



# BETA THETA DATA

Fall 2013 Volume 62 Number 1

## The Longest Christmas Eve EverRRR

You know how so many retailers get ready for the Holiday Season by putting out merchandise in October? Or September? Or sometimes it even trickles into their stores earlier than that. Well, I know why they do it and this isn't one of those columns where I'm going to bash retailers for rotten business practices. (Full disclosure: my lovely wife works in retail.) But the point is, when this happens most of us just groan and lament, "that's way too early".

Well, here at the Beta Theta Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha, we have the opposite thing going on. We've been saying for a while now that next Homecoming is going to be the big one. We've been urging folks to plan ahead for Homecoming 2014 because it's going to be great big celebration for Pike. And it still is. But we just couldn't hold back the amazing alumni and passionate undergrad Colonists this year. They all wanted to get started way early!

There was an amazing influx of early 80's alumni. For a guy like me, (Pike Pledge Class of '82), this could'a been a movie called *When the gods Walked the Earth*. Led by the legendary V-Man, we had an all-star cast of some of the coolest, wildest and funniest Pike Brothers of all time descend upon 17 South Ave. They brought their passion; enthusiasm and energy to the weekend's proceedings let me tell you, it was infectious! But it didn't stop there; the alumni at large were also represented but a plethora of Pikes from across all the decades.

Not to be outdone, our amazing undergrad colonists collectively said "we see your ante... and raise ya!" These guys are sharp and ready to make it happen in a big way. They are the vanguard of the new Pikes: focused, energized and determined. And they are "bringing it" without all of the nonsense and baloney that we all, as a fraternal community, have simply outgrown. All brothers also owe a big debt of gratitude to Andy Glasner and his "Impossible Mission Squad" of alumni guiding these colonists. Together, they are not only achieving what everyone had thought was going to be an impossible accomplishment, but doing it with a level of excellence. So much so that now the Pikes are routinely used as the example of "how to reboot a fraternity and get back onto the Cornell campus".

Even my dad, a Cornell Sigma Nu alumnus, notices.

And to the Brotherhood at large, I say thanks for the support and patience. I also say "Get Involved". Things are going well right now and we won't stop until they are even better. I'd also say mark your calendars for next Homecoming, October 17-18, 2014, but you saw that one coming didn't you?

If the Pike house were a holiday, it would be the whole Yuletide season. And we've been experiencing the longest Christmas Eve ever. But now we can see what lies ahead - and we just know it's going to be worth it!

## Our First Homecoming Weekend

There's an old saying, "you never get a second chance to make a first impression". Our first homecoming weekend with the alumni was certainly one for the record books. During our first event, held at our annex on North Campus, members of the E-Board and other officers greeted our fellow alumni at the door and welcomed them to our wine and cheese party. It made for an interesting setting, since most alumni were accustomed to reconnecting with their roots at the old house on 17 South Ave. For most of us, it was the first time meeting fellow alumni. We all shared stories about our lives, our experiences at Cornell.

Our newly forged bonds between colony members and the alumni continued to solidify as the night went on, reaching its peak as we made our way onto the rooftop to share cigars. We were up there for well over an hour, listening to old drinking songs, funny stories about interactions with other sororities, and pranks they pulled on their fellow brothers. However, the most touching of stories was that of the Gibber. Up until this point, none of the colony members knew who he was and what he did to make such an impact of generations of PiKA brothers. Tales of his tireless efforts to make sure the house remained in good condition, his devotion to the brothers, and the fact that he kept a rolodex of all the brothers' family members so he could greet them by their first name, typified who Gibber was. These are the types of stories that gave meaning to what it was to be a Pike.

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Nicholas Toth '14 [nctoth@gmail.com](mailto:nctoth@gmail.com)

Ed Catto '85 [edcatto@hotmail.com](mailto:edcatto@hotmail.com)

## Board of Directors, 2013-2014

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<u>term</u>		
2014	Josh Tauber	516-448-5803
2015	Ed Catto, President	201-314-4558
2016	Bob Forness, Vice President	973-701-7323
2017	Tim Cole, Alumni Relations	508-982-5266
2018	Steve Amador, Treasurer	703-269-7096

## Advisor's Corner

As the students returned to the hill in September, the alumni advisors started to meet

again. All the respective advisors have met with their colony member counterparts and are working on 2013/14 activities. This includes fall recruitment for upper classmen and preparation for the spring recruitment. The colony is also complying with all the new expectations from the University on new member education requirements. Also, a new group of officers was recently elected and the AAG will work with them before they take office in the spring.

