



University of Michigan Retirees Association

Volume 10, No. 1

September-October 2006

Social Hour Programs

September 14 Susan Pollay, Executive Director, Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority, will speak on “Downtown Ann Arbor – Changes and Possibilities”. She will describe some of the changes taking place in a downtown that has been able to remain attractive and relevant to a wide diversity of users.

October 12 UMRA Annual Meeting. In addition to the election of Board members, Marty Eichstadt will present news from the Benefits Office, and Michael Andrews, a representative from TIAA-CREF, will speak on pension issues.

November 9 Sylvia Hacker, Professor Emeritus, UM School of Nursing, will speak on “Sex versus Sexuality”.

Note: We still hope to be able to reschedule Professor Juan Cole, a nationally recognized expert on the Middle East, as a speaker at an UMRA Social Hour.

The subsequent dates for the 06-07 UMRA Thursday Social Hours are:

December 14, 2006

January 11, 2007

February 8, 2007

March 8, 2007

April 12, 2007

May 10, 2007

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Social Hour Details

UMRA Social Hours are held most months during the academic year on second-Thursday afternoons from 3 to 5 PM. All UM retirees and their guests are cordially invited to attend. The gatherings usually include light refreshments—coffee, sliced fruit, cookies, and soft drinks. Social Hour programs begin at 3:15 PM and continue until about 5:00 PM. Announcements about speakers and programs are made in this newsletter, in University Record *Events* notices, and at <www.umich.edu/~hraa/umra>, the UMRA web site.

Meeting Locations

Social Hour gatherings are held at the Best Western Motel, 2900 Jackson Road, Ann Arbor. Parking is plentiful, and easy access to the meeting room is gained by using the Ballroom entrance at the rear of the building. Handicap access is good. Other venues will be used from time to time. Please check the meeting notices on Page 1 to find the latest information.

The University of Michigan Retirees Association Newsletter

2072 Administrative Services Building, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1432

The Administrative Services Building is located at the intersection of Hoover and Green Streets. Parking is available nearby.

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REPORT ON UMRA'S APRIL "WELLNESS DAY"

The April 25, 2006, "How to Stay Healthy As We Age" program was sponsored in part by the UM HRAA Strategic Planning Office and Associate Vice President Laurita Thomas. The program proved to be a great success with over 100 members attending some part of the day's events which were held at UMRA's usual meeting site at the Best Western Motel.

Registration and Coffee began at 8:30 a.m. after which Pat Butler and Douglas Woolley welcomed the attendees and described the day's schedule.

The program began with Sheila Ferguson who presented a motivational approach to the issue of healthy aging by focusing on the importance of humor and laughter in our lives. After a short break, Cassie Messmer of the Alzheimer Association discussed how our thinking patterns can help motivate healthy aging. This was followed by a presentation by Andrea Lasichak of UM's School of Public Health on the importance of good nutrition for problems ranging from heart disease, cancer, diabetes to brain enhancement.

Lunch began about noon and included choices from among chicken, salmon or vegetarian and was well received by all.

The first talk after lunch focused on cancer prevention and was given by Annette Schork of the Cancer Answer Nurse Line. Schork concentrated on colorectal, prostate, breast, cervical, lung and skin varieties. Dr. Carol Kaufman next spoke on various aspects of shingles prevention. The final presentation was on the importance of exercise in maintaining mobility, flexibility and fitness and was presented by Dr. Richard Lampman with assistance from Red Simmons.

The Program concluded with a general discussion including questions from the floor. Pat Butler did an outstanding job in setting up the entire program and members expressed great satisfaction and interest in another such event next year.

SEPTEMBER 2006 UM HEALTH FAIR

This is an appropriate place to mention that UM's annual Health Fair to discuss the current state of the University's health care policies, especially as they relate to retirees, will be held on Monday, September 11, 2006, at the Ypsilanti Marriott at Eagle Crest, 1275 South Huron. There are two identical sessions: the morning session runs from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. while the afternoon program runs from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. This event is an opportunity for UMRA members to have their health insurance questions answered.

A STORY FOR OUR TIMES

Professor Emeritus, Wilfred Kaplan, longtime UMRA Board Member and Officer has written a poignant and moving story about his life and times. His words follow:

A RETIREE'S STORY

By Wilfred Kaplan

In 1986 I retired as professor of mathematics at the University after 46 years of service. For the next 14 years I remained active in my field, continuing my research and publishing, and my participation in University affairs (including the UMRA).

