



# THE MIRROR



## FRASIER

### Monthly News of Frasier Meadows Retirement Community

Volume 61

February 2022

## Shelter from the Marshall / Louisville Fire

Luckily, Colleen Ryan Mallon, Frasier VP of Marketing & Advancement, had visited the Balfour Retirement Community in Louisville the day before the catastrophic Marshall fire. As the wind-driven conflagration threatened more emergency evacuations, Colleen texted Carrie Gray, Director of Sales and offered the Canyons Center at Frasier. "Tim was in a meeting, and I knew he would support the offer. That's the kind of place Frasier is." The fire situation and our guests' needs changed rapidly as the evening passed. Balfour Assisted Living residents, followed by Balfour staff, continued to show up through the evening. Our team realized they would need more Frasier staff. The call went out, and everyone who could come, did.



Anticipating our guests would need to rest, Housekeeping brought foldaway beds and inflatable mattresses to the Canyon Center. Dining brought snacks and water and later served dinner.

Eventually, it became clear that the nearly 30 guests would have to stay the night.

An all-Frasier call went out asking for inflatable mattresses, and as Tim

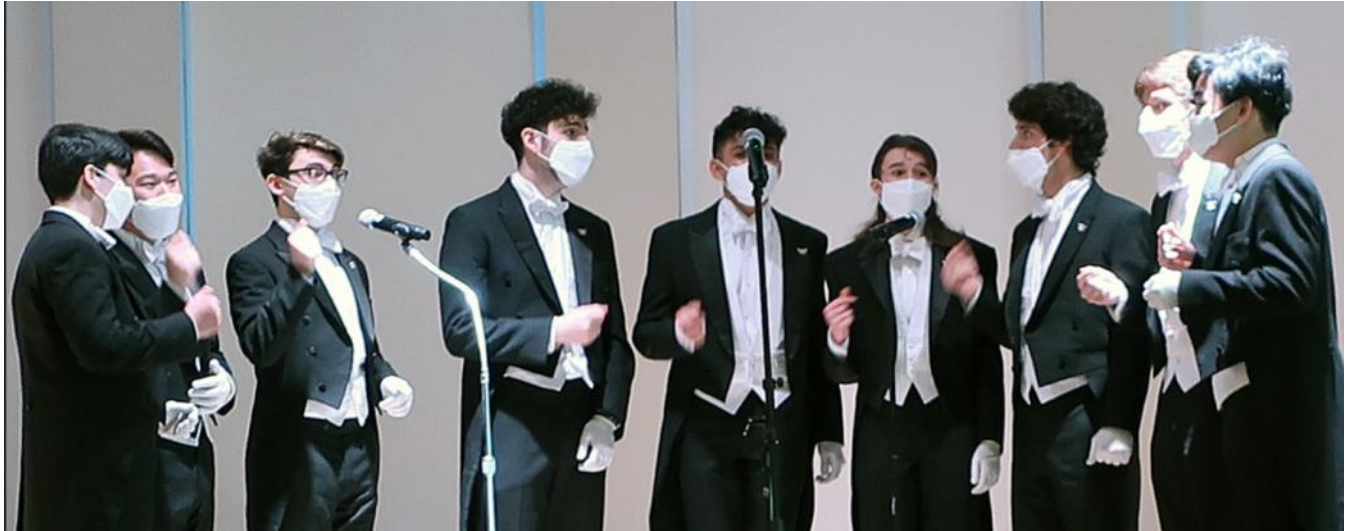
Johnson put it, "A parade of residents with blowup mattresses, sleeping bags, and blanket rolls appeared."

Our guests stayed for the night, breakfast, and even lunch the next day then gradually returned to Balfour, grateful for the shelter.

Thanks to our staff who worked on their holiday, we were able to hold a piano concert in the Canyons Center by the following evening.

*Marc Sobel*

## Yale Wiffenpoofs



As a thank you for the emergency accommodations Balfour provided a concert from the Wiffenpoofs. Every year, fourteen senior Yale students are selected to be in the Whiffenpoofs, the world's oldest and best-known collegiate cappella group. Founded in 1909, the "Whiffs" began as a senior quartet that met weekly at Mory's Temple Bar. Today, the group has become one of Yale's most celebrated traditions. Singing a mixture of old Yale tunes, jazz standards, and other hits from across the decades, the Whiffenpoofs perform more than 200 concerts across six continents each year.



