

Ozark Trails



Newsletter of the Greater Ozark Chapter of YMCA Alumni
Serving Missouri, Northern Arkansas & Eastern Kansas
February 2024

Mary Ching, President
Marty Rogers, Newsletter Editor

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



As I write this it is 54 degrees February outside. Two weeks ago, it was super freezing. Spring has decided to make an appearance - even though it may be short-lived! I heard songbirds today and saw my first robin in the yard. That is an amazing thing about nature, just when things are foggy, rainy, and cold, the sun comes out! Hurrah for spring and rebirth, baby chicks and newborn calves!



And we are having some of that excitement in our Greater Ozark Chapter. We miss Dody Hawkins, Jim Knight, and Lou Krenz greatly, but we do have some exciting news - we have some new members joining us! We want to welcome Angie Peters, Kelly and Alan Gotham, Laurie McTearnen, Gayle Vessels, Mary and John Meisenheimer, Karen Kocher, Renee Tillman, Jeff and Annett Campbell, and Kayla Williams to our Greater Ozark Chapter. Please, welcome our new members to the Ozark Chapter, and we look forward to some new thoughts, joy, and spirit added to our group. We hope to expand our meetings to include regional Cluster lunches when we can get together and have additional fun and fellowship.

Mary

Watch the robins! And enjoy the sun!

Read on for information about the Ozark Chapter meeting in Bentonville, Arkansas, April 23-25, 2024. James Kirschner from YMCA Retirement Fund will speak on Tuesday evening.

The deadline is March 22 for hotel reservations and meeting registration.

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

Greater Ozark YMCA Alumni Chapter Meeting

April 23-25, 2024



[Bentonville](#), Arkansas, the home of Wal-Mart, has beautiful parks, wonderful museums and performing art venues, bike trails, dining and more. Crystal Bridges, opened in 2011, has become a draw for visitors from near and far. Everyone will find something to enjoy in Bentonville. Come early or stay longer!

Hotel Accommodations

The Holiday Inn Express, 2205 S.E. Walton Boulevard, Bentonville, AR, 72712, will be our headquarters. The Holiday Inn Express offers a free hot breakfast from 6:00 - 9:30 am every morning. Free wifi, free parking, a pool and exercise room are also included. The hotel is just off I-49 at exit 85.

The rooms will be \$124 per night, plus taxes. **Please reserve your room no later than March 22th** to receive this special price. Make reservations online at [YMCA Alumni group rate](#) or by calling the Holiday Inn Express at (479)271-2222 and using group # 10042097 for YMCA Alumni. Come early or stay longer for the same rate.



[Crystal Bridges](#) is a beautiful museum in a gorgeous setting. The art can be found indoors and out across the 120 acres, with trails of various levels leading you to art in nature. General admission is free. Alice Walton founded this museum saying, "To me people everywhere need access to art. That's what we didn't have here and that's why it was so important that Crystal Bridges be located in this region."



Infinity Mirrored Room by Yayoi Kusama



Love by Robert Indiana



The Spider by Louise Bourgeois

[Museum of Native American History](#)

was founded by David Bogle, a registered member of the Cherokee Nation. The extensive collection of over 10,000 artifacts allows us to learn about diverse Indigenous cultures through tools and art.



James Kirschner, the Chief Strategy Officer for the YMCA Retirement Fund, will share his wisdom with us Tuesday evening. James has worked for YRF for over 20 years and has many years of experience in strategy and leadership at the YMCA of Greater New York and through his private consulting business.

**Greater Ozark
YMCA Alumni Chapter Meeting
Bentonville, AR
April 23-25, 2024**



Tuesday, April 23:

2:00-4:00 pm Registration and check-in at **Holiday Inn Express**

5:15 pm Leave for dinner at **Lin's Garden Chinese Restaurant**

(next door to hotel; dinner included on registration fee)

5:30 - 8:00 pm Dinner, devotion, ice breakers, and fellowship;
presentation by James Kirschner, Chief Strategy Officer - YMCA Retirement Fund

Wednesday, April 24:

6:00 - 9:00 am Breakfast in hotel, included with hotel room

9:30 am Gather in breakfast area for devotion

9:45 Leave for **Museum of Native American History**

10:00 - 11:00 am Self guided tour of museum

11:00 am Leave for **Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art**

Chapter photos when everyone arrives.

Enjoy this world class art museum at your own pace, including 120 acres of outdoor space and 5 miles of trails. Several trails are hard surface and 0.5 - 1.1 miles in length. Others have steps and crushed granite surfaces and are up to 1 mile in length.

Lunch is on your own; **Eleven**, the Crystal Bridges restaurant, is open from 11:00 am - 2:30 pm.
The Coffee Bar offers a variety of drinks and snacks and is open all day.

