



NEW YORK ALPHA NEWS

NEW YORK ALPHA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION • CORNELL UNIVERSITY

A CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT



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If you haven't kept up with events on campus, it has been a tragic six months for the Cornell community as a whole and especially for the Greek community. Last October, first-year student Antonio Tsialas was found dead in Fall Creek gorge. The investigation into his death is still in progress at this writing, and few details have been made public. Two facts are known: he was last seen

naming Cornell, Phi Kappa Psi, some of the chapter officers, and the chapter advisor as defendants.

These events have stoked emotions on both sides of the ongoing debate about the value of the Greek system at Cornell. Add to this the response to the coronavirus pandemic, which has brought an unprecedented level of uncertainty and anxiety to the campus. This is

chapter-advising model, complete with names and specific roles. (We need volunteers to step up for this role; for more information see Dave Martin's article on page three.) In short, we will make the case that we can be part of the solution rather than adding to the problem.

The timing of our application is another matter. When our last application was rejected, we were told we would be eligible to apply in



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at an unregistered event at Phi Kappa Psi, and alcohol was served. In her letter to the campus community, Cornell President Pollack cited these events, noting that they "regrettably follow a pattern of misconduct in the Greek-letter system." In a December letter, she announced "that in order to promote the health and safety of our students we must impose additional—and meaningful—reforms on Greek life at Cornell." The reforms include stricter enforcement of policies and new regulations on the recruitment process, including substance-free recruitment events. She also acknowledged the positive contributions from the Greek system over the years and rejected a call to abolish the system. You can read the president's letter at <https://tinyurl.com/SAE-Reforms>.

In January, the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life released a 12-page Risk Management and Social Event Policy. It includes a restatement of existing rules as well as a number of new rules and restrictions on events with alcohol. If you are interested in the details, search cornell.edu for "social event policy." While some may view these as extreme changes, it should be noted that they are broadly consistent with SAE National's policies.

Also in January, Tsialas's parents filed a lawsuit

the environment we face as we consider applying for recognition and the right to form a new SAE colony. As I have said before, we will not be victims of events beyond our control. Rather, we choose to be players, focusing on the things we *do* control. We will hold fast to our aspiration to build a chapter that is a model for Greek life. To this end, we are continuing our project to identify best practices to implement in a new chapter. And we will continue to seek opportunities to contribute to the Cornell community, as we did by sponsoring the keynote at the A.D. White Annual Summit for Greeks last fall.

We have been in contact with SAE National, which has prepared a first draft of a letter of intent (which precedes a formal application). In the coming months, we will be working closely with National to develop an application that presents a compelling case for recognition. I believe National has a positive story to tell about its reforms and results achieved. The New York Alpha Alumni Association expects to participate in the presentation and highlight the continuing engagement with and support from our alumni. The application will describe a robust

the fall semester of this year. At this point, it is unclear what the fall semester will look like. Whenever normal operations resume, we will need to assess the campus environment and our chances for success.

At this point, it is impossible to imagine how all this might play out. With that said, I can assure you that the content and timing of our application will be chosen to maximize our chance for success. Thank you for your patience and continuing support as we navigate these uncertain times.



At the A.D. White Annual Summit for Greeks last fall: Ryan Lombardi, Cornell vice president of student life; keynote speakers Rich Braham and Rae Ann and Stephen Gruver; Ron Skalko '73; and keynote speakers Evelyn and Jim Piazza. View the keynote address at <https://tinyurl.com/ADWhite>.

RECONNECT WITH YOUR BROTHERS

Jon Hyduke '06 | Outreach Committee Chair
jon.hyduke@gmail.com

Cornell Reunion Weekend is fast approaching. If you're able to attend, I encourage all to do so, no matter your class year. I've been fortunate to have attended twice. Not only is Ithaca amazing at that time of year, but even more important is how exciting it is to connect with brothers across many different classes.

If you can't attend Reunion Weekend, I still encourage everyone to re-engage and reconnect. Perhaps you could gather a few brothers at a local establishment? Or call that classmate you haven't spoken with in some time. It is important, especially in times like these, to remain a tight-knit community.

