



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Message from the ERA President, Vicki Highstreet p. 02
- Thank you to Former ERA President, Pam Edwards p. 03
- Welcome new Emeriti and Retirees Association Members p. 04
- Introducing a New ERA Member p. 05
- ERA 65th Anniversary p. 06
- Organizational Development Plan p. 08
- Funding Opportunity for ERA Members p. 09
- Wisherd Awards p. 10
- Wake Up Your Well-being p. 11
- Mini-Grant Update p. 12
- State of Long-term Care in Nebraska p. 13
- ERA Announcements and Notices p. 15
- Upcoming Programming p. 16
- Programming Recap p. 18
- Memory Moments p. 20

Welcome new Emeriti and Retirees Association Members



65th ERA Anniversary
The inaugural piece in a series of articles dedicated to celebrating the 65th anniversary of the ERA.



Congratulations Wisherd Awardees

Three members of the ERA were honored with Wisherd Awards in recognition of their exceptional service.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Save These Dates!

The ERA offers a comprehensive calendar of events for you to enjoy, featuring educational luncheons, tours, coffee chats, and engaging discussions on hot topics.

ERA: STRONGER CONNECTIONS, BRIGHTER COMMUNITY IN 2026

BY VICKI HIGHSTREET, ERA PRESIDENT



Welcome to ERA in 2026! Membership and engagement are increasing in our UNL and Lincoln communities. I value reconnecting with former colleagues and meeting new friends through ERA. Joining the ERA surprised me with how much it improved my social life—I've never laughed as much as I do at all the activities we attend together.

As you look at our calendar for this spring I hope you'll find opportunities to engage with us. Not everything is for everyone, but you might be surprised at what you learn by stepping out of your comfort zone and attending something new.

Check our spring calendar for events you may find interesting. Trying something new could offer unexpected insights. Enjoy luncheon programs, tours, coffees, hot topic sessions, and opportunities to connect with others. Feel free to introduce yourself—I'm always happy to connect with new friends in ERA. Your feedback is appreciated to help ERA remain a valuable part of our University of Nebraska system.



Vicki Highstreet

ERA 2026 President

Thank You, Pam Edwards!

BY LARRY DLUGOSH, ERA PAST PRESIDENT



Pam represented the Association and its members very well as ERA President in 2025. She always had the membership in mind whenever the board acted.

Her leadership style was characterized by kindness, an attitude of caring, and the belief that transparency was very important in everything the Association did. She was a good listener; a rare commodity these days!! She had a positive attitude and a smile to go along with it.



Above all, Pam has a very high likeability quotient - that is to say people like her and because they like her they trust her judgment. Likeability is often overlooked when examining individual leaders but it is the difference between great leadership and just OK leadership.

Pam's tenure included issues that many other presidents did not ever encounter. The prolonged drama of budget reductions and the no confidence vote on Chancellor Bennett from the Faculty Senate were two examples. The ERA was asked to weigh in on both issues and Pam managed them very well.

We were fortunate for her leadership in 2025.

Thank you Pam!!



WELCOME NEW ERA MEMBERS!

BY DON WEEKS, ERA MEMBERSHIP CHAIR



Welcome to the 52 new ERA members who joined from December 1, 2026-February 1, 2026. If you joined during that time period but do not see your name, please contact me at dweeks1@unl.edu so that we can include you in the next newsletter.

