Cares Committee, Annual Report 2019-20

The Cares Committee continued its two main activities of sending remembrances and presenting workshops. In the area of remembrances Kathleen O’Brien continued her essential work of identifying former U of M faculty and staff who have died and finding out how to contact their families. Nancy Helmich and Helen Carlson continued the work of then sending condolence cards.

Five workshops were presented, following the UMRA luncheons. These were:

- September 24, 2019 Educational Opportunities for Seniors at the U of M Anastasia Faunce, LearningLife, Sandra Krebs Hirsch, OLLI, Julie Selander, Office of the Registrar
- October 22, 2019 OHR Annual Benefits Update Ryan Residorfer and Krisann McMahon, OHR
- November 19, 2019 The Age Friendly University Joseph E. Gaugler, Public Health Ron Matross
- January 28, 2020 Understanding Hearing Loss: What’s New and What We all Should Know. Liz Anderson Center for Applied and Translational Sensory Science (CATSS)
- February 25, 2020 Senior Housing and Long-Term Care Options Panel with Cheryl Hennen, MN Board of Aging, Susan Farr, Ebenezer, Tetayana Shippee, UM Public Health, Ron Anderson.

Three additional workshops were planned, but cancelled due to the closure of the University by the pandemic quarantine.

Going forward in 2020-21, the two functions of the Cares Committee will be split. The Cares Committee will now solely focus on the remembrance activities, and any other personal support activities it wishes to continue. Kathleen O’Brien will chair the Cares Committee. The workshops will be planned and executed by a Workshops Committee, a subcommittee of the Program Committee. The Workshop Committee will be chaired by Ron Matross

Cares Committee Members, 2019-2020

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UMRA Cares Committee “In Remembrance” Report 2019-2020
by Kathleen O’Brien, 8/8/20

“In Remembrance” Assignment

Kathleen O’Brien assumed this assignment from Earl Nolting in September, 2017. Condolence cards are sent on the passing of UMN retirees and on the passing of the spouse/life partner of UMN retirees to their surviving next of kin (i.e. spouse/life partner, child, sibling, grandchild, niece, nephew…). Most weeks Kathleen receives the encrypted list of UMN retirees who have passed away from the UMN Human Resources department. HR information is sketchy and incomplete, so KO’B researches the UMN retirees work history and location of surviving kin from University Directories, Obituaries and Google. Sometimes KO’B needs to phone a surviving relative to verify the information and make the best deduction as to whom and where to send a condolelence card.

KO’B then sends the information on those who have passed to her assignment partners—UMRA volunteers: Helen Carlson and Nancy Helmich. Helen sends condolence cards to the families of retirees from the UMN Coordinate Campuses, MN Extension Service and Research/Outreach Centers across Minnesota. Nancy sends condolence cards to the families of UMTC retirees. Nancy purchases greeting cards wholesale from a local firm (Julu Cards) who designed and produces the cards. She is reimbursed by the UMRA Treasurer for the cards and postage. Helen purchases and sends Sympathy cards and funds these costs as a donation to UMRA.

The condolence card message is similar to this:

“The University of Minnesota Retirees Association extends to you [and your family] our sincere sympathy on the passing of your [husband/wife/father/mother/aunt….Name for example: your mother, Mary Lou Hill].”

Frequently a personalized note that recognizes the unique contribution of the person is added.

When UMRA members or their spouses pass away, K O’Brien sends a $30 donation on behalf of UMRA to their designated charity or the UMRA Retirees Research Grant fund at the UMN Foundation. K O’B donates the materials and postage. She is reimbursed for each $30 donation from the UMRA Treasurer. Below is the list of UMRA members and spouses/partners who passed away during this year.

In addition, K O’Brien writes the “In Remembrance” column for the UMRA newsletter. Also when we learn of a serious illness of an UMRA member or their spouse/partner, K O’Brien sends a hand written card of support on behalf of UMRA colleagues.

The UMRA Treasurer’s Annual Report identifies the cost of the “In Remembrance” assignment.
Condolence Cards sent in 2019-2020

Sent by Nancy Helmich to the families of UMTC retirees: 162

Sent by Helen Carlson to the families of UMN Coordinate Campuses/Extension/Research Center retirees: 30

Total for year, July 1, 2019 to July 1, 2020: 192

UMRA Memorial Donations for UMRA Members in 2019-2020

K O’Brien sent $30 donation on behalf of UMRA to the charity designated by the retiree or their family or if no charity was identified to the UMRA Retirees Research Grant fund in the UMN Foundation. K O’Brien is reimbursed by the UMRA Treasurer for these donations. The UMRA retirees are listed in the year when UMRA received notice of their passing and when the donations were made.

1. Vandora “Van” Linck passed May 7, 2019. Widow of Dr. Albert Linck, UMN Professor of Plant Pathology and administrator who passed away in 2007. UMN grad in Home Economics, Van was a high school teacher and active in the Clovia Sorority on the St. Paul campus, Goldstein Gallery, Landscape Arboretum, UMN Women’s Club and UMRA Cares Committee.

