

**Summary to Date - Questionnaire - UMRA Members
May 2010
Response tabulation of January 21, 2011**

The University of Minnesota Retirees Association (UMRA) is your organization and you should have something to say about what it does and how it functions. The UMRA Board of Directors is interested in hearing from you about ideas to improve the experience of belonging to UMRA. Below is a survey for you to use in communicating some of your thoughts. In the interests of brevity, we are concentrating on just a few activity areas, so if other subjects occur to you, please feel free to add comments.

1. Luncheon Get-togethers:

A. Have you attended some of the luncheon meetings?

42 **Yes**

15 **No. If No, why not?**

I live in Arizona, returning to Minnesota only three weeks in the summer.

I usually work through the lunch hours.

Time didn't work.

Conflicts with other commitments.

Not recently. Decreased mobility and hearing problems. Also, a conflict with another regular activity on Tuesday afternoons.

Low level of energy.

I am still teaching part time as adjunct and my schedule doesn't permit attending.

As soon as this book is done (ms due Dec 31) I will have a bit more time to attend.

I am a member of the alumni assoc but at 92 I do not drive into the campus very often I continue my membership because of the good work you all do and because I enjoy the newsletter. I have a computer but am not very clever at using it except for simple emails so haven't been successful in returning the recent survey . My input wouldn't be very meaningful any way.

I am not available on Tuesdays when I think the luncheons are scheduled.

Although I remain a member of the Association, I am too old to get around, hence I keep reading the notices. I do not come to the meetings. I appreciate your contribution.

Have not been free for most.

I live in Ely Minnesota during the summer months and near Phoenix in the winter; it is pretty hard to justify going to the Twin Cities for these meetings unless the topic is of extreme interest or I have another reason to be in the Twin Cities area when there is a meeting. I joined UMRA because I believe in supporting the group and how it represents me in other areas, such as health insurance issues.

And, if your response is No, skip to Question 1, part D,

B. Approximately how many luncheon meetings did you attend

in 2009-10? 2,0,8,6,1,2,3,1,7,4,1,5,2,0,2,4,2,7,0,8,4,1,4,5,1,4,3,6,1,0,5,0,2,1,7,3,8,6,8,3,8,8

in 2008-09? 3,6,8,0,1,3,1,5,7,6,0,5,0,1,3,3,3,5,2,8,0,0,3,0,4,4,5,6,0,1,5,5,4,1,6,1,7,2,8,4,8,8

Was regular until about 5 years ago.

C. Please register your opinion regarding the following aspects of the luncheons.

Location of luncheon meetings:

- 34** like the Campus Club location
Parking and Bookstore
- 9** please explore other options on U of M campus
- 8** please explore off-campus options

Reasons:

- 16** parking
- 8** need more space so more people can attend
- 2** need better acoustics
- 5** like variety
- 7** other (please specify)

May draw more new members who want a more convenient place to drive to and meet.

Meeting at the CC 1-2 times annually might work, especially for certain topics.

Easy access to MTC buses, transportation we all need to be encouraging.

May find better menu at reasonable price.

I'm flexible about this, but if people have trouble walking, it would be difficult to get to Campus Club.

Traffic

Cost

Access to bus at Campus Club,

Close to home,

Amount of food is shrinking!

Do you think the luncheons are a good value?

- 28** Yes
- 11** No
- 4** No opinion

Good value most of the time

OK but not great

To improve the luncheon experience would you pay more to:

- 20** change/upgrade the menu selections, course
- 11** restore the dessert course

My husband would like that!

I really don't need dessert-candy is ok.

OK as is but willing to pay more if others vote for change.

Charge too much as it is.

I come to UMRA luncheons to (please rank your choices):**hear interesting speakers**

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see University friends and former colleagues

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stay in touch with the University community

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stay in touch with the campus

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I am involved in other ways.

Meeting new people was one of our main objectives in joining and attending, beginning in 2007-2008; but we've been disappointed in having met new people on somewhat superficial levels, with limited table conversation; at this point in life my wife and I are concerned about creating more depth in our relationships, rather than just knowing people on a name basis; it's hard to remember people we've met at previous meetings.

The most memorable speaker(s) I have heard at an UMRA luncheon was/were

Brian Atwood, Larry Jacobs

Physics of superheroes

Bob Holt's introductions, the peregrine falcon speaker, Robin Wright, John Freeman, Brian Atwood.

