

Issue No. 10

THE

Fall 2025

# BAAA Journal



May God, Chivalry,  
Brotherhood and  
Excellence in all things  
be our guide.

Beta Alpha Chapter  
April, 27, 1903

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# Letter from the Editor

Brothers,

Over the last several years, this newsletter has served as a place to highlight the good work of our chapter, to celebrate the accomplishments of our alumni, and to carry forward the bond we share as brothers of Kappa Alpha Order. From updates on the house to stories of individual achievement, we have sought to keep alive the traditions of honor, excellence, and fellowship that bind Beta Alpha together.

This project was started during a unique time. In the early days of COVID, when connection was most needed, the newsletter provided a way to bridge the distance. It gave us a means to share stories, rekindle friendships, and remind one another that the bonds of brotherhood endure.

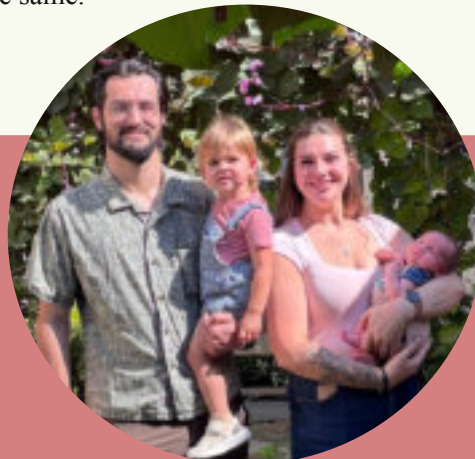
As times change, so too do the ways we communicate. This will be the last formal edition of our newsletter in its present form. Going forward, alumni features and articles will be shared on an upcoming BAAA blog page, where new pieces will be published as recommendations as submissions come in. All news, announcements, and house updates will now flow through our social

media channels and BAAA email lists, ensuring faster communication and broader reach.

This transition is not an ending but an evolution. Just as our chapter has always adapted to meet the needs of the moment, so will our alumni communications. What will remain constant is our commitment to celebrating our brothers and sustaining the ideals of KA.

We owe a particular debt of gratitude to those who made this publication possible. Jack Conroy built and sustained this newsletter from the beginning, providing the foundation on which it has stood. And Joe has given countless hours assembling each edition with diligence and care, ensuring that our alumni could stay connected through its pages.

Thank you to every brother who contributed stories, photos, and support along the way. It has been an honor to share this work with you. The medium may be changing, but our goals remain the same.



**John Destefano, PC '16**

Brothers,

It's been a while since the last newsletter, and BAAA has been busy - maybe the busiest we've been since we started!

As many of you know, we've been collaborating with SELF and BAEF to organize a fundraiser to replace the outdoor furniture at the chapter house - something wildly new for us! This was a really exciting opportunity to leverage the skills of our talented alumni, tapping in to the expertise of sales, software, and product management to help get the job done (see Page 14 for more info)!

We're also excited about Homecoming here in a couple weeks, as we continue to fine tune the formula we've been using the last few years. Our Merchandise team has been working hard to introduce what we hope will be a fun new tradition for all who attend - keep your eyes peeled for more info from us on this soon on all of our contact channels.

Speaking of new endeavors, we've been talking for a while about kicking off more frequent opportunities for alumni to get together outside of Homecoming and Pats.

Jack Conroy, the



**Joe Studer, PC '16**

# BAAA Update

former editor of the BAAA Journal, has stepped up to lead a new endeavor focused on creating these opportunities! For folks in the St. Louis area, there are a couple "Suds and Summits" events currently planned as an opportunity to go for a hike then grab a drink with other alumni. Expect a lot more of these style events to come from us in the coming years! If you'd like to receive more info about these, reach out to us at [betaalphaalumni1903@gmail.com](mailto:betaalphaalumni1903@gmail.com).

As you can see, there's a ton of action happening with BAAA! As a small change in tune, if you read John's "Letter from the Editor" to the left (go read it if you haven't), we've also had to make a tough decision recently. We're operating as a relatively limited, volunteer only team. With these limited resources, we've had to make the tough decision to stop publishing the BAAA Journal. This edition will be the last. We still intend to keep communication channels, and provide a venue for sending out stories and communication, we currently intend to implement a more adhoc blog-style on our website for sharing updates. We expect this will be a more sustainable option for our volunteers, allowing us to continue providing value to all of our alumni. If you have any feedback about this change, or wish to volunteer for BAAA, please reach out to us at our email!

