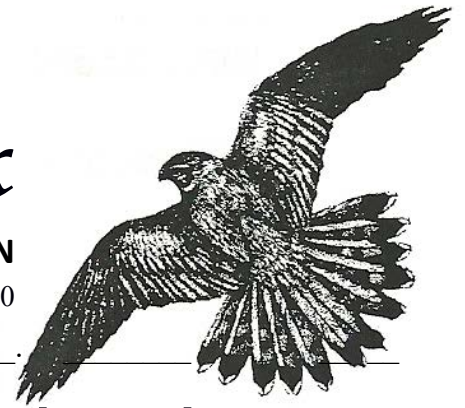


The Gray Hawk

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA RETIREES ASSOCIATION

June 2025 • Vol. XXXI, Issue 10



New UIRA Board Members Elected

The results are in for the recent election to fill four UIRA Board of Director positions. UIRA members voted via email, April 28 through May 14, for president-elect and three directors-at-large (three-year term), and have chosen:

Rachel Stewart, president-elect



Rachel Stewart

Rachel Stewart retired in 2024 after 23 years at the Tippie College of Business, where she managed the college's public and internal websites as well as email communications to Tippie's alumni, faculty, staff, and friends. Before her time at Tippie, Rachel developed and maintained websites for the UI Alumni Association and the Office of Student Financial Aid. She is a past member of the Council on the Status of Women and has also served as a board member for the Women's Resource and Action Center. Upon her retirement, Rachel was elected to the UIRA Board of Directors and chaired the Website Committee this past year. During this time, she also visited or traveled with friends and family to California, Nevada, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Washington, Arizona,

Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, and Minnesota. In addition to exploring parts of the U.S., Rachel enjoys attending many of Iowa City's excellent live theater productions and as many movies as possible at FilmScene. She is also lucky to be able to spend time and make weekend trips with her children, Mara and Andy, who still live in the area. Other activities she enjoys are attending book club meetings, collecting Enid Collins purses, and attempting to finish way too many cross-stitch projects. (Editor's Note: Rachel is not related to UIRA Treasurer Todd Stewart.)

Directors-at-large

John Allen retired in 2024 after 34 years as a clinical professor at the College of Law. In the law school's clinic, he and his students represented clients in a wide range of civil matters but with an emphasis on workers' rights cases. He also taught trial advocacy and served as an advisor to the student-led Trial Advocacy Board. He is a member of the advisory council of the Iowa City Regional Office of Iowa Legal Aid and



John Allen

serves on the board of AbbeHealth. He enjoys travel, which is a good thing, given that his children and grandchildren all live on the West Coast.

Mike Noel retired in December 2021 from Information Technology Services (ITS) after 35 years of service. He graduated with an MSEE in electrical and computer engineering from the University of Iowa. He spent his early career as a research engineer developing image processing systems for the university's Departments of Anatomy and Internal Medicine. In the mid-1990s, he transitioned to central ITS, where he served in various technical and administrative roles. He led the ITS-Administrative Information Services department for more than 20 years, retiring as executive director. He was honored to receive a lifetime achievement award for his campus IT leadership in 2021. In retirement, Mike enjoys swimming, biking, woodworking, escaping cold Iowa winters, and traveling. He is also a recent core volunteer for Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity, building affordable housing for the community.



Mike Noel

Nancy Langguth retired from the College of Education in July 2021 as associate dean for teacher education and student services and a clinical professor in the Department of Teaching & Learning. In her 24 years in the college, she was involved in facilitating student teaching placements across the U.S. and internationally and taught several classes. Nancy finds the benefits of UIRA membership to be many, including the opportunity to become acquainted with others who have had careers with the University of Iowa as well as to develop friendships with many colleagues who had been so helpful over the years in various departments across the university. Nancy has enjoyed serving on the Program Planning Committee and the Awards Committee the past two years and enjoys walking alongside UIRA members with the Explorers Group, whether on a trail or at the mall due to inclement weather—with every walk fostering wonderful conversations. Nancy serves on the Community Impact Council for United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties and is a member of 5224GOOD. Favorite pastimes include



Nancy Langguth

biking with her husband, Brad, being in the very good company of those who call her “Nana,” learning about the country and world through travel, and watercolor classes to help her paint that which she sees in nature.

Explorers Walking Group

This month, we thank **Alice Atkinson** for serving with **Lesanne Fliehler** to organize walks/hikes for the past two years. This month we welcome **Marianne Mason**, who will help schedule these in the future.

