

GAMMA CRESCENT

GAMMA CHAPTER OF ALPHA GAMMA RHO FRATERNITY AT PENN STATE | SPRING 2016

AGR BROTHERHOOD CONTINUES TO FLOURISH AT PENN STATE

ALUMNI SUPPORT ESSENTIAL TO CHAPTER SUCCESS

INSIDE

2

AGRICULTURE AT
GAMMA

4

ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE

5

ONWARD AND
UPWARD

Gamma Chapter of Alpha Gamma Rho is thriving. At Penn State, our undergraduate chapter is comprised of a brotherhood of around 90 members, who are excelling in scholarship, brotherhood, philanthropy/community service, and extracurricular activities. In March, two executive board members attended the AGR regional leadership seminar in Pittsburgh, along with two alumni board members. In April, the chapter participated in Penn State's Ag Progress Day, where they had a booth to help educate the public about agriculture and some of our chapter's professional programming opportunities.

From an alumni perspective, we conducted a strategic planning session in February, during which both undergraduate and alumni leadership discussed goals and the direction we will take in the next three to five years. Work has already begun on our professional recruitment and professional development/networking efforts. In March, we hosted our Founder's Day meeting at State College, with nearly 20 alumni in attendance. In August, we'll send alumni and undergraduate representation to the AGR National Convention in Omaha, Nebraska.

While our undergraduate presence continues to grow and flourish at Penn State, we are always looking to better engage our alumni base. If you are interested in getting involved, please don't hesitate to contact myself or any of the alumni or undergraduate board members. Our collegiate brothers are eager to share their accomplishments with Gamma alumni and always welcome visits to the chapter house. In addition to financial support, there are many professional development and other activities that the brothers can use assistance with. Also, the alumni board is constantly looking for new committee members and has elections for two director positions at every Homecoming meeting. If you've not been involved in recent years, now is a great time to re-connect and give back to our beloved fraternity!

Fraternally,

Corey Simmons '04 (Γ1504)

Gamma Alumni Association President

(814) 777-3786

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AGR Experience, Brotherhood Prepared Ken "Stump" Gross '73 (Γ1024) for Career in Agriculture

Ken "Stump" Gross '73 (Γ1024) grew up seven miles from the Gamma chapter house in State College, Pennsylvania, and worked on a neighbor's dairy farm during his adolescence. "Had I continued to live at home during college, I would have missed out on being a brother. Brotherhood was one of the most important experiences of my life." Ken said he learned a lot about what it takes to be a leader, how to succeed, and how to handle adversity.

After receiving his B.S. in horticulture in 1976, Ken continued his studies at PSU and received his M.S. in horticulture in 1978, studying the biochemistry of fruit ripening. He continued his graduate studies at North Carolina State

University, where he received a Ph.D. in 1981.

Ken joined the USDA's Agricultural Research Service as a postdoctoral scholar in 1981



Ken with his wife, Leah, and son, Alex, at the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington, Virginia.

and retired as research leader of the Food Quality Laboratory in 2007. He led a group of research scientists working on quality and food safety of fresh produce. He also authored over 100 publications, was an invited speaker at conferences in 12 countries, holds a U.S. patent, and is a Fellow of the American Society for Horticultural Science. Ken was an adjunct professor at the University of Maryland - College Park, where he served as adviser to a number of Ph.D. graduate students.

Ken largely credits AGR with launching him on his career in plant and food research. As a first-term undergraduate, he was unsure of his career goals. It was through the guidance of the

(Continued on page 2)

AGRICULTURE AT GAMMA

Joining AGP was one of the best career moves that I ever made. I realized this before I even graduated. Let me explain...I came to school with no clue what to study and no clue where to socialize. In the fall of 2008, I became a brother of AGP, and my professional network has since grown exponentially. With guidance from alumni and older brothers, I was able to identify a major that was congruent with my professional goals; I signed up for Ag Systems Management (now called BioRenewable Systems). Additionally, the leadership opportunities that the house lent were gold for resume building and were often a ticket into interviews. Eventually, I gained an interest in the seed business after participating in an AGP leadership conference in Missouri.

