

A very special Christmas gift

BY LOIS BELL
SHERIDAN SENIOR CENTER

SHERIDAN — She will wake up on Christmas morning with her special family surrounding her — Henry, Jack, Tal, Fred, Bear and R.D. If the weather is nice enough, Kris Walker will walk her family, feed her family of six dogs, then head to the Sheridan Senior Center mid-morning to deliver meals on this very special Sunday: Dec. 25, Christmas Day.

“It’s the first time I’m able to deliver meals on Christmas,” said Walker referring to her work schedule. Sheridan residents may recognize Walker when she’s on the job: Walker is a city community service officer who works in animal control.

One of the things Walker likes to do on her time off from work is volunteer.

She chose to help deliver mid-day meals from the Sheridan Senior Center to homebound elders.

“I was looking for the right fit for me to volunteer and this suits me,” said Walker who began volunteering three years ago in response to an appeal from the Senior Center for help. She has the same route on Tuesdays and Saturdays, two days that fit her schedule. The routine has provided Walker the opportunity to get to know the people she helps serve.

“So many out there who need some help,” Walker said. Through the years, Walker has gotten to know the people on her route. Like many of the home delivered meals volunteers, Walker reaps the reward of gratitude that is expressed not only by the meal recipients but also by the center.

“They are always happy that we’re there. They don’t take it (the meals and the service) for granted,” Walker said. On Christmas, more than a dozen volunteers will be giving the gift of their hearts, hands and time to deliver a hot noon meal to 160-180 homebound elders on Christmas Day.

Shirley Knisley, home delivered meals coordinator at the Senior Center, observes a different feel at Christmas as compared to the Thanksgiving holiday.

“Christmas is not like the Thanksgiving,” said Knisley, who has been the heart of coordinating home delivered meals from the center for 12 and a half years. “During Thanksgiving, many families are home for the holiday. But

this is not true for Christmas.”

The absence of family during Christmas leaves the need to be sure elders are fed, many who cannot afford a meal, cannot cook for themselves, or are dealing with health recovery or illness.

The Sheridan Senior Center kitchen is one of the few in the region that is open 365 days a year for service. Decades ago, the center’s board of directors made the decision to provide meals year-round recognizing that hunger does not take a holiday...or weekend...off.

Walker does not see spending 45 minutes of her Christmas Day delivering meals as a chore or burden. Rather, she sees it as blessing. And if the weather should provide her the opportunity, Walker will throw in a little fun for herself: she’s been known to use her four-wheeler to deliver meals. Having a four-wheeler is not a requirement for home delivered meals volunteers.

In addition to the 12 or more Senior Center home delivered meals volunteers on Christmas Day, there will be additional volunteers helping serve a holiday roast beef in the center’s dining room at 211 Smith St.

Volunteers are essential to the Senior Center’s meals program both in the home delivered meals program and at the Senior Center’s dining sites throughout Sheridan County. But the volunteer feeling seems to feel a little warmer during Christmas.

“It’s a chance to do something like this to help someone else out,” Walker said.

And after 45 minutes of making a difference in the lives of more than one dozen residents, Walker will enjoy her Christmas Day with her very special four-legged family at home.

Kris Walker feels blessed to share some of her Christmas Day delivering a noon day meal from the Sheridan Senior Center to homebound older residents. Walker is one of 25 to 30 volunteers who will help with the Christmas lunch this year by delivering meals or serving in the Senior Center’s dining room at 211 Smith St.



COURTESY PHOTO |

CENTER STAGE |

Be happy for this moment

Only three days until Christmas! Wow has this month been jam packed with fun and festivities! Weekly-daily-hourly, it’s true! It’s a catchy spirit of all colors. Just ask the SheridanAires choir, FA-LA-LA Holiday!! Oh, yeah, I guess you had to be at the annual Winter Concert. Two shows with master of ceremonies, the amazing AJ Longhurst. Thanks to this year’s sponsor Brookdale Sugarland Ridge. The house was full and of course festive! To top it all off, Gene Sager honored us with an invitation to be part of the inaugural choir performance at the Whitney Center for the Arts! Thank you Mr. Sager.

This morning the Young At Heart Players lit up the dining room with rehearsals

of their next play. In addition, Dominoes were being played in the one corner while others played Kings

Corner on the other side and still more people shot the breeze with a hot cup of coffee. All this happening while the Charlie Brown Christmas scene on the back of the stage painted the picture of light heartedness. A room full of people sitting comfortably, filling the room with fun and festive energy. That’s a joyful picture to this activities director.

