

UMRA NEWSLETTER

A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association

NOVEMBER 2017

Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist Steve Sack to entertain UMRA November 28

At our November 28 luncheon, UMRA will welcome the Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist Steve Sack, who has entertained and provoked readers of the *Star Tribune* since he drew his first cartoon for the newspaper in 1981. A native of St. Paul, Sack kicked off his newspaper career while attending the University of Minnesota, where he illustrated feature stories and drew editorial cartoons at the student-run *Minnesota Daily*.



Steve Sack noted in their citation that “Sack successfully harnessed all the cartoonist’s tools—caricature, composition, biting wit, and solid journalism—in his impressive portfolio.” Sack himself says he “seeks to emphasize visual creativity combined with humor, powerful commentary, and a clear personal perspective to maximize the most effective elements of this unique art form.”

But as this background Sack provided suggests, his sense of humor is never far from the surface.

Sack’s career began at the University of Minnesota’s Daily newspaper, where he wandered in looking for a part-time gig illustrating feature stories. When the paper’s staff cartoonist took a leave of absence, Sack hopped into the cartoonist’s chair and was instantly hooked by the Glamorous Cartoonist Lifestyle. Over the years Sack’s style has changed dramatically. Originally a pen-and-ink guy, he has at various times experimented with brush, charcoal, technical pen, markers, colored pencil, watercolor, Wacom tablet digital, and (currently) the iPad. Next he’s considering scrimshaw or Q-tips dipped in tattoo ink. Or not. Always searching, always keeping it fresh.

Sack lives in Bloomington, Minnesota. In his spare time he enjoys oil painting, sculpting, and playing with his grandchildren (and has Legos embedded in his feet to prove it).

In August, Sack published *The First and Only Book of Sack*, a collection of his work that was very well received. In fact, demand was so strong the book almost immediately went into back order. We are hoping, however, there will be copies available for purchase at the UMRA luncheon. Sack will discuss how he approaches his craft and the challenges of bringing his ideas into compelling graphic images, and says he looks forward to a lively Q and A.

—Jerry Rinehart, Program Committee Chair

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

NOVEMBER LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday, November 28, 2017
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Featured Speaker

Steve Sack,
editorial cartoonist, *Star Tribune*
“Commentary in a
Unique Art Form”

Location

Conference Room ABC
Campus Club, Fourth Floor
Coffman Memorial Union

Menu

Italian sausage lasagna with Caesar
salad, and coffee or tea.
For vegetarian or gluten-free
options, please request when
making your reservations.

Reservations ARE Required.

Deadline: **Monday, November 20**
Prepayment of \$16 per person.
Annual prepayers please call in
reservations.

To reserve your place(s) and
parking, send your check payable
to UMRA to UMRA Reservations
c/o Judy Leahy Grimes,
1937 Palace Ave., St. Paul, MN
55105-1728

Or, contact her before the dead-
line at 651-698-4387; e-mail:
jleahy4654@aol.com.

Please honor the reservation
deadline; if cancellations are
necessary, please call by Nov. 20

Parking

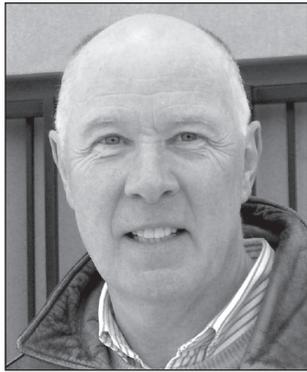
University ramps and reserved
space in East River Road Ramp
with UMRA’s discount coupon —
\$6 for the day.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

November 28 Workshop: Challenges of caregiving among older adults

According to a recent Pew Research study, about one in five adults age 65 and older serves as a caregiver for another aging American, and at least a third of these older caregivers find the caregiving stressful. Our workshop this month, led by Greg Owen of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation in St. Paul, will provide insights into the role

and stresses of informal or family caregiving among older adults, and he will describe types of caregiving services that are available.



