

# Messenger Bits from the Messer-Brandenburg Chapter



January 2024

Winter

## ***President's Message***

Happy New Year to all our Y Alumni members. Here's hoping you all enjoyed a blessed Christmas with your family and friends and are ready to meet the new year with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

As we start 2024, you will note that our chapter voted to go with a new leadership format. I am excited to share that Wray Howard was recently elected to serve along with me as a co-president. He served as our vice-president and coordinated our National Service Project fund raising efforts the past two years. We look forward to working together as we strive to promote opportunities for us to connect, travel and serve.

To start this year, our focus will be on renewing and growing our chapter's membership. By now, many of you have already renewed and many more are likely to do so soon. Let's invite and encourage fellow Y retirees to join us in 2024 and enjoy the fellowship.

Please take time to read about and view photos from our chapter events held in October, November and December. Our thanks to everyone who assisted in organizing these events. Let's have a great Y Alumni year in 2024!!!

Yours in Service,

Denny Mohrman and Wray Howard,  
Chapter Co-Presidents



## ***Board Members***

*Cathy Adams    Linda Dean    Jim Furrie    Rick Gattoni*  
*Denny Handrow    Wray Howard    D'Ann Lagerblade    Denny Mohrman    Pat Nelson*  
*David Phelps    Angie Rester    Martha Rolf    Larry Stinson    Dianne Warrick*



**Messer-Brandenburg Y Alumni Annual Meeting**

Our Annual Meeting was held on October 25, 2023 at Camp Winnebago in Rockford with 24 in attendance. Following the morning business meeting, our group was entertained by the Rockford Y Retired Men’s Club Choral group while we enjoyed our box lunches. In the afternoon we got updates on the Emergency Assistance Fund, International/World Service and our National Service Project. Below you will find the results from our election held that day. Many thanks to Wray Howard and Martha Rolf for their assistance in securing this year’s site. All in attendance agreed it was a fun day.

**Messer-Brandenburg 2024 Executive Board**

- Co-Presidents - Denny Mohrman/Wray Howard
- Vice- President - David Phelps
- Treasurer - Rick Gattoni, Jr.
- Secretary - Martha Rolf
- Past President - Denny Handrow



***Veteran's Day Gathering***

Eleven Y Alumni members met at the Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center on Friday, November 10 for our Annual Veteran's Day gathering. Those in attendance included Bob and D'Ann Lagerblade, Steve Dahlin, Rich Escutia, Linda Dean, Cathy Adams, Ken Buss, Don Heller, Wray Howard and Denny and Cindy Mohrman.

The group enjoyed a sharing session in the Great Hall near the stone fireplace. Later we moved to the Porch Room for our lunch. Following lunch, the group shared memorabilia they had saved from their "working days" at the YMCA. What a wonderful experience reminiscing about "the good old days"!



**Cluster Holiday Parties**



**Wisconsin Cluster**

The Wisconsin Area Y Alumni from our Messer-Brandenburg Chapter met on December 6 at Flipside Cafe and Grill in Grafton, Wisconsin. 14 gathered to share a quick update on themselves for the last year. After placing our food orders, we played holiday bingo and then enjoyed camaraderie during our meal. After lunch we finished up with singing a couple of songs for the holidays. Everyone had a great time!



**Illinois Cluster**

The Illinois Area Y Alumni from our Messer-Brandenburg Chapter met on December 13 at Chuck's Southern Comfort Restaurant in Darien, Illinois. There were a total of thirteen in attendance. Cathy Adams organized a couple of games which everyone enjoyed participating in as we visited before the meal. It was great to meet in person again this year!



### National Service Project Update

We have raised most of the money (\$840,000) needed to build a village of 4 Tiny Homes. The outsides of two homes are finished and two others should be finished in 2024. 160 volunteers helped make this happen and 100 more will work in 2024. If you are interested in being a volunteer in 2024, the work weeks are May 7 and 14 and September 10, 17 and 24. Several of us in the M-B Chapter are planning to volunteer during the week of May 14.

To register go to the website: [www.wawokiye.org](http://www.wawokiye.org) For additional details please feel free to contact Linda Dean: [lgdean28@gmail.com](mailto:lgdean28@gmail.com) or call 630.362.9973.

### YMCA Alumni Reunion at Sea

Register now for YMCA Alumni Reunion at Sea, Jan. 26-Feb.3 2025 aboard Royal Caribbean's Harmony of the Seas. Embark from Galveston, Texas into the Western Caribbean.

It's a bargain. The registration fee for our Reunion at Sea is only \$99 because so much is included in the Royal Caribbean cruise cost. The fee includes a special champagne lunch aboard ship, a commemorative reunion t-shirt, an onboard photo background for selfies and administrative costs.

Register NOW for the best choice of staterooms.

<https://www.ymcaalumnitravelclub.org/at-sea-reunion-at-sea>



### In Memoriam:



**Mary Glenn** passed away on Thanksgiving Day, 11.23.23. She had just celebrated her 95th birthday the week before, but had been in severely declining health.

Mary and her brother and mother lived in Paris when she was young and her father, Paul Anderson was serving there. He sent the family home during the war (WWI), but he remained to serve the Y in France.

Mary and her husband Bill were giants in the YMCA World Service Movement during and after WWII. They served in Turkey and possibly Ecuador in Central America.

Our chapter's memorial gift was sent to YMCA World Service as requested by her family.

(Our thanks to Joan Holland for sharing some details about Mary's life experiences.)