

VIP Club Newsletter

VOLUME 39, NO. 04
July/August 2019
<http://vipclubmn.org>

FYI: In 2020 the Club will celebrate 40 years of operations, thanks to [founder Millie Gignac](#)! ASK not what the Club can do for you; ASK what you can do for the Club to recognize our celebratory 40th year of friendships!

AUGUST PROGRAM Your Social Time!

The Club Board has scheduled no specific activities for this month, we suggest that you choose to join a friendship breakfast or lunch meeting listed in the page 8 Periodic Social Groups.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM(s) Our Legacy and You!

September 17th, 9:30 AM to noon: All Club members are invited to join a Legacy discussion and planning session at the Lawshe Memorial Museum in S St Paul. The Club will provide coffee, muffins, and Danish rolls. What should we be doing during 2020? Should we end our artifact/relic collecting?

Background: In October 2005, Richard 'Ole' Olson asked the Club's Board to document our Information Technology history. Volunteers formed a committee consisting of LMCO employees and interested Club members. The first committee meeting was January 2006 at the Charles Babbage Institute, we set general objectives of gathering artifacts and career summaries and a goal of making the unknown stories of ERA and subsequent companies known to the public. We started vipclubmn.org to publicize our stories, a second step was the Minnesota sesquicentennial displays in 2008. When LMCO decided to close their Eagan facility, Dakota County Historical Society agreed to become an artifact repository and permanent exhibit of our artifacts and history. Club volunteers began the arduous task of identifying thousands of images.

Current Activities: Through the fund-raising efforts of Dale Weeks, the Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA), et al' -Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) began developing a documentary about Minnesota's role in the onset of the Information Technology industry. TPT has interviewed two dozen industry pioneers, half of those have had direct ERA/UNIVAC/Sperry/Unisys/LMCO experiences.

TPT is now in the second phase of documentary production. The Club board is in contact with the TPT producers; our goal is to host an open house documentary preview in September or October. As we go to press, *date and venue are yet open – stay tuned!*

Future: At the 17 September meeting, we'll plan what to do relative to the Legacy initiative as part of the VIP Club's 40th Anniversary celebrations during 2020.

By *Lowell Benson*

OTHER UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Pick a Golfing Date – A compilation of weekday rates from many courses is now available: <http://vipclubmn.org/Temp/GolfCourseRates-2019.pdf>.

Submitted by *Keith Behnke*.

August 7th – 10 AM **VIP Club** Board Meeting in the visitor's conference room at Unisys, Eagan. Members are welcome to sit in – inform the President the week before if you'd like to bring an issue to us (or listen in.)

September 11th – 9 AM Roseville retirees' 313th meeting and buffet breakfast at the New Brighton Eagles Club. Send a note to Marv Brown at mdbrib@comcast.net or call him 763-416-3903 **before September 7th** if you plan to attend.

October 2nd - 10 AM **VIP Club** Board Meeting in the visitor's conference room at Unisys, Eagan.

November 6th - Mark your calendar for the UNIHOGS and Technologists reunion at Casper's in Eagan. This annual gathering's history pre-dates the VIP Club; originally a group of 1108 and 490 engineers who left UNISYS Roseville to form other companies - <http://vipclubmn.org/Social.html#Hogs>. We have invited a speaker from the Minnesota High Technology Association. Luncheon cost is just \$15 per person, several variations available on Casper's menu.

December 5th – 11 AM. Annual UNIVAC Old Timers' reunion at the Lost Spur; remember when J. Markfelder and E. Lillestrand hosted us at the Ft. Snelling Officer's club?

2020 venues reserved – Jan. 5th, Apr 8th, & May 1st.



THE VIP CLUB IS FOR RETIREES AND FORMER EMPLOYEES OF OUR GREAT HERITAGE COMPANIES

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Much to my regret later in life, I was not too much of a fan of history in high school nor college. To be sure, I took all the classes that were required - US, world, and state history (big secret – I grew up in Wisconsin and never really had to learn Minnesota history) and plodded thru like all my fellow students that just wanted to get the class over.



Over the years, I have come to regret my casual attitude to history. So many things happen in our society are the links of a chain that extends through time. Understanding those old links is important in understanding the present reality that we all must deal with and I have come to understand that if you didn't get it back then, you might not get it now.

