



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

December 18, 2015

Co-President Tom Lawrence called the meeting to order at the downtown David D. Hunting Y. **Henry Capogna** recognized deceased members of the club who played a significant part in our history and then offered a 17th century nun's prayer for the invocation – see list of past members (page 2) and invocation (page 3). The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Guests: **Bob Branch** (Williams), **Kim Ritz** (Nelson/Topliffe), **Angie Hoffman** (Topliffe), **Dick Howard** (Williams), **Lois Feichtenbiner** (Capogna), **Barbara Duiven** (Duiven), and others. **Grateful Dollars** were received and past **Birthdays** recognized.

Club News

- **Neil Topliffe** circulated "Thanks Ron" sheets for members to write a note to Ron Nelson to be presented at the end of the meeting with a certificate.
- **Bob Williams** reported that over \$2,000 had been donated to the Y Service Club Endowment Fund in honor of **Ron Nelson** with a deadline of December 31 to make gifts as one way we can say thanks to Ron for his support of our club and his 28 years of leadership to the Grand Rapids YMCA.
- **Bob Smith** gave final directions to everyone for distributing the Santa Claus Girls Christmas bags on Saturday. The total distribution is about 1,000 more than last year.
- **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) – 1/13/16, 5:30p – Park Church, 10 E. Park Place NE.

Our Motto

*To acknowledge the duty
that accompanies every
right*

*Happy
Birthday*

Bob Williams (12/19)

Wally Andersen (12/28)

John Carruthers (1/10)

Pat Miles Sr (1/15)

Kent Mudie (1/18)



Find us on
Facebook

[-White Elephant Sale](#)

[-Run Thru the Rapids](#)

Grand Rapids Y Service Club

475 Lake Michigan Dr NW
Grand Rapids MI 49505

www.gryserviceclub.org
www.runthrurapids.com

is a member of

Y Service Clubs International.

www.ysmen.org
www.ysmenusa.com



Upcoming Speakers

- 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
- March 4** **Jocelyn Detloff**, Author & Mary Free Bed Foundation
Annual Fund Director
- March 18** **Lisa Rose**, author of Midwest Foraging - foraging for
seasonal foods
- April 1** **Buck Mathews**, Author "The Book in Each of Us"
buckmathews946@gmail.com
- April 15** **Tom Vilella**, Zeeland Farm Services, Green and growing at
the speed of light
- May 6** **Chris Boden**, President and CEO of GEEK Group
- May 20** **Jamie Ryske**, Heartside Ministries GED and Literacy
Coordinator

A Prayer for Aging Gracefully

Attributed to Anonymous 17th Century Nun

Lord, thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will someday be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody, helpful but not bossy.

With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest Lord that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details, give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing, and a love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains, but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessing cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. - Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a Saint some of them are so hard to live with. But a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so. Amen

RECOGNIZING STALWARTS OF THE PAST

Below is the list of deceased stalwarts saluted December 18 by Henry Capogna prior to the prayer. Awesome Service Club members they were.

Jack Baines
Keith Friend,
Barney Oldfield
Bill Azkoul
Earl Thompson
Tony Eggebeen
Gordie Hartger
Mike Feichtenbeiner
Bill Rogers
Chet Hall
Harry Brace
Bruce Bode
Don Brown
Sandy Bigelow
Bob Metzger
John Peterson
Bruce Elkins
Ed Lamberts

Please send Neil additional names of deceased members you remember who are not on this list.
editor@gryserviceclub.org



MEETING THIS WEEK – FRIDAY JANUARY 8

12:00 PM @ David D Hunting YMCA

**Colonel Denny Gillem – Talk Show Host
ISIS & the U.S. Military Perspective**

Denny is a graduate of West Point and served in Vietnam. He is an author, currently teaches American Government at GRCC and hosts a syndicated talk radio show.

Nelson Reflects on 28 Years of GR Y Service

Ron Nelson entertained club members as he recalled early experiences upon becoming Grand Rapids Y CEO in 1987. One of his first stops was at Camp Manitou-Lin where Dave McDonald, former YSC member and one of the search committee that hired Ron, took him to be sure he was properly introduced to the camp program. “It was Dave who later asked me to join the Y’s Men’s Club in 1988 in time to be a White Elephant Sale worker.”



Stories of the early years included the Downtown Y cafeteria meals “that brought me face to face with YSC President **Chuck Marks** marching into my office after a meeting where the entire meal was a Styrofoam cup of mashed potatoes.” Ron promised Chuck that the Y would be out of the food business by the end of the year. The downtown Y also provided Ron with many stories including dealing with a resident on the roof, his office

being flooded and later a ladder crashing through his window.

Accomplishments of the Y during his tenure that Ron’ identified as significant success stories included Camp



**RON NELSON
RECOGNITION in
support of the Y Service
Club Endowment Fund
REACHES \$2,650**

As one way to say THANKS RON for his leadership to the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids, but particularly for his active membership with the Service Club and support of Camp Manitou-Lin,



members and friends were invited to make donations in Ron's Name to the Grand Rapids Y Service Club Endowment Fund.

To date 23 individuals have contributed a total of \$2,650. The Service Club Endowment is part of the Heritage Club Investment funds. Our Endowment Fund has now reached more than \$15,000. This means these funds will be held in perpetuity with an annual amount – usually the interest earned – being directed in support of Camp Manitou-Lin.

(continued from pg. 3)

Manitou-Lin Cheff Lodge and new quad cabins, the Baxter Building and Gates Chapel.

With the leadership of several key community leaders, **including Bob Gillette**, a master plan was developed with the idea that they would build several strong suburban branches to subsidize a new downtown branch. “Ironically, our downtown branch has done quite well on its own and became our flagship,” Nelson shared. Those branches were added though, including Wolverine World Wide, Visser, Spartan Stores, and ultimately the latest LEED and Global Universal Designed Mary Free Bed Y that was dedicated in December.

Ron noted that the Grand Rapids Y began with a meeting in Park Church 150 years ago and will continue its strong presence in the community in 2016 with a new CEO.

“I want to express much appreciation to the Y Service Club for its many contributions to our Y as well as the community. It was an honor for me to be a member.”

Ron was presented with a certificate along with thank you messages from those present at the meeting.

**IN HONOR OF
AND WITH DEEP APPRECIATION TO
RON NELSON**

For 28 years of leadership as CEO of the YMCA of Grand Rapids

- **IN PROVIDING** a sense of vision that has led to Grand Rapids becoming recognized in the YMCA movement across the USA and Internationally as an innovative leader in building healthier communities
- **IN LEADING** in the completion of four award winning, state of the art branch Y's in the past 10 years
- **IN CREATING** a dynamic and renewed vision through a focus on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility

AND

For your active participation in the Grand Rapids Y Service Club

- **IN OVERSEEING** the “Fabric & Foam Department” for the White Elephant Sale annually
- **IN ALLOWING** the Y Service Club to always be welcome and supported by Y staff
- **IN WELCOMING** the mission of the Club to not only provide financial support to Camp Manitou-Lin but to be strong advocates of the camping program in reaching children of all financial needs.

**WE DO HEREBY DECLARE THIS DAY, DECEMBER 18, 2015,
RON NELSON DAY.**

In your honor a \$2,000+ gift on behalf of the members and friends of the Club is being made to the

**Grand Rapids Y Service Club Endowment Fund of
the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids Heritage Club**

