

# The Westby Border News

January 26, 2009

Volume 4

Issue 67

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## BACK IN THE WINTER OF...

We hate to wish our life away, but many would be happy if all that was left of *this* winter were the memories and stories to tell the grandchildren. Last year we had an “open winter” (little or no snow)

and this year we may be paying for it. In terms of the amount of snow, according to Gene Meyer, the official weatherman for Westby, we have not had record amounts, 37 inches thus far, but what we have received since December is still all accounted for and has literally blown to Timbuktu and back. The wind, we have experienced this



An increasingly familiar sight on Highway 5.

winter, has been the biggest culprit. Temperatures dipped to -42 on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January and rebounded to 34 degrees on the 18<sup>th</sup>, a whopping 76 degree swing in a matter of days, but the wind never let up.

Lanny Nordhagen, foreman for the Montana State Highway Department, says this winter is right up there with the worst on record for snow removal and the challenges his department faces in keeping the roads open.

In a typical year Highway 5 between Plentywood and Westby can be trying at times, but the immense amount of wind coupled with the amount of snow has made it almost a daily challenge this year.

On Friday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, following 12 hours of around 40 MPH winds, Lanny and his crew of six worked with 4 trucks and 2 rotary plows seven hours to reach Westby and open the road to one lane traffic. Lanny reported in the area of the Comertown Flats there is a stretch that contains a

drift over a mile long.

And, although highway 5 has been “blocked” many more times, this was the fourth time the road had been officially closed this season and was closed for almost 24 hours.

*(Continued on Page 9)*

[Return to Westby on the Web](#)

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# Randy's Restaurant

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*Randy & Bonnie Matzke Owners*

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2 pc – Barrel 20 pc

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**DINING ROOM ONLY**

**MONDAY** – Chicken Strip Dinner w/ coleslaw & fries

**TUESDAY** – Waffle Special

**WEDNESDAY** – Halibut, Shrimp or Walleye w/ baked potato, toast, choice of salad

**THURSDAY** – 2 pc Chicken or Pork Chop Dinner w/ baked potato, toast & salad

**FRIDAY** – Chicken Fried Steak w/ fries, toast & salad

**SATURDAY** – Hamburger Steak w/ baked potato, toast & choice of salad



## Wee Bee Quilters

On January 6th, the Wee Bee Quilters met at the Westby Community Center. They had 13 members present. They had a very busy meeting with many show and tell quilt projects. Doreen Johnson gave a demonstration on how to do needle felting. Everyone brought blocks for the Ugly Fat Quarter contest. All were very nice, so instead of voting on a winner they drew names. Terry McCauley and Doreen Johnson were the winners.

One of the many show and tell items was a beautiful quilt made by Cindy Nielsen and all hand quilted. Everyone encouraged her to take it to the Minot Quilt show. Discussion was held about restoring a 1920's quilt that Lorna has. It will be started on at the next meeting. Also discussed was the Lone Star Quilt class that Kathy Johnson will be giving on March 28th.

A pleasant surprise was to learn that Martie Simonson and Faye Johnson are purchasing a small long arm quilting machine to do small projects on. Bonnie Matzke brought the fat quarter for this month's drawing and Arlene Hove was the winner. The hostess was Terry McCauley. Next month's meeting will be held on February 3rd and Elaine Onstad will be the hostess.



*Pictured Above: January 23, 2009, 8:00 AM Sun dogs in Westby. The temperature was ten below zero.*

### ENGAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT



Steve and Suzi Ekness of Westby would like to announce the engagement of their son Jesse Ekness to Genevieve Malisani. The bride-to-be graduated from Great Falls High and the Salon Professional Academy. She is a cosmetologist for Linda Michaels Salon & Day Spa. The future groom graduated from C.M. Russell High School and graduated from UM Helena College of Tech. He is a carpenter for Malisani Inc. A February 21, 2009 wedding is planned in Great Falls, MT

## New Century Ag

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*Danny Moore*  
*Westby Manager*

# A Day in the Life...

By Sandy Elm

Chester and Beverly Olson spent Christmas Eve and Christmas day with Mark and Marilyn Olson in Sidney Mt. Others also there were Marie King of Reserve, Lindsay Olson and Andres of San Diego, CA, and Chris and Lindsey Olson and Tucker of Spearfish, SD. New Year's Day, Chester and Beverly Olson were dinner guests of Gene and Joan Olson in Plentywood.

