



# Ozark Trails

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

**Dave Rogers, President**

**Fall 2020**

**Mary Ching, Newsletter Editor**

**The mission of the 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...**



As newly elected chapter President, my first act is to thank Bruce Wands for 3 years of excellent leadership. We owe him and Karron a vote of thanks. Other electees include Naomi Hundley as Secretary/Treasurer, Bill Ching as membership chair, Mary Ching as newsletter editor, Dick Flynn as World Service chair and Janis Berry as EAF chair. It is the best group a new president could ask for.

That's the good news.

The bad news is the pandemic. Our fall meeting in Branson has been cancelled. As we look toward a spring gathering, the Covid-19 infections (at least in my home state of Missouri) are rising. So, we'll see how things look in the winter, but it doesn't look promising. We're going to try a chapter-wide Zoom meeting in November. It should be fun to see and talk to everyone, and we hope to get some new ideas about future chapter meetings. **Look for a Zoom invite in 2 or 3 weeks. The meeting will be November 10, 2020 at 2:00 pm.**

Further bad news is the impact the pandemic has had on YMCAs. It has been a tough year for the Ys, and it isn't over. Ys have had to shut down for weeks, maybe months, some Y camps have had to close for the summer, staff have been furloughed, some staff have even lost their jobs. This has affected practically the entire Y orbit including YUSA. We've gathered information from a variety of Y organizations with which the Ozark chapter has a connection and asked how they're holding up during the pandemic.

The one group that hasn't taken a financial hit is us—Y Retirees. Thanks to the Retirement Fund we've seen no drop whatsoever in our revenue. Nor will we. If anything, we're doing better financially because our travel expenses have been

curtailed.

So, it's a time for counting our blessings. When we get together with friends our age (mostly via Zoom), one of the most common remarks is, "Boy, I'm glad I'm retired." When Y colleagues still in the workforce ask for advice, it's tough to respond adequately because none of us have ever dealt with a pandemic. One thing we can do, however, is offer our financial support—more important this year than ever.

In closing, I would like to echo CBS News' Norah O'Donnell, "*Stay positive, test negative.*"

**Zoom Ozark Chapter meeting**

**November 10, 2020 2:00 pm**

**See you then!**

# SAVING THE LEGACY OF YMCAS

My name is Debbie Redmond and I retired from Gateway Region YMCA in April 2017. During my time with the YMCA, I got involved in finding historic treasures in several of the YMCAs in the St Louis vicinity and saving items as other people would find them. When I retired, there was a question regarding what to do with the items I had collected and whether the items should be kept.

I volunteered to sit down with the State Historical Society of Missouri and



**Charles and Debbie Redmond**

see what was already stored from our YMCAs as well as see what I could do to help preserve the history. Additionally, I worked with the Y USA Archivist who also maintains the Archives for Y's Men International. Some of the information for St Louis needed to also be preserved in the Archives in Minneapolis.



**YMCA Historical material to go to State Historical Society of Missouri**

As I started on the endeavor, several of the older buildings were closed and I was asked to go into the buildings and retrieve what I felt was important for the history. As time went on, my collection of treasures began to grow and I felt I should at least organize it somehow before giving it to the

Archives. Each time I thought I was close to finishing the work, more questions and/or more items seemed to appear.

It was agreed that we should share the history with others and the idea of placing photos and information on walls of some of the YMCAs were discussed. The first historic wall was placed at Downtown at the MX in 2017 shortly after I retired. Then the Carondelet Park Rec Complex set up a wall in St Louis to commemorate the 100 years of a Carondelet YMCA in 2019. When Monsanto YMCA (now called Bayer YMCA) was going through remodeling, I was asked to research and provide information for their wall. Last week, I was asked to assist in the information for the Emerson YMCA in North St Louis County.

As for the items that I had in my possession? Well, I kept bringing it home. Dan Schulze (Vice President at Gateway Region YMCA) asked if I could scan the information before placing it in the State Archives. That took a little bit of time.....okay, it took a lot of time. By the time the Pandemic hit, I had 18 boxes that filled the Living Room and Dining Room. Finally, in August the 18 boxes were turned over to the State Archives. What is left is a substantial amount of digitized files which can be utilized by the YMCA (and lots more space in my dining room and living room) which is good since I am now helping with Virtual Learning for a couple of granddaughters.



