

# VIP Club Newsletter

**VOLUME 25, NO. 6**

**www.geocities.com/vipclub2003**

**JUNE 2005**

The Number to call for information on Unisys Retirement Status and Benefits: 1-877-864-7972.

The Number to call for information on Lockheed Martin Retirement Status and Benefits: 1--866-562-2363.

Wednesday, June 01	Board Meeting, Roseville	10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, June 08	Roseville, Program & Social Time	7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, July 06	Board Meeting, Eagan	10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, July 13	Annual Picnic Highland Park Pavilion	4:00 p.m.

## JUNE PROGRAM: ROSEVILLE

### Almost everyone enjoys eating out.

Eleanor Ostman, **St. Paul Pioneer Press** food writer for **30 years**, has collected 600 of the funniest stories and 300 of her favorite recipes out of 4000 that have appeared in her popular Sunday column, "Tested Recipes". They're all in her book titled "Always on Sunday". Since that book, now into its third printing, came out, Eleanor has entertained audiences more than 500 times with stories from her life in food, such as: Having lunch with Paul Newman, Crashing Walter Mondale's banquet in China with Deng Xiaoping, Lola Perpich's persnickety pie crust, and the day Julia Child asked **her** for recipes. Now she has a new **book titled "Minnesota Eats Out"**. This book is a richly illustrated history of dining in this state, **dating** back to the 1850's. Eleanor tells stories and **shows pictures** from this new best-selling book for which she recreated more than 70 recipes from best-loved restaurants. Eleanor will have copies of "Minnesota Eats Out" and "Always on Sunday" **for sale** and will sign them.

## JULY PROGRAM: HIGHLAND PARK

**COME OUT AND CELEBRATE THE 25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIP CLUB!** The VIP Club Annual Picnic will be held at 4:00 p.m. on July 13th. This event enjoys the largest attendance of any Club event each year. It will be held at the Pavilion at Highland Park in St. Paul. The Club will supply hamburgers, buns, condiments, coffee, and soft drinks. All attendees are requested to bring food items for the potluck portion of the picnic - suggestions of what to

bring are based on the first letter of your last name: A - H Dessert; I - P Casseroles; Q - Z Salad.

We will have a Memorabilia Table displaying old Club photos and other items of interest. You are encouraged to bring items to display and share with your fellow VIP Club members."

## ADDRESS CORRECTIONS

Please send permanent address changes to Dick Mullins addressed to the VIP Club at the address given on the label page of the newsletter. Also, please remember that for temporary changes the U.S. Postal Service will forward your mail.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**From: Dale Phelps**

As I write this message, I am beginning to wonder if it is ever going to get warmer and when our wonderful summer days will come. Our May program meeting was held at the Eagan Community Center. It was well attended with Steve Lear, Peace Project founder, representing the Jewish Community Relations Council giving a very informative power point presentation on "Understanding the Middle

East Conflicts: A Hope For Peace." There was time for questions and there was good participation in the discussion. Steve concluded with an inspiring prayer.

I encourage you to attend our June program meeting in Roseville. Eleanor Ostman will speak on a subject all of us like: Eating and Eating Out. Eleanor was food writer at the St. Paul Pioneer Press for 30 years. She has written two books: "Always on Sunday" and "Minnesota Eats Out". The books will be available to purchase and Eleanor will sign them.

Mark your July calendars for the 13th. Our VIP Club will be celebrating our 25th year anniversary. You are encouraged to bring memorabilia items to share with your fellow VIP Club members. This will be a great opportunity to see some of your former cohorts and do some reminiscing.

Respectfully, Dale Phelps, VIP Club President

Sign outside a secondhand shop:

WE EXCHANGE ANYTHING - BICYCLES, WASHING MACHINES, ETC. WHY NOT BRING YOUR WIFE ALONG AND GET A WONDERFUL BARGAIN?

## From the Editors



**Brian Berggren** (651-451-9009) &

**Joe Schwarz** (651-698-9698)

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## DINING CLUBS & GROUPS

### Breakfast groups and get-togethers:

**One breakfast group** meets monthly at 9:00 a.m. on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Tri-City American Legion, Old Hwy 8, New Brighton. Phone: **763-416-3903**.

