



Ozark Trails

Newsletter of the Greater Ozark Chapter
of the YMCA Alumni
Serving Missouri, North Central Arkansas,
Kansas from Wichita eastward

Bruce Wands, President

Fall 2019

Mary Ching, Newsletter Editor

The mission of YMCA Alumni: "to enable members to promote a nurturing worldwide Christian Fellowship that provides educational, social, service and charitable opportunities. "

From the President's Desk...

Bruce Wands

It sure has been another of those busy years! I thought that retirement was supposed to be more relaxed.....

We had an outstanding time in St. Charles, thanks to Bill and Mary Ching's efforts and contacts. I still am suffering from 'whip lash' (not really) from the demolition derby - so much fun. The lower level Boathouse at the Lewis and Clark Museum has been under water 3 times since our visit. We were blessed to hear from current Y staff on what is happening in the St. Louis area.

Karron and I were able to attend the Regional Alumni meeting in Louisville, KY. Laura Slane and her committee did a fabulous job putting this together. The General Council approved that no national dues will be charged to join a second Alumni Chapter. We had great workshops to choose from as well as great tours.

Welcome new members to the Ozark Chapter. We extend to you a warm greeting. We hope that we will have a chance to meet everyone in Branson. **Save the dates, April 28, 29 & 30, 2020;** more information forthcoming. The Mott, Messer-Brandenburg, and Schriener chapters have also been invited to join us.

It is always sad when we lose a member, and we lost two this past year. Dick Stoll and Bill McAllister. both served the Lord faithfully through their YMCA careers and well after they retired.

It has been such a great opportunity to serve you as your chapter president. I wish to acknowledge the incredible support that I received from the Executive Committee, Dave Snow, Bill and Mary Ching, Naomi and Dick Hundley, and Dick Flynn. They were always there for the needs of the Chapter and kept me on a straight path. Thank you!

I think we need to meet more often, even if it is just for lunch, show, or tour in a regional setting, for a half day or longer. That will require someone from an area to step up and be the host. We cover such a large area, that traveling long distances are not practical, and if you miss the 'one' meeting a year, it is easy to disconnect! So- hoping you will think about that and share with us in Branson.



Welcome New Members

We are delighted to welcome new members to our Greater Ozark Chapter in 1919. We welcome Nels and Judy Bagnardi, Steven Gimenez, Karen and Gilbert Hutchcraft, Marilyn and Jack Kohler, Lin McRoberts, Marsha and Robert Pirtle, Jerry and Martha Prado-Shaw (also joined Mott Chapter), Debbie Redmond, Karen Shelton and Jim and Nancy Weaton (also joined Mott chapter), Gail Vessels and Mike Schmidt.

We welcome you all and hope that you will come and join us for fun and fellowship often.

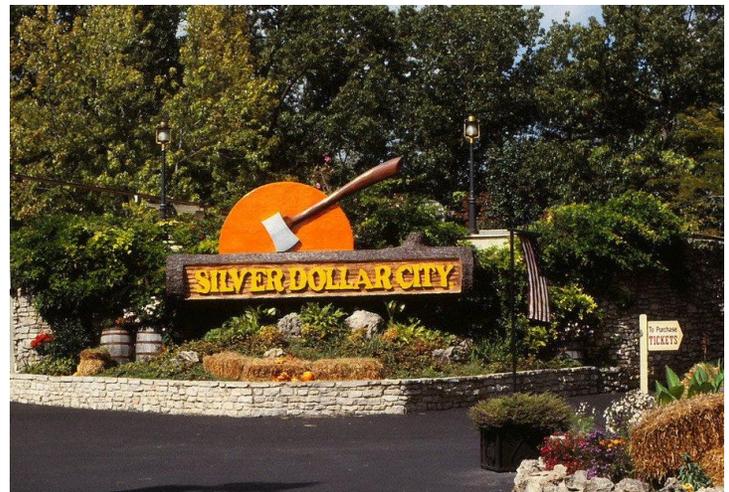
Back to Branson for the Spring 2020 Gathering! April 28-30!



