

# *Sigma Phi* *flame*

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**SIGMA PHI**

## Your Dues: Pillars of Sig Opportunity & Posterity

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# Becoming a 'Wandering Bird'

by Andrew Steele, H'07   a.steele33@gmail.com

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Anything precious is difficult to put into words. We devise shorthand among our friends to condense complex ideas into simple phrases. One such Sig phrase during my years as an undergraduate brother at Hamilton College was 'Wandering Bird.' More than a decade after becoming a Sig, I have joined many young professionals in a nomadic lifestyle that separates me from old familiar haunts, not to mention family and friends. In an increasingly atomized world that threatens each of us with periodic bouts of loneliness or notions of inadequacy, Sigma Phi is a strong shield that has buttressed my spirit through personal trials.

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## I may be a Wandering Bird, you see, but I'm never alone.

Just what is a Wandering Bird? At the Beta of New York, it means a Sig who has graduated and taken flight. Wandering Birds would drop in to share stories about their latest adventures. It was a great way for us young folks to connect with someone beyond our small world in rural upstate New York...and to perceive something greater than ourselves.

In my second week of rushing Sig, I was tasked with getting in touch with a Wandering Bird: a recently graduated brother who had left upstate New York to work for a little start-up called Facebook, Inc. Rather than brag about his cool job, this gentleman wanted to connect with *me*, a complete stranger.

He recommended that I read the Chinese Daoist poet, Han Shan. He gave me some calming advice that challenged my confident assessment that choosing your college major or minor was an existential problem. He was smart, but also quirky and sincere. I asked for and received suggestions about where we new pledges could meet in secret. The phone call lasted all of 30 minutes, but I remember every detail. If this was a foretaste of brotherhood, you could count me in!

Finding and nurturing such willingness lies at the center of my experience as a Sig.

Once I became a full-fledged member, I began to reciprocate. At the UVA-hosted 2008 ceremony known as a 'Tunk,' which formally accepted the request by UNC-Chapel Hill to establish a chapter, I wandered down to beautiful Charlottesville to meet still more brothers and sisters. The Serps have a gorgeous home, graciously and exuberantly accessible to me and

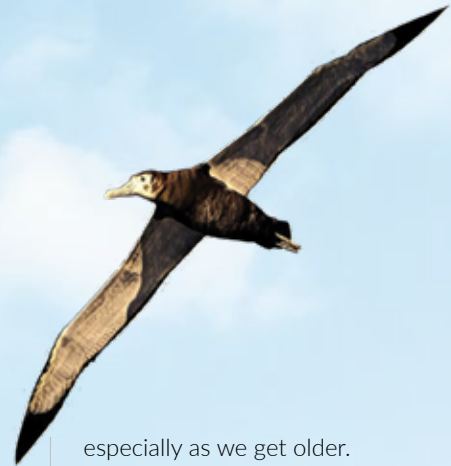
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*A Wandering Bird had swooped in during my first  
few months of collegiate alienation and connected with me.*

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He easily demonstrated a willingness to engage with others of goodwill.

others, which opened my mind to a still wider Sig world. The stories I heard



there were different but familiar. Our fellowship touched off a wellspring of mirth and hilarity that was anything but dry.

Later, as a newly-minted college graduate, I pretty much begged to serve as a Wandering Bird for new pledges in the spring. As active brothers hand-picked new brothers, the clientele might have been slowly shifting but it was an organic and natural process, energizing our chapter with impassioned actives who saw themselves in the institution they were building and sustaining. I found ways to connect. I mailed to a pledge a copy of my father's beloved paperback novel,

*Journey to the East* by Hermann Hesse. We talked by phone about Servant Leadership and how to live a life of service. Even though I was nominally the teacher, I learned a lot, too.

These days, I no longer live with Sigs and my flock of Wandering Birds has thinned. COVID was particularly brutal. I learned that friendships can be fragile and must be nurtured like any other relationship. I set up periodic Zoom chats to connect with Sigs around the world, started sending annual check-in emails, and begged others for baby photos and new mailing addresses. I was lonely, basically. Making friends is hard,

especially as we get older.

I spent the last two years working and living in Beijing, China during dramatic COVID lockdowns and away from my wife for long periods of time. Thankfully, I had a reserve of Sigs on deck to keep my spirits up. Brothers in Singapore and Hong Kong could connect with me without the nuisance of time zones. Plus, I continued to hear from three brothers who had given me a surprise visit in Brussels, Belgium, a few years earlier. No matter where in the world we may be, Sigs stay connected.

As the years go by, the tremendous capacity of Sigma Phi to empower its members only grows. The desire to connect, to share, to care for others and be cared for – these are all timeless aspects of the human condition. I have no doubt that Sig serves as a secret life preserver or refuge: a buoy during storms. In my view, that's not a sign of individual weakness; it's a testament to our collective strength.

I frequently sit down and reflect on how the friendships and life lessons I've learned as a Sig continue to transform my life. In an age when loneliness, apathy, and lies are troubling bywords of our broader society, the three-pronged lights of Friendship, Love, and Truth shine brighter than ever. May you and I never forget the gifts we have received and continue to give freely, always for our mutual benefit.



(L to R) Andy Steele H'07, Gregory Root H'06, Kevin Rowe H'07 and Blake Hulnick H'07, all enjoying a wedding in 2015.

# Sigma Phi: Third Coast Prospects?

by Mark Patterson, I'74 map@dmarksmusic.com

We know that Sigma Phi extends from coast to coast. Can you envision a time when it extends to a 3rd coast? Having a chapter in Texas would provide a Thrice Illustrious presence on the East Coast, West Coast and the Gulf Coast, too. And that is exactly what the new Sigma Phi Texas Steering Committee is working towards.

Reporting to the Sigma Phi Society Expansion Committee, an ad-hoc Texas team of Sigs has recently been assembled to screen

schools throughout the state to determine which campuses are the most prospective. With a central committee of five alumni working from the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, plus regional advisors in the Houston, Austin, and San Antonio areas, the steering committee hopes to have a short list of candidate schools ready to present to the Expansion Committee for its review and approval later this year.

One can only imagine the



conventions, game days, and the scent of world class BBQ that a Texas chapter would make possible! And with luck, we just might be up and running in the Lone Star State by our 200th birthday.

*(Don't worry. The team has already decided that boots, Stetsons and shoestring neckties will not be required...)*

## Administrative Changes to Society Bylaws to be Approved at Convention '23

The following administrative changes to the Restated Constitution and Bylaws of the Society have been approved by the Standing and Advisory Committee and will be voted on for adoption at the Convention Annual Meeting of Members on Saturday October 14, 2023 in Berkeley. The proposed changes make no substantive change to the way the Society operates or conducts its business.

- Correct minor grammatical (punctuation) errors/omissions
- Change references to "By-Law" and "By-Laws" to "Bylaw" and "Bylaws"
- Add reading of the deaths of brothers since the last Convention to the Convention order of business

- Highlight constitutional provisions in the document in blue font to make them more readily identifiable/distinguishable from bylaw provisions.
- Update the list of charters outstanding to reflect the relinquishment of Hamilton and UNC's undergraduate charters and the revocation of Michigan's undergraduate charter.
- Update the date of the document to reflect adoption of the proposed revisions as of October 14, 2023 (assuming the revisions are passed/adopted).

For a detailed review of the changes, please click [here](#) (if reading the *Flame*

online) or scan the QR code nearby to see a red-line pdf file of the proposed changes.

The meeting, scheduled to start at 9:00 AM PDT, will be held in the International House on the UC Berkeley campus (2299 Piedmont Ave., next door to the Sig/Thorsen house). Please check the Convention agenda at the Sig house when you arrive in Berkeley for any late changes to the meeting start time.



**If viewing online, please click on the QR code to redirect to the pdf document.**



# Restoration in Chapel Hill: High Hopes & Baby Steps

by Michael Hardison, T'11    michaelhardison@gmail.com

Even four years later, I still remember all the phone calls I made from Japan to our undergraduate chapter in Chapel Hill.

Brother Jacob Morse, T'11, provided an update on the Alpha of North Carolina's unfortunate situation in the fall 2021 edition of *The Flame*. At the time, I was on my second deployment as a Navy pilot that fall, half a world away. Although I could send my thoughts and opinions as a member of our alumni board, it was incredibly jarring to see our active chapter's membership disintegrate and not be able to do anything about it. Talking with men I considered my brothers as they told me that they were choosing to leave the organization that so many of us

had poured our hearts and souls into was heart-wrenching

From our 2019 active membership disappearing almost overnight...to the Covid-19 crisis... until now, the Alpha of North Carolina's alumni board has basically operated in a 'survival mode.' We went from stewarding our actives' tenancy in our new off-campus home to acting as property managers for a home now lived in by strangers. We had no ability to recruit new members during a pandemic, and we had to make difficult decision after difficult

decision in order to promote a future for the Alpha of North Carolina.

*Fast forward to 2023 ...* Now, largely due to the leadership of (then) alumni board president Jacob Morse, we're just beginning to see opportunities for the future. We've sold our off-campus property and now the alumni board's goal is to chart our path forward, as opposed to just treading water. This past March, we hosted our second alumni reunion in Chapel Hill, bringing back over 20 brothers for a weekend of revelry and reminiscing. Our alumni board's goal right now is to bring those who still consider themselves brothers of the Tarheel chapter back into the fold and help set the course forward.

