

ALPHA GAMMA RHO BETA GAMMA CRESCENT

May 2026

Continuing the Tradition of Excellence — Fundraising Campaign

By Brother Ken Gibson

Spring is here and we are happy to report that the capital campaign is up and running and off to a great start. We are also pleased to report that in just a few weeks' time, fifty-five brothers have already pledged or made donations totaling close to \$95,000.

It is an unfortunate reality that the cost of construction and overall costs associated with maintaining the chapter house have increased significantly. Considering this reality, we have set some big goals for this campaign. Knowing that we have over 800 alumni who have benefited from the bonds of brotherhood over the years it is our hope that every brother will give something toward this campaign.

The AGR Alumni board has recognized three areas of importance for the campaign: **House Improvements** with a goal of \$200,000, **Scholarship** with a goal of \$200,000 and a **Mortgage Reduction** goal of \$100,000.

We are optimistic that at least 150 men will donate at the \$1,000 level or more. We ask every brother to consider giving at a level that is appropriate for them. Gifts of \$1,000-2,499 will be recognized on the giving tree in the chapter house as a Pioneer Award gift. A gift of \$2,500-4,999 will be recognized as a Brotherhood Award gift and a gift of \$5,000-9,999 will be recognized as a Founder Award gift. Gifts of \$10,000 or more will receive distinctive recognition. Your gifts can be pledged over a three-year period.

A few weeks ago, every Beta Gamma brother was mailed a letter about the campaign and an invitation-to-give form. The



letter outlines in greater detail what is included in these three areas of importance. We realize that some of you may have questions and I invite you to call any member of the Fundraising committee. We welcome all questions. An update on the campaign will be given at each of the six summer alumni reunion events scheduled for this summer. Please see an article outlining these special events elsewhere in this issue of the Crescent. ●

Campaign Fundraising Committee

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Ken Fiedler 815-275-6643

Bob Janes 608-490-1194

Scott Laufenberg 608-575-6189

Jay Long 815-708-3598

Michael Long 815-508-7119

Dave Ward 920-723-1211

Advisor Report

By Dr. Charles Steiner #653, Beta Gamma Advisor



As another academic year ends, it seems like a suitable time to reflect on the past and embrace what the future has in store. This report reflects on the current state and progress of the Beta Gamma Chapter with a focus on three core areas essential to the long-term success of the fraternity: Brotherhood, Strengthening Connections, and Engagement. Each of these pillars plays a

critical role in shaping both the individual experience and the collective strength of the chapter.

The undergraduates continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to fostering a sense of brotherhood among our members. There is a clear culture of mutual respect, shared responsibility, and accountability that has been evident in both formal chapter activities and informal interactions.

Brothers are increasingly supportive of one another academically, socially, and professionally. Study groups, mentorship between big and little brothers, and consistent attendance at brotherhood events are all positive indicators. New brothers appear to be integrating well, suggesting that recruitment and onboarding processes are effective in identifying individuals who align with our values. We have several recently initiated brothers who are serving in leadership roles on the executive team.

That said, sustained effort is needed to ensure brotherhood remains intentional rather than incidental. Continued emphasis on meaningful programming, beyond social events, will help deepen relationships and reinforce shared purpose.

The chapter has made progress in strengthening both internal and external connections. Alumni engagement has increased with communication and involvement in chapter events. Founders' day was a success, and we had alumni back to meet with the undergraduates during our Monday evening meetings. This is an area with significant potential, particularly in terms of career networking, mentorship, and alumni support.

We are excited about the AGR alumni events that are being planned this summer as another opportunity to connect and engage with fellow brothers. The Alumni Golf Outing Supporting BILSA Scholarships is scheduled for Friday, August 14 at The Oaks Golf Course in Cottage Grove, Wisconsin. The AGR Alumni Board has been a sponsor for years and have had a large turnout of brothers' golf and/or attend the alumni happy hour event after golf. Sponsorship and registration details can be found here: www.uwplatt.edu/events/2026/08/alumni-golf-outing-supporting-bilsa-scholarships

On campus, the chapter maintains a positive reputation with focus on building relationships with faculty, staff, and other student organizations. Members are visible in leadership roles and campus activities, which enhances the fraternity's credibility and influence.

The university recently completed a study that explores and quantifies the economic impact of the university on our graduates, the tri-state region, and the state of Wisconsin. Details on the UW-Platteville 2025 Economic Impact Report can be found here: www.uwplatt.edu/economic-impact

Industry connections, particularly within agriculture and related fields, remain a key opportunity. Expanding professional outreach, through guest speakers, company visits, and internship pipelines further aligns the chapter with our professional mission.

Philanthropic and community service efforts are commendable, with

Beta Gamma Key Contacts

May 2026

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Message From the President

By Kim Keeseey #180 Alumni Board President



I am proud to say that our commitment to the fraternity continues to grow. We have over 31 Brothers engaged in our seven committees. What a statement that makes, not to mention that over \$72k has already been pledged to the fundraising campaign from committee members. Each of you received a letter detailing the needs and plans that the Board and committee have identified. Your generous gifts will

help us make our "Continuing our Tradition of Excellence" fundraising campaign a reality. Thank you!

The annual Founder's meeting that was held on April 18 in Russell Hall gave each committee chair the opportunity to share their key plans and accomplishments. The presentation can be found on the brother's side of our website - Plattevilleagr.com. I would encourage

you to login to view the slides and stay abreast of upcoming activities, meetings, and events.

Our Alumni Board goals for this year are, 1) increase engagement and involvement, 2) full launch of the fundraising campaign, 3) bring the Alumni Board to nine by adding two new members, and 4) complete the first draft of a strategic plan. Please welcome Rich Grulke #343 and Dakota James #762 as our newly elected Alumni Board members (which allowed us to achieve goal #3).

