



Winter 2021

Eastern Star Masonic

Retirement Campus

Spotlight

2445 South Quebec St
Denver, CO 80231-9924
303-756-9489



Spotlight on the Board

Being a transplant to Colorado, I did not know about the Robert Russell Eastern Star Masonic Home in Denver until I became a member of Eastern Star in 1986. I have watched the home grow and become a showplace for members of either Eastern Star and Masons.

It is a place where residents are treated with respect. The workers enjoy coming to work.

My goal as a member of the Board of Trustees (BOT) is to maintain high standards and keep improving the living conditions for residents. COVID-19 has presented many challenges but the staff has met them. Their efforts kept residents safe and healthy.

When I first became aware of the home, there was just the Robert Russell building with a wing that housed the Chapel. The Grand Chapter Office was in the basement.

Then the Star Vista Village was built. About this time, I was elected a member of the House of Delegates (HOD) from Centennial Chapter. I reported back to the chapter how the campus was improving.

When the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Colorado joined with the Grand Chapter of Colorado, OES, the name was changed to Eastern

Star Masonic Retirement Campus (ESMRC). The BOT hired a management company. The Mary Barry Building was built with assisted living rooms, a new dining room, and a memory care neighborhood.



During my year as Worthy Grand Patron (2014–2015), Colorado Grand Chapter, OES raised money for the Memory Care occupational stations that provided residents tools or items related to things in their past.

I was placed on the Board of Trustees by Grand Master Vern Turner, one of the last appointed by the Masons and Eastern Star. Selecting members of the BOT is no longer done by Eastern Star. The Grand Lodge was changed to protect both organizations. Financially, the BOT is now elected from a pool of applicants. The HOD has representatives from each chapter, lodge, and Star Vista Village.

You can be a part of this organization by being on the HOD, or submitting an application to be a member of the Board of Trustees. The application can be found on the website.

– Jim Jarvis
President, Board of Trustees

Eastern Star Masonic Retirement Campus: 303-756-9489

2445 South Quebec Street, Denver, CO 80231-9924

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Spotlight is printed by Publication Printers corp., 2001 S. Platte River Dr.

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New year — New beginning

I am looking forward to 2021 and new beginnings for Eastern Star residents, families, friends, and care providers. We were excited to have our first COVID-19 vaccination clinic on Jan. 21. Residents and staff got the first dosage of the vaccine to stop the spread of this vicious virus that has impacted our entire world.

After receiving the second dose of the vaccine, I hope to return the campus to some normalcy. Without question, it will continue to be important to wear masks, social distance, and maintain good personal hygiene and infection control practices to keep everyone safe. I anticipate it will be some time before we will be past the need to take precautions to keep the virus in check — not just in our community but in the nation as well.

I believe it will be the end of 2021 when the majority of the U.S. population is vaccinated, and there is no more threat of COVID-19. Life will return to something resembling normal — what it was prior to this awful time in our history.

I must, and will always continue to, thank the entire ESMRC staff for their terrific and hard work during this pandemic. Their dedication to providing quality care, and their continuous commitment to this community and the residents, is a true testament to how special this Eastern Star Masonic community is.

No community is an island. We have had the good fortune of many supporters who continue to contribute to our ongoing success during this very trying time. The financial donations and special donations of food and meals for staff has been truly overwhelming. It was appreciated during this very trying time. Gifts for residents and heartfelt words of care, concern and encouragement have truly been overwhelming — a beacon of light for the community.

Many of the residents' families and friends have praised the quality of care their loved ones receive at ESMRC. These words of recognition

have been great morale boosters for the entire staff.

My hope is that by the end of summer 2021, maybe even sooner, we will be able to open our doors once more to the families, friends, and visitors who mean so much to residents. I can't wait to have the campus bustling once more with a full calendar of the social programs, outings, and special events that traditionally have been such a large part of life on this campus.

It will be wonderful to once more welcome new residents to our campus. Offering a new beginning and opportunities to enrich the minds, spirits, and lives of more residents to call our campus home will be a refreshing development.

