



# Belle Fourche Beacon

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## Local Meteorologist Headlines February First Saturday Brunch

**Robbi Longbrake**  
news@bellefourchebeacon.com

BELLE FOURCHE—The wind has been the story this winter.

Although snowfall has been limited, retired meteorologist Susan Sanders says the area has experienced unprecedented wind. “The wind. I have never seen so much wind—wide-spread wind and strong, especially in the hills. Have you been through the hills lately and seen all the tree damage? It’s just amazing how many trees are down!”

During her presentation, Weather Matters, at the First Saturday Brunch at the Tri-State Museum on Saturday, February 7, Sanders discussed the wind and other notable weather phenomena in the hills, including snow patterns and storms throughout history.

The town of Lead holds all of the snowfall records for South Dakota, she said—most snowfall in one day, most snow in one month and most snow in one season.

“This year we’re not doing so well—they’ve only gotten 37 inches of snow this year, when normal snowfall for this year would be 99 inches, so only a third of the snow—we’re over halfway through



Showing the slide presentation about record setting snowfall, retired meteorologist Susan Sanders explains when the most snowfall was in one day. Longbrake photos

the snow season, so hopefully March and April,” said Sanders. “April is the snowiest month in the whole area, so hopefully we’ll be able to get some more!”

Other events in the area were discussed such as the

remarkable temperature fluctuations of January 22, 1943 and the Winter Storm Atlas of 2013.

She attributes the distinctive weather patterns to the unique topography of the Black Hills, which rise above the cold air

like an island and contribute to rapid changes in short distances.

The First Saturday Brunch is a monthly event (held every month except July) at the Tri-State Museum, combining a delicious meal with an engag-

ing speaker program. Guests can arrive at 10 a.m. to enjoy breakfast and refreshments, and the speaker program begins at 10:30 a.m.

Each month features a different presenter covering a

Weather contd. A3

## Ribbon Cutting Welcomes BC Excavation to Belle Fourche

**Robbi Longbrake**  
news@bellefourchebeacon.com

BELLE FOURCHE—Belle Fourche Chamber and the Spearfish Chamber joined forces to welcome the new business, BC Excavation, to the Northern Hills area with a ribbon cutting celebration.

The ribbon cutting took place at the business located at 10937 US Highway 212 Unit #7, Belle Fourche, at noon on February 3.

The young family behind the new business, Corey, Jeni and their two boys Beau and Cash, moved to Belle Fourche just last month with Corey arriving only two weeks ago.

This family and business are definitely hitting the ground running! “My wife came out here probably a month ago, and then I’ve been back and forth—finishing some projects in Montana, and then I was moving stuff because it is hard with the two

(little ones) for her. So I’ve only been out here full time probably two weeks,” explained Lemon.

Lemon is new to the area, but not new to construction or the excavation business. “I’ve been doing it for myself for six years,” he said. “My father-in-law was in the business for about 20 to 25 years and I worked for him for about eight years before that, so I’ve been into it for about 15 years, but I’ve been in construction my whole life.”

The couple discovered Belle Fourche about five years ago when they came to the area for a wedding. “We found the Belle Fourche, Spearfish area and just fell in love with it,” explained Lemon. “So we were looking between Sheridan, Wyoming and here, and we just like this area more. It felt like there was more opportunity here.”

Bringing an established

company to town, Lemon says he will be able to keep some of his old projects in the move. BC Excavation employs three people. “We are a mid-sized company and do custom homes and all that kind of work,” shared Lemon.

Moving from Bozeman, MT, the family was looking for a place with small-town values.

So far, they are happy with Belle. “It’s very, very, very welcoming, and it reminds us of small-town Montana—that’s what we’re searching for, especially with the two boys,” said Lemon.

“We bring good family values, that’s our biggest thing—we are trustworthy, honest people, and I just want to put my head down and get to work, meet people and be a part of the community!”

Beyond owning a business, I want to be a good person and good neighbor.”

## Tri-State Museum Showcases History of Downtown Belle Fourche

**Robbi Longbrake**  
news@bellefourchebeacon.com

BELLE FOURCHE—Snapshots of days gone by are what you will find when you peruse the latest temporary exhibit now showing at the Tri-State Museum. The display, Our Town, focuses on downtown Belle Fourche.

A fun historical look at how State Street and the surrounding downtown area have changed over time is on display.

There are pictures of past businesses like the Belle Fourche Hotel from 1890 and the Community Building built by the Tri-State Round Up in 1927, to name a few. There are storyboards that discuss various past businesses with shared memories presented. The timeline focuses on the mid-20th century.

The exhibit is a pleasant trip down memory lane with a display that lists some of the past businesses such as Ben Franklin, Gambles, Coast to Coast and Montgomery Ward, just to name a few. Stop over and see if you remember any of the businesses. The ladies at the museum welcome stories and artifacts from the past.

The museum has had this exhibition in the past, but if you saw it then, stop by and see what has changed. “Some of the boards

had to be changed because different things were updated,” explained Jada Udager, Collections Archivist. “I’m not 100% sure what they had for artifacts the first time, but I do everything so much differently.”

Udager gathered artifacts for the exhibit from a few places. “There are a couple of things that I borrowed from Love That Shoppe—Betty is absolutely amazing! I walk in the door and she says, pick out what you want—and then the rest is from our collections.”

It’s quite an extensive look into the past. “You’re going to see pencils and pens from businesses gone by, some of the coolest calendars, and a lot of business-type things—swag, basically—just information about the different buildings and businesses,” said Udager.

After you look through the exhibit, you can test your knowledge on the touchscreen quiz. There is a special section for kids to do activities and crafts.

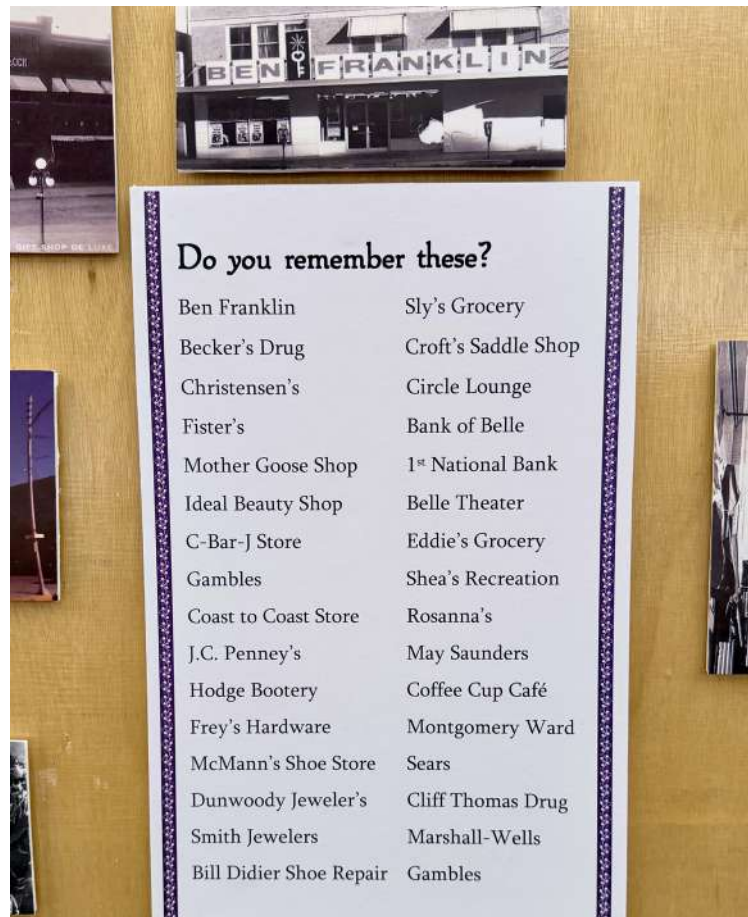
Explore this temporary exhibit through May 22, 2026. The next temporary exhibit will be Vaudeville! and it will run from May 23 through August 28. Don’t forget to check out the mini exhibit, But First, Coffee.

It runs through April 11 when a

Downtown Belle Contd. A3



(Above) Owner of BC Excavation, Corey Lemon cuts the ribbon to his new business location in Belle Fourche. (Below L) The family behind BC Excavations, Corey Lemon, Jeni Lemon and their two boys Beau and Cash. (BR) Community members, family and other businesses owners and employees welcome the Lemon family to Belle Fourche at the Ribbon Cutting celebration. Longbrake photos



A partial list of many of the businesses that once occupied buildings in the downtown area of Belle Fourche. Longbrake photo

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## Pastor's Perspective

This Perspective is from the archives of Four-square Pastor, the late Dr. Jack Hayford

### "Love Is God's Light in the Darkness"

... the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. (1 John 2:8-11)



heart—first toward the Lord, then toward those around you. The flow of power in our lives is directly proportionate to the flow of love, and the call of Scripture is always redemptive. God demonstrated His own love toward us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). God so unconditionally loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16). Jesus did not come executing judgment; He came reaching in love. This doesn't mean He had no discernment about people or that He was indiscriminate in His conduct. It means Jesus was not

here to raise up a standard for people to rise to, but that He came to reach with the long, loving arms of God to draw people in.

Further, in those of us who've come to Him, there is something of the recovery of what God has in mind for all of humanity. God intends that recovery be manifest in us so others will desire it. The light of Jesus' righteousness enables us to examine our own lives and to attract others to Him by warming them with His love. We are not called to shine it as a searchlight in their faces, telling them to measure up. When we grasp this, something different will take place in the Church today. We are called to holiness, but we are not called to apply that measure to the world. It's a measure we're called to require of ourselves as we grow in the life of Christ. The ultimate measure will always be how the love of God is manifest in us. This is the love that will reach out to the world with tenderness and power—not mandating repentance, but offering a people glimpse of God's mindset toward fulfillment and purpose for their lives.

The only thing that will touch people in a world blinded by sin is evidence of what they want most: love. Where people see love's vitality, worth, and attractiveness, they will inquire into the Truth that produces it. We will not win the world by persuading people how pure and holy we are but by how loving we are. By being the incarnation of the goodness of Jesus, and showing them love as He did, people will be drawn to Christ.

God's heart breaks over human bondage, just as His Son's body was broken to provide redemption and deliverance from it. God's "wrath" is His fury against the self-destructive things done by His children that hinder Him from fulfilling the good He intends for them. When the spear was thrust into Jesus' heart, blood and water came forth—the medical sign of a broken pericardium. It is literally God's broken heart that provides salvation to mankind—the same heart breaking in frustration over those who insist on their own self-imposed program of death. We have not been made agents of our Heavenly Father's anger but of the love behind it.

You and I have no power in spiritual warfare if we don't love what or who we're praying for. The raw power of prayer and ministry in the Spirit have to do with authority born of loving that comes from the transformation of your

begin with your own family by cultivating a climate rich in the resources of spiritual discernment and loving discipline (1 John 2). Teach morality on the basis of its promise and hope...not as a system of fear and taboos. "Speak truth in love." Then, shine as light in a "crooked and perverse world" (Phil. 2). Watch for people who manifest a hunger for understanding and a longing for spiritual reality. There are always God-seekers among the lost.

Writing to the Corinthians, Paul said, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?" meaning they will never receive the fullest benefits of God's purpose in their lives. Listing a battery of horrible sins, Paul tells this church of committed believers, "and such were some of you, but you are washed... sanctified... justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Remember, no one is beyond deliverance.

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Brian Kline  
Owner

Most of us intend on "getting around to it someday," but that someday never comes and we leave our family wondering whether or not they did the right thing. **It doesn't have to be like that.** It's not pleasant to be reminded of our own mortality; we can laugh, cry, or do a little of both. Regardless of how we prefer to deal with the big questions of life, **it always works out for the best when we face things head on,** especially in regard to such a sensitive issue.

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## Surprised by God's Love

God, our Father, reveals His love in so many ways! Walking downstairs I see dark clouds moving above the waters. Once again I sit in my favorite place, worshipping God and thanking Him for the beauty of Planet Earth. He plans a different canvas for each day just for His people to observe His marvelous works. An amazing light brushes the tree tops with a warm, breathtaking shade of rust. The red-orange-brown color glows, but as I gaze the trees turn back to the gray color of winter as the sun plays hide-and-seek with dark-gray clouds. The wind helps the light push against the heavy clouds, smearing the sky with flashes of a soft, airy blue. The clouds linger nearby and I hear the laughter of the wind moving through the tree tops outside my windows. Circumstances change, the landscape changes, but the light still shines and God is still working.

