



## **WABASH COLLEGE**

### ***Class Agents Letter***

Alumni and Parent Relations

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## **Class of 1964**

### **Class Agent**

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Gentlemen of the Class of 1964:

Wabash retains the Bell; the world is once again safe for democracy!

Ten minutes after our last letter hit the Ethernet, I received an appreciative note from my same-named friend, Dick Durham. It seems Dr. Kurtz had recruited him to Wabash. Dick also has a new CD available at <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/dickdurham>.

With the close of the fiscal year at the end of June, the Annual Fund established a new record. Giving topped \$3,175,000 from more than 4,300 donors. That's nearly \$51,000 above the previous single-year record of 2009. I sometimes look at the Honor Roll over the course of the year. I don't care who gives or doesn't give; some of my Kappa Sigma brothers and other friends from our years at Wabash rarely contribute to the fund. The Honor Roll simply supplies a snapshot of who has survived another year – no mean feat at our age.

On October 12<sup>th</sup>, the college hosted a dinner celebrating the successful completion of the Challenge of Excellence at The Princeton Club in New York City. Free food, hurray. As happens when Wabash men meet, we swapped stories of the college and its cast of characters.

Sitting next to me was Will Arvin (2008) from the Annual Giving Office. We were talking about how each generation of Wabash men feels that its time on campus represents the Golden Age of Wabash. We know, of course, that our era was the preeminent Golden Age. How could it not be with the likes of Trippet, Rogge, Moore, Charles, et al, in residence? For Will those were only names in a history book. The only name connected to a person that he knew of was that of our honorary classmate, Dr. Joseph O'Rourke, long-time speech professor and debate coach. I never had a course with Dr. O'Rourke, but I did have a few contacts with him. When I was ringing the bell for classes, his office and classroom were on the third floor by the bell rope. For the first class of the day I was supposed to ring the bell five minutes before eight and again at eight for the start of class. Sometimes - after working the 11 to 7 shift at Steel Industries or when I just got off to a slow start - I would miss the first warning bell. A couple of

times I got growled at. One morning I was walking towards Center Hall and noticed that someone had left on his headlights. I had just shut off the lights when a window on the third floor swung open. “What are doing to my car?” More growling. My last contact with him was much more congenial. At our last reunion we shared a table for the box lunch on the green. I reminded him of these two stories, and then we swapped stories about my fraternity brothers and friends who had been on the debate teams. No growling, but lots of laughs. Open the site below for more about Joe.

[http://www.wabash.edu/magazine/1997/summer/features/tribute\\_joe\\_orourke/home.htm](http://www.wabash.edu/magazine/1997/summer/features/tribute_joe_orourke/home.htm)

About the “free food” —parking, \$38.00 (It is New York City after all.), gas, \$22.00, dinner with congenial Wabash men, priceless. Well, not exactly priceless, but close enough.

The next letter will focus on one of the icons of our era, Norman Moore. Please feel free to forward your recollections to me.

### **Annual Fund & Challenge of Excellence Update**

As the calendar year draws to a close, you may want to make your contribution to the Annual Fund earlier than usual. Who knows what the “fiscal cliff” will bring.

Wabash celebrated the success of the Challenge of Excellence. The campaign, which is dedicated to student aid, faculty support, funding global immersion trips, and endowing the business leadership program, exceeded its \$60 million dollar goal, and did so a full twelve months early, raising \$68,116,695. The College has also celebrated another banner year of giving in the Annual Fund. Last year's annual fund giving was over \$3.1 million dollars (an all-time record) and reached 35% alumni participation for the first time in recent years.

As you may be aware, the 2012 College year will mark **President Pat White's 7th and final year** as the 15th President of Wabash College. President White will be touring various regional associations in the spring, and we hope that you will all be able to join us for a celebration of his tenure. Additionally, the College has begun the planning process to find **Wabash's 16th president**. The Search Committee has selected a small group of candidates who are being invited to participate in confidential interviews with the search committee members in mid-December.

One final note: Wabash continues to rely heavily on **alumni referrals** for quality applications for the Class of 2017. This year's freshman class came from a pool of over 1000 alumni referrals and--remarkably--over 20% of the 260 students who were rung in on Freshman Saturday were Wabash legacies. If you think you know a future Wabash man, you can refer him online at <http://www.wabash.edu/alumni/admissions>.

The College has also made its new admissions marketing materials, following the “Serious” theme, available for download at these links:

<http://www.wabash.edu/alumni/docs/athletics.pdf>

<http://www.wabash.edu/alumni/docs/Outcomes%20draft.pdf>

<http://www.wabash.edu/alumni/docs/Road%20Piece.pdf>  
<http://www.wabash.edu/alumni/docs/Viewbook.pdf>

### **Reunion**

Our 50th class reunion is scheduled for June 6-8, 2014. We still need someone to put together the class book. This project involves gathering the information and putting together a book to be given to all class members. If you would be interested in taking this on, contact Tom Runge (runget@wabash.edu). Skip, Dudley, and Bill will be contacting everyone over the next few months, and I hope you help them. We had a good reunion last time, and if all of you who attended return for our next reunion and do your best to get two of your friends to come as well, we will have a great reunion this time.

As I bring this letter to a close, I should let you know I am making plans to attend the funeral of a young woman I have known since she was born. Her parents are my close friends here in Danbury. Lauren Rousseau was a teacher at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. She had wanted to be an elementary school teacher even before she was old enough to go to school.

<http://www.newstimes.com/local/article/Lauren-Rousseau-The-best-year-of-her-life-4120850.php>

Be well, and perform random acts of kindness. We need them.

James R. Durham