**Another breakfast group** meets monthly at 8:00 a.m. on the 1st Thursday of each month at Joseph's Grill, 140 South Wabasha, (Wabasha and Plato) St. Paul. Phone: **651-222-2435**.

## Luncheon Groups & Dinner Clubs:

**One Unisys Luncheon group** meets monthly on the 2nd Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. at the Old Country Buffet, Holly Shopping Center, located at University Ave. and Mississippi St. just north of I-694. For information call **651-552-1465**

**Another Luncheon group** (engineering/drafting) meets monthly on the 1st Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. at the Old Country Buffet at 2000 S. Robert, West St. Paul. For information call **651-456-0750**.

**And another Luncheon group** (Unisys and Burroughs) meets monthly on the 2nd Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. at the Mall of America 3rd floor North Food Court. We sit at the tables between the elevator and Burger King. For information call **952-854-7855**.

**Dinner Club.** A **Unisys Dinner Club** meets monthly on the 4th Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. at Champs located at 35E and Larpenteur Avenue. For information call **763-786-1044**.

## MEETING & EVENT DATES 2005/2006

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Activity</u>
June 08	7:00 p.m.	Rsvl	Program - Social Time
<b>July 13</b>	<b>4:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Park</b>	<b>VIP Club Picnic</b>
Aug 10	7:00 p.m.	Eagan	Program - Social Time
Sept 14	7:00 p.m.	Rsvl	Program - Social Time
Oct 13	7:00 p.m.	Eagan	Program - Social Time
Nov. 09	6:00 p.m.	Rsvl	Pot Luck – Program
<b>Dec. 08</b>	<b>5:45 p.m.</b>	<b>USAF</b>	<b>Christmas Party</b>
Jan. 11	7:00 p.m.	Rsvl	Program - Social Time
Feb. 08	7:00 p.m.	Eagan	Program - Social Time
Mar. 08	7:00 p.m.	Rsvl	Program - Social Time
Apr 12	7:00 p.m.	Eagan	Program - Social Time
May. 10	7:00 p.m.	Rsvl	Program - Social Time

Note: Rsvl = Roseville, Eagan = Eagan Community Center, Park = Highland Park Pavilion, USAF = NCO Club at U.S. Air Force Base off Hwy 62

## WELCOME NEW CLUB MEMBERS

**Mihelich, Fred** U Cook MN  
**Rao, Ramdas** U Lino Lakes MN

U = Unisys B = Burroughs LM = Lockheed Martin D = Unisys Defense Systems

## IN REMEMBRANCE

**Malone Robert Joseph**, - Age 75, of Monticello, MN, formerly of Minneapolis, died Tuesday, March 1, 2005 of a massive stroke. Robert was a 30-year employee of Unisys and retired in 1989. He is survived by beloved wife, Marcella. Robert was a member of the VIP Club.

**Schaenzer, James P.** - Age 73, longtime Woodbury Resident, died on April 22, 2005. Survived by loving wife, Ellen (Larkin) of 50 years. Jim was a Univac/Unisys employee for 36 years.



**Thomley, Medferd Gilman** - Born July 7, 1929 in Osseo, WI, passed away April 18, 2005. Medferd was a retired employee of Unisys before he began volunteering at Unity Hospital in Fridley. Medferd is survived by his wife of 47 years, Erna.



**Weller, Howard** - Born in 1915 in New York City, passed away May 5, 2005 in Maple Plain. Preceded in death by his beloved wife, Gunhild. Howard was retired from Univac and General Electric.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **BLOODMOBILE**

#### **Bloodmobile Information from Marion Scott:**

The April 29<sup>th</sup> blood drive at Unisys Roseville collected 35 units. Volunteering were John Dufour, Jim and Alice Montain, and James Roth. A big thanks to all.

### **RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVES SCHEDULE.**

**Wednesday, August 24<sup>th</sup>**, Lockheed Martin, Eagan needs greeters and servers 9 a.m.-12 p.m. & 12 p.m.-3 p.m.

**Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup>**, Unisys MACS Eagan needs greeters and servers 9 a.m.-12 p.m. & 12 p.m.-3 p.m.

**Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>**, Unisys Roseville needs greeters and servers 9 a.m.-12 p.m. & 12 p.m.-3 p.m.

