

# The IOTA SIG



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ITHACA, NEW YORK

www.alphasig-rockledge.com

DECEMBER 2002

## “Unauthorized Reunion” A Big Hit

How many of you have received an invitation to attend another Reunion at Cornell and thought:

- I hardly ever went to class, I don't know many Cornellians. (*It would be great if I knew other Alpha Sigs would be there.*)
- It would be fun to see the old haunts in Collegetown and around campus. (*It would be even better if there weren't any crowds to deal with.*)
- It would be cool to stay at the Statler. (*You need to make a reservation years in advance for Reunion Weekend.*)
- It would be great to hang out with the boys again. (*"Honey, would you mind watching the kids for the weekend?"*)

After throwing away the Cornell invitation, I began to think that it was too bad that there wasn't a reunion just for Alpha Sigs. Actually, not all Alpha Sigs—just the brothers I know. Something in the summer when it's warm, not like Homecoming in the fall. Plus there aren't any crowds in the summer. Hey, I could even bring the wife and kids and show them where their grandparents wasted all their savings.

Thus was born...the Alpha Sigma Phi Unauthorized Reunion. During the week-

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## We Have A Lot To Be Proud Of— And A Lot To Work On

Two main themes prevail throughout the articles included in this winter edition of *The Iota Sig*, which are the increasing environmental pressures the current undergraduates face both from the university and from the community, as well as the brotherhood's united response to these challenges. As you'll see, we have a lot to be proud of, and a lot to work on, including a fire sprinkler system overhaul scope decision that balances ongoing use of the lower Hogg with \$30,000 to \$60,000 of additional funding needs. As you settle down in front of the fire to read, I hope you'll find encouragement, inspiration, and challenge as we bring you up to speed on the current state of the house.

### Be encouraged that our house is in good hands

In line with the first overall theme, I think it is apparent that our undergraduates are under perhaps greater pressure from community officials and the university than any of us experienced during our own undergraduate days. I would argue the pressure has grown more and more intense each year over the last decade. Repetitive facility inspections, “no tolerance” crackdowns by the police (even on registered social events), and aggressive anti-hazing university programs have added regular concerns of risk management to every step of our undergraduates' fraternity lives.

In response to the university anti-hazing initiative, alumni Adam Mikulka, Rich Grousset, Dan Rice, and I had the interesting challenge of working with the undergraduates to review and restructure the new member education (pledging) program. As alumni, we were surprised to see not only how many of the same official Alpha Sig rituals and local “traditions” that had developed over the years—and indeed, that we had experienced during our own pledging process—were not only still in place, but also to see how many of these activities could now be considered hazing. Road trips to attend the regional alumni event in New York City last year, scavenger hunts, and the use of pledge books to interview brothers came into question, among other practices.

More surprising, though, was the legwork the undergraduates completed in an effort to eliminate questionable activities and refocus the new member program—all in advance of our visit! Our resulting meeting evolved into more of a review of the great work the undergraduates had already done to refocus the pledging program, rather than the battle about risk management that we alumni had expected. I don't envy the undergraduates' position in these tenuous times for fraternities at Cornell, but the proactive response the undergraduates are taking in such a difficult university environment is exemplary.

### Be inspired by your brothers' examples of alumni involvement

For our second theme (which perhaps comes in response to the first), I think it is apparent that our entire brotherhood, alumni and undergraduates included, are responding to these challenges as a team. Peter Cardoza, with the help of current senior Mike Summersgill, put together quite a successful “unauthorized reunion”

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### Upcoming Regional Events

**New York City, February 2003 • San Francisco, Fall 2003**

*More details to follow soon!*

Interested in setting up a regional event in your local metropolitan area? Contact Dave Poggi at david.poggi@dartmouth.edu, or call 603/643-5292.

## “Unauthorized Reunion” A Big Hit

*(continued from page one)*

end of June 14-16, 18 brothers from the mid-'80s, along with spouses and kids, descended upon Cornell for a weekend of fun. Although we experienced a typical rainy Ithaca weekend, the weekend was a rousing success. We stayed at the Statler, spent evenings in Collegetown, took a tour of wineries and gorges, had a cook-out at Stewart Park, and capped off the weekend with a Father's Day brunch at the Statler. But most of all, we were able to visit with brothers we hadn't seen in years.

