



FSU Pikes Delta Lambda Newsletter - December, 2015

Chapter Update

The '**Top House**' video already has over a quarter of a million views! If Delta Lambda of Pi Kappa Alpha is not already the most popular fraternity chapter in America, it is now certainly one of the most well-known.



College Weekly - Top House, check out this awesome video

The undergrads are gone for Christmas. Classes resume January 6th 2016.

Chapter & Alumni Events

January 6th **Monthly Alumni Luncheon** / First day of classes

January 11th **'Winterfest'** 6 pm Union ballroom. All Greeks have rush tables.

January 15th -17th **'Greek Leadership Summit'** Chapter Presidents required (by FSU) to attend.

February 3rd, **Monthly Alumni Luncheon**

February 3rd **FSU Chapter Advisors Meeting** 6 pm Union 311B

March 2nd **Monthly Alumni Luncheon**

March 9th **FSU Chapter Advisors Meeting** 6 pm Union 311B

March 7th – 11th **Spring Break**

April 5th FSU requires all spring pledges to be initiated by this date.

April 6th **Monthly Alumni Luncheon**

April 19th **Greek Awards Night** 6 pm Union Ball Room

April 22nd Last day of classes

April 25-29 Final Exams

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS: February 26-28th Founder's Day celebration weekend

Monthly Luncheon - University Center Club



Click to view website

Next Alumni Luncheon: Wednesday, January 6th, 2016 @ 12:00 noon.

Pike alumni gather for lunch and fellowship on the first Wednesday of every month at the University Center Club at noon. Special guests include the Undergraduate Delta Lambda Chapter officers, who will report the latest on Chapter operations and achievements. All alumni are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Luncheon begins at noon and will conclude by 1 pm.

A Homecoming Celebration of Fellowship and Brotherhood

Former Seminole star and All-American linebacker **Ernie Simms** was an **NFL** First Round draft pick in 2006 to the Detroit Lions. Ernie is a product of Tallahassee's North Florida Christian School and a popular personality among all local Seminole fans.

Sims' mother Alice was an All-American sprinter at FSU, his father played running back for the Seminoles and younger brother Marcus, a linebacker and running back, also played for the Seminoles.

In 2008, Sims created the **Ernie Sims Big H.I.T.S. Foundation**, which is geared to providing support to community-based organizations that offer services to disadvantaged youth and adults, and to assist organizations that support the humane treatment of animals.

The law firm of Pumphrey & Prince (**Don Pumphrey '06** and **Nathan Prince '14**) as well as **Jimmy Keen '73** – all friends of the Simms family - are proud to be local sponsors of the tournament, played annually at Golden Eagle.

Through the generosity of Jimmy and Don, a number of Delta Lambda alumni and undergraduates were invited to play in the Tournament. After a week's rain delay, the Tournament was played the Monday of Homecoming Weekend, November 16th.

One of the great strengths of Delta Lambda is a chapter identity that transcends time. The Brothers of the 1970s and 1980s share with our current undergraduates and recent alumni the same identifiable Pike personality and the expectations of exemplary achievement.

Don and Jimmy were most gracious hosts as was their Golden Eagle Club. Adult beverages and cigars were in plentiful supply; the weather was balmy and breezy and the sky a flawless blue.



Jimmy and Don's Pike guests included undergraduates Fritz Maxwell '13 (standing, left), Rob Hicks '14 (kneeling, left), Eddie Allen '13 (kneeling, center), Geoff George '13 (kneeling, right), Trey Ville '14 (standing, right), Dalton Council '15 (standing, end). Alumni Charlie Barnes '65 and Clint Wallace '01 are standing on either side of Jimmy Keen.



Tournament sponsors include Jimmy Keen '73 (standing left). Don Pumphrey '06 (kneeling, next to Tournament namesake Ernie Simms) and Nathan Prince '14 (standing, black shirt, hand in pocket). Other special guests in the picture include private investigator Todd Chaires, Paul Franklin, and candidate for Leon County Sheriff Walt McNeill.

On Friday night, Jimmy and Joey Keen hosted a small group of long-time close friends and Fraternity Brothers at their beautiful home in Golden Eagle.



The strong Fraternal Bond reaches across generations. All five men have sons who are also Delta Lambda Pikes. From left, Mickey Fernandez '77 (Michael Fernandez '10), Brent Sembler '78 (Logan Sembler '09), Jimmy Keen '73 (Michael Keen '14), Tom Wheeler '78 (Kevin Wheeler '09) Harry Sargeant III '77 (Harry Sargeant IV '02).

Jimmy Keen writes, "The five of us enjoyed a long awesome evening at our home. Joey & I prepared smoked ribs, chicken and sides. The Pike Bond is so powerful. This photo represents Delta Lambda fathers and sons with initiation dates extending across more than 40 years, from 1973 through 2014."