On the weekend of November 1-3, Beta Theta undergraduates were represented by Sam Vrabel, Erik Engberg, and John Lemp at the Pike U Summit in New Brunswick NJ. Bob Forness, Ralph Olivier, and Tom Sporney were alumni in attendance. Friday night and all day Saturday, sessions included operational and leadership topics, and were interspersed with lectures from Pike alumni successful in financial markets and sports journalism.

As most know, this year is one of transition. The colony is formed, but does not yet occupy the house. So, in parallel with normal activities, the colony must complete all the requirements to be chartered and make ready to occupy the physical structure at 17 South Avenue. As you'd imagine, that is a lot to take on. The alumni will do their best to support these activities - exciting times!

Mark your calendar for rechartering late spring 2014.

## Calendar

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April, 2014	Rechartering
May 1, 2014	Spring 2014 BΘData deadline
June 5-8, 2014	Reunion Weekend
June 7, 2014	Alpha Theta Reception, 17 South Ave.
July 31- Aug 4, 2014	PiKA Nat'l Convention, Baltimore MD
October 17-18, 2014	Homecoming
November 1, 2014	Fall 2014 BΘData deadline
November, 2014	Pike University, New Brunswick NJ
Sept 18-19, 2015	Homecoming
March 26, 2017	Centennial of BΘ chapter founding
March 1, 2018	PiKA 150 <sup>th</sup> anniversary

## Our First Homecoming Weekend (continued)

These stories carried on into the following day where we tailgated before the Homecoming football game. Only a day later, there was a clear sense of familiarity, of a growing bond between the colony members and alumni. As we shared hot dogs and burgers, I found that many of our guys were eager to learn more about PiKA from the alumni. At our Chapter meeting the following weekend, several stories had already circulated regarding the success of our first Homecoming weekend. While much of the weekend was more or less geared toward welcoming back our fellow alumni members, for the first time since we embarked on this long journey to recharter, we truly felt like brothers: a Fraternity. We can accredit our alumni for making that desire a reality and look forward to their continued support.

For the past few months, the brothers have been working to accomplish their chartering tasks so that the current colony can submit its petition to charter in January and hold its chartering banquet in the spring. Some of the highlights include a *Let's Fight Malaria* philanthropy event, was held on November 16th. This purpose of this event is to raise proceeds for *Voices of African Mothers* - an organization that provides bed nets for families in Ghana in order to prevent malaria. The event itself included a self-defense seminar and a showcase of various martial arts groups around campus in order to raise proceeds. Brothers have also made steady progress in recruitment and have added an additional ten brothers to our ranks during fall recruitment.

## Homecoming Minutes

The Annual Meeting of the Alpha Theta Fraternity was held at 17 South Avenue, Ithaca, New York, on September 21, 2013, being the 94th Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

The Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by President Ed Catto.

27 members were in attendance in person, and 52 by proxy.

Minutes of the last annual meeting were read.

A report by the secretary of the Beta Theta colony was given.

A report of the Alumni Advisory Group was given by Nate Rudgers.

A report was given by President Ed Catto concerning the Alumni association.

Vice President Bob Forness spoke about acquiring a fire truck for use by the new active chapter. He proposed that a committee be formed to look into maintenance and liability issues. Bob also spoke on a possible campaign for raising significant capital, gifts under IRS code §501(c)(3), and donations for specific house improvements.

A report and materials on alumni services were given by Tom Sporney.

A report on the Hugh Gibbs Capital Improvement Fund was given by Ralph Olivier. A grant of \$1,000 has been received from the State of New York for an energy audit of the house.

A report by Treasurer Steve Amador was read and approved.

A motion was made and passed that all official acts of the Officers, Directors, and Trustees of the Corporation during the previous year be ratified and approved.

