



Class Agents Letter

Class of 1955

Class Agent

Bob Kellogg

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Dear 1955 classmates,

The school year has started at Wabash with actual classes being held with very careful awareness of COVID-19. So far, so good.

Thankfully, Wabash is an independent school for the most part. While the administration is facing the inevitable spread of virus as students have returned, they are, for the most part, receiving cooperation from students (can you believe that!??) and have things under reasonable control. This is possible because the college worked out very careful safety guidelines for students, employees and faculty before the students returned and are keeping all informed on a weekly basis. They are conducting both random and targeted testing. You can access the latest information by referring to the Alumni News and Notes, sent monthly by email. In addition, you can see the most up-to-date information on the College's dedicated webpage (<https://www.wabash.edu/covid>); for President Scott Feller's weekly updates, click on Important COVID-19 Documents.

Fall sports have been postponed, so there will be no Monon Bell game this fall.

Let's make this newsletter interesting to everyone. Most of us would like to know what's happening (or happened) with our fellow graduates, even those we didn't know well while on campus, so hopefully the class agent's letter will be a conduit for that information. I believe our stories speak well for Wabash College and the education we received.

I'm going to start the ball rolling by telling something about me and the last 65 years:

My hometown is Columbia City, Indiana, population then, 4,219. Other Columbia City grads in school with us you may have known are Jim Adams, Dick Crampton, and Stanley Long, each a year or two ahead of us, as well as Darwin Eherenman, in our class. After graduation I married a Whitley County girl and took a job as an Engineer with Blue Bell Inc., the world's largest garment manufacturer. (Think Wrangler brand)

You see, I was a math major and physics minor at Wabash, and when I was looking for a job, most companies wanted to train me as a salesman. ---Not me!! Blue Bell had an on-the job training program for Industrial Engineers (at a time when few colleges were offering degrees in Industrial Engineering) Now, that was for me! At the whopping salary offer of \$300 a month (and after hearing Wayne Broshar, another physics major, had been offered \$700 a month by NASA.) I accepted. It was one of the best decisions of my life. Blue Bell was a very efficient company (and Industrial engineers were the old time



"Efficiency Experts") So, Industrial engineers had a pretty free hand with the company operations. My official title was "Engineer", and I was treated like a part of management, although I was so new I couldn't engineer my way to the loading dock. They sent me to Greensboro, NC for training. I worked hard as I could, and received regular raises. After a short stint back in the Columbia City plant, I was sent to Tupelo, Mississippi in 1956.

Moving to Tupelo was like falling off the end of the earth for a boy from the northern Indiana farm country. Those people considered me a "Yankee" and were still ready and willing to continue the civil war. The local theater reserved the balcony for "Colored" folks, the bus station had special fountains and rest rooms for "colored", restaurants did not serve "coloreds", etc. Our manufacturing headquarters had just two black employees: a maid and a janitor. (At the time, I think they'd have been insulted if we called them black)

One memory particularly sticks in my mind. It was a crowded Saturday afternoon downtown, when the local farmers came in to shop. The streets were full of folks, black and white. My wife and I, shopping with our small son, were walking on a crowded sidewalk. Coming toward us we saw a small group of young black men. As we neared, about 20 feet from each other, the group of blacks stepped off the curb to let us pass. I felt embarrassed as we continued on, but in my mind, here was my new job assignment, and I'd better get used to it.

Attached to this letter you will find the "Where are you now" form requesting basic info about you and your family. Please use it to let the college know your current situation. The form is obviously geared to graduates out of school fewer years than we are. Most of us are retired; not exciting news. So, let's try something else as well. We have entered a variety of endeavors, and/or professions, and we all have antidotes to tell, humorous and otherwise. (Maybe like my little story about meeting blacks on the street in Tupelo) Such stories must have special meaning to you, and will have meaning to the rest of us, once you explain the situation. Such stories will give all of us a sense of the wide variety of ventures we've encountered. If you send your stories to me, I'll be sure they get to everyone in the next Class letter. This could be great fun and make the class letters interesting to all. My addresses are below. (If you send nothing, there may be a very tiny class letter.)

The purpose of what you've just read was to spur you into writing your story. I know you all have one. Like mine, it doesn't have to shake the earth, just tell us what you did after Wabash. We're all old farts now, and retired, and that's Ok. Some of the experiences which became routine for us will be different and interesting to others, so tell us about you.

Respectfully.

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p.s. The Sphinx Club got so hard up for speakers they asked me to do a Chapel talk a few years ago. (March 24, 2016) Wabash Chapel talks are available on You Tube (<https://youtu.be/A96u5R76IRU>) (<https://www.youtube.com/c/wabashcollege/videos>), so you can see what I look and sound like these days. Don't expect a lot. Once at the podium parts of my notes were missing, so there was a good deal of paper shuffling. But, the message was good, if I do say so myself!

“Where Are You Now?”

Wabash Class of _____

While you are holding this in your hands, take a moment to fill it out and send it to: Wabash College, Alumni and Parent Relations Office, PO Box 352, Crawfordsville, IN 47933. While you're at it, why not contact a fellow alum or professor you haven't talked to in a while?

Name _____ Home Phone _____

Home Address _____

Business Address _____

Business Phone _____ Business Fax _____

E-mail _____ Home Page _____

Interested in serving your class as a class agent? Yes _____ Maybe _____ Not yet _____

Interested in helping the College with fund raising? Yes _____ No _____

Family Information

☐ Single

☐ Married

☐ Partnered

(Spouse/partner's name) _____ Anniversary (if applicable) _____

☐ Divorced

☐ Widowed

☐ Father of (kid's name/s) _____ Birthdays _____

Latest Employment and Education Information

☐ Unemployed ☐ Self-employed doing _____

☐ Employed (where) _____ Occupation _____

☐ Looking for work

☐ Retired

☐ In school at (where) _____

☐ Working toward a (degree) _____ in (field) _____

☐ Writing a book on _____

I'd really like to hear from (classmate/s) _____

Any other interesting news? _____
