



Minnesota Chapter Penn State Alumni Association Annual Newsletter

JULY 2013

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Nittany Nation,

I don't know if it's just me, but it seems like every year goes by faster and faster - it feels like it was just last month when I was writing the President's letter for the July 2012 Newsletter. The past year has been a busy one for our chapter and the next one promises to be even busier!

In this newsletter you'll read about some of the many exciting events that took place here in Minnesota over the past twelve months including the Annual Summer BBQ Picnic / Student Send-off, exciting football road trips and a wonderful Annual Dinner with guest speaker Joe Battista. If you haven't taken the opportunity to get involved with our chapter, I would highly encourage you to attend an event this year and meet some of the great local alumni we have living here in Minnesota. The backgrounds, talents and achievements of our local alumni continue to impress me every time I have a chance to talk with folks from around the state. From doctors to actresses, scientists to TV Production Managers, and from industry business leaders to engineers, we have a wonderful breadth of expertise and interests that are always fascinating to learn about.

For those who are collegiate athletic fans, be sure to mark your calendars for November 9, 2013 when the Penn State Football returns to TCF Bank for the second time to battle the Minnesota Golden Gophers and on the following weekend, November 16, the defend-

ing Big Ten Champion Penn State Women's Volleyball team will play the Gophers at the UofM Sports Pavilion. More details for both of those matchups and associated social activities will be developed and communicated over the summer.

Not to be out done .. Penn State Hockey will be making its first trip to Minneapolis to play the Golden Gophers on Friday, February 28, 2014 and Saturday March 1. At the end of the season, they'll return yet again from 3/20-3/22 for the Big Ten Tournament at the Xcel Energy Center. At this time, we don't know what the availability of tickets will be, but we'll keep everyone informed via our email newsletter and Facebook page.

Lastly, I would like to take this time to thank the Board of Directors for all of their hard work and countless hours they volunteer to help shape and form the direction our Chapter takes. We could not possibly exist without all of their efforts and I thank them for everything they do for the chapter!

Have a great summer, and I'm looking forward to seeing you all again at the Annual Summer BBQ in August and at the weekly TV tailgates in the fall. ☺

For the Glory,

Brian Binkley '02
president@psumn.com

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Insert: Membership Form

2013 Football Schedule:

- 08/31/13 vs. SYRACUSE
- 09/07/13 vs. EASTERN MICHIGAN
- 09/14/13 vs. CENTRAL FLORIDA
- 09/21/13 vs. KENT STATE
- 09/28/13 Bye
- 10/05/13 at Indiana
- 10/12/13 vs. MICHIGAN
- 10/19/13 Bye
- 10/26/13 at Ohio State
- 11/02/13 vs. ILLINOIS
- 11/09/13 at Minnesota**
- 11/16/13 vs. PERDUE
- 11/23/13 vs. NEBRASKA
- 11/30/13 at Wisconsin

Another Record-Breaking THON!!!

February 15-17, 2013

Happy Valley during THON weekend. Even those who have experienced it sometimes have trouble finding words to describe it. This year's event left many people in the BJC and those watching online speechless, as this year's total was an-

nounced - a new record fundraising campaign of over \$12.3 million. WE are proud of many things, but the determination and passion that Penn Staters have for fighting back against pediatric cancer is always on display every February in Happy Valley. ☺



With this year's total, THON has now raised over \$100 million since it began in 1973

Wrestlers Three-peat!!!

Hopefully many of you have been following the exploits of the PSU men's wrestling team over the last few years. If so, then you already know that the Lion grapplers won their third consecutive National Championship this past March. After having hired Olympic gold medalist and four time NCAA national champion Cael Sanderson four

years ago, the Nittany Lions have been dominating their sport. Coach Cael has been very successful in recruiting highly touted student athletes from Pennsylvania, as well as from around the country. Cael's team had 5 wrestlers in the final championship matches, with two of them winning individual titles. Of those five wrestlers, four will be returning this year, so our team will be favored by many to win another title.

