

The Westby Border News

April 25, 2011

Volume 6

Issue 116

1.00/copy

PASTORS UNITE TO CELEBRATE TRANSPLANT ANNIVERSARY

May 10th marks the one year anniversary for Pastor Barbara Westhoff's successful kidney transplant and what better way to celebrate than to introduce the donor to her grateful congregation. Rev. Chris Flohr of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Missoula, who so generously donated his kidney, inquired about coming up for a visit -



Pictured above: Pastors Chris Flohr and Barb Westhoff

Pastor Barbara Westhoff had been suffering from the effects of polycystic kidney disease for many years and had been in stage four (of five) since 2006. In 2009 she was put on a donor list. From across the state, Reverend Chris Flohr, started noticing her name -

around the time of the anniversary. As is expected, Pastor Barb was ecstatic about the visit and asked if he might conduct services while here to allow the congregation to get to know the man who gave her a new lease on life, even if just a little better. He graciously agreed and the meeting is set for Sunday, May 8th, two days prior to the anniversary date. Reverend Flohr will preach at both the Immanuel (10:00 AM) and St. John's (8:45 AM) Church services.

showing up in a list of prayer concerns e-mailed weekly by the synod office, but there were no specifics about her illness. Pastor Chris and Pastor Barb had crossed paths at continuing education workshops and Montana Synod assemblies when he served multiple congregations in the Glasgow area. When her diagnosis showed up on one of the e-mails, Flohr looked the disease up on the Internet, and things began to come into focus.

(Continues next page)

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FRIDAY – Chicken Fried Steak w/ fries, toast & salad
SATURDAY – Hamburger Steak w/ baked potato, toast & choice of salad

Chocolate & Vanilla Soft Serve

Chicken to go (potatoes included) 2 pc – Barrel 200 pc

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for your kindness and support during our difficult time after losing our brother and uncle, Erwin D. Olson. We would especially like to thank Pastor Barbara Westhoff from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Westby for her moving eulogy. Her inspiring words made us realize how much Erwin was thought of by the citizens of Westby. We would also like to thank Danny and Val Moore for all of their help preparing for the funeral and especially for taking care of Erwin for so many years. Erwin never had to worry about spending the holidays alone. Often when we called him, he already had plans to have dinner with your family (or some other kind family of Westby). Since we lived so far away, we had difficulties seeing Erwin as often as we would have liked. But he assured us that he was always busy doing something or going somewhere with his "family" in Westby.

Also, we want to thank David and Cathy Engstrom and family for taking Erwin to Bozeman for the basketball tournament. He was so happy to be attending the tournament with his good friends. You made his last weekend very special. We also need to thank the WELCA group and the other church members for the fabulous lunch provided at the church. Thanks to the American Legion group for making all of the arrangements for the military funeral. This was very important to Erwin. Of course, many thanks to Fulkerson Funeral Home for their assistance in the many details that needed to be completed for Erwin's services. It gives us a special peace knowing that Erwin was surrounded by so many wonderful and loving people. The Westby community will always hold a special place in our hearts. Thank you for your generous spirit.

With grateful appreciation,
Odetta Arcand and
The family of Erwin D. Olson

PASTORS

(Continued)

When word came she was having trouble finding a donor and wasn't likely to find one among close relations, Reverend Flohr decided to be tested. Once the blood test was verified, he cleared two rounds of testing, and then traveled to Denver for a psychiatric evaluation and a meeting with both surgeons and others who would be involved. The final step was approval from the hospital's transplant board.

With this requirement met and all other barriers down, all need be was set the date. As noted, May 10th, 2009, was that date and one year after Pastor Barb received this true gift of life there is great reason to celebrate. Pastor Flohr will be in town a very short time and all are welcome to attend and join in this celebration at either of the church services on May 8th.

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SHOOTING RANGE PROGRESS

Nate Olson, spokesman for the organizers behind the newly formed gun club and prospective shooting range, says things are coming along for the pistol and shooting range located north of town. Weather permitting, plans are to finish the building framework by the first part of May.