Our matter-of-fact intention is to bring back an active chapter to the University of North Carolina. While there are no guarantees, how and when that happens is something that we're currently discussing and planning. We understand that our ambition is as challenging as it is important. In this pursuit, we welcome assistance and advice from Sigs from other chapters who resonate to our goal of restoring Sigma Phi's Alpha of North Carolina a reality.



*Tarheel Sigs  
Josh Barrett,  
Brandon Mayfield,  
Michael Hardison,  
Sakibul Huq &  
Jason Cowan enjoy  
life at time-honored  
'He's Not There'  
UNC watering hole.*

# Ann Arbor Initiation Aftermath, 1947

by Lewis Towler, M'47

*(dateline: January, 1947, a dark, quiet room in the Red House on the Hill in Ann Arbor)*

I had the feeling that my many pre-initiation rigors were nearly at an end. A member of the Alpha of Michigan's senior class said to me: "OK, Lewie. Take a shower and get dressed. You have somewhere to go." Weary but anticipative, I did so. I donned my Kuppenheimer suit and was promptly ensconced in a waiting car and whisked off to the elegant University Club in Detroit.

Upon our arrival at that marvelous place, an older Sig alum approached and said to me: "Lewie, let me buy you a drink." Suddenly, there appeared in my hand a double martini with two olives. I was astounded seeing how many older alumni were there! And then I recognized Society General Secretary Wink Mayer, L'10, in all his glory! In addition to having earned a giant Society reputation, Wink was an imposing man: over 6 feet tall, shock of white hair, bespoke tailor-made suit, magnificent, gloriously polished shoes. (Don't look at them overlong; their shine will blind you!) I was thrilled to see that famed Sig, and to understand

that the Society's General Secretary was on hand to celebrate with me and newly-minted Sig/pledge peers.

Somehow, in all the University Club bedlam (hilarity & mirth?), I located my future Red House on the Hill roommates - Stu Fraser, Stan Wiggins and Frank Zagelmeyer, all M'47 - and exchanged the grip with them.

Suddenly, the most junior initiate in my class was called upon and advised of the traditional 'baby of the pledge class' requirement to make a thought-provoking speech to the assembled Sigs. Bravely, he stood upon a stout University Club chair and opened his mouth to address the gathered brothers. Before he could speak more than two words, however, a barrage of moistened, targeted napkins



descended upon him, as did a roar of laughter from his audience!

Spirits were high all through the evening with Sigs young and old enjoying being together. The evening concluded with Michigan's traditional 'Goodnight Song', saluting each other as well as "those who no longer remain."

The passing years may have seen the demolition of the Alpha's old 'Red House on the Hill' at 426 North Ingalls. More recently, those years have likewise witnessed the rescinding of Michigan chapter's charter. But nothing - I repeat, nothing! - can take away the joy or excitement of that night long ago when 100 or more Sigma Phi brothers gathered to cry out together from their hearts: **"It's great-Great-GREAT to be a Sigma Phi."**



*Detroit's vintage University Club, back in the day.*

# CASH REWARDS TO ANCHOR NEW SPEF INITIATIVE

by Jack Romaine, L'90, SPEF President    jeromai1@yahoo.com



**SIGMA PHI  
EDUCATIONAL  
FOUNDATION**

I am very excited to announce a new program from the Sigma Phi Educational Foundation (SPEF) beginning with the fall 2023 semester. We will be rewarding academic achievement by individual undergraduates with up to \$100 per year accompanied by recognition in the *Flame*. Quite simply, this latest initiative is called "Academic Excellence Program."

The Educational Foundation's purpose is to promote undergraduate scholarship and to enhance the college experience. Our longstanding "Best Chapter GPA" and "Most Improved Chapter GPA" programs have experienced zero participation from chapters for multiple years and have been discontinued. The vision is that our new and individualized program will attract greater awareness and greater participation.

**How Does it Work?** Undergrads simply email proof (i.e., a screen shot or image of a report card) that they are on the dean's List. They accompany that proof with a completed eligibility/payment instruction form, available on the Society's website at the start of the semester, within 60 days of the close of the semester/trimester. Sig students will receive \$50 per semester/\$33 per trimester each time they reach this level of achievement. Names will be published in *The Flame*.

**Who is eligible?** All Sigma Phi undergrads in good standing with their chapter and the national who have earned Dean's List recognition can qualify.

**Why?** Education matters. While Sigma Phi has always delivered fraternity fellowship, this initiative demonstrates something more. In fact, it's another way for SPEF to underscore our broader mission of undergraduate development. We want our undergraduate brothers to do well in school and the Foundation wants to do more to recognize their hard work. Scholarship has always been a part of the Sigma Phi culture, but we haven't done enough to publicize this cornerstone in recent years. We hope to change that perception - and offer more encouragement - through programs like this one.

Tell me more about what SPEF is doing! SPEF has more exciting programs along these lines in

development. We are trying to do more for our undergraduate Brothers! As I hope you know, SPEF launched its Speaker Series Program last year and the Alpha of Virginia hosted two very successful events. The Alpha of New York hosted its inaugural Speaker Series event focusing on entrepreneurship this past May (See supporting story on page 16.) We hope to initiate these at all Sig chapters. Such events help to teach new skills, raise awareness on campus about Sigma Phi, and build relationships with the faculty and staff of host institutions.

Sigma Phi's Educational Foundation strives to do more! I hope you will join us on our journey. Please contribute to SPEF at [sigmaphi.org/donate](http://sigmaphi.org/donate).

*Scholarship Programs*



# Kagan Alumni House in Schenectady

by Bob Shages, U'69 [rshages@gmail.com](mailto:rshages@gmail.com)



Back in the early 1990's, the brothers at the Alpha of New York had started discussions (mostly one-way) with the Union College administration about renewing our 99 year land-lease for our house at 1 Library Lane. When Sigma Phi built "The Place" in 1906, the arrangement with the College was that we would own and maintain the building while Union would retain ownership of the campus-located land. Should Sigma Phi cease to exist or the lease run out, building ownership would revert to the College.

There was as abrupt and unfortunate change in College administration from 1999-2001. A Trustee U2K Committee was formed, charged with analyzing the future of social life at Union. Stridently anti-fraternity, that Committee stopped any renewal discussions our Sigma Phi Place, along with the houses of Psi Upsilon, Chi Psi, Alpha Delta Phi and Phi Delta Theta. All properties were taken over by Union College and members were moved to college owned fraternity units/dormitories. Our Alumni Board, along with the other Greek organizations, tried repeatedly to get the College to reverse its decision. To no avail....

While retaining our 100 year old house turned out to be a losing battle, it clarified the absolute need to have a place of our own, without College oversight, for purposes both social and ceremonial. Through the foresight of Peter Smith, U'67, and others, an endowment fund had been started in the late 1970's to ensure funds were available for inevitable capital improvements to "The Place." Such monies - in addition to a well-orchestrated campaign initiated by a group of dedicated alumni - allowed us to begin the quest for an off-campus house at Union. After looking at many properties, we found and purchased an older, 5 bedroom house right across the street from the campus. Sigma Phi became the proud owners of 10 Union Avenue

- "10U", as we call it - on April 26, 2001. While not ideal in size, the location was perfect. It remains, to this day, the only off-campus Greek house owned by a Union fraternity.

The visionary of the purpose of this house was Leonard M. Kagan, U'66. Lennie was the immortal Sig. A member of the S&A and the Viele Scholarship Committee on a national scale, for 50 years Lennie was the heart and soul of Sigma Phi at Union. Since his 1966 initiation, Lennie missed only one or two initiations, imparting his traditional wisdom to each class of new Sigs as to how things are "properly done" while accepting the changes that come with each new generation. And - my! - how he perpetually fought the Union Administration to regain The Place. Len and a large number of alumni were on campus the weekend of the Board Meeting when the decision was made. Among Len's memorable, emphatic quotes was this one: "Sigma Phi cannot exist without our Conclave Room..."

Between 2002-4, "10U" was revamped to consolidate two bedrooms into one Conclave Room with all the traditional accoutrements. It was envisioned to be an "alumni house." The living room was furnished with selected items from The Place and newly purchased furniture of a style you would expect in a finely decorated family home. It was set up for quiet social events and as a comfortable off-campus house for selected lucky Sigs. The first occupants in 2004 were alumni Ridgely Harrison U'00, Aaron Noble U'00 and Aaron D'Addario U'00. Originally intended as a residence for graduate brothers, in ensuing years undergrads with off campus living privileges came to be the occupants.

Over time, however, with increased pressure from the College around campus drinking restrictions and severe party regulations, 10U was used more and more for off-campus parties. Inevitably, there was excessive wear and tear on the house and its belongings, losing the true sense

of conservatorship that was always present at The Place. The active brotherhood had developed the mindset of 'tenants' and not 'owners.'

In about 2017, the Alpha of New York's Alumni Board recognized a change in this mentality was needed to ensure our off-campus home remained a viable space for our chapter. So began the challenge of reorienting the actives' mindset to owners and custodians of 10U, so future brothers might also enjoy it. Money was tight and repairs were slow....but the Alpha's alumni forged forward.

When Lennie passed away last December (*See article by David Loeb on page 14.*), many Sigs who loved him made memorial donations in his name to the Alpha of NY. The Board elected to use this money to rehabilitate 10U more quickly. The use of the house would be refocused away from large social occasions and would be furnished and run in the manner of a regular home. We renamed it The Kagan Alumni House in honor of our brother who had given so much to the Society.

