



BETA THETA DATA

Fall 2016 Volume 65 Number 1

Advisor's Corner

Hello brothers. Here is an update from the Finger Lakes region. When I am not enjoying a wine tasting and the fall colors, I still make the time to act as advisor for this fine bunch of men in the active chapter. For the most part, that involves staying out of their way and letting them run the house. But now and then, it also means attending chapter events and really getting to see what a great job they are doing. For those that came to homecoming, you got to see the house in terrific condition and enjoy a well put together weekend. For those that follow the chapter on FaceBook, you get to read about a recent philanthropy event "Nothing but Net" that raised over \$3,300 for Cycle of Life and St. Jude. We welcomed new brothers in during the Fall rush and are looking forward to an even busier time in the Spring rush. Of course, we also face the occasional challenge, but the teamwork, communication and professionalism demonstrated in each situation is impressive. In short, the future is bright, so I think I'll enjoy another glass....

Andy Glasner '86 arg42@cornell.edu

5 Questions with...

Alan P. Zucchini, '67

Alan [www.linkedin.com/in/alan-zucchini-3b080a1] served Beta Theta as house manager in his sophomore year, his only year living at 17 South Avenue.

- *Alan, your early career had you in several stints with networking & communications companies. How did the shift come about in starting an environmental company?*

[AZ] Yes, I spent almost 20 years in high tech, both computers and networking. During most of that time I was involved in digital communications at a time when the field was embryonic. I worked for Tymshare/Tymnet for 8 years in various positions. When I left I was VP of Operations and Support. Tymnet was an early form of packet switched network, truly one of the forerunners of the internet (never encountered Al Gore). Spruce is not the first company I started. I left Tymnet in 1983 to start a high tech company, Network Switching Systems (NSS), with the purpose of developing and building high capacity digital communications equipment. This was a high capitalization startup funded by venture capitalists. This company was sold to another High Tech company in 1987. Though the Venture guys got most of the proceeds, the employees did pretty well and I made a few dollars on the sale. I went to work for the acquiring company as VP of Business Development. It was during this time that I was approached by a small start-up in Silicon Valley by the name of Cisco Systems looking for a CEO. At the time Cisco was a tiny company in a couple thousand square foot office. But that is a story for a different time. Suffice it to say that it never happened.

When I was still at NSS, I read some of the early press on the dangers of radon and the need to test and mitigate one's home. I did, in fact, test my home in 1986 and found slightly elevated radon. Even then I thought there was a business opportunity in radon. In late 1988, I once again left my job to start another high tech company. We were planning on developing and building much higher speed networking equipment (in fact, the type now used in the internet). Unfortunately, this was at a time that venture money was scarce and we were in the midst of a bit of a hi-tech crash. Bottom line we never got funded. I had maintained my interest in the radon industry. I decided that this was an opportunity to do some good for the environment and for public health and hopefully to do well in the process. Thus in September of 1989, I, along with 2 minority interest co-founders, incorporated RadonAway. Our first office was a small 120 sq ft bedroom in my house. We had 3 desks, a computer, 2 phones and a typewriter.

- *What is the origin of the company name, Spruce Environmental Technologies? Spruce has had steady growth through the years. How have you accomplished that? What are your primary products and markets? What have been the most significant challenges to the organization in its 27 years? What would you change in hindsight?*

[AZ] A number of years later, we branched out into other Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) areas. The name RadonAway was too limiting. After much discussion we settled on Spruce. It fits an environmental company. I still like the name. RadonAway still exists as a brand. We sought no outside investment so we have bootstrapped the company from the beginning. We started by developing radon fans that addressed a small niche of the market that wasn't being served well. We gradually added to the product offering and have become the dominant radon fan manufacturer in the world. Though we have some non-radon related

{continued on page 3}

Board of Directors, 2016-2017

<u>term</u>		
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
2021	Tom Sporney	410-863-5854

Calendar

March 26, 2017	Centennial of $\beta\Theta$ chapter founding
May 1, 2017	Spring 2017 $\beta\Theta$ Data deadline
June 8-11, 2017	Reunion Weekend
Oct 20-21, 2017	Homecoming
November 1, 2017	Fall 2017 $\beta\Theta$ Data deadline
November, 2017	Pike University, Philadelphia
March 1, 2018	PiKA 150 th anniversary

Homecoming Minutes 2016

The Annual Meeting of the Alpha Theta Fraternity was held at 17 South Avenue, Ithaca, New York, on September 24, 2016, being the 98th Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

The Meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by President Tim Cole.

21 members were in attendance in person, and 35 by proxy.

A moment of silence was observed for Ralph Olivier, who passed away last November.

Minutes of the last annual meeting were read and approved with the correction that "501" be added to "(c)(3)" in the paragraph on the Treasurer's report.

The following reports were given by officers of the Active Chapter:

Duncan McKeen, SMC of the Active Chapter, gave a report on improvements by the actives costing approximately \$30,000.00. Beta Theta chapter currently has the 4th highest GPA of Pike chapters nationwide. There is also an increase in documentation and preservation of chapter records. Four pledges were taken in Fall rush. Insurance for the personal property of the active members was also discussed.