Pulling off the alumni event would not have been possible without the active involvement of the undergrads. In particular, I want to thank Mike Summersgill '03. Without his tireless efforts, the event would not have been possible. In addition, a half dozen undergrads returned to Ithaca to make sure things went smoothly.

So the next time you receive a reunion notice from Cornell, send out an e-mail to your fellow brothers and give the undergrads a call. You just may end up with the best reunion you'll ever attend.

Peter Cardoza '87

## With Alumni Assistance, Undergrads Rework Pledge Program

During the Homecoming corporation board meeting, Dave Poggi '97, Tom Hunter '95, Rich Grousset '98, Adam Mikulka '98, and Dan McKinley '02 sat down with the undergraduates to re-evaluate Rockledge's pledge program. With the university-mandated closing of many chapters last year, everyone agreed our program should be revised to minimize risk and ensure that each event truly meets our goal "to better the man." We outlined a series of informal meetings at which each event and tradition would be examined and revised or removed as necessary.

We held our first pledge program revamp meeting on October 6, and more than 10 undergrads helped outline a complete list of all traditions, events, and rituals associated with pledging. We then evaluated and categorized each event in order to identify our top priorities. Several events were flagged for immediate

changes, and the brotherhood offered ideas for improving each event without losing its meaning. All the undergrads contributed enthusiastically, and great strides were made toward our goal.

Dave Poggi spearheaded a second meeting on October 26, and, with the help of Dan Rice, Adam Mikulka, and Rich Grousset, the undergraduates reviewed the proposed changes. The alumni added their perspective and made some suggestions in areas the undergraduates had overlooked. The resulting dialogue yielded more improvements and a sense of consensus among all present.

As this process continues, we are striving to keep the new program anchored by tradition while still growing with the ideas of the newest brothers. We are confident that the result will be a pledge program of which every brother can be proud.

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**Visit us on the Web at**  
**[www.alphasig-rockledge.com](http://www.alphasig-rockledge.com)**

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## A Lot To Be Proud Of—And A Lot To Work On

*(continued from page one)*

last summer on the weekend following Cornell's official reunion. Participants raved about the weekend. As you read Peter's article, consider setting up a similar reunion weekend for your classmates in the coming year.

Also be inspired by the words of Jon Cokinos in his interview with Mike Suita about the impact of brotherhood in his life since he graduated. Jon was recognized this Homecoming for his generous contributions to the house during last year's fundraising drive, but his comments on the lifelong friends he made in the fraternity will remind us all of the reasons we stay involved and in touch with each other.

### **Be challenged on how to solve the pending sprinkler system overhaul project**

Finally, when you consider your 2002-2003 contribution to the house, be challenged by solving the facility maintenance needs facing the Rockledge estate. "Challenged" may seem like an odd

adjective to use here, but I think it reflects the necessary personal involvement and self-sacrifice needed to solve problems.

Reflecting back on the admirable qualities of the undergraduates when faced with a problem, we see them evaluate their options, make tough decisions, and excel at implementation. As a major source of funding for house repairs and maintenance, we alumni have some difficult decisions to make with regard to the targeting of our budgeting and fundraising goals this year. The brotherhood faces a pending fire and sprinkler system overhaul project expected to cost between \$30,000 and \$60,000. (To put this in perspective, last year's alumni contributions generated roughly \$15,000 of income.) The high-end figure of \$60,000 reflects incremental costs required to upgrade our sprinkler system in order to allow for ongoing use and residence of the lower Hogg. Should we choose to invest the minimum \$30,000 on the project, we will be required either to obtain a safety variance from the city or eliminate the Hogg as a place of residence. I am guessing many of you will

have input on this issue, so please e-mail me at [david.poggi@dartmouth.edu](mailto:david.poggi@dartmouth.edu), or call me at 603/643-5292 if you have any comments on how you would like to see us proceed.

### **Encouraged, inspired, challenged,...and responsive**

In summary, we should all be encouraged by the undergraduates' response to a changing community and university environment, as well as their triumphs in the face of adversity. We should also be inspired by Jon and Peter's comments as they reflect the ongoing development of a more involved alumni network, as well as the growing partnership between the alumni and the undergraduates. Finally, be challenged by participating in our pending sprinkler project. We cannot sacrifice safety, so we must respond to the pending issue. I look forward to seeing you involved.

