



## WABASH COLLEGE

### *Class Agents Letter*

Alumni and Parent Relations

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### Class of 1977

#### Class Agents

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March 21, 2016

SAN DIEGO – Hello, fellow Wabash Wallys from the class of '77! I'm writing after a wedding weekend in sunny Southern California, where my wife (Kathy), adult son (Tyler) and I have been for the past few days. It's been a terrific time, but all things end and soon we head back to Cleveland. I've been a bit slow in getting my first letter out to you and our other classmates since I resumed "class agent status" a few months back. Greg and Herm and I will be collaborating on communicating with you about news and events. My role is a "connector" – I will pass along news from classmates, and do what I can to help us keep or regain touch with each other as we approach some of those "milestones" such as our 40<sup>th</sup> class reunion in 2017, retirement, grandchildren, etc.

Also, I want to briefly add this – I'm a "warts and all" type of guy. One of my younger sisters is in a terrible fight against cancer. I changed careers around 2005, moving from PR-communications to being a college professor. I have Kathy's parents, ages 90 and 89, living in our home with us. When we communicate with each other, let's feel free to share bad news, good news, and everything in between. We're in the fourth quarter of our lives ... not a time for false fronts or pretenses. Let's pretend we're all part of a raiding party trying to capture the Monon Bell from its hiding place in Greencastle. The more we share with each other, the closer we'll become again as we approach the time to sing those words, "As long as life shall last, our greatest joy will be to shout the chorus" a few more times.

The first two classmates I heard back from when my first letter went out to you in early January were **DAN BROUGHTON** and (no surprise) **GREG BIRK**. Dan and I were travel mates while at Wabash, as we are both from the Cleveland area and he'd sometimes offer me a ride back home at break.

Dan wrote: "I live in Chicago these days with my wife (Kim). We have two kids; a son at McGill and a daughter who is a sophomore. I got crushed in the last banking cycle and reinvented myself a couple of times, emerging as a real estate developer working with a small firm near Chinatown. We do a little of everything - restaurants, townhouses, general contracting, office buildings - we do okay and have a lot of fun. Looking forward to the 40<sup>th</sup> reunion." Dan's email address is [dan\\_broughton77@yahoo.com](mailto:dan_broughton77@yahoo.com). No doubt he'd enjoy connecting with some of his Phi Psi fraternity brothers also.

Greg and Carroll continue “living the dream” in Switzerland. He tells us, “... As I started thinking about my 2016 calendar I thought it might be fun to mention in the letter that I have entered the first ever [Beer Lover's Marathon](#) in May. A fun marathon with 13 "aid" stations at Belgium breweries. I ran the Medoc Marathon with my Wabash pledge son, Frank Fish '79, a couple of years ago and we had great fun running 42K with 21 wine stops. It would be great fun for some classmates to join me for a few hours of great conversation, exercises, and some of the best TWR in the world. I have no doubt it will be the same party atmosphere of the Medoc. I know you have been killing the half marathons, so I am counting on you to announce in your letter you will be coming over for the fun and moving up to the marathon. *(Sorry Greg ... can't make it this May ... but maybe you'd try to go Paul??)*

“I am also encouraging the College to get a group to come over for the [Nemean Games in Greece](#) in June. I have been in touch with the founder of the games who is a Wabash grad, Stephen Johnson. He spent his professional life excavating the site. I have also corresponded with John Fischer who said he would be willing to serve as a tour guide host if the College gets a group together. How great to tour Greece with John. I hope the College can pull it off. Either way I am going to go over and participate. With something that only happens every four years it is best I do it while I can. WAF, Greg” Greg’s email address: [gregbirk77@gmail.com](mailto:gregbirk77@gmail.com)

