



# Cal Delta Spotlight

USC House Corporation of Phi Delta Theta | Spring 2016 | University of Southern California

Alumni Office | P.O. Box 80828, Atlanta, Georgia 30366 | www.phideltatheta-caldelta.com

## USC House Corporation

### A Word From Our President



**H**umility is a virtue, but let me brag about Cal Delta alumni for a moment. The winter edition of The Scroll honored members of the Cornerstone Club, which consists of Phi Delt alums who have contributed \$25,000 or more toward a local chapter campaign supporting the “bricks and mortar” of a chapter house. There are 22 Cal Delta brothers on this list of generous givers, more than any other of Phi Delta Theta’s 182 chapters in the U.S. and Canada. Combine the social skills of the Phi Delt House with a USC education, and the result is quite a pairing of success and generosity.

In March I ran into another Cal Delta alumnus by the name of **Bill Putney '51** who deserves our gratitude. Currently the highest bond number in the chapter is 1794. Brother Putney’s bond number is 6. That’s not a typo. He was initiated in 1948. And he’s in great shape with a major trip to Europe coming up.

Warren Buffett has said that we get to enjoy the shade of a tree because someone planted it long ago. To the founders of our chapter like Bill Putney and everyone who has supported it since: thank you. You are a big reason why Stephen Youts, our Province President, now refers to Cal Delta as the premier Phi Delt chapter on the West Coast.

Bruce Buettell '82

President – USC Phi Delt House Corporation



An honored guest at the Orange County Founders Day Dinner was Cal Delta alumnus Bill Putney (center), Bond #6, initiated in 1948. With Bruce Buettell (pictured left), and Bruce Birkeland (pictured right), who received his Golden Legion pin at the dinner.

### Alumni Spotlight:

## Lt. John J. Gobbell '60



John and his wife Janine at a USC fund raising event at the Caruso Catholic Center. “The guy behind us is Tommy Trojan aboard the famous USC horse Traveler.”



John with his soon to be wife, Janine, a USC Theta. “Janine and I go all the way back to 1960 to when we were married three weeks after our graduation from USC.”

**Editor’s Note:** For this edition of the newsletter we’re shining the Spotlight on Brother **John Gobbell '60**. From the hometown of Encino, CA, John graduated from USC with his BA in English. After graduation, John served in the Navy for two years in active duty and then six years in reserve where he achieved the rank of lieutenant. His degree and Naval experience would become significant factors years later – John’s 7th novel, *Edge of Valor*, was recently published, and he is working on his 8th novel, *Dead Man Launch*. Today he is a full-time Author, Publisher, and Owner of *StarboardSide Productions*. John and his wife Janine have been married for 55 years. They have two kids: daughters Jennifer and JJ – both USC graduates; a Cat named Luther; and nine grandchildren – two from Jennifer, and seven from JJ! For fun, John enjoys sailing, walking around Balboa Island, having dinner with friends, spending time with family, and catching USC sports. John is also a past competitive sailor and has competed for the Congressional Cup three times.

### What led you to join Cal Delta?

**Bill Gobbell '55**, my older brother, pledged Phi Delt five years before me along with a number of other sons of close family friends. There were many of us and I didn’t have a chance looking at another house. Phi Delt was the top house on Fraternity Row (Twenty-Eighth Street) and that was all I wanted.

Little did I know of the rushing process when I first showed up. Fortunately, my brother Bill and my Dad told me to keep my mouth shut during rush. And that must have worked because I got the bid.

### After growing up in a military and medical family, why did you join the NROTC in school?

At the risk of sounding corny, I liked the idea of putting on a uniform, becoming an officer, and serving our country. More than that, we were surrounded with Navy. My Dad served in the 1930s peacetime Navy and then later in the South Pacific in World War II as a Navy doc. They actually sent him ashore at Tarawa (Gilbert Islands) in the third wave. He was still cleaning his underwear for decades after that. And then my brother Bill caught the bug and joined the NROTC at USC. And I followed after that. From a practical standpoint, neither one of us wanted to be drafted – we were both 1A with student deferments. Along with many others, we didn’t want to be forced into the Army after leaving college. We preferred clean sheets and hot chow and a quiet life at sea, except ... brother Bill fell for all the brass and glitter and screams and

grunts of the Marines. So he took the Marine option in his junior year and came out a Jarhead.

