



new york alpha news

NY Alpha Alumni Association • Cornell University

Celebrating Our Second Century



June is a great time of year in Ithaca, and we're making Reunion plans for events at Hillcrest to make it worth the trip. In fact, we're doing our best to encourage all of you to re-engage and support the work of NY Alpha.

Each year we are offering a little more incentive to increase participation during the long weekend. We sent details in our latest mailing about a month ago, and there's info in this newsletter and at www.sae-cornell.org.

This year's highlight will be the grand opening of our new and beautiful (and just completed) deck. That alone should be reason enough to attend, but there's more.

We will also be honoring our longtime alumni association president, Kevin Merriman '88. Many know his story, and others can read about it in the article to the right.

With a tough act to follow, Gus Noojin '69 has stepped up to take over, and he will be joining us at Reunion. Let's welcome him with outstanding participation, especially at the Saturday reception. I'm sure you'll be interested in hearing what he has to say when he addresses the gathering.

It doesn't have to be your reunion year for you to visit Hillcrest on that June weekend! Several members of the NY Alpha board have formed an SAE Hillcrest "Continuous Reunion Club." We come back every year because we have so much fun! The truth is that we've found you can have more fun in non-reunion years, because there are fewer class-based social obligations—large events that are enjoyable enough but are also not anything like being back at Hillcrest with a group of brothers. That's an incomparable experience that unites us across generations.

Please join us! If I can be of any assistance, please contact me at rls73@comcast.net.

Ron Skalko '73

Kevin T. Merriman '88: 2017 True Gentleman of NY Alpha



Most of you probably read the last *NY Alpha News* front-page column written by Kevin Merriman '88 about his tenure as president of the New York Alpha Alumni Association and board member for the last 15 years. He describes what he remembers most and best about the experience as being merely and all about fellowship!

When we increased the size of the board years ago, Kevin was one of the first to volunteer to serve. We were at a point where it was important for the board to do more to serve the chapter and Cornell than was possible with just the small handful of alumni involved who had run things for years. It was a time for transition.

Out of this effort emerged a full "working board" of around 20 alumni. In the beginning, as treasurer, Kevin did a good job keeping our finances in order. After a very few years, we asked Kevin to become president. Although reluctant at first, he agreed.

Not surprisingly, for the next several years, committee activities and accomplishments all increased. More money was raised because we had a strong fundraising team headed by Mike Slusar '86. More facilities work was done because we had a strong team headed by Jim Beckett '85. And the programs/outreach committee took on more programming because that team was strong and motivated as well.

But the fact is that all three teams and the cadre of board officers were under the steadfast leadership of Kevin as president. Without his guidance and management skills, so much of what we accomplished would not have been possible.

Because of Kevin's commitment to results, Hillcrest has evolved into a facility that has the potential to be competitive with the best the Cornell fraternity system has to

offer. In addition, the strength and quality of the board has never been better. Those were his goals: goals we in turn made our goals—and that is where we are today. That is the true substance of Kevin Merriman's rich legacy.

Noteworthy was that Kevin led the organization during times of significant change and significant difficulty. Kevin's professional and focused leadership made all the difference as we greeted growth and change and met challenges.

Inspired by this and as a testament to the fellowship he relished, most members of the NY Alpha board continued their board service well beyond what they might have originally envisioned. This proved essential to our organizational strength and endurance in recent years.

As Kevin concluded in his article, it has been quite a run! And we all should thank him for that.

We are pleased to recognize Kevin T. Merriman '88 as the 2017 True Gentleman of New York Alpha. As is customary, the award will be presented in June at our Reunion celebration.

Reunion 2017

VISIT HILLCREST JUNE 8-11!

www.sae-cornell.org for the latest details.

FRIDAY: Open house from 1:00 p.m. til dark. This is a great time to visit Hillcrest on your own or with your family and friends.

SATURDAY: Doors open around noon. NY Alpha Alumni Association board meeting will be held at 2:00 p.m. in the library.

Alumni reception from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Award ceremony at 5:15 p.m.

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

A Bright Future Is Ahead for NY Alpha



After six months as president of your NY Alpha Alumni Association, I am hardly a veteran. However, I have learned a few things in that short time—or perhaps I've been reminded of some things I already knew. Whatever the case, I offer them for your consideration.

