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PRAIRIETRACKS

2024 RESOLUTIONS OR GOALS

PAGE 6



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— FROM THE — CEO's Chair

Laurie Shelton, President/CEO
Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau

Shop Huron & Win promotions are in their 10th year and it is making an impact in our community. When the first Shop & Win promotion began in 2014 the sales tax increased by 3% over 2013. At the end of 2022 our total sales tax was up 30% from 2014 and we are on track to be higher than that by year end. So I challenge you to keep showing love to our local businesses!!

I did some research on some interesting stats and felt that they were worth sharing or reminding you of:

- Small local owned businesses account for 41% of the US Economy
- \$68 from every \$100 spent locally stays local.
- Local business generates 70% more local economic activity than the big box retail.
- Small businesses donate 250% more than large businesses to community causes.
- South Dakota is the best small state for local business entrepreneurship. 53.47% of SD business remained in operation through their first five years. 10.75% of South Dakota's population owns a business as their primary job.
- 61% shop local because of their unique products according to a consumer poll and— 40% of those polled purchase locally because they want to support the community or the small business.
- 25% of local business close because of low sale or limited cash. The more local shopping you do, the fewer local business will shut down.
- 65% of shopping budgets are still spent in store vs online

Bottom line is that few consumers can shift their spending to local business exclusively, but changing in small steps can be a boon to the local economy. Even a positive Google or Yelp review can lead to more local business for our community.

I encourage you all year to support your local businesses and together we can continue to make a difference in Huron.

Laurie

RINGER WANTS TO KNOW...

WHEN AND WHERE IS THE HEGG BROTHERS CONCERT?

Find the answer to Ringer's question in this edition of Prairie Tracks. Call the Chamber at 352-0000 or email wanda@huronsd.com with your answer and phone number by December 15th for a chance to win **\$25 in Huron Bucks**.



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Thru 12/1	Christmas Bag Sale - Gifts & Decorations Huron Area Senior Center	11	Bingo 5:30PM • The Salvation Army
Thru 12/1	SD Farmers Union State Convention	11	Christmas in the Commons 5:30PM • Huron High School Auditorium
Thru 12/24	Shop Huron & Win "Reindeer Games" 352-0000 • Huron Businesses	12	Chamber Mixer 4:30PM • Farmers and Merchants Bank 333 Dakota Ave S
Thru Jan 15	Huron Arts Council - Festival of Trees Huron Event Center	12	Evening of Prayer 6PM • Grace Episcopal Church
1-2	East River Nursery Collector's Open House East River Nursery	12	MS Society - Fundraiser - Crown the King! 6PM • Red Arrow Bar
1	VFW Bingo 7PM - 9PM • Huron Mall	12	Theology in the Wild 7PM • Scoreboard
1	Karaoke 9PM • Sportsmen Bar	12	Hegg Brothers Holiday Jam 6PM • Huron High School Auditorium
2	Christmas Highland Cow Acrylic Painting Class 9AM - 12PM • East River Nursery	13	VFW Bingo 7PM - 9PM • Huron Mall
2	Craft & Vendor Fair - Christmas Bake Sale 10AM - 4PM • Holy Trinity Multipurpose Room	15	Karaoke 9PM • Sportsmen Bar
2	Outta the Attic - OPEN 11AM - 3PM • 255 Lincoln Ave SW	15	Holiday Market 10AM - 2PM • Centre Plaza
2	Meat Bingo 2PM - 4PM • Hurst's Corner	16	Bingo 5:30PM • The Salvation Army
2	Holiday Porch Pot Class #4 3PM - 5:30PM • East River Nursery	18	MS Society - Fundraiser - Crown the King! 6PM • Red Arrow Bar
4	Bingo 5:30PM • The Salvation Army	19	Food Giveaway 11:30AM • People's Transit
5	LifeServe Blood Drive 12:30PM - 6PM • HRMC Legacy Plaza Auditorium	21	VFW Bingo 7PM - 9PM • Huron Mall
5	MS Society - Fundraiser - Crown the King! 6PM • Red Arrow Bar	22	Karaoke 9PM • Sportsmen Bar
8	VFW Bingo 7PM - 9PM • Huron Mall	22	MS Society - Fundraiser - Crown the King! 6PM • Red Arrow Bar
8	Karaoke 9PM • Sportsmen Bar	26	Parkinson's Support Group 1:30PM • Huron Public Library
9	Oh Holy Night Acrylic Painting Class 9AM - 12PM • East River Nursery	27	Holiday Basketball Classic Huron Arena
9	Outta the Attic - OPEN 11AM - 3PM • 255 Lincoln Ave SW	29-30	VFW Bingo 7PM - 9PM • Huron Mall
9	Christmas in the Corner 2PM - 4PM • Hurst's Corner	29	Karaoke 9PM • Sportsmen Bar
10	Elks Pancake Feed 9AM - 1PM • Elk's Lodge	29	

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2023 is Nearly Over and Many of You May Be Thinking About Your 2024 Resolutions or Goals

The Prairie Tracks team leaders, Ted Haeder, Laurie Shelton and Brad McGirr, are always thinking about ways they can improve Huron to make it the best place to live, work and play! If you haven't thought about your goals for 2024 maybe they will inspire you to think about some things you might want to accomplish in the new year!

The Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau's business directory contains a listing of about 700 businesses in Huron. That number probably gets above 800 if businesses in surrounding communities in the Greater Huron area are included.

I tend to frequent the same handful of places because of habit and convenience. When I go out for lunch it is usually some place close to work. The same goes for groceries and other retail purchases. All good places with good service but I know there are many great businesses in the area that I have never experienced.

Sherman Gose likes to say, "you don't know what you don't know."

I am going to take his advice to heart and learn more about the places that I know little or nothing about. My goal for 2024 is to visit one Greater Huron area business a week that I have never visited before.

I know a fair amount about my community. By the end of 2024 I should know considerably more.

Ted Haeder

When it comes to setting goals, several years ago I set some long-term goals both personal and professional. This was a challenge for me as I was very used to living day by day, but taking the time to do that has been a game changer. I focused on faith, family, friends, financial and professional goals. Setting down to figure out what my priorities should be and focusing on the why they were priorities has made it easier to stick with them. I try to be realistic with setting monthly, quarterly, yearly goals and then looking at how I am doing on long term goals. Are my short-term goals feeding into the long-term goals, or have they been just a to-do list rather than a goal?

Reminding myself of those goals and having a focus helps me be more productive with my time. If I am being honest, I may veer away from those goals when getting caught up in the day-to-day routine and especially when life throws me curve balls. I can tell when that happens because things just don't feel right and it is time for a reset. And hey, we are all human and life doesn't always go as planned, so I give myself some grace and move forward.

Each year, I like to pick my "Word" for the year, that is another way that I try to keep my life in perspective and to remember to focus on the important things in life.

Laurie Shelton

"Don't have a flexible goal, but be flexible in the path to the goal." It is very difficult to predict every day, every month, every year challenges that can impede the path to a goal but if I keep grinding, I can find my way.

If you spend any time around me you will find that I am very open about any goal I have set in my mind, you will hear about it, how I plan to get there and when I plan to get there. Sharing with others not only holds me accountable to doing what I said I was going to do, but it also opens up doors through conversations with others that can help me find my way.

So, in the spirit of sharing, here are a few of the fun goals for the year of 2024.

