UNIVERSITY LEAGUE CANDELIGHT CONCERT
MADISON SAVOYARDS TO PRESENT
“An evening with Gilbert & Sullivan”

Friday, December 3, 2021, 7:00 pm
Where: Virtual - Cost: $10.00
Registration deadline: Tuesday, November 30, 2021.

Madison Savoyards, Ltd., presents a studio recorded performance for the University League's virtual Candlelight Concert. J. Adam Shelton and Catherine Killam host an evening of Gilbert & Sullivan, touching on Madison Savoyards' history in Madison, WI. Soloists Kelsey Wang, Beck Beuchel, Noah Strube, and Mike Brady perform a selection of Gilbert & Sullivan favorites from Iolanthe to The Pirates of Penzance, with that combination of high wit, romance and musicality that is woven into every Gilbert & Sullivan operetta. They will also feature a song from Gayden Wren's A Gilbert & Sullivan Christmas Carol, which they last performed in 1997, and the well-loved "Long Day Closes," by Sullivan, traditionally sung in memoriam for passed Savoyards. This recording will stream live for University League on December 3 at 7:00 pm on YouTube, followed by a live cast and director Q&A on Zoom.

The Madison Savoyards began in 1963 with a production of Gilbert and Sullivan's Iolanthe, and annually presents a staged production of a Gilbert and Sullivan or other light opera. Their fully staged productions with live orchestra provide performance opportunities for young artists, community members, and emerging professionals, through English-language comic operas that are fun for audiences of all ages. Madison Savoyards welcomes and includes all people regardless of age, race, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, or religion.

Their mission is to preserve the works of Gilbert and Sullivan and other light opera by producing and promoting live performances; to develop the skills and talent of cast, crew, and musicians of all ages; and to inspire, entertain, and educate the community through performances and other initiatives.
Catherine Killam has served as president of Madison Savoyards' Board of Directors since 2018 and has performed on the Savoyards' stage as Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Princess Zara in *Utopia Limited*, Elsie Maynard in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, and the title role in *Patience*, as well as numerous choral roles since age 9. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Peck School of the Arts at UW - Milwaukee, her Master of Music from the Longy School of Music and is currently in UW-Madison's MBA program in Arts Administration.

J. Adam Shelton directed Madison Savoyards' productions of *Die Fledermaus* in 2018, *Trial by Jury* in 2019 and our streamed 2020-21 productions of *Pirate Island* and “I have a song to sing, O! he has sung professionally with Madison Opera, Des Moines Metropolitan Opera, Arizona Opera, the Mid-Columbia Mastersingers & Symphony Orchestra, Wisconsin Chamber Choir, the Sault Symphony of Canada, Soo Opera Theatre, Madison Savoyards, Fresco Opera, Four Seasons Theatre, and Music Theatre of Madison. He is associate lecturer of voice at UW-Whitewater while maintaining the Shelton Private Voice Studio, LLC in Madison. His students have gained national attention at NATS and the Jimmy Awards in addition to local accolades and casting decisions.

For program and registration information, go to https://univleague.wisc.edu/programs/

The University League Great Dane Readers program has started a new school year!

During “normal times,” volunteer readers would visit their assigned classrooms once a month for eight months to read to the children. These are not normal times. The children are attending classes in person this year. However, because the preschoolers are still unvaccinated at this time, the Head Start sites are not allowing visitors into their classrooms for the fall semester. As 23 of our 27 classes are Head Starts, this change affects most of our volunteers. So rather than visiting the classes, the volunteers are delivering four titles to the schools in October for the teachers to read with the children throughout the fall. Unfortunately, because we are unable to visit most classrooms now, we are currently not adding new readers to our group.

The good news is that this year we are providing 471 sets of eight books (3768 books) to preschoolers in 27 Dane County classes. Participating classes include Head Start sites, Animal Crackers, The Playing Field, and the BLW Community Center. We are also donating more than 500 books to the Head Start classes to use for their Family Fun Night gatherings.