**Want to receive future communications from BAAA?**  
Click [here](#) so we can learn how to contact you!

**Want to reach out to BAAA?**  
Email us at  
[betaalphaalumni1903@gmail.com](mailto:betaalphaalumni1903@gmail.com)

# Homecoming '25

## Friday, Oct 3rd

- 5:30p - Dinner at Di Trapini's  
*400 E 6th St, Rolla, MO 65401*
- 7:30p - Brotherhood @ Chapter House  
*1 Fraternity Drive, Rolla, MO*

## Saturday, Oct 4th


- 10 - 11a SELF Board Meeting  
*1 Fraternity Drive - Chapter Room*
- 11a - 1p BAAA Barbeque  
*1 Fraternity Drive - Veranda*
- 5 - 9p Homecoming Banquet  
*US-63, Rolla, MO 65401 - Rolla Lions Den*  
*Dinner is \$30/Person*
- 9p - Brotherhood @ Chapter House

Be on the lookout for commemorative Homecoming '25 Challenge Coins - for purchase this year!

All proceeds will go towards scholarships.





A man in a light blue polo shirt and a camouflage baseball cap is smiling while holding a large striped bass. He is on a boat, with a blue cooler and other fishing gear visible in the background. The text 'KA for Life: The Leadership and Legacy of Bill Thomas' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# KA for Life: The Leadership and Legacy of Bill Thomas





For Bill Thomas, Kappa Alpha Order has always been more than a fraternity—it has been a lifelong source of brotherhood, service, and purpose. From his early days as House Manager, short time as Alumnus Advisor to founding the Beta Alpha Alumni Association (BAAA), and now serving as Self Board President, Bill’s dedication has remained steadfast. His focus continues to be on strengthening alumni connections, supporting active members, and ensuring Beta Alpha develops principled leaders for the future.

Bill’s connection to KA began in 1981 when he arrived at Rolla, introduced to the fraternity by high school friends. From the moment he stepped through the doors, he knew he had found his place. “It was just like, wow, this is where I’ve got to be,” he recalls. The house was full of men who shared his values, men who would become his lifelong brothers. The structure of fraternity life, the traditions, and the energy of the house immediately felt like home.

Born in Owensboro, Kentucky, Bill credits his mother with instilling in him the values that KA exemplifies. “She raised us to be the best southern gentlemen she could produce,” he says. These lessons in humility, hard work, and faith became the foundation for his lifelong dedication to KA. His brothers Todd, Marc, and John and his son Will would all follow in his footsteps, making KA a true family tradition.

As an active member, Bill quickly found ways to contribute. He stepped into leadership as House Manager, overseeing the daily operations of the fraternity. “I didn’t have the aptitude for a president role, but I had the privilege to serve,” he says.

Some of his favorite memories from those years involve the deep sense of camaraderie built through tradition. Brotherhood-building events like pig roasts at Spring Creek Farms and the Newburg run



became legendary. “You could be scared or panicked leading up to it, but the finality of those events was extraordinary,” he recalls. They were the kind of moments that tested and strengthened bonds. Philanthropy efforts also played a key role in shaping the culture of the house. Hosting underprivileged children during Christmas wasn’t just about service—it was about embracing KA’s deeper purpose. “We weren’t just a fraternity; we were a family bringing joy to others,” he reflects.

Sundays brought a different kind of unity. “It felt like half the house went to church together,” Bill recalls. In a time when college can feel isolating, KA provided a foundation of faith and friendship. “KA provided me so much warmth. I knew I was where I needed to be.”

One of Bill’s most impactful contributions to KA came with the founding of the Beta Alpha Alumni Association (BAAA). When he was elected Vice President of the Self Board, he quickly realized that the role had little defined responsibility. Rather than remain passive, he took initiative. “I wanted to be involved. I wanted to build something,” he says. At that

very meeting, he announced the creation of BAAA. What started as an idea immediately gained traction. “The moment we adjourned, guys came up to me ready to help,” he remembers. Younger alumni, including Joe Studer and Jared Hanisch, brought fresh ideas and technical expertise, helping turn BAAA into a thriving network. Bill credits them entirely: “BAAA wouldn’t be a fraction of what it is without each brother’s contributions.”

BAAA has quickly become a vital component of the fraternity, ensuring that the brotherhood extends beyond graduation. Through mentorship programs, scholarships, and networking opportunities, it has expanded our active alumni base and strengthened the connection between alumni and active members. “BAAA transitions graduating seniors into engaged alumni,” Bill explains. “We make sure brothers understand the value of staying connected.”

