



WABASH COLLEGE

Class Agents Letter

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Class of 1951

Class Agent

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Dear Men and Ladies of the Wabash Class of 1951:

When I sent my last class letter to you I never thought I would be writing to you so soon again. But things happen as you will see as you read on.

When I received the annual Christmas card from our classmate, Larry Honan '51, there was enclosed an envelope with the words, "Rich, Pictures from the past. Larry." There were some gals in the pictures who I did not recognize; one was a picture of Larry on his 18th birthday etc.

I planned to call Larry about the pictures and when I got around to it in January, I was told his number was no longer in service. I thought maybe Larry may have moved to some warm place from the Indianapolis address I had always known. I then sent a note to him in the mail asking him to tell me his new phone number.

About a week ago I came home from subbing to find a note from Beth, "Ann Mitchell called. Larry Honan and his wife were killed in an auto accident." You could have hit me with a brick. Larry was one of my roommates when I checked into Hulet House in September of 1947. We became good friends.

Larry was born on a farm near Lebanon, IN. He went to grade school at a two-room rural school house. The biggest city he had ever seen was Indianapolis. He turned eighteen in November of '47 and we celebrated at Hulet House. Larry was a baseball fan and a Cub fan which suited me just right. He came home with me to Chicago a couple times. We went to a Cubs game and I have a picture, just off my right shoulder, of us going to the game. He sent it to me shortly after I became your Class Agent. We drove up to Wisconsin one time so I could show him the huge Wisconsin dairy barns. He couldn't believe barns could be that large.

Larry attended Wabash for two years. The next time I saw him was coming out of a mess hall at Sampson Air Force Base in New York. I also ran into Bill Orman '51 there. The next time was at James Connally Air Force Base, Waco, TX. I was a fairly new 2nd LT and he was a Corporal. I asked him to my house for dinner but he didn't really want to. Last time I talked with him was before our 50th Reunion when I tried without success to get him to attend. Larry has contributed to the Annual Fund every year since I've been a class agent. We exchange Christmas cards and notes every year.

I called Ann Mitchell and learned that Larry and his wife died when their car went out of control on ice. They had no children and his only survivors were a sister and some nieces and nephews. Ann thought that their address book was with them in their car and was lost or destroyed in the accident. She said that Larry had talked about a Rich and a Stu at Wabash but they had no last names or anyone to notify. Her first clue was when she got my note. Her favorite memory of Larry and his wife were that they were the kindest people she ever knew.

If you're thinking I take this loss of Larry hard you are right. I always thought that I would get to Indianapolis one of these days and get together with them. I never did it and now I am sorry, very sorry. Larry was a great guy, a fine Wabash Little Giant and member of our class.

Soon after talking with Ann I called Stu Jacobs. Here's what Stu wrote me after our conversation: *Couldn't get Larry out of my mind today. Seems like yesterday that we were all together at Hulet House... Ed Davis, Chuck Perry, Bill Hess (my first roommates); you, Larry, Herb Brooks, Stripey Lewis, Dick Friese, Gene Henriouille, Bill Everitt, Ray Bentley, Jay Grantham, Phil Mason, Bill Hoganson, Bob Alban, Roger David, Howard Knutson, Gene Bond & Ron Bailey (who died when he transferred to Purdue).*

Larry had a favorite expression... Hebe... which he used as an expletive. One day I asked him what that meant and he said he had no idea but had used it all his life. When I told him it meant Jew he was shocked as I was the first he ever knew. I remember him coming back from Mass one day and I chided him about not washing his face before he went. He then explained Ash Wednesday to me. I never remember him getting mad... hardly ever raised his voice in anger and was a joy as a roommate. We had many great times together.

Wonderful memories indeed.

And here is the obituary sent me by the College after I called them about Larry. Somehow I had never received notice from them but it could have been lost when my computer was sick.

Lawrence A. Honan Jr., 79, of Indianapolis, a relative of local residents, died Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2008, in a traffic accident in Indianapolis. Born Nov. 4, 1929, in Lebanon, he was the son of the late Lawrence A. Sr. and Nelle Moran Honan. He graduated Lebanon High School and attended Wabash College for two years. He was a member of the Lebanon High School baseball team and also played for the Lebanon Merchants and Hicks Bus Body softball team. He married Catherine A. Molohon in Lebanon on Oct. 12, 1957. She also died in the traffic accident. Mr. Honan had worked for the postal service as a railway mail clerk, then as a mail clerk for the post office. He was a member of St. Michael Catholic Church in Indianapolis and American Legion. He was a veteran of the Air Force. He was an avid sports fan, especially of the Chicago Cubs. Surviving are his sister, Fran Herr of Lebanon. Also surviving are several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Tim Honan (wife: Joan) and his brother-in-law, Paul Skiles. Friends may call from 9 a.m. until the service time at 11 a.m. Monday, Dec. 29, 2008, at St. Michael Catholic Church. Graveside services are at 2:30 p.m. Monday at St. Joseph Cemetery, Lebanon. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Augustine Home for the Aged. Online condolences at usherfuneralhome.com.

On December 15, 2008, just a few days before he was killed, Larry made his donation to the Fund. I have decided to make a donation to the Wabash College Annual Fund in Larry's name. Perhaps some of you would like to do so, too.

I had decided not to make any big pitch for money in this letter but I have to share with you this fact. As of February 18, 2009, The Class of 1951 was at 43.02%, ahead of last year at this time and currently number one among post WW II classes. You guys are great.

Best wishes,

Richard H. Griesser