



BETA THETA DATA

Spring 2019 Volume 67 Number 2

SMC Report

The Spring 2019 semester was a very successful one for the Beta Theta Chapter. With recruitment, philanthropy, and community service, the chapter went above and beyond.

John Carboni '20
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We initiated 26 new members, the largest class we have seen in many years.

This also comes in the wake of the IFC seeing its lowest number of recruitment participants in a long time. This goes to show how hard our recruitment chair and committee members worked to recruit a strong class of great men. These men are involved in many organizations on campus, and come from different places all over the world. They are dedicated individuals, with several already demonstrating interest in taking positions in the house or in the IFC.

The chapter continued its participation in Relay for Life to support the American Cancer Society, teaming up with the Tri-Delta Sorority to put on "Pie-a-Pike." The chapter also supported the Special Olympics of Tompkins County by sending several brothers to Ithaca's annual Polar Plunge, and donating the proceeds of our second annual Pi K race at the botanical gardens to the organization. Furthermore, the chapter continued its relationship with the St Catherine of Siena Church with weekly groups going to clean dishes after their events.

Beta Theta did hit a bit of a road bump though. We were called in for a Greek Judicial Board hearing for an incident that occurred after one of our events in March. But with the help of Alumni advisors Bob Forness and Chuck Whitehead, and the knowledge that our brotherhood follows the proper event management guidelines, we put together a strong case and made it out with very minimal punishment.

This semester is coming to an end, but I am excited for what the rest of 2019 holds. We already have 5 brothers planning on attending the Academy, the national convention held in Memphis this summer, where Beta Theta will hopefully take home some more awards.

Alpha Theta President's Report

It has been a quiet spring, but things are heating up with the insurance investigation. We are beginning the substantial process of submitting the documentation requested by the forensic accountants. We are all anxious for resolution, but I would like to be clear: this process is long from over and likely will not be fully resolved by Homecoming 2019 (October 5). I promise to continue providing updates. I know that everyone was hoping for a check in the mail and this isn't that. I ask for your patience and I am proud to report that we are maintaining progress on what we all agree is the right path. The elephant in the room isn't leaving any time soon, but that isn't all we have been working on.

Jeff Reinders '14
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Some of you may recall that four years ago prior to our first rush in 17 South since re-chartering, the house desperately needed some improvements which included new carpets, curtains, light fixtures, fresh paint, and numerous other small improvements around the house. Additionally, the back room adjacent to the great room was renovated to celebrate the Pikes of the past. The active chapter paid for those improvements and AT agreed to pay them back. We have slowly been whittling down at that balance, but finally paid it off completely this winter. The actives elected to use the funds to purchase new couches for the first floor. We owe Beta Theta a huge debt of gratitude for taking the initiative when we didn't and for their patience as we regained control of our finances.

In the past few months, we have made a number of small capital improvements to 17 South which were in responses to immediate needs.

- The back parking lot was re-graveled which has been a significant cosmetic improvement.
- New grass was planted on the front lawn in addition to a few other non-routine improvements to the property grounds.
- Inside the house, we reframed the composites for '87 and '05 and a few Ed Catto originals.
- During a social event, part of the ceiling in the basement above the bar booths collapsed. Luckily, no one was hurt. It was repaired and replaced shortly after.
- We installed an HVAC system to remove moisture from the live-in advisor suite. This was in response to persistent mold development in that room and after Andrew purchased and burned through multiple personal dehumidifying units. This improvement is seen as one of a few projects over the next few years to make the basement more livable.

June 7-9, the 4's and 9's will be returning to campus for reunion! I will be there representing the extraordinary Class of 2014. Please come to 17 South on Saturday from 4-6 for a picnic. I imagine songs will be sung, beverages consumed, and I'm sure it will be glorious to view.

Board of Directors, 2018-2019

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

Calendar

June 6-9, 2019	Reunion Weekend
October 4-5, 2019	Homecoming
November 1, 2019	Fall 2019 BΘData deadline
November, 2019	Pike University, Philadelphia
June 4-7, 2020	Reunion Weekend
September 25-26, 2020	Homecoming
June 10-13, 2021	Reunion Weekend
June 9-12, 2022	Reunion Weekend

Advisor's Corner

This is my last report as Chapter Advisor of Beta Theta.

Bob Forness '87

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It has been my privilege and pleasure to work with the actives, executive boards and my fellow alumni advisors these past few years.

