



FALL 2021

THE PATHS WE'VE WALKED



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NATION

EDITORIAL: THE PATHS WE'VE WALKED

By Mark Fernau '82

This fall has seen a return to something like normal, with Edgemoor's undergrad brothers walking those familiar paths to the various quads as in-person classes resumed. And the theme of this issue of the Oracle has ended up being about paths as well, both literal and symbolic. But first some news.



Mark Fernau
Editor

will be a chance to gather as a brotherhood and commemorate the beloved building where our journeys down the path of adulthood began. This issue features an in-depth look at how LXA acquired Edgemoor, set in the context of the rise of the fraternity house at Cornell.

As you may have read in the fall president's letter, one of the main things on the mind of Omicron Alumni Organization President Rick Meigs '80 (rmeigs@comcast.net) is the need to rejuvenate (literally) the OAA board with some new volunteers from decades that begin with 20. The board is currently too small to function effectively, and there is a great need for the vision, energy, and perspectives of those younger alumni who will be the shepherds of Omicron in the years to come. Along with the "wisdom" of the grayer alumni, we desire a board that is in tune with the needs and wants of the younger generation in terms of activities,

communication methods, and interactions with the undergraduates. So if you think you can dedicate a few hours per year to connecting Omicrons from across the decades and keeping the spirit of brotherhood alive, give Rick a call to talk about how you can contribute your particular talents and interests to the board. For me, it has been very satisfying to get plugged back into what it means to be a Brother and to have an excuse for a trip to Ithaca every once in awhile. And, of course, dues donations are always appreciated to allow OAA to facilitate the work of keeping brothers in touch (www.iswza.org/give).



Homecoming was officially canceled because of COVID, but a large number of brothers from the last three classes came to town around the graduation events for the class of 2020, and some Omicron alumni gatherings were held, mostly off campus. Rho Chris "Brodie" Vaziri '22 did a fantastic job planning a successful visit for the recent alumni. Chris Turner '94 and the ISWZA board report that Edgemoor is in pretty good shape. At the beginning of the semester, for the first time in some years, a formal "work weekend" was organized by the Mu and the undergrads with the support and help of Mike Agustin '92 and Phil Prigmore '69 of ISWZA and High Pi Jason Cho '98, with a filled dumpster, a repainting of the back decks and stairs, a serious cleaning, and other maintenance. ISWZA's other main concern and ongoing plan is renegotiation of our mortgage to a more-traditional fixed pay-



ment plan to allow paying off of the “Brother Bonds” from alumni that helped us to complete the renovation of Edgemoor, with the eventual goal of buying it out from the bank through a new round of financing by Omicron alumni as an investment vehicle. In undergrad news, again, under difficult conditions, High Alpha Troy Bailey '23 and High Delta (recruitment) Ryan Moon '23 led the undergraduate brothers in a successful fall-semester rush that resulted in nine new associate members. See the accompanying story for their names and pictures. We also introduce last spring's group of newly initiated brothers.



Back to the paths! Rick Meigs muses on the long-defunct Edgemoor dorm; everybody knows that before setting off down any path (on Libe slope or otherwise) a good night's sleep is a boon, and apparently there was a pretty good chance that a brother could actually achieve that in the communal confines of the dorm. Wayne Mezitt arrived at Cornell and began to follow paths that he thought led to directions beyond his prior experience growing up in a horticultural family. It turned out that those paths eventually circled right back to that family and that business, enriched by what the experiences he had gained following those paths. Bob Shaw followed his path from Cornell, LXA, and the Marine Corps into the business world, taking a winding route with varied scenery but always heading upward

and always remembering where he had been, and having a lot of fun on the way. Swede Saderholm has given us a wonderful meditation on paths and trails metaphorical and real. It started out as a news contribution but fit so nicely into the emerging theme of this issue that I elevated it to a feature. In telling us about his life, Swede describes that trail that we are all on, navigating between our past and our uncertain (but ultimately certain) future, and he tells us to keep putting one foot in front of the other and to enjoy every step of the way while we do. Alan Fridkin follows with a more literal journey to his beloved Alas-

sio, Italy, going from café to café and reminding us that some trips are meant to be taken slowly and savored in the moment. We are left with the realization that every person that we encounter on the path is a potential friend and has something to offer us. Jim Sollecito then adds the insight that sometimes it is essential to just step off the path entirely for a time and surrender to the beauty of creation and the moment, whether it is in a boat far offshore with a fishing rod or in your own backyard breathing the scent of the soil and feeling the wind on your skin.

As always news of the paths and journeys of Choppers of all years was fascinating and varied. And, as Swede points out so eloquently, eventually our paths run out and our journeys end. Our obituary section is anchored by a lovely tribute to Brother John Sovocool,



who literally put thousands of miles under his feet as a long-distance runner and clearly exemplified the best of Lambda Chi Alpha to all of those he encountered as

he made his too-short journey down the path of life. We salute, mourn, and celebrate those of us who have recently completed their treks. *Vir quisque vir.* ❖

THE NEWEST OMICRONS (SPRING AND FALL 2021)

Omicron Zeta welcomed 12 new brothers in our COVID-impacted spring recruitment, and here, as promised in the last *Oracle*, are longer profiles on these men.

Hotelie Christian “Bougs” Bougas '24 (O-2002), is a Cornell Tradition Fellow from Fullerton in sunny Southern California. He spent this summer in his ancestral Greece perfecting his Instagram influencer aesthetic.

Our indispensable brother this term is **Colby Cheung '24 (O-2003)**, High Jock, Low Mu, and burgeoning triathlete. A government major from Menlo Park in the Bay Area, he has written for the *Cornell Diplomat* and did research this year on prison reform in New York State for the HumEc school.

Wilmington, Delaware, native **Rohan Chugh '24 (O-2004)**, is a Hotelie, whose previous hospitality experience includes three years as a volunteer for Ronald McDonald House, prepping rooms and preparing meals for the residents. He was also an avid gardener, and his folks still periodically send up a box of harvested vegetables. He has mostly been serving up jokes as High Gamma this semester.

Willy Czech '24 (O-2005) grew up on a farm in Dutchess County, NY, with older brother **James (O-1961)**, and knows how to keep the Pit a sty. When not studying ILR, he's a forward with club hockey, where he's scored two goals and two assists this season.

Our first fashion major in almost a decade, Connecticut

THE NEWEST OMICRONS (SPRING AND FALL 2021)



native **Beckett Fine '24 (O-2006)** has designs for clothes, designs for shoes, and designs on fitting a bouncy castle inside the house, recently realized. Our hyperactive social chair has kept the calendar full and our guests safe and happy during our critical first post-COVID semester.

Hailing from Briarcliff in Westchester County, NY, mechanical engineer **Kyle Harris '23 (O-2007)**, is a member of one of Cornell's more exotic project teams, the Cornell University Autonomous Underwater Vehicle. It's a better conversation topic at parties than his internship last summer doing industrial automation with Premier Paint Roller. Or, at least Kyle thinks so.

Junior **Colin Holdreith '23 (O-2008)**, ILRie from Manhasset, NY, is preparing for a career in international law with involvement with Kappa Alpha Pi, Model United Nations—and many hours in sailboats. He managed and coached in the Make a Wish Charity Regatta for several years, raising over \$60,000.

Artsie **Andrew Hubschmidt '24 (O-2009)** co-founded an ESL tutoring program for underprivileged children with his brother. He himself speaks fluent Estonian, which may be what he brought to the table as co-social this semester. Hubs is an Artsie from Bryn Mawr, PA.

Operations Research major **Ian Machado '24 (O-2010)** spent the first few years of his life in Angola, then moved to Lake Elmo, Minnesota, to begin preparing for Ithaca's notorious winters. He plays club soccer. Despite being captain of his high school FIRST Robotics competition team, he has not found a way to automate the tedious duties of High Sigma.

Rory McIntosh '24 (O-2011), an Aggie, calls Pittsford, NY, home and Environment and Sustainability his major. He's an accomplished saxophonist, but doesn't break it out much at the house, perhaps concerned it will disappear into the depths of The Pit.

Berkeley, CA, native **Max Stein '24 (O-2012)** is a double major in AEM and Viticulture & Enology in CALS. He's met his obvious interest in the wine industry with plenty of experience in the field on a vineyard planting crew. He has also been busy this fall serving on the IFC Judicial Board, as activities ramp up post-COVID.

Grill master **Parker Venator '24 (O-2013)** is a food science major in CALS. The Buffalo, NY, native's team won last year's annual FoodSci 1101 ice cream competition with the entry of "Apple Commons," inspired by the COVID-canceled Apple Harvest Festival, a flavor that "embodies community spirit." This fall he embodied the body of an enforcer as High Iota, preventing the house from being overrun by a party-starved student body early in the semester.

Fall rush was also successful, although again undertaken in a time of COVID-induced uncertainty. We welcomed nine new associate members, who are now newly initiated brothers of Omicron Zeta: **Alexander E. Zadeh**, CALS '24, from Weston, MA; **Issy Saadeh**, Arts '23, from Chicago, IL; **Sebastian A. Lascola**, Arts '24, from Durham, NC; **Yash A. Kumar**, CALS '24, from Jericho, NY; **Shea W. Kinander**, Hotel '24, also from Chicago; **Logan L. Hanchett**, AAP '24, from Bloomington, IN; **Liam R. Dixon**, CALS '23, from Plattsburgh, NY; and **Adam M. Czosnyka**, CALS '24, from Buffalo, NY.

HISTORIAN'S CORNER: "WITH A FEELING OF SATISFACTION"

LXA Acquires Edgemoor



By Jason Cho '98 with Philip Prigmore '69

The most obvious place to situate a fraternity house in Ithaca would be downtown near the corner of State and Aurora Streets, and the most proven way to fill it would be displays of opulence once reserved for emperors—or so went the thinking. Lambda Chi Alpha finding our home at 125 Edgemoor Lane was hardly fated. A bit of work, a bit of hope, and a bit of serendipity have conspired to make us the envy of the campus.

Today, the landscape of Cornell fraternity houses looks much as it did fifty years ago. Cornell's Greek system, even in its current diminished state, is too large for a single "Greek row" as found at some campuses, but amidst all of the new construction on and around campus, none of the new buildings houses a fraternity or sorority.

Prehistory

But this has not always been. The semi-century of Cornell's existence preceding the arrival of Lambda Chi Alpha saw huge changes in the geography of student life. At the end of Cornell's inaugural year, seven fraternities had already been organized, but what is now campus remained rough fields and forest; student life was found downtown. The first chapters met and socialized in rooms rented above the businesses of downtown Ithaca, amidst the boarding houses where almost all students lived, walking the steep hill up Buffalo Street to class every morning.