Craig Allen, School of Natural Resources
Brian E. Areman, Finance and Personnel Services
Keith Wayne Bacon, Husker Energy and Power
Rhonda L. Ball, Information Technology Financial Services
Jack M. Beard, College of Law
Barbara A. Berg, Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture
Mary M. Brenning, Dining Services
Stuart B. Bussard, Husker Energy and Power
Rebecca E. Cahoon, Biochemistry
Vladimir Cakic, Custodial Services
Richard A. Cassidy, Information Technology Infrastructure Services
James M. Cotton, Hixson Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts
Robert James Crisler, University Communications
Kim A. Culver, Nebraska Union
Richard J. Dolan, University Television
Beth J. Doll, Educational Psychology
Christy J. Dunsmore, Programs in English as a Second Language
Lisa M. Durso, Agronomy and Horticulture
Melanie L. Eirich, University Television
Brenda D. Ensore, College of Arts and Sciences
Angela S. Fox, University Museum
Diane M. Fry, Human Resources
Susan J. Fuller, College of Engineering
Stephen J. Gamet, Agriculture and Horticulture
Julie E. Gilmor, Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools

Mary M. Guest, Research and Innovation
Jeffery D. Halvorsen, Custodial Services
Judith Hendrix
Cindy J. Henry, Human Resources
Duane J. Hoffbauer, Landscape Services
Roger M. Hoy, Biological Systems Engineering
Gary Edward Kimminau, Information Technology
Mary W. LaGrange, Business and Finance
Jeannine M. Leger, College of Engineering
Daniel J. Linzell, Civil and Environmental Engineering
Lynn M. Niemann, Food Science and Technology
Sandra B. Placzek, College of Law
Deborah M. Quinn, Military and Veteran Success Center
Barbara J. Rock, Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute
Paulette M. Sombke-Hansen, Center on Children, Families, and the Law
Harlan R. Sorensen, U. S. Meat Animal Research Center
Karen L. Stoa, Business and Finance
Timothy L. Terrell, College of Engineering
Douglas L. Watson, School of Natural Resources
Kristy S.E. Weissling, Special Education and Communications
Connie L. Wieser, Sponsored Programs
Martha J. Young, Procurement Services

INTRODUCING A NEW ERA MEMBER





Introducing Ellen Paparozzi as a New ERA Member

We are thrilled to announce that Ellen Paparozzi has joined as a new ERA member after an outstanding 40 year career at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Ellen retired in 2022. I invited her to introduce herself by responding to the questions below.

What was your most memorable experience while at UNL?

Wow, there were so many. The first one that comes to mind was the inaugural ceremony establishing the Alpha-Gamma chapter of Pi Alpha Xi, the national horticulture honor society at Nebraska. My initiation, as a Rutgers undergraduate, was unremarkable to say the least. So, I wanted this to be special for our students. I was teaching floral design at the time. So, some of my students and I designed expansive floral displays in the atrium basement area of the Library. It had lots of light and the flowers just shimmered. We were fortunate that not only did the President of Pi Alpha Xi National and our department head, Dr. Roger Uhlinger, come but also Vice Chancellor Omtvedt! Both the students and their parents were very impressed! We succeeded in making the new inductees feel special and their parents proud.

What was your greatest accomplishment?

My greatest accomplishment was not mine alone. I was hired, along with a number of other faculty in the early 1980's, to build a strong, nationally recognized undergraduate and graduate program in horticulture at the University of Nebraska. By the late 1990's UNL's horticulture program was ranked in the top 15 in the United States.

What are your plans in retirement? Volunteer - Habitat for Humanity construction crew, American Reforestation Initiative and as a Community Advisor for national America in Bloom. I also plan to travel with my husband and spend time with my grands.

Why did you join the ERA? I am interested in some of the lectures/presentations/activities that the group provides.

What do you hope to gain from participating in the ERA? Hope to keep learning and enjoy seeing/meeting other retirees.

What do you like to do for fun? In addition to traveling (we enjoy hiking), I am addicted to Jazzercise and we are avid volleyball fans.

And anything else that you would like to share. Just that I really appreciate the time and effort that everyone takes to make this group go!

