
Fwd: Here's BRIDGES for September 2022

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----- Weitergeleitete Nachricht -----

Betreff: Here's BRIDGES for September 2022
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WFYR at Seventh World Conference in Aarhus, Denmark



BRIDGES

Official Newsletter of
The World Fellowship Of YMCA Retirees

September 2022 * [View as Webpage](#)

Notes from the chair...



Hello Albrecht,

About 50 members gathered at the 7th WFYR World Conference held in Aarhus, Denmark. We had six sessions for WFYR business matters in conjunction with the 20th World Council Meeting of YMCAs during the period of July 3 to 9, 2022.

At first, we were expecting 62 participants, but due to Visa or health issues, 11 people could not attend. Another issue was the spread of COVID. By the end of the conference, more than ten WFYR participants had to isolate in their rooms.

Each session began with an opening prayer, and we also prayed for the people feeling weak and worried due to COVID. We prayed for their health, recovery and safe return home after the World Council. We invited guests, including **Carlos Sanvee**, Secretary General of the World Alliance, as well as Regional General Secretaries. Special guests from the Ukraine YMCA, **Victor Serbulov**, and **Theonis Charles Browson**, from the Sri Lanka YMCA spoke about the difficult situations in their countries.

As new Chair of the WFYR, I proposed the following goals for WFYR's next four years:

- 1. Global Retirement Initiatives (GRI):** two schemes were discussed during the WFYR sessions. In Sri Lanka, retaining staff members in each YMCA has been a challenge due to the current economic crises and extreme inflation hitting the country. Another GRI scheme would be continued under the leadership of **Guenter Ozdyk** and **Francis Asiema**. This initiative was identified as an important investment by the WFYR and YMCA Alumni of the USA. In four years, this initiative could spread to younger staff employees in various countries.
- 2. Fellowship strengthened in each area:** I also noted the good example of USA and Latin America and Caribbean. This kind of gathering beyond each country may be encouraged to keep good fellowship internationally or beyond each chapter.
- 3. World YMCA Emergency Assistance Fund (Secours Speciaux):** In the last four years various countries have donated to SS funds. The amount of contribution to this fund varies but a total of nine countries (USA, Canada, Germany, Philippines, Japan, Scotland, England, Australia and LACA) have contributed to the fund. In addition, USA World Brotherhood Fund (WBF), Canada, UK and Germany made special COVID contributions at the peak of COVID pandemic across the world. The group discussed the importance of this kind of support by the alumni group members. The case should be clearly made for further appeal to the need of such funds. Donations could be created from many more countries regardless of the amount.
- 4. The Newsletter *Bridges*:** It was noted that **Len and Joyce Wilson** will continue for the next four-year term. Gathering information from afar is difficult so it would be appreciated if all country movements made efforts to provide them with news, articles and pictures. Countries not formally organized as a National Fellowship of YMCA Retirees could be introduced by their sending some articles and pictures to **Bridges** in the future.

The whole group meeting was adjourned with prayers from various people and statements of appreciation for the WFYR financially supporting many members, giving them the opportunity to attend the World Conference of WFYR.

Warmly,
Kohei Yamada
WFYR Chair, 2022-2026

Thoughts from the editors...

Your editors spent the last two years semi-isolating from COVID at our barrier island summer home. We received our shots and both boosters, so we decided to undertake our first major travel experience by attending the World Alliance gathering in Denmark. We had a wonderful visit to Copenhagen prior to the conference. However, we and about 100 other attendees contracted the dreaded virus during the conference in Aarhus.



It caused us to miss much of the conference and also sadly, the opportunity to follow-up on the invitation to spend after-conference time with delegates from Germany, **Guenter and Margaret Ozdyk**. We are now home and fully recovered and eager to share reports of several conference delegates.

Please note the excellent overview of the event by **Kurt Kaboth** that is available as a drop down in this edition. Kurt is not only an excellent treasurer, but obviously has talents as an observer and writer.



As COVID fears begin to wane, several retiree gatherings are scheduled in coming months. This edition of **Bridges** contains news of WFYR friends meeting in the UK and Bangladesh. A national meeting of YMCA Alumni USA is planned in New Orleans in November and will be highlighted in the next edition.

On a sad note, many of you have been informed of the recent death of **Nick Nightingale**, Secretary General of the World Alliance from 1998 - 2002 and a friend of many retirees around the world. We mourn the early loss of a friend and statesman for the YMCA.

We hope you will enjoy the pictures and personal accounts of WYFR friends in Denmark. **Bridges** welcomes new WFYR Chair **Kohei Yamada** who demonstrated his leadership in Denmark, presiding over our sessions, after Chairman Phil Dwyer self-isolated with the COVID virus.