A view of the wind driven Marshall fire from Frasier Meadows about 3+ miles away that burned 1,000+ homes and structures and caused over 1 billion \$ in damage.



## February Birthdays

### INDEPENDENT LIVING

Jere Beasley .....	1
Mary Ann Ganey .....	1
Prudence "Prue" Scarritt ..	3
Maryann Balassa .....	4
Mila Kalish .....	5
Joni Marquardt .....	7
Linda Yarr .....	8
Margaret "Mitch" Stahl ....	9
Leslie Lomas .....	10
Reva Greenburg .....	12
Shirley Mosburg .....	12
Marion Ramirez .....	13
Joan Peters .....	14
Judy Tucker .....	14
Nan Phiher .....	15
Yvonne Kristy .....	16
Dorothy "Dory" Meier .....	16
Fred Ramirez .....	19
William "Bill" Wood .....	19
Glenn English .....	22
Susan Bogatin .....	23
Kenneth "Ken" Fernalld ...	23
Stan Huntting .....	23
Janet Klemperer .....	23
Inge Sargent .....	23
Jan Carlson .....	26
Marilyn Krysl .....	26
Judy Rothe .....	26
Julianne "Jill" Anderson ..	27

### ASSISTED LIVING

Michael Yanowitch .....	1
Margaret Baker .....	7
Bette Hadler .....	18

## Dining Services:

by Janet Klemperer



January has been a month of coping with labor shortages throughout the Frasier campus. For example, on January 21st, a total of 18 Frasier employees were absent. Dining Services has been particularly hard hit. Even so, the staff is trying to make sure that we are well taken care of, and we are grateful for their.

Menus have been adjusted from day to day, and the opening of North Fork dining room for breakfast and lunch has worked well. One change has been the outsourcing of certain foods to Mayme's Restaurant to make the deli shelves more varied and efficient. The commercial company Jack and Olive is now supplying the takeout salads, sandwiches, and parfaits in Mayme's; other food remains the same – snacks, several frozen entrees, baked goods, and frozen desserts. Mayme's is still open seven days/week from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Dining Services has a goal of being as ecological as possible. The "green box" system for takeout food was introduced a few years ago, to prevent the expense of compostable containers that are still used frequently and are expensive. Staff is investigating the possibility of using the large green boxes, when we have a big enough supply, for lunch and dinner delivery to our apartment shelves. Details are still being worked out to make this possible.

Charlotte Haravey .....	20
Bill Bradley .....	22

### SUMMIT CARE CENTER

Joyce Leiper .....	16
Roberta Nalley .....	17

## Frasier Rings in the New Year in Style

**H**ow does the Frasier community welcome the new year after having gone through another year of pandemonious pandemic and having witnessed neighbors and friends losing their homes in an indescribably destructive conflagration? With somewhat subdued humor, but with morale-building style!

Staff had decorated the Eldorado venue beautifully: tables were set up; there were crazy hats; there were signs irreverently maligning the year 2021; right near the door were Tim Johnson and Stephanie Lynn welcoming folks with libations; and not to forget, there were tables laden with not “just” desserts, but with a slew of delectable selections not lacking takers.

But the centerpiece was the band *After Midnight*, a six-member combo that uncannily (and intentionally) resembled the Benny Goodman orchestra of renown and other Big Band era groups that this audience was very familiar with. This excellent jazz group has performed to great acclaim regionally and nationally. Its offerings were joyous, entertaining, nostalgic, and infectious, so much so that several small groups were moved to dancing on the sidelines.

If this were not a “senior” home, one might have seen continued dancing well after midnight, (but the band might have left by then).



