



# BETA THETA DATA

Fall 2018 Volume 67 Number 1

## SMC Report

The fall semester marks yet another successful one for the Beta Theta Chapter here on the hill. I am proud to announce that with an outstanding effort from our

Ben Kermisch '19  
[bkermisch514@gmail.com](mailto:bkermisch514@gmail.com)

recruitment chairman and committee, 7 new members were initiated in

the fall. This is significantly higher than the past two years, and sets expectations high for spring rush (when the freshmen can rush). These members come from diverse backgrounds, have varied interests, and will be integral pieces of our chapter moving forward.

While the recent news about Steve Amador is disheartening, the active Chapter's relationship with Alpha Theta is closer than at any moment since rechartering, and I am optimistic for the future. Speaking of the future, we recently held executive board elections for all positions starting in January. I speak for everyone in the chapter when I say that I am looking forward to seeing the new leaders in action. While they will undoubtedly face challenges – namely adapting to new expectations and continuing to ensure the chapter maintains its high standards of operations – I am also confident that they will continue to make progress and further the chapter.

I wrote in my President's message in the last edition of Beta Theta Data that our chapter is uniquely well-positioned among fraternities to adapt to the myriad changes on campus. This is still the case, with superb leadership both within the chapter, from National, and from our alumni advisory board. At Convention this summer, Beta Theta won several awards, including a Raymond L. Orians Excellence Award for its performance over the past year. The foundation has been set to reach even higher and win a Smythe this coming summer if we put in the hard work. With such high potential, I am excited to see what the next year will bring us.

## Alpha Theta President's Report

I hope you all took a few minutes to read the disheartening findings detailed in the [board's attached letter](#). Many of us have known Steve for decades and were shocked and angry. I would like to use my space here to address some of the common responses that I have heard.

Jeff Reinders '14  
[jjr87@cornell.edu](mailto:jjr87@cornell.edu)

Many people have said that they suspected something was up. The reason Steve was able to get away with this for so long, was simply because no one stopped him. The Alpha Theta board members did not force Steve to share the financial

details with them and yearly at homecoming, we all listened to Steve's financial reports and did not question them. Those that did cry foul did not do so loudly enough. Few volunteer organizations challenge their leaders because they respect the sacrifice those volunteers are making. But we are all mature enough to understand that criticism is part of mentoring and a questioning attitude makes our organization healthier. I applaud those of you that responded to this letter with offers to help. If you have been in a management role and believe your experience may be valuable, please set up some time with me or one of the other board members and share your expertise.

One example of that questioning attitude making a difference was our consideration of Student Management Corporation (SMC) instead of our former handyman as our general contractor. The active chapter had cited issues with our handyman's performance since we resumed occupancy of 17 South. "He has been our contractor for 20 years" is not sufficient reason to retain his service. SMC contractors are competitively priced and are held to SMC's standard of quality. The status quo may be the best option, but the only way to know is to periodically evaluate ourselves. Since employing SMC, Alpha Theta's relationship with Beta Theta has dramatically improved. In this case, it was clear that moving on from what we had always done was long overdue.

Many other responses called for us to sue Steve's estate or other forms of posthumous retribution. To address this issue, let me explain what we expect to happen as the insurance investigation progresses. First, the forensic accountants will gather our financial information and determine how much money has been taken. Next, the insurance company will settle with us and we will hopefully receive compensation. Finally, the insurance company will attempt to recoup the funds they paid us by going after different at-fault parties. In this case, this may include Steve's estate or his business. Therefore, Alpha Theta will not be suing Steve's estate at this time. Our general counsel and our alumni with insurance and law experience agree that working with the forensic accountants and launching this investigation is the prudent course of action. It is possible that this will not be resolved for months and the payout will be significantly lower than the total amount we believe was taken. At this time, I ask for your patience. I promise to update you in this column and more frequently online if there are additional updates to share.

On a positive note, the house passed its Certificate of Occupancy inspection with minimal work required. Our CoO repairs coupled with the boiler replacement consumed our time and focus last year. Furthermore, the lack of a CoO prevented the active chapter from hosting events. This year we are relieved and excited to use our resources on substantive improvements to 17 South.

