



# Babcock Bulletin



The Official Newsletter of Babcock House March 2006

## President's Message

*By John Rozum, Alumni Board President*

Hard to believe that another school year will soon be behind us. It's been a heck of a busy year at Babcock House - I thought things were supposed to slow down as you approached 75 years...

That's right. We've been talking about it for a while now, but the 75th Anniversary of Babcock House will officially begin when the next semester begins in September. An anniversary this big calls for celebration, and that is just what we have planned. Beginning with the 75th anniversary Homecoming Celebration and concluding with a very special Babcock Student/Alumni Banquet.

Preparations have also included planning of the 75th Anniversary Alumni Directory, which should be ready for next spring's banquet. Watch for future Babcock Bulletins for more details!

As we prepare to look back upon the last 75 years, we are also looking forward to the future. In this newsletter, Ron Curran gives us the details of a project conducted by the Business School using Babcock House as a case study. The group was challenged to create and present a marketing plan for the House. This project resulted in some great ideas and has already helped us redefine our plans for how to fill the House in the future.

Most of you will recall that your first mention of Babcock's 75th was the introduction of the "75 for 75" campaign nearly two years ago. Our goal was to raise \$75,000 by the 75th year for House remodeling projects. I'm proud to say that we are doing well on that goal, but there is still a long way to go. Donations have come in all sizes, from \$10 to \$10,000 and all are appreciated. I am confident that past generations of Babcock will come through and help us meet our goal!

This issue also marks a bit of a milestone, too. This is the first issue that is being delivered electronically via email to those who prefer that to a paper copy. Frankly, it saves us about \$.50 for every issue we can "deliver" online. If you'd prefer yours via email, drop me a line at [jrozum@wdxpo.com](mailto:jrozum@wdxpo.com).

## Spring Steward's Report

*By Craig Kohn, 2006 Steward*

Since taking on the roles of Steward-elect in May of 2005, and Steward at the end of December, I have been fortunate enough to gain multiple opportunities to learn many valuable skills in the area of home appliance repair. As of last count, I have repaired, or called in repairs for 39 appliances at Babcock House. However, the good news is that most of the time, the repairs were done by myself and/or another house member (saving several hundred dollars), and this concentrated collection of breakdowns seems to be nothing but a coincidence (which has given us an intricate understanding of washers, etc. in the process).

Major repairs since December include the washing machine (which our friends at Sears determined to be "totaled"), water heater, electrical work, and minor repairs such as doors, light fixtures, and broken beds.

Other than the spree of repairs, the House is doing quite well. We currently have 22 members in house and one out-of-house member. As of press time, most members are gone for a well-deserved spring break and are gearing up for the second half of the semester. True to form, house improvements are continuing over breaks, with 1st Corner receiving a fresh coat of paint and Steward's receiving a new, personally-built couch, among other smaller items. A new table-top display is also being made for use in recruiting at World Dairy Expo, FFA Conventions, etc.

The House continues to be very active on campus, and upcoming highlights include CALS Week, in which the Babcockers will once again defend their CALS Olympics Champion and Volleyball Tourney Champion titles, as well as spring formal and Wine Supper. Overall, it should be another great semester.

## **A Look Into the Future**

*Ron Curran, Emeritus Board President*

About a year ago, the board decided we needed to develop a longer term vision and plan for the future. After a number of phone calls and emails, we came in contact with Jennifer Wiggins, a doctoral business student who teaches a fall “capstone” class required for seniors at the UW’s School of Business. Jennifer agreed to make developing a long term marketing plan for Babcock House her class’s project. She divided the class into groups of approximately five students each. The class visited the House, interviewed our members and was given access to Board members and House leadership. Each group developed a written marketing plan and oral presentation.

Having a marketing plan developed by seniors majoring in marketing appealed to us for a number of reasons. Their ages are very close to our target market, being in the Business School, they are detached enough from us to be very objective and they worked for free.

Our present recruiting focus revolves around promoting that we are cheaper than anyone on campus, provide home cooked meals, have free internet and laundry, a rich history and that we are cheaper than anyone on campus.