### *In Loving Memory*



#### *Lyal Quinby*

*Born* ..... Oct. 2, 1931  
*Entered F.M.R.C.* ... Aug. 1, 2008  
*Died* ..... Jan. 2, 2022

#### *Muriel Woods*

*Born* ..... April 7, 1938  
*Entered F.M.R.C.* ... Mar. 29, 2009  
*Died* ..... Jan. 5, 2022

#### *Marjorie Worth*

*Born* ..... July 13, 1924  
*Entered F.M.R.C.* ... Jan. 10, 1996  
*Died* ..... Jan. 7, 2022

Despite everything, Frasier staff and employees and residents managed to welcome 2022 in a wonderful way. To all a Happy New Year, and a better one at that.

*Alex Herzog*

## Musings

by Anne Bliss



### February Doldrums

**A**h, February! The “dead of winter,” accompanied by “brown days,” is with us, as spring’s green grass blades have yet to emerge from below the drab, dead lawn of last year. For many, February is a dreary month: cold, maybe snow and ice abound, and hibernation seems like a good animal thing to do, even for us humans.

But we all know meteorologists are masters of *prospicience*, and they serve as good models for those who want to move toward spring as quickly as possible. This word originates from the Latin word “*prōspicientia*,” which describes both the act of looking forward and divine providence. Pronounced *pros-PIH-sheens-sha*, It originated in 15<sup>th</sup> century Latin, and indicated the action of looking ahead under guidance of the divine.

As we muddle our way through this month, we may want to consider that some among us are creative, doing good work, perhaps sensing guidance from above, and feeling the *prospicience* that our efforts will have some good effects, or even change the world in some beneficial way.

If nothing else, we can imitate the weatherman/woman who studies and uses technology to make predictions or suggest the emergence of spring. Or we might be like my former neighbor who looked at the sky and mountains every morning and had the uncanniest sense of *prospicience* in predicting the weather. She always said, “Just look at the clouds; they’ll tell you what’s going to happen.” And they usually did. So, look up!

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THE MIRROR staff will meet at 3:00 p.m.  
 on Monday, February 7th to plan the March  
 issue.

## Town Hall Meeting on Joined Neighborhoods

A virtual Town Hall meeting on Joined Neighborhoods, the first since 2019, was held on 12 January 2022. Seventy-nine households critiqued the Joined Neighborhood structure of governance that has been in effect during the Prairies move-in and the COVID pandemic. Jim Wolf, Resident Council president, facilitated the meeting, calling for constructive commentary.

The basic concept of Joined Neighborhoods (JNs), with its purpose of social integration of all of Frasier's independent living areas in addition to governance, seems to be working well in a majority of the JNs. Social integration fosters the sense of a Frasier-wide community. JNs that had organized social events appeared to be functioning more effectively and having more fun than those that had not. Examples of those social gatherings include lunches, cookie exchanges, BYO dinners, holiday parties, bocce ball games, and pizza parties.

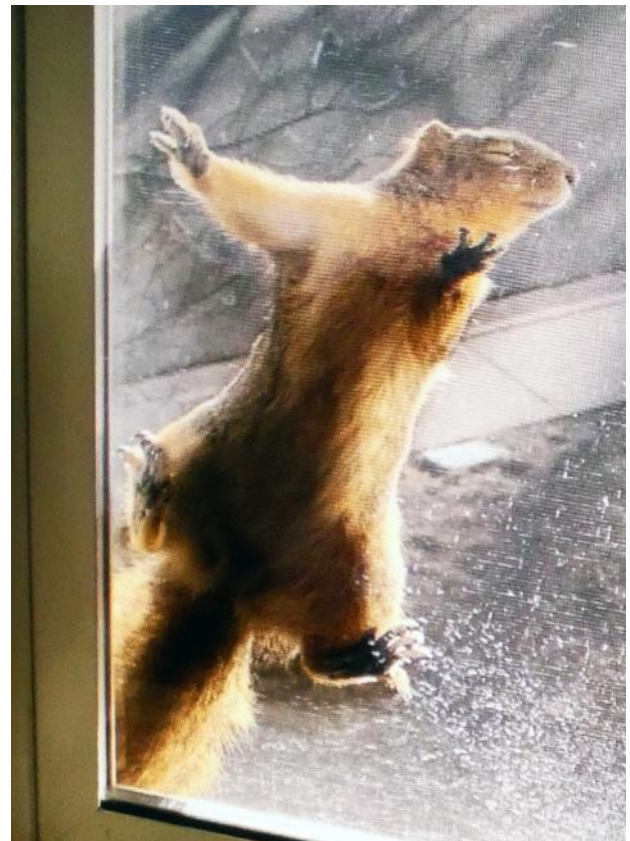
An ad hoc group (Marc Sobel, Marky Lloyd, Ron Forthofer, and Barbara Farhar) has looked into "best practices" for JN leadership. By interviewing several officers, the group has developed four lists detailing effective approaches for JN meetings including agenda preparation, speakers, and social events. These topics will continue to be refined for recruitment and education of JN officers.

