

## UMMRA INFO

## THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, MORRIS RETIREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

<<http://www.morris.umn.edu/ummra>>

VOLUME XII, NUMBER 4, SPRING 2010

## NOTE FROM THE UMMRA PRESIDENT

*Greetings UMMRA members!**Spring has sprung! As we watch three foot snow banks become grass and bask in balmy temperatures (for Minnesota), our thoughts turn to summer fun. But first comes the UMMRA Spring meeting (with Jacquie's UMM update) and the many events for our graduates (both staff and students) who are looking forward to living the not-at-University life.**Special Note: Check out the Volunteer Opportunities on the second page. We had a wonderful meeting at the library in February with over twenty UMMRA members helping to identify people in pictures from the archives. It was so much fun, we volunteered to come and 'work' again. We need volunteers for UMM's graduation, the PRCA needs people to work in the gallery downtown (what a great time to check out all the artwork for sale), and West Wind Village residents love to hear and discuss stories. Just a couple of hours a month can make a big difference in our community. Speaking of volunteers, your UMMRA Board has been extremely helpful in keeping this organization running smoothly. Many, many thanks to Mary Ann, Karla, Joan, Bernice and Cathy, Llea and Dolores, and Laird! Dian Lopez*

## ANNUAL MEETING &amp; ELECTION OF OFFICERS

**The proposed slate** for 2010-2011 board members will be voted on at the April 15 business meeting.

Vice-President: Lynn Schulz (1 year term)

Member-at-large: Tom McRoberts (2 year term)

**Continuing on the board (already approved):**

President: Dian Lopez (1 year term)

Secretary-Treasurer: Joan Reicosky (1 year term)

Member at large: Llea Anderson (1 year term)

Editor, *UMMRA INFO*: Karla Klinger (appointed)

Volunteer Coordinators: Bernice Erdahl and Cathy Kemble

UMMRA TC Representative: Laird Barber

Learning Unlimited Representative: Phyllis Gausman

*Many thanks to Mary Ann Scharf as Past President and Dolores Lammers as member-at-large for their service on the board.*

UMMRA ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON  
BUSINESS MEETING

When: Thursday, April 15, 11:45 a.m.

Where: Prairie Inn, Gazebo Room, Morris.  
Choose from the menu.

Speaker: Chancellor Jacqueline Johnson will bring us up to date on what's new at UMM.

## ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

April 9-10 opening: Exhibit, History of Agriculture in Stevens County at the Stevens County Historical Museum, *Reaping What We Sow--A Century of Change in Agriculture*. Reception 5:00-8:00 p.m. (9th). Farmers lunch 1:00-5:00 (10th). Watch for the Upcoming Traveling Homemakers Exhibit.

April 8-10: Jazz Fest, Edson Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.

## UMMRA EVENTS

April 8: Join us on the fourth floor of Briggs Library for cookies and coffee to identify old photos, 1:30.

April 15: UMMRA Annual meeting. See box above.

April 29: UMMRA reception for retirees, LaFave House, 4:00-5:30 p.m.

April 29: UMM Recognition Dinner, Oyate, 6:00 pm.

May 6: Lunch: Lakeside Ballroom, Glenwood, 11:45.

June 3: Spring potluck at East Side Park, noon.

*Please check the Bits and Pieces column for individual retirement events. For rides or information, contact Dian Lopez on her cell phone at 287-1517 (local in Morris). An email will be sent out before events.*

## LEARNING UNLIMITED SPRING PROGRAM

*Please check before event for latest time and location.*

April 29: Hands-On Museum at Stevens County Historical Museum for Morris sixth graders.

April 30: Historical Re-enactors, Morris Elementary School concert hall, 1:30 p.m. Open to all.

May 12: "Seeing Modern Art," What to look for and how to see it. Michael Eble. Morris Senior Center, 1:00 p.m.

June 14: Flag Day, East Side Park, 6:00 p.m. Spend an evening remembering the meaning of our flag with veterans color guard, music, patriotic voices and food.

## SAD NEWS

**Linda Harstad**, Computing Services, died January 18 in Morris. Donations in her honor for the Staff

Development Fund can be made to UMM, listing the Linda Harstad Memorial Fund.

**Elise Heald** died in a nursing home in St. Louis at the age of 90. She managed the UMM Bookstore in the 1960s. Her husband, **Jack**, who died about 10 years ago, was one of the original 13 faculty members and taught French. Elise was an active hostess and contributed to the social life of the young campus.

