

# The Minervan

THE OWL NEWSLETTER | SPRING 2023

Chris Gookin '99, BOG Chairman

## Annual Meeting Report

*"The lines of distinction between the owl and all other birds are so clear cut that they are considered as an independent order."*

— An Owl Study, Lambda Iota Society Arcana

After several years of *light* attendance at our annual meetings, the 186th was well attended by classes spanning five decades. Notable attendees were **Alan Bauman '85**, **Jack Brown '62**, **Gary Guerrieri '72**, **Dave Palmer '64**, and **Ed Payne '66**.

Matt Murray generously hosted FADC at his home, providing a place for Owls to meet for tall tales, mischief, and reconnecting. Matt's pledge class of spring '98, **Andy Cocovinis '01**, **Adam Frischer '01**, **Chris Swartzbaugh '01**, and **Joel Sodano '01**, all attended. Multiple classes were represented from the early 2000s, and by all accounts, the common experiences of the brotherhood were on full display. Despite many Owls not having seen or communicated with regularity, the attendees picked up where they last left off, reinforcing ties of brotherhood and friendship. A tour of the house and the improvements that have been ongoing since 2011 greatly intrigued these Owls.

The brothers of Pi Kappa Phi attended in

excess of 40 undergraduates. Their newest pledge class highlighted their strong showing and performance since the last annual meeting. The Pi Kapps have continued to gain new members, graduate their seniors, and actively participate in student government, and their philanthropy continues as a commendable baseline!

Many of you know that our annual meeting is not all play; it comes with a business discussion of the state of affairs of the society and ensures the society's summary of the previous year's expenditures and initiatives. Ongoing physical-plant and infrastructure improvements and preventative maintenance continue most notably with the repairs to the chimneys. Ongoing projects scheduled for spring are planned, and your support is earnestly requested.

Members of both societies attended the business meeting, providing our alumni the opportunity to meet, earnestly and thoughtfully to discuss, and to work toward common



L-R: Chris Gookin '99, Spencer Baker '64, John Wager '85, Brian Mack '91, David Palmer '64, Jack Brown '62.



L-R: Alex Brownstein '90, Alan Bauman '85, Doug Reed '75, Ed Payne '66, Adam Holmes '91, Jared Lombardi '04.

ground as we move forward...together.

Plans for the 2023 annual meeting are underway, and our hope is for a continued robust showing; it takes significant work to pull together an annual meeting and to provide you a time to remember. Please be looking toward fall '23 and further communications from your board of governors.

I Remain Owlshly Yours,  
**Chris Gookin '99**



L-R: Dylan Boyd '06, Chuck Hammel '06, Adam Frischer '01, Andy Covinis '01, Tim Cassidy '08, Alex Brownstein '90. L-R: Adam Chicoine '06, Alex Brownstein '90, Chris Swartzbaugh '01, Jared Lombardi '04, Joel Sodano '01, Graham Ollard '06, Ed Peterson '06, Brian Mack '91.

# Let Us Reconnect

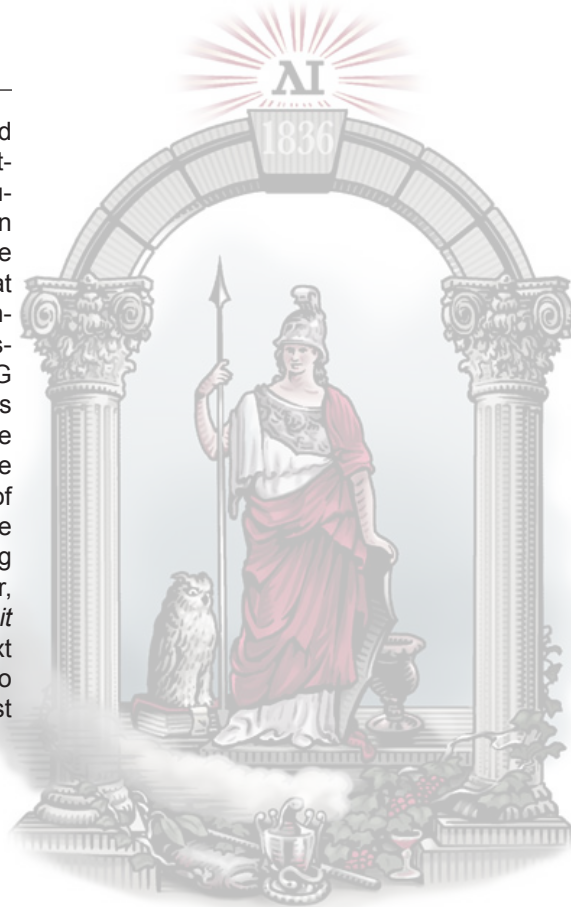
Fellow Owls:

