

UMRA U NEWSLETTER

A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association

APRIL 2011

Learn about the “new normal” from April speaker Tom Stinson, state economist

You might be asking, “When will the economy return to normal?”

For the first 30 years after World War II, the answer was: pretty quickly. Back then, “normal” meant a continuation of economic growth with economic gains that were widely shared. Since the mid-1970s the return to normal has begun to take longer, even though during the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century, the economy was operating with some of the lowest unemployment rates since World War II.

This time around, the recovery from the recent Great Recession is taking much longer, and the question of when will the economy return to normal begs another question: What is “normal?”

Our April speaker, Tom Stinson, professor of Applied Economics and Minnesota’s



state economist, will address that question when he talks with us about “The New Normal and Minnesota.”

The Great Recession is over, and the economy is growing again,

but, according to Professor Stinson, we are not likely to return to where we were before this recession started. The combination of the recent economic downturn and historic demographic changes will lead to a “new normal” — a position quite unlike what we have been used to.

Professor Stinson has served as the state’s economist since 1987, longer than all of his predecessors together. The position of state economist was created to provide an unbiased, non-partisan state budget forecast. That forecast can make a governor happy or not so happy. When the unemployment rate is low and state revenues are growing, the budget forecast helps to set parameters for new initiatives and/or tax cuts. But when unemployment is high and state revenues are dropping, a governor might be tempted to shoot the messenger. That this has not happened is a testimony to Professor Stinson’s professionalism.

A native of Washington State, Tom Stinson received his B.A. degree in political science from Washington State University and Ph.D. in economics from the University of Minnesota. Professor Stinson is a past president of the Minnesota Economic Association and a member of the economic advisory board of the *StarTribune*.

While there is great uncertainty about what the new normal will bring, a better understanding of the demographic and economic forces producing new challenges and new opportunities will best equip us for success over the next two decades or more.

Join us on April 26 to learn more about the forces, challenges, and opportunities of the new normal and how we might adjust to it.
— Craig Swan, Program Committee

Following the April program, plan to stay for dessert and conversation about changing tax laws and estate planning. See story on page 3.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

APRIL
LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday
April 26, 2011
11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Featured Speaker

Tom Stinson, U professor and Minnesota’s State Economist
“The New Normal and Minnesota”

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 reservations that
are not prepaid.

Reservation Deadline

Thursday, April 21

To reserve your place(s) send a check, payable to UMRA, to April UMRA Reservations, c/o Judy Leahy Grimes, 1937 Palace Ave., St. Paul MN 55105. Contact her at 651-698-4387 or jleahy4654@aol.com

Please honor the April 21 reservation date; if cancellations are necessary, please try to let us know by noon April 21.

Parking

Parking is available in the East River Road Garage at UMRA’s membership discount, \$5.00 for the entire day.

Board Meeting at 10 a.m.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Surprises spring from every corner at the Arboretum

As the return of spring and warmer weather promises the rejuvenation of outdoor plants and flowers, our thoughts turn to the University's Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Here you can enjoy luscious gardens, leisurely walks, and almost every variety of plant that can grow in our Minnesota climate.

Located southwest of Minneapolis just off Highway 5 near Chaska, the arboretum began as the Horticultural Research Center in 1908 and formally became the Arboretum in 1958. The site now encompasses more than 1,000 acres and is visited by more than a quarter million people a year. Horticultural researchers keep busy developing varieties of plants, including apples and grapes, with desirable characteristics such as specific taste qualities, high productivity, and, of course, the ability to withstand the rigors of our Minnesota climate.

The Oswald Visitor Center, completed in 2005, is a magnificent architectural centerpiece that features a spacious atrium, the 375-seat MacMillan auditorium, two high-tech classrooms, a cafeteria-style restaurant, the Reedy Art Gallery, gift shop, and a really "green" geothermal heating and cooling system. An enclosed passageway connects it to an older building named for the Arboretum's first director, Leon C. Snyder. The Snyder Center houses the Andersen Horticultural Library,

a collection of more than 15,000 volumes specializing in horticulture, botany, and natural history.

The seasonal attractions are the gardens with their marvelous varieties of ornamental flowering plants—the Japanese garden, rose garden, herb garden, bog trail, hosta glade, woodland, and azalea gardens. If you are interested in seeing the variety of trees, walk or drive the Three Mile Drive loop. Take advantage of the miles of walking trails, which bring you within touching distance of all the plantings.