A report by Treasurer Steve Amador was read and approved.

Tom Sporney, Alumni Relations, gave a summary of dues-paying members and donations during the past years, and a comparison with earlier years.

C.B. Smith reported on the Hugh Gibbs Capital Improvement Fund.

Tom Sporney also reported on the capital campaign. Approximately \$127,000.00 was obtained by the campaign fund, plus an additional \$6,500.00 given to ATCIC. The cost of the front lawn project was approximately \$110,000.00. There is a balance in the capital campaign fund of approximately \$1,800, and \$3,000 in the ATCIC account. \$10,000.00 has been paid to Alpha Theta to be used for reimbursement to Beta Theta chapter for some of the improvements they made.

President Tim Cole reported on discussions with Duncan McKeen to improve communications between Alpha Theta and the active chapter. It is proposed that there be regular monthly communications between the president of Alpha Theta, the SMC of the active chapter, and a representative of the Alumni Advisory Group. Proposed modifications to the lease between Alpha Theta and the active chapter have been discussed. Tim

also reported on investigations into the availability of insurance to cover losses to personal property belonging to the members of the active chapter. The answer was that, since Alpha Theta does not have an insurable interest in this property, insurance cannot be obtained, and this insurance must be obtained by the active members themselves.

A motion was made, seconded 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 Ed Catto, whose term expired today. Andy Glasner and Tom Sporney were nominated. Andy Glasner withdrew his nomination. A motion was made and passed that nominations be closed. A motion was made and passed that Tom Sporney be elected by acclamation and Tom Sporney was elected.

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

The meeting was opened to nominations for Trustee of the Hugh S. Gibbs Capital Improvement Fund to complete Ralph Olivier's unexpired term. Ken Hull was nominated. A motion was made, seconded and passed that nominations be closed. A motion was made and passed that Ken Hull be elected by acclamation, and Ken Hull was elected.

OLD BUSINESS

Logan Cheek reported that history of the early Alpha Theta and Pi Kappa Alpha Chapters at Cornell had been accepted as a subject for his Master's Thesis in the ILR School.

NEW BUSINESS

Ed Conti agreed to put together something appropriate for Beta Theta's 100th anniversary next year. A motion was made and passed that a committee for that purpose be created, consisting of Ed Conti, Paul Wessel, and Ed Catto.

A general discussion was held concerning the feasibility of establishing a separate organization as an alumni association. Andy Glasner agreed to organize one or more meetings of any members who were interested in participating to review that question and the structure of the Alpha Theta bylaws in general.

Bob Forness reported that there has been a significant change in the personnel of the University relating to fraternity/sorority relations.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

David S. Miles, Secretary

{continued on page 3}

The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of Alpha Theta Fraternity was held at 17 South Avenue, Ithaca, New York, on September 19, 2015.

The Meeting was called to order at 11:55 a.m. by President Tim Cole.

The following Directors were present: Cole, Amador, Salamida, Sporney and Reinders by video conference call. Also present: Miles, Secretary.

Reading of the Minutes of the last directors' meeting was read and approved.

The following were elected officers of the corporation:
President – Tim Cole

Vice President – Andrew Salamida
Secretary – David Miles
Treasurer – Steve Amador
Alumni Relations – Jeff Reinders

A discussion was had concerning damage that occurred as a result of an incident of the sewer line backing up. No vote was taken.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:28 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

David S. Miles, Secretary

5 Questions with...

Alan P. Zucchini, '67

{continued from page 1}

business, the vast majority of what we do is still radon related. In addition to fan manufacture (which we do here in Massachusetts), we have a subsidiary, AccuStar Labs, that provides radon testing equipment. We also have a radon mitigation equipment distribution arm which continues to operate under the RadonAway name. We currently operate out of 3 owned buildings in Haverhill, MA with a total of about 100,000 square feet. We also have facilities in Carmel, IN, Denver, CO, Lebanon, PA and Medway, MA.

I think our success is tied to several factors. The two most important being: 1. manufacturing high quality products that address the needs of the customer and 2. providing extremely responsive customer service.

As to challenges, certainly the early years were the toughest. Our first year of operation we grossed an enormous \$85,000. I went for 3 years with no salary. The first gulf war occurred just as we were getting some traction. I remember one day when the phones weren't ringing and nothing was going on so we closed down and went to a nearby pub and watched war news. Since those days we've had challenges but not nearly as serious. We saw slowdowns during the recession of 2000 and the great recession of 2008 had an even bigger impact. However, we have always been very fiscally conservative and weathered these reasonably well. We have had several years where growth itself was a challenge. We had 3 consecutive years of average annual growth above 15%. Though a great problem to have, ramping up production while maintaining a high level of quality was challenging. Other than minor nits, I'm not sure I would change anything. Not to say we didn't have some failures and mis-directions, but there is no major thing I would do differently.