The board of governors recognizes that this *Minervan* newsletter is long overdue. Please accept our apologies for the lack of regular communications in recent years. The BOG is committed to rebuilding our bridge to the alumni, and we request your feedback on how we can best use our communication tools (newsletter, website, Facebook) to regain and maintain a sense of community. We encourage you to write to [lambda.iota.society@gmail.com](mailto:lambda.iota.society@gmail.com) to give suggestions and, of course, to send us your news. If you are not a member of our Facebook group, “Lambda Iota Society at The University of Vermont,” I encourage you to submit a join request. If you are already a member, please use the group thread as a venue for maintaining contact with the BOG and with each other.

In a welcome turn from the crisis-inflected communications of years past, the articles in this issue are filled with predominantly good news. 440 Pearl Street is

thriving, both in its physical condition and through the bustling activity of its inhabitants. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have met many of the young men with whom we now share our house. The Lambda Iota chapter of Pi Kappa Phi at UVM is a top-notch group. They are committed to learning our history and passing it on to future generations. The BOG oversees their use of the house and plays somewhat of an advisory role, much the same way that BOG and undergrads have always interacted. Now that it is full of brothers (literally all the rooms in the house are full), it is hard to describe the feeling I get when I walk through the front door, other than to say that it just feels right...*it feels like Lambda*. I look forward to the next annual meeting, when many of you will also get to experience that feeling for the first time in a very long time.

Owlishly yours,  
**Joel Sodano '01**  
Alumni Communications Chair



# Memories with Friends and Brothers

Brothers of Lambda Iota:

I am writing to you today to share my experiences as a member of Pi Kappa Phi during my time at the University of Vermont. My name is Franklin Cody, and I am from Bennington, Vermont. I graduated with a BS in business administration and a BA in economics last May. I joined Pi Kappa Phi in the spring of 2020 and became president for the 2021 calendar year. I have lived at 440 Pearl Street for the past two years and have made countless memories with friends and brothers there.

I decided to join Pi Kapp because of many the friends I had made the first two years of undergrad slowly began joining the chapter. I came to UVM with limited interest in joining a fraternity, especially after hearing many of the stories my brother would relay about his fraternity down in Florida, but I did not have that same experience with Pi Kapp. As I came to meet more of the brothers, I realized that the relationships and experiences that fraternities

offer—particularly Pi Kapp—do not necessarily come with the stereotypical negative aspects. I was initially excited to join Pi Kappa Phi in spring 2020.

And then, the pandemic hit.

Fortunately, the chapter stuck together during this difficult time. The Nest began to be more than a house, a place that brought together the chapter spontaneously. While the school began seriously cracking down on many students for the most minor infractions, the Nest became a refuge to many. Some of my fondest undergraduate experiences will be hanging out with brothers in the library, possibly well into the night, because there was no where else to go.

The social opportunities that fraternities offer are well documented, but I believe Pi Kapp offers so much more to any student's personal and academic growth than that. Leadership opportunities, mentorship, and network expansion are some of the many different benefits of being a Pi Kapp. I am thankful I was able to take advantage of all of these during my time as an

undergraduate student. These experiences and opportunities would not exist without the work that many have done before us.

Part of our pledge education in Pi Kappa Phi includes learning about a poem by Will Allen Dromgoole called “The Bridge Builder.” “The Bridge Builder” tells the story of an old man who works tirelessly to build a bridge across a chasm, even though he will never cross the bridge again. The old man builds the bridge for the next generation, because they will have to cross the same chasm. The lesson of this poem gives me appreciation of the work many have done and still do behind the scenes to make sure the chapter, and the board of governors, offer meaningful experiences and connections with Pi Kappa Phi: Lambda Iota's past, present, and future. I hope you will consider supporting Pi Kappa Phi / Lambda Iota by attending the annual meeting on September 30.

