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e-NEWS

Horst Truedstedt, Editor

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From the Office

If you need to contact the club, please call 1-651-377-8893 -- the call will be forwarded to a board member. Emails sent to the club at rchret@aol.com are checked frequently. We hope to staff the office from 11:00 to 12:00 Tuesdays and Thursdays. We will see if this is a benefit to club members.

Larry Plank

Contact US

We want to hear from you about obituaries and anniversaries. Or, of course, anything else that's on your mind. We were getting information from you when you 'replied' to the emailed newsletters, but we no longer have the userid that 'sent' the newsletters. You need to send an email to rchret@aol.com or call the office at 651-377-8893 and leave a message. We will get back to you.

Plans for 2026 Club Events

Save the Date: July 17 for Mantorville event – Hubbell House and Theater. Details and signup forms will be in the May newsletter.

There will be a PICNIC, probably in August. Details and signup forms will be in the May newsletter.

We are finding that some people are not looking at the newsletters online – if you are seeing the newsletters, please tell your friends about events and refer them to IBMRAC.com to view or print the newsletters.

2026 Spring Walk-Hike Activities

Join IBM Alumni members, spouses, and guests for Walking/Hiking events this spring to get some exercise while enjoying nature and the outdoors. Eight walk/hikes will start the first week in May and continue through June and include trails in city and county parks. The trails are moderate with some inclines and will take about 1½ - 2 hours with the trail leader pointing out interesting geological features and history of the parks and wildlife and flora along the routes.

1. May 6- 9:00 am: Quarry Hill city park, 701 Silver Creek Road NE Rochester which is accessible from County Road 22 (East Circle Drive), meet at the parking lot by the Nature Center. The Park offers more than eight miles of trails. Paved, grassy and some incline provides a variety of options of trails through meadows, woodland, oak savanna, quarry ruins and overlook of Rochester. [Park Info and trails map.](#)

2. May 13 - 9:00 am: Essex city park, 5455 West River Road NW, Rochester. Meet at the parking lot by the picnic pavilion. Essex Park, located on the north edge of Rochester, has many trails that loop through prairie, woods and meadows providing a great opportunity to enjoy nature and the outdoors. Some trails are paved, others are grass or dirt trails. [Park Directions](#)

3. May 20 - 9:00 am: Indian Heights Park, 1800 Terracewood Drive NW, Rochester. Meet at the parking area at the end of Terracewood Drive. Indian Heights Park is a little-known gem situated between Assisi Heights to the west and the Zumbro River. Trails wind through woods, oak savanna, around an old quarry and offer a hilltop overlook of the city of Rochester. The name “Indian Heights” was coined by pioneers who recognized this as an Indian burial ground in the 1800’s. The trail leader will talk about the Indian and Pioneer history of the area. [Park info and map.](#)

4. May 27 - 9:00 am: Oxbow County Park, [5731 County Rd 105 NW, Byron.](#) Meet at the 2nd bridge picnic area parking area. Oxbow Park, consisting of 572 acres, offers a great variety of hiking trails that wind through a landscape of wooded hills and meadows. We will hike on the North Meadow Trail and part of the Zumbro Trail. [Park Info.](#)

5. June 3 - 9:00 am: Root River County Park, [4012 80th St SE Rochester, MN 55904.](#) Meet at the parking lot. The 125 acres of Root River Park offers many secluded areas to hike. A 2-mile looped hiking trail winds through the meadows and wooded hills along Root River providing visitors with a variety of options of beauty and natural history. Great scenery with towering limestone bluffs along the Root River. A section of the trail is on a 1800’s wagon trail used by early settlers. [Park Info and map](#)

6. June 10 - 9:00 am: Chester Woods County Park, [8378 Highway 14 E, Eyota, MN 55934.](#) Meet at the parking lot by the boat ramp. There are about 12 miles of primitive trails through a variety of inviting natural habitats in the undeveloped areas of the park. The trail leader will select a route of about 2 to 5 miles depending on weather and desires of the hiking participants. [Park Info](#)

7. June 17 - 9:00 am: Oxbow County Park, [5731 County Rd 105 NW, Byron.](#) Meet at the 2nd bridge picnic area parking area. Oxbow Park, consisting of 572 acres, offers a great variety of hiking trails through a landscape of wooded hills and meadows. We will hike on the Maple trail and part of the Zumbro Trail. [Park Info.](#)

8. June 24 - 9:00 am: Quarry Hill Park, [701 Silver Creek Road NE, Rochester](#) which is accessible from County Road 22 (East Circle Drive), meet at the parking lot by the Nature Center. The Park offers more than eight miles of trails. Paved, grassy and rugged terrain provides a variety of options of trails through meadows, woodland, oak savanna, quarry ruins and overlook of Rochester. [Park Info and trails map](#).

