



DECEMBER 2021

The Sunny Side of Life

The monthly family/staff newsletter of
Sunshine Meadows Retirement Community

www.sunshinemeadows.org; 620-543-2251 400 S. Buhler Rd., Buhler, KS 67522

Sponsoring Churches/Board of Directors

Buhler MB-Mary Ellen Jantz, Charlotte Smith, Velma Goertzen; Buhler Mennonite-Open
Hoffnungsaus Mennonite-Louis Martens
Bethany Nazarene-Kay Scheel
Crossroads Christian- Open; Victorious Life-Open
Buhler Methodist- Open; At large-Cameron Kaufman, Mary Frazier



A Sad Parting, but a Happy Retirement

SMRC lost two long-term and valuable employees this past few weeks as LeNora Duerksen, Chaplain and SSD, and Rita Black, Director of Human Resources, announced their plans to retire. The staff threw a luncheon farewell party for the ladies on December 1, with staff members, friends, and family in attendance.

Read their farewells on the next few pages.



If you'd like to send cards to residents, please call SMRC at 620-543-2251 Mon.-Fri., 9-4, for a list of those who would really appreciate a note. If you live nearby, you may drop them off; or, mail to **SMRC, 400 S. Buhler Rd., Buhler, KS 67522**

In DECEMBER we welcomed:

Donald & Elsie Steelberg

Gail Wolf

Hester Watson

We Said Goodbye to:

Rose Pianalto

DECEMBER Resident Birthdays

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Donna Bauer | 15 Alma Bauer |
| 7 Janet Blick | 20 Larry Thompson |
| 8 Viola Schultz | 24 Joe Keith |
| 13 Bobbie Miller | |

DECEMBER Staff Birthdays

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| 2 Carson Przymus | 14 Yvonne Wheatley |
| 4 Londa Tipton | 24 Kaia Stone |
| 5 Angela Imel | 26 Amanda Downtain |
| 5 Lenora Duerksen | 30 Harold Wenzlick Jr |
| 11 Garrett Price | 31 Victoria De La Cruz |
| 13 Holly Elliott | |

Merry Christmas!



Keith Pankratz, CEO keithp@sunshinemeadows.org
Danetta Rice, Human Resources hr@sunshinemeadows.org
Londa Tipton, RN Director of Nursing don@sunshinemeadows.org
Debra Thompson, RN MDS Coord. mids@sunshinemeadows.org
Rachel Perry, LPN Care Manager rperry@sunshinemeadows.org
Hazel Brott, LPN MCUCare Mgr. hazelb@sunshinemeadows.org
Amanda Downtain, RN AL Care Mgr. almanager@sunshinemeadows.org



A Farewell from LeNora Duerksen, Chaplain & SSD from 10/2/2007-11/12/2021

After retiring from my career with the United States Postal Service, I received my Masters of Divinity at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana. I walked into the SMRC Chapel for the first time on Labor Day weekend in 2007 to help officiate at Rose Wedel's memorial service; she was a member of the church I was serving. I felt very welcomed and was surprised when first Eric Beye, whom I had known and worked with since 1982 at Barnstormers and the Old Mill Restaurant, and then Keith Pankratz, handed me a job application directly after the service.

It has been my pleasure, privilege, and honor to serve God for over 14 years in the mission faithfully portrayed by resident-centered care at Sunshine Meadows. My priority position as Chaplain has always been part time, so I have also

served in other capacities. I've worked at various positions, such as Activities Director for independent living residents, and front desk receptionist. These various positions were held until the Social Services Designee position became available in June, 2011. A few of the eclectic things that I have enjoyed doing at SMRC include: Helping to decorate the lobby and showcase for each changing season; helping pot flowers; decorating the venue for the annual Gala; having a weekly Bible study in each neighborhood; providing daily devotions/prayers before meals in AL/nursing; being able to hold hands with the senior saints on the sometimes arduous journey to the pearly gates; facilitating Parkinson Disease Support Group, including the greater community of caregivers; assisting with graduation parties (Celebration of Life services) held in the chapel for over 500 dear souls; being a part of the fun cast for the fundraiser held at the Old Mill and all the hilarity of making authentic animal voices; the close bond with the residents and colleagues strengthened within the context of suffering/rejoicing together through all the ups and downs in the activities of daily living; hosting 17 group events for residents/employees and/or fundraising events at our Longhorn Ranch (behind Goessel, as they say), and hosting the SMRC employee picnic, held at our place during the reign of Doris Coats Gray as DON.