2. Dorothee Aeppli, passed away in February, 2019. UMN PhD in Mathematics and Senior Research Biostatistician in the School of Public Health. She was the widow of UMN Professor Alfred Aeppli, UMN School of Mathematics who passed in 2008.

3. Donald McKay Fraser passed away on June 2, 2019. Son of longtime UMN Law School Dean Everett Fraser, Don graduated from the UMN and the UMN Law School. He represented Minneapolis in the US Congress (1963-79) and served as Minneapolis Mayor (1980-94). At the close of his distinguished career of public service Don Fraser taught at the UMN Law School and Humphrey School. He was predeceased by his wife Arvonne Fraser in August, 2018, who also had a distinguished career in public service and was a Senior Fellow in the Humphrey School.

4. June Cavert passed away on June 5, 2019. Widow of Dr. H. Mead Cavert, Professor of Physiology, Associate Dean of the UMN Medical School and twice Interim Dean who passed away in November, 2016. June was active in and an officer in the UMN Women’s Club.

6. William Edson passed away on June 20, 2019 at the age of 104. William was UMN Professor of Educational Psychology, Director of Student Personnel Office and Director of the Education Career Development Office. In his retirement he volunteered at the U Hospital and was a founder of the UMN Retiree Volunteer Center.

7. Kiki Gore passed away on June 25, 2019. Retired from Boynton Health Service as a Records Assistant. She was the widow of Warren Gore, Professor of Rhetoric, UMN School of Agriculture who passed away in January, 2017. After retiring Kiki taught Spanish to adults until June, 2019.

8. Peter Plagemann passed away on July 18, 2019. Peter was Professor Emeritus of Microbiology in the UMN Medical School where he taught and conducted research for more than 40 years.

9. Taeko Perry passed away on July 14, 2019. A well known potter and supporter of the arts, Taeko was the wife of retired UMN Professor of Psychology and Assistant Director of U Counseling and Consulting, Dr. Dallis Perry.

10. Carl Mohn passed away on August 8, 2019. UMN Professor of Forestry Resources, Carl earned his BA and PhD at the UMN and had a long career in teaching and conducting research in forestry genetics. He is survived by his wife Carolyn Mohn.

11. George Kenneth Gordon passed away on September 26, 2019. Dr. Gordon served in the UMN School of Public Health faculty in Hospital Administration where he led the Center for Long-Term Care Administration. He is survived by his wife, Ruth Stryker-Gordon.

12. Walter “Cork” Johnson passed away on September 24, 2019. “Cork” earned his BA, MA and PhD in Physics at the UMN. After a brief stint at GE, Professor Johnson served the UMN Physics faculty and the Institute of Technology as an administrator. He is survived by his wife Harriet Johnson.

13. Gerhard Hans Weiss passed away on October 2, 2019. A survivor of the Holocaust, Gerhard came to the US with his parents in 1946. Professor Weiss served in the UMN German Dept. (1956-1998) but after “retirement” continued his research, teaching and administrative service for many years. Gerhard received the UMN President’s Award for Outstanding Service and chaired the Friends of the U Libraries.

14. Robert “Bob” Kvavik passed away on September 1, 2019. UMN Professor Emeritus of Political Science (1968-2014), Bob served in the UMN academic administration for more than 20 years as Senior Associate Vice President, Vice Provost, chief of staff to provosts and interim provost in 1992 and 1998. King Harald V of Norway appointed Professor Kvavik Knight First Class of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit for his promotion of research and University collaboration between the US and Norway. He is survived by his wife Karen Kvavik.


17. John Tester passed away on November 15, 2019. Professor Emeritus in UMN College of Biological Sciences, Dept. of Ecology, Evolution and Environment, John was a pioneering ecologist who elevated the UMN in the study of biology and ecology.

18. Douglas Woog passed away in December, 2019. Doug Woog was the revered head coach for the University’s Ice Hockey program from 1985 to 1999. A UMN grad and ice hockey player, he taught, coached and was a high school counselor for 17 years; was Assistant Coach for the US Olympic Ice Hockey team in 1984 and inducted in the US Hockey Hall of Fame in 2002. He is survived by his wife, Janice Woog.

19. Neal Nickerson passed away on December 31, 2019. Professor Emeritus in the UMN College of Education and Human Development. Dept. of Educational Policy and Administration who taught for over 50 years (1964 to 2016). In 2013, Dr. Nickerson received the President’s Award for Outstanding Service.

20. Eville Gorham passed away on January 14, 2020. UMN Regents Professor Emeritus in the College of Biological Sciences, Department of Ecology, Evolution and Behavior, Dr. Gorham earned his PhD in Botany from University College London, England. He is considered the “grandfather of acid rain research” and taught/researched at UMN for 36 years until his retirement in 1998. Eville was a member of the US National Academy of Arts and Sciences.

