



NOVEMBER 15 FORUM

NOVEMBER 2022

What happened November 8? Understanding the 2022 midterm elections

What could be more timely than to have Kathryn Pearson as our presenter for the UMRA luncheon forum just one week after the 2022 midterm elections? With U.S. Senate and House races occurring across the country, as well as heated governor and state executive races, there will be a lot to unpack.

Please note the forum will be on Tuesday, November 15, a week earlier than usual, to avoid Thanksgiving week. Reservations and prepayment are due by November 5.

An associate professor in the University of Minnesota Department of Political Science, Pearson has earned a reputation as an UMRA presenter rock star for the illuminating election analyses she's shared with us since her first UMRA presentation in 2008.

Pearson joined the U of M faculty in 2004 and is a distinguished scholar whose research focuses on the United States Congress, congressional elections, political parties, and women in politics. Her research has been published in *The Journal of Politics*, *Perspectives on Politics*, *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, *Political Research Quarterly*, and *Politics & Gender*. Her book titled *Party Discipline in the House of Representatives* was published in 2015 by the University of Michigan Press, and she has a new book in the works on gender and partisanship in the House of Representatives. She is a recipient of the Morse Alumni Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education.



Kathryn Pearson

This year's elections may be the midterms, but these days state and even local elections have become national politics. I don't know about you, but I will be hungry for a clear-eyed view of what happened on November 8 and what it may mean for Minnesota and the U.S.

You can [reserve and pay online](#) at umra.umn.edu > Members Only > Forum Reservations (login required), or email Diane Young at young054@umn.edu if you prefer to pay by check.

Please join me in welcoming Kathryn Pearson at our November forum.

—Jan Morlock, UMRA past president

NOVEMBER 9 WORKSHOP

Neuroplasticity in aging

Neuroplasticity is the ability of the brain, at any age, to rewire itself to function in new ways in situations of new learning, experience, or injury. Janet M. Dubinsky, Ph.D., will join us for UMRA's Living Well Workshop at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, November 9, via Zoom to discuss this remarkable ability of the brain to be flexible, in both

structure and function, to make new connections and adapt to the circumstances of life.

Dubinsky is a well-known neuroscientist and community educator and a professor of neuroscience in the University of Minnesota Medical School Department of Neuroscience.

See **WORKSHOP** on page 3 ...

From the President

We are not alone

The University of Minnesota Retirees Association is not unique. Higher education institutions across the country have retiree organizations, and many of them like to connect with each other. The Big Ten has an [association of retiree organizations](#), and the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education ([AROHE](#)) has 121 member organizations. These groups



Ron Matross

hold webinars and meetings to share ideas and best practices.

UMRA is active in both groups. UMRA member Cherie Hamilton is an AROHE Board member and has been nominated for president. The Big Ten group revived its annual in-person conference this past summer at Northwestern, and UMRA Past President Jan

Morlock, Secretary Julie Sweitzer, and News Editor Kris Mortensen attended. In 2026, Minnesota will host the conference, and we are already beginning to plan and save for it. (Let us know if you'd like to help with that planning!)

It's fun and instructive to compare notes with the other associations. When we do so, we generally find a convergence in mission (education, service, and socializing) but many differences in organization and specific programs. Some are like us, open to all retirees

from the school, while others are emeriti organizations, restricted to faculty. Connections with the university's administration vary. At some schools like the University of Southern California, the retirees' association is part of a [funded retiree center](#), which also provides pre-retirement planning resources. Some associations receive technical and administrative support from their university administrations or foundations and have paid executive directors or other staff. Many, though, are like us in that they are independent organizations, primarily funded by dues and staffed by volunteers.

It's in the realm of programming that we find the most diversity. Every association made a pivot to virtual programming during the pandemic shutdown, and now everyone is trying to figure out their return to in-person programming, while keeping some virtual events. Our signature all-member event for many years has been the luncheon forum with a formal lunch followed by a guest speaker. Many schools have similar luncheons, but other places, like [UW-Madison](#), have breakfasts; or, like [Michigan State](#), offer afternoon coffees.

So, the question for this month is, should we be thinking about changes or alternatives to our monthly luncheon forums?

