



# EMERITI AND RETIREES ASSOCIATION

Continuing Our Commitment

This newsletter is archived at [emeriti-retirees@unl.edu](mailto:emeriti-retirees@unl.edu)

August 2025

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**Welcome new Emeriti  
and Retirees  
Association Members**



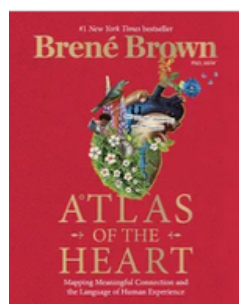
### President's Message

Hear from Pam Edwards about this summer's new "Pop Up" sessions, along with updates from the UNL Executive Vice Chancellor and NU Foundation leaders.



### Wake Up Your Well-being

Discover the many ways creative well-being activities enhance the overall well-being of an ERA member. Delight in witnessing the positive outcomes these activities can bring.



### Book Review

Learn about one of Oprah's Book Club picks for 2023! Oprah described it as a deeply moving story that will make readers see themselves and their relationships in a new way.

## CONTINUING OUR COMMITMENT

### BY PAM EDWARDS, ERA PRESIDENT

The UNL's Emeriti and Retirees Association (ERA) did not take a summer vacation! In academic terms, the ERA created a third semester which began in June 2025 and continues through August. This makes the new ERA tagline, "Continuing our Commitment" a guiding light for an action-packed year.



sessions kicked off the summer semester!

- ERA and OLLI members participated in the **Aging Partners June Tour**. Randall Jones, Aging Partners Director, introduced participants to the Aging Partners organization. Participants toured and saw the fitness rooms packed with fitness equipment and fitness professionals to help participants. Learn more about [Aging Partners](#)' outstanding services.
- **Immigration 101** - In July, Dr. Kevin Ruser, UNL Law Professor and Director of the Immigration Clinic, presented topics about immigration history, terms, US policies and organizational structure and what is happening today. Dr. Ruser was joined by two Immigration Clinic law students who explained how they assist those needing assistance with immigration regulations.
- Put August 21<sup>st</sup> at 10:30 – 11:45 a.m. at the Nebraska East Union, Prairie Suite on your calendar when Senator Danielle Conrad will present a **Nebraska Legislature Update**.



### ERA Meeting Reports

In July, the ERA Executive Committee was fortunate to meet with Interim Executive Vice Chancellor (EVC) Mark Button and NU Foundation Directors, Seth Barnes and Will Jones. We introduced the ERA to EVC Button, providing a brief history of the organization and describing what ERA does with the university. The objective of our meeting was to determine how he and the ERA might collaborate to generate shared value for both organizations.

Excutive Vice Chancellor Button summarized current university events and challenges. He encouraged the ERA to take an active role in helping the university by telling the university's story, focusing on the university's ROI (return on investment) for the state. Button referred to [The Economic Impact of the University of Nebraska System 2024](#) which reports on the economic and social accomplishments of the University of Nebraska system. The ERA will revisit this topic soon; please read the report in the meantime.

The ERA Executive Committee also met with Seth Barnes and Will Jones and discussed how the NU Foundation and the ERA can expand our partnership to benefit ERA members and the University. Will and Seth will be introduced at the September 16th general membership meeting, with further opportunities to meet them at future meetings. We appreciate the NU Foundation as they actively get to know the ERA and our members.

**THANK YOU!**

to the ERA board, committees and members for your support. I encourage everyone to bring a friend to the September 16th meeting to kick off the first semester.



# WELCOME NEW ERA MEMBERS!

BY DON WEEKS, ERA MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Welcome to the 65 new ERA members who joined from April 1, 2025- August 1, 2025. If you joined during that time period but do not see your name, please contact me at [dweeks1@unl.edu](mailto:dweeks1@unl.edu) so that we can include you in the next newsletter.