To attend one of the June 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.

■ **June 17** (Tuesday), 10:00 a.m., Hickory Hill Park, 800 Conklin St., Iowa City (Press Coffee afterward)

■ **June 25** (Wednesday), 10:00 a.m., James Alan McPherson Park, 1858 7th Ave. Ct., Iowa City (Heyn's Ice Cream afterward)



Explorers at Herbert Hoover Museum prairie (from front to back): Lesanne Fliehler, Marianne Mason, Warren Darling, Mary Schlapkohl, and Russ Lenth.

From UIRA President Evalyn Van Allen-Shalash

A Farewell Message

As I offer my swan song as your president, I want to express what an honor it has been to serve in this role. Returning to the UIRA Board in the post-COVID era brought me back into the heart of the university community. It has been a true joy to reconnect with former colleagues and to meet so many wonderful new friends along the way.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the board members for their dedication, tireless efforts, and unwavering support throughout my term. Please join me in celebrating my dream team: **Lois Cox, Cathy Wilcox, Todd Stewart, Michael Barron, Chris Brus, Jean Florman, Michael Hovland, Cindy Seyfer, Diana Lundell, and Rachel Stewart**. Many thanks to **Alice Atkinson** for her hiking enthusiasm and exceptional program ideas. A shoutout to **Kellie Digmann**, our administrative services coordinator, for her generous and steady support. Warm regards to our two liaisons this year from the Emeritus Faculty Council, **Bernard Sorofman** and **Minnetta Gardinier**. Heartfelt gratitude to **Lesanne Fliehler**, whose steady hand, keen eye, and quiet persistence brought *The Gray Hawk* to life each month—always with care and thoughtfulness.

A warm nod of appreciation to **Carolyn Wanat**—my mentor during her presidency of the Emeritus Faculty Council, when I served as her liaison in the Office of the Provost.

Carolyn welcomed me again with open arms when I joined the UIRA board, and her wise guidance over the years has meant the world to me.

A special note of gratitude goes to the late **Deb Cobb**, our past president. Her constant encouragement and cheerful spirit were deeply appreciated, and she will be dearly missed.

Looking ahead to a new year, I'm delighted to welcome our incoming officers and board members. **Rachel Stewart** will serve as president-elect, and we're pleased to add **Nancy Langguth**, **Mike Noel**, and **John Allen** to the board.

We've made meaningful progress on several fronts during the past year. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of **Chris Brus**, we improved our membership records and updated our bylaws. We also revised our UIRA Policy Manual to better support current and future board members. We implemented a modest increase in membership dues to fund expanded social opportunities—an initiative we may continue building upon.

To broaden engagement across our community, I reached out to several organizations that support retirees in various ways. I was proud to champion the "Eight Over 80" awards from the Center for University Advancement, connect with Global Ties Iowa, the International Women's Club, and participate in the university's student mentoring program. A highlight of the year was attending the Big Ten Retirees Association (BTRA) annual meeting at The Ohio State University, alongside President-elect **Lois Cox**. We returned energized with fresh ideas for programming and organizational growth.

I was especially pleased to introduce a new column in our monthly newsletter—"Reflections"—where members are invited to share stories and insights from their careers or retirement journeys. We hope to launch a travel-themed column where folks can share adventures and tips from the road.

Serving as your president has been a joy. I've loved the creativity, sense of purpose, and most of all, the connections—with you.

Wishing you a joyful summer and looking forward to seeing you in September as we kick off a year of celebrations marking UIRA's 30th anniversary of service to the University of Iowa's retired community.

Warmly,
Evalyn

Join Us in June!

We look forward to seeing all members at the UIRA Annual Meeting Friday, June 27, in Room 2520-D at the University Capitol Center (2nd floor of the UCC). Social time, with ice cream and cookies, begins 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!

UIRA President's Award to Chris Peterson Brus

The President's Award is presented annually to a UIRA member who has gone above and beyond in service to UIRA. This year's recipient is Chris Peterson Brus who will be honored at the annual meeting on June 27.

Chris holds a Master of Science in public health from the University of Iowa and is a registered cyto-technologist. Over the course of 24 years at the University, Chris had a variety of impactful roles. At UI Hospitals and Clinics, she worked in the Department of Pathology, engaged in epidemiological research in public and environmental health, and directed the community outreach, education, and advocacy efforts of the Environmental Health Sciences Research Center. She also taught in multiple departments and served as director of the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program for 17 years.