Please call Marion Scott at 651-455-7952 to sign-up.

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

### **Costs and Quality: Not So Funny Numbers**

You think there is a relationship between quality of care, costs, and access to specialists? At the Minnesota Senior Federation's April Medicare Justice Coalition meeting, I got a copy of Dr. Jack Wennberg's speech to the New York Academy of Medicine (43 pages with slides). The title is "Variation in Use of Medicare Services Among Regions and Selected Academic Medical Centers: Is More Better? Dr. Wennberg, a nationally-recognized Dartmouth researcher, uses three classifications to

look at unwarranted variations in care – these classifications are termed: Effective; Preference-Sensitive; and Supply-Sensitive.

Effective services are those viewed as medically necessary, with benefits "thought to so outweigh the risks that virtually all patients with a specific medical need should receive the service." Using 439 quality measures, researchers found patients got recommended care only 54.9% of the time. As an example, in several regions fewer than 50% of Medicare enrollees with diabetes got the recommended eye exam every two years; in the best areas, only 75% got the exams.

Preference-sensitive services are discretionary surgeries. Wennberg views idiosyncratic practice styles as the major reason for large differences. An example contrasts two hospital referral regions in Ohio: the study showed virtually no Medicare women undergoing lumpectomy (almost 100% got a mastectomy) for early-stage breast cancer, while in another region 48% received lumpectomy. Similar differences occur with orthopedic surgeries, with significant variations between the ratios of knee, hip joint, and back surgeries. Such surgeons tend to specialize in a subset of procedures within their specialty and manage their workload to keep the schedule full. The only orthopedic procedure with a constant ratio between regions was for hip fracture repair, a non-elective procedure.

When doctors use what Wennberg calls shared decision making, the number of surgeries is reduced by up to 40%. This process has the doctor helping the patient "make informed, values-based choices among two or more medically reasonable alternatives, and patient aids are standardized, evidence-based tools designed to facilitate that process." Using such a process, trials have shown a net reduction in the demand for more invasive surgical procedures.

Supply-sensitive services account for at least 50% of medical spending and are largely those services provided to people with chronic illnesses, with most spending going to those with congestive heart failure, chronic lung disease, and cancer. Spending levels among regions "reflects the frequency of physician visits (and revisits), hospitalizations, stays in intensive care units, referrals to specialists, and the use of imaging and other diagnostic tests."

The variation among regions in use of these services almost demands that "quality" be redefined. Rates of primary care visits vary by a factor of three, specialist visits by a factor of six, and hospitalizations by a factor of four. More telling is the visit rate for patients in the last six months of

life; the highest-rate region averaged 55 visits, while the lowest-rate region averaged 14 visits.

Medicare spending in high-rate regions had 61% more dollar costs, 32% more beds, 31% more physicians, 65% more specialists, 75% more internists, and 37% more surgeons. The low-rate regions had 25% more family doctors – and lower mortality rates. Wennberg says, “It should not be surprising that the supply of resources governs the frequency of their use.”

The hospital referral regions that are included in the studies are mostly in New York, New England, and Florida; others are in Ohio and San Francisco. No references are made to hospital regions in our most-poorly reimbursed Midwest area; the disparities would surely be greater. And the relationships between costs and quality do not seem to favor the Medicare consumer in either cost or quality. Submitted by Brian Berggren.

### **Social Security Issues**

At the May 2nd Metro Senior Federation Expo, Rep. Tim Penney and U of M Prof. Larry Jacobs spoke about Social Security. At the May 6th Social Security Forum at the Minnesota History Center sponsored by the Minnesota Board on Aging, Tim Penny and AARP’s Skip Humphrey spoke. Penny gave us a great history lesson on SS and its changes over the years. Some of his concerns were the change in life expectancy from 60 to almost eighty now, and the number of workers supporting retirees decreasing from 16 in 1950 to 3.6 now, and 2 in 2030 (other projections say 2 in 2035 by Mitch Pearlstein and past 2050 by others). Tim’s bigger concern was the current savings rate; only 26% have IRAs and they only average \$13,000. His endorsement of private accounts is a way to force increased savings.

