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Subject: Here's Your July 'Nor'Easter'  
Date: July 11, 2020 at 4:00 AM  
To: caltschul@icloud.com



## *The Nor'Easter*

New England Chapter E-Letter

July 2020

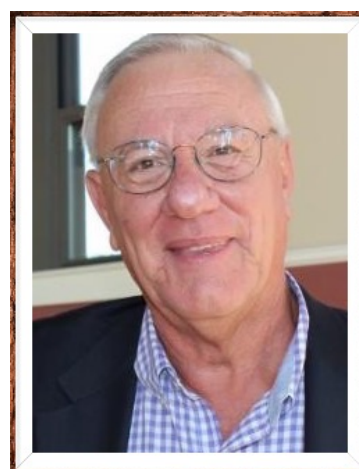
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Dear {First Name},

**Happy Summer to All New England YMCA Alumni.** Hasn't the weather been awesome? Hope you're able to get outside and enjoy it while it lasts!

We had a great time at our "kinda hokey," but fun Virtual Campfire last month. In case you missed it (and seeing our special guests from near and far), you can join the fun by clicking [HERE](#):



These past several months have certainly **ZOOMED** by, haven't they? Yes, sometimes it seems I have at least one **ZOOM** meeting each day with one or the other of the organizations I'm volunteering with. Makes me wonder how much gas I have saved as well as reducing my "Carbon Footprint" by meeting from my home instead of driving and

Carbon footprint" by meeting from my home instead of driving, and how much driving time I have also saved. I wonder if this will continue after this crisis passes. Seems like a good idea to me.

My favorite **ZOOMS**, by far, have been the three meetings of **New England YMCA Alumni** we have enjoyed together. Besides attracting a larger group of members than our in-person meetings have recently, we have seen many folks on our computer screen whom we don't usually see in person.

We really hope to see you at our next **ZOOM** gathering in early September which will feature a speaker from the **YMCA Retirement Fund**. Remember, it's free and "come as you are" for these gatherings.

I hope everyone is doing OK during this COVID-19 pandemic. Remember, you always are eligible to apply for a grant from EAF if in need of financial assistance. I hope you will contact me if there is anything else NEYA can help you with.

Be safe, be well, wear your mask, and wash your hands!

*Lou Falk*



**Andres Fortunato of the Dominican ACJ joined us at our campfire. He's the subject of a major feature story in the July CONNECTION.**



**YMCA Alumni Communications Director Craig Altschul entertained us on his sax.**



**Who says you can't sing campfire songs on ZOOM? We won't win a Grammy, but Harry Rock pulled it off.**

## Some Thoughts On Personal Charitable Support





Finally, there is the **YMCA Emergency Assistance Fund**. This is an idea funded by us for us. It provides needed financial support to YMCA people, you and me, who have suffered a financial emergency due to a storm, a fire, a death or other disaster. Some years ago I became aware of a woman whose YMCA professional husband died much too early. She had medical bills beyond what their insurance would pay. The Emergency Assistance Fund rescued her and their three children.

It really is a good idea and a useful activity to decide what you can afford to contribute. Then plan in advance which projects you will support and how much you will spend. Once you have a plan you still will have to decide how to handle the especially worthy project which comes along mid-year.

## Secours Speciaux: An Update



**YMCA Alumni** made a recent contribution of \$200,000 to **Secours Speciaux** (the EAF of the World YMCA) from our World Brotherhood Fund to help support our retired colleagues around the world during this COVID-19 pandemic. It was reported in **The CONNECTION**. A recent report from

Secours follows. You can be proud of your organization.

"The **Secours Speciaux** fund committee met twice in May via **ZOOM**. We focused on responding to the **COVID-19** impact on retirees. Responding to the pandemic, **Secours Speciaux** has sent grants of \$500 each to 35 retirees around the world with little or no pension. Each retiree signed a receipt for the funds and many included heartfelt thank you letters.

"Another group of retirees in need has been cleared through our checking process and has been approved for a grant. They too will receive \$500. We have not yet had any requests for assistance from persons without health insurance who have been hospitalized by the virus, but we are ready to respond quickly to any requests for help. Very recently we learned of two virus-related deaths: a Peruvian retiree and a U.S. (New York City) staff member. We are discussing how to help the staff who have been furloughed or laid off because their YMCA has closed." -- **Bonnie Mairs**, Chair

## A Multi-Chapter ZOOM July 28 About ISC



You are invited to set aside an hour or so **Tuesday, July 28** at 3 p.m. (Eastern) for a special ZOOM gathering of members from eastern chapters. We will be discussing YMCA Alumni's **International Service**

**Corps**, led by **Bill Hooson** of the **Weatherford Chapter** and a member of the ISC Task Force.

This is a "come-as-you-are" gathering, so be comfy. No masks or social distancing required. Maybe you'll see friends from other chapters you haven't seen for a while.

