

January 2012 Volume 74 Issue 3

# The Florida Sandpaper

A newsletter of the C. B. Willis Chapter of AYR  
Founded in 1936

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## Ladies and Gentlemen Welcome To The Big Top



## Circus Sarasota and the

## Two Big Events Scheduled Wednesday and Thursday February 15-16

Sarasota Circus is exciting. Ringling Museum of Art is a treasure. But, the fellowship is priceless!

Happy hour and dinner at the Lievings and a World Service Auction on Wednesday. Thursday is the Ringling Museum, lunch at O'Learys, dinner at Primo's Italian, and the Sarasota Circus. Combine all that and you've got a "must do" date to put on your calendar.

Register by **January 15th** to get the special motel rate at the Best Western-Midtown Hotel.



Full details and  
registration form  
on page 3

# Why We Joined The C. B. Willis Chapter

Joe and Tonia De Groot



Although Tonia and I met while I was serving at the Fulton, NY, YMCA, she had never shared my previous experiences working at the YMCA. Her early experience was playing tennis at the Rochester Maplewood Y where she won the Club Championship. Little did she know that several years later

she would marry a Y person.

It was while I was with the Fulton Y that I decided to return to the pastorate having been a minister before entering Y employment. I was assigned to the Clayton United Methodist Church in Clayton, NY. It was there that Tonia and I were married. Shortly after that, I officially retired from the Y.

After eight wonderful years in Clayton, I retired from the church in 2000. It was then that we became snowbirds, enjoying our summers on the St. Lawrence River and winters at our place in Vero Beach.

Being members of NAFYR, we, of course, received the "Old Guard News". In 2003, we read about NAFYR sponsoring the "Fellowship at Sea" cruise. Knowing that we would be in Florida at that time, we signed up. We both had a great time. It was also a chance for me to renew old friendships with Y folks I had worked with and known through those Y years. Tonia had a chance to meet many great, loving, caring, and exciting people and I heard her say, "These are my kind of folks".

**We didn't know a soul but it wasn't too long before we felt we had known them forever.**

Among these wonderful folks were the members of the C.B. Willis Chapter. We still remember how they welcomed us at the motel in Cape Canaveral the night before the cruise. We didn't know a soul but it wasn't too long before we felt we had known them forever. We learned that they were the organizing committee for the cruise. They did a marvelous job, and it was while we were having such a great time, that they urged us to join the C.B. Willis Chapter and continue to have more fun at chapter get-togethers. And we did. There is this great bond with so many friends that share a common meld of "Body, Mind, and Spirit." The members of the C.B. Willis Chapter exhibit a special ministry in their service, not unlike the service we saw from our parishioners up north.

For those of you who are retired and spend some time in Florida, we would like to invite you to share in this special bond. We have so much in common, so much to share, and many opportunities to explore Florida together. Consider joining, attend some of our get-togethers, and let us enjoy many good times together.



Photos: Raymond James Art and Dali Museum Event

# Co-President's Message

John and Kathy Shepherd



Those who were unable to attend our November event in St.Pete/Clearwater missed a fabulous event. There was great fun and fellowship the first evening. On Thursday we toured the new Dali Art Museum in St. Petersburg. WOW, was Dali different. The St. Petersburg History Museum was our last stop. **Doug McLeod**, our chapter archivist, presented several three ring binders which represented 75 years of Willis Chapter history to the

museum for safe keeping.

Our next event will be in Sarasota, February 15 -17, 2012. It kicks-off at **Larry and Carole Lieving's** home. So come one, come all, to enjoy the great food, fun and fellowship, and a World Service Auction to cap off the first evening. Kathy and I look forward to seeing many of you there. Let me know if you or anyone you know needs a ride to this event. We want to assist anyone who desires to attend this event!!