The undergrads continue to work hard on recruiting, community involvement, and officer involvement in the alumni committees. They are also doing an excellent job communicating on Facebook the activities that they participate in as well as personal highlights of young Brothers.

Lastly, we hope you can make one of the upcoming summer Beta Gamma outings (listed on the website). Thank you for your support. God bless you and your family. ●

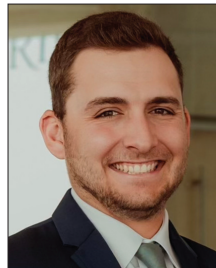
Meet the New Members of the Board



Rich Grulke #343, Beaver Dam, WI – Rich is originally from Mayville WI and earned a BS in Soil and Crop Science with a minor in Horticulture from UWP in 1991. He spent 1988 working on two farms in Australia. After 34 years (plus two summers) with Seneca Foods Corporation - best known for private label vegetables like Green Giant and Libby's - he recently retired. He worked as a field representative and during

the last seven years he also served as Pest Control Supervisor. He and his wife, Terri, live on a farmette near Beaver Dam, WI and have one daughter, Emma. He enjoys raising a few beef cattle, row crop farming, woodworking and traveling. He has built cabinets, custom furniture and been involved in extensive remodeling and finish carpentry projects. He has served on his church Board of Directors as the property and grounds manager for the past 15 years. He also served as general leader of his local 4-H club for 10 years and participates in

the Dodge County Leaders Association. Rich is happy to be back on the board for a second term and looking forward to giving back to the fraternity. He also serves on the Beta Gamma scholarship committee.



Dakota James #762 was initiated in the Fall of 2014 in the Gamma Upsilon class. He graduated in the Spring of 2018 from UW-Platteville with an Ag Business degree and a minor in Soil and Crop Sciences. After graduation he moved to Chippewa Falls, WI where he worked in agronomy sales. Dakota currently lives just outside of his hometown of Mineral Point, WI where he is currently employed by Nutrien Ag Solutions. In

his free time Dakota enjoys helping at his family's beef farm, hunting out on his land, and coaching high school baseball in the spring for Mineral Point High School. He is looking forward to giving back to AGR and supporting the undergrads and alumni the best he can.

Advisor Report continued from page 2

brothers showing genuine investment in giving back. Funds raised from Ag Fest each year have went to supporting School of Agriculture initiatives and the chapter has donated funds to other organizations to support charitable causes. These activities not only benefit the community but also strengthen internal bonds and reinforce shared values.

Additionally, balancing academic responsibilities with fraternity involvement remains important. Continued emphasis on academic accountability will ensure that engagement does not come at the expense of scholastic performance.

The chapter is in a positive position, with strong foundations in brotherhood, strengthening connections, and member engagement. The chapter's culture reflects its values, and there is clear momentum

in several key areas.

Moving forward, the focus will be on:

- Deepening the quality of brotherhood experiences
- Expanding alumni and industry connections
- Ensuring consistent and meaningful engagement

With continued intentional leadership and commitment, the chapter is well-positioned to strengthen its impact both on campus and within the broader agricultural community.

Thanks to all the alumni who have supported the undergraduates and us advisors over the past year. Have a great summer and we hope to see you at one of the upcoming alumni events. Fraternaly, Chuck Steiner, David Heimerdinger and Ryan Pralle, Chapter Advisors ●

Do You Know Someone Who Will Be Attending UW-P?

If so, please contact Kurt Zimmerman, zimmermanku@uwplatt.edu, 217-649-2184 or Grant Otter, otterg@uwplatt.edu, 262-210-3009.

Annual Meeting Report

By Dave Ward #85



The Annual meeting of the Beta Gamma Alumni Association took place at 2pm on April 18 at Russell Hall on the UW-Platteville campus. Alumni President Brother Kim Keesey #180 called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silence for those Brothers who have passed away. Kim then asked that each brother introduce themselves.

There were approximately 55 alumni, undergrads, and advisors in attendance.

Brother Ken Gibson #231 then reviewed the minutes of last year's meeting.

President Keesey reported on the goals and priorities of the Board. They include increasing the Board to nine members, increasing Alumni engagement, kicking off a fundraising campaign, and starting work on a Strategic Plan.

Alumni Treasurer Brother Kevin McArtor #280 reported on the finances of the Alumni Association. Kevin mentioned that the insurance settlement from last spring's hailstorm more than covered the repairs to the siding and the roof on the house. Kevin also reported that the Alumni Association is on track to meet their budget goals. The Association's net worth is \$702,054.00 up from \$658,668.

George Kilbride #181 reported on the status of the house and grounds. He went into depth on hail damage. George also mentioned that a new hot water heater was installed. The previous water heater was 15 years old. George outlined future priorities for improvements and repairs to the house. Brother Gary Hertzburg #184 volunteered to

fill a vacant spot on the House and Grounds Committee.

Ken Gibson outlined the work that the Fundraising Committee is undertaking. Ken and the Committee will go into more detail in a separate article.

Chapter Advisor Brother David Heimdinger #513 announced the winners of the following matching funds scholarships: Highest GPA - Ethan Bode #911, Most Improved GPA - Jacob Brouillard #926, Key Committee Man - Owen Trone #919, and Outstanding Undergraduate - Tyce Bettenhausen #916.

