

The Pillars Press

December 2024



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December Resident Spotlight: Jim and Neva Pfeffer

This month, we are excited to highlight James (Jim) and Neva Pfeffer, a wonderful couple who have called The Pillars of Mankato their home since February of 2023. Jim and Neva, who have been married for an incredible 68 years, have deep roots in southern Minnesota and share a passion for family, travel, and community. Jim was born and raised on a farm north of Mapleton, MN, and after high school, he enlisted in the United States Navy, serving for four years. Neva, originally from Madelia, MN, grew up on a farm west of Vernon Center, MN, and attended country school before completing high school in Garden Center. After graduation, Neva attended commercial college for bookkeeping. Jim and Neva's paths crossed in a memorable way. Both were passionate about ballroom dancing, and after Jim returned from his service in the Navy, the two met while dancing at the Kato Ballroom. Their connection quickly grew, and they were married in 1956. They initially rented a home on Fair Street in Mankato before building a house nearby, where they lived for many years until moving to the Diamond Creek neighborhood after retiring. Together, Jim and Neva raised three children: Denise, David, and Greg. The couple is also proud grandparents to seven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren, most of whom still live in Minnesota. Neva worked in a podiatry office until starting their family, after which she stayed home to care for their children. When their youngest child was nine months old, Neva returned to work for Carlson Craft, where she remained in the main office for 31 years before retiring. Jim's career was diverse and interesting. He initially ran a gas station, then worked for Coca-Cola for several years. Later, he was invited to buy into United Supply, where he became a co-owner until his retirement. One of Jim and Neva's favorite activities has always been ballroom dancing. They spent many nights at Georges Ballroom in New Ulm and the Kato Ballroom in Mankato, enjoying the rhythm of dance and the camaraderie of fellow dancers. They also share a love for travel, having visited all 50 states, as well as Canada and Mexico. One of their most memorable trips was an Autumn in New England vacation through Holiday Vacations, which they both agree was their favorite. Additionally, Jim and Neva have enjoyed seven cruises over the years, creating countless memories along the way. As avid sports fans, they are particularly passionate about the Minnesota Timberwolves. Since moving to The Pillars of Mankato, Jim and Neva have enjoyed being part of a vibrant community. They are especially grateful for the "amazingly kind staff and fun residents" who have made them feel at home.



VILLAGES OF YESTERYEAR!

Each year, as the holiday season approaches, The Pillars of Mankato transforms into a festive wonderland. One of the beloved traditions in our building is the display of a stunning Department 56 Dickens Village, a tradition that began thanks to our resident, Rosalie Adams. Before our very first Christmas at The Pillars, Rosalie approached us with a special request: she wanted to share her cherished collection of Department 56 Dickens Village pieces with the residents, staff, and families. Naturally, we were delighted, and since then, every holiday season, Rosalie—along with a volunteer or two—meticulously sets up her



extensive, hand-painted village in the library and community room for all to enjoy. This year, we're taking a moment to highlight Rosalie's dedication and give a little history behind the iconic Department 56 Dickens Village that she lovingly arranges each year. The tradition of creating Christmas villages, also known as "putzes," dates back to the 16th century in Germany. These miniature villages, often set up in homes during the Christmas season, became popular throughout Europe and eventually made their way to the United States. The charm of these tiny, whimsical villages filled with holi-

day scenes continues to captivate people around the world. The Department 56 Dickens Village we know today has its origins in 1976, when a group of employees at Bachman's Greenhouse, a Minneapolis-based florist, came up with the idea to create six lighted, hand-painted ceramic buildings. Inspired by a snowy night, they set out to craft these miniature buildings to bring warmth and charm to the holiday season. The collection was an immediate success, and Department 56 was born, named after the number on their accounting ledger that designated their holiday giftware department. Since then, the collection has expanded to include a wide variety of villages



and figures, all meticulously crafted to bring scenes from classic Christmas tales to life. Today, Department 56 continues to produce these iconic villages, which are highly sought after by collectors and holiday enthusiasts alike, and we are lucky to have Rosalie's collection on display for all to enjoy each year. Rosalie's effort to share this delightful piece of holiday tradition is a gift that brightens our community and brings a sense of wonder to everyone who visits. Her dedication and the timeless charm of the Department 56 Dickens Village truly help make this holiday season at The Pillars of Mankato something special.



**We Remember
Dottie Lawson**



*Welcome New
Residents*
**Fran Sargent
Roy Pemble
Karlene Gormley**



EMPLOYEE Spotlight

Our Employee Spotlight this month is Hanna Rissman. Hanna has worked at The Pillars of Mankato for 2 years as a part time receptionist.

Some Fun Facts about Hanna:

Family: She has lived in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Springfield, MO and her family parents, two brothers and their black shih-tzu Murphy currently live in Elk River, MN.

Favorite Hobbies: Her favorite hobby is painting.

Favorite Quote: "I am learning to love the sound of my feet walking away from things not meant for me." A.G.

Fun Fact: I played flute in the marching bands for 6 years!

Favorite Thing about The Pillars: The Residents!



HANNA RISSMAN, RECEPTIONIST



The toy drive will run
Nov 16—Dec 11
please bring new,
unwrapped toys and
place in the box for
children in need in
our community!



HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

Don't miss it!

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11
4 - 7 PM
PILLARS COMMUNITY ROOM

Christmas Dinner

We will be serving a traditional Christmas Dinner on Wednesday, December 25th at Noon. At this time, guest space is limited to the first 12 guests that sign-up. If residents inform us that they will not be dining with us, we will be able to expand our guest number.

RSVP by December 18th

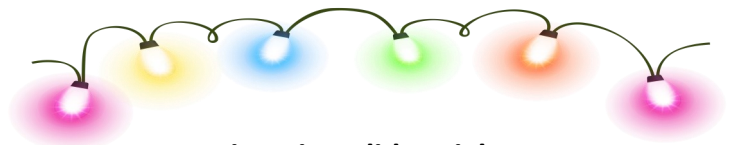


Staff

- Dec 3—Noel W.
- Dec 5—Kirby L.
- Dec 7—Kaitlynn F.
- Dec 15—Jessica G.
- Dec 28—Maddie P.
- Dec 31—Beza B.

Residents

- Dec 2—Pat Loonan
- Dec 6—Gene May
- Dec 7—Lois Willmert
- Dec 8—Pat Kruger
- Dec 9—Lyle Kettner
- Dec 11—Jan Strobel
- Dec 13—Jim Pfeffer
- Dec 15—Jerry Schwantes
- Dec 26—Arlene Neilsen



Kiwanis Holiday Lights

Non Perishable Food Items Collection

Please bring non perishable food items and place in the box in The Pillars Lobby!

All donations go to help our area food shelves!