



Ozark Trails

Newsletter of the Greater Ozark Chapter of YMCA Alumni
Serving Missouri, Northern Arkansas & Eastern Kansas
February 2025

Mary Ching, President
Marty Rogers, Newsletter Editor

The mission of YMCA Alumni: To provide opportunities for members to Connect, Travel, and Serve while nurturing worldwide Christian fellowship.

As I write this... It's 72 degrees outside! Spring is in the air! Of course, likely it won't stay that warm, but it is a welcome change for sure.



Please notice some changes in the agenda for our gathering. The Executive Committee has followed the guidelines of the questionnaire sent out last fall and made some changes to the format. The first change is to make the gathering two days and two nights. We recognize the time restraints of our members, so the event is shorter, but it is jam-packed with interesting events and lots of fun. Take advantage of breakfast at the hotel as well as "Kickback Time" at no charge. And, of course, we will always enjoy free Wi-Fi. The hotel is quite new and easy to get to since it is right off I-70 at exit 229B. Free Parking is available on the lot or below the lot with direct access to the hotel.

What has not changed is time allocated to free time. The hotel has a lovely conversation area. Kickback time includes a free drink and hot food and is always popular. The group meeting will be in the hotel. We will provide maps for the second day and carpool. Saturday lunch is on your own and can be any of the restaurants on Main Street or in the area by the hotel which is called "The Streets of St. Charles." Menus will be provided for your convenience in selecting a place to eat.

We will be electing and installing new officers. We'll hear about YMCA Alumni experiences, events, and goals for the coming year. And we especially welcome and look forward to seeing our friends from Mott Chapter and other chapters that may join us.

As you will find, there is a lot to see and do here in historic St. Charles. We sincerely hope you will be joining us in historic St Charles for fun and fellowship while dining and maybe shopping in the unique little shops.

Mary

All blue, underlined words are links to web sites for further exploring.

YMCA Alumni Chapter Meeting Greater Ozark & Mott chapters April 4-6, 2025

St. Charles
Historically Awesome since 1769

Since 1769, St. Charles, Missouri, a restored historic city on the Missouri River, has been welcoming visitors to its shores. Founded by French Canadian fur trader Louis Blanchette, the city was named Les Petites Cotes, (The Little Hills), which later evolved into Saint Charles. The town grew into an important trading center for countless pioneers. Because of its strategic location on the Missouri River and its entrance to the western territory known as the Louisiana Purchase, it was a critical destination for tens of thousands of travelers. Check out the [Discover St. Charles](#) website for more information.

Hotel Accommodations

Drury Plaza Hotel, 380 Mulholland Drive, St. Charles, MO, will be our headquarters. Located in the *Streets of St. Charles* area, the Drury offers a free hot breakfast, complimentary evening snacks and drinks, free Wi-Fi and more. Here's a link to sample breakfast and "Kickback" menus:

[Breakfast and Kickback Menu - Drury Hotels](#)

The rooms will be \$151 per night, plus taxes. **Please reserve your room no later than March 3rd** to receive this special price. Room reservations may be made online <https://www.druryhotels.com/>. Reservations may also be made by calling 1-800-325-0720 and referring to your group number 10138175.

Main activities

We'll tour the [First Missouri State Capitol Historic site](#), the seat of government for Missouri from statehood in 1821 until 1826, when the official capitol in Jefferson City was ready.

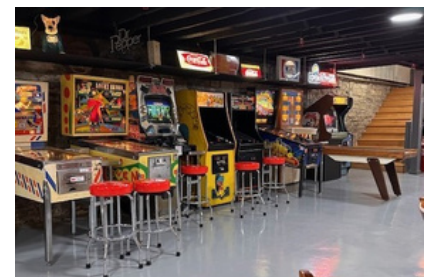
We'll **"Hit the Bricks"** with a **guided tour of Main Street St. Charles** is a collection of historic buildings that now serve as home to restaurants and small shops. The street is cobblestone and has many historic markers on individual buildings. It's a fun place to spend the day and enjoy the state park of the First Capital of Missouri.

Join us Saturday evening at **The Soda Museum** and [Main Street Arcade](#), 126 North Main St, St. Charles, for games, food, drinks, and fun! The Main Street Arcade, located in the lower level of The Soda Museum, is home to over 350 retro arcade games, with vintage machines going back to the 1930s and the average game dating to the 1980s.