NOTE: All hikes will meet-up at 9:00am. A reminder email for those who have signed up will be sent a few days prior to the walk-hike date with directions to the park meet-up area. **To Sign Up** [CLICK-HERE](#).

Dave Lind - your walk/hiking activity leader

Alumni Golf Plan for the 2026 Season

We are planning 7 events on the following schedule:

6/01 The Bluffs
6/15 Cedar River
6/29 Zumbro Falls
7/13 Mt Frontenac
7/27 Willow Creek
8/10 St Charles
8/24 Lake City

If you have not received our email invitations and would like to participate, please send us your name and email address so we can add you to the distribution list. We will email everyone next May with details of the events and instructions for signing up.

We encourage you all to join us next season for 7 more rounds!

2026 Golf Committee:

Jeff Parker (jeff.buddyscooter@gmail.com), primary contact
Bill Kleis (wckleis@gmail.com), assistant

Obituaries

Roger L. Block died on March 2, 2026. Roger served in the US Army, in the 82nd Airborne Division. In 1956, he began an apprenticeship program with IBM in Rochester. He retired as a Senior Tool Designer and Drafter. Roger was committed to serving his church community, taking part in numerous activities. He was an avid reader and a fan of crossword puzzles and sudoku. In early adulthood, he enjoyed swimming and playing handball. He was fascinated with airplanes, especially historical military aircraft and enjoyed trips to air shows. Roger is survived by his wife, Jeannine; children; grandchildren; and great-grandchildren.

Charles Brower died on February 26, 2026. In 1964, he was employed at IBM in Rochester, starting as a lab technician and retiring in 1991 as a staff engineer. Chuck's hobbies included photography, woodworking, gardening, computers and electronics. He had a passion for building and repairing things. Charlie is survived by his wife, Gloria; children; grandchildren; and a great-grandson.

Donald Buske died on March 2, 2026. Don spent time in the US Navy during the Korean War. He worked at IBM in Rochester for 35 years, from 1956 until retirement from the Purchasing Department in 1991. He enjoyed spending time with his family, woodcarving, drawing, writing poems, singing in the church choir, driving across the country, and USS Hornet ship reunions. Don is survived by his wife, Kathryn; children; and grandchildren.

Rolland Derby died on November 18, 2025. Rolland spent time in South Korea as a US Army Military Policeman. He worked at IBM in Rochester. He loved runabout boats and pulling people on water skis. Upon early retirement, he bought an old wood teak Carver cabin cruiser and became a true Mississippi river rat. He loved traveling and history. Rolland is survived by his children.

Arlene Folkert died on February 21, 2026. Arlene tended sprawling vegetable gardens that fed her family year-round. She filled the kitchen with aromas of fresh-baked goods. She mapped out memorable fishing getaways to Northern Minnesota and epic month-long road trips. She worked

as a para-professional for many years in Rochester public schools. She was active in her church, in many different functions. Arlene became an Alumni Club member when her husband, Arthur, died in 2022. She is survived by her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Nicholas Hedberg died on January 17, 2026. Nick worked at IBM Rochester from 1964 until the mid-1990s. He later worked at Mayo Clinic. Nick enjoyed fishing, golfing, and spending time with his grandchildren. He is survived by his sons, grandchildren, and partner Carole Mataya.

Virginia Hyland died on March 3, 2026. Ginny worked at a number of different jobs, including the FAA, before accepting, in 1980, a position in the secretarial training program at IBM. She excelled throughout her career and held a position as Executive Assistant to IBM's top-level leadership in Rochester. She enjoyed spending time with family, scrapbooking, painting, gardening, singing, snacking in the boat, playing with her dog, and singing in the church choir. She is survived by daughters and grandchildren.

Phyllis 'PJ' Jameson died on January 14, 2026. For a time, when her children were very young, she was a stay-at-home mom. Then she began a long career with IBM, starting part-time and eventually moving to full-time employment. She was actively involved in her children's activities including Boosters, 4-H, Girl Scouts, County Fair, and the Pine Island Riders Saddle Club. She volunteered at the State Hospital, Adaptive Riding Program, Earthwatch and the Humane Society. She and her husband, Curly, traveled the world and lived in many different locations. They returned to Rochester in 2020. PJ is survived by her husband, Curly (an Alumni Club member); children; and grandchildren.

Patricia Little died on January 29, 2026. In 1984, Pat and her husband, Mike, moved to Rochester. She worked in purchasing at IBM for 20 years. For 29 years, with her husband, she played bass guitar in a local rock band 'the Chubs' where she was affectionately known as Mama Chub. When a granddaughter was born, she retired from playing music and opted to take care of the granddaughter. Pat is survived by her husband, Michael; a daughter; and a granddaughter.

