

The Florida Connection **Sandpaper**

January 2021 Volume 83 Issue 3

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The mission of the YMCA Alumni is to enable members to promote a nurturing worldwide Christian fellowship that provides educational, social and charitable opportunities.



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The Florida Sandpaper is the newsletter of the C. B. Willis Chapter of YMCA Alumni and is published six times a year.

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It's bigger than the Willis Chapter. It's bigger than YMCA Alumni. It is as big as the world!

*"I don't want to travel as a tourist;
I want to do something meaningful when
I visit another country."*

International Service Corps (ISC) is a program of YMCA Alumni. Members volunteer for short or relatively longer service stints and use their expertise to help YMCAs and their staffs and volunteers in other nations better serve their communities.

Have you ever wanted to immerse yourself into another culture, but your YMCA work schedule didn't allow it? Well, now that you're retired, YMCA Alumni has a great opportunity for you. With immersion programs that can start with just a few weeks to six months the ISC is right for you.

The ISC of YMCAs offers additional methods for us to connect, travel and serve our counterparts in other countries. This is a hands-on, immersion into another culture taking your YMCA

experience and using it to encourage, teach, and assist our colleagues internationally. Some have taught basketball or swimming, others have assisted with strategic planning and recovery following a natural disaster.

The ISC Task Force is using this time during COVID 19 to gather names and information from interested alumni. ISC is working on compiling a list of YMCA alumni who are interested in the program, interested in possibly volunteering, and would like to learn a little more about their YMCA experience.

ISC has a placement in Germany that has been put on hold, one in the Bahamas on hold and one at the Yokohama YMCA in the beginning stages of planning.

Several Willis Chapter members have served in ISC assignments including **Walt and Joan Jacoby, and Larry**

(Please see "ISC" page 4)

C. B. Willis Chapter - Connect-Travel-Serve

Messages and Reports

Co-Presidents' Message: Larry & Debbie Garvin



Season's Greetings to all! As we move into 2021 ... we're sure that everyone has high hopes that the newly developed COVID-19 vaccine, will be a success. Retuning our country to what we all consider as normal, will be a major stride to improving the less than positive behavior that you may have observed in others during this pandemic.

To summarize, the lack of socialization, financial duress, even the lack of a smile (can't see a smile with masks on) has had an enormous negative impact on folks. Since we all are retired, we are insulated in many ways from what younger people in the workforce are experiencing on a daily basis. We should all be grateful.

The impact of the pandemic on YMCA's around the country has been severe. The following are a few examples. I retired from the YMCA at the end of 2010 ... at that time there were 999 corporate YMCA's in the United States. Keep in mind, a large urban YMCA with multiple YMCA branches is counted as 1 YMCA. Currently, there are 770 corporate YMCA's in the United States. Granted some corporate Y's have merged together; however, from what was recently shared at a meeting I was part of there are a number of Y's who will never be able to open their doors again. Those Y's are unfortunately bankrupt.

We recently learned that the Atlanta YMCA, which has been financially solid, has had to layoff key administrative staff ... and some of those who are still employed, have had their salaries reduced to approximately 75% of their annual salary. The Los Angeles YMCA, has sold their corporate office and has moved their staff into several branches in order to reduce expenses. We can only imagine the severity the pandemic has had on the small and mid-size YMCA's. In conclusion ... working for a YMCA today is a significant challenge ... it is difficult in every component of YMCA work.

Moving on to our Chapter. As we all are aware, our Willis Chapter of YMCA Alumni, has embarked on a different approach to Chapter Membership in 2021. We eliminated the previously established Chapter Membership Dues of \$25. The thinking behind this change is to stimulate more YMCA retirees who reside in Florida (400 plus), to become active in the Chapter.

With that said ... here is how we are doing so far. In 2020, the Willis Chapter had 73 membership units. As of December 10, 2020, we have had 29 units who have contributed a total of \$1,625 (an average gift of \$50) to the Willis Chapter. Of those 29 folks, 20 also paid the National Dues of \$25 ... and, in addition contributed a total of \$825 to National YMCA Alumni. Sooo, we're off to a good start.

Regarding YMCA Alumni membership on a National level. As of December 7, 2020, we have 1,122 membership units ... compared to 1,219 units last year at this time.

Just a reminder ... our next National YMCA Alumni Reunion remains scheduled for January 12-15, 2022 in New Orleans Louisiana.

All the best ... hope your HAPPY HOLIDAYS were many!

Fitness: Go NUTS!

Phil Wortman, Roberts-Gulick Award

Nutrition ... not mental health! Going nuts is an easy way to boost nutrition and energy levels. Going nuts is simply a way to improve your health.



