The Bachelor
THE STUDENT VOICE OF WABASH COLLEGE SINCE 1908
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Tyler Wade '12 named new Dean of Admissions

HUTCH NORRIS '27
STAFF WRITER

On Monday, October 12, President of the College, Scott Feller, notified the campus that Tyler Wade '12 accepted the role of Dean for Enrollment Management. The offer was extended by the college following an arduous, nation-wide search involving The Bryant Group, a national recruitment firm.

"It is interesting to say we had a five month process to find the guy that was across the street," said Feller. "I think it would be natural for readers to think that was a little strange or that's a little inefficient, but we went into it very open about wanting to hear from a lot of people their vision for the Wabash College enrollment office. We talked to great people who gave us great ideas, but at the end of the day, I think we saw that Tyler really has a good handle on the strategies that should guide our efforts, and he's had a lot of experience here at the more tactical level of implementing those strategies."

Wade spent just over 12 years working in the Office of Admission. In his time he has served in almost every role in the office, and spearheaded recent efforts to expand recruiting across southern Texas. In this time, Wade has developed a plethora of relationships among the Wabash community, which could not be denied in his consideration for the role.

"Tyler has a deep set of relationships all around campus and all around the Wabash Nation," said Feller. "He is very committed to relationship building. He was an elected city council person in Greencastle, Indiana. To be an elected official in a small town requires a certain gift for forming relationships."

In this new role, Wade will take an overarching role in the management of enrollment strategies. His ascension comes at a crucial time in college admissions.

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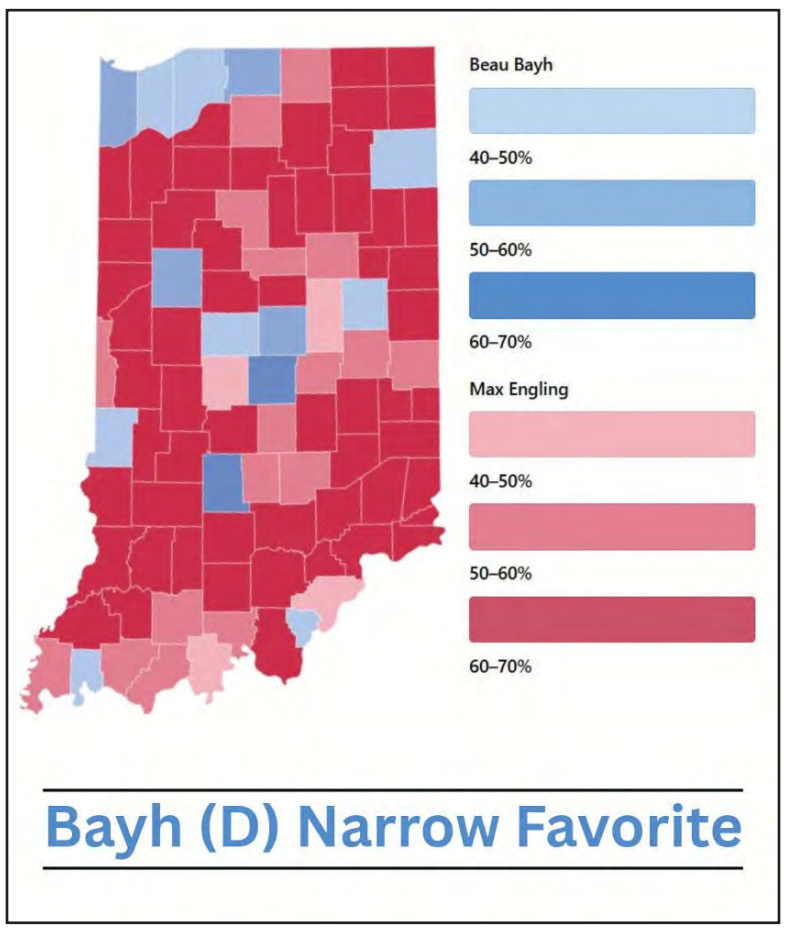
INDIANA MIDTERM BATTLEGROUND



GRAPHIC BY CONNOR PHILLIPS '28

Early polling has shown the Democratic candidate for Indiana's secretary of state race, Beau Bayh, as the narrow favorite.

CONNOR PHILLIPS '28
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Despite being a ruby-red state, Indiana has several close races to watch on November 3rd from state-wide to local house districts here are the key races to watch election night.

Secretary of State's Race:

The secretary of state is the third-highest ranking office in Indiana. The office oversees the state's elections, maintains state records, charters new businesses and more. The term is four years. Independent Greg Ballard, Democrat Beau Bayh, Republican Max Engling and Libertarian Lauri Shillings make up the crowded race for the seat.

Diego Morales, who is the current Secretary of State, lost his re-nomination bid back in June due to his term being marred by controversy. He hired his brother-in-law at a salary of $108,000. The office gave numerous no-bid contracts to companies that donated to his campaign. Morales purchased a GMC Yukon Denali for $90,000 with taxpayer funds from a dealership that donated $65,000 to Morales's campaign.

These scandals have led Democrat nominee Beau Bayh to run on the promise to call for an independent audit of the Secretary of State's office on day one. Bayh has said that his first priority is to clean up the corruption in the Secretary of State's office and has made it a focal point of his campaign.

Beau Bayh is a newcomer running for elected office but certainly not in the political realm. 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.

Some other of Bayh's policies include supporting Indiana's current voter ID laws on the basis that they are common sense and says he wants to prosecute any cases of voter fraud. Bayh has called for referendums that would allow Hoosier voters to weigh in on issues important to them, including redistricting. Bayh has also called for an end to wasteful spending and to cut the red tape and make it easier to open a business in the state. Along with highlighting his non-partisan stance as a candidate.

Max Engling is the Republican nominee for Secretary of State who has previously served as the Central Indiana regional director and adviser to U.S. Sen. Jim Banks. Before that, Engling was a staffer in Washington, D.C.

Max Engling's top policy is to ensure only U.S. citizens vote in Indiana elections — protecting voter confidence and the integrity of the voter rolls. Engling has also advocated for closing off the primaries. This means every Hoosier who wishes to vote in the primary will have to register with a political party.

Some of Engling's other top policies include stopping business fraud, creating a Transparency Portal that gives citizens a direct channel to report potential election issues and cutting red tape for small businesses.

Two other major third-party candidates are also on the ballot this year. Greg Ballard, who is running under the Lincoln Party, is one. Ballard served as mayor of Indianapolis from 2008 through 2016 as a Republican.

Some of Ballard's notable policies include creating an Indiana Voters Guide, creating a more uniform way that counties operate elections and adding a Nonpartisan Recount Commission of Retired Judges.

Lauri Shillings is the Libertarian Party nominee. Shillings' career experience includes working as a graphic designer, business owner, adjunct professor and director. Shillings' top three priorities are: "Protecting the Integrity and Privacy of Indiana Elections, Serving Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs, and Educating and Empowering Indiana Voters."

Turning to the campaign, this race has been anything but normal. Campaign finance reports filed last Thursday, October 16, by the Secretary of State candidates show that Bayh spent $3.9 million during the July-September period, compared to Engling's $1.6 million spent.

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Welch Packaging session highlights career opportunites

PHILLIP BARRE '30
STAFF WRITER

Welch Packaging's Early Career Professionals Program offers recent college graduates a chance to learn the business world from the ground up, giving them experience in different departments before settling into a specific professional role. The company's information session at Wabash introduces students to this approach to professional development and explains how graduates can build practical experience while discovering the different responsibilities that keep a business running.

One of the main ideas behind the program is that understanding a company takes more than knowing how to do one job. Participants begin on the production floor, learning how Welch Packaging's products are made and gaining a better understanding of the work that happens before a product reaches a customer. This starting point allows graduates to see the process behind the finished product and recognize the work that goes into producing it.

From there, participants rotate through departments such as sales, supervision, customer service, human resources and design. Each department offers a different perspective on how a business operates, from communicating with customers to supporting employees and developing product designs. These experiences help participants understand that successful businesses depend on many different responsibilities working together.

This approach allows participants to see how different parts of a business connect. Someone working in sales, for example, benefits from understanding the production process, while employees in other departments can gain a broader perspective on the company's daily operations. By experiencing these different roles, graduates have the opportunity to become more adaptable, develop new skills and understand how their work can contribute to the company's overall success.

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'Christmas came early'

Colts fire Chris Ballard from General Manager role

COURTESY OF YAHOO SPORTS

Former Colts GM Chris Ballard watches training camp alongside owner Carlie Irsay-Gordon.

WILL DUNCAN '27
PHOTO EDITOR

In a move that was years too late, if you ask many Indianapolis Colts fans, General Manager Chris Ballard was fired on Monday, October 19, a day after the Colts fell to the Tennessee Titans in one of the most humiliating losses in the team's recent history.

"It feels like Christmas morning, but better," said Carson Cole '29 when asked about Ballard's firing.

In his almost decade-long tenure, Ballard's record ended as 72–82–1, finishing with zero division titles and a postseason record of 1–2. Sunday's loss to the Titans puts the Colts' record at 2–4, without ownership of their first round pick, which the organization traded to the New York Jets for cornerback Sauce Gardner. One of many extremely questionable moves that Ballard made.

"This is the start of a long road ahead of becoming a real, competitive football team again," said Kaleb Faber '27.

As Faber mentioned, that "start" begins at the quarterback (QB) position. During Ballard's tenure, the Colts had 14 different players start a game at QB. The lack of security at QB may also be the fault of Ballard. In 2012, the Colts used the first overall pick on Andrew Luck, who ended up being one of the best players the Colts ever had. However, after 7 years of practically no front office help in developing an offensive line to protect the star, Luck suddenly retired at the age of 29, arguably in the middle of his prime. Since then, it's been a battle to be mediocre. Year after year, the Colts attempted to save their money, go and find a mid-level veteran QB and strive to be, at best, decent. Finally, after four years of delaying the inevitable, Ballard used the 4th overall pick in the 2023 draft on Florida QB Anthony Richardson. It was a selection that was supposed to revitalize a Colts offense in desperate need of a leader, but injuries and inconsistent development now have left Richardson on the back burner of the Colts' plans. Fitting for an organization that feels like it will be stuck at .500 no matter what choices are made.

"We drafted an inexperienced developmental 20-year-old quarterback fourth overall, who was one of, if not the most, athletic and naturally talented quarterback and football player prospects we have ever seen, and handled him as a project in the worst way possible," said Faber.

Now that the Ballard chapter has ended in Indianapolis, fans are looking to the future to continue the story.

"Ditching Ballard is the first step in the right direction," said Silas Mills '27. "We have been subjected to shameful general management for a decade… a mid-season firing shows that we want to win now."

With no first-round pick, the Colts are stuck at a crossroads for where to go next. Do you continue with a struggling Daniel Jones, whom Ballard gave a 2-year, $88 million deal to in the offseason, or do you fall back to your top-5 draft pick who now enters his fourth season having only started 15 total games? Either way, it is a big risk, and one that has everyone speculating.

Beyond the QB, Indy's lackluster defense is a major issue as well. The Colts currently have the 25th-ranked defense in the league, and allow 351.2 yards per game, according to ESPN. However, in one of Ballard's few success stories, the team has multiple promising young defensive pieces, including Justin Walley, CJ Allen, Laiatu Latu, AJ Haulcy and Bryce Boettcher. Yet, just because the pieces are promising doesn't mean they'll ultimately pan out.

"Ballard has had an off-and-on defense and inconsistent starters that didn't permit growth," said Ashten Oldham '30.

