



OUR MISSION

Y Service Clubs International is a world-wide fellowship of persons of all faiths working constructively together based on Christian teachings, in partnership with and supporting the YMCA. Its mission is to strive through active service to develop, encourage and provide leadership to build a better world for all humankind.

CLUB OFFICERS

Pres: Wally Andersen & Tom Lawrence
Pres. Elect: Jon Hess
Secretary: Martha Beals
Treasurer: Ken Haines
Asst. Treas: Tom Johnson
Past Pres: Ethan Ray

BOARD MEMBERS

Rick Bartling `18
John Carruthers `17
John Duiven `16
Chuck Marks `17
Bob Smith `16
Keith VanderPol `18

ACTIVITY CHAIRS

Chaplin: Gary Davis
Run Thru the Rapids:
Syd Baxter & Kent Mudie
Santa Claus Girls:
Bob Smith
White Elephant Sale:
Bill Streeter/ Greg Winer
Historian: Don McWatters
Sparks Editor:
Neil Topliffe
[Sparks Editor](#)

Grand Rapids Y Service Club

Y Service Clubs International - Mid East Region

DOUBLE ISSUE November 20 & December 4, 2015

Final Preparation for Santa Claus Girls next Week

Next week is the homeward stretch for sorting the bags and preparing for the several hundred drivers to descend on the Santa Claus Girls staging area next Saturday morning, December 19.



Photo by Bob Williams

THIS Tuesday, Thursday, Friday from 8:30 am 'til 10:30 or so is when we need all available hands to finalize and mark the Santa gifts bags into delivery routes, usually 14 per driver. Members and friends are welcome to help during the week and definitely on Saturday Delivery Day

Deliver Day, Saturday the 19th is an experience in itself. Outside traffic directors need to arrive at 6:00 am. Inside Assistants who help people find their delivery route bags need to be at the Knoll facility by 7:30 am Saturday. Address is the same as last year: 4300 36th Street, Kentwood (between East Paris and Patterson).

MEETING THIS WEEK – FRIDAY DECEMBER 4
12:00 PM @ David D. Hunting YMCA

Ron Nelson – CEO of GR YMCA & Club Member

Ron will reflect on his Leadership Journey of 28 years.

Let's give him a strong farewell – Bring a friend or 2

[More details on Page 3](#)

News from 11/20 & 12/4 Meetings

Our Motto

*To acknowledge the duty
that accompanies every
right*

Happy
Birthdays

Syd Baxter (12/9)
Tom Lawrence (12/9)
Jud Ross (12/14)
Bob Williams (12/19)
Wally Andersen (12/28)



Find us on
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Grand Rapids Y Service Club
475 Lake Michigan Dr NW
Grand Rapids MI 49505
www.gryserviceclub.org
www.runthrutherapids.com
is a member of
Y Service Clubs International.
www.ysmen.org
www.ysmenusa.com



Co-President Tom Lawrence called the meetings to order at the downtown David D. Hunting Y with the opening invocation given by **Syd Baxter** (11/20) and **Gene Gess** (12/4), followed by the pledge.

Guests 11/20: Jay Schoettley (Topliffe), **Cathy Copogna** (Copogna) and **Angie Hoffman** – GR YMCA staff person who is taking **Lorrie Jayne's** place as YSC bookkeeper.

Guests 12/4: Steve Kapersky (McWatters), **Craig Koffman** (Streeter), **Matt DeBoer** (Williams).

Grateful Dollars were received and past **Birthdays** recognized with \$ gifts received– **Jon Hess** (11/7), **Chuck Marks** (11/18), **Rick Bartling** (11/17), **Bill Peterson** (8/18), **Tom Lawrence** (12/9), **Jud Ross** (12/14) and **John Osbourne** (9/25).

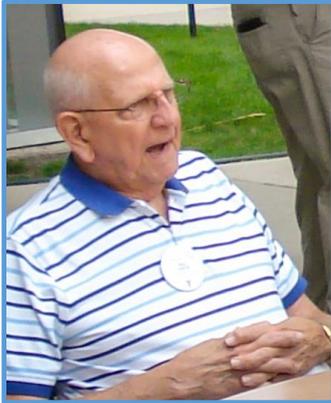
Club News

- **Tom Lawrence** reported the Board approved \$200 for using SE Y bus to take new Youth Service Club members to Camp Manitou-Lin for an overnight experience
- **Bill Streeter** said Star Leasing is providing a trailer without charge for three months to store items for White Elephant Sale storage – all current trailers are full. Still exploring site options.
- **Bob Smith** said that Santa Claus Girls signups are more than 1,700 ahead of last year. **Delivery day December 19.**
- **Kent Mudie** reminded members to contact **Syd Baxter** if you haven't yet picked up your Run Thru the Rapids T-shirts.
- **Bob Williams** invited members to a get-together at **Bill Smith's** home 12/10 to say goodbye as he moves to Naples Florida later this month – **See more info and address page 3.**
- **Bob Williams & Neil Topliffe** invited members to make a contribution to the **Y Service Club Endowment Fund** in honor of the 28 years of leadership by our member and Y CEO **Ron Nelson. See more details page 3.**
- **Member Dues** should be sent to **Tom Johnson** - \$250 for the year. Give your check to Tom or mail to him, DeVos Place, 303 Monroe Ave NW, 49503-2233.

