



EMERITI AND RETIREES ASSOCIATION

Continuing Our Commitment

This newsletter is archived at emeriti-retirees@unl.edu

NOVEMBER 2025

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Welcome new Emeriti and Retirees Association Members



ERA Scholarship Winners!

Discover our latest ERA scholarship recipients as they share how the awards made a difference.



Wake Up to Well-Being

As we grow older, staying connected becomes one of the strongest predictors of happiness, health, and longevity. The ERA offers countless opportunities to nurture those meaningful connections—come explore them with us.



ERA Recieves Mini Grant

With support from the Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition, the ERA will launch a series of suicide prevention and social connection initiatives designed specifically for older adults.



ERA: A VIBRANT COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS

BY PAM EDWARDS, ERA PRESIDENT

ERA Publications Chair Connie Boehm selected Community as the theme for this month's newsletter, defining it as "a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals."

When I think about that definition, I'm reminded of something I wrote in the February newsletter—calling ERA "a vibrant community of friends" that "maintains my connection to UNL in new and meaningful ways." Ten months later, I've seen that spirit of community in action. ERA members truly embody fellowship and friendship, making this organization as dynamic as it is welcoming.



Fellowship at the Heart of ERA

Fellowship is at the core of who we are. From September through April, members gather for monthly meetings, presentations, and tours to learn about the people, programs, and research that make UNL thrive--while enjoying time with old and new friends.

This year, our program committee helped extend that spirit through Pop-Ups, short, timely topic presentations launched in 2025. They were a huge success and will now continue year-round. Another highlight has been our informal monthly "party time" at **Meadowlark Coffee & Espresso**, where members share a morning beverage, laughter, and conversation—often forming new friendships along the way.

Expanding Our Circles of Community

This year also brought new opportunities to connect beyond our group:

- Partnering with OLLI: In September, ERA and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute co-hosted an Ice Cream Social featuring Nebraska Dairy Store ice cream. The room was filled with laughter, conversation, and new connections—a true celebration of community.
- Collaboration with the NU Foundation: Foundation representatives joined ERA activities to share information about programs that benefit students, the university, and our members. Their involvement has strengthened our ties across campus.
- Supporting UNL Students: At our November general membership meeting, we'll recognize recipients of ERA Student Scholarships. Supporting upper-class UNL students through the ERA Scholarship Fund is one of our proudest traditions. Thanks to your generosity, the fund continues to grow and help deserving students achieve their goals.

Gratitude and Looking Ahead

As I reflect on my year as ERA President, I feel deeply grateful for this remarkable community—our board, committees, partners, and every member. Your knowledge, creativity, and kindness make ERA what it is today. Thank you for your friendship and for the warmth you bring to every gathering.

Please join me in congratulating Vicki Highstreet, our 2026 ERA President! Vicki's leadership, enthusiasm, and fresh ideas will serve ERA well. Congratulations also to Tom McFarland, 2026 President Elect/Vice President/Program Chair, and to Nancy Mitchell and Dean Young, our 2026–2028 Board Directors.

It has been a privilege and a joy to serve as your president. Thank you for making ERA a true community—one built on connection, fellowship, and friendship.

Warm regards,

Pam

WELCOME NEW ERA MEMBERS!

BY DON WEEKS, ERA MEMBERSHIP CHAIR



Welcome to the 35 new ERA members who joined from August 1, 2025, to October 15, 2025. 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.

