

UMRA UNIVERSITY NEWSLETTER

A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association

MAY 2006

Explore space with Prof. Robert Pepin, speaker for Annual Banquet, May 16

On reviewing the speakers' topics for this past year's luncheon meetings, I was struck by the contemporary nature of the subjects and the uniformly high quality of the presentations. In every instance, in the time available, we heard about the current status in a particular discipline or activity as well as the promise and problems.

As might be expected, controversy was often present. The topic for May and the annual banquet meeting is markedly different. The field of research is current but the focus is on material far removed in time and space.

In late January, my attention was drawn to an item in *eNews for Alumni and Friends*: "The University's Bob Pepin has always been fascinated by ideas about how our solar system formed. Since NASA's Stardust mission returned its first samples of material from a comet and interstellar dust, January 15, the physics professor has been eagerly awaiting a chance to unearth some of the secrets these particles have carried for billions of years."



I thought, here is a splendid opportunity to view our world from a perspective free of politics, the culture wars, or local issues, such as having to decide how many stadia should be built.

Professor Pepin began his study in the space sciences at UC Berkeley, after a brief affair with oceanography, completing a Ph.D. in 1964. He came to Minnesota just as the Apollo missions to the moon were opening a new research frontier. The scientific "finds" of the lunar samples and a fascination with space exploration drew him into the Apollo program, first as a member of the teams that planned lunar surface activities and the distribution of moon rocks to the science community, and later as science adviser in Mission Control at the NASA Johnson Space Center during the last four Apollo missions.

Pepin returned to Minnesota in the late '70s, a time when space exploration leaped from the moon to Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and beyond. His research at Minnesota helped establish that some meteorites were actually fragments of the Martian surface torn loose and ejected into space by energetic impacts.

His current research focuses on the theoretical aspects of the origin and early history of atmospheres on Earth, Mars, and Venus, and experimentally on analysis of samples collected by two robotic spacecraft missions: "Stardust" gathered dust from a comet; "Genesis" sampled the sun's corona that streams out past the planets as solar wind.

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

MAY BANQUET
AND ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday
May 16, 2006
5:30 to 9 p.m.,

Featured Speaker

Robert Pepin, professor,
School of Physics and
Astronomy, University of
Minnesota

**"Collecting Comet Dust and
Wind from the Sun"**

Location

West Wing of the Campus Club,
Coffman Memorial Union,
East Bank Campus, U of M

See page 2 for more details

Cost

\$30 per person (tax included)

Reservation Deadline

Noon, Friday, May 12

To reserve your place(s), and select an entree, send a check, payable to the University of Minnesota Retirees Association, to Ben Zimmerman, at 2225 Folwell Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108; call him at 651-645-1662; or e-mail him at zimme003@umn.edu.

Reservations requested after noon May 12 will be on a waiting list. Cancellations must be received by noon Thursday, May 11.

Parking

Parking is available in the East River Road Garage at UMRA's membership discount, \$4.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our association continued to make progress in a number of areas during the past year as we explored new ways to serve the membership. The opportunity to play an active role in those adventures will be among the pleasant memories I will carry away from my term as president. The presence of a committed and supportive Board made our progress possible; they were ever mindful of their responsibilities to the members, and they are congenial colleagues as well.

When UMRA began the 2005-06 year, there were new faces in two principal positions: secretary and treasurer. Ben Zimmerman mastered the duties of the former, as his predecessor David Wark joined the Board. Judy Howe stepped into the shoes of the redoubtable Robert Plunkett and acquitted herself impressively as treasurer. Thus the Board's deliberations and decisions are duly recorded, our bills paid, and all funds accounted for.

The association was well-served also by the representatives from UMRA to the several Senate committees that deal with retiree concerns.

UMRA's administrative structure is such that there always seem to be several presidents at hand and happily so. I was fortunate to be a "president-in-

training" under the tutelage of past president John Howe, whose own tour as president was marked by a number of accomplishments that members now enjoy.

This year, attention has been directed toward developing programs to serve our members. The seminar on financial planning, covered in another part of this letter, is the first of several programs envisioned to address the important aspects of post-retirement finances. The president-elect, Frank Miller, has steadily become involved in the intricacies of the organization, arranging for a number of our speakers, and has absorbed the unwritten and unspoken practices common to all organizations.

Our Newsletter, which receives favorable comment when Big Ten officers exchange views and e-mails, is the product of editor/publisher Ginny Hanson, who has patiently dealt with multiple article writers and flexible deadlines with rare good humor.

I thank UMRA members for providing me the opportunity to contribute to the association's continuing efforts to better serve all retirees and the larger University community.

Most cordially,
Warren Ibele, President

Annual Meeting is May 16 – a week earlier this year – Make reservations right away!

You are invited to attend UMRA's annual meeting and spring banquet on May 16!

Our program will begin at 5:30 with a cash bar in the Campus Club's West Wing dining room. Dan Wascoe, at the club's grand piano, will join us and provide a selection of melodies popular with our demographic, and even some from other generations. Dinner will be served at 6:30, followed by a brief business meeting and the election of new officers at about 7:30.

Professor Pepin's talk and discussion will begin about 8 pm. Adjournment will be around 9 p.m.

