

# Are you ready for the Harvest Moon Ball?

There are celebratory events that we all look forward to on an annual basis.

An idea is born with certain expectations attached, goals are created, people are recruited to pitch in, and the curator convinces everyone that it's all worth the effort, expense and anxiety.

The Harvest Moon Ball was born as a result of the creativity of Shellie Powley, Sheridan Senior Center's former activities director 20 years ago. Of course right behind Shellie her husband, Buzz, stood ready, willing and able to "tote that barge and lift that bale."

Dayton Community Center was chosen as the perfect venue for this warm fall celebration. As the idea became contagious, Jean Harm, head cook at the Heritage Towers Senior apartment building (one of the Senior Center meal sites), offered her culinary experience as food preparations became obvious.

What could be better than an old-fashioned pancake supper with a side of sausage and flavorful egg bake? Corn stalks, gourds, pumpkins and

anything colorful enough to convey the comforts of the fall season decorated the hall.

Folks young and older from the area gathered, including many from Sheridan. It was a party to be "grandfathered" in ... and so it goes.

The Ball was created for the Tongue River area to increase awareness and, in some ways, introduce the Sheridan Senior Center to the residents there. The Ball was also an opportunity for Sheridan seniors to enjoy fun and fellowship with old acquaintances and make new friends.

For Sheridan residents the Mini Bus service made it possible for dozens to make this a festive trip.

The first senior meal opportunity was contracted on a bid basis between the Ranch House restaurant in



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Ranchester and the Branding Iron, formerly the Hitching Post, in Dayton. The current meal site was established at Dayton Community Church in the early '90s, where a noon meal is still offered to those 60 and over.

This meal opportunity still exists as a five-day-a-week venture as well as Home Delivered Meals service for this area. In addition, transportation to and from the Tongue River valley is available.

As we embrace change in our lives, the Senior Center continues to evolve and grow in many ways. The Harvest Moon Ball is still celebrated at the Dayton Community Center building, and Jean still looks forward to this annual event.

We are now serving a full chicken dinner, complete with pie and apple cider. Bandana entertains us with country music from 7:30-9:30 p.m., and the whole family is encouraged to attend. Dinner is a suggested donation of \$5 per person.

If you plan on eating, it's recommended to make you reservations by calling 672-2240. Or just come and dance. It is a very casual event, despite the name.

This year the Harvest Moon Ball is sponsored by the Sheridan Johnson Community Fund. So come have a ball with us, especially if you've never been, and if you've been waiting all year for this event, make no excuse; we're there just for the good time!

*Jane Perkins is activities director for the Sheridan Senior Center.*

*Center Stage is written by friends of the Senior Center for the Sheridan community. It is a collection of insights and stories related to living well at every age.*