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THE SIFTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

WEBINAR RECAP

Annual ETF/SWIB Update on the Wisconsin Retirement System

BY MILLARD SUSMAN, MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL MATTERS IN RETIREMENT

The past year was worrisome for folks living on a pension. Inflation, supply chain glitches, COVID scars, and political conflict all contributed to market uncertainty. Consequently, there was a lot to discuss in this year's report from the Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF), which administers our retirement system, and the State of Wisconsin Investment Board (SWIB), which oversees our investment portfolio.

The SWIB team included Edwin Denson, executive director and chief investment officer; Rochelle Klaskin, deputy executive director and chief administrative officer; and Todd Mattina, head economist and chief investment officer for asset and risk allocation. They gave us an overview of last year's performance. The SWIB portfolio generally performs significantly better than its benchmarks and achieves considerable overhead savings by managing much of its investment portfolio internally instead of relying on paid external managers.

Todd Mattina, a new staff member who just joined SWIB in January, surveyed the current financial landscape and said that, although the economy has recently been showing improvements, there are still uncertainties that will require vigilance on the part of investors.



John Voelker, secretary of the Department of Employee Trust Funds, reminded us that the Wisconsin Retirement System is among the best-managed retirement systems in the nation, passing all of the tests for sustainability of retirement systems with a current funded ratio of 105%. The WRS Core Fund was down 12.92% at the end of the year. The Variable Fund was down 17.83%. The averaging method that WRS uses for calculating annual pension adjustments resulted in a small increase (1.6%) in Core Fund pensions. Secretary Voelker presented forecasts of Core Fund pension adjustments for the next four years, showing the effects of various hypothetical SWIB income figures.

ETF has launched an ambitious program to increase dependability by replacing outdated technology and expanding staff. This will greatly improve capacity and reliability of data management systems, providing better service to the increasing population of WRS customers. ■

Visit the UWRA website (UWRAmadison.org) then select Resources/Presentations/2022-23 Jan-Jun to find videos and slides for this presentation.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Welcome, New Board Members!

BY SANDI HAASE

Please join me in welcoming the newly elected officers and board of directors: president Tom Broman, president-elect Laurie Mayberry, secretary Jane Richards, and directors Jordan Hanson, Cathy Middlecamp, and Kevin Niemi. They join immediate past president Jane Dymond and directors Ramona Gasper, Scott Hildebrand, Michael Bernard-



Donals, Marc Fink, Jurgen Patau, and Mary Czyszczak-Lyne.

At the annual meeting we bid farewell to outgoing board members. We offer our sincerest thanks to secretary Marian Fisher, interim president-elect Chris Kleinhenz, and director Jim Stratton who leave the Board. All have made positive and unique contributions to the Association.

Join a UWRA Committee We are an all-volunteer association with more than 2,000 members. The success of UWRA is due to all the work that is done by our committees. There are over 70 members who volunteer their time and serve on our committees. The work you see most often is done by the Electronic Technology Committee, Committee on Financial Matters in Retirement, Luncheon & Reception Committee, Retirement Opportunities Committee, and Travel Committee, which collectively sponsored nearly 30 virtual programs and in-person events, as well as 12 breakfast gatherings.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in the Retirement Association, joining a committee is a great place to start. You can learn more about each committee by visiting UWRAmadison.org. Please consider joining a committee and sharing your skills, talents, and interests today!

Lots of plans are in the works for an exciting lineup of fall programs, and several programs are already

announced. Visit the website often, as programs will continue to be uploaded through the summer.

Sifter Summer Break Note that *The Sifter* takes a break during the summer; the next issue will be published in September (with an August 1 submission deadline). Watch the “announcements block” on the UWRAmadison.org home page for periodic news updates. Continue to stay well. We will see you on Zoom in the Fall! ■

INSTITUTE ON AGING

UW Institute on Aging Colloquium Set for September

Since 1988, the Institute on Aging at the University of Wisconsin–Madison has hosted an annual colloquium. It is free, open to the public, and attracts a full-capacity crowd each year from the campus and community. Registration will open the first Monday in August (8/7/23).

