

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

My 'Short List' For AYR

By Len Wilson

The 2011 AYR Reunion in San Diego totally met its goal of "Renewing the Spirit" for all the attendees by generating an event filled with "Fun, Friends and Fellowship." I was privileged to be among friends and Y family members during the final gala dinner and sock hop. Julius Jones turned over the gavel of leadership and I officially began my three-year term as your president.



Len

Julius and his team did a great job of positioning our organization for the exciting and challenging triennium ahead of us. Pat Ritter and her group created the right moment for the transfer of leadership. They all received the applause and appreciation so richly deserved for their efforts and accomplishments.

You know exactly what I mean if you were there and, sadly if you were unable to come, this issue of *AYReports* is providing photographs and accounts of a very memorable event. I also am certain you will enjoy some of the memories of the reunion online at www.Yretiree.org.

The reunion contained many highlights, but the messages from Bill Butterworth, a well-known humorist and motivational speaker, spoke directly to me. Unlike the "Bucket List" we hear much about lately, he provided us with a "Short List" to live by, illustrating it with some of his own life stories. His four key points included: Choose to love; be honest in all regards; value relationships; and finish what you start.

He was able to blend authenticity, humor, and inspiration. I sincerely believe that, among our chapter members, lies the same potential and blend if we take the time to listen to our own stories.

The reunion featured some personal remembrances from attendees, both inspiring and humorous. I would hope the tradition can continue at chapter

meetings and the stories be written down to be shared within our fellowship. Perhaps our stories and traditions are the greatest legacy AYR can provide the YMCA Movement.

I noted when accepting the gavel from Julius that the membership does not vote in the traditional manner for its next leader, but that I would work hard during the next three years to earn their votes of confidence.

In a way, I provided my own "short list" for AYR. It all starts and ends with our chapters.

Realize and proclaim that we are truly blessed as an organization. What other organization of retirees can claim the level of support we receive from the YMCA of the USA, AYP, and our own Retirement Fund? Leaders of all three of those organizations were with us in San Diego and promised their full support in the years to come.

Our chapters contain some of the best group leaders and trainers in the history of the Y. Let's put those skills to work at every meeting.

We succeeded in the Y because we were very good at member recruitment and retention. Let's set some ambitious chapter goals and attain them. I propose a new theme for chapters: ROAR R TOGETHER.

Chapter Check-In

... **Durrell E. (Dee) Connor**, 92, Chief Petty Officer, U.S. Navy Retired, is a Pearl Harbor survivor. He was a special guest of the **Marston Chapter** in late September at a meeting at the Magdalena Ecke



Dee Connor personalizes the Pearl Harbor attack to members of the Marston Chapter.

YMCA in Encinitas, Calif. He gave a personal account of the infamous attack. He began his presentation by telling the group that he was wrapping Christmas presents in his quarters on the USS California the morning of Dec. 7, 1941.

Although his ship was hit, it did not sink due to the crew's quick action of counter-flooding in order to stay afloat. He shared interesting insight, as well as a diagram of where ships were positioned and a picture taken of him raising the American flag during the bombing. Dee has been selected to place a wreath at a Pearl Harbor Memorial commemorating its 70th anniversary...

... Neither rain nor flood danger kept hardy members of the **Central Atlantic**

Chapter from visiting the **Nemours Mansion and Gardens** in Wilmington, Del., in September. They toured the 77-room home of **Albert I. duPont**. Renowned architects **Carrie and Hastings** loosely based their design on Marie Antoinette's Petit Trianon at the Chateau de Versailles in France, a tribute to the duPont's heritage. The group toured the 222 acres of gardens by bus. It is the largest formal French garden in North America. They also checked out the five vintage automobiles in the garage including two Rolls Royces, two Packards, and a Buick with a rumble seat...

... **Larry Pelesh** has ended his long reign as editor of *Clippings*, the newsletter of the **Central Atlantic Area AYR Chapter**. "It has been an interesting and, in some cases, a challenging experience. It's been a great ride and I will always cherish the trip," Larry wrote in the fall



Central Atlantic Chapter member checks out Albert duPont's vintage cars.

issue. **Ken and Chris White** take over as editors. **Maurice and Pat Hight** will serve as co-presidents. Chapter members are very proud of **Len Wilson**, who assumed the national presidency of the National AYR Board at the 2011 Reunion in San Diego...

