

Swim and Dive places fifth at conference

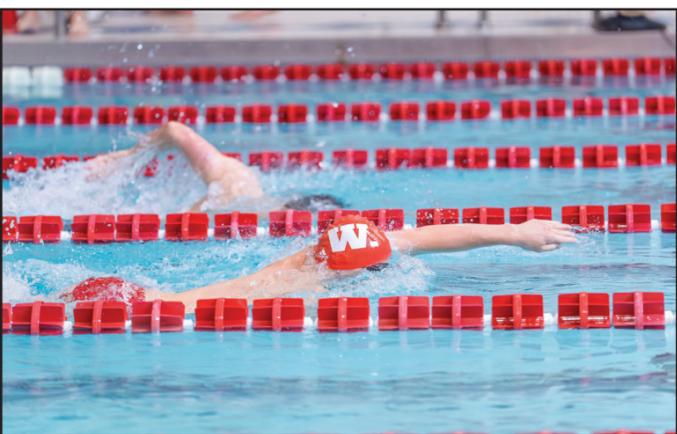


PHOTO BY JEREMIAH RUNGE '29

A Wabash swimmer breaks the surface during a meet in the Class of 1950 Natatorium.

CARTER MCCALL '29
 STAFF WRITER

Wabash delivered a strong performance at the 2026 North Coast Athletic Conference Swimming and Diving Championships (NCAC), ultimately securing a fifth-place finish in a highly competitive nine-team field at Denison University. From the opening session through the final relay, the Little Giants showcased depth, resilience and record-breaking talent, led by sophomore Ryan West '28, whose championship swim on the final night provided a fitting exclamation point to Wabash's week.

Wabash wasted no time establishing itself as a contender. The Little Giants made their biggest early impact in men's three-meter diving, where three athletes scored and combined to generate a major boost in the team standings.

"This team has grown so much in the last two years, I have no doubt that in the next two years we will be in contention to make it to the NCAA Championships."

- Ryan West '28

Fox Seebach '29 advanced to the championship final and placed eighth overall, while Michael Cruzado '27 produced a career-best performance in finals competition to finish ninth. Liam Fuller '28 added an 11th-place effort from preliminaries. The trio combined for 68 team points, giving Wabash immediate momentum and keeping the program within striking distance of the conference leaders.

That depth on the boards proved significant as the meet unfolded. Cruzado later added another scoring performance in

one-meter diving, with Fuller and Seebach again contributing valuable points to solidify Wabash's standing.

The Little Giants carried their diving success into the pool, where two strong relay finishes helped solidify their position near the top of the standings after the opening session.

In the 200-yard medley relay, the quartet of West, Lew Sams '29, Owen Thomas '29 and Quinn Sweeney '27 delivered a season-best swim, dramatically improving upon previous times and scoring key points. Wabash closed the session with another breakthrough in the 800-yard freestyle relay, as Sweeney, West, Nicholas Plumb '27 and Mason Gilliam '28 combined for a major time improvement and held off conference rivals in a tightly contested finish.

Those early relay performances set a tone for the rest of the championship. Wabash relied on collective execution and steady scoring across events rather than a single isolated strength.

While the team effort stood out all week, West emerged as the defining performer of the championship.

On the second night of competition, West shattered the school record in the 200-yard individual medley, delivering one of Wabash's top individual finishes of the meet. He later led off the 400-yard medley relay with another record-breaking backstroke split, eclipsing a program mark that had stood for several seasons. His leadership helped the relay squad produce one of the team's highest-scoring swims of the night.

West continued his dominance in the 400-yard individual medley later in the meet, moving up from his preliminary seed to secure a finish in the "A" Final and add another major point total to Wabash's score.

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Wabash in the age of AI

Wabash pursues \$5,000,000 AI grant from Lilly Endowment, finds AI expertise close to home



PHOTO BY JAMES WALLACE '26

Wabash has been navigating the practical and ethical complexities of artificial intelligence since its explosion into the mainstream in 2022. A balance must be struck between a traditional liberal arts education and preparation for an AI-driven job market.

NATHAN ELLENBERGER '26
 MANAGING EDITOR

The following is the first installment in a series by The Bachelor focusing on artificial intelligence at Wabash College. This first article focuses on a grant Wabash received from the Lilly Endowment and the long-term strategy of the College.

In the future, the invention of artificial intelligence will likely be regarded as the most historically significant development of the 2020s. In a span of less than four years, AI has gone from science fiction to a ubiquitous, seemingly inescapable feature of modern life. Nearly every aspect of modern human life is now impacted by AI, and higher education is no exception. While the rapidly changing AI landscape creates much political, economic and social uncertainty, Wabash is taking steps to stay abreast of these technological changes.

From the moment that the first homework assignment was completed with ChatGPT, the College has kept a close eye on AI and its implications — both for the education that students receive and the position Wabash occupies in the broader higher education landscape. Wabash has several strategies and advantages that position it well in a world with AI. Financial assistance from outside the College and expertise from within the faculty combine to place Wabash on the cutting edge of liberal arts colleges that must reckon with the existential uncertainty AI creates.

Wabash is currently applying for a grant from the Lilly Endowment that is intended to assist Indiana colleges and universities navigate AI issues. According to the Lilly Endowment, the Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education initiative (AIHE), exists to help these schools "consider more fully the challenges and opportunities that artificial intelligence presents," and "develop new or enhance existing strategies to improve their students' educational opportunities and outcomes and their preparation to prosper in the workplace and life in a future that will be increasingly shaped by AI."

Announced in the Fall of 2025, the AIHE grant is administered in two phases. The first phase is a planning grant, which gives colleges and universities a smaller sum to help apply for the much larger second grant installment, the size of which would be proportional to a school's enrollment. As of December 2025, Wabash secured a planning grant of \$125,000, which is now being used to research and develop a grant proposal that could earn Wabash up to \$5,000,000.

"Higher ed institutions in the state of Indiana are really fortunate to have a partner and an advocate like the Lilly Endowment," said Dean of the College Todd McDorman. "Right now, we're in an information gathering phase where we're surveying staff about their use and attitudes toward AI and what sorts of resources and

support would be helpful. We're also talking about ways we can get more information on student perspectives. We'll use that information to formulate the grant."

McDorman identified three pillars that he wants the grant to impact. The first is the continued integration of AI into a thoroughly liberal arts education. The second is professional development for faculty and staff. Thirdly, the grant would also go to support Wabash's technological infrastructure that would be increasingly overwhelmed by the increasing demands of AI.

"I think our approach reflects where many liberal arts colleges are, as they are trying to figure out how to preserve their traditional nature, but also learn from AI," said McDorman. "Our approach might be a little different than a large state school, just as our overall educational orientation is different than a large state school. I think we're a little ahead of the curve in some ways. We've had an AI taskforce this year, we have a lot of faculty discussions, teaching and learning about AI. But in other respects, we're figuring this out like the entire sector is."

"I genuinely think that the age of AI in education is a huge opportunity for places like Wabash because we offer something really unique and special that larger institutions just can't do."

- Professor of Philosophy
 Matt Carlson

While the College seeks to leverage the AIHE grant to integrate AI into its liberal arts education, the focus is still on delivering a quality education that prepares young men for the realities of a changing economic landscape. While the steering committee for the grant proposal is still framing concrete metrics to measure the grant's success with, potential indicators of success include institutional access to powerful AI tools, increased engagement with AI in course curriculum and more experiential learning opportunities with AI.

The steering committee charged with writing the grant proposal has a diverse cross-section of faculty and staff, including Professor of Philosophy Matt Carlson. Carlson has quickly become Wabash's de facto resident expert on all things AI, which may seem counter-intuitive to some who would expect a professor of computer science to fill this role. As an academic, he has wrestled with the sobering philosophical implications of AI deep-fakes and misinformation.

"I think my background in philosophy puts me in a pretty unique position," said Carlson. "On the one hand, I have research on some

real dangers of AI. So I have a paper about deep fakes, for example, that's a few years old, but I'm sad to say that I was completely right in all of the problems that I raised in that paper."

While Carlson's academic engagement with AI already confirms his expertise, he has added to his AI bona fides with some recent consulting work. Carlson recently consulted at Microsoft, using his deep knowledge of formal logic to help large language models (LLMs) communicate not just with humans, but with each other.

"What we did is relied on my background in formal logic and the philosophy of language to effectively create a mini-language for AI agents to communicate with one another that's very stripped down and simple," said Carlson. "It's efficient, but also a human being can look at it and understand what they are actually saying."

Wabash is lucky to have Carlson on the faculty, producing cutting-edge research on the philosophy of artificial intelligence. However, the College is even more fortunate that such an expert has expanded on his academic credentials with serious industry experience — literally helping to create AI tools. With his theoretical and practical expertise, Carlson is a tireless advocate not only for faculty perspectives, but the value of the liberal arts in the age of AI.

"It's easy to start to think that we've got to do things differently, [that] we need to move into the future, we can't be stuck in the past. I think it's wise to resist that temptation," said Carlson. "Many of the skills that are going to be most valuable for people as AI becomes more and more common are the kinds of skills that you get in a liberal arts education like Wabash — skills in asking really good questions, skills in making good judgments in situations of contradictory or incomplete information, skills in collaborating with other people. These are things that are incredibly valuable that AI is not very good at, and maybe never will be very good at. I genuinely think that the age of AI in education is a huge opportunity for places like Wabash because we offer something really unique and special that larger institutions just can't do."

2026 marks the end of an era for Wabash; the class of 2026 was the last to be admitted to the College before the explosion of ChatGPT and generative AI. Yet the 2026-2027 academic year will also mark a new beginning, as it is the first year that every current class of Wabash students entered the College knowing how to use AI. ChatGPT and other LLMs are going nowhere, and though attitudes on AI range from apocalyptic to utopian, the blunt reality is that it will take hard work from all corners of Wabash to navigate these changes successfully. With institutional support from all corners, however, Wabash will continue to fight not simply to adapt to AI, but to adapt AI to the needs of the College and its students.

Congratulations on Distinction in Comprehensive Examinations 2026

Albert Bernhardt	Philosophy/Politics/Economics
Henry Birk	Economic
Evan Bone	English
Tobey Condon	Philosophy/Politics/Economics
Curtis Faughnan	Art
Braiden Foster	German
Braden Gendron	Economics
Isaac Gramis	Computer Science
Dylan Haslett	Financial Economics
Brady Largent	Mathematics
TriAn Le	Computer Science
Justin Lewis	Biology
Arman Luthra	Computer Science
Hoang Anh Nguyen	Mathematics
Austin Pickett	Political Science
Braden Potters	Religion
Silvio Radice	Philosophy/Politics/Economics
Christopher Runyon	Political Science
Augustin Sanchez	Physics
Noah Villalon	Art
Carson Wirtz	Theater

COURTESY OF ASSOCIATE REGISTRAR JULIA PERRY

Rebuilding Gaza, military AI in Venezuela, Cali avalanche

News around the world

CARTER RAMSEY '29
STAFF WRITER

Gaza Reconstruction
President Donald Trump announced Sunday that \$5 billion is being approved to go towards reconstruction of the Gaza Strip after the Israel-Palestine conflict left the territory virtually destroyed, and plans on sending thousands of personnel for international stabilization and policing the area. The proposal initially comes from President Trump's newly created Board of Peace and is expected to be fully announced in Washington this week. Roughly 20 members of the Board of Peace will be gathering to work on this deal, but it is unclear who exactly the members are. While \$5 billion is currently being approved for reconstruction, some estimates say that a full rebuild of the area would cost nearly \$70 billion due to the last two years of constant conflict in Gaza. An international stabilization force has already been mentioned in the Gaza ceasefire, but few countries have expressed any interest in joining in on the path to stabilization. Indonesia announced that they expect to deploy 8,000 troops by the end of this summer to further police the area. Because of the conditions of the conflict in Gaza, there will certainly be some significance in whoever makes this decision, and some disagreement is to be expected regardless of who makes that decision. This brings up new points as to whether the aid given to Gaza from the Board of Peace is intended to rebuild structures and secure the land simply for personal benefit, or if it truly will improve



Locals clear the rubble in Gaza. Reconstruction is the essential next step in healing fresh wounds.

the lives of people living in the region.