- Add my instrument rating to my pilot's license. (already working on it!)
- Qualify for the South Dakota Rodeo Association finals. (I haven't done this since I was 21 years old.)
- Eliminate the phrase "It could have been worse" from my vocabulary. (I am so sick of hearing that.)
- And the big one, raise \$500,000 for the Huron School District Foundation. (Let's Go!!)

When you see me out and about don't be afraid to ask me about my progress but be prepared for an in-depth discussion on how it is going!

Best of luck to you all in 2024, may we never again have to say, it could have been worse.

Brad McGirr

Thank you to Ted, Brad and Laurie for sharing your goals and tips for keeping us on track with our goals for the new year. Let's all work to make Huron the best it can be in 2024!

Merry Christmas

&

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The **#CornerstoneCommunity** had a busy year, here are a few highlights:



Huron Day of Caring



Huron Alzheimer's Walk



MS Walk at Lake Byron



Breast Cancer Walk



Cornerstone celebrated 30 years in business with a party!



Lieutenant Colonel Collin Enstad, Commander of 2nd BN 196th RTI with SD National Guard presented Gordon with a Commanders Coin to honor his service in the SD National Guard.

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Miss SD State Fair Scholarship

BY CANDI BRILEY, South Dakota State Fair Assistant Director



The Miss SD State Fair Scholarship program is part of the Miss South Dakota Scholarship Program that provides more than \$50,000 a year in scholarships.

The 2024 Miss SD State Fair was crowned on Saturday, September 2 at the SD State Fair on the Farm Bureau Dakotaland Stage. The 2024 Miss SD State Fair is Emily Deinken from Sioux Falls.

GET TO KNOW EMILY:

A Galaga pro, Seinfeld super-fan, and former professional crossing guard, Emily Deinken is your Miss State Fair 2024! When she's not rewatching Seinfeld or trying to beat her Galaga high score, you can find her teaching 5-8th grade band in Sioux Falls and coaching the middle school dance team. In addition to teaching band, she plays flute in the USF and Augustana Community Bands and enjoys "Flute Caroling" at local nursing homes. And, as a former 4H kid, Emily can't wait to re-experience all of the pure joy and excitement of the state fair!



*2024 Miss SD State Fair
Emily Deinken*

Emily started competing in the Miss South Dakota Organization to share her passion for her initiative: Advocate for Educators. Focused on recruiting, retaining, and supporting the needs of educators across the state, Emily seeks to promote a positive change in education and establish a brighter future for our teachers, students, and communities. With the future of tomorrow in our classrooms today, investing in our educators is a necessity we cannot afford to overlook, and Emily is working to spread that message nationwide. For more, check out Emily on Instagram @missstatefairsd.

Here's a special message from Emily:

"From celebrating agriculture and the arts to music and food, I believe the state fair truly has something for everyone, and I am honored to be a part of this historic tradition. Can't wait to see you there!"

Also crowned at the State Fair was the Miss SD State Fair Outstanding Teen. The 2024 Miss SD State Fair Outstanding Teen is Modesty Heath.

Here's a special message from Modesty:

"Hi, my name is Modesty Heath, and I am your new Miss State Fair's Teen 2024. I'm a Huron native and my Community Service Initiative for this year is "Brain Aneurysm Awareness", a topic I use to help honor my late grandmother's legacy. This is my first year as a title holder and I'm super excited to represent my community this coming year."



*2024 Miss SD State Fair
Outstanding Teen
Modesty Heath*

We look forward to working with Emily and Modesty throughout the year!

We Are Ready for Another Exciting Year of Winter Fest!

In Huron, Winter Fest, a winter celebration held annually at the Nordby Exhibit Hall on the Fairgrounds. Sponsored by the Huron Community Improvement Committee, Winter Fest is a series of events for Huron families to gather and enjoy themselves and beat back the blahs of winter with fun for all.

Winter Fest 2024 will run from 10 AM to 2 PM on Saturday, January 20 and will feature bouncy houses for the kids as well as bingo for the adults. The Huron Library will host a structured activity for the younger set while the Huron Girl Scouts will be selling hot dogs and snacks. A free hot chocolate bar will be available once again as well as face painting for the kids. Corn hole and other family games will be available for all as will the popular photo booth. Sleigh rides will be offered, weather permitting, wagon rides if the snow does not fall.

The highlight of Winter Fest will be the third annual Chili Cook Off sponsored by Picek Construction who will award \$200 and a trophy to the winner. We look forward to tasting all the contestants' entries. If you would like to be a contestant, please give Amy Fullerton a call at 605-461-1435. The winner will be determined by popular vote.

Please note that admission to Winter Fest is free. Come join us and bounce away those winter blues.

The Huron Community Improvement Committee (CIC) is chaired by Amy Fullerton with the following members: Deanna Jones, Tom Brantner, Kristal Volquardsen, Mark Robish, Denise Matson, and Jessica Hotchkiss. It liaises with Chad Schroder of Parks and Rec and Commissioner Drew Weinreis.

In addition to Winter Fest, the CIC hosts a Street Dance each summer, sponsors Mural displays downtown and at the Kansas Street Mall, maintains the downtown Christmas wreaths, and hosts the I Made a Difference campaign among other activities designed to increase the quality of life in Huron.



December Athlete of the Month: Hamtyn Heinz

BY MATT NIEDERBAUMER, CFP® Vantage Financial, Partner, Senior Wealth Advisor

Hamtyn Heinz, a senior at Huron High School, started athletics at an early age with the encouragement of her father. Fast forward to her senior year where she is competing in her ninth year of volleyball as the varsity setter and team captain. Having started as a freshman on the varsity team, the increased responsibilities and expectations of playing at this level have taught her many lessons. Hamtyn shares, "As a leader and role model to my younger teammates, I am extremely mindful of my actions and always strive to maintain composure on the court." This leadership mindset is also evident on the basketball court where Hamtyn plays point/shooting guard and starts her 11th season this year. According to Basketball Coach Jeremy Noyes, "Hamtyn has several qualities that separate her from the norm. First and foremost, she is a fierce competitor. This is due to her tireless preparation. She holds herself, and often her teammates, to a higher standard than what is asked or expected from her adult leaders." He goes on to note her exceptional leadership and determination in all aspects of her life, whether it's on the court, in the classroom, or the community. Hamtyn is an accomplished athlete having earned ESD Honorable Mention for both basketball and volleyball, the 1,000-dig and 2,000 sets milestones for volleyball, and the school record for the javelin throw in track where she's competed for seven years.



In addition to pushing herself athletically, Hamtyn strives for excellence in the classroom and has maintained perfect grades. She is also active in many extracurricular clubs namely Huron Community Foundation Board, Future Health Professionals, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Future Business Leaders of America, and Huron Youth Leadership Council. With her busy schedule and many accomplishments, it's clear she will have a bright future ahead. The next big decision for Hamtyn is to decide which college she will attend.

To obtain an application for the Athlete of the Month Scholarship program email bfast@vfplanning.com, visit Vantage Financial Partners website at www.vfplanning.com, or ask your high school guidance counselor. If you are a high school senior who plays sports, attends a SD high school, you are eligible to apply for a \$1,500 scholarship.

Getting to know Hamtyn:

FAVORITE QUOTE: "I've failed over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed." - Michael Jordan

FAVORITE FOOD: Chicken alfredo

FAVORITE LATE-NIGHT SNACK: Cereal

HIGHLIGHT OF YOUR SPORT CAREER: Competing in Volleyball State Tournaments.