In addition to the feast provided by the Keens, the culinary highlight was undoubtedly the Elk Stew created by FSU Board of Trustee member (and Chairman of the Legends of Delta Lambda) Brent Sembler '78.



Brent Sembler supplies the dinner complete from shot to pot.

“It was a gorgeous Tallahassee evening, with temperatures in the low 50's”, said Sembler. “We sat out on Jimmy's back porch, smoked cigars and solved the world’s problems, like old guys should do.” Jimmy cooked ribs on his grill for six hours and made his famous beer can chicken.

Brent says, “It was by far the best meal I've ever had in Tallahassee! We drank Don Julio 1942 tequila and let Harry’s bodyguard drive our wives back to the hotel.”



On Saturday, the crew now joined by Doug Russell '79 watched the game together from the Pike skybox. Russell, Mickey Fernandez '77, Jimmy Keen '73, Harry Sargeant '77, Tom Wheeler '78.



The Sargeant-Wheeler-Fernandez trio has remained tight since chapter days. Here are Pikes attending a reception for Coach Bobby Bowden '49 in south Florida in the 1980s: **Charlie Barnes '65, Harry Sargeant '77, Tom Wheeler '78, Mickey Fernandez '77, Pete Schwab '73, Mike Long '83.**

Ad Astra

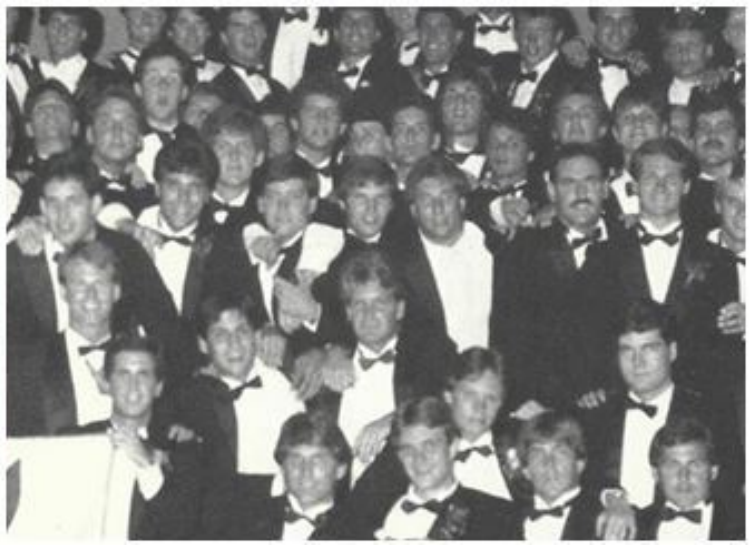


Gene Strickland '81 posted the news at 4 pm on December 5th. "Guys - terrible news. **Cort McCord '81** was running a 5k with his daughter this morning - apparently he had a heart attack and they couldn't revive him. Prayers for his wife, Tish and his children, Ben, Connor, & Diane would really be phi phi right now.

If you weren't in school at the same time as Cort (Fall '81), know that he was a great Brother - solid, hard working, good as gold - Pikeboy editor one year, at least, and I think he was Pig Roast Chairman once. He was even more solid as a father. He was truly a great dad - I can't imagine how his children must be taking this."



CORT McCORD
Executive Editor, **PIKEBOY**
Story Producer for "1800 Seconds" Television Show



Cort's loyalty to the Fraternity never wavered in the 34 years since his initiation. As an alumnus he accepted the stressful work of dealing with the challenges, especially during the darkest hours in 1991. During that time Cort agreed to become 'Chapter Advisor' to the Firemen Club, serving as mentor to our beleaguered and courageous young men, keeping the group focused and out of trouble until they merged with the Pike Colony in 1993. Because of the volatile political landscape of the times and the sub rosa nature of the Firemen, Cort's role was never made public, until now.

But there is another story about Delta Lambda; it is a story that Cort loved. Throughout his long career he was senior sales representative for a Swiss elevator company. After we lost the chapter, Cort and other young alumni went to the house to gather up all the historical memorabilia they could find. Cort allowed it all to be stored in the elevator company's warehouse. Seventeen years later, the memorabilia was recovered and moved into the new Pike house in Heritage Grove.

Here is the story, as preserved in the Delta Lambda Archives. The details were confirmed by Cort on June 9, 2005.

The Whiskey Bottle Story

From an email received 6-9-05

I spoke with Cort McCord today and he confirmed the details about the half-filled bottle of bourbon.

When the walls were caving in and darkness was about to descend on Delta Lambda in 1988, a small group of Brothers saved all the memorabilia they could, packed it into trunks and stacked it for storage. Before putting it away for what became a 17-year sleep, that small collection of loyal brothers stood in the living room and cracked the seal on a bottle of bourbon. They raised their glasses in one last toast to dear old Delta Lambda, and all agreed that if she had to die it was best to go out on top, a position which the chapter unquestionably occupied at that time.