Artificial Intelligence Used in Military Raid on Venezuela

New reports reveal that some artificial intelligence may have been used in the recent raid of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela last month. The AI model Claude by Anthropic was used to help carry out military operations in Venezuela. It was unclear exactly how the artificial intelligence was used exactly, but the tool is capable of operations such as controlling unmanned drones. Claude states in its policy that the system should never be used for violent ends, and Anthropic claims that it was not used in that way for this operation. *The Wall Street Journal* recently claimed that Anthropic and Claude was used in a recent partnership with Palantir Technologies, a contractor of the United States Defense Department. Both Palantir and Anthropic have yet to release any information on their involvement with the raid, but have been confirmed to be used generally in the United States defense strategies.

8 Skiers Found Dead After California Avalanche

Authorities at the Nevada County Sheriff's Office reported early Wednesday that 8 bodies have been found and identified near Lake Tahoe in California and one person is still missing. The avalanche is being recorded as the nation's deadliest in nearly half a century after a heavy winter storm hit the west coast earlier this week. The 8 identified appeared to be skiers from a backcountry guided tour on a three day trek in Northern California's Sierra Nevada. Six others from the guided tour were discovered safely, but had to wait 6 hours after the avalanche to be rescued. Authorities have confirmed that there will be an investigation on whether the trip should have been approved in the first place and if any negligence was involved. Of the 8 recovered and one still missing, there are 7 women and 2 men, ranging in age from 30 to 55. Of the skiers rescued, one still remains hospitalized after the incident.

Bears contemplate stadium, statehouse tackles gender

Regional news update



A rendering of a potential version of the Chicago Bears stadium.

CONNOR PHILLIPS '28
STAFF WRITER

Chicago Bears Stadium

The countdown clock is ticking louder for a potential deal locating the new Chicago Bears stadium in northwest Indiana. Indiana General Assembly leaders say they expect any financial agreement for a football stadium project will need to be finalized ahead of the scheduled February 27 adjournment of this year's legislative session. Several Indiana cities have made pitches to be home to the new Bears stadium. The latest is Portage, Indiana with their "Halas Harbor" proposal. This would be a \$5 billion stadium complex on the south shore of Lake Michigan. The proposed development would be located 40 miles from Soldier Field and would be privately financed with zero taxpayer burden or debt on the team, according to city officials.

Another city gunning to be home to the Bears is Gary, Indiana. According to a press release, the city of Gary's Stadium Authority has identified three sites they call "Plug-and-Play sites" the city considers ready for immediate development. Indiana's highest-grossing gaming location, Gary West End Entertainment District, is one of the top spots up for consid-

eration. This space is adjacent to Hard Rock Casino Northern Indiana. Buffington Harbor is another area being eyed by the Chicago Bears. Like Soldier Field, the Buffington Harbor offers the team a stadium on the waterfront. Miller Beach, a site near the Indiana Dunes National Park landmark, is the final location being highly considered in Indiana. Garnering three million annual visitors, the Bears have the potential to provide a stadium experience unlike any other team in the NFL.

State House Updates

As always it has not been a dull two weeks in the Statehouse. Here's what you missed.

House Bill 1359, was centered on rules for when local election officials can scan early voting ballots. However, the Indiana Senate Elections Committee approved an amendment on Monday that shortens the early voting period from 28 days to 16 days. Now it is on the way to the State Senate.

Senate Bill 182, is a new bill that passed through the Indiana State Senate and would make changes to multiple gender-related issues in the state of Indiana if it is ultimately signed into law. The bill, in its current form, would redefine Indiana's

definition of a person's "sex" as well as "female" and "male." The authors of the bill state that the word "gender" would also be used as a "synonym for sex." The bill is currently on its way to the Senate.

Senate Bill 270, would require townships with low performance evaluations to merge with other townships. The plan would also let city governments take over the township functions when the township is located mostly within the city limits. The bill which has been compromised to this current version will need to gain House approval, both the House and the Senate would have to agree on a final version before the legislative session's scheduled February 27 adjournment.

House Resolution 28, Would recognize the national debt as a national security threat and calling on Congress to establish "an effective regular order for budgeting." This serves as a launch for national effort from American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). ALEC, which promotes model conservative legislation to state lawmakers, finalized the model last summer with ten other states weighing this resolution now.

Students charged for staying on campus over winter break

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Where do a school's obligations to its students end? One could pose that question to any number of a school's operations. An especially pertinent, and relatively new practice, that begs an answer to this question is student housing fees over winter break.

Students, domestic and international, who want to stay in Wabash housing over winter break must first apply to do so. If they're approved, they are charged \$30 per night to stay in Wabash housing. That comes out to around \$900 of additional housing fees. Most students never will need to worry about that cost; this past winter break, only five students were in this boat. Student athletes are not charged to stay on campus because they are actively participating in school programs. But some students, especially international students who hail from far-away countries, face the pressure of deciding whether to pay the fee and stay on campus, find a place to stay in a country that is foreign to them or travel home and face the associated risks of leaving America as a foreign student in 2026, chief of which is the worry that they may be barred from reentering. It doesn't help that a lot of students are not aware of the charge before they get to campus.

"The numerous conversations I've had with international students about this issue have all pointed to the same view: the stress, which is most definitely there, comes from the fact that this information is a surprise for everybody," said Arman Luthra '26, a former president of the International Student Association. "The \$30 fee is not mentioned in orientation materials, onboarding calls or any of the early communications prospective international students receive."

A fee for students who want to stay on campus over break is not unusual. Most, if not all, similar-



PHOTO BY DAGIM HUNTINGTON '29

The Student Senate of Wabash College deliberates a complicated issue. Student Senate has been advocating for the just treatment of international students.

ly-situated colleges have them, and Wabash's is lower than most of its peers'. The rate of the fee is equivalent to the daily rate students pay for their room at other points in the year. But the College did not always charge students to stay on campus over winter break. In 2020, when school administrators were so exhausted from the burden of mitigating the pandemic's effects on campus, they shut the College down completely, sending all students home, in an attempt to allow themselves some breathing room. After that year, administrators' realized more than before the potential benefits of minimizing the number of students on campus over winter break. The \$30 per night began primarily because it keeps the number of students on campus down to only those who absolutely have no other option.

"We'll never send a student away to a bad situation," said Residence Life Specialist Mike

Lynn. "If someone has a dire circumstance, we're going to work with them and ensure their safety and that they're able to get back to campus."

There's also a case for the fee because it forces students to get away from school and into new scenery for a time, which allows winter break to be an actual respite from Wabash. That's certainly a life skill all adults need, and it might make sense for Wabash to teach that skill where they can.

"I think we have landed at a good place because it is getting students off campus when they need a break," said Associate Dean of Students Marc Welch '99. "Even if they don't think they need a break, it does them some good, but we do want to, as always, be as supportive as we can for the students who are here. Behind the scenes, we have helped students find housing."

Administrators are united —

they want to help the students and do what's best for them, while also keeping the interests of the college in mind. But pushing students to find alternative housing over winter break, while totally within the College right and the student housing agreement does not cover winter break, and framing it as an opportunity to acquire an "adulting" skill perhaps misses the reality students' face.

"That intent is fine on its own," said Luthra. "The problem is that it assumes leaving is easy. For international students, a break means figuring out housing, transportation and logistics in a country that is still, in many ways, unfamiliar. I've been fortunate in that I've been invited to friends' homes for Thanksgiving, Christmas and other breaks, and I know other international students who have had similar experiences. But that is a matter of luck and social connection, not institutional support. The College should not

rely on students' personal networks to solve a structural gap."

Wabash does a lot to support students over break. A food pantry on campus supplements the food students buy to feed themselves, Coordinator of Student Success Vic Lindsay drives students to grocery stores and other administrators and friends of the College support students. The Student Senate has chipped in to fund student transportation at the end of each semester. Since May 2025, the Senate has spent \$3,500 on vehicles alone. That doesn't include money for drivers, and it is money from students' yearly activity. While it is a good thing for the Student Senate to help their Wabash brothers with transportation, it begs the question — should the College foot that bill?

And while domestic students can pick up jobs off campus if they need extra cash to pay to stay on campus over winter break, international students do not have that option.

"International students can't just pick up another job like domestic students can," said Director of International Programs Amy Weir. "If a domestic student wants to stay, that person gets charged too. It's just the international students don't have family here to go stay with."

Equality means treating everyone the same, regardless of their situation. Equity, however, takes a person's circumstances into account and distributes resources so that everyone enjoys an equal outcome. While staff and administrators are working to further equitable treatment of students, it may be that the systems which are in place prioritize equality, regardless of a student's situation. Whether the \$30 per night fee is more equal or equitable is up for debate.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

Bringing Wabash across the world: William Boas

ANTONIO GRANDINETTI '28
STAFF WRITER

As any Wabash man knows, expanding learning beyond the classroom takes tremendous time and energy. Fortunately, William Boas '26 rises to that task as an accomplished student and a campus leader. A Spanish major from Greenwood, Indiana, Boas has been the vice president of Delta Tau Delta and secretary of the Sphinx Club, while also pursuing a Track and Field career.

Throughout his time at Wabash, Boas has eagerly tested his Spanish outside of class. His first major step came in Spain, walking El Camino de Santiago as part of an immersion course. The excursion in Spain pushed him outside his comfort zone where he was able to battle test his new learning.

"While hiking the Camino de Santiago, I could test my skills outside the classroom," said Boas. "It was my first time being overseas in Spain, trying to make the most out of it, only with five Spanish classes."

Professor of Spanish Daniel Rogers shared the Spain trip and other classes with Boas, reflecting on moments that stood out to him.

"My favorite recent memory of him is written comps. We had asked students to dress up a bit for their presentations" said Rogers. "Will showed up immaculately dressed with an exceptionally stylish ensemble. It kind of picked up everybody's mood and made the day more fun."

After visiting Spain, Boas continued building on that experience. This past May, he traveled to Argentina for another immersion course, now with stronger language skills and more confidence.

"Going to Argentina was merely unexpected, as I never thought to ever be in South America," said Boas. "What was most surprising was that many of the people spoke very good English and were also extremely friendly. We even got approached by a girl in our morning routine of getting some baked goods. Me and my other



COURTESY OF WILLIAM BOAS '26

William Boas '26 and Professor of Spanish V. Daniel Rogers attend a soccer match while on an immersion trip in Argentina.

two classmates were shocked by her initiative to try out her English."