Suggestions for change included merging one JN with another; polling all residents on every issue; improving communications for new residents; getting direct feedback from administration on issues residents have raised; increasing the length of JN meetings to get everything done; changing to "stacks" or floors; having an occasional building-focused meeting; and asking residents to take more responsibility to un-

derstand the system and how things work, rather than trying to circumvent it.

The Executive Committee (Jim Wolf, Barbara Farhar, Anne Lindsey, and Janet Brewer, two Advisory Committee chairs (JoAnn Joselyn, Carolyn LeSage), two JN leaders (John Harmon, Marc Sobel), and the chair of the by-laws committee, Ed Sanders, will consider the comments from the Town Hall and those sent to the Resident Council. This committee will send recommendations to the by-laws committee, who will prepare changes to the Resident Council by-laws as appropriate. By-laws changes must be approved by Resident Council, and then ratified by the Joint Neighborhoods before they go into effect.

*Barbara Farhar*



A wind-driven squirrel— holding on !

## Recycling

Frasier's resident recycle team will be adding another collection item to our recycling efforts — **ReUSE for UPS!** Much of the packaging we receive can be re-used by UPS, which is happy to take our plastic envelopes, Styrofoam peanuts, and bubble wrap! Signs and samples and a separate collection crate have been added to our recycle rooms to help identify the specific items that can be re-used.



Kay Forsythe (*right*) is chair of our recycling efforts. Sue Middleton and Trice Morrow (*left*) are supervising this project.

## FACETS 2022 Needs YOU!

Frasier's FACETS 2021 arts and literary journal was a huge success, with a variety of articles, poems and stories, arts and crafts from staff and residents. In preparation for FACETS 2022, residents and staff are invited to volunteer for the new editorial team. We're seeking four new editors and two staff members to read and view entries and choose works to be published, copy editing as we go. The editorial team meets once a month until the May 31st deadline, when we will meet more often to choose content. You need not be an expert to join the team.

To volunteer, please send a short message by February 15 telling why you want to join the editorial team to

[FRASIERFACETS2022@gmail.com](mailto:FRASIERFACETS2022@gmail.com).

*Submission guidelines for content for FACETS 2022 will be forthcoming.*

FACETS 2022 co-editors,  
Anne Bliss and Nancy Tilly



This cart contains items collected from just the Prairies buildings from just one week.



## A Surprising New Year's Piano Recital

**J**ean Browne is a renowned pianist and composer. She was introduced by resident Bill Rawsky who heard of her interest in of-



fering a piano recital during her visit to Boulder friends. She took to the Eldorado Canyon stage for her afternoon performance consisting of short classical favorites by Bach, Listz, Brahms, and Chopin. Inserted between each of the classical pieces were compositions of her own. These pieces had such titles as *Ocean of Tears*, *Fugue in D minor*, and *Life Can Be Odd*. These compositions came from Browne's own life experiences.

She chose to play the — McIntosh piano, donated to Frasier by resident Dick McIntosh. That piano was built by Steinway in 1895 and rebuilt in the mid two-thousands. It provided a rich and sonorous sound for Browne's skillful and sensitive playing. The audience filled the available seats. For each piece, and at the end of her performance, Brown received enthusiastic applause. Performance over, she descended from the stage and spoke happily with many of the admiring audience.

