

Newsletter

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 2025



President's Message

The Retirees have been busy this fall. We started with our 50th Anniversary celebration at Inis Grove Park on September 12. More than 40 retirees enjoyed a catered brunch on a beautiful late summer morning. We recognized those present who served on our board in the past and shared a history of our organization, which can be found below.

This successful start to our fall activities was followed by two presentations: the first on Iowa State athletics and the second on precautions for traveling safely. I hope you were able to join in on Zoom or in person for these talks. Our final event for the fall was the recent Rock On in Retirement Symposium, with the theme "Easy Ways to Be Fit in Retirement."

I am grateful to the sponsors who make our events possible and to our board members who volunteer their time to plan, organize, and ensure everything runs smoothly. We are also grateful for Heather Bristow's tireless assistance and are delighted that she will continue to serve as our director.

All the best,

Barbara Pleasants, ISU Retirees Association President

ISU Retirees – The First 50 Years

On September 8, 1975, Helen LeBaron (not yet Helen LeBaron Hilton), who had just completed her tenure as dean of the College of Home Economics (not yet the College of Health and Human Sciences), convened a meeting. It was the first gathering of an advisory committee charged with helping Iowa State University better serve its retired faculty. This committee presented a list of seven recommendations to George Christensen, Vice President of Academic Affairs. In addition to practical matters such as office space, mail, and stenographic service, the committee suggested including retirees and their spouses in departmental social events. These recommendations were to be shared among the colleges and departments.

That November, the first official event, a coffee hour, included a tour for more than 100 people in the Scheman Building and Brunner Gallery, hosted by Neva Peterson. A second event – “What Next for the ISU Foundation?” – drew 100 people in January 1976. A third program in March, titled “Energy Research and the Changing Scene,” took place at the Ames Laboratory. Thus, the ISU Retirees Association was born and continues to this day. Those program topics could still be on our agenda 50 years later.

In 1982, ISU Retirees became an official committee of the University. Ten years later, the College for Seniors (now OLLI at Iowa State) was launched. During this time, the committee’s scope expanded to include retired P&S and merit employees, as well as retired faculty and administrators. Today, there are thousands of ISU retirees.

With the combination of the ISU Alumni Association (the former home of ISU Retirees) and the ISU Foundation, ISU Retirees’ new administrative home is not yet determined. Once again, an advisory committee (this time the current Board of Directors) met with representatives of the President’s Office and made recommendations for the association’s future needs. Although that list differs from the one created 50 years ago, it reinforces the continuing need for a voice for all ISU retirees.



Anniversaries Everywhere

It's a big year for anniversaries! In addition to the Retirees Association, both University Museums and Jack Trice Stadium (previously Cyclone Stadium) are turning 50. Ames' Brookside Park, co-owned by the city and the university, and WOI-AM (now Iowa Public Radio) are 100 years old, and WOI-TV, owned by Iowa State until 1992, is turning 75. One of the university's signature programs, Learning Communities, turns 30 this year.

Among the fall's biggest celebrations was Parks Library's 100th anniversary open house in late September. Free samples of hard cider and a new cherry-chocolate ice cream from the ISU Creamery were on hand, and the Iowa Statesmen – an outstanding men's choir, itself observing its 25th anniversary – performed songs and even a kickline for Library Dean Hilary Seo and guests.



Photo by Owen Schreiner, Iowa State Daily



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CyTown News

Cyclone athletics director Jamie Pollard presented “All Things Iowa State Athletics,” co-hosted by the Retirees Association and OLLI at Iowa State, in September. In case you missed it, here are 10 things you may not know about CyTown, currently in development between Jack Trice Stadium and Hilton Coliseum.

1. McFarland Clinic, whose new building is the first under construction, needs much room to expand and has always visualized having space close to Iowa State athletics.
2. Despite what one may think, the CyTown project will yield a gain of 10% more parking space due to careful planning and design.
3. There will be walkways over the drainage ditches.
4. A children’s playground, Cy’s House, will feature very large play structures that look like birdhouses.
5. CyTown Suites, totaling 60 apartments, are envisioned as premium lodging for game days and other occasions, although they could be year-round residences. These “turnkey” units can be leased for a ten-year period. Entering a lease requires a payment of \$500,000 to the ISU Foundation. One-third of the units have already been taken.
6. At the north end of CyTown, near Hilton Coliseum, will be the Sukup Cylo Amphitheater. It will be a gathering space for outdoor music and events, with no permanent seating.
7. A Marriott hotel called “The Cardinal” will be built adjacent to the Scheman Building.
8. Between two CyTown office and retail buildings will be a replica football field, a concept “stolen” from the Dallas Cowboys. Possibly the marching band could practice there – sometimes!
9. CyTown’s Grand Opening is scheduled for Fall 2027. Aside from the clinic and the hotel, all the buildings will be erected at the same time.
10. Also in 2027, the Iowa boys’ high school basketball state tournament will move to Hilton Coliseum under a five-year agreement.