It is clear that the Argentinian immersion trip was influential in Boas' time as a student. Rogers was also able to accompany him on the Argentinian trip.

"My other favorite memory of Boas is from the Argentina immersion trip. I didn't realize that he was such an amazing dancer! But the photos and video prove it," said Rogers. "One way that he has



COURTESY OF ELIJAH GREENE '25

impacted me is through seeing his close relationship to his family. He really has a close bond with his family and I find

that both important and inspiring."

Director of Track and Field and Cross Country Coach Clyde Morgan also boasts an admiration for Boas.

"It has been a pleasure to watch Will grow over the years as a man and athlete," said Clyde. He has been a phenomenal leader to our young guys. He has been through some life storms, but has grown from them. He will be a better man for it."

Boas has enjoyed many more keystone parts of the Wabash experience.

"Getting into the Sphinx Club was one memory I hold close to my heart," said Boas, "I still remember when me and my Rhyne brothers got initiated, we were on cloud nine, pure ecstasy after chasing this goal for a while. The club was something that I felt very good about as this organization made me feel a lot of pride." He added, "The Sphinx Club was something that had a lot of impact when I was deciding where to go."

After graduation, Boas will be working with Cook Medicine in Bloomington in the medical education department, where he interned over the summer. Here he can continue to make an impact.

'Lenin's Embalmers' exclusive preview

NOAH MINTIE '29
FEATURES EDITOR

If life is but a stage, then the Wabash Fine Arts Center is once again unafraid to put that adage to the test. "Lenin's Embalmers," its second production this year, relates a macabre premise to the lived experiences of the modern world. The production runs from Feb. 25-28 with showings at 7:30 p.m. in the Ball Theater. Tickets are free for students and available to reserve on the Box Office website.

"[Lenin's Embalmers] is hilarious, and dark and twisted," said Associate Professor of Theater and department chair Heidi Winters Vogul, the director of the play. "It's based on the actual story of the two men that were forced by Stalin to embalm Lenin. It deals with it in a very comedic way, but is a very serious discussion of how governments can go too far to maintain power."



PHOTO BY DANNY TKACHUK '29

The cast of "Lenin's Embalmers" poses during a rehearsal.

Despite the comedy, "Lenin's Embalmers" promises to handle rather gloomy subject matter, and that extends to the cast of characters. While the face of oppression in the previous production, "1984," was hidden, "Lenin's Embalmers" openly depicts Joseph Stalin in all of his ruthless splendor. Eamon Colglazier '28 has found his role as Josef Stalin to be challenging due to Stalin's extreme ideologies.

"The hardest part is trying to get into the headspace of someone who is extremely hateful," said Colglazier. "This play deals with leadership

that wants to maintain control of the media," said Winters Vogul. "It deals with leadership that feels comfortable doing extrajudicial killings. It defines truth in a way we saw in '1984,' but in a very different venue. It emphasizes important things to guard against as we hold on to democracy."

"The similarities between '1984' and Lenin's Embalmers' is the presence of authoritarian governments," said Preston Parker '26, who starred in "1984" and plays Leon Trotsky in "Lenin's Embalmers." "That connecting thread of authoritarianism has made it a pretty easy shift from '1984' to 'Lenin's Embalmers.'"

Between "1984" and "Lenin's Embalmers," the theater department has been thematically exploring government this academic year. As is often the case with bleak, dystopian, satirical and political stories, the cast and crew hope to share a story that directly ties to modern-day issues.

"My character is a key symbol for a politician in today's world," said Alex Schmidt '27, who plays Boris, a main character and one of the titular embalmers. "My character is very much using everyone that he can to game, but also to appeal to as a family man, scientist and great hero. But really, he's just making stuff up as he goes along."

For anyone needing a politically relevant, sharply comedic, yet thematically twisted piece of art to attach to, "Lenin's Embalmers" is worth reserving a ticket for.

Travelling professor provides poetic insight to Wabash

PHILLIP HARVEY '29
STAFF WRITER

Regardless of who you are or where you come from, your perspective of the world can capture something incredible. That's what David Baker, Professor Emeritus at Denison University, author and poet tells collegians as he tours the midwest. On Tuesday, January 17th, Baker spoke at Wabash College.

"I loved the deep meanings in both the love stories and the stories about his daughter," said Brady Reeves '29. "His written poems are so elegant and the tone used brought the whole thing together."

Baker's path started in Missouri, where he lived until earning his undergraduate degree at the University of Central Missouri. Baker didn't start out with a desire for notoriety or fame. Much rather, he allowed an interest to take root in his life and grow naturally over time. The lyrical, musical approach he adopted to language began as a guitarist and teacher. That's where an interest in education first came to him.

Baker moved on to the University of Utah for his Ph.D. in English in 1983. The next year, Dr. Baker became a professor at Denison University, where his career would be anchored. He published his first collection of poems, "Haunts," in 1985.

"If you write a poem, eventually you would like someone to read it. It's not for yourself," said Baker. "And so I found my way into publishing poems and journals, and then began to collect batches of my poems, and because I love books, and read a lot of books of poems, I thought, well, I'll try that too, and I eventually was able to do it. I've been lucky."

The major turn for his career came when he took up the helm as the Poetry Editor of "The Kenyon Review," a premier international literacy magazine and nonprofit. For over 25 years, he learned there, growing and publishing "After the Republic" and "Never-End-

ing Birds," the latter of which won the prestigious Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize. Dr. Baker has been called an ecopoet, and his work frequently explores the human body, natural world and the beauty contained therein.

"Poetry is about music. It can capture the artfulness of language, not just information or a story," said Baker. "The story is part of it, but its task is to make the prose of lives and the prose that we write also a form of musical expression and artfulness and beauty or difficulty or whatever those things are. That's why poetry has a lot of formal attributes that have to do with the lyric and singing and rhythm and harmony which would normally belong to music."

Baker's early work was noted for its keen observations about the seemingly mundane and simple midwestern countryside. Later in his career, he was categorized as an ecopoet due to his environmental concerns. Instead of natural poetry in the normal sense of offering lyrics to the beauty of a sunset or flowers, he rather delves into rigorous, often scientific exploration of the relationships between humanity, different aspects of the environment and the environment with itself.

His 2018 collection, "Swift: New and Selected Poems," highlighted the "vanishing" world, the rapid passage of time and whole species with it. "Whale Fall," his work in 2022, blended in real ecological taxonomy with metaphors for the pandemic and political climate of the time as a metaphor for a whale's body sinking to the ocean floor to provide life for an entire ecosystem.

Baker overwhelmingly has expressed how beauty is tied to loss. By focusing on the microscopic details of the natural world, he makes us confront the greater issues around us. Perhaps that's a perfect metaphor for a man who describes himself as a small town neighbor as one of the largest literary publishers in the world.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Charismatic and essential: Julia Phipps

BRADY REEVES '29
STAFF WRITER

The Fine Arts Center is one of the most important buildings on campus to many professors and students alike. Coming from Austin, Texas after graduating from TCU, Academic Administrative Coordinator to the Fine Arts Center (FAC) Julia Phipps, is in her sixth year at Wabash. Phipps works hard around the FAC to make sure everything is running smoothly and her position is crucial to the FAC staff.

"Julia makes sure that everyone in the department has all of the supplies that we need for a successful school year," said Professor of Rhetoric Jennifer Abbott. "She is never afraid to back down from a problem, from the theater department to a scheduling issue."

Phipps chose Wabash because she was deeply enticed by the culture on campus. After visiting her husband, Website Editor and Broadcast Engineer Adam Phipps '11, working at Wabash, she discovered the environment that he worked in and realized that this is a great fit of what she wants in an institution.

"I love Wabash, I love the culture and I love my colleagues," said Phipps. "My colleagues and WISE workers are super supportive. They love taking stuff off my plate when I am stressed."

Her love for Wabash spreads to others. Phipps is a fan favorite around campus having many close friends due to her social personality and caring attitude.

"I enjoy that she can connect to anyone that she talks to and can invite anyone to a long conversation so easily," said Abbott. "Her personality is so joyous, positive and contagious to anyone in the same room as her."

Phipps' character makes her a beacon of light on campus. She is extremely charismatic and loves talking to students and staff alike. She attends events often in the FAC such as Glee Club performances, poetry readings and speakers. One of



COURTESY OF JULIA PHIPPS

her favorite past times is attending the Tabletop Game Club meetings.

"Last summer, I was sticking around on campus with international students and students who have internships and I would bring up 5-10 board games to sit down and relax," said Phipps. "I even have my own board game designing company with my husband."

Phipps is a great person to run into when you are in a bad mental space. She is extremely willing to help out any students or staff that need the help. She is also willing to take time out of her day to make sure that each member of the faculty that she works with is okay.

"She is an excellent person to go to for moral support when I am feeling overwhelmed," said Abbott. "She is a lovely person who checks on you to make sure that you are doing well."

One of Phipps' favorite parts about Wabash is the connection that you build over your four years. The alumni network is much different from what Phipps is used to seeing. Seeing some former Wabash students makes her incredibly ecstatic.

"There are still some alumni that I talk to from about 10 years ago," said Phipps. "I remember seeing them again and going and catching up like nothing has changed at all. It is so refreshing to have a connection where it feels like you never lost touch with each other."

Although she couldn't attend Wabash, Phipps is incredibly pleased that her husband did and wishes

that her son will attend Wabash as well. She is also an advocate of the teaching styles on campus that make this institution challenging.

"I would come to campus to visit and I noticed that it is a campus of critical thinking," said Phipps. "Here you can learn to be a leader, learn how to work hard and find success with your effort."

Phipps loves hearing about students being active on campus. She is a believer in the connections built through clubs or groups. A big factor of the true Wabash experience is getting out of your room.

"Get involved with things that excite you like the Glee Club, theater production and the Malcolm X Institute of Black Studies," said Phipps. "Go out and support a brother in a play and stop playing those video games that trap you in your room."

Phipps is a very beloved member of the staff on campus. She does so much behind the scenes in the FAC and her character has helped her grow into a strong leader on campus. Her likeness spreads beyond just the FAC, it spreads to all at this college.



COURTESY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING
Julia Phipps acts as Hippolyta in A Midsummer Nights Dream at Wabash College.

Behind the Brew



PHOTO BY DAGIM HUNTINGTON '29

Byron Lehr poses at the 1832 Brew.

DAGIM HUNTINGTON '29
STAFF WRITER

For a lot of Wabash students, the 1832 Brew — or as it's known to many on campus "the Brew" — is more than just a place for a quick coffee. According to Byron Lehr, 1832 Brew co-owner, who has worked at the shop for 12 years, the coffee shop has grown into an essential space for connection, conversation and caffeine.

Formerly part of the "Good to Go Xpresso" chain, what is now the 1832 Brew was actually brought to the Wabash College Lilly Library in 2008 by Sharon and Kurt Conklin. After a few years, the Conklins made plans to move, and sold the shop to the couple Ashley and Logan Kemp, Lehr's daughter and son-in-law. Ashley was working as a manager at the time and Logan as a cook at Wabash. The Kemp's wanted the Wabash location to be distinctly unique, so they took a campus-wide vote for the name. "1832 Brew Espresso Bar" came out on top. The company's coffee became quite popular around campus and led to the couple suggesting an expansion project into the College's library to have more room and a leisure area where people could meet up and hang out. This expansion plan was accepted and put into motion, giving us the Brew as we know it today.