In 2000 my wife became handicapped and for the next 4 years my life centered on her care. In effect, I became a home aide, doing all the cooking and other household tasks, except for some relief from paid home aides. With some difficulty, I still remained active in my field.

In the fall of 2004 my wife's condition had deteriorated so much that we had to move to Glacier Hills retirement home; I was in the Independent Living section; my wife was in the Nursing Center. Unfortunately, this arrangement lasted only seven weeks, for my wife died on January 20, 2005.

Her death was a devastating blow, for it came after 66 years of married bliss. I started to tell friends the remarkable story of how we met in Zurich, Switzerland in 1936; we were both mathematics students and I happened to sit next to her the first day in class. With a computer at hand, I began to type the story. I soon realized the possibility of providing a detailed authentic account, for I was in possession of thousands of letters – some between the two of us, others between one of us and a friend or relative. These had been partly organized and, with some assistance, I began to arrange them chronologically. By now that has been done for letters sent between 1936 and 1962 and our story has been typed out for most of those years; via e-mail it has been made available to many friends.

The tale of the first two years is so striking that I have self-published it as a book, entitled Heidi and Bill – Beginning of Our Lives Together. The book contains many photographs as well as drawings from the letters. It tells how our first date was a grand ball, lasting from 9 p.m. to 5 a. m., after which we walked home together for an hour, holding hands; we were already deeply in love. After about three months of great happiness, I began to travel across Europe, as required by the fellowship I held from Harvard. Meanwhile we wrote each other about marriage. Heidi's Swiss parents were strongly opposed. Their attitude and other circumstances led me to return to my parents' home in Boston for a year, during which we corresponded furiously. I was working on my doctoral dissertation and Heidi on a diploma from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology. She achieved her goal in May of 1938; I attained the Ph. D. at Harvard a year later.

In July of 1938 I sailed back to Europe on the Queen Mary, with marriage uppermost in my mind. Somehow we won over Heidi's parents and the wedding was celebrated in August. By September we were settled in America, where I had a teaching position at Rice Institute, as it was then called. There Heidi continued to take advanced courses in mathematics. In fact she also obtained the Ph. D. in 1944 from the University of Michigan.

For those interested in reading our love story, an e-mail to <verenapress@msn.com> will provide information

Project Genesis — Help Others Improve Their Reading

The Reading department at Washtenaw Community College is looking for people who love to read to participate in Project Genesis, a reading assistance program that provides one-on-one support for students who are working to improve their reading skills. Volunteer coaches help WCC students with vocabulary, phonics, and comprehension checks. Coaches and students discuss stories, and coaches provide invaluable background knowledge – all of which directly impact reading development. It is the individual attention that volunteer coaches give to students that is a major factor contributing to their success.

In the four years since the program was implemented, teachers find that in addition to completing their assignments and attending class regularly, the students who regularly work with volunteer coaches exceed their expectations and are able to advance two or more reading levels at the end of only one semester. By improving their reading skills students have a greater opportunity of reaching their college goals, obtaining better jobs, and discovering the joy of reading.

Project Genesis is looking for volunteers for the fall semester who can give one or two hours per week - daytime and evening hours are available - starting September 5th. Please consider joining your fellow retirees in this worthwhile program.

For more information, please contact Denise Crudup at (734)973-3355 or email at <dcrudup@wccnet.edu>.

IN MEMORIAM

The University of Michigan Retirees Association wishes to honor the memory of those members who served the University with devotion and dedication. [Please alert one of the listed UMRA contacts to include a name in future issues of the Newsletter.]

Maria Holm Coyle April 20, 2006
Retired from the Office of the Registrar

Hazel Hubbard June 4, 2006
Retired from the Diploma Office

Jack Dalrymple August 13, 2006
Retired from Controller's Office in 1987

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Although not a subject that UMRA members often wish to contemplate, as we age, health issues begin to assume increasing importance in our lives. And in this connection, the subject of Advanced Directives and Living Wills are at the center of many health considerations.

The following text is largely taken from a document prepared by the UM Health Service and addresses the question of how we can assure that what we individually want for our health care can be protected in the event that we become incompetent to express our health care wishes.

1. What is an “advance directive”?

An advance directive is a written document in which you specify what type of medical care you want in the future should you lose the ability to make decisions.

2. Must I have an advance directive?

No. The decision to have an advance directive is purely voluntary. No family member, hospital or insurance company can force you to have one, or dictate what the document should say if you decide to write one.

3. Are there different types of advance directives?

Yes. Two types are (1) a durable power of attorney for health care and (2) a living will.

