



League Letter

Volume LX, Number 5, April 2026 www.univleague.wisc.edu Editor: Gisell Sirianni Asst. Editor: Roma Lenehan

UNIVERSITY LEAGUE ANNUAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON Quasquicentennial Celebration Wednesday, May 6th, 2026, 10:30 a.m. Blackhawk Country Club

Mrs. William F. Allen, the fourth president of the University League (1905–07), beautifully recalled the organization’s beginnings:

“The University League was born on a pleasant day in early May [1901], under the old forest oaks on my back lawn, 228 Langdon St. There were six or eight of us who gathered for this great event... The day was exceptionally beautiful, one of those rare days of early spring, and the light and shadows played around us under the spreading oaks, lending charm to the advent of our new baby. We had seen the need for her coming and were anxious that she be equipped in every way to fill that need.”



From that small gathering beneath the oaks, the University League took root—growing into a vibrant and enduring organization. Inspired in part by a similar league in Michigan, its founders created a community grounded in connection, purpose, and a shared commitment to the University.

A 1929 account in the *Capital Times* described the League’s early mission: to “promote social contacts for faculty wives as well as women students... Opportunities for helping girl students were found.” That spirit of engagement quickly translated into action. Early initiatives included organizing an ice carnival, expanding swimming facilities, and advocating for a “Women’s Building,” which ultimately became Lathrop Hall. From the very beginning, the League embraced a mission centered on scholarships, service, education, and friendship—principles that continue to guide and inspire us today.

ANNUAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

When: Wednesday, May 6th, 2026

Registration: 10:30 a.m.

Annual Meeting: 11:15 a.m.

Lunch: 11:45 a.m.

Celebration: 12:30 p.m.

End Time: 1:30 p.m.

Where: Blackhawk

Country Club

3606 Blackhawk Dr.

Madison, WI 53705

***Cost:** \$40 per person

***Reservation Deadline:**

April 27th

***Reservation form on:**

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The League's impact on student support began early and has grown remarkably over time. Funds were raised for the Women's Building as early as 1910, and in 1916 a loan fund was established for women students. In 1925, Mrs. Allen further strengthened this commitment with a bequest of \$2,000—nearly \$60,000 in today's dollars. By 1930, even in the midst of the Great Depression, the League expanded its efforts by establishing two scholarships in addition to its loan program.

Today, that legacy continues with thirty-one named scholarships and a general scholarship fund at the UW Foundation. Since the 1980s, the League has contributed an extraordinary \$2.7 million in scholarship support to the University. In 2025 alone, \$136,970 was awarded—an inspiring testament to the generosity and dedication of our members.

The League's original goal of fostering connection has flourished through the creation of Interest Groups, beginning in 1949. Today, members enjoy a rich variety of opportunities—from bridge and Mah Jongg to birding, ecology, genealogy, wine appreciation, book discussions, travel, and more. Volunteer service remains equally central, with members giving their time and talents to organizations such as the Allen Centennial Garden, PBS, the Arboretum, UW Hospital, and Friends of International Students. Together, these activities reflect the vibrant, engaged spirit of the League.

While the League was originally established to serve University women, it has evolved into a welcoming and inclusive organization. Today, membership is open to anyone who shares a commitment to our mission of scholarship, service, education, and friendship. No University affiliation is required—only a desire to participate and make a difference.

On May 6th, we will gather at Blackhawk Country Club to celebrate 125 years of the University League—honoring our past, celebrating our present, and looking ahead to a bright future. This milestone is more than an anniversary; it is a celebration of generations of members whose vision, generosity, and dedication have shaped the League into what it is today.

We warmly invite you to join us for this special occasion and to share in the pride of our remarkable legacy. Together, we celebrate 125 years—and the many more to come!

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION UPDATE

Beginning this fall 2026, members who wish to receive a printed copy of the League Newsletter by mail are kindly asked to cover the cost of printing and postage.