FAVORITE CLASS: Honors Algebra 2. Math is my favorite subject and Mrs. Fitzgerald is my favorite teacher.

FUN FACT: All my siblings' first names start with the letter H and have a Y in their name; We all have HPH as our initials.



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REDFIELD

The CNW Historic RR Depot in Redfield is decked out in Christmas finery throughout December during its regular hours of 10 am-4 pm Tuesday-Saturday. Take time to check out the gift shop.

Cookies and coffee will be served December 8. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be on hand December 9 from 1 pm-4 pm December 9. Elves will be passing out goodie bags. Youngsters may bring in their Christmas wish lists.

The Depot will be closed for the 2023 season December 30.



Pumpkin Palooza Champion

HURON AREA ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Sales Tax Collected	October '22	October '23	% Change
Sales Tax - 1%	401,785	455,115	13%
Second Penny	401,785	455,115	13%
Third Penny (BBB)	44,805	40,041	-11%
Year-to-date combined total	7,829,184	8,327,265	6%
**Real Estate Statistics	October '22	October '23	% Change
Sales	18	13	-28%
Average Sale Price	171,344	241,408	41%
Year-to-date Total Sales	162	124	-23%
Active Listings	26	26	0%
Average List Price	183,683	230,733	26%
YTD Average Days on Market	81	84	4%
Building Permits	October '22	October '23	% Change
Residential			
New Homes	4	0	-100%
Garage	4	1	-75%
Remodel	59	31	-47%
Estimated Value	1,456,505	224,565	-85%
Commercial			
New	2	2	0%
Remodel	2	8	300%
Estimated Value	464,838	485,406	4%
Year-to-date combined total	12,863,126	11,428,204	-11%
Employment (County)	September '22	September '23	% Change
Total Workforce	9,067	9,323	3%
Total Employed	8,912	9,163	3%
Total Unemployed	155	160	3%
Total Unemployed	1.7%	1.7%	0%

***Real Estate Statistics courtesy of Huron Board of Realtors*

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Southeast Technical College LPN Graduates in Huron

BY TERESA HAATVEDT, RN, BSN, HRMC Health Care Career Development Specialist

Six licensed practical nurse (LPN) graduates were pinned at a ceremony on November 28 at Huron Community Campus. The nurses plan to work within the community of Huron upon successfully completing their nursing board licensure.

Southeast Technical College (STC) in Huron offers a certified nurses assistant (CNA) certification course, LPN diploma, LPN to registered nurse (RN) associate degree, and a 1-year medical assistant program. Programs begin each August and vary in length according to the individual curriculum.

Northern State University (NSU) offers many of the prerequisite courses a student needs prior to starting the LPN and RN degrees in person at Huron Community Campus. A collaborated pathway has been developed between STC and NSU to assist the student to navigate through these courses. Students receive a substantial cost savings at \$40 per credit hour (plus \$20 fee) by completing them in Huron.

Miller, Redfield, Wessington Springs, and surrounding areas. There are so many facilities and staff that have welcomed our students and have done such a great job helping our students learn about the healthcare field.”

Mikayla Sargent, LPN student: I love that the Southeast Tech program in Huron allows me to stay in town so that I spend less time traveling and more time at home with my kids and family. I also love that our classroom size is smaller because I get more comfortable with my teacher and I'm not afraid to ask questions when something doesn't make sense and everyone in our class is super close.

On behalf of HRMC, we congratulate each of the students and wish them the best of luck in their profession. We encourage each of them to continue their desire of learning within their nursing career to positively impact their patients and communities.

Teresa Haatvedt, RN, BSN, and HRMC health care career development specialist assists students with questions on these programs, proctors student exams, and establishes job shadow experiences in a variety of health care departments.

If you are interested in learning more about the programs or shadow experiences, contact Haatvedt, at thaatvedt@huronregional.org or office 353-6589.



Sarah DeHaai, RN

Sarah DeHaai, RN, Southeast Technical College Instructor: “The education that we provide in Huron is the same as what is offered in Sioux Falls but the great thing about the programs in Huron is that we offer much smaller class sizes, which allows for more one-on-one time with the instructor. We are also very fortunate to have such strong community support from the healthcare organizations in Huron,

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Evolution of Physical Therapy

BY SHANE HARTMAN

While ancient medicine may date back to the 3rd millennium BC, Physicians like Hippocrates, Herodicus and Galen are believed to be the first practitioners of physical therapy while advocating for the use of massage, hydrotherapy, movement therapy and manual therapy techniques to treat patients around 500 BC. Modern Physical Therapy was established around the early 1900's seen to treat the Polio outbreak along with the start of World War 1 with the American Physical Therapy Association formed in 1924.

The Physical Therapy profession today has progressed and expanded considerably with the development of many specialties and subspecialties. Physical Therapist are movement experts who improve quality of life through prescribed exercises, hands on care and patient education. My goal for this article is to inform and educate the public on the many areas that Physical Therapy can provide to meet an individual's healthcare needs.

Post Surgical Care: This area may be the most well known and recognizable area of treatment and specialties. Most individuals are aware of the importance of rehabilitation following orthopedic surgeries like joint replacement, knee reconstruction surgery (ACL, MCL, meniscus) and arthroscopic shoulder surgeries (Rotator Cuff, labrum, etc) to properly restore previous level of function. However, physical therapy can be effective in recovery from any type of surgery by; decreasing pain and inflammation; improving range of motion, flexibility, strength and mobility; promoting healing; reduce scar tissue; and prevent complications.

Post Injury Care: This area of treatment may be the most expansive dealing with upper and lower extremity injuries along with neck and back injuries. Whether these injuries were sustained from an accident, work, athletics, recreational activities or normal activities of daily living, physical therapy is a very important means to recovery. Early treatment can help decrease the time and cost of recovery, control pain, encourage proper healing and prevent re-injury.

Prehab: This area of treatment has increased over the years and is becoming the standard for elective orthopedic surgeries due to the many benefits seen post-surgery. Prehab refers to pre-surgical rehabilitation with the goal of improving strength, range of motion, flexibility and mobility prior to surgery. Numerous research shows that

patients who undergo prehab prior to surgery have better outcomes. Research suggests this should start a minimum of six weeks prior to surgery, more is always better.

Injury Prevention: Whether you have a history of injuries or looking to avoid injury, Physical therapist can be very effective in identifying muscle imbalances, improper body mechanics and risk factors that predispose individuals to injury or inhibit their physical performance. Proper assessment and evaluation can help address these deficits which may be addressed through exercise, education and modifying body mechanics and technique.

Fall Prevention: Falls and fear of falling can completely diminish a person's quality of life. A fall can result in an injury, loss of independence and decreased ability to perform the things that are important to someone. According to the CDC, approximately 1/3 of adults over the age 65 fall each year and between 20-30% of these falls result in moderate or severe injuries. However, falling is not a normal part of aging. Physical therapy can identify the reasons you might be at risk for falls and help address those risk factors to help reduce your risk for falls.

Vestibular Rehabilitation: Vestibular rehabilitation therapy involves treatment to alleviate problems caused by vestibular disorders like vertigo and dizziness, gaze instability and imbalance and falls. Physical therapy will evaluate the relationships between the central nervous system (brain) and your sensory system which includes, inner ear, eyes, and your joints, muscles and skin.