Branson is always a fun place to gather together for our spring meeting and April 28-30, 2020 will be no exception. The hotel where the event will be held is the Comfort Inn at Thousand Hills. It is centrally located at 203 S. Wildwood (just south of The Hard Luck Café) and it is convenient to all the action in Branson. Parking is free and hotel rooms are \$85 per night before taxes. The rooms are double queens with interior entrances. Details on registering will be in the Spring newsletter.

The schedule is not complete at this time as shows are scheduled during the winter months but look for the Spring Ozark Trails with details. **Save the dates- April 28-30, 2020!**

Spend a little more time in Branson:



Ozark Chapter Officers



Bruce Wands	President
Dave Rogers	Vice-President
Naomi Hundley	Sec./Treasurer
Mary Ching	Newsletter Editor
Bill Ching	Membership
Dick Flynn	World Service

Greater Ozark member, Laura Slane, and her volunteer crew did a fabulous job on YMCA Alumni Reunion in Louisville. Many people were able to connect with friends from previous YMCAs and made many new friends. The opening night on the **Belle of Louisville** was wonderful with mild temperatures and smooth sailing, dinner included.

Many tours were offered as well so everyone had the chance to see Louisville's great sites. The hotel was in the heart of downtown Louisville so there were many restaurants near. The next YMCA Alumni reunion will be scheduled for the East Region in 2021. Watch for more details later.



Bill Ching writes: "I was asked, as the chairperson of the Gateway Regional YMCA International Committee, to attend the Y175 conference in London, England in early August."

"Katie Hrdlicka, a volunteer member of the Gateway Region YMCA international committee, and I accompanied several young professional staff. The conference celebrated the 175th anniversary of the founding of the YMCA in London by George Williams. Each YMCA from around the world was invited to send young people from 16 to 30 Years of age to the conference. The purpose of the conference was to create an understanding of the YMCA movement in other countries. Participants were encouraged to be leaders at home in understanding the Y's mission globally. It was very encouraging to see over 3,000 young people strongly embracing the Mission of the Y. The highlight of the many speakers were the TED talks of young entrepreneurs and community leaders, giving living examples of how they made some differences in their communities. I expect to see an increase in international work at the Gateway Region Y from the work that is already planned by the delegates who attended Y175."

Greater Ozarks members visit the Mott Chapter in Red Oak, IA



Bill and Mary Ching, Bruce and Karron Wands, Janis Berry and Dee Walker attended the Mott Chapter's semiannual meeting in Red Oak, Iowa October 10-11. The meeting featured networking, a banquet, a tour of the Montgomery Co Historical Museum, a tour of the Wilson Performing Arts Center as well as a tour of the Montgomery County YMCA and a visit with the Mayor of Red Oak. It was a fun time and it was an opportunity to see how a smaller YMCA operates with in a rural area with volunteers and staff.

YMCA ALUMNI TRAVEL CLUB OFFERS 10 EXCITING TRIPS IN 2019 AND 2020

Travel with friends is at the top of members retirement wishes. Be sure and check out the **2019** and **2020** trips offered by the **YMCA Alumni Travel Club**. All trips are now available for registration on the website (www.ymcaalumni.org/travel).

The Travel Club's expanded **2020 domestic and international** line-up is noteworthy. It begins with the **Colors of Provence** river cruise in France **April 27-May 11**. A domestic trip called **America's Parks & Monuments** includes Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse monuments and Yellowstone National Park **May 14-23**. Cruise **Portugal's River of Gold** (Douro River) with stops in Lisbon, Portugal and Salamanca, Spain **Oct. 10-19**. **Oct. 13-20** features another domestic opportunity called **Canyon Country Adventure** to the spectacular Grand Canyon, Bryce and Zion National Parks and more.