So, save the date, and watch for another email in the week before the event with your official ZOOM invitation. Hope to see you there. **-Lou Falk**



## Connecting With Members; Tell Us What's Going On

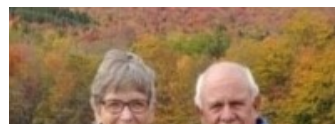


**A TRIBUTE: Zack Filkoff**, brother of **Andrew** and son of **Risa** and **Roy Filkoff**, made his first trip to the **Dominican Republic** when he was in Middle School, long before the current string of homebuilding trips began.

This first trip made quite an impression on **Zack** because he returned in later years to become an active homebuilding participant. One of his collateral duties on these trips was to be the official photographer and videographer for our chapter and he produced some excellent videos which still are used today to promote the trip. (<https://vimeo.com/132857469> and <https://vimeo.com/98761867>)

Recently, real life (*aka a job*) has prevented him from coming to build new homes, yet he wanted to remain involved so he set up an online fundraiser. This fundraiser raised in excess of \$1,000 and will be used to pay local Dominican workers to build the new homes this year in our places since we are unable to travel there. Thank you, Zack, for caring!

**VERMONT UPDATE: Skip Raymond and Karen Stewart.** Vermont is experiencing great weather with lots of sun, some rain now and then and





great sleeping temps. All is well with Karen and I as we continue to commute back and forth between Windham, Vt. and New Canaan, Ct.



We are careful about wearing masks and social distancing and try hard to stay out of crowds. We had a high school graduation in each family this spring and each was a car parade with the drive by handing of the diploma. Both boys will be off to college this fall, one at UConn the other at St. Lawrence. For Skip that makes five in college, two in high school and one working at the Madison YMCA. Karen has the one in college and six still in public education.



**FROM OUR PROGRAM CHAIR: Nancy LaRue Bonnell.** We are looking into a future gathering and considering **The Inn at East Hill Farm in Troy, N.H.** I would love to get feedback from our membership. They are currently open and have all COVID-19 protocols in place and accepting residents of all New England states.

"Let the fresh country air at The Inn at East Hill Farm help stimulate your brain. We are located at the foot of picturesque Mt. Monadnock and 10 miles south of Keene, We are 50 miles from Manchester, 85 miles from Boston, and 95 miles from Hartford." Check out their website [HERE](#).

Here I am in my mask. I am a volunteer N.H. Lake Host and educate boaters about the "Clean, Drain & Dry" method for aquatic invasive species prevention at our pond every Friday afternoon and Saturday mornings through Labor Day!

**FROM OUR TREASURER ALAN HURST:** Stepping in as the Treasurer last year I was given great training and guidance by **Marsha Bowman**. However, she didn't tell me about COVID-19, how to respond to extra needs in The **Dominican Republic** and how to deposit money in closed branches without drive up tellers.



Banking has been a challenge this year, but it also has generated stories and, as my wife likes to say, "It's all about the stories." I went to my closest Webster branch in March and they had a note posted that the

lobby was open by appointment. I whipped out my cell phone and asked for an appointment.

Oh no, they only schedule appointments for wire transfers. What? Every wire transfer I have done in my life has been electronically submitted. You can visit our branch in Cromwell. To Cromwell I go. Eighth in line, 45 minutes later I am second in line and I hear the teller say, "Sir you can only withdraw \$1,000 per visit." "I want \$2,000" five minutes later.

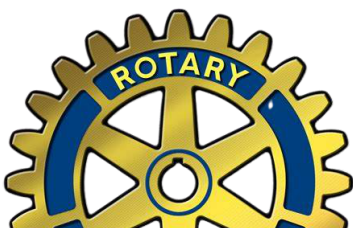
"We will give you \$2000 this one time only." Eighteen minutes later the customer got his cash. Eighteen minutes?? On a positive note, I had to visit the bank because our members were so generous in helping out Andreas and his Dominican Republic staff. Thank you!

On another front, **Jean Carmichael**, our National YMCA Alumni President-Elect, called me this spring. Apparently our friend Lou told her I had time on my hands and would be a good choice for National Alumni Treasurer. We went back and forth on expectations and time commitments. It was made clear to me that I could not be National Treasurer instead of New England Treasurer (Jean. Lou and I had some fun with this one though not all three of us at the same time). I have accepted and will be taking office July 1 next year, right after the 990 is filed.