I had the great wisdom to stay with the Navy and I’m sure glad I remained the family Squid.

It was a crazy time as I graduated and went on to active duty. I married Janine, (the love of my life) fifty-six years ago and then was immersed in the process of becoming a leader. What challenges! Upon graduation, the Navy ordered me to a “Tin Can,” the USS *Tingey* (DD 539) a revered Fletcher class destroyer of World War II. Something I didn’t anticipate was that becoming an officer in the Navy involved the enormous responsibility of leading men. Right away, they gave me a division of twenty-five sailors in the deck division. I mean these guys were the roughest of the rough. Fortunately, I had a Chief who took care of me and them. Chiefs are the backbone of the Navy – wonderful people. Other challenges were the crushing workload, sleeplessness, the constant confrontation with adversity. That and following orders.

On the other hand, I discovered “Tin Cans” had 60,000 horsepower to play with. Conning them was a real blast. Deck officers had bugs in their teeth, stood tall, and enjoyed their moments on the bridge. Also, I became the fire control and anti-submarine warfare (ASW) officer having fun shooting the five inch guns and chasing submarines. Later in the reserves, they made me a “Gun Boss” (Weapons Officer) on a reserve destroyer.

Gobbell (Continued on Page 4)

# CHAPTER NEWS

Greetings brothers! The California Delta chapter of Phi Delta Theta has had an exceptionally successful start to the spring 2016 semester. There are plenty of accomplishments that I would like to update you on, from becoming leaders within the Greek community at USC, to having our highest chapter membership since our re-founding. Our chapter has been taking many steps in the right direction, and I can confidently say that I have never been more proud to be a Phi.

Going into the spring semester, our chapter membership was an astounding 130 undergraduate students. We have been working hard to expand our reach in the Greek community, and that work has visibly paid off. We are now one of the largest fraternities on campus, and our membership numbers are well above the national average.



## President's Message

Additionally, our large numbers allowed us to take a step back and really take care with the decisions we made during the rush process this semester. We focused on searching for men who clearly exhibited the characteristics of a Phi, and we ultimately ended up extending bids to 22 quality men.

As it stands, we have 17 members of our Phikeia class, and they have shown that they are on their way to becoming excellent members of the fraternity.

For the first time ever, the California Delta Housing Corporation extended a Phikeia Scholarship, for one half of pledge dues to a member of our current pledge class, **Brandon Brown**. Brandon transferred from Purdue University, where he played for the baseball team. This scholarship is one that we hope to institute in future semesters in order to allow men who



California Deltas attend the horse races with the ladies of Delta Delta Delta.

exhibit leadership skills to take part in the Phikeia process, and we are extremely appreciative of the work that **Bruce Buettell '82** and the rest of the Housing Corporation put in to make this happen.

Finally, we have been very involved on the USC campus, both socially and through service. Next month, we will be hosting our spring Philanthropy "Phi Delt Puppies" in order to raise money for the ALS Association and give fellow students a break from studying for finals. Socially, we are innovators on the row. We constantly try to come up with safe, new, and creative outlets for people to have fun, and we see our influence when other fraternities inevitably follow suit. We are also

very involved in intramural sports and other university-organized activities. Finally, we have taken a stand against sexual violence on college campuses through our support of IFC efforts such as the "We Care" campaign.

We're expecting great things out of 2016. Feel free to reach out to me at any time, and we would be more than happy to have you stop by the chapter house to visit. Fight on!

Yours in the Bond,

Mark Miller  
Chapter President, Phi Delta Theta  
California Delta

## Chapter Spotlight:



Ehren running for student body vice president.

# Ehren X. Elder

*Editor's Note: Representing the chapter as Spotlight is graduating Senior, Ehren Elder. From the hometown of Los Altos, CA, Ehren is wrapping up a double major at USC in Economics and Philosophy, Politics and Law. Ehren has led a busy life on campus, serving as the chapter Housing Manager, and as IFC Executive Vice President of Admin Affairs, IFC Executive Vice President of Judicial Affairs, and as an Orientation Advisor and Spirit Leader. He also works part-time in the Dornsife Admission office. Ehren has interned with the San Fran Dist. Attorney office and Bain & Co. as an Associate Consultant intern. In his spare time, he enjoys surfing and swimming, and even finds time to help coach a little league team with Brother Alex Budde every spring.*

things: first that a humanities degree wasn't worth a lot in the job market if I didn't go to law school and second that I missed doing math. For these reasons I added an economics major and never looked back. I have loved the study of economics and benefitted greatly from employing the critical lens that the discipline applies to human markets and behavior.