- *What are the current trends in the radon testing & mitigation industry? Do you see the results of the 2016 US election or changes in attitude toward environmental issues affecting your business?*
[AZ] Public awareness of radon as an environmental hazard has certainly increased over the years. This has been a big engine of growth. There are discussions among the quasi-government mortgage lenders about a requirement for radon testing and, if needed mitigation. This would result in tremendous growth in the industry. Knowing the pace at which governmental bodies move, I wouldn't hold my breath. Also, there is growing acceptance among home builders of the need to address this issue. So I do believe there will be continued growth. I can't really speak to environmental issues in general, but I don't think the election will have much of an impact on the radon issue. I am concerned about the growing problem of increased regulation and taxes on small businesses, but that is a much bigger discussion.
- *What Pikes have you managed to stay in touch with personally? Who have you lost touch with and would be interested in seeing?*
[AZ] I have regular contact with a number of Pikes through email. In recent years, I have been to several Homecomings at Pike and connected with a fair number of old friends.
- *What's your fondest memory of 17 South Avenue?*
[AZ] I have many fond memories of my time at Pike. But I think what summarizes it all is the feeling that it was my home away from home and my college family.

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@betathetadate.net].

Dik's Ravings

Now that the election is over, we can go back to liking the people who voted for the people we can't even believe are allowed to exist. You know who I mean. How could Brother Whozit possibly support that corrupt, lying weasel? And why would he mention it on Facebook? Pick up the phone and give Brother Whozit a call. He's not so bad. He held your head while you prayed to the porcelain god. You brought him a pizza and a six pack when he was broke and mourning his faithless ex-girlfriend, the tramp. Some things are bigger than politics.

Brother Friggy has joined the Choir Eternal, and now they're singing Grateful Dead songs. You can hear them if you try. Peter Aufrichtig '80 died of a heart attack October 2, and he leaves many, many people to mourn him. Present at his funeral were brothers Frank Koh, Jim Dake, Marc Rockford, Neil Best, and Paul Wessel. I have written of Friggy many times in these pages, including the true story of how he helped me become a brother in the fraternity. I'm going to miss his chuckle and his zest for life. Frank Koh and I talked at length about Friggy and his appetites, and we concluded that you have to love people the way they are, right now and without hesitation or regret or a need to change them, which is another reason to call Brother Whozit.

This past summer Brian Pickerall and I had a sudden and immediate need to email pictures of ourselves riding a cable car over the confluence of the Rhine and the Mosel rivers to Ed "Tool" Conti in California, knowing that he is a fellow aficionado of German beers and wines. He immediately emailed back that he had a similar photograph of himself and Paul Linskey at said rivers. Who knew this was a thing?! Brian and I were on a river cruise with our spouses, during which we also visited Steve and Lisa Crump and their daughter Paige at their home in Basel, Switzerland. Steve has maintained his studly college physique, and took us all hiking in the Alps. "Alps," in case you don't know, consist mostly of "up," and oxygen is plentiful only if you bring your own. If you visit Steve, Lisa, and Paige, feign a leg injury or they will find an Alp, scamper up it, and leave you begging for mercy on the last great day.

Next year is Gibber's 100th birthday. I'm now of the age where I read the obits and "In Memoriam" notices in the paper, and I think it's kind of dopey that some of the latter wish their respective decedents a "happy birthday," given that it's hard to be happy when you're under the sod, but we can still celebrate on Hughie's behalf. It'll be a grand, king hell party! To keep out the riffraff, we can call it the Beta Theta Centennial, or some such folderol, but secretly it will be the One Hundredth Annual Gibberfest. Chow will make tee shirts, an offer he made while reading this sentence.

Gibber was deeply philosophical. I occasionally had dinner with him at the retirement home, and one time another resident at our table told us she was 102 years old. Later I told Gibber she didn't look like she was over a hundred, and he said "how would you know?" When profoundly hungover guys would bemoan the amount they had consumed, he would say "nobody held a gun to your head." I guess you had to be there - with Gibber, much of the profundity was in the means of expression, and his notable face and deep baritone is what manifests itself when I'm in need of succor. Once I was going on about a couple of girlfriends that were giving me fits and I asked him for advice: "I think you need to grow up" was all he said. Maybe there's still time for that. Screw it! Let's have a party!



Alumni Notes

Don Reed '62 [reeder1@twcny.rr.com] writes "Big changes in my life; as of December 31, 2016, I will be retiring and my business *Reed's Seeds* will be sold. I will still own our 265 acre farm; part of it is leased to Main Street Farms, Allan Gandelman who runs his main operation here. He is a farmer who runs a sustainable operation and is working toward all-organic. He will use about 29 acres now, and hopes to grow to 100 acres."

"I will still be working a little to manage the real estate, etc. My wife plans to make many trips to the West Coast to see family & 2 daughters in Vegas & Oregon, and my son in LA. Grandchildren 4 & 2 years old and 13 month old in LA and a grandson in Oregon. We plan on traveling quite a bit and I plan on playing more golf."

Chapter Eternal

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

William C. Cummings, '50

October 11, 2016

[www.costello-runyon.com/obituary/William-C.-Cummings-Jr./Metuchen-NJ/1661446]

Charles M. Leung, '71

February, 2016