*Kevin Bunnell*

## Welcome to the Lunar New Year of the TIGER!

**F**ebruary 1 is the date to celebrate the Lunar New Year (often called the Chinese New Year) in 2022. The Tiger is the third animal in the Chinese 12-animal zodiac, and



years of the Tiger include 2022, 2010, 1998, 1986, 1974, 1962, 1950, 1938, 1926...at the rate of one animal per year. In 2022, New Year celebrations begin on February 1 and end on February 15 with the Lantern Festival. Those born in the year of the Tiger tend to be highly competitive and recognized for ambition and courage but are also generous. They want to win but are honest and want justice.

*Anne Bliss*



## 2022 Kickoff Display

**F**rasier's first 2022 entry display cases took residents on a trip down memory lane. Thanks to the extensive collection of Elvis memorabilia belonging to resident Stephanie Wrotny, viewing the cases transported viewers back to junior or senior high school days when memories were made of music, dancing and awareness of the opposite sex. Elvis played a large role with his unforgettable music!



Growing up in Denver, Stephanie was captivated by Elvis after a Junior High age visit with a girlfriend to see Elvis perform with the Louisiana Hayride in the Denver Coliseum. From that time forward the girls would attend movies as screaming fans. The girlfriend became an "airline stewardess" and eventually met Elvis. Stephanie never met him but began collecting Elvis memorabilia via purchases or gifts because "it makes me happy."

Years later she took an Elvis Cruise down the Mississippi where some of his former employees gave talks about Elvis. They stopped at many Elvis sites and even attended the candlelight vigil at Graceland on the anniversary of his death. Look for a candle and program in the display. Stephanie has been to Graceland twice and now has an "Elvis Room" at her Frasier apartment.

She was most willing to share her collection in Frasier's entry display cases enhanced by Rachel Dritlein's (Dining Services) life-sized Elvis cutout. The display takes the viewer in many directions. In a party theme you find a tablecloth, napkins, salt and pepper shakers, dish towels, guitar confetti and the cookbook, "Are You Hungry Tonight?," with Elvis' favorite recipes. Gift ideas include candy boxes, Matryoshka style nesting dolls, puzzles, playing cards, an Elvis Mr. Potato Head and more. There are books and newspapers announcing Elvis' death, stamps, lunchboxes, keyrings, and an umbrella. There is even a tiny period TV showing Elvis, a Snow Globe with Elvis, and an Elvis PEZ candy dispenser. Standing in front of the cases visitors might imagine the familiar music in their heads.

Stephanie even used her collection as a teaching tool with her Louisville class in a unit about "Hobbies." She shared with the students that through her hobby she learned that being famous is hard because of the loss of privacy and that you must be very careful with drugs. Don't miss this nostalgic exhibit on view until mid-February.

*Marion Ramirez*

## January's Community Conversations

**A**t this month's meeting, Michelle McParland warned that the COVID Omicron variant is highly contagious; we were urged to use extreme caution outside of Frasier. Staff infections, especially in Summit, have increased. Booster shots were given to many employees. Omicron restrictions also necessitated changing the scheduled Frasier Board retreat to a series of virtual meetings.

In the wake of the destructive Marshall fire, residents raised questions about possible evacuation plans for Frasier. A separate meeting is planned to address all of Frasier's emergency procedures.

The budget process for the next fiscal year has begun. Departments are assessing their staffing and materials needs in light of supply issues, inflation, and difficulty attracting and retaining workers. The third "Numbers with Nikki" meeting February 11th will give us an initial assessment of Frasier's financial position.

In marketing news, Colleen Mallon reported that Frasier had 25 move-ins in the last six months, with nine more scheduled early this year. We are currently fully occupied in independent living, and the waitlist has slightly increased to 394 households. A new survey regarding the policy on pet ownership is planned.

Several residents pointed out deficiencies in directions for visitors and signage within Frasier. Action is promised.

*Charlie Anderson (109)*

## Human Trafficking

**H**uman Trafficking is a very old crime. It is also a very current crime. Kara Napolitano, from the Denver non-profit Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking spoke with urgency. It is happening now. It is happening here. Some may think trafficking is limited to illegal trade in Asian sex-workers or captive employees on shrimp-harvesting ships sailing far-off seas. It is also in



Colorado, in Denver, even in Boulder. Human Trafficking is exploitation for labor (including sex workers) through coercion. The law defines trafficking as commercial sex of any sort by a person under 18 as well as labor (including sex) and crime performed at any age under conditions of force, fraud, or coercion.

