



# BRIDGES

PUBLISHED BY THE WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF YMCA RETIREES

## The Chalice Letter

### The Privilege of Servant Leadership

By your election, it has been my privilege to serve these past four years as your Chairman. I chose 'The Chalice Letter' as the name of my regular column to communicate with all of you who receive *Bridges*. I have always preferred the symbol of the chalice to hold in trust a more sacred meaning ascribed to a cause that encourages its members to seek wholeness of spirit, mind and body with God given gifts of life. Our God given gifts did not end with retirement.



Our world-wide fellowship is just a few weeks away from convening our 6<sup>th</sup> World Conference in conjunction with the 19<sup>th</sup> YMCA World Council. The Executive Committee of the World Alliance has appointed **Carlos Sanvee**, Secretary of the Africa Alliance, to become our Secretary General for the World Alliance in a smooth transition from **Johan Wilhem Eltvik**.

The WFYR Nominating Committee, chaired by **Kohei Yamada**, will be presenting a new slate of leadership. The presumptive nominee to become our new Chairman is **Phil Dwyer**, a career YMCA leader who has served ably on our Leadership Team the past four years and is our Conference Program Committee Chair in preparation for Chiang Mai.

WFYR is first a fellowship of faith among friends. Through Secours Speciaux, we stand by our colleagues who retired without adequate pension to meet urgent medical needs and end of life issues. This is our signature self-help initiative. We are indebted to our colleagues who serve on the World Alliance Secours Speciaux Committee chaired by **Bonnie Mairs**. The Secours Speciaux Fund in Geneva faces new challenges and we must step up to ensure the future security of The Fund.

WFYR worked closely with YMCA Alumni USA, the national fellowship of YMCA retirees in the USA, to strengthen oversight of the World Brotherhood Fund (WBF) since the death of **Harold C. Smith**. Harold was the beloved CEO of the YMCA Retirement Fund, who during his own retirement, applied his acute investment skills to triple the assets of WBF. A grant has been transmitted to Geneva this year to the Secours Speciaux Fund. His legacy has created the Harold C. Smith Foundation with start-up assets exceeding \$78 million to advance and promote Christian education and mission related initiatives including the YMCA. Friends of Jerusalem International YMCA was approved for one of its first grants.

During the 5<sup>th</sup> WFYR World Conference, we approved sponsorship for a regional reunion of Latin American and Caribbean retirees to be hosted in Montevideo 2016. **Jerry Prado Shaw** and **Prescott Johnson**, both former WFYR Chairs, collaborated with Latin American leadership to coordinate a very successful event. Surplus from this event was gifted to WFYR to underwrite travel subsidies in support of the World Conference in Chiang Mai as well as to develop Latin Net, an innovative chapter made up of Latin American and Caribbean retirees who now live in North America.

In collaboration with the Latin America and Caribbean Area YMCA, we were able to develop our first Global Retirement Initiative with a deliberate process that engaged the beneficiary, a legal advisor appointed by the local board and final approval of a mutual agreement by all parties. We now have a working model that can be duplicated where there is interest and active leadership of the National YMCA willing to perform the due diligence in collaboration with a local Association especially in Africa, Latin America, and/or South Asia.

We are all grateful for the continued leadership and passion **Len and Joyce Wilson** contribute to every edition of *Bridges*. Feedback from all of you has been very positive. We also appreciate the hard and timely work of all our translators as each edition circulates to constituents whose English is not their mother's tongue. And sincere thanks to the **Philadelphia Freedom Valley YMCA**, for their generous support in making the newsletter possible.

I shall cherish the memories of learning remarkable ways retired colleagues continue to serve others both through and outside the YMCA. We retired from active service with the YMCA, but we did not retire from servant leadership. Many examples of service fall under the category of helping others restore wholeness in their lives. This is the essential nature of our life's work, strengthening the wholeness of spirit, mind and body for all.

We will have a great time together in Chiang Mai as I turn the gavel over to **Phil Dwyer**. Following the example of **Prescott Johnson**, **Adrian Moody**, **Don Anderson** and **Jerry Prado Shaw**, I will respond to other roles to continue the advancement of the mission of WFYR. It has been my privilege to serve you as your chair.

*Norris Lineweaver*

WFYR Chair



# BRIDGES



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(If we missed your group or erred, please let us know.)

## THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITORS

Your editors have just returned from a “48 Hour” planning session with leaders from the YMCA Alumni Board and representatives from all seventeen chapters in the USA. We were privileged to inform them just how much WFYR is a perfect match for their expanding themes of CONNECT, TRAVEL AND SERVE. They were eager to learn more, and were very supportive of the potentials for WFYR’s global retirement initiatives (GRI). There is an opportunity during the Chiang Mai to discuss ways that WFYR members can expand contacts with members of WFYR traveling for pleasure or service in coming years.

**Jerry Prado Shaw** announces that the 63 WFYR attendees in Chiang Mai have accumulated more than 4,000 years of YMCA experiences . They represent 23 countries. This edition of *Bridges* provides photos and glimpses of why some of our attendees in Chiang Mai value the opportunity to attend. Many of our friends have plans for traveling before and after the event. Their contributions to this edition of *Bridges* provide for interesting reading.



In response to the recent request for pictures from Chiang Mai attendees, here is one of your editors joining 6000 persons protesting gun violence in the USA.

Your editors are looking forward to meeting many of the persons we have written about during our work with *Bridges* over the past twelve years. We plan to gather a variety of input and photos from Chiang Mai for the next edition of our newsletter. Staying with **Don and Sue Anderson** on both ends of our travel and traveling with Don and friends from Chiang Rai after the conference will make the trip even more memorable.

Words from **Norris Lineweaver** in his final Chalice Letter provide inspiration and confidence in our new leadership for the next four years. **Phil Dwyer** points out how important it becomes to add meaning and contributions to the brief dash between the dates on our lifetime.

*Len and Joyce Wilson*

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## WORLD FELLOWSHIP AFFILIATE NEWS

### Phil Dwyer, Nominee for WFYR Chair

My mother brought her middle child **Philip Dwyer** to a YMCA in 1959 at age 11 and I have been continuously engaged with the movement ever since – as a member, volunteer, part time employee, YMCA professional and now a retired volunteer and donor. My last paid job was President/CEO of the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA with eleven branches serving 75,000 people in a twenty-five town region. In July, I will be honored to become the 7<sup>th</sup> Chairman of WFYR.

As I think about my leadership goals, I am reminded about the story, “The Dash of Your Life,” by **Sherry Riter**. Adapted for YMCA staff, it goes like this. The dash that is located on a gravestone between the date of our birth and the date of our death is a powerful little line. It can represent a day or one hundred years. Regardless of the length of time it represents, the dash shouts, “I lived here! Don’t forget me, I was a YMCA Director!”

Of course, who you spend your dash with determines a lot of how you live your life. Our “calling” in life was to serve the YMCA which allowed us to spend time with a movement dedicated to making the world, and the people in it, better. We have lived a life of happiness and have surrounded ourselves with people who share the mission of the YMCA. If you are lucky, like myself, the colleagues you met and worked with around the world have added immense value to your life. But, let’s remind ourselves, we only get one dash, so be selective with whom we spend it with, and what we do with it. Seize every moment as if it were your last and drink in the sweetness of life. Make sure you live your dash so fully that it will still be shouting your success in serving others long after you’ve gone to rest. It isn’t just a line... It’s your life!

Well, my dash continues and I chose to spend it with WFYR working toward the fellowship we experienced during our careers; advocating for Secours Speciaux – to raise more money and extend its reach to a wider group of fellow retirees who need

support; and by expanding WFYR’s Global Retirement Initiative. These are three of my goals as your incoming chairman. I will need the help of WFYR members throughout the world.

I was asked to serve as Program Chair for the Sixth WFYR Conference and have dedicated a considerable amount of time serving in that role. I am happy to report that YMCA colleagues from around the world have said YES, when asked to serve in volunteer roles. My wife and I are active in our communities and will be busy until July 1<sup>st</sup> when we fly to Bangkok for a few days of rest and touring before heading to Chiang Mai. We will have dinner with colleagues from Latin America who will also be taking a rest stop in Bangkok.

My leadership role starts in earnest with a Friday dinner in Chiang Mai with the newly elected 2018 - 2022 WFYR Leadership Team. We will enjoy fellowship and talk about the next four years. On my return Debby and I will take our annual August vacation on Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire and then return home refreshed and ready to re-engage in our community and WFYR activities.

