



WABASH COLLEGE

Class Agents Letter

Alumni and Parent Relations

P.O. Box 352

Crawfordsville, IN 47933

Web site: www.wabash.edu

Email us: alumni@wabash.edu

Phone: (765) 361-6369

Class of 1963

Class Agents

Alan Stanford

alan.stanford@att.net

Bruce Polizotto

bpolizotto@hotmail.com

Tom Billings

t-billings@sbcglobal.net

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Last Saturday was a perfect fall day in Crawfordsville. Homecoming, the tacky decs, Chapel with the Glee Club, recognitions and awards, and a Wabash football 51-0 rout over Oberlin made it perfect. The Class Agents met for an update from President Greg Hess, Dean for Enrollment Management Mike Thorp '86, Alumni Affairs director Steve Hoffman '85, head football coach Don Morel, and Career Services' Cassie Hagan, and I wanted to share some of the information with you.

But first, we have had more sad news about fellow classmates who we have lost since my last letter.

Robert Erickson died in St. Augustine, Florida on June 28 ending a life of tremendous accomplishment and service. Bob, a Sigma Chi Bio major at Wabash and a wrestler and football athlete, went on to receive an M.S. in Microbiology from Wesleyan, a Ph.D. in Microbial Genetics from Rutgers, and an MBA from Stanford. He started several biotech companies including Neutekbio in Galway, Ireland. According to his widow Mary Flynn, Bob lived with Hepatitis C from surgery, got through open heart surgery and was finally felled with cancer. His obituary was testimony to a great person, "Robert will be remembered for his lifelong passion for learning and sharing ideas, and his gentle and generous spirit. Inspired by nature and art, he enjoyed writing, reflecting, and sharing his thoughts and experiences with others." Some Little Giant! Bob is survived by his wife, Mary Flynn, two children and four grandchildren and a brother and sister. Mary Flynn can be contacted at 453 N. Bridgestone Ave., Saint Johns, FL 32259, 904-716-8521.

And **Glenn Pride** died on August 20 in Dallas. An academic and track standout at Wabash, he was later recognized in The Athletics Hall of Fame. He earned his Medical Doctor certification at IU's School of Medicine then received advanced fellowship training in Gynecologic Oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York. He retired from his practice in 2006. He is survived by Mary Jo, his ex-wife, two children, and three grandchildren along with two sisters and a brother. Some of his Delta Tau Delta brothers commented, "Very sad. A fine scholar, athlete and good soul; I can see Glenn going over the high hurdles on a sunny day at Wabash – a cinder track – a beautiful sight; I have fond memories of his grin as he shrugged his shoulders ... we are all better people for having known Glenn; He out drove his foursome at the 50th Reunion all the while sporting that playful smile that hinted that he knew something that we didn't (which was no doubt true.)"

Now, an update on the College. Steve Hoffman, Tom Runge's replacement in Alumni Affairs following Tom's retirement, covered items for Class Agents (there were about 40 back), and kept the agenda moving. Don Morel gave a great perspective of football and Wabash. This year's freshman class of 215 yielded 66 going out for football, and he would love to have 90! Although the coaching staff is obviously doing well with last year's and this year's impressive win record, recruiting is his toughest challenge. He humorously gave us his sales pitch, "1. Wabash is a rigorous school (that means tough!), 2. The football program is rigorous (that also means tough), 3. Wabash is in Crawfordsville, Indiana (!), and 4. It's all male. And, by the way, most players have 3.6 and above high school GPA's with a handful of 4.0's, and the floor is a 3.4." You would be proud of his commitment to recruit only students who are capable of doing the academic work necessary to graduate in 4 years as complete Wabash men. He encouraged any of us who is aware of an outstanding high school student athlete who fits this criteria to email him personally, moreld@wabash.edu.

Cassie Hagan, who leads the career services operation, reported improved results in getting students linked with internships and earlier focus on initial career placements and graduate school research and commitments. If you can influence an internship opportunity or assist with any post-Wabash vocational help email Cassie at haganc@wabash.edu.

Mike Thorp, Dean for Enrollment Management (I think we used to call the job "Admissions Director"!), gave a positive but realistic story of the challenges in recruiting. Each high school recruit for Wabash averages applications to 8 colleges (the national average is 12), and competition is tough for those that can make it at Wabash and buy the "small liberal arts all-male college in the Midwest" story (my words-not Mike's!). This year's freshman class of 215 was "light", in comparison with Greg Hess's goal of a student body of 900-1000. Wabash's 4-year graduation rate is in the 80-83% range, compared to Purdue's male graduation rate an amazingly low 37% and IU's 48%. The recruiting calendar is being moved back to get to qualified candidates earlier in their decision process. Honor Scholarships will be the first of December and used as a tactic to interest qualified prospects. Financial aid decisions will be committed earlier, also. The recruiting mantra seems to be "young men ready to do the work." Send Mike an email with any recommendations you have – best to include email and birthdate in addition to first and last name if you can get the information. Contact him at thorpm@wabash.edu.

President Greg Hess closed the session with his remarks. Several items loom large including framing several potential large gifts into a campaign to raise the endowment significantly. (Wabash's is around \$342 million [DePauw's is \$954 million], and the draw rate unfortunately hovers around 6% when the goal is closer to 4%.) He had a great comment, "In many things in life bigger is better ... education is not one of them!" Amen. I always believed that Wabash was so richly endowed – and it is in much better shape than many colleges – but we need to be working on doubling the endowment to meet the challenges that lie ahead for small, independent and great learning institutions.

I skipped the alumni lunch to have a burger and onion rings with John and Carolyn Doyel, my Delt pledge brother mentioned in the last letter as having just been married. They stand ready to greet any of you returning to Crawfordsville! (Although I didn't vet this offer with them.) Returning to Indy, I called Bruce Polizotto. He and Linda are still in Michigan planning to return to Indy early in November. He has had several serious surgeries with his eye, but outcomes are positive, and he is his great self.

One other thing. I was 5 minutes late for the 8:15am start (due to waiting on the CSX train!) and walked in with a Class of 2016 grad, Jake Norley. After a quick introduction we sat together in

the session. Jake was an exceptional football athlete and is now at Purdue in a 5 year doctorate program in biochemistry. A testament that Wabash is a great place with exceptional outcomes. Keep your eye on him!

Send me a note or email to catch up. We'll share (or not, if you guide us) in future letters. Bruce, Tom or I will get another letter out before the end of the year, so I'll skip any contribution requests for now, except always think about Wabash in your gifts and bequests!

Best regards,

Alan, for Bruce and Tom