

The Westby Border News

October 24, 2011

Volume 6

Issue 127

1.50/copy

Westby Alumni Never Stops Learning

It has been over forty years since Chuck Ubben walked through the doors of Westby High School diploma in hand, but the learning did not cease there, it merely switched directions. Having grown up in eastern Montana in the late sixties, it's doubtful his career path was even remotely evident on the horizon. Annie Green Springs and Boone's Farm were not calling him.

Chuck spent the early part of his career working for a beer distributor in Tacoma, Washington. After ten years, he left that company to work for Odom-Southern Distributors of Washington, a large distributor of wine, beer, waters and sodas. His specialty with the company has always been wine; however, he has an extensive background in craft and import beers, as well.

Ubben's career as a wine specialist has grown parallel to the industry in the United States. Both appear to have exploded. Not only wine consumption, but the number of wineries here in the United States has increased dramatically in the last 20 years, even 10 years. In comparison over those same years, Chuck's career has evolved from a wine salesman to a "Court of Master Sommeliers" and most recently a "Certified Specialist of Wine".

A Court of Master Sommeliers expertise encompasses knowledge, tasting and serving while the Certified Wine Specialist gains worldwide knowledge of all aspects of wine. To become certified on this level you have to know global wine regions, biology, language, geography and



the history of wine. After 30 years in the industry and seven months of studying including seven practice tests, Chuck and 35 other hopefuls from five states met in Seattle to be tested for the rights to this prestigious title.

Before the test, the group spent two additional, grueling days studying with the wine master who would administer the test. The first day included a 13 hour study period with the students back at 7:00 AM the next morning for another 5 hour study period.

(continues page 12)

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LION'S HAVE BUSY YEAR

As the annual Lion's sponsored craft and bake sale is upon us, it seems a good time to reflect on their many contributions to the community and applaud their continued effort in keeping each of these very worthwhile programs going.

On Saturday, October 29th, the Lion's Club will be holding their annual Craft and Bake Sale. This is a big fund raiser for the group and they are asking for your continued support. Because of their diminished numbers, the group relies heavily on community members to contribute items to the bake sale. This allows for a nice variety baked goods. The sale runs from 10:00-2:00PM and lunch with homemade pies will be served throughout the day.

Two other important fundraisers run concurrently beginning in December. A national Lion's program, "Light a Light for sight" begins in December and all money received is sent in to Montana Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation and the Leader Dog Foundation. Fresh Christmas wreaths will again be available from the Lion's around the 1st of December. Proceeds from wreath sales go back into our community to help those in need. Bob Lagerquist heads up the "Light for Sight" project and Kim Rust may be reached at Al's Meat to request a wreath.

Each year, the Lion's Club awards a scholarship to an eligible Westby High School senior. The recipient for the 2011 was Terrance Bjorgen.

In years past, the Lion's Club breakfast has been a popular part of the Prairie Fest activities. Over 100 meals were served this year.

Another important project is the ongoing collection of eyeglasses and sunglasses, prescription and non-prescription. The glasses will be sent to Great Falls to be recycled. This is an ongoing project and the collection box is located in the Community Center. A big box was just shipped off and will be put to good use.

The Lion's Club would like to thank all for their support. They are always looking for new members to help with these very worthwhile endeavors. Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at 6:15 at the Community Center. Feel free to stop and check them out.



Pictured left: 100 years and still going strong! Rene Stageberg celebrated her 100th birthday, October 13th, 2011 with a party at the Community Center.

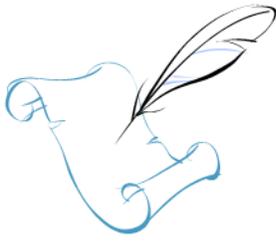
See story on page 13.