One after another, each man spoke of his love for Delta Lambda, and pledged his life-long loyalty to her memory. Then each man in turn smashed his glass into the brick wall in the house foyer. The whiskey bottle was still about a quarter full so they decided to re-seal the bottle and bury it in one of the trunks, leaving it to an unknown future generation of Delta Lambdas to contemplate the glory that once burned brighter than any other and then suddenly was gone.

On June 8, 2005, SMC Jon Graber '02 and past SMC Eric Carr '01 were present as fork lifts moved piles of equipment and ancient boxes from a dark corner of the Thyssen-Krupp Elevator Company warehouse, clearing access to Delta Lambda's buried past. There, undisturbed beneath the dust and debris of seventeen years were boxes of photographs, rusted plaques, broken trophies, composites inside shattered glass, and three large trunks. The trunks contained all the robes and ritual regalia of the old chapter. And at the bottom of the last trunk, wrapped in the white robe of a Neophyte, was the bottle of Old Forester Straight Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey, waiting, waiting, waiting for so long for the new generation of Delta Lambdas to raise their own toast to glory re-born.

As soon as news broke of Cort's passing, Marty Riggs '83 employed Facebook to announce a Crowdfunding appeal for Delta Lambda alumni to raise \$10,000 to help the family with funeral expenses while they waited for the insurance to be paid. Marty set up a "GoFundMe" account. Within 48 hours, Pikes and former Pike Little Sisters had run the total contributions up to \$25,000.

At the last Monthly Alumni Luncheon he attended, Cort announced that he would be running the 5K marathon in December. There were cheers and congratulations all around.

He will be missed.

Chapter Eternal at 52.





Photo above was posted by **Joe Feheley '81**. "I was desperately looking for a recent photo of our bros with Cort and I remembered taking this from the 2009 Pikapalooza!!"

Following the viewing at a local chapel, **Gene Strickland '81** hosted dinner at the Doubletree. Under Gene's direction the hotel set aside a beautiful private room for Pike alumni, and the gracious staff attended respectfully to every detail.

A great many Brothers, especially those from the 1981 classes, were seen variously at the viewing, the dinner and the funeral the following day. Brad Williamson flew into Jacksonville from Dallas and drove over with Joe Liguori. Charlie Bradley came down from Atlanta.

Strickland noted that Bill Lickson arranged the post funeral lunch at A La Provence. "That was surprisingly meaningful," Gene says, "It was low key, relaxed, and thoughtful - casually reminiscent of downtime spent at the old house,"

These alumni were among those attending the various events: Charlie Barnes '65, Ed Barnes '71, Charlie Bradley '81, Dave Dowdy '81, Kyle Eberlin '83, Jim Finch '81, Tom Fontana '83, Garland Gould '81, Bob Hall '49, Scottie Howell '06 ('88 Fireman), Bruce Johnson '81, Jimmy Keen '73, Bill Lickson '71, Joe Liguori '81, Jim McNeill '77, Clarke Morris '83, Greg Nelson '84, Marty Riggs '83, Doug Russell '79, Gene Strickland '81, Brad Williamson '84. Sincerest apologies to anyone whose name was overlooked.

Attending Brothers ranged down the sides of a long formal table at the Doubletree. Wishing to lend an air of formality, Gene Strickland asked Ed Barnes and former SMC Doug Russell to open the meeting using the Chapter's Ritual Books. Gene passed a small slab of altar stone down the table. With the stone was a paper listing all Delta Lambda Brothers who have entered the Chapter Eternal. As the stone passed from chair to chair each Brother read a name aloud, and marked it with a special pen.



Strickland then produced a bottle of Old Forester Straight Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey, exactly the same as described in the famous 'Whiskey Bottle Legend'. The bottle was passed around and many toasts were offered and stories recounted.

In what was no doubt the most poignant moment of the evening, Marty Riggs stood to speak. He said, "I'm really not a polished speaker, but I wanted to make an appropriate tribute to Cort. So the only thing for me to do is sing."



Marty Riggs sang 'Blue Christmas' and all the rest of us joined in.

Marty and Cort had remained close friends since college days. One of the things they shared was a love for the music of **Elvis Presley**. In fact, each of them sang at the other's wedding, in the manner and style of Elvis. It was all good-natured fun. Cort's wedding had taken place in the Elvis Chapel in Las Vegas.

Marty began to sing.

*I'll have a Blue Christmas without you
I'll be so blue just thinking about you
Decorations of red on a green Christmas tree
Won't be the same dear, if you're not here with me*

One by one, all the Brothers began to add their voices to the song.