Once this is done, the group would like to have volunteers help them tin the buildings and complete the project. The Westby Development Corporation will be providing lunch on the work day and is hoping many will show up to make this a true community project. Anyone wishing to donate to this worthwhile project may make their tax deductible donation to the Westby Development Corporation marked "Westby Shooting Range".



It is a beautiful day in the neighborhood! I awoke early this Easter morning for church so happy to see the sun shining and the temperature above freezing. It is a glorious day for all the obvious reasons. Had it not been in the weather department, I would think twice about sharing our last minute trip to see the grandkids in California for fear of receiving death threats and hate mail. The locals are getting rather testy about the daily forecast and as we checked in at home from afar, it was obvious old man winter wasn't going down without a fight. Other areas of the country, though, are enjoying "spring" and we soaked up as much sunshine and stored as many memories as you can pack into a week, only to be counting the days until next time. My, how the babies change in a matter of months. Colton is 3 ½ now and Bryce will soon be a year. It's hard, but I will refrain from filling this week's pages with Grandma stories. Well, maybe just one! Chel, Heather and the boys had just picked us up at the airport when we stopped at a strip mall with a sporting goods store to buy a new pair of hiking shoes for Colton. I noticed a kitchen store as we got out of the vehicle and mentioned I would like to stop in and look at their dishes. Colton wanted to go with me, so we went on ahead. No more had we entered the store and Colton said, "Grandma, I need to ask that lady (sales clerk) something." Before I knew it, he scurried over to her and said, "cuse me, do you have hiking shoes?" The clerk got the biggest smile on her face and said, "I'm sorry honey. We don't." I wanted to burst out laughing. He sounded so grown-up. I didn't want to laugh and possibly embarrass him or make him think he had done something wrong.

About that time, the rest of the family walked in and the look on my face from trying to contain myself made them think something was wrong. The clerk, too, was trying to contain herself as another customer approached her with a question. Somehow, I don't think her question was going to get the same reaction. I can't think about the incident without a getting a big grin on my face. Hard to be so far away, yet feel fortunate to see them as often as we do.



Pictured above: Danny holding Colton (sporting his new hiking shoes which he finally located) and Val holding Bryce.

Spring on the calendar is always a busy time of year for me even without a trip thrown in (not that I mind) and especially this year. Every day is booked with either a bridge game or substitute teaching. Of course, the school staff and students are busy with any number of activities they are trying to work in before school wraps up in a month. The winter that just-won't-quit has played havoc with scheduling and re-scheduling of math meets, academic Olympics, golf meets and track meets. I do enjoy subbing and it keeps me connected to the school and the young people. The spring is an especially exciting time to me part of the activity as the seniors anticipate graduation and ALL are counting the days till summer vacation.

(Continues next page)

The tough winter also meant very little bridge marathon was played earlier and we were still scheduling and re-scheduling games shortly before we left, due to weather. I now scramble to get two ladies marathons and a couple's marathon, which Danny and I belong to, wrapped up in the next two weeks. Everyone knows I need a mission. I guess this one is pretty well mapped out until schools out.

With the great game of bridge comes good friends and a wonderful array of food. On a recent trip to Medicine Lake for a game we enjoyed the following from our delightful hostess, Marilyn Bolstad. Having just returned from the south with an abundance of fresh lemons, she whipped up the following light dessert which brought just a touch of sunshine to us neglected northerners.

FROZEN LEMON PIE

1 cup fresh lemon juice
8 ounces sweetened condensed milk, one can
8 ounces frozen whipped topping
1 prepared graham cracker pie crust

Mix lemon juice and sweetened condensed milk until well blended. Fold in whipped topping and spoon into prepared crust. Freeze overnight. May serve with additional whipped topping.

These tasty little bites were just a perfect little something to balance out the lemon pie.

