



Buffalo Bytes



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CUSTER CONNECTIONS

A Meaningful Tip to Transform Your Business' Marketing

No matter what industry you're in, you can always learn from techniques used in other businesses. Particularly if those techniques lead you to ideas that help you connect with your audience. In this article, we're going to discuss an easy change that will transform your business's marketing and how people see your business. It's something you can do today regardless of your target market. It will work for everyone because it's all about connection.

To industries that are pros in this technique are residential real estate and colleges/higher education. *What do they have in common?*, you might ask. Both understand the importance of being part of their target audience's dreams.

And that's what you need to do if you want to improve revenue in your business.

The Residential Real Estate Way

If you've ever worked with a real estate agent to sell your home, one of the things they may have told you was to remove all personal effects, including family pictures. The logic behind this is two-fold. Number one, people get distracted by pictures and may spend more time looking at your vacation shots than your home. Secondly, when there are pictures of you and your family in the home it is hard for someone to imagine their family in *your* home. When you remove all your pictures, it is easier for a potential buyer to envision themselves in *their* new home, not yours.

You want the same in your business' marketing. You want to encourage your potential customers to envision what it would be like with the services or products you provide. This dream/fantasy process must be a smooth one. Through content, you want to create a way for people to feel like they're home/in the right place. You want your products or services to be a part of their dreaming.

Finding Your Spot in College

Open a college or university view book and you will see an unimaginable world of fun laid out on glossy pages. There are many pictures of people in groups together smiling and enjoying the educational environment. Generally, the images in view books are diverse and show lots of different activities and people of different cultures and ethnicities. That guarantees that anyone looking at the view book will find something (or someone) they can identify with. Just like in real estate, colleges sell a vision.

Apply the Teachings of Real Estate and University Marketing to Your Business

What marketing people in both industries do well is help create a dream. They don't use scare tactics or worst-case scenarios to drive purchases or get people enrolled. Instead, they insert their products or services as part of a desired lifestyle.

You may be thinking your business or industry does not have a dream to sell. Maybe you're a plumber or you run a business that is anything but sexy. There is always a way to connect what you do with an ideal. Brainstorm what many people value—home, safety, love, beauty, for example. Then consider how your business may tie into those ideals. For instance, if you are a plumber, you are critical to the foundation of a functioning home. It doesn't matter how beautiful the home is, if the plumbing isn't working, it doesn't fit anyone's dream. The home is where we shelter our family, entertain our friends, and seek a safe harbor from the outside world. Good plumbing is essential to that dream. Think of a way you can tie that messaging in through evocative images and content. Don't explain that directly. Show it.

Review your current website content, advertising, and marketing. What dream are you helping people achieve? How are you making their lives better? Most marketers use a problem/solution approach and that's not wrong. But if you want to change how you're currently marketing, consider how your business feeds into the dreams of your audience. When you help them see a better time, a better life, a better position, you can become a very integral part of their future.

Christina Metcalf is a writer/ghostwriter who believes in the power of story. She works with small businesses, chambers of commerce, and business professionals who want to make an impression and grow a loyal customer/member base. She loves road trips, hates exclamation points, and is finally starting to figure it all out.



Dawn Murray
Executive Director

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHAMBER STAFF

Dawn Murray
Executive Director

dmurray@custersd.com

Fred Baumann
Information Associate

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Information Associate

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Information Associate

phattervig@custersd.com

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Information Associate

bytes@custersd.com

Adrianna Burgess
Information Associate

assistant@custersd.com

COMMUNITY MEETING

Come hear survey results and give your feedback on the
Harbach Park Phase 3 Design

Thursday, February 8th at 6pm
At the Pine Room, Custer County Library Annex

Come share your great ideas!
Everyone welcome!



Online attendance
option on City website
day of the meeting!



2024
Board Of Directors

Amy Bailey - President

John Stahl - Vice President

Michelle Fischer - Treasurer

Amanda Allcock

Bobbi Schmidt

Carrie Moore

Craig Reindl

Corey Virtue

Miranda Boggs

Julie Jenniges - City Liaison

Mark Naugle - School Liaison

Lydia Austin - CSP Liaison

Jessica Noteboom - BID Board Liaison

COMMUNITY MEETING



YOU ARE INVITED TO A PUBLIC WORKSHOP ON THE
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN OF THE CUSTER COMMUNITY CAMPUS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH AT 6PM

AT THE PINE ROOM, CUSTER COUNTY LIBRARY ANNEX

PLEASE JOIN US AS WE FOCUS ON THE RECREATION CENTER
COMPONENT! **EVERYONE WELCOME!**

*ONLINE ATTENDANCE OPTION ON CITY WEBSITE DAY OF THE MEETING!



MEET THE NEW STAFF



My name is Adrianna Burgess. I am a recent graduate BHSU with my degree in tourism and hospitality management. I am super excited to be a part of the chamber and put my best foot forward to help promote our local businesses and the town of Custer as a whole.

My name is Andrea Spaans (Conlon) and I was born and raised in Pringle, SD. After many years, I have moved back and am enjoying every bit of it. There's no place like



home! My family and I enjoy ATVing thru the hills and spending time outdoors. I look forward to getting back into the community and help serve you thru the Chamber.



