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Five long-time faculty and staff mark retirement this year

Summary: Five long-time staff and faculty members will mark their retirement from the University of Minnesota, Morris at the end of this academic year. The nearly 175 years of combined service and dedication to the campus will be recognized during the annual Faculty and Staff Recognition Dinner on April 26.

(April 13, 2007)-Five long-time staff and faculty members will mark their retirement from the University of Minnesota, Morris at the end of this academic year. The nearly 175 years of combined service and dedication to the campus will be recognized during the annual Faculty and Staff Recognition Dinner on April 26.

In addition to the recognition of retirees, the event will acknowledge the contributions and recipients of the following staff and faculty awards:

Paula O'Loughlin, associate professor of political science, is the recipient of the Horace T. Morse University of Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education, Sarah Buchanan, associate professor of French, is recipient of the UMM Alumni Association Teaching Award, and Dave Roberts, associate professor of mathematics, is recipient of the Faculty Distinguished Research Award.

Jane Kill, Student Counseling staff, and student Kristen Strissel will be recognized as the recipients of the Mary Martelle Memorial Award. Outstanding Staff Awardees are Carol Backman, Financial Aid, and James Anderson, Plant Services. Bryan Herrmann, Admissions, will be recognized as the recipient of the Morris Academic Staff Award.

Those who have retired within the past academic year or who will retire shared some favorite UMM memories:

Llea Anderson, vending supervisor

In 1971, Vern Brown, former general services manager, surprised Llea Anderson with a phone call offering her a position in vending. She hadn’t applied, but she accepted the invitation, a decision she never regretted. “I’ve always been proud to be a UMM employee,” said Anderson. She remembers those early years fondly, especially the camaraderie between fellow employees.

When Anderson started at UMM, “vending” meant caramel rolls and ham sandwiches made fresh and packaged each morning on campus. For special events, they served entire meals including homemade pies. Bookkeeping and inventory was completed with pencil and paper. Today, computers drive the operation and most foods are purchased frozen and prepackaged. “Trends have changed a lot over the years,” said Anderson. The “Hostess man” used to fill machines four times per week. Healthier options are emphasized now, but chips are still a favorite, according to Anderson.

Anderson’s last day was in November 2006. She misses the people, but not the coin-operated machines and she enjoys retirement: “I get up every morning and do things on my own time. If I read for a while, I don’t feel guilty. And, I’m blessed to have grandchildren near.” Anderson is active at the Federated Church, volunteers at the Morris Area Food Shelf and works out at the RFC most mornings.
Gordon Harstad, grounds and building worker
Throughout his 29-year history at UMM, Gordon Harstad witnessed many changes to the UMM campus – a new Student Center, a new science building, renovations to John Q. Imholte Hall. But the two buildings for which he was responsible over the years, Pine Hall and Blakely Hall, changed very little. That was fine with Harstad. He likes the older buildings and he liked visiting with the students who made them their homes.

Harstad retired at the beginning of the 2006-07 year. He reports “retirement is nice,” and the fishing last winter was “pretty good.” During spring, summer and fall he helps area farmers. Year-round, he tends his tractor collection: 10 John Deere, two Internationals, and one Case, dating from 1939 until 1959, all in running order. Watch for him in area parades this summer.

Jooinn Lee, professor of political science and chair of the Division of the Social Sciences
When doctorate candidate Jooinn Lee applied to UMM in 1961, he imagined teaching in Morris for two years, then returning to Korea. Forty-six years later, he looks back on a career that begins and ends at UMM, proud of his division’s accomplishments and excited about UMM’s future.

Lee remembers his first campus visit. He arrived by bus. Herb Croom, then director of student services, met him at the Merchant Hotel. “I loved that man,” said Lee, “and I accepted the UMM appointment immediately.” Relationships between the small number of faculty, only 33 in 1961, were important and Lee appreciated the campus community and the Morris community reaching out to him. He’s accumulated many memories throughout his career, but the most vivid may be the extraordinary silence in his classroom, disbelief and denial, after announcing President John F. Kennedy’s assassination in 1963. He also recalls the 1965 St. Patrick’s Day Blizzard, when he and others stayed the night in Behmler Hall because of intense wind chill and 20 inches of snow.

The renovation of John Q. Imholte Hall pleases Lee and he is very proud of his colleagues and staff in the Division of the Social Sciences: “I am immensely appreciative of their generous understanding of Jooinn Lee,” he said. “Our division provides very able leaders and strong leadership for the campus. And we have top-notch junior faculty. I’m very proud of recruiting them to UMM.” Lee looks forward to traveling “whenever I want” and to tending his yard and gardening. “I’m also going to read all the books I haven’t had time to read,” he shared.

Lee earned a bachelor of arts degree at Yonsei University, Korea a master of arts at the University of North Dakota and a doctorate at the University of Illinois. His specialization is in the areas of political theory and contemporary political ideologies. He is a published author and a recipient of the Horace T. Morse Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education.

Joan Reicosky, instructor of accounting
Every day of spring quarter 1979, the late Sun Kahng, UMM professor of economics, “sat in” on Joan Reicosky’s class. A few weeks earlier, he knocked on the door of her home and asked if she would teach accounting. “He must have been impressed,” reflected Reicosky. “I’ve been teaching the whole accounting sequence since then.”

Technology is the biggest change in accounting since 1979 when “paper and pencil crunching” were the norm. She utilizes computer simulations, online problems and general ledger software, but also continues to encourage students to experience the paper and pencil approach in order to “understand the flow of information.” Her courses provide practical, “real life” applications. Reicosky enjoys the classroom’s “give and take” and working with advisees and directed studies students.

While she knows students, fellow faculty and staff will be missed, she wonders about adjusting to a less rigid routine...no evening preparations for class, no calendars marked with semester schedules. A quick check of her “to-do list” reveals that Reicosky may be just as busy in retirement: ballroom and square dancing, cross stitching, sewing, gardening, reading, traveling and building a new home with husband Don.

Reicosky earned a bachelor of science from Ohio State University and a master of education from the University of South Carolina.
Dennis Templeman, associate professor of anthropology
While finishing his doctorate at the University of California, Berkeley, Dennis Templeman accepted a position at UMM in 1971. He said of his 36-year career at UMM, that is has been "a good life for me, very satisfying." Although he admitted that it might sound trite, he said, "I've met a lot of wonderful people. I say it because it is very true." In the early 70s, Templeman began teaching some of the first American Indian courses at UMM, created at the request of and in partnership with American Indian students.

Templeman's long-time research was published in book form in 1996 as The Northern Nadars of Tamil Nadu—an Indian Caste in the Process of Change. In January of 2008, he will return to India to "make new contacts" and reunite with old friends, including Evam Piljain, activist for many of the tribes of South India. Templeman plans to serve as editor for Piljain's autobiography.

The Faculty and Staff Recognition Dinner will begin at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 26, in Oyate Hall of the UMM Student Center. A UMM Retirees Association pre-dinner reception, that is open to all, will begin at 4:30 p.m. at LaFave House.

Photo by David Nieves '10, El Paso, Texas: Jooinn Lee is among long-time faculty and staff who will retire this year.

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