**A.J. Medlock, Missouri State Historical Society and Debbie**



**Collin Mingo (Carondelet Park Rec Complex Staff and A.J. Medlock**

*Debbie*

Zoom is an audio- and video-conferencing tool that is available on multiple platforms. With Zoom, one person creates an account, sets up a meeting, then sends a link to others. (Watch for an email from Dave Rogers!). Participants can hit the link written on the email to attend the meeting. We will be doing a Zoom meeting this November. Keep in mind, if you want to be seen, you will need a camera on your device. Check your computer for a camera on the top of the screen: tablets and phones usually have cameras. A link will be sent to you at your email. **You can click on that link which will take you directly to the Zoom meeting. Ozark Chapter Zoom meeting will be November 10, 2020 at 2:00. Watch for your invitation on email.**



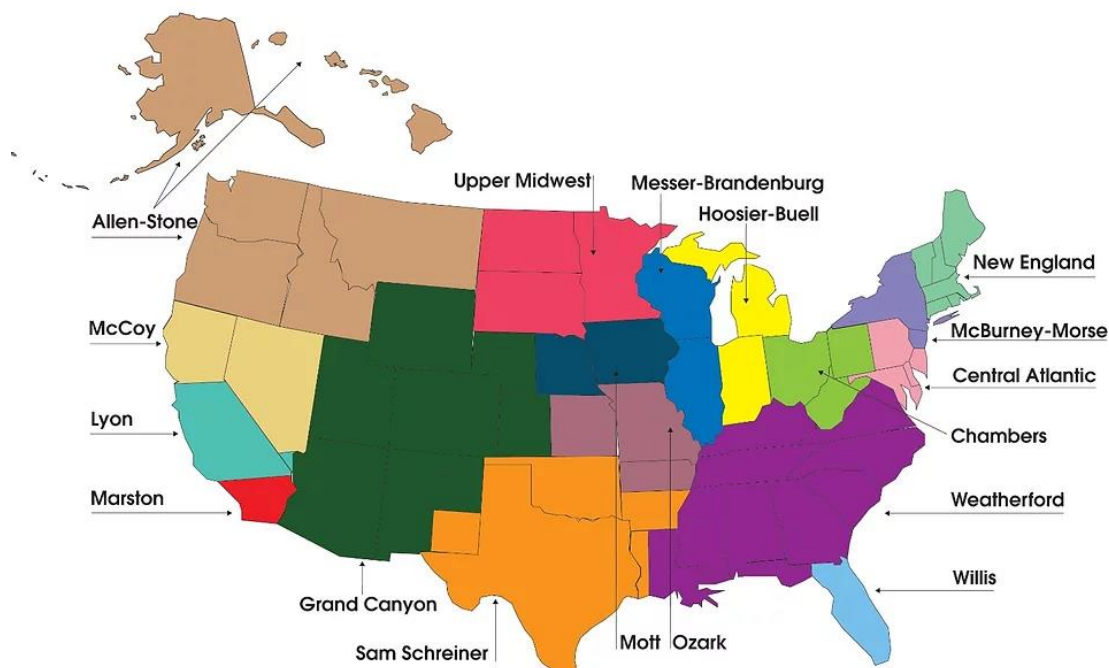
## National Service Project Update:

All 17 Y alumni chapters have a representative on the National Service Project Committee - I represent our Chapter. We meet monthly and have identified the Mission Statement as well as Project Attributes. Currently we are reviewing the suggested 38 projects that were submitted from all 17 chapters.

Once the projects are vetted against the mission statement and the attributes, we will recommend an awesome project to the Board of Y Alumni. When approved, we will inform all chapters of the suggested project and its timeline. Our hope is to have participation from all chapters. Remember Y alumni represent three words; Connect, Travel, and Serve. This upcoming project will encompass all three words. More information to come. Have a super fantastic fall!

Nels Bagnardi

## Chapters of YMCA Alumni- The National YMCA Alumni Organization







Janis Berry

Dear Members,

I do hope everyone is well and staying safe. It's that time of year again, for you to start thinking about your gift to the Emergency Assistance Fund (EAF). You have been a vital partner in this program in the past and I do hope you will remain so.