ERA 65TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

BY DON WEEKS

This year we are celebrating the 65th Anniversary of the founding of the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association. There will be events and activities throughout the year to commemorate and appreciate our past history. This will include articles in this newsletter starting with the story below drawing attention to a founder of the UNL Emeriti Association (now the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association, ERA) and the generosity of her sister in establishing a bedrock financial foundation for the organization, the Maude Wisherd Fund.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
65th

The story behind the Maude Wisherd Fund

The Maude Wisherd Fund was established in 1981 by Zelma Wisherd in honor of her sister, Maude Wisherd, a devoted librarian at UNL and a co-founder of the UNL Emeriti Association in 1961. This fund has been a financial mainstay for the organization throughout much of its 65-year existence and has served to support and honor numerous ERA members.



Maude Wisherd worked as a librarian at the University of Nebraska from 1916 to 1955. She was awarded the rank of Assistant Professor in 1949. She worked in the library of the Nebraska State History Society from 1955 to 1966. Maude died in 1978 at the age of 94. She helped found the UNL Emeriti Association in 1961 and was an active participant in the organization.

The story of Maude and Zelma Wisherd begins as a pioneer story. Samuel Oscar Wisherd, who was descended from a colonial Scottish family, was born in 1853, in Maryland. When he was one year old his family immigrated west to Illinois, and later to Atchison County Missouri. In 1878, he returned to Illinois and married Alice Hurley. This couple had five children, Ethel-1882, Maude-1883, Harry-1888, William-1890, and Zelma-1898.



In Missouri they had 4000 acres under cultivation. Oscar Wisherd was reported to have developed “western fever.” In 1882, the family was in Gage County and had 2800 acres in production and the 1900 census finds the family in Colfax County, living in Leigh Village. They, certainly, were large landowners in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. By 1910, the entire family lived in Lincoln, at 1821 Prospect St.



ZELMA WISHERD, 1920

Zelma willed her estate to the University of Nebraska Foundation in 1981. Twenty percent was dedicated to a newly established Maude E. Wisherd Memorial Fund for the “welfare and comfort” of the UNL Emeriti Association.

ERA 65TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION (CONTINUED)

BY DON WEEKS

To our knowledge only one of the children married. William married Alta Criswell and we are unaware of any children from that marriage. Both brothers, Harry and William were in WW I.

Maude was a librarian at UNL from 1916-1955. She was an acquisitions librarian and attained the rank of assistant professor in 1949. After she retired from UNL she worked at the historical society library for an additional 10 years. We believe she struggled economically in retirement. In those days, retired faculty generally received only a few hundred to few thousand dollars per year, which led to the establishment of the Emeriti Association in 1961, to address the critical economic needs of emeriti. We believe Maude was actively involved in establishing the UNL Emeriti Association. She died in 1978, with Zelma, her sister, listed as her only survivor.

Zelma graduated from the University of Nebraska with a degree in education in 1920, and went to Napa, California, where she was a teacher. Later in life she moved back to Lincoln and her late life was spent in Gateway Manor. She died on Nov. 24, 1981, and left 20% of her estate to the NU Foundation with the stipulation that the interest be used to benefit emeriti. It was named the Maude Wisherd Fund in honor of her sister. Early interest from the fund was used primarily for emeriti medical insurance and medical expenses, especially for folks past 80. Later, as medical expenses became less a problem for emeriti and their retirement resources were much better, funding of scholarly pursuits and other emeriti activities were supported from the fund. The Maude Wisherd Fund has been a solid and critical resource for the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association.

Edited remarks of the late Lowell E. Moser, President 2009, UNL Emeriti Association. Portions of this story were part of a feature article in the November 19, 2009, Scarlet.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

BY VICKI HIGHSTREET, ERA PRESIDENT 2026

In December, the ERA board gathered to explore the Ecocycle model, aiming to determine the necessary steps for advancing our association. The model outlines four key areas:

- **Gestation** – This phase focuses on revitalizing the organization by introducing innovative ideas and approaches, ensuring continuous adaptability and growth.
- **Birth** – This stage involves launching new ideas or projects, characterized by high energy and potential, though it often lacks resources and structure.
- **Maturity** – At this point, activities are fully developed and operational, generating value; however, they may become stagnant if not managed effectively.
- **Creative Destruction** – This emphasizes the importance of eliminating or transforming outdated or ineffective activities, encouraging organizations to release what no longer aligns with their goals.