I will close by thanking all of you who have responded to this letter with gratitude. We appreciate your well wishes and ask for your patience and understanding. I would also like to thank my fellow directors past and present, and the other volunteers that have truly stepped up over the past year.

## Board of Directors, 2018-2019

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term		
2019	Jeff Reinders, President	630-639-8999
2020	Andrew Salamida, Vice President	607-245-6428
2021	Tom Sporney, alumni relations	410-863-5854
2022	Duncan McKeen	757-589-1717
2023	John Lemp, Treasurer	845-625-7940

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## Advisor's Corner

I was recently asked by a colleague how I was able to find the time and energy to be a Chapter Advisor given all of the other demands in my life. My answer was an easy one. When I'm working with our Chapter and its leaders, I'm energized and inspired both as a Pike and as an advisor and I find the time.

Bob Forness '87  
[bob.forness@gmail.com](mailto:bob.forness@gmail.com)

Recently, Andy Glasner and I visited the Pike House for an Octoberfest party. Andy Salamida was showing off his culinary skills on the Pi Kappa Alpha big front lawn. The house looked great with lights and decorations. While it was a lot of fun, Roscoe and I made an early departure rather than relive our glory days!

We are currently seeing new laws, rules and regulations promulgated by state legislatures, national fraternities, fraternity councils, and many universities to curb excessive and dangerous behaviors associated with Greek Life. Echoing these actions, President Martha Pollack recently issued a set of mandated reforms for Greeks at Cornell to implement over the next two years. These changes are already having a direct impact on our Chapter and the Cornell Greek community. Hopefully, the cumulative result will be positive. Unfortunately, there will also be unintended consequences. Our Chapter is doing its best to respond in a thoughtful and constructive manner to this changing landscape. I would encourage alumni to find ways to support the active Chapter during this challenging period.

Next summer I will be assuming the role of chair of Cornell's Fraternity and Sorority Advisory Council (FSAC). This role will be a challenging one given the current climate. As a result, I will be stepping down as Chapter Advisor. If you are interested in serving as Chapter Advisor, please give me a call. Take it from me - you too will be energized and inspired by our undergraduate brothers.

My thanks to the alumni advisory group, but most especially to Andy Glasner and Chuck Whitehead for all of their time and support.

Happy Holidays to All!

## Calendar

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May 1, 2019	Spring 2019 βΘData deadline
June 6-9, 2019	Reunion Weekend
October 4-5, 2019	Homecoming
November 1, 2019	Fall 2019 βΘData deadline
November, 2019	Pike University, Philadelphia
June 4-7, 2020	Reunion Weekend
September 25-26, 2020	Homecoming

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## Homecoming Report

Homecoming weekend this year was a great success! We kicked off the weekend with an open house, pizza, and beer in preparation for our pub crawl. Unfortunately, due to the thunder storms in the area, the light show and fireworks were cancelled, but that didn't ruin the mood of the weekend.

The next morning we had a strong turnout for the Alpha Theta meeting and took steps to improve the future of our chapter. The meeting was followed by a tailgate in Lynah parking lot before alumni supported Big Red against Yale during the football game. Later that evening, brothers met back at 17 South for a well-attended barbecue, which many considered to be the highlight of the weekend.

We concluded the weekend with a Sunday brunch at the house for any alumni that wished to attend. Thank you to everyone who came back to Cornell and made this weekend special, especially those who contributed to help the active chapter cover the costs of hosting the weekend. We hope you all can come back to make next time just as successful as this year.

Tom Beirne '20  
[tbeirnepike@gmail.com](mailto:tbeirnepike@gmail.com)

## 4 Questions with...

### Garry P. Nolan, BS '83

Garry [<https://web.stanford.edu/group/nolan/nolan.html>] is a Professor of Microbiology & Immunology, and runs the [Nolan Lab](#) at Stanford. We caught up with him returning from meetings in Georgia.

