League Letter

Volume LXI, Number 2, October 2026 www.univleague.wisc.edu Editor: Roma Lenehan and Gisell Sirianni

University League Candlelight Dinner and Concert

Amanda Poulson

Wednesday, December 2, 2026, 5:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.
Maple Bluff Country Club

Amanda Poulson: A Musical Journey Around the World

At our Candlelight Dinner and Concert, Wisconsin native Amanda Poulson will present **"Seasonal Songs & Timeless Favorites,"** an enchanting blend of cherished holiday selections and iconic songs that have stood the test of time. Known for her sweeping, powerful vocals and engaging stage presence, Amanda takes audiences on musical journeys through beloved Broadway classics, operatic masterpieces, and contemporary favorites.



Amanda's remarkable performing career began early. At just 10 years old, she appeared as a child extra in opera productions, and by 14, she had made her professional singing debut. She went on to perform internationally as a featured dancer before earning her Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where she toured for three years as a featured singer and dancer with the Wisconsin Singers.

Wednesday, December 2
Cash Bar: 5:30 p.m.
Dinner: 6:00 p.m.
Music: 7:00 p.m.

Maple Bluff Country Club
500 Kensington Dr.
Madison, WI 53704

Cost: $40 per person
Reservation Deadline:
November 23, 2026
Reservation form on page 11

Menu: King Salmon, Chicken Pesto or Eggplant Parmesan
(See menu details on the reservation form, page 11)
All meals include salad, water, coffee and/or tea, and cookies.



Her career has taken her from intimate New York cabarets to major theatrical productions and cruise-ship stages around the world. In 2008, she joined Royal Caribbean Productions as a Featured Singer, later performing with Azamara and sailing to all seven continents. Among her memorable experiences was playing Tanya in *Mamma Mia!* aboard *Allure of the Seas*. She also sang while suspended nearly 40 feet in the air during *Blue Planet*, an elaborate aerial theatrical production.

Madison audiences may remember Amanda for her roles as Eva Peron in *Evita*, Maria in *West Side Story*, Ellen in *Miss Saigon*, Ursula in *The Little Mermaid*, and Cathy in *The Last Five Years*. A founding member of Four Seasons Theatre, she has also devoted herself to nurturing the next generation of performers through directing, choreography, vocal coaching, and musical theatre workshops for young people throughout Wisconsin.

Combining timeless music, seasonal cheer, and engaging storytelling, Amanda promises to create a memorable soundtrack for our holiday celebration. **You may wish to invite family and friends to join us for this memorable evening!**

From the President



Dear Members,

We have started the year building momentum. The Fall Coffee at Blackhawk was a lovely event on a gorgeous day. Our speaker, Katie Gillespie, shared insights into the future of nursing. We hope more of you will be able to join us at future events and enjoy the wonderful speakers and programs the University League has to offer.

HELP WANTED: For our organization to remain vibrant and active, we need strong leadership and committee members. I'd like to see more folks getting involved. I'm asking you to strongly consider joining the Long Range Planning, Membership, Program, or Scholarship Committee. Adding to the membership of these vital University League committees will help position us for growth in the future. Please contact me to let me know how you can help.

Fall will soon be turning to the holiday season. Be sure to mark your calendars and return your registration for our Candlelight Dinner and Concert on December 2 at Maple Bluff. Our Program Committee has planned a wonderful meal and a musical performance by Amanda Poulson that evening. See the article about Amanda in this newsletter. Share this fun evening with your friends and family.

If there is ever anything League-related you'd like to discuss, don't hesitate to let me know. Both my email address and phone number are in your Yearbook.

Thank you again for your support and participation in the League. We need every member to pitch in to make us stronger and contribute to our efforts in Scholarship, Service, Education, and Friendship.

John Shanda
President 2026–2027

Announcing the Sally and Bob Lorenz University League Endowed Scholarship



Sally and Bob Lorenz met as graduate students at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, married on December 29, 1970, and spent decades together supporting the university. The newly established, fully funded, Sally and Bob Lorenz University League Endowed Scholarship honors their legacy by supporting UW–Madison students in the College of Engineering's Department of Mechanical Engineering.

