



the Alumni Forum

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Iota Alpha Chapter

Winter 2000



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hóla Brothers,

I am Francisco J. García and I am the new president for our jovial Iota Alpha chapter. I am very enthusiastic and excited about the coming term. In the promising winter 2000 term, we are having many different activities. Some of these include our traditional American Music Concert, Jazz Festival, Singing Valentines, and other brotherly events.

During the last week of February, some of us will represent our chapter in the Midwest Regional over in Toledo, Ohio. On Feb. 12-13 we had the province workshop down at Nu Epsilon in Hillsdale and as usual, we'll attend the Province Council Meeting over at Gamma Omicron.

I hope you brothers have had a good New Year's and may this year bring the best for all of you.

Long live Sinfonia!
Francisco J. García



NEW SINFONIANS

Last term, our chapter initiated three new Sinfonians. They are:

Sammy "Doeg" Ives: I come from a family of 3. My father left my mother before I was born, so it has been difficult growing up. I have one brother and a sister on my mom's side of the family, and 3 siblings on my dad's side. I joined because it was a chance to express my ideas and views towards music, and also assuming that it would be just plain cool. I soon realized that being cool was not the only thing the group stood for. Currently I am playing in a heavy metal band named ShockWave, which formed 5 years ago, and just reunited recently.

Cardell "Paul" Johnson: Greetings Alumni, My name is Cardell Johnson. My hometown is Detroit, Michigan. I am a sophomore at Alma College. I will obtain a major in Political Science with a minor in English and Spanish. With spare time, I like to bowl, write, and more importantly sing. I joined Phi Mu Alpha because I love music and believe that it plays an important role in everyday life. I like all genres of music, but my favorite is R&B Soul. I look forward to becoming a Sinfonian so that I can help promote music in America.

Delvard "Solo" Newhouse: My name is Delvard Tremayne Newhouse and I'm a sophomore here at Alma College. I'm originally from Flint, MI, and I've been involved with music all my life. I began playing alto saxophone in 4th grade and have been involved in concert, marching and jazz ensembles in high school playing alto, tenor, and baritone sax. I also play drums and piano by ear and enjoy MIDI composition. I joined Sinfonia because of my love for music and my desire to be involved with a group of men who share that same love.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

February

25-27 – PMA Midwest Regional in Toledo, Ohio

March

10 – 7pm: Gold Night
 18 – 3pm: PMA/SAI Watch Hockey
 18 – 8pm: Brothers' Night
 24 – 8pm: American Music Concert (Heritage Center)
 25 – 8pm: White Night

April

1 – Ritual
 8 – 7pm: Brothers' Night/Senior Wills
 Sometime between 23-29: Possible Trip to Lyrecrest; we'd love to have alumni join us! Drop us a line if you're interested.

THE LAST HOMECOMING OF THE MILLENNIUM

This year was a great homecoming for the Iota Alpha chapter. Several alumni were here early enough to help the actives sing the National Anthem and the Alma Mater at the football game. We had a good time at the football game and as always, we had our traditional cookout afterwards.

This year was a little different because we actually got an official party permit approved by the college. We are the first group on campus outside of the Greek socials to ever have done so. However, the extra regulations that we had to deal with didn't prevent us from having a good time, nor did they prevent people from showing up. Over 58 people showed up during the course of the day! It was great to have the room so packed.

Brother Joseph "Wallrus" Martin was the grill guru this year, turning out some of the best burgers that one of our cookouts has had in years. Of course, no Sinfonia cookout would be complete without our own football game. (Complete with both the old guys and young guys complaining about how sore they were afterwards.) It was a great time with old friends getting together and new friendships being formed.

Keith "Exar Kun" Suppes
 Fraternal Education Officer

'T WAS THE MONTH BEFORE CHRISTMAS

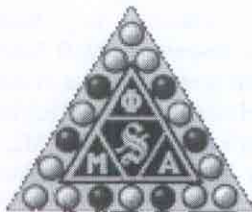
On November 6, 1999, Alma students, faculty, and townspeople flocked to Alma College's Presbyterian Hall for a ridiculously early Christmas Concert. Well, perhaps "flocked" isn't quite the right word. Still, more than 70 people were in attendance, making it one of the most successful ΦMA concerts in recent years.

Aaron "Opus" Decker and his "Amazing Bedroom Orchestra" opened the concert with a Christmas medley. The concert program ranged from the traditional (such as "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," sung by Joey Martin) to very out of the ordinary. Randy Beutel's rendition of "What Child is This?" on electric guitar definitely fell into the second category, but was very well received. Not all pieces were as serious as "Winter Peace" (performed by Sarah McKinney on flute and Melissa Desjarlais on piano). A mixed group of ΦMAs, ΣAIs, and friends performed a version of "Grandma Got Run Over By a Reindeer" in which Keith Suppes in antlers ran down Michelle Sharpe and then was chased around stage by "grandpa" Aaron Decker. Susanne Cook and Jen Klaiiss sang a duet about their love of pizza that, while not exactly fitting the seasonal theme, drew cheers from the audience. It was an evening of great music and a lot of fun, both for the performers and the audience.