To have things added to Buffalo Bytes, please send to Andrea: bytes@custersd.com. Items need to be received by Wednesdays at noon in order to be added to weekly Buffalo Bytes. Thank you!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January 25

Chamber Mixer

5pm-7pm

Dacotah Bank

February 15

Chamber Mixer

5pm-7pm

Gold Pan

hosted by: Starr Insurance/Western Skies Teal Estate/ 21 Electric

February 26-March 2

Restaurant Week

Custer, SD

March 2

Trade Show

9am-3pm

Custer High School

WEEKLY HUMOR



CHAMBER HAPPENINGS

**Congratulations to the 2024-2026
Custer Area Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors members**

AMANDA ALLCOCK

MICHELLE FISCHER

CARRIE MOORE



CHAMBER MIXER



JANUARY 25TH
5 P.M. - 7 P.M.

Hosted by:

DACOTAH BANK

Located at 35 South 6th St, Custer

**MIXERS ARE A GREAT WAY TO MEET, MIX, AND MINGLE
PLEASE BRING A FRIEND AND ENJOY SOME REFRESHMENTS**

SPONSOR **CUSTER** **RESTAURANT WEEK**

FEBRUARY 26-MARCH 2

GOLD	\$300
SILVER	\$200
BRONZE	\$100



Email Dawn at
dmurray@custersd.com



Vendors

WANTED

Custer Trade Show

March 2, 2024

9am- 3pm

Custer High School -1645 Wildcat Lane

[Printable Registration Form](#)

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS!

Wild Ones

Custer Care and Rehabilitation Center

Game On! LLC

Red Sands Ridge
Black Hills Realty
Custer Piecemakers Quilt Guild
All Net Connections
Grooming by Brenna
Gold Valley Camp
Black Hills Candles
Black Hills Family Vacations
Hillcrest HVAC and Appliance Pros
Reed's Chimney Sweeping, Handyman & Caretaking
Jubilee J Photography
Willow Creek Child Care
Broken Boot Dispensary
Growing Roots, Inc
Homestead Carpet Care
Lenny Merriam CPA, CFE, PLLC

WEEKLY MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

We would like to shine a spotlight on our member, VFW Post 3442 (*Kenneth Kuper VFW POST 3442*). They are our local Custer VFW Post that just so happens to be an amazing restaurant and bar. Hosting several events for the public to help build and support our community. The VFW Post 3442 does so much to help others that it makes it hard to list everything. Just a few examples of the way they help our communities are: donating to the Youth Baseball in Hot Springs, helping local community members and mostly Veterans with bill assistance, helping with senior projects, and even offering scholarships to students moving on to their next adventure. Keep a close eye on their events so you can also be a part of helping not only support our community but to help build a stronger one.

Visit our website at: www.custersd.com/VFW-Post-3442



2024 Custer Chamber





Address: 721 Mt. Rushmore Rd,
Custer, SD 57730

Phone: 605-673-4262

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS



VFW Post #3442

AREA EVENTS

Fresh Homemade Lasagna



for Sale!



The Hills Finest in Custer is hosting “The Lasagna Lady” to satisfy your cravings with mouth-watering lasagna. Come and get it at The Shed.

Lasagna is \$35 and will feed 6-8 people.

***Order Now &
Pick Up at
The Shed***

***25086 Shamrock Rd.
Custer 57730***

***Jan 27th
12-5 pm.***

**To Order:
Call Michelle
605-517-5588**



Interesting Read:
Google “The
Lasagna Lady”
Donations will be
accepted for
Esther’s Rising.

• In Custer - Shop Local •



BUILD A BETTER WORLD FOR WOMEN and GIRLS

Cordially invites you to a Fundraiser for



Helping HOMELESS WOMEN VETERANS with safe and suitable housing

There are an estimated 55,00 Homeless Women Veterans nationwide.

Women veterans are four times more likely to become homeless than their male counterparts.

Saturday, January 27, 2024

American Legion

1045 Jennings Ave, Hot Springs SD

1pm – 3pm

Soup Luncheon \$10 Donation

Keynote speaker is the

Ms. Veteran America Second Runner-up

Lt Col Jennifer Rollins (Retired), B-1 Aviator



American Legion Auxiliary Battle Mountain Unit 71

MUSIC by GUMBO LILIES





Custer County Courthouse Art Gallery

420 Mount Rushmore Road, second floor

Through March 29, 2024

**Showcasing the artwork of
Tracy Harrison.**

Endorsed by Custer Area Arts Council.



"Circle of Life"

This dreamcatcher represents the circle of life and our connectedness to all things. We give thanks when we receive from mother earth. The turtle represents mother earth and the native American calendar year. The arrows represent life.

Materials: Bison fur, turtle shell, arrows, deer antler, sage, sweetgrass.

BIBLICAL CITIZENSHIP

IN MODERN AMERICA

IT'S TIME TO TAKE A STAND!

Throughout our history, American churches have played a vital role in the preservation of liberty. In this time of crisis, where we see our freedoms under attack like never before, we are calling on every Biblical Christian in America to step up and join us in defending liberty.