Bob Lorenz was born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. He earned his BS, MS, and PhD degrees in mechanical engineering from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He also received an MBA from the University of Rochester in New York. Bob was a distinguished UW–Madison mechanical engineering professor and leader of the Wisconsin Electric Machines and Power Electronics Consortium (WEMPEC), an internationally renowned research group at the university. He mentored more than 200 graduate students and hosted numerous international visiting professors and scholars in his lab.

Professor Lorenz was a true leader in his field. He was a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), recognizing his extraordinary engineering accomplishments. In addition, he held two chaired positions: the Mead Witter Foundation Consolidated Papers Professor of Controls Engineering and the Elmer R. and Janet A. Kaiser Chair. He was also a patent holder and was posthumously inducted into the National Academy of Engineering. Bob passed away on January 27, 2019.

Sally Lewis Lorenz grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and received a BA in biology from Carleton College. She then studied at UW–Madison, where she received an MS in Education–Zoology. Sally taught biology and middle school science for several years. While raising their three children, she worked part-time in positions that continued to draw on her interest in and experience with childhood education.

Sally has been a member of the University League for over 40 years and has served on the League Board in multiple leadership positions since 1985, including two terms as president. She is currently the University League Endowed Scholarship Liaison for the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association (WFAA) and serves as a consultant to the League Board.

Bob and Sally are known and respected for their deep commitment to education, international engagement, faith, and community service, including Habitat for Humanity, mission work, and numerous nonprofit leadership roles.

When Sally was asked why she decided to establish a University League Endowed Scholarship, she responded:

> *"For a long time, I have thought about starting a University League Endowed Scholarship because I have been an active member of UL for over 40 years and have given a lot of time and energy to the organization and to promoting its scholarships. The additional reasons are that my husband Bob was only able to come to UW–Madison because of the scholarships he received, and he ultimately became a faculty member in Mechanical Engineering in the College of Engineering for 35 years. He also gave much of his time and energy to teaching and doing research with students and visiting scholars from throughout the world. I also supported Bob's career by entertaining his graduate students and their families several times a year and by hosting visiting professors from other universities who came to Madison to work with Bob and his colleagues. After Bob's passing, I was inspired to leave a legacy of each of our involvement with the University of Wisconsin–Madison by setting up this University League Endowed Scholarship."*

If you are interested in establishing a University League Named Endowed Scholarship, contact Sally Lorenz, University League Named Endowed Scholarship Liaison, or Peggy Wiederholt, University League Scholarship Committee Chair. Contact information can be found in the University League Directory, or you can email universityleague.scholarship@gmail.com.



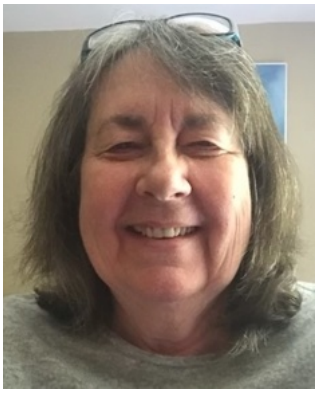
Save On Taxes: Donate Your Required Minimum Distribution to Scholarships

As the end of the year approaches, you may be reviewing your finances and considering charitable gifts that could offer tax advantages.

How an IRA charitable distribution can reduce taxable income:

- If you are 73 years of age or older, you are generally subject to an annual **required minimum distribution (RMD)**, which is the minimum amount you must withdraw each year from certain tax-deferred retirement accounts.
- Withdrawals from tax-deferred retirement accounts generally increase your adjusted gross income. Depending on your circumstances, that increase could place more of your income in a higher tax bracket and increase the amount of tax you owe.
- Using a **qualified charitable distribution (QCD)** to satisfy all or part of your RMD allows you to donate money directly from your IRA to an eligible charity without including the qualifying amount in your taxable income.
    - A QCD goes directly from your IRA to an eligible charity and is not counted as taxable income. This may provide a tax advantage.
    - However, it is important to remember that **the funds must be transferred directly from your IRA to the charity**. If you withdraw the money into your bank account first and then donate it, the withdrawal generally remains taxable and does not qualify as a QCD.
- Keeping the QCD amount out of your adjusted gross income may also help reduce or avoid income-related surcharges on your Medicare Part B and Part D premiums, potentially resulting in additional savings.

