

UMRA NEWS

December 2024

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Celebrate the Holidays with UMRA

This is a festive time of the year with many different holidays to celebrate. Join fellow UMRA members for the December 12 special Holidays Season Program. You have the option to participate in person or via livestream.

The announcements begin at 11:30 a.m., when Katherine Kurtz will pass the gavel to incoming president, Mike Kalasinski. This will be followed by a special Learn & Grow presentation by U-M's carillonist, Tiffany Ng.



Dr. Ng's presentation, *Expanding our Sonic Horizons: Tower Music for an Inclusive Campus*, will be both informative and entertaining.

For those attending in person, the December 12 program will continue with an **Afterglow at 2:00 p.m.**, featuring light holiday refreshments made possible by our terrific UMRA Sponsors.

We request all in-person attendees register on the UMRA website so we may anticipate the number of attendees.



President's Report

December is here, whether or not we are ready for the many end-of-year activities ahead. Some of you are in the throes of planning for the holidays. Others, more organized than I am, are thinking ahead and preparing for 2025.

December also marks the end of my term as UMRA president. As I reflect on the past two years, I do so with gratitude and appreciation. Serving as your president has been an honor, and I am proud of all we have accomplished as an association. I have enjoyed attending university functions and events, reminiscent of the years I worked in Development. In my capacity as president, it was encouraging that our organization continued to be recognized by the University's executive officers and leadership. This signifies the importance of retirees to the mission and vision of the University. Thank you for entrusting me with this important position!

I am delighted to introduce your new president; Michael Kalasinski. Before retirement, Mike was the assistant dean of finance and administration in the School of Public Health and served on many university-wide committees. He brings important breadth and depth of experience and expertise to UMRA. Please join me in welcoming Mike to this important role.

Susan Shields has been nominated to step into the role of vice president. Susan was senior director of corporate relations in the Business Engagement Center at the University of Michigan before retiring. In this role, Susan worked with most of the schools and colleges at the University. Her nomination will be voted on by the UMRA board at the December 2024 board meeting.

Another important thank you must be extended to Rodger Wolf for his service as UMRA's treasurer. After almost 10 years diligently managing UMRA's finances, Rodger has passed the baton on to a new treasurer. During his tenure as treasurer, Rodger initiated the corporate sponsors program and was an important member of the team that implemented our online credit card payment system. Over the years he steadfastly answered hundreds, probably thousands, of member questions about dues and how to pay them. Rodger's leadership, attention to detail and willingness to go above and beyond, have left an indelible mark on UMRA. Although he is "retiring" from the position as treasurer, we are fortunate that he will remain on the Board, where he will continue to offer his invaluable support.

As our leadership changes, new ideas, programs and initiatives will be launched, and some activities may be dropped. What remains constant is the commitment of the Board to our membership and all university retirees. Our theme—Get Connected, Stay Connected, Feel Connected—remains a shared priority and a guiding principle going forward.

My very best wishes for the holidays and New Year. And Go Blue!

Katherine Kurtz
UMRA President

Reminder ❖ December 12 Monthly Meeting

WCC attendees have the option to order a boxed lunch to enjoy before the meeting.

The [livestream](#) of the program begins promptly at 11:30 a.m.

Pre-registration is requested for in-person attendees. Register [here](#).

Please note special program timing

This meeting spans the typical lunchtime, so in-person attendees may wish to eat an early meal before arriving or order a boxed lunch to enjoy at WCC before the meeting (see below). WCC does not allow outside food/drink. This program will not follow our usual Learn & Grow and Seminar format.

10:45 a.m. Registration opens, social hour and sponsor/member time

Coffee, tea, water and soda will be available.

If you wish to enjoy lunch with us, you must **pre-order and purchase your lunch on our website**. Orders can be placed from **December 1 through 5:00 p.m. on December 4**. Click [here](#), scroll down to the Registration section and place your order. Social hour and sponsor/member time continues. Menu options are “coming soon.”

11:30 a.m. President’s Welcome and Leadership Transition (Livestream begins)

Coffee, tea, water and soda will be available.

11:45 a.m. Special Guest Speaker #1: *Expanding our Sonic Horizons: Tower Music for an Inclusive Campus*

Tiffany Ng, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Music, University Carillonist and Chair of the Department of Organ in the School of Music, Theatre & Dance will share her work since 2015 to expand and enrich the repertoire performed on the University’s two carillon towers. Her work brings joy, beauty and artistic diversity to the everyday experiences of hundreds of listeners each day. Through her stories and concert videos, follow Prof. Ng’s journey with her students and colleagues to expand traditional carillon music to encompass rich annual cycles, ranging from Native American Heritage Month to U-M Veterans Week to National Coming Out Day to the annual MLK Symposium, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that listeners of every background get a chance to hear music from our towers that affirms them as welcome and integral members of our community. Thank you to the **Program Committee** for arranging this presentation.