To request this service, please send a check for **\$10.00** to help cover the cost of printing and postage for all **five issues** published during the season.

Please make the check payable to: **The University League, Inc.**
P.O. Box 5064, Madison, WI 53705-0064.

Members who prefer to receive the full-color electronic version of the Newsletter may continue to do so at no cost—no action is required.

Thank you for your continued membership, as well as your support and understanding!



FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

It is hard to believe that I am writing my fifth President's Letter for this League year. Where has the time gone?

We are currently in the midst of our Stay-at-Home Scholarship Campaign. At the time of this writing, just over 30 percent of our members have contributed. To those who have already given, thank you for your generosity. If you have not yet had the opportunity, I warmly encourage you to consider making a contribution, either by check or online, in support of this very important effort. Scholarships remain at the heart of our mission, and your participation makes a meaningful difference.

Enclosed in this Newsletter, you will find the registration form for our Quasquicentennial Spring Luncheon, to be held on May 6th at Blackhawk Country Club. This special "Get the Red Out" celebration will honor our 125-year legacy by reflecting on our past, celebrating our present, and looking ahead to our future. Our annual meeting will take place just prior to the luncheon. I hope you will mark your calendar, submit your registration, and plan to join us for this memorable occasion. Please note that the registration deadline is April 27th.

In closing, I extend my sincere appreciation to our Board, committee members, and the entire membership for making the 2025–2026 League year such a success. I look forward with great enthusiasm to our continued growth and accomplishments in the year ahead.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

John Shanda
President 2025-2026

CELEBRATING MARGARET ANDREWS ALLEN **The University League Founding Member 1901**

A Legacy of Leadership and Support: **Mrs. William F. Allen Scholarship Fund**

Margaret Andrews Allen, wife of the renowned Professor William F. Allen, played a pivotal role in the founding of *The University League*. At the first organizational meeting held on May 4, 1901, she was instrumental in establishing the organization and proudly served as a charter member. Mrs. Allen later became the fourth President of the University League, continuing her leadership and commitment to supporting women and education.

In 1916, the League established the "University League Loan Fund for Women's Studies" with an initial contribution of \$50—laying the foundation for what would become a lasting tradition of support for students.



Mrs. Allen's dedication endured beyond her lifetime. In April 1925, she generously left a bequest of \$2,000 to strengthen the loan fund. In recognition of her extraordinary generosity, the fund was renamed the **Mrs. William F. Allen Loan Fund**.

As the years passed, the fund continued to grow. By 1978, it had reached \$10,200 and was entrusted to the management of the University of Wisconsin Foundation. At that time, it became known as the **Mrs. William F. Allen Scholarship Fund**, reflecting its evolution into a scholarship awarded annually to a student attending the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Today, the fund stands as a testament to decades of generosity and stewardship. Contributions from The University League and its dedicated members have helped it grow steadily over time. As of June 30th, 2025, the market value of the fund is \$93,111—an enduring legacy that continues to support students and honor Mrs. Allen's vision.

Reference: *A History of The University League, 1901–2001* by Rose Fahien.

THE UNIVERSITY LEAGUE MISSION

Supporting Scholarships, Service, Education, and Friendship

2026 • 125th Anniversary Scholarship Benefit

Donation Update

As of March 14, 2026, we have raised **\$21,600**, with **40% of member households participating**. *Our goal is \$25,000—and with your help, it is well within reach! To allow additional time for participation, the Scholarship Benefit donation deadline has been extended to **April 30th, 2026**.*

✓ If you have donated already, **THANK YOU!**

✓ If you have not yet contributed, **PLEASE DONATE NOW!**

Please watch for email updates reflecting donations received after March 14th

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the University League Scholarship Benefit?

The Scholarship Benefit is a stay-at-home fundraiser. The purpose is to raise money for our General Scholarship Fund (GSF) in support of University of Wisconsin-Madison students.

When does the Scholarship Benefit take place?

