

New Year's is more than just the bubbly

BY LOIS BELL
SHERIDAN SENIOR CENTER

SHERIDAN — “New Year’s 1981 I was north of the Arctic Circle in Alaska,” said veteran Harold Huber of a memorable New Year’s Day for him. “The Northern Lights were dancing all night long. The women in the headquarters wanted to go on a patrol and command sergeants.”

A major, Huber relented to the request and took an all-women patrol against the 10th Special Forces and the 9th Infantry Division. The patrol set up an ambush; after three hours, they saw an “enemy patrol” and executed the ambush with laser equipment.

“We led them (the ‘captured’) back to camp. When we arrived, the ladies removed their headgear and facial coverings,” said Huber. “The ‘enemy’ realized it was an all-girl patrol. They were a Special Forces team of eight men. Needless to say, they begged not to disclose this information.”

Since 2003, the Sheridan Senior Center has hosted a noon day New Year’s Eve celebration, the brainchild of Senior Center Director Jane Perkins, who likes to refer to herself as the “Director of Fun.” The farewell to 2016 and hello to 2017 celebration was hosted on Friday, Dec. 30, on what Perkins called the New Year’s Eve “Eve” to include as many people as possible who may have weekend plans.

Prior to the New Year’s Eve “Eve” celebration at the center, Perkins collected written experiences from a number of people who come to the Senior Center. Huber was one person who shared a holiday experience. Individuals submitted New Year experiences that included adventure, novel experiences and humor.



COURTESY PHOTO |

Experiences ringing in the new year can be as varied as the people who celebrate. The Senior Center collected New Year’s Eve recollections from people who come to the Senior Center. Memories range from assignments in the Arctic to holiday cooking mishaps. The collection is posted in the Senior Center lobby at 211 Smith St.

Sheridan resident Steve Baskin was in Times Square, New York City, one New Year’s Eve to watch the giant Waterford crystal ball descend to count down a new year. It was an experience

“It was 1968, very cold and thousands of people,” Baskin said. “We stayed at a hotel not far from Times Square. It was great fun but I never did it again. Standing in the cold for hours is really not all that much fun!!”

Flavia George celebrated many new years in Brazil.

“I have great memories of my New Year’s Eve celebrations in Rio De Janeiro,” said George. “At quarter to 12, my family and I went to the beach to watch the fireworks and welcome the new year. Prior to that, my grandma had a party at the house where we gathered around the dinner table and ate special end-of-the-year goodies.”

JoAnn Forte remembers a special New Year’s Eve for her; she was in Barbados in during the first Gulf war.

“We had Hoppin’ John, black-eyed peas, corn bread,

spaghetti casserole and roast chicken that had been alive and well that very morning,” Forte said, “and pound cake for dessert.

“We walked the beach at midnight, danced to live pub music and reggae. We only had television from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. so I didn’t get to see Dick Clark,” said Forte, referring to the radio personality who hosted the Dick Clark’s Rockin’ New Year’s Eve program every Dec. 31 for 40 years.

Judi Panetta was living on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, when she invited friends to

an afternoon dinner.

“I put a turkey (in the oven) with garlic, basil and Parmesan (cheese) inside,” said Panetta, who is proud of her Italian holiday turkey.

“When guests began to arrive, someone suggested that something was burning. All the decorations from the surrounding pine forests and beach and some candles were all checked – nothing!” Panetta said. “I really got a whiff of something fowl!”

She searched throughout the house to discover noth-

ing then proceeded with the dinner when all her guests had assembled.

“Not until the bird was out (of the oven) did I discover I had left the plastic bag with the giblets inside still cooking with the bird!”

Whether greeting a new year in fatigues, away from home, with family or with friends, each new year brings new opportunities to celebrate another planetary turn around the sun with unique experiences for each and every one...going beyond a glass of bubbling champagne.

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Recalling Grumpy’s shack across the track

Roy “Grumpy” Norris was the city marshall part of the time when I was in high school. He was the grandfather of Marjorie and Bob Douglas. He lived in a two-room shack south across the CB&Q railroad tracks and the train depot. Bob and Marjorie lived rural about 10 miles north of town.

When the weather was nasty and bad, Bob stayed with his grandad.

On these occasions, Marjorie took room and board with Mrs. Satterfield up in the timber on Pine Street. There were several girls that lived rural that did the same thing when the weather was bad.

We boys liked playing poker whenever we got the chance.

We had several places in town where we honed our skills at playing poker. When Bob stayed with Grumpy, we usually had a poker game at his shack. We would say, “We were going to Grumpy’s shack across the tracks to

play poker.”