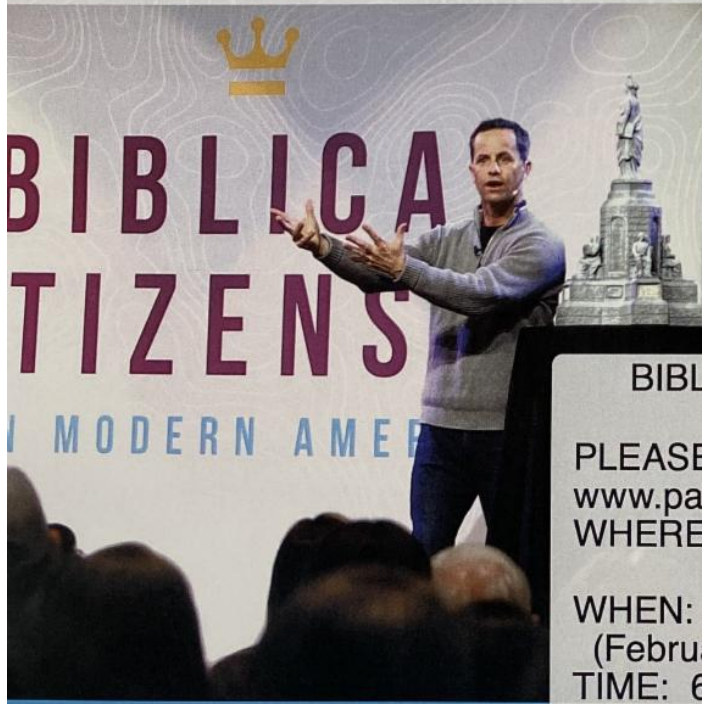
Know your Religious Liberties

Gain more Constitutional Knowledge

Learn Tangible Action Steps for Preserving Liberty

Be entertained, inspired, and educated

Learn the Biblical, Historical, and Constitutional Foundation of Freedom



SIGN UP TODAY TO ATTEND BIBLICAL CITIZENSHIP IN MODERN AMERICA!

BiblicalCitizens.com

BIBLICAL CITIZENSHIP CLASS - FREE!!

From the Patriot Academy

PLEASE REGISTER at:

www.patriotacademy.com/coach/register/7509

WHERE: Mountainview Baptist Church

12230 Aviation Way, Custer, SD

WHEN: Eight Sessions beginning February 5th

(February 5, 12, 19, 26 & March 4, 11, 18, 25)

TIME: 6:00 – 8:30 pm

Get Registered



**BLACK HILLS
PARKS &
FORESTS
ASSOCIATION**

UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 2024

- 16

WIND CAVE ADVENTURES IN NATURE

Park Reservation Encouraged
- Wind Cave National Park » 10 am - 12 pm

Winter Children's Program. Ages 4-10. Email: WICA_interpretation@nps.gov Phone: 605-745-4600
- 18

BHPFA & SHEJUMPS - SUNSET HIKE

SheJumps Registration Required
- Harbach Centennial Park, Custer, SD » 4 pm - 5 pm

Hike the Skywalk Trail from Harbach Park to enjoy amazing evening views. The Skywalk trail is ½ mile uphill.
- BHPFA & SHEJUMPS - WINTER FILM SCREENING

SheJumps Registration Required
- The Custer Beacon - Custer, SD » 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Pasang: In the Shadow of Everest, a quest to become the first Nepali woman to summit Everest in 1993. Come out for food, drinks, and fun. All ages are welcome!

Tickets: \$5 per person - Purchase your ticket ahead of time and be entered in a drawing to win a pair of K2 skis!
- 25

BHPFA - FULL MOON NATURE EXPERIENCE

Family Programming Registration Required
- Whitney Preserve - Hot Springs, SD » 6 pm - 8 pm

Come join experienced instructors for a fun-filled learning experience under the full moon. Families welcome.

Cost: Family (2 adults, 2+ children under 12) - \$20 | Individual - \$10 | Children Under 12 - \$4

FEBRUARY 2024

- 18

BHPFA & SHEJUMPS - GETTING STARTED WORKSHOP

SheJumps Registration Required
- Lost Cabin Brewery - Hill City, SD » 1 pm - 2 pm

New to the area? Want to try a new outdoor activity? Workshops are great for beginners? This workshop will cover Winter Travel: where to go, safety, lessons learned (the hard way), and what gear to bring.
- 10

BHPFA - ANIMAL TRACKING

Family Programming Registration Required
- The Trailhouse - Custer, SD » 6 pm - 8 pm

This program will begin in a classroom and then into the field to expand our knowledge. Families welcome.

Cost: Family (2 adults, 2+ children under 12) - \$45 | Individual - \$20 | Children Under 12 - \$10
- 13

WIND CAVE ADVENTURES IN NATURE

Park Reservation Encouraged
- Wind Cave National Park » 10 am - 12 pm

Winter Children's Program. Ages 4-10. Email: WICA_interpretation@nps.gov Phone: 605-745-4600
- 27

WIND CAVE ADVENTURES IN NATURE

Park Reservation Encouraged
- Wind Cave National Park » 10 am - 12 pm

Winter Children's Program. Ages 4-10. Email: WICA_interpretation@nps.gov Phone: 605-745-4600





Registration

« « « « «





Family Programming Registration

« « « « «



Visit us online!