So, I need to confess that all mini philosophizing was evoked by the VIP picnic. This was a great time – lots of retirees reconnecting with former work associates, sharing old memories and stories (some of which were entertaining, but not printable) and just enjoying old relationships. Lots of remembering the tough problems solved and big projects completed. We had a visitor, photojournalist Jim Kron from TPT, who was shooting some video for their upcoming documentary about the early computer industry in Minnesota. Stay tuned for more data about that later this summer.

But back to history – listening to those conversations was listening to history that has been made by the folks who were a vital part of the process. Maybe not the kind of history that gets memorialized into textbooks a hundred years from now but, the kind that moves forward in hundreds of everyday steps that together produced important changes for the better in our world. As a company, we were not perfect, but there was a collective drive to success, excellence and fairness that I personally have never seen matched. Those picnic stories, at their heart, showed that most of you felt the same way. Amazing how a retiree picnic can make one feel so proud of their fellow workers.

Harvey Taipale, VIP Club President.

SOCIAL REPORTS & ARTICLES

Roseville Good Old Days Re-cap:

This year we estimate that about 275 people attended the Roseville Good Old Days Reunion at the Mermaid on May 3rd.

We had 248 pre-registered but 47 did not pick up their name tags so some were not in attendance. We had 41 attendees who signed in but had not pre-registered which would bring the documented attendance to 242.



But there are always people who just don't pick up their pre-printed name tag and make one but don't sign the sign-up sheet and those who just come and join the fun but don't bother with signing in.

Dave Wilhelm's 2019 snapshots are on-line at <https://photos.app.goo.gl/uJPq9Yjs4GXbLWpc7>.

Previous year snapshots are linked from <http://vipclubmn.org/Social.html#RGOD>.

We ended up with \$302.00 in the donation jar, so I am comfortable with the 275 number. We have reserved the Mermaid's Atlantis Ballroom for May 1st, 2020 – mark your calendars now! Byline *Paul Dickson*

Syttende Mai Re-cap: A Consul General, a Sheriff, and not one but two Ambassadors - Oh My! By all accounts the 2019 Syttende Mai lunch/program was an over-the-top success. And that doesn't even include the English Professor whose thesis was on Beowulf (from the time of the Danelaw in England) and whose special interest is the Eddas. On top of that we had press coverage for the first time ever. You can read the Dakota Tribune Sun This Week article at https://www.hometownsource.com/sun_thisweek/norwegian-ambassador-helps-eagan-residents-celebrate-syttende-mai/article_8e461058-7cd8-11e9-958f-4b4babb27a4c.html.

Casper's back room was a 'full-house'! Seven tables set for 8 people had to have chairs added resulting in 9 per table. The featured speaker was Kåre R. Aas, Norwegian Ambassador to the U.S. He spoke about Norway's initiatives to reduce emissions by electrifying their many harbor craft, railways, and automobiles. He noted that most of their electricity is from hydro-electric plants (no nuclear plants), and they are part of a Scandinavian power grid. In response to an audience question, he spoke of his country's role in peace keeping arbitration discussions, the most recent relative to Venezuelan conflicts. Amb. Aas also mentioned that he and his wife were both from beyond the Arctic Circle (northerners like us!), with his wife hailing from Kirkenes, the last town before the border with Russia. Other notables by name were Hennepin County Sheriff (Ret.), Rich Stanek, former U.S. Ambassador to Norway Samuel Heins, Honorary Consul General Eivind Heiberg, and Metropolitan State Professor Lawrence Moe.

Thanks to Dale Torgerson for the Casper's arrangements and being the emcee; to Dick Lundgren for the speaker invitations; and to Dave Carter and Dale Phelps for managing the check-in table. Event snapshots are on page 6. The 2020 date is set for Friday May 15th. Byline *R. Lundgren*

Annual Picnic Recap: What did you think of the Eagan location? The board would welcome feedback compared to our prior two decades at the Highland Park facility. Two individuals were instrumental in making this year's picnic a success. 1) Membership Director Gish Devlaminck who arranged the use contract with the City of Eagan and acquired the necessary insurance to allow attendees to have beer. 2) John Westergren who bought all the food, coordinated the volunteer cooks, and did much of the kitchen work.