Submitted by Susan Yager, ISU Retirees Newsletter Editor



A Retiree in Dublin

Diane Rupp sometimes finds it hard to stop. She retired from the Office of the Registrar in 2023 after a 20-year career at Iowa State, then un-retired to assist the Registrar's office with a new student information system. Later that year, she retired again. Diane also finds it hard to stop traveling, including to the "Farmageddon" game in Dublin this past September.

A native lowan, Diane is an alumna as well as a retiree, attending Iowa State from 1975-79. Those were mostly good years for Cyclone football under coach Earle Bruce, cementing her habit of cheering for Cyclone teams. She's also a traveler in Europe and throughout the U.S., especially enjoying seeing family out west.

So when her cousin, Rev. Dan Rupp (another ISU alum) organized a group to attend the Cyclones game in Dublin, he was sure to include her. The group of about 30 endured a day's delay in Chicago, but that was about the extent of their bad luck. They were able to travel to Belfast, Northern Ireland, as well as to Cork and Killarney. Diane says the group had "a wonderful time" seeing the Irish countryside and interacting "with the people in the cultures of the area."

But Dublin – and the game, of course – were also a focus. A few nights before the game, a portion of the marching band played in the streets outside the group's hotel. By day, the streets were full of both Iowa State and Kansas State fans. "It was a sea of red and purple," Diane recalls. The pep rally was held the afternoon before the game, on an "absolutely beautiful day." The marching band, cheerleaders, President Wendy Wintersteen, head football coach Matt Campbell, Governor Kim Reynolds, and others were there "to cheer on the crowd and get everyone fired up!"

Game day itself was cloudy and rainy. "We were fortunate to be under the second level of seats and out of the rain," Diane says. In the stadium, one side was all for Kansas State and all for Iowa State on the other. "Needless to say, it was a sea of red where we were sitting!" Diane also enjoyed "the camaraderie of all of the fans." In particular, "The singing of 'Sweet Caroline' after the win pulled at my heartstrings!"

Given a chance, Diane "would certainly love to visit Ireland again" and recommends group travel, especially for those visiting a country for the first time. She also suggests keeping a travelogue, even if it's just a few notes, and identifying any photos taken. Diane also encourages would-be travelers to "experience the cultures, the food, and the views. I am always amazed at all of the little surprises that you find along the way."

Diane Rupp, right, with ISU alumni Gary and Colleen Bornmueller of Des Moines.



What's Going On Over There?

This feature takes a look at things you may not be aware of, whether you're a mile or a thousand miles from campus.

East Side: Creamery's many flavors

On a warm autumn morning, students in the Food Sciences Building find study spots on the second floor. Many appreciate the quiet, but some are eagerly awaiting the noon opening of the ISU Creamery. The Creamery, opened in 2020, offers ten flavors of ice cream each day (and cheese as well). Three flavors are always available, dark chocolate (called 1858), vanilla (Two Swans) and strawberry (Campanile Kiss). Seasonal flavors are also offered – this fall, it's apple pie – along with about 20 more flavors, rotating daily.

Visitors to the Creamery (2953 Food Sciences; currently open noon-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri. when classes are in session) can choose flavors named after colleges, programs, and even traditions. You might try Human Sci Sweet Cherry Pie, with a sweet corn custard base, or CALS' Pasture Bedtime, a mocha-flavored treat with chocolate and caramel. Recently, the Creamery has partnered with other campus units to present flavors such as Aha! Moments, a cherry and chocolate flavor honoring Parks Library's 100th year, and Better Together, a vanilla ice cream with cookies-and-cream pieces celebrating the university's many learning communities.

Check the Creamery's "[Scoop Schedule](#)" for the flavors on any given day. Parking is available in the metered East Parking Deck, just south of Food Sciences.

West Side: New building for IMSE

There's a new building along the engineering corridor on the west side of central campus. Located just south of Howe Hall, the Therkildsen Industrial Engineering Building features research facilities and spaces for hands-on student learning, spanning 80,000 square feet.

Before the construction of Therkildsen, students of industrial and manufacturing systems engineering (IMSE) shared space with mechanical engineering in the Black Engineering building. As student numbers in IMSE increased from 200 at the turn of the century to more than 450 today, the need for a separate building became evident. While a few functions of IMSE remain in Black, the department now has a home of its own.