- *It is interesting to discover the path that individuals follow during the course of their lives. Describe how your passion for science, biology, and the business of biotechnology developed, from your early education through your career to the present.*  
[GN] It's easy for me to trace my earliest interests in science and biology back to near kindergarten age and up through high school. Whether it was plants, chemistry, or electronics (salvaging TVs from the rubbish of my paper route clients...) I spent a fair amount of my youth, frankly, locked up in my bedroom "lab". I guess I was a nerd long before I even knew "nerd" was a thing—but also was driven by a very distinct lack of connection with other boys, or girls, my age. But these early days of not really connecting with other kids in the neighborhood underscore why PiKA at Cornell was so important to my career path.

At Cornell I was lucky to work in the lab of Dr. Ali Szalay as an undergrad researcher. Dr. Szalay is (still) an extraordinarily creative scientist who was on the cutting edge of turning discovery into commercial opportunities. Whereas most of the field considered "industry" as the Devil's call, I was being inculcated at Cornell with a "connect the dots" approach to merging open inquiry with practical applications. The PiKA Chapter House especially became my home every summer and during the school year while I focused on lab work up at Boyce Thompson. Work hard at the lab, play hard back at PiKA

After Cornell, I went to Stanford for graduate school where I worked in a lab that matched my interests in biology, physics, and computer science. My mentors, Dr. Leonard & Leonore Herzenberg had developed an instrument called the Fluorescence Activated Cell Sorter which, essentially, allowed a researcher to rapidly profile the immune system with as many as 4 different measurements, but at the rate of 10s of thousands of cells per second. It was the beginning of the big data revolution that fed a hunger in pharmaceutical companies for how to use this information to manage autoimmune diseases and cancer. Len and Lee—quintessential hippies—were unique in that they also had 2 of Stanford's top 3 patents, leading to hundreds of millions of dollars of royalties for themselves and Stanford. I also learned the ethics of how to walk the fine line of taking public investment in science into discovery and commercial applications. Here again, watching how basic research MUST be commercialized to attain maximum utility, this contributed to a model I was building in my head about how to move ideas to near immediate use in the clinic. A recent culmination of the utility of such deep immune profiling led to this year's Nobel Prize for Dr. James Allison for immune therapy of cancer—which is saving thousands of patients lives per year. Jim is a good friend, uses many of my lab's technologies and I am excited to be joining him and his equally talented wife (Pam Sharma) in Stockholm this December for the celebration of his Nobel.

After Stanford I did my postdoctoral work at MIT with Dr. David Baltimore—a Nobelist who won the prize for understanding retroviral replication. There I conceived and then co-developed a gene transfer technology in 1991 that is now the standard gene transfer methodology for gene therapy, CAR-T cell, and screening of protein functions. I also cloned and characterized a gene family (NF-KB) which is a central regulator of immune function. Together, this work got me "noticed", multiple offers to start my own lab, and how I decided that Stanford (and the burgeoning biotech industry in Silicon Valley) was the best place to start my lab in 1992.

The succeeding 25 years were a reimplementations of those early experiences. We developed numerous new technologies that have been adopted by thousands of labs worldwide that led me deeply into the biotechnology industry wherein I started 8 companies to date which ranged from reversing the evolutionary process where viruses made cells BETTER (my first NASDAQ company, market cap of ~\$600M), to deep immune system and imaging/profiling (one sold for \$207M), "big data" genomic analysis company (Sold to Roche for \$120M), a recent sale to Roche of a genomic/proteomic company (undisclosed sale price), and even a two new companies that map atomic structures of whole cells to advanced aeronautic materials. The combined technologies now drive a several billion-dollar markets.

A takeaway I have seen, in retrospect, about technology development as opposed to hypothesis testing has led to a valuable lesson for me. Hypothesis testing is inherently confrontational where a given idea is either right or wrong. Scientists often battle for "their" idea long after the data has amassed that should bury the notion. Technology is inherently agnostic... and my lab has taken that "arms merchant" approach. Sell to both sides and let the market battle out for supremacy. I've always started by trying to determine what is INEVITABLE in coming technology development... and then reengineering my lab towards that inevitability.