I look forward to welcoming all of you back into our community. I plan to thank you in person for supporting the ESMRC organization and our mission of providing high-quality senior housing and services while being true to our Masonic principles and values.

If you know someone who could benefit from this community and the services we offer, please have them contact the Marketing Department for more information about our campus. (See page 13.)

– Larry Lillo
Executive Director



On the cover: ESMRC's oldest resident, Elsie, 103 years young, was the first resident to be vaccinated at the first COVID-19 clinic on Jan. 21.

Memory Care — a special bond between caregivers and residents

In my early days in this profession, when I was working as an activities aide, I recall that a family member of a new resident in the memory care neighborhood being upset because I wasn't immediately able to get his mother to attend activities. His reasoning was that because he could convince his mother to do anything, I should be able to as well.

Back then my knowledge and understanding of Alzheimer's disease and dementia care was limited. Likewise, I lacked understanding of the difficulties and emotions that families confront when placing their loved ones in memory care.

I did know that I couldn't immediately engage his mother because she did not know me. Most importantly, I did not know her — her past and her "facts." I didn't know her nuances and complexities. I did not yet know what would make engaging her possible.

ESMRC has the most beautiful physical environment of any memory care neighborhood that I've ever been in. If you haven't seen it yet — you should. It's one of the jewels of our com-

munity. Physical environment is important for effective Alzheimer's and dementia care. Unfortunately physical environment is too often overlooked in these units. Yet, even the most beautiful and appropriate physical environment in a memory care neighborhood means little if the caregivers do not truly know the residents.

In Alzheimer's and dementia care a lot of emphasis is placed on what essentially is a fact sheet about a resident — their past, routine, likes and dislikes. There is value in this summary. But imagine if you were reduced to a sheet of facts.

What if someone was tasked with supplying your needs — both physical and emotional — through a single day, utilizing only facts. Imagine how limiting that would be. The facts can tell you when and where I was born. They can tell you what I did for a living. They can tell you that I really like french fries.

This means very little when it comes to knowing how my mind currently works, what motivates me, how I perceive the world, what my emotional landscape is at any given time, and what I truly need in

the moment to feel safe, comfortable, and cared for.

All effective care and engagement in the memory care neighborhood hinges on the ability of the care staff to establish and maintain a deep and nuanced relationship with each and every resident.

How do care staff establish and maintain such relationships? It is a challenge, especially when there are certain tasks that must be accomplished, many needs to meet, and there aren't enough hours in the shift.

Staff come to truly know the residents. It's the kind of intricate and nuanced knowing that only comes with time and trust. They must step outside their "reality," and into the resident's reality. ESMRC care staff achieve this with a special openness and spirit of pure service. Being receptive, the caregiver allows the resident to share how they perceive the world and what they need.

Experienced caregivers know what makes a resident happy or sad. They come to know what a certain restlessness or facial expression means. Experts in body language, caregivers interpret a myriad of non-verbal cues. A daily, even tedious, routine is a new, and potentially frightening,

See **Memory Care**...page 15



Activities Recap



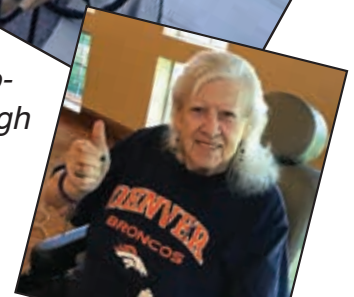
Residents were treated to a car parade by the El Jebel Shrine, which included horses! Blue skies and friendly faces made it a wonderful afternoon September treat.



Below: Joel (and all residents) got flu shots.



The residents still enjoyed doing the Mile-High Salute for the Broncos.



Halloween was celebrated!



Below: Elsie was thrilled to see herself on the cover of the fall issue of Spotlight.



Left and above: Thanks to friends at Pinkard Construction for building (and donating) a love pod for socially distant visits. When it was in use, masked residents and guests could visit on the outdoor patios.



The Dollar Cart is brought out twice a week. It always becomes a shopping frenzy, thanks to loyal supporters. Residents have been well stocked with their favorite candy to maintain their sugar high.



