

SENIOR

Ring in the new year unique and varied

FROM THE SHERIDAN SENIOR CENTER

SHERIDAN — New Year's Eve and New Year's Day give many an opportunity to reflect or resolve. For some, New Year's Eve and Day called for special celebrations or activities. And even if the moment didn't seem special at the time, some activities turn out to be special after all.

"We used to go to the dance at the old school house on lower Dutch Creek along with people from Ulm, Verona, Wyarno," said Frances Miech. "Paul and George Koltiska would play waltzes, polka, two steps with their guitar and violin."

Duane Buchholz served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean Conflict from 1949 to 1954.

"We celebrated Christmas 1951 in Hong Kong," said Buchholz. "Then, on the way home from Korea on the USS Brown we crossed the date line on New Year's Eve so we essentially had two New Year's. I'm still trying to think of what to do with the extra new year."

"A group of 12 of us would go out to dinner at the Golden Steer then out to the Elks for dancing," said Sheridan resident Lola Deming. "My husband was a great dancer."

"New Year's was about the same as every other day," said Paul Ross. Ross grew up on a farm then worked on a ranch for three years. After ranching, Ross took a job as a truck driver.

"You got up and you worked. Sundays and holidays the family got together; the aunts, uncles, grandparents and kids, we would have a big meal, the table would be piled high, the kids had their own table. Everyone came to the table and stood behind their chairs and said their prayers — as soon as you heard 'amen' you would hear the chairs slide."

Jim and Phyllis O'Connell shared their New Year's memories.

"We usually had a party on New Year's Eve but one year we took a trip to Mexico. I remember flying over

Dallas and seeing all the Christmas lights. We spent one night in San Antonio, the next in Veracruz and the next Cozumel. We had the three girls and Jim's mother. She had bought a big sombrero and we had a hard time getting it back home on the plane. In San Miguel we stayed up until 2 a.m. listening to the mariachi band."

"We used to get together with friends and go to someone's house," said Barb Whiteman. "That way we could bring the kids. We'd play cards in one room and the kids would play in another."

Dixie Marosok grew up in Nebraska.

"The community of McCalister, Nebraska, had a New Year's Eve party and dance for the surrounding farmers and their families," said Marosok. "We dressed up and brought all the kids. We started dancing at 8 p.m. and stopped just long enough to eat dinner and put the babies to bed. The dancing continued through to early morning."

"We always had a New Year's Eve service at church," said Herb Johnson. "It sure was a good thing for our church people to do. We'd have refreshments."

Karen Watembach grew up in Wibaux, Montana.

"As a young girl we loved to dance," said Watembach. "The whole family would go to St. Phillips to dance. It was a small village south of Wibaux that had died but the dance hall was still there. Years later I'd usually go with a group of other girls to Billings to dance but New Year's Eve was never a big deal."

Later Karen became a Catholic sister and worked on the Crow Agency in Montana.

"Many years later I enjoyed the New Year's Eve powwow in Crow Agency," said Watembach.

You may not think what you do on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day is special, but chances are, what you do is special and unique as you are creating a special memory.



COURTESY PHOTO

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day celebrations are as unique and varied as the individuals who celebrate the night and following day. For years, Herb Johnson would attend church service on New Year's Eve and spend New Year's Day watching football.

CENTER STAGE

Say 'no' to IRS scammers

Last March, the Senior Center offered a Fraud Watch presentation as part of the Center's "When I'm 64...or more" life planning series. We invited local AARP Chapter leadership and the Sheridan Police Department to present warning signs and preventative actions all of us can take to dodge being scammed.



Folks who attended were surprised when Detective Jerome Smith, one of the keynote speakers, shared

that many of the scams are here in Sheridan.

The sad news is that once the money is gone, it's gone. It's difficult for detectives and FBI agents to trace and recover money. Even if they could recover scammed monies, it could take a long, long time.

The best tip for keeping scammers from getting your money: don't fall for it. Take a breath, slow down and take control. Tell the caller you're going to do some checking and will get back to them. If they are legitimate, they'll understand.

For the moment, let's focus on IRS tax scams.

Here's a big piece of advice: The IRS will never call you.

Since our Fraud Watch presentation last March, I have had people call me asking about a "call from the IRS" they got. I am proud to share that they didn't get taken. Just recently, someone showed me a phone number from a call she had gotten "from the IRS." It was a legitimate Washington, D.C. area code but trust me: it's a scam. No one who shared with me this past year that they had been contacted "by the IRS" has been arrested.

I spoke with a representative at one of our local reputable accounting firms about how the IRS would contact you if they needed to.

The IRS will always contact you in writing. Only after repeated attempts to reach you by mail, would they call you.

What do you do to ensure the letter or call is not a scam? You can do one of two things.

One option is to call the local IRS office. They are located at 1949 Sugarland Drive, next to the Holiday Inn. Call 672-7425 for their availability.

Another option is to call a local reputable accounting firm. Tell them that you received a letter from the IRS and that you would like them to validate its authenticity. It is fair — and good business — to ask if they will charge and how much for this consult. One accounting firm I spoke with does not charge for consults — such as validating the authenticity of an IRS letter — but they will visit with you about their fees should the letter

be legitimate and you need follow up. You don't have to be one of their clients or have ever done business with them for this consult.

Here's a strong suggestion for this tax season: file early whether you are getting a refund or have to pay. If you have to pay, you can file early then you have until April 15 to send a check.

