarlia Reservoir, in need of repairs.
So why would a park hire HPTC as opposed to a local firm? “We’re talking about sensitive preservation work, like conserving historic lath and plaster or repairing historic windows or doors,” notes Vitanza, “so for the parks, there’s a benefit in dealing with us, in that... we’re very flexible. For example, if unknown historic graffiti is uncovered beneath wallpaper or paint, instead of ripping out the plaster and replacing it with gyp board, if that was the original intent, HPTC would stabilize the plaster and conserve the graffiti. For us it’s a training opportunity, for a contractor it’s probably a change order.

“Plus, clients also know that they’re getting skilled artisans, experienced people who specialize in historic preservation crafts and trade work” he adds, “and there’s always the training aspect too.” Even after conducting technical review panels and reviewing previous projects, with outside contractors “there’s always the issue of ‘do these people bidding on these jobs really have the highest level of expertise to do it?’”

Assessing Historic Structures

The National Park Service maintains nearly 400 parks across the country and in US territories and possessions, so HPTC’s artisans are often on the road. It’s not unusual for some of HPTC’s folks to be in the field 48 weeks any given year. “There are historic structures in almost every park,” Vitanza says, “Even parks that are mainly natural areas will have buildings that were constructed in the early 20th century or maybe late 19th century that are part of the infrastructure.”

Responsibility for maintaining these structures falls to the superintendents of the individual parks. “Many parks used to have a small preservation crew in-house,” says Vitanza. “Certainly a lot of the bigger parks, especially out west, and the more remote areas, have in-house expertise to
deal with whatever particular type of structure there is in their area. But many of these park-specific preservation programs have fallen by the wayside because they just haven’t received the support.

“If parks need help to prioritize a building’s needs, that’s where HPTC comes in. I’m often asked to go to a park and look at historic buildings when it’s really not clear what’s going on, or why a building’s having problems, and so we’ll go out and do a critical assessment of the structure and present to the park staff what we think the issues are and provide a structured plan for them to address the situation. We usually suggest incorporating training in some way for park personnel as part of every project.”

Often, Vitanza will complete what’s known as a Historic Structure Report, which he describes as “the baseline document for any given cultural structure in the Park Service.” He recently completed such a report for a structure at Monocacy National Battlefield, a civil war battlefield that happens to be where the HPTC is located, in Frederick. That park is home to a late 18th-century building known as the Thomas House. “It was built in 1790s,” says Vitanza, “and it evolved over time. It’s significant because it was damaged during the Civil War, and Union and Confederate generals met there after the battle, which was in July of 1864. The building was repaired and lived in until a couple of years ago by private owners.

“The past year, year and a half has been spent repairing the building,” Vitanza explains. “The park decided to go with a ground-source heating and cooling system for the building, so they did geothermal wells and had to do haz-mat cleanup for the oil tanks and the old furnace.” According to Vitanza, reducing its carbon footprint is a major goal of the Park Service. “The Park Service is all about being sustainable,” he says. “That’s something we’ve been doing since the mid-1970s — way before USGBC got started with LEED. The NPS always thinks about that—that’s part of our mission statement.”

**Meigs, Revisited**

Vitanza says the biggest training project his team has worked on over the past several years is actually not a Park Service project but one for the National Cemetery Administration, which is part of the Department of Veterans Affairs. “We were
Example of penciled joints, a popular 19th-century treatment for painted brick masonry buildings, found inside the house. Details like these help explain the evolution of the building.

Original two-wythe thick walls with later 19th-century brick veneer used to cover 1864 battle damage and unify the exterior of the house.

Historic American Building Survey (HABS) large-format photograph of Thomas House is part of the documentation process used by HPTC for the Historic Structure Report; part of HABS Library of Congress collection MD-1251-A.

HPTC 2008 VPI summer intern and Metagenes alumna Lexa Rio [photo left], intern Susan Satuliatis (a UMD grad), and Vitanza after a day of architectural investigation at the Thomas House.
asked to survey nationally significant historic cemetery lodges in 39 national cemeteries,” he explains, “so we’ve spent the past three years—mainly in the mid-Atlantic area—going out to these lodges and carrying out this baseline condition assessment of the buildings and reporting back with drawings and sketches and hundreds of photos about what we discovered about each building—what’s the condition, what are the character-defining features, and then, what does the agency need to be looking at to get the building back in good condition.”

Many of those buildings are real survivors and in reasonable condition, according to Vitanza, “because of the robust nature of their original construction, but they all seem to have some work that needs to be done, and a handful of them are in poor condition.” Of the 39 lodges surveyed, 15 have been targeted for a stabilization project slated to begin next year. The goal is to “mothball” the buildings (“basically prepping them so they survive an additional five to ten years without any use”) until a compatible use is found. Those 15 buildings are mostly in remote, rural locations, where there’s little constituency for their use. “When historic buildings are left empty they tend to go into decline really quickly,” Vitanza notes dryly. “People notice that they’re empty, so there’ll be vandalism or break-ins, and a lot of times these buildings haven’t been kept up since the mid-70s and so are vulnerable targets.”

Most National Cemetery lodges were built according to specs laid out by Montgomery C. Meigs—the same Meigs who devised the Washington reservoir system, who also served as the Quartermaster General of the Army during the Civil War. “Meigs became responsible for burials,” says Vitanza, “and his office managed the construction of the early National Cemetery system; they designed a standardized plan for the cemeteries, and they designed this building—a lodge building, which is a combined residential and office structure, done in French Second Empire style. His office wrote standardized specs for it—it was the Army, after all—so they had the drawing, and they had specs for either a one-story or two-story version, and either out of brick or stone.

“And I find this really interesting: In the 1870s and 1880s, when the National Cemetery system was being developed, the Quartermaster General’s office had several of these lodges concurrently under construction all across the country, all built by private contractors... and the builders tried to cheat the government even back then! Meigs would send out his inspectors to

Montgomery C. Meigs not only devised the Washington reservoir system, but also served as Quartermaster General of the Army during the Civil War, oversaw the construction of the early National Cemetery system, and designed a standardized plan for the cemeteries and their lodges.
check on construction progress and discovered lodges with only partial foundations or without excavated cellars, which was what was in the specs. He would have the builders demolish the building and start over again.”

As Vitanza and his team have been completing the assessments on the lodges, the National Cemetery Administration has been updating National Register and National Historic Landmark nominations. “So we’re all working together and learning about General Meigs, the building type, and what it took to get them built. It’s been a great experience that way.”