Casey and Darrin Elm prepared a Christmas Eve supper for Sandy and Slugger Elm, Tyler, Alyssa, and Jarrod Elm of Billings, Rose Frickson, and Marilyn Ming and sons, Justin and Josh.

Christmas guests at the Shannon and Mike Gebhardt home for several days were Mike's mom Sandy Cox and husband George of Loveland, Colorado. Callers on Christmas Eve later in the evening were Rose Frickson, Darrin Elm, Sandy and Slugger Elm and Jarrod Elm.

Christmas day dinner guests at Sandy and Slugger Elm's home were Vera Elm, Rose Frickson, Casey Elm and Tyler, Alyssa, and Jarrod, Darrin Elm, Shannon and Mike Gebhardt and Cole and Rylie, and George and Sandy Cox. Marilyn Ming was a caller later in the day.

Traveling out to Red Lodge to spend Christmas with Chel, Heather, and Colton Moore were, Danny and Val Moore and Ashley, Marlowe and Elaine Onstad, Pam and Vince McGlothlin and Quinn, Dawson and Cooper. Everyone had a great time with the newest edition to the Moore family, Colton, son of Chel and Heather. Heather's mother Barb from Tucson, Arizona was also a guest.

Dick and Doreen Johnson spent Christmas Eve with Josh and Maggie Johnson and family. On Christmas day they were at La-Casa with Keith Johnson.

Karen and Vance Meyer had Marsha and Myron Meyer and Gene Meyer over for Christmas Eve supper. On Christmas day Marsha and Myron had Karen, Vance and Gene over for dinner.

On the Friday after Christmas, Karen and Vance Meyer went to Great Falls to spend time with their daughter Tiffany and Blake and Benjamin. While they were there, Thayne, Sonny, and Mitchell Meyer came from Billings to visit also.

John and Arlene Hove spent Christmas Eve at LaCasa with Arla Samuelson, Arlene's mother. On Christmas day they drove to Billings, stopping at Kathy and Tom Wankles in Miles City for Christmas dinner. Becky and Dave Sweat and daughters were also there. Then they went on to Billings to be with their daughter Tara and Shane and family.

Cindy and Eric Nielsen and family spent Christmas Eve and Christmas day with Howard and Irene Nielsen and Susan and Kim at the Howard Nielsen home. Also visiting Cindy, Eric and family over the Christmas holidays were Deann and Jon Egeland of Billings. Deann is Cindy's sister.

On New Year's Day, Karen and Vance Meyer hosted Susan and Kim Meyer and Gene Meyer for dinner.

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What can be said about this winter that hasn't been said? I'm here to say we will survive as we always do, but it looks like it's another one for the record books. I am very lucky I don't have to be out in it or drive to work and worry about whether the road is open to Plentywood and, if so, for how long. I have been out of the house a total of three times, counting today, since we returned from Red Lodge on the 27<sup>th</sup> of December. After the roads were opened up today (for those of you who aren't familiar with our road or those of you who have been gone so long you have forgotten, highway 5 from Plentywood to Westby blocks almost daily with the amount of snow and with the wind we have had to deal with this winter) we decided to make a quick trip to Plentywood since even though it was -20 degrees there was no wind and the sun had made an appearance. Don't kill the messenger, but I must say it was just beautiful, what with the sun shining, the big beautiful blue sky and the pristine white snow mostly undisturbed, it was hard to imagine such a beautiful scene could cause so much havoc. Such is Mother Nature. Now, now, settle down. I realize beauty is in the eye of the beholder and I promise not to mention the beauty thing again as I **would** like to live long enough to enjoy next season and the splendor the much appreciated spring will bring!

