

# Wabash.

## Class Agents Letter

Class of 1961

Class Agent

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## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Wishing you a Blessed Holiday Season with as much family as you can muster!!!

This is our 65<sup>th</sup> Reunion Year! Plan to join us at Big Bash June 5-7, 2026. The Golden Oldies classes have had quite a good turnout recently. More details and registration will follow in the coming weeks.

Also, please remember to send support to our Dear Old Wabash... Just 3 years ago, our class had 59% participation. Last year it was below 50%. Yes, we have lost many of our fellow men, so perhaps others can step up. Here's how you can make your gift to Wabash before 2025 ends: <https://www.wabash.edu/news/story/13522>.

The Community Center continues to take shape. It will be a spectacular addition to our campus. The special loan agreement with the Dept of Agriculture has been approved, so now it's the weather being the only hold up.

The week of finals witnessed not only food being available nearly around the clock, but the Animal Welfare League of Montgomery County brought dogs in to give comfort to stressed students!

DePauw to Hell...They Kept the Bell. Wabash had a good season, but lost to John Carroll and the Dannies. DePauw got an \$80M gift to upgrade their athletic facilities but they're not sure where the 2026 Bell Game will be played. Wabash was invited to the **ForeverLawn Bowl** scoring a touchdown with two seconds left in regulation and converting a two-point attempt to win by one over Ohio Northern. Other Wabash teams generally had good records, Soccer, Golf, Wrestling, Volleyball, Tennis and Cross Country all had high points this year. Lacrosse starts in February with Grandson Jake Pippen being a star player. That makes Pete, his two sons and now three grandsons quite a record.

Pippen also told me that he is the "Pond" chairman for his HOA. He had a visit from the water control expert. Pete asked him his name, and he replied "Max Servies." He told Pete he is Max's grandson!!!

And, on that subject, I am proud to announce a new Great Grandson: Camden James Austin. Both he and his older brother live in Newburgh, IN so we have not yet met him!



I was asked to represent President Feller and the College at the Inauguration of the new President of Anderson University (Barbara's Alma Mater). Scott Means replaces John Pistole (former TSA Director.) I also did this 8 years ago. Always a pleasure, but disappointed that Hanover, Franklin nor DePauw were represented! This meant that I got to lead the procession of dignitaries.

New Dean of Students Dr. Scott Brown is the eighth dean of students in Wabash history, not including interims. Brown has a long resume in student affairs at Mt. Holyoke (a women's college in Massachusetts), College of Wooster, Colgate University, Dartmouth College, and a few others. He has an undergraduate degree from Indiana University, a Masters, and a PhD in student Personnel Administration from the U of Maryland. It is my understanding that he is very well liked by the students!



The Wabash College Baseball team will have a new artificial turf infield playing surface at Goodrich Ballpark thanks to the generosity of a former student-athlete and his wife. John Birdzell '61, a four-year letterman and pitcher for the Little Giants, and his wife, JoAnn, made a \$610,000 gift to have a turf infield installed in time for the 2026 season. As a result, the facility will now be named Birdzell Field at Goodrich Ballpark.

"I'm a lifelong baseball fan and a loyal and devoted alumnus who loved playing baseball at Wabash 65 years ago," said Birdzell, who currently resides in Westfield, Indiana. "I'm also a huge fan of Coach Jake Martin and what he's done for the baseball program both on and off the field.

<https://www.wabash.edu/news/story/13520>

*Sadly, we have lost more of the pillars of our great Class of 1961...*

WITH DEEPEST <sup>♥</sup>  
*Sympathy*

**Austin Edward Brooks Jr.** died on May 11, 2025, at home, surrounded by his family.

He was born Aug. 10, 1938, in Fort Wayne, to Austin Edward Brooks Sr. and Gertrude (Wilson) Brooks. He graduated from Northside High School in 1957. When he arrived on the Wabash College campus in the fall of 1957, he had no idea he would return to Wabash to spend his entire academic career and Crawfordsville would become his home. After graduating from Wabash in 1961 he attended graduate school to study biology at Indiana University – Bloomington, earning a PhD in 1965. He married Eva Lucille (Lucy) Clark in 1963. After IU he accepted a post-doctoral fellowship to study at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, where their first child, Timothy Austin, was born.