*And when those blue snowflakes start falling
That's when those blue memories start calling
You'll be doin' all right, with your Christmas of white
But I'll have a blue, blue blue blue Christmas*

*You'll be doin' all right, with your Christmas of white,
But I'll have a blue, blue, blue blue Christmas*

The Tomb of the Unknown Pledge Pin

At dinner, Gene Strickland held up a bent and battered pledge pin. He told the assembled Brothers that the pin had been discovered in the bomb shelter after initiation of the 1981 class. No one claimed it, and so the orphan pledge pin had been in Gene's possession for some 35 years.

"Tonight," Gene intoned solemnly, "The Unknown Pledge Pin will be properly entombed at 218 South Wildwood in memory of our departed Brother Cort." It is best left to rest there in silent and eternal tribute to Cort and to the unconquered spirit of the great Delta Lambda.

We were told that a Florida State University maintenance worker/engineer had earlier that day drilled a small hole in the concrete sidewalk about the size of a .50 caliber shell casing. One half of a brass capsule was placed into the hole, where it waited to receive the pin and the top, locking portion of the capsule.

Gene engaged a travel bus to transport the Brothers from the hotel. It was a robust and spirited bus ride to 218 South Wildwood. In the giant dormitory, hundreds of young men and women slept unaware that Pike alumni in their 50s and older were on their way to bury a pledge pin and set fire to a list of deceased Brothers in front of the dorm where their beloved fraternity house used to stand. One alum expressed his approval of the outing and said wistfully, "It's been a long time since I was in jail in Tallahassee."



The band of Brothers stood in silence in front of the dorm. A sheet of paper upon which was written the names of each deceased Delta Lambda Brother was ceremonially burned upon an altar stone. Then, Gene Strickland placed the unknown pledge pin inside the brass sepulcher, and sealed it for its final rest.

Following the funeral the next morning when many of us were gathered outside the church, I first heard the details of the nighttime ceremony. I remarked at how wonderfully gracious was that gesture on the part of the

University Administration to send a crew to drill a hole in the concrete. "Who did you speak with at the University to arrange that for us?" I asked. Then I noticed many faces staring at the ground or looking away. Someone said, "Well...that may have been unauthorized."

Evidently, someone dressed as an FSU Engineer had set up an official-looking shop on-site earlier in the day, drilled the proper hole, and with a set of precision tools cut the name "Cort McCord" into a brick. Gene Strickland, who organized the memorial events and who actually is both an engineer and a contractor, denied any knowledge.



2015 Chapter Executive Council

Updated December 20, 2015

- SMC President: Mike McCoy
- Internal Vice President: Kevin Stokes
- External Vice President: Reid Nelson
- Secretary/Excellence Officer: Griffin Wilcox
- Pledge Education: Rob Hicks
- Rush Chairman: Steven McFall
- Treasurer: Jake Ross
- House Manager: Chase Cappai
- Risk Management: Daniel Coconceli
- Title IX Chairman: David Teytelbaum
- Member At Large: Max Huzuda
- Sergeant At Arms (Judicial Officer): Trip Lawson
- IFC Representative: to be determined
- Intramural Sports Chairman: to be determined
- Social Chairman: to be determined
- Alumni Liaison: to be determined
- Political Officer: Hunter Anger
- Legal Liaison: Tre Ville

Alumni Advisory Board

- Chapter Advisor (interim): Charlie Barnes '65
- Legends of Delta Lambda: Brent Sembler '78, Chairman
- Legends Oversight: Jimmy Keen '73
- Rush Advisor: Doug Russell '79
- Pikes Illustrated Editor 2015: Jean Tabares
- Faculty Advisors: Andy Miller '70, Doug Tatum '77
- Finance Chairman + Advisor to the Secretary and Treasurer: Eli Nortelus '01
- Risk Management: Jimmy Keen '73, Don Pumphrey, Jr. '06, Clint Wallace '01, Matt Liebenhaut '01, Carlos Lindo '05.
- Pledge Education Advisor: Dustin Daniels '10
- Technology Advisor & Webmaster: Chris Dietz '87
- House Manager Advisor: Gene Strickland '81
- Alumni Association Co-Chairman: Gary Prescott '72 and Mark Smith '78.
- Alumni Association Committee: Eric Carr '01, President; Gary Prescott '72, Mark Smith '78, Bob Hall '49 (Charter Member), Phil Doumar '09, Jarrod Germano '07
- Newsletter Editor: Charlie Barnes '65
- Newsletter Publisher: Chris Dietz '87
- Education/Scholarship Advisor: Scottie Howell '06 ('88 Fireman)
- Ambassador: Bob Hall '49
- Chaplaincy Advisor: Rev. Rick Blythe '72
- Political Advisors: Bob McKnight '62 (Fla. Southern College); Scottie Howell '06 ('88)
- Mentoring Advisors: Jimmy Keen '73; Doug Tatum '77

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