



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25 AND WILL DUNCAN '27

Chapel Sing rankings: 1. ΛΧΑ 2. ΣΧ 3. ΔΤΔ 4. ΦΚΨ 5. ΒΘΠ

La Alianza renews Buy Local Competition

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
 POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

On a campus that prides itself on its philanthropic success, it is hard to stand out. However, La Alianza's Buy Local Competition has managed to do just that.

The Buy Local Competition is an incentive-driven contest that aims to encourage members of the Wabash community to spend money at local businesses in Crawfordsville. Entrants can submit their receipts to La Alianza Treasurer Jesse Herrera '26 by email or text in exchange for tickets in a raffle. The more you spend, and the more receipts you submit, the more tickets with your name on it are entered into the raffle.

"We want it to be seen that Wabash men go out and help people."

- Treasurer of La Alianza
 Jesse Herrera '26

The winner of the raffle will receive a \$100 Amazon gift card, second place \$50 to Amazon and \$25 to the 1832 Brew, and third place is another \$25 Brew gift card. The prizes may be motivation enough, but Herrera – who organized the competition this year – believes there is a more important reason for students to participate.

Continued page 2

Football shuts out St. Norbert in season opener

Looks ahead to Homecoming bout with Battling Bishops

HAIKEN DIEMER-MCKINNEY '26
 STAFF WRITER

A cool fall air, hot grills along Mud Hollow and seats filling up at Little Giant Stadium reminded the Wabash community of one thing – football is back. On September 7, the Wabash College football team kicked off their season in style with a decisive 31-0 shutout against St. Norbert College, marking the program's first shutout since 2019.

The Little Giants showcased their strong defensive presence, highlighted by an epic 100-yard fumble recovery for a touchdown to close out the first half. As St. Norbert's offense was on the one-yard line, Cooper Jarvis '25 knocked the ball out of the running back's hand, allowing Sam Ringer '26 to scoop up the loose football and take it to the house. Ringer's fumble return for a touchdown broke the Wabash record for the longest fumble return of 93 yards set by BJ Hammer '01 in 2000.

"I didn't know I had a touchdown until about the 10-yard line," said Ringer. "I slowed down enough for our corner to block their running back and that was enough for me to get down the sideline and outrun everyone else."

Continued page 7



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Running back Xavier Tyler '26 is lifted into the air by a lineman after scoring his first touchdown against St. Norbert on September 7, 2024 at Little Giant Stadium.

Trump and Harris face off in first debate

JAMES WALLACE '26
 NEWS EDITOR

In what was the first, and possibly only, debate between former President Donald J. Trump and current Vice President Kamala Harris, voters watched as the two candidates for the 2024 election clashed on September 10, 2024, in the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.

"I probably took a bullet to the head because of the things that they say about me."

- Former President Donald J. Trump

The debate was hosted by ABC News and featured a fairly structured arrangement in which both candidates had limited time for every response, microphones were muted when it was not their turn and there was no live audience to react. However, after a civil shaking of hands between the two candidates to start the evening, this structure was hardly followed by either candidate.

While the debate covered a variety of topics – the economy, immigration, abortion, firearms, race relations and healthcare – each candidate kept falling back onto the main points of their campaigns when prompted.

Continued page 2

La Alianza renews Buy Local Competition

Continued from page 1

“We want it to be seen that Wabash men go out and help people,” said Herrera. “We want to go out and do things, and show local businesses that they’re one of us. We’d like as many guys as we can get to push this message that we’re all one community.”

“I’m confident we’ll break the \$15,000 goal.”

- President of La Alianza
Cris Cantu '26

La Alianza has higher hopes than ever for the Buy Local Competition’s third iteration in as many years. The group aims to improve on its tally from last year of \$12,000 spent at small businesses in just two weeks. That was an improvement from the competition’s inaugural year when just south of \$10,000 was spent at local businesses. This year’s goal is a whopping \$15,000. Without a doubt, \$15,000 is a steep goal. However, La Alianza President Cris Cantu '26 is confident this target can be smashed by the Wabash community. Institutional backing from the College and exciting news about the new Latino Community Center turned a lot of peoples’ heads toward the work La Alianza has been doing.

“I’m confident we’ll break the \$15,000 goal because more people are looking at what we’re doing,” said Cantu. “It’s not that people didn’t want to help as much before, but some people just didn’t know what we did because we were small. That’s fine, but now we have a spotlight, we’re trying to capitalize off the spotlight in a positive way.”

One of the misconceptions Wabash community members looking to compete in Buy Local may have is that there is only a small list of businesses and restaurants that can be submitted. Herrera wants people to know that any local small business goes, not just the usual go-tos for Wabash students.

“It’s not restricted to one list of 10 places, everywhere counts,” said Herrera. “There are tons of businesses out here. It doesn’t have to be catered just to food, clothing or gifts. You can go anywhere.”

The Buy Local Competition is just one of many events La Alianza has planned for the semester. The group plans to co-host some TGIFs, continue their much-adored carne asada grill outs and run a Homecoming tailgate this Saturday with the Mariachi club. La Alianza will also continue to help out in the wider Crawfordsville community by reading to students at local elementary schools and offering translation services to people.

Trump and Harris face off in first debate

Continued from page 1

For Trump, immigration made an appearance in many of his answers about other topics, such as the economy. This was likely due to the familiarity of the topic for his voter base, and Harris’s lackluster job in controlling immigration during her time as Vice President. Harris, on the other hand, touted her economic plan, which features a “child tax cut of \$6000” and a “\$50000 tax deduction to give to small businesses,” both of which are a part of a plan for an “opportunity economy.”

However, while immigration was a main point for Trump, he did manage to hurt his position when he discussed the current administration’s lack of response. When talking about Harris’s mismanagement of the border, he falsely claimed that Haitian migrants were eating Ohioan citi-

zens’ dogs and cats. This baseless claim hurt Trump’s credibility, as the far fetched statement pushed away potential voters.

Healthcare in general was also brought up — most notably when talking about the Affordable Care Act. While Harris claimed that the Affordable Care Act needed to be strengthened, Trump took digs at it, but came up short in his rebuttal. When asked what his plan to replace the Affordable Care Act was, Trump could only respond that “I have a concept of a plan.”

Both candidates were also asked about abortion, a divisive topic that is a make-or-break for many voters. While Trump touted that he had given the people what they had wanted by creating the opportunity for Roe V. Wade to be overturned, Harris delivered an emotional monologue about how Trump had taken

away a woman’s right to her body.

Another claim made by Trump during the debate surrounded his assassination attempt that occurred on July 13, 2024, in Butler, Pennsylvania. After Harris commented that no one would be able to stop Trump if he was let back in the White House, Trump responded by saying, “I probably took a bullet to the head because of the things that they say about me.”

The two candidates’ difference in performance could also be seen in the distinct differences between their closing arguments. Harris, who delivered closing remarks first, painted herself as a candidate from a new generation who would help the country to turn the page on all of the lies and rhetoric of Trump. Trump’s response in his closing remarks focused on the fact that Harris has had three and a half years to accomplish her campaign promises, so “why hasn’t she done it?” He also touted his performance as President and promised strong leadership back in the White House.

While this was Harris’ first presidential debate, making her a newcomer with low expectations, she did most things on the debate stage right. Trump as a seasoned debate veteran, on the other hand, was put in news headlines for all of the wrong reasons. With less than two months before Election Day on November 5, 2024, voters won’t have to wait long to see the impact that the first, and possibly only, presidential debate will have on the next government of the United States.



COURTESY OF ABC

Former President Donald J. Trump and current Vice President Kamala Harris shake hands before their debate on September 10, 2024, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mental Health Mile invites tough conversations about suicide

TY MURPHY '27
STAFF WRITER

Last year, the Sphinx Club hosted Leslie Weirich for her Chapel Talk “One Second of Hope” where she detailed her story of losing her son and former student Austin Weirich '18 on September 10, 2016 to suicide. She looked on to a full chapel of students and shared a vulnerable story on men’s mental health and suicide. Many students were moved to tears and still remember this talk one year later.