Spend all day exploring Crystal Bridges, enjoying the beauty inside and out, or check out other attractions: [Wal-Mart Museum Heritage Lab](#) - free; 9 am - 7 pm

[The Momentary](#) - contemporary art; a Crystal Bridges museum - free; 10 am - 6 pm

[Peel Museum & Botanical Gardens](#) - free; 9 am - 3 pm, Peel Museum (home) has stairs

[Compton Gardens & Arboretum](#) - free; gardens sunrise - sunset; exhibit room 8 am - 5 pm

5:30 pm Meet at the hotel to carpool to dinner at **Azul Tequila Mexican Restaurant**

Dine as a group; order from menu and pay for your own meal

Thursday, April 25:

6:00-9:00 am Breakfast in hotel and check-out of hotel by 11:00 am

9:00 - 11:00 am Business meeting in hotel meeting room

Devotion, introduction of new members, updates from the National YMCA Alumni board and other committees, memorials, auction of Mark Twain's pipe to benefit World Service, other business

Other dining options you might enjoy before leaving Bentonville:

Table Mesa - 108 E Central, Suite 10 (Mexican) 8 am - 9 pm \$\$-\$\$\$

Tusk & Trotter - 110 SE A Street - (American, local food, bar) 11 am - 9 pm \$\$-\$\$\$

Tavola Trattoria - 108 SE A Street (Italian) 11 am - 9 pm \$\$-\$\$\$

Crepes Paulette - 100 SW 8th St, Suite 4 - (sweet & savory crepes) 10 am - 7 pm \$

Sushi House - 2501 SE 14th St Suite 5 - (Japanese, sushi) 11 am - 9 pm \$\$-\$\$\$

YMCA Alumni
Greater Ozark Chapter Meeting
April 23- 25, 2024

Conference Registration Form

Name:_____ Spouse/Guest 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 Tuesday dinner, snacks, and meeting room

Early-Bird Registration Fee (before March 22) -\$45 per person

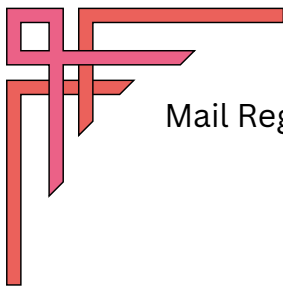
Persons _____ x \$45 = \$_____

or Registration Fee (after March 22) - \$50 per person: # Persons _____ x \$50 = \$_____

Voluntary contribution to help support the Greater Ozark Chapter: \$_____

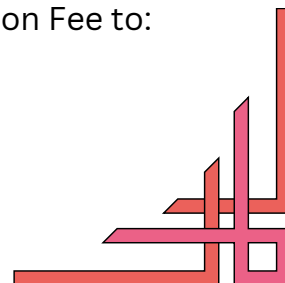
Total amount enclosed \$_____

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

- Jon Vance's ISC assignment in Albania (Feb. issue) and Teresa Hill's ISC assignment to Grand Bahama (Jan. issue)
- *Memories* from Bill Moss
- Be sure to check out future Travel Club adventures, including a trip to Land of the Midnight Sun next summer.

There's still time to Register for YMCA Alumni Reunion at Sea, Jan. 26-Feb. 3, 2025



Were you shivering in the cold this January? Image basking in the sun while sailing the Caribbean with your YMCA Alumni friends!

The next YMCA Alumni reunion will be a Reunion at Sea, Jan. 26-Feb. 3, 2025, aboard Royal Caribbean's Harmony of the Seas. Embark from Galveston, Texas into the Western Caribbean. Reunite with friends and colleagues with workshops, speakers, parties and fun shipboard. Visit three exciting ports of call in the gorgeous waters of the Western Caribbean.

Register now to get great prices and, rest assured, that if you must cancel, you can do so until October 14, 2024. And, wow – what a ship!

Your hosts: West Region YMCA Alumni Chapters and the YMCA Alumni Travel Club.

Click the Reunion At Sea logo above for details.

The entire itinerary is shown as well as the pricing. Prices are very reasonable starting from \$877 per person interior stateroom to \$1314 for an ocean view balcony and choices in between.

The links below will take you to the websites shown.

[YMCA Alumni](#)

[Travel Club](#)

[Chapter Leaders & newsletters](#)

[YMCA Alumni Facebook](#)

[National Service Project](#)

[Chapter Events & Resources](#)



Home 1 & 2 near the end of
the 2023 Waves
photo credit: Danny Maier



2023 Wave 7 photo credit: Randi Sidman-Moore

Kurt Kaboth
(McBurney-Morse),
Dave Rogers (Ozark)
Don Kerr
(Upper Midwest)
Photo credit: Marty Rogers



The work continues in 2024

The goal is to erect tiny homes 3 and 4 this year, while continuing the work needed to finish homes 1 and 2. Volunteers are signing up for May and September waves. The dates are:
Wave 1 - May 7-14, Wave 2 - May 14-21, Wave 3 - September 10-17, Wave 5 - September 24-October 1.
Wave 4 - September 17-24 - is already full!