We are really hoping things will be more normal for the spring semester and the volunteers will be able to return to in person readings for the remaining four titles. This year we have chosen some books that are great fun to read aloud- including a rhyming book about a polar bear that will not share a chair, another featuring a chicken in a library, and an alphabet book with a very confused moose.

University League can be proud for helping provide so many books to so many families this year! And for helping some Dane County preschoolers learn the answer to the question: Why did the chicken cross the road? (To get to the library, of course!) If you have any questions about Great Dane Readers, please contact Mary Warfield at mbwarfield@gmail.com or (608) 273-9809.
Greetings, University League Members!

Fall has arrived and the 2021-2022 year is in full swing. We continue to operate in hybrid mode—a combination of Zoom, in-person and outdoors (balmy weather permitting). Several Interest Groups now meet in their pre-Covid venues, and a few more Volunteer Opportunities are cautiously opening up to regular activity. The uncertainty over holding future programs in person is starting to give way to normal operation once again. We welcomed several new members at a New Member Coffee on November 4th—the second one since May. So, we are gaining ground, even though there is still a need in some instances for masking and distancing.

The Fall Coffee was held on September 22 at Blackhawk Country Club, our first gathering in nearly two years. We did it! Dr. Amy Gilman, Director of the Chazen Museum, spoke with great wit and expertise about how the Chazen adjusted its focus during the pandemic and is moving forward with new initiatives to inspire the entire campus community to visit the Chazen. The Fall Coffee was a festive event that took place on a beautiful fall morning, with familiar faces walking through the door, eager to be together once again. The feeling was exquisite.

As described in the cover story, this year’s Candlelight Concert on December 3 will feature the Madison Savoyards live streamed on YouTube and Zoom (the Savoyards only have virtual offerings scheduled through 2021). If you were fortunate enough to have seen their virtual summer performance, “I have a song to sing, O! Musical gems from Gilbert and Sullivan”, you will have a good idea of what is in store at the Candlelight Concert. Gilbert and Sullivan were Victorian-era masters of light opera who remain popular with audiences today. Local performers form the cast for all of the Savoyards’ productions. We are fortunate to have such talent in our midst, and we can’t wait to delight you with more “G&S” musical gems at the Candlelight Concert.

The Program Committee has scheduled the March 22 Spring Luncheon and the May 10 Annual Meeting and Luncheon at Blackhawk and Maple Bluff Country Clubs, respectively. You’ll hear more on those events in future issues of the League Letter.

The Scholarship Benefit Committee has been meeting since June to prepare for the annual Stay-at-Home scholarship fundraiser. We continue to hear from students who are recipients this academic year of the funds that you contributed during last year’s benefit. You couldn’t imagine a more impressive group of young scholars, many of whom were involved in tutoring, mentoring, and community service starting in high school. An emerging theme in their letters is the desire to build careers in which the skills honed at the UW-Madison will enable them to help others. I commend our scholarship recipients for seeing beyond themselves with their vision of improving lives in their communities. Their need for financial assistance to complete their education is evident, and that is where we can make a difference, too, with our gifts.

Finally, apropos of scholarships, I want to thank all of you who have donated so far this year to our scholarship mission, either via your membership renewal, your program donations, your “In Honor Of” and “In Memory Of” donations, or your donations to University League’s endowed scholarships. Your generosity is amazing and is always deeply appreciated.

Joan Leffler
INTRODUCING NEW UNIVERSITY LEAGUE MEMBER: BARBARA DRAKE

Wisconsin native Barbara Drake was born in Prairie du Chien and grew up in Janesville. She joined University League in April 2021 and the UL Board of Directors just two months later, in June. Barb serves on the Board as the Assistant Interest Group Chair, and has delved into that role enthusiastically, working alongside the Chair, Mary Jo Willis, guiding our Interest Group Leaders in the routines of a new year. Barb also arranged for Alice in Dairyland to speak to the Wine Divas and Dudes Interest Group at their September gathering at the Drummond Winery in Waunakee. “Alice” (Julia Nunes) gave a thoroughly engaging talk on Wisconsin’s wine industry, which includes 82 commercial vineyards. Thanks to Barb’s initiative, the Divas and Dudes were off to a memorable start this year!

