**Luncheon Committee**
Gail Holmes, Co-Chair

We began our 2014-15 series of luncheons on Wednesday, October 22, 2014 with Director Diana Popowycz sharing the 25-year history of Suzuki Strings of Madison and a talk about the major tenets of Suzuki philosophy. The highlight of the morning program was a magnificent performance of memorized music by five of her young students in a “tiny concert” that would rival any professional orchestra. Professor David M. McDonald’s presentation on “Russia Resurgent: Vladimir Putin’s New World Order” was a very timely topic. He provided insight into Russia and the struggles that our current administration and Congress are having with them. There were 86 registered for the morning program and 128 for the luncheon at Covenant Presbyterian Church. The buffet was catered by DeBroux’s Diner and Catering Service of Oregon.

“Taste, Discover, and Learn about Wisconsin Cheese” was the morning program on Monday, November 17, 2014 featuring the expertise of Ken Monteleone, the owner of Fromagination. He took us through the artisan cheese movement in Wisconsin dating back over 100 years. Finally, we tasted the three tempting cheese samples on our plates provided by Ken—Dunbarton Blue and Pleasant Ridge Reserve (Gruyere) made from cows’ milk and Evalon Cave Aged made from goats’ milk. Cheese sampling was a big hit! Luncheon speaker Sue Riseling, Chief of the UW-Madison Police Department, gave an insightful talk about her book *A View from the Interior—Policing the Protests at the Wisconsin State Capitol.*” Protesting at the Capitol were 1.5 million people, plus officers came from throughout the state, and calm needed to reign while respecting the constitutional rights of people. Sue masterfully led that team. Eighty-eight were registered for the cheese tasting and 104 for the three-entree luncheon served by the Coliseum Bar and Banquet.

Our Wednesday, March 25, 2015 luncheon was held at the Zor Shrine Temple and was catered by Hy-Vee Catering, a first for both with the Luncheon Committee. Morning speaker Shane Driscoll, a detective and K-9 handler with the UW-Madison Police Department, shared fascinating information about the K-9 police program. We had hoped that Rex, his partner for over ten years, could have also been present, but Rex died in early February at the age of almost 13. Shane showed pictures of other K-9 teams and shared the specialty fields in which these dogs are trained. Rex was certified in explosives detection and tracking and also provided protection for important visitors to Madison. Luncheon speaker Joanne Berg discussed the joys and challenges of owning her bookstore, Mystery to Me. She retired from University administration to a volatile small-business environment. Joanne brought a few books to illustrate her stock and the selections customers encourage her to purchase from publishers. Sixty-one registered for the morning program and 75 for the luncheon.

For a third appearance with us, Robin Chapman shared a variety of poems she had written and published at the Wednesday, May 6, 2015 morning program held at the Arboretum. We started with smiles on our faces in hearing “If I Ran the Government: My Plan to Rescue the Economy and Create Jobs” to thoughtful countenances as we drank in her descriptive words. This was followed by the UWRA’s Annual Meeting and voting in the first photo contest. Luncheon speakers Steve Ackerman and Jonathan Martin shared their knowledge and expertise on
“Weather, Climate and Climate Change.” Their explanations based on scientific facts were fascinating. Both are professors in the Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, and their claim to fame is as part of the two-man “Weather Guys” segment on Wisconsin Public Radio. The morning program had 81 registrations and Gaylord’s Catering provided the meal for 115 attendees.

At each UWRA program, participants were encouraged to make donations of cash or checks to help with our community’s continuing need to procure food at pantries. For both October and November, St. Vincent de Paul’s food pantry was the recipient. Grace Episcopal Church and Mount Zion Baptist Church food pantries were the spring recipients.

We were saddened at the death of Arthur O. Hove on December 9, 2014. Art was a long-time member of the Luncheon Committee and the second President of the UW-Madison Retirement Association.

The resourceful Luncheon Committee members are Darrell Barth, Buff Brennan, Debbie Lauder, Joel Skornicka, Barb Wiley, and co-chairs Gail Holmes and Christine Schindler. Providing educational, timely, entertaining programs for UW-Madison Retirement Association members and guests as well as an opportunity for fellowship is our goal.