The building is named for its lead donors, C.G. "Turk" and Joyce A. McEwen Therkildsen, who made a gift of \$42 million for the project. The Therkildsens met and married as Iowa State undergraduates, living in Pammel Court during the early years of their marriage. Both graduated in 1959 and have long supported IMSE, having endowed the department's chair as well as an IMSE professorship. Their gift is the largest for an academic building in the university's history.

Submitted by Susan Yager, ISU Retirees Newsletter Editor

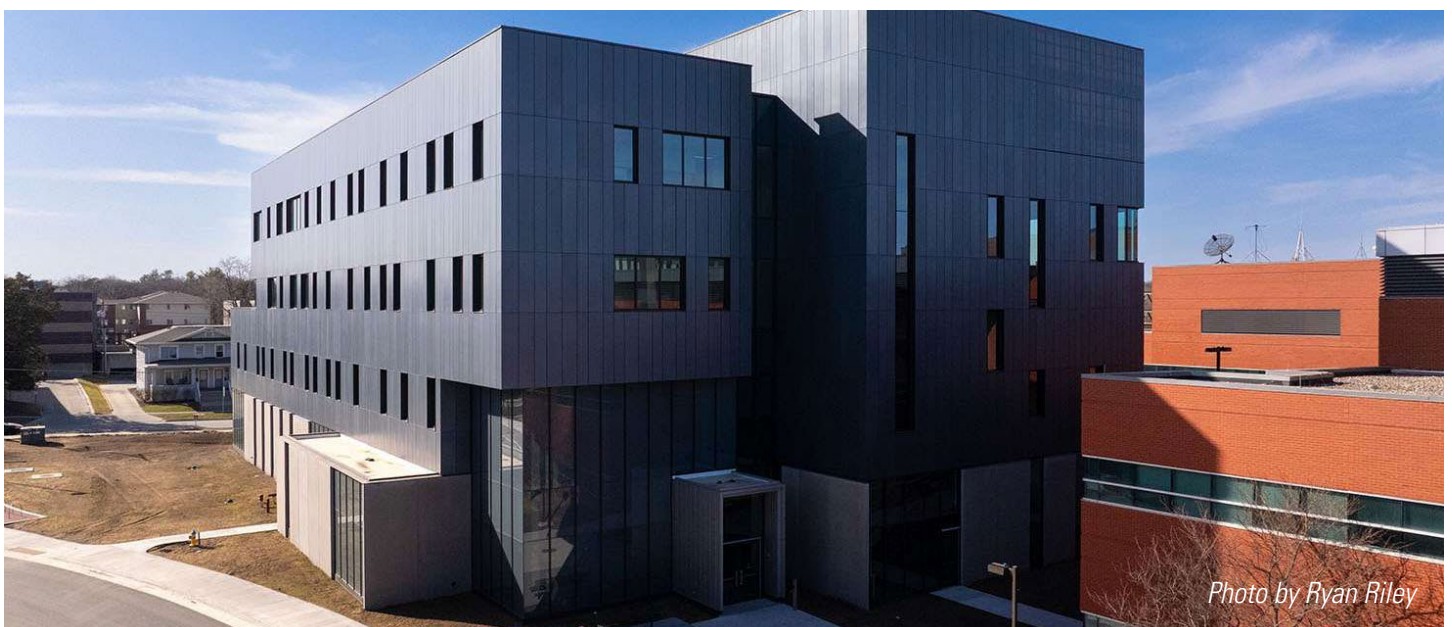


Photo by Ryan Riley

ISU Benefits: Open Enrollment Closes December 7

Open enrollment for 2025 benefits at ISU runs through Dec. 7, 2025. Retirees who are already enrolled should have received their benefit packets in the mail by October 15.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are not making any changes for 2026, you do not need to complete the Open Enrollment Form. Your existing coverage will continue for 2026.

The web page, which includes information on upcoming medical and dental premiums, Humana plan design changes, and a recorded presentation, is available at <https://www.hr.iastate.edu/retiree-open-enrollment>.

2026 IMPACT ON ISU RETIREES:

- Medical premiums will increase 3-7% depending on the plan and tier in which you're enrolled.
- No medical plan design changes.
- Humana plan out-of-pocket maximum will increase from \$2,000 to \$2,100.
- Dental premiums will remain the same as in 2025.
- No dental plan design changes.

You are responsible for paying all premiums in a timely manner to maintain continuous coverage. Consider setting up automatic payment options with Wellmark and Delta Dental of Iowa, if you haven't already done so. Wellmark and Delta Dental will provide an automatic payment form upon request.