BELLS WILL BE RINGING

We are happy to announce the engagement of our past president, Andy Tallman to Jennifer Brown. Jenn is an Alma College and Sigma Alpha Iota, Theta Eta chapter alumna. They have been dating for a year and a half.

Jenn is currently teaching elementary music in Pinconning, MI. Andy plans on teaching high school biology and getting kids excited about science after he graduates next December. The wedding date is set for December 31, 2000.



WINTER OFFICERS

Due to the upcoming graduation of four of our most experienced brothers, we decided to elect new officers to have a layover period to help new brothers get accustomed to holding major offices. Here are the election results:

Executive Board Offices

President – Francisco “Apollo” García
Vice President – Karli “Zaccheus” Lopez
Secretary – Aaron “Opus” Decker
Treasurer – Randy “Anakin” Beutel
Fraternal Education Officer – Keith “Exar Kun” Suppes

Non-Executive Board Offices

Alumni Secretary – Steve “George” Nadeau
Historian – Sammy “Doeg” Ives
Warden – Andrew “Loki” Tallman

ROOM IMPROVEMENTS

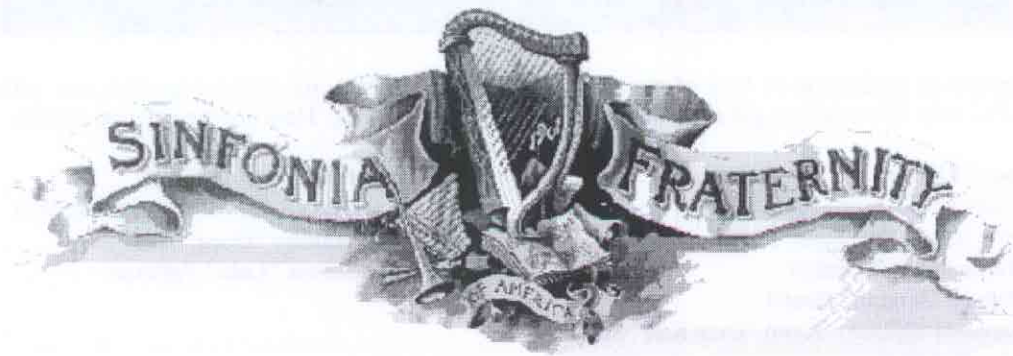
This last year has been a time of change for the fraternity room. It all started during the winter of 1998 when a few members decided that the fraternity should get some new sound equipment of its own. After looking at a few models and seeing what we could afford, the members had a vote and used some of the fraternity funds to purchase a new Kenwood amplifier and tape player. Shortly after we got these components, brother Mike Petterson donated two very new home theatre speakers to the room. This whole new sound system has brought us an incredible surround sound system with great bass and a crystal clear audio. When we want to crank up the volume, it can easily be heard from South tower!

In November of this last year, the brothers spent about ten hours on a Thursday night rearranging the room. After all was said and done, the room looked better than I’ve ever seen it before, and I’ve been here five years! This new arrangement has made the room a much more comfortable place to hang out and has been a major factor for the increase of people at our movie nights. One night, in fact, we didn’t even have enough seats for everyone that came. Like always though, we made sure that they were given a brother’s seat! We also have what we now call the Patriarch Chair, which is like a command chair in the center of the room. The standard rule is that the person in the room who has been a member of the fraternity the longest has rights over the chair, which is used by Tony Patterson (the piano artist-in-residence) quite often.

It was after that crowded movie night that we all started to think about improving our entertainment system even more with some video equipment. In the past we never had a problem with the television that the group purchased in the spring of 1997, but with the community switching over to DVDs, we needed to get a television that could handle RCA and super video inputs. Up until recently, I had been bringing down my television and DVD player so that we could watch movies. With this all in mind, I headed up a mass money donation process to raise enough money to get new video equipment for the room. To all of our amazement, and thanks to many active and alumni members, we were able to raise \$1200 in less than ten days!! We shopped around and after getting a irresistible price at ABC Warehouse in Mt. Pleasant, we purchased a 36” Zenith television with multiple inputs for anything we could possibly use and the top of the line RCA DVD player that is on the market right now. With these now connected to our stereo system, our entertainment system is now mind-blowing. We have planned more movie nights this term and are planning on having one or two hockey nights every week in the room until May.

All these changes have really helped the fraternity room to once again become a great place to hang out! Sometimes it just feels so great to be a Sinfonian, and, thanks to a strong brotherhood as well as the best alumni on earth, this is one of those times! We would like to thank all of our alumni for their support over the years; we couldn’t have grown to what we are now if it wasn’t for your help and dedication. Thank you once again.