Local researchers showcase cutting-edge science in diverse aspects of aging through talks and poster exhibits, while many organizations from the community provide a Health and Resource Fair. The program additionally includes a keynote address by an internationally recognized leader on current and critical topics of aging as well as presentation of New Investigator Awards to junior scholars. ■

For more information, visit aging.wisc.edu/annual-colloquium/

 **SAVE THE DATE**

**INDIAN MOUND GUIDED WALK
(REPEATED)
SEPTEMBER 26**
UWRAmadison.org/event-5269286

There was such an overwhelming interest in this tour that it will be repeated Tuesday, September 26 (rain date is Thursday, September 28). With two tour guides, we will be able to accommodate 50 attendees. Watch the UWRA website for updates.

UWRA NEWS

A Round of Applause, Please, for UWRA Volunteers!



The success of our Association results from the time, effort, dedication, and work done by the UWRA Board of Directors, committees, and Strategic Framework workgroups. While we continue to face unprecedented challenges, these members continue to move the Association forward. You can learn more about each committee by visiting UWRA-madison.org. Consider joining a UWRA committee and sharing your skills, talents, and interests today. We want to recognize all committee members for their contributions and celebrate another very successful UWRA year. In recognition of their effort, the Board of

Directors has approved a \$500 donation to the UW-Madison Open Seat Pantry. Please join in thanking:

Rachel Baker, Electronic Technology

Michael Bernard-Donals, Retirement Opportunities, Board of Directors

Tom Broman, Partnership & Engagement, Membership, Board of Directors

Bruno Browning, Electronic Technology

Dan Catlin, Auditor

Kathy Christoph, Electronic Technology

Mary Czynszak-Lyne, Membership, Board of Directors, Strategic Framework-ED Transition, 2023 Big 10 Conference

Rick Daluge, Financial Matters in Retirement, Membership

David Deci, *Sifter* Columnist

Marcy Doelp, Electronic Technology, UWRA Facebook Administrator

Laura Duguid, Financial Matters in Retirement

Ruthi Duval, 2023 Big 10 Conference

Bob Dye, Financial Matters in Retirement, Membership

Jane Dymond, Board of Directors, 2023 Big 10 Conference, Strategic Framework-ED Transition

Tom Eggert, Financial Matters in Retirement, Retirement Opportunities, 2023 Big 10 Conference

Marc Fink, Luncheon & Reception, Board of Directors

Marian Fisher, Financial Matters in Retirement, Board of Directors

Susan Fuszard, Travel

Ramona Gasper, Luncheon & Reception, 2023 Big 10 Conference, Board of Directors

Joan Gillman, Financial Matters in Retirement, Partnership & Engagement

Sandi Haase, Business Office & Operations Team, Financial Matters in Retirement, 2023 Big 10 Conference

Jim Hanson, Membership

Scott Hildebrand, *Sifter* Column Coordinator, Retirement Opportunities, Board of Directors

Lisa Hildebrand, *Sifter* Column Coordinator

Karen Holden, Financial Matters in Retirement

Gail Holmes, Travel

Brad Hughes, Electronic Technology

Orv Jordahl, Electronic Technology

Faisal Kaud, Electronic Technology, Financial Matters in Retirement, Retirement Opportunities

Chris Kleinhenz, Partnership & Engagement, Board of Directors

Sharon Kluender, Retirement Opportunities

Crescent Kringle, *Sifter* Column Coordinator

Jerry Kulcinski, Partnership & Engagement

Ullrich Langer, Travel

Sheila Leary, *Sifter* Editor

Al Liegel, Travel

Judith Louer, Luncheon & Reception

Laurie Mayberry, Partnership & Engagement, Retirement Opportunities, Board of Directors, *Sifter* Column Coordinator

Colleen McCabe, Travel

Don Miner, Financial Matters in Retirement

Mel Morgenbesser, Financial Matters in Retirement

Ken Mount, Financial Matters in Retirement

Tim Norris, Financial Matters in Retirement

Esther Olson, Travel, Board of Directors

Jurgen Patau, Business Office & Operations Team, Financial Matters in Retirement

Mary Beth Plane, Retirement Opportunities

Mary Barnard Ray, *Sifter* Columnist

Steve Reischel, Electronic Technology

Paul Reichel, Electronic Technology, Financial Matters in Retirement

Kay Reuter-Krohn, Financial Matters in Retirement

Ralph Russo, Travel

Barbara Rust, Business Office & Operations Team, Strategic Framework-ED Transition

