



# COMMUNITY UPDATES

## Grow your health care career with us!

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- Training provided
- Free employee meals
- Benefits including 401K
- Priceless memories
- Valuable experience

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## SUMMER IS HERE!

This issue we are featuring our Environmental Services teams, and it is timely, because our courtyards are looking amazing! Thanks to their hard work in creating such beautiful outdoor spaces for our residents; if you haven't been in the courtyards yet, I encourage you to take a look.

A big congratulations to our Owatonna team who just completed their MDH survey of the south building with flying colors! Minimal corrections of only 7! (average survey is 15) and the surveyor praised the staff for how well they did cares and for their knowledge of the residents. Way to go! If you recall, North Mankato was surveyed last year with minimal corrections as well. Owatonna north building is still awaiting their turn and I'm confident we will have a similar outcome. Great job everyone!

Also in this issue, meet the first recipients of our Birchwood Recognition Award. Thank you to everyone who submitted nominations with such kind words about the staff. We have such dedicated and caring people at Birchwood!

- Andrea Rupe, LALD  
Vice President of Business Operations



# MEET OUR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES TEAMS!

## OWATONNA

### JEFF FUNK

**Environmental Services Coordinator | [jeff@birchwoodcottagesmn.com](mailto:jeff@birchwoodcottagesmn.com)**



Hi my name is Jeff! I have lived in Minnesota all my life. I was born in Rochester, moved to Austin in 2010, and currently in in Blooming Prairie. I have a wonderful girlfriend; we have been together for five years. She is amazing and also works in the same field.

I began my career in the hotel industry for about 15 years and then wanted a change. I took a position in Austin at a large assisted living/memory care facility as a maintenance director. It was the best move I have ever made. A position came available at Birchwood Cottages and was hired in 2020. It is the best facility I have ever worked at and so glad I made the change. My supervisors and owners will hear you out and help in anyway that they they can. The owners will stop in and say hello and ask if we need anything, and treat you right. They are great people.

I enjoy helping people out anyway that I can to keep them safe and put smiles on their faces as that means everything to me. I hope I will have the same as I grow older and will need similar assistance. So for me, its about the residents and making sure they have what they need from me and at the end of the day putting a smile on both our faces. It feels good to know that I helped someone out today.

### CARRIE SHELDON

**Environmental Services Assistant**

Hi, my name is Carrie. I am currently the Housekeeper and Environmental Services Assistant. I am from Fort Dodge, IA and I moved to Minnesota in 1996. I love it here as it is so beautiful! I currently reside in Blooming Prairie.

I have three wonderful children, Jace, Jessie and Jamie, and an absolutely beautiful 1 year old granddaughter, Evelyn. I also have a dog, Rudy, a 3 1/2 year old Rat Terrier.

I love to camp, fish, plant flowers, decorate with solar lights, and spending time with my honey.

I have been with Birchwood Cottages for 1 1/2 years and I love it (go team Birchwood!). The residents mean the world to me.



# MEET OUR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES TEAMS!

## NORTH MANKATO

### DOUG MEHLHAFF

**Environmental Services Coordinator | [mankatomaintenance@birchwoodcottagesmn.com](mailto:mankatomaintenance@birchwoodcottagesmn.com)**



Hi, I'm Doug Mehlhaff! I've been at Birchwood since they opened in June 2018. My wife, Karen and I grew up in a small town in north central South Dakota (Eureka). We've been married for 36 years. Karen is a 5th grade teacher at Monroe Elementary in North Mankato.

We have been blessed with 4 amazing children. Isaac, (26) is finishing his schooling at UNC/Chapel Hill. Twins, Jonah and Eli are (19). Jonah works and just bought his first home at age 18. Eli attends school at U of Minnesota studying philosophy and pre law. Our daughter Maggie is deceased. We have an adorable naughty Siamese cat, Milo. Aside from hanging with my family, in my therapy time I enjoy gardening, cooking (German/Russian), Bible studies, home remodel projects, church activities and pestering my neighbors.

I've been working in Senior Living for over 13 years and find it rewarding to be able to serve others. Memory care became my passion because I have compassion for the resident wherever they may be in their Dementia. Each resident is always so appreciative with whatever help you try to provide.

I came to Birchwood Cottages after 6 years at Ecumen/St. Peter because Birchwood is a private and small family owned operation. Each employee at Birchwood is able to give back their own gifts and talents in a unique way that makes Birchwood the leader in memory care living for southern Minnesota.

### TRINITY PACHECO

**Environmental Services Assistant/Housekeeper**

My name is Trinity Pacheco, I'm the housekeeper at Birchwood Cottages in North Mankato. I have 2 cats,

Delilah and Oity. They're my world! What brought me to work here at Birchwood was my sister. She had been telling me for weeks how great it was working here. And it was exactly what I was looking for as I was in the middle of job hunting.

I'm very thankful I was given the opportunity to work here, it's been a blessing!



# Birchwood Cottages' Difference

## RECOGNITION AWARD



### ADRIANNA ROBERTS

Resident Assistant | North Mankato

Adrianna was nominated to receive the first Birchwood Cottages' Difference Recognition for North Mankato!

Adrianna's dedication to the resident's is exceptional and is recognized by her peers. She is consistent with her work and is always positive. She's an all around genuine person who is so welcoming to families visiting their loved ones.



### JADE CULVER

Resident Assistant | Owatonna

Jade was nominated to receive the first Birchwood Cottages' Difference Recognition for Owatonna!

Jade is consistently committed to the well-being of the residents and her team. She is always being helpful, kind and is a hard worker. She's a person her co-workers can count on and is friendly and professional with her residents.

# Thank you!

All of us at Birchwood would like to express our sincerest gratitude to Jade and Adrianna for upholding the mission and values of Birchwood. Thank you for your dedication to the residents, and your team.

**Has someone gone above and beyond for you or your loved one at Birchwood?**  
Nominate them today! Nomination cards available at the communities, or email the Executive Director. Anyone can be nominated at anytime.



## CONTACT US

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### North Mankato Community

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#### Find us on Facebook!

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@[birchwoodcottagesnorthmankato](#)

## MORE ONLINE

- [Owatonna Leadership](#)
- [North Mankato Leadership](#)
- [Blog Posts](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)

Visit

[BirchwoodCottagesMN.com](http://BirchwoodCottagesMN.com)

# Experience the Birchwood Difference Stop by for a Tour!



## Community Highlights

State-of-the-art camera and alarm technologies

Homestyle living areas with community kitchens

Private and companion room options

24/7 on-site dementia trained caregivers

Life enrichment programming

Chef prepared gourmet meals

Beautiful gardens and courtyards with walking paths

*Come Home to*



*People. Purpose. Passion*

*Our  
Values*

**People.** The heart of Birchwood Cottages.

**Purpose.** To provide a higher quality of life for those with memory loss.

**Passion.** For striving for excellence.

