



BETA THETA DATA

Fall 2015 Volume 64 Number 1

Capital Campaign Update

Thanks to your commitment to our fraternity and your generosity, we are pleased to report that we successfully concluded our capital campaign this summer. We exceeded our campaign goal of \$100,000, raising a total of \$136,000. Over 280 alumni and actives contributed to the campaign, including every member of the pledge class of 2014. Participation was broad

Elliot Dee '84 elliotideellc@gmail.com
&
Tom Sporney '75
tsporney@betathetadate.com

based, including alumni and actives from 39 classes from the pledge class of 1949 to 2015. And our campaign renewed many relationships among the brotherhood and reminded us of the powerful ties that bind us together. Thank you for making our campaign a success!

Work has begun to refurbish the Pi Kappa Alpha Big Front Lawn. Due to the weather, the schedules of our contractors, a structural problem encountered with the porch and delays in issuing a permit from the Ithaca building department, we have revised the schedule to complete the construction work. We expect to finish the front lawn by the end of year and wish to thank Chuck Smith, who is volunteering his time to serve as our general contractor for the project. Once the front lawn project is completed, the Alpha Theta Board will decide how to allocate the additional funds raised during our capital campaign. Several capital projects are under consideration.

We wish to thank the members of our Capital Campaign Committee for their exemplary dedication to this project: Josh Bernstein, Ken Hull, Bill Page, Marc Rubenstein, Paul Wessel and Alan Zucchini. We also want to express our appreciation to our Class Captains who reached out to their classmates and rallied alumni to participate. And most importantly, we wish to salute everyone who donated to the campaign. Your contributions have strengthened our fraternity for years to come.

Fred Crow Returns to Ithaca on Veteran's Day

Fred Crow '51 is a decorated living war veteran, and a PiKA fraternity brother. Fred was a POW in the Hanoi Hilton for almost six years.



In front of the Statler on arrival for Veterans Day, 2015, the Big Red Band, son Jeff Crow (Major, USA, retired), Logan Cheek '60, (captain, AUS, retired), Marty Merry '65 MD, (his flight surgeon for this mission, retired) and to the far, far right, TSGT Sara Lynn Castrogiovanni, (AFROTC NCOIC) greeted Fred. A good time was had by all with a short concert: Air Force Song, Davy, Carry Me Back to the Old Days, and the Alma Mater.

Chapter President's Report

Fall of 2015 has been a great semester for Beta Theta. We took on nine new members making PIKE one of the largest fraternities on campus with 78 brothers. Each new member has added new opinions and thoughts to our brotherhood which only makes us stronger. The chapter is happy with the way they have integrated themselves into our brotherhood, and we are proud to call each of them our brother. PIKE is positioned to have a successful spring rush which could push our fraternity into triple digit membership. The active chapter is excited to see our membership grow and to see the PIKE brand spreading around campus.

Matt Lim '17
mlimpike@gmail.com

I would like to thank those of you who came to the Hill for homecoming this year. It was a pleasure to meet all of you and share stories-it is always fun to have alumni back at 17 South. I would also like to thank Tim Cole for helping Beta Theta host a successful gathering. With his help, I am sure each homecoming will be better than the last. For those of you who could not make it out this year, I encourage you to come for homecoming next year. It's a great opportunity to rekindle relationships, meet the active chapter, and see 17 South again. On behalf of the active chapter, thank you to everyone who contributed to the capital campaign. The front porch is looking fantastic, and we are excited to show it off once it is completed. When the sun comes out in the spring and the weather is above freezing, we hope to host outside events and utilize the new space.

My time as president of Beta Theta is coming to a close. It has truly been an eventful year, and I am proud of the progress that the chapter has made. I believe that the chapter is heading in the right direction, and I am confident that the new executive board will uphold the values of PIKE and drive the fraternity forward. Please feel free to contact me at mrl239@cornell.edu if you would like to reach out. Be on the lookout for November (mustache November) photos on the facebook page: the actives will be growing out their mustaches in support of prostate cancer awareness. Enjoy your holidays, and, as always, phi phi kappa alpha.



Board of Directors, 2015-2016

term		
2016	Ed Catto	201-314-4558
2017	Tim Cole, President	508-982-5266
2018	Steve Amador, Treasurer	703-269-7096
2019	Jeff Reinders, Alumni Relations	630-639-8999
2020	Andrew Salamida, Vice President	607-245-6428

Advisor's Corner

Hello brothers, new and old, locally and around the world.