Hey you should’ve been here for the White Elephant Party or the Light Tour and Soup Supper that Jean put together. It is a reward to us when new people participate or even some that haven’t been here for a while. Vicki hadn’t been around quite some time and low and behold shows up for the party. Lots of hugs and warm wishes. That’s part of the job you know. What a reward for us to breed such joy through our job.

The third week of

December...music, music, music. Volunteers sharing their joy through their gift of music. It is a complement to the fun department that we can offer these musicians a fun and festive atmosphere to perform. We appreciate and look forward to the ‘joyful noise’ they provide for us: Clair Arcadia, Anna Bailey, Leigh Howard and Saralee Garber, Sandy Canfield, Terry Garrison, Sam Hoffman, Beverly Haynes and Canary Joe Band.

We know the joy of cookie decorating can be time consuming so guess what? We made the cookies for you and provided the rest as well. Would it make more sense to be 12 and decorating cookies, licking icing off your fingers and ‘cheating’ to eat one before you’re done...I don’t think so! The simple joys of life are ageless. Ask Alice, she was there.

The art of creating fun and festive is as simple as something for everyone. (And always have hot cocoa or popcorn available). Jean has kept the craft room busy. It’s a joy to walk by a class in session and hear the giggles, the roar of laughter and people helping people.

We’ll end our fun and festive month with the Burgers and Bluegrass Christmas Party. Hoping to encourage

folks to exude joy with dancing feet. After all the music sure does. Age? No matter. It’s worth stopping in to catch the joy bug and you will.

Our New Years’ Eve and Noon Party can be compared to any fun and festive New Years’ Eve event you’ve ever had in your younger days...with a little sensibility. Music by the Canary Joe Band, a first class meal from our kitchen staff, a toast a noon and BINGO following. Note the date: Friday, Dec. 30, beginning at 11 a.m.

Fun and festive all year long at the Sheridan Senior Center!

I’ll take this opportunity to thank all our dining room volunteers that help our lunchtime run smooth.

There I was searching the web for an official quote reminding us that joy breeds joy.

“Be happy for this moment. For this moment is your life.”

— Omarr Khayyam, Persian philosopher, scholar.

JANE PERKINS is the “Director of the Fun Department” 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.



“Great place to go see people and if they aren’t coming they are missing out.”
— Paul Robbins

Sheridan Senior Center
“Celebrating 40 Years of Service”
www.sheridanseniorcenter.org
Fun and Food
BUILD YOUR OWN SALAD MON- FRI

	Entrée Choice*	or	Soup Kiosk
Sun -	Roast Beef		
Mon -	Ham & Macaroni Bake		Potato Soup
Tue -	Cabbage Roll Casserole		Turkey Noodle Soup
Wed -	Parmesan Fish		Mexican Beef
Thu -	Meat & Vegetable Pizza		Asian Chicken Soup
Fri -	Chicken Cordon Bleu		No Soup/Salad Kiosk
Sat -	Pork Chop		

*entrée only offered for Home Delivered Meals

Mon- Holiday Hours	9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.	
Wed - B.A.M.	9:30 a.m.	Community Room
Thu - Cribbage	12:30 p.m.	Dining Room
Fri - New Year’s Eve Eve Party	Begins 11 a.m. Bingo Follows	Dining Room
Sat - New Year’s Eve	9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Holiday Hours

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
211 Smith Street Sheridan, WY 82801
Home Delivered Meals (307) 672-6079
Senior Center Main Phone: (307) 672-2240 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Mon - Fri



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Move-in by December 31

SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS

- The Senior Center will be serving a Christmas roast beef lunch on Sunday, Dec. 25. Lunch hours are 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. The building will be open 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. that day.
- The Sheridan Senior Center will be open 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dec. 24–26, 2016 for lunch during its usual lunch hours 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. at 211 Smith St. All other services will be closed in observance of the weekend and Christmas holiday with all services resuming on Tuesday, Dec. 27.
- Goose Creek Transit public bus

transportation will be providing service during limited hours over the Christmas weekend. Please call 675-RIDE (7433) now to schedule your ride appointments in advance for Dec. 24–26, 2016.

- 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 – Mar. 14, 2017. Sign up before Jan. 11 by calling 672-2240. Pay the instructor at the class. Under 60 years old? \$80 for the course or \$10 per class. 60 or older? Register with the Sheridan Senior Center and there is a suggested contribution of \$60 for the course or \$8 per class.

- New Year’s Eve EVE (...that’s right!) at noon celebration, Friday Dec. 30, at the Sheridan Senior Center. Music, gaiety and BINGO! No need to sign up in advance.