

Midterm races to watch

CONNOR PHILLIPS '28
STAFF WRITER

Secretary of State's Race:

Indiana has been known as a ruby-red state for Republicans for the last few decades. One local race this year may change that assumption. The Secretary of State's race looks like it may come down to the wire. Democrats are pinning their hopes on Beau Bayh, the 30-year-old successor to a political dynasty started by his grandfather, former U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh, and father, former Gov. and U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh. Republicans have ousted incumbent Diego Morales back in June for Senator Jim Banks' staffer, Max Engling. Additionally, two other candidates are running under third parties. Lauri Shillings is running as a Libertarian, and former Indianapolis mayor Greg Ballard, a Republican turned independent, will be on the ballot under the Lincoln Party.

Current Secretary of State Diego Morales' tenure in office has been marred by controversy. Questions have been raised about his use of state funds to purchase a \$90,000 luxury car from a dealership that contributed to his campaign, and his hiring of his brother-in-law at a six-figure salary to be co-director of the Secretary of State's auto dealer services division.

Even though Diego Morales is not on the ballot this year, his conduct is playing a large role in the race. Beau Bayh said Engling represented the same "corruption, insider dealing, and waste of taxpayer money" as Diego Morales. While Max Engling framed the general election as a fight to "push back against the Democrats' attempts to undo common sense election integrity laws."

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Campus construction continues



COURTESY OF ADRIANN RHOADES

Renderings of the completed renovation of Knowing Fieldhouse gym and indoor track. The field house will be closed all semester for the renovations.

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The start of another academic year has brought campus back to life — shouts of greeting populate the mall, wide-eyed freshmen are adjusting to their new lives and classes are back in session. But while students were away this summer, campus was busied not by academics but the whirl of drill bits and concrete mixers. But while many newly completed projects dot campus this fall, there are still works in progress.

Academic buildings, living units and support buildings were host to a number of upgrades this summer. The International House received external renovations and will get internal ones over the course of the semester, and Detchon Hall's front stairs received some much needed reinforcements after recurring issues with crumbling plagued them last

year. Morris and Wolcott Halls both were treated to fresh coats of paint, furniture upgrades and new carpeting, and the south side of campus got its fair share with new turf on Fischer Field and a fresh parking lot on the corner of Jennison and Grant.

However, certain projects continue. Many students expected Knowing Fieldhouse to be ready for the start of school in August, but over the summer, the damage to the underlying concrete was determined to be greater than previously expected. Additionally, in the 25 years since the Fieldhouse's surfaces were added, new advancements in floor technology enabled the project to include a wider variety — and a higher quality — of surfaces than project managers believed was possible at the outset. Included in the Knowing project will be an indoor track manufactured by the world's

best track manufacturer, volleyball specific practice flooring that will also be utilized by intramurals and an artificial turf section that will be used by athletes of many sports teams.

"Almost every team at Wabash will use that space in some way throughout the course of the year," said Director of Athletics Jim Peeples. "What drove our decision making on the flooring upgrades that we made was who uses that space most often as their day-to-day practice space."

While the upgrades to the Fieldhouse will modernize the surfaces and make it safer for athletes and casual users alike, the project was delayed nonetheless. Some students were frustrated to return to campus without the project completed and felt like in May they were, to an unreasonable extent, in the dark about how long the upgrades would

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President Feller exclusive

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The Bachelor sat down with President Feller ahead of the 2026–27 academic year to discuss the progress of the College's many building projects, the Monon Bell's arrival in Muncie and Wabash's next steps in the age of AI.

Q: We're about to begin another school year, which is always a mix of old and new things. What has you excited about the next year at Wabash?

A: "This may be more of what has me excited than students, but the College's bicentennial is in 2032. That's coming into sharper and sharper focus. By the end of this school year, it's five years away. And so I'm excited by a couple of things. One, the opportunity it provides for all of Wabash to reflect on this institution that has the opportunity to enter its third century. There's just not a lot of things that boast that. So, I think that's super exciting as a kind of odometer, milestone or birthday.

But I also think the timing turns out to be good to ask the question, "What's Wabash all about?" What do we want Wabash to be all about? You know, if we don't do that kind of reflection and goal setting and planning for it to happen, well, then we'll be bounced around by external forces. I'm not high on the external forces bouncing us around right now. It's more important than ever that we set our destiny rather than let the outside world, you know, tell us what we should be.

Q: There's not been visible progress on the Community Center this summer, but can you share any work that went on behind the scenes and what students can expect from construction this fall?

"The Community Center project is one of these examples of a duck on a lake. The part you can see doesn't look like it's moving very fast. Underneath, the feet are going crazy. The under-the-surface piece is a couple of big enabling projects. One is the parking lot in Mud Hollow. If you go there's now a new parking lot that was a requirement from the city for us to build the Community Center, because we've eliminated a bunch of parking. Part of that was a necessity. Part of it was a nice addition to the College, but the other necessity is the cooling plant that's going in between the football field and Martindale. That literally has to be complete before the Community Center is complete. Otherwise, we'll have no heating and cooling. The other things are even more hidden. There's still a lot of tunnels and tunnel work being done, and a lot of piping needs to be put in underneath the surface.

The other big part was that, in the first week of July, we had the interim closing on our loan with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and that was a milestone on the financing side. You might recall that we had financed the demolition ourselves, and before we could begin the construction, we had to get through this interim closing process with the USDA. It involved evaluating and improving three things: one, our design; two, that we know how much it's going to cost. They also had to approve our contractors. Then the third part was we had to demonstrate that we can do the interim funding of the construction until completion. The USDA is not going to release the funds until the building's done, and so we had to show that our partner, J.P. Morgan Chase in this case, was both able and willing to provide us a construction loan, and so each of those three pieces was big. It was a painfully slow process, and it added a lot of stress. To the good, though, all these prices now are guaranteed. And we've had a second set of independent eyes look at all of our planning and all those things. It definitely slows us down, which is bad, but it does two good things. One, it ensures that we're not going to have some surprise price increase during the course of this, and two, it leaves us the option to refinance the J.P. Morgan loan with the USDA under what are favorable terms for the College. With that funding from the USDA, we have the opportunity to also refinance our existing debt, and given that interest rates are higher

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Caleb Mills Bell rings in new class



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN

August 21, Members of the Class of 2030 sat in Pioneer Chapel for the annual ringing-in of the freshmen class.

JERRION ROSE '28
STAFF WRITER

This past Saturday the Class of 2030 participated in one of Wabash College's most beloved traditions. The Ringing In ceremony has been around for almost 200 years and sets the tone for more traditions to come. 252 new students representing 13 different states assembled in the Chapel to commence the beginning of their Wabash journeys. And for 87 members of the Class of 2030, Wabash signifies the first from any generation in their family to attend college.

"We tell people Wabash isn't for four years, it's for life. That's true – I've got friends to prove it. But the life part doesn't happen later. It gets built here."

- Interim Director of Admissions Tyler Wade '12

Wade's speech, President Scott Feller approached the podium with the same bell used to ring in the first class of Wabash college. Used first by the College's first professor, Calib Mills to ring in the first original 12 students.

"I felt very welcomed. It was cool to see so many people around me that were at Wabash for their education."

- Cory Hudson '30

To begin, President Feller asked them to remember all the people and supporters who made sacrifices that propelled them all the way to the chapel on that day. Encouraging them to acknowledge and honoring them by continuing to grow and face challenges. Students were sitting in the pews of the ground floor surrounded by their families and friends on the second floor balconies. A parallel to the theme of President Feller's message, to remember the people who surrounded them on their path-

way to Wabash College.

Wyatt Emerson '30 moved into the FIJI fraternity excited to begin his Wabash Career.

"I really liked ringing in," said Wyatt Emerson. "There was a lot of information coming but overall I felt really welcomed. I thought that was great. It was good to be surrounded by WLAIP members. The fight song was great. I thought the speakers did really well bringing in new perspectives."

After Dean Brown gave his remarks, the Glee Club sang the Wabash Fight song. Current members of the club were joined with a few members from the freshman class.

"I felt very welcomed," said Cory Hudson '30. "It was cool to see so many people around me that were at Wabash for their education."

Wabash has a great many traditions in its scarlet halls, but Ringing-In is the one we all begin with. The only time we hear that bell and share one place until we walk under that arch and leave thy sacred portals.



PHOTO BY WILLIAM DUNCAN

Freshmen left Pioneer Chapel after Ringing-In to find their orientation groups on the mall.

Hunt for New Dean of Admissions

OWEN VEMEREULEN '28
NEWS EDITOR

As many students left campus at the end of last semester, it was announced that Dean of Admissions, Chip Timmons '96, would be leaving Wabash after almost 30 years with the College to become Purdue's new Executive Director of Undergraduate Admissions. With this change in personnel happening going into summer, admission's busiest time of year, this could have presented a major challenge. This change seems to have done nothing to slow the steady pace of the admissions office.

"When Dean Timmons left in June, one of his achievements that we celebrated was the development of a strong Admissions team with a deep bench," said President Scott Feller. "We have seen that play out in that we really haven't missed a beat."

It seems as though it is business as usual for the admissions office. The College is in the process of looking for a new Dean of Admissions. In the meantime, Tyler Wade '12 has stepped in as the Interim Director of Admissions.

