

## The magic of a car and a marriage proposal

FROM THE SHERIDAN SENIOR CENTER

SHERIDAN — Maybe it's magic. A car was involved in a marriage proposal for four couples at the annual Golden Years dinner at the Senior Center on Oct. 15.

"We were in my Volkswagon Beetle convertible when I asked her to marry me," said Don Wells said of when he proposed to his future wife, Nancy.

"We went to different high schools. She was on the women's swim team and I was on the guy's swim team," said Wells. "We knew each other over the summers."

After college for Nancy and service for Don, their paths crossed again and they started talking.

"I can't remember if I called her up — probably — and we went to the movies," said Wells. They dated for almost two years before Wells asked her to marry him.

Connie and Wayne Newcross were the youngest couple at the Golden Years evening celebrating 51 years of marriage. Connie Newcross shares how they met.

"It was his friend and my friend trying to introduce us for about a year," said Newcross. "He kept canceling because he was so shy."



COURTESY PHOTO

**Celebrating 70 years of marriage, Irene and Richard Snider, left, share cutting wedding cake with Connie and Wayne Newcross who have been married 51 years. The two couples represented the longest and shortest couple married who attended the annual Golden Years dinner at the Senior Center on October 15. Forty people celebrated being married 50 years or longer at this annual gathering.**

date. Where did Wayne Newcross ask Connie to marry him?

"We were sitting in his pickup truck when he proposed," said Newcross. "We started talking about how many children we wanted to have. We picked out a boy's name." Then he asked her to marry him.

Jim Marosok was sitting atop a utility pole stringing cable lines in town. From his perch, he started visiting with a young teacher who was at recess at the

Linden School playground. The two had met previously at a Sheridan College ball game.

"I'm standing out at recess and he recognized me," said Dixie Marosok. "He doesn't like to do anything by himself so he started talking to me. I started going out for recess a little sooner every day."

Their first date was with a group of friends. "We didn't go out on individual dates then," she said. The couple met in groups with friends for six weeks before going on a date alone by themselves.

They were in his 1955 Oldsmobile V8 when he proposed to her.

"We were going to dinner at the American Legion but instead of going to the legion, Jim drove out of the way," said Dixie Marosok. "He was very quiet and then he asked me. The words were barely out of his mouth before I said yes." The Marosoks have been married 58 years.

Richard Snider wasn't in his Ford Model A when he proposed to his future wife, Irene, but they did drive around while they dated.

"We went to high school together, we were in the same grade," they said. "But I noticed her when I was a junior or

sophomore," said Richard Snider.

They don't remember exactly where they went on their first date but most likely it was to a dance, which were popular gatherings in Sundance, Wyoming in the mid-1940s. Then he proposed.

"We spent about \$35 on the diamond and \$10 on the ring," said Irene Snider. "We didn't have much money then."

The Sniders held a special place of honor at the Golden Years dinner as the couple who have been married the longest, celebrating their 70th anniversary this year.

"We're still having fun," said Snider.

In the 1970s, community volunteers began the annual Golden Years dinner to celebrate those married 50 years or longer. The Senior Center became the host site three years ago. Couples, widows and widowers came to the evening celebration that included live Spanish guitar music and dinner with wedding cake for dessert.

"It's easy to ask someone to marry you when you're in love and stay married when you're in love," said Jim Marosok.

With or without a car involved with the proposal, a marriage of 50 years or more is a magical event to celebrate.

## Defining 'senior'

I'm so confused. I'm not sure what defines who is a "senior" (outside of high school or college, that is).

When you turn 50, you can join AARP. You most likely are still working (like I am) and not old enough to retire, but you can join. If you go to Albertson's on Thursdays, you can get a 10 percent discount if you're 55 or older. For dinner at the Dragon Wall Chinese restaurant, you have to be 65 to get a discount. There are senior discounts for movies, museum fees, events.

You can register at the Sheridan Senior Center when you're 60 and qualify for a "suggested contribution" toward most events and meals. There are folks in the community in their 70s, 80s and 90s who say they're too young to come to the Senior Center.

