



WABASH COLLEGE

Class Agents Letter

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Class of 1968

Class Agent

Jim Roper

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Dear Friends in the Class of 1968,

Here's your letter—that newsy update thing again. Happy 2016! Lots going on at Wabash. More opportunities now than we could dreamed of back when ships were wood. On the home front in Colorado Springs, I have my season pass to A Basin, and we are practicing (indoors) baseball everyday—15U Titans and 13U Majestic—and the 8U twins are signed up for another season of Little League. Cub Scout Pinecar Derby coming up! I passed another physical exam—although they are now calling it a “multi-symptom visit” or some such nonsense. The bureaucrats are winning! I hope you are all well and smiling. Please send me an update!

I received a terrific letter from Van Butler in Durango. He answered all the questions I've been asking about the photos he's posted on Facebook. (I inserted the photos he referenced.) Appears the Butlers are doing it right! I hope to meet up with Van and Mary in Scottsdale when my son plays a baseball tournament there in March.

Hi Ropes,



Thanks for the pics in the newsletter. Per your suggestion, I thought I would give you a little update.

As Mary says, we have had a summer bracketed by rivers. The first picture you posted was Mary and our granddaughter, Meghan, taken at an overnight campsite one night during our six day trip through the Grand Canyon in May.

On the other end of the summer, along with another couple, we rented a 39 foot boat and spent a week cruising down the Vilaine River, the Brest a Nantes Canal, and the Erde River in central Brittany. We followed that with a week seeing sights in Normandy, of course including a full day tour of the invasion beaches. This was quite poignant to me, as my dad was a glider trooper landing early in the am on D-Day. I had been there once before, in 1963, but had never done a real tour.





As you as a fellow Coloradian understand, we spent the rest of the summer playing a lot of golf, taking our jeep to the mountains, and doing a little hiking. The second picture that you included was taken on a local (somewhat) hike at Spud Lake on Spud Mountain. It's a beautiful spot, reached by way of a fairly easy hike that goes through several layers of beaver ponds before depositing you at the spot where that picture was taken. We also had a huge summer mushrooming. The chanterelles in particular were huge and abundant this year.

In between our trips, we focused ourselves on doing a long distance remodel on a condo we bought in Scottsdale. We've had a small one bedroom place ever since the surgeon's efforts convinced us it was time to think twice about skiing. We decided to upgrade to a small two bedroom place that was really nicely located and really beat up. It came out great and we're looking forward to spending time there this winter.

We're both going full steam and enjoying ourselves here in God's country. We're still making music with our church band that includes monthly performances at several of the assisted living and care units in the area along with the weekly leading of worship at the contemporary service. We continue to be blessed with good health and are thankful for it.

Ok, that's a quick summary. I never have been much of a writer, but sure appreciate the effort you put in and always enjoy the news. Oh, by the way, Monon Bell gathering at the Main Event Sports Bar on Florida Road. If Pat Haney shows up as promised, there'll be two of us this year. Last year I had to make an honorary alum of a neighbor of ours who was there for the Ohio State game but loved the Wabash story.

Best to all. Anybody in the neighborhood, Durango or Scottsdale, look us up.....Van

Terry Smith

10/27/2015



A personal account that proves to me that there is a GOD. This rainy evening I was on my way to C'ville to have supper with an old college buddy. South of Romney on 231 I was stopped behind a car that was turning left. As I always do, I looked in my rear view mirror and saw a white box truck bearing down on me. It was probably 2-300 ft away. He was going way too fast to stop the truck before it struck me from behind and making me a statistic. Instantly, with a car stopped in front of me, I knew my only option was to step on the gas and try and steer my truck down into the ditch between the road and telephone poles. I was waiting for the impact from behind and afraid to look in my mirror. But none came and I miraculously missed the telephone pole and about the same time I noticed the white box truck had also gone into the ditch and was on the other side of the pole and passing me. Somehow he had missed me, kept his truck upright, and escaped the collision. I sat there for a while and thanked God for delivering me safe and sound. I also sat there a while and collected my thoughts and calmed down. It had to be God that protected the passengers of all three vehicles.

From **Jim Millikin**:

Great job...as always. Keep em coming!!

Very little new here. I'll soon have grandkids in CA and in MD. Guaranteed to stretch the airline budget for Granny's visits. Talk to you later, almost time to gear up for the 50th.