"I think having the confidence and trust in the team that we have here and their strengths and ability to get stuff done has helped make for a pretty seamless process in general," said Wade. "[President Feller] was very clear in his charge to me in taking this job as interim, is to set things up for whatever comes after interim."

The College is looking into replacements as we speak and are working to find the best candidate whether that's in or outside the Wabash College family.

"We've engaged a search firm to assist us in identifying candidates to become our next Dean," said Feller. "They are leading a national search, encouraging both internal and external candidates. They spent a couple days on campus

early in the summer, met with our faculty, staff and coaches and are working hard to source candidates and conduct preliminary interviews. Our on-campus search committee will mobilize in mid-September, and it's our hope to have on-campus interviews in early October and to name someone shortly thereafter."

It appears that the number one objective coming out of the Admissions Office is to keep the train running and make sure the change has no effect on recruiting the next class.

"I think having the confidence and trust in the team that we have here and their strengths and ability to get stuff done has helped make for a pretty seamless process in general."

- Interim Director of Admissions Tyler Wade '12

"We have a number of new initiatives underway, including a partnership with Two Ocean to help us source prospective students and their families," said



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN

August 21, Members of the Class of 2030 sat in Pioneer Chapel for the annual tradition of ringing-in.

Feller. "Alongside that, we're working with another firm to build a new microsite with content expressly designed for prospective Wabash men and their families. That work is moving forward at pace. Our early application numbers are up over last year."

One message that is being reiterated is the idea that the Admissions Office isn't the only one recruiting. They are looking for engagement from everyone.

"Enrollment is everybody's business at the institution," said Wade. "None of it happens without everybody on campus being involved. Whether that's faculty welcoming students or students hosting prospective students. So managing enrollment isn't just bringing in new students, it's keeping and retaining the ones that are already here."

With recruiting for the class of 2031 already underway and the class of 2030 being one of the biggest the college has had, it appears that while Wabash College will miss Timmons, it takes more than losing one person to derail any progress they're looking to make.

Construction update



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN

As students return for classes construction on new Communnity Center is still in limbo.

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really take. The current projection is that the Fieldhouse will be complete by the end of the calendar year.

"I understand these feelings and they are valid; however, I think it is important to note that progress isn't just what is happening before our eyes," said Director of Planning, Design and Construction Adriann Rhoades. "There is a lot of work that occurs behind the scenes and on paper to ensure that we are designing spaces and selecting materials that are in alignment with the standards of the College and the student experience."

Other long-term projects progressed over the summer. The Central Plant — which will supply heating and cooling to the new Community Center, as well as other locations on campus — is on track to be finished by the summer of 2027. And the Community Center itself, whose progress has been blocked for some time by government shutdowns and issues with financing approval, finally closed on an interim funding agreement with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) in July. That agreement, which secures lower interest rate and debt refinancing options for the College, will ensure price freezes that the USDA must honor, effectively lowering the ultimate cost of the project. Contractor teams are re-mobilizing, and foundation work is expected to begin next week, with the planned end of the project set for the summer of 2028. In the coming months, more community input will help move the project forward.

"We will have some upcoming events over the next year to provide additional feedback on furniture et

cetera that will ultimately go into these spaces, and we want everyone on campus to participate," said Rhoades.

And while students may find it frustrating that all this construction is happening during their four years on campus, some student leaders are urging patience and understanding while remaining determined to keep campus' spirits high.

"I would like everyone frustrated with the construction delays to consider the other facilities that other generations of Wabash men may have had to wait to see completed during their time here," said Student Body President Jack Ray '28. "My team is placing a great emphasis on events at the mall this year, whether there is construction or not. The mall has always been our campus collection point and we will continue to use it as such."

But while students are still encouraged to energetically use all the campus' spaces, administration officials are prioritizing safety and asking all Wabash community members to do the same.

"Safety is very important as we increase construction activity on our campus," said Rhoades. "We know these projects can cause fatigue, especially on a small campus, but we want to do everything we can to make the overall experience as positive as possible as we work to bring these exciting capital improvements to Wabash."

So, as summer wanes and the Arboretum's leaves begin to change with the dawn of fall, expect to see Wabash's architectural and infrastructural facets changing along with them, accompanying another year of Wabash students on their journey in Crawfordsville.

Midterm races to watch

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Key Midterm Races Profiles:

Texas Senate Race

Ken Paxton (R) vs. James Talarico (D)

Incumbent John Cornyn (R) lost to Paxton in the Republican primary runoff after losing Trump's endorsement. As of August 2026, major election forecasters rated the general election "Lean Republican" or "Toss-up". Talarico holds a strong fundraising lead, as he has raised \$68.6 million, and Paxton has raised \$9.25 million.

James Talarico has served in the Texas State House since 2018. His key policies have focused heavily on public education, capping pre-K class sizes, equipping schools with Narcan and passing legislation to cap out-of-pocket insulin prices for Type 1 diabetics. Talarico's Senate campaign is focused on reforming campaign finance and removing corporate PAC money from politics.

Ken Paxton has served as Texas's Attorney General since 2014. Known as a hardline conservative, Paxton frequently led lawsuits challenging federal policies under Democratic administrations regarding immigration, energy regulations, environmental rules and healthcare.

Michigan Senate Race

Abdul El-Sayed (D) vs. Mike Rogers (R)

Incumbent Senator Gary Peters announced in January 2025 that he would not be seeking a third term in the Senate, leaving this seat up for grabs. This seat has been polling as one of the most competitive in the entire 2026 election cycle. Most aggregate polls show El-Sayed ahead by or just under one point.

Abdul El-Sayed won the primary against Congresswoman Haley Stevens by under one percent. El-Sayed is running on a progressive platform that includes Medicare for all, lower drug prices and reproductive rights. Before running for Senate, El-Sayed was Wayne County's Health, Human, and Veterans Services Director.

Mike Rogers is a former Congressman representing Michigan's eighth congressional district from 2001 to 2015. Rogers narrowly lost the 2024

Michigan Senate race to Rep. Elissa Slotkin. Rogers has been a close ally of President Trump in a state the President won back in 2024. Rogers' main policies are tax cuts for small businesses and housing, and supports the border wall and stronger immigration enforcement.

Maine Senate Race

Susan Collins (R) vs. Troy Jackson (D)

Maine is one of the few states that has re-elected a Senator of the opposite party to the one it supported in the Presidential election. Susan Collins is in the battle of her political career as she seeks her sixth term in office. Troy Jackson has replaced Graham Platner after Platner withdrew from the race due to sexual assault accusations and other controversies. Polls have shown Jackson up by one to three points.

Susan Collins has served in the Senate since 1997 and has been labeled as one of the most effective members of the Senate. Collins is recognized as a moderate and centrist Republican who occasionally breaks with her party on issues such as abortion rights, gun control and marriage equality.

Troy Jackson served as a member of the Maine State Senate from 2016 to 2024, where he was President of the Senate. Jackson follows in much of the progressive policy that the former nominee, Graham Platner, had been a progressive and champion for working-class families, union rights, universal school meals, lower prescription drug costs and collective bargaining rights for independent loggers.

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than they've been for a while, to be able to access below market financing is a significant benefit to the College. So, we'd like to have things done faster, but they tell me we're going to see concrete in August.

Q: From the students' perspective, I think there's a growing sense that the College has been overly optimistic to a fault with its communication about how long building projects would take. With Knowing Fieldhouse, for example, which I think a lot of students thought would be done by the start of school. Do you think the College bears responsibility for those kinds of miscommunications?

"It's reasonable to ask if we bit off more than we can chew here. There's a lot going on, right? The new steps at Detchon, new turf on the soccer field and lots of work at the International House. So there's three things that happened much faster than anyone expected. I don't think anybody expected that when they left campus that they would come back and all of these would be done. I think this is the nature of the beast. Some things go better. Some of them go slower. Everyone remembers one of those sets. Nobody remembers the other. We've tried to keep people up to date because people do want to know. We have tried to be open and honest of what we expect, but the truth is the College had never done a public funding project in its history, and so the financing with USDA just took way longer than we thought. As just one example, I did not expect that last fall we were going to be impacted by the longest

Feller Interview



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN

President Feller ringing in the class of 2030 at Pioneer Chapel on August 21.

government shutdown in the history of our country.

Knowing Fieldhouse is interesting. We could have done that one faster, but I think people are going to be much much happier with the ultimate outcome. To give you two examples, it turned out that there's been a lot of advancement in floor technologies in the 25 years since that's been built, and as we came to understand it and price things out, three things happened. One is we realized we could get a much better surface there, and we could get a couple of different surfaces to support different types of activities. The other piece was that when we took up the floor, there was some damage to the concrete. There were faster ways to fix it that probably wouldn't have lasted 25 years, so we made a decision that we were going to grind down a 50-foot wide area of concrete. We could have probably done it at four feet, but contractors said if you do that, it may fall again in 10 years. So that's the difference.

Q: Another hot topic is the 132nd Monon Bell being held in Muncie. Can you talk about the decision-making process behind bringing the Bell to Ball State and to what extent Wabash folks were involved in that?

