



**Friday, May 4, 2018**  
**State association honors Immanuel Lutheran Communities' Jim Pettis as Volunteer of the Year**

KALISPELL – In a local ceremony today, Immanuel Lutheran Communities of Kalispell celebrated Jim Pettis' achievement as Volunteer of the Year awarded to him by The Montana Health Care Association. Pettis was awarded Volunteer of the Year award at MHCA's annual awards banquet during their convention in Bozeman.

The award is one of the association's 2018 Commitment to Caring Awards, presented to Pettis for state-wide excellence and commitment to volunteering. Pettis volunteers at Immanuel Skilled Care Center and The Lodge at Buffalo Hill assisting residents and interacting with their families.

"Jim is truly an outstanding volunteer spending over 20 hours per week at Immanuel Lutheran Communities," Volunteer Coordinator Kathy Buffington said in nominating Pettis. "His passion to help the staff, his gentle and kind love for the residents and his consistency are truly unparalleled."

Pettis has been volunteering at Immanuel Lutheran Communities for nearly 10 years. He spends many hours visiting with residents. He's played Santa Claus, helped with fundraisers and helped with outings. He will rarely say no to any request for help and often sees where help is needed before being asked. "This man is what every facility needs, a person with the time, the energy and mainly the heart to simply fill in wherever needed," said Buffington.

In addition spending time with residents, Jim helped kick off a new volunteer program in memory support called 'Lunch at the Lodge.' Buffington said, "I asked Jim what he thought about visiting with the men in the newly opened neighborhood and he said, 'I can go over there every Tuesday for lunch.' I envision Sam with Norm, Cliff and Woody sitting around 'Cheers' and the theme song playing '...sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name' when I think of Jim and his friends at The Lodge. He just makes life better!"

Pettis spent his career working for the railroad as a conductor and enthusiastically spreads his railroad calendars throughout the buildings each January. At least once a year, we ask Jim to do a presentation on the railroad for a group and they put together the model train set for fun.

"Jim strengthens our employees, he loves our community and he wants us to always reach our full potential. A person who continually gives away their time and talent to

place others, and others' needs, ahead of their own, is the purist form of sacrifice. Jim loves these people he spends his mornings with; he always puts them first. His self sacrifice is what makes a difference. That is not unique to Jim and it is not unique to most volunteers. Jim has simply perfected the art," Buffington said.

**About Immanuel Lutheran Communities**

Immanuel Lutheran Communities is a not-for-profit Life Plan Community located in Kalispell, Montana. Immanuel Lutheran offers residential living, assisted living, memory support, rehabilitation services and skilled nursing care. Operating since 1957, Immanuel Lutheran remains committed to its philosophy of providing a faith-based environment to enrich the lives of older adults. For more information please contact 406-752-9625 or visit our website at [www.ilcorp.org](http://www.ilcorp.org).

Founded in 1962, the Montana Health Care Association is a nonprofit, member-driven professional association serving Montana's long-term care facilities from with 282 facilities represented. Members provide skilled nursing, personal care, assisted living, home health, respite and therapy services.

The association and its members are dedicated to improving the quality of long-term health care in Montana through educational programs and advocacy with the Montana Legislature and administrative agencies. MHCA also serves as an information source for its members, state regulatory agencies, the Montana Legislature and the general public.

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