

Class of 1953

Class Agent

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Dear '53s:

Hope you are all safe and coping reasonably well with cabin fever during these troubled times. We have all been through a lot in what is getting dangerously close to our ninety years, with wars, economic upturns and downturns, personal triumphs and disappointment and more – but nothing quite like this. At our age, as we plunge through uncharted waters with virus targets on our aging backs, our role is probably to pull the covers over our heads and be confident that these kids we have raised and these students Wabash has educated and their likes everywhere will find ways to right the ship and make us safe and confident in the future once more.

In the meantime, let's talk about Wabash and the Mighty Class of '53.

The College:

Currently, of course, everyone at Wabash is on battle stations. Students are home, classes are on line and everyone is working hard to make the best of a tough situation. But I am sure you get the same bulletins from the College that I do, and those indicate that Wabash is still a great place that is doing fine. They are approaching \$200 million in the Giant Steps Campaign (you included yet?), the new football stadium and track are shaping up day by day and a remodeled Lilly Library is on the way. The College scores remarkably well in the Princeton Review's annual ratings of all the nation's institutions of higher learning: first in Best Alumni Network (take a bow); first in Best Schools for Internships, third in Most Accessible Professors; fifth in Best Career Services; and the impressive list goes on and on. Small colleges and particularly small liberal arts colleges are struggling to stay relevant and to stay alive in the more "get a job" attitude that exists in a good piece of our society. But the institutions that believe in the liberal arts and do them well still have a compelling story to tell and still have a critical role to play. Wabash is one of those who does it well. We'll be okay.

The Class:

Let's get to the bad news first. Since our last communiqué we have lost Bob Green, Jack Judy, Bill Augsperger, Hugh Allen and fellow class agent Bob Miller. As has been the norm for our class, all led interesting and productive lives, often taking leadership roles and serving their communities well. They will be missed. Their obituaries are attached on the next page.



Hugh Ellett Allen

October 10, 1931 – December 19, 2019

<https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/9700720/Hugh-Allen>

William Dexter Augspurger

April 30, 1931 – September 11, 2019

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/theledger/obituary.aspx?pid=193908224>

Robert B. Green

June 5, 1927 – November 15, 2019

<https://www.allencares.com/obituaries/Robert-Green-67/>

Jack W. Judy Jr.

October 11, 1931 – January 11, 2020

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/williamston-mi/jack-judy-8998388>

Robert Warren Miller

June 15, 1931 – March 7, 2020

<https://obituaries.heraldbulletin.com/obituary/robert-miller-1078834326>

As to the rest of the class, we scattered pretty widely once we escaped Crawfordsville, engaged in a wide variety of occupations, professions, civic enterprises, family building and general mischief over the years and we seem to remain surprisingly active despite leaving most of that behind, by now.

Roger Drummond and Ellen report in from Ocala, Florida where they are living in the Brookdale retirement community. They are glad to have family living in the area. Roger says he recently had a pacemaker installed “and now can do a lot more, which still isn’t much.” He doesn’t say whether he still has a chance to exercise those entertaining vocal cords that we have enjoyed when he was at Wabash and several times since. Ellen’s brother was Reeve Peare, who you will remember was a member of our class (and a great character). Caleb, his grandson, is interested in attending Wabash and Roger, Ellen and Reeves’ widow Helen are busily pushing him in that direction. I told Roger that if Caleb would come to Wabash I would promise to tell him some tales about his grandpa’s exploits there. We’ll see.

Bob Hay and Christine have given up their place in Idaho and now live permanently in Tucson, Arizona (where it stays warm all the time). He says one does acclimate to the heat and they are finding it’s a pretty good place to hunker down if one must hunker down. He has cut back to only six doctors, three of which are ophthalmologists for his one good eye. *Editor’s comment – sounds very much like the rest*

of us. He continues to play some golf – figuring ways to do the social isolation thing at the course - and to ride his bike, which has a “cheater”, a little electric motor that kicks in when the hills get steep. Sounds great; I hadn’t heard of these. Like, I assume, most of us, he is reading a lot, which I am, and taking internet courses, which I am not.

