June 26, 2006

Fellow ‘53s:

The College

It has been another great year for our alma mater. The Bash continues to show up in various prestigious lists of national best thises and thatss, the most colorful of which was our designation as the nation’s Hottest Men’s College. Of course, the sobering reality is that there are only four men’s colleges -- leading Jim Amidon to say that “It’s a bit like being named valedictorian of your home school class”. Ah, well. More importantly, the College graduated 203 Little Giants, now off to make the world a better place, deposits from their replacements-to-be are up 8%, alumni giving to the College is up $1.2 million from last year, and endowment is at an all time high of $351 million. None of this is by accident. By any measure, Wabash remains a vital beacon of leadership in ever growing sea of mediocrity in liberal arts education. Somehow, they have managed to keep making the place better, despite the fact that we haven’t been there for (gulp) 53 years.

Next year will be a year of historic transition in leadership for Wabash. As has already been well documented, Dr. Patrick White, currently of St. Mary’s College, has been selected to succeed Andy Ford as President. More recently, Dr. Gary Phillips was appointed Dean of the College, effective July 1. He will replace Mauri Ditzler, who left to assume the presidency of Monmouth College. Dr. Phillips is currently Chair of the religion department at The University of the South, in Sewanee, Tennessee. He was selected from a large and high quality pool of applicants, where, according to President Ford “Even in that company, he stood out.” President-elect White states: “Gary Phillips brings a deep passion for the liberal arts and a commitment to leadership grounded in reasoned discourse and a listening heart”. The Board of Trustees also announced that Larry Griffith, current Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of Franklin College, has been appointed CFO at Wabash, also effective July 1. This trio receives the baton from a highly successful team that led the College through an extended period of high achievement and success. By all appearances, the new group has all the tools to follow in kind. We of the Class of ’53 wish them well and pledge our support.

The Class

We continue to bulldoze our way through retirement (with strong emphasis on the “doze”, for most of us). A few bits of news:
I had a nice chat with our beloved (real) class agent Frank Mullen. He is doing well in Richmond, IN, where his brother and other relatives live, but he still misses the Big Apple. He and a nephew are planning a trip to a lake in New York state in early summer. I’m sure he would enjoy a call or a note: 2030 Chester Blvd. Richmond, IN 47374; (765) 939-1955.

Jack Fitzgerald reports from Fredericksburg, TX, that he and Roma Nelle celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Memorial Day. The whole crew – three kids, with spouses, nine grandchildren, one grandchild-in-law, three dogs and a kitten – converged on the Fitzes for weekend of merrymaking, leaving the old folks happy, but entirely pooped. Fitz is trying to get a repaired rotator cuff back in shape. He insists that “surgery is more fun to do than to have done”. Easy for him to say. This is the same guy that contends that heart transplants are a relatively simple surgery. I want him on my team.

Fred Warbinton checks in with news that he and Barbara recently renewed an old friendship with our former classmate Dick Keeling and his wife Judy. Fred and Dick were good friends through elementary school, high school, and their freshman year at Wabash. Dick then entered the service during the Korean conflict, finally returning to Wabash and graduating with the class of ’57. Dick and Judy reside in Emporia, KS, where he has retired as a Biology professor at Kansas State Teachers College.

Bob Dickinson reports that all is well with his crew. He and Dottie are in good health. They spend seven months in Sarasota, FL, and most of the rest at Lake Wawasee in northern Indiana. Their kids and ten grandkids wander in and out all summer. In family news, their oldest granddaughter was married recently, and Bob is working with his oldest son on a possible business acquisition. He says the latter may be hard on his golf game. Something is certainly hard on my own golf game. I just wish I could figure out what.

Al Stolz, our Energizer Bunny classmate, drops us a line regularly. At a time when most of us are busy trying to find a comfortable spot to lie down, he keeps hunting up stuff to do and honors to accumulate. He attends political rallies, saves a life here and there, and gets himself in Who’s Who in America. Then, in his spare time, he has the energy to research that 1953 was the hottest year in weather history, saying there could now be little doubt that the Class of ’53 had the Hottest Year at the nation’s Hottest Men’s College (see above). Slow down, Al; you’re making the rest of us look bad.

The bad news this edition is that Tom Cunningham passed away on March 16. Tom was a Kappa Sig, and very active in campus activities while at Wabash. He went on to receive his law degree from IU, and was a practicing attorney in Indianapolis until a few days before his passing. Tom had served as deacon, elder and trustee of the Irvington Presbyterian Church, was past president of the Downtown Lions Club and the Devonshire Civic association, and was an active member of a number of other civic and professional groups. Bob Miller, a good personal and professional friend, says: “Tom was a neat guy with a droll sense of humor. He and I even got to try a jury trial together about twelve years ago. He will be missed”. Tom leaves his wife of 48 years Dorothy Ann, three children, and eight grandchildren. Our sympathies go to them.

Giving

The fiscal year at Wabash is at an end on June 30. Our contributions help those talented 850 current Little Giants (hey, one’s my grandson) by: augmenting scholarships and financial aid;
increasing resources for academic programming, including immersion learning trips; allowing
technology upgrades; and contributing to upkeep of campus facilities, and more. This year, our
bucks are supplemented by a 1:25/1:00 match from the Lilly Endowment, so your contribution
has unusual leverage. You can make a gift online at www.wabash.edu/alumni/egift.

As of May 22, 38 members of the Class of ’53 or their widows had contributed $111,031 to the
annual fund. That comes to 44.7% of eligible donors -- seventh in all the 74 graduating classes
since 1932. The dollar total ranks us eighth in that group. Nice work! It would be even nicer if
a few of those we haven’t heard from could respond and raise us above that magic 50% mark.
A last minute check from just a couple of you could make that happen. Consider it.

Donors This Year

Bonner Allee  Herb Hawvermale  Pete Moffett
Hugh Allen  Don Hendrickson  Frank Mullen
Pat Anderson  Cal Hilgediek  Mrs. Judy (Jim) Ray
Bill Augspurger  Art Iles  Pete Schma
Bill Backman  Mrs. Carlyn (Dan) Johnson  Mrs. Virginia (Ryan) Shaw
Hudson Cattell  Dan Korb  Al Stolz
Charlie Crum  Sam Kriegman  Louie Sunderland
Roger Drummond  Fred Lamb  Jim Tchalo
Jack Engledow  George Littell  Fred Warbinton
Jack Fitzgerald  Stan Long  Mrs. Jean (Doc) Williams
Tom Florsheim  Charlie Lytle  Dick Williams
Mrs. Maurie Fredrickson  Don McMasters  Tom Woerner
Bob Green  Bob Miller

Thanks to all of you for your generosity and your vote for the future of the College We Love So
Well.

Jack,

(For Bob and Fred)