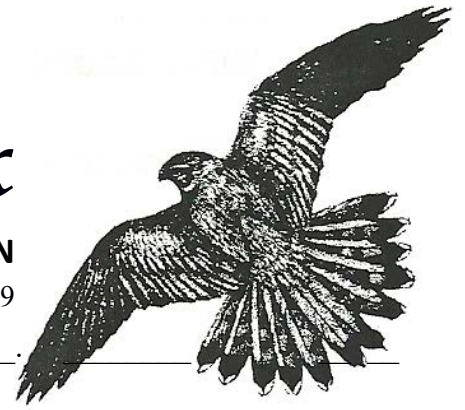


The Gray Hawk

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA RETIREES ASSOCIATION

May 2025 • Vol. XXXI, Issue 9



May UIRA Programming

Walking Tour of Campus Trees

Tuesday, May 13, 1:00 p.m., meet on the east side of Macbride Hall (entry to Museum of Natural History). Your UIRA Program Committee host is **Nancy Langguth**, nancy-langguth@uiowa.edu.

On the UI campus there are almost 9,000 trees, comprising over 350 species and countless cultivars in maintained areas. Of note are two Conifer Reference Gardens as recognized by the American Conifer Society, a Literary Grove featuring trees with connections to famous authors at the world-famous Writers' Workshop, a Quercereturum (oak collection), an extensive collection of ginkgoes, and several current or former Iowa State Champion trees.



Andrew Dahl has been the campus arborist at the University of Iowa for 25 years. In that time, the University has achieved Tree Campus USA designation in the past 16 years and became an Accredited Level II Arboretum through ArbNet in 2021. Andrew became an International Society of Arboriculture certified arborist in 1995. He has been awarded Urban Forestry Professional of the Year by both the Iowa Urban Forestry Council and the International Society of Arboriculture, the Award of Merit by the Midwest Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, and Outstanding Advocate by Trees Forever.

When Andrew isn't busy working at the University arboretum, he's serving on several local and regional tree committees, looking for neat trees to visit, seeds to start, and people to talk trees with.

Recent Recording

If you missed this in-person and Zoom program in April, it is posted on the [UI Retirees Association website](#).

■ "Athletics Compliance" (April 17 program with Andy Banse)

Explorers Walking Group

To attend any of this month's walks, send an email to lesanne-fliehler@uiowa.edu. Details about each walk will be emailed to registrants a day or two in advance. If the weather isn't conducive for an outdoor walk, look for an email about an hour before the scheduled time of the walk. We'll decide then whether to cancel or reschedule.

■ **May 14** (Wednesday), 10:00 a.m., Kent Park Lake

■ **May 30** (Friday), 2:00 p.m., Lower City Park

From UIRA President Evalyn Van Allen-Shalash

Spring Has Sprung

I am thrilled to share that UIRA received \$2,575 in donations during this year's One Day for Iowa campaign! These generous contributions support the UIRA-sponsored Undergraduate Scholarship Fund. This year's scholarship recipients will be announced and awarded checks at the UIRA Annual Meeting, June 27 (see page 3). We accept donations to the fund throughout the year on the UI Center for Advancement website.

Our annual election is underway now through May 15, so be sure to look in your email for more information about the candidates and your ballot. Candidates for the Board of Directors are **John Allen**, retired from the College of Law; **Mike Noel**, retired from Information Technology Services; and **Nancy Langguth**, retired from the College of Education. **Rachel Stewart**, retired from the Tippie College of Business, is the candidate for the office of president-elect.

The April 8 bus tour of the west side of campus was a standout event—thanks in large part to our engaging and knowledgeable host, **Rod Lehnertz**. Rod brought the landscape and history of campus to life, and it's no surprise the event drew such a strong response; 30 members packed the bus for this memorable journey.



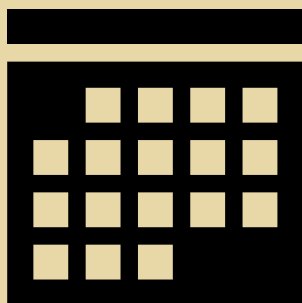
Above: Rod Lehnertz leads the bus tour. Below: These ladies in purple enjoyed the tour: Ellie Herman, Nancy Langguth, and Mary Palmberg.

