



# Ozark Trails

Newsletter of the Greater Ozark Chapter  
of YMCA Alumni

**Bruce Wands, President**  
**Mary Ching, Newsletter Editor**

**Summer 2020**

**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**

We missed seeing you all in Branson in April; so sorry we could not get together for Connecting and Reconnecting! Who would have guessed what would be going on in our lives in 2020!?!

We have several new members and we look forward to meeting them in person, shaking their hand, giving them a hug and swapping stories of service in the YMCA. We welcome Nels and Judy Bagnardi, Desoto, MO: Karen and Gilbert Hutchcraft, Sikeston, MO: Marilyn and Jack Kohler, Kirkwood, MO: Lin McRoberts, Topeka, KS: Charles Lord and Danette Tipton, Wichita, KS. Welcome to each of you! We also welcome our "Second Chapter" members, Jim and Nancy Wheaton and Jerry & Martha Prado-Shaw. Dave and Connie Snow, Lou Krenz and Bruce and Karron Wands are also members of two chapters.



Sadly, Branson will not work this fall for our Gathering as Branson is experiencing issues with opening. The Landing Princess Dinner/River Cruise that we had planned to do, has decided to keep their boats in dry dock for this year. Traveling and gathering in a motel appears not to be in our best interest for safety and health reasons. If you have already sent in registration money for Branson, our treasurer, Naomi Hundley, will be refunding registration money to you within the next couple weeks. If you have questions, she may be reached at 501-282-3254. If you have made reservations at the Comfort Inn, please cancel by calling 877-335-4727.

We are considering having a mini-area Connection in the St. Louis area and another in the Kansas City area this fall. Travel time would be cut in half, but our fellowship would continue. YMCA people have always made a situation work-yes, probably with a mask! I would welcome your thoughts/suggestions on this. Please review the special reports from our Greater Ozark chairpersons: National Service Task Force, Nels Bagnardi; World Service, Dick Flynn; EAF, Janis Berry. God bless you all! Be safe and well!

Bruce Wands  
bbklwands@gmail.com  
816-616-6503



Let's stay connected! We are looking for five volunteers who will contact five Alumni families from our chapter to contact every other month. It is fun and rewarding. Please contact Bruce at [bbklwands@gmail.com](mailto:bbklwands@gmail.com) or phone/text 816-616-6503. Bruce will provide you with contact information for your five individuals/families.



## National Service Project YMCA Alumni Update:

Dear Colleagues,

I am the Greater Ozarks Chapter's representative on the National Service Project Task Force, and I need your help.

As a bit of background, the New England Chapter started doing a service project in the Dominican Republic 10 years ago. Every year, chapter members travel to the island and build homes for the residents of the village of San Gregorio. These volunteers have raised the money for supplies and provided the sweat equity to build the homes—a total of 18 homes have been built in 10 years! This project has reinvigorated the chapter and has given members something to look forward to and work on together every year. It reminds us of the unique power of the YMCA to impact the lives of children, families, and communities world-wide. Now, we want to explore what we can do to serve communities in need at a national level.

**This is where I need your help:** The task force will meet monthly until we finalize a plan for a national service project to present to the National Board later this year. In the meantime, we need help with two things from you:

1. *Tell us which attributes we should consider when picking a service project. (some suggestions on the table: challenging, doable, sustainable)*
2. *Tell us your ideas for possible service projects that would interest YOU, something we can all be proud to support. (some suggestions on the table: Sioux Indian YMCA, YMCA resident camps)*

All ideas accepted and encouraged! It would be awesome if the National Service Project idea came from our Chapter. Would you be kind enough to share your thoughts with me by **July 7th**? I appreciate and look forward to your response. Have a super fantastic day!

Nels Bagnardi [njbagnardi22@earthlink.net](mailto:njbagnardi22@earthlink.net) 573-210-6228

## ***A Chat Conversation with the YMCA Retirement Fund...***

### **YMCA Retirement Fund:**

**Mary Ching:** Question to Retirement Fund: My husband, Bill, is a YMCA retiree. I am the editor of the Greater Ozark Chapter YMCA Alumni and I would like to reassure our members that everything will be ok. Got any information I can use?

**Agent: Jennifer:** Good afternoon. We actually have a newsletter that goes out to the Fund's retirees, as well as the information on our website. Please allow me a moment to get you some links.