—Ron Matross, UMRA president, r-matr@umn.edu

PDGR

It's not too late to apply

UMRA's Professional Development Grants for Retirees (PDGR) program is an annual competition with applications accepted October 1 to December 31. These grants support projects related to retirees' research, instructional history, or new scholarly and creative interests. Previous grants have covered topics such as art, statistics, social equity, science, and medicine.

Funding of up to \$5,000 per grant is available. Retirees from all five campuses within the U of M System are eligible whether they are members of UMRA or not. You can find more information about the PDGR program, including the instructions for applying for 2023 funding,

at umra.umn.edu > [Serving You](#) > [Grants for Retirees](#). Please consider making an application.

If you would like to make a financial contribution to the program, you can also do that online. Go to crowdfund.umn.edu and search for "professional development." Or, for information about making a tax-efficient gift from an IRA if you are age 70½ or older, contact Lynn Praska, senior planned giving officer, U of M Foundation, at lpraska@umn.edu or 612-624-4158.

—John Bantle, M.D., PDGR Committee chair, bantl001@umn.edu.

Welcome new members

Please give a hearty welcome to 10 new members who joined UMRA in September 2022. For contact information, visit the Member Login page at umra.umn.edu (log in required).

Joan Askevold, Boynton Health Service, admissions interviewer

Henry Buchwald, Medical School, Department of Surgery, emeritus professor of surgery and biomedical engineering

Deborah R. Dillon, College of Education and Human Development, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, senior associate dean

Neal Gale, University Stores, delivery service driver

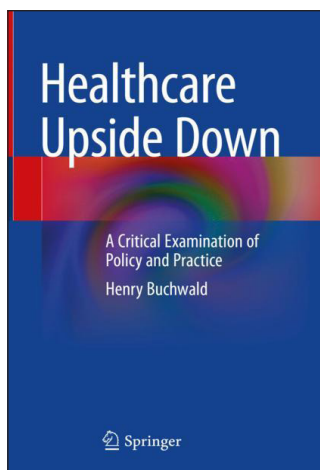
Cheryl Johnson (and **Terry L. Johnson**), Office of Student Finance, Academic Support Resources

Gary R. Johnson, College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences, Department of Forest Resources, professor emeritus

Aileen Lyle, College of Science and Engineering, School of Mathematics, actuarial lecturer and advisor

Mary Moga, University Honors Program, senior academic advisor

Janice Parrow, College of Veterinary Medicine, Veterinary Medical Center, principal veterinary technician



New member Henry Buchwald, M.D., Ph.D., assumed emeritus status in July but maintains activity in several academic pursuits, along with his interest in the changes in healthcare and its delivery he experienced and witnessed over the past 60 years. His book, *Healthcare Upside Down: A Critical Examination of Policy and Practice*, has recently been published by Springer.

... **WORKSHOP** from page 1.

And, in the spirit of learning new things, she will use ChimeIn—a web-based tool for collecting comments during a webinar—to interact with us during the program. Instructions and the link for using ChimeIn (optional, not required) will be emailed in advance to everyone who registers for the webinar.



Janet Dubinsky

In addition to her position in the Medical School, Dubinsky is a leader in the Graduate Program in Neuroscience (GPN), teaches undergraduate and graduate neuroscience, and is the founder of the BrainU professional development program. She has led and is currently a member of the GPN Public Engagement Committee, which runs Brain Awareness Week and the high school neuroscience competition Minnesota Brain Bee.

Dubinsky is a major contributor to knowledge generation in the metabolism and physiology of the brain, with particular attention to metabolic abnormalities present in Huntington's Disease. She is also internationally known for her research on the impact of neuroscience knowledge on teaching.

At the U of M, her work and teaching have been recognized with the Outstanding Contributions to Postbaccalaureate, Graduate, and Professional Education Award in 2011, and the CBS Stanley Dagle-Samuel Kirkwood Undergraduate Education Award in 2020–21.

In her teaching, Dubinsky helps students at all levels achieve and understand neuroplasticity. This workshop will be a unique opportunity for us to benefit from her great knowledge and gifts as an educator.