Sylvana M. Airan, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Scott Blair, Building Systems Maintenance
Stephen Michael Buhler, English
Richard A. Cassidy, IT Infrastructure Services
Albert Casullo, Philosophy
Kim A. Culver, Nebraska Union
Stephen Ducharme, Physics and Astronomy
Melanie L. Eirich, University Television
Brenda D. Ensor, Arts and Sciences
John M. Farrell, Natural Resources
Kelly Feehan, Nebraska Extension
Kathleen M. Glenn, Engineering
Mark A. Griep, Chemistry
Sheri Hastings, Athletics
Cindy J. Henry, Business Center
Matthew J. Honnor, Athletics
Lana Johnson, Agronomy and Horticulture
Nels W. Johnson, US Meat Animal Research Center
John R. Kammermann, Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences
James M. Kimes, Athletics
Jodi L. Lathrup, Business Center
Donald J. Lee, Agronomy and Horticulture
Patrice C. McMahon, Political Science
Peter J. Pinnell, Art, Art History and Design
Laura L. Romeo, NE College of Technical Agriculture
Douglas F. Rudeen, Eastern Nebraska Research and Extension Center
Yi Qian, Electrical and Computer Engineering
Karl J. Reinhard, Natural Resources
Jon D. Stenberg, Operational Technology
Jeanne M. Sutherland, Athletics
Hans M. Sturm, Glenn Korff School of Music
Tamora Sue Tvrdy, Custodial Services
Donald P. Umstadter, Physics and Astronomy
Robert G. Wilhelm, Mechanical and Materials Engineering
Michael J. Zeleny, Business and Finance



GIVE TO THE ERA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

BY JAMES GRIESEN, ERA SCHOLARSHIP FUND CO-CHAIR

"I am honored to have been selected to receive the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association (ERA) Scholarship. Receiving this scholarship allows me the ability to complete my final semesters at UNL and obtain my Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and Women's and Gender Studies that I have been working very hard for. With the ERA's contribution I can continue to learn, gain new experiences, and grow personally and academically. Thank You!"

--Kerrigan Healey, 2025-2026 ERA Scholarship Recipient

The **UNL ERA Scholarship Fund** was established in December of 2021 with a \$1,000 transfer from the Association's general fund, and various fundraising campaigns were initiated. Criteria were established for annually awarding a \$1,000 scholarship to a UNL sophomore or junior with unmet financial need. By 2003 endowment earnings and contributions enabled us to award the first \$1,000 scholarship. That same year the ERA Board set a goal of raising the endowment balance to **\$ 90,000**, and thanks to a great response from our members we now have an endowed account with a balance of **\$101,129**. That allowed us to award three scholarships for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 academic years, bringing the total number of awards granted to seven. We will continue to increase the number of awards and/or increase the amount of the awards as additional donations to the fund allow.

Please consider including the **UNL ERA Scholarship Fund** as you make your end-of-year donations. The following paragraphs offer guidance on how to make an **end-of-year donation** to the **UNL ERA Scholarship Fund**.

The UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association Scholarship Fund is invested with and administered by the **University of Nebraska Foundation**, Fund # 01157580.

There are **two primary ways** to make end-of-year donations to this fund:

I. Cash contributions can be made by check sent to the address at the bottom of this article, or online at www.nufoundation.org/fund/01157580. Please designate the donation for the **ERA Scholarship Fund (#01157580)**.

II. If you are over the age of 72, there are several reasons for making contributions from **pre-tax retirement accounts** before the end of the 2025 income tax year:

- Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from pre-tax retirement accounts – e.g., IRA, 401k, and 403b accounts – must be taken by December 31st.
- Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) – completed by direct transfer from the IRA administrator to the charity – do not affect income taxes; they are excluded from both income and deductions.
- QCDs must be made from an IRA account, but funds from other pre-tax retirement accounts (e.g., 401k) can be rolled over to an IRA account and subsequently contributed directly to a charitable organization.
- The amount transferred directly from one IRA to a charitable organization counts toward meeting the combined total RMD for all of your IRA accounts.

Please consult with your tax or financial adviser if you do not have prior experience in making QCDs from an IRA. It is important to commence this process in November in order to ensure completion before December 31st.

If you decide to donate to the **UNL ERA Scholarship Fund** by check, the NU Foundation's address is: 1010 Lincoln Mall, Suite 300 Lincoln, NE, 68508

Please note the specific fund name (e.g., The **UNL ERA Scholarship Fund #01157580**) on your cash contribution via check or online, and/or make sure your IRA administrator notes the specific fund name and # on their QCD direct transfer document.



"For a student several hundred dollars short of what they need to pay their tuition a scholarship can make the difference between enrolling or dropping out."

--Chancellor Bennett

MEET OUR ERA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

My name is **Zubaida Khudaida**.

My major is psychology on a Physician Assistant track.

My hometown is Mosul Iraq.

I plan to attend Physician Assistant school once I graduate.