A: "The short answer is it's DePauw's year. It was their decision, and so my main contribution was that I offered more than once to host it here at Wabash. The problem there is that their stadium is not going to be done next year, so you know,

so that my offer wasn't really what they were looking for. They looked around at various spaces, and apparently it's not that easy to find a place where you can get a bunch of people together on a Saturday when there are other college football games obviously going. We knew it would be at a neutral site, and a contingent from DePauw and Wabash have already traveled to Muncie to see the spaces. It's their game; they're in the lead, and we're trying to be supportive of their efforts."

Q: AI is on the tip of every tongue right now, or at least it seems that way. What are the College's next steps with AI?

A: "There's two tracks of activities there. One is the AI task force under Professor Matt Carlson and Dean McDorman's leadership, that they continue to do their work. In terms of short-term stuff, it's making sure that various tools at the College are able to use AI tools. The bigger, more exciting project in my mind is that at the end of last school year we submitted to the Lilly Endowment two grant proposals for their AI in higher education initiative, and so we've continued over the summer to advance those applications. All seems to be on track. I had a call with the endowment in July about our larger collaborative AI project with DePauw and St. Mary's University, and so we did learn that that project was chosen to go on to the second round of funding. Now we need to send them by early October a more detailed plan.



COURTESY OF INDIANA CAPITAL CHRONICLE

Bo Bayh, Max Engling, Greg Ballard and Lauri Shillings all put their hat in the ring for the Indiana Secretary of State election.

2026 SUMMER OF CINEMA JOURNAL

NOAH MINTIE '29
FEATURES EDITOR

In the last four months, Kryptonians, boosters, bounty hunters, murderous girlfriends, liminal spaces, Greek heroes, homophobic demons, sentient toys and awkward conversations about sex have beamed onto the silver screen. It has been one of the biggest, yet most scattershot, blockbuster seasons of the 2020s, and I was there for all of it. In a time where executives and artists are united by their inability to match TikTok's viewership, there is something tru-

cere. Unfortunately, the third act puts a bullet in the script's subtlety and pushes the plot a bit too far off the deep end. Even so, I still maintain that "I Love Boosters" is an underrated banger.

As someone who followed director Kane Parson's YouTube work for years, his debut feature "Backrooms" was one of my most anticipated films of the summer. While it slightly disappointed me, it was not disappointing in the way I feared. Rather than being a rushed and hollow

concept that emotionally derailed in execution, while "Toy Story 5" still managed to squeeze some charm out of a franchise plagued by the need to justify its continued existence. This twist renewed my excitement for other big IP-based blockbusters to come, though that hope did not last.

The biggest letdown of my summer was Craig Gillespie's "Supergirl," an adaptation of Tom King's

action setpieces finally evoke the franchise's heyday—perhaps even reaching back to a lost era before Marvel's cinematic tyranny. Finally, New York City is a playground for a living, breathing Marvel world that balances comic book pulp with cinematic melodrama. While I had an absolute blast, the lack of ambition and (ex-

final products. While "The Last House" plays with more high-concept ideas, the glacial pace and thematic aimlessness pale compared to "The End of Oak Street's" slick dinosaur thrills. Not only did "The End of Oak Street" stomp out its coincidental



ly special about how prevalent these movies managed to make themselves, for better or for worse.

Back in the early days of May, one of the summer's most exciting patterns began to surface: the shocking success of indie movies. By now everyone has heard of Curry Barker's horror movie "Obsession," starring soon-to-be superstar Inde Navarrette as a woman who is brainwashed into loving a man so much that she cannot bare (hehe) the thought of being without him. The story is a typical "Monkey's Paw" venture, yet Barker's dynamic directing shows great promise. If his career continues its upward trajectory, I predict that "Obsession" will be seen as more of a proof of concept than a highlight of his work, but it is still a strong display of potential.

Unfortunately, the next two films, Aleshea Harris' debut feature "Is God Is" and Jon Favreau's brand extension "Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu" were much less exciting. The former shot for a tale of familial vengeance and landed as a meandering hero's journey. Despite great performances from Kara Young and Mallori Johnson, the unfocused plot

attempt to capitalize on its online popularity, "Backrooms" actually leverages the subject matter for the sake of thematic resonance rather than fan service. The subtext is rather blurry, but it is undeniably there. The set design also crafts several deeply unsettling scenes. This film is another case of third-act falloff, but I have seen worse, and the movie still outweighs its flaws with quality thrills and disturbing storytelling.

Though I was already sick of sloppy blockbusters, Travis Knight's "Masters of the Universe" was next on the agenda. While the film manages to squeak out a few wacky or fun moments, there was very little about this film that substantively added to the ever-growing pile of nostalgia-bait remakes from the childhoods of American millennials. Perhaps if it were less embarrassed of its own subject matter, the film's sincerity would carve out more room in our perpetually-distracted digital culture.

Thankfully, the father of the modern blockbuster had a new movie queued up to reanimate the summer. Steven Spielberg's "Disclosure Day" falls just short of his other alien movies, but still managed to stand out as one of the season's best. Rather than fixating on the mystique of extraterrestrials, the film ponders what their existence means to humanity on a personal and societal level. While this sub-

"Supergirl: Woman of Tomorrow," my personal favorite comic of all time. The film dilutes the book's sprawling, colorful space odyssey into another generic superhero movie where rubbery, gray digital effects get splattered around the screen to bedazzle a trite plot. Not a single character, shot or line from "Supergirl" will be evoked, referenced or remembered in ten years. While last summer brought viewers great hope for the growth of James Gunn's DC Universe, this kind of filmmaking nurtures the seeds of doubt.

While "Supergirl" left me feeling nothing, Olivia Wilde's awkward comedy "The Invite" had the exact opposite effect. At times it feels like more of a stage play than a film, with sharp dialogue and uncharismatic characters working at 110% to make the viewers cringe like never before. The more that the script spins its wheels, the more the messaging gradually loses touch with itself, breeding an unfulfilling ending. "The Invite" still manages at least a partial hold on some compelling ideas, and it was a fun appetizer for the visual feast that next beheld me.

Once again, Christopher Nolan has directed the cinematic event of the summer: "The Odyssey." Despite its rocky reception (at least by many academics) as an adaptation, Odysseus sailed into the hearts of moviegoers everywhere. I would argue that "The Odyssey" is not supposed to be an adaptation or translation; that is a reductive mindset that turns it into a checklist of traits. It is a cinematic

tremely) messy subtext render this movie disappointingly hollow. Much like the Little Caesar's pizza it constantly promotes, "Spider-Man: Brand New Day" is pleasant, yet professionally temporary.

Of course, this summer was not confined to the theaters themselves. As August began, Netflix hosted Louis Leterrier's "The Last House," which depicted a quiet suburb becoming ground zero for the invasion of an ancient species. Meanwhile at the theaters, David Robert Mitchell's "The End of Oak Street" depicted a quiet suburb becoming ground zero for the invasion of an ancient species. Similar concepts, but wildly different

doppelganger, it also ranked as the most delightful surprise of the summer, and one of the year's best thrillers.

As the remaining years of the 2020's fall away, so too does the air of doomerism that cluttered pandemic-era film discourse. While 2026 has had its fair share of disappointments, this blockbuster season bodes well for both the health of the industry and the integrity of the artistry. Hopefully the summer's dusk will usher in an autumn full of fantastic indie and horror projects, which could put 2026 in talks as one of the best film years of the 21st century.

ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF TMDb

and clunky script stunted the film's emotional impact. The latter was even more directionless, with a few endearing moments that were mostly lost in a galaxy of sludgy effects and narrative filler. Harris' strong directing could shine in a future film, but Favreau's sloppy work only cements Disney-era "Star Wars" as an oversaturated cultural phenomenon.

Because "Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu" felt like a soulless product, it actually enhanced Boots Riley's colorful, anti-consumeristic comedy "I Love Boosters" by comparison. With a distinctive panache and bouncy energy, this film's political punchlines were equally chaotic and sin-

version may disappoint some, I would argue that it will come to be one of "Disclosure Day's" more memorable traits. Even some of the film's more vanilla aspects, such as its action setpieces, still sit on the upper-rack of modern filmmaking.

With the indie fever sweeping the cinemas, I was excited to catch Adrian Chiarella's slithering horror film "Leviticus," and I was unexcited for Andrew Stanton's seemingly-bleary "Toy Story 5." In both cases, my initial impressions were wrong. "Leviticus" had an ambitious yet unwieldy

reimagining of a timeless story that manages to keep several details intact, while also expanding to new thematic territory. I would not call "The Odyssey" a masterpiece, but I can definitely say that it deserves its acclaim.

Only a week later, Destin Daniel Cretton swung onto the screens with Marvel's promised return-to-form "Spider-Man: Brand New Day." The studio's bravery to finally use its heavy-hitters again is refreshing, and the competent

RATINGS

OBSESSION

IS GOD IS

STAR WARS: THE

MANDALORIAN AND GROGU

I LOVE BOOSTERS

BACKROOMS

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

DISCLOSURE DAY

LEVITICUS

TOY STORY 5

SUPERCIRL

THE INVITE

THE ODYSSEY

SPIDER-MAN: BRAND NEW DAY

THE LAST HOUSE

THE END OF OAK STREET

SEASON'S VERDICT:

DO:

Your homework.

DO:

Become Outlook-literate.

DO:

Eat healthy.