Hugh Schmidt, Electronic Technology

Karen Schwarz, Travel

Jack Sorenson, Financial Matters in Retirement

Scott Springman, Electronic Technology

Jim Stratton, Partnership & Engagement, Retirement Opportunities, Membership, Board of Directors

Millard Susman, Electronic Technology, Financial Matters in Retirement, Retirement Opportunities

Jim Vannes, Electronic Technology

Barbara Wiley, Luncheon & Reception

Larry Winkler, Business Office & Operations Team, Strategic Framework-ED Transition

Beth Zemp, Business Office & Operations Team, Board of Directors, Strategic Framework-ED Transition

Kathy Zweifel, Financial Matters in Retirement ■

ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY

Coming this Fall: Tech Clinic on Fitness & Health Trackers

BY SANDEE SEIBERLICH, MEMBER, ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Are you thinking of purchasing a personal fitness tracker or smart watch, but would like to know more about what is available? Maybe you already use a fitness tracker, such as a Fitbit or an app on your phone, and would be willing to share your experience with other UWRA members. Perhaps you would just like to learn more before taking the plunge. If so, please plan to join UWRA members this fall for a personal fitness information exchange.



We will bring our smart watches, Fitbits, or any other items we especially like, to share tips and tricks. If you are a potential or new user, you are welcome to come with questions.

We will also discuss medical alert wearables (e.g., fall detectors) if there is interest.

Stay tuned for the details in the October *Sifter*. ■

We welcome your questions and suggestions anytime at UWRA.tech@gmail.com.

WEBINAR RECAP

Solar and Sustainable Energy

BY SCOTT SPRINGMAN, MEMBER, ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

In April, several experts presented a panel discussion about the history, current innovations, and future of sustainable energy. Scott P. Williams (Wisconsin Energy Institute) presented the big picture of climate change and the challenge of solar as a major solution. He focused on where we are headed and why we are on a better path than before thanks to cheap solar and wind.

Sam Dunaiski (Renew Wisconsin) presented Renew’s “Zero Carbon Roadmap,” a plan and calculation that shows a viable zero-carbon future by 2050, but requiring collaborative planning, supporting policies, and economy-wide investments. Jackie Harrison-Jewell (Couillard Solar Foundation) presented the foundation’s mission: to help Wisconsin nonprofits get solar for their organizations. Justin Arneson (All Energy Solar) discussed net metering rules in Wisconsin, solar incentives, recommendations for roof installation vs. ground mounts, general costs, annual solar production, and return on investment. He also presented four popular ways to finance solar. ■

Visit the UWRA website (UWRAmadison.org) then select Resources/Presentations/2022–23 Jan–Jun to find a video and slides for these presentations.

UW-Madison Retirement Association Membership Application and Renewal Form

(Please Print)

Name		Spouse/Partner Name	
Email		Spouse/Partner Email	
Are you retired? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Year you retired?	Are you retired? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Year you retired?
Retired from? (Department)		Retired from? (Department)	
Classification <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff (limited) <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty (limited) <input type="checkbox"/> University Staff		Classification <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff (limited) <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty (limited) <input type="checkbox"/> University Staff	
Home phone	Mobile phone	Mobile phone	
Street Address		City/State	Zip Code + 4
MEMBERSHIP LEVEL OPTIONS. All levels include an electronic copy of <i>The Sifter</i> which is published monthly September – June. <input type="checkbox"/> Annual \$30 <input type="checkbox"/> Bargain (6 yrs.) \$150 <input type="checkbox"/> Life \$400 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Yet Retired \$15 <input type="checkbox"/> Outside of 535xx, 537xx, 539xx: <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 (1 yr.) or <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 (6 yrs.)			AMOUNT

- You can:
- Join and pay online
 - Join online and pay by check payable to UWRA
 - Join by mailing this form and a check payable to UWRA to UW-Madison Retirement Association, 21 N. Park Street, Room 7205, Madison, WI 53715-1218

You are encouraged to join online! Visit UWRAmadison.org

UWRA NEWS

Recognizing Life Members

The UW-Madison Retirement Association would like to take this opportunity to recognize all its current life members (as of April 1, 2023) and thank them for their support.