... The **Grand Canyon Chapter** is already looking ahead and planning for a reunion Oct. 15-18, 2012. The location is Durango, Colo., and will be based at the historic 1880's-era

Strater Hotel. The dates mean low hotel rates and timing during the fall golden aspen season. Highlight of the trip most certainly will be a trip through what is absolutely some of the most awesome scenery and dramatic ascents in the nation on the **Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad**. An excursion through Mesa Verde National Park is also on the schedule. **Stew Brown** wants all AYR members to know they are welcome to join in the fun. It's a perfect time for a driving vacation...



Members of the Grand Canyon Chapter will ride the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad through spectacular scenery in Oct. 2012.



Central Atlantic members toured the spectacular Nemours Gardens of Albert duPont.

... Members of the **Willis D. Weatherford Chapter** enjoyed a Fall Festival in mid-October at **YMCA Blue Ridge** at the height of the colorful fall season in those beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. There were plenty of meals included for fellowship and presentations about current YMCA programs. There was time for bird watching, golf, sing-alongs, a silent auction, and music. Outgoing co-presidents **Jim** and **Jeri Ingram** and other officers were formally thanked. Plan to be part of the Weatherford Spring Fling April 30-May 2 in Chattanooga, Tenn. Event organizers are **Fritz** and **Diane Simonsen**...

... **New England Chapter** members headed to the **Springfield College** campus in Massachusetts in mid-September where they were hosted by President **Richard Flynn** and YMCA Relations Director **Harry Rock**. They enjoyed lunch with students planning YMCA careers, visited the new Y Archives and YMCA Hall of Fame in the recently dedicated YMCA Stitzer Center, and enjoyed dinner with the theme, "Driving Through Tuscany." Event committee included **Dick Foot**, **Evan Page** and **Mary Falk**...

... The Hampton Inn at Corsicana, Texas, south of Dallas, was the site of an October gathering of the **Sam Schreiner Chapter**. Members enjoyed a round of chasing the little white ball at the Oak Trail Golf Club, shopping, visiting local attractions, and plenty of fellowship. **Gene Bulard** is the new chapter president. **Ed Jezek** is vice president; **Tina Carter**, secretary, and **Janie Turner**, treasurer. **Zera Mackie** is the retiring president...

... **Hoosier-Buell Chapter** members were proud to see **Norris Lineweaver**, their nominee for the AYR **F. William Stahl Award**, presented with the prestigious honor during the 2011 AYR Reunion in San Diego in September. Members are looking ahead to their annual gathering at the **Potawatomi Inn** in **Pokagon State Park**, Ind., Jan. 3-5, 2012 ...

... It was Daytona Beach, Fla., for the **C.B. Willis Chapter** at **Perry's Ocean Edge Resort**. The views from the hotel rooms at sunset were spectacular. Members enjoyed a Cajun-style shrimp boil on the lawn by the beach, tours of **Bulow Plantation Ruins Historic Park**, and a dinner at **Aunt Catfish**. Members are meeting just about as this issue reaches you at the Hilton Homewood Suites in St. Petersburg. The Willis Chapter was formed here 75 years ago. Tours included the **St. Petersburg Museum of History** and the **Salvador Dali Museum**. The newly prepared chapter history will be presented to the History Museum for its archives...



AYR appreciates the ongoing support of the YMCA Retirement Fund.

... "No other retiree organization or profession in this country has the history and the potential for fellowship and service as we do through AYR and especially through the **Messer Chapter**," is the message sent to members by **David Bast**, new chapter president. Dave is also AYR's Vice President/Central and the creator of www.Yretiree.org...

... It's time for the annual **McCoy Chapter** Christmas party at **Mary** and **Marty Hanzlik's** home in Novato, Calif. Dec. 8. It will be the 15th gathering at their home. An outstanding luncheon costs \$5 a head that goes entirely to Y World Service. A "white elephant" gift exchange provides lots of laughs and there is always a question of the day for everyone to answer. Future events include a Bay Area Cluster at Point Bonita in February, St. Patrick's Day Celebration at the Jelly Belly Factory in Fairfield in March, and the annual Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Ore., in April...

