

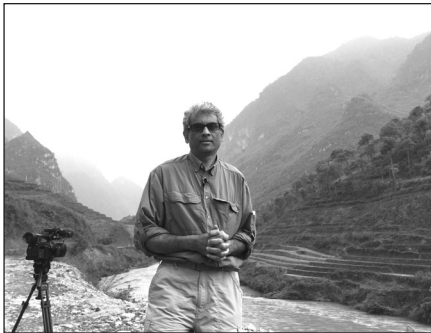
# UMRA NEWSLETTER

A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association

JANUARY 2019

## Award-winning journalist to share reflections on making the foreign less foreign

“How tech is putting the needs of impoverished Kenyans on the map.” “Karachi and Mumbai: A tale of two megacities.” “Health care workers brace for new cholera epidemics in Haiti.” “The race to develop coffee that can survive climate change” (El Salvador).



“Does solar power offer a brighter future for off-the-grid Navajo residents?” “This school in India proves music can change lives.” “Reporter’s notebook: Covering Ebola in Nigeria while navigating corruption.”

These are but a sample of the stories from more than 60 countries that our January speaker has covered during his 30-plus years as a journalist.

To fellow PBS fans, Fred de Sam Lazaro needs no introduction. In addition to reporting for the PBS NewsHour from 1985 to the present, he was a regular contributor and substitute anchor for PBS’s Religion and Ethics News-weekly and has directed films from India and the Democratic Republic of Congo for the acclaimed documentary series, *Wide Angle*.

“Making the foreign less foreign,” the title of de Sam Lazaro’s January 22 talk to UMRA, encapsulates his life’s work. He pursues this theme through his reporting and through his directorship of the Under-Told Stories Project, a partnership between St. Thomas and the NewsHour to report stories largely ignored in the mainstream U.S. media.

The project produces high-quality, multimedia reporting for public and commercial news outlets on a range of topics, many of them highlighting the work of social entrepreneurs who are improving lives around the world. The 20-odd stories that de Sam Lazaro produces annually for the NewsHour are used to engage St. Thomas students in courses, internships, and mentoring opportunities, through which they develop hands-on skills in media production while reflecting critically on under-reported news stories from throughout the world.

De Sam Lazaro is the recipient of two honorary doctorates, numerous journalism awards, and media fellowships from the Kaiser Family Foundation and the University of Michigan. He is a trustee at the College of St. Scholastica, his alma mater; serves on the board of *MinnPost*, a Minnesota-based nonprofit online news service; and has also served on the boards of the Asian American Journalists Association and the Children’s Law Center of Minnesota. A native of Bangalore, India, he lives in St. Paul.

Despite the larger West Wing venue for our January meeting we expect a capacity crowd, so you are encouraged to make your reservations early.

—Chip Peterson, UMRA past president

## UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

JANUARY MEETING  
At A Glance

Tuesday, January 22, 2019

### Location

West Wing Dining Room  
Campus Club, Fourth Floor  
Coffman Memorial Union

### Luncheon + Forum

11:30-1:30 p.m.

*Making the foreign less foreign*

Featured speaker:

Journalist Fred de Sam Lazaro

### Living Well Workshop

1:30-2:30 p.m.

*Meditation and Mindfulness*

Panel discussion

### Menu

Fennel crusted cod served with  
caramelized onions, roasted  
tomatoes, Kalamata olives, and  
roasted potatoes.

*For special dietary needs, please  
request when making your  
reservation.*

### RSVP by Tuesday, January 15

Prepayment of \$20 per person;  
annual prepayers must make  
reservations.

Reserve your places(s) and park-  
ing and pay online, or send your  
check payable to:

Judy Leahy Grimes  
1937 Palace Ave.

St. Paul MN 55105-1728

Or contact Judy before the  
deadline at [jleahy4654@aol.com](mailto:jleahy4654@aol.com).

### Parking

\$7 maximum in University ramps,  
including reserved space in East  
River Road Ramp, with UMRA’s  
discount coupon.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

## UMRA seeks to contribute to the development of the University

We are pleased with the outcome of the University's presidential search process and look forward to welcoming president-elect Joan Gabel to campus in the new year.