How to proceed if interested:
Talk to your financial advisor about this tax benefit and consider making an RMD donation to the University League General Scholarship Fund, for which donations should be mailed to P.O. Box 5064, or to one of the University League Named Endowed Scholarships, which is sent directly to the UW Foundation. Direct any questions to universityleague.scholarship@gmail.com.



The University League Grant That Changed Suzanne Quigley's Life

In 1973, Suzanne Quigley married the love of her life, Timothy Quigley. Together, they helped open the Ovens of Brittany restaurant in Madison, where Suzanne worked as a chef and Tim as a sommelier, or wine steward. After becoming a mother of two, Suzanne worked part-time as a restaurant waitress to help support her family while Tim attended the University of Wisconsin.

Recognizing the importance of education, Suzanne began her own academic journey in 1977 by enrolling in two classes at UW–Madison. A grant from the University League made those first classes possible, creating an opportunity that, she says, literally "changed my life."

Suzanne earned a BFA from UW–Madison in 1983 and an MA in Library and Information Science in 1986. She then pursued further graduate study in art history while working as a graduate student in the UW School of Human Ecology.

Suzanne built a distinguished career in museum registration and art management. She served as Head Registrar at the Detroit Institute of Arts from 1989 to 1995 before moving to New York City, where Tim taught at The New School for Social Research. There, Suzanne served as Head Registrar at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum from 1995 to 1999 and at the Whitney Museum of American Art from 1999 to 2005. In 2005, she founded Art & Artifact Services, LLC, providing consulting and art-management services to private collections, artists, estates, foundations, museums, and galleries. She is also a founding board member of ARCS, the Association of Registrars and Collections Specialists, and has been an expert weaver for many years.

Suzanne and Tim returned to Madison in 2021 as Tim faced Parkinson's disease and dementia. He died in 2023. Today, Suzanne devotes much of her time to the Textile Arts Center of Madison, a resource center dedicated to the fiber arts. Looking back, she is grateful for a fulfilling career that began with the opportunity provided by a University League grant in the 1970s.

Sarah Best 2026–27 Special Student Services Scholarship Recipient



Sarah Best, a returning adult student and communications professional, is the recipient of the 2026–27 University League Scholarship in University Special Student Services (USSS, formerly ACSSS), which is part of the UW–Madison Division of Continuing Studies. She is pursuing a master's degree in library and information science, focusing on public librarianship, archives, and accessibility.

A Career Grounded in Public Service
At a celebration for student scholarship recipients, USSS personnel shared Sarah's path back to graduate study. Her initial pursuit of graduate education was interrupted by financial instability, undiagnosed disabilities, and a lack of sustained academic support.

Over the next decade, she built a career in nonprofit and public-sector work, including serving as CEO of a digital agency that supported more than 250 nonprofit and academic clients. Sarah currently volunteers a few hours per week at Temple Beth El's library while taking classes at UW–Madison.

Advancing Access and Inclusion
Sarah's commitment to lifelong learning shapes her goal of helping libraries and educational institutions become more inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities. This goal is very personal to her, as she has been diagnosed with a physical disability and learning differences herself.

Expressing Gratitude
Sarah is very grateful to receive the University League Scholarship, stating, "It takes a lot of courage to go back to school as an adult. Receiving this scholarship gave me the boost I needed!"

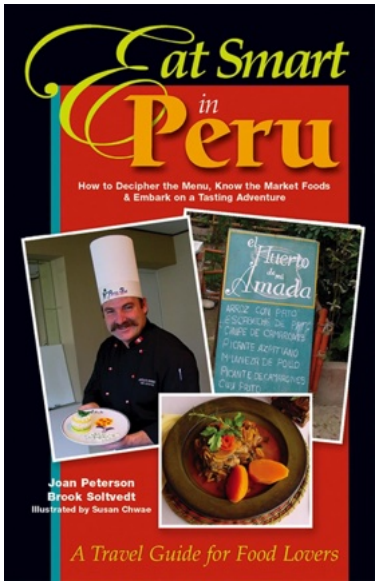


We Thank Webmaster Brook Soltvedt
As we move to a new website

At its meeting on October 1, the Board of Directors discussed upcoming changes to our website. Our current web hosting platform, WiscWeb WordPress, and the wisc.edu domain will no longer be available to us after the first of the year. Fortunately, another UW-related organization, Demeter, addressed this issue several years ago. Judy Stang and Linda Harvey, both members of Demeter, put us in touch with their web designer, who helped the Executive Committee understand the process, costs, and skills needed to move forward.