Lennie was one of a kind, in so many ways. His passing was a blow to all of us. As my work with GE moved me around the country and Lennie was busy as a 24/7 obstetrician, we would often not see each other for several years. When we did meet at a swing or reunion and sit down with a glass of Drambuie, we could pick up our last conversation, almost verbatim, where we left off years ago. Ours was a brotherhood connection I will never forget.

There are so many alumni to thank for all they have done for Sigma Phi and to make this a reality. Since Lennie touched so many brothers, we hope that The Kagan Alumni House will be a reminder of a brother's dedication to Sigma Phi and an inspiration for brothers new and old for years to come.



# Your Dues: Honoring the Trust

by Mike Imirie, M'69 [mimirie@aol.com](mailto:mimirie@aol.com)

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**When I first initiated into Sigma Phi in 1969, I had a very real feeling of accomplishment. Months earlier, I had made an important decision about joining. In the company of my pledge peers, I had successfully addressed pledging and initiation requirements. I was proud. I felt affirmed by the membership I had earned.**

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While I wasn't fully aware then, there was more. I was entitled to immediate and enduring member benefits from that moment on. Some were philosophical, while others were very pragmatic. All are important. Among them:

- Formal affiliation with a noble and unique organization dating back to 1827.
- Lifelong invitation to the friendship and comradery of Sigs at my chapter and within the Society at large.
- A continuing subscription to the semiannual *Sigma Phi Flame*, to stay in touch with Society developments and its members.

There would be no cost to those benefits...ever. When a young man initiates into our band, such fraternal benefits are his. They continue throughout life.

Fast forward.....As a Sig alumnus, I would learn that member benefits grow over time. The Society hosts a national convention each year and Sigs coast-to- coast are invited. Rotating, annual founders' day events are staged - the most recent of which

was hosted in Nashville this past March - and that region's alumni are invited to take part. A master member database is maintained, using which alumni are updated about Society news and opportunities. Added value? That database can help connect brothers who have fallen out of touch. All the while, another benefit is quietly delivered. Volunteer leaders at the national level donate their time and make decisions

supporting the posterity of Sigma Phi in twice-annual business meetings and Zoom meetings in between.

These two different benefit types - the ones immediately apparent and those most often appreciated or enjoyed down the road - represent genuine, unique member value for Sigs. In both personal and organizational ways, they support and reflect Sigma





Phi's enduring value: once a member, always a member. Such benefits put wind in the sails of this Society as she approaches her future.

Nearly two centuries down the road, it's a future that Bowie, Bowie, Cromwell and Witherspoon could never have imagined. The changes and challenges their fledgling organization has witnessed since 1827 - economic trauma, world wars, worldwide health scourges, profound social changes, etc. - are many and formidable. Sigma Phi's ability to contend with those changes over the years has been made possible by one thing only: members who continue to care. The remarkable support that Sigs have provided - locally and nationally - over the 19 decades since our founding has underwritten this Society's posterity

There are no guarantees about tomorrow. Instead, Sigma Phi's best hope lies in our practice of delivering meaningful member experiences today. Quite simply, those inculcating experiences are made possible by our support. In person and via dues dollars, participation - *our* participation - is key to continuing vitality for the Thrice Illustrious.

If you are proximate to a Sig chapter - and COVID has taught us that we can be proximate, at least virtually - take part. Then, move a generous step beyond that participation and support Sigma Phi via annual dues. If you are distant from a Sig altar, let annual dues payments serve as your 'participation proxy.' The medium you use - check, online payment via web, QR code payment, etc. - isn't important. The purpose is.

Together, through the recurring mechanisms of in-person participation where it's possible and continuing financial commitment where it's not, let's resolve to make faithful, ongoing contributions to our fraternity. By doing so, brothers, you and I will honor the cardinal trust placed in us as new initiates so long ago: the commission to use our energy, talents and resources to perpetuate this Sigma Phi Society.

## In Support of 'Soulcrafting'

by Nick Fischer, S'20    naf8uyr@virginia.edu

**Nothing quite reminds a Sig brother of the urgent worth of our Society like witnessing an initiation. I have now seen my fourth consecutive Swing at the Alpha of Virginia. It's the last which I'll enjoy as an active. With each initiation has come a deepening appreciation of the blessings that Sigma Phi bestows on the young men who are fortunate enough to stumble across it - or perhaps, who are fortunate enough to be called into it.**

The circumstances of our Virginia's recent initiation force me to consider that the movement of a man toward Sigma Phi might indeed be more a spiritual calling than a happy accident or a rational, end-of-Greek-rush choice. One of my new brothers showed me a project he made as a junior in high school - a gingerbread house with the Sigma Phi letters on it. Per his honest confession, he chose those letters on a whim, expecting neither that Sigma Phi was a real fraternity nor that he and his hometown friends would join it together as S'23s. As a man of faith, he tells me that Sigma Phi now feels like he was destined for brotherhood. Another of our newly-initiated brothers approached me on the morning before our initiation process began and insisted that I listen to him recount the previous night's dream. As he described it to me, I was struck dumb; that young man had dreamt of the exact scene that unfolds at the end of our swing, which he, of course, had yet to experience. Inexplicable things happen in Sigma Phi!

Alongside these signals of Sigma Phi's mystical nature came the more familiar marks of the unusual good that we do in initiation: tears flowing from the eyes of neophytes as they make the decision to commit to us; emphatic hugs shared between eighteen year-olds intoxicated by nothing aside from their epiphanies; and the radical openness expressed in "I-love-you" and honest confessions of shortcomings, hopes, and dreams among bright-eyed freshmen who have spent just a few months together. When we give Sigma Phi to a young man, we give him one of the greatest gifts he can possibly receive, at a time he needs it most. Isolation, depression, and feelings of un-worth are ravaging college campuses in the 21st century. As Sigma Phi brothers, we are charged with stewarding the most potent medicine to these ills which is available to the lads at our host institutions. I do not take this charge lightly, and - since you're reading this - neither do you.

As the foregoing reflections suggest, I believe that fate is on the Society's side. But our fate works itself out via our concrete choices, and our choices today carry a tremendous weight. The forces arrayed against the project you and I know as Sigma Phi are strong. The public views Greek brotherhoods with heightened suspicion in the wake of scandals like the Rolling Stone incident involving Phi Kappa Psi here at the University of Virginia. More recently, our brothers at the Epsilon of New York have felt firsthand pressure from administrators who want to closely inspect and more tightly control the ways in which we acquaint new members with our order - sometimes on fair grounds, but not always - and not necessarily. Fraternities across the country have in recent years disaffiliated from select campuses, like at USC, Duke, and West Virginia. These are surely strategic calculations, but they are defensive, made in response to unmistakable hostility to Greek life. Support we have from the broader public and our host institutions seem to grow more tenuous each year, shifting an even greater proportion of the responsibility to support onto our own shoulders. Within Sigma Phi: our chapters are few in number,

*(continued on page 12)*

*(continued from page 11)*

perpetually juvenile (we actives, after all, will always be 18 to 22 years of age), and organized by and for those actives. For this

Sigma Phi to march through the future despite such uncertain outside supports - and in order to give our sons, grandsons, and their peers what she has already given to us - we will depend upon alumni support more acutely than we have in the past. In the flesh, our alumni continue to lend us invaluable helping hands; earlier this spring, for example, Virginia Sig alumni gathered at the house to advise of financial, social, and real-estate hurdles. In the planning and execution of the Alpha's initiation, alumni provided critical guidance to ensure that we gave our neophytes the same choice to lead or die that we faced and answered well. But at the same time that we cherish the hands-on support of our alumni, the future will require more than their physical presence. It's clear to me that our Society's vital task of 'spiritual soulcraft' also depends on consistent monetary assistance from caring alumni, season after season.

What will give Sigma Phi the strength to navigate the weary future taking

shape, especially in light of our vulnerable size and undergraduate-led style of operation? In my view, it is in large part the efforts of graduate brothers on the fiscal front. We are a human institution in a human world, needing dollar resources in order to set ourselves up to do the work that Sigma Phi does on the hearts and minds of men. Each of us makes lifelong vows to promote the well-being of our brothers, and we know how to fulfill this by physical action and word - but the need for us to support ourselves financially remains, and will grow more dire as support from the world dwindles.

At the Alpha of Virginia, the financial dedication of our alumni has paid off tremendously. Conducting a successful rush in Charlottesville and contending with financially well-endowed peer houses requires sizeable donations... and our devoted alumni have generously given. At the national level, equally grave fiscal needs present, and require the same devotion. I am thankful beyond measure that my chapter's alumni contribute as generously as they do; because of it, we are able to 1) recruit men as well-qualified as the S'23s and 2) maintain our

beloved chapter house. We can do this because - and only because - our alumni dutifully concur that the lifelong promise to support Sigma Phi involves dollar support. Guarding the Sigma Phi flame has always involved sacrifice, and that sacrifice is equally the duty of us all, for we all receive the same initiation. We are a secret society with a distinctly spiritual and internal orientation; this means that no one outside our bonds is going to do much to keep us afloat. Philanthropies will not fund us. Universities will not cut us slack. The resources this Society needs to continue giving college undergraduates the incredible gifts that Sigma Phi offers will have to come from...us.