Barb has a wide-ranging academic background that led to a multi-path career during her life. She started with a degree from the UW in Public Health Nursing and served as the school nurse at three Madison schools in the late ‘60’s and early ‘70’s. That job made her see the need to expand her training to include social work. Soon a Master’s in Social Work followed. She went on to use both her nursing and social work degrees in Minnesota schools at the same time as she was pursuing her next major goal: a doctorate in Education Administration at the University of Minnesota.

After earning her Ed.D., Barb spent the next 25 years as a high school principal in small towns in Minnesota and Illinois. She comments that as a school principal, you “see it all.” She keenly recognizes that each phase of her education—nursing, social work, and education administration—was invaluable to the career choices she made. She enjoyed the role of school principal because it always afforded the opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of students.

Barb’s additional noteworthy accomplishments include an Associate Deanship at Harper College in Illinois and, after returning to the Madison area, spending three years as the Chinese language immersion coordinator for Verona elementary school students. During that time, Barb went on a trip to China with other American educators who also were Chinese language immersion coordinators—a trip that was sponsored and financed by the Chinese government. Her most recent career adventure has been getting a realtor’s license, which is a departure from the roles she played in education, social work and nursing but which, according to Barb, gets her out in circulation and keeps her active! We extend a hearty welcome to Barb. In University League you’ll find even more outlets for your boundless energy, your desire to meet new people and to experience a wealth of interesting activities.

VOLUNTEERS OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities to preserve a healthy environment, to be grateful for what nature offers us. That is gratifying for those who volunteer in the care of our green spaces. Volunteers at Allen Centennial Gardens, UW Arboretum and the UW Lakeshore Nature Preserve and Other Sites share some of their experiences and opinions.

Allen Gardens: Volunteer Linda Christen said that last summer she went to the garden every Tuesday from 9 am to 11 am. “Depending on what the director says, we plant or weed. One nice thing is that the student interns frequently give us garden walks highlighting plants or trees that interest them”. Sheila Lynch also said “Of all the things that I appreciated about working at Allen Gardens, the nicest was the little walk-around introductory session prior to each working period. We were introduced to several plants each time, with an explanation of why they were chosen, the reason for placement in the garden, their attributes and possible negative traits, etc. It gave me a depth of understanding that I would otherwise not have experienced.”
**The Arboretum:** Judy Troia, a longtime volunteer, said that she is usually a visitor center receptionist. “When it was closed due to COVID, I did volunteer work with the Native Plant Sale in May. I ended two 3-year terms on the friends of Arboretum Board. Starting in October, I will be back at the Visitor Center reception desk which will be open once again.”

**The Nature Preserve:** Volunteer work parties and stewards like Roma Lenehan do invasive species removal (weeding), brush cutting and seed collecting.

**The Friends of the UW-Madison Libraries:** The library will be using volunteers all year long to receive and sort book donations in Memorial library, 728 State Street.

**The Wisconsin Historical Museum:** The museum uses volunteers for their information desk and as docents and tour guides.

**The Wisconsin Film Festival:** Planning an in-person Festival for 2022, it invites volunteers to register on their web site.

Many of the 14 sites which utilize UL volunteers indoors are still closed or opening slowly. Thank you to all UL members who have volunteered for one or more of these opportunities. Your names have been sent to the volunteer coordinators of all of the sites, whether open or closed. If you have questions, please contact the coordinators whose latest contact information is listed on the UL web site. Priscilla Thain and Ellen Lewis are the coordinators of the UL volunteers.

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**SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE**

By Barbara Widder

**Chris Kemp one of our Scholarship Beneficiaries:**

You’ve all heard: “when life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” After I interviewed Chris, this phrase came to mind. Here’s a bright, motivated young man who exhibits wisdom beyond his years, and a singular desire to make a difference in this world. From his teen years in Milwaukee, to his status here in Madison, he has been an eager and resilient student, curious to experience everything life has to offer him. Even with obstacles growing up, Chris maintains an open mind about his future. Chris is a young man with a clear vision of what he’d like to do with his life.

