



The Alumni Forum

Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity of America – Iota Alpha Chapter
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VOLUME XII
ISSUE I
WINTER 2002

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Fall Brawl 2002

The Iota Alpha Chapter at Alma College hosted Province 2's 2002 Fall Brawl. The event was very successful and very satisfying to all who attended. The Province Council meeting was held on Saturday and Sunday in two separate sessions. The time in between was packed full of learning and Sinfonian bonding.

Seven chapters attended this year's Fall Brawl, including the men from Epsilon, Beta Iota, Delta Iota, Gamma Epsilon, Iota Alpha, Iota Omicron, and Nu Pi. A good deal of credit should go to the men of Iota Omicron who were able to bring up 10 men despite the lengthy drive from Bowling Green. Also, kudos goes to the Nu Pi Chapter for having the most brothers in attendance.

The Province Council meetings went well and a great deal of business was accomplished. One goal that was set forth from this meeting was to have chapter representatives be more informed as to the wishes of their chapter and



more prepared to participate in discussion and decision-making. One of the highlights of the meeting was the introduction of a new "triathlon" event for the province. This looks like a promising idea to promote friendly competition and camaraderie between the brothers of the various chapters.

Saturday afternoon provided a lot of free time and a rewarding experience for virtually everyone in attendance. Multiple games of football were played and a lot of healthy Sinfonia and non-Sinfonia related conversation went on. I believe that we are

becoming closer as a province, which can only have good long-term effects. The host chapter provided lunch, hamburgers and hot dogs.

Saturday evening brought a talk about risk management from John Cereso that I believe was quite beneficial to many chapters. Also, I think many more people in the province are aware of the possible consequences of risky actions and are taking actions to eliminate any problems, especially in the probationary programs.

The gentleman from the Nu Pi Chapter at Central Michigan University hosted the evening activities of the province in Mt. Pleasant. This was a great benefit to the province as they had the space available to house the large number of people that attended the event. Fall Brawl concluded on Sunday afternoon with the final session of the Province Council meeting. The weekend was very beneficial and constructive for all those who attended and for Province 2.



Jon 'Executor' Cuttitta

Homecoming 2002

This year's Homecoming saw a few different approaches by the active brotherhood of the Iota Alpha Chapter. As most of the actives, all five of us, had forgotten about planning for Homecoming in any form, we didn't send out our usual invitations. However, this year saw some of the best turnout for alumni members.

As I, along with three other active brothers, were initiated last term, it was great to get to meet many of our alumni brothers. I know there were so many that I forgot most of their names. (I hope no one is offended because I can't remember names very well, but at least I can sort of recognize some faces from previous composites.)

This year marked a milestone for the Iota Alpha chapter. For the first time, an alumni member from before our re-founding came back to visit. He was the last member initiated before we went inactive, I know there are more alums from that generation and I would like to invite any to visit us in the basement of Bruske. It also turns out that the Sinfonia room we are in right now is where we started out in the 70's. From the history I picked up over the weekend, when we were re-founded, we were in the basement of

Gelston and then moved over to Bruske.

Homecoming this year consisted of a few different events. As usual, PMA, along with the SAI's, sang the "National Anthem" and "Alma Mater" before the football game. Some brothers decided to stay and watch the game, but, as Alma won by such a large amount, many more came down to the Sinfonia room to hang out and get acquainted. This led to a "friendly" game of touch football. (Might I suggest to any interested in playing again, stay away from sandals, as I was sore for two days afterwards.)



Our football game even had a cheering section as brothers Brian Martin and Shannon McNeal decided to haul Jurassic, which is still around by the way, out onto the lawn so they could relax in comfort.

After Alma's defeat of Defiance, wherever that is, the alumni and active brothers gathered for a barbecue on the back Bruske lawn consisting of some great food — burgers and hot dogs. For dessert, the sisters of SAI treated us to, what appeared to me, to be much better



prepared sugary food.

After all the eating, it was time once again for the Homecoming choir concert. The concert scheduled to start at 8 p.m., was delayed for about 25 minutes as the Alma College Alumni receiving one of the awards, decided to give a half an hour dissertation on the first amendment. (I have heard it was a good speech, but as I was waiting to pull stuff off the stage, I didn't hear it.) The concert was good from my standpoint, and included a picture of our very own alumni secretary, Joey Martin, in the slideshow.