Some of my favorite memories include the glory days spent with the independent living residents doing activities, including their annual trek for brunch at our house; the days spent with nursing residents, visiting, fishing, feeding day old bread to the cows and horse, riding four-wheelers in the pasture and enjoying a shady picnic lunch packed by Eric's team; enabling visitation evenings and weekends between residents and family during the COVID shut down; the hard work of hosting fundraising events, knowing it was all worth it for the deepened friendship, laughter, and resources raised for SMRC. *(Continued on page 3)*

LeNora Duerksen, continued

I shall always treasure the memory of the teamwork generated during the pandemic due to shortages in dietary, nursing, etc., that afforded us the opportunity to NEVER say “That’s not my job” as we stepped up to fill the needs of our residents. I have always considered Chaplaincy the greatest privilege ever, as we held hands on our sojourn through the final chapter of life with senior saints. The cost of this intimate connection requires time, energy, resources, and most important of all, vulnerability and an aversion to superficiality.

I hope to continue listening for the call to serve the marginalized in some capacity that the Good Lord reveals to me in His perfect timing. Slowing down the pace; allowing the first streaks of sunshine to be the gracious replacement of my alarm clock; perhaps an annual escape from Kansas blizzards to a tropical beach; more moments for reading the Word and other stories to myself and to my beloved grandchildren and adults; more time to enjoy God’s great creation outdoors, whether in national parks or my own “Garden of Weed’n”; perhaps even visiting the longhorn ranches of cherished friends; being more available for my mother and my husband and family... in other words, just being present in the present!

As I look forward to this transition, I have no huge bucket list other than getting my berm greenhouse built and sewing room organized. I cherish BEING -- more available to help others, whether that is clearing trees out of pastures, visiting Logan and family in Alaska, Lucius and family in the El Dorado countryside, or playing and working with Lyndl and family residing in the Duerksen Hills; and simply greeting the dawn, sipping hot latte on my deck while geese honk on the pond, in unhurried quiet time, praising my Lord and Savior. To borrow the words of Paul in his letter to the church at Philippi: “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything be excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me, put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you!” (Phil. 4:8- 9)

**By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.
1 John 4:9**





Retirement party pictures



A Farewell from Rita Black, Director of Human Resources from 9/17/2012—12/1/2021



How time flies! I have been at Sunshine Meadows for over nine years as Director of Human Resources! It has had its various challenges but I wouldn't trade it for anything. I feel I have been so blessed to have known so many wonderful residents. Meeting their smiles in the morning makes my day! Also being a part of our staff and Leadership Team has been quite a humbling experience over this past year and a half. I am very grateful to have been a member of this team through such a challenging time.

Life has sent me in various vocational directions. About 100 years ago I worked at HCC, followed by Far-Mar-Co, and at Great American Life as a policy underwriter. At one point I worked part-time for the Department of Defense, administering the ASVAB testing for our military. In the last 30-some years, I worked at Haven Schools for 10 years as office manager and Network Administrator, then moved to Hutchinson and spent the next eight+ years at Health-E-Quip in the respiratory therapy department, setting up oxygen and cpaps for customers. And then I accepted the position at SMRC. So that brings me current to where I am now about ready to enter the "Life of Riley"...or at least I hope so!

So for my plans...do I have to have some? Funny, right? Traveling to places I have never visited in the US definitely is on my list, such as an Alaskan cruise. Hopefully we can sneak in some international travel along the way! Riding short, fun Kansas bike trails will also be a part of the plan. Of course, at the top of my list will be the opportunity to spend more time with the kids: Kelsey (Dean), Naples, FL, Janessa (Jordan), Garrett (Jamie) in the Kansas City area and Jerry's kids, Amy (Al), Maize and David (Cara), Washington DC! Oh, and we can't forget all 9 of the most adorable grandkids! - - and one on the way in January!

I am thankful for the opportunity I was allowed to have here at Sunshine Meadows Retirement Community! God Bless!! - Rita Black

Remember When - by Doris Schroeder



THE BIG SNOWSTORM

Being a teacher in the old days like my mother, Emma, did, was rather difficult. She told me lots of stories of adventures in school teaching.

After graduating from Buhler High School, she taught in several different country schools around the area. She then attended and graduated from Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas, and got her teaching degree.

