

Class of 1977

Class Agents

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June 29, 2026

CLOSING THE BOOKS – This is a quick “ask” from all of us as Wabash closes the book on its 2025-2026 fiscal year on Tuesday (June 30). The college just told us that it needed less than 250 more alumni to make a gift this fiscal year to help it reach its target of 40% of alumni participation for the 13th year in a row. If you’ve given a gift to Alma Mater, that’s great. If not, and especially if you have not in recent years, would you consider making a gift NOW as we approach our graduating class’s 50th anniversary? Here’s a link to click on to do so:

<https://www.wabash.edu/giving/>



The college mailed out a planned giving brochure to all its alumni earlier this month. If you’re inclined to make a major gift to the college, now would be a good time to reach out to classmate Greg Birk and let him know. He’s at gregbirk77@gmail.com. He and Carroll are probably recuperating from all the foreigners they’ve had in Switzerland following all the peace talks and G7 sessions, so he’d love to hear from a classmate or two.

If you want to keep track of end-of-year gifts by the way, you can do so by visiting www.wabash.edu/alumni and also on the National Association of Wabash Men’s Instagram account @nationalassociationofwabashmen

IF YOU HAVEN’T DONE SO, please mark June 3-4-5 for our 50th class reunion, Big Bash 2027. We will have a pre-Big Bash event on Thursday, June 3, at the home of Paul and Debbie Van Ness in Waveland. All are invited, but it will be a special night of remembrance dedicated to deceased classmate and spouse. Main festivities will be at the college on June 4-5 (Friday/Saturday). Herm, Greg and I would love to see 97 of our classmates back in the Academic Halls of Crawfordsville on these dates.

Quick Personal Note – My email was hacked! If something resembling a party “invite” comes to your email purporting to be from me, DELETE IT. Sorry about this. I’ve tracked down the device which started the problem and have purged it, but still working with Google to resolve the situation. Do save my person email address of johnkprof@gmail.com, as (chances are) my work email address will no longer be effective come August 1, 2026.



ROBIN STOUT REMINISCES

More than two dozen members of the Class of 1977 were at the college for the 2026 Big Bash earlier this month. ROBIN STOUT came, primarily to reunite with his Class of 1976 friend JOE MIMS. Robin and I had an opportunity to reconnect as well, and he reminded me that he was in Philadelphia during the summer of 1976, the nation’s bicentennial. I asked if he’d share his thoughts about that experience with the class. Here they are:

Jack Kudlaty suggested I start my Junior Year, Fall 1975, in Bogata, but that was too much for a small-town American boy like me. I went to Philadelphia instead, and teamed up with other Great Lakes College Association students to rent a big old house in Germantown. I spent the semester touring Philadelphia and working for the Public Defender’s Association. I liked Philly so much, I decided to stay an additional semester, Spring 1976. I lived in Center City and worked in a mental health facility whose catchment area included Independence Hall.



Needless to say, America’s 1976 Bicentennial in Philadelphia was one big party. I stayed the entire summer. It was a Presidential Election year also; I got to shake Jimmy Carter’s hand at Temple University. There were historical exhibits; there were concerts; there were street fairs; there were thousands of tourists from all over America and all over the world; and yes the mental

health facility where I worked treated its fair share of delusional Benjamin Franklins. I remember the 4th quite well. We started the day at a music festival in Fairmont Park; went down to Independence Mall to hear President Gerald Ford; stood at the top of the Philadelphia Art Museum steps and saw what is still the largest fireworks display I have ever seen in my life; and by the wee hours of what had become July 5 we were still celebrating on Chestnut Street.

Back then, Philadelphia had its share of crime, and former Police Chief Frank Rizzo was Mayor. At about 3:00am, a phalanx of officers, locked arm-in-arm in full gear, came marching down Chestnut, literally from the building line on one side of the street to the building line on the other side of the street, and offered, shall we say, 'gentle persuasion' that it was time for everybody to go home!

Now, at age 70, July 4, 2026 can't compare!

Thanks for your love and support for Alma Mater.

Best for Wabash Always,

John

John Kerezy '77