The meeting was opened to nominations for Director to succeed Steve Amador, whose term expired today. Steve Amador was nominated. A motion was made and passed that nominations be closed. Steve Amador was elected.

The meeting was opened to nominations for Trustee of the Hugh S. Gibbs Capital Improvement Fund to succeed Ed Conti, whose term expired today. Nate Rudgers was nominated. A motion was made, seconded and passed that nominations be closed. Nate Rudgers was elected.

### OLD BUSINESS:

Logan Cheek raised the issue of the motion that we commission and place a NY State historic marker in front of the house honoring Elbert Parr Tuttle AB '18, LLB '23, which was referred to the Capital Improvement Fund at the last meeting. The Capital Improvement Fund will review the exact language proposed with Logan and Ed Catto within 30 days.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
David S. Miles, Secretary

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The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of Alpha Theta Fraternity was held at 17 South Avenue, Ithaca, New York, on September 21, 2013.

The Meeting was called to order at 11:15 a.m. by President Ed Catto.

The following Directors were present: Catto, Amador, Cole and Forness.

Also present: Attorney William R. Shaw, and Miles, Secretary.

Minutes of the last directors' meeting were read and approved.

The following were elected officers of the corporation:

President - Ed Catto

Vice President - Bob Forness

Secretary - David Miles

Treasurer - Steve Amador

Alumni Relations - Tim Cole

Bob Forness reported on plans to create a secure on-line depository for corporate documents, originally introduced at the last meeting.

## Homecoming Minutes (continued)

It was agreed that there would be informal, quarterly meeting of the board of directors to update all board members, to be organized by Ed Catto.

### MORTGAGE OF THE CORPORATION PROPERTY:

Attorney Shaw discussed the proposed loan to the Corporation, to be secured by a mortgage on the Corporation's property at 17 South Avenue. In connection with the loan, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED: That all the actions taken by the officers and directors in connection with the loan occurring prior to this date be ratified and approved.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Corporation be and the same is hereby authorized to make application to White Horse Capital, Inc., a Tennessee non-profit corporation, for a new loan in the amount of One Hundred Thirty-six Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty-eight and No/100 Dollars (\$136,968.00) at a rate of interest and upon terms and conditions as stated in the July 24, 2012 commitment letter from White Horse Capital, Inc. to the Corporation, and such other terms and conditions as may be required by White Horse Capital, Inc.

FURTHER RESOLVED that the proceeds of the new loan be utilized for the consolidation of existing loans and certain new funds all to be used in connection with the real property municipally known as 17 South Avenue, Ithaca, NY 14850 and being the chapter house for the Beta Theta Chapter of the Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Corporation be and is hereby authorized to accept the loan commitment letter, from White Horse Capital, Inc., and that all actions as done by the officers of the Corporation in connection with that loan are hereby ratified and approved.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Ed Catto, as President of the Corporation, and David S. Miles, as its Secretary, be and they are hereby authorized to execute any and all documents necessary to consummate the real estate purchase and the loan aforesaid, and to bind the Corporation thereby.

Ricky Chachra addressed the board concerning a plan for house management when he leaves, which maybe as early as January. He also gave a report on the work he has overseen during his term here.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
David S. Miles, Secretary

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*Happy*  
*&*  
*Safe*  
*Holidays*

## 5 Questions with... Chris Barbieri '62

Chris spent most his free time at Cornell rowing, and is presently Director, Asia Division at the Vermont Chamber of Commerce [[www.vtchamber.com](http://www.vtchamber.com)].