Vitanza is also doing lodge work for the National Park Service. Seventeen park units have National Cemeteries within their boundaries, and many have Meigs lodges. In coming months Vitanza and his team will be undertaking a project at Poplar Grove National Cemetery, a Civil War cemetery located at Petersburg National Battlefield, in Virginia. Vitanza has an ulterior motive: to see all the Meigs lodges in the National Park Service. “Three down,” he says, “fourteen to go…”

It’s clear that Vitanza loves what he does—but he hasn’t always worked in preservation. “I went to Virginia Tech,” he says, “so I got a straight BArch—there were no historic preservation classes in the College of Architecture.” He was already interested in working with existing and historic buildings, so for his thesis project he chose to work with a historic industrial site. His advisors didn’t share his enthusiasm. “I wasn’t even sure I was going to graduate,” Vitanza laughs. “I had to design a new building that fit into the site in order to graduate—they wouldn’t let me just focus on working with the historic buildings…. They were all very happy when the new design element came into the project, because it didn’t look like it was going to fly if I didn’t have that!”

After VPI, Vitanza had a hard time finding a job that fit his passion. He spent some time in Stamford, Connecticut, working with the well-known preservationist/art historian/artist Renée Kahn conducting historic building street surveys for local municipalities. Next move, Boston, where he worked a succession of jobs, including a stint with the Park Service—but in a regional maintenance office, where he did new design, not preservation. Finally, after a few years with a private firm, a position opened up with the Park Service’s Historic Preservation Training Center, and Vitanza relocated to Maryland to take the job. “And that’s when I really started getting hands-on work experience in historic preservation; I worked most of the first year as a laborer!”

Vitanza started out as a trainee, but over time, he was handed more and more responsibility, moving to and overseeing projects in New York, New Mexico, Arkansas, Texas, the upper northwest, and western Pennsylvania. He studied under the NPS preservation legend James S. Askins for two and a half years. Vitanza obtained his architectural license in 1987, and in 1991 he was named HPTC’s Senior Historical Architect.

Some of Vitanza’s favorite projects for
graduate programs. I’m usually looking for somebody with a BArch who’s in a master’s program in historic preservation.”

Last year’s intern spent the bulk of her summer developing lodge assessment reports, including one at Fort Smith National Cemetery, in Arkansas, under the guidance of one of Vitanza’s more experienced staff. Afterward, she and her mentor traveled to New York to survey cemeteries on Long Island and in Brooklyn. “So she went out and surveyed three lodges this summer,” notes Vitanza, “and was instrumental in preparing notes for the first draft for Fort Smith, and she started working on the drafts for Long Island and Brooklyn; that’s better than a typical intern job!” Next year’s intern will almost certainly spend at least part of the summer working on some other historic lodge.

Vitanza is at no loss for candidates—last year, 61 students applied—but as a Metagenes alum and former Worthy Architect (chapter president), he would love to see more APX members apply. “If you’re in architecture school and you’re looking for some hands-on experience, then you need to be aware of this internship program,” he says. He urges architecture students who are interested in preservation to watch the website [www.preservenet.cornell.edu/employ/ncpe.html] for 2012 application updates. “It’s a paid internship—and it’s a good deal, I think!” quips Vitanza. “It’s a great opportunity to help preserve some of the best resources in the country.”
Banks sure seem to be in the news a lot these days, what with the ongoing financial crisis. But Homer Williams, for one, seems confident that our nation’s banking system will emerge from the crisis stronger than ever.

And Williams is well versed on the subject. As principal of Williams, Spurgeon, Kuhl, and Freshnock Architects (WSKF) in North Kansas City, Missouri, Williams has more than four decades of experience in the design of more than one hundred bank and financial service projects, and he recently published a book with Wiley & Sons on the design of financial institutions.

While the book focuses primarily on the pragmatic aspects of bank design, it also delves into the history of banking and the structure of our financial system. According to Williams, the first “banks” probably originated in the third millennium BC—in the form of temples. At temples “people could exchange items such as cattle, implements, or precious metals, before the use of coins,” Williams explains in Building Type Basics for Banks and Financial Institutions.

“When coins of precious metals began to be used as payment, ‘money changers’ were those who understood the relative value of various coins and could provide the means for a desired exchange.”

Banking has seen its share of ups and downs over the centuries. “Banking declined in medieval Europe,” says Williams, “because of religious opposition to ‘usury,’ which is the collection of interest added to a loaned amount. The renaissance brought a revival of banking, most prominently in Italy where Marco Polo had introduced a trade route to the east, and with that, its exotic products. In the fourteenth century, the famous banking houses in Venice and Florence brought about the modern practice of banking.” Williams points out that the English word bank derives from the Italian banco, meaning “bench”—the tables where early banking transactions occurred.

“As trade increased and more people traveled greater distances to exchange goods,” says Williams, “the need for an accurate means of monetary measure increased as well.” Plus, coins were “unwieldy to carry in large numbers.” Over time, people began using paper money.

“In England, the safekeeping of precious coins or objects was entrusted to goldsmiths,” explains Williams, noting that goldsmiths had the only safe storage vaults.

“Their customers knew that was how the goldsmiths kept safe their valuables and began to ask if their own could be kept in the smiths’ vaults as well. Written receipts allowed both customers and the goldsmiths to know what was stored at a given time. Soon, customers, and then the goldsmiths, began to exchange these written receipts, instead of the actual stored items.” The practice spread, and in 1694 the Bank of England was chartered and granted permission to issue its own notes.

In the United States, banking developed relatively late. “The economy in colonial America was principally agricultural,” notes Wil-
liams, “and credit was extended to farmers by merchants in cities such as Boston or Philadelphia. These merchants then bought on credit from their British suppliers, and when the harvest came in, the whole chain was paid off.” But then the Revolutionary War broke out, and the system was disrupted. “The need for indigenous banks became clear.”

In 1781 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania chartered the Bank of North America, Williams recounts, “but for another ten years there was no nationally chartered bank.” In 1791 Congress chartered the First Bank of the United States, but twenty years later, as the bank’s charter neared its expiration, Congress succumbed to pressure from the early colonial banks, which had since become state institutions, and failed to renew the charter. Then came the War of 1812, and with it, more economic complications; as a result, in 1816 Congress voted to create the Second Bank of the United States. This bank, too, had a twenty-year charter—and, again, it was allowed to expire. “From then until the Civil War era,” says Williams, “free banks could be established by anyone who could provide a minimum capital outlay and deposit specified amounts, in the form of bonds, with a state agent. With such minimal restraint, however, many of these failed.”