21. Jerome “Jerry” Hammond passed away on August 8, 2019. Professor Emeritus in the UMN College of Agriculture, Dept of Applied Economics. Dr. Hammond’s teaching and research focused on price and marketing policies in the US and developing countries. He is survived by his wife, Marie.

22. Mary Elizabeth “Manna” Ibele passed away on March 23, 2020. Manna was the wife of Warren Ibele, UMN Professor Emeritus of Mechanical Engineering and former Graduate School Dean. Manna was a social worker, resort owner, street car conductor and homemaker. She is survived by her husband of 72 years, Dr. Warren Ibele.

23. John “Kim” Munholland passed away on March 29, 2020. UMN Professor Emeritus of Modern European History in the College of Liberal Arts, History Dept. Kim earned his PhD at Princeton and immediately joined the UMN History dept. faculty. Dr. Munholland was a valued teacher and respected scholar who led several study tours to France. After his “retirement” he continued to teach in U Honors and Continuing Ed Programs until November, 2019.

24. Shirley Zimmerman passed away in March, 2020. UMN Professor Emeritus of Family Social Science, Shirley earned her PhD at the UMN in 1977 and served as a teacher, researcher and author of Family Policy until her retirement in 2000. Dr. Zimmerman was committed to social justice and active in politics and civic life.
25. Lanny Schmidt passed away on March 27, 2020. UMN Regents Professor Emeritus in the Institute of Technology, Dept. of Chemical Engineering and Materials Science (1965 to 2014). Dr. Schmidt was a valued mentor who supervised about 90 PhD students and a distinguished scholar with many awards among them membership in the National Academy of Engineering. In 2014, Scientific American named him one of the 50 most outstanding American scientists. He is survived by his wife, Charlotte.

26. William “Bill” Gardner passed away on February 16, 2020. Bill was Dean of the UMN College of Education (1977 to 1991). He earned his BA, MA and PhD from the UMN; taught High School Social Studies and served on the St. Louis Park School Board before joining the UMN College of Education faculty. His social studies curriculum was widely used and he was a respected scholar and prolific author who consulted worldwide.

27. Milan Kovacovic passed away in March, 2020. Milan was Associate Professor of French language, cinema, literature and culture at UM Duluth from 1974 to 2017. A distinguished faculty member and valued teacher he received the CLA Teaching Award (2000) and UMD Student Award of Outstanding Teacher (2013).

28. Marion Watson passed away on March 28, 2020. UMN graduate returned to UMN in 1969 as one of the first women to manage a radio station and continued her work in Communications and Educational Technical Services until her retirement from the UMN in 1992. Marion Watson was a pioneer in radio, inducted into the MN Broadcasting Hall of Fame in 2008 and awarded a University distinguished service award.

29. Frances Paulu passed away on April 22, 2020. Widow of UMN Professor Emeritus Burton Paulu who passed away in 1999. Burton was the manager of the U radio station, KUOM and Professor and Director of U Media Relations. Fran worked as a social worker and while a wife and mother a volunteer activist serving as the President of the League of Women Voters, Chair of the Minneapolis Charter Commission and Director of the Urban Coalition. In 1970, she began her 18 year tenure as the executive director of the Minnesota International Center (now Global Minnesota) and is credited with extending the engagement and visibility of Minnesota and the UMN around the world.

30. Ingrid Werk passed away in April, 2020. Wife of Mahmood Zaidi, Professor Emeritus, Carlson School of Management, Dept. of Industrial Relations. She is survived by her husband Dr. Mahmood Zaidi.

31. Judy Lundell passed away on April 18, 2020. Judy earned her BA in Elementary Education at Mankato State University in 1970. Then she came to the UMN where for 31 years she worked in Student Affairs as an administrator in Recreational Sports. Judy was a member of UMRA from her retirement in 2001 until her passing.

32. Robert “Bob” Holt passed away on April 25, 2020. UMN Professor Emeritus, College of Liberal Arts, Political Science Dept. (1957-1999), Dean of the Graduate School (1982-1991) and Interim Dean of the College of Liberal Arts in 1996. After “retiring” Bob continued to teach and serve the University on numerous committees and as President of UMRA (2009-2010). He is survived by his wife Shirley.
33. Patricia Yardley passed away on May 25, 2020. Widow of Professor Emeritus Donald Yardley, UMN Institute of Technology, Dept. of Civil Engineering who passed away in 2009. Patricia was a librarian who worked for Ramsey County Library her entire career.

34. Richard “Dick” Caldecott passed away on May 29, 2020. Founding Dean of the UMN College of Biological Sciences, Professor of Genetics and Cell Biology, Dick is credited with bringing the Freshwater Institute to the University of Minnesota. In his retirement, Professor Caldecott represented the UMN at the US Congress and in national academic professional organizations.

35. Margaret Sloan passed away on June 8, 2020. Associate Professor in the School of Public Health. Margaret lived 104 plus years. As a research scientist in her generation what an extraordinary person she must have been.