Hillcrest is not just physical place, it is inside each one of us. Although our efforts to return to campus may have hit a few hurdles, we will continue to persevere toward the common goal, which requires help from every member of our community. Paying annual alumni dues goes a long way in continuing to support these efforts. As a reminder, we now allow payment of these dues via PayPal to make it easier than ever. Go to www.sae-cornell.org, click on "How to Give" on the left side of the page, and select the PayPal option.

KEEP INFORMED

Be sure to check
ALUMNI.CORNELL.EDU
for updates on the status of
Reunion 2020.

HELP SUPPORT HILLCREST!

Ron Skalko '73 | Fundraising Chair
rls73@comcast.net

Since 2011, your alumni board has overseen significant improvements and restoration at Hillcrest totaling close to \$2 million! This is a truly amazing accomplishment, but we are not finished. We are now in the active planning stages for the common areas on the first floor. We can transform these spaces to become well-used activity areas. Of course, your continued financial support is needed.

with corporate matches! And don't forget, a gift through Cornell to the Hillcrest SAE Development Fund is tax-deductible.

Those of us on the alumni board of NY Alpha express our sincere appreciation for your past support of both Cornell University and our fraternity. If you haven't yet donated this year, we hope we can count on your participation as we approach the close of the 2019-2020 Cornell Fund year. If you have donated but are inspired by what you read in these pages to donate again, we thank you mightily!

"Despite adversity, so many brothers have been steadfast and very generous to Hillcrest and the New York Alpha Alumni Association."

Despite adversity, so many brothers have been steadfast and very generous to Hillcrest and the New York Alpha Alumni Association. Through our efforts we have achieved some amazing results, and I am confident we will continue to do so.

You can mail your gift to the Hillcrest SAE Development Fund #780108 in the enclosed envelope, or you can give to SAE through Cornell's secure alumni website using this link: <https://giving.cornell.edu/>.

Please remember that giving to SAE through Cornell will double the impact of your gift. It will count once for Cornell and once for NY Alpha. You can also double the amount of your gift

In return for your loyalty, the volunteers on the NY Alpha alumni board promise to keep working hard on your behalf to bring SAE back to Cornell. Please join us in honoring Hillcrest again this year!

THE RESULTS OF YOUR SUPPORT!

Hal Sieling '62 | Facilities Chair
halsieling@aol.com

The final fix to the before-mentioned safety issue on our new deck should soon be approved for installation. The plan is in the works and will lead to only a small change in appearance on its south end. We are glad to have this nearly behind us after almost two years of discussion.

In the last issue of the *New York Alpha News*, I wrote about working next on the first-floor common areas. We are several weeks into that planning and hope to have some portions done prior to this year's Reunion. The wood paneling in the Great Hall needs a refresh, as it has not been touched for nearly 20 years and obviously shows some wear. So, too, do the walls above, whose tired look will be improved with new paint. The trim, chair rails, wood beams, baseboards, and windowsills also need and will get an uplift, and all the rooms in the main common area of the first floor will have the same colors for these items. That's the way it was historically, but in haste in 2011 different colors were used by different contractors. Our goal is a master plan for

coordination of this effort, which will be obvious to the discerning observer. As part of the plan, other items like the ceilings, doors, and crown molding will also be painted.

The library color scheme also will be aligned with the colors in the Great Hall and North Hall, so all the rooms on the main floor look like they are from one plan. The main stairway and its paneling is also a key element of this plan. Some parts were upgraded last year; the balance will be done soon. None of the rooms requires major surgery! It is mostly an issue of fine-tuning, but these things still need to be done. The carpeting in the library will be replaced eventually too, but not until the summer just before we reoccupy Hillcrest.

Without the benefit of continuing alumni support, the Hillcrest we would be returning to would look tired and worn. As I have said in the past and repeat now: your support drives our success and ability to upgrade these areas and keep Hillcrest in top shape.

So thank you!

CHAPTER ADVISING – 2020 AND BEYOND

Dave Martin '94

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Many of us generously donate funds to New York Alpha as a way of staying connected to our chapter—which still means so much to us well after our time on the Hill. Additionally, many of us volunteer through our alumni association board to further our relationship with our brotherhood of alumni. For both of those gifts of time and financial support, New York Alpha is eternally grateful.

