Volunteering Committee Annual Report 2013-14
Submitted by Co-Chairs Chère Gibson and Dale Burke

For a number of years, the association took in cash and food at our four yearly luncheons which were then donated to area food pantries. As a result of feedback from the food pantries, we instituted a new policy this past fall that encouraged members to make only monetary donations and opened up the donation process to include all of our programs in addition to the luncheons. Food pantries can do more with cash donations (provide more meals), and the logistics of handling cash as opposed to cans, etc. seems to be easier on our members. We also felt that given the need, there was no reason to limit the generosity of our members to luncheons only. So far this change has been met positively by the pantries and our membership.

Thanks to the efforts of committee member Peg Davey, a relationship with the Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery was established several years ago, and this past fall we committed to providing volunteer support to the annual Wisconsin Science Festival. Several dozen members contributed their time and assistance to this effort, and we hope to increase the number of contributing volunteers in the coming years as the festival continues to grow.

As a result of a membership survey and recommendations from involved individuals, we looked into focusing our food donations on a limited number of pantries where members are already currently involved and where we might develop future group volunteer opportunities for our membership. The survey results led us to choose Grace Episcopal, St Vincent de Paul, Bethel Lutheran and Mt. Zion food pantries for the rotating donation process for the 2014-15 year. We will continue to look for ways to involve our members with one or more of these pantries going forward.

We were pleased to have co-Volunteer of the Year award winners this year as both Peg Davey and Faisal Kaud were chosen by the committee as honorees. Both are long-time association members and have been involved in numerous association and community activities for years.

At the request of Dean of Students Lori Berquam, committee and board members will assist the Dean of Students Office during Welcome Week this fall by handing out goodies on Bascom Hill to returning students.

Once again, the committee chose to honor Midvale Elementary with a grant. Several of our members volunteer at Midvale and we have maintained a relationship with the school for a number of years.

At the request of the committee, Provost DeLuca once again issued a letter to all Deans, Directors and Chairs reminding them of the wealth of talent that exists among retirees and encouraging them to consider ways in which retired volunteers could contribute to their needs.

As a committee, we decided to institute a succession planning process that would ensure continuing, experienced leadership within the committee while at the same time allowing all committee members the opportunity to assume a leadership position if interested. Each co-chair will serve a two-year term with the two positions being opposite each other so only one co-chair
is leaving each year. Co-chair Chère Gibson is stepping down this year, and she will be replaced by Diane Kravetz. Dale Burke will remain as a co-chair for one more year.