



# HEROES AT HOME

A special newsletter during COVID-19 to recognize **heartwarming stories** & the **hard-working** staff in our healthcare division



## Heroes of HOUSEKEEPING

While everyone goes about their day at the **Hastings Veterans Home** (DOMS), Housekeeping's General Maintenance Workers (GMWs) are always working – 7 days a week, 365 days a year – to keep our home clean and safe. With a total staff of only 10, GMWs led by Dale Nietfeld are some of the silent heroes of the DOMS. In just five hours, GMWs prepared 15 beds to move the Veterans off one wing, turning it into an isolation unit; Hastings DOMS is now prepared in the event we have a confirmed case of the COVID-19 virus.

In the space of a few days, Housekeeping, with help from other departments, moved those 15 Veterans to their new rooms, made sure they were settled, arranged furniture, and moved the Veterans' belongings into, or out of, storage. GMWs then went back to that wing and within days had deep-cleaned the entire area and set up patient rooms and a Nursing Station to create an isolation unit so they would be ready for future needs. GMWs also played a big part in creating The Bunker Cafe, the Veteran-named second dining room set up in the gym, created to help Veterans maintain social distancing during mealtimes.

GMWs have rearranged some of the Veteran lounges to that same end. Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit Minnesota, Housekeeping staff had been given the additional task of sanitizing all door handles and railings throughout the campus, though some of our Veterans have now taken over this job.

Housekeeping staff have done all this while maintaining their usual duties of keeping the entire campus clean and maintained, and without missing a step. Someone from the Housekeeping Team is always visible, so they are frequently a first contact for our Veterans. GMWs will help fix a remote, clean up a spill, help move something, or provide some thoughtful conversation, for Veterans and staff!

COVID-19 has changed the way we live our lives, and Housekeeping has been there, usually ahead of everyone else, to clear, and clean, the path.  
(Submitted by Julia Matthews)

Thank you: Dale Nietfeld, Chris Anderson, Scott Bremer, Crystal Ely, Larry Esty, Juana Garcia-McGinn, Ed Krings, Gerald Massie, Ann McGrath, and Melissa Lundberg... *and to all housekeeping across our Veterans Homes!*

# Heroes of HOUSEKEEPING

At the **Minneapolis Veterans Home**, Victor is one of many Housekeeping staff providing a critical service to both residents and staff. He works tirelessly, putting in long hours to ensure the environment for our Residents and staff is safe and sanitary. He has spent a tremendous amount of time with Paula, MDVA quality director, learning about PPE and how to be protected when cleaning Resident rooms. Victor is an incredible example of our staff, continuously going above and beyond.

*(Submitted by Brittney Voll)*



Thanks to one of **Minneapolis'** regular volunteers, Deb, for making and donating handmade (and personalized!) bingo cards. *(Submitted by Erin Betlock)*

## HASTINGS VETERANS HOME STRANGE BREW



The **Hastings Veterans Home** has been partnering with local businesses, and received a much-appreciated supply of hand sanitizer recently! *(Photo submitted by Michael Anderson)*

## Sorry, this seat's taken

(CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING AT ITS FINEST!)

We love the creativity of our staff! It can be hard to enforce physical distancing, especially with Residents facing memory loss.

The **Silver Bay Veterans Home** came up with a unique solution! These "towel mannequins" help create spacing in common seating areas.



# A SIGN OF THE TIMES

Staff appreciation signs are visible from the highway, just outside the **Luverne Veterans Home!** *(Photo submitted by Shirley Connor)*



## Hearts in Windows!

The nationwide movement of #HeartsintheWindow and #AWorldofHearts shows no signs of slowing down. Check out the windows at the **Minneapolis Veterans Home!** *(Photo submitted by Brenda Gravel)*



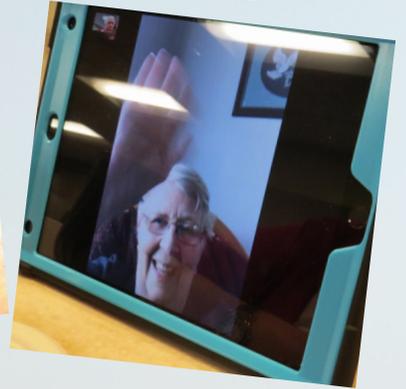
## "N" is for Nurse...also, for Hero



Mackenzie, age 5, was learning about the letter "N" in preschool, and couldn't resist showing everyone what a real hero looks like. Her mom, Amanda, serves as a nurse at the **Luverne Veterans Home**. *Mackenzie, we agree!* Thank you to Nurse Amanda, and all the dedicated healthcare staff at the Minnesota Veterans Homes. *(Photos submitted by Amanda Walker)*

# THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY STAY THE SAME

*Connecting in the cloud: Across all our Veterans Homes, staff are facilitating "visits" by connecting hundreds of Residents with family members.*



Photos submitted by Deanna Mounts (Fergus Falls Veterans Home), Julie Luchsinger (Silver Bay Veterans Home) and Shirlee Peterson (Minneapolis Veterans Home).



Don't miss out! We will also be sharing positive #HeroesAtHome stories on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Follow the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and stay engaged.