

Club Origination

The VIP Club concept began in 1979 when our founder, Millie Gignac, was conducting pre-retirement interviews with Sperry employees. She saw that most employees were reluctant to rapidly break their ties with the company and in particular friends with whom they had many shared memories. So putting action to words she persuaded management not only to set aside 1,465 square feet of the Shepard Road Plant manufacturing area but to also refurbish and furnish the area to the tune of about \$35,000.

The first general meeting was held on September 3rd, 1980 with about 75 people in attendance. Officers were elected, plans were made for monthly meetings, and a constitution and by-laws were drawn up. Al Mueller, retired Antenna Coupler engineering manager, was elected the first President. Club members were advised that they would have to abide by Company regulations, but other than that, it was their club room. Company maintenance people and all employees weren't allowed in the room. Clubroom was closed after Burroughs bought Sperry to form Unisys.

IT Legacy Project

- **Goal:** Engineering Research Associates (ERA) began a remarkable story of technological innovation and contributions to the computer industry in 1946. We aim to relate this 77-year+ story as many of us have lived parts of it—most history book entries have limited defense industry information among the commercial computer system development stories.
- **Objectives:** First, is to **capture** whatever remaining material and information available; Second is to **catalog and archive** all the material collected; and Third is to **publish/publicize** our history and heritage in ways that interest industry and our fellow Minnesotans via the web and local institutions.

P.O. Box 21903 Eagan, MN 55121
<http://vipclubmn.org>

2023 BOARD Contact Information

President — Steve Koltes skoltes@comcast.net,
[Annual UNIVAC Old Timers Reunion]
Vice President — Jim Andrews, webmaster@vipclubmn.org [website, Winter Luncheon]
Treasurer — Paul Hove, paul@paulhove.com [Annual UNIVAC Old Timers Reunion]
Secretary — Bonnie Westberg, volunteerboni@gmail.com, [Winter Luncheon, Sympathy cards]
Director — Gish Devlaminck, membership@vipclubmn.org [Member Database]
Director — Dick Lundgren, rflundgr@aol.com [CBI Liaison, Programs]
Director — Keith Behnke, keithbhkn@comcast.net
[Program Plans, Golf League Liaison]
Director — Mary Shutt, rfolkshutt@comcast.net
Immediate Past President — Harvey Taipale, hjtai-pale@comcast.net [IT Legacy, Lawshe Memorial Museum Liaison]

Board Associates: Mary Beth Ruhland [Editor] clubnewsltr@vipclubmn.org, Paul Dickson [RGOD] paul.dickson@comcast.net, John Westergren [Picnic, IT Legacy] jwestergren@gmail.com, Lowell Benson, la.gj.benson@comcast.net [IT Legacy, Unihogs & technologists],
Members Emeriti: Dale Phelps, drphelps416@gmail.com and Joe Schwarz, jschwarzsr@centurylink.net.

Lawshe Memorial Museum Volunteerism Leads: Keith Myhre, kmyhre@lightblast.net; Bob Pagac, rpagac@hotmail.com; and Jon Simon, jcsimon1st@frontiernet.net;

[Tuesday AM help is always welcome!](#)

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VIP CLUB

Established in 1980

The **VIP CLUB** is a non-profit, social and services organization of retired and former employees from **Unisys**, Lockheed Martin, and their legacy companies illustrated below.



We are proud of our Information Technology (IT) Legacy preserved for future generations at the Lawshe Memorial Museum in S. St. Paul, at the Charles Babbage Institute - U of MN in Minneapolis, MN, and in our hearts and minds!



MAIL THIS FORM WITH YOUR CHECK TO:

VIP Club P.O. Box 21903
Eagan, MN 55121

APPLICATION/Renewal FORM: Dues: \$7, 1 year \$ 18, 3 years ____ Free if ≥90.

Member (≥55) __, or Associate (<55) __: Address Change __, New __, Renewal __; Friend ____.

Name _____ Spouse's Name _____
 First _____ M.I. _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
 Street Address or P.O. Box _____ City _____
 (____) _____ @ _____
 Primary Telephone Number _____ E-mail address _____
 Newsletter delivery preference is: Electronic ____ or U.S. Mail ____.

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

Include my data in the Club's Directory? Yes __ No __. DIRECTORY is only available to Members and Associates!



VIP Club Member Eligibility: Retirees and spouses from **Unisys**, Lockheed Martin, their MN legacy and successor companies. Active employees 55 years of age and vested [and spouses] are also eligible.

Associate Member Eligibility: Former employees of Lockheed Martin, **Unisys**, and their heritage or successor companies under age 55. **Friends:** Not an ex-employee but a legacy history supporter.

Life Members (seniors) Former employees 90 and above are free!

Membership Benefits

- Annual events participation; Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, Annual June Picnic, and January Holiday party & dinner.
- Contacts with former co-workers via the planned social activities and the Club Directory.
- Contact/site information for monthly periodic group breakfasts, lunches, and a dinner.
- Links to recreational activities; i.e. golf leagues, MN senior centers, etc.
- Opportunities to nurture friendships via Club committees and other volunteer activities.
- Periodic newsletters with event reports, new member recognition, obits, forms, program announcements, Legacy articles, etc..

Club History Tidbits

- We have ~650 memberships; 82% in Minnesota, 3% WI, 3% FL, 2% AZ, plus 9% in 35 other states plus 3 international members.
- Since 2006, over 400 former employees and systems users have contributed stories to our Information Technology Legacy Anthology, <http://www.vipclubmn.org/OurStories.html>.
- In 2008 more than 75 volunteer members participated in several Minnesota Sesquicentennial activities, chronicled in the Minnesota 2058 bi-centennial time capsule, vipclubmn.org/Articles/It'sAWrap.pdf.
- Active participants in the 2019 Twin Cities Public Television documentary; MN Solid State, High Tech History, vipclubmn.org/Articles/TPTclips.pdf.

Club Planned Social Activities

- Winter Party; Dinner and Holiday Gathering at the Lost Spur Country Club.
- April Volunteers' Recognition Luncheon; ~20,000 member hours reported per year!
- 'Roseville Good Old Days' gathering in the northern suburbs.
- Syttende Mai luncheon at Casper's in Eagan.
- June picnic in Eagan; beer, brats, burgers, and great friendship stories.
- November Annual UNIVAC Old Timers' Reunion at the Lost Spur in Eagan
- Specialty programs such as the river cruises, open houses, Unihogs, ... , etc.

Encouraged Social Activities

- Numerous group meetings at breakfasts, lunch, and dinner venues around the Twin Cities; see web site Activities page.
- Recreation League combinations of retirees and current Unisys & LMCO employees—i.e. Golf, PC & Electronics Club, Bowling, etc.