Once again, the system was revived by the economic demands of war: “In 1863,” reports Williams, “Congress enacted the National Banking Act to finance the Civil War, and by 1866 there were 1,600 nationally chartered banks, which accounted for 75 percent of all bank deposits in the United States.” The act also introduced the first uniform national currency and established the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), which continues to oversee all national banks.

Most banks constructed during this era were classical Greek, Italianate, French Second Empire, Victorian Gothic, or English Queen Anne style in design, notes Williams. Then, in the 1870s, Henry H.
Richardson ushered in a revival of the eleventh-century Romanesque style. “Surprisingly, Richardson only designed one bank,” notes Williams, “the Agawam Bank in Springfield, Massachusetts, and it was not in the style for which he became famous. His many other commissions, however, were the inspiration for countless banks throughout the United States well into the early twentieth century.

“The new banks were required to back their notes with federal government securities,” he continues, but nonetheless “severe financial panics occurred... in 1893 and again in 1907.” The government responded by creating the National Monetary Commission and, in 1913, passing the Federal Reserve Act, which established a central bank as the “lender of last resort” and a nationwide monetary policy.

Then, in 1929, came the stock market crash and the Great Depression. “Bank construction came to a halt,” says Williams, “and market events led to the insolvency of numerous banks across the country.” Runs on banks led to a “bank holiday” in 1933—four days during which all US banks were closed so that they could be evaluated and the public reassured. In the aftermath of the Great Depression, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation was established, providing a set amount of insurance (initially $2500) to each depositor should an insured bank become insolvent.

The post-Depression era also saw a significant increase in government oversight.

Williams notes that, on a design level, the Depression also brought about a change in bank architecture, as those banks that had managed to survive sought to project a new image. “One of the early modern banks was the 32-story Philadelphia Savings Fund Building, built in 1932,” he says. “It was designed by William Lescaze and George Howe and has been called America’s first ‘truly modern skyscraper.’”

The break with classical influences became even more pronounced after the Second World War. “Of the immediate postwar banks the most dramatic was the Fifth Avenue branch of the Manufacturers’ Trust designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) in New York City in 1954,” says Williams. “An in-house competition was held over a weekend at SOM and the winner was Charles Evans Hughes III, who designed a four-story build-
The Arch November 2011

Williams believes that financial services will continue to be offered from physical structures, such as the Hyde Park Bank Technical Center, designed by Florian Architects and soon to be constructed in Chicago.

ing with a glass curtain wall that featured the vault prominently visible from the street, a practice that is still favored by many bankers today.”

In his forty years of experience designing banks, Williams has personally witnessed dramatic changes in the banking industry—both technological changes, such as electronic banking, the use of debit and credit cards, and remote deposit capture; and “less visible innovations” in planning, equipment, and the delivery of financial services, as well as regulatory changes. “As younger customers or members enter the workforce,” he says, “they bring enhanced abilities in use of higher-tech systems and equipment. Their ease in using the Internet, wireless systems, and other technological advances will alter banking practices in the United States.”

But is the United States on the cusp of becoming a “cashless and paperless” society? Not in Williams’ opinion. “Likely, financial services will continue to be offered from new and renovated buildings,” he asserts, “even as many personal banking needs are increasingly being met through use of cell phones, PDAs, and the Internet.”

Overall, Williams is optimistic about banking’s future. “While the current global financial crisis is indeed formidable,” he admits, “this country has experienced similar difficulties in the past.” He cites the lessons learned from the Great Depression, the savings-and-loan crisis in the 1980s, and the FDIC’s handling of the 1984 failure of Continental Illinois bank as evidence that the country will emerge from the current crisis “stronger and wiser.” In the meantime, he’s passing on his knowledge to help others construct the edifices that house our nation’s banks.

Get in touch with your alumni association!

Andronicus Alumni Association
President: Alberto Lopez
Tel: 523.525.7315

Antelamios Alumni Association
President: Danielle Swanson
Tel: 847.612.8816

Apollogoros Alumni Association
President: Kevin Chupp
Tel: 407.229.6309

Cleisthenes Alumni Association
President: David Sparks
Tel: 281.693.2782

Cossutius Alumni Association
President: Erin Dobesh
Tel: 402.805.0755

Daedalus Alumni Association
President: Kristen Borg
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Dominitian Alumni Association
President: Michael Swanson
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Iktinos Alumni Association
President: Linda Lilly
Tel: 754.222.6089

Metagenes Alumni Association
President: Michele LeTourneur
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Pytho Alumni Association
President: Erin Dobesh
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Rabirius Alumni Association
President: Mike Shoup
Tel: 513.295.8841

Rhoeus Alumni Association
President: Jennifer Haworth
Tel: 831.525.1447

Satyros Alumni Association
President: Shannon Rich
Tel: 629.717.2548

Seshait Alumni Association
President: Shawn Vann
Tel: 954.802.6653

Vitruvius Alumni Association
President: Jeffery D. Chambers
Tel: 717.627.2375

Xenocles Alumni Association
President: Richard Boothman
Tel: 817.455.4228

Get in touch with your alumni association!
Brothers Marrying Brothers

The Couples of Alpha Rho Chi

BY DANIELLE SWANSON, ANTHEMIOS ALUMNA
(UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN)

JUST A FEW WEEKS ago, Daedalus brother and WGAA emeritus Scott Swan-son and I became the most recent couple to join the ever-expanding list of brothers who have married brothers. I come from Anthemios, where this is a pretty common occurrence—and not too surprising, as Alpha Rho Chi is a large group of coed, like-minded individuals. But just how many of us have married other brothers?

When Scott and I became engaged last year, I started casually listing those couples I was already aware of. I knew quite a few off the top of my head, mostly from Anthemios, but also from Andronicus, Daedalus, Apollodorus, and so on. I knew there had to be more.

Over the past year or so, a couple of us have been gathering information, working from multiple starting points—personal contacts, the official membership database, and word of mouth. The responses have been coming in bits and pieces. Although the list is undoubtedly far from complete, what follows is at least a partial picture of the many couples of Alpha Rho Chi.

If you or someone you know married a brother, and we’ve missed you or have incomplete information here, please let us know. Send your info to archi@alpharhochi.org. Please include a photo along with the date of marriage, chapter affiliation/ names of bride and groom, bride’s maiden name, and any other pertinent info.

Michael & Melissa (Marsico) Conchilla
Vitruvius
May, 1998
Shown with daughter, Gabrielle, 3.

Alex & Sharon (Trask) Estill
Rabirius
September 4, 2005

Bill & Mary (Wallaert) Baum
Anthemios
May 25, 1991
“We have two kids, Rose, 12, and Robbie, 9.”

☆ Bill & Mary (Wallaert) Baum
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“We have two kids, Rose, 12, and Robbie, 9.”