... It was Fall Reunion time for the **Chambers Chapter** in mid-October as members headed for **Youngstown YMCA Camp Fitch** on the Lake Erie shoreline. It is considered to be one of the nation's premier Y camps. The Youngstown YMCA has invested more than \$10 million in camp facilities over the past decade. Guest speaker is **Brian Rupe**, Camp Fitch Executive Director on the theme, "YMCA Camping: Past, Present, Future." Some members took the extra time to visit attractions like Lake Chautauqua, the famous Chautauqua Institute, Peek 'n Peak Resort and more...

... **Lyons Chapter** members will enjoy their annual Christmas party at Majares Mexican Restaurant in Pasadena, Calif., Dec. 10...

REUNION REFLECTIONS:

Soaring Spirits, Camaraderie, Fun

By Pat Ritter

Several hundred energetic Y retirees came from all corners of the globe to be part of AYR Reunion 2011, Sept. 13-17 in beautiful San Diego. The warm California sun greeted members daily as they navigated the tropical walkways at the Town and Country Resort.

The opening reception poolside was filled with smiles, hugs, and lots of chatter. Brad Fitch did not disappoint with his Colorado Rocky Mountain High tribute to John Denver. Some felt Brad even sounded better than the real deal. San Diego Chargers Chaplain Shawn Mitchell and Bill Butterworth, a motivational speaker, highlighted the daily general sessions.

Bill shared his "Short List for Y Retirees." Using humor, antics, and life stories, Bill reiterated the most important life qualities of love, honesty, relationships, and faith. Continued impact of the Latin America YMCA in the lives of youth came alive through Oscar Escalada's comments. Featured national leaders John Preis (YMCA Retirement Fund), Donna Dunn (AYP), and Neil Nicoll (Y-USA) offered glimpses into current priorities and work of their



Pat

respective organizations. The "We Remember" segment memorialized 800 retirees who passed away since the 2008 Reunion.

Kindred Y groups seized the opportunity to reconnect with old friends and

- colleagues. George Williams, Aurora University, and Springfield College alumni held receptions, while an EAF reception, under the leadership of Dale Ventres and Stew Brown, recognized the efforts of chapter presidents and EAF reps. An EAF raffle at the reunion raised about \$350.
- World Service silent auction of an original Pickles cartoon raised \$150.
- World Federation of YMCA Retirees Leadership Team held their annual meeting at the hotel while attending most reunion activities.
- There were representatives from Japan, Gambia, Scotland, Brazil, Scotland, Lebanon, Mexico, and the United States in attendance. The



(Top) Bob "The Fonz" Hastedt and Julie Rose get into the '50's swing. (Bottom) Poodle skirts score a big hit at the Sock Hop.

National AYR Board and General Council held their final session under President Julius Jones, and the new board met briefly with incoming president Len Wilson.

Several chapters took the opportunity to hold meetings or socials in San Diego.

The hot ticket item for chapter gatherings was the Grand Canyon-

Weidensall Chapter and Cluster Harbor Dinner Cruise. Not wanting to leave anyone out, it was opened up to others wishing to attend. The final “on deck” tally numbered 72. The event included great food and a good time.

Other groups united to celebrate their Y career paths. Some 21 former physical education directors from 10 states representing 850 years of Y service met for lunch to share Y stories, career path overviews, most memorable moments, and mentors. Nine Californians were in the group, including recent San Diego Y retirees Dick Chapel, Dick Webster, and YMCA active, Steve Totten.

There are approximately 15 HR retirees with eight attending the reunion. A luncheon at The Fish House on San Diego Harbor was organized, followed by several other social gatherings and sightseeing opportunities during free time. Their next reunion is planned for Philadelphia. Career years represented by the eight attendees approximated 250 with geographic representation from ten states.

Seventeen members were nominated by their peers as unsung heroes during their careers and in retirement. The Passion Awards, developed by John Brooks, recognize unique career achievements in persons who found a way to remain true to their program passion as epitomized through the works and lives of notable historic Y figures. Recipient names and additional information are posted on the AYR website.

Chapters and Reunion Planning Committee members created daily excitement with drawings for donated prizes, cash, and baskets loaded with unique goods from all over the country. Thanks to the Retirement Fund for their financial support, as well as for sharing contents from their storage closet inventory. Y logo promotional apparel, office supplies, and numerous mementos thrilled attendees and golf tournament participants alike.

Our closing “50’s Sock Hop” was, well, a groovy blast from the past. Ladies donned their poodle skirts and saddle shoes, while the guys

grabbed their lettermen jackets to jive and twist to the sounds of the “Catillacs Band.” No surprise, however, it took ballads to fill the dance floor.