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Danny Moore
Westby Manager



Letter to the Editor:

Dear Editor,
In July of 2011, after retiring from the State of Arizona, my wife Paula and I decided on a vacation - towing our trailer from Phoenix, Arizona through California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico and finally back to Phoenix. While in Montana, we stayed in Plentywood and I made it a point of stopping by Westby as I had attended a portion of the 8th grade there when my father was stationed at the former Fortuna Radar Station. When we first arrived in 1964 there was no base housing available, so we rented a house (that no longer exists) across from the grainery [sic] just as you enter Westby from Fortuna. It was then that I met classmates Randy Nordhagen, Mark Stordahl, Rick ?, Jerry Tangedal, Terry ?, & Kent ? (at least these are some of the class pictures that I still have - & I apologize for any misspelling or forgotten last names - but it's been 47 years).

To the best of my recollection, my 4 younger brothers and I only attended Westby for a couple of months before we obtained housing at the base and transferred to the school in Fortuna (and I later attended Crosby High my Freshman year). Some of the people I remember from Fortuna are: Leslie Aaberg, James Haskins, Darrel & Wannie Shefstad, Elizabeth & Laila Torgeson, & LaVonne & Susan Wigness. I was able to get in touch with Randy Nordhagen & we spent some time with he & his wife Cathy reminiscing [sic] and we also met his cousin Karen who acutally [sic] lives about a mile from us in Phx (small world). It would really have been nice to see any other of the above mentioned, but I realize that after all these years many people have gone their own ways. But it was really great to see Randy & to be able to see how things have changed and/or stayed the same in the Westby/Fortuna area. And if any of the above mentioned see this or know of each others whereabouts, [sic] I would thoroughly enjoy hearing from you.

Steve McVay
Westby/Fortuna 8th grade class of 1965
mc_amiga@yahoo.com

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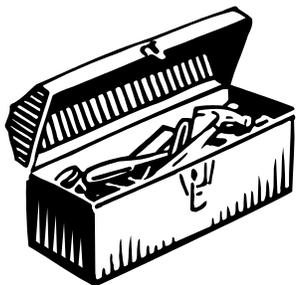
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It has been a marathon of celebrations, friends, and family. It started with the granddaddy of them all-Rene's 100th birthday party. And what a day it was. Our resident celebrity did it up right with guests from across the county and state, and family from across the country. She enjoyed every minute of it and is a perfect example of living life to the fullest at any age. When I grow up I want to be just like her! Danny's brother, Richard, and his children, Greg and Merrilee, drove in for the special occasion as did several others in the crowd. The next day our nephews and their friend arrived in town for their annual hunting trip. Thus began a marathon of gathering to catch up on the last year, reminisce about previous trips, and rehash the daily hunt. Our old friend Carl joined us on Sunday after a 2200 mile trip from Florida and our family was complete. The gatherings continued throughout the week with other special friends (family) joining in. It is a week each year we truly look forward to, not only because it generally is the only time we see them, but because we cherish the memories made to relive and enjoy next year and every year until perhaps we, too, reach 100. With gathering comes food and there was no lack of it. I had to pick and choose the recipes this week as there were too many to share in one column. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but by next issue it will be on to holiday flavors. Hard to believe. The weather is playing tricks with our mind.

This first recipe comes to me from Debra Ubben via her mother-in-law, Joan Killens. Debra served it to Joan and Dick on a recent trip to Tacoma. I found it very appropriate to share it this issue while highlighting her husband, Chuck's, recent accomplishments. I tried the Bolognese sauce and found it outstanding.

After a little research, I learned Bolognese is a term for a meaty pasta sauce named for Bologna, Italy, the city of its origin. Chuck recommended a good Chianti classic (BANFI) or baby super Tuscan (CENTINE) as the wine pairing for this dish.