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Shown with daughter, Gabrielle, 3.

☆ Alex & Sharon (Trask) Estill
Rabirius
September 4, 2005
Brothers Marrying Brothers

July 11, 2009
“The Andronicus Alumni Association had weddings in June, July and August of 2009,” reports Brooke. “All brides and grooms were brothers!”

July 11, 2009
“We both had a three pronged rake tattooed on our shoulder,” says Torrie. “Dana wanted to get a tattoo—but would only do it if I got the same thing (I already had two others). We ended up spending more time arguing over which was ‘left’ and which was ‘right side of the wearer.’ We both ended up with it on our right shoulder. I still think I’m right!” Dana died of brain cancer on November 22, 2008.

September 25, 2004
“Alex and I enjoy sharing the jokes that go along with being brothers.” Favorite Iron Chef episode: the cuttlefish.
Brothers Marrying Brothers

Pete Heinz & Johanna James-Heinz
Anthemios
September 27, 2008

Pete Heinz & Johanna James-Heinz
Anthemios
September 28, 2002

Richard & Kia (Jackson) King
Seshait
September 27, 2008

Greg & Karen (Grieves) Marker
Anthemios
September 30, 2000

Anthony & Pearl (Hung) McLin
Andronicus
August 14, 2009
‘Just to out-dork the rest of the Archis, at 5’0 and 6’4, we’re 16” on center.’

Greg & Caroline (Higgins) Pelley
Anthemios
November 8, 1997

Michael & April (Sommer) Rabanera
Andronicus
June 20, 2009
“Scott Swanson performed a reading, my big brother Eddie Osuch was a groomsman, April’s pledge brother Vanja Deretic was the maid of honor, and Laura Schmidt, Danielle Likwan, and Scotty were just a few of a number of brothers in attendance from the Andronicus, Daedalus, Anthemios, and Hadrian Chapters.”
**Scott & Kathy (Herzog) Strnad**  
*Anthemios*  
October 14, 2006

“One of the most memorable parts of our wedding was the last song of ‘American Pie.’ It was so much fun to have your brothers and your family in one large circle singing along... It is something that is always a highlight in other brother-to-brother weddings we’ve been able to attend.”

First child expected October 28, 2011.

**Scott & Danielle (Likvan) Swanson**  
*Daedalus/Anthemios*  
September 4, 2011

**Michael & Stephanie (Sodke) Ward**  
*Anthemios*  
October 5, 2002

“I am very proud to have been married to such a great guy,” says Stephanie. Mike was diagnosed with a pineoblastoma brain tumor in February of 2006 and died December 22, 2010.

**Tim & Renee (Horwedel) O’Sullivan**  
*Anthemios*  
**Manny & Kirsten (Walker) Perez**  
*Apollodorus*  
May 9, 2009

**Frank & Myrnabelle (Roche) Reilly**  
*Apollodorus*  
**David & Diane Roberts**  
*Daedalus*  
**Ellen-Marie Hilgersom & Troy Schalge**  
*Daedalus*  
**John & Suzanne Schmid**  
*Daedalus*  
**Manny & Nicole (Maxwell) Scotidis**  
*Anthemios/Rhoeus*  
**Spencer & Jennifer (Harris) Sear**  
*Pytheos*  
**Brian & Vicki (Lichocki) Smith**  
*Anthemios*  
September 4, 2010

**Stan & Carla (Bowman) Smith**  
*Daedalus*

**Brian & Adair (Sodke) Spencer**  
*Anthemios*  

**Jeremy & Angelica (Ting) Steinmeier**  
*Daedalus*  
**Matthew & Jeanne Stevenson**  
*Rhabrius*  
**Dan & Amy (Carter) Storm**  
*Metagenes*  
**Arnold & Sarit (Krell) Swanborn**  
*Andronicus*  
**M. Scott & Lou (Snezek) Tedrick**  
*Demetrios*  
October 10, 1990

“We have two sons: Tyler, 16, and Joe, 10. Joe is planning to be an architect. He hopes to be a legacy APX pledge some day!”

**David & Staci (Bartlett) Thrilwell**  
*Apollodorus*  
April 4, 2009

**Ryan & Shawna (Richardson) Upp**  
*Daedalus*  
March 10, 2001

**Erie Bahrke & Scott Utter**  
*Anthemios*  
**Nicholas & Juli (Piecuch) Wells**  
*Senemut*

**John & Carol (Grewe) Thaler**  
*Demetrios*  
October 29, 1983

“One day in the spring during studio our professor noticed Carol’s engagement ring,” recalls John. “He said, ‘You’re engaged? What’s his name—do I know him?’ Carol said ‘Yes’ and pointed to me...” Photo from 25th wedding anniversary in Nauplion, Greece.

**Manny & Nicole (Maxwell) Scotidis**  
*Scotidis/Anthemiou*  
**Spencer & Jennifer (Harris) Sear**  
*Pytheos*  
**Brian & Vicki (Lichocki) Smith**  
*Anthemios*  
September 4, 2010

**Stan & Carla (Bowman) Smith**  
*Daedalus*

**Brian & Adair (Sodke) Spencer**  
*Anthemios*  

**Brady M. & Darlene R. (Patton) Woods**  
*Seshait*  
June 7, 2008

“We have a son, Dixon C. Woods, born October 9, 2009.”
Milestones in Our History
The Founding of Arcus Society

As every pledge of Alpha Rho Chi knows, our fraternity was founded on April 11, 1914, when Arcus Society of the University of Illinois and Sigma Upsilon of the University of Michigan came together in Chicago, Illinois, to form the first national architectural fraternity. As we approach the centennial of that noteworthy event, we've begun marking the anniversary of the milestones along the way. This year, we take a closer look at the founding of Arcus.

It was 100 years ago, in the fall of 1911, that fifteen young men at the University of Illinois determined “to unite in a common bond of devotion to the arts,” as founding member Leo M. Bauer would later recount, “particularly that of architecture, to which they had dedicated their lives.” Chandler C. Cohagen, Bauer’s counterpart at Sigma Upsilon, would proudly recall that the members of Arcus were “to be found among the best campus organizations, honorary fraternities, student and class undertakings, and other worthy activities.” Membership was limited to sophomores, juniors, and seniors, and three faculty members assumed advisory roles: Dr. Nathan C. Ricker, Loring H. Provine, and Allen H. Kimball.