- Chris, your recent career has been with the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, but there were several years between leaving Cornell and working with the Chamber. What was your path leading to your career with the VT Chamber?*

[CB] My next stop after Cornell was the University of Vermont, where I was offered an assistantship and received my MS in agricultural economics. Having spent every summer working on a dairy farm in Vermont as a kid, I was hoping to find suitable employment in Vermont, but that was not to be. I accepted a sales and marketing position with HP Hood and Sons Dairy in Boston. My boss knew I was hoping to return to Vermont, and after 4 years I was offered the retail manager job at Hood's Burlington Vermont plant. Shortly after, I was moved to general sales manager of Hood's Portland Maine operation. I missed Vermont and 6 months later landed the position as President of the Vermont Chamber. At the time the Chamber was a 3 person operation with an annual budget of \$60,000. When I retired from the Chamber 30 years later we had a staff of 20 and a nearly \$2 million annual budget.
- What prompted the Vermont Chamber of Commerce to concentrate on an international trade partnership with Taiwan? Tell us about your involvement with that.*

[CB] We created an international trade committee in 1993. About that time I received a call from then Senator Jim Jeffords, who had a staffer that had done a 6 month internship in Taipei Taiwan, and thought Vermont had trade opportunities with Taiwan. We invited Taiwan's trade rep in New York to meet with our committee and he confirmed our opportunities in Taiwan. We asked Sen. Jeffords to lead a Vermont trade delegation to Taipei and he agreed. That trip was in August of 1993. We were hosted by Taiwan's ministry of foreign affairs. We followed up by participating in 3 annual food trade shows. I met a Taiwanese trading company owner who said to succeed in Taiwan we needed a full time presence. We opened a full-time trade office in 1997. Meanwhile I had fallen in love with Taiwan's culture and lifestyle. I made many trips to Taiwan from 1993 through 2000 promoting many of Vermont's products, higher education and tourism. I also began travelling to mainland China beginning in 2000. I decided I wanted to live in Taiwan, but my friend said that the big opportunities were in mainland China, so in 2003 I resigned as chamber president and moved to Shanghai to direct the chamber's new China international trade office.
- From the your living and travelling in China, what did you enjoy the most? What was the most challenging?*

[CB] My goal beyond my business responsibilities was to try to understand as much as possible about Chinese culture by experiencing Chinese culture. To that end I lived in a middle class local neighborhood and the only foreigner in a very large area. There are many things to enjoy about China. Business opportunities abound for those willing to invest the time and resources to understand the business culture and overall culture, which differ significantly from those in the west. Chinese culture includes many of my own values such as a strong work ethic, personal responsibility, strong family ties, focus on education and valuing personal relationships. Beyond that, the food is incredible, a thousand different choices prepared a thousand different ways. It's the best food in the world! After living and travelling throughout much of China for 10 years, I still find that every day of each trip is a new adventure.
- What Pikes have you managed to stay in touch with personally? Who have you lost touch with and would be interested in seeing?*

[CB] Some have left us, but Ken Canfield, my roomie for all three years in the house, and I have remained very close friends and see each other often. I've lost touch with Will Anderson who is in Maine.
- What's your fondest memory of 17 South Avenue?*

[CB] It's tough to settle on just one, but for me it was the camaraderie, which would include the study and learning support, experience sharing, social life and friendships that were created. I was rowing during my years in the house and the support from the brothers helped me balance classes with rowing with study etc. I would be remiss if i didn't identify Gibber as a key player in all of the above. He had his moments, as we all know, but was an amazing man who cared deeply about his flock and beloved by all of us who had the privilege of sharing the house with him. After graduation he and I stayed in touch until his passing.

If you'd like to participate in Five Questions, or have a suggestion for someone you like to hear from, finger him to Tom Sporney [[tsporney@betathedata.net](mailto:tsporney@betathedata.net)].

## Dik's Ravings

Chas Horvath and his wife, Mary, were here in DC recently, visiting their son, CJ, who is working his way through college as a waiter at a German restaurant. My wife and I joined the Horvaths at the restaurant to see how the lad is doing. He

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Washington correspondent

passed my impromptu test, and knew the German word for "beer," which is "bier," and is pronounced "beer." (It's difficult for me to be too pedagogical when I'm in pre-schnitzel drooling mode.) Chas is one of our funniest story tellers, which is why I had the foresight to wear rubber pants, but we never got around to reminiscing about the squirrel-in-the-Library incident, or his stealthy trip to Wells College under the pile of laundry in the back of Doug Wright's van. We spent the evening talking about grown-up stuff.

