



# BETA THETA DATA

Spring 2014 Volume 62 Number 2

## Pika 2.0

Reboot is a pop culture term that you understand even if you haven't used the word before. It simply means restarting a fictional narrative. And refers to updating the beloved and familiar aspects of a character or story so that it works better for the current time and society. For example, the James Bond franchise has been updated numerous times. 007 has morphed from a WWII veteran with a cruel streak to a metrosexual-ish guy with a female mentor and boss. The current Star Trek movies feature a new Kirk, a new Spock and a refreshing of favorite storylines. Spider-Man was rebooted by Sony in 2002 and again, amazingly, in 2012. And on TV, a rebooted Sherlock Holmes is recovering from substance abuse and Dr. Watson has become a woman.

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

In each case, talented folks realized that were too many barnacles attached to the ship of their particular narrative. Too much of what their characters, mythology and culture history stood for didn't ring true for today's audiences. So they kept the good parts, jettisoned the bad parts and started anew. And these brave folks enjoy great success because their passionate audiences understood the need for a reboot. And guess what? These heroes are even more popular because they attract new followers. New generations of passionate fans essentially say, "This is cool and it works for me".

And here's more good news: our Pi Kappa Alpha reboot is a grand success! Early in May, an Ivy League colony became a brotherhood of Beta Theta Pikes. Under the stars on the Arts Quad, top brass from Cornell University and Pi Kappa Alpha National Headquarters joined with our Alumni Advisory Group, dedicated alumni and even parents to welcome these men as brothers in the rebooted Pi Kappa Alpha chapter.

The new Pike is ready for the challenges of 2014 and beyond. But here's the best part. They are not just prepared to respond, but to lead the way. Cornell's Pi Kappa Alpha reboot is the poster child for how to do it right today and how to do it right for future. We are an example of how to focus on what's important, how to get rid of a dated culture and how to create something that will give back to the community. And ultimately, to be a source of pride for all involved.

As Cornell University, and every other university, struggles to understand to the role of fraternity life, we're on the forefront offering our visions and fresh solutions.

But make no mistake. The reward for stepping up and rechartering is a one-way ticket to a long walk on a tightrope. These college men know that there's plenty of folks who want them to fail, and can't wait to wag their collective fingers at them with a smarmy "tsk-tsk" and say, "I knew it would never work." It won't be easy, but who wants easy?

That's one of the reasons we've got so many dedicated alumni involved. Batman had Alfred. King Arthur had Merlin. Luke Skywalker had Obi Won and Yoda. And our new brothers have the Alumni Advisory Group. Andy Glasner leads the AAG, a top-notch task force of focused and dedicated alumni, as they work closely with our new brothers blazing new trails. I've heard both the alumni and the actives say "we're getting the better part of this deal." (Unabashed plug: Interested in helping? Join the AAG. We can always use more dedicated alumni.)

Originally I was thinking of titling this column "The Glorious Start..or What Now". But upon reflection, I realized how off base that is. We know what now. The actives know what now. Now it's time to get down to business. This August, for the first time in four years, active brothers will be living at 17 South Avenue and they'll be doing it with a renewed sense of purpose and a fresh new vision. I couldn't be more proud of the alumni who've worked to get us to this spot and of the Cornelians who we now call brothers.

We have 78 new Captain Kirks who've just earned the keys to a refitted Enterprise. Strap your self in and get ready for adventure!

See you at Homecoming.

## Board of Directors, 2013-2014

term		
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2015	Ed Catto, President	201-314-4558
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2018	Steve Amador, Treasurer	703-269-7096

## Calendar

June 5-8, 2014	Reunion Weekend
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
May 1, 2015	Spring 2015 BΘData deadline
Sept 18-19, 2015	Homecoming
March 26, 2017	Centennial of BΘ chapter founding
March 1, 2018	PiKA 150 <sup>th</sup> anniversary

## Advisor's Corner

EXTRA! EXTRA! HOT OFF THE PRESS! The Colony at Cornell University is now Beta Theta Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha! The chartering ceremony occurred on

the weekend of May 3rd with all colony members initiated by teams from national, local chapters, and alumni. The celebration followed in a tent on the Arts Quad and was attended by members of the Cornell administration, Pike National, alumni, and of course a lot of happy new brothers and their dates. It's a great feeling to have our fraternity back on the hill.

