

Macht recognized for teaching safe driving course

FROM SHERIDAN SENIOR CENTER

SHERIDAN — Richard Macht was surprised when he found out he had been recognized from the national office of AARP with the AARP Director's Award for Distinguished Service. Macht is being recognized for his years of service teaching the organization's driver safety courses to the community.

"I didn't realize (I have taught) 97 courses," Macht said. "I knew I was getting close to the century mark."

At age 75, Macht began teaching the AARP Smart Driver class in Sheridan about 13 years ago, when the program was called "55 Alive." His co-instructors then were Dale Ring and LeRoy Johnson when an opening came open for another instructor.

"I taught driver's education at Big Horn School," said Macht, who taught for 20 years.

Macht jumped in with both feet and started teaching. There were 35 people in Macht's first class.

"I told them that I guessed they had all about taken the class before, so I mentioned to them that all of them had to drive 10 minutes with me," Macht said.

When the attendees groaned, Macht just told them that he was just kidding with them and proceeded. Two years later, Macht was asked to train as a district coordinator. The district covered Sheridan, Buffalo, Upton, Gillette, Sundance, Newcastle and communities between.

"I'd say it's about 180 miles to the farthest point," Macht said.

As the district coordinator, Macht recruited instructors and provided training. The team had six to seven instructors in the district.

"Today there are nine," Macht said.

From district coordinator, Macht became a trainer, then the state coordinator for the driver safety program.

"I was the state coordinator for six years," Macht said.

He oversaw the district coordinators, trainers and instructors and represented Wyoming at regional, sectional and national meetings.

Macht has seen many changes through the years.

"In 2014, training for instructors became computerized," Macht said. "A lot of instructors quit because

they didn't want to use the computer."

The number of instructors dropped from 48 to 23 in the state.

Macht solicited the assistance of the Wyoming AARP staff who advertised the need in the state AARP newsletter. Applicants would submit their interest to the staff office who would pass the contact information on.

"We built it back up to 40 instructors by the end of 2014," Macht said. "Today we're back to 49 instructors."

The AARP Safe Driver course is volunteer run but volunteers get a stipend for their time.

"If you have to drive out of town to teach a course, you could take either the stipend or mileage plus you're paid for meals. If you have to stay overnight, AARP pays for your lodging," Macht said.

Through all his roles, Macht continued to teach. Recently, he was recognized for teaching 1,515 drivers.

"I like to teach about driving and the role it plays in our society today," Macht said. "I think it's very important for people to evaluate their driving skills and add new driving skills. The traffic patterns don't stay the same. And I enjoy the interaction between the people and myself."

Macht anticipates continuing to teach as long as he's enjoying the class.

Today, Macht co-teaches in the district with Janet Dill.

Any driver of any age can take the class taught on Saturdays during 2017. Registration is simple by



COURTESY PHOTO

Richard Macht continues to share his love of teaching safe driving. This 75-year-old retired driver's education teacher has been recognized by the National AARP Office for teaching almost 100 community courses in Sheridan and other Wyoming communities over the past 13 years.

calling the Senior Center at 672-2240. There is a fee of \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members payable on the day of the class via the instructor.

"If you're 50 or older, Wyoming law mandates that you get a 10 percent

discount on your automobile insurance when you successfully complete the in-class course," Macht said. "You can also take it online and then it's up to your insurance company if they grant discounts for the online course."

"I want to thank all the volunteers in the Driver Safety program, the state AARP office and the Sheridan Senior Center for all the contributions they have made to me to make this a very successful endeavor," Macht said.

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
Tue - Cheeseburger Deluxe		Turkey Curry Soup
Wed - Ham & Macaroni Bake		Creamy Chicken Soup
Thu - Hot Beef Sandwich		Creamy Rice
Fri - BBQ Pork Wing		Beef Noodle
Sat - Beef Tips/ Egg Noodles		No soup kiosk on Saturday
Sun - Chicken Fried Steak		No soup kiosk on Sunday
Mon - Sweet & Sour Pork		Check out our Soup of the day!

*entrée only offered for Home Delivered Meals

March National Nutrition Month...Put Your Best Fork Forward

Tue - Bingo	12:00 p.m.	Dining Room
-------------	------------	-------------

Wed - Enter by North doors only March 29 through April 2

Thu - Sheridan Aires Choir	9:30 a.m.	Community Room
Fri - Dominoes	9:30 a.m.	Dining Room
Sat - Texas Hold 'Em	1:00 to 3:00 p.m.	Dining Room

Mon - South doors to Senior Center scheduled to re-open on Monday, April 3

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

CENTER STAGE

Things to know about menopause, osteoporosis

Menopause

Menopause refers to a woman's last menstrual cycle, secondary to the female running out of eggs in her system. The average age of menopause is 51.