Above: Thank you to John Swift for throwing the residents a Kentucky Fried Chicken and Dairy Queen Party. It was (guaranteed) calorie free!



The residents did make their votes count!





Left: Thanksgiving dinner filled these residents' plates.



Considered essential workers during the pandemic, ESMRC employees worked hard. They found a way to enjoy the Christmas holiday.



With the help of various organizations that played "Santa Claus," ESMRC provided ample gifts for residents.



Christmas at ESMRC did not have its usual festivities, but the residents were reminded of the holiday when they opened presents or examined their stocking gifts.

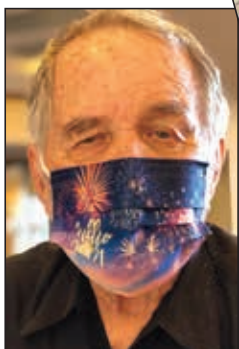
Memory care residents (below) opened the stockings and gifts that

Colorado
DeMolay
and Joanne
Kappel
provided.





***More Christmas
and
New Year's Day***



Spotlight on the Life Enrichment Department

I was the Life Enrichment Director at ESMRC for seven months when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the community in mid-March 2020. At the time of this writing, I have spent more time in this position serving this community through a difficult pandemic than I did pre-pandemic.

When I took up this position, I had the triple blessing of entering a community of enthusiastic residents, plentiful resources and coworkers who were receptive to my ideas. I inherited a stellar Life Enrichment team that were in place and were dedicated to the department. With this “wind at my back,” I took the skill set I already had and hit the ground running.

At our peak, which we hit in February 2020, the Life Enrichment Department was executing two full calendars of programming for both the assisted living residents and Memory Care Neighborhood. Seven days a week, the department averaged somewhere between 5–7 activities each day for both calendars, while facilitating a handful of events for the Star Vista Village residents each month.

The department had a burgeoning volunteer program of religious services, pet therapy, music, and more. We hosted about 60 people for Friday afternoon Happy Hours, which had steadily grown to include resident families and Star Vista Village residents.

The department’s transportation program also hit its peak in February with 28 group outings in addition to 44 medical and personal appointments. The community culture was so vibrant and alive. My team and I were looking forward to setting new goals in the new year, growing the department to extend its reach beyond the ESMRC community.

Then it fell apart. One by one, I marked through every activity and outing until the March calendar turned completely red. A new calendar would not follow. The Colorado Department of

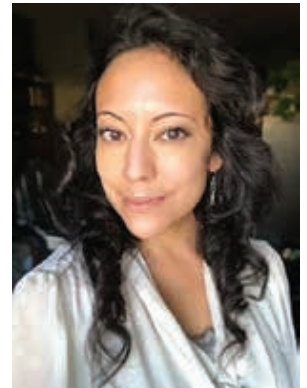
Public Health and Environment, Public Health Order 20-20 was the final blow for my department and ESMRC’s community culture.

In the early days of the pandemic, all employees were fearful that the virus would have a terrible impact on the community. I had to dissolve my team: drivers Morgan and Dave left. Kathy moved to the care department to assist in caring for coronavirus positive residents. Through two seasons, the halls of ESMRC remained silent.

The Activities/Life Enrichment profession has never been about Bingo or hosting parties. These things have their place, but the true calling of the activities profession has always been to support the residents in maintaining their independence, fostering their sense of community (both inside and outside the walls of ESMRC), and providing them with meaningful opportunities to live a full life. A well-run life enrichment department creates opportunities for the activities and events that are meaningful to the residents, always keeping in mind what they love and value. Ideally an activities department also operates in a true partnership with all departments in the building. All departments work to build and maintain the spiritual and emotional wellness of residents.

In the activities profession, I often feel as though I am creating something out of nothing. With constructing calendars, scheduling, planning and completing administrative tasks, I didn’t forget the calling of my profession. As the months stretched on, my calling was brought sharply back into focus. Learning new ways of doing old things was the name of the game. What a sharp learning curve it was.

See Enrichment... page 12



*Rebecca Brown
Life Enrichment
Director*

Enrichment...from page 11

As it turns out, the department still had much to contribute. Time was no longer an issue. The psychosocial needs of the residents were greater than before.

