

# 'This is the best Senior Center in the country'

As I went to the Senior Center one day recently, there was a Mini Bus unloading people at the front door, including one in a wheelchair and another with a walker.

Cars were leaving the rear of the building delivering Meals on Wheels. As I entered the building, someone was leaving with assisting equipment from the Loan Closet, and a staff member from In-Home Services was greeting a senior at her office door.

The dining room was busy serving us a tasty, nutritional meal, and there was an entertaining program during the noon hour. I finished my meal and spent the afternoon in the Community Room playing bridge.

As I left the building later that afternoon, my mind took me back to the days when a group of us who worked in people-serving agencies was concerned about obvious needs of the senior population in our community. We became

aware that housing, transportation and nutrition services topped a long list.

We started meeting often in the meeting room at the YMCA to share our concerns and ideas. We soon organized as the Senior Citizens Coordinating Council.

Our first project was to secure funds from the Wyoming Department of Transportation to buy a van for transportation and recruit a volunteer driver. A Meals on Wheels program was begun with the help of the Sheridan Memorial Hospital kitchen, and we started out delivering 12 meals a day.

First Christian Church and the



## Center Stage

Darlene Elliott



Salvation Army provided us with space, and we began serving a hot meal at noon five days a week.

By this time we had secured part-time staff, and it was obvious that there was a need for a center. It took

lots of noontime meetings, telephone calls and visits with community leaders. But then the first 1-cent sales tax was proposed, and we were included in receiving some of the funds.

With the generous support of the city of Sheridan, Sheridan County, foundations, organizations and many individuals, we dedicated the Sheridan Senior Citizens Center in March 1980.

The needs of the elderly population

of this community continue to grow, and the Senior Center Board and staff work hard to meet those needs. The community is right there supporting this important service, as always.

Folks return from their travels and say, "This is the best Senior Center in the country," and we hope you will pardon us when we say, "Well, we knew that."

Thank you, Sheridan!

*Darlene Elliott served on the first Governor's Council on Aging, was chairman of the Area Agency on Aging and member of the founding board of the Senior Citizens Coordinating Council, and is a member emeritus of the Senior Center Board.*

*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.*