This sense of community and connection also played a pivotal role in Bill’s own journey. The relationships he built through KA opened doors he never expected. “Brother Jerry Gilmore believed in me and gave me an opportunity at

Missouri Engineering Consultants,” he says. That first job provided Bill with experience and helped him develop the skills that would shape his future career. His transition from engineering to business felt natural, as he had spent years learning how to manage systems, keep things running efficiently, and build strong networks—skills that applied just as well to his companies as they did to KA.

Now, as Self Board President, Bill has ambitious but achievable goals. He wants to increase scholarships and expand mentorship programs. “We need to show brothers who can’t always make it back how valuable it is to give,” he says. “Their investment is in the young men of Kappa Alpha.” He is also focused on reinforcing academic excellence and character development. “The active members are making excellent grades, and I hope they continue to excel,” he notes. “Most importantly, they need to stay out of trouble.”

Reflecting on KA’s traditions, Bill acknowledges the importance of progress while preserving core values. “I see no change in our brotherhood,” he says. “We still uphold chivalry,

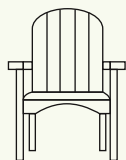


knighthood, and gentlemanly conduct. The Order has done a great job.”

Through BAAA, mentorship programs, and alumni engagement, Bill remains dedicated to deepening the fraternity’s impact. “We are all part of something bigger than ourselves,” he says. “KA for life—it’s not just a phrase. It’s who I am.”

# Exceeding Expectations: Supporting Outdoor Spaces!

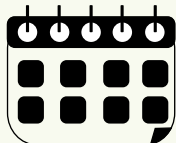
Thanks to the incredible generosity of our alumni, the outdoor spaces of the chapter house have been refurbished for studying and brotherhood for years to come. Thank you all for your support!



Furniture & Installation  
\$14,852



Scholarship Contributions  
*TBD - Pending Plaque Costs*



Ships from Factory  
Sept. 22nd  
*(Hopefully in time for Homecoming)*

Thanks to all who reached out about Polywood's furniture sets, with a small pivot in the line of tables we purchased, we were able to save several thousand from our initial estimates, *and* order extra dining chairs to set around the tables on the veranda! We had over 50 alumni donate to the fundraiser, ranging from the pledge classes of 1956 through 2016 - a 60 year spread of alumni support! For full details on the furniture ordered, visit [mst-ka.org/furniture-fundraiser](https://mst-ka.org/furniture-fundraiser).



# Sixty Years of KA Brotherhood

An Interview  
With Ubes Sfreddo





For more than sixty years, Humbert Sfreddo (aka Bob or Ube) has carried the KA bond. Looking back, he credits the fraternity with giving him the foundation for his career, his values, and a lifetime of friendships.

That journey began in the fall of 1955, Humbert was raised and living in Southbridge, Massachusetts, when he embarked on the long trip to Rolla to attend the Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy now known as Missouri S & T. Before that the furthest he had ever been from home was a day trip he and some buddies took by skipping school to New York City.

Getting to Rolla was an adventure in itself. Hurricane Diane had just torn up New England and trains along the coast were not running. Humbert, along with Hank Fairbanks (who was also going to Rolla), had to take the New York Central out of Fitchburg, MA to St Louis. After spending the night in St Louis they hopped on the Frisco milk train to Rolla which took a little over three hours.

When they arrived in Rolla they took a cab to the KA house, as

Hank had an invitation. Humbert was tagging along and though he did not have an invitation was invited to stay. This was comforting since he did not have accommodations in Rolla yet. At that time the KA house was at the corner of State and 14th Streets.

In his first semester Humbert incurred scholastic and social probation. He came to his senses and settled down to business and was initiated into Beta Alpha in the spring of 1956. While hazing still existed at that time, he managed to avoid most of it since he wasn't a freshman. He indicated he never understood the meaning of it.

At the time, the KA chapter had a major goal to replace the existing house. The University had plans for a new fraternity row, and KA wanted to be part of the plan. This resulted in an austerity program to save money towards a new house and demonstrate to alumni desire for this to happen. Humbert, who learned how to butcher meat growing up in his dad's meat market, offered to be the meat cutter for the house. He processed quarters of beef which





could be purchased wholesale - saving funds for a new house.

For this he received free room of \$12 per month. The total house bill at the time was \$67, and tuition was \$200 a semester for out of state. For context, other prices at the time included movie tickets for a nickel on Thursday night, a schooner of beer at the El Caney Hotel by the railroad tracks for 15 cents or a bottle of Falstaff for 25 cents.