We have made the promise to be faithful for life; let us honor this promise by - among other participation proofs - contributing annual dues. There's no way to predict what our next crucible moments will be, but when they arrive, it will be our faithfulness in dues payment that enables us to prevail through the inescapable reality of practical, economic, and human obstacles.

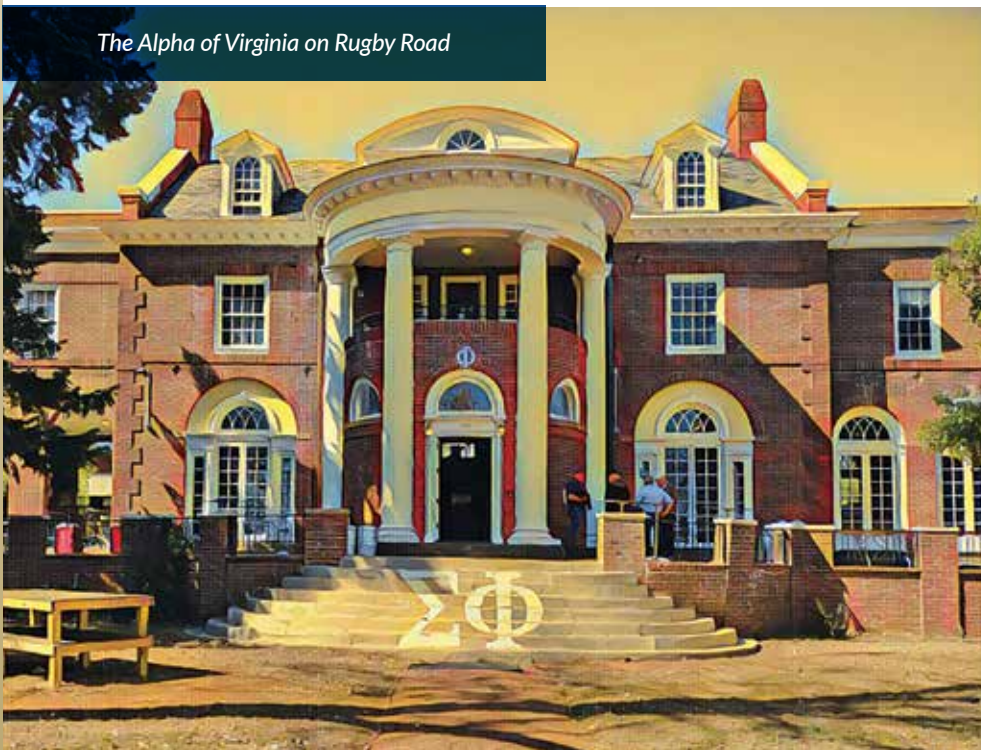
Just as at other chapters, Virginia Sigs maintain a tradition of "biggs and littlees" - mentor and mentee pairs of brothers who are first joined when the younger man is just a pledge. Toward the end of this year's pledge period, I asked my great-grand-little what he most wanted in life. With his characteristic sincerity, he looked me in the eye and said "Nick, all I really want right now is to be a brother." Thankfully, he accomplished it.

Seeing very recently what this has meant for him and the 19 other new Virginia brothers, I urge that we cannot accept a future for American college men without Sigma Phi. Let us honor the promises we made as young men and contribute our resources to this lofty and lifelong cause. In this pedestrian but vital way, you and I can continue to nourish the souls - young and old - who will never stop needing us.

***Esto Perpetua.***

Sigma Phi  
DUES

*The Alpha of Virginia on Rugby Road*



# Sig Dues: “What They Said”

## Pro and con, what do Sigs have to say about duespaying?

**Greg Sawka, L'84:** “My intention was always, and still is, to be a lifelong duespayer. I think I have missed a few years at times simply related to my own disorganization, moves, etc. Dues requests can get lost in life’s shuffles on any given year. I imagine many others are in the same boat. I have to believe the passion is there, we just need to find a way to tap into it in the context of a busy, distraction-filled world.”  
[gsawka@bancroftusa.com](mailto:gsawka@bancroftusa.com)

**Ed Rice, M'80:** “The alumni for whom Sigma Phi already is a significant priority already pay their dues. For those who do not pay dues, it is too big an ask to make Sigma Phi a top priority. But Sigma Phi should certainly not be cast aside. It is not hard for most of us to pay annual dues and keep the flame alive, both for ourselves and for future generations.” [e.rice1@comcast.net](mailto:e.rice1@comcast.net)

**Bill Cohen, F'90:** “When I think about why I pay dues and give small donations I attribute my behavior to loyalty to an org that gave as much as it got. I got a lot out of my active time with Sigma Phi. It was a safe port in a huge school with inherent rituals that meant something. I believe in the power of shared responsibility and doing your part. If everyone paid Sig dues - which are very small - the Society would routinely be flush.” [wjcohen.43@gmail.com](mailto:wjcohen.43@gmail.com)

**Mark Patterson, I'74:** “There are lots of good reasons to pay dues. Here are some of mine: 1) help maintain the Society that was such a big part of each of our lives - to this very day!; 2) help the Society in its mission to mold young men into valuable contributors in today’s world; 3) support our deliberately-small Society as we attempt to grow and expand. (This is the chance to be part of something exciting!)”  
[map@dmarksmusic.com](mailto:map@dmarksmusic.com)

**Chris Williamson, V'79:** “I am just an intermittent duespayer. So what doesn't compel me to pay my dues? 1) I don't get a big sense of urgency; I am operating under the assumption that other, more upstanding Sigs are making dues payments such that dues receipts are pretty good. 2) I'd like a better idea of where dues monies go; 3) In my life, I am bombarded with donation requests from non-profits. The need feels somewhat bottomless.” [westwick2014@gmail.com](mailto:westwick2014@gmail.com)

**John Addy, S'17:** “Elihu Root famously observed that ‘no human institution lives long unless it meets a human need.’ We know from experience this is true; but we know that no human institution lives long without funding, either. And for those on whom Sigma Phi made its powerful impact, we should care that the flame continues to burn brightly and strongly for those who come after us, so that they, too, can have such an awesome experience. When something has had such a fundamental impact on your life, you want to share it.” [jda9cd@virginia.edu](mailto:jda9cd@virginia.edu)



(continued on page 14)

## DUES DEFINED



“Dues.” Webster’s dictionary defines dues as a payment or obligation required by law or custom. Within Sigma Phi, it’s none of those.

There’s no law. There’s no obligation. Instead, there’s an opportunity to support through your dollars the functions which move this Society forward. Twice annual publication of the *Sigma Phi Flame*. Database management. Convention and March Fourth support. Risk management resources. Web hosting.

But there’s more. At the same time that you support the nuts & bolts of Sigma Phi, your dues dollars promote the same formative experiences which shaped you in your undergraduate days. Group living dynamics and responsibilities. Leadership opportunities. A sense of shared fraternal purpose and pride.

While the Sigma Phi experience has spanned nearly 200 years, its satisfactions today are much like the ones our founders enjoyed and envisioned. And your dues dollars - offered year after year - promote both those important satisfactions and our Society’s posterity.

Won’t you please make your 2023 dues payment today?

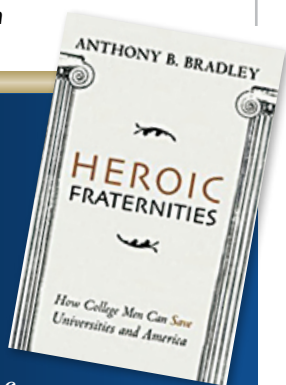
When you do so, it’s not a payment. It’s not an obligation. Rather, your dues dollars support a unique and priceless membership opportunity for young men who aspire to follow the same path you did, so many years ago.

(continued from page 13)

**Dan Mansoor, C'79:** "If dues support is to grow, we need to find better ways to encourage our alumni about two key Sigma Phi benefits: 1) uniquely meaningful small residential experiences, delivering intimate residential housing benefits on impersonal college campuses; & 2) lifelong connections to support personal and professional ambitions." [danieljmansoor@gmail.com](mailto:danieljmansoor@gmail.com)

**Joe Rosati, L'83** "I am as guilty as everyone else with this and I will be sure to go online and pay my dues. In life, we often take the ones we love for granted. Sigma Phi clearly falls into this category. No drum-beating should be required for those who continue to hold Sigma Phi so dear." [jrosaticpa@gmail.com](mailto:jrosaticpa@gmail.com)

**Andre Hollis, S'89:** "Sigma Phi matters. At a time when societal bonds in America are breaking down and faith in traditional institutions is disappearing, we need an organization that stands for FRIENDSHIP, LOVE and TRUTH. Maintaining our bonds takes effort. AND MONEY. Dues support from you and me is critically important to this." [adh208@gmail.com](mailto:adh208@gmail.com)



*Copies of  
'Heroic Fraternities'  
are available at  
[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)*

## In Tribute to Len

by David Loeb, U'99 [dloeb99@gmail.com](mailto:dloeb99@gmail.com)



**Leonard Michael Kagan U'66** passed away in the afternoon on December 12th, 2022, surrounded by his loving wife, Cara and their daughters, Michelle and Erica. In her subsequent communication to us, Cara described his passing as "quite peaceful." On December 14th, about 30 Sigma Phi Brothers joined family and friends to sing *Never Forget* and bury our brother according to Jewish custom.

