

The SALTINE SIG



Building the Future of Sigma Chi

Anyone paying attention would understand that the following statement needs no further explanation: the fraternity industry has faced perhaps unparalleled pressure throughout the last several years. From the since-debunked *Rolling Stone* article to the horrific bus incident at the University of Oklahoma, and punctuated by the tragic loss of several undergraduate fraternity men due to alcohol-fueled hazing, fraternities have regularly—and rightfully—been put on notice that the time to clean up our act is now.

Although none of the highest profile incidents involved Sigma Chi, we have not been immune to our share of problems, and 70th Grand Consul Tommy Geddings has become known for steadying his focus on the moniker: Let's fix the problem, not the blame.

With that as the backdrop, Sigma Chi International Fraternity leadership resolved to do the right thing—no matter how difficult—to raise the standards of Sigma Chi to ensure our relevancy today and for generations to come.

At the end of 2017, the International Fraternity Executive Committee came together to devise reasonable policy changes that would reshape the fraternity experience. Launched in January 2018, Sigma Chi has begun implementing these changes. Focusing on a core cause of many of the problems, we set the permanent ban of hard alcohol (alcohol above 15 percent ABV) from all Sigma Chi facilities, and the prohibition on pledges and potential members

(continued on page four)

Alumni Big Brothers—The Time is Now

By Phil Oldham '66

Editor | *The Saltine Sig* | poldham405@aol.com

As you read elsewhere in this issue of *The Saltine Sig*, our fraternity system—and indeed, our own Psi Psi Chapter—is under siege from both the outside and within. Within our chapter there appears to be a disconnect between undergrads and alumni. The result is that we are being guided by the detrimental actions of the few. It is time to turn complaints into solutions.

Building short- and long-term benefits of being a Psi Psi/Sigma Chi needs to be an “all hands on deck” effort with, most importantly, each of us taking leadership and personal responsibility.

Our undergrads need to take responsibility for the condition of, and what happens in, our 737 Comstock chapter house. They are the keepers of a heritage that belongs to all 1,600 Psi Psis, and we alumni have an obligation and an opportunity to help guide our undergrad brothers to the benefits of the Sigma Chi brotherhood, from which they will profit in post-grad Sigma Chi life.

Back in January, you should have received an emailed invitation to become an **Alumni Big Brother (ABB)** to our current and future Psi Psi undergrads. The job is simple, the reward significant. The immediate response proved we know and want to share the values of Sigma Chi. For those who missed the email, or as a second-chance reminder, here is what our brothers signed up for, as presented in the email:

The No. 1 reason for college and being a Sigma Chi are the post-grad Sigma Chi advantages. As a Psi Psi alumnus, you can relate to undergrad life, yet you know

more about life after Comstock Avenue. Today's Psi Psi undergrads could use some help in preparing, which only we can provide. Hence, we are initiating the **Psi Psi/Sigma Chi Alumni Big Brother program.**

Very simply, we are looking to give our **undergrad brothers an opportunity to connect with a Psi Psi alumnus who is in the profession they are pursuing, lives where they now live or where they hope to be, or simply shares interests.**

So that this is not just senior job-hunting, we will connect with second semester sophomores or first semester juniors—already settled into college and ready to declare their majors. **Each undergrad would be able to reach out to Psi Psi alumni who have volunteered to be Alumni Big Brothers.** We would create a handbook for how **ABBs** can connect, support, and help prepare undergrads for the advantages of Sigma Chi post-grad life.

This is a very special opportunity both to give back and to enjoy connecting and building a Sigma Chi life. As this is to benefit our undergrad brothers, we encourage their input on what they feel they need and how to build a mutually beneficial connection.

So, if you haven't already, please reach out to me, or sign up on the psipsi.org website, giving your connection points (profession, company, location, and major interests) and share your ideas on the Psi Psi Facebook page.

I am proud to be a Psi Psi/Sigma Chi!