Greg Owen

Owen will begin the workshop by presenting the findings of a Wilder Research study of several hundred St. Paul residents. Then you will have opportunities to ask practical

questions of two specialists from Wilder's Caregiving Services Center. The specialists will be available to meet with individual workshop participants and answer questions about caregiving, care receiving, and the stresses of caregiving.

Owen received a doctorate in sociology from the University of Minnesota, and since 1979 he has led major projects at Wilder Research addressing a wide range of topics, including hospice, homelessness, older adult services, and the recent St. Paul study titled "Caregiving in Context." He will share insights from that study on how those giving care to older adults cope with the demands on their time and skills. He will also provide an overview of the various services offered by the Wilder Caregiving Services Center.

A recipient of the outstanding teacher award at St. Mary's University in Minneapolis, where he has served as an adjunct professor in the Health and Human Services graduate program, Owen has been a guest lecturer at the University of Minnesota and several other local colleges and universities. He has also consulted with and conducted studies for private foundations, nonprofit service organizations, and state and federal government agencies.

Join us after the UMRA luncheon on Tuesday, November 28, for this important workshop beginning at 1:30 p.m. in Campus Club ABC, and encourage fellow University retirees to attend also. UMRA workshops are free and open to everyone.

— Ron Anderson, Workshop chair

Parking reservations available for UMRA luncheons

Combine your reservation for the UMRA luncheon with a reservation for parking and ensure your parking space. Plan to arrive between 10 a.m. and noon. Pay when exiting, using your UMRA parking coupons as usual.

Come at 10:30 before luncheons for coffee and social time

Thanks to the Campus Club for making its Bar and Lounge available to UMRA members for coffee and visiting before our luncheons. There is no charge and no need to RSVP. Come early and catch up with friends and acquaintances.

Thank you to the University of Minnesota Bookstores for helping to sponsor the November Newsletter. The bookstores also provide UMRA Members with a generous 20 percent discount on apparel, gifts, general books, and supplies. New this year, UMRA members are eligible to purchase tech products at special educational pricing.

Holiday Shopping

Minnesota Style

Shop our Holiday Sale
November 30—December 2
and save 25% on almost
everything in store & online.
Plus—receive a \$10
U of M Bookstores
gift card for every \$50
in eligible merchandise
you purchase.
See Bookstores for exclusions.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

UMRA BOARD NEWS

UMRA legal/financial status: UMRA is not part of the University, although the recently signed memorandum of agreement with the Provost's Office does formally acknowledge what had hitherto been a more ad hoc relationship. At present we are an independently incorporated Minnesota nonprofit under a status that does not permit potential donors to make tax-deductible contributions. Drawing partly on a recent meeting of UMRA's Council of Past Presidents, at its Oct. 24 meeting the board began a discussion of this arrangement versus potential alternatives. Should UMRA seek to become part of the University? To forge a closer relationship to the Foundation or the Alumni Association? To become a 501(c)3 nonprofit so that contributions could be deductible? Over the year the board will be weighing the very real advantages and very real disadvantages to each of these alternatives (and possibly others) versus the current arrangement.

Relationship with MGS: Following up on a presentation the previous month, the board voted to establish a cooperative relationship with the Minnesota Gerontological Society (MGS), <https://www.mngero.org/>. Initially this will involve, at a minimum, appointment of an UMRA representative to MGS's Education Committee (Earl Nolt-ing is currently serving on an interim basis) and another to its Research Committee; publicizing to the membership MGS's free webinars on aging topics (next ones are November 15 on posture, and December 12 on seniors and technology); and soliciting MGS's help as appropriate with UMRA workshops. Let me know if you might be interested in either of these committee positions.

Nascent special interest group (SIG): Andy Whitman's email to the membership drew some 15 indications of interest in the new SIG on retiree financial and legal issues. Although the initial organizational meeting will have been held already by the time this newsletter goes to press, it is not too late to join the group. If you are interested but have not yet responded, email Andy, awhitman@umn.edu.