The department supported the residents in maintaining their connection with family. Residents learned to video chat. Eventually, my department acted as the official liaison for much anticipated in-person visits.

In the early days I wrote many letters to residents, communicating community information and words of encouragement to foster hope. The department took a cart door-to-door that had activities, crafts, and weekly treats of ice cream sundaes from Dairy Queen. Door-to-door beer and wine was also provided several times a week in lieu of Happy Hour.

By the time the residents were permitted back into the dining room they had decided that they needed something stronger than wine. The next day I expanded the bar offerings. The weekly Dollar "Cart" grew to become a twice a week venture that now spans four tables. The effort is to support a thread of normalcy, independence, and choice for the residents.

The monthly resident Lunch Bunch changed as well. Residents looked forward to ordering takeout from a different restaurant each week. The department was also a visible presence in the community — alongside the Fraternal Relations Department. During the major holidays, both departments facilitated holiday surprises and visits. We wanted to make the holidays a little less grim.

My duties as Life Enrichment Director have expanded to include personal shopper, librarian, interior decorator, repair person, research assistant, IT support, mixologist, stain removal expert, informal talk therapist, secretary/scribe, and something akin to a DoorDash driver. This is not an exhaustive list. If my efforts and the department's offerings pre-pandemic were already person-centered — they are even more so now.

These efforts are small. They are not as showy as hosting 60 people for Happy Hour, but they are more personal and meaningful. Aside from tasks, I now know more about the likes and dislikes of each resident. I know more about their lives, histories, and families than I did before. Before this pandemic I had set my sights on growing the department upward and outward. It grew inward instead. Once this is all over there will likely be an opportunity to serve the residents better than before.

What ESMRC and its culture will look like when the doors open again and life within resumes? I do not know. All efforts to care for the residents and keep the coronavirus at bay kept everyone from mourning what life was like. It was the end of a beautiful era and we didn't get to say goodbye.

Life will return to ESMRC, and when it does, I will be here on the other side to support a new beginning in the community. I will have to start all over again, but that's OK. Creating something out of nothing is what my Life Enrichment Department does best.

– Rebecca Brown



Above: Door to door cart brings activities, crafts and weekly treats from Dairy Queen.

What if I can't afford a senior retirement community?

With the cost of everything going up, many older adults find that their nest egg is not large enough to support an apartment in a senior living community for the rest of their lives. Things are fine now at home, but what about the future? As a person ages, they tend to need more assistance, which has costs associated with it. These challenges ask the question: How do I plan for future needs if my retirement funds are limited?

Here are some suggestions on how to plan if your retirement funds are limited.

1. Research affordable senior housing communities and get on their waitlist immediately.

2. Determine if you financially qualify for the Medicaid program that is offered through the Department of Health and Human Services. If you qualify, you will receive funds to cover rent, food and healthcare either at home, or in an assisted living or skilled nursing center that accepts Medicaid.

3. Check to see if you have any life insurance policies that might have cash value. You can ei-

ther borrow from the policy, or cash it out.

4. Look into shared senior housing programs:

- seniorhousingoptions.org*
- silvernest.com*
- seniorresource.com/cohousing/Colorado*
- Area Agency on Aging



5. Explore family options to determine if a family member can financially, physically and practically care for you in their home. For example, some homes have steps and other obstacles that would not be safe.

Finally, don't panic! Help is out there, you just need to know where to find it. A good start would be to contact the Area Agency on Aging, 303-866-2800, www.agingcare.com.

They can help with:

- Mobility assistance programs, meal plans and housing
- Assistance in gaining access to services
- Individual counseling, support groups and caregiver training
- Respite care
- Supplemental services, on a limited basis

I hope this article has given you some ideas for how to plan now to avoid stress and anxiety in the future. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have other questions about senior living options.

– Diane Martini
303-753-2179

FRIDAY at Hyland Hills Golf Course
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Shotgun Start
7:30am
Shotgun Start or Tee Times
Depending if there is Covid Restrictions

\$135 per golfer includes:
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SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE!