I am proud to be a Sigma Chi, especially a Psi Psi.



Greek System under Siege and Facing Challenges Nationally. What is Next for Psi Psi?

By Hank Suominen '78

Recently, the Mu Mu Chapter of Sigma Chi at West Virginia University disassociated from being a university-recognized student organization, a group of fraternities and sororities (Sigma Chi included) filed a lawsuit against Harvard University claiming discrimination against single-sex social organizations (even those off campus and not affiliated with Harvard), and very poor judgment about a theme for satirical humor at Theta Tau at Syracuse University are just a few examples of the Greek system being under siege.

The Mu Mu Chapter of the Sigma Chi Fraternity disassociated from West Virginia University (WVU) on August 12, 2018, due to a series of issues with the school. This was an idea proposed by the Sigma Chi International Headquarters (HQ) during the Balfour Conferences in the summer of 2018, but had not yet been approved at the time of disassociation. This caused a massive headache between the chapter and HQ, which thought the university had been treating the Mu Mu Chapter unfairly for some time. Not receiving a fair-due process in WVU's "Reaching the Summit" plan and the school not allowing freshmen to rush in the fall were two of these complaints.

After trying to resolve some of the conflicts with the school, Grand Consul W. Thomas Geddings Jr. referred to the WVU Administration as "tone-deaf" and supported the chapter's decision to disassociate. Since then, the Mu Mu Chapter has maintained much better communication with HQ. The chapter has also joined the WVIIFC, an independent fraternity council created in unison with four other fraternities that left the school but have the support of their respective headquarters. You can read more about the details at <https://tinyurl.com/GeddingsStatement>.

At Harvard University, the elimination of same-sex social clubs is the desired public policy for the university. From Tommy Geddings' letter on the topic: "The Sigma Chi International Fraternity, along with other interfraternal entities and plaintiffs,

filed parallel lawsuits against Harvard University in federal and state court. The suits are in response to the university's policy that blacklists their students—our members—by sanctioning those who choose to join single-sex organizations, regardless of whether or not those organizations are recognized by Harvard. This is an untenable example of overreaching institutional policy, and Sigma Chi has chosen to stand up to Harvard to fight for the rights of our men, as well as students everywhere who find great value in the experience provided by a single-sex organization. To read more about the background and stay up to date with the effort, visit standuptoharvard.org.

"Greek life is changing fast. We need to be prepared to adapt at a moment's notice."

Sigma Chi established its Kappa Eta Chapter in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in May of 1992, and we have enjoyed a history wherein the men who have joined that chapter have become some of the most loyal and successful Sigma Chis within our ranks. Our chapter has never been recognized by Harvard and has always operated independent of its purview. Yet, our students are now subject to sanctions by their university simply for belonging to Sigma Chi."

The Alpha Omega Chapter of Sigma Chi at Stanford University lost recognition of its charter over, among several issues, flying the American flag. Actually, they were asked to take down a 3-foot by 5-foot flag and did so, only to put a 4-foot by 6-foot flag in its place. As Jack Nicholson said in *A Few Good Men*, "And that's a crime? I'm being charged with a crime?" might not be the perfect answer, but you get my point. Read about it here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8epq6vj>.

No doubt about it—the very poor

judgment for the theme of a "satirical humorous skit" at Theta Tau at Syracuse University has caused uproars on several fronts. If you have not seen the video of the skit conducted by the newly initiated members, you can probably still find it on YouTube.

In my humble opinion, while the choice of themes demonstrated very poor judgment, the last time I looked it up, being stupid when it comes to exercising judgment about what is supposed to be funny was not yet a crime. Yet the university went about suspending the participants in this incident, neither giving them any opportunity to explain how it was they came to exercise such poor judgment, nor giving them any opportunity to understand what university rules and regulations or federal and state laws were broken. Students filed a lawsuit and were granted some relief: <https://tinyurl.com/ybn3dckf>.