[Please register](#) and join us on Wednesday, November 9, for what is certain to be a fascinating, enlightening, and engaging presentation.

—Frank Cerra, M.D., UMRA past president

Want to try ChimeIn before the webinar? Go to <https://chimein2.cla.umn.edu/join/741704> and respond to the open question(s).

HELLO, my name is Chip Peterson

Hometown: St. Paul. I was a third-generation East Sider and the product of what was then considered something of a mixed marriage (Swedish dad, Norwegian mom).

When did you become a member of UMRA?

Immediately upon retiring in January 2012.

What was your very first job? Your best job? First: I began snow-shoveling work with neighbors when I was still in grade school; I continued until I was well into college. Best: Peace Corps volunteer in Venezuela.

What was your occupation when you retired from full-time work? Study abroad administrator in the U of M Learning Abroad Center.

Where were you in 1972 when you learned of the Watergate break-in? St. Paul. I recall more vividly, though, Nixon's ultimate downfall. My wife, Rosa María, and I were doing research in Pasto, Colombia. In that pre-internet world, we largely depended on one local Peace Corps volunteer's subscription to *Time* magazine for updates. We could scarcely bear the waiting until the next issue arrived with the latest news on the collapsing house of cards in Washington.

Describe an unforgettable event in your life: Early in my study abroad career, I was aboard a plane that crashed in Spain, taking some 50 lives. The photos I snapped after escaping from the burning wreckage subsequently appeared in *Newsweek*, *Paris Match*, *Maclean's*, *Der Spiegel*, the inaugural issue of *USA Today*, and many other publications. Proceeds from the photo sales generated the down payment on the St. Paul house where Rosa María and I still live.

Do you have a favorite place on the U of M campus? Cooke Hall, in whose pool I spent some 20 hours a week working out during the U of M swimming team's season in my undergraduate years.

What is something you currently enjoy doing with your time? Travel, photography (the UMRA Photo Club is a great source of joy), and providing child care for our three grandchildren.

What is a fun fact about you we might not know? Rosa María and I spent our honeymoon hitchhiking from Mexico to Panama. Altogether in my younger days, I hitchhiked some 100,000 miles, including through every mainland country in the Americas.



Chip Peterson with his wife, Rosa María de la Cueva Peterson, in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Gopher Women's Basketball on November 20—join the fun!

UMRA has reserved a block of 30 tickets for the [Gopher Women's Basketball](#) game against Presbyterian College at Williams Arena in Minneapolis on Sunday afternoon, November 20.

It will be a warm-up for the Big Ten Conference season, which starts in December. UMRA has obtained great seats (Section 115) for the bargain price of \$6 each. It should be a fun time to get together and enjoy cheering the Gopher women.

It will also be a time to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Title IX—the federal civil rights law that changed women's access to sports. Minnesota has played in the Big Ten since it began sponsoring women's basketball in 1982.

To order tickets for the Minnesota vs. Presbyterian College game, send me an email saying how many you want. I can give them to you and you can pay me at UMRA's November 15 luncheon, or we can settle up at the game.

But hurry. The purchase deadline is November 4. After that, unsold tickets will be released to the public.

—Will Craig, wrcraig@umn.edu

Visit z.umn.edu/gopher50 to see photos and stories of the barrier-breaking Gopher athletes whose "firsts" paved the way for future generations of women and girls.

VOLUNTEER CENTER

International Institute welcomes retiree volunteers

Jane Graupman's September UMRA Forum presentation on the International Institute of Minnesota concluded with an enthusiastic call for volunteers. The Institute, as Executive Director Graupman described, provides critical support services for immigrants and refugees. Importantly, Graupman stated that retirees have long played a significant role assisting in these areas.

In following up with her comment, "We love retirees ..." leaders of the University Retirees Volunteer Center (URVC) met with the Institute's immigration services director, Corleen Smith, and identified an important area of need to serve as the initial focus for UMRA and URVC volunteers: helping refugees and asylum seekers complete the complicated paperwork required for visa applications and becoming U.S. citizens.