1:00 p.m. Special Guest Speaker #2: This speaker will be announced at the podium. Thank you to the **Learn & Grow Committee** for arranging this presentation.

2:00 p.m. For those attending in person, the program continues with an **Afterglow**, featuring light holiday refreshments made possible thanks to our UMRA Sponsors. We request in-person attendees to [register](#) on the UMRA website, so we may anticipate the number of attendees.

Attention WCC In-Person Attendees—Please Preregister

We kindly request that you register for the monthly meetings you plan to attend in person at WCC. The deadline to preregister is 11:30 p.m. on the Wednesday before the meeting. While registration is optional, we greatly appreciate those who let us know in advance that they will be joining us. To register, go to the Events Calendar and select the date of the event on the calendar. On the screen that displays the meeting details, scroll down to the registration section. You must log in to register. If you are not logged in, you will see a prompt on the right side of the screen. Click that link and log in. You will then see options to register and order lunch.

Note: Those who plan to watch the meeting via our YouTube channel do not need to register. You will receive the link to the meeting in the reminder email.

2025 Monthly Meetings

UMRA's in-person meetings are held at **Washtenaw Community College, Morris Lawrence Building**. These meetings will also be [livestreamed](#) via the UMRA YouTube Channel. If you are unable to attend, you can watch the meeting at your convenience on our [YouTube channel](#).



January 16 — *Stay Safe – Avoiding Identity Theft and Financial Fraud*

Mark Munzenberger, AFC. Financial education manager, University of Michigan Credit Union. Financial fraud and identity theft continue to impact nearly everyone in America. Every day, there is a news story about another data breach, a novel scam or how an individual became the victim of a phishing attempt. While there are new tools to help

protect ourselves, the scams keep evolving, so it is imperative that we stay vigilant. This presentation will cover the essential steps and actions needed to protect yourself, tools available for consumers and resources to turn to if something happens. Core topics include: 1) How ID theft happens, 2) The most common financial scams in 2024, 3) Tools and technology and 4) Protecting your credit.

February 13 — *ChatGPT Unveiled: Exploring the Power of AI Conversations*

Ed Adams, former chief technology officer, Stephen M. Ross School of Business. Ever wonder what it would be like to have an intelligent conversation with a computer? Well, that's the exciting world of AI chatbots, and one of the most advanced is called ChatGPT. This talk will unveil the secrets behind ChatGPT, demonstrate how conversational AI is revolutionizing communication, education and daily life, and why it's changing the way we interact with technology. We'll explore the possibilities of AI conversations, from helping us with daily tasks to even having friendly chats. Whether you're a tech enthusiast or a curious novice, this talk will provide valuable insights into how AI is shaping our future and how you can leverage its capabilities in your daily life.

March 13 — *Keeping Older Drivers Safely on the Road: Resources and Training for Understanding Advanced Driver Assistance Systems and Automated Vehicle Technologies*

Lisa J. Molnar, Ph.D., is a research associate professor emerita at the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute. Dr. Molnar has over 35 years of experience conducting research on transportation safety and mobility at the U-M Transportation Research Institute. The development of advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) and automated vehicle (AV) technologies hold great promise for helping older adults maintain safe mobility. However, challenges remain in ensuring that ADAS and AV technologies are accessible, acceptable, affordable and otherwise inclusive for older adults. This presentation will focus on recent efforts to improve older adults' understanding of ADAS and AV technologies. You will learn about relevant ADAS and AV resources available through the State of Michigan's website *Safe Drivers Smart Options* and a recently completed project, funded by the Center for Connected and Automated Vehicles, on ADAS and AV training conducted by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute. The objective of the project was to develop and pilot-test a training curriculum to help older adults become more familiar with the functioning and operation of ADAS and AV technologies through classroom and closed-track demonstrations conducted at U-M's Mcity test facility.

April 10 — *Saving Songbirds*. Presented by Marissa Jardine. Ms. Jardine is the Clinical Manager of the Bird Center of Michigan. The Bird Center provides wildlife rehabilitation services for injured and orphaned birds. Her talk will focus on the spring migration of songbirds, window collisions, cat-caught birds and orphaned babies. Jardine will share tips and advice regarding protecting songbirds, as well as what to do if you need assistance. Michigan is home to many migrating bird species, especially in the spring. This will be an important talk regardless of where you live-- in the country or a high-rise in the city.