Historically, as an alumni organization, we have not provided substantial opportunities for most of us to interact directly with the active undergraduate chapter, beyond Homecoming tailgates and meeting the brothers living at Hillcrest at Reunion. We have been fortunate over the course of our history to have some key alumni local to Ithaca serve as chapter advisors to the undergraduate chapter, but that has primarily been a one-man job, with many of those fine alumni brothers serving in that capacity for many years running. As part of our eventual recolonization, we plan to provide opportunities for a larger group of individuals to interact with the active chapter through a new chapter advising model, including an advisory board, that we plan to

present to Cornell and SAE National with our application. This would be a central part of our governance after recolonization.

Through this new program, we will recruit, nominate, and elect a group of five advisors to pair and interact with key active chapter officers to provide support, advice, and a sounding board to these officers as they execute their responsibilities on behalf of the active chapter, and as they grow in their leadership roles within the chapter. The intent of the program is to provide a direct link to the active chapter, in which experience and expertise can be shared with the actives as needed, but also—and equally important—to provide a forum for relationships to be developed between these active chapter leaders and the advisors.

The advising program will be very active, with expected biweekly interactions between the advisor and paired chapter leader, as well as monthly advisory board meetings. While one of the advisors is planned to fill the role of a live-in advisor, having residence at Hillcrest and interacting daily with the active chapter, other advisors can meet either locally or remotely with their advising partner in the chapter. Each advisor will serve a two-year term, as

elected by the NYAAA board.

While our alumni organization is the likely source of most of these advisors, and where we will be recruiting heavily, we have also specifically left membership on the advisory board open to other individuals who could be nominated by the board, with the intention of identifying key individuals who can make a positive influence on the undergraduate leaders and on the advisory board. For instance, we might identify leaders among Cornell's staff or faculty as advisors.

We plan to elect the initial advisory board in advance of the election of the first group of undergraduate leaders for the new SAE NY Alpha colony, once formed. This will allow the advisory board to begin work immediately with the chapter leaders as they take on their very important role associated with the chapter's return to Cornell.

If you would like to learn more about these advisor roles, or if you would like to nominate yourself or another individual for a position on the advisory board, please contact me at my email address above for further information.

In Memoriam: Asa Matlack Stackhouse III '61

July 3, 1939 – September 27, 2019

Bill Jordan '62

wfjordan@earthlink.net

Asa became my ΣAE Big Brother in 1959 and remained among my closest friends. Shortly before he died, he called from his hospital bed. Neither of us considered it would be our last conversation.

After Cornell, Asa joined the Air Force. As a second lieutenant, he became a navigator-bombardier in B-58 strategic bombers and subsequently earned his wings and flew C-130s. After that, he and C-130s were inseparable.

In Vietnam, Asa flew in support of U.S. and clandestine forces. Noteworthy were his missions flying MC-130s—at the time the most advanced transport plane in the world—with electronic countermeasures and computerized navigation instruments for penetrating intense antiaircraft threat areas. The aircraft, called Black Birds, utilized top-secret, night-viewing, forward-looking infrared sensors that permitted treetop flight in zero-visibility conditions. Painted black and dark green, they bore no identification or insignia. MC-

130s flew “spook” missions, such as carrying soldiers wearing NVA uniforms to fields deep behind enemy lines and using 20-foot Fulton Skyhooks to snatch U.S. soldiers and airmen from the ground in NVA-controlled regions.

Retiring as a major, Asa flew C-130s for Southern Airways, which he adamantly denied was a CIA airline. He delivered cargo to dirt strips from Africa to the South Pacific. On one flight to Africa, he suffered a heart attack while landing with only two of the C-130's four engines running. Thus, his commercial flying career ended.

Later, Asa worked part-time as a FEMA logistics officer. During and after the 9/11 crisis, Asa deployed to New York City, where he remained for more than six months. His reputation for precision, efficiency, and good humor made him a FEMA favorite at disaster sites.

About five years ago, Asa left Fort Walton Beach for his hometown, Moorestown,

New Jersey, to be closer to his brother Tom, a psychologist, his favorite niece Kata, his cousin Art, and many childhood friends. He reaffiliated with his family's Quaker faith and attended its meetings for worship.

Our friendship lasted 60 years; its memories are indelible.



Asa Stackhouse (on right)



From left: Brothers Bill Kingston '59 and Kent Hewitt '59 with Bob Quencer, Phi Kappa Sigma, in Zimbabwe in February as part of a Cornell-led tour of Southern Africa.