According to Bauer, it was Dr. Ricker—then professor emeritus of architecture and a former dean of the college of engineering—who first suggested the name “Arcus.” “He believed that the acanthus leaf represented the most beautiful form in plant or floral life,” said Bauer. “He reminded us that hardly any of the great architectural monuments designed by Greek and Roman master architects were without the acanthus as a mode of decoration. He felt that any name to be chosen... should contain the last two letters of the word. Inasmuch as our lives would henceforth be bound to the profession of architecture, and always interwoven...”

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The Archi
November 2011

Milestones in Our History

November 2011

Architectural societies interested in forming a national fraternity. Letters were sent to Harvard, Washington University, Georgia School of Technology, Cornell University, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of California, and the University of Michigan.

This home (possibly located at 606 East Green) was listed as the Anthemios residence in the University’s 1915 Yearbook and in the 1916 Archi, and may have been the house secured by Arcus in 1913.

Leo M. Bauer, a member of the original Arcus Society, handled the “voluminous correspondence and tedious negotiation” with Michigan’s Sigma Upsilon.

During the time of its organization, Arcus held its meetings at the University’s YMCA (now Illini Hall).

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The days of my active membership within the halls of Anthemios were a grand time of activity and misadventure. I will always remember fondly those long days, and longer nights, burning the candle at both ends, reveling in the love of brotherhood, camaraderie, and antics that maintained our spirits. It was a time of personal growth for me, my immediate brothers, and the fraternity as a whole. I had come to study architecture, and decided to do so among those that passed before me, the brotherhood that was the Anthemios Chapter of Alpha Rho Chi. These then, are some of the tales from 1981 through 1984.

The Daring Rescue of Tillie, or “Tit For Tat”

In the days when I was a pledge and new initiate, there existed an active tradition of having certain “nonsensical” items that the house possessed move between chapters, when one visited another, as if of their own volition. It encouraged road trips and fostered the feeling that the chapter was part of a much larger brotherhood.

One of these nonsensical items was a sculpture that sat on the left side of the mantel above the fireplace in the main room of the house, the lounge. It was slightly larger than one of the salt blocks used in today’s water conditioners, and weighed about the same as one. It was, as we liked to put it, a “bust of a bust” named “Tillie.”

On the last night of a visit from brothers of Demetrios, Tillie “grew legs” and left Anthemios. As Demetrios prepared to depart we searched for her, but as we did so they boarded their van, said their farewells, and pulled away. We never could prove that they had her. We could not search the van.

Not long thereafter, Anthemios began planning a return visit and a bit of subterfuge to “rescue” Tillie. It was decided that we would travel with two teams of broth-
ers. The elder members would be the “emissaries” of brotherhood, while the younger members would enact the “rescue.” Anthemios contrived of a tactical plan, in which the majority of the visit would play upon Demetrios’ concerns for their house charter and nonsensical items. The last night, there would be a party, and that was the time for action. The “emissaries” would keep Demetrios up until shortly before dawn. The “rescue” team would go to bed early, await the other team’s “all clear,” and then go to work. It was also decided to give Demetrios the opportunity to search our van, which meant moving Tillie to a safe place for later recovery.

David V. Moody, Worthy Architect, made sure that his team put Demetrios “to bed.” He learned that all Demetrios’ valuables were stashed behind a door in a storage room downstairs. He had seen the door, and the hinges were, of all things, on the outside. Tillie would have to be there. It was nearly dawn as the rescue team was assembled and moved out. They easily located the basement storage area, passed the sleeping Demetrians, pulled the pins on the door, and set it aside. Within was Tillie.

They could have taken much more, but there was a Worthy Architect’s deal. The information came with a price: Take no more than that which had been taken. The rescue team took the sculpture, left the door off its hinges as a warning, and left all else. They loaded into the van and drove down the road until finding a place where they could safely hide Tillie. Returning to the Demetrios chapter house, they resumed the positions of sleeping Anthemians.

Anthemios rose to the accusation of theft. It was discovered that only one thing had gone missing: a sculpture that we had also lost. We could only surmise that it must have “grown legs,” as it had in our own experience. As Anthemios prepared to depart, Demetrios’ representatives insisted on searching the van. The Anthemians, of course, had prepared for this, and the search turned up nothing. With effusive farewells and hopes that the Demetrians would find the intruder, Anthemios departed—picking up Tillie, who was still waiting for them, along the way.

**AN UNDERGROUND SWIMMING POOL, OR “BOB GOES FISHING”**

My pledge brothers and I, as new initiates, were tasked with the responsibility of maintaining certain rumors among the next pledge class. One was that election of the Worthy Architect was determined by a night of raucous drinking. The last man standing was summarily made the new chapter president. Another was that the chapter room, which was in the basement, extended underneath the patio area in front of the house, and in that space was an indoor swimming pool.

Bob Pfingston in particular took special pleasure in perpetuating the swimming pool rumor. Always quick with an offhand reference to its existence, he also enjoyed reminding the pledges that it was for actives only, hence the location within the chapter room. Pledges naturally want to believe in the benefits of membership, and Bob took full advantage of this, baiting them at every opportunity.
There were a few pledges that resisted the rumor, despite all of Bob’s efforts to reel in the entire pledge class. When challenged, he once went into great detail to explain away the grass growing between the patio pavers, describing how the nonexistent room had been built at such a level as to be below the topsoil. The pledges knew that the chapter room door was in the rear of the dining room, under the lounge. It was a plausible location for a small indoor swimming pool, but there was one problem: the pledges had noticed that nobody ever used the pool.

It was then that Bob decided to lend a bit of realism to the rumor. One evening, as the brothers and pledges were assembling in the lounge for the evening meal, he closeted himself in the chapter room. He had taken a bucket of water into the room; he was dressed in swim trunks, and had a towel.

We descended the stairs to the dining room. Once Bob heard our footfalls and voices, we heard a splash of water. Shortly thereafter, he walked through the chapter room door, dripping wet, and rubbing his hair dry with the towel. We offered remarks in support of his ruse and Bob responded in kind. He quickly went upstairs to change and joined everyone for dinner, still maintaining a wet head, leaving the pledges to wonder.

**The Disappearance of Room Five, or “We Don’t Know You”**

The next pledge class initiated, and thus my pledge brothers and I were no longer considered new initiates. One of the new actives was given to complaining and became the brunt of many pranks as a result. His parents had not yet visited the chapter house, and the time came for him to go home for the weekend, to return with his parents in tow. During his absence, we decided that he had never existed, that nobody knew him, and that the “alleged” room he occupied (room 5) wasn’t there. Over the course of the night and next morning, we built a wall over the door to room 5 and dry-walled, taped, sanded, and painted it so that it would blend in. Tim Flock, always attentive to detail, added base molding to complete the presentation.

