



UMRA FORUM

NOVEMBER–JANUARY–FEBRUARY 2023–24

Beyond the classroom, the student experience today

If you're like me, you have indelible memories of your experiences as an undergraduate student—the good leavened with the painful, especially those experiences that forced you to grow in wisdom or humility. Since then, you may have sent your own children and grandchildren off to college to learn their own lessons. How are today's students and their experiences different from when we went to college? Beyond grades, what are the greatest challenges they face to completing their degrees? In your career, you may have taught students or worked with them and may have reflections or questions about what has changed.

For UMRA's luncheon forum on November 28, we will be joined by Calvin Phillips and Maggie Towle from the University of Minnesota Office of Student Affairs, two experts who focus full time on students and their challenges and successes beyond the classroom. Phillips and Towle will share their insights and the latest research and survey results about student demographics, mental health, employment, food and housing insecurity, and what our students have to say about themselves and their plans post-graduation. Our guest speakers will also address what can make the U of M campus more welcoming to students and a better environment for success.



Maggie Towle



Calvin Phillips

Calvin Phillips, DEd, is vice president for Student Affairs for the Twin Cities campus and chief student affairs officer of the five-campus U of M System. Before his current role, he was associate vice president for Student Affairs at Eastern Michigan University. Phillips serves on the Student Affairs planning and programming committees for the Association of American Universities and the Association for Public and Land-grant Universities. Maggie Towle, MA, is senior associate vice president for Student Affairs. She has provided leadership for more than 30 years in the management of student affairs at the Twin Cities campus, and currently serves as a co-chair of the U of M President's Initiative for Student Mental Health.

I hope you will join us on Tuesday, November 28, for this eye-opening conversation about student life today. To make your reservation for the luncheon forum at Midland Hills Country Club in Roseville, go to umra.umn.edu > Member Portal > [Forum Reservations](#).

—Jan Morlock, UMRA Program Committee

NOVEMBER 21 LIVING WELL WORKSHOP

Showcasing UMRA's Professional Development Grants for Retirees

Three recent recipients of awards from UMRA's Professional Development Grants for Retirees (PDGR) program will be featured during UMRA's Living Well Workshop via Zoom on Tuesday, November 21. The PDGR program provides up to \$5,000 for University retirees to continue their scholarship or to pursue new projects of interest.

The webinar will be hosted by John Bantle, PDGR Committee chair, who will give a brief overview of the grant program and then introduce the grant recipients to present highlights of their projects.

See **WORKSHOP** on page 8 ...

Can we do more for the University? Should we do more?

We've all contributed to the betterment of the University of Minnesota during our working careers. We can continue to make meaningful contributions during our retirement years.



Eric Hockert

UMRA members have made substantial financial donations to the University and have contributed thousands of hours of volunteer effort to the University's medical studies and in many other areas. This includes our Silver Gopher Service Corps helping the Office of Admissions with events for new and prospective students.

In addition, we attend sporting and cultural events, we participate on University Senate and department committees, and we continue our research. We teach courses for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, advocate at the Minnesota Legislature, write letters to newspaper editors, and participate in Age-Friendly University activities. Among newer efforts, UMRA is pursuing paths to provide input on University president and regent selections. And we contribute in many other ways to help make the University a better place for all.

What else can be added to this collection of contributions? Should we be more coordinated and active in advocating at the legislature for the University's budget request? Should we devote more energy to supporting our communities with our time and personal expertise? Could we do more to help former colleagues decide when and how to transition from full-time work to retirement? It can be a difficult time for some people. The experiences of those of us who have successfully made that transition might be helpful to pre-retirees and to those in the early phases of retirement. How do we properly share our experiences in a way that would be useful to them?

These are some of my thoughts about how we can engage with the University more completely to the benefit of everyone. I'm certain there are many more. What are some contributions you think we should pursue to help make us an even better partner? I'd love to hear your thoughts. You can reach me at ehockert@umn.edu.

New Membership and Communication Committee

UMRA has formed a new Membership and Communication Committee, replacing the Membership Committee and the Communication and Outreach Committee. The new group is charged with welcoming new members, helping current members get more involved and connected, and working to ensure UMRA is a known and respected member of the University community. Do you have ideas for ways to accomplish these goals? Would you like to be part of the group? We would love to hear from you. Contact Ron Matross at r-matr@umn.edu.