Diagnosed with Alzheimer's and Parkinson's in recent years, Len was not able to be present at Alpha of New York since initiation in 2018. We all know how much Sigma Phi meant to Len for more than 50 years of his life, and we arranged to connect with that brother by phone during the Tunk Banquet this past November. We updated him on the weekend events, he asked how many new brothers we had (13), and Bob Shages, U'69, told a bad joke and he laughed. When it became clear, however, that Len, who has never been shy to take the stage and give lengthy speeches and tell stories, was not going to do that... we suggested a song. As a group, we began to sing Sigma Phi Ter Inclyta. Len, who had not spoken more than a few words to that point, immediately joined in, belting out *Sigma Phi Ter Inclyta* along with all the Brothers in the room!

That moment was simultaneously the saddest and most beautiful experience I have had at Sigma Phi since becoming a Brother.

If you knew Len, you knew that Sigma Phi was an important part of his life. Season after season, he loved Sigma Phi and all its Brothers. Len had been a friend and brother to countless Sigs, young and old, since his initiation in 1966. He was truly

interested in getting to know each and every brother who passed through the Halls of the Alpha...and he knew all our names!

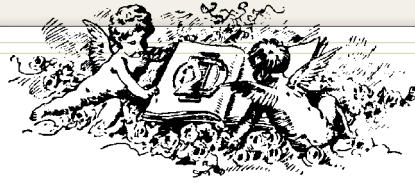
For the past 50 years, he was a fundamental influence and a constant at the Alpha of New York. Perhaps 500 brothers have enduring memories of meeting him as pledges. Then a couple weeks later, he was standing in front of us new men welcoming us into the Brotherhood of Sigma Phi. His trademark (and lengthy!) Tunk speeches and Sunday morning stories over brunch were part of what made Len an initiation institution.

He enjoyed talking, telling stories, and giving speeches at formal events. He would assure parents at homecoming and parents weekends that their sons did not join an Animal House. He would share stories of when he was an undergraduate.

Many of us didn't know what Drambuie was before we met Len, but he educated us on the fact that it was the *Nectar of the Gods* and should be enjoyed by all.

There will be no replacing Len at the Alpha of New York. What we can do is honor his memory by keeping the flame alive and ensuring the 196-year traditions of our Society are honored for another 196+ years.

***Never Forget the Brother, in the bonds of the Sigma Phi.***



## Pregnant Poem

*The free verse poem which follows was first published in a 1950s IBM periodical, intended as a reflection on the importance of mentorship in industry. It immediately struck your editor as a metaphor for the earnest work that has long been done in the hallowed halls of Sigma Phi, as well.*

### BUILDING MEN

by Robert W. Murphy, 1959

How do you train him?  
 There he stands before you  
 Clean and lanky  
 With a look of bright morning on his face  
 Appealing  
 In the way that morning is  
 And youth is  
 And the hopefulness of youth.

And then you realize  
 The awful responsibility  
 That is yours....  
 To train  
 To train and build  
 And nurture and lead.  
 You realize how much of business is training  
 How much of modern industry is building men  
 Inspiring men  
 And leading them to achievement.

Well, here is good timber  
 But what are you going to build of it?  
 And how do you go about the building process?

This is the answer: You give him of yourself.

Urge him to learn his craft, of course  
 And learn it well  
 Whatever it is – law, engineering, accounting.  
 Tell him he must labor hard, to learn it well.

That, of course,  
 Goad him and dip into classic tomes  
 And newer letters  
 To touch base often  
 In academic halls  
 And move about in tasks foreign and unfamiliar.

But this young man needs more.  
 Judgement he needs,  
 And understanding,  
 And maturity.

For these, he looks to you.  
 And you must give them to him.

Let yourself rub off on him.  
 Let him sit beside you as you work,  
 To work with you,  
 To study with you,  
 To be perplexed with you  
 To analyze with you,  
 And to dream with you.

Give him the impossible task to do,  
 The unanswerable question to answer.  
 There is no better way to train –  
 Whether you be Socrates training Athenian youth.  
 Or an American man of business  
 Teaching some young hopeful the craft of management  
 In mid-century industrial America.

## Keeping In Touch With Sigma Phi

Ready or not, life gets busy. And like paying bills on time, addressing daily tasks properly, and managing work responsibilities, keeping in touch with you requires effort. Here's a method which makes continuing contact with the Thrice Illustrious a bit easier

How? By being registered at the Society's website - [sigmaphi.org](http://sigmaphi.org) - and updating your secure online information as your busy life experiences changes.

Here are some simple steps to follow to access 'members only' information on our website.



Click on 'Log in' (upper right of the homepage). If you don't yet have login credentials, fill in the familiar information areas on the sign-up form. Submit. In a day or two, we will send you an approval for your registration.

If you've already registered, go to the bottom of the page and click 'Log in.' Type in your email address and password, and you're good to go in updating your contact information.

Thanks for taking another look at this administrative yet important web feature. More importantly, thanks for continuing to make contact with Sigma Phi a priority in your busy life.

## Union Speaker Series Event: Signature Success!

On Thursday, May 4, the undergraduate brothers of the Alpha of New York hosted the inaugural Sigma Phi Speaker Series for the campus of Union College. The event was hosted in the Nott Memorial and featured entrepreneurs from various backgrounds who shared their stories of success and failure as they navigated the challenges of launching their own businesses.

The topics of conversation ranged from sustainability efforts to the decision-making process explaining why and how each panelist got his start as a business owner.

Many thanks to our panelists who returned to Schenectady to speak with Sigma Phi students and the campus community at large.

This event could not have taken place without the support of our alumni and undergraduates working together to coordinate the evening. Many thanks need to be shared with Scott Daniels, U85, for coordinating the panelists and pre-event dinner and to the Undergraduate Brothers, who orchestrated the entire on-campus

event in the Nott Memorial.

This event represented many facets of Sigma Phi's core tenets: alumni support of our chapter;; undergraduate input and initiative, and socialization among different generations of Sigma Phi, which seems always to happen seamlessly.

As we move toward our 200th anniversary celebration in Schenectady four short years from now, we will be asking more and more of you to make events like this a success. If you are willing and able to lend your support, please do not hesitate to reach out to Alumni Corp President Ridgely Harrison, U'00 ([ridgelyiv@gmail.com](mailto:ridgelyiv@gmail.com)) or event organizer Scott Daniels, U'85 ([Scottdaniels603@gmail.com](mailto:Scottdaniels603@gmail.com)).



### Panelists (L - R)

**Matt Arnold U'86 - Founder/President, Unimacts Engineering & Manufacturing**  
**Randall Beach U'91 & Sarah Beach - Co-Founders, Murray's Fools Distilling Co.**  
**Peter Cowles U'90 - Founder - Aspetuck Brew Lab**  
**Josh Weinstein U'89 - Founder, Creative Co-op Advertising Agency**



# California Convention Beckons

**OCTOBER 13-16, 2023**

by Moses Cesario, I'89 [moses@cesario.net](mailto:moses@cesario.net)



It is the California Alpha's great pleasure to invite you, our beloved brethren, along with spouses, lovers and significant others to the Society's upcoming 2023 Convention. It will be held in the vibrant city of Berkeley, California from **October 13th to 16th**. We'll come together to celebrate Sigma Phi, share our experiences and strengthen our bonds as members of this exceptional organization.

This will be a convention to rival any: a celebration of epic proportion! Prepare yourselves to leave behind the icy bonds of earth for a few days, come with an

open heart, take sustenance here and plan to renew yourselves with a generous dollop of unrivaled mirth and hilarity.

We've been working hard to ensure that every aspect of this planning exceeds your expectations **Alumni... prepare to meet and grow your association with Sig peers as well as members from all chapters. Alumni with Family... make Convention '23 a family outing.** This convention will be

kid and wife friendly! **Actives...** the main message for the youngest members of the band is "JUST GET HERE." The Active Chapter has special fun planned for you. If you are on a shoestring budget, bring a tent and camp in the backyard at Sig. Or, call the house and reserve a couch. Whatever you do, find a way to get here. All the rest will be gravy, guaranteed!

I look forward to seeing you all there.

## ACCOMMODATIONS:

We have reserved room blocks at 4 different destination/boutique hotels:

### Berkeley Faculty Club

\$175-\$195/night  
[www.berkeleyfacultyclub.com](http://www.berkeleyfacultyclub.com)

### Berkeley City Club

\$225/night  
[www.berkeleycityclub.com](http://www.berkeleycityclub.com)

### Graduate Hotel

\$226/Night  
[www.graduatehotels.com/berkeley/hotel](http://www.graduatehotels.com/berkeley/hotel)

### Claremont Hotel, Spa & Resort

\$400/Night  
[www.fairmont.com/claremont-berkeley](http://www.fairmont.com/claremont-berkeley)

## DETAILS:

*Each hotel is within walking distance to the Sigma Phi Chapter house EXCEPT the Claremont Hotel, which is a 5-minute Uber ride away.*

More than anything else, what makes the Sigma Phi Society truly special is its people. This includes Sig brothers as well as Sig Sisters, wives, significant others, and family. As members with a shared passion for FLT, a commitment to community, and a deep desire to make a positive impact on the world around us, the opportunity to gather together at the Society's 2023 Convention will surely serve to enhance this powerful force for good that is the Sigma Phi Society.

