



PILLARS OF THE CITY

NORTH MAIN STREET FLOOD WALL CITIZEN RECOGNITION PROJECT

Applications due by December 31st

Project Goal: To utilize the flood wall pillars on North Main Street to give recognition to people, in Austin's past and present, who have made significant contributions to improving the quality of life in Austin related to growth, economic impact, health, education, culture, recreation, communications, business or scientific innovation.

NOMINATION APPLICATION FORM

Pillars of the City Nominee Name: Rosalie Seltz

Is Nominee Living?: Yes No
(If Nominee is deceased, please provide alternate contact information)

Alternate Contact:

Nominee/Alternate Contact Address:

Nominee/Alternate Contact Phone:

Nominee/Alternate Contact Email:

Describe nominee's significant contribution to the City of Austin and identify the time frame in which it was made. The Committee will not conduct additional research; all judging is based on the information provided.

See attached

Please provide photo of the nominee to be used as basis for recognition artwork, if available.

Nomination submitted by:

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email:

Signature:

Date: 12/28/21

*Please return form to City Hall, 500 4th Avenue NE or e-mail to annk@ci.austin.mn.us.
Please call 507-437-9940 with any questions.*

Pillar Nomination – Rosalie Seltz

I believe that Rosalie (Rosie) Seltz deserves to be named a Pillar of the City of Austin because she has been an inspiration to hundreds of students at Austin High School. She continues to be an inspiration into her nineties.

Rosie Seltz taught English at Austin High School from 1950 until she retired in 1993. It was her first job out of college and it ended up being her life career. She served as the journalism teacher and high school newspaper and yearbook advisor. In 1989 Rosie received the lifetime achievement award from the Minnesota High School Press Association.

Rosie is well known for her devotion to correct grammar and good communication skills. She was quoted in an October 1989 Austin Daily Herald article: “My primary purpose is to teach proper communication. Only a few of them (journalism students) will go on to journalism, but they all will have to speak and write the rest of their lives.”

One student who did go on to a career in journalism, Stephan Benzkofer, said, “Mrs. Seltz was my first and most influential journalism teacher. She laid the foundation for what proved to be a wonderfully satisfying, productive 25-year career in newspapers. Her love of the English language and the beauty that can be found in grammar informs my writing to this day. Equally important, her high standards – did someone say “stickler”? – were an invaluable lesson that have stuck with me ever since.”

Rosie is still volunteering in Austin. Among other things, she volunteers every summer for the Mower County Historical Society during the county fair. She always works in the school house, where she entertains the hundreds of people who visit the site.

Rosie is humble about her achievements. She has said, “If you hang around long enough you’re bound to win something.” (referring to her lifetime achievement award.)

Her teaching philosophy was: “Students won’t always remember what you said, but they will remember how they felt.” If you mention Rosie Seltz’s name, the reaction is usually, “She is a force!”

Her legacy of high standards has influenced generations of Austin grads. It lives on in their use of good grammar and communication skills.

Rosie was married to Dick Seltz, an award-winning high school baseball coach and history teacher at Austin High.

2023



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NOMINATION APPLICATION FORM

Pillars of the City Nominee Name: Rosie Seltz

Is Nominee Living?: Yes No
(If Nominee is deceased, please provide alternate contact information)

Alternate Contact: _____

Nominee/Alternate Contact Address: _____

Nominee/Alternate Contact Phone: _____

Nominee/Alternate Contact Email: _____

Describe nominee's significant contribution to the City of Austin and identify the time frame in which it was made. The Committee will not conduct additional research; all judging is based on the information provided.

Please provide photo of the nominee to be used as basis for recognition artwork, if available.

Nomination submitted by:

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email:

Signature:

Date:

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Please call 507-437-9940 with any questions.*

Ann Kasel

From:
Sent: Tuesday, August 2, 2022 4:47 PM
To: Ann Kasel
Subject: Pillar nomination Rosie Seltz
Attachments: Pillar NominationSeltz.docx; RosieSeltzDailyHerald.docx

I am sending two documents.

