

# Couple makes quilts for children

By Karen Krien

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A St. Francis couple could spend their retirement days sitting back in the chair and watching television but they have chosen to spend their time helping others.

Larry and Louise Wilson are retired and have been for some time. However, they donate hours to help children as well as others.

Three years ago, they began quilting. While it is great to create and put together quilts for their families and to see the beautiful spread on one of their beds, they find more joy in making quilts for children in the Social Rehabilitation Services. These children are going to foster homes. They are scared, many have little to take with them but each will get their own quilt. It is a quilt to wrap up in when they are sad; a quilt to remind them that someone cares; and a quilt that is their own possession.

Last two years, they made 38 quilts for these kids. Most of the quilts are hand tied. Louise will also quilt the pieces by hand but Larry sews the pieces together.

Mr. Wilson began sewing at an early age. Both of his parents worked so his mother had taught him to sew among other things. This trade helped him when he went to college. He worked in a dry-cleaning shop where some of his duties were altering and mending clothing. In fact, he made his oldest son, Ron's first suit.

He also knew a lot about sewing machines as he sold Singer machines to make money. Today, he still has a soft spot for them and has six Singers which he has repaired and restored.

Louise grew up sewing and making quilts. However, there was a time when their children were still at home that she took a break. After they left home about

30 years ago, her passion for sewing was back. She said she loves sewing, whether it be quilts, crocheting or embroidering.

The Wilsons have made quilts for all of their children and grandchildren. Mr. Wilson, who likes bright colors, finds it interesting to see what his family will pick out for colors. Since Mrs. Wilson likes soft, muted colors and he likes brights, the family is bound to get exactly what they want. They are particular about the fabric they use, ordering most of it on line. For a particular quilt, they try to get all the material from the same supplier (brand) because the grain and bias will be the same.

The cost of quilts add up. The material will cost an average of \$8 a yard, and then there is the backing and batting. A large quilt can cost around \$200 and that doesn't take in the time it takes to cut the pieces, sew them together in a selected pattern, then put the entire quilt together with the backing and batting. The quilt then needs to be quilted, either with a quilting hoop or on a quilting frame or with a long-arm machine.

Mr. Wilson said the long-arm quilting machines are very expensive, thus so is the labor when they send them to a person who has the equipment. After putting in all that time, effort and money to make the quilt, Mr. Wilson has come to want and expect good work. He sends most of the quilts to a professional quilter in Utah but he thinks it is worth it.

Recently, the Wilsons donated a quilt to be given away in a silent auction. The proceeds will go to help the victims of the Haiti earthquake. It is displayed in the Methodist Church Thrift Store where Louise volunteers about six hours a week.

At the St. Francis Public Library, through the month of March, they have eight quilts on display. One



MAKING QUILTS —Larry and Louise Wilson show one of the quilts they have made.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

of the quilts made by Louise has over 3,000 hexagon pieces and is completely hand quilted. Larry has a "flower garden" patterned quilt

with 3,600 pieces but he said his are sewn by machine and quilted with a long-arm machine.

The library is open Mondays

through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. People are urged to stop by and admire the quilts.

# Society to award money

The Cheyenne County Historical Society will award a \$500 scholarship to one graduating senior in order to encourage his or her further education and interest in local history.

Applicants must meet four criteria: be a Cheyenne County resident; have a cumulative grade-point average of at least 2.0 at high school graduation; plan to attend a college, university, or vocation-technical school; and submit an application and essay in a large, brown envelope by March 31 to Ward Cassidy at St. Francis Community High School or Anita Burton at Cheylin High School.

Application forms are available from Mr. Cassidy or Mrs. Burton. St. Francis students should be aware that the common application form they usually complete for local scholarships will not be used by the Historical Society's Scholarship Committee because they chose to use a form that would be equitable for both St. Francis and Bird City students.

An essay of 250-300 words should address why it is important to know the history of Cheyenne County. The applicant should not put his or her name on the essay itself because the judges wish to be impartial.

The scholarship recipient will be awarded \$250 in August and \$250 in January 2011, as long as he or she maintains at least a 2.0 grade-point average and remains in good standing at the school attended. This money can be used to help buy some texts or pay some tuition or room and board.

This is the fourth year the Cheyenne County Historical Society is offering this scholarship. The first year the amount was \$250, and Brittany Lucas was the recipient. The following year the society voted to raise the amount to \$500, and Jenice Hartman and Elizabeth Gienger were the subsequent recipients.

Direct any questions to Lucille Rossbach at 332-8903.

# Obituary

Ruby Roberts

March 30, 1921 - Feb. 28, 2010

Ruby Roberts died on Feb. 28, 2010, in Aurora, Colo. Ruby was born March 30, 1921, to Laura and Charlie Graves during a March blizzard in a northeast Cheyenne County, Kan., farm house.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Laura Eckenberg and Charles Graves; her first husband, Arnold Roesener; her second husband, Edwin Roberts; two brothers, Emmor and Hurlbut Graves; sister, BeBe Goerler.

She is survived by her sons, Don and wife, Linda Roesener of Cincinnati, Ohio, Stan and Claudia Roesener of Portland, Ore.; four grandsons; seven great-grandchildren; sister-in-law, Lola Graves, also Charles Graves, Tom and Donna Stevens and family, all of St. Francis and Jerry Knapp and family of McDonald; numerous nieces and nephews, cousins and friends.

Ruby's childhood was shortened at the age of 7 when her mother died. She became the mother to her little sister and was in charge of the cooking, cleaning, laundry and trying to keep track of her older brothers.

Her granddad, Thomas Graves, lived with them until his death. Also her aunt, Grace Rynnion and children lived with them numerous times.

Ruby talked about the Dirty 30s. How she'd try to keep the dirt out by wetting sheets and putting them over the windows. Also how she hated walking to school and stepping on grasshoppers and how they clung to her legs. She said she could still feel them.

Times were tough for their family just like a lot of other families.

Ruby attended a country grade school at Wheeler.

She lived in St. Francis with

Ma Quigley and attended high school. On weekends and summer vacations she'd return home to bake bread, do laundry and take care of things. She graduated in 1939.

She just celebrated her 70th St. Francis Community High School alumni reunion in June 2009.

She returned home until she went to Denver, Colo., in 1942, to work at Gates Rubber Company.

On Aug. 7, 1943, she married Arnold Roesener.

Ruby became a military wife. In 1956, they moved to Englewood, Colo., where Ruby started working at Montgomery Wards in Denver. She retired from there right before the company closed.

She was active in Eastern Star, her church and her family.

After retiring she made her home in Windsor Gardens.

Memorial Services were held on March 4 at Windsor Garden Centerpoint at Aurora. She was buried in the Olinger Chapel Hill Mortuary in Littleton, Colo.

Donations may be made in her name to the American Heart Association.

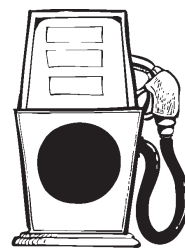
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