

The Pillars Press

May 2025



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May Resident Spotlight: Barb Johnson

We are thrilled to shine this month's resident spotlight on Barbara (Barb) Johnson, a kind-hearted and adventurous soul with a lifetime of stories to share. Barb was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and raised in North Minneapolis until 5th grade, when her family moved to Robbinsdale. She remained there until she married the love of her life, Jerry Johnson. Their story began in 1956, when they met through a church youth group outreach program. Two years later, in 1958, they tied the knot and began their 65 beautiful years of marriage. Barb graduated high school in 1957 and pursued her early interest in business by working with the clothing buyers at Gamble and Skogmo Company. She was with the company until 1961, but her most cherished role came a few years later:



becoming a mom. In 1963, Barb and Jerry adopted their son Mark, followed by Greg in 1965, and Jill in 1968. That same year, Barb received a joyful surprise—after believing she couldn't have children, she found out she was pregnant. Their youngest, Todd, was born in 1969. Barb stayed home to raise her four children until Todd turned 10. Ready to return to the workforce, she spotted an ad for a police clerk position and decided to apply. She was hired on the spot and started the very next day. Barb went on to work for the Brooklyn Center Police Department for 21 years, earning a reputation for her dedication and professionalism. In 1999, Barb and Jerry bought a lake home on Platte Lake near Brainerd, MN, close to friends. After Jerry retired from his career as a construction manager, they began spending winters in Green Valley, Arizona—first renting a townhouse, then purchasing a home they fell in love with. They wintered there for 15 wonderful years. Throughout their lives, Barb and Jerry shared a love for travel. They especially enjoyed visiting presidential museums across the U.S., with Ronald Reagan's in Simi Valley, CA standing out—complete with a tour of Air Force One. They were also avid downhill skiers and skied in various parts of the country. Among their many adventures were hot air ballooning in Stillwater, MN and a rare, invitation-only ride in the Goodyear Blimp at the Crystal Airport. One of Barb's favorite memories is the birthday card tradition she shared with her sister. For 25 years, they mailed the same card back and forth, adding new messages each year—eventually including slips of paper as the card filled up. A beautiful symbol of their lifelong bond. Barb's hobbies include sewing and knitting for loved ones, as well as playing bridge. In 2023, Barb moved to The Pillars of Mankato to be closer to her daughter Jill. She says her favorite thing about living here is how welcomed she feels by both the staff and fellow residents.



HONORING HEROES: THE HISTORY AND TRADITION OF MEMORIAL DAY



Memorial Day, observed on the last Monday of May, is a solemn American tradition dedicated to honoring the men and women who have died while serving in the U.S. military. While it marks the unofficial start of summer for many, its roots are deeply tied to remembrance and reflection.

The origins of Memorial Day date back to the aftermath of the Civil War, a conflict that claimed more American lives than any other. Originally known as Decoration Day, the holiday began as a way for communities to honor fallen soldiers by decorating their graves with flowers and flags. One of the earliest recorded observances was in 1868, when General John A. Logan, leader of a Union veterans' group, called for a nationwide day of remembrance on May 30.

Over time, Memorial Day evolved to honor all American military personnel who lost their lives in service, not just those from the Civil War. In 1971, it became a federal holiday, officially observed on the last Monday of May to allow for a three-day weekend.

Traditions include visiting cemeteries and memorials, holding parades, and observing a national moment of silence at 3:00 p.m. local time. Families gather, veterans are recognized, and communities pause to reflect on the cost of freedom.

While the day often includes barbecues and family time, Memorial Day serves as a poignant reminder: freedom is not free. It is a time to honor those who gave everything so we could enjoy the liberties we cherish today.

Ladies
NIGHT

CELEBRATE MOTHER'S DAY
IN STYLE - LADIES NIGHT!

Ladies
NIGHT

This Mother's Day, let's raise a glass to the women who raised us, inspired us, and continue to shape our lives in the most beautiful ways. Join us for a **fabulous Ladies Night** in honor of all the incredible moms, grandmothers, daughters, granddaughters, and the cherished women who lift each other up every day.

Event Highlights:

- A stunning **Fashion Show** featuring timeless elegance and trendy pieces perfect for every generation.
- Signature **cocktails** crafted just for the occasion.
- **Light desserts** to satisfy your sweet tooth while you mingle and make memories.

Whether you're celebrating with your mother, bringing your daughter, or inviting your best gal pal, this evening is all about love, laughter, and connection.

Date: Thursday, May 8, 2025

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: The Pillars of Mankato Community Room

Attire: Chic & Classy – dress to impress!

Come toast to motherhood and enjoy a night full of fashion, flavor, and fun.

Let's make this Mother's Day one to remember.



Happy National Nurses Week is May 6 - 12

During Nurses Week, let's give a big shoutout to our Pillars of Mankato Nurses: Gerri, Taylor, Syndol, Kristen, and Mikara. Their dedication, kindness, and expertise make a huge difference in the lives of residents every single day. Thank you, nurses, for all that you do!





SARAH SABRIE

PLANS TO ATTEND MSU MANKATO
AND MAJOR IN NURSING



ANNIE SHELDON

PLANS TO ENTER THE WORK
FORCE FULL TIME



PAIGE TUREK

PLANS TO ATTEND MSU MANKATO
AND MAJOR IN NURSING

HAPPY GRADUATION

Congratulations to all of our High School Graduates on your well-deserved success! Your hard work and dedication have paid off. Wishing you a future filled with even greater accomplishments.

IN REMEMBRANCE

ARNIE RANUM

DAVID SCHAUER

We remember and honor those who
have passed.



EMPLOYEE Spotlight

Our Employee Spotlight this month is Nyamat. Nyamat has been a Resident Assistant here at The Pillars for almost 2 years.

Some Fun Facts about Nyamat:

Favorite Food: Spaghetti

Favorite Color: White and Blue

Favorite Hobbies: Adventures

Favorite Quote: "I can do all things,
through Christ who strengthen's me."
Phillipians 4:13

Favorite Thing about The Pillars: The
great work environment!



Nyamat Gew, **RESIDENT
ASSISTANT**

Happy

Birthday

Residents

May 1st Lorraine S.

May 7th Joe F.

May 8th Kathy C.

May 10th Marg S.

May 11th Don A.

May 14th Pat L.

May 18th Roy P.

May 20th Dale B.

May 21st Emma I.

May 25th Miriam V.

May 25th Peggy S.

May 30th Maggie T.

Staff

May 5th Nyakor B.

May 17th Michele E.

May 20th Nyachan D.

May 28th Anita M.

May 29th Scott A.

WELCOME to our community

Martha Auger

Carol Auger

John and Nada Foede

Margaret Jahr

Chuck and Bonnie Radel

Peggy Schulze