If you are a typical Southerner (like I am) then pecans are your favorite. You even know how to pronounce the word. They

are a great source of vitamins, minerals and provide necessary dietary fiber.

Pecans have shown a significant positive effect on cardiometabolic risk. They reduce the chances of developing atherosclerotic disease and diabetes.

They have significant antioxidant activity to protect against cell damage. They've even been shown to support brain health and slow down the progression of motor-neuron degeneration in mice.

I love'em raw, roasted with a little butter and salt, or mixed with a little corn syrup and sugar cooked in a pie shell as a slice of pecan pie. (So much for all the "health" aspects.)

Gail's favorite nut (besides me) is the almond. She has them every morning as part of her breakfast routine.

Almonds are the favorite of active people. Studies have shown that eating almonds two hours before an activity can improve performance. They may even reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

If combined with a low-calorie diet almonds have been shown to improve many abnormalities associated with a metabolic syndrome and reduce the presence of high levels of fat in the blood.

Don't confuse eating almonds with drinking almond milk. It only contains about two percent almond, but has a lot of carrageenan which has been linked to inflammation and colon disease.

Though a peanut isn't really a nut, but a legume, it is nutritionally much the same as tree nuts.

Data from GreenMedInfo Research Group LLC. www.GreenmedInfo.health

Food For Thought

(A recipe for living)

Reverent Joseph DeGroot

NEW HOPE Revelation 21:1-6a



There is a Roman coin that has the two heads of the Roman God Janus on one side of the coin. One head is facing forward and one head is looking

back. The month of January receives its name from this Roman God.

Looking back, 2020 was not a very good year. What with the COVID 19 pandemic, there were lost jobs and businesses, people were sick and dying. There were lockdowns, cancelations and shut downs, kids were not able to go to school. Then there was depression and suicides. Are you ready to say good-bye 2020?

Looking forward to 2021 begins a new decade of hope. (Some measure decades by years ending in 0, but actually a decade begins in a year ending in a 1.) Many of us will make resolutions for the New Year, that we will break within the first month, how about the first week? What kind of resolution do we make for a decade?

Near the end of Revelation, John gets a vision of God's plan for the faithful. John encourages the followers of Jesus who are being persecuted for their faith. John reminds them, that the one hope is that the future belongs to God. We can resolve that those who have suffered can open their ears and their hearts and hear the good news of God's new heaven and new earth. **God is in control, that is our hope.**

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Who Is Doing What

Dorothy Markell—Correspondant



Nancy and Pete Kiziu writes:

WE MOVED!!!

We sold our house in ONE DAY, the timing was right, and we are renting a villa in On Top

Of The World in Ocala Florida. We are building our first home and will be able to move in late spring. There are so many things to do here in our little 55+ active community and we are having fun playing water volleyball, pickleball, bocci ball, corn hole and driving around in our new golf CAR. Yes, it's a car, complete with radio, Bluetooth and BACK UP CAMERA!! More news on the house as we are waiting for our 'groundbreaking' soon.

Pat Frazier reports that things are a lot better as the church is open on Sunday's with no singing as that spreads the virus and also you must keep your mask on. The ushers, which I am one, will approach the person and ask them to please put their mask back on.

I have gone out to eat, but choose to go early afternoon in between normal meals. My younger son is coming for Thanksgiving and that will be the first time I have seen him in 9 months. I am cooking a roasted chicken, but will have all the holiday sides. I am keeping myself as safe as possible, but not staying in the house. Sunnyside has opened many activities with only 9 or 10 attendees. I call Bingo, go to Trivia and teach a water aerobic class. I am doing well and hope you all are well and staying safe. I will take the shot when it comes out. God bless you all.

Carol and Larry Lieving say:

We are just fine, going places we need to with masks on and keeping our distance as much as possible. We are having a traditional Thanksgiving dinner with our daughter and family

and a few close friends at our house. The first part of December we are driving to Dallas for a Baylor graduation and the holidays with a daughter and family and back home in January sometime. Can hardly wait till we can all get together again.

John Mercier and I (**Dorothy**) have done some traveling during the pandemic. A lot of alone together. Drove to Marco Island for four days in the summer and have been to Key West several times and we are going again this month. We drive alone (together), check in behind plexi-glass, and do puzzles on the balcony, read, (drink) and eat at outside restaurants. We at least have a change of scenery. Thanks to Covid, I have been acquiring a new—larger-wardrobe. Don't think I'm the only one in that regard. Blessings to all.