Cathrine Wambach, pictured left, shared a good laugh with Craig and Janet Swan during UMRA's September meeting at the Campus Club in Minneapolis. Photo: Ginny Hanson

Because this opportunity involves an initial group session for volunteers to review questions and suggestions regarding how best to work with clients on the paperwork, this activity lends itself to our volunteers working together—a goal many have mentioned regarding their interest in volunteering. Full descriptions of the work, the times for the group sessions, client assistance times, and the preferred backgrounds and qualifications for volunteers are being developed. Check urvc.umn.edu for updates.

—Jerry Rinehart, URVC Management Committee chair, and Deanne Magnusson, URVC vice-chair and project director

November Luncheon and Forum

Tuesday, November 15

Campus Club, Fourth Floor
Coffman Memorial Union

10:45–11 a.m. Check in
11:15 a.m. Buffet lunch

Featured speaker

Kathryn Pearson, associate professor
U of M College of Liberal Arts
Department of Political Science

Menu

Wild Pacific salmon crusted with sesame seeds,
pan seared and drizzled with sesame
ginger tamari sauce. (GF, DF)
Served with roasted sweet potatoes,
a seasonal vegetable, and bread.

Vegetarian bowl option.

Reservations due by November 5

Prepayment of \$30 per person.

[Reserve and pay online](#) or email
Diane Young at young054@umn.edu.

Cancellations and refunds will be honored until
November 5. We are not able to accommodate
reservations on the day of the event.

Parking

For a discounted rate of \$1 per hour
in University parking facilities, use the
QR code on the back of your UMRA
membership card when exiting.
Credit cards only.

Food for thought

“The trouble with political jokes is that
they very often get elected.”

—Charlie Brown

Hiking Club transitions to winter

November is when the UMRA Hiking Club switches to its one-hike-per-month winter schedule. Yep, we keep hiking all winter long! With shortened daylight hours and long winter nights, it's tempting to stay indoors. But with the right clothing (bring warm clothes) and ice grippers on our boots, hiking—as well as cross country skiing and snowshoeing—is a great way to stay connected to friends and keep our activity level going during the darkest months. This is a chance for you to feel like a kid again with rosy cheeks and cozy mittens!

Please join us at 9:30 a.m. on the first Mondays from November through March to discover how lovely Minnesota winters really are! Find the schedule and sign up for hikes (required) on the [Hiking Club page](#) at umra.umn.edu.

Hike leaders are still needed for December, January, and March.

—Bev Moe, UMRA Hiking Club



Members of the UMRA Hiking Club enjoyed a beautiful fall day while exploring the 620-acre conservation area in the city of North Oaks, north of St. Paul, and learning about the James J. Hill family's commitment to preserving the natural environment. Photo: Jane Doyle

'Signs' is the theme for November Photo Club meeting

The next meeting of the UMRA Photo Club will be in person starting at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 8, in the meeting room of the St. Anthony Library in the St. Anthony Shopping Center at New Brighton and St. Anthony Boulevards.

For those interested in having lunch together first, meet at the Great Dragon Restaurant across the shopping center parking lot at 11:30 a.m.

The Photo Club welcomes all UMRA members with an interest in photography.

Masks are not required but are welcomed. Please stay home if you are sick or have been recently exposed to COVID-19. We expect people will be fully vaccinated with one or more boosters, but we will not be checking vaccination cards. For November, the theme is "Signs." (For December 13, the theme will be "Bridges.")

Contact Craig Swan at swan@umn.edu for more information, including guidelines for sharing pictures at the meeting. Newcomers are welcome!

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

Northrop and U of M Bookstores

If you haven't been to a concert or play at Northrop since renovations were completed in 2014, you are in for a treat. It is a fantastic theater, and UMRA members get a \$5 discount on qualifying Northrop 2022–23 Season single tickets! Northrop also offers a 15 percent discount when ordering tickets to three or more qualifying events in the "Choose Your Own Package." Go to northrop.umn.edu to get your tickets now.

University Bookstores in Coffman Memorial Union is back to its bustling, pre-pandemic atmosphere with appealing new Gopher wear and lots of other cool things for U of M retirees and alumni. With your UMRA membership, you will receive a 20 percent discount on apparel, insignia gift items, general books, and supplies. The typical exclusions apply (textbooks, computers, graduation items, etc.). Shop in person or online at bookstores.umn.edu to get the latest Gopher gear and show your support for our teams!

