



NEW YORK ALPHA NEWS

NEW YORK ALPHA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION • CORNELL UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Gus Noojin '69
President,
New York Alpha
Alumni Association

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As you can read nearby in this issue, the New York Alpha chapter had another very successful recruiting season.

This will allow the house to operate at capacity and put the chapter's finances on very firm footing. The house and the kitchen are operating more efficiently each semester and SAE is regaining its stature as a campus leader:

This is all good news, and your consistent support has been crucial in getting us to this point – I keep saying this because it is true. To, hopefully, bring that statement to life, I'd like to give you a picture of what volunteer support looks like. A great example is your Alumni Association board, whose work is not visible to most. The board is comprised of 12 brothers, most of whom serve as officers or chair one of the board's 5 committees. They have families, careers and other commitments, but contribute their time and talent unselfishly. Importantly, they can be relied on to fulfill the commitments they make. If you have been part of

a volunteer organization, you'll know this is often not the case.

Dave Martin has stepped up to serve the crucial role of chapter advisor. This is a tough job in the first instance and more difficult from 1500 miles away. He stays on top of events in Ithaca and provides valuable, trusted counsel to the EA and other officers. He also stays in touch with SAE National and visits campus several times a year.

Matt English (and Eric Jorgensen for 20 years before him) serves as treasurer. In addition to seeing that the bills are paid and tax forms are filed, he monitors the SAE accounts maintained by Cornell for accuracy. And, he provides valuable support to the chapter treasurer as a mentor.

Ben Roberts, our Fund-Raising Chair, has been sidelined by a move and a new baby, but he is back in action now.

Darryl Tom, the consummate multitasker, stepped in to keep the fund-raising communications on track. This is in addition to editing this newsletter and coordinating alumni outreach events. He also is our main contact with Elevate, our alumni services provider, and directed the recent website revamp along with Jon Hyduke.

Gregg Klein and Brian Nicholson are co-facilities chairs. They have a monthly video conference with the Cornell Facilities group to prioritize projects and monitor project progress and costs.

Steve Sinaiko, our secretary, helps keep us true to our bylaws and keeps the minutes of our meetings.

Andy Rung is our representative to the AIFC and keeps us abreast of developments across the Greek community.

I hope this helps you appreciate the breadth and depth of service your alumni volunteers provide. Perhaps, it will also inspire you to get involved as a volunteer. Let us know your skills and interests and we'll find a way to get you involved. Extra help is always welcome.



Gus Noojin
Gus Noojin '69

EMINENT ARCHON'S LETTER



Justin Alvarez '27

Phi Alpha Brothers! My name is Justin Alvarez, and I am honored to serve as Eminent Archon for New York Alpha for the 2025 school year. I am a sophomore at Cornell University studying Government and Art History and a member of the Epsilon Class, which was initiated in Spring 2024. It is an incredible privilege to lead our chapter as we continue to strengthen our presence on campus and build upon the strong foundation set by my predecessors.

Heading into our third year at Hillcrest this fall, Sigma Alpha Epsilon is now known to be a strong leader around campus. With over 70 brothers, the bonds within the house have grown stronger as brothers travel together, connect through internships and mentorship opportunities, and engage more actively in chapter social events. Among our ranks, we have brothers serving as presidents and executive board members of organizations such as Big Red Hearts, Cornell MergerSight, the Bee Club, and PAD Pre-Law Fraternity and holding key leadership positions in engineering and other professional organizations. This presence reflects our commitment to excellence, leadership, and service—not just within SAE, but across the Cornell community.

In recruitment, we have successfully initiated 25 new brothers as part of the Eta Class, and we are projecting a strong Fall 2025 class, with interest in SAE at Cornell continuing to grow. Most of our new class resides in California, with the rest primarily from New York and Florida. Additionally, many new brothers are pursuing degrees in Business and Hotel Administration, further strengthening our presence in some of Cornell's most prestigious and influential programs. This unique blend of backgrounds has fostered a strong, dynamic brotherhood that brings together

different perspectives while maintaining a shared commitment to the values of Sigma Alpha Epsilon.

