

# Valley View Voice

Valley View Retirement Village • Rock of Ages Mennonite Home • M.A.I.D.S. • McMinnville, Oregon • Winter 2022

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## Valley View Voice

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### Editor:

Gordon Martin

### Photography:

Gordon Martin

### Contributing Editor:

Victoria Wilbanks

## MARY HILL By Victoria Wilbanks

Mary was born and raised in Massachusetts as the middle girl in a family of three girls and a boy. Her mother was a homemaker from a rural Swedish family, and her father was a mold maker. He was very good at his job and was often asked to do the more complicated jobs. As she grew up during the depression, Mary remembers her father needed two jobs to support their family. His second job was at an electrical company. Her father also came from a rural family. Their extended families all lived close, and Mary often went to her grandparents grocery store for candy and other treats.

For as long as she can remember Mary wanted to become a nurse, although her mother did not agree. Mary was able to take a three year nursing course and earn a degree from Boston University. After school she went to work at the New England Deacones' Hospital as an RN. Later on in life Mary and her sister flew to San Francisco in the hopes of finding employment. Both of them were hired for teaching related positions, and settled in California. Mary met her husband John in California, at the Presbyterian church they attended. John and Mary were married in that same church. Mary's mother took her first airplane flight to attend the wedding in California. Mary and John soon relocated to Oregon and later had two boys, Kenneth and Stephen.

Mary's husband John, was a social worker with a Master's Degree. He worked in the field of foster care, and later was able to find a job with the State of Oregon in Salem, where he and Mary had moved, and she worked as an RN for the Salem Hospital. Then John was transferred to McMinnville where they purchased a home, and where their two boys grew up. Prior to his retirement John developed his beloved hobby of photography into a second career which he really enjoyed. Mary said he traveled all over the state, and was sought after for his work. Their son, Kenneth, followed in his father's footsteps, becoming an avid photographer.

John became ill in 1986, never to improve to any degree, and endured two amputations. Until his death in 2001, Mary took great care of him, using her

(Hill continued pg 3)



## From Delvin's Desk



Delvin Zook

I find myself with mixed emotions as I ponder where we are after nearly two years into this pandemic. Yes, there are those that say, "Just move on." Others are still very careful about wearing their mask properly and distancing. This week again we have had some staff members who tested positive. This generates lots of debate. Those working in long term care and hospitals know it's not only a matter of staying healthy themselves, but it's also wondering if they can work or if they will have enough help when they are at work; all of which can be stressful. Presently, as long term care providers, if one person tests positive for COVID we go into an Executive Order (EO) from the governor. It requires all staff to be tested within 72 hours and then weekly until we have had two consecutive test cycles without a positive test. So, you might say, "Well, just don't get tested." It doesn't work that way. We are required to test anyone who has COVID-like symptoms. I've been late submitting a report and the State called me, already aware of someone sick who tested positive. Unreported positives can produce civil penalties and restrictions. We do know the present Omicron variant is highly contagious. However, we are thankful it appears to cause only a

mild to moderate sickness. We still live under the EO causing extra work and challenges. All of this causes anxieties and stress for the staff.

This pandemic is affecting all of us whether we want it to or not, some more than others. I have asked staff, residents, others about how their life is today. I heard comments like: "I was so sad when Ida passed, I miss her" (our only resident passing from COVID), "I wish folks would wear their masks properly," or "The past couple years has slowed me down and given me an opportunity to reflect on what's important," or "I spend a lot more time at home with my family," then "Work is more stressful because of the various demands of wearing protective gear and worrying about residents," or "It has slowed me down in a good way, I'm spending more time with God," and then the optimistic, "This too shall pass."

Those here at Rock of Ages with leadership responsibilities, especially our department leaders, carry a heavy load. They are working hard to make sure we have adequate staff that are concerned for resident's care by bringing on new staff and getting them trained properly. The uncertainty of what tomorrow may bring and being prepared to meet the needs of those we care for weighs on them at times.

(Delvin continued on pg 4)

## Chaplain's Corner



Lynn Miller

As we approach the month of February we think about Love and Valentine's Day. Love is the very nature, the essence of God. "God is Love" the Bible tells us. And He calls us to love. Jesus said love sums it all up: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second [commandment] is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:30-31)

Legend says St. Valentine sent notes to family and friends from his prison cell saying "I love you, remember Valentine." God sent us a valentine through the prophet Isaiah (43:3-4) "For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior... Since you are precious and honored in my

sight and because I love you." It is no small thing to hear God say "I love you"!

Many of us think of our Mothers as ones who show or showed much love. Sometimes I wondered how mine divided her love among 6 children, then 22 grandchildren and 33 great grandchildren. She didn't divide it amongst us, she multiplied it!