Representing the UMRA Board, Frank Cerra and Chip Peterson participated in Gabel's Twin Cities Campus forum in December and were favorably impressed by her background, responses to questions, and communication style. They provided a summary of their positive views on the candidate and the

search process to Board of Regents Chair David MacMillan and Presidential Search Advisory Committee Chair Abdul Omari.

This support for Gabel follows two earlier efforts UMRA made to express our perspectives on the search process and the characteristics needed for the next University leader. In October, about 20 UMRA leaders had a wide-ranging exchange with Omari. And on November 16, UMRA's views were formally published in an op-ed written by Frank Cerra and Bill Donohue [[umra.umn.edu/news/2018supresident](http://umra.umn.edu/news/2018supresident)]. Their letter stated that the University president must understand the complexity and impact of the University, be able to build relationships both across the campuses and with critical stakeholders, and bring energy and vision, but not a political agenda, to the position. While not everyone is pleased that only one candidate agreed to be a public finalist for the position, Gabel's past record and articulation of the leadership challenges she is eager to assume indicate she is well suited for this position.

### Raising UMRA's profile

UMRA's mission statement notes that in addition to supporting the welfare of U of M retirees, the organization seeks "to contribute to the development and welfare of the University and its mission and goals." In addition, our recent retreat reaffirmed the importance of raising UMRA's profile within the University. Decisions on leadership positions clearly are essential to University welfare

and participating in these processes reminds the broader community of the resources we represent. Our members' experience, expertise, and passion can and should contribute to these important decision-making processes.

Our engagement is important. We plan to have the new president join our monthly gathering early in her tenure on campus. In addition, by the time you read this, UMRA representatives will have met with Dan Wolters, chair of the Regents Candidate Advisory Council, to discuss the selection process currently underway for the four open Regents seats. Finally, the search for the University's next executive vice president and provost will commence in the coming year, and UMRA's Board will seek to continue the engagement which we think is vital to both the University and our organization.

—Jerry Rinehart, UMRA president

## Nominations requested

The main responsibility of the immediate past president, besides serving on the UMRA Board of Directors and Executive Committee, is to chair the Nominating Committee for the next year's Board and officers. In discharging this duty, I seek the assistance of the entire membership.

Per UMRA's bylaws, the Nominating Committee consists of two Board members (including the past president) and three UMRA members not on the Board. If you would like to serve on the committee or suggest someone else for our consideration, please let me know as soon as possible. We seek a diverse committee that collectively knows a lot of UMRA members.

Once the committee is appointed, it will seek candidates for president-elect and several at-large Board positions. Here, too, we welcome your suggestions (as well as self-nominations).

Please take this charge seriously. Member involvement is crucial to all aspects of our organization, but especially when it comes to selecting our leadership. I look forward to hearing from many of you.

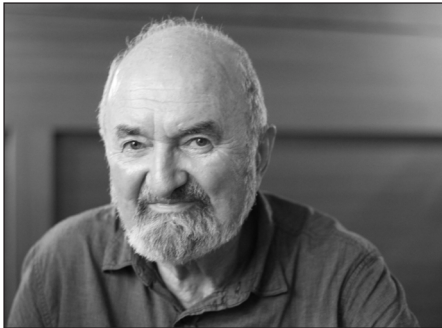
—Chip Peterson, UMRA past president, 651-699-4286 or [c-pete@umn.edu](mailto:c-pete@umn.edu)

## Come at 10:30 before luncheons

Thanks to the Campus Club, the fourth floor Bar and Lounge are available to UMRA members for coffee and conversation before our luncheons. There is no charge and no need to RSVP.

## January workshop: meditation and mindfulness

The January Living Well workshop will be a discussion of meditation and mindfulness. Three UMRA members—Ron Matross, poet Michael Dennis Browne, and another— will lead off by talking about their very different mindfulness paths and practices, including why and how they got started in meditation, why and how they continue with it, and how they deal with obstacles to doing it.



*Michael Dennis Browne*

Then we will do a brief meditation, followed by time for a group discussion of mindfulness practices. Come and share your questions about meditation as well your own experiences with it.