Looking ahead: The "town hall" of October 24 (see article on page 4) generated an amazing range of ideas for future UMRA directions. Sifting through them, winnowing the list to something manageable, and establishing priorities among them will consume much of the board's energy this year. To all those who participated in the forum—many thanks. And for the four-fifths of UMRA's

membership who were unable to attend the luncheon, rest assured that the board is eager for your thoughts as well. Please feel free to write anytime, and be sure to respond to any surveys you may receive during the year.

— Chip Peterson, UMRA President 2017–18
c-pete@umn.edu

Open enrollment deadline is November 30

At the October workshop Melinda Soderberg from the U's Office of Human Resources provided an overview of the health plan options available for retirees in 2018. Representatives from each of the plans were available to answer questions from individual members. The slides from Soderberg's presentation will soon be available on



the UMRA website. November 30 is the deadline for open enrollment. If you have previously enrolled and are not making any changes, no action is necessary. Your coverage will continue automatically.

Manjula Gopairaj talks with Health Plan representatives at UMRA's workshop on the University's health plans for retirees. U of M benefits counselors can be reached at benefits@umn.edu or 612-624-8647.

Welcome new members to UMRA

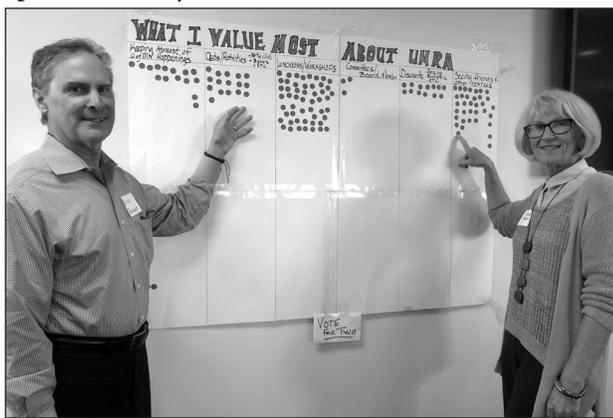
Please give a hearty welcome to six new members who have joined UMRA since the last newsletter. Greet them at luncheon meetings and help introduce them to others:

- Joan Bailey, Neuroscience, P&A
- Judy and Thomas E. Beniak, Health Careers Center-AHC Shared, P&A
- Cynthia Gross, Experimental and Clinical Pharmacology, Faculty
- Carol Cline-Hedblom and Bruce Hedblom, Admissions-Articulation Officer, P&A

For contact information, see Member Directory at <https://umra.umn.edu/membership>

October Town Hall recap: Members discuss UMRA's future

Membership in UMRA is growing, a reality that prompted the UMRA Board to convene a Town Meeting-style discussion at the October luncheon to identify future activities and governance issues of importance to our members. Led by President Chip Peterson and facilitated by board member Jeanne Markell, the luncheon attendees were asked to discuss three questions at their tables. Following the discussion period for each question, table reporters were called upon to share selected ideas from their respective groups with the entire assembly. These and all other ideas will be written up in a report for use by the board.



At the October Town Hall meeting, Eric Hockert and Jeanne Markell count the votes for what members value most about their membership in UMRA.

Q. *What are some ways UMRA members' expertise and wisdom could be helpful to the U?*

A. Some ideas presented: Find ways to be mentors to students and/or younger faculty and staff. Foster more intergenerational contacts. Legislative advocacy and networking. Fundraising. Outreach through connections beyond the U. Establish a scholarship program or study abroad fund.

Q. *What additional opportunities for social and intellectual engagement might UMRA develop for its members?*

A. Organize groups for campus tours and to attend local events such as Minnesota Orchestra and theater performances. Organize travel tours, both national and international. Connect UMRA with the University Retiree Volunteer Center for volunteer opportunities.



Participants at the October Town Hall meeting discuss each of the three questions posed by the discussion facilitators. Leaders at each table reported the ideas from their brainstorming session.

Q. *What more could the U do to support UMRA?*

A. Allow UMRA to communicate with retirees at retirement. Push for an UMRA Center; investigate the model of the Institute for Advanced Study at Northrop. Provide access to larger University space for free or at least for University rates. Continue the funding of research grants for retirees. Establish a speaker series on aging, open to the wider community.