Next Board meeting (3rd Wednesday) – 12/16/15, 5:30p – Park Church, 10 E. Park Place NE.

TRANSITIONS

Farewell to Bill Smith



Bill Smith not only has been a member of our club for 26 years, he is a Past President, White Elephant Sale Chair, member of the Manitou-Lin Board, friend and cheerleader to us all.

Bill has decided to move to Naples Florida to live with his daughter, leaving GR December 20. Last Thursday 15 friends bid him farewell at his condo, offering our THANKS and traveling mercies on behalf of us all.

Bill's new address is:
3213 Brookeview Court,
Naples, FL 34120-4470.
Cell phone 616-690-2619.

Upcoming Speakers

- January 8** Lisa Rose - author of Midwest Foraging (how to forage for fresh seasonal vegetables)
January 22 Roberto Torres - Grand Rapids Hispanic Center
February 5 Mike Hughes - Doorganics, organic veggies home delivery
February 19 Lou Esposito – Davenport University Head Football coach

Club to Recognize Ron Nelson

Join us on **Friday, December 18** in recognizing the 28 year term of service of our club member Ron Nelson as CEO of the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids. He retires at the end of December and is headed to



Florida. Ron will be our guest speaker that day, recapping experiences during his years in Grand Rapids.

During Ron's tenure four new branch YMCAs have been built in the community, each one of them providing major physical and healthy living opportunities for all ages and needs in Kent County. The most recent to open,

Mary Free Bed YMCA, not only is a LEED Certified facility but last week was awarded the FIRST Global Universal Design Award for it being 100% accessible and inclusive for all regardless of physical ability.

Special Opportunity to Honor Ron

How can we as a club best recognize Ron? By preserving and enhancing our own club, the YMCA and Camp Manitou-Lin ... **by making a contribution to the "Ron Nelson Appreciation" gift - Y Service Club Endowment Fund** – a fund that lives in perpetuity with income from it supporting the future of Camp Manitou-Lin. "Already we are at \$1,300," Bob Williams reports. "Can we reach \$3,000 in honoring Ron? I think we can," he added.

To donate before the end of this year, write a check to YMCA SERVICE CLUB ENDOWMENT and send it to Bob Williams, who is managing the gift, 3166 East Gatehouse, SE, Grand Rapids MI 49546-7010. Or bring your check to the meeting on the 18th. A certificate with our signatures will be presented to Ron at that meeting.

CASA Protects Kids

Did you know our county has the largest program in the state with the single task of providing a volunteer advocate whose only focus is supporting a child going through the trials as a ward of the county courts?

CASA, Court Appointed Special Advocates is a program supported by the courts but fueled by a dedicated cadre of 78 volunteers relating to most of the 700 kids who are in foster care and under the jurisdiction of the court.

Our November 20 club speakers, Cathy Weirick, executive director of CASA GR, and Angela Brown, Development Director, shared a poignant video explaining the work of the organization and how much it means to the children being served.

CASA advocates for kids across the child welfare system. “It’s the CASA volunteer assigned to the child who will have their back” on a constant basis, Weirick explained. “A child in the system often deals with 3-4 case workers over time,

who only sees them once a month. They have an attorney who sees them three times a year. And often the parents are needing their own help to cope, leaving the child feeling alone and lost,” she added. Nor is it unusual for the kids to be in and out of 2-3 foster homes in the process as well, she added. CASA volunteers spend time with their child/children at least three to four times per month, listening, being a friend and someone who provides a constant, unbiased balance to their lives.



Volunteers go through a stringent training program over several weeks. Background checks and interviews are an important part of the preparation. However, once assigned to a child, they have the responsibility and authority to make regular reports to the presiding judge on exactly what they are seeing, observing and hearing from the child. “The judge listens carefully to the CASA volunteers,” Angie Brown said, “because they know the volunteer has the welfare of that child and nothing else in mind.”

Tuned In to the Grillin’ Guys

How do you combine something you enjoy doing, sharing the experience with a good friend, creating a business in the process, building a radio audience, and having fun doing it? Oh, add to that cauldron, focusing on helping feed our troops overseas some of the best grillin’ food around!

That’s just what our two speakers (December 4) have put together. And best of all they fed us by far the best lunch of pulled pork with all the fixin’s you could ask for.

Randy Joppie and Bob Nurmikko host the weekly Grillin’ Guys radio show “for the grilling fanatics,” filling the hour on air with great ideas, lots of fun banter, and how-to’s.

They currently have a goal to send a complete BBQ experience with grill and food overseas, “giving our troops a taste of home!” Go to their [web site](http://www.thegrillinguys.com), www.thegrillinguys.com to get details on when to listen and support the [Operation GI BBQ](http://www.gibbq.com) program, www.gibbq.com.

