

TOOL KIT FOR UMRA CARES COMMITTEE

Submitted by chair, Jeanne Markell, August 2024

2023-24 Committee Members & Liaisons:

Jeanne Markell: chair, delegator, and donation oversight
Nancy Helmich: author, condolence - Twin Cities campus
Kathleen O'Brien: author, condolence - coordinate campuses, ROCs, UM Extension
Virgil Larson: liaison, membership database manager
Kris Mortensen: liaison, UMRA newsletter editor
Kristy Frost- Griep liaison, UMRA treasurer
Jessa Voloun: liaison, Office of Human Resources
Lynn Praska: liaison, UMN Foundation
Julie Wallace: liaison, UMRA Archivist

Committee Mission/Activity:

This is a three person committee that partners with a number of "liaisons" to carry out its mission: 1) Collect death information on retirees; 2) send condolences to families; and in the case of member deaths, 3) inform our members of deaths via the UMRA newsletter's *In Remembrance* column and 4) make donations in the deceased member's honor to the memorial of their choosing. It has been effective and efficient for this committee to operate mostly by phone and email since many of the tasks are routine. Members devote considerable time to this work, which demands attention throughout the calendar year. At the close of the fiscal year the group assesses accomplishments and directions for the coming year.

Workflow (continuous for all 12 months):

- We gather and share information about deaths of all U of MN retirees, send condolences (Kathy or Nancy) to families when we have contact information. In the case of UMRA member deaths, we inform members via the UMRA newsletter. For members, a \$30 UMRA donation goes to the named memorial cause.
- Jeanne coordinates this effort as deaths become known to her via OHR, published obituaries or word-of-mouth. She checks UMRA member status with Virgil and sends assignments to Kathy and Nancy for sending condolence cards. Expenses for cards and postage are covered by UMRA treasury.
- Jeanne sends \$30 memorial checks from UMRA when a member dies. Donations go to family's preference and if none is identified the contribution goes to the Professional Development Grants for Retirees (PDGR) program, UMF fund # 4867. Every few months Jeanne submits copies of donation letters and checks to the treasurer for reimbursement.
- There are four issues of the UMRA newsletter: Sept-Oct, Nov-Jan- Feb, March-April, & May; Jeanne submits to Kris Mortensen the list of names and relevant data for the deaths of retirees who have been UMRA members at some point in their retirement. Names are not listed unless there is a published obituary or with permission of family members.
- Each summer the chair submits an annual report of the committee year activities and also a report to the UMRA archivist. Copies of these reports for 2023-24 are attached below.

UMRA Cares Committee Annual Report: July 1, 2023- June 30, 2024

*Submitted August 11, 2024 by Jeanne Markell, chair
(jeannemarkel@gmail.com)*

Committee Charge: Using reports from the Office of Human Resources (OHR), published notices, and surviving next of kin, this committee acknowledges deaths of all University retirees with personalized messages to family members. If deceased were UMRA members, we inform our membership via the newsletter and make a \$30 donation to the family's suggested memorial. If none is named the donation goes to the Professional Development Grants for Retirees (PDGR) program, UMF fund #4867. The committee's original charge included a "care guides" function to support members with serious illness, but that role is now minimal.

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Protocol

- We intake data on retiree/member deaths to the best of our limitations, working to assure accuracy and respect privacy. OHR's cooperation is greatly valued, however these lists include only retirees whose benefactors reach out about University death benefits. Our goal is to acknowledge as many retiree deaths as possible. Thus, our committee efforts include checking for obituaries online, contact with colleges/ departments and tapping networks of colleagues who hear about retiree deaths. **All retiree deaths** discovered are acknowledged by the committee after verification, whether UMRA members or not. Jeanne sends the list to Nancy & Kathleen. If a contact address is available they write cards expressing, on behalf of UMRA, condolence and appreciation for the person's career contributions. Feedback about this committee practice is very positive. In many cases family members send notes of appreciation for UMRA's efforts to reach out in time of loss. **UMRA members** who are deceased trigger additional committee effort. In addition to sending condolences cards:

1. We inform our membership of the passing of all UMRA retirees /member spouses via the *In Remembrance* column of our quarterly newsletter. Jeanne compiles a list of deceased members with relevant data and submits that to newsletter editor Kris Mortenson by deadline for the newsletter. We identify deceased UMRA members by department and the year they joined UMRA, making a deliberate attempt to honor everyone in the list equally. No titles, no degree abbreviations after names. However, we also include (in the PDF version of the online newsletter) links to published obits. Names are only listed in this column when we have either an official public notice of death or if permission is granted to us by next of kin. This practice grew out of several instances where family members requested privacy about their loved ones' deaths.