Then comes one of the most uncomfortable questions Colts fans have to ask themselves: Does rebuilding include trading star players? Quenton Nelson, Deforest Buckner, Jonathan Taylor and Grover Stewart make over $80 million-a-year combined. Expensive stars in the peaks of their careers that are stuck on a rebuilding team scream trade candidates, another hurdle this organization has to manage.

"In a perfect world, [the Colts stars] would retire as Colts while experiencing success in Indy, but that outlook is likely delusional," said Faber.

To put it plainly, whoever takes over the front office will inherit a franchise trapped in no draft capital, high salary commitments and a quarterback decision that is in dire straits. Even though Colts fans don't want to hear it, it's the truth: Ballard's firing begins a long, ugly road back to redemption. One that won't happen overnight, and probably won't happen for multiple seasons.

Whether the organization rallies around Richardson's raw potential, trusts Daniel Jones can put the Colts back where they were before his Achilles injury or very possibly burns it all down to start anew, one thing remains clear: Indy has taken its first real step towards accountability.

COURTESY OF FOX SPORTS

Chris Ballard has been fired as the Colts' General Manager after nine years with the franchise.

Wade '12 named new Dean of Admissions

PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Tyler Wade '12 speaking at annual Ringing In Ceremony on August 22, 2026 in Pioneer Chapel.

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We are approaching a demographic cliff, where there will be less high-achieving young men graduating high school. While the college will be able to increase its applicant pool to a certain extent, the proportion of students that attend out of the total applicant pool must increase.

"Are there big challenges that we face?" said Wade. "Yes, but I wouldn't want to be doing it anywhere else, with anybody else. The only way that Wabash can differentiate itself, especially when our target demographic is the most sought-after demographic in the country, has to be the people that we have. We need to get everyone on board with the idea that enrollment is everybody's business."

Welch Packaging session

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The program also highlights the value of learning through experience. While college courses provide students with important knowledge, entering the workforce brings new responsibilities and challenges that cannot always be fully understood in a classroom. Rotating through different departments gives participants the opportunity to apply what they know, learn from their experiences and become familiar with different professional environments.

For recent graduates who are still deciding which career direction to pursue, this kind of experience can be especially valuable. Exposure to several areas of business allows participants to discover their strengths, explore their interests and better understand the opportunities available to them. It also emphasizes the importance of being open to learning new things rather than limiting themselves to what they already know.

For Wabash students, the information session provides a useful example of how employers approach training and professional development. It demonstrates that starting a career does not always mean immediately choosing one narrow specialty. Sometimes, gaining experience in several areas can provide a clearer picture of how an organization works and where an individual can contribute most effectively.

Ultimately, Welch Packaging's Early Career Professionals Program emphasizes the importance of being willing to learn, take on different responsibilities and understand the bigger picture. Its approach gives graduates an opportunity to develop beyond a single position and build a foundation for their future careers.

News around the world

Civil unrest in France grows with arrest of protesters, tensions in Northern Irland rise as supporters of reunification protest Orange Order

HUTCH NORRIS '27
STAFF WRITER

Garvaghy Road

Sectarian tempers have risen in Northern Ireland following the Orange Order's attempt to march through a Catholic enclave in the town of Portadown in County Armagh. The Orange order is a protestant fraternity founded in the aforementioned county to ensure the existence of Protestantism in Ireland.

The conflict over this very march dates back to the 1970s when sectarian violence continued to escalate across the island. The Orange Order and similar protestant fraternities marched down Garvaghy Road last in the late 1990's, when a 1998 ban required the involvement of over 1,000 British soldiers to fend off over 10,000 protestant loyalists and resulted in swaths of violence. This violence took the lives of the Quinn brothers, Jason(8), Mark(9) and Richard(10), whose house was petrol-bombed, and a protestant police officer, Frank O'Reilly, whose riot shield shattered from a pipebomb.

Tensions eased significantly in the past quarter century as broad support for the Portadown lodges' efforts to reroute marches dwindled. However, recent tensions flared in response to a pro-Palestinian march by Irish Republicans in the area. This caused Orange lodges in the area to file to march down Garvaghy road in October for a historical celebration.

The conflict erupted into thousands of protestors gathering in the small town on October 3, 2026. Support for reunification efforts has reached its broadest support in the 21st century among Irish citizens. This fueled broad political support against the Orange Order's efforts to march through the enclave. The march has been ultimately banned by the Secretary of Northern Ireland Chris Bryant, who recognized that the march would require major security commitments

France

France, no stranger to civil unrest and protests, experienced some of its worst civil disruption in years in recent weeks as protests turned to riots across the country. Over 2,000 people were arrested this past weekend for a variety of crimes, including looting, vandalism and property damage of all sorts. French President Emmanuel Macron condemned the anarchy, which has largely overshadowed the impetus behind the initial protests, namely, poor conditions in schools and the rising price of living. The government has declared it will take an "uncompromising" approach to the rioters, and Macron vowed to do whatever was necessary to protect property and businesses from the riots. In some cities curfews have been put in place. Police have garnered criticism, however, for their use of force in response to the demonstrations. At least six minors have been maimed by police forces, a fact that many protesters have seized upon and used as motivation. Authorities are apparently responding as best they can, but it's likely that the protests — and quite possibly riots — will continue in the coming days.

COURTESY OF NURSE PRACTITIONER CHRIS AMIDON

Indiana Election predictions

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Bayh has faced scrutiny for his fundraising since much of it comes from out of state. He has gained more than $1 million from out-of-state donors, with some of the biggest contributors having longtime ties to his father, former U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh.

As the campaign continues, it has become personal. Beau Bayh released a commercial featuring a uniformed sheriff's deputy alleging that Republican Max Engling "has been convicted and investigated at least eight times for reckless driving and reckless behavior." Engling has since called the ad defamation and threatened to sue Bayh unless the commercial is pulled.

Bayh registered in Indiana in 2014 and voted in 15 elections, primarily through absentee ballots while attending Harvard and serving in the Marine Corps. Engling has attacked Bayh for living out of the state for so long and still voting in elections.

As the election draws closer it starts to become evident just how close this race will be. An October 16 poll found Bayh at 43%, Engling at 35%, Shillings at 6% and Ballard at 5%, with 11% undecided. Another poll back at the start of the month found Engling with 38% support to Bayh's 37%. Shillings had 6% support and Ballard 5%, with 14% undecided.

The Secretary of State's race will be perhaps the most closely watched race in Indiana on election night. Considering the political environment and considering the scandals of the incumbent Secretary of State, this seems to be Beau Bayh's race to lose. Bayh has nearly double the amount of money that Engling has, and it shows in TV ad buys and outreach. Bayh has continued to poll well throughout the state and has presented himself as the solution to the problems that the Secretary of State's office faces.

Final Rating: Bayh Narrow Favorite

Indiana State Senate

SD-1 Scott Houldieson (D) vs. Trevor De Vries (R)

Democrat Scott Houldieson, a Ford electrician and UAW leader, is campaigning on higher wages, utility affordability and workers' rights. Republican Trevor De Vries, an insurance broker who defeated incumbent Dan Dernulc in the primary with Trump's endorsement, emphasizes tax cuts and lower household costs. Both campaigns are competing for working-class voters in Northwest Indiana.

Final Rating: Lean Democrat

SD-22 Natasha Baker (D) vs. Ron Alting (R)

Democrat Natasha Baker, a public school teacher, is campaigning against data-center tax incentives while advocating stronger public school funding, childcare access, and property tax reform. Longtime Republican Sen. Ron Alting announced on October 21 that he would be resigning from the State Senate after shoplifting allegations. If re-elected the new Senator would be chosen by the Republican Party's vacancy process.

Final Rating: Toss Up

SD-29 Kristina Moorhead (D) vs. John Ruckelshaus (R)

Democrat Kristina Moorhead faces former Republican Sen. John Ruckelshaus for the open seat vacated by J.D. Ford, who is running for Congress. Moorhead is seeking to maintain Democratic representation in the Indianapolis-area district, while Ruckelshaus is attempting a legislative comeback. The campaign contrasts a new Democratic candidate with a Republican who has previous Statehouse experience.

Final Rating: Lean Democrat

SD-31 Kerry Forestal (D) vs. Juanita Albright (R)

Democrat Kerry Forestal, the Marion County sheriff and former U.S. marshal, emphasizes public education, teacher compensation and his law enforcement experience. Republican Juanita Albright, a physician and Hamilton Southeastern school board member, focuses on affordability, healthcare, education and public safety. Both candidates are campaigning on their professional backgrounds and experience managing public responsibilities.

Final Rating: Lean Democrat

Indiana State House

HD-4 Ryan Kominakis (D) vs. Ed Soliday (R) vs. Travis Gearhart (L)

Democrat Ryan Kominakis, a steelworker and Marine veteran, is challenging Republican Ed Soliday over rising utility bills and tax incentives for data centers. Soliday, the House Utilities Committee chairman, defends his work on electric grid reliability and energy policy. Libertarian Travis Gearhart campaigns on government reform, workers' rights and lower taxes.

Final Rating: Tilt Republican

HD-10 Chuck Moseley (D) vs. Ted Uzelac (R)

Democratic incumbent Chuck Moseley, a longtime legislator and National Guard veteran, faces Republican Ted Uzelac, Portage's assistant police chief and an Iraq War veteran. Moseley emphasizes workers' rights, veterans and public employee benefits. Uzelac campaigns on public safety, economic development and affordability.

Final Rating: Lean Democrat

HD-24 Racheal Bleicher (D) vs. Hunter Smith (R)

Democrat Racheal Bleicher, a nonprofit leader, challenges Republican incumbent Hunter Smith, a former Indianapolis Colts player. Bleicher emphasizes public school funding, property tax reform and community oversight of data centers. Smith campaigns on parental rights, school choice, public safety and conservative social policies while seeking his second legislative term.

Final Rating: Lean Republican

HD-25 Tiffany Stoner (D) vs. Becky Cash (R)

Democrat Tiffany Stoner is challenging Republican incumbent Becky Cash in a rematch of Indiana's closest 2024 House election, which Cash won by just 64 votes. Stoner has made data-center tax incentives and affordability central campaign issues. Cash disputes accusations about her legislative record and emphasizes her opposition to several measures criticized in Democratic advertisements.

Final Rating: Lean Democrat

HD-39 Lindsay Gramlich (D) vs. Danny Lopez (R)

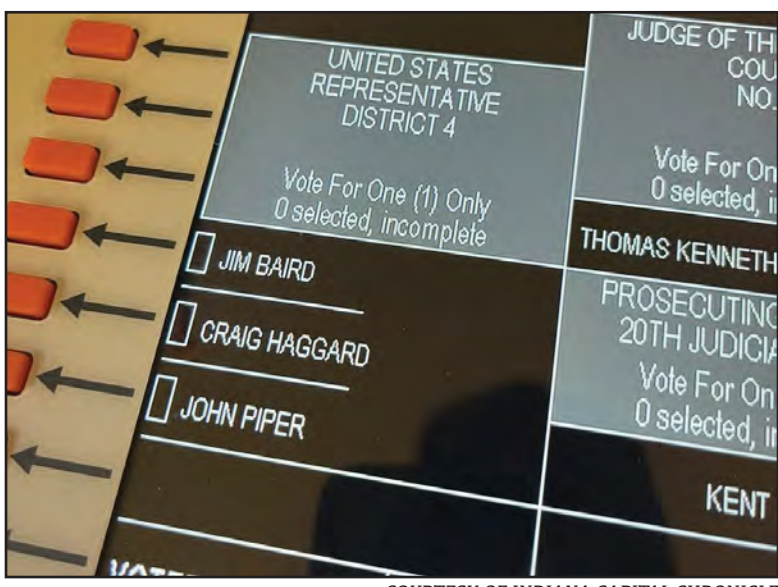
Democrat Lindsay Gramlich, CEO of Girls Inc. of Greater Indianapolis, challenges Republican incumbent Danny Lopez. Gramlich campaigns on public education, affordability and opposing data-center subsidies. Lopez emphasizes school choice, early literacy, economic development, and maintaining low taxes. Lopez won his first legislative term in 2024.