In 1876, Psi Upsilon rented a house for itself near Buffalo and Quarry Streets, ideally situated halfway between the comforts of downtown and the classrooms atop the East Hill. Delta Kappa Epsilon followed. Two years later, Alpha Delta Phi purchased a lot on Buffalo Street and built the first fraternity house at Cornell

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there. The race was soon on for chapters to build ever-larger structures in ever more-favorable locations.

Then in 1888, the Stewart Avenue bridge over Cascadilla Gorge was built, followed by a streetcar along State Street, and foot traffic on Buffalo evaporated. Chapters shifted again, to Central Avenue—an increasingly important gateway to campus but separated by Cascadilla Gorge from the riff-raff in Collegetown—and elsewhere on West Campus. Chi Psi scoring the greatest coup with its acquisition of Jenny McGraw's mansion, the most palatial piece of real estate Ithaca has ever seen.

A House on Cascadilla

Phi Delta Theta joined the Scramble for West Campus with an insider's help. Franklin C. Cornell had granted a tract of land to Liberty Hyde Bailey, first dean of the College of Agriculture. Bailey, a Phi Delt, in turn conveyed a piece to the Cornell chapter for the purposes of building a house. Edgemoor Lane had not yet been built or named, but the anticipation was palpable in their report to their national magazine: "[D]uring the past week we have become possessed of a most beautiful lot, overlooking Cascadilla Gorge, and adjoining the campus. It is the most beautiful spot imaginable for a chapter house, and we hope ere long to report our more mature plans for a house thereon, and in mentioning this I deem it not out of place to take the opportunity of extending the thanks of the chapter to Bro. Professor Bailey, Bro. Gilbert and Bro. Freeman for the sincere interest taken in, and great amount of time and hard work devoted to, the chapter house project." (Robert Lathrop, *The Scroll of Phi Delta Theta* 227, Jan. 13, 1893)

Neither did they skimp on the design. In 1895, having raised sufficient funds, Phi Delt hired the local team of Clinton L. Vivian and Arthur N. Gibb, Cornell architects who had trained under Ithaca and Cornell's foremost architect, William H. Miller. In their first design for a fraternity house, Vivian & Gibb created a strongly symmetrical plan in the shape of an "I," with a smoking room, card room, living room, and library centered on an open, formal staircase. The exterior design borrows from the Arts and Crafts style, combining stone masonry at the ground level and Stick Style timber framework for the upper stories. It was Vivian

& Gibb's most notable structure to date. They would go on to design the nearby houses of Theta Delta Chi (now the Center for Jewish Living) and Sigma Chi (now Kappa Alpha Theta).

On one of the two rock promontories overlooking Cascadilla Gorge, they built a summerhouse with a view of the waterfall and the College Avenue Bridge, and after a few years, built a new wing to house the dining room/chapter room and kitchen in the southeast. Phi Delta Theta possessed a fine house in the finest location. They needed only to hold on to it. Fortunately for us, they did not.

For the older, established fraternities of Cornell, the race never stopped. New land was acquired, and new houses were built; old houses were expanded and expanded again. After World War I, the fashionable quarter was Cornell Heights, first developed by Edward Wyckoff, where the Morse family (of Morse Chain) and others had built grand manors. Phi Delt acquired a piece of land on Ridgewood, across from the Morse estate, and longed to rid itself of its previous good fortune.

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The Situation at 614

Lambda Chi Alpha in 1920 had survived World War I thanks to the efforts of C.B. Fraser '19, Leon M. Brockway '08, and others as previously recounted in the Oracle. But we were in no position to launch property wars in the hip precincts of the Hill. The mortgage on 614 Stewart Ave had not been paid down during the war, when it had been rented to the Student Army Training Corps. For that, Uncle Sam paid \$156.32 in rent, against more than that in damage alone, much less a dent in the \$13,400 of principal owed.

Other fraternities had rebounded strongly; fifty were in operation—more than before the war. And Omicron was still a very young chapter, chartered in 1913; there would not be any millionaire donors to woo for some years. Membership was growing, after a rough postwar start, but soon the house would be at capacity. And we lacked the facilities not only to compete, but seemingly to participate in the ordinary exchanges of Greek life. Bemoaned the housing report: "We have for years been receiving social invitations

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LXA Acquires Edgemoor

from other fraternities but in our present location it is impossible to hold any open dances or entertain because of lack of room." (Proposed Change of Omicron Chapter House, 1921)

The purchase of 614 Stewart Avenue had been a great accomplishment in 1913, a testament to the devotion of the alumni of an organization barely five years old, and to their fulfilled hopes for a successful organization. But its construction frustrated its use, with small, crowded common rooms and inadequate dining facilities. Neither could it be expanded, as adjacent land would be difficult to acquire.

Searles Shultz '21, High Alpha (and future Skaneateles politician), appointed a housing committee to look into options of himself, architecture student and High Beta **"Bugs" Beugler '22**; future High Alpha **Bill Stotz '22**; and High Tau **Bob Burt '20**, a MechE from Battle Creek, Michigan and "a deep student of science when his Ford speed-wagon doesn't require attention."

The committee pursued Phi Delt's news closely. Other chapters overlooked good men for their lack of money or pedigree, and Lambda Chi Alpha had embraced them. Now, it seemed, another chapter was overlook-

ing a matchless site for the sake of fashion, neglecting a prime location and views for a lifetime. Lambda Chi Alpha would benefit again.

It was still an ambitious order. The new house was half again as large as the old one, at triple the asking price; Omicron Zeta was less than ten years old, and over a dozen new fraternities had organized since the chartering. Still, the vision of the committee was appealing. A larger house would enable a larger brotherhood, with salubrious effects on finances and interchapter relations. And there was a growing confidence, and pride: "We feel that we are able, ready and desirous of having and maintaining a finer, larger Chapter House in order to better entertain our rushees, families, friends and alumni."

The house was inspected, and it was estimated that similar construction could not be done postwar for less than \$100,000. The delicate financial details were worked out by the undergraduates. Construction of a new dorm above the dining room (now Chapter Room) would expand the capacity of the house by almost a third and was included in the plan. Could we pull it off? We thought we could pull it off. We did pull it off. Lambda Chi Alpha would acquire 125 Edgemoor Lane and its furniture for a mere \$40,000, with finances set up for the mortgage to be discharged within ten years. The alumni reviewed the proposal and agreed: it was the deal of the century.

The *Omicron Alumni News* was ecstatic: "It is indeed with a feeling of satisfaction that we can now consider ourselves as the owners of one of the finest lodges in the heart of the fraternity district of Cornell. The advances the chapter has made since its recovery from the strain of war times have been remarkable. Little was it dreamed last fall that we, who had just weathered a rather severe financial storm, were now ready to swing this deal, which is indeed one to be proud of."

This year marks the one hundredth year since the acquisition of Edgemoor, where every brother since has lived and shared, and many more to come. It was a moment made possible thanks to sharp eyes, hard work, and big dreams—in the very best tradition of Omicron Zeta.



ALUMNI FEATURE: THE DORM

By Rick Meigs '80

The

100th anniversary of Omicron's move to Edgemoor and the upcoming April celebration of that event have gotten me thinking back on years of Omicron and Edgemoor history, and I started to ponder on how the Edgemoor "dorm" came about. For the younger generations that missed out on the dorm experience, the dorm with its 12 or more bunk beds occupied the northeast corner of the third floor where rooms 307-311 are now. In 1995, the dorm was abandoned and turned into a weight room. The 2014 remodel moved the weight room to the center of the newly constructed third floor with steel columns and beams supporting the room adequately, unlike the prior wood construction that nearly had weights fall through to the second floor on a



Rick Meigs

few occasions in the early 2000s.

During the eons that the dormer served as a bunk room, there was a strict quiet policy. The brothers had a rotating wake-up-duty responsibility, and there was a wake-up-time peg board outside the door on which we hung our wake-up tag (often an expired ID or a creative example of self expression) on the hook corresponding to the time at which we wanted to be woken. My only recollection of a quiet-time violation was when **Harry "Hesh" Kaiser '78** (I think) put a typewriter in the dorm bed of **Mike Bachich '78** and he came in drunk at 2:00 AM bellowing "What the F\$^& am I going to do with a typewriter at 2:00 in the morning?"

"Sleeping porches" reached a peak of popularity around 1900, so it is not much surprise that an unfinished room was included in the original design of the house. The original design driver for these sleeping porches was to take advantage of cool night air in the era before air conditioning. Through the clever use of

down sleeping bags and electric blankets, the utility of sleeping porches (and the pretty-much unheated dorm at Edgemoor) was increased to year-round. As it turns out, the outdoor fresh air probably resulted in a fairly low incidence of flu and the like as the ventilation was similar to outdoor tuberculosis wards of that time period.

Apparently, sleeping porches are still popular in fraternity houses in the Midwest, Idaho, and Oregon. The sentiment expressed on the Internet by fraternity men who use them ranges from "The best experience of my life" to "Way too weird for me." That sentiment was true at Edgemoor as well when I was there, ranging from brothers who slept there every night and swore by it to those who did pretty much all they could (including bribing roommates and building elaborate lofts in their rooms to increase the number of sleeping berths) to avoid their turn in the dorm. For good or ill, sleeping in the dorm with 20 or more fellow Lamb Chops is one aspect of brotherhood that the younger generations of Edgemoor denizens will never experience. ❖



HORT SENSE: CORNELL, LXA, AND MY CAREER CHOICES

By R. Wayne Mezitt '64

I was born into a nursery family, and thus the fundamental significance of horticulture and an appreciation of plants were inevitably instilled in me as a life-value. Some of my earliest memories center on activities in which family



Wayne Mezitt

and friends got together for events; predictably, our conversations often turned to gardening, propagation, growing, pest management, and design. So when I entered Cornell, everyone naturally assumed I would study horticulture.

During my earlier school years, I began to realize that I wanted to explore a broader outlook to best utilize my energies and aspira-

tions to “make a difference” with my life’s activities. So when I was admitted to Cornell I chose a different path. Yes, I registered for a few horticulture classes in the Ag School, but my main impulse was to leverage the opportunities offered by this large, diverse institution to get a more well-rounded experience. I enrolled in the Arts and Science School.

I recall those first few September days on campus in 1960 as being utterly inspirational for me: enthralled by the revolutionary (to me!) campus ambience, I was stimulated by the huge range of opportunities. Upon denial of my audition to become a member of The Sherwoods, (a spinoff of the Cornell Glee Club that was active from 1956 to 1973 and has since performed at Reunions), I applied for the Cornell Glee Club (not because I had a particularly outstanding voice, but because I enjoyed singing). Soon I was invited to pledge Lambda Chi Alpha. In retrospect, although it was certainly not obvious at the time, both of these decisions turned out to be instrumental in setting my career path. These two institutions, in their own manner, were fundamental influences on how I would approach life’s opportunities and challenges for years to come.