May 15 — *To Be Announced*

MONTHLY SEMINARS

January 16 — *2025 Tax Follies & Wisdom: Odd to Horrific Episodes from Ancient to Present*

Joel Slemrod, Paul W. McCracken Professor of Business Economics and Public Policy in the Stephen M. Ross School of Business and professor of economics in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Professor Slemrod, an authority on tax policy design, is known for his pioneering research on how tax policies influence households and companies. He will use stories to illustrate basic principles of taxation, including how taxes are used to change behavior—both for sinister and laudable purposes—and share notable tax policy successes and failures. Slemrod has testified before Congress, advised the Congressional Budget Office and Internal Revenue Service and assisted treasury departments on every continent. He has published 17 books— including *Rebellion, Rascals and Revenue: Tax Follies and Wisdom through the Ages*—and was named U-M’s David Bradford Distinguished University

Professor of Economics in 2021. Learn more about him here:

<https://lsa.umich.edu/econ/people/faculty/jslemrod.html>.

February 13 — *Recognizing Deep Fakes*



Hafiz Malik, professor of electrical and computer engineering in the College of Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Michigan–Dearborn.

Due to the instantaneous nature of social media politics today, the only way to combat fake multimedia is to detect it in close-to-real time. Malik develops tools to fight against fake multimedia. He has created a method to detect computer-generated audio at near 100% accuracy and is now turning to fake multimedia detection in real time. His current tools can differentiate real from fake audio at the microscopic level with specific markers. These tools can be used by newsrooms, social media platforms and smart

speakers. Malik will discuss the current state of fake media and the strategies used to identify it, as well as approaches to verify authenticity.



March 13 — *Why Incompetence Fails to Recognize Itself*



David Dunning, professor of psychology in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, and faculty associate in the Research Center for Group Dynamics, Institute for Social Research.

Professor Dunning will discuss the psychology underlying the notorious “Dunning-Kruger Effect,” a condition in which people remain unaware of their incompetence and ignorance, thereby being left with illusions of expertise they do not have (a condition that visits all of us sooner or later). He touches on its implications for health, education, the workplace, politics, as well as the digital age. Dunning (with Justin Kruger) received the 2023 Grawemeyer Award in Psychology for the work, which has been featured internationally on National Public Radio Public Broadcasting Service, The British Broadcasting Service, The *New York Times* and other venues—even *Doonesbury*.

April 10 — *Memory: How It Works and How to Improve It*



Thad Polk, Samuel D. Epstein Collegiate Professor of Psychology, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, and professor of psychology in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. He also serves as chair of the Cognition and Cognitive Neuroscience Area at the Michigan Neuroscience Institute.

Professor Polk will present findings from the Computational & Cognitive Neuroscience Lab on the neural architecture that underlies cognition; that is, the set of fixed neural structures and processes that give rise to cognition. What are the parts, how do they work and how do they interact to produce the mind? Ultimately, researchers aim to understand how the cognitive architecture is determined (e.g., which aspects are genetic), how the architecture changes as a result of experience and normal aging and how it normally functions. He will discuss brain aging and what can be done about it, including how the brain changes as we age and steps we can take to age more gracefully.

May 15 — *Mcity and the Future of Mobility*



Sue Carney, Director of Marketing and Communications for Mcity at the University of Michigan.

Ms. Carney will discuss activities at Mcity and how the work being done there could improve the quality of life for us all. Mcity is an interdisciplinary private-public partnership that brings together industry, government and academia to advance transportation safety, sustainability, equity and accessibility. This is a world-class, purpose-built test facility for connected and autonomous vehicles and technologies, including mixed-reality testing capabilities and data tools powered by artificial intelligence. Mcity is a makerspace—a hub for research, development and deployment of next-generation mobility innovations to the real world.



Joke of the Month

I recently bought a toilet brush - long story short, I'm going back to toilet paper.



Recap November Meeting

Professor Barbara McQuade presented to a full-capacity crowd at UMRA's November 14 Monthly Meeting. McQuade, U-M Law School professor from practice, focused her remarks on the theme of her recent book, *Attack from Within: How Disinformation is Sabotaging American Democracy and the Rule of Law* (2024).