Remember, these trips are all **limited in space**. Start exploring the opportunities right now.



News of our Greater Ozark Members:

Doris Hawkins:

Doris is the happy, charming person she has always been. She enjoys happy hour a couple of times a week with her children and Laurie visits from Columbia, Mo on occasion. Doris still drives to church and the grocery. She has so many great- grandchildren it is hard to count all 19 of them!

Bruce and Karron Wands:

We are not sure what happened to 2019 - can't believe October is here already! Bruce spent time most every



week building homes with Habitat for Humanity. Known as "Coach Grampa" to 4th thru 8th graders at Timothy Lutheran School for soccer, track and cross country - it does keep him busy! It was so great to host nearly 100 kids for the Cross-Country meet. Karron continues to be active with Lutheran Women's Missionary League and other church functions. Grandchildren are everything and we are blessed to have three boys here and four grandchildren just across the state in St Clair. They live on an acreage and Bruce loves to get on the ole tractor and mow, etc. It's a peaceful atmosphere, listening

to the moo of the 10 Highland cattle and the roosters crowing! About a dozen ducks follow us around wherever we go. Sunrises and sunsets are indescribable.

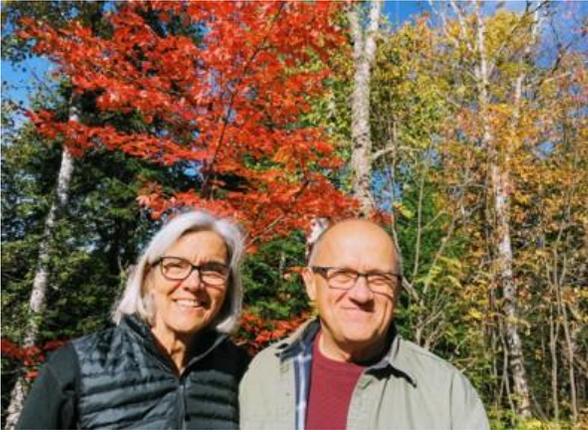
Our nephew by marriage starred as John Adams in "1776, The Musical" at the Muni in St Louis which we thoroughly enjoyed. We spent time in Branson with Karron's sister from PA. We road tripped to upstate New York for a family reunion which was on the front lawn of the homestead where Bruce grew up. Our daughter-in-law, and three grandchildren (11, 13, 14) went with us - visiting some fabulous museums on the way. Derrick and the boys caught up to us at the VRBO in Vermont not far from the homestead. We recently went to the 495th Army Reunion in Mt Pleasant, Iowa, then on up to Onalaska, WI, and then Hampton, Iowa, to spend time with Karron's nephew and family.

We had a great time at the regional YMCA Alumni Reunion in Louisville, KY ... always a joy to "Connect". From there we headed to Iowa for Karron's 60th (good grief - 60?) class reunion in Manchester, stopping to see her brother and sister-in-law in Cedar Rapids on the way. Another venture to "Connect" was to visit the Mott Chapter in Red Oak, Iowa, with Bill and Mary Ching.

Laura Slane:

All is good. Since the YMCA Alumni UK trip in May, I have been busy with the Louisville Reunion. We had a great group of volunteers that worked hard to pull off a fun event. Now that it is over, I have some travel plans coming up and getting back to more genealogy research.





Ken and Molly Wold:

Retirement is going well. My wife, Mollie, retired from teaching in May. Five months after I had retired from Camp Wood YMCA. We are adjusting to having time together, but it seems to be going well. We've had a number of friends who have offered us places to stay for vacation destinations and to get some long-awaited visits in. In the past few months we have been to a cabin just outside Estes Park, CO, Lake George, NY and most recently the north shore of Lake Superior.

Next it will be visiting some of our kids in Washington state for an early Christmas and then our daughter's wedding in March. A couple of the kids will be home for Thanksgiving.