James Adams	Gerhard Ellerkamp	Lars Jorgensen	Catherine Middlecamp	Elizabeth Sheehan
Susan Adams	Peggy Ellerkamp	Vicki Kalscheur	Rosalie Migas	Kathy Shurts
Jane Adams	Gayle Ellis	Murray Katcher	Sue Milch	Jim Shurts
Hans Adler	Richard Ellis	Susan Katcher	Anne Miner	Michael Siebers
Colleen Albrecht	Diane Elson, M.D.	Phyllis A Kauffman	John Moses	Paulette Siebers
Kenneth Albrecht	Rae Erdahl	Robert G Kauffman	Aileen Nettleton	Miriam Simmons
B. Lynn Allen-	Jim Erlenborn	Coky Klimpel	Allan Nettleton	Hollis Skaife
Hoffmann	Barbara Erlenborn	Don Klimpel	Deborah Neuheisel	Michael Smith
Rima D Apple	Herman Felstehausen	Sharon Kluender	Diane Norback	Thomas Smith
Michael W Apple	Marian Fisher	Cheryl Knobloch	Jane Norman	James Soley
Ruth Apps	Raymond Fonck	Frank Kooistra	John Norman	Karen Soley
Jerry Apps	Linda A Foster	Gundega Korsts	Doris Ockert	Brenda Spychalla
Ana Araujo	David E Foster	James Koza	Shel Ohare	Glen Stanosz
Elizabeth Barlow	George Frazier	Julia Koza	Esther Olson	JoAnne Stanosz
Susan Barthel	Tama Frazier	Diane Kravetz	James O'Neill	David Stella
Mark Beatty	Aaron Friedman	Richard Kunert	Alberto Palloni	Kathy Stella
Eric Berg	Todd Friske	Lawren Kunz	Russell Panczenko	Steve J Stern
Sandra Bertics	Susanna Fuerstenberg	Hanns Kuttner	Mary Beth Plane	Edna Szymanski
Brian Bigler	Susan Fuszard	Janet LaBrie	Peter Plane	Audrey Tluczek
Franklyn Boll	Gary Girdaukas	Ann Landry	Angela Powell	Cathleen Trueba
Virginia Terry Boyd	Martha Girdaukas	Greg Landry	Paul H Rabinowitz	Kendra Tutsch
Keith Bozarth	Kathleen Mary Gleeson	Ullrich Langer	Ronald Raines	Jerald Tutsch
Bruce Braun	Karen Goebel	Kathy Lewinski	Shiela Reaves	John J Uicker
Nancy Braun	Janice Golay	Joan Liegel	Joel Reitz	Edward Van Gemert
Robert Buchanan	Elise Gold	Allen Liegel	Joel Robbin	Amanda Vander Venter
Barbara Buenger	Gareth Green	Mark Lingenfelter	Jeanette Roberts	Grace Wahba
Ronald Burnette	Constance Grogan	Sherry Lloyd	Chong-Suk H Robinson	James Walker
Gerald E Burns	E Wayne Grogan	Jean Lottridge	Stephen M Robinson	Ann Wallace
David Callan	Brent Haase	Richard Lottridge	Manuela Romero	Sandra Ward
Judy Callen	Sandi Haase	Barend Lotz	David Rosol	Ann Wilson
Jim Callen	Richard Hamby	Terry Roe Lund	Sharon Rosol	David Wilson
Gerald Campbell	W Lee Hansen	Stephen R Lund	Barbara Rust	Larry Winkler
Christine Cefalu-Moses	Sue Hilgemann	Bruce Maas	Mark Saltzman	David Wood
Robin Chapman	Karen A Hill	Jan Maas	Kewal K Saluja	Beth Zemp
Mei-Hao Chen	Mark Hill	Angela Madalon	Wilton Sanders	
Birgit Christensen	Douglas D Hill	Michael Madalon	Stephen P Schmidt	
Stephen Coon	Nancy Hilmanowski	Florencia Mallon	Bonnie Schmidt	
Joyce W Crim	Ronald Hilmanowski	Susan Manning	Jean Tretow- Schmitz	
Colleen Cummins	David W Hoffman	Bradley Manning, MD	John Schmitz	
Geke de Vries	Michael Hoffmann	Carrie Marlette	Ann M Schreiner	
Susan Dentinger	Karen Holden	Duane Marlette	Anthony J Schreiner	
John B Dillon	James Holden	Doug Marshall	Robert C Schubert	
Lynn Docter	Jeanette A Holz	Mary Marshall	Stephen Schuelke	
Jane Doughty	Bradley Hughes	Katharyn May	Tom Schwab	
Susan Douglas	Shitao Huo	Michael May	Dan Schwarz	
Ruth Drage	Mona Huo	Cynthia May	Karen Schwarz	
Edwin L Dreier	Gregory Iaccarino	Laurie Mayberry	Ken Scott	
Shirley Duschak	Patricia Iaccarino	Linda McDonald	Wes Severson	
Jack Duschak	Richard Jahnke	Patrick McDonnell	James Shaft	
Jean Dye	Matthew Jaworski	Julia McGivern	Sheryl Shaft	
Robert Dye	Gail Jobelius	Ruth McNichols	Debra Shapiro	