One thing that continues to bring us comfort on these cold blustery days is food. In the last issue I presented the pizza recipes from our Christmas trip, but left out the Buffalo Chicken Pizza recipe. Since I have had a request for that particular recipe, I will include it now. It was very good and promises to warm you right up.

## BUFFALO STYLE CHICKEN PIZZA

3 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cooked and cubed  
 2 tablespoons butter, melted  
 1 (2 ounce) bottle hot sauce  
 1 (8 ounce) bottle blue cheese salad dressing  
 1 (16 inch) prepared pizza crust  
 1 (8 ounce) package shredded mozzarella cheese

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. In a medium bowl combine the cubed chicken, melted butter and hot sauce. Mix well. Spread whole bottle of salad dressing over crust, then top with chicken mixture and sprinkle with shredded cheese.

Bake in preheated oven until crust is golden brown and cheese is bubbly, about 5 to 10 minutes. Let set a few minutes before slicing, and serve.

Note: Sister Pam and daughter Ashley said they parbaked the pizza crust before putting on the rest of the ingredients. Also, they felt a thin layer of the blue cheese dressing is enough. If you use the whole bottle it tends to get soggy. If you prefer a stronger blue cheese flavor, sprinkle crumbled blue cheese on with the mozzarella.

Next, I would like to share my love for popovers, although I have always been a little intimidated to make them. First of all, I didn't have a popover pan and the thought of buying another pan I have to store, only to use a few times a year, seemed like a waste (funny how thoughts like this creep in a lot more now that I'm at a more "mature" age than in my frivolous youth) and secondly, I haven't had the best luck with cream puffs which it appears to me, the batter is quite similar. According to *Cooking Light*, Popovers are a quick bread based on the old English Yorkshire pudding, crisp on the outside and moist on the inside. When I found this recipe in *Cooking Light*, I couldn't resist. I love fresh thyme and knew the popovers would go well with the soup I was making. Well, I must say I was blown over.

They were delicious, very easy to prepare, and baked up beautifully in a muffin tin (For best results I would recommend it be a heavy duty one.). I have since made them several times and Danny and I both enjoy them very much. The thyme could easily be left out all together or replaced with chopped fresh sage and black pepper, or chopped fresh parsley. A traditional version would be void of herbs and cheese. A couple things to keep in mind while preparing popovers, allowing the milk and egg mixture to stand at room temperature for a half-hour before adding the dry ingredients helps the popovers reach their full height, while preheating the pan before adding the batter will cause it to immediately begin to rise. Also, it is best to refrain from peeking at the popovers while baking as opening the door may cause them to deflate. Other than that, they are really quite simple.

## FRESH THYME POPOVERS

4.5 ounces or about 1 cup flour or sub about 2/3 white flour and 1/3 whole wheat  
 2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 1 cup 1 % milk  
 2 large eggs  
 1 tablespoon butter, melted  
 Cooking spray  
 1 tablespoon finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (any fresh parmesan will work)  
 Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Combine flour, thyme, and salt, whisk to combine. Combine milk and eggs in a medium bowl, stir with a whisk until blended. Let stand 30 minutes. Gradually add flour mixture to milk mixture, stirring well with a whisk. Stir in melted butter. Coat 8 popover cups with cooking spray. Sprinkle with parmesan evenly among cups. Bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes or until golden brown. Serve immediately.  
 Note: I baked popovers (8) in a muffin tin at 350 in a convection oven for 30 minutes and they turned out beautifully.  
 This final recipe is one I recently tried when looking for an enchilada recipe that wasn't as heavy and filling as the traditional one served around here with loads of sour cream and canned soups. I have to say I liked it better, but for Danny the verdict is still out. You be the judge.

