

# THE CENTENNIAL SPIRIT



*"An alumni newsletter dedicated to continuing the spirit of brotherhood created by the Centennial."*

Volume 2, Number 1 ▀ Fall 2008

## SPRINKLER SYSTEM COMPLETED

Tom Balcerski (#1063)  
Campaign Chairman

It has been a little over a year since our chapter celebrated one hundred years at Cornell. We can be proud of our accomplishments during that time. The active chapter won four awards at the 2008 Conclave and was named an "Outstanding Chapter of Acacia." Ten individual alumni received well-deserved awards.

In the past year, we also inaugurated our Centennial Capital Campaign, to which individual 121 alumni brothers and little sisters have generously contributed. The active chapter has also helped with the campaign, pledging \$10,000 on top of its existing rent obligations.

We have received **pledges totaling \$210,035** and have received **\$136,290** in cash gifts, of which **\$98,645** has been given to the corporation and **\$37,845** to the Acacia Fraternity Foundation (AFF). We are thus progressing to the **campaign goal of \$345,000**, of which we wish to raise **\$245,000** for the corporation and **\$100,000** for the AFF.

And we have results. In one year, we accomplished what the fraternity had not been able to do in forty-five—we built a fire-suppressant sprinkler system and financed it entirely without debt. This is something we of which we can be extremely proud. I know I am.

We have also begun our improvements to the chapter house more generally. The wing roof required replacement this summer, as did the commercial-grade refrigerator in the kitchen. We have replaced nearly every window on the first and second floors of the house and some in the basement and third floor. There are new faucets in the wing



*Newly installed pipes running along the hallways on the second floor.*



bathroom, new floors for the second floor master bathroom, and new curtains in the living room.

But the *campaign is not over*. We have many future projects to complete, including replacing our forty-year-old steam furnace, replacing our forty-five-year-old piano (see page 2), replacing expensive windows in the dining room, kitchen, pantry, laundry room, and hallway leading to boiler room, upgrading our kitchen and living facilities, and renovating the chapter library. **Estimates for the remaining capital improvement projects total \$160,000.**

Where will the fraternity find the funds to ensure the next one hundred years of brotherhood? Since the last issue of this newsletter, new pledges have totaled \$17,210, which while greatly appreciated, have dropped off significantly since the initial donations after the Centennial.

If we are to meet the challenges ahead, we will need to rededicate ourselves not only to the spirit created by the Centennial but to the essential fraternal ties that bind us all. We need to continue to promote the values of brotherhood that have defined the Cornell Chapter since its founding in 1907 by twenty Master Masons at Barnes Hall.

In closing, I would ask all brothers to consider supporting our fraternity in the coming months. If you have contributed once to the capital campaign without making a pledge, please consider a second gift. If you have not contributed before, there is no time like the present. I hope you will join me in ensuring the next one hundred years of brotherhood at Cornell Acacia.

## **Inside: Photos of work completed plus much more!**

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Newly installed pipes running along the wall in the chapter room (above) and the Commons (right). Some pipes blend in naturally with their surroundings while others will be painted. Thanks to generous donations of David Fischell '75 and other brothers, the forty-five-year-old piano is scheduled to be retired this fall.

**TUNING UP: THE SEARCH FOR A NEW PIANO**

Elie Bilmes (#1118)

Venerable Dean and Piano Search Chairman

One of the goals of the campaign has been to replace our grand piano, an aging Matushek with a cracked sounding board that makes it impossible to tune. We have been exploring various options over the past few months and are close to settling on an instrument we like.

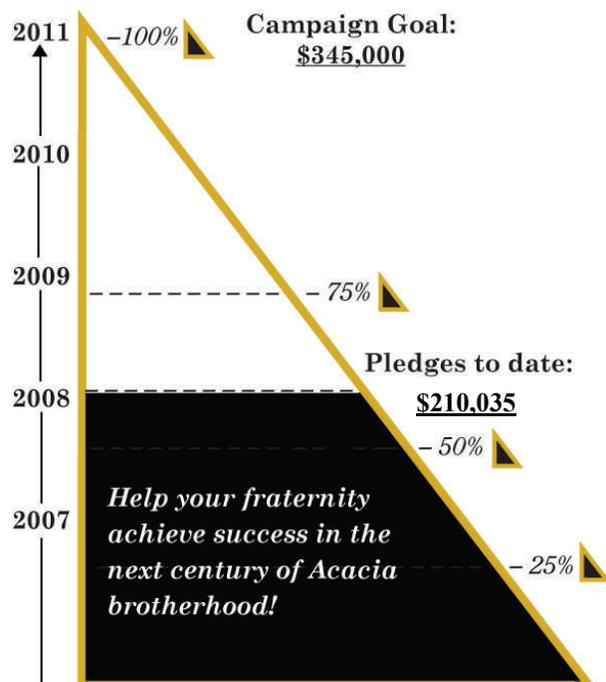
As of right now, we are leaning towards purchasing a 1926 Mason Hamlin Model AA, a fine piano that will look great in the commons. At 6'3", it has a full sound that can be used to entertain guests before formals and play selections from *Acacia Sings*. It has recently been refinished in a mahogany color, and its action is in great shape for a piano of its age.