I have especially enjoyed observing the restoration of Spring Peeper Meadow. Fifteen years ago, it was a cornfield from which excess water was drained by underground tile. After the tiling system was removed, water accumulated, and thousands of individual marsh plants were transplanted and nurtured for several seasons. Surrounding upland areas were also restored. The area now boasts a broad spectrum of native plants. A boardwalk across the wettest portions offers visitors views of the marsh and its wildlife inhabitants.

Although there is an entrance fee to the Landscape Arboretum, when you visit, please take advantage of the discount for UMRA members to become Arboretum members. For more details about the Arboretum including many wonderful photographs of flowers and habitat to be seen there, check out the website at arboretum.umn.edu.

— John Anderson, UMRA President

ander049@umn.edu or 651-489-4330

Coming events for your UMRA calendar

Tuesday, May 24

Our annual meeting and gala luncheon is always a celebratory event, marking the end of a term and a beginning of the next. This year it also will be an opportunity for us to honor and celebrate with Dr. Susan Hagstrum and President Robert Bruininks as they enter a new phase of their lives.

Saturday, June 18

Join us for a special reception and tour at the Goldstein Gallery. Enjoy refreshments and an exhibit of artisan samples of handcrafted textiles of India. UMRA member Donald Clay Johnson traveled to India for his research, supported by an UMRA Professional Development Grant. He will talk about the crafts of the region as members and guests tour the exhibit. Plan now to invite fellow retirees and soon-to-retire U faculty and staff so they might see how membership in UMRA can benefit them when they achieve full retirement!

New webmaster is appointed

David Naumann has taken over responsibilities for maintaining and updating the UMRA web site. Having taught a course in web site development in the Carlson School of Management for several years, he brings considerable expertise to this role. We thank David for volunteering and we offer our very sincere appreciation to Ron Anderson who provided several years of excellent service as webmaster.

Nominations for leadership positions

In anticipation of the election of officers and new board members at the UMRA annual meeting in May, a nominating committee—consisting of Bob Holt, chair, Dick Caldecott, Betty Radcliffe, Pat Tollefson, and Gayle Graham Yates—is seeking candidates for leadership positions. If you would like to serve on the board or be involved in a leadership position, please contact Bob Holt at holt@umn.edu or 612-377-5419 to indicate your interest.

Professional Development Grants program awards nine third-cycle grants

A committee of retirees, appointed by Vice President Tim Mulcahy, met with Associate Vice President Frances Lawrenz on February 24 to review 19 applications for this year's Professional Development Grants for Retirees (PDGR). The committee recommended nine applications for funding, and in early March Vice President Mulcahy announced the awards. Of the winning proposals, one came from the Morris Campus; the others from the following Twin Cities campus colleges: CSE (IT); CLA; Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences; and University Libraries. See below for the list of this year's winning projects. See the UMRA website for more extended paragraph descriptions.

And, watch for an article describing UMRA's grants venture in the next issue of the University's Alumni Magazine.

— John Howe, PDGR committee

Professional Development Grants for Retirees, 2011–12

- Ferolyn Angell, Humanities, UMM—Translate Mother's Journals as Historical Reference for a Theatrical Work
- Subir Banerjee, Geology and Geophysics, CSE (IT)—Reconstructing the History of Chinese Climate Changes in the Last 10,000 Years
- Patrick Brezonik, Civil Engineering, CSE (IT)—Controls on Mercury Bioavailability and Cycling in the Environment by Natural Organic Matter and Aquatic Humic Substances
- Morton Harris, Mathematics, CSE (IT)—Discuss Specific Mathematics Theory with a Professor in Valencia, Spain
- Donald Johnson, University Libraries—Study British Fashion in Colonial India; specifically, Lady Curzon and Queen Alexandria
- Calvin Kendall, English, CLA—Translation with Introduction, Commentary, and Notes of Two Books by Isidore of Seville
- Herbert Pick, Jr., Institute of Child Development, CLA—Investigation of the Calibration of Self-Produced Locomotion (Stepping) Without Vision
- Nora Plesovsky, Plant Biology, College of Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources—Sources of Stress-Induced Cell Death in *Neurospora Crassa*
- Michael Stoughton, Art History, CLA—Deliver a Lecture in Sorrento, Italy

As described in previous reports, the Professional Development Grants program is supported by temporary funding provided by President Bruininks and colleagues. UMRA's P.D.G.R. committee, in partnership with the UMRA Board, is accelerating the search for more permanent funding. If you have suggestions concerning that effort, please contact John Howe, howex002@umn.edu.