**APPOINTMENT ANNOUNCED: Harry Rock**, former Westfield YMCA Executive and later Director of the YMCA Studies Program at Springfield College who is currently a "Rock"-star guitarist, has been appointed as our chapter's representative to the new **YMCA Alumni National Service Project Task Force**. Fresh into retirement Harry became chairman of a huge year-long 350<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration for the **City of Westfield**, and he no doubt was



looking for a new project on which to work when that one ended. We are pleased to have Harry's initiative, skills and experience representing our chapter. Harry and Anne have purchased a condo as a summer vacation retreat to enjoy on the coast in Charlestown, R.I. Walking the many beaches is a daily high point of their day.



**Doug Lisk Receives District Rotary Award:** Doug Lisk has been honored with the Donald A. Adams Outstanding Rotarian Award for Rotary District 7980. The Award is named for Adams, a past District Governor (1922-23) from the New Haven Rotary Club. He became the 15th



President of Rotary International in 1925-26.  
Here's the citation:

*"Recognized for his Rotary and community work. Doug is a past President of the New Haven Rotary club where he serves on the Board of Directors and has been the Club Secretary for 20 years. Additionally, he has also been the District 7980 Secretary for almost as long. A multiple Paul Harris Fellow he has served on numerous committees both in his local club and District. A Rotarian since 1982 starting as a charter member of the Wilton Rotary Club. Doug splits his time between the YMCA, his Church, Rotary and his family with 5 children and 6 grandchildren to keep him busy after retiring from the YMCA after 40 years. Doug and his wife Eunice celebrated their 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year."*

## We Need YOUR Input On New National YMCA Alumni Service Project



The **New England YMCA Alumni Chapter**, as you are well aware, has been the sponsor, supporter, fundraiser and work force for the past ten years building 18 homes in the village of **San Gregorio** in the **Dominican Republic**.

This impactful work has been recognized by the **YMCA Alumni** national leadership and as such, the president appointed Lou Falk to chair a new initiative to undertake a study for assessing whether there is a need and/or interest in undertaking a national service project in the United States.

The new **National Service Project Task Force** is made up of representatives from each of the 17 YMCA Alumni Chapters from around the country with Lou providing the leadership. Lou has asked me to represent our own New England Chapter.

Listed below are the attributes that were identified as part of our first national **Zoom** task force meeting for you to review.

### **"How do we identify a project?"**

*First, what are the attributes we should be looking for?*

**Challenging**...the project can't be easy. Rotary's Polio Plus wasn't an easy project. It has to say to our younger retirees and those about to



*retire that there is more to life in retirement than picking up trash on beaches, even though that is important also! Rather...if you are a member of YMCA Alumni here is an opportunity to continue your life-changing work.*

**Do-able** *We're not Rotary International, and we can't possibly eliminate polio world-wide, so what can we do? Whatever we choose we must believe that, even though it will be a stretch, we can achieve success.*

**Sustainable** *We need to build a reputation for YMCA Alumni on this project. It needs to become a project that future retirees look forward to becoming a part of when they retire so they will join our organization. Therefore it needs to be a multi-year project...."*

**Lou** has asked each chapter representative to solicit input from their respective chapter members. So here is where you as a proud member of the **New England YMCA Alumni Chapter** come in and where I need your help.

1. Please review the above listed attributes and let me know if we are missing anything or if you have additional input on the ones that are listed.
1. Please think of national service projects that you feel we should consider undertaking based on the above listed attributes. It could be to address the critical needs of the Sioux Indian YMCA, supporting YMCA resident camps, addressing the underserved communities of the inner city, etc... Don't limit your thinking. We are looking for a pool of ideas to evaluate and we will then report back with our top choices so send in all of your thoughts, regardless of how traditional or extreme they might be. Let the committee determine and assess the ultimate validity and soundness of the idea as a potential project to undertake.

Thanks very much for your time in reading this and for sending along your thoughts. Just because we are retired doesn't mean that we can't still have a significant impact on the lives of those who are under resourced and under served. The strength, impact and longevity of the YMCA Movement since 1844 is due to the commitment of volunteers to make a difference. Our combined impact as New England alumni can be significant so please send me your thoughts by Tuesday, July 7 to [hrock.ymca@gmail.com](mailto:hrock.ymca@gmail.com) or text to 413.564.9863.

Thanks very much! I so appreciate your support and input!  
**--Harry Rock, Chapter Service Project Chair**

## 'GOING PLACES' Will Have Lots Of Travel News



A new edition of our Travel Club newsletter-- **GOING PLACES** -- will be in your email box July 15. It's free -- **subscription only** -- and contains news and some MAJOR updates on how COVID-19 is juggling our trips. You can subscribe if you click the button

below.

### SUBSCRIBE TO 'GOING PLACES'

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

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