So what does this all mean to Psi Psi undergrads and alumni? First of all, there is a report from the consultant hired by the administration that is due out any day—we have to see what recommendations are made. If the environment becomes too toxic and anti-Greek, it might be prudent to follow the path of the Mu Mu Chapter formerly of WVU and disassociate from 'Cuse on our terms with the blessing of Sigma Chi HQ.

Such a step would relieve pressure in some ways, including that there would be less compliance oversight by the university administration. However, it would put more pressure on the chapter to "operate by the book" when it comes to compliance with state law and Sigma Chi policy, and there would be loss of privileges such as not being able to participate in intramurals, and Derby Days would lose participation of other Greeks.

For all practical purposes, House Corp's role would be unchanged. We would run the real estate as we have for the past five decades. Greek life is changing fast. We need to be prepared to adapt at a moment's notice.

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Attention Mid-'70s/Mid-'80s-Era Psi Psi Alums...

Mark your calendars for the Mid-'70s/Mid-'80s-Era Reunion, to be held June 27-30, 2019

On a first-come, first-served basis, you can stay at the house or, if you are afraid of the ghosts from eras past, book a room in a local hotel. If you plan to stay at the house, plan to bring linens or a sleeping bag, pillow, towel, fan, etc. There will be a full-size mattress in your room with a fresh mattress cover on it.

Here is the General Plan

Early arrivals show up Thursday afternoon, June 27. Dinner will be informal. Head to M Street or organize a barbecue off grill, card game or backgammon at the house; BYOB.

Friday, June 28:

A light breakfast—egg sandwiches, etc.—will be served at 7:00 a.m. There will be a round of golf at Drumlins Country Club (Drumlins, West Course Par 70 Yardage 6030 Rating 113 Slope 113, 800 Nottingham Road, Syracuse, NY 13224; 315-446-4555; greens fee, bucket of balls and cart is around \$33) with tee off around 9:00 a.m. with lunch afterward. After golf, we will gather up at the house, where there will be a happy hour from 4:00-7:00 p.m., followed by a family-style sit down dinner starting at 7:00 p.m. (a catered barbecue off the grill with burgers, salads, etc.; BYOB).

Saturday, June 29:

There will be a light breakfast—egg sandwiches, etc.—served at 7:00 a.m. Plan to head out for activities like Finger Lakes Region winery

tours, bar hopping old haunts, a trip to Green Lakes State Park and, for those so inclined, a bus trip to Turning Stone Casino (plan to leave around 9:00 a.m. and return by 10:00 p.m. A 25 seat bus will cost around \$1,700, so if we fill every seat on the bus it will cost about \$70 each, which seems high to me but that is what the chauffeur quoted). Those going to Turning Stone can play golf, or take part in all that the casino has to offer. There will be a dinner at 6:00 p.m. The bus will depart at 9:30 p.m. for the house. Turning Stone golf greens fees: Shenendoah (Par 72 White: Rating 69.9 Slope 128) or Kaluhyat (Par 72 White: Rating 71.0 Slope 135) \$105; Atunyote (PGA Tour Grade Par 72 White: Rating 71.7 Slope 134) \$200 (includes cart, practice balls, and greens fee).

Sunday, June 30:

There will be a light breakfast served at 7:00 a.m. The house will be closed up at noon.

Here is What it Will Cost

Everyone who attends pays a base fee of \$35 to cover the cost of house preparation, rentals, and clean-up after we are done.

Cost for those attendees who want to stay at the house all three nights will be around \$155 a head for continental breakfast and dinners, set up and clean up, rentals, etc.

Note that there are 17 singles available in the house so there is a wait list set up to accommodate that many staying in the house. If the house is full, more are welcome to participate, however, you would have to stay in a hotel or be willing to be in a double occupancy room. If you want to specify a particular room or roommate, please do so at time of RSVP.