Chris Peterson Brus

Throughout her career, Chris was recognized for her outstanding dedication and leadership. Her honors include the Jean Jew Women's Rights Award (2003), Lola Lopes Award for Undergraduate Advocacy (2008), and Iowa Women's Foundation Ovation Award (2019). After taking early retirement in June 2015, she remained closely connected to the world of science and innovation, contributing part-time to a university-affiliated start-up, while also rekindling her lifelong passion for music.

Chris continued her commitment to service as an active member of the UIRA, serving as Board secretary (2023-24) and chairing the Bylaws Update Committee (2023-24) and Membership Committee (2024-25).

Chris's leadership has made a lasting impact on the UIRA. It became clear that our bylaws needed careful review and updating. With close attention to detail, Chris identified outdated language, clarified procedures, and suggested thoughtful revisions to better reflect the needs of today's members. Thanks to her guidance, the Board was able to adopt substantial updates that will serve the organization well in the future.

In addition, Chris also recognized the pressing need to overhaul our membership systems. She painstakingly reviewed every detail, identifying what was and was not needed, what could be improved and how to make it an altogether more user-friendly process.

But Chris's contributions went far beyond the technical and administrative. She offered steady encouragement and invaluable support to both Deb Cobb and me as

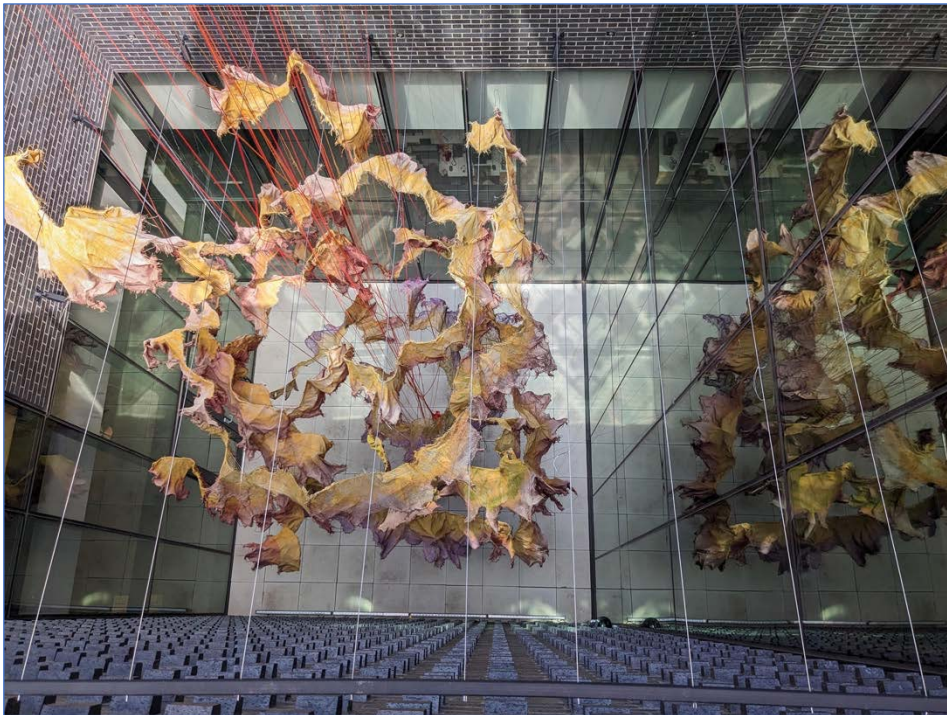
we found our footing in new roles. Her kindness, patience, and professional guidance (including correcting my Robert's Rules of Order mishaps) made a world of difference.

We are profoundly grateful for Chris's exceptional contributions, her tireless energy, and her generous spirit. Her efforts have not only strengthened the foundation of the UIRA but also enriched the experience of those privileged to work alongside her. Thanks to Chris, the organization is poised for continued growth and success.

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 second- and third-place winning photographs, with judges' comments. All the winning photos will also be placed on the UIRA website.

Thank you to this year's judges **Susan McClellen**, **Larry Mendenhall**, 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

Second Place: Doug Brenner, *Spirit Dance* (2023) by Nnenna Okore, as seen from above.

Judges' comment: Lovely composition with nice symmetry and color. Including all four walls as framing for the sculpture really directs your eye to the artwork.

Third Place: There was no third-place winner.



Iowa

Second Place: Roseanne Meyer, Wilson Orchard flower and bee.

Judges' comment: Nice bold composition with nice bold colors. The little bee on the flower is a bonus.



