A Letter from the President: Ian Frink

In so many ways, this semester was a great semester for Mu chapter. We were blessed with the opportunity to celebrate the 85th anniversary of Mu chapter with our members and alumni. We convened in the Frangipani room of the Indiana Memorial Union and had an elegant dinner with a spectacular classical duet followed by great conversation and memories.

Also, we tried out some new requirements this semester and did away with some others. We voted in a cohost social requirement where brothers plan and attend a social together to promote brotherhood. In the realm of service, we voted in a promoted service requirement where brothers are required to attend one of four big projects throughout the semester. By having this requirement, we hope that members get to strengthen relationships while achieving the service that they desire. Lastly, we had a strong executive board that were willing to go above and beyond for the members of Mu chapter. By putting others above themselves and achieving the goals set before them, they excelled in every way possible.

I believe the incoming executive board will rise to the same standard. With the Rubberduck Regatta scheduled for April 12, and a large group of graduating seniors, I know that this board will have their fair share of challenges; however, with some help from members and the support of alumni they will achieve all that is set before them.
A Successful Semester of Service

We were incredibly proud of all of the service chairs this past semester. There were several events that went well due to all of their hard work and dedication.

Promoted Service: We forwent a Fall Project this semester to instead put more focus on our new service requirement. This semester we installed the promoted service requirement. This requirement encouraged brothers to serve together which was instrumental in fostering increased brotherhood.

Our four promoted service projects this semester were a Habitat for Humanity Build, Operation Write Home, Hoosier Hills Food Packing, and the Pledge Project.

Service Projects: Other projects that Mu participated in this past semester included the Boys and Girls Club Fall Festival, Boys and Girls Club Romp at Riddle Point, Love Letters to Strangers, and the Wonderlab Pumpkin Launch.

As far as weekly projects, Mu has been involved with a few organizations. Students can go to the Rise to help tutor children every Tuesday and Thursday. Other brothers were involved with a program called Practical English Tutorials, where they were able to tutor international students at Indiana University in English. We also went to Bell Trace on Friday nights to play euchre or other games with the residents there.

Rubber Duck Planning: This semester our Rubber Duck chairs, Katherine Litchin and Erin Bradley, began planning for next semester’s 25th annual Rubber Duck Regatta. After several thoughtful presentations from brothers, we voted to benefit the New Hope Family Shelter for this year’s event. Our Rubber Duck chairs have already reserved a date in the spring. In previous years, we have held an event aimed at providing an atmosphere for the children of Bloomington to enjoy. However, as we are throwing the event on a college campus, we decided that this year it would be more successful as an event for college students.

We have already started canning and have raised a little over $130. We hope that with Rubber Duck in the minds of all APO members, we can influence people to get more involved with the event next semester. We are optimistic that the 25th Rubber Duck will be the most successful yet!

—By Kelly Barton & Emily Hentz

HELPING HANDS: APO brothers serving at one of the promoted service opportunities this fall semester. Many students came out to Hoosier Hills Food Bank to package boxes of food for Bloomington families.
Leadership continues to Grow

Leadership, friendship, service: these three simple words are what motivates our brothers, and this year our brothers were exceptionally motivated. As Vice President of Leadership, I was delighted to help my brothers to find a leadership position in which they could thrive. Each brother stepped up to their role enthusiastically, but with a change in requirements. It was beneficial for our members to take part in the 85th Anniversary of Mu Chapter to see how skills gained from Alpha Phi Omega can transition into real-world scenarios and the job market. We hope to continue to build our relations with our alumni so that our members can continue to see these types of benefits.

This year I was especially proud of the Bigs engaging in our LEADS course. Though a bit long and held at odd hours, the course provided valuable information to help expand our brother’s leadership capabilities. My favorite part about serving on the Executive Board was getting to know every member of our organization a little bit better.

We had hoped that introducing families into chapter would also bring everyone closer, but while this failed I am confident the next board will find a better solution to continuing brother bonding. Overall, Fall 2014 was a successful semester for APO and I look forward to seeing how chapter changes in years to come.

—By Laurel Boyd

Welcome, New Initiates!

The pledges had a very successful pledging period this semester. We started out the semester with a fun pledge retreat where the pledges got paint their own picture frames while getting to know each other and meeting the members of exec. Throughout the semester they learned about the fraternity through their own interesting history presentations they created. They also planned their own service project. After considering many ideas they decided that as a pledge class they wanted to adopt an “APO Road” that they could clean and could be part of APO Mu in the semesters to come. They invited other members of chapter to come help them clean the road in mid-November. Although it was a bit chilly, everyone had an enjoyable time. They actually ended up cleaning twice as much as they had originally planned.

We initiated twenty new members, and they are all very excited to be actives. As pledge masters, the Ellens are very proud of them and can’t wait to see all the wonderful things they do in the future!

—By Ellen Wiebke
Membership Undergoing Changes

As one of the three principles of Alpha Phi Omega, friendship is a very important part of keeping any chapter together. I was elected into the position of Vice President of Membership with the goal of strengthening the friendship and brotherhood of Mu Chapter even more than it was. My fellow exec board members agreed with my goal, and we came up with new ways to make meetings fun and added some unique requirements.

The first of the new requirements was that two or three brothers had to “cohost” a social of some kind. The activity was decided by those who hosted. This idea guaranteed that at least two brothers would be attending an event and prevented the chances of anyone showing up alone to an event. Also through this method, new social ideas could be introduced. There was some confusion at first since this was a new concept, but chapter seemed to catch on quickly and enjoyed it.

The other requirement was a “family” social. Brothers and their littles, if they had any, were divided into groups of five. These groups were created randomly except for the littles who were in the same group as their Bigs. On their own, the families had to meet for a social that was decided unanimously. This gave the brothers that regularly don’t see each other the opportunity to socialize as well as introduce pledges to other actives. The requirement was liked by most of chapter, however they found it difficult to get all of the members together at a single time.

Small things were added to meetings in order to try to make them more fun and interesting to chapter. All members of the exec board would present their information individually instead of the president giving the whole meeting. This allowed chapter to see different faces throughout the meeting and helped them identify who the exec members were. During the membership announcements, I would add pictures to the slides of the activities that occurred within the past few weeks. They gave members who might not have been able to attend a chance to see what happened, they also encouraged more members to attend future events.

These were only some small modifications, and some of them can possibly be made better. Each step and even little steps can lead to something great. The principle of friendship is what brings the other principles of leadership and service together and forge the pride of Alpha Phi Omega.

—By Matt Slagle