



new york alpha news

NY Alpha Alumni Association • Cornell University

Fellowship



To thrive, every organization requires a change in leadership from time to time; new leaders bring renewed energy, different perspectives, and fresh ideas. Recognizing this, I am announcing that

my tenure as alumni association president ended at Homecoming.

It's been a great honor to serve all of you these past 15 years. We've had many great advances and some very profound setbacks, but they have not defined my experience. What does? I've often asked myself: Why commit to this cause (there are so many others) over such a substantial period of time? I've found the answer in what I remember most fondly about the experience: fellowship. I had the opportunity to meet and work with generations of men with whom I share a common passion. I met and got to know their families, and they mine. And the experience was shared as the many stages of our lives unfolded. Some have become members of my extended family—"brothers," if you will. So, for me, it's merely and all about fellowship.

Consider whether fellowship might be a good reason for you to become involved in the work of the alumni association. You will read in these pages the great work that's been done—and that will need to be done in the future. All of it will require renewed energy, different perspectives, and fresh ideas. Whether you engage as a board member, an active donor, or simply lend support to a single issue, you undoubtedly will experience the same fellowship that has driven me these past 15 years.

A word of thanks—to my fellow board members, to Lisa Wood and her colleagues at Elevate (formerly Stewart Howe Alumni Service), and to CU—for their many years of support. It's been quite a run!

Kevin T. Merriman '88

New President Asks for Your Help



I am both honored and humbled to be the new president of our NY Alpha Alumni Association. I am honored to be able to serve an institution that is important to me at a critical juncture in its history. I am

humbled because, at the risk of gross understatement, Kevin Merriman is a tough act to follow. He served for an incredible 15 years, leading NY Alpha through some of its most challenging times. Thanks to his leadership and the support of a strong board, five years after arguably the most tragic incident in our history, we are well positioned to take the next step.

Thanks to expert project management by the Facilities Committee, Hillcrest, at just over a century old, is in better condition than most of us remember. The capital to support this effort was largely raised by the Fundraising Committee. Additional funding came from operating surpluses generated from use of Hillcrest as a Cornell residence facility. Recent True Gentleman honorees Jim Beckett and Mike Slusar had critical leadership roles in these successes.

Although Kevin, Jim, and Mike are stepping down from their leadership positions, it speaks volumes that all three will continue to serve on the board. I feel very fortunate to have the benefit of their wise counsel as well the tenacity of Hal Sieling, who always steps up to do whatever no one else can or will. While not mentioning each by name, the other board

members deserve recognition for their service on board committees (each member serves on at least one committee of the board). Nothing gives a leader confidence like having a strong team to work with, and I have that in spades.

As noted above, we are poised to take the next step, and I view it as my role to lead that effort. Fortunately, we have a plan in place. In 2012 the board approved a strategic plan for NY Alpha. It's available on the website and is worth a read. The plan spells out, in some detail, the actions required to realize that vision. It calls for broad involvement of the alumni base—not just the board. So we have a pretty good idea of what to do, but there are still a lot of blanks to fill in on who will do the work. I appeal to you, the alumni of NY Alpha, to step up and help us create the new SAE active chapter at Cornell. We need your time, talent, and treasure to make this a success. If you would like to help, contact any member of the board. Or when a brother contacts you, please say "yes!"

I look forward to working with all of you to write the next chapter in NY Alpha's history.

Gus Noojin '69



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Reunion 2016 ... 125 Years in the Making!

By any measure the 125th-year reunion of NY Alpha in Ithaca this past June was a roaring success. We had more events at the house than ever before, more brothers showed up, and by the end of the evening, just about every morsel and ounce of provided refreshments had been consumed. But even more than that, there was a spirit in the air to unite and build.

As returning alumni looked around at the improvements made to Hillcrest, it was hard to imagine a time when things looked better.

Of course, the highlight of our improvements this year was hard to miss, with new windows either installed or standing alert for installation in almost every corner of every room!

It was obvious to all that NY Alpha alumni had been working hard to make things happen. As most of you know, we have invested \$1.3 million over the past few years to make Hillcrest a jewel of west campus once again. The room reconfiguration project, the new advisor's suite, the lake view lounge, and the new windows are the most visible of the changes made so far.

But keep in mind that there is more to do. And first on the list is to redo the deck on the second floor, with upgrades to the kitchen

close behind.

Because of what they saw, many, many young and older alumni stepped forward to indicate their willingness to help when the time comes. Of course, the proof will be in the pudding, but the number of mentions was notable—and together with the spirit mentioned above gives a strong indication of things to come.