- Wellmark Member Customer Service: 1-800-494-4478
- Delta Dental Member Customer Service: 1-800-544-0718

As a reminder, if you drop the ISU Wellmark plan, you will not be offered an opportunity to re-enroll in the coverage. If you drop the ISU Wellmark plan, you must also drop the prescription plan. If you're covering a spouse/partner or dependent children, their coverage will end as well.

As a further reminder, reported in our last newsletter, the Benefits Team is now located in the Warren Madden Building: 1218 Warren Madden Building, 2221 Wanda Daley Drive, Ames, IA 50011-1004.

Submitted by the Iowa State University Human Resources Benefits Team

Did You Know...? Ames Voice

You can keep up with university and Ames community news via the [Ames Voice](https://amesvoice.beehiiv.com), a free, online weekly news source that began this year. The community-owned Voice is intended to be a trustworthy source for news about Iowa State as well as Ames events, businesses, and sports. You can sign up to receive the Ames Voice at <https://amesvoice.beehiiv.com/subscribe>.

A Retirees Association Gift Guide

It's holiday shopping time, and the Retirees Association hereby suggests ten places to search for gifts. The more we looked, the more places we found – so many that we've set some aside for next year!

A first stop for holiday shopping is the Iowa State University Bookstore. In addition to clothing, toys, and school and tech supplies, you can buy holiday-themed ornaments, nutcrackers, and other [seasonal gifts](#). The bookstore makes it easy to order online.

Another great place – but only if you're in Central Iowa, as shipping is unavailable – is the [Reiman Gardens Gift Shop](#), inside the main entrance. It features Iowa-made products, butterfly-themed items, and gifts for children. Purchases support Reiman Gardens' programs and exhibits. Reiman Gardens members receive a 10% discount, but no one needs to pay admission to the Gardens in order to shop.

However, if you and/or your garden-loving friends are far from Ames, you can still send them something flowery: the 2026 Garden Calendar published by ISU Extension. This year's calendar, "A Bounty of Bulbs," is available from the [Extension Store](#) for only \$9.

Speaking of shipping gifts, how about ice cream? You can order any flavor (except their vegan one) from the [ISU Creamery](#), but the shipping cost is steep (\$55 per order). Still, if your favorite friend is pining for some Alma Mater Baklava, ice cream can be packed in dry ice and shipped overnight, twice per week. Or you could send a gift of cheese instead; the fee for 2-day shipping is \$35. If your friend is in Ames or will visit, "double scoop vouchers" are available for \$4.50, the price of a double scoop of ice cream (and usable only for ice cream). These vouchers have an expiration date, but the current batch won't expire until December 31, 2026.

Lovers of learning would be pleased to receive a gift certificate from OLLI at Iowa State, the university's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. [OLLI gift certificates](#) can be used to purchase an OLLI membership (\$35 annually) or for course fees. These fees range, depending on the length of the course, from \$25 to \$65. See the OLLI Update at the end of this newsletter to learn about classes planned for the term that starts in January.

A very local "shop" is a pop-up cart operated by the Uganda Alliance, an ISU student group. This cart carries crafts, including jewelry, bowls, and purses, at student-friendly prices (but anyone can buy them!). These items, made by women in Uganda, are purchased, then resold by the Uganda Alliance. Income from customers' purchases returns to Uganda, supporting people and programs there. The cart occasionally appears outdoors, often in the green space south of Parks Library, but on no strict schedule. However, anyone interested can visit the cart in the office of the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods, 111 Curtiss (513 Farmhouse Lane). Please contact Marcie Fahn, Program Coordinator at the Center, at csrl@iastate.edu, to ensure someone is there to greet you.

If it's ISU-themed material you're after, head for [Innovate 1858](#) on the first floor of the Student Innovation Center (606 Bissell Rd.). A vast array of ISU and alumni-related material, all created or developed by Iowa State students, includes cards, clothing, stickers, coffee, and more. Innovate 1858 will ship products, or you may pick them up at the store.

Alternatively, you can find more generically Ames- and Iowa-themed gifts at another "number" store, [Ames 1864](#). This store is located at 500 Main in Ames, but its mugs, glassware, leather goods, and cards can also be purchased online. An online-only possibility is [Shop Iowa](#). A drop-down menu lets you select items associated with specific locations in Iowa (even Iowa City).

Finally, for those who have everything: How about a rock? Cyclone-engraved stones are available at several outlets, including this [Iowa State Cyclones Engraved Stone](#) at Shop Iowa. This product is from a Saint Ansgar, IA company, [SaintStone](#), which offers a variety of welcomes, identifiers, memorials, and notices on stone.