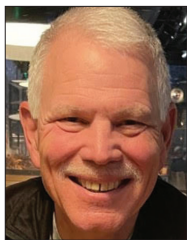
Brother Gary Klug #134, Chair of the Alumni Relations Committee reviewed the Alumni Reunions that are planned for this summer. He will go into more detail with dates, times, and location in a separate article. Mark Keesey #222 explained the goals of the Communications Committee. The committee wants to improve our email list. He also reviewed the website.

David Heimdinger gave a brief status on the UW-Platteville School of Agriculture. Enrollment is down slightly at 413 students and 73% of School of Agriculture students are female. David believes that with high school graduation numbers that are declining, UW-Platteville will be challenged to keep the student population steady. He thinks the low point will be around 2030.

Kim Keesey, Kevin McArtor, and George Kilbride were reelected to the board of directors. At last year's Annual meeting a by-law change was passed expanding the board to nine members. Brothers Dakota James #762 and Rich Grulke #343 were elected to fill those new positions on the board. A social gathering at Steve's Pizza followed the meeting. ●

Communications Committee Report

By Mark Keesey #222



First off, a huge thanks needs to be extended to the Beta Gamma Communications Committee for their tireless efforts in keeping our Chapter communications processes strong. Our Crescent team (Chuck Miller - Editor and Dave Ward - Asst. Editor) continue to excel in publishing our bi-annual newsletter. This year we have parted ways with our previous Crescent layout editor (thank you

Ashley Yaeger for your support). Our new layout editor is Ryan Ebert. We are looking forward to his support for the Crescent. Thanks also goes to Jack Tarnutzer (VNR Public Relations) for his efforts in keeping our AGR Facebook (facebook.com/plattevillealphagammarho/) vibrant and current. Jack is also instrumental with undergraduate updates to the Beta Gamma website. Thank you Team!

The Beta Gamma website (PlattevilleAGR.com) was launched last September (highlighted in the December 2025 Crescent). It continues to be updated (with news / events, event pictures, Brother profile ar-

ticles, and Crescents) as well as improved with additional information like fundraising campaign details, annual meeting slides, and in memoriams for our Brothers. We encourage all Brothers to take advantage of this wealth of information. Access is through the login process (an overview of this process can be accessed at plattevilleagr.com/login_overview/). If you have any difficulties getting into the website, do not hesitate in contacting Mark Keesey (agrmak222@gmail.com or 262-501-7176).

And as we continue to move to improve our digital communications with the Chapter, it will be important to have ways of accomplishing those communications. An evaluation of our Brothers "master list" has indicated we have approximately 220 Brothers (more than 25%) that have no email address listed. It will be our goal in 2026 to close that gap. If you are one of those Brothers that currently does not have an email address listed, please expect that a Brother will be reaching out to you. You can also always update your contact information through Chuck Miller at cmiller4424@gmail.com. ●

Your Dues Support the Crescent

If you find the Crescent publication valuable and informative, please support the newsletter with your dues. We now have over 800 brothers on our mailing list. As our membership list grows, so does the expense of printing and mailing the Crescent. Costs average over \$3,000 per issue. We sincerely thank those that regularly support Beta Gamma with their alumni dues. ●

Donations & Gifts

By Scott Laufenberg #224

The following Brothers have made a gift to Beta Gamma since December (12/1/2025 - 5/7/2026).

We wish to sincerely thank all donors, large and small, for truly helping AGR 'Make Better Men'.

005 John Blaska	050 Dwight Horkheimer	120 Pat Kelly	317 Robert Weiglein
006 John Krueger	071 Steve & Sharon Mergen	121 Raymond Morse	342 David Wright
010 Mark Highland	085 Dave Ward	134 Gary Klug	355 David & Kris Welsh
018 Patrick Krutza	090 Jack Ellickson	142 Mark Yanke	367 Jeffrey Radl
019 Jeffrey Key	094 Kenneth Whitmore	224 Scott Laufenberg	370 Duane Schaefer
032 John Elvekrog	096 Daniel & Rose Dreis	231 Kenneth Gibson	370 Duane Schaefer
033 Charles Brandt	106 Daniel Adams	280 Kevin & Denise McArtor	585 Christopher Jefferies
035 Ronald Pribnow	108 James Smith	266 Jeffry Laufenberg	OTH Robin Patterson
048 Jeffrey Blaska	109 Charles Miller	296 Lyle Poch	

Spring 2026 Scholarship Report

By Scott Laufenberg #224



The scholarship committee, not unlike our organization, is committed to "Making Better Men". Our goal is to recruit the best and brightest then reward high achievers and brothers of high character. In 2026 we took some additional burden off the undergrad chapter by funding the National Leadership Conference for \$2,500.

We are doing this by offering New Initiate Scholarships. These scholarships help cover a portion of the initiation fees for all new Initiates, making it easier for them to join Alpha Gamma Rho. This year we are proud to welcome an outstanding group of 14 new initiates. Additionally, we are providing two Making Better Men scholarships to further support our recruitment efforts. These scholarships are awarded to individuals

who demonstrate exceptional leadership potential, emphasizing our commitment to developing future leaders within the fraternity.

We offer the Grulke and Valstad Scholarships for high achievers and members of the highest character.

We need everyone's support for the upcoming "Tradition of Excellence" fundraising campaign to achieve our goals. Our fund balances are as follows:

- Beta Gamma Scholarship Fund at AGR National.....\$123,683
- Dennis Valstad Scholarship Fund at AGR National.....\$48,970
- AGR Scholarship Fund at UW Platteville Foundation.....\$8,600

With additional funds donated to the New UW Platteville Foundation account we were able to increase our Scholarship spend to **\$8,800** for the past school year. ●

Notice of 2026 Alumni Dues

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

I would like my donation applied toward:

- 2026 Alumni Dues \$40.00
 Other Donation \$ _____

To pay by check: Make your check payable to Platteville AGR Alumni and mail to:
Platteville AGR Alumni Treasurer, PO Box 7, Platteville WI 53818

To pay online: Visit <https://2026-alumni-dues.cheddarup.com/> or scan this QR code.



