June 2005

Gentlemen of the Class of ’69,

It has been a long stretch since the last newsletter and a lot has happened. The Class of 2005 graduated. Andy Ford announced his plans to step down as president. The Fraternity – College partnership is well on its way. The Second Big Bash welcomed over 250 alumni.

Perhaps our best news is that our class’ members returned safely from Iraq. Dave Carlson is back safely performing surgery in Evansville, IN.

Bill Bird reported that his younger son Brian Bird is now “de-compressing” after spending the last year with the 1st Calvary transporting gasoline and other volatile substances throughout Iraq. Brian will take a month or so before exploring the GI Bill and finding the next stage of his life. Bill’s daughter Missy still helps him run his law office. Jennifer works as an administrator in the Ashville, NC Christian Prep school.

Bill’s hip replacement has healed nicely. In fact he and several friends are headed to Waterville, Ireland to play golf! Betsy Bird will be relaxing at the beach with their two high school daughters Haley and Marybeth.

Eldest Jimmy Bird is an MD in Australia several hours North of Sidney. He’s married and has two kids.

Naptown Correspondent Jack Clarke:

Hi Rob. Will Clarke is completing his sophomore year at Little Giant U on a high note. Will was one of four Academic All-Americans for the Sons of Wabash wrestling team. Will nearly qualified for the Nationals, finishing 2nd at the NCAA regionals, maintained a 3.2 gpa, and had a winning season overall.

I reminded Will that I had a career 3.2 gpa at Wabash and he quickly reminded me that that was on a 9 point scale. Oh well!

He is currently fighting his way through the last weeks of the semester, burdened by the knowledge that all his buddies at various academic resorts like I.U. and Ball State are ogling coeds and throwing frisbies. Ah, it’s good to know that some things never change.
Brother **Charlie Clarke** is wrapping up his sophomore year at North Central H.S. sporting a 3.98795 gpa or something like that, just can't bust the 4.0, and playing rugby which I have come to believe may be the greatest sport ever. It's like a huge potfight with a kegger afterward (these guys substitute hot dogs and Gatorade). Hell man, I'm the team caterer. Charlie plays outside center (whatever the Hell that is) and claims it's the most fun he's ever had. Charlie doesn't have a girlfriend yet.

**Codger Clarke** is currently trying to make the AARP All-Americans: I walk **Chops**, the dog, pay bills, and complain about things I have no Power to change. **Linda** maintains her edge with lots of tennis and rides herd on us three knuckleheads, and the dog. Hope everything is well with the Gorham clan. I thought of you when the Illini went down. I was with you. See ya soon.

Over in Champaign, we were relieved by the end of another dreadful football skid (although Illinois did beat Indiana) and we were thrilled by a storybook basketball season. We were involved in documenting much of the excitement using panoramic photos. Our shots in Hooters made Bill Geist’s University of Illinois commencement speech twice! None-the-less, Illinois’ trip to the Final Four in St. Louis served as a reunion/business trip. My wife **Laurie** and I stayed with **Jill** and **Charlie Raiser**.

Charlie is active with the St. Louis Arboretum; he recently helped establish a new computer based financial management system for what is often described as the best arboretum outside of Washington DC. Charlie seems to know every tree, plant and shrub in the place. Before shifting to commercial activities - Charlie did get his MBA at Harvard, we should recall that Charlie was a Wabash Bio major!

**Campus Visits**

Construction is moving along on the East side. The Phi Gams have an enormous hole in the ground. The Phi Delta Theta house looks like it will be ready for occupancy this fall.
The photos included in this newsletter are all posted on line at www.buzz-card.com/wabash05
You can see Charlie Raiser and the campus panoramas on line.

Gorham family news: son Robert K. Gorham – Wabash ’96 was married Saturday 18 June 05 in Bloomington, Illinois. He married Katie Klasey who he’d begun dating while at Wabash. Among the wedding party members was Thomas S. Gorham -Wabash ’98. Tom flew back from Tokyo where he teaches English in a middle school.

Campus Issues
Please remember that the Wabash fiscal year ends June 30th. Your gifts to the College need to be received prior to the fiscal year end in order to be counted as a 2005 donation. Please do what you can.
House keeping
It is becoming clear that only old war-horses like Charlie Raiser and John Culley were able to sustain decades in the role of Class Agent. It is clear that I need to follow John Buford and pass the mantle on to others. It’s about time to concentrate on building a retirement nest egg!

Please contact Tom Runge to express your interest in serving as our next Class Agent. In spite of his demanding schedule, Charlie Raiser offered to temporarily come out of “retirement” and serve as a very temporary Honorary Class Agent.

I do volunteer to help, when possible, to document significant events.

It has been fun keeping in contact with members of our super class of 1969! Please do call or e-mail if you are so moved.

Signing off
Rob Gorham

R.S. Gorham and Co
American Institute of Architects
1002 West Healey
Champaign, IL 61821
rgorham@buzz-card.com
(217) 352-9848

Truth in Life
- Wayne Cochrane