Membership renewal reminder

If you haven't renewed your UMRA membership for 2023-24, please do so ASAP. Renewals were due July 1. To renew online, go to umra.umn.edu > Member Portal > Renew Membership. Review and update (if necessary) your information and then click on "Save Changes & Renew" to proceed to the payment page. The payment page will show the date when you last renewed your membership. Questions? Email membership manager Virgil Larson at virgil.larson1@gmail.com.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RETIREES ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT • Eric Hockert

PRESIDENT-ELECT • Julie Sweitzer

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TREASURER • Kristy Frost-Griep

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CHAIR, MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE • Ron Matross

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Variety and flexibility suit him

UMRA member Scott Elton caught the volunteering bug back in 2008 when he joined a Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity crew through Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. “It doesn’t matter what your skills are. Habitat always finds something for volunteers to do,” Elton recalled.

So, when UMRA announced that the University Retirees Volunteer Center was recruiting retirees to join the Silver Gopher Service Corps, Elton was among the first to volunteer to greet future Gophers participating in the Office of Admission’s Newly Admitted Students Welcome Day at the University.

“I really enjoyed snapping photos of families alongside a snow-covered Goldy outside Coffman,” he said.

Elton also joined other Silver Gophers to work with admissions staff during last summer’s Campus Preview days and, most recently, to pack food for underserved youth through the Every Meal agency in Roseville.

He likes the variety and flexibility that volunteering provides. This veteran of the University’s central, collegiate, and departmental administrations finds retirement suits him, too—especially, he says, “the ability to take a nap after lunch.”

—Peggy Mann Rinehart



UMRA member Scott Elton started volunteering with Habitat for Humanity eight years before he retired from the University in 2016. Photo by Dennis Chick.

Thank you to The Pillars of Prospect Park for sponsoring UMRA’s November–January–February 2023–24 newsletter, and to the University of Minnesota Foundation for sponsoring the newsletter and UMRA’s November 2023 Forum.

FY23 report shows UMRA’s overall financial status is good

In my first year as treasurer for UMRA, I learned a lot and hopefully improved my reporting to the Executive Committee and Board as I went through the year. It was a year of change as we grappled with issues of venue for the luncheon forums, and trying to determine the best possible ways to reach our members and offer the most value.

UMRA’s overall financial status is good. There are a few areas that may require explanation and attention going forward, such as the effects of earlier dues collections, attention to luncheon costs, overall increased costs for all operations, and the upcoming hosting of the Big 10 Retirees Association conference.

Revenues appear to be significantly up in FY23, but that is primarily because we started collecting FY24 dues in the spring this year, and reignited the monthly in-person luncheon speaker events. Also, we added several social activities in FY23 that have recorded strong attendance. Finally, in FY23 we reunited officially with the University Retirees Volunteer Center (URVC), so this also adds to the total financial activity for UMRA in FY23. Total revenues for FY23 were \$58,911.

Expenses increased for many of the same reasons, but we also increased the number of pages in the monthly newsletter, and printing costs for the physical newsletters went up as well. Newsletter and luncheon costs are our two largest expense items. Other expenses include memorials paid by the Cares Committee, Membership and Host Committee costs, attendance at the Big 10 Retirees Association Conference, membership in the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education, insurance costs, etc. URVC’s primary expense is student workers, then some parking voucher costs, a software tracking system license, and some miscellaneous costs of operation.

UMRA/URVC purchased T-shirts for the Silver Gopher Service Corps volunteer effort, many of which have already been purchased by individual volunteers. We hope the remainder will be purchased, and those funds reinstated to UMRA/URVC.

See **FY23** on page 7 ...



Welcome new members

Please give a hearty welcome to 69 new members (and partners) who have retired from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, unless otherwise noted, and joined UMRA as of October 1, 2023. For contact information, go to umra.umn.edu > Member Portal > Member Search.