DO:

Sleep.

DO:

Learn the fight song.

DO:

You're paying for an education, so put that money to use! If all you want to do is chud out, there's a school down south that'll take you!

DO:

Organized emails and conclusive calendars are essential for responsible students. The sooner you learn to toggle off the "reply all" default, the better.

DO:

You'd be surprised how quicky your unchecked "freshman 15" could skyrocket to a "freshman 45" once you discover the 1832 Brew.

DO:

Anything you do instead of sleeping would be done better if you slept first. 5 a.m. papers on a rested brain always beat 1 a.m. papers on a tired one.

DO:

If you get your W's, you'll treasure them forever. If you get a few more hours of Fortnite in, you'll remember them for less than an actual fortnight.

DON'T:

Click on spam emails.

DON'T:

Only read the High-Fives.

DON'T:

Call an Airraid.

DON'T:

Skip extended orientation.

DON'T:

...you dare click "reply all."

DON'T:

While you're at it, you may want to pray that Honor Society never gets a hold of your email address.

DON'T:

Don't be the bum who tells us "I just skip to the High-Fives every week" and then proceeds to ask about things that we answer in *The Bachelor*.

DON'T:

We figured we'd include this here given Dr. Warner's recent retirement. Spare us the extra email — just ask a Club guy. They'll likely oblige.

DON'T:

Career services will be unenthusiastic to teach you something as a junior that you were shown as a freshman.

DON'T:

This unholy button clutters the inboxes of your Wabash brothers. Please spare us the pain and yourself the embarrassment.

Wabash joins The Princeton Review's top 392

MANN VATS '30
STAFF WRITER

Wabash earned its way into prestigious territory. "The Princeton Review" named the College in its Best 392 Colleges List, and *The Bachelor* earned recognition as one of the nation's top student newspapers. The honor places both the College and its student-run publication among a select group recognized by the annual guide, which evaluates colleges based largely on student feedback and campus experiences.

Unlike rankings that focus primarily on admission statistics or institutional data, "The Princeton Review" heavily relies on student surveys to assess everything from academics and campus culture to extracurricular involvement and overall satisfaction. Wabash performed particularly well in the categories that many students consider central to the college's identity.

For Editor-In-Chief Elijah Wetzel '27, the recognition reflected the qualities that students experience every day.

"I was proud when I saw Wabash's success in the Princeton Review's rankings," said Wetzel. "We were high up in the list in lots of categories that we as a school pride ourselves on, such as accessible professors, school spirit and Greek life and it's nice to be recognized as one of the best schools in the country in those regards."

Because the rankings are largely based on student responses, they carry a different significance than lists built solely on institutional data. These lists offer insight into the experiences of current students for prospective students and families. For those already on campus, they provide affirmation that the qualities often as-

sociated with Wabash are being recognized beyond Crawfordsville.

Alongside Wabash's appearance in the Best 392 Colleges guide, *The Bachelor* was recognized as one of the nation's top 10 student newspapers. For a college whose enrollment would fit comfortably inside the lecture hall of many major universities, this means more than a ranking. It affirms the faith that faculty, administrators and students place in one another everyday. It is recognition of a community that has long believed in itself, and it further reinforces a reputation that continues to reach far beyond Crawfordsville.

"I am astounded by what our students accomplish on campus," said Dean of Students Scott Brown. "You all have an enormous amount of freedom and the responsibility to do great things with it; and you do."

Wetzel shared a similar sentiment. While he described the national recognition as a significant accomplishment, he pointed to the consistent effort of the newspaper's writers, photographers and editors as the driving force behind the honor.

"Rankings should never go to the head, though," Wetzel said. "Reinstating that recognition is most valuable when it serves as motivation rather than validation."

Rankings may come and go, but the qualities that earned them tend to stay. For Wabash, that means a campus culture built by engaged students, accessible professors and organizations willing to hold themselves to a high standard. This year, "The Princeton Review" noticed. The challenge now is making sure it won't be the last.

Nathan Aker steps up as new Residence Life Specialist

JOSEPH PARADA '27
STAFF WRITER

Wabash College has a new face overseeing residential life on Campus, though for many students, it isn't a new face at all. Nathan Aker, a fixture of the football program for the past several years, has stepped into the role of Residence Life Specialist, succeeding Michael Lynn.

This position oversees housing operations across campus, including room assignments, summer housing programs and support for Greek life, while also supervising Resident Assistants and serving as a liaison between students and Campus Services.

Aker joined the Wabash football coaching staff in March 2020, as the tight ends coach and director of football operations and high school relations. Before Wabash, he spent over a decade as a high school football coach in Indiana, including six years as head coach at South Putnam High School.

That combination of coaching experience and familiarity with the campus is exactly what stood out to Dean of Students Scott Brown during the search for a new Residence Life Specialist.

"The Residence Life Specialist Position is a key role on a campus where we expect students to live and learn," said Brown. "We were looking for someone who had the high organizational skills, problem-solving ability, and community building experience to support our students, student staff, and the residential experience for all. All those hopes were answered when we hired Aker, a very experienced educator who already has deep connections within the Wabash community".

It's not only Brown who has seen these qualities, his colleagues



COURTESY OF COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

around campus have seen them as well. Head Football Coach Jake Gilbert '98, who has worked alongside Aker for years, has watched those qualities up close.

"He loves Wabash and loves our students," said Gilbert. "Nathan is extremely organized. He is a good listener and a high character person. He is very detail oriented and follows through on what he says he will do. Nathan's relationships through football will help him get things done with our students."

Aker sees the transition the same way, not as a career change, but as a chance to widen the same kind of impact he's built with players over the years.

"At this point in my career, I have been thinking about ways to broaden my impact," said Aker. "Going from a dozen or so tight ends to our 160-man football team, I have wanted to expand that impact across campus. This position allows me to work with all students, a fan-

tastic group of RA's and our great faculty and staff."

That confidence comes from experience as Aker has already watched relationships built on the football field carry students well past graduation. Former Wabash players Derek Dean '13, Christian Zeffel '22 and Jonathan Thubodeau '20 all played for him at the high school level before enrolling at Wabash, and the connection followed them.

"The coach/player dynamic translated later to being part of my family, and I remained invested with them through their career as Wabash students, but even more so now as men in their own lives," said Aker.

It's that same investment he hopes to bring to every student he works with in his new role, whether or not they ever played for him.

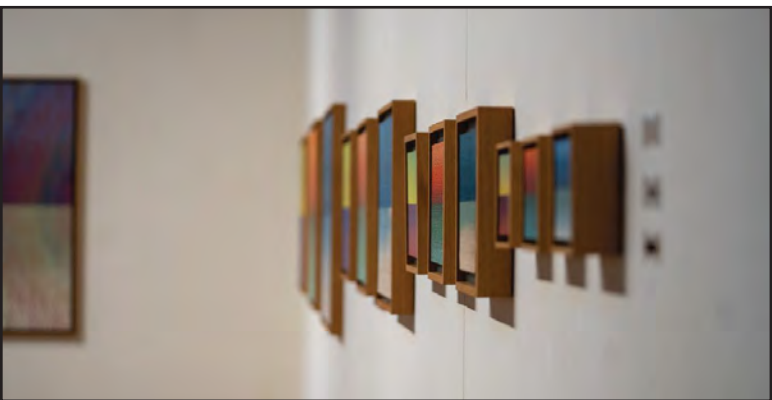
"I want students to know that I am here for them, that I genuinely care about their situation, and that I may not know the answer, but that I will find the answer and help resolve the issue," Aker said.

Aker also hopes students will take a moment to appreciate the staff who keep Wabash running behind the scenes.

"It takes many people to make Wabash go," said Aker. "I am excited to work with everyone. Wabash is a truly special place, but the best part of Wabash is the people."

It's not easy to be thrown into a position right before students were ready to move in, but Aker hit the ground running. Quick communication with residence assistance and fraternity leaders created a smooth transition that proved his capabilities in this role.

New grant rejuvenates Fine Arts Center



TOBIN SEIPLE '29
FEATURES EDITOR

From the annual campus kickoff to the yearly senior art exhibit, the Fine Arts Center has permeated the minds and piqued the interest of generations of Wabash men. While the institution supports the art, the department will broaden its campus and community impact in the coming semester. Over the summer, Lilly Endowment Incorporated awarded the Multigeneration Arts Engagement, Leadership & Culture of Place grant

PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

to the Wabash Art Department. Beyond strengthening the arts at Wabash, the support will deepen the connection with schools near and far.

"Our program was selected through a competitive statewide review process that identified projects with the greatest potential to strengthen regional communities through arts and culture," said Associate Professor of Art and Department Chair Annie Strader. For us, that means creating meaningful connections between Wabash College,

local schools and cultural institutions like the Carnegie Museum. We will be bringing professional artists into our gallery and community in ways that benefit people of all ages and strengthen the creative life of Montgomery County."