WFYR can look forward to energetic leadership in the next four years as Kohei sets a course to follow and build upon the solid performance of **Phil Dwyer** over the past four years.

Best wishes to all...

Joyce and Len Wilson
Editors



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Aarhus 2022

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Our WYFR World in photos...



Large photo -- Phil Dwyer, outgoing WFYR Chair, introduces and welcomes Carlos Sanvee, Secretary-General of the World Council of YMCAs; Left 3 photos – rain did not stop us; outdoor gathering; old town Aarhus (Gamel); Bottom 2 photos – plenary discussion session; Ukrainian dancers.



Len Wilson and Don Anderson near ancient watermill; old town



Delegates: Top row – Miguel Bellora, Uruguay and Alicia Sanjurjo Zunini, Argentina; Francis and Mary Asiema, Kenya, flanked by John Naylor, Scotland; Rudolf and Leonore Berger and Guenter Ozdyk, Germany; Bonnie Mairs, USA; Second row – Thomas Brendel, Rudolf Berger, Albrecht Kaul; Leonore Berger; Margaret Ozdyk, Germany; Jonathan Quayefio-Mexico, Ghana; Jorges and Christina von Lindenberg, Colombia; Ghassan Sayah, Lebanon.

A special report from Aarhus

By Kurt Kaboth



WFYR's treasurer, **Kurt Kaboth** was taking photographs and keeping notes during the entire World Conference. Readers of **Bridges** are encouraged to review his comments and observations on the entire conference provided by clicking the button below.

(Photo: Kurt Kaboth, Len Wilson, Bonnie Mairs, Don Anderson and Juan Simoes Iglesias, Secretary-General Europe Alliance)



[Read Kurt's Report](#)

Aarhus: The City of Smiles

Reflections of WFYR World Conference

By Christina von Lindenberg, Treasurer, WFYR LACA



Photos top row: Having dinner with our friends Jerry and Martha Prado Shaw; Clarita and Josias Arteaga, Aida Vergara, Colombia and Miguel Escorcha, Venezuela; Bus ride to local site -- Here we go; **Second row:** Juanita de Quinteros, Peru; Carlos Manuel Quinteros, Peru; Alicia Sanjurjo Zunini, Uruguay, WYFR VP for Latin America and Caribbean; Jerry Prado Shaw; Martha Prado, Argentina; at our "Dinner with a Dane", our guide volunteer and past VP of Aarhus YMCA; Cristina von Lindenberg from Colombia; Don Anderson from Hawaii; our hostess Lene Nørby volunteer at the Aarhus YMCA for over 10 years; Daniel Craggs, Marketing Director of the England Wales YMCA; Nakago Ocado, Board member of the National Council of YMCAs of Japan and Jorge Gonzalez from Cuba; younger generations from Colombia my native country.

[Read Cristina's Report](#)

Y's Retired of the UK;
Keeping cool and a round of golf



While the weather forecasters were warning the population to keep cool and avoid the heat, 18 Y's retirees and their guest Gwynne Jervis were arriving from Bath, Hereford, Dorchester and addresses less distant to enjoy lunch, catch up, relate grandchildren and great-grandchildren exploits and other topics that folks like us share.

We enjoyed the company of folks who hadn't been able to participate for several years, those who have been regulars from the early days, and, delightfully, new participants.

The group photo on the practice putting green taken as colleagues dallied in the sun, reluctant it seemed to depart. It was a good day, we hope those who gave their apologies, greetings and good wishes will be able to join us next time. --By *Graham Clarke*

WFYR welcomes new World YMCA President Soheila Hayek

Meet the new YMCA World President. A warm welcome to **Soheila Hayek** of YMCA Lebanon, elected at World Council on July 5, 2022.

"Our global movement is a beautiful giant that is hiding in plain view, and it is time to change that! In parallel with pursuing the goals of Vision 2030, we have the task of elevating our brand and making our name synonymous with 'Youth Empowerment' pastors."



Bangladesh Fellowship of YMCA Retirees (BFYR)



(Photos: Left -- new officers elected at BFYR meeting; children gather at BFYR outing)

We are glad to inform you as the COVID situation has improved in the country. We successfully organized the 3rd General Meeting of Bangladesh Fellowship of YMCA Retirees (BFYR) on 29 July 2022.

A refreshment tour was also organized jointly with the meeting, which gave the members and their families some time to re-energize after overcoming the crisis period caused by the pandemic. We are sharing some photographs of the event.