After board members shared their insights in each area, President Vicki Highstreet identified five key focus items. Subsequently, a team of members was appointed to address the following:

1. Fundraising for Scholarships – Led by Marjorie Kostelnik
2. Collaborations
 - On campus – Led by Nancy Mitchell
 - Off campus – Led by Larry Dlugosh
3. Programs/Hot Topics/Articles/Position Papers – Led by Tom McFarland
4. Business Operations – Led by Debbie Hendricks
5. Communication with UNL, Local, and State Leaders – Led by Jim Lewis

Past President Pam Edwards will facilitate the Organizational Development Team for the year 2026.

GLOW BIG RED-FEBRUARY 11-12

BY KIM HACHIYA

The UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association is again participating in the Universitywide Glow Big Red day of giving. The 8th Annual Glow Big Red runs from noon Feb. 11 to noon February 12. But you can donate NOW.

Here are the critical information points:

1. Go to <https://glowbigred.unl.edu>
2. Either search for Emeriti and Retirees Association Scholarship Fund OR
3. Type in this fund identification number: 01157580

Note, we have two funds at the NU Foundation so if you want to give to the Scholarship Fund, be sure that you have specified that.

Thank you for supporting UNL Students through the ERA Scholarship.



FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR UNL ERA MEMBERS

BY MARJORIE KOSTELNIK

2026 CALL FOR PROPOSALS TO SEEK FUNDING THROUGH THE MAUDE E. WISHERD RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES GRANT



- Are you a dues-paying member of the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association?
- Are you engaged in research or other scholarly/creative work that could benefit from funding up to \$2,000 to achieve the project's aims?

If you answered yes to both questions, then you are eligible to apply for potential funding (maximum of \$2,000) through the Maude E. Wisherd Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities Grant program. This fund is intended to provide financial support to projects planned or in progress that need additional resources to reach a satisfactory conclusion.

Examples of work that qualifies for such funding includes, but is not limited to, publication costs associated with a book or journal article; documenting the history of a program, department, or college; and/or creative projects related to UNL or the community. Funds are limited and are awarded on a competitive basis. The number of awards varies from year to year and depends on the total dollars available annually.



The deadline for submissions is March 15, 2026. Submit applications and 3 letters of support to Marjorie Kostelnik by email (mkostelnik@unl.edu).

For more specific details regarding eligibility and a description of the application process refer to <https://emeriti-retirees.unl.edu/sites/unl.edu/emeriti-association/files/media/file/grantapplication.pdf>

CELEBRATING 2025 WISHERD AWARD RECIPIENTS

by Marjorie Kostelnik, ERA Awards Chair

2025 was a banner year for recognizing important contributions made by ERA members to the scholarly and physical communities in which they have worked during their retirement from UNL.

The public announcement of the Wisherd grant and award winners was made at the Fall luncheon sponsored by the Chancellor's Office and the Alumni Association and held on Innovation Campus, Thursday, December 4. See photos taken at the event below. It was an inspiring afternoon, reminding all of us of the great talent represented among the ranks of our UNL emeriti colleagues.

THE WISHERD AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE

This year's awardee was Dr. Larry Dlugosh, Professor of Educational Administration Emeriti. The award was bestowed in honor of his substantial contributions to the communities in which he has lived and worked throughout his retirement.



Wisherd Award for Outstanding National/International Humanitarian Service

The 2025 awardee in this category was Dr. Thomas McGowan, Professor of Teaching Learning and Teacher Education Emeriti. The award recognizes the substantial contributions he has made to the international community throughout his retirement.