—Ron Matross, chair, Workshop and Cares committees

## November speaker's analysis of the 2018 midterms was a tour de force

Before a packed house at the Campus Club, Kathryn Pearson, a U of M political science professor and frequent commentator on elections, presented a comprehensive review of the November midterms. She analyzed the national House and Senate races as well as the Minnesota statewide and statehouse elections, identifying themes and commenting on the rural-urban divide, increased turnout, and the record number of women candidates.

With dramatic illustration from her slides [[umra.umn.edu/View Past UMRA Forums](http://umra.umn.edu/View_Past_UMRA_Forums)], she noted how the Democrats gained 39 seats in the U.S. House and will control the House beginning in January. Pearson characterized this as a Democratic “Blue Wave” election primarily because of the large number of seats that changed in the House. She discounted the Republican pickup of two seats in the Senate (for a 53–47 advantage) because of the party’s large structural advantage and the location of many of those seats in states the GOP won in 2016.

In Minnesota, the Democrats swept the statewide offices and took back the House by flipping 18 seats. (The state Senate was not up for election.)

Four of the U.S. House seats in Minnesota changed hands, for a net result of no change in the makeup of the Minnesota delegation (5 Democrats, 3 Republicans). Pearson said the seats that did change hands demonstrate the state’s urban-rural divide, and further noted that Minnesota is likely to lose one house seat after the next census.

Women set records in 2018, accounting for 476 U.S. House primary candidates, 53 U.S. Senate candidates, and winning primaries at higher rates than men. Pearson expects more women candidates in the future because research shows women win elections at the same rate as men.

Pearson also presented a tour de force analysis of the midterm electorate, depicting voting behavior by turnout, gender, age, race, education, and region.

Finally, Pearson opined that the 2018 results are unlikely to be a good predictor of what will happen in 2020 because turnout is much heavier in presidential election years. Also, the upcoming election will be greatly influenced by events between now and then, the candidates who are selected, and their interplay with each other.

Pearson’s presentation was enthusiastically received and prompted many questions by UMRA members

—Bill Donohue, chair, Program Committee, and Kristine Mortensen, editor



*Kathryn Pearson talking with Shirley Holt, Jerry Rinehart, and Robert Bowman*

## HELLO, my name is Carol Urness

**Hometown:** I was born in Wilmington, California, but grew up in Lamberton, Minnesota, a small, idyllic, agricultural prairie town.

**When did you become a member of UMRA?** 2002.

**What was your first job?** Babysitting, house cleaning, and ironing. The first “big” job I remember was washing and waxing my great-uncle Sam’s immense Cadillac to earn enough money to go to Vacation Bible School.

**What was your occupation when you retired from FT work?** I was curator and professor at the James Ford Bell Library on the West Bank Campus.

**Where were you in 1968?** I was lucky to make an extensive bird-watching trip to the Soviet Union. I also met colleagues at the Russian Academy of Sciences. A banner year and a great introduction to the fun of travel!

**If you could learn a new skill, what would it be?** I think it would be great to be a mushroom expert.

**Do you have a favorite place on the U of M campus?** The outdoor spaces around Wilson Library. Some wonderful butterflies, birds, and trees are there. I used to see a red fox regularly over the retaining wall nearby.

**What is a fun fact about you we might not know?** When I retired I rented a space in the St. Anthony Shopping Center in Northeast Minneapolis to open Corner Books. We specialize in art, history, nature, local writers, and children’s books with nature subjects.

**What is something you currently enjoy doing with your time?** Writing. Since retirement I’ve published, with two Russians and a Dane, a very scholarly book on Vitus Bering. Also, David Lanegran and I wrote *Minnesota on the Map*, published by the Minnesota Historical Society. And I’m currently finishing a series of nature essays.



Carol Urness and her bookstore bear

## Welcome new members to UMRA

Please give a hearty welcome to 17 new members who have joined UMRA since mid-October. Encourage anyone you know to attend our monthly meetings, greet all newcomers, and help introduce them to other members.