“It was a really rich and close to home talk that really

engrained a statement about mental health into my mind,” said Landon Huber '27.

Following Weirich’s first Chapel Talk, Leslie’s Hope, a suicide prevention and advocacy organization started after the passing of Weirich’s son, hosted a 5k to continue spreading their message of suicide prevention and mental health. It was a major success with a significant portion of the student body and Crawfordsville community attending. Participants were exposed to hard conversations about men’s mental health

and this year a very similar event will be taking place.

On September 19, the College will be hosting the Mental Health Mile immediately following Weirich’s upcoming Chapel Talk. While not the same 5k as last year, the Sphinx Club and the Student Development and Wellness department hope that making the event a mile will prove even more successful.

“Doing a 5k on a Saturday morning isn’t the easiest on student schedules,” said Student Development and

Wellness Coordinator Tristen Myers. “Since my priority is serving students, I changed the event into the Mental Health Mile during the week, just to be more accessible and hopefully reach a wider audience.”

With a lot of these changes Myers hopes for an even greater attendance than last year. The 5k was attended by over 300 Wabash students and was noted as a great success in spreading an important message. These aspirations have grown even bigger.

“I hope that by doing it during the week and immediately after Chapel [Talk], maybe we reach 400 or 500 plus students,” said Myers.

With September being Suicide Prevention Month, organizations across campus are working to bring awareness to the issue of suicide — especially when it hits so close to home.

“Every year in September, the Sphinx Club does its best to bring awareness to mental health and suicide prevention,” said Sphinx Club President Luka DiFilippo '25. “The mile is an event to help the student body feel more open about being sensitive to this. My role in this is to be welcoming to everyone across campus and to get as many people in attendance as possible.”

While this month puts a focus on mental health, the College doesn’t want the hard conversations to stop after the mile.

“Being an all-male campus, we want to continue to edu-



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Wabash men prepare to run in the 5K memorial on September 8, 2023 behind Little Giant Stadium.

cate students and staff on the value of prioritizing mental health,” said Head Counselor Keri Francis. “We know there is an increased risk for this population, and we want to recognize the risk and normalize help seeking. We also think it is important to cultivate a culture of vulnerability and empathy towards one another, even if you have not experienced the same struggles.”

Creating a culture of vulnerability is important for any community — because Wabash has felt the impact of suicide before, a big part of the reason for the Mental Health Mile is to spread a message that students and members of the community are not alone.

“You never know who is struggling,” said DiFilippo. “Be there for everyone at all times. Remember Austin Weirich and Evan Hansen '16. We miss them dearly, and we never want to experience anything like that ever again.”

Thanks to Myers, Weirich, the Sphinx Club and more, the College is getting to be a part of another impactful

community event and hopefully future students will also. Thanks to popularity from last year’s event there is a desire to continue doing such things for the community in the future.

“We do hope to make this a yearly thing,” said DiFilippo. “It is great for the community. It brings us all together and allows us to spread awareness and be there for each other in times of need.”

September invites all students to have hard conversations with each other and become more aware of the challenges of suicide and how to prevent it. All students are encouraged to attend Weirich’s Chapel Talk on September 19 and participate in the mental health mile. In a community affected so greatly by the effects on mental health, the organizers are hopeful that the Mental Health Mile will continue to be a popular gathering. But more than anything, the organizers hope to leave a message to students that they are not alone and there is always someone looking after them.

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Freshmen react to whirlwind Homecoming Q&A with the hottest new members in town



PHOTO BY KYLE FOSTER '27

Phi Kappa Psi pledges participate in Homecoming chants while brothers watch on September 10, 2024 on the Mall.

TY MURPHY '27
STAFF WRITER
Nathan Hollcraft '28 - Phi Kappa Psi

Q: How confident are you and the house feeling about the preparation for Chapel Sing?

A: I am feeling confident in my pledge class. We have a few guys just on the edge, but I'm confident that their determination and our help will get them there and that they'll have it down. We have the biggest group and we're definitely trying to get the win. I'm really excited!

Q: What are you most looking forward to the rest of the week and into the weekend?

A: I am most looking forward to the homecoming tailgate. Just all the guys from the house having fun and continuing to bond together. Tailgates are one of the events that really bring out the word brotherhood. Just all of us having fun and getting to know each other.

Mason Gilliam '28 - FIJI

Q: Do you think your experience would be different if Homecoming was later in the semester?

A: I think it would've been the same.

Q: What has you the most excited about homecoming week?

I'm excited for it to be over.

Q: What has you the most excited about Homecoming week?

A: Building stronger relationships with my pledge brothers (you can swap out "pledge" for something else if you need to). This is likely the most time we will all spend together collaborating and working on something as a unit, so the memories and relationships that I'll get from homecoming week will be great to reflect on later and great for my future with my pledge brothers.

Luis Hernandez '28 - Lambda Chi Alpha

Q: What have been the challenges with preparing for Homecoming?

A: My biggest challenge in preparing for Homecoming has been getting ahead on homework, I was recommended to do that by upperclassmen in the house. Another struggle has been getting enough rest so that I can perform well in soccer.

Q: Do you think your experience would be different if Homecoming was later in the semester?

A: Homecoming week would be even more difficult if it was happening later in the semester because my workload has been ramping up and I don't believe that I have hit the peak of it yet. Having it this early allows me to have a lighter workload than if it were later in the semester.

Paul Hawksworth '28 - FIJI

Q: What have been the challenges with preparing for Homecoming?

A: It's been a large time commitment. There's been a bit of stress with trying to prepare for Chapel Sing while also coming up with ideas for the banner, float, etc. It's been stressful to stay on top of academics when I'm committing so much time to preparing for Homecoming.

Q: Do you think your experience would be different if Homecoming was later in the semester?

A: I think my experience would be worse. I think spending more time preparing for Homecoming would only make me more stressed and more ready to get past Homecoming week. I like that it's early this year just so I have more time to devote to being involved on campus and more time to focus on academics after Homecoming ends.



PHOTO BY KYLE FOSTER '27

Beta Theta Pi pledges stand in line watching other houses perform their chants.

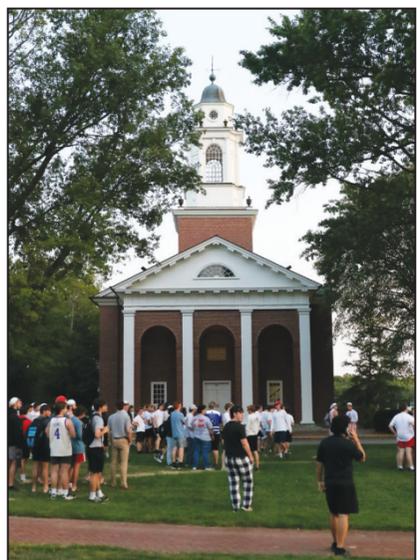


PHOTO BY KYLE FOSTER '27

Students gather on the Mall to participate in Homecoming activities.



One day a year

Wabash fans celebrate the football home opener

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

Crawfordsville, IN — It doesn't take much to make Wabash fans happy. Hot grills, cold coolers and a brand new season of Little Giant football was enough to get the Wabash faithful up early for pregame festivities on Saturday, September 7.

Hours before the game started, Wabash students, parents, alumni and more were flooding into Mud Hollow where tailgaters enjoyed the thrill of opening day.

Members of the Sphinx Club, donning their full-striped attire and carrying milk crates, dotted the grassy field before they took to the sidelines.

"It's beautiful," said Luis Rivera '25, a member of the Sphinx Club. "I can't wait to be back on the sidelines with my brothers. I love that this is the quintessential Wabash brotherhood experience, and it's my favorite time of year."