Wisherd Award for Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities Grant program

This award was made to Dr. Allison G. Stewart, Professor of Art History Emerita. It is intended to support her ongoing research and preparation of a book manuscript that is entitled *Sebald Beham, Book Illustrations, and the Early Protestant Reformation. Dürer's Privilege and Beham's Horse.*



Thank You to the members of the UNL ERA Awards Committee for 2025-2026:
Robert Diffendal, Patricia Crews, Rita Kean, Jake Kirkland and Marjorie Kostelnik (Chair).

WAKE UP YOUR WELL-BEING

Resources provided by Connie Boehm, Publications Chair

For this month's edition of Wake Up Your Well-being, I am sharing a selection of articles that center around the well-being of the aging population. Simply take a picture of the QR code or click on the picture and then click on the link that comes up.



Are you doing enough to keep your brain healthy?

Take our quiz to score your lifestyle's potential for preventing diseases like dementia

Harvard Gazette / Dec 18, 2025



Hold the Cream and Sugar: Black Coffee Linked to Lower Risk of Death

In a new study, researchers found the link between coffee consumption and mortality risk changes with the amount of sweeteners and saturated fat added.

Tufts Now / Jun 16, 2025



What Should I Do With Unused or Expired Prescription Medications?

There are many options for safe medication disposal, explains an associate professor of medicine and clinical pharmacologist at Tufts Medical Center.

Tufts Now / Jan 20

Keep yourself and your family safe. Visit leftovermeds.com to learn the right way to dispose of various medications or to find a drop-off site near you.

800.222.1222 leftovermeds.com



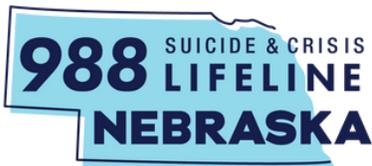
SUICIDE PREVENTION MINI-GRANT UPDATE

Resources provided by Connie Boehm, Publications Chair

Few prevention efforts focus specifically on the intersection of aging, isolation, and ageism that can contribute to suicidal thoughts in later life. To address this need, the Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition has awarded the University of Nebraska Emeriti and Retirees Association (ERA) a 2025–2026 mini-grant. With this support, the ERA will launch a series of suicide prevention and social connection initiatives designed specifically for older adults.

ERA Launches Suicide Prevention Education Training

On January 14, 2026, the ERA conducted a suicide prevention education training session, engaging eighteen participants. This hour-and-a-half training was led by Vicki Highstreet, the ERA President, and Connie Boehm, the ERA Publications Chair. The post-test results revealed that participants achieved an average score of 84%.



Participants Key Takeaways Included:

- Resources available through 988
- The importance of discussing suicide, which does not increase the risk
- Recognizing warning signs of suicide
- Approaching conversations with individuals contemplating suicide

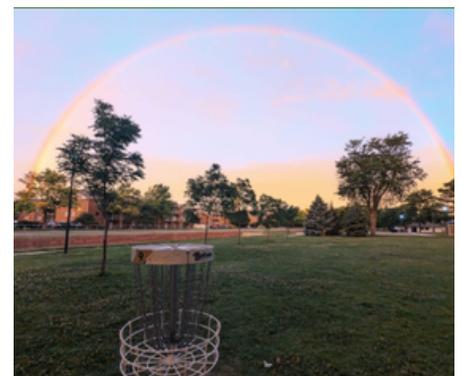


Dinner with the UNL Collegate Recovery Community



Intergenerational Events

Having positive intergenerational communication can lead to about 90% of the aging population feeling better mentally and physically.



Disc Golf Exhibition with the Lincoln Flying Disc Club at Bethany Beginners Disc Golf Course followed by refreshments and Conversation.

STATE OF LONG-TERM HEALTH CARE IN NEBRASKA: CHALLENGES, CHANGES, ROAD AHEAD

This article is from the Aging Partners Newsletter, *Living Well*, Winter 2026 • Volume 22 • Issue 1.

