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April 15, 2014

Dear 59ers:

We are up to fifteen guys registered for the 55th reunion at the 2014 Big Bash, June 6-8. For those of you who are uncertain, err on the side of joining us. You know five years is a long time until our next get-together.

I was reminded of this when I received notice that two of our classmates died last month. Paul A. Crowe succumbed to leukemia on March 9. He and his wife, Rosemary (Lucas) Crowe married in 1958 and were residents of "Mud Hollow" the famous campus married student community. Graduating Phi Beta Kappa from Wabash, Paul attended graduate school at the U. of Florida and Tulane U. He served on the faculty at the U. of Georgia, U. of New Orleans and Western Kentucky. He was Financial Economist at the Fed. Reserve, Atlanta, GA and Sr. Economist for Economic Affairs, US Dept. of Commerce before entering USAID in 1983 as an Economist. After retirement in 1993, Paul accompanied Rosemary on overseas assignments and served as consular/economic consultant in the Marshall Islands. He was a member of the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity.

Ronald Deane Smith, the second of the notable Smith twins in our class died on March 10. His twin, Donald E. Smith, preceded him in death. Ron was an educator, retiring in 1991 from the South Bend Community School Corporation after 32 years teaching at Warren and Dickinson Junior High and Middle Schools. Ron was a 1955 graduate of John Adams High School. After graduating from Wabash, He received a master's degree from Indiana U. He was a member of Delta Tau Delta fraternity.

We will remember these men at our forthcoming reunion. We also greatly appreciate the many years of loyal support that Linda Smith and Rosemary Crowe have given to the Class of '59 and to the College.

Billings, Miller and Franz are just getting back from their winter trips to Florida. I rode out the multiple storms in Chicago this winter with only a short break to attend my grandson's fifth birthday celebration.

Some of you may know that I am Vice Chairman of the Poetry Foundation Board, based in Chicago. This is the organization to which Ruth Lilly, a Wabash benefactor and the sole heiress to the Lilly pharmaceutical fortune, gave several hundred million dollars a few years ago. For this the NY TIMES called her “Silly Lilly!”

One of the programs of which I am very proud that her bequest made possible is Poetry Out Loud. This is an annual poetry recitation contest that attracted over 365,000 high school students this year. On April 30 we will hold the finals for the 50 plus state and territorial winners. It is truly exciting to hear the students recite poetry ranging from Shakespeare to Shel Silverstein.

With so many art and music programs being discontinued in the nation’s high schools, it is inspiring to see teachers volunteer their time to coach these talented young people. Poetry is alive and well in their hands.

Hope to see many of you soon. GET REGISTERED!

Robert (Bob) Wedgeworth
Craig Green
Roger Billings
Class Agents