



Class Agents Letter

Class of 1966

Class Agent
Cal Black

Alumni and Parent Relations Office
301 W. Wabash Ave.
Crawfordsville, IN 47933
765-361-6360
alumni@wabash.edu
wabash.edu

October 2022

Dear Men of '66,

CAMPUS UPDATE

The Class Agent Forum was held on 9/10, and President Scott Feller gave an overview of current activities at Wabash. Here are some items of interest he shared with the class agents:

- There are 265 new students, 25 of whom are international students, 20 come from the Chicago area and 20 are from Texas. The student body is 835 full time students.
- 66% of the new students are from Indiana
- 58% have pledged a fraternity, up from 42% during the Covid year
- The capital campaign has surpassed the goal of \$225 million but is still an active campaign
- The Annual Fund set a new record of \$3.9 million-\$300,000 over the goal
- Alumni participation was 40%, a number that is critical in obtaining grants and College recognition
- The graduation rate is 83% which is much higher than most colleges and universities
- The return on investment (ROI) places Wabash at #9 in the country and the top 10 are mostly the coast schools of name.

This month our featured classmates are Jerry Blossom, Jack Hauber and Ken Schild-all founders of! Teke at Wabash in the fall of '62. These three classmates and others were courageous, committed and pioneers in the fight against racism at Wabash.

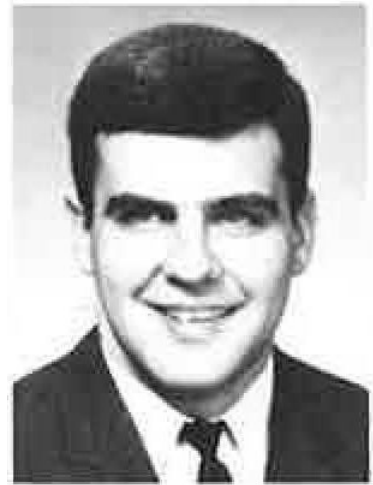
Jerry Blossom '66

By my senior year in high school, I was interested in a place like Wabash College. (And there really is no other place like Wabash). Fred Scott, a young alum in the admissions office, came to Richmond, Indiana High School and was given my name as a prospect. He believed in his product, and it was not just a job to him. The recruiting approach "Are you man enough for Wabash? It's not for everyone" was exciting, challenging and frightening all at the same time.



With no idea of a career pursuit and a liking for small classes and a family atmosphere, I signed on. I was welcome to continue playing football and instrumental music for enjoyment.

A large majority of Wabash freshmen joined fraternities and lived in fraternity houses. I did not want to commit without seeing the fraternities more than in a superficial rush period when they all looked so good. I had a nice dorm room at Wolcott Hall, but I was going "stir crazy." My good friend, Jon Mader, had pledged TKE. The fraternity stayed in contact with me after the initial rush period. I became friends with several actives and pledges. I liked the unique concepts of nondiscrimination and no "hazing." I also liked the challenge of the new organization that others gave no chance of surviving four years. The Teke approach was low key and friendly. Bob Hamilton did seem to bug me on a daily basis, but that was just Bob being Bob.



In high school our band and swing band were tight. And our football team was a true band of brothers. We had each other's backs. Friends of other races was just routine. My parents could not understand why I wanted to leave my nice dorm room for the old house where the dust bunnies rolled across the floor like tumbleweeds. The Tekes were quite diverse in many ways. My parents could not understand why.

But I joined that first pledge class belatedly. I was initiated later that second semester. At Teke, I was a rush chairman and an assistant pledge trainer. I played in all the college bands (clarinet and saxophone). I saw little game action as a varsity football player but was ready to go in if needed. I majored in zoology with a minor in psychology. I did not go to Wabash as a premed, but as a senior, I decided to apply to medical school.