Jim

From **Dr. John Greeves:**

Fantastic newsletter as always. Thanks for the inclusion. We are off for a river cruise on the Danube for our 45th wedding anniversary year. Should be fun. Sorry I will miss the Bell Game but will check it out on line. Thanks again. Your family looks great. WAF, JHG

I received a nice note from Dan Susie, who's busy super-lawyering in Dallas. Sez he is in good health, still running 12 miles per week and very busy on the job. Will see him at the next Homecoming!

Sad to hear of the passing of a friend:

John Ross Neal, 70, died June 29 in Crystal Lake, IL.

Born December 31, 1944, he was the son of **John Neal '35**.

While attending Wabash he was a member of Beta Theta Pi.

Neal was a robotic chemist at Signature Bioscience, Inc. in Hayward, CA.

He is survived by cousins, **Robert Neal, Jr. '60**, **Edward Neal, '66**, and **Davey Neal '01**



Jim Funnybone Dashiell

So Monday I was running the hydraulic log splitter when I accidentally partially amputated my left thumb. It all happened so quickly!! Bad enough I was so sick in Nepal but to catch my thumb in the splitter.....pure stupid. One less nail to trim.

Martindale Hall to Be "Re-imagined"

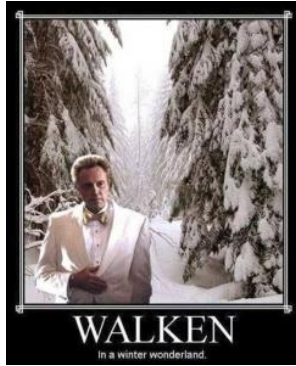
Martindale set to undergo complete transformation. [Full Story.](#)



I do not know how you "re-imagine" or even "transform" a building. I mean, there it is! Only in higher academia can this phrase be offered with a straight face. I think the real world event is that a renovation of the interior will be underway after current residents are moved to the new housing in January.

MAKE A GIFT

If you're ready to invest in Wabash, make a gift to the Annual Fund. Call 1-877-743-4545 or email giving@wabash.edu.



Campus Services recently won a national honor from the Professional Grounds Management Society for its work keeping the campus looking nice. Wabash won a Green Star Honor Award in the small college and grounds category. Only seven national colleges were so honored.

Below, I have attached a link to the latest quarterly copy of Spread the Fame, a publication of the Admissions Office. In it, you will find a passionate articulation of the value of a Wabash education from Dean Mike Thorp, '86, as well as tips on how to have conversations with prospective students and their families. I hope you'll take a few minutes to check out this quarter's newsletter! [**CLICK HERE TO READ THIS QUARTER'S EDITION**](#)

Susie '68 named to the 2015 Who's Who in Energy

[December 16, 2015 Alumni Relations](#)

Some of us are retired, while others just find another gear.



Dan Susie '68 was named a 2015 Who's Who in Energy last month. Each year, an elite group of energy leaders is honored as Who's Who in Energy by *The Business Journals*, a division of American City Business Journals. Who's Who in Energy honors key players in the energy industry. These people support the industry by providing services in a variety of different areas, including law, finance, oil and gas, etc. Dan is a Shareholder with Winstead law firm in Dallas, Texas, where he is a member of the Finance and Banking, and Energy Lending practice groups. After Wabash, Dan earned his JD at Southern Methodist University, Dedman School of Law.



Congratulations to the Little Giant football players, coaches, and support staff. They wrapped up their 2015 season 12-1, NCAC champs, and seventh-straight Bell victory. Wabash seniors Mason Zurek and Tyler McCullen were named to the 2015 D3football.com All-America Team. Zurek was named to the all-America first team, while McCullen was selected to the second team. <http://bit.ly/1k7sYvJ>

Terrific season. Wow! I already look forward to next year. WAF!!!

Steven Johnson updated his profile picture.





Here's a nice note from the world of Dr. Jim Dashiell and his beautiful family:

Had a great time yesterday with my awesome grandkids. I gave all tool bags...red for boys and pink for girls and each family received a good microscope. We played games, ate too much and loved each other's company.

Dr. Raymond B. Williams H'68 is the Committee Chair for the National Geographic Sacred Journeys exhibit at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis. The exhibit, produced in collaboration with the National Geographic Society and made possible by Lilly Endowment Inc., will be open through February 21, 2016. Dr. Williams chairs a committee of scholars whose mission is to create an exhibit to help visitors understand different faiths. Alumnus Ken Ogorek '87 is a member of the advisory committee.



Warner Elected WHA President

History professor Rick Warner became the new President of the World History Association on Jan. 1.