The recent celebration of our fraternity's 161st birthday on March 9 (Founder's Day) reminds me that we are part of a long-lived institution. I find it amazing that the ideals and vision of a group of college students—not unlike us at that age—can be carried forward for over a century and a half. How many institutions can you think of that have not only survived, but prospered, for that long? Recall that Cornell just celebrated its sesquicentennial. Our NY Alpha Chapter was in existence for 120 years. Certainly, there were some ups and downs during that period, but my reading of the history of our chapter is that the high points far exceeded the low ones.

These extended periods of excellence, I believe, account for another important observation: our alumni group is very strong. While I admit to limited knowledge of other fraternity alumni groups at Cornell, I can easily imagine ours is among the strongest. A significant number of you pay annual dues (of course, we would always like more). This allows us to stay connected via this publication and various on- and off-campus events. Furthermore, we have consistently met fundraising goals for the Hillcrest SAE Development Fund. This, combined

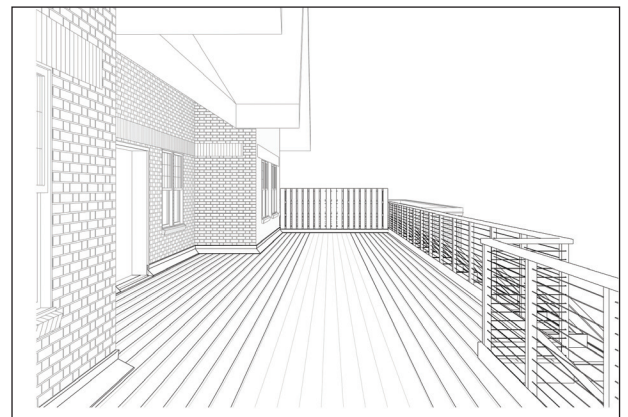
with efficient operation of the property, has enabled us to invest \$1.3 million in the house since our charter was suspended. If you haven't been to Hillcrest in the last few years, you should plan a visit (the June reunion would be an excellent time). I guarantee you will be impressed and amazed. It is gratifying that our alumni can provide this level of support while the undergraduate chapter has been inactive for over six years. It would have been easy to write it off, but you have not chosen that path. Because of this, I believe there is a very bright future for NY Alpha. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

My brief tenure on the board has convinced me that this level of alumni support has been possible because of the dedication and hard work of our board. The "heavy lifting" is done in our committees: facilities, fundraising, communications, outreach. Their hard work keeps us in touch, raises the money, and figures out how best to invest in our home at Hillcrest. There are some stalwarts who can keep this up for a while longer, but the average age of our board suggests it is not sustainable for the long run. We need to broaden the age distribution of the board by adding members from the classes of, say, the last 15-20 years. We look to younger members to bring new perspectives, fresh ideas, and new energy that can propel us forward. Did you make some of your most enduring

friendships at Hillcrest? Did you learn life skills you couldn't have learned in the classroom? Do you want to provide this opportunity to a future generation of young men? If so, now is the time to step up. Contact any member of the board to explore the possibilities.

You may recall that your board approved a strategic plan in 2012 (it is available at www.sae-cornell.org). We are in the process of reviewing and updating that plan, with the hope that we will soon be able to begin execution. When that time comes, we will need to draw on every bit of the alumni support mentioned previously. Personally, I relish the challenge. Your board is ready to roll—are you?

Gus Noojin '69, President
gusnoojin3@gmail.com



Architect's drawing of new deck looking south.

Lost Brothers

We're looking for current postal and/or email addresses for the following brothers. Please write us at alumnirecords@sae-cornell.org with any up-to-date contact information you have.

Edwin F. Chobot Jr. '47

Tomas Dudley Drew-Bear '51

Peter V. Blouin '64

Paul A. Levine '70

Douglas R. Miller '72

George Abdella Hoagland '75

Iain A. Heggie '81

Michael P. Giansiracusa '04

Daniel Jacob Wyler '07

Allan Amitay '10

Michael Alexander Lieberman '13

We're About to Make the Best View in Ithaca Even Better!

As some of you know, our big project for 2017 is the replacement of the deck on the second floor. It has been said that the view from there is unmatched anywhere on campus. Those of you who have attended the last few reunions certainly enjoyed socializing out on the deck but also must have noted its deteriorating condition. So come back in June to see the new one!

A second project was just completed: the upgrade of the fire alarm system at a cost of nearly \$43,000. The new system replaces an old one that did not meet current safety standards.

While we have many projects on the drawing board, next in line will be several upgrades to the kitchen, as well as renovation of the chapter room and three rooms that surround it. We have a team of alumni working on plans for this area; this is described in more detail below.

