



Class Agents Letter

Class of 1968

Class Agent
Jim Roper

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Dear Class of 1968,

Wow! The television has looked like the summer after we graduated. Hope everyone stays safe. The virus thing is starting to normalize in Colorado. Hopefully the same is happening where you are. Here, we somehow managed to avoid becoming ill, but we did binge-watch Walking Dead for weeks. My favorite character was Nigan. Sorry, but Nigan got 'er done. What did you do while you stayed home? Anything crazy? Let us know. Pictures?

Big Wabash news is the departure of **Dr. Greg and Lora Hess**, who I believe did an outstanding job leading Wabash through serious times. I count them as friends. The stadium comes along, should be finished by football season. Remember when the old one was new? If the horizon is clear by then, maybe we should gather at Wabash for Homecoming. And more sincere reflections on Wabash by **Dan Vannatter**. Sadly, one obituary. If you have any news, or even if you don't, please send me a note with photos! And get those health screens. I do the medico thing—three docs—every six months. If I can, you can.

Take good care and be safe.

WAF,

Jim Roper '68

I received this cordial note from classmate **Mark Sutton**, a great Wabash wrestler and later high school coach. The college took my address off the letter years ago—maybe privacy concerns—leaving it there is fine with me. We live in a litigious world. The General Cushman article was from Dan Vannatter. **Here's Mark's letter:**

What a bonus to actually receive a hard copy of your most recent class letter, Jim. For an old geezer who has spent fifty years appreciating antiques, it's probably not surprising that I prefer the archaic quaintness of actually holding what I read, whether it be my morning newspaper, credit card billings or class letters. I don't have a clue as to why the college invested a stamp rather than going internet with this last one, but I appreciated it. One thing I will suggest, whether via hard copy or email, you certainly need to include your direct email address with each letter. As you'll note, I wasn't sure which of the three addresses I have for you was current, so I'm sending this reply to all three.



I did enjoy your personal account of your interactions with General Cushman. Although I confess that many of your abbreviations were beyond me, I'm sure they made sense to those who served with you. And it's always great to see the input, including photos, from other classmates. With all of us sadly qualifying for the "high risk" category as far as the virus is concerned, I'm certain most of us will look forward even more to every newsletter as a helpful distraction from our quarantine time. Although I'm afraid that those letters will also contain more heart wrenching news of classmate deaths because of this pandemic.

Wabash has always turned out a lot of doctors and that profession is obviously filled with lots of heroes in today's world. I can't help but think that many of our classmates would return to do battle with this virus in a heartbeat were it not that they know their age potentially makes them more of a liability than an asset. Certainly it is frustrating to have to stand by as all of this unfolds. Were it WW2, even at our age, we could do some kind of work to help in a food pantry or manufacturing personal protective gear or whatever, but being told to stay home and do nothing so we don't further burden the medical system is painful. Because my wife and I are on social security and have pensions, the understandable shotgun approach to providing stimulus checks will simply be a windfall for us. So we've donated ours to a food pantry. We can at least do that much.

Meanwhile our age has afforded us lots of good memories on which to reflect. And many of those memories center around the good times and good people we have encountered thanks to our time at Wabash College. Thanks very much for your efforts in helping to keep those memories alive, Jim.

Mark Sutton

Dan Vannatter sent this, his memory of "Comps are Coming" back in our day at the Bash. My memory of Comps is different, because my grad school acceptance had been nuked by the Selective Service. Read Dan's experience. What was yours? I will delay his second Vietnam Tour story installment, to publish this more relevant for some of us to Wabash memory.

Comps Are Coming! By Dan Vannatter

Nothing strikes fear in the heart of a Wabash Senior like those three words! At least that was true in the dark ages of the late '60s when I and my fellow Wabash Seniors started the second semester of our senior year. We, every one of us, were somewhat cowed by the "Sword of Damocles" that seemingly hung over our heads and we all were developing our respective strategies to prepare and ultimately conquer Comps, thereby proving we belonged to the unbroken procession of those who prevailed and graduated from Wabash College. We were, hopefully, all then to become known far and wide as Wabash Men!

So, what were Comps? And, why were they so intimidating? Well, read on and you will learn: Comprehensive Exams were the ultimate test of your accumulated knowledge gained (and earned) in your four years at Wabash College. The exams consisted of 12 hours of written answers by each student to questions posed by the faculty in



both his Major and Minor areas of concentration, study and retention; and, a one-hour oral examination by two professors from his Major and one professor from his Minor. YOU HAD TO PASS COMPS TO GRADUATE!