Ergonomics: Ergonomics refers to designing and arranging things people use so that the people and things interact most efficiently and safely. Physical therapists are trained in properly assessing work sites and providing recommendations on how to adjust posture and mechanics and the possibility of equipment changes for improving productivity and decreasing risk of injury.

These are just a few of the many areas and specialties that can be addressed and treated with Physical Therapy and are covered by most insurance companies. Furthermore, the requirement of a referral from a medical doctor is not required by my most insurances.



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Merry Christmas!

We extend our Appreciation and say
Thank You to our members.

Wishing everyone a Holiday Season filled
with Joy, Peace and Prosperity.

Christmas Open House
December 7th & 8th



Wessington's Christmas Parade of Lights

In 2011, someone had a vision and that vision has turned into the best Christmas Parade ever.

This year Wessington's Christmas Parade of Lights will be held Saturday December 9th, beginning at 6:00 pm with the theme "Cowboy Christmas". The parade route will begin on the south end of Wessington Street (main street) and continue north through the business district. But don't go away yet; the parade will make another pass through, this time accompanied by a display of fireworks in the northern sky.

This spectacular holiday parade has grown through the years. You will be amazed at the many unique and beautiful entries that will be decked out with Christmas lights and music for this occasion. Recognition is given to the best theme, most beautiful, and humorous parade entries.

Come early, a free will donation chili feed will begin at 3:30 pm and go until 5:00 pm, along with a visit from Santa at the Wessington gym. Children will be able to talk to Santa and parents may take photos. Children will also be able to enjoy Busy Bee kids activities put on by Buzz'n that will go from 4:00 - 5:30 pm. Join us in this magical holiday celebration in Wessington. It will fill your heart with the Christmas Spirit. For more information, you may contact Whitney at 605-377-4290.



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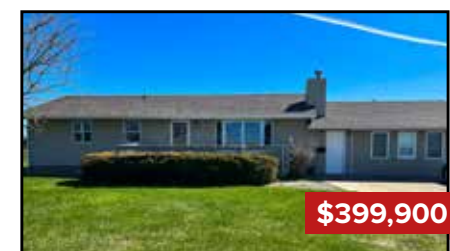
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Huron Parade of Lights

AMBER OHRBERG

The 2023 holiday games are afoot! We kicked off the holiday season with the 2023 Reindeer Games Parade of Lights. During our special thirtieth anniversary the following entrants pulled Santa's sleigh away as winners: Best Lighting - Most Humorous - Best Portrayal of Theme - Most Beautiful - Best Technical Design - and People's Choice - A big thank you goes out to our parade award category sponsors: Dakota Provisions, Agtegra, and American Bank and Trust. As a new addition this year, Santa announced the winners at Campbell Park while the community Christmas tree sparkled in the night with lights sponsored by Lewis Drug. Hot cider and cookies warmed the hands and bellies of those in attendance. Please join us next year in Campbell Park at the parade's end as we establish this tradition.

But the contests aren't over yet! The Parade of Lights committee would again like to recognize one house in our community with the "Griswold" award. The rules of this game are simple: bedeck your house and yard with Christmas cheer and hope your efforts win the hearts of neighbors and passers by! To nominate an address for a chance at this acknowledgment, contact the Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau by the following means: social media, email, phone, or in person. The winning house will receive \$100 at the Chamber Mixer on Tuesday, December 12th at Farmers & Merchants Bank thanks to our generous sponsor, American Bank and Trust. These winners also have the distinction of serving as the Grand Marshalls of the 2024 Parade of Lights.

For yet another 2023 Reindeer Game, the POL committee - in conjunction with the Huron Public Library - will host another Christmas Lane Bingo. Warm up the cocoa and fire up your inner competitive spirit by using our Bingo sheet to hunt down the various lights and decorations around town. See if you can visit all of Huron's unique Christmas Lanes and don't miss the Boy Scout Light show at Memorial Park. Pick up a Bingo sheet, map and instructions from the Library, Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau, or find a printable sheet online at either website. Even if you find yourself limited by transportation or mobility you still have the opportunity to participate and possibly win a prize. Complete a Bingo down, across, or diagonally and then submit your completed entry to the HPL or HCVB to take part. Contest runs from November 27th until December 31st, 2023. Several entries will be randomly selected to win a prize sponsored by one of our amazing local businesses (Don't Spill the Beans, Scooters, East River Nursery, Just Fabulous, Bakabes, Black Tie, Walker's Flower Shop, and Rainbow Flower Shop.) Winners will be notified to stop in the Library to pick up their prize.

As always, please contact the Parade of Lights Committee via the HCVB if you would like to join our committee as we plan for a successful 2024 or if you have any ideas or questions about Christmas Lanes.

May your winter nights be warm and merry and filled with magic this joyous season and as we ring in 2024.



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BY RITA ANDERSON,
De Smet Community Foundation

December 3 is a Big Day in De Smet with Many Events Taking Place:

Get Your Baking Done at the Annual Cookie Walk

The De Smet Community Women have tables full of homemade cookies and goodies for sale at the Event Center on Dec. 3 from 11 to 1:00. You weigh your items selected and pay by the pound. It's a great deal!

Stay Entertained This Winter in De Smet with Fun IMPACT Classes, Registration Opens December 3

Area residents are excited with the popular IMPACT class registration opening on December 3 from 11 AM to 1 PM at the Event Center. These outstanding classes and events are held through January and February with a Pub Crawl, Theatre night, Valentine Dinner and classes featuring Anti-Terrorism, Floral Arranging, Vietnam Survivors speaking of their experiences, Geo-Caching, Stroke Awareness, Yoga and Fitness plus many more and tours scheduled. Come register and see entire class schedule. Amazing one-time \$50 registration fee covering unlimited classes. All are welcome!

De Smet Area Concert Series Tickets for 2024 Go On Sale at Event Center

The De Smet Area Arts Council presents five Sunday afternoon concerts from April through September 2024. These concerts have gained a tremendous reputation throughout the region for their high-caliber performers coming from across the nation. Series Tickets, remaining at same cost of \$60, go on sale Dec. 3, 11AM to 1PM, at Event Center. Entertainers include Penny Gilley who performs on RTD-TV, Shaun Johnson & the Big Band Experience; Doug Allen Nash (Johnny Cash & Neil Diamond impressions); Matt King as 'Elvis'; and 'American Pie' w/ Pat & Donna Surface. Call 605-854-3502 for tickets also.

De Smet Annual Tour of Trees & Visit with Santa at Klinkels III on Main Street

A great family event provided by the De Smet Chamber, the Annual Tour of Trees happens with the beautifully decorated Christmas trees, Santa's visits with the children and soup and sandwiches served on December 3 from 11 AM to 3 PM in the back hall at Klinkels III Bar & Grill. Purchase chances to win wonderful gift baskets donated by local businesses. See De Smet, South Dakota Facebook page about all events.

View Live Radio Show: "Badger Clark, the Cowboy Poet" - Dec 9

The Laura Ingalls Pageant Society in cooperation with South Dakota Public Broadcasting proudly present this unique 3rd Annual Christmas Radio Play, "Badger Clark, The Cowboy Poet", on Dec. 9 at 5 PM at the De Smet Event Center. See Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant Facebook page & call 605-854-6060 for information and tickets. Buy early to watch this entertaining radio play LIVE as tickets are limited.