The Benefit is typically held annually from February 1st through March 31st. This year's deadline has been extended to **April 30th**.



How is the Benefit different from any other donation to the General Scholarship Fund?

- *The Scholarship Benefit is a focused fundraising effort held each spring to raise awareness and encourage participation.*
 - **100% of all contributions** made during this period support the General Scholarship Fund (GSF).
 - Any GSF donations made between **February 1st and April 30th** are counted as Scholarship Benefit contributions.
 - Any donations made outside this timeframe still support the GSF but are not counted as a Scholarship Benefit donation.
-

How to donate

A Scholarship Benefit letter and donation card were mailed to all members in February. Donations may be made in several ways:

- Mail your contribution using the provided donation card to:
The University League, Inc.
P.O. Box 5064
Madison, WI 53705-0064
 - If you no longer have your card, you may still mail a check with a note indicating it is for the **Scholarship Benefit**.
 - Online donations are also available via QR code. To request the code, please contact:
universityleague.scholarship@gmail.com or peggywiederholt@sbcglobal.net
-



Acknowledgment of Donations

(All acknowledgments are sent by the Scholarship Committee.)

- Donations up to \$499 are recognized with a mailed thank-you card, noting tax-deductible status.
 - Donations of \$500 or more receive a personalized thank-you letter from the President and the Scholarship Committee Chair.
 - In Memory of (IMO) acknowledgments are mailed upon donor request when recipient information is provided.
 - In Honor of (IHO) acknowledgments are emailed to University League members and mailed to non-members upon request of the donor when the names and addresses of the honorees have been provided.
 - Donor names, IMOs, and IHOs are published in the *League Letter*:
 - Donations received through March 14 will appear in the April issue.
 - Donations received after March 14 will appear in the August issue.
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How Scholarships Are Awarded

All contributions to the General Scholarship Fund received during the fiscal year (June 1–May 31), including those from the Scholarship Benefit, are combined and distributed among the 12 University of Wisconsin colleges and schools listed in the University League directory. Each school selects its scholarship recipients and reports back to the League.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Peggy Wiederholt, Scholarship Committee Chair at peggywiederholt@sbcglobal.net.

Thank You to Our 2026 Scholarship Benefit Donors

Donations Received Through March 14th, 2026;

(Donations Made After March 14th Will Be Published in the August League Letter)

\$1 - \$249

Susan Adams
 Carol Aspinwall
 Lauren Blough
 Heidi Bollinger
 Joyce Bringe
 Katherine Brock
 Lois Buelow
 Lynda Cantrell
 Jane Danis
 Jeannine Desautels
 Ruby Dobson
 Nancy Dorl
 Jane Dunn
 Ann Ellingboe
 Rose Fahien
 Friedemarie Farrar
 Janice Golay
 Nancy Gondzur
 Judy Ham
 J. Margo Hansen
 Karen Harris
 Linda Harvey
 Rhonda Heise
 Billie Hellerstein
 Elizabeth Hoadley
 Susie Jablonic
 Kay Jarvis-Sladky
 Roberta Johnson
 Pam Joseph
 Carole Klopp
 Kathy Knox
 Sharon Koenig
 Anne Marie Lawrence
 Fern Lawrence
 Carol Lyon
 Claire Mangasarian
 Jan Martin
 Ann McBride
 Rose Meinholz
 Phyllis Menne
 Fumiko Miyazaki
 Joan Montague
 Verelene and James Morris
 Sandra Nuernberg
 Leslie Paynter
 Melinda Pellino
 Karen Peterson
 Bev Pfiefer
 Linda Procci
 Agnes Radek
 Mary Ann and Richard Reale
 Shirley Reiser
 Taryn Resnick

Michele Rohan
 Julie Sadowsky
 Marcia Schmidt
 Beverly Schrag
 Diane Smidt
 Louise Thompson
 Judy Troia
 Mary Lou Tyne
 Kim Vergeront
 Jeanne and Francesco Vitale
 Ann Walser
 Barbara Widder
 Joan Wiersma
 Betty Zeps