Graduating Seniors



Trent Laufenberg #886 is graduating with a degree in Engineering Technology Management. Following graduation, he will pursue a career in construction project management. During his time as a member of Alpha Gamma Rho, Trent has been the Noble Ruler, Vice Noble Ruler Operations, Chaplain, Ducks Unlimited Chairman,

Block and Bridle Beef and Lamb Show Chair, and a Ceres sweetheart. Being a brother of AGR has given him some of his closest friendships, lifelong memories, and real-world experience that will carry into his professional career. His time in the fraternity pushed him to stay involved and take full advantage of his college years.



Brayden Peter #887 is graduating with a bachelor's degree in Animal Science and Agricultural Business. Following graduation, he plans to move back home to expand his family's show pig operation while continuing to grow his career in the livestock nutrition industry. During his time as a member of Alpha Gamma Rho,

Brayden was very involved, serving as Vice Noble Ruler of Activities and Vice Noble Ruler of Membership Development, while also contributing to the Risk Management Committee, Judicial Board, and Community Service Committee. In addition to his fraternity involvement, he found a second home in the Block and Bridle club, where he held leadership roles as President, Vice President, and Swine Show Chair over the past four years. His time at Platteville was an incredible experience, and through Alpha Gamma Rho he learned the true value of brotherhood, leadership, and commitment, making it clear there is no other place or group of people he would rather have spent his college years with.



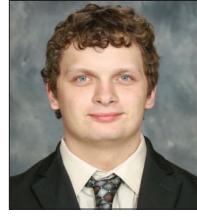
Mason Raabe #892 is graduating with a degree in finance. Following graduation helps to develop his career in finance. During his time as a member of Alpha Gamma Rho, Mason has been Vice Noble Ruler of Finance and the treasurer of Ducks Unlimited. Being a brother of AGR has meant that Mason has been able to both develop

himself professionally and make lifelong friendships and memories.

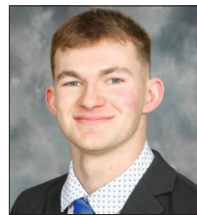


Brody Mahon #894 is graduating with a major in Soil and Crop Science and a minor in Agribusiness. Following graduation, he will assist Full Bin Agronomy, Mahon Farms, and Rahn Seed and Services as a seed sales associate for Pioneer Seed. During his time as a member of Alpha Gamma Rho, Brody served as Vice Noble

Ruler of Alumni Relations and held several committee chair positions. Being part of this fraternity has helped set him up for success in the business world by allowing him to network with members across many different areas of agriculture.



Zachary Kostka #895 is graduating with a degree in Criminal Justice with a minor in Forensic Investigation. After graduation he plans to enter and complete the 720-hour Wisconsin Department of Justice Law Enforcement Academy. Upon completion of the academy, Zach plans to start his career in law enforcement as a Patrol Deputy with the Rusk County Sheriff's Office. During his time at Alpha Gamma Rho Zach served as Vice Noble Ruler of Activities, Public relations, and served on many committees such as the Ag Fest committee and judicial board. During his time at AGR, Zach was able to better himself professionally and through the agriculture industry. AGR gave Zach a college home that he will forever be grateful for, and friends and memories that will last forever.



Owen Jones #896 is graduating with a degree in Soil and Crop Science. Following graduation, he plans to work on his family farm in Cambria, WI and begin his drone spraying business. During his time as a member of Alpha Gamma Rho, Owen has held the role of provisions, as well as being a key member of many committees within the chapter. Being a brother of AGR has allowed him to strengthen his leadership skills, while making lifelong friendships and expanding his connections in the agriculture industry.



Jack Lichte #901 is graduating with a degree in Crop and Soil Science with an Agronomy emphasis, as well as a degree in Agribusiness. Following graduation, he plans to work with United Cooperative in Prairie du Sac as an Agronomy sales trainee and applicator. During his time as a member of Alpha Gamma Rho, Jack has held

various positions such as Public Relations, head of community service, and participated multiple times on the QC board. Being a brother of AGR has meant so much to him as he has made so many lifelong friends in his time at Beta Gamma, as well as many connections out in Industry as a whole. Being in AGR also got him and many others involved in many more activities, such as the Agronomy Club and the Collegiate Crops Team.



Ethan Bode #911 has been accepted and is enrolling in Veterinary school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison prior to graduation from UW-Platteville. During his time as a member of Alpha Gamma Rho, Ethan served as Vice Noble Ruler of Scholarship, as well as being a part of the Judicial Board and the Scholarship committee. Being a brother of AGR has been very impactful in his life because of the relationship he has been able to form, and the opportunities he has been able to capitalize on. From his fellow brothers and advisors, he has received mentorship and friendship which has helped him succeed in his endeavors. He wants to truly thank the members of Alpha Gamma Rho who have supported him thus far, and who will continue to do so in his future.