Thanks to Mary Shutt for who provided kitchen help and roasting pans to keep food warm. Thanks to Keith Behnke who coordinated printing of name tags by UNISYS and registered the drop-in attendees. With some no shows, the participant count was ~85 people. A TPT cameraman dropped by for a 'group fun' documentary inclusion. See page 7 for a collage.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF

The obits hereunder are redacted from funeral home postings or Pioneer Press or Star Tribune listings.

Andrzejek, Philip – Age 84 of Robbinsdale passed away May 6. Philip is survived by his wife, Constance, three sons and several grandchildren. He was a Mechanical Engineering graduate of the U of MN and worked at Control Data, 3M, and UNIVAC before retiring from NSP.

Halvorson, Alger Harlan – Age 89 of Eagan passed away May 21. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Arlene, three children and several grandchildren. Al worked as a Logic Designer for Unisys until he retired in 1989.

Johnson, Mentor - Age 87. Mentor was born in Clarkfield, lifetime resident of Richfield. He worked at Univac/Unisys from 1956-1989, first at the Shepard Road plant and then at Roseville. Submitted by son Bruce Johnson, who is also a retired UNISYS employee.



Johnson, William Bradford "Brad" – Age 89 passed away on April 19, 2019. He is survived by wife of 60 years, Eileen; children and grandchildren. He joined the Army during the Korean War, fell in love with electronics in Japan. On returning to the U.S. he started working as a technician at Univac in Minnesota. After marriage, he returned to school earning a degree in Electrical Engineering from Northwestern. Then back in Minnesota and Brad worked again for Univac and then for Control Data. From *Paul Dickson*.

McKeen, Dale L. 75, of Port Richey, FL, formerly of White Bear Lake, passed away April 1, 2019, at the Tampa, FL, VA Hospice. Born in Duluth, Dale attended Denfeld High School and UMD. He served four years in the US Navy on the destroyer, USS John W. Weeks. After military service he worked for Control Data Corp. and retired from Lockheed Martin.

Meyer, Bruce L. 97, of Bloomington passed away peacefully April 6, 2019. Born in Montevideo, MN, he graduated Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis, enlisted in the Navy and served as Chief Petty Officer in the Atlantic and Pacific. Bruce had worked at UNIVAC in the 60s. ...



Naumann, J. David, Professor Emeritus, U of MN. At age 17 he enlisted in the Navy which spawned his interest in technology. Then he became a technician at Univac. As the lack of a college degree blocked his advancement, he went to the University of Minnesota for his Bachelors' degree, and then went on to earn an MS. He continued his educational path by completing his doctoral program in 1977 and began his career as a faculty member. He retired from the Carlson School of Management in 2006. He is survived by wife Joyce and extended family.

[The Andrzejek, Halvorson, McKeen, Meyer & Naumann obits were submitted by *Dale Phelps*.]

Neumann, Don – passed away on April 2nd of congestive heart failure in WA. He is survived by wife Beth and daughters. A bit of his IT history is <http://vipclubmn.org/People5.html#Neumann>. Also, <http://vipclubmn.org/sysmissles.html#RemoteSites>. They were VIP Club members. Don worked for me and was the Univac manager at the Air Force Blue Cube in Sunnyvale CA. Our mission was the maintenance of Univac equipment at the Satellite Tracking Stations worldwide. These stations forwarded classified data from various classified satellites to the Blue Cube for processing and dissemination. By *Paul Hove*

Pejsa, Jane Hauser - died at age 89 on 1 April 2019 in Fairfax, VA. She graduated from West High School in 1947 and as class valedictorian and summa cum laude in 1951 from Carleton College, where she majored in math and minored in German. Jane first worked at Northwestern Bell, Univac, and General Mills as a computer programmer. Her early work is at <http://vipclubmn.org/People6.html#Pejsa>. Jane's history was part of the MN Historical Society's greatest generation display at their St. Paul museum. From *Dick Lundgren et al'*



Philipson, Eugene 'Gene' – Age 91, Gene passed away May 7th with his wife, Marge at his side. Gene was a 1986 retiree from Sperry, his career began as a programmer and culminated as a manager of software engineering. He and Marge were life members of the Club, shown here at the 2016 picnic. From *Don Naaktgeboren*.



Ripley, David C. – Age 73, of Henderson, passed away Jan. 4, 2012. David served in the U.S. Air Force and was an electronic engineer designer, credited with 1968 PC card designs at Sperry. He is survived by spouse and best friend, Karyl; two brothers, and three children. [Submitted by *Jim Frazier* as found during an internet search.]