The shop operates through a mixture of attending workers and staff, creating a welcoming and familiar environment. Students are also central to creating the menu. While Lehr's daughter Ashley calls the shots, student input plays a crucial role. This helps the Brew keep up with other, much larger chain coffee shops, like Starbucks and 7brew. Over the years, 1832 Brew has become a place where Lehr regularly meets new people

and sees the shop as deeply connected to Wabash culture.

"Thursdays are especially lively, with the busiest stretch typically between 10:00 and 11:00 am," said Lehr.

When asked about the most popular drink, Lehr didn't hesitate. He made it clear that some menu items are more popular than others.

"As many Wabash students might already know, one drink stands out on the menu. The Blue Lotus is the most popular by far, with regular coffee close behind."

Lehr also has advice for newcomers who might feel overwhelmed by the options. Rather than sticking with something common, Lehr encourages first-time visitors to branch out.

"For first-time visitors, I recommend the Carmello," said Lehr, "But please try new drinks and experiment with flavors."

Lehr loves interacting with students, he emphasizes that communication is what makes a day good at the Brew especially when the shop is busy and he's rushing to make orders.

"My favorite part of working at the 1832 Brew is talking with students and faculty," said Lehr. "The uniqueness of the college is nice."

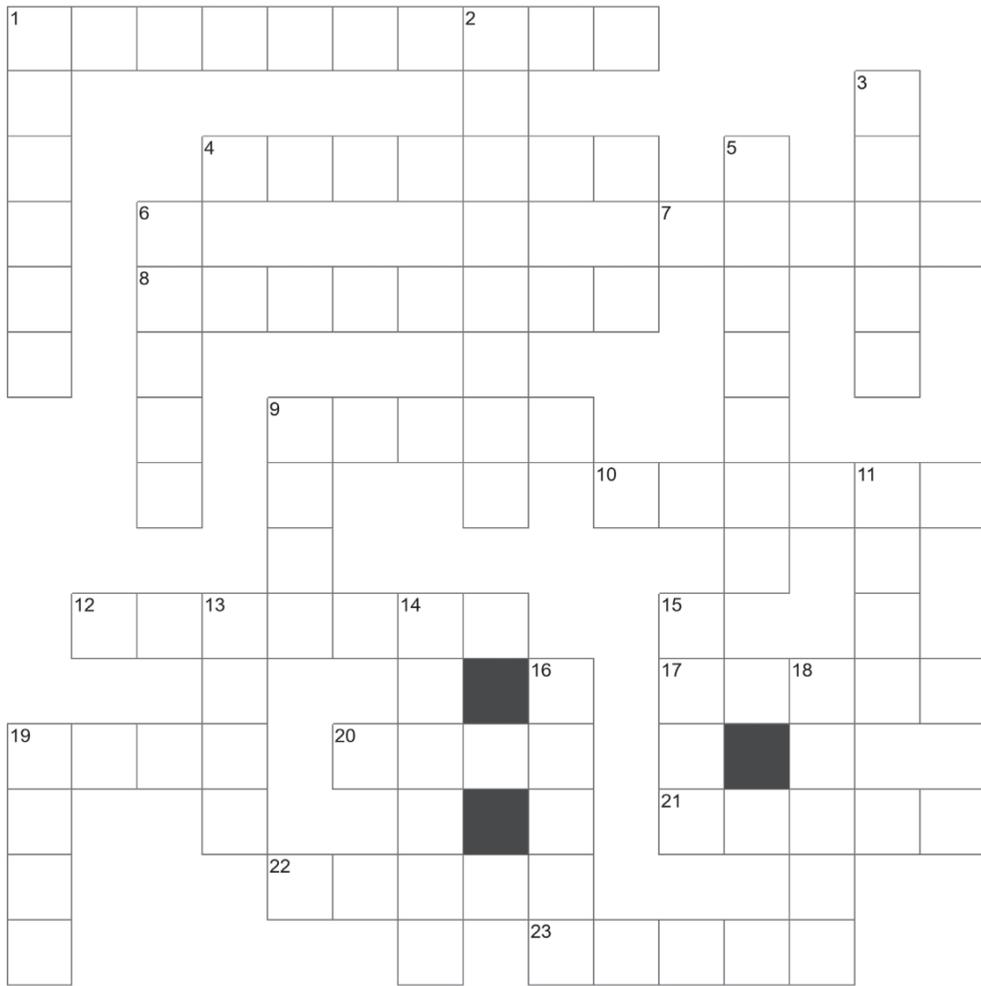
Looking ahead, he was hesitant to share any specific plans, but we should be "on the lookout" for anything to come. For the meantime Lehr hopes to keep things running just as they are.

"This place is welcoming, built around the people and a good cup of coffee," said Lehr.

While students have their heads deep into essays and books, the Wabash community will always have a relaxing spot at "the brew."

'President's Day'

Crossword by Tanner Quackenbush '26



Across

- 1. Political party symbolized by an elephant
- 4. President's advisory group
- 7. President who ran three times before being sworn in
- 8. Political party symbolized by a donkey
- 9. Media covering the President
- 10. Used to cast a vote for President
- 12. Student Body President of Wabash College
- 17. National bird, often seen with presidential seals
- 19. Length of a presidential service
- 20. Last name of the second pair of father-son presidents
- 21. First African American President
- 22. ____ of the Union
- 23. ____ Lady, presidential spouse

Down

- 1. Former actor turned President
- 2. Legislative branch working with President
- 3. To choose a President by vote
- 5. President during the Civil War
- 6. Second US President
- 9. President during Mexican-American War
- 11. Shape of the President's office
- 13. ____ David, presidential retreat
- 14. Atomic bomb ordered at the end of WWII
- 15. President's power to reject a bill
- 16. Commander in ____
- 18. Civil War general and President
- 19. President who also served as Chief Justice

Scan for answers!



'Wuthering Heights' sinks into mediocrity



COURTESY OF TMBD

NOAH MINTIE '29
FEATURES EDITOR

Every few months there is bound to be a divisive new movie to split critics and become talk of the town. This time around, it is Emerald Fennell's "Wuthering Heights," an (apparently loose) adaptation of Emily Brontë's classic novel of the same name. Some critics have praised Fennell's contemporary, dramatic and deeply sexual interpretation, while others have argued that it is a complete misrepresentation. While I am usually very vocal about my stance in these debates, I actually found the film to be deeply unremarkable.

"Wuthering Heights" follows the turbulent romance between Catherine (Margot Robbie) and Heathcliff (Jacob Elordi) as they make their way through the social and economic chokeholds of the mid-nineteenth century. Much of the film's drama revolves around the typical misunderstanding and social pressure tropes which have fueled the romance genre for centuries. That is, until the third act decides to turn the freak up by at least fifty shades.

Having never read the novel, I cannot speak to the value of "Wuthering Heights" as an adaptation. However,

I have always believed that the best cinematic adaptations stand alone, sometimes bringing new fans to the source material. The first act of the film certainly meets this goal via a snappy script, an emotional extended prologue and a devious yet personable performance from Robbie.

Robbie's energy is both unique and realistic, so it is a shame that Elordi can never match her energy as well as the supporting cast does. I do not even pin the blame on him, as Heathcliff's character is written in a one-dimensional fashion. The third act tries to rectify his rigid and predictable place in the story, but it swings too far the other way. His topsy-turvy writing derails the central romance from its earlier boredom to a nonsensical affair that buckles under the weight of its own complexity.

Besides the sloppy writing, "Wuthering Heights" also suffers from mediocre presentation. Fennell does a few interesting things, particularly with the way that she depicts her actors' skin. Besides that, it is mostly unmemorable. The lighting is static and flat, with any scene set at night being far too dim. The cinematography is composed with a disappointingly function-first approach. By this I mean that there is only one thing happening in any given shot, and that thing is usually an overt depiction of the immediate plot. It really does feel like the subtext was gutted from the film's visual traits.

I still hesitate to agree with the Brontë loyalists though. "Wuthering Heights" is not a cinematic disaster. It is hardly even sub-par. The plot was still engaging, even if the writers did fall asleep on their keyboards for most of Heathcliff's scenes. The dialogue feels fancy and period-appropriate, sometimes poetic, but still easy to follow. Following that marriage between then and now, the score elevates the drama despite

sounding unmistakably contemporary.

The production design, while almost absurd in spectacle, fits the tone of the movie very well. From the smooth black stones of Wuthering Heights itself to the contrasting pale marble of the Linton Estate, the locations glean more subtext than the shots which house them. Their ethereal aesthetic is bound to intrigue the viewer no matter their investment in the plot.

Honestly, the most interesting thing about "Wuthering Heights" is that it manages to be so nondescript despite (for better or for worse) housing so many distinct elements. For all of the fuss about Fennell's choices, I suppose you require an attachment to the book for such decisions to even matter. While I found them unobtrusive, I also spare no affection for adaptations that depend on my knowledge of the source material to leave an impact.



COURTESY OF GLAMOUR UK

Catherine, played by Margot Robbie, dons her wedding gown ahead of her unhappy marriage.

FINAL VERDICT:
2.5/5 WALLYS



'Wuthering Heights' soundtrack matches the film's spottiness



COURTESY OF SPOTIFY

TOBIN SEIPLE '29
FEATURES EDITOR

One would expect that a star-studded movie with an intriguing plot and top-notch cinematography would boast a solid soundtrack. In the case of Wuthering Heights, however, mediocrity seems to overshadow the videography, plot and actors and into the soundtrack "Wuthering Heights" by Charli xcx. For people that see modern music as a time in music with a true lack of talent, this album is evidence to their beliefs. "Wuthering Heights" seems to be remarkably unaffected by creativity.

Parts of the album are understandably boring due to its status as a soundtrack for a movie; not every song should be a mainstream pop song. However, six out of the twelve songs are limited to a bland background of violin and synthesizers. The most complex song in this album, "Out of Myself," does initially spark hope with an intriguing drum sound that resembles static in a promising way. It also has a nice orchestral section which she surprisingly uses in a pop-like way. However, those same orchestral sounds are a primary problem within "Wuthering Heights." It is as if Charli xcx lost a bet and she had to make an entire album only using one type of instrument. Violins and cellos can be heard in every song in this album.

Beyond the lack of instrumental differentiation from song to song,

there is not a single standout track. Yes, there are two songs that are slightly more upbeat in nature yet still do not satisfy the typical standards for pop tracks. This is surprising for an artist that typically releases lively music. If this artist intended to release this album as a simple soundtrack and not a serious release for her fans, all of the songs would make sense. Considering that Charli xcx has promoted this album like her more mainstream hits, it is shocking that there does not seem to be a single hit-worthy track.

That being said, this album is not a complete failure. The quality of production is comparable to the quality of a Macbook: modern, simple and balanced. The overused orchestra, while being responsible for the ultimate downfall for the album, is well-produced. Integrating traditional sounds into modern music, especially when songs like "Out of Myself" and "Seeing Things" do it so well along modern 808s, is an accomplishment. Charli xcx also layers her vocals quite nicely and causes the occasional goosebump.