Last year, we were able to assist 23 active YMCA employees and 3 retirees overcome various challenges such as medical emergencies and other adversities. You were their ANGEL. On behalf of those individuals that were helped, I thank you. Your generosity has meant so much to so many. Sincerely,

Janis Berry  
Emergency Assistance Fund Chairperson  
Greater Ozark Chapter

EAF has been available for us for more than 110 years. Our contributions have continuously supported EAF and ensured funds are available for Association of Y Retirees (AYR) and Association of Y Professional (AYP) members who qualify for emergency financial assistance. **You could be eligible for a grant if you have been a member of YMCA Alumni or AYP for at least the past six months or are a surviving dependent of an eligible member.** The following definitions of an emergency are used to determine grant approval: 1. Medical expenses in excess of insurance provisions. 2. Catastrophic distress as a result of acts of nature or other events such as accident or crime. 3. Emergency as a result of an unforeseen event, not from the exercise of personal choice. Visit [www.yretiree.org](http://www.yretiree.org), click on EAF for more information and forms. For those wishing to mail a check, please send to: Emergency Assistance Fund c/o YMCA of the USA Financial Development 101 N Upper Wacker Drive 16th Floor Chicago, IL 60606

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## Ozark Chapter Officers

Dave Rogers	President
Naomi Hundley	Sec./Treasurer
Mary Ching	Newsletter Editor
Bruce Wands	Past President
Bill Ching	Membership
Janis Berry	EAF Chairman
Richard Flynn	World Service Chairman
Nels Bagnardi	Service Project Chairman





The **Sioux YMCA** is very small, located in a log building in Dupree, South Dakota, and serving the large Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation. The reservation encompasses 5,400 square miles, the size of Connecticut. The mission is to serve the youth and families of the reservation in ways that help them fulfill their greatest individual and collective spiritual, mental, and physical potentials.

The Y must raise its entire budget each year, and almost all donations come from outside of our service area because of the poor economy in this very rural isolated area. We depend upon volunteers for help in making this happen. Three full time staff cannot begin to cover the entire reservation on a daily or even a weekly basis, so volunteers help us meet our financial and programmatic goals.

The Sioux YMCA is at a critical juncture. In a typical year, the Y receives about 40% of its funding through donations from other YMCAs. But Y's around the country are hurting. Many have said they cannot renew their donations. So, to fill that gap the Board of Trustees is reaching out to friends and colleagues in the movement and asking for your support with a donation to the annual campaign. We respectfully ask that you consider a donation to the Sioux Y Annual campaign. Whatever your gift, it will make a world of difference to kids on the reservation. To donate, go to [www.sioxymca.org](http://www.sioxymca.org).



Your gift to YMCA World Service creates opportunities for young people to overcome obstacles and create change that will last generations. This support is critical because in many communities worldwide, young people do not have access to the basic resources and opportunities they need to thrive, such as quality health service, education, employment, and opportunities to learn outdoors.

The Greater Ozark YMCA Alumni Chapter has been generous in the past with its support for YMCA World Service. In 2019 members of this chapter contributed \$3,475. The majority of these gifts were given as checks at last year's annual meeting. Since then a few members have made their 2020 contribution responding to a request directly from the national World Service office. We thank all of the members who have already done this, and we would ask other members to consider making a contribution to the 2020 World Service Campaign. World Service needs were great prior to COVID19 and are substantially greater now. You will be receiving a pledge card from World Service so please return the completed form and payment to the following address. Make sure to mention you are a member of the YMCA Alumni Greater Ozark Chapter.

YMCA of the USA- World Service  
101 N. Wacker Drive 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60606

#### STATUS OF YMCA REOPENINGS



To date, **778 of the Movement's 801 Y associations** have re-opened. Some Ys reported as "open" may only be operating their facilities or programming at limited capacity in accordance with local guidelines. Ys are sharing their experience, ideas, resources and questions on Link. [#ReopeningYourY](#)

## ***News about the YMCAs in the Ozark region:***

### ***The Grand River Area Family YMCA***

The Grand River Area Family YMCA closed due to the pandemic from March 17 to May 4. During the shutdown, the staff pivoted from regular duties to deep cleaning, painting, and refurbishing the building. During that time, the staff stepped up their involvement by providing food to those in need. In addition to their regular "Backpack Buddy" program, the Y received a COVID license to participate in the CACFP (school feeding) program which they ran in partnership with the Chillicothe and Chula school districts. They also received a PPP loan and county grants.

