



The Iowa Acacian

A quarterly newsletter for alumni of Acacia Fraternity at
The University of Iowa

Volume 1, Number 1

Summer 2005

This will be the first edition of The Iowa Acacian, a quarterly newsletter for alumni of Acacia Fraternity at The University of Iowa. In light of the fact that as of Spring 2005 the active chapter has gone on hiatus, a group of alumni have instituted this newsletter as a means of allowing us to remain in contact with one another as we work to reestablish the active chapter in the future. Our aim is for the newsletter to appear quarterly. In it we will communicate information regarding the soon to meet alumni chapter of Acacia, progress toward reestablishment of the active chapter, and news from individual alumni.

If you have ideas or contributions for The Iowa Acacian, send them to Michael Morris #859 at <spanprof118@yahoo.com> or <mmorris1@niu.edu>.

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- Announcement regarding status of Acacia Fraternity at The University of Iowa
- Announcement of formation of alumni chapter of Acacia Fraternity
- Report from Chris Berry, Corporation Board President, Dan Wilkes, Corporation Board Treasurer, and Bryk Lancaster, chapter advisor
- Report from Devin Johnson #839 on his year as national consultant to Acacia Fraternity
- Alumni news and updates

The state of the active chapter as of May 2005

During the last several years the Iowa chapter has been in a gradual decline, especially in the area of recruitment. Although the chapter received numerous awards and accolades from the university, our recognition and image on campus had begun to wane. In December active membership was at an all time low. Recruitment in the fall 2004 semester was positive, as the chapter pledged ten pledges. However, by the end of this semester, that number had dwindled to one. Visits by the Acacia Fraternity Headquarters on two separate occasions helped determine that the root cause of the problem was three members of the chapter, all of whom lived in the house, who gave the chapter a great deal of grief. These members were promptly asked to withdraw their membership from Acacia and move out. This left six active members. A significant effort was put forth to organize a large push for the spring semester. The active chapter received help from Rob Kameen, the Rush Coordinator for Acacia Fraternity International. However, in February after several failed rush events a decision was made to pull Rob from Iowa, and at that point we concluded that the cause was lost. It became obvious that the actives would not be able to sustain anything long-term, and the active chapter suspended operations on the University of Iowa campus.

Since the Acacia Fraternity at the University of Iowa voluntarily suspended operations the Intra-Fraternity Council has not revoked our recognition. The fact that we are leaving the campus on our own terms assures our ability to return to campus in a timely fashion when we are ready to do so.

Further, Acacia Fraternity International has not revoked our charter, with one condition. It is our duty as alumni to construct a solid plan for rebuilding, recruiting, and sustaining an active chapter in a timely fashion. A good faith effort must be put forward to prove to the International Council that work is being done towards reviving the University of Iowa chapter. Toward that end, we are forming an alumni chapter, the details of which are described below.

-Bryk Lancaster

Alumni Chapter to Form

A group of alumni living in the eastern Iowa region have begun organizing to form a chartered alumni chapter of Acacia Fraternity. The only requirement for such a chapter is for a group of fifteen interested Acacia alumni from any undergraduate chapter to express interest, and a \$75.00 one time chartering fee.

The chapter will be focused in the Iowa City/Cedar Rapids area. However, alumni living outside of this area will be allowed to join the membership. The focus of the alumni chapter will be to provide a strategic plan for the reestablishment of an undergraduate chapter on the University of Iowa campus, the strengthening of alumni relations, and increasing social event opportunities for alumni. The chapter plans to have quarterly business meetings.

The initial meeting of the new alumni chapter will be held at the chapter house of Acacia Fraternity House, 202 Ellis Avenue Iowa City, IA, on June 11th, 2005, at 2 PM. The purpose of the inaugural meeting will be to sign the chartering petition, elect temporary officers, appoint a constitution and bylaw committee, determine

the amount of interest and support available, and schedule a second meeting. The second meeting will include the election of the permanent officers and the adoption of the constitution and bylaws.

Some projects being considered for the alumni chapter are revamping the Iowa Acacia website to be more alumni-friendly and focused, running a capital campaign for repairs and upgrades on the chapter house, sending out a quarterly newsletter to keep alumni updated, planning alumni outings, and writing a strategic plan for the reformation of the chapter at Iowa.

Aaron Morrow is spearheading the campaign to form an alumni chapter at the moment, and you should send any questions or suggestions to him. His contact information is included below. We hope to see you at the meeting on June 11th at 2 PM.

Aaron Morrow
106 N. River Drive
PO Box 497
Princeton, IA 52768
319-330-1788 cell
amorrow836@hotmail.com

Iowa Acacians Corporation Board Happenings

The Iowa Acacians corporation board has been quite busy this past year. I wish all the events had been joyous occasions, but most were quite sobering.

