

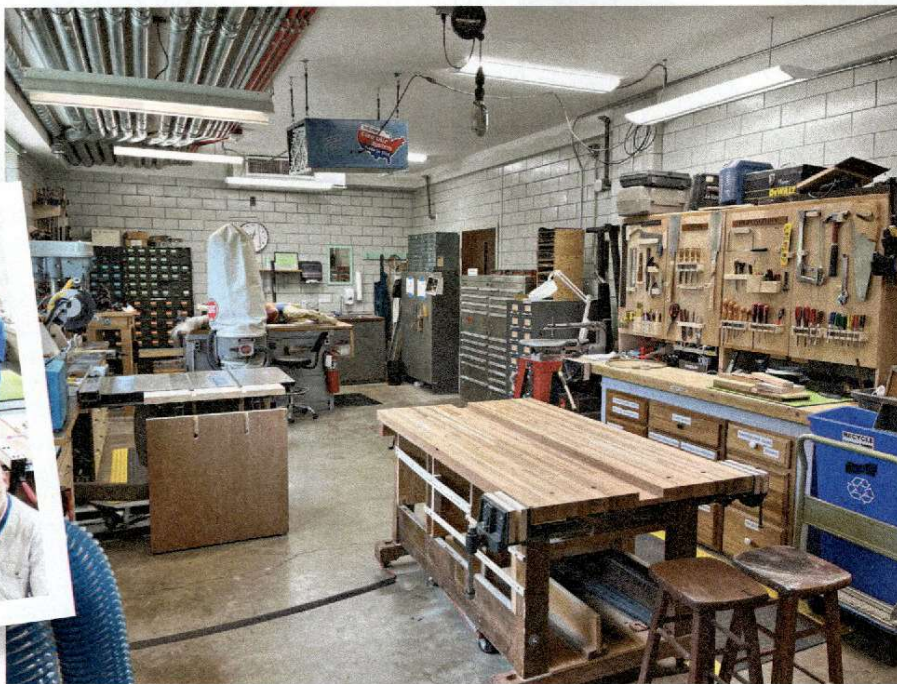
A SHOP TO SHARE

Connection, creativity, and accomplishment bring an entire community of woodworkers together in a shared shop space.

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▲ Charlie Aumiller (second from right, front row), titled "Woodworker Emeritus" by his friends, was the prime woodworker for most of two decades. He helped the shop grow into a vital part of the community.



One wall features consolidated storage options in wall cabinets, under-bench storage drawers, tool racks, and an eclectic collection of steel cabinets.

The woodworking shop at the Frasier senior living community in Boulder, Colorado, serves a vital role. Sure, it scratches the resident woodworkers' itch for a space to create, providing a well-equipped and safe workspace. But, more important, it brings educational opportunities and a sense of camaraderie to new and experienced woodworkers alike while serving the community of 500.

For more than 60 years, the small workshop on the 20-acre campus has benefited from tool donations. With each donation, better tools replace older ones, resulting in a collection of top-notch equipment. Tools that leave the shop get donated to local charities.

The shop resides on the ground floor of the oldest section of the building behind a locked door that limits access to those residents who have signed a

liability waiver after an interview with the Director of Facilities. He witnesses the signing of the liability waiver after ascertaining their woodworking experience.

Resident-to-resident training also occurs on a regular basis. For example, five women completed a seven-week course, "Women Working Wood." The shop also hosted a training session for two individuals interested in a refresher course on using the tablesaw. But the most common form of education occurs when residents hang out in the shop and chat about all things woodworking.

Frasier, a nonprofit organization, updates utilities in the space as needed. They removed a defunct baseboard heating system to make way for new cabinets. Recent LED lighting upgrades replace the old fluorescent fixtures to enhance visibility and safety.



SHOW US YOUR SHOP

Send high-resolution digital photos of your shop to woodmail@woodmagazine.com and we may showcase it in the magazine!



Large windows flood light into the shop, including onto the hub of the space: a large workbench. Dual vises and an ample benchtop serve multiple users well.



Featuring storage on the outside and inside of the hinged doors, this "Tool Repository" provides a home for a variety of hand and portable power tools with plenty of storage in the drawers below.

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ONE OF THE GREAT JOYS OF LIVING HERE IS SHARING HOBBIES AND INTERESTS WITH OTHER RESIDENTS WHO ARE REMARKABLY ACTIVE, INTERESTING, AND ACCOMPLISHED.