Comedians Bessie and Beulah got the audience reminiscing about the good old days and there was even a “Fonz” sighting (a.k.a. Bob Hastedt). Check out the photos in this issue. Fanfare turned into farewells as President Julius Jones turned the gavel over to incoming President Len Wilson.

Until we come together again, thanks to all who, in big ways and small ways, made this a memorable AYR Reunion. Teams of volunteers from western AYR chapters deserve high praise for the time and efforts over the past three years that helped give life to this event. We send a special thanks to my good friends Marian Bolton, Bea Halk, and Jack Tillman for serving as key chairpersons. It has been a pleasure serving as Reunion Chair. ♦

Pat Ritter chaired the 2011 AYR Reunion. Email: PSRitter@AOL.com

What's In Our Names?

The name behind the Messer Chapter in Illinois is L. Wilbur Messer (1856-1923). Wilbur became General Secretary of the Chicago YMCA in the late 1800s at a time when metropolitan-wide associations were in their exploratory stages.



L. Wilbur Messer

provided much of the organization and developmental growth. His theory was the Metro YMCAs brought a sense of solidarity and unity, allowed branches to concentrate conducting local community activities, brought an economy of scale, better accuracy in reporting,

unifying numerous program interests, and made it easier to enlist

public interest and support.

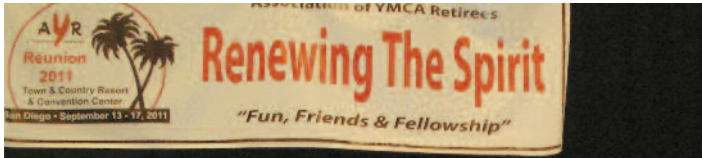
Wilbur often led discussions about specialized Ys (such as railroad, student, “colored,” armed services) that he felt needed to be independent, but still were located within a metropolitan service area. Eventually, control of some of these independent operations was turned over to the National Council. ♦

—Stew Brown

There were 10 of these so-called “Metro” Ys by 1910 and Messer

Fun In The Sun —

Wish You Were Here





EAF: ON MY MIND

By Dale Ventres

Pleasant memories of our 2011 AYR Reunion are still fresh in my mind as I write this column. EAF enjoyed a relatively high profile during the event through an EAF Reception one afternoon and a presentation session the next morning.



Dale

Nine EAF Chapter Representatives accepted "Thank You Certificates" from Stew Brown and me, with the rest of the certificates accepted by chapter members who will

- arrange a suitable presentation at a chapter event. Thanks to Stew for engineering the reception.
- A chapter representative just reported she was notified a chapter member experienced an emergency and, as this person is an AYR member, he is eligible for an EAF Grant. We are working on this now and I have high hopes all will progress smoothly.
- Please be on the lookout for any evidence of an emergency a fellow retiree may have sustained. It is not impolite to kindly inquire if a known situation has created a financial problem. EAF Grants have been awarded because someone took the time to ask.
- I must report that, since so many

- members withhold their gift until year-end, we are woefully behind last year at the same time. EAF Reps have received full details on all facets, and were challenged to step up their promotion. We recorded 759 contributions for \$74,459 last year about this same time, but this year we show only 491 gifts for \$50,424. Please send your EAF gift to AYP, Stitzer YMCA Center, 263 Alden Street, Springfield, MA 01109.
- It was refreshing to reconnect with so many old friends at our reunion, as always, and possibly even better meeting new friends. There's nothing like Y friends. ♦

Dale Ventres is AYR Chair of the Emergency Assistance Fund. Email: dventres@aol.com

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

Y's Men International?

By Ryan Bean

Judge Paul William Alexander formed a men's luncheon club in 1920 at the Toledo, Ohio YMCA to promote fellowship through community service. The club grew and spread like so many great ideas associated with the YMCA and, by 1935, Y's Men clubs could be found in North and South America as well as in Europe and Asia.

There were 255 Y's Men clubs in 22 countries by 1942. World War II put a strain on the clubs and many folded. However, those that remained continued to donate their



Ryan

time, talent, and treasure to aid their local and global communities.

One aspect of Y's Men International that impresses me the most is the global perspective they hold. The idea went international early in their history. The international headquarters moved to Geneva, Switzerland when they saw they were part of a global brotherhood.

- Y's Men clubs serve global communities to this day. The Manila, Philippines club recently helped organize a benefit run



raising half a million pesos (\$11,000) for relief work in Japan following the earthquake and tsunami.