The spring banquet is a concluding event of our UMRA year, so come one, come all! Contact Ben Zimmerman to make reservations (see page 1 for instructions). **And be sure to indicate your menu selection; the entree choices are beef, chicken, and vegetarian.**

Retiree discount parking is available in the East River Road garage – bring your UMRA discount card.

If you are a reluctant driver in the evening hours and can't find a friend who plans to attend, just call the U Retirees Volunteer Center at 612-625-8016 to arrange for a ride.

Pepin is speaker, May 16 – continued from page 1

Professor Pepin's interest in students is marked by his co-founding of the Institute of Technology Honors program in 1985 and his service as director for the past sixteen years. He found the experience "an ultimately satisfying job" as he guided the undergraduate study of 100 or so of the University's "best and brightest."

We welcome Professor Robert Pepin to our annual meeting and look forward to his presentation: "Collecting Comet Dust and Wind from the Sun."

—Warren Ibele

Financial planning during retirement years — Reserve your place in May 18 seminar

A spring letter from Dan Feeney, chair of the Retirement Committee, Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, encouraged us to review our financial situations. “Too often,” he said, “we make decisions regarding income protection or retirement plan investments and never revisit them, only to find later that the decisions we made, while good at the time, may no longer be appropriate.”

At about this same time, the UMRA Board decided it would be a good idea to sponsor a seminar centered

UMRA’s energetic Howes to take hiatus

The good news is that UMRA is thriving and no doubt will continue to thrive; the bad news is that there will be a gaping hole in the Board of Directors next year, because John and Judy Howe will be absent in 2006-07. During recent years they have been a lively and graceful presence.

When John was president, he masterminded a miracle by persuading Parking Services to grant a discount to UMRA members, and capped it off with a bookstore discount for dessert (if we may mix metaphors). This year he has been an energetic and effective past president, inspiring more attention to membership recruitment and serving as chair of both the ad hoc membership committee and nominating committee.

As treasurer, Judy has been the mastermind of the bank account and budget, but in addition, she continued to oversee the list-serve and web site. Whenever a Board member suggested a new chore, somebody would say, “Judy could do that.” She would modestly respond that she couldn’t do everything—then she would go ahead and do it.

We thank them for the many jobs well done, and we wish them a happy and restorative year in Washington, D.C., after which we will welcome them back with enthusiasm.

---Warren Ibele and Frank Miller

WANTED: Data base volunteer

Computer-savvy member needed to maintain the membership database and listserve for the association. The database is currently in an Excel file.

If you can give a little time to assist your association in the important work of maintaining communication with its members, please contact Judy Howe at j-howe2@umn.edu. She can provide information about what’s involved and answer questions you might have.

Thank you

on post-retirement financial planning. That seminar is planned for Thursday afternoon, May 18, 2 to 3:30 p.m. in the Campus Club conference rooms, where we customarily have our luncheon meetings.

Andy Feterl, current president of the Twin Cities section of the Financial Planning Association, will present and discuss the principles, benchmarks, and guidelines for post-retirement financial planning.

This is our first effort in this important area, hence our first focus is on the UMRA membership. Should you know, however, of University retiree colleagues who may be interested, please invite them to attend with you.

There is no charge for this seminar, but please help us plan for your attendance by making a reservation. To reserve your places, contact the UMRA secretary, Ben Zimmerman. You can phone him at 651-645-1662 or e-mail him at zimme003@umn.edu.

Experiencing the joys of volunteering

In January we began a series of articles written by retired colleagues about the volunteer assignments and experiences they are enjoying. The volunteers made their connections with assignments through the University Volunteer Center. The last in this year’s series is from Elwood Caldwell.

Volunteering through the University Retiree Volunteer Center (URVC) is a triple-win process! As a volunteer:

- You are calling attention to the continuing potential of retirees as well as helping the Center do its job of being ready to provide capable volunteers for community and University events;
- You are helping to assure the financial viability of those events and locations; and
- In many cases, you are able to enjoy an entertainment experience you would otherwise have to pay for!

In my experience, all of these points certainly apply to ushering for events at the Rarig Center and Ted Mann Concert Hall, which in most cases involves only taking tickets or handing out programs, not having to find seat locations. They also apply to working with the Red Cross Bloodmobile. Donor clients are themselves all volunteers willing to share in contributing to a life-saving process. Checking them in and minding the post-donation canteen are easy but essential volunteer functions.

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Volunteering—Continued from page 3

The presentations at Rarig and Ted Mann by budding professionals are always top quality. Unless you are one yourself, you will not be able to tell them from those you see and hear (and pay for) at Ordway or Orchestra Halls!

As a result of an agreement between the respective boards of URVC and my Kiwanis club, several retired club

members have also joined the URVC's roster of volunteers, thus adding to its effectiveness as well as to the club's record of community volunteering.

To get in on the opportunities offered by the URVC, call the office at 612-625-8016. It's staffed (by volunteers!) mornings only, Monday through Friday.
—Elwood F. Caldwell



Retiring and retired University colleagues attended a reception at the Campus Club on April 21, sponsored by UMRA's Board and membership committee. Representatives of UMRA, OLLIE, the U Retirees Volunteer Center, and the U Women's Club visited with prospective members.

University of Minnesota
McNamara Alumni Center
Room 264, Suite 250
200 Oak Street S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455-2002



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