The Lion wrestlers did not travel to Minnesota for a dual meet this past season, although they did wrestle at



Iowa. Board member (and big wrestling fan) Dean Creighton traveled to Iowa City to take in the action, and met up with a Central Iowa PSU Alumni Chapter member. (Although small, perhaps this was a start to future joint activities with the Central Iowa Chapter.) Unfortunately Iowa defeated Penn State that night. Despite the loss, and

even though they were far outnumbered, the two PSU fans enjoyed their visit and were very impressed by the enthusiasm of the sellout crowd in Carver-Hawkeye Arena.

The 2013-2014 wrestling schedule has not yet been released, but we are hopeful that a visit to meet up with the Gophers will be on the calendar this winter. If so, a

chapter event will surely be planned to attend as a group to cheer for the three-time defending National Champion Nittany Lions. 🇺🇸

Scholarship Endowment Update

We have a number of exciting updates in regards to the Chapter Scholarship Endowment. First, let's talk some numbers! The Penn State Endowment Stewardship Report for 2011-12 was released by the University last November. This report contains the current financial health of the Chapter's scholarship endowment fund.

During 2011-2012, \$874.04 was added to the endowment. The book value of the endowment fund on June 30, 2012 was \$67,700.19 with a market value of \$83,504.78.

Penn State anticipates that approximately \$3,000 will be available for spending in 2012-13. This will allow us to continue to award a minimum of a \$2000.00 scholarship while increasing our overall funds by reverting the unused amount back into principal.

With the gracious support of Craig and Connie Johnson, we have formally changed the name of the scholarship to *Minnesota Chapter of the Penn State Alumni Association Past Presidents' Endowed Scholarship*. The name change reflects the desire of the Board to recognize and honor the past leaders of our Chapter. Each year, the scholarship will be given in "honor of" one of the past Chapter Presidents. This year's honoree is Pete Hoffman, one of the founding members of the chapter (and our first President) who sadly lost his long battle with cancer in July 2012.

In addition to the current scholarship, the Chapter's Board of Directors has been investigating the possibility of

a second scholarship through a program known as *The Trustee Matching Scholarship Program*. So what is this, and why would we consider it? Through this program, the University would match 10% of the initial pledge. When the endowment becomes fully funded, the Trustee Scholarship will provide approximately 15 percent of the endowment's market value each year as opposed to the current 4.5% in our existing scholarship. (\$50,000 book value equals \$7,250 in scholarship available each year.) The 'catch' is that we have just five years to raise the amount of our initial pledge (a minimum of \$50,000). The reason why we would create this second scholarship is to take advantage of the University essentially doubling our pledge and thus allowing us to give out even more scholarship money.

We have been setting aside funds for a "jump start" but still are looking at a steep mountain ahead. We have until March 31, 2014 to make the commitment. If you are interested in making a pledge, would like more information or have fundraising ideas, please contact Brian Binkley – president@psumn.com.

We would like to thank everyone for their steady support in our on-going efforts to support our local Nittany Lions. With your generosity, we have been able to provide over \$20,000 in student aid to students from Minnesota attending Penn State. 🇺🇸

Annual Summer BBQ / Student Send-Off



The Minnesota Chapter – Penn State Alumni Association’s Annual Summer BBQ and student sendoff was held on August 5th 2012. Over 40 Penn state alumni and students gathered at Dan Gordon’s home in Plymouth on a beautiful sunny Sunday afternoon. Five new incoming freshmen were in attendance as well as many of their family members. The incoming freshman had an opportunity to meet alumni, recent grads and current students at Penn State. The picnic featured hot dogs, brats, hamburgers, salads and desserts provide by the chapter.

During the picnic Shauna Wrazidlo was announced as this year’s scholarship winner. Shauna received \$2000 to-

ward her education at Penn State. Unfortunately, Shauna was not able to be honored in person. We

wished her well and congratulate her on representing Minnesota students at Penn State. Scholarship applications are now being taken for the 2013/2014 academic year. The applications can be found on our website.