Recent email reminiscences among early '60s era Pikes centered around cars. I don't know how I got involved, being a mid-'70s guy. Anyway, a bunch of them had foreign sports cars. The brotherhood started bidding some working class schlubs along the way, because by 1976, the Pike parking lots were littered with hand-me-down sedans and other Detroit detritus. All of the crappiest cars belonged to Jim Dake. He had a Fairlane that had an external frame welded to it, because the original one had rusted out. I have written previously of his oil-burning Vega (pardon the redundancy). Donzo had an Opel, if you can imagine. Chris Ashley did have the class to drive both a Mustang and a Bimmer, but in between he had a Vega, too. I had a car for a semester – it was a Lamborghini Countach, but to discourage thieves and moochers, I disguised it as a 1976 Toyota Corolla with a four cylinder engine, a manual choke, and plastic seats that somehow made your ass feel colder than the outside air. I smacked a deer with that car, and hit it so flush that it caved in the front, and dented both fenders; the deer got clean away, so I didn't even have the satisfaction of eating it.

For no apparent reason, here's a picture of Nate Rudgers:



You're welcome.

Speaking of cars, one of the stupider things I've done was to jump onto the hood of Jim Kopp's Bimmer. At the time, he was driving it up South Avenue. With a Dik across the windshield, it was hard for Jim to see, and he missed the turn, sending the car over a log and into a ditch and me through the roadside scrub. Florence Nightingale Kopp jumped out, ignored my immobile form, and screamed "my car, my car!" Fortunately, I was drunk.

A great theme here would be "brothers losing their cars in corn fields," but I'm already on the naughty list of a few of our esteemed brothers, and I don't want to further perpetuate the notion that college fraternity life has anything to do with hijinks, so I'll take a miss. Man, I caught an earful after the columns about reckless endangerment and the fun one can have with corn oil and root vegetables! The last thing I need is more opprobrium. Suffice it to say that testosterone, beer, and gasoline are a heady mix. If any of you colonial Pikes are reading this, you should know that we alumni like to embellish stories, and for the most part, we studied hard and went to the

library daily. Why, I spent many hours in the library, the stone one, up the hill next to the food place, with all the books and things. I was the maestro of the card catalog. Gibber once asked me if I lived in that library! That's how much I studied. And it paid off! I made the List of Smart Guys, and graduated magnum opus with a degree on real paper, with a seal and a picture of a guy with a beard. Not the fun kind of seal, either, but the studious kind. Yes, we were scholars.

Okay, just this: at least three guys in the late '70s lost their cars in corn fields. They were only found after Sherlock Holmesian effort. I think one of the incidents required hounds. Another incident ended in jail, but, and this is the important thing, we All Learned Valuable Lessons. Remember kids, in the words of the great philosopher, Ed Catto, it's not fun until someone loses an eye.



## Alumni Notes

Ironman **Alfredo Martel '87** was interviewed by Ad Age [[adage.com/article/cmo-interviews/caribou-coffee-finds-silver-lining-store-closures/243656/](http://adage.com/article/cmo-interviews/caribou-coffee-finds-silver-lining-store-closures/243656/)] in August about Caribou Coffee's current consolidation. Alfredo continues to compete in triathlons; follow him on Facebook [[www.facebook.com/alfredo.v.martel](http://www.facebook.com/alfredo.v.martel)].

**Mark Podgainsky '88** recently his 25<sup>th</sup> reunion, and had a strong showing from the class.

"Jimmy Cone, Jon Kaiden, Howie Ross, Adam Sussman, Will Friese, Mike Mathewson, Jeff Vreeland, all attended. Also around campus were Chow (of course), Ed Conti, Box, and Andy Glasner. We had a rousing singing of Itsy Bitsy Spider, which attracted the attention of a brother from an earlier class who was walking outside past the house, thinking that it was closed because there was no sign. Upon hearing the singing, he came in and joined the festivities. Thanks to all who set up a nice event for alumni."

## Chapter Eternal

The brothers of Beta Theta Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha extend their sympathy to the families and friends of the following brothers:

**Richard L. Harder '51**

**Allan Douglas Martin '56**  
January 10, 2010

**Ralph E. Schmollinger '62**  
June 8, 2009

**Edward D. 'Ted' Tinker '62**  
May 5, 2003