Let me end by adapting another quote, perhaps one of Ted Kennedy’s most memorable from his attempt at the USA Presidential nomination in 1980. A few months from now my role as WFYR chair begins. For all of us whose YMCA cares have been our concern, “the work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives, and the dream shall never die.” Let’s keep working on behalf of a YMCA cause that endures, and dream about service as joy, while we continue to make a difference during the remainder of the dash of our lives.



Phil Dwyer and his wife, Debby at the YMCA Sitzer Hall, Springfield, College

### New Secretary General for World YMCA



President of the World YMCA, **Peter Posner** OBE, announced the appointment of **Carlos Sanvee** as the next Secretary General, commencing 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019.

Carlos is currently General Secretary of the African Alliance of YMCAs (75%) and Special Advisor to the Secretary General for

the World YMCA (25%). He will succeed Johan Vilhelm Eltvik as Secretary General when Johan’s eight-year term concludes at

the end of 2018.

The announcement is the culmination of a 15 month process undertaken by the Search Committee on behalf of the World YMCA Executive Committee.

“After a thorough and rigorous process, our unanimous recommendation for the position was Carlos”, confirmed Peter. **“Congratulations Carlos, our next Secretary General! May God support you in your work for the World YMCA in the years to come.”**



## WORLD FELLOWSHIP AFFILIATE NEWS

### Looking Toward the 5th WFYR World Conference

#### Kohei and Marlene Yamada - Japan

We are from Japan after retiring from YMCA. The last work was in Hong Kong (Area Alliance Office of Asia Pacific) and we both stayed in Hong Kong for 6 and a half years enjoying the exciting city of Hong Kong.

My first work in YMCA was in 1975 at the Baltimore YMCA, USA. My study in University was Gerontology and I applied for the position at the YMCA to start



Marlene and Kohei Yamada

programs for Senior Citizens there. There I met Marlene studying music at Peabody Baltimore. We got married after coming back to Japan and I worked for Tokyo YMCA while Marlene was teaching English in Tokyo for a while until we had three children.

We moved to Utsunomiya City (120 km north of Tokyo) and started a first YMCA Nursing Home in Japan, maybe in the world in 1993. It was an exciting experience and now after retirement, we are still volunteering for the elderly staying in the Nursing Home.

I am now busy helping Y's Men movement in Japan as well as Y's Men International to promote good partnership between YMCA and Y's Men's Clubs in the world for its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022. Marlene is enjoying Choir groups in Japan.

This time, we plan to visit Bangkok before Chiang Mai meeting and also visit Chiang Rai after the World Council for a few days. Let's enjoy together .

#### Francis Asiema - Kenya

I was in the YMCA employment for 36 years up to June, 2005 when I retired. During my tour of employment, I was privileged to meet many people and made friends internationally. Throughout my years of service, YMCA became part of my family both nationally and internationally. I therefore look forward at the forth coming World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees conference as great opportunity for me to get connected to both active and retired friends within the YMCA international family.



Francis Asiema

I look forward to being reconnected to some of the people who were active in both my life in general and my line of work in serving people through the YMCA.

It will be my desire to get to know and meet new people for anticipated incredible amount of sharing various challenges of

retirement from YMCA with people from different geographical areas of the World with the purpose of getting motivation for various aspects of my life in retirement. It will be a great opportunity for me to be connect with my peers from different perspectives and views, learn from them, and make new relationships.

In conclusion, I look forward to the conference to allow me to discover new places or cities in Thailand and learn about its people and culture through the post conference trips and visits. I look forward to my participation in the conference to open an opportunity to a well-deserved holiday and possible medical tourism in Thailand in the future.

Finally, I most sincerely thank the sponsors and individual organizers of the World WFYR gathering for their financial support who made it possible for several YMCA retirees from Kenya and the rest of Africa to come over to Thailand to participate in this memorable conference. This was deeply appreciated.

#### Guenter Ozdyk - Germany

My life would have been different without the YMCA. I worked as a volunteer, was a member of many committees, chairman of our local YMCA, organized many events, was the leader of different groups and had the privilege to work as a volunteer to set up a strong partnership between my local YMCAs and a branch in Sierra Leone. Even during the war time in West Africa, I have been able to visit my friends. Being trained in computer science it was a highlight in my life to work in Kenya for the Africa Alliance of YMCA as the Executive Secretary .

So this is a wonderful opportunity to meet some of my friends from African YMCAs and get updated about the latest developments in their national movements.