Room 5 has a window over the front door, with an ornamental railing that makes it rather unmistakable. This we could do nothing about. It didn’t matter to the scheme that had been planned. Any brother not wanting to be a part of the subterfuge was directed to leave, and those who remained prepared for the nonexistent brother’s arrival. It was decided that the house should appear empty, except for one brother walking through the hallway on the second floor, when the target and his parents arrived. Once he and his parents had found that the door to his room no longer existed, the brother in the hall was to confront them and disavow any remembrance of him whatsoever. Everyone else hid, listening and waiting.

We all heard his arrival, his tour of the first floor, and then his invitation to his parents to see his room. They climbed the stairs, and he immediately realized that the door to his room was no longer there. It was then that I, as the designated brother, rounded the corner to deliver the confrontation.

“Where’s my room?” he exclaimed.

“What room and who are you?” I responded.

“Well, there was a door to this room when I left,” he insisted.

“Do you see any door?” I countered. “You need to leave this place immediately. I do not know you.”

He stood his ground, arguing that since the window existed above the front door, the room must also exist. Again I asked, “Do you see any door?”
He responded, “I know it’s right there,” and proceeded to punch his fist into our deception.

Thankfully he punched through above the door knob. The effort, however, did not help him to open the door, and so he took his folks to lunch and left the house. The scheming portion of the brotherhood thought this rather amusing, and disassembled their work to restore the door to its original condition. They, in turn, disavowed any knowledge of the visit.

**Battle for the Chapter House**

Over the winter break of 1982, Anthemios suffered an entire loss of the gravity-fed radiator heating system. The Informal Worthy Superintendent for the impending initiation, Bill Verthein, returned to campus early that January to prepare for the activities. What he found was a house in distress. The rest of Anthemios wasn’t due to return until later that week. Bill was quick to take action, and likely saved the house in the process. It seemed that one of the house managers had failed to replace a broken windowpane above a radiator in the third floor hall before leaving for the break, leaving only a piece of cardboard to resist the blowing winter winds that buffeted the western face of the house. The cardboard pane failed, the cast iron radiator froze, and, being a gravity-fed system, a chain reaction occurred. Radiators froze and burst throughout the building, all the way to the basement.

By the time the brotherhood returned, Bill had things stabilized. Construction-grade salamander heaters were running full blast in strategic locations throughout the four-storied structure to keep it from freezing and causing more damage. Water from the cracked radiators had free-flowed for some time, as was evident by the destruction it had caused, but had since been cut off. The lounge was littered with the broken remains of its plaster ceiling, which had collapsed from the weight of water it had absorbed, and the salamander heater within roared loudly and reeked of propane. Upstairs was not much better. The house was a disaster.

The initiation was immediately postponed. The pledges, to their credit, understood and accepted this; after all, they were returning not only to initiate, but take rooms in the chapter house. This was their problem as well. It was determined that everyone would remain in the house that night, the bedrooms being the safest places to block out the propane fumes—those radiators had not yet burst, and the floors there were still dry. The next day, however, all would need to seek another place to live for the semester.

The first places to be reclaimed were in the basement: the kitchen, laundry room, dining room, and chapter room. Initiation was the first priority—even if we could not live in the house, we would begin with the areas we needed most to carry out another initiation. During this time the rest of the house was still filled with salamander heaters, the alumni association was hard at work to reclaim the house, and the chapter as a whole was trying to decide what to do with itself.

The house next door was “the annex” at the time, owned by Anthemios and used by the graduate stu-
dent alumni members for housing. It also had a basement, and that is where we held chapter meetings for a time while we sorted things out.

I recall one meeting specifically. The discussion began with the prospect of closing our doors, completing repairs, and reopening. It was argued that this was the best and most expedient course of action for the chapter in recovery. I could not agree; as rush chairman that semester, I felt strongly that we ought to take advantage of this bad situation and try to turn it in our favor. I argued against closing our doors during reparations, suggesting that they might never open again if we didn’t continue to attract new members. I proposed that we show the rushees our hardship, show them the work in progress, and then take them to dinner elsewhere.

I think there were 17 brothers there, including myself, in that basement. At this time in fraternal history, Anthemios was the last remaining chapter of all men. But I knew the statistics: one half of all enrolled students in the architecture program were women. I knew that the other fraternity chapters accepted women as members; Anthemios, as a founding chapter, was the only holdout. Looking around, I expressed my position that it would be foolish to continue turning our backs on a potential 50 percent of new members. I moved to accept women into the Anthemios Chapter of Alpha Rho Chi. The motion carried with a vote of nine to eight; the house was divided. Some of those opposed chose to object by leaving immediately; a good number of alumni were lost as well, in objection to the chapter’s decision.

In prior semesters, we, as a house, had often dressed up and walked to Uncle John’s Pancake House for an all-you-can-eat pancake experience à la APX. Think goofy flat-topped hats, trimmed by things from the restaurant’s kiddy treasure chest, and everyone wearing paper moustaches cut from black construction paper. The head waiter, “Uncle John,” was always quick to recognize us and assemble a large table at the back of the seating area. Now we took all rushees to dinner there (sans moustaches and hats), then brought them to tour the house. We showed them our strength, our determination, and the absolute fun we were having, as students, working on a very old building. As a result of the chapter effort, the new pledge class consisted of six men and seven women, all having been told stories of how the house had been, what it could be again, and how soon it would get there.
Metagenes circa 1982
Life at 105 Lucas Drive

by Phil Buckberg, Metagenes Alumnus
(Virginia Technical Institute, Blacksburg)

For most of the 42 years of the Metagenes Chapter, we rented a house at 105 Lucas Drive in Blacksburg, Virginia. The house (I don’t think we ever called it anything but “the house”) served the typical functions of any fraternity house: social center, brothers’ residence, business hub.

The house had three bedrooms, in addition to a barely functional kitchen, one full bathroom and a half bath, a living room, dining room, and basement. Rent from the brothers living in the house was not enough to cover the chapter’s monthly rent to the elusive “Mrs. Hill.” So, sometime before I joined, the brothers created two “rooms” in the attic, which allowed two more brothers to live in the house and pay rent. As I recall, one could barely sit up in the attic rooms, but brothers “furnished” them enough to get by.

To reach the attic, we stepped onto the window seat at the top of the stairs and turned around to climb a ladder into the ceiling. Under the ladder was a working pay phone, sometimes the only phone service into the house. Receiving calls was free, but you had to have dimes or quarters to place an outgoing call.