4. What is a “durable power of attorney for health care”?

A durable power of attorney for health care, also known as a health care proxy, is a document in which you give another person power to make medical treatment and related personal care decisions for you.

5. Is a durable power of attorney for health care legally binding in Michigan?

Yes, based on a recent state law.

6. Who is eligible to have a durable power of attorney for health care?

You must be at least 18 years old and of sound mind.

7. What is the person to whom I give decision making power called?

The person is known as a “patient advocate”.

8. When can the patient advocate act in my behalf?

The patient advocate can make decisions for you only when you are unable to participate in medical treatment decisions.

9. Why might I be unable to participate in medical treatment decisions?

There may be a temporary loss of ability to make or communicate decisions, if one were knocked unconscious in a car accident or had a stroke. There might be a long term or permanent loss through a degenerative condition such as Alzheimer’s Disease.

10. Who determines that I am no longer able to participate in these decisions?

The doctor responsible for your care and one other doctor will make that determination.

11. What powers can I give a patient advocate?

You can give a patient advocate power to make those personal care decisions you normally make for yourself. For example, you can give your patient advocate power to consent to or refuse medical treatment for you, to contract for home health care or adult day care, arrange care in a nursing home or move you to a home for the aged.

12. Can I give my patient advocate the right to make decisions to withhold or withdraw life sustaining treatment?

Yes, but you must express in a clear and convincing manner that the patient advocate is authorized to make such decisions, and you

must acknowledge these decisions could or would allow your death.

13. Can I authorize my patient advocate to decide to withhold or withdraw food and water administered through tubes?

Yes. If you wish to give your patient advocate power to have tube feeding withheld or withdrawn in the event you become terminally ill or permanently unconscious, you should state this in the document or in a living will.

14. Do I have the right to express in the document my wishes concerning medical treatment and personal care?

Yes. You might, for example, express your wishes concerning the type of care you want during terminal illness. You might also express a desire not to be placed in a nursing home and a desire to die at home. Your patient advocate has a duty to try to follow your wishes.

15. Is it important to express my wishes – either in the durable power of attorney for health care or in a separate living will?

It may be. Your wishes cannot be followed if no one is aware of them. It can also be a great burden for your patient advocate to make a decision for you without any guidance.

16. Who may I appoint as patient advocate?

Any person age 18 or older is eligible. Obviously, you should choose someone you trust, who can handle the responsibility, and who is willing to serve.

17. Does a patient advocate need to accept the responsibility before acting?

Yes, he or she must sign an acceptance. This does not have to be done at the time you sign the document. Nevertheless, you should speak to the person you propose to name as patient advocate to make sure he or she is willing to serve.

18. Can I appoint a second person to serve as patient advocate in case the first named

person is unable to serve?

Yes.

19. What if I have no one to appoint as patient advocate?

You can still complete a living will.

20. What is a “living will”?

A “living will” is a written statement in which you inform doctors and family members what type of medical care you wish to receive should you become terminally ill or permanently unconscious, and unable to make or communicate decisions about your continued care.

21. What are the differences between a durable power of attorney for health care and a living will?

The focus of a durable power of attorney for health care is on who makes the decision; the focus of a living will is on what the decision is. Also, a living will is limited to care during terminal illness or permanent unconsciousness; a durable power of attorney for health care can be applicable during temporary disability.

22. What might a living will say?

You might express your wishes in general terms - “Do whatever is necessary for my comfort, but nothing further”. Or, “I authorize all measures be taken to prolong my life”. You might express desires about the use of specific medical interventions, such as a respirator, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), surgery, and blood transfusions. You could authorize experimental or non-traditional treatment. You should express your wishes concerning food and water administered through tubes.

23. Is a living will legally binding?

Although 41 states have laws giving living wills legal force, Michigan has not yet passed such a law. Doctors and hospitals might comply with your wishes, but no one can provide absolute assurance.

24. Can I have both a durable power of attorney for health care and a living will?

Yes. You could have a single document or

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two separate documents. If in separate writings, you should make sure your wishes expressed in the two writings are consistent. If in a single document, you should comply with the technical requirements of the durable power of attorney for health care law.

25. In general, what should I do before completing an advance directive?

Take your time. Consider who you might choose to be your proxy. Think about your treatment wishes. Discuss the issue with family members and your doctor. Talk with your minister, rabbi, priest, or other spiritual leader if you feel it would be helpful.

UMRA HIKING GROUP

Sandy Sipkin is the UMRA organizer of a hiking group. Those interested and not yet on her email list can contact her at <ssipkin@comcast.net> or by phone at 734-747-8785 for further information.

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