Once again, I would like to thank all the brothers who came back to Alma for Homecoming this year and to invite any alums back to visit us as we try to gain a larger membership. If you couldn't come this year, there is always Homecoming next year, even if we forget to send out invitations.

Adam 'Solomon' Bradley



Meet Dan Rito!

Hey! I'm Dan Rito, current President of the Iota Alpha chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. I am a sophomore from Grosse Ile, MI which is an island in the Detroit River. In fourth grade I had decided that I was coming to Alma when my mom, an alum, took us there to visit. It is kind of scary to think that I had decided where I was going to college when I was only about 9 years old. I have not declared my major yet but, it will be Chemistry with possible minors in Music and/or Biology. I plan on pursuing medical school after graduation from Alma College.

I came to know about Phi Mu Alpha from both my R.A., Del Newhouse,



being a Sinfonian and a person, Josh Vrooman, on my floor pledging PMA in the fall of last year. I originally figured that I would sign the bid and see what it was about and if I wanted to be apart of it. I was pleasantly surprised to see that there was a fraternity on this campus that actually had purposes that they believed in and tried their best to uphold.

Our pledging period was interesting. My fraternity father had to leave Alma a couple weeks into the period. Our probationary class developed quite a few things that we wanted the fraternity to be when we became full members. All the members of my probationary class had to assume chapter officer roles very shortly after our initiation due to graduation of most of our chapter. As I said, I am

President of chapter right now. Our roles are a little different than the traditional roles because of the small size of our chapter so, we all end up kind of helping each other out on tasks. I, personally, am trying to bring a greater level of organization and a devoted work ethic to the chapter. We, as a chapter, are trying to publicize the group more and hopefully recruit more members as a result of it. I would really like to see our chapter in a more stable state than I entered into it. I would like to see a lot more members that each have a good handle on what has to get done and how to get things done the most efficient way as possible so, there is less time spent on business and more time to grow as a chapter, Sinfonians, and friends.

Dan 'Windu' Rito

Meet Tim Ricci!

Hello! My name is Tim Ricci and I am the Secretary and Warden of the Iota Alpha Chapter! I am a sophomore at Alma and am currently pursuing a double major in Business Administration and Music. For the future, I am thinking about working for a music corporation such as Yamaha or something around that line. By working for a music corporation, I can combine my love for music along with my management skills in the business aspect. My hometown is originally Bloomfield Hills, MI, but my parents now live in Westminster, MD.

I was introduced to Alma by my sister, Lindsey, as she attended Alma College just before I came in. I became interested in Alma because of the strong academic and music programs it has and because I could continue doing all of the activities that



I did during high school. Through Lindsey, I met Joey Martin, now Lindsey's husband, and he introduced me to Phi Mu Alpha! When I first signed my bid to Phi Mu Alpha, I was not sure that it was something that I wanted to do at that time, but as I went through the Probationary Program, I became more and more interested in being a Sinfonian. As the Probationary Period continued, I learned what being a Sinfonian is all about. Now that I am a brother in Phi Mu Alpha, I can really appreciate the purposes and ideals that the fraternity brings forth.

Phi Mu Alpha interested me especially because it was a *music* fraternity, and not just some party and drinking related organization. My enjoyment of music is a major part of my life so it was the right choice for me. I am the principal trombonist in all of Alma's ensembles including the Alma Symphony Orchestra, Jazz Ensemble, and the Kiltie Band. To try something new this year, I decided to

sing in the chorale. My friends and I are forming a jazz combo to play in the newly renovated Joe's Place, and sometimes, I play with some of the music faculty in a Dixieland Band.

This year, I am holding a number of office positions in the chapter due to a large amount of graduates last year, and a slump in recruitment. As I said earlier, I am the Secretary and Warden of our chapter. Speaking of which, take a look at the minutes on the web! In addition, I am the Song Leader and the Room Manager. The Brothers are motivated in the recruitment process, and also in the direction of what the fraternity really wants to do in the future. I hope to bring some new ideas including concerts, fundraisers, and building the brotherhood in the fraternity even stronger. When I graduate from Alma, I would like to see Phi Mu Alpha at its highest membership rate, and its activity in music greater than ever before.

Tim 'T-Boner' Ricci

Meet Adam Bradley!