Another goal is to understand if the African YMCAs are successful in strengthening the Youth as the most important factor for development.

I also would like to discuss and learn what other YMCAs are doing to work against these negative political trends towards hypocrisy and contempt for fundamental human rights?

This second goal comes with many questions; one important question for me is to understand how Christian brothers and sisters can support someone to be elected in a high position when this person at the same time is trampling on the most fundamental rights of others. What is the YMCA doing against all these developments and is the voice of the YMCA clear and loud enough to be heard in the public.

Due to time constraints I have no pre or post conference plans.



## WORLD FELLOWSHIP AFFILIATE NEWS

### Looking Toward the 5th WFYR World Conference

#### Mr. A.P. Jayanthakumar - Sri Lanka

As much as I cherish my memories whilst working with the YMCA-Sri Lanka, I look forward to attending the 19<sup>th</sup> World Council of YMCAs conference, to not only meet those that are young at heart as I am, but also to see their perspective in how WFYR could be developed both nationally and internationally.

This conference showcases the fact that we have a huge community. Therefore, I firmly believe that through God's grace, we could achieve greater heights by sharing the wealth of knowledge and experience gained at this event.



**A.P. Jayanthakumar**



**Dharmajothy Jayanthakumar**

I would like to conclude by saying that my journey does not end here but would embrace every opportunity God gives so generously, to uplift the lives of the body of retirees and keep the spirit of YMCA-retirees movement alive. My wife and I also wish to thank all who motivated and were instrumental in making us part of this conference.

#### Ellein and Michel Asfour - East Jerusalem

Greetings from Jerusalem to you and all friends .This is our photo and few lines about our trip.

Ellein and I are looking forward to join the World WFYR gathering in Chiang Mai next July to meet colleagues and to make new friends. To us this international event is a big YMCA family gathering which we are proud of and happy to join and be witness of the world YMCA discussions and new issues .

We are not planning any pre -or post-conference trips or visits , but we may use our last day Sunday the 15th of July for special activity together with friends. We are sure that Chiang Mai has many interesting places to go and discover.



**Ellein and Michel Asfour**

#### Jonathan Quayefio-Mexico - Ghana

I want to make new friends I have never met before. Also would like to interact with many people to learn more about how they are running their YMCAs in their various countries.

After the Conference I will stop at Addis Ababa for two days to tour facilities of the Ethiopia YMCA and visit to places of interest as this is my first visit to that country.



**Jonathan Quayefio-Mexico and grandchildren. L-R: Stephanie Irene, Jowan Dominic and Joachim Horst.**

#### James Thompson - United Kingdom

Because of the itinerant nature of my career in the Movement it has been a privilege to attend seven previous World Council Meetings. All have been challenging and inspiring. However 2014 at Estes Park was different. And that difference has spread to my own Area Alliance and my own National Council. Young people were accorded a leadership voice as never before and I want to be in Chiang Mai as these young voices are raised in confidence and dedication to the future of the YMCA.

As for the WFYR, there will be important matters to discuss, not least those of our brothers and sisters who will not be with us and who face poverty in retirement. However, there will be for me, as there will be for others, an opportunity to take the hand of those whose companionship in many a trying circumstance was beyond calculation.

And that leads me to the opportunity I will have to travel within Thailand and stand again at the graves of my dear friend Khun Lanjun Chairitana, former General Secretary of the Bangkok YMCA and a young World Alliance volunteer. Both saw the need and met it at great cost.



**James Thompson**



## WORLD FELLOWSHIP AFFILIATE NEWS

### Looking Toward the 5th WFYR World Conference

#### Prescott Johnson - USA

My connection with WFYR goes back to its development years in the late 80's and early 90's, with John O'Melia giving leadership to its founding. I served as second chairperson and coordinated the WFYR meetings at Estes Park and the Caribbean cruise, having served as chair for 7 1/2 years. My interest in attending the July meeting is to continue the opportunity to see former Latin American colleagues and students of mine during the years of 1962- 1972 as a fraternal secretary of the YMCA of the USA with the Latin American and Caribbean Confederation of YMCAs, with offices in Montevideo, Uruguay. My role there was as Asst. Director of The Instituto Tecnico, the YMCA training college for those preparing for a career in the YMCA in South and Central America as well as Mexico. In addition, I was a consultant to the YMCAs for programs of physical education, recreation, aquatics, and sports.