Prayer: All praise to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit ☐ the great Three-in-One! I come to praise You! You have made me glad and I am joyfully singing "How Great Thou Art" as I come to worship You! I know that You are God, You created me and I belong to You. I am the sheep of Your pasture. I thank You for the beauty of the earth. Lord, Your word is right and true; You are faithful in all that You do. You are Love, the Creator of the universe. I love righteousness and justice, and thank You that the earth is full of Your unfailing love. Thank You for this vast universe of deserts, majestic mountains, ocean waves, lakes, trees dressed in splendor, flowers that bloom, birds that sing, squirrels that scamper through autumn leaves, geese that fly in formation, blue skies, fog, mist, the sun and moon and the stars that You call by name. You are good! Your love and faithfulness will last forever!

Scripture References: Psalm 33:4-5 NIV; Psalm 100; Psalm 8

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. John 16:13, NIV

Dear Father in heaven, grant your Spirit to us, your children. May something from you be revealed on earth so that divine strength and divine truth, not what is only human, are with us in all we do. May powers of peace and healing be revealed through us because you are near and your kingdom is all around us. You can do all things, also things beyond our understanding. We trust in you, and we believe that through your power and your Spirit you will take possession of our whole lives and the lives of the many who sigh in their hearts for absolute truth. Amen.

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Quotes and Valentine's Day Wishes



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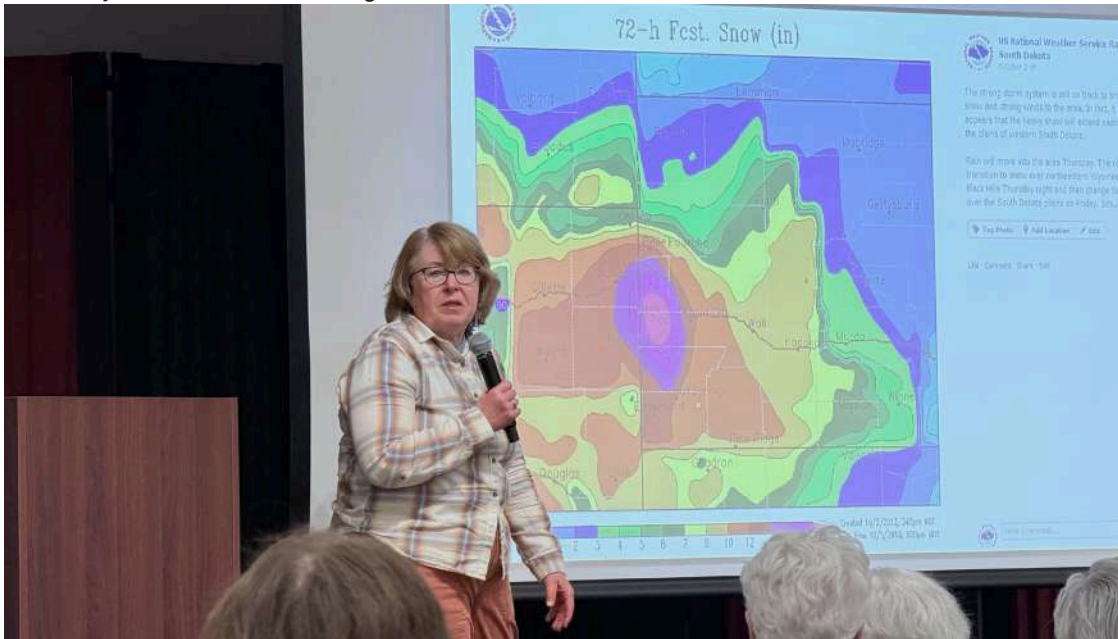
**From A1 Weather**  
variety of local history and regional topics. Reservations are required. For those without a museum membership, there is a \$5 fee, but the brunch is free for museum members.

Attending just the presentation without the meal carries no charge, making it easy for anyone to join in and learn. The next brunch is scheduled for March 7, when presenter David Super will discuss Bitten, Kicked and

Stomped: Deadwood's First College-Trained Vet. The First Saturday Brunch offers a fun, informative way to connect with local history, enjoy a meal, and meet other community members who share an interest in the Black Hills and surrounding region.



There was good community turn out to listen to First Saturday Brunch *Weather Matters* presented by **Susan Sanders**. *Longbrake Photo*



(L) Retired meteorologist **Susan Sanders** gives a slide presentation during the *First Saturday Brunch*. (R) Retired meteorologist Susan Sanders talks about the weather Saturday February 7th. *Lonbrake Photos*



**From A1 Downtown Belle**  
new mini exhibit focusing on rocks and minerals will open April 11.



(L) Guests of the *Tri-State Museum* look at the *Our Town* temporary exhibit. ; (R) There are a lot of artifacts to enjoy at the *Our Town* temporary exhibit. *Longbrake photos*



(L) New artifacts have been added to the permanent exhibit *The Minnesela, A Town That Once Was and Is No More* exhibit. (H) A bow tie from the new permanent exhibit about *Haberdashery*. *Longbrake photos*

# Bronc Wrestlers Compete in Last Regular Season Tournaments

**Kandi Tonsager**  
news@bellefourchebeacon.com  
On Saturday, February 7th the Bronc wrestling teams split directions with the Lady Broncs headed to Newcastle for the Lady Doggie Invite. The Lady Broncs took all five girls wrestlers on the team. Coach Cory states that "all of them gained some experience, and are striving to prepare

themselves to be in the best position possible come Regional tournament time in a few weeks!"  
At 105lbs, Charlie Huston took 5th place, at 110lbs AnnaBell Dighton took 3rd place and Lia Mundt took 6th place, Jasmine Reason competed at 120lbs and at 100lbs, Kyra Vandenberg took champion continuing her streak.

On the boys side, Coach Cory states, "were pretty short handed due to multiple reasons. Those that traveled to compete got in some good matches, and are continuing to key in on areas where needed come Regional tournament time in a few weeks!"  
Competitors were Jaxson Linch at 106, Jace Olson at 113lbs, Teedin Humble at

120lbs, Dylan Park at 126lbs, Preston Lake at 132lbs, Jace Hiles at 132lbs, Kolby Tibbs at 150lbs, and Koby Bowden at 165lbs.  
Place winners for the boys were Caden Swaney at 106lbs earning 4th, Riley Dighton at 157lbs earning champion and Luke Tonsager at heavyweight earning champion continuing their streaks.

As the season winds down for the wrestlers, they have one dual left in Morecroft his coming week.  
They will then compete in hopes to secure a spot for state at the Regional meet in Rapid City at The Monument Ice Arena on Saturday, February 21st. State will be held in Sioux Falls at the Denny Sanford Premier Center on February 26-28th.



(L) Coach Nathan Juelfs, Jasmine Reason, Lia Mundt, Charlie Huston, Kyra Vandenberg, AnnaBelle Dighton & Coach Andrew Dighton at *Girls Newcastle Tournament*; (R) AnnaBelle Dighton 3rd Newcastle Girls Tournament. *Tonsager Photos*



(L) Bronc Champions **Luke Tonsager** (heavyweight) & **Riley Dighton** (157lb) at Hill City Tournament; (R) **Dylan Park** in control.



(L) **Jace Hiles**; (R) **Koby Tibbs** working a cradle.



(L) **Caden Swaney**; (Top C) **Koby Bowden** & **Riley Dighton** taking a break matside between matches at Hill City; (BC) **Teedin Humble** (R) Lady Bronc Champion 100lb **Kyra Vandenberg Newcastle Girls Tournament**.

### Bronc Basketball

Kandi Tonsager

news@bellefourchebeacon.com

The Broncos took on Moberge-Pollock on Thursday, February 5th. The score was 6-15 at the end of the first, 13-24 at the end of the 2nd, 16-37 at the end of the 3rd, with the final score 27-43.

Reven Audiss made two 3 point field goals in the game, Tatum Martin and Gabe Raba each had a 3 point field goal as well.

On Saturday, February 7th, the Broncos hosted Custer with a tough loss of 27-43.

The Broncos hosted Rapid City Christian at home on February

10th at 2:30pm, Rapid City Stevens on the 12th at 5:30pm, and on Saturday February 14th the Broncos host the Belle Fourche Classic starting at 10am with teams to include; Little Wound, Upton, Oelrichs, Timberlake, Lead-Deadwood, Kadoka and Tiospaye Topa.

The Lady Broncos travelled to Sturgis Brown on Tuesday February 3rd where they fell to the Scoopers 25-45.

On Thursday February 5th they travelled to Moberge where they took a tough loss to the Tigers 18-55 and on Saturday February 7th they hosted Custer with a loss of 26-52 to

the Wildcats.

The Lady Broncos will host Rapid City Christian and Rapid City Stevens this week before heading to Spearfish for a tournament on Saturday February 14th starting at 9am.

Both Bronc basketball teams will celebrate Senior Night on Tuesday February 17th at the Belle Fourche High School gym against the Sturgis Scoopers.

The Lady Broncos tipoff at 5:30 pm with Seniors honored before the game, the boys to follow.

The Bronc Cheerleaders hosted a Pee Wee cheer camp this past week and performed at the home basketball game on Saturday February 7th with local youth.



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Lady Bronc Basketball Action



Varsity Lady Broncos

Bronc PeeWee Cheer 2-7



Bronc PeeWee Cheer 2-7



January Students of the Month



Backrow left to right-Hallie Pottorff, Reed Ruzicka, Leila Seaman, Dally Burman, Tate Rosencranz, and Colden Hodo
Front row left to right-Levi Hendrickson, Calla Sweet, Jamie Hunter and Leo Bartscher

BF Rec Center 2026 Men's 3X3 League Champs



BF Rec Center 2026 Men's 3v3 League Basketball Champions: Casey Cvach, Tyler Hohenberger, John Lang, Jarret Inghram. Not pictured Luc Bonefield.

February City Council Meeting

Ryder Heitz
BELLE FOURCHE—The Belle Fourche City Council held its first meeting of the month on Monday, February 2. In the Mayor's Report, Mayor Randy Schmidt thanked City employees for their collaboration with the school in making the girls' wrestling tournament at the Rec Center a success.

During community input, Raymond Allen expressed concern that city service rates have increased from about \$60 to nearly \$100 per month in eight years, outpacing Social Security cost-of-living increases and straining seniors on fixed incomes. He said many older residents cannot return to work and are being squeezed by rising expenses.

Chuck Lawless presented the Mayor and Council with a certificate from Belle Silver Linings in appreciation of the City's support.

The Chamber of Commerce reported that the Chamber has moved to 713 6th Avenue while welcoming two returning and two new board members and updating its strategic plan. Recent activity includes new member additions, the January 31 Legislative Cracker Barrel, and upcoming events such as the February 3 BC Excavation ribbon cutting and the February 13 Annual Banquet and 115th anniversary celebration.

The Chamber is also receiving summer visitor inquiries and expects the Heroes Honor Ride to return in August with more details to follow. The Museum & Visitor Center reported that in January, 201 visitors from 15 states and one foreign country, Bosnia and Herzegovina, were recorded despite the facility being closed the first week for annual cleaning.

Two new exhibits were

created and two others were refreshed during this time. The facility also hosted a successful mid-month rental for Monument Health, added several future rentals, and opened new exhibits that drew positive attendance—though one program saw lower turnout due to severe wind.

Upcoming activities include the premiere First Saturday Brunch of the year, theater auditions and performances, youth and family programs, and the Rural Expressions Photography Contest reception at month's end. Clark Sowers with the Belle Fourche Senior Center reported being very impressed with the recent turnaround at Belle Silver Linings, noting improved finances, an active and committed board, and positive progress that benefits both the organization and the community. The Council approved participation in the South Dakota Department of Transportation's Bridge Reinspection Program,

City Council Opportunity!

Ward 1, 2 & 3 opening

Have you ever thought about serving your community? Now's your chance!

There are currently open seats on City Council, and petitions will be available starting February 6th for those interested in running. If you're passionate about making a difference and shaping the future of our city, we encourage you to consider this opportunity.

Petitions available: February 6th

Belle Fourche City Hall 511 6th Ave. Belle Fourche, SD 57717



Chamber Banquet - Friday February 13th

Reserve your table today!

\$300 - table for 8

The 2026 Lawrence County District 31 Legislative Crackerbarrels:

Will be held Saturday, February 28th at the Deadwood Gulch (304 Cliff St, Deadwood).

Will be held at 10:00 AM.

The District 31 Lawrence County Cracker Barrels are organized by the Spearfish and Deadwood Chamber of Commerce to give the community an opportunity to meet with our elected officials.

Legislative Crackerbarrels in your area offer access to your local legislators, as well as the chance to hear their answers on a variety of legislative topics. Each elected official will give an update on the committees they serve and bills that have been introduced. Attendees will have the opportunity to submit questions in writing at the event.

Senator Deibert, Representative Odenbach and Representative Fitzgerald have been invited to sit as a panel to give updates on the current legislative session.

Our legislators are also available at that time to answer questions from the audience. The events are free to attend.