Sorry, I can't recall, although there have been some interesting ones.

Larry Jacobs from Political Science.

The Sept speaker (Robin Wright).

Linda Mack, then at STRIB, re architecture of TC's new cultural venues.

Program on peregrine falcons.

Professor Masten, Children At Risk Research.

Dean of Humphrey Institute, Prof. Jacobson of Humphrey Inst..

Brian Attwood & Larry Jacobs

History of Opera in Twin Cities, New Technology in Biology (including classroom tour), Head of Art Department

For simple pleasure – The presentation about peregrine falcons--For information – the presentation about the state of the art electronic classroom--Sorry – I don't recall names right now. Lots of other good ones.

Harlen Hansen.

Hy Berman, Peter Hudleston, Larry Jacobs, Lanny Schmidt.

I was so impressed with Chris Maser who talked about legal problems of the elderly that I hired her write a will and other matters.

Maser-attorney talking about wills-estate planning-health directives, Lori Sturdevant, Eric Utne, Larry Jacobs

Apostolos Georgopolous

The most memorable speaker(s) I have heard at an UMRA luncheon was the one about physics and comic books. Absolutely terrific!

The attorney who spoke at the Sept luncheon (on Elder Law). She also presented at the Big 10 meeting hosted by Minn that summer—OUTSTANDING!

Ken Keller

Vern

What kinds of speaking topics do you prefer?

29 Academic research

(if related to major issues)

23 Subjects of general interest to retirees (e.g., travel, health, community resources, financial or estate planning, etc.)

We're interested in both.

Major life and sustainability issues— environmental concerns (global warming, etc.), political conflicts, philosophical/ideological perspectives.

Academic research tied to real world issues and understanding.

Academic research when topics are relevant to current events

My idea of a good speaker to invite is:

Bill Doherty, Paul Rosenblatt, Megan Gunner, Andy Collins

My idea of a good speaker to invite is: Someone from the theater department, someone like Vern Sutton from Music, John Wright, English and African American Studies, someone from Women's Athletic program, faculty or administrator/dean from the Medical School to discuss new programs and/or research, Senior Fellow Art Rolnick at the HHH.

Who ever and deliver the above (topics of general interest to retirees) in a useful manner.
David Good from History Departmen.

My idea of a good speaker to invite is: Gerhard Weiss re his research over the decades alternating with a younger scholar or administrator.

As a new member, I have only had the opportunity to attend two luncheons and hear two U of MN speakers, but I have enjoyed both experiences.

My idea of a good speaker to invite is: someone who is in a position to provide interesting and unusual insights into a particular topic—like Charlie Rose os some of his guests.

Bill Doherty & Any Collins

A public figure or person in the news

Political speakers such as Lori Sturdevant who is researching and writing some historical books.

Regents' Professor Megan R. Gunnar

I have nobody to suggest.

High teaching/speaking skills. Example: Larry Jacobs, Lori Sturdevant

D. Some members do not have ready access to transportation to attend UMRA luncheons:

3 I would like to obtain a ride with another UMRA member
Shirley Zimmerman, Hebert Mohring, Marvin & Ruth Stein

8 I am willing to provide a ride to another UMRA member
Van Mueller, Kay Swanson, Al Levitan, Frank Wood in Prospect Park & sometimes take the bus, Herbert Mohring, Michael Root, Earl Nolting, Russell Hamilton,

0 I am willing to serve as coordinator to connect riders with providers

Out of town for several months of the year.

I don't go enough yet, but will later.

I work part-time on campus and use the bus only--so I can't help with transportation!

Will help, but unable to chair. (Earl Nolting)

If we could make the luncheon reservations deadline a few days earlier than we presently use, perhaps we could match people needing rides with people signed up to attend luncheons who live nearby (based on zip codes). Then the "hitch-hiker" could commit to luncheon attendance with the security of having transportation and timely notice would still be provide to the kitchen about the number of meals needed. There might be other ways to do this as well, but this is offered as a starting point for a more detailed discussion of the problem.

2. Possible activities UMRA could add depending on members' interests:

I/we would be interested in attending:

18 Workshops on skills such as using computers, using the Internet, etc.
(advanced—PowerPoint, Web sites, etc.)

16 Seminars on topics such as investing, elder law, health benefits issue

21 Tours of campus venues, attending music and theater performances or art shows

Emphasis on attending music and theater performances.