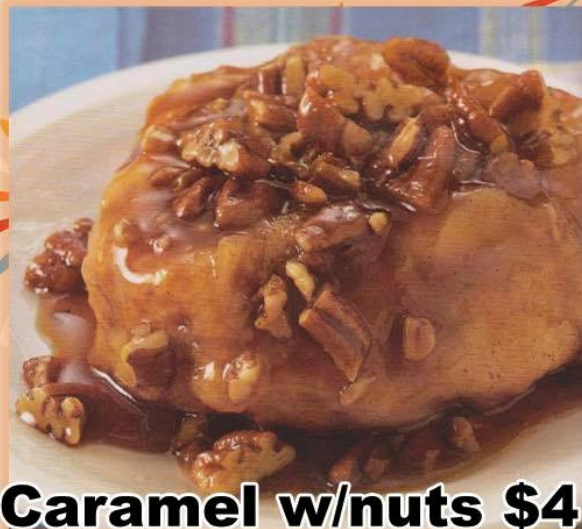
Click on the "EVENTS" tab to see more info!

« « « « «

605|745|7020 BlackHillsParks.org



**Cinnamon Rolls are
back at the Custer
Senior Center!!!!!!**



**Caramel w/nuts \$4
or w/o nuts \$3.50
Frosted & Plain \$2.50**

**Every Friday
January 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th**

538 Mt. Rushmore Rd., Custer

9AM UNTIL THEY'RE GONE!

**Advance Orders by Wednesday
at Noon are Recommended.**

Call 605-673-2708

**GOOD KARMA
JEWELRY**
Custer, SD

VALENTINE'S DAY

S A L E

10-25% OFF SELECT JEWELRY

10% OFF NON-SALE ITEMS

30% OFF BLACK HILLS GOLD

507 MT RUSHMORE RD. CUSTER, SD





South Dakota Enhanced Conceal Carry Class

This Is A One Day Class

Saturday February 10th, 2024

9:00am to 4:30pm

The Enhanced Permit allows you carry in 38 states
including MN, NE, WI, NV, NH, WA, and SC

Class size is limited so register early.

For additional information or to register for the class you
can email the instructor at **echo.ft.sd@gmail.com**

Or call the shop at 605-673-3222 or email us
southernhillstactical@gwtc.net

Donate Blood American Legion Post 46 **Donate Blood**
Be the One – Help Save a Life

Thursday, February 8th, 2024
9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Custer City Masonic Lodge #66
220 N. 6th St., Custer, SD 57730



Scan this QR Code to schedule a donation time >>>>>>



Contact Legionnaire, Jeff Cathcart, at 919-200-1809 if you have any questions.
Jeff will also be happy to schedule your donation time for you.

About The American Legion:

The American Legion is the largest wartime veterans service organization with about 1.7 million members in roughly 12,000 posts across the nation. Chartered by Congress in 1919, The American Legion is committed to mentoring youth and sponsoring wholesome community programs, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting a strong national security and continued devotion to servicemembers and veterans.

If you would like to be a part of our **Custer American Legion Post #46**, please contact us at: 605-673-3930 or adjutant@custerlegion46.org. We are **Veterans Strengthening America!**

HEALTHY LUNCHEON



at the
CUSTER BEACON
351 Washington Street, Custer, SD.

**sponsored by Rec. & Wellness
& The Custer Senior Center**

Thursday, February 8, 2024

Noon to 2 pm \$13

***Included w/lunch: A Heart Health presentation by
Registered Dietician, Helen Nichols
of Monument Health.***

tickets on sale at The Custer Area Chamber

Please join us March 9th, 2024 from 10-2 at Custer Elementary School for the Southern Hills Family Resource Fair where children and families can learn about everything our community has to offer for children 0-8!

Businesses, please get involved and register for a booth at no cost to you! This is a great way to get involved and share what you can offer children 0-8 and their families! Scan the QR code to register! Space is limited, so register today!

MARCH



SAVE THE DATE

9



SOUTHERN HILLS FAMILY
RESOURCE FAIR

SOUTHERN HILLS FAMILY RESOURCE FAIR

MARCH 9, 2024

10 AM TO 2 PM

CUSTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Early Learner Custer Family Resource Fair

Join us for a unique opportunity to connect with young families and elevate your impact!

👤 Who Should Participate? Organizations and businesses serving children ages 0-8 and their families.

🌈 Why Participate? Connect directly with families, gain brand visibility, and be part of a community-focused event.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

👉 **NETWORKING:** CONNECT WITH BUSINESSES, PROVIDERS, AND FAMILIES.

🌐 **EXPOSURE:** FEATURE YOUR ORGANIZATION IN EVENT PROMOTIONS.

🚀 **EXPERTISE:** POSITION YOUR ORGANIZATION AS A CHILD-CENTRIC LEADER.

🎁 **EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:**
GIVEAWAYS AND PRIZES
CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES
FREE FOOD!



NO FEE



SCAN TO REGISTER

DON'T MISS OUT! RESERVE YOUR BOOTH NOW TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR COMMUNITY'S YOUNGEST MEMBERS' GROWTH AND WELL-BEING.

