

# the Hello

Housing Update

ACACIA FRATERNITY at the UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS



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## Details, Details, Details!

In order to return 302 E. Armory to its original fraternity house purpose, work will need to begin immediately after closing the purchase and possession is finalized.

**Ken Wagner '55**, a retired Acacia Illinois architect, is heading up the planning and implementation of what has come to be dubbed "the manning up process". A committee of active chapter members met with Ken to provide the Chapter's input in that process so that Acacia Illinois will have the facilities needed and desired by today's fraternity college students.

The Alumni Corporation Board has authorized funding for \$45,000 worth of alterations and improvements slated post-closing. Approved improvements include: first floor painting; new floor coverings;

exterior handrail assembly and repair; shower curtains replacement in the bathrooms; removal of old signage and the addition of Acacia metal letters. All changes are expected to be completed prior to student move-in early August 2012. Watch for progress photos in future editions of *The Hello*.

Improvements for the following year will cost approximately \$50,000. Constructing a more congruent connection between the original house and the annex, which would add 747 sq ft of additional living space as currently contemplated on the Armory-side of the house (later), could add another \$150,000 when constructed. Changes to be made in the second year will be outlined in the next edition of *The Hello*.

## Kudos, Compliments and Commendations

### What Our Alumni are Saying

The following are unsolicited responses to the previous edition of *The Hello*:

"I am a very happy alumnus"

"Congratulations on the planned acquisition of the new home for Acacia UIUC... You and your team have made an excellent choice. The perseverance, commitment and hard work of the alumni team are the cornerstone for the future of the fraternity."

"I have not contributed yet but would like to contribute now."

"Great job on getting a new home for Acacia!!! Assuming I can keep paying the \$5k/yr, go ahead and put me down for another \$25k. Thank you for your great work on this!!!"

"I expect to increase my earlier commitment of \$10,000 in the next few months."

"Please pass my "thanks a bunch" to the entire board!! Seems like you were all like bulldogs - bite and don't let go!!! Cheers"

"We just received the Hello in today's mail that features the new chapter house ... We currently have two sons that are active brothers in Acacia ... The information that we received in the Hello confirms their enthusiasm for the new chapter house ... We would like to contribute \$1,000 in the name of our two sons toward the new house, \$500 in the name of each of them."

"Dedication seems to be the proper description!! There for a while I didn't have much hope! Turn-a rounds are harder to do than start-ups and the board members were certainly leaders in that effort!!! Again - Many thanks."

"Very nice piece on the new chapter house. I am remiss in not yet having contributed. I would like to contribute now and hope that it helps."

## Like to Comment? Contact any member of the Board

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Mike Conniff '93  
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Mike Duncan '74  
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Phil Chapman '71  
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## More Straight A Students at Acacia Illinois!



Connor Olsen '10, Kevin Langendorf '09, Tommy Mauro '08 and John Gibson '11 all achieved straight A's in the fall 2011 semester. Pictured here are three of the four straight A students. Congratulations to them all! (L to R): Connor Olsen, Kevin Langendorf and Tommy Mauro.

Extra special congratulations to Connor Olsen, now in his junior year, who has achieved straight A's every semester since coming to the U of I. What a record!

## Active Chapter Supports Purchase of Acacia's New Home

The financial support of our Active Chapter members for our new home is not lost in the hustle of our ongoing progress. Through their careful budgeting, planning and diligent collections, the Active Chapter has already donated \$40,000 to the Capital Campaign.

Today, the Active Chapter is considering and planning for another significant donation to further demonstrate their support of their new home.

More information is yet to come. Watch for it in the next edition of *The Hello!*

### Chapter Officers 2012-2013

#### Venerable Dean

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#### Senior Dean

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#### Junior Dean

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## "Manning Up" for Fall 2012 Occupancy

The Chapter is doing its part by insuring the house is filled with at least 58 residents this fall. While the Beta house accommodated only 47 chapter members, the University housing authority established the maximum residents at 302 E. Armory to be 72 (with the current, larger "dorm room" configuration). The Chapter and Alumni Corporation Board have tentatively concluded

that 64 residents can be comfortably housed in a desired configuration, and collectively set an objective goal of 58 live-in members for the fall semester.

Many in the spring 2014 pledge class will likely move into the new house and thus become the part of a prestigious "first year residents list", which may be posted for years to come on the walls of Acacia Illinois.

## Chapter Developing Updated Budget

Acacia treasurer, **Sam Moore '10**, along with fellow chapter officers and alumni chapter treasurer liaison, **Harrison Pappas '05**, are working diligently to structure the house budget based on our new home for the coming school year. Key factors include the larger "live-in" capacity and related cost increases and expenses previously covered by Acacia's

soon-to-be former landlord (Betas).

The good news for active members - with at least 58 live-in actives, there will likely be only a minimal increase in house bills (if any) depending on the number living in the house. Historically, Acacia's house bills have remained competitive with University dorm lodging and food costs.

## Bank Financing in Progress

Alumni who have followed Acacia's property acquisition process know that funding is required to eventually have a mortgage-free property. Meanwhile, more work is required.

**Mike Duncan '74** has assumed the responsibility of obtaining a mortgage at favorable terms, and is

evaluating multiple proposals from various banks, along with assistance from **Michael Conniff '93** and **Art Mertes '85**.

Acacia will invest a substantial portion of the funds already collected in the first phase of the Capital Campaign, while leaving adequate reserves for other needs.

## Purchase Details Nearing Final Phase

Those alumni exposed to the nitty-gritty details of any real estate closing are well aware of the myriad of details involved in concluding and ultimately closing on a purchase.