The website for the National Service Project, <https://wawokiye.org/>, has photos, videos, diagrams of the tiny homes, and the answer to most questions. On the NSP website, click Project and then the Project Detail link for specific information. Nels Bagnardi, our chapter representative, will also be glad to answer any questions. His email is njbagnardi@gmail.com.

Dave and Marty Rogers participated in Waves in 2022 and 2023. They report that there is work for all skill levels, you will have the chance to try new things, meet new friends, and learn about the Lakota culture.



ISC News



The International Service Corps (ISC), a committee of YMCA Alumni, is exploring an international project working with YMCA Mexico in Tijuana, to assist as they provide services to children and teens. The ISC met recently with Valerie Ruiz Griego, Program Coordinator for Casas YMCA para Menores Migrantes (YMCA Homes for Migrant Minors) in Tijuana, Mexico. This program supports children and teens deported from the U.S., as well as children and teens from different countries seeking asylum in the U.S. Learn more about this successful program started by YMCA Mexico in 1991 on their website: [Casas YMCA para Menores Migrantes](#). Your computer should offer to translate the page to English.

ISC hopes to send a small team to Tijuana later this year. Spanish fluency will be extremely helpful, but there will be some jobs for non-Spanish speakers, such as cooking, cleaning, painting.

Thanks to Ken Wold and Wayne Uhrig, ISC committee members, for the information on this project.

The Mission of Casas YMCA para Menores Migrantes

- We provide a safe and respectful home.
- We are open doors Homes, which means that people stay in our program by choice.
- We offer a care alternative for unaccompanied minors other than institutionalization in government shelters.
- We developed a multidisciplinary care model that is projected as an example of good practices for the entire country.
- This model supports to children and teens to have different opportunities for their lives, strengthen their resilience skills and acquire tools that they can take home to change their realities.
- It guarantees that people living in risk situations in their communities of origin receive protection and access to justice.

The main services provided



News from around the chapter

Mary Reid & Butch Michael: News from Omaha -

Happy New Year to the Greater Ozark Retirees and friends. 2023 is just a quick glance in the rearview mirror now. Time marched on for family birthdays and the passing of my sister, Ann Hoag, in Auburn, Alabama. A grandson was married Dec 28 to close the Year on a happy note.

We had beautiful fall weather in Omaha and enjoyed a visit to LeMars, IA with the Mott Chapter and the original Wells Blue Bunny ice cream fountain as well as a visit to the Lewis and Clark museum location nearby and saw the local YMCA for a great introduction to their facilities. The Y Senior class fun activity was an afternoon at a Pumpkin Patch with S'mores for all.

Both of us attend Bible study classes and enjoy singing in our church choirs. Mary continues with daily YMCA exercise classes and volunteers with Assistance League activities weekly. Best wishes to all as we live through our second round of heavy snow



Tedd & Jill Maxfield: Greetings from Kansas City! Most of my time has been spent working, although Jill and I took an East Coast cruise in October. We were about a week ahead of the foliage, but had a great time, saw some beautiful sites, and put on about 10 pounds. The good news is I lost 5 of those pounds since. Who knows when I might lose the other 5?

I've also spent a fair amount of time in Wyoming in the last year. My dad, Max Maxfield (former Y professional in Michigan, Missouri, and Wyoming) was diagnosed with lymphoma, so I spent several weeks with him, visiting each time he underwent a round of chemo. Fortunately, he is now in remission!

I'm hopeful for good weather for outdoor activities this spring!



Kim & Debra Phillips: We went to Colorado this past Summer. We enjoyed some hiking, dining, biking, reading, outdoor concerts and great times with friends and family. We are hoping to make it in April as long as Kim's knee holds up. He has surgery scheduled for early May.



The Bagnardi men: Joe, Nels, Joe

Nels & Judy Bagnardi: Greetings from the Bagnardi's. It's been a busy travel time this past fall for us. Over Thanksgiving, we visited Judy's sister and brother-in-law in Estes Park, CO. It was beautiful and very snowy. We then travelled to the Albany, NY area over the Christmas holiday to visit Nelson's family, including his 95-year-old father and his twin brother, Joe. While in NY, we also got to spend time with our daughter Emma, who lives in Great Barrington, MA. In mid-January, we joined Marty and Dave Rogers in Bentonville, AR to help plan the upcoming spring Chapter meeting, scheduled for April 23-25, 2024. Hope to see you in Bentonville...