Love is just a nice thing to share! In a Dennis the Menace cartoon, Dennis and his friend Joey visited their neighbor, Mrs. Wilson. As they left the house, each with a handful of cookies, Joey asked, "I wonder what we did to deserve these." Dennis replied, "Look Joey, Mrs. Wilson gives us cookies not because we are nice, but because she is nice." Be nice and show some love to someone today.

## Honoring our Employees

### Employees of the Month (EOM)



**Michael Contreras**, is the Sept EOM and is a joy to have on our kitchen team. The residents appreciate how well he's come to know their preferences and often gets things started for them as soon as they come in. All of us count on him to be there with a smile, and his kind demeanor while waiting on people in the dining room is very much appreciated.



**Julie Ballard** was named EOM for December. Julie has blessed us by coming to Rock of Ages and leading the kitchen crew. She has a heart for ministry and it shows in her work, going the extra mile to make sure folks have good meals. She has brought in new employees that knew her prior to Rock of Ages and wanted to work with her. Julie and her husband also are very involved in ministry at their church.



**Jessica Diaz** was named Co-Employee of the Year

Jessica always has a smile on her face, even when it is a tough day. She is a friend to both residents and staff and is always willing to help cover a shift or help other staff as needed. She does an amazing job on the ever changing schedule and helps keep the M.A.I.D.S. office going.



**Maria Ramirez** was named Co-Employee of the Year

Maria Ramirez came to work in April 2007. Her dedication soon was obvious as she began absorbing all she could about her work. Through thick and thin, disappointments, and hard days, Maria became the encourager for the rest of the Memory Care staff and beyond. She brightens our days with her cheerful smile and lighthearted spirit. Through all the COVID testing, masks and stress, her years of experience have been a great help to newer staff.

(Hill continued from pg one)

excellent nursing skills, although she did find it necessary to work as well. This was an extremely difficult time for her and the family. It took a great toll on her, but as she relied on her strong faith, God did get her through it. The period between 1992 and 1994 was especially difficult. In addition to her husband's condition, Mary developed breast cancer which involved chemotherapy. This was also the time period when the couple lost Kenneth, their oldest son in a drowning accident. Mary is one of many parents who say that losing a child is one of the saddest events a person can experience.

After her struggle with cancer, Mary recovered and resolved to be "better, not bitter," and clung tightly to her faith, "going within" and doing the best work of her life on her spiritual self, emerging to be the person she is today. Prior to moving to Valley View, Mary sold her home of 40 years in McMinnville. She has many happy memories of it and of the neighborhood near Linfield College. The population of McMinnville was only 12,000 when they moved here, and the boys had plenty of room to be boys in a safe environment. Mary remembers that during the boys' growing up years, the family loved to camp and hike, and saw many beautiful places in Oregon when they traveled with their motorhome. Their youngest son, Steve, earned a degree from Oregon State University in Electrical Engineering. He and his wife now live in the Seattle area with their two-year-old son Emmaus who is Mary's only grandchild and is very precious to her.

Mary notices as she volunteers on the Spiritual Life Committee at Rock of Ages, she receives as much from the patients at TLC as she gives to them when she visits and comforts them. Mary sometimes reflects on her journey up until this point, and sees how happy she has become as a "human being" rather than a "human doing". She also sees how her past work as a nurse in the community made her aware of the Valley View Community, and sees how everything came together for her. Mary has always been a busy, involved person. In fact, at one point she was instrumental in helping establish the Free Clinic in McMinnville for the less fortunate. But now she enjoys the peace and joy she finds in her new comfortable home at Valley View, and especially likes having the 3/4-mile path available so she can pursue walking, one of her favorite pastimes.

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## *The Lighter Side*

- My mother was browsing in a store when a saleswoman offered assistance. Mom admitted she didn't have anything particular in mind, and the pair started chatting. The woman quickly learned that Mom was retired. Interested, she confessed that she was also considering retirement. Mom immediately started telling her how much she liked no longer working and how the saleswoman would also enjoy it. Finally, convinced by Mom's enthusiasm she asked, "How long have you been retired?" Mom replied, "This is my first day!"
- I asked the kids in my nursery school class what they needed in order to grow up nice and strong. One little girl answered, "Birthdays!"

(Delvin continued from pg 2)

However, we have many promises in the Bible we can claim and like the gospel song says, *Many things about tomorrow I don't seem to understand, but I know who holds tomorrow and I know He holds my hand.* I thank God for each of our staff who have dedicated themselves to a greater calling of caring for others. Thank you each one!

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