## CHICKEN ENCHILADAS

¼ cup butter  
 1 onion, sliced  
 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into ½ inch pieces  
 1 (4 oz) can green chilies, drained  
 3 ounces cream cheese  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 1/3 cup vegetable oil  
 10 fajita- size flour tortillas  
 1/3 cup half and half  
 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese  
 Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a 13X9 pan with nonstick cooking spray  
 Melt butter in large nonstick skillet over med-hi heat. Add onion, cook stirring for 5 minutes. Add chicken, cook 5 more minutes or until chicken is done. Turn off heat stir in chilies, cream cheese and salt. Heat oil in a small skillet over med-hi heat. Add a tortilla and cook for a few seconds until tortilla becomes limp. Remove to a paper towel lined tray. Repeat with remaining tortillas. Spoon 1/3 cup filling down the center of each tortilla. Roll and set, seam-side down, in prepared baking dish. Drizzle evenly with half and half and sprinkle with shredded cheese. Bake, uncovered at 350 degrees for 23 minutes or until top is golden. Cool slightly before serving.  
 Note: I used ½ the amount of butter and used rotisserie chicken instead of fresh. Also, I used 1/3 less fat cream cheese and doubled the green chilies. Instead of using vegetable oil to warm tortillas, I used nonstick spray, adding it to pan as needed. Lastly, I used fat free ½ and ½ to drizzle over the tortillas. I still thought they were delicious served with refried black beans and salsa. To reheat leftovers, I drizzled a little more fat -free ½ and ½ over tortillas before warming.

*Hope you ENJOY!  
 for  
 LIFE IS GOOD!*

# A Day in the Life...

*(Continued from Page 6)*

On January 8th, Erwin Olson hosted Senior Citizens at the Westby Community Center. Progressive whist was played. Marvin Nelson took first and John Mendes got second. The door prize was won by Dennis Kittelson. Guests were Rose Frickson, Kim Rust, Dale Drawbond, Wade Bjorgen, Vance Meyer, Carol Mangel, Richard Westgard, and Fay Moore.

Gary and Joylene Novota recently returned to their East Helena home after spending nearly 3 weeks in the area. Their return trip was delayed due to weather and road conditions. While visiting they were able to enjoy the Christmas program at the school, and also at the Immanuel Lutheran's Sunday School. Their neice and nephew Aaron and Alicia Lagerquist were participants. They spent time with Joel and Annie Lagerquist and Howard Hammer in Plentywood. Christmas Eve was enjoyed at the Helmer Lagerquist farm with Jody, Cindy, Aaron and Alicia Lagerquist, Lynden and Pegg Lagerquist, and Alex Lagerquist and his friend Randi. Christmas Day was celebrated at the Jody Lagerquist farm where Dale and Toni Soderquist joined them. Junior and Sharon Germann ventured out for New Year's Day. An annual highlight for New Year's day was the making-and-eating of LEFSE!!

Westby Senior Citizens met at the Community Center on January 15th. Jennie Nordhagen was the hostess. Eileen Overgaard took first and Shirley Quam took second in progressive Whist. The door prize was won by Anita Bjorgen. Guests were Susan Tefre and Fay Moore.

On Saturday January 17th a group of ladies met at the Prairie Kitchen for lunch to help Ruth Brown celebrate her birthday. Teresa Johnson provided the birthday cake. Those attending were Rose Frickson, Enid Kittelson, Shannon Gebhardt, Fay Moore, Sandy Elm, and Teresa Johnson.

Due to the weather and the road conditions, several Westby residents have been stranded in Plentywood over night. I must say it makes it interesting for those of us who commute back and forth everyday for work. And be careful if you just come over to shop, you might have to spend the night. Remember to pack a winter survival kit where ever you travel this time of year. Take care and have a Happy New Year.

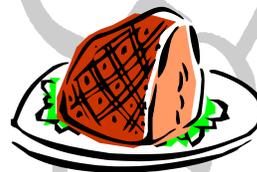
## Al's Meats

212 Main Street  
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**1/2 Grain Fed Beef**  
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# School Board Meeting Minutes

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Westby School District #3 was held on January 12, 2009. Brenda Ryals, Vance Meyer, Donna Sorenson, Marty Westgard, Jim Sundsted, Mr. Koterba and Arlene Hove were in attendance. Chairman Ryals called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Visitor at this meeting was Suzi Ekness.