We have estimated the cost of the kitchen upgrades at around \$50K. This includes new lighting, replacement of tables, and other built-in elements of the dishwashing room. Most of the kitchen equipment is serviceable

and works just fine. The walk-in needs some upgrades but is otherwise acceptable. Included in the cost is purchase of a pizza oven.

The team has been working hard on planning for what we're calling the rec room. Hillcrest needs a place where students can kick back and relax in a comfortable and informal setting. TVs would be ideal in the rec room as well, rather than on the fireplace in the living room (which detracts from the charm of that room). The Great Hall and living room are more "formal" and not suitable for these activities.

A tremendous outpouring of alumni support has gotten us to this point, and we are relying on that to continue as we move forward. There are many other projects on our list that need attention. Check out the ideas and supporting documentation at the facilities link on our website to learn more!

Hal Sieling '62
halsieling@aol.com

The Good Stuff

I am very pleased to report that our fund-raising efforts continue to meet our ongoing goal to carry out our strategic plan for Hillcrest's repair and upgrades. Since 2011, we have replaced the Wing's roof, restored the library doors, reconfigured the rooms for additional single occupancy, replaced all of our "vintage" windows, and upgraded our fire alarm system. That represents a whopping \$1,300,000 investment into Hillcrest. Thanks to all of our loyal and true gentlemen, we continue to make a significant contribution to our favorite home away from home, Hillcrest. That is exceptional alumni commitment by any measure!

In following our long-term plan, we are now entering a phase that addresses many décor issues and items that generally affect the aesthetics of the house. By Reunion '17 we are going to have a new deck to enjoy. Furthermore, there are plans to make significant improvements to the chapter room and the rooms that immediately adjoin it.

The current plan for that space is to reconfigure the area as a "rec room." This would include creating a TV viewing area

and installing entertaining games like indoor shuffleboard, darts, and of course a pool table. Some walls would be opened up somewhat between the three rooms to increase flow. We are also planning new and improved flooring as well as wall finishes and lighting for all areas.

While I'm excited about seeing this area develop, we have other goals further down the line to address improvements to the kitchen and dining room, as well as restoration of the general common areas and new and improved flooring in the bedrooms. These will all be things that we can see, touch, and enjoy! Now that's what I call "the good stuff"!

On behalf of the alumni association and your fellow NY Alpha alumni, I thank you for your continued interest, support, and donations of time and treasure to keep the renovation of Hillcrest moving forward. Please support continued improvements to Hillcrest with a donation this year!

Cory G. Jackson Jr. '86
cj@jacksonhospitality.com



Kingston Honored by Cornell Rowing

Bill Kingston '59 was honored by the Cornell Rowing Association at a Cornell Club of New York dinner on February 4. Bill and Sigma Chi Carl Schwarz '57, the coxswain of the undefeated 1957 Henley crew, were both recognized for their financial support of Cornell Rowing for 44 consecutive years, longer than any other alumni. Bill "Shifty" Schumacher '57 attended the dinner. He was #5 in the "engine room" of the Henley champs; George Bullwinkel and Glenn Light, both '58, were spares.

Bill has endowed scholarships for Cornell students with financial need and has been a major contributor to NY Alpha. He is a class of '59 officer, Cornell Council member, and CAAN volunteer. He was elected to Sphinx Head, the senior honorary society.

Kingston came to Ithaca via a Cornell National Scholarship, the university's highest award. He earned his bachelor's in electrical engineering in 1960, and also has a master's in engineering from Yale. He worked for Norden Labs, then a division of United Technologies, for almost 30 years, and became COO. He established his consulting company, WK Systems, in 1988. One of his clients was SAE John Sargent '61, founder of Quantitative Medical Systems, a provider of software for kidney dialysis companies.

Bill's mom passed away before he came to Cornell. When his dad died just after his 1956 SAE initiation, he lacked the cash for a plane trip home to Denver. In a wonderful gesture of brotherhood, his brothers chipped in to help him buy the tickets.

Bill married Alpha Phi Jackie Grimm '61. They were introduced by Kent Hewitt '59 at a 1960 glee club/chorus rehearsal after Bill told Kent to note a tall, beautiful woman in the chorus. Kent, who did not know Jackie, marched Bill over to her, introduced himself and then introduced Bill. The Kingstons live in Wilton, Connecticut.