Sadly, many Y's Men clubs seem to be fading in the

- United States. That seems a shame, considering their past strength. However, Y's Men remain strong, particularly in Asia. The most recent census of Y's Men in 2009 tallied over 30,000 members in more than 70 countries. The Y's Men motto is "to acknowledge the duty that accompanies every right." ♦

Ryan Bean is Research and Outreach Archivist at the Kautz Family YMCA Archives. Email: benx029@umn.edu

GOLDEN TREASURES NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

- 74 years Freeda and Bob Apgar, Orange City, Fla., Sept. 4
- 68 years Elizabeth and Ivan Springstead, Cambridge, Wis., Nov. 6
Martha and Franklin Hoernemann, Dayton, Ohio, Dec. 25
- 67 years Mary and Ed Andersen, Big Bear City, Calif., Nov. 8
Frances and Matthew Carter, Sarasota, Fla., Dec. 10
- 66 years Janis and Milda Plisis, Lake Geneva, Wis., Nov. 7
Margie and Gene Cornwell, Lima, Ohio, Dec. 8
Genie and Glen Davies, Ankeny, Iowa, Dec. 29
- 65 years Jeanne and Bob Swearingen, Encinitas, Calif., Nov. 2
Shirley and John Morgan, Tacoma, Wash., Dec. 19
- 64 years Joan and Ken Pearl, Savannah, Ga., Dec. 27
- 63 years Hana and Rudolph Spitalsky, Westmount, PQ, Nov. 6
Helen and Selmer Anderson, Sioux Falls, S.D., Nov. 7
- 62 years Marie and Tom Fink, York, Pa., Nov. 12
Edy and Warren Breithaup, Palm Harbor, Fla., Nov. 22
Jean and Dick Carey, Nisswa, Minn., Dec. 26
Mary Lee and Robert Rhodes, Downers Grove, Ill., Dec. 29
- 61 years Barbara and Norman Connor, Ponce Inlet, Fla., Nov. 18
Lynn and Chuck Micklewright, Helena, Mont., Dec. 28
Dorothy and Don Reap, Tipton, Ind., Dec. 30
- 60 years Jean and Dick Olin, Venice, Fla., Nov. 11
Verna and Ted Jacobson, Coal Valley, Ill., Nov. 15
Betty and Jim Dixon, Richmond, Calif., Dec. 8
Dorothy and Leo Johnson, Westwood, Mass., Dec. 9
- 58 years Betty and Victor Paieda, Harbor City, Calif., Nov. 21
Celeste and Bob Tschopp, Chesterfield, Mo., Nov. 21
Ann and Phil Knight, Coral Springs, Fla., Nov. 23
Patricia and Maurice Hight, Cape May, N.J., Nov. 28
Corky and Lyle Johnson, Minneapolis, Minn., Dec. 17
Bette and Wayne Evans, So. Yarmouth, Mass., Dec. 27
- 57 years Barbara and Bill Parkhurst, San Diego, Calif., Nov. 6
Bonnie and Reeder Huddleston, Crawford, Texas, Dec. 26
- 56 years Beverly and William Simpson, Sioux Falls, S.D., Nov. 25
Barbara and David Davidson, Onalaska, Wis., Dec. 17
Kay and George Smith, Ormond Beach, Fla., Dec. 26
- 55 years Audrey and Bob Richter, Wauwatosa, Wis., Nov. 3
Norma and Bob Fortune, Columbia Station, Ohio, Dec. 8
Judy and Ken Widlake, Glen Burnie, Md., Dec. 29
- 54 years Barbara and Arthur Griffa, Orange City, N.J., Dec. 28
Donna Jean and Jerry Nelson, Ventura, Calif., Dec. 28
- 53 years June and William Crews, Detroit, Mich., Nov. 29
Sharon and Alan Marquardt, Eden Prairie, Minn., Dec. 21
- 52 years Judy and Clifford Moss, New Britain, Ct., Dec. 6
Francia and Bill Hawkins, Lords Valley, Pa., Dec. 26
Joanne and Bill Newton, Orangevale, Calif., Dec. 27
- 51 years Nancy and Bill Olson, Sioux Falls, S.D., Nov. 11
Avis and Chuck Holmes, Bloomington, Minn., Dec. 3

Send your Golden Treasure listing to Clark Koechel, 606 Sarah Drive,
Fond du Lac, Wis. 54935. Email: ick2@charter.net.
Deadline for January listing is December 3.