April 26 at 2 p.m. — Special topic: new tax laws and your estate planning

Following the luncheon meeting program on April 26, UMRA members are invited to stay for dessert, a discussion of new tax laws, and a review of estate and gift planning.

Do you know how recent federal and state tax law changes may affect you? Why is it important to have an estate plan?

Join us for an informative conversation with Jane Goodnight, J.D., director of Trusts and Estates at the University of Minnesota Foundation. Some of the questions she will address: What is the difference between a will and a revocable (living) trust? What other estate planning documents are important? What are "good" versus "bad" assets to give to heirs? How can charitable giving increase one's income? Learn about the necessary tools and options for making tax-wise gifts to your heirs as well as legacy gifts to charity.

Invite your friends — all retired or current faculty and staff are welcome. When you reserve for the April luncheon, let us know if you plan to stay for this program. **If you plan to come just for this discussion, or if you are inviting a guest, please RSVP** to Judy Leahy Grimes, April reservationist, at 651-698-4387 or jleahy4654@aol.com. We want to be sure to have sufficient desserts and beverages available!

Spring into volunteering

The University Retirees Volunteer Center is ready to help you find a volunteer activity that matches your interests in helping your community. For a survey of volunteer activities, e-mail URVC at urvc@umn.edu or call 612-625-8016.

The following projects are immediately available:

Young Inventors Fair: Judging is completed, but "volunteer officials" are needed April 30 at Mall of America to meet inventors (3rd–8th graders) and give awards.

History Day: (May 1, U of M): Back-up judges are needed to interview, evaluate, and provide feedback.

Adult Basic Ed. Tutoring: Help adults achieve better employment, serve their inquiring minds, and develop facility in the technology that is necessary today.

Red Cross: Bloodmobile and Blood Donor centers need greeters to register donors and canteen workers.

Health Care Centers and Veterans' Home: Teach basic computer use, play bingo, cards.

Summer Concerts and Theater: Caponi Art Park and Learning Center in Eagan needs greeters, etc.

Gardeners: Help youth programs maintain urban gardens.

Hospital Service: broad variety of volunteer services— requires a weekly commitment, but only a 3-4 hour shift.

ASPREE: 5-year clinical study to determine the benefits of a daily low-dose aspirin for seniors over 70.

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Minneapolis, MN 55455-2002

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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 _____ Phone _____
E-mail _____
Other Info _____

Have Mother's Day brunch at the Campus Club

The Campus Club announces that their traditional Mother's Day Brunch, Sunday, May 8, is open to both members and non-members this year and promises a fantastic menu. Tickets are \$23.95 for adults and \$12.95 for children 12 and under. Seatings are in the West Wing Dining Room from 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Reservations are required. Please call 612-626-7788. For details, see CampusClubUMN.org

Welcome new members

Please give a hearty welcome to new members who have recently joined UMRA. Greet them at the next lunch program, and add this information to your directories.

Ron Faber, School of Journalism and Mass Communications, faculty
1912 Cedar Lake Prkwy, Minneapolis, MN 55416
612-922-7820; 612-626-0061, faber001@umn.edu

Edward L. and Judy Farmer, History, faculty
147 Cecil Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55415-3610
612-379-7429 efarmer@umn.edu

Frederick Cooper and Helen Foster, Art History, faculty
2190 Folwell Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108-1304
651-649-1063 frederick.cooper@comcast.net

Cheryl F. Fish, Department of Surgery, Medical School, CS
521 Nelson Court, Center City, MN 55012
651-257-4631 fishx025@umn.edu

In the media: "Never forget."

In two ways recently, two UMRA members shared the uncommon tragic circumstances of their youth.

In a March 27 article in the *Star Tribune*, **Lisa Gumpel** told of her childhood experiences as one of more than 600 Jewish children shuttled out of Berlin to Czechoslovakia and then to England as the borders were closing in the advent of World War II. Eventually coming to the U.S., she earned a Ph.D. in German linguistics, and taught at the U of M Morris campus for more than 30 years. Read her story at www.startribune.com/lifestyle/118710864.html.

On March 14 an Art Faith Humanity event at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts focused on the art of Dr. **Robert Fisch** with the multimedia presentation "Light from the Yellow Star; Music of Sorrow and Love." Also featured was a premier performance of a piece written for this special occasion by Israeli composer Boris Pigoval. Dr. Fisch was professor of pediatrics at the U for many years and has been busy since retirement sharing his story and helping young people learn important lessons from the holocaust. Read more at www.yellowstarfoundation.org.

Keep current on UMRA news, programs, and discounts
with a visit to our web site: www.umn.edu/umra