- Lisa Albrecht, College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), School of Social Work, faculty
- Mark Bohnhorst, Office of the General Counsel, Transactional Law Services, P&A
- Jan Boyer-Kellermann, Office of Information Technology, civil service
- William Merritt Bussiere, Extension, Center for Community Vitality, P&A
- Randall Croce, Carlson School of Management, Labor Education Service, P&A
- Daniel A. Feeney, College of Veterinary Medicine, Veterinary Clinical Sciences Department, faculty
- Terry Klosterman, College of Liberal Arts, Department of Psychology, civil service
- Cathy Konat, College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS), Development, senior development officer
- Linda Lorenz, Office of Institutional Research (OIR), civil service
- Barbara Muesing, Board of Regents, administration, P&A
- Joan Patterson, School of Public Health, Division of Epidemiology & Community Health, faculty
- Maria R. Pintado, School of Dentistry, Department of Restorative Sciences, faculty
- Jo Prouty, CFANS, Department of Applied Economics, P&A
- Lisa Rebeck, Parking & Transportation Services, civil service
- Mary Alice Schumacher, Academic Affairs, Provost’s Office, civil service
- S. Murthy Tadavarthy, Medical School, Department of Radiology, faculty
- Ruth Westra, Medical School, Duluth campus, Department of Family Medicine and Biobehavioral Health, faculty

For contact information, please visit [umra.umn.edu/Contact Us/Member Search](http://umra.umn.edu/ContactUs/MemberSearch) (login required)

## November workshop was thoughtful discussion of loss and resiliency

Ted Bowman, who specializes in helping individuals, families, organizations, and communities deal with loss, change, and transition, led the November UMRA Cares Committee workshop. Bowman, who taught family education at the U for many years, addressed issues of loss, change, and depression, and offered suggestions for how one might speak to and perhaps help grieving people.

Possibilities start with making contact and asking a person, “How are you doing?” “Do you want to talk?” “Do you want to talk about ‘up’ stuff or ‘down’ stuff?” In offering help it is important to express condolences but not a good idea to try to talk a person out of their grief, Bowman said. “The loss is forever, the continual presence of an absence.”



*Ron Matross and Ted Bowman*

Citing research, his own extensive practice experience, and an impressive range of literary sources, Bowman talked about the complexities of the grief process, whether triggered by “conspicuous loss” (death, diagnosis, disaster, dismissal, or dementia) or shattered dreams. He emphasized the importance of embracing loss—“if something is unmentionable it is unmanageable”—but acknowledged it is often not simple, because one recurrently encounters new and unanticipated challenges connected to a loss.

Bowman also addressed the special challenges of grieving in close relationships, like couples and families, when people may avoid talking about their losses because they are trying to protect one another. Citing a couple in which one partner had multiple sclerosis, Bowman described how the couple tried to find new ways to connect with each other and to offload some of their sadness without necessarily talking about it.

One overriding message Bowman offered was that people can both honor sadness and find paths to moments of renewal and hope. Loss and change do not go away, but there are things to enjoy and appreciate.

—Paul Rosenblatt, UMRA Cares Committee

## URVC offers a better way to manage your volunteer activities

If you’re looking for a new volunteer activity, or if you’ve already served in a rewarding activity through the University Retiree Volunteers Center (URVC), soon you’ll be able to explore a broad range of opportunities and easily enroll online. Better Impact, URVC’s new volunteer management system, will allow users to explore projects, consider schedules, and sign up online to volunteer.

Users of the Better Impact system will be able to search all the projects currently supported by the URVC or use a filtering option to show only those projects which correspond to their interests. URVC administrative staffers Sally Schakel and Alan Kagan have provided significant input for this exciting transition, by populating the Better Impact site with information about projects seeking volunteers as well as the interest profiles of current URVC volunteers. URVC staff will still be available by phone or email to answer questions and provide other help.

A unique username and secure password will be required to use the Better Impact system, and volunteers will be encouraged to enter or update their interest profiles to indicate the kinds of projects that appeal to them. The volunteer profiles and activity selections provide important guidance to the URVC staff about the kinds of projects to support and promote in the future.

When URVC’s Better Impact rollout is imminent, current URVC volunteers will receive an email with information about how to get started. The rollout is planned for the first quarter of 2019, as soon as user testing is completed.

—John Anderson and Marva Sullivan, URVC

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### *Food for thought*

“It is difficult to make predictions, especially about the future.”

—Niels Bohr, physicist

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## In Remembrance

We report the passing of UMRA members as we learn of these losses to our community. Our condolences to the families and friends of our colleagues.

