



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:

I was all set to write you a week ago and my computer broke and had to go in the computer hospital. It's back now and here I am. We have had one heck of a winter and today is supposed to be the first day since November where the temperature is going to go above freezing. I still have two feet of snow on the ground but maybe that will start going down.

About a week after I wrote you last I had a sudden attack of pancreatitis and ended up in the hospital for three days. Got home and it took about three weeks to get back to normal. Never did get my Christmas cards out.

My last letter told you of the rough times the college was going through with the death of Johnny Smith, the Delt pledge, then the heart attack striking down Bill Placher '70 and now the recession's effect on the Wabash Endowment fund, a loss of about \$130 million.

As your class agent I receive *The Bachelor* each week. I get to read about all the issues that are on the front burner of Wabash students, faculty and administration. I think President Patrick White never thought he would be faced with all the difficulties that have filled the first semester of the 2008-2009 college year.

I think it might be fun or interesting for me to pass on some of the items I can glean from *The Bachelor* articles.

President White looks forward to a fresh start with the new semester. *Things can't get much worse so things have to get better. That's what I said as I saw the funds in my retirement nest egg decline more and more. Things could not get much worse but they did.*

There have been a string of burglaries across the campus. Student victims feel violated. Students are quoted as saying it is the school's responsibility to do something about it. *I really searched my memory and can't remember if we even had a key to the Phi Psi house. As I recall the doors were never locked. We came and went at all hours and I don't remember anyone having stuff stolen or missing. The college's current problem doesn't speak well of how America and Crawfordsville are going and the passing off of responsibility bugs me. It is always somebody else's job to take care of me. Government, the college, the police can't prevent things from happening. Do I believe in concealed carry? Yes but it is against the law in Wisconsin.*

The W.A.R. Council is in the process of a series of six meetings of "in your face" alcohol education. *As you can easily guess this is a positive step after the tragic event that shook the campus last fall. As you probably know I am a sub teacher in middle and high school. I have*

handled a number of middle school classes on alcohol and drugs. As you may also know, if I make it through May, it will be thirty years since I have used alcohol. Booze was a problem for me at Wabash and through much of my life. I never had classes like those I teach and meetings like the ones going on at Wabash now. I don't know if they would have helped me at that time but they might have.

A number of quotes from the Wabash community were printed. Among them are these, with my comments.

“John Roberts (screwed) up the oath of office, which isn't much of a surprise because he probably never read the constitution. I guess I'm also angry about the invocation. The whole invocation was done in the name of Jesus – which is fantastic. I'm sure that's going to bring the whole rest of the world on board. As a non-Christian, I guess he's not my president, and this ain't my country.” Dr. Ethan Hollander, Professor of Political Science *Wow. Reading this is not a shock to me since I've met and had a few talks with the head of the Wabash Political Science department and some members of the Lawrence University Poly Sci people here in Appleton. This is a far cry from what I remember from Roberts and Wilder when I was a Poly Sci minor. By the way in eighth grade Sister Margaret not only had us read the Constitution but we had to memorize it, one part at a time. 'nuff said.*

“The speech was an Obama speech – it was eloquent and well delivered. It's a very touching Moment after Martin Luther King Day to have a black man sworn in as president. I think we can all celebrate that regardless of our politics.” Austin Rovenstine '10. I could agree with this. Being from Chicago and having been inside on some Chicago political deals, I am beginning to have doubts.

Coach Mac Petty has gone over 500 wins in his 32-year career as Wabash's Head Basketball Coach. Couldn't happen to a finer gentleman, a real class person. When I brought my grandson down to Wabash he was the only one of the coaching staff to pay any attention to him. He was a record setting quarterback, good basketball player and a left-handed pitcher later drafted by the Cleveland Indians (Native Americans) and earned full scholarships at Indiana State and Xavier. Now that Rob Johnson is retired, Mac is the only one of the coaches that pays any attention to me. Not that there is any reason they should.

I certainly don't expect any of you to agree with my comments but I hope they might stimulate some thought.

By the way a letter from one of our classmates poured in. Yes, I received a very nice note from Don Mefford. I don't know how you are but when I receive a letter from a law firm I don't recognize I wonder who is causing me trouble now. I was glad to see it was from Don. He writes that he still goes down to the office now and then “for old times sake.” Also he says he is constantly reminded that Wabash taught him how to think.

For me, the fun in writing these letters is when I have the opportunity to praise you and express how proud I am of you. You guys are the greatest. Here's the latest reason I have for saying this.

It's no secret that with everything going down the Annual Fund is not doing as well as hoped for and needed. As Class Agents we have received several emails and letters urging us to not slack off in our effort for the Fund.

One of the last mailings was a comparison of our current donations with the same time last year. Currently we have 33 donors for 38.37%. Last year we were at 37.50% at this time. WE ARE THE TOP CLASS OF ALL POST WWII CLASSES. Would you believe some classes have 3 class agents. All we have is an old gray haired guy who is finding it harder and harder to get out the minimum of four letters per year. So it is not the class agent but a bunch of guys (I include all you wonderful ladies as guys whenever I use this reference) who make the Wabash Class of 1951 outstanding.

Here are the super people who have made us stand out through the first half of the current fiscal year:

Robert Clipsham, Mrs. Marianne Cullinan, Willis Ellis, John Emery, Charles Goering, Richard Griesser, Chandler Holmes, Lawrence Honan Jr., Warren Jackson, Stuart Jacobs, Edward Jube, Mrs. Holly LaSalle, Ellwood Lewis, Walter Longworth Jr., Donald Mefford, Kenneth Millican Robert Montgomery, Donald Mosiman, William Orman, Donald Partridge, Allen Pierson, Mrs. Margaret Regnier, J. Mark Rhoads, Robert Rogers, Jack Schenck, Tully Shaw, Donald Shepherd, James Slagle, Mrs. Sue Smith, Mrs. Nancy Swain, Mrs. Mary Beth Wahl, Donald Wise, Burton Wright, Richard Yoder.

What a great bunch. I'm honored to be your class agent. I know this group will grow by the time I write you again.

My best to all.

Richard H. Griesser