



Class Agents Letter

Class of 1981

Class Agents
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Greetings Class of 1981

Peter's Report

Mike and I hope that 2023 has been a good year for you and yours. Maybe you have had the opportunity to come back to Wabash sometime over the last 12 months and if not, then in 2024. If you came back on a certain Saturday in November, as I did, for a football game, at least the weather was very pleasant and for the first time in history the game went into overtime. Mike has a bit more to say about that below.

Our class had its first ever class Zoom call and we had the opportunity to hear our classmate John Hilbrich talk about the process of writing and publishing his book **Get to CEO: Chart Your Path, Learn the Skills and Avoid the Mistakes to Get There Faster**. The book has all 5 star ratings on Amazon. This book provides practical career advice and does so succinctly and effectively. I am sure John would tell you it makes a great Christmas gift for family and friends who aspire to be future CEOs. It was great to get a number of classmates together to discuss this very interesting project of one of our own.

Just this past week another classmate Bill Macon had the pleasure of reading Saturday, December 9, 2023's *Wall Street Journal's* Off Duty Section, that on its front page contained a fold and a half sized photo of a plate sized sugar cookie with sprinkles. **The Best Holiday Cookies of 2023 Are Also the Biggest**

<https://www.wsj.com/arts-culture/food-cooking/the-best-holiday-cookies-of-2023-are-also-the-biggest-97d3c274>

While any of us that enjoy cookies, especially at the holidays, may have appreciated the article, it was special for Bill as the recipes included in the article were from his daughter, Georgia Macon, executive pastry chef at Portland, Maine's restaurant Twelve. The recipes and more incredible photos are on page D9. These are big cookies indeed.

We are always glad to share news about our classmates and welcome your ideas for opportunities to get together in person or virtually in the coming year. Please share your news and ideas with us.

Peter Wright
Co-Class Agent



Mike's report

Wabash didn't win the Bell this year. As the great Kurt Vonnegut wrote, So It Goes.

It was a good game to watch though. We just needed a better OT. From the Minnesota restaurant, where I was among the local alums convened to watch, I texted Doug McKay to see if he was at the game and, sure enough, he was there and texted a picture to let me know what a spectacular Autumn Day it was in Indiana.

And I must add a huge shout out to Charlie Crowley '70 who is the glue for the Minnesota based alums. He is THE unfailing great Son of Wabash. Kudos to his work on getting us together!

At our gathering this year I met Richard Most (Class of 1986), and his wife Julie. They have been in Minnesota for the last 15 years. Richard is Sigma Chi, as am I, and it was amazing how quickly we connected over our overlapping bros.

And it made me ponder about that overlapping thing that happens really, for any 4 year higher ed program. When we reminisce about Wabash, it usually isn't just who we know from our graduating class. We were also at school with the three classes from before our graduation and the three classes after our graduation. We also often know men from other classes too.

Hear me out on this proposition and how I think it can help us find ways to update and re-connect with each other. I will of course, use myself as the example... but I'll leave blanks for folks to fill in.

Here is a kind of schematic to use for my point:

We, the Class of 1981, entered Fall 1977 as Freshman

The Seniors were Class of 1978

The Juniors were Class of 1979

The Sophomores were Class of 1980

And, as we moved through Wabash, the Classes that followed in our wake were the Class of 1982, the Class of 1983, and the Class of 1984.

To tie this together then, my conversation with Richard meant that the Seniors he knew were the Class of 1982, those Sigs that I had the pleasure of recruiting, along with Mel Gore, as Co-Rush Chairmen. This included, among others, Dr. Stephen H. Webb. It was such a completely different perspective on the men we both know, reference points really for how we knew them, that made our conversation so great. His perspective on the men he knew, and thought of as Seniors and all that meant, was so different from my perspective on the men I knew, and will always first think of, as Freshmen.



It made for such a wonderful conversation, and made me think, Class letters cut across classes. My goal for 2024 is to figure out how to bring those perspectives to these conversations.

On November 20th I attended my first “After the Bell” session. These are sessions that offer alumni the opportunity to “come back to Wabash” for discussion by faculty on a variety of topics. The one I attended was entitled “After the Bell – Founding Wabash”. It was a presentation by Wabash Archivist Nolan Eller '11 who provided a glimpse into the founders, and the creation of Wabash, via materials contained in the Robert T. Ramsay, Jr. Archival Center at Wabash College. It was fascinating to see how much original material is found in the archives, particularly Edmund Hovey’s materials. Nolan did a masterful job with the presentation.



There were 39 attendees including Rolland Strasser:

He let me know he is now living in CT and that Hovey’s grandson went to Yale and was very influential at the Museum of Natural History in New York City.

At the end of the session, I did ask Nolan how he missed weaving into his discussion the expulsion of Basil Barrickman.

This confused Nolan and the moderator Emily Vetne (who did a terrific job managing the event and the QnA!).

But there were enough of the crowd who remembered Barrickman’s Revenge that my question drew some laughter and some nice words from John Kerezy '77. And I did give a thumbnail sketch of the birth of Barrickman’s since it involved the Lilly Archives.

I highly recommend the “After the Bell” series. In fact, of note for our class, the next one will be presented by Emeritus Professor Warren Rosenberg who arrived at Wabash in 1980.

Here are the details:

- For the next virtual After the Bell, Warren Rosenberg H'98, Emeritus Professor of English, will present *Movies and Masculinity: Exodus (1960), Munich (2005), and Me* on Thursday, January 18 at 7:30 p.m. EST. Register here: <https://www.wabash.edu/events/afterthebell-rosenberg/>

Mike Robak
Co-Class Agent

As 2023 ends, Peter and I send everyone holiday good wishes, cheer, and a Happy New Year!