



THE PILLARS
OF GRAND RAPIDS
SENIOR LIVING | ASSISTED LIVING | MEMORY CARE

September 2026
Vol. 5 Issue 9

Newsletter

Hello September



Tiffany Johnson
Executive Director

Message from the Executive Director

As we move into September, there is a distinct feeling of transition all around us. The long days of summer are beginning to give way to cooler temperatures, students are heading back to school, and we look forward to celebrating Labor Day and welcoming the official start of fall later this month.

This month gives us the opportunity to celebrate Labor Day, a time to honor the dedication, hard work, and contributions that strengthen our communities and our nation. We are grateful for our incredible team members, whose commitment to providing exceptional care, engaging activities, delicious meals, and a warm, welcoming environment makes our community such a special place to call home. We also celebrate our residents, whose unique life experiences, accomplishments, and wisdom enrich our community every day. Thank you to everyone who helps make our community thrive.

This month, we are proud to share that our community is currently at 100% occupancy. This milestone reflects the vibrant, welcoming atmosphere that makes our community feel like home. A full community presents a unique opportunity for residents to connect with one another, participate in activities, and build meaningful, long-lasting friendships. Creating these strong relationships has been a longstanding tradition here, and it is one of the many reasons our community continues to thrive. We are grateful for the trust that residents and families place in us and for the sense of belonging that makes our community so special.

As families settle into new school-year routines and the autumn season approaches, we encourage residents and loved ones to enjoy all that this special time of year has to offer. From the changing colors of the leaves to seasonal activities and celebrations within our community, fall brings many opportunities to connect, reflect, and create new memories together.

Thank you for being such an important part of our community. We look forward to sharing a wonderful season ahead with all of you.

CULINARY CLIPS

Chris Geirsdorf
Culinary Director



Happy or Not

We have added the comment cards to the tables in the dining room. Please use them to leave your comments, good or bad. Our Servers will turn these into the Dining Services Director, Chris and enter them comments in for you to our "Happy or Not" kiosk. We want to hear your comments.

8 Snacks that Pack a Punch

Protein + Fiber + Healthy Fats = Satiating Snack

1. Apples + Peanut Butter
2. Carrots + Hummus
3. Greek Yogurt + Berries
4. Whole Grain Crackers + Cheese
5. Hard Boiled Egg + Clementine
6. Whole Grain Toast + Nut Butter
7. Trail Mix with nuts, seeds, dried fruit
8. Cottage Cheese + Fruit



Chef Appreciation Week September 14- 18

- Featured Chef; During this week we will have each Chef prepare their signature dish for the noon meal for Residents. Watch your mailboxes in the upcoming weeks for more details.
- Breakfast Buffet – Friday September 18th. Please sign up with Debbie at the front desk by Monday September 14th if you plan to attend.
- Show your appreciation to our Chefs by filling out the appreciation cards that will be placed at each table starting September 1st.

National Ice Cream Cone Day – September 22

Join us in the Community room at 1:30 for Ice cream Cones

Fall Winter Menus

September 21st we will be starting our new round of menus featuring seasonal favorites

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We Did It!
**100%
OCCUPANCY!**
A MILESTONE WORTH
Celebrating!

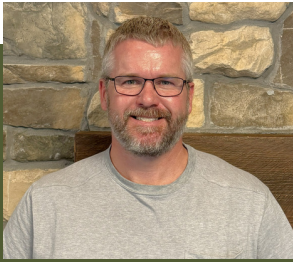
WE GOT HERE TOGETHER,
NOW LET'S CELEBRATE TOGETHER!

★ YOU'RE INVITED TO A ★
BBQ PARTY!
**PETE'S
SMOKEHOUSE
BBQ**
REAL SMOKE. REAL FLAVOR. REAL GOOD.

WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 2ND
2:00 – 5:00 PM

RESIDENTS & FAMILIES
YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN US!
MEALS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE
DIRECTLY FROM PETE'S SMOKEHOUSE BBQ.

Thank You
FOR BEING PART OF THE PILLARS FAMILY!
HERE'S TO 100% OCCUPANCY AND MANY MORE MEMORIES!



Rob Vance
Maintenance Director

Fall Into a Little Cleanliness

As the leaves begin to change and fall is settling in, we thought it would be a good time to talk about something that affects all of us every day—keeping our hallways and common areas clean and welcoming.

Our maintenance team works hard behind the scenes to keep our building running smoothly. Along with repairs, work orders, preventative maintenance, outdoor projects, and all the little things that come up each day, we also help take care of unexpected messes throughout the building.