Support Our Local Businesses throughout the Christmas Season

All businesses in De Smet will be offering specials during the entire Christmas Season! De Smet is very fortunate to have their Main Street full and many gift stores and retail businesses bustling with unique products and activity. Your support for local businesses makes a difference!

DECEMBER 2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Kingsbury County Food Pantry open every Tuesday afternoon, 1 – 4 PM, 221 Calumet Ave

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>3: Cookie Walk/ IMPACT Registration/ Concert Series Sign-up:
11AM-1PM, Event Center</p> <p>3: Tour of Trees, De Smet Chamber, Klinkels Back Room</p> <p>3: Crawford/ Osthus Funeral Home Memorial, 2PM, Event Center</p> <p>5: De Smet Elementary & Middle School Concert,
6:30PM, De Smet High School</p> <p>5: 'The Sharing' Community Meal, 6:30 PM, United Methodist Church</p> <p>8: Roller-skating (all ages), 7 – 9 PM, Event Center</p> <p>9: Christmas Radio Play: "Badger Clark, The Cowboy Poet",
5PM, Event Center</p> | <p>12: De Smet Development Corporation Community Meeting,
7 AM, Oxbow, Everyone Welcome</p> <p>13: Red Cross Blood Drive: Noon – 7PM, Event Center</p> <p>15: Music Boosters Dinner Theatre</p> <p>15: Roller-skating (all ages), 7 – 9 PM, Event Center</p> <p>21: Ugly Christmas Apparel Roller-skating (all ages),
7 – 9 PM, Event Center</p> <p>27: Feeding South Dakota Food Giveaway,
Noon, Washington Park</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

CHECK OUT THE MANY JOB OPENINGS IN DE SMET at www.desmetsd.com under Job Opportunities

On a personal note...

I want to thank all of the people who have contributed to my column here, have supported me and our many efforts and businesses in De Smet, cheered me on, the Huron Chamber, Creative Printing and all in Huron for keeping this magazine going and everyone I have gotten to know through this Prairie Tracks. I have decided it is time for others to take over this important De Smet Happenings column as I retired from the De Smet Economic Development Director position last year..... but I just could not give up my writing here for a while as I helped to establish and encourage the Huron Chamber to develop this magazine many years ago and have felt to be such a part of it from the very beginning. This Prairie Tracks production covers a great deal of territory and read by many people so it is greatly appreciated in De Smet and entire region. It is a great joy every time someone says to me, "We came to this event because we saw it in Prairie Tracks!" or "I know you because I read what you write in Prairie Tracks." I am still very involved and passionate about the state of South Dakota serving on many statewide Board of Directors and teams working on several projects that I sincerely care about so I hope to continue to see all of you around in De Smet and throughout the region. Please add my cell phone number, 605-203-0216, to your contact list and call me if you would like information on anything or if I can help you or your community in any way. Thank You from the bottom of my heart!

William K. Kingdon Leaves Lasting Legacy for Huron Community



The late William "Bill" Keith Kingdon

Because of the late William "Bill" Keith Kingdon's generosity, local nonprofits will benefit for years to come through the William K. Kingdon Charitable Fund, a sub fund of the Huron Community Foundation (HCF) held with the South Dakota Community Foundation (SDCF).

Bill attended Jefferson School and Huron High School graduating in 1963. He graduated from the University of South Dakota in 1967 with a degree in music education. "He always wanted to return to Huron," said his older brother, Dick Kingdon. "He very much loved the community."

Bill joined the Peace Corps in 1967, and spent two years in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Following that, in 1971, he went to work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, teaching music, math, and reading to the Navajo Indian Students at Fort Wingate School near Gallup, New Mexico. He retired in 2001 and lived the rest of his life in Gallup.

Bill was an accomplished pianist, singer and guitar player. His musical abilities brought acclaim from students and friends alike who knew him. His brother, Dick commented, "After his passing, I was very happy to find recordings Bill had made of him singing and playing guitar. He was very talented."

His parents and grandparents preceded him in death. He is survived by his older brother, Richard Kingdon of Mundelein, Illinois.

Because of his gift to HCF, their local advisory council will make distributions to local charitable causes and nonprofits for years to come with preference given to musical efforts.

To learn more about the William K. Kingdon Charitable Fund and Huron Community Foundation, please visit <https://www.sdcommunityfoundation.org/local-impact/community-foundations/huron-1>

Community Savings Account/SDCF Partnership

HCF was established in 2004 in partnership with the SDCF. With careful investment, the fund will continue to grow and enhance quality of life in the local area forever. This fund is one of 85 communities in partnership with SDCF. Individuals, families and organizations can establish their own named fund under the umbrella of HCF with the minimum of a \$100,000 deposit. Currently there are several named funds that are a lasting legacy to these donors. Donations can be made to any named fund by any donor by contacting HCF.

Established named funds can recommend to HCF of their desire for future grants.

5 Signs YOUR LOVED ONE IS READY FOR ASSISTED LIVING

- 1 Have there been any red flags? Has your loved one fallen, gotten in a fender bender, confused medications or had a medical scare? These can be indicators that it may be time to look into assisted care.
- 2 Is the house in disarray? If mail is piling up, trash is not being removed, the house is not as clean as it used to be or laundry and linens aren't getting clean, maintaining the house is probably becoming more than your loved one can manage.
- 3 Noticeable weight loss, body odor or change in looks? These are signs that your loved one is having a problem managing activities of daily living. Assistance may be needed in areas like food preparation or personal hygiene. This is also a sign of loneliness or depression.
- 4 Complaints of loneliness, depression or social withdrawal? Losing a spouse or close friend, or having limited social opportunities due to a lack of mobility or transportation, may leave your loved one isolated and depressed.
- 5 Signs of fire, trouble with appliances or entrances left open? Safety and security issues are common reasons to research an alternative living arrangement. The thought of a major accident can be terrifying. As loved ones age, they may begin to forget things that can lead to safety concerns.

If time spent with loved ones over the holidays sparks a conversation about assisted living, we are here to help every step of the way.

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Fundraiser Concert Planned - Holiday Jam with the Hegg Brothers



BY JEN BRAGG, United Way Heartland Region Executive Director

The Student United Way-Huron Youth Leadership Council is pleased to announce the return of the popular holiday concert “Holiday Jam with the Hegg Brothers”. This fundraiser concert will be held at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, December 13, 2023 in the Huron High School Auditorium. A favorite for many locals in past years, Holiday Jam is a long-running seasonal tradition that continues to highlight new musical twists. This musical showcase features the talents of a multi-piece band led by brothers Jon and Jeremy Hegg. The ensemble uses multiple instruments and voices to create their own unique versions of the classical Christmas tunes. For more information on the history of Holiday Jam, performance photos and music samples, go to holidayjam.com.

This holiday event will be held free of charge to the community, thanks to the generosity of area sponsors. At the time of this publication, sponsors include Marilyn Hoyt, Doug and Rhonda Kludt, Paul Christen, NuStar Energy, Carr Chiropractic, Mike and Tami Meyer, Kiwanis Club, Independent Health Solutions, Mack Metal, Slumberland Furniture, Snow Huether and Coyle, 1st Stop Insurance, Red Wilk Construction, Jan Manolis, Jean Anderson, Rodney and Beckie Freeman, Gerad and Ranae Puterbaugh, Carpet Outlet, Gary Hofer Farms, JD Concrete, Coborns. In kind

sponsors include Tom and Jane Meekins, Jordan and Kelsi Stricherz, and GiGi’s Coffee Shop. A suggested donation of \$10 per person for the night’s entertainment will go towards the student organization.