In the end, "don't settle for less" is a mantra that was intentionally ignored in this album. The vocals and production quality may have saved "Wuthering Heights" from being a complete disaster, but that does not justify the utter lack of originality used from song to song. There is no rationale in utilizing the same instruments and sounds in every single track and having six out of the twelve tracks being nothing but vocals and orchestra. The whole idea of the pop genre is for easy-to-listen-to music for the audience to shake their body to. Unfortunately, the only thing listeners will shake while listening to this album is their head as they snooze to sleep.

FINAL VERDICT:

2/5 WALLYS



The Chadwick Crazies haven't been crazy enough



Sports Editor

Sean Bledsoe '26

Reply to this opinion at smbledso26@wabash.edu

It's no shock that our basketball team is in contention for another NCAC Championship. While the team relies on a combination of senior leadership and youthful freshmen contribution, there is another thing that the team has relied on for a long time: the Chadwick Crazies. The Bachelor's former Sports Editor, Ethan Wallace '25, even wrote an article detailing what he deemed the "Chadwick Effect." To put it simply, when opponents walk into Chadwick, they struggle. But not this season.

Wabash finished this season with a home record of 6-5. If you look back at prior seasons since the 2021-2022 season - when fans were welcomed back after the COVID-19 pandemic - Wabash only had nine losses on Mac Petty Floor in the span of four seasons. But in this season alone, the Little Giants have suffered five losses. In other words, more than half the total losses they endured were handed from the fall of 2021 to the spring of 2025.

In my eyes, one of the key contributors to these inadequate home performances is the fact that the Chadwick Crazies section has simply not been good enough this season.

As someone who has been to nearly every single home game throughout my four years here, I know what the true noise of Chadwick sounds like. The Crazies have had some magical abilities in recent years. We've seen players and coaches get ejected for jawing back at the fans, missed free throws by the other team in crunch time and rival fans getting so mad at the student section that they forget about the game they're watching. There is almost a beauty in reflecting on my memories of the Chadwick Crazies, but it's safe to say I have no memories of this season - at least not any good ones.

Who would I be without bringing some evidence to the table, though? I went back and looked at the NCAA Statistics database, and it's so convenient that they have an attendance column. When looking at the average home game attendance for each season since my freshman year, the numbers are shocking.

During the 2022-2023 season, Chadwick saw an average of around 475 fans per home game. Now this is the lowest number out of my four years here, but it is understandable due to the fact that this was the "hangover year" after the graduation of Jack Davidson '21, Kellen Schreiber '21, Tyler Watson '21 and Jack Hegwood '21. When fans began to

realize that Wabash had a chance of winning the conference tournament for a second consecutive season, they showed up.

The 2023-2024 season saw an average home game attendance of around 769 fans, and the 2024-2025 season averaged approximately 623 people for every home contest. 2025-2026 home game attendance, however, has dipped down to roughly 569 sets of eyes watching a game on Mac Petty Floor in person.

That is roughly a 50-fan decrease since last year, which is quite literally multiple rows in the Chadwick Crazies section. But that is also a 200-fan drop from two years ago, which is the rest of the bleachers in the student section filled up to the top.

Now some people may and probably will make the claim that I can't justify these drops in numbers being Wabash students because I don't know the total number of people that were Wabash students, other Wabash fans or opposing fans. That is a fair point, but I can also justifiably say that opposing teams tend to not travel well to Wabash, and other Wabash fans outside of the students tend to have more consistent attendance.

Some people could also make the claim that basketball plays over winter break. Fair enough, but it was only three games this season. One of those games was also on January 14, a day during a week where seniors were finishing comprehensive exams, other winter athletes were on campus and some students were back on campus because they wanted to be. So what's the excuse there?

But as someone who has broadcasted Wabash basketball games consistently for four years, I have a clear look at the Chadwick Crazies as I sit across the court at the scorer's table. Heck, I even have four cameras recording every inch of the gym for two and a half hours straight.

After going back and looking at each home broadcast this year (yes, I really did this), the only games that had a nearly full or completely full student section were the home opener against Rose-Hulman and the home game against our archrival DePauw. Those two games were the first two games of the season. Since then, the only game that has gotten close in terms of Chadwick Crazies section attendance was the John Carroll game or the Wittenberg game.

Now I do know that students like to sit behind the east basket, which is fine, but my challenge to all of my fellow brothers remains the same: join the Sphinx Club members in the Chadwick Crazies section and get that trash talk and noise closer to the sideline.

Regardless of if we host a home game on Tuesday, February 24, let's do a better job of showing up, filling the bleachers and making as much noise as humanly possible to support our boys on the hardwood. Oh and also... tarps off!

HI-FIVES

FIVE THINGS WORTHY OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

PROTECT YOUR LITTLE GIANT

Hi-Five to Olympic athletes for wrapping it up and using 10,000 condoms since the start of the Olympics. The winter athletes are breaking much more than records and they are doing it safely.

FINAL PUSH

Hi-Five to the seniors for passing comps. Unfortunately, that email doesn't mean you can go to Tony's every day for the last 10 weeks of the semester.

TEAM BUILDING!

Lo-Five to Iowa's Alpha Delta Phi chapter for getting busted hazing their pledges in a now-viral police bodycam video. Hey, at least they don't have to sit through chapter and pay dues anymore.

IN A PICKLE

Lo-Five to the Florida couple that got charged with assault after a heated pickleball match. The only pickleball match more heated than that resulted in the Monon Pickle finding its way home. WAF!

DOG DAYS

Hi-Five to Lindsey Vonn, she needs it after an all-time bad week. An Olympic crash, and then her dog died. She crashed and so did her dog. Her words, not ours.

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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.

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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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Chayce Howell '27

Reply to this opinion at cjhowell27@wabash.edu

The Bachelor, in partnership with **Wabash Democracy and Public Discourse**, launched this recurring column to reflect how students are thinking about campus life, current events and the broader world. Each week, a small group of randomly selected Wabash students gathers for a facilitated conversation. Rather than offering conclusions or arguments, the column captures how students are making sense of complex issues in real time.

Bad Bunny's Super Bowl halftime performance, along with a competing Turning Point USA broadcast featuring Kid Rock, sparked debate about music, identity and division on one of the country's largest stages.

During this week's conversation, discussants described the halftime show as more than entertainment. Rather than focusing only on production or choreography, par-

ticipants returned repeatedly to moments that felt personal.

Several scenes resonated strongly. One student pointed to the widely discussed image of a child sleeping across two chairs. "Looking back, I can see there were times where I was the one sleeping in the chairs," the participant said, describing it as a familiar experience at weddings, birthday parties or other gatherings that carry on into the late night.

Others highlighted the wedding scene. "The wedding scene stood out to me," one person shared.

For many participants, recognition shaped enjoyment. Familiar songs transformed the performance into something nostalgic. "I enjoyed it mostly because I knew most of the songs," said one student, who mentioned the performance reflected aspects of his own cultural background. "It was cool to see songs in the Super Bowl that I have heard growing up."

Even students who did not connect personally to every reference said the performance offered a glimpse into experiences not always visible on mainstream platforms. Participants also noted brief or extended appearances by Pedro Pascal, Jessica Alba and Lady Gaga, which students interpreted as signs of cultural crossover.

Reactions varied, particularly around the exclusive use of Spanish.

"There are people who don't speak, don't understand and make jokes, and there are

people who really relate to it," one participant observed. Several suggested language influenced whether viewers felt included or distanced.

Comparisons to past halftime shows surfaced frequently.

Referring to Shakira's previous performance, "That was the first halftime show I watched completely," one student said. "And that made me wonder why there was such huge backlash for Bad Bunny."

While Shakira's set featured more songs in English, others referenced the political climate and how cultural moments can become politicized.

Despite these tensions, several students believed Bad Bunny's message resonated.

"I think his message was about love against hate, and I think his music was helpful in doing that," one participant said.

Students also questioned how long such messages endure.

"I feel like it's mildly successful, but you can already see the halftime show and its messages getting off social media as time goes on," another student noted.

The conversation then turned to the competing Turning Point USA's halftime broadcast featuring Kid Rock.

Reactions were mixed but leaned skeptical. Some participants described the rival show as exaggerated.

"A friend called it an overexaggeration of

what it means to be American," one student said.

Others focused on how the event shaped the broader moment.

"I just didn't like that it was taking away from the message that Bad Bunny was trying to show," a participant commented. "Pretty unnecessary in my opinion."

Students discussed the "All-American" framing.

"I saw the All-American halftime show as a message of separation," one participant said.

Participants also referenced technical problems during the TPUSA broadcast, which several students said distracted from the performance and weakened its impact.

"I don't believe it was too successful," one participant said. "If anything, it helped the Bad Bunny message."

Once viewed primarily as entertainment, now halftime performances serve as cultural moments carrying identity, politics and symbolism. Students pointed to online reactions, political commentary and viral clips as evidence of how quickly entertainment becomes a site of public argument.

For now, participants agreed on one point. Halftime shows are no longer just intermissions. They have become stages where culture, politics and identity collide, often revealing as much about the audience as the performance itself.

More than a show

Wally's Wall: If there's one thing you could change about Wabash, what would it be?

Michael Cruzado '27

I would ban all non-necessary electronics. Might be a crazy take, but I believe it would lead to more social interactions.

Benedict Grill '26

1,000 car parking lot and a dollar general instead of the arboretum.

Paul Hawksworth '28

I'd get more people out of their rooms and into the community Wabash works so hard to build. This place gives students so many great opportunities to build community and not enough students put in enough work to take advantage of them.

"The resources of this college are there for you to use, if you take the initiative to use them." - William Placher '70

Albert Bernhardt '26

I would have Bachelor writers and other people who handle Wabash media use sound sources for every disputable claim they make with full bibliographies attached. Even in opinion pieces. Especially in opinion pieces. Claims that cannot justify themselves or tolerate further scrutiny have no place in an academic institution (in my humble-ish opinion).

Noah Mintie '29

Women.

Evan Bone '26

More variety from our food providers and high quality fruit (strawberries especially!)

It's time to get into Formula One

Cooper Navarro '28

Reply to this opinion at chnavarr28@wabash.edu



practice on Friday and Saturday. Then you can watch the Formula Three race, Formula Two and Formula One qualifying. On Sunday, there are two exciting races in Formula One and Formula Two. As someone who has been to a Formula One race, you can't match the atmosphere that Formula One brings to any other sport. I went to Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps for the Belgian Grand Prix. Sitting in the famous Eau Rouge corner was a truly special experience.

Also, which sport lets you play on the court or field after a game or match? None but with Formula One, you can step on the famous Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps, which I was able to see for myself and it was spectacular.

This is the perfect time to get into Formula One with the addition of two new teams, Audi and Cadillac. Cadillac is the second American team in Formula One, with its headquarters just over an hour from Wabash—a perfect new team to root for.