For example, one of my Glee Club obligations was to show up (in condition to sing!) at Sage Chapel every Sunday at 2:10 PM and every Wednesday at 7:15 PM for practice. These times often turned out to conflict with ongoing more-pleasurable activities at the Edgemoor House, but I was true to my word. Looking back now, I see that these Glee Club commitments taught me the value of prioritizing long-term goals, sometimes at the sacrifice of shorter-term enjoyment. I know that I missed some of the fun, but returning from a 2-hour sober activity each week, I was better able to focus on my primary goal of earning a college degree.

The Cornell Glee Club also afforded me significant opportunities to explore activities I would continue to enjoy after graduation: travel (to Russia that first Christmas vacation!), unique experiences (singing Beethoven’s 9th Symphony with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra) and connecting with intriguing personalities and (non-horticultural!) lifestyles.

My second major influence was LXA with all of its elements: the trials of living with fraternity brothers at 125 Edgemoor Lane and off campus, management of personal habits [smoking, alcohol consumption, social graces (including the ever-so-useful “Fuller’s Law”)], dealing with diverse individuals to establish lifelong friendships, and, most significantly, connecting with Beth Pickering who turned out to be my wife (and lifelong advisor!).

After graduating in 1964 (boasting never a final grade below “C”), I chose to continue my college career at Cornell’s Business School. Beth and I married in 1965, and I worked part-time in insurance sales for Mass Mutual, not my favorite endeavor, but a lesson in self-discipline. With Beth’s pregnancy I narrowly avoided the draft and subsequent Viet Nam challenges. Then in 1966 my dad asked me to rejoin the family business; my grandfather was ill and he thought he could rely upon my MBA degree to improve how the nursery was being managed.

Moving back home and into the nursery business turned out to be just the right career decision for me and our family. All my “outside” experiences enabled me to appreciate the value of personal integrity, strong relationships, authenticity, and having fun—all major

HORT SENSE: CORNELL, LXA, AND MY CAREER CHOICES

elements that are characteristic of the nursery industry. My Cornell experiences also enabled me to serve meaningfully in some key nursery industry association positions that helped to enhance the long-term credibility of our family business.

Being retired now from day-to-day involvement in operations of our family business has enabled me to expand into a new “careers,” albeit still centering around horticulture. I’m grateful to be able to devote my energies to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and other organizations, working to enhance the appreciation of how plants and the environment are so instrumental in living meaningful lives.

Continuing to stay in touch with so many friends from

Cornell and LXA is such a pleasure as my maturity-years advance. With Cornell and LXA as major influences, I consider myself extremely fortunate to have made so many right choices and enjoyed such a rewarding career path.

R. Wayne Mezitt, LXA O-952, is a 3rd-generation nurseryman, a Massachusetts Certified Horticulturist, now chairman of Weston Nurseries of Hopkinton, Chelmsford & Hingham MA, and owner of “Hort-Sense,” a horticultural advisory business. Wayne currently serves as a trustee for the Massachusetts Horticultural Society at The Gardens at Elm Bank in Wellesley, MA, and chairman for the Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG). ❖

AN OMICRON TIMELINE

By Jason Cho '98

25 Years Ago: Reunion 1995

Don Worn '50 (O-660) departs by bicycle from his home in Los Gatos, California, on May 9. He arrives in Ithaca, New York, for his 50th Reunion on June 9, four flat tires, one scraped hand, and over 3,000 road miles later. Taking a southern route through Phoenix to visit an old roommate, then looping north through Oklahoma and Ohio, he rode 51–140 miles a day in all weather and arrived to the resounding applause of his classmates. But he took the plane home.



Jason Cho

50 years Ago: Fall 1971

The house’s electrical wiring, already brittle with age, is becoming a hazard as brothers power new lighting, refrigerators, and Hi-Fis with a web of extension cords. The solution chosen by the Mu, **Elliot Sloane '74** (O-1152), is to train to become a licensed local electrician himself, on the theory that “the most adequate and economical decision should soon be reached.”

75 Years Ago: Rush 1946

Returning veterans, bolstered by the recently passed G.I. Bill, pour onto campus and crowd into the house. Membership triples over prewar figures, and the Class of 1949 becomes the largest in Omicron history, at 34 members, twice as many as the classes above and below it. The house is full of triples and quads, and overcrowding in the dining room is dire. Discussions begin about selling

the house, or demolishing it in favor of a modern edifice.

100 Years Ago: December 1921

The famed Austrian psychoanalyst Dr. Herman Vosberg lectures an assembly of faculty and other dignitaries at Risley Hall on “Dreams and the Calculus,” his method for mapping dreams onto a Cartesian plane. “Dr. Vosberg,” it emerges, is none other than **Charlie Stotz '21** (O-105), “a student of architecture, but not of Freud” as the *Daily Sun* reported. Outrage at the hoax (or rather, the gullibility of the good and the great assembled) fills headlines around the globe thereafter.



ALUMNI FEATURE: LIFE AND CAREER - EDGEMOOR AND AFTER

By Bob Shaw '78

My

family was from Boston, and my father was a career U.S. Marine officer. Somehow, I attended four different schools in the fourth grade—that's hard to do in 9 months. Those moves were just the first of 30 that I eventually made. I am often asked what is my favorite place that I've lived: my hardwired response is "my current location."

As the commandant of the Marine Corps would dictate, "thrive where you're potted."



Bob Shaw

In May 1974, the Cornell Club of Washington, DC, hosted its admitted student reception. Club President the legendary **Bob McKinless '48** made a beeline to my father in uniform. Bob was a Marine in the V-12 program during WWII and was recalled to active duty during the Korean War. I was one of Bob's

countless recruits for Lambda Chi Alpha, which additionally netted **George Lutz**, **George Kajos**, and **Bill Murphy** from Founders Hall—not a bad haul from Cornell's smallest dormitory. I was fortunate to have a Naval ROTC scholarship and wandered into an Operations Research/Industrial Engineering major.

How would you describe 1970s Lambda Chi Alpha (or, as my children chide me, "the 1870s")? Let's start by saying what it wasn't: preppies, rich kids, nerds, jocks, girl magnets, or dominated by a gaggle of hot-lies/aggies/engineers. Maybe we were the "Un-Fraternity," a twist on the message 7-Up popularized; however, we weren't hip enough to come up with that. We'd say to the guys that rushed us that we were just good guys who enjoyed a killer location adjacent to campus and Collegetown. We had fun while be-

ing smart, capable, and interesting. Mostly it was a time of tolerance and live and let live; you could be yourself in that house. We all came together: Dead heads, tools, and ROTC, which is hard to say about America today. Our big ambition was to get a job and a car, as we were collectively broke. We knew hard work would carve out a future. There was no hazing nor unearned harassment. The parties were fun and activity constant. It wasn't utopia, however. The food was so-so even for our naïve palettes, and my father, a frequent visitor, would forcefully counter my moans about the house's state of cleanliness on alumni visits. And, tolerance has a different definition today; we have learned a lot more about relating to one another in life.

Our Class of 1978 had 20 brothers, reflecting the boom-and-bust rush efforts (the Classes of 1977 and 1979 each had 7 or 8). As Scholarship Chair, I initiated the "Tool of the Week" award in which the (then legal) recipient chugged a 16 oz PBR Bomber at chapter meetings. As High Alpha, I had great partners with **Mike Bachich**, **Greg DeWitt**, and **Andre Marteccini**, to name a few. A highlight was our dedication of the dining room to **E.J.C. Fischer '10** who was in attendance. That was the class of 1910!

Upon graduation, I joined the "family business" and became an infantry officer in the Marines. Suddenly, payback for Uncle Sam's scholarship largesse became real: the pay was \$6,600 a year while fellow engineering graduates scored \$27,000. After you deducted \$1,600 for uniforms, I earned less than the minimum wage! Nominally stationed in Hawaii, I made two 7-month deployments to the western Pacific and Indian Oceans during the Iranian Hostage Crisis. The camaraderie and travel were mind blowing, with 40 port visits between Africa and Hawaii. Remember, every sea story is entertaining, and some are even true! In my final year I was the aide-de-camp to the general commanding 80,000 Marines and sailors scattered over two-thirds of the world. He rated a plane, and I carried his bag and helped his wife shop. A big highlight was frequent trips with **Brian Kelly '78**, who was living on Maui. His buddies thought I was a

DEA agent. A little bit of Marine rubbed off as Brian's son Devin later flew Marine helicopters at my idyllic base. My brother Scott gave Devin a pair of real gold wings he wore while piloting Marine One for Presidents Bush I and Clinton. Semper Fidelis.

I entered Harvard Business School in 1982, which was a finishing school for engineers at the time. **Dave Dupont '79** joined me there a year later. More frugal years ensued as Jimmy Carter had taken away the GI Bill and the school didn't get the memo. A highlight was the Harvard-Cornell hockey game with many Boston-area brothers capped by an epic freak snowstorm and everyone crashing in my Spartan dorm. We all vow to repeat that adventure soon, but the digs will be better next time. After maxing out student debt my first year, I married Michelle Bowdring, whose parents grew up with mine in Boston, and she supported us as an emergency room nurse at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Some early jobs after grad school included a year in high-tech marketing for a Boston data communications company and joining a b-school classmate at Warburton's, an English subsidiary of the largest family-owned baking enterprise in Europe. Even though the original business concept was dying in the north of England and faring even worse in cosmopolitan Boston, we transformed the bakery/café chain, raised three rounds of venture capital, and grew from 5 to 25 stores in Boston, Pittsburgh, and Chicago. Eventually, archrival Au Bon Pain bought the business, and it morphed into Panera Bread.

I then joined Sodexo, S.A., now the world's largest contract services company, and they sent me to Paris for a month to intern on excursion boats adjacent to the Eiffel Tower. My mission became to buy a similar U.S. business. Fast forward 30 years, and I have been president of the Spirit/Odyssey/Hornblower fleets. Today they feature over 150 excursion boats in 22 U.S. and Canadian cities, including the Statue of Liberty, Alcatraz, and Niagara Falls, Canada, operations. I was on the board of the American Queen Steamboat Company and advised the start-up 40-vessel NYC Ferry connecting the outer boroughs. What a fabulous adventure of sunsets, awesome eccentric people, and unforgettable memories. That Operations Research major mattered while scaling up businesses. Now it is called "Information Engineering," and the grads land in hedge funds with absurd pay but few

adventures.

Today I bounce among doing advisory work as a long-serving board member of a publicly traded lithium-ion battery manufacturer and the Marines Memorial Association of San Francisco, writing columns for the Passenger Vessel Association, and mentoring boat-business proteges. I am active in school and Marine alumni groups. Connecting with many during the pandemic became a rewarding mission. In 2020, we had 17 of 18 living brothers from our Omicron class on quarantine zoom calls—the one MIA was the business partner of an attendee, which just made his update juicier. We hope we can spend more time with each other as many are retiring and downshifting.