Alumni News



Scott Wilson #66, Burlington, WI - The Wisconsin Pork Association (WPA) recognized Scott Wilson Family as Distinguished Service Producer Honoree as their outstanding pork industry leaders during the organization's annual meeting. The Wilson Family farms are where Scott, a fifth-generation farmer, works alongside his children, Alex, Anna, and Amber and their families. Wilson's Prairie View Farms is the only SPF certified hog operation in the state of Wisconsin. In other words, Wilson's hogs are disease-free and rigorously tested to maintain the integrity of the herds. They raise most of their feedstuffs and sell their highly acclaimed breeding stock nationwide. In 2004, Wilson's expanded their enterprise when they purchased the Elkhorn Locker Plant. Now named Wilson Farm Meats, the family proudly sells their home-raised pork and other local meat products. The Wilson family is very forward thinking and works hard to pioneer the way in swine health and production efficiency. They are active members of WPA and are always willing volunteers when needed. The Wilson's set an example of what America's pig farms are known for: family, hard work, honesty, and grit. Reprinted from the MidwestFarmsReport.com



Mike & Lynn Martz #154, Maple Park, IL - Prairie Farmer Magazine has awarded the Martz's as a 2026 Master Farmer. They received the award in Bloomington, IL on March 12. The award recognizes individuals with exceptional agricultural production skills, commitment to family and service to community.

Mike and Lynn Martz farm near Maple Park, Ill., where corn feeds cattle, and cattle manure fertilizes corn. Mike manages the cattle, while Lynn oversees the crops, creating a seamless partnership. Together, they've built Larson Farms Partnership and Larson Grain Farms into a 7,100-acre operation producing corn, soybeans and finishing 7,000 cattle annually. Their family, including their son and Lynn's parents and brothers, plays a vital role in the farm's success.

The Martz's are known for meticulous financial management, resource stewardship, and community involvement. Lynn and her father, Ray Larson, are the first father-daughter pair to be named Master Farmers, with Ray earning the title in 1970.

The farm operates two distinct divisions. The cattle side, managed by Mike, includes a 3,300-head feedlot and advanced ultrasound technology to optimize feeding efficiency and product quality. They've ultrasounded cattle for 30 years, sorting them into feeding groups, feeding efficiency, and improving relationships with packers. The grain side, led by Lynn, produces corn, soybeans, and wheat, with 800,000 bushels of storage. Lynn handles financials, marketing, and innovative practices like selective spraying technology and non-GMO soybeans for premiums.

Technology plays a key role, with y-drops, see-and-spray, and exact-apply systems reducing costs and improving efficiency. Renowned animal behaviorist Temple Grandin designed their cattle facilities, enhancing safety and animal welfare.

Beyond the farm, Mike and Lynn contribute to conservation and the Illinois beef industry. Mike helped pass a statewide checkoff in 2014, while Lynn serves on the soil and water conservation district board. Both aim to leave a legacy of faith, hard work, and excellence in agriculture, embodying the best of Illinois farming. Mike and Lynn were

nominated by Josh St. Peters, Illinois Beef Association.

Reprinted with permission from PrairieFarmer.

Randy Wileman #234, Janesville, WI - Randy retired from Westphal & Co., Inc. (Electrical Contractor), where he was employed for 34 years as Senior Project Manager. Randy's wife Mary is an accountant and tax preparer. Their son, Bowen, works for Westphal & Co. as an electrician. Bowen and his wife reside in Milton, WI. Their daughter, Caitlyn, works for Topigs Norsvin and resides in Grimes, IA with her husband. Their future plans include vacationing and camping and riding his Harley.

Tim and Mark Keller #313, Mt Horeb - Mark and his brother, Tim, and their families, Kellercrest Registered Holsteins Inc was recognized at the Wisconsin Holstein Association State convention in February as the Wisconsin Distinguished Holstein Breeder for 2025. Info was in the April Wisconsin Holstein News.

RT Rick Thompson #357, Darlington, WI - RT will be Judging the Brown Swiss Show at World Dairy Expo this fall in Madison. Congratulations to RT for being recognized as prominent US cattle judge. This is an outstanding honor. World Dairy Expo is the premier forum for the global dairy community to learn, share, create commerce and showcase competition.



Garrett Benzing #738, Sparta, WI - Will serve as an honorary ambassador for the Sparta Area Cancer Support (SACS) organization this year. He was a SACS honoree back in 2014 after he had been diagnosed with a rare and aggressive pediatric cancer, alveolar rhabdomyosarcoma, at the age of 22, not long after graduating from UW-Platteville. A cancerous tumor was found in his left leg, so after they amputated above the knee a mid-thigh level, Garrett thought it would be over. "We thought I was cancer free the first time I did an amputation," said Benzing. "We went through a year of treatment and then it was gone. Then after about a year plus it came back or never left." The rest of Garrett's leg was removed, leaving just a hip. "That was a bit of an adjustment, as an understatement," said Benzing. He went through treatment for about five years before being told he was in the clear. Then another five years later, while amid planning a wedding with his fiancée and just after buying a house, he was diagnosed with cancer again in July of 2023. After a third surgery he has been cancer free since September 2024." Garrett said that SACS has helped him in so many ways and he is honored to be able to represent them again for a second time. Garrett works as a Farm Loan Officer for the USDA Farm Service Agency in Monroe and Jackson counties. Reprinted from the MONROE COUNTY HERALD By Logan Everson



Thomas Long #778, Weyauwega, WI - In 2023 Thomas married Alyssa and they purchased a home. In October 2024 they welcomed their first child, Cynthia Charlotte Long. Thomas says that Cynthia has changed our lives in the best way. In May 2025 Thomas took a position as Field Service Engineer for Simpson, a division of Norican Group, a company that sells and services foundry equipment. His territory is the globe with a general focus on Wisconsin and adjacent states.