LITTLE CORNY BITES

8 ounces cream cheese, softened
2 ounces (1/2 cup) shredded mozzarella cheese
4 ounces, 1 cup shredded pepper jack cheese
1 egg
1/2 cup frozen corn, thawed
4 ounces (48) tortilla chips-Scoops work best

Finely chopped parsley or cilantro for garnish. Preheat oven 350 degrees. In a large bowl combine cream cheese, egg, and cheeses. Stir in corn. Arrange chips on a large rimmed baking sheet and place 1 tsp corn mixture in each. Bake until filling sets, about 20 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley or cilantro. Serve warm.
May spread corn mixture in baking dish and bake until set. Serve with corn chips on the side.

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Our new centennial column will keep you informed of the plans, progress, and updates for the reunion, as well as bring you interesting stories, past and present, and tidbits of Westby's history. Anyone wishing to share pictures, stories, or pieces of the puzzle may contact the Border News. Cathy Nordhagen will be our new correspondent for the history portion of this column and she may be reached at: firecrackermango@gmail.com or 385-2364.

OLE AND LENA BJORGEN

By Clara Bjorgen Hollarn

Ole and Lena Bjorgen and family left North Menomonee, Wisconsin, with the Ole Haugen family in 1909 to homestead in North Dakota. They were heading for Elkhorn Township and traveled by train as far as Ambrose, North Dakota. Sivert Ekness was there to meet them with his lumber wagon to take them the last thirty miles. To the Bjorgen's, it seemed like a long, rough ride. Lena Bjorgen said it was like being on the ocean, where you see nothing but prairie and sky, almost to the end of the world. They stayed overnight with the Ekness' and in the morning he took them to their 12 X 12 homestead shack. After their first night in their own home, they woke in the morning to find snow on top of the quilts.

Clara, the oldest of the children moved after a month to Ambrose where she went to work sewing for dressmaker. When she became old enough, she filed on a claim and proved it up.

Ole and Lena, with Ed, Annie, and Oscar, later moved the shack close to the lake and built another, 12X12 addition. This they sodded to make it warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer. The Bjorgen's almost lost their shack by fire once. It was the sod around it that saved it. Ed carried his mother's truck down to the lake, to save that anyway. Ole's cousin, Ed Rogstad, lost all his grain stacks to a fire one year. A neighbor, Adolph Bakke, lost his barn and chickens. Bjorgen Lake was "the old swimming hole" and in the evenings Ekness', Haugen and Rogstad's would come with their families for a swim.

In the winter there were the storms. One bright winter morning Ole Haugen came to Ole and Lena's and asked them to stay with his wife, who was expecting a baby, while he went to get a mid-wife. A storm hit that afternoon, and the Bjorgen's were still at the Haugen's. Clara, Annie, Ed and Oscar were at home, but couldn't even get out to the barn to feed the cattle or horses. They sat around the red-hot stove, but couldn't keep warm, so finally went to bed. In the morning Ole and Lena went home. When Ole went to the barn, he found one of his horses on his back dead. Once there was a cyclone that took all the crops and broke all the windows, so Ole had to hold a quilt over them to keep out the rain and hail. It came at night. Emil Onstad and Christopher Andersen were asleep in their shack when it hit. Emil jumped out of bed and jumped down into the cellar just as the shack blew away. It started to rain and there poor Emil sat in the cellar hole so scared thinking Christopher to be dead. It rained so hard and got so slippery that Emil couldn't get out. Soon Christopher came walking back, looking for Emil. He was expecting to find him dead. He was sure glad to find him still alive. He helped him out of the home and the only place they had to go was over to Sivert Ekness. All they had on was their underwear and when Sivert opened the door, all he could do was laugh. There they stood in their underwear, soaking wet and covered with mud.

(Continues next page)

The Bjorgen children had three miles to walk to their 12X12 school house. In the fall the school was banked up with manure to keep it warm. This was fine until spring came. It thawed out and then what a stink!

In 1916 there were six school houses built in Elkhorn Township. Oscar, Elmer Bodine and Mrs. Hans Peterson got together and played for dances at the school houses.