We have also expanded our philanthropic and service initiatives with other organizations across Cornell. In addition to our ongoing work with national partners like NMDP and the American Red Cross, we have strengthened our presence on campus through collaborations with sororities for major philanthropic events. This year, we are partnering with Alpha Xi Delta to host the Rose Gala, an elegant fundraiser supporting Sleep In Heavenly Peace, and we are teaming up with Pi Beta Phi for the Powder Puff Football Game, benefiting Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. These initiatives help us give back and foster meaningful relationships within the Greek community at Cornell.

In terms of house improvements, we continue to enhance Hillcrest for both active and future generations of brothers. This past year, we furnished the chapter room, created an in-house gym, and added wood flooring to the hallways. These upgrades would not have been possible without the generous support of our alumni network, and we are incredibly grateful to the NYAA for their continued investment in our chapter's success. Our next focus includes replacing the boiler room, new deck furniture to enhance our outdoor gathering space, a sound system for the dining hall to improve meals and events, and upgraded lighting for both the deck and the house exterior to enhance visibility and aesthetics.

The future of New York Alpha is bright, and we are excited to continue strengthening our ties with alumni through the NYAA network. The continued generosity of our alumni has played a crucial role in maintaining and improving the historic home of New York Alpha, and we are excited to keep building on that foundation to enhance the experience for both current and future brothers. We look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming events and updating you on our progress throughout the year.



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD

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Chuck Chiemelu '12

Andy Rung '03

Neil Teague '66

Emeritus

Jim Becket '85

Cory Jackson '86

Eric Jorgensen '84

Hal Sieling '62

Mike Slusar '86

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: KIRK VASHAW '94

Kirk Vashaw graduated from the Cornell University College of Engineering in 1994. He has been the President of Spangler Candy Company since 2008, when he became the seventh president in the company's then 102-year-old history, and the first fourth generation family member to lead it. He became Chairman and CEO in 2011.

Spangler is located in Bryan, Ohio (population 8,300). It employs 550 people, and manufactures 2.5 billion Dum-Dums lollipops a year, along with Circus Peanuts, Sweethearts, Necco wafers, and Bit-O-Honey candies. In addition, Spangler is the only producer of candy canes in the US and makes about half of all the candy canes sold here.

While at SAE, Kirk served in a variety of roles including Pledge Educator, Summer House Manager, Chronicler, and EA.

After graduating from Cornell, Kirk was a Project Engineer at Gilbane Building Company, the largest family-owned construction management company in the US. After receiving an MBA at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business in 2001, he worked at the Gillette Company on licensing in their marketing department. In 2003, Spangler needed help after signing a licensing deal with Disney, and he then joined the business.

He currently serves on the boards of Spangler Candy, Mennel Milling (one of the largest family-owned flour milling companies in the US), the Bryan Area Foundation, and the Williams County Airport Authority.



Kirk Vashaw '94

How did you rise the ranks to become CEO? Did it help to work for other organizations prior to joining the family business? What challenges do you face in running an organization?

In the 1970's Spangler made a rule that any family member employee must have outside work experience. It's a good rule. My outside experience at different companies in different industries was helpful in understanding Spangler's strengths and weaknesses. This perspective helped me understand where the Company needed to focus its resources and allowed me to gain more responsibilities.

Nobody likes nepotism, and I had to fight that stigma. Since I became CEO, the Company has seen significant growth. It turns out that people don't care as much about nepotism when the team is regularly winning.

What advice would you give to others who want to advance their careers in large organizations?

I think fraternities are great places to learn how large organizations work and how to maneuver in them. Most organizations have a Board, who elect Management, to oversee Employees, to service Customers. As a SAE Brother, you get to be all these constituents at the same time.

Didn't like the last SAE party? Did you elect the wrong Social Chair? Did the employees setting up the party not do their job? Was it not funded properly? Or were your customers crappy? Regardless of the answer, it's your fault. The ability to understand the viewpoints and needs of the entire spectrum of an organization is great life skill.

As an engineer at heart, I've told others, "Business is simple. People are the hard part." Logic gives you a pretty good idea of how a system will work or what a competitor might do. People are emotional and harder to predict. I think the best leaders are great people readers. They understand the different ways to influence different people.

Living with a bunch of guys for several years helps you better understand others and their influences on the House's decision making. You are unlikely to move up in a big organization without understanding it's politics.

I am terrible at reading people, but I figured that out. My work around is I ask others who are good at it and then communicate with people accordingly.

One of the things I learned in our SAE House meetings is that a good, well-timed, one liner can usually get half of the people to instantly agree with you. Laughter is an underrated motivational tool.

