UMRA Members

Looking for ways to serve fellow retirees - join an UMRA Committee

UMRA has three standing committees and one ad-hoc committee. All of the committees will benefit from having additional members who bring their knowledge and expertise to the issues dealt with by committee members.

The standing committees are: Benefits and Pension Committee, Communications Committee, and Membership Committee. The ad-hoc committee is the Committee on Exploring the Feasibility of a Retiree Centre.

The Benefits and Pension Committee looks at the benefit and pension programs of the University from the perspective of those who have retired and are eligible for the benefits and pensions provided by the University. Retirees with interest and expertise in such matters are invited to join this committee. The chair is Frits Stevens. He can be reached at frits_stevens@umanitoba.ca.

The Communications Committee is responsible for maintaining the website, preparing The UMRA News and other communications to members, and sending communications electronically or otherwise to members. The Committee is currently looking for members who can assist in the performance of all three functions. The chair is John Mundie. He can be reached at mundie@ms.umanitoba.ca.

The Membership Committee looks after recruiting and retaining members, maintenance of the membership list, establishing of fees, and the development and delivery of programs which are specifically of benefit to our members. The chair is Diane Biehl. Her e-mail address is dbiehl@mts.net.

With the announcement of the University of Manitoba that it has purchased the Southwood Golf Course, it was decided that the ad-hoc Committee on Exploring the Feasibility of a Retiree Centre should be reactivated. Two of the members of the original committee have agreed to continue to serve and three others have expressed an interest in joining. We are looking for additional members. If you are interested, please contact Lois Brockman at 269-6899. There is a need for new members to serve on this Committee.

Changes in your address, etc.

As is normal, retirees do change their addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses during their retirement. Several times each year, those who have made changes have sent notice of such to UMRA, often by e-mail. While UMRA has passed this information on to the Staff Benefits Office, technically, it is not appropriate for us to do so. Therefore, for those retired members who are receiving monthly pension payments from the University of Manitoba, notification regarding change of address and/or banking information should also be sent directly to the Staff Benefits Office so that their records can be appropriately updated. This is necessary for auditing purposes and accuracy, as well as to meet FIPPA (Privacy) regulations. So please contact the Staff Benefits Office at (204) 474-7428 or e-mail Staff Benefits Office, Room 180, Extended Services Complex, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB, R3T 2N2.

One Thing That Is Predictable - the President’s Reception

If this sounds like a repeat of our introduction to the President’s Reception in April, you are right. Throughout the summer months we continued to experience extremes in the weather with heavy rains and cool temperatures during the early part of the summer followed by hot and dry weather, mixed in with severe winds and thunderstorms. And it wasn’t only the prairies which experienced this phenomenon—it happened throughout the world. So it is nice to know that while you cannot count on the weather, you can count on the President’s Reception for Retirees being held as usual. It is on Saturday, October 20, 2007, in Marshall McLuhan Hall, Room 204, University Centre, starting at 2:00 p.m.

Global Health – A Role for Manitoba

We all are very much aware of the health pandemics people around the world face, such as HIV and more recently SARS. Fortunately, within the Province of Manitoba, there is a group of professionals who have first-hand knowledge and expertise in managing pandemics. Many of them reside in the Department of Medical Microbiology at our University. They gained this experience through their work in combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, where 6,500 people die every day and new orphans are created every 14 seconds.

Our guest speaker, Dr. Allan Ronald, has been a leader in this fight to eradicate AIDS in Africa. Based on his experiences, he will share with us what is required to mobilize awareness of pandemics and to provide the health care and infrastructures in order to achieve the desired outcomes with compassion and empathy.

Recently retired, Dr. Ronald has had a distinguished career in medicine, science, administration, and education. In 1980, before work in North America were aware of HIV/AIDS, he was instrumental in establishing the University of Manitoba/University of Nairobi World Health Organization Research and Training Program in Sexually Transmitted Diseases as a founding member. This Program has been called the most important research site in the developing world.

University of Manitoba Retirees Association (UMRA) – Annual General Meeting

The fourth AGM of UMRA will take place immediately prior to the President’s Reception in Rooms 205/207 University Centre, starting at 12:30 p.m. These rooms are just across from Marshall McLuhan Hall.

At the AGM, there will be the election of members to the Executive to fill vacant positions, reports by the Treasurer and UMRA committees, and matters of interest to all retirees. Even though only active members of UMRA can vote on the election of members and other motions, all attendees are encouraged to fully participate in the discussions at the AGM.

Parking for Reception and Annual General Meeting

Parking for the President’s Reception and AGM is available in Parking Lot A (between St. John’s College and the Basic Science Complex) and in Parking Lot P (behind the Education Building). Parking is also available in the Parkade behind University Centre (parking fee required).

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President’s Reception

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Following Dr. Ronald’s presentation, Dr. Emöke Szathmáry, President and Vice-Chancellor will bring us up to date on happenings at the University. Then there will be time to meet and talk with friends at a reception in the Hall.

Remember that your spouse/partner is most welcome to come to the reception. Please also invite those survivors of retirees to the Reception. Please also RSVP by calling Linda Lassman, 474-9124, or e-mailing her at linda.lassman@umanitoba.ca.

Wanting to learn some basic computing skills?