National AYR President **Len Wilson** wants all chapters to **R.O.A.R.** together in 2012. **Reach Out, Actively Recruit and Retain** our chapter members. In his President's message Len wrote; "We are more than an association of members. We are brothers and sisters in a family of retirees." My vision for the Willis Chapter membership runs parallel with Len's vision. You are more than members to me and our  
(Please see "Co-Presidents, Page 5)

## Information And Registration—Sarasota Event

### INFORMATION

#### Wednesday, February 15

- 3:00 Check in: Best Western Midtown. \$99/night plus tax. **Cut off date: January 15.** 941-955-9841 1425 Tamiami Trail (Rt. 41)
- 5:00 Happy Hour at the Lievings. 3711 Calliandra Drive.
- 6:00 Dinner. \$7.00/person.
- 7:05 Itinerary Meeting.
- 7:51 Auction for World Service.
- 9:59 Lights out at 3711 Calliandra Dr.

#### Thursday, February 16

- 10:00 Meet at Ringling Museum of Art. Corner of North Tamiami and University Avenue. \$19/person
- 12:00 Lunch at O'Learys near Marina Jacks. Return to Museum to finish viewing exhibits.
- 5:00 Dinner at Primo's Italian. Order from Early Bird menu.
- 7:00 Sarasota Circus in the Big Top. \$35.50/person. We will have the opportunity to meet some of the performers after the show.

#### Friday, February 17

- 9:00 Meet in motel conference room to wrap up the event and other important stuff.

#### Costs summary/person:

- Dinner \$ 7.00
- Museum \$19.00
- Circus \$35.50
- TOTAL \$61.50**

**Detach and mail with check to**  
**Janet Ferguson**  
**240 Sand Key Drive #26**  
**Clearwater, FL 33767**  
**727-596-5530**

Names \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Make your motel reservations directly with the motel—deadline for special rate is January 15.**

# November Event Minutes

Pat Frazier, Secretary

The C. B. Willis Chapter met November 9th at the Homewood Suites in St. Petersburg. A group of 9 members visited the Raymond James International Headquarters where they house a wonderful art and sculpture gallery. After the tour the group returned to the hotel where they met the other members. There were a total of 22 members attending the gathering. After a cocktail hour and light supper the meeting was held.

**John Shepherd** started the meeting by stating the Just 4 Lunches were being planned in each area. The Sarasota County one will be held on January 12th at the Hillview Grille. Others are being planned in their areas. Our next gathering will be in Sarasota on February 15th and 16th and will have a circus theme. More elsewhere in newsletter.

It was approved that **Doug McLeod** be given permission to sign the transfer papers of the archives to the History Museum of St. Petersburg. It was also approved that the C.B. Willis Memorial Fund will pay for the lunches of our guests.

On Thursday the group traveled to the Salvador Dali Museum and had a great tour. He was an interesting artist.

After lunch at the Alfred-Whitted Airport, we and our Willis family guests went to the Museum and turned over the archives. See more detail on the ceremony in an article by Doug.

Thanks to **Bob and Janet Ferguson** for a wonderful program.

Please do not forget your donation to the E.A.F. for this year.

Hope all of you had a safe and wonderful Holiday season and see you all in February.



## Just 4 Lunches (J4L)

The popular Just 4 Lunch informal get-togethers have been scheduled. The program will be "Tell your best Y story." Come and join in!

### Sarasota Area

#### Hillview Grille

1920 Hillview Street  
Sarasota, FL

**Thursday, January 12, 2012**

12:00 Noon—2:00 PM

Contact **Bill & Dorothy Markell**  
941-713-5876

### First Coast Area

#### Penney Retirement Community

Penney Farms, FL

**Wednesday, January 18, 2012**

12:00 Noon

Contact **Walt & Joan Jacoby**  
904-284-8607

Or **Doug & Carol McLeod**  
904-7976558

### Naples Area

#### The Glades Country Club

Naples, FL

**Thursday, February 9, 2012**

11:30 AM—2:00 PM

Contact **Fred Toot** at [fredtoot@aol.com](mailto:fredtoot@aol.com)  
or 239-793-6676

## Central Florida Area

#### Olive Garden

4101 Conroy Road,  
Orlando, FL

**Wednesday, January 25, 2012**

12:00 Noon

Contact **John & Kathy Shepherd**  
386-473-0163 or 386-774-5707

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## Cancer Cannot ...