Volunteers Wanted

Volunteers for Beta Gamma Mentor Program. We need Alumni to step up and give some time to undergraduate Brothers - a relationship that can become whatever you make of it! Casual in nature and or career path discussions - it is a great opportunity to give

back, share life's insights or lend an ear! This is a great way to connect with the House and UW-Platteville. Contact Tyce Bettenhausen - bettenhausset@uwplatte.edu or Gary Klug - klughihamp@tm.net for more information. ●

Beta Gamma Standing Committees

House and Grounds

- Planning and managing housing projects including maintenance and renovations
- Works with the fundraising committee to prioritize future projects
- Works with the active chapter to maintain the chapter house
 - George Kilbride - Chair
 - Frank Raupp
 - Gary Herzberg
 - VNR-Operations- Jonas Jandrin

Scholarship

- Administers the scholarship program including picking scholarship winners
- Advances leadership opportunities within the chapter with AGR foundation funds
- Identifies new ways the alumni can support the educational excellence of the chapter
- Works with the fundraising committee to grow the scholarship funds
 - Scott Laufenberg - Chair
 - Ron Goplin
 - Ken Von Rueden
 - Richard Grulke
 - Micheal Long
 - VNR Scholarship – Braden Rogers
 - Chapter Advisor - Dr. Ryan Pralle

Communication

- *Coordinates content for twice yearly Crescent publications*
- *Builds and maintains website including relevant alumni and chapter information*
- *Maintains list of names, addresses, phone numbers and emails*
- *Informs alumni of any alumni news, events or information via email, Facebook and mail*
 - Mark Keeseey – Chair, Website Design
 - Chuck Miller - Crescent Editor
 - David Ward - Crescent Articles
 - Open
 - VNR Public Relations – Jack Tarnutzer
 - Ryan Ebert – Layout editor

Alumni Relations

- Plan alumni events
- Works with the chapter to have alumni and chapter joint events
- Runs the mentor program to build relationships with alumni and undergraduates
 - Gary Klug - Chair, Mentor Program
 - Jim Kruger
 - VNR Alumni Relations – Tyce Bettenhausen
 - Larry Raupp
 - Open

Fundraising

- Plans and execute fundraising drives for the alumni association
- Works with the scholarship committee to identify scholarship fundraising needs
- Works with the housing and grounds committee to identify fundraising needs
- Keep lifetime giving records and manage the house giving tree
- Manages the Beta Gamma Fund, Valstad Fund and future housing fund
 - Ken Gibson - Chair
 - Jay Long
 - Scott Laufenberg
 - Michael Long
 - Bob Janes
 - Brian Donnelly
 - Ken Fiedler
 - Jeff Bode
 - Dave Ward

55th Alumni Banquet/events

- Evaluate and recommend options to accommodate alumni needs
- Reserve facilities and cater, communication, etc.
- Coordinate alumni and actives to help with logistics
 - Dave & Kris Welsh – Co-director
 - Dave Bohnhoff – Co-director
 - Larry Raupp
 - John Scott
 - Randy Binversie
 - Mike North
 - VNR Alumni Relations - Tyce Bettenhausen
 - VNR Planning – Derek Schwartzlow
 - VNR Activities – Owen Trone

Strategic Planning

- Develops a strategic plan that provides a road map for long term survival
- Utilize the resources of alumni, advisors, and undergraduates
- Communicate and review the strategic plan annually
- Responsible for overseeing the execution of the strategic plan
 - Jay Long - Chair
 - Charles Steiner – Chapter Advisor
 - Ryan Pralle – Chapter Advisor
 - David Heimerdinger – Chapter Advisor
 - Kevin Klubertanz
 - Mark Keeseey
 - Jeff Bode
 - Sam Peetz
 - Dave Ward
 - Noble Ruler – Grant Otter

State of the Chapter

By Grant Otter #910, Noble Ruler



Greetings brothers, I hope this report finds you well. Once again, the end of the school year has arrived here at Beta Gamma. As we move toward the last few days of this spring semester, I want to look back and recognize the achievements and high points of the past couple of months. Regarding the size of our chapter, we have passed another great threshold. We are now sitting at 41 members

after this year's recruitment. In the fall we recorded thirteen new members, and we added one more this spring. These new brothers have already shown their drive to further our fraternity and its interests. We are very happy that these outstanding men have decided to join AGR Beta Gamma. We look forward to continuing to grow with them as we make each other into better men. There have been eighteen brothers living in the chapter house this spring semester, and there will be eighteen again come fall. At the conclusion of the spring semester, we will be sending seven seniors out into the world with hopes that they will do great things now that their time here is complete.

The Beta Gamma Chapter just finished our chapter visit from AGR nationals on the 4th of May and should be receiving Gold Chapter status once again. This positions us towards the top of chapters nationally, which is very impressive considering our chapters age and size relative to many others. This award demonstrates our new officer team's great start this spring along with our longstanding tradition of good work throughout the chapter.

When it comes to academics, we remain in good shape and continue to take our studies seriously while maintaining strong scholastic standards. The undergraduates have worked hard to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.33, which reflects the hard work, discipline, and perseverance of our brothers. At the end of the day our education is what we are here at UW-Platteville for so it is something we try to hold to a high standard.

Our involvement on campus and within the community has been something that our new officer team has been trying to increase but we do have a good amount of involvement already. Our brothers hold officer positions and high involvement across a wide range of organizations, including the Inter-fraternal Council, Campus Programming and Relations, Block and Bridle, Farm Bureau, Ag Ambassadors, Ag Business Club, Dairy Club, the Dairy Judging Team, Crops Team, Agronomy club, and Accounting and Finance club. These are just a few of the more than twenty clubs and organizations in which our members are actively engaged. Through these roles, they continue to develop strong leadership skills that will serve them well both during their time here on campus and throughout their professional and personal lives after graduation.