By Oscar Bjorgen (May 3, 1964)

On Sundays we had church services and ladies aides at the homes. My Dad's place was stopping place, where those that were on their way to file a homestead, in Montana and Canada, stopped to rest-this was 28 miles from Ambrose, North Dakota. Grandma always saved the best for the folks coming through, when it was not so fresh any more, it was given to the children.

I'd like to tell more about those homestead days, we had some awful things to put up with-lice, bed bugs, flies, mosquitoes. I remember the ladies had to use towels and chase the flies out. We boys could sit by the table and catch flies by the hand-ful; bed bugs-my goodness -by the hundreds. We had dances in the six new school houses. I played violin and the guitar, Elmer Bodine played the guitar and violin, Mrs. Hans Peterson played the organ. We really had a good time when we got together, and we looked forward to it in those days. Later Engebret Haugen and Odd Nelson played the accordion.

By Bobby Bjorgen

I will add what I remember my dad (Oscar) telling me. Ole Bjorgen, went west in 1908 to get that homestead claim. You had to prove it up, you had to plow up some of the ground and also build on it, so as to stake a claim. When he got out there (2 miles east of Westby, MT and 6 miles north, in the very northwest corner of North Dakota) was grass thick and tall, he said, way up to the buffalo's stomach. Ole, worked that ground and built a 10X20 shack. Later that year, he went back to get his wife, Berlina (called Lena) and children; Ed, Clara, Annie, Oscar and Olaf. Olaf, died and

What a shock it was to Lena who was looking for the nice, tall grass. When she arrived there had been a prairie fire that fall, no tall grass, black and a few rocks here and there. She began to cry, "Ole, what have you brought me into now?"

Mrs. Ole Bjorgen passed away at East Grand Forks, Minnesota at the age of 66 on January 13, 1929, following an illness from the flu. She was buried in Menomonee, Wisconsin.

In 1937 Ole Bjorgen died. He got a little black speck in his ear. Doc Smith from Noonan, North Dakota wanted him to go to Savanna, Missouri where they could cure skin cancer. Some men we knew had been there and got theirs cured. Eagle Strand, of Westby, run the grain elevator, and Melvin Brothers, a neighbor east of us. But Grandpa had not money, he was truly broke. He got \$18 a month on welfare, so he told Doc he could not go. Then Doc said, "I'll sign a paper recommending the county to send you t Savanna. He went to the courthouse; they just showed him a stack of warrants that they had issued to teachers. Forth dollars a month waiting to be cashed and they could only be make good, as taxes were paid. The farmland was all going back to the county for taxes. No crops, no money to pay taxes, etc. People living in the country had gone broke; we were too broke to go.

(Continues next page)



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OLE and LENA BJORGEN

(Continued)

He went back to Doc Smith and told him to cut the ear off and take plenty. Doc did not want to, but finally did. After that, the cancer began to increase and then it went like wild fire. It became completely raw, eating half the side off his face to his nose and neck, in to his head, till it hit this brain and killed him.

Ole wished to be buried in Menomonee, Wisconsin beside his wife, Lena. Dad (Oscar) and Olaf Haugen took him down-some 500 to 600 miles one way, in the back of Dad's pick-up. With only \$10.00 in his pocket, Dad perhaps with a little help from Olaf made it there and back again. I think they stayed with Auntie Clara in Grand Forks, going down and coming back. They may have had a graveside service in Menomonee, but there was no obituary.

NOTE: The Bjorgen Family history will continue in the next issue with the next generation and the Oscar Bjorgen Family.

COMING SOON!

The next edition of *The Westby Border News* will be unveiling the 2013 Westby Centennial Logo as well as the design to be used on the new highway signs announcing the community of Westby. The names of the winning designers will also be listed!

BOWMAN

Funeral Services for Gordon M. "Lucky" Bowman were held on Tuesday, April 19, 2011 in Amundson Funeral Home of Grand Forks.

Gordon M. "Lucky" Bowman, 64, Emerado, ND, died Friday, April 8, 2011 at home.

