



# NEWSWATCH

Vol. 2018-19 No. 6

January 2019

**Next meeting: 2 p.m., Wednesday, February 13**  
**St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 100 SR46 Bypass (note location)**  
***Doors open at 1:30, with piano selections by Pam Freeman***

## **Beyond the gates: the Indiana University Center for Rural Engagement**

On February 13 the IURA will welcome **Kerry Thomson**, Executive Director of the IU Center for Rural Engagement, to speak about how the center is collaborating with rural communities to create a stronger, healthier Indiana. Kerry developed skills as a community builder through service with Habitat for Humanity, where she was the local chapter's CEO for more than 20 years. In 2018, she was named to head IU's Center for Rural Engagement. Kerry focuses on creating relationships that span boundaries of race, culture, and income, building community across lines that are too frequently barriers.



The IU Center for Rural Engagement (<https://rural.indiana.edu>) improves the lives of Hoosiers through collaborative initiatives that discover and deploy scalable and flexible solutions to common challenges facing rural communities. Working in full-spectrum community innovation through research, community-engaged teaching, and student service, the center builds vision, harnesses assets, and cultivates sustainable leadership

structures within the communities with which it engages to ensure long-term success.

The meeting will be at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, on the 45/46 Bypass. Safety tip: try entering from Pete Ellis Dr., taking Longwood to 7<sup>th</sup> Street and the church.

## **The meaning of home and "stuff"**

**Pam Freeman's** delightful interpretation of piano music from (Johann Sebastian) Bach to Hoagy (Carmichael) welcomed 76 people to the IURA's first meeting at St. Mark's United Methodist Church. Round tables encouraged conversation as the audience assembled; President **Doug Porter** broke into the hubbub to thank the Hospitality Committee and Snack Coordinator Mary Rose for their good work on our behalf.

Doug introduced **Dr. Philip B. Stafford**, retired Director of the Center on Aging and Community, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, and author of the blog, "Phil's Adventures in Elderburbia: The Aging Indiana Blog" (<https://agingindiana.wordpress.com/>)

Phil addressed the value of physical objects, using vignettes that emphasized the significant emotional value of special objects, or "stuff." Cherished objects may represent connections to other people, yourself to yourself, or achievements and contributions to community.

Ownership can be a relational quality, binding people together. We accumulate a lot of stuff. There comes a time when we have to evaluate



what to do with it, whether we're moving or not. Or we do nothing about it and leave the task to someone else – usually an adult daughter.

Important objects are more than

souvenirs – they evoke meaning, help us remember ourselves to ourselves. This makes it difficult to part with things, particularly when reducing the volume of possessions in a move. The experience is easier if one has some control over how/to whom belongings are distributed. Knowing who will get things and telling their stories ameliorate the sense of loss.

On the practical side, Phil suggested the Monroe County History Center's annual garage sale as a good place for things you can let go.

<https://monroehistory.org/events/annual-garage-sale>

**Wendy Bernstein** and **Mary Rose** observed that interest in heirlooms and garage sale items may not extend to younger people. Are we older folks the ones buying at garage sales? Phil, displaying his cultural anthropologist cred, suggested that this transition in taste happens every generation.

**Beth Greene** recommended Marie Kondo's book *Tidying Up* and her related Netflix program. She works methodically through the belongings, saving sentimental, most difficult, items for last. **Martha Wailes** encouraged us to acknowledge the grief inherent in parting from home and giving away possessions.

**Louanna Cocchiarella**, **David Dilcher**, and **Beth Greene** contributed to a lively discussion of supporting a legacy collection by endowing a museum to maintain family heirlooms. Establishing a family museum is another option, but it involves considerable planning to establish

a museum trust, identify responsible parties, and anticipate how disputes would be resolved. Small local museums, the public library, the VFW post, the post office may be interested in displaying a well-presented family collection.

Phil encouraged us to be practical: label photographs, tell and record stories of special objects to instill a sense of history and place. You don't need all the stuff to sustain the family story and legacy. For example, divide a set of dishes among several people. Choose something small and meaningful.

## Retirees support the United Way

Retirees once again led the way in contributions to the United Way campaign. **Eileen Schellhammer** and **Jim Grandorf** announced that as of Jan. 16 retirees have pledged \$260,996 to the 2018 United Way campaign, again exceeding the group's target. Contributions came from 215 retiree donors, including 97 Vanguards, those pledging \$1,000 or more.



Retirees account for about one third of IU's contribution to the campaign. Jim encouraged those who have not yet contributed to do so now; consult an advisor for how to avoid taxes on a required minimum distribution from

an IRA by donating directly to the United Way or other charity. He challenged retirees to reach \$300,000!