I am Adam Bradley from Roscommon, MI. In what has evolved into becoming a high school choir director, I came to Alma because many friends from my high school came to Alma to study music last year. I was part of the Kiltie Band playing tuba in the Fall and trumpet during the Winter Term and was also part of the Chorale. This year I am a member of the Alma Choir and dropping band. I joined Phi



Mu Alpha because brother Francisco Garcia kept urging, and telling me, to show up to the informational sessions. I never was all that interested in joining a "social" fraternity because I had seen too many movies with drunk frat boys and I don't drink. Somehow, I did make it through the pledging process, which wasn't too bad when I remembered to schedule interviews! Currently, I am the Fraternity Education Officer and hopefully I can inspire more guys to join, and give them a

good probationary experience. As of right now, things are being shaken up for our chapter, as it should be with next year's membership consisting of 66.6% Newbies. When I leave, I hope this fraternity knows a little more about itself, has a few more members of the God family (next year, I will be the last one), has an actual organizational system so things won't be hard to find to pass down, and maybe have a few more traditions.

Adam 'Solomon' Bradley

Meet Bill Sawin!

My name is William Sawin and I was raised in the town of Manton, MI. I am currently at Alma to receive basic training in Physics and Calculus and take advantage of a "back door" admittance program into U of M or Michigan Tech. as an Engineer. I plan to receive a Liberal Arts education in addition to engineering in order to give me an edge over my competition.

I play the violin as a primary instrument, trumpet as a secondary instrument, and have limited piano skills. My mother believes music is an important art as it teaches the skills of discipline, creativity, and stress management as well as several other benefits only musicians know and appreciate. She further believes in music as the only international language in existence today; a language that reaches across cultures and across oceans. She taught me to understand and appreciate music in this fashion.

I learned of PMA my first semester from a hall mate named Josh Vrooman. A sophomore, Josh and I became friends early on in my freshman year. Later, he decided to join PMA after receiving a bid. I NEVER wanted to join a fraternity, and if you had asked



me a year ago, I would have said that. However, PMA is different, at least at Alma. It professes ideals that I believe in. And not only does it profess ideals, it's members try to adhere to them. The most obvious example of these is drinking. I'm not a big fan of alcohol and the horrors it has inflicted upon my friends and family. As a result, I did not want to be associated with any group who involved itself in binge parties. One of the first things I took upon myself to learn after I was offered a bid was PMA's policy on drinking and whether or not the members were consistent with the policy. PMA's Iota

Alpha chapter passed this test. However, my reasons aren't limited to something as simple as alcohol. PMA stands for music, its betterment, and the betterment of its members. While I don't believe any fraternity deserves a religious zeal, I do believe one should join a fraternity based on what it says, and what it does in follow-up. Iota Alpha does this. I believe

it is important for people to serve others. I've found that many Americans search for happiness in plenty of places, but true happiness is found when we stop trying to serve our own wants and selfish desires and seek to help and serve others. PMA allows its members to do this.

In regards to my pledging period, I don't have anything to compare it to, so honestly, I have no complaints. I suppose it could have been better, but it could have been much worse, too.

As a current member of Sinfonia, I serve the offices of Treasurer and Historian. Beyond these services, I hope to inspire and uphold the ideals of Friendship and Integrity among the current chapter of PMA.

When I graduate, I believe the most important state of the fraternity should be the state of its members in relation to each other. We are a business fraternity, true. We are in the business of promoting the highest standards of creativity, performance, education, and research in music in America. However, we should be first and foremost a brotherhood, and to me, that means friends. Friendship is difficult. It takes days of hard work, shared experience, and patient forgiveness. That's why true friendship is difficult to come by. I hope that when the current members of PMA go our separate ways, that not only do we take with us a padded resume for our future workplace or a list of accomplishments to boast of in front of others, but true blue friends that we can call on when we like or need. I wish to see PMA IA chapter as a fraternity upon my graduation.

Bill 'Platypus' Sawin

Probie Matt Bryan!

My name is Matt Bryan. I am from Plymouth, MI, originally from Western South Dakota but we moved here when my father took a job as a pastor.

I am majoring in both Political Science and History. I am also in both Chorale and Alma Choir currently, and taking voice lessons.

I first heard about Phi Mu Alpha from Del Newhouse. I also came to find that my mother was a PMA sweetheart. I am currently in my "probationary" period so all I can say about that is that it is going well and worth while.