Grumpy and Danny Rodabaugh, the local harness and shoe repair man, like to play cards at the local pool hall. We high school boys were allowed to play the lesser games, but were not allowed in the poker room. We boys would gang up on Grumpy and Danny to rounce or set them. They would get extremely angry when we did this. It was a lot of fun to rounce or set Grumpy or Danny!

When we played cards at Grumpy’s shack, the smoke would be so thick that you could cut it with a knife. Everyone smoked and the smoke was very thick. The shack was small and nowhere for the smoke to go.

There were several poker players that I learned the game from. The card savvy and education of playing at Grumpy’s shack stood me in good stead when I joined the U.S. Navy. I won a lot of money playing poker aboard ship in the Navy.

We sometimes cooked when we played poker at Grumpy’s shack. The menu was generally chili and hamburgers. The hamburgers were usually burnt on the outside and raw

in the middle as I remember them. If you complained, you were the cook for the next meal. At that age, anything was edible unless it ate you first. None of us boys knew how to cook, but we knew how to play poker and smoke cigarettes.

The winter of 1949, we spent a lot of time playing cards at Grumpy’s shack. Most of the time the roads were blocked. That condition gave us a good excuse to play cards and to shoot pool at the local pool hall. Bob could not get home, so he spent a lot of time at the shack going to school.

The shack had two rooms and a path to the outhouse. The larger room consisted of a kitchen-living room combination. The other room was the bedroom and storage area. There was city water piped into the kitchen. That made it nice for cooking and doing dishes. It was a good place to spend our idle hours and to play cards.

GUEST COLUMNIST AND VETERAN BOB HUFF grew up in Upton. 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.



BOB HUFF

SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS

- The Sheridan Senior Center will operate under holiday hours — 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dec. 31 through Jan. 2. Lunch will be served from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Home-delivered meal service will be available as usual. All other services will be closed in observance of the weekend and New Year’s with all services resuming on Jan. 3.
- Goose Creek Transit public bus transportation will provide service during limited hours over the New Year’s weekend. Please call 675-RIDE (7433) to make your ride appointments in advance for Dec. 31 through Jan. 2.

- Kick off 2017! The Senior Center is again offering the Weight Release class. Learn effective strategies for weight release, empower your relationship with food, improve nutrition knowledge and identify food and emotion connections impacting your weight goals with registered dietitian Georgia Boley. Tuesday evenings, 5:15-6:15 p.m., Jan. 17 through March 14. Sign up before Jan. 11 by calling 672-2240. Pay the instructor at the class. Younger than 60 years old? \$80 for the course or \$10 per class. If you’re 60 or older? Register with the Sheridan

Senior Center and there is a suggested contribution of \$60 for the course or \$8 per class.

- Saturday breakfast at the Senior Center, Jan. 14 from 7:30-9 a.m. Two eggs, sausage, hash browns, toast, fresh fruit, your choice of milk or juice plus a bottomless cup of coffee or tea. Call 672-2240 in advance to let us know you are coming and pay at the door when you show up. Cost is \$5 per person for individuals who are 60 and older and registered with the Senior Center. Senior Center meal tickets may be used.

Sheridan Senior Center
“Celebrating 40 Years of Service”
www.sheridanseniorcenter.org

Fun and Food
BUILD YOUR OWN SALAD Mondays - Fridays
Entrees and kiosk include sides, dessert and drink.

Entrée Choice*	or	Soup Kiosk
Sun - Hot Turkey Sandwich		
Mon - Tater Tot Casserole		No soup & salad bar today
Tue - Sweet & Sour Pork over Egg Noodles		Beefy Tomato Soup
Wed - Baked Potato Bar w/ Chili OR Ham & Cheese Sauce		Cream of Mushroom Soup
Thu - Turkey Filet		French Onion Soup
Fri - Baked Breaded Fish		Beef Stew
Sat - Beef & Cheese Enchilada		

*entrée only offered for Home Delivered Meals

Mon - New Year’s Day Holiday Hours	9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.	
Tue - Cribbage	12:30 p.m.	Dining Room
Wed - Pool Tournament	9:00 a.m.	Tongue River Valley Community Center
Thu - National Bird Day presentation	10:00 a.m.	Dining Room
Fri - No-cash prize BINGO	Noon	Dining Room

Lunch Service Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., 365 days a year at 211 Smith Street
Building hours: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Mondays - Fridays
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Weekends and Holidays
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