Final Rating: Lean Democrat

HD-62 Amy Huffman Oliver (D) vs. Dave Hall (R)

Democrat Amy Huffman Oliver, a Brown County school board member, challenges Republican incumbent Dave Hall. Oliver prioritizes public school funding, rural healthcare, and affordability. Hall emphasizes infrastructure, combating drug abuse and limiting government overreach. Hall narrowly won his previous two elections.

Final Rating: Lean Democrat



COURTESY OF INDIANA CAPITAL CHRONICLE

Ballot from the May primaries featuring Jim Baird, who is up for reelection in the 4th US Congresstional District.

FEATURES

What is... an alumnus on 'Jeopardy!'

PHOTO COURTESY OF 'JEOPARDY!'

Donovan Bisbee '12 stands at the ready on* 'Jeopardy!' *during the September 21, 2026 airing.

HUTCH NORRIS '27
STAFF WRITER

The notorious six by five blue board stares down waves of contestants day after day when 'Jeopardy!' is recording their seasons. Each shoot day consists of one week's worth of televised content. For some contestants, their experience can be quite short.

"You show up early, you go through a briefing, you sign some papers," said Donovan Bisbee '12, a challenger for the sixth episode of season 43. "You get to do a practice round to try to get used to the buzzer. Then, some people who did that, played in the first game, and then 45 minutes later left and went to the airport."

Bisbee was grateful to experience multiple days of filming, as he served as the standby alternate because he was an out of state contestant. Unfortunately, Bisbee's 45 minutes in front of the camera similarly came and went like so many contestants before him. However this did not come without some great success.

Bisbee was well on his way to a near wire-to-wire victory leading up to Final Jeopardy. He pulled ahead with an 11th clue and never looked back. Bisbee amassed a lead as large as $8,600, but lost the game in Final Jeopardy. Bisbee was able to find some big success on the board because of some direct ties back to his time at Wabash.

"Props to the late, great Tom Campbell, an absolutely incredible former professor," said Bisbee. "I took four classes from him. That's how I knew Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, which was $2,000. Precogs, which was a Daily Double, that I was like, no way, no way would have known that. But I took a sci-fi lit class with Tom Campbell, and that spawned a love for Phillip K. Dick."

In addition to his success on the board, Bisbee drew comparisons between his experience in filming and his time at Wabash. Bisbee is a brother of Kappa Sigma, as well as being a member of Glee Club and being involved in theater productions. Like the brevity of his recording experience, Bisbee's time at Wabash benefitted from this flash-in-the-pan experience.

"It's so much like Wabash in these little fishbowl intensity experiences," said Bisbee. "It was only a day, but because of the intensity of the time spent together the relationships that get formed are so intense. Additionally you're all there for a reason. You're all the same kind of weird, in the same way that no one ends up at Wabash by accident, unless you're me."

Bisbee, who hails from Ridgefield, Washington, heard about Wabash because his sister read some of the college's information in the book Colleges That Change Lives. Since she was the oldest sibling, both Bisbee sons were inundated with college mailers from an early age. Ridgefield High School produced 3 Wabash men, as the brothers got a friend to tag along.

"As an avid 'Jeopardy!' fan, it was cool to see a Wabash alumnus participate in one of my favorite shows," said Paul Hawksworth '28. "Over the years, the show has only increased in difficulty, and, despite the end result, Bisbee's performance was a great representation of the quality of Wabash men."

Bisbee went on to obtain his M. A. and Ph. D. in Communication from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He now serves as a Lecturer and Director of Oral Communication Courses in the Department of Communication Studies at Baruch College, City University of New York.

'Digger' needs to dig deeper

NOAH MINTIE '29
FEATURES EDITOR

COURTESY OF TMDB

What even is Alejandro G. Iñárritu's "Digger?" You won't find an answer from the film's marketing, as each trailer is unusually vague. You also won't find an answer from the critics, who are wildly divided between fervent supporters and avid faultfinders. You also won't find an answer from the first twenty minutes of the film, which is intentionally misleading. Thankfully, I have an answer: "Digger" is an artificially complex yet fairly entertaining satire about more than you'd expect, but less than you'd want.

"Digger" follows Digger Rockwell (an unprecedented, phenomenal performance by Tom Cruise), an aging billionaire whose flippant Greenland oil drilling directly begets a global climate catastrophe. In the dwindling time before millions of deaths, it's up to Rockwell, his company's Head of Environmental Safety Ganesh (Riz Ahmed) and U.S. President Compson (John Goodman) to stumble their way into some sort of solution.

A key ingredient to any political satire is a strong performance. "Digger" has these in spades, to the point where some actors feel wasted. The renowned Sandra Hüller and Jesse Plemons also have roles in the film, though their characters have such a limited role that their performances feel tightly constrained. Nevertheless, Cruise, Ahmed and Goodman still do very well, projecting as much depth as they can on their trite lines.

"Digger" is a collection of formulaic stories hiding behind a very sophisticated presentation. Though it is difficult to address without spoiling the film's big twist, I can at least say that "Digger" is not just a satire about climate change. It's also a meta-commentary about the relationship between artistic expression and political issues. Unfortunately, neither narrative is particularly compelling. The film's choice to pursue breadth sacrifices its depth, and most of the movie's messaging takes the form of impudent monologuing.

When the subtext is so clearly laid out, the audience isn't rewarded for investing additional thought into the film. There's nothing to stick with the viewer after the credits have rolled besides the film's obvious, open-and-shut application to real-world issues. "Digger's" choice to confine its impact to its own runtime simultaneously makes for a more accessible and more meaningless film.

It's a shame that the film boasts ace actors and spellbinding set design, only for a hollow narrative to cheapen the whole. However, I'd still label "Digger" a worthwhile experience. Even if its lack of depth stunts its significance in the wider media landscape, there's still something to be said for a film that entertains without inspiring. It's not enough, but it is something.

While my response to this "Digger" was comparatively muted, I can at least appreciate how exciting it is that such a large online following has taken to such a bizarre, unique film. A political one, nonetheless. It's exciting to see such a film be embraced; I just wish it could be deep enough to cultivate a cinematic legacy, and not just a provisional fanbase.

FINAL VERDICT: 3/5 WALLYS

Impact and opportunity: a history of immersion courses

TOBIN SEIPLE '29
FEATURES EDITOR

World travel is essential, yet it is inaccessible for too many. According to the Pew Research Center, roughly 27% of American adults have never left the country. Many who have left the country may travel the world for work or personal pleasure, and not necessarily to expand their world view. At Wabash, immersion courses provide the perfect chance for students to expand their horizons by studying the world authentically. These courses feature trips that are a medium between the liberal arts education and international travel; the goal of these expeditions is to encourage students to embrace a higher quality of learning. Immersion courses focus on tangible learning rather than enjoyable tourism; even students that are well-traveled benefit from the trips as they can connect their knowledge to the real world.

"One of the joys that I have in leading these is that there's less of a distinction between when you're in class and when you're not in class," said Professor of Classics Jeremy Hartnett '96. "You learn stuff when you are sitting down at a restaurant for example...The things that we see on the trip are constantly touch points for the rest of the semester.

The concept of international travel for the purpose of education has existed at Wabash for decades; however, immersion courses were formally created in 2000 as a part of the College's strategic plan through the Center for Academic Enrichment. One of the earliest trips, co-led by Professor of Biology and Global Health Initiative Director Eric Wetzel, was held near Jamaica's Hofstra University Marine Laboratory in 2001 and allowed students to complete field research in ecology by studying octopi. The trip to Jamaica is just one of the many unique and exciting trips that professors have hosted through immersion courses.

"Students have the opportunity to travel with faculty experts, who help them navigate a new environment and interpret what they are experiencing," said Associate Professor of Spanish Jane Hardy. "You can learn from books and in a classroom setting, but the learning is much more profound and lasting when you can experience what you're studying first-hand. Imagine, for example, the difference between reading about coffee production or watching a film about it vs. going to a coffee plantation in Costa Rica, seeing the landscape, walking between the rows of coffee plants and picking coffee fruit yourself... Best of all, Wabash covers nearly all of the cost, making immersion courses accessible to everyone."

In the early 2000s, the courses grew in popularity, and were funded mainly through the College's campaign, where a major grant that supported the courses was secured by then Dean of the College Mauri Ditzler '75. The courses have always come at no cost to students (outside of personal meals and travel documents), but in 2007, a donation from the Eli Lilly Endowment Inc. matched $2.5 million to the $2 million the college received from donors. Then-President of the College Pat White announced that the funding would allow the college to set up a $2 million endowment to fund classroom programs including immersion trips. More recently, in 2018, Board of Trustees Member John C. Schroeder '69 and Diane Schroeder H'99, generously gave to the College to ensure that every Wabash student has access to fully-funded immersion courses.

"The impact of these trips is tremendous," said Hardy. "The learning is deeper and longer-lasting when you can immerse yourself in what you're studying and experience it first-hand. Beyond that, students gain confidence by traveling and learning to navigate a new environment, while still having the support of an experienced faculty member... Planning, teaching and leading an immersion course is a tremendous amount of work for a faculty member, and we usually sacrifice a break in order to do it, but many of us are dedicated to offering such courses because we see the tremendous impact the experiences have on our students."

While learning in a classroom at Wabash is tremendously valuable, there are simply incomparable advantages that come from traveling. Students can further understand why they are learning specific subjects, and can feel a stronger connection to course material.

"When we are walking through the streets of Pompeii or climbing a volcano, which is one of the things that we do, it is really palpable that the Romans and the Greeks were real people who lived radically different lives from ours," said Hartnett. "I showed in my Latin class today a picture of the first immersion course that I led, which was in 2007. There were 14 guys on the trip and I think seven of them went back to Italy for their honeymoon, which shows the impact that the trips can have on students."

While the trips provide incredible experiences and impact, they are not intended to fully change the worldviews of students. Rather, they are designed to expand them.

"The successful immersion course doesn't mean that everybody's coming back from Paris wearing a beret and smoking clove cigarettes and reading Camus," said Hartnett. "It's that a seed has been planted about how interesting and complex the world is."

Outside of education, immersion courses can influence students in many ways.

"Immersion courses open the world to students, stimulate their curiosity and imagination, and inspire them to continue traveling," said Hardy. "Not only do they learn about other countries — in the case of an international trip — but leaving the US and seeing it from the outside provides students with a different perspective on their own country."

Ultimately, these trips are made possible through the generosity of alumni, faculty, staff, and of course, the professors who plan and lead these brilliant experiences. In the nearly thirty years since their development, immersion courses have served students across the board. They help students tangibly apply information from their classes, give them a unique firsthand understanding of the world, and often lead to greater realizations and wisdom in the context of their education.