I really hope to bring an unrivaled enthusiasm to PMA along with some fresh recruiting ideas, etc. I would really like to see PMA as a widely known organization on campus and I would like to see a devoted group of brothers.

Matt Bryan



Elected Officers

President

Dan 'Windu' Rito

Vice President

Jon 'Executor' Cuttitta

Secretary

Tim 'T-Boner' Ricci

Treasurer

Bill 'Platypus' Sawin

Fraternal Education Officer

Adam 'Solomon' Bradley

Warden

Tim 'T-Boner' Ricci

Historian

Bill 'Platypus' Sawin

Alumni Secretary

Joseph 'Wallrus' Martin

Appointed Officers

Song Leader

Tim 'T-Boner' Ricci

Room Manager

Tim 'T-Boner' Ricci

Webmaster

Joseph 'Wallrus' Martin

Room Organization

The Sinfonia Room has been moved around! It all started on one of those nights with some restless energy and some Alumni were at Alma for one of the Color Nights. I believe it began after midnight and we all just felt like doing some cleaning and organizing. It had been a while since that had been done, and let me tell you, it really needed it! We went through pretty much all of the miscellaneous stuff in the corner where the big metal cabinet is and eventually we made it to the desk, where it was sorted and organized.

That's not reorganizing you say? Well, this phase of cleaning and organizing continued for the next couple of weeks, when we moved the old loft (now a stage) to the other side of the room where the wall of signatures is, and we put the piano on top of that. Now it is ready for some

open mic nights! All we need are some acts!

The large table was put on the other side of the room where the loft was and now it is used for the meetings where all the brothers can be seated around the table. We really like the setup because it seems to be better for a



meeting atmosphere.

We also have some new furniture along with getting rid of some of the old. The blue couch was removed and was replaced with one of Brother Bradley's grandparents that they were going to get rid of. A swivel recliner has been added to the middle of the

room, and one of the bouches has been removed because it was broken. The space that the bouch left is being used for the large table for meeting space.

Before I left for summer vacation, I took measurements of the windows so that I could make some new curtains for the room. I thought the those old white ones could use a face lift. So with the help of my mom, new black curtains were made to fit the windows. They look great!

All of these activities have been a great thing for the fraternity, but they also brought our Brotherhood even closer by looking through old history stuff, and just by hanging out together. If you haven't been to Alma lately, stop on by! We've got a lot of great things planned and are trying to make the Iota Alpha chapter even better than it was before!

Tim 'T-Boner' Ricci

Kiltie Band 2002

After a fantastic end to the 2001 season of the Kiltie Band at the Indoor Show last year, this year's Kiltie Band members were ready to start the season at a high level, hoping to achieve an even greater excellence this year. The show this year would be music from Riverdance. Band members returned to Alma one week early during the Freshman Preterm week to refresh on marching basics, getting the "chops" back in shape, and get a good handle on some of the drill. By the first home game against Wheaton College, the band was marching and playing the first two songs, and played the rest of the show standing still with no music on the field.

It was a new high for the Kiltie Band! A good number of alumni was there to support the Kiltie Band at Homecoming against Defiance. The band performed at halftime during the crowning of the new King and Queen, and also performed their full show at postgame. The home football games were not the only thing the band was preparing for. The first annual Alma College Kiltie Band and Hohner Institute of Percussion Marching Band Invitational was held on October 19. The event was for high school marching bands wanting to perform for comments only along with



receiving a clinic after their performance by top-notch judges. Each judge had his own specialty including percussion, color guard, and winds. This year there were seven high school bands in attendance including Alma, Roscommon, North Branch, Marlette, Walled Lake Western, Walled Lake

Northern, and Ogemaw Heights. The Hohner Institute of Percussion presented its Marching Percussion with music from West Side Story. The Hohner Institute of Percussion has been established in Mount Pleasant in memory of the late and much loved Robert Hohner, former Professor of



Percussion at Central Michigan University and director of the renowned Robert Hohner Percussion Ensemble. This non-profit institute seeks to preserve Professor Hohner's educational legacy in the world of percussion by providing instruction to children, university students, and adults through clinics, concerts, and special projects.