Sincerely,  
**Franklin Cody, ΠΚΦ'22**

# Summarized House Restoration Report

In December of 2019, Spencer Baker '64 got a call to inform him that bricks were found on the ground and that they appeared to have slid off the roof. When we arrived on site, it was clear that some bricks on the back side of the east chimney parapet had become loose and peeled away from the chimney. A professional inspection revealed that the damage was caused by the freeze-and-thaw cycle during the winter months, and over time, the small cracks, unnoticeable from the ground, became so big as to cause structural damage.

It was abundantly clear that this work could not wait, as every passing winter was bringing the brickwork one step closer to collapse. Work began in spring 2021, with painstaking brick-by-brick demolition of the chimneys. In August 2021, new Vermont Quarries' Danby White

marble caps were placed upon beautifully restored chimneys and parapets.

For the full report with extensive before and after pictures, visit the official Lambda Iota website: [www.lambdaiota.org](http://www.lambdaiota.org).

**Jim Jorschick**  
House Contractor



## ANNUAL MEETING

SAVE THE DATE

September 30, 2023

The 187th annual meeting will take place on Saturday, September 30, 2023. Hotel space in Burlington is limited, so make your travel plans now!

As a reminder, the annual meeting dates are dictated by UVM's alumni weekend. You can go to [www.alumni.uvm.edu](http://www.alumni.uvm.edu) (click on "Events") any time to find out when annual will be.

## IN MEMORIAM: 2018–2022

Richard "Dick" N. Bohlen '50

Ernest Edward "Rocky" Bottom '57

J. Gregory Barlage '90

James A. "Bud" Edgerton '52

J. Paul Malloy '59

Jack Batha '00

Donald M. Crofut '54

Donald I. Murray '60

Chad Corpieri '00

Clement Paul Nadeau '54

Raymond P. Gendron '61

Vannarin Ly '01

Robert E. Benoit '56

Robert Bradley Stewart Sr. '68

Cody Ray Surprise (Pi Kappa Phi) '24

Col. Jan Donald Curran '56

James Stewart "Robby" Robinson '72

Clifford G. Cole '57

Charles Willard Russum '73

# Owls Send Their News & Notes

**John “Jack” Holly ’51:** Dear feathered friends, to bring you up to date: I’m 90, as all of the class of ’51 has to be (or older). I was 17 when I entered UVM. I pledged the Owls my first year. Many guys then were vets and, so, were older than green youngster like myself. I think, because of that, fledglings grew up fast. I know I did. I knew how to stoke a coal furnace, so I got to live rent-free for my first year in the house with the responsibility of keeping the Nest warm. I have fond memories of the Owl friendships and daily camaraderie in the Nest. I think I went from a self-oriented teenager to a mature, more thoughtful and caring young man from Owl and university relationships. Those years ended with Kake Walk my senior year. Bill (Cleary? - Kelly?) and I “walked” and got third prize. The brothers made us practice every night before dinner for months! I like to think we were partially responsible for the end of that racist celebration, as we did not want to do blackface, and the brothers agreed. We walked in blue pants, white shirts, and red sashes, with no make-up, and still got third place. (As an aside about graduation: my brother had a plane, and during the outdoor graduation, he flew over the campus and revved his engine so I would know he was thinking of me.) I left right after graduation to NYC and earned a master’s in fine-arts education at Columbia University Teachers College. I taught art in public schools: Connecticut, NYC, and Garden City, Long Island, New York, for 44 years, retiring in 1997. Got married, raised three sons. Now have two grandchildren: all grown up now of course. Until the pandemic, I was very active in community theater, singing and acting in hundreds of amateur and semiprofessional productions, many of them in children’s shows performed in theaters, schools, and libraries in the metropolitan area, plus I had a wonderful opportunity to design and execute many stage sets. Hopefully, there will still be some of that “down the road.” As an artist, I became involved in modeling for life-drawing classes, and it’s been almost a second career: modeling for many schools and colleges in the NYC area. That, of course, ended with COVID, but is now starting up slowly, so I’m employed again (oldest model in captivity, I’m sure)! I’m sorry to see the Owls as we knew it so changed, but happy that you caring and active alums are working so hard to keep traditions alive. Thank you! (Incidentally, I still have my Owl song book.) I appreciate being kept in the loop, and look forward to future Owl news!

**Lloyd Porter ’57:** Barb and I are both

reasonably well, still living in our home in Lee, New Hampshire. Our daughters and their families live nearby. Both of them and a granddaughter are UNH grads. UNH is about six miles from our house. PS: Glad to see that the fraternity is doing well.