Poverty, homelessness, illegal immigration status, illiteracy, youthfulness: any condition that creates an imbalance of power fosters trafficking. Available drugs and/or alcohol increase the risk as does the disruption of social patterns and social services. Locally, fluctuations in immigration and the COVID epidemic have increased trafficking. Unexplained injuries, lack of ID, request for payment in cash, malnourishment, inability to speak for themselves, inconsistency in story: all are red-flag-warnings that a person of low status is being taken advantage of. We were advised to contact the HOT LINE for reporting trafficking tips: 866-455-5075 in suspected cases.

Kara urged those who want to get involved as a volunteer or for more information to contact her at [Kara@combathumantrafficking.org](mailto:Kara@combathumantrafficking.org) or go to the web site

[www.combathumantrafficking.org](http://www.combathumantrafficking.org).

*Louise Bradley*

## Cooper's Hawks

A Cooper's Hawk has moved into the area around Frasier's campus. It is quite different from the red-tailed hawks we are more used to seeing. Cooper's Hawks are medium-



sized (about crow size) with short, rounded wings that enable them to fly quickly even through dense forests as they chase prey. These hawks have noticeably longer tails than the red-tailed hawks and the tails are barred gray and black. Unfortunately,

birds, preferably medium-sized birds like the robin, are the favorite food of the Cooper's Hawk. While originally these hawks were found mostly in forested areas, backyard bird feeders have helped them adapt to urban living. In addition to birds, Cooper's Hawk will eat small mammals including ground squirrels.

*Bev Postmus*

## Manzanitas Bloom for Christmas and for Valentine's Day

Just before Christmas, the Panchito manzanitas in the Prairies Courtyard bloomed. Guess they didn't read the Plantselect website



that says these evergreens flower in early spring. The tiny, white bell-shaped

flowers tipped with pink dangle below oval leathery green leaves on reddish stems. Once established, this low-growing shrub in the Heath family, produces red berries that, perhaps, led to the Spanish name, Manzanita, meaning "little apple." Native to the Uncompaghe Plateau in western Colorado, Panchito manzanita (*Arctostaphylos coloradoensis*) is a natural hybrid of kinnikinnick and greenleaf manzanita. It's well adapted to a dry climate and fluctuating temperatures. Look for them in all the Frasier courtyards where 170 plants give us winter color...plus unexpected spring-in-winter flowers.

*Carol Cushman*

## Tiny Timely Visitors

Wintertime visitors to Frasier have been the chickadee and siskin. These active birds move nervously and acrobatically as they search for food, including seeds and overwintering spiders and insects.



Chickadee



Pine Siskin

The Black-Capped Chickadee of the Paridae family has a complete black crown enclosing the eye to bill. Pine Siskin, family Fringillidae, is nomadic and associated with mixed forests. It is smaller than a common House Finch, and like finches is covered with striping on its chest. If you're close, you might see yellow in the wing stripes and notice the notched tail.

*Janet Chu*

## Frasier's Women's Clothes Closet Has Moved

The new location is still on the Garden level, but further south just before the turn to enter the South wing. The new space is much smaller. Hence, two thirds of the store's stock had to be moved out but GOOD NEWS - all that clothing has been donated to victims of the great Marshall fire.



Marcia and Pat moving new items in

The new space has been transformed. Some of the walls were white and, for interest, some are now aqua. A space that was a rest room has been converted into a private dressing room. A new shelf built by Warren Underwood will display jewelry. The entrance door is mostly glass, inviting shoppers to come in and have a look.

Opening day for the new Clothes Closet will be Monday, February 14<sup>th</sup> and then every Monday from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

*Kevin Bunnell*

## New Medical Loan Closet — Sale Items

Currently we have one "Scooter" priced at \$200 (it is small and steers like a bicycle); a new one would cost about \$1500. We also have a larger vehicle steered with a "joy stick". It has new batteries but is somewhat shop-worn. A new one would cost around \$3000 but our price is set at \$300.