The mother of **Tom McRoberts**, Elizabeth Kopff McRoberts, 92, died February 14 at West Wind Village.

*Our sympathy to their families.*

#### 2009-2010 RETIREES

**Bert Ahern**, History, at UMM since 1967

**Van Gooch**, Biology, since 1976

**Art Kunde**, Residential Life Custodian, since 1975, Retired in summer 09.

**Ron Kussatz**, Residential Life Custodian, since 1997,

Retired in fall 09

**Tom McRoberts**, International Programs, Continuing Education, and Center for Small Towns, since 1972,

Retired in fall 09.

**Tom Swenson**, Plant Services Custodian, since 1974

#### BITS AND PIECES

□ A retirement event for **Bert Ahern** will be held at the LaFave House on May 3 from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

□ *A Garland of Holiday Greetings in Verse 1927-2009* has been privately published by **Bettina Blake** with Faith Ferguson. It contains the Christmas poems sent by her parents and herself over 82 years, along with a narrative of the events in the life of the Blake family and then in her own.

□ A celebration of the life of **Jim Gremmels** will be held on Thursday, April 29 in the P.E. Center at 11:00 a.m. followed by lunch in Oyate around noon and a program at 2:00 p.m. in Edson.

□ A retirement event for **Van Gooch** will be held at Pomme de Terre Park on Saturday, May 22.

□ **Walter (Slim) Hokanson** is celebrating his 100th birthday. On April 17th, an open house will be held in his honor at West Central Homes, 6 Thomas St., Morris, from 1:00-4:00 p.m.

□ **Pat Kahng** is back from visiting her children in California and Hawaii and is making quilts.

□ *Pots Old and New*, a ceramic exhibit by **Karla Klinger**, will open at the PRCA in Morris on May 2. You are invited to the 2:00-4:00 p.m. reception.

□ The 2010 **Jooinn Lee** Lecture, featuring Dr. Michael Armacost, will be held April 7, 7:00 p.m. in 109 Imholte Hall.

□ **Barbara McGinnis** is spending much of the winter in Bakersfield, CA with a daughter and her family. In January, Barbara, her three daughters and Shaheen Haji spent a week in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Shaheen now lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.

□ Former Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs **Gary McGrath** and wife, Kitty, joined Chancellor Johnson at a dinner for UMM alumni in Mesa, Arizona in February.

□ A statement honoring **Tom McRoberts** for his contributions to the University, the community and the state has been entered into the December 16, 2009 *Congressional Record* by Rep. Colin Peterson.

□ **Judy Riley's** "Sunspots" feature about Country Day Cooperative Preschool appeared in the February 13 *Morris Sun Tribune*. Country Day was co-founded by **Anne Uehling** and **Karla Klinger** in 1965.

□ **Ruth** and Neil **Thielke** will be traveling to Ireland in April and May to minister and to celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary. Neil has been in Kenya visiting over 80 AIDS orphans supported through a fund within his ministry organization.

□ The spring issue of *Profile* will feature a eulogy for **Ray Lammers**, stories about **Bert Ahern** and **Van Gooch**, and a photo of **Jim Olson** and Jim Togeas with the Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients.

□ 100 years ago, according to the January 9 *Morris Sun Tribune*, Morris citizens were invited by the Jones-Donovan Garage to see "our first Ford car."

#### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

• **Briggs Library:** Identify photos, Briggs Library, 4th Floor. April 8, 1:30 p.m. Cookies and coffee provided.

• **Evergreen Readers:** Contact Cathy Kemble or Bernice Erdahl to volunteer to read to residents of West Wind Village.

• The **PRCA** in downtown Morris asks UMMRA members to consider working in the gallery for 3-4 hours a month. Call Julia Conroy at 585-5037.

• **UMM Graduation Volunteers:** Contact Dave Swenson at (320) 589-6080 to help out on May 15.

#### WHAT'S YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT?

To calculate your carbon footprint, go to the Nature Conservancy at <<http://www.nature.org>>. Click on "green living" and then on "What's your carbon footprint?" Also check out volunteer activities. The Nature Conservancy is collaborating with UMM.