For more information, contact the Spearfish Chamber 605-642-2626 or the Deadwood Chamber 605-578-1876.

which requires a 20 percent city match.

A reminder was given that petitions for Ward 1, Ward 2, and Ward 3 may be picked up starting February 6 and are due back by March 6. City Finance Officer Tonsager gave a budget update. He stated that the report was adjusted to compare expenditures to the percentage of the year remaining, noting most major funds are in good standing (Fund 211 is higher due to a baseball field lighting loan payment, and January expenses were heavier than usual because of several large annual bills); overall, the funds are expected to remain within acceptable ranges. Councilperson Brunner informed the Council he would be absent from the February 17 meeting. Councilperson Steeves reminded citizens to verify that their voter registration is current, noting they may check their registration online or complete any necessary updates at the County Auditor's Office.

Councilperson Sowers reported attending the Cracker Barrel on Saturday, noting it was well-attended and thanking the Chamber for hosting. He stated that property taxes were a frequent topic of discussion and that Lee Capp later contacted him with an idea regarding potential property tax relief for senior citizens, which he said may warrant further discussion.

City Administrator LaFayette informed the Council of the housing study packets provided to each member and noted that key takeaways were summarized on the first page. City Attorney Wilfert introduced Samuel Savory, who was in attendance with his Trail Life troupe while working on a citizenship badge focused on civic participation and good government involvement. Mayor Schmidt closed the meeting by thanking City staff for their work in transitioning to the Tyler Financial system. The next regular City Council meeting will be held Feb. 17.

BELLE FOURCHE COUNSELING Journey to Hope

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 24, 2026 12:00 PM

Featured Speaker:

Crystal Hanson of Belle Fourche Counseling will share information about the services and support available in our community.

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3 Bronc Seniors Sign Intent to Play Football Pearson, Bush-Graslie & Lipp

# Show Up

by Belle LaVenue



**BFACT VOLUNTEERS are invited:** The Belle Fourche Area Community Theater invites all volunteers, sponsors, and patrons to the 2026 Volunteer Gala on February 21 at 7pm at the Branding Iron Steakhouse Banquet Room. BFACT plans to “party the night away” as they celebrate all their volunteers for an amazing 2025 Season and for what will be an unforgettable 2026 Season. There will be music, games, karaoke, trivia, giveaways, and so much more! Branding Iron Steakhouse food, as well as their full menu and bar, will be available. The theme for the Gala will be Broadway, so come in your theater best, or come dressed as your favorite theater character. Whatever it is, just make sure you come in the spirit of celebration! Don't miss out on this night that will surely be a blast. Note: the Gala is open to all ages!

Getting ready to take over the theater this week, is the BFMS Theater cast and crew with practices for their show, **VOLTAGE**, an electric comedy about robots. Pay attention, Elon Musk - a future full of robots might not be the dream you imagine! Their show is also well into the future: We will see them onstage in mid-March.

Your presence at all the upcoming events is much appreciated, so don't forget to add these upcoming fine arts experiences to your calendars and be ready to **SHOW UP!**

March 13 & 14, Friday & Saturday: BFMS performances of Voltage, 7 PM @ the BF Rec Center Theater.  
March 21, Saturday: BFACT Volunteer Gala, 7 PM @ the Branding Iron.  
March 27-29, BFACT presents “Curtain Call: A Night of One-Acts”

## Belle Fourche Bronc Football Players Sign Intents to Play Football

**Kandi Tonsager**  
news@bellefourchebeacon.com

On Monday February 9th, three Belle Fourche High School Seniors signed with various colleges an intent to play football.

Spencer Bush-Graslie committed to play football at Dakota State University in Madison, South Dakota.

Spencer plans to pursue a career in business management or teaching. Spencer would also

like to get into coaching after his playing days are over he states.

Spencer has been playing football for roughly 10 years, “I started playing in second grade with the Cardinals after Jesse Kracht talked my parents into letting me play,” Spencer recalls.

His favorite football memory would be playing Custer this past season as it was Coach Sweet's first “road win”.

Spencer's advice to up and coming players is, “Be relentless

in everything you do and play with perfect effort.” Spencer is looking forward to being a Trojan.

Emitt Lipp committed to play football at Black Hills State University as an Offensive Lineman.

He plans to major in Biology and eventually get his Masters. Emitt started playing tackle football in 1st grade and has been playing ever since.

His favorite football memory

is scoring a touchdown as a lineman. Emitt's advice to up and coming players is, “Stick to the program. Be dedicated.”

Emitt is looking forward to being a Yellow Jacket. Gavin Pearson committed to play football at Dickinson State University.

He plans to major in Agriculture Business. Gavin has been playing football for around 10 years.

He started playing flag

football when he was young then in 5th grade began his tackle football career.

Gavin's favorite football memory is playing his Senior year homecoming game verse Lead- Deadwood.

Gavin's advice for up and coming players is, “don't only focus on football during the season, but take it seriously in the off season.” Gavin is looking forward to being a Blue Hawk.



Emitt Lipp and family



# EMITT LIPP

OL | BELLE FOURCHE HS | SD

#PLAYINTHEHILLS26



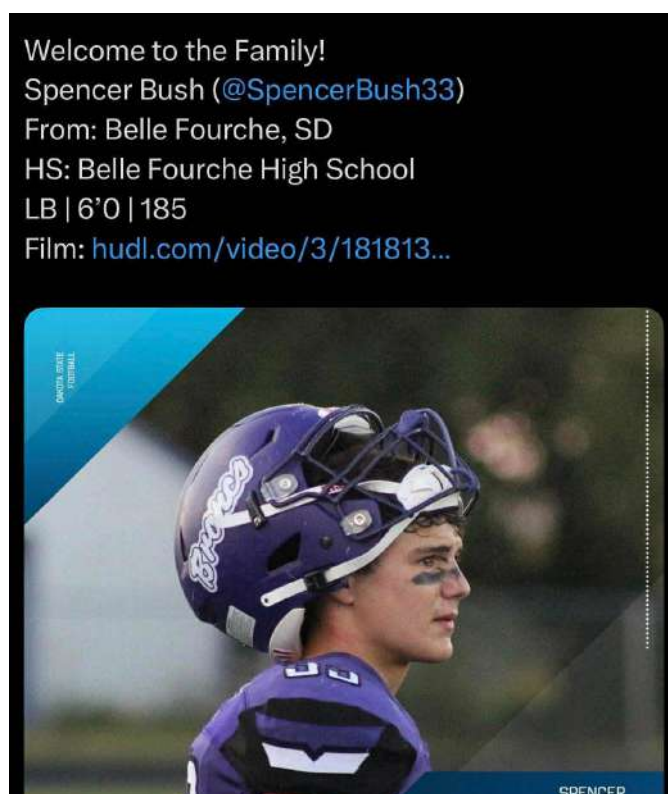
Gavin Blue Hawk Welcome



Gavin Pearson and Family



Spencer Bush and family



Spencer Trojan Welcome



# “What a Lot of Fish There Are”

Meg English

news@bellefourchebeacon.com



What a lot of fish there are teeming in the vast unexplored ocean depths.

The world beneath the surface of the seas is alive, mysterious, and fascinating. No wonder that so many imaginative young persons who grow up miles from the sea aspire to a career in Marine Biology.

Having taught high school for quite a few years, I can certify that indeed many high school students express a longing to study Marine Biology.

As their advisor I would point out that a career in Marine Biology would require relocation for anyone who has grown up in or near the “center of the nation” about as far as anyone can be from an ocean or inland sea.

I would explain that a career in Marine Biology would involve some serious commitment to education, but I would never undermine a student’s sense of wonder and mystery that comes with imagining the world beneath the surface of giant bodies of water nor would I discourage them from achieving their dreams.

A emergence of my own interest in Marine Biology occurred during a visit to the Onira Aquarium in Canet, France on the Mediterranean coast <https://www.oniria.fr>. The Onira Aquarium was a nice break from touring local medieval ruins, a satisfying activity that consumes many weekend afternoons.

We visited the aquarium on a Sunday in November during the off-season.

Here, at the aquarium an impressive collection of provocative sea creatures can be observed through glass. Museum aquariums are mini ecosystems where lighting, water parameters, and the selection of plants and fish must be managed carefully to create a balanced environment for marine life. The Onira Aquarium facility is thoughtfully organized for the benefit of both visitors and sea creatures.

The sizable aquariums presented lighting and environmental habitat to best provide comfort for the sea creatures. For human visitors there was plenty of information in various languages and an easy, relaxed opportunity to observe how these creatures might appear in the depths of their ocean habitats.

The creation of aquariums is called “aqua scaping”. Anyone who sets up a home sized aquarium is an “aqua scaper.” Fresh water tanks are great places to begin because they are supposedly easier to regulate than marine (saltwater) tanks. However, I have admired the marine aqua scaping achievement of many inland friends and acquaintances who have successfully nurtured glorious tropical fish in home aquariums.

At the Onira Aquarium there was plenty of time to stop and watch the fish and to study their movements and habitat. I took photo with my cell phone, and I look forward to a return visit. On reflection, a career in Marine Biology is appealing, but on a more practical scale aqua-scaping seems just as nice.



A stingray creeping along the side of the aquarium glass. Stingrays are bottom dwellers. Likely this specimen is not looking at the visitors because its eyes are on the top side of its body. The mouths and gills are on the under-side.



## Belle Fourche Beacon ‘Happenings’ and News Bytes Calendar

The Beacon Happenings Calendar is public service listing of meetings, events, and things to do in and around Belle Fourche. Happenings announcements may be sent to:

### Belle Fourche Writers

Belle Fourche Writers February meeting schedule: Saturday, February 21 from 10 AM to Noon. All writers are invited to attend! Meetings are held at the Belle Fourche Public Library.

### Belle Fourche Recreation Center

Notes from Belle Fourche Rec Center Aquatics Manager: As always, please reach out if you have any questions, comments, or concerns! My email is listed below as well as the Rec Center front desk number [collin@bellefourche.org](mailto:collin@bellefourche.org) 605-892-2467

### Classes

**Water-walking** - This class is held every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 7:30 - 8:15 am. This class involves walking in waist-deep to chest-deep water. Water resistance provides a low-impact, full-body workout that strengthens the core while also improving cardiovascular health.

**Silver Splash** - This class is held every Tuesday and Thursday from 11:30 - 12:15 pm.

Silver Splash is part of our Silver Sneakers program. It involves a series of low-impact workouts with specially designed Boogie Boards. This class is great for core strengthening and for cardiovascular health.

**AquaFit** - We will hold AquaFit every Monday and Wednesday night from 6:30 - 7:15 pm. This class is higher intensity than what we currently offer. The workouts all involve using either dumbbells or foam weights. The class is designed to target multiple different muscle groups while also strengthening your core. 605-892-2467 [bellefourcherec.com](http://bellefourcherec.com)

### Tri-State Museum

Tri-State Museum and Visitor Center offers new exhibits

The Tri-State Museum spent January freshening some exhibits and creating other new ones. The changes occur in the mercantile and a new “transportation” exhibit in the center of the museum.

In the mercantile, the case that has exhibited dolls features a new collection of 12 dolls from the museum’s extensive Millicent Henderson collection. These new dolls are from the 1940s-1980s and include a Madame Alexander doll, a Romanian doll and a distinctive burlap doll of Central American origin.

Also in the mercantile is a mini “haberdashery,” filled with vintage men’s clothing and toiletries. “We’ve had a number of exhibits about women’s and children’s apparel, but nothing that focused on men,” said Collections Archivist Jada Udager. “We thought this was a chance to feature artifacts we’ve not featured before.”

Across the floor from mercantile is the museum’s collection of salt and pepper shakers. The museum has so many of these that the entire four-shelf case could be completely refreshed. Some of new novel shakers include a lock and key, loaves of bread – and a little green alien in a spaceship.

A new exhibit in the museum’s mid-section is “Transportation: From Stagecoaches to Trains to Cars.” This exhibit includes images plus artifacts such as spokes for wagon wheels, a lady’s travel case, a miniature car and a vintage model stagecoach crossing a “path” with grass on either side of the roadway. There is also a brick roadway made of the few surviving bricks from Belle Fourche’s brick factory.

This exhibit also includes a basket with vintage postcards from places across the U.S. and abroad, which can be examined by visitors.

There is no admission charge to visit the Tri-State Museum and Visitor Center, which is located at 415 Fifth Avenue in Belle Fourche. For more information, call 605-723-1200 or visit the website at [www.thetristatemuseum.com](http://www.thetristatemuseum.com)

### Tri-State Museums holds “Groundhogs!” class on February 21, 2026

The Tri-State Museum and Visitor Center will hold a class on groundhogs on Saturday, February 21 from 10 to noon for third-fifth graders.

