



## Pactoracles

Class Agent's Letter For The Wabash College Class of 1971  
February 1, 2010



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## Our 40<sup>th</sup> Reunion: June 2011

Our 40<sup>th</sup> reunion will be the first weekend in June 2011. In the ensuing months, we will make many important decisions such as whether to have a complete make-over or whether to expect a stimulus package (financial or otherwise). But, one decision we must make now. We must decide to reserve this important weekend on our calendars now.

It may shock some of us to know that some classmates have computers, and some do not; some have e-mail addresses, and some do not; some have friends without being on Facebook, and others get their friends wherever they can. But all of us have a calendar. So, let's get it on our calendars now.

There will be only one 40<sup>th</sup> reunion of our class, and we want as many of us to attend. We have had very enjoyable reunions in the past, and this one will be no exception. To assure that outcome, I will be forming a reunion committee this year. To volunteer, give me a call or an e-mail.

## Alumni and Faculty Team Up For Symposium On Baseball

A Committee of alumni, faculty, and staff are working to put on an academic symposium by faculty and alumni and a banquet featuring Will Carroll of *Baseball Prospectus*, March 26-27. A baseball movie Friday night with a critique and discussion, and a Saturday morning wiffle ball tournament before a double-header with Wittenberg are also on the schedule.

This is an alumni initiative for alumni, faculty and staff working together to develop and strengthen the ties between alumni, on the one hand, and the faculty and staff on the other, and to foster stronger ties among faculty and staff, while having fun in a liberal arts field of dreams.

Eight presentations are already on the card. I have included the title to the presentations where I have them; the others are descriptions.

Chris Carr '82, formerly the psychologist for the Kansas City Royals, will address sports psychology and the liberal arts

Tobey Herzog, Professor of English, will present his personal essay entitled, "Russ Meyer, Soft Porn, Baseball, and Innocence Lost."

Todd McDorman, Professor of Rhetoric, will present an essay entitled "Image (Dis)Repair in Pete Rose's *My Prison Without Bars*."

Steve Morillo, Professor of History, will address baseball and the teaching of American history (*continued on next page*)

## *Baseball Symposium, March 26-27*

*(continued from prior page)*

Dennis Krause, Professor of Physics, will discuss the physics of baseball.

Lon Porter, Professor of Chemistry, will connect chemistry and the evolution of the baseball bat

Greg Redding '88, Professor of German, will address the impact of German immigration on baseball

Bob Wedgeworth '59 will recount the old Negro Leagues.

Some have asked why baseball is the topic. Everyone knows of baseball, and baseball runs the gamut of the liberal arts--literature, science, math, economics, politics, religion, history, visual arts, fine arts, etc. It is not an overly difficult topic such as global warming. The purpose of the symposium is to have fun and to develop the relationships as stated above within a liberal arts setting.

The committee includes yours truly as committee chair and Brad Johnson '71.

More information will be forthcoming soon. Contact me with any question or suggestion for the symposium.

## **Survey Confirms Wabash Students Are More Engaged In Academic Pursuits Than Most Students Nationwide**

Wabash students are engaged in academics and campus life. We knew that in 1971, and it is comforting to know as 60-year-old somethings that they are still today. But neutral investigators have confirmed our personal experiences.

In an annual survey of more than 360,000 college freshmen and seniors in 627 American colleges, the level of engagement of Wabash men remains near the top in the country and near the top of peer institutions in the Great Lakes region.

The survey, 2009 National Assessment of Student Engagement (NSSE), questioned students in five categories: (1) level of academic challenge, (2) active and collaborative learning, (3) student-faculty interaction, (4) enriching education experience, and (5) supportive campus environment.

Here is just a tiny sampling.

- 97% of Wabash freshmen felt the college placed substantial emphasis on academics.
- 63% of Wabash freshmen frequently worked harder than they thought they could to meet faculty expectations.
- 26% of Wabash freshmen wrote more than 10 papers between 5 and 19 pages and 27% wrote a paper more than 20 pages.
- 45% of Wabash seniors did research with a faculty member.
- 86% of Wabash seniors would choose Wabash again if they could start their college career over.