Organizations and businesses are required by law to have your W-2 payroll and 1099 Forms for interest income postmarked to you by Jan. 31. If you don't have all your paperwork to file by the first week of February, start calling and asking for your forms.

If you are computer savvy, you can visit the official IRS website at www.irs.gov for tips, forms and questions on filing.

I have a wish: that Sheridan County is a place that scammers won't win. Please spread the word so we're all safe. Share it with people you care about. I invite you to join us on Tuesday night, Jan. 5, at 5:30 p.m. for a free presentation for community members of all ages on Fraud Watch for all types of scams. The presentation will be held on the dining room stage at the Senior Center at 211 Smith St.

LOIS BELL is the communications director at the Sheridan Senior Center. Center Stage is written by friends of the Senior Center for the Sheridan Community. It is a collection of insights and stories related to living well at every age.

SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS

- "Scammers Never Take a Holiday" Learn the warning signs and tips and techniques to avoid being pulled into a scam. The Senior Center is partnering with AARP and the Sheridan County Police Department for a Fraud Watch presentation on Tuesday, Jan. 5, at 5:30 p.m. at the Senior Center. The presentation is free and open to community members of all ages. Just walk in. The center is located at 211 Smith St. This presentation is offered through the Senior Center's "When I'm 64...or more" life planning presentation series.

- Country style breakfast at the Senior Center featuring biscuits and gravy, eggs, grapes, hot coffee and tea and a choice of juice. Saturday, Jan. 9 at 211 Smith St. serving breakfast from 7:30-9:30 a.m. \$ 4.50 suggested contribution for those 60 and older and registered with the Senior Center. Senior Center meal tickets can be used by registered patrons. Please call us at 672-2240 to let us know you're coming. Pay by ticket, cash or check at the dining room desk when you come.

- Is it becoming a national event? Whether you spell your first, middle or last name Jane, Jayne, Janie or — however — you are invited to the annual JANE PARTY! The party is Saturday, Jan. 16, at 2 p.m. at the Sheridan

Inn. Please call 672-2240 by 5 p.m. on Jan. 8 to let us know you're coming and for details. This is an invitation to guys and gals.

- Young at Heart Players to begin rehearsing for next production. The theater group at the Senior Center will resume on Tuesday, Jan. 19 to begin rehearsing for the next production, "The Paper Bag Bandit," a hilarious old-fashioned melodrama. Director Pat Tomsovic encourages all interested actors, both veteran and new to the stage, to attend! The show has many characters with lots of small roles, so it's just right for people who don't like to memorize lines! Join us at 9:30 a.m. at the Senior Center if you'd like to get involved with theater. If you are unable to attend that day and would like to be involved, call or email Pat at 752-9070 or patomsovic@bresnan.net.

- Tax preparation assistance appointments at the Senior Center for February are now being taken by calling 672-2240. The appointments will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning Feb. 2. Make your appointment early to ensure you have a spot. March and April appointments are not yet available. This service is offered free by AARP Foundation Tax Aid for personal tax filings only for those who are age 60 and older (no businesses).

Sheridan Senior Center
"Celebrating 40 Years of Service!"

Fun and Food

Entrees and kiosk include sides, dessert and drink.

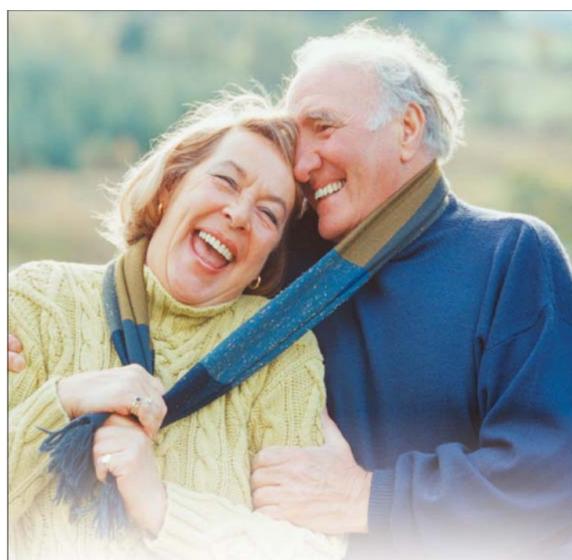
Entrée Choice*	or	Soup Kiosk
Sun - Herb Baked Chicken		
Mon - Chicken Enchilada		Beef Stew
Tue - Sloppy Joe		Creamy Chicken Soup
Wed - Fish Florentine/Wild Rice		Salad Bar/ Assorted Toppings
Thu - Pork Wing		Salad Bar/ Assorted Toppings
Fri - French Dip		Fish Chowder
Sat - Beef Vegetable Skillet		

***Home Delivered Meals**

Mon - Support Group Night	5:30 p.m.	Various rooms
Tue - "When I'm 64...or more" Fraud Watch	5:30 p.m.	Dining Room
Thu - Crochet Class 6 week class pay instructor	1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Art Studio
Fri - Conversation Pit	8:00 a.m.	Dining Room
Sat - Biscuits & Gravy Breakfast	7:30 - 9:30 a.m.	Dining Room

Visit us on the web at: www.sheridanseniorcenter.org

Lunch Service Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.,
7 days a week
211 Smith Street Sheridan, WY 82801 (307) 672-6079



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