This class will be taught by Programs and Events Assistant Sam Comes. Students will learn about groundhogs, their habitat and cultural significance. The class will include a PowerPoint, a video, paper activities and a craft to make a groundhog. There will also be a drawing for the book, “Groundhog,” by Samme Jacknell.

Admission to the class costs \$2 or is free with museum membership. All students must pre-register by calling 605-723-1200.

This is the second of monthly classes that will be held in 2026. To obtain a rack card listing all the classes, stop in at the museum or call and one will be mailed to you.

The Tri-State Museum and Visitor Center is located at 415 Fifth Avenue in Belle Fourche.

### Belle Fourche Arts Council to hold third annual Photography Contest

The Belle Fourche Arts Council will hold its third annual “Rural Life Expressions” Photography Contest in February, with the final judging and public reception to take place on February 28 from 5-7 p.m.

Submissions can be made through February 20, and participant categories include Under 18 and Adult. Subject categories include Landscape, People and Animals. There is an entry fee of \$20 per entrant and this covers four submissions, with two maximum per category.

Prizes will be awarded for each subject category: 1st place - \$175; 2nd place - \$100; 3rd place - \$50. There will also be awards for People’s Choice for each subject category.

Entries will be on exhibit in the Tri-State Museum gallery from February 24 through February 28 and prizes will be awarded at the Tri-State Museum & Visitor Center reception on Saturday, February 28 5-7pm.

Entry forms and additional info, available online at <http://www.rurallifeexpressions.com>.

Mail or drop-off entries to: Tri-State Museum and Visitor Center, 415 5th Avenue, Belle Fourche, SD 57717. If sent via mail, the postmark date must be no later than February 20, 2024.

For additional information, please call 605-723-1200.

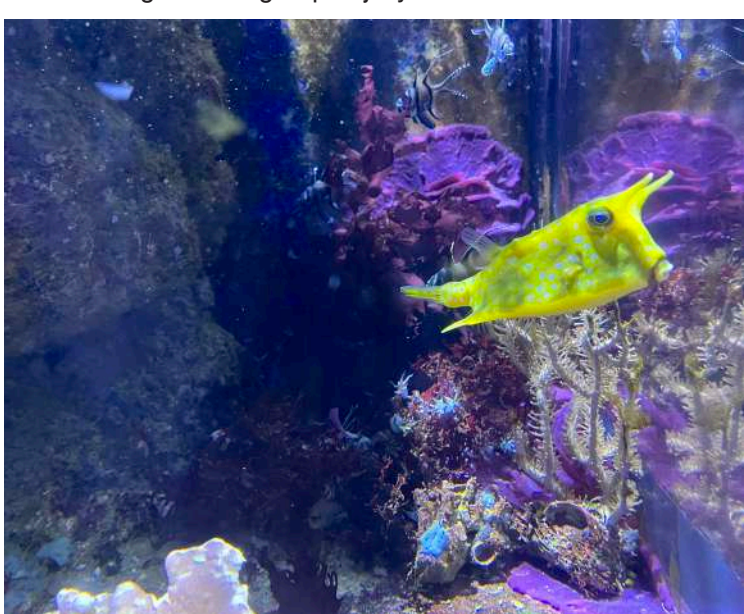
The Tri-State Museum and Visitor Center is located at 415 Fifth Avenue in Belle Fourche.



**Mediterranean Moray.** Grows to around 4-5 feet. Feeds on dead animals, mostly nocturnal. Likes to hide in crevices. Eels are sought after as food, but the skin of the Mediterranean Moray is toxic to humans.



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9:00 AM – Weigh Ups

12:00 Noon – Bred Cows Followed By Feeder Cattle

BT-Branding Time Shots PC-PreCondition Shots DF-Drug Free BV-Bangs Vaccinated NI-No Implants

### Feeder Cattle

SUNNYSIDE LIVESTOCK – 100 BLK & BLDY STRS & HFRS – 500-600# - BT, PC, NI, WND

IVAN CRANSTON – 87 HERF & F-1 BLDY STRS & HFRS – 600-700# - BT, PC, NI, NO HFRS KEPT

DUPREL & SONS – 75 BLK & HERF STRS -800-850#

LEON MINOR – 70 BLK STRS – 750-850#

BARBERO INC – 65 BLK HFRS – 650-700# - BT, PC, NI, WILL PAY FOR BV

BEHRENS RANCH – 50 BLK HFRS – 525-575# - BT, PC, WND

TJ WESLEY – 45 RED STRS & HFRS – 650-750# - BT, PC, WND, HFRS BV

KOMES RANCH – 40 HERF HFRS – 550-650# - BT, PC, WND

DARRELL OEDEKOVEN – 40 BLK & RED HFRS 0 675-700# - BT, PC, BV

MIKE & KAREN DIRKS – 39 F-1 BLDY HFRS – 575-675# - BT, PC, BV, NO HFRS KEPT

JOE GANTZ – 35 BLK HFRS – 650# - BT, PC, NI, BV

DOUG SLOVEK – 33 BLK MOSTLY STRS – 750-850# - BT, PC, NI, HFS BV

JASON SINNER – 32 BLK STRS & HFRS – 500-750# - BT, PC, WND

PEARSON RANCH – 32 F-1 BLDY HFRS – 700-750# - BT, PC, NI, BV, NO HFRS KEPT

SULZBACH RANCH – 30 BLK STRS & HFRS – 600-700# - BT, PC, WND

RON GRUBL – 26 BLK & CHAR STRS & HFRS – 500-600# - BT, PC, WND

ROCKY SCHMIDT – 10 RED ANGUS HFRS – BT, PC, POURED, NO HFRS KEPT – WILL PAY FOR BV

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### 2026 CATTLE SALES

February 20th – Bred Hfr & Cow Special – Selling All Classes Of Cattle  
February 27th – Feeder Cattle & Replacement Hfr Special – Selling All Classes Of Cattle  
March 6th – Bred Hfr & Cow Special – Selling All Classes Of Cattle  
March 13th – Feeder Cattle & Replacement Hfr Special – Selling All Classes Of Cattle  
March 20th – Regular Sale – Selling All Classes Of Cattle  
March 27th – Grass Cattle & Replacement Hfr Special – Selling All Classes Of Cattle  
April 3rd – Regular Sale – Selling All Classes Of Cattle  
April 10th – Grass Cattle & Replacement Hfr Special – Selling All Classes Of Cattle  
April 17th – Regular Sale – Selling All Classes Of Cattle

Attention to all sheep & goat producers: It is required that every male & female animal over the age of 12 months have a scrapies tag in place to sell. These tags can be obtained by the producer for FREE by calling 1-866-873-2824. If they come to the sale barn without being tagged, you will be charged \$4/hd for our vet to do them. Please call us if you have any questions.

### 2026 SHEEP SALES

February 19th – Regular Sale – Selling All Classes Of Sheep & Goats  
February 26th – Regular Sale – Selling All Classes Of Sheep & Goat

St Onge Livestock has a receiving station for the Gillette Area every Thursday. It is on Northern Drive in Gillette. Call Doug Miller at 307-660-0960 to let him know what is coming. You can unload all day every Thursday until 3 pm. You pay receiving station fee of \$3 per head & \$2.50/cwt for trucking. You can also call Justin Tupper at 605-680-0259 & he can let them know your cattle are coming also.

THE BROADUS RECEIVING STATION IS TAKING CATTLE EVERY THURSDAY FOR OUR SALES ON FRIDAY. You can drop your cattle off every Thursday by 3pm. You pay receiving station fee of \$3 per head & \$2.50/cwt for trucking. For more information, call Tyler or Brandy Escott at 406-421-5579 or 406-951-1666 or Justin Tupper at 605-680-0259.

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1:00 PM

#### BRED EWES

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Sage Askin – 36 5 & 6 Yr Old Ewes – Wf Bucks – March – 40 5 & 6 Yr Old Ewes – Bf Bucks – 5/10  
Fishhook Ranch – 80 6 Yr Old Ewes – Wf Bucks – 4/5  
Casey Holmes – Dispersion- 3 To 6 Yr Old Ewes – Sams Bucks – 3/1  
Anderson Ranch – 320 3 Yr Old Ewes – Ram A Bucks – 3/10 – 21 Micron Wool

#### BUCKS

SAGE ASKIN – 20 BUCKS

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## What Does It Mean To Be A Cattleman?

### Representative Jana Hunt Special to the Beacon

My great grandpa was the trail boss for the Diamond A Cattle Company at the turn of the century in Western South Dakota. My grandpas on both sides were independent cattle ranchers in Western South Dakota. My dad raised me on our cattle and horse ranch in Western South Dakota. Prior to becoming a legislator, I would have thought I knew the answer to what it takes to be an honest, hard-working cattleman back in 2024. However, in 2026, I get to stand on the front lines fighting over the policies and laws that affect our cattle producers in our state.

Today I am questioning what it actually means to be a cattleman (or in my case cattlemoan) in 2026? Being in this legislative arena, I have been in the crossfire of cattle producer associations like SD Cattlemen's, SD Stockgrowers, Farm Bureau, Farmers Union, R-Calf and more.

There were some foundational truths I thought all cattle producers knew about the cattle industry. Truths like 80% of the meat packing industry is controlled by 4 meatpackers (2 of which are foreign owned), cattle farts are no more dangerous to our environment now than they were when my great grandpa was raising cattle, and that South Dakota producers know what's best for our industry. However, two bills this last week have made me question the above statements. HB1077 and HB1064 were heard in House Ag Committee on the same day and the thorough and comprehensive testimony on

both of these bills have made me question these foundational principles of what I thought a cattleman stood for. HB1077 is a bill that would label cell cultivated meat as adulterated and, for all intents and purposes, ban the sale of that meat in South Dakota.

HB1064 is a bill that would allow independent beef producers to sell specific cuts of beef rather than whole, half or quarter.

Please listen to the links below for the committee hearing for both of these bills.

House hearing HB 1077: <https://sdpb.sd.gov/sdpbpodcast/2026/hag10.mp3#t=179>

Senate hearing HB 1077: <https://sdpb.sd.gov/sdpbpodcast/2026/sag14.mp3#t=662>

House hearing HB 1064: <https://sdpb.sd.gov/sdpbpodcast/2026/hag10.mp3#t=4269>

Throughout the committee hearings, I began to wonder what a cattleman actually stands for in 2026. There was conflicting testimony from SD Stockgrowers, SD Cattlemen, Farm Bureau, SD Retailers, SD Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and many producers regarding how cattle producers should view the above bills.

While every testifier stated they support the cattle industry and our cattle producers, they proceeded to take various stances that made me wonder what cattlemen really, foundationally support in our state.

I will be blunt. It was specifically the SD Cattlemen's Association's opposition testimony that left me shaking my head in bewilderment.

SD Cattlemen's Association

opposed both bills and justified their actions in an article. SD Cattlemen's Association came out with a statement that said: "To ban fake meat is bad policy." I am standing here in frustration wondering where they were when the "bad policy" was enacted to use our beef check-off dollars to fund the ideology that cattle are bad for the environment, to use our beef check-off dollars to lobby against MCOOL and the OFF Act, and to use our beef check-off dollars to support the meat packers and ultimately the development of fake meat.

Three of the four meat packers combined have invested over \$250 million dollars to the research and development of "fake meat." SD Cattlemen's Association, where was your opposition when the "bad policy" was implemented that promotes the ultimate destruction of the foundation of independent cattle producers? But then I learned SD Cattlemen's Association is an affiliate of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). NCBA is an organization who would lead you to believe they represent the cattle producers in the United States; but when you follow the money, it becomes obvious they represent the 4 meat packers. SD Cattlemen's Association's loyalty seems to belong to the NCBA rather than SD cattle producers—independent producers who are federally forced to pay beef check-off dollars when in reality those dollars are arguably used to fund their destruction.

SD Cattlemen's

Association went on to make the statement: "We as a state are not in the business of stopping citizens from voting with their dollar." This statement is laughable for two reasons: 1) by this logic, we cattle producers are forced by federal law, via beef check off dollars, to "vote" for fake meat and 2) it will not be the paying citizens who will be consuming this fake meat. It will be our military, our school children, our Native American population through government food distribution, and our SNAP beneficiaries that will be the guinea pigs. This second reason brings me to another altogether different concern I have with SD Cattlemen's policy philosophy. Another statement made by SD Cattlemen's Association is: "Lab grown protein must go through the same federal inspection process as any other food. Calling it 'adulterated' in state law creates a legal contradiction that weakens the credibility of South Dakota's food safety framework." SD Cattlemen's Association's lack of consternation at the FDA for the questionable and unsafe approval of cell-cultivated protein (fake meat) is concerning.