**Cynthia Agee**, Housing Facilities

**Tina R. Ahrens**, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Business Center

**John F. A. Atkelson**, Bureau of Sociological Research

**Bradley A. Blair**, Nebraska Manufacturing Extension  
Partnership

**Timothy Brown**, University of Nebraska High School

**Walter E. Burr**, Facilities Management and Planning

**Craig E. Chandler**, University Communications

**Thomas E. Clemente**, Agronomy and Horticulture

**Kaori Contreras**, Campus Dining

**John G. Cook**, Athletics

**Valerie J. Crook**, Pixel Lab

**Doris R. Elifritz-Lux**, Nebraska Extension

**Teresa Eileen Fangman**, Center for Biotechnology

**Kelly A. Feehan**, Nebraska Extension

**Marilyn J. Fenton**, Financial Systems

**Stephen J. Friesen**, Facilities

**Ann M. Galloway**, Bureau of Sociological Research

**Christine L. Gengenbach**, Institute of Agriculture and Natural  
Resources Finance and Personnel

**Nabor R. Guzman**, Panhandle Research, Extension and  
Education Center

**Scott A Hawco**, Print and Mailing Services

**Shawn L. Hunt**, Fleet Management

**Thuy TT Huynh**, Dining Services

**Paul J. Jasa**, Biological Systems Engineering

**Elizabeth A. Jensen**, Dining Services

**Shequing Ji**, University Registrar

**Wendy L. Kahland**, Center of Children, Families, & the Law

**Tracy K. King**, Custodial Services

**Kathryn M. Klundt**, Eastern Nebraska Research and  
Extension Center

**Carolyn Kollmann**, Human Resources

**Don Ladd**, Plant Pathology

**Deanna M. Larson**, Human Resources

**Mark N. Leonard**, University Television

**Paul T. Linder**, Custodial Services

**Debra L. Loudon**, US Meat Animal Research Center

**Janet Lu**, Libraries

**Allen R. Lyons**, Facilities

**Kathryn L. Maresh**, Accountancy

**Pamela A. McCoy**, Information Technology Services

**Brett T. Meyer**, Custodial Services

**Molly C. Nance**, Water for Food Institute

**Natalya M. Nersesian**, Agronomy and Horticulture

**Warren Nettleton**, University Fleet Management

**Linda G. Novotny**, University Libraries

**Cindy S. Obenchain**, Athletics

**Audine M. Oehm**, Center on Children, Families, & the Law

**Gregory A. Olesen**, Procurement Services

**Sue E. Ostrander**, College of Education and Human Sciences

**Connie E. Reed**, University Television

**Teresa A. Riggins**, Athletics

**Barbara A. Robertson**, College of Engineering

**Rex A. Robison**, Campus Recreation

**Howard C. Sanford**, Custodial Services

**Susan L. Sarver**, Buffett Early Childhood Institute

**Shirley J. Sato**, Center for Biotechnology

**Barbara Schafer**, Custodial Services

**Kathrine R. Schwartzman**, Pound Business Cooperative

**Claire A. Schwinck**, Procure-to-Pay

**Joyce A. Starke**, Center on Children, Families, & the Law

**Mike Thompson**, Physics and Astronomy

**Melody K. Torske**, University Television

**Steven G. Torsko**, Athletics

**Catherine H. Urban**, University Registrar

**Eric H. Walker**, Custodial Services

**Shelley R. Witte**, College of Technical Agriculture

**Tracy L. Zimmerman**, Biological Systems Engineering



## WAKE UP YOUR CREATIVE WELL-BEING

BY RITA WEEKS

Some models of well-being include a creative dimension, as it is widely considered beneficial. Rita Weeks found that creativity supported her happiness and well-being as she describes below.

*I Learn to Dance in the Rain.* The signs appear frequently in shops and catalogues as we browse our world. The signs are just signs....no instructions attached.

I had become bored and frustrated walking in the rain so I wandered down the hall to a Visual Arts Course provided by Why Art?, an Omaha based program to provide creative activities for vulnerable populations in foster care, domestic abuse shelters, grief groups and now expanding to senior communities.

Our first session was an intro to watercolor. (I am challenged most hours to simply sign my name due to complications from cervical spine surgery as well as my Parkinson's.) the assignment was to paint a bagel...simple brown circle, or whatever you decide to paint. I left the class with a pink donut and strawberry! I can do this!

I began browsing YouTube videos, I googled watercolor techniques and supplies. I talked with neighbors who had experience and supplies....I did not want to make a huge investment in this activity after only a one hour session.

I thought, I paced, I stewed, I ate chocolate, I recruited Don for a visit to Michael's. A plan was taking shape in my mind...paint small birthday cards, greeting cards. Size determined by lack of wall space and refrigerator magnets since we have already downsized our living space.