Professor McQuade started the discussion by differentiating misinformation from disinformation. With misinformation the transmitter believes the message is true and shares it unaware of its falsehood. Disinformation is the **deliberate** use of false information to push a particular position. She proposed that disinformation is a current major threat to the USA. She used examples from the Mueller Report (2019) to demonstrate how a foreign country used disinformation to support a preferred candidate for USA president, sow discord in the USA and undermine confidence in American elections. Disinformation leads to scapegoating minorities as foci of problems and unrest. Through repetition, disinformation gains traction, supports the belief that disinformation is true and often unites people against a common enemy. Disinformation is growing and is harming public safety and the rule of law.



Technology is the most common medium for the dissemination of disinformation. Professor McQuade presented several examples of false websites that could be easily confused with legitimate resources. She proposed several solutions to address misinformation and its sequelae, including a meaningful regulation of social media, especially at the state level. Current social media laws are old and out of date. The most recent, substantive, social media laws were passed in 1996. She emphasized the need for social media platforms to share algorithms to be more transparent about how people are targeted. Additional proposed solutions include improving population social literacy and exercising personal responsibility in response to misinformation attempts. A lively question-and-answer and discussion session followed the presentation. The session is available online at <https://www.youtube.com/@umichretirees>.

--Vi Barkauskas

Recap October Hamtramck Trip

The new trip reservation procedure worked like a champ, and 39 seasoned travelers appeared on time at the Carpenter Road Meijer. Our wonderful driver, Glenn, met us with his brand new 40-passenger Bianco bus and we were soon on our way to the Eastern Market, where we stopped and picked up our historian and guide, Marion.

One member of our group grew up in Hamtramck, but most of us were there for the first time. The city was named for French-Canadian soldier, Jean-Francois Hamtramck, who fought in the Revolutionary war. As commander of Fort Shelby, he took possession of Detroit upon the British surrender. Originally chartered as a large township in 1798, it became a village in 1901. To avoid annexation by Detroit, it became a city in 1922.

Hamtramck attracted a number of Polish folks when the Dodge brothers opened their Albert Kahn designed automobile plant in 1914. By 1970, the population was 90% Polish.

Dodge Main closed in 1980 and was replaced by a new, larger, General Motors facility in 1985, which displaced nine churches and many residences and businesses. This led to an increase in Middle Eastern immigration. By 2021, Hamtramck became the first city in America with a Muslim-majority population, yet it remains ethnically diverse with a strong Polish presence and many annual festivals—religious, national and musical.



Our first stop was St. Albertus Church, a magnificent medieval style building, dedicated in 1885. Although officially closed in 1990, a group of parishioners formed a non-profit organization to maintain the building. Next, we had lunch in a cozy private room at the Polish Village Café. We started with dill pickle soup, a Polish delicacy, followed by their Polish plate—kielbasa, stuffed cabbage, a pierogi and mashed potatoes, with paczkis for dessert.

After filling our take-out boxes, we went to St. Florian’s Church. Dedicated in 1928, it is an architecturally acclaimed modern Gothic building. It, too, has quite a few stained-glass windows, many depicting Christian events, and including a very large rose window above the organ loft. Although opulent, St. Florian somehow lacked the warmth of St. Albertus.

We returned to the business district to visit the Hamtramck Historical Museum, which displays many interesting artifacts and traces of the city’s evolution.

After staying as long as we wished, we had some free time to explore historic Joseph Campau Street on our own. We found the Polish Art Center next door. Perhaps more gift shop than museum, it offers a large selection of Polish imports. Most of us continued to Srodek’s Campau Quality Sausage Company and the New Palace Bakery. More than a few of us carried packages back to the bus.

Heading home, Marion took us past two of Hamtramck’s sports facilities. Keyworth Stadium, built in 1936, was the first WPA project in Michigan and is currently home to the Detroit City Football Club for men’s and women’s professional soccer. Next door is Hamtramck Stadium, one of only five remaining Negro League ball parks. Restored in 2020, it is used by local athletes for several sports.

Glenn took us on his scenic route through Detroit to I-94 and home. It was warm and sunny all day, but as we returned, the weather turned ominous. Shortly after we were back in our own cars, the clouds opened up.