After the tour, 20 members continued the experience with a relaxed and enjoyable lunch at Bump's Restaurant. The combination of great company, good food, and an inspiring look at campus made for a very special day.



Jean Jew and Carolyn Chalmers sign books as they greet lecture attendees.

We were also pleased to be a co-sponsor of the talk “They Don’t Want Her There,” at the Boyd Law Building, featuring author and attorney **Carolyn Chalmers** and professor emerita **Jean Jew**. Quite a few UIRA members were in the audience to hear the women share the story of the landmark legal case. *They Don’t Want Her There* is the fall 2025 One Community, One Book selection through the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature.



Save the Date!

Join us for the **UIRA Annual Meeting** on Friday, June 27 in Room 2520-D at the University Capitol Center (2nd floor of the UCC). Lunch and social time begin at 12:30 p.m. followed by the business meeting at 1:00 p.m. Come celebrate the accomplishments of the past year with fellow members!

If you’re unable to join in person, the event will also be available on Zoom.

Watch your inbox for a registration email coming soon!

In Memoriam: Deborah Cobb

It is with deep sadness that we share that our dear colleague and friend, Deborah Cobb, died on April 2, 2025. Deb was a cherished member of the UIRA community. She served with distinction on the Board of Directors as president-elect, president, and then past president during the 2024–25 year. As chair of the Program Planning Committee, Deb was the creative force behind the engaging programming our members enjoyed this year. She also briefly served as the UIRA liaison to the Emeritus Faculty Council.



Deb took special pride in the memorable Barn Party she hosted with her brother and sister-in-law—an event that quickly became a favorite among our members. Her warm presence, ever-ready smile, and encouraging spirit made a lasting impression on everyone she worked with.

Her leadership, warmth, and enthusiasm will be profoundly missed.

Reflections

Submitted by Teresa Mangum, Emeritus Professor in the Departments of Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies and English, and Past Director of the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies

One of the many joys of my career at the University of Iowa was directing the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies. I followed in the footsteps of the inimitable Jay Semel, who decided to retire when the version of the center he directed blew up—quite literally—with the leveling of Oakdale Hall. I was thrilled to be selected as his successor, only to find myself the director of nothing and nowhere. My first assignment, therefore, was to work with UI Facilities staff to identify a new location.

Thus was I introduced to the deep, dark, mysterious Mission Impossible process of campus space planning. Every other day, my phone would ring, and a stern voice would say, “Meet me at the corner of X and Y. Do not bring anyone with you. Do not tell anyone where you’re going.”

After several such surreptitious encounters, I was introduced to the lovely Tudor house at 111 Church Street, in the posh neighborhood of the President’s House and the centers of creative writing at the University.

It appeared, however, that we had stumbled into Mission Impossible, The Sequel. The kitchen was a mountain of pizza boxes and chicken bones. A resident writing fellow, desperate to finish writing a novel, barricaded herself in her room. Water was rising in a flooding basement. Wide-eyed, I was edging out the door when Cheryl Reardon (then a member of the Office of the Vice President for Research) said “Give me two weeks.” In her usual unflappable, steely fashion, Cheryl cleared the house, cleaned the basement, and found a budget for renovations and refurbishing.

A few months later, Neda Barrett (then Director of Operations at Obermann and now CLAS Senior Human Resources Director) and I were settling into what has become one of the most beloved spaces on campus. Over the years, I had the incredible pleasure of working with a team that in addition to Neda included Jennifer New, Saffron Henke, Erin Hackathorn, Jenna Hammerich, Lauren Cox, and brilliant graduate assistants and postdocs.

The latest incarnation of the Obermann Center is an inspiring example of the power of invention, collaboration, creativity, and generosity when the faculty, staff, and students who come together to form the University work together in support of research and teaching, discovery, and learning. Not only did the Obermann Center prove to be Mission Possible. Under the excellent leadership of the new director, Luis Martín-Estudillo, the Center continues to flourish and to ensure the research of faculty and students will be possible far into the future.