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"Still in orthopedic surgery practice full time," reports **Don Huene '55**, who has 14 patents on medical devices. Don's wife, Annette, died about 10 years ago. "Very difficult after 50 years of marriage." Don still races horses and raises exotic animals and remains both a collector and repairer of clocks. As if that's not enough, he also collects and repairs auto musical pianos. Get in touch with him by postal mail at 7429 N Valentine Ave., Fresno, CA 93711, or by email at yosemf@aol.com.

"We're doing fine for a couple of 'old timers,'" admits **Bob Hutchins '56**. "Still happily married to my coed, Susan P. (Howe). Not much going on, no changes to speak of." He continues, "We're golfing a couple of times a month in the good weather months. Belong to a fitness club to keep in shape as much as possible. We do a lot of walking and are both active in our church." Despite the unexpected passing of their son, Bob Jr., last year, they're "hanging in there, still keeping up with Big Red athletics, good Cornell friends, and what's happening on the Hill. Had a visit from my old college roommate, **Pete Huberth '56** earlier this year. He flew in from Alaska, his home state." "Hutch" concludes, "Hope all is well at Hillcrest!" Drop him a line at 269 The Meadows, Enfield, CT 06082, or lccgolfbob@aol.com.

Don Rector '57 and **Ron Demer '59** enjoyed a spot of reminiscing late last year. Wrote Don to Ron, "Thanks for bringing memories of Carmen Coed back to me after some 60 years. Looking back now, I realize how privileged I was to

experience the camaraderie of SAE Hillcrest. I've never been able to carry a tune, but I loved singing the SAE songs after dinner at coffee in the living room. **Dick Estey '55** or the late **John Kernell '55** played the piano. What a luxurious existence for four years." A retired federal administrative judge, Don was the author of Carmen Coed, SAE's prize-winning skit in 1956. He adds, "Another oft-remembered memory was a soft-shoe performance with **Jon Logan '57** while singing "Hard Hearted Hannah, the Vamp of Savannah." Jon is now a physician in Canandaigua, New York (363 Walker Dr., 14424). Don makes his home at 4328 Vashon Dr., NE, Lacey, WA 98516. Email him at newstart10@me.com.

"I'm shutting down my small remaining architectural practice to call myself retired," announces **Hugh Zimmers '59**. "I'm not just downsizing but selling my much-too-large Philadelphia house and moving to Vermont with my wife of 45 years (Eleanor). We will be with my son and his small but vibrant family." Adds Hugh, "I have just completed a series of calls with **Hal Sieling '62** in California and an engineer at Cornell about the early history of the 50+-year-old 'new' wing, which I designed." Reach Hugh at ezimmers@comcast.net.

A research professor and distinguished professor of physics emeritus in the department of physics at SUNY Stony Brook, **Paul D. Grannis '60** has received the Alfred P. Sloan and J.R. Guggenheim awards. Paul and wife Barbara traveled

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to Basel and Venice in 2016. They also enjoyed a Yellowstone and Grand Teton safari, during which they saw black and grizzly bears, bighorn sheep, coyotes, bald eagles, and bull elk shepherding their harems. Paul observed that the alpha male elk could not graze while protecting their herds, ultimately losing to better fed younger rivals. Reach him at pgrannis@sunysb.edu or 1 Terrell Lane, Stony Brook, NY 11790.



Jay Kasin '62 writes, "My wife, Cindy, and our children and grandchildren are all well and have survived an eventful year, including our usual three weeks on the Big Island of Hawaii. Son Phil and

his family joined us for a wonderful week (five-year-old Avery declared, 'I could get used to this!'). We shared another delightful week with friends and soaked up the sun and relaxation all by ourselves the third week." Jay had carpal tunnel, knee replacement, and gallstone removal surgeries in 2016, and all went well. In 2017 they're planning to spend a few days in Vegas in March and to attend Jay's 50th Cornell reunion in June. Jay didn't graduate from Cornell; he finished at Adelphi and was instrumental in the founding of an SAE chapter there, NY Sigma. Unfortunately, it folded in 1974. The Kasins live at 1805 134th Ave., SE Apt. 2-10, Bellevue, WA 98005. They also have a vacation home a couple hours east in Leavenworth. Adds Jay, "Old friends sagely predicted that I would wind up in either Bellevue or Leavenworth, but not both." Reach him by email at jkasin@comcast.net.

Neil Schilke '62 is serving as chairman for the class of 1962's 55th reunion, June 8-11, 2017. "I hope that my SAE brothers will attend." Catch up with him at 1879 Lincolnshire Dr., Rochester Hills, MI 48309, or nerschilke@aol.com.

