

# Thickman: You have to stay active

**By Bob Gross**

*Staff reporter*

You have to stay active, says Dr. Seymour Thickman.

"I couldn't encourage involvement more," he said. "To do anything — it's a vital part of existing, and there's no question that the satisfaction of involvement is absolutely incomparable and creates a sense of purpose."

Thickman, retired since 1990, follows his own prescription for living. At the age of 84 he stays active volunteering for various Sheridan organizations.

And on Wednesday, Thickman, who came to Sheridan from New York state in 1953, was honored by the Sheridan Council of Social Agencies as its "Human Service Person of the Year."

A short list of his volunteer activities includes working at The Free Clinic of Sheridan, serving as director emeritus on the board for the Sheridan Senior Center, and serving on the foundations for Sheridan Memorial Hospital and Sheridan College.

He was also a member of the Wyoming Council for the Humanities.

"The whole idea of aging is changing," he said. "Not that we don't experience loss or illness or whatever, but there's so much that's available so that one shouldn't stop contributing or enjoying life."

Thickman also fills in for other physicians where needed.

"I will go to places that need me," he said. "I was in Torrington just a few weeks ago."

He said he hasn't lost his passion for medicine.

"There was an old physician who told me it's important to leave medicine before

it leaves you," said Thickman. "I just enjoy it, so I don't want to leave it yet."

"As a physician for over 50 years he has cared for many individuals and families," wrote Carmen Rideout, executive director of the Senior Center, in her award-nominating letter. "Through his service work, he has cared for an entire community!"

Thickman also was nominated by Kathie Schonenbach and Mary Beebe of Sheridan County Community Health Services.

"He spends so much of his spare time helping other people in our community," they wrote. "He serves on so many boards and committees."

Thickman said he finds satisfaction in being involved and seeing "the change that an organization can make. It's gratifying to see the community responding to need. It's a need that helps make this community such a treasure."

He said Sheridan "has changed with the times because the times changed and the needs changed."

"There was no senior center, and then people got the idea that this might be important."

Thickman said the changes in his adopted hometown have become more evident, "but whether the population has been relatively dormant or not is not as important as it is a dynamic community working to improve."

Council of Social Agencies President Sue Feck stands with Dr. Seymour Thickman after presenting him with the Human Service Person of the Year award at the Sheridan Palace Restaurant on Wednesday.



The Sheridan Press/Michael Sullivan