



2005 Division Street Manitowoc Wisconsin 54220-5652
T 920 684 7171 F 920 683 9292 www.felicianvillage.org

Felician Village

NEWS RELEASE

To: Herald Times Reporter Date: June 2, 2009
From: Mark McLaughlin, Director of Marketing (684-7171 Ext 329)
Release: IMMEDIATELY
Headline: FELICIAN AWARD WINNER GRIES HONORED

On Sunday, May 17, Pat Kaldor, President, Felician Village, announced that Wilfred “Wiff” Gries is the 2009 recipient of the Felician Award. This was particularly pleasing to Kaldor who explained that Gries is “one of our own” since Gries and his wife, Marjorie, are residents at The Gardens at Felician Village.

The Felician Award for Excellence in Service to the Elderly, now in its third year, has been established to recognize an individual whose advocacy for seniors has had an impact in Manitowoc County. The criteria for the Felician Award are that the recipient will have had a significant impact on seniors in a unique and personal way and that the person’s efforts reflect the core values of the Felician Sisters. If the recipient’s employment in some way involves seniors, what they have accomplished for seniors should go beyond the normal expectations of their job responsibilities.

During the program honoring Gries, Sr. Clarette Stryzewski, President/CEO of Felician Services, Inc., explained that “The Felician Sisters and all the employees at Felician Village strive to follow the values of the Sisters but it is particularly rewarding when one of our own residents is recognized for living out these important values in service to others.”

The many services Gries is involved in were presented at the award program by Vicky Schneider, Director, Spiritual Care, Felician Village. As a returning Navy veteran who served in World War II, Gries worked for Wisconsin Public Service for 40 years and 25 years as a volunteer of the Brillion Fire Department. Following his retirement, Gries dedicated his time to the service of the elderly. He served two 3-year terms with the Commission on Aging Board of Manitowoc County, served on the Advisory Board of the Aging & Disability Resource Center Mobility Committee, participated in the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Group and was a member of their regional board. Gries also participated in the Senior Statesman’s program where he learned how to advocate at the state level on behalf of senior citizens. Gries continues to volunteer twice a week at St. Vincent DePaul.

Gries has served as a volunteer at Felician Village for 22 years, first driving weekly from Brillion to St. Mary’s Home for 13 years and for the past 9 years serving directly from his residence at The Gardens.

He is also present daily at St. Mary's transporting residents, serving as an usher and Eucharistic Minister and volunteering as cashier in the Coffee Shop.

As Schneider explained during the program, "Wiff truly lives out, in word and action, our Felician mission and values".

Gries was nominated by Sr. Mary Agnes Landowski of Felician Village, who referred to the Sisters' values of dignity and compassionate services in her nomination comments. "By providing services for the elderly, Wiff enhances their dignity. In responding to their needs, he acknowledges each person's worth and value. He has given these services willingly, freely and for a good part of his life. Volunteering his services has become his lifestyle".

The announcement was made at a ceremony held at the Courthouse Pub, Manitowoc. Over 35 people attended the event to celebrate the announcement with Gries and his wife, Marj.

In addition to receiving her own personal award, Gries's name will be placed on a plaque that is displayed at Felician Village. The names of the two previous winners, LeRoy Krejcarek, Two Rivers, and Mary Claire Mullins, Manitowoc, are also on the plaque. The plaque has spaces where future Felician Award winner's names will be added. Roeschen's Omnicare Pharmacy help make this event possible through their corporate sponsorship. They have been the corporate sponsor each of the three years.

- 30 -



PHOTO ID: The three people in the photo are, (l to r) Sr. Agnes Landowski, Felician Village employee who nominated Gries; Wilfred "Wiff" Gries, 2009 Felician Award winner; and Sr. Clarette Stryzewski, President/CEO, Felician Services, Inc. representing the Felician Sisters, sponsors of Felician Village.