One of the most common—and time-consuming—messes we encounter is coffee spills. We certainly understand that accidents happen. A cup gets bumped or a lid comes loose. It happens to everyone!

However, cleaning up a coffee spill can take considerably more time than simply wiping up a small puddle. The area may need to be cleaned several times. During that time, a member of the maintenance team is pulled away from the work they had already scheduled.

That may mean a work order takes a little longer to get to, a maintenance project gets delayed, or another resident must wait a little longer for assistance. A small spill can create a bigger ripple effect than we might realize.

The same goes for our four-legged friends. Occasionally they leave a little "present" behind. When that happens, please let a staff member know right away so it can be taken care of quickly and safely.

We're All Part of the Team

Keeping our community clean isn't just the responsibility of housekeeping or maintenance, it takes all of us. A little extra care from everyone can make a big difference.

- Please be mindful when carrying coffee and other drinks through the building.
- If a spill or mess happens, let someone know as soon as possible.
- Please clean up after pets and notify staff if an accident occurs.

Our goal is to provide a clean, safe, and comfortable environment for everyone to enjoy. By working together, we can help our maintenance and housekeeping teams spend more time taking care of the important work that benefits all our residents.

So, this fall, let's enjoy the changing leaves, warm coffee, and beautiful common spaces—and do our best to keep the coffee in the cup and off the floor!

DID YOU KNOW?

Honey never spoils! Archaeologists have found ancient honey that was still edible.

A group of flamingos is called a flamboyance.

Octopuses have three hearts—and blue blood!

Bananas are berries, but strawberries technically aren't.



Melissa Drake & Riggs

LIFE ENRICHMENT

September Monthly Outings & Activities

September brings lots of fun activities and events! Be sure to check the monthly calendar for specific dates, times, and additional activities happening throughout the building.

Monthly Shopping Outings

Every Monday at 9:40 AM

Please refer to the monthly calendar for the specific shopping destination each Monday.

Lunch Outings

September 3: El Potro – 11:00 AM

September 10: White Oak Casino – 9:40 AM

Grandparents Day

September 13

Happy Grandparents Day! To celebrate, please stop by the Community Room and grab a yummy donut.

Assisted Living Week

Assisted Living Week kicks off on Monday, September 13!

Join in the fun by participating in our daily dress-up themes:

- September 14 – Jock or Nerd Day: Choose your style and wear it proud!
- September 15 – Tie-Dye Tuesday: Show off your favorite tie-dye outfit!
- September 16 – Wacky Tacky Wednesday: Let's see your best mismatched outfit!
- September 17 – Mix-Up Thursday: Dress in contradiction—hot vs. cold, casual vs. fancy, and more!
- September 18 – Sports Friday: Show your pride for your favorite sports team!

Activity Donations

Please remember to leave the Community Spaces as you found them so all your neighbors can enjoy them, too. If you have games, puzzles, books, or other items you would like to donate to our activities, please reach out to Melissa. Her office is located next to the 2nd Floor Community Room

Outings & Transportation Reminders

Please remember to check your monthly calendar for upcoming outings, shopping trips, dining adventures, medical transportation dates, and special events. Many of our activities have limited seating, so we encourage you to sign up as early as possible to reserve your spot!

Medical transportation is available for local medical appointments only and must be arranged in advance. If you need transportation or have questions about scheduling, please contact Melissa at 218-999-4962.



Jennifer Fox
Memory Care Coordinator

The Importance of Community for Our Residents Living with Dementia

At the heart of Memory Care is the belief that every resident deserves connection, purpose, and a sense of belonging. Building and maintaining a strong community is especially important for individuals living with dementia. Meaningful social interactions bring comfort, joy, and opportunities for engagement while helping residents feel valued and included.

Community involvement helps create moments of happiness, encourages conversation, and supports emotional well-being. Whether through visits, activities, special events, or shared experiences, these connections enrich the lives of our residents and remind them that they are an important part of a caring and supportive family.

A special thank you goes to everyone who made our Fair Day on August 15 such a wonderful success. We were delighted to welcome residents from Independent Living who came to visit and participate alongside our Memory Care residents. Their involvement brought smiles, laughter, and a wonderful sense of togetherness to the day.

Thank you to all who continue to support our residents and contribute to our community. Together, we create meaningful moments and foster connections that enhance the lives of those we serve.

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Jon Wilson – Our Employee of the Month!

We are excited to recognize Jon Wilson, Resident Assistant, as our Employee of the Month!

Jon is someone our team, residents, and families know they can count on. He brings reliability, dedication, and a genuinely compassionate heart to our community each and every day.