The tentative agenda was reviewed, one announcement item was added, followed by a motion to approve by Meyer seconded by Sorenson, AIF.

The Clerk read the minutes of the December 8, 2008 regular meeting, one wording correction was noted, and the minutes were approved and placed on file.

The November financial and investment interest reports were reviewed.

**Public Comment:** None

**Committee Reports: Buildings and Grounds:** Mr. Koterba, along with custodian Mike Gebhardt, suggested that more heaters are probably needed in various locations around the school. Also, a valve stem in the boy's locker room broke and since these are very old and in poor condition, these valve stems and all related plumbing should be replaced, probably this summer. The Board gave their unanimous approval for these upgrades.

**Unfinished Business:**

**A.** The following policy revisions were given a second reading:

-2161P – Special Education – Sorenson moved to adopt the revisions, Westgard 2<sup>nd</sup>, AIF

-2410 High School Graduation Requirement – Westgard moved to adopt the revisions, Meyer 2<sup>nd</sup>, AIF

-3310 – Student Discipline – Meyer moved to adopt the revisions, Sorenson 2<sup>nd</sup>, AIF

**B.** The following new policy was given a first reading:  
-2333 – Participation in Commencement Exercises – Ryals moved to adopt this policy, Meyer 2<sup>nd</sup>, AIF

**New Business:**

**A.** Following compilation of Board's evaluations of the Superintendent, Ryals recommended that Mr. Koterba be offered a contract for 2009/2010. Sorenson moved to offer said contract to Mr. Koterba, Westgard seconded, AIF.

**B.** Mr. Koterba recommended that the Board consider hiring William Duffield, Executive Director of the Montana Association of Oil, Gas & Coal Counties, Inc. to represent Westby School's oil and gas interests during the 2009 Legislative session. Meyer moved to hire Mr. Duffield at the rate of \$1500.00; Sundsted seconded the motion for hire, AIF.

**Announcements/Discussion**

**A.** Mr. Koterba gave a brief 2009 Legislative update.

**B.** Mr. Koterba reviewed the proposals of the MHSA, to be voted on at the annual meeting on January 19, 2009 in Bozeman. Mr. Koterba will attend this meeting as well as the MREA Board Meeting in Helena on January 21, 2009.

**C.** All buses passed the second semester bus inspection on December 22, 2008.

**D.** Mr. Koterba reported on the MOGT meeting that he attended in Billings on December 18, 2008.

**E.** Chairman Ryals read three Thank You's: D.J. Collier, Randy & Cathy Nordhagen and Sonja & Darrell Mangel

Sundsted moved to approve payment of January payroll warrants #10309-10325 (10318 was voided due to a printer jam) totaling \$78,757.55, and December claims warrants #14891-14918 totaling \$29,704.66. Meyer seconded the motion for payment approval, AIF.

The December extracurricular financial report was reviewed followed by a motion by Meyer to approve, motion seconded by Sorenson, AIF.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Arlene Hove, District Clerk  
Brenda Ryals, Chairman

**THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL  
AND SUBJECT TO BOARD  
APPROVAL.**

## Upcoming Events

### January

- 27th Games @ Divide Co. – GJV-4:45; GV-6:15  
BV vs. Lambert @ Westby – 6:00 pm
- 30th BV @ Culbertson – 7:00 – Bus @ 4:00
- 31st GV @ Lignite – GJV-4:00; GV-5:30 – Bus @ 1:45  
BJH @ Fairview – Games @ 10:15 & 11:30 – Bus @ 7:30 am  
Games @ Brockton – BJH-5:30; BV-7:00 – Bus @ 2:15