A huge thank you to all that were involved in this effort, but most of all, congratulations to the new brothers. You've worked hard to do something special and to make friends you will have for the rest of your life. Welcome brothers and "Here's to the class of 1917!"

With this major milestone behind us, the new chapter will occupy 17 South Ave starting this fall. The house manager and new officers are working on the details including hiring of a cook, room assignments, and identification of our live in advisor. Of course, they are also working on the social calendar, so look forward to Homecoming events back in the house - I hope to see you all there!

## Endowment Fund Contributors Needed

Beta Theta's Chapter Endowment Fund (CEF), at \$6,639, is \$3,361 short of the \$10k floor where the Pike Foundation

[\[www.pikes.org/EducationalFoundation.aspx?pid=10\]](http://www.pikes.org/EducationalFoundation.aspx?pid=10) would grant 3-5% annually for Pike chapter programming, i.e. Pike U & Chapter Executive Conferences. We are seeking to find 3 other alums that would join me with \$1000 contributions. Ideally, we would like to have this in place by the time of the Pike Convention in Baltimore this summer.

Please contact me directly if you are interested.

## Chuck Whitehead receives Law School's Anne Lukingbeal Award

At a reception in the Berger Atrium on April 22 2014, Professor Charles K. Whitehead received the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Anne Lukingbeal Award. Named after its first recipient, Associate Dean and Dean of Students Anne Lukingbeal, the award is presented to a member of the faculty or staff who has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the women of Cornell. The Women's Law Coalition (WLC), a student organization that advocates for women at the Law School and in the legal profession through educational outreach and philanthropic activities, established the award in 1999. Recipients are selected through a vote of the students.

more...  
[cornelllawschool.tumblr.com/post/84526272032/charles-k-whitehead-receives-anne-lukingbeal-award](http://cornelllawschool.tumblr.com/post/84526272032/charles-k-whitehead-receives-anne-lukingbeal-award)

## 5 Questions with... Kevin Williams '81

Kevin [<http://forensicmeteorology.com/?page=aboutfounder>] was the kicker for the Cornell freshman football team, and founder of an exchange program with broadcast majors at Ithaca College.

- Kevin, how did you get to your current position as Director of Meteorology at the NBC affiliate WHEC in Rochester?*

[KW] I have been on the air in Rochester since 1983 and I have been blessed to be working at WHEC since 1996. Previously, I was serving as the Director of Meteorology at another station in town when that station was sold. Upon researching this new ownership and interacting with the new local management they put in place, it was clear to me that this was not a situation in which I wanted to remain. Thus, I was able to take advantage of a "get out of jail free" clause in my contract. It allowed me, in my sole discretion, to declare my current contract null and void in the event of the sale or transfer of ownership of the station. I declared my intention to do just that to the great angst of the new owners who were so angry that I even had such a clause in my contract that they started to dismantle my office the very next day in order to make my remaining days their "memorable". For me, their actions conjured up that old, great hockey cheer heard when the Big Red is thrashing an opponent at Lynah only to be meaninglessly scored upon late in the game..."it just doesn't matter." Regardless, because I did not have the standard non-compete clause, WHEC and I were free to enter into an agreement.
- How did your Weather-Track business get started?*