So, on behalf of the Sire of the Alpha of California, the Little Fairy, our esteemed, dignified alumni numbering over 400 strong, the ever worthy, always jovial and welcoming active chapter members, and the wee pledges running about, make your plans now!

All convention-goers are welcome at the Teakwood Towers at any time after 3 PM on Thursday, 10/13. A schedule for all of Convention '23's Friday and Saturday events will be forthcoming soon.

For more details, please scan the QR code.



# SOCIETY 'MISSING'

by Mike Imirie, M'69 [mimirie@aol.com](mailto:mimirie@aol.com)

Healthy organizations need to do all they can to maintain contact with their members. Each year, busy brothers relocate, change addresses and choose different contact information. Times about 6000 Sigs, keeping up with those changes presents nonstop (daunting?) administrative challenges. ***Can you help Sigma Phi reach out and restore contact?***

Among others, we have fallen out of touch with the following Sigs. *Flames* aren't reaching them. Emails aren't getting to them. They are out of the Thrice Illustrious loop. If you have any current contact information – mailing addresses, email addresses or phone numbers – please share with your editor ([mimirie@aol.com](mailto:mimirie@aol.com)).

With your help, we'll try anew to “restore ties that bind” for each man you assist.

## CORNELL

G. Michael Hostage C'51  
Robert Donald Smoots C'53  
Kiyoshi M. Murata C'63  
Lawrence Dowdell  
Washington C'66  
Robert Stephen Stroud C'68  
Jeffrey Gale Wendle C'68  
David William Mitchell C'76  
John H. Josephson C'81  
W. Bennett Mitten III C'83  
Ryan R. Fischer C'90  
Nicholas Seward Bosch C'00  
Starling Winston Childs III C'03  
Ryan Andrew Rimmer C'06  
Kolton V. Reynolds C'09  
Christopher James Nady C'12

## WISCONSIN

Thomas J. Dean F'56  
William Keepers F'57  
David Ellis F'59  
Brian F. Crisafulli F'60  
Richard S. Frazer F'67  
Gary Bjoraker F'70  
Michael W. Olson F'74  
James T. Webster F'78  
Sheldon W. Woldt F'81

Andrew Lidral F'84  
James R. Verheyden F'90  
Matthew William Kumerow F'99  
Andrew Phillip Goldemberg F'07  
Mitchell John McNett F'11  
Walker Kenneth Fanning F'14

## HOBART

John W. Snape G'51  
Edward Linehan G'56  
J. Nicholas Hurd G'61  
Geoffrey J. Harter G'67  
Eric Holch G'67  
John F. White G'73  
Frederick H. Oxall G'77  
Christopher P. Kohn G'81  
John F. Burke G'85  
Sean T. Crowley G'89  
Stefan T. Moday G'93  
Michael P. Boland G'98  
Eric Clark G'07  
Zachary Tyler Lerman G'10  
Thomas Joseph Strada G'14

## HAMILTON

Haskell E. Rhett H'55  
David A. Spector H'60  
Edwin H. Green III H'64

Roger Clayton Jones H'67  
 Louis Brown Jr. H'73  
 Robert T. Hannon H'73  
 Alexander Clark Keith H'73  
 Lee H. Bristol III H'79  
 Carl Severn Sorenson IV H'84  
 Ezra M. Kopelowitz H'85  
 Nicholas D. Brown H'90  
 Timothy S. Ryan H'94  
 Michael P. DiFeo H'99  
 Noah Samuel Bishop H'08  
 Gabriel Augustus Burford H'12

### CALIFORNIA

David Whitechat I'54  
 M. Rogue Hemley I'55  
 Michael Farrell I'59  
 Richard H Holland I'63  
 Andrew Szurek I'68  
 Peter Wohlfeiler I'72  
 Donald Bayly I'75  
 William B. Baringer I'79  
 Eric Gordon Keeling I'83  
 David W. Munroe I'86  
 Sami Ziabakhsh Choy I'04  
 Rahim Ali I'07  
 Zachary Jacob Kast I'07  
 Patrick Joseph Sunbury I'08  
 Russell Connor Mays I'12

### LEHIGH

John C. Archibald L'52  
 Edward Carrington Fawcett L'55  
 Maurice K. Shaw L'58  
 Robert William Strickler L'62  
 Kenneth R. Adams L'63  
 Steven Blase Csanadi L'63  
 James B. Moran L'64  
 Robert S. Guinan Jr. L'66  
 Leonard Henderson Dudman Jr. L'70  
 Frederick Stewart Lewis III L'70  
 Burton Sutcliffe Raymond L'73  
 Joseph Anthony Michael  
 Chaippini L'76  
 Derek J. Leigh L'82  
 Nicolai Schanche L'86  
 Christopher C. Kercsmar L'91

### MICHIGAN

Stuart G. Bradley M'58  
 Jeffrey C. Grimord M'64

A. Monroe Stinchcomb M'65  
 Charles T. Kao M'68  
 David L. Hartman M'69  
 Michael May M'71  
 Thomas A. Weatherbee M'74  
 Edward G. Ganellan M'79  
 Michael T. Roth M'83  
 Mark Richard Beougher M'88  
 Michael Blair DeYoung M'94  
 Jordan Paul Young M'97  
 Fernando Barreto De Moura M'03  
 Ethan Siegler Barnes M'07

### VIRGINIA

T. Channing Moore S'61  
 Michael F. Jackson S'62  
 Michael A. Cernick S'75  
 Brockett Muir III S'81  
 Latane Baldwin Campbell S'82  
 Walter Scott Jr. S'83  
 David L. Arnold S'87  
 Thomas F. Cooney Jr. S'87  
 Don S. Garber Jr. S'87  
 Donald L. Konz II S'88  
 Christopher C. McCarty S'89  
 R. Alec Marshall III S'90  
 David Andrew Burden S'93  
 Emmanuel D. Tesone S'96  
 Justin Paul Michael Hrabec S'04

### NORTH CAROLINA

Burak Basogul T'11  
 Stephan Grabner T'11  
 Rohan Ayinde Smith T'11  
 Michael Kayemba T'12  
 Caleb Brian Royster T'12  
 Nikhil Baradwaj T'13  
 Nabil Leroy Lachgar T'13  
 Johnathon Scott Lueck T'15  
 Carson Cy Cutright T'16  
 Varun Kasula T'17  
 Patrick Markwalter T'17  
 Donald Cayton T'18  
 Arya Kode T'18  
 Collin Flynn T'19  
 Paul Rudinsky T'19

### UNION

Richard Armstrong U'55  
 Joseph A. Esty U'55  
 George Delamater

Thompson Jr. U'57  
 Benjamin P. Lamberton III U'59  
 Philip M. Wackerhagen U'59  
 George C. Miller II, MD U'65  
 John Coleman U'66  
 Gregory McNamara U'74  
 David Plumer Jr. U'74  
 James L. Haupt U'79  
 Joseph Lee Klapper MD U'84  
 Matthew Arnold U'94  
 Matthew Montague Torpey U'03  
 Peter Burton McCue U'08  
 Daniel Thomas Luciano  
 DeBona U'10

### VERMONT

Edward Hayes Willard V'54  
 Richard Grant Allen V'59  
 Lawrence James Newman Jr. V'60  
 Stephen C. Slack V'62  
 Robert A. Collins V'64  
 Steven L. Sperlik V'67  
 Frederick E. Jurgens Jr. V'72  
 Angus MacDonald Hodge V'73  
 Darren S. Berger V'79  
 Orlando R. Muyschondt V'87  
 Quinlan Eddy V'90  
 Zachary Morse Taylor V'02  
 Gerret Bernard Merrum V'07  
 Andrew Joseph Steinberg V'14

### WILLIAMS

Albert R. Adkins W'47  
 Robert Holmes Jones W'47  
 Thomas E. Stephens W'51  
 Castle N. Day W'52  
 Robert E. Bethune W'53  
 Henry J. Eder W'53  
 Bruce E. Johnson W'56  
 Rex Baxter W'58  
 John Edward Franklin Jr. W'58  
 Richard Newham W'58  
 Albert E. Nugent Jr. W'58  
 Richard J. Gillingham W'59  
 Michael W. Norton W'59  
 Donald H. Pelletier W'59  
 Robert E. McNulty W'62

"I've lived in and around the Boston area since 2016 or so", advises **Greg Abbe, H'08**. "These days I'm a civil servant, working as a director in Sustainability and Resiliency, the focus of which is essentially slowing climate change and preparing for its impacts. Day after day, it's invigorating, challenging stuff." [greg.abbe@gmail.com](mailto:greg.abbe@gmail.com)

**John Andrews, I'53**, shares this news from Rossmoor, California: "I celebrated 88 years on May 3, and gathered an eclectic group to mark the day. It was an excellent day, with good friends, good food and great weather. One couple which was on hand was Sig peer Mike Traynor, I'52, and his wife. Others co-celebrants have entered my life since final retirement from the Coast Guard in 1993 after some 30+ years. I find it interesting that there are few (and fewer) faces and souls around that have contributed to my life over the years, but I keep growing with their help and inspirations and plan to do so on into the future!" [stbch@att.net](mailto:stbch@att.net)

**Bob Bednas, M'60**, (*aka, Bednarius*), reports that, while purging some old file boxes during his recent winter of discontent, he discovered a misfiled, dog-eared folder entitled "Songs that Sigs Sing when Sigs don't Sing Sig Songs.. It was an incomplete, somewhat curated collection since there were many such Ann Arbor songs, but it included a rather extensive sampling of ribald limerick classics that may have been peculiar to the Sigma Phi Place inhabitants at 426 N. Ingalls at the time. In those days of yore, *that.....was college!!!*" [bobbednas@gmail.com](mailto:bobbednas@gmail.com)