The ten fraternities, along with independents, were set up at their tailgating lots, adding to the atmosphere. All across Mud Hollow, familiar traditions resurfaced for another year. Phi Delta Theta pledges wore their distinctive green pots and members of Sigma Chi painted their chests. Lambda Chi Alpha celebrated in their front yard just a hundred feet away from the concourse, where fans steamed into the open gates of Little Giant Stadium. For many, this was the signal that the semester is fully underway.

"Looking around all the houses — and not just the houses, but independents coming out too — you know that Wabash is actually back," said Sarvik Chaudhary '25. "It's always a good feeling to see alumni come out and the students interact with each other. This is going to foreshadow how great this semester is going to look for the students at Wabash."

For seniors who've been around for opening day before, the day took on a new meaning. As they begin their final year as student-fans of Wabash football, the class of 2025 faces the pressure of making the most of the fall.

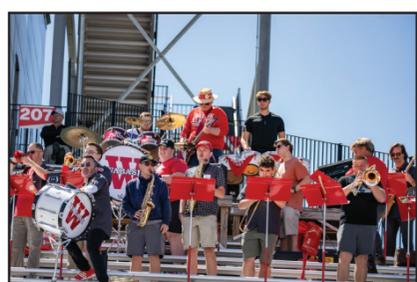
"It feels incredible," said Chris Zimmerman '25. "Senior year, it's my last go around. I'm happy to be here and to get hyped up with the boys and support the team."

Many alumni were able to return to their alma mater for the day of fun and anticipation.

"It's great to be back on campus on such a nice day for a football game," said Eugene King '78. "I love football. I love our Wabash team. Now hopefully we can have a successful season and take that Bell back."

Spirits and hopes were high across the board. From new experiences to a familiar sense of belonging, everyone had something to appreciate. One day a year, Wabash gets to come together to celebrate a new season of football and all that entails.

PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25 AND DIEGO BANUELOS '27



'Beetlejuice Beetlejuice' review: Twice the name, twice the movie?



COURTESY OF IMPERICON

BEN WALLACE '25
STAFF WRITER

"Beetlejuice Beetlejuice" is the biggest surprise of the year. I went in expecting a soulless cash grab, riding on the coattails of nostalgia for the beloved classic. Instead, I was delighted to find a film packed with sharp, well-timed jokes and the same quirky charm that made the original so unforgettable.

I'm usually not a fan of Tim Burton's signature style, but this movie struck a different chord with me. The whimsical camera work felt perfectly in sync with the film's tone, and the contrast between the vibrant afterlife and the grounded real world was masterfully executed.

The film opens by reintroducing Lydia Deetz, once again portrayed by Winona Ryder. Now all grown up, Lydia, who famously communicated with ghosts in the original movie, has taken her supernatural talents to the next level—hosting her own show where she helps people deal with the restless spirits haunting their lives. In the middle of filming, Lydia suddenly has a vision of Beetlejuice lurking in the live audience, forcing her to cancel the taping of that episode abruptly.

Next, the film introduces Jenna Ortega's character, Astrid, a role that feels like it was tailor-made for her. Even co-star Winona Ryder joked, "We were waiting for Jenna Ortega to be born" when asked about the long wait for the sequel.

It would be impossible to talk about a "Beetlejuice" movie without mentioning the man himself. Michael Keaton absolutely nails the role, delivering one hilarious moment after another. His comedic timing as Beetlejuice is spot-on, making every line and gag land perfectly.

Beetlejuice is a fascinating character because he keeps the audience in a constant state of uncertainty. His charisma makes you almost root for him, but his intentions are always questionable, leaving you conflicted about whether to side with him or not.

The afterlife realm is a cornerstone of both "Beetlejuice" films, serving as a bizarre, otherworldly backdrop that blends dark humor with surreal visuals. In "Beetlejuice Beetlejuice," our return to this strange dimension is marked by even more imaginative details and eccentric characters, like the hilarious duo Bob and Wolf. Their antics add a fresh wave of comedy to the chaotic, bureaucratic afterlife, enhancing the film's charm and

making it even more enjoyable. The quirky rules and unpredictable nature of this realm continue to set the tone, reminding us that in the world of the dead, anything can happen.

The film does have a few weaknesses, in my opinion, with the biggest flaw being the overload of plot points happening simultaneously. Just as you get fully invested in one storyline, the film abruptly shifts to another that you'd almost forgotten, disrupting the flow and making it hard to stay engaged.

The character Delores felt completely unnecessary, with an arc that could have easily been left out of the movie. Her inclusion seemed like a last-minute addition, as if Burton simply needed a role for his significant other, rather than serving any real purpose in the story.

Danny Elfman returns to compose the score, and once again, he delivers flawlessly. While the music is nearly identical to the original, it perfectly complements the quirky, offbeat tone of both films, making it a fitting choice all over again.

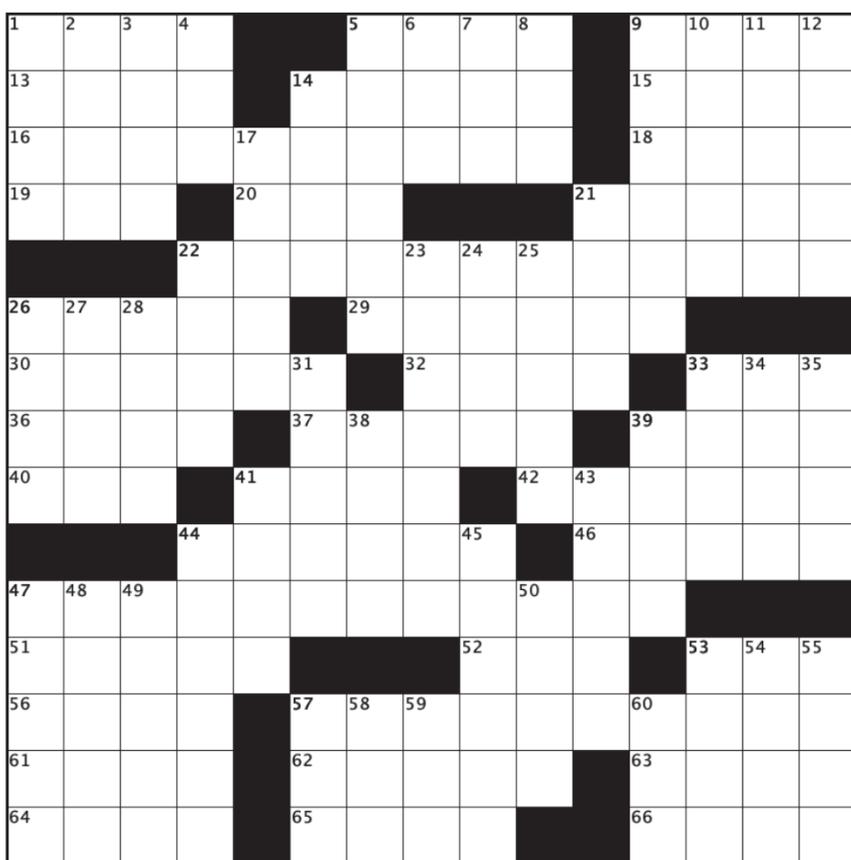
This movie definitely isn't for everyone. Tim Burton's style tends to leave a sour taste for some viewers (myself included), but I still recommend giving this one a shot. It's surprisingly funny and makes for a genuinely enjoyable time at the theater. While I always encourage seeing films on the big screen, if you're not ready to spend the \$7 at the Crawfordsville AMC, this is one I think most people will appreciate once it hits streaming.

FINAL VERDICT: 3.5/5 WALLYS



'Welcome!'