Unlike rankings, which often have commercial motives, this survey does not. It confirms that Wabash is an excellent place for education where people matter.

These results should be further impetus for each of us to keep our school strong by encouraging young men to enroll at Wabash. A referral is easy, important, and rewarding. We can refer a student—especially juniors, sophomores, and younger--by mailing information to the Dean of Admissions, P. O. Box 352, Wabash College, Crawfordsville, IN 47933 or referring online at <http://www.wabash.edu/alumni/student/refer>

## News From Campus...

**Interesting New IM “Sport”—Recycling.** The IM Recycling competition will begin February 4 and run to the month’s end. The winning living unit will get 24 points.

Bins and bags will be distributed early next week, which will be collected twice a week, Monday and Thursday. I am not sure how this contest will be scored, but it may be one sport where trash talking is encouraged.

**First Generation Students.** Wabash still attracts a large number of first generation students. It is applying for a grant to help attract and keep those students. For this purpose, a “first generation student” is a student neither of whose parents completed college. How many of our classmates were first generation students? If you were one, send me your comments about it.

**Wabash Scores High In Rankings.** *The Princeton Review*, which is in partnership with *USA Today*, has recently named Wabash as one of the 50 best values in private colleges. Wabash is the only Indiana institution to be named to the Top 40 of *Forbes.com*’s Best Colleges and Best Buys College lists for 2009.

*The Princeton Review* surveys administrators and students at more than 650 public and private colleges and universities on more than 30 factors in academics, cost of attendance, and financial aid. It observed Wabash’s “solid reputation” and “rigorous academic programs” and spotlighted Wabash’s Honor Scholar Weekend for merit-based scholarships.

The *Forbes.com* rankings are done in conjunction with the Center for College Affordability and Productivity. *Forbes* focuses on student opinion while considering other factors such as post-graduate success and the estimated student debt after four years.

**Business Initiative.** Wabash is starting a Business Leaders Program to deliver a comprehensive introduction to the world of business. It will combine academic courses with experiential learning. This is not a business major, however.

The program will include a business-related internship. Under this program, the college may have grant money to help to pay the intern. This is a good deal for the employer, the student, and the college. For more information, please contact me or Angie Cook-Smith at the college.

**Basketball Team On A Roll.** After a slow start, the Little Giants have won eight of their last nine games to boost their season record to 12-6 and its conference record to 7-3. Wabash lost an early season contest at DePauw but pummeled the Tigers, 72-50 in Crawfordsville in a December re-match. They defeated a tough Wittenberg team (13-3) on January 20.

**Wrestling & Swimming.** It is hard to determine how these teams are doing because of various meets. The wrestling team seems to be doing well, having finished second in a 11-school tourney at North Central (Chicago) and third out of 14 teams at Elmhurst College (Illinois) on January 17. The swimming team does not seem to be doing as well, but it is heading toward the conference tourney, February 10-13.

**Faculty Cut-Backs.** Approximately 32 faculty or staff have accepted early retirement packages offered because of the recession. The departures will not occur all at once. The college is also reducing budgets, but the idea is to do more with less.

## ***With Our Classmates...***

**Steve Blau** continues to pursue various opportunities in the commercial and corporate real estate arena. These presently take the form of (a) receiverships and other engagements related to the recession, (b) litigation support and expert testimony, (c) corporate and institutional counseling, and (d) a mix of transactional assignments.

"Unfortunately, the first segment seems to have the most potential right now," he writes. "One of my business colleagues and I developed a program to quickly - and with a high degree of certainty - move troubled mid-range commercial property assets through either state foreclosure or bankruptcy. We're pretty busy, as a result."

He is enjoying grandfatherhood. His eldest, Alia, has a seven year old daughter (Emma) and a one year old son (Sam). "Shanni, my middle daughter, presented us with Jordyn about 18 months ago and is due to deliver Max within the next week or two. Two boys, two girls."

"Alia's husband, Travis, a Major in the Marines (he was deployed three out of the last five years), is finishing up a graduate degree at the School of Advanced Warfighting (a program for which only a handful - I think 24 - Marine officers are selected each year).