Katherine Allen, Andersen Horticultural Library, librarian

Susan C. Anderson, Department of Pediatrics, research program manager

Janet Arth, Libraries, systems librarian

Erik Bieber (and **Paula Bieber**), Library Enterprise Systems, IT analyst

Michael C. "Mike" Burns, Men's Gymnastics, head coach

Katherine Casey, College of Liberal Arts, Fiscal Administration, payroll specialist

Bernadette Corley Troge, Libraries Facilities and Operations Management, director

Mary Curtin, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, diplomat-in-residence and global policy area chair

Joseph Dahip, Parking & Transportation Services, transit manager

Vasilikie Demos, Morris campus, Division of the Social Sciences, professor emeritus

Susan Diekman, College of Education and Human Development, communications and marketing director

Kathleen Donohue, Employee Benefits, disability benefits coordinator

Gail Eckel, Office of the President, assistant to the president

Linda Eells, Department of Applied Economics, associate librarian

Michelle M. Englund, School of Social Work, senior researcher

Richard S. Frase, Law School, professor emeritus

Karen Frederickson, Department of English, graduate

program coordinator

Elizabeth Friesen, Libraries, Data Management and Access, director

Jane Glazebrook, College of Biological Sciences, professor emeritus

Mark Groberski, Office for Student Affairs, mental health practitioner

Carrie Grussing, Morris campus, Office of the Chancellor, executive assistant

Charles Grussing, Morris campus, Campus Police, lieutenant

Merrie Harrison, School of Public Health, data manager

Marshall Hertz, Department of Medicine, professor emeritus

Kathleen Hughes (and **Michael Hughes**), School of Dentistry, Clinical Systems, scheduling manager

Marlene Johnshoy, Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, online instructor and webmaster



Professor Jill Hasday (left) was welcomed to UMRA's September luncheon forum by Barbara Shiels and Julie Sweitzer, both members of the UMRA Program Committee, and UMRA President Eric Hockert. Photo by Jean Kinsey.

Donna Johnson, Disability Resource Center, director

Jeffrey M. Johnson, Libraries, systems administrator

Martha Johnson, Learning Abroad Center, assistant dean

Lyndel King, Weisman Art Museum, director and chief curator

Gail Klatt (and **Peter Klatt**), Office of Internal Audit, chief auditor

Diane Krawczynski, Office of the General Counsel, senior paralegal

Frances Lawrenz, Office of the Vice President for Research, associate vice president

Patricia Lenton (and **Wesley Lenton**), Oral Health Research Clinic, director

David Lilja, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, professor emeritus

Lynne Lura, College of Veterinary Medicine, clinical rotation coordinator

Wayne G. Mueller, Carlson School of Management, Marketing Department, senior lecturer

Jon Nichols (and **Stephanie Nichols**), Libraries, director of digital preservation

Pat Nunnally, College of Design, Landscape Architecture, lecturer

James Percich, Department of Plant Pathology, professor

Fred W. Peterson, Morris campus, Division of the Humanities, professor emeritus

Jim Pirie, Department of Chemical Engineering and Materials Science, IT professional

Connie Post, Duluth campus, Minnesota Sea Grant College Program, accountant

Richard C. Prielipp (and **Kimberly R. Kislia**), Department of Anesthesiology, professor and chair (2005–13)

Debra Pusari, Financial Aid, associate director

Holly Radis-McCluskey (and **Glen McCluskey**), Northrop, director of ticketing

Michael Rollefson, Graduate School, associate to the vice president and dean

Lon Rosenfield (partner of Barbara Friedman, member since 2021)

Gail J. Sadeghi, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Women's Health, department administrator

Randal Seifert (and **Katherine Seifert**), Department of Pharmaceutical Care & Health Systems, associate dean and professor emeritus

Karen Starry, Graduate School, director of Graduate School policy

Jill Strand, Duluth campus, Academic Writing and Learning Center, instructor

John Sundsmo, Facilities Management, Waste Recovery Services, assistant director

Kartie Sundsmo, Parking & Transportation, office supervisor

Robert Sykes (and **Patricia Sykes**), College of Design, Landscape Architecture, professor emeritus

William “Bill” Tantzen, Libraries, applications developer, not retired

Andrew J. “Andy” Taylor, Department of Radiology, professor

Steven Webster, College of Science and Engineering, Management of Technology, senior fellow/chair

Li Zhu, Libraries, Technical Services, library assistant

CABINETS OF CURIOSITY

Goldstein Museum of Design

The Goldstein Museum of Design, in the College of Design, had its origin in textiles collected by two world-traveling sisters, Harriet and Vetta Goldstein. Today, it encompasses the original base of international fabrics but attends as well to material objects constructed of plastic and metals. With objects including Christian Dior fashions, Navajo rugs, and Wedgwood china, this museum has something to interest everyone. Researchers find rare and representative materials for their studies in history, art, and culture, while students are introduced to the possibilities of object-centered learning.