After their performance, awards were given to each of the participating bands. Then, the Alma College Kiltie Band performed its entire Riverdance show. The show consists of approximately 70 charts of drill, with numerous visuals and of course the exciting music of Riverdance. Overall, the Invitational was a success, and the hope is to attract more and more bands each year to become an attraction to Alma College, and to the Hohner Institute of Percussion.

Tim 'T-Boner' Ricci

Jazzfest 2002

This past school year's Jazz Fest was a hit! Nineteen Jazz Groups from all around Michigan, from as close as Alma to as far as St. Ignace (almost 200 miles away), ranging from middle school, to Jazz Combos, to full high school Jazz Ensembles participated in the Alma College Jazz Festival. Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Sigma Alpha Iota hosted the event in the Heritage Center for the Performing Arts. Jobs were assigned to members of each organization such as judge runners, setup crew, and band guides to help the

day go along smoothly. Mr. Metcalf, Director of the Alma College Jazz Ensemble, found top-notch judges, including himself, to give comments to each of the bands to aid them in their performances to come. Each band was judged on areas like tone/intonation, ensemble performance, interpretation, rhythm, improvisation, showmanship, selection, amplification, and overall performance. Most bands had soloists that were later narrowed down to a list of top-performing candidates. An Outstanding Jazz Soloist was then selected and was given an Alma College Music Department Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 first year,

\$1,000 second year, \$1,500 third year, and \$2,000 fourth year if the student attends Alma College and performs in one ensemble per academic term. Outstanding Section Awards, and the Most Promising Young Musician Award were also given. The day was finished off with a performance from the Alma College Jazz Ensemble. Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Sigma Alpha Iota owe a great thanks to Mr. Don Metcalf who arranged a lot of the festival activities.

Tim 'T-Boner' Ricci

Jon Cuttitta leaves...

Greetings Alumni Sinfonians!! I am both happy and sad to announce that I will soon be joining your ranks. I am now completing my final year at Alma College. My time here has been both valuable and memorable. I can't wait to leave and I can't bear to go. I will be graduating in the spring with a major in mathematics and a minor in social studies along with getting my teacher certification. My immediate plans following the school year include teaching summer school and trying to get a teaching position somewhere around the state.

Sinfonia has been a very important part of my life here at Alma College. It has probably been the single greatest commitment that I have made to anything, excepting of course my education.

During my time as an active member, I have strived to do my best for Sinfonia and to pass my knowledge and enthusiasm onto others. I am very proud of our newly initiated members. I am confident that they will rebuild our chapter and make it strong and successful. I hope that I will somehow have an effect on the chapter, in the attitudes they adopt and that they will build.

The tools and the knowledge that I



have gained as a Sinfonian are very valuable to me and will help me to go farther in life than I ever dreamed possible. However, much more important to me are the friends whom I have gained through my association with Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. Over this short three years or so I have gained some of my best and truest friends through Sinfonia. I leave you with a few words that I have found to be very true during my time as a Sinfonian:



Work for Sinfonia and Sinfonia Will
Work for You.

Live for Sinfonia and Sinfonia Will
Live for You.

Once a Sinfonian, Always a Sinfonian,
Long Live Sinfonia!!!

Jon 'Executor' Cuttitta



Lyrecrest Shakedown

New Madrid fault line. Does that ring a bell? Well, it certainly rang quite a few bells this summer in Evansville, right next to our National Headquarters, Lyrecrest.

On June 18 of this year, just after noon, Evansville was hit by an earthquake of magnitude 5. Because the soil in the central U.S. is looser and sandier than on the west coast, the shockwaves from an earthquake can travel much farther. The same magnitude earthquake on the west coast would be about 10 times worse in the central U.S.



The worst part about all of this is that part of Lyrecrest was severely damaged — a room collapsed! The room that collapsed was the back room of the merchandise area where most of the merchandise is stored. Three factors contributed to the room collapsing: the weight of all the items in the room, the dampness of the dungeon-like basement, and, of course, the earthquake.

Work has already begun and is hopefully nearing completion at the time of writing. In order to pay for the repairs needed, the Fraternity had to take out a \$50,000 loan. In order to help cover the cost of the loan, they are asking any and everyone to donate if they can. The Sinfonia Foundation set up a tax-deductible method for us to contribute. To date, they have received over \$30,000, but they still need more. So, if you can donate, please send it to:

The Sinfonia Foundation
Lyrecrest Fund
10600 Old State Road
Evansville, IN 47711-1399

Joey 'Wallrus' Martin

Letter from E-Board

Greetings Brothers!