The Reflections feature is a remembrance of your working years or an experience you’ve had post-retirement. Send submissions to van-allen-shalash@uiowa.edu.



UIRA Volunteer Service Awards Announced

The UIRA annually honors two of its members for their volunteer service to the community and to the University of Iowa. To be eligible, nominees should be members of the UIRA, retired for at least two years, have outstanding service carried out since retirement (activities prior to retirement do not count), and have engaged in activities that have made a positive impact. The UIRA Awards Committee receives nominations for the awards in April and announces the recipients in May.

For 2025, the UIRA Community Service Award goes to **Sue Otto** and the University of Iowa Service Award is awarded to **Carolyn Wanat**. They will be honored at the UIRA Annual Meeting, June 27.

Service to the Community Award

Sue Otto is a former president of UIRA (2018-2019) and member of several committees including Nominating and Programs. She had a special skill in creating Qualtrics surveys for elections and member surveys.



Sue Otto

Her community activities are many and varied. For the past eight years, she has served as secretary to the Mayfield Homeowners Association board, which serves 168 residential units, providing dues and special assessments, insurance, landscaping care, snow removal, garbage removal and recycling, and other community expenses.

Sue also has been very active in the Unitarian Universalist Society, serving on its board as president (2011-2012). Sue also served on its New Facilities Committee and various subcommittees in addition to being a worship associate for 10 years. Service trips to the Texas/Mexico border in

Mexicali and Matamoros were especially memorable while distributing supplies to asylum-seekers. Other local UU committee involvements include Leadership Development, Ministerial Fellowship, Hospitality (team leader), and Board of Trustees.

In recent years Sue has been a volunteer/teacher for the Friendship Community Project where she served as a native-speaker volunteer for a weekly ESL conversation group. Since 2024 Sue has been an assistant and teacher for the beginning literacy classes and the beginning level ESL classes for immigrants.

A very special involvement is being a member of a support team for a Cuban immigrant couple. This team has helped the couple find lodging and discusses the couple's schedule, finances, needs, and issues. In addition, Sue provides Spanish interpretation services and participates in filling out myriad legal paperwork for both state and federal agencies including green card applications.

In addition to her community service activities, Sue enjoys traveling, taking classes, attending lectures and workshops, reading, exercising, and spending time with friends and neighbors.

Sue retired from the University of Iowa in 2015 as associate professor emerita in the Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. She was director of the UI Language Media Center and co-director of the FLARE Second Language Acquisition doctoral program. For 35 years she focused on creating foreign language instructional software and researching the effects of multimedia and web-based applications on language acquisition and cross-cultural understanding.

Service to the University Iowa Award

Carolyn Wanat's genuine interest in forging connections between the university and its retirees led to her many contributions to university-related organizations in the years since her retirement in 2013. Below are just some of her contributions, many still ongoing.



Carolyn Wanat

Emeritus Faculty Council (EFC)

- Two consecutive three-year terms on the council from 2015 to 2021, president for 2019-2020
- EFC liaison for university charter committees and UIRA for two years—attending all board meetings and assisting at programs
- Liaison for Faculty Senate and Faculty Council (2020-2021)
- In her year as EFC president, Carolyn made a commitment to forge a stronger alliance between UIRA

and EFC, inviting the sitting UIRA president and president-elect to present an informational talk to the EFC

Senior College

- Serving a three-year term on the Senior College Committee (2018-2021), where duties included proposing new courses and coordinating and co-coordinating courses. This included a new course offered by Professor Ed Kottick on the harpsichord. Professor Kottick has since taught a course each year on a wide array of music topics.
- Course delivery moved from in-person to Zoom during the pandemic. Carolyn and her colleagues shared responsibilities for setting up and navigating Zoom delivery.

