



The Hello

ACACIA FRATERNITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS • SPRING 2008



Everything Is Coming Up Roses For The Fighting Illini Football And Acacia



Above: The Piegza tailgate. (From left) Mark's daughter Alexandra, Ed's sons Jack and Matt, Ed Piegza '85, Mark's wife Lisa, Mark's son Charlie, Ed's wife Susie, and Mark Piegza '86.



Many Acacian Brothers traveled to Pasadena for the 2008 Rose Bowl.



By **Michael Conniff '93**
VP Alumni Relations

After the unbelievable win over OSU in November, we knew we had a shot. Another win, a few BCS team losses, and a little luck the Illini maybe, just maybe, had a chance for the Rose Bowl. This team was different. It had the swagger back of old with the potential to be even better. Those of us who attended Illinois in the mid to late 90's had some rough football seasons that was quite frankly hard to watch at times. The

Illini did make it to a few bowls (Liberty, Holiday, and Micron PC) but were never in the running for the Grand Daddy of them all. However, like the team, this year was different. Young, fast, and full of fire, these Illini were the real deal. The Illini followed up their massive win at OSU with a thrashing of Northwestern at home. A few BSC names faded and then... BAM – the Illini were headed to Pasadena for the first time since 1983.

Many of my fellow brothers who agonized through the lean years of Illini football knew what

we had to do. Get to Pasadena. Who knows when the next chance will come? We scoured websites for hotels and plane tickets, searched for game seats and made our trek to Cali. Some arrived early, some just in time for kickoff, but we all made it. Brother **Josh Schwede '97**, who lives in Southern California, arranged a bus from Hermosa Beach to Pasadena for many of us. **Patrick Owens '96**, drove in the wee hours to arrive early enough to get a space for our tailgate. Knowing the tailgate may be hard to find, Patrick, also known by his

nickname Billy, set up a Cub flag in a sea of maroon, so we could find our fellow Illini amidst the Trojans fans. We trekked from buses, cabs and limos and made our way across the golf course on a spectacular sunny day to our pre-game meeting place.

Although we may or may not have known it at the time, the tailgate was the highlight of the day. All told, we had 30+ Acacia brothers, just represented by pledge classes ranging from 1994-2002

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Chapter's Social Calendar Full For Spring

By **Nikos Lioutas '07**
Social Chairman

With the school semester well on its way, the social calendar that was set up last semester is now in full swing. So far, active members have enjoyed exchanges with Alpha Chi Omega and Kappa Alpha Theta, with fun themes including Saturday Morning Cartoons and Noah's Ark.

In the coming weeks, we will be planning an ice skating event with the women of Delta Delta Delta, as well as going to a Cubs game later on in the semester with KappaDelta. There certainly is plenty to look forward to!

Alumni Corporation Board Officers

Arthur Mertes '85 President	Andrew Millard '98 Vice President, Chapter Relations
Michael Conniff '93 Vice President, Alumni Relations	Michael Duncan '74 Vice President, Real Estate Division
Skip Heaver '01 Corporation Treasurer	Dennis Bone '02 Chapter Liaison Treasurer & Advisor
Adam Powers '98 Corporation Secretary	Philip W. Chapman '63 Chapter Advisor, Mentor Programming
Mel Rapp '49 Communications Chairman	Dale Feldman '47 Board Volunteer
Mike Fischer '01 Social Chair	

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Active Chapter Member Spotlight on...

Robbie Keller '06



Robbie Keller is an Acacia spring initiate of 2006.

Recently, Robbie ran for the University of Illinois Student Senate. Thanks to the support of Acacia and others in the Greek Community at UofI, he was victorious!

Although, their term will not start until the next academic year, the recently elected senators have already gotten involved. On March 5th, the current Student Senate and the new Senators took a trip to Springfield to talk with some of the members from the Illinois General Assembly. The main reason for the trip was to make sure they would keep the university in mind when discussing the state budget. The Illinois Student Senate has weekly meetings, so if anyone would like Robbie to voice any of their issues or concerns, he would be happy to do so. Robbie can be contacted at Robert.joseph.keller@gmail.com.

Visit www.acaciaillinois.com the official Acacia website to:

1. Learn more about the chapter
2. Search for alumni
3. Update your address, phone number and e-mail address
4. Post noteworthy accomplishments (a new baby, a recent marriage, a recent promotion, etc.)

Do you have interesting information you'd like to share with other alumni? Post it on the website by visiting www.acaciaillinois.com and clicking on the alumni links then "Brother to Brother."