Michelle is a full-time community volunteer, an amazingly energetic partner, and the on-call family medical expert. Typically, at non-Covid holidays we have 40–50 guests as we both are from large families. Our four adult children all have MBAs, and we have three grandchildren. I used to do marathons and triathlons, and I once rode my bicycle across the country over two summers. We live in McLean, VA, but recently bought an 1890s cottage in Marshfield, MA, near a beach that Michelle and our children have enjoyed nearly every summer of their lives.

I was thrilled to repay **Bob McKinless '48** by being one of three speakers at his 90th birthday, covering his Lambda Chi and Marine Corps eras. We are so fortunate to have such great lifelong friends from Lambda Chi Alpha. Let's create new adventures together soon. ❖



TRAVEL NUGGETS: CAFÉ, ANYONE?

By Alan Fridkin '65

One

of the many losses from the pandemic is being deprived of sitting in a good café. It took me decades to realize that a café is not principally a place to rest your feet and write postcards. A real café, and I don't mean Starbucks, is a little, fiercely loyal corner of a community. It is the living or family room for a distinct slice of life. Tourists and visitors are often tolerated. But the real bond is between the padrone (or padrona) and their regular clientele.



Alan Fridkin '65

The habitudes have made a choice. In many French, Italian, or Greek cities or towns, folks go to their café and not another. In our little town of Alassio

in the Ligurian province of Savona we divide our time between four or five. The accompanying photos include the Madeleine (men at table), Rudy (black dog and cappuccino heaven), San Lorenzo (fresh blood orange juice), and Impero (yellow dog and yellow roof). Each has its own feel and cast of characters. Just as each patron is likely to have a life-long allegiance to a football (soccer) team, you might never see them in another café down the street.

You don't have to be a coffee drinker. You might have tea, a soft drink, a freshly squeezed juice, or a shot of grappa. There will always be a cornetto (croissant), or some focaccia, or maybe a salad, sandwich, or burger. There might be some hors d'oeuvres/antipasti, particularly if you are having an alcoholic beverage.

The line between a café, a pub, or a tavern often blurs from country to country, province to province, or even within a town. But the ones worth visiting aren't part of a chain. One of our favorites in Alassio is right along the beach. At different times of the day, different and distinct groups of customers are there, from the early morning crowd, lunch patrons and those who make it a point of being there just



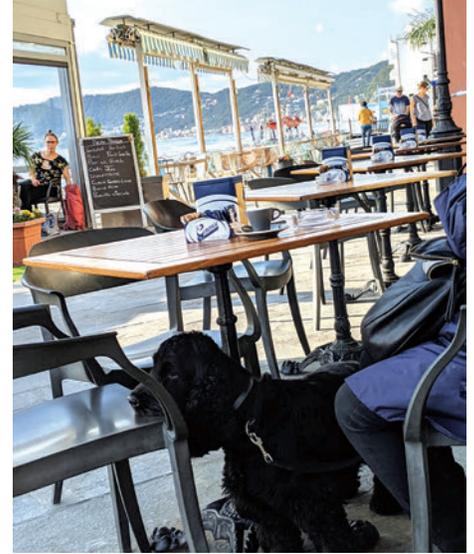
before or after dinner. As the years have gone by, Rudy, the owner, is there from dawn to early afternoon. Then his sons take over. Drinking a cappuccino or a Campari and Blood Orange juice within yards of the Mediterranean Sea is therapeutic whether it is sunny or rainy.

Like clockwork, around 10:30 AM, a group of older women, some widows, gather for their morning beverage. There are of half a dozen nationalities: Swedish, English, Irish, Swiss, and Italian. All came to Alassio on vacation, married local men, and never left. They have been friends for decades—and they have become our friends.

One of the joys of foreign travel is to discover that even in the “unfriendly” cafés one can encounter an unexpected new friend. We have learned, from many driving trips in Europe, that it always takes a good 25% longer to get from point A to B than you thought when you look at the map. Some years ago, my wife and I took an early Friday morning car ferry from Corfu to Igoumenitsa on the Greek mainland. It was almost 2 hours late. Greece is not Switzerland. We were driving back to Athens and had to return our rental car before the office in Pireaus closed. Parts of Greece are rugged and sparsely populated. Road construction on the main national highway went on for tens of miles, and heavy truck traffic made driving tedious. There were no “facilities” along the road. Towns were tiny and some distance off our route.

By early afternoon we had given up hope of having lunch and were focused on the more pressing concern of finding bathrooms. A detour took us through a nearly deserted one-street town. It was now or never. We passed one café

TRAVEL NUGGETS: CAFÉ, ANYONE?



with three wizened codgers sitting at a table out front. We drove a few more blocks, but the few stores seemed closed or deserted. Reluctantly, we went back to the café.

The men stared at us. Cautiously, we parted the glass beads hanging as a makeshift door and went in. We were somewhat relieved to see a lady behind the bar. A few more men were huddled at a table in the back. They too were silent.

We sat at a table and hoped for the best. After a few minutes, the lady came to our table, and in my primitive Greek I ordered two espressos. She gave me a questioning look and went to the bar. Conversations among the regulars resumed.

About 5 minutes later, one of the men out front walked in and came right to our table. He was younger than I first thought, and he happened to be a Greek Orthodox Priest! In perfect English he asked, "What kind of coffee did we want?!" Apparently, espresso wasn't the right term for a strong coffee in this area. With his help, we got our coffee, and, after a discreet interval, we both got to use the unisex bathroom. It was clean, and thankfully, not of the "Turkish" squat variety.

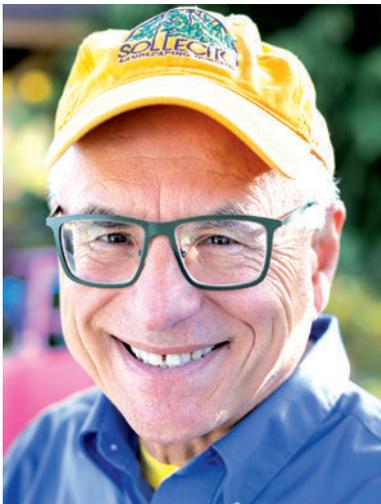
This would never be our local café, but the people were kind, and we made it to Pireaus in time to get caught in afternoon rush-hour traffic. But traffic and maps are the topics of another story. Meanwhile, celebrate and enjoy the local café! ❖

ALUMNI FEATURE: MAKE SOME RIPPLES

By Jim Sollecito, '76

I am uncomfortable in big cities; I always have been. The incessant noise does not allow me peace. It seems everyone is always so busy talking on devices about anything but the here and now. I feel they're missing out on the small gems that enrich daily life.

Biscayne Bay is as close to Miami as I like to be: flyfishing for bonefish 12 ocean miles off the Florida Keys by skiff boat. You can see but not hear the city in the distant background. Forty-two years ago, Megan and I boat-camped here off Elliot Key while we were still dating. I thought the mosquitoes would carry us away. Instead of bitten, I ended up smitten.

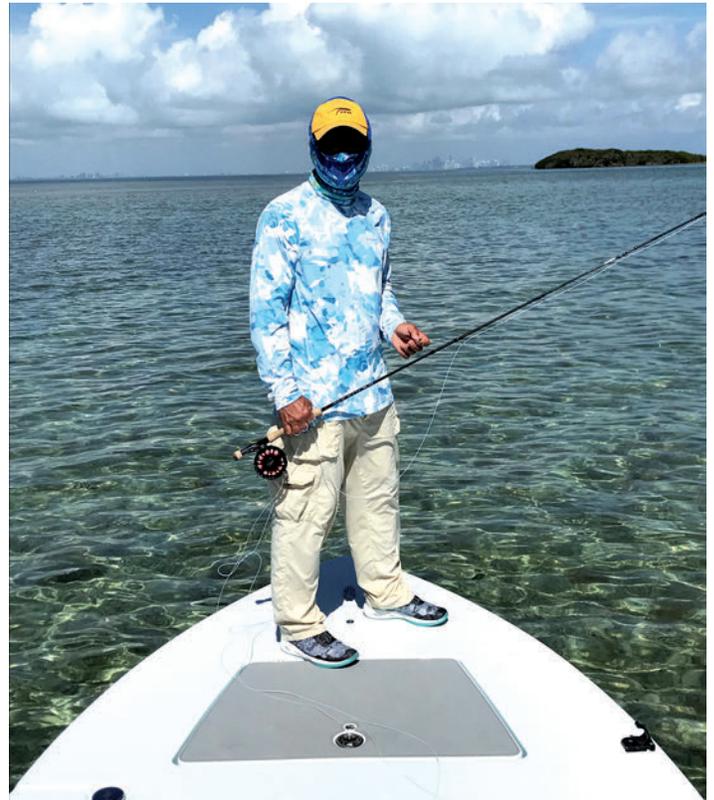


Jim Sollecito

As you can see in the accompanying photo of me making ripples on Biscayne Bay, I'm now very diligent to protect my skin from the sun. I aim to be far away from phone service and so, subsequently, the shade. The disconnect is one of the attractions. You know, keeping it fun and in the moment. Phones can be a "reel" drag. Shielded from the sun, phone off, focus unimpeded, I can truly enjoy the day without distractions.

When I was on the college wrestling team, we would get gigs as concert security. I remember the 1973 Watkins Glenn Summer Jam, along with 600,000 of my new best friends. Not one talking on a cell phone. Because they had not been invented yet. The air was filled with The Band, The Allman Brothers Band, the Grateful Dead, and a lot of smoke from weed. "Ripple" by the Dead resonated. Listening, as if I were alone, a ripple on still water, despite the fact that I was surrounded by a tossing sea of humanity.

Every now and again that catchy tune pops into my head. Just a feel-good song that persists in my brain, making me smile and nod my head to the rhythm.



Sometimes this happens in my own backyard, when the sun warms the soil and my heart. My ritual, this reawakening happens every spring. Smelling the soil, tasting the fresh air, listening to droplets as they water freshly planted roots. Feeling alive and feeling life again. One ripple at a time.

It's not always important to make waves. Sometimes a ripple is enough. It intersects and occasionally overlaps with others. As we take advantage of outdoor opportunities let's silence our electronic devices and experience the miracle that it is to participate in this planet. You know I "Seas the Day" when I can. It helps to place myself in proper perspective to the larger scope of the world.

Take the moment, go outside, and experience the positive impact within you and around you. Your contentment and happiness will ripple to the point of overflow.

Jim Sollecito Ag '76 (O-1191) has traveled to 39 countries in search of fish willing to bite on the end of his flyrod. He has 5 IGFA World Fishing Records and was the first in New York State to accomplish the Salmon Royal Slam. He still operates Sollecito Landscaping Nursery in Syracuse, NY, to help support his fly-fishing passion. ♦

ALUMNI FEATURE: MY REFLECTION ON LIFE AS WE RETURN TO A "NORMAL"

By Peter "Swede" Saderholm '60

As

I look back and forward at my life, I am amazed that I am here and still kicking. Sometimes I feel like I am walking a mountain trail overlooking both my past on one side and my future on the other. Now I can never return to my past life, but I also am not sure

how long I can survive in the present on this mountain-top trail. However, I plan on hiking this trail as long as I possibly can because it is a good trail and the hike is enjoyable.