By Carolyn Bogott

American Association of University Women

The story goes that there was a sign on the side of a restaurant in northern Minnesota that read, "Welcome Fishermen." A small woman was seen reaching up to add a comma between the words with a black magic marker.

From the parking lot came a voice saying, "Mrs. Seltz, is that you?!" And, indeed, the woman was Rosie Seltz. The voice came from one of her former students, who knew that if Mrs. Seltz saw it, there was no mistake in written material that would remain uncorrected.



Rosie Seltz

Rosie Seltz taught English at Austin High School from 1950, when she was fresh out of teachers' training at Winona State, until 1993, when she retired. Now, at 91 years young, she says that teaching gave her so many benefits, and we know that her teaching gave endless benefits to the thousands of students she taught. This many years into retirement, how many teachers still have students contact them, as well as stop by for a visit?

The teaching philosophy that she followed was that "Students won't always remember what you said, but they will remember how they felt." To that end, Mrs. Seltz would ask students who didn't do well on a test to come to her after school and she would go through the test with them and offer a second chance. She was

usually in her classroom until 6 p.m., helping individual students. She wanted her students to use even the skills they didn't think they needed. Illustrating rules of grammar by using examples from the newspapers, or magazines, or from current music lyrics was one of her teaching methods.

Writer and former student Stephan Benzkofer said, "Mrs. Seltz was my first and most influential journalism teacher. She laid the foundation for what proved to be a wonderfully satisfying, productive 25-year career in newspapers. Her love of the English language and the beauty that can be found in grammar informs my writing to this day. Equally important, her high standards — did someone say "stickler"? — were an invaluable lesson that have stuck with me ever since.

"I still use her Simon and Garfunkel example to explain when to use a comma in a series. And I can draw a straight line from her classroom to one of my keenest pet peeves: people omitting the comma to set apart the noun in a direct address. Even on birthday cakes! (i.e. Happy birthday, Sam!)"

Although as a child she wanted to become a nurse like her mother, in high school Rosie realized that the written word was very important. She started doing copy editing in high school and continued with that in college. Her two jobs during her school years were at a photography studio and doing public relations work for Winona State. Both those experiences were no doubt helpful when Rosie was asked to provide school news to the Austin Daily Herald, as well as to supervise the student publications during her years at Austin High School.

During her childhood as well as her college years, she lived in Winona and loved the river and bluffs. When she came to Austin, she expected to stay only a year, but, at a mixer at the Bervens after a ball game, she met Dick Seltz, an AHS history teacher and coach, whom she ended up marrying. They remained in Austin and raised their four children here.

One of Rosie's favorite quotes is from Eleanor Roosevelt, "We should constantly be reminded of what we owe in return for what we know." This philosophy of life is reflected in the fact that Rosie has continued to give of herself since retirement. Hospital Auxiliary, Cedar Valley Services, Mower County Historical Society, and Austin High School Alumni Association have all had years of her dedicated volunteer service.

Her words of advice for a full life are to remain open to change, to be curious and interested in people and in new ideas. Austin, and the thousands of students you inspired, thank you, Mrs. Seltz!

Pillar Nomination – Rosie Seltz



Rosie Seltz in living.

Rosie Seltz positively influenced Austin High School students for forty-three years with her high standards of English language usage as well as her supportive teaching style. If a student didn't do well on a test, she would take time after school hours to go over the test and give the student a second chance. She says "Students won't always remember what you said, but they will know how they felt ." When her name comes up, former students always have a positive story about Mrs. Seltz.

Rosie continued to give to her community after her retirement with volunteer activities. She has given her time to the Mower County Historical Society for the County Fair, hosting visits to the schoolhouse. She also volunteered with the Hospital Auxiliary and the Austin High School Alumni Association.

Rosie has left a legacy of good communication skills, as well as self-confidence in generations of students. She is definitely worthy of being commemorated as a Pillar of Austin.