Shortly after graduation, I was hired by the largest vegetable seed distributor in the Northeast: Seedway. I spent a couple of years learning the ropes and then had the opportunity to assume a new role. I packed up and made the trek out to Washington State for another company called Sakata Seed America. Currently, I work in Philadelphia for Seminis, the vegetable seed division of Monsanto. As a territory sales representative, I travel the entire Mid-Atlantic up into Ontario. I want to point out that each move was a direct result of being recruited for a bigger and better position. I tell you this not to brag, but to highly encourage you to pursue a degree in the Ag field. For the undergraduates, I have some advice: assume a leadership role in the chapter, strongly consider studying agriculture, and begin networking immediately. You will be amazed at how far along you will be three or four years after graduation. Not only that, but you will be even more amazed at how much more room you have to grow. - **Joe Cassidy '08 (Γ1537)**

Thank You, Generous Brothers, for Your Loyal Support of the Gamma Chapter

Thanks to the support of loyal alumni, \$3,750 was contributed with 21 gifts to our fall 2015 appeal. The successes and achievements of the Gamma Chapter are directly attributed to the support and involvement of its members. The active brothers are grateful for and proud of the support they receive from their alumni. We hope more alumni will join their brothers and contribute to our ongoing annual campaign.

Pink Rose Member

(\$1,000 and up)

Walter T. Moore '86 (Γ1239)
Carlos Rascon '02 (Γ1487)

Franklin S. Ace '60 (Γ795)

Wilbur L. Avril '61 (Γ819)

Kenneth Ketterer '61 (Γ802)

John W. Sutton '63 (Γ841)

Timothy L. Strickler '66 (Γ894)

George E. Myatich '69 (Γ965)

John P. Palmieri '71 (Γ995)

Marc Lewis '76 (Γ1086)

John D. Merenick '86 (Γ1236)

Thomas Olliver '91 (Γ1313)

Peter W. Mozes '93 (Γ1329)

Common Bond Member

(\$500 to \$999)

Robert D. Heilman '56 (Γ717)
Frank E. Skacel Jr.,
V.M.D '69 (Γ947)
Rick G. Steinmeyer '69 (Γ968)

Friends of Gamma Member

(Up to \$499)

William C. Patterson '41 (Γ461)
William F. Craig '50 (Γ599)
William Kincaid '51 (Γ622)
David Stabler '51 (Γ620)
Robert C. Antram '53 (Γ668)
Irving Buck '54 (Γ683)
John R. Akers '55 (Γ692)
Joseph E. Williams '59 (Γ778)

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Ken "Stump" Gross '73 (Γ1024)

(Continued from page 1)

brotherhood and the faculty adviser of Gamma Chapter at the time, Dr. Bill Hepler (chairman of the Department of Horticulture), that Ken found his lifetime interest in plant research.

Ken says that brothers should take full advantage of the experience by living in the house or spending as much time there as possible in order to experience living with like-minded yet diverse individuals. "Learn how to appreciate others' differences and idiosyncrasies. When I think back to those times, I recall a tremendous range of personalities, abilities, interests, and backgrounds. Yet, we all got along and respected each other because of our common bond as brothers," he said. "I learned that there are not good and bad personalities, just different ones. That was an experience that has helped me throughout my life."

Some of Ken's best memories stem from rooming in the alumni lounge and beer gardens. This was where the beer refrigerator was kept, and where alumni who were back for a visit or football game would crash. It was the after-hours hangout, but they took pride in their academic achievement as well. Ken says, "I had a number of roommates while there: **Penrose Hallowell Jr. '73 (Γ1030)**, **Dick Bland '72 (Γ1009)**, **Timmy Olsen '72 (Γ1006)**, **Bob Wilson '73 (Γ1028)**, **Dean Cotton '74 (Γ1043)**, and others. Those guys were all fantastic and I cherish the many memories."

Ken lives with his wife, Leah, and son, Alex, in Ellicott City, Maryland.



Ken "Stump" Gross '73 (Γ1024), friend Rick, and Pen "Recess" Hallowell '73 (Γ1030) at deer camp 2015. Stump only hunts after lunch!

