



WABASH COLLEGE

Class Agents Letter

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Class of 1961

Class Agent

J.B. Bachman

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May, 2015

Dear Many Miler;

..... From the campus of Wabash College...

What a privilege to attend the 177th Commencement ceremony on Sunday. 229 Wabash men stepped into the ranks of alumni on a cloudy, warm afternoon. The senior speakers were quite good, and the pomp and circumstance of the colorful entry by the faculty and trustees (including Jim Cumming – still one of the tallest in the parade!) Several foreign students wore scarves denoting their country. After 25 years as the faculty marshal, Toby Herzog turned the duties over to Frank Howland. The young man I have been following, Patrick Parham, has had a very good academic career as well as earning four letters as a wrestler. He is from Carmel, and his mother worked for me at New York Life fresh out of IU. It is such a joy to share in their pride and happiness.

This is the largest graduating class since 1991 and sports three Fulbright Scholars and one Rhodes Scholar. New Dean Scott Feller told the men at breakfast on Saturday:

“While it is obvious that tomorrow you end your time as an undergraduate and transition to a vocation or possibly graduate school, it is perhaps less obvious that as you move from student to alumnus, you become someone who has responsibility for this institution. I love the quote I found from a previous Deans’ breakfast, ‘In a peculiar reversal of roles, tomorrow afternoon you will become a part of the structure that has ultimate control of this college.’ Think a little bit about what that means.”

Parham said he was quite pleased that President Hess gave homage to Pres. Pat White who had “rung in” this class four years ago. A couple of weeks ago, they held an unveiling ceremony of Pat’s official portrait as the 15th President of Wabash (painted by White’s artistic daughter, Molly) in the Lilly Library. When it was over, Pat White lead the assembled group in a rousing rendition of “Old Wabash.” One long time observer said he had never heard that sung inside the library and it was quite effective!

We were lucky it didn't rain on the Commencement ceremonies on the mall, and we were also fortunate the sun didn't come out!!! It was quite humid. Did get to visit with Jim and Susie Cumming afterward. They look great and are getting ready for a trip to Spain with Anne & Andy Ford, Jim Price '60 and retired faculty member David Hadley.

On a sad note, Beta pledge brother Bill Pullen passed away following surgery to remove a malignant tumor in his brain. Bill had several bouts with cancer over the past 15 years. I spoke with him about a week before the surgery and he was quite optimistic. A friend of his had the same surgery a year before and was doing well. Bill's son, Clay, had said his Dad was suffering from fatigue and some memory issues, thus the MRI he got in late March.

Bill passed away this morning around 9 a.m. He had been heavily sedated for 2 days, and just simply drifted on. I'll let you all know asap when we finalize funeral arrangements and other details. I have to say it is a relief to let Bill go, he would not want to linger on like he was, I hope you all feel the same. Take care and later.... Judy (Pullen)

From: john r [mailto:jrbirdzell@hotmail.com]

JB I was at Bill's funeral service yesterday and echo everything you mentioned about the good life Bill lived as an astute business man and loving husband, father, and grandfather. Thanks for representing our pledge class at the visitation (people I spoke with were very pleased that you were there) and I'm VERY glad that I was able to make it for the funeral and have a chance to talk briefly with Judy and their sons, all of whom were accomplished and a credit to their parents.....

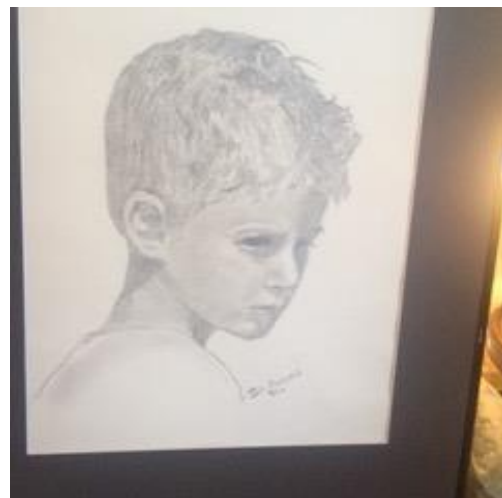
Really enjoyed the montage of pictures depicting Bill's exemplary life. He exemplified the ideals of Wabash very well.....Vic and Karen Hasler were there for the funeral, as well, and were most gracious in introducing me to family and inviting me to sit with them during the service.....

Like you, I was totally unaware of the fact that Bill had been battling cancer for many years, which apparently originated in his kidneys and then spread to his lungs (where he had parts of both lungs removed) and ultimately to the tumor in his brain....With all of that, it was probably a blessing that he was able to leave such a legacy of love, respect, and accomplishment and pass on to "a better life in heaven." Great guy.

(He truly traveled "many productive, caring, and loving miles, before he slept".....)

RIP, Brother Bill.