House plans with room numbers can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/SXHousePlan>. If you just want to have dinner at the house each night, the cost will be around \$35. If you want dinner at Turning Stone, the budget is \$75. Note that Turning Stone requires payment in full by May 27, 2019, so those who want to participate in Turning Stone will have to pay by May 15, 2019.

Here is How You Participate

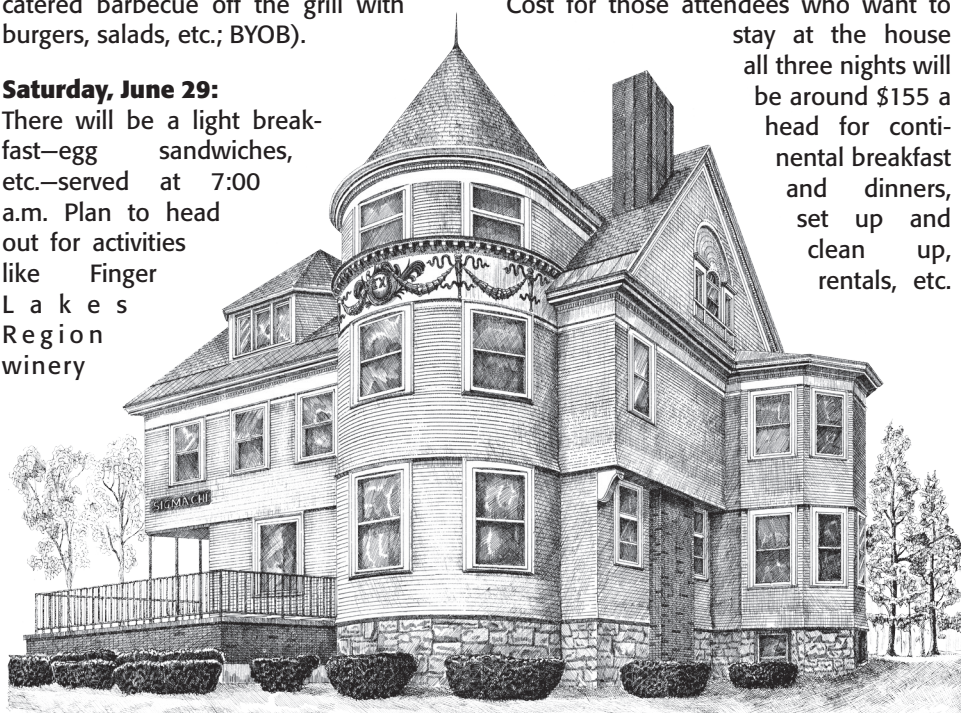
The link to the RSVP form is at <https://tinyurl.com/SXMidEraReunion>. All the options to participate are on the website form. Reservations opened January 15, 2019. Remember: first-come, first-served. The deadline to RSVP if you want to play at Turning Stone is May 15, 2019. After June 1, 2019, you will owe a late fee of \$50, which will go into the BYOB fund.

If you don't sign up by June 15, 2019—which is the cut-off for the catering company—sorry, but we will see you next time. You will be prompted to pay by credit card at the completion of registration. If you don't pay at the time of RSVP your reservation is not complete. You can come back later to pay but your reservation for a room in the house might not be available if someone pays ahead of you. If you have something else you would like to do, please specify at the time of RSVP.

Any questions? Email me at hank@suomi33.com or call me at 617-312-6800.

You must RSVP if you want to attend, with payment in advance by credit card only. If you are waitlisted, please contact me to be released.