BROTHERS GAIN LEADERSHIP SKILLS AT CONVENTION, ARE EAGER TO APPLY INSIGHTS

My name is Jack Tierney and I am the noble ruler of Alpha Gamma Rho Gamma Chapter for the 2016 calendar year. I was born and raised in Woodbury, New Jersey, a small city 20 minutes outside of Philadelphia. I am a civil engineering major and am minoring in mathematics and business administration; I am currently in my fourth semester at the Pennsylvania State University. My family has a deep connection to agriculture as my great-grandfather, a Penn State graduate, started our family florist shop, CJ Sanderson & Son, in Woodbury, New Jersey, 102 years ago. To this day, my 86 year old grandfather works in the shop every day and has taught me the basics of horticulture over the years of me being in the shop and working there.

On March 4-5, Brother **Vincent Favaloro '14 (Γ1671)** and I attended the annual AGR/Sigma Alpha leadership convention in Pittsburgh. We were accompanied by Gamma Chapter Alumni Board President **Corey Simmons '04 (Γ1504)** and Alumni Board Secretary **Ben Baker '06 (Γ1518)**. Over the course of the weekend, we were able to further develop our leadership skills and were able to make connections with our brothers and sisters in agriculture. These bonds have led to potential chapter visits throughout the academic year, which will only further the connection

between Alpha Gamma Rhos nationwide. Overall, the leadership seminar was a great experience that helped everyone who attended leave as a better man/woman.

I am pleased to say that Gamma Chapter is in a better position now than it has ever been! With an ever-growing and strengthening brotherhood, Gamma Chapter continues to be a prime example of what a Greek organization at Penn State should be. The brotherhood has made great strides in academics, intramural athletics, and community service. Gamma Chapter participated in Penn State's AG Day, a day presented by the College of Agriculture that exposes the entire university to the agricultural opportunities given on campus, on April 13. The 2016 Gamma Chapter undergraduate executive board looks to continue to grow in all of these areas to further improve Gamma Chapter and the Penn State community as a whole.

Fraternally,
Jack Tierney '14 (Γ1668)
 Noble Ruler
 jft5090@psu.edu



AGR undergraduates had a table at Ag Day, where several students, teachers, and members of the Ag department stopped by and learned how AGR is connected to the community. Children also stopped by, spun the pollinator wheel, and got a mini pollinator wheel as a prize.



Brothers Sam Black '11 (Γ1592), Miles Basila '11 (Γ1583), Jake Moore '11 (Γ1589), Nate Bevans '11 (Γ1590), Styli Tsinaroglou '10 (Γ1564), and Ryan Lynch '10 (Γ1565) at the Washington Memorial in March.

Chapter House Brings Brothers Together, Lowers Living Costs at Penn State

Alpha Gamma Rho Gamma Chapter at Penn State has had a strong past few semesters numbers-wise. In the fall of 2015, our chapter proudly stood with more than 100 active members and boasted that over half of

the brotherhood lived in house, which was at capacity with 51 tenants. Our chapter likes to advertise how much cheaper our in-house dues and house bills are when compared to that of the dorms on campus and apartments available off campus. Each brother pays a mere \$5,000 each semester to live in the house (it comes with a house meal plan), which is several hundred dollars cheaper than the average room and board/meal plan on campus at Penn State (it's approximately \$5,300 per semester).

Due to a larger senior class graduating, our in-house numbers took a hit going into the spring of 2016. We have 94 active members with 36 living in-house. However, the room selection process for next fall has begun, and we are expecting the numbers to be around 50% of the brotherhood living in for next fall once again, which we cannot be more excited for.

Fraternally,
Brandon Miller '14 (Γ1675)
 VNR Finance

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE ON THE FOREFRONT AT AGR

This semester, the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity once again rose above the pack in academic excellence. The undergraduate GPA (3.23) surpassed both the Penn State GPA (3.18) and the IFC GPA (3.18). We are extremely proud of this tradition of excellence and aim to continue upholding high academic standards throughout the coming semesters.

