

Singer celebrates 75 years on stage at local business

Phil Crawford has been performing for 75 years. He will be celebrating those years on stage at 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 13, at Diamond R Bar and Grill. Also entertaining will be musician, Evelyn Roper, from Gunnison, Colo.

Everyone is invited to come by, say "hi" and sit a spell, Mr. Crawford said.

Mr. Crawford started singing at the age of 4 making his debut on the stage, playing a little colored boy in a skit with his parents. With that, he said, I was hooked and have been on stage in one form or another ever since.

He said he was raised in a poor family, moving from place to place. Entertainment in those days, he said, were programs at the local country schoolhouses by musicians and local storytellers and an occasional square dance. His parents sang and his mother recited poetry and readings.

During a stay in the hospital, one of Phil's nurses was a gypsy lady singer who played the guitar and even taught him to play. I guess I was a good student, he said, because I learned a lot. Two well-known guitarists, Phil said, say they still see the gypsy lady's influence in my playing.

After his mother had let it be known that she was looking for a guitar for Phil, a lady brought one in. It wasn't much, Phil said. It had a cracked back but I was able to practice on it.

His first big moment as an entertainer came in 1951 when attending a dance at Oscars in Sargent, Neb., he met and played two numbers with Lawrence Welk. For the next six years I played with a number of groups in Western Nebraska, South Dakota, Wyoming and Colorado. In the 60s and early 70s I was part of Wayne's WesternAirs, consisting mainly of Wayne Wright on lead guitar, Bill Cole on drums and myself as lead singer and rhythm guitar, with numerous guests along the way..

In 1996 I was introduced to Cowboy Poetry and Music Gatherings. The first being Nebraska Cowboy Poetry



PHIL CRAWFORD plays his guitar.

Gathering and Old West Days, in Valentine Neb., one of the largest in the Central United States. It was here in 1998 that I was put on the stage with the number one lady cowboy poet in the United States, Yvonne Hohenbeck of South Dakota.

Since then, he has played and sang his way all over the Western United States and part of Canada.

I have performed at a number of the large cowboy poetry and music gatherings, he said, with most of the top cowboy poets and writers from the United States and Canada.

"I don't list any because I ride my own horse not their shirt tails," he said.

He has hosted and performed in several sessions at the Montana State Poetry Gathering in Lewistown, Mont., The Arizona Cowboy Music Symposium Tucson, Ariz., and The Lost an Lava Poetry Gathering in Shoshone, Idaho. He has also performed and hosted regularly at The Nebraska Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Valentine for the last 15 years.

At one Arizona Cowboy Symposium in Tucson, he was in a group of five who backed the last surviving member of the original Sons of The Pioneers, in about a 30-minute concert.

One of my greatest moments, he said, was in Lewistown, where he was interviewed by

Adam Tanner of Reuters News for a documentary on Cowboy Poetry shown round the world. I was on their website in London for about 7 weeks. My signature photo was taken by Tanner.

The biggest thing to being a successful performer, he said, is joy. You have to enjoy what you are doing and convey that to your audience. The bridge to them is a smile and a happy face. You will convey to them, what they see as well as hear..Yes I believe in what I wrote in the front of my Little Poetry Book: Always follow Your Dreams, For they are the Stair Steps to Success, Without them you are Nothing.

It wasn't always easy but I never lost sight of the Dream I had when I stepped off the stage for the first time when I was 4 years old in a little country schoolhouse down in the hills of Nebraska and I have played my guitar, sang and recited poetry with many of the Country's best.

The "Good Book" says, "In him all things are possible" and I will add...

Some things just take a little longer than others..

Success, Yes it took a lifetime, but I feel content that I have reached my goal.

And with that I rest my case. I am content.



RESIDENT OF THE MONTH — Sharon Schuricht, right, tell her childhood memories during her interview with Cathy Loop

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Resident honored during reception party held

Sharon (Zimbelman) Schuricht was the March Resident of the Month at the Good Samaritan Village. After a short but entertaining interview and a powerpoint presentation compiled by Cathy Loop, recreation coordinator, Mrs. Schuricht and those attending enjoyed refreshments..

Sharon was born on March 5, 1943, to Eddie and Mildred Zimbelman. Shortly after she was born, she became very sick. Her parents lived on the farm so they sent her to be with uncle and aunt, Ted and Pearl Rath.

Aunt Pearl, she said, fed her cow's milk and she began to get better. She spent a great deal of her young life living with her Uncle Ted and Aunt Pearl. Sharon also had one brother, Larry and three sisters, Marilyn, Dorothy and Dora.

Growing up, she did her share of chores which included milking cows, feeding chickens and hogs.

She attended grade school in St. Francis then her parents moved to Sterling, Colo., where she graduated from high school. Her favorite subject was English and her favorite teacher was Francis Seabolt.

She said that one of the things that changed her life the most was leaving Uncle Ted and Aunt Pearl and moving back home with her family.

Following her graduation from high school, she went on to attend Central Business College in Denver where she earned a secretarial degree.

She moved back to St. Francis where she worked at the hospital. There she met Raymond Schuricht and married him in 1965. Marrying Raymond, she said, was one of the best things that happened to her.

They lived on the farm near Armel, Colo., then moved to St. Francis before the birth of their son, Mark. We loved to dance as well as traveling, she said. We traveled to the West Coast, to Las Vegas and Oregon.



Sharon Schuricht

For five years, Raymond and Sharon ran Sharon's Snack Shack. She said she really enjoyed the people. She had two bulldogs, Pugs and Spunky, who were her favorites.

Sharon became a resident at the Village in 2011. She enjoys playing the piano, reading, watching television, doing word search puzzles.

Her advice for young people today are words that her Aunt Pearl used to say, "Don't worry about tomorrow — it will take care of itself and live each day as if it were your last."



Tumbleweed

Celebrating 75 Yrs. On Stage
Saturday, April 13, 2013

We will be circling up the wagons at 6 p.m.

At The Diamond R Bar & Grill
Entertainment

By

Evelyn Roper

From

Gunnison, Colorado

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