



WABASH COLLEGE

Class Agents Letter

Alumni and Parent Relations

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Class of 1958

Class Agent

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Dear Classmates and Friends,

180 years ago today, Professor Caleb Mills rang the school bell (the same one that is used to "ring in the Freshmen and the Seniors out" now) and taught the first class in Forest Hall. It was more than a year after (11-21-1832) the founders knelt in the snow on the bluff overlooking Sugar Creek and asked God to bless their endeavor. He did, and with the financial support of faithful men and women like you, Wabash College has prospered. Many, many thanks!

Emeritus Professor of History James Barnes and his wife Patience edited the book "500 Strong - Wabash College Students in the Civil War". It lists the men and gives biographical sketches of the more than 500 who fought in the war. Nancy Baxter, wife of Art Baxter '56, published the book.

In conjunction with the publication of "500 Strong", a symposium on the Civil War was held on campus. Roger Billings '59 gave a paper on the law practice of Abraham Lincoln in Illinois. Roger also has written a book--"The legal Career of America's Greatest President". Roger is still teaching law at Northern Kentucky University and has become quite a Lincoln Scholar.

Both books are available in the College Bookstore or from Amazon.

Whenever I think of Lincoln, I am reminded of the statue (a plaster cast) of Lincoln and his dog that graced the Campus Center's portico for a short time. The dog was quite obviously a male, and one night, someone painted his male member bright red. I asked Vic Powell if he knew who the artist was and what happened to the statue. He didn't know the painter, but said that the statue was stored under the bleachers at the football field for a while and later on quietly taken to the Crawfordsville dump. Ah, the Crawfordsville dump where Jim Collins and some other Scott Gang members went to shoot rats. Those were the days, my friends!

The Wabash football team had a great year winning 9 while losing only 1. In the 120th game of the rivalry, the guys pummeled the De Pauw Tigers 38-21. The Little Giants scored a touchdown the first five times they had the ball. It was 35-7 at the half. Play got a little sloppy in the second half, but everybody got to play. The good guys have won the Bell 5 years in a row. Wabash leads the series 58-53-9.

During "Bell Week" the Bell is removed from its perch over the entrance of the gym and taken to the Chapel where it is rung day and night and guarded from the Dannies. My church's organist's day job is with a company in Indianapolis which builds, restores and repairs organs. It did a complete overhaul of the organ in the Chapel some 5 or 6 years ago, and it needed some minor repairs. My friend and another man drove to Crawfordsville in a white unmarked van and parked in front of the Chapel. They were immediately met by some students who thought they were there to steal the Bell. The kids take the Monon Bell thing very seriously. In fact, the quarterback slept in the Chapel by the Bell the night before the game!

The cross country team was very good: It won the Little State meet, the league championship and were first in the NCAA Great Lakes Regional. The guys went to the National Meet for the 4th time in a row finishing 21st. That may have been a slight disappointment,

The last time the runners won the Great Lakes regional was some 16-17 years ago when the "Three Amigos"-Roger Busch, Scott Gall and Jeremy Wright finished first together. The first five runners were Wabash men. Total score: 15! You can't get a lower score than that.

Roger Busch is now the cross country coach. He's doing a tremendous job!

Jeremy Wright was killed in action in Afghanistan, a few years later. It's hard for me to believe that none of the men I knew who fought in WWII--cousins, uncles, neighbors, my brother and his high school friends--died. It makes no sense to lose a fine young man like Jeremy.

Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Yours in Old Wabash,

Gordon