Crossword by
Logan Weilbaker '25



Across

1. Fighter's punches
5. Accessibility installment
9. Prayer end
13. Bit of land
14. "Do not let your deeds ____ your words" – Saint Jerome
15. Daily Planet employee
16. *57-Across competition in which the winner takes the W
18. Tiny parasite
19. Container for powder or beer
20. Gift given at Daniel K. Inouye International Airport
21. Gave off, as charisma
22. *Greek art installations on display for 57-Across?
26. Knucklehead
29. Like most pro athletes, at the end of their contracts
30. Attic walking hazard
32. Grammy winner Redding
33. Compete at an auction
36. "____ Woman" (ELO song)
37. The end of one's rope?
39. Theme in many ancient Greek plays
40. ____ Moines
41. Spanish surrealist
42. Oral
44. Former politician and convicted felon
46. Rival, say
47. *"Royal" procession during 57-Across
51. Yoga pose
52. Remy, e.g.
53. Charitable TV spot
56. Ink spots?
57. *College welcome week?
61. "A Death in the Family" author
62. Like leprechauns
63. Soothing substance
64. Tear, as garments
65. Football gear
66. Front-page articles

Down

1. One of four in a deck
2. Hunger (for)
3. Toot your own horn
4. Nine, on the cal.
5. Protester's imperative
6. Boxer who "floats like a bee"
7. Part of an hr.
8. Nickname for Margaret
9. Type of milk
10. Maze crop, aptly
11. Submit
12. Makeup of Maslow's hierarchy
14. Rarer than rare
17. Street corn often topped with cotija
21. Frequently-tipped bills
22. Call of the wild?
23. Canyon creator
24. Sluggers of Louisville
25. "Hasta la vista"
26. Chille
27. Pacifist's symbol
28. Sacred bird of Egypt
31. Voice actor Mel
33. Cake-making step
34. Twosome in a tabloid
35. "Don't admit it!"
38. Choir section
39. Kefa or Lucida Grande, for two
41. UFC CEO ____ White
43. Sauce made with pine nuts
44. Noticed, as Spiderman
45. Underline, perhaps
47. 2022 World Cup host
48. Screen time measure
49. Devoured
50. A pop
53. Bank
54. Bank deposit?
55. Periods
57. Commonly replaced joint
58. Pop star Rita
59. So-so, in modern parlance
60. British isle



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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.

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The Bachelor is a member of the Hoosier State and Indiana Collegiate Press Associations (HSPA and ICPA).

Our one true home



Matthew Lepper '25

Reply to this opinion at
mrlepper25@wabash.edu

Homecoming. A time of excitement, competition, unity and school spirit that is truly like no other. There is so much that goes into this week-long celebration of Wabash and those who came before us.

Freshmen make floats worthy of display case real estate from less-than-adequate materials. Alumni book their flights and pack their bags for a return to their true home. Voices across campus belt "Old Wabash" into the wee hours of the morning.

Amidst the mad dash on student, faculty and alumni bases to prepare for truly monumental events, I feel that we can get lost in what Homecoming is truly about.

For my brothers that were around for Homecoming last year, namely Chapel Sing, there may be a shroud of anxiety and concern regarding how things will be this time around.

We can rest easy knowing that precautions have been set in place, safety measures taken and hours have been spent conversing across meeting tables. As is with most things at Wabash, the responsibility falls on us students to make a difference.

This campus breathes through the student body, and we have all the tools necessary to make sure Wabash doesn't run out of air. My proposed call to action?

Through our actions, attitudes and intentions as students, let us make homecoming the most positive experience this campus has ever seen. Let us remember that the core existence of Homecoming is an opportunity for us as a campus to come together and celebrate the very institution that has undeniably left a mark on our lives, as well as those who walked these very bricks before we even knew what a Little Giant was.

To the freshmen, welcome! You're about to experience a week like you never had before. Whether intentional or not, a large portion of the success of homecoming rides on your shoulders. This isn't meant to add to your plate like a tutorial paper or trudging to study tables.

Rather, this is an opportunity early on in your career at Wabash to fully envelop yourself into the culture that makes this institution so special. Wabash will challenge you often, to be frank. So why not kick off your career by accepting the challenge of

Homecoming?

Cherish the late nights spent building floats, creating chants, attempting to get paint out of your clothes from adding the last details to your banner. Chances are these opportunities will be out of your grasp once this year passes, so treat it as such.

Connect and bond with your brothers, and embrace the fact that you as an individual are part of something greater during Homecoming. Take advantage of these fleeting years.

For all of my other upperclassmen, this ain't your first rodeo. You've (likely) seen Homecoming before, but I urge you to treat it like you've never seen masses of guys in white t-shirts and facepaint screaming "Old Wabash" so loud that the town of Crawfordsville puts out a noise ordinance.

Treat it like you've never marveled at the creativity and artistic ability of pledge classes. Treat it like you just submitted your deposit and are anxiously awaiting move-in day. We as upperclassmen have the chance to set the tone for how Homecoming is perceived, a position that can make or break Homecoming.

If we approach Homecoming with enthusiasm, positivity and unparalleled spirit, the rest will fall into place. Scream encouragement for your boys as they're fighting for their W, belt their chant like your own and just have fun with it.

In some time, we'll be the ones packing our bags for a voyage back to our one true home. Let's make the most of our time as students, before we trade books for briefcases.



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Lepper '25 raises his fist at the Homecoming game against Oberlin College on September 14, 2023.

HI-FIVES

FIVE THINGS WORTHY OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

CONCEPTS OF A PLAN

Lo-Five to the candidates for delivering an extremely predictable performance at the presidential debate. In case you missed it, you should be on high alert for Haitian pet thieves, supermax prisons run by RuPaul and some guy named "Abdul."

FORGIVE US FATHER, FOR WE HAVE SINNED

Lo-Five to fifth-ranked Notre Dame football for losing to Northern Illinois University. For those who don't follow football, this is like failing a Warner class.

IN THEIR JURASSIC ERA

Hi-Five to the dinosaurs of the Indianapolis Children's Museum for wearing friendship bracelets to celebrate the upcoming arrival of The Eras Tour. As far as we're concerned, you'll never go out of style.

THE PRETENDER

Lo-Five to Dave Grohl for cheating on his wife of 21 years and fathering a child with his mistress. I guess someone really was getting the best of you.

SMELLS LIKE TEAM SPIRIT

Lo-Five to the new Rhynes for nothing other than just being Rhynes. If you make it through the next two months, maybe — just maybe — you can earn yourselves a hi-five.

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Is enough, enough?



Jackson Bohrer '26

Reply to this opinion at
jabohrer26@wabash.edu

At what point do we say enough is enough? We need to take a hard look at our traditions and see if the risk we are taking is worth the reward. Wabash is a school rooted in tradition, but we cannot let it be our downfall. Homecoming is designed to bring the school together, a sequence of unifying events that leads to a victory on the football field. This should be a time for alumni to return to campus and remember the good old days. Lately, it has become hard for the alumni to remember their time here when they have to learn about the head traumas that keep occurring during

the traditions we all love.

In an age of sue first and ask questions later, we continue to put the campus at risk. The competition between houses has gone from friendly to hostile. Over the past three years, multiple people have been sent to the hospital over competitive tradition. Between scraps breaking out over white hats and concussions caused in Chapel Sing, where do we draw the line? Do we have to wait until the school comes down on us due to lawsuits or do we step up as a student body and make the change ourselves?

Everyone tries to throw the blame around for why things keep going wrong. The simple answer is to look in the mirror and look around campus. We have stopped improving because we don't want to interfere with tradition. We act like every tradition dates back to 1832. But I'll let you in on a well-known secret. None of our traditions go back that far. Our traditions have been molded and modified to fit the

needs of the campus. Look at Chapel Sing for example. Receiving a W used to be the worst thing that could happen to a Wabash man. Now it's one of the best feelings in the world.

Change has allowed this college to function all these years. We have adapted and overcome the obstacles in our way. The sad truth is if we keep making changes out of reaction to these incidents, the slip ups will eventually catch up to us. We need to start making a proactive change on this campus. A change where tradition is no longer harmful to the student body. This change isn't going to come from the administration, it has to come from us, the students. We need to hold each other accountable and prove that we uphold the standards that we claim to live by.