The Student United Way-HYLC is a group of high school students who are dedicated to community leadership, volunteerism, and philanthropy. They are a 501c3 non-profit under the guidance of the United Way Heartland Region. All funds raised from the evening’s concert will go to the group’s work in our community, which includes providing annual grants to local youth-based organizations. Some past recipients of grant funding have been Huron Public Library’s Summer Reading Program, BelieveFest, Girls on the Run, the Backpack Program, Royal Family Kids Camp, the Children Transportation Fund, the Pheasants Forever Pollinator project, Destination Imagination, and many more.

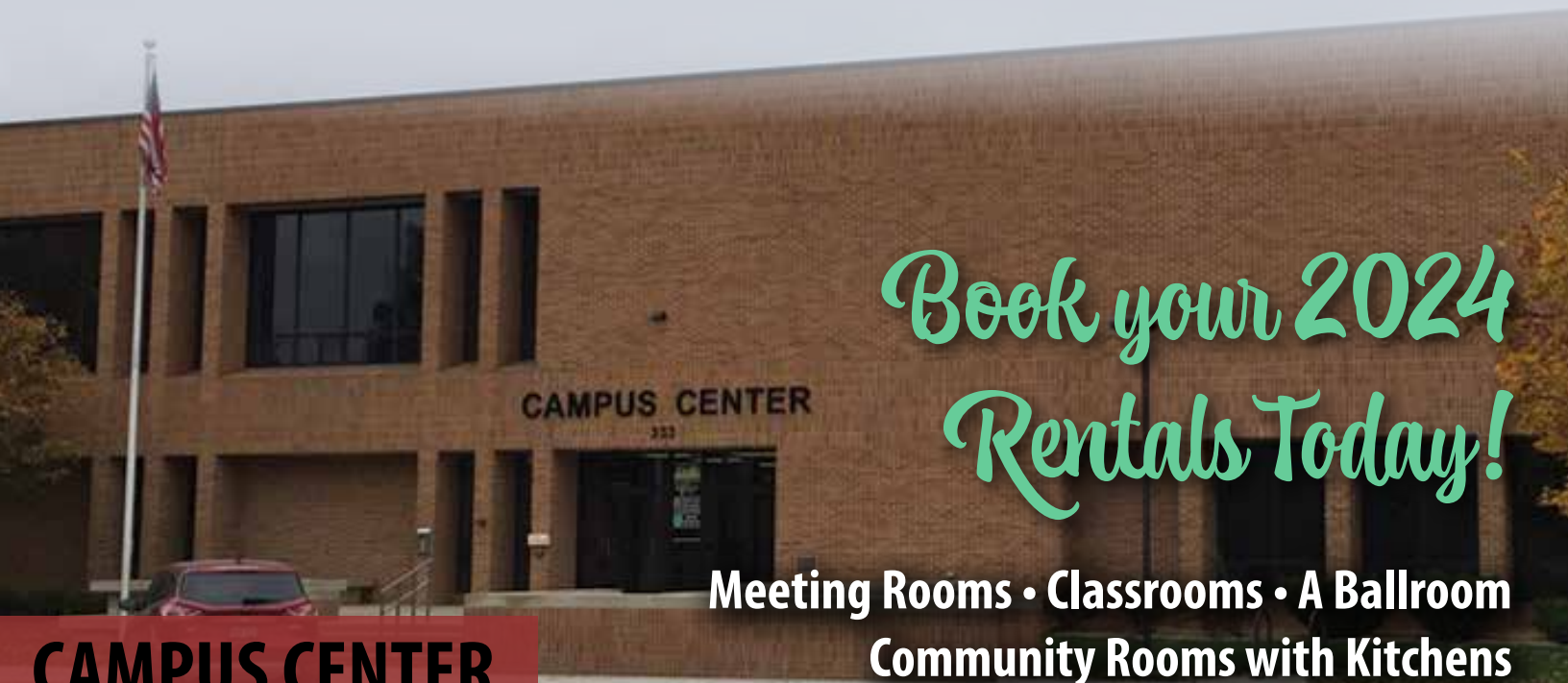
So grab your favorite holiday sweater, come out for a night of great music and Christmas spirit, and support Huron’s youth in the process. For sponsorship information, please contact the United Way Heartland Region by calling 605-352-3537 or emailing us at uwhuronsd@gmail.com.

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Huron Parks & Recreation Department

First Timer

BY JAKE LINDGREN



The older I get; I have realized there are fewer and fewer “firsts” for me. I try to remember that when parenting or teaching somebody something that is likely their “first”. Recently, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to take a child out for their first deer hunt.

I picked up Noah Carr his dad, Josh, on an early afternoon to head to the deer stand. Noah had a “Mentored Deer Tag” which allows a new or young hunter to shoot a doe, as long as they’re accompanied by an unarmed “mentor”. Earlier in the week I took Noah through a crash course of basic gun safety and shooting instructions. He seemed to pick up fast so I felt comfortable moving forward.

The evening hunt started with quite a bit of excitement...several deer up and moving before we could even get settled into the stand. After an hour or so of patiently waiting, a mature doe stepped out presenting Noah with a perfect shot opportunity. The shot appeared to be a good one, but the doe ran off into the trees quickly so we didn’t know for certain. We hopped down from the stand, followed a quick, 50-yard blood trail, and recovered the deer.

Back at the garage, we hung, skinned, and processed the doe. A few days later, we made burgers and jerky out of some of the meat, and Noah was able to share with some friends and family. I was told that Noah even had to get up in front of his entire class to tell his hunting story.

From my perspective, it was a 10/10 hunt. At times, I’ve forgotten what it’s like to experience the “newness” of hunting because I have been doing it long enough, I don’t get very many “firsts”. So, this was unique for me...I got to sit back and observe the beauty of someone journeying through their first hunt and kill.



BY DARLENE DEKNIKKER

Tis the season to be jolly, so spread joy to all you meet! Keep that spirit in your heart throughout the month and into the year ahead!

I felt the desire to share some Christmas Memories of the past. I randomly visited with people of all generations from Lake Preston and asked them their favorite Christmas memory. So, we will take a trip down memories from the 50’s to the present time.

** Grampa Zeeck gave me a Caterpillar Tractor. You would wind it up and it would take off even in the snow. I also remember the big meals we would have at the holidays. Also, the Christmas programs at the Country School and the gift exchanges. Country kids only got to come to town on Saturday nights when we got our groceries.*

** I recall how exciting it was for our Church Christmas programs, we would get candy canes and treats. We also went Caroling, we (parents and kids) even went out in the country to carol. Another fond memory was the free movies at the Lake Preston Movie Theater, usually a Saturday afternoon and more candy.*

** I remember the Church programs and apples. The school programs were also a big hit and you get another apple there as well.*

** I remember going to Don's Fix it Shop and Dad saying, "go get a tree". As a young boy that was big deal and I thought he had a lot of trees! I also remember the hanging decorations down Main Street. On every block. They hung across the street and they were beautiful!*

** I remember the Christmas programs at church getting bags of peanuts, an apple and a Hershey candy bar. I also remember the movies at the Legion and popcorn or a treat. If I recall correctly, one movie was "Macy's Christmas Story".*

**A fond memory of mine was the trees that lined the south side of Chuck's Grocery. You knew then Christmas was approaching soon!*

** I was always excited about Swenson's Drug because they had a drawing and you had a chance to win a present and have your picture taken.*

** I loved the big old Tree and all the lights on it and you could see it as you drove closer to town.*

** I enjoyed the Tree lighting and singing Christmas carols.*

** I remember after our Church Christmas program we would drive around town and look at all the lights. I also remember my friends and I loved Christmas in our town because we went to all the businesses and sampled their stuff.*

Lots of wonderful memories!