--David Williams

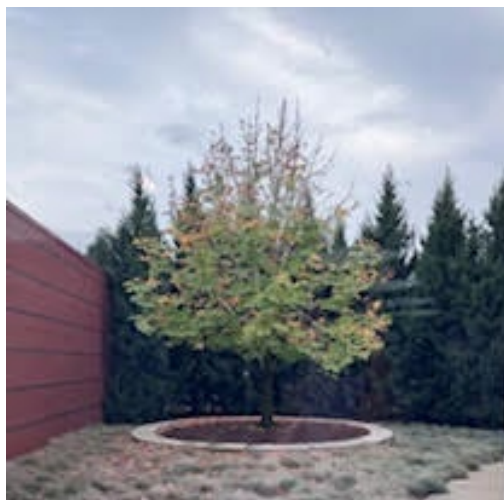
Recap Holocaust Center Tour

On November 4, a group boarded a Bianco bus for a trip to a great lunch, a museum and shopping.

Our first stop was lunch at Bravo! Italian Kitchen in Livonia. The meal was served family style and included rolls, two salads, three entrées, dessert and beverages. Everything was very good, especially the house salad and chicken parmesan.

Next, we headed to Farmington Hills to The Zekelman Holocaust Center. The Center was founded in 1984, moved to the current location in 2004 and was recently renovated. We were each provided with a listening device and

divided into two groups for an hour-long guided tour with a trained docent. After the guided tour, the son of two Holocaust survivors shared their story with our group. He told how his parents came to the Detroit area after the war because they had relatives able to be their sponsors.



Before leaving the Center, we saw a beautiful Chestnut tree in a courtyard. The tree is a sapling, cut from a Chestnut tree that Anne Frank could see from her hiding place in Amsterdam. As you can imagine, the Center was a very emotional place to visit.

Our last stop was Nino Salvaggio International Marketplace in Bloomfield Township. We shopped, had coffee and visited amongst ourselves. We had a wonderful day, and our driver, Glenn, got us there and back safely.

--Beverly Turner

Upcoming Day Trips

All outings offered by UMRA can be found on the UMRA Events Calendar.

January 15, 2025 (Wednesday) The Henry Ford Tour

The Ford Rouge Factory Tour begins with a visit to the Legacy Gallery and Electric Vehicle Display, where you can look back at iconic vehicles manufactured at the Rouge complex and look ahead to automaking's electric future. Two films shown in the Legacy Theater describe the history of the Ford Motor Company. We hope to see a Ford F-150 final assembly on the production line before we head to lunch. A buffet lunch at **Ford's Garage** in Dearborn is included in the tour cost.



After lunch, we will stop at the Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation. You can explore the exhibits at your own pace. Step into a world where past innovations fuel the imagination of generations to come. You can experience the strides of America's greatest minds while fully immersing yourself in their stories. The trip departs from the Meijer parking lot on Carpenter Road at 8:00 a.m. The cost is \$155.

February 15, 2025 (Saturday) U-M vs. Minnesota Hockey Game

UMRA has reserved 25 tickets for the U-M vs. Minnesota Hockey game on Saturday, February 15 at 6:00 p.m. These two hockey programs are among the top programs in the country, and their games are always exciting. Tickets are \$35 each and are on a first come, first served basis. There is a limit of four tickets per family. Transportation to Yost Area on State Street is on your own.

To order ticket(s), scan the QR code or sign in to Members Only on UMRA's website—umra.hr.umich.edu. Go to the events calendar, click on February 15, 2025 and follow the instructions. You will be sent a code for our block of tickets. Payment will be made directly to the UM ticket office. The tickets will be emailed to you. The deadline to order tickets is January 15, 2025. If you have a question, email Al Hermsen at ahermsen@umich.edu.



SCAN ME

March 6, 2025 (Thursday) *Sense & Sensibility* – Matinee at the Encore Theater

Join UMRA at the Encore Theater for the musical production of *Sense & Sensibility*. Based on the novel by Jane Austen, the story follows the life of the three Dashwood sisters and their widowed mother as they are forced to leave the family estate at Norland Park and move to Barton Cottage. There, the older two sisters (Elinor and Marianne) experience love, romance and heartbreak.

UMRA has reserved 20 seats for the 3:00 p.m. performance. The cost is \$50 per ticket. No refunds after February 4, 2025. Register online at umra.hr.umich.edu/events. Go to the March 2025 Events Calendar, select the date and Encore Play. Tickets will be held at will-call at the Theater. Transportation to the theater is on your own.

Optional Afterglow at Metzger's Restaurant—305 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI <https://metzgers.net/dinners/>. Please E-mail Sandy Regiani if you plan to attend dinner with the group at sregiani@umich.edu.