In reflection, I have had a wonderful life. I have no regrets about the things I have done and things I have left undone. My parents as a youth instilled in me the importance of family and a belief in God. At an early age, I learned the importance of saving and at 13

I paid, using paper-route earnings, for a 23-day Boy Scout trip from New York to California and back by train to attend a Scout Jamboree. This trip instilled in me a desire to travel, which I still have. As a 15-year-old, I joined with seven other Boy Scout friends for a 10-day canoe trip on the Fulton Chain of lakes in the Adirondack Mountains in New York. We had no adults with us. This trip instilled in me a taste for adventure. Upon high school graduation I continued my education at Cornell, and the engineering degree that I eventually earned taught me the importance of critical thinking. I was now about to set out on my life. Upon graduating, I worked for the Central Intelligence Agency for 35 years and then retired, and I have never returned to work for pay again. Then my real life started.

The smartest thing I did was to marry my sweetheart of 6 years, and she has been a wonderful wife for 59

years. We are both reasonably healthy. We have two grown sons, both married to their first wives, and we have five healthy grandchildren. I have wonderful friends, including many from my days at Cornell and LXA. However, their number is decreasing as I get older, and I have found it necessary to replace some with younger people. Friends are an important part of maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle. Sometimes they are hard to find, but it is worth the search and the effort to maintain these linkages.

Over the years, I have participated in a wide variety of youth activities and sports, Boy Scouts, and Church. I have lived an interesting life with travel, adventure, and community service. I took my family on a 3-week trip around the United Kingdom and on a 3-week road trip out to see a brother in Utah, with lots of stops along the way. Three times I have traveled around the globe. I spent 2 years living in Thailand. I have visited Seoul, Tokyo, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, Nepal, Algeria, South Africa, Peru, Liberia, London, Paris, Italy, the Holy Lands, and Germany – many of these more than once. I have traveled from Amsterdam to the Black Sea by river boat. I have been on three grand canoeing adventures: one in Northern Maine on the Allagash and Penobscot River systems, and one in the Wisconsin Northern Tier, entering into Canadian lakes, in addition to the one on the Fulton Chain as a youth. I have twice backpacked the Philmont Scout Reservation in New Mexico with Boy Scouts. After retirement, I have traveled to Juarez, Mexico, numerous times, building homes for displaced Mexican workers. I have participated in about 10 mission trips to various parts of the United States as a member of disaster-relief efforts. I organized three trips to Liberia to expand the buildings at a church high school and to constrict a medical clinic. I spent 2 years acting as a construction supervisor for a major addition to our church facilities.

Then along comes COVID 19 and the shut down of our entire world. The only thing that was normal was my wife and her effort to put a good meal on the table every night. We saw few friends. We worked on 1000-piece puzzles. We read. We watched British TV. During this time, I began to realize I had a prob-



**Peter "Swede"
Saderholm**

ALUMNI FEATURE: MY REFLECTION ON LIFE AS WE RETURN TO A "NORMAL"

lem with my lungs. I could breathe normally, but the oxygen was not getting into my blood system very effectively. This reduced my energy level and my endurance. The pulmonologist said I had fibers of some unknown source in my lungs. Not much can be done for this other than monitor my oxygen level and the activity that causes it to drop. Then a recent EKG indicated I have atrial fibrillation. Now I am waiting for a meeting with a cardiologist to determine the next steps in this health adventure. In addition, I now need to add to the list a macular problem in my right eye, which is also contributing to my double vision.

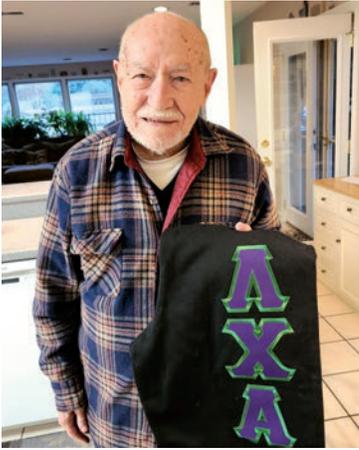
So what are my choices? I have all of my original organs, and they work. My GI tract is great. My blood

pressure is good. I have no restrictions on drinking alcohol, except those imposed wisely by my wife. I normally sleep well for 6+ hours each night. I have no broken bones and no artificial joints. I can still walk and bend, just not as easily as in the past. So I choose to continue my journey on this very scenic mountain crest trail. Sometimes my journey has frequent rest stops that allow me to enjoy the view. Other times I move more quickly. It may take me a while to get to the end, but I am in no rush. I can look to one side on a past life full of fun and adventure with family and friends. I can always choose to slide off the other side into the dark valley below; but it does not look like much fun. So I will stay up here on the trail forward..❖



NEWS FROM ALUMNI

► 1948



Bob McKinless (O-612) broke his left femur a year ago, and reports he is “still recovering and walking with a cane,” although he was able to go bicycling all over Ohio with his grandson this summer. He has moved back to his condo in Arlington, VA, where he is rocking the 94th-birthday LXA sweats. He has a new email address as

well: bobmckinless@gmail.com.

► 1950

Walter T. Spalding, Jr. (O-710) just returned home to North Olmsted, OH, after 1½ years in Orlando, FL, where he and his wife Rae were “nannies” for their two grandchildren, so their daughter and son-in-law could work. “Ages 2 and 4 kept us very busy! We were able to play lots of golf, when we got time off, at the great Walt Disney courses nearby—so that really helped a lot.” He can be reached at walterspalding@att.net.

► 1956

Dick Bushey (O-790) sends us a new email address, rdbushey@yahoo.com.

► 1962



Sandy Gilbert reports that red tide is back on the west coast of Florida with a vengeance as shown in the photograph of a Longboat Key canal. The current bloom has been made even worse by a release of highly polluted

water from a holding pond from a retired fertilizer plant that flowed into lower Tampa Bay and Anna Maria Island Sound. If there is any good news on the subject, it's that the severity of this and other recent blooms has finally forced regional governments to begin cleaning up their wastewater plants to lower the amount of excess nutrients flowing into our waterways. In Sarasota County, for example, the government has committed to spend \$157 million to expand and upgrade the Bee Ridge wastewater plant that will reduce the amount of nitrogen in their reclaimed water by about 70%. This will help to improve the water quality in the streams and bays as nitrogen is red tide's favorite food source. Solutions to Avoid Red Tide (START), the non-profit organization that Sandy runs, is now involved in the implementation of a landmark stormwater filtering system at Bay Park in Sarasota. With a combination of an underground denitrification barrier and a restored oyster reef and clam colony, the system will naturally filter out nitrogen and pollutants from 72 million gallons of stormwater annually before it ever reaches Sarasota Bay. This is important because stormwater is accounting for 65% of the excess nutrients in our waterways that feed red tide.

When not working on red tide projects, Sandy continues to play some golf at The Meadows, putter around in the garden tending his ever-blooming Nora Grant Ixoras and cooking some of his favorite recipes like chicken cacciatore. Wife Emmy Lou is doing well after a knee replacement for her right knee and will wrap up her career in real estate this year with Michael Saunders & Company. They still enjoy socializing with friends, even under COVID protocols, and spending time with their grandkids who fortunately live nearby. They can be reached at sandem133@aol.com.

► 1964



Wayne Mezitt (and Lee Leonard '63) check in with news of the 17th (after a COVID delay) reunion in the Adirondacks of a gang of late '50s/early '60s brothers. The hosts were **John Comstock '61** and his wife

NEWS FROM ALUMNI

Arlene and **Bruce Veghte '60**. Others participating were **Bill Fuller '60**, and **Swede Saderholm '60**, along with Wayne and Lee. Several of the brothers were unable to make it, but they were toasted during the nightly festivities. They ate (and drank) several delicious dinners at area restaurants including one at Vrooman's Hotel and Restaurant in Caroga Lake, where the owner bought them a round of drinks. They played a round of golf on the short but testy Nick Stoner course, and their cultural adventure was a trip to Wilton, NY, near Saratoga Springs, to explore the U.S. Grant Cottage where the former president escaped from New York City to write his memoirs and then died shortly thereafter. Bruce Veghte introduced them to the project that he is shepherding for the Caroga Arts Collective—a musical arena in the middle of the woods for the regular performances sponsored by the group. Kyle's Shed will have the MyHill Meditation Site in honor of Bruce's late brother Dick, who loved classical music and the arts. The accompanying photograph from Vroomans shows the reunion bunch around the table: from left to right clockwise, are Bill, John, Bert Vonderahe (not an LXA), Wayne, Vrooman's "88-year-young" owner who had fun flirting with the boys, Bruce, Lee, and Swede. Wayne also reports that **Tom Shineman '65** had to miss that reunion because of some health issues with his chronic asthmatic bronchitis that had him hospitalized for a spell and feeling poorly, with a gravelly voice and not much strength, but Wayne is happy to update that Tom and Jan are back at their Arizona home now until spring, and Tom is feeling much better and is even playing golf again.

► 1967

Ralph Wilhelm writes, "Greetings from Central Indiana and also upstate New York on Lake George where we currently spent some of the summer. Weather on the lake is getting better now after a few days of rain and cold. I recently decided this spring to retire from consulting and expert witness work in automotive electronics. I decided that after 50 continuous years of working since graduate school it really was time to "hang it up." Current clients and law firms took my retirement well; lots of very qualified, younger people that can capably do the same job better are ready and willing to step in. I am still staying busy with a number of volunteer activities: board member for the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, various commit-

tees and advisory groups at Cornell including BOD member of Cayuga's Watchers and the Class of '67 55th Reunion Major Gifts campaign, and member of the Industrial Advisory Board, School of Engineering, University of Indianapolis. Katharine and I have been squeezing in travel over the last 20 years, e.g., Vietnam, India, Greece, Turkey, Italy, Iceland, New Zealand, Cuba, ... and are now scheduled for Jordan/Egypt and Oberammergau/Germany in 2022 and potentially Japan in 2023. There are really too many places to experience and not enough time! I would be glad to see any brothers cycling through Indiana; contact is best at rvw5@cornell.edu or 317-508-6866." [Ed. Note: **Jason Cho '98** reports that in September Ralph suffered a burst appendix that landed him in the hospital for 9 days followed by a course of heavy antibiotics and painkillers but that Ralph "was still able to ask me how rush was going." That's our Ralph! All of our best wishes go out to him for a speedy recovery and a return to traveling and visiting Ithaca from time to time.]

► 1969

Alan Shineman (O-1050) (alan.shineman@gmail.com) writes to say he has retired from JP Morgan Chase, where he had served most recently as Vice President of Technology Management.

Gary Curtis of Matthews, NC, has also retired from the banking industry, leaving First Union National Bank.