Dave Poggi '97  
Corporation Board President



*Looking sharp.*

## Donor Spotlight: John Cokinos '95

As a gesture of our gratitude toward all the alumni who continue to pledge their support to the house after graduating, the brothers of Rockledge have mounted a handsome new plaque on the wall of the chapter. The 10-by-12-inch plaque has a bronze engraving of the house on it, below which will be engraved the names of our most generous donors. The inaugural recipient of this honor is John Cokinos '95, who was kind enough to take a few minutes out of his day to tell us a little bit about his experience with the brotherhood.

**OK, John, for all the brothers out there who don't know you, tell us a little bit about yourself and where you've been since graduating.**

*I was born in Rochester, Minnesota, and I went to John Marshall High School. After graduating, I started out at Citicorp, and since then I've worked on leverage financing at Lehman Brothers.*

**What did being a brother in Rockledge mean to you? What does it still mean to you?**

*I made a lot of my best friendships in school. I still consider a lot of them my best friends. Years later, I still hold on to the bonds we formed during those years, and I still have most of my friends from those years.*

**How do you think being a brother has affected the way you view the world now?**

*Well, the brotherhood had a lot of different personalities, and a lot of different values—so what it taught me most, really, was how to deal with a lot of different people and how to value friendship and loyalty. It's not just about drinking. There have been times in my life when the brotherhood has really been there for me. About five years ago, my mother passed away. I called up the brothers I knew from that period, and they were there for me, and they helped me get through it. It's not just about drinking. It's about the friendships you form along the way.*

**What have you been up to since graduating?**

*Unfortunately, I've just been working. [Laughs] Lehman Brothers had been good for the past few years, and I've been dating a woman named Lisa for the past four and a half years.*

**What's on the horizon for you?**

*Well, I hope to get engaged soon. I just turned 30 two days ago, and don't you laugh because you'll be there yourself one day. Other than that, I'm going to keep working at Lehman Brothers and keep on supporting the house.*

The undergraduate brothers appreciate John's continued support, and we're looking forward to seeing him at Rockledge during recruitment in January.

Mike Siuta '05

## Chapter President Reports

As president of the house, I am pleased to report that the house is doing great this fall. Last semester's pledges have all come into their own as brothers, and with seniors, juniors, and sophomores living in the house this year, a very interesting dynamic of education and mentoring has developed. This has been crucial to our success so far this semester.

Early in September, in response to a very turbulent August, the Ithaca Fire Department and the city and campus law enforcement offices decided to adopt a policy of "zero tolerance." Re-evaluating our plan for the semester, we decided to restructure our risk management system, put in extra work to ensure that the house would pass fire inspection with no problems, and make sure that we abided by all of Cornell and Ithaca's rules and regulations. As a result, we have had no problems—unlike some of the other, less fortunate members of the Greek community. It gives me great pride to say that as more and more challenges are put before us, we continue to meet them and overcome.

In this newsletter you will read more about some of the changes that we are making. I hope that after reading this *Iota Sig* you are all as pleased with the house's progress as I am. We hope to see many of you back for alumni events, and any time in between.

Avi Giladi  
Chapter President





## Brothers Take Alcohol Awareness Course

The brotherhood recently participated in an online alcohol awareness course designed to promote safe and responsible drinking. In return for 90 percent of the brothers taking the course, we received a substantial break on our insurance costs.

Offered through [www.alcoholedu.com](http://www.alcoholedu.com), the course took an average of two to three hours to complete. It consisted of an overview of the history of alcohol, the potency of different types of alcohol, and the short- and long-term effects of alcohol abuse. Brothers listened to several chapters of lectures and completed survey questions. At the end of the course, participants had to take and pass a final examination by correctly answering 65 percent of a series of multiple-choice questions.

While most of the ideas communicated through this program seemed to be common knowledge to college students, several important things could be learned from it. Charts and graphs based on user-inputted information provided an interactive feature that allowed users to see how alcohol would affect them specifically.

The course was not aimed so much at discouraging students from drinking as it was at educating college students about the risks associated with alcohol consumption. It was a good opportunity for our brothers to learn about the consequences of alcohol use while at the same time freeing up funds for better use by the brotherhood. It also illustrated the strength of our brotherhood, as we were able to pull together and get over 90 percent participation in a relatively short period of time.