The festivities included presenting True Gentleman of New York Alpha awards to long-time fund chairman Mike Slusar and facilities chairman Jim Beckett. Over the past 15 years, they made things happen like never before. Both set a high standard that will be difficult to top by others who follow in their footsteps.

Alumni from many classes—from '59 to '11!—attended both the family day activities on Friday and the board meeting and reception on Saturday. Reunion classes of '61, '66, '86, '06, '11, and more were well represented.

The crowd will bust the seams next year if Ron Skalko's outreach is as successful as it was this year.

Was that fun or what?!

Hal Sieling '62



Young Alum, Looking to Get Involved?

As we continue to execute our strategic plan with a goal of returning to campus, it is critical that we involve all members of the Hillcrest community. To this end, we are working to engage young alumni to ensure that all voices, opinions, and perspectives are heard. Our goal is to build a channel for brothers to communicate with one another, share ideas, and provide peer support for any endeavor.

Specifically, we are fostering a group of young alumni class liaisons who will play a vital role in increasing participation. Their work will involve contacting all members of their respective classes, keeping them updated, and asking them to "give" in whatever way they can.

Getting people thinking and talking will help alumni take ownership of our way forward. Our collective participation and leadership will make a significant impact on our success.

To build excitement about our ultimate goal, we are also looking to coordinate new alumni events, encourage giving, and increase communication/collaboration as we execute our plan.

We are currently planning one such event that will occur when the Cornell football team travels downstate to play at Columbia on Saturday, November 12. This event will take place at The Ginger Man in midtown Manhattan right after the game.

At the very least, we want people to interact with one another and remember why we all joined this amazing community.

To achieve success, we need everybody's help. We hope you will answer our call.

Adam Schulman '09
Jon Hyduke '06

Hillcrest at 101



As some of you already know, we have invested \$1.3 million in Hillcrest renovations over the past few years. The reason we keep repeating that is because we can all be proud of what has been done to improve our beloved Hillcrest through alumni giving. What you might *not* know is that we intend to do more but simply can't without your support.

Hillcrest looks better than most of us can remember. But there still are and will be needs as we move forward in the next few years. Some are obvious and some not so much, but all are necessary to make us competitive in the west campus and fraternity communities.

The windows replacement should be all done by the time you read this. If you did not see the first of the new windows at reunion, you will be surprised at how nice they look. Drop by next year during reunion in June to see for yourself.

The lake view lounge was opened a year ago—a spectacular addition to the northwest corner of the main floor. The other reconfigured rooms are not as obvious, but the result is a much better floor plan for students seeking single rooms. In addition, the payback in terms of room rents is significant.

So that's the recap of what we have done. What's next?

There is a long list, but it starts with a new deck on the second floor. The roof under it might also need to be replaced or repaired. This project is estimated to cost \$150K and will be done next spring or summer.

A fire alarm upgrade is mandated for this year as well, at a cost of \$45K.

Following those two projects are various changes and upgrades in the kitchen. These are expected to cost around \$50K.

The changes described take us to the fall of 2017 and need to be funded during this year.

Also keep in mind as you plan your giving that we intend to do a major overhaul in the basement rooms, including the old chapter room. The purpose of this is to have a recreation room where social activities can take place away from the first floor.

Hal Sieling '62

Well Done and Time for Fun

We had a great fundraising fiscal year in 2015-'16, raising almost \$100,000 to invest in Hillcrest! While we had several new donors, a great majority of the funds were generated by repeat and steadfast brothers. Thank you all for your generosity. Your support this year allowed us to complete the much-needed window replacement at Hillcrest.

Currently we have two projects directly in front of us that we need to fund. One is a life-safety issue that requires us to update our fire alarm system. But there is another fun project ahead of us that I think everyone can get behind: replacement of our deck overlooking Cayuga Lake.

Not only do we need to replace the deck, we might need to replace the underlying roof at the same time. The cost of this roof and deck work is approximately \$150,000. I know that is a lot of money, but your NY Alpha Alumni Association has been unswerving in its dedication to go beyond the mere fix to make high-quality, long-term repairs and improvements.

In reflecting on my time at Hillcrest, I

believe that some of the best times I had were on the deck. We had social events, cookouts, and a great private area to lie out in the sun (when it showed up). Did the deck just happen to be a perfect place to launch water balloons at students across the street? Why, yes—yes, it did. This fabulous space is also home to the best view of Cayuga Lake, and we were able to enjoy it and share it with our friends.