Thirty-one undergraduates made it on the Dean's List for the fall 2015 semester:

Benjamin Apuzzo '14 (Γ1674)

David Ballinger '14 (Γ1672)

Joseph Bechay '15 (Γ1720)

Samuel Black '11 (Γ1592)

Paul Boehringer II '15 (Γ1698)*

Brandon Camarre '12 (Γ1598)

Michael Cameron '13 (Γ1631)

Michael Chubinsky '12 (Γ1620)

John Cosenza '15 (Γ1690)*

Matthew Disanto '12 (Γ1622)

Michael Hellman '14 (Γ1667)

Alex Infusino '15 (Γ1697)

Eli Kessler '14 (Γ1665)

Adam LaCaria '13 (Γ1640)

John Lawler '15 (Γ1684)

John Longo '15 (Γ1691)

Thomas Mahan '14 (Γ1677)

Brandon Miller '14 (Γ1675)

Ryan Moser '14 (Γ1680)

Andrew Nolff '14 (Γ1656)*

Ryan O'Leary '15 (Γ1695)

Andrew Saba '12 (Γ1621)

Dillon Santopietro '11 (Γ1594)

Michael Scattergood '13 (Γ1648)

James Schlupp '12 (Γ1619)

Marc A. Shuler II '15 (Γ1702)

Timothy Smith '15 (Γ1710)

Aaron Sosnader '14 (Γ1678)*

Ryan Sosnader '13 (Γ1650)

Clay Swackhamer '12 (Γ1602)*

Sean Walsh '15 (Γ1715)

*Earned a 4.0



Eleven of the 31 AGR undergraduates who made the Dean's List for the fall 2015 semester.

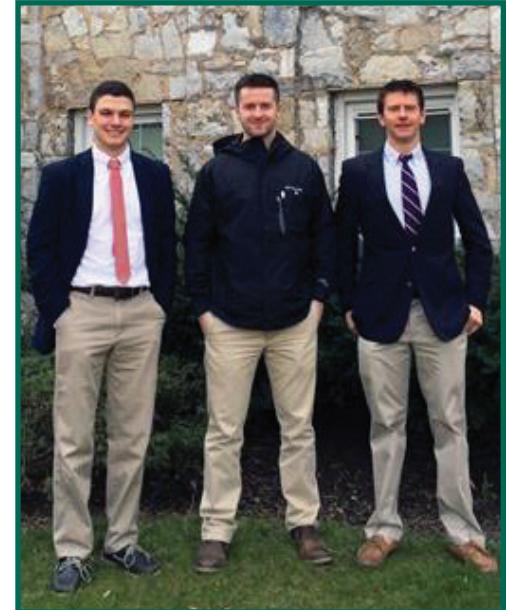
Along with high academic standards, the executive board and I have decided to increase the amount of professional development events at the chapter house. We aim for one professional development event a semester. In the spring semesters, Gamma Chapter will host alumni who would like to return to the chapter house and share their experiences in the workplace with the undergraduates. If you would like to be a part of one of these events, feel free to contact me as well as the rest of the executive board. In the fall semesters, Gamma Chapter will host professionals from Career Services in the College of Agriculture to do resume workshops (or similar professional development events) to prep undergraduates for Fall Career Days.

We aim to continue our history of academic excellence as well as success in job placement for active brothers.

Fraternally,

Aaron Sosnader '14 (Γ1678)

VNR Scholarship



Aaron Sosnader '14 (Γ1678), Clay Swackhamer '12 (Γ1602), and Paul Boehringer II '15 (Γ1698) are three of the five undergraduates who achieved a 4.0 for the fall 2015 semester.

VISIT US ON THE WEB



CHAPTER WEBSITE
agrgamma.chapterspot.com



CHAPTER FACEBOOK

The Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity
- Penn State, Gamma Chapter



CHAPTER TWITTER
[@AGRPennState](https://twitter.com/AGRPennState)



ONLINE GIVING
<http://agr.kintera.org/annual>

ONWARD AND UPWARD

Gamma Chapter Gains Strength in Numbers

This spring semester, we welcomed in a new brotherhood class of 10 members. With our ever-increasing number of brothers in Gamma Chapter, we can afford to be much more selective during our recruitment process, ensuring that we bring in quality young men to the house. Their majors and interests range far and wide. From advertising to engineering to immunology and infectious diseases, the spring 2016 new member class is a dynamic and diverse group of young men. Since joining the brotherhood, they have quickly proven themselves as capable and hard workers, setting high hopes for the future of the chapter. During our THON weekend, the spring 2016 new member class was hard at work cheering on our dancers and holding down our section during the wee hours of the morning. New member **Nick Smith '16 (Γ1737)** stayed in the stands for the entire 46 hours!