The first signs of approaching menopause are the onset of irregular cycles as well as the occurrence of hot flashes. These signs and symptoms have

been known to occur around the age of 40. Hot flashes generally occur in the face, neck and chest and are characterized by five to six minutes of intense warmth and perspiration. Also, increased amounts of adrenaline are released during a hot flash, which results in a faster heartbeat.

The beginning signs of menopause are signals of a decline in the body's production of the hormone estrogen in the ovaries. Even before the ovaries stop producing estrogen, estrogen levels can decline to a level low enough to contribute to bone loss. For this reason, bone density testing is recommended for women who are approaching menopause.



ERIC FREY

Osteoporosis

After menopause, the female body no longer produces estrogen. This hormone loss increases the risk of cardiovascular disease in women to equal of that for men. This makes it important for women to pay attention to cardiovascular risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, smoking, family history of cardiovascular disease and a sedentary lifestyle.

Osteoporosis is the loss of bone mineral density. This means bones become weak and more prone to injury or breakage. Osteoporosis accounts for close to 1.3 million fractures in the United States per year. The disease usually begins in the late 30s and accelerates two to five times its normal rate at the onset of menopause.

The main factors contributing to osteoporosis are the loss of bone density associated with the age of the skeletal system, bone loss as a result of estrogen deficiency in post-menopausal women, reduction in calcium intake, heredity and lifestyle factors, such as smoking, alcohol consumption, poor nutrition and lack of exercise. Osteoporosis cannot be reversed.

Therefore, prevention is the key. Three common prevention strategies are estrogen replacement therapy for post-menopausal women, calcium supplementation and exercise.

Studies show that women who exercise regularly will slow bone loss and gain bone mineral density. In order for exercise to be effective in stimulating the growth of bone mass, the exercise must be weight-bearing. Weight-bearing exercise includes activities such as walking, running, hiking and dancing, and excludes exercise where you do not support your own body weight, such as swimming, water aerobics and bicycling.

Weight-bearing exercise can be helpful for both post-menopausal women and those who are interested in preventing the development of osteoporosis. Exercise should be done at least three days per week for 20 to 30 minutes.

Please consult with your physician or health care professional prior to beginning an exercise program.

GUEST COLUMNIST ERIC FREY works for Sheridan Memorial Hospital's Wyoming Rehab and teaches the B.A.M.! exercise class 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 HAPPENINGS

• The Senior Center's south doors and lobby will be closed Wednesday, March 29 through Sunday, April 2, for construction. Access to the building will be by the north doors facing Whitney Commons. The Senior Center will be open as usual weekday and weekend hours and services will continue as usual.

• Afternoon tea with certified etiquette consultant Treva Mayo, will take place April 8 at 2:30 p.m. at the Sheridan Senior Center. Sign up by April 3. The suggested contribution is \$15 per person. Gloves and hats

are optional.

The menu will include: Elmwood Inn scones, water cream and egg salad sandwich, Benedictine tea sandwich, English garden sandwich, lemon bread, mini hazelnut cookie and Valerie cookie. Sign up by April 3. No limit on the number of people who can come!

• The seventh annual Keystone Awards are April 20! This is a fundraiser to support services from the Senior Center in supporting older residents living independently in our communities. Live entertainment, food,

friends and fun. Honor people who have shaped the community. Tickets are on sale at the WYO Theater, 42 N. Main St., or online at wyotheater.com.

• A trip to the Mountain Meadow Wool Mill in Buffalo is scheduled for March 28. Lunch and transportation is included in the trip fee. The suggested contribution for individuals registered with the Senior Center is \$20. The cost for nonregistered travelers is \$24. Payment reserves your spot. Stop by the Senior Center receptionist station at 211 Smith St. to pay and

sign up Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. You may reserve your spot with a credit or debit card by calling 672-2240. The deadline to pay and sign up was March 23.

• A trip to Glacier National Park with the Senior Center will take place Sept. 9-13, but sign up is required by May 1. Interested in more information or signing up? Call Peg Martin at Brittain World Travel for details, Mondays through Fridays, 672-2481.

Brittain World Travel is coordinating this trip for the Senior Center.

GROW YOUNGER

SKILLED NURSING
SHORT-TERM THERAPY

Westview Health Care Center
 307.672.9789
 1990 W. Loucks St. Sheridan, WY
 WestviewHealthCareCenterWY.com
 Joint Commission accredited