**Agent: Jennifer:** <https://www.yretirement.org/news-seminars>

**Agent: Jennifer:** <https://www.yretirement.org/File%20Library/Publications/AYR%20News/Retiree-Liaison-Report-May-2020-web.pdf>

**Agent: Jennifer:** <https://www.yretirement.org/how-can-we-help-you/im-a-retiree/news-for-retirees>

**Mary:** Thanks. Is there any more up to date info since the May report?

**Agent: Jennifer:** Basically, there are no real changes for retirees. Checks are guaranteed and have not (and will not) stop for our retirees.

**Agent: Jennifer:** The interest rates currently being paid on accumulating accounts do not affect retirees' checks.

**Mary:** What happens if the YMCAs are not sending money into the retirement fund? How can the fund manage the payouts then?

**Agent: Jennifer:** Keep in mind that new funds in do not pay the benefits for retirees. The funds that people pay into their accounts are annuitized and managed separately from the funds that participants are paying into their accounts.

**Mary:** Thank you. Do I have your permission to print this chat in the Ozark Newsletter?

**Agent: Jennifer:** Sure.

## *Tell me a Story*

**Looking for something to do while you are at home?** Here is an idea. The Midwest Genealogy Center in Independence, Mo has a program designed to help families understand their history. Studies show that children who know their family history tend to be more comfortable and secure in their own lives, so the Center created a program called "Tell Me A Story". A senior (elder) in the family sits down and answers a series of questions about that person's life.

Not everyone has the ability or the time to go to the Midwest Center to do this program but as a retiree, you can do this program yourself on a peaceful (rainy) afternoon. You can record your answers on paper or on your computer. You can also record your answers on apps such as voice recorder or have a grandchild video it. That way both your voice and your face are shown telling the story. Here are some sample questions you may want to answer for your family:

*What was the happiest moment of your life?*  
*Who was the most important person in your life? Why?*  
*Where did you grow up?*  
*Where were your parents born?*  
*What was your childhood like? What toys did you enjoy?*  
*Did you ever get into trouble?*  
*Who was your childhood best friend? Why?*  
*What did you do for a living?*  
*Were you in the military?*  
*Where did you meet your spouse?*  
*Did you like your job?*  
*Who were your favorite relatives?*  
*What traditions have you passed down from your family?*



These are sample questions-your children, nieces and nephews may think of more to ask!

## *Check it out!*



The next **YMCA Alumni Reunion** will be held **Jan 11-15, 2022** in fabulous New Orleans. More information will follow as details are set but it promises to be a fun and exciting event. The virus will be a faint memory by then so make plans for fellowship, fun and excitement in this charming, lively southern city!



## World Service:

Dear Dick,

Greetings from Y-USA! Thank you so much for your leadership and support for World Service in the Greater Ozark Chapter! In 2019 World Service partnered with over 50 countries-here are just a few examples of ways your World Service support made a global impact:



- YMCA Peru addressed child labor by helping kids stay in and succeed in school, as well as providing livelihood opportunities and education to their parents
- The Togo YMCA empowered youth with Know Your Rights workshops and HIV/AIDs education
- The Tijuana YMCA in Mexico provided housing, psychosocial counseling, and family reunification services to migrant youth on the U.S./Mexican border.

The Greater Ozark Chapter raised \$3,475.00 for the 2019 YMCA World Service Campaign.

## News from around the Chapter



President Bruce Wands has been busy besides YMCA activities. He has been rebuilding a massive deck for his grandchildren's above ground pool. This required removing the old deck and working with the new lumber during very hot days! Hope you had time for a swim, Bruce!

Bill Ching just completed a stain glass picture for his sister's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. The picture of her favorite bird, the Hummingbird, hangs in the window of her South Dakota home. Stained glass was a great hobby to do during the really hot days.



Spring Training was cancelled mid-season so Dick and Jani Flynn could not use their remaining tickets. They decided to close their Florida condo and return to their Kansas home while it was still possible to travel safely. They arrived home March 20<sup>th</sup>.

Jani Flynn's hip surgery had been scheduled for April 8 but was rescheduled with all other non Covid-19 related procedures. She finally received her new hip of June 11<sup>th</sup> and the surgery was very successful. She is now pain-free and recovering ahead of schedule according to her surgeon. She is looking forward to resuming golf and other activities in a few weeks. The 'other activities' may be limited due to the current covid-19 guidelines and activities.

*What have you been doing with your "confinement opportunity?" Let us know and share your stories and pictures. Send to Mary Ching [mecwdc1@gmail.com](mailto:mecwdc1@gmail.com)*

*Be safe and well and wear your mask!*