In the fall of 1966 they returned to Crawfordsville where Austin taught biology at Wabash for 38 years before retiring in 2004. During that time, their second child, Laura Beth, was born. While at Wabash, Austin pioneered many innovative teaching techniques including organizing with colleague and dear friend Bill Doemel the Wabash Aquatic Biology Program. For four summers this program provided 15 students the opportunity to spend six weeks in a different wilderness setting including Yellowstone, the Boundary Waters and Northern Wisconsin, the Florida Keys, and the Northeast Coast. He also developed a patented technique which allowed a blind student to feel microscopic images. Additionally, he eagerly supported the use of technology and computers as teaching tools and pursued research worldwide with sabbaticals and research trips to such diverse locations as Hamburg, Germany, Bangkok, Thailand, Johns Hopkins University and the Pacific Northwest.

After retirement Austin became involved in several community organizations including the Friends of Sugar Creek, the Youth Service Bureau, the Park Board, and served as both an elder and deacon for his church, the Wabash Avenue Presbyterian Church. In retirement he was able to pursue his many hobbies which included fly fishing with his buddy, David Hadley, wood carving, especially song birds, turning wooden bowls, travel and biking.

He is survived by his wife (Lucy) of 61 years; his two children, Tim (Kathy) and Laura (Brian); four grandchildren, Lizzie (Josh), Delaney, Jenna and Nathan; and two great-grandchildren, Jazmyn and Dekan.

He was preceded in death by his parents; a brother; a sister; and a great-granddaughter.

A celebration of his life will be held at a later time. Donations in his memory can be made to Wabash College, The Friends of Sugar Creek or the Youth Service Bureau.

“Dear Old Wabash, thy loyal sons shall ever love thee . . .” Aus most certainly did!

*Here's an email I received from Bill Doemel.*

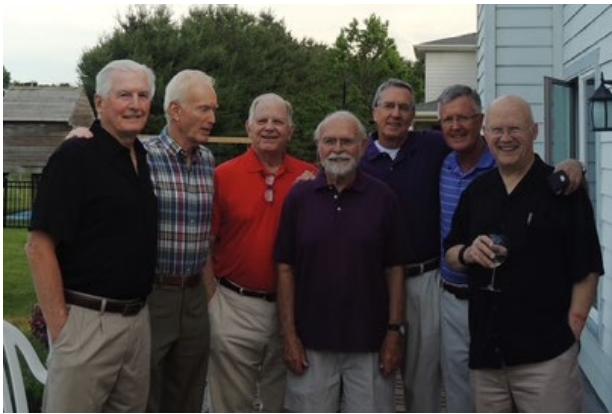
*I hope you are well and finally watching the "destruction" of Sparks--lots of memories there. I am writing to request information (identity of people in pictures) and to ask if you can spread word to your classmates regarding the celebration of life for Aus. When I went to the letters, I appreciated the inclusion of Paul Olexia's obituary (I met him several times through Aus and he was a good friend of Nancy's through the Scotland Program) and Charlie Quillen, another friend of Aus's.*

#### **Tim Conlon and Lee Andreas**

*Tim and Lee both played significant roles in Aus's life at Wabash and both were close friends. Aus named his first son Timothy, honoring Tim. Lee had met Lucy Clark while working at a camp in 1959. When he asked Lucy if she was planning to return in the summer of 1960, she said no that she would be going to Woods Hole. He told her that his classmate, Aus Brooks, would be going there as well. Lucy and Aus met and the rest is history.*

#### **Pictures**

*I have attached two photos which I assume are classmates of Aus from the Class of 1961, but I don't have names. The first is a group photo and the second shows Tom, an unknown individual, Lee and Aus. Do you know the identity of the unknown individual?*



#### **Memorial Service**

*I have attached an invitation to the Celebration Service which I'm hoping you can share:*

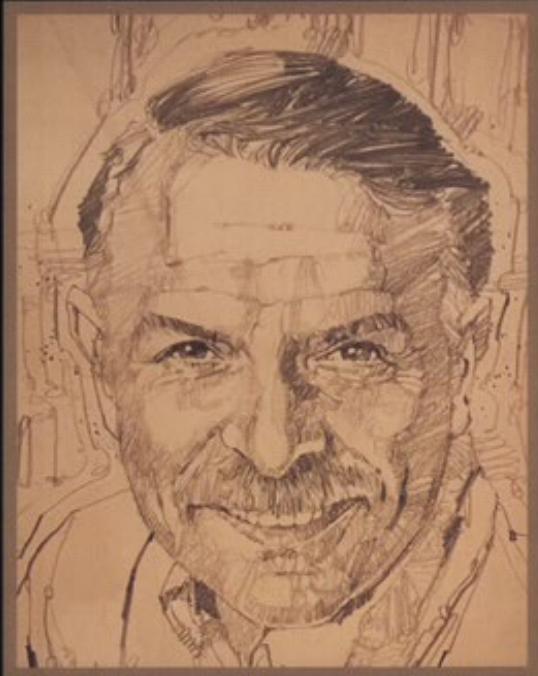
#### **Austin Brooks: Celebrating a Life Well-Lived**