The Y experienced nearly a 20% drop in membership by the end of May. Program revenue was down, too, as spring programs had to be cancelled. It has been a difficult summer because membership numbers have not yet rebounded, daily usage is down year over year and the Y has had to hire extra cleaning workers, in addition to keeping all their regular full-time staff. In spite of all that, once the PPP loan has formally been approved and the Y can book that money as a contribution, the Y is forecasting a break-even FY 20.

### ***Camp Wood YMCA***

Camp Wood YMCA has been incredibly blessed through the pandemic. Former, and current, leadership through the board, volunteers and staff ensured that CWY held no debt and the camp had cash reserves on hand to weather the storm. Although not able to run traditional summer camping program, CWY was able to pivot to offer family experiences, serving close to 80 families this summer. With the loss of most fall groups and schools tight budgeting was essential.

Camp saw a net loss of over \$600,000 to budget, but still finished the fiscal year with over \$50,000 in cash in reserves, as well as a line of credit that was not necessary to borrow. Deferred accounts from campers rolling their 2020 camping fees to 2021 will influx the camp with cash at the beginning of the new fiscal year.

Along with a moved golf tournament, Camp Wood will see another large influx of cash (\$85,000 +) in the first month of the fiscal year. Development efforts have been incredible with two, \$100,000 matching grants to be received, which will put Camp Wood at raising over \$500,000 in sustainable funds to carry the camp through until the summer of 2021. The minimum plan next summer is to run some sort of summer camping program, having learned and planned all year. Previous gifts and pledges for the capital campaign did allow construction well over \$1,000,000 in projects over the past 9 months, including Jones Lodge renovation, Reeble Landing construction, and other needed projects. Overall, it has been a tight and nerve-wracking year, but again because of past leadership and strong financial decisions, Camp Wood YMCA has remained viable and strong during the pandemic.

### ***The Gateway Region YMCA***

This has certainly been an unprecedented year for the Gateway Region YMCA due to COVID, like it has been for so many other Ys and organizations. When we were forced to close our facilities in the spring, the Y remained "open" by pivoting to meet the immediate needs of the community-as we have for more than 167 years. For example, the Y provided childcare to more than 220 children of emergency and essential personnel, we conducted more than 12,000 wellness-check calls to seniors and collected food for those in need at 20 facilities. The community also responded by donating more than \$300,000 to our response efforts.

### ***The Long Branch YMCA***

The Long Branch YMCA Macon, Missouri serves two counties for a total population of about 25,000. Macon is the largest town with a population of 5,400. The Y closed Mid-March to mid-May due to COVID, receiving no membership revenue. The Payroll Protection Program allowed us to continue paying our staff. Now that it's October, we're almost back to normal. Member traffic is slower and steady and VERY THANKFUL to be able to come to the Y! We have 110 kids playing flag football on Saturdays, down a bit from 150. Membership is down from the all-time high of 2900 in 2016 to around 1900. We have 3 full time staff (down from 4) and about 62 part-time staff. We had to make some salary adjustment. Our saving grace...no debt, no pool.





**Linda Pourchot**

## **News from Ozark Members**

Hello from Manchester. Being a grandma, I was concerned that our 4-year-old granddaughter would not have her final year of preschool in preparation for kindergarten next year. I have taught many preK's to swim but not letters and numbers. I am so thankful for internet as I have developed curriculum. Remember Letter People? You can still find their songs on YouTube! Hope all of you are having as fruitful year.



**Lucy**

As I'm sure is true for many of us, the Battersbys were disappointed to cancel some much anticipated trips this year. We had rented a beach house in Florida for a trip with extended family and were very much looking forward to a week with all the kids and grandkids together. Sigh...maybe next summer. We also had planned a trip to Sedona and Phoenix with my dad. He was scheduled to receive an award from the National Academy of Inventors. We were particularly disappointed to cancel that one.

Speaking of my dad, we had a pandemic modified birthday party in May to celebrate his 95th. We all sat outside in the yard, with each of the extended family units at their own socially distanced card table. Less than satisfactory, but better than by Zoom, I suppose.

Two of our grandkids are back in in-person school (see photos of Jackson - 1st grade and Scarlett - Kindergarten below). The other two are homeschooling (Paige - HS Junior and Payton - 6th grade).