By 2050, Nebraska's population of individuals age 75 and over is projected to grow by 63 percent — surpassing 250,000 residents. In less than 25 years, this rapid shift will heighten demand for care services and create significant economic impacts across the state. As the population ages, the gap between older adults needing care and the available workforce will widen, intensifying strain on Nebraska's already challenged nursing home and assisted living industry.

This transformation will require major adaptations in housing, infrastructure, funding, workforce development and care delivery models.

Access to long-term care through nursing home and assisted living facilities is becoming increasingly limited. This transformation will require major adaptations in housing, infrastructure, funding, workforce development and care delivery models. Many face underfunding and workforce shortages, leading to closures — especially in rural areas. The problem is compounded by an aging workforce and difficulties recruiting new professionals.

Jalene Carpenter, Nebraska Health Care Association (NHCA) president and CEO, leads the organization representing these facilities statewide. NHCA provides advocacy, regulatory guidance and general support for these facilities, while also offering accredited education for long-term care staff.

While Nebraska has recently seen some improvement in staff stability, overall staffing levels have only returned to where they were before the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We lost a tremendous amount of the workforce during the pandemic,” Carpenter said. “The demand for care will always be there, but we need the staff to care for people, too.”

Sixteen Nebraska nursing homes have closed in the past four years, citing staffing shortages and lack of funding. In many rural communities, limited workforce availability makes it difficult for facilities to accept new residents, creating a cycle of low funding and continued closures.

“It's difficult when we have closures in a small community,” Carpenter said. “A facility is often the largest employer in town. If our state doesn't invest in our rural communities — especially around nursing facilities — we'll continue to see closures.”

Small-town facilities struggle with tight margins, and although additional services such as assisted living, nonmedical home care and home health care services have expanded, they remain limited or more costly in rural areas. Closures leave those with a higher level of needed care with the decision to move farther from family, and less frequent visits can negatively affect their physical and emotional well-being.

“It's hard to attract and retain staff when Medicaid reimbursement doesn't cover the cost of care,” Carpenter said. “Facilities then can't raise wages or offer competitive benefits, so they lose money and staff, and eventually can't continue operation.” Workforce shortages also directly affect quality of care.

“You can't admit more residents if you don't have adequate staff,” Carpenter said. “Consistent staffing is the No. 1 driver of quality care.”

NHCA advocates for sustainable funding, reasonable regulations and policies that let caregivers focus on residents rather than excessive paperwork.

“These facilities care for a vulnerable population,” Carpenter said. “We want nurses and caregivers at the bedside, not buried in paperwork.”

State of Long-Term Health Care in Nebraska: Challenges, Changes, Road Ahead (continued)

“Ultimately, the goal is to preserve choice. Every individual’s aging journey is different — each person deserves the opportunity to decide how they’ll age and in what setting.”

Future of Long-Term Care

NHCA’s top priority is staffing. Having enough qualified staff allows facilities to serve more residents — and it takes a wide range of professionals to make that possible.

“Administrators, directors of nursing, and even maintenance and culinary staff are critical to a facility’s success,” Carpenter said.

While demand remains steady for nurse aides, medication aides, licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and registered nurses (RNs), Carpenter encourages people to consider the many rewarding careers in long-term care.

“When people think of health care, they picture hospitals or clinics,” she said. “But long-term care is about relationships, caring for people 24/7. That’s what makes it so meaningful.”

NHCA offers training programs for nurse aides and other careers. Nurse aide training also is available through community colleges, and many facilities cover the cost for their staff.

To highlight long-term care, a docuseries called “People Worth Caring About” shares stories from professionals in the field. It can be watched at: <https://nehca.org/NEHCA/Support/PWCA.aspx>.

Knowing and being trained in long-term care industry careers is vital to expanding the workforce. The University of Nebraska Gerontology Department is doing just that.