There are also, of course, the powerhouse teams in Formula One, whether it's back-to-back constructor champions McLaren with world championship driver Lando Norris. Red Bull, which has Max Verstappen, who fell short of the driver's championship and wants to reclaim his title, and new teammate Issak Hadjar. Then there is the historical Ferrari. Every driver's dream is to race in a Ferrari Formula One car. Their drivers, Charles Leclerc and Lewis Hamilton, look to be front-runners alongside Mercedes in this year's constructors' championship. Mercedes seems to be the favorite, with George Russell aiming to bring home his first driver's championship, and Andrea Kimi Antonelli.

I think you are serious about getting into Formula One. The first step is to watch Drive to Survive on Netflix. There are currently seven seasons, each with 10 episodes, lasting about an hour, with a new season coming out on February 27th. This will give you valuable insight into the drama and rivalry within Formula One. Watching this series will help you find your favorite team and driver, and see how they perform on and off the track. You will also see the team structure in Formula One and how some teams favor certain drivers.

I hope you tune in for the first race of the season, March 6-8 in Australia.

Some say Formula One isn't really a sport. What sport has stadiums that span cities or drivers that drive in pouring rain, blurring sun or in the black of night? What sport makes even Vegas stop and stare? Sure, there are passes and daring dives down the inside. And our big game is 24 times a year. This is no ordinary sport; this is Formula One.

With the new race season approaching, it is time to become a Formula One fan. There is no better time to become a fan, as new regulations, new teams and new drivers have joined the grid this year. Formula One is a sport you can follow all year round, starting on March 6-8th, with the first race of the season. The season is coming to a close on December 4th-6th.

What truly separates Formula One from other sports is that it is not just about speed, but about precision and strategy under constant pressure. Drivers race at over 200 miles per hour for nearly two hours, knowing that one mistake—braking a fraction too late or clipping a curb—can end their race instantly. Unlike many sports, there is no time to stop, reset or regroup. Every lap demands complete focus, and every decision can determine victory or disaster. This level of intensity makes each race unpredictable and impossible to look away from.

Formula One also has a deep and storied history, stretching back to its first official World Championship race in 1950 on the world-famous Silverstone track. Another bit of Formula One history is the world-famous driver Lewis Hamilton, a 7-time world champion who should be an 8-time world champion (but that's neither here nor there), Michael Schumacher, a 7-time world champion, or 4-time world champion Max Verstappen are both historic drivers in Formula One.

I think there is no better sporting event to attend than a Formula One race weekend. It is a three day ticket package that includes arriving early at the track to watch Formula Three practice and qualifying, as well as Formula Two and One

Wallies in the wild: Living in limbo

Connor Craig '25



my host institution's choir, and I volunteer part-time with Médicos del Mundo, a healthcare rights advocacy group for vulnerable women, doing research for them. Every day is a blessing here, and I'm so thankful for how everything came together. But I always find myself circling back to that "limbo" stage during my Wabash experience and what I learned, because I find myself there yet again at this very moment.

I recently received an offer from Indiana University School of Medicine to begin my long-awaited medical career as a tried-and-true Hoosier at heart. However, I'm taking a risk by applying for a position to continue working with Fulbright as a regional mentor. Right now, my Spanish is improving every single day, my students' English and cultural awareness improves every time I speak with them (my fifth graders know how to properly use "no cap" and "lock in," and my second graders can't stop dapping me up), and I'm finding myself as a contributing member of the Logroño community. I would be a guide to lead future cohort members in the La Rioja autonomous community, but that would mean deferring IUSM for a year. That brings us back to the original question... What do you do when you don't know what to do?

During my time living abroad, I think I've got at least a start at answering that: just exist. There's nuance to that though, and it requires existing with purpose. Learn to cook and make a meal for your friends. Visit somewhere you've never been just for the hell of it. Make friends with a random person who you might not see again (shoutout to the British guy with a metal detector that I met on the beach in Santander, Cantabria). If you don't have a final destination as of right now, why not enjoy the ride for what it is and live life?

I have no clue whether next year I'll start my path to becoming Dr. Craig or continue making my students giggle over my animated explanations of English grammar. But I know that the options are there, and it's okay if I don't have the answer to that today, tomorrow, next week or in three months. All I have to do is "aprovechar" day by day and understand that the most I can do is simply exist.

Whether you're heading into your first summer as a Wabash man, or about to temporarily part ways with Crawfordsville (we all know we'll be back at some point or another), if you find yourself in "limbo," remember to take it easy and be grateful for the journey. You'll grow from the lack of direction. Be patient. Cross the bridges once you arrive at them. Don't be afraid to say "yes" to whatever presents itself to you. And remember, being in limbo is a privilege, and it's something we get to experience.

I spent the second half of my senior year in future-plans "limbo." Just so I could have something on the other side of the commencement stage, I felt like I kept having to fish to make options available as I waited for news about a potential fellowship opportunity. The hard truth with playing that game is that it's difficult, nearly impossible to not compare yourself to others whose post-grad opportunities are set well before graduation. And when you do have that final destination, the weight immediately lifts. One by one, I celebrated my peers as they heard if they earned spots in graduate/medical/law school or if a company hired them to start their careers... while I had empty hands.

Most days during my "limbo" phase all I could be happy with in a day was the small wins: getting a fire pump in the Allen Center, the sun reflecting off the snow on my daily walk to Hays, Busch Apple making an early comeback and most of all being grateful to get to do what I was doing rather than needing to do what I was doing. Things were simple yet confusing during that period of time. I would wake up, go to class, lift, study and sleep all without a final destination.

So, there I was, spending my evenings in the library, studying for the MCAT with honestly no clue what I would do after commencement. Would I work as a medical scribe in a local clinic? Do I try to find a temporary research position in my community? Is it reasonable to do something non-medical and teach English in Spain? I had absolutely no idea.

Trying my best not to get frustrated by this looming vacancy in my near future, I found it necessary to simply be more patient and cross bridges when I get to them. And "di sí a todo y luego haces lo que te dé la gana," which roughly means "say yes to everything and do whatever you want" (as I've learned from the mother of some of the children I tutor).

Fortunately, that waiting game worked out. Right now, I'm living out in Logroño, La Rioja, Spain teaching English to pre-school and elementary students who are around three to eleven years old. I teach private English lessons on the side. I help out with

Desensitized by memes

Opinion Editor

Evan Bone '26

Reply to this opinion at ecbone26@wabash.edu



Humor and irony, memes specifically, help us make light of situations that feel out of our control. Turning our ridiculous political figures into silly memes gives us a semblance of control when we feel powerless in our lives. Especially in this fast-paced internet age, it's easy to feel overwhelmed as jobs disappear because of AI, global conflicts are livestreamed into our handheld devices and the same societal ills seemingly reappear. Irony can feel like our only defense in a world out to get us.

I am often reminded of a quote from philosopher Terrence McKenna from his "Final Interview" posted by Wisdom for Life on Youtube.

"I think it's just going to get weirder and weirder and weirder and finally it's going to be so weird that people are going to have to talk about how weird it is," said McKenna. "The systems which are in place to keep the world sane are utterly inadequate to the forces that have been unleashed."

This quote is from 1999 yet it captures this current moment defined by inhuman images generated by AI, anticipation and fear of global conflicts and politicians involved in morally bankrupt circles. In retaliation to this weirdness it seems as though our generation has turned to irony and humor to denigrate powerful figures and the state of our world into something much more manageable. But is this the right reaction to our times?

The recent wave of Epstein files, and the plethora of mentions of President Donald Trump and other well known figures, have led to a massive wave of memes on social media — Instagram and TikTok in particular. It doesn't surprise me that our generation has reacted in this way. The content of the Epstein files is so deplorable and intricately evil that it is shocking to read about. I've given the files a couple reads and each time I come out of that dark corner of the web feeling dirtied by the files I combed through. Even reading these files requires some form of coping, of trying to distract yourself from the abuses of power and spider webs of connections between political leaders, business moguls and technology creeps. But when I am scrolling through my phone and I land on a reel poking fun of, or at worst glamorizing, people in the Epstein files, I feel disgust in my gut at the fact that our loudest response to child abuse and trafficking is to joke about it.

The worst of the memes I've seen treat Epstein's lifestyle — designer clothes, private flights and expensive properties — as something to aspire for. I don't think I need to explain why these

memes are terrible. But more commonly I find screenshots of the Epstein files memed with gifs, irony and punchlines. These memes may seem harmless; they make Epstein and others into a joke and you may say what's wrong with that? But irony and humor can be a slippery slope towards apathy. For some people in our generation, they interact with memes more than some family members. Memes walk with us wherever we go. We spend hours on our phones. And so, if you surround yourself with memes about abusers, then eventually you may only associate them with the joke and not the crime. Your first reaction when Epstein's face pops up on your screen may be to laugh and not to frown with disgust.

We have already become desensitized to Epstein's crimes through the slow release and meme-ification of Epstein and his accomplices. The slow release of these files feels like a plot by the Department of Justice to make these grotesque crimes just another part of our news cycle like sporting events and the weather: "Oh it's going to rain tomorrow, and the Pacers lost to the Cavaliers and there's a new picture of Prince Andrew standing over a teenage girl." The slow release and memes about the Epstein files have turned sexual abuse and pedophilia into yet another headline that we just have to accept as a part of our lives. I worry that the comedic tone of how people discuss Epstein's crimes will strip us of our empathy akin to the heartless abusers in the files.

From the same interview of McKenna that I quoted earlier, the philosopher offers some hope.

"The good news is that, as primates, we are incredibly adaptable to change," said McKenna. "We can put up with about anything. It's a good thing because we're going to be tested to the limits." Our empathy is being tested by our technology and the moral failures of elites. But we are adaptable and resilient.

You may wonder what you can do about this? Washington D.C. is far away from Crawfordsville, Indiana and institutions don't change simply because of outrage. But we have the power to shape the discourse around us. Ignore memes about abuse. Don't give them your likes and comments. Keep the fire of empathy alive. We all may be too desensitized by the internet from seeing war and abuse on our phones so often, but empathy doesn't disappear so easily. Engaging authentically with others, getting involved with your community, reading about others lives through literature and much more can flex that empathy muscle that is being destroyed by irony. Don't allow the world to give you too many emotional calluses. Be proactive in your empathy. Even if a joke seems harmless, it can fester in our consciousness without our knowing. So next time you're scrolling, choose your likes, comments and laughs carefully. Irony is a weapon raised against our hearts. Fight back with empathy, Wabash.

A Wabash Record: 10 Orr Fellows!

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Alex Kindig

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Have an opinion on campus culture or a hot take to share? Write an opinion piece!

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Swimming and diving team places fifth at NCAC Championships

Ryan West '28 captures the conference crown in the 200-yard backstroke

Continued from page 1

His most memorable moment, however, came on the final night. In the championship final of the 200-yard backstroke, West surged past the field to capture the conference title. His winning time not only secured all-conference honors but also broke his own school record, cementing one of the finest individual performances in program history. The victory marked Wabash's lone conference crown of the meet and provided a defining highlight in an already impressive championship run.

"I think what led to my success this weekend was the process and preparation I've been doing this past year," said West. "I have been working hard in and out of the pool to set myself up for the best meet I can have."

Though West grabbed headlines, Wabash's fifth-place team finish was fueled by contributions throughout the roster.

Gilliam delivered strong distance performances, including a top-six finish in the 1,650-yard freestyle and additional scoring swims in the 200 and 500 freestyle events. William Renie '27 consistently

added points in mid-distance races and relays, while Carter Ramsey '29, Aidan Gubbins '29 and Andres Tejada '29 contributed personal-best efforts in distance events.