The Board will keep you apprised of our progress. Look for future emails requesting your input on possible URL addresses, photos, and page banners. But first, we are in need of **a new webmaster**—someone with tech skills like those of our retiring webmaster, Brook Soltvedt.

Brook has been a member of the University League since 2011, when Mona Steele was president and Bill Zarnsdorff was the webmaster. Bill retired from the University of Wisconsin Department of Medical Physics in 2018, and Brook and Sharon Nellis took over the webmaster role. Sharon stepped down in 2023, and Brook continued in the role. "It was mostly that I had tech and editing skills that the group needed," she explained.



Brook initially worked in the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Wisconsin. When online teaching became more common, she took classes through DoIT to learn how to put courses online. DoIT hired her to help with its online learning systems, providing customer support and testing new versions. She also worked for a small publishing firm that produced books about enjoying local foods while traveling abroad. She spent five weeks eating her way around South America and co-authored two books, *Eat Smart in Peru* and *Eat Smart in Brazil*.

Brook has devoted nearly full-time effort to volunteering with the League of Women Voters, Madison Civics Club, University League, and various other projects, using her editing and computer skills. This fall, the League of Women Voters has demanded much of her attention, leaving her less time to spend with her husband. Therefore, she has decided to give up her role as the University League's webmaster.

When asked her for ideas for a parting gift from the League to thank her for her years of service, she replied, "I don't like *stuff*... I had a charmed life with many opportunities, and I have done my best to pay back for all the good things that came my way."

She asked that we make a donation to the scholarship fund in her name, which the Board agreed to do on October 1. Not only will we miss her tech skills, but we will also miss her ability to edit the materials we asked her to post—removing open parentheses, lost commas, and dangling participles.

Thank you, Brook!

For now, we need help from our membership to find a new webmaster and perhaps another member who loves to edit. If you have these skills or experience, or know someone who does, the Board would love to hear from you.

Thanks to YOU, Zeffy Is a Go!

We're excited to share that our pilots using Zeffy have been a huge success thanks to YOU! The response rate for the Fall Coffee was almost 50%!

What is Zeffy?

Zeffy is an online platform for nonprofit organizations. Other organizations in the Madison Area who use Zeffy are Bethel Lutheran Church, Madison Maennerchor, and St. Stephen's Lutheran Church.

Benefits to YOU:

- Easy online forms and payment for event registrations, membership renewals, Scholarship Benefit contributions, and general scholarship and Great Dane Reader donations. **RMDs for QCDs must be mailed to P.O. Box 5064.**
- Receive immediate confirmation on your device and via email shortly thereafter
- No longer need to rely on snail mail or use an envelope or stamp
- **User Education Hint:** Zeffy does not charge University League for using its platform or for credit card/e-check processing fees. One of Zeffy's sources of income to provide this service is the **optional service fee**, visible in the Summary section; there is an automatic default which you may change. Please consider adding a nominal $0.75–$1.00 per transaction; it's like the cost of the paper, stamp and envelope you would otherwise need.

Benefits to University League:

- Reduces check processing/depositing and data entry
- Automates deposits
- Automates confirmation as well as reminder emails
- Simplifies reports



Please consider giving Zeffy a try when registering for the Candlelight Dinner and Concert at Maple Bluff Country Club on December 2, 2026!