20 Interest groups such as writing group, book club, games group, etc.

(Art club—painting, etc.; book club focusing on serious topics)

Depending on where and when.

Book club-Yes!

Above sound interesting, depending on the specifics

2 Other interests (please specify): _____

Not computer per se, but some specific areas like photo-editing, video-editing, website dev't/mgmt, and related.

Finding ways to help members get involved in some meaningful volunteer activities where they can use their inquiry skills for the benefit of others on short term projects.

My main issue is time availability. So...could we include some of the above events as part of our monthly meetings (or following them) so we could combine events when we come to campus... Liked the idea of hearing a speaker and visiting a campus site—could we apply that model to the Bell Museum? Or, when Weisman is finished, could we hear a speaker and then visit the site?

Photo club-Frank Busta

Planner: estates and trusts

WOW, these all sound great if I lived in the Twin Cities; much better than the offerings at our "active adult" home in the Phoenix area.

I would suggest UMRA explore the possibility of a member bulletin board where people could connect on a variety of interests and needs: for example, Want to buy, Want to rent, Places to visit and eat in out of town or out of country locations, Tickets to events—wanted or available to share (at cost)—Football, M/W basketball games, Hockey, Guthrie, Orchestra Hall, Weisman, MIA, Walker, etc. One or more persons would have to check listings and remove out of date listings, but I think it would

work. I see something like an UMRA “Stub Hub”. Also people having trouble driving – day or night—could team up with others to attend various events together.

3. Professional Development Grants Program:

Are you aware of the Professional Development Grants Program for continuing research and program development that UMRA initiated for U retirees?

41 Yes. If so, how did you learn about it?

Board meeting, *UMRA Newsletter- I received a grant in the first round.*, UMRA luncheon, *John Howe*, UMRA Newsletter, *UMRA*, UMRA Newsletter, *UMRA Newsletter; I applied but was not accepted, ostensibly because I lacked expertise in composing; I proceeded with the project anyway, completing **Eco Songs**, 12 selections about various environmental issues*, UMRA Board Meeting, *From a colleague*, Communiqués from John and Judy Howe, *At meeting*, e-mail, *Through the UMRA newsletter*, Sought support, but needed too much money, *UMRA Newsletter*, Read the announcements, *Internet*, Colleagues told me about it, *UMRA*, Announcement at meeting, *Friends told me*, Newsletter & e-mail, *Newsletter*, Newsletter & website, *Newsletter & presentations at luncheons*, Newsletter, *UMRA Newsletter*, UMRA Newsletter, *From the newsletter if memory serves me correctly*, UMRA notices & from John Howe, *e-mail*, watched its development at board meetings, *through you!*, UMRA board, *UMRA Newsletter*, the papers, *Newsletter and board meetings*. Board

7 No

4. Leadership:

Have you ever participated on an UMRA committee or served on the board?

19 Yes. In what capacity?

On Board 2 years, *Membership Database Manager*, Served on board and was Treasurer_ for 3 years, *Membership committee*, Board and membership committee. *President, ca. 1999-2001*, Board, *Volunteer ushering, etc*, New board member. *Currently on Board and Retirement Committee*, President of board, *Representative from URVC*, On board, Representative on Campus Club board, *Board*, Membership committee-short stint on board-Newsletter editor, *Treasurer*, Board, *Secretary for 3 years*

34 No

Are you interested in participating on a committee or task group? Please specify area of interest _____

Improving the lunches (Judy Howe),

Will do lunch reservations once a year (Pat Tollefson),

Maybe at some future time... collecting money for the luncheon (Helen Carlson),

Yes (Flexible for interest area, Donald Clay Johnson),

Only if the work could be done via computer and long distance (Charlene Mason)

What do you need? (Herbert Mohring)

Maybe (Marvin Stein)

On membership committee-interested in continuing (Earl Nolting)
 Depends on the group; if interesting, perhaps (Clifton Ware),
 Membership once off Board (Corrine Ellingham)

Not at this time, *Already tied up*, Probably not, *Not interested—no time*. Not panting for this; I'm heavily committed to OLLI and to work as a reader of high school seniors' applications to UMTC, *Probably not*, No, *Travel and Reporting*. Part-time employment keeps me occupied, *I will be spending my retirement years in Arizona, so I plan to get involved with the U of MN Alumni group down there. But, I strongly support UMRA's activities and will continue to be a dues paying member*. Unable, Quill96 Story Group Class, *Program—depending on where or when meetings are held*, The one I am on, *Not yet. Still working; writing book*, No, *Any*. Perhaps later, *No*, No, Too involved with other organizations, *No*, No-too many trips out of town, *No*, No interest—busy at other places, *No*, My scholarly interests or those of my spouse.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