A congratulatory note is in order for the newly elected corporation board officers. Elections were held at the Fall 2004 corporation board meeting. I am pleased to introduce the following newly elected officers: President-Chris Berry, Vice President-Tollif DeJong, Treasurer-Dan Wilkes, Secretary-Mike Morris, and Facilities Manager-Jeremy Heyer. Congratulations and thank you for your continued service.

One of the primary responsibilities of the corporation board is to provide housing for the active chapter. Over the past year providing housing has become increasingly difficult due to lack of rental payments from the active chapter. The corporation board took out a second loan in the Fall 2004 to pay mortgage payments and real estate taxes.

The condition of the fraternity house is deteriorating. Remodeling needs to occur in the very near future: plumbing, water heater, bathrooms, kitchen, and boiler all need or soon will need attention. It has become clear that a different direction needs to be taken because the current design of the structure is not going to suffice. New types of living are becoming popular; privacy is important. Apartment

style living is becoming the trend in dormitories and fraternity houses. Suites with 2 or 4 rooms sharing one bathroom are now being utilized.

The corporation board would like to create a rentable income-producing unit while maintaining a chapter room, dining room, and small kitchen. It is not the goal of the corporation board to create another apartment house, but something that is attractive to a fraternity that promotes brotherhood. This remodeling goal became much more difficult this past winter. In late February the active chapter ceased operations on the University of Iowa campus, and as a result the corporation board was forced to turn in a new direction. Several options were considered: selling the building and land, turning the building into a boarding house and renting out rooms, or leasing the house to an outside party such as another fraternity, non-profit organization, or even the university itself. It was agreed that the most attractive option would be to lease the house in hopes that the active chapter will return to campus in the future and will have a house to which to return. The corporation board was fortunate enough to find an interested party to lease the house for this upcoming year. The Iowa Chapter of Pi Kappa Phi has agreed to lease the building and furnishings from the Iowa Acacians, Inc. for a term of one year beginning August 1, 2005, end

July 31, 2006. The Iowa Acacians are liable for real estate taxes, insurance, costs associated with rental permit issuance, and maintenance of major mechanical components. Pi Kappa Phi will pay all utilities. A third party property manager, Keystone Property Management, has been hired to collect and disburse revenue, inspect and repair property, negotiate leases (individuals), handle tenant requests, maintain records, and manage any insurance claims.

Obviously this situation is not ideal for the Iowa Acacia chapter, yet it allows us the opportunity to return to campus in the future. Consistent alumni communication is needed now more than ever if we want to see an active Iowa Acacia chapter at the University of Iowa once again. I think that we've been busy for so long trying to keep the active chapters head above water that we haven't had time to properly communicate with the alumni. Communication needs to become the number one priority of the corporation board if we want to be successful in the long term.

Please feel free to contact me about any questions, comments, and/or concerns as I am always willing to listen to your thoughts about Acacia Fraternity.

-Chris Berry

Corporation board treasurer's report, Spring 2005

R. Daniel Wilkes

We currently maintain a significant cash holding as a result of increased borrowing in 2004. The additional debt was required as the income from the active chapter dropped to \$17,500 during 2004.

The estimated budget from May to July 2005 shows zero income and significant expense. The majority of the expense is required to make the building ready for our tenant, Pi Kappa Phi. As that is the case the cash reserve is expected to drop to \$14,500 by August 2005.

This summer the chapter house will be leased to 5 individuals. However, their rent will merely pay the utilities. The board elected to allow summer roomers as an occupied building is desired over a vacant building. Primary consideration was given to an insurance surcharge for a vacant house.

The budget surplus for this fall's academic year is small. Should a major building component (i.e., plumbing or heating) require replacement, the board will again be faced with the prospect of increasing our debt to cover costs. Debt is being reduced by over \$14,000 annually.

We have engaged a local architect to facilitate the planning of a building renovation. Our hope is to utilize our resources to their fullest extent.

Your comments and suggestions are welcome. Please contact Dan Wilkes with your concerns. He may be reached at home (319) 221-1440, at work at (319) 369-2506 or via e-mail at: dwilkes@aegonusa.com.

Financial Statements as of 4/30/2005

<u>Balance Sheet (as of 04/30/2005)</u>		Deficit	(\$23,647)
Assets		<u>Budget – August 1, 2005 to July 31, 2006</u>	
Cash	\$ 38,148	Income	
Land & Building	<u>\$470,260</u>	Rent	\$57,000
Total Assets	\$508,408	Expense	
Liabilities		Mortgage	\$27,540
Mortgages	<u>\$192,434</u>	Property Tax	\$ 9,500
Total Liabilities	\$192,434	Insurance	\$ 8,230
Net Assets	\$315,974	Maintenance	\$ 7,500
		Management	\$ 1,710
		Rental Permit, etc.	<u>\$ 1,170</u>
		Total	\$55,650
<u>Budget – May 1, 2005 to July 31, 2006</u>		Surplus	\$ 1,350
Income	\$ 0		
Expense			
Mortgage	\$ 6,885		
Maintenance	\$15,000		
Space Planning	\$ 1,500		
Legal (lease)	<u>\$ 262</u>		

Report from Devin Johnson #839, 2004-05 Acacia Fraternity Leadership Consultant

Since last August I have had the honor of working for Acacia Fraternity headquarters as a Leadership Consultant. The last year has taken me all over the country, allowed me to make many new friends, and given me lots of great stories. As an undergrad it was easy to forget that Acacia existed beyond our chapter and the ones to which we made frequent road trips, such as Wisconsin and St. Cloud State come to mind. Without a doubt the first question asked at every chapter to which I traveled was how other Acacia chapters were doing and what they were like.