Seim, Howard N. - Age 87, born in Granite Falls, MN, resident of Columbia Heights, MN, went to be with the Lord on May 28th. He is survived by his wife Vonnie of nearly 63 years, their four children, and nine grandchildren. Howard enriched our world as a Christian, guardian, keeper of tradition, lutefisk lover,



administrator, inventor/patent holder, military man, education advocate, Electrical Engineer, farmer, problem-solver, wood worker/builder, loyal family man & friend. He retired from Unisys, Roseville.

Weeks, Glenn O. – Age 81 of Hugo, passed away on April 21st, 2019 surrounded by family after a 12-yr battle with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis. He was graduated from Iowa State University with a BSEE in 1960. Glenn and surviving wife, Janet came to Minnesota for his first job with Univac



in St. Paul, MN. During his career he worked with Control Data in Arden Hills, MN and Mississauga, Ontario, Canada; Amdahl in San Jose, CA and then Unisys in Mission Viejo, CA where he retired in 2006. Submitted by *Paul Sandve*.

CONTACT DATA

2019 VIP Club Activity Coordination:

CBI Liaison; Dick Lundgren, rflundgr@aol.com
Golf Leagues; Keith Behnke, keithbhknk@comcast.net
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- Exhibits; Keith Myhre kmyhre@lightblast.net
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Volunteer Luncheon; Frank King, kingx063@umn.edu
Webmaster; Jim Andrews, webmaster@vipclubmn.org

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Greg & Susan Casey of Houston TX.
- Karla Fedor of Eagan MN.
- Lawrence 'Larry' & Sharon Scott of Little Canada, MN.
- Lonni J. Wersal of King George VA.
- Paul C. & Wendy Rapp of Lakeville MN.
- Peter Demos of Maplewood MN.
- Timothy & Roseanne Galegher of Northfield.

LEGACY TIDBITS

Computer Memory Technologies: The Computer History Museum in California has a fairly exhaustive story about all types of computer memories.  **Computer History Museum**
<https://www.computerhistory.org/revolution/memory-storage/8/252> covers drum memories including the work done by ERA for the ATLAS computer.

Their page 8/258 has UNIVAC magnetic tapes. Page 8/263 includes the 1107 thin film memory. Page 8/264 shows the Sperry 1110 plated wire memory. Their 27 internet pages include data from many, many technology companies.

ERA to UNISYS memory usage story are in our Legacy page, <http://vipclubmn.org/Memory.html>. Hope that you enjoyed reading the technology history, I did – *LA Benson*.

The 1960 picture below, provided by Mentor Johnson’s son Bruce, is the Univac technician team sent to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for a couple of months in 1960 to install a Univac mainframe at a Brazilian government site. The picture is taken at the Luxor Hotel on Copacabana beach. We could use some help identifying the people in the picture below:



Mentor Johnson, Doug (Gilbert?), Al (Tweet?), Don, Jim Greeder, and Jerry? A previous newsletter had a link to a YouTube video, "Electronic Servants - Roseville UNIVAC", which I really enjoyed, it briefly shows my dad Mentor Johnson at the 16:35 mark (he’s the guy standing up wearing a suit). [\[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbISLJ0HZP4\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbISLJ0HZP4) Bruce Johnson was at Unisys Roseville from 1985-1992 and at Unisys Eagan/Macs from 1992-1997.

To the Moon: The Integrators – point your browser to <https://www.zdnet.com/article/to-the-moon-the-integrators/>. This is ZDnet’s second installment in their “To the moon” series about IBM and UNIVAC, the two primary computer systems integrators for the Apollo missions. Article originally written in 2009.

Extracted from their internet site page: “IBM’s Real Time Computer Complex in Houston (above right, Top) and NASA’s Fresnedillas DSTN station in Madrid, Spain, (above right, Bottom) one of the many Deep Space Tracking Network outposts using UNIVAC systems for pre-processing of telemetry downlink and command uplink data.”



Two article paragraphs which are inconsistent with other history writings: 1) “UNIVAC, originally started as the Eckert-Mauchly Computer Corporation, was the descendant of the namesake founders work on the ENIAC, the first stored program digital computer which went online in 1947.” 2) “By the late 1970s, Sperry ended the UNIVAC brand name, and in 1986 acquired another smaller computer manufacturer, Burroughs, to form UNISYS.”