As you probably know already, the Iota Alpha chapter is almost all new faces from last year. We had numerous Sinfonians graduate and guys weren't as interested in joining Phi Mu Alpha as we wished they were! So, in that case, the Executive Board is made up of our entire chapter. Usually every Tuesday night at dinner we meet to set our agenda for the general business meetings and discuss any "pressing" issues. One of these pressing issues is how we want our fraternity to be in the next few years. Our top issue is recruitment. We are trying to get more and more men interested in the fraternity by doing more activities on campus. These activities will hopefully include more musical activities, and more service

activities throughout the city of Alma.

Also, since our brotherhood is so small, our business activities are heavy due to each brother having multiple offices. There never seems to be a time when we can just go hang out in the room and do anything that sounds like fun. It isn't that our brotherhood is weak, because we believe it to be very strong. Rather, it is the overwhelming feeling of work and responsibility that keeps us from that "Sinfonian" feeling we get when we are all together. We always seem to have fun during our Song Rehearsal, Ritual Rehearsal, and even the dreaded General Business Meetings, so we are just trying bring that sense of brotherhood to the next level.

As for the business side of Phi Mu Alpha, we are all working our hardest to get things organized by doing our job correctly and efficiently. It is also our goal to work to organize things in a

manner that makes accomplishing our projects easier. Things will get easier as new members are initiated, and we hope for the best in that.

Another goal we are trying to achieve is to purchase a new piano for the room. We believe it would be too expensive to fix and tune the piano we have, so we have come up with the idea to get an electronic keyboard that we can plug in to an amplifier. This way, we would never have to tune it, and it would be easy to bring it wherever we wanted.

We hope that we have informed you of what has been going on in the Iota Alpha chapter! We hope that next time we're saying that we have accomplished our goals!

OAS AAS LLS!

**The Executive Board
Iota Alpha Chapter**

Letter from the F.E.O.

Dear Alumni Brothers,

As many of you probably have heard, the Iota Alpha chapter numbers five collegiate members this year. As you can see, this means membership and recruiting is our primary focus for this year. However, as four of us are new and the fifth guy has never been FEO, our Province Governor, Kenton Barnes, felt that we were not qualified to run a probationary period. As this is a story, I will start at the beginning.

Before classes started, around the middle of August, Province 2 had its annual President/FEO/Province Council Representative Retreat down at Lyrecrest, which was neat as two of us had not been there yet. As FEO, I was required to bring a probationary packet and, as a group, we would try to standardize certain things throughout the Province. Of course, I had only my own packet to base my new one on, so I adjusted a few things and used that one. Kenton, however, felt that my packet was inadequate to train Probationary members. He requested that our chapter fix the packet and resubmit it to him, while in the meantime, not having a probationary period in the Fall term, and instead, working with the chapter at Michigan State to learn how to

accurately conduct a probationary period.

When school started and I mentioned what Kenton had said to the brothers who had not gone on the trip, the consensus was to take on Probationary members anyways. However, with the input of some Alumni brothers (thanks for the help, by the way), we decided to try to change Kenton's mind and prove we were capable. After resubmitting our newly, and greatly, revised probationary packet, and about 3-4 hours of meeting and discussing the issue with Kenton, it was decided that we could take on Probationary members with a few conditions. The first condition was that we could not use our new packet; instead, we had to use phase two of the colony program, which is, I would consider, a national probationary packet. We also had to attend, with at least one brother, all Probationary meetings at Michigan State, and we were required to have either the Deputy Province Governor, as Kenton is in Germany at the moment, or the FEO from MSU at each

of our Probationary meetings and color nights. Everyone agreed to these terms, and by Homecoming, we had sent out bids and were waiting to see how many would be signed.

This term, we had one bid signed, Matt Bryan, who has a bio somewhere in this forum. Unfortunately, one brother will be student teaching next fall and will not be able to hold office, and probably won't be around that much. This means that we will definitely be trying to recruit freshmen for Winter term. If any alumni have any ideas on recruitment methods that have worked in the past, I would ask that you please get in touch with the

chapter.

Overall, in terms of membership, we may not be gaining many brothers at the moment, but I along with the new guys, have learned more than we did during our probationary period last year.