This **scholarship** means a lot to me since it takes my mind off the money aspect of school, and I can **focus** more on my studying. It had also motivated me to keep working hard to **achieve my goals**.



My name is **Kerrigan Healey**, and I was born and raised in **Lincoln, Nebraska**, so this has been my home for almost 22 years now. At University of Nebraska-Lincoln, I am a senior majoring in **Anthropology** and **Women's and Gender Studies** with a minor in **Classics**. After I graduate, I intend to enter the workforce, and I'm very interested in finding positions in libraries to foster third spaces in communities and assist in providing **inclusive accessibility** to public resources and information, which is something I am very passionate about. Perhaps in the future I would consider graduate school, but I am looking forward to graduating and gaining more job experience. Thanks to the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association (ERA) scholarship, I am **better able to finance** my final semesters, thus allowing me to handle the mental and academic stress of that a senior year brings. I have worked very hard to get to where I have gotten, so it means so much to be awarded this contribution from the ERA to **help me continue to grow** personally and academically within the time I have left at UNL.

My name is **Kensey McKay**. I am a sophomore **Accounting** major in the College of Business. I am from **Columbus, Nebraska**.

Receiving this scholarship is more than just financial support; it is helping me set up a **foundation for my future**, starting with my undergraduate education. Education has been a top priority in my life from a young age, and like most young university students, being able to finance that education has always been a worry. This scholarship not only helps me fund my future, but it also **opens doors** to other opportunities within my education. It is validation for my hard work and motivation to continue to strive for excellence in every opportunity I receive at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. It is hard to fully describe my gratitude in words, but I am so beyond thankful and will continue to show that through dedication and commitment to my education.



WAKE UP YOUR EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Written by Connie Boehm with support from chatGBT

THE POWER OF CONNECTION: WHY STAYING CONNECTED MATTERS AS WE AGE

As we grow older, maintaining meaningful connections becomes one of the most powerful predictors of happiness, health, and longevity. While genetics and lifestyle choices—like diet and exercise—certainly play a role, research increasingly shows that social connection may be just as vital to our well-being.

A Lifeline for Health and Happiness

Decades of research, including Harvard's Study of Adult Development, reveal that people who are socially connected to family, friends, and community live longer, experience fewer health problems, and maintain sharper minds. In contrast, chronic loneliness has been linked to higher risks of depression, heart disease, and cognitive decline. Connection, it turns out, is one of the best medicines available—and it doesn't require a prescription.



Connections Within the ERA Community

For members of the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association, opportunities to connect are woven throughout the year. Monthly educational programs, social gatherings, and the annual luncheon offer occasions to learn, laugh, and engage with others who share a lifelong connection to the university.

The Value of Giving Back

Many ERA members continue to serve through volunteerism, mentoring, and scholarship support. Whether recording oral histories for the ERA interview project, assisting at campus events, or supporting local nonprofits, these acts of service create bridges that connect generations and sustain the university's spirit of engagement.

Staying Connected in Every Season

Connection can take many forms: attending an ERA program, joining a committee, reaching out to a fellow member, or simply sharing coffee with a friend. Even small moments of connection can lift our mood, sharpen our thinking, and renew our sense of belonging.

As one ERA member recently reflected, "Being part of this community keeps me active, inspired, and grounded. It's a reminder that retirement doesn't mean stepping away—it means connecting in new and meaningful ways."

Bottom line: Staying socially connected isn't just enjoyable—it's essential to our health, purpose, and joy. Through the ERA, we're reminded that friendship, curiosity, and community continue to enrich life well beyond our years on campus.

BOOK REVIEW

THE INTENTIONAL LIFE: CRAFTING YOUR LEGACY, ONE DAY AT A TIME**BY DAVID ANDERSON**

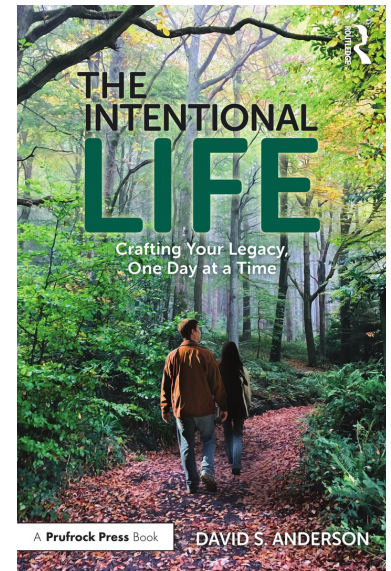
REVIEW COMPILED BY CONNIE BOEHM

“Daily doses of wisdom! ***The Intentional Life*** provides 365 unique perspectives on living with purpose and intention. A truly inspiring and transformative read!”

