

UMRA UNIVERSITY NEWSLETTER

A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association

FEBRUARY 2009

University Librarian Wendy Lougee to speak at UMRA luncheon, February 24

How does one transform a huge research university library system to embrace digital technology and make it user-friendly? University Librarian and McKnight Presidential Professor Wendy Pradt Lougee was already working on answers 20 years ago, when that question was just on the horizon.



On February 24, she will speak about “timeless knowledge/timely access,” a phrase she uses to describe the hybrid world that libraries now live in.

Nationally known for her pioneering contributions to designing and developing digital libraries, Lougee is a frequent speaker and consultant on issues associated with publishing, digital content and tools, and on assessing research behaviors.

Before coming to Minnesota in 2002, she held several positions at the University of Michigan, including associate director for Digital Library Services. There, she launched its digital library program and began working in digital library development nationally. Her many awards for innovations and risk-taking efforts include the Hugh Atkinson Award (for innovative efforts in research libraries), *ComputerWorld* Honors Program Laureate, and Michigan’s Walter H. Kaiser Award for leadership.

Lougee currently serves on an array of professional organizations, ranging from research-oriented groups (as vice chair of the Council on Library and Information Resources Board) to those dealing with emergent challenges within the academy (as chair of the Association of Research Libraries E-Science Group and president of the international Digital Library).

She holds a B.A. in English from Lawrence University, an M.S. in Library Science from the University of Wisconsin, and an M.A. degree in Psychology from the University of Minnesota.

We look forward to meeting Wendy Lougee on the 24th and hearing how her work is helping to shape the future of libraries in this era known as the digital age.

— Julie Medbery, Program Committee

Help swell UMRA membership; invite prospective members to lunch

Help build membership by encouraging fellow retirees to sample UMRA’s hospitality and programming. Invite a prospective member to join you for a lunch program this year. It’s UMRA’s treat! Just call in to alert us when you make your reservations; give us their names for name tags; and help us give them a hearty welcome!

And, don’t forget to tell them about all the benefits of membership in UMRA including the discounts on parking, athletic events, and bookstore purchases.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

FEBRUARY
LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday
February 24, 2009
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Featured Speaker

Wendy Lougee, University Librarian, University of Minnesota

**“Timeless Knowledge —
Timely Access”**

Location

Conference Room ABC
Campus Club, Fourth Floor
Coffman Memorial Union,
East Bank Campus, U of M

Cost

Prepayment: \$12 per person.
\$14 at door for those not prepaid.

Reservation Deadline

Thursday, February 19

To reserve your place(s) and to take advantage of prepaid price, you must send a check, payable to UMRA, to UMRA Reservations, c/o Becky Hurst, 1794 Roxanna Lane, New Brighton, MN 55112 before the deadline date. You may contact Becky at 651-636-5568; e-mail: rebecca.hurst@comcast.net

Reservations requested after Feb. 19 will be on a waiting list. Please let us know about cancellations by noon, February 19.

Parking

Parking is available in the East River Road Garage at UMRA’s membership discount, \$5 for the entire day. Come early and visit the Bookstore.

Board Meeting at 10 a.m.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

A Good Man Skilled in Speaking

A few days after Barack Obama's inauguration to the U.S. Presidency, we are left with our impressions of the day. Two million people showed up to shiver through below freezing weather to watch, listen, and cheer the proceedings and to witness the first African American become our forty-fourth president. Garrison Keillor wrote, "You had to be there. Had to."

I had no desire to go to Washington to see the event. Politics as usual and the cynicism that goes with it have dulled any enthusiasm I might have had for such events. But now that it's over, I confess to feeling I missed something by staying home.

UMRA members have experienced many inaugurations. Many of us heard some of Roosevelt's four, and Truman's first on the radio. I heard one and saw one of Eisenhower's two on black and white TV. Some were memorable, but most were not. I was two when Roosevelt gave his first: "we have nothing to fear but fear itself." I don't remember most of these speeches, although several of the speeches were, I'm sure, eloquent in their own right. But I do remember the chill that ran up my back when I heard Kennedy's eloquent challenge to service: "ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

In the four years since the 2004 Democratic Convention, propelled by his oratory, we have witnessed Barack Obama's meteoric rise to prominence and power. Throughout the primaries, at the 2008 Convention, and throughout the presidential campaign, he has combined clear analysis of complicated concepts with compelling eloquence. Who can forget his Philadelphia speech on race? Forced to deal with the racial comments of his pastor, he framed what was, in my view, the most important speech of the 2008 campaign. His inaugural speech completed the campaign package—a field of rhetorical gems waiting for scholars to probe and analyze.