**Adam 'Solomon' Bradley
F.E.O.—Iota Alpha**



Alumni Aaron Decker

Aaron 'Opus' Decker is busy wearing himself out by schooling full time and working full time. (Please pass the 2x4.) In just under a month, he'll have received his Associate's in Computer Programming (with Honors!) from the local community college, and have survived being a quasi-systems analyst during a multi-mainframe computer consolidation for a multinational den of evil—er, I mean, corporation. ("I love consulting; all the horrors of being a full-time employee, without the fat paycheck.") Soon thereafter, he hopes to return to the lower Michigan area to find a decent job, earn lots of money, and go back to school for what he really wants to do which, frankly, could be anything at this point.

Aaron 'Opus' Decker

Alumni Phil Wilcox

Hi All! Janine had another baby just before Christmas last year, this one was mine too...;<) So we now have a 3 year-old Kaelie and a 10 Month-old Kylie and they are both running me ragged. My job has been going great, I got to design a game board this month as part of a training session. A third of the company will be taking the training over the next two years. So it will get a lot of bang, for very little buck. Janine was happy to leave behind the horrors of Godzilla management at Napoleon Schools and has started a much nicer job in Dearborn Public Schools. She is back in the library and dealing with kids all day instead of wires, plugs, databases and servers. She is much happier now and much less stressed. We found it more than just a bit ironic that she found a job in Dearborn in the same month as my company announced it will be leaving Dearborn. C'est la vie, mes amis!

Phil & Janine Wilcox

Alumni Brian Martin

Brothers,

What a privilege it is to be able to speak with you all through this venue! It has been a long time since I've had the opportunity to speak with many of you, and suffice to say much has passed in that time. I have chosen to speak to the active members in this medium more so than we alumni perhaps. I know that gentlemen in the chapter currently are worried about the number of members being low, and would like to speak to that issue.

It also occurs to me that I have never spoken in this public fashion about my Sinfonian journeys outside of our courageous local chapter in Alma. Many of you have never had the time or the opportunity to experience our great brotherhood beyond the confines of Province 2 or even of Superior and Wright avenue. The experiences I have had help me put the situation at our home chapter into perspective.

I had the great fortune to experience Sinfonia outside of the comfortable realms of the Sinfonia room in Bruske hall. At the 1997 National Assembly in Cincinnati I was exposed to the horrifying depths of politico and unbrotherly behavior befitting a political party more than a brotherhood. One year later, I chose to move to Evansville and took a job with the staff at Lyrecrest. For three years I worked in the very heart of our organization putting together a computer system and

helping to piece together the broken shards of our leadership ranks. Side by side with such fine men as Brothers Andrew Zerance from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Jamie Morris of University of Texas at Austin, Ryan Ripperton of the University of North Carolina, Jeremy Korba of University of Evansville, and the dedicated men of our National Executive Committee's and Commissions on Standards — the fraternity healed, and time passed. At the 2000 National Assembly, I was exposed to just how much can be accomplished when people put aside personal ambition and seek to work together for all that is best for Sinfonia. It was simply amazing to see how far we could come towards getting 'back on track' to Father Mills' dream. That dream of Sinfonia that we all know in our hearts.

When our chapter first started, we have no record of what purposes or goals our original chartering founders had in mind. Only since our reactivation by brothers that we have some communication with have we found that our chapter was truly a social endeavor. Along the way, we expanded through that social nature to one of nearly professional proportion. All along the way the chapter has struggled and fought to keep interest high and ambivalence low. To achieve and to succeed in quality, where quantity may not be found. Brothers, this struggle itself is part of the Sinfonian way. To keep the true course of the hero thought doubt may assail us and fear challenge

us. Do not be afraid brothers, the striving is more important than the goal. Remember that even in our darkest hours - both in the chapter and beyond - our Brothers are there for us. To give us strength, support, encouragement, hope, and to clasp our hand in that way that only a true Sinfonia knows how. To look us in the eye and tell us that we are never alone. That even when strength fails and will collapses — our brotherhood still exists.

No person may know what lies ahead for our home, our Iota Alpha, but to those brave gentlemen fighting that good fight right now, I raise a toast. I have seen the nobility of the lion in the heart of the Sinfonian. I have seen the persistence of the salmon to swim upstream in the actions of a Sinfonian. And I will always be proud to call our fellow men — our fellow Sinfonians — my brothers.