Once again, Dan Gordon has offered to host this year’s student sendoff and annual picnic on Sunday, August 4, 2013 at his home in Plymouth from 3pm to

6pm. Please visit our website or Facebook page or more details or contact us at info@psumn.com with any questions. If you plan on attending, please send us an email at rsvp@psumn.com with the names of everyone in your family attending. 🍷



Joan M. McLane Award

[written by Penn State Alumni Association - AlumnInsider]

Brian Binkley '02 epitomizes the mission of the Penn State Alumni Association with his involvement with the Minnesota Chapter and was awarded with the **Joan M. McLane Recent Alumnus Award**, given to a recent alumna/alumnus who has provided exemplary volunteer service to the Penn State Alumni Association and graduated from the University within the past 10 years. He is currently its president and has also served as treasurer and webmaster. With Binkley's leadership, the Minnesota Chapter has reached its highest membership level ever; met its mission to raise \$22,000 for its scholarship fund by 2014 three years early; redesigned its website; and established its presence on social networking sites such as Twitter and Face-

book and LinkedIn. Binkley is always looking for ways to improve the chapter, all while juggling a family and a career. He is also an Alumni Admissions volunteer and attends local college fairs to talk with prospective students about Penn State. A \$1,000 "cash award" was designated by Binkley back to the Minnesota Chapter Endowment Scholarship. ☺



Alumni Courtyard Brick

The next time you're back in State College, you'll have a little piece of Minnesota to look for at the Hintz Family Alumni Center! In honor of our 30th anniversary as a Chapter, we have purchased a brick that was installed in the spring of 2013 at the Alumni Courtyard.

The Alumni Courtyard is a visible tribute on the University Park campus to alumni and those who have supported the University through their membership in the Penn State Alumni Association and consists of nearly 1,900 bricks and stones inscribed with the names of Alumni Association members throughout the history of Penn State.



The Alumni Courtyard is a continuation of the Alumni Walk, created five years ago and stretching from the Hintz Family Alumni Center through colorful gardens, just steps away from the Obelisk on The Mall and is adjacent to the Hintz Family Alumni Center on the south side. A pleasant seating area and a welcoming feel will be traversed by thousands of students each day, making the area one of the most visible and visited features at our alumni home on campus. ☺

Annual Night Out on the Town and Silent Auction

In response to loyal member feedback, we opted for a change of venue for this year's Annual Night Out on the Town and Silent Auction. On Sunday March 3, 2013, we hosted the event at the Marriott Minneapolis West with Joe Battista as our guest speaker. In addition to a broad selection of silent auction items (including PSU Creamery ice cream, flat screen TV, gift cards for local establishments, other PSU paraphernalia, etc.), guests also had the opportunity to take pictures in the photo booth that was donated to our Chapter for the Social Hour!

To top off a night of good food and socializing, JoeBa energized all in attendance with the introduction of Penn State Hockey to the Big10 and the construction of the new Pegula Ice Arena at University Park. Be certain to mark your calendars for the inaugural game against Wisconsin in December and PSU vs. Minnesota here in the Twin Cities in February 2014!

We are proud to announce that we raised \$1,592 in proceeds from the silent auction which goes directly towards our scholarship endowment. Thank you to everyone who made this possible from our donors to our bidders! A spe-

cial thank you to all those in attendance. We look forward to an equally fun and successful event next year! ☺



Minnesota Chapter Board of Directors with Joe Battista (from L-R: Dan Gordon, Chris Barrella, Marilyn Binkley, Joe Battista, Brian Binkley, Dean Creighton, Stephanie Brondani, Brian Varner.)

Lady Lions Volleyball @ Minnesota (2012 Recap)

Nearly a dozen PSU-MN Alumni members joined the Penn State Volleyball Booster Club, some of whom had made the long trip from State College by car, to cheer on the #1 ranked Lady Lions October 29th as they traveled to the U of MN campus to take on the #10 ranked Minnesota Gophers. Our crowd of at least 40 people, dressed in blue and white, was surrounded by a sea of maroon and gold, but we were not to be out-cheered. And there was a lot to cheer about. After winning a



close first set, the Lions went on to take the second set handily, and put away the third set to take the match.

Several players came out for a short meet and greet where they expressed their appreciation for the loud and supportive crowd. Because they were off to the airport immediately following the game, there wasn't time to take pictures of the players with our alum group, but we did manage to get a picture of Maggie Harding, a sophomore, and her brother Jay, currently a MN resident, who had come to cheer her on. 📷



Second Football TV Tailgate Viewing Location in 2013

[B-52's in Inver Grove Heights Will Host]

The Chapter is proud to announce that B-52 Burgers and Brew at 5639 Bishop Ave., Inver Grove Heights has agreed to host our Football Watch Parties. B-52's has plenty of TV's, all of the sports packages, and has plenty of parking especially with the neighboring hotel and AMC movie theater. This is now a second establishment that will host our watch parties. We will continue to also meet at Robert's Restaurant in the Medina Entertainment Center.