When I assumed the watch from Andy Glasner, I had big shoes to fill. Andy has a habit of passing roles to me, from house manager to fire truck chairman to Chapter Advisor. I wonder what he has planned next. My thanks to Andy and Lisa for opening their 'B&B' to me on many trips to Ithaca.

The ever changing living and bonding experience that is the Beta Theta Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha is both familiar and new each year. I've truly enjoyed working with the chapter and look forward to watching it continue to grow and excel.

Each successive group of undergraduate leaders continues to inspire me. Manning the wall in a Game of Thrones climate for Greek chapters is extremely challenging. Add to that academic requirements, athletics, clubs, internships, and graduate admissions or first jobs upon graduation, it is unbelievable how much the brothers accomplish and mature during their own watch on the wall. 17 South Avenue remains for each of them, as it did for us, a refuge from stress and a home away from home. However, never fear that an active social life continues as the chapter again demonstrated for Slope Day this week.

I am pleased to report that Charles (Chuck) Whitehead, our illustrious professor of law, technology, and entrepreneurship has agreed to serve as Beta Theta's next Chapter Advisor. Chuck has been instrumental in supporting both my predecessor, Andy Glasner and I in the Chapter Advisor role. Our thanks to Chuck for stepping up to the first chair - it is a role he already understands very well.

Russell Sesler, '16, a rising impresario of real estate finance and one of the founding SMCs of our recolonized chapter, has agreed to serve as Chuck's second. In addition to working with Chuck, Russell will lead the charge in recruiting the next generation of alumni advisors to the AAG. So if you are looking to volunteer, raise your hand and Russell will be in touch!

Please reach out to Chuck and Russell to give them our thanks.

I will still be around, as I will now serve as the Chair of the University's Fraternity and Sorority Advisory Council.

May Beta Theta continue to thrive, supported by both current active and alumni brothers, for the next year and every year to come!

2019 Reunion

Brothers,

We are pleased to welcome you back for this year's Summer Reunion and hope you can join us at 17 South for a picnic at Pike from 4-6 PM on Saturday, June 8th. Congratulations to class years ending in 4's or 9's on another milestone!

There will be beer and light food. During this time you are welcome to walk around the house and enjoy the company outside (weather permitting).

We are accepting donations to the active chapter to help cover the costs and although \$17,000 would be nice, all jokes aside, anything you can give is appreciated. Below are links to donate via credit card and Venmo. Cash and checks will be accepted at the door.

If you do not have Facebook and plan on attending, have any questions, or want to let us know of any dietary restrictions please contact me at Jsuzzanpike@gmail.com.

We hope you can make it back to Ithaca for this and look forward to seeing you!

Credit Card:

<https://cornellpikes.org/reunion>

Venmo:

Cornell Pi Kappa Alpha (@cornellpike)

5 Questions with...

Chuck Whitehead, BA '83

Chuck [<https://www.linkedin.com/in/charles-chuck-whitehead-6a3b4b6/>] is the Myron C. Taylor Alumni Professor of Business Law at Cornell Law School and director of the Law, Technology and Entrepreneurship program at Cornell Tech [<https://youtu.be/rDbYcuxooFY>]. He specializes in business organizations, capital markets, financial institutions and transactions, and mergers and acquisitions.