SLOW- COOKER BOLOGNESE SAUCE

1 Tbsp olive oil
 1 pound lean ground beef
 ½ pound bulk Italian sausage (hot Italian turkey sausage works great)
 ½ cup minced onion
 ½ cup minced celery
 ½ cup minced carrots
 1 Tbsp minced garlic
 1 28-oz can whole tomatoes, chopped (I used fresh)
 ½ cup milk
 ¼ cup dry red wine
 ¼ cup low sodium beef broth
 ¼ cup tomato paste
 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
 1 tsp salt
 1 tsp dried basil
 1 tsp oregano
 ½ tsp red pepper flakes
 ½ tsp fennel seed
 ½ cup mascarpone or cream cheese (I think cream cheese works fine)
 1 pound penne or similar pasta

Heat oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add burger and sausage; cook until no longer pink. Drain off fat. Set aside. Spray slow cooker with cooking spray. Mix garlic with carrots, celery and onion in bottom of slow cooker. Top with meat mixture and add remaining ingredients except last two ingredients. Cover and cook on low heat for 3-4 hours. Cook pasta per directions and immediately before serving, whisk mascarpone or cream cheese into sauce. Spoon sauce over penne and serve. Garnish with fresh basil or shaved parmesan. 6 servings.

I have to say, I love this Ricotta recipe and tried it on a fluke. In the recipe it was intended for the cream base for a pasta dish. I needed goat cheese for an appetizer, but being worried about my audience's feelings about goat cheese, I opted for a milder cheese. This ricotta fit the bill perfectly and could it be any simpler? I served it with crostini, roasted cherry tomatoes and roasted garlic to rave reviews. It is a keeper with much potential.

QUICK LEMON RICOTTA

2 cups 2% milk
½ cup plain Greek yogurt
2 tsp cider vinegar
1 ½ tsp grated lemon rind
¼ tsp kosher salt

Combine in a microwave-safe 1 quart liquid measuring cup milk, yogurt and vinegar; microwave at high for 4 minutes. Stir to form small curds. Strain through a sieve lined with a double layer of cheesecloth. Let stand for 5 minutes. Discard liquid. Scrape cheese mixture into a small bowl; stir in lemon rind and salt. Refrigerate until serving.



Pictured above: What would a birthday celebration be without a helium balloon and flowers? From Rene Stageberg's birthday celebration.

These cute little treats are all the rage and with Halloween right around the corner, I thought it a perfect time to share.

CAKE POPS



1 cake mix prepared according to package directions (any flavor)
1 cup of homemade or prepared frosting (app., enough to make balls sticky)
2 pounds of vanilla candy coating
20 Sucker sticks
Styrofoam block to hold pops
Mini chocolate chips, sprinkles, nuts or decorations of choice.
Crumble cooled cake in to large bowl, add frosting and beat with a mixer on low speed to combine. Roll in to 1-1 1/2 inch balls. Freeze for 15 minutes or refrigerate for 1 hour. Melt vanilla candy coating. Removing a few cake balls at a time, dip stick about ½ inch into candy coating and insert in to flatten side (side resting on pan) about half way in ball, submerge ball on stick in candy coating. Gently tap wrist holding stick to shake off excess coating. Sprinkle with decoration of choice and put stick in Styrofoam block to dry. Continue until all pops are coated. Place in cellophane sucker bags and tie with ribbons or in plastic wrap. Makes app 20 cake pops.

A lesson from Rene:

Enjoy
AGE IS JUST A NUMBER
and
Life is Good!

School Board Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting
October 11, 2011
7:00 P.M.

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Westby School District #3 was held on October 11, 2011. Brenda Ryals, Brant Cartwright, Jim Sundsted, Aldon Joyes, Mr. Holecek, Mr. Somppi and Donna Sorenson were in attendance. Chairman Ryals called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Vance Meyer arrived at 7:05 p.m.

Visitor at the meeting was Suzi Ekness.

Donna read the minutes of the September 12, 2011 regular meeting. Following one correction, these minutes were approved and placed on file. Donna then read the minutes of the September 22, 2011 special meeting. Following no corrections or additions, these minutes were approved and placed on file.

The Board reviewed the Clerk's August financial report.

Public Comment: none

Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds: Housing report: Meyer reported that construction on the new housing project was proceeding well. Most of the cement is poured, the walls are up and rafters will be put up soon. Sheridan Electric will move the power pole and underground power and phone lines will be installed.

