

UMRA U NEWSLETTER

A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association

FEBRUARY 2012

Joanne Eicher takes us into the world of fashioning an encyclopedia in our digital age

How does an encyclopedia come about? How does one get to be an editor of one? Who decides what goes into it? How are additions and changes made?

In the past, an encyclopedia could take decades to complete and parts would be almost immediately obsolete, but Joanne Eicher, editor-in-chief of the ten-volume *World Encyclopedia of Dress and Fashion*, will tell us how she got involved with this new work (published in 2010 in print) and how it can be continuously updated online.

Joanne is Regents Professor Emerita, Department of Design, Housing and Apparel, here at the University. With a combined degree in anthropology and sociology (B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.



degrees from Michigan State University), she specializes in cultural aspects of clothing and dress.

She joined the department of Textiles and

Clothing in 1977 as department head, and, from 1983 to 1987, she served as department head and director of the Goldstein Gallery in the newly merged department of Design, Housing, and Apparel. A widely respected teacher and administrator, she was named Regents Professor in 1995.

Following a life-long interest in dress and clothing, Joanne began fieldwork in Nigeria with the Kalabari of the Niger Delta in

1980 and published extensively with a Kalabari colleague. This led to research on exporting textiles from India to Nigeria. In 1987, she returned to Nigeria during a sabbatical year in Oxford, England, and expanded her research to Egypt, India, and Thailand. Her many publications and papers include presentations in China, Korea, India, and Australia.

Upon retiring from the University in 2005, Joanne turned to writing and editing. Besides heading the creation of the *World Encyclopedia of Dress and Fashion*, she is also consulting editor for the *Dress, Body, Culture* series (Berg Publishers, London, England). In 2008, she co-authored *The Visible Self* (3rd, ed.) and was associate editor for the *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion* (Scribners, 2005).

Recent articles include “The Anthropology of Dress,” “Dress, Gender, and the Display of Skin,” and “The American Groom Wore a Celtic Kilt: Theme Weddings as Carnivalesque Events.” Her recent chapter, “The Body,” has just been published in *Art and Fashion*, a book edited by two Australians.

Please welcome one of UMRA’s distinguished members to the podium for an entertaining and interesting program.

— Julie Medbery, Program Committee

Note: a Financial and Estate Planning seminar will follow the February program at the Campus Club. See article on page 3 for details and for how to make reservations.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

FEBRUARY
LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday

February 28, 2012

11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Featured Speaker

Joanne B. Eicher, Regents Professor Emerita, U of M
“Creating an Encyclopedia in this Digital Age”

Location

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

Reservations Required

Cost: \$14 per person when pre-paid (see below); \$16 at door for reservations that are not prepaid.

Reservation Deadline

Thursday, February 23

To reserve your place(s) by pre-paying, send a check, payable to UMRA, to UMRA Reservations, c/o Pat Tollefson, 4210 Polk St.

NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421. Or arrange to pay at the door by contacting her at 763-781-9747 or p-toll@umn.edu.

Please honor the reservation deadline date; if cancellations are necessary, please let us know by noon February 23.

Parking

Parking is available in the East River Road Garage, with UMRA’s membership discount coupons—\$6 for the entire day. (Coupons will be available at the meeting.)

Board Meeting at 10 a.m.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

"This month marks a milestone and an important turning-point in the fortunes of the Professional Development Grants for Retirees program, which was initiated by UMRA more than four years ago.

As I reported in November's Newsletter, in the first three years of its existence, the program awarded grants of as much as \$4,000 to 36 retirees from 10 different colleges on the Twin Cities campus as well as Duluth and Morris. Grant applications for cycle four of the program are now being evaluated by a review committee appointed by the University.

Meanwhile the endowment campaign that we launched last fall to ensure future support for the grants program is well under way. We have raised nearly a third of our initial goal of \$100,000. If we can achieve that goal, it will help us make our case to potential outside donors.

What is critical now is to sustain the campaign's momentum. The successes so far achieved are due in overwhelming measure to the indefatigable efforts of John Howe, who has led the PDGrants Committee from the beginning. Those of us who have worked with him stand in awe of his diplomatic skills, his persistent pressure, and the extraordinary results he has obtained.

In January, John announced that for personal reasons he was stepping aside as chair of the committee. We

all owe John a vote of thanks, and so, on behalf of us all, UMRA's Board of Directors has unanimously approved a resolution applauding John's long-term leadership, vision, dedication, and commitment to developing and implementing the PDGrants program.

