

### Class Agents

Earl Houck

Duane Hile

### Class Agents Letter

Alumni and Parent Relations Office

301 W. Wabash Ave.

Crawfordsville, IN 47933

765-361-6360

alumni@wabash.edu

**wabash.edu**

November 2, 2019

Classmates –

It's déjà vu all over again! In my class letter of November 2017 (which I'm sure you all recall!), I wrote about visiting classmate **Ted Klopp** in California to see his vineyards and do some winetasting, only to have our visit interrupted by wildfires in the area. As I was watching the news about the current crop of wildfires in CA, I sent Ted a note asking if it was affecting his area again. Here is his reply:

" Hi Earl

Like when you were here except the authorities have learned from that bad experience. Were given evacuation orders on Saturday as fires were raging north of Healdsburg. Forecast was for more wind and they didn't want another case of people getting caught trying to escape in a hurry. Roads were filled with cars at 3am but we stayed at Laguna ranch Friday night and Saturday at Thorn. No power, hence no water and air was terrible so we took the rv over to Napa and found a great campsite there and stayed 4 nights. Came home one day to get stuff we had forgotten and had to get special permission to enter evacuated areas as police had closed everything off to prevent looting etc. Went back to Napa but came home today and evacuation was lifted. When we got here, still no power but it finally was turned on about 5:30 tonight. Fires are 50% contained and there is no wind which helps immensely. Now the problem is that it is cold, frost, at night but gets up to 75 in the day. I can live with this. No one was killed or injured in the evacuations and only one traffic accident with minor injuries. Pretty amazing with over 190k people evacuated! Fire departments from all over the west and police from all over Ca. to help out. Over 5k fire fighters. Impressive. Now we clean out refers and freezers from 4 days without power. Grapes were all in so no problem there. Hope all is well with you." Glad that it turned out alright for you this time around, Ted. I look forward to visiting again.



I caught this picture on Facebook of **Ron Sheese** celebrating Canadian Thanksgiving in Toronto. The Canadians celebrate Thanksgiving on the second Monday of October. I wonder if Ron will celebrate again on the fourth Thursday of November with those of us south of the (Canadian) border?

Another classmate, **Steve Claffey** is featured on a video of the Crooked Creek Food Pantry highlighting Steve's efforts in bringing in some Wabash interns to work at the Pantry. You can see the video at <https://youtu.be/A9VW2tqte4k>. I think I recall seeing Steve and his crew participating in Wabash Day last year at the Food Pantry. Which raises a question: Did any of you participate in Wabash Day October 26/27 this year? If so, let us know and send a picture.

In Duane's last letter he asked for more classmate inputs as a way to keep us from suffering through his jokes at the end of his letters. I saw this reply from **Rick Helm** picking up on the jokes comment and just felt the need to pass it along to all y'all (I'm learning to speak Southern.) As you may know "y'all" is a staple in Southern conversation, and "all y'all" is the plural form of that.): "If a fruit pie costs \$2 in Havana, Cuba; and the same pie costs \$3 in Haiti; and the same pie costs \$4 in the Virgin Islands; what do you have? Pie rates of the Caribbean, of course!" (I can hear the groans.) Maybe it is time to start a pun competition. Send us your entries.



While off scouring the Facebook pages looking for classmates, I came upon this picture of Tom Werner in full hiking regalia. The caption noted "nature's beauty (and very muddy hiking trails)"...but it did not give a location. So here is the mystery: Where in the World is Tom Werner? (Maybe he will see this and give some additional information.) Just goes to show that Phil Coons isn't the only hiker among our classmates.

As further proof that some of our classmates are still out walking and hiking, here is **Phil Pearson** on Labor Day participating in the Mackinac Bridge Walk. (Yes, another Facebook find. Just a warning, guys, if you're on there, we will find you. So make it easy on us and send us your stories and adventures. Or just a hello.)