Unfinished Business:

A. Mr. Holecek and Mrs. Sorenson updated the board on the status of the Procurement Card application for the school. The application has been forwarded to Harris Bank in Chicago, IL for final approval. We should receive notification soon whether or not we are approved.

New Business:

A. The following Series 1000 board policy revisions were given a first reading:

BP1110 (Taking Office)

BP 1111 (Election)

BP2230 (Annual Organization)

BP1210 (Qualifications, Terms, Duties of Board members)

BP 1400 (Board Meetings)

BP 1420 (School Board Meeting Procedure)

BP 1532 (Trustee Insurance)

B. Mr. Holecek reported that he had received an application from Bobby Bice for temporary student employment. Mr. Holecek would like to hire Bobby to help with some fall clean-up projects and gym cleaning after games. Sundsted made a motion to hire Bobby Bice as a temporary student janitor; Meyer seconded, AIF.

C. Mr. Holecek presented three Journal Vouchers for approval by the board: #2012-2 to change payout of Arlene Hove's termination sick leave and vacation pay to come from Compensated Absences fund, per our Auditor's recommendation; #2012-3 to correct the line item expenditure for Flex and HRA administration Fees paid to Precision Administrators, per our Auditor's recommendation; #2012-4 to pay part of the expenditure for student computers from SRS REAP monies. Cartwright made a motion to approve these Journal Vouchers; Joyes seconded the motion, AIF.

Announcements/Discussion

Mr. Holecek informed the board that he will be attending MCEL in Great Falls October 20 & 21.

(Continues next page)

School Board Meeting Minutes

(continued)

Superintendent's Report:

Mr. Holecek informed the board that students enrolled in Ag classes through MT Digital Academy qualify to participate in FFA. There is a possibility that students who wish to be involved may be able to attend FFA meets with the Plentywood FFA. He will look into the options available and report back to the board in November.

Mr. Holecek reported that he had attended the Westby City Council meeting on October 10 in order to express his concern over the lack of school crosswalks and the increase in the number of vehicles speeding through the school zone. Several possible solutions were discussed. Mr. Holecek plans to attend the City Council meeting in November as well, and will report to the board at the next School Board meeting.

Mr. Holecek announced that there will be a meeting in Glendive on October 25 for schools interested in participating in an inter-local agreement for a health insurance cooperative. He, Brenda Ryals and Donna Sorenson will be attending. All board members are welcome to attend.

Mr. Holecek will bring a list of potential volunteer coaches to the November meeting. There may be a couple of instances where a volunteer coach will be needed for basketball.

Mr. Holecek informed the board that the new office copier/printer approved at the last meeting is in and will be installed on the network later this week.

Mr. Holecek reported that as of the last home volleyball match we have spent about \$1500 more than we have received in income in the athletic fund. He will update the board again when the figures are compiled for basketball season.

Mr. Holecek reported that he did not make it to the Keystone Pipeline project meeting last month due to a family conflict, but there has been quite a bit of information on the meeting in the Billings Gazette.

Mr. Holecek has not heard when Century Paving will begin paving our bus loading zone and parking lot. Mr. Meyer has heard that they are almost done in Outlook and will be coming to Westby next.

Mrs. Ryals read a card from Arlene Hove thanking the board for the retirement party given on her behalf and for the cabinet of quilting thread she received as a gift.

The next regular school board meeting will be postponed until Tuesday, November 15, 2011 so that Mr. Holecek can attend the City Council meeting.

Meyer moved to approve payment of October payroll warrants #10811 - 10821 totaling \$101,875.76, and October claims warrants #16532 - 16587 totaling \$63,405.07. Sundsted seconded the motion for payment approval, AIF.

Due to the lateness of the November regular meeting, Meyer made a motion to approve payment of November bills that have early payment deadlines, Joyes seconded the motion for approval of payment, AIF.

