



## UMMRA INFO

THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, MORRIS RETIREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER  
VOLUME XII, NUMBER 1, SUMMER 2009

### LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

*Greetings from UMMRA, the UMM Retirees Association, and a special welcome to our new retirees. We invite all previously retired, newly retired or nearly-retired employees from any University of MN unit in or near Morris to join UMMRA. Please browse this newsletter and visit our website ([www.morris.umn.edu/ummra](http://www.morris.umn.edu/ummra)) for more information about your organization. Join the over 100 members who are taking advantage of the many benefits of UMMRA. We have meetings with interesting speakers, picnics in beautiful locations, learning activities (or apply for a UMMRA grant to increase your knowledge about the topic of your choice whether through a class, study, travel, or just learning by doing). UMMRA is also known for its support of UMM students, graduation ceremonies, retirement celebrations, as well as helping with learning activities in the Morris community. Be sure to join us! Please read the "Memory Tours of UMM" article by Jim Olson, retired chemistry professor. In 2010, UMM will celebrate 50 years of existence, the West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station will celebrate 100 years, and Homemakers Extension will celebrate 150 years. Plans in the making include a barn dance in the hay mow of the old Dairy Barn, documentaries with interviews from and about the past, visiting scholars and many special projects (the 'Year of Agriculture' will be celebrated at the Historical Museum), and an Art Gallery historical exhibit. We need your help with the latter. Do you have any artifacts from long ago stored in your attic, garage, picture albums, etc? Please let me know ([lopezdr@morris.umn.edu](mailto:lopezdr@morris.umn.edu)): we would love to display them in the Art exhibit. Stay tuned for a fun 2010!*

*Dian Lopez, President*

The summer UMMRA Newsletter is sent to all retirees. Other issues are sent only to paid members. See the attached letter from secretary/ treasurer, Joan Reicosky.

### THE 2009-2010 UMMRA BOARD

President: Dian Lopez (2 years)  
 Past President: Mary Ann Scharf (1 year term)  
 Secretary/Treasurer: Joan Reicosky (2 year term)  
 Members-at-Large: Llea Anderson (2 year term)  
 Editor, *UMMRA INFO*: Karla Klinger (appointed)  
 Volunteer Coordinators: Bernice Erdahl, Cathy Kemble  
 UMTC UMRA Representative: Laird Barber  
 Learning Unlimited Representative: Phyllis Gausman

### CONGRATULATIONS, NEW RETIREES!



L to R: Tom Mahoney, Jim Van Alstine, Carol McCannon, Judy Riley, Kay Carlson, Mike Miller, Lynn Schulz, Jim Carlson. Missing: Tim Ray.  
Photo: Melissa Weber

Two additional staff members announced their retirements after the spring newsletter was published. **Janie Klein**, Health Services, began work at UMM in 1992, and **Art Kunde**, Residential Life, started in 1975.

### 2009-2010 DATES TO SAVE

#### First Thursday Casual Luncheons

September 3: Our opening fall potluck will be held in a beautiful outdoor location to be announced, beginning at 11:45 a.m. More information will be available in August.  
November 5: Lillehaugen B & B south of Starbuck. 11:45.  
December 3: Holiday party at Common Cup. 6:00 p.m.

#### UMMRA Quarterly Meetings, Prairie Inn, Morris, in the new Gazebo Room addition, 11:45 a.m.

October 15. Dr. John Stock will discuss Apnea.  
February 18. Speaker to be announced.  
April 15or 22: Chancellor Jacquie Johnson: UMM update.

#### Opening of the 2009-10 Academic Year

August 24, 1:30 p.m.: Contact Dave Swensen to volunteer to guide new students and their parents to the welcome ceremony. Email Dave at <[dswenson@morris.umn.edu](mailto:dswenson@morris.umn.edu)>.

### SAD NEWS

**Clyde Johnson**, professor emeritus of music, died from cancer on April 23, 2009, in Morris. Clyde's doctorate from the University of Iowa in 1957 was in composition. He taught theory, composition and woodwinds and conducted the UMM stage and concert bands for many years. He played clarinet and saxophone in many venues. Our sympathy to his family.

## SPECIAL KUDOS

• *If Only the Rod Had Been Round*, a book by Bridget Harris Volden as told to **Ruth Thielke**, has been published by Instant Publisher.com. The book recounts Bridget's life experiences, including abuse in a residential school for indigenous children in the Northwest Territories, and her struggle, through faith, to overcome addiction. Contact Ruth for information about purchase.

• **Carol McCannon** was the recipient of the 2008-09 Outstanding Staff Award (Civil Service) as well as the Mary Martelle Memorial Award (staff).

## 2008-2009 IN REVIEW

### Board Business

Annually, the board decides on the agenda and programs for quarterly meetings, plans the annual spring reception for old and new retirees, agrees on locations for First Thursday luncheons, responds to volunteer needs, and oversees *UMMRA Info*. This year we introduced a holiday party. Two special accomplishments were the posting of a web-site at <http://www.morris.umn.edu/ummra> and establishing a mini-grant program to be implemented in August. See the UMMRA web-site for details.