Proceeds from sale of these items go to the Resident Council— net of repair costs.

Interested? Call me at 8233 or cell 720-333-3807.

*Kevin Bunnell*



The Boulder Star  
as seen from the Hilltop room

# Spiritual Care at Frasier

**F**rasier cares for its community in so many ways. There is a well-staffed and equipped Wellness Center to cater to our fitness-conscious residents. Our Dining team seeks to provide tasty meals; Community Life keeps us entertained and occupied. Our grounds and buildings are pleasing; we enjoy a library, brewery and more. What about Spiritual Care which has been central to Frasier since its founding in 1960 as a Retirement Community

of the Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church?

Now that Frasier has evolved to an independent not-for-profit organization with a diverse resident population, Spiritual Care provides an inter-cultural approach to supporting residents, families and staff in coping with emotional and spiritual needs. Under the capable guidance of the Rev. Shawn Fawson, Director of Spiritual Care and Rev. Karen Howe, the Frasier community has access to education and guidance in these facets of life with a commitment to social justice, cultural humility, inclusiveness and religious diversity.



Rev. Shawn Foster

There are interfaith opportunities for worship, celebration, learning and reflection with weekly vespers and meditation, monthly Catholic Mass and Shabbat services, and multi-faith holiday services. Our chaplains devote approxi-

mately 60 hours each month to One-on-One Spiritual care visits where topics such as loneliness, loss of autonomy, spiritual journey, discovering a new purpose, and more, may be addressed. Shawn and/or Karen also attend deaths which numbered 22 since mid-July of 2021, and which often include family meetings, anticipatory grief, and bereavement support.

There is more! Are you aware that every first Tuesday there is a 2:00 p.m. "Taizé" meditative service in the Eldorado Room? On Wednesdays at 9am there is "Meditation" in the Assembly Room. Also, on Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m. in the North Peaks Community Room, there is an ongoing Book Study of *Faith after Doubt*. On Thursdays at 1:30 in the Mountain Vista Room there is a "Navigating Grief" discussion group.

Indeed, Spiritual Care work is extremely important to the multi-faceted care Frasier offers to its community!

*Marion Ramirez*



Digging in the snow for lunch

## More Frasier Response to the Marshall Fire

Residents were relieved to hear that no staff lost their homes in the fire. However, Tim Johnson reported that a Board of Trustees member and Frasier's lawyer did lose their homes. Several staff members had to evacuate for several days, and Frasier temporarily housed three staff who needed a place to stay. Amazingly, two families on our waiting list, who lost their homes in the fire, will be able to move in soon. Frasier will then be fully occupied until new vacancies occur.

Frasier housed evacuated seniors from Balfour (see pg. 1), but our residents wanted to do more. Of course, individuals reached out to family and friends. But in addition, a clothing drive was held for one week in the Canyon's center, and a steady stream of residents shared their things. The Clothes Closet also donated several boxes and bags of clothing. As a result, our big van was packed full of donations three-times over. Omid Dolati and Ty Tobin took two large loads to Broomfield to American Moving and Storage for further distribution. Black Belly restaurant in Boulder collected warm coats, gloves, and boots so Omid and Ty sorted and delivered those. Residents still wishing to help can visit [www.coloradogives.org](http://www.coloradogives.org) to make a monetary donation. Sister Carmen is also accepting donations of gift cards.

*Angie Twist and Jo Ann Joselyn*

## Wellness News: Meet Ramiro Rivera

Ramiro brings both energy and expertise to our Wellness Center. Originally from Chicago, Ramiro attended the University of Mary in Bismarck, ND, on a soccer scholarship. There he received excellent training in exercise physiology, and after graduating he passed a difficult exam to become certified by the American College of Sports Medicine. Before coming to Frasier, Ramiro did one-on-one training with athletes. His schedule at Frasier is impressive — six different classes per week (most meeting 2 or 3 times each week) plus 15 one-on-one sessions every week.