And from **Fred Toot** (aka **Santa**, you need to see the beard!): We have not been to church lately but go out to eat about 3 times per week. We only get pictures of our family. We did participate in a Halloween parade -golf carts-up and down the streets of Park Forest. BUT we are quite excited that we went solar with 23 panels on the roof to provide electricity. (Backed up by Florida Power and Light). There are no holiday parties in sight but very little COVID in our 450 home park. Count your blessings, wear a mask, wash your hands.

Bill Ryan writes: It's been a challenge at our house for a while. Loosing sight in left eye so have to sell motor home. Very sad for us as we enjoyed the coach for the past 30 years. But all good things have to come to an end sometime. As for me, just turned 88 in September. I have a problem getting around because my pace maker is showing signs of a fatigued heart, just won't pump like it used to. **Marcy** has been great. What a great life we have had together. She is a REAL BLESSING. I tried zoom once but no luck. Can't remember what to do. Phil tried to help; but still no luck. Say HELLO to all and have a BLESSED Holiday Season.

Membership Features and Benefits

ISC

(Continued from page 1)

Carole Lieving. Their experiences were true “life experiences,” always to be cherished with fond memories. All would be glad to share their experiences with those interested in serving.

Also, Willis Chapter member **Jann Sterling** serves on the ISC Task Force. She provided the information on the ISC program.

Here are some details of ISC program arrangements:

- Length of assignment: two weeks to six months
- Accommodation: provided free by the hosting Y, and usually some meals
- Financial assistance provided by ISC for international travel, visas, medical necessities such as vaccinations
- Types of assignments: very diverse--program development and expansion, teaching English, instructing basketball, swimming and other sports, strategic planning, collaboration with other local non-profits, work with the board
- Open for application to couples or singles
- Time required to arrange: 3-6 months

If a YMCA Alumni member has an interest in serving, just email **Bob Lomauro**, ISC Task Force Chair, boblomauro@gmail.com for more information and an application. The information ISC would like to gather of those interested is:

- Contact information (name, email address, phone)
- Area of interest / expertise (i.e. strategic planning, sports, English language teacher, capital campaigns, etc.)
- Your YMCA experience
- Your last YMCA responsibility
- Is your interest is limited to regions of the world or has time limits (i.e. I prefer Asia, I am limited to a 3 month placement)

ISC is just one of the many benefits available to YMCA Alumni members. It is a great way to stay relevant to today's happenings and continue to use your skills and talents while serving those in need across the world.

“We can't wait until we can start again!” says Jann. “The needs are as diverse as the YMCAs themselves.”



Join in ... you are a “SUPER HERO!” If you don't think so, just ask all those thousands of people you've served over your Y career.

We want you!

The C. B. Willis Chapter is on a campaign to provide each and every Y retiree living in our service area an opportunity to remain connected with the Y and past Y friends and colleagues.

If you aren't currently registered as a chapter member, please take a moment to complete the Free Membership and Donor Form. That will put you in touch with Y retirees from across the nation. You'll become part of a unique grouping that maintains a connection with those who want to extend the camaraderie from their Y career days into their retirement years.

Even if you don't register as a member we want you to know that you are always welcome to participate in chapter activities.

The burst of the electronic age has widened the scope of ways to remain connected. Our hope is to expand the base of Y retiree involvement allowing you to connect with fellow Y retirees at whatever level you may desire. If you are already a registered member, your membership is automatically renewed.

C. B. Willis Chapter Members' Donor Campaign

YOUR FREE C. B. WILLIS CHAPTER OF YMCA ALUMNI MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FOR 2021 IS AVAILABLE NOW!

C. B. Willis Chapter of YMCA Alumni Association Free Membership Registration and Donor Form for 2021

C. B. Willis Chapter membership is FREE.

Current C. B. Willis Members' memberships are automatically renewed for 2021.

National Membership is FREE for the first year.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Preferred Telephone _____ Email _____

C. B. Willis Chapter Dues\$ **FREE**

Donation to C. B. Willis Chapter\$ _____

- \$25—Partner Level
- \$50—Donor Level
- \$75—Sponsor Level
- \$100+—Entrepreneur Level

NOTE
Please make separate
checks for Chapter
Donations and
National Dues/
Donations

National Dues \$25.00.....\$ _____ *

National Donation.....\$ _____

Please make your C. B. Willis Chapter Donation check payable to:

C. B. Willis Chapter

Please make your National Dues/Donation check payable to:

YMCA Alumni

Detach and Mail to:

Janet Ferguson, Treasurer

2751 Regency Oaks Blvd Apt C502

Clearwater, FL 33759

* Note: National Membership is **FREE** for the first year and for Y retirees 90 years and older.