PRESIDENT

Continued from page 1

- Reach Out... Actively Recruit and
- Retain our chapter members.
- Realize we are much more than an
- association of members. We are
- brothers and sisters in a family of
- retirees. We genuinely care about
- one another.
- I hope to secure your help
- discovering how we can make
- our chapter membership more
- valuable. I will look for that help
- through meetings and messages. I
- have some thoughts on ways to
- bring learning and discovery, as
- well as relationships, with friends
- to our local meetings. I sincerely
- felt that power at our recent
- reunion and I trust you will help
- AYR and me as we seek to continue
- "Renewing The Spirit." ♦

*Len Wilson is President of AYR.
Email: len.wilson@comcast.net*

OH, DEER ME...

"We recently had a new neighbor call the local township office to request the removal of the DEER CROSSING sign on our camp road. The reason: 'Too many deer are being hit by cars out here; I don't think this is a good place for them to be crossing anymore.'"

—AYR member Gary Forster's
Camping Newsletter
gary@garyforster.com

A THOUGHT FOR YOUR DAY

Aging With Grace

By Bruce Tamlyn

We all are getting older whether we welcome the aging process or not. The years seem to slip by more and more quickly without any regard for our desire to slow it down. Maybe the essential question when it comes to growing older is are we getting



Bruce

wiser, more centered, and more loving as we age?

At the risk of oversimplifying, let me suggest that there are two paths available to us as we age. The first

path we will label the path of denial and disdain, and the second path we'll call the path of acceptance with grace.

The path of denial and disdain can look pretty ugly. These are people who become crankier, more ornery, and more negative as they age. They let life's little frustrations drive them crazy. They become less forgiving of themselves and of those around them. These people are not fun to be around.

Most of those on this first path don't realize how negative and ornery they are. They are just being "themselves." The center of this path is a disdain for the aging process and, moreover, a lack of sincere self-acceptance and genuine self-love.

The second path, the path of acceptance with grace, looks very

different. Here there is a welcoming and an embracing of the aging process. One might even say there is a sense of gratitude for the passing years, seeing each new year as a gift. There is a growing appreciation of the inner and outer beauty that comes with age.

We become wiser, more patient, less judgmental of ourselves and others, more forgiving, and more peaceful. In a general way, we take on a more loving nature that permeates our

relationships and our day-to-day disposition. There is a humility and a "gratitude of the heart" that is evident in the lives of those who are aging gracefully.

Aging gracefully is the process of letting go of our self-centeredness and replacing it with the divine grace that comes in a relationship with the Holy. Aging with grace is a sacred journey and one that should not be traveled alone. May the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob travel with us. May our journey be a long, healthy, and loving experience. ♦

Rev. Bruce Tamlyn is chaplain of the Silver Bay YMCA of the Adirondacks. Email: btamlyn@silverbay.org

Changing Lives In Sierra Leone

By Mary Tikalsky

More than \$135,000 was raised in 2010 from World Service gifts of YMCA retirees. Special thanks to AYR World Service Chair Peter Post. Peter's passion and leadership for World Service is lifting up this mission and reconnecting AYR more closely to this extraordinary work that Y giants like the late Harry Brunger, John O'Melia and so many more helped lead for decades. Total contributions from Y retirees so far in 2011 already are more than \$108,900 from 384 contributors. Our goal this year is to exceed \$150,000 with the participation of 600 Y retirees. Please think of World

Service at your regular chapter gatherings.

Let me tell you about one of the most powerful World Service examples.

The Sierra Leone YMCA, established in 1912 in this West Africa country, has 25 branches and program centers today and is one of the oldest and most respected youth development organizations in the country. The YMCA is committed to providing youth-friendly, innovative, and participatory

SIERRA LEONE *Continued on page 11*

Time Travel

By Bill Cameron

As an adolescent, I read about as much science fiction as I could get my hands on. I waited impatiently for each month's sci-fi magazines to show up in the mail. I happily worked my way through the science fiction shelves at the city library.



Bill

My favorite science fiction stories were about time travel. Being young, I wasn't particularly eager to travel into the past, but the thought of venturing off into the future was always seductive.

I've mostly moved on to other kinds of reading, but the idea of time travel still grabs my imagination. Not being young, this time I'd like to give the past a try.