Bob McCabe '65 made a "nostalgic visit to Hillcrest" in late January while at Cornell as a guest of the Cornell Hockey Association and Big Red Athletics—a celebration around the 50th reunion of the 1967 Cornell men's NCAA ice hockey championship team, of which Bob was assistant coach. The president and CEO of the Vero Beach Chamber of Commerce, Bob lives at 2001 9th Ave., #105, Vero Beach, FL 32960. Email him at robertjmccabe@aol.com.

"Hello, brothers," writes **Chuck Spencer '68**. "I have thought of SAE a lot this month. I gave a eulogy at my brother-in-law's funeral a few weeks ago. I had known him 50 years and grew to appreciate that though not an SAE, he exemplified, like no one else I have known, a true gentleman,

'who thought of the rights and feelings of others rather than his own; and who appeared well in any company, a man with whom honor was sacred and virtue safe.'" He concludes, "Thank you, SAE, for these lofty goals." Chuck makes his home at 5743 Rushwood Dr., Dublin, OH 43017. Email him at charles.spencer@nationwidechildrens.org.

Congratulations to **Mark Dembo '86**, who has recently joined the staff at Cornell—with the university's online learning arm, eCornell. "I am still based in New York and work with organizations to help them take advantage of the phenomenal resources of the university to build and grow the skills of their workforce." Mark adds that it was great to see so many brothers and friends at their 30th reunion last year—"it seemed like no time had passed at all!" He finds it "truly exciting" to be reconnected with Cornell. (44 Sunrise Ave., Katonah, NY 10536; mdembo@gmail.com)

Clayton Marshall '92 reports that he has settled down in Las Vegas now, but is "jetting around the country regularly" as a United Airlines 737 first officer. He adds, "Nice view from my 'desk,' but still like the view from the back deck at Hillcrest better." Reach him at 505 Los Dolces St., Las Vegas, NV 89138, or claymarsh@aol.com.

More accolades for SAE brother and Ithaca Mayor **Svante Myrick '09**: He's been recognized by Forbes as one of the "30 Under 30" (law & policy). From the Forbes website: "Myrick was first elected Mayor of Ithaca, New York at the age of 24. He inherited a \$3 million budget deficit, which he closed while ultimately lowering taxes. He has added new infrastructure and housing, and has revitalized public transportation. He was recently re-elected with 89% of the vote." Congratulate him at slm84@cornell.edu.

"I'm down in North Carolina finishing up my last year of medical school at Duke," announces **Luke Poveromo '10**. "I'm in the process of applying to residency in reconstructive surgery. I actually just finished a visiting rotation in NYC at Weill Cornell. It was a great experience and nice to be back in New York." Luke adds that he hasn't been back to Hillcrest since his brother graduated from Cornell in 2013. "Can't believe how time flies." We don't have an updated NC address for Luke, but you can reach him by email at lpp7@cornell.edu.

Thanks to the hard work of **Adam Schulman '09** and **Jon Hyduke '06** of the alumni board's outreach committee, we held a successful event in New York City in November, coinciding with the Cornell vs. Columbia football game at Baker Field. It was an exciting, high-scoring game that Cornell won on the last play. Several alums and

their guests attended the game, and a bigger contingent assembled at the Ginger Man restaurant for a reception, which convened just after the Cornell band marched down Fifth Avenue from Rockefeller Center to the Cornell Club.



Ron and Lorraine Skalko '73 with Pam Daniels checking out the Columbia Lion to compare it with our two at SAE.



SAE alumni gathered at the Ginger Man in New York City after the Cornell-Columbia game. From right: Andrew Soare, Ben Blueweiss, Dan Fine, Jon Hyduke, and Adam Schulman.



Cornell-UNH hockey game at Madison Square Garden. Left to right: Rob, John, Karen, and Marie Ceske; Marie's boyfriend; Rachel, Jessica, Nathan, and Steve Sinaiko.

Chapter Eternal

James E. Storer '47

August 29, 2016

William H. Abraham '51

December 28, 2016

Thomas Moron '51

June 8, 2015

Maurice O. Ryan Jr. '54

September 16, 2016

Peter M. Huberth '56

February 9, 2017

Richard S. Rogus '59

October 27, 2016

John D. Wright '64

June 8, 2015

DON'T FORGET: LOG ON TO WWW.SAE-CORNELL.ORG & UPDATE YOUR PROFILE!