On November 7, from 1 to 3 p.m., UMRA's next Cabinets of Curiosity tour will take us to McNeal Hall on the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus in St. Paul, where curator Jean McElvain will demonstrate and discuss some of the Goldstein's fascinating and often unexpected holdings before we walk through the current gallery exhibit.

Go to umra.umn.edu > Programs & Events > [Annual Calendar](#) > November 7 to register (required). Group size is once again limited, so be sure to sign up if you are interested in joining this tour and discussion.

Questions? Contact Sally Kohlstedt at sgk@umn.edu.

HELLO, my name is Ann Nordby

Hometown: Beautiful south Minneapolis. I've lived in many places, but I am now back in Minneapolis. I love it here.

When did you become a member of UMRA? 2023.

What was your very first job? At age 15 I got a seasonal job in the Sears catalog department. We would grab order lists from the vacuum tubes lining the walls, then wait for the listed items to come down giant wooden slides connected to the warehouses upstairs. We wrapped the items together with string and cut the string with an odd piece of jewelry: a ring that had a sharp hook, like a claw. I think I was paid \$1.85 per hour. I took the bus to and from work, and I enjoyed it very much.

What was your occupation when you retired from FT work? I'm a writer, editor, and writing coach. Since leaving the U, I have two sides to my business. At this time of year, I'm busy coaching high school students to write effective college application essays. Year-round, I write and edit reports and other materials as a contractor at the U. I'm a learner, so I love diving into subjects as diverse as shared autonomous vehicles, food security, and plastic waste recycling through pyrolysis. I get to interview many interesting students and faculty members.

Do you have a favorite place on the U of M campus? The Campus Club! I have been a member since I started working at the U, and I still am. I love going there for Trivia Mafia, or just to have lunch. Their salad buffet is delicious, and the view is great, too.

What is a fun fact about you that we might not know? I'm a jazz fiend and a midcentury girl. In my mind, these things go together. I love Mrs. Maisel, Danish modern furniture, and the Dakota Jazz Club.

What is something you currently enjoy doing with your time? I like to exercise regularly. I walk with UMRA's hiking group, I go to a water aerobics class in the St. Paul Gym pool, and I practice yoga at home. But cycling is my favorite. When I ride my bike, I feel like a kid. Or a bird.



Ann Nordby celebrated *Syttende Mai*, or Constitution Day, in Norway with her son, Erik Lucas, and daughter, Caroline Lucas, at the Royal Palace in Oslo in 2019.

Hiking into winter

Join the UMRA Hiking Club at 9:30 a.m. on **Monday, November 6**, for a five-mile, moderately paced hike around Pleasant Lake in the heart of North Oaks. The hike will pass by some of James J. Hill's original farm buildings as well as beautiful homes along the lakeshore. The trail is wide, generally flat, and consists of packed dirt and crushed rock.

On **Monday, December 4**, the group will meet at 9:30 a.m. for an invigorating hike from The Monument, located at the intersection of Mississippi River Boulevard and the west end of Summit Avenue in St. Paul, to Minnehaha Falls in Minneapolis and back. This hike is on paved trails, approximately 5.5 miles in length, and will be at a pace suitable to the weather.

Newcomers are welcome! To sign up (required) for these hikes, go to umra.umn.edu > Programs & Events > [Annual Calendar](#) and search by the date.



Members of the UMRA Hiking Club hiked to Minnehaha Falls from the Mel-O-Glaze Bakery in Minneapolis in October. Photo by Joan Garfield.

... **FY23** from page 3.

We are setting aside \$2,000 per year to save for FY26 when we host the Big 10 Retirees Association Conference here in Minnesota. That comes from our reserves. We hope to get support and sponsorships, but we must plan for covering some costs ourselves if we do not get enough support from other sources.