- *The Nolan Lab consists of about 25 or so members (researchers, faculty, post-doc fellows, students, etc.) with many ongoing projects and specific interests. How do you manage that operation, and organize the people and activities supporting the Lab's mission?*

[GN] I learned early on that giving people room to grow and make mistakes is essential to science. Child-like freedom is key (with limits). I have seen AGAIN AND AGAIN—creativity is stifled in companies. It almost seems that humans in large organized groups become stupid relative to the individual. Companies are far better than academic labs at taking an idea that has proof of concept and refining it to commercial perfection for the public. That's just my experience.

That said, the other major lesson I learned reflects on the PiKA environment. Learning to accommodate many personality types into a collective mission was, essentially, what the pledging process was about. My own Pledge class had everything from ROTC members to engineers to ... let's just say "room 9"... This was further hammered into my psyche in the Herzenberg lab at

## 4 Questions (continued)

Stanford... where I arrived to a lab on the first day where the expectation was not what you looked like, who your boyfriend or girlfriend was (and what sex), or your politics. So, far from a leftie pot-smoking stereotype of California (which it was all of those things), it was also an environment where all views are tolerated and asked only to justify themselves with ideas and hard work. I entered the lab as a very politically conservative graduate student—attracted to ideas, physics, and advanced computation. When I later “came out” as gay in that lab—it was a non-event, because my science was already being noticed as unusual in how it stepped outside the norm. I do credit that eventual “coming out” as releasing mental constraints that made me realize I don’t need to always follow convention to be successful.

But I can trace nearly every nascent skill of social interaction I applied in those early days at Stanford as learned at PiKA. Whether it was learning how to “be a guy” with such a diverse group of Chapter Brothers, how to break out of my shell, or how to be taught by Gibber how to lose (constantly) at spades if he wasn’t on my team—the PiKA experience was a critical component of, I believe, my later successes.

So, I’ve put this all together by telling people who come into my lab... “I am not your boss. Build an empire in my lab... just don’t kill anyone! Convince others to work with you... I am here only to stop you from going off the rails”.

I have found that, plus maximal reasonable allowance of tolerating personality types leads to extraordinary creativity. I’ve had Christian Fundamentalists in my lab, hard left near anarchists, nerds, conservative Republicans, and just about everything in between and beyond. It’s not always easy, but it’s been the most remarkable level of creativity I’ve seen generated. And I credit PiKA and my former mentors for pointing out those “rules of the game” for success.

- *Bring us up-to-date {in layman's terms} on your current work within the last year, and its impact on cancer, leukemia, and autoimmunity research.*

[GN] We have developed technologies over the years that are all about “measurement” of cell components that tell us about how tissues, cancers, and the immune system are constructed. The technologies range from biopsy profiling technologies to newer concepts enabling atomic scale resolution that images those cellular components. It’s a “picture is worth a thousand words” approach that aims to dispense with complex and arcane concepts and translate biology directly into images of the molecular machines in every cell. While I am more spiritual than religious, if there’s anything that drives me to believe in the Divine it’s the extraordinary complexity of how DNA and proteins dynamically act to drive function.

The main push in our lab is the hybrid push we take to technology development. We spend a lot of our time ensuring we are up to date on the furthest edges of materials and physic research. This allows us to have at our disposal ideas for creating new technologies to answer new questions.

Specifically, our latest technologies have shown that the fundamental unit of the body “the cell” is, in fact, a character actor in a larger play. Recent work from our group has demonstrated that cells (especially in the immune system) come together in a dynamic dance to create momentary functionalities. Understanding these functionalities drives immune outcomes. We have now described a hierarchy of these complex relationships and how they respond to a cancer’s presence. We can now create in silico models of these relationships and PREDICT exactly where we should tweak the system to create a desired outcome. From an engineer’s point of view, it’s as if you finally had all the inputs and outputs of a complex manufacturing system, or the workings of an engine, and once you are able to mathematically describe it you can then use that model to figure out where something is wrong (disease) and possible approaches to fix it.