Andy Glasner '86 arg42@cornell.edu

our time in lovely Ithaca, attending our proud institution, and of course, all the friends we made at 17 South Ave. It is also a concept that is hard to understand or teach until you go through it and feel it yourself. But it is an important one, one worthy of our time and effort. The men currently forming the active brotherhood are learning more each week as they face the challenges of running the house, recruiting new members, staying within the stricter bounds of the university and society, and all the while, completing the rigors of their academic requirements. And as we make steady progress, we also have some growing pains. The previous set of officers and members helped us get our charter back. The current officers and members were the first to move back into the house. Now, we have a newly elected e-board that will take office in the next months and they will work to stabilize the organization, refine the policies and build on the hard work of the past few years. We started well with a strong showing at homecoming and reintroduced a few of the older tradition and songs (we may need Flax-man or Rick Ross to help us edit a few of the lyrics to a more modern and politically correct version!). We also welcomed some new members to the fall pledge class. Oops, I mean new members... We got to see three father and son pairs: Hegie, Kibels, and Kenji were all present. Now, we will prepare for recruitment during the spring rush. And of course, with all of our activities, we will try to grow this feeling of brotherhood between actives, new members and the alumni.

For those of you that missed homecoming this year, reserve the date: September 23-24, 2016. There will be wine and Cheese Friday night, the Alpha Theta mtg on Saturday morning and some form of BBQ before either football or Rugby. And we can expect a continuously improving formal at the house on Saturday night. Hope to see you all there.

Contributing to Cornell Pike

One of the unexpected results arising from conducting the Capital Campaign was that the Committee, through Steve Amador's initiative, followed through on the research necessary to investigate whether a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) entity could be established for contributions. So, after many years of asking the question, the Alpha Theta Community Improvement Campaign Inc. has been established as a public charity, and recognized by the IRS as an organization eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions in the future. Elliott Dee, Bill Page, and Tom Sporney are named as Directors of the corporation in its bylaws. In general, an individual who itemizes deductions may

Calendar

May 1, 2016	Spring 2015 BΘData deadline
June 9-12, 2016	Reunion Weekend
Sept 23-24, 2016	Homecoming
November 1, 2016	Fall 2016 BΘData deadline
November, 2016	Pike University, Philadelphia
March 26, 2017	Centennial of BΘ chapter founding
March 1, 2018	PiKA 150 th anniversary

deduct contributions to most charitable organizations up to 50% of his or her adjusted gross income computed without regard to net operating loss carrybacks.

At Homecoming, the Alpha Theta Board of Directors discussed the utilization of this new entity into the overall plan, and a follow-up conference call was held on October 6th. Moving forward, it was decided that the old Capital Improvement Fund would remain in place to collect regular semester-occurring contributions from the active chapter, and that the new tax-deductible Alpha Theta Community Improvement Campaign (ATCIC) would be available to alumni for any contributions \$100 or more. Also, ATCIC would be available to the active chapter, subject to discussion & approval by ATCIC Directors, for philanthropic fundraising campaigns actives organize where tax-deductibility would be advantageous to the campaign.

So, presently, avenues of support to Alpha Theta presently are

- Regular Dues: for Alpha Theta operations, annually \$50 for five years graduated, \$35 less than 5 years
- Extra Contributions
- Alpha Theta Capital Improvement Fund (ATCIF): actives contributions through chapter payment only
- Alpha Theta Community Improvement Campaign (ATCIC): public charity, tax deductible, \$100 or more
- Beta Theta Chapter Endowment Fund (CEF): through Memorial Headquarters (PiKA International), distributions from CEF interest to the chapter scholarship fund start in 2016; these funds are available for chapter education activities (e.g. PikeU registration)

Homecoming Recap

Homecoming weekend was a great success. The alumni and current brothers congregated at 17 South for a weekend that was beneficial and enjoyable for all. Friday night, a wine and

cheese event was held at the house so that the current brothers could meet the alumni. The night set the tone for the rest of the weekend. The Alpha Theta meeting on Saturday morning was productive, as the finances of the fraternity were discussed, including the capital campaign and the front steps. Finally, the homecoming dinner was a great success, and a building block for the future. A board of donators to the capital campaign was revealed, and alumni, their dates, and brothers had a wonderful time. The weekend was excellent, and something that we can improve upon in the future.

Jon Kibel '17 jkibelpike@gmail.com

5 Questions with...

Dr. John M. Olsewski, MD '80

John [health.usnews.com/doctors/john-olsewski-17042] was initiated in 1977, and served Beta Theta as President, Vice President, Secretary, and Athletic Manager. He was was the Chairman of the Alumni Fund Drive in 1979-1980. He enjoys golf, swimming, NYC professional teams (Mets, Giants, Rangers), and Cornell lacrosse.

