



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY™

ALUMNI

CyclonesEverywhere

ISU™ RETIREES

Newsletter

SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER 2025



President's Message

I hope you have been enjoying summer despite, depending on where you live, high heat and humidity, excessive rainfall, lack of rain, Canadian smoke, or some combination of these. If none of these apply—you have found the perfect climate!

We have been planning our 50th Anniversary brunch for Sept. 12 and, if you live reasonably close to Ames, you should have received an email invitation with information on how to make a reservation. As noted in the invitation, a \$10 fee per person is required with your reservation; this is to help with catering and other expenses. If you are not sure you sent your RSVP, or missed the deadline, please contact Heather Bristow, Director of the ISU Retirees Association, at 515-294-5790 or hbristow@iastate.edu. We hope you can join us.

We are looking forward to resuming our lecture series in September. The first presentation, All Things Iowa State Athletics with Jamie Pollard, Cyclone athletics director, will be co-sponsored with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at ISU. See details below and read on to learn more about our programs and events. You can always refer to our website for information and links for Zoom access.

The Retirees Association is being affected by a major reorganization that includes the Alumni Association, where it has had its home. During this process, most Retirees Association Board members are serving a second year in their positions. This includes me, which is why I am again writing this column!

All the best,

Barbara Pleasants, ISU Retirees Association President



Combined Alumni Association and Foundation: What It Means for Retirees

A current process to combine the ISU Alumni Association and ISU Foundation marks the beginning of a significant new chapter for Iowa State University and how it engages even more effectively with its tremendously loyal, supportive students, alumni, donors, friends — and retirees.

Last fall, ISU hired a third-party consultant to conduct an assessment of the communication and constituent engagement initiatives of the university, the ISU Alumni Association, and the ISU Foundation. The assessment was important as ISU continues to strive toward a “one university” approach to present a strong, unified and consistent presence to its many audiences.

Over five months, the consultant interviewed nearly 300 people, reviewed more than 500 documents, and conducted peer university reviews. Among the five key recommendations in its final report was a recommendation to combine the ISU Alumni Association and the ISU Foundation. A review committee affirmed the recommendation to President Wendy Wintersteen, noting that the combination would build upon both organizations’ strengths and proud histories and would lift up Iowa State in a more unified way to deliver the best possible experience for constituents.

A steering committee, with representatives from ISU, the ISU Alumni Association and the ISU Foundation, was formed to oversee implementation of the recommendation. Workstream teams were created to address changes needed to achieve a successful transition.

As part of combination efforts, OLLI was made part of the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), a unit under the ISU Senior Vice President and Provost’s Office.

Heather Bristow, Director of OLLI at ISU and Retirees, continues to serve as the main staff contact for the Retirees Association with an office now located in Howe Hall with the CELT team. Bristow is working with representatives from the President’s office and CELT to review program offerings and explore possible changes or improvements.

To date, there are no program changes for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The lectures will still be offered as planned. Rock On will occur on Oct. 30 (note the earlier date). Memorial Day planning will still take place. The ISU Retirees Association Board of Directors and staff will keep the ISU retiree community updated with any changes to these plans.





Fall Presentations: ISU Athletics, Safe Travel

All Things Iowa State Athletics

Thursday, Sept. 25, 3:00-4:30 p.m. CT, hybrid meeting at the Green Hills Community Room, 2205 Green Hills Dr, Ames, and remote online via Zoom

This program is being offered collaboratively with OLLI at ISU. There will be no social time prior to the program. The presenter will begin at 3 p.m.



Speaker: **Jamie Pollard**, Cyclone athletics director. This will be the third time Jamie has visited with the Retirees Association, but the first time since construction began on the CyTown complex between Hilton Coliseum and Jack Trice Stadium.

Travel Safety - Plan Ahead!

Thursday, Oct. 23, 3:00-4:30 p.m. CT, hybrid meeting at the ISU Alumni Center: Horton Multipurpose Conference Room, Ames, and remote online via Zoom, with social time beginning at 3:00 p.m. CT



Speaker: **John F. Patience**, professor emeritus of animal science. John will relate his experience encountering a pickpocket while traveling in Germany, steps he took toward recovery, and advice for travelers.