In the First Century BCE, the Roman teacher of oratory Quintilian wrote *Institutio Oratoria*. He defined the "perfect orator" as "a good man, skilled in speaking." I believe that the people who voted for Obama and who have such high hopes for his presidency have recognized him as an orator of that caliber—a good man who has the ethos of being in the new generation of American leaders and who represents in his genes and upbringing the integration of races and cultures, who has the ability to analyze and set forth solutions to our problems, and who can craft those ideas into a compelling style. He is a modern day "good man skilled in speaking."

— Hal Miller, President

Update: U Retirees' health care plans

The new enrollment figures are now in for the 2009 Health Plan. According to Employee Benefits, some 2,218 of us and our spouse/partners (1,574 retirees and 644 spouse/partners) signed up for coverage at last fall's open enrollment, down slightly, 0.7 percent, from a year ago.

By plan, Blue Cross/Blue Shield's U of M Retiree Plan remains the most popular option at 42.7 percent with 948 enrollees (682 retirees, 266 spouse/partners), down 1.4 percent; followed by Health Partners 65+ at 31.1 percent with 689 (480 retirees, 209 spouse/partners), down 0.6 percent; Medica Group Prime Solution at 12.8 percent with 285 (197 retirees, 88 spouses), down 0.3 percent and U Care for Seniors at 12.6 percent with 279 (201 retirees, 78 spouse/partners), up 1.1 percent.

Interestingly, although the Blue Cross/Blue Shield plan has been able to maintain its lead position among University retirees and their spouse/partners in spite of its higher premium costs, the latter's impact may be reflected in a steady erosion of the plan's market share over the past six years (i.e., 53.6 percent in 2004, 51.1 percent in 2005, 49.3 percent in 2006, 46.6 percent in 2007, 43.0 percent in 2008, and 42.7 in 2009). Whether this trend will accelerate as more and more new retirees enroll in the program who previously have been covered by Medica or Health Partners under the Active Plan remains to be seen. How this all plays out and its implications for the Retiree Plan as a whole is something we will be keeping our eye on for you in the years ahead.

— Ted Litman, UMRA Representative,
Benefits Advisory Committee

All-U Honors Committee seeks help

The Honors Committee of the University is responsible for organizing nominations for a number of awards ranging from certificates of appreciation to honorary degrees and the naming of buildings. With nearly half a million living alumni and thousands of employees, along with the many people who are important to the University, identifying and selecting individuals for these honors is a daunting task.

The Honors Committee relies on nominations from the colleges and support units; and the number of nominations varies from unit to unit. Often, the number of awards given is not in proportion to the size of the college. Professional schools, with close ties to their constituencies, are usually the most active in these nominations.

Recently, Vickie Courtney, coordinator of the Senate and lead staff person for the All-U Honors Committee, met with several UMRA presidents to encourage retirees' involvement in the nomination process. Of particular interest is the Outstanding Achievement Award, given to University alumni/ae, and the Award of Distinction, given to those not directly affiliated with the University.

Recognizing that these nominations are subject to the initiative of the colleges, and that several colleges are already functioning very well in this process, the UMRA Board decided that we could try to help those that are somewhat less active in the nomination process. We will start by identifying retirees who come from those colleges and encouraging matches to provide assistance in the nomination process. UMRA members who are interested in helping in this effort and would like to know more should contact Hal Miller by email: miller@umn.edu.

U Women's Club is raising scholarship funds with sales of new cookbook

The University of Minnesota Woman's Club published a new cookbook in August 2008. The historic cookbook includes recipes from current members as well as recipes from previous UMWC cookbooks.