From **Marvin Van Metre**

It cannot invade the soul, suppress memories, kill friendships, destroy peace, conquer spirit, shatter hope, cripple love, corrode faith, steal eternal life, or silence courage.

*Author Unknown*

## Miracle That AYR Exists

**Bill Cameron**, outgoing AYR Vice President East, states in his email to AYR East Chapter Presidents, that, "One of the conclusions I reached through my participation in the National AYR is that it's a miracle that the organization exists at all."

Cameron explains that somehow without an office or paid staff and little money AYR manages to operate with "considerable vigor and imagination." He illustrates that comment by pointing out that AYR publishes a first-rate newsletter, has an informative web site, conducts national get-togethers, and raises significant support for EAF and World Service.

Though Cameron extols that AYR is entirely a volunteer organization, it faces real challenges as its membership is not growing. AYR needs to find ways to attract the new retirees and build a relationship with active Y staff.

Cameron states that developing a single membership combining both the national AYR and chapter memberships is an important step in insuring the organization's future success.

**Ralph Christian** of the McBurney-Morse Chapter replaces Cameron as AYR Vice President East.

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## World Service Success

### Walt Jacoby, World Service

The 2011 World Service Drive was a success. We set a new standard for AYR support.

The Willis Chapter has done its part with 23 Willis members sending in their World Service support and generously contributing over \$4,000 in total for our chapter.

Begin planning your 2012 World Service support. Willis Chapter should lead the pack. Checks can be sent to:

### YMCA World Service

**Mary Tikalsky**

**YMCA of the USA**

**101 Wacker Drive**

**Chicago, IL 60606**

## World Service Auction

The February event will include a silent auction for World Service. It only works if we all help by contributing items we may no longer need or desire but might be a treasure for someone else. It can be fun and best of all the proceeds benefit World Service. So bring what you can. Silent Auctioneers will be **Carol and Doug McLeod** (there is some doubt that Doug can remain silent for any length of time).

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## March Willis Chapter Event Set

The dates and the program have been set. Put March 14 and 15 on your calendar. Here is the schedule:

### Wednesday, March 14

- Check in at the Quality Inn, 959 US 1, Vero Beach, FL. Rate- \$89.99/night (tax inc.) Phone 772-569-0900
- 6:30 PM Private Dining Room
- Dinner followed by Fellowship Time at the motel.

### Thursday, March 15

- 6:00-9:00 AM Continental Breakfast at motel.
- 10:30 AM Citrus Museum and Heritage House
- Noon lunch
- 1:30 PM McGee Botanical Garden
- Open time to relax
- 5:30 PM Buffet Dinner
- 7:30 PM Music Man at the Riverside Theater

### Friday, March 16

- 6:00-9:00 AM Breakfast at motel, enjoy other attractions around Vero Beach area or head home.

## Two Important Cut Off Dates

- Reservations are held for the Music Man until **February 23**.
- Rooms are held for the motel until **February 29th**.

**Complete details and costs in the February issue of the Sandpaper**

## Fitness: Doing It Right

Phil Wortman



Getting a haircut and running errands ... stop at Arby's for a quick sandwich ... what is this? A long line of ladies, all over 60+ years old ... some in their mid to late 70s ... all shapes and sizes, not all of them in the best physical condition. Someone's birthday? They all had sheets of coupons and were tearing out the ones they wanted. The last lady in line looked at me and handed me a sheet. After all, she said, since I had to wait in line behind all of them I should get a coupon and save

some money.