We have this update from **Tom Cranmer, M'69**. "Not much new is

happening. Like many folks our age, I am the proud grandfather of three (two girls and a boy). I am still actively practicing law ---pushing the rock uphill---but still enjoying the challenge of the law. For the time being at least, retirement is off in the distance somewhere." [cranmer@MillerCanfield.com](mailto:cranmer@MillerCanfield.com)

**Clint Day, I'61**, son of Curt Day, I'25, posts this update. "In my encore/retirement career, I've become an entrepreneurship instructor. I've been doing it for about ten years, starting the entrepreneurship program at State College of Florida, authoring the field's Quick Study Guide found in many college bookstores, and editing the Current in Entrepreneurship blog at <https://clintoneday.com>." Clint returns to Berkeley periodically to liaison with the Lean Launch program at the Haas Business School. During an April 24-26 trip, Clint enjoyed a memorable lunch with brothers Keith Jacobsen, I'65, & Stan Ferber, I'64. [clint.day@comcast.net](mailto:clint.day@comcast.net)

We have news from **Alexander Denton, H'04**: "I'm pleased to share that I have been named a partner at the law firm of Robbins Alloy Belinfante Littlefield LLC, a boutique law firm specializing in business litigation and regulatory law in Atlanta, Georgia. My areas of practice include gaming law, election law, and general business litigation." [adenton007@yahoo.com](mailto:adenton007@yahoo.com)

**Bob Downing, L'59**, and **Sig Sister Sue Downing** are very busy organizing a move to a nearby beautiful, assisted living community. "I have come to think of our new home like the Sig House with women. What could be better than that? Sue and I count our blessings, having lived long enough to benefit from this change. This is a common subject on my many calls

with Lehigh Sigma Phi Brothers of the L'59 era. All are feeling blessed...and

some of us are still playing golf! I'm also very proud to say Downing & Company is still busy building Affordable Assisted Living Communities for frail Medicaid seniors: a real but satisfying challenge. About a dozen years ago, we switched from family housing to affordable assisted living for qualifying seniors (less than \$2,000 in assets and 1200 in monthly income) and there are millions of these folks. We have financed about 30 such buildings and own minority stakes in some. I hope and plan to stay at this." [bobdowning1@outlook.com](mailto:bobdowning1@outlook.com)

"In May", advises **Jack Forys, S'21**, "I graduated with a degree in Economics and French. It has been a nice four years, with its ups and downs. I appreciate better now that the point of college is to train teenagers in how to be well adjusted young adults rather than calculus or Balzac. I feel like a much different person now than when I showed up in Charlottesville. This fall, I am taking a Project Manager job at Epic Systems in Madison, WI. I will be living in a house on the shore of Lake Monona with Kiernan DiMeglio S'18, and look forward to attending a swing or two at the Alpha of Wisconsin. Beyond Epic, I am still debating between a JD/MBA/or maybe even a wildcard Masters in French. That said, I have spent the last few years markedly pecuniarily challenged and will enjoy changing that a bit before I return to school!" [jcf3kn@virginia.edu](mailto:jcf3kn@virginia.edu)

**Michael Geisser, V'70**, shares this update: Coming soon! My latest writing project, ADJUSTMENTS: A Memoir of Disease and Enlightenment, is undergoing its final review before the publication track. This book-length memoir charts the personality changes I made going from a braggart and a narcissist to an empathic person who cares about others. I'll keep Sigs apprised of its progress. [mgeisser@cox.net](mailto:mgeisser@cox.net)

**Tom Geraci, M'75**, is a firm believer in the importance of health, both professionally and personally. In a late May note, Tom writes: "Having



retired from a 33 year career in emergency medicine I joined forces with Brain Performance Technology to open a new office in San Jose, CA. We strive to provide Magnetic eResonance Therapy (MeRT) for a variety of mental disorders. This is the only proven therapy for autism. MeRT and my company, Summit Brain Health, can be researched at: [www.summitbrainhealth.com](http://www.summitbrainhealth.com). Personally, I just went to Yosemite National Park and climbed to the top of Yosemite Falls. At 67 years of age, that takes some planning or it won't be successful!" [tom.a.geraci@gmail.com](mailto:tom.a.geraci@gmail.com)

The Alpha of California's new active chapter president, **Peter Grinde-Hollevik, I'22**, established a wonderful priority on his first day in office. He asked for help. More specifically, he asked that Sigs support him in his service as a volunteer truck driver to deliver humanitarian aid to the Ukrainian Eastern front line and liberated villages across the war-torn country from mid-July and onwards. He'll serve with an organization called ParaCrew Norway, dedicated to delivering timely civilian aid of all kinds in the widening Ukraine conflict. "We'll be first to enter many of these sites, delivering food, clothing and medicine more rapidly and efficiently than many larger organizations." Peter asked California Sigs to donate to support the Para Crew mission, and Left Coast Sigs responded generously: more than \$2000 at press time. Importantly, all donations went directly to the mission. Volunteers like Peter paid for their own accommodations and food. [hollevik@berkeley.edu](mailto:hollevik@berkeley.edu)

**Jack Harned, F'51**, posts this news: "At my stage in life, I have no amazing accomplishments to report. Just happy to be enjoying life and good health in Bloomfield Hills with my good wife. In April, we enjoyed a cruise on the Mississippi River -- New Orleans to Memphis -- as an early celebration of our 50th wedding anniversary on May 18. Many highlights: great experience with luxury ship and fine crew; making new friends with fellow cruisers, visiting cotton and rice plantations, Vicksburg civil war battlefields, museums of South and river life, historic Louisiana capitol at Baton Rouge. Wonderful!" [jrh647@aol.com](mailto:jrh647@aol.com)

**Bob Johnson, M'67**, has advised of the passing of his Sig Sister wife, Ilona, on December 12, 2022. Bob became a Sig in 1967 and made Ilona a Sig Sister in 1969, helping to rejuvenate that important and lovely tradition at the Alpha of Michigan. [johnsonphd@aol.com](mailto:johnsonphd@aol.com)

This heartfelt message about family and Sigma Phi comes from **Nick Mobray, M'04**: "I wanted to provide you with some inspiration about what March 4 and the University of Michigan means to my family and me. Attached is a photo of my son, Mikotaj, with his maternal grandmother. My boy was born on the 4th of March in 2011. Mikotaj has taken an interest in the University of Michigan. My heart's desire is that Sigma Phi can once again have an active chapter by the time he is a freshman there." [mowbrayn@gmail.com](mailto:mowbrayn@gmail.com)



*Nick Mobray's son, Mikotaj  
with his maternal grandmother*

**Mitchell Maddox, S'00**, shares this upbeat news from Texas: "Life is great. About a year ago I moved to Austin, where I live a mile from my brother who has two lovely children. I've been enjoying the city - despite the heat! - and margaritas are the drink of choice. I'm taking my niece and nephew rafting for 6 days on the Salmon River in Idaho, which is the kind of thing I am always trying to do more of. I'll be bringing some Hemingway with me to really get into the spirit!" [jmitchellmaddox@gmail.com](mailto:jmitchellmaddox@gmail.com)

**John Mason, Jr, S'55**, posts this quill from the eagle. "A year and a half ago, Linda and I moved from Alexandria, VA (a DC suburb), to Lancaster County, in Virginia's Northern Neck. We're an hour's drive from where the York River empties into the Chesapeake Bay at its mouth. Gloucester is the nearest city of any size. We call it Lower Slower Virginia (LSV). It's ten miles between traffic lights here, on two-lane country roads. In point of culture, barbecue competes mano-a-mano with seafood, which features oysters all year, with no R-month ('restricted') rule rationing them. Our home reminds me of rural Latin America from long ago, where I lived for many years. LSV feels like I've come back to my pueblo." [jsm36@breezeline.net](mailto:jsm36@breezeline.net)

**Brendan Provo, F'16**, shares news from the Windy City: "I moved last November to Chicago to take a new job with a company called Ingredion that's a world leader in manufacturing ingredients for foods such as sugar, starch, corn syrups, corn oil, etc. I had previously been living in Madison, WI, for about 4 years working for a small pharmaceutical company. I've got a place in the city and I'm really enjoying the great food, drink and exploration opportunities around me. I work four 10-hour days so I have extended weekends and, as the weather warms, I've found so many cool spots in the city...and I've only scratched the surface. Examples? Second City Comedy Club, Shedd Aquarium, Field Museum, etc. Next on my bucket list? Seeing my hometown Milwaukee Brewers play the Cubs at Wrigley Field!" [bp.provo@gmail.com](mailto:bp.provo@gmail.com)

**John Rawley, V'05**, writes "I'm living in West Palm Beach, Florida and working as an art consultant with a gallery here. Sean Haggerty, V'05, and I are about to launch Wild n' Crazy Catz, an NFT ('non fungible token': contact brother Rawley for interpretation!) collection that features the heads of 1990s era celebrities on cat bodies. Love to connect with any local Sigs that might want to be involved with the project (or connect in general)." [johnrawley@gmail.com](mailto:johnrawley@gmail.com)