We have recently developed a system for mapping the precise 3D position of molecules in cells at molecular resolution. Our next goal is the development of a new instrument that can go a level below that for mapping of atomic positions of all atoms in a cell. Beyond that, we have ideas on the books for the use of quantum entanglement to map objects at a distance – yes a tricorder...

We are driven, frankly, by the envy of what we currently cannot do, but know is inevitable.

- *What positions did you serve in the fraternity chapter? What was significant in your Pike experience at Cornell?*

[GN] I served only as House Manager for a couple of years.

Significant really were some incredible friendships--Doug Koneff and Hunter Johnson standing out most in the later years. Especially important in the early years was David Twyman who probably was most critical in getting me out of my shell. Doug and Dave were of course part of the Navy ROTC experience which, while I did not sign up for the full “experience” after my two year stint in ROTC, they remained friends for years after. And, as I noted above, the many other brothers allowed me to be comfortable with other guys in a very non-threatening way. Lots of memories with the likes of Peter Mulligan, John Peterson, “V”, the Rock, and the list goes on.

I think what I remembered most though about those days was the comradery of dinners at the House. But more even than that was Hugh Gibbs, who ushered so many young men through their maturity and times in the house. Especially playing spades with Hugh in the library--- it was something I looked forward to nearly every day!

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

## Alpha Theta minutes

The Annual Meeting of the Alpha Theta Fraternity was held at 17 South Avenue, Ithaca, New York, on September 22, 2018, being the 100<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

The Meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by President Jeff Reinders.

21 members were in attendance in person, and 18 by proxy.

Minutes of the last annual meeting were read and approved.

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

Harrison Johnson, past SMC of the Active Chapter, gave a report, referencing the discussion points raised at the last meeting:

1. The relationship between Alpha Theta and the active chapter has improved since the last meeting.
2. The Certificate of Compliance has been received from the City of Ithaca.
3. Lack of financial clarity based on the structuring of Alpha Theta bylaws:
  - a. The creation of the position of Vice-Treasurer and the appointment of John Lemp alleviated concerns about the concentration of power in a single officer.
  - b. The actives are still owed \$18,600 by Alpha Theta.
  - c. The automatic 5% escalation rate problem has been resolved.
4. Ray Canzler has been replaced by Student Management Corporation as the general contractor.

Jeff Reinders, President, reported:

1. The board of Directors will look into refinancing the current loan with White Horse Capital.
2. The fund raiser at the end of last year raised \$43,000.00.
3. Research will continue into having the house designated an Historic Property.

Jeff Reinders gave a report for Tom Sporney, Alumni Relations, who was unable to attend, showing a bar chart summary of dues-paying members and donations during the past year, and a comparison with earlier years.

Ben Kermisch, SMC of the undergraduate chapter, gave a report, including their continuing success in academics and athletics. He announced that the TPE real-world education program was successful and will continue.

Restructuring the current dues in such a way as to encourage recent graduates to continue their involvement in the fraternity through Alpha Theta was discussed.

Eliot Dee, President of ATCIC, gave a report. In last year's fundraiser, 116 donors gave \$43,000.00. The possibility of conducting a major fundraising campaign was discussed. It was also pointed out that dues payments can now be made online.

It was announced that preliminary reports indicate that Steve Amador may have stolen in excess of \$300,000.00 from Alpha Theta accounts. John Lemp and Tim Cole will continue the investigation. Tim is attempting to obtain access to one of Steve's QuickBooks accounts which may contain Alpha Theta assets.

A motion was made, seconded and passed authorizing the Board of Directors to negotiate with the insurance company that issued Alpha Theta's Employee Dishonesty policy and reach a settlement.

A motion was made, seconded and passed Alpha Theta implement a series of financial controls designed to either eliminate or substantially reduce the risk of a recurrence of a misappropriation of funds. These controls may include: two signature approvals of payments through Bank of America's online system; external bookkeeping services from either Sciarabba Walker, Student Management Corp or similar; a controls audit by Sciarabba Walker; and, implementation of any further controls required or recommended by the insurance company.