An informal vote showed that most members present were in favor of aggressively growing UMRA membership. When asked to choose from a list of items of what they value most about UMRA, most picked luncheon programs with stimulating speakers, seeing old friends and colleagues, and belonging to special interest subgroups such as the photo and book clubs.

Chip Peterson concluded by thanking everyone and noting that he will use the president's column in the UMRA Newsletter to keep members informed of progress in the board's work on the future of our organization.

—Jean Kinsey

Photo Club meetings to start earlier

The UMRA Photo Club will meet Tuesday, November 14, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the St. Anthony Branch of the Hennepin County Library located in the small shopping center at New Brighton and St. Anthony Boulevards in St. Anthony Village. We hope that by starting and finishing half an hour earlier we will beat the afternoon commuter crush on the freeways.

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

Come at 11:30 a.m. for lunch and camaraderie at the Great Dragon Buffet located across the parking lot from the library. (Ask for the senior discount.)

The November meeting will begin with a series of “Where is it? What is it?” pictures. Attendees are asked to email two or three mystery pictures to Dick Kain, kain@umn.edu, by Monday, November 13, and to bring five to seven pictures to share and discuss. We welcome photographers of all abilities. Most of us are struggling amateurs who like to take pictures and want to improve. For more information contact Sheri Goldsmith May, golds009@gmail.com or Craig Swan, swan@umn.edu.

— Craig Swan, co-chair, Photo Club



Photo sharing at the UMRA Photo Club meetings is high tech with Dick Kain (foreground) at the helm. Operating the computer devices, he projects members' selections for sharing and discussion.

Help high school debaters become more effective communicators

Here's a chance to learn new skills (or dust off old ones) and help teenagers develop their public speaking skills: The Minnesota Urban Debate League, which sponsors high school and middle school debate seasons in Minneapolis and St. Paul, needs volunteers for the fall weekend tournament series through November and early December. No prior experience is necessary; training and a meal will be provided. Valuable judging skills are critical thinking, interpersonal skills, problem solving, public speaking, and verbal/written communication.

The Minnesota Urban Debate League is sponsored by Augsburg University to empower students through competitive academic debate “to become engaged learners,

critical thinkers, and active citizens who are effective advocates for themselves and their communities.”

This year's debate topic is: *Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its funding and/or regulation of elementary and/or secondary education in the United States.*

Before each debate new judges receive a half-hour training about high school debate norms, evaluation, debate activity style, and suggestions for effective and informative decisions. Preliminary online judge training at www.augsburg.edu/urbandebateleague/volunteer/training, includes: 1) Judging High School Debates, 2) First Time Judging, and 3) Basics of Debate.

Judges watch the debate rounds and evaluate teams for logic, effective argumentation, and speaking skills. They select the winner, assign speaking points to individuals, and provide constructive feedback to help debaters improve skills.

Select from the season schedule:

- November 10 or 11: Highland Park Senior High
- November 18: U of M campus (URVC provides parking)
- December 1 or 2: Eagan High School: Junior Varsity State Tourney
- December 8 or 9 (Location TBD): Urban Debate League Championship
- December 15–17: Hyatt Regency: (1300 Nicollet Mall, Mpls): John Edie Holiday Tournament

Middle school debates start in January. In December we will send the January schedule to those who have registered. To register as a debate judge, contact University Retirees Volunteer Center; urvc@umn.edu or 612-625-8016.

— Alan Kagan, URVC Coordinator

Hero needed

UMRA is still seeking a successor to Earl Nolting as discount coordinator. The cost-cutting deals we all so appreciate—the reduced-rate parking, bookstore discounts, special ticket prices for events; the list goes on and on—will disappear if no one tends the garden. Please volunteer. Earl's list of current discounts and his contact information for our discount-providing partners will make your life easy, and he stands ready to provide free coaching as needed.