Wabash Wisdom: Advice and Encouragement from Wallys

"If it's working, keep doing it. If it isn't, it's time to ask for help" - Phillip Harvey '29

"I think the biggest thing that has pushed me to succeed—particularly later in the semester—is thinking about the bigger picture. Try not to just go through the motions of class, eat, sleep, repeat. Really be present in what you're doing in every moment so that you can enjoy the memories you'll make when you have free time!" - Silas Mills '27

"Some of the best things that you can do to easily prepare and set yourself up for success are to stay organized with your workload, school life, as well as sports so that you can get the upper hand on any challenges. You can also go out of your way to talk to professors in your topic as well as any friends/ fraternity brothers who are either doing the same course as you are or have also been in your shoes." - Lewis Sams '29

"The second half of the semester is harder, but success is still possible. Find a separate place to study, work in the mornings/between classes, and review with classmates before exams and projects." - Nick Green '27

"The best piece of advice I have is probably to not miss class. During this part of the semester many people decide to fade class, then they get behind and in my opinion the hardest part of Wabash is catching up." - Tony Grandinetti '28

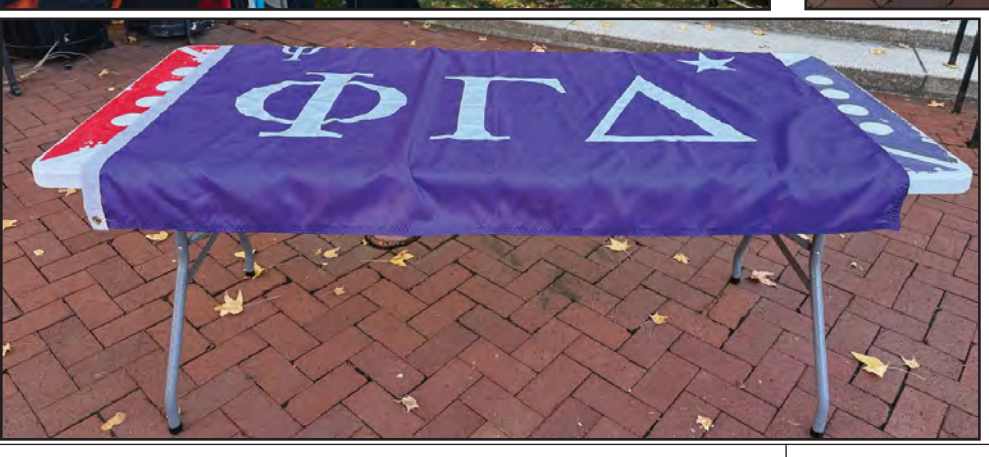
"Your situation is never final. There is always more work to be done, effort to be spent, and last-minute emails to be sent kindly harassing for a better grade. We are more than halfway done, so put your head up and Finish Strong!" - Theodore Quick '29

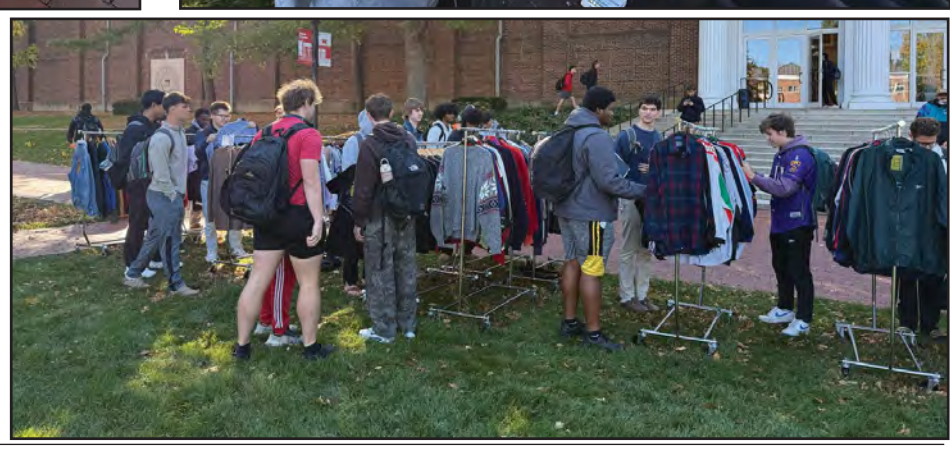
"My biggest piece of advice is to stay on top of your homework and not let assignments pile up. The end of the semester can get stressful, but keeping up with your work and focusing on one thing at a time makes a big difference." - Match Stitle '28

"My biggest advice is to listen to your instincts. If you don't feel like you've put in enough work on an assignment, that's an indicator that there's more to do, even if you may not want to do it. Also, put your project deadlines in your outlook calendar." - Henry Chilcoat '27

'Fleaji' gives old threads a new life

Photos by Will Duncan '27





Finding new perspectives abroad with Jaylen Young '28

COURTESY OF JAYLEN YOUNG '28

Jaylen Young '28 shows off his tatoo to several children in Kenya.

JAYLEN YOUNG '28
GUEST WRITER

This summer, I took a trip with a Wabash class of 1966 alumnus named Bill Cook. He founded and runs the Bill Cook Foundation, which builds and funds schools for people in developing and low-income countries, as well as providing many other forms of basic support that give people dignity. For the beginning of my trip, we went to Italy, specifically Siena, Florence and Rome. We went there because Bill's focus is the history of St. Francis of Assisi, and I am a history major, so he was extremely excited to show me the profound Catholic churches throughout Italy, especially in Siena. It was a wonderful opportunity to get to know him and travel with him. He taught me so much about Catholicism and the history of how the cathedrals came to be. Seeing so many ancient artifacts firsthand made the experience feel surreal for me.

For the second part of our trip, we went to Kenya, where Bill's foundation funds a couple of schools. For me, this was the best part of the trip. Going to lower-income places and seeing how happy these kids were to go to school made me feel so grateful for the things that I have. In the beginning, one school's first science lab only had a Bunsen burner, so there was not a lot to work with. However, these kids were just so excited, and it was such a beautiful sight to see.

Going to Italy helped me understand my faith on a deeper level. Bill helped me understand Catholicism in a unique way that I was not used to. I was raised Christian and was never able to fully understand the difference between Catholicism and the tradition I was raised in, but going on this trip with Bill allowed me to visit St. Peter's Basilica, which gave me a feeling that is not easy to describe. He also had me go to the Scala Sancta, the Holy Steps that Jesus was said to have walked on in Jerusalem. This was the moment when I felt the closest to God and my religion. It made me look more deeply into Catholicism and make it more of a part of my life. It felt like Christ was next to me as I walked and prayed up those steps.

What I learned in Kenya was more about the person I want to become and the mark I want to leave. I want to help as many people as possible. This experience showed me how Bill has helped so many people throughout his lifetime, and it made me reflect on what I have done and whether I have done enough with the advantages I have been given.

After seeing the students in Kenya, I fully understood how grateful I need to be. They have a lot less materially, and most of them came to school from the slums in Kenya. Even though they do not come from much and do not have much, they somehow always had a smile on their faces every day.

This led me to do more as soon as I got back to the States. I wanted to be different and change how I was before this trip. I wanted to always help others, and if someone needed anything, I wanted to be able to lend a helping hand. I also learned something from the nuns we stayed with because they treated us so kindly and helped with anything we needed. They also had Mass on Sunday and a chapel that I would listen in to, which connected me to my trip to Italy as a sign to get closer to God.

Bill is continuing to do magnificent work, and his care for everyone he meets is so moving to me. He completely changed my life.

We also plan to go on another trip this upcoming summer. We have not decided where yet, but I know that going with Bill will definitely teach me something that will change the person I am, and I am very grateful for that.

Without Wabash, this would have never been possible. This place is special and often gives you the greatest opportunities; you just have to be willing to take them.

Renowned poet explores themes of fatherhood

COURTESY OF UTAH PUBLIC RADIO

JOSEPH BOGGS '30
STAFF WRITER

This semester, Wabash College has been gifted with the opportunity to hear from many decorated guest speakers. This week's speaker, part of the President's Distinguished Speaker Series, continued the streak. On Wednesday, October 21, students and faculty were privileged to welcome decorated poet Michael Kleber-Diggs to campus for a reading, meet and greet and classroom sit-in.

Kleber-Diggs is an accomplished poet, memoirist, essayist, literary critic, arts educator and podcast host. His poetry collection featured his book "Worldly Things," a title that won the Max Ritvo Poetry Prize in 2020 and the Hefner Heitz Kansas Book Award in 2021, alongside being a finalist for the 2022 Minnesota Book Award. Appearing as a guest speaker of the President's Distinguished Speaker Series, Kleber-Diggs gave an inspired reading from his decorated collection to a crowded venue in Baxter 101.

Throughout his talk, his poems revealed a consistent theme: fatherhood. This theme emerged, however, naturally through his brief time at Wabash thus far.

"I didn't have any set idea of what I could think about or share," said Kleber-Diggs. "I really wanted to share just what was on my mind."

He proceeded to do just that, showing how his experiences as a father and son contributed to how he thinks about and develops his art.

Kleber-Diggs also proved himself to be quite the humorous poet, bringing the audience to laughter several times, all the while beautifully conveying serious undertones that underlined his talk.

While attendees only had an hour to listen to his graceful readings, Kleber-Diggs left behind encapsulating imagery of fatherhood and how one should approach it, imagery that is remarkably fitting and pertinent to the all-male audience of Wabash.

"My hope is that everybody will find a way to be, not only as a father, but as a person, as a man, as a son, as a spouse, authentic to who they are," said Kleber-Diggs. "I had to find my own way forward and my hope is that people will do the same…shaped from within."

Kleber-Diggs left Wabash with this message, and it is now up to those fortunate to hear from him to heed that advice and become their own image of a father, a son or whatever it may be.

Kleber-Diggs continued to float around campus in the following days, bringing discussions to classrooms and further sharing his works. He stated his desire to always continue writing, with plans to release another book of poetry. Kleber-Diggs has been an excellent contribution to a semester of vibrant programming.

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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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Staff editorial: The mental health crisis is closer than you think

Yet another tragedy has come out surrounding men's mental health as actor RJ Mitte, best known for his role in "Breaking Bad," died by suicide on October 12. This continues the alarming trend of death caused by suicide, specifically in men. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, roughly 80% of all suicide deaths in America are men. What makes this statistic even more concerning is that 60% of men who die by suicide had no documented mental health diagnosies.

What does this mean for us at Wabash, especially given our near-unique position as an all-male institution? It means that chances are either you, someone you know or someone your buddy knows either struggles with mental health, thoughts of suicide or masks it through various coping mechanisms. When we read a headline about another male celebrity taking their own life, at times, we feel very far from the situation.

We can deflect and act naive to the situation, like it hasn't once eaten away at us. But men, that would be foolish, and we here at Wabash know better than to be fools. In 2025, Wabash's undergraduate enrollment came in just a shade over 900, so let's do some simple math. In a 2026 study conducted by UnitedHealth, researchers found that roughly 44% of college-aged people struggle with depression. To put that in perspective, that would mean just under 400 Wabash men deal with these battles. To make it even more real that means based on statistics, either you or your roommate have had feelings of depression this year. Mental health is real, and it is eating at people that you interact with every single day.

Thankfully, we live in a time where the options to seek help are more numerous than ever. Wabash offers counselors at our Counseling Center completely free of charge. You are never above telling someone you are struggling. But seeking help is only the start. Here at Wabash we constantly harp on the connection, trust and brotherhood we develop with one another. Yet, those words mean almost nothing when those are only developed in the good times. A real brother checks in on his friends. A real brother asks them how they are, to let them know you truly care about them. Sometimes all someone needs is to know that you're there for them.

So, the next time you start a conversation with a classmate, walk to practice with a teammate or are eating a meal with your fraternity brother, take a second to check in. Put your phone down. Seriously. Ask them how they are and mean it. Ask them a second time to get to the truth. Take initiative and speak up about your own struggles because someone may be going through the same thing and you'd never know until you speak up. We cannot keep convincing ourselves that our brothers are fine because they look fine. We cannot continue to read headlines of yet another suicide and think that those people, and those issues, are too far away for us to care about.

These struggles are closer than we'd like to admit. At the end of the day, we can't force someone to open up, but we can let them know that we're there for them. We as Wabash men can create an environment where it's encouraged to speak up about your struggles, and know that when you come to someone for help it is received with open arms.

