April, 2005

Dear '52ers,

**W. NORWOOD BRIGANCE COLLOQUIY**

Third Floor Center Hall, as we all knew during our student days, was home of the Wabash College Speech department chaired by W. Norwood Brigance. Oh, there were others who taught there during his tenure, of course, and they included some very good ones, too, like Myron Phillips and one of my personal favorites, Vic Powell. But let’s face it, in the period 1948-52, Third Floor Center was the domain of W. Norwood Brigance, both as a speaker and as a speech teacher of national renown.

I supposed his initial “W” perhaps stood for “Willard,” or perhaps “Willis,” which might account for his preferring the “W. Norwood” moniker as we remember him. Indeed, not until our junior year did I learn the “W” stood for William – which I had always thought was a perfectly good way to begin one’s name.

Imagine my surprise, then, to read this reference to Briggie on a recent Wabash website announcing a colloquy in his honor to be held on campus April 14-16, 2005:

“William N. Brigance established a well-known legacy in the Communication discipline as a promoter and advocate for the role of public speech in a free and democratic society.” (Visit http://liberalarts.wabash.edu/cila/home.cfm?news_id=2074 for a complete description of the 2005 Brigance Colloquy on Rhetoric and Democratic Citizenship)

A very accurate statement, of course. But **William N. Brigance?** Not only times do change, but (apparently) names do as well.

In any event, I plan to return to campus to see what else has changed during the past 50 years respecting the role of rhetorical studies and the practice of rhetoric in a
democratic society. Are any of the rest of us planning to attend? How about my former debating partners Gene Reeves, and our one-time class agent a few years back, Eldon “Andy” Andrews? It would be great to see and to visit with you guys along with other past frequenters of Third Floor Center Hall.

Friday April 15 features a 6:30 pm Colloquy Banquet at Trippet Hall followed by an after-dinner program to include Wabash College Emeritus Professors of Speech Vic Powell and Joe O’Rourke leading a time for stories and anecdotes remembering “Briggie.” Should be fun, assuming I can find the new “Trippet Hall.”

The cost is a very modest $25 which covers dinner Friday night, as well as both breakfast and lunch on Saturday, April 16. The Saturday morning program: Prof Medhurst of Baylor University will talk about Brigance and the development of rhetorical studies in the 20th century, to be followed by Prof Ivie of IU on “Speaking Democratically in the Backwash of War: Lessons to Draw from William Norwood Brigance on Citizenship and Rhetoric in a Free Society.” If you are interested, contact Christina Gilbert 765-361-6316 (gilbert@wabash.edu).

BIG BASH AT WABASH

Speaking of returning to campus, as you know the Wabash Reunion program for all classes is set this year for Friday, June 3- Sunday, June 5. There was a fantastic brochure mailed to each of us a couple of weeks ago. All classes who graduated before 1955 sit together at the banquet, which affords an excellent chance to visit with contemporaries of other classes who were students with us during 1948-52. My brother Bob Reinke, for example, is part of Wabash Class ‘55 (freshmen during our senior year) who will be celebrating their 50th Reunion Class this year. Contact Michele Tatar at 765-361-6371 at the Alumni Office for more details and reservations.

UPDATED CLASS ’52 ROSTER ENCLOSED

On the subject of contacting someone (oh, “Briggie,” how he loved those “transitions” as a speaker moved from one subject to another!) Tedarino Steeg penned this e-mail about a month ago:
“I was going through some old Class Letter stuff ‘tother day and found your website for Ernie Scott. It said www.ernestscott.com. I punched it up, but all I got was ‘Web site not found.’ …either that was incorrect or the gendarmes finally caught up with him. … T”

Well, now, anyone who hangs on to “old Class Letter stuff,” and even refers thereto from time to time, is not one to be ignored.

So I provided Ted with Ernie’s current e-mail address, which suggests all of us should have an updated roster. Such is enclosed, thanks to our Alumni Office.

You may want to take a look at the roster and see if there isn’t someone you should contact. While you’re at it, drop me a line as well. If Tedarino’s gendarmes have caught up with you, your classmates would like to know about it. Or if the roster is incorrect, perhaps the gendarmes would like to be brought up to date as well.