Our process of assimilating the new member class into the house has been smooth thus far. They have worked hard to learn the history and traditions of our chapter while gaining a much greater appreciation for agriculture. As a class, they have hiked Mt. Nittany, mulched the house, and joined us for social events and for meals every week. I am confident in saying that these young men are future leaders for Gamma Chapter and will continue to move our fraternity forward in a positive direction.

Fraternally,
David Ballinger '14 (Γ1672), VNR Membership Development



The spring 2016 new members, from left: Ryan Schulte '16 (Γ1735), Tom Albertson '16 (Γ1729), Charlie Ocasek '16 (Γ1732), Nick Smith '16 (Γ1737), Austin Gongora '16 (Γ1731), Cas Wolanin '16 (Γ1738), Tom Conroy '16 (Γ1730), Nick Perilli '16 (Γ1733), Kamakaya Silva '16 (Γ1736), and Matt Schloesser '16 (Γ1734).

Intramural and Philanthropic Achievements Abound at AGR

It has been a very busy yet exciting year at Alpha Gamma Rho. Intramural sports thrived, THON was a great experience, and Greek Sing and Homecoming were wonderful times.

Over the years, we have thrived in intramural sports. We have made it to championship and late rounds of the playoffs for multiple sports. It began with our softball team cruising through the regular season and losing in the first round of the playoffs, sadly. Brother **Brian Morales '14 (Γ1683)** made it to the championship for wrestling, but lost a very close match to his opponent and placed second in his division. Our basketball team went undefeated throughout the regular season, but lost to Sigma Chi in the semifinals off a last-second buzzer-beater. Our track season was short and sweet. We placed fourth overall out of five teams that participated. We finished last in many events but that didn't change our attitudes of trying our best. **McKenzie Gary '13 (Γ1626)** finished first in the 60-meter sprint; he blew away the competition! The soccer team has just started their season and is off to a 2-0 season. We hope for the best and to bring home a championship!

Greek Sing was a great weeklong event to witness. We placed fifth in the overall rankings; however, we believe that we should have won. Our performers gave the crowd the

performance of a lifetime, and it was great to witness. We were partnered with Delta Gamma and Phi Gamma Delta.

Homecoming this past year went great, and we actually made a float! We were happily partnered with Phi Sigma Sigma sorority. We finished in the top 10 for overall Homecoming points, and our float was easily one of the best! We had a barn party, which included lots of hay, overalls, and plaid shirts. It was a great Ag event, and there will definitely be more to come.

THON was such a great time, and we are so proud of our dancers, which included **David Ballinger '14 (Γ1672)**, **McKenzie Gary '13 (Γ1626)**, and **Peter Clark '13 (Γ1629)**. Our dancers danced their big hearts out for 46 straight hours. They received help from brothers in our house who visited them on the floor and boosted their morale and overall wellbeing. **Sean Walsh '15 (Γ1715)**, **Nick Smith '16 (Γ1737)**, and myself stood in the stands for 46 hours. THON was a memorable time, and we even raised a lot of money without having the ability to go canning. Hopefully next year we can raise even more money!

Fraternally,
Zack Mahler '14 (Γ1681)
VNR Activities

ENHANCED RECRUITING EFFORTS MAXIMIZE POSITIVE GROWTH FOR GAMMA CHAPTER

The goal of Gamma Chapter for spring recruitment 2016 was to replace graduating seniors with quality men eager to learn agricultural values and make a positive difference in the chapter. Our recruitment strategy utilized multiple events that catalyzed brother-to-potential new member interaction, allowing us to make more educated decisions when extending bids. The events ranged from a formal poker and cigar night to laser tag and a volleyball tournament, with a few other events in between. Holding a diverse array of recruitment events provided the brothers of Gamma Chapter a great way to get to know potential new members in a variety of settings, which is key to selecting quality future brothers. In the end, Gamma Chapter had 10 freshmen accept their bids, hailing from agricultural Pennsylvania backgrounds all the way to Brazil and Angola. All 10 members have shown genuine interest and aggressive effort toward improving the chapter and broadening their outlook on agriculture. Going forward into fall 2016, our goal is to recruit a slightly larger class of 15 new members with the same hardworking characteristics exhibited by the spring 2016 new member class. If we accomplish this, Gamma Chapter is in capable hands for the foreseeable future.