I had to ask ... what was this group ... were they celebrating something? "No," they chimed in, "We are a bowling group from up the way. We just like getting together after bowling and having some fun." I had thought about leaving and going on down to another place ... it would be quicker, but as I stood there watching them I thought, "You know, these ladies are doing it right. Here they are, some not able to move all that well, being physically active, enjoying one another's company, and definitely adding to their physical and mental well being. Isn't that what physical fitness is all about?" I couldn't leave. I had to stay there and, though not part of their group, share in their enjoyment of life. I got my sandwich and ate my lunch and left with a smile on my face.

We need to look for ways to increase our activity levels ... look for ways to have interaction with others. Maybe it is something just as simple as helping out at the church with their gardening, or going shopping for the person next door who can't get out to do their own. Being active helps to keep our weight down and our spirits up.

## Co-Presidents

(Continued from Page 3)

chapter leadership. Each chapter member is the most important person to me and our chapter leaders. Your participation at chapter events, though desired, is not as important as your health and well being. Therefore, let one of us know how we can help you stay active. We pledge to do everything we can to make sure that your participation can be realized. This will be our mission today and for years to come.

We have included a calendar of **Just For Lunch** events for 2012. Please make your reservation by phone or email one week in advance of the scheduled event. This year's J4L theme will be "YMCA Story Telling." We all have numerous stories

about our YMCA experiences. Some might be very funny but most will touch the heart strings of our memory.

We are also including several new national and chapter thrusts we would like you to be aware of. Please read them carefully and if you need any additional information on them please contact me. We want our chapter members to get the help and information necessary to support these worthy projects and causes.

Finally, Kathy and I hope you and your family will have a very Merry Christmas and most joyous New Year. We look forward to seeing you at one of our great Willis Chapter events in 2012!!

May God continue to bless you ALL!!

## From The Beach

Jan Mark, Correspondent



Great time was had in Clearwater. (Which we found out was a big general area because we were lost in town. The new Dali Museum on the waterfront was architecturally something to see.

**Larry (Carole) Lieving**, Sarasota, was overheard pointing out in Dali's painting of Dadaques, Spain, the house in the village where they spent five days and walked to a small Dali Museum in town. In this painting Dali had many portraits of his sister and one of himself. That was only one of many hidden things in his paintings. It took me a long time to squint and see Lincoln in one total painting. Just confirmed how unusual Dali was!

The whole **Willis descendants** were special. **C. B. Willis** would be proud.

**Bill (Dorothy) Markell**, Hendersonville, NC, are renting in Bradenton. Back in November Bill was thrilled to celebrate his 89th birthday. Sorry to hear about Bill's son-in-law, **Gary** who had a water sport accident breaking his back and paralyzing him from the chest down.

**Alice and Carl Gaites**, Venice, celebrated Christmas a day late following an eastern and southern Caribbean cruise with their son, daughter and son-in-law.

**Marvin and Jean VanMetre**, Haines City, are thrilled with their twin great grandchildren, **Martin** and **Josephine**. Enjoyed a family reunion in Springfield, IL, and vacation in Sanibel.

**John and Valerie Kerwin**, Lakewood Ranch, were a delight to meet. Valerie worked as an art teacher in a Sarasota child care and pre-school. She specializes in acrylics and is proud of the great wall mural she sketched and painted. John worked with C.E.O. **Carl Weinrich**. He is still working making "black boxes" (which are now bright orange) for ships and planes.

**Geri Cushman**, Sarasota, lost her friend of twenty five years and is trying to build a life without him. She went east to settle the estate and experience an earthquake and "Irene".

Always be yourself because the people that matter don't mind and the ones that mind don't matter...it seems to me from the beach.

## Willis Chapter Member To Match First Ten \$100 Donations to EAF

An anonymous C. B. Willis Chapter member has pledged to match the first ten \$100 donations made to the Emergency Assistance Fund (EAF) by other Willis Chapter members in 2012.

The donation for \$1,000 has already been sent to AYR National EAF Chairman Dale Ventres with the expectation that a minimum of ten Willis Chapter members will take the challenge/opportunity and make an EAF contribution of a minimum of \$100 to this most important charity.

