



## WABASH COLLEGE

### *Class Agents Letter*

Office of Alumni Affairs

P.O. Box 352

Crawfordsville, IN 47933

Web site: [www.wabash.edu](http://www.wabash.edu)

Email us: [alumni@wabash.edu](mailto:alumni@wabash.edu)

Phone: (765) 361-6369

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### Class of 1988

#### Class Agents

Greg Teague

[teague\\_greg@comcast.net](mailto:teague_greg@comcast.net)

Scott Quick

[scott.quick88@wabash.edu](mailto:scott.quick88@wabash.edu)

Scott Smalstig

[ssmalstig@jdausa.com](mailto:ssmalstig@jdausa.com)

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Dear Class of '88,

Greetings Gentlemen, I hope this letter finds everyone happy and healthy. What can I say? Most of you already know what a rough time the fall of 2008 was for the Wabash community. At my last writing we were mourning the passing of Dr Swift. In late September we lost Virginia "Ginny" Hays, wife of the late Will Hays '37, supporter of all things Wabash and friend to many of us. Just a few short weeks later, on Homecoming weekend, freshman Johnny Smith '12 from Tucson, Arizona died tragically on campus. In the aftermath of this young man's passing came the closure of the Delta Tau Delta fraternity house at Wabash.

The finishing blow came over Thanksgiving weekend when word reached the College that Dr. William Placher '70 had died suddenly while teaching on sabbatical in Minnesota. To simply say that Dr. Placher was Some Little Giant would be an understatement on the greatest order of magnitude. Dr. Placher was one of those rare souls that come along once in a great while. His passing was universally mourned in the Wabash community and beyond, my thoughts pale in comparison. Wabash is a better place because of Bill Placher and we are better men because of him. What better legacy could anyone want?

It is in the shadow of these events that I have struggled to write this letter. I have come to realize that, as we continue this journey of life, not all mem'ries are sweet and not all songs are of praise. I realize now that part of my role here is to share the moments of sadness and tragedy that befall our Wabash family. I ask simply and humbly that we keep those we lost in our thoughts and prayers. While days have turned into weeks and weeks into months, many still feel those losses as if they happened only yesterday.

The one bit of bad news I have not mentioned yet is one we are all feeling, the economy. Unless you have fully embraced the Caveman spirit and are truly living in a cave and have no contact with the outside world, you have probably noticed the tough economic climate in which we find ourselves. Wabash is not immune to the current financial downturns, either. In a blog entry earlier this year Wabash President Pat White noted that the College's endowment had declined in value by approximately 30% or \$130 million in the span of the preceding 12 months. That's a lot. There is no way that one class can make that up in a similar amount of time. Don't worry; I'm not going ask to anyone to put up the \$604,651.16 that would represent one equal share of the endowments decline.

What I am going to do is ask you to give something to the Annual Fund. Why? Because Wabash received a record number of applications this year, in hard economic times. Why? Because a bunch of young men just completed Honors Scholar weekend and are thinking seriously that Wabash is going to be their home for the next 4 years. Why? Because the parents of those young men are trying to figure out how to pay for a Wabash education. Think back, 25 years ago WE were those young men at Honors Scholar weekend. It was our parents trying to figure out how to put us through school. For some of us, it was us trying to figure out how to pay for a Wabash education.

Can we each give Wabash the large sum I noted above? No, I hardly think we can, I'm not sure any one of us could and I certainly know that I cannot. But we each can give something. President White's blog entry I quoted from above is entitled "Wabash Always Fights" and was from January 15, 2009. In one of his opening remarks he noted the following about our battle cry. "It is a cry that is easy to say, but not always easy to live, because we often say it when we are back on our heels, when we are behind in the contest, when we might be baffled even disheartened by the challenges before us." I believe that Wabash Always Fights. I believe that it is more than just something we say, I believe it is something we do.

Wabash needs us now. Wabash needs our support. A new generation of Wabash Men is about to embark on the same journey we started 25 years ago. We need to help them see that journey through. If you have already given to the Annual Fund this year first and foremost allow me to say thank you. Thank you on behalf of myself, my fellow Class Agents, on behalf of the College and on behalf of those young men about to enter Wabash's classic halls.

If you haven't given yet, please consider giving. I know times are tough right now and I know that most of us are watching every penny much more closely than we were even a year ago. Worried that a gift of \$10, \$25 or \$50 won't go very far, go ahead and give it. You would be surprised how far that gift can go when pooled together with similar gifts from a lot of other people. Have \$10 a month you can spare then why not sign up online to give a regular monthly gift? Several of our classmates already contribute in this manner.

Here are the numbers for the Class of '88 as of 3/16/09. There are 215 eligible donors associated with our class, including both graduate and non-graduate members. To date donations have been received from 43 of the 215 or 20% of the class. Our goal is 40% class participation in the Annual Fund. To meet this goal we need an additional 43 members of the class, or 86 in total, to make a donation of any size to the Annual Fund. Not sure how to give, do it online here <https://www.wabash.edu/alumni/egift> Live in Indiana? Get a Wabash license plate for your vehicle and give to the College at the same time. The process for getting Wabash plates has changed, find out what you need to know at the following link <http://www.wabash.edu/alumni/plates> With the Endowment down, the Annual Fund becomes ever more vital to the health and well-being of the College. I believe we can make this goal.