In talking over the transition with John, it became evident to me that to expect one person to direct the two quite separate functions of the committee, namely the endowment fund-raising effort and the management of the annual grants program, was simply too much to ask. After much discussion we concluded that the best solution would be to set up a standing committee with responsibility for the endowment campaign within the PDGrants committee. The parent committee would retain responsibility for the annual, operational management of the grants program.

Accordingly, I am delighted to be able to announce that Judson Sheridan has agreed to take over as chair of the PDGrants committee and that Jan Hogan will chair the new standing committee directing the endowment campaign. With this outstanding new leadership in place, I am confident that the Professional Development Grants for Retirees program has a bright future.

— Calvin Kendall, UMRA President
kenda001@umn.edu

Capacity crowd learns the power of bees... and how reservations can avoid a comedy of errors

The January lunch featured an exciting opening act followed by a spectacular headliner, Marla Spivak, who talked about bees, delivering charm and education at the same time.

The opening act, however, was sheer improvisational comedy. People kept wandering in from the hallway and claiming to have reservations! Others, already seated, not in on the joke, were patient and polite. A performer impersonating "me" acted puzzled and powerless. Saving the day were the intrepid Campus Club servers—busy as bees, they buzzed around and found chairs and, eventually, food for all.

What did we learn at the January meeting? We learned that honey bees are even more industrious and ingenious than we thought, they are crucial in the food system, and very fortunate to have the loving attention of the likes of Professor Marla Spivak and her students.

We all also learned the importance of reservations!!

Perhaps we (your committee and newsletter editor) have not been clear in communicating this, but the fact is—even if you plan to pay at the door instead of sending in a check, you must call or e-mail to reserve your place(s) for lunch by the deadline listed on page one. Please!

— Frank C. Miller

Frank describes himself as Amateur Reservationist. We describe him as UMRA's Disarming Humorist. Frank would be happy to have reservations assistance at future luncheons. You can reach him at mille005@umn.edu or 612-331-2145.

Upcoming programs — Mark your calendars

March 27 – Eric Kaler, 16th and current president, U of M

April 24 – Ira Reiss, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, on the topic of his recent book: *An Insider's View of Sexual Science since Kinsey*.

May 22 – Lori Sturdevant, Star Tribune columnist and author, will talk about University history: *All John's Children* (John S. Pillsbury, "father of the University").

UMRA and U Foundation offer financial planning seminar on February 28

Plan to attend “Estate and Gift Planning Strategies: What You Should Know” in Conference Room ABC of the Campus Club, following UMRA’s general meeting, February 28.

UMRA and the University of Minnesota Foundation invite retired faculty and staff to join us for dessert and a discussion of current tax law, as well as a review of estate and gift planning. Jane Godfrey J.D., a recent addition to the Planned Giving team at the U Foundation, will discuss these topics and answer your questions about estate planning. Jane comes to the U of M with 20 years of experience in estate planning at a leading Twin Cities law firm.

Topics will include: an update on federal and state estate tax laws; why it is important to have an estate plan; the difference between a will and a revocable (living) trust; important estate planning documents; how charitable giving can increase income; and necessary tools and options for making tax-wise gifts to heirs and legacy gifts to charity.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP by Thursday, Feb. 23, at www.rsvp.umn.edu/umra/ or call Lynn Praska in the University of Minnesota Foundation at 612-624-4158.

Status of U retiree health plans: a report

The new enrollment figures are now in for the 2012 Retiree Health Plan. According to Employee Benefits, some 2,361 of us (1,677 retirees and 684 spouse/partners) signed up for health and medical coverage through the U Plan for Retirees during last fall’s Open Enrollment. This is up slightly (0.6 percent) from last year.

By plan, Blue Cross/ Blue Shield U of M Retiree Plan remains the most popular option with 834 enrollees (35 percent of enrolled retirees), but down 0.4 percent; followed closely by Health Partners 65+ with 788 enrollees (33.4 percent), up 0.9 percent. Medica’s Group Prime Solution enrolled 428 (18.1 percent), which is down 0.7 percent. U Care for Seniors is at 277 (11.7 percent), up 1.8 percent. The relatively new Health Partners National Plan enrolled 34 (1.4 percent), which is up 25.9 percent.