"I've seen, first hand, what impact the quick and caring response of EAF can have on a YMCA family that has experienced a devastating medical situation that imposed significant financial exposure. It wasn't just the money. It was the care and empathy that accompanied the assistance. A need was recognized, a phone call was made and EAF immediately acted. It genuinely brought smiles to sad faces. I hope more than ten take this challenge and add additional dollars to their \$100 contribution," explained the donor.

Willis members should send their donations of \$100 or more for 2012 ASAP to:

**Dale Ventres**  
**AYR EAF Chair**  
**1302 Del haven Ct.**  
**Redlands, CA 92891**

### Archive Presentation Photos



Top photo: Susan and Waite Willis during opening comments by Doug McLeod, Willis Chapter Archivist. Bottom left photo: Museum Archivist Ann Wikoff receiving the archives from John Shepherd, Willis Chapter President. Bottom right photo: Waite Willis thanking the Museum and Willis Chapter and sharing family memories.

## C. B. Willis Chapter Donates 75 Year Archives To St. Petersburg Museum of History

### Chapter member led the fight to save Mullet Key now known as Ft. Desoto County Park

Doug McLeod

C.B. Willis Chapter, a chapter of the Association of YMCA Retirees, is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The organization was founded by Clarence B. Willis of St. Petersburg in 1936 at a meeting at Huber's Restaurant on First and North. As part of a year long celebration, members gathered at the St. Petersburg Museum of History to transfer the organizations archives to the museum for safekeeping.

Museum Archivist **Ann Wikoff** received the 75 year collection from Chapter President **John Shepherd** of DeBary, FL. Three descendants of founder C.B. Willis participated in the ceremony—great grandson **Dr. Waite Willis** and his wife **Susan**, and great-great grandsons **Patrick** and **Warren Willis** and his wife **Karly**.

The Willis Chapter is one of 21 chapters in the U.S. and was headquartered in St. Petersburg for more than 40 years. Annual Fellowship Luncheons were held each February, and with few exceptions, were held at the Shriner's Club, later called the International Club. Members came from more than 20 cities in Florida.

Many prominent people of our time have been members including International Statesman **John R. Mott** (1865-1955) and **Dr. Ernest M. Best**, retired President of Springfield College. Locally, Dr. Best, in 1962, led the fight to save Mullet Key from commercial development. The area is now known as Ft. Desoto County Park.

Currently, the 140 member chapter meets in various locations throughout the state. Membership is open to all YMCA retirees and their spouses. Its purpose and mission is fundamentally the same as in 1936. That is to provide activities and programs that emphasize fellowship, fun, inclusion, service and education.

The St. Petersburg Museum of History is located at 335 Second Avenue N.E., St. Petersburg, Florida.

## New Year: New Beginning

Joseph A. DeGroot



The New Year is upon us. The New Testament readings for early January tell of the Magi or three Kings visit after the birth of Jesus, a season known as Epiphany in many Christian churches.

As Jesus' first 30 years go by, his parents take him to Egypt and when it was safe they returned to Israel and settle in Nazareth. The family traveled to Jerusalem where Jesus disappears and is found in the temple "about his father's business."

Before we know it Jesus is baptized in the river Jordan by his cousin John and God announces to the world that, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." This is the beginning of the New Testament and a new year.

With the Old Testament prophecies we are prepared for the new with the birth of Christ our King. That God is with us in the person of Jesus Christ and now we can know what God is like and what God wants us to be.

It is great! We get a chance to do it all over again. We can make New Year's resolutions, correct mistakes we've made in the past, re-visit old promises, and also, old friends.

Remember, before we "kick the bucket" it is a chance to start over. The Roman god Janus is shown above with two heads, one looking forward to the future and one looking backward at the past. Just think of all the experiences we have had because of the YMCA. All the things we have learned, the people we have met and helped, the opportunity to mature in our body, mind and spirit.

I kind of like that, because of the past we have prepared ourselves and others for the future. We don't just grow old and die. We mature and plant seeds for those who follow us. This is another chance that God has given us.