Gail, Steve's girlfriend/fiancé, has three daughters. Her eldest, Alice is a law school grad who spends most of her time breeding and training horses. She was on the US Equestrian Team's long list a few years ago and is presently competing at some stratospheric level in Dressage. Zosia, her middle daughter, is midway through her degree in Veterinary Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. And her youngest, Maxine, will graduate from Princeton this year.

**Keith Nelson.** "I have continued to work in public service in Illinois state government. After 16 years with the IL Dept of Corrections (including "spending time" as a Warden. I have been working for the IL Dept. of Human Services for 9 years. I have worked in the Division of Mental Health as an administrator in our Forensic Division (patients unable to stand trial..UST and those not-guilty-by-reason-of insanity...NGRI.) Among various duties, I am responsible for monitoring approx 200 individuals who are not institutionalized, but are either outpatients or conditionally released from court-ordered secure placement in a forensic facility.

I remain a Senior Public Service Administrator in "rank" and as such am still subject for re-appointment every 4 yrs. Fortunately, I have resisted my "radical" impulses and remain employed despite a decreasing number of similarly titled employees in IL crushing economic environment.

My wife Lavon (25 years and counting) insists that I can't retire until our 15 year old, Lydia, completes college! I have therefore raised her with the idea that she is "daddy's retirement program."

I visit the campus frequently and recently enjoyed a somewhat rainy day soaking in the Fall colors on campus. I have always been nostalgic for a walk among campus trees from Baxter to the College sign and still imagine encountering Dean Moore during one of his many campus strolls. Sometimes I even smell the smoke of a pipe in the air!

Today colleges cost thousands of \$\$\$, but a Wabash College education is still priceless after almost 40 years!"

## **Join Classmates Who Support The Annual Fund**

Nearly 50 classmates have already contributed so far this fiscal year which will end June 30. When we alumni contribute, we say “thanks” for our own good fortunate and demonstrate our belief in the strong liberal arts education of Wabash College. If you have not contributed so far this fiscal year, please do so by mailing a check to Wabash College, P.O. Box 352, Crawfordsville, IN 47933 or by contributing online at [www.wabash.edu/alumni/egift](http://www.wabash.edu/alumni/egift). Thanks.

Skip Adams  
Greg Allen  
Jerry Anderson  
Jim Ball  
Bruce Bradway  
Bill Braun  
Jim Bromley  
Ed Corley  
Mike Dill  
Andy Dziubinskyj  
Jeff Eaton  
Dave Gray  
Rick Gregory  
Bob Harlan  
Pete Hawley  
Dan Holderbaum  
Trey Holland

John Hubert  
Ron Israel  
Richard Jaffke  
Clark Johnson  
Jim Kamplain  
Sam Kazdan  
Marv Keffer  
Steve Kennedy  
Allen Kepchar  
Gene Kepple  
John Lathrop  
Mike Lemon  
Skip Long  
Dave Main  
Allen Matthews  
Al McElfresh  
Alex Miller

Richard Morford  
Keith Nelson  
Jon Pactor  
Jim Peters  
Larry Phelps  
Ed Pitkin  
Mark Randak  
Greg Rasmussen  
Jim Rendel  
Phil Rifner  
Carl Royal  
Tom Runge  
John Ryder  
John Street  
Steve Wildman  
Tom Williams

### **Wabash Day**

Thanks to Classmates **Kai Chin** in Denver, **Steve Meisenheimer** in Knoxville, and **Brad Johnson** in Indianapolis for helping, along with me, at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Wabash Day last October. Wabash Day, which stands for Wabash Alumni Benefiting And Serving Humanity, is a national day of alumni community service organized by alumni and performed by alumni, family, and friends with the core values of the Wabash liberal arts tradition and the Gentleman’s Rule to be responsible citizens. This year’s Wabash Day will be October 9-10. Please mark your calendars now. Hopefully we will have more than four classmates this year.

**Thanks for reading *Pactoracles*. It is my honor to serve the Class of 1971. Please contact me with any news, comments, and questions.**

Kind Regards



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