Fountain in Nuremberg

Les Boone: As a partner in the YMCA Alumni Travel Club experience I was fortunate to take the October "Gems of the Danube Cruise along with only 2 others Alums amidst a fine group of travelers from across the globe! The trip included 3 days in Prague then 7 days aboard the "Scenic Pearl" on the Danube! Nurnberg, Passau, Vienna, Salzburg, Melk Bratislava, & Budapest were featured points of interest. The pictures depict our 'Y' group at the Fountain in Nuremberg & a restaurant table view of the five of us related to the Alumni group! This was my first out-of-country experience since Vietnam in 1966!



Les with YMCA Alumni friends on Danube cruise



Dave & Marty Rogers: This photo is from our first trip to Bentonville in April 2017. Spring is a beautiful time to walk the paths and trails of Crystal Bridges and other location in Bentonville, AR. We can't wait to see you there!

We enjoyed the holidays with our kids, spending Thanksgiving in Minnesota and Christmas in Missouri. Dave and our son, Chris, enjoyed an early Christmas present and attended a Minnesota Wild-Chicago Black Hawks hockey game in St. Paul.





We had dinner in the posh restaurant where the front desk used to be.



The Downtown YMCA built in 1926.
Source: Collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library Association.

Bill & Mary Ching:

For ninety years, the Locust Street YMCA served the St Louis downtown area. In its original life, the ten-story building housed everything from a tailor shop and cafeteria to lounges and library. Legend says that at the building dedication in 1926, the original key was thrown directly in the Mississippi River so the YMCA would never close.

Even though the building was structurally sound, it had incurred major water damage from broken pipes in the upper floors. The building was not practical to repair so it was put up for sale. No one knew what would happen next. After several years, a boutique hotel chain, 21C, purchased the old YMCA. No one knew what would happen to the marble floors, tiled pool or beautiful wood framed walls. Built in the Renaissance Revival architecture of the day, the building is made of granite and brick and has magnificent interior woodwork everywhere. This building was built on the same site to replace another YMCA built in 1885 that burned.

Today the front entrance remains mostly the same with the marble steps and wonderful woodwork. The woodwork has been cleaned and it sparkles with the patina of age and grace. The building also has a major entrance on Locust Street, once considered a premier location in the city of St. Louis. The main lobby was huge and featured check-in behind a magnificent wooden desk. Across the hall from the check-in was a billiard room where residents and members could play pool.

Sometimes in adult life, you get to revisit places from your past. Bill and I got the opportunity to have that experience in January. We also got to visit the newly renovated building in December when the YMCA retirees met for a Christmas lunch and had tours of the building. Bill had an office on the second floor in the building from 1990 until 1999 when he moved to the National YMCA. Our Christmas present from our kids was an overnight stay and dinner at the hotel. Our room was formerly a racquetball court and still had tall ceilings and wood floors.



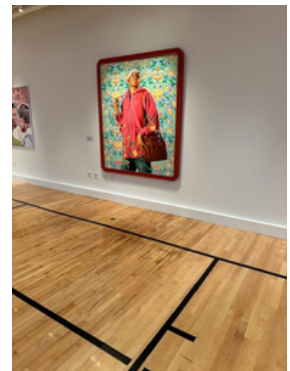
Original front doors.



Our room - former racquetball courts



Remodeled pool



The building's original gyms and track were retained and repurposed into spaces for exhibits and meetings.



Bruce & Karron Wands:

Hmmm... Retired – feet up, shorts, t-shirt, sandals – nothing to do?! That's not exactly true, is it? Especially for those who can't say "no"! Or is it we hope to make a difference to humankind...

Bruce has his hammer and saw as he continues to volunteer regularly for Habitat for Humanity. The rewards of seeing a family able to purchase a house they could not otherwise afford – that's the reward we love to see!

And how about all those kids he coaches. This year it's girls 5th – 8th grades in many sports – and don't tell Bruce they don't need hugs too! Coach Grampa is known to many at Timothy Lutheran School. Looking forward to helping with the tournament this month. And has recruited Karron to keep the hospitality room open for coaches, referees, AD's and principals so they have a place to relax between games and have a bite to eat.

Karron volunteers at LWML (it's a Lutheran missionary league), dedicated to educating and sharing the love of Jesus – through collecting funds to keep spreading the gospel in other countries as well as in our own community. And it's a great social outlet for all in the league. Currently looking into travel by train across Canada – do let us know if you've been there, done that and share your experience with us.

Bruce looks forward to visiting with you on your special days – birthdays, anniversaries, etc. And we hope to see you in Bentonville in April!



Dick & Naomi Hundley:

We were blessed to have our daughter, Beth, here during the January freeze. We have spent time catching up on projects and TV binge watching. Naomi is still knitting hats and scarves to give to the homeless or whoever needs them. She still has a box of yarn from a friend to work into something warm. Dick spends his days reading and working on Bible study for his Sunday School class. We look forward to seeing all of you in April.



Happy Valentine's Day