Optional activities for Saturday afternoon or Sunday

- [The Lewis and Clark Boat House and Museum](#), 1050 S Riverside Dr (\$7/person)
- [Fast Lane Classic Cars](#), 427 Little hills Ind. Blvd (free)
- Hike or bike along the **Katy Trail** through Frontier Park along the Missouri River
- [St. Charles Home Show](#), 1 Convention Center Plaza (free)
- Tour [St. Charles YMCA](#), 3900 Shady Springs Lane, St. Peters, MO
- [The Foundry Art Centre](#), 520 N Main Center (free)



Greater Ozark & Mott Chapters

Be a Kid Again

St. Charles, MO

April 4-6, 2025



Friday, April 4:

- 2:00-4:00 pm Registration and check-in at **Drury Plaza Hotel**, 380 Mulholland Drive
- 4:30-5:30 pm Icebreakers & Fellowship in the Lewis & Clark room
- 5:30-6:30 pm Dinner at Drury's "Kickback" buffet - included with hotel room, \$12 if no hotel room
hot food & cold beverages
- 6:30 - 8:00 pm Business meeting, games and fellowship in the Lewis & Clark room
Auction of Mark Twain's pipe to benefit World Service
Dessert & snacks

Saturday, April 5:

- 7:00 - 9:00 am Hot breakfast in hotel lobby, included with hotel room
- 9:30 am Gather in lobby for devotion and announcements
- 9:45 am Car pool to Tourism Center, 230 S Main St., St. Charles
- 10:00 am Two tours, each about an hour
 - Group 1 - Hit the Bricks, guided historical walking tour of downtown
(included in registration fee)
 - Group 2 - First Missouri State Capitol Historic Site
- 11:00 am Groups switch tours
- Noon Lunch on your own followed by time to explore St. Charles

Lunch ideas downtown

Lewis & Clark's Restaurant, 217 S Main St
The Main House, 500 S. Main St.
and more

Streets of St. Charles area restaurants

(near hotel)
First Watch, 1405 Beale St
Firebirds Wood Fired Grill, 1501 Beale St
Session Taco, 1650 Beale St.
Napoli 3, 1450 Beale St
P.F. Chang's, 400 Lombard St
Prasino, 1520 S Fifth St
Chicken N Pickle, 1500 S. Main St
(this is a cashless location)

Explore St. Charles for the afternoon

Ideas can be found on the previous page

- 5:30 pm Dinner at Drury's "Kickback" buffet - included with hotel room, \$12 if no hotel room
hot food & cold beverages
- 6:15-8:30 pm Evening Fun at **The Soda Museum/Main Street Arcade**, 126 N Main St., St. Charles
(Included in registration fee)

Sunday, April 6:

- 7:00-10:00 am Hot breakfast in hotel lobby, included with hotel room
- 11:00 am Check out of hotel, Continue to explore St. Charles, St. Louis, or head home

YMCA Alumni
Greater Ozark & Mott Chapter Meeting
April 4-6, 2025

Conference Registration Form

Name:_____ Spouse/Guest Name:_____

(First & last name as it should appear on name tag)

Address:_____ City:_____ State:____ Zip:_____

Home Phone:_____ Primary Member Cell: _____ Spouse/Partner Cell:_____

Email primary member _____

Email spouse/partner member _____

Emergency contact at home:_____ Relationship _____ Tel. # _____

Registration fee includes Hit the Bricks, Saturday evening event, snacks, and meeting room

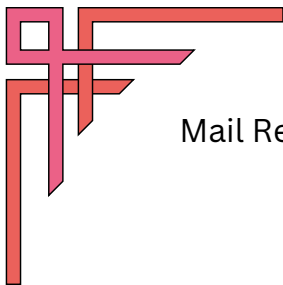
Early-Bird Registration Fee (before March 3) -\$50 per person

Persons _____ x \$50= \$ _____

or Registration Fee (after March 3) - \$55 per person: # Persons _____ x \$55 = \$ _____

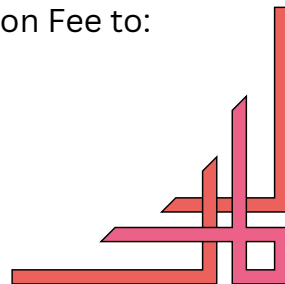
Total amount enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to YMCA Alumni Greater Ozark Chapter



Print Registration Form
Mail Registration Form and Registration Fee to:

Naomi Hundley
160 Victoria Lane
Hot Springs, AR 71901



Highlights from The Connection: National news from YMCA Alumni

- Profiles of Chapter Presidents Mary Ching and Marv Zimmerman in the February issue
- Lyon Chapter assisting Los Angeles Y after the devastating fires
- YMCA Alumni Strategic Plan 2025-2028
- International Service Corps (ISC) and National Service Project (NSP) updates
- Travel Club adventures for 2025 and 2026

Neighborhood lunch meetings were held in St. Louis (top photo) and Kansas City (bottom photo) this fall. These were wonderful opportunities for fellowship and recruitment of new members. Future events will be planned.