**Joan (Overson) Mason** died November 29, 2018. She was the surviving spouse of U of M philosophy professor Homer Eugene “Gene” Mason. Joan sang in the St. Olaf choir, the Bach Society of Minnesota, and the choir of St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church in St. Paul, and worked as an elementary school librarian in the Saint Paul Public Schools until her retirement in 1990. Both the Masons were members of UMRA.

**Sidelle Moss** died October 31. She was the surviving spouse of Dr. Jerome Moss, a professor of vocational and technical education. Both were members of UMRA. She was also active in the University of Minnesota Women’s Club and served as its president from 1982 to 1984.

**Peter Reed** died November 27. Originally from Surrey, England, he was recruited to this country by the U.S. Olympic Cross Country Skiing Team and joined the U of M Department of English faculty in 1965. Professor Reed received the Morse-Amoco Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education and served as chair of the English department and associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts. He wrote the first book-length analysis of Kurt Vonnegut’s novels. He is survived by his wife, Margaret (both members of UMRA), and family.

**Phyllis Scholberg** died November 3. She was the surviving spouse of Dr. Henry Scholberg, curator and librarian of the U of M Ames Library of South Asia. Phyllis was a first- and second-grade teacher in St. Paul and suburbs and was active in her union. The Scholbergs traveled broadly and led a SPAN (Student Project for Amity Among Nations) group to India in 1964. Phyllis was also a Global Volunteer to Tonga, Spain, and Jamaica. Both Scholbergs were members of UMRA; Phyllis was also active in the U of M Women’s Club.

**Dale Sorenson** died September 11. Dr. Sorenson spent his career on the faculty of the U of M College of Veterinary Medicine, where he was a leading researcher in large animal carcinoma and served as dean. He also did research at the Brookhaven National Laboratory and, for many years, provided health care to animals at the Como Park Zoo in St. Paul.

—Kathleen O’Brien, UMRA Cares Committee

## Firsthand—experiences with aging

By Ron Anderson

Mention the word “aging” in a group conversation and immediately people want to tell stories of deteriorating health, declining capabilities, and adjusting to loss and limitations. However, aging can also bring improvements in creativity, wisdom, spiritual depth, even greater joy and happiness. This column aims to reveal, firsthand, some of the gains as well as losses that arise from aging.

The UMRA Photo Club has enhanced my life as a retired person in many ways. Several of us started the club in 2010 and its monthly meetings now attract more than 25. Initially I attended sessions to improve my technical talents; now I go mostly to be part of a community and to increase my sense of the beauty around me.

I take most of my photos in nature, as do most of the Photo Club members. Thus, together we develop better understanding of the beauty around us and how it improves our serenity. This growth of aesthetic capacities, I believe, adds to our spiritual depth and joy in life.



*Tibetan man with prayer wheel. Photo by Ron Anderson*

Photography increasingly gives meaning to my life. Over the 13 years of my retirement, the beauty of nature has become more salient. This has changed my priorities for travel; I pick places that will make wonder and awe part of my life. This is the essence of Joseph Heller’s remark that, “When I grow up I want to be a little boy.”

Surely these kinds of experiences illustrate David Borchard’s claim in *The Joy of Retirement* that later life can deliver the feelings you’ve always wanted. Or, as Stan Goldberg noted in *Lessons for the Living*, “Living is not about triumphing over death; it is about embracing it.”

*If you would like to share a firsthand experience related to health and aging, please submit a brief essay to Ron Anderson, UMRA Cares Committee, at [rea@umn.edu](mailto:rea@umn.edu).*

## Social Activities Committee has big plans for 2019

The Social Activities Committee has put together a draft of possible events for January–June 2019. Our planning took into consideration your suggestions from our recent survey, and we hope you will continue to send suggestions for future events. The events for January and February are confirmed.

### Confirmed and proposed events

- January: Armchair Traveler [see [umra.umn.edu/Events/Social Activities](http://umra.umn.edu/Events/Social_Activities) for details]
- February: Gopher Women's Basketball game [reservations are closed]
- March: UROC (Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center) neighborhood forum
- April: museum tour and lunch
- May: annual meeting and celebration
- June: Mississippi River boat tour
- June/July: jazz concert and happy hour, Campus Club
- July/August: campus Equine Center and Bee Lab tours

We'll keep you informed as we confirm or change the agenda.