“The care of adults living in long-term care requires an indepth understanding of the unique aspects of aging,” said Julie Masters, University of Nebraska Department of Gerontology professor. “It’s seeing the person beyond the disease state. This takes coursework, hands-on experience through practicums and internships, along with one-on-one conversations with older adults. Students who enroll in gerontology courses with the intent of working in long-term care do so because of a respect and commitment to making the lives of older adults better. Like the docuseries, gerontology students understand the idea that those in long-term care are people worth caring about.”

Supporting Long-Term Care

Carpenter encourages families to talk early about care preferences.

“Don’t wait until there’s an acute event to have those conversations,” she said.

Carpenter also emphasizes the importance of rural engagement and support.

“Stay connected with your local assisted living or nursing home,” she said.

“Volunteer, know what’s happening and find ways to support them. The more a facility is connected to its community, the more likely it is to succeed.” Volunteers can read to residents, play music, share community news or deliver crafts from children.

Carpenter also encourages the recognition and value of those who choose careers in long-term care.

“The people who work in these communities are amazing and so passionate about what they do and who they care for,” she said. “When you meet someone working in longterm care, thank them. They’re doing important, meaningful work.”

ERA ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTICES

Congratulations

Charlyne Berens on the 2025 Doc Elliott Award

Established in 1986, the award honors retired University of Nebraska–Lincoln faculty who demonstrate exemplary service, genuine care for students and alums, and dedication that goes beyond expectations. It is named for Curt “Doc” Elliott, a beloved economics professor known for his rapport with students and his popular televised classes.

Jane T. Olson Endowed Former Dean Shari Veil and alumna Angel Jennings, assistant managing editor for culture and talent at the Los Angeles Times, nominated Berens on behalf of the College of Journalism and Mass Communications. Both praised her lasting impact on students, alumni and the university community.



Shelley Zaborowski, Executive Director of the Nebraska Alumni Association presented Charlyne with the Doc Elliott Award at the ERA Annual Luncheon in December,

***Full article can be found on the [College of Journalism and Mass Communications page](#).

Let Us Grow Together

Older Americans with strong social connections are healthier and live longer than their socially isolated peers. ([PRB: Today's Research on Aging, No 44 December 2024](#)). The ERA is dedicated to fostering these vital connections through our various activities. We are excited to introduce a new initiative called “**Let Us Grow Together.**” This activity will showcase the talents of our members, allowing them to share their skills with one another.

Our inaugural “Let Us Grow Together” event showcases Rita Weeks and her watercolor painting expertise. If you would like to try new Watercolor painting tricks or refresh your brushing ideas come to paint cards or mini canvases with Rita. These will be casual sessions of “try and succeed”. Color theory and artistic technique will not be emphasized (because I have not progressed to that level).



Date: Thursday 2/12.

Time: 10 am.

Sign up by 2/11: Rweeks@aol.com

Bring your own paints and brushes or we will have some available for use.

Location: Grand Lodge 4400 S 80th.

THE ERA PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS TO CONNECT, ENGAGE AND SERVE.

Mark your calendar for exciting upcoming gatherings and opportunities .



UPCOMING PROGRAMMING-2026

EDUCATIONAL LUNCHEONS

February 19, 2026 Luncheon

Speaker: Kevin Smith, Professor, Political Science

Topic: Incarceration in America

Location: East Campus Union, Great Plains A

Time: 11:30 am



March, 2026 Luncheon

Speaker: Kim Todd, Extension Horticulture Specialist, Licensed Landscape Architect, Agronomy & Horticulture

Topic: Backyard Farmer, a cooperative television program produced by the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension and Nebraska Public Media.