2. Jeanne mails a \$30 designated donation in memory of the deceased URMA member and asks those sources to notify families of the gift. Frequently families express appreciation for UMRA's recognition of their loved ones.

3. Because the *In Remembrance* listings are brief, and in a spirit of further honoring contributions of retirees, this year our committee agreed to invite our members to submit personal statements of tribute to the UMRA-sponsored ejournal, the *Journal of Opinions, Ideas and Essays*. The contact for this is JOIE editor Kris Bettin.

Committee activity: 07/01/23- 6/30/24

- URMA sent condolence cards in memory of 53 retirees; 20 were members of URMA (*the list is attached as addendum for the UMRA archives*)
- Notice of member deaths appeared in the *In Remembrance* column of our newsletter
- Of the memorial donations, 9 were made to the U Foundation for our *UMRA Research Grants Program, U of M Foundation fund # 4867*
- Most committee business was accomplished by meeting virtually via phone/email/texts.
- In addition to task completion the committee (and helpful collaborators) regularly interacted to strengthen our efforts. This included ways to work more efficiently and effectively, improve accuracy and to be mindful of the meaningful work which involves loss and grief. It is the committee's intention to strike a balance of mission, timeliness and respect for family wishes as we carry out this work. We will continue to assess and modify.
- Our ongoing challenge is to know when there are retiree deaths, but we do what we can.

2023-24 Expenses

Expenses (donations, cards, postage) are reimbursed by the UMRA treasurer with appropriate receipts provided. Sometimes committee members absorb incidental out-of-pocket costs (computer supplies, postage, etc). Reports from UMRA treasurer Kristy Frost-Griep indicate these committee expenditures from 7/1/23 to 6/30/24:

- \$55 for condolence cards
- \$46 for condolence cards and postage
- \$600 for memorial donations

Total FY24 Cares Committee expenditures: \$701.00

UMRA Cares Committee 2023-24 Report to Archives

The Following Retiree Deaths were acknowledged by the UMRA Cares Committee in Fiscal year 2023-24.

20 UMRA MEMBERS

Memorials were sent as noted

- **Thomas Clayton**, d. August 9, 2023. Department of English. Joined UMRA in 2015. *Donation to Episcopal Homes Foundation,*
- **Sally Jorgensen**, d. August 28, 2023. Dept of Biochemistry. Joined UMRA in 2005. *Donation to U of MN Cancer Foundation*
- **Ronald Phillips**, d. August 25, 2023. Dept of Agronomy & Plant Genetics. Joined UMRA in 2010. *Donation to Project Ag-Grad*
- **Ella Strand**, d. September 18, 2023. Administration, UMC. Joined UMRA in 1999. *Donation to U Foundation Fund #4867*
- **Willard Miller Jr.**, d. October 29, 2023. College of Science & Engineering. Joined UMRA in 2010. *Donation to U of MN Math Department.*
- **Rene Knutson**, d. October 26, 2023. Medical School. Joined UMRA in 2021. *Donation to U Foundation Fund #4867*
- **Dorothy Bohn**, d. May 6, 2023. Walter Library. Joined UMRA in 1994. *Donation to U Foundation Fund #4867*
- **Virginia Craig**, d. December 25, 2023. Spouse of retiree Will Craig. Joined UMRA in 2009. *Donation to Minneapolis AAUW*
- **Lynette Marten**, d. December 1, 2023. U of MN Extension Communications. Joined UMRA in 1997. *Donation to U Foundation- Gordan & Lynette Marten Fellowship*
- **Frank Wood**, d. December 11, 2023. Department of Education & Human Development. Joined UMRA in 1995. *Donation to U Foundation Fund #4867*
- **Thomas McGowan**, d. January 10, 2024. MN Supercomputing Institute. Joined UMRA in 2020. *Donation to U Foundation Fund #4867*
- **Lester Block**, d. June 24, 2024. School of Public Health. Joined UMRA in 2007. *Donation to MN Public Radio*
- **Marvin Cook**, d. January 31, 2024. Department of Electrical Engineering. Joined UMRA in 1997. *Donation to Veterans of Foreign Wars*