Our oldest daughter, Kim, was recently ordained as a minister in the Wesleyan Church. She is the youth pastor at Warrenton Wesleyan Church in Warrenton, Missouri. Craig and I are so proud of her. She has such a huge heart for service.



**Nancy and Craig Battersby**

After retiring from the Y and then the Park & Rec biz, and then from grant-writing, I am now on my fourth career chapter, serving as Finance Director for a high-tech start-up. (My dad has always said that the key to a long life is to continually keep retiring and then starting new and interesting chapters). Our company's product is a patented cyber security unhackable hardware device. We were pleased to recently receive a contract with the Air Force to adapt our devices for use in military aircraft to protect communications in the battle space. (Evil doers won't be able to hack our drones or fighter jets now).

Hope everyone is well and staying safe.



**Scarlett**



**Jackson**



**Dave and Connie Snow**

Life is very slowly returning to a little bit of a new normal. Still, a lot of not going anyplace, masking about 50 percent of places we go BUT Football is returning for us, so things are looking up. Husker nation is ready!!

In August we had our first Great grandchild, a beautiful girl named Charlie. Later in October we have a grandson being married. We are both well and staying busy.

Summer is officially over ...where did it go? My volunteer marigolds came back like "creeping jennies." Yet we can still enjoy warm afternoons for another few weeks as the leaves are showing their fall colors.

Butch has overseen some home remodeling part time and loves it. Likely to have back surgery later this month.

Mary has been able to rejoin exercise classes at the YMCA since July. Small group of them enjoyed a backyard pool for some "real lollygagging time. "

Bible study is meeting for the Book of Genesis this session. Stay well and Best wishes to all.



**Mary Reid & Butch Michael**



**Jim and Eva Knight**

Jim retired from being the Rotary secretary after 51 years in July. Eva is volunteering at the church food pantry every Tuesday and daughter Julie is passing out the prepared foods on Wednesdays. We are staying close to home and daughter Julie is doing all our shopping. We have been blessed as the kids have all stayed employed during the virus while several have had to work from home. Our oldest granddaughter has moved from Wisconsin to San Francisco to work for Old Navy. (Please keep her in your prayers). The other granddaughter is back in school at K State and the third, Melissa is scheduled to graduate from

Community college and has been accepted at KU Med Center upon passing her state board.

My kids are coming most days. I have a caregiver that takes me places and helps me with exercises, too. Got my flu shot yesterday and everyone in my family is fine.



**Doris Hawkins**



**Eulah Johnson**

I don't leave my house- it's like being in prison! I have three great grandsons now. Daughter Linda is a teacher in Marion, Iowa, Daughter Sherry is in Iowa city and Son Chris and family are in Lincoln. It is nice to have the kids and grandkids close home.



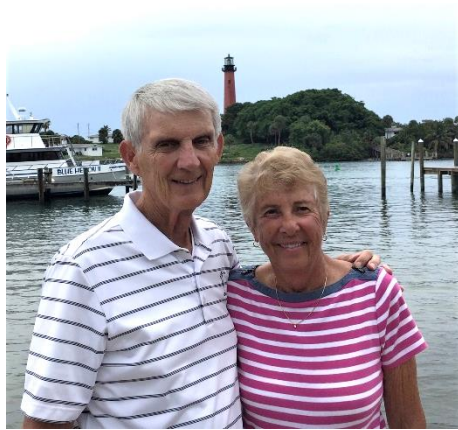


**Dick and Naomi's backyard!**

The Hundley calendar is pretty empty these days! We haven't even been able to see our new great granddaughter but have lots of pictures and videos. Here in the woods it is easy to enjoy the deer, squirrels and chipmunks and now that it's cooler we can be outside more. The pace is slow, but Dick still does a Sunday School lesson every week that is sent out to the congregation. Our joy is in keeping current with our friends by phone, Facebook, or Zoom and we would welcome a call. We are very thankful for technology!



**Dick and Naomi Hundley**



**Dick and Jani Flynn**

Occupying our time.... Like so many others, our travel plans have been cancelled or delayed! Now we get excited about driving the 3 miles across town to the Post Office – just to drop a letter or two into an outdoor mail receptacle (to avoid indoor lines).