Such has taken an immense amount of time by **Mike Duncan '74**, who fortunately for Acacia Illinois has had a

life career of negotiating such purchases. By the submission deadline for this edition of *The Hello*, contracts were signed, security deposits were provided, inspections were completed and some funding applications were submitted. By print and delivery times, we expect to be even further along.



## Daily Illini Documents Acacia Illinois Purchase

On February 14, 2012, the *Daily Illini* printed an article on Acacia's planned house purchase.

The article stated that "Acacia has been looking for a property to buy for their members for the past seven and a half years."

Though the *Daily Illini* staff queried Alumni Corporation Board Members, no comments were made other than those attributed to **Mike Duncan**

'74 and identified in the article as chairman of the Real Estate Search Committee of the Alumni Board.

The *Daily Illini* quoted Mike, in part, as saying: "During this time we've evaluated 31 different properties in Champaign and Urbana and we narrowed it down to ten finalists and aggressively pursued three of those."

## It's Not All That Simple

Imagine the paperwork and complex legal documents and jargon involved in a house purchase. Development of the original documents and the drafting and re-drafting of complex statements has been an ongoing task.

Attorney **David Thies '73** with support and counsel from attorneys **Adam Powers'98** and **Art Mertes '85** has resulted in

Acacia Illinois being not only well guided but fortunate to have this valuable help without cost.

To paraphrase Hillary Clinton: It takes a lot of committed Acacia Illinois alumni to achieve what has been accomplished. We appreciate each and every one of them and the talents they have contributed.

## Achievement Involves Total Board Effort and Support

Ongoing support and counsel has been received from every Alumni Corporation Board member, including **Drew Millard '98** whose knowledge of current real estate, banking and property management matters has been most helpful in leading the Board to appropriate financial resources.

After graduating with a degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering, Drew joined the Chicago engineering firm AECOM. Drew cultivated his passion for real estate into a full-time career, launching 33 Realty - a company that handles leasing, buying & selling, investment and property management for customers ranging from high net worth investors to first-time homebuyers and to those looking for a new apartment in Chicago. Drew's company employs 20 agents and manages many downtown buildings.

Drew married his college sweetheart Marta. Drew and Marta are parents to a three-year-old daughter, Izabella, and one-year-old son, Joey. Throughout all his time spent building his career and his family, Drew has remained a dedicated and contributing member of the Alumni Corporation Board which he joined in 2001.

Contributions of time, money and expertise from dedicated Alumni like Drew have allowed Acacia Illinois to successfully reach our current position. As outlined in this edition of *The Hello* and in communications to come, much remains to be achieved and the involvement and assistance of more Alumni is needed.

If you have an interest in seeing this project to a successful conclusion, contact **Art Mertes '85** at (312) 953-0718 or one of *The Hello* co-editors.

## Roadmap to Success

Unless you have a reliable GPS, making a trip to some distant point without a roadmap is unwise. Acacia's pro forma statement details our financial roadmap to insure success and help secure lending.

**Art Mertes '85**, with assistance from past Alumni Corporation Board member **Dennis Bone '02** and other current board members, drafted and revised Acacia's pro forma. Board members remember our alumni's admonition from more

than seven years ago which paraphrased:

"You cannot be successful and expect alumni support in the absence of a realistic pro forma statement."

Yes, the banks expect the same as well. Acacia's pro forma concentrates on developing a justifiable financial roadmap to the future. Input from a wide variety of sources and the pathway to financial stability is clear.

## Brothers Eternal

### Ron Slonneger 1935 - 2012

**Ron (Sly) Slonneger '54** passed away at his home on January 18, 2012. He is survived by his wife Jean, two daughters, a son, four grandchildren and a brother.

Ron graduated from the University of Illinois with a mechanical engineering degree and later obtained an MBA. A native Peorian, Ron worked for Caterpillar for 41 years and retired in 1995. Ron and Jean shared a passion for sailing and were actively involved in sailing with the Peoria IVY Club. For 11 years following retirement, Ron and Jean spent several months each year sailing from the Great Lakes to the Bahamas and back.

### Charles E. (Chuck) Yale: M.D., D.Sc. 1925 - 2010

The following information was obtained from the obituary of **Chuck Yale '43** who died at home in Mesa, Arizona on November 7, 2010. Chuck is survived by his wife Helen, four children, thirteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Chuck served as a pilot in the US Navy from 1943-47, before enrolling at University of Illinois, where he earned an Engineering Physics degree in 1949. Chuck married Helen Whitson in 1948 and the couple moved to Cleveland, Ohio where he attended medical school at Case Western before completing nine years of surgery residency and fellowship at the University of Cincinnati School of Medicine.

Before retirement, Chuck had been Professor of Surgery Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine in Madison, Wisconsin where he established the Gnotobiotic Laboratory to study bowel obstruction in germ free rats. Chuck was one of the developers of gastric surgery for the morbidly obese.

Chuck served as Acacia Venerable Dean from 1948 to 1949.

*Editor's note: We rely on members of the family as well as alumni submissions to report the passing of alumni. We apologize for any delay in forwarding this information.*

## The Hello Editors

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Help us keep our alumni records up-to-date! Parents, please forward this newsletter to your son. Alumni, edit your member profile online at [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com), or clip this form, place it in a stamped envelope and send to: Acacia Fraternity, University of Illinois #1151, PO Box 2187, Columbus, GA 31902.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Roll Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## Homecoming 2012

### A real reason to “Come Home”

What a wonderful opportunity to share the past as well as our new home this fall with all alumni!

An “official” unveiling and introduction of 302 E. Armory will commence at Homecoming this fall. Mark your calendars and make reservations now - plan to be there!



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



*Join Your Brothers at*  
**HOMECOMING!**

**October 27, 2012**

*Illinois vs. Indiana*

11:00 a.m. kickoff  
Pre- and Post-game Festivities  
at our New Chapter Home  
302 E. Armory