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WESTBY STUDENTS EXCEL

WESTBY SUDENTS ATTEND MATH MEET

Westby junior high and high school students attended the 2011 Math Competition in Sidney on March 30th. The top 15% scores of each grade level who attend the meet from all classes of schools in Northeast Montana are assigned a superior rating with the next 20% given an honorable mention. Each student takes three tests, and some participate in a group test. The Westby students came away with exceptional results earning seven TOP SCORES among all students attending. Also, eighth grader Cooper Olson and freshman Thayne Ekness won Regional Top Student Awards for earning three superiors. Math instructor Jennifer Pulvermacher accompanied the students to

These are the results by grade:

Seventh Grade:

Kevin Rust: One Superior and one Honorable Mention.

Eighth Grade:

Jaime Gibson: Two Superiors.

Sabrina Carter: One Superior and one Honorable Mention.

Cooper Olson: Two **TOP SCORES** and three Superiors resulting in a **Regional Top Student Award**.

Ninth Grade:

Shayla Garman: One Superior.

Sophia Ekness: One Honorable Mention.

Thayne Ekness: Two **TOP SCORES** and three Superiors resulting in a **Regional Top Student Award**.

Tenth Grade:

Makayla Westgard: One Honorable Mention.

Kayla Rust: One **TOP SCORE**, one Superior, one Honorable Mention.

Tess Bjorgen: One **TOP SCORE** and one Superior.

Eleventh Grade:

Waylon Garman: One **TOP SCORE**, one Superior, one Honorable Mention.

Brett Nielsen: One Superior.

Twelfth Grade:

Colton Hellegaard: One **TOP SCORE**, one Superior, one Honorable Mention.

In addition, WHS also received **top team** for grades 9 and 10. Members of this team included Kayla Rust, Tess Bjorgen, Thayne Ekness and Shayla Garman.

WHS ACADEMIC OLYMPIC TEAM

Congratulations to the HS Olympians for their successes at the Academic Olympics held at Glasgow High School on April 5th. Two Westby students walked away with top honors. History teacher Nate Olson escorted the students to Glasgow.

(Continues next page)



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WESTBY STUDENTS EXCEL

MATH RESULTS

(Continued)

Brett Nielsen was the **Top Junior Student** with his finishes of: Math-1st, Social Studies-1st, English-1st, Science-2nd. Brett is the son of Eric and Cindy Nielsen.

Thayne Ekness came in as the **Top Freshman student** and had placements as follows: Science-4th, English-7th, Social Studies-9th. Thayne is the son of Steve and Suzi Ekness.

Colton Hellegaard is a senior at WHS and he placed in two of his events: Math-2nd, Social Studies-7th. Colton is the son of Clyde and Deanna Hellegaard.

Kayla Rust had a 7th place finish in English and represented the sophomore class. Kayla is the daughter of Rob and Kim Rust.



DISTRICT MUSIC FESTIVAL RESULTS

Westby had an excellent showing at District Music Festival held April 8th and 9th in Scobey. Sixteen students have earned Superior ratings and the right to attend the 2011 State Music Festival.

Of those students, Abby Westgard, Logan Olson, Shayla Garman, and Waylan Garman all earned superiors for vocal solos, while Kayla Rust and Makenzie Westgard earned the right with a woodwind duet and also for their individual efforts on their clarinet and flute, respectively. In addition, Makayla Westgard on her trumpet, Terrance Bjorgen on his flute and Thayne Ekness on percussion all were awarded I ratings.

Several groups walked away with superior ratings including the Westby Drumline, the Westby High School choir for two different numbers, as well as the Women's Vocal Ensemble.

The Westby High School composite band also earned a superior for their rendition of "On the Wings of Swallows". In addition, 8 Excellent ratings were awarded to various members of the music department.

The state music festival will be held in Billings



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Westby Centennial
July 12th - 14th, 2013

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Submission Deadline:

6 P.M. FRIDAY before
Publication

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