The Lake Preston Chamber/4 Lakes Forward is gearing up for another Christmas in our town.

Mark your Calendars: LAKE PRESTON HAPPENINGS

December 1 - Holiday cheer for all those who attend! Check out the Lake Preston Facebook for more information.

PCW will also be having their annual Light Show this year. It's worth the drive!

December 9 - 4th annual vendor show in the Main Gym

December 16 - BB Cakes - Christmas Cookie decorating class - Contact Brenda

First National Bank and Magnolia Moon will be having a Angel Tree. Stop in either location to get more information.

Shark News: Wrestling and Basketball will be starting and in full swing by the end of the month. Also there will be some special quest days for the kids along with school concerts.

Stop by our quaint town. We would love to see you!

The residents of Lake Preston want to wish each of you a Blessed and Joyous Holiday Season!

That Which We Fail to Do

BY CRYSTAL LIEN, PrairieTracks Contributing Writer



Humans are fascinating, complex, confusing and, at times, disappointing creatures. The disappointing nature of humanity should shock us not. We are, after all, prone to self-centeredness, spiritual blindness, and despondency toward another. It's easier to turn a blind eye and mind your own than it is to extend grace, mercy, and compassion to another especially if they are not a loved one. Which leaves many to shoulder their pain, sadness, and heartache on their own. We are a culture of "suck it up", fake it 'til we make it, and smile through the hurt.

And it is exhausting. We, all of us, need to do better.

I wish we were comfortable, and brave enough, to walk beside those who are laden with the burden of pain, heartbreak, and trauma or, leastways, willing to walk boldly with our own instead of glazing over it for the benefit of another. To see those that are hurting and enter into their trauma simply because they are human and because we are commanded to "love others" is the call of a believer. Yet, we oft choose a path of lesser discomfort to self. One that costs less: less time, less feeling, less sharing of burden.

"Love others" seems so incredibly simple an ask. But we don't. Not truly. We love those with who we share a bond or those for who we care deeply. But rarely do we extend that to strangers, outcasts, or those whom we've chosen not to like or labelled as our enemy. We are love "withholders" often stingy with our help and our sincere empathy, and we would rather bite our own tongues than offer apology. Humanity lacks an ease and willingness to sidle up beside pain and walk with it hand-in-hand, step-by-step for however long it takes.

Gravitating to less-heavy emotions and the people who carry them is such a simpler and less-personal task. Joy is easily shared and fun to join in on. We are more than comfortable with "joy" as we link arms with, skip with, and even dance with her. We thrust our joy-whether reciprocated or not- onto others; post about, boast about it, print it in yearly cards and newsletters. Joy, simply put, abounds.

Even anger is romanticized and cozied up to. We allow it to cross the threshold of our homes contrary to the danger it can bring. "Anger" sits at our tables, drips into our conversations, and even saunters into the beds with our betrothed. We hold anger like a trophy, a right, a notch on our belts...as if it is an honor bestowed upon us, an rectitude, and a right.

What then of pain? Is it no less worthy an emotion given us by our Creator? Even Jesus wept (John 11:35). Yet, we see one weeping and avert our eyes because it disturbs us so. We choke on our own tears, rarely releasing them because there is some unspoken stigma we've

attached to it. The pain of others, however, should send us running, not for the hills, but for the healing and the helping. "Pain" isn't the leper emotion we make it out to be. It has a purpose. As the Tin Man found out, "Now I know I have a heart because its breaking". It's the part of "life" we overlook and avoid talking about. But it is how we know we are alive! How we know we are human. Pain...from loving and losing, from hoping, from caring is the cost of having a heart. And we need to learn to hold hands with pain, the pain that we carry and the pain we see in others.

Yes, there is an uncomfortable vulnerability that lingers on the heels of openly hurting, freely crying, putting words to a pain that is deep. And there is an uncomfortable out-of-controlness that walks with those who sit with the hurting. Maybe, just maybe, that is how it was designed? A putting off of self, of control, of "I've got this", and crying out to God with words that don't know what they want, with emotions that are uncontrolled and with a knowing that "God has got this". It's trusting God enough to let him hold our tears; to have faith enough to know He can heal the hurt, and humility that understands we are merely His helpers, the proverbial "hands and feet" to the hurting. The more we learn to sit with pain- either our own or someone else's- the more we will find joy, compassion, community.

Oh, that we were brave enough, selfless enough, humble enough to share the burdens of pain. They are the heavier emotion of which we carry in this life. Ask God to give us eyes that see...the hurting, the sad, the heavy-burdened and extend grace and mercy where it is lacking. Choose another over self and learn to value the scars that tears leave behind.

Debt Restructuring Considerations



BY KELLY WEAVER, Small Business Development Center, Regional Director

Given everything that has happened in the economy over the last several years, businesses may find themselves forced to reassess the cash needs of the business. If you find debt service (loan payments) is one of the major cash expenditures of the business, debt restructuring may be an option for lowering immediate cash needs. Having debt is a reality for nearly every business operation at some point. The key is knowing how best to leverage the assets of the business and properly manage the resulting debt.

First, let's take a step back and understand some basics about business financing which can lead you down the path to some positive debt restructuring.

1. The first rule of thumb is always to match the term of the debt to what is being financed. Short-term assets should be financed with short-term debt and long-term assets with long-term debt. Typical terms for business loans would include 15-20 years for real estate, 8-12 years for heavy equipment/machinery, 7-10 years for equipment and fixtures, and 3-7 year for working capital (operating cash, inventory, etc.).

2. Next, consider the value of the business assets and how much can be loaned against these assets. Banks will typically lend 80% on real estate, 80% on accounts receivable, 50-60% on equipment, and 50% on inventory. These numbers will vary based on the specific assets and specific lenders, but it will give you an idea of the total debt your business assets can generally support.

3. When trying to lower debt service costs, most business owners focus on the interest rate. Remember that the length of the loan often has more influence on the payment amount than the interest rate does. If lowering your total debt payment(s) is your goal, it might be better to negotiate for a longer term than for a lower interest rate.

If you are unable to restructure your current debt or are looking for additional ways to increase cash flow, here are some other thoughts:

- Review any leases you may have. If you intend to keep the equipment, investigate buying the lease out early. This will free up collateral to support the bank loan, and you may be able to lower your payment. Check for any penalties with the leasing company first.
- Look at all of your operating costs to see where expenses can be reduced. Engage your employees in the effort to identify potential savings.
- Lastly, don't forget to look at what you are taking out of the business personally. Can the wages and other expenses you draw out of the business be lowered for a time? Can you restructure any personal debt to lower your cash requirements? Is there other income that could be generated within the household to help pay personal expenses?