[KW] It was on September 1, 1980 when, as a senior, I began forecasting for my first radio client...WTKO in Ithaca, from the 11th floor of Bradfield Hall. The folks at Cornell Atmospheric Science were so supportive as I attempted to start a business while still a student. (Note that while most Cornellians lamented getting up for 8:00 classes, I had to be at Bradfield by 6:00 every morning to go on the air.) Upon graduating, and now with 2 partners, I moved our office downtown to the Dewitt Building. Then in 1983, I moved the business to Rochester. Today, my company serves clients in the United States and Canada with tailored forecasts, broadcasts and research. My day starts at 5 a.m. on the radio and concludes at 11:30 p.m. with the late night t.v. news. While I have achieved a modicum of notoriety for my local radio and television work, I have earned a broader, more national reputation as an expert in weather-related litigation. Along the way, and through my consulting work, I was also a weather columnist for Gannett, penned 3 local weather books and helped create a weather exhibition at our local science museum.
- You are among a number of meteorologists who say global warming is not true. Taking a strong position on a controversial subject must have given you interesting professional encounters through the years. Please share one with us.*

[KW] The Earth's climate is always changing, going thru cycles of warmth and cold, drought and flood. Carbon dioxide, that demonized "pollutant," is actually not a pollutant at all. It is a plant food and is thus a critical component of life on Earth. And it is not a primary driver of our climate. The sun, with assists from ocean cycles, volcanoes and cosmic forces, is the main driver of the planet's climate. By the way, the Earth has not warmed since 1998 and predictions of "falling skies" have largely failed as tornado and hurricane counts are way down, while global snowfall and sea ice are increasing. It is too bad that it has become so politicized and that contrarians like me (and there are actually thousands of like-minded climate scientists, by the way) are demonized. I came to really see that when debating an individual at a local college who was a strong, manmade global warming advocate. At the end of the debate, a man and woman from the audience came over to me. ( I recall that they were both wearing Al Gore buttons.) I struck up a seemingly pleasant conversation with the apparent husband. But when that conversation ended, his wife turned to me and bellowed: "I can't believe that someone from Cornell (me) could be that stupid." I wished her a nice day as a security person quickly whisked her away.
- What Pikes have you managed to stay in touch with personally? Who have you lost touch with and would be interested in seeing?*

[KW] I have tried to stay in touch, largely by going to homecomings and reunions. I was feeling badly about not keeping better in touch with my big bro, Johnny Olsewski, when fate would step in. My wife, daughter and I were on a campus visit when, lo and behold, our path took us right in front of Johnny O and his lovely bride Chris. It was amazing and we have promised to stay better in touch. Like countless others, I enjoy reading Dik's ramblings and clever witticisms and have exchanged cards during the holidays. And I am fortunate that CB (Chuck Smith) lives just down the road from me which has allowed us to take in some hockey and football games together. I have also seen Nate Rudgers and Bill Page who reside(d) in the area. Bill Webster and Mark Ochs also used to pass through every now and again.
- What's your fondest memory of 17 South Avenue?*

[KW] Hmmm. So many. Actually, first thing that came to mind was when I was living at the "Estate." It was the late night chorus of "cookies in K-Dubbs room" that I will always remember as Johnny-O, Monty (Bob Montione), Ketch (Kevin Ketchum), Paul Lego, Jeff Taub, Jim Dake, Tom Berg and other brothers would stop in to "shoot the breeze" while munching on cookies sent from home. But there are so many memories that flood my mind: Gibber, formals, date nights, The Dream Girl song; the tube room, the fire truck, hockey games at Lynah, road trips, intramurals, Joe's, the Chapter House. There were, however, some memories I would like to lose. To this day I still can't eat jello due to a traumatic "dinging" experience some many years ago. But on a serious note, I wish to state that I consider my choice to attend Cornell and to rush PIKA among the wisest decisions I have ever made. My years on the Hill were among the best of my life. I truly treasure the memories and the people that helped make them and will always be a proud and grateful PIKE and Cornellian.

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@betathadata.net](mailto:tsporney@betathadata.net)].