-**Dr. Miriam Delphin-Rittmon**, Former Assistant Secretary of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, USA

“At a time when our country is grappling with ongoing concerns about anxiety and stress, social isolation, and overall well-being of our youngest generation, this book-***The Intentional Life*** – rich with the first-hand narratives of those sharing generously of their lived experiences – will help young adults grapple with the issues key to their spiritual, emotional and social wellness.”

-**Luoluo Hong**, PhD, MPH, Vice President for Student Engagement & Well-Being, Georgia Institute of Technology, USA

**What legacy do you want to leave?**

The Intentional Life: Crafting Your Legacy One Day at a Time blends theories of positive psychology with 365 individual testimonials from people ages 17 to early 90s, and offers rich insights to help readers discover their personal answers to this important question. Please consider reading this book and gifting this book to young people in your life. It can serve as an essential foundation for moving forward with a rich and fulfilling life. And doing so, one day at a time.

The author collected 365 insights from people who overcame struggles, organizing them into seven sections: optimism, values, self-care, relationships, community, nature, and service. Each day offers practical advice for building resilience and finding purpose.



See our own Vicki Highstreet's piece, **You Can Do It... Don't let them take away your dreams**, in Chapter 5: Relationships, page 233 of this book.

MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

By Molli Stolz, Aging Partners benefits counselor

This article is from the Aging Partners Newsletter, *Living Well*, Fall 2025 • Volume 21 • Issue 4.

Open enrollment is the time each year when Medicare participants can review and make changes to their prescription drug coverage. This year, between **Oct. 15** and **Dec. 7**, Medicare prescription drug plans announce any new changes to their plans for the following year, giving participants the opportunity to adjust their coverage based on those changes.

Medicare Advantage plan participants may also make changes to their plans at this time. If changes are made to drug plans or Advantage plans, the new plan ends Dec. 31 and begins Jan. 1. Once a new plan is selected and enrollment is complete, the old plan will automatically end on Dec. 31. No further action is needed. Medicare Advantage plans offer an additional enrollment period that begins Jan. 1 and ends March 31.

Why is Open Enrollment Important?

For most people, this is the only time a person can switch Medicare drug plans. If no change is made during this time, the current drug plan will continue for another year. Several changes can occur during this period, including adjustments to drug tiers and pricing, changes to deductibles, updates to premium costs and revisions to the maximum out-of-pocket limit.

Drug plans can also be eliminated at this time. In such cases, insurance companies often “crosswalk” participants to a new plan — typically one offered by the same company. If no action is taken during open enrollment, the plan will begin on Jan. 1. Participants need to make sure that the plan they are cross-walked into will work for their medications. If medications have changed for the individual, it becomes especially important to check on plan options to ensure the most cost-effective coverage. Watch for mailings beginning in September from your current drug plan.

Even if Medicare coverage and a drug plan were just started because of a recent retirement, it is important to check that the drug plan is still the best one for the coming year.

The government uses the open enrollment time to make changes to Medicare as well. This includes premiums or deductibles for Medicare A and B, plus any additional changes to the drug plans.

How to Compare Drug Plans During Open Enrollment

Individuals may create a Medicare.gov account and complete a drug plan comparison online. Otherwise, there are a few community resources available. Aging Partners offers comparisons throughout open enrollment; call 402- 441-7070 to reserve an appointment. Nebraska SHIP also serves as a resource; appointments can be made by calling 402-471-2841. There are also several enrollment clinics offered in the community.