UI Retirees Association

- Serving on the Program Committee beginning July 2020

- Serving as president-elect beginning in January 2021 for the remainder of the 2020-2021 year
- Serving as president (2021-2022)
- During her year as past-president and program chair, the membership began hosting outdoor hikes (to safely host in-person events). The Explorers Special Interest Group continues, and Carolyn is an active participant.
- Carolyn continues to serve as proofreader for *The Gray Hawk*

Service to the University (in an informal capacity)

- Post-retirement, at the request of the associate dean, Carolyn has continued to serve as an informal mentor to assistant and associate professors in the College of Education.
- She continues to mentor former students who are now tenured professors at Iowa and other universities. She has encouraged and assisted them in seeking academic positions and has advised on research, teaching, and service.

In addition to her service to the university, Carolyn is also active in the Iowa City community, including membership in Iowa City AM Rotary. While a Rotary member, Carolyn served as mentor to City High Interact members. Interact is the high school Rotary-sponsored service club. She also is an usher for Iowa City Community Theater, City Circle Acting Company, and the Coralville Center for the Performing Arts.

Carolyn retired in 2013 as associate professor emerita from the Department of Educational Policy and Leadership Studies. She served as program chair of the Educational Leadership Program that prepared students to serve as school principals, superintendents, and other leadership positions. For nearly 25 years, she offered a popular qualitative field methods research course that attracted students from the College of Education and other colleges.

Photo Contest Results

Congratulations to this year's winners of the annual UIRA Photo Contest! First-, second-, and third-place winners will be honored at the UIRA Annual Meeting, Friday, June 27, 2520-D University Capitol Centre. Below are the first-place winning photographs, with judges' comments. Second- and third-place photographs will be published in the June issue of *The Gray Hawk*. Winning photos will also be placed on the UIRA website.

Thank you to this year's judges **Larry Mendenhall**, **Susan McClellen**, and **Tim Schoon**, and to the contest coordinator, UIRA Board member **Diana Lundell**. Many thanks to Hills Bank & Trust for once again sponsoring the contest.



University of Iowa

First Place: Todd Stewart, July 4 Fireworks Over Old Cap. *Judges' comments: Beautiful fireworks photo. Fireworks can be tricky to photograph, but this is well done. The sky is full of color and the dome adds an element that is often missing from fireworks photos. Good job.*



Iowa

First Place: Mark Reagan, Bald Eagle Rocket. *Judges' comments: Beautiful action photo of an eagle in flight with the nest building material in the talons as an added bonus. This is really nice.*



USA

First Place: John Moyers, Roseate Spoonbills on Sanibel Island, Florida. *Judges' comments: Nice action with the birds playing/fighting, and lovely color.*



International

First Place: John Donelson, Stokksnes Peninsula, Iceland. *Judges' comments: Beautiful color and detail and nice symmetric composition.*

Welcome to Our New Members!

Kären Mason, UI Library Special Collections

William Silverman, Internal Medicine

Lisa Searls, UIHC Telecommunications

Andrew Winkelmann, Intercollegiate Athletics



**UI Retirees Association
Board of Directors 2024–2025**
(year term on board expires)

Evalyn Van Allen-Shalash	President (2026) van-allen-shalash@uiowa.edu
Lois Cox	President-Elect (2027) lois-cox@uiowa.edu
Deb Cobb (In Memory)	Past President (2025)
Cathy Wilcox	Secretary (2027)
Todd Stewart	Treasurer (2027)
Diana Lundell	Director and Editor, <i>The Gray Hawk</i> (2026)
Rachel Stewart	Director and Webmaster (2027)
Michael Barron	Director (2026)
Chris Peterson Brus	Director (2025)
Jean Florman	Director (2026)
Mike Hovland	Director (2025)
Cindy Seyfer	Director (2027)
Minnetta Gardinier	EFC representative (ex-officio)

The UI Retirees Association maintains a continuous connection to the University of Iowa and supports the interests and welfare of retired University of Iowa faculty and staff members.

Meetings of the Board of Directors are held at 1:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month. Meetings are hybrid (in person at USB and via Zoom).

Contact Info: UI Retirees Association
University Services Building
1 W. Prentiss Street, Iowa City, IA 52240

[Email](#)

[Website](#)