In the past five years, Indiana has built a Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) grant, with a ground-braking \$1,250,000,000, with \$64,000,000 funded through the Lilly Endowment Incorporated to support cultural arts in Indiana. The government relied on an external consultant to help determine the allocation of the funding. There were meetings in nearly every county, including one held on the Wabash campus where members of Montgomery County discussed their thoughts on arts and culture. Ultimately, the College was able to work with the community to build a model for the Artist in Residence program and was successful in their application to the grant as a result

"This grant was made possible through our collaboration with the

Montgomery County Community Foundation," Salzman said. "They recognized a need to support the arts and historical restoration in a way that invests in our cultural spaces. Their partnership will bolster local organizations who depend on community grants for critical infrastructure and spaces where we can expand our outreach together."

Beyond its contributions to the county, the aid from the grant will directly impact Wabash students. Strader will offer a new course focused on leadership in the arts that will tangibly incorporate cooperation with Montgomery County into the course. Additionally, Associate Professor of Art Matt Weedman will make changes to the Photography course this semester by partnering with local institutions. The alterations will include students working with nearby clients including the Carnegie Museum to produce photos.

"They have to go through the process of meeting with these places and as clients to see what it is that they need," said Weedman. "They will discuss what they need and how

they will get things done in groups and just go through the process of providing the service."

The Art Department will also expand the Artist in Residence program. The changes will allow students to diversify their perspectives by meeting more artists and participating in a variety of workshops.

"Building community engagement into both new and existing courses allows us to adapt and expand our offerings as new opportunities and needs emerge," said Strader. "We will be shifting our AIR program to have on average three artists visit per year for 1-3 weeks each for fully engaged residencies doing workshops and providing gallery tours and getting out into the community."

Through the Lilly Endowment Incorporated, the READI grant, will equip the Art Department to be more involved than ever in students' lives and in the metropolitan area. The elevated support will ultimately expand the offerings within art courses and entice more collaboration with the county.

'Welcome Back!'

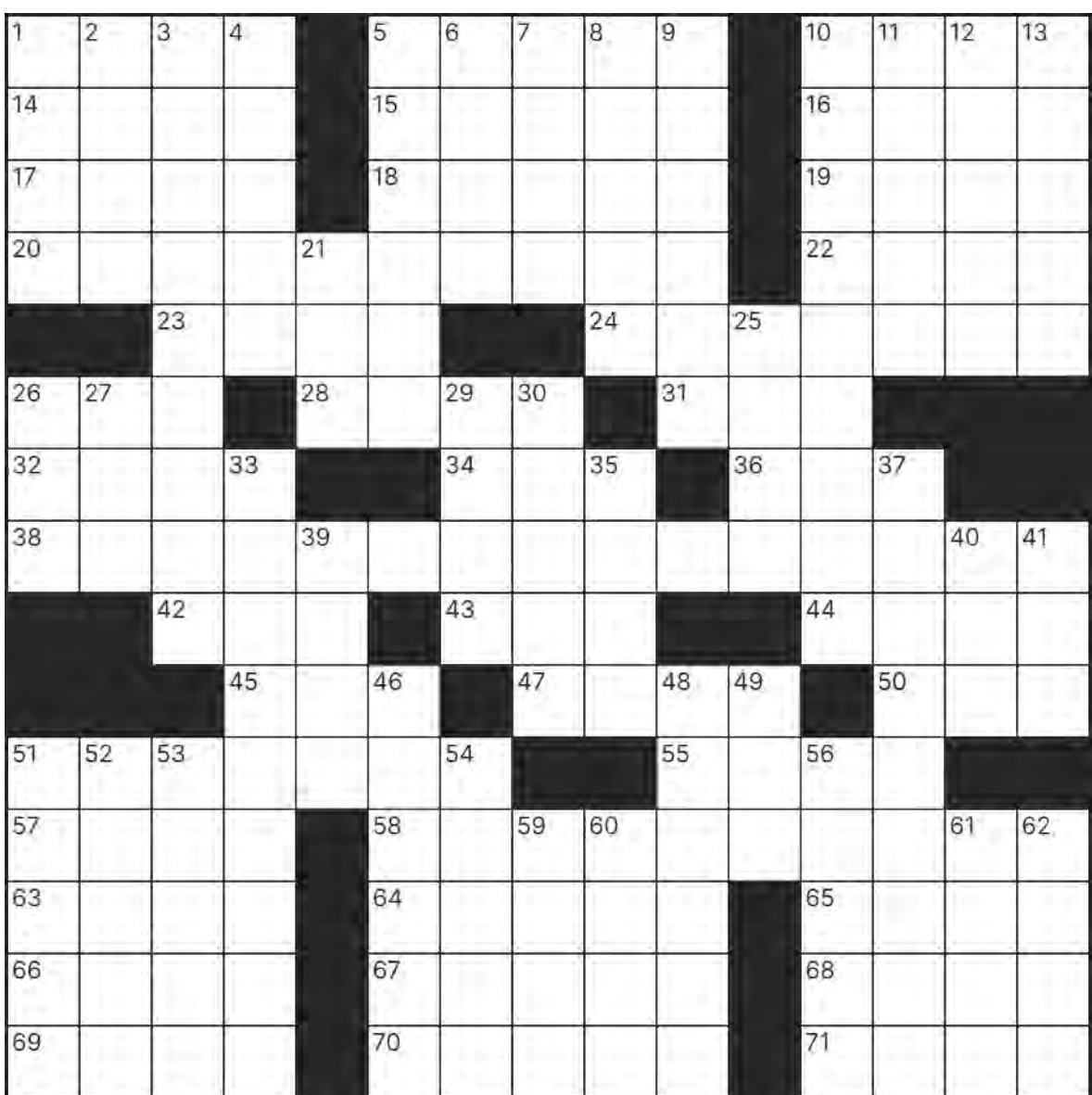
Crossword by Paul Hawksworth '28

Across

- Calming whispering audio
- A dog's "Name-O"
- Home of 'Monday Night Football'
- Muse of history in Greek mythology
- "When you ___ your résumé, but still get the job"
- A.k.a sorghum
- Body art, for short
- Furious
- Parcel of land
- Pot and stripe organization
- On-campus science hall
- ___ upon a time
- Cubism artist
- Not receiving notifications, abbr.
- ___ bigger and better things
- Agreed to when making an online account, abbr.
- Baby's first word
- Roadside assistance service
- ___ drop
- Wabash basketball student section nickname
- Female counterpart of a monk
- Bottom of a dress
- The four major performing arts awards, abbr.
- Bathroom scale meas.
- Latin for god
- Prefix in front of -body or -where
- Popular 1950s rhyming cocktail
- Arabic name meaning "light"
- "Don't walk under that! You'll fail comps!"
- Where freshmen get their "W's"
- Famous cellist Ma
- 'Forgotten War' location
- Common chowder served in Boston
- Red Sesame Street character
- booboo
- Lowest female singing range
- Chiefs head coach Andy
- "Don't tread on me" animal
- Geller brother on 'Friends'

Down

- Fifth book of the New Testament
- ___ in the face
- Wu-Tang Clan member
- Sticky substance applied to string instrument bows
- H4 submachinegun in "Call of Duty"
- memory, in text msgs.?
- Following Shaq's O'
- Arose from a seat
- "I don't like it ___!"
- "I can't stress this enough"
- Three-time NBA champion player and coach Paul
- Clever schemes
- Untrue
- Pvt., Cpl., Sgt., e.g.
- Prolonged unconsciousness
- DeLorean model in 'Back to the Future'
- Sodium hydride formula
- RPM measuring device, for short
- Wine aged in wood
- Stage of life when full maturity is obtained
- Where Wile E. Coyote gets his TNT
- Cheap flavored Cheyenne tobacco product
- Indy Fever's league
- Extremely long time
- Eye pimple
- Twisted people, in slang
- A gut feeling that something is wrong
- Musical pitch between fa and la
- Louis of MGM
- What an actor takes on
- "Did you see this?", in text msgs.
- Displayed for buyers
- Famous playwright Wilde
- Opera solo
- A "sneak" at an unreleased film
- Washington D.C. baseball team for short
- lab-altered vegetables, abbr.



Scan for answers!



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The purpose of *The Bachelor* is to serve the school audience, including but not limited to administrators, faculty and staff, parents, alumni, community members and most importantly, the students. Because this is a school paper, the content and character within will cater to the student body's interests, ideas, and issues. Further, this publication will serve as a medium and forum for student opinions and ideas.

Although an individual newspaper, the Board of Publications publishes *The Bachelor*. The *Bachelor* and BOP receive funding from the Wabash College Student Senate, which derives its funds from the Wabash College student body.

Letters (e-mails) to the editor are welcomed and encouraged. They will only be published if they include name, phone, or e-mail, and are not longer than 800 words.

The Bachelor reserves the right to edit letters for content, typographical errors, and length. All letters received become property of this publication for the purposes of reprinting and/or redistribution. Profanity may appear in the publication, but only in cases of direct quote or if profanity is necessary to the content of the story. Please do not confuse profanity with obscenity. No article or picture of an obscene nature will appear in this publication.

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The bane of the early artist



Noah Mintie '29

Features Editor

Reply to this opinion at
njmintie29@wabash.edu

After nearly four years of writing film criticism for my school papers, I have learned one unwavering truth about the artistic process: the more you learn, the more you realize that you have yet to learn. Art is a thing of infinite subjectivity and intricacy, which is why the scores of motivational videos which definitively tout the “best tips for beginner artists” mostly just leave their viewers with untouched notebooks and empty canvases. Clearing mental blockades and uniquely expressing your vision are deeply personal battles, and in my experience, only the artist themselves can coach themselves through it.