While it is difficult to gauge just how much people took away from this program, it is clear that some people now have greater knowledge that may be used in an emergency situation involving alcohol. We like to have fun, but at the same time we realize the importance of safety and risk management. The greater awareness we have as a result of this course should help us find the balance.

## Rockledge Needs Sprinkler System, Substantial Maintenance And Repair

With the fall weather here and the winter coming soon, some large improvement projects are on the horizon for Rockledge. First, Cornell recently announced new fire safety guidelines for fraternity houses. The first requirement is that all houses must have sprinkler systems installed as a fire deterrent. Second, each house must be directly wired into the fire department, so that there is automatic notification whenever the alarm is triggered. As a consequence of this, the fire alarm box will have to be replaced with a direct dialing unit. All Cornell-owned houses are required to comply with these specifications by 2005, and the others are expected to follow shortly after. Although this deadline gives more than ample time, the corporation board has already started working with the brotherhood to get the project in motion.

Also, the wiring in the house needs some substantial maintenance and repair, especially in the singles corridor. Much of the electrical wiring in the house is very dated, and the rooms on the extremities of the singles corridor

are starting to show signs of electrical deterioration and failure. Ideally, rewiring could be done simultaneously with the installation of the sprinkler system to limit the amount of damage done to the ceilings and walls of the house. The corporation board has started looking into how best to accomplish this.

Besides these issues, the house is in fine shape. We have passed our fire inspection, and our occupancy permit has been renewed for the next calendar year. While there is always the occasional task to do, the brothers are doing an admirable job keeping things in working order. While the weather in the past weeks has been surprisingly mild, we are all too aware of the snow and cold coming. All we can do is enjoy the outdoors while we still can and know the warmth of the house will provide a welcome escape from the Ithaca winter.

Brian Wasserman  
House Manager



*Meeting*

# ALUMNI MAILBAG

Stay in touch with WILLIAM TRIMMINGHAM '50 at [wjtrim@alaska.net](mailto:wjtrim@alaska.net) or at Box 32, Hope, AK 99605.

CARL D. CRANKSHAW '53 has relocated to Hilton Head, where he's enjoying sun, golf, and leisure. His new address is 22 Sand Fiddler Rd., Hilton Head Island, SC 29928 ([cdcran@aol.com](mailto:cdcran@aol.com)).

The rector at Saint Paul's Church in Holyoke, J. GOLLAN ROOT '60 can be reached at 475 Appleton St., Holyoke, MA 01040, or at [s-g-root@attbi.com](mailto:s-g-root@attbi.com).

"Had a great time last year at our 40th reunion," writes EDMOND A. KAVOUNAS '62 (99 Birch Lane, Greenwich, CT 06830; [ekavounas@rockwoodcap.com](mailto:ekavounas@rockwoodcap.com)). "Got to visit with BRUCE HERBERT '62, CLIFF WAGONER '61, STEVE TIPTON '61, LANCE BERGSTROM '62, ED CAPRA '61, and JOHN REIF '61. Let's do it again! Thanks to the Alpha Sigs who hosted a very nice cocktail hour. It was great to visit Rockledge again."

One day at lunch, with nothing better to do, JOSEPH W. SANTAMARIA '62 went surfing on the web and, on a whim, went to the Alpha Sigma Phi Web site. He found the Cornell link and from there found his way into the scrapbook. "I went to '1960s and earlier,' and there we all were—great pictures and even greater memories of the 'old gal' and of Rockledge. A bunch of us 1958 pledge brothers still keep in touch from time to time via e-mail, so I quickly told them about the scrapbook, and they are now enjoying it as much as I do. Thanks so much for setting that up; those were great days, and it was wonderful to be reminded of them (even if we all looked like we were 12 years old!)." Joe is a senior project architect at Watkins Hamilton Ross Architects in Houston, and e-mail reaches him at [jwsantamaria@whrarchitects.com](mailto:jwsantamaria@whrarchitects.com). He lives at 2337 Sunset Blvd., Houston, TX 77005.