"The student is expected to conduct himself at all times, both on and off campus, as a gentleman and a responsible citizen." Can we honestly say that we all live by this? Our traditions are leading to violence and the frag-

mentation of campus. There must be a way to continue these traditions while upholding the Gentleman's Rule.

As a campus we keep talking about the change we want to make, so Wabash is more inviting and inclusive, but nothing has changed. We are supposed to be one brotherhood but constantly find ourselves breaking into factions. Pro-club versus anti-club, fraternity versus independent, house versus house. How can we effectively make change when we are constantly divided into these groups? We need to find a way to make competition friendly and focused on bringing the campus together. We need to show up to events that are designed to be all-campus. We can be proud to go Greek and be in our specific houses, but it doesn't have to be displayed at the expense of the rest of campus. Wabash is your home for four years. We should make the necessary changes to ensure we have a home to come back to.

Redefining Homecoming



Connor Craig '25 & Luka DiFilippo '25

Reply to this opinion at ccraig25@wabash.edu or ladifil25@wabash.edu



As seniors, we both have seen how Homecoming has been conducted for three years now; every time, there is always banter, competition and memories made among all competing classes during festivities. This has only been possible from Wabash being a tight-knit microcosm where our priorities are rooted in tradition and community. However, Homecoming in September of 2023 called for a redefinition of how events need to be facilitated. What occurred last year will never happen again, as that situation inspired a proportional response this year. The idea of what Homecoming “should look like” has been a heavy topic of conversation for us. The main focus of the Sphinx Club executive team the past few months has been to communicate proper expectations, prioritize the organization of events to ensure smooth operations and allow all students to maximize their experiences during this timeless tradition.

Homecoming is meant to be a time for brotherhood, comradery and unity among the Wabash community. While fraternities and independents compete in smaller competitions throughout the week, the entirety of Wabash comes together on Saturday to cheer on the football team during their first conference home competition.

From athletic challenges to creative displays, every group competing shows their pride for the College, not disdain for each other. Through the chants, the students show their unity by cheering for Wabash and against the opponent of the week. By painting and drawing their banner, they put Wally or the football team on display defeating the enemy. By creating their floats, they do much of the same. The floats, though, are on a much bigger scale that are towering over the opposing team as they enter Crawfordsville. The upperclassmen bring in athleticism by competing in dodgeball the day before the game.

During Chapel Sing, the freshmen and other participants exhibit the great-

est pride a Wabash man can offer: singing the fight song “Old Wabash.” Many see this event as a rite of passage for a Wabash Man. Although some see it as a competition between living units, in reality, it is the entire Wabash community coming together to present our love for the College to the world. “Old Wabash” is our greatest form of pride. From singing it at every athletic win to singing it after Chapel Talks, it is ingrained in our culture.

While all events proceed based on a usual schedule, the idea of what Homecoming “should look like” changes throughout the years. Homecoming used to originally be a tradition preserved mostly for fraternities and involved upperclassmen alike. Over time, there is clear evidence of this transforming into what we see today. For example: we’ve left behind stuffing saltines and sriracha in participants’ mouths during Chapel Sing and turned the tradition into an opportunity to celebrate individuals who have learned the song. Now, after meeting with faculty and administrative staff that have seen this gradual shift in tradition, we have realized that traditions are meant to change. They morph over time the “good” is carried onto new generations of Wabash men, and the “bad” becomes a footnote in the archives.

Taking the time to reevaluate how Homecoming functions has been strenuous indeed, but critically thinking through everything that needs to be explicitly said and taking an organized approach is the expectation. Elevating the standard for both the student body and the Sphinx Club to be fully engaged in participating should be a byproduct as we move towards putting more effort into this week. We’ve done everything we possibly can up until this point to prioritize the safety and enjoyment of everyone participating in Homecoming 2024. Buy into the Wabash community, meet new people, embrace the traditions and enjoy this year’s Homecoming week!

Crafting a strategy for your college years



Jennifer Merrell

Reply to this opinion at JenL.Merrell.com

So, you’ve made it to college. You and everyone else in your freshman tutorial. In a few short years, you’ll be going head to head with college students near and far as you enter a competitive job market. You may hope you are prepared for interviews. You may hope you did all the right things. You may hope you get that internship, job or grad school acceptance. Hope is not a strategy and strategy starts now.

You have choices to make every day in college and it may be the first time you’re making those choices all by yourself. Sure, you’ve got an advisor that is telling you what the requirements are to graduate in four years. Maybe they are helping you lay out the order in which you take those classes or complete those projects. Maybe you are even required to do an internship. This is the bare minimum.

The bare minimum in college is like showing up to a potluck with a bag of store-bought chips: technically edible, socially acceptable but ultimately unfulfilling. It’s the academic equivalent of a participation trophy. You were there, but did you really experience the game?

Crafting a college strategy to stand out in the competitive workforce involves more than just fulfilling academic requirements. It demands a proactive approach that extends beyond the classroom, encompassing a blend of academic excellence, experiential learning and personal development.

So what are you going to do? Maintaining a strong GPA is fundamental. It’s equally important to dive into your chosen field deeper than the minimum requirements. Go beyond your assignments and lectures. Engage in supplementary materials. Listen to visiting speakers. Seek out opportunities to apply the theoretical knowledge you are gaining in class. Obtain complementary designations or certificates. These are activities you may need to do without pay or grades or any accolades. Developing a growth mindset now will help you prepare for the real world and solidify lifelong learning habits that will enhance and accelerate your career.

In addition to the technical skills you are acquiring, focus on developing the transferable skills that are sought after in every role and in every industry: critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration and adaptability. Participate in extracurricular activities, clubs or organizations where you can hone these skills.

Whether an internship is required for your major or not, do one. Actually, do two. Why?

If you wait until the summer before your senior year to do an internship and it turns out you can’t stand (for

example) the insurance industry, you’re on a short timeline to experiment in different industries or in different roles. Start early. Start looking for that first professional internship during the fall of your sophomore year. Actively seek opportunities that align with your career aspirations and enable you to apply your knowledge in a practical setting. If more experience gets you more and better paying opportunities, why not differentiate yourself from your peers?

Now for the tough love. If a paid internship isn’t available to you, do an unpaid internship. I know that’s not a popular opinion. Get over it. If your options are an unpaid internship or none, choose the unpaid internship and work a second job for money. It’s not fun. It’s not easy. Guess what? Life isn’t always fun or easy.

Internship experiences provide insights in industry practices and work cultures. They will help you develop practical skills, build a professional network and show that you can translate what you are learning into real work. Most importantly, they will unveil to you what you really like or don’t like, what kind of industries or roles are out there (that you may never have otherwise known about), and will help guide the next steps in your academic journey. You might even find joy in or passion for something you never knew about.

Networking starts now. Attend career fairs, industry roundtables, coffee connections and workshops that connect you to potential employers. These are not just for juniors and seniors. Your

first few years are an opportunity you will never have again. This is your opportunity to ask absolutely any question, practice and mess up while having potential employers be extremely forgiving. Additionally, an employer that sees you interested in their organization year over year is going to remember you. I can tell you hands down employers remember those who are impressive as much as those who show up consistently and ask thoughtful questions.

This is also the best time to start working on your online presence on LinkedIn, craft a compelling resume you can continually update, and practice those interview skills.

Now is the time to sanitize your social media. You know that photo from last week’s fraternity party. The one on your public Instagram? Your future employers are checking. They don’t care if “everyone is doing it.” If I have two candidates that I’m thinking of hiring and one has some questionable content on social media, I’m hiring the other one. It really doesn’t matter if you think that is “judgemental.” You are being judged not only for your skills, but how you might represent an organization. Can I trust you as a representative of my brand?

By implementing these strategies, you can position yourself as a highly competitive candidate in the workforce, equipped with the knowledge, skills and experiences necessary to thrive in your chosen career path.