At this time I'm not planning on any additional trips in and around the Chiang Mai conference. Hasta pronto y buen viaje!

Paz y que se mantiene la fe,

#### Yukio Yamasaki - Japan



Yukio Yamasaki

I made early retirement from the Y when I was 55 years old, and became a clergyman of the United Church of Christ in Japan. I served at the Shimonoseki Maruyama Church in Shimonoseki, Japan for five years, and the Simpson UMC, Arvada, CO for five years, the Vancouver Japanese United Church, Vancouver, Canada for nine months, and the Japanese Church in KL, Malaysia for few months.

I was in a senior male choir until four years ago, and am still singing in the church choir at my current church.

I also became a member of the YMCA where I used to work, and a member of a Y's Men's Club, which relates to the Kobe YMCA.

I am a member of the JFYR which relates to WFYR, and I served as a vice chair for East Asia Area for six years.

#### Edgar Machado - Brazil

My dear friends and colleagues;

It is a good time to send some news in relation to our colleagues from Latin America and the Caribbean. During the last months I had the opportunity to be in contact with some of our colleagues from this part of the world. I've been in contact with Geruzes and Margarida Pinto in Piriapolis, (Uruguay), and had the opportunity to remember and celebrate our thoughts and exchange of ideas regarding our movement and WFYR.

Geruzes and Margarida are Brazilians currently living between Switzerland and Brazil; they always want to be in contact and involved with YMCA programs and its social and Christian spirit. Another moment of my life related to my association with WFYR has been the opportunity to participate in Montevideo in a fellowship gathering with our retiree colleagues from Uruguay. It was an agape gathering with exchange of information and experiences as retirees. Indeed it was a time of joy and plenty of possibilities to confront the new times. We talked about the encounter in Chiang Mai and we became highly enthusiastic with the possibility of being there. In Brazil, between Porto Alegre and Sao Paulo we had a very intense exchange of information regarding our own presence in Chiang Mai. Our colleagues from the State of Sao Paulo maintain various interesting encounters with our colleagues from the Brazilian Federation of YMCAs.

My personal desires are that the association brotherhood should give greater intertwining to the possibilities of changing our personal experiences, especially after our retirements.

With regard to me, I only have a round trip, with participation of all moments of our meeting. When I bought the ticket to travel, I forgot to leave a few moments to get to other places, and making changes with the airline (Ethiopian Airlines) was not possible.

#### Yukio Miyazaki - Japan

Our goals for the Chiang Mai gathering include reunion with friends who worked together in the Refugee and Rehabilitation work of the world alliance in the 1980s. We would also hope to share ideas and consideration with fellows. "How can we participate in the program such as the Global Citizenship Program undertaken by the World Alliance?"



Ms. & Mr. Mirei and Yukio Miyazaki

Our post-conference trip is not finalized.

#### Ai Lian (Irene) Tan - Malaysia

"I want to take this opportunity to meet the retired secretaries and share experiences. It will be a very memorable occasion for me indeed as it will be the first WFYR Conference and first World Council that I will be attending, and I am very excited!

I did not plan for any pre or post conference events but I will be delighted to show you Kuala Lumpur if you plan to visit Malaysia.

This is a photo of me (front row with glasses) at a YMCA camp for hearing impaired youths in Taipei in 2017."

I look forward to meeting you and other members of WFYR in Chiangmai!





## WORLD FELLOWSHIP AFFILIATE NEWS

### Looking Toward the 5th WFYR World Conference

#### Charles Mashemo Okewemba - Kenya

My name is Okwemba Charles Mashemo born in 1956 in a rural village of illiterate parents as a fifth child. Married to Rose with seven children, two boys, five girls, and now grandfather to 10 grand children, six boys and four girls.

After rewarding experiences while working at the Young Men's Christian Association in various positions for 22 years, the experience could not allow me sit idle. I was asked to join a community-based organization as a volunteer, serving orphans and vulnerable children, and after a short time they elected me as their chairman. We have served up to 9800 orphans in western province of Kenya. Kenyan President Hon. Mwai Kibaki noticed my contributions and awarded me a Head of State Commendation.

The credit goes to the YMCA who trained me in various fields at the community level. Currently the Organization has graduated into a local NGO and still retains my services as their volunteer chairman. It now serves orphans, vulnerable children, widows, and people living with HIV/AIDS with a vision of a Healthy and Self Sustained Community.