*Throughout the anniversary celebration, UMMRA Info will feature stories about the early years. If you were here in the 1960s and early 1970s and are willing to contribute, please contact Karla Klinger at [klingerk@morris.umn.edu](mailto:klingerk@morris.umn.edu).*

### **Memories of UMM, Part Two** by Stephen Granger

Briggs and Imholte were successful in securing funds for new physical facilities. This first wave of new construction came during a period of commitment by the legislature to the development of post-secondary educational opportunity in rural Minnesota. It helped to have Delbert Anderson, a member of the House of Representatives from Starbuck, serving as the chair of the powerful Legislative Building Commission. Harold Fahl, superintendent of plant services from 1967 to 1993, made exceptional contributions to the campus planning and building effort. During the period from 1965 to 1973 a science complex, a library, a fine arts center, a physical education building, a heating plant, a food service, and three additional residence halls were added to the original campus.

The size of the teaching faculty, only 13 when the college opened, increased rapidly. By 1965 there were 63 faculty members for 984 students. There were ten English faculty, six in foreign language, five in biology--Robinson Abbott, Wes Birge, Jim Togeas, Bernice Lund, Sen Fan, Truman Driggs, Bruce Dunn, Joinn Lee, Ted Uehling, Dorothy and Laird Barber, Pat McGinnis, Eric Klinger, Hank Parker, Fred and Edith Farrell, Dick Grant, Cliff Gray, Dave Lieberman, Sin Min Wu, Vicky Wood, Nat Hart, Clyde Johnson, Ray Lammers, Ellen Ordway, Sun Kahng, Bill Peterfi, George Fosgate, Lois Hodgell, Fred Peterson, Bruce McGrew, Chuck and Corinne Bruning, Willis Kelly, Dean Hinmon, Louise Curtis, Bruce Rolloff, Rich Borstad, Noel Olson and many others had come by 1965.

We have to remember the 1965 secretaries who ran the college--Emilie Howey, Lois Hogander, Liz Mathison, Carmen Russell, Marty Kroening, Janet Fredlund, Margaret Thompson, Doris Benson, Audre Ross, Mary Martelle, Lois Norby, Lois Sommer, and Pat Tanner.

In the early years we also hired several of our own graduates--Gary McGrath, John Blasingame, John Dayton, Tom McRoberts among others. One of our graduates, Jim Carlson, music professor and director of UMM's jazz bands, came to UMM that first year, 1960, as a high school student to play trumpet in UMM's orchestra.

In 1972 enrollment reached a high point of 1,763. Then the college age population began to decline; enrollments fell and then plateaued at about 1500 students. The decline in enrollment was unsettling. This new institution was not well-known, even in Minnesota. It seemed evident that to sustain a first rate undergraduate college, the admissions program must become as active as that of a private college. Under Imholte's leadership, Bob Vikander, the new and ever resourceful admissions director, was given the funds and staff for an aggressive recruiting effort. "High ability recruiting" it was called. Campus administrative units and the faculty got behind the spirited enrollment campaign. These efforts began to pay off by 1980 and enrollment was rising again, reaching 2,000 students by 1990. New freshman had a median high school rank of 92% tile. 85 percent were in the top twenty percent of their class. The best class ever! By 1989 there were 33 National Merit Scholars on campus; in 1982 there were only two. Minority enrollment had jumped to 16 percent.

We must remember Dan Noble, UMM financial officer and his assistant Arlene Beseman. Dan was a brilliant, witty, loveable man, a CPA and a lawyer, who could write letters, "cook the books", or whatever it took to keep UMM on financial course in the 1970's and '80's. He was a great help to Jack Imholte.

In his 21 years as chief administrative officer, Jack Imholte remained consistently dedicated to the success of the institution as an undergraduate, public liberal arts college of the highest quality, integrity, and humaneness. Reasonable teaching loads year after year enabled the faculty to spend considerable time working with individual students, in directed studies, joint research, and internships, and in addition, amass a very creditable record of research, scholarship, and artistic production.

By 1990 when Jack Imholte ended his long tenure as chancellor, UMM was a much stronger institution than a decade earlier. In 1982, during a state-wide fiscal crisis, there was talk of closing the college as a cost saving measure, but by 1989 UMM was ranked as one of the ten best regional liberal arts colleges in the mid-west by U.S. News and World Report.