- **John Dahler**, d. January 22, 2024. Dept of Chemistry. Joined UMRA in 2001. *Donation to U Foundation Fund #4867*
- **Robert Dykstra**, d. February 2, 2024. Dept of Educational Psychology. Joined UMRA in 2003. *Donation to UW River Falls Foundation*
- **Jean Forsberg**, d. November 22, 2023. Department of Psychology. Joined UMRA in 2022. *Donation to U Foundation Fund #4867*
- **Kevina Muunich**, d. February 28, 2024. Spouse of Lee Munnich, Humphrey School. Joined UMRA in 2021. *Donation to Mothers' Love Foundation*
- **Gloria Williams**, d. February 17, 2024. Dept of Design, Housing & Apparel. Joined UMRA in 2009. *Donation to U Foundation Fund #4867*
- **Louis Janus**, d. April 15, 2024. Spouse of Law School retiree Suzanne Thorpe. Both joined UMRA in 2013. *Donation to 2Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies.*
- **William Flanigan**, d. March 19, 2024. Dept of Political Science. Joined UMRA in 2009. *Donation to U Foundation Fund #4867*

33 NON-UMRA MEMBERS

- Joseph Di Slavo, d. August 19, 2023. Department Physiology, UMD.
- Harley Hanke, d. September 18, 2023. U of M West Central Experiment Station
- Mike Liepold, d. September 18, 2023. U of MN Extension, Le Seur County
- Richard Gjertson, d. July 27, 2023. U of M Landscape Arboretum
- Danil Gifford, d. April 18, 2023. Law School
- Sang Slage, d. August 18, 2023. Housing Administration
- Jayne Hacker, d. August 29, 2023. Humanities Administration
- Terry Shannon, d. September 26, 2023. UMD Dept of Education
- James Kangas, d. September 11, 2023. UMD Custodial
- Donald Connelly, d. September 20, 2023. Laboratory of Medical Pathology
- Victor Cox, d. October 9, 2023. Veterinary Biological Sciences
- Judith Kashton, d. November 29, 2023. Department of Psychiatry
- Pamela Wilson, d. October 10, 2023. Mechanical Engineering
- Theodore (Ted) Labuza, d. December 04, 2023. Dept of Food, Science & Nutrition
- Michael Mech, d. December 03, 2023. Medical School
- Richard Roher, d. March 18, 2023. University Libraries
- Bernard Bachrach, d. July 14, 2023. Dept of Medieval History.
- Max Madsen, d. November 2, 2023. Accounting Inventory Services
- Otto Lee, d. December 30, 2023. U of MN Extension/ Lake of the Woods county.
- Harlan Johnsrud, d. December 5, 2023. U of MN Extension/Mower county.
- Jack Ferebee, d. December 15, 2023. Parking Services
- Karen Brademeyer, d. November 25, 2023. School of Public Health
- Russell Menard, d. November 16, 2023. Dept of History
- Marhur Kannan, d. January 4, 2024. Veterinary Biomedical Science
- John Boradhurst, d. October 17, 2023; Dept of Physics & Astronomy
- Erven Skaar, d. January 22, 2024. U of MN Extension/Isanti County.
- George Rehm, d. January 17, 2024. Extension Specialist, Soil, Water, Climate
- Lois Norby, d. June 24, 2023. U of M Business Office
- Claudette Blaisdell, d. January 21, 2024. Office of Human Resources
- Dennis Seefeldt, d. May 12, 2024. U of MN Extension District Administration
- Richard Bellefy, d. May 9, 2024. UMD NRRI Administration.
- Alan Hooper, d. June 22, 2024. Dept of Zoology
- Karl Bethke, d. May 19, 2024, Art Department

Report submitted by Jeanne Markell, CARES Committee Chair, August 2024