Are you one of those retirees who would like to send e-mail messages to your children or grandchildren who have computers? Or have you wanted to know how to find that special recipe or other information from the Internet? If you are one of those who has these desires (and a number of members have already expressed them), UMRA has arranged for the offering of a workshop on basic computing skills. This will include an introduction on using e-mail, the Internet, and some basic elements of the Windows operating system. Individualized instruction will be available with the opportunity to try out the procedures learned.

The course will be offered to members at no charge on Saturday, November 24th, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in Room 335, University Centre, Fort Garry Campus. Free parking is available at the places specified for the President’s Reception. If you are interested, please RSVP by phoning 474-4175 by November 9th. Computer lab spaces are limited, so register early.

Wanting help with your computer problems in your home?

Several UMRA members have expressed an interest in having someone come to their home to help them resolve problems they are having operating their computer. Arrangements have now been made to provide this service to members residing in the Winnipeg area. Charges for house calls are negotiable and will vary depending upon the nature of the problem and the time involved in resolving it. Members wishing to have this service are asked to call the Association at 474-7175 and leave a message. A member of the Executive will make arrangements for the house call to take place.

CURAC News

UMRA’s President, Lois Brockman, and Vice-President, Jay Goldstein, attended the Fifth Annual Conference and AGM of the College and University Retirees Association of Canada (CURAC) held in Windsor, Ontario May 23-25. The conference focused on pension issues related to college and university retirees and strategies for improving benefits, including health resources and long term care. The advantages of having of retiree centres (something UMRA has been considering) were also discussed.

UMRA is a founding member of CURAC. There are presently 37 member organizations. Among its many purposes, CURAC serves as a clearinghouse for information about “best practices” in retirement policies, pensions, and benefits. Three members of UMRA currently serve on the CURAC boards and committees: Lois Brockman (UMRA President) is a member of the Board of Directors; John Mundie serves on the Communications Committee; and Marilyn Stothers is on the Housing Committee.

You can find out more information regarding CURAC by going to its website at www.curac.ca.

Volunteer Opportunity

On Wednesday, November 7th, the University of Manitoba is organizing activities for grade 9 students coming to our campuses for the “Take Our Kids to Work” program. These students will be given the opportunity to shadow their parent or relative for the day, participate in organized activities, or participate in some combination of these two options.

The “Take Our Kids to Work” planning committee is looking for retired University staff who would be willing to help with this event. Volunteers will be needed in a number of areas, including hosts, tour guides, and providing assistance for orientation and lunch. While the specific activities are still to be determined, the organizers would like to hear from retirees interested in helping out as soon as possible. Such retirees are asked to contact Kelly Teixeira at 474-8929 or kelly.teixeira@umanitoba.ca.

2007 United Way Campaign

October sees the start of the annual United Way Campaign at the University. Retirees at the University have played a very important role in assuring the success of this campaign. Those living in the Winnipeg area will be receiving a letter and pledge card at the beginning of the month. If you wish to participate, please join with us. You can find out more information regarding the United Way by going to their website at www.unitedway.mb.ca.

We now have a logo

UMRA received several submissions to its logo competition. A committee of the Executive reviewed the submissions and selected the logo which is displayed above. The logo was designed by Maureen Johnson. Maureen describes the logo as representing our circles of friendship in UMRA, the University, and the community. We wish to thank everyone who participated in this event. A copy of the selected logo will appear on the UMRA website and will be on display at the AGM and the President’s Reception.
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Next President’s Reception for Retirees

The 2008 Spring President’s Reception for Retirees has been scheduled for Saturday, April 26, 2008. It will be held on the Fort Garry Campus. Mark your calendar now as you will not want to miss this event.

We try to plan a year to 18 months in advance as to what topic and/or speaker would be of interest to retirees. If you have any suggestions about either a topic or a speaker you would like have presented or hear at an upcoming reception, please let us know by contacting a member of the Executive, phoning the office, or sending an e-mail.

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Global Health – A Role for Manitoba

We all are very much aware of the health pandemics people around the world face, such as HIV and more recently SARS. While such pandemics have their origin restricted to particular geographic areas, the ability of people to travel to almost anywhere, no country is immune from a pandemic occurring within its borders. Consequently, it is important for all nations and jurisdictions within them to have structures and systems in place to effectively combat a pandemic whenever it should arise.

Fortunately, within the Province of Manitoba, there is a group of professionals who have first-hand knowledge and expertise in managing pandemics. Many of them reside in the Department of Medical Microbiology at our University. They gained this experience through their work in combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, where 6,500 people die every day and new orphans are created every 14 seconds.

Our guest speaker, Dr. Allan Ronald, has been a leader in this fight to eradicate AIDS in Africa. Based on his experiences, he will share with us what is required to mobilize awareness of pandemics and to provide the health care and infrastructures in order to achieve the desired outcomes with compassion and empathy.

Recently retired, Dr. Ronald has had a distinguished career in medicine, science, administration, and education. In 1980, before we were known as the University of Manitoba/University of Nairobi, Professor Ronald was appointed as a founding member. This Program was established as a result of his work in establishing the University of Nairobi Research Centre. In his work with Prof. Marshall McLuhan, he gained this experience with HIV/AIDS, he was instrumental in establishing the University of Manitoba/University of Nairobi Global Health – A Role for Manitoba. They gained this experience through their work in combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, where 6,500 people die every day and new orphans are created every 14 seconds.

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