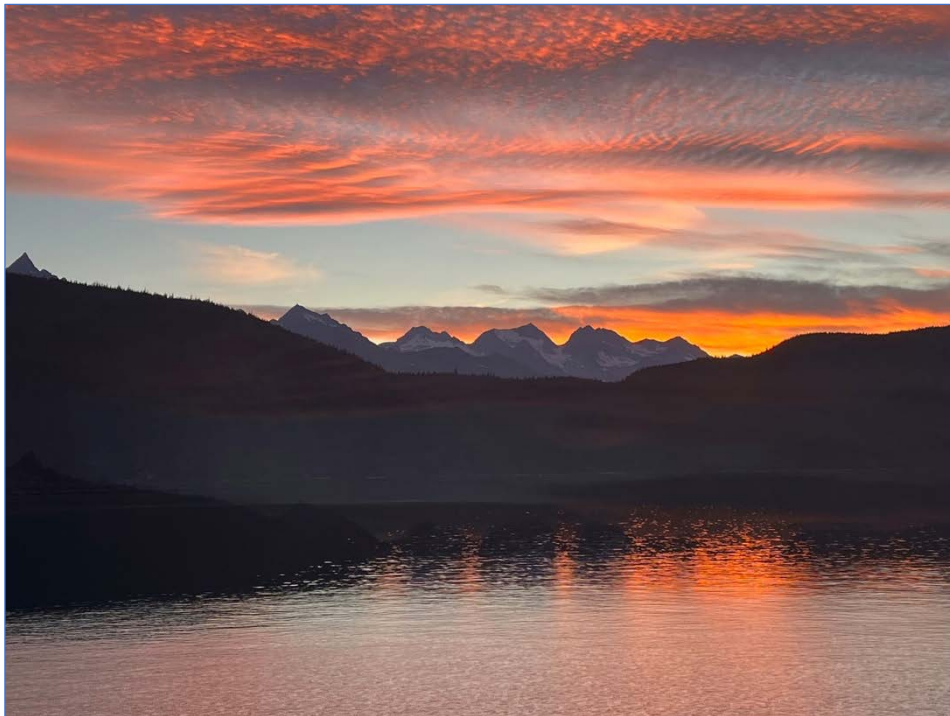
Iowa

Third Place: Mary Palmberg, State Fair horse. *Judges' comment: Fun picture of a large horse. We were wondering if the human leg that disguises itself almost perfectly as the horse's leg was intentional. Whether it was or not, we loved that aspect of this photo. We got a good chuckle out of it.*



USA

Second Place: Kevin Heckman, Eunice Lake, Washington. *Judges' comment: Beautiful color. Beautiful reflection. The clarity and crispness one gets at a high mountain lake really comes through in this photo.*



USA

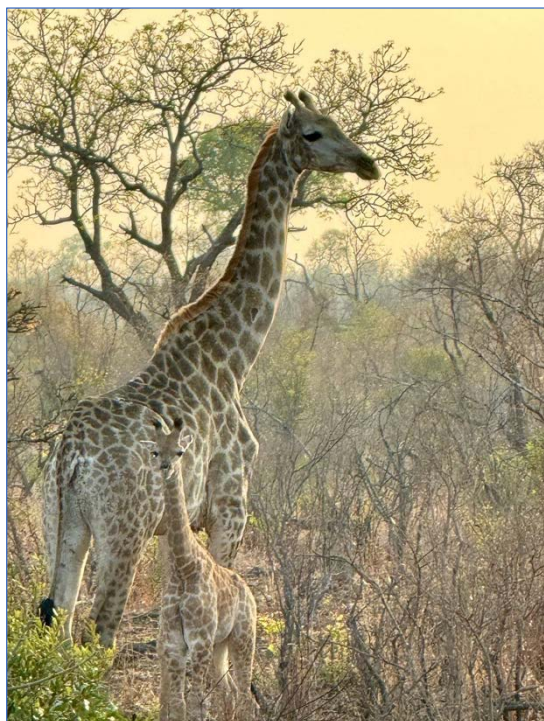
Third Place: Jan Lawler, Sunset from Chilkoot Inlet, Haines, Alaska. *Judges' comment: Nice sunset color, beautifully captured.*



International

Second Place: Lee Alward, Sunset from an Antarctic expedition cruise ship.

Judges' comment: Beautiful color and the small boat in the lower right helps to show the scale of the landscape.