- *Johnny O, it's pretty clear from your CV that you had early direction to be on the career path that you've achieved. How was it that you came to your interest in medicine? And, more specifically, orthopedic and spinal specialties?*
 [JO] My interest in medicine was fostered at the youngest of ages. My father graduated NYU in the early 1930's and was accepted to NYU School of Medicine. But these were the depression years and there was no money in the family to send Dad to school, and he was the only male in the family, so he had to be the breadwinner. And then World War II came along and by the time my father left the service, he felt he was too old. So I was labeled at an early age to fulfill the family's dream. Orthopaedic surgery was easy, playing 4 sports growing up and three sports in high school and then lacrosse for three years for the Big Red led to that subspecialty. Every young orthopaedic surgeon aspires to be a sports team physician, and I was no different; but you learn early on in your training that these opportunities are few and far between. So I wanted a subspecialty that made me unique and marketable to a University based or large private practice Orthopaedic group and early in my training I was extremely fortunate to meet my first mentor, Dr. Edward H. Simmons, one of the most famous spine surgeons in Canada who had recently come to the States to practice in Buffalo, where I had attended medical school and was obtaining my Orthopaedic Surgery residency training. I got intense training in spine surgery as a resident, much more than most Fellows across the country get, and we collaborated on many research projects. Dr. Simmons lined up my Fellowship, that is the way it was done back in those days, one big gun calling another big gun to say, you take my guy, you will not regret it. So I was the last of the two year trained Spine Fellows at Twin Cities Scoliosis Spine Center at the University of Minnesota, the original Spine Fellowship in the United States. I was very blessed to have such an experience to bring back to New York.
- *You've given presentations entitled Wrong-site surgery: Evolving the culture of safety in health care, and The impact of the malpractice crisis on the practice of Orthopaedic Surgery. Can you apply principles of risk management in medicine to that of fraternity operations? How so?*
 [JO] The concept of risk management in medicine was really born from the culture of safety that the airline industry started back in the 1960's to avoid fatalities. It is really centered around the concept that a culture must exist where all members of the team feel safe to speak up if they sense something is not right, that there will not be ramifications. Applying the concept to fraternity operations is really very easy; whenever we as a group were guilty of being about to do something really stupid or dangerous, the chances are nearly one hundred percent that at least a few of us in the room knew that our anticipated action was WRONG. If those people felt the freedom to speak up, to have what we call in medicine a "Time out", before we do a procedure so that everyone in the room understands what we are about to do, the chance of someone getting hurt goes down dramatically. But if that culture does not exist, peer pressure takes over, people feel reluctant to speak up, and then bad things happen.
- *It was good to catch up with you at Homecoming. You told me about the experience of bringing your daughter by 17 South Avenue while the house was occupied by renters & not the brotherhood. Would you share your thoughts about that? What is your advice to the active chapter for the future?*
 [JO] I had spent the first 16 years of my daughter's life bragging to her about my experience at Cornell, and most specifically how the House had brought me out of my shell, yes I was actually very quiet in high school, and most importantly helped me develop the social skills of dealing intelligently and respectfully with people who have a opinion different from my own; so essential to my profession. I was mortified and embarrassed to no living end to bring her over the House at that age and find the door locked, the sign gone and boarders living there. And the irony of ironies is that my daughter is now the Executive Vice President of Pan Hellenic at Cornell. She is just so much smarter and so much more accomplished than her father was at that age. My advice to the Active Chapter is very simple, may you never go through that experience when you come back 30 years from now.
- *What Pikes have you managed to stay in touch with personally? Who have you lost touch with and would be interested in seeing?*
 [JO] I stay in touch with my lineage. Kevin Williams (KW, one of my little bros) lives and works outside Rochester, Chuck (CB) Smith, my great big bro, is close to Ithaca; and we try to get together for Cornell lacrosse games. I still follow the lacrosse team very vocally, getting to three to four home games and the same number of away games per year. I regret that I have not kept in touch with the brothers who work in the New York Metropolitan area. I already promised Paul Wessel at Homecoming that I will take him to the Rangers-Sabres hockey game at MSG.
- *What's your fondest memory of 17 South Avenue?*
 [JO] I am by nature still extremely competitive, so that answer is really easy:

 - Beating ATO three years in a row in softball, including championship games. (Right Bush?)
 - Beating Chi Psi really, really badly in the semifinals of football (Dik was over their house later that night and he described it best, "they were livid!").
 - Beating DU twice in the same season in box lacrosse (Right Chris?), and almost beating them in the championship game in football (I still firmly believe we would have beaten them if we had one day off after having to push those big Chi Psi bodies around the day before in the semis).
 - And you know what made it all worthwhile? It was to look to the sideline and see over 100 Pikes and their dates screaming and singing on our sideline, and maybe four or five fans on the opponents sideline.