Thank you!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

All YMCA retirees living in the C. B. Willis Chapter service area are provided a **FREE** chapter membership.

If you are a new Y retiree or haven't been a member before all you need to do is register ... your C. B. Willis Chapter Membership is **FREE** and provides you full access and benefits of chapter membership. You'll also receive a **FREE** 1st year national membership with all the benefits and privileges.

If you are already a chapter member, your chapter membership is automatically renewed. To renew your national membership will require payment of \$25 National Dues.

Your donations are greatly appreciated! They allow your chapter and national leadership to plan and provide fellowship, gatherings, travel, and newsletters to meet the needs and interests of your YMCA Alumni Association.

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The question: "Why the switch from chapter membership dues to a life free chapter membership supported by donations?"

We wanted to "open up" the opportunity for all of the 450+ Y retirees living in the C. B. Willis Chapter service area to be part of the association's web of communication, gatherings, and collegial fellowship. We wanted to include those who were primarily interested in being connected through newsletters and electronic communications rather

than being interested in or couldn't travel to chapter events. By "opening it up" everyone can be involved at whatever level they wish.

The electronic advances in delivery of communication has changed the paradigm for being connected. A free membership supported by donations was the Willis Chapter practice for 73 years. We trust that the current and future membership will be as generous as those in the past and fund the chapter's operations. **Your support is needed!**

Editorials and Events

Editorial: Totally Ignored

Phil Wortman, Sandpaper Editor, Stahl Award

I went to the YUSA web site (ymca.net) and clicked on “History” looking for material for an upcoming issue of the C. B. Willis Chapter newsletter, “The Florida Sandpaper.”

Ah, there was a segment designated for 1960 to the 1990s. Perfect! Some of us retired “old timers” can reminisce as we read; and, some of the newly retired can be reminded of the accomplishments of that era.

I eagerly began to read through the information. Some good stuff happened. Black Achievers was conceived in 1967 by HOF **Quentin Mease** at the South Central YMCA in Houston. The Youth Basketball Association (YBA) was formed with the NBA in the mid 1970s. The National YMCA Swimming and Diving Championships, originally started in 1922, became the world’s largest swimming championship with 1,500 participants. The YMCA Character Development Program was initiated in 1994. YUSA established arts and humanities as a national program in 1998.

But wait! WHAT? No mention of the “Y’s Way To Physical Fitness” and HOF **Clayton Myers**? Really? So, I re-read it. Nope! Nothing there ... not a thread. Nothing about the 1971 YMCA Consultation on Physical Fitness held in Philadelphia that brought the leading authorities in the fitness and wellness world together—people like **Golding, Sinning, Cooper, Fox, Astrand, Kraus**, etc.—in support for the Y’s role as a leader for the improvement of American health and wellness.

Nothing about the surge and tremendous growth the Y experienced in facilities, membership and program participants, all related to the YMCA Health Enhancement Programs which encompassed the YMCA Cardiovascular Health Program, YMCARDiac Therapy, Ys Way to a Healthy Back, YMCActivetics, Y’s Way to Slim Living, etc.

Am I just senile and making things up? I’m sure I remember those things occurring. Matter of fact, I was right in the middle of it. How can the biggest organizational program thrust in the history of the YMCA be totally ignored and left out?

But, it has been, not a single word. History is in the eyes of the writer. I guess it is up to those who lived it to remember how it really was, regardless of what has been written. C’est la vie!

Alert: Next ZOOM Meeting!

**C. B. Willis Chapter
ZOOM Meeting
TUESDAY
JANUARY 19, 2021
3:00 PM EST**

This C. B. Willis Chapter Zoom Meeting has a full agenda. You don’t want to miss this one!

Agenda items include a full membership report to examine the results of returning to free chapter memberships for all Y retirees living in our chapter’s service area, and the membership registration and request for operational donations effort.

Three editions of the Sandpaper plus a Zoom meeting alert for the YRF presentation were emailed to almost 400 Y retirees in our service area. The opening rate was around 45-50% for all emails. We’ll discuss the “cultivation process” and how we can best “connect” with more of our Florida Y retirees. We need your thoughts.

Come with some ideas for a future “in person” chapter event. With COVID 19 becoming in check we need to look forward to getting together and celebrating the demise of 2020!

Everyone wants to go to New Orleans, especially with someone who knows the “ins and outs” of the “Big Easy.” That’s the way the 2021 YMCA Alumni Reunion is scheduled. Planned by those “in the know.” the event will provide you an opportunity to fully enjoy the uniqueness of the city. More info at the Zoom meeting!