And there was another reply to Duane's last letter from **David Decker**: Duane's "current class letter has moved me to write. The picture of the Henry brothers is amazing: they all look like Bullet Bob! I'd like to say that they are more decayed than I am, but that would not be true.

When I came to Wabash in 1963, I had been living in Des Moines for six years. I always thought of it as a dreary place but have come to recognize that it was a good place to grow up (sort of...). I think Bob Myers lives there and now O'Rourke. I think I was the only Wabash man from Iowa during 1963-7. I was last in Iowa after my mother passed in 1999, and half of the places I knew were gone by then. Imagine a pump handle in an open field where my grandparents' house once stood.

Anyway, life grinds on. Remember the Tom Lehrer song Bright College Days from maybe 1960 with its line of "sliding down the razor blade of life..."? We have lived in Florida since 2005 after a quarter of a century outside Boston. Physically I was OK until about 2011 when I got prostate cancer, followed in 2015 by either a brain stem stroke or an neurological attack caused by Agent Orange from my time as a lieutenant in Vietnam. (I note in passing that Vietnam is now a luxury resort destination. Gag.) So I am always unstable, like an old drunk, and don't do much other than weave and stagger two miles each morning at dawn.

My wife is fine and literally flies around the US and the world (India, France, Ireland, England) doing high-end floral designs and teaching. I stay home with our handicapped son Andrew. He is 43 now and a true love. Mildly retarded from birth with hearing loss and a speech impediment, he has suffered for over a decade with Sarcoidosis and Autoimmune Hepatitis. We are 80 miles from the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, so we spend a lot of time up there. He is able to work part time as a bagger at Publix and the staff and customers love him. We are very lucky!

Thanks for your class letter." (As both Rick and David mentioned Duane's letter specifically, we now know that we have TWO known readers of our letters. Maybe we'll see a few more guys brave enough to admit that they actually read these and reply with some news and updates!)



One more picture to share, taken Oct 22, of the new entrance to the campus which was dedicated earlier in October. I'm looking forward to getting back to C'ville and seeing it in person.

Duane covered a lot of Wabash current athletics events in the last letter. For you Facebook users, you can keep up to date with all the athletics by subscribing to Wabash College Athletics. There have been several recent posts highlighting wrestlers, swimming and diving, soccer, and football. It's a good way to catch the current info on all sports.

Save the date-- November 16 -- the 126<sup>th</sup> Monon Bell Game at DePauw! FOX Sports Indiana and FOX Sports Midwest will again televise the Monon Bell Classic between DePauw University and Wabash College when the football teams meet for the 126th time on November 16, 2019

marks the third consecutive year viewers around the nation will be able to see the action on FSI, and this year the game will also be televised nationally on FOX College Sports Atlantic, and streamed on FOX Sports GO. There will be several Wabash/DePauw telecast parties throughout the country. Check <https://wabash.edu/alumni/mononbell> for a listing of the parties currently scheduled. All the parties will be family-friendly unless otherwise noted in the details. Wear your Wabash attire and cheer the Little Giants on. There is still time to order Wabash hats, sweatshirts, or other articles – just contact the Wabash College Bookstore on line at the Wabash.edu website. Since the Monon Bell entered the rivalry in 1932, Wabash leads, 43-38-6. Be there when we make it 44-38-6.

And Duane and I wish you all a very Happy Thanksgiving. May you all be able to celebrate with your family and friends and take some time to remember all that we each have to be thankful for in our lives.

I've got to go take a nap so I can get up at 2:00 AM to reset my clocks. It is my annual opportunity to "turn back time" and relive the past – even if it is just one hour of past. Maybe I'll do something really crazy that I might regret...and then just turn the clock back and act more responsibly. And since almost everyone around me will be asleep, no one will ever know!

Send us your updates, pictures, puns, jokes, news, Wabash recollections, pre-planned obituaries, or something for the next letter!

Be well. Happy Thanksgiving. Thanks for reading our letters!

WAF.

Earl