This summer we will be hosting our 2nd ever summer scholarship event. The "Making Better Men" event will be held on June 27 at the chapter house. We have sent out emails to all the guidance counselors and Ag teachers in Wisconsin hoping to attract as many potential future brothers as possible. Last year we gained six new initiates through this event. We plan to do house tours, interviews, a tour of the farm along with just spending some time with all those that attend. After the event we pick two of the attending recruits to receive the

scholarships. This event is something we really hope to build on from last year and continue improving in the future. With time we think this could become our biggest fall recruitment tool.

Our 50th Ag-Fest will be this fall on September 18th. This year's speaker is still up in the air so I cannot say for sure who it will be yet. We plan to try to get more involvement from students in the School of Ag along with more faculty involvement as well. We will also have several local and regional companies attend as sponsors, which will allow the attending undergraduates to get the benefit of connecting with possible employers. Some of the representatives from these companies will even be alumni of Beta Gamma, which is a great thing to see. The Adam Bartel's Band will be back to perform live music after dinner. I hope to see as many of you guys as possible, it should be a fun time.

Reflecting on this spring semester, I am happy to share how well the state of our chapter is. The new executive team has been working hard to maintain the longstanding excellence of our chapter, and we look forward to rolling that over through summer and into fall as we get back to school next year. I would like to thank the previous officers for their help with transitioning me and the new officers into our roles. If we continue to maintain and improve strong relations among the alumni and undergraduates, we will continue to strengthen the bond shared by the brothers of our beloved fraternity.

To our graduating seniors, thank you for your dedication to Alpha Gamma Rho. Your hard work, leadership, and commitment to our values have set an outstanding example for your younger brothers. You have each played a vital role in helping us pursue our mission to "Make Better Men."

To our alumni brothers, past and present, who have supported us with their time, service, or hard-earned dollars. Thank you for your unwavering trust and generosity. We would not be where we are today without your continued involvement, and it is your support that allows us to remain the strongest fraternity on our campus. The time and effort you guys put into helping us does not go unnoticed and is much appreciated.

To the Alumni Board of Directors, thank you for your constant help and drive in creating the best home anyone could ask for here at Beta Gamma. The board has been a tremendous help for our new officer team and has really kept us on track. I hope to continue building on all the things we have worked on in the past with you all.

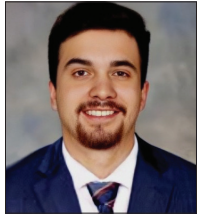
To the Beta Gamma chapter advisors, thank you for everything you do. We are deeply grateful for the time you take from your busy lives to guide and support us as we navigate this chapter of our own. Without you guys, things would be significantly more difficult.

Serving as Noble Ruler this spring has been a wonderful experience for me for which I am very thankful. The memories and experiences I have had so far are ones I will always remember. I am honored and grateful to be able to serve the chapter alongside so many friends and I am confident that this will continue next fall. Thank you for trusting me with the opportunity to serve this fraternity and contribute to shaping the place we call "home."

I hope everyone has a great summer. Do not hesitate to reach out or drop by 845 West Madison Street as we would be more than happy to see you. ●

Strategic Plan

By Jay Long #864



The Strategic Planning Committee has been meeting since Fall 2025 to help shape priorities for the chapter in the future. The eight-person committee includes chapter advisors, alumni, actives, and alumni board members.

The committee has started the process of building a roadmap that will help guide our chapter's growth and engagement over the next several years. Part of the process is using tools such as The Baldrige Excellence Framework,

a tool that allows the committee to track performance and results. As of now, the committee is meeting monthly and is finalizing a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis. The goal is to identify 3-5 objectives for each portion of the SWOT analysis and create goals centered around each one that are attainable and trackable.

The committee is planning to have the first draft of the strategic plan by the end of the year and finalized copy by the 55th Anniversary in March 2027. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Jay Long. 815.708.3598 or jlong3584@gmail.com. ●

Summer Reunions Events

By Gary Klug



Have you recently thought about your experiences and connections with AGR and Platteville? Do you have great House memories that bring a smile to your face? Perhaps, you recall a Brother's antics-that causes a chuckle out of nowhere and makes people wonder what you are up to. Do you often wonder where those

Brothers are, who shared moments of craziness or moments of triumph and joy with you? Whatever those moments of fun, pride, or perhaps trials were, special times were had and Brothers bonded. Many of us long for such moments in our lives again, and we believe we can accomplish that by recalling, reclaiming and returning to joy-

filled moments of Brotherhood.

To that end, you are invited! We have planned six Summer Alumni Reunions for all of us to rekindle memories and make new ones. We are hopeful that you will consider attending one or more of these gatherings. In doing so, you are certain to run across a brother you haven't seen in quite some time! Please select one, two or ALL that fit your schedule and enjoy these fun-filled events. See the list of the reunions for locations, dates, and times, and who will be hosting each event.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have questions or input, please feel free to reach out to one of us. We are excited to offer these get-togethers and hope to see you this summer! Brother Gary Klug, Chair Beta Gamma Alumni Relations 712-202-4461 ●

Summer Reunion Schedule			
DATE	LOCATION	START TIME	Host(s)
Friday June 5	Ziegler Winery W3953 Winnebago Heights Malone, WI	3:00 PM, Band 5-8 PM Cash bar Food Available for purchase	Kerry & Barb Henning 920-286-0610
Tuesday June 23	Kestrel Ridge Golf Course 900 Avalon Rd Columbus, WI	4:00 PM Heavy hors d' oeuvres Golf early afternoon by RSVP	John Blaska-608-358-5580 Jeff Blaska 608-628-0197 Dave Ward 920-723-1211
Saturday July 11	Donnelly Ranch 9944 North Wallin Rd Edgerton, WI	1:00 PM Refreshments and 'lots of food' Family Friendly	Brian Donnelly 608-201-9406 Bob Janes-608-490-1194
Wednesday July 15	Older AGR Fellows Group Brigham Park, 3160 Co. F Blue Mounds, WI	1:00 PM Potluck Picnic Meat provided	Ron Goplin 608-206-1987
Sunday July 26	Jonamac Orchard 19412 Shabbona Rd Malta, IL	1:00 PM Food and Refreshments "Bring the family"	Kevin McArtor 815-761-8996 Mike Martz 815-751-0519
Saturday Aug 1	The North Barn 2137 Pine Grove Rd Platteville, WI 53818	1:00 PM Food and refreshments Families welcome	Mike North 608-778-0338 Scott Laufenberg 608-575-6189

Has Your Contact Info Changed?