Now is the time to tackle this project, and I am counting on everyone do their part. Always remember that a gift to the Hillcrest SAE Development Fund is a gift to Cornell and is tax deductible. You can make a donation by returning the enclosed gift form or by donating online at <https://www.giving.cornell.edu>. (Click the red Make a Gift Online button).

Thank you all for your continued love and support for Hillcrest. We are making a major impact on the sustained life and utility of our historic home and, in the process, ensuring our legacy for the next hundred years.

Cory "Action" Jackson '86

Memorial Day Tribute

This past Memorial Day Weekend, Ron Skalko '73 visited the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Foundation in Evanston, Illinois. There were more than 1,500 flags planted in front of the Levere Memorial Temple's Peace Chapel in memory of the SAEs lost in military conflicts since 1856. Nineteen of those flags were represented by the Brother Heroes of NY Alpha:



Brother Heroes

WWI

Louis R. Crowdrey '95
Charles F. Hubbard '15
James A. Roberts '20

WWII

William C. Arthur '41
Carey H. Brown Jr. '41
Clay R. Davis '39
Maynard F. Lednum '45
Edward Earl Ludwig '43
William F. Noble '38
Clifford R. Oliver Jr. '37
Richard K. Thackston '38
Brewster Ward '38
John Harris Wesley '42
James Richard Whitman '45
Francis C. Wilbur '18
Henry V. Wille '37

Korea

Frederick W. Belz III '51

Vietnam

Robert L. Crosby '65
Douglas D. Crowe '61

ny alpha alumni news & notes

"Not much has changed for the 'old' R.A.," reports **Bob Hutchins '56**. "Still happily married to my queen, Susie. Fortunately, our kids are all local here in New England, and we get together often." Of course, six grandkids keep them pretty busy. Tragically, however, in late August, one of Bob's sons (Robert Jr.) passed away. "Hutch" adds, "We think about the 'good old days on the hill' often. Hope all is well 'far above.'" (269 The Meadows, Enfield, CT 06082; lccgolfbob@aol.com)



Phil Monroe '57 traveled east in July to attend the July 2 wedding of his number-two daughter, Karen. Her husband is a retired Air Force master sergeant, and Karen wanted her dad and groom in uniform. Phil looks good holding his great-granddaughter in his dinner dress whites, with the four stripes of a Navy captain. He was commissioned soon after he graduated in January 1958 and began a 30-year Navy career, retiring in 1988. Phil lives in California, a stone's throw from the Pacific. He adds that he enjoys the drinking, dining, and recreation benefits of retired military at the Navy's West Coast headquarters in Coronado and nearby San Diego. Catch up with him at 28 Bahama Bend, Coronado, CA 92118; philmonroe1@aol.com.

"The past year has seen many changes, writes **Stew Maurer '57**. "We moved to a wonderful continuing-care retirement community. We've kept on the go ever since, with trips, activities, and pickle ball twice a week. Can't believe I celebrated my 80th birthday last November and our 59th wedding anniversary in July. Time flies." Stew hopes to attend his 60th Cornell Reunion next June. Write to him at his new address: 1110 Marshall Rd., Greenwood, SC 29646. Or send him an email at gofercoffee@aol.com.

Retired attorney **Bob Knechtel '58** continues to recover from his encounter with the Guillain-Barre syndrome with a Miller Fisher variant that struck him last fall. While some double vision lingers, his balance is improving, and he walks normally. He added that, although he was not unhappy in Idaho, it had become clear to him that he should move back to the Bay Area to be close to family and friends there. Bob's new address is 5601 Natomas Blvd., #1303, Sacramento, CA 95835. Reach him by email at rgkbob@gmail.com.

Cornell's engineering department has its first endowed professor of practice position, thanks to **Art Geoffron '59** and his wife, Helen. The announcement was made at ORIE's 50th anniversary dinner earlier this year. Art believes that academic-industry interaction is valuable to students, faculty, companies, and agencies alike. The endowed professorship will bring vital opportunities to PhD students for "real-world engagement." Contact Art at 322 24th St., Santa Monica, CA 90402, or ageoffri@anderson.ucla.edu.