Larry Jacobs has appeared on many news programs and given rather abbreviated comments. At the Expo, he had 15 minutes that he used to explain many of the funny numbers that are used by all who speak on the issue. The easy one was that private accounts do not have anything to do with the fiscal problems or fixes to Social Security. His discussion of projections gave the real lesson. He said projections used by those promoting personal accounts have been using the most optimistic projections of economic growth (7-9%) for the new accounts, while the numbers used to determine the time when SS account funds will not be able to pay 100% of planned benefits use the lowest estimates of growth (2-3%). The big projection guess is not just with economic growth, but also with immigration, birth rates, and many other factors. Making

decisions in haste based on such projections simply does not lead to good policy.

Skip Humphrey suggests broadening the SS tax, diversifying the trust fund, and creating savings incentives outside SS. He said private accounts weaken SS, put the benefits of future retirees at risk, and do nothing for the long-term security of either the retirees or SS. His explanation of Bush’s Progressive Price Indexing showed that retirees would get a shrinking future benefit, and over time all would receive about the same benefit – effectively eliminating any progressivity in payouts that is most critical to the poor. Those with average earnings of \$37,000 would see a benefit cut of 29%; those earning \$58,000 would see a cut of 43%. He also reminded us that Social Security is only one part of a secure retirement; we should have a pension with additional savings, health insurance, and for many, some continued earnings. The MN History Center event was taped for review at the upcoming 2005 White House Conference on Aging and many of us in the audience had an opportunity to testify. Submitted by Brian Berggren.

### **Medicare and Drug Issues**

The MnSenFed Metro Expo in May had a Pfizer vice-president of sales Dr. Peter Rost as keynote speaker. Leaders from the state’s leading healthcare payers/providers also addressed the seniors. Dr. Rost told us that he thought the big drug companies were making a big mistake and a bad business decision in trying to maintain high drug prices. His experience in Europe was that they could make more money by lowering drug prices and making good drugs available to more who need them. He explained that in Europe the countries all negotiate drug prices, and even in the U.S. the VA and PBMs (pharmacy benefit managers) get rebates. Only the poor and uninsured pay full price.

Dr. Rost also said that in Europe all drugs are sold only in factory bottles or blister packs; no middlemen have access to the drug distribution network. In the U.S. secondary drug traders are heavily involved in our drug distribution network, are licensed by the individual states, and are only required to show a driver’s license and pay a \$1,000 fee.

The healthcare industry speakers ranged from the absurd to the superb. One representative said we had nothing to fear about our healthcare but fear itself – I think we need to fear costs, poor quality, and our representatives in D.C. that impose the bad laws and rules on us. Another speaker left the whole audience in stunned silence when he said his operation would give us more options, more benefits, and lower costs! Two other speakers were realistically

informative. Donna Zimmerman of Health Partners spoke of their quality program and helped us all understand that fee-for-service medicine does not measure or reward quality. Health Partners is using their electronic medical record system to better manage risk factors for diabetes and heart disease, and significantly improving outcomes for their Medicare and other patients. Submitted by Brian Berggren.

## **TRAVEL**

### **WINNIPEG, HERE WE COME!**

The State Fair won't be the only great Minnesota get together this year for VIP Club members and their friends. We're headed via motor coach for Winnipeg from August 5-8, and hope to greet you on board. The sights we'll see include the famous Folklorama Cultural Festival, a Winnipeg City Tour, Riverboat Dinner Cruise, the French Quarter and Cathedral, Royal Canadian Mint, plus the Assiniboine Park Formal Garden, Manitoba Legislative Building, and Museum of Man and Nature. The first night includes an optional visit to the uniquely decorated Club Regent Casino. Also included are three nights' accommodations in first class hotels, and six meals. Our professional tour escort will guide us every step of the way, to make sure we don't miss a thing. Prices are \$399 per person (Double), \$379 per person (Triple, Quad), \$499 (Single). Full payment is due before June 25th. Call in your reservations early! See the flyer for this trip on our website, [www/geocities.com/vipclub2003/index.html](http://www.geocities.com/vipclub2003/index.html). Phone Yvonne Cecchini at 651-423-9196 or email [ycecchini@juno.com](mailto:ycecchini@juno.com) to sign up.