\$250 - \$499

Nan Baillies
 Kathleen Engel-Hunt
 Susan Lauffer
 Linda Mayfield
 Donna McCarthy Beckett
 Helen Read
 Judy Stang
 Priscilla Thain
 Mary Jo Willis

\$500+

Linda Baumann
 Betsy and Bezalel Haimson
 Richard Leffler
 Roma Lenehan
 Caroline Liedtke
 Sally Lorenz
 Diane Risley
 Jacqui and John Shanda
 Judy Stevenson
 Mary and Terry Warfield
 Peggy Wiederholt

In Honor of

Doris Cook

Joan Wiersma

Linda Harvey

Melinda Pellino

Beverly Schrag

Frank Hoadley

Elizabeth Hoadley

Roma Lenehan

Katherine Brock

Judy Ham

Cindy May

Betty Zeps

Jill Muehrcke

Judy Troia

Elaine Rosenblatt

Michele Rohan

John Shanda

Kathleen Engel-Hunt

Jan Martin

Peggy Wiederholt

Judy Stang

In Memory of

William H. Aspinwall

Carol Aspinwall

Gerry Dunn

Jane Dunn

Mary Ann and Richard Reale

Bert and Vi Fredrickson

J. Margo Hansen

Mary Sue Hansen

Roberta Johnson

Frank Hoadley

Elizabeth Hoadley

Bill Lawrence

Anne Marie Lawrence

Fern Lawrence

Joan Leffler

Friedemarie Farrar

Richard Leffler

Ann McBride

Diane Smidt

Priscilla Thain

Olvi Mangasarian

Claire Mangasarian

Carol Palmer

Caroline Liedtke

Charlotte Peterson

Karen Peterson

Professor Will Risley

Diane Risley

Professor Donald R. Schuette

Verelene and James Morris

Amal Vitale

Jane Danis

Phyllis Menne

Jeanne and Francesco Vitale

Professor Joe Wiederholt

Peggy Wiederholt

MEET BRAEDON LUKEY
2025–2026 Mrs. William F. Allen
University League Scholarship Recipient

Braedon Lukey of Middleton, Wisconsin, is the recipient of the 2025–26 Mrs. William F. Allen University League Scholarship. He is a second-semester freshman in the College of Letters and Science, with plans to double major in biochemistry and German. As a scholarship recipient during The University League’s 125th Anniversary, Braedon reflects the League’s ongoing commitment to scholarships, education, and excellence.



His interest in biochemistry began after taking an Introduction to Biotechnology course in high school, which inspired him through its real-world applications and impact. Although the coursework is challenging, he remains enthusiastic about continuing to explore the field.

Braedon also developed a strong interest in German language and culture during high school, where he founded the German Culture Club and Kaffee Klatsch. He is now studying German at UW–Madison, serves as a tutor, and has been invited to join the German Club Executive Board—further encouraging his plans to double major.

In addition, Braedon is a member of the University of Wisconsin Concert Band and plays the bassoon, his favorite instrument. Music has become a meaningful and joyful part of his University of Wisconsin experience.

In Braedon’s Own Words...

Have your experiences at UW–Madison met your expectations?

“I would say that my experiences at UW have exceeded my expectations. I was very excited to go to UW–Madison and knew I was going to learn a lot; however, I was a little worried about feeling out of place and not having the support I would need to tackle college. Although I was right that I would learn a lot, the sense of community and support from both my peers and professors has been truly exceptional and has far exceeded my expectations.”

What do you like most about UW?

“I would say the thing that I like most about UW so far is the people. The people here are so nice, and there is such a great sense of community surrounding our students and teaching staff. Overall, in terms of people and community dynamics, I do not think I could have asked for more in a college.”

What would you like to say to the donors who contribute to the University League scholarships?