April 29, 2025 (Tuesday) Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

Frederick Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park - One of the leading cultural destinations in Michigan, featuring 132 acres of indoor and outdoor gardens, is the Midwest's most significant outdoor sculpture exhibition. The magnificent Tropical Conservatory consists of five stories of shimmering glass; 15,000 square feet filled with tropical plants from five continents, and the Meijer Sculpture Park, highlighting more than 40 beautifully detailed bronze sculptures. A tram will take us through the sculpture park. A guide will provide commentary during the indoor tour of the conservatory.

Everyone will receive a \$24.00 lunch voucher to be used at the **Taste of the Gardens Café**.

Robinette's Apple Haus & Gift Barn - Robinette's history goes back over 100 years. The family bought the farm in 1911. At the time, it was primarily a peach farm. In 1973, what started as a produce-growing farm, grew into the Apple Haus. The Robinettes wanted to serve the public by providing them with the freshest baked goods and produce, as well as many other tasty treats. The Apple Haus includes the bakery, lunch counter/eating area, cider mill, home-grown fresh fruits and more.

The trip departs from the Meijer parking lot on Jackson Road at 7:30 a.m. The cost of the trip is \$129 per person.

June 6, 2025, (Friday) Bay City, Michigan

Tour Bay City with a local step-on-guide. A lumber and shipping town, Bay City has many old stories. Learn about Hell-Half Mile and tour the district with turn-of-the-century brick buildings, which today house quaint specialty shops, eateries and pubs.

Enjoy a buffet lunch at Krzysiak's House, offering authentic Polish food in a fun vibrant atmosphere.

Board the Princess Wenonah for a 2-hour cruise down the Saginaw River into Saginaw Bay while learning about the rich history of this old lumber and shipbuilding town.

See the flyers attached to the newsletter for more information about our UMRA trips or contact Carol Williams, cwms@umich.edu.

Have You Renewed Your Membership?

The new membership year is in full swing. If you haven't renewed and have misplaced your renewal email, let us know. Email us at umra@umich.edu. We are happy to resend the message.

Get Connected. Stay Connected. Feel Connected.

Transitioning and Thriving

Planning for Long-Term Care and End-of-Life Considerations

The 10th installment of our Transitioning and Thriving series is now available on the UMRA website. Installment 10 is entitled “**Planning for Long-Term Care and End-of-Life Considerations.**”

Long-term care and end-of-life decisions are not just about medical care—they’re about preserving independence, protecting financial assets and providing peace of mind, not just for yourself, but for your loved ones as well.



Whether you’re single, married or a solo ager, putting a solid plan in place will allow you to focus on the present, knowing you’re prepared for the future.

Click here, [Thriving in Retirement](#), to access all of these resource.

If you have specific questions or have topics you would like us to address, please let us know via email at UMRA-RetireThrive@umich.edu.

Shared Interest Groups

UMRA Gamers



Monday, December 2

RU Game Store, 1345 E Michigan Ave., Saline, MI 48176

3:00-5:00 p.m.

Attend this session and learn about a number of games you might find useful over the holidays to either play with family or give as gifts. Questions are welcome. If you would like to participate in this group or if you have any questions, please contact Dennis Drobeck at wonderama@juno.com or 734-218-0388.

UMRA Hikes



Friday, December 6

Trails in Bird Hills

Start gathering at 9:45 a.m. in the Barton Nature Preserve (Barton Dam) parking lot (W Huron River Dr at Bird Road). Hike 10:00-11:30. We will hike in hilly, wooded areas (across the road)--some gentle, some a bit more challenging. We can choose. Leashed dogs welcome.

Optional lunch at HOMES brewery/Asian fusion, 2321 Jackson Ave.

To join or receive updates and announcements, please email Herb Loner, hloner@umich.edu.

UMRA Walks



Friday, December 20

Dicken School neighborhood

Convene 9:50. Begin walk at 10:00-11:30 a.m.

The optional lunch will be at Holiday’s Restaurant on Stadium. To receive details about future walks, email Verna Bell, verna@umich.edu, or Beverly Turner, rockman@umich.edu.

UMRA Plays Mah Jongg



The group meets Mondays (excluding holidays) at 1:00 p.m. at the Pittsfield Township Senior Center—701 W. Ellsworth Rd., Ann Arbor (on the S.W. corner of State St. and Ellsworth Rd.). The group is open to players of all levels. If you have a question about the game, contact Corrine Serrell at corrine.serrell@gmail.com.

UMRA Travel Discussion



No December Meeting

A Zoom link will be sent to the Travel email list before the next meeting.