In sprint competition, Sweeney scored in both individual and relay events, including the 50 and 100 freestyle and multiple relays. Lew Sams '29 emerged as a key breaststroke contributor, advancing to the "A" Final of the 200-yard breaststroke and leading a deep Wabash showing in the 100-yard breaststroke alongside Abbas Hakim '29, Cooper Kowalski '28 and Dane Market '26.

Plumb added significant backstroke and butterfly points, including an "A" final appearance in the 200-yard backstroke alongside West. Across stroke groups — backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle and individual medley — Wabash consistently placed swimmers into scoring finals.

The Little Giants also closed the meet with a strong showing in the 400-yard freestyle relay, capping the championship with another cohesive team effort.

Wabash remained competitive throughout the four-day championship, climbing and holding position among the top half of the standings. The Little Giants ultimately totaled 1,030 points to finish fifth overall.

Host Denison claimed the team title for the 15th time in program history. They were followed by Kenyon, John Carroll, DePauw and



PHOTO COURTESY OF CARSON HIESTER '26

Dane Market '26, Aidan Mason '26, John Allen '26, Carson Hiestler '26 and Morgan Govekar '26 take a picture together at their last NCAC Championships on February 14, 2026, at Denison University in Granville, Ohio.

then Wabash.

Beyond the points and podium finishes, the championship revealed a program trending upward. School records fell. Personal bests stacked up across events. Relays drastically improved their times. Freshmen scored alongside veterans. Divers and swimmers alike produced impact performances. And most importantly, the whole team displayed the Wabash spirit.

"The team chemistry was awesome," said Sams. "We were the biggest cheerers there, and we were always super electric before each of our teammates swam."

Most importantly, Wabash demonstrated balance. From diving depth to sprint speed and from

distance endurance to medley versatility, the Little Giants proved they can compete across the full spectrum of championship events.

"This team has grown so much in the last two years," said West. "I have no doubt that in the next two years we will be in contention to make it to the NCAA Championships."

With West's conference title anchoring the week and a lineup filled with underclassmen contributors, Wabash left the 2026 NCAC Championships not just with a fifth-place finish, but with clear momentum for the seasons ahead.



PHOTO BY HUGH VANDIVIER '91

The Wabash swimming and diving team take a team picture after the conclusion of the NCAC Championships on February 14, 2026, at Denison University in Granville, Ohio.

Baseball sets sights on NCAC Championship

JERRION ROSE '29
STAFF WRITER

After setting the program record for most single-season regular season wins and finishing second in the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) in a strong 2025 campaign, the baseball team now looks to the 2026 season ahead. In 2025, the Little Giants crushed the competition, setting new standards for themselves. In every winning game they had, the Little Giants beat every opponent they faced by at least three runs. They also earned the Team Academic Excellence Award for making plays both in the classroom and on the field. Head Baseball Coach Jake Martin '03 will continue to lead the Little Giants in 2026, entering his 10th year as head coach.

"Last year was a good year," said Martin. "We finished second in the conference in the regular season, set the record for regular season wins in program history and really did a nice job all year."

2025 ended in disappointing fashion, however, as Wabash dropped two games against Wittenberg to get bounced in the first round of the NCAC tournament. Even so, Martin remains confident in his team for this season. Leaning on the balance between veteran players and new faces, he hopes this dynamic will help propel the team further. Going into the 2026 season, Martin is focused on improving the margins.

"The little things that sometimes go hidden in a box for they ultimately impact winning and losing," said Martin. "We want to minimize what we give up and be able to take advantage of what teams are giving us through free bases."

This year's Little Giants welcome a new pitching coach to the staff. Assistant Baseball Coach Zach Zaborowski comes from Westfield, Indiana. After playing just two years of baseball at Westfield High School, he earned a scholarship to play baseball for the Indiana Tech Warriors. Zaborowski excelled at Indiana Tech, ending his career ranking first in career strikeouts and fifth in career wins. His successful college career earned him the opportunity to join the United States Professional Baseball League's Westside Woolly Mammoths in 2024 and the Pioneer League's Grand Junction Jackalopes for the 2025 season. Across the span of his collegiate and professional career, he gained more than enough experience to join the Little Giants.

"I was the youngest [candidate] but that was a strength as well," said Zaborowski. "I am the same



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

Aidan McConnell '26 throws a pitch in a game against Earlham College on April 22, 2025, at Goodrich Ballpark.

generation as these kids so I know what works and what doesn't."

Going into his first season, Zaborowski has hit the ground running by going in-depth with each pitcher, creating individual workouts, encouraging them to be confident in their strengths and holding them accountable. Overall, Zaborowski believes this group will find success by winning the subtle battles, and he's looking forward to seeing the talents of the freshman and sophomores bloom on the field. His intentions this season align with Martin's, specifically focusing on limiting mistakes.

"We have a lot of versatility [on the pitching staff]," said Zaborowski. "And I don't want to give 20 guys the same thing to do at practice."

Goodrich Ballpark will also be receiving turf in the infield and foul territories for the 2026 season, thanks to the donation of former Little Giant baseball player, John Birdzell '61. The turf will replace the current dirt and grass, which has been in place since Goodrich Ballpark opened in 2011. Renovations are hoping to be completed before the home opener on March 21.

This year, the Little Giants aim to make a run at the NCAC championship and a berth into the NCAA Division III National Tournament. Team spirits are at an all-time high coming off the heels of a record-setting regular season in 2025 and a strong freshman class looks to sustain the program's solid performance. The baseball team will open their season with three games against Franklin and Marshall College, Hampden-Sydney College and Muskingum University on February 21 and 22 in Hampden-Sydney, Virginia.

TY MURPHY '27

STAFF WRITER
SEAN BLEDSOE '26
SPORTS EDITOR

From a dominant track and field performance to multiple individual wrestling titles, Wabash teams delivered several standout performances. Here is a recap of this week's sports.

Lacrosse

The lacrosse team had a busy week hosting Muskingum University on Saturday, February 14, and travelling to Kalamazoo, Michigan to face Kalamazoo College on Wednesday, February 18.

Against Muskingum, Jake Pippen '26 led the team with four of the Little Giant's seven scores. Evan Bair '28 added two scores in the third quarter to keep it close, but Muskingum pulled away later in the quarter. Christian Dybedock '27 put up one more score to end the fourth quarter in a 7-11 Little Giants loss.

Wabash followed with a thrilling double-overtime 7-8 loss. Bair led the team with three goals, helping the team build momentum in the second quarter. Pippen and David Finstead '29 found the net to make the lead 7-5, but the Hornets did not back down. Kalamazoo responded with two late goals to send the game to overtime and then capitalized in double-overtime to hand Wabash its second loss of the season.

The team will return to action on Saturday, February 21, at Fischer Field where they will take on Hope College at 1 p.m. EST.

Track and Field

The track and field team dominated the day after travelling south on Saturday, February 14, to compete at the DePauw University Invitational in Greencastle, Indiana.

Conner Grimes '26 clocked in at 6.91 seconds to surpass the school record of 6.92 seconds set by Will Newby '23. Grimes returned in the 200-meter dash with a win after putting up a time of 21.90 seconds. This shattered the former school record of 22.30 seconds held by Jose Franco '22.

In a commanding fashion, Quinn Sholar '26 set a school record with a 17.47-meter throw to obliterate the former record of 17.35 by Derek De St. Jean '15.

Four other Little Giants claimed first place honors. Sly Williams '26 won the long jump with a mark of 6.66 meters, Haiden Diemer-McKinney '26 won the 1,000 meters in 2:30.16, Brock DeBello '29 captured the 400-meters in 50.19 seconds and David Adesanya '27 took the 800-meters in 1:56.34. Wabash won the 12-team invitational with a score of 211.5 points.

The track and field team will return

This week in sports

to action on Saturday, February 21, to compete at the Indiana State University Open in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Volleyball

The volleyball team hosted Westminster College (Missouri) on Sunday, February 15, at Chadwick Court in a thrilling head-to-head matchup.

After dropping the first set, Wabash rallied behind kills from Shad Wilson '27 and Zev Wolverton '27 to take a 13-7 advantage early on. With 12 more kills and a block by Bawibawi Thang '27, the team was able to even the match at one set a piece.

The team carried their momentum into the third set, finishing with a 25-21 victory. The Blue Jays responded in the fourth and withstood a Wabash comeback to win the set 25-23 and take the home team to a decisive fifth set.

Westminster raced to a 10-5 lead before a Wilson kill and a Matthew Stitle '28 service ace put the Little Giants behind by one at 10-11. Despite trading points the Blue Jays were eventually able to pull away to win fifth set 15-13 and seal the match.

The squad will take the court again on Friday, February 20, at Olivet, Missouri to take on the University of Olivet. The first serve is set to take flight at 7 p.m. EST.

Wrestling

The wrestling team competed on Saturday, February 14, at the Mid-States Invitational hosted by Alma College in Alma, Michigan. The Little Giants claimed five champions and 17 top-eight finishes.

James Day '26 led the team after capturing the title at 133 lbs., finishing with a 16-1 technical fall against Manchester's Nasir Christian. Jaylen Young '28 won his championship match, beating Ohio Northern's Flint Guerra in a fall at 174 lbs. to claim the title.

Hadyn Ball '27 and Spencer Watson '28 met in the 197 lbs. championship bout in an all-Wabash final. Ball

secured the victory with a 4-1 sudden victory against Watson.

Titus Waters '27 captured the heavyweight championship with a 14-3 major decision against Lakeland University's Diego Morales. Zach Huckaby '28 rounded out the victories for Wabash with a defeat of fellow teammate Michael Taheny '29 by a tally of 7-2 to claim the 184 lbs. class.

The wrestling team will start their postseason bouts at the 2026 NCAA DIII Central Region tournament on February 27-28 at John Carroll University in University Heights, Ohio.

Tennis

The tennis team faced a doubleheader against Coe College and University of Wisconsin Stevens-Point on Saturday, February 14, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Then on Sunday, February 15, they went head-to-head with Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa.

Wabash fell 1-6 to Coe College, earning its lone point from a Murilo Guarnieri '28 victory, who won his singles match 2-1 (6-7, 6-1, 6-4).

The Little Giants rebounded against Wisconsin Stevens-Point thanks to the number two doubles team of Cole Shifferly '26 and Tharakesh Ashokar '26 getting the momentum started. After getting off to a good start, the team did not let up and completed the 7-0 sweep.

Grinnell College was a difficult matchup for the Little Giants. Edmon Neto '29 was the lone singles victory as he won 2-0 (6-4, 77-62). The team lost 1-6.

Wabash will split forces on Saturday, February 21. Some will travel to Greencastle, Indiana to take on North Central College with the first match set to take place at 11 a.m. EST. Others will stay in Crawfordsville, Indiana, to take on Franklin College and the University of Saint Francis (Indiana) in a doubleheader at Collett Tennis Center set to start at 11 a.m. EST.



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Carson Fettig '28 looks to gain an advantage over his opponent during the Wabash College Open on January 31, 2026, in Knowling Fieldhouse.