— Chip Peterson, c-pete@umn.edu

When getting around becomes difficult

You can still enjoy concerts—in your own living room. If you have given up your car, or if driving at night is a challenge, you can still enjoy School of Music (SOM) events via the Internet. Request email delivery of *Ostinato*, the School of Music electronic newsletter to receive information on upcoming SOM events. Many of the events are listed as **live streamed** for your enjoyment at home.

From the School of Music: “The best quick link to lead people to SOM streaming concerts is z.umn.edu/stream. We will, in the future, list all our streaming concerts there. We are working with our web designer on making this happen.”

You may need to check out computer requirements in advance, but if you are OK with that aspect, it is quite easy to make the connection with the events. Depending on your speakers, the sound may not be quite like “being there,” but that may be a trade-off you can live with to enjoy the performance.

— Earl Nolting, Cares Committee member



New members welcomed at reception for orientation in October



New members chat over coffee before the orientation program begins in the Campus Club Lounge.

This annual reception, held in October, gives new members the opportunity to learn more about the benefits and activities UMRA offers retirees.



From the Cares Bookshelf —

Letters from Madelyn: Chronicles of a Caregiver, 2nd Edition by Elaine Sanchez (2016). Boutique of Quality Book Publishing, Inc. (Amazon Kindle version is \$6.15)

This heart-wrenching story emerges in letters written by Madelyn, an elderly farm wife, who for six years served as caregiver for her dying husband, who had suffered a major stroke. Elaine, the author, is Madelyn’s daughter, who wrote that her purpose was “to honor my mother’s memory and fulfill her wish of helping others who find themselves struggling to cope with the emotional stress of caring for a loved one.”

While 70-year old Madelyn Kubin was spiritually strong, her physical fragility exacerbated her ability to give the care her husband needed. By the end of the six years of family caregiving, both Madelyn and her husband had passed away. The story spanning those six years reveals a remarkably strong caregiver in her emotional and spiritual well-being, despite her isolation, loneliness, and stress. Madelyn writes unabashedly about her anger, guilt, depression, and grief. When her husband, Quentin, displays dementia-related inappropriate sexual behavior, Madelyn eventually learns how to handle it with grace and humor. She shows how it is possible, even in the very worst end-of-life situations, to experience mental and spiritual growth.

The author, Elaine K Sanchez, is a co-founder of Care-giverHelp.com, an online caregiver support program. Her book takes a very close look at aging, proving the adage that “growing old isn’t for sissies.” Although growing old together can be consoling, the job of caregiving becomes even more demanding. If you worry about the headaches and traumas of wearing out together, especially as a member of an intimate pair, you will find the book relevant and comforting.

— Ron Anderson, Cares Committee

Professional Development Grants for Retirees: Time to apply!

The Professional Development Grants for Retirees program has transitioned to a new, online-only application and review process. PDGR awards are available for all University faculty, professional and administrative, and civil service retirees from the Twin Cities and coordinate campuses (fully retired by July 1, 2018). The application period opened October 23, and the deadline for application submission is December 15.

Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6

Grants may provide up to \$5,000 to pursue professional interests. This may include expenses for travel and per diem costs related to research trips and conference attendance; stipends for undergraduate and/or graduate research assistants; photocopying; and the purchase of books, computer, software, and other relevant costs of scholarship.

The grants do not cover salary for the applicant or institutional overhead charges. A link to the new instructions for submitting applications can be found via the UMRA website: [umra.umn.edu/Activities/Grants for Retirees/Application Instructions](http://umra.umn.edu/Activities/Grants%20for%20Retirees/Application%20Instructions).

Abstracts of all the grants that have been awarded since 2009 are also posted on the UMRA website, at [Activities/Grants for Retirees/Previous PDG Awards](http://umra.umn.edu/Activities/Grants%20for%20Retirees/Previous%20PDG%20Awards). It is an impressive list and shows the value this program has played in helping retirees remain actively engaged in their professional activities. The program has also become quite competitive, with 21 applicants last year from several different colleges and programs. Current funding allows us to award between 10 and 15 grants annually, depending on the amount requested.



Speaking at the New Members reception and orientation, Dick Poppele explains how UMRA's professional grants program works.