Overall, we had net income of \$7,411 in FY23. However, if you remove the effect of FY24 cash activity, we actually spent approximately \$4,000 of our reserves this year to cover all costs. Some of that we will recoup in FY24: \$400 from T-shirt sales and \$1,200 or so from printing newsletter stock ahead, because printing in volume saves money. \$1,000 of the overspending was actually extra cost from FY22 that wasn't paid out until FY23. When all of that is taken into account, we spent approximately \$1,750 into reserves.

URVC had a net use of just under \$1,000 of reserves, which was planned and approved by its Board of Advisors.

Your UMRA board and committee members are working hard to look for ways to save on expenses in every possible way to keep luncheon costs and dues down even as costs rise, and we will continue to do so. We are also looking for ways to increase revenues, if at all possible.

—Kristy Frost-Griep, UMRA treasurer

Cyber tips and tricks – protecting your cyber identity

Cybersecurity is a pervasive concern. And the recent “data incident” where a hacker obtained the personal information of past University employees and students raises the specter again for UMRA members. What can we do to protect against potential identity theft resulting from stolen data?

It helps to be clear about the risks, in order to focus our efforts on preventing damage. Hackers are looking for data that can help them get into your online accounts.

Or that allow them to sign up for credit cards, loans, or other accounts in your name. To learn more, go to umra.umn.edu and search for “Cyber tips & tricks.”



FY 2022-23 UMRA Financial Report

July 1 through June 30

OVERALL STATUS: SLIGHT OVERSPENDING FY23

UMRA		URVC	
Savings certificate	\$ 10,256		
Savings account	\$ 6,974		
Checking account	<u>\$ 10,813</u>	Carryforward	\$5,130
Total checking and savings 6/30/23	\$ 28,043	Total Available 6/30/23	\$4,213
Revenue:		Revenue:	
Sponsorships	\$ 7,500	Allocation	\$ 4,000
Dues	\$ 22,150	T-shirts	<u>\$ 405</u>
Luncheons	\$ 16,055		
Social Events	\$ 7,206		
Donations	\$ -		
Transfer out of Savings	<u>\$ 2,000</u>		
Total Revenue	\$ 54,911	Total Revenue	\$4,405
Expenses:		Expenses:	
Newsletter	\$ 13,611	Student workers	\$3,611
Luncheons	\$ 21,717	Parking	\$ 419
Social Events	\$ 3,463	Dues: Software	\$ 732
Big 10 Conference 2023 costs	\$ 2,126	T-shirts	\$ 409
Big 10 Conference 2026 reserve	\$ 2,000		
Committee expenses	\$ 1,508		
Insurance	\$ 1,434		
AROHE	\$ 240		
Silver Gophers	\$ 420		
Other	<u>\$ 981</u>	Other	<u>\$ 151</u>
Total Expense	\$ 47,500	Total Expense	\$5,322
Net Income (Loss)		Net Income (Loss)	
	<u>\$ 7,411</u>		<u>\$ (917)</u>

—Kristy Frost-Griep, UMRA treasurer

Food for thought

“It’s no joke, old age. It just looks funny.”
—Roger Rosenblatt, American memoirist and essayist

... **WORKSHOP** from page 1.

The three projects address mental health in children, the University's human rights record, and changes in the earth's environment, all important issues for the University and the Minnesota public:

Michael Potegal, associate professor ad honorem in the Center for Allied Health, whose project is "Severity Hierarchy in the Temper Outbursts of a Large Cohort of Psychiatrically Referred Youth."

Barbara A. Frey, former director of the Human Rights Program in the Institute for Global Studies, whose project is "Minnesota's Human Rights Stories."



Barbara Frey

Ralph W. Holzenthal, professor emeritus in entomology, whose project is "Caddisfly Biodiversity of Ecuador." Technology allowing, Dr. Holzenthal will be speaking to us from his project site in Ecuador.

Please join us to learn about this work and the PDGR program. Perhaps you will be stimulated to apply for an award yourself. Applications for funding starting April 1, 2024, will be accepted until December 31, 2023. You can find more information about the program, including the instructions for applying for 2024 funding, at umra.umn.edu > Service & Outreach > [Grants for Retirees](#).

Go to z.umn.edu/UMRA-workshop-November-2023 to register for this free Zoom webinar at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, November 21.