The Treasurer's report was read and approved.

Bob Forness gave a report on the Alumni Advisory Group.

The meeting was opened to nominations for Director to succeed Tim Cole, appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Steve Amador, and whose term expired today. Tim Cole and John Lemp were nominated. A motion was made and passed that nominations be closed. Voting was by show of hands. John Lemp was elected.

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, with the exception of any official acts relating to the embezzlement of funds by Steve Amador.

Tim Cole was recognized for his work on investigating and recovering the funds stolen by Steve Amador.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
David S. Miles, Secretary

## Board of Directors minutes

The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of Alpha Theta Fraternity was held at 17 South Avenue, Ithaca, New York, on September 22, 2018.

The Meeting was called to order at 12:17 p.m. by President Jeff Reinders.

The following Directors were present: Reinders, McKeen, Salamida, and Lemp.

Also present: Miles, Secretary.

The following were elected officers of the corporation:

President – Jeff Reinders  
Vice President – Andrew Salamida  
Secretary – David Miles  
Treasurer – John Lemp  
Vice Treasurer – Vacant  
Alumni Relations – Tom Sporney

John Lemp was appointed Master Administrator of any QuickBooks accounts in the name of, or which may contain assets belonging to, this Corporation. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:32 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,  
David S. Miles, Secretary

## Dik's Ravings

I'm tired of reading the rantings of faded, doughy, boring old guys who have nothing better to do than complain and tell lies, and I'm sure you feel the same way. Therefore, this is my last column.

Dik Saalfeld '80 [rfs25@cornell.edu](mailto:rfs25@cornell.edu)  
Florida correspondent

Man, I've told some whoppers! The story about Ralph Olivier's attempt to have Genny Cream Ale piped into the hospital room after his first heart attack?! It was really Pabst Blue Ribbon! Or the story about Friggy and the naked Swedish flautists? They were Finnish!

See? It's crap like this that I mailed in twice a year. I had fun doing it, maybe some of you enjoyed it, but the time for it has passed and somebody who has something useful to say should put these column inches to better use.

While I have your attention, I would like to extend my thanks to Tom & Jerri Sporney, who have published this newsletter on our behalf for many years. You have no idea how much effort they have put into keeping you informed.



## Alumni Notes

You can now pay your alumni dues or contribute to the Gibber Fund online at <https://alphathetaportal.herokuapp.com/>. Funds are collected through Paypal, and transferred directly to the accounts of Alpha Theta Fraternity or Alpha Theta Community Improvement Campaign.

When you receive this newsletter, please review the contact information on the bottom of the cover letter. We would be grateful for you to fill in any blanks, and correct any contact info, especially phone numbers and email. Thanks.

[tsporney@betathetaddata.net](mailto:tsporney@betathetaddata.net)

## Chapter Eternal

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

**George P. Beardsley, '62**  
September 6, 2017

**Gary J. Bennett, '73**  
May 18, 2018

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/potsdam-ny/gary-bennett-7855879>

**William C. Bigler**  
December 22, 2017

**Joseph P. Critelli, 63**  
September 6, 2017

**Oscar W. Bilharz, '49**

**Arthur H Diamond, '52**  
April 26, 2017

**John C. Dunkle, '63**  
July 1, 2017

**Keith A. Everett, '61**  
December 13, 2017

**Jeffrey A. Hall, '73**  
July 23, 2015

**Robert J. Harrington, '51**  
March 26, 2017

**Robert C. Kemp**  
October 25, 2015

**Dana B Lawrence, '61**  
January 14, 2015

**Dominic A. Longo, '59**  
November 29, 2013

**Wayland M. Mead, '53**  
January 9, 2014

**James M. O'Hara, '60**  
May 3, 2018

**Raymond E. Thurau, '56**  
July 11, 2017

**James Tibbetts, '61**

**Thomas E. Whelan, '52**  
March 26, 2018

**Frank G Walter, '64**  
October 18, 2017