There was no Extracurricular Financial Report presented.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Donna Sorenson, District Clerk

Brenda Ryals, Chairman

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

WeeBee Quilter's October Meeting Minutes

The WeeBee Quilters meeting was called to order on October 4, 2011 at 2:00 pm by President Cindy Nielsen. There were 12 members present. (Cindy Nielsen, Donna Evans, Arlene Hove, Elaine Onstad, Bonnie Matzke, Lorna Lagerquist, Gail Adams, Karen Meyer, Marsha Meyer, Mary Lou Heppner, Doreen Johnson and Terri Mc Cauley). Our guest this month is Anita Bjorgen. The secretary and treasurer reports are read and approved.

The drawing this month is won by Arlene, and it was a kitchen towel with a cute Bee embroidered by Cindy. Just adorable! Arlene also won the gift basket from the Enchanted Room in Glendive at the Quilt Shop Hop! Way to go Arlene!

We had show and tell and our guest Anita, showed us her stunning embroidered state bird quilt! A lot of time and patience went into this beautiful quilt and it surely is a forever keepsake! Thank you for sharing with us.

The Red/White and Black quilt is finished and it is beautiful. Thank you to all who helped get it finished, it will be used to raise money for the Immanuel Lutheran Church.

We talked about getting together October 18, 2011 at 9:30 am, to work on our Comfort Quilts. We have almost enough green, brown and beige blocks to make 2 quilts. Karen (and maybe Arlene) will check at Jane's in Plentywood for some brown material for sashing, borders and backing. So bring sewing machines etc. to the October 18th quilt session and plan to sew!

We talked about the Centennial Quilt and Donna had brought an embroidery card for her sewing machine that had a wheat pattern. Cindy is going to talk to Charlotte Nielsen and also to Hi-Line Sports and ask about embroidery. We also decided to talk more about the Centennial Quilt on October 18th while we sew.

Arlene received a message that the Grenora Quilter's are putting on a show Saturday, November 19th from 10:00am to 4:00pm., and Sunday November 20th from 12:00pm to 4:00pm. This will take place at the Senior Center! Hope some of us can go!

We decided to start our regular monthly meetings at 1:30 pm instead of 2:00pm. That will help with some of the gals who have to travel to attend meetings.

Next meeting is November 1, 2011 at 1:30pm! Remember the new time.

Karen Meyer will serve in November. Meeting Adjourned.

Terri McCauley, Sec./Treasurer.



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Centennial Central

Anyone wishing to share pictures, stories, or pieces of the puzzle may contact the Border News.

Cathy Nordhagen, our correspondent for the history portion of this Column, may be reached at: firecrackermango@gmail.com or 385-2364.

History of Westby, Montana

(The Conclusion to our three-part series.)

The era of the "roaring twenties" found Westby still a bustling, ambitious little town. Many of the businesses had changed hands, and new ones were added. Looking down the street now, some of the signs would say Berlin Brothers Tire Repair, Matt Madsen Meat Market, Alida Steinberg Home Cafe (later sold to Irene Finn and Marian Schultz). Peter Miller and Luther Hultgren General Merchandise (purchased from Berger Larsen), Frank Bertch's Piper-Howe Lumber Co., Bredevin Chevrolet, Rohweder Show Hall, Planter's Hotel (sold by Mrs. Shaber to Hilma Pearson during this period). There were two doctors during this -

time, the first one being Dr. Wright -- followed by Dr. La-Barge. Mrs. Berg ran a nursing home (Wm. Stageberg residence today), and one patient (Mrs. Leonard Rierson) recalls having her tonsils removed there when she was seven years old. Walter Olesen opened his light plant and the first telephone office in town was opened. Anton Nelson's Implement, Hank Skeel's Pool Hall (later sold to Charlie Meyer), Alvina Andersen's Millinery, and John Andreson's "livery service" (John used a Model T Ford to drive passengers and often the doctors to their destination) were all part of this era.

