

# Sentinel says goodbye to Skifstad

Glen Skifstad has retired twice and judging by how active he remains he may retire a few more times before he's truly done.

Speaking with people in the community one finds out that Skifstad means many things to different people. Some remember him as their teacher and others know him as the Burnett County sports guy who is always near the action with a pen and paper along with his camera.

Last week Skifstad said goodbye to the Sentinel offices after announcing his retirement back in April. That decision ended a sturdy 18-year relationship with the newspaper.

Skifstad stopped teaching after 21 years when he began having trouble with his hearing. He taught in Hayward at first, then was asked by former Grantsburg Principal Byron Kopp to teach in Grantsburg.

"The last 17 years I spent teaching in Grantsburg," he said. "I started here in the fall of 1982. Those kids have kids now. I taught a few of those families where I taught the parents and their kids. Never happened with they're grandkids, but it is now getting close."

It was a difficult decision to part with teaching as well as the Sentinel.

"It became an issue when I had two hearing aids and still was having trouble hearing the kids," he said. "So, Byron Higgin started me out as a courier (in 2001) and later was working in production."

Higgin was the editor of the Sentinel until 2008 and brought on Skifstad and taught him the basics of the newspaper industry. Skifstad started out with the

paper working on the production of the paper.

"One of my first jobs was Monday, now this was back before digital photographs, I would take all the film from the reporters and drive it to a one-hour photo place in Pine City," he remembered. "During that hour I would work on my production work and proofread while I waited for the film to get developed for that week's paper."

He has numerous memories from over the years working in the Sentinel office and in the community.

"One time as a courier, I was driving east of the Wood River and the back wheel of my truck went off and into a ditch while driving," he recalled. "It was one of the hottest days of the summer."

Skifstad was able to call his wife Terri and she brought a van and trailer. He moved the newspapers into the van and finished his route.

Glen and Terri Skifstad raised four daughters in Grantsburg. Terri is an elementary school teacher in Webster. She grew up in Siren and Glen was raised in Star Prairie. He went to a two-room school for grade school. They are both very proud of their daughters.

"They are all doing what they want to do," he stated. "All the girls went further into education and they are all doing well."

Skifstad decided it was time to retire again from the Sentinel after learning he was going to become a grandfather for the fourth time.

Tom Stangl is the publisher of the Sentinel along with a number of other newspapers. He defines Skifstad as the ultimate team player.

"I have found that Glen does a fine job working with Sentinel staff, coaches and student-athletes," Stangl said. "He is very good at highlighting the accomplishments of others."

Stangl told Skifstad at his retirement party he expected him to have one or two more retirements in his future.

After 18 years, he certainly had an abundance of memories from working at the Sentinel.

He recalled a time at the Sentinel when the comradery in the office at that time between Stacy Coy, Terry Nordrum and Todd Beckman was incredibly strong.

"Stacy, Terry, Todd and I depended on each other to get the paper done. We worked so hard to make sure everything was done on time," Skifstad said. "One time, Stacy and I even stayed until 4:30 in the morning to finish sports. In those days, we would cover the games Tuesday night and come back here to get them into the paper for Wednesday."

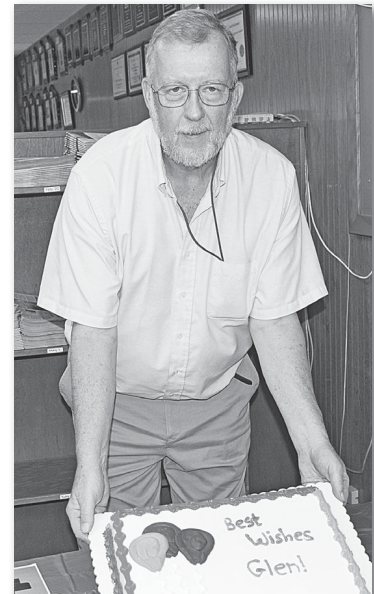
He added at the time he was covering Siren, Webster, Frederic and Luck sports teams, all by himself.

Skifstad worked with Sentinel editor Jonathan Richie on a pair of stories that he is very proud of.

"We went to Siren School and spoke with Gage Holmes and interviewed him, that was a highlight," he said.

Holmes was a sophomore at the time and playing with the Siren Football team. He has two cochlear implants and Skifstad very much enjoyed the interview and being involved in the process.

"There was the other story we did with the young hunter," Skifstad said of Hunter Tiedt, the Webster kinder-



JONATHAN RICHIE | SENTINEL

**Glen holds up the cake that he shared with the community, and his family and friends during his open house last Monday.**

gartener who killed his first buck last year with a bow his great-grandfather gave him. Tiedt also has two cochlear implants.

"Those were two stories that I was very proud to be a part of," Skifstad said.

Skifstad's plans for his second retirement include some woodworking and a lot of time with his grandkids.

"I feel it's time to step down and I want to visit the grandkids more," Skifstad explained. "I want to get to their music programs and see them play sports."