In early February I heard from **DR. PAUL FERGUSON**. He wrote: “Post doc at Purdue, Kellogg Company, Hoffman-LaRoche, Bristol Myers Squibb (Mead Johnson), and Mead Johnson Nutrition (after IPO from Bristol Myers). I have been at Mead Johnson for 25 years. I now manage a group responsible for carrying out nutritional clinical trials in pediatric populations. Married (wife is Christy) for 35 years, with a son (Andrew). I have completed about 25 triathlons since 2005....On a personal level, I had testicular cancer in 1985. I was super lucky to go to Dr. Lawrence Einhorn (at IU Cancer Center), who developed the cure for this type of cancer. I have been cancer free now for 30 years! So, all in all, I have had a rewarding and fulfilled life.” Paul and I are “connected” on LinkedIn, by the way, and you’re welcome to connect with me there if you are on this social networking site. Paul’s email address is: [fergusoc@twc.com](mailto:fergusoc@twc.com). He’d love to hear from some of his Sigma Chi brothers.

Also, wanted to give you a “personal” report from a campus visit I had last month with one of our honorary alumni, **ROBERT JOHNSON**. Coach Rob retired after 37 years of track and cross country coaching at Wabash, but he still helps out the college and is still on campus all the time. The Robert Johnson Little Giant Invitational is an indoor beginning of the season event on the Robert Johnson Track at Knowling Fieldhouse. The college honored Coach Rob in January with a banner at the track. Here’s a link to the story. [http://sports.wabash.edu/news/2016/1/17/TRACK\\_0117160509.aspx](http://sports.wabash.edu/news/2016/1/17/TRACK_0117160509.aspx) Coach Rob is doing well and in great spirits. You can reach him at: [johnsonr@wabash.edu](mailto:johnsonr@wabash.edu)

SOME COLLEGE NEWS – Wabash does a phenomenal job of updating us about happenings on campus, and one can’t possibly do justice to everything great happening there in just a paragraph or two. But with help from web links, we can give you a few highlights and offer the ability to “drill down” a bit if you are interested. So here are some details:

- Wabash College’s Democracy and Public Discourse (WPDP) initiative is hosting a series of community discussions aimed at improving community involvement. These are happening throughout Indiana and elsewhere, with Wabash students leading the way. Details: [http://www.wabash.edu/news/displaystory.cfm?news\\_ID=10779](http://www.wabash.edu/news/displaystory.cfm?news_ID=10779)
- Wabash wrestling team finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the national in the NCAA Division III nationals earlier this month, and had two national champions as well. Here are the details:

<http://sports.wabash.edu/news/2016/3/13/wrestling-wrestlers-finish-fourth-at-nationals-with-two-national-champs.aspx?path=wrestling>

- The new residential district is going up on the far west side of campus and should be completely full when classes resume in the fall.
- “IndyCar and the Liberal Arts” is a special panel discussion happening in conjunction with the 100<sup>th</sup> running of the Indianapolis 500. The event is at Ball Theatre on April 11. Details: [http://www.wabash.edu/news/displaystory.cfm?news\\_ID=10770](http://www.wabash.edu/news/displaystory.cfm?news_ID=10770)

IF BY CHANCE -- You sent me an update and I missed it, just email me again at [johnkprof@gmail.com](mailto:johnkprof@gmail.com). You are free to put the word “Partsheimers” in the subject line, as I do forget a bit more often nowadays. Thanks.

IMPORTANT EVENT IN APRIL – No, not the IRS and April 15. The Wabash Board of Directors and the National Association of Wabash men encourage Wabash alumni to vote in elections for Alumni Trustee on the Board and for the Board of Directors for the National Association of Wabash Men. One guy is especially worthy of your vote, our own **HERM HAFFNER**. There is also an election for alumni trustee for the Board of Trustee. A terrific candidate is my good friend SCOTT DREHER '82, who lives in San Diego and has become very involved with the college over the years. There is an online voting option. Details are at [http://www.wabash.edu/news/displaystory.cfm?news\\_ID=10759](http://www.wabash.edu/news/displaystory.cfm?news_ID=10759) Ballots and biographies of the candidates have been mailed to you. Voting deadline is April 26.

AT END ... Do continue to send me news and information guys. If your travels ever bring you to Cleveland, look me up for

- Great get together for catching up
- Free Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Tickets (I'm a Founder's Club member)
- Terrific look at a city that'll be in the headlines, one way or another, when the Republican National Convention gets here in July.

Best For Wabash,  
John