My only thought on this score is that the U is a big place and getting bigger. The periodic umra meetings are OK but so big and so formalized and not totally cheap, either. For my part, it would be nice to have a small bunch from the medical school to sit around and have lunch with and gab a bit. the challenge would be to find a rallying point or person and a group willing to join up. I think the periodic meetings are just too large and unwieldy...tho to be honest, I have only attended one or two.

My main interest is having the retiree association address the issue of our retiree health benefits which as you know are way below those of other major universities. While it would be difficult to gain the kind of coverage available at Michigan or Michigan State of the U C system at this time, what could be addressed first is getting our risk pool changed from one made up of those of 65 and over to one which includes the entire University employee population. Not only do our retirees pay the entire cost of our health coverage, they pay it based on a population of those 65 and older. Addressing this issue of course would involve getting the currently employed faculty, many of whom don't even know that they will get no University participation in their retiree health coverage costs, interested in this issue that will have a major effect on them once they retire.

_____ is unable to answer. He has dementia. Since we once attended activities with pleasure, I am answering for us.

1. A no, C explore off campus because of parking
 Speaking topics of most interest academic research

2. skill workshops eg computer 3. no 4. no

Survey seems a good idea, hope you get many useful responses. We are in Mpls May thru mid-October.

I started filling in the survey but then gave up. Although I had been a member of your board and attended numerous luncheons over the last few years, I moved from Minnesota to Cape Cod three months ago so couldn't respond cogently to your questions about your local programming. I'm curious, however, about how members who live far from the campus can carry the message, interact with the network effectively, and, in general, participate in such a way as to feel like active members. Now there's a challenge for you!! Jan Hively

I have been a consistent supporter of UMRA since my retirement and appreciate its efforts on behalf of the welfare of retired faculty. For a variety of reasons, however, I have decided not to be active in the governance and planning activities of the Association.

I came away from the meeting on the proposed "Retirees Center" with some thoughts, underscored by this month's U of M Retirees meeting on the outcomes of some of the Prof. Development Grants for retirees. Our retirees association has been very successful over the years in negotiating an impressive array of benefits for its members. ... Because of that success we should, as an organization, be perceived as continuing to support the University. ... Our retired faculty and staff do indeed generously support the U as Jerry Fisher, then president and CO of the U of M Foundation indicated when he was the speaker at one of the UMRA meetings. ... We are all aware of how the economy has affected the University and the families of current and prospective students. So I believe it would be a wise and appreciated gesture if UMRA would establish an undergraduate tuition scholarship. ... The timing could not be better and the gesture warmly appreciated at a state university where the annual undergraduate tuition is above \$12,000.

Thank you for providing your viewpoints to help us plan for the next year of UMRA activities. Your response will be important in the organization's future decisions.

Name _____

John Anderson, Ayers Bagley, Annie Baldwin, Arlene Bennett, Hy Berman, Les Block, Pauline Boss, Robert J. Bowman, Connie Burrill, Frank Busta, Helen Carlson, Stan Deno, Eugene Edie, Vernon Eidman, Corrine Ellingham, Caroline Gilbert, Judy Leahy Grimes, Russell Hamilton, Harlan Hansen, Ginny Hanson, Willard Hartup, Jan Hively, Katherine Hoaglund, Judy Howe, Warren Ibele, Vern Jensen, David Johnson, Donald Clay Johnson, Sally Jorgensen, John and Barbara Killen, Nels Knutzen, Virgil Larson, Alexander Levitan, William Liljemark, Charlene Mason, Robert McCollister, Herbert Mohring, Van Mueller, Earl Nolting, George (Rip) Rapp, Michael Root, Marty Rossmann, Sally Schakel, Earl and Rebecca Scott, Tom Shaughnessy, Edward Silberman, Sue Smith, Mariah Snyder, Ruth Stein, Fred Steinhauser, Harriet Strasberg and Pete Lund, Roger Stuewer, Kay Swanson, Pat Tollefson, Clifton Ware, Frank Wood, Shirley Zimmerman, Sue Zuriff.