She and another teacher, Eva, taught a large county school near Billings, Montana. They lived in a boarding house. One day, the sky began to darken and snow began to fall. Soon the storm really hit and snow was coming down fast. Eva called the parents to come and get their children before the weather got worse.

It was still snowing hard and visibility was impossible when Eva and Emma bundled up and started walking back to the boarding house about a mile away. Halfway, Emma and Eva were becoming winded and tired. Emma began to pray, when, out of the blue, she saw something that gave her hope.

Two horses pulling a big hayrack came thundering down the road. The driver and rider stopped quickly when they saw the two teachers partly hidden in a straw stack. The men had hunted for them for two hours. They made their way to where the girls were buried in the straw, then stopped cold in their tracks. "That is certainly Emma and Eva if we ever saw them!" one man said. The girls wore big grins on their faces. Emma told me later, "We were never so happy to see anyone in our lives!"

Soon, the two ladies were bundled up in blankets and transported to the huge Montana boarding house. Both of them were able to smile as they faced the future.





FUNSHINE PAGE



1.
Get
Get
Get
Get
IT

2.
S
L
O
W

3.
s
t
a n d

4.
BJACKOX



Get your

THINKING cap on!

Solving these little word puzzles is great for the brain!

Answers below.

5
HEAD / ACHE

6.
DECI / SION

7.
S
T
A
H
W
that

1. Forget it; 2. Slow
down; 3. Stand in the
corner; 4. Jack in the
Box; 5. Splitting head-
ache; 6. Split decision; 7.
What's up with that?

BUHLER SENIOR CENTER MEALS

Come 'n' Get It!



SMRC residents, please call Stacie Klassen for more information.

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board near the dining room. Community members, please contact the Senior Center at 620-543-6858.

Don't judge each day
by the harvest
you reap, but
by the seeds
that you plant.

Robert Louis Stevenson

**"No one can make you
feel inferior without
your consent." —
*Eleanor Roosevelt***

December Senior Center Menus

December 9th

Tossed Salad with dressing
Baked Steak
Creamed Potatoes
Peas and Pearl Onions
Wheatberry Bread with Butter
Pumpkin Pie with Whipped Cream

December 16th

Carrot and Celery sticks with Ranch
Chicken Borscht with Crackers
Deli Sandwich with Lettuce and Tomato
Chips
Apple Pie with Ice Cream

December 23rd

Christmas Luncheon
Orange Fluff Salad
Baked Ham
Scalloped Potatoes
Green Beans
Zwieback with Butter
Pecan Pie

December 30th

Tossed Salad with Dressing
Spaghetti and Meat Sauce
Wax Beans
Bread Stick
Cherry Crisp

Live greenery is beautiful,
BUT
artificial greenery is much safer!



What is Christmas?



It is tenderness for the past,
courage for the present,
and hope for the future.

-Agnes M. Pahro



**Per Fire
Marshall code,
No LIVE tree,
wreath, or
Christmas
greenery is
allowed in the
facility.**



Traveling Teddy

The Activity Department has begun a fun project. They sent a Teddy bear to the Second Grade Class at Union Valley School, as the first stop in classrooms around the area. They asked the class to send it on to another class or another school in Reno County, but first, that they send Sunshine Meadows a letter about their class and how they felt when Teddy showed up. Recently, Activities received a package of Christmas Cards from the class, along with a picture of them with Teddy, and a letter (on page 11) describing their class. It will be posted, along with the picture, on the bulletin board in the hall outside the Activities room. The Activities staff don't expect to get Teddy back until February. Melanie Koehn, Activities Director, said, "It's exciting to see where he will travel. One of the school children said that her grandma works at Sunny's. We learned it was Dana Weast's granddaughter. Super exciting to find out." Dana works in the Dietary Department and has a reputation as a fabulous baker.

November 19, 2021

Dear Sunshine Residents,

We were so surprised and excited to find Teddy in our mailbox here at Union Valley Grade School. We have enjoyed having him here in our second-grade classroom for the last couple of days.

Our teacher is Mrs. Joanne Burckhart. We have a very active classroom of 26. Fourteen boys and 12 girls. The best parts about school are recess, PE, lunch and of course friends. Teddy has enjoyed reading with us. Watching us do 2-digit addition in math and working at our centers. When we do centers, we are working in 6 different groups. We do different learning activities while Mrs. Burckhart works with small groups of students.