My travels took me from the micro brews and homemade breakfast burritos of Oregon State to the quirky traditions of Texas A & M. Some of the highlights of my travels include watching the Oregon State almost beat USC at home in some of the densest fog I've ever seen in my life. I will never forget the Texas Hall of Fame and the Dixie Chicken at Texas A & M. You have to visit there to know what I am talking about. If you ever go to central Oklahoma you have to go to a small town called Okarche. There you will find the oldest bar in Oklahoma, called Eischens. They serve the best fried chicken and okra along with the coldest Coors Light draws you will ever have. I was able to go golfing in February while in Texas--all the while watching out for rattlesnakes. What can I say about Ohio? Ice luge. In April I went to the famed Little 500 at Indiana University. Most of the day was spent at Kilroy's on Kirkwood. Good times.

As a consultant you learn to pack light, whether driving yourself somewhere, flying, or catching a ride. There are just some things you just don't have room to bring. This becomes especially apparent any time you are present at a fraternity function that requires some sort of costume. You learn to be adaptable and creative. Goodwill and the Salvation Army

become your best friends. It is amazing what you can put together from your suitcase, the brothers you are staying with, and the above mentioned stores. I myself was faced with: Halloween, Christmas party, and an 80's bar crawl to name a few. The job requires you to do two contradictory things: fit in and stand out.

Traveling to many of our chapters and their campuses provided a great way to compare our chapter and campus with others all across the country. The most important thing I learned during the past year was that the Acacia world needs our Iowa Chapter. We owe it not only to those Acacians from our chapter that have come before us and to those Acacians at other colleges and universities, but to all those potential members attending The University of Iowa who won't even have the option of having an Acacia experience if we as individuals and as alumni group don't act immediately.

We should settle for no less than being the best fraternity at Iowa. To reach that goal requires more than a full house and lots of active members. It requires involved and committed alumni who can support the active chapter. There are a number of different ways to do this. The most visible way for actives to know this support exists is through the condition of the house. The support can range from having an involved chapter advisor to setting up an endowment to award scholarships to active members and to potential members. Acacia Fraternity is something great. There would be no greater disservice than to fail getting our fraternity back on campus at the University of Iowa.

So live...

Devin Johnson
Roll #839

Alumni news and updates

This section is intended for you to tell your fellow brothers about the things that are happening in your life. A wedding? A birth? A new house? A get-together? A visit? The Iowa Acacian would like to know about it! Send your news and photos (in jpeg format) to Michael Morris #859 at <spanprof118@yahoo.com> or <mmorris1@niu.edu>.

Zehnle's engaged!

This spring Brian Zehnle #785 announced his engagement to Monica Muñoz of Wichita, Kansas. On 14 May a party was given in their honor in Chicago just after Zehnle's graduation from the famed Second City workshop. In attendance were Jon Karl and his fiancé Lindsay, Michael Morris, Dave and Julie Moon, and Steve and Erin Turley, among others, and we celebrated until the wee hours of the morning. Brian and Monica have been living in Chicago, but by the time you read this they will have moved back to Kansas City, where they have taken new jobs. Congratulations Brian and Monica!

More weddings

We'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate Jack Savage and Cindy Stevens on their marriage on 21 June. And John Liss and Annie Parker will be married at Old Brick church in Iowa City on 16 July. Congratulations to Jack and to John!

A birth

A shout-out to congratulate Dan and Theresa Wilkes on the birth of Katie Grace on Tuesday, 17 May 2005. Mom and baby (and dad and big sis Ellie) are doing well.

Finally.....

Do you know that a Yahoo group exists for Iowa Acacians? You can become a member by pointing your web browser to <groups.yahoo.com/group/AcaciaUIAlum>. John Liss is the moderator. If you have any problem subscribing, you can email John at <john-liss@uiowa.edu>.

Interested in making a donation to secure the future of Acacia Fraternity? You can send your donation to the following address:

R. Daniel Wilkes
1622 A Avenue NW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52405

If you wish, you can earmark your donation to the scholarship fund for future members to strengthen recruitment, the building fund for renovation of the chapter house, or chapter reestablishment. Let us know your preference (if you have one) with your donation. Thank you.

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