Yesterday, Barbara & I drove up to Louisville to attend visitation for Bill. We spoke with Vic & Karen Hasler'60 and a large contingent of his Bloomfield high school classmates, with whom Bill kept in close touch. The family (Judy and three sons) had put together a lovely video of Bill's life. He was adored by everybody (friends, co workers and loving family!) After a very successful career with a large Caterpillar dealership (President and



CEO) Bill played a lot of golf (like the comment “decent golf”) and took up painting (Bill was a doodler all his life!)

He had several bouts with cancer going back some 15 years (I did not know this!) and this time renal cancer reappeared in the brain. They thought they got it all out, but he never really came out of the coma after having the top of his skull taken off. Judy said it was best that he passed.



I cannot help but be impressed with Bill’s vibrant life and what he accomplished... he was a quiet, friendly and caring Brother from Southern Indiana... JB

From: Michele Ward [<mailto:wardm@wabash.edu>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 8:38 AM
To: j.b.bachman61
Subject: J. William "Bill" Pullen '61-Deceased Alumnus

Pullen, John W.
Died 4/17/15

Spouse: Pullen, Judith (Judy)

While at Wabash: Played Basketball and was a member of Beta Theta Pi

Preferred Home Address: 3903 Eagle Way Prospect, KY 40059-9500 (502-228-3671)

Pullen, John William "Bill", passed away April 17, 2015, one week before his 76th birthday.

Bill was born in Bloomfield, IN, the second son of Donald and Belle Louise Smiley Pullen. After graduation as president of his high school class, he went on to Wabash College and then to the University of Chicago, where he received his MBA. Bill became a district sales rep in southern Texas for Caterpillar Tractor Company, then in 1971 he moved into sales management at Whayne Supply Company, a Caterpillar equipment distributor based in Louisville. There he remained for the rest of his career, becoming president and CEO of the company in 1985.

After retirement in 2005, Bill became a devoted family man, played decent golf at Hunting Creek Country Club, served as president of the Prospect Goshen Rotary Club, and joined art classes and small group studies at St. John United Methodist Church.

Bill was preceded in death by his brother James "Jim" Pullen and sister Bonnie Pullen Miller. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Judith Dyer Pullen, three sons, Greg, Mark, and Clay (Erin) Pullen, three grandchildren, Olivia, Lucas and Grace Pullen. Bill's siblings Beverly (Bill) Ockerman, Jerry Pullen, and Joe (Linda) Pullen also survive him. A host of family members, friends, and classmates, and former employees all cherish his memory.

His memorial service will be 11 a.m. Monday April 27, 2015 at St. John United Methodist Church, Prospect, KY. with a private burial in Cave Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be 1-5 p.m. Sunday at Pearson's, 149 Breckenridge Lane and at church after 10 a.m. Monday until service.

In lieu of flowers the family requests all donations be directed to the American Cancer Society - See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/louisville/obituary>

JB,

I am deeply saddened to hear the news about Bill. It sounds as if he is not likely to make any significant recovery. All we can do is pray for the best and hope that he and his family can find some peace.

....We are doing great but we have been through a difficult year. We decided to modify our house to make it more compatible for aging in place by adding an elevator and other changes. Unfortunately, we had real problems with our contractor and eventually had to fire them and bring in other people to get the work done. The worst part was that they left a basement door open and a major rain event led to flooding in the basement. The hardwood floor had to be replaced but they waited so long to do this that mold developed and the mold remediation work was finally finished last week.

Tina joins me in sending our best wishes.

Charles F. Cleland, Ph.D SBIR National Program LeaderUSDA/NIFA
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On Mar 11, 2015, at 8:07 AM, Beesley <jonorm49@comcast.net> wrote: to John Birdzell

Was that you I heard this morning on NPR? Sure sounded like you! Or maybe I have been away so long that everyone from Indiana sounds the same.

From: john r [<mailto:jrbirdzell@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2015 2:58 PM
Subject: RE: Birdzell '61 volunteers for Veterans

Still can't quite figure out how the "ole' alma mater" picked up on this, but have received a couple of nice emails, including one from Greg Hess. Thanks for your kind words. (It's interesting that the

morning we did the local interview at 5am, it was "colder than a well-diggers rear end....!") [Way to go, Bird!!!](#)

From: Michele Ward <wardm@wabash.edu>

Date: March 11, 2015 at 3:31:32 PM AST

Subject: Birdzell '61 volunteers for Veterans

John Birdzell '61 is retired and a U.S. Army Veteran. He volunteers his spare time now to pick up veterans in northwest Indiana and take them to the Adam Benjamin Jr. VA Memorial Clinic in Crown Point, Indiana for medical appointments and care, and often to catch a shuttle to another medical center in Chicago.

This morning, John was featured in the National Public Radio *Morning Edition* program, "Veterans Choice Act Fails to Ease Travel Burdens for Vets in Need of Care." [Click here](#) to read or listen to John comment about the challenges veterans face and how he does his part to help.