Why should you bother about contacting an old classmate?

Here’s why, as provided recently by Jim Thomas:

Dear Bill,

Thanks for the recent Class Agent’s (not Agents) Letter [December, 2004]. The news of Marq Ransom’s death brought to mind our 50th reunion. Marq had decided not to attend, but at the encouragement of Dick Daniels I, and others, called Marq. I had a long chat with him that was delightful. After our calls he did decide to attend, and he said at the reunion that he was so glad that we had contacted him to convince him to attend.

Please note my new email address: cymru8@gwi.net. With warm regards,

James Blake Thomas, Class of 1952

FROM THE HILLS OF MAINE CONTINUED

So I asked Jim Thomas of Pennobscott, Maine if there might be any significance to the letters “cymru” in his new e-mail address? His answer is more interesting than one might expect. It is well worth sharing:
The address cymru is the Welsh word for Wales. My previous e-mail was rhysap after my Welsh ancestor Rhyr ap Thomas. I began studying Welsh in 2003. In March last year, Peg and I went to Scotland staying at Glasgow for a week with side trips through Ayrshire and to Edinburgh to view some of my Scot ancestral sites. At the end of the week, Peg returned home to work, and I took trains from Glasgow to Carmathen, Wales where Rhys ap Thomas and his wife are interred at St. John’s church. I stayed in Carmathen for two weeks with some side trips trough Southwest Wales, and I practiced speaking Welsh.

One moment of victory was when I went into a pub, walked up to the bar, and said, “Un peint oewrw, os gwelch yn dda.” I was served a pint of ale, just as requested. The Welsh language is making a comeback, and Welsh is now required in school through age 16.

However, not everyone speaks Welsh, and, of course, everyone speaks English. For example, at the post office I asked for a book of stamps for postcards, to the U.S. I made this request in Welsh, but the clerk responded with “I don’t speak Welsh.”

After leaving the post office, I realized that I had missed a great opportunity. I should have said to the clerk, “What a pity.”

OOOWAHWAH

Jim

A 4th GENERATION THRALL @ WABASH

From Arlington Virginia, Russ Thrall reports that he and spouse Marilyn had the great pleasure of attending Wabash Homecoming last fall. They are now finalizing plans to attend their grandson’s graduation from Wabash in May 2005. “He is a fourth generation Wabash man and we are very proud of him.” And well you should be, Russ! Congratulations and thank you for sharing that great news via r_thrall@comcast.net, which now and hereby corrects your address mistyped in my latest December ’04 Class Letter.

Although Russ claims to be email capable (more or less), he still prefers to receive his newsletters in hard copy. Why? Because that way it is “something you can walk around with…put down somewhere and get back to it … easily share with some one else… and yes, make into paper airplanes if it comes to that.” While he had an Adobe Reader, Russ has not yet installed it in his new pc, and may not do so. He concludes: “The printed word always seems to work and so I prefer it. I’m a no hassle kind of guy.”
A SPORTS ERRATUM

Sparky Watts called me recently to note my “Wabash Athletics Hall of Fame” article in the December '04 Letter was flawed. While Ken Beasley was indeed elected captain of our undefeated football team his senior year and was also MVP for our junior year, he was not the MVP our senior year as I wrote. Actually, the MVP honor in our senior year went to Norm Bucktenica, a fact further confirmed by a photograph of Norm (on crutches yet!) receiving his teammates’ award at pg 85 in the 1952 Wabash.

So wha’ happen”? Well, it seems that the October, ‘04 Wabash press release was in error and I unwittingly repeated the error in my subsequent Letter to you. But there is good news in several respects: (1) the Alumni Office has assured me Wabash athletic records are corrected, (2) Buck appreciates my corrective efforts and (3) he not only promised to follow up with an update as to how he and Alea are currently expending their time and energy, but has done so:

Alea and I are doing well – Alea especially so. Last year about this time she was completing about four months of chemotherapy for cancer (tumors in three areas). While not in remission, the tumors have remained pretty much the same size with no apparent metastasis into vital organs. She does get fatigued fairly readily, but continues to play golf two or more times a week, volunteers at her church as a docent and at the Palm Springs Desert Museum. The medical profession is continually mystified by her response to the cancer. Besides she has a remarkable attitude.