For Aging Partners appointments during open enrollment, it is important to have a list of your current medications and their dosages. You will need your red, white and blue Medicare card. Make sure the Medicare card is the new one and not the old Medicare card with your Social Security number on it. Lastly, you will need to know what drug plan you are currently on to get an accurate comparison of new plans. Some people may have a Medicare.gov account. If so, bringing the login information can also be helpful as most of the information needed is already listed in your account details. Aging Partners does not accept walk-ins for open enrollment. Call 402-441-7070 to schedule an appointment.

ERA ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTICES



UNITED WAY COMBINED CAMPAIGN

by James Griesen, ERA Combined Campaign Representative

The 2025–2026 United Way Combined Campaign, themed “**Sowing Hope at Home,**” invites UNL faculty, staff and ERA members to support the health, education and financial stability of Nebraska families. Every gift—no matter the size—helps strengthen our community and build brighter futures across the state.

By participating in the UNL Combined Campaign for Health and Human Services, you can choose how your contribution makes an impact. Gifts may be directed to categories of agencies, known as Federations—such as the United Way Impact Fund, Education, or Health. You may also designate your support to up to five specific agencies or federations, identifying how much each will receive.

Please take a moment to review the materials Pam Edwards emailed on October 30, 2025, and consider joining this UNL effort to support these agencies. *The giving deadline is extended to November 30!

Michael Forsberg Featured in *Living Bird*

by Hugh McDermott, ERA Member

Acclaimed conservation photographer Michael Forsberg is the cover feature in the fall issue of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s *Living Bird* magazine. In a recent conversation with ERA member Hugh McDermott, Michael shared that he and his colleagues are currently producing a new documentary following the migration of whooping cranes from Canada to Texas. Filming is expected to wrap up by Thanksgiving.

For those who enjoyed Michael’s presentation at last year’s ERA luncheon, you can learn more about his latest project at: allaboutbirds.org/news/following-whooping-cranes-by-plane-along-the-whooper-highway.



CELEBRATING 2025 WISHERD AWARD RECIPIENTS

by Marjorie Kostelnik, ERA Awards Chair

Each year, the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association (ERA) proudly recognizes active members with the Wisherd Awards for exceptional contributions in the following categories:

- **Outstanding Community Service**
- **Outstanding Service to UNL**
- **Outstanding National/International Humanitarian Service**
- **Grant for Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity**



This year, the ERA Awards Committee is pleased to announce awardees in three categories:

- **Outstanding Community Service**
- **National/International Humanitarian Service**
- **Grant for Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity**

These honorees exemplify the best of ERA—continuing to make a difference through service, scholarship, and creativity that benefits UNL and communities near and far.

Please join us in celebrating the 2025 Wisherd Award recipients on **Thursday, December 4**, at the annual ERA Luncheon hosted by the Chancellor at Innovation Campus. It’s a wonderful opportunity to honor their achievements and recognize the lasting impact of their work.

ERA ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTICES

Thank You for your Support!

by Sylvana Airan, ERA Campus Engagement Chair



We collected around 43 coats; 71 sweaters and a few scarves, mittens and hats.

Thank you for your donations and a big thank you to Ramona Miller (Ag Hall) who separated the items, counted and bagged them into gigantic bags, making it easy to haul to city campus for the distribution.

Thank you for helping to keep our international students warm, especially the 'new' students who are enjoying the Fall weather and not believing our warnings regarding Nebraska winters. I am in the midst of explaining "goodbye shorts, hello Cudl Duds."

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ERA ORAL HISTORY PROJECT ADDS STUDENT COMPONENT!

by Kim Hachiya, ERA Secretary



The **ERA Oral History Project** continues to grow and succeed! Over the past year, **Doug Jose** and **Kim Hachiya** have recorded **15 interviews** with UNL emeriti and retirees, with more planned in the months ahead. These conversations capture personal stories and university history that will be digitally archived at **Love Library** and accessible through the **ERA website**.

Interviewees this year include **Don Weeks, Marjorie Kostelnik, Jim Griesen, Doug Jose, Jim Lewis, Pat Crews, Ronnie Green, Ken Dewey, Earl Hawkey, Martin Massengale, John and Karen Janovy, Kay Logan Peters, Mark Griep, Nancy Mitchell, Larry Dlugosh, and Priscilla Grew**. Scheduled next are **Parks Coble, Jim Van Etten, and Linda Schwartzkopf**, with taping resuming in February 2026.