WHINFIELD D. MELVILLE '63 writes, "On my way back to Rochester

from Boston, I stopped for an evening to see Mary and WALT WILLIAMS '63 in their new home in Manlius, New York. Walt is retired from Bristol Meyers." Drop a line to Whin at [wdmelville@rte.com](mailto:wdmelville@rte.com) or at 33 Concord Dr., Pittsford, NY 14534.

HENRY E. FESSLER '77 reports that JEFF SNEDEKER '78 dropped by for a cup of coffee when he was in Baltimore for a pediatrics meeting. "His description of life as a local Ithaca doctor sure sounded tempting. However, after 15 years of practicing critical care medicine here at Johns Hopkins, I'm probably no longer qualified to treat a head cold. My wife and two daughters are also not willing to leave just yet, but that's only because they never went to Cornell. I hear occasionally from ROALD EULLER '75, who works for the Rand Corporation in DC after living in New Zealand for five years. I also recently visited BRIAN JONES '76. He is in San Diego after a decade in Germany. I'm not quite sure what he does for a living, but I never understood what he did in college, either." Henry's address is 514 Yarmouth Rd., Towson, MD 21286 ([hfessler@comcast.net](mailto:hfessler@comcast.net)).

Write to JOHN N. AMODEO '79 at [jamodeo@crja.com](mailto:jamodeo@crja.com) or at 8 Worcester Square, Boston, MA 02118. John is a senior associate at Carol R. Johnson Associates, Inc.

When we last heard from JOHN "Dirk" ANDERSON '81, he and fiancée Mary Willy were planning a July 2002 wedding. "BILL LYNDON '83 will be my best man, and several other brothers plan to attend—although the wedding will be a modest event in Chicago." Send best wishes to the newlyweds at 7010 Westmoreland Rd., Falls Church, VA 22042 ([john.anderson@mwa.com](mailto:john.anderson@mwa.com)).

After nine years in Florida, Judy and TODD D. OSTROW '83 decided to move back to Atlanta, where Todd works as a neurobiologist at Northside Hospital. The Ostrows have been married for 14 years, and they have two sons, Alexander (7)

and Mitchell (3-1/2). Todd can be reached at 4789 E. Conway Dr., Atlanta, GA 30327, or at [tostrowmd@yahoo.com](mailto:tostrowmd@yahoo.com).

JAMIE S. STALLMAN '92 lives at 632 East Ave., Pautucket, RI 02860, and his e-mail address is [jstallman@yahoo.com](mailto:jstallman@yahoo.com).

"I am finally finished with my residency," writes JASON SCOPP '93 (637 11th St., Santa Monica, CA 90402; [jscoppmd@yahoo.com](mailto:jscoppmd@yahoo.com)). "I am moving out to L.A. for a sports medicine fellowship. After my fellowship, I have no idea where I'll be."

During his first year of business school at Duke University, ROBERT P. HARGREAVES '95 had the opportunity to get together with MARC SAULSBURY '96, who was finishing up at UNC's business school down the road. Write to Rob at [rhargreaves@nc.rr.com](mailto:rhargreaves@nc.rr.com) or at 1811 Snowcrest Trail, Durham, NC 27707.

A vice president at Coast Cities Financial, KIRK M. WEST '95 makes his home at 21101 Foxtail, Mission Viejo, CA 92692. Send e-mail to Kirk at [kharmah@earthlink.net](mailto:kharmah@earthlink.net).

Mail reaches JASPER CORDERO '96 587 Spring Ave., Ridgewood, NJ 07450, and e-mail at [jaspercordero@verizon.net](mailto:jaspercordero@verizon.net).

Brothers in the Philadelphia area are invited to look up MARC R. SAULSBURY '96 at 1531 Skilec Blvd., West Chester, PA 19382 ([marc\\_saulsbury@kenan-flaglermba.unc.edu](mailto:marc_saulsbury@kenan-flaglermba.unc.edu)).

PAUL CICOLELLA '97 is a failure analysis engineer at Affymetrix, Inc., in Sunnyvale, California. He has a new address: 4021 Fair Oaks Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025 ([paul\\_ciccolella@affymetrix.com](mailto:paul_ciccolella@affymetrix.com)).



*We regret to inform  
you of the passing into  
Omega Chapter of*

LOWELL H. BALLINGER '64  
on April 9, 2002.

*We'd love to hear from you!*

*Please complete and return your newsform today!*



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## THE IOTA SIG

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