**Lawrence Underwood ’59:** I had planned to bring family (10) to Basin Harbor last year. COVID-19 has moved it to this year. I hope to visit AI at that time.

**Daniel Bean ’60:** In November 2019, Jeanette and I, plus about 20 others, visited Israel on a religious tour. Reading from the Bible became a lot more meaningful after seeing the places Jesus walked and spoke. The Sea of Galilee is much larger than I had imagined. The Jordan River is today little more than a small overgrown Vermont back farmer trickle; except for where it leaves the Sea of Galilee. Restorations in Jerusalem allow you to stand near the original walls built in years BC. We only experienced one distance rocket attack near Tel Aviv on our first day there. We have lost another brother: **Robert E. Benoit**, PhD and class of UVM 1956. Robert (Bob) Benoit and I were classmates at Enosburg Falls, Vermont, high school, class of 1952. Other classmates were Owl brothers **David Depatie ’56** and **Robert Brown ’56**. They were also classmates at UVM. Now, with Bob’s passing, I am the sole survivor. After college, Bob served in the Army, then earned his MS and PhD in microbiology from Rutgers University, and then joined the biology faculty of Virginia Tech University. He was an active researcher, with projects in both Alaska and Antarctica, and he was a well respected professor, popular with his students. Bob is survived by his wife of 62 years, Jean, as well as his children and multiple grandchildren. Condolences can be sent to the family at 1602 Hawthorne Ridge, Blacksburg, Virginia, 24060. If you wish to, you may donate to the Robert E. and Jean L. Benoit Scholarship (% University of Vermont Foundation, 411 Main Street, Burlington, VT 05401). A few years before his death, Bob was in Vermont one summer for a high-school class reunion and week of Vermont summer weather, and we toured the renovated Owl house. He was pleasantly surprised at its resurrection, and we shared stores of our times there. So sad to think that, the longer the time we have to look back at, the fewer the friends we have left to reminisce with about those times. Hoot Bob; we will miss you.

**William Widlund ’64:** Elise (’63) and Woody are at Wakerobin Life Care Community in Shelburne, Vermont, entering our ninth year

here. COVID has put an end to an ethnographic photo trip to Southeast Asia. Days are filled with exercise, philanthropic activities... and our eight year old granddaughter who lives close by.

**Edward Payne ’66:** Ed has had a number of health issues but is enjoying the grandkids and a regular heart rhythm. The land that he farmed is being bought by Fish and Wildlife, as well as the Land Trust. This will preserve open fields for the future. The “house” has done a good job in its renovations and new purpose. Congratulations!

**Donald DeVries ’67:** Retired from federal government in 2011 and have spent winters in Frisco, Colorado, skiing and working for Vail Resorts in Keystone. Summers have been spent mostly at my home in Shelter Island, New York, when not traveling.

**Les Velez ’69:** Greetings! I hope all is well, and once again, I had to pass on being at the annual meeting. This COVID issue has certainly thrown a monkey wrench into many activities unfortunately. Sorry to hear about the chimneys; if it is not one thing, it is another with a house as old as 440 Pearl. Take care and be well.

**Henry Swift Jr. ’70:** Enjoying retirement in Tallahassee, Florida. Missed our annual trip to Vermont due to the virus. Hope to get back next summer to see family, including **Gary Guerrieri ’72!** And, we usually have a meal with **Bob Castle ’70**, **Gary Bannister ’74**, and **Jim Goldsbury ’72**.

**Antonio Guerrieri Jr. ’72:** I’m finding the ’70s more painful than the last time: knees, back, and hands complain this time around. I still enjoy woodworking and tending to our property in Grand Isle: all 18 acres! We joined the 251 Club years ago and are almost one third of the way visiting all of Vermont: 251 towns and cities in our 1958 Ford Skyliner.

**Shannon Sweeney ’87:** Married with four children: Nick 23, Jack 21, Estelle 20, and Hank 18. Have lived in Aspen, Colorado, since 1992 and have owned and operated a real-estate development company since 1993.

**JoMeredith Wilson ’03:** While not the happiest of news, I wanted to let those who knew and helped save my beloved Garfunkel in 2002 (I’m looking at you Dr. Galloway!) that he passed away peacefully at home in front of the fireplace at 19 years. Thank you for helping me save him all those years ago. He was the best.