In 2024, after leading the project since 2012, Doug Jose passed the leadership role to Kim Hachiya. That fall, they partnered with Jamie Wenz and Kristian Anderson at the College of Journalism and Mass Communications to record interviews in The Production House studios at Andersen Hall.

Journalism students now assist with filming, directing, and editing—creating a wonderful intergenerational collaboration that strengthens both the project and our connection to UNL's history.

ERA ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTICES

GLOW BIG RED: SUPPORT ERA SCHOLARSHIPS

by Kim Hachiya, ERA Secretary



The UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association will again take part in Glow Big Red, the NU Foundation's 24 hours of giving campaign to benefit organizations across UNL.

This year's event runs **February 11–12, 2026**. The website launches December 8, with early giving starting January 12.

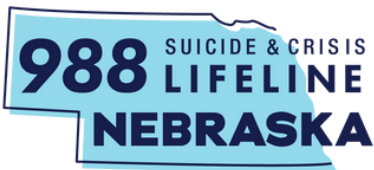
In 2025, ERA raised \$3,225 through 17 gifts (including \$1,575 in matching funds), finishing 29th on the leaderboard. Since launching our Scholarship Fund in 2021, we've raised **\$101,129** and awarded scholarships to seven deserving UNL students.

To give to the ERA Student Scholarship Fund, visit glowbigred.unl.edu, search for "Emeriti and Retirees Association Scholarship Fund," or use Fund ID: 01157580.

Thank you for supporting ERA scholarships—or any of the many worthy organizations participating in Glow Big Red!

ERA AWARDED MINI-GRANT FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION INITIATIVE

by Connie Boehm, Publications Chair



Suicide among older adults is a serious and growing public health concern that requires targeted, age-responsive prevention strategies. National data show that while suicide rates among youth and middle-aged adults have stabilized or declined, rates among older adults—particularly men aged 65 and older—have continued to rise over the past decade.

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 Retiree 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. Planned activities include developing educational materials and presentations, organizing two intergenerational connection events, distributing lock boxes for guns, and implementing targeted awareness campaigns to strengthen engagement and community connections.

Through this initiative, the ERA aims to foster stronger connections, reduce isolation, and promote hope and well-being among older adults—helping ensure that every life remains valued, supported, and connected.

More details and **ways to get involved** are coming soon!

THE ERA PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS TO CONNECT, ENGAGE AND SERVICE.
Mark your calendar for exciting upcoming gatherings and opportunities .

UPCOMING PROGRAMMING-2025

November 20, 2025 Luncheon

Esports: Engaging and Educating Students in 2025

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

Location: East Campus Union , Great Plains Room

Time: 11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Dr. Tan is interested in the relationship between the structural, sensorial and narrative components of interactive and entertainment media, with a special focus on the cognitive and emotional effects that video game components have on players.



December 4, 2025 Chancellor's Luncheon

Speaker: Dr. Rodney Bennett, Chancellor, UNL

Topic: Learn about the state of UNL and interact with Chancellor Bennett. Presentation of: 'Doc' Elliot Award (by the UNL Alumni Association), the Wisherd Award for Outstanding Service to UNL, the National International Humanitarian Service, and the Grant for Research, Scholarly and Creative Activity - (by the ERA).

Location: Nebraska Innovation Campus Conference Center

Time: 11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Co-sponsored by the Chancellor's Office, UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association, the UNL Alumni Association, and NU Foundation. ERA members will receive a registration form from the Chancellor's Office in November so please be on the lookout for the invitation.

December 17, 2025 Holiday Social

Time: 9:30 am - 11:00 am

Location: Cornhusker Bank at 84th and "O"

Bring a favorite holiday treat to share and join your former colleagues and friends for coffee/tea and conversation. An entertaining group activity will test your knowledge of holiday facts and history. Mark your calendar and watch for the invitation in your **December 1st** email.



THE ERA PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS TO CONNECT, ENGAGE AND SERVICE.
Mark your calendar for exciting upcoming gatherings and opportunities .