Humbert lived in the old KA house or the annex at Pine and 14th Street for three years. During this time, the austerity program by the active chapter gave alumni leadership, lead by George Easley, the ability to provide the necessary funding and financing for a new house, which was completed in 1960.

During his sophomore and junior years Humbert served as Steward for the fraternity, acting as a buffer between the men in the house and the cooks.

Before coming to Rolla, Humbert graduated from a junior college and completed his B.S. in Civil Engineering in 1958 at Rolla. After graduating he worked for three months for a paving contractor from Chicago, Illinois, before being drafted

into the Army. Highlights of his military career were serving as Construction Surveying Instructor at the U.S. Army Engineer School at Fort Belvoir, Virginia and a year with the U.S. Army Sub Post Engineers at Inchon, Korea. While in Korea, he supervised six Korean National engineers in planning, estimating, bidding and constructing facilities for Army installations in the Inchon Area.

Before he left Inchon, Humbert contacted the company he had worked for before the war. At the time, they indicated there was a position for him after he returned home. Sadly, this wasn't the case. After returning home Humbert received a telegram telling him not to return as the company had gone out of business. Looking for work, he applied to the Missouri Department of Transportation and accepted a position at Kennett, Missouri. Luckily for Humbert, and the state of Missouri, this resulted in a prosperous 39 year career.

In addition to his initial assignment in Kennett, Humbert had two positions in Sikeston, three in Jefferson City and one in Springfield. Humbert was the District Engineer in Sikeston and retired in Jefferson City as

Director of Project Development. During his time as District Engineer in Sikeston, Humbert's pledge father, Ted Jennings, was the District Engineer for the Illinois Highway Department. The two fraternity brothers represented their respective states in planning for the new Cape Girardeau Bridge over the Mississippi River. Additionally, Brother Jim Jackson (PC '59) was the District Engineer for Macon, MO while Humbert was the District Engineer at Sikeston.

Humbert enjoyed his career at MODOT, and was thankful for the opportunity to serve the people of the state of Missouri. He cherishes the many people he has come to know from the public and within the department. He feels rewarded driving around the state seeing the variety of agriculture, industrial, historical and recreational venues that exist today. He appreciates the opportunity he had to play a small part in providing and improving the transportation system connecting these facilities to cities and towns for day to day travel.

Since retirement in May of the year 2000 Humbert has enjoyed

giving back to his community. He served for eight years on the MoDOT and Patrol Employees' Retirement System, six years on the River City Habitat for Humanity board of directors, helping build 130 homes for twenty-two years. He has also been a member of the Jefferson City Breakfast Rotary Club for twenty-five years, helping with club projects that assist people both near and far.

Through it all KA has remained a significant part of Humbert's life. He has served on the SELF board for sixty years, and was honored to be a member of the Chiles Province Court of Honor. He continues to be impressed by the chapter's emphasis and campus leadership on scholarship along with service projects and charities it supports.

He believes there is a connection between academic excellence and success in life after leaving the university. Fraternity life is a great part of this matrix.

Looking back, Humbert sees giving back as a responsibility we all should have. KA gave me the foundation for my career and life. "I just want to make sure others have the same chance"

# The Beta Alpha Alumni Association WANTS YOU



## Contact Jack Conroy for Details

*We're looking for folks interested in Website Design, handling communications, organizing local functions, or even just helping BBQ at the chapter house!*

## ==== *Contact Us* =====



### BAAA Contacts

General Email

[betaalphaalumni1903@gmail.com](mailto:betaalphaalumni1903@gmail.com)

Facebook Group  
X  
LinkedIn

### BAAA Social Media

Kappa Alpha Order - Beta Alpha Alumni Association  
[@BetaAlphaAlumni](#)  
Kappa Alpha Order - MS&T

Alumnus Advisor  
Number 1  
Recruitment Chair

### Chapter Contacts

Jim Hennessey ([jim.hennessey@outlook.com](mailto:jim.hennessey@outlook.com))  
Marco Miskovic ([msmgg5@umsystem.edu](mailto:msmgg5@umsystem.edu))  
Brady Dodd ([bcdkcd@umsystem.edu](mailto:bcdkcd@umsystem.edu))

Facebook Page  
Instagram  
LinkedIn Page  
Twitter  
Website

### Chapter Social Media

Missouri S&T - Kappa Alpha Order  
[@mst\\_ka](#)  
Kappa Alpha Order - Beta Alpha Chapter  
[@MST\\_KA](#)  
[www.mst-ka.org](http://www.mst-ka.org)





**Interested in Joining BAAA?**

**Email:**

**betaalphaalumni1903@gmail.  
com**