Late in medical school, I decided on pediatrics as a specialty. I finished my training at Marion County General Hospital (Indianapolis) and at Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. I had exposure to rural medicine along the way and wanted to do it. I started the first pediatric practice in tiny Murphy, N.C. After seven years I joined the pediatric emergency medicine group at a children's hospital in Knoxville, TN. This was a brand new subspecialty and was just my niche. I retired from there in 2017, after 37 years.

My major time consuming activity is delivering meals on wheels all across Knox County two days a week. Without a regular route, I go where needed, and I enjoy it. I was in charge of Wabash Day for the Knoxville area for several years. I coordinated the Monon Bell Game watch parties. It was like being rush chairman again. Carla and I have five children, ten grandchildren, and one great grandchild. (But actually they are all great)

Jack Hauber '66



In the fall of 1961, my father drove me and Bill Ray on a trip to visit colleges, including Miami of Ohio, Butler, and DePauw. On the way home from Greencastle, as we passed near Crawfordsville, he said "I think there is a college here, too." That's how we found Wabash. Once there, I selected TKE specifically because of the fraternity's views on equality and human dignity. While at TKE, I served as Histor, Grammateus, and Epiprytanis. I worked as a reporter and Managing Editor (AKA ad salesperson) for the Bachelor and sang in the Glee Club. I represented TKE on the Inter-fraternity Council, the handball court, and the perennial championship bowling team. I majored in math and minored in econ (because Dr. Henry said physics classes would not get easier after Phys-Chem and I should look for another minor).

After graduation, I taught math at The Loomis School, a private boys' high school in Connecticut. While there, I had the opportunity to learn about GE time-sharing and the BASIC programming language at Dartmouth College. (Time-sharing was the earliest form of personal computing.) Funded by the National Science Foundation, the purpose of the program was to see if high school students could learn how to use a computer! After three years at Loomis, I realized that the students changed every year, but the content of my job did not, and I wasn't growing and learning. So I returned to the Midwest and got a Master's degree in Computer Science from Purdue.

After graduation in 1971, I was hired by GE Information Services because of my time-sharing service experience. Thus began a 40+ year career in sales, sales management, and sales training. After 16 years with GE, I decided to try a small, start-up company where I was a Regional Sales Manager. After three years, the company failed, so I went to a mid-sized company as Director of Sales Training. They were bought out by a larger company, which then brought in an all-new management team. Since I had tried huge, mid-sized, and small companies, I decided to go to work for someone who I would never leave and who wouldn't get rid of me...me. In 1992, I bought a Sandler Sales Institute franchise and spent the next 19 years selling and delivering sales and management training and consulting to individuals and corporations.

Sally and I are retired and living in Gaithersburg, MD. We have four children (including John, class of 1990), 11 grandchildren (including Owen, class of 2025), and three great-grandchildren (so far, all female so there may not be a fourth Wabash legacy).

I volunteer with the Asbury Clowns, a group that dresses up and visits the nursing home monthly to put a smile on a few faces when they celebrate birthdays. I am also on the board of a non-profit, the Gaithersburg Beloved Community Initiative. During Covid, I got involved in a class on writing memoirs and have now published a book of my memoirs called "What I Am Is What I Was When...."

Ken Schild '66

My wife Gail (who has put up with me for 48 years) and I live in Encino, California. We have two adult children and three grandchildren. I grew up in St. Louis, MO and attended public schools and was the valedictorian of my high school class and a member of the first Teke pledge class in 1962.

While at Wabash, I was active in speech (including the Baldwin Oratorical Contest) and debate; captained the Teke bowling team to four intramural titles; and served consecutive one year terms as Secretary, Treasurer and President of Alpha-Alpha. I majored in political science, minored in economics, and graduated from Wabash summa cum laude in 1966. I went on to Harvard Law School, graduating magna cum laude in 1969 and was a member of the Harvard Law Review.