Fraternally yours in music and song,
 Joseph “Wallrus” Martin, Sigma Class – Spring 1996



THE HILLS ARE ALIVE

Austria. Land of majestic mountains, rolling hillsides, and breathtaking valleys. The red-roofed houses dotting the landscape are only one of the many symbols of the rich heritage and tradition held by the country-folk. It seems that the scene would only be complete if a pleasant, friendly lady were roaming those hillsides singing Rogers and Hammerstein tunes with small children dancing around her. The only problem with this image is that it was *not* a part of my trip to Austria.

Instead, I spent the majority of my time in the city of Vienna, cultural capital of all Europe. In cooperation with the department of international studies here at Alma College, I was lucky enough to spend a term in this wonderful city and earn college credit at the same time, for even less money than I would have spent on tuition had I remained in Alma. Suckers.

Never have I had a more exciting experience. Spending time studying in the city where Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Berg, van Weber, and numerous other musicians of posterity lived was music major heaven. The city has an air about it that sings of the accomplishments of these, and other, truly great men.

Really, having to go to class every day wasn't so bad. Most of my classes were quite interesting. Each of them were Vienna-oriented, so while we learned about the art and architecture of the Baroque period, we were able to go and see it in the places it was first built. Likewise, studying the accomplishments of Mozart was accompanied by a trip to the Opera to see *The Magic Flute*.

In fact, perhaps my favorite part of being in the city was the music. Nearly every day, I went to hear a concert or see an opera. (Oddly enough, the operas were rather inexpensive; I could go every night for less than two dollars, provided I was willing to stand for a couple of hours.) Probably the most amazing concert I heard was the first I went to: The Budapest Festival Orchestra playing Mahler's First Symphony. Next would have had to be Bach's Saint Matthew's Passion, which I heard Easter day.

However, the unrivaled high point of my experiences came during a trip to Heiligenstadt, just outside of the main part of Vienna. On taking a walking tour of Composers' houses, we came upon this little town to see the place where Beethoven wrote the Heiligenstadt Testament, a letter confessing his deafness. With the influence of my music professor, I was enabled to play a piano which Beethoven had owned when he had lived in that house. It was truly a spiritual experience.

Going to Austria was a bit daunting however, as my knowledge of the German language upon my arrival in the country was limited to "Guten Tag" and "Auf Wiedersehen." However, I had the good sense to refuse to speak English outside of class. As a result, I quickly became a fully-functioning member of the community in which I lived. Soon, even going grocery shopping wasn't a horrifying experience!

If any of you get a chance to travel to Austria, take it! When (and if) you come back, please let me know; I'd love to sit and talk about your experience, and have the chance to "relive" some of mine. Austria is a place I truly miss, and I hope someday to return.

Oh, and of course, the beers and wines were excellent.

Aaron "Opus" Decker
Secretary, Chi Class

CAMPUS BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

During a weekend last term, several individuals stole cement and plywood from a stack of supplies Physical Plant was using to restore the alumni house. They used the plywood to build a form around the spirit rock, which they then filled with concrete, sticks and lava rock. Half way up they ran out of materials, so they just left the Spirit rock sticking out of this haphazard square like some bizarre art exhibit.

After looking at it for a week or two, five brothers used sledge hammers and picks to remove the large chunks. Next, chisels and hammers were used to clean off the last remaining pieces. The whole process took approximately one hour and generated applause from the whole campus.



FROM THE PEN OF OSSIAN MILLS



Looking back over the past ten years of the life of Sinfonia, one is tempted to ask, "Has it paid?" Personally I believe that it has, many, many times over. The fact that hundreds of young men students have been brought together, yes and bound together, by friendly and mutual interests for life means very much, and it is a well known fact among the brothers that many a young man has been inspired through his Fraternity associations with an ambition to make the most of his life and in every way to be worthy the respect of his brothers. One of the most beautiful spectacles in life is to see men mutually interested in each other, so much so, that like "David and Jonathan" they are ready to sacrifice, even to the laying down of their lives, for their brothers, and this is what Sinfonia has been during the past ten years, and many of the boys are now out in the world fighting the battle of life, making a place and a name for themselves, inspired to do their best by the thought that their brothers are deeply interested in their successes. And so, although Sinfonia may not have accomplished all that some of us who are most deeply interested in its welfare have desired, it has accomplished much, very much, for which we are grateful and of which we are proud. Long live the Sinfonia.

Ossian E. Mills

From "Sinfonia—Yesterday", Sinfonia Yearbook 1910

YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE

The Iota-Alpha Chapter once again performed our annual Valentine Serenades fundraiser. We charged \$3.00 per serenade, and included a carnation with each. After much rehearsing, we were able to perfect You Are My Sunshine (the most popular song of the bunch), Sha-boom, Earth Angel, Still of the Nite, and The Rose. All of the rehearsals, as well as the immense amount of running around on the 14th, paid off well—we sold 48 serenades and made \$148.00 profit, and had a great time doing it!

SINFONIA ROUNDUP!



Assembly 2000 Website Now Online!

www.sinfonia.org/assembly2000/