Opinions of inaccuracies: 1) The term ‘on-line’ relative to computers didn’t occur until the mid-50’s when phones were connected as communication devices so 1947 is wrong. The ENIAC was originally a plug-board computer, not an electronic stored program computer. In the 50’s the ENIAC was upgraded to become a stored program computer – after several others were in existence. 2) Mr. Blumenthal, then Burroughs board chairman, led a buy-out/takeover of Sperry in 1986 – Sperry did not acquire Burroughs.

Suggest computer history readings are: 1) <http://vipclubmn.org/Articles/CreativityToObscurity.pdf> 2) <http://vipclubmn.org/Articles/HistoryReview.pdf>

Link submitted by Mike Adelman via Bill Rhode, Paul Dickson, and Ron Q. Smith. Editing by *Lowell Benson*

☺ **LIGHTER SIDE** ☺

Just before I die, I’m going to swallow a bag of popcorn kernels. My cremation will be epic!

Syttende Mai snapshots – May 17, 2019



Standing in the back are the Honorary Consul General Eivind Heiberg of Norway and the Sun This Week reporter, Andy Rogers.



We were honored to have Norwegian Ambassador to the US, Kåre R. Aas as our speaker.

Note: Your membership expires on December 31st **if 2019** is behind your name of the address label, or **if 2019** is in the subject line of your newsletter available email from newsletter @ vipclubmn.org.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION or RENEWAL or CHANGE FORM

Please mark an **X** in the appropriate info/option boxes. *Submittal Date:* _____

Dues: \$7.00 1-year, or \$ 18.00 3-years, or free if age 90 or older.

Renewal, New Member (≥55), Associate member (<55), Life (>89), or Information Change.

Name (Last, First, M.I. – or attach an address label.)

Spouse's Name

Street Address or P.O. Box

City

State

Zip Code

(____) _____ - _____
Primary Telephone Number

E-mail address

Newsletter delivery default is electronic or select U.S. Mail if you have no email address.

Employer is/was UNISYS, Lockheed Martin, and/or predecessor company _____.

Include me in the Club's Directory? Yes or No. *DIRECTORY is only available to Members and Associates!*

MAIL FORM WITH CHECK* TO: VIP Club - Membership P.O. Box 131748 Roseville, MN 55113-0020
*not required if only changing information in our database or if renewing at age 90+.



2019 Picnic - Eagan Central Park Venue
© Collage and snapshots by LABenson



Jim Paul
cooked the
burgers



Keith B. prayed then
checked attendee Names.



Chips, fruit, beans,
slaw, condiments,
buns, and meats.



Bob Pagac
cooked the
brats



Four beer types and sodas.



Dale H. waved!



Art F., Steve K., Gene A., & Dick L.



Roger, Vern, Al, Ken, Bill



Ruth S. Dale P. and Lynn L.



Norb R., Marv & Mel J.



**Karla F. and
Laura T.**



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Established in 1980

VIP CLUB Newsletter

P.O. Box 131748, Roseville, MN 55113-0020
<http://www.vipclubmn.org/Newsletters.html>

Board of Directors - 2019

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UNISYS Liaison

Kirsten Rasmussen; meetings, etc., 651-323-9543
Judy Borneun; Eagan print shop, 651-635-6792

PERIODIC SOCIAL GROUPS

Monthly Breakfast Gathering

- 1st Thursday at 8 AM at the Capitol View Cafe, 637 Smith Ave. St. Paul.

Monthly Lunch Gatherings

- 1st Tuesday in Eagan at 11:00 AM - Rickey's Café at Stark's, 3125 Dodd Road, Eagan, MN
- 2nd Tuesday at 11:30 AM - Mall of America 3rd floor North Food Court, we meet by the tables 'tween the elevator & Burger King. Coordinator is Paul Wennerstrom, 952-854-7855.
- 2nd Wednesday at 11 AM at Baker's Square, Northtown, 221 Co. Rd. 10 NE, Blaine MN.
- 2nd Saturday of odd numbered months at 11:00 AM, Baker's Square, 1881 West Highway 36, Roseville. Coordinator Urho Rahkola, 651-429-3319.

Quarterly Breakfast Gathering

- 2nd Wednesday at 9 AM in the Eagles Club, Old Hwy 8, in New Brighton., Mar., June, Sept., & Dec. Coordinator Marv Brown, 763-416-3903