Have you moved or do you have a new email address or phone number?
Please send updates to Chuck Miller at cmiller4424@gmail.com.

New Member Recruitment

By Kurt Zimmerman #934



The spring 2026 recruitment class consists of one phenomenal new member who I am excited to call my brother. While the numbers for this semester may be small, I am excited for the upcoming recruitment opportunities we have. The most prominent of these being our upcoming scholarship event being held on June 27th in Platteville. We are taking applications for the Making Better Men scholarship up until June 10th, and I am excited to host this event and bring more young leaders into our fraternity. The scholarship has two main parts to it, the first being a simple online application about the candidates past leadership experiences and future plans. The second is a day visit to the house including interviews, meeting the Brothers and getting familiar with the house, a farm tour, and dinner. The event last summer drew five candidates out and all of them joined their first semester here at UWP. We have already started receiving applica-

tions and they look like promising applicants, so I am optimistic about the future of the scholarship program.

Beyond the scholarship, we have had remarkable success in contacting potential new members through our involvement on campus and traditional recruitment strategies. We have been present on campus all semester between involvement fairs and word of mouth outreach, and I am hopeful that next semester will have a strong recruitment class. There are several groups and organizations that Alpha Gamma Rho has connected with, and I believe that their good faith in us will be helpful in drawing in more outstanding young men.

I would like to thank all of the wonderful people who have supported recruitment this semester. If you have any questions, ideas, thoughts, comments, or concerns about recruitment please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach me on 217-649-2184 and I would be happy to discuss our current recruitment strategy and any potential ideas you may have for next semester. ●

Welcome New Member



Jamison Thomas #941 - Jamison joined Alpha Gamma Rho to be around like-minded people. His family operates three beef cattle operations in Missouri, and he works on multiple dairy farms in the area. Jamison enjoys working on trucks and farm equipment, fishing,

paintball, dirt racing, and rodeo. He hopes to graduate from UWP and then attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison veterinary school with the goal of becoming a large-animal veterinarian specializing in dairy cattle. He plans to buy into a local veterinary practice that he already works with, start a family of his own, and maintain a small herd of beef cattle. ●

BILSA Golf Outing

By Dave Ward #85



On Friday August 14th the UW-Platteville College of Business, Industry, Letters and Science and Agriculture (BILSA) will hold its annual golf outing. The purpose of the outing is to raise money for scholarships for students studying within BILSA. The outing will be at the Oaks Golf Course in Cottage Grove.

The Oaks is owned by Brother John Blaska #5. The Beta Gamma Alumni Association is a sponsor of the event. This year there will be an Alumni reception in the event tent for those who want to attend but do not golf. Prizes and a live and silent auction will occur after golf. If you are planning on golfing contact Dave Ward at 920-723-1211 or palum76@yahoo.com or Jeff Blaska at 608-592-0100 or blaskabunch@yahoo.com so we can organize foursomes of AGRs. ●

Scholarship Award Winners

Brother Ken VonRueden #57 announced at the Founders Day Annual meeting that Brother **Ryan McCord #914** received the Mike Grulke Scholarship of \$1,000. Brother **Jack Tarnutzer #905** received the Dennis Valstad Scholarship of \$1,000. Brothers **Derek Schwartz-**

zlow #931 and **Luke Hand #929** received the Making Better Men Scholarship of \$500 each. Pictured below (L to R) are Brothers McCord, Tarnutzer, Schwartz, and Hand. ●



McCord



Tarnutzer



Schwartzlow



Hand

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BETA GAMMA CHAPTER CRESCENT

2026 Events

May

- 16 Commencement
- 22 Spring Semester Ends

June

- 5 Summer Reunion – Ziegler Winery
- 23 Summer Reunion – Kestrel Ridge
- 27 Member Recruitment Event, AGR House

July

- 11 Summer Reunion – Donnelly Ranch, Edgerton, WI
- 22 Summer Reunion – Brigham Park, Blue Mounds, WI
- 26 Summer Reunion – Jonamac Orchard, Malta, IL

August

- 1 Summer Reunion – Mike North Residence
- 14 BILSA Golf Outing, The Oaks, Cottage Grove, WI

September

- 2 Fall Semester Begins
- 13 Oaktobefest, The Oaks, Cottage Grove, WI
- 18 AgFest, AGR House, Platteville, WI

October

- 10 UWP Homecoming



ALPHA GAMMA RHO BETA GAMMA FOUNDERS DAY

March 12-13, 2027

FRIDAY, MARCH 12

Slices and Stories at Steve's
Steve's Pizza, Platteville Time TBD

SATURDAY, MARCH 13

Gather, Graze, & Reminisce
Russell Hall | 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

AGR UW-Platteville Chapter House Tours
Saturday afternoon - tours available on-site

ALUMNI 55TH Anniversary Dinner
Velzy Center, UW-Platteville | 6:00 PM

Please visit PlattevilleAGR.com for hotel reservation information.