One welcome effect of the poor economy has been a drop in demand for pianos, and we are able to purchase this instrument for the bargain price of \$13,000. We are grateful for a generous offer by David Fischell '75 to help pay for a significant cost of the instrument.

I have been aided in this search by Preston Shimer '61 and Tyler Huth '10, both of whom have a passion for music. Tyler, a pianist in the Cornell jazz ensemble, has tested several pianos during this stretch and assures me that the AA is a good pick. By the time you read this, we will have had the instrument appraised by a professional to ensure that we are making a wise decision. We will also

invest in a humidifying system and biyearly tunings to ensure that this considerable investment is well maintained.

Be sure to check the chapter website for updates about this exciting purchase.



Pledges to date: \$210,035, about 61% of our goal. Help us reach our target of \$345,000.

**IF YOU ARE IN THE TOP 5% TAX BRACKET:**

**DON'T READ THIS!**

Preston Shimer (#635)  
Major Gifts and Planned Giving Chair

Brothers in this tax bracket already know how to make the IRS tax rules work for them. This article is for the rest of us, brothers like me who are solidly in the "middle class.". We need to learn how to make the tax code work for us and let us put money into organizations which are important to us instead of into the Federal government. The IRS provides the rules and the technique is called Tax Planning.

In a nutshell, Tax Planning is following the IRS rules allowing tax deductions for authorized activities. "Middle class guys" understand the value of home mortgage interest deductions. This IRS rule has made it possible to have nice homes and deducting interest helped pay the mortgage. Many of us don't understand another set of IRS rules, the ones that enable our estates, when we pass on, to give money to charitable groups we designate instead of paying it out as inheritance and estate taxes. Tax planning and Planned Giving programs work together so that our heirs and beneficiaries get more of our money in the end and the governments get less. Why? Because the charitable donations reduce our estate tax bill which is then

taxed at a lower rate, if at all. Your family wins and your charities win.

I'm pushing planned giving for my Acacia brothers because it is one of the best ways that you can provide the maximum for your family when you pass on and also provide something for your fraternity. You win and Acacia wins. In order to win, you have to document your decision to direct your estate executor to distribute a gift to Cornell Acacia. This can be done by adding a note to your Last Will and Testament. You also need to advise the Cornell Chapter of your decision by completing the Planned Giving form available on the chapter's web site. <http://www.cornellacacia.org/index.php?a=cc&s=litform> The form includes instructions.

As you work hard at doing the best you can for yourself and your family in this rough economy, set aside a few minutes (that's all it takes) to look at your estate plan. Put Cornell Acacia into your plan by completing the Planned Giving form and send it to Ithaca. There are no checks to write. I guarantee you'll feel good about this decision. Questions? Feel free to contact me.

*(Editor's Note: Brother Preston Shimer is a part of the campaign team with the Planned Giving portfolio. He is also a locally elected government official. He knows he can spend whatever you send him in taxes. E-mail: [pwshimer@comcast.net](mailto:pwshimer@comcast.net))*

**WHY YOU SHOULD GIVE TO YOUR FRATERNITY**

John Carpenter (#959)

The Cornell chapter of Acacia is clearly worthy of our support. However, there are tremendous personal rewards associated with making a gift. Let us explore briefly a few of the benefits to be received from our continuing support for Acacia Fraternity.

The strongest motivator for me personally was nostalgia. All of us have fond recollections of our years at Cornell. We can give to express sentimental tribute, and to celebrate the years and experiences we enjoyed with our brothers. In some ways my donation is a personal 'thank you' for how Acacia influenced my personal development. More importantly, donating has allowed me to feel part of something much larger - 100 years of our chapter's proud history! Reading Tom's book and attending the wonderful Centennial Celebration have definitely opened my eyes to how great our Fraternity is and how lucky I am to continue to be an active part of it.

Another reason to give is to be able to directly affect the current direction of the chapter. The current undergraduates are an outstanding group of

young men, and they have built an excellent brotherhood. By donating you can have an immediate positive impact on their environment. Acacia is aptly suited to teach young men leadership, responsibility, and social behavior. **A gift to Acacia is in support of education in general.** Let us ensure that these young men have a beautiful and safe house to thrive in!

A final reason to give is to ensure the future of the house. Acacia's continued existence and future success largely rests with the condition of the chapter house. Success in gaining new members is strongly correlated with perceptions of the house and grounds. If you have not already, please join us in ensuring that Cornell Acacia will remain the best house on Cornell's campus for another 100 years.