— Ted Litman, UMRA Representative to the U Benefits Advisory Committee

In Remembrance

We report the passing of UMRA members as we learn of losses to our UMRA community. Our condolences to the family and friends of:

Marilyn Gorlin, who died November 24, 2011; she retired from Educational Psychology, civil service

Moving ahead toward a PDGR endowment

As reported earlier, the UMRA Grants Committee has begun an ambitious plan with the goal of building a permanent endowment for our Professional Development Grants for Retirees program. While we have the assurance of several more years of temporary funding from Central Administration, we must prepare for longer term financial support.

Last fall the committee proposed, and the UMRA Board approved, a phased endowment campaign beginning with an appeal to association members, then to all University faculty and P&A retirees, and finally for a campaign directed to local foundations and individual lead donors. Our ultimate goal is a \$1,000,000 endowment, a sum sufficient to fund 10 or more awards annually.

Our goal for the first phase of the campaign was \$100,000. With 41 contributions from members to date, plus the Board’s initial investment, we have raised \$32,270, a sum now resting securely in our U Foundation account. As we make plans to extend our appeal to the larger audience of University retirees, we encourage UMRA members who have not yet made a contribution to do so, and if you have already made a contribution or pledge, please consider adding to it. You may use the pledge card provided in our mailing last fall, or you may go to the Foundation’s giving link at giving.umn.edu/umra.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that two UMRA colleagues have agreed to assume responsibility for the ongoing leadership of our grants program. Jan Hogan will take charge of endowment building while Jud Sheridan will direct our annual award activities. Both will welcome your suggestions and advice.

— John Howe, outgoing chair of the PDGR Committee

Book Club to discuss “Memory of Trees”

On February 17, Gayla Marty, author of *Memory of Trees: A Daughter’s Story of a Family Farm*, will join the UMRA book club to lead a discussion of her book. A University staff member, Marty is editor and media relations manager in the College of Education and Human Development.

The UMRA Book Club meets on the third Friday of every month at 2 p.m. at 1666 Coffman near the St. Paul campus. March and April’s books for discussion are: *The Girl in the Blue Beret* by Bobbie Ann Mason, and *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot.

New members are always welcome. Contact Pat Tollefson (p-toll@umn.edu) for more information.

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address, e-mail, or phone?**

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3. Mail both to the address above.

Name _____
Address _____
City, State _____
Zip _____ Phone _____
E-mail _____
Other Info _____

Volunteer for Success Beyond the Classroom

Last month I volunteered for the “Student Creativity Festival,” a project of the Success Beyond the Classroom (SBC) program. It was a most gratifying experience—an opportunity to observe students from 29 elementary schools in participatory classes that integrate the arts and sciences. After an engaging set of demonstrations by faculty and students of the University’s Physics Department, the young students broke up into groups and attended their choice of three classes with such diverse subjects as “Endangered Species,” “Mexican Music and Culture,” “Neutrinos and Dark Matter,” “Paper Marbling,” and “Whats-its on Wheels.” Enthusiasm for knowledge was so evident in these children!

URVC is now seeking volunteers for the next SBC event: Young Inventors Program and Fair. Students, grades 3–8, have been creating inventions in projects that emphasize the creative process, scientific inquiry skills, and problem solving. **Volunteer opportunities:** 1) Evaluators are needed March 8 and 9 to judge the projects at a St. Paul location on University Avenue; 2) General volunteers are needed for the

Invention Fair on May 5 at the Mall of America. For more detailed information or to indicate your interest in volunteering, e-mail the Volunteer Center at urvc@umn.edu or call the office, 612-625-8016.

— Alan L. Kagan, Project Director, URVC

Welcome new members to UMRA

Please give a hearty welcome to new members who have recently joined UMRA. Greet them at the next lunch program, and add them to your UMRA 2011-12 Directory.

Karlind T. and Susan M. Moller, Development and Surgical Sciences/Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences, Faculty
686 Arbogast St., Shoreview, MN 55126-4102
651-484-4504; molle001@comcast.net

Maureen A. Scaglia, AHC Research Bldg Mgmt Serv., CS
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612-798-0485; 612-685-2205; scagl001@umn.edu

Gwen Willems, CEHD, P&A
1880 Tatum St., St. Paul, MN 55113
651-646-8854; wille002@umn.edu

William J. Gallagher, Medical School, CS
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Philip M. Voxland, CLA OIT, CS
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Keep current on UMRA news, programs, and discounts with a visit to the association’s new and ever-improving web site: www.umn.edu/umra