Donations Needed

Jordan's Senior Project

Live Benefit Auction All Proceeds Go to Christmas for Kids

**Saturday March 23rd at 6 PM
VFW Post 3442 in Custer**



Contact:

Corey Virtue 605-517-0193

Jordan Steed 605-440-0994 or email js5323@k12.sd.us

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Show Your School
Spirit With Your**



Wildcats Debit Card.



| highmarkfcu.com |

800-672-6365

This is our newest Spirit Debit Card. Each card swipe of this custom debit card will result in a donation to the CHS Activities fund.

META GOT YOU DOWN?





MAYBE YOU NEED A SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER!

Struggling to navigate the ever-evolving world of social media? Green Owl Media can help! We manage your Facebook/Instagram content so you can focus on what matters ... running your business!

contact us today!

Limited openings for hospitality/tourism based businesses in the southern Black Hills.



Ann Cunningham • *Photographer/Media Manager*
605.440.2400 Green.Owl@goldenwest.net
www.GreenOwlMedia.com



www.kevin.bhsdrealty.com
605-431-5094
kevinkennedy605@gmail.com





Kevin Kennedy, Broker Associate



**Perfect spot overlooking Angostura
2.3 Acres, building site
\$285,000**



**2 mile Rd., Custer
40 Outstanding Acres
\$289,000**



**TBD Silver Creek 6.73 beautiful acres in the heart
of the Black Hills National Forest
\$403,800**



**TBD Rochford Rd. 6.06 Acres surrounded
by creeks, trees and valleys.
Plans for electric and water to be brought
to the building site. \$363,600**

**Call Kevin for your personal tour or
to hear about all of our listings!**

605-431-5094



All properties are listed with Black Hills Realty

Flower Power

Happy Hour

at

*Jenny's
Floral*

**Fridays in January
12-5 p.m.**

**Half off fresh cut,
single stem flowers**



The First Interstate Custer Area Fund is accepting applications for grants from qualified 501 (C) 3 organizations in the Custer area thru March 31. Recipients will be selected and grants funded during the Month of April, 2024.

Disbursements by the local board of directors are determined according to the needs of the community. Past disbursements from 1999 to date have totaled \$269,534.00 and have benefited a variety of local projects, historical organizations, and the arts and humanities.

If your non-profit organization would like to be considered in the disbursement of funds, please complete the First Interstate Custer Area Fund application form and return it to any board member or mail the form to First Interstate Custer Area Fund, 648 Mt Rushmore Rd, Custer, SD 57730. Attn: Donna Cullum. Completed applications can also be emailed to donna.cullum@fib.com.

Grant application forms are available from any local board member, please call Jenny Behlings 673-5436, Curtis Tyler 673-2215, Donna Cullum 673-2215, Nathan Wiederholt 673-2716 or Misty Fish 673-4848. The deadline for completed applications for the annual disbursement of funds will be March 31, 2024.

The funds will be disbursed during the month of April, 2024.



Valentine's Day



Custer County Democratic



Silent Auction

\$250 value!

Package includes:

- 1 Night Stay at Black Hills Bungalow, Hermosa, SD (use by Oct. 1, 2024)
- Wooden Wheel Vineyards Red Wine
- Locally Handcrafted, Decadent Chocolates



Bid in person at upcoming breakfasts and meetings, or by emailing bid to ccsddp21info@gmail.com



Top bidder will be notified on February 3rd, 2024 at the Custer Co. Democrats Breakfast Gathering. Need not be present to win.

Custer County Democrats

Coffee & Breakfast Gathering
Meet Your Fellow Democrats!

Saturday, February 3rd — 9:00 AM
Laughing Water Restaurant
Crazy Horse Memorial

NEW SCHEDULE IN 2024

Breakfast Gathering
1ST Saturday of The Month

*Looking Forward To Seeing
Everyone On Saturday!*



2023 - 2024

CUSTER STATE PARK



WINTER TRAIL CHALLENGE

WINTER TRAIL CHALLENGE

❄️ **Barnes Canyon Trail** ❄️

❄️ **The Lost Trails** ❄️
Upper Loop

❄️ **Needles Highway** ❄️
North Side and only when road is closed

❄️ **Grace Coolidge Trail** ❄️

❄️ **Badger Hole Trail** ❄️

❄️ **Bison Trail** ❄️

❄️ **“Snowshoe It”** ❄️

*Check out some snowshoes from the park and
give it a try on any trail listed above*

You can use your own snowshoes as well

- ❄️ *The Winter Trail Challenge runs from Nov 24, 2023 to April 1, 2024.*
- ❄️ *All forms must be turned in by April 5, 2024.*
- ❄️ *At one point along each trail is a Winter Trail Challenge Selfie Sign. To complete the Trail Challenge, participants must hike all the listed trails and take a selfie at each Winter Trail Challenge Sign. Bonus points for fun photos.*
- ❄️ *Stop in the park Visitor Center or Park Office, show off your photos and earn a 2023 Winter Trail Challenge Pin. (Note Pictures can also be mailed to the address below)*
- ❄️ *All completed forms must be submitted by April 4, 2024.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 605.394.2693 OR EMAIL CUSTERSTATEPARK.COM

NEWS FROM THE STATE





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tues., Jan. 23, 2024

CONTACT: [Katlyn Svendsen](#), Global Public Relations & Content Services Senior Director, Travel South Dakota

Outstanding Tourism Industry Members Honored at Governor's Conference on Tourism

PIERRE, S.D. – On Thursday, January 18, **Governor Kristi Noem** and Travel South Dakota honored tourism industry members and businesses from across South Dakota for their loyalty, commitment, and passion for the state's tourism industry. **Governor Noem** presented various awards to recipients from across South Dakota.