Our school is located just as you come into Hutchinson on East 30th street. We have grades Pre-K through 5th grade. There are about 480 kids in our school. Our principal's name is Dr. Paul Erikson.

Our school is close enough to Dillon Nature Center that we walk there for field trips at different times during the school year. One of the best parts is that we get to walk across the pedestrian bridge that crosses highway 61.

We wondered what you liked to do as kids outside of school. We like to play outside, ride bikes, jump on our trampolines. Some of us play sports such as football, basketball, and baseball. Some are into gymnastics and cheerleading. Others enjoy reading and doing crafts. One of the boys in our class participates in the rodeo. We all like to play on our computer tablets or game systems like Nintendo. Spending time with our family and friends is always the best.

We hope you enjoy our cards we had a great time making them.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Burckhart's 2nd grade class.

(Cody, Bently, Lucy, Landry, Ty, Baylor, Masson, Colton, Henry, Harper, Berkley, Carter, Izaiah, Brinleigh, Bradley Tate, Sofie, McKenna, Mackenzie, Lylah, Khloe, Dawson, Saharrah, Teadric, Auralia, and Jayla)



CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

New clothes make great gifts for residents!

BUT!!!



If they land in the laundry without a nametag, **they may not get back to YOUR LOVED ONE!**

And nobody wants that to happen.

So PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, TAG THOSE CLOTHES!!!

A *PLEA* from our



Laundry staff can't return clothes if they're not marked with the owner's name! Even OUR great staff can't recall



TAGS, PLEASE!!!

whose clothes belong to whom! **PLEASE** mark them before giving them to your loved one - or bring your marker with you so you can mark them once they've tried them on, to be sure they fit. We want them to enjoy their new clothes as much as you do! So **PLEASE TAG THOSE NEW CLOTHES!!!**



TOO BAD the people these were meant for aren't getting to wear these nice clothes!!!

DID YOU KNOW there are 24 **COMMONLY GIVEN** vaccines provided periodically in the United States? This does not include the COVID vaccine. Each of these 24 vaccines were at first met with suspicion by the public, especially those living in poverty and without healthcare; now, these inoculations are generally taken as regular physical health measures. Very few people have serious reactions to them.

<https://www.nature.com> › book reviews

Vaccines — lessons from three centuries of protest - Nature

What are the possible side effects of a COVID-19 vaccine? The most common symptoms are fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, and injection site pain. More people experience these side effects after the second dose. You may have side effects after vaccination, but this is your body's expected reaction, and it means the vaccine is working. Vaccines rarely cause long-term side effects. **How effective are the COVID-19 vaccines?** The three authorized vaccines have greater than 90% effectiveness in clinical trials against hospitalization and death from the virus. **Why not wait until more people get the vaccine?** Widespread vaccination is critical to help stop the pandemic and reach herd immunity. Less than 40% of Kansans ages 18+ are fully vaccinated. 325+ million people are fully vaccinated worldwide. **Do I need to vaccinate if I already had COVID-19?** Reinfection is possible, so vaccination is recommended even if a person has previously been infected with SARS-CoV-2 – the virus that causes COVID-19. People over the age of 65 have less than 50% protection against reinfection with SARS-CoV-2. Younger people have less than 80% protection against reinfection with SARS-CoV-2 – but could spread it to others.

“When you’re feeling your worst, that’s when you get to know yourself the best.” — *Leslie Grossman*

Resident Rights (December)

Each month, a right and/or policy will be posted in this newsletter. To get answers to questions about resident rights at Sunshine Meadows, please do not hesitate to contact Dizaray Parker, Social Services, Sunshine Meadows.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONAL & CLINICAL RECORDS: Your medical, social and financial records will be released only to those staff who need them, to other health care institutions if you require care by those facilities or when required by law or by the agency that is paying for your care.

You have the right to inspect and purchase photocopies of your records upon written request and two business days' notice to the facility. You will be charged the prevailing community rate for photocopying the records you request.

*“Start where you are. Use what you have.
Do what you can.”
- Arthur Ashe*



Follow the antics of Sunshine Meadows'

Irvinggaard & Hortense

on KWBW, KHUT, KWHK, KBBE, and BOTT radio!

Coming soon: Sylvia moves in!



400 S. Buhler Rd., Buhler • 620-543-2251

SUNNY'S HOURS:
M-F 7am-2pm
T & Thu 7am-7pm
Dine-In or Carry-Out
620-543-5707