Not a life member?

Is it time to renew YOUR membership?

See information & options on p. 4 of this issue.

MEET A UWRA MEMBER

Not What I Expected ...

BY CATHY MIDDLECAMP, UWRA MEMBER

A retirement party? Not what I expected or perhaps even wanted. It wasn't that I didn't want to see my good friends across the UW, ones who continue to mean the world to me. Rather, COVID was in full swing when I retired, and my colleagues and students were nowhere to be seen. So, I simply turned out the lights, shut the door to my office, and went home.

Clearly, I did not expect COVID. It shaped so many things in my life, dividing both my family and my friends. Vaxers and anti-vaxers. Science and anti-science. And, of course, life and death.

Looking back, the Vietnam War was another major event that I did not anticipate. It shaped so many things in my years as an undergrad at Cornell University. The draft and draft dodgers. Teach-ins and student strikes. And, of course, life and death.

My life, if not my career, has been marked by what was happening in the "real" world. I could tell many other stories as well, such as being with students when the planes hit the World Trade Center.

Some things in my life, however, were predictable. One was being asked the question: "What do you want to do after you retire?" Truth be told, I failed miserably at answering. Thing is, I never had retired before, so I really didn't know.

I had learned not to ask my students: "What are you going to do after graduation?" Of course, some had an answer; most, however, seemed to hate this question. Accordingly, I usually just gently inquired about how to stay in touch when they moved on. And truly, if there's one thing I want to do in retirement, it is to stay in touch with my good UW colleagues, which is why I joined the UWRA as a life member.

Perhaps more important is, what have I done after retiring? To my dismay, I've spent much time dealing with arthritis in my lumbar spine that painfully pinched nerves in my legs. I finally got on the radar screen of a UW neurosurgeon who performed a routine but fairly major operation. I'm still in the process of healing.



Finally, the big question: "Should I have retired sooner?" I didn't have a crystal ball. But let me end by saying that I'm both grateful that I was able to work at UW-Madison for 40+ years, and I'm glad now not to be working any more. Seems as close to a win-win as I can get. ■

April 1–30, 2023

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Roger Schultz,
Public Health
Kathy Schultz

Hanna Filutowicz,
Pediatrics
Anders Yocom,
Wisconsin Public Radio

BREAKFAST AT ELIE'S CAFE

909 E. Broadway, Monona, WI
9:00–10:30 A.M. In-person gathering
TUESDAY, JUNE 27

Join fellow UWRA members for breakfast (or a cup of coffee or tea) once a month for lively conversation. No registration needed.

{ The UWRA is your network in retirement! }

ACTIVITIES IN RETIREMENT

The Happy Horologist

BY LEROY BAKER, UWRA MEMBER

Horology refers to the study of time and the art of making timepieces. I repair and restore mechanical clocks, both the mechanisms and cases, for the joy of fixing something that is broken. If a clock has special meaning to someone, like belonging to a grandparent, that is even better.

I found my way into horology in the mid-1980s through a friend with a retail clock business and a like-minded group of people in the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors (NAWCC). My interest in horology has continued since retiring as chief technology officer at UW Health, where I served on the management team for 25 years.