► 1976

Rich Fanelli (O-1173) has retired after a long career in pharmaceuticals and can be reached at richard.j.fanelli@gmail.com.

Jim Sollecito (O-1191) tells us that he recently did some landscaping work for Sue Gifford, the widow of **Dale Gifford '71**. He says, "She proudly brought out an old *Oracle* she saved." [See images on following page.] It is from 1968 and, as they were looking it over, the names prompted some memories. She told Jim about some hard times that **George Botbyl '71**, whom many of us know only as a Thumper name of the game, had experienced as George grew up in an economically challenged environment as a townie in Ithaca. Coincidentally (or maybe not!), Dale grew up in Masonville, NY, which is another "name of the game." It is evident from the *Oracle* that something mailed to "Gifford/Masonville/New York 13804" would get safely delivered to the right place in 1968. That issue also gives an explanation of the origins of the Little Sister program that flourished for a short time.

the omicron oracle

Newsletter of the Cornell University Chapter of Lambda Chi Alpha



VOL. XLII ITHACA, N. Y. MAY, 1968 NO. 3

Fine Spring Pledge Class Taken

ALUMNI NOTES

Omicron 38, OTTO "TOOL" BRANDT, writes "I know of no Lambda Chis living in the Maplewood, New Jersey, area." Since Brother BRANDT is in poor health and cannot always get out, perhaps other local alumni would enjoy writing him at 439 Richmond Avenue or calling him at 762-6978. I'm sure he'd enjoy hearing from you.

CLINTON W. WITOM, 0-133, is associated with the Little Rock firm of consulting engineers, Garver and Garver, Inc. He has three children and eight grandchildren; his son Robert is an Associate Professor of Biochemistry at the University of Missouri, and his son William is the Curator of the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Brother DUNCAN McEWAN, M.D., 0-181, writes to us from Orlando, Florida. "I see HERB WALLACE '25, who is now retired and living in Buffalo. He and BILL SKILTON '24 joined me for an evening of reminiscing. Bill left Cuba several years ago and is located in business in Orlando. I expect WINDY LEWIS to stop by for a visit during the next few weeks." Dr. McEWAN's only child, Bruce, graduated from the University of Florida Law School and is practicing in Orlando.

We're glad that DEANE A. DUNLEY, 0-270, liked the last Oracle. He's an Asst. Professor of English at Middlesex County College in New Jersey, and writes that his son Brian will graduate from Penn State this June. His son James will graduate from High School this June, also, and has applied to Cornell (among other schools). Jim's interested in Aero-space Engineering.

0-382, DR. L. M. BEAKMAN, runs the Beakman Veterinary Hospital in Lockport, New York. He writes: "I visited the Lambda Chi Alpha chapter at Muncie, Indiana. They have a nice (Continued on page 5, column 1)

After the smoke cleared from rushing, Omicron discovered that it had added thirteen new pledges, bringing total membership to 75. While this might seem to be a small number of pledges (and it is), the CORNELL DAILY SUN reported that this year fewer freshmen pledged fraternities than any year in the last five years. Despite the small size of the pledge class, they have a good deal of spirit and have added greatly to the house.

The lead-off man for our baker's dozen is, appropriately enough, ALLEN DEAN BAKER, Al hails from Delmar, New York, home of brothers Jacques Wood, Eric Powers, and William Morgan (0-188). He's already been elected Little Gamma; we predict great things for Al.



Pledge President Ted Clayton Runs Pledge Meeting

There's a saying that "every good pledge class should include a towie." This year's Ithacan is GEORGE THOMAS BOTBYL, who proves that an Engineer can play cards all day (Continued on page 2, column 2)

"LITTLE SISTER" PROGRAM BEGUN



High Epsilon Harry DeLibero Explains Program to the Brotherhood.

High Epsilon Harry DeLibero '69, together with David Kukulinsky '70, have recently begun a "Little Sister" program in the house, similar to the programs at several other chapters. The purpose of the program is to establish a group of girls who are associated with the house yet not pinned or engaged to any of the brothers. In this way, many blind dates can be avoided, and the awkwardness of social situations is somewhat eased. In recent weeks, High Epsilon DeLibero has held several cocktail parties and dances in order that the new Little Sisters may meet the brothers, and vice versa. All parties have been great successes, and a small group of fifteen "Little Sisters" has grown to almost thirty.

Although the girls have been over at the house for many scheduled social functions, they paid a surprise visit to the house on April Fools' day to wake up the brotherhood - at 6:30 A.M.! The program is in the early experimental stages right now, but it should be very successful, as both the brothers and the Little Sisters are enthusiastically planning future parties.



SPEAKER PROGRAM CONTINUED

The Long-defunct Speaker Program appears to be getting somewhere this term, after a hibernation of nearly a year and a half. An outgrowth of long-defunct "Faculty Teas," the Speaker Program provides an opportunity for brothers and pledges to hear interesting faculty and administration personnel speak on various topics. In March, Professor Roderick Robertson of the Theater Arts department spoke on "Are Movies Better than The Stage?", and other faculty speakers are planning to talk this Spring Term.

Circle this date on your calendar:

OCTOBER 25-26-27

Is homecoming weekend at Lambda Chi.

PLAN TO BE THERE!

THE OMICRON ORACLE
Newsletter of the Cornell University chapter of
Lambda Chi Alpha

Volume XLII No. 3

Editor: Henry McNulty '69

Contributors: Joseph Kelley '69
William Meli '70

Photographs: David Kukulinsky '70
Henry McNulty '69

Ithaca, New York
May, 1968

EDITORIAL

Recently, the University has hinted that next year contract dining the "meal-plan" will be mandatory for all freshmen, and that it will last all year. We believe that the recently-constructed Noyes Center is primarily responsible for this measure. The huge dining area requires a large staff even in the Spring, when most freshmen pledge fraternities and therefore eat at the house. In order to make up for food losses in the Spring, the University plans to force all freshmen to eat at a University cafeteria (or at least pay for a meal there, if he doesn't eat it).

It need hardly be stated that this plan, if adopted, will raise havoc with Lambda Chi's dining system. We, along with most houses, depend on pledges to fill out the dining plan in the house. The more that eat, the cheaper the food can be supplied. As the Cornell Daily Sun puts it, "the plan will certainly have adverse financial effects on otherwise sound fraternal... living units."

A petition has been drawn up, protesting the new University policy, which was signed by virtually every brother and pledge, and some 2500 other students. We feel, however, that letters of protest from alumni would be equally effective, and may be vital in preserving chapter life, or at least in-house dining. We urge you to write to the Department of Housing and Dining

in Day Hall, or to the Board of Trustees. With your support, perhaps we can persuade the University to stop this ridiculous plan.

- Henry McNulty, Oracle Editor

Send your letter to:

Arthur H. Dean
Sullivan and Cromwell
48 Wall Street
New York, New York 10005

FINE SPRING PLEDGE CLASS TAKEN

(Continued from page 1)

and still not bust out. George's extensive knowledge of Ithaca has resulted in his helping the house get such diverse items as tobacco and -uh- dates.

From the Sunshine State comes EDWARD WALTER CLAYTON, the Little Alpha. Ted's a Junior, and a Mechanical Engineer to boot. Ted spent the last three weeks trying to find waves on Cayuga Lake that are suitable for surfing (good luck!). For those interested, Ted's home address is Belleair Shore, Florida.

DALE WILLIAM GIFFORD and THOMAS RICHARD HANLEY, JR. are two of a kind--both New York State Aggies (a hardy breed). Dale's from Masonville, Tom's from Rochester. Both are enthusiastic intramural hockey players.

Our choice for "Most likely to become a Clyde Barrow" is LUDWIG MICHAEL JAMES LICCHARDI, from Brooklyn, New York. Luddy can often be seen casually lounging around the house in a seven-piece double-breasted pinstriped suit, nervously fingering a violin case. He is quoted as saying, "Youse guys better stop makin' fun o' me, or else ----"

From the balmy shores of Annandale, Virginia, comes JON DAVID PENNINGO, a Communication Arts major in the Agriculture school. Jon's on 150-lb. football, which tends to make him a terror during pledge raids.

The Little Epsilon is DANIEL GREGORY RACINE. Dan's from Ontario, New York, and is (Continued on page 3, column 1)

SPORTS REPORT

(Continued from page 6)



Pledge Brother Hockey Game

To turn towards this Spring: Once again Lambda Chi's Softball team seems headed towards a fine season. With eight returning starters, we opened the season by thumping Alpha Sigma Phi 22 to 7. The following week, the team showed its spirit and competitive nature by staging a come-from-behind victory over Sigma Alpha Epsilon. A six-run rally in the bottom of the sixth inning gave us the 3-4 win. Having taken care of the "class" of our league, the championship seems almost inevitable. Starters are Bruce Compton (pitcher),

Bob Schneider (catcher), John Lombardi (first), Ron Wood (second), Jim Stroker (shortstop), Mitch Mroz (third), Karl Karst (left field), Warren Lem (center), and Lee Sanborn (right).

The intramural swimming meet will take place on May first and second at Teagle Hall. Led by former High School All American Backstroker Bruce Compton, prospects of a Lambda Chi win are high.

Thus, without managing to win a University championship, Lambda Chi distinguished itself in its league several times. With an increasing interest in intramural athletics, next year's season should be superb.

SORRY DOC

In recent Omicron Oracles, we have tended to list only the undergraduate members of the High Zeta. At this time, therefore, we'd like to make public the following information:

The High Pi is S. George Dirghalli, Z-P 270.

"Doc" is married to the lovely Kira Stewart. They live in Cortland, New York, where "Doc" is the minister of the Grace Episcopal Church. He is a distinguished part of the National Fraternity Office, having been a former Traveling Secretary and National Counselor on Ritualism.



the omicron oracle

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NEWS FROM ALUMNI

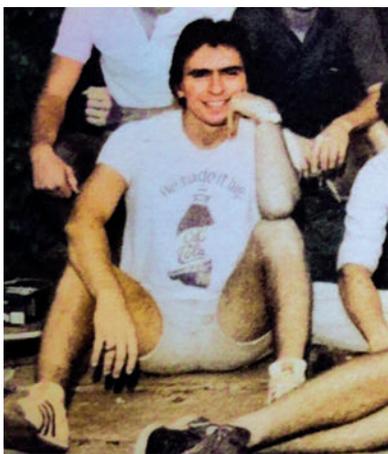
► 1978



Jim Sollecito also tells us that **Gary Fitzgerald**, top photo, has been in the news in Jim's neck of the woods Syracuse in his capacity as President and CEO of the Iroquois Healthcare Association located in Clifton Park, NY, doing advocacy for over 50 hospitals in 32 counties in upstate and central New York. Gary has been with IHA for over 30 years, after working for the New York State Council on HealthCare Financing for 12 years after Cornell, ending his tenure there as Executive Director. IHA is keeping very busy advocating for mitigation of the staffing shortages in upstate

hospitals, which have been present for some years and are now exacerbated by COVID and by imminent staffing-ratio legislation. A quick glance at <https://www.iroquois.org/staff-directory/> revealed that Gary's classmate **Greg DeWitt**, lower photo, is Vice President at IHA. Another well-run subsidiary of Omicron International!