UPCOMING PROGRAMMING-2026



January 14, 2026 Hot Topic Pop Up

Trainers:: Connie Boehm, Vicki Highstreet, Suicide Prevention Advocates

Topic: Recognize, Respond, Refer: Empowering Communities to Prevent Suicide

Location: East Campus Union

Time: 10:30 am



EDUCATIONAL LUNCHEONS



January 20, 2026 Luncheon

Speaker: Dani Busboom Kelly, Head Coach, Nebraska Volleyball

Topic: Nebraska Volleyball

Location: East Campus Union

Time: 11:30 am

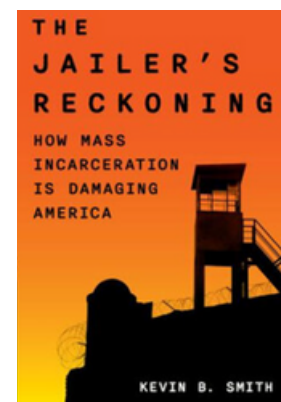
February 19, 2026 Luncheon

Speaker: Kevin Smith, Professor, Political Science

Topic: Incarceration in America

Location: East Campus Union

Time: 11:30 am



March, 2026 Luncheon

Speaker: Backyard Farmer Panel

Location: East Campus Union

Time: 11:30 am

PROGRAMMING RECAPS

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

September 16, 2025

Speaker: Megan Elliott

Topic: Digital Media Arts

Megan Elliott arrived in Lincoln during the rise of artificial intelligence with an exciting opportunity—to build a brand-new undergraduate program at the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. The program is designed to ensure every graduate is robot-proof and fluent in technology, data, and human creativity.



During her presentation, Megan shared videos highlighting the students' many experiential learning opportunities and expressed gratitude for Johnny Carson's generous contributions to the Carson Center. Thanks to his support, each of the program's 160 students receives access to a high-powered laptop to use throughout their four years of study. Students also have opportunities for both domestic and international experiences, enriching their education and expanding their global perspectives. The ultimate goal of the program is to develop transformative, creative learners through a truly student-centered approach—one where every graduate can step confidently into their dream job or launch their own company right out of school. Megan hopes these students will continue to build businesses and creative networks here in Nebraska after exploring the world.



September 19, 2025

Emeriti and Retiree Association and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)

Ice Cream Social

Bethany Park, Lincoln Nebraska

The ERA and OLLI co-hosted an Ice Cream Social featuring UNL Dairy Store ice cream. No one thought to take photos—everyone was too busy having fun! More than 50 ERA and OLLI members came together on a rainy Friday evening to share ice cream, lively conversation, and laughter. The energy in the room was a perfect reminder of what community feels like.



October 14, 2025

Speaker: Brittany Duncan

Topic: Nebraska Intelligent Mobile Unmanned Systems Lab (NIMBUS)

NIMBUS studies how drones can safely and easily work with all people, using broad community input and practical trials.



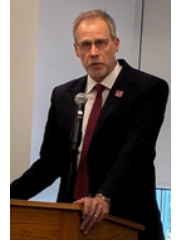
PROGRAMMING RECAPS



October 7, 2025

Speaker: Dr. Mark Button, Executive Vice Chancellor

Topic: "How is UNL Navigating the Budget Process?"



October 22, 2025

Speakers: Dr. Steve Dunbar and Dr. Kristie Pfabe
Topic: Gerrymandering: Nebraska and Beyond



Coffee Chats

September 4, 2025

Location: Wilderness Ridge

ERA's annual *Welcome Back* to the Academic Year!



October 6, 2025

Location: The Knolls Retirement Community
 Coffee and Tour

Forty ERA members gathered October 6 at The Knolls Retirement Community for coffee, conversation, and tours of independent living apartments and shared spaces. The visit offered fellowship and insight into local senior living options.



November 6, 2025

Location: Meadowlark Coffee and Espresso



The Knolls offers plans for independent living, assisted living, and memory care. Additional information can be found at <https://dialseniorliving.com/the-knolls-lincoln-ne/>. The hospitality shown by The Knolls in hosting our October coffee was greatly appreciated.