The NAWCC has local chapters that hold regional events to buy, sell, trade, and learn. I was a charter member of the Madison Chapter that formed in 1996 and have been a chapter officer ever since. I currently serve on NAWCC’s national board of directors.

I learned repair through a few good books and from NAWCC members who freely shared their knowledge. There are also excellent online resources. Initially, I worked from my garage workbench with basic hand tools. Once I was hooked, I built a shop in my basement and started accumulating more specialized tools. I have most of the tooling needed for repairs up to the point of making new gears. Because I have not invested in gear-cutting tools, I make those repairs by hand or enlist the services of a specialty shop.

Most of the clocks I restore are 100 to 175 years old. Some were mass-produced by long-lived companies, some by short-lived companies, some by individual artisans, and some by a combination of all three. I enjoy uncovering the history of each clock that passes through my hands.

The two biggest obstacles in repairing a clock are 1) understanding exactly how each mechanism works and 2) sourcing replacement parts. Clock-makers tried many ways to make a better clock



over the years, some more successful than others. While the basic functions are similar, the exact way those functions are achieved can vary greatly from mechanism to mechanism. Certain parts are still available today, but many must be made or salvaged from broken timepieces. That challenge keeps me interested. Similarly, restoring cases requires attention to wood species, finishes, and fittings like decorative brass, gold, and glass. ■

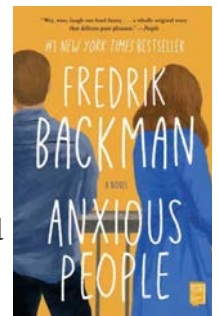
The Madison chapter of NAWCC welcomes anyone with an interest in clocks, watches, or timekeeping to our meetings. Visit new.nawcc.org/index.php/chapter-171-madison

BOOK MARKS

Anxious People

REVIEWED BY SHEILA LEARY

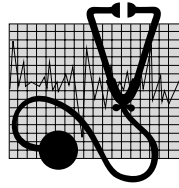
“How can people be this obtuse and annoying?” was my reaction to the first pages of Fredrik Backman’s *Anxious People*. But, there is method in their madness. Backman, author of the bestseller *A Man Called Ove* (made into the film *A Man Called Otto* with Tom Hanks), in this novel brings together random strangers for an apartment viewing, each with their own anxieties, grievances, and regrets. Through comic, tender, and surprising moments, they find ways to be generous and forgiving to others and to themselves. ■



WELLNESS MATTERS

Medical Decision Making: What's in It for Me?

BY DAVID M. DECI MD, UWRA MEMBER



Over the past fifty years, there have been enormous changes in ways to diagnosis and treat diseases. Take pneumonia, for example. Two generations ago, the diagnosis was generally made by taking a history and listening to the lungs with a stethoscope. Occasionally if the diagnosis was in question, or the presenting symptoms were atypical, a simple chest x-ray was performed. Treatment would consist of one of a limited number of antibiotics taken for up to two weeks. Hospitalization was often felt to be necessary.

Today, we have vaccines to prevent pneumonia, diagnostic tests like urine antigens and CAT scans, and a multitude of antibiotics to choose from. Some antibiotics are given orally for only five days, and only the sickest of patients is admitted to the hospital.

As a patient, how do we know what is the best therapeutic option to take? Certainly, trust in our own physicians is a key place to start. But how can we be sure that they are up to date, and how is it decided what is best for me?

Many of us resort to the advice of friends, family members, or media personalities who may be promoting the latest unproven fad. And then there is the internet! I liken getting information from the internet to gulping mouthfuls of water from the river. It is too much and not even filtered.

Lest you drown in polluted water, there are some credible resources on the internet that have stood the test of time. These are designed to give you background information as well as treatment recommendations that are backed up by evidence that is current, reproducible, and relevant.

The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPTF) has a governmental site, [uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/](https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/), that provides guidance on prevention of disease and

injury through screening tests and/or patient education. There is an extensive array of guidelines—specific to condition, age, and gender—that are the generally considered the standards of care. But, even among these recommendations, there are ratings as to how accurate, effective, and practical these screening tests are for a population of US citizens. Grades from “A” to “D” are assigned along with an explanation for a particular recommendation’s value.