So what’s your strategy? It starts now.

Football beats St. Norbert 31-0

Continued from page 1

The Little Giants' stout defensive performance kept St. Norbert's run-heavy offense off the scoreboard. Brock Robertson '26 led the team with 10 tackles, while the team accumulated 69 tackles total. Associate Head Coach Jake Gilbert feels the team is already gaining momentum in his first year of running the defense.

"I thought the interior line was great and Ringer was strong on the perimeter," said Gilbert. "We were stout on the line of scrimmage, devoting a lot of numbers to the blocks and it worked."

Although the defense claimed the spotlight, it's easy to overlook how polished and efficient the offense looked under new starting quarterback Blake White '25. White threw for 175 yards, going 20 for 27 passing with an 11-yard touchdown to tight end Connor Garrity '25. While being the predecessor to Liam Thompson '24 is a tall task, White is letting the work he invested in the offseason set him up for this moment.

"I really wasn't nervous coming into this game," said White. "Each day in the off-season was about working to get 1% better and being as ready as I could to support my team and get the win."

Head Football Coach Don Morel was also encouraged by White's debut, as he committed no turnovers and adjusted to the different paces of the game. Coach Morel also knows that through film study and scouting a tough defense, White's performance was a reflection of his preparation.

"He is the first one into practice everyday to look at



Five Wabash defenders converge on a St. Norbert ballcarrier on September 7, 2024 at Little Giant Stadium.

film," said Morel. "He spends about an hour studying with me and another hour on his own. He's super driven and wants to be great."

"I think our defense is still the best one I've played," said White. "Knowing the defense I practice with everyday is better than the one I see on the field makes me feel better about what I'm going up against."

On the ground, Xavier Tyler '26 shined in his debut as the starting running back, rushing for 78 yards and securing the first and last touchdown of the game. Tyler set the tone for the Little Giants' running attack, allowing the offense to stay balanced and keep St. Norbert's defense guessing.

"I've waited two years sitting behind other guys, learning the plays and now I know what it takes to step into this role," said Tyler. "Overall, it's very special to not only serve as a veteran presence but be a leader for the offense and guys in my position."

Wabash will face its first conference opponent in Ohio Wesleyan University on Saturday, September 14 for their Homecoming matchup. Unlike St. Norbert, who was centered around running the ball with tight formations, Ohio Wesleyan operates with a spread out, pass-heavy offense. The defense will emphasize maintaining their physicality and being active on the ball in the pass game,

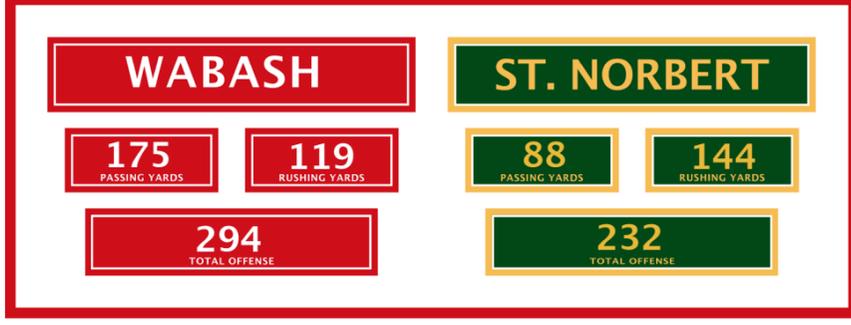
while the offense will work to establish its identity.

"We're an offense that runs the ball, hits big plays and moves the ball down the field, while not afraid to punt if we fail on third down," said Morel. "We're still figuring out who we are and this week will be one step towards that goal."

Identity is one thing to keep a team going, but it takes a special culture to reach new heights. Following the 31-0 victory, a swarm of players surrounded Coach Gilbert, jumping up and down in celebration. Beyond physical preparation, opening the season with a statement win is a testament to Gilbert's leadership and the positive impact he's making on his players.

"I'm close with our guys," said Gilbert. "I'm relational and authentic with them. I hope Saturday was a confidence building moment for our team and I want our guys to believe, because belief precedes action. I know what we can do with our talent, but I want to build champions before championships."

The road to an NCAC championship continues on Saturday against the Battling Bishops, with the intention to send a message to the conference that the Little Giants are here to play.



GRAPHIC BY ETHAN WALLACE '25

McRoberts: Week 1 NCAC football power rankings

NOAH MCROBERTS '25
STAFF WRITER

1. DePauw University (1-0, 0-0 NCAC)

This placement might be controversial. The Dannies handed the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology Fightin' Engineers a 57-14 beatdown to kick start their season. To add insult to injury, Rose-Hulman failed to score until the final quarter, which began with a 50-0 score. In recent years, this game has been close with scores of 33-21 and 17-14 in the last two seasons. If they want to three-peat as conference champions, the Dannies will have to tackle a lot tougher opponents than Rose-Hulman's finest.

2. Wabash College (1-0, 0-0 NCAC)

A 31-0 shutout to start the year is as good as it gets. Tell me the last time the Dannies returned a fumble 100 yards for a TD! I bet you can't. However, it isn't just the defense that proved impressive over the weekend, as Blake White '25 had a solid debut as starting QB. As a punter, he managed to pin the opposition inside the twenty on three separate occasions, one of which was neatly nestled inside the 1-yard line. He even cracked the 200-yard mark in total punting yards, averaging 40 yards per punt. We haven't seen numbers like that since Joey Annee '22 was an All-American my freshman year. It's safe to say we're in good hands.

3. The College of Wooster (1-0, NCAC 0-0)

Given a rather underwhelming season last year that saw them getting shellacked by DePauw, Wittenberg and Ohio Wesleyan, despite close matches with Denison and Wabash, Wooster came into week 1 as a legitimate wildcard. Who knew what kind of Scottish team we would see this year? Well, a year removed from a 63-43 loss at Wilmington College, Wooster put the fear of God in that same Quaker squad with a 56-13 beatdown. If week 1 is any indication, we might see Wooster's return to the upper echelons of the conference.

4. Denison University (0-1, 0-0 NCAC)

You know, I was pretty happy about the situation with the red teams in the conference until a few minutes ago. Although Denison lost almost their entire starting offense last year. They retained their best player for a fifth year. Trey Fabrocini, the 3-time all-conference RB decided to return and terrorize NCAC teams once more. If there is hope for other conference teams, it is that their 7-31 loss to 24-ranked Linfield University was significantly worse than previous seasons.

5. Wittenberg University (0-1, 0-0 NCAC)

The Ohian Tigers are hurting most of the red teams following the horde of graduating seniors last year. Week 1 was a pretty mediocre showing against a solid if not unspectacular Baldwin Wallace ball club, and I'm afraid that we will be looking at a lot more mediocrity from Wittenberg as the season rolls on. However, since neither team uploaded the stats following their matchup, I couldn't really tell you why they will be mediocre. So...trust me bro.

6. Ohio Wesleyan University (1-0, 0-0 NCAC)

It is tough to gauge the Bishop's skill level after beating Otterbein, a team that went 0-10 last year. However, the Cardinals play in a high-quality OAC conference and put together quality performances against the likes of Capital University, and even scored 22 on John Carroll University in the final matchup of the year. They also didn't get bit by turnover like Wittenberg or Denison did, and they played within one score of both of those teams last year.

7. Kenyon College (1-0, 0-0 NCAC)

The matchup in Gambier, OH last week went about as well as you could expect from a matchup between such notable programs as Bluffton University and Kenyon. Fans probably breathed a sigh of relief when the final tick on the game clock hit zero. The Owls won the 13-6 snoozefest a year after losing to Bluffton 51-35. So, good for them, but I don't foresee them overcoming any conference opponents above them on this list.