### What experience did you gain from your internships?

Interning at the San Francisco District Attorney's Office was an enlightening experience which offered me a firsthand glimpse into the legal world. I worked on the prosecution of a dozen defendants and networked with brilliant attorneys and law school students. This past summer, interning for Bain & Co. in their Los Angeles office was one of the best experiences of my life. I not only expanded my skills, I also gained immense insight into the business. I spent ten weeks on a team doing stock price altering work for a client with over \$10B a year of annual revenue.

### How did you become involved as a youth baseball coach?

I started coaching youth baseball in the spring of my Sophomore

### What led you to join Cal Delta?

Coming out to rush during the fall of my freshman year, I was hesitant about the notion of joining Greek life. This reticence faded however as I got to know the gentlemen of Phi Delta Theta. They were smart, interesting, easy to talk to, and ambitious. They exemplified in my eyes everything that a college man should represent. They were going places. And I wanted to go with them. Three and a half years later, while the names and the faces have changed, the chapter still holds true to the wisdom and character that first drew me in.

### Why did you pursue a double major?

I entered USC Pre-Law majoring in Philosophy, Politics and Law.

Through my coursework I was constantly challenged and learned a great deal. But I also discovered two



Coaching Baseball with Brother Alex Budde.

Elder (Continued on Page 3)

# ALUMNI NEWS

**Robert M. Hubert '55** - How could I not pitch in some bucks! I pledged in 1951(Bond 119) and graduated SC Dental School in 1957. My 4-year grad class would have been 1955. **Cal Johnston '54** was the pledge master.

**W. Thomas T. Maudlin '59** - In loving memory of my pledge class member, the wonderful and fun **Dick R. Chalk '60**. I just read of his passing in a recent Cal Delta Spotlight.

**Mark Jozwiak '82** - I recently came across two photos from my days as an active member. We are looking sharp!



Mark Jozwiak '82 and his pledge class during a fall initiation party 1980.



Mark Jozwiak '82 and the guys during fall initiation 1981.

## Have Alumni News?

We want to hear from you! Send your personal updates, accomplishments, adventures, and photos to our Account Manager Kasey Breedlove at [kbreedlove@elevateims.com](mailto:kbreedlove@elevateims.com), or simply fill out the tear-away form at the bottom of your cover letter and return it in the mail. We want to share it in the next issue of *The Cal Delta Spotlight!*

SAVE  
THE  
DATE

## HOMECOMING

Saturday, November 5th

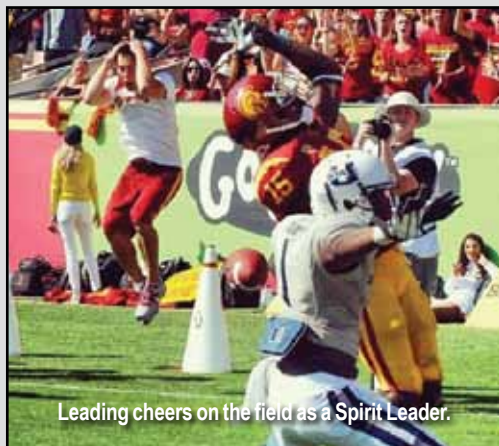
vs. OREGON DUCKS

## 2016 Blue ChiP Dinner



Details TBA Soon!

## Elder (Continued from Page 2)



Leading cheers on the field as a Spirit Leader.

year with one of my fraternity brothers, Alex Budde. The kids on the team are between 9 and 12 and all come from the low income neighborhoods around USC and while we may be short on supplies, they are overflowing with heart. Our first season we lost every single game en route to a disappointing 0-10 finish; however, last year we turned our fortunes around to go undefeated and capture the league championship. You can catch us at it again this spring at Toberman Park on the corner of Washington and 19th.