However, there are still some throughlines in the artistic experience. After all, an entity such as art can only be identified if there is some universal trait that unites it. And I would argue that art’s throughline is also its most essential ingredient, one that hitherto demoralized newcomers must embrace in order to succeed. That ingredient is authenticity.

It sounds blithingly obvious, but like all artistic concepts, authenticity becomes more intricate upon closer examination. The most damning trait of artistic authenticity is how slippery it is. Many works of art are born from sincere ideas, but the grueling process of creation gradually morphes the vision and erodes the meaning. Most mediums require the authentic contribution of several people, and all it takes for the chain to fail is one weak link. But the hardest part isn’t even maintaining that authenticity, it’s finding it in the first place.

I’ll give an example. Three years ago I began acting in community theater, specifically, their annual production of Charles Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol.” My dream role was the Ghost of Christmas yet to come: a silent spectre clothed in a pitch-black robe with only long, sinister fingers peeking out. The character

is just as thematically imposing, being an unfeeling messenger of consequence. Though I was never cast as this spectre, I would orbit around the actor that was as if they were my personal hero.

I was not just drawn to this role because it was superficially cool; something deeper was at play. I was a short, chatty, out-of-shape and chronically uncool nerd with an inability to sit still, but a knack for line delivery. The role I sought was reserved for tall, coordinated, athletic types, particularly those who struggle to memorize lines. I was aware of this discrepancy, yet I still longed for the role. That play was my first major artistic creation, and I viewed art as pure escapism.

And that is the great mistake. Consuming art is often treated as an escape, but the creation of art is not. In order to capture that slippery authenticity, the artist must be introspective, philosophically congruent and self-critical. Unless the artist taps into their own experiences and feelings, their art rings hollow and lifeless.

Now more than ever, the tools to create art are widely accessible. Everything from the writing of a novel to the coding of a videogame are only a few clicks away. However, I more often see these tools misused than properly used. New artists become upset that their technical talent is not reflected in the final products. That is because they are seduced by the idea of creating art to smooth out their insecurities. They create and embody characters that reflect an idealized reality, not their own.

Even fantastical, mainstream entertainment is more personal than you may think. J.R.R. Tolkien’s “Lord of the Rings” novels directly reflect his experience fighting in World War I. George Lucas used “Star Wars” to channel his anger about U.S. imperialism. The authenticity courtesy of the artists pushes these works beyond mere escapist fare that most audiences may take them as.

So, I would encourage anyone who has tried and failed to fulfill their artistic pursuits to interrogate their work for a moment. Think of your latest poem, painting, picture, story, sculpture and sketch. Analyze every element of that piece and ask: where does this come from? If it comes from outside rather than within, that may be what stalled you.

HI-FIVES

FIVE THINGS WORTHY OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

WE’RE DONE WITH THE 20S

Hi-Five to the newest faces on campus, the Class of 2030. Reading '30s in graduation years is making all of us feel old.

QUEEN OF COUNTRY

Hi-Five to the late-great Dolly Parton. We'll all be a bit more efficient in our 9-to-5s for you.

NO-LING FIELDHOUSE

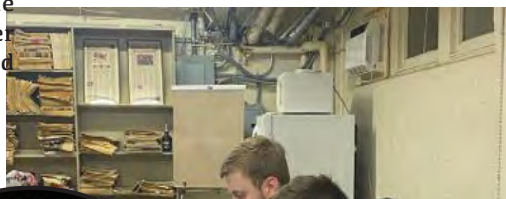
Lo-Five to yet another construction delay. Don't worry, though; we have super cool sketches of what maybe will be done at some point.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Lo-Five to Enes Kanter Freedom for getting banned from the Chicago Sky's stadium amongst WBNA controversy. Sources say he's committing to Saint Mary's College.

THE SECRET FORMULA

Lo-Five to all the freshmen at Coffee and Careers for already running The Brew out of its magical blue Lotus. You have not worked hard enough to take our prized possession from us.



Dueling Opinions

or

Fraternity freshmen: Read and reading tremble!



Kyle Foster '27

Interfraternity Council
President

Reply to this opinion at
kafoster27@wabash.edu

As you begin the journey of becoming a member of your respective fraternities, I implore you to keep your head high. You have been given a great opportunity to join one of the 10 great fraternities we have on this campus. Take pride in the fact that you have been chosen to keep these organizations alive and thriving. These fraternities existed long before we arrived and will continue to remain long after we are gone. Within these houses you will find a lot of history and traditions. Many traditions you will likely be encouraged to uphold and build upon.

Many of these traditions take place during the fall semester: Homecoming, Bell Week, Senior Bench painting and many more. Homecoming is a long-standing competition between all the houses where freshmen compete for points in fundraising, chants, banners, floats and Chapel Sing, where the house with the most points is crowned champion. As many of you have probably heard, Chapel Sing is the foundation of the week.

It is my belief Chapel Sings stands at the foundation of what a true Wabash man is. Chapel Sing is a time tested tradition that not only begins to challenge new Wabash students but gives them an opportunity to prove themselves and prove that they are able to commit themselves to something challenging and accomplish their goal. If done properly, each one of you will walk off the Mall with a W and one class will emerge as victors. For some houses, this is an expected victory, but for others it is proposed as a challenge to overcome.

The Senior Bench is known as the landmark

of the senior class on campus. For you freshmen, that means you cannot sit on it, but you can change it. Throughout the year many houses will have the opportunity to paint the bench and claim it for their house. In doing this you will have the opportunity to commemorate the seniors in your class who have spent the last several years devoting time and effort into this place you are stepping up into.

Then there is Bell week. As the semester progresses and our football team prepares for what is the most anticipated game of the year, The College will change. Not in a literal sense but in its atmosphere. More often than not, our college is filled with competition against one another and fueled by the passion to be the best people, house and organization across campus. However, when it's time for that game things change. We all now have one goal: win and do everything it takes to do so. So, what does that mean? It means supporting those on the team in any way possible, listening to seniors speak at Bell Chapel and of course taking the drive to watch the greatest team in America bring the Bell back home.

However, these events will not be the only things that define your time here at Wabash. It's not just the houses you are in but the classes, professors and random people you will meet in these four years that will shape your experience. I would encourage you to spend little to no time playing video games and isolating yourself from others. Take the two steps outside and meet some new people and have a conversation with them. Some of my best nights at this college were spent with people talking with no set agenda. I encourage you to reach out and interact with new people, talk and get to know them. Ask them about their time in college. I bet they have more wild stories about college than you would think.

So hold your head high and with pride. Be proud of the house you joined and the commitment you made to it. Be proud of the people standing next to you and push them to be better with you. All I ask is that when your time here is coming to an end make sure you can look back and say that you left Wabash better than you found it.

Brotherhood with autonomy



Ike O'Neill '27

Independent Men's
Association President

Reply to this opinion at
itoneill27@wabash.edu

Gentlemen, welcome back to campus! I could not be happier to be writing about the Independent Men's Association (IMA) in this year's vs. Interfraternity Council article (IFC)! My first draft of this piece included a much more detailed list, pointing out the flaws of each house to the incoming freshmen, but The Bachelor refused to let me publish it and threatened to label it as libel. I suspect Kyle Foster '27 is behind this. (Not really).

But on a more serious note, the decision to join a fraternity or participate in the IMA will likely be one of the most defining decisions of your Wabash experience, and as my freshman tutorial professor, Professor of Psychology Eric Olofson, always says, “you should know both sides of an argument before forming an opinion.” Joining a fraternity merely because you had a father, brother or friend before you in that house is often a rather weak reason to join; however, staying independent because you did not participate in any rush event or because you went to one house and did not like it is also an awful way to go about this decision. If you are serious about making the most out of your Wabash experience, I cannot encourage you enough to visit every townhouse, living unit and fraternity. Talk to the gentlemen you go to class with or that are on your sports teams and see the personalities and opportunities that come with each.

The opportunities that come with the IMA are often overlooked, but mirror much of the same ones provided by the fraternities. If you are looking for a formative experience, the IMA has a host of different roles that we are constantly trying to fill from more time demanding cabinet roles to smaller

commitment roles with events. If you are looking to give back to the community, the residence assistants hold philanthropic events every semester to encourage you to help others. If you are looking for an avenue that provides you with something to do, the IMA holds a plethora of different social events for you to attend.

This begs the question of what makes the two living situations different? The main benefit of the IMA is our living conditions and personal autonomy. Many of the residence halls offer incredibly nice rooms and the option to live in a solo, duo, trio, etc. The townhouses offer more space, your own yard, and the chance to share a house with your closest buddies. The caveat to this, is many members of the IMA are required to live in less desirable housing their first year before getting these options. Additionally, because there is no formation to join the IMA, you get full autonomy over your schedule. Many students find this helps them manage challenging coursework and sporting schedules as they adjust to college.

The main drawback to staying as an independent is that some find it harder to find a sense of belonging on campus. That is not to say that the independents just stay in their dorm rooms and avoid people, but it is much more of an active effort to get to know your fellow independents versus a fraternity, where knowing your brothers is essentially required. The truth of the matter is that if you know that you would not venture out to meet other people, or if you are not on a team that provides you with a group already, please join a fraternity or make an active effort to attend the IMA events; we would be ecstatic to have you. Everyone on campus would rather you feel like you belong than have the percentage of students in Greek vs. Independent sway in their favor.