Basketball stumbles against Wittenberg, home court advantage uncertain

CARTER MCCALL '29
STAFF WRITER

With postseason tournament seeding implications on the line, the Little Giant basketball team hosted the Wittenberg Tigers on Wednesday, February 18, for last home game of the regular season before the North Coast Athletic Conference tournament.

Wittenberg made the opening basket, but Wabash went on a 7-0 run to take the lead. Wabash maintained the momentum through aggressive drives and efficient free-throw shooting.

The Tigers refused to go down easy, though. They mounted an 8-0 run behind impressive paint scoring that cut the deficit to just one. The back-and-forth battle intensified in the final six minutes with Nate Matelic '27 and Gavin Schippert '26 scoring on the inside.

In the closing moments, Schippert converted a layup to give Wabash a 32-27 cushion, but the Tigers hit a three with just six seconds left to cut the Little Giant lead to two at halftime.

The second half opened with a strong Little Giant start, but Wittenberg flipped the script on the Little Giants midway through the half. A three-pointer tied the game at 44 points a piece, and several consecutive scoring possessions swung the point margin in favor of the Tigers. All of a sudden, Wabash found itself trailing 44-49 with just under nine minutes to play.

The Little Giants kept battling. Colton Stowers '29 knocked down a jumper to stop the run, and Luke Ellspermann '29 added two more free throws to cut the deficit. With under four minutes remaining, Schippert drilled a clutch three-pointer to bring Wabash within two.

The closing minutes were tense. Schippert converted a layup and Matelic calmly sank two free-throws to narrow the gap to a single point.

After a missed Wittenberg shot in the paint, Wabash gained possession with seven seconds left on the game clock. Stowers took it up the court and passed it to Matelic, who missed the game-winning jumpshot short. The Wittenberg Tigers toppled the Wabash Little Giants 64-63.

On Saturday, February 14, Wabash delivered a memorable Senior Day performance at Chadwick Court, rallying in the second half to defeat Kenyon College 86-79 in a pivotal North Coast Athletic Conference matchup.



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Josh Whack '26 pulls the trigger on a three-point shot against Kenyon on February 14, 2026, at Chadwick Court.

Before tipoff, Wabash honored seniors Schippert, Josh Whack '26, Rich Brooks '26, Randy Kelley '26, and student assistant Sean Bledsoe '26. The players have competed with great poise this season and have been a beacon of leadership for the talented younger players that are the future of the program.

“To see the seniors play well and make a contribution when they had family here and with them being honored before the game gives me a lot of satisfaction.”

- Head Basketball Coach
Kyle Brumett

“As a senior, I have to lead by example,” said Brooks. “If the younger guys see me doing something well, I hope that they see that and want to do it too.”

Kenyon controlled much of the first half, building multiple small leads behind timely three-point shooting and efficient work at the free throw line. The Owls carried a three point lead into halftime, maintaining steady offensive production despite strong interior play from Brooks and timely scoring from Whack.

The second half, however, belonged to Wabash. The Little Giants leaned on an inside-out attack that began to

shift momentum midway through the period. Keegan Manowitz '27 sparked the surge with a key three-pointer to tie the game, and Brooks followed with another triple to give Wabash its first lead in several minutes. Matelic added a clutch three off the bench, helping to fuel a 9-2 run that energized the home crowd.

With the score tight late in the game, Schippert delivered a defining sequence. He converted a second-chance tip-in and then buried a three-pointer to ignite the game-changing 10-0 burst. Ellspermann added free throws, and Whack finished a driving layup to stretch the lead to double-digits in the final two minutes.

Kenyon mounted a late push behind a 26-point effort from Nicholas Graves, but Matelic sealed the win at the free throw line. Wabash's balanced scoring, efficient shooting and rebounding edge ultimately secured a crucial conference triumph and a fitting Senior Day celebration.

“To see the seniors play well and make a contribution when they had family here and with them being honored before the game gives me a lot of satisfaction,” said Head Basketball Coach Kyle Brumett. “Having to come from behind the way we did also hammers home the fact that this group still has a lot to play for.”

The Little Giants will wrap up the regular season on Saturday, February 21, against the Oberlin Yeomen in Oberlin, Ohio. Tipoff is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. EST.

The Bledsoe '26 breakdown: NCAC basketball power rankings

SEAN BLEDSOE '26
SPORTS EDITOR

It's a sad week for readers of *The Bachelor*. This is my last week doing power rankings...ever. I want to say thank you to those who have read my (hopefully) funny, rude, satirical and sometimes downright evil power rankings since the football season started in early September. Who knows though? If Wabash makes March Madness, I may have to do a power rankings article of all 64 teams in the tournament. But let's focus on the NCAC for one last time this week.



#1 - Denison Big Red
Overall Record: (16-8)
NCAC Record: (11-4)

This pains me to do. I literally hate myself for doing this, but it must be done. The Big Red knocked off John Carroll by beating the brakes off the Blue Streaks by 17 points. Then they beat Wooster, which isn't that impressive but whatever. So help me God, though, if Denison hosts the NCAC tournament. I can't stand their broadcast quality, let alone their annoying broadcasters. Matt Tanney '05, could you invest some money into your school's broadcast quality to help with my sanity please?



#2 - John Carroll Blue Streaks
Overall Record: (18-6)
NCAC Record: (10-5)

The Blue Streaks and Big Red have played hot potato with the first place power rankings spot over the last four weeks. There seems to be a slight curse with the top spot because my number one team has changed every week due to a loss. The 17-point thrashing JCU took from Denison was their biggest loss of the season. Hopefully this keeps the Streaks at bay for the rest of the season. Nobody wants to see Luke Chicone, their All-American guard, scoring more than 20 points a game ever again.



#3 - DePauw Tigers
Overall Record: (17-7)
NCAC Record: (10-5)

I'm very hesitant to keep the Dannies above Wabash, especially because they didn't play a game on Saturday and probably went off partying, drinking beers and chasing people to date. Not like they pulled anyone, though. Black and gold Tigers smell worse than Rhynes. Regardless, the Dannies played the Bishops on Wednesday night and barely escaped with a win. So long, Dannies. My kids will never ever go to that wretched, ugly, disgusting, terrible and atrocious school down south.



#4 - Wittenberg Tigers
Overall Record: (17-6)
NCAC Record: (10-4)

Haha! Head Basketball Coach Kyle Brumett was right. A top conference team did lose to Oberlin in February. Here's my question: how does Head Coach Darren Hertz play 14 of the 23 guys on his roster and still lose? That's actually crazy, bro. Coach Hertz can play all the guys he wants, but at some point he has to take a look in the mirror. I'm also shocked he wasn't ejected on Wednesday night. I was really hoping to see him charge at the Sphinx Club. Everyone knows it's best to just keep your mouth shut and stay on the bench when you're going up against the Chadwick Crazies.



#5 - Wabash Little Giants
Overall Record: (14-9)
NCAC Record: (8-6)

The Little Giants were led by their trio of playing seniors, Gavin Schippert '26, Josh Whack '26 and Rich Brooks '26, as the three combined for 45 of the team's 86 points against Kenyon on Saturday. Don't worry, Randy Kelley '26. I didn't forget about you. Randall led the team in whiteboards handed to Head Basketball Coach Kyle Brumett — the most important statistic of all. Wabash dropped a close one on Wednesday night to Wittenberg, making the chances of a NCAC quarterfinal game being hosted at Chadwick slim. The good news is that Wabash's road record is favorable. Sko Bash!



#6 - Wooster Fighting Scots
Overall Record: (7-16)
NCAC Record: (4-10)

The Fighting Scots have been all over the map this season, and Saturday night at OWU was no exception. After making a last-second three at the end of regulation, Wooster went on to win in overtime. The Scots hope to make the NCAC tournament, but they have to beat DePauw on Saturday to have a chance. Assuming they keep Jaiden Cox-Holloway off the floor, they should be fine.



#7 - Ohio Wesleyan Battling Bishops
Overall Record: (7-16)
NCAC Record: (4-10)

I wonder what sin the Bishops committed prior to the Wooster game, because the man upstairs struck them down. Losing to the Scots may be one of the worst punishments of all time. What's worse is losing to DePauw, and...oh, that happened too. Yikes.



#8 - Oberlin Yeomen
Overall Record: (11-12)
NCAC Record: (4-10)

The squirrels found their proverbial February nuts against Wittenberg and Kenyon. Let's go! But your winning streak is over. The Little Giants will see you tomorrow.



#9 - Kenyon Owls
Overall Record: (10-14)
NCAC Record: (4-11)

I don't even know what to say about the Owls. Who...who...who's going to be your head coach next year?

Making waves: Ryan West '28

TY MURPHY '27
STAFF WRITER

Competing in one of the toughest conferences in Division III, the Wabash swimming and diving team knows what adversity is. The North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) is home to national powerhouses like Denison University and Kenyon College. But this year at the conference championship, in a pool filled to the brim with elite competition, Wabash gained more than experience. They crowned a conference champion.

Ryan West '28 competed in the NCAC Championships from February 11-14 at Denison University in Granville, Ohio. On the final day of competition, he captured the conference 200-yard backstroke title with a time of 1:46.42, smashing his own previous school record of 1:47.56.

“Winning it just proved that everything I was doing all year was worth it,” said West. “It was meaningful. It was proof that hard work does pay off, and it was especially special to celebrate it with my teammates all around me.”

Hailing from Apex, North Carolina, West got a late start to swimming. He only started when he was 14 years-old and did not know how good he would be. But after a few years of competition, he had caught the attention of a certain Wabash coach.

“From the initial recruitment when we first started having conversations with him, we knew he was going to be a pretty special athlete,” said Head Swimming and Diving Coach William Bernhardt.

And that is exactly what



PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTH COAST ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

Ryan West '28 celebrates his win in the 200 yard backstroke at the NCAC Championships on February 14, 2026, at Denison University in Granville, Ohio.

the team got when he busted onto the scene as a freshman, setting several school records. But going into the 2025 NCAC Championships, he came up just short as he finished third overall in the 200-yard backstroke. While some athletes would dwell on it, West used it as his motivation.

“Being a freshman and coming in third showed me that I had a shot,” said West. “I was that close in my first year, so I knew all I needed to do was to keep thinking about how I did not win in order to push myself so that I could do it.”

Coming into this year's conference championship, he knew he was ready, and his team did too. After watching him train over the course of the season, it was certain he could do something special.

“He leads by example; he's out there

busting his butt every single practice,” said Bernhardt. “Every practice he shows up and gives his best effort. That's the kind of leadership that he brings to the team.”

After breaking the 200-yard individual medley and 100-yard backstroke school records earlier in the meet, West surged to the title at the end of the fourth day of competition to take home his victory. After touching first, it immediately became a special moment — not just for him, but for the team itself.

“It's been almost 10 years since Wabash had an outright conference champion,” said Bernhardt. “For the team to be able to see that level of performance and to see that two of the best teams in the country can be beaten, it's special.”

West is currently ranked sixth in the nation for 200-yard backstroke but will have to wait for other conferences to finish up to officially know if he secured a spot for the NCAA Division III National Championships. While his spot is not official yet, it is for certain that West has etched himself into the Wabash history books.

CUTOUT PHOTO BY HEAD SWIMMING AND DIVING COACH WILLIAM BERNHARDT