Members, family and friends may join us at either location. We recognize that Medina is far for our east-side members, and it has been a long time goal to find a host in the east metro. We hope for those where Medina was a long drive will come out to Inver Grove Heights to cheer

on our Nittany Lions.

As a friendly reminder, the 2013 season kicks off August 31 against Syracuse University at 2:30 Central. Since this is a new partnership, we kindly ask that if you are thinking of going to Inver Grover Heights on Aug. 31, please RSVP to brian.varner@psumn.com. RSVP'ing isn't mandatory, but we would like to be gracious guests and give them a headcount a week before our first game.

Please follow us on Facebook. We create events for each game and which promotions we are doing for that particular Saturday. We look forward to seeing you at B-52's or at the Medina Entertainment Center on August 31st! 📷

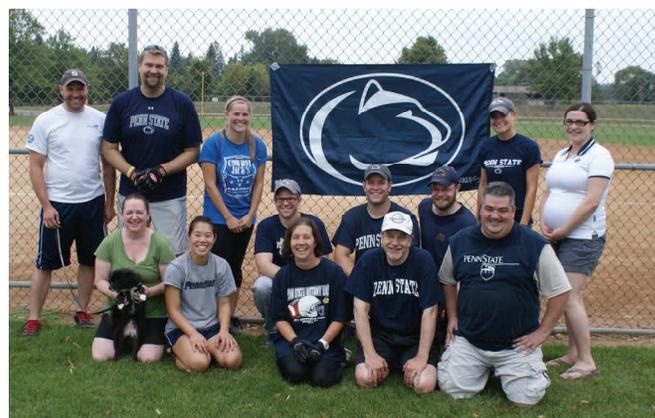
Big Ten Alumni Softball Tournament – August 24, 2013



Do you play softball? Do you play baseball? Do you like to run, throw, catch, and swing? If you do, then come out and play in the Big 10 Annual Softball Tournament on Saturday, August 24th, 2013. Even if you do not want to play or are on the disabled list, we always appreciate our excited fans to cheer us on!

This year, we'll be welcoming alumni from both Rutgers and Maryland to play in the tournament even though their schools don't officially join the Big Ten until the 2014-2015 seasons.

We are hopeful for a victorious tournament this year by avoiding Illinois in our bracket – last year's winners! Stay turned to the website and Facebook for more information or RSVP now to chris.dore@psumn.com. 📷



Penn State Football vs Iowa – Roadtrip Recap



[written by Board Member Stephanie Brondani]

A contingent of PSU-MN alumni headed down to Iowa City on October 20th for a nighttime away game. Not having been to Iowa for a game before, I didn't know what to expect. Would the home fans be friendly or hostile? Would they say mean things about the Sandusky scandal, or not reference it at all? I was ready for anything, but ended up being pleasantly surprised at the warm welcome to Iowa City that we received from virtually everyone we came into contact with, all the way from the parking lot to the stadium, which was quite a haul. Before the game we were entertained by the cheerleaders and Blue Band at the official tailgate, where we all enjoyed the vast spread that was prepared for us. Everyone was in a sunny mood, which matched the perfect weather.

Arriving in the stadium it was apparent that there were two sections of Penn State fans, and we were not anywhere near each other. However, that didn't diminish our enthusiasm one bit. Though surrounded by Hawkeye fans, we felt welcomed once again, and even though we gave them a real thrashing (38 - 14) that never changed. The Iowa fans were a nearly flawless class act. The only negative incident that I heard about was a group of students who dressed up as Sandusky jailbirds in striped jumpsuits. Even this was handled well, with the police escorting these students out of the stadium area.