# CENTENNIAL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN HONOR ROLL

**Chapter Founders' Society**

*\$50,000 and above*

**Corporation President's Society**

*\$25,000 - \$49,999*

#800 David Fischell, 1975

#807 Robert Merritt, 1975

**Chapter President's Society**

*\$10,000 - \$24,999*

The Actives of Cornell Chapter

#434 Robert Flickinger, 1947

#635 Preston Shimer, 1961

#738 Stewart Burger, 1970

**Centennial Benefactor Society**

*\$5,000 - \$9,999*

#403 R. Stephen Hawley, 1943

#492 Bill Burnett, 1953

#783 Stanley Niman, 1973

#836 Bill Utic, 1977

#946 James Carlson, 1988

**Centennial Society**

*\$2,500 - \$4,999*

#450 William Wickham, 1951

#600 John Male, 1958

#607 David Richard McDougal, 1958

#649 John Ahlfeld, 1963

#720 Jerry Kreider, 1968

#842 Bruce Schneider, 1978

#1037 David Klesh, 2002

#1040 Byron Hing, 2002

#1063 Thomas Balcerski, 2005

#1066 Charles Kalter, 2005

#1070 Bradley Ayres, 2006

Anonymous

**Campaign Supporter**

*\$1,000 - \$2,499*

#334 Clarence Bent, 1939

#523 Wallace Rich, 1951

#534 James Symons, 1954

#554 Frank Tetz, 1955

#565 Tom Burrows, 1956

#594 Robert Fash, 1958

#596 Carey Fletcher, 1958

#597 Francis Hugo, 1962

#614 Charles Field, 1959

#620 Bill Easton, 1960

#625 Ivan Szanto, GR

#630 Richard Heine, 1961

#734 Howard Zwiefel, 1969

#796 John Abeles, 1975

#959 John Carpenter, 1991

#960 David Rickerby, 1991

#965 William Cammuso, 1992

#970 Paul Hayre, 1991

#973 Andrew Regenbaum, 1993

#981 Michael Cvijanovich, 1994

#983 Arif Haq, 1994

#994 Todd Peskin, 1995

#1014 Paul Molnar, 1998

#1045 Michael Nasatka, 2003

#1049 Joshua Roth, 2003

#1050 Scott McQuade, 2003

#1053 Andrew Hur, 2004

#1060 Peter Rimshnick, 2005

#1062 David Rimshnick, 2005

#1065 Tarek Banaja, 2005

#1069 Zachary Samuels, 2005

#1081 Mark Elliot, 2007

LS1 Patricia Warner Kehe, 1979

**Campaign Contributor**

*\$25 - \$999*

#431 Frederick Sheldon, 1948

#437 William Gibson, 1948

#440 William Pendarvis, 1947

#443 Robert Bergren, 1950

#492 Scott DePalma, 1953

#496 Robert Squires, 1952

#497 Joe Wilford, 1952

#500 Ernest Schaufler, 1948

#504 John Curtiss, 1951

#509 L.W. "Pete" Knapp, 1951

#524 John Pakan, 1953

#529 Robert Cipperly, 1952

#545 John Mallery, 1952

#560 Neil Sharp, 1955

#590 David Bills, 1958

#632 William Keltz, 1961

#637 Laurence Hoard, 1961

#642 John Krakauer, 1962

#648 William Dearcop, 1962

#673 Edgar Francis, 1965

#674 Timothy Fullam, 1965

#701 Richard McMurtry, 1967

#713 Richard Ahlfeld, 1968

#715 Bill Amon, 1968

#717 David Gorelick, 1968

#722 Sam Roberts, 1968

#723 Daniel Smith, 1968

#730 Thomas Kocovsky, 1969

#756 Stuart Hantman, 1971

#763 Fred Tierney, 1971

#772 Lars Lundeen, 1972

#789 Harlan Meinwald, 1974

#793 Bruce Korf, 1974

#795 James Greig, 1974

#859 Jeffrey Spiro, 1979

#880 Christopher Wong, 1981

#887 Timothy Thom, 1982

#890 Andrew Mercer, 1982

#895 Alan Jette, 1982

#899 Scott Dulman, 1983

#907 Dan Merrill, 1983

#916 Alan Pasquino, 1984

#924 David Mazaika, 1985

#931 Charles Huffine, 1986

#964 James Waxmonsky, 1992

#966 Steven Horowitz, 1992

#969 Andrew Nolan, 1991

#1017 Barclay Hershey, 1998

#1039 John Abrehamson, 2002

#1043 Charles Hong, 2001

#1046 Eric Wursthorn, 2003

#1047 Randy Clark, 2003

#1051 Tom Ricketts, 2003

#1052 Jay Ayres, 2004

#1056 Brian Kwoba, 2004

#1064 Gregory Chulsky, 2005

#1067 Zachary Weinstein, 2005

#1068 Igor Dolgalev, 2005

#1071 Hanny Carp-Martinovici, 2006

#1075 Jeffrey Ballyns, 2005

#1076 Jared Davis, 2006

#1100 Brian Clapp, 2009

Anonymous (3)

*As of 10/08/08*

Cornell Class Year:	# of Donors	# Possible	% Participating
Classes 1935-1950	9	40	23%
Classes 1951-1960	24	101	24%
Classes 1961-1970	21	104	20%
Classes 1971-1980	15	114	13%
Classes 1981-1990	10	98	10%
Classes 1991-2000	13	56	23%
Classes 2001-2010	29	68	43%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>19%</b>

*\* Figures based on number of living brothers and little sisters with known mailing addresses.*

**TOTAL FUNDS**  
**PLEGGED TO DATE:**  
**\$210,035**  
**FROM 121 DONORS**  
**THANK YOU!**