Jani and I both regularly attend our board, organization, and committee meetings via Zoom and keep in touch with kids, grandkids, and friends via email, texting, Facebook, Instagram, Facetime, Zoom, and Marco Polo.

Our main outdoor recreational activities are golfing and gardening. Sadly, I am convinced that time spent attempting to be really good and have fun at either detracts from one's performance and joy in the other!

Did I forget to mention – on rainy days and/or when bored, there is always another closet that needs to be cleaned (for the 14<sup>th</sup> time)!



Bruce and Karron Wands celebrate their 57 year as newlywed sweethearts! 2020 has been an interesting year for Karron and Bruce. Now home after a rehab job on his hip (five days early release!), Bruce is recovering and back to exercising. Karron is chief nurse now that

he is home and sometimes wishes for the days when she could just go shopping, no mask included!

The good news is that Karron and Bruce are well and that their children visit frequently. Bruce misses the school activities and the grandkids. Karron misses volunteering but think it is good to stand back and let others try their skills. Karron says that they have really enjoyed the lovely fall weather that Kansas City has been having and that they have had many lovely evenings on their deck. Dinner a la fresco has been great and so has the nice soft breeze.



**Karron and Bruce Wands**



**Betsy Stoll**

We can't have visitors at Aberdeen, but we have only had a few problems with COVID. I haven't seen my daughter since Christmas, but the children and grandchildren are all fine. I go to exercise program which can only handle 10 people at a time as well as our movies, with a sign up.



**Dave and Marty Rogers**

Dave & I have found retirement in a small town is good for pandemic life. Walking nearly every day has been good exercise, although we'll need to bring out warm coats and boots in a few months. Zoom calls with family and longtime Y friends have been fun and actually kept us more in contact than in a normal year.

Dave is nearing the end of his six-year tenure on the board of the Camp Olson YMCA (Minnesota), and chaired the risk task force that dealt with coronavirus. In May they made the difficult decision to cancel the camp sessions this summer, a very sad day for all involved. We were able to travel to north central Minnesota for a board retreat in June.

I have enjoyed reading and sewing masks. After nearly 30 years in one house, it seems like a good time to go through the accumulation and share with others. I was glad to share children's books with a friend who is a new third grade teacher. My current project is getting Legos ready for Joy Toys Christmas program. So many little pieces!

All doing well. I have done some home projects. I am still doing genealogy research and enjoying time with the family.



**Laura Slane**



**Dave Moliga**

2020 has been a mixture of challenges. Shortly before the COVID shutdown in March I had another heart issue with a blockage corrected, but then AFIB returned. I am now stable again. Now I have been healing. My RV has been idle but hoping for a return to traveling next spring (Yellowstone?). Been able to catch up on various projects around the house and enjoyed worship by video.

Our church has begun in person services again, and I am helping to organize our "Shoebox" ministry (Operation Christmas Child). I am looking forward to a more normal next year and as always, give God the Glory.

Our doctor says the best place to be during the COVID season was our RV so we have tried to get away a few times. We went to South Dakota in June; Iowa in September and we are planning to go to Branson in November. We have been careful to eat and sleep in our coach and always avoid crowds.

At home, lots of projects have been done. Bill put in a new floor in Mary's office and he made a stained glass for his sister. Mary got a new sewing machine that embroiders so that has been a major learning experience. She also continues with her writing of a family history book and genealogy research. Be well everyone-and wear your mask!



**Bill and Mary Ching**





Remember Pre-Covid?



**Proposed trips for 2021-2022 (see website for details)** <https://www.ymcaalumnitravelclub.org/>

2021:

Republic of Georgia - Late Spring, Dates TBD (YMCA Georgia)  
 Active & Discovery On The Rhine - Sept. 28-Oct. 5, 2021 (Avalon Waterways River Cruise)  
 Maritime Colors Ocean Cruise - Sept. 30-Oct. 8, 2021 (Royal Caribbean)  
 Trade Routes of the Middle Ages Ocean Cruise - Oct. 4-18, 2021 (Viking Ocean Cruises)

2022:

A Caribbean Reunion - Jan. 16-24, 2022 (following YMCA Reunion '22)  
 Affordable Italy By Rail - Dates TBD (Gate One Tours)  
 Portugal's River of Gold Cruise - May 2-11 (Viking River Cruises)