Next step involved recruiting a few friends to fulfill the art critic role. Positive feedback helps. Encouragement is essential. Inspiration comes in many forms. I suggested they could keep any cards they liked...bribery works.

The rain of my physical challenges continues, but I am now having fun. A five year old receives weekly notes from Grandma and is learning colors, counting and sorting. The black cat still basks in the sunbeams and also cheers friends and family from the mailbox with warm words or birthday greetings.

Rain is needed to help things grow. It rejuvenates, it refreshes, it cleanses our vision and changes our view of the world....and encourages us to dance again.

"More fun to paint than eat (or nag). Now I need to find a fun replacement for exercise!"



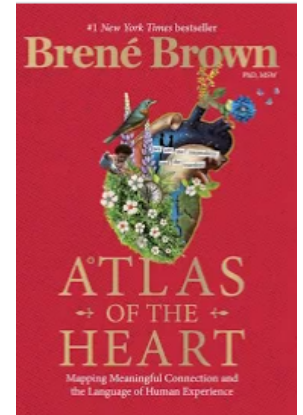


# BOOK REVIEW-ATLAS OF THE HEART

BY BRENE' BROWN

REVIEW WRITTEN BY PAT TETREULT

We often hear that life is a journey and it is the journey that matters more than our destination. *Atlas of the Heart* is about the journey. Our experience of it, including the emotional impact. When we think about human emotions and human connection, we may recognize human beings and our experiences are simple and complex at the same time. We often simplify things in order to understand them. In *Atlas of the Heart*, Brené Brown helps simplify and explain the complexity of our emotions and experiences while providing language and perspective to help navigate our and others' experiences and feelings, and ways to help navigate them. Increasing our language and understanding of our feelings can help us acknowledge, accept, and appreciate the human experience (and its impact), allowing us to connect with ourself and others in a more deeply and therefore more meaningful way. The exploration will resonate no matter what your current understanding and/or knowledge of human emotion, communication or



connection is. Modern times are quite complex, and time moves at a pace that seems unprecedented to many of us. There is often a disconnect between what we are experiencing and how we understand ourselves and others, and our connections with people (we are social beings at heart). We are more connected in with the technology available and its seeming necessity in our daily lives while often feeling more and more disconnected. We know a lot of people although it is not necessarily on a deep level where we feel safe and supported. We often don't have the confidence or language to share our truth with kindness. *Atlas of the Heart* provides language, and examples from real life. This expands our understanding of emotions and ways to help us integrate our experiences and emotions to experience deeper meaning and understanding of ourselves and our interactions with others. While delving deeply into so many of our human emotions, no matter the emotion being explored, hope is eternally present.

In Brené Brown's words, "...we need language and the grounded confidence to both tell our stories and be stewards of the stories that we hear. This is the framework for meaningful connection." Brown uses scholarship and storytelling to help us better understand the cultural context of our lives, the language and impact of emotions, as well as how we navigate our life's journey. Increased understanding of our emotions and experiences provide us with additional ways of looking at experiences and emotions, increasing understanding, meaning and our choices. It underscores the importance and connection of vulnerability to courage, and courage is essential for taking care of ourselves. Skills for meaningful connection are also provided. *Atlas of the Heart* is a roadmap to help navigate the complexity of our varied experiences (challenges and the gifts they bring) and emotions (87 are explored). This roadmap provides a navigational tool to help us on our life journey without losing our self. Enjoy the journey!

Suggested reading: *The Gift of Story: A Wise Tale About What is Enough* by [Clarissa Pinkola Estés](#)



Pat in Chicago with her golden wings!

Pat Tetreault, Ph.D., MLS, retired from UNL in January of 2025 after 32+ years in Student Affairs. Pat served as the Sexuality Education Coordinator for 16 years, and as the founding director of the UNL LGBTQA+ Center (2007) and director of the Women's Center since 2019. The centers merged into the Gender and Sexuality Center as of August 2023. Pat is an award-winning educator; published author; public speaker; social justice educator, advocate, and consultant; and has presented at regional, national, and international conferences. Since retirement she has joined the Larksong Writers Place and swims regularly.

# A LOOK AHEAD AT END OF SUMMER AND FALL 2025 PROGRAMMING

THE ERA PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS TO CONTINUE THEIR COMMITMENT TO CONNECT, ENGAGE AND SERVE. THE NEXT FEW PAGES HIGHLIGHT THESE OPPORTUNITIES.