Westby's first mayor when the town was incorporated was Nels Nelson. (Continues next page)



Dr. Ivan



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The History of Westby (continued)

On the date of December 14, 1916 an election was held in which 46 votes were cast and all for the Incorporation of Westby -- not one dissenting vote. Thus the beginning of city government in Westby was official. The year 1925 finds P.G. Anderson serving as mayor and Elmer Hultgren as policeman. It was also during this year that the "Lights of the Westby News" were extinguished, and the newspaper went out of existence.

1930-1940 -- depression, poor crops and hard times were felt by everyone. President Roosevelt inaugurated a program of relief and many early residents recall "WPA" projects where they were provided with \$40-45 a month. Despite these hardships, the people found time for pleasure and many times the entertainment was offered by Thorstein Skarning (related to Gene Hanson), the world famous accordionist. This event was always held in John's Hall.

A big improvement to Westby was the building of a new, modern highway between Westby and Plentywood. No longer needed was the famous "old blue trail". It was also during these years that Westby was struck by two tragic fires, which destroyed many buildings on Main Street.

Buildings lost were Otto Enger Shoe Shop, Charlie Meyer Billiards and Saloon (1936) and the Planter's Hotel (1937).

1941 and World War II -- Westby felt the impact of the war, minor was rationing of food, clothes and gasoline; but heart rending was the loss of three boys from our community. Alton Olesen, Helmar Lee and Andrew Wirtzberger gave their lives in the defense of their country.

It was also during this time that Westby welcomed the REA into the community. One of the men, who worked hard to promote this, P.G. Anderson, is also the oldest pioneer (93 years). The REA Office located in Westby for a short time and then moved to its present headquarters at Medicine Lake, Montana.

Westby was again struck by fire -- this time buildings on the west side of the street were destroyed. Lost in the blaze were Lloyd Schultz Barber Shop, Home Cafe (Selma Helseth, Prop.) and the Aubrey Ferguson living quarters. The years between 1950-60 also brought improvements to our little town, including the arrival of RTA, and a much improved telephone service. The 780th Radar Squadron eight miles east of Westby was built in 1951. The Radar Squadron receives its mail through the Westby Post Office, and often the base families live in Westby until living space is available at base headquarters. It affords to us the opportunity to mingle with people from all parts of the world. A new addition to the Westby School was built in 1955 and dedicated to Mr. G.F. Freisleben, who devoted 35 years as superintendent of this school. The present faculty includes 15 teachers and a superintendent. Also included is a school secretary, two janitors and hot lunch program (housed in the old gym) that employs two cooks and a dishwasher. There are four buses running daily to pick up students from rural areas. The school has grown from 30 pupils in 1914 to 227 pupils in 1966. In 1968, another addition was completed which houses the elementary grades and several high school classrooms as well as a new cafeteria.

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The History of Westby (continued)

Water for the town was also the question of the 50's. A special election was held on June 20, 1958 and a vote was passed to bond the town for such a purpose.

Eighty-eight votes were cast with only 17 of them dissenting. Mayor at the time of this election was Roy Listoe. In 1960, Westby was authorized to build a new post office and the contract for such building was awarded to Simon Swanson of Plentywood. It was also during this time that Lawrence Rohweder built his new insurance building. Many of the buildings along the main street were given a new front and all of these improvements did much to improve the appearance.

Westby has been served by 13 mayors. These men are Henry Reuter, Nels Nelson, Berger Larson, Peter Miller, C.N. Rostad, P.G. Anderson, A.T. Olesen, Elmer Hultgren, Idor Ekness, Lawrence Rohweder, Roy Listoe, Stanley Thorpe and our present mayor, Jerome Meyer. To these men we are appreciative for giving of their time and effort in serving our city.