Location: East Campus Union

Time: 11:30 am

April 14, 2026 Luncheon

Speaker: Tiffany Heng-Moss, Interim Vice Chancellor, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Topic: Rooted in the Land Grant Mission: An IANR update on the Power of Partnerships

Location: East Campus Union

Time: 11:30 am



UPCOMING PROGRAMMING-2026

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Nebraska Junior Academy of Science

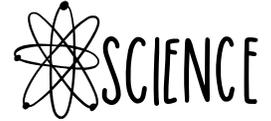
**SCIENCE FAIR
JUDGES**

NEEDED

Regional Science Fair: **March 4, 2026**

State Science Fair: **April 23, 2026**

Location: Nebraska East Campus Student Union



If you are interested in participating as a judge, please reach out to Dr. Tammy Mittelstet at tmittelstet@unl.edu or call Dr. Tammy Mittelstet at 402-472-1517.

TOURS

February 13, 2026

Host: Ajai Ammachathram, Associate Professor, Nutrition and Health Sciences and staff, Scarlet Hotel and Hospitality Management Program

Location: Innovation Campus Scarlet Hotel

Time: 10:00 am



March 24, 2026

Host: Mike Boehm, Professor, Plant Pathology

Topic: Green House: Innovation in Plant Growth,

Location: Innovation Campus Greenhouse

Time: 10:00am

HOT TOPIC POP UPS

May 1, 2026

Topic: Hearing Loss and Seniors

Speaker: Barkley Center students

Location: East Campus Union

Time: 11:00 am



May 14, 2026

Topic: Disc Golf demonstration, playing a round and pizza

Sponsors: Lincoln Parks and Recreation, Lincoln Flying Disc Club, UNL Disc Golf Club

Location: Bethany Beginners Disc Golf Course and Club House

Time: 5:30 pm

PROGRAMMING RECAPS

Please go to the ERA website for [video recordings](#) of the Educational Programs

EDUCATIONAL LUNCHEONS



November 20, 2025 Luncheon

Esports: Engaging and Educating Students in 2025

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

The ERA members engaged in a lively conversation about esports (electronic sports) with Dr. Ryan Tan. Dr. Tan shared details about UNL's growing program.

Dr. Tan's engaging and thoughtful presentation motivated everyone to want to know more about esports. One of the students that participates in esports also shared how much she appreciates the community of esports; it gives her a place to fit in.



December 4, 2025 Chancellor's Luncheon

Speaker: Dr. Rodney Bennett, Chancellor, UNL

Co-sponsored by the Chancellor's Office, UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association, the UNL Alumni Association, and NU Foundation.



January 20, 2026 Luncheon

Nebraska Volleyball

Speaker: Kelly (Hunter) Natter

Participants enjoyed a lunch featuring soup, salad and dessert while gaining insights about Nebraska Volleyball. The event concluded with an engaging question-and-answer session.



PROGRAMMING RECAPS



Coffee Chats



December 17, 2025 Holiday Social

Time: 9:30 am - 11:00 am

Location: Cornhusker Bank at 84th and "O"

Participants enjoyed festive treats and reconnected with former colleagues and friends for coffee/tea and conversation. An engaging group activity was included, allowing everyone to test their knowledge of holiday facts and history.



January 7, 2026

Time: 9:30 am - 11:00 am

Location: The Meadowlark



February 5, 2026

Time: 9:30 am - 11:00 am

Location: The Meadowlark





The UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association Board mindfully watches obituaries and posts information on the website regarding deceased emeriti and retirees who are honored with a moment of silence at meetings. The following names were announced since November 1, 2026. According to board policy, a \$500 contribution will be made each year to the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Scholarship fund in honor of the ERA members who have died that year.

Dennis Berens, spouse of Charlyne Berens, College of Journalism and Mass Communications

Burke Casari, widower of Laura Casari, English

Jim Hartung, Athletics

Craig MacPhee, Economics

James Moon, spouse of Lorraine Moon, Office of Research and Innovation

Joyce Richter, College of Education and Human Sciences

Carolyn Riefler, widow of Roger Riefler, Economics

Karen Spero, Lied Center for Performing Arts

L. Dale Van Vleck, Animal Science

Kathy Vokoun, UNL Dairy Store

Richard G. Walsh, Agricultural Economics