ISU Human Resources Office is Moving

On Sept. 9, the ISU Human Resources Office will move to the Warren Madden Building at 2221 Wanda Daley Drive on the north side of campus. Other forms of communication are being utilized to inform employees, students, and retirees of this change as well.

The department has been considering relocation for several years to be more accessible to the people it serves. There will be five parking spots reserved in the southeast corner of Lot 121, just south of the building, for ISU retirees and new employees.

Memorial Day Program

The ISU Retirees Association invited family, friends, and colleagues to join in remembering those who have gone before us on Wednesday, May 21. This year's Memorial Day ceremony was offered as a hybrid event (in-person and online), with 33 people attending in person and 24 more people joining online.

We gathered to remember retired and current ISU faculty and staff and their spouses or partners whose passing we learned of since May 1, 2024. After reading the names of all those we remembered, attendees were invited to share verbal tributes to their loved ones.

You may view the recording of the ceremony and read the list of names on the Memorial Day page of our website at www.ISUAlum.org/MemorialDay.

Thank you to the ISU Alumni Association staff, ISU Horticulture Department, Green Hills, and the many volunteers who worked to make this memorable event possible.



“Move to Green Hills before you think you need to. You’ll appreciate this community so much when you do!”

– Paul & Ardeth Rietz

2205 Green Hills Dr. Ames, IA 50014

515.357.5000

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Date Change for Rock On in Retirement 2025: Mark Your Calendars Again!

Due to a change in university organization and planning, we have altered the date for Rock On 2025. This year's Rock On, "Easy Ways to Be Fit in Retirement," will be held on **Thursday, Oct. 30**. As usual, we'll meet from 8:30 a.m. to noon on the second floor of the ISU Alumni Center, with Zoom access available. The symposium is free. Registration opens in September and will be announced through emails to members and on the ISU Retirees website.

You are encouraged to dress comfortably in case you want to practice the gentle exercises presented. Participants will do the movements while sitting or standing with chair support. As before, a wide array of local organizations will be on hand to provide information about their services and products, with some offering small treats and gifts. Some of the vendors contribute prizes to be awarded at the end of the symposium.



Our presenters are **Dr. Colleen Schwartz**, clinical outreach coordinator for the Iowa State University Translational Research Network (U-TuRN) in the department of kinesiology, and **Abbie Coniglio**, research scientist and Walk with Ease program manager. They will conduct three 40-minute sessions that are energizing, fun, and informative. Sharing recommendations from the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion's *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, Colleen and Abbie will emphasize personalized, practical strategies to help you remain healthy by fitting more activity into your life.

Preventing falls will receive special emphasis. Falls are the greatest cause of unintentional injury and injury deaths among adults 65 and older, and the primary way to prevent falls is by being physically active. Colleen and Abbie, as leaders of the Story County Fall Prevention Coalition, are dedicated to decreasing falls and increasing activity to promote vibrant, independent living for as long as possible.



Evidence-based ways to prevent falls, including strength and balance movements, will be demonstrated, explained, and experienced. The presentations will also feature the Arthritis Foundation's Walk With Ease, an evidence-based fall-prevention program that is appropriate for people with arthritis. In addition, we'll learn about the warmup used in tai chi for arthritis and fall prevention, and about yoga and chair yoga, effective mind-body balancing activities you will explore, along with a brief, balancing mind-body meditation. Colleen, a podiatrist by training, will discuss the best shoes for balance and fall prevention as well as new technologies such as apps and wearable devices.

The Story County Fall Prevention Coalition offers free fall-risk screenings to Ames community residents on the first Friday of each month at Research Park Building 6 (2325 N Loop Dr). These screenings take approximately 15-20 minutes and help individuals better understand their risk of falling and what personalized strategies they can use for prevention. To schedule an appointment, contact Abbie Coniglio at abbiec@iastate.edu or 515-290-9934.