I try to play golf and tennis regularly – each twice a week. Two days a week I continue to volunteer at the Braille Institute (average age of students is 76 years!), teaching two classes at the present time – ‘Coping with Fear and Troubling Times,’ and ‘Socrates Revisited.’ It is extremely rewarding and stimulating for me. In addition, I continue to spend a fair amount of time sculpting. In February I was pleased to be selected to exhibit pieces in an Art & Wine Festival here in Palm Desert.

The Braille Institute experience has given us another example of the never ending, widespread Wabash influence on the world: It has been a pleasure to meet and become acquainted with Bob Perrone (W '80) who is on the staff as Orientation and Mobility Specialist. He does an outstanding job of teaching orientation and mobility to the students/clients, as well as orienting families, volunteers and staff.

Well, that’s about all the news from the California contingent of Lake Wobegon. We will be here ‘til May 22 when we fly back to Minnesota. So if anyone wants to visit us out here this season you better hurry!

Fond Regards, Buck
NEWS FROM CAMPUS

This Class Agent’s Letter contains little current news of Wabash College. There are two reasons for this. First, there is so much to report about (and from) fellow members of our Class of ’52, and I thank you all for this being so. Second, mailings from the College (e-mails and otherwise) are so voluminous and detailed that there is no reason to repeat what you already know. However, you are invited to visit http://wabash.edu/alumni/ and follow what you see there for more campus coverage. In fact, if you add this website to your list of “favorite places” on your computer, you will find it much easier to keep up to date, check on classmates and news of other classes near our own, etc.

That said, here is some great news hot off the press from campus: as of March 24, 2005, more than 2,800 alumni and friends have made gifts to the Wabash Annual Fund (formerly “Greater Wabash Foundation”) which total more than $1,850,000!

These gifts have a direct impact on students as they help to fund scholarships, provide financial aid, furnish teaching and learning opportunities, assist academic programming, and maintain the upkeep of campus facilities. If you have yet to make a gift to Wabash this year (the fiscal year ends June 30), please consider doing so now. As you know, the percentage of giving by alumni is an important criterion considered by others as a measure of how alumni gauge the education they received. No gift is too modest not to be counted for this very important reason.

Cordially,

Bill
William J. Reinke
51795 Waterton Square Circle
Granger IN 46530
LEXUSEAR@aol.com
(574)271-1941

P.S.: A recent Wabash Trustees’ letter began: Wabash College educates men to think critically, act responsibly, lead effectively, and live humanely. If you will go back and re-read the contributions to this Letter at pgs 3-5, it would appear that Wabash College achieved these objectives pretty well during years 1948-52.
This e-mail reporting the April 3 demise of classmate Jerry Huntsman was received AFTER the April Class ’52 Letter was completed but BEFORE it was disseminated.

----Michele Tatar, Wabash College Alumni Office.

From: Heather Bazzani [mailto:bazzanih@wabash.edu]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2005 10:05 AM
To: 'Alison Kothe'; 'Cal'; 'Carolyn Goff'; 'Carolyn Harshbarger'; 'Carrie Mitchell'; 'David Troutman'; 'Doug Brinkerhoff'; 'Guy Spurway'; 'Heather Bazzani'; 'Jim Amidon'; 'Joe Emmick'; 'Joe Klen'; 'Karen Handley'; 'Linda WILSON'; 'Marilyn Smith'; 'Mark Shreve'; 'Michele Tatar'; 'Mike Warren'; 'Mona Clouse'; 'Nancy Doemel'; 'Rhonda Maynor'; 'Scott Fendley'; 'Steve Charles'; 'Steve Hoffman'; 'Susan Cantrell'; 'Tom Runge'
Subject: Jerry Huntsman ’52-DECEASED ALUM

WABASH COLLEGE DECEASED ALUM

Name: James O. (Jerry) Huntsman                  Class: 1952

City/State: Niceville, FL

Deceased Date: April 3, 2005

Information received through phone call from his daughter in law.

Widow Information:
Mrs. Florena Huntsman
800 Bay Drive #3
Niceville, FL 32578