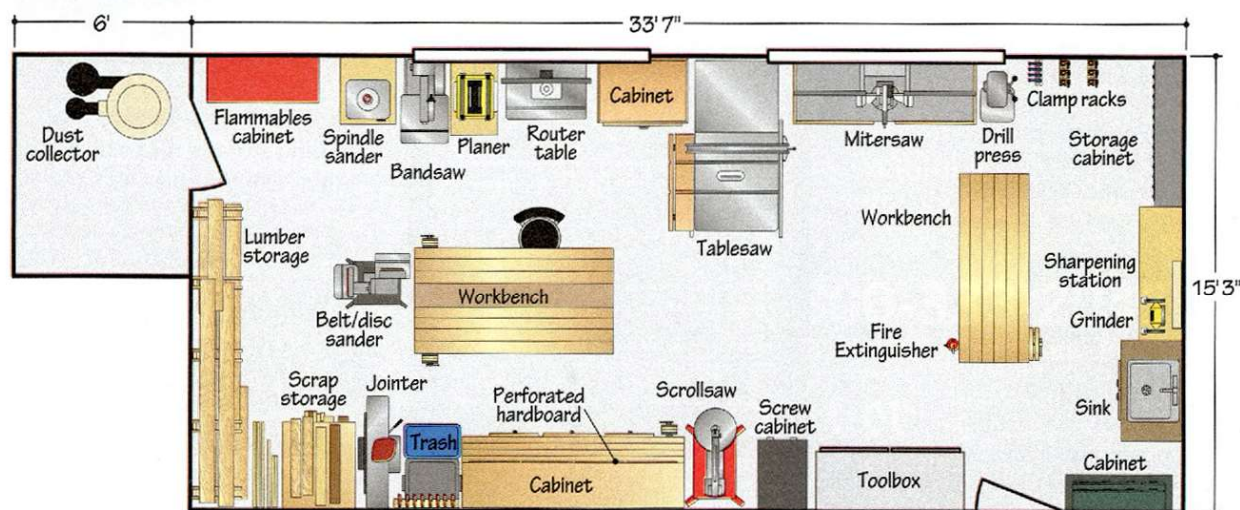
—CURT ESHELMAN, RESIDENT

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Fire safety is a high priority. The shop connects to the building's sprinkler system, including the horn and strobe lights. A fire extinguisher mounted near the door provides additional protection. Woodworker Curt Eshelman recalls, "A fire inspector told me to mount the extinguisher near the door so your instinct is to go there, then make a choice: tiny fire, put it out; big fire, exit quickly and close the door behind you." An emergency call system mounted near the door provides a direct line to help if it's needed in a hurry.

Frasier woodworkers try to rely on water-based finishes but safely store flammable materials, such as oil-based finishes and solvents, in a steel cabinet designed for storing flammable materials.

A central dust collector feeds multiple tools through dedicated ductwork and shop-made plenum boxes mounted to walls. Each one features multiple blast gates and a remote power switch that controls the collector.





◀ Shop-made plenum boxes equipped with several gates connect multiple machines to the dust collector. An on/off switch on each box remotely controls power to the dust collector.



The newest addition to the shop, a SawStop tablesaw, replaces the old Delta Unisaw. The saw's blade-brake technology is already credited with preventing a potentially serious injury.

The shop is well-organized thanks, in part, to a variety of donated metal storage and tool cabinets. Every drawer and door in the shop bears a label describing its contents, making every fastener, piece of hardware, and tool accessory easy to access. Dedicated organization ensures that anyone can easily find items when needed, and return them just as easily when done, which helps keep the shared space running smoothly.

Overall, the shop is self-supporting. The woodworkers often do repairs for other residents without charge. Some residents make a donation in appreciation. Donations not tied to receiving services go to the nonprofit corporation. When a resident works on a large project, they buy their own wood and finishing material. For small projects, however, the shop provides materials free of charge. The goal is to make the shop user-friendly for woodworkers of all interests and skill levels.

Tomas Mendez, Vice President of Operations shares, "The Frasier woodshop is more than just a place to create—it's a space for connection, purpose, and lifelong learning. It encourages creativity, fosters friendships, and promotes a sense of accomplishment. The woodshop offers a fulfilling way to stay engaged and inspired at any age." 🌱

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Donated cabinets make it easy for every shop user to find tools, hardware, and a myriad selection of woodworking tools, supplies, and accessories.



FASTENERS

An old computer punch card cabinet offers drawers that prove the right size for storing fasteners.



FINISHES & SOLVENTS

Flammable materials reside in this metal safety cabinet that seals to prevent fire.



HARDWARE & ACCESSORIES

Color-coded, labeled drawers in donated army field cabinets keep hardware like nails, nuts & bolts, and cabinet hardware organized.



TOOLS, SUPPLIES, & FIRST AID

Providing storage for small tools and accessories, this cabinet also features large drawers for safety equipment and first-aid supplies.