Another helpful online tool is Choosing Wisely. This database was developed by the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) and is populated by more than 600 recommendations from 80 medical specialty groups: [choosingwisely.org/](https://www.choosingwisely.org/).

Choosing Wisely provides diagnosis and test specific answers to common questions such as test accuracy, availability, benefits, harms, and alternative choices. This site can be very helpful to review with your doctor at the time of your visit. The information it provides can serve as a tool in making sure that, as a patient, you clearly understand what to expect regarding outcomes and even cost.

One rule of thumb: never agree to a procedure, test, or medication that you do not understand. Be an empowered patient by asking questions and seeking information from respected sources. ■

IN MEMORIAM *David M. Deci MD FAAFP was a retired family physician and a member of UWRA. He passed away peacefully at his home in Topsham, Maine, on April 21, 2023, at the age of 68. We are grateful that he was able to share his wisdom with us in the Wellness Matters column for the past year, and we extend deepest sympathies to his family.*

WEBINAR RECAP

2023–25 State and University Budget

BY SCOTT HILDEBRAND, MEMBER, RETIREMENT OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE

Crystal Potts, UW–Madison’s senior director of state relations, previewed the potential impact of the 2023–25 Wisconsin state budget on the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the UW System. Democratic Governor Tony Evers introduced his two-year budget plan in February, and the proposal is currently making its way through the Republican-controlled state legislature.

Among the highlights of the governor’s budget is a compensation increase of 5% in the first year, and 3% in the second year, for faculty and staff, with the state funding 70% of the increase. The university would have to provide funding for the rest of the increase.

The governor’s capital budget proposes numerous major building projects at UW–Madison, includ-

ing the \$347 million Engineering Hall and the \$285 million replacement of the Camp Randall Sports Center (“the Shell”). The Engineering Hall project would allow the College of Engineering to grow by 1,000 undergraduate students, Potts said.



Potts also outlined the university’s strategy for advocating on behalf of the university throughout the budget process. She said Chancellor Jennifer Mnookin and other campus leaders will meet with the governor and legislators. She also said the university’s alumni and other stakeholders will be active in advocacy efforts. ■

Visit the UWRA website (UWRAmadison.org) then select Resources/Presentations/2022–23 Jan–Jun to find videos and slides for this presentation.

Time to Renew or Begin Subscriptions for the Print Edition of *The Sifter*

The full-color digital edition of the UWRA’s *Sifter* newsletter is emailed free of charge to all members. However, if you wish to start or renew a paid subscription to the *print edition*, now is the time to do so. The annual print edition subscription is \$15, which covers the cost of printing and mailing the ten issues (September 2023–June 2024). You can subscribe by logging on to UWRAmadison.org and clicking on “STORE,” or complete the subscription form below and mail it to the UWRA Office. Please note that multiple-year subscriptions are not available. ■

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REFLECTIONS

Cultural Encounters

BY MARY BARNARD RAY

Traveling to other parts of the world always teaches me about many things. The tour guides and scenery and history are interesting, but what especially delights me are the unusual details I learn about how people live in other countries—their day-to-day habits and annual traditions. Our recent trip to islands in the western Pacific was no exception.



Singapore is, as our cab driver explained, a “fine” place to live. If you break any of the many rules, you get fined. Nevertheless, a clean, serene environment is the result. There are never any gummy spots on sidewalks because chewing gum

cannot be sold in Singapore. The trains and buses are pristine because it is against the rules to eat or drink anything on public transportation—not even a piece of hard candy, as one tourist learned to her chagrin. Eating while walking down the street is also not allowed, so there are no dropped ice cream cones. One rule did stump me though: it is against the law to walk around in your own house naked. I guess you must remember to take your robe with you when you head to the shower.



While visiting an active volcano, we discovered that at least one ethnic tribe in Indonesia retains the custom of throwing yearly sacrifices into that volcano to bring prosperity, good fortune, and harmony from their Hindu gods. They don’t sacrifice people, but they do offer first fruits, portions of their crops, chickens, and goats. However, other groups of locals prefer to avoid the waste. They fashion big nets on long sticks to catch the sacrifices as they are thrown, making use of whatever they catch. That’s a unique form of recycling.