*Author's Note: Janus is an ancient Roman, composite, obscure god who is associated with doorways, beginnings, and transitions. A usually two-faced god he looks into the future and the past. The concepts of January and janitor are both based on aspects of Janus.*

## Reflections: Getting Lost

### "The greatest among you must be your servant."

Harold C. Smith, D.D.



It is a sunny afternoon in May at a college. The class of 2011 is about to set out to make their way in the world. As they are sent forth with their hard earned degrees they are told: "Find YOUR passions. Chart YOUR OWN Course. March to the beat of YOUR OWN drummer. Follow YOUR dreams. Find YOUR-SELF."

But six months later reality has already set in. Today's college product is facing a very different reality as they make their way from a protected and sheltered childhood to a world that

is unforgiving and unpredictable.

Find YOUR passion they were told, but they discover that developing one's inner self is a life-long endeavor.

Chart YOUR own course, they were taught, but as they chart their journeys, life gets in the way. A young woman is called home to help care for a sick parent; a young man working under a miserable boss must develop a new skill set to help keep his department running; the promised road to a dream career becomes a rocky path of exhausting hours, broken promises and financial mistakes and disasters.

March to the beat of YOUR own drummer they heard at commencement. But they soon discover that you make the most beautiful music when you play in harmony with others.

Seek YOUR own happiness they were urged. But happiness is elusive until it is found in another's happiness—your spouse, your child, your family and friends.

Writing in *The New York Times*, the columnist David Brooks articulates his concern for the class of 2011 and 2012, "Today's grads enter a culture that preaches the self as the center of life." But, of course, they age and discover that the TASKS of life are at the center.

Most of us are egotistical and self-centered most of the time, but it is nonetheless true that life comes to a point only in the moments when the self dissolves into some task.

The purpose of life is not to find yourself. It is to lose yourself. As Jesus reminds us in the Gospel, greatness is discovered not in finding ourselves but losing ourselves in the great tasks of life and the Christian faith.

*Editor's Note: Due to an electronic error in transmitting Harold Smith's column "A Risky Business—Love" published in the last issue a significant portion of the column was omitted. We regret the error.*

**The purpose of life is not to find yourself. It is to lose yourself.**

### On A Personal Note:

*Thanks to all who remembered my 89th birthday. The flowers are lovely and all the cards—such a lovely tribute. It is great to be alive and recovering so well and to have such wonderful friends and (Willis) family. Bill Markell*

## History: "Mintonette" *From YMCA in America 1851—2001*



*William Morgan*

The sport of "Mintonette" has become one of the most popular sports in the world. William Morgan developed the sport in the 1890s because he thought the sport of basketball was just too strenuous for the businessmen who came to the Y.

He used a tennis net and basketball bladder and blended elements of basketball, tennis and handball to develop his sport. In 1896, the International YMCA Training School in Springfield, MA, changed the name to "Volley Ball" and 56 years later the name became one word. To increase the difficulty the net was raised from 6 feet, 6 inches to 8 feet in 1916.

During WWI, 16,000 volleyballs were distributed to the military. Between 1918 and 1919 more than a million American soldiers participated in YMCA organized volleyball games. Today, more than 800 million people worldwide play volleyball at least once a week.



## C. B. Willis Descendants Present 75 Years Of History To Museum

The great grandson, **Waite Willis** and wife **Susan**, and great, great grandsons, **Patrick Willis** and **Warren Willis** and his wife **Karly**, attend the presentation of the C. B. Willis AYR Chapter archives to the St. Petersburg Museum of History.

Seated left to right are Patrick Willis, Karly Willis, Warren Willis, Susan Willis and Waite Willis.

Mark your calendar! Vero Beach Event—March 14-15

The Florida Sandpaper is the newsletter of the C. B. Willis Chapter of the Association of YMCA Retirees (AYR) and is published six times a year.

*The Florida Sandpaper*

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