



# WABASH COLLEGE

## Class Agents Letter

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## Classes of 1942 & 1943

Class Agent  
Paul Mielke

July 2004

I've had letters from Leslie Lee and John Rettig, '42, and from Martha Jacoby Stafford. Though posted earlier, it was June 30 before I found them in my Math Department mailbox. They had been sent to USPS Box 352. Two of them contained checks, which I took to Carolyn Harshbarger on July 1.

Martha says, "I write this check and one to de Pauw meaning both to be for the upcoming fiscal year, but surgery got in the way of my good intentions. As always, do with it as you feel best and make it in the memory of Robert M. Jacoby, '43 and C. Edward Stafford, '34. Thank you for all the great class letters—I do read all of them.... Do you have an address for Martha Million, an Alpha Gam sister of mine?" The Degitzes were good friends of the Millions, so of course they had Martha Million's address, which they gladly supplied, saying that she was well and that they had visited with her only a few days ago. I took the opportunity to call Martha Stafford with the good news. We had a pleasant chat. She mentioned continuing to correspond with Faye and Paul Emmert, '41.

We all remember Rettig as a pleasant guy with an off-beat sense of humor. He used an old USPS 25¢ envelope and some 4¢ stamps to send me a valentine. Here are copies of both the envelope and the valentine.



John writes, "Here's a little family history for you to work on. As I recall, you have Wisconsin roots. This little gem was in a lot of

postcards, some postmarked in the 1900s. It is a home made greeting made in a style popular in those days. I have no idea whether this may have been sent to or from the name on the back." He refers to "Elsie Mielke, Portage, Wisconsin".

John was right; Racine is my hometown. My parents had large families, all born in the 1880s and 90s. I have many first cousins, some I know about but never met, and I'm sure there are others I still don't know about. Elsie could well be a lost relative. Thanks, John, for the happy thought.

I hope that Leslie Lee will not mind my quoting from his letter containing some biographical anecdote. He says, "I read your letters regularly even though Wabash is a long way away in both space and time. My memories of college after over sixty years are a little different from many in our class. I was an independent and spent too



much of my time working —of necessity, of course. I have memories of alternating six to twelve , and midnight till six, at Yellow Cab with Dick Cowan, and frying hamburgers six nights a week at the Midlands Café on Market Street. I didn't see too many games or other social events.

“In spite of the depression and some long hours working I did enjoy my years at Wabash. Like most of us, I went into the army within hours of graduating (as the fifth Lee brother). Three of us were in the service from 1942 or before. I was in Europe, married a French girl (Jacqueline Monnier) and stayed in the Army of Occupation for three years in Berlin.

“Returning to the States after five years in Europe I continued working in hospital laboratories and related lab activities until I retired at seventy-five. I retired from the Joint Commission for Hospital Accreditation after seventeen years.

“I'm still in excellent health and spend much of my time with plants and botanical ‘play time’, which was my original interest. We had a Christmas Tree Farm and a tree nursery for a few years. Didn't make much money but had fun. I spend a lot of time in church work with the Presbyterian Church of Mt. Dora, a ‘small mountain’ near Orlando which rises in some places to a height of 2500 centimeters. In local T-shirt shops you can buy a shirt that says ‘I climbed Mr. Dora.’

“Jackie and I have two sons who live near us. A daughter died at the age of thirty-three. We have two grandsons and two granddaughters, all of whom are handsome or beautiful, or so we'd like to think.

“I don't know if you got the word that my last living brother, Ray, '38, died a few days ago in Salt Lake City. He had passed a long career as an electrical engineer with Westinghouse after leaving the service.

“Thanks for all the many years you have served as class agent. I'm sure everyone appreciates all the time and effort you have put in.”

Les, support from folks like you makes it a joy and creates these letters. Here is another case in point from Ed Randak, who writes, “We are doing great for our age. Aren't we all? Just think what it would be like without the progress of medicine.

“Have had a mild winter but too little snow fall. They are closing some fishing streams as the flow is too low and the water too warm. Were up to the cabin, now Mark's, for a weekend. It was great with the very fresh air and pleasant temperatures. It is on the Boulder River in the Gallatin Forest at about 5200 feet.

“We have plans for the third time for a trip to Helsinki followed by a cruise from St. Petersburg to Moscow by river, canal and lakes beginning on July 18<sup>th</sup>. The two previous attempts at Helsinki were canceled because Louise had an unexpected knee replacement and then a fractured femur caused by her falling off a treadmill when she turned it to high speed instead of off. Keeping our fingers crossed on this planned trip”. Good luck, Ed & Louise!

Goodrich Hall will be ready for occupation by math & physics on 23 July. Re-dedication will be at Homecoming on 2 October.

Our local fire fighters began razing the Phi Delt house by using it as a training site. For the year it takes to build their new house on the same spot, the Phi Delt will live at Crawford House.

Concluding on a sad note, Ed Krache, '43 has died. More on that later. PTM, 7-12-04