Dik's Ravings

Moshe Cohen and I had dinner here in DC recently. Moshe lives in Boston with his family, but travels the world for his sideline as a mediation expert. His day job is teaching MBA students at Boston

Dik Saalfeld '80 rfs25@cornell.edu
Washington correspondent

University. This is an unexpected career trajectory, as far as I'm concerned, given that he majored in physics at Cornell, and has a masters in electrical engineering from McGill. But he is a Renaissance man, and the multiple interests suit his can-do nature. We ate at Martin's Tavern, a Georgetown institution, and one that has mercifully never sported a fern or wood fired bruschetta oven.

Steve Crump, his wife Lisa, and their daughter Paige have lived in Basel, Switzerland for years. The other kids have flown the coop for college, medical school, jobs, and the like. Steve writes a blog called "An American in Basel." Those of you fortunate enough to receive his annual letters, or to have followed his class column in the Cornell Alumni Magazine, know that he is a gifted writer. While the Swiss are ripe for skewering, Steve treats their fabled fastidiousness with gentleness and awe. Plus, he's funnier than a ... a... thing that's really funny. I don't know – barrel of monkeys. Funnier than me, anyway, for what that's worth. Look him up at www.crumpinderschweiz.blogspot.com.

Steve's brother-in-law, Andy Bjork, is branching out into the toy business. He started a company called Justa 'Bout Any Thangoes, LLC to make and market Head-Liners™ [www.kickstarter.com/projects/745628762/head-linerstm-retropop-art-collectable-toys], which are described as "Retro-POP Art Collectable Toys." The prototypes look pretty keen. You can, of course, get in on the ground floor, but I'm not getting any kickbacks, so you'll have to hunt him down yourself. As you know, Alpha Theta Director Ed Catto is also in the toy business. There seems to be a trend here, one that involves regressing further back than college beer parties to the warm comfort of the playroom and mommy's ample bosom... oh oh. Bad visuals, given that mommy's ample bosom is now below her even more ample knees. In any case, I am regressing, too – I'm packing up my toys and moving back to Florida with my lovely bride, where I will sleep late, go fishing, and grumble at the incomprehensible world. I'm retiring from Federal service, selling the manse, and going to where the climate suits my clothes. At some point I will work again – not because I will need to stay busy and get out of the house and all that, which will be the official story, but because I will need the money. I suppose I could sell a kidney – if you have a spare, give me a call, or send it to me packed in dry ice.

Monti's son, Justin, and a couple of other college age kids stayed at our house for a few days over the summer. They were performing the traditional rite of the American youth whereby they explore the USA without spending any money. Remember that? Pack up the folks' castoff Studebaker, couch-dive for gas money, and hit the dusty trail. Most of us did it. Anyway, despite the iPhones and piercings and tattoos, America's youth is still as it was, 'lo! those many years ago, namely deeply appreciative of free lodging, food, and beer. When peers visit us, our goal is give them a rich, cultural experience, showing the best that our Nation's capital has to offer. When peers' children visit, our goal is to send them home alive. Mission accomplished!



During the recent front stairs fundraiser I rallied enough of my classmates – Pledge Class of '77 – to pay for and get a step in front of the fraternity house named after us. Yup, if it weren't for us, anybody trying to get to the front door would fall into the bowels of the earth. It's going to be engraved, and everything. Next time you're huffing your way up those goddamn stairs, stop and think of us, as you admire our step, and curse us for not installing an escalator.

Alumni Notes

Neil Best '82 [nbest1@gmail.com] daughter, Simone Leah Best, is headed to the hill as a member of the class of 2019, joining Jeremy Wessel, son of Paul, '83.

"I told her to feel free to enjoy the soon-to-come upgrades to the front of the fraternity lodge -- from afar! I brought her to Homecoming last October to try to seal the deal on her making Cornell her first choice. She spoke to Dik and others that weekend, and came home immediately and applied to... Brown. But it all worked out for the best in the end. I think. I might even let her go to a Pika party -- after she turns 21. Maybe."

Rick Carrington '69 [rcarrington@sbcglobal.net] visited with Charlie and Robin Shafran in NYC at end of September. They have a great life there in the heart of Manhattan, are both still active, while Charlie is retired, he is still very active, dealing with consulting that includes overseas trips. He is also involved in working on programs that are helping to advance medical treatments for malaria (and probably a lot more). They have 2 daughters, one of whom has two children for Robin and Charlie to visit and babysit.

Chapter Eternal

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

John Murnieks
May 7, 2013