I hope to see you all at the IMA events. To the incoming freshmen and all Independents that have not in the years past, come out to chapel sing. Embrace the traditions. Finally, no one comes to Wabash because it's small, they come because it's close knit. Regardless of your living unit, get involved, say hello to people on the mall and be a part of the community. God bless the Geeds.

New foes and new places as football opens up their 2026 season

NASH-OCHS WALD '29
STAFF WRITER

There's a buzz on campus as Jake Gilbert '98 takes on his second season as Head Coach of Crawfordsville's very own Wabash Little Giants football team. Following a solid 9-2 season, the Little Giants are ranked third in the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) preseason poll with 76 points. They sit behind DePauw with 93 points (4 first place votes) and John Carroll with 95 points (6 first place votes). Now Wabash gets ready to prove the projections wrong and show that last season wasn't a fluke by continuing their dominance.

Wabash brings back an electric passing game with quarterback Brand Campbell '27 returning after a 2,121 yard passing season topped off by putting up 27 total touchdowns, with 21 of those coming through the air and 6 on the ground. That's a jump from his previous season after getting the green light as the starter. The most shocking improvement for Campbell was his ability to run the ball. He ran for a total of 258 yards last season and punched in six touchdowns making him a threat at the goal line and adds another level to an already deep Wabash offense.

Luke Adams '27 also brings some major fire power following a breakout junior season where he hauled in 61 passes for 904 yards and 9 touchdowns. Adams was electric all over the field earning him

2025 All-NCAC Third Team honors last season. He didn't only make an impact receiving the ball, but he also returned 7 punts for touchdowns and even forced a fumble, making an impact whenever he was on the field.

Onto the rushing attack, Cole Dickerson '28 takes over as the lead back after running for 320 yards last season. Leading the rush is a strong offensive line including Jax Bower '27, Atticus Blank '27 and Lucas Copenhaver '28.

"We're confident in the recruiting and freshman class and how they have shown up ready and prepared with a lot of energy," said Tanner Crouch '28. "The returners also have a lot of confidence in the junior mentor class and starters from last year."

It's a well-known fact in the NCAC that when you come to Wabash, points don't come easy. Last season the defense only let up 19 touchdowns. With key defensive players like William Harris '28, who totaled 44 total tackles, three tackles for loss and two interceptions. Other defensive players like Trevor Ings '27, Ayden Salpierta '27, Carac Johnson '27 and Cole Williams '27 are the reason the Little Giants outscored their opponents 371 to 195 last season.

There's a lot to be excited about going into this season including a new opponent joining the NCAC. Washington University in St. Louis (WashU) joins NCAC (football



PHOTO BY JACK MILLER '28

Cole Dickerson '28 scans the field in a scrimmage against Taylor University on August 20th at Little Giant Stadium.

only affiliate) shortly after the arrival of John Carroll last season. WashU posted an 8-3 record in the College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin, which earned them the fourth spot in the NCAC preseason poll with 68 points.

"We are excited to see our new opponents," said Gilbert. "I like preparation so it's always a challenge to face someone you haven't seen before."

Gilbert welcomes the challenge that this season presents facing off against a variety of difficult opponents. Including the season opener where they welcome Hampdon-Sydney College to Crawfordsville for the first time since 2022. The Little Giants are also preparing themselves for two other major matchups. They will head to University Heights, IN to face off against the reigning conference champions, John Carroll. The biggest

game of the season, though, will be on November 14th. The Monon Bell Classic will be hosted in Muncie, IN at Scheumann Stadium, which is expected to be one of the biggest Bell Games ever.

"John Carroll and DePauw are always on my mind since they were our only two losses last year," said Gilbert. "We aren't preparing for them daily, but we have spent a lot of time diagnosing what went wrong last year and thinking about what we need to do this year."

Gilbert brings a mentality that emphasizes effort and attitude. Going into this season, Gilbert preaches that championship behaviors win championships and that the campus is hungry for a breakout season and they are prepared to deliver.

"We're confident in the recruiting and freshman class and how they have shown up ready and prepared with a lot of energy. The returns also have a lot of"

-Tanner Crouch '28



PHOTO BY JACK MILLER '28

James Mercer '29 makes a nice grab over the Taylor defensive back in a scrimmage against Tyalor University on August 20th at Little Giant Stadium

New turf and expectations as soccer opens their season



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Bryce Kinneman '27 jogs up the field durring stoppage in a match against Adrian College on September 10, 2025



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Wabash players celebrate as a team after a goal in a match against Franklin College on August 29, 2025



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Zane Biggerstaff '28 clears a ball away from danger in a match against Franklin College on August 29, 2025

TY MURPHY '27
STAFF WRITER

The World Cup might be over but Wabash College soccer is right around the corner, and with a new turf and a more experienced roster, they are ready to get back to action.

Last year, the team went a disappointing 6-11-1, failing to make the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) tournament. After the season, the team's mentality changed, especially as its young core gained valuable experience. That experience has helped shape a stronger team culture heading into this season.

"Our goals are definitely to build on the culture that we've been trying to establish for a while of always working hard," said team captain Alfredo Campos '27. "When you bring back a young group, with a year of experience, it can only be a better team. Our overall goal this season is to win games."

The team's improvement isn't only about its young players gaining experience. Veterans also are returning to provide leadership. Bryce Kinnaman '27 was named captain alongside Campos this season. And both of them seem to be on the same page.

"We really have a high standard for ourselves and just expecting that standard every day is something that we've seen in preseason, and we've been pretty happy with," said Kinnaman. "So going into this year, it's really just we know what the outside noise is, but what can we create, and what can we expect from ourselves, and what can we really continue to execute week in and week out."

The Little Giants' first preseason test showed signs of that development. In a scoreless scrimmage against Earlham on Friday, Aug. 21, in Richmond, Indiana, Wabash held the Quakers off the scoreboard while continuing to build chemistry.

"Every season brings its own challenges and opportunities," said Head Soccer Coach Chris Keller. "We return a lot of guys that played a big role, but they

have developed, matured and are much better leaders, players and athletes. We strengthened some weaknesses positionally and have a solid group."

Another difference this season will be the team's home field. Following renovations to Fischer Field, players have been practicing on a new turf surface. While the new turf will not be used in a game until the home opener against Bluffton University on Sept. 3, players have already noticed an improvement during practices.

"It's felt better training wise, especially on the legs," said Campos. "And also, the College got behind us on it and are supporting us which means everything. Just knowing that we still have that support is giving us that little extra like motivation that we needed."

The new field is coming at the right time, with the Little Giants set to open their season on the road against Franklin College on Sept. 1. The game will give the Little Giants their first regular season opportunity to see how their more experienced roster performs together.

"We're an older group now," said Campos. "For us it's always more excitement than jitters or nervousness. We're ready to get started and a lot of the group's excited."

The Little Giants will face eight NCAC opponents during the regular season as they look to return to the conference tournament. With twelve home games scheduled at the newly renovated Fischer Field, Wabash will have plenty of opportunities to build momentum in front of its home crowd.

For Campos, that support can make a difference.

"The times where we've had a full crowd has definitely motivated the team," said Campos. "It definitely puts a little fire under us when more guys are coming out."

With a more experienced roster, a new home field and higher expectations, the Little Giants will look to turn last season's struggles into a stronger 2026 campaign.

Wabash trio caps off season at the Division III National Championship

ABBAS HAKIM '29
STAFF WRITER

The Wabash College Track and Field team ended their outdoor season by sending three competitors to the National Championship Brock DeBello '29, Quinn Sholar '26 and Sly Williams '26 traveled to Nashville, TN for the NCAA Division III Outdoor Championships in May of 2026 and returned as three All-Americans.

"The coaches, trainers and athletes deserve a lot of credit," said Head Track and Field Coach Clyde Morgan H'11. "They work extremely hard, support each other, and have fun!"

For Williams and Sholar, the weekend marked the end of their Wabash Careers. Williams responded to a foul on his first triple-jump attempt with his best jump of the competition on his third attempt, finishing 15th. Sholar finished off his career earning All-American honors in both shot put and discus, gaining the title of a two-time All-American at the meet. Sholar finished 15th with a throw of 48.20 meters in discus. He again finished 15th in shot put with a heave of 16.36 meters. With Sholar's impressive feats in his senior year, he earned the title of 2026 NCAC Field Athlete of the Year. Morgan credits Sholar's success to his passion to get better, his leadership, and his willingness to be okay while uncomfortable. Morgan also credits Williams' All-American status to his dedication to grow as a person off the

track.

DeBello entered his freshman season with a clear goal: break the Wabash College 400-meter record. By the end of the season, the goal grew into something greater. He ended the season finishing fourth nationally in the 400-meter with a time of 46.80 seconds, meriting his first All-American honors.

"My only goal was just trying to see if we could get the school record," said DeBello. "I did not think about getting to Nashville at all."

DeBello first began to believe that competing at the national level was possible during the indoor season. Wabash competes in a strong conference in the 400-meter, and DeBello realized he could stay with some of the conference's top runners.