### February

- 3rd Games @ Lambert - BJH-4:30; BV-6:00 – Bus @ 12:30  
Games @ Westby vs. Divide Co. – GJV-4:45; GV-6:15
- 5th Games at Grenora: Boys vs. Savage – BJH-4:00; BV-5:30; GV vs. Ray-GV-7:00 – Parent Night in Grenora
- 6th Games @ Grenora – BV vs. Bainville -7:00 – Bus @ 5:45
- 7th JH Tournament @ Culbertson – TBA  
Games @ Fairview – BJH-5:30; BV-7:00 – Bus @ 2:30  
GV vs. Parshall – TBA
- 9th JH Boys semi-finals at Fairview
- 10th Games @ Westby vs. Froid/Lake - BJH-4:30; BV-6:00 – last game for JH Boys

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**Call Brenda at 385-2577.**

**Equal Housing  
Opportunity**

The First Day of Spring is  
March 20th...



But who's counting?

## BACK IN THE WINTER OF...(continued)

Marsha Meyer, postmaster at the Westby Post Office, says this year has been “the wind against the mail”. Typically the mail has arrived anywhere from one-half to two and a half hours late from Wolf Point each day. Once the mail arrives, it then becomes a challenge to the rural carriers to find a way to get to their patrons. Some delivery has been sporadic, but most have gone no more than one day without mail. The carriers have had to detour countless miles to make this happen. Ron Nichols, who brings the mail daily from Wolf Point, could not leave town after the road closed around noon on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. Once the road opened around noon the next day, Marsha sent her husband to retrieve Westby’s mail which had arrived earlier in Plentywood.

As the USPS says “Come rain, hail, sleet or snow the mail must go through.” At the origin of this slogan, I’m not so sure they ever had Highway 5 to contend with!

Peggy Bowman, secretary at Westby School, had this to say about the challenges of getting the word out as to the status of school closures, extracurricular activities and bus schedules. “We have only missed one day of school and had one day where the buses couldn’t run and the children had to stay at their ‘home away from home’. Our biggest nightmare has been for Sue Meyer, our athletic director, in the canceling and rescheduling of girls and boys basketball games.” There are now four games to make-up and everyone’s schedules, along with their nerves, are getting tight. Peggy went on to say she sticks pretty close to the phone to keep the parents and community members abreast of the ever changing situation. Fortunately, there have been no major accidents or mishaps to report due to the weather or road conditions and for that we can be thankful. Nordhagen says, to keep that record, people need to be mindful of the warnings and, if traveling, stay tuned to local weather reports at all times.

*Pictured right:* Main Street in Westby. Life goes on, even in the face of piles of snow and bitter winds.

He went on to say, “The state department’s biggest hindrance in keeping the roads clear is cars stuck out on the road. It is impossible for the heavy equipment to get around these vehicles and just because we are driving a big orange truck doesn’t mean we can always see what’s ahead either.” There have been reports of many stranded in Plentywood perhaps ill prepared, but still happier than those who chose to brave the conditions or start out and find themselves stuck and the conditions vastly different out there on that lonely highway than even they imagined.

For those of you who think we need our heads examined for even thinking about living here. Don’t worry about us, we’re tough. Maybe crazy, but tough and we need stories to tell *our* grandchildren. Like this one as told by Gene Meyer, “Back in ‘42 the highway was blocked for two weeks after a five day blizzard. We were just fine, though. We made it around the back way to Plentywood if we really needed to get there.” Or, least we forget this story from more recent years, that many of us have already filed away always thinking the winter at hand has got to be the worst. What year did our election ballots have to be delivered to the Community Center by the Sheridan County snow plow so our citizens could vote in the presidential election? If you can’t remember for sure, it was 2000 the year winter arrived on October 31<sup>st</sup> and stayed until May 1<sup>st</sup>. Remember, it can always be worse and soon, maybe not soon enough, but soon, this winter, too, can be filed away with “Back in the winter of.....”.



# DIARY OF A SNOW SHOVELER

**December 8** 6:00 PM It started to snow. The first snow of the season and the wife and I took our cocktails and sat for hours by the window watching the huge soft flakes drift down from heaven. It looked like a Grandma Moses Print. So romantic we felt like newlyweds again. I love snow!