To enroll in Medicare, you have to be 65 unless you're working and covered under a qualified employer's medical program or if there is some type of exception for you. At Red Lodge Ski Resort, you can ski for \$20 for the day if you're 70 or older under their "super senior" rate. I'm sure somewhere I have to be 62 before I can get something.

So, is anyone "in charge" of standardizing who is a senior? It appears not.

I'm just coming to this party myself. I'm somewhere in-between AARP and the super-senior skier price at Red Lodge. But as I'm out and about, I find myself checking to see if my age qualifies for a discount: it all varies. But, hey, 10 percent off a hotel room at least pays for the lodging and local taxes on the room: I'll take that.

I heard one woman's opening benediction at a conference say, "forgive me, Lord, I've never been old before." How true for all of us.

While age can qualify you for some perks — such as discounts — I think the rest is really up to us. No big news here, we've been doing this for millennia. And, (wait for the ta-dum), our lives are definitely not defined by discounts although discounts are nice.

Tim Lockwood, state director for AARP of Wyoming spoke to a group in Sheridan last May about AARP CEO Jo Anne Jenkins' book, "Disrupt Aging."

"The average life expectancy of someone at the age of 50 is approximately 30 more years," said Lockwood. "That's longer than all the years you probably spent in school."

And what a great opportunity to try new things. Lockwood continued to say this very point: This is a great time to explore new directions in life, take chances on something you may have not considered doing before if you choose to do so. He shares stories of professional 70-year-old barrel racers and dirt bike riders in Wyoming. These individuals are defining what "senior" means to them: most likely it's not a number.


I'm years away from retiring but am beginning to think what life is going to look like for me. My live point forward is a blank palette in many ways, a blank canvas that I can paint to my own numbers. I look forward to painting that palette with my husband, Mark. And we're going to head in that direction with or without discounts or special treatment because of our age (although we won't pass up those opportunities when we find them!).

So, as my husband and I start to look at defining what "senior" means for us, we'll still be on the lookout for enrollment deadlines (such as Medicare) and discounts. And we'll keep our fingers crossed we won't be asked for proof of age when we ask for the senior discount!

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.



LOIS BELL



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\*entrée only offered for Home Delivered Meals

Mon - Construction begins at the Senior Center - please watch signage for access to building

Tues - Watercolor Painting	10:00 a.m.	Art Studio
Thu - State Candidate Forum, Districts 29, 30 and 51	5:30 to 7:00 p.m.	Dining Room
Fri - Dominoes	9:30 p.m.	Dining Room

Lunch Service Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., 7 days a week

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### SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS

- The new phone number for the Day Break Senior Adult Care Services at the Sheridan Senior Center is: 675-4YOU (4968).
  - Join us for a state candidate forum at the Sheridan Senior Center on Oct. 27, 5:30-7 p.m. Refreshments hosted by Sheridan Chapter 676 of AARP. The Senior Center is located at 211 Smith Street.
  - Are you getting the maximum benefits from your Medicare Part D prescription coverage? Don't throw your money out the window or get caught in changes in 2017 that could cost you more. A review of your Medicare prescription coverage could help you stretch your dollars. Free review of your Medicare Part D prescription coverage will be available at the Senior Center. Appointments are required by calling 672-2240. Don't wait and be locked out of this valuable and free service.
  - Veterans, please allow us to put your military pro-
- file on the Sheridan Senior Center's Wall of Honor. We are conducting interviews with veterans Sep 26 - Oct. 28. We have extended the date by one week. Please plan to make an appointment by calling 672-2240 to share your story and be photographed to be placed on our Wall of Honor during Veterans Day week. If you have wonderful photos of you in uniform, we will scan your photo and return it to you.
- Construction at the Senior Center is scheduled to begin on Monday, Oct. 24. Entrance to the Sheridan Senior Center will be through the north doors facing Whitney Commons and through temporary doors on the south side of the building from the lobby. Please look for signage. Services at the Senior Center will continue and meals will be served seven days a week, 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Questions? Please call the center's receptionist at 672-2240.