We all chose to go to a college that is a tiny, all male institution and that is rooted in brotherhood and tradition. So why not make being open about our struggles and checking in on each other's mental health a tradition that carries on long after our days on campus? Brothers, check on your buddy, check on yourself and remember, being strong doesn't mean acting like nothing is wrong. It's when you admit your struggles that healing can truly begin.

HI-FIVES

FIVE THINGS WORTHY OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

FLEACEJI

Lo-Five to the prices of the clothing at Fleaji. We know your house has no money but looking to scam broke college students won't work — after all, we are Wabash men.

0 DOUBTS

Hi-Five to Tyrese Haliburton to returning to action after 486 days. Take us back to the promise land.

MICHELLE ROSS

Lo-Five to Katie Zacharia for being fired after serving just five days as the White House Press Secretary. Turns out, not everyone can fake being a lawyer like Mike Ross.

RALLIED UP

*Lo-Five to President Trump for commenting on Lieutenant Governor Jon Husted's "a*s" during a rally in Kentucky. See, he's not sexist — he objectifies women AND men.*

"IT'S ABOUT DAMN TIME"

Hi-Five to the Indianapolis Colts for finally firing GM Chris Ballard. We heard they're looking for lackluster staff members down south.

The beauty of sonder

Carter McCall '29

Sports editor

Reply to this opinion at
csmccall29@wabash.edu

On the first day of fall break, I was driving home on the interstate with nothing on my mind but sleeping in my own bed. Somewhere past the halfway point, a beat-up silver sedan pulled up alongside me. The driver, an older man, was singing along to something with his whole chest. A child's car seat sat in the back. A few miles later he took an exit and was gone. I'll never know his name, but for a second it hit me: someone was waiting for him. He had a favorite song, a worst memory, a joke only his brother understands. His life was just as real and complicated as mine, and I'd seen about three miles of it.

There's a word for that feeling: sonder. Writer John Koenig coined it in "The Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows" to describe the realization that every passerby lives a life as vivid as your own, one in which you're just an extra in the background.

Koenig filed it under "sorrows," and plenty of people agree. If eight billion stories are happening at once and I'm a blurry face in nearly all of them, what makes mine special?

I think that reading is wrong. Sonder only stings because we've quietly assumed we were supposed to be the main character. Drop that assumption and what's left isn't despair. It's wonder.

I'm a Christian, and my faith is why I see it that way. Feeling small and being insignificant are not the same thing. David looked up at the night sky and asked, "what is mankind that you are mindful of them?" (Psalm 8:4). In the next breath he marvels that God has "crowned them with glory and honor" (Psalm 8:5). If every person carries God's image, as I believe they do, then sonder doesn't shrink anyone. It shows that significance is everywhere.

But you don't have to share my faith to see it. In his 2005 commencement speech at Kenyon College, novelist David Foster Wallace described standing in a packed grocery store checkout line after a long day, irritated at everyone around him. His point was that we have a choice. Our default setting treats every stranger as an obstacle. But we can choose to imagine that the woman snapping at her child might have spent the last three nights at her dying husband's bedside. How we see strangers is a decision, Wallace argued, and the lazy decision makes us miserable.

I see it in sports too. The golfer I'm paired with in a tournament isn't just a number on a leaderboard. He might be fighting for the last spot in his team's lineup, or playing in front of a grandfather who drove for hours to watch him. The ref who blows a call at a Wabash game goes home to a family that asks him how his night went. The opposing walk-on who never gets off the bench still shows up to every practice, and nobody in the stands knows why.

The real problem is pride, and it's ours. Pride rarely sounds arrogant. Mostly, it's just the quiet belief that my stress, my schedule and my reputation matter more than whatever the person next to me is carrying. We walk across campus with headphones on and eyes on our phones, treating everyone else as scenery. On a campus this small, it's easy to convince ourselves we already know everyone's story. We don't.

This is where sonder stops being a feeling and becomes an obligation. Jesus said the second greatest commandment is to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). When pressed on who counts as a neighbour, he told the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37). A man lies beaten by the road. Two respected religious men walk right past him. The one who stops is a stranger who doesn't know the man's name or how he got there. He doesn't need to. He sees a life that matters, and he acts.

Most of us fall well short of that standard. We wait to hear someone's story before deciding whether they deserve our patience. That gets it backwards. The cashier who seems short with me might be working her third double this week, or she might just be having an ordinary day. It doesn't matter. Her life is real, so she's owed the same kindness I'd want.

For me, that conviction comes from God. For you, it might come from your upbringing, your conscience or just the plain experience of being human. Wherever it comes from, it should cost you something. Sonder isn't a pretty word for an Instagram caption. It's a demand to treat every stranger as someone whose life is worth exactly as much as yours.

So here's my challenge this week, whatever you believe. Take the headphones out. Notice one stranger and remember that their life is as real as yours. Then act on it. Hold the door, learn a name, say thank you and mean it.

We are small, and that's not a tragedy. It's an invitation, and we have no excuse to ignore it.

Go vote: Indiana Public Question #1

Owen Smith '27

Reply to this opinion at
otsmith27@wabash.edu

Over fall break, I had the privilege to vote early in Marshall County for the midterm elections. Like many other voters, I spent time researching the candidates as thoroughly as I could to form my opinions on them, whether they are candidates who hold a statewide office or are running for the school board in my brother's district.

If you have not voted yet, your ballot will ask you to vote on a number of different candidates and issues. However, the last couple of questions on your ballot will not prompt you to decide between a list of names. Instead, it will ask Hoosiers if they wish to change two parts of the Indiana Constitution. I write this opinion to express the importance of researching and voting on Indiana Public Question #1.

Under the Indiana Constitution as it currently stands, people who are charged with crimes have a right to bail, with an exception for the crimes of murder and treason when the proof is evident or the presumption is strong. Public Question #1 asks voters whether that exception should be expanded.

If the amendment passes, a person charged with an offense other than murder or treason could also be denied bail. However, two standards would have to be met. First, "the proof (would have to be) evident or the presumption strong." Second, "the state proves by clear and convincing evidence that no release conditions will reasonably protect the safety of any other person or the community." In simpler terms, voting YES expands the authority of Indiana courts to keep certain defendants in jail while they await trial when the state can demonstrate that releasing them would create a serious safety risk. Voting NO keeps the constitutional right to bail as it exists today.

There are important considerations to make before voting on this question. Supporters argue that judges need greater discretion when protecting the public. There may be circumstances in which someone charged with a serious crime poses a substantial danger to the community or another person, but the current constitutional protection of bail limits a judge's ability to keep that person detained before trial. You will hear many supporters point to the fact that defendants charged with attempted murder can get bail and a successful amending of the Constitution can allow judges to deny bail while still putting the state in the position where they must demonstrate that "no release conditions will reasonably protect the safety of any other person or the community."

Simultaneously, opponents of this proposal raise equally important constitutional concerns. One such concern is that someone awaiting trial has been accused of a crime, not convicted of one. Opponents assert that expanding pretrial detention must therefore be approached cautiously, as it gives the state greater authority to incarcerate individuals who have yet to be found guilty of a crime. One of the more notable organizations that oppose the proposal is the ACLU of Indiana, which provides many arguments for why the change should not pass. Furthermore, expanding the authority of courts to restrict bail to more defendants could lead to increased overcrowding of local jails, more families being separated and destabilized and more defendants who could lose employment, housing and community connections while awaiting trial. Both arguments and concerns about asking this question on the ballot are worth your attention.

Before voting, read the amendment yourself and examine the proposed wording. Several news outlets have covered this question in far greater depth than I can in an opinion article. Consider why supporters believe the change is necessary but also consider why opponents believe the existing constitutional protection should remain.

I implore you all to go and vote if you are able. Your vote matters (look up the Deery vs Copenhaver primary race if you are doubting me). Whether you are going to cast your vote in an unusually close secretary of state race, or a school board election that only receives about 1,500 votes, your participation matters. I hope those who read this engage in the election process this November. After all, when we Hoosiers are given the power to potentially amend our constitution, we owe it to ourselves to understand what we are voting for before we make that decision. But don't let a Wabash student who took one Himsel class tell you how to vote in this election. Do the research, make up your own mind and go vote.

Wallies in the Wild

Thomas Joven '24

Whether it's a fraternity, the Student Senate and its organizations or SI instructors/QSC tutors, the student-run nature of Wabash forces students to learn about how different organizations are run. Doing so is important because understanding and appreciating how different parts of an organization fit into the full mission equip you to better perform your own role, and every time you start at a new school, job or opportunity, you are joining a new organization.

As an underclassman in the FIJI house, I learned what I could about many aspects of the fraternity, from new member education to the philanthropy committee to the social committee. Well-rounded knowledge of the house was helpful when I was the academic chair my sophomore year because I understood the different directions the freshmen were being pulled in and could factor that into my efforts to help them succeed academically.

The summer after graduating from Wabash, I attended Marine Officer Candidate School (OCS) in Quantico, Virginia. One of the most infamous parts of OCS is a candidate's billet, where, essentially, the candidate is tasked with leading some set of fellow candidates. I spent four days as the Candidate Company Gunnery Sergeant, meaning I worked with three other candidates to lead the entire company of approximately 200 Marine Officer Candidates. That opportunity was eye-opening because it showed me all the behind the scenes that went into planning our training. And I was a much sharper candidate for the rest of the summer.

Throughout law school, I have known Wabash prepared me well, and it wasn't only my constitutional law classes with Professor Himsel which did so. Wabash prepared me for law school and Wabash prepares men for whatever they endure because Wabash trains us to think critically.

The most dreaded law school moment is the "cold call" when you must answer questions in front of 75 or more people. I've certainly had more than my fair share of incorrect answers, causing me to feel a bit silly, but I've never feared getting called on. For me, professors asking me questions is natural because it happened in my physics courses, my Greek courses and my history courses. Dialogue between students and professors trains students to be thinkers, and that's helpful no matter what you do.

Wabash is a special place. While the student body is diverse, it takes a certain type of person to choose our all-male school in Crawfordsville, Indiana, and we are all that type of person, a Wabash man. In closing, I'll reiterate two bits of advice you have no doubt heard before. First, treasure your time with your brothers. I was excited to finally sleep in a room without other people, but I quickly realized I missed having everyone around. Second, offer kindness to everyone in the workplace or other environment. Asking how someone's weekend was can go a long way.

Be a Wabash tourist

Jack Miller '28

Reply to this opinion at
jvmiller28@wabash.edu

We have all received emails or seen posters around campus and said, "Oh yeah, maybe I'll go to that." I encourage you to drop the maybe. During the four years that you are here, you only have so much time to participate, explore and attend the free events that Wabash puts on. I have recently thought about it like a country that I cannot come back to. When you're there, why would you not do the most touristy things? For example, if you were in London, would you not go see Big Ben, the Eye and Piccadilly Circus? When I was abroad in Ireland there was so much that I could have done that I look back and think, "why did I not take a day and go do that?" After some time to think, I learned that this is the stuff that you would look back on and think, "why did I not do that?"

This is the same at Wabash: when the four years are up, you cannot go to a lunchtime colloquium with your friends. Yes, maybe you're a rhetoric major, and you might think, "why should I go to a math colloquium?" I say because once you are rung out, you don't have an opportunity to do these things. Not only will you have the opportunity to learn new things from a subject that you might know nothing about, but you might also find a new passion or a new hobby. For example, I had never been to a play before in my life; my high school did not have them. For freshman tutorial, we had a fourth hour where we had to go see the "Twelve Angry Men" production; I was disappointed because it felt like a waste of time, but I could not have been more wrong. I was fully engrossed in the story as it was my first time watching "Twelve Angry Men" in any form. Since then, I have been to every production Wabash has put on, and I have enjoyed each one more than the last. It's inspiring to see the work and effort that students put into their passions and makes me work harder in my passions.