**December 9** We woke to a beautiful blanket of crystal white snow covering every inch of the landscape. What a fantastic sight! Can there be a more lovely place in the whole world? Moving here was the best idea I've ever had! Shoveled for the first time in years and felt like a boy again. I did both our driveway and the sidewalks. This afternoon the snowplow came along and covered up the sidewalks and closed in the driveway, so I got to shovel again. What a perfect life!

**December 12** The sun has melted all our lovely snow. Such a disappointment! My neighbor tells me not to worry- we'll definitely have a white Christmas. No snow on Christmas would be awful! Bob says we'll have so much snow by the end of winter, that I'll never want to see snow again. I don't think that's possible. Bob is such a nice man, I'm glad he's our neighbor.

**December 14** Snow, lovely snow! 8 inches last night. The temperature dropped to -20. The cold makes everything sparkle so. The wind took my breath away, but I warmed up by shoveling the driveway and sidewalks. This is the life! The snowplow came back this afternoon and buried everything again. I didn't realize I would have to do quite this much shoveling, but I'll certainly get back in shape this way. I wish I wouldn't huff and puff so.

**December 15** 20 inches forecast. Sold my van and bought a 4x4 Blazer. Bought snow tires for the wife's car and 2 extra shovels. Stocked the freezer. The wife wants a wood stove in case the electricity goes out. I think that's silly. We aren't in Alaska, after all.

**December 16** Ice storm this morning. Fell on my back on the ice in the driveway putting down salt. Hurt like a son of a gun. The wife laughed for an hour, which I think was very cruel.

**December 17** Still way below freezing. Roads are too icy to go anywhere. Electricity was off for 5 hours. I had to pile the blankets on to stay warm. Nothing to do but stare at the wife and try not to irritate her. Guess I should've bought a wood stove, but won't admit it to her. I hate it when she's right. I can't believe I'm freezing to death in my own living room.

**December 20** Electricity's back on, but had another 14 inches of the darn stuff last night. More shoveling! Took all day. The darn snowplow came by twice. Tried to find a neighbor kid to shovel, but they said they're too busy playing hockey. I think they're lying. Called the only hardware store around to see about buying a snow blower and they're out. Might have another shipment in March. I think they're lying. Bob says I have to shovel or the city will have it done and bill me. I think he's lying.

**December 22** Bob was right about a white Christmas because 13 more inches of the white stuff fell today, and it's so cold, it probably won't melt till August. Took me 45 minutes to get all dressed up to go out to shovel and then I had to go to the bathroom. By the time I got undressed, did my business and dressed again, I was too tired to shovel. Tried to hire Bob who has a plow on his truck for the rest of the winter, but he says he's too busy. I think the jerk is lying.

**December 23** Only 2 inches of snow today. And it warmed up to 0. The wife wanted me to decorate the front of the house this morning. What is she, nuts?! Why didn't she tell me to do that a month ago? She says she did but I think she's lying.

**December 24** 6 inches - Snow packed so hard by snowplow, I broke the shovel. Thought I was having a heart attack. If I ever catch the son of a beaver who drives that snow plow, I'll drag him through the snow by his eyelids and beat him to death with my broken shovel. I know he hides around the corner and waits for me to finish shoveling and then he comes down the street at a 100 miles an hour and throws snow all over where I've just been! Tonight the wife wanted me to sing Christmas carols with her and open our presents, but I was too busy watching for the darn snowplow.

**December 25** Merry Christmas! 20 more inches of the darn slop tonight - Snowed in. The idea of shoveling makes my blood boil. I hate the snow! Then the snowplow driver came by asking for a donation and I hit him over the head with my shovel. The wife says I have a bad attitude. I think she's an idiot. If I have to watch 'It's A Wonderful Life' one more time, I'm going to stuff her into the microwave.

**December 26** Still snowed in. Why the heck did I ever move here? It was all HER idea. She's really getting on my nerves.

**December 27** Temperature dropped to -30 and the pipes froze; plumber came after 14 hours of waiting for him, he only charged me \$1,400 to replace all my pipes.