The past fifty years have seen vast changes in the lives of everyone. Gone are the horse and buggy days replaced by automobile and jet plane. The first oil well was drilled on the Carl Petersen land in 1962. Since then oil wells have sprung up rapidly until now there are close to 50 wells in the area with drilling still continuing. This is a land of shining futures, glorious hope and realized aspirations. This land of God has been and still remains a "bountiful one". In 1903 -- pioneers of a new land; in 1969 -- still pioneers -- always at the beginning of a new era. Whether it be developing the sod, building the first automobile, flying the first airplane or landing on the moon. The residents of Westby are proud of their past, hopeful for their future and thankful to those diligent pioneers who helped to make this way of life for us so rich and secure.

Westby Alumni Never Stops Learning

(continued)

Following a lunch break, the participants were each handed a sealed envelope containing 100 random questions in which they had 60 minutes to answer. "It was the hardest test I have ever taken in my life." commented Ubben. It would be three weeks before the test results would be known, and Chuck mentioned, "We were told if you receive a small envelope in the mail, you have failed, a large one would mean success and thus contain your certificate." After a tense three weeks, I was one of eight to receive a large envelope containing a certificate bearing my accomplishments-Chuck Ubben, CSW, Certified Specialist of Wine, from the Society of Wine Educators. "I was very happy to have completed this stage of my wine career." Chuck's position with Odom basically includes educating restaurants about wine and the industry thus allowing them to make the best decisions for wine pairings.

Adding CSW to his title, not only gives him credibility in the wine world, but assures his clients they are getting the best possible advice and service for their restaurant or wine shop.

Whether Chuck's formal education ends here is yet to be determined. Reaching the level of Certified Specialist of Wine, has allowed him an invitation to participate in the ultimate test sponsored by the Society of Wine Educators-Certified Educator of Wine...CEW. Should Chuck decide to pursue this top level from the Society of Wine Educators his career focus would switch from sales to teaching. Chuck said, "I am considering this as it is, again, a much more in depth study and would allow me to be one of the 'teachers of wine'." For now, he is happy to share his newfound knowledge with his very, I feel, lucky customers.

Chuck and his wife, Debra, continue to make Tacoma their home. Their daughter, Molly, is a sophomore at Pacific Lutheran University also in Tacoma. Chuck's mother, Joan Killens, resides in Westby.

CENTENARIAN CELEBRATES BIRTHDAY

One would never know it, 'cept she has bound to have told you, she has been planning for this big day for a long time: A celebration of one hundred years of living.

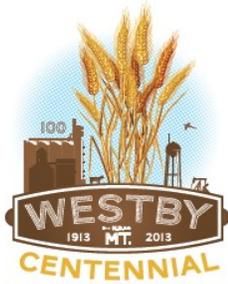
Rene Stageberg's 100th birthday was celebrated on October 13th with greetings and people from near and far at the Westby Community Center. The party, hosted by her family, was attended by well over one guest per her year and greetings from everyone from the Westby school faculty and students to President Barack Obama. Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer also sent a congratulatory letter. Rene personally greeted everyone, had her picture taken with most and thoroughly enjoyed every minute of her celebrity status.

When I said you would never know it, it is in reference to her independence, her tenacity, her spirit which all burn brightly even at 100 years of age and, no doubt, contributed to her longevity.

As if in symbol, the day of her birthday her cane, the only remnant of a broken leg two years ago, hung loosely from the window sill, "I don't need it anyway unless I'm outside. It just gets in the way and it can hang there all day." She was whooping and hollering in celebration and she didn't want anything stopping her.

And if that isn't enough, she still drives her 1995 Buick around town and plays whist with the best of them. She is looking forward to basketball season as she hasn't missed a home game in 70 years. Indications are there is a lot of life left to live and if you have any question about it one need look no further than Main Street, Westby, where most days if you don't spot her walking down for groceries, you may find her busy with senior citizens, Jolly Twelve, American Legion Auxiliary or just visiting with whoever happens into the Prairie Kitchen. A life to truly celebrate!





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Submission Deadline:

6 P.M. FRIDAY before
Publication

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Subscriptions are \$30.00/year.
Mail your check made payable to:

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% Val Moore or Tracy Johanson
Westby, MT 59275

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