The majority of the orphans who hailed from vulnerable setups have now finished secondary education and some in university trainings are now assisting their siblings after their parents' death. **BRAVO BRAVO YMCA!**

My personal goal while in Chiang Mai is to join others in the world conference to learn more from retirees and current activities of the YMCA. I wish also to borrow more ideas on the service of humanity. I do not plan to have any pre- or post-conference trips or visits as I had no prior arrangements though I would have wished.

#### Rupert George - India and England

Having participated in two earlier WFYR Reunions and enriched by the proverbial YMCA fellowship, Beulah and I could not resist attending the Sixth Conference at Chiang Mai in July! Hopefully it will give us an opportunity to meet colleagues and their spouses we have met/known in the past. Further we look forward to meeting in person those with whom we have exchanged mails and/or have had telephone conversations. When we return, no doubt we will have added a few more friends to our list! We look forward to our visits to YMCAs in Yangon and Kolkatta as well.



**Charles Mashemo Okewemba**

#### Martha Prado and Jerry Prado-Shaw - USA

**Our goals by priority are as follow:**

Fellowship and renewed friendship with active and retired YMCA colleagues; Support and further the agenda of sensitizing active YMCA leadership for sustainable solutions regarding the existing conditions of unsecured retirement for fellow colleagues from around the world; To participate, rejoice and celebrate in this historic moment in the life our world YMCA movement with the appointment of our new World Alliance of YMCAs Secretary



**Martha Prado and Jerry Prado-Shaw in Valparaiso, Chile, 2015**

General, Carlos Sanvee, from Togo, Africa; To learn about the history, the people and culture of the region. Visit places of interest.

**Our pre and post program:** Prior to Chiang Mai we will stay for a few days with a group of fellow YMCA retirees visiting Bangkok, Thailand; After Chiang

Mai we will visit with other fellow YMCA retirees Ho Chin Min City (Vietnam); Singapore and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). Ending our trip in Seoul, South Korea.

#### Ricardo Marttini - Canada and Peru

I am 71 years of age, Peruvian by birth, and have resided in Canada since 1978. I have been married, for 22 years to Pamela Schneider, and have four children and seven grandchildren.

I served on the staff of the YMCA of Lima, Peru, from 1964-1976. I graduated from the Instituto Tecnico of the YMCA, and was YMCA Executive for Industrial Recreation and Camping.

In Canada I worked until retirement in 2006 as a logistics specialist. From 1986 until today I have an Martial Arts Academy.

My voluntary work is with (CMHA) Canadian Mental Health Association, (JC) Justice Initiatives, and (CHRA) Country Hills Association Program

My principal goal in attending the conference is to have the opportunity to meet with old colleagues and to learn about projects and programs of the YMCA around the world.

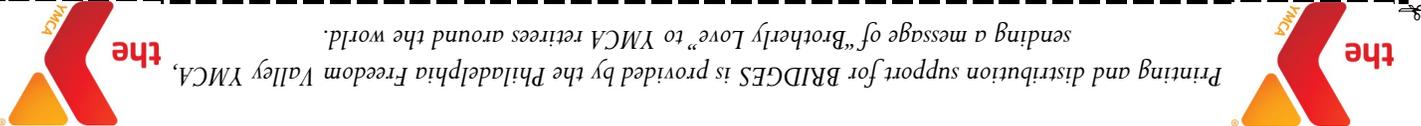
I will stay in Bangkok 4 days prior the conference (July 4-7) Unfortunately my wife will not be able to attend the conference due a previous commitments.



**Rupert and Beulah George**



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**BRIDGES IS FOR ALL WHO WISH TO RECEIVE IT**

*All who would like to receive BRIDGES will be able to, without a "subscription" fee. However many retirees from countries all around the world have sent a USD subscription remittance to support WFYR. Any who wish to make such a contribution may use this remittance form. Check should be made payable to WFYR.*

**TO: WFYR Communications Chair: Ken White, 46 Squirrel Road, Doylestown, PA 18901, USA.** "I wish to provide support for WFYR at USD \$7 per year \_\_\_\_\_, or \$18 per three years \_\_\_\_\_. Extra contribution to WFYR \$ \_\_\_\_\_ I want to RECEIVE each issue of BRIDGES, but I am not able to help financially at this time. \_\_\_\_\_

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