The **Rooster Rush Cacklin' Community Award** was presented to the **Aberdeen Convention and Visitors Bureau** for going above and beyond to make in-state and out-of-state hunters feel welcome. From greeting hunters at the airport to distributing legendary pheasant sandwiches throughout the community, Aberdeen encouraged young people to become the next generation of stewards of the land.

In its third year, the **Governor's Tourism Rising Star Award** was presented to **Taryn Reidt** with **Chamberlain-Oacoma Chamber of Commerce**. This award recognizes an individual who has worked in the tourism industry for two to four years, is excelling in their career, and whose work is demonstrating a bright future in the tourism industry. In her four years as chamber director, Reidt is credited with helping create the Hometown Hero Banner Project as well as increasing chamber membership by 346%. She is known for her positive attitude and for consistently exceeding expectations.

The **Peter Norbeck Excellence in Tourism Innovation Award** was given to **Holy Terror Days/The Haunting of Keystone**. This award recognizes an industry partner for their innovative thinking in making their destination, business, event or attraction even more appealing to visitors. Created by a cooperative of Big Thunder Gold Mine/Big Thunder Inc, Rush Mountain Adventure Park/Rushmore Cave, and the Traveler Magazine/1899 Keystone Schoolhouse, The Haunting of Keystone is composed of three "haunted" attractions featuring more than 100 actors. In its 13 years of existence, the event has grown in popularity, making it an important economic boost each year to Keystone while devoting 10% of the annual gross to community improvement.

"As the event's popularity has grown, so has the impact on this small town, in terms of motel reservations and restaurant business. In 2023, event attendance was up 34%," said Gov. Noem. "For their efforts in providing a haunted good time for visitors, it's my privilege to present this award."

The **A.H. Pankow Award** recognizes a representative of the media for showing superior interest in and coverage of South Dakota's tourism industry. This year's award went to **Jeff Carrino** of KMSD Radio in **Milbank**. Jeff and KMSD consistently promote [TravelSouthDakota.com](#), events across the state, and the economic impact of tourism on South Dakota.

Black Hills Adventure Tours of **Rapid City** took home the **George S. Mickelson Award**. This award honors businesses, communities, or organizations that exceed visitors' customer service expectations. This business added a new 3,500 square-foot building, upgraded vehicles, and designed new business cards with a QR code that goes directly to a review website. They also monitor visitor feedback daily, making sure that everything is done to ensure a magical South Dakota visit.

The **Ruth Ziolkowski Outstanding Hospitality & Customer Service Award** is given annually to four industry members, each representing one of the four tourism regions in South Dakota. This award recognizes tourism industry professionals who provide remarkable service to visitors and whose work demonstrates an outstanding spirit of hospitality. These awards were given

to **Kelly Larson** of Dakota Indian Foundation/Dakota Plains Gallery & Gifts in **Chamberlain**; **Susan Kaiser** of Spearfish Canyon Lodge & The Latchstring Restaurant near **Lead**; **Zane Lodmell** of Hampton Inn in **Sioux Falls**; and **Dianne Larson** of Ingalls Homestead in **De Smet**.

"These are the kind of people who embody the essence of customer service in South Dakota," said James Hagen, Secretary of the Department of Tourism. "Their profound dedication, resilience, and talent are what put our state's hospitality above all other competitors."

The **Ben Black Elk Award** is a prestigious honor recognizing an individual who makes outstanding contributions to the state's visitor industry. This year's award was given to **Lucille Holsether** of **Wall**. For 30 years, Lucille has been a dedicated and

passionate travel counselor at visitor centers at Wasta and Minuteman Missile National Historic Site. Her exceptional knowledge and zest for hospitality have left countless travelers with pleasant, lasting memories of their visit to South Dakota.

“Lucille’s contributions have boosted our tourism industry and enriched the lives of those who have had the pleasure of meeting her,” said Gov. Noem. “Her dedication and passion are an inspiration to us all.”

The South Dakota Department of Tourism is comprised of Travel South Dakota and the South Dakota Arts Council. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen.



YOU'RE INVITED

Join us **Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 10 a.m. CT/9 a.m. MT**, for Travel South Dakota’s Passport Program webinar featuring Bandwango. In this webinar you’ll hear from members of Travel South Dakota’s Marketing Campaign & Projects Manager, Alexa Dorn, and Bandwango’s Client Success Specialist IV, Krystal Rosado, as they discuss the Passport Program in South Dakota, how it works and its benefits.

What: South Dakota Passport Program

Date and Time: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 @ 10 a.m. CT/9 a.m. MT

Presented By: Alexa Dorn and Krystal Rosado

Cost: Free!