CONNECTING THROUGH SHARED RECIPES— WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

Recipes bring us together. Share the dishes that mean the most to you—full of stories, memories, and love. This will be a regular ERA Newsletter feature. Send yours anytime!

From the kitchen of: Tom McFarland, ERA Director

Oven-Fried Chicken Thighs

Prep time: 12 minutes **Cook time:** 30-32 minutes **Total time:** 44-46 minutes

Serves: 4

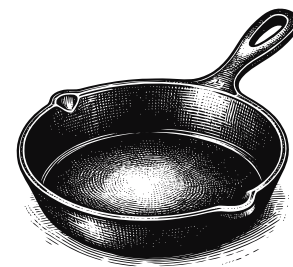
Ingredients:

- 4 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
- 3/4 cup flour (or gluten-free flour)
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper (use less if you prefer mild)
- 3 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon white pepper
- 3 tablespoons avocado oil or vegetable oil

Instructions

Preheat oven to 425°. Place a cast iron skillet in the oven while it preheats.

Mix all dry ingredients in a shallow bowl. Pat thighs dry with paper towels and completely coat each thigh in the seasoned flour mixture. Remove the hot skillet from the oven. Add oil to coat the bottom and wait for it to heat. Place the floured thighs skin-side down in the hot skillet. Bake for 25 minutes (27 minutes for larger thighs) then carefully turn over and bake skin-side up another 5 minutes and internal temperature reaches 165°. Rest 5 minutes before serving.



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From the kitchen of: Pam Edwards, ERA President

Jackie's Fudge Sauce (My mom's incredibly yummy sauce)

- ½ cup butter
- 2 squares unsweetened chocolate
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa
- ½ cup evaporated milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 dash salt



In the bowl part of a double boiler melt butter and unsweetened chocolate over low heat. Stir sugar and cocoa in the butter and chocolate mixture. Blend evaporated milk, vanilla, and dash of salt in the mixture. Cook mixture until thick – approximately 3 – 4 minutes. When thick, remove from heat, cool slightly and pour in containers of your choice.

CONNECTING THROUGH SHARED RECIPES—WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

From the kitchen of: Nancy Mitchell , ERA Director

Forgotten Cookies

2 egg whites
pinch salt
2/3 c. sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
1 6 oz. pkg. semisweet or sweet choc. chips
1 c. broken nuts (opt.)
2 candy canes hammered into bits in plastic bag (opt.)



Preheat oven to 350 before mixing. Beat egg whites until stiff. Add sugar a small amount at a time and after each addition. Add salt and vanilla. Fold in nuts and/or chips. Drop by tsp. onto foil-lined cookie sheets. Place in oven and turn off heat. Leave all day or over night before opening the oven. Makes about 50 cookies. It's magic that these ingredients produce so many cookies. They keep well.

Time: about an hour to mix and put on trays, then wait overnight for them to be finished (forget them).

Hint: I think one of the keys to success with these is to make the cookies small.

History: The wife of the president of Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, TX, gave this recipe to me sometime in the late 1970s or early 1980.

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From Anne Mulligan, ERA Member



Six things that you should do every day:

Do something **SOCIAL**

Do something **EDUCATIONAL**

Do something **SPIRITUAL**

Do something **CREATIVE**

Do something **PHYSICAL**

Do something **NICE FOR OTHERS**



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 April 3, 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 ERA members who have died that year.

Millard “Mill” Beatty – Mechanical and Materials Engineering
Linda Green-Pence-Registrar’s Office
James Hendrix – Dean, College of Engineering
Robert Klein-Nebraska Extension
Kevin Lee-Astronomy and Physics
Richard Lombardo-Graduate Studies
Sandy Lineberry-Nebraska Extension
William “Bill” Messman, Custodial Services
Myron Pudwill, UNMC College of Dentistry
Ernest Sigler, UNMC College of Dentistry
Thomas Silletto - Agricultural Engineering
Phyllis Steward, Bursar’s Office
Lillian Kaye Tidball-Gerontology
David Torquati-Spouse of Julia Torquati, Child, Youth and Family Studies
Davin Williams, Campus Rec
Jean Williss, University Library
Julie Yardley – NCard Office
David Zalewski – UNMC Dental College