Plus, just time to share some thoughts and conversations between old and new friends ... that is probably the most important part of being there. Come join us!

**Take a little time to
click on and enjoy
ymcaalumni.org**

Lagniappe

November 17th Willis Chapter Zoom Get-together Was FUN!

It was good to see everyone, and it didn't take long for the conversations to begin! Everyone started sharing how COVID 19 had been affecting their lives. There were some very interesting situations ... 2020 has affected us all in so many different ways.

Attending were: **Larry Garvin, Dorothy Markell, Larry and Carole Lieving, Joe DeGroote, Jan Sterling, Cindy Ferguson, Fred Toot, Don Macher, Pat Frazier, Phil and Gail Wortman.**

YMCAs across the country are really struggling...they have let staff off as the budgets have dwindled as the virus has kept many or most members home. The Y in Los Angeles sold the downtown facility to economize. Ten years ago there were 999 YMCAs in the USA and now there are 770.

Cindy, a member of the Blue Ridge Assembly Board, shared some news about the financial difficulties BRA is having due to the COVID 19 virus.

Conference attendances at BRA have dropped from 33,000 to 3,000 during the same time period. Revenues have declined by 82%. Staff have been reduced from 99 to less than 30 members with significant reduction in salaries and volunteer short term staff furloughs.

Please consider an end-of-the-year donation to BRA. It has played a major role in the prosperity of the YMCA movement in the South. BRA needs your help!

Larry, the East Vice President as well as the Willis Chapter President, gave a brief update on the national YMCA Alumni membership reporting that we had 1,110 national membership units, down from the same time last year. The chapter's current membership campaign and change from dues to donations is going as planned ... full report in January 2021.

Don Macher who is on the Travel Club committee said that many trips have had to be postponed due to COVID 19.

News regarding the New Orleans reunion: The registration fee is to include the opening night dinner, a city tour and a visit to Mardi Gras World (where the floats are made). We will stay at The Embassy Suites for \$159 per night. Other options will include a cooking class and a visit to the WWII museum. At the end of the triennial there will be an optional cruise - 7 days, 6 nights -for \$800. More details later.

We all enjoyed the Zoom meeting and will do it again after the New Year.

YMCA Alumni Reunion January 12 -15, 2022



It's not that far off. As fast as time flies since retirement, it's almost like tomorrow. And, this is one Reunion you don't want to miss. The theme:

“Laissez Les Bons Temps Roulet”

translated from Cajun French is
“Let the good times roll.”

We've got a special group working on planning the event! They know New Orleans backwards and forwards. Being there will be like being on a personal tour of the sights, sounds and foods of the “Big Easy.”

Subscribe to “Going Places” Newsletter—It is FREE

Your YMCA Alumni Travel Club Committee is publishing “Going Places,” an electronic



newsletter for Y-retirees, YMCA Alumni Travel Club participants, friends and families, sent six times a year. It gives you great information on the upcoming travel opportunities being offered.

If you have an interest in potentially joining us on a YMCA Alumni Travel Club trip in the future, go to [ymcaalumnitravel.org](https://bit.ly/35hrt66) or subscribe to the newsletter by going to <https://bit.ly/35hrt66> It is **FREE**.



IMPORTANT NOTICE: If you are **not receiving chapter email alerts** and information about ZOOM meetings, we do not have your current or correct email address. Please email it to Phil Wortman (wortmanii@aol.com) so you won't be left out.

Your YMCA Alumni Association

History



The YMCA happenings between 1872 and 1889

From YUSA Web Page (yusa.com) History

In 1872, the first Railroad YMCA was organized in Cleveland as a partnership between the YMCA and railroad companies to provide wholesome overnight lodging and meeting space for railroad workers.

In San Francisco, YMCAs serving Asians were established in 1875 to serve the large Chinese population there, and a Japanese YMCA was founded in 1917. U.S. Native American Ys started in 1879 with the founding of a YMCA by Thomas Wakeman, a Dakota Indian, in Flandreau, South Dakota.

Camping became a cornerstone of YMCA programming in 1885 when the YMCA started Camp Dudley, America's first known summer camp program, at Orange Lake, New York. The longest continually operating camp, its aim was to provide children with a positive developmental experience through making new friends, building confidence and growing in self-reliance.

Designed to promote Christian character through fostering speech, sportsmanship and scholastic achievement, the Chapman, Kansas YMCA developed the Hi-Y club for high school boys in 1889. The service clubs ultimately became the "four fronts" program—Hi-Y, Jr. Hi-Y, Tri Hi-Y and Gra-Y—and served youth of all ages.