After graduating from Harvard, I worked for the Los Angeles law firm of Irell & Manella, becoming a partner in 1976. I was a business lawyer specializing in corporate, tax and securities law. During the 1980's my major client was a solar energy developer who through limited partnerships with investors built nine solar electric generating systems in the Mojave Desert. For many years the 350+ Megawatts of those plants represented the majority of electricity produced by solar energy in the United States. I left Irell & Manella in November 1993 to run the law department of a life insurance company, retiring in 2012 as Senior Vice President & General Counsel.

Gail wife and I were active in our local Parish, and I was a member of its Parish Council and Finance Council for many years. I also served on the Advisory Board of the Catholic high school my son attended in the 1990's. I co-chaired the fundraising campaign that led to the completion of the current Teke House in 2008. I have been a member of Alpha-Alpha's Board of Advisers for many years. Wabash has asked me to assisting in numerous Wabash fund raising campaigns going back to 1972.



Here is a review prepared by Jerry and Ken of their early days as Tekes at Wabash. It is quite inspiring and it is certainly an important part of Wabash history

Early TKE History

Jerry Blossom and Ken Schild have been asked to write something about the challenges involved in early TKE history. For the Tekes in the Class of 1966, what follows will not be new, but we're happy to share our joint memories¹.

Before discussing our memories, we relate things that happened earlier in 1962 as they form the basis for TKE's reactivation as a Wabash fraternity. It is part of TKE lore that in late 1961, early 1962, Bob Hamilton'64 tried to persuade his Phi Gamma Delta fraternity brothers to pledge Jesse Liscomb'63, an African American Wabash student. Although Bob was a very persuasive public speaker, his fraternity brothers ultimately decided that they would not pledge an African American. Bob did not take No for an answer and a fellow Phi Gam, David Wilson, a physics major, arranged a visit to the Martindale Hall dorm room of John Dooley'63, Roger Alig'63 and Dave Johnson'63 – three physics/math majors. He pitched the idea of starting a new fraternity at Wabash that would not practice hazing and that would be open to members of all races, colors and creeds. The fraternity got its charter in May 1962 and the first men since the 1930's were initiated at that time.

Roger Alig had an uncle – John Alig – who had been a member of the TKE Wabash chapter (TKE's 25th) that had folded during the Great Depression in 1936 or 1937. He had told Roger that if somehow the old TKE Charter could be re-established, he would donate \$100 to the revitalized Chapter (which Roger collected). Thus all involved became aware that there was a dormant TKE charter for a Wabash chapter and that TKE had never restricted membership based on race, color or creed. A number of things then began happening virtually simultaneously – TKE's headquarters in Indianapolis was contacted and guided the group as to what was needed to reactivate the dormant Charter and new members were recruited.² The Alpha Alpha Chapter of Tau Kappa Epsilon was officially revived in May 1962 with around 35 members. The initial actives included a junior Phi Bete (Roger Alig'63) and one varsity athlete (tennis player Dave Johnson'63).

When Jerry and Ken arrived at Wabash in September 1962, somehow TKE had rented two houses – one on Crawford Street (underneath where some of the new dorms or tennis courts exist), and another (referred to as the Annex) at the northeast corner of Grant & Pike. The Crawford Street house (also known as the O'Lessker House) slept 12 and the Annex 22-24. Another 15+ members lived off campus or in the dorms. We assume that the Crawford Street house wasn't called the Annex because it was across the street from campus as opposed to two blocks away. These properties lacked suitable kitchen and dining facilities for the Chapter's members. We took our meals at the Campus Center. Dinner was the only meal that was eaten together (in an upstairs dining room) and one of the few times when most members of the chapter were in the same room at the same time.

¹ With the assistance of Roger Alig'63 and Jon Pactor'71. Jon recently completed a book on the history of AA of TKE.

² Many of the new recruits had lived together as independents in Kane House for 1-2 years before it was used as transition housing for Beta Theta Pi and Sigma Chi from September 1961-June 1963.

The Annex was poorly insulated. It also lacked storm windows. Ken shared a room with Jon Mader'66 and they put newspaper around all the edges of the windows to keep the wind from blowing through. Jon, who eventually held all Wabash sprint records (100, 220, 440 and mile relay) did not have any excess fat to keep warm, and would frequently turn on a hot plate under his desk to keep his feet warm.