The following is the schedule for the remainder of 2025 year. Contact Vicki Highstreet, Program Chair, [vickihighstreet@gmail.com](mailto:vickihighstreet@gmail.com) with questions and suggestions.



· August 21 (Thursday) – 10:30 – 11:45 a.m. – The Nebraska Legislature Happenings – Senator Danielle Conrad – Nebraska East Union – Prairie Suite

## LUNCHEON MEETINGS

**September 14, 2025**

**Bring a Friend!**

**Speaker:** Megan Elliott, *Johnny Carson Endowed Director in Emerging Media Arts*

**Topic:** Digital Media Art

**Location:** East Campus Union , Great Plains Room

**Time:** 11:30 am



**October 14, 2025**

**Speaker:** Dr. Brittany Duncan, the Ross McCollum Associate Professor and Associate Director of Computing and Technology in the UNL School of Computing.

**Topic:** The NIMBUS (Nebraska Intelligent MoBile Unmanned Systems) Lab is an exciting place where the latest research and technology in software and systems engineering, robotics, and sensor networks converges to develop more capable and dependable Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.

**Location:** East Campus Union , Great Plains Room

**Time:** 11:30 am

**November 20, 2025**

**Speaker:** Ryan Tan, Assistant Professor, Sports Media & Communications

**Topic:** Esports, the organized competitive playing of video games, where individuals or teams often engage in structured tournaments and leagues.

**Location:** East Campus Union , Great Plains Room

**Time:** 11:30 am





# A LOOK AHEAD AT END OF SUMMER AND FALL 2025 PROGRAMMING CONTINUED

## LUNCHEON MEETINGS

**December 4, 2025**

**Speaker:** Dr. Rodney Bennett, Chancellor, UNL

**Topic:** The state of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**Location:** Innovation Campus

**Time:** 11:30 am

In collaboration with the NU Foundation, UNL Administration and the NU Alumni Association



### Coffee Chats

These events are Informal gatherings without presentations. Please look for coffee chat announcements in your email and register online. Contact Social Activities Co-Chairs, Jane Zatechka [janezatechka@gmail.com](mailto:janezatechka@gmail.com) or James Griesen [jgriesen1@unl.edu](mailto:jgriesen1@unl.edu), with questions and suggestions. All of these events are scheduled from **9:30 - 11:00 am**.

**September 4, 2025**

Location: Wilderness Ridge  
1800 Wilderness Woods Place



**October 6, 2025**

Location: The Knolls Retirement Community  
5801 Norman Road, Lincoln

**November 6, 2025**

Location: Meadowlark Coffee and Espresso, 1624 South Street, Lincoln



**December 17, 2025**

Location: Cornhusker Bank, 84<sup>th</sup> and O Street, Lincoln

# RECAPING PAST PROGRAMMING

## SUMMER 2025

### June 25, 2025-Tour Aging Partners in partnership with OLLI



Vicki Highstreet welcoming participants.



Aging Partners magazine



Randall S. Jones giving an overview of Aging Partners

### July 22, 2025-Pop Up Session-"Immigration 101" Dr. Kevin Ruser, Director of the Civil Immigration Center in the College of Law



Dr. Ruser informs the participants



Participants are actively listening



Graduate students discussed their role



# MEMORY MOMENTS

The UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association Board mindfully watches obituaries and posts information on the website regarding deceased members of the UNL community who are honored with a moment of silence at meetings. The following names were announced since April 1, 2025. According to board policy, a \$500 contribution will be made each year to the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Scholarship fund in honor of the UNL community members who have died that year.

## Millard “Mill” Beatty – Mechanical and Materials Engineering

Bryce Bonness-UNMC Dental College

Linda Green-Pence-Registrar's Office

Robert Klein-Nebraska Extension

Kevin Lee-Astronomy and Physics

Richard Lombardo-Graduate Studies

## Sandy Lineberry-Nebraska Extension

Lillian Kaye Tidball-Gerontology

David Torquati-Spouse of Julia Torquati, Child, Youth and Family Services

Raymond Coert Voorhees-Spouse of Kit Voorhees, Lied Center for Performing Arts

Julie Yardley-NCARD Office

David Zalewski-UNMC College of Dentistry