I would hope that accountability in the beef industry is a fundamental pillar in the SD Cattlemen's Association. It came to light during testimony of HB1077 that the FDA approved cell-cultivated protein based off the research of the organization who is developing this product. The FDAs approval consisted of reviewing information from UPSIDE Foods about the cultured cells they, themselves, are

producing. The FDA stated it has "no further questions at this time about the firm's safety conclusion," and promptly approved production for UPSIDE Foods. The FDA needs accountability brought to the forefront, and the best, strongest groups to bring that accountability is our independent cattle producers.

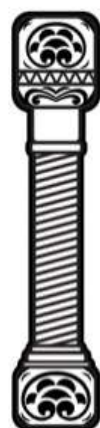
At the end of the day, I am just a cattle rancher from Western South Dakota and a legislator working hard to represent District 28A. I'm trying to reveal the truth and discern what is best for the state of South Dakota. The foundational principle I know is that like so many SD cattlemen, my great-grandfather, my grandfathers, and my father worked hard to create and leave a way of life for their children and grandchildren—a way of life that promotes independence, strength, honesty, and a will to fight for what is right.

So, in conclusion, I'm learning that the best people to promote and protect the cattle industry is we, ourselves—independent cattle producers that believe in and trust the product that we produce. We need to stop aligning ourselves with bad actors, companies, and associations that say that they are on our side when, in fact, they are trying to destroy us, our livelihood, and our way of life while using our own dollars to do it.

We need to research for ourselves who is worth supporting and partnering with and reject those working against our independent cattlemen's principles. I am determined to take my own advice on this.

I hope that you will too.  
Jana Hunt  
SD House of Representative  
District 28A

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## Looking Back in Belle

These articles come from newspaper microfilm from the Belle Fourche Public library, using a new microfilm reader and printer. The photographs are from the Tri-State Museum.



by Mary Buchholz

*75 years ago  
Belle Fourche Daily Post –  
60th Anniversary edition  
6 June 1951*

**LIVESTOCK – Backbone of the Tri-State Region BELLE LEAPS TO PROMINENCE IN EARLY DAYS WITH RECORD SHATTERING CATTLE SHIPMENTS**

Mention names like the VVV and Cross Anchor in Belle Fourche today and the odds are three to one that you'll draw a blank look. Those names that helped to skyrocketed Belle Fourche to prominence in the livestock world rapidly are becoming mere words in history books. The 60 years since Belle Fourche was born has seen many changes in the cattle industry, and even in the cattle. The rugged, rangy Texas longhorn has disappeared. In its place is the short stocky Hereford. Where ranchers counted their stock in thousands, given the big ranchers today count their cattle in hundreds. Cattlemen today talk fluently of vaccines and a multitude of treatments that were unheard of in the romantic period of the gun-toting cowboy. Thru all these years and changes, however, the livestock industry, both sheep and cattle, has been the backbone of Belle Fourche. While farming, and more recently sugar and bentonite, have contributed substantially to the progress of the town, the industry still forms the basis of Belle Fourche's economy.

**To Prominence Overnight**

Belle Fourche roared to prominence as a Cowtown almost overnight. The railroad reached Belle Fourche in 1890. That year 1615 carloads of cattle – 20 to the car – were shipped. Freight on the shipments amounted to \$200,000. The cattle - \$50 stuff was valued

at \$1,615,000. By 1902 Belle Fourche had become known as the greatest original cattle shipping point in the world. That year 110,000 head of cattle, valued at \$6,000,000 went out of Belle Fourche. That figure has never since been approached. The cattle business was flourishing in eastern Wyoming and southeastern Montana long before Seth Bullock maneuvered the railroad to Belle Fourche. However, ranching in the immediate vicinity was not born until gold was discovered in the Black Hills. Records show the first herd of cattle was turned loose on the Centennial prairie near what is now Spearfish in 1876. Later that year, M. V. Boughton drove in 200 head, which he grazed on lower Falsebottom. He lost those cattle. A band of Sioux drove them off. During the spring of 1877, however, the first big herd was trailed from Texas. There were several thousand cattle in a bunch and they ranged on the Redwater and tributary streams. Several small herds came in that year, ranging along the Redwater, Spearfish and Belle Fourche.

**Large Herds in 1880**

In 1880, several large companies drove their herds to this area. Among them, the Driskill Brothers, the E6, and Cross Anchor. However, in 1879 and 1880, settlement of the Falsebottom, Redwater and Spearfish valleys forced the cattlemen to move their herds farther from the Black Hills. They pushed out along the Belle Fourche river. The period from 1880 to 1906 was the day of the big cattle outfits in the Tri-State area – looked upon today as the romantic period in the country's development. Range talk of the day included names like the Flying V, the Hat, Turkey Track, Mill Iron, Hash Knife and VVV.

**Thousands Die in Blizzard**

Few old time cattlemen recall those days, however, without remembering the winter of 1886-87. A blizzard swept the range, covering the grass with a deep blanket of snow. Cattle died by the thousands. The E6, for instance (belonging to Clark, Plumb and Company and located on the South Grand in Harding county) went into winter with 18,000 cattle and counted out 1900 in the spring round-up. Out of 10,000 that were trailed from Texas in the summer of '86, only 20 were alive the next year. The small farmer and rancher kept moving out from the Black Hills, however, and by 1904, records of the day list the VVV as the largest cattle outfit in the immediate vicinity. Here is how one writer described the change in 1903. "Last summer this writer visited the range section which he had first seen in 1888. He found the country fenced and cultivated. Farm houses stood where formerly cattle ranged; in each enclosure were numerous heads of cattle. In fact there were five times as many cattle in that section as there were in 1888. In the early days one man owned 10,000 heard of cattle; today 100 men own 100 head of cattle each. The disappearance of the large herds has benefited the country." Available records indicate that although the first pure-bred stock was introduced into the area as early as 1879. It was not until the turn of the century that the taint of the Texans was eliminated from the herds. D. T. Harrison of Minnesela and Joseph Reynolds of Rochford are credited with bringing in the first breeding herds.

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(75 years ago – Belle Fourche Daily Post – 60th Anniversary edition 6 June 1951) -Photo of old time cattlemen from fall of 1911.

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	2 Chicken & Rice Bake Creamed Spinach Garlic Toast	3 Zuppa Toscana Soup Dinner Salad Bread Stick	4 Hawaiian Pork Roasted veggies & Potato with Dinner roll	5 Meatloaf Mashed Potato & Gravy Peas & Carrots, Roll	6 Chicken Enchilada Black beans & corn with Spanish Rice
	9 Honey Sesame Chicken Buttered Noodles Asparagus Roll	10 Beef Braut & Sauerkraut With Onions & Peppers Pasta Salad	11 Ground Beef & Gravy Mashed Potatoes Cheesy Broccoli, Roll	12 Chicken Fried Steak Mashed Potato & Gravy Dinner Salad	13 Ham & Broccoli Cheddar Soup Dinner Salad
	16 Roast Beef With Gravy Potato & Bacon & Green Beans Roll	17 Meatloaf Mashed Potato & Gravy Corn Roll	18 Pork Stir Fry with Rice Asian Vegetables Egg Rolls	19 Baked Ham Cheesy Potatoes Green Beans with Bacon Roll	20 Fish options
	23 Pulled Pork Sandwich Coleslaw, Baked Beans Chips	24 Swedish Meatballs Egg Noodles Mixed Veggies, Roll	25 Chicken Nuggets Roasted Brussels Sprouts & Carrots Fries	26 Liver & Onions or Cheeseburgers Fried Potatoes Dinner salad Roll	27 Fish options Beef Taco OR Fish Taco Cilantro Rice & Black Beans

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**MOBLEY LAND INC -MT**  
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PC, BT SHOTS, NI, WEANED  
**X HEART RANCH -WY**  
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SHOTS, NI, BV, POURED, WEANED  
**GAER RANCH-SD**  
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**WUPS @ 10 AM MT | BRED CATTLE @ 12 PM MT**

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February 12, 2026 ..... FEEDER CATTLE SPECIAL & WEIGH-UP SPECIAL -  
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..... SPECIAL - WUPS @ 10 AM MT, BRED CATTLE  
..... @ 12 PM MT  
February 26, 2026 ..... FEEDER CATTLE SPECIAL & WEIGH-UP SPECIAL -  
..... WUPS @ 10 AM MT, FEEDER CATTLE @ 12 PM MT

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Riley Lesh | 406-697-0573  
Brett Loughlin | 605-210-0615  
**Forsyth,MT**  
Scott Anderson | 406-351-1844  
**Jordan,MT**  
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**Familiar Challenges**

**Erin Healy**

Special to the Beacon  
As the Legislature moves deeper into session, familiar challenges are emerging in Pierre. Committees are advancing major bills rapidly, often while the public is still asking questions.

Whether it is economic development, health care, or taxes, South Dakotans deserve transparency, accountability, and a real voice before long-term commitments are made.

**Feed Families, Fund Schools**

Representative Erik Muckey introduced HB 1281, the Feed Families, Fund Schools Act. Democrats see it as the most responsible approach to lowering property taxes over time.

The bill eliminates the state sales tax on groceries, saving the average South Dakotan about \$245 annually. Lost revenue is replaced responsibly

through modest adjustments, including a 5 percent sales tax, still among the lowest in the region, and a one-dollar increase in the tobacco tax.

HB 1281 also creates a state-wide school building construction fund offering zero percent interest loans, giving districts a practical alternative to bonds. This reduces local property tax pressure and helps stabilize school funding.

Most importantly, the bill sustains education funding, supports teacher salaries, responsibly funds Medicaid, and builds a competitive workforce while addressing local school funding burdens that have long gone unmet.

**Health Care Restrictions Without Support**

This Legislature continues to restrict reproductive health care, often without supporting families in meaningful ways. Bills focusing on extreme

definitions of life threaten IVF, surrogacy, and basic medical care. Miscarriages are medical emergencies, not crimes, and laws that criminalize pregnancy loss put patients and doctors at risk, especially in rural areas.

If lawmakers truly value families, the focus should be on expanding access to health care, affordable childcare, paid leave, and economic stability rather than punishing or intimidating parents and patients.

**Data Centers and Economic Development**

Democrats recognize that data centers may bring economic benefits, but growth cannot outpace accountability. Proposals like HB 1005, granting 50-year tax breaks, require careful scrutiny.

Democrats are advocating a one-year moratorium on large-scale data center permits and a summer study with meaningful public input. HB 1301 highlights the need for transparency, public engagement, and

safeguards to avoid leaving communities with hidden costs.

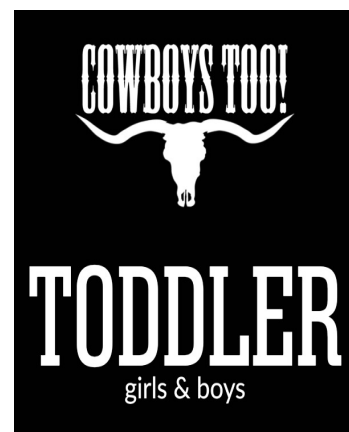
This temporary pause would allow the state time to fully evaluate effects on electricity, water, infrastructure, and local communities. A moratorium is not about stopping growth. It is about responsible leadership.

**Looking Ahead**

South Dakotans expect their government to slow down, ask tough questions, and put people first.

Democrats are pushing for transparency, accountability, and public engagement in every decision, from economic development to health care and taxes. That is the standard South Dakotans deserve.

*Erin Healy represents District 10 and is the Democratic Minority Leader for the House of Representatives. She sits on House State Affairs.*



Erin Healy

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Interested individuals can apply by submitting an Application, Resume, and Cover Letter addressed to the Butte County Auditor, Attn: Annie Capp, 117 5th Avenue, Belle Fourche, SD 57717. Phone 605-892-4485. Email: [auditor@buttesd.org](mailto:auditor@buttesd.org)

**SPEARFISH SD – The 2026 Lawrence County District 31 Legislative Crackerbarrels** will be held **February 28th at the Deadwood Gulch (304 Cliff St, Deadwood). Event will be held at 10:00 AM.**

The District 31 Lawrence County Cracker Barrels are organized by the Spearfish and Deadwood Chamber of Commerce to give the community an opportunity to meet with our elected officials.

Legislative Crackerbarrels in your area offer access to your local legislators, as well as the chance to hear their answers on a variety of legislative topics. Each elected official will give an update on the committees they serve and bills that have been introduced. Attendees will have the opportunity to submit questions in writing at the event. Senator Deibert, Representative Odenbach and Representative Fitzgerald have been invited to sit as a panel to give updates on the current legislative session.

Our legislators are also available at that time to answer questions from the audience. The events are free to attend.

For more information, contact the Spearfish Chamber 605-642-2626 or the Deadwood Chamber 605-578-1876.