These circumstances made operating as a fraternity challenging to say the least. Nevertheless, the Chapter persevered and even added new members during the second semester. One of them was Jerry. Certainly TKE couldn't compete based on physical facilities, but apparently friendship and unique policies were more important in recruiting. We had a very enterprising social chairman, Wally Rowen'65, and a number of memorable parties. While hardly an Intramural powerhouse, bowling was our only IM championship (bowling team had three pledges – Jack Hauber, Bill Ray and Ken Schild plus one sophomore – Tom Burns), TKE was competitive in intramurals. We ended the second semester by winning the award for the best Pan-Hel booth as well as the scholarship trophy.

We can't remember any speeches from that time period about our fraternity's ideals, but the fact that we had and sought African American and Jewish members and did not practice hazing were obvious to all of us and part of our chapter's DNA. We feared ridicule, but the faculty and the college administration were supportive; perhaps we filled an unmet concern they had. Dr. Eric Dean, Dr. Philip Wilder and Dean Norman Moore were frequently available for advice.

The revitalized chapter included one varsity athlete as most athletes already belonged to other fraternities. The first year pledge classes included three varsity TKE athletes – Jon Mader in track³, Jerry Blossom in football and Richard Cauthen, who lettered in three sports (cross country, track and wrestling) . We had a good representation in campus activities including student government, glee club, band, theater, forensics and various clubs.

In September 1963, our housing situation took a huge turn for the better. The Sigma Chi's had moved out of Kane House into their new house, so TKE could move in. Together with our existing Annex, TKE now had housing for most of its members as well as suitable kitchen and dining facilities (in Kane House) so two meals a day could be eaten together and members could easily gather informally on campus. It also made the benefits of an absence of pledge hazing more obvious to TKE pledges. TKE did have a rigorous pledge training policy, but nothing like that prevalent elsewhere.

Furnishing Kane House involved a trip to the Salvation Army (or Goodwill store– memories a bit vague) in Indianapolis. Having a Salvation Army truck drive up with our used furniture purchases was emblematic that our fraternity survived on a shoe string budget.⁴ As we know, all furniture of college students has a short life span. No one ever joined TKE because of luxurious living conditions. In any case, until TKE moved into a new house in the fall of

³ Jon later played football as well.

⁴ TKE also occasionally purchased used furniture at a Crawfordsville auction. Jack Hauber recounts how he and Jerry Blossom thought they were bidding \$3 on a desk to discover at the end of the evening that they had purchased the hose sitting on top of the desk instead.

1968, it rarely acquired new furniture. It is remarkable that in the space of six years a student initiative to start a fraternity without discrimination and without hazing resulted in a brand new house of nearly 70 members in 1968.

We also had to learn how to rush. The reactivated chapter included a few members who had depledged other fraternities (plus Bob Hamilton who had been a member of one), but most Tekes did not have the slightest idea how to recruit new members. This was an ongoing challenge. We gained many members during the second semester of each year primarily by recruiting friends.

These early years were a learning experience for everyone. We did not have upper classmen who had been members for years and long experience in budgeting and bill collecting. During the summer of 1963 the families of the then President and Treasurer each loaned the fraternity \$500 so summer and start up bills in the fall could be paid. Subsequent treasurers and presidents prepared and implemented budgets that made certain that such emergency measures were never needed thereafter. We had a natural diversity, which was much prized, but made our brotherhood interesting and arriving at a consensus difficult on almost any issue.

Next month we will feature several Kappa Sigs and their protest against their national fraternity when they were not allowed to pledge an African-American. If there are any Kappa Sigs or other classmates who can contribute to this story, please let me know ASAP so that that information can be included in the next class letter. Mike Lindeman, Bill Summers and Mel Washburn have submitted information to date.

Thank You to all of you for what you continue to do for our Alma Mater!

“These fleeting years...”
Cal