## **NOSTALGIA**

### **WHAT'S IN A SYMBOL ANYWAY**

by Glen Hambleton

I recently set about reducing some of the flotsam and jetsam I've collected during my journey through life. Among those articles were a host of 35 mm slides taken back when that was the "state of the art" for recording images for posterity. In the several thousand images, meaningless to any one but me, was a slide indicating in very graphic form just how much the world has changed.

Way back in 1975 (which really seems like just yesterday), I was a participant in a trade show of corporate products in Moscow, USSR. A Univac 1106 multiprocessor along with several products from New Holland and other divisions were there to show prospective new clients.

There, flying over the exhibit hall were the flags of the USA, the USSR, and the Sperry Star silhouetted

against a bright blue sky. Each of those symbols bring to the viewer a whole set of emotions and differing reactions. Only one of the organizations those symbols represented survives with any similarity to what it stood for at that time.

It was my intent; when I looked at that slide with those three symbols to include it with this article. That was my intent, however, since the trash man has left with several shopping bags of slides, I'm unable to locate that slide. Oh well, what's in a symbol anyway?

When I joined "the company" in 1959, I went to work for RRU and most of the furniture and other office equipment had ERA inventory tags on them. For a while later on the company was just called UNIVAC, and I worked for the Defense Systems Division. I transferred for a time to the Federal Systems Division, which sold commercial products to the defense industry. Soon, however, the company became the Sperry Corporation, and each division included Sperry in its title, so I worked for Sperry UNIVAC then. If my memory serves me correctly, in 1975 the theme for Sperry was "synergism" and in addition to New Holland and UNIVAC there were Remington, Gyroscope and Ford Instrument divisions as well. By my early retirement in 1987, I was working for UNISYS.

In the course of a couple of international assignments, I worked for the Sperry Rand International Trade (SRIT) Division and wondered if we would ever have a Southern Hemisphere International Trade group! But, like I said earlier, what's in a symbol anyway?

## **THE LIGHTER SIDE**

An elderly couple had dinner at another couple's house, and after eating, the wives left the table and went into the kitchen. The two gentlemen were talking, and one said, "Last night we went out to a new restaurant and it was really great. I would recommend it very highly." The other man said, "What is the name of the restaurant?" The first man thought and thought and finally said, "What is the name of that flower you give to someone you love? You know... the one that's red and has thorns." "Do you mean a rose?" "Yes, that's the one," replied the man. He then turned towards the kitchen and yelled, "Rose, what's the name of that restaurant we went to last night?"

It's not the number of hours you put in,  
but what you put in the hours that count.

**VIP CLUB – MS 4003  
P.O. BOX 64942  
ST PAUL MN 55164**

**VIP CLUB OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS FOR THE YEAR 2004**

\* = A/C 651, + = A/C 612, @ = A/C 763, # = A/C 952

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:  
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Jim Larson \*698-3963  
Sunshine.....Jim Larson \*698-3963  
Lynn Farris Lindholm \*484-1030  
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UNISYS Liaison, Roseville ..... Judy Cognetta \*635-6563  
Printing & Mailing UNISYS Print Shop, Roseville .....

Lockheed Martin, Eagan Liaison ..... Sheri Grone \*456-2210

**Directions to Eagan Community Center.** Take Hwy 35E south or north to Pilot Knob Road. Turn left (north) on Pilot Knob Road. Turn left on Central Parkway (which is also the North entrance to Lockheed). The Eagan Community Center is at 1501 Central Parkway.

**Directions to Unisys in Roseville.** Take Hwy 35W south, or north, to the Industrial Way / St. Anthony Blvd off ramp. If coming north or south on Hwy 35E go west on Hwy 36 which will take you to the Industrial Way / St. Anthony Blvd. off ramp of 35W (Hwy 36 becomes Hwy 35W where it joins Hwy 35W). Go north on St. Anthony Blvd. to Walnut St. (the first street on the right). Turn right and go to Highcrest which is the first place where you can turn left. Past the stop sign. Bldg 3 is on the right. Gate 5 is in the center of the building.

From Hwy 280 northbound, use left lane exit just past Cty Rd B for Terminal road access (St Croix St.). Turn left at Terminal Rd, then turn right at Highcrest Rd to building entrance.