The funding for the program involves both the Office of the Vice President for Research and UMRA. We encourage UMRA members to make a tax-deductible contribution to this program. You may give by credit card online at give.umn.edu/giveto/SeptUMRA or by check payable to the University of Minnesota Foundation, UMRA Fund 4867, P.O. Box 860266, Minneapolis MN 55486-0266. You can also support this fund with a gift in your will or trust. For more information, please contact Lynn Praska, senior planned giving officer, University of Minnesota Foundation, at 612-624-4158 or LPraska@umn.edu.

—Dick Poppele, PDGR Committee Chair

Book Notes

In this regular column, Book Club members share their discussions.

H is for Hawk by Helen MacDonald, book discussion at October meeting.

This book is categorized as a memoir. But it is much more. The book also explores the life of T. H. White, author of *The Once and Future King* and *The Goshawk*, a book that MacDonald read earlier in her life.

It is after her father's death that MacDonald acquires a goshawk, a huge bird of prey noted for being nasty and very difficult to train. She and her father had worked with many hawks from the time she was a small child, and she felt this was the best thing she could do in memory of her father and to deal with her grief.

The actual training of the goshawk is detailed and often gruesome. The hawk is trained to kill rabbits, partridges, and pheasants and is fed dead chicks and other meat to get the bird's weight up. Some in our group were upset by this carnage or just thought it was repetitious.

The book diverges often, and this was a problem for most of our readers. The training of MacDonald's goshawk, Mabel, is interrupted with an in-depth investigation of T.H. White's troubled personal life and the training of his hawk. Members felt, for the most part, this interrupted the flow of her memoir, and much could have been edited.

The main theme of the book is MacDonald's grief at the loss of her father. She is depressed, pulls away from friends, family, and her academic job. Many wondered how she was able to devote so much time to training the hawk. Didn't she need to make money? Didn't she need to go out with friends? Didn't she need an academic focus to her life?

In the end, however, her use of language in beautiful phrases like, "I felt as if I were built of wool. Grey, loose-spun wool on an aching set of bones," and "Fractious gusts of wind rattle the hedgerows, blowing voluminous shoals of leaves over us as we walk up the track," convinced us that her writing is amazing. Reading the book, with its back and forth skips between topics, was a challenge. That challenge, mixed with the cruelty of the raptor's hunting and the intrusions of White's personal life, led some to stop reading or to push on reluctantly. I read it once and listened to the author read the audio book and was fascinated by it all.

— Stephanie Daily, UMRA Book Club member

UMRA University of Minnesota Retirees Association

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UMRA's phone: 612-626-4403
Website: umra.umn.edu

Thank you to the University of Minnesota Foundation for helping to sponsor the UMRA November Newsletter.

Tax Efficient Giving from your IRA

The now permanently extended IRA charitable rollover law allows individuals 70½ or older to give up to \$100,000 directly from their traditional or Roth IRA to qualified charities and avoid paying federal income tax on the withdrawal. Distributions made directly to charity under this law can be used to satisfy the individual's required minimum distribution. Gifts to the University can be directed to any campus, college, or program.

Contact our University of Minnesota Foundation planned giving representative, Lynn Praska, at 612-624-4158 or lpraska@umn.edu, for information on making a gift to the University.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
FOUNDATION

UMRA Cares Committee is here for support

For assistance and support in the event of the death or serious illness of an UMRA member or family member, please e-mail us at umracares@umn.edu or call 612-626-4403, and leave a message for UMRA Cares.

Also, if you learn of someone who is facing a difficult life challenge, please contact the UMRA Cares Committee.

Care Guide program is suspended

Care Guides are a small group of volunteers who were trained by the late Dr. Robert Kane, director of the U of M Center on Aging. The guides were started to assist UMRA members in locating resources to manage unexpected long or short hospital stays or the challenges of providing caregiving to family members with serious health problems.

Dr. Kane was our advisor and supervisor. Due to his unexpected death last spring we are unable to provide Care Guide services at this time. We hope to resume as soon as we secure a new advisor and supervision for our services.