We can only hope that our fans back in State College are as welcoming to our visiting fans as the Iowa fans were to us. Their hospitality helped make it a wonderful weekend. 🍷

2012 Bowling Party

The only bowl game we Penn Staters could attend this year took place on December 27, 2012. Medina Entertainment Center hosted 9 of us at their bowling alley, where we proceeded to amuse ourselves for the better part of the afternoon. In addition to local active alumni, we were joined by 2 recent Penn State grads who currently live on the East coast. A wide range of bowling talent could be found, but bowling prowess didn't matter one bit. All of us had a great time, and even managed to raise some funds for THON. Hopefully the bowl game of 2013 will have an even bigger crowd! 🎳



Candidates for Chapter General Board Member Positions

Chris Dore

Chris graduated in 1993 with a Liberal Arts degree. Originally from Long Valley, NJ, Chris and his wife Christina live in Plymouth, MN. A member of the Board since 2004, his primary responsibility has been organizing the PSU team for the annual softball tournament, but has been active in the community service events (Habitat for Humanity, FMSC, etc) and other functions (Freshmen Send-off, football road trips, etc.). He is a Project Manager for UnitedHealth Group in their mainframe group. He is also a firefighter for the City of Plymouth (past lieutenant, past captain, current member of the relief board).

Dean Creighton

Dean is originally from Honesdale, PA and graduated from PSU in 1980 with a B.S. in Food Science. Dean and his wife Barbara live in Brooklyn Park and have a grown daughter and a son in college (Iowa State). He has worked

for General Mills, Inc. for 22 years and is currently in R&D in the Big G cereal division. Dean has been part of the Board since 2011. He has also held leadership positions in his national professional organization, in his church, and as an adult volunteer in Boy Scouts.

Brian Varner

Brian graduated in 1999 with a B.S. in Marketing. A native of Buffalo, NY, Brian has been a member of the Board since 2011. Professionally, he has developed marketing departments for Arena Football League teams in Buffalo and Philadelphia, including building the Philadelphia Soul for Jon Bon Jovi. Shifting gears, Brian has been living in the Twin Cities for the past six years helping over thirty TV stations around the country monetize their websites.

Second Harvest

On June 1st, a group of twelve Penn State MN alumni met at Second Harvest Heartland in Golden Valley for a fun afternoon of food packaging. After watching an interesting and informative video that explained the organization's mission and how they operate, we were taken in to the main facility to wash up and don beauty-enhancing hairnets. Then we were led to a room where we packaged oversized tortillas, which were heaped in large bins, into bags of 12. Once finished with that, we moved to the room where white rice was packaged.

After two hours of work, we had packaged over 100 pounds of tortillas and over 600 pounds of rice. We were impressed with the friendly and helpful staff, and enjoyed getting to know some of the other groups of people who were also there that day to volunteer. A post-volunteer social gathering was organized at the Sunshine Factory. We

look forward to returning to Second Harvest next year, and continue to seek other community service opportunities. Anyone with ideas for future service projects is urged to contact any one of the Board members. 🌐



Vince Trotta – Official Photographer!

The Penn State Alumni Association Minnesota Chapter is proud to announce the promotion of Vince Trotta as our Official Photographer. Vince has been our “unofficial photographer” for the past several years taking photos at the weekly TV Tailgates, Big Ten Alumni Softball Tournament and our Annual Summer BBQ/Student Send-off. On Saturday, September 29, 2012, Vince was recognized for his efforts with an official name badge to proudly wear at all events. A short video clip can be found on our Youtube Channel at: <http://youtu.be/ChHDL26R86k>. Please join us in congratulating Vince and encouraging him to keep on taking wonderful photos at all of our events! 🌐



Community Support – Giving Back

One of the purposes of our Chapter as listed in our by-laws is to “support and develop the civic activities of this community”. In the spring of 2012, we made a contribution to Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota for \$1,000 and this past spring, we have donated another \$500. We are also making a \$100 donation to Second Harvest, our 2013 Community Service event host.

When you sign up for your 2013-2014 Chapter membership, you’ll see we added new line items if you wish to make additional contributions towards these worthy causes that we will continue to support in the years to come. 🌐



In April '12, we made a \$1,000 donation to Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota at their Annual Gala



Mark Your Calendars!

August 4th: Student Send-Off/ Annual Picnic

August 24th:  Softball Tournament

November 9th: PSU Football at Minnesota

February 28th & March 1st: PSU Hockey at Minnesota

March 20th – 22th: Big Ten Hockey Tournament (Xcel Center)



Minnesota Chapter Penn State Alumni Association
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