Undergraduate Officer Listing

Joel Grachan Venerable Dean Woodridge, IL	Bryan Musolf House Manager Schaumburg, IL
Tyler Smith Senior Dean Mazon, IL	Erik Stoecker Risk Manager St. Louis, MO
Matt Warren Treasurer Barrington, IL	Matt Fitterer Philanthropy Chair Naperville, IL
Zach Brooks Rush Chair Downers Grove, IL	Shams Lambaz Alumni Chair Schaumburg, IL
Tony Perrino Junior Dean LaGrange, IL	



Everything Coming Up Roses

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who traveled from near and far. . Some brothers attending the games I had not seen since our days in Champaign. We have all chosen different paths in our careers (doctors, lawyers, accountants, entrepreneurs, sales execs, and a news anchor to name a few) and life. But one thing remains the same—we are all good brothers and friends who are bonded by our time at Illinois and our membership of Acacia Fraternity. No matter how much time may have passed, there is still a place where people may refer to you by a nickname who may not have heard in a long time—Monch, Billy, Guapo, H, Lolly, or BC.

Before we knew it, the tailgate had passed and it was game time. Most of us went our separate ways since our tickets were scattered across the stadium. The Illini were no match for the mighty Trojans, but the game was truly an experience to remember. In the end, the game was no match for the Acacia pre-game tailgate. Just like our football program, our local chapter is achieving a new renaissance. The swagger of old is back with the potential to be even better. Be a part of it!

Alumni Spotlight on...

Ron Hamelberg '57

In 1957, **Ron Hamelberg '57**, took the first two degrees of membership with Freemasonry. At the time, Ron was also attending an ROTC summer camp and holding down a summer job. During his senior year at Illinois, he was "raised" to the third degree by a retired UofI professor, also an Acacia.

This past fall marked 50 years of membership for Brother Hamelberg. Congratulations, Ron, on your 50 years as a Masonic Brother!



Acacia Alumni attorneys share legal discussions, and old stories at an Acacia Esq. luncheon in Chicago. Clockwise from the head of the table are: John Julian '76, Dan Zollner '76, Leigh Roadman '78, Mike Lombardo '99, Scott Koch '95, Matt Douglas '93 (back of head), Art Mertes '85, Bill Dugan '88, and Chris Kaczynski '88.

2007 Alumni-Sponsored Tailgates a Huge Success; Sponsors Needed for 2008 Games.

By **Adam Powers '98**
Alumni Corporation Secretary

This past year was an exciting season for the Illini football team. Acacia Illinois Alumni cheered the team on each step of the way. The 2007 season marked the first in what hopes to be a long-standing tradition of alumni-sponsored tailgates at each of the home games in Champaign. Additionally, we hosted gatherings to kick-off the season in St. Louis for the Arch Rivalry Game vs. Mizzou and also celebrated together in Pasadena at the Rose Bowl.

Alumni-sponsored tailgates are intended to provide yet another opportunity for our alumni to gather together to remember our common past and share in our current lives. While an increasing number of alumni are meeting up at Homecoming, this past year's tailgates provided alumni with more opportunities to catch up.

For those that weren't able to join in the fun this past year, I wanted to fill you on the typical Acacia tailgate. Most tailgates started no later than 8:30AM for the 11:00AM games, and often with the first cans cracked as early as 7:30AM. Todd Wallin '98 and Adam Powers '98 drove down and set up enough Illini tailgating equipment each week to adequately fill the page of a fan catalog. Our location was always near the southeast corner of the Kirby Ave. and Oak Street intersection, marked by a 25 foot flag pole

flying Illini and Acacia flags. Strategically, we were within 100 feet of the port-o-potties and a block and a half from Memorial Stadium. Even when it rained for the first game, we stayed dry under the tailgate canopy.

The menu always included beer-boiled and grilled brats, chips, cookies, and sometimes included fruit, salads, and bagels. Beer and pop filled the coolers. Competitions in bean-bag toss and catch with the football often stretched into the next game's tailgate. Conversations were many and everyone who attended really experienced a fun morning/afternoon of tailgating.

The Michigan game did not kick off until 8:00PM, but the tailgate, sponsored and set up by Jay North '87 and Eric Kuehl '89, was going a full six hours earlier. Jay and Eric enlisted the culinary assistance of their lovely wives and put out a spread that far surpassed what many local organizations' professional catering offered. Spirited and entertaining games and competitions filled the afternoon.