He was recently certified to teach Floor Pilates. Ramiro wasn't able to say which class he most enjoys teaching. What he really finds



satisfying is being able to help participants in any class develop the proper form for an exercise so the exercise can be done without pain. What he finds challenging is adapting an exercise to accommodate the physical ability or limitations of an individual. In the past, Ramiro was into soccer and Olympic weightlifting. He now spends his free time mountain biking and appreciates the opportunities that Colorado offers.

*Bev Postmus*

## Valentines: Love, Hearts, and CHERUBS!

**C**herubs, ah, sweet baby angels with bows and arrows. But, in this season of love and heart-shaped pleas to "BE MINE, VALENTINE," let's reconsider Cupids.

These "angels" arose in Middle Eastern mythologies and monotheistic religions as God's



"Cherub" on a Neo-Assyrian seal, c. 1,000–612 BC

emissaries. Babylonians knew *karābu* as "propitious" and caring. The Hebrews associated them with Assyrian *kāribu*, beings that interceded with gods on behalf of humans. Ezekiel wrote of cherubs: men with four faces...man, lion, ox, and eagle... representing domains of God's rule. Ezekiel's cherubs had four wings, human hands,

straight legs, and calf-feet, and they could move like lightning.

Early Islam refers to them in the Quran as *Muqarraboon*, one of multiple classes of God's angels. In fifth century, Christian *angelology*, cherubim belong to the second highest angelic order with Seraphim who had "burning love to God" and the militant Archangels. By the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Thomas Aquinas wrote of knowledgeable cherubs, and Christian artists painted little winged boys carrying bows and arrows. Jewish tracts claim cherubs as Garden of Eden guards, thus their little weapons.

So, what happened? Cherubs feature in every monotheistic religion, but not in Greek,

Scandinavian, Indian or Chinese mythologies or religions. As God's messengers, how did they become associated with valentines? Is love heavenly? Do hearts belong to God? How did these formerly lightning-fast winged men, currently baby boys, get involved? Valentine supposedly pricked a leaf and sent a love message; maybe that has something to do with shooting arrows? It's a mystery to me! But Happy Valentine's Day, regardless!



Modern Valentine's Day Cupids/ Cherubs

*Anne Bliss*



*Eat fast while that tall coyote doesn't see us.*

## The Pandemic: Uncertainty and Hope

Resident Curt Eshelman gave another of his detailed presentations about the pandemic. There has been a huge increase of new cases due to the Omicron variant although the numbers are now beginning to fall rapidly from the January peak. Hospitalizations are higher than ever, but the number of deaths and severe cases are fewer. We still need to be very careful.

- Most of the talk focused on future uncertainties and hopes.
- What don't we know? The origin of Omicron? With so many mutations, an intermediate mouse population probably harbored a human strain for a while before re-infecting humanity.
- How many cases? The rapid fall in cases may not continue to the low level seen elsewhere.
- How many people must be immune for "herd immunity" to be effective? The estimate was 65%, now 95%?
- How effective are current vaccines against Omicron? Moderately so against severe cases, especially with a first or second booster, but there are many breakthrough cases.
- Do we need a new vaccine specifically for Omicron? Yes, it's in the works, but we may need more versions as new variants emerge.
- When will Paxlovid, Pfizer's oral "cure" for early cases be ready, how much additional protection will it provide, and how can we get it? It is about as effective as being vaccinated and

boosted, but will it help those who already have been?

Data are hard to find, so Curt recommends we contact our doctors to arrange a plan before symptoms appear. Do we need a new version of the at-home test?

The hope for the future is that COVID will change from a pandemic to a widespread and mild endemic disease. This result depends on herd immunity to make the number of cases decrease dramatically, and also that the disease will become relatively mild. Curt's hopeful prediction is that the pandemic will be over this spring. No masks, no closures, no distancing. Museums, restaurants, and travel will resume.

Reasons exist why these results may or may not happen: there will be widespread immunity by infection or vaccination. Also, the necessary population immunity, cross-variant immunity, and immunity duration are not well known. The rapid decline of cases might not continue. New variants could affect everything. New vaccines and treatments may be delayed or ineffective. Several variables must combine for the transition to endemic to occur. Curt repeatedly emphasized that the pandemic is still on, and we should keep using all precautions for now.

*Jeff Grove*