—John Bantle, PDGR Committee chair

Upcoming programs

January 16 Workshop: Therapeutic approaches to aging. Laura Niedernhofer, MD, PhD, will describe her research in the fundamental mechanisms of aging and developing therapeutics to target and treat them.

January 23 Forum: *Before All Is Said and Done*. Author and former WCCO anchor Pat Miles will share the financial and life lessons she learned from the unexpected death of her husband.

February 20 Workshop: All about your knees. Do you have sore knees or think a knee replacement may be in your future? Elizabeth Arendt, MD, will tell us all we need to know about this critical joint and common treatments.

February 27 Forum: Minnesota legislative politics. Meet Melissa Hortman, speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives. A member of the DFL Party who represents the northern Twin Cities metropolitan area, she is a 1995 graduate *cum laude* of the U of M Law School.

All programs in January and February will start at 11 a.m. and will be via Zoom. Full descriptions of the programs will be published in the UMRA eNews and on umra.umn.edu in the coming months.

November Luncheon and Forum

Tuesday, November 28

Midland Hills Country Club
2001 Fulham Street | Roseville MN 55113

10:45 a.m. Social time
11:15 a.m. Luncheon and forum

Featured speakers

Calvin Phillips, vice president
Maggie Towle, senior associate vice president,
U of M Office for Student Affairs

Menu

Pan-seared chicken breast in a wine sauce with artichokes, tomatoes, capers, and Kalamata olives. Yukon gold potatoes, glazed carrots, and warm rolls.

*Vegetarian, gluten-free and dairy-free options available.
(Please request when making your reservation.)*

**Reservations, payment, and refund requests
are due by November 18**

\$30 per person

Go to umra.umn.edu > Programs & Events
> [Forum Reservations](#)
to reserve and pay online, or email Diane Young
at young054@umn.edu.

Parking and entrance

Free parking is available in front of the clubhouse. Enter the building through the door to the far right (east end), where there is also a guest drop-off area.

FIRST PERSON

Homes: Leaving the old and starting anew

By Jean Kinsey and Frank Busta

At my retirement party, I (Jean) said, “Welcome to my Commencement.” Little did Frank and I know that commencements repeat themselves. Now, Frank and I are commencing a new lifestyle in a senior living community, The Pillars of Prospect Park. Our familiar furniture, books, and art works look different in this new space, but once they were all arranged and could be found, it became home. It feels good, and comfortable, and safe.

The new neighbors are very friendly, the activities non-stop (but optional), and the dining room is open three times a day every day. The social opportunities are particularly rewarding—cribbage, movies, TED Talks, transportation with prearranged tickets to concerts, etc. We brought our respective home offices with us so we can hunker down behind our computers for endless hours if we choose, but we accept the daily challenge of selecting interesting activities. It does take a few weeks to adjust to some new rules, e.g., no candles, new driving routes to our favorite haunts, new faces among the caregivers assisting Frank, and new walking paths.

Move first, sell later

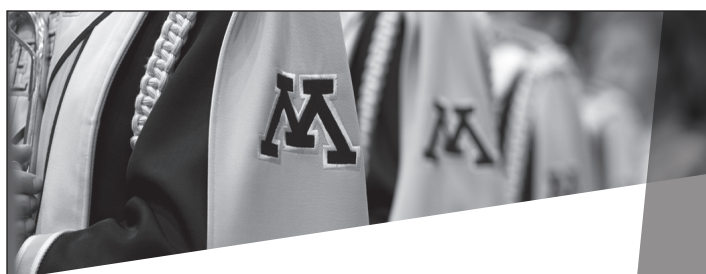
How do you spell relief? SOLD, as it relates to your former home. Before and after we moved, we spent almost every day for over five months clearing out two lifetimes of paper, books, clothes, etc. Wisdom says, move first, sell later. It may be wise, but it is very hard physical work sorting, packing, and hauling selected stuff to selected places. Finding the best place to dispose of specific things is a challenge. Do we sell it somewhere (Facebook Marketplace, auction houses, consignment stores)? Which charity vender should receive our clothes, household goods, and books? A junk hauler and a shredding truck became part of the parade.