One tradition at Wabash that I feel is taken for granted is Chapel Talks. This is not something other schools have. These are opportunities to learn about a topic or hear a side of an argument that you would not normally hear. They are easy to skip; I can attest to skipping a Chapel Talk or two after pledgeship to rot on the couch and scroll for that extra hour before lunch, but this is a rare opportunity that we have as Wabash students, so don't miss them before you lose them forever.

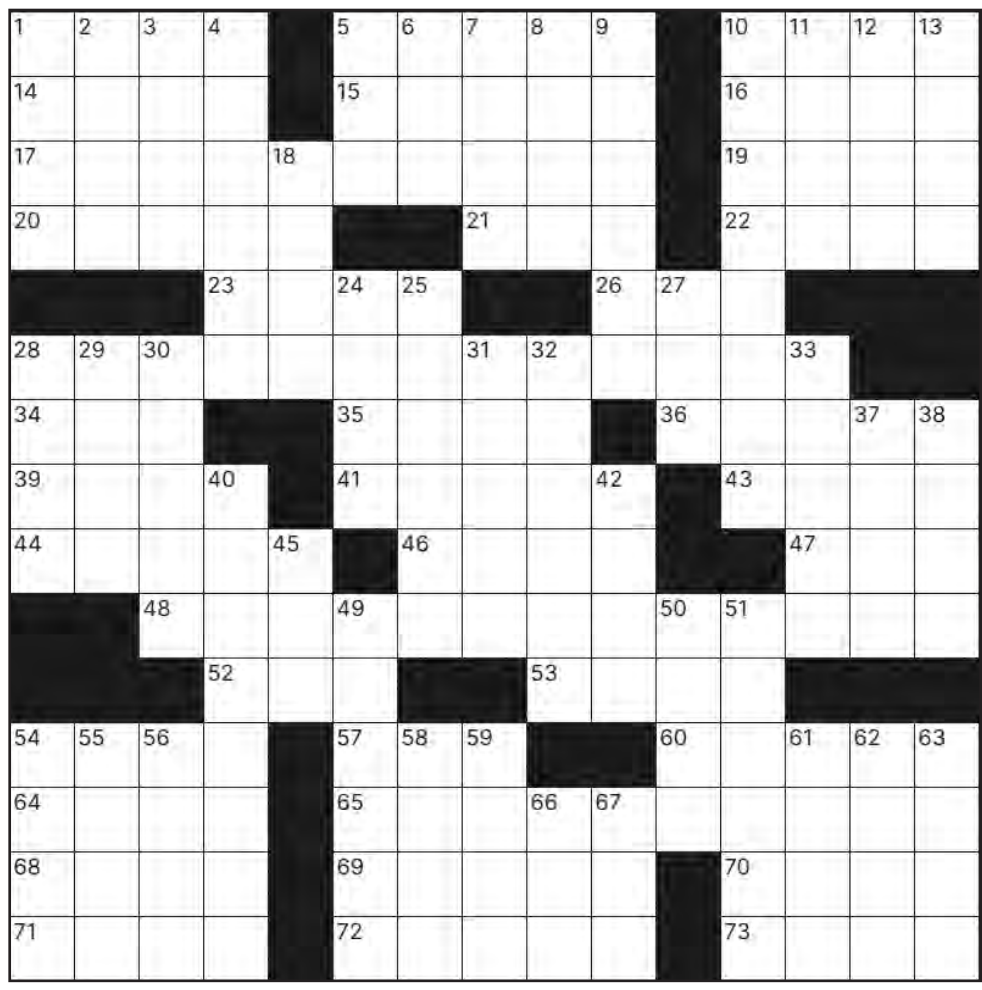
Everyone has heard of the Monon Bell game, but have you gone to a Tuesday wrestling meet, a soccer match or a volleyball game? We are lucky to have sports year round, so when football isn't playing, support the rest of the campus in their activities. While you're here, everything is free; take advantage of this. Use it as a break from writing a paper, doing homework or studying for a test.

One final area where I feel most of campus misses out is the art galleries. As an art minor, I see the amount of time and effort students put into their work, as well as the visiting artists that come here and showcase their world-class works. The hours that go into each brushstroke, shooting and editing make sense to go and show your support. You don't need to know a thing about art to enjoy something pleasing to the eyes. To see this outside of Wabash, you would need to pay, but here you get to see the early works of up-and-coming artists.

After reading this, you may be thinking to yourself, "I don't have the time." There are little moments in your day that you don't realize you waste. The hour between classes, sports, a job or homework. This won't end in college or after; it's better to understand how to fit as much into your day now while you have the opportunity. So get involved at Wabash, find a passion and be a tourist.

'Shaken, not stirred'

Crossword by Paul Hawksworth '28



Across

1. Cut, as fat
5. Book's home
10. Roll-call response
14. Verdi opera heroine
15. Ham medium
16. Turnpike turnoff
17. Nickname for one that has the Midas touch?
19. Jogger's music source, perhaps
20. Sweet bargain
21. Delicious!
22. Hall of Fame wide receiver Randy
23. Humongous
26 .'60s gridiron org.
28. Narcissist's philosophy of tolerance?
34. MP4 alternative
35. Solo, in 14-across
36. West African capital
39. General interests?
41. Layers, in a cake
43. Crop circles, e.g.
44. Hogwarts potion master
46. Actress Hathaway
47. Golf ball position
48. Executioner's certification?
52. Unit equal to 2,000 pounds
53. Seemingly hopeless
54. ASAP, in hospitals
57. NPR host Shapiro
60. Opt (to)
64. CBS football analyst Tony
65. What 17-, 28- and 48- across are
68. Keyboard error
69. 1832 Brew specialty
70. ___ time (right away)
71. The "A" in PGA, abbr.
72. D-sharp equivalent
73. Pro hoopers in Brooklyn

Down

1. T-shirt labels
2. Protest with pitchforks and torches
3. Having nothing to do
4. Monsieur's wife
5. ___ Lanka
6. Chinese dynasty preceding the Three Kingdoms
7. Pushing conventional limits
8. In ___ (replacing)
9. Set up, as a hard drive
10. Maneuver used to stop choking
11. Big convention
12. Some Kia compacts
13. Approx. takeoff times
18. Red Hot Chili Peppers' bassist
24. Small pesky fly
25. Rocky's wife
27. Org. that approves medicines
28. What bills become when they're passed
29. "Terrible" Russian tsar
30. Like some infections
31. Legal claims on property
32. Rightfully acquired
33. Ground beef contaminant
37. Stairwell support
38. Figure skating jump
40. Saloon staple
42. Alien search grp.
45. Prefix for environmentalists
49. Turn on, as computer options
50. 1912 answer to the Hydrox
51. Absolute zero temperature unit
54. Ms. in Barcelona
55. Christmas list items
56. Guitarist's sound boosters
58. Top of a house
59. "___ Players Anthem" (2007 UGK song)
61. German "A"
62. Penny's value
63. General ___ chicken
66. Grammy winner Lipa
67. Denver hrs.

Scan for solution!

Welcome Board of Trustees &
Good Luck Football

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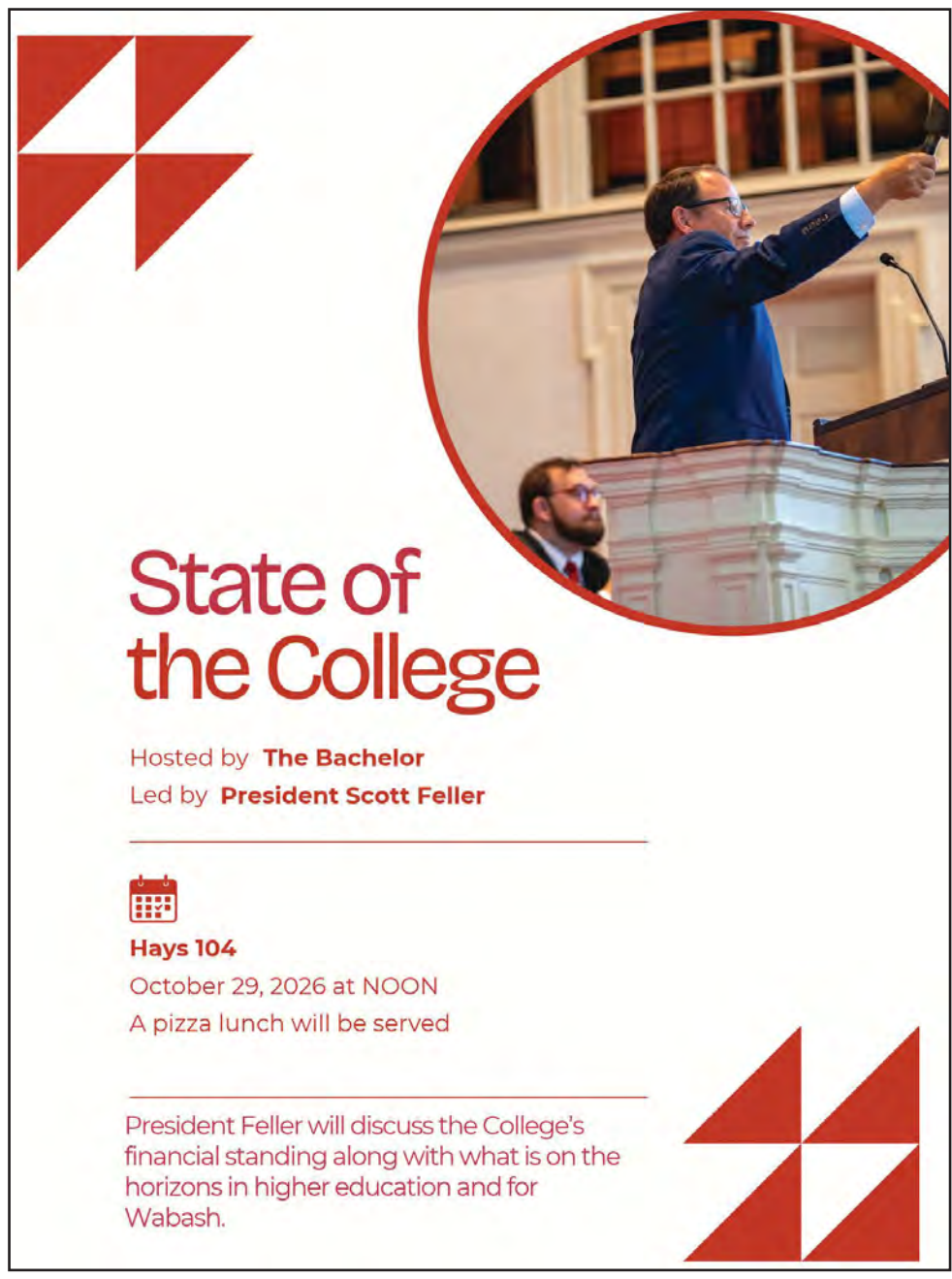

SPORTS

Swim opens season in duel meet at RHIT

CARTER McCALL '29
SPORTS EDITOR

Ozzy Jankowski '30 didn't wait long to make his mark. In his first collegiate meet, the freshman won two individual events, anchored a winning relay start and helped Wabash College open its 2026-27 swimming and diving season with six event victories and a second-place team finish at the Indiana DIII Invitational on Saturday, Oct. 17, at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology.

The Little Giants scored 715 points in the five-team field. DePauw University won the meet with 969, but Wabash finished comfortably ahead of host Rose-Hulman (677.5), Franklin College (412) and Manchester University (115.5).