Wabash students Matt Knox and Kyle Bottos with John Birdzell in 2010. Matt and Kyle were recipients of the Dr. John P. and Helen Birdzell Scholarship, which honors the memory of John's mother and father.

On a positive note, Joe Barnette reports that he is able to take a few steps from the car into a restaurant... though never shy about food, this is nevertheless a remarkable recovery from his stroke in April of last year. He and Charlene wintered in Florida and returned to Indiana on May 1st. Joe will be returning to the excellent Indiana Rehabilitation Center frequently to keep working on his progress!

Pete Pippen reports that he has been battling kidney stone issues, but seems to be making progress. Pete has a granddaughter in nursing @IUPUI who will be going to Haiti this summer on a medical mission. Two grandsons are big in Lacrosse. They went over to watch Wabash play in its inaugural season. (I met and heard the coach speak at a lunch back in February) Lacrosse is an interesting and fast-paced sport. It is sweeping across the Midwest like wildfire. 'Started in the Northeast (Syracuse) by Indians, it is touted to be the only sport totally originated in USA...(basketball???)

Doug and Pat Burns spent two months in Australia and New Zealand and had a wonderful time. Doug wouldn't say if he picked up an application for citizenship.... Pat seems to be having allergy problems in Charlotte, so there is some chance they will be moving to Indiana in the future.

WABASH COLLEGE

Wabash ROI Among Nation's Best

by Richard Paige

March 5, 2015

Wabash College ranked 50th nationally in the 2015 *PayScale.com* ROI report, a ranking released today of the best return on investment in higher education.

Wabash graduates can expect to earn more than \$597,000 more than a high school graduate over a 20-year period following degree completion. That figure placed Wabash in the top four percent nationally of the 1,223 schools ranked for providing the best monetary return through a combination of low cost of attendance and a high earnings potential for alumni.

Based on this ranking, Wabash graduates earn more than \$363,000 more over a 20-year period than the median college graduate, which breaks down to better than \$18,000 annually.

"Our young men don't choose between science and art, or between academics and athletics, but instead combine elements of college life that many think are in opposition to each other," said Dr. Scott E. Feller, Dean of the College. "Similarly, the data from *PayScale* show that a student choosing Wabash does not have to decide between a liberal arts education and financial success."



Wabash and Rose-Hulman were the only Indiana higher education institutions to appear in *PayScale's* top-50 slots, outdistancing Purdue (53rd), Notre Dame (75th), Indiana (397th), and DePauw (677th). The Wabash placement also topped all other Great Lakes College Association members listed.

Further, Wabash's four-year full cost of attendance, reported as \$175,900, was the third lowest of all private schools ranked in the top 100. Wabash was joined by National Liberal Arts Colleges Harvey Mudd and Lafayette in the top 50.

"For generations, Wabash has offered young men a rich liberal arts education that is both attainable and respected in the marketplace," said Preston Bost, professor of psychology and director of institutional research. "The return-on-investment analysis by *PayScale* is a rigorously quantitative way of representing the stories we hear every day

from graduates who credit Wabash with helping them succeed.”

The *PayScale* rankings are determined by the difference between the 20-year median pay for a bachelor’s degree recipient and the 24-year median pay for a high school graduate minus the cost of attendance.

Good morning,

It is with a heavy heart that I pass along the news that long-time Wabash Professor Richard Strawn passed away Sunday evening at the age of 91. Dr. Strawn taught French, linguistics, and music to Wabash students over four decades, beginning in 1951 until his retirement in 1987, and remained a vibrant part of the College’s community throughout his life.

A full obituary can be found on the Wabash website: http://www.wabash.edu/news/displaystory.cfm?news_ID=10476

Sincerely, Jim Amidon

Well, guys! This is long enough. There are some Christmas photos, but they can wait until summer! Barbara and I will be moving back to northern Indy as soon as we can get our home on the market and find a buyer. Real estate is “hot” in Nashville as it is also in Indy. We’ll just have to see. We hope to be in place by mid/late August.

Briefly, Wabash sports continue outstanding performances. Basketball went pretty well. Wrestling sent five to DivIII National Championships winning a back-to-back national champion by Reilly Lefever @ 184 lbs. Brother Conner Lefever won Champion @ 174, and brother Reece Lefever came in 2nd. This is the first time in history three brothers competed at the Finals. The Little Giants finished the season Third in Division III (behind #1 Wisconsin Whitewater.) Wabash also finished 5th nationally in academic GPA. Coach Brian Anderson has built a superb program of 63 wrestlers!!

The Wabash swimmers had an outstanding year, establishing many new records and sending six swimmers to Nationals.

Track and Field won a record tying 5th straight NCAC title and has several at the Nationals as this is written. So raise your glass to a very successful athletic program at your alma mater...

And, since we are way behind previous years of giving, please join in NOW! We stand at 52 which is 15-18 behind our recent past in giving. (In our 50th year we had 91 donors!!!) Wabash is a GREAT college, and she deserves your support!!!

Many Miles Before the Night.....

JB