We learned a lot about ourselves when Jennifer presented a summation of the plans to the Board on January 25. Results of written surveys of Babcock Residents (16 of 22 residents participated) found the highest valued strengths of living at Babcock are:

- 1) Price of housing
- 2) Included meals
- 3) Living with both genders (this ranked much higher with female than male residents)

However, responses to open ended questions revealed a distinctly different pattern. Superseding the listed items above in importance were:

- 1) Babcock House’s community atmosphere
- 2) The friendship among members
- 3) The feeling of belonging to something more than a building

According to the class, the most powerful marketing tool is an organization’s web site. They told us if we didn’t have an attractive, easily navigable website that told them what they wanted to know, they just weren’t interested in living at Babcock House. They also made very clear that history means little or less to their generation. They also suggested we expand the Babcock “living experience” to people living outside the House (past members now living in apartments, for example).

We are not filing this document away to collect dust. The Babcock House Board is making the following changes:

- Our marketing/recruiting will be much more focused. We will de-emphasize our prices and prioritize our community atmosphere, friendships and sense of belonging.
- We have found a student who will revamp our website this semester to emphasize the above as a class project.
- Our recruiting brochure will emphasize the same points.
- We have already set 2006-07 room rates. However, future rates will probably allow more cash for House upkeep and improvements. We are presently 53% of dorm housing costs.
- We are getting bids for rebuilding our kitchen. This was a major area of concern to the marketing class. (Anyone with access to bargain prices on appliances – PLEASE CALL!!)
- We are looking into low cost renovations of the dining room to make it less institutional and more family like. These would include better lighting, round tables and warmer colors.

The report contained a number of other recommendations we are considering on a longer term basis. Our goals are to maintain the mission of Stephen Babcock while appealing to a more affluent and discerning student with more living options to keep Babcock House viable for years to come.

## This is the House that Babcock Built - Part 3: Wisconsin's Pride

*Author's Note: This is the third part of a multi-part series about the life of Dr. Stephen Babcock and the history of his namesake's organization, Babcock House. References courtesy of the UW Archives and the Wisconsin State Historical Society.*

*By Craig A. Kohn, 2006 Steward*

"I still see him almost daily passing my window as he winds his way to his laboratory. On those trips he often drops in to discuss with me his problems and my own as well," wrote Louis Kahlenberg in 1924, adding, "Dr.

Babcock worked on fundamental and novel problems, rather than on matters of a routine character... he has constantly kept up his interest in problems of an experimental nature."



This quote probably best summarizes Dr. Babcock's later years. He easily could have been content with the results of his butterfat test; in fact, milk production in the U.S. increased 900% in 30 years in large part because of the Babcock Test and the stock breeding data it gave for establishing the development of the five major dairy breeds. However, in no way did his work end after his invention of the butterfat test; indeed, with this invention, his work truly began. In 1903, Dr. Babcock developed and perfected the "cold storage" method of curing cheese. Later, his "hidden hunger" experiments on the nutritional needs of cattle, or simply, feeding cattle solely one type of grain, paved the way for the science of nutrition and the discoveries of Vitamins A and D by McCollum and Steenbock, respectively. Finally, Dr. Babcock perfected an apparatus using Pasteur's procedures for a complete pasteurization of milk.

Shortly before receiving his coveted status of Professor Emeritus in 1913, effectively allowing Dr. Babcock to devote his time entirely to his research, Dr. Babcock's curiosity was piqued when he found a moth larva, which is 75% water, in a jar of malted milk 100% free of water. This conundrum motivated Dr. Babcock to solve the biochemical mystery of metabolic water, or the creation of water from solids via oxidative metabolism (the jar is still on display in the old Biochemistry Building above Babcock's main lab).

Dr. Babcock's final work was on a mystery that eluded him throughout his life, the theory of the constitution of matter, or the transference of energy through matter. For the last two decades of his life, Babcock pondered how a moving pendulum could cause a rise in temperature in a closed system, and created experiments to measure and record this phenomena. Babcock's attention to detail and perfection created the need for condition-controlled laboratories; three of these were created, including one underneath the basement of Ag Hall (yet to be re-discovered for the UW by the 75th class of Babcockers). Dr. Babcock died in the midst of this experiment.