Such a wealth of possibilities – happy hunting!

Submitted by Susan Yager, ISU Retirees Newsletter Editor



Congratulations, New Retirees!

John Adam
Bruce Arendt
Chad Arnold
Peggy Auwerda
Roy Ball
Dave Brotherson
Tim Burgess
Kay Christiansen

Alan Dispirito
Beth Doran
Kurt Earnest
Rodney Fox
Jeff Freland
Donald Fulton
Jane Galyon
Nancy Grudens-Schuck

Melody Gustafson
Karen Hart
Paul Hase
Jim Hurley
Peter Lawlor
Ann Laws
Kerry Moore Kroneman
Michael Mosch

Jacqueline Shanks
Howard Tyler
Patricia Ulvestad
Diane Van Wyngarden
Betty Wilcox
Gary Wright





New Location for OLLI at Iowa State Office

Reminder: So much has changed for OLLI at Iowa State's organization over the summer with the combination of the ISU Foundation and the ISU Alumni Association. Director Heather Bristow relocated the OLLI at Iowa State office to 2624 Howe Hall, joining the rest of the CELT (Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching) team. While this move will make staffing collaborations more efficient, it presents challenges for meetings between Heather and OLLI members. Therefore, it is best to schedule meetings with Heather directly via phone or email. And of course, a brief Zoom meeting is always an option as well.

OLLI Winter term

The Winter 2026 Course Preview is Wednesday, Dec. 10, at 1:30 p.m. CT. There is no registration to attend the course preview as the event is open to the public, the link to attend the course preview will be available on the events page of their website, <https://olli.iastate.edu/>. Registration for the winter term will begin on Friday, Dec. 12, at 8:30 a.m. with classes beginning in January. A few of the possible upcoming courses include: Authentic Italian Home Cooking: Valentine's Day Dinner; Parkinson's Disease and Dementia: Normal Aging vs. Differential Diagnoses; Yikes (Data Breaches, Compromised Accounts, etc.); Cover Crops: Green Fields, Clear Water; Ames Celebrates the Nation's Centennial; Demystifying AI; It's Not What You Said! It's How You Said It! The Role of Nonverbal Communication in Our Interactions With Others; and Beyond the Game: How Athletics Academic Services Shape the Lives and Futures of Iowa State Athletes.

OLLI Memberships

An OLLI at Iowa State membership is still only \$35 and is valid for from July 1 to June 30. All members need to renew their membership each July. With the office move to CELT, a change for the membership and registration system was necessary. After several discussions and careful consideration, a partnership with ISU Extension & Outreach Registration Services was found to be the best option. You will still access OLLI at Iowa State forms through their website, [OLLI at Iowa State website](#).

Special Benefits

An OLLI Membership includes two complimentary concert tickets for the Central Iowa Symphony (a value of \$40), two complimentary concert tickets for the Ames Chamber Artists (a value of \$30), buy-one-get-one-free tickets to select shows at Stephens Auditorium, and 10% off one purchase over \$25 at the Octagon. Additionally, you receive a monthly newsletter and other benefits, including access to a community of enthusiastic learners.

Submitted by Diana D. Shonrock, OLLI at ISU Representative, ISU Retirees Board

OLLI, a lifelong learning program, was developed by the ISU Retirees Association in 1993 and later was invited to become an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Today, OLLI at Iowa State is one of 124 programs at colleges and universities from Maine to Alaska to Hawaii that are partially sponsored by the Bernard Osher Foundation.

2025-26 Board of Directors

The ISU Retirees Association (ISURA) board of directors is an official university committee. Representatives from each college, the University Library, Extension, merit staff, professional and scientific staff, and the University Benefits Committee are appointed to serve on this committee. Other committee members include a Faculty Senate representative and the ISURA newsletter editor.

Barbara Pleasants (LAS): President

Scott Elston (Business): Past President

Jan Breitman (P&S): Secretary

Susan Yager: Newsletter Editor

Mary Lynn Damhorst (Human Sciences)

Norman Hill (University Benefits liaison)

Jane Jacobson (LAS)

Diana Shonrock (OLLI at ISU liaison)

Pat Strah (P&S)

Florine Swanson (Extension)

Max Porter (Faculty Senate liaison)

Ex Officio

Heather Bristow, ISU Retirees Director

Office Hours and Contact Information

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. • www.ISUalum/Retirees

Heather Bristow, *Director*

hbristow@iastate.edu

(515) 294-5790

Contact Information Updates



Be sure to send us your most current contact information so we can keep you up-to-date on the latest news and events for ISU Retirees. You may access the information form online at www.ISUalum.org/RetireesInfo or by using this QR code.