Jankowski set the pace from the first event. He led off the 200-yard medley relay alongside Ryan West '28, Lew Sams '29 and Quinn Sweeney '27, and the group touched first in 1:35.19. He then won the 100-yard backstroke in 51.02 seconds and the 100-yard individual medley in 52.77, beating the field by nearly three seconds in the latter.

"The 200 medley relay win meant the most to me," said Jankowski. "Getting a win in the first event really set the tone for the meet and showed everyone that Wabash came to fight. I was really grateful to contribute to that crucial win."

The swimmer who finished second in that race was his own teammate. West placed second in 55.75 to give Wabash a one-two finish, but his best moment came earlier in the 200-yard individual medley.

That race came down to the final touch. West and Franklin's Will Chambley swam stroke for stroke, and West reached the wall in 1:59.64, just 0.22 seconds ahead of Chambley's 1:59.86. It was the tightest of Wabash's six wins. West also placed fifth in the 200-yard freestyle in 1:48.62.

Chambley ran into another Little Giant in the breaststroke. Sams won the 100-yard breaststroke in 1:00.39, holding off Chambley by 0.29 seconds. Sams added a second-place finish in the 200-yard breaststroke in 2:13.37, making him the only Wabash swimmer to finish in the top two of both breaststroke events.

Nick Plumb '27 completed a Wabash sweep of the backstroke events. Plumb won the 200-yard backstroke in 1:58.72 to give the Little Giants their fifth individual title of the day. He then showed his range in the 1,000-yard freestyle, placing fourth in 10:27.17. Mason Gilliam '28 finished one spot ahead of him in 10:25.21, as the two teammates spent 40 lengths of the pool less than two seconds apart.

Sweeney gave Wabash depth in the sprints. He tied for third in the 50-yard freestyle in 22.25 seconds and placed fourth in the 100-yard freestyle in 48.28.

The Little Giants nearly ended the day the way they began it. Jankowski, Will Renie '27, Charlie Renie '30 and Sweeney combined for a time of 3:11.76 in the 400-yard freestyle relay, but DePauw touched first in 3:09.97 to win the final event.

"It was good to get the first race out of the way and settle back into competitive racing," said Carter Ramsey '29

The diving squad added valuable points. Michael Cruzado '27 led the group with a fourth-place finish on the three-meter board with 157.15 points and placed seventh on the one-meter board with 162.95. Fox Seebach '29 finished sixth on the three-meter board with 125.50 points and ninth on the one-meter board with 133.45. Liam Fuller '28 placed eighth in the one-meter competition with 143.85 points.

Wabash returns to Terre Haute on Friday, Oct. 23, for a 7 p.m. dual meet against Rose-Hulman, a team it outscored by 37.5 points Saturday. The Little Giants will then host Davenport University and Lewis University on Saturday, October 24, at 1 p.m. in their first home meet of the season.

COURTESTY OF COMMS AND MARKETING

Ryan West '28 races in the 200 yard medley relay race at the Indiana D3 Invitational on Saturday on October 17

Golf finishes fall season in Florida

MARK BERGER '28
STAFF WRITER

Wabash golf hit the road again for the Golfweek October Classic, spending their fall break on the beautiful greens of the Sunshine State. The tournament was hosted at Sandestin Resort & Club in Destin, Florida, October 18–20. The Little Giants played three rounds over the course of three days and finished the tournament 16th out of 25 teams. Leo Dellinger '29 led the team in individual placement, followed by Mason Pierle '28, Tyler Morton '29, Charlie Seaburg '29 and Finn Carteaux '29. The team shot a combined total of 904 (+52) in a field that featured some of the top teams in the country.

"The best part about the trip was all of the time that we got to spend together," said Pierle. "We spent time fishing in the bay and enjoying the beautiful weather."

The first round of play was a tale of two nines as they started off shaky on the front nine. Bogeys plagued the team as they attempted to find their rhythm on the opening day of the tournament. The turn onto the back nine proved to be a change of pace as Dellinger shot back-to-back birdies on holes 10 and 11. Wabash added five more birdies before the end of the round, and finished with a team total of 306 and took their spot in 17th place. Dellinger sat at T-40 with a 75 individually with Pierle and Seaburg T-52 and T-60, respectively.

"I was very pleased with my mental attitude towards the tournament," said Pierle. "Every round will have some adversity in it, so finding ways around that is extremely important for a three day golf tournament."

Wabash built off the momentum they generated at the end of the first day to make moves in the leaderboard during the second round of play. The team played consistent golf while tacking on 10 birdies throughout the team, with six of the 10 coming again on the back nine. The Little Giants combined for a team total of 294 shots, led by Dellinger's 70 shot round. Dellinger jumped up to T-27 individually after the round and Pierle moved up to T-50, while the Little Giants as a team moved up to T-13.

COURTESY OF NICO KLEMENTZOS

Charlie Seaburg '29 watches his drive at Raven Golf Course on October 19.

"We have become a super tight knit group who all look to get better and compete with each other which leads to so much success," said Pierle. "By staying competitive and keeping each other accountable we will have a lot to hang our hats on going into the spring season."

The final round of the Golfweek October Classic was also the Little Giants last round of their fall season. The team shot a combined total of 304, and Dellinger and Carteaux led the way as they both birdied hole 17 as the day wrapped up. Dellinger placed T-31 with a weekend score of seven over par. Pierle finished T-60, and Morton trailed just behind in T-64 as Wabash finished the tournament in 16th place.

"This semester, we saw glimpses of the team we can be," said Dellinger. "This offseason is going to be focused on getting that potential to become a more consistent outcome."

They'll resume their season next March as they look to continue a historic year that's been led by youthful talent and superb coaching.

Football drops second game in a row to John Carroll

CARTER McCALL '29
SPORTS EDITOR

Two yards. That was the distance between Wabash and overtime Saturday at John Carroll University. Luke Adams '28 caught a 39-yard pass from Brand Campbell '27 and went down at the Blue Streaks' 2-yard line as time expired, ending a 24-17 North Coast Athletic Conference loss in University Heights, Ohio.

The loss dropped Wabash to 4–2 overall and 3–2 in the NCAC. It was the team's second straight one-score conference defeat after a 4–0 start. John Carroll, the defending conference champion, improved to 5–1 (4–1 NCAC).

For three quarters, the Wabash defense controlled the game. John Carroll ran the ball 17 times for 13 yards. William Harris '28 and Carson Foxen '28 shared the team lead with eight tackles apiece. Harris added a 10-yard sack, giving him a sack in four straight games, and Dakota Johnson '28 recorded a 6-yard sack.

Wabash scored first. The defense forced a three-and-out on John Carroll's opening possession, and Domanic Barnett '28 returned the punt to the Blue Streaks' 43. Cole Dickerson '28 carried six times on the eight-play drive, including an 18-yard run, and finished it with a 3-yard touchdown. Tyler Church '28 added the extra point for a 7–0 lead.

A blocked Wabash punt late in the first quarter set up a 24-yard John Carroll field goal. The Blue Streaks then took a 10–7 lead with 1:08 left in the half, capping a 15-play, 84-yard drive with a 3-yard touchdown run by quarterback Tyler Green.

Wabash tied the game early in the third quarter. Campbell hit Dickerson for 10 yards and scrambled 14 more, and Church made a 39-yard field goal to make it 10-10. Harris ended John Carroll's next drive with his third-down sack, and Church followed with a 62-yard punt.

The Little Giants then put together a 12-play, 57-yard drive that stretched into the fourth quarter. Dickerson converted three third downs on the ground, the last an 8-yard run to the 1-yard line. A penalty pushed Wabash back. On third down, Jackson Gilbert '28 found TJ Williams '29 for a 12-yard touchdown, Williams' first receiving score of the season. Wabash led 17-10 with 9:55 left.

PHOTO BY JEREMIAH RUNGE '29

Cole Dickerson '28 contorts his body to make a catch in a game against The College of Wooster on September 26 at Little Giant Stadium.

The game turned soon after. Wabash forced another three-and-out, with Tanner Crouch '28 breaking up the third-down pass, and an 18-yard John Carroll punt gave the Little Giants the ball at the Blue Streaks' 35. Wabash lost 14 yards on its next three plays and had to punt. Church's 45-yard kick pinned John Carroll at its own 4 with 7:29 to go.

John Carroll made a 96-yard drive look routine. The Blue Streaks needed just 10 plays to cover the length of the field, averaging nearly 10 yards per snap against a Wabash defense that could not get off the field. Green found Shane Lindstrom for gains of 18 and 24 yards, and John Carroll did not slow down even after a quarterback change. Backup Bryce Tubin stepped in and threw a 6-yard touchdown to Quincy Newsom to tie the game 17-17 with 3:11 left.

Wabash could not answer. The Little Giants picked up one first down on a 12-yard catch by Dickerson before punting from its own 37 with 1:31 remaining. John Carroll needed even less time on its next possession. Green hit Jack McDaniels for 10 yards, then found him again for a 63-yard touchdown. The Blue Streaks covered 73 yards in two plays, and only 31 seconds passed between the Wabash punt and the go-ahead score with one minute left. Across its final two scoring drives, John Carroll gained 169 yards in 12 plays.

"On the last drive there was some miscommunication coming off of the sideline about what defensive package we were in that led to a guy being left open when he should have been covered," said Harris.

The Little Giants took over at their own 22 with 55 seconds left and needed to cover 78 yards with a running clock. What followed was a drive that moved the ball well but spent time poorly. Campbell completed a 10-yard pass to Keith Jackson '29, then checked down to Carson Chadd '27 for 4 yards in the middle of the field, a short gain that kept the clock running when Wabash could least afford it. After an incompletion, Campbell hit Adams for 11 yards on third-and-6 to move the chains, but the offense was slow to get back to the line. By the time Wabash called timeout, only 11 seconds remained. The Little Giants had used 44 seconds to gain 25 yards. Adams then caught a 12-yarder at the John Carroll 41, and Campbell spiked the ball to stop the clock. With time for one or two plays at most, Campbell went over the middle again, finding Adams for 39 yards. The completion was the biggest play of the drive, but it came in the one part of the field where the clock does not stop. Adams was tackled at the 2 as time expired, leaving Wabash 2 yards from the end zone with nothing left to do.

Dickerson finished with 115 rushing yards on a career-high 35 carries. He has rushed for at least 115 yards in three straight games and has scored a rushing touchdown in all six games this season. Adams caught six passes for 87 yards, three of them for 62 yards on the final drive. Campbell completed 11 of 21 passes for 140 yards and is nine yards short of Dave Broecker's '83 career total of 4,894 passing yards.

Wabash converted 10 of 18 third downs and scored on all three trips inside the red zone but finished with 261 yards of total offense. Green threw for 345 yards for John Carroll. The strong Wabash front held the Blue Streaks to only 13 rushing yards.

"We have excellent defensive lineman and linebackers," said Head Coach Jake Gilbert '98. "Those guys are great against the run. We are hard to block and we run to the football really well. Our tackling has been very good in the box. We've been able to smother other teams' run games because we are good up front."

The Little Giants return to Little Giant Stadium Saturday, Oct. 24, at 1 p.m. They host Washington University in St. Louis, who is 6-0 and nationally ranked.

Losses to Wooster, Depauw leave soccer's NCAC hopes hanging by a thread

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Disappointing losses to the College of Wooster and arch-rivals DePauw extended Wabash soccer's losing streak to four games and ensured they'll be in last place in the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) heading into Saturday's matchup against Wittenberg.