Spangler employs a large percentage of the population of Bryan, Ohio. What efforts do you make to give back to the local community?

One of our main goals as a family business is to survive, so we are very sensitive to balancing the long-term needs of

all our stakeholders. These include our shareholders, our employees, our customers, our physical and intellectual property (our future), and our community. If you keep these balanced, your organization can last forever. If these get out of balance, the wheels can quickly come off.

Our community is a stakeholder. If we don't have a nice community, we don't have a workforce. Nobody wants to live in a dump. Supporting the community sometimes involves big financial donations, but just as important is personal involvement.

For example, when it was time to rebuild our schools, Spangler helped mobilized a committee to convince citizens to vote for a bond levy. It passed, and we replaced our 100-year old buildings with new ones.

During COVID, we sent an army of employees to our Health Department to call people to schedule their vaccinations. Our community efficiently prioritized oldest to youngest and got everyone vaccinated quickly.

Allowing employees to coach high school sport teams is a way we support the community and our workforce at the same time. The community has been treated to some State Championship games out of this arrangement as well.

What plans, if any, do you have to grow Spangler? I know you led the effort to acquire Necco recently. How did they help establish an organizational culture?

We've been through a growth spurt the past seven years with our acquisitions of NECCO and Bit-O-Honey. In both cases, we acquired the equipment and moved it to our facility. We did not retain any of the employees, because we didn't want a culture clash.

A strong culture helps people focus their efforts in the same direction and provides a framework to make decisions that others within the Company will view favorably. Spangler's culture has been built over our 119 years, and we weren't about to risk screwing it up.

How has your affiliation with SAE influenced your career?

The True Gentlemen is a tool to create a culture. I better appreciate a strong culture through my membership in SAE. It is probably the most underappreciated attribute of an organization.

In most business cultures, personal integrity and authenticity will take you far and allow you to overcome your weaknesses.

Having fun at work is important in many cultures too. SAE taught me many ways that people have fun. I don't think putting a pot on my head and running into a wall multiple times is fun, but I now appreciate that others do. You'll communicate more effectively with someone if you know they enjoy doing something like that.

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What advice would you give to the young men who are restarting NY Alpha?

I would encourage them to identify what they want as a group and then to take personal accountability to help the House meet those objectives. If everyone pulls their weight in the same direction and has a little patience, you'll get there.

The inability to believe you can achieve something is many times is the greatest obstacle. In 1994, our EA Beau Taylor '94 said NY Alpha was going to figure out how to win the Zeal Award. He made us believe we could, and then we did.

A favorite memory as an SAE?

Besides all the hazy memories, our class took lots of road trips. They always seemed to generate classic stories which continue to be retold (and enhanced) through the decades.

Channing Hamlet '94 and I are both pilots. We grabbed our little brothers (Matt Reidenbach '97 and Greg Williams '97) and flew them to Rochester for front row seats at a small Chris Rock show before he hit it big. He declared us, "the whitest four people on Earth" complained our "whiteness was blinding him". I always think of that night when I see him on TV and acknowledge my receding hairline has made my shininess worse since then.

I might have more good memories of SAE after I graduated. Our class has been good at planning an event every year or so. I hope my best SAE memories are ahead. Brotherhood is forever.

REUNION 2025

Cornell Reunion Weekend is June 5-8, 2025. On Friday, there will be an open house at Hillcrest. Saturday, there will be a New York Alpha Alumni Association board meeting (brothers are welcome to attend) at 2 p.m. followed by a reception at the house at about 4 p.m. Those interested in staying in the house for the weekend for free should contact darryl.tom@gmail.com.

By Benjamin Roberts '10

Spring in Ithaca is a time of transition—our newest brothers are finding their place, our seniors are preparing for the next chapter, and at Hillcrest, we continue the tradition of ensuring our home remains as strong and welcoming as ever.

For 108 years, SAE has stood at the top of the Hill, and thanks to alumni support, we've kept Hillcrest the premier fraternity house on campus. That legacy continues today. Recent upgrades—including new LVP flooring, exterior painting, and remodeled chapter and game rooms—have helped modernize our home while preserving its historic character. But as always, there's more work to be done.