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Long Term Care Service 8:45 a.m.  
Sunday School: All ages 9:30 a.m.  
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Morning Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.

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10:30 a.m. Praise & Worship  
Wednesday: 6:30 p.m. Bible Class

**NORTH POINT CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
10959 Kellem Lane, Spearfish  
Sunday Services: 9AM and 10:30AM

**PRAIRIE HOME CHURCH**  
1701 Hwy 212, Newell  
Sunday School: 10 a.m.  
Worship: 11 a.m.

**RANGELAND MINISTRIES CHURCH**  
Alzada, MT  
Sunday: Worship: 10:00am  
Mark Leverington, Lay Pastor

**RED WATER CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Belle Fourche Rec Center  
Sun: 9:30-12:30.  
Contact: Nathan Thompson  
605 569-3057  
Sermons: fightintheshade

**SALVATION ARMY OF THE NORTHERN HILLS**  
120 Ryan Rd., Spearfish  
605-642-0924  
Envoys: Tim and Peggy North  
Sunday: 9:45 a.m.

Sunday School: 11 a.m.  
Worship Nursery available  
Wednesday: 6:30 p.m.,  
Learning and Discovery Study

**SPEARFISH ADVENTIST® CHURCH**  
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Pastor Marveen Gentillon  
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Sabbath School: 9:30am  
Worship Service: 10:45am  
Bible Study-Tuesday: 6:00pm

**SPEARFISH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST (CONGREGATIONAL)**  
920 N Main Street, Spearfish  
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and on Facebook.  
Pastor Randy Hedge  
605-642-8253

**ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL**  
6th and Roundup  
892-2446  
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The Rev. Sandy Williams, Priests Deacon  
Rev. Mike Weaver  
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Wednesday at 5:55 PM during  
the school year.  
Watch our Sunday service  
live on Facebook.

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Sunday School and Worship  
at 8:30 a.m.  
www.bfsoucc.org

**ST. PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
855 5th Ave.  
Father Kevin Achbach, Pastor  
Father Max Vetch, Pastor  
Mass Times:  
Sunday Mass: 9:00 a.m.  
Daily Mass: Tues. & Thurs. 12:15 p.m.  
Confessions available one hour  
before all Masses

**SUMMIT OPEN BIBLE FELLOWSHIP**  
Seventh and Summit  
892-4630 or 892-4389  
Pastor Rick and Diane Brennan  
Sunday: 10 a.m. Worship  
Kidz Church Immediately Following  
Wednesday: September - May  
6:30 p.m. Adult Bible Study  
Kidz Alive (Kindergarten - 6th Grade)

**VALE COMMUNITY COUNTRY CHURCH**  
Pastor Darla Dunn  
402 Rosander St. Vale SD 57788  
Service Sunday: 10 a.m.  
605-210-0512

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## By John Newby "Building Main Street, not Wall Street" The Hidden Cost of Big Box Stores

As with anything, striking a balance is critical for ultimate success, the same can be said in building a community. Sir Issac Newton once said that "We build too many walls and not enough bridges." Picture two communities, identical in size, each wrestling with the same challenge: how to grow their economies in difficult times. One leader sees a big box store proposal and believes salvation has arrived. The other examines the numbers differently. What that second leader discovers changes everything. Most communities chase the same dream: attract the big retailers, the recognizable chains, the massive distribution or data centers. Tax revenue projections look promising. Ribbon-cutting ceremonies make for good photos. But beneath the surface, a very different story unfolds. Researchers at Tischler & Associates decided to look beyond glossy projections and examine what these developments actually cost communities. What they found should be required reading for every city council member in America. For every 1,000 square feet of big box retail, taxpayers shell out \$468 annually once you account for roads, infrastructure, and services these stores demand. That strip of locally-owned specialty shops downtown? They generate a net return of \$326 per 1,000 square feet. Fast-food outlets cost taxpayers a staggering \$5,168 per 1,000 square feet



each year. The development that looks like economic progress is oftentimes draining community resources. But the story doesn't end there. Dr. Patricia Frishkoff at Oregon State University analyzed charitable giving patterns across companies of various sizes for the Small Business Administration. The results were striking, employees at small and midsized companies with fewer than 100 workers generated an average of \$789 in cash and in-kind donations throughout their communities. Their counterparts at larger businesses with more than 500 employees? Just \$334 per employee—nearly 60% less. When a local business owner sponsors the Little League team, donates to the food bank, and buys a table at the fundraiser, that's not just generosity—it's a fundamentally different relationship with the community. Perhaps most revealing is research by Stephan Goetz and David Fleming at Pennsylvania State University. They analyzed 2,953 counties across America, representing every type of community imaginable. After controlling for countless variables, they discovered something remarkable: counties with more small and mid-sized locally-owned businesses enjoyed greater per capita income growth. Areas dominated by large, absentee-owned businesses

showed lower incomes overall. The explanation is straightforward. Most big box retailers and chains offer wages clustered at the lower end of the spectrum. Locally-owned businesses create opportunities across the income range, including management roles that actually pay middle-class wages. The implications reach beyond economics into public health. When researchers studied 3,060 counties and parishes for the Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society, they found that areas with a higher proportion of small and mid-sized businesses had lower rates of mortality, obesity, and diabetes. Remember those two adjacent communities? They're not hypothetical. Researcher Walter Goldschmidt documented their stories in "As You Sow: Three Studies in the Social Consequences of Agribusiness." Both were small agricultural towns in California. One was dominated by large agribusiness corporations. The other consisted primarily of small and mid-sized owner-operated farms. The difference was visible in every aspect of community life—the latter enjoyed a more vibrant, diverse economy and demonstrably higher quality of life. These aren't just statistics. They represent real choices communities make every day. When economic development dollars flow primarily toward recruiting big chains, that's a choice. When half those resources instead support locally-owned businesses, that's a different choice—with profoundly different outcomes. The urgency is only increasing. Every month, more dollars flow out of local communities through online retailers, eroding the tax base that supports

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schools, roads, and emergency services. Communities need a thriving base of local businesses not just to survive, but to build the kind of future that benefits the next generation. This is where community leaders and local media companies share a common interest. Both need a solid local business base to thrive. Both have a role in educating residents about why choosing local matters. And both have an opportunity to build something that lasts—not just for this quarter, but for decades to come. The question isn't whether your community will grow. The question is what kind of growth you'll choose—and who will benefit from it. John A. Newby, author of the "Building Main Street, Not Wall Street" column, assists communities and their local media companies combine synergies allowing them to not just survive, but thrive in a world where truly-local is lost to Amazon, Wall Street chains and others. His email: john@360MediaAlliance.net.

**THE DAKOTA SCOUT** The Dakota Scout, a journal of South Dakota politics, government and culture that features journalism from veteran reporters Jonathan Ellis and Joe Sneve. Newsletters can be sent directly to your inbox and you can receive the state's top political podcast - The Scouting Report. Look it up today.  
The Dakota Scout is a South Dakota owned, sourced and printed independent operation co-founded by Ellis and Sneve. Together, they have more than 30 years of combined experience in South Dakota journalism that have earned them reputations as dogged reporters who've not lost touch with their neighbors' sensibilities. Be in the Know!  
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Jonathan Ellis & Joe Sneve



**February 8, 2026**  
by **Karen Odell**  
It has been another warm week for February, at Capitol and on Tie Creek. Sunday made it up to the

sixties. Alvin Cordell went to the Hills for a tax appointment, on Tuesday. Marlee's cold or flu has lingered on, so she made a trip to the Buffalo clinic, on Thursday. Friday was Alvin's birthday. On Saturday, Alvin went to Belle Fourche to watch the high school play basketball against Custer. He got to see grandson, Gavin Pearson, play on the team. On Sunday, Alvin and Marlee went in to the Camp Crook Corner Bar for the Super Bowl game. The place was packed with people, for the Super Bowl party. On Monday, Dick and Erma

Albert went to Spearfish for Erma's dermatology appointment. They went to the Senior Citizen dinner, on Friday. On Sunday, Father Matt was a visiting priest from Rapid City, for the service at the Catholic Church. Dick and Erma had lunch at Saloon Number Three with Randy and Mary Smith and their granddaughter. Randy and Mary's Montana priest will be back next week, but it was fun visiting in South Dakota for a few Sundays. Doug and Julia Davis made a trip to Rapid City for the funeral of her friend, Sharon Culbertson, on Monday. Sharon had worked with Julia in Deadwood, and later in Belle Fourche. On Thursday, they went to Belle Fourche to see grandson, Keaton, play basketball at the Middle School. Doug went to watch grandson, Kellan, play basketball in Belle

Fourche, on Saturday. He had stopped and picked up his mother, Alfreda, and they both enjoyed the games, and had lunch together. Tommy Melum joined the Ekalaka FFA for a trip to Miles City. They participated in the mechanics competition, and were judged on their welding, soldering, mechanics work on round balers, and other events. Their team won an impressive fourth place among the many schools that participated. Ernie and Rachel celebrated their eighteenth anniversary, this week. Bryce, Dawn and Dorothy Padden went to Buffalo, on Thursday, for the boys' basketball games and Parent's Night. The players presented flowers to their parents, before the varsity game. The game was exciting and there was a big crowd of people there to cheer

them on. On Saturday, Brandon Padden took the boys' wrestling team to Hill City, while Ashley Padden took the girls' wrestling team to Newcastle. Kanyon won first place in her division, where they presented a tierra to the winning girls. She had won a tierra last year, too, so now she has collected two. Maybe she will have a room-full by the time she is a senior. Dorothy, Dawn and Bryce were at home, but got to see one of her matches on the computer. Karen Odell had a muddy week. The temperature was up, and the snow melted. She went to get the mail early, when the mud was still frozen, and went to mail letters in town and stop at Wolff's for groceries, in the morning, too. She saw the FedEx driver look at her road and then decide to leave the package

at the mailbox, which was a good idea. Karen visited on the phone with Shirley Melum, her brother Jim Evans, daughter Mollie and granddaughter Kyia Smith, daughter Micki Odell and Rachel Melum. There was lots of texting, and pictures, during the Super Bowl. Micki and Jesse, in Tacoma, were the most interested, and fans of Seattle on the west coast. Mollie and Kyia were watching the Puppy Bowl. Carson is also a Seattle fan, though he lives in South Dakota. Jeff and Amanda were watching, too, but I am not sure who they cheered for. Nearly everyone watched the Alternative Half-Time Show on TPUSA. It was on YouTube and Rumble, and it was good. Karen and Hywel soon turned to the Puppy Bowl, too. A mistake proves that someone finally stopped talking long enough to do something.

## BFRC Aquatics Calendar February 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Youngsters 11-12 pm Silver Splash: 11:30-12:15 Open Swim: 1-4:45 pm Swim Lessons: 5-6:45 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	6 Adult/Lap: 6-12 pm Walking: 7:30-8:15 am Youngsters 11-12 pm Open swim: 12-6:30 pm Open Lap 6:30-7:30 pm	7 Adult/Lap: 8-10 am Open Swim 10-4:30 pm Paddleboards 4:30-5:30 pm
8 Open Swim 1-7:30 pm	9 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Walking: 7:30-8:15 am Youngsters: 11-12 pm Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm AquaFit: 6:30-7:15 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	10 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Youngsters: 11-12 pm Silver Splash: 11:30-12:15 Open Swim: 1-4:45 pm Swim Lessons: 5-6:45 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	11 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Walking: 7:30-8:15 am Youngsters: 11-12 pm Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm AquaFit: 6:30-7:15 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	12 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Youngsters 11-12 pm Silver Splash: 11:30-12:15 Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	13 Adult/Lap: 6-12 pm Walking: 7:30-8:15 am Youngsters 11-12 pm Open swim: 12-6:30 pm Open Lap 6:30-7:30 pm	14 Adult/Lap: 8-10 am Open Swim 10-4:30 pm Paddleboards 4:30-5:30 pm
15 Open Swim 1-7:30 pm	16 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Walking: 7:30-8:15 am Youngsters: 11-12 pm Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm AquaFit: 6:30-7:15 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	17 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Youngsters: 11-12 pm Silver Splash: 11:30-12:15 Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	18 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Walking: 7:30-8:15 am Youngsters: 11-12 pm Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm AquaFit: 6:30-7:15 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	19 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Youngsters: 11-12 pm Silver Splash: 11:30-12:15 Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	20 Adult/Lap: 6-12 pm Walking: 7:30-8:15 am Youngsters 11-12 pm Open swim: 12-6:30 pm Open Lap 6:30-7:30 pm	21 Adult/Lap: 8-10 am Open Swim 10-4:30 pm Paddleboards 4:30-5:30 pm
22 Open Swim 1-7:30 pm	23 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Walking: 7:30-8:15 am Youngsters: 11-12 pm Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm AquaFit: 6:30-7:15 pm	24 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Youngsters: 11-12 pm Silver Splash: 11:30-12:15 Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	25 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Walking: 7:30-8:15 am Youngsters: 11-12 pm Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm AquaFit: 6:30-7:15 pm	26 Adult/Lap: 6-1 pm Youngsters: 11-12 pm Silver Splash: 11:30-12:15 Open Swim: 1-6:30 pm Open Lap: 6:30-7:30 pm	27 Adult/Lap: 6-12 pm Youngsters 11-12 pm Open swim: 12-6:30 pm Open Lap 6:30-7:30 pm	28 Adult/Lap: 8-10 am Open Swim 10-4:30 pm Paddleboards 4:30-5:30 pm

## Legals

### NOTICE OF HEARING ON ADOPTION OF SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET FOR 2025 BUTTE COUNTY

Notice is hereby given that on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026 at the hour of 09:45 a.m., the Board of Butte County Commissioners will be in session at the Butte County Courthouse in the City of Belle Fourche at 839 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Belle Fourche, Butte County, South Dakota for the purpose of considering and adopting a supplemental budget to cover expenses of certain functions of County Government that were not provided for in the Annual Budget for the fiscal year 2025.