Come to think of it, I did. Not long ago.

It was in San Diego, the opening night of the AYR Reunion. I ambled into a flowered courtyard to join the welcoming reception crowd. In an instant, I was transported back in time. There, arrayed across the open space, enjoying hors d'oeuvres and sipping drinks, were long-unseen friends from a past life.

Maybe it was a trick of the soft lighting, but at least for that moment, that evening, they appeared to me just as they had those years back, when we labored together tirelessly, and mostly

happily, in the vineyards of the YMCA. And at least for that moment, that evening, I was young again myself.

Like the time traveler I was that night, I gravitated from one old friend to the next. Laughing, hugging, remembering, sharing. Stories told, adventures recounted, joys celebrated, losses mourned. Remember when... Whatever happened to... How about the time...

I'm sure that retirees from other occupations, other professions, also have their remembrance-filled get-togethers. But there's something uniquely satisfying about reuniting with those you worked alongside for an organization that, for more than a century and a half, has stood for the best possibilities in human lives and human communities.

There's a beloved old poem that begins, "Backward, turn backward, O time, in your flight, make me a child again just for tonight." The AYR Reunion certainly didn't make me a child again.

But through the inexplicable mystery of time travel, it made me — "just for tonight" — once again a young, bright-eyed YMCA director surrounded by colleagues who quickly became friends. ♦

Bill Cameron is a member-of-large of the AYP National Board. Email: billcameron@comcast.net

SIERRA LEONE Continued from page 10

programs that respond to the development and economic needs of its members and program participants.

The YMCA reaches more than 10,000 youth and families annually. The organization is able to



Youngsters in Y programs in Sierra Leone.

accomplish this by offering entrepreneurship education, life skills training, sports and recreation activities, primary education, and successfully generating income locally and from abroad. The Missoula Family YMCA in Montana is the Y's U.S. local partner. They are helping to develop a new Y branch in the city of Makeni.

Thank you for your guidance, leadership, generous support, and friendship. Thank you for continuing to serve. ♦

Mary Tikalsky is Associate Director/International, YMCA of the USA. Email: Mary.Tikalsky@YMCA.net. You may contribute to YMCA World Service online at: <http://www.ymca.net/world-service>

AYR NATIONAL BOARD

President: Len Wilson
(len.wilson@comcast.net)
Vice President/East: Ralph Christian
(ralphchristian@live.com)
Vice President/Central: David Bast
(dcbast@comcast.net)
Vice President/West: Jack Tillman
(tillman7@pacbell.net)
Vice Presidents/Membership:
 Rich Hill
(resghill@gmail.com)
 Pat Ritter
(PSRitter@AOL.com)
Secretary: Vickie Hennessey
(vhennessey@aol.com)
Treasurer: Ken White
(ken@kjwhite.net)
Assistant Treasurers: Dottie Eley
(deley@seattleyymca.org)
 Rich Hill
(resghill@gmail.com)
Member-at-Large: Bill Cameron
(billcameron@comcast.net)
Past President: Julius Jones
(jayjaygp@msn.com)
Consultants: Donna Dunn
(AYP; ddunn@aypymca.org);
 Neil Nicoll (YMCA of the USA;
Neil.Nicoll@ymca.net);
 John Preis (YMCA Retirement Fund;
preis@ymca.org)

AYREPORTS

AYReports is the official publication of the Association of YMCA Retirees. Deadline for the January 2012 copy submission is December 3.

AYReports is edited and produced by Craig Altschul + Associates (ca+a) 240 N. Westview Dr., Vail, AZ 85641 (520) 290-4569

Editor: Craig Altschul
(caltschul@earthlink.net)

Managing Editor: Peggi Simmons
(simmonsp@earthlink.net)

Art Director: Kate Keleher
(kate@rkeleher.com)

Report change of address to: AYP Executive Office, Stitzer YMCA Center, Springfield College, 263 Alden Street, Springfield, MA 01109.

AYReports
 Editorial Office
 240 N. Westview Drive
 Vail, AZ 85641

Presorted STD
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Tucson, AZ
 Permit 277

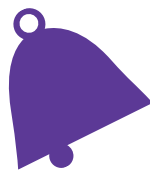
3-In-1 Wishes
For You And Your Family



HAPPY THANKSGIVING



MERRY CHRISTMAS



HAPPY NEW YEAR