## Any plans for after graduation?

After graduating, I will spend the summer as a White House Intern for the National Economic Council before starting a career in management consulting at Bain & Company in Los Angeles.

## Chapter Grand

We are saddened to learn of the passing of our Cal Delta brothers:



**Paul J. Powers, Jr. '54** passed away peacefully Tuesday, May 14, 2013, surrounded by his loving family. Paul grew up in Westwood and Long Beach, graduating from St. Anthony's High School and went on to graduate from the University of Southern California with a degree in Business Administration. He served in the U.S. Army at Ft. McNair in Washington DC during the Korean War. When he came home to Long Beach, he served as Plant Manager for Purex Corporation until he moved the family to Salinas to start Powers Rentals in 1966. Paul was an avid pilot of his Turbo Piper Lance based out of the Salinas Airport with an IFR rating and thousands of hours of flight time. One of Paul's greatest joys in life was flying... whether taking people that had never flown to see whales in the Monterey Bay, or business and family trips across the country. Paul was a very active member of the community serving on numerous boards and committees. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Carlene Powers; his children, Paul Jr., Melinda, Susan, Linda, and James (and their spouses, Karen, Steve, and Marguerite); and his seven grandchildren. Paul, you will be missed, but never forgotten.

*"My Dad was a proud member of Phi Delta Theta at USC, and he loved the house and all that went on there. I loved hearing the stories that he told regarding the house, meeting Frank Gifford, and inspiring my cousin Steve Stracke '76 to join the house in later years."* - Paul J. Powers III

**John "Jack" W. Wheeler '56** passed away on Thursday, November 26, 2015, Thanksgiving Day. His spirit is carried on by his devoted wife Marilyn, three children, Laurie, Donna and Robert (and their spouses, Larry, Steve and Rosemarie), seven loving grandchildren, and an extended family of relations and friends from every walk of life. We were blessed to learn many valuable lessons from Jack during his 84 years, among them: Whistle while you work. Take time to feed the birds. Take the effort to keep your neighborhood clean. Jack enjoyed working with young people, especially the activities and antics of his grandkids. He coached Gladiator football, and was Associate Bethel Guardian for Job's Daughters, a branch of the Masons of which he was a member. He was proud of his Scottish Heritage and played the bagpipes and traveled to many parts of the world. He was an avid USC fan and alum, rooting for the Trojans at both home and away games. Other times if you went to look for him, you might find him in the garden, playing his clarinet to Dixieland jazz records, golfing with his wife, on his sailboat, or in his art studio at home making stained glass windows and mastering watercolors. He will be missed by all who were lucky enough to know him.



## While on active duty, where was your ship sent?

My two years of active duty was quite intense. Homeported in San Diego, we steamed 11,000 miles. First, we did the West coast of the U.S and on to Esquimalt British Colombia, down to Acajutla, El Salvador to Mazatlán to San Francisco. Later on deployment, Janine was stuck in San Diego as the *Tingey* then steamed for the Western Pacific. We travelled sometimes in really snotty weather - but it's amazing, one gets used to it. Beginning with Pearl Harbor, we went on to Yokosuka, Japan, (Tokyo Bay) Okinawa, Subic Bay, Philippines, Hong Kong, Chin Hae Korea, and Sasebo Japan – a typical WESTPAC cruise with the Seventh Fleet.

## Once back in the U.S., why did you go into management consulting?

It seemed the thing to do. Work with senior management; present recommendations to client companies and watch them grow. But it took a while getting there. After leaving the Navy I drifted through two or three jobs. Finally, I secured a position with KPMG Peat Marwick and that lead to an enjoyable career.

## How did you come to join the staff of Boyden Associates as Vice President?

A KPMG client was the parent company of Boyden Associates, which at the time had twenty-five offices in the U.S. and another fifteen overseas. I joined the parent in an administrative capacity, spent three years with them and transferred to Boyden's Los Angeles Office, becoming a Vice President three years later. After that I became Vice President and Branch Manager of the Newport Beach California, branch. It was with Boyden that I learned the value of networking and sales and



John pictured on the bridge of the destroyer, *USS Kidd* (DDG 100) and in 1960 (inset).

business development. All three are, of course, the same thing, but I was astounded to learn how many people shy away from making that “cold” telephone call or worse, making that “cold call” with a potential client in his office.