Looking ahead, we're committed to key improvements that will keep Hillcrest thriving for the next generation of brothers, including:

- **Boiler repair project starting late 2025**
- **Kitchen equipment upgrades to support a better dining experience**
- **New dining room furniture to maintain the sense of brotherhood at every meal**
- **WiFi enhancements for stronger connectivity in study and common areas**
- **Restroom updates and improved common area furnishings to keep Hillcrest both functional and inviting**

We made a great showing on Cornell Giving Day this year ranking at #11 for student and campus groups. Please continue to support Hillcrest through the Hillcrest Development Fund with your tax deductible gift and also pay your alumni dues.

Please visit sae-cornell.org/ways-to-give.

CORNELL HOCKEY



FROZEN APPLE NOVEMBER 30, 2024

From Andy Lodge '95: Ken Worthington, Chris Bonn, Marc Wood, Doug Greer and I met for drinks before the game with our families.



CORNELL-HARVARD GAME

Back row: Todd Girshon '90, Mark Miller '90, John Justice '90, Geoff Ryan '90, Eric Wenger '90;
Front row: Jeff Marks '91, Jay Schiff '88

CLASS NOTES

From Ralph (Rennie) Boericke '59, BME '60, and wife Nancy Lynch '60 Dave Hugle, '56 Hotel, writes from California:

My husband Haggai and I are actively involved here at the Tamalpais retirement community in Marin County, he with raising funds for scholarships for employees and their children here and in similar facilities throughout Marin, and I'm heading the resident food services committee here, reminiscent of my spot as steward at SAE working with cooks Buster and Betty. I had a chance to hook up with my senior year roommate, Britt Stitt '58, when his wife Susie, a Wheaton College grad, ended up here in our Skilled Nursing Facility for 5 weeks recovering from a multiple fracture of her leg. Among other things we ended up whiling away the hours doing competing laps in the pool. I always win despite my 90 years. Imagine, and he's only 88..."

Charles Morris, Hotel '56, BS '57 writes:

"Hi Ron. Thanks for your E-Mail along with the pictures....brings back a lot of memories. I appreciate your efforts on my behalf. I am doing just fine health wise and have stayed out of trouble in every thing I can remember. Best regards to you and your family. Charlie Morris."

Charlie lives in Spokane WA. He became a US Airforce pilot after Cornell flying fighter planes, and then had a second career with Pan American Airlines after retiring from the military. His email is cmmace@aol.com

After living on Bald Head Island in North Carolina, Nancy Lynch Boericke, A&S '60, Kappa Alpha Theta, and her husband, SAE Ralph (Rennie) Boericke '59, BME '60, have relocated to Stone Ridge Senior Living at 186 Jerry Browne Rd #1302, Mystic, CT 06355. They can be reached at rrb866@gmail.com

CHAPTER ETERNAL

James Bowyer '06

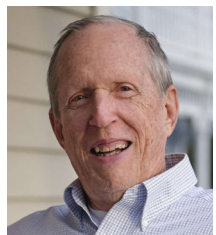
James "Jim" Fitzgerald Bowyer Of Flourtown, PA and formerly of Richmond, VA, died on Monday, November 14, 2022 at the age of 39. He graduated from Cornell University in 2006.

Gary Fisk '90



Gary Fisk graduated from Cornell University in 1990, and was a sales engineer in the San Francisco, CA area. He passed away comfortably on January 23, 2025 at home surrounded by his family and a wealth of love. Gary could hold a captivating conversation with anyone on any subject, often over wine. He leaves behind a wife, Michelle, with whom he loved to go scuba diving and travel extensively to sunny locales.

James Bolling "Bo" Sullivan III, 84



Bo Sullivan, who called Beaufort, North Carolina home for 54 years, died peacefully, surrounded by his family, on Thursday, October 17, 2024.

Born in Rome, GA on March 19, 1940 to the late James Bolling Sullivan Jr. and Eleanor Wyckoff Sullivan, Bo's early education included the Darlington School for Boys in Rome, Shades Valley High School in Birmingham, AL, and The Choate School in Wallingford, CT.

Bo discovered the natural world while exploring the woods around his childhood home. When his older cousin asked him to "Please stop shooting all the birds I've been busy putting leg bands on..." Bo decided to help him with the banding process instead. He quickly fell under the spell of all things feathered, and became the youngest federally licensed bird bander in the country.