Budget Supplements from Cash Reserves (Increase in spending authority over original approved budget)

Account Number	Description	Amount
101-161	Gen Gov Buildings	\$ 232,000.00
101-153	Court Appointed Atty	\$ 6,400.00
201-311-435	Hwy Road and Bridge - Minor Equipment	\$ 69,000.00
206-750	Wheel Tax	\$ 1,100.00

At such time all interested persons may appear, either in person, or by representation, and will be given an opportunity for a full and complete discussion of such supplemental budget.

Dated at Belle Fourche, South Dakota this 12<sup>th</sup> day of January 2026.

Board of Butte County Commission  
/s/: Chad Erk, Chairperson

ATTEST: /s/: Annie Capp, Butte County Auditor

Published on Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Published on Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Position: Full-Time Deputy Auditor  
Reports to: Butte County Auditor

#### Summary of Duties:

The Sworn Deputy Auditor's main emphasis will be on Local, State, and Federal financial reporting. Other duties include maintenance of County asset inventory, insurance, and leases, administering and training the Financial, Payroll, and Human Resources Software (Tyler Incode). The Deputy Auditor will perform Auditor duties in the Auditor's absence.

Salary: \$27-26-\$28.63 DOQ  
Hours/Week: 40 hours Mon-Fri

Education Required: GED/High School Equivalent - Bachelor's degree preferred

#### Abilities/Skills:

A successful applicant will have knowledge of accounting principles and financials, strong numerical aptitude and attention to detail, skills in Microsoft Office, leadership skills, supervisor experience, knowledge of Insurance policies and claims process, written and verbal communication skills, time management, and organizational skills

Benefits: Retirement, Health insurance, Holidays, Vacation

Applications may be picked up at the Auditor's office at the Butte County Administration building 117 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, Belle Fourche, SD 57717.

Interested individuals can apply by the submission of an Application, Resume and Cover Letter addressed to the Butte County Auditor, Attn: Annie Capp, 117 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Belle Fourche, SD 57717. Phone 605-892-4485. Email: [auditor@buttesd.org](mailto:auditor@buttesd.org)

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### February

- 12<sup>th</sup> - Dinosaur Talk @ Grap's, 5:30PM Burger Night at Moose Lodge
- 13<sup>th</sup> - 7:30AM Coffee & Caramel Rolls @ Silver Lining, 5PM Chamber Banquet, 5:30PM Galentines @ Belle Flowers
- 14<sup>th</sup> - Happy Valentine's Day
- 16<sup>th</sup> - President's Day

Casino Night March 13th

Be sure to LIKE and FOLLOW us on social media for all the information or visit our website

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Closed Sunday

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# The Valley Irrigator

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## Community Hits Blood Drive Goal in Newell



**Blood drive workers**, from left: Devin Stephens, Jennifer Ash, Vitalant Blood Drive Coordinator; Ashleii Bernath, and Dennis Feller. *Courtesy photo*

### Blood Drive

**Robbi Longbrake**

news@bellefourchebeacon.com

NEWELL—If giving blood saves lives, then those who volunteered to donate blood at the Newell blood drive did their part to help achieve that goal. Community members showed up ready to give a little of themselves to help others in need. Whatever It Takes Coalition hosted the blood drive on Monday, February 2.

The goal of the blood drive was to collect 23 units of blood. By the end of the day, that goal was successfully met with exactly 23 units obtained. Each donation can save up to three lives.

Having people donate their time and energy along with blood is so important and needed because there is no artificial substitute for human blood. Collecting blood from donors is essential for patient survival.

Vitalant was in charge of the event. Those who donated were able to receive a \$15 gift card as a special thank you if they signed up for it when they registered for an appointment.

Turnout was good considering the time of year. According to Sabrina Harmon, WIT Director, they were pleased with the number of donors who participated despite seasonal illness and the Black Hills Stock Show being in full swing.

**Blood Drive Contd. D4**

### Celebrate Recovery Support Group is now meeting at *Emmanual Baptist Church*

Every Friday at 6:30 pm.

10913 Sourdough Rd.

Come for potluck on the last Friday of each month.

## Newell Commission Sets Up New Year

**Ryder Heitz**

news@bellefourchebeacon.com

NEWELL—The Newell Board of Commissioners started off the new year with three meetings held across the month of January. During these meetings, the board approved 2026 employee salaries, addressed personnel changes, and took action on several community and infrastructure items.

At the first regular meeting of the year on January 12, commissioners approved bills and payroll, opened a new investment account for town funds, and moved forward with plans for additional amenities at the city pond. The commission authorized a memo of understanding with South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks for installation of a vault toilet near the fishing pier.

Commissioners also approved multiple building permits, including a mobile home park permit, and formally approved the 2026 Volunteer

Fire Department roster. The board designated First National Bank as the town's official depository for the year; the Black Hills Pioneer was designated its official legal publication.

Several community requests were approved, including waiving City Hall rental fees for the Valentine's Day dance, Easter Dinner, and Legislative Cracker Barrel. Sabrina Harmon of the W.I.T. Coalition gave an update on upcoming events. On March 12, there will be a W.I.T. Coalition Luncheon beginning at 11:30 a.m. at the Newell Christian Fellowship Community Hall.

Commissioners discussed branch pickup after the December storm. Construction project clean-up and incidents of trespassing were also discussed. A commissioner read a citizen's letter regarding drug-related incidents in Newell. Information was presented on equipment to throw a Big Summer Blowout party.

Two special meetings later in the month focused primarily on staffing and administrative matters. In a Special Session on January 22, the commission approved the full 2026 salary schedule for town employees and officials. Bennett, Main, Gubbrud & Willert were selected as the town's legal counsel. Use of the DOT Welcome sign with a \$20 fee was approved. Commissioners also waived the City Hall rental fee for any CPR classes held by Newell Ambulance.

Personnel matters continued on January 30, when the commission met briefly in special session, entered executive session, and subsequently voted to end the employment of a town employee.

The next regular meeting of the Newell Town Commission will be held on February 9 at 5 p.m. at the Town of Newell office building.



## Newell Health Clinic



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### Whatever It Takes Coalition MEETING INVITATION

**When:**  
Tuesday, February 10, 2026 \* 6:00 pm  
Free Supper starting at 6:00 pm with program to follow.

**Where:**  
Newell Christian Fellowship Community Hall  
306 4th Street, Newell, SD 57760

**Program: Veteran's Resources & Collaboration**

Jody Smith—Community Engagement Coordinator with the Black Hills Health Care Systems, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs who works with communities that is critical in prevention of Veteran suicide. Approximately half of Veterans receive care outside the VA. The VA is dedicated to reaching all Veterans where they live and connect. To do this, the VA and communities are coming together to implement the public health approach, combining community and clinical interventions for suicide prevention. Together, the VA and communities can work toward ending Veteran suicide.

Local Veterans **Kevin Groves** and **Pastor Lance Putnam** will also be on hand to visit with Veterans and the families about setting up a local group that could be helpful by sharing contact information, etc.

*All are welcome that care about helping our Veterans and their families.*

**Because we care!**

Please let me know if you can make it, so I can plan accordingly.  
Want to make sure I have enough for supper and seats set up.  
sabrina.harmon.wit@sdplains.com \* 605-381-9136



Grand River Roundup



Betty Olson

news@bellefourchebeacon.com  
Monday, February 2, was Groundhog Day and after the groundhog saw his shadow we are supposed to have six more weeks of winter, but this week felt more like spring with the temperatures above freezing that have melted all the snow and turned it into mud!

It was another nice day on Tuesday when Casey took the Harding County wrestlers to Newell that afternoon.

Sadly, there are more deaths to report: Pat Dinkins, 86, of Bison, passed away on Saturday, January 31. Service of Remembrance for Pat was Saturday, February 7, at the Bentley Building in Bison with burial at the Bison Cemetery.

Vada Doerr, age 95 of Hettinger, passed away on Saturday, January 31, at the Western Horizons Care Center, surrounded by her

family. Vada's funeral was Friday, February 6, at the United Methodist Church in Hettinger with burial at the Hettinger Cemetery.

Ed Miller, 83, of Faith, passed away on February 2, in his home. Ed's funeral was on Wednesday, February 11th at the Faith Community Center.

LeRoy A, Donner, 86, passed away on February 2, at the CHI St. Alexius Medical Center in Dickinson. Burial for LeRoy will be this spring.

Our son-in-law Dr. Michael McNelis lost his mother Norma Jean "Nory" (Strommer) McNelis, age 84, when she died peacefully on February 4, in Buffalo, Minnesota, with her family by her side.

Reub and I went to Hettinger on Wednesday to get stuff from Runnings and White Drug and as usual, Reub got his squeeze from his cousin Roxie Finck. We stopped in Reeder on the way home

to have coffee and some good visits with the Prairie Pioneers and got to visit with Polly Markegard that we hadn't seen for a while. When we got home late that afternoon, our son-in-law Michael McNelis had left a message on the answering machine telling us that his mother Nory McNelis had passed away.

It was 63 degrees here on Thursday so I washed huge loads of laundry to hang outside to dry and with the little wind we had it wasn't long before I could bring everything back inside to fold and put away. Reub and I were going to load a bunch more firewood in the entryway and Shylo and Scout came up to help us. The twins aren't even three years old yet, but they sure are fun to have around to help us and entertain us. Our son Sage stopped that afternoon to visit on his way home from checking on things for MDU in Camp Crook. Casey and Taz were working on the new bull pen they are building over east and Sage stopped to talk to them a little while too.

Casey went to Buffalo to take the Harding County boy wrestlers to Hill City on Friday for the wrestling meet early Saturday morning and the Harding County girls had a wrestling meet in

Newcastle on Saturday. The hay grinder came down that afternoon and Taz filled the grinder with hay bales to get them ground up. Copper was over at Grandma Missy's house and helped Missy make some of those delicious egg bites that Missy shared with us. I got the recipe from Missy and when I get around to making them, I'm going to have Copper come up and help me make those yummy things!

It was a beautiful day on Saturday with the temperature at 57 degrees. Jaden and Rikki Kempel's baby shower was at the REC center in Buffalo that day and Missy, Amanda and the little girls went in to it while Taz and Knox went to the rodeo in Bismarck where Taz won the steer wrestling. Casey had the Harding County boy wrestlers in Hill City that day and the Harding County girl wrestlers were in Newcastle, Wyoming.

We took an old picture of a bunch of Reva cowboys that was taken several years ago to church Sunday morning to show it to people that were related to some of them or knew some of those cowboys. On the back of the picture, it names Seab Ledbetter, Joe Ledbetter, Red Lermeney, Tex Reeder, Ed Verhuslst, Bill Olson, Claude Olson, Bill Welch and

Paul Verhuslst with Reub's Uncle Lance Olson sitting in the Model T between the cowboys because he had been in a horse wreck and was paralyzed from the waist down and couldn't use his legs. I'd love to find some way to enlarge the picture and make a copy of it to put up at the Reva Store in Reva.

My old recliner that I got from my mother years ago when she went to the nursing home in Hettinger has broken down because just like me, it's getting pretty old. I need to find a new one that I can lean back and rest my legs on when I'm worn out so I'll be looking for one soon.

Talking about getting old, I'll leave you with these:  
1. A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office. "Is it true," she wanted to know, "that the medication you prescribed has to be taken for the rest of my life?"  
"Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her.

There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied, "I'm wondering, then, just how serious is my condition because this prescription is marked 'NO REFILLS'."

2. Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it. This is so true. I love to hear them say "you don't look that old."