► 1979



Ray "Pod" Yasson (O-1221) recently got a shout out on Omicron's Facebook page: "Ray was a pitcher for Cornell's JV baseball team (which went 16-1 his sophomore year), but he made his most important pitch in the chapter room during High Kappa elections: a revamp of new member education. Over

the 1970s, Omicron had been modernizing our program; the last hazing practices were ended in 1978. Ray's two years of reforms were just not about doing away, how-

ever, but about building anew: a program that challenged new members as individuals and not just as part of a class; one that required them to think about the meaning of service, of ritualism, and of brotherhood, and not just perform menial tasks. Events he first organized like the out-of-house retreat and candle pass became mainstays of the Kappa calendar for the next three decades, and he and **Don Gitto '80 (O-1223)** established the modern incarnation of pre-Initiation as well. Our chapter's stance against hazing was not imposed on us; it came from a recognition of our own values and of our own ability to do more, prompted by our own leaders. We hope every chapter finds their Ray." In response, Ray posted: "Thank you very much for this shout out, but none of this would have been possible without the great and courageous leadership at that time in the house headed by our High Alpha **Mark "Bent" Hallock (O-1215)** and the rest of the brotherhood who all bought in to an ambitious attempt to redefine what it meant to become a member of our wonderful fraternity. Cheers to all in the classes of '79, '80, and '81 who established the foundation of a great tradition that continues to evolve to this day."

► 1980



Bill Stasiuk celebrated the summer of COVID vaccination by finally playing out with his band "Back Eddy" on the open porch of "The Deck" in Salisbury, MA, after a year and a half of using online app JamKazam to practice together online. Staz said, in leading up to the gig, "I think we actually got better/tighter as a band through [playing online]. So now, we have turned that corner to be back together in person and are practicing in [my] barn like the old days. We recently played our first live gig at a backyard party a few weeks back, which felt so good."

NEWS FROM ALUMNI

► 1981

Dan Sovocool writes, "Life has taken me on a rather different path than I might have expected. I spent the last 13 years in sunny Colorado, married to my lovely bride from Ireland. I retired and moved to Portugal in time for the pandemic. We're riding out the lockdown in Leiria, about an hour or so north of Lisboa. We love it here, and look forward to traveling when conditions permit."

► 1982



Mark "mef" Fernau (O-1262) and his wife **Melissa** hosted **Brian Rooney '80** and his wife **Natalie** for an overnight stay in Cambridge, MA, and they all took in a New England Revolution MLS soccer game at Gillette Stadium (Mark and Melissa are pretty excited about having the best team in the league and one of the best all-time after 16 years of watching good years and bad). Natalie and Rod are owners of the East Memphis Athletic Club gym along with Natalie's son Josh (<https://eastmemphisathletic.com/>), which keeps them busy when they aren't on the road. Brian is pleased to report that his health is on the mend and he is feeling great these days.



Mike Curtis (O-1260) has been in Albuquerque, NM, since 2017, the latest stop in a long career in communications and broadcast journalism that has also taken him to Memphis, New Jersey, Philadelphia, and Kansas City. He writes

Cornellians that he, his wife **Sheryl** and his son **Austin** escaped the heat this summer traveling through New England and visiting his daughter at Yale, and he plans to be in Ithaca for Reunion 2022. "Curt" also met up with "mef" **Fernau '82** in a pizza parlor in Harvard Square on that same New England trip.

► 1983



Brad Friedman of Ship Bottom on Long Beach Island, NJ, has been a busy host of Omicrons on the Jersey shore this year. In late August, he was again host to some of his Edgemoor cohort. In the accompanying picture are (standing, from L to R) **Steve Fakharzadeh '83**, **Dave Wurz '83**, **Keith Mullan '81**, Brad's wife **Kim (nee Hoover '84)**, Brad, and **Winston Jenks '83**, along with (sitting, L to R) **Pete Bliss '83**, Steve's wife **Diane**, Keith's wife **Julie**, Dave's wife **Karen**, and Winston's wife **Tricia (nee Deluca '83)**. The brown blur is **Sharky** the dog. Then at the beginning of October, he and **Kim** welcomed **Mark Fernau '82** and his wife **Melissa (nee Duncan '83)** for an overnight visit as they attended a family event on LBI.

► 1984

Jim Morrill (O-1298), jamorrill.morrill@gmail.com, continues to enjoy his "retirement" as proprietor of the Delmar Beverage Center in Delmar, N.Y., which specializes in regional and New England craft beer, cider, and alcoholic seltzer. Stop by and visit on your way through the Capitol District!

NEWS FROM ALUMNI

neering IP I recently acquired the rights to market. If anyone is interested in innovative pump technology, give me a holler to chat" at tjflemings@gmail.com.

► 1985



T.J. Flemings (O-1314) just missed the last *Oracle*, but reports that as of May he was fully vaccinated and starting to party again—responsibly. Fifteen months of pandemic is not an issue if you are an introvert. “I plan to travel far and wide soon now that it’s safe again (at least safe for me). I am looking forward to doing some more sailing—it’s been too long since I was out on the ocean in a storm. Call me if your sailboat needs crew and I might show up.” He keeps in touch with **Mad Al Warner ’85**, **Rick Holborow ’85**, and **Chris Miller ’85**. TJ reports that little bro Rick Holborow has moved back to Ithaca, and to look him up when in town. He also recommends going to Al’s website and buying some of his Dó Sauce (www.dosauce.com). “Don’t fear flavor! You’ll thank me.” He, Al, and Chris last met up a couple summers at a swanky hotel in Chicago, having drinks and chatting up many a hot girl, as one does. A few months after that Rick and Chris came to Detroit, and they went bar hopping. “We ended up at some famous establishments like the Green Dot Stables for exotic sliders and drafts. You haven’t lived until you’ve eaten there.” “Lastly, I am working on starting a business around some engi-



Mike “Maddog” Ellison gave us a quick update. “I have a law firm (Smith Ellison) here in Orange County, CA, where I have worked for over 25 years now. We love the weather out here and have been talking full advantage of it. I am still playing a lot of soccer and some lacrosse

and have added a fair amount of golf and motorcycle riding. My wife, who was also an attorney but who stopped practicing 28 years ago, spends a lot of time playing tennis and some soccer. We have three sons, the youngest in grad school at Columbia, the middle one in grad school at U of Hawaii, and the oldest, who graduated from Cornell in 2015, works out here and will be getting married in December. Last month I saw **Greg Lieberman ’85** in person for the first time in 30 years. He is an orthopedic surgeon in the New York City area and was out in San Diego for a conference. He and I are going to be getting together with **Fred Oh ’85** and **Bob Sullivan ’85** in January in Arizona for some hockey and basketball and possibly football games—somewhat reminiscent of our trip up to Montreal for the Canada Cup in 1984.”



Scott “Sweave” Weaver recently attended the Cornell Hockey opener at Harvard with **Neil Tyrrell ’85**, **Dave Konieczynski ’88**, **Steve Wax ’88**, and **Asa Davis ’87**. They met up in Harvard Square before (and after) the game for a libation or two with **Mef Fernau ’82**, **Steve Keegan ’80**, **Cliff Manko ’80**, **Mike Lennon ’81**, **Bill Stasiuk ’80**, and **T. Scot Brown ’81**, who also attended the game along with 10 other spouses, children, relatives, and friends.

NEWS FROM ALUMNI

vides mobile free medical clinics to underserved populations. Catch up with him at pgr3@cornell.edu.

► 1994

Carlos P. Barroso (O-1460) sends us a Wellington, FL, address and a new email: carlosbarroso@gmail.com.

► 2000

Andy Osborn of Charlotte, NC, (andyoz11@hotmail.com) is now working for Wells Fargo as business initiatives consultant.

► 2004



Lew Sovocool (O-1611) returned to the U.S. Forest service 5 years ago, where he has been working as lands and realty specialist for the Columbine Ranger District in the San Juan National Forest. After graduation, Lew had served in the U.S. Army as a combat engineer in Iraq and Afghanistan, and after completing his

service, had been recruited to the Veterans Green Corps to train as a wildland firefighter. He relocated to southwest Colorado and served with the San Juan Hotshots as a leader and supervisor in 2011 and 2012 before graduate school. He, Amy, and the family are still in Durango, and can be reached at lew.sovocool@gmail.com.

► 2007

As we settled into summer, **Keith Bayless (O-1663)** (keith.bayless@csiro.au; Instagram: [@the_keithing](https://www.instagram.com/the_keithing)) was down in some other hemisphere preparing for winter. A Schlinger Postdoctoral Fellow at the Australian National Insect Collection, he was interviewed on Afternoons with Georgia Stynes on Radio Canberra on the wonders of winter flies. Keith earned his Ph.D. in entomology and biotechnology from North Carolina State University in 2016.

► 2010



Pelle Rudstam (O-1711) graduated from Western Carolina University's accelerated BSN program at the end of 2019, and relocated to Madison, Wisconsin, where he works as a case manager for Recover Health. He volunteers with Remote Area Medical (RAM), a charity that pro-

► 2014



Carter Loftus (O-1785) broke out letters for his birthday hike up Monte Gradiccioli. A Ph.D. student in the Crowfoot Lab at the University of California Davis, he has been in Germany for two years as a guest researcher with the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior. A behavioral ecologist, Carter studies personality, dominance, and collective decision-making in baboons, which makes the letters seem all the more appropriate. He can be reached at jcloftus@ucdavis.edu.

► 2015

Eric Ari Rubin (ericarirubin@gmail.com) of Cincinnati, OH, is now assistant general manager at Delaware North Sport Service.

► 2018

Max Ginsberg (O-1878) (mjg336@cornell.edu; Instagram: [@mginsberg](https://www.instagram.com/mginsberg)) has returned to the Big Red as an assistant basketball coach, after three years at Holy Cross as assistant coach and director of basketball operations. As an undergrad, Max was head student manager and director of the summer basketball program, although his most reliable dunks always came during Gamma Report.

REMEMBRANCE OF A BELOVED BROTHER



(John Sovocool '78 at his 30th Cornell reunion in 2008 on the fire escape in front of his former room at Edgemoor. Note the "HK" initials above his head, from his roommate Harry Kaiser, illustrating that the exterior door hadn't been painted in 30 years.)

By Bob Shaw '78 and the Sovocool family

John Ray Sovocool, '78, age 65 (O-1210), passed away May 20, 2021, in Batavia, NY, after a valiant five-year battle with brain cancer. John is survived by his devoted wife Jean Barr Sovocool, five children and two stepchildren, and a large extended family. Jean was a champion during this journey and brought John such comfort every step of the way. The family has asked that contributions made in his memory be given to his hospice, Crossroads House of Batavia, NY (www.crossroadshouse.com).