Students in the 1980s were not wired, could not text or email, and were not reachable 24/7. If someone liked something, they told you. The term “unfriend” didn’t exist, and you carried your music in a box of cassette tapes. In the old days, if we wanted to get a group together, we planned it in advance or scrambled to call people at home. Cowgill Hall, home of VT’s architecture program, was close to town, so someone would run through the studios to round people up and drag them to Mike’s for the best burgers and fries in town, or Greek’s Cellar for bad pizza (it tasted like cardboard and ketchup) and beer. None of us ever had much money, but those with a little more often covered for those who couldn’t afford it, so that no one was left out.

The house was forever being painted and repainted, once with bright blue walls, next with a combination I referred to as “calamine lotion and heat rash.” Maybe the paint was free; I don’t recall for certain. In addition to the furniture of unknown origins, we sat on wooden “cubes” that had probably been someone’s design project at one time. The extendible, foldable, semi-gateleg dining room table was the perfect piece of furniture for the house, as if designed specifically for our fraternity.
(as it may well have been). When brothers filled the house, the table folded up almost flush against the wall. When we had chapter dinners or when someone just felt like cooking, the table opened up to seat everyone, no matter how big the group. The house was a place to experiment with ideas, to be creative without being graded, to be a little more independent than in studio.

The basement was probably the best room in the whole house. The plain, open staircase led to the full, unfinished, unfurnished space, barren except for a bar, a dartboard, and a door leading out to the creek. No space was more full of life than the basement, especially at party time. We danced to New Wave and Modern Rock when they were new, not oldies. But at the end of the night, we formed our Motown Circle. Kim Clark, our ageless brother who passed away in January of 2011, would go to the center of the circle and belt out tunes by the Four Tops, the Temptations, and other legendary 1960s groups while the stereo played in the background and we all sang along. By night’s end the crowd was mostly brothers, but occasionally a friend or newcomer would go the distance with us. I can’t say for sure, but those moments probably turned some guests into brothers.

The house was so run down and so spare that almost any design effort was an improvement. In retrospect, each design proposal should have begun with bulldozing, but we knew we were fortunate to have a house at all in Blacksburg, so we embraced it as it was. A few years ago, we gave up the lease on the house, but the current tenants allowed us to take a picture for our 40th anniversary celebration. In the picture, you can barely see the house behind the brothers gathered on the porch—which might be the best memory of all.

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November 2011

Demetrios 1983
Joining the Big Leagues at OSU
BY ERIC LIPSCHUTZ, DEMETRIOS ALUMNUS
(The Ohio State University, Columbus)

In 1983 the Demetrios Chapter of Alpha Rho Chi had the pleasure of teaming up with the Kappa Delta sorority for the annual Greek Week celebration at The Ohio State University. Our Greek system was divided into two divisions for fraternities, “scarlet” for houses with 50+ members and “gray” for those with fewer than 50 members. The Demetrios Chapter had always been in the gray division, and we had never paired up with a sorority before. That year I remember there was an extra spring in our step because we had beaten out scarlet houses to team up with Kappa Deltas. Even our female brothers were enjoying the camaraderie.

We pulled our traditional all-nighter creating our 8’ x 8’ sign, which was drawn on a bed sheet in pastels for the sign competition. The theme was “The Legend is Growing,” celebrating 50 years of Greek Week at OSU.

Two Greek Week events that we participated in for the first time were the song competition and the bed race. We practiced our songs around our 1866 Steinway Patent Grand piano, which sat in the bay window of our living room. The piano held special meaning to the actives and alumni of Demetrios. It was dedicated to Vicky Toms and Jim Mitchell, whose young lives had been cut short in the chapter house fire in January, 1976. It had been Jim’s dream to have the piano restored, which was done after the tragic end to his life. As pledges we were taught to stay away from the piano, and it was rarely played. To hear the joy the piano brought that winter and spring would have made Jim proud!

As for the bed race... as architecture and design students you might have expected us to have a really top-notch design and meticulously constructed bed—the envy of the Greek system. Well, you’d be wrong! Ours was a sorry mess constructed of an old bed frame, bicycle parts, and 2-by-4s that were bolted and tied together with rope. The back handle on the bed broke as it was racing down 15th Avenue, and we watched in humiliation from the finish line as one of our brothers hit the deck and skinned his knees. Needless to say, our bed was disqualified since only three of the four brothers who started the race made it across the finish line with our Kappa Delta coed! Not all was lost, though: Eight of us attended the Kappa Delta Diamond Cotillion, and two brothers married Kappa Deltas!

Noted

Asked about Anthemios’ visit (page 28), Brother Lipschutz comments, “I remember having a big party at our chapter house during the National Convention in 1983, and we had to hide everything at an off-campus apartment—so chapters stole the toilet tank top and some glass doorknobs since there was nothing left to take from the house! We did leave out the stuff we’d pilfered from other chapters, however.”
Anthemios 1985
Stoked for Fun
by Kendall Kirkpatrick, Anthemios Alumnus
(University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

Let me begin with a quote from one of the most iconic 80s trilogies, Back to the Future:

Dr. Emmett Brown: “1.21 gigawatts? 1.21 gigawatts? Great Scott!”

Marty McFly: “What – what the hell is a gigawatt?”

About the same time those words were streaming from the silver screen, I was moving into the chapter house as a “new I.” Back then, I think you’d be hard pressed to find anyone who knew what a giga-anything was. We were still trying to wrap our minds around “mega-byte.” Yes, things were much different back then. Back before cell phones. Back before laptops, email, Facebook, Blu-Ray, Blackberry, and Outlook. Back before Viagra. How did we ever survive? Don your wayfarers, climb into my DeLorean, and charge up the flux capacitor. We’re going back to 1985!

During our brief trip, you’ll want to reacquaint yourself with some of the lingo commonly overheard in the hallowed halls of 1108 South First Street:

Awesome = Cool
Bogus = Unfair

Gag Me with a Spoon = Dislike
Gnarly = Very Good
Grody = Really Gross
Radical = Immensely Attractive
Psych = “Gotcha”
Stoked = Ready

Vroooom! Screeeech! Here we are. Back at the chapter house in 1985. Can somebody cut the grass? It looks like a hayfield out here.

Not long into the school year I remember participating in one of those late-night hallway “solve the world’s problems” conferences, strategizing how to attract more folks to pledge the house. Alumni brothers Mike Anderson and Tim Flock told us of a time when they used to block off the street and have a multi-house block party and rush students to pledge. Really? We had a party with the rival D-Chi’s and AGR’s? Yep, and Anthemios hosted their party as the appropriately named Archi All-Nighter. And by the way... all of the photos of “proof” are probably still in the house library.