### First Thursday Noon Luncheons

We started our year with a September potluck at Marty Kroening's farm and ended with a June 4 potluck at Eastside Park in Morris. During the year, we had lunch together in Chokio, Benson, Starbuck, Terrace, Alexandria and Morris. As part of the October trip to Terrace, we toured the nearby private Barsness Cemetery, an idyllic spot overlooking Lake Ben in Barsness Township. The holiday party at Common Cup with the exchange of popular white elephant gifts will be repeated next fall.

### Quarterly Programs

October 16: The fall luncheon/ business meeting was held at the Cozy Café in Cyrus. Speaker Dorothy Rosemier from the West Central Regional Partnership highlighted her organization's mission and goals to make the state energy self-sufficient through linking people, organizations, and resources. Andy Lopez reported on the in-progress UMMRA web-site; Bernice Erdahl reported on volunteer readers at West Wind Village, and Janet Ahern and Laird Barber agreed to investigate designing a mini-grant program to support members' learning activities.

March 23: Lowell Rasmussen, Vice-Chancellor for Finance and Facilities, featured speaker at the luncheon at UMM Food Service Building, explained ways in which UMM is working to become carbon neutral. Andy Lopez demonstrated how to navigate through the new UMMRA web pages. Janet Ahern presented the mini-grant program, which was approved by the membership. Each year UMMRA will award up to \$350 to up to three members to help support their learning activities. Deadline is August 1. Phyllis Gausman described the financial difficulties Learning Unlimited is facing. The membership voted to

award the organization \$300 to support the Heritage Day program speaker in spring.

April 23: At the Prairie Inn, Chancellor Johnson discussed changes at UMM in response to the reduction of state funds. The administration will protect the student experience and minimize the impact on employees. She reported that UMM has two Truman Scholars, an honor shared only with Stanford, Wellesley and the Naval Academy. UMM is putting up a second wind turbine. In other business, we elected officers and planned the spring reception for retirees.

## BITS AND PIECES

□ A hog roasts, receptions and parties were held for our retirees, beginning in March.

□ **Bettina Blake** sends greetings to all her friends through the UMMRA President, Hal Miller, whom she saw unexpectedly in Old South Church in Boston in May.

□ **Glenyce Bretz** and her husband, Ed, attended **Clyde Johnson's** funeral. They live near Paynesville.

□ **Rod Briggs** was named superintendent of the West Central School and Experiment Station in 1959 (*Morris Sun Tribune*, March 18). His wife, **Helen**, was featured in the fall 2008 *Profile* for her financial contribution to the Briggs Library. She said, "Rod would be thrilled by what the college has become, the excellence of its programs, and especially by the plans for energy independence for the campus."

□ **James "Doc" Carlson's** retirement and the 31st Annual Jazz Fest that he founded were featured on the front page of the March 14 *Sun Tribune*. **Jim** and wife, **Kay**, along with **Jim Van Alstine**, were featured in the winter 2009 issue of *Profile*.

□ **Bruce Dunn**, UMM psychologist from 1963-65. visited with **Eric** and **Karla Klinger** and **Steve** and **Arden Granger** on a trip east. **Arden** and **Joanne Hagstrom** have been doing preparatory work for the 2010 census.

□ A memorial event for **Joe Jesseph**, Morris community counselor and UMM Director of Counseling from 1967-1979, was held at the LaFave House on June 6. **May** and their three children and their families and Joe's third wife, Carla, reminisced with **Doris Benson**, **Barbara McGinnis**, **Lila Watson**, **Klingers**, and others.

□ Articles by **Nat Hart** "On This Earth: A Green World? Go For It" and "The Things That Are Hidden" appeared in the March 21 and May 13 *Morris Sun Tribune*.

□ Former UMM Post Office employee, **Betty Payne**, is featured with her husband and 11 children in "Payne's lucky number 13" by Chad Koenen in the May 9 *Starbuck Times*.

□ **Don Reicsoky**, recently retired research soil scientist, will travel to Argentina in August to participate in a professional conference. **Joan** volunteered to act as guide.

□ **Jim Tanner** had triple by-pass open heart surgery in April and is rebuilding his strength through cardiac rehab at his home in Park Rapids.

□ Retirees mentioned in alumni stories in the winter *Profile* include **Janet Ahern, Kay and Jim Carlson, Clyde Johnson, George Fosgate and Ray Lammers.**

**Pat and George Fosgate** also are mentioned in the class notes section. Other references are filed in UMMRA archives.

**As a part of the upcoming celebrations of UMM's founding almost 50 years ago, UMMRA members are invited to share their memories of the early years, as Jim Olson does below. Please contact editor Karla Klinger.**

#### **MEMORY TOURS OF UMM: Jim Olson**

It was the fall of 1959 and I was beginning my first professional position – teaching high school chemistry and being the preceptor of Junior Hall (now remodeled several times and called Pine Hall) at the West Central School of Agriculture. My boss was an energetic fellow named Rod Briggs. One October evening I met him on the sidewalk and he said I should listen to the 10:00 P.M. news that night because there would be an interesting announcement. It was from the Board of Regents and said that the University of Minnesota was planning to start a collegiate level program on the Morris campus, as an experiment.