## The West Central School of Agriculture (WCSA)

*This year celebrates the 100th birthday of the West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station as well as the 50th anniversary of UMM. The information in the following article is summarized or excerpted from the WCSA alumni page on the UMM website as well as from [http://www.morris.umn.edu/preservation/WCSA\\_NRform.pdf](http://www.morris.umn.edu/preservation/WCSA_NRform.pdf), the historic district nomination narrative by Gemini Researchers: Susan Granger, Scott Kelly, Kay Grossman. The early years from the WCSA alumni web site: <http://www.morris.umn.edu/alumni/WCSA/history/>*

**Founding:** “An intense effort was made to establish a University of Minnesota agricultural high school on the Morris campus in the early 1900s. Local legislator Lewis C. Spooner rallied the community, legislature, governor and the University of Minnesota regents in support of the new school. E.C. Higbie was hired as the first superintendent and on October 3, 1910, the West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station opened to 103 students.” The WCSA was one of four residential agricultural schools established in MN, served 15 counties, was one of the longest running in the U.S., and operated through 1963, serving over 7000 students. The other MN schools were in St. Paul, Grand Rapids, and Crookston. Waseca, a fifth school, opened in 1953.

Six month program: “The WCSA’s mission was to educate west central Minnesota youth on contemporary agriculture and homemaking methods and provide core academic instruction. Students accepted were at least 14 years of age and eighth grade graduates. Students enrolled in a three-year course of study that ran from early October after the fall harvest until late March before spring planting. Students continued projects at home during the summer, and visiting instructors monitored progress. Summer projects allowed students to share new agriculture practices with their parents. Typical classes included animal husbandry, cooking, sewing, carpentry, as well as English, math, and music. Short courses were offered for students who could only attend for brief periods.”

**From the Gemini report:** [http://www.morris.umn.edu/preservation/WCSA\\_NRform.pdf/](http://www.morris.umn.edu/preservation/WCSA_NRform.pdf/). Section and page numbers are noted in brackets.

**Numbers of students:** Class size varied over the years from 103 to 455, dipping during World Wars 1 and II and surging after each war [8:11].

**Campus:** The central square (mall) was developed between 1911-1916. A master plan from 1911 involved three sets of twin buildings all facing the central square, forming a pleasant symmetry [7:2-3]. Several of these buildings were in place by 1920, though most were under different names. Spooner (the WCSA Boys’ Dormitory, 1912-13) and Camden (the Girls’ Dormitory, 1912) faced each other across the square. Imholte Hall (Agricultural Hall, 1910-11) and Blakely (Senior Hall, 1920) flanked Behmler (Dining Hall, Junior Girls’ Dormitory and Gymnasium, 1918). The oldest building, the Multi-Ethnic Resource Center (Agronomy, then Music, 1899), dates to the Indian School and sat across from the Home Economics building (since razed for Home Ec 2, now the Humanities building, 1954). Engineering (later Community Services and now the Welcome Center, 1915) was placed on the western side of a north-south road. The Cattle Barn built in 1914 is now the Saddle Club Barn; the Seed House (1929) is the Recycling Center, the Infirmary (1923-24) is the Education building. Junior Hall (1926) is now Pine Hall [7:36].

**The early years:** “The WCSA’s six faculty held the titles of superintendent, accountant, preceptress of the girls’ dormitory, and instructor in home economics, animal husbandry, and iron work. In reality their roles were much larger, as the 1916 WCSA yearbook explains: ‘Those were the days when the accountant taught mathematics, acted as librarian, sold the postage stamps, mopped the dining room floor, fed the chickens, and gathered the eggs’ (Moccasin 1916)... When the School and Station opened in 1910, the campus and farm were in disarray and the staff was at first consumed with repairing and improving the facilities. The 1914 yearbook explains, ‘In those days [circa 1910-1912] there was no sidewalk between Morris and the school so they [students and staff] were obliged to trail through eighty rods of very adhesive Stevens County clay...The whole campus, therefore, was a sea of mud, not a very beautiful sight at that time surely’” [8:9, quoted in Olson 1972:9]. When the funds became available for building, faculty member Bridgford wrote, “a real transformation took place” [8:10].

**Making a difference:** “The School and Station in Morris was also founded at a time when... agriculture was becoming increasingly technical...”[8:5]. “Two years after its founding, *The Farmer*, a long-running agricultural journal published in St. Paul, credited the institution with significant improvements in local agriculture: ‘This whole section of the state shows the influence of this new school already. Two years ago there were but two silos in Stevens County, and but little attention paid to stock raising. Today there are about 50 silos in the county, 20 being sold by one dealer this past season. There are 25 pure-bred Holstein sires in the county and a few dams and several pure-bred Guernsey herds. A number of herds of good grade cows are started. Fifty-one students in the school from the home county are transforming the ideas of farm life in their home neighborhoods. Numbers of them have started the building of silos on the home farms. More systematic records of cost and production are instituted; better seed is introduced’” [8:10]. The WCSA /Experiment Station was making a difference.