Here's a bit of good news that arrived via Facebook on 1-19-2016:

Bruce Malcolm Gras

Springfield, VA I AM VERY THANKFUL TO BE ALIVE TODAY. IN THE PAST TWO MONTHS, I HAVE BEEN DECLARED DEAD TWICE WHILE IN HOSPITALS FOR CANCER TREATMENT ONLY TO STUBBORNLY CONTINUE LIVING. AS A RESULT, I HAVE WONDERED WHY I AM STILL HERE. I BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS MEANT FOR ME TO BE RETURNED TO MY NEW FAMILY AND TO BE A MESSENGER OF FAITH. BEFORE I EVEN TRY TO WORK OUT EXACTLY WHAT TO DO IN BOTH REGARDS, I WANT TO SHARE MY

GRATITUDE WITH ALL MY FACEBOOK FRIENDS WITH THIS BEAUTIFUL AND TOUCHING SONG OF GENTLE FAITH-BEARING LOVE OF LIFE.

ALL THE BEST TO ALL YOU, BRUCE

Many of you will remember Bruce as the master musician at our 40th reunion. We actually had an excellent jam session at the motel before the reunion, and what a great time resulted from his efforts. Amazing guy, any way you measure it. You can find the song he referenced on his website. I was able to contact Bruce via email and he sent this story:

"I have faced death before, too many times to count or even recollect. However, it is very tough to face death when you have pulled away from it not just once, but twice, and felt that you were really and finally safe after the second time. Still, fighting is far better than the alternative. So, when I fell out of remission with the extra difficulties of considerable internal bleeding and a bad blood infection this last Fall, the first thing I did was crap in my pants. Who wouldn't? I saw my pancreatic cancer creeping back into Stage 1 and making tracks to Stage 2, I have been treated in the past at the Cornell Medical Center and the associated Weil Institute, as well as at Johns Hopkins. This time though, I chose to go to the Moffitt Center down near Tampa. The details are unpleasant to relate, but their combination of aggressive and holistic medicine appear to have genuinely done the job at last. I am very grateful to have battled and beat this insidious beast in this final showdown if it turns out to be so. I know that I have spent nearly all my net worth now with all these pre-clinical trial and experimental treatments. Still, as I said, this is far better than the alternative.

What I have found, though, is worth much more than the seven figures I have spent to beat cancer. It is a revived and refreshed faith in God. Who else could have assisted me in getting this far back? I have an especially renewed appreciation for family and raising children. Some of you might remember that I was a married student all four years of my time at Wabash, working full time while going to school full time, to keep my family, wife and daughter, together. I did the same at the University of Chicago while getting my MBA. Then, in 1975, and after 13 years of marriage, my wife came out of the closet. At that time, my reaction was WTF? In 1975, there was no understanding at all of Gays, and Woman's Lib was just emerging. Anyway, those 13 years were all for naught as my wife took my daughter into her world. I lost the family I had been so committed to for all their well being, and I had real ashes in my mouth about family life as a result for the next 40 years. Today though, I long more than ever, especially with a refound life, for finding that life that I missed which has the love, warmth and comfort that a loving and devoted wife can bring to my and our lives. In addition, I now terribly miss raising children to help them succeed by their own energies and discovery. I have to admit that, over the years, I have marveled and admired our own Class Agent, Jim, with his joy and success in raising his own young family. Now, I only wish that I can be so lucky myself.

About five years ago, a close friend in the Navy and posted in the Philippines introduced me to his wife's sister. This could have been nothing as most of us know and even experienced. On the other hand, she and I have grown closer and closer until we have reached the point where I have married her, Jessica, in a strange, but valid ceremony conducted over Skype. This is until I finish bringing her over here to live together in the States. Then, we will have a fantastic church wedding and reception to which everyone of you, my '68 classmates, will be invited. AND, I have saved that best part for the last! Jessica comes with a marvelous set of three daughters, Karen 6 years old, Katrina, 8 years old, and Krisna Mae, 18 years old. This is the best of all worlds for me as you can imagine from the foregoing. I am equally grateful to our Lord and Savior for bringing them to me as I am for him returning my life to me. I hope he will also will guide me in my retirement to indulge in my three passions. Go to www.thegrasgroup.com to see what I mean when you have a spare moment.

Godspeed and may the Lord bless you even just a bit of what he has done for me so late in life, Bruce Malcolm Gras, Wabash '68."

All the best, Bruce



Iron Mike Gallagher posted this photo with the caption, "Tuna and Snapper on the beach." Must be Mexico?

Nice.

That will wrap up this edition of YOUR letter. Shoot an email this way when you can. Get those "multi-symptom" health screens and plan on partying at Homecoming next year! Life is short!

WAF,
Jim Roper '68