Being new to the area, my wife, Nancy and I were not familiar with the lobbying that had been going on for several years by the West Central Educational Development Association to get this to happen. The announcement turned the school year upside down, triggered several enormous tasks, caused concern, worry, resentment and anger by “Ag School” faculty about to be displaced, and finally ended in the fall of 1960 with 238 students on campus as freshmen.

Among my recollections of that planning year were the committees that met and drew up plans for various courses to be taught and how those courses would satisfy prerequisites of engineering and various health science curricula. Who was available to teach the courses, where would they be taught and with what lab equipment all required answers. In addition, Dr. Briggs had made some rather profound determinations: there was to be a liberal arts emphasis throughout the curriculum, we WOULD be a liberal arts college and our aspirations for peer schools were undergraduate MIAC colleges.

Recollections of faculty meetings during that planning year: Rod Briggs returned from a meeting in the Twin Cities and announced that the name of the new college would be the University of Minnesota, Morris and the letterhead would say University of Minnesota, Morris, Morris Minnesota, 56268. There was much discussion about this: how confusing or cumbersome it was, wasn't it neat to have a separate ZIP code from the rest of Morris, UMM would be the “initials” and it sounded like humming a tune. Briggs was emphatic that there was a comma between Minnesota and Morris in the name, NOT a hyphen. One factor behind much of the discussion in those days was to distinguish the program at Morris from Duluth Branch – as UMD was frequently called. We wanted to be as different from the Duluth operation as possible. Eventually the term Coordinate Campus was coined (I have no idea who advanced the idea) and naming subsequent programs at Waseca and Crookston was easy.

Finally, a word about Dean Briggs. An interesting project would be to trace all of the titles he carried as the UMM “experiment” developed. He started as Superintendent of the Ag School and Experiment Station and eventually was named Provost of UMM. Rod was able to do many things! A normal work day for him would involve getting up at three or four in the morning, go out to his office and line up a day's work for his staff, drive to Minneapolis for one or usually several meetings with various people or committees, return to Morris stopping at the office to see what was next on his schedule and then go home and work on the remodeling project in the house he and Helen had purchased on the shores of Lake Crystal. It was normal for him to work until midnight, paneling, sheet rocking, wiring or plumbing. The next day he would do the same thing all over. In my 40 plus years with the University of Minnesota I never met another person with the willingness, toughness and durability to do all of the things that Rod Briggs accomplished. Simply naming a library after him was an understatement of the role he played in the formative days of UMM.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, MORRIS  
RETIREES ASSOCIATION

To potential and present members of UMMRA:

This is a call to join or renew membership in the UMM Retirees Association (UMMRA) for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. If you are still on the staff or have previously been so, you are eligible to join your colleagues and fellow staffers in UMMRA. Our membership consists of both retired and not-yet-retired members of any University of Minnesota unit, primarily those in the Morris area, i.e. WCROC, Minnesota Extension, Continuing Education, Regional Programs, and Summer Session, etc., as well as UMM. It includes faculty and all other staff (including bargaining units) and spouses. At present we have 117 members.

UMMRA functions not only as a social organization where members occasionally meet with old friends, but also helps members make the transition to retirement a bit easier. Members receive our newsletters and communications, such as e-mail, about special lectures, events, or activities both on campus and in the community, as well as those sponsored by UMMRA.

We offer retired members certain benefits, such as free UMM parking permits, and information on their "perks" as University retirees, such as how to be maintained in the University data base (at present this is not automatic), and how to obtain a retiree "U-card" for continued access to libraries and other University facilities. We serve as a link to the administration, and are continually defining and trying to upgrade benefits for retirees, especially in the Morris area. We also have an UMMRA representative on the all-University Retirees Association Board in Minneapolis (UMRA).

We hope that you will join UMMRA for the 2009-2010 season. Our dues are \$10.00 per year per person, \$15.00 per couple. Please fill out the section below and return it with your check to our Secretary/ Treasurer. We look forward to hearing from you.

(Tear here)

(Tear here)

To: Joan Reicosky, Secretary-Treasurer, UMMRA  
24 Brook St., Morris, MN 56267

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Was at University from \_\_\_\_\_ to Retirement in \_\_\_\_\_

Retired from (Unit, Department, position, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for dues for one year (for the period July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010) for \_\_\_\_\_ person(s) @ \$10.00 per person, \$15 per couple. (Please make check payable to UMMRA)

( ) Check here if you wish to be removed from our mailing list.