## Volunteer to help IURA

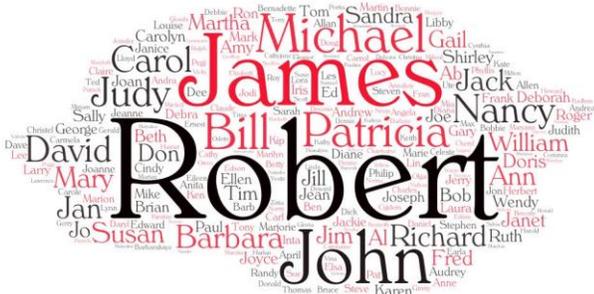
Incumbents are ready to pass along associate board member positions: Retiree Benefits, *Newswatch* Editor, and Webmaster. Contact **Doug Porter** if you are interested or have a nomination.

## Hello, I'm IURA

Thanks to **Doris Wittenburg**, IURA Directory Publisher and Database Master, we can use “data analysis” to look at ourselves. The most common first names of IURA members and their frequencies are:

Robert 13  
James 10  
John 10  
Michael 9  
Patricia 9  
Nancy 8  
David 7  
Judy 7

All varieties of “Mary” together account for 12 members – ranking before John and James. This word cloud shows how we all fit together; the larger the name, the more members it represents.



Bottom line, if you recognize an IURA member but can't remember his name, try “Bob” (for a woman, try “Mary” and mumble a second syllable).

## Elder orphans

“I'm an IU-Bloomington faculty member who will retire in two years. I am also an elder orphan.” So wrote Kelley School of Business Professor **David Rubenstein** to the IU Retirees Association last fall. What, the IURA wondered, is an “elder orphan?”

David referred to a *New York Times* article, which included the statistics that “about 22 percent of people 65 and older either are childless or have children who are not in

contact.” The American Geriatrics Society uses the term “unbefriended” older adults.

AARP has useful advice on “How to Plan for Aging Without a Family Caregiver” including: (<https://www.aarp.org/caregiving/basics/info-2017/tips-aging-alone.html>)

- **Consider where — and how — you might like to age.** While you're still healthy, evaluate your living situation and try to make a plan. How important will mass transit, or access to taxis be? Is communal living an option, such as taking on roommates, or moving to a senior community?
- **Get your paperwork in order.** Make all legal documents accessible and your intentions clear.
- **Develop a social network.** You may not be able to rely on friends for serious, long-term care, but they can help you — and you them — in many ways, such as bringing meals when you're ill or recovering, and doing errands such as picking up prescriptions or groceries. Consider joining clubs, taking a class, volunteering — anything that will offer you repeated exposure to a new group of people.
- **Think creatively.** Consider adopting a family that would care for you and you would bequeath your assets to them. Or join other elder orphans in a living situation with space for a live-in caregiver.

IU Retiree Hopeful David Rubenstein plans to leave Bloomington when he retires. If there are IURA members who are elder orphans and retired from other universities, please send David any transplanted-elder-orphan insights.

## Silver Sneakers

IURA members with Medicare supplement insurance through the IU Anthem Blue program have good news for 2019. Once again, no change in the monthly premium, and as an added benefit participants can use facilities in the Silver Sneakers Program without additional cost. Locally, they include Twin Lakes Recreation Center, Planet Fitness, Anytime Fitness, and LT Paddle Sports. The benefit extends to Silver Sneakers facilities throughout the country. For more information contact [Silversneakers.com](http://Silversneakers.com).

**IU Retirees Association**  
**P.O. Box 8393**  
**Bloomington, IN 47407-8393**

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## **Emeriti House, University Club**

For information about the programs of the Emeriti House and the University Club, our partner organizations, see

<http://www.indiana.edu/~emeriti> and  
<http://www.indiana.edu/~uclub>.

## **Rounding out the 2018-2019 calendar**

- Feb. 13, **Kerry Thomson**, IU Center for Rural Engagement. Music and conversation at 1:30, program at 2 p.m. St. Mark's United Methodist Church.
- The IURA does not meet in March. On April 17 at 2 p.m., **Kristin Leaman** will speak on The People's History of IU. The location for the meeting is to be determined.
- May 8, at 5 p.m., potluck dinner at Bell Trace with **Jeff Wuslich** of Cardinal Spirits.

## **IURA directory update**

The list of board members on the cover of the membership directory is incomplete. Gail Londergan is a board member 2018-2020. Her contact information is the same as in her listing as Vice President/Hospitality Chair: 812-334-3037, [londer@indiana.edu](mailto:londer@indiana.edu).

## **About this newsletter**

*Newswatch* is published eight times each year, August through April, except for February. To correct your address, please contact **Doris Wittenburg**, [dwittenb@indiana.edu](mailto:dwittenb@indiana.edu). Ralf Shaw was acting editor for this issue. **Judy Schroeder** writes *Newswatch*. ยินดีต้อนรับกลับ (welcome back in Thai), Judy! Send corrections or comments to her at [jschroed@indiana.edu](mailto:jschroed@indiana.edu).