However, Dr. Babcock's life was not solely dedicated to his research. Dr. Babcock was affectionately known across the UW campus for his kindness and sense of humor, leading to his nickname, "The Laughing Saint of Science." Dr. Babcock was an avid fan of UW sports and attended every home football, basketball, and baseball game during his tenure at Madison. He was so popular that he was granted two seats at Camp Randall in his honor, solely for his use until his death in 1931. Never once absent from these seats, Babcock could always be found with a bag of peanuts or popcorn in his hand, cheering on the Badgers to a hopeful victory.

Dr. Babcock was not an avid fan of phones, however, and he refused to install one either in his home or lab. When UW administration forced him to install one, he gained the upper hand by claiming that he "just didn't hear the ring." However, Dr. Babcock did embrace other forms of technology, especially Ford's automobile. At the age 78, Dr. Babcock bought his first car, and he and Mrs. Babcock toured most of the state on country back roads. Dr. Babcock continued to drive without incident until his death. (continued)

On July 2nd, 1931, Dr. Stephen Moulton Babcock died of heat exhaustion in his own home at the age of 87. Newspapers around the world, including the New York Times, heralded the death of the “Laughing Saint.” The Wisconsin State Journal published articles about Dr. Babcock for a week after his death, honoring his life by concluding, “The distribution of his gifts and good works has been, and will continue to be, world-wide.”

Dr. Babcock ranks among the greatest in service to mankind, and yet has been almost forgotten by the history of mankind solely because of his humility and selflessness. Said UW Pres. Glenn Frank, “In an age smitten with passion for publicity, Prof. Babcock forgot himself into immortality,” but, unfortunately, not into infamy.

Indeed, had it not been for Dr. Babcock, the Wisconsin dairy industry would have “gone to pot,” according to College of Ag Dean William Henry. In Dean Henry’s opinion, only Dr. Babcock had the capacity to save Wisconsin’s dairy industry and lobbied to get Dr. Babcock to UW from New York, an offer Dr. Babcock initially refused. Later, Babcock would come to call the Badger State his home, and in return, help make it what it is today.

Few people have, or are even able to draw the connection between modern Wisconsin they know and the presence of Stephen Babcock in the state. Dr. Babcock’s work allowed for the modernization of the state’s dairy industry, allowing America’s Dairyland to come into existence and dominate the US dairy industry. Today the Wisconsin dairy industry contributes \$20.6 billion dollars to the state economy, and directly employs 160,000 people, in large part allowing a recent 7th place ranking nationwide for Wisconsin’s state economy. Furthermore, Dr. Babcock’s foundational research in nutrition led to Steenbock’s discovery of the synthesis of Vitamin D, the proceeds of which led to the creation of the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, which has given \$800 million towards UW research since its founding in 1925. Without Dr. Babcock, the State of Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin, as we know them now, would not likely be in existence. The ideology that one man can make a difference has rarely been more greatly exemplified.

To conclude this biography of Dr. Babcock, many things could be said, but I think the sentiments expressed in the July 6, 1931 Milwaukee Wisconsin News are the most appropriate. They are as follows:

“HAD DR. STEPHEN MOULTON BABCOCK so willed it, he might have died a multi-millionaire. WHEN De Laval of Denmark gave the cream separator to the dairying world, he (De Laval) patented his invention and before long was able to count his fortune in millions. BUT DR. BABCOCK was an idealist who believed that inventions of universal beneficence belonged not to the inventor but to humanity at large.”

“HIS DEATH has called forth many tributes to him as a scientist, as a trail blazer, as an inventor of the highest accomplishment in man’s most important industry. But greater still than all of his achievements, all of his service, is the example he has set as a selfless benefactor of the human race – a man who turned his back on a princely fortune that his fellow men might enjoy his priceless gift at the cheapest possible cost.”

“AMERICA has produced many great inventors whose genius has advanced the human progress, enriched thousands and added greatly to the comfort and enjoyment of life, but all of them have profited or sought to profit from their inventions. They are not to be blamed for that. It is the human, often necessary, way. DR. BABCOCK, however, chose the nobler course. He had the larger view of social obligation. To his God-given intellect and to the education of his country had made possible, he gave due credit to his invention, and he turned it over to the public as something for which he could not justly ask a monetary return.”

“WISCONSIN, mourning at his grave, is proud to number this exceptional citizen among her adopted sons.”