## Why did you decide to start your own business?

Sometimes I think now it was abject greed. But at the time, I was desperately sincere to make a go of it, to change things, and to help companies grow. When I started out, I followed some of the great maxims: Have a strong stable of clients who will give you business over a period of time; at



Gold Medal awarded to John for best historical fiction, 2015, by the Military Writer's Society of America.



John's ship, the destroyer *USS Tingey* (DD 539) homeported in San Diego, California.

least six months capitalization and the willingness to do menial tasks such as typing letters, licking envelopes and escorting clients and candidates around town. All this is mixed in with a major element: networking, networking, and networking. I can't emphasize enough how important this is for the sole proprietor. And then times change; suddenly we fall into a recession and the aerospace-defense business or real estate or food services are no longer hot topics. They go flat. One must be adaptable to change. I had capabilities in other industries and I moved on. Somehow, it worked.

But one thing I learned over a period of thirty years in executive recruiting really helped there and eventually with my writing. I discovered the three major elements of a true professional. Before I tell you, please remember I'm a simple guy. I sometimes over-generalize. But that said, try this: a true professional is characterized by three things:

- He has mastered all the fundamentals of his trade/profession and now executes them, easily, scarcely thinking of them, as if they were second hand.
- He is utterly dedicated to his work; it is his passion, he continually thinks of ways to improve his work for himself and for others.
- He shares knowledge, not charging others who seek his advice.

## When did you discover a passion for writing?

To this day, it puzzles me that I enjoy writing. At first, I thought putting together a good story was all there was to it. But for some reason, I discovered I enjoy the mechanics – polishing a sentence, a paragraph or even a phrase – not once, but several times. Often, I'll blast out a chapter and think it's perfect. It's really hot. Then the next day, I'll go back to it and discover it's dreck; to begin, the mechanics are all wrong, syntax, declarative sentences, author exposure, complex and run-on sentences. For me, it's fun to go back and weed all that

stuff out. Now the chapter begins to sing. It's then one discovers lost opportunities in plot and characterization. This part is really neat. You make changes, the story comes alive and you can't wait to go on to the next chapter where the process starts all over again.

## How do you keep your inspiration flowing?

I'm fortunate in that I've fallen into using a series character in my fiction; i.e Todd Ingram. I'm now working on another Todd Ingram novel, my eighth, *Dead Man Launch*. It's 1968 and Todd Ingram, a Naval Academy graduate of 1937, is getting long in the tooth. He's now a Vice Admiral and is getting ready to retire. So along comes Ingram's son, Jerry, a hot-shot P-3 (Anti-submarine patrol plane) pilot born in 1944. In a way, I start all over again with Jerry as he begins a career in the Navy, fighting bad guys (Soviets), and meeting a girl. But Jerry won't be as driven as his dad. He'll be distracted by the times, by laziness, and lack of dedication. To a certain extent, I think we all learn these lessons in life and make our own way in getting it done. That's what Jerry must do.

## What advice can you give to the alumni and young actives about completing a book?

At first, learn the fundamentals of story-telling and of narrative. It may seem like drudgery but it must be done. If you don't, agents and acquisition editors will toss your manuscript on the sludge pile to be taken out with the next morning's junk. The manuscript must be as perfect as you can get it. Nothing less will suffice. Again, editors and agents will toss your m/s on the pile if it's not perfect. They don't like to fool with sloppy work.

Next, your story and its theme must be unique, different, new and refreshing. Editors are looking for the next John Grisham or Harper Lee or Lee Childs. But don't do the same thing as Grisham or Lee or Childs. That it's a knock-off becomes apparent and then that m/s also lands atop the sludge pile. Keep your language simple and your theme always in mind. Hold onto the theme; it drives the book and keeps the reader's nose in it.

And always, whether your career is fiction, or landscaping, or medicine, or whatever, never give in. Always stay with your dream. It's all you have. As Winston Churchill said, “Never give in, never give in, never give in.”

**\*You can learn more about John Gobbell's novels at [www.JohnJGobbell.com](http://www.JohnJGobbell.com)!**