Then and Now in Newell

**February 3, 1916** It Miss Irene Voice gave a Leap Year party to a number of her schoolmates and friends at the Experiment Farm Friday evening, and a delightful evening is reported. Mrs. John L. Barnes acted as chaperon for the party going out from town.

A number of friends of Mrs. C. R. Nelson attempted to surprise her on Monday evening, the anniversary of her birthday, but were in turn surprised by the preparedness for their arrival. "A little bird" spilled the beans and the surprise was returned. A most pleasant evening was spent by those in attendance and all wish Mrs. Nelson many happy returns of the day.

Miss Freda Nielson arrived Sunday and is now in charge of the 5th and 6th grades of the Newell Schools. Miss Nielson's home is at Underwood and is a graduate of Spearfish Normal and previous to coming here she held a position as teacher in the schools at Cresten and a teacher in the Spearfish Normal. The addition of another teacher in the Newell Schools was necessary to care of the increasing number of pupils in the Intermediate Grades.

**February 2, 1926** Mrs. Staiger's condition was found to be worse than anticipated. The clinic at Hot Springs found that she would have to undergo an operation, but several treatments would be necessary first and now, Paul, son of Mr. & Mrs. Staiger, was operated on for appendicitis on Wednesday morning at the Belle Fourche Hospital. Paul was in Belle Fourche as a witness in Circuit Court when he was stricken with an acute attack and at once taken to the hospital for treatment.

"Looking Forward to our Past"

Tuesday was Ground Hog Day when the little pig is supposed to emerge from his hole and take weather observations. The sky was overcast locally until late afternoon when the sun shone for a time. If his hogship did come outside any hour of the day, it is probable his eyes were filled with drifting snow that he was unable to see more than 10 feet and moreover, in event he didn't get a glimpse of the sun, it's a safe bet there'll be 6 weeks more of winter, anyway, in spite of the old tradition.

Abe Jones of the Slim Buttes took 15 horses which he had sold to Mr. Murphy of the Minneapolis Tribune Newspaper, to Reeder, North Dakota last week. Mr. Jones is one of the pioneer horsemen of western South Dakota and has the reputation of raising the best horses in this part of the state.

**February 6, 1936** Articles of Incorporation were The WPA Project for extension of the sewer system in Newell has finally been approved, according to Ralph Boyer, project manager. The work involves the laying of 2,300 feet of sewer tiling to supplement the present system. The total cost will be \$2,000, of which the Federal Government is furnishing \$1,188 and the property owners benefit, according to Mr. Boyer there will be 15 men employed on the local project and the men who will be given employment are those who at present being borne by the men but with the opening of the Newell project this expense will no longer be necessary. M. J. O'Brien was appointed foreman of the project and had orders to start the work Tuesday morning,

but the extreme cold weather caused postponement.

Don't miss the big double feature at the Arcade Theater on Friday and Saturday, which includes "Hop-along Cassidy", "A Day of Flanders", selected shorts and the first chapter of the exciting serial, "The Miracle Rider". Everyone will want to see "China Seas", next Sunday and Monday at the Arcade. Seething with action, alive with poignant dialogue and thrilling spectacle of human aspirations, greed and lust gone mad. On Wednesday, the beloved American character of "The Hoosier School Master", steps out of the pages of the novel and onto the screen at the theater Wednesday. You can't afford to miss it!!

**February 7, 1946** Sidney H. Flyte, Rapid City proprietor of the Black Hills Concrete Products and Herbert Kronick, Ford dealer at Sturgis were visitors in Newell yesterday. Both came here in their own airplanes. Don M. Phall, Rapid City was here on regular schedule as instructor to a local flying class. The airport is gaining popularity. Together with Alphonse Johnson's new plane, it made 4 private planes at the airport yesterday. Edward Brodsky was appointed as manager of the city airport at the regular meeting of the City Commission. Mr. Brodsky is a veteran flyer of the late war and several years' experience in aviation and landing fields.

Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Bottala visited Sunday with Mrs. Lena Lahonen at Upper Horse Creek. They also called on Jennie Kosola and family, Mrs. Anna Hentila and Mrs. Fannie

**February 9, 1956** Fred and Ernest Gardner, Arne Lund, Harry Townsend and Tony Toderoff went to Orman Dam last Sunday for some ice fishing and reported one of the largest catches of fish ever brought up through the ice.

Art Abbingtion, regional superintendent for Butler Bros, Minneapolis, spent Tuesday here observing an inspecting the local Ben Franklin Store and visiting Noel Holmes, local

manager, and store staff.

A Cocoa Cola truck driven by Ray Burger, Deadwood, spilled its load of soft drinks at the north abutment of the bridge on 79 between Newell and Vale. Burger told Sheriff George Hafner and Deputy Walter Miller, who investigated, that the mishap occurred when his brakes locked after he attempted to pass a pickup which pulled out to pass a pickup which pulled out to pass another pickup. Burger applied the brakes and as they locked the truck rolled over the bridge rail.

Twelve ladies gathered at the home of Mrs. Tillie Kusima last Wednesday afternoon to celebrate the birthdays of Mrs. Kusima, Mrs. Henry Jaukkari, Mrs. August Ypparila and Mrs. Ray Rivinoja. The afternoon was spent visiting and at the close, four beautifully decorated cakes and coffee were served.

Mrs. David Richards attended a noon luncheon for Daughters of American Colonists at the home of Mrs. Martha Brown in Sturgis Saturday. Reports were given and other business conducted, before tasty refreshments were served.

Woman Marine Pfc Nancy J. Fardig, daughter of Mrs. Edith Falk, of Newell, set a precedent by being the first woman Marine to fly a jet aircraft January 12, as part of her training as a link training instructor. Pfc. Fardig flew a TV-2 Jet and handled the 2-hour familiarizing flight flawlessly.

The jet flight climaxed a 10-week intensive course. Before entering the service in April 1955, she graduated from Newell High School

**February 10, 1966** Sale of the Boe Farm along Horse Creek southeast of Newell, which was settled by Ole L. Boe in 1879, was

announced by his son Mr. & Mrs. Ragner Boe, who took over operation of the place in 1934. The sale was to Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Schild, 2 sons and 1 daughter. The Boe family will live in Newell until they make future plans.

Persons who would like to donate meat, potatoes or other food for the needy families in the Vale, Nisland and Newell communities may now leave such items at either Tri-county Lockers or Cliff's Barber Shop in Newell or contact Newell Police Chief Edward Yoder. Yoder also announced that a receiving depot for the Salvation Army has been set up in the old radio shop in the Wall Building.

Jerry Jacobsen, son of Mr. & Mrs. Henry W. Jacobsen, Castle Rock, arrived home Sunday from Simi, Calif for an extended visit with his parents and other relatives and friends. Jerry was recently graduated from San Fernando, Calif, where he received his Bachelor of Art Degree in Journalism. A graduate of Newell High School, Jerry has signed up for the Peace Corp after taking a number of tests and is now awaiting word of his assignment.

All officers of the Belle Fourche Irrigation District were reelected at the Annual Organization meeting of the Board of Directors held last week. They include President R. J. Donaldson, Newell; Vice President Daryl M. Williamson, Vale; Secretary Alice Helmer, Vale and Assessor Edward Breidenbach, Newell. Virgil Terrill, Nisland took the office as newly elected Director from the Nisland-Fruitdale Division. After a discussion, the Board ruled out a proposal for pumping irrigation water to dry land, due to the fact that water users under assessment might suffer shortages in time to come.

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Alice and Paul  
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### Here's What's Happening in Newell!

**Newell Clinic now open at the Newell Evangelical Church**  
Call 605-204-9497

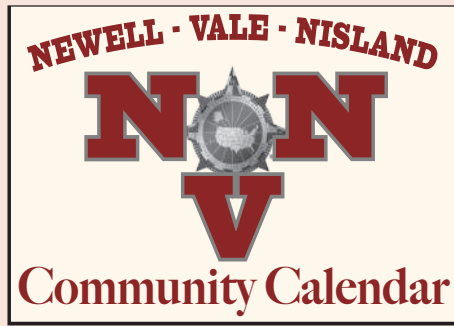
**Feeding South Dakota**  
Second Thursday every month,  
1:30 p.m.

**Wednesday Evenings**  
Summer Campus CleanUp  
Every Wednesday, 4-6 p.m.  
Newell School

**Newell Library Hours**  
Open Monday, Wednesday, Friday  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Mondays**  
Monday Night Bingo at the NVN  
Senior Center 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

**BH Farmer's Market**  
Second Tuesday each month,  
4:30, Nisland Town Hall

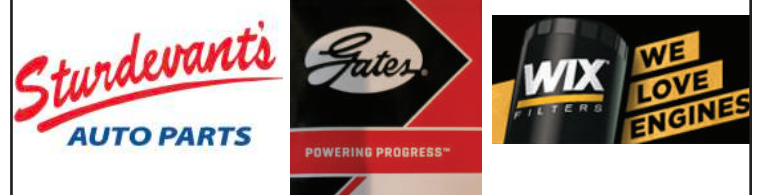


### Newell Service Center

101 4th Street- Phone 605-456-3455



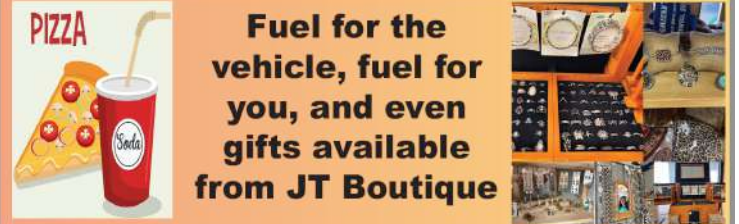
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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2) Tornadoes, Cereal, Fruit, Juice, Milk  Shredded Turkey & Gravy on Flatbread, Mashed Potatoes, Brussel Sprouts, Fruit, Milk	3) Egg Omelet, Cereal, Fruit, Juice, Milk  Pizza Wraps with fresh veggies, Fruit, Milk	4) Pancake Turkey Wraps Cereal, Fruit, Juice, Milk  Meatball Subs, Broccoli, Fruit, Milk	5) Biscuits & Gravy, Cereal, Juice, Fruit, Milk  Grilled Cheese Sandwich or Tuna Sandwich, Tomato Soup, Green Beans, Fruit, Milk	6) NO SCHOOL
9) French Toast Sticks, Cereal, Juice, Fruit, Milk  Goulash, Peas & Carrots, Fruit, Milk	10) Long Johns, Fruit, Milk  Chicken Nachos, Roasted Broccoli, Fruit, Milk	11) Pancakes, Cereal, Juice, Fruit, Milk  Corn Dogs, Potatoes, Fruit, Milk	12) Egg Bites, Cereal, Juice, Fruit, Milk  Chicken Parmesan, Green Beans, Fruit, Milk	13) NO SCHOOL
16) NO SCHOOL PRESIDENT'S DAY	17) Hashbrown Eggs Cereal, Juice, Fruit, Milk  Chicken Patties, Green Beans, Broccoli Salad, Fruit, Milk	18) Long Johns, Cereal, Juice, Fruit, Milk  Sloppy Joes, Mixed Veggies, Fruit, Milk	19) Breakfast Quiche, Cereal, Juice, Fruit, Milk  Chicken Nuggets, Spicy Green Beans, Fruit, Milk	20) NO SCHOOL



### Celebrate Recovery Support Group is now meeting at Emmanuel Baptist Church

Every Friday at 6:30 pm.  
10913 Sourdough Rd.  
Come for potluck on the last Friday of each month.

### Newell Health Clinic



is accepting new patients!

located in the Newell Evangelical Church on 8th street across from the Blue Line Diner.

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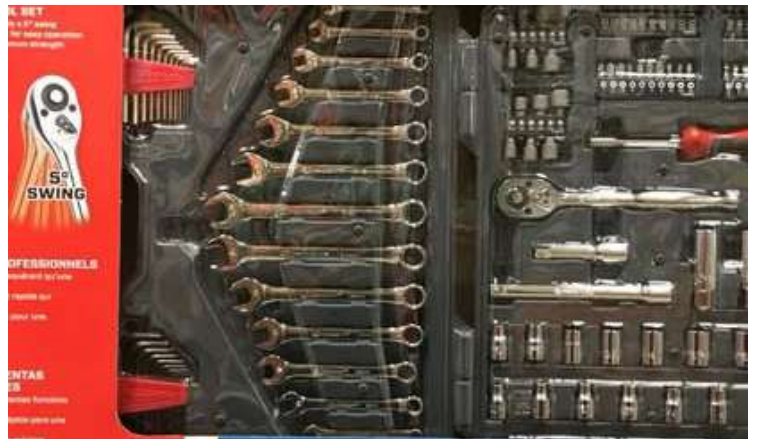
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