For my fellow alumni, this goes for you all as well. May we continually work to uphold our oath, to live as moral and upright men, to seek the best in others for the good of all. Together, we will bring the world, our country, our communities, and even our friendships with others to the light of true harmony.

Fight the good fight brothers, wherever and however it is to be fought.

I remain as always,
Fraternally yours,

Brian 'Retriever' Martin

Letter from the Alumni Secretary

Dear Brothers and Fellow Alumni,

It has been a pleasure to bring this issue of the Alumni Forum to you! I hope that what you have seen so far in this issue shows you the work ethic that is in each of the active brothers this year. I believe it is an accurate reflection of the direction the fraternity is heading towards.

From what you have read about or witnessed firsthand (for those of you who were at Homecoming), the fraternity is at an all-time low for the number of members. This has placed incredible amounts of pressure onto the brothers in getting the normal workload done, as well as additional pressures from the Province Governor.

Kenton Barnes, our Province 2 Governor, had decided that our chapter needed to be placed into the Colony Phase II pledging period. Part of this change to our pledging period has been beneficial, though at the same time burdensome. The good part about it is that through this process, the new members get the chance to be around other active members from around the province and see how their programs are locally run. The bad part is that every week, the brothers have to drive down to Gamma Epsilon in Lansing for a meeting there. To those alumni who abhorred the General Business Meetings, just think about having the additional responsibility to spend every Sunday in Lansing. And there are no "if's, and's or but's" here, they are doing it to save the fraternity. As part of the deal where Kenton allowed the chapter to take a pledge class, the brothers had to promise to take that journey every week! They are indeed a dedicated group of men!

This year you may have seen some other ways in which they are trying to improve the fraternity. For instance, on the website (<http://www.sinfonia.net/iotaalpha>) now you can start to view the General Business Meeting Minutes again. After a hiatus of the Minutes not being done, the brothers wanted to make sure that their alumni knew they were working hard. All of the Minutes they had are now in PDF format, which is also a new standard that was implemented on the website. Speaking of which, this very issue of the Alumni Forum will be on the web for download in all it's splendid color glory!

As my way to help out this term, I have taken it upon

myself to fully fund the cost of the Alumni Forum. Due to our growing list of alumni there is a growing list of addresses that are completely out of date. At this point we do not have the current address to over 40% of our alumni! This is where we need your help! If your address on the website is wrong, or you have the correct address for someone else, please update that information through the fill-in-form located on the bottom of both alumni sections of the website. That information is collected weekly, verified, and added into our records. I would like to get that unmailable figure down to 10% or less, after all there are only 109 alumni!

As for next term, things are looking good for our chapter. A number of people have hinted that they are looking forward to receiving a bid!

Do know this though, the brothers are working hard to make their alumni proud of the Iota Alpha Chapter!

If you have anything that you would like to appear in the next issue of the Alumni Forum, please mail or email it to the chapter and it will get into the right hands. The contact information should you need it will appear on the top of the front cover.



As an alumni update for myself a lot of things have been going on in my life since I have left college, most happening recently.

First, I got married! Yes, to those of you who said that I would never be sly enough to pull off such a stunt, I proved you wrong!!

On a more serious note, Lindsey (my wife) and I were able to purchase our first home a few weeks after we got married. We are now living in Troy, and really like the area. If any of you are in the Troy area and feel like stopping over, just do so! Or you could be like Andy Tallman and just drive by my house a couple of times and not stop in, the choice is yours! (Now you have to stop by, Andy!)

Lindsey found a job as a choral music teacher at the Warren Arts Academy in the Woods school. The school is still new, only having a freshman and sophomore class right now, but it will gain a new class and with it more students over the next two years. She is hoping to have a few different types of choirs and is working on setting up a show choir.

Until next issue, my brothers, take care!

Joey 'Wallrus' Martin
Alumni Secretary—Iota Alpha

Fraternity Calendar of Events

Black Night — November 7

Gold Night — November 15

White Night — November 20

Ritual — November 24

Alma College Music Calendar of Events

Nutcracker — November 14-17

Kiltie Marching Band Indoor Show — November 23

Jazz Ensemble — November 24

Festival of Carols — December 6-8