His life experiences, being a part of an underserved community, as well as his desire to understand different cultures, are leading him to choose a double major in the field of Social Work and African Studies. He says his major influences have been his older brother, who is in the Air Force, and his older sister. He also spoke enthusiastically about his “pack of 4,” guys who were fast friends all through school. When they graduated and moved in different directions, they made a pact to always be there for each other, to support, encourage and keep their focus. With mentoring by the CAE (L&S Center for Academic Excellence) campus organization, and these other influences, Chris has in place an important foundation for success here at the University of Wisconsin. We are so proud of him and wish him well.

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**INTEREST GROUP UPDATES**

**Aerobics History**

We Bid Good-Bye to the Aerobics Group. It has been nearly 40 years since a group of 35 enthusiastic women got together at Fire Station #2 for a one-hour aerobics class. One of these founding members, Caroline Liedtke, has been leading the group for most of the 40 years since then. At first, they just enjoyed aerobic dance – grooving to Michael Jackson music. Then, when they moved to Kehl Studio of Dance (later called Madtown Twisters), they added steps and weights to their routine and began meeting twice a week. Marilyn Gundermann became the group’s treasurer and filled in as leader when Caroline was away.
In 2008, Jill Muehrcke added yoga and pilates to the routine. The group loved the yoga poses, especially savasana, the final resting pose of total relaxation, after which they melted into a few blissful moments of mindful meditation. When COVID hit, the group disbanded but kept meeting for socially-distanced coffee, as they had become good friends. During these meetings, they made the decision to discontinue the formal aerobics part of the group but still get together regularly for coffee.

The final group, in addition to Caroline, Marilyn, and Jill, includes Elisabeth de Boor, Friedemarie Farrar, Dan Hill (YES, guys have always been encouraged to join in!), Ruth Gundermann, Margaret Kaufman, Carol Kiemel, Claire Mangasarian, Linda Mayfield, and Judy Troia. They all agree that the best part of the group was the friendship and camaraderie, which made exercising so much less painful. And they will continue to meet every few weeks to catch up with stories and, always, much laughter.

Namaste, dear friends!

![Picture from the 35th-anniversary luncheon in 2018](image)

**Wine Divas & Dudes 9/23/21 Event**

The Wine Divas & Dudes Interest Group began its 2021-2022 season with a fun in-person event! They met on September 23, 2021 on the outside patio of Drumlin Winery in Waunakee. After over a year of virtual visits it was great to meet, network and clink our wine glasses. They enjoyed wine and cheese while learning about the history of the winery (they actually started by growing apples and making apple cider) and learning which grapes they now produce. They had as main speaker—Wisconsin’s Alice in Dairyland (Julia Nunes).

Julia shared how one becomes Alice in Dairyland (a very competitive process) and what her life is like as Alice. Her job is to know about the Wisconsin agriculture environment so we were able to get an overview of what Wisconsin has to offer. Alice in Dairyland is a very personable and entertaining speaker.
Artiques
Join the Artiques group to help ring in the Holidays at The Stables at Quivery’s Grove on **Tuesday, December 14, 2021**. The festivities will start at 11:45 am with food and fun for all. Mark your calendars now so you can look forward to the celebration. More information and specifics contact Aleta Murray at: a-murray@sbcglobal.net – (608) 712-7550.

IN MEMORIAM

Since our last newsletter, we are sorry to tell you that the University League has lost three beloved members, Ruth G. Johnson, Aurora Gil Casado and Frank Graziano. Ruth G. was League president in 1997-1998; Aurora was one of the charter members (known as the “Founding Mother”) and longtime participant in the Spanish Reading/Literature Interest Group; And Frank was a deeply admired teacher, mentor and care provider in the field of HIV/AIDS.

Among the League members who called to express sadness and surprise that such an active, lively person as Ruth G. (as she wanted to be called – she thought that plain Ruth Johnson was too ordinary) is now gone were Cindy May, Kay Jarvis-Sladky, Donna Calvert, Elizabeth Gill, Betty Zeps and Elaine Rosenblatt. Various other members commented on Ruth’s contributions both to League and to life itself:

*Beverly Rogers*: Ruth G. was such a light in this world, and she will surely be missed. I will always remember her smile and positive attitude.