A new thriller by **Jim Glenn '59**, *Pakistan, India and the Bomb: Spy versus Counterspy*, is available at Amazon.com. Set in 1972, it involves a Pakistani professor, a CIA spy, an American businessman, and India's secret development of an atomic bomb. Jim's 35 years in international business included four years in India with an American multi-national. To write the novel, he researched nuclear weapons, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and the aftermath of the 1947 India-Pakistan partition. He also read the autobiographies of several retired American spies. Jim lives near Taos, New Mexico (P.O. Box 2270, 87571). Email him at jamesglenn@taosnet.com.

Class of '59ers **Jim Day** and **Dick Hyde** had lunch together recently in New York City. Dick is a retired attorney and enjoys an unusual hobby: He's part of a crew that flies a WWII B-25 bomber around the country, often to air shows. Find out more by writing Dick at 7580 Portbury Park Lane, Suwanee, GA 30024; richardhyde@aol.com. Jim can be reached at 4 Cliff Dr., Englewood, NJ 07631; jcday0126@gmail.com.

Despite having macular degeneration in both eyes, **Howie Miller '59** continues to operate his recycling business, buying waste latex emulsions and formulating them for spraying on haul roads, landfills, and steel slag piles to contain dust. Howie plans to work this recycling operation for many years—a business that has put his five children through college! One of his grandsons, Brady Miller, is the QB on the West Point sprint football team and enjoys studying military history at the academy. Contact Howie at 741 Jeffrey Rd., Moorestown, NJ 08057; sctbray@aol.com.

Congratulations to **Jim Baden '61**, who received the Order of the Lion Award from Georgia Rho for his service as president of the Hilton Head Alumni Association. The award was presented at the chapter's annual Founders Day reception in March. "Total surprise," writes Jim. As always, he invites brothers to visit. (27 Dolphin Point Ln., Hilton Head Island, SC 29926; jamesbaden@cinci.rr.com)



Photo credit to *The Record*, Vol. 135, Issue 1

"When I finished my training in Boston," writes **Ralph Giannella '61**, "I went to the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research for three years, followed by medical school faculty positions at the University of Kentucky and the University of Cincinnati, where I was chief of gastroenterology. I continue to work part-time and still enjoy it. Pat and I have two sons, a real estate lawyer-business man and a PhD computer scientist, and three grandsons. We are well and travel often, including a trip to Italy in May." Get back in touch at 615 Stanley Ave., Cincinnati, OH

45226; ralph.giannella@uc.edu.

A retired stock broker, **Bill Kerns '61** lives near the Pentagon in Arlington with his wife, Mary. He has been in touch with pledge brothers **Chuck Rhodes '61** and **Carl Shrawder '61**. **Ron Demer '59** adds, "Bill played lacrosse and was the perfect 'Big Red bear,' built like a bruin and 225 pounds." Contact Bill at 1600 S. Joyce St., Apt. 631, Arlington, VA 22202; ayesoar@verizon.net.

Lyle Clapper '63 returned to visit Hillcrest in early October. He hadn't been back since transferring to the University of Illinois after the fall semester of his sophomore year! He was impressed with the house, campus, and natural beauty of the Ithaca area. Lyle and wife Marie have homes in Chicago and Arkansas. He spends half of each year touring the U.S. in a 34-foot class A RV. In fact, he stopped in Ithaca after several weeks in the Canadian Maritimes, where he found Nova Scotia to be particularly beautiful. Reach him at 412 NW 5th St., Bentonville, AR 72712; aviateacher@gmail.com.



"Lots going on," announces **Elliot Hershik '82**. "At the end of March, my wife and I got together with **Ken Blahut '82**, who was in Chicago for a family event. There was a bunch to talk about, as Kenny and I hadn't seen each other in over 30 years. The restaurant was able to turn the other tables over several times while we caught up." Elliot adds that the business he and wife Dawn started last year celebrated its one-year anniversary. "We opened a Supporting Strategies franchise. Our services are bookkeeping and back-office support for small businesses on an outsourced, remote basis. Gives me an opportunity to use that CPA certificate." (1224 Catalpa Lane, Naperville, IL 60540; edh5689@comcast.net)

Dana James Hall '06 is an associate in the office of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati in Palo Alto. He practices corporate law and governance and corporate finance. Keep in touch with him at 364 N. Rengstorff, Mountain View, CA 94043; djhall@wsgr.com.

Chapter Eternal

Walter W. Patten Jr. '49

May 29, 2016

Richard R. Rice '49

August 28, 2016

Russell C. Voorhis '50

January 10, 2016

Ralph M. Gasparello '51

July 11, 2016

G. Franklin South '53

August 25, 2016

Raymond VanSweringen III '73

October 13, 2015