The islands of southern Japan were every bit as spotless as Singapore, despite their having no rules against gum or eating on the street. It seems that the culture is just tidy by tradition. Southern Japan takes it one step further; it does not have trash cans in public areas. Nor do stores offer bags for items you buy. Apparently, the people of southern Japan plan ahead and manage to carry everything home to their own receptacles.

Traveling inevitably teaches me something about myself and my American habits as well. This time my learning experience was the result of a casual question I asked a tour guide about cherries.



We were in Japan just before the cherry blossom season, so there was much excited anticipation about as the blooms were about to open. I asked what I thought was an obvious question: “What do you do with the cherries? Do you make jam or syrup or something?”

The guide was perplexed. “We don’t do anything with them. We prefer milder tastes,” she answered. So it seems that the Japanese cherish their myriad cherry trees just for the beauty of those fragile blossoms that come once a year. This amazed me. That’s when I realized that I am habituated to the idea of productivity more than the idea of beauty for its own sake. I’m not sure what this reveals about me or my culture, but it has certainly given me something to ponder over the upcoming summer. ■

WEBINAR RECAP

UW-Madison's Social Media

BY BRAD HUGHES, MEMBER, ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

In May, the Electronic Technology Committee presented an engaging webinar about how the Office of University Communications at UW-Madison uses social media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and LinkedIn. These are valuable ways to share the university's expertise, research, and successes, create strong engagement, and reach new audiences. The webinar featured Jennifer Matteson, manager of social media for University Communications, who focused on campus-level social media strategies.

Matteson introduced the varied social media channels that she and her colleagues use, emphasizing how timely, visual, and interactive they are. She offered fascinating insights into the audiences the university reaches through different channels, focusing on strategies and opportunities for each. For example, University Communications uses Instagram, with its emphasis on photography, to engage students. They use LinkedIn to reach faculty and alumni. Matteson explained how their team develops strategies based on measures of audience engagement with each channel.

In the presentation, Matteson shared great examples of social media posts about the Chancellor's Investiture and about the northern lights over Lake Mendota, featuring compelling images and video.

It's easy to sample some of the university's exciting

and visually stunning social media! Scroll to the very bottom right of the university's home page (www.wisc.edu/) and



click on one of the five icons for social media. Some require setting up an account, but several allow you to browse without an account. ■

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Do you enjoy being on campus?

The UW-Madison Office of Human Resources seeks volunteers to guide New Employee Orientation driving tours of campus. Volunteers would handle the speaking part of the tour; professionals will drive the buses. These tours will aim to educate new (or current) employees about the many landmarks and fascinating history that our campus has to offer. And, of course, there will be trivia!

We will provide volunteers with more than enough talking points for a successful tour, but you are welcome to share other relevant information that employees would find interesting. Ideally, these tours will take place year-round and on weekdays. No necessary commitment would be required beyond a tour you have agreed to guide—you could guide one tour, or 100!

The Office of Human Resources is currently creating information sessions for interested volunteers. In the meantime, please contact Marci Birkes-Geffert (marci.birkes@wisc.edu), New Employee Orientation guide, for more information. ■

■ UW-Madison Retirement Association Calendar Dates ■

Visit the UWRAMadison.org website for updates and additional future events.

Virtual events (V), In-Person events (IP)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---|
| • Tuesday, June 20 | 9:00 A.M–5:45 P.M. | Old World Wisconsin Excursion (IP) |
| • Tuesday, June 27 | 9:00–10:30 A.M. | UWRA Monthly Breakfast at Elie's Cafe (IP) |
| • Thursday, September 21 | 10:00 A.M–NOON | Impact of Demographic Changes on the Economy (V) |
| • Tuesday, September 26 | 10:00 A.M–NOON | Indian Mound Guided Walk (IP) |
| • Wednesday, October 4 | 1:30–3:00 P.M. | Contested Black Freedom in Wisconsin, 1725–1968 (V) |

For information on Board and Committee meetings and deadlines for **The Sifter**, visit UWRAMadison.org.

For information on upcoming PLATO trips, visit platomadison.org/page-18561.

THE SIFTER

UWRAmadison.org

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c/o Division of Continuing Studies

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