Bob’s daughter and one of his sons managed to get out of England after this mess hit and are in isolation in their own homes. Strange world we are in.

George Littell checks in from Greensboro, North Carolina, home of Lois, his bride of seven years and, much earlier, an acquaintance from high school days in Mountain Lakes, New Jersey. Lit’s home is in Winchester, Massachusetts and they migrate back and forth between the two properties (which makes sense because most of his career was spent running a travel agency, which he retired from about eight years ago). He still plays a lot of tennis at the age of ninety-one. George started with the class of ’52, and tells an interesting tale about him and three classmates, who I am sure some of you will remember. When they were all Betas at Wabash, George, Tom Klingaman, Tom Moser and Ted Steeg got together an informal quartet that occasionally hung around the piano at the Beta House and practiced for fun. Much later, they remembered how much fun they had and decided to have an annual four or five day “reunion” to sing and generally have a blast together, They held that celebration for ten consecutive years. Ted sent me a CD of one of their songs from their last get together, and by golly, they still sounded pretty good. Sadly, all but Lit are now gone. But what a great example of the type of lifetime relationships that often evolve from the Wabash experience.

Tom Florsheim and Nancy are staying isolated in Milwaukee, but say they are managing to keep busy. Besides the customary dog walking Tom says he has been able to spend more time with his long term interest in photography and they both are doing at home the exercises they usually do at the gym. Reading the news in three papers, reading books and being on the internet makes the days go by quickly and keeps them from being bored. Their three boys are in Milwaukee and their daughter is in Chicago, so they had an enjoyable Zoom session on line to celebrate Tom Jr’s birthday. (*Ed.’s note: our family did one too, with ten respondents. Chaotic fun!*) He says production in their company is pretty much at a standstill in the current crisis, with internet sales about all that is going on. (Tom is Chairman Emeritus, Tom Jr. is CEO and son John is President and COO of Weyco Group that does a lot of shoes. No grandchildren there yet). Tom says: “This will all be over some day and I hope we will all be here along with our loved ones”. Amen!

Jim Smith still hangs out in a senior living community in Bradenton, Florida and, like the rest of us, bemoans the “outside” activities he is missing during our shutdown – most of all TENNIS. But he notes he has quadrupled the time he has for reading books, listening to music, writing memoir pieces and watching his beard grow. He puts his tongue firmly in cheek and says: “*I have focused on developing the Smith Staying Svelte System, a strategically synchronized series of specially sequenced sets systematizing several somatic exercises specified solely to solve seriously sagging skin. I was ready to go public with my program until today when I saw an online video clip of Jack Black’s TikTok Show, and I realized I could not compete with that!*” Sounds like a real winner; sorry he chose to give it up. I got back in touch with him to check whether he meant he was missing tennis because of the plague or because he had given it up for age reasons. Horrors, no he replied – he’ll be back at it at least three days a week in a huge Tennis League of 165 teams, where he has played for twenty years and is listed as an honest to gosh Legend He has long been active and successful in competitive senior tennis events and has been an leader and/or officer in several other tennis organizations.

Dave Saunders reports in from Perrysburg, Ohio, where he has hung out for the last forty years or so. Dave says that Little Giant news is hard to come by in this land of the Buckeyes where he lives. He is in good health, plays some golf, goes on long walks and reads a lot. His wife's health is not good, which puts some limitations on his activities. He sold his studio a number of years ago but still likes to paint with water colors now and then (nothing worth letting out of the house, he opines). Two of their children and one grandchild live in the area and Dave says they are "a part of our daily lives", a having family nearby blessing I also share with him and cherish. Dave mentions that hearing a choir on TV sing the exact arrangement of a benediction that the glee club, under Mitch did all those years ago, "almost broke me up, with those great memories of another world" Indeed, Dave, it was a great world and I think we all have those "almost broken up" memories now and again.