—Bev Moe, UMRA discount manager



Book Club meeting November 18

Stephanie Daily will lead the discussion of *West with Giraffes* by Lynda Rutledge when the UMRA Book Club meets via Zoom at 2 p.m. on Friday, November 18. Email Pat Tollefson at p-toll@umn.edu for more information, including suggestions for starting a new book club. To read a summary of the group's discussion of their October selection, *This Tender Land*, go to umra.umn.edu and search for "Book notes."

Fourth Friday Book Club meeting December 2

Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End by Atul Gawande is the selection for the next meeting of UMRA's Fourth Friday Book Club, which will be held via Zoom from 2 to 3:30 p.m. on Friday, December 2, to avoid the Thanksgiving holiday weekend at the end of November.

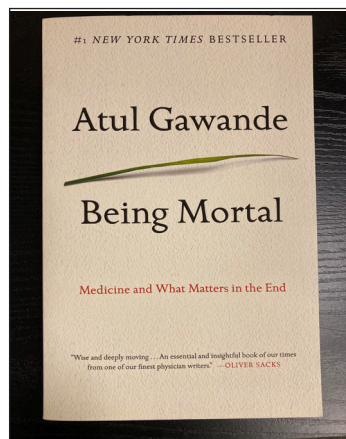
Gawande is an American surgeon, writer, and public health researcher. He practices general and endocrine surgery at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and is a professor in the Harvard Medical School Department of Health Policy and Management.

Modern medicine has transformed the risks of birth, injury, and infectious disease from harrowing to manageable. But when it comes to the inescapable realities of aging, what medicine can do often runs counter to what it should do.

In numerous examples of research and stories of his patients and his own family, *Being Mortal* catalogues the issues of aging and death, what Gawande cites as "... an era in which the relationship between patient and doctor is increasingly miscast in retail terms."

In the words of the late Oliver Sacks, "*Being Mortal* is not only wise and deeply moving, it is an essential and insightful book for our times, as one would expect from Atul Gawande, one of our finest physician writers."

Contact Margaret Catambay at m-cata@umn.edu or Dorothy Marden at marden@umn.edu for information about how to join the meeting on Friday, December 2. Newcomers are welcome.



In remembrance

As we learn of the passing of UMRA members and other University standouts, we send a message of condolence to their families. Please join me in remembering our colleagues.

Marjorie Jessen died July 26. Born in 1927, she is survived by her husband, Carl Jessen, a professor emeritus in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences.

Jane Starr died August 29. Born in 1929, she served on the Minneapolis School Board for eight years, as well as on the Minneapolis City Planning Commission. Active for 60 years in the U of M Women's Club, she was its chair in 2007–08. She was also a founding organizer of Southeast Seniors in Minneapolis (a neighborhood nurse program) and an involved member of UMRA. Her husband, Clark Starr, a professor of communication disorders, died in 1999.

Roger Stuewer died July 29. Born in 1934, he earned his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and then joined the U of M faculty. The founding director of our History of Science and Technology program, he retired in 2000 as a professor emeritus in the Department of Physics and Astronomy.

—Mary E. Knatterud, UMRA Cares Committee

UMRA Cares supports members

For assistance and support in the event of the death or serious illness of an UMRA member or family member, please email umracares@umn.edu or call 612-626-4403 and leave a message for UMRA Cares.

UMRA Cares Committee 2022-23

Jeanne Markell, chair
Nancy Helmich
Mary Knatterud
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Kathleen O'Brien

Thank you to the University of Minnesota Foundation for sponsoring UMRA's November newsletter and forum.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RETIREES ASSOCIATION

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

Upcoming events via Zoom, November

- 7 Financial & Legal Issues Group: Estate Planning
- 9 Living Well Workshop
- 18 Book Club I

December

- 2 Fourth Friday Book Club
- 7 Family History Interest Group
- 14 F&L Issues Group: Tax Update

Share upcoming events any time by emailing the UMRA webmaster at leegi001@umn.edu. Include event title, date, time, a brief description, and contact information.



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