IHSV,
Hank Suominen



Update from the Undergraduate Chapter

By Jack Brotman '21 | Pro Consul

The 2018-2019 school year had a great start here at 737 Comstock. We kicked off the year with a very successful fall rush. Recruitment is something we continue to pride ourselves on and take very seriously, and we are very excited to welcome our six new members to the Psi Psi Chapter:

- **Benjamin Alon '21**, Jericho, NY
- **Christopher Daus '21**, Golf, IL
- **Jared Kaiman '21**, Great Neck, NY
- **Nathan Kellar '21**, Syracuse, NY
- **David Ogunnowo '21**, Jamaica, NY
- **James Rudman '21**, Medford, NJ

On November 3, 2018, we initiated these six men as Sigma Chis. We believe these young men are worthy of carrying forward the values and traditions of the fraternity,

and we are excited to see them grow and excel as members of the Psi Psi Chapter. We look forward to adding more new members during the spring recruitment, which will be held February 7-15.

We have also continued to excel philanthropically. On November 2, we continued our tradition of hosting a blood drive in our chapter house with the American Red Cross. This semester, we had 24 donors, including 13 first-time donors, give a total of 20 units of blood—enough to save the lives of 60 patients. We look forward to reaching even better totals when we welcome the American Red Cross back on February 27.

On October 6, we co-hosted the inaugural "Sigma Hoops," a charity basketball tournament, with Phi Beta Sigma, a

multicultural fraternity on campus. All profits went to the March of Dimes organization. The event had a great turnout, and we are already working with the Sigmas to schedule another tournament for the spring semester.

Our fall pledge class took the time to make and donate over 200 sandwiches to Catholic Charities Men's Shelter, an emergency evening shelter for homeless men in Syracuse.

Of course, no spring semester is complete without Derby Days. While we have not yet determined the exact dates, we have lofty goals of surpassing last year's record total of \$27,000 for Hunstman Cancer Foundation, Children's Miracle Network, and Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital.

Future of Sigma Chi

(continued from page one)

from attending any social events where alcohol is available. Sigma Chi's action set the tone for the rest of the fraternity world to get in line. During the August 2018 meeting of the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC), health and safety proposals largely mirroring those of Sigma Chi were near-unanimously adopted. All member fraternities now have until September 2019 to raise their health and safety standards to meet the new expectations.

Sigma Chi is also hard at work developing world-class programming that will affect our brothers' understanding of crucial character and leadership development concepts. This will materialize in a number of ways and will be validated by recognized third-parties. These programs will enable our brothers to take the lessons beyond the fraternity construct in ways that will benefit them in their professional and personal lives. Tune in to Sigma Chi's website and magazine for more on this in the future.

Finally, as we have always done, Sigma Chi is standing up for our rights. The Sigma Chi International Fraternity joined with an interfraternal coalition of students and fraternal organizations to file federal

litigation against Harvard University for their policy that effectively blacklists our members for seeking a single-sex fraternity experience. You can read much more about this on the internet, as our efforts have been covered widely and largely supportively by news outlets across the continent.

The Sigma Chi International Fraternity is fighting harder now than ever before to preserve the importance of the fraternity experience. One of my favorite beliefs in Sigma Chi is that we are a collection of diverse thoughts, hopes, and beliefs, shared by the hundreds of thousands of men who wear the White Cross. To make this a reality, we need every brother to step forward and re-engage with Sigma Chi—in whatever capacity he can—so we can continue to support each other and secure our future. Be an advisor, big brother a young man, attend alumni chapter meetings, or just simply update your contact information at psipsi.org and at members.sigmachi.org so we can keep you in the loop. It's our lives and our Sigma Chi—and the time to engage is now.

I wish you all a Happy New Year and a wealth of unparalleled prosperity!

Guard Well,
Michael J. Church
Executive Director

Update Your Contact Info for the New Sigma Chi Directory!

Sigma Chi International Fraternity, founded in 1855, recently launched a comprehensive alumni data verification project. Most Psi Psi Chapter alumni should have already received a request via paper mail or email from Sigma Chi International Fraternity Headquarters to update or confirm their information.

Sigma Chi needs your help to confirm the accuracy of your data and fill in any information gaps. If you have not already responded to the letter or email, please call 866-645-8139 (toll-free) to verify the accuracy of the data currently listed on file. Up-to-date alumni information is essential to foster brotherhood in accordance with the traditions and proud history of Sigma Chi International Fraternity. That's why it's so important to call.