*(continued from page 17)*

Dean Smith

**Dean Smith, S'82**, earned honors as George Washington University's Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Member Award at GWU's 2023 Commencement

on May 21. Brother Smith currently serves as the Director of Duke University Press. He has enjoyed a 29 year career in publishing, with expertise in scholarly as well as trade and association publishing. His faculty contributions at GWU center on teaching within the University's Master of Professional Studies in Publishing discipline.  
[deansmi@gmail.com](mailto:deansmi@gmail.com)

"Caution was warranted when we hit the slopes!" writes **Marshall Solem, F'79**. "Twelve Wisconsin alumni convened in Breckenridge, CO, this past February for our 10th annual Old Guys Ski Retreat. We greatly enjoyed, as always, even though 2 ended of us ended up with torn ACLs (including yours truly), one with a gout flare up, one encountered a case of high altitude pulmonary edema and - upon return home - four discovered they had contracted COVID in the final days of the trip! Were we daunted? Not a chance! On to Sun Valley in 2024!"  
[marshall.solem@zs.com](mailto:marshall.solem@zs.com)

**Alvar Soosaar, S'96**, recounts the story of a propitious and Sigly chance meeting. "As far as I have been able to tell, I am the only Estonian Sigma Phi (Very happy to be proven wrong, by the way!) In my role as Director of US Investment & Trade for Estonia's Foreign Ministry, I have deliberately reached out to a few Sigs - from Virginia, Vermont, and Cornell, for starters - for advice, introductions, etc., and am hugely thankful to them for their help. In NYC this past March, I organized an event for the New York Angels investment group where they were pitched by several Estonian startups. Following the several-hour session, we all got to spend a bit of time together. One gentleman asked me about the Estonian language, noting that he learned a bit of Norwegian along the way and even participated in an exchange program in Norway during college. This rang a bell for me, and so I started the now-predictable questioning: "Oh, did you go to school in the Midwest? Maybe Michigan or Wisconsin?" "Yes", said he. "Wisconsin." "Oh, I actually know a few guys who did something like that, but they were all in a relatively small fraternity." "Oh, really? Was it Sigma Phi Society?" "Why yes, as a matter of fact. I went to Virginia as an undergraduate, and joined the Society in the mid-90s." And with that, Dick Davies, F'75, reached out his hand to shake mine, exchanging

an unmistakable grip! "And now Dick and his wife will be visiting Estonia. Alpha of Tallinn, perhaps?"  
[soosaar@gmail.com](mailto:soosaar@gmail.com)

**Lloyd Stamy, S'70**, continues to be passionate about the craft of writing! At press time, this Sig author's third book in a series was about to be released. Called *Perfect Strangers - Bad Bear Down*, it follows publication of *Reunion of Strangers* (2018) and *Strangers No More* (2021) as the latest iteration within a series in which retired CIA operative Hap Franklin returns to work to avenge the death of his wife. Intrigue, complexity and complications abound in this work, as in the previous *Strangers* books! Publications success aside, Lloyd remains addicted to the written word, happily confessing "Writing is always a thoroughly enjoyable experience as well as a routine daily pastime, even if only for my own amusement." [lloyd.stamy@gmail.com](mailto:lloyd.stamy@gmail.com)



**George Wilson, M'68**, writes: "I recently began work to organize a team of writers to produce a Kindle book on leadership skills in a manufacturing company. The book is coming along, although some on our team are progressing much faster than others. It's all fun, though! My wife, Beverly, is writing the chapter on "Communications." She and I will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary on June 30th."  
[wilsonlogistics18@gmail.com](mailto:wilsonlogistics18@gmail.com)



Vermont Sigs class of '73 celebrated 50 years as Sigs in Burlington this past March.



# Never Forget These Brothers

News of the passing of these brothers has been received since publication of the December 2022 Sigma Phi Flame.

John McGregor Barnes M'48 ..... 7/5/2011  
 George E. Beckett G'42 ..... 10/15/2004  
 Gene A. Bell I'57 ..... 11/28/2022  
 Charles Gilbert Black III L'49 ..... 12/12/2022  
 William Oliver Boswell Jr. G'41 ..... 10/23/2013  
 Stuart T. Brunet U'49 ..... 1/26/2022  
 Charles Brate Bryant C'47 ..... 5/12/2022  
 Donald M. Condon Jr. F'69 ..... 3/19/2023  
 David H. Couch G'47 ..... 2/15/2021  
 Clark VanVoorhis Coyle L'55 ..... 4/24/2017  
 John S. Crittenden I'49 ..... 2/21/2020  
 James Stafford Dolliver C'50 ..... 8/8/2019  
 Ralph Orace Dunn Jr. M'46 ..... 12/20/2016  
 David A. Garden L'48 ..... 1/17/2023  
 John J. Goulet V'47 ..... 9/5/2016  
 James F. Henry W'49 ..... 8/28/2022  
 Charles R. Hoagland I'45 ..... 6/25/2022  
 Francis M. Huffman Jr. C'48 ..... 12/20/2022  
 Charles E. Jenkins L'50 ..... 12/27/2014  
 Leonard M. Kagan MD U'66 ..... 12/12/2022  
 Garrett J. Kamerling F'47 ..... 4/22/2023  
 Gilbert Bruce Kerr W'58 ..... 9/19/2022  
 Kendall C. King C'50 ..... 5/19/2021  
 John Frank Learman M'47 ..... 1/4/2023  
 James Noble Macmillan M'51 ..... 5/4/2023

Roy Herrick Maffly I'45 ..... 4/15/2019  
 Philip W. Meader M'46 ..... 9/10/2015  
 Michael W. Mecklenburg H'79 ..... 4/14/2017  
 Kenneth Vadney Murray I'47 ..... 3/1/2019  
 Nathaniel Shaw Norton Jr. L'47 ..... 4/5/2023  
 Stanley G. Orr C'54 ..... 10/4/2022  
 Russell B. Osborn H'47 ..... 2/19/2022  
 Wilbur F. Osler III L'49 ..... 8/30/2018  
 Harry E. Reddick Jr. I'44 ..... 1/14/2013  
 Anthony J. Romanazzi U'76 ..... 1/28/2022  
 Robert J. Rule C'69 ..... 11/6/2022  
 Michael A. Schoenegge H'91 ..... 3/23/2023  
 Hugh Leland Singrey I'43 ..... 4/19/2022  
 Peter Hempstead Sisson C'83 ..... 5/23/2023  
 William Tracy Southworth L'47 ..... 3/16/2011  
 Douglas Ira Tudhope V'47 ..... 10/8/2022  
 W. Norman Vercoe V'46 ..... 11/13/2014  
 Kenneth J. Verostick Sr. L'52 ..... 7/15/2022  
 Lawrence Richard Warner G'47 ..... 10/18/2007  
 Gordon G. Waterfall I'54 ..... 11/19/2022  
 James Edmond Welsh M'39 ..... 10/26/2022  
 Ralph C. Williams Jr. C'47 ..... 2/2/2020  
 Christopher Allen Wilson L'57 ..... 1/24/2022  
 Frank Willard Zurn C'47 ..... 10/15/2022

## KUDOS & THANKS

...to the following Sigs for their articles, information or suggestions supporting this issue of the 'Flame': Moses Cesario, I'89, Nick Fischer, S'20, Kurt Haigis, V'73, Michael Hardison, T'11, David Loeb, U'99, Mark Patterson, I'74, Jack Romaine, L'90, Bob Shages, U'69, Tim Starr, G'05, Andy Steele, H'07 & Lew Towler, M'47.

Issue after issue, we actively solicit Sig stories, perspectives and feedback. Why? Every time a reader circles back with a suggestion or a written contribution, it improves the Society's next publication. Contact Editor Mike Imirie, M'69 (mimirie@aol.com) with your feedback and suggestions. Your thoughts and suggestions are always welcome.



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# Annual Dues: Giving Made Easier

by Bob Guthrie, S'86, Society Treasurer [bguts123@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bguts123@sbcglobal.net)

**Member dues are lifelines for non-profit organizations.** At both chapter and national levels, member contributions pay the bills. While there are often other sources of income, dues remain the financial foundation for any non-profit.

You know that dues are used for Society administration, leadership training materials, event and ceremony planning, website enhancement, active chapter outreach and publication of the *Sigma Phi Flame*, among other key deliverables. Very simply, member dues add value for our organization, making it possible for us to keep alumni informed and engaged.


Your support is key. As inflation skyrockets, your dues payments have never been more important. In order to make it easier for alumni to give, we've created another avenue for members to use to pay dues: QR codes for both annual dues and donations to the Sigma Phi Educational Foundation.

Just scan the beneficiary you choose using the QR reader on your phone, and you'll promptly move to a secure site where your donation can be made...effortlessly.



Should you choose to continue to support the Thrice Illustrious the old fashioned way, of course, you can clip the coupon shown here and mail your dues via USPS or make your payment via the Sigma Phi website!

No matter which avenue you choose, know that your support - your continuing engagement - is always deeply appreciated and always put to very good use.



## SIGMA PHI SOCIETY ANNUAL DUES

Make checks payable to the Sigma Phi Society.

\$500   
  \$250   
  \$100   
  other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Base-level dues:   
  \$75 (initiated 2008 and earlier)   
  \$50 (initiated 2009 and later)

**Sigma Phi Permanent Endowment**

My additional gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in support of the Sigma Phi Society Permanent Endowment is enclosed.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_