8. Hiram College (0-1, 0-0 NCAC)

In what might be the weirdest box score I've ever seen, Heidelberg came out guns-a-blazing last Thursday with 38 points in the first 20 minutes of play, all while holding Hiram scoreless until the last five minutes of the first half, after which saw Hiram score 14. Then, neither team proceeded to score for the remainder of the contest. Both teams succeeded on less than 23% of their third-down opportunities, and there were only a combined three successful fourth-down attempts in a game that saw 11 chances. To the chagrin of all fans of quality football, more contests like this may be in store with Kenyon and Oberlin still on the schedule.

9. Oberlin College (0-1, 0-0 NCAC)

Well, at least you can say Oberlin tried. In addition, they provided Calvin University with their first-ever football victory. I don't know if it makes the situation better or worse if I include that it was Calvin's first-ever football game. What was bad though was the 44 points that separated the two teams. I suppose Knights are better than Yeomen in the hierarchy of names and medieval feudalism as well. We shall see if they can scratch across what might be their only shot for a W this weekend with an equally poor Anderson team.

Tennis opens at UW Whitewater tournament



PHOTO BY KYLE FOSTER '27

Cole Shifferly '26 focuses on an incoming serve during a doubles scrimmage at tennis practice on September 9, 2024.

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

Wabash tennis faced off against a strong tournament scene for their first competition of the fall calendar. The University of Wisconsin White-Water Warhawk Fall Invitational on the weekend of September 6, put Wabash players up against opponents from top-end Division III schools and several scholarship colleges.

With the most important matches of the season being reserved for the spring, the fall season is a chance for younger players to get settled into collegiate tennis and for experienced players to play challenging opponents without having the weight of the season on their shoulders.

Courtside, the team focused on cheering each other on with their distinctly Wabash-brand encouragement that brings out the team-side

of an individual sport. The emphasis on team support is vital to the success in a sport that often hinges on the mental aspects of the game.

"Most of the players, before they arrive here, are familiar with the individual aspect of the sport," said Bickett. "From a team cohesion, team building aspect, the really important thing that we wanted to really emphasize was making sure if we weren't playing, we were getting out there, supporting our teammates and helping them through tough moments. Because that is much more difficult to do in a [tournament setting] than it is in a team match. But if we can do it well there, we can do well in a team match."

On the court, the tournament was divided into nine singles sections and four doubles sections, giving the Little Giants an opportunity

to field a large portion of the lineup.

The Little Giants' resilience was tested across the two days of competition. Tharakesh Ashokar '26, Rafael Rin '27 and Samuel Soto Garcia '28 each placed third in the 2-singles, 3-singles and 6-singles brackets, respectively. Each third place winner had to return to the court after a loss in the semifinal and bounce back to win bronze.

"The team atmosphere was just as good as always — loud noise, yelling my name, cheering me up, literally transferring the energy through voice and cheers," said Ashokar. "After losing the first set, looking at them rooting for me always makes me realize that winning and losing doesn't matter. They're going to support me no matter what. It gave me the energy and confidence to do the right things in the match."

Cole Shifferly '26, who will be tasked with being the top player for the Little Giants, finished fourth in the 1-singles bracket against the toughest competition the tournament had to offer.

In doubles, the team found less success, but still turned out a third-place finish at 2-doubles from a duo of Ashokar and Rin.

Along with Soto Garcia, other freshmen members of the team found success in their collegiate debuts. Faustino Dimuro '28 and Maksymilian Domanski '28

recorded fourth-place finishes in their respective singles positions. Murilo Guarnieri '28 combined with Shifferly to finish fourth at 1-doubles.

Several players entered into brackets at a position above where they played in previous seasons, still finding success against stronger opponents. The depth that allowed the team to field players in higher spots, will also give the team a competitive and flexible lineup.

"Look across our roster," said Bickett. "We have a strong level of talent, and I could put guys in numerous positions and still feel confident that they would be successful."

Out of the mix of wins and losses that any team faces in a tournament, the Little Giants have the opportunity to take a point of reference for where they need to be when the March and April conference schedule rolls around.

"Our guys did a really good job of understanding what the purpose of that trip was — to play good, strong, competitive matches, to be challenged, to be pushed and to get better," said Bickett. "And I think the majority of them did that."

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One hundred yards to a historic achievement

Sam Ringer '26 leads Wabash defense to shut out St. Norbert

ELIJAH GREENE '25
PHOTO EDITOR

It's hard to imagine a more perfect start for the Wabash football team this year. With so many questions surrounding Associate Head Football Coach Jake Gilbert '98 and his new defense, as well as the efficacy of a Wabash offense replacing half its starters, the Little Giants put the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) on notice with a 31-0 win over St. Norbert College.

Their first shutout in five years, the Little Giants looked stalwart on defense all afternoon, with the proverbial cherry on top being a three-play goal line stand at the conclusion of the first half. On third down at the one-yard line, senior line-backer Cooper Jarvis '25 punched the ball free from the hands of St. Norbert quarterback Peyton Lyon, resulting in a 100-yard fumble recovery touchdown from NCAC Defensive Player of the Week Sam Ringer '26.

"When the ball was snapped, it was crazy," said Ringer. "When [the other team's] under center, you expect a QB sneak. When he dove, Cooper reached up and punched at the ball. The ball actually bounced off one of their own lineman's head right into my hands, and then I just ran."

Ringer, a rhetoric major



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Sam Ringer '26 sprints out of the end zone, starting his record-breaking 100-yard fumble return touchdown against St. Norbert College on September 7, 2024 at Little Giant Stadium.

from Cincinatti, Ohio, has had a rocky relationship with football over the years. Coming off of a third torn ACL the season before, there was potential that Ringer might never have played football again. But, he decided to come back in 2024 once more to play for Coach Jake Gilbert and the Little Giants.

"Ringer, to me, is key to unlocking the defense because of his ability," said Gilbert. "He can do anything. He's extremely strong, powerful, explosive and fast, so we have to get him at the

point of attack as much as we can. He really can disrupt an entire offense."

Ringer recorded three tackles as well as his fumble recovery on September 7. Despite this number not being close to the team leading total (10), Ringer created matchup problems defensively, placing him in prime positions to impact the game in other aspects.

"[Ringer] was really productive on the perimeter," said Gilbert. "He was unblockable out there. He's strong enough to go against

tight ends, but yet he's fast enough to cover receivers. We don't have a lot of those guys, so he got player of the game not just for that one play, but for other plays [too]."

As well as putting Wabash definitively in the lead 24-0 to end the first half, Ringer's touchdown cemented him firmly in the Wabash record books, breaking the record for both the longest fumble return (previously 93 yards, set by BJ Hammer '01) and longest fumble return for a touchdown (previously 75

yards, set by Ethan Buresh '16). The 100-yard figure also broke the NCAC fumble return touchdown record of 99 yards set by Cisco Brooks-Church of Oberlin in 1994.

There's no question that the fumble return stole the spotlight, but a look at the statistics from the game reveal other key factors that contributed to the Little Giants' first ever shutout in the new Little Giant Stadium. The Wabash defense held St. Norbert to 232 yards of total offense, with only 88 of those coming through the air. For a secondary that has historically struggled to come up with consistent pass defense, this stat shows promising signs for the rest of the season. Along with the fumble return, the Little Giants also recorded an interception in the third quarter, winning the turnover battle 2-0 for the game.

Outside of the stats, however, was a palpable sense of confidence radiating from the unit which was evident from the very first snap of the game. The Wabash defense played with swagger and assuredness from start to finish, attitudes that fans have been waiting on for years. For example, to start the game, the defense held St. Norbert to three straight three-and-outs, an impressive feat for any level of football. Coach Gilbert seems to

have found the missing piece to make this Wabash defense excel.

"There was a bunch of uncertainty with not knowing who's going to come in and what new defense we were going to run," said Ringer. "I think once Gilbert got here, he made it pretty sound. This is the first time we finally have all come together as a team. Our culture has improved so much."

