Luncheon Committee Report for 2011-12

The first UW-Madison Retirement Association luncheon was on Thursday, September 10, 2011. The morning program featured Madison Police Officer MaryAnne Thurber sharing her career in a wide variety of policing activities. Her wit and delightful spin on events kept us laughing. She also enumerated how her role as a woman police officer impacted the department and other officers as she blazed a trail in this field. Madison Mayor Paul Soglin was our luncheon speaker. He masterfully explained the city’s forthcoming budget and budgeting process for the general fund and the capital improvement plan plus the amount of debt that has been incurred by Madison. His handout showed how the trend of increasing debt would be unsustainable. He also explained the shared revenue system and the redistribution of taxes as it affects Madison. We were at the Warner Park Community Center with a buffet catered by Gaylord’s. Fifty-five registered for the morning program and 71 for lunch.

On Thursday, November 10, the morning program entitled “Creating Choreography” was presented by Assistant Professor of Dance Kate Corby and her dance composition student, Elena Santiago. Elena demonstrated the use of body parts to express exaggerated movement, the use of available stage space, and the response to feelings such as fear. Her fluidity of movement was graceful and expressive. Jim Hubing, Director of the Henry Vilas Park Zoo, explained the “Conservation of Endangered Animals” and the 100th Anniversary of the Zoo. He shared endearing stories of actions of various zoo inhabitants over the years. That they are well cared for and provided appropriate living space, medical attention, and nutrition was evident. Queen Anne’s served our lunch at the West Side Club. Fifty-four were registered for the morning program and eighty for the luncheon.

We were treated to the agile hands of Howard and Frances Karp playing piano duets of Franz Schubert, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Antonin Dvorak. Their dynamic performance was at Covenant Presbyterian Church for the morning program on Thursday, March 15, 2012. We were honored to have Judge Barbara Crabb of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin as our luncheon speaker. Her address provided revealing information of the Constitution’s creation of the judicial, legislative, and executive branches and especially “The Role of the Courts in a Tripartite Government.” Because the sound system was malfunctioning, Judge Crabb graciously provided her written remarks for posting on the Association’s website. The lunch was served by Queen Anne’s Catering. There were 130 registered for the morning program and 154 for lunch.

It was most appropriate that we gathered at Olbrich Botanical Gardens since our morning program speaker on Wednesday, May 9, 2012 was their director, Roberta Sladky. Her PowerPoint entitled “Olbrich Gardens: Past, Present and Future” highlighted the significant history of Olbrich, the Gardens today, and hopes for the future. Our luncheon speaker was John D. Wiley, former UW-Madison Chancellor and former Interim Director of the public Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery. We learned about the world-class interdisciplinary biomedical research themes and outreach programs sponsored by WID. After a luncheon buffet from Gaylord’s Catering Service, there were docent-guided outdoor tours of Olbrich Gardens. Roberta Sladky volunteered to lead one of these informational tours on this sunny spring day. There were 100 registered for the morning program, 129 for lunch, and 59 for the garden tours.

At each luncheon, the Board of Directors encouraged the collection of nonperishable food
items, cash and checks to help with our community’s continuing need at food pantries. The donations were distributed to food pantries at Middleton Outreach Ministry, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, DeForest Area Needs Network, and St. Vincent de Paul.

The Luncheon Committee’s innovative and knowledgeable members who create these educational and entertaining programs are Darrell Barth, Buff Brennan, Art Hove, Joel Skornicka, Barb Wiley, and co-chairs Gail Holmes and Jack Ladinsky.