One of Jon's greatest strengths is his ability to truly listen and connect with people. He takes the time to make our residents feel heard, valued, and cared for, while also providing families with the support and reassurance that means so much.

Jon, thank you for the exceptional care you provide, for always being willing to help, and for the positive difference you make in the lives of those around you.

Please join us in congratulating Jon on this well-deserved recognition! We are so grateful to have you on our team!





Christina Korthas
Director of Nursing,
RN , LALD

Welcome to September! As the summer heat fades and the crisp autumn air begins to roll in, our clinical team is shifting our focus toward seasonal wellness and preventative care.

Autumn is a beautiful time of transition, but it also marks the beginning of respiratory illness season. Keeping our community safe is our top priority. This month, we will be preparing for our annual Flu and COVID-19 vaccination clinic partnered with Thrifty White pharmacy. This clinic will take place sometime in late September or early October so keep an eye out for information in your mailbox.

With the arrival of September, shorter days mean less natural sunlight. For seniors, less sun exposure can lead to a drop in Vitamin D—a vital nutrient responsible for maintaining bone density, supporting immune function, and regulating mood.

To keep your levels optimal this autumn, focus on these strategies:

- Eat Vitamin D-Rich Foods: Choose fortified milk, cereals, salmon, and eggs at mealtime.
- Catch the Midday Sun: Spend 10-15 minutes outside in the courtyard during peak daylight hours.

Thank you for your continued partnership in keeping our community healthy, vibrant, and safe. My door is always open if you have any questions regarding your loved one's care plan.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce our new Support RN, Chris Feist. Chris brings over six years of valuable nursing experience to the Pillars team and is deeply committed to high-quality resident care. Please stop and welcome Chris when you see him out and about in our community.





PK Mayo

Eveleth MN native PK Mayo takes you on a Great American Music tour in all of its shapes and forms woven together in the perfect aural quilt. A member of the MN Blues Hall of Fame. Rock and Country H.O.F. and MN Music Award winner PK is the perfect engineer for this ride through our great musical heritage.

THURSDAY
SEPT 10TH
3:00 - 4:00 PM



Debbie Tahtinen
Concierge

Concierge Corner

We are heading into my favorite season! 🍁 There's just something special about the crisp mornings, cool nights, cozy sweatshirts, and all the wonderful activities that come with this time of year. But before we get too excited about pumpkins and colorful leaves, we still have a few more summer days to enjoy! 😊

As we head into a busy season of appointments, outings, and activities, I wanted to share a friendly reminder about letting the Front Desk know when you leave the building.

Whether you are heading out for a doctor's appointment, shopping, lunch with friends, or simply enjoying some time away, please remember to let us know that you have left.

Why is this important?

- Knowing who is in the building and who is away, helps us:
- Keep everyone safe in the event of an emergency or evacuation.
- Know who is currently in the building and who is away.
- Reach you or your family if something unexpected happens.
- Know that you are safely away rather than wondering if you are still here.

Where do I sign out?

Memory Care Residents:

Please sign out within the Memory Care department according to their procedures.

Assisted Living and Independent Residents:

You can sign out at the Front Desk or simply call the main number to let us know you are leaving each day. If you will be away from the building for more than 24 hours, please let us know when you are leaving and approximately when you expect to return.

It only takes a moment, but it helps us keep our community safe, informed, and connected. And, of course, if you ever have a question, please don't hesitate to stop by the Front Desk or give me a call. 218.999-4999.

The Funny Side

Why did the golfer bring two pairs of pants?

In case he got a hole in one.



Why don't eggs tell jokes?

They'd crack each other up.

HA
HA
HA
HA

Knock, knock.

Who's there?

Tank.

Tank who?

You're welcome!

Why did the tomato turn red?

Because it saw the salad dressing!

ha ha ha

HUMOR

Ha
Ha
Ha
Ha
Ha

What do you call a bear with no teeth?

A gummy bear.

WORD HUNT

SEPTEMBER
EDITION

ACORN
APPLE
BROWN
CIDER
FALL
FOOTBALL
HARVEST
HAYRIDE
LEAVES
NUTS
OCTOBER
ORANGE
PINECONE
PUMPKIN
RED
SCARECROW
SEPTEMBER
SQUASH
SWEATER
YELLOW

O	O	Y	E	H	U	O	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	R	R	O	O	E	B
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P	M	S	H	L	V	L	N	E	P	C	E	N	B	S	U	E	C	W	D
T	C	U	A	T	S	N	Q	A	O	O	H	S	V	R	U	L	E	O	A



To get the answers: Visit your EmpowerMe Wellness clinic!

from your wellness partners at

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—WELLNESS—