You'll learn...

- What Bandwango is and how it works
- Explore the success of the Travel South Dakota passport program, showcasing statistics and insights into engagement and participation
- How Bandwango passports benefit local businesses
- What businesses can do to promote passports
- Common practices to make the best user experience.

Please *register* ahead of time. This *webinar* will be hosted by Travel South Dakota via Zoom. Please contact Industry Training & Legislative Relations Manager *Bailey Tysdal* with any questions.

How to Connect

This webinar will be available via Zoom. For most participants, joining the webinar will be as simple as clicking the link provided in the confirmation email. If you are uncertain if you can connect, you can read about the system requirements on the [Zoom website](#).

Once you call into the session, please turn your phone or computer to mute during the webinar. Participants will be able to ask questions during the session through the chat function in the webinar. There will be a question and answer session at the end of the webinar.

to submit questions by typing them into the messaging functionality during the webinar. There will also be time for Q&A at the end of the session. If you only want to listen and/or run into any problems with logging on to Zoom, phone-only access is an option. This webinar will be recorded. A link to the recording will be sent to participants following the presentation and will be available on [SDVisit.com](https://www.sdvisit.com).

PRESS RELEASES

SOUTH DAKOTA RETAILERS ASSOCIATION
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: January 9, 2024
Contact: Caleb Nugteren, 605.224.5050
cnugteren@sdra.org



Skogen Kitchen of Custer Named Restaurant of the Year

PIERRE, SD – Skogen Kitchen in Custer has been selected as the South Dakota Retailers Association’s Restaurant of the Year. Presented annually, the award recognizes a restaurant with a reputation of excellence in food, service, and atmosphere.

Skogen Kitchen is a chef-driven fine dining restaurant concept that offers a unique dining experience with each visit.

Owners Chef Joseph and Eliza Raney met while working in the restaurant industry in southern California. After moving to Custer and working for other restaurants, they decided to open their own restaurant in the summer of 2017. The name Skogen is a nod to Joseph’s Norwegian heritage. In Norwegian, the word Skogen means “forest” – a fitting name given the location.

Their ever-changing menu incorporates a variety of American cultural cuisines featuring fresh foods from across the country, including many locally sourced foods.

“He takes a lot of fun ingredients and puts it together to make this masterpiece,” Eliza says of her husband. “He is so good about his flavors and layers of flavors. It’s really a party in your mouth!”

Nathan Sanderson, Executive Director of the South Dakota Retailers Association, says the Raney’s have more than met their goal of being unique but not pretentious.

“Skogen Kitchen’s menu and the excellent service combine to deliver a dining experience that draws rave reviews,” Sanderson said. “Local customers, visitors from across the country, and restaurant review publications sing their praises.”

Joseph notes that the restaurant and the menu are small by design, to allow them to take really good care of each person and serve the customer best.

“If you have an idea and you have an ability, you can try that anywhere,” Joseph said. “But we want to make sure that we’re advocating to our employees that you can follow your dreams whatever they are, just appreciate where you are. You’re in South Dakota.”

To learn more about the Raney’s and the Retailers Association’s additional award recipients, [visit sdra.org/awards](https://www.sdra.org/awards).



Black Hills Energy Prepares for Extreme Cold, Encourages Customers to Do the Same

Utility Issues Important Conservation and Safety Reminders

Rapid City, SD – Jan. 11, 2024 – Black Hills Energy is closely monitoring the National Weather Service forecast this week for a winter storm and extreme cold temperatures predicted to impact the Black Hills. Our electric operations teams are preparing for ice and below freezing temperatures, which are expected to last through next week.

Energy Conservation Reminders

With sustained cold and freezing temperatures in the forecast, energy use can increase and lead to higher monthly bills. Black Hills Energy is ready to help customers reduce energy use by sharing these conservation reminders and tips:

1. According to the U.S. Dept. of Energy, you can save as much as 10% a year on heating and cooling costs simply by turning your thermostat down by a few degrees for eight hours a day.
2. Did you know as much as 7-12 percent of a building's heating and cooling loss occurs around windows and doors? Jettison those leaks and weather-strip to seal around movable joints like doors or windows.
3. Lower your water heater setting. Lowering your temperature setting a few degrees can save energy. Lowering your temperature to under 120 degrees can save you up to 10% on your water heater costs.
4. Limit laundry and chores until later in the week when temperatures normalize. If you must do laundry or wash dishes, consider energy efficiency strategies to lessen the impact. For example, run complete loads of laundry, rather than partial loads, to avoid using more hot water than necessary. Changing dishwasher settings to air dry is another way to save energy.
5. Make sure your fireplace damper closes tightly when you're not using it. Closing the damper could save 8% of your home's heat.
6. You could save as much as 30% of your energy costs by better insulating your attic or top floor.
- 7.

Electric Safety Reminders

Black Hills Energy is also urging our customers to keep their homes safe with the following guidelines.

In an event that you experience an unexpected outage in your home or business, please follow these guidelines for staying safe:

If your power goes out, see if your neighbors have power. If they do, check your home for blown fuses or a tripped circuit breaker.