*Saturday, August 2; 11:00 AM; Salter Hall in the Fine Arts Center, Wabash College.*

Thank you for your help. Best wishes.

Bill Doemel (H74)

AUGUST 10, 1938 - MAY 11, 2025



## AUSTIN BROOKS CELEBRATING A LIFE WELL-LIVED



Cedar Waxwings in Winter carved by Aus

Saturday, August 2, 2025  
11:00 AM

Salter Hall-Fine Arts Center  
504 S. Grant Ave., Crawfordsville, IN 47933

Reception to follow in Littell Lobby

**David Warren McAfee**, age 86, died on November 1st, 2025. A celebration of his life will be held on Saturday, November 22nd from 12 to 3 pm in the barn at County Line Orchard in Hobart, Indiana. All are welcome.

David was born on September 1st, 1939 to Coral Louise (Horner) and Warren Barney McAfee in Hobart, Indiana, making him part of the fifth generation of McAfees in Hobart. McAfees have continuously farmed land in Hobart for over 200 years.

David graduated from Hobart High School in 1957. He attended Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana, where he joined the Kappa Sigma fraternity and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1961. He then joined the Navy, serving in Vietnam from 1962-63 and as the navigator on the USS Francis Marion APA 249, from 1963-65. He received his MBA from Benedictine University in 1982.

After the Navy he earned a living as a sales engineer, designing, selling and installing commercial heating and air conditioning systems (he referred to himself as a peddler). His marriage to Nancy Louise Gessler in 1965 resulted in two sons, David George James McAfee and Andrew Paul McAfee, and an adopted daughter Sarah Louise McAfee. David and Nancy divorced in 1977.

In 1985, David married Bonnie (Pierrou) McAfee, and she brought stepson Mike Yoder into the family. With Bonnie, David decided to make a major change in his life and pursue a long-held ambition. He often quoted Bloody Mary, a character in the musical South Pacific who sings, ".if you don't have a dream, how you gonna

have a dream come true?" So in 1988, at the age of 49, David started planting apple trees on 35 acres he and Bonnie had in Hobart.

Those trees grew and became County Line Orchard. David was its visionary, and Bonnie its organizing and bookkeeping force. The orchard became a must-visit autumn destination for Chicago area families. It eventually grew to some 5000 trees and included a pumpkin patch, corn maze, Kid's Farm, a restored 1941 barn and "Trail of Fears" haunted forest. Some 37,000 students, teachers, and parents visited the orchard each fall on school tours, at the time a North American record for fall school tours. Cider donuts that were only available during the fall were hugely popular, and people gladly stood in line for them. David could often be found hustling about the Orchard in his trademark red suspenders. More than any other accomplishment, he took pride in the people - the nearly 300 seasonal workers and managers who helped the orchard thrive. He and Bonnie were given the North American Farmer's Direct Marketing Association's highest honor, "Marketer of the Year," in 2005.

When they realized it was time to step back from running the orchard, a buyer came along with an appealing offer, and David and Bonnie sold County Line Orchard in 2006.

In addition to the orchard, David served on the Purdue Cooperative Lake County Extension Board, and was president of both the Indiana Horticulture Society and the Indiana Farm Market Association. He was also a board member of the Hobart Community Fund and its predecessor, the Hobart Economic Industrial Development Committee.

The birth of his grandchild Ada in 2007 led to Dave and Bonnie moving to California. They chose Granite Bay, an hour outside of Sacramento, where they resided for many years and were visited on many weekends by Mike, his wife Beckie, and their daughters Ada and Zoe. In August of 2020, during the height of the COVID pandemic (August of 2020) David and Bonnie bought and moved into the house next door to Mike and Beckie in San Jose, CA. They lived there, surrounded by family, until the present.