Contact Joe Marker at joemarker2@gmail.com, if you would like to be added to the email list. Recordings of discussions can be found at [Travel Videos on Demand](#).

UMRA Volunteers



No December Activities

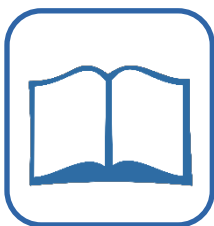
Activities resume in 2025

January 23 (Thursday) at Food Gatherers.

February 20 (Thursday) at Maize & Blue Cupboard.

Questions? Contact Karen Shill, kshill@umich.edu.

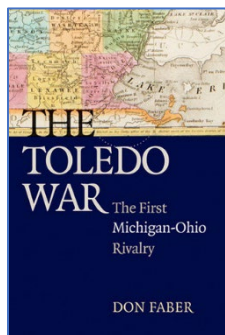
UMRA Reads



UMRA Reads meets via Zoom from 3:00–5:00 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of the month. A link will be sent to anyone who wishes to join the discussion.

Podcasts of the book discussion can be found at [UMRA Podcasts](#) on the website. New members are always welcome. To join, contact Sharon Grayden, grayden@umich.edu.

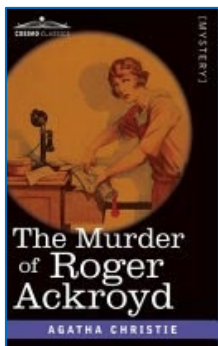
Wednesday, December 18



The Toledo War: The First Michigan-Ohio Rivalry by Don Faber, former editor of the *Ann Arbor News*, chronicles a long-simmering dispute over a narrow wedge of land called the Toledo Strip. When Ohio claimed the mouth of the Maumee River, land that—according to the Northwest Ordinance of 1787—fell in the territory of Michigan, the "Toledo War" began.

Ultimately, the resolution of this fight benefited both Michiganians and Ohioans. Ohioans won the war, and Michigan got the Upper Peninsula. But back then, passions about rightful ownership ran high, and it would take many years and colorful personalities—all the way up to presidents—to settle the dispute. This book is a well-researched and fascinating account of the famous war.

UMRA Reads October Recap



Everyone agreed—Agatha Christie’s *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* was a wonderful reading experience. Many reasons were offered, including that it transported one’s mind away from everyday reality to a different space of puzzles to be solved. The group members all felt actively engaged with the book, following the many red herrings, suspecting first one character and then another. The surprise ending was a bit anticipated by a few, but was totally unexpected by most others. Some wanted to reread the novel to see what clues they might have missed. Christie’s talent at spinning such a crime mystery was very evident in this novel and the reason why it is rated as one of her very best. Our group talked about her inventiveness in fashioning this particular surprise ending, which is so good that her technique has been used by other novelists to this day.

You can listen to this interesting discussion at [UMRA Podcasts](#).

--Monica Starkman

In Memoriam

UMRA wishes to express sincere condolences to the families and friends of members who have passed and whose information we have received since our last posting.

Name	Date of Death	Name	Date of Death
Joel S Berger	10/7/2024	Jackie Monk	9/15/2024
Maria Borondy	10/5/2024	Deborah Jane Oakley	8/21/2024
Ann DeFreytas	10/29/2024	Arthur Oleinick	9/26/2024
Sheila C Feld	10/20/2024	Henry Poort	12/12/2023
Mary Margaret Jender	10/9/2024	Jill B Reyes	9/29/2024
William P Malm	9/16/2024	Nancy A Schenk	9/6/2024
Daisy Jean Manis	10/11/2024	Richard G Snyder	9/5/2024
Nancy A McIntosh	9/14/2024	Gary Warmanen	10/10/2024
Robert Merkel	9/27/2024	Earlie M Woods	10/3/2024



**American
Red Cross**

The Red Cross Needs Blood Donations.

Hurricanes Helene and Milton have taken their toll on current blood supplies. Please consider donating blood.

Contact the Ann Arbor Office of the local Red Cross at 4624 Packard, 48108 or call 800-733-2767 to make an appointment.

Spice Drive—Another Huge Success

Dear UMRA friends and colleagues:

The generosity of UMRA members responding to the request for spices for U-M's Maize & Blue Cupboard was remarkable.

Your donations filled my car—the trunk plus the back and front seats and floors. Upon my arrival at the Maize & Blue Cupboard, I was inundated with a host of excited, helpful students and a delightful woman, a visiting researcher from Ghana. With glee and appreciation, my helpers snapped up the boxes. They kept loading and reloading a cart they used to transport all of the spices until they were secured in their sanctuary. Staff member, Emma, was thrilled and grateful to UMRA for its generosity.