“Awesome! Let’s do that,” we agreed, and sprang into motion. Although we were going it alone, without the neighborhood, and on a shoestring budget, soon the campus was plastered with hundreds of flyers and we were rolling up the grody wool carpet in the lounge. What was that smell? The retro house stereo was ready to rock and garbage cans held kegs of Old Milwaukee on ice. Of course the actives always had a private keg of something better. We were stoked for fun.

Soon the house was packed with kids and other folks dancing to songs like “Jungle Love” and “Mony Mony.” Down in the dining room, below the “dance floor,” the ceiling was flexing up and down so much I thought

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we were going to lose it. I guess we didn’t know how lucky we were until years later. Many folks were having a good time and little old APX was seemingly “back on the map.” I’m sure quite a few other things happened that night, but I don’t recall the foggy details. I do remember we went through six kegs of beer. A gnarly success! And I think we gained a pledge or two. Six kegs, eh? Awesome!

Fast-forward one year and we went bigger with twelve kegs and a few more pledges. The following year again more than doubled in volume. The beer line stretched four wide from the dining room, up the stairs, out the front door, and down the sidewalk. And we secured a pledge class of thirteen. How were seven actives going to initiate thirteen pledges? One at a time. And we were VERY tired. And the house grew. So what next?

With new members came fresh ideas for fun. Social chairman Ted Urbanski (who, for some reason, always had a trip to the emergency room before a party), came up with an idea to host a luau in the late spring before the end of classes. Again on a shoestring budget, we hauled in six tons of sand and a hot tub, built a waterfall over the front door, and contained it all inside a bamboo fence. Beer was served from a war canoe and we drank from pineapples and coconuts. We were so cool, even D-Chi’s paid us a visit... How bogus. We never once thought how all that sand would track into the house and facilitate the removal of the varnish from the hardwood floor. How many times did we have to repaint the crest?

So we were a social house that was a bit professional too. We were small, but spirited. We were passionate about APX—and still are today. I was glad to be a part of something and contribute what I could to build our fraternity and chapter. It was a constant struggle back then, but every contribution, no matter how small, paid big dividends to make our fraternity the great assembly of brotherhood it is today.

In our present world of terabytes, Google, trillions of dollars, global business, and smart phones, how did we ever survive? Might have something to do with the resourcefulness and creativity that have always come out of our membership. I’m sure that in a few short years, today’s active membership will look back and reflect what is was like when they were pledges, way back in 2011.

**At the risk** of sounding ancient, in the ’80s we did make do without many things we take for granted today. There was a single phone line coming into the chapter house. When I was the pledge trainer and when a pledge was missing and we couldn’t reach them by phone, we simply had to send pledge brothers out looking. As a result we spent a lot of time waiting! There was also no practical way for brothers to communicate during certain parts of ritual, so we usually went on faith that everything was proceeding according to plan. In the late ’80s you could still get truly lost in an urban area in a way that is mostly inconceivable now. This happened to Brendan Ellis (Apollodorus ’88) and I on a road trip to Key West via Miami. This was before the age of GPS, so with no success calling ahead, finding the location on a map, or asking several people on the street for directions, I ended up offering a cab driver money to give us directions.

**ApolloDurus, Late ’80s**

**The Dark Ages of Technology**

**By Dan Kirby, Apollodurus Alumnus**

(University of Florida, Gainesville)

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**Note**

Author Dan Kirby was recently elected to serve as president of the Florida Association of the American Institute of Architects—the first African-American president since the association was founded in 1912. Congratulations, Brother Kirby!
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- Awards scholarships to members of Alpha Rho Chi
- Sponsors professional programs and publications
- Underwrites the Alpha Rho Chi Bronze Medal program
- Promotes new and innovative educational opportunities

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Winners of the APX Medal 2011

In 1931, the Grand Council established the Alpha Rho Chi Medal to “encourage professional leadership by rewarding student accomplishment; [to] promote the ideals of professional service by acknowledging distinctive individual contributions to social life; and [to] stimulate professional merit by commending qualities in the student not necessarily pertaining to scholarship.” Each year the Alpha Rho Chi Medal is offered to more than 100 schools of architecture, whose faculty select the graduating seniors they feel best exemplify these qualities.

The following students were awarded the Alpha Rho Chi Medal in 2011

Andrews University
Brandon Clear
Roger Williams University
SCIARCC

Arizona State University
Stacey Crumbaker
Chi-Thien Lam Nguyen

Auburn University
Kristy L. Swann
Tristan Brasseur

Ball State University
Ashley R. Wilson
Catherine Caldwell

Boston Architectural College
Stephan Messinger
Audrey Blevins Treece

Cal Poly at Pomona
Stephanie Hiramoto
Southern Illinois University

Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo
Brittany Yung Thornburg
Southern University and A&M College

California College of the Arts
Alexa Getting
Syracuse University

Carleton University
Pia-Jacqlyn Malinis
Temple University

Carnegie Mellon University
Christopher Bretecher
Texas A&M University

Catholic University of America
Abbie Schrants
Texas Tech University

City College of New York
Aaron Peiffer
University of Arizona

Clemson University
Sean A. Gunther
University of Arkansas

Cooper Union
Stephen N. Parker
University of British Columbia

Cornell University
Deborah Ferrer
University at Buffalo

Cornell University
Lawrence Leung Heng Sue
University of California at Berkeley

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Drexel University
Mark A. Aseltine
University of Colorado at Denver

Drexel University
Alexandra Wolchasty
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University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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Georgia Institute of Technology
Andrew Bryan
University of Memphis

Harvard University
Lawrence Leung Heng Sue
University of Miami

Harvard University
Mark A. Aseltine
University of Nebraska

Illinois Institute of Technology
Sarah A. Hirschen
University of New Mexico

Iowa State University
T. Scott Collier
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Judson University
Stacy Morton

Kansas State University
Clark Colby
University of Pennsylvania

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Laura Cothran
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Lauren McCrady
University of South Florida

Louisiana Tech University
Lauren McCrady
University of Southern California

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University of Tennessee

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New Jersey Institute Of Technology
Jason E. Kurzweil
University of Texas at San Antonio

New School of Architecture
Robbie Bennett
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North Carolina State University
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ARCHI COVER CONTEST

The Archi has a new look! Our thanks to Rick Jenkins for submitting this year’s winning cover image (and to Stacie Doman, Pearl Hung, Ji Kho, Eric Lipschutz, and Jennifer Rearich for responding to our rather last-minute online call for submissions).

Want to see your original artwork featured on the cover of next year’s Archi?

Send your original photo, sketch or other work to archi@alpharhochi.org by July 31, 2012.