*Brook Soltvedt*: She was quite a character. I'm sorry to hear this news.

*Theresa Calderon*: I am truly saddened by the news of Ruth G’s passing. Her vibrant and creative spirit will live on in our hearts and be ever present in our League work to support UW scholarships.

**Ruth Pugh Gifford Johnson** died peacefully at home on September 6, 2021, preceded in death by her husband, Professor of mathematics and engineering Millard Wallace Johnson Jr. Married for 55 years, they had a fabulous life together, with great love, respect, and lots of fun. She always said that life was such a great gift and that she was one of the lucky ones to have almost everything she basically wanted - her wonderful family and the opportunity to be of service to the community through her many volunteers and political involvements. To mention some of Ruth G.’s many community involvements other than University League: active member and officeholder in the Republican Party of Dane County and Wisconsin, Republican Women of Dane County and Wisconsin, and serving as a Presidential Elector in the Electoral College for the 1984 election.
She was also a neighborhood association chair and docent at Monona Terrace. Ruth G. loved all these activities and gave it her all as a leader and participant.

Ruth G. also loved to play bridge and was a member of the several League Bridge Interest Groups that have played together for many years. Many of those members (Judy Stang, Priscilla, Gennie Bostian, Helen Lackore and others) have some great "Ruth G. stories" as well and there's enough material to devote an entire newsletter to Ruth G.! She enjoyed the outdoors and extensive travel around the world. Her most favorite times were spent with family at the cabins they built in the wilderness at Springpole Lake, Ontario. It was also where she caught a 35-pound lake trout. Past League President Betsy Haimson reminisced about Ruth's skydiving hobby: Apparently, the story is that she wanted to keep on skydiving but stopped after she had had cataract surgery and her ophthalmologist told her she'd better discontinue that activity! Ruth G. knew that when she walks “through the valley of the shadow of death” (23rd Psalm) that her husband Millard would be there to take her arm.

Aurora Rodriguez Melendez Gil Casado received her angel wings on September 8, 2021, in Madison WI. Born September 13, 1932, in Madrid Spain, she immigrated to the US in 1955, raising two daughters while fulfilling her passion for social work. Always willing to help others in any way, she led her life with laughter and kindness, leaving a hole in the hearts of friends and family. She was a long-time member of the Spanish Interest Group. The group could always rely upon Aurora for cultural information due to growing up in the heart of Madrid, part of it during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). There her small business-owner parents taught her the value of keeping politics close to her chest. Through her mother’s family she experienced another region of Spain, Asturias, which was known for its proximity to both the sea and mountains and is kept green year-round due to regular rainfalls. Aurora’s family followed the tradition of naming a daughter after the mother. In fact, there are five Aurora’s including Aurora’s own mother.

Aurora loved her birthplace and was fervent in following many Spanish customs relishing such classic Spanish dishes as paella, tortilla española, jamon serrano. In her later years, she enjoyed visits back to Madrid staying in a family apartment. Her daughter Debbie is known in the Hispanic community of Madison for being a founder of Nuestro Mundo, a dual immersion language school in the Madison Metro School District. Loving her two daughters, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, Aurora was particularly proud of her granddaughter who is an emergency care physician and graduate of UW School of Medicine. In Aurora’s words, she said: “Los barcos se vienen, y los barcos se van” “Boats come and boats go.”

Frank M. Graziano, League member and husband of Mary Graziano, passed away peacefully at home, on Sept. 22, 2021, after a long battle with cancer. He always fondly remembered his childhood in Bangor, PA. Frank received his B.S. from St. Joseph's, his master's from Villanova, and his MD/Ph.D. from the University of Virginia. He spent 35 years in practice at the University of Wisconsin, focused on treatment and research of HIV/AIDS and immunology. His passion for HIV/AIDS education took him to many parts of the world, with Uganda, Africa, being the most important to him. Frank spent his retirement years continuing his HIV/AIDS work in Africa, teaching medical topics at Clarke University, and traveling internationally with Mary. In his free time, he focused on family, traveling, and attending activities and sporting events of children and then grandchildren. He enjoyed all sporting events; especially swim meets. Frank and Mary enjoyed exploring international cuisine with fellow faculty of the University. He was an avid runner and participated in numerous marathons and races around the Midwest.
MEMBERSHIP UPDATE
Cindy May, Membership Chair
clmay@wisc.edu or 608-848-9291