“I would like to offer my sincerest thanks to all the amazing donors who contribute to the University League scholarships. Their contributions alleviate the financial burden that comes with college for me and many other students. Personally, this has allowed me to spend more time working on my schoolwork, which has helped me succeed in my classes, as well as continue pursuing my non-major-related interests, like playing the bassoon.

Thank you so very much!”

Braedon Lukey

THE UNIVERSITY LEAGUE SHINES ON WMTV MADISON!

In celebration of The University League's 125th Anniversary, the organization was proudly featured on WMTV Madison! On March 11, news anchor Leigh Mills interviewed League President John Shanda and Scholarship Chair Peggy Wiederholt to highlight this remarkable milestone and promote the League's Scholarship Benefit.

The television interview provided an exciting opportunity to share the League's rich history, its strong tradition of volunteer service, and its enduring commitment to supporting students at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Being featured on local television brought well-deserved visibility to the League's mission and celebrated the incredible impact of its scholarships over the past 125 years.

This special WMTV appearance marks a proud moment in our anniversary year and reflects the dedication of our members, donors, and leaders. We are thrilled to see The University League's legacy recognized in the Madison community as we continue building a strong future together!



WMTV Madison news anchor Leigh Mills, President John Shanda and Scholarship Chair Peggy Wiederholt

IN MEMORIAM

Margaret Hickman
[University League President 1988-1989]

GREAT DANE READERS

With Gratitude
By Mary Warfield

In February of this year, a preschool class at the Madison College Early Learning Campus shared their appreciation for reader Peggy Wiederholt with a beautiful Valentine—a small but heartfelt reminder of the joy that reading together brings.

That spirit of gratitude extends to all the wonderful people who helped continue the work of Great Dane Readers during the 2025–26 school year. A special thank-you goes to our 33 volunteers who visited classrooms each month and patiently shared stories about pumpkins, playful otters, and even a fox who dreams of becoming a tiger. With smiles and enthusiasm, they nurtured a love of reading while gracefully navigating the realities of preschool classrooms—including the occasional tears or tantrums. Their kindness, patience, and dedication make a lasting difference for young readers.



University League
GREAT DANE READERS

Our sincere thanks go to Barb Freeman, Lucy Lasseter, Cindy Edwards, Gail Steinhorst, Sally Stengel, Jan Freis, Jacqui and John Shanda, Nancy Baumgardner, Anne Raffa, Nancy Gloe, Laureen Yoshino, Mary Tremaine, Janet Gajewski, Sue Taylor, Denise Garlow, Barbara Rogers, Sheila Endres, Kathy Knox, Helen Read, Terry Warfield, Susan Daugherty, Cheryl and Brian Goodman, Mary Lou Tyne, Kathy Hunt, Kim Ebert, Willa Aldstadt, Fran Malloy, Peggy Wiederholt, Kathy Siebert, Sullivan Greenberg, and Sabina Schneider. Thank you all for sharing your time, patience, and love of books with the children of Dane County.

We are also deeply grateful to our many generous donors. Without your support, we would not be able to purchase and donate the books that are such an important part of our program. Great Dane Readers receives no federal or state funding, which means your contributions are truly our most important source of support. They allow us to continue promoting early literacy and placing books directly into the hands of young readers.



**Peggy Wiederholt receiving a beautiful
Valentine**

Like many organizations, we are seeing the effects of rising costs. Books that once cost \$2.50 now average \$3.57, and those previously priced at \$3.39 are now \$4.19—or even as much as \$5.37. Despite these increases, our commitment remains the same: to ensure that children in Dane County have access to wonderful books and the opportunity to develop a lifelong love of reading.

If you have supported Great Dane Readers in the past, please know how deeply your generosity is appreciated. If you are able to continue giving, your support will help ensure that even more children receive the gift of a book. On behalf of the children who benefit from this program, thank you for helping us share the joy of reading! 📖

If you have any questions about Great Dane Readers, please do not hesitate to contact me at (608) 273-9809 or mbwarfield@gmail.com.