We all knew as Seniors that Spring brought the dreaded Comps to each and everyone of us. And, if it slipped our minds, the Juniors helped us remember by placing a huge banner on the front of the Campus Chapel with COMPS ARE COMING! In very large letters! How was it determined that one passed these Comprehensive Examinations? The written portions were evaluated by professors from your Major and Minor (multiple professors read and evaluated each student's written efforts and assigned grades which were averaged to give a final grade for the 12 hours of written efforts) and the three professors who conducted the oral examinations also averaged their scores to obtain an oral exam grade. The written and oral scores were then reviewed by the Department Chairmen along with the respective grading professors and a final score determined. The grades were tabulated and once completed were posted on the bulletin board outside the Campus Chapel.

How were these grades listed? There were 5 potential grades: they ranged from a "1", a "2", a "3", a "JP" (or Just Passed), and a "Did Not Pass". Fortunately, the Class of 1968 did not have anyone who did not pass. The "Did Not Pass" list, if there had been someone who was on it, was not listed. The crowd of Seniors in front of the list once it was posted was at least three deep and everyone was looking for where their individual name fell on the list. I was one of those Seniors that day and thought I knew I had done my best on both the written exams and the orals; I was not totally confident of either where or if I would find my name on the listing. Why was that? From my perspective, that is where this story gets interesting!

I came to Wabash with a strong academic record from High School, graduating 3rd out of about 250 in my Class of 1964. I had been awarded (and, I believe earned) an Academic Scholarship that paid my entire educational costs. I had been accepted at both Yale and Wabash and chose Wabash for several good reasons and never doubted that choice. My preparation for college was both aided and dictated by my environment: I had a paper route throughout High School which meant I woke up at 0430 every morning and walked to where my papers were dropped off by a truck, opened the bundles, placed the papers in my "paperboy's bag" and walked my route, rolling the papers and securing them with rubber bands and tossing them on porches and front steps every day to include Sundays.

The early rising dictated that I go to bed early, so studying early was paramount. There was no place to study in our home other than the kitchen table or the toilet in the bathroom. The bathroom was the quieter room with the door shut, unless I had to step out to allow someone else to occupy it. The rigid discipline I followed was both self-induced and parent driven. I enjoyed the rewards of doing well and receiving very good grades, but I also had 'encouragement' from my father who set high standards for himself and suggested I should do the same. I did not feel restricted, merely strongly encouraged to do my best each and every day. The oversight was there, but it did not seem obvious to me at the time.

Once I got to Wabash, I was in an entirely new and different environment than I had ever experienced. I had a single room with a well-lit desk area for studying, an exceptionally comfortable bed and a semi-private bathroom and shower I shared with another student who also had his own room. The food service was incredible with all one could eat at every meal (which helped me gain 20 pounds the first three months) and I no longer had to wake up at 0430 each day. Classes were very interesting and the homework was substantial. I had signed up for a full load and, unlike High School, I found myself struggling to keep pace. Moving from my home environment in which I was so very busy each and every day (with restrictions on my space, study areas, sleep schedules, sports participation, paper route deliveries and weekly collections) to Wabash and so much freedom was too much for me. My academic performance suffered, for I was unable to deal with the lack of oversight and did not realize it; in fact, I started to wonder if I was Wabash material. I finished the year with barely a "C" average, if that.

That summer I determined I would return to Wabash and attack the academics with a renewed energy. I signed up for 22 hours that first semester and nearly exhausted myself working to erase my initial disappointment and to strive to be among the academic leaders. With a few fits and starts and an intense desire to "prove myself to myself," I managed over the next three years to build my accumulative grade point to just below an A-. I was no longer embarrassed by my academic standing and began my preparation for the Comprehensive Examinations (the dreaded COMPS) early in the first semester of my Senior year. In the second semester, I established a study regimen and sleep plan that had me fully engaged and prepared well ahead of COMPS. My confidence was cautiously optimistic, but still wary. I was not alone. The campus buzz was filled with discussions and dire predictions of the difficulties ahead as COMPS approached. "COMPS ARE COMING!" was everywhere! And, right on schedule, they arrived!

The first day of COMPS we Seniors all reported to our individually assigned locations on campus. We were issued the "blue books" and pencils. The written exams were to be 12 hours in length, broken into three four-hour sessions over a 2-day period. As I indicated earlier, the written sessions covered both our Major and our Minor courses of study. All written answers were to be in structured paragraphs in the Blue Books. The questions were written on a central blackboard at the front of the classroom. Once we were shown the question for the session, we could begin and could write until told to stop.