We Need Your Help. After a slow last year, University League is resuming activity. In September we gathered at Blackhawk Country Club to hear Amy Gilman’s exciting talk about the Chazen Museum. Most of our twenty Interest Groups are meeting, either in person or by Zoom. Volunteer Opportunities are reopening. University League offers many avenues to make friends and support the University of Wisconsin-Madison by providing student scholarships and volunteers. We also help young people learn to appreciate books through University League Great Dane Readers.

We all know someone who would enjoy joining an Interest Group or coming to our fascinating programs and supporting the University of Wisconsin. Everyone needs to renew their social life after the pandemic.

Please help us recruit new members. Our members are our best ambassadors. Please consider reaching out to someone you know about joining our wonderful organization. Bring a friend or relative to an event or an Interest Group. Or paraphrase our "elevator speech," printed on the inside front cover of the Yearbook. If you'd like some copies of our excellent brochure, don't hesitate to phone or email me. Refer people to our refreshed website, univleague.wisc.edu. Some people have never heard of League, others do not know what we do, or do not know that we are open to everyone. Together we can increase our membership!

Our Membership Committee has been busy, recruiting 14 new members during the year of the pandemic when we were not even meeting! Now we have many more opportunities to recruit people to revitalize our groups while maintaining our membership. You would be amazed how many new members that some people, like Mary Jo Willis and Kay Jarvis-Sladky, have recruited by just short conversations in their daily lives. Without continuous recruitment, our organization will shrink because some members are unable to renew.

A discussion with a friend about an Interest Group or speaker can take only a few minutes – and joining University League can enrich a friend’s life!

Way to go Cindy!

Membership Committee Chair Cindy May worked on recruiting Bucky Badger into University League while attending the Chancellor’s annual picnic for new UW faculty last August.

The Chancellor’s picnic is a good forum for spreading the word about University League and our mission. Our scholarships are awarded to students in every School and College at the UW-Madison, a fact that the Chancellor and other UW administrators who are present acknowledge each year at the picnic.
UNIVERSITY LEAGUE CANDLELIGHT CONCERT
Friday, December 3rd, 2021, 7:00 pm

Virtual Performance by The Madison Savoyards,
“An Evening with Gilbert and Sullivan”
Cost: $10 per login

Registration deadline: Tuesday November 30th, 2021.
NOTE: Registration for this event is by US mail only.

Name: ___________________________________________________________

Your Preferred Email Address: _______________________________________

(Accuracy is Important!)

You will receive a Zoom and YouTube link on Wednesday, December 1, 2021

_____ Reservations @ $10.00 each: $ ______

Optional Donations:

General Scholarship (IMO/IHO): ______

University League Centennial Fund (IMO/IHO): ______

TOTAL ENCLOSED ______

(For donations “In Honor of” or “In Memory of”, please circle IHO or IMO and provide contact information.)

Please make checks payable to The University League Inc.
Mail check with this form to: Betty Zeps, 1922 Adams St., Madison, WI 53711.

Questions? Contact Betty Zeps (bszeps@wisc.edu, or Joan Leffler (jleffler@wisc.edu)

We appreciate receiving any articles and pictures you or your group have that you would like published in the League Letter and invite you to keep sending them. The deadline for submissions to the next issue is Friday, November 19, 2021. Please send to gisell_2403@hotmail.com or bszeps@wisc.edu in .doc or .jpg form for easier editing.
Fall Coffee speaker talks about the Chazen’s future.

She went on to enlarge on these endeavors with plans that will include the entire community in the activities of the museum: more outreach beyond the arts to include curricula development, programs and services for all the University’s Colleges and Departments; services to engage the Madison community at large; more diverse exhibits; and even more accessibility to the museum. Of course, another priority is to further develop and interpret the permanent collection.