Leaving one’s longtime home is both emotionally draining and exciting. Tears flow as you discard memorabilia, say goodbye to beloved neighbors, and drive away for the last time. But the catharsis of right-sizing your belongings, and saving and relocating just the right things, brings a new kind of freedom. It is that freedom that makes the transition exciting. And, not incidentally, it is an enormous gift to your heirs.



Jean Kinsey and Frank Busta celebrated the U of M’s 2023 Homecoming in style at The Pillars of Prospect Park in Minneapolis. Photo by Carly Danek.

If you would like to share a first-person account of something meaningful to you, whether it’s a humorous or a sobering reflection related to aging, or a snapshot of what you’re doing in retirement, please send an email to me with “First person” in the subject line. —Kristine Mortensen, editor, akm@umn.edu



Tax-efficient giving to the U

If you’re 70½ or older, you can give up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA to charity, without paying federal income tax on the withdrawal. If you’d like to make a gift to the U or pay off a pledge, consider this tax-wise giving option.

PHONE 612-624-3333

EMAIL plgiving@umn.edu

WEB give.umn.edu/giving/future-giving

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
FOUNDATION

*The U of M Foundation does not give tax or legal advice.
Please consult your professional advisor before making a gift.*

Share pictures and laughter with the UMRA Photo Club

The UMRA Photo Club meets monthly on the second Tuesday, starting at 12:30 p.m., at the St. Anthony Library, located in the east end of the St. Anthony Shopping Center at 2941 Pentagon Drive NE. We welcome all UMRA members with an interest in photography. We share “theme” and “photographer choice” pictures, we ask questions, and we laugh a lot. Our next meetings and themes are:

November 14: Favorites (favorite photos)

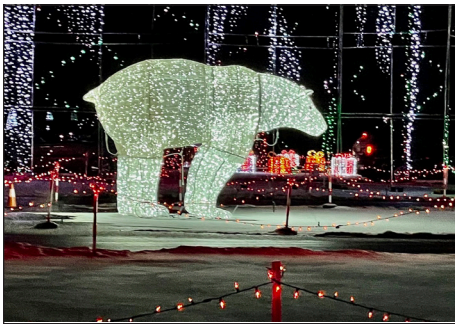
December 12: Smiles

January 9: Reflections

February 13: Wallpaper (pictures that would make good wallpaper on your computer or mobile device)

Come at 11:30 a.m. for lunch first at the Great Dragon Buffet, across the parking lot from the library. Don't forget to ask for the senior discount.

For more information, contact Sheri Goldsmith May at gold009@gmail.com or Craig Swan at swan@umn.edu.



“Light” was the theme for a recent UMRA Photo Club meeting. This photo of a polar bear in the 2021 Valley Fair Holiday Light Display was one of the pictures shared by Gene Allen.

Book Club I to meet November 17

John Bantle will lead the discussion of *Strongmen:*

Mussolini to the Present by Ruth Ben-Ghiat, an expert on authoritarian demagogues, when the UMRA Book Club meets via Zoom at 2 p.m. on Friday, November 17. From Mussolini to Putin, this book details what authoritarian leaders have in common and how they can be stopped.

Email Pat Tollefson at p-toll@umn.edu for more information. To read summaries of the book club's discussions, go to umra.umn.edu and search for “Book Notes.”

FF Book Club to meet December 1

UMRA's Fourth Friday Book Club will discuss *The Death of Ivan Ilych* by Leo Tolstoy when it meets from 2 to 3:30 p.m. on Friday, December 1, via Zoom. This date is a departure from the usual fourth Friday to accommodate the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.

Published in Russian in 1886, the novella is considered one of Tolstoy's greatest works, multi-layered with symbolism and literary craft, a masterpiece of psychological realism.

What we have is a view of a man who lives a life lacking in self-examination, a life in conformity with his status in society. An ordinary man. And an ordinary death, as in the 19th century of Tolstoy. One that comprises solitary denial of suffering and unremitting pain, insight to the impending outcome, despair, self-realization, and ... let's leave the rest to the reader.

Please join the discussion. The Fourth Friday Book Club welcomes all UMRA members! For more information and to get the Zoom link for joining the meeting, email Dorothy Marden at marde@umn.edu or Margaret Catambay at m-cata@umn.edu.