*Next – Part 4: Forefront of the “Cooperative Revolution”*

## **Alumni Info Still Needed!**

The Babcock House 75th Anniversary Directory project rolls on! We are in the process of re-creating the entire list of all past and present Babcock House residents and members, and we could sure use your help!

The last issue of the Babcock Bulletin had a form and we asked each of you to fill out the form to be sure that we had your information correct. If you haven't sent yours in, please do so today. Please note, the fax number on the form is incorrect - the correct number is 608-224-0300.

The updated forms and letters are coming in from Babcockers from around the globe, From South Africa to the Netherlands and from Alaska to Florida! This directory is truly going to be a special piece - going beyond just a listing of names to include the stories and memories that made our time at the House so great.

If you would like to help us piece together the list to see if anyone is missing from your class or era, please call John Rozum at 608-224-6455 ext 104 or email [jrozum@wdexpo.com](mailto:jrozum@wdexpo.com).

## **House Happenings**

*By Michael Boettcher, House President*

Andrea Bloom- Currently a freshmen, but Andrea isn't your typical freshmen at Madison. She has been traveling the state and promoting Wisconsin Agriculture as a Wisconsin State FFA officer. She represents section 7, fairing from Loyal, WI. During the past 5 months, she has visited over 25 schools for chapter visits to present workshops to FFA members and agriculture students. For the next 3 months she will be revisiting FFA Chapters, giving keynote speeches at their annual banquets. Andrea's duties as a state officer will conclude this summer in Madison at the State FFA Convention, June 13-15. Congratulations Andrea!!!!

Garritt Boettcher- Many 'cockers will recognize this name because he has been in the house for what has now been 11 semesters. He will be ending his stay at Babcock this spring. Garritt recently received his Bachelors in Biological Systems Engineering, Agricultural Structures. He now continues his studies at Madison, pursuing his masters in Biological Systems Engineering, Agricultural Machinery. Right now Garritt spends a lot of his time building the Badger Pulling Tractor, being one of the leaders of the design team. This summer Garritt will be traveling the U.S. conducting forage drying tests for his master's work. Garritt, thank you for your commitment to the house and you will certainly be missed!!!!

Michael Boettcher- Finishing up his senior year at UW will conclude his stay at Babcock, after 8 semesters. Next fall, Michael will receive his Bachelors Degree in Horticulture, Production Systems. This summer Michael will travel to Boston, MA to work with the Boston Red Sox baseball club as a turf management intern, a truly rare opportunity. A few parting words, "Thank you Babcock for all the opportunities and connections that you have allowed me to make through my years here at UW. It has been a hell of a ride." With Michael and Garritt leaving the house, marks an end to a 9 year run of a Boettcher brothers staying at the house. Typical Boettcher!!!!

Craig Kohn- Has recently been selected by the State Legislator as 1 of 10 UW-Madison students to participate in the "Posters in the Rotunda" Research Symposium on April 25th at the State Capitol Building for his ecological and agricultural research. The event brings students and faculty from 15 UW System campuses to the Wisconsin State Capitol Rotunda to share findings from undergraduate research projects with state elected officials, Regents, government representatives, and the public. Craig is now in consideration for the national "Posters on the Hill in Washington, D.C." Congratulations Craig!!!!

## Who is the Babcock Alumni Board?

If you've got questions about the House, suggestions or would like to volunteer to serve on the Board, committee or special projects, please contact any Board Member.

John Rozum, '95, President - 608-831-5055  
Ron Curran, '87, Past President - 608-233-9779  
Dan Wepner, '79, Treasurer - 920-922-4376  
Chris Sawyer, '00, Treasurer-Elect - 608-245-9490  
Kevin Shinnars, '73, Faculty Advisor - 608-263-0756  
Timm Johnson, '72, Secretary - 715-248-3277  
Craig Kohn, House Steward, - 608-238-7395  
Michael Boettcher, House President, 608-238-7384

Feel free to contact the Alumni Board with any House questions you might have or to get more involved.

## Your Donations Are Tax Deductible!

Remember that Babcock House is a not-for-profit organization and that your donations to the House are tax deductible. Please contact your tax advisor for full details!



**Babcock House**  
1936 University Ave  
Madison, WI 53726

## Thanks To Our "75 for 75" Donors!

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*(In Memory of Dennis Kendall)*

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