REGISTER NOW

GOLFER'S INFORMATION

NAME _____

EMAIL _____

CASH, CHECK MADE OUT TO ESMRC GOLF
(OR PAY ONLINE)

Contact Pati Sawyer Boex for more information:
303-753-2160 • patis@esmrc.com

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Philanthropy —

Eastern Star Masonic Retirement Campus thanks the following Chapters, Lodges and individuals for their donations to the ESMRC for September–December 2020.



Amy Blechinger
S.C. Boles
Nancy Brown
Michael Bulloch
L. Dean Clark
James Dawkins
Duncanson estate
Carol Errickson

Thomas Henshall
Rebecca Huffman
Joanne Johnson
Richard Metzler
Glenn Perkins
Pat Rasmusson
Steven Reffel
Margaret Ringhofer

Thomas Robyn
Helen Scherer
Howard Sharpe
Karen and Jerry Spence
Charlene St. John
John Swift

In-Kind Donations —

Thank you to the following Fraternal Family members and private individuals who donated in-kind items for the residents as well as treats/food/lunches for the staff during the months of September–December 2020. You were so generous in rewarding our dedicated staff during the very hard months of quarantine. We appreciate you!

Sue Baker
Kara Bartolik
Eli and Judy Batenburg
Lynn Breeze
Nancy Brown
Linda Burgess
Family of Patsy Curd
Barbara Emmons
Leigh Green
Patti Hayford

Julia James
Joanne Kappel
Sue Knebel
Family and friends of Ann Lane
Ellen Lillo
Family of Norma Lu Murr
Tammy Oldson
Family of Lillian Rogers
Kristi Rudy
Doris and Drew Schrupp

Linda Stengel
Mike and Robin Terry

Colorado DeMolay
Colorado Jobs Daughters
Colorado Rainbow Girls
CU Denver Volunteers
Loyalty Chapter #145
Mazanita Chapter
Tamarac Optimists Club

Christmas Donations —

Thank you to the following Masonic organizations and private individuals who helped fund the Santa Claus program that helps residents in need have a Merry Christmas.

Denver CO Commandery #1
Denver Chapter #2

Joanne Kappel
Les Sonksen

Thanks to all anonymous donors or those whose names are not acknowledged here — we appreciate your support!

The Robert Russell Eastern Star Masonic Retirement Campus is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit, so all donations are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to Robert Russell Eastern Star Masonic Retirement Campus or R.R.E.S.M.R.C. Send them to Attention Director, 2445 S. Quebec St, Denver, CO 80231. You can also go online to ESMRC's website: www.esmrc.com, then click the "donate now" icon. Make a secure donation using the Community First Foundation System.



Colorado Gives Day — Thank you to the community members who made a donation on Colorado Gives Day in December! ESMRC participated for the fourth time, raising more than \$13,300.

Ramona and Brian Abeyta
Jeanne Abdou-Sabet
Toni Adamo
Jim Anchustegui
Helen Andresen
Melissa Aragon
Craig Bailey
René Ballinger
Louise Bates
David Berman
Phil Black
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Leslie Stoltz
Dick Surroz
Nancy Swope
Elaine Tayman
Robin Terry
Paul Ward
Bart Wegner
Janet White
Shirley Wideman
Genie Wilcox

Union Lodge #7

Memory Care...from page 4

experience for memory care residents. Every day, ESMRC's remarkable care staff adapt to residents.

Last spring COVID-19 had a large impact on ESMRC's Memory Care neighborhood. Staff endured many long days providing care to COVID-19 positive residents. They encouraged them to eat by offering them homemade soup. They were a comforting presence to residents whose families could not visit them.

The shift in healthcare, especially in the care of older adults, is trending towards what we call "person-centered care." Yet this is something individuals effectively working in Alzheimer's and dementia care have always known. You cannot provide the best care for a human being if you do not truly know them.

— **Rebecca Brown**
ESMRC Life Enrichment
Director



Spotlight

Robert Russell Eastern Star
Masonic Campus of Colorado, Inc.
2445 South Quebec Street
Denver, CO 80231-9924

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