I was a Psychology Major and a Biology Minor (I also had a Minor in Ancient Greek, but thankfully, I was not being tested on that subject.). The first question was, "Why Do We Study Psychology?" The standard answer is found at the front in almost every Psychology textbook and it is, "we study psychology in order to understand and predict behavior." I stated that reason and immediately asserted that that was NOT the reason at all. I wrote that the reason we study Psychology was for POWER. I then defended and explained my answer for three hours. When I was finished, I felt very relaxed and was no longer intimidated by the written testing. Though I no longer remember the second and third questions, I was so confident in my abilities after the initial question, that I felt assured that I did very well throughout the written portion of COMPS. So, it was on to the Oral portion! The Orals were scheduled for the next two weeks after the written portion. Once notified of our appointed time and place, we reported individually to the selected room, in coat and tie. There I was faced by three professors, two from my Major, Psychology, and one from my Minor, Biology. What happened next was both interesting and frightening! I entered the room fairly confident that I had prepared well and would represent myself very adequately regardless of the questions these professors asked. I was to sit on one side of the table across from the three professors. The very first thing that occurred after I sat down was that the Biology professor greeted me and placed a bug on the table directly in front of me. He then told me to tell him everything I knew about that bug. I swallowed several times, considered what to say and launched. I described the Phyla and all sorts of other data about that bug, gaining confidence as I spoke. I must have talked for nearly five minutes about that bug and then indicated my response was completed. The Biology professor then told me that I had accurately described everything about that bug (I started to feel better and somewhat relaxed) and then he said I had told him everything about that bug except to tell him what it was called. At that point I was numbed and nearly panicked. I told him I did not recognize the bug and did not know what it was called. He was incredulous and said very authoritatively, "that bug is a Tic; have you never seen a Tic?" I answered that "truthfully I had never seen one, though I had been bitten by at least one and my Mother had put clear nail polish over it on my leg to kill it." My response seemed to satisfy him that I was telling the truth and he turned me over to one of the Psychology professors. I was then asked to go to the blackboard and describe a statistical model used to determine the accuracy associated with some psychological testing. I knew the answer and delivered it rapidly with a surge of confidence that sustained me throughout the remainder of the hour of questions. Once I departed, I felt both a relief that Comps were over and a feeling of satisfaction that I had done my best. What I did not know at that point in time was if my best effort was good enough!

COMPS were now over for our entire class. All 175 of us Seniors were anxious to learn how we had performed and were evaluated. On one Spring day the word spread across campus like wildfire, "the Comps scores were now posted!" There was a rush of young men from every direction centered on the Campus Chapel. I was there behind a crowd of three or four deep trying to get close enough to find my name among the lists. When I worked my way to the front, I began my search.

I looked first at the list of JPs (the Just Passed list). My name was not there; I then moved up to the list of those who received a "3." My name was not there either. By the way, I was now breathing hard, somewhat concerned that I might just not have passed! I raised my eyes to the listing of the "2s" and, lo and behold, there was my name. Relief was instantaneous! I started to feel validated, but not fully. I did look at the listing of the "1s" and was not surprised that the number of "1s" was not large and I knew most of those on that list and also knew they were all very dedicated students and earned that distinction.

I knew now that I had redeemed myself and was going to graduate with an admirable grade point average that was totally validated by my "2" on COMPS. I was satisfied, but I did have a lingering small voice in my head that asked me what would I have to have done to have earned a "1?" After noodling on that for a short period, I relegated those thoughts to the very back of my mind. Then an interesting meeting with the Psychology Department Chairman occurred.

I was contacted by the Psychology Department secretary and given a date and time to come to the office of the Department Chairman for my Senior exit interview. I arrived at the appointed hour and was asked to be seated.

The professor was very kind to me, expressing very positive comments about my four years at Wabash, and telling me my academic maturity had impressed him. I was delighted to receive his comments and truly enjoyed his telling me that "of all the students he had been in contact with in my class at Wabash, I was from his perspective, the most prepared and ready to 'commence.'" That was very heady stuff to hear and I was sitting there quite pleased with both the professor's complementary comments and myself. He then said something that stunned me that day and still stings every time I think about it.

He looked at me across his desk and said (as accurately as I can remember his words), "Dan, you did a great job on the Comprehensive examination! We were all impressed by your performance. And, you came 'this close' to earning a '1' on COMPS!" I was both stunned by his statement and immediately at a loss for words. We may have talked a little longer, but I am not certain. What I was certain of then, and remain so today, is that I would rather he had not told me how close I was to earning a "1" on COMPS!

I knew I had performed exceptionally well and had prepared diligently and correctly. I knew the material, thoroughly evaluated it and drew conclusions that were unique, accurate and well-defended. My performance at the Orals was flawless other than not knowing my bug was a Tic. I was happy to discover that I had received a "2." However, had I received a "1", it would have validated my four years at Wabash, most importantly to myself, but also to my fellow classmates. That was a leadership teaching point that I carried forward throughout my Military career and implemented when it was warranted. I attempted to never withhold commendation and praise when it was deserved, especially when I could offer laudatory comments about others in front of their comrades and peers. I, and others I have known, may have appeared to be "Silky Sullivan's", when in fact were "Secretariats!"