In general, debt consolidation can be very helpful particularly if you have several loans, if a balloon payment is due or if some of the loans (or leases) have small balances. Keeping these fundamentals in mind, you may be able to replace several payments with an overall smaller single payment. Hopefully, this information will give you a little insight into how your lender will view your request for debt restructuring or consolidation so that you both can work together to get your business through a tough time.

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Security Cameras

BY TOM GLANZER, PrairieTracks Contributing Writer

Cameras are everywhere these days. Just Google “security camera bloopers” and you could be entertained for hours. I honestly enjoy the ones where people are just sliding down their driveway on ice, or their cars just slip out of the driveway and into the neighbor’s yard....I’m entertained because it isn’t me on the video....but we have all been there, but most of us fell when it wasn’t on camera.

We put up cameras when we lived at the lake, it was a nice way to keep an eye on the house when we were not home and see what the dogs were up to or see how nice the lake was on a calm day. But it was also to just add a layer of security to our lives.

I put cameras on my mom’s house, and every once in a while she will say, “Can you check the camera’s...somebody pulled in my driveway really late last night.” Mom lives on a dead end street and really late is like 10 or 11 PM. So most of her worries are calmed by the fact that they used her driveway as their only way to get back out of the neighborhood...at 9:45 PM.

We did watch the cops on video one day as they were in her back yard during the State Fair looking for a kid that was up to shenanigans...but for the most part a stray cat, the gal that delivers that extra newspaper thing and my kids are the only thing tripping her motion sensors.

Our house....now that is where the entertainment value of a security camera comes in. The novelty of having security cameras has not worn off on me...yet...I still like to check a lot of the day’s activities.

Our middle son Brecken and his buddy Cashton Caudell come home from Huron High School almost every afternoon for lunch. The other day I randomly watched the video of them walking in the house and Brecken was singing a little Morgan Wallen. Let’s just say Mr. Morgan would not be impressed with Brecken’s singing abilities that day. I thought about posting it, but my dad jokes only go so far with the kids before I lose their trust.

However, there is a security camera video of Brecken on our Facebook and Instagram pages...and he knew 100% he was being recorded. He pulled in on his Harley one night, and parked right in front of the camera. He proceeded to dance on the bike and then off the bike for about two minutes. He was jamming AC/DC in his headphones, but when I downloaded the video I overdubbed the musical theme and lyrics from the kid’s TV show “Blues Clues”.... then sent it to social media for the world to see. Ironically, the tempo and the dance moves he did fit perfectly and tons of people got to enjoy our “free spirited” son.

One weekend we were in Sioux Falls and my camera alert kept going off like every minute, so I finally jumped on the app to see what was going on. We have two little neighbor boys that we love, and they love to visit us, so our house is their house. Well, Walker Joe and his big brother Hudson were on their bikes, and our driveway was their race track. So I dropped into the microphone function and started hollering their names through the camera. Little Walker was very confused and started looking around for me...then I explained to him that I was watching him and talking to him through the camera. Have you ever tried to tell a five year



old that you are done talking to him while using a security camera....they don’t want the “game” to be over. Five minutes later I just closed out of the app. Walker stayed in the yard for another five minutes dancing and showing off for the camera...don’t worry I saved it and will use it for his graduation and wedding day! I’m that kind of neighbor!

So far I haven’t had any personal mishaps in life that have been caught on our camera, but I am sure that time is coming.

Our kids kind of know they can’t lie to us about what time they got home, who was with them, or how late Kolby and the neighbor boy Carter were in the front driveway using sidewalk chalk to deface my precious concrete. So do I use the camera for parenting....I would say no....the kids and Steph would say otherwise.

The other day my app was giving me a bunch of motion notifications in the middle of the morning, so I figured I had better see what was going on. Then I saw the transgression. You see, mama Steph has a very strict “NO DOG” policy in her truck. You can use a dog box in the back end, but no dogs in the cab. Now I agree that we spoil our Vizslas....and I think they should be able to ride up front, but I also know to obey the rules my wife has on her vehicle.

Our oldest son, Maxim backed out Steph’s truck in one video. Then the dogs ran around the yard in another video. Then the problem....in video three. Maxim opened up the door of the truck and the dogs jumped in like they had always been welcomed to ride in that truck. So I texted Maxim.

“Do you have the dogs in mom’s truck?”

“Yes”

“Does she know this?”

“I have the seats covered.”

“Are you going to drive her clean truck on the gravel roads?”

“I thought I would be back before she gets home so she won’t know.”

For the record, that kid has more guts than I do...I would never let the dogs ride up front...seats covered or not! He was also depending on a timeline of her return that was not 100% set in stone.

She got home before he did and I let the whole thing play out, and didn’t get involved, but I called him later to see if he was still living with us for the near future. He said, “mom said it was fine and not a big deal.” I asked him how did he get away with it when I would have been sleeping on the couch or in the garage for a month. His reply...“I guess I am more likeable than you!”

That is true....so the next time I am caught red handed on security camera breaking one of Steph’s “House Rules” I will try to just be cute and cuddly, and hope Maxim was in on the rule breaking!



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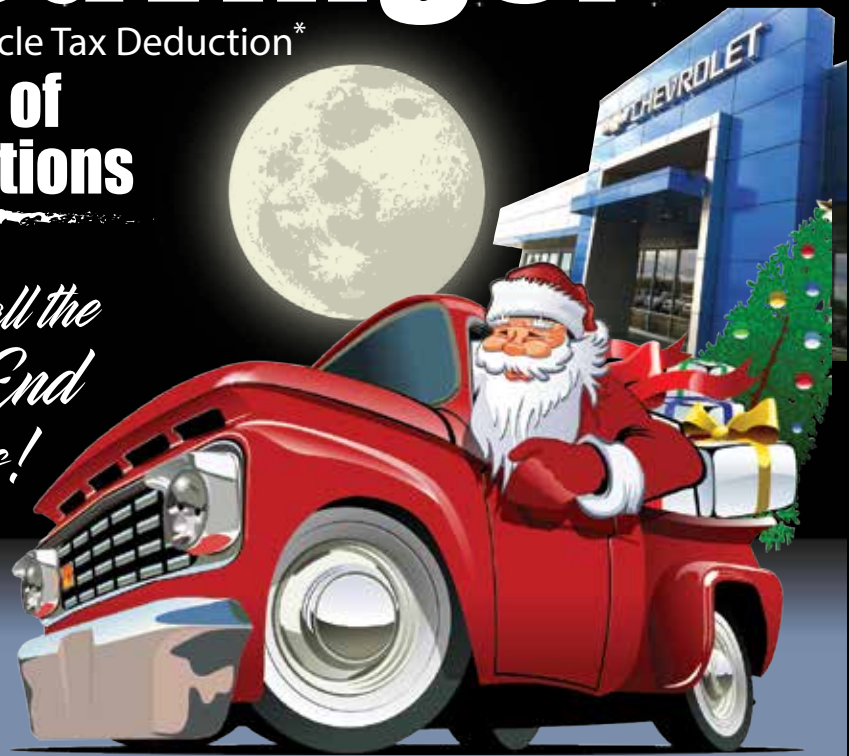
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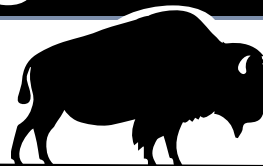
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