FAMILY HISTORY

Solving the mystery of a death

Knowing your family's medical history is important for everyone, especially as we become more aware of the role played by genetics in many medical conditions. If this topic is of interest to you, please plan to attend the next meeting of UMRA's Family History Interest Group (FHIG) on Wednesday, December 6, from 10 to 11 a.m. via Zoom.

“Preparing A Family Medical History and Solving the Mystery of a Grandfather's Death” is the title of the program that will be presented by UMRA member Michelle Casey. In her presentation, Casey will discuss her motivation for preparing a family



Michelle Casey

medical history, describe the process she used, and share lessons she learned. She will include suggestions for finding family death records—despite data challenges—based on her lengthy search for her own grandfather's death record.

See **HISTORY** on page 11 ...

... **HISTORY** from page 10.

Casey was a senior research fellow in the School of Public Health, Division of Health Policy & Management when she retired from the University in 2018.

An email with the Zoom link will be sent to all UMRA members one month and also one week before the program. We hope you can join us.

—Lynn C. Anderson and Craig Swan, FHIG co-chairs

ARMCHAIR TRAVELER

Travel both near and far enriches

UMRA's first Armchair Traveler program of 2024 will take us on travels near and far with two fabulous presenters—Carol Urness and Kate Maple—from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 24. Here are the descriptions of their presentations.

Traveling close to home: Carol Urness

Travel to far-off lands teaches us history, geography, and culture, and enriches our lives. At some point, most of

us have to give up travel to distant lands, usually due to physical limitations. This doesn't mean we have to stop learning through travel, especially travel near us, even in our backyards. In this presentation, we will consider ways to "travel" in interesting areas near home.



Photographing flowers like this bloodroot is one way Carol Urness enjoys "traveling" to interesting areas close to home.

In search of inspiration at the edges of the earth:

Kate Maple

Chasing the light, the landscape, and the sea. City stories and vast spaces. It's hard to describe Iceland with words; images tell the tale best. Reflections on time and space and place. Highlights of landscape and sea, and some food reports. Photos and drawings. Reykjavik, the west, the north.

Mark your calendars and save the date. The Zoom invitation will be emailed to UMRA members one month and also one week in advance of the program. I hope you can join us.

—Lynn C. Anderson, Armchair Traveler program chair



The town of Ólafsfjörður in northern Iceland, nestled between the mountains and the sea, is connected by tunnels to two neighboring fishing villages. Photo by Kate Maple.

In remembrance

Based on notification from the U of M Office of Human Resources, published notices, and surviving next of kin, the UMRA Cares Committee informs our membership of current and past UMRA members who have died, and sends condolences to families. Join me in remembering our friends and colleagues. Also, if you learn of the passing of an UMRA member and would like to share that information, please let me know. —Jeanne Markell, UMRA Cares Committee chair, mark002@umn.edu

Thomas Clayton, d. August 9, 2023. Department of English. (He joined UMRA in 2015.) His partner, Janice Derksen, is an UMRA member.

Sally Jorgensen, d. August 28, 2023. Department of Biochemistry. (2005) Her husband, Charles "Chuck" Jorgensen, is a member.

Ronald L. Phillips, d. August 25, 2023. Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics. (He and his wife, Judy Phillips, joined UMRA in 2010.)

Ella Strand, d. September 18, 2023. Department of Fashion Merchandising. University of Minnesota Crookston. (1993)

Gayle Graham Yates, d. April 27, 2023. Department of Women's Studies. (She joined UMRA in 2003 and served as UMRA president 2007–08.) Her husband, Wilson Yates, was also an UMRA member.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RETIREES ASSOCIATION

McNamara Alumni Center
200 Oak Street S.E., Suite 250
Minneapolis, MN 55455-2002

November-December programs and events

- 6 Hiking Club
- 6 Finance and Legal Group
- 7 Cabinets of Curiosity
- 14 Photo Club
- 17 Book Club I
- 21 Living Well Workshop
- 28 Luncheon Forum
- 1 Fourth Friday Book Club
- 4 Hiking Club
- 6 Family History Interest Group
- 12 Photo Club

Go to umra.umn.edu > Programs & Events > [Annual Calendar](#) for a listing of all future events.

Share upcoming events by emailing the UMRA webmaster at leegi001@umn.edu. Include event title, date, time, a brief description, and contact information.



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