Bob Woods is in Smithfield, Virginia. He says there is not much news from down there, but he and his wife of 17 years had a couple of Wabash adventures in the past few years. Wabash came south to play Hampton-Sydney in football a few years ago and they thoroughly enjoyed that game. And they came north to give his wife a tour of the Wabash campus in 2014, (*Ed's Note::which I am sure she enjoyed, because, as we know, it's lovely. Looks like a college campus should look but seldom does*). Bob says they spend their winters even further south – in Florida - where they do their level best to keep the wine industry afloat and enjoy 25 years of retirement.

Fred Warbinton and Barb have moved a bit north from their Indianapolis digs to the Stratford Senior Living facility in my home town of Carmel. Fred points out what I am sure most of you already know: "It's unbelievable how much stuff accumulated over the years". They got successfully downsized just before this current mess developed and are now hunkered down in the Stratford enjoying having their meals delivered to their door and not missing the stairs in their old home a bit. For many years Fred played drums in a concert band, but tells me he has now "hung up his sticks". They have a grandson graduating from Wabash this year and headed for law school. Like thousands of other prospective graduates around the country, he is bummed that Commencement Ceremonies cannot be held.

Jean (Mrs. Bugsy) Williams is still in Crawfordsville, now at Whitlock Place, Room 131, 1719 South Elm Street, Crawfordsville, IN 47933. She reports: "At 101 sometimes adjustments are required but I am happy and reasonably healthy in my cozy apartment and I have round the clock help if I need it. I remain interested in the world and what everyone is doing". She goes on to say that her computer skills are waning, so letters are probably a better option for correspondence. Amazing lady, as always! Sounds as if her relentless schedule of world travels may be ended, but she remains in great spirits.

Jack Engledow is firmly anchored in Carmel, Indiana where I have lived for sixty some years. Since I am home bound like the rest of you, I don't have to traverse daily Carmel's 125 (no kidding) roundabouts which are our mayor's favorite thing. I'm in generally good health, walk quite a bit, play a little golf (very, very poorly) and did work out on weight machines a couple of days a week – back in the good ol' days when the facility was allowed to open. I spend a little time at the family business. They let me participate in some of the fun marketing and strategic stuff but I don't have any serious responsibilities. My oldest son is CEO and two grandsons head up divisions. All three are Wabash graduates, so we are in good hands. Like Tom Florsheim's firm, and all others, we are being deeply affected by this lockdown and can't wait for normalcy to return. (An aside on family businesses: Tom's 128 year old Weyco Group edges out the 88 year old Engledow Group by just a few hundred million dollars in annual sales, but I am sure we will catch up in a few more decades.) I lost Nancy about a year and a half ago after seventy some years of hanging out together, and that has taken some getting used to. But I am terribly

fortunate to have almost all of our four kids, seven grandkids and six great-grandkids in the area. They pamper me shamelessly and we are together in various combinations pretty much daily when things are normal. Life is good.

Final Thoughts:

And that's about it for this time, gang. Many thanks to all of you who got us news and howdies from your far flung places. We hope you will stay in touch and that others who we did not hear from this time will let us know what you have been up to, as well. Reach me at jackengledow@sbcglobal.net or Fred Warbinton at fwnbw@sbcglobal.net.

A final observation and suggestion: In preparing for this newsletter and scanning the College's list I came up with a startling observation: From our graduating class, nineteen of us remain on the list as compared to thirty-four widows. We are an endangered species! Scary! But that made me think a bit about Wabash Widows and Wabash Wives. Our class, over the years, has accomplished some pretty amazing things in our careers and our lives. What we don't hear a lot about, perhaps in particular because Wabash has this male thing, is the spouses, who in most cases are at least a full partner in anything we have been able to pull off. They have heard two million renditions of "From the Hills of Maine..." , frozen their feet at the football games, listened to a thousand stories of raunchy things that happened at the Gamma Gamma House while usually taking the major responsibility for raising the kids and just smiling, while often accomplishing amazing things on their own.

How about you Wives and Widows getting in touch with us with some stories about your Wabash experiences which we can share in future newsletters. It would be fun to have some observations from the distaff side. We have it coming.

Jack and Fred