"I knew Brock could compete on the national level during the recruiting process," said Morgan. "He is tough and has a strong work ethic. What also makes him special is that he is willing to sit down and learn about the training. Brock asks the type of questions that show he is invested not only in the program, but in Wabash. He's a spiritual young man with a great sense of humor motivated by his family and teammates."

After the indoor season, DeBello and the Wabash coaching staff focused on qualifying him early, letting him spend the rest of the season preparing for the national meet. In the final, DeBello stuck

to his strategy built around his personal strength. Knowing that the first 200 meters was not his strong point, he was prepared for some competitors to start in front of him. Instead of panicking, he was confident.

"I trust my training and Coach Morgan," said DeBello.

Powered by his trademarked last 200 meters. DeBello finished fourth with

a time of 46.80, improving on his previous Wabash best time of 47.65. He credited Morgan, Assistant Coach Robert Johnson, and his teammates for pushing him throughout the season. DeBello hopes to use his experience to emerge as a stronger leader in his sophomore season.

"It'll be a good opportunity to help lead better on the team," said DeBello.



COURTESY OF D3PHOTOGRAPHY.COM
Brock DeBello '29 rounds the turn into the final 100 meters of the 400 meter dash preliminary heat. He qualified for the finals with a school-record-breaking 46.85 seconds

Little Giant golfers cross the pond

CARTER MCCALL '29
SPORTS EDITOR

The Wabash College golf team closed out its offseason with a trip most college golfers only dream about, traveling to St. Andrews, Scotland for an alumni-sponsored excursion to the town widely regarded as the birthplace of the game.

The trip centered on the town of St. Andrews and the links terrain surrounding it, giving the Little Giants a week unlike anything on their usual schedule. Instead of the manicured, tree-lined courses most of the team grew up playing in the Midwest, they faced firm, fast fairways, unpredictable coastal wind and pot bunkers deep enough to swallow the player whole. Players spent the week high, spinning wedge shots they rarely need back home. They were forced to hit low, punched irons to keep the ball under the wind and bump-and-run approaches instead of the high, spinning wedge shots that dominate American golf.

None of it would have been possible without Wabash alumni, who funded the trip. It was the latest example of alumni investment in the golf program, and in Wabash athletics as a whole. It gave players a firsthand look at how far the Wabash network reaches beyond campus.

"The trip was a great way to get closer to my teammates and coaches," said Jacob Eble '29. "It also gave us an opportunity to meet amazing alumni."

Beyond golf, the week doubled as a walk

through the sport's history. Playing the same turf that helped shape the rules of the modern game gave the team a different kind of appreciation for golf's roots.

The team packed a serious slate of golf into the trip. Rounds included both courses at Fairmont St. Andrews, followed by a trip down the coast to Carnoustie, one of the most demanding championship venues in the world. From there, the Little Giants played Royal Montrose Golf Links, home to the Medal Course dating back to 1562 and among the oldest golf grounds anywhere. Back in St. Andrews, the team also played the Eden Course and the Castle Course, two very different tests within the same historic town. The Eden being a classic parkland-meets-links layout, and the Castle Course as a more modern, dramatic design perched above the North Sea.

The trip's highlight, though, came down to luck as much as golf. A handful of players entered, and won, the daily ballot for a tee time on the Old Course itself, giving them the rare chance to play the same links that has hosted golf for centuries and shaped the rules of the modern game. For those players, it was the trip's capstone: walking the Old Course's fairways, crossing the Swilcan Bridge, and finishing at the 18th green in front of the R&A clubhouse.

The trip wasn't just about golf, either. Long travel days, shared tee times and evenings spent recapping rounds gave players and coaches time together away from the usual

routine of practices and matches.

"The trip was really good for the team," said Mason Pierle '28. "It brought all of us closer together and really helped to uphold our strong team culture."

Looking ahead to the fall slate, the

Little Giants return with more than good memories. Thanks to Wabash alumni, the team got to test its game on the ground where golf began. It served a fitting send-off into a season built on the same tradition and discipline that defines the program.



COURTESY OF JUSTIN KOPP '21
Wabash golfers, alumni, and benefactors pose in front of the famous Swilcan Bridge on The Old Course in St. Andrews, Scotland.

Redpack look to use depth to succeed

CARTER MCCALL '29
SPORTS EDITOR

Wabash College cross country enters the fall under fourth-year head coach Tyler McCreary with a roster built around a strong senior core and enough underclassman depth to give the program real flexibility once the varsity seven takes shape.

Four seniors anchor the group: Austin Jewell '27, Carter Norris '27, Angel Perez '27 and Evan Shupe '27. That is a sizable veteran class for a Division III program, and it gives Wabash a foundation of runners who have already been through multiple conference championship races and understand what it takes to peak when the season's biggest meets arrive. The junior class includes Nathan Hollcraft '28, Sawyer Lewis '28 and Johnathan Loney '28. This group of runners give the Redpack a bridge between that senior leadership and a sophomore group that includes Tyler Kerzee '29, Jack Loftus '29, Kaiden McGuire '29, Nash Ochs-Wald '29 and Sam Vaught '29. Several of those sophomores saw meaningful varsity mileage as freshmen last fall, and a year of additional strength and racing experience should push the middle of the roster closer to the front pack.

"This team is in a better place than last season," said Loney. "We've returned most guys and the overall team attitude is more positive."

Freshmen make up nearly a third of the roster this year, with Austin Baugh '30, Malcolm Cruz '30, Raul Delgado '30, Owen Dilley '30 and Cooper Knoblauch '30 all joining the program. That kind of incoming class gives McCreary and assistant coach Taylor Marshall options as the season progresses. They have the ability to either ease newcomers in through the non-conference slate or lean on them sooner if injuries or off-days open a spot in the varsity lineup.

"This freshman class has really shown up ready to work right away," said Ochs-Wald. "They hit the ground running and are pushing everyone to be better."

Depth will matter most once the

conference schedule tightens. Wabash competes in a league that regularly sends teams to the national meet, and results there tend to come down to which team can keep five or six runners together rather than which team has the single fastest runner. With three full class years of returners plus a large freshman class, the Little Giants have the numbers to build a competitive varsity lineup even if the early front-runners change from meet to meet.

"This team is in a better place than last season. We've returned most guys and the overall team attitude is more positive"

-Johnathan Loney '28

Non-conference meets early in the season will be the proving ground, giving McCreary's staff a look at where each runner stands before the lineup gets set for conference and regional racing. How quickly the newcomers adjust to college mileage, and whether the senior class can stay healthy through a full season, will likely decide how far this group goes.

With the opener approaching, the Little Giants have the pieces with experience up top, depth in the middle, and a large freshman class waiting in the wings to build toward a strong finish this fall.

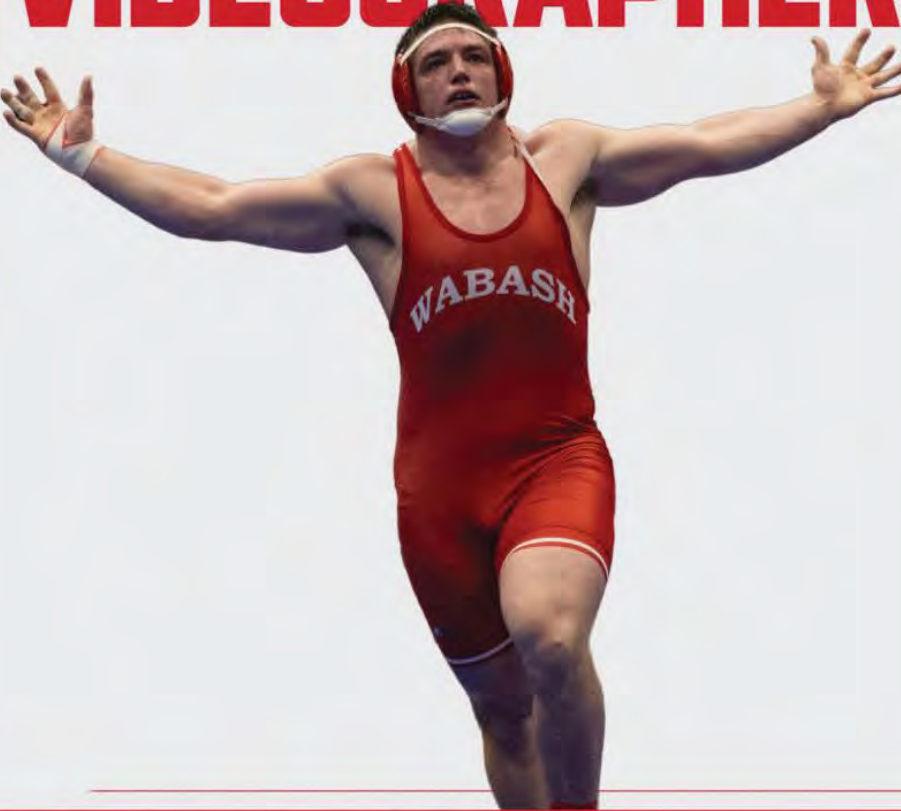


COURTESY OF COMMS AND MARKETING
Austin Baugh '30, Thomas Price '26, and Evan Schupe '27 meet up to talk after the annual Alumni Run

WABASH WRESTLING

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