The links below will take you to the websites shown.

[YMCA Alumni](#)

[Travel Club](#)

[Chapter Leaders & newsletters](#)

[YMCA Alumni Facebook](#)

[National Service Project](#)

[Events & Chapter Resources](#)

News from around the Chapter

Nels & Judy Bagnardi: Over the Christmas holidays, Judy and Nelson Bagnardi travelled to the Capitol District in New York to visit Nelson's family. We spent time with Nelson's 96 year old father, as well as his twin brother, nephew, younger brother, and our daughter Emma (who lives in Great Barrington, MA). While we were visiting, Nelson's dad experienced some health issues and ended up in the hospital. The doctors determined he has both heart & kidney problems. He is back at home, but will need to have multiple medical tests, as well as a heart procedure, over the next few weeks. Like the doctor told us, "He has an old heart," but he is currently in good spirits. We will just need to take it one day at a time.



Les Boone enjoyed a December visit to the Missouri Botanical gardens with his friend Susan. It was so much fun!



Dave & Marty Rogers: We had a wonderful time on the YMCA Alumni Reunion at Sea cruise in January. We reconnected with old friends and made new ones. We learned about chocolate making on an excursion in Roatan, Honduras, Mayan history and pyramids in Costa Maya, Mexico, and viewed coral reefs near Cozumel by a boat with underwater windows. Bob Cook of GoTravel gave travel tips, Len Wilson taught chess, and Mary Tikalsky of YMCA World Service gave an update on the situation in the Middle East as of the end of January. It was wonderful to travel with a group of Y Alumni friends and we would heartily recommend checking out the Travel adventures.



Chacchoben Mayan ruins



Don Macher & Dave met for the first time, but their career paths crossed & influenced each other.



With Mary & Hazel Coates and Nick & Nancy Zimmer from Mott Chapter



Bill & Mary Ching: We celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary December 27, 2024. Sixty years of bliss went faster than I would have imagined when I popped the question during the summer of our senior year. Both of us were seniors at different colleges in different states. We met at a Presbyterian camp where we had volunteered to be counselors for middle school kids for one week. A summer internship for Mary and a summer job for me near Winterset, Iowa turned into a romance, and we were engaged at the end of the summer. After some juggling of plans for our senior years of college, we found a way to graduate together and be married right after Christmas.

2024 was eventful, not always in the best of ways health wise, but we have survived to this point and are enjoying our families who also live in St. Charles County.

Bill joined the church choir again and keeps in touch with the local Y while serving on the Y board and several committees. Mary just finished another quilt to give to the Salvation Army for their use. She is pleased to give the presidency of the Ozark Chapter over to the next president, this spring, with many new members from across our service area. See you all April 4 & 5, 2025 in St. Charles.

Debbie & Charlie Redmond



Debbie was in Bogota, Colombia, in November with the Gateway Region YMCA International Committee to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Bogota YMCA.



Debbie & Charlie and family at Christmas with hats Debbie made in her spare time.



Charlie Lord: In addition to writing books, Charlie has served as president of the Wichita West Optimist Club for 4 years. He is pictured (in blue cap) attending a Wichita Optimist outing at Kauffman Stadium.



Bruce & Karron Wands attended the Mott Chapter meeting in Kalona, Iowa in October, and then traveled on to Dubuque, Iowa, to meet with former staff from the Y there.

Their family Christmas gingerbread house contest was Noah's Ark v. Swiftie.



Maintenance staff from Dubuque YMCA



Swiftie



Noah's Ark

Marv & Connie Zimmerman: Marv and Connie are members of the Mott Chapter. Marv currently serves as the Chapter President and Connie has served as their secretary and editor for several of the last cycles. The Mott Chapter took a survey several years ago and decided their chapter focus would be on friendship and connectivity. They were hosting the group lunches and smaller gatherings long before the National made it a priority.

Marv and Connie travel around the Midwest visiting their six children and relaxing at the family cottage in Wisconsin. Their hobbies include fishing, hunting, golf, and gardening.



Nick & Nancy Zimmer: Nick and Nancy are also members of the Mott Chapter and enjoyed their first cruise with Dave and Marty in January. They enjoyed a Segway tour in Costa Maya and Nancy played pickleball every morning.