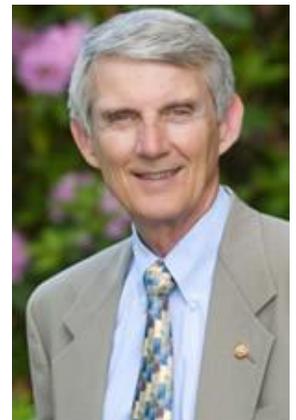


Dave and Marty Rogers:

Marty and I just returned from California, site of the 45th year reunion of the class of 74 YMCA World Service Workers — a program that the International Division of YUSA no longer runs (Alas!). Anyway, in 1974 five of us left to work at YMCAs around the Mediterranean: me in Madrid, David Wheeler in Athens, Gary Mysorski in Beirut, Rich Price in Jerusalem and Jan Keny in Ramallah, Palestine. We gather every other year to relive our adventures working for five very different YMCAs in Europe and the Middle East.

Dick and Jani Flynn:

The Flynn's had a great summer. It was our very first summer away from the Adirondacks and we enjoyed spending quality time with our kids and 9 grandkids in Kansas and in Colorado. We took them all on a July cruise to Alaska and had perfect weather and a fun time. Jani and I did that 4 years ago and evidence of climate change in just 4 years is both striking and scary! Following the cruise, Jani and I spent an extra week in the Seattle area visiting and touring with a couple of her cousins (including one who was an 8-year-old flower girl in our wedding a zillion or so years ago). We love the Mt. Rainier area and hadn't been back there for a number of years.



Now that school has begun, the grandkids keep us hopping - with one college graduate, 4 currently in college, and 4 who are busy with a variety of school activities. We attend some of their swim meets, tennis matches, pom-pom cheering, school plays, birthday parties, etc. With the early snow, we are hoping to watch 3 of our grandchildren engage in snow ski racing and ski jumping competition in Colorado!

The last week in September we drove through southern Colorado on route to visiting a couple of the Utah National Parks - Arches and Canyonlands. Beautiful scenery, fantastic weather, and another great trip!

We head to Jupiter, Florida for the first 3 months of 2020 and return in time to attend our April meeting in Branson. Looking forward to seeing everyone there!

Mary Reid and Butch Michael:

We had three grandsons graduate in May, one with an Assoc. Degree from Community College, one with Assoc Degree Comm. College and Home School, one High School. Sports- one flag football and one high school football and basketball

We had a fun time at wedding of Butch 's granddaughter in Des Moines, IA.

I am active with YMCA SILVER SNEAKERS...Exercise classes and social events potlucks and a trip to Pella, IA to see gorgeous tulips in bloom in May. I am doing Bible Study Fellowship and choir at my church. Butch sings at 8AM at his church.

We held a surprise 80th birthday party for Butch on Sat, October 19th before actual day of the 21st.

We helped the Assistance League clothe 4,000+ school children with J.C. Penney the first two weeks of Oct. Fundraisers for this big project are our Thrift Shop and Dining Out times where restaurants donate a percentage to the League



Jim and Eva Knight:

We actually have something to report at this time! My granddaughter, Jaime, was the valedictorian at her high school in May and entered Kansas State this fall. My son, Jace, was married in June at the age of 49. I will be recognized by my Rotary Club on October 20th this month for 50 years of service as the secretary of the club. The Club was 100 years old in 2016. Other than these events the old folks are staying close to home.

Craig and Nancy Battersby:

Craig and I took an anniversary trip to Sedona, AZ in honor of our 43rd wedding anniversary in April. After completing my 2nd knee replacement in January, the renewed ability and the opportunity to hike on the beautiful trails was fantastic.





Martha Prado & Jerry Prado Shaw:

Just celebrated the sweet 15 birthday of granddaughter Samia Alessandra, September 30, 2019 in Miami, Florida

Attended de YMCA Alumni gathering in Louisville, Kentucky in September 24-26, 2019

Attended the Second Reunion of Red Latina Zona Norte in Miami, Florida, October 1-2-, 2019, a YMCA retiree chapter of Latin American & Caribbean YMCA retirees residents in Canada, USA and Mexico.