"We all survived," announces **Ron Hewitt '69**, recounting a recent visit he and Shirley had from Jeanne and **Gregg Otto '69** in January. Ron writes, "We had a great time with a couple of great desert hikes. The most memorable one was to the top of Camelback, which was a five-hour, strenuous hike in Scottsdale. Last third was mostly on hands and knees up very steep slopes." Reach "Sloth" at 65 Checkerberry Lane, Henniker, NH 03242, or rshew@tds.net.

From Oyster Bay, New York, **Willie McCormiskey '70** writes, "Twins Will and Rosie are freshmen in college." Both are accomplished violinists, although Willie describes Will as "currently retired." Rosie is at Clemson, majoring in elementary education. Will is at SUNY Geneseo, where he's studying business and playing lacrosse. Willie continues, "Wife Maria is a school teacher (music), and I'm in my 35th year as a PGA professional." He also works as a substitute teacher in the winter. "Miss my buddy Champ," he adds. Check in by email at mccumjr@yahoo.com or 85 Capital Heights Rd., Oyster Bay, NY 11771.

The (perhaps unenviable) distinction of having survived three hurricanes goes to **Jim Baden '61**, who makes his home in Hilton Head. Jim is working as a volunteer in the local Volunteers in Medicine clinic, doing minor surgery. He also attends Rotary and sings barbershop harmony (with Barbershoppers). Jim sees **Bill Standen '58** regularly, since he lives nearby. Reach Jim at 27 Dolphin Point Lane, Hilton Head Island, SC 29926, or jpbadenmd@gmail.com.

Bob McCabe '65 reports, "On the weekend of January 24-25, I attended the 50th-anniversary celebration of the 1970 ice hockey team, which had a 29-0-0 record and won Cornell's second NCAA championship. As assistant coach from 1965 to 1969, I enjoyed seeing all of the players I helped recruit for the 1970 team. It was also great to experience the incredible enthusiasm of the students and townspeople who continue to support Cornell hockey. The crowd demonstrated its indomitable spirit as Cornell beat Dartmouth on Friday night and then tied against Harvard on Saturday evening. The latter game was even more gratifying to me, as my hometown is Cambridge!" Bob, who serves as president of the Vero Beach Chamber of Commerce, lives at 4049 Ocean Dr., #506, Vero Beach, FL 32963. Email him at robertjmccabe@aol.com.

NYA's Steve Hindy Named Cornell's 2020 Entrepreneur

We are pleased to report that **Steve Hindy '71**, co-founder of Brooklyn Brewery, a pioneer of the craft brewing movement and a much-valued supporter of Reunion at Hillcrest annually, has been named Cornell Entrepreneur of the Year 2020 by Entrepreneurship at Cornell. You can read more about Steve and his circuitous route to his calling at <https://tinyurl.com/SAE-Hindy>.

Bruce Flenniken '72 reports, "This fall my 19-year-old daughter and I visited northern India for nine days to interact with the Tibetan government-in-exile (Tibetan Central Authority). After meeting many of the officials—including their young president, who attended Harvard—we were treated to the highlight of our trip: a private audience with the 15th Dalai Lama of Tibet. Then off to see the Taj Mahal and a couple of days in Dubai to visit the world's tallest building and do some fun activities in the Arabian Desert." Bruce adds that he lives in a suburb of Boston and would love to hear from anyone coming through



SAEs gathered at Lynah on January 25 for the game against Harvard. From left: Eric Wenger '90, Geoff Ryan '90, Todd Girshon '90, and Jay Schiff '88.

who wants a place to stay. (168 Homer St., Newton Center, MA 02459; brucef08@comcast.net)

"All is well," writes **Nate Mann '74**, who had to retire at age 65 from the partnership but still works there two to three days a week. He continues, "I took up golf six years ago. My handicap is 35. I am the most improved player at the club. They keep me because I am solvent." Nate enjoys his "five beautiful granddaughters—none of them look like me." Catch up with him at 3191 Cape Verde Place, Costa Mesa, CA 92626, or ndmann@hotmail.com.

Chapter Eternal

Donal C. Reeves '50

November 19, 2019

Everett F. Seidenberg '51

October 24, 2019

John Ditchos '53

June 18, 2019

Asa M. Stackhouse III '61

September 27, 2019

John P. Moe '64

June 10, 2019

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