As well as Mike, Beckie, Ada, and Zoe, David is survived by his eldest son David and his wife Shannon McAfee and children Amelia, Aurora, and Avery-Mae, middle son Andrew McAfee, and daughter Sarah McAfee and her partner Jay Wilson and children Jain, Jivan and Ananda. He was preceded in death by his brother Glenn and the love of his life, Bonnie McAfee.

When reflecting on his life, David said, "The greatest work satisfaction, fun, accomplishment, joy, and success were associated with the orchard. Nothing, not being a Naval officer, sales engineer, or getting my MBA was half as challenging, half as hard, or half the fun of raising and marketing apples, pumpkins, and the entire farm experience. In short, it has been great fun!"

In lieu of flowers, please donate to charity or plant an apple tree.

*You will remember that Dave was co-Class Agent during our early years as alumni. He came up with several clever items including the Many Miler theme which came from Dean Ben Rogge's speech at our Senior Breakfast.*

**Mead Clifford Killion**, age 86, passed away from pneumonia on November 3, 2025 in Elkhorn, WI. A private family memorial will take place at a later date.

Mead is survived by his wife of 36 years, Gail Gudmundsen; son Thann Killion, daughter Tracy (David) Mack, sister-in-law Joan Killion, sister-in-law Lynn Gudmundsen, brother-in-law Vance (Virginia) Gudmundsen; nieces: Rachel Hellenga, Heather Hellenga (Tom Colclasure), Caitrine Hellenga (Tim Barker); nephews: Jesse Killion (Elizabeth); Jake Gudmundsen (Miriam Liabo); Theodore (Alison) Gudmundsen, Peter (Caitlyn) Gudmundsen, Patrick Myers; grandchildren: Sean Mack, Lindsay (James) Anest and Ian (Jessica) Mack; great grandchildren: Maximos and Finley Anest; grandnephews: Braxton Farr; Jackson Colclasure; John Gudmundsen; Wesley Gudmundsen; Theodore Killion; grandnieces: Harper Lee (Joshua) Lorentzson, Clara Killion, Sophia Killion, Claire Gudmundsen; great-great niece, Lydia Lorentzson.

Mead was preceded in death by his parents, John and Hazel and his two younger siblings, Virginia Hellenga and David Killion.

Mead was born June 5, 1939 in Woodstock, IL. He graduated from Battle Creek High School in 1957. He earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Wabash College, a master's degree in mathematics from Illinois Institute of Technology, and a PhD in Audiology from Northwestern University. He received an ScD honorary doctorate from Wabash College.

Mead was a design engineer at Knowles Electronics for over 20 years, after which he founded his own R&D company, Etymotic Research, Inc. in 1983. His unwavering mission was to develop products to measure, improve and protect hearing. Mead and colleagues at Etymotic were awarded over 100 patents in the fields of acoustics and hearing aids. Mead never actually retired; after selling Etymotic Research, he started another company to continue working on projects he still felt passionate about.

Mead lived an extraordinary life. He frequently mentioned that both of his parents were preachers, so he insisted on sharing his passions with others. Mead will be remembered not only for his brilliant mind, adventurous spirit and unceasing curiosity, but also because he cared deeply for others. He was an inspiration to many. He touched countless lives in numerous ways: family, friends, colleagues, coworkers and graduate students.

Mead had a kind heart and took pride in the accomplishments of those he mentored. He loved teaching and felt honored to be an adjunct professor at Northwestern University.

He loved music, whether it was listening, directing his church choir for over 40 years, or playing piano and violin.

In college Mead began flying a sport plane and returned to it in his 70s-80s when he co-owned a Piper J3, his first plane. He was an avid runner and was especially proud of completing 32 marathons.

Mead always encouraged others to celebrate the little things along the way. His groundbreaking work in audiology is an enduring part of his legacy, as was his commitment to making the world a better place.

Contributions can be made in Mead's memory to Wabash College, VanderCook College of Music and the American Auditory Society.

*Comment from Gail: "Thank you for writing. I slept in a chair in the hospital and hospice under a blanket that says: "Wabash Always Fights!"*



*"What we love well, our true heritage is above all the teaching and learning that goes on here, one person to another; very different kinds of people interacting and arguing and coming to care about each other..."*      Dr. William C. Placher '70

And so we say good bye to another year. Wabash College is an outstanding place where friends become life long companions. Thank you for putting up with me all these years! I send my very best wishes to you and look forward to our 65<sup>th</sup> Reunion...

*Many Miles before the Night.....*

*J B*