We look forward to seeing you at this year's Rock On in Retirement!

Submitted by Mary Lynn Damhorst, Rock On Committee Chair, and Colleen Schwartz

Sneak Peek at Preventing Falls

For an early look at fall prevention: Dr. Fuzhong Li, Pease Visiting Scholar and an international expert in fall prevention and mind-body exercise, will speak at Iowa State on Sept. 25 at 7:00 p.m. in Memorial Union 2630. "Insights on the Development, Evaluation and Translation of the Tai Ji Quan – Movement for Better Balance for Falls Prevention in Older Adults" will highlight his groundbreaking work in this field.



New Director Helps Bridge Past and Future at Reiman Gardens

Christine Prescott has completed a year she describes as “full of learning, joy, and possibility” as director of Reiman Gardens. On a summer morning, she appears as the calm center of an organized storm of activity at the Gardens, amid volunteers pulling down decorations and gardeners hurriedly placing plants and props in the conservatory. They are preparing not only for autumn displays but also for the [Garden’s Botanical Bash](#).

Christine, a native of Mason City, grew up in a family that valued time outdoors and a connection to nature. It’s not surprising that she’s still a hiker and an avid birder, nor that her background brought her to ISU for a degree in animal ecology. But that might seem an unusual major for the director of a nationally known garden complex. However, Christine draws a clear connection between her college study of ecosystems—the dynamic interactions of plants, animals, and people—and the care of public gardens as “incredible living systems” that teach visitors and ISU students about those interactions. Gardens, she says, are “a bridge between people and plants, between science and beauty, and between conservation and community.”



Under her leadership, Reiman Gardens is celebrating its 30th anniversary with the theme “Picture Perfect: Celebrating 30 Years of Beauty,” honoring the history of the Gardens while also looking ahead. That history includes the growth of Iowa State’s gardens from the Farm House lawn to a lot on the northeast edge of campus to the full development of Reiman Gardens’ 17-acre site. It’s still a “toddler” as gardens go, says Christine, more established than a garden just a few years old, but far from the century-old gardens founded by business magnates in the early 20th century.

Two things distinguish Reiman Gardens from such institutions: its “landlocked” state requires that it grow fuller rather than larger, and its connections with the university make it what Christine calls “a real-world learning lab.” Thus, its growth is focused on rich experiences such as concerts, workshops, and seasonal events rather than expansion, and collaboration with students helps shape the Gardens’ purpose. An example of how education partners with experience is a new, student-created [“Butterfly of the Day” app](#).

The balance between fun and restfulness, enjoyment and learning will continue to be a focal point of the Gardens. Elwood Gnome, at 15 feet, the world’s largest concrete gnome and the Gardens’ most popular attraction, is neighbor to the dignified Ross Formal Lawn Garden, and plant and vegetable trial gardens share space with [roses](#) developed by ISU horticulturalist Griffith Buck.

Going forward, Christine would like to focus more on native plants in the Gardens while retaining the cultivars of, for example, the rose gardens. There will always be an educational component, such as the utility of native plants, and “always something other than would be found in a common garden,” she says. And there will always, she hopes, be magical moments. Christine recalls, as a highlight of her first year as director, watching a child “freeze in awe as a butterfly landed gently on their arm. In that moment, I saw the kind of connection we strive to cultivate every day—between people and nature, between science and wonder.”

Submitted by Susan Yager, ISU Retirees Association newsletter editor

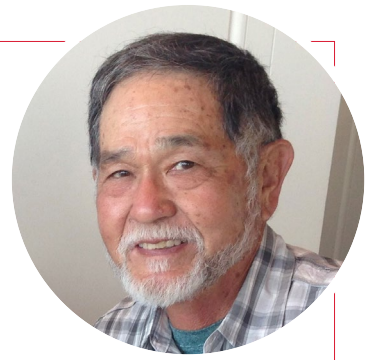
Upcoming Events at Reiman Gardens

- Farm to Table Supper, Sept. 11, 5:00-8:00 p.m.
This event is a fundraiser for the Grow & Give program, which collects and distributes produce each Monday during the growing season to local food pantries.
- Botanical Bash, Sept. 13, 5:00-9:00 p.m.
The “bash” features local food vendors, a silent auction, inflatables, an all-request concert by The Dustin West Band, and a drone show.
- Elwood Gnome’s 15th Birthday Celebration, Sept. 15, noon-5:00 p.m.
- Spirits in the Garden, Oct. 10-12
- Winter Wonderscape light show, Dec. 4-6, 11-13, 18-23, 26-2