INTEREST GROUP UPDATES

WINE DIVAS AND DIVOS: Exploring Pinot Wines

In February, members of the Wine Divas & Divos Interest Group enjoyed a unique opportunity to explore the world of Pinot wines from across the globe. While many participants were already familiar with several red Pinots and a few white varieties, the Rosé Pinot was a delightful discovery for some.

The evening was hosted by Barbara Drake and Julie Sadowsky, who thoughtfully guided the group through a tasting of wines paired with delicious appetizers. Their warm hospitality and knowledge made the event both informative and enjoyable, offering members the chance to expand their appreciation of Pinot wines while sharing good conversation in a welcoming atmosphere. 🍷





ARTIQUES

A Special Visit to Atomic Antiques: History, Treasures, and Hidden Finds

On Tuesday, March 17, a group of Artiques members enjoyed a special behind-the-scenes visit to Atomic Antiques, located at 4546 Verona Road. Bob Richardson, the owner, shared the early history of the business and how he and his wife, Jennifer, transformed the space after purchasing the building just three and a half years ago—investing more than \$5 million in the process.

Today, Atomic Antiques features over 100 vendors and more than 25,000 square feet of high-quality antiques, including vintage furniture, clothing, lamps, dishes, and more. It's truly a place to explore—and easy to get lost in! While Epic employees make up a significant portion of their customer base, many visitors buy a unique treasure.



ABOUT OUR LAST EVENT

Spring Luncheon and Lecture: “The Bones of Bascom Hall”

Members and guests gathered for a delightful Spring Luncheon and Lecture featuring “The Bones of Bascom Hall,” presented by Betsy Draine and Michael Hinden.

The authors read from their enjoyable mystery which takes place in Bascom Hall and other areas of the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. The book reminded us of the history of the University in the 1960s. As the detectives try to solve the mystery of bones in the attic of Bascom Hall, they take us on a tour of Madison and several Frank Lloyd Wright buildings.



Michael Hinden and Betsy Draine

The photos below highlight some of the special moments from this enjoyable gathering.







University League Luncheon and Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 6th, 2026: 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Blackhawk Country Club



Program: Quasquicentennial Celebration (125th Anniversary)

Reservation deadline: April 27th, 2026 (No refunds after this date)

Member: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Additional member: _____ Phone: _____

Guest(s) name(s): _____ Phone: _____

____ Reservations @ \$40 each (includes lunch and program) \$ _____

General scholarship (IHO/IMO name): _____ \$ _____

For donations "In Honor of" or "In Memory of," please circle IHO or IMO above and provide contact information below. General scholarship only please.

_____ (line for providing contact information)

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Menu (list any dietary restrictions below):

____ Chicken Veronique (Riesling Wine Sauce, Grapes, Almonds, Asparagus, Wild Rice) First Name(s): _____

____ Grilled Chicken Craisin Berry Salad First Name(s): _____
(Craisins, Blue cheese, Walnuts, Berries and Raspberry Vinaigrette) Can be made without Chicken

Water, coffee and/or tea; mini muffins; assorted cookies

Dietary restrictions _____

Need a ride? ____ Can you offer a ride? ____

Make checks payable to: **The University League, Inc.**
(Note: Your check will be cashed a few days following the event.)

Mail to: Betty Zeps, Cardinal View, 3820 Tribeca Dr. #212, Middleton, WI 53562

Reservation form and payment must be in hand by April 27th, 2026

Questions? Call Rich Leffler at (608) 345-7782



The University League, Inc.
Post Office Box 5064
Madison, WI 53705-0064

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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Organization
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Quasquicentennial Trivia.....

* The League celebrated 100 years in 2001

* A “Century of Giving” was celebrated in 2016

Our Quasquicentennial will be celebrated in May, 2026