- If your neighbors don't have power or if you can't locate the problem, report the outage at www.blackhillsenergy.com/outages.
- If you see damaged outdoor electric power equipment, please contact us at 1-800-890-5554.
- Do not try to remove any debris if it is on a powerline or outdoor electrical equipment.
- If you are outdoors, never touch or attempt to pick up a fallen powerline. Assume any downed power line is energized.
- During an outage, unplug sensitive computer and electronic equipment or protect them with a high-quality surge protector.

Helpful Links

Stay up to date by visiting www.blackhillsenergy.com/weather. Customers can also find winter

energy conservation and billing resources at www.blackhillsenergy.com/winter-ready. To receive outage notification on your mobile device, please log into your Black Hills Energy account at: <https://www.blackhillsenergy.com/>

About Black Hills Energy

Black Hills Corp. (NYSE: BKH) is a customer focused, growth-oriented utility company with a tradition of improving life with energy and a vision to be the energy partner of choice. Based in Rapid City, South Dakota, the company serves 1.3 million natural gas and electric utility customers in eight states: Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming. More information is available at www.blackhillscorp.com and www.blackhillsenergy.com.

Media Contact

Lynn Kendall, Community Affairs Manager (605) 399-5180
lynn.kendall@blackhillsenergy.com

24-Hour Media Assistance

888-242-3969



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service Features Janurary 2024





Custer Senior Center

January Activities


Febuary Activities



[Click here to Check out the Custer School District Calendar for upcoming school events!](#)

WEEKLY INSPIRATION

“Miracles happen
everyday, change your

A photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sky is filled with orange and yellow clouds, and the water reflects the colors. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

perception of what a
miracle is and you'll see
them all around you.”

-Jon Bon Jovi

Beamsun0.com

HELP WANTED

JOIN OUR INTERVIEWING TEAM!

MMI-2 International Research is seeking dependable, self-motivated people with strong customer service skills, reliable transportation and a love of the outdoors. If you are looking for temporary, intermittent part-time work, and live in or near Hill City, Custer, Merritt, or Rapid City, South Dakota, this might be a great job for you! Please see below for all the details.

Position Overview:

- Conduct one-on-one, in person, exit surveys with visitors leaving the Black Hills National Forest. This is done by asking a series of pre-set questions from a computer tablet, recording responses in the tablet, and submitting the data electronically at the end of your shift.

Work schedule:

- Temporary, intermittent, part-time work through September 2024
- 6-hour shifts including a 30-minute paid lunch
- Variable days (including Saturdays/Sundays and possible holidays)
- Flexible schedule

Qualifications and Other Key Requirements:

- Must live in or near Hill City, Custer, Merritt, or Rapid City, South Dakota
- Must be proficient using technology like tablets, cell phones, GPS, e-mail, and Wi-Fi
- Must have strong in-person customer service, ability to work/think independently, and problem solve
- Must be dependable, self-motivated, and possess a strong work ethic
- Must possess a valid U.S. driver's license & have reliable transportation. 4WD a plus
- Must be willing and able to drive to forest survey sites. Distances vary
- Must be willing to work outdoors in varied weather conditions
- Must be willing to work part-time hours and variable shifts including Saturdays/Sundays, and possible holidays
- Must be willing to commit to position through September 2024

Compensation Information: (All shifts are 6 hours and include a 30-minute paid lunch)

- Starting pay is \$125 per shift plus a \$25 fuel allowance per shift for a total of \$150 per shift
- \$225 bonus paid after every 10 survey shifts/days worked
- Paid training

If you think you would be a good fit for this position, email your resume and/or tell us a little bit about yourself. Please note "Hell Canyon/Mystic RD" in the email subject line and send to: info@mmi-2.com

We will not respond to applicants who live outside of the target area.

RECENT RETIREES ARE HIGHLY ENCOURAGED TO APPLY

Laughing Water Restaurant at Crazy Horse Memorial® is currently searching for a FULL -TIME YEAR-ROUND LINE COOK.

Prior experience in working kitchen line in a fast paced - small restaurant or food service environment is a must.

Position is full-time, year-round at 35/40 hours per week w/ Evening, Holiday & Weekends required and some overtime.

This is an hourly position with the benefits associated with full-time, year-round employment, which include medical, dental, optical, and AFLAC insurances, Paid Personal Leave, and a retirement plan.

Please contact HR@CrazyHorse.org or call (605) 673-4681 for more information!



Laughing Water
RESTAURANT®
AT CRAZY HORSE MEMORIAL®



The Custer Senior Center Board of Directors is accepting resumes for the full-time position of Custer Senior Center Director. The primary administrative duties are grant-request writing, working with the Center's finances, and facility management. QuickBooks or a similar bookkeeping program is advantageous. The position is full-time, 40 hours per week. Insurance and retirement benefits are not available at this time. Year-end bonuses may be earned. For more information and a copy of the position description, please send an email to cscdirvac@gmail.com; or call the Center at 605-673-2708. The Senior Center is a non-profit organization, and is an equal employment opportunity employer.



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CONTACT US:

(605) 673-3047

507 Mt Rushmore Rd Custer, SD

Be sure to check out the Help Wanted section on our [Website:](#)

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