Thank You for Your Generous Donations

General Scholarship
Lynn Courtenay
Barbara Drake
Winn Eckert
Sue Hilgemann
Mary Long
Claire Mangasarian
Donna McCarthy Beckett
Shirley Reiser
Julie Sadowsky
Judy Troia
Mary Jo Willis
Sandra Wurdeman

In Honor Of
Sally Lorenz
Anne Marie Lawrence
Cindy May
Betty Zeps
The University League
Katie Gillespie

In Memory Of
Linda Baumann
Sandra Nuernberg
Judy Stang
Gerald R Dunn
Jane Dunn
Gay L and Robert Goldstein
Bette McCaulley
Charlotte Peterson
Karen Peterson
Amal Vitale
Lynn Courtenay

Great Dane Readers
Coral Bishop
Lynn Courtenay
Winn Eckert
Kathy Knox
Susan Lauffer
Claire Mangasarian
Donna McCarthy Beckett
Phyllis Menne
Aleta Murray
Jane Pizer
Shirley Reiser
Carol Rosseel
Julie Sadowsky
Judy Stang
Judy Troia
Jamie Truscott
Sandra Wurdeman

In Honor Of
Cindy May
Lynn Courtenay

In Memory Of
Linda Baumann
Sandra Nuernberg
Pat Koval
Ann McBride
Bill Lawrence
Anne Marie Lawrence
Joan Leffler
Ann McBride
Amal Vitale
Lynn Courtenay

About The University League Fall Coffee

The University League welcomed members to its Fall Coffee on September 23, 2026, at Blackhawk Country Club for a morning of fellowship, conversation, and an engaging presentation. Members had the opportunity to reconnect with friends and meet fellow League members before hearing from Katie Gillespie, DNP, RN, Clinical Associate Professor at the UW School of Nursing.

Her presentation, “The Role of the Nursing Profession in the Future American Medical System,” explored the evolving role of nursing and its importance in the future of American healthcare. Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make this a wonderful start to the League’s new year!



In Memoriam

Linda Baumann
Heidi Bollinger, University League President 1987-1988
Elsie Ham

















University League Candlelight Dinner and Concert
Wednesday, December 2, 2026: 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Maple Bluff Country Club

Amanda Poulson will regale us with "Seasonal Songs & Timeless Favorites"
Reservation deadline: November 23, 2026 (No refunds after this date)

Member: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Additional member: _____ Phone: _____

Guests' name(s): _____ Phone: _____

___ Reservations @ $40 each (includes dinner and program) .....$_____

General Scholarship.....$_____

Great Dane Readers .....$_____

For donations "In Honor of" or "In Memory of" please circle IHO or IMO here and provide contact information below. (General Scholarship only please.)

Contact information for IHO or IMO_____
_____

TOTAL ENCLOSED $_____

Check Your Menu Selection:
___ **King Salmon**: Pan-seared, rice pilaf, broiled asparagus, Béarnaise sauce
___ **Chicken Pesto**: Herb linguine, cherry tomatoes, pesto cream sauce
___ **Eggplant Parmesan**: Herb panko-crusted eggplant, fresh mozzarella, pomodoro, Parmigiano-Reggiano, linguine, fried artichoke
All meals include salad, water, coffee and/or tea, and cookies. There will be a cash bar.

Dietary restrictions: _____

Need a ride? _____ Can you offer a ride? _____

Online Reservations: ZEFFY: UL's 2026 Candlelight Dinner/Concert Online Reservation Form

Make checks payable to: **The University League, Inc.**
(Note: Your check will be cashed after the reservation deadline**)**

Mail to: University League, Inc., P.O. Box 5064, Madison, WI 53705
Mail early as the reservation form and payment must be in hand by November 23, 2026
Questions? Call Rich Leffler at (608) 345-7782

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Discover Your Interest Group!



Looking for a new way to connect, learn, and enjoy time with fellow University League members? The League's Interest Groups offer wonderful opportunities to explore shared interests, discover new passions, and build lasting friendships. Whether you enjoy the arts, nature, reading, travel, technology, or simply spending time with others who share your interests, there may be a group that is just right for you!

Interest Groups are a wonderful way to get to know other members, exchange ideas, learn something new, and make the most of your University League experience. You might even discover a new hobby or an interest you never knew you had! With so many possibilities, there is always something new to explore.

Take a moment to visit the University League website to learn more about the available Interest Groups and find one that catches your eye. We encourage you to explore the options, connect with fellow members, and discover all the ways you can get involved!

Explore the Interest Groups: https://univleague.wisc.edu/interest-groups/