Fraternally,
Ryan Moser '14 (Γ1678)
VNR Recruitment

Lynn Dietrich '70 (Γ987) Runs for Penn State Trustees Seat

Please Support the Efforts of Our Distinguished Alumni

"I ask for your support to be elected to the PSU Board of Trustees. I would appreciate the opportunity to offer my knowledge and practical experience in agriculture, agribusiness, general and global business to advocate for effective agricultural education, research, and extension programs focused toward production agriculture and fulfillment of the land grant objectives of Penn State. Effective education, research, and extension programs will benefit our commonwealth's farm families by increasing their competitive edge and standard of living, thereby benefiting consumers of food and fiber. With the increasing dilution of voices of agriculture on the board, it is critical that trustees elected by the agricultural societies have the ability and desire to strongly advocate for production agriculture interests. **I have those abilities and desire.**

My career and life have been built around **service** and **leadership**. My engineering and management experience is international. Having managed large projects and hundreds of people around the world, I have developed the ability to successfully manage and to achieve success with many nationalities and cultures through good economic times and bad. I do understand the necessity for long-term and succession planning and know firsthand the consequences of doing it poorly or not at all. I have led through good times and bad and understand when and how to expand and to cut back. I have demonstrated my ability to think and act both strategically and tactically. Although conservative by nature, I do understand and know how to implement positive change as an agent of innovation and progress. Strength through adversity is a lesson learned.

My Penn State roots run deep. My wife, Joyce, was a Penn State kid in the 1950s and 1960s as her father secured B.S., M.S., and D.Ed. degrees in Ag. Ed. Our three children are graduates of Penn State, and two have married Penn State graduates. Our six grandchildren all know the correct response to: '**We are!**' Our university has been a deep, continuing, and lasting positive influence on our lives. Joyce and I have provided funding for the LeRoy C. Smeltz Memorial Trustee Scholarship, which benefits students studying agricultural education and production agriculture by providing for two yearly scholarships to help, encourage, and assist students. I would very much appreciate the opportunity to continue to give back my time and talents to the university by serving on the board of trustees. If granted the honor to serve, I will advocate in an effort to enhance the university's world-class status and its continued ability to offer affordable educational opportunities to students. I will promote, sponsor, and support agricultural education, research, and extension programs to benefit all Pennsylvania residents."

-Lynn Dietrich '70 (Γ987), Position Statement

GAMMA CRESCENT

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ATTENTION: This newsletter is intended for alumni, undergraduates, and parents. If your son is still attending Penn State, he will receive a copy at the chapter house. If he has graduated, please send us his permanent address to update our records. Thank you.

FOUNDER'S DAY 2016



Alumni and actives meet in the Great Hall on Founder's Day.



Alumni and seniors at the chapter house on Founder's Day, from left: Justin Rees '10 (Γ1573), Clay Swackhammer '12 (Γ1602), Greg Surine '12 (Γ1603), Bryan Dillehay (Γ1638), Corey Simmons '04 (Γ1504), Carl Anderson Sr. '78 (Γ1111), Ben Baker '06 (Γ1518), Jameson Kenny '12 (Γ1605), Carl Anderson Jr '05 (Γ1508), Nick Martin '99 (Γ1425), Bill Nichol '50 (Γ603), Jay Ramsay '69 (Γ953), Jesse Halowell '97 (Γ1392), Tom Olliver '91 (Γ1313), Jon Schroer '90 (Γ1289), Lynn Dietrich '70 (Γ987), Kris Reitz '99 (Γ1435), John Shearer '49 (Γ586), and Brian Sarris '69 (Γ60).

Alumni News

John W. Sutton '63 still meets for golf, dinner, and Canada fishing with two other AGR brothers after more than 50 years. John is also still trading grain every week. He lives in Lansdale, Pa. E-mail: grainman.jws@verizon.net

Rick G. Steinmeyer '69 reports that after many trips to Bonita Springs, Fla., he knew it was where he wanted to be after graduation. Rick spent 10 years in the food industry and learned about GNC when in school, which is the company that built Bonita Bay.