## Dik's Ravings

A few of us gathered for dinner in Boston in January. Attendees included Mike Dowd, Chas Horvath, Rick Eno, Andy Bjork, and Moshe Cohen. We

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Washington correspondent

almost didn't invite Rick because of the whole table manners and flatulence issue,

but I decided to be on my best behavior and not scare him off this time. Andy and his wife, Carolyn Crump - brother Steve Crump's sister - finally unloaded the last of their mooching daughters, so they're selling the sprawling estate near Boston and moving to a smaller place in Newport. Andy got choked up talking about one of his daughters, which I thought was corny, until he got to the point, which is that she worked in a brewery, and then I got choked up, too. Moshe teaches and consults on dispute resolution, coaching, and other business issues, work which takes him all over the world. Earlier that week I heard him on the radio talking about Ernest Shackleton, the Antarctic explorer, if "explorer" is the word I want, given that Ernie's claim to fame with regard to the frozen continent is simply that going there didn't kill him. I hadn't seen Mike in years; he is hale, although he has about 6 gray hairs, which is the only way you can tell he's over 50. Chas tried to set us straight on his obsession with squirrels during college, but the stories have swamped the truth, and it was a losing proposition. Chas has many good squirrel recipes, so if you're from Kentucky, or just in the mood for a wiggly, furry treat, give him a call.

Mark "Taz" Ochs bought a classic Austin Healey and had it restored. It is a beautiful automobile, and he's going to let me drive it! I just have to meet a few conditions first, such as taking a sports car driving test, learning the shift pattern, and going 131 years without another major accident. I told him I was happy that he was so concerned about my safety, but he just stared at me blankly. Only 128 years to go!

Monti "Monti" Montione sent me an article about a guy who broke the 5 minute mile. My first thought while reading it was, as yours is, "so what?" Then I got to the part about the guy chugging beer during the run. Monti used to run the Phi Psi 500, see, and he was reminiscing. (The Phi Psi was a running-while-chugging-beer race, back when it was still politically correct for undergraduates to consume vast quantities of beer in public.) Monti seemed kind of jealous, mostly because the guy ran a better time, and also didn't run the last half mile covered in vomit.

I am in frequent contact with Dream Girl Lynda Hershey Spalding. Her two kids - one of each - are grown and out of the house. Lynda is still a sweet soul, ever thinking of ways to improve the world; if we were all more like Lynda, it wouldn't be that difficult, but then I wouldn't have any material to work with.

Our old frat lodge will be open for business again soon. A new crop of brothers will redeem our name on the Hill. Many alumni banded together and worked hard to renew our brotherhood. My message, from the bottom of my heart, and I think many of us share this sentiment, is simply this: don't screw it up.



## Alumni Notes

**Joe Quade '49** [airborne1@optonline.net] is proud to report that he recently was honored to receive the French Legion of Honor Medal (Chevalier of the French Republic), presented to him by the French Ambassador to the United States.

"It was presented to me in recognition of the part I played in the liberation of France during World War II, when I served as a paratrooper in the US 17th Airborne Division."

Linda & **Chip Baines '78** [chip.baines@gmail.com] are expecting their 3rd grandchild in December, and a 4th in June 2014.

**Dana Lawrence '61** is serving as chaplain's volunteer at a nearby state jail on a part-time basis, sharing the gospel message, encouraging new believers, and sketching them as we share their stories in their dormitory areas.

"I've posted some of the sketches on Facebook; check out *Dana's Faithbook Art*".

"Our third child, Caroline, was admitted to Cornell's College of Engineering '18 class. That completes the flush: Diane '80, Hans '81, Liz '09, Adam '11 Caroline '18."

- Hans Drenkard '81 [thsphy@optonline.net]

"Hi, from lat 33 50 54 long 112 15 46. Still living on my boat in sunny Arizona. Kids in college. Girlfriend Trish is still with me, Good luck to the chapter 'reset', and thanks to all those who have made this happen."

- Doug Wright '81 [dlw602@gmail.com]

## Chapter Eternal

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

**Peter D. Stocky '59**  
October 26, 2011

**Robert Louis Wegryn '59**  
May 5, 2013

[<http://www.higginsandbonner.com/obits/obituary.php?id=294013>]

**Chuck Winchester '48**  
November 24, 2013