International

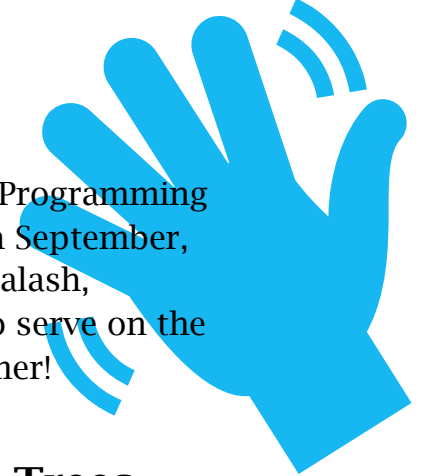
Third Place: Linda Jones, Africa—Sunrise in Kruger National Park. *Judges' comment: Beautiful dusty light on a pair of giraffes. The color palette is just lovely.*

Senior College Courses for Fall

Senior College courses will once again be available this fall. Taught by emeritus and current University of Iowa faculty members and others, the courses cover a wide variety of topics in the humanities, sciences, and the arts. The course listing will be available on the web in late summer (www.foriowa.org/senior-college). Registration will begin on Monday, August 4 at 9:00 a.m.

See You in September!

This is the last issue of *The Gray Hawk* until September. The Programming Committee will work this summer to plan events beginning in September, so if you have ideas, please send them to Evalyn Van Allen-Shalash, van-allen-shalash@uiowa.edu. In addition, if you would like to serve on the committee, we would love to hear from you. Enjoy your summer!



Talkin' Trees

About 30 UIRA members learned all about the special trees on the UI Pentacrest and at nearby administration buildings during a May 11 program. UI Campus Arborist Andy Dahl led the walking tour, giving a fascinating account of the varieties and the histories of some of the largest trees not only on the campus, but in Iowa and the United States.

Welcome, New Members!

Gary Anderson, General Stores,
Vice President for Finance and
Operations

Thomas Vaughn, Health Man-
agement & Policy, College of
Public Health

Gray Hawk Writers

This month, we share one of the pieces written by a member of the Gray Hawk Writers special interest group. Want to join the group? Visit as a guest—you may decide to join! Contact Jennifer Wohn at lwsbws@gmail.com.

Sea Turtles and Echoes

By Omer Sanan

Along with several other guests at the Playa Viva Eco Resort that morning, I started walking up to Tortuga Viva (turtle sanctuary) to watch this event that only happens in late December and January. Sun was just rising over the Sierra Madre mountains in the southeastern sky. A distant violet haze obscured the horizon, light reflecting from the low clouds, now pink, painted the ocean. Big waves still carried streaks of the grey western sky on their shoulders. By the time we arrived at the release point on the beach the sun was up, and the ocean had a golden glow, and was calm at the distance. Close to the shore waves rose like long whale shapes, their emerald bellies sparkled with the rays of the rising sun and then they collapsed in a thunderous tumult.

The worker placed a large plastic bucket in front of us, filled with baby turtles that looked like dark mushroom-caps with little flippers. He poured the bucket on a long thick line. Seemingly sleeping turtles came to life, in a frenzy they raced towards the water. Some waited for the foamy edge of the wave to come to them and then started their race catching a ride. Luckily there were no predatory birds around and all 300 baby turtles made it to the sea. As I was walking away the images of little frantically paddling flippers, waves, sizzling sound of the bursting little bubbles on the foamy edge, the struggle of life, death, the pulse, the ebb and flow of life resonated with another memory, an echocardiogram I had just few weeks earlier.

I have my shirt off, lying on my back on a gurney. Next to me a young technician is quickly typing my information into a cream-colored machine that will check my heart. Its screen blinks and makes beeping sounds and an electronic tracing of my EKG appears reassuringly on the top. I can see the screen only by craning my neck, only for a brief time. She asks me to turn to my left and move my chest over to the edge where the gurney is cut away. “Good,” she says and places this smooth device that is coated with warm slippery gooey substance over my heart. A loud rhythmic thumping and whooshing sound fills the room. I look up and see the grainy image of contractions, the pulsatile flow, and the tumult, just like breaking waves. I notice the little leaflets of my aortic valve and mitral valve open, close, and tremble just like the little turtles’ flippers. The flow of life and the will to live, this little turtle of mine has been at work for 74 years, pushing around something that was just seawater not too long ago. Yes, after all, I am a drop of the ocean still, and I will hitch a ride on one of its receding waves just like the turtles.



**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](#)