John was born January 25, 1956, at Pepperrell Air Force Base, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, along with his twin brother Wayne. John grew up on a farm in Le-Roy, NY, with eight siblings. Their family had a prolific Cornell legacy that included grandfather Lewis '25, parents Wilbur '50 and MaryAnne '52, uncle James '53,

his twin Wayne '78, brother **Dan** '81 (Lambda Chi Alpha O-1251), Wayne's son **Lewis** '04 (another Lambda Chi O-1611), and John's daughter Kristin '05. At Cornell he joined the Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity with his North Campus dormmates **Harry Kaiser** and **Al Hieger**. His nickname was "Cool"—a natural derivative of his last name and a perfect reflection of his relaxed, confident, easy-going, and sunny personality.

He had a full Air Force ROTC scholarship and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. He became an officer in the strategic ICBM missile program in Arizona, later serving in New Jersey, Illinois, Hawaii, and Washington State. He would often remark that we didn't know cold like the Dakotas, and he forever hated winters. He served in a special assignment in Guatemala and Vietnam. The latter was one of the most challenging: for the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Task Force to bring home missing Americans from the Vietnam War. Unfortunately, the Air Force gave him a Cambodian interpreter who didn't speak Vietnamese. Given that the Vietnamese hated Cambodians because of a war displacing the Pol Pot regime, Cool started behind the 8 ball. You can imagine Cool cajoling remote villagers for information and then deciding whether scarce dig teams should be deployed on meager information. He was magnificent and bred for this challenge.

After 15 years and an MBA from Golden Gate University, Cool took advantage of the Cold War peace draw-down with an early retirement as a Major. After a brief stint in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cool forgot that he hated winter and bought the Fieldstone Farm Resort in Richfield Springs, near Cooperstown, NY, which he owned and operated from 1998 through the summer of 2020. Cool thrived as the resort's front man, handy man, stonemason, carpenter, and landscaper. Growing up on a farm proved an invaluable foundation. You could see his artisan handiwork everywhere: beautiful greenery throughout the resort, colorful stained-glass lamp shades and window ornaments, woodwork, and garden walls and walkways lovingly crafted from local stone. Most of all he enjoyed mixing with the guests at the end of a long day, learning their stories and making everyone feel like family. Cool was active in the Cooperstown business community and was a mentor at American Legion Boys State in the summer.

Cool loved giving back to his community when he wasn't busy hitting the trails. His true passion was



(John Sovocool '78 (left) and Wayne Sovocool '78 (right) from March 2014. John coerced Wayne into running his first and only marathon. It was the second of five in five days that John would do in five different states. It was the Dust Bowl Series in TX, OK, KS, CO, and NM. Cool always said to wear a good shirt for the crowd to cheer you on, plus wearing dark socks made you look like a nerd.)

long distance running—he conquered 98 marathons, including 10 Boston Marathons and at least one in each of the 50 states (completed in 2015). Twice he finished five marathons in 5 days. He also did the Western States 100-mi Endurance Run. His custom rack displaying all of his finisher medals was amazing. Once while visiting classmates in DC, he had to do a 20-mile training run and the snow was too deep. No problem, he did it in under 3 h on a treadmill! Another time he broke his toe in the first mile of a difficult trail race and finished with his typical smile. One of his last efforts was a marathon around Otsego Lake, in which he accompanied a Wounded Warrior who had lost a leg. The Wounded



(Cool celebrates 50 marathons in 50 states, in 2015.)

Warrior competed to commemorate his uncle’s survival of the infamous Bataan Death March, and Cool was with him the entire way. He entered his struggle with cancer in superb physical and mental shape.

We all admire Cool’s spirit during his final battle: he was relentlessly positive, concerned for others, and thankful for his life. The brothers of Lambda Chi admired his humor and steadiness and universally praised his courage. John was a great friend who listened and set a positive example for the rest of us. We’ll miss our dear brother and friend—Cool!



OBITUARIES

The Omicron Oracle notes with sadness the passing of the following brothers:

C. Stuart LaDow '47

December 14, 2015



Stuart, age 90, of Allison Park, PA, grew up in Warren County, PA. Following his enlistment in the U.S. Navy at age 17, he served in WWII as a radio-man and Navy gun crew member on the SS *Israel Putnam*, a merchant ship operating in the North Atlantic Ocean transporting munitions to Great Britain. He graduated from Cornell with a BA and

was president of the Student Council during his senior year. He had a long and successful career in accounting, finance, managerial positions in the banking and mortgage industry, and financial consulting, much of it with branches of the General Electric Company. He also was long active in management and oversight of community and church organizations in Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

Robert C. Allen '50

February 3, 2018

Robert was a consulting engineer with Aer Aqa Company and lived in Port Hueneme, CA. He got a Bachelor's of Mechanical Engineering degree at Cornell.

William F. "Fred" Hickling '48

July 17, 2019

Fred, age 93, of Endicott, NY, is survived by his wife and college sweetheart of 70 years Barbara ("Bobbie"), 3 children, 8 grandchildren. And 9 great-grandchildren. Fred's years at Cornell from 1943 to February 1948 were broken up by a stint in the Navy during WWII. After Cornell, he spent 40 years working for New York State Electric and Gas (NYSE&G), most notably as Manager of Power Supply and System



Operations. Fred enjoyed drawing and painting in many media (oil, water colors, and acrylics). After retirement, he devoted hours to carving decoy and full-size models of ducks, geese, and loons. He was also a history buff, specializing in the Civil War and WWs I and II, as well as early New York State history. His greatest joy came from boating, canoeing, and fishing for trout in Canada and deep-sea fishing off the Jersey coast. Fred loved all things Cornell—for 40+ years he and Bobbie could be found sitting in the Crescent on a Saturday afternoon "following the plight of the Cornell eleven." He was also active in church leadership at his local parish.

Dale W. Gifford '71

December 18, 2019



After graduating from Cornell with a general agriculture degree, Dale spent 2 years in the U.S. Army and then got two more degrees from SUNY Oneonta. He worked as a counseling psychologist for the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs in Syracuse, retiring in 2009, and then continuing to work with Veteran Readiness and

Employment services until his untimely death. He lived in Camillus, NY, and loved sports and coaching various youth sports teams. He enjoyed biking and walking on the Erie Canal, was an avid reader, and loved spending time with his grandchildren. He is survived by his wife Susan, 4 children, and four grandchildren, in addition to his brother Terry.

Lawrence E. O'Brien '62

April 7, 2020



Lawrence is survived by his wife Karen, 2 children, and 4 grandchildren. In addition to Cornell, he graduated from Northwestern University. He was a member of MENSA and an avid sailor and reader and loved to travel. He taught multiple generations of his family to drive a car, "some more successfully than others." He had a great sense of humor, which probably helped with the driving lessons!

Jerome A. Batt '43
December 15, 2020



Jerome, of Williamsville, NY, age 98, was a Hotelier at Cornell. Born in Buffalo, he would often reminisce about playing baseball in the vacant lot next to his home, with an errant line drive once going through the next-door window and landing squarely in his neighbor's lap while he was reading the morning newspaper. He was very active on the Cor-

nell campus scholastically and athletically. With his energy and leadership abilities, he was chosen captain of both his baseball and hockey teams, one of the few athletes in Cornell sports history to captain two sports. He and his late wife Dorothy had a 71-yr loving marriage and 4 children. A WWII Navy veteran, after working as manager of the Saturn Club he rose to senior VP at Service Systems Corp. He also served as president of the Cornell Club of Buffalo. He enjoyed sports and coaching youth sports, entertaining, playing piano, and gardening, and was active in community, religious, and alumni affairs.

Robert T. Leshner '65 (MD '69)
February 12, 2021

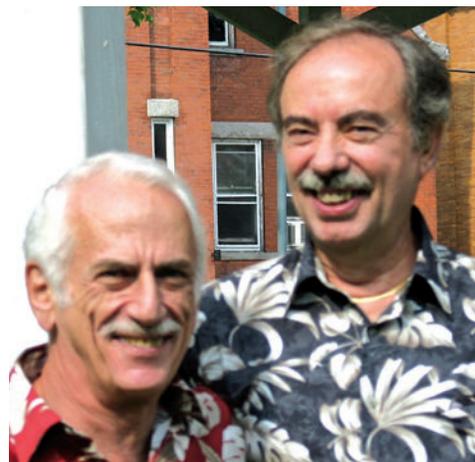


Bob, age 76, of San Diego, CA, was a professor of pediatrics and neurology at the University of California, San Diego, and George Washington University School of Medicine in DC; director of the Neuromuscular Medicine Program at Children's National Medical Center in DC; staff pediatric neurologist at Children's Hospital of Richmond, VA; consultant in neuro-

logy at McGuire V.A. Medical Center in Richmond; professor of neurology and pediatrics and director of the Muscular Dystrophy Association Clinic at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine; Cub Scout leader; avid equestrian and fox hunter; enjoyer of travel, running, and the outdoors; and active

in professional and alumni affairs. Born in Brooklyn, NY, Bob was also a veteran: After postgraduate training, he served in the U.S. Navy for 2 years at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, and 2 years at the Naval Regional Medical Center in San Diego, CA, where he was assistant chair of the department. He was deployed as fleet surgeon with the Seventh Fleet for 4 months in 1977. He will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery.

John E. Johnson '54



May 23, 2021
John (O-749), of Kerhonkson, NY, passed away at the age of 88, on the eve of his seventeenth wedding anniversary. He and his husband, Marshall Berland, had been among the first

same-sex couples to wed when it became legal in Massachusetts, and they had been together 40 years. He met his husband-to-be in 1981 after his divorce, and they traveled the world together for decades. He is also survived by three grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. The son of **Deyo Johnson '20 (O-414)**, he served the chapter as High Phi (ritualist) and editor of the *Omicron Oracle*, as well as being an avid photographer and member of the Sage Chapel choir and the Glee Club. He recalled his days in the house fondly to the end. After graduating with honors in English Literature, he served in the U.S. Army in Korea, rising to the rank of first lieutenant. He married the former Judith Misner in 1956, with whom he had three children, Daniel, Amy, and Meredith, who all predeceased him. After leaving active duty, he worked for William H. Deyo Lumber in Ellenville, NY, the family business, rising to president. He then served as an executive for Marvin Millwork across town, the largest distributor of Marvin Windows in the Northeast, until his retirement in 1990. He was very active in the community, serving as treasurer of the Ellenville Reformed Church, president of the Ellenville Noonday Club, 20-year board member of the Fantinekill Cemetery Association, and an original member of the Ulster County Planning Board. He retained his strong interest in photography, but above all, was known for his kindness and intellect.

PER CRUCEM CRESCENS



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