His passion for ornithology led him to Cornell University in Ithaca, NY where he received a BA in Zoology in 1962, and served as the chapter president of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity.

A natural athlete, Bo could beat almost anyone at any game – basketball, golf, and tennis being favorites. However, while traveling through Point Clear, AL for a tennis tournament in 1959, the young bachelor would meet his match. Neither sports nor birds could compete with Ashley Luce's feminine charms. The couple married in Mobile, AL in 1963.

Moving to Austin, (where they would welcome a son), Bo went on to earn his Ph.D. in Genetics from the University of Texas in 1966. A Postdoctoral Research Fellowship followed at Duke University in Durham, NC from 1966 to 1969 (with two daughters joining the family). In 1970, Bo moved to the Duke Marine Laboratory on Piver's Island in Beaufort, where he became an associate professor of Biochemistry (and his young family would put down permanent roots).

Bo's early interest in birds gradually evolved into an even deeper fascination with a different group of airborne creatures – butterflies and moths. With insect nets and UV-light traps in hand, his single-minded pursuit of the Lepidoptera order would

take him to the mountains, jungles, and coastal forests of Ecuador, Brazil, Panama, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Costa Rica. However, his favorite destination was Colombia, until the rise of the drug cartels made collecting trips there too dangerous.

Changing focus to his home state, Bo became a founding member of the North Carolina Biodiversity Project, a leading expert in moth taxonomy, and a major contributor to the website [Moths of North Carolina](#), which documents the population, habitat, and history of every species found across the state. Author of approximately 175 scientific papers and journal articles, Bo's extensive regional research and field work culminated in co-authoring the 2012 publication *Owlet Caterpillars of Eastern North Carolina*.

Bo was widely respected as a research associate and contributing collector for many prominent institutions including the American Museum of Natural History, the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, NC State University, Arizona State University, the University of Florida, and the Costa Rican Institute of Biodiversity. His remaining collection of specimens, numbering in the millions, will become part of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC.

While butterflies and moths were Bo's abiding lifelong interest, his career took a surprise left turn in 1975 when he bought Gaskill's – Beaufort's old-fashioned feed, seed, and hardware store. From the corner of Live Oak and Mulberry Streets, the man who worked with creatures that fly became the man who worked with creatures that walk. His studies over the next 25 years shifted to hay and hog feed, vegetables and fertilizers, selling and repairing lawn mowers and chainsaws, stocking hand tools and toilet plungers, mixing paint, and supplying Easter biddies and Christmas trees for the many eastern Carteret County families he cared about deeply.

An active supporter of numerous national and local organizations, Bo served on the Executive Committee of the Lepidopterist's Society, on the local Board of Directors for Branch Banking & Trust Corporation (now Truist Bank), on the Finance Committee of the Beaufort Historical Association, and as a founding member on the Board of Beaufort's Tiller School.

Bo is survived by Ashley, his wife of 60 years, and their children and grandchildren.

Carlo A. Ugolini

Carlo A. Ugolini, lovingly known as "Ugi," passed away on Wednesday, January 1, 2025, at the age of 73. Born on February 7, 1951, in Toronto, Canada, to Carlo Ugolini and Willis Helen "Billie" Burlie. Carlo's life was marked by his passion for family, faith, hockey and a heart devoted to serving others.

Carlo's love for hockey began in his hometown of Toronto and carried him through four years at Cornell University, where he graduated in 1973. Carlo led the men's hockey team scoring 69 points (25 goals and 44 assists) during his senior year. He went on to play professionally for the Syracuse Blazers and Muskegon Mohawks before spending two years in Italy playing in an Italian league. Upon returning to the United States, he continued his hockey career with the Muskegon Mohawks and the Grand Rapids Grizzlies. Even in his later years, he enjoyed the sport, playing on a Church hockey team in Grapevine.

Beyond hockey, Carlo pursued diverse interests and careers. He loved hunting, golf, football...really all sports! He owned a sporting goods store, worked at a couple of Wichita radio stations, and ultimately found his true calling in the oil business. After working several years in the oil industry, he founded Eternity Exploration: "Our Quest for His Eternal Resources," a Christ-centered oil company that reflected his deep faith. Carlo's walk with the Lord began in November 1982, and he dedicated his life to sharing the saving grace of Jesus Christ with everyone he met. His servant's heart was evident through his church involvement and his work with Hope of Life International in Guatemala.