For prices, see the [Reiman Gardens Events page](#)



Continuing the Conversation



Q&A with Paul Domoto, retired professor of horticulture

Last March, Paul Domoto spoke at a Retirees Association event on making Ames a pollinator-friendly city. Here we continue the conversation with a Q&A with Paul on pollinators and how to provide and protect their habitats.

Q. You have a project making your property into a friendlier habitat for pollinators and other wildlife. How's that going?

A. It's technically the property of our homeowners' association, an area between our townhome and a neighbor's that is separated by an easement that occupies most of the space. The area has a relatively steep slope with a serious erosion issue. We were able to obtain grants from our city's Smart Watershed program to partly defray the cost to install a rock stream and rain garden and correct the erosion issue, as well as to plant a pollinator-friendly habitat that includes native prairie flowers and grasses. The rain garden is in its second growing season. This spring and early summer, it was very thick with biennial black-eyed susans, and now the perennial flowers and grasses are beginning to show. Typically, it takes three years to establish a prairie.

Q. It's been a wet summer in much of the Midwest. How does that affect pollinators?

A. The abundant rains have been very good for the flowering plants and insect larvae that feed on plants where flooding has not occurred. However, too much rain can become an issue for ground-nesting bees and birds.

Q. Can a small bit of habitat, say in a backyard or small traffic island, really make a difference?

A. With our intensive monoculture in the Midwest, any pollinator habitat is beneficial. A few flowering plants in the backyard will always attract some butterflies and bees. If you encourage your neighbors to plant some flowers, it would increase the habitat, and traffic islands planted with flowers would also increase the habitat and create corridors to draw in more pollinators. Roadsides where flowering plants are allowed greatly increase the habitat for pollinators.

Q. Which species of flowers are best for supporting pollinators?

A. Planting native species is best. These are the species that the pollinators evolved with, but non-native plants are also fine. The native flowering plants are seasonal for their periods of bloom, so it's important to have a continuum of bloom sequence between the plant species. Bumblebees and non-native honeybees collect pollen, so high pollen-producing flowers are beneficial. The nectar-producing potential is important for both bees and butterflies. Even the shape of the flower can have an influence.

Q. Are there specific things gardeners and homeowners can do this fall to promote pollinator habitat?

A. Yes - here are three:

- Don't rake leaves in the fall. Leaving litter on the ground protects pollinator species that overwinter on the ground or just beneath the soil surface.
- Some pollinator species lay their eggs in the stalks of some herbaceous plants and the species overwinter as either an egg or larva. Leaving the stalks standing or as fallen litter during the winter promotes the species' continued presence in the spring.
- "Lights out" or minimize light pollution. This is something you can do throughout the year. During the growing season, artificial light can disrupt the behavior of light-sensitive insects such as moths. In the fall, artificial light can disorient migrating pollinators. This is most evident with birds, where some species are pollinators.

Q. For those interested in learning more about pollinators, what websites or resources would you recommend?

A. Here are just a few of many websites on pollinators. For more, do an internet search for "pollinator habitat garden."

- [Pollinator Friendly Ames](#)
- [The Bee Conservancy](#)
- [ISU Extension's "Gardening for Butterflies and Pollinators."](#)
- [Xerces Society](#)
- [Pollinator.org](#)



Congratulations, New Retirees!