In times of divisiveness and all the negative feelings and concerns we are experiencing, it was pure joy to see people of all stripes coming together to bring joy to the lives of the students and staff who need food assistance.

I commend UMRA for promoting this wonderful idea and thank all who donated to this worthy cause. Your gifts will bring delight and pleasure to their recipients.

Sincere thanks to UMRA Board members, those who organized this effort, and many very giving UMRA members—and friends.

Karen Shill, Facilitator
UMRA Volunteer

PS. I went back to the MBC on November 21 to take a picture of the spices we had donated. To my surprise, the spices were gone. They were so appreciated by MBC clients they flew off the shelves! KS

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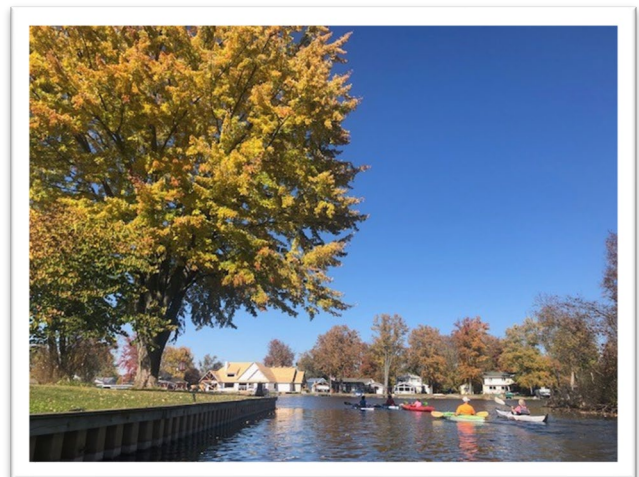
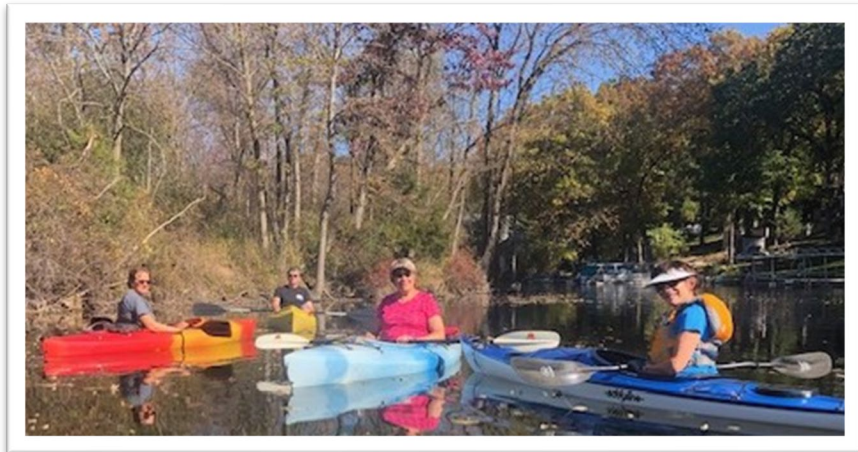
Rodger Wolf
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Photo Gallery

UMRA Hikes



UMRA Kayaks in October



Photos contributed by Heb Lonner and Al Hermesen

Jewish Cultural Experience



Photos contributed by Carol Williams

Thank You UMRA Sponsors

The U-M Retirees Association community sponsorship program broadens our base of support and expands programming capabilities.

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Retirement Income Solutions is a locally-owned and independent financial advisory firm that specializes in the active management of TIAA and Fidelity accounts, along with other assets.

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(866) 842-2949 <https://locations.tiaa.org/mi/ann-arbor/777-east-eisenhower-parkway>

University of Michigan Credit Union – Mark Munzenberger

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UMCU is a member owned, not-for-profit cooperative serving the financial needs of its members and the community.

UMRA is grateful to our sponsors for their loyalty and support. Many of our sponsors attend our monthly meetings and would love to meet you at our new location at WCC.

UMRA Contact Information

The UMRA Office is located at 2005 Wolverine Tower, 3003 S. State St., Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1281.

(Wolverine Tower is closed to the public.)

To learn more about UMRA activities, go to our website: <https://umra.hr.umich.edu>.

Have a question? Missing an UMRA newsletter issue? To communicate with UMRA, please send an email to umra@umich.edu, or give us a call at 734-763-2387, select option 3.



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