**December 28** Warmed up to above -20. Still snowed in. The WIFE is driving me crazy!!!

**December 29** 10 more inches. Bob says I have to shovel the roof or it could cave in. That's the silliest thing I ever heard. How dumb does he think I am?

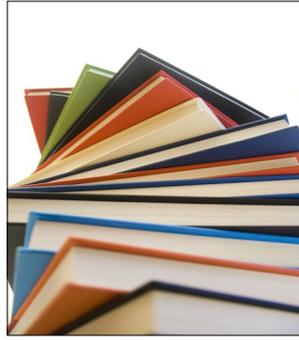
**December 30** Roof caved in. I beat up the snow plow driver, and now he is suing me for a million dollars, not only the beating I gave him, but also for trying to shove the broken snow shovel up his nose The wife went home to her mother. Nine more inches predicted.

**December 31** I set fire to what's left of the house. No more shoveling.

**January 31** Feel so good. I just love those little white pills they keep giving me. Why am I tied to the bed?

# BOOK CLUB

## By Arlene Hove



### Marley & Me

Author: John Grogan

January has brought much wind, snow and cold to our corner of the world and reading is a great way to escape what is outside our windows. Tuck in with a good book such as Marley and Me and the snow and cold will seem to disappear for a few hours.

This is the delightful true story about the incorrigible, somewhat neurotic but always loveable and loyal-to-a-fault yellow Labrador retriever, Marley. We soon discover, however, that this is much more than a tale of a dog; it is the story of a family in the making and the bigger-than-life animal that helped shape it.

The story opens with life before Marley. The Grogans are newly married and living in south Florida and life seemed about as good as life can get. They could not leave well enough alone, however, and answered a classified ad in the Palm Beach Post, an ad for a dog. One of the males of the litter seemed particularly smitten with the Grogans, and the rest, we say, is history.

Marley puts his owners to the test early on and they decide that obedience school is what Marley needs. The attempt at making Marley into the obedient canine they desire fails miserably and Marley is ultimately expelled from school! Marley's misadventures will have you laughing, especially if you own or have ever owned a dog. Full grown, Marley was a 97 pound steamroller, crashing through screen doors, destroying wherever confined during a thunderstorm, drooling on everything, including the guests, and eating everything he could get his mouth on, fine jewelry no exception. All of this was considered a small price to pay for the unconditional love and devotion that Marley returned to his owners during the thirteen years of his life with them. Marley enjoyed life to the fullest.

What would Marley have to say about the book? We're pretty sure he would have eaten it.

### THANK YOU

I would like to thank all of the people from Westby for their support of our mother throughout the years. I know there are many of you that have visited with our mother while she was in the nursing home that we don't know about. She would have been so happy to know that so many people attended her funeral service even though we understand the weather was quite cold and windy. We won't even begin to try to name anyone in this note because we know we would miss someone. The cards and notes that we received have told us that she touched a lot of lives and all of us will miss her. Fortunately, we all have the memories of her kindness in her younger days, and her smile. Westby has proven once again that it is a great little town with kind and considerate people.

Ron and Bobbie and family  
Luella and Charles and family  
Bob Sawrey (Phyllis husband) and family



### WINTER SURVIVAL

It isn't just the human population that's finding this winter difficult. The deer population has been slowly inching it's way further and further into town. The picture to the left was taken by Val Moore from her kitchen window. A doe and 2 of her fawns have been frequenting Danny & Val Moore's yard to feast from their bird feeder. They used to come in under the cover of darkness, but now visit several times throughout the day. No doubt they're just as eager for Spring to arrive as the rest of us.

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It's winter in Montana  
And the gentle breezes blow  
Seventy miles an hour  
At twenty-five below.

Oh, how I love Montana  
When the snow's up to your butt  
You take a breath of winter  
And your nose gets frozen shut.

Yes, the weather here is wonderful  
So I guess I'll hang around  
I could never leave Montana  
'Cause I'm frozen to the ground!



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