Cynthia Adams
 Raimi Adeleke
 Jeff Alger
 Diane Alshihabi
 Wade Andersen
 Brian Angstrom
 Sherri Angstrom
 Lois Benning
 Lawrence Bice
 Dianne Brotherson
 Kristy Bryden
 Michael Bugeja
 Cathy Bullock-McCalley
 Stewart Burger
 Joseph Burnett
 Lynne Campbell
 Eun Choi
 Gianfranco Ciardo
 Jon Clarridge
 Judith Dittmar
 Philip Dixon
 Nadine Dobbe
 Karl Duke
 Jane Dupuis

Mario Filippelli
 Rodney Fischer
 Janice Friedel
 Kristin Fulton
 Richard Garrey
 Kim Gaul
 Michael Gaul
 Susan Gent
 KJ Gilchrist
 Kimberly Goodmanson
 Patrick Halbur
 Dina Hamouche
 Raymond Hansen
 Dermot Hayes
 Kathy Hein
 Robert Horton
 M Hubby
 Charles Hurburgh
 Lori Jarmon
 Paul Johnson
 Kent Kerby
 Karen Krueger
 Jim Kurtenbach
 Brenda Kutz

Alan Kuuttila
 Pam Lane
 John Lauridsen
 Robert Lee
 Richard Lesar
 Susan Long
 Phyllis Mann
 Beth Martin
 Christine Matteo
 Michael Mayfield
 Anita Micich
 Gordon Miller
 Virginia Monroe
 Mikesch Muecke
 Sarvinder Naberhaus
 Steven Niebuhr
 Sree Nilakanta
 Gail Nonnecke
 Jim Noonan
 Patty Novak
 William Nutty
 Carla Peterson
 Marsha Peterson
 Warren Phillips

Stacey Poling
 Larry Prince
 Maria Pringle
 Dan Rice
 James Roth
 Tracy Rullestad
 Sarah Ryan
 Paul Schafbuch
 Irmi Schewe-Miller
 Yeon-Kyun Shin
 Sung Song
 Douglas Stokke
 Lori Sulzberger
 Alan Swanson
 Dwight Thompson
 Scott Thompson
 Peggy Ward
 Eldon Whitaker
 Huaiqing Wu
 Xiaoqing Wu
 Yih-Hwa Yang
 Karen Zunkel



Fall is coming, and much has changed for OLLI and ISU over the summer with the combination of the ISU Foundation and the ISU Alumni Association.

OLLI at ISU Office Relocation

At the beginning of July, OLLI director Heather Bristow moved to a new office, 2624 Howe Hall, to join the CELT (Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching) team. While this change will make staff collaborations more efficient, it does present challenges for Heather's meetings with OLLI members. Depending on scheduling, a departmental parking pass may be available for use in the General Staff parking lots north of Howe Hall. It's still quite a walk to the building from there, so it may be best to schedule meetings with Heather elsewhere in Ames. And of course, a brief Zoom meeting is always an option.

OLLI's New Semester

Registration is open for courses beginning in September. A few of the upcoming courses are Shape Shifters: Geometry in Art; Ames History Timeline to 1940; Unsung Heroes of the 1950s and 60s Civil Rights Movement; Photography Tips and Techniques; Oh Sleep! It is a Gentle Thing, and The Only Dance in Iowa: A History of Six-Player Girls' Basketball.

OLLI Memberships

An OLLI at ISU membership is still only \$35 and is valid from July 1 to June 30. July 1 marked the start of the 2026 fiscal year for OLLI at ISU. All members need to renew their membership. The move to CELT made it necessary to change our membership and registration system. Several discussions and careful consideration helped us determine that the most beneficial option is to partner with ISU Extension & Outreach Registration Services. You will still access the form through a link on the membership page of the OLLI at ISU website at <https://olli.iastate.edu/>.

Special Benefits

An OLLI Membership includes OLLI Talks such as All Things Iowa State Athletics, Presenter: Jamie Pollard, Thursday, Sept. 25, and Prairie Valley Wetland – The Ins and Outs, Speaker: Sara Carmichael, Wednesday, Sept. 17, both offered as hybrid events, 3:00-4:30 p.m. CT. Other items include complimentary concert tickets, and other discounts in Ames.

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 was later invited to become an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Today, OLLI at ISU 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

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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.