- I discovered a few years ago that you grew up in Greenbelt, Maryland, where I have been employed for the past 15+ years. What was it like growing up in Greenbelt when you were there?*
[CW] Growing up in Greenbelt was the best – named for the green forest “belt” that rings the town. Think Mayberry RFD, but only 30 minutes from Washington, D.C. We had fishing and swimming in the summer, tree forts, sledding in the winter, and school was only a 10-minute walk from home. It’s hard to imagine a better place to have been a boy.
- You held senior legal and business positions in the financial services industry in New York, London, and Tokyo before entering academia. Why did you make the transition from business to academia, and what challenges did you face in that switch?*
[CW] I decided to become a law professor while I was still in law school. The standard route was to do well in law school, work for a federal judge for a year or two, work in a large law firm for a few years, and then join a law faculty. That was pretty much what I did – Columbia Law School, clerking for a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals (2nd Circuit), and then working at a well-known Wall Street law firm, Sullivan & Cromwell. But shortly after leaving law practice to teach, I was offered the general counsel’s job for the North and South American operations of a former client, Nomura Securities. At the time, Nomura was the largest and most profitable investment bank in the world, so it was difficult to turn down. I thought I would work at Nomura for a few years, and then become a law professor. I left Nomura to teach, but then got a call from Salomon Brothers. Salomon transferred me to Tokyo, and we then became a part of Citigroup. I ended up as the Citigroup Country Officer for Japan, overseeing Citigroup’s operations for the country. But I still wanted to teach and eventually made the leap. The most difficult part of the transition was convincing academics, many of whom had practiced only three or four years, that after seventeen years in practice I could still write and teach. I was fortunate – the timing was right and good positions opened up, eventually leading me back to Cornell where I now teach at the Law School.
- One of your current projects is the eō Business Incubators, which are set up to support tech business startups in Ukraine [<https://inventure.com.ua/analytics/formula/u-ukrainy-est-vse-vozmozhnosti-stat-stranoj-startapov>]. Please update us on the progress of this program.*
[CW] Ukraine has great technology, a well-educated workforce, and easy access to Western Europe. A lot of great IT comes from Ukraine, which provides world-class coding and other outsourcing services for companies in the United States and elsewhere. So why isn’t Ukraine a tech hub in its own right? Why is Ukraine’s GDP per capita the lowest in Europe? The answer is an inability to commercialize technology – a gap that has existed in other countries, but hasn’t yet been spanned in Ukraine. The Incubators are intended to help do this. The original idea arose after talking with regulators, academics, and friends in Ukraine. We are fully funded for the next 3 years by USAID and the US State Department, and we launched in early April. We expect to begin our first incubation cycle on May 20 – about 10-12 businesses, out of over 180 that applied during a very short, one-month application window. Each incubation cycle will be about 4 months. Among its many problems, Ukraine has a weak legal system. One question is whether market demand for regulatory reform – as foreign investors demand a more transparent, consistent legal regime – will affect how laws are implemented and enforced. I am hopeful that, in addition to helping build a new economy, the Incubators will introduce a need for a rule of law that has been lacking.
- What positions did you serve in the fraternity chapter? What was significant in your Pike experience at Cornell?*
[CW] I was the Social Chairman for 3 or 4 semesters. It worked out well, because I was also the Social Chairman for North Campus – we could combine gigs on campus with events at the House. (Anyone remember the Drongos?) Pike taught me that a group of guys, from different backgrounds, doing different things, with different views on life, could pull together and accomplish whatever we put our minds at doing -- whether it was rewiring the House, fixing-up an old firetruck, or flying the Pink Cloud to Elmira. And we could have fun doing it.
- Have you managed to stay in touch with anyone from 17 South Avenue? What’s your fondest memory of 17 South Avenue?*
[CW] I’ve stayed in touch with a lot of guys over the years. And now that I’m teaching at Cornell, I run into a lot more Pike alumni – usually stumbling around campus, almost blind from years of drinking.

Most of my fondest memories are difficult to remember. Maybe it was waking up the morning after spring break covered in pizza boxes (I had slept through a party in Room 2) with a headcrunching hangover – which was odd, because I only had a few drinks before switching to a Coke. And then having 3 of the brothers swing by, apologetically, to tell me they had spiked my drink – and only now realized that two others had been doing the same. Or maybe, after I played “Turning Japanese” for the 1000th time, a gift from the Trivia Committee, it was Dik grabbing the record from my room and frisbeeing it across South Avenue, shouting, “The Trivia Committee giveth, and the Trivia Committee taketh away.” Or it was strapping myself to the hood of V-Man’s car, while tearing down South Avenue, to film his campaign movie. Or it was tying an electrical cord around Glenn Law’s waist, and lowering him down to grab bricks out of pledges’ hands as they were bricking in. Did we really do all of that? But, like a lot of guys, it was also hanging out with Gibber. We spent time together – usually at about 2 a.m., cleaning up after parties, while I was Social Chairman. Gibber would tell me to get some rest, he would take care of things – but just hanging out, talking, even for a few minutes, these are memories that are still fresh today.

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@betathetadana.net].

Alumni Notes

James Goodrich '65 writes that his oldest Charlene has been teaching music for 24 years. His middle daughter does contract work in North Dakota, and his youngest is married and has a young child.

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@betathetadata.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:

Peter Andrew Curtiss, '56
October 27, 2013

Charles Foret, Jr. '53

Paul Hilliard Frick, '51
December 3, 2018