Your prompt attention and assistance are greatly appreciated. Please call 866-645-8139 to verify your data today.

For more information about this directory project, please visit <https://sigmachi.org/directory> or email headquarters@sigmachi.org.

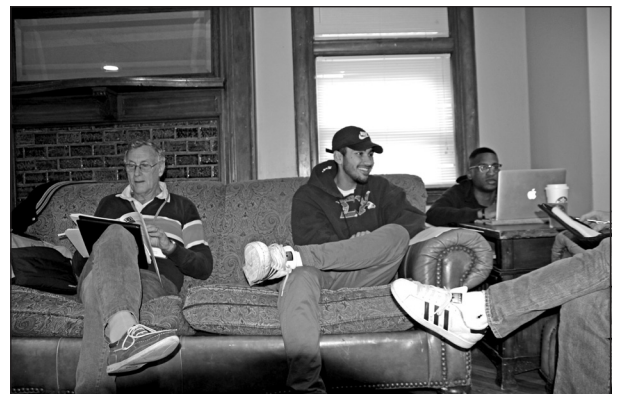
Homecoming 2018



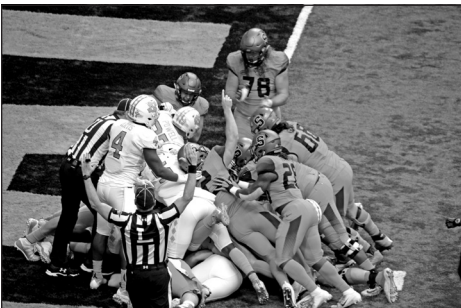
737 Comstock on Homecoming morning.



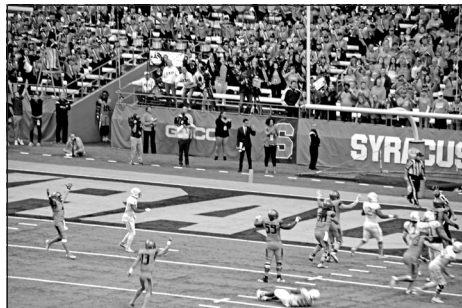
737 Comstock on Homecoming afternoon.



Above photos: Psi Psi brothers during the board meeting on Homecoming day.



The Orange attempts to push through the UNC defensive line for a touchdown during the Homecoming game.



The Orange wins the Homecoming game with a field goal in overtime.



The final score of the Homecoming game: the Orange wins by three!

Psi Psi Alumni Send Their News

Ken Sparks '56 writes, "Fully retired and living in southeastern Virginia on the Chesapeake Bay. Still playing the piano, singing, and writing songs 60-plus years after doing the same at 129 College Place. Talk with **Bob McMeekin '56** fairly regularly." Contact Ken at P.O. Box 1202, White Stone, VA 22578, krsparks@aol.com, or 202-494-3863.

Ed Hanna '57 writes, "Retired and maintaining the family farm. Spend fall and early winter in McCormick, South Carolina, near Augusta, Georgia. Golf a little, nap a lot." Catch up with Ed at 56 Bluff Rd., Rexford, NY 12148 or edhanna2@aol.com.

James D. "Jim" Caskie Jr. '67 wrote in August, "Retired. Currently living on Smith Mountain Lake in southwest Virginia outside Roanoke. Celebrated my 50th wedding anniversary with my blushing bride, Linda, in June 2018. Son living in Los Angeles, daughter returning from a two year assignment in Hong Kong to a new position in New York City. Zoey, my Golden Retriever, will be two years old tomorrow, and as quoted from a recent TV commercial, 'I should have named her cash, because that's what she cost me.'" Drop him a note at 1015 Pierpoint Ct., Moneta, VA 24121 or jcaskie@aol.com.