Wabash College received the sad news that classmate J. Edward Garrigan passed away on March 29. His obituary follows:

**REV. JOSEPH EDWARD GARRIGAN
1947 – 2020**

REV. JOSEPH EDWARD GARRIGAN, 73, of Doylestown PA, Died at St Anthony's Hospital, Gig Harbor, WA, on March 29, 2020. Education, Wabash College, Yale University and General Theological Seminary in NYC. Member of Evangelical and Catholic Mission, Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament and Guild of All Souls, Society of St. John the Evangelist and Catholic Clerical Union. Rector of Saint Paul's Episcopal church in Doylestown, PA, 1979-2004. Served the greater Philadelphia Episcopal community until retirement in 2015. Published works, 1996 compilation of sermons titled "Comfortable Words". Born to JoAnn McMahon Garrigan and Thomas Garrigan on Jan. 1, 1947 in New York City, NY. Preceded in death by his father Thomas Eugene Garrigan and survived by his mother JoAnn Garrigan Minton; his wife Jan Garrigan; brothers Michael and Patrick & their wives. Stepchildren 4. Step-grandchildren 8. Memorial Service is planned at St Paul's, Doylestown, PA pending COVID19 restrictions.



Mike and Kathy Gallagher 4-14-2020

Doin' that Covid-19 prevent thing. Stay safe!



04-24-2020

Mary and Van Butler celebrating 27 years. Congrats!



Wabash, Hampden-Sydney Renew Gentlemen's Classic Football Rivalry - 04/13/20

Wabash College and Hampden-Sydney College will renew their football rivalry in 2022 and 2023. The two colleges for men will open those seasons by playing each other in a continuation of The Gentlemen's Classic, which began in 2014.



05-05-20 O yeah, Cinco de Mayo.

Mike Dybel reminds us. Thanks, Mike.

Of course, May the fourth be with you!

THANK YOU from the college

Thank you to everyone who helped bring #WabashTogether on our seventh Day of Giving.

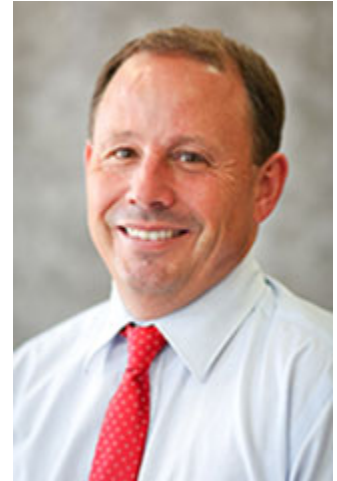
Thank you for responding to our messages with your gifts, challenges, and passion.

Together, we completed seven challenges and unlocked \$490,000 from 6,045 gifts totaling \$1,214,321 for Wabash students.

Your support on the 5.12 Day of Giving enabled us to take a Giant Step together for Wabash College.

If you haven't made a gift to Wabash, the College's fiscal year ends June 30th. Your Financial Support will help educate young men and continue the traditions we enjoyed. You can make a gift online at www.wabash.edu/give or call 877-743-4545. Or you can mail a check to Annual Fund, Wabash College, 301 W. Wabash Ave. Crawfordsville, IN 47933.

The Wabash College Board of Trustees has elected **Scott Feller, Ph.D.**, to serve as the 17th President of Wabash College. Dr. Feller, who has served as Dean of the College at Wabash since 2014 and as Professor of Chemistry since 1998, was elected by unanimous vote during the Trustees' meeting May 16 and will begin on July 1, 2020.



Terry Smith with family 6-11-20

Fall Schedule at Wabash

- Aug. 7-8 New students move into living units (scheduled and staggered)
On the recommendation of our on-campus teams, Wabash College will start the fall semester two weeks earlier than scheduled.
- Aug. 9 Ringing-In Ceremony for new students (live-streamed for family members)
- Aug. 10-11 Remaining upperclassmen move into living units (scheduled and staggered)
- Aug. 12 Classes begin
- Nov. 17 Classes end
- Nov. 18-24 Final exams



6-21-20 **Lee Grogg** on Fathers Day!



And **Terry Schuck**, coming from Telephone, Texas!



If you have comments or photos to share, please send them. I hope the virus is subdued and the stadium is done by Homecoming. Let's make a tentative plan to get back to C'ville for that!

WAF,
Jim Roper '68