--With Best Regards, Sudip Arinda, Chairperson and Alex Frank Raulim, General Secretary, Bangladesh Fellowship of YMCA Retirees

"Oh, dear time" Germany: Report on the 4th Seniors' Day of the CVJM Westbund 2022.



Pastor Burghard Affeld began his lively presentation at the Seniors' Day on June 19 at the Bundeshöhe, educational center of the YMCA-Westbund. The 65 participants were asked if they were guided by a tendency to disregard the problems and conflicts of the world, because they felt powerless to respond. He concluded his remarks with the call, "Let your light shine!" Using examples from his own life, he showed where there are meaningful opportunities for us in our old age to become witnesses of the Gospel for others.

The day concluded with a "musical treat" in which the gospel choir "Enjoy" from Dorsten, led by songwriter **Christian Loer**, delighted us with its spiritedly performed song contributions.

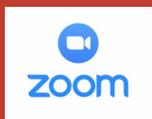


The Passing of NICK NIGHTINGALE Secretary General of the World YMCA from 1998 to 2002

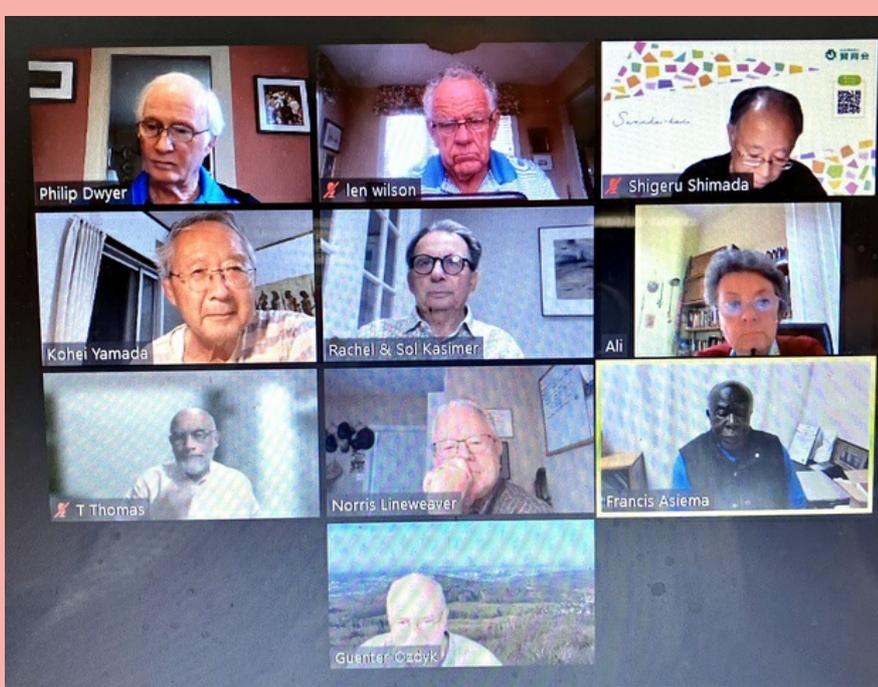
As Secretary-general, he acted on his vision set out in his 1998 acceptance speech:

"I think the YMCA is about helping people pull themselves together. At the heart of our talk is bringing transformation to individuals, their relationship with God, their sense of self-worth, the opportunity to be fully realized. The YMCA has changed me and I'm sure it has changed many of you. Our work with individuals, I suggest, is the foundation on which everything else is built. Our calling is to work first with individuals and then through them with their communities.

"I developed a vision of a world bridge called the YMCA. It's a bridge that spans all of our activities and aspirations, and our many different versions and images of what the YMCA is and does. A bridge that allows us to recognize that difference, and that each YMCA is unique."



New WYFR Cabinet meets with Chairman Kohei



The survey taken at the conclusion of WFYR meetings in Aarhus indicates that participants felt the entire conference was well organized and informative. There was agreement that the next WA world conference in Ontario four years from now needs to have a separate space designated for WFYR sessions, fellowship and some meals.

Franco Savoia suggested that WFYR try to arrange a worldwide Zoom session for WFYR members to become more aware of and involved in ongoing goals and activities. In true YMCA fashion, it was agreed that Franco would be the best person to lead the initiative and **Sol Kasimer** agreed to lend support for Canadian technical involvement.

Although the Global Retirement Initiative (GRI) necessitates a great deal of legal and local approvals, the results will be well worth the time and effort. However, it was pointed out that many Y retirees exist on very meager or no retirement funds after years of dedicated service.

Bonnie Mairs was thanked for her 15 years of dedicated leadership in **Secours Speciaux** and assistance her efforts have provided countless Y retirees around the world.

Bridges will continue to provide glimpses of initiatives arising from WFYR Executive sessions.



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