Joseph J. "Joe" Durzo '67 writes, "Judy and I have been living in Denver since 2003 and we love it. Judy is retired and is president of the History Colorado Volunteer Council, serving the state's history museums. I've been on the Board of Governors of the Sigma Chi Foundation since 2014 and am currently the chairman of that board. I'm mostly retired but still do some consulting work. In the last two years, I've been fortunate to spend time with **Tom Baesl '70**, **Bill Beach '69**, **Bob Clark '71**, **Rick Lent '70**, **Brian Mihalik '70**, **Phil (Molly) Powers '69**, **Don Schefmeyer '69**, **Ted Spall '69**, and **Tim Stebbins '67**. I'd enjoy hearing from Psi Psi brothers from my era. The best way to reach me is at JoeDurzo@comcast.net." (352 Jackson St., Denver, CO 80206)

Don "Fritz" Schefmeyer '69 writes, "My wife CoCo and I spend our summers in South Bend, Indiana, and our winters in

Palm Beach, Florida. I'm a member of Sig alumni clubs in both locations and have attended a number of initiations at Florida Atlantic University. Over the last few years, I've attended both the Balfour Leadership Conference and the Horizons Program. The challenges to fraternities are daunting, but Sigma Chi is in the forefront of meeting those challenges. We see **Ted Spall '69**, **Bill Beach '69**, **Dave Poole '70**, **Joe Durzo '67**, and **Phil Oldham '66** and correspond with many brothers from the '60s and early-'70s." Write to Fritz at 63262 Orange Rd., South Bend, IN 46614 or dschefmeyer8@gmail.com.

James W. "Jim" Fini '83 writes, "Annual Psi Psi summer get-together was great again at Saratoga home of **John 'Turk' Honis '83**. Brothers '**Festa' Reardon '84**, '**Shot Spot' Ward '83**, '**Skoze**,' and '**Theo' Collins '84** were in attendance with me. We added brother '**Jake' Romanow '80** to the annual Psi Psi ski trip in January, heli-skiing in British Columbia." Get in touch with Jim at 2230 Seaside St., Vero Beach, FL 32963 or jimfini@icloud.com.

Anthony P. "Tony" George '85 wrote in August that he moved to North Carolina. Drop him a note at 9316 Hightower Oak St., Huntersville, NC 28078 or tgeorge63@att.net.

Bob "Batman" Lord '85 writes, "Married Robin Brenner Lord (TriDelt '85), three kids: Emily (SU grad/DG '16), Drew (Cornell grad), and Paige (second year at Syracuse Falk School)." Drop him a line at

Chapter Eternal

Lee L. Belle '49
May 12, 2018

Albert H. Frankenbach '52
June 18, 2017

John F. McGlynn '52
May 14, 2018

Robert M. Hick Jr. '54
March 24, 2018

Edward R. Buck III '68
August 14, 2017

Steve Nagy '91
October 20, 2017

931 Weed St., New Canaan, CT 06840 or blordarf@gmail.com.

Michael K. Atkinson '86 writes, "On November 16, 2017, President Trump nominated me to be the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, and on May 14, 2018, the U.S. Senate confirmed me for the position. The Inspector General of the Intelligence Community oversees the programs and activities within the authority of the Director of National Intelligence, and works to prevent and detect waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement within the U.S. intelligence community." Congratulate him at 8600 Garfield St., Bethesda, MD 20817 or michaelatkinson8600@gmail.com.

Psi Psi Alumni—Save the Date for the 2019 Spring Psi Psi Clam Bake!

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2019

11:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

Mark April 27 on your calendars to get back to 737 Comstock Avenue for the 2019 Spring Clam Bake and Reunion.

Reach out to your Psi Psi classmates and join reunion groups ... or just come to meet up with old and new Psi Psi brothers. If you want to be connected to Psi Psi classmates, let me know at poldham405@aol.com.

You can also check out the Clam Bake details on the psipsi.org website.