After their incredible showing against St. Norbert, Wabash will have its first chance to test its newfound defensive prowess against the NCAC on Homecoming against Ohio Wesleyan on Saturday, September 14. The Battling Bishops are 1-0, winning their first game against Otterbein University. They come in totaling 313 yards of total offense in their previous matchup, but having already thrown two interceptions, it's clear that the Little Giants will have the opportunity to continue creating takeaways next Saturday.

"We're trying to be 'champions before championships,'" said Gilbert. "I'm trying to get our guys to have that mentality to make it a reality that we can be the best, defensively."

Soccer knocks down five-straight wins for perfect start

JORDAN DONSKY '25
STAFF WRITER

Wabash soccer is off to a stellar start this season, now sitting at an impressive 5-0 after two dominant performances at the annual Robbie Dreher Classic, before taking down Anderson University on the road.

The Little Giants kicked off the tournament, hosted at Fischer Field from September 7-8, with a commanding 3-1 victory over Alma College.

The Little Giants wasted no time taking control, as Bruno Zamora '25 opened the scoring just two minutes into the game with a brilliant curling shot into the bottom right corner from inside the box.

The momentum continued when Angel Vazquez '26 doubled the lead shortly after, putting Wabash firmly in charge. Vazquez struck again in the 68th minute, making it 3-0 and extending his impressive goal-scoring tally to three goals in four games.

Although Alma managed to pull one back with a penalty in the 73rd minute, following a handball by Wabash, the Little Giants comfortably closed out the game, securing the win and setting the tone for the weekend.

On Sunday, September 8,



PHOTO BY KYLE FOSTER '27

Zane Biggerstaff '28 leaps for a header against Bluffton University on September 8, 2024 at Fischer Field.

Wabash returned to action, this time against Bluffton University. Once again, the Little Giants started strong, with star striker Jose Escalante '26 netting two goals

in quick succession in the 14th and 19th minutes, giving Wabash an early 2-0 lead.

Escalante was named NCAC Athlete of the Week for his outstanding contribu-

tions, including three goals and one assist across three matches. The junior forward continues his remarkable start to the season.

"Having the 1.5 mentality and always working hard on the field and off the field - that is the key to my success so far," said Escalante. "I'm taking things game by game."

As one of the scoring leaders Escalante is under considerable pressure to perform for the team. But he doesn't face the task alone.

"Pressure, I would say it's more like a pleasure," Escalante said. "[I love] being on the field, scoring goals; and obviously I'm scoring goals because my team has passed me the ball. I cannot score goals if my team doesn't pass me the ball ... They put the ball in the perfect places for me to score."

Despite Bluffton capitalizing on a defensive error to make it 2-1 in the 57th minute, Wabash remained in control. In the 78th minute, Alfredo Campos '27 sealed the deal with a well-placed finish, securing a 3-1 win and clinching the 2024 Robbie Dreher Classic trophy.

"It's always nice to win a tournament, especially when

it's at home," center-back Niall Gavin '26 said. "I know it means a lot to the guys to win the tournament for Scott [Dreher] and his family. Seeing him and his family celebrate with us really shows what Wabash is all about."

This season has seen more rotation in Wabash's backline than usual under Head Soccer Coach Chris Keller.

"Having that extra depth in the backline to give each other a break throughout the season is going to help a lot, especially in conference play," Gavin said.

With addition to talented center-back Zane Biggerstaff '28 and experienced Andre Aguilera '25, there are more options for Coach Keller to utilize in matches

"If an opponent is good at playing long balls, I might not start because our other center-backs are stronger in the air," said Gavin. "But if a team lets us play through them, I might get the nod because of my passing ability. As long as we don't take these decisions personally, this depth will give us a huge advantage."

Little Giants dominate the Anderson Ravens with a convincing 3-0 victory on Wednesday, September

11, with goals coming from Campos, Vazquez and Logan Dottenwhy '28. With that, Vazquez brings his goal tally to four on the season.

As the Little Giants ride the momentum of their 5-0 start, they face their toughest challenge yet in an exhibition match against Division I opponents, the Dayton Flyers, on Saturday, September 14, in Dayton, Ohio.

This matchup will be a true test of Wabash's resilience and skill as they step up to compete at a higher level. The Little Giants are eager to show they can compete with the best. Following the exhibition, Wabash will return home to Fischer Field to take on Hanover College on Wednesday, September 18.

"I think putting teams away early and keeping clean sheets is something we're really focused on now. As we start playing tougher opponents, we know we need to continue scoring early and shutting teams out."

The team will look to continue their winning ways as they prepare for the heart of their season, with expectations running high.

Curnutt leads Redpack at first meet

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

With the semester fully underway, cross country is ready to hit its stride. The Red Pack opened the competitive portion of their season at the Franklin College Invitational on Saturday, September 7. The 8k meet was a chance for most of the team to pace themselves, before they step up to full competition level in their next race. The team executed on their plan and had some stand-out performances.

Normally, the team would open the season with a 5k race where they would push themselves to reach their top times, but with a full 8k to open the season, Head Cross Country Coach Tyler McCreary instructed the team run a more tempo-driven race in groups.

"When you do more of a tempo effort in a race while everyone else around you is really competing hard, it can be a little bit difficult for guys to [stay on pace]," said McCreary. "They did a really good job grouping up and following the pace plan."

The meet gave the team the chance to work together, as they finalized the condi-

tioning portion of the season. The runners worked together to hit their marks down the stretch developing the teamwork side of the sport that helped Wabash take home the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Championship last season.

"We paced in groups," said McCreary. "And that lets you work with someone and communicate while you're racing and executing the race together. It also prepares them for how we generally race as a team, which - most of the time - is going to be pack running."

Brayden Curnutt '25 was one member of the team who was given the greenlight to race at full force. Curnutt came into the season in excellent shape early in August, which allowed him to exert himself in this meet.

"[Curnutt] definitely put in his best summer of his life," said McCreary. "And his fitness is there... I've just noticed a different level of confidence about him over the last several weeks, and I think that he's ready to take that next step as an elite runner, not just in our conference, but I think on a national stage."

Curnutt's preseason efforts paid off, as he dominated through the final stretch of the race. He finished with a time of 25:33.2, which was good for sixth place. His efforts earned him the distinction of NCAC Athlete of the Week for men's cross country.

"I felt great during the race," said Curnutt. "I felt like I got stronger as the race went on and felt smooth and controlled as I settled in. As I started getting closer to the finish line, I just went back to the summer I had, all the miles and workouts I put in were preparing me for the last 2-3 kilometers of the race."

Wabash placed eighth out of 21 teams, but will count the competitive experience and training as the most important result of the meet.

The next time the Red Pack will race will be the Gil Dodds Invitational at Wheaton College, where the Little Giants will be running to win. The race will take place on Saturday, September 21, giving the team two weeks to prepare.

The team will stick to their usual training, but they will continue to press the in-



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Members of the Wabash Redpack stride out to the Huntsman Outdoor Track to start the cross country course which winds around the Arboretum during the Charlie Finch '51 Alumni Run on August 25, 2024.

tensity on the physical end. And on the mental side of the sport, the team will condition their toughness that separates great racers from everyone else.

"Leading up to the next race, stacking good workout days and being consistent in my training is important for me," said Curnutt. "Along with that, preparing my mind to race again is also important, visualizing a successful race, keeping a calm mind, not overthinking the next race and staying healthy

over the next few weeks."

Preparing as a team will be a vital part of the Red Pack's development. Being able to field a team with six runners who can finish in a narrow window will help Wabash win the NCAC Championship in November.

"Everyone is responsible for executing their race," said McCreary. "They all depend on each other. Generally, you're going to be able to win championships and be a good team if your number one runner to your number

five runner have a really close [time] gap."

With their first meet behind them, the Little Giants are entering the second stretch of their season. As the Red Pack takes their next step of building their individual and team competitiveness to the level the historic program has come to expect. They will keep the big picture in mind as their season winds its way towards their ultimate goal of repeating as NCAC champions.