While family – spouses, kids, significant others and friends – were always welcome at every tailgate, the last game of the season versus Northwestern truly became a family affair. Parents of at least five attending Acacians joined in the festivities. By that game, the Illini amassed an impressive record and word of our tailgates had spread such that more than 40 Acacians and their families enjoyed the tailgate.

A special thank you again goes to all the alumni listed who donated money to sponsor the entire season of home football games. An impressive number of Acacians gathered and shared in the brotherhood that characterizes our fraternity.

We hope to continue the tradition of alumni-sponsored tailgates this year with tailgates in St. Louis, at every home game in Champaign, and



then in Evanston for the away game against Northwestern. Sponsorship is as easy as writing a check for \$250-\$350 for a single game, and multiple alumni can co-sponsor the game to decrease the individual contributions. Though not necessary, if you would like to help purchase, set-up and host the tailgate, we will be happy to coordinate with you. Otherwise, just show up, have fun, and enjoy the tailgate with your brothers.

Please contact Adam Powers at adampowers1@gmail.com to sponsor a game this year.

Thank you to those Alumni that sponsored our 2007 tailgates:

Bob Lincicome '50	Jay North '87
Mel Rapp '49	Eric Kuehl '89
Richard Erdmann '67	Todd Wallin '98
Dennis Dusek, MD '68	Charlie Pikul '99
Mike Duncan '74	Maz Kothari '99
Dan Zollner '76	
Leigh Roadman '78	
Dan Bayston '80	

Sponsors are needed for the following 2008 tailgates:

08/30/08 vs. Missouri in State Farm Arch Rivalry Game St. Louis, Mo.	10/18/08 vs. INDIANA
09/06/08 vs. EASTERN ILLINOIS	11/01/08 vs. Iowa
09/13/08 vs. LOUISIANA- LAFAYETTE	11/15/08 vs. OHIO STATE
10/11/08 vs. MINNESOTA **Homecoming**	11/22/08 at Northwestern Evanston, Ill.

ACACIA



Tailgates provide a great opportunity for Acacia brothers and their families to enjoy food, fun and friendship.

\$1.75 Million Campaign for Acacia Illinois to Begin – Volunteers Needed

Under the leadership of Mike Duncan '74 and Dan Bayston '80, the \$1.75 Million Campaign for Acacia Illinois is about to begin! This is the culmination of a lot of hard work by alumni leaders and volunteers.

Acacia's current lease of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house will expire at the end of the 2008-09 school year when SAE re-colonizes at the U of I. This imminent deadline has spurred the Acacia alumni Board of Directors into action. Planning for this housing transition has been in the works for several years. The goal is to purchase an existing facility that suits Acacia's needs and, if needed, properly renovate the structure.

The Board's ability to purchase and properly renovate a new house will evolve and ultimately be tied to Acacia's fundraising success. To help Acacia achieve the success needed, a capital campaign leadership team and campaign committee is currently being formed. As the campaign gets organized, consider helping with this effort.

To be part of this great project, simply contact Ryan Flickinger, Acacia's Campaign Manager, at (800) 955-ALUM (2586) or rflickinger@omegafi.com.

If you are motivated to participate in this ambitious effort, please agree to serve as a member of the Finance Committee. There will be a limited time commitment involved with serving on the committee. As a member of the Finance Committee, you will be asked to do two things: (1) make a generous pledge of your own to the campaign and (2) help recruit brothers you know well (pledge brothers, old roommates, etc.) to get involved. You find that it provides you with a good excuse to reconnect with old friends. It's fun, it's easy and it's important to the future of your fraternity.

If you are willing to help, please contact Ryan Flickinger and let him know!

Brother to Brother

Chris Kaczynski '88 and his wife, Dawn, welcomed their second son – a future Acacian – on February 28, 2008.

Justin Jackson '00 and his wife, Camille, welcomed their son, Carter Richard, into the world on Nov. 13, 2007. Both mom and baby are doing great.



The Hello Co-Editor and Attorney, Adam Powers '98, Experiences Exciting Court Appearance

Adam Powers '98 had an interesting day in court this past March. It was in the very same courtroom (via special arrangement) where Adam had earlier become reacquainted with fellow attorney, Katie Kelley (U of I - Kappa Kappa Gamma '01), but this time he proposed marriage. The results were excellent and she accepted his "pleading". The matter is to be continued until the wedding date is set. Congratulations to the future bride and groom!

ACACIA

Name _____
 Roll Number _____
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