Planning to visit Argentina and Uruguay next December 1-19, 2019 for a family gathering and will attend special gatherings of YMCA retirees in Buenos Aires, Argentina and Montevideo, Uruguay.

Dick and Naomi Hundley:

The year has been exciting for us. We went with the Alumni group on the Alaska Cruise in the spring and it was better than we had ever dreamed it would be. We were with YMCA friends that we have known for years and met some new friends. The skies were clear for us and we saw the peak of Denali from every direction. Naomi's brother and his wife drove to Vancouver and visited with us for an afternoon before we came back home. We were only home two weeks until we went to Missouri to be with our daughter who had major surgery and has recovered very well. In October our daughter from Connecticut flew in and we drove back up to Missouri for the marriage of our grandson. It was a beautiful wedding and we wish them a happy life together. While we were there we visited the boyhood home of Walt Disney and the Disney Museum in Marceline, Missouri. If you are a Disney fan it is a worthwhile trip.



Betsy Stoll:

Betsy is still living at Aberdeen Center and is in good health. Her children check on her regularly, especially since she has a son living here in St. Louis. She would like to thank everyone for their strength and support during Dick's illness and passing.



Eulah Johnson:

I am in good health and doing well, especially since I have a new great grandchild. Eli Samuelson is the grandson of my daughter, Linda, and son of granddaughter Christine. Babies are wonderful!



Dave & Connie Snow:

2019 has been a tough year for many in Nebraska with the heavy rains and flooding. Roads and bridges were out and farmers were trying to raise a crop. We saw the results but did not have to deal with it personally.

In July we went to visit our son/wife in Idaho. Connie really enjoyed his planning and preparing all the meals. Attended two theatre performances, enjoyed our annual visit to the Farmers Market. We always enjoy the beauty of Idaho.

In August we enjoyed a week in a rented house on the Oregon coast with our son/wife. For middle of the country flatlanders, it was a treat to hear and see the tides coming in and going out 24/7. We toured the area, sampled sea food and enjoyed the people in small community nearby. Now we are discussing and planning to update our kitchen after twenty years of retirement.

Both of us stay busy with a schedule with several volunteering opportunities.

Bill and Mary Ching:

As usual, we have been on the move a lot this year. We started the year in Florida with the RV where Bill attended a diesel class so he would know more about RV diesel engines. From there we moved to Clermont, FL which is within 6 miles of Disney World. Lots of traffic but the weather was lovely. On the way home we stayed in Savannah, GA, Aiken SC and Asheville, NC. We enjoyed our trip and saw lots of friends as well as interesting sites.



When we got home it was time for the YMCA Alumni Greater Ozark Chapter Gathering in our hometown of St. Charles. We had lots of fun being hosts to the group and hope everyone will come back again some time. We hosted a graduation party for the youngest of our grandsons so we are all done with high school. Seems strange!

We went to England for the 175 YMCA International event. When it was over, we took a bus trip of Western England where Bill's family immigrated. If you have seen the PBS show Poldark, this is the area. It is less populated and has lots of small farms. We also attended the Louisville Regional YMA Alumni meeting in Louisville as Bill was on the planning committee of the event. Afterward we stayed with friends in southern Indiana in farm country. We also went with Karron and Bruce to the Mott chapter meeting in Red Oak, Ia. Nice event though the weather was chilly.

ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP



Thank you for being a Greater Ozark YMCA Alumni member and please renew your YMCA Alumni Chapter membership for 2020.

Look for your renewal brochure in your snail mail in early November and in the printed version of *The CONNECTION* later in the month. But, do it the easy way. Just do it online. Quick and easy.

Please note: a YMCA Alumni member may now belong to other YMCA Alumni chapters without paying an additional fee beyond the home chapter and national YMCA Alumni membership annual fee.