Sharee Nelson died on January 24, 2026. In 1984, Sharee moved to Rochester and pursued degrees from RCTC and Winona State. While living in Rochester, Sharee worked at IBM and later was self-employed as a webmaster. She cared deeply about the well-being of animals, especially cats. She also enjoyed creating visual art, graphite drawings and portraits of people in her life. Music was another passion. She played piano and percussion, loved attending live performances, and especially loved classic rock and jazz. She is survived by siblings and dear friend Ted Zabel.

Arthur 'Dick' Olson died on February 3, 2026. Dick first joined IBM in White Plains, NY in 1962. He has worked in Knoxville and Chattanooga TN, Endicott NY, and Rochester. He has also worked to expand markets and sales channels throughout Asia and the South Pacific. After 25 years with IBM, he moved to Singapore and then to Vietnam, working as an IBM consultant. In 2000, he came back to the Midwest and settled in Minneapolis. Dick is survived by children and grandchildren.

Thomas Dean Phillips died on February 7, 2026. Tom enjoyed a career in IT at IBM and Think Bank. He loved family, sports, photography, and serving wherever he could. He was active in his church. Tom is survived by his wife, Carrie; children, and grandchildren.

Randy Rolfe died on January 7, 2026. Randy was employed by IBM as a senior programmer, systems analyst, and systems architect. His job often took him to other countries throughout the world. Randy, a guitarist, and wife Irene, a pianist, shared a love of music and enjoyed dancing. They traveled far and wide, mostly in the US and Canada. He is survived by his wife, Irene; cousins; nieces; and nephews.

Charles 'Bruce' Swanson died on January 9, 2026. Bruce served in the US Army. For a time, he was employed at his father-in-law's construction company and later, worked for IBM retiring in 2001. He enjoyed many activities including snowmobiling, traveling, wintering in Florida, spending time at the lake, fishing, boating, camping, teaching family how to water ski, music programs, celebrations, sporting events, woodworking, reading and farming. He mentored high school students interested in future business careers. Bruce is survived by his wife, Sharon; children; grandchildren; and great-grandchildren.

Merle Clark Thompson died on February 10, 2026. Merle joined the US Navy and served for four years during the Korean War. In 1963, with a degree in electrical engineering, he started working for IBM and remained until retirement. He enjoyed all types of music, especially classical, opera, bluegrass, and ragtime. He sang in the Rochester Barbershop Chorus. He was an accomplished pianist. Merle also had a passion for words, had a wicked vocabulary, and was a master at crossword puzzles. He is survived by his wife, Jane; a daughter; and grandchildren.

Cheryl Vessey died on March 10, 2026. Cheryl spent 32 years at IBM, retiring as an Administrative Assistant. She spent many hours volunteering, bringing comfort to patients, at Ronald McDonald House and Mayo Clinic Caring Hands. She loved animals, birds, running, hiking, and biking. She cherished time spent with friends over coffee or lunch. Cheryl is survived by her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and former husband and close friend, Craig Vessey.

Mary Wherry died on February 14, 2026. Mary has been living at Brookdale Onalaska for the past eight years. She became an Alumni Club member when her husband David died. Mary spent her last day with four generations of family gathered together to celebrate her 94th birthday. She is survived by her son, Bruce, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

James 'Woody' Woodfork died on May 8, 2025. After attending Elgin Watchmakers College, Jim enlisted in the US Navy and served in the Korean War. His watch making knowledge was put to good use on his ship. Jim moved to Rochester and worked at a jewelry store repairing watches but soon went to work at IBM, where he eventually became a Senior Electronic Technician. After retirement, he worked as head usher at Mayo Civic Center and during golf season, he worked as a starter at the golf course. He was a youth football coach, a softball player, umpire, and avid supporter of boys and girls sporting events. He is survived by his daughters and grandchildren.

Herman Zincke died on January 15, 2026. In 1956, Herman went to Endicott NY to train with IBM. He was part of the early days of IBM Rochester and worked with the project team that developed the AS/400 computer. He retired in 1991 after 34 years of service. After retirement, Herman cleaned

churches. He met friends for coffee every day, took walks with his wife, Diane, and tended his lawn and roses. He loved camping, snowmobiling, fishing trips, and traveling in his motorhome. Herman is survived by his wife, Diane; children; grandchildren; and great-grandchildren.

Our deepest sympathies to family and friends.

Celebrations

55th Anniversary: Dave and Norma Amundson – January 23

Please continue to let us know about obituaries and celebrations. We appreciate hearing from you.