Here is my challenge to the class. While I have already made a donation to the Annual Fund I believe in this enough that if we get class participation to the 30% level, that's 65 total donors, I will donate an additional \$100 to the Annual Fund. If we get to the 40% goal or 86 total donors I will double that and donate an additional \$200 in total. The fiscal year end is 6/30/09, for accounting purposes and the fact that I'm on vacation the last week of June, my challenge ends on 6/15/09. Tom Runge '71 in Alumni Affairs will likely see this challenge so I just volunteered him to oversee the donor counts for this. He gets the numbers regularly anyway so it shouldn't be much of a burden. There it is my friends, make me put my money where my mouth is. I know my additional contribution does not represent a vast sum; in fact it is a bit of a challenge to our family budget in June given some previous financial commitments. The point of my challenge is two-fold, firstly, that every gift of any size, large or small, matters. Secondly, that Wabash is worth fighting for and sacrificing for, in good times and in bad. Wabash Always Fights, is that something we say or is it something we do?

Now that I've recounted the sad events of last fall and made my challenge for the Annual Fund, please allow me to share news we've received from several of our classmates.

- **Chris Whitfield** – I hadn't talked with Chris in a very long time when out of the blue I got a message from him on LinkedIn. After working many years with Eli Lilly, Chris is now the founder and CEO of Batswadi Pharmaceuticals based in Johannesburg, South Africa. You can read more about his company and contact Chris here <http://www.batswadi.com/>

- **David Hawksworth** – My old roommate writes “After 10 years as Executive Director of Community Access Television in Salina, KS, I left my position to start my own business. I am doing video production for local companies as well as consulting for public access television stations across the country, and slowly growing my client list. If you ever find yourself on I-70 and passing Salina, feel free to give me a call! I'm at 785-822-7561, and my e-mail address is [dh@dhvideoproductions.com](mailto:dh@dhvideoproductions.com).”
- **Scott Fendley** -- This is starting to sound a bit like Entrepreneur’s Corner, but Scott has also ventured out on his own and hung up his shingle. Scott’s company is SF Consulting and specializes in providing “operational solutions for non-profit organizations”. To find out more check out his new website <http://www.sfconsultingnow.com/>
- **Raman Ahuja** – Raman sent word to the College that he is currently working as Business Head of Food Exports for Bharti Del Monte India Pvt. Ltd. He and his family live in Gurgaon near New Delhi, India.
- **Booth Jameson** – Scott Quick wrote to say that Booth, his lovely wife Jennifer, and their son John Owen were all kind enough, with no notice and at the last possible minute, to open up their home to take me in and give me a place to stay in DC for the inaugural festivities. Booth and family live a short walk away from the Hill, and within minutes I was able to be in the midst of the sea of humanity that had descended to capture a moment of history. Scott added, "I had great fun playing with John, who matched me silly for silly - clearly Booth's progeny. Jennifer was a delight to talk with, and I still haven't figured out what dirt Booth had on her to get her to marry him." Thanks for the crash pad Clan Jameson!
- **Ali Raheem** – Ali is another member of our class working internationally. I got this note last fall “I graduated in '88 and am working for Ernst & Young and was recently seconded to our Japan practice for a 3 year assignment. Regretfully, I was not able to make the recent reunion as it was in the middle of our relocation planning. Prior to our Tokyo move, I was based in San Francisco. I look forward to making the next reunion.”
- **Phil Woods** – Phil wrote “I’m living in Valparaiso and working at Vision Financial Services in LaPorte. Vision is a healthcare receivables management company that I and 2 other principals started 4 years ago. I have a 4 year old, Connor Andrew, who keeps me busy and, as you know already having kids of your own, focused on the “important” things in life.” Great to hear from you Phil, we still need to get together for lunch when you are in Indy next.
- **Gary Bacon** – I still see Gary at Church where he continues to serve as a Deacon and we bump into each other practically on a weekly basis. Gary and his wife Sandy, who are both dentists, recently completed a Mission trip through our Church to India where they provided dental services as part of their work there. I don’t have all the details yet but hopefully I can share some additional information about their trip in my next letter.
- **Rob Jones** – Rob caught up with me on LinkedIn and dropped me the following note “Hope this finds you well. I will see if I can't drum up some additional support from some of our other classmates. Maybe this could be the first step towards getting better attendance at our next reunion. Kara and I had a good Christmas season hope yours was equally enjoyable and fulfilling.”

Part of “this” that Rob is referring to is the Wabash College Class of 1988 group that we started on LinkedIn. There are not a lot of members yet but this is the first time we have mentioned it in public. Are you a LinkedIn member? Please join in the group; hopefully it can become a central hub for class communications and reunion planning for our 25<sup>th</sup> which is just 4 short years away. Not a LinkedIn member yet? Feel free to join us at [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) and by free I mean literally, it doesn't cost anything.

I think that about covers everything on my to-do list for this letter. If I missed anyone in the class news section please accept my apologies, my memory isn't what it used to be. Just poke me again via email or a phone call and I'll be sure to get it in the next letter. Please remember those we have lost in your thoughts and prayers and don't forget the Annual Fund. I look forward to hearing from as many of you as possible and would love to share what is happening in your life and your part of the world with the rest of the class. And in closing, always remember to think critically, act responsibly, live humanely and lead effectively.

Yours in Wabash,

Greg Teague '88