Proceeds from cookbook sales help the club provide scholarships for young University women. The cookbooks sell for \$15 and make wonderful gifts. If you are interested in purchasing one, please contact President Cherie Hamilton at: 612-929-0233 or pimentamalageta@hotmail.com

The University of Minnesota Women's Club invites all women to participate in their wide-ranging activities.

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Join in opportunities to volunteer!

University Retirees volunteers assist the Law School by serving as **jurors for mock trials** that give law students practice in their fields. The following photo (courtesy of Geraldine Kagan) shows participants in a mock trial, November 25.



From left: a law student who acted as court clerk, a student lawyer, Judge Timothy L. Blakely (district county judge in Goodhue City, Red Wing County), three student lawyers, and two URVC volunteer jury members, Helen Briggs and Richard Kueppers. Other URVC jurors, not shown, were Phyllis Campbell, Manuel Guerrero, Sally Howard, and Geraldine Kagan. On November 18, the following URVC volunteers served on two juries: Marilyn Borkon, Bright Dornblasser, Sally Howard, Patricia Koors, Sylvia Ouellette, Gajendra Patel, D'Ann Prior, Roy Thompson, Barbara Tiede, Gerhard Weiss, and Janet Weiss.

Ushers enjoy a University Theatre play for free, including parking fees. Volunteer an hour at Rarig Theatre to take tickets or hand out programs during the upcoming run of *Night Train to Bolina*, February 27–March 9 (both evening performances and matinees).

Written by Nilo Cruz and directed by Dominic Taylor, assistant professor of theatre arts and dance, the play shows how “Clara and Mateo, young, poor and powerless in an adult world, confront life with intelligence, passion, and eloquence in a haunting tale of the dispossessed of the earth...two poor Latin American children's spirits soar like kites as they run away to an invented place called Bolina.”

If you would like to serve as a juror at a mock trial, usher at a play or concert, or take advantage of any of several dozen other opportunities to volunteer, contact the University Retirees Volunteer Center by e-mailing urvc@umn.edu or by calling 612-625-8016 on a weekday morning.

— Judy Rosenblat, URVC volunteer and board member

U Women's Club —Continued from page 3

In addition to monthly Interest Section meetings, the club presents four Conversation luncheons each year. The next Conversation with a Woman Leader program will be held on April 7 at the Minnesota Humanities Center, 987 Ivy Street, St. Paul. The speaker will be Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives, focusing on the Minnesota budget process.

To learn more about UMWC or about attending a luncheon program, please contact President Cherie Hamilton at: 612-929-0233 or pimentamalageta@hotmail.com

IN MEMORIAM

In January we reported the passing of several members in 2008. As we learn of losses to our UMRA community, we will report them here. Our condolences to the families of:

Martin W. Duffy, Industrial Relations, d. Dec. 6, 2008

Partner Nancy James is an UMRA member

Ivan D. Frantz, Jr., Medicine and Biochemistry, d. Jan. 23, 2009; Spouse Veronica is an UMRA member

For in memoriam notices, please contact John Anderson, Data Manager, by e-mailing him at ander049@umn.edu

Welcome new members—joining since November

The following are new members who have joined UMRA since November. Please give them a hearty welcome at the next lunch program and add their contact information to your 2008-09 directories. For a list of members who had joined us since spring 2008, please see the November 2008 issue of the UMRA Newsletter (available online: www.umn.edu/umra).

Johnson, Donald Clay (U Libraries)

1920 First St. S., #1203, Mpls, 55454; 612-332-5337

O'Boyle, Carol and Robert A. Silvagni (Nursing)

1101 Sibley Memorial Highway, #105, Lilydale, 55118; 651-293-1727

Root, Michael and Tamara (Philosophy)

5136 Logan Ave. S., Mpls, 55419; 612-922-6981

Thomas, Margaret (Biological Sciences)

1606 W. Skillman, Roseville, 55113; 651-633-4571

Zuriff, Susan R. (U Libraries)

4300 W. River Parkway, #253, Minneapolis, 55406

For additional information about
UMRA and its activities, and to see photos of past
events, go to www.umn.edu/umra.

**Have you changed your
address, e-mail, or phone?**

1. Print new information below.
2. Cut out this form **and address label**.
3. Mail both to the address above.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State _____

Zip _____

E-mail _____

Other Info _____

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

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