Against Wooster last Saturday at Fischer Field, Wabash's hopes for a statement victory in the conference were stymied by a second half surge by the Fighting Scots. The Wabash forward line — which has had to chop and change as the result of injuries this year — looked something more like what Wabash fans have been used to with the return of Danny Tkachuk '29. After starting the game at right wing, Tkachuk swapped into the center forward role after 15 minutes and kickstarted the Little Giants' press. Ethan Simmons '29 registered a few strong shots on goal from outside the area that forced Scots' goalkeeper Eddie Glucksman to make diving stops. Wabash piled on more pressure with dangerous deliveries from corners before they broke the deadlock. Tkachuk turned over Wooster's Rohan Kickbush, who had only just entered the game, and after some interplay, Simmons found Tkachuk on a cutback from the left side of the goal for an easy goal.

"In the first half we played with more composure than we did in the second half," said Brady Reiter '29. "We played more to feet, and then that drew them in, and then we were able to find Bryce [Kinnaman '27] and Danny out on the wings."

Despite leveling more pressure on the Wooster goal and being the dominant side in the half overall, Wabash couldn't extend its 1–0 lead. The Scots rediscovered a rhythm after the break, and just 20 seconds after Wabash wasted a scoring opportunity on a counterattack down at the Wooster end, their opposition sliced through the defense to level the game at 1–1 in the 55th minute with a goal by Connor Shea. Just eight minutes later, Shea doubled his tally and put Wooster in front 1–2.

Wabash was never able to settle into the game after going down. Though they pushed hard for an equalizer, a giveaway at the back led to an easy Wooster goal for 1–3 in the seventy-second minute, and Wabash wasn't able to generate any big scoring chances afterward. Chances that went untaken and turned into momentum for Wooster made it a frustrating result.

"We didn't put a second one in in the first half, and their goalie had a couple really great saves, said Head Coach Chris Keller. "There was a point in the second half where we had an opportunity to put them away, but a couple bad passes on our end, and we couldn't execute and make it two zero. I thought we played well, but playing well doesn't get you the three points."

The loss made a big game even bigger against DePauw University on October 21 in Greencastle. Despite entering the match on a three-game skid, Keller spoke his team's mentality heading into the match against a strong Tigers squad.

"It's an important game, but every three points is just as important. A rivalry is something that you get up for, and it's fun and a little more intense," said Keller. "We've lost one time to them in 10 years, and I think people forget about that pretty quickly, but we need to continue to build what we have and find those wins, especially when everybody in the conference is beating everybody."

The Tigers, however, had other plans. After an acrobatic overhead kick led to a Julian Bell goal in the eleventh minute, DePauw never let the Little Giants off the hook. Wabash hoped to control the middle of the pitch with a box midfield, but they were never able to settle the game down to get into a rhythm. Things went from bad to worse when DePauw doubled their lead just 55 seconds before halftime, converting another chance off of a set piece Wabash failed to clear.

The second half was no better. Three more goals — though only one coming from open play — gave the Tigers the 5–0 win. What joy Wabash found going forward was minimal. They did not muster a single shot during the 90 minutes, while DePauw registered 17, with 10 finding the back of the net or drawing a save from Rafael Cordova '30. It was a toothless performance from a team that has been wracked by injury during the second half of the season.

"We beat ourselves tonight with our defense against set pieces," said Kinnaman. "They only scored one goal from open play, and we knew we needed to limit their capabilities from set pieces, so we beat ourselves down in that category."

With three opponents left — two of which, Denison and John Carroll, are in position to make the four-team conference tournament — Wabash desperately needs results to make the tournament. It'll have to come game by game.

"We have to focus on the next game, and nothing more," said Kinnaman. "We must pick our heads up and prepare for Wittenberg with 100% commitment and focus. We knew every NCAC game will be gritty no matter the circumstance, and we plan on fighting till the very last minute in every game.''

PHOTO BY JEREMIAH RUNGE '29

Ty Freedman '27 throws the ball in during the game against The College of Wooster on October 17.

Editor Opinion: Why the NCAC deserves two playoff spots

CARTER McCALL '29
SPORTS EDITOR

Saturday, October 3, in Granville, Ohio, Wabash lost a football game by one point to a team picked fifth in its own conference. If that sounds like an indictment of Wabash, read it again. It's an indictment of a playoff system that treats the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) the same as leagues it would beat on any given Saturday.

Start with the math. The NCAA Division III playoff field holds 40 teams. 29 of those spots go to conference champions, one per league, no exceptions. The other 11 are at-large bids, awarded by a committee that leans heavily on winning percentage. Last year there were 13 at-large spots. This year, with the New England Small College Athletic Conference entering the postseason, there are two fewer. And the NCAC picked this exact moment to become one of the deepest football conferences in the country.

Look at who's in it. John Carroll joined last fall and went 8-0 in conference play, won the title and reached the national semifinals. DePauw — yes, I'm going to say it, and no, it doesn't hurt any less — took an at-large bid and advanced to the third round. Wabash went 9-2 and spent its postseason at a bowl game in Canton, Ohio. This fall, the conference added Washington University in St. Louis, which went 8-3 last season in the CCIW, one of the toughest leagues in Division III, and still missed the playoffs.

Then there's Denison. Picked fifth in the preseason coaches' poll, the Big Red is now 4-0 in conference play and fresh off a win over the Little Giants. Wabash, John Carroll, WashU and Denison would be favorites to win most conferences in the country. In the NCAC, they're fighting over one automatic bid.

The current system's answer is the at-large pool. Lose your conference race, and the committee might bail you out. That's a hope, not a plan. With 10 football members, NCAC teams play nine conference games, and Wabash and WashU each have just one non-conference game. Every contender plays every other contender, and someone has to lose. Those losses pile up in the column the committee watches most closely, while a team from a weaker conference runs the table against overmatched opponents and sails in at 10-0.

So stop making the NCAC beg. Give it a second automatic bid.

The NCAA already treats conferences differently based on size; a league has to meet membership requirements just to earn one automatic bid. The principle that not every conference is identical is already built into the system. I'm asking the NCAA to take the next logical step and recognize strength, not just size.

Here's how it could work. The NCAA already ranks every team through the NCAA Power Index (NPI), its formula for balancing wins with strength of schedule. Use it. Each year, the conferences whose teams rank highest in aggregate NPI over a rolling three-year window would earn a second automatic bid, which would go to the conference runner-up. The rolling window keeps one fluky season from rewarding a league that doesn't deserve it. Set the threshold high enough that only two or three conferences qualify in a given year. If a conference falls off, it loses the bid. If another one rises, it earns one.

That's not a favor to the NCAC. It's a standard, and the NCAC would have to keep meeting it. Right now, this conference would.

The obvious objection is that every second automatic bid comes out of the at-large pool, which is already shrinking. That's true, and it's the point. The at-large process is where deep conferences go to get lost. A committee comparing a two-loss NCAC team with a one-loss team from a weak league is weighing apples against a schedule full of air. An automatic bid tied to a measurable strength standard takes that guesswork off the table. The best leagues get the access they've earned, and the remaining at-large spots still go to the best teams left over.

The other objection is simpler: Win your conference. That's fair, to a point. Wabash had its chance Saturday and gave it away with three turnovers and a blocked extra point. Nobody on this campus is pretending otherwise. But "just win the conference" ignores the arithmetic. When a conference has four or five legitimate contenders, at least three will come up short, and some of those teams could beat the champions of half the conferences in the bracket. Finishing second in the NCAC shouldn't mean the same thing as finishing second in a league that wouldn't survive a month of this schedule.

When WashU's arrival was announced in 2024, this newspaper wrote that a stronger NCAC would put the league in position to send two teams to the playoffs each year. The conference did everything it could. It added John Carroll and WashU, and the football got better. What it can't do is make the selection committee notice. Only a rule change can do that.

Wabash hosts WashU on Oct. 24. Those games will feel like playoff games. Under a better system, the loser wouldn't automatically be playing for a bowl bid.

Cross Country puts together solid finish in the rain

GABE FINK '30
STAFF WRITER

The Wabash cross country team braved the rain-soaked Jenna Strong CC Fall Classic, finishing fifth thanks to a strong performance from Sam Vaught '29 as well as his point-scoring teammates. Taking place at Wilmington College in Ohio on October 16, the Little Giants placed five runners in the top 88. The team's performance showed resilience by adapting to weather, as well as improvement as they seek to close the gap between teammates. As the championship season approaches, the Little Giants look to build on their momentum and improve going forward.

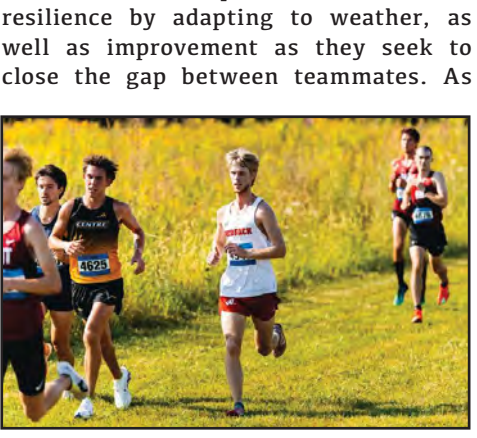

PHOTO COURTESTY OF NICO KLEMENTZOS

Johnathan Loney '28 grinds it out in the middle of the race at the Gill Dodds invitational on September 18

Overall, the team finished fifth out of the 18 point-scoring teams. For the overall team standings, Findlay and Rio Grande tied for first, followed by Shawnee State in third and the host Wilmington in fourth. The Little Giants secured fifth, beating out Pikeville, Hanover, Wittenberg and Midway. The team's success took shape thanks to Vaught and his continued run of good form, alongside contributions from the Little Giants as a whole.

"Vaught was outstanding as he has been all year," said head coach Tyler McCreary.

Vaught built upon his success at the Greater Louisville Cross Country Classic where he finished with a time of 25:31. He maintained his position as the team's front runner, finishing in the top 11 for the second consecutive time with a commendable 9th. He finished the 8,000 meter Jim Boland Men's course in 25:58, only 46 seconds off of Tyler Jenkins, who won with a time of 25:12. In terms of runners in point scoring teams, Vaught finished second.

Other contributors to the Wabash result include Johnathan Loney '28, who was the second Little Giant to cross the finish line. He improved upon his previous result of 71st, placing 34th with an overall time of 27:10. Next up was Cooper Knoblauch '30 who finished in 70th place with a time of 28:01. Last among the point scoring runners was Owen Dilley '30, who finished with his best result of the season so far with 88th place.

An issue the team has been working on in recent weeks is how spread out the results have been in terms of the finishing order. The Little Giants' last outing saw Vaught finish in 11th, with his nearest teammate finishing 60 places behind him. This time around, Loney finished only 25 places behind Vaught, which demonstrates the work the team has been putting in to close the gap. In order for the team's success to really take shape, they need to come together and continue to help the other runners improve and finish higher on the standings. The result in Wilmington proves a step in the right direction

"Running in the rain was difficult," said Evan Shupe '27. "A lot of holes and uneven ground made running especially hard. We also had to run on a lot of gravel and concrete that we weren't used to in spikes."

Rain provides a whole other challenge alongside the already present difficulties in running 8,000 meter courses. The Little Giants had to be mindful of the changing conditions while still maintaining their form going into the competition. The adverse weather provided the team with an opportunity to prove how they respond to challenges. Despite this, the team still produced a good result and showed adaptability when the need arose.

"This team is ready to go into the NCAC Championship with a chip on their shoulder," said McCreary.

Being able to adapt to unforeseen challenges will be crucial as the team gears up for championship season. The team is in a really good spot and continues to work hard to improve with each competition. Despite the challenges they've faced, they have proven themselves and that the Little Giants are a presence not to be ignored.