—Cherie Hamilton, chair, Social Activities Committee

## Wanted: orphan articles and essays

Do you have a pet article you've written or would like to write but haven't found a place for publication? The online *Journal of Opinions, Ideas, and Essays* (JOIE) is soliciting articles for its 2019 issue. JOIE publishes works on a wide range of topics by retired or active University of Minnesota faculty and staff. Accessible through a web search, JOIE's articles have been downloaded by readers in more than 60 countries. The journal is sponsored by UMRA and managed by the University of Minnesota Libraries.

For more information and to browse previously published articles, go to the JOIE website at [lib.umn.edu/publishing/journal-opinions-ideas-and-essays](http://lib.umn.edu/publishing/journal-opinions-ideas-and-essays).

—C. C. "Bud" Clawson, JOIE editor-in-chief

## Professional Development Grants for Retirees—2019 update

Six proposals for the 2019 Professional Development Grants for Retirees (PDGR) were submitted by the December 14 deadline. The number is below our recent average, but the proposals submitted represent a nice cross-section of colleges and departments.

The review process comes next and the approved proposals will be announced in March. The financial support provided by the grants (up to \$5,000 each) is for the period April 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020, and may be used to fund travel, stipends for research assistants, the purchase of books, computer hardware and software, and other relevant costs of scholarship.

The members of the UMRA Grants Committee will conduct the review of the new proposals with an eye on the professional development value of each.

—Dick Poppele, chair, PDGR Committee

## Book Club picks books for spring

The UMRA Book Club will meet on January 18 at 2:00 p.m. at 1666 Coffman. Kathy Cramer will lead the discussion of *The Care and Management of Lies* by Jacqueline Winspear. In February, the club will read *The Radium Girls* by Kate Moore; the discussion will be led by Judy Helgen. Mariah Snyder will lead the discussion of *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover in March. The April discussion of *The Shoemaker's Wife*, by Adriana Trigiani, will be led by Laura Erickson. Herb Scherer will lead the discussion of our May book, *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald. For more information, contact Pat Tollefson at [p-toll@umn.edu](mailto:p-toll@umn.edu).

For a review of the club's November read, *The Nest*, go to [umra.umn.edu/Events/Interest Groups/Book Club](http://umra.umn.edu/Events/Interest_Groups/Book_Club).

## Parking reservations available

When making your reservation for the January luncheon and program, add a reservation for parking to ensure your parking space in the East River Road Ramp. Inform the attendant (on duty between 10 a.m. and noon) when you arrive that you have a reservation. Pay as usual when exiting, using your UMRA discount parking coupon.

# UMRA University of Minnesota Retirees Association

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

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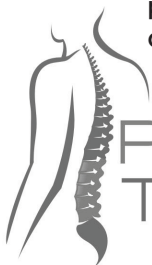
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UMRA's phone: 612-626-4403  
Website: [umra.umn.edu](http://umra.umn.edu)

*Thank you to the Bakken Center for Spirituality & Healing for helping to sponsor UMRA's January newsletter.*

## UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA AND NIH PARTNER TO EXPLORE NON-DRUG THERAPIES FOR BACK PAIN

**Do you have new low back pain?** The PACBACK study is funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and is looking for volunteers. Back pain treatments from medical and chiropractic providers are provided at no charge for eligible individuals.



PACBACK  
Trial

Want to learn more?  
Contact [www.pacback.org](http://www.pacback.org)  
or 612-626-2224



Earl E. Bakken Center for  
SPIRITUALITY & HEALING  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

## Photo Club to meet January 8

Members of the Photo Club will share pictures of houses and discuss camera priority settings—those letters on a wheel at the top of your digital camera—when they meet on Tuesday, January 8, 12:30–2:30 p.m., at the St. Anthony Library. Come at 11:30 for a buffet lunch at the nearby Great Dragon. Newcomers are welcome. Contact Sherilyn Goldsmith May <[gold009@gmail.com](mailto:gold009@gmail.com)> or Craig Swan <[swan@umn.edu](mailto:swan@umn.edu)> for more information.



*This photo Ron Anderson took in Kenya nicely expresses the theme of a recent Photo Club meeting: cozy.*