

September
2021
Vol. 04 Edition 6

HOW TIME FLIES...

Monthly News & Events

HIGH PLAINS WESTERN HERITAGE CENTER  SPEARFISH, SD



Setting the Stage

From Exec.
Director
Karla Scovell

Hello Everyone! A lot has happened since we last talked on July 1st. We hope you've had a wonderful summer during July and

August. Wasn't it great to celebrate the 4th of July, attend rodeos and county fairs among so many other events that occurred during the summer? At the Heritage Center we enjoyed being a source of great events beginning with the "Faith, Hope & Country" concert featuring Clover Potter & her new group. Ending the month on a high note was the "History of Traditional Western Music" with Allen & Jill Kirkham and the "History of Blues In America" with Joey Leone and his band the last weekend of the month.

We've enjoyed dozens of guests during this time including the granddaughter of Tennessee Vaughn, Shirley Vaughn Melum and her family! Be sure to check out our Facebook page for photos of the family. Karol Johnson and her family honored us with the donation of a beautiful buggy seat made into a bench in memory of Gene Johnson. On your next trip to the HPWHC be sure and make a point to try out this beautiful new item now located in our Transportation Room.

This past month of August we began hosting the Road Scholars once again after a year of hiatus. Local authors such as Paul Higbee, David Wolff, Bill Bosch and Doug Hoff will be educating the Road Scholars on local history and Randy Bender & Joyce Jefferson will entertain and enlighten them through their musical/historical presentations. Diamond Tours bus groups will also be back in just a few days and our volunteers will be coming to the rescue!

It's hard to believe the year is more than half over but there is still much to look forward to as we enter our busiest time of the year. Be sure to keep a copy of our calendar nearby so you won't miss a thing!



Board Member Spotlight

Deep Roots in Cattle Country

John Nelson grew up on a farm in Sanborn County amid a Scandinavian culture.

"My Nelson ancestors came over from Sweden in 1904-06 and settled near what used to be the railroad town of Cuthbert. We were about seven miles from Lecher and 10 miles to Woonsocket, which is well-known for their great melons. It had a good recreation area too, with a nice lake nearby."

The third of five children, Nelson had two older brothers, a younger brother and a younger sister. Early on, he quickly learned about farm life.

"We grew feed corn and alfalfa – a lot of cattle feed," he remembers. He was soon off to school at Mount Vernon, where he graduated in 1968.

Back on the farm – as the third oldest boy – he surmised that "I was pretty low on the totem pole, so chores included riding shotgun, opening gates, cleaning out the barn with a pitchfork, and doing chores Sunday night. So I just kept on going to school."

Nelson chose pre-Med at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, where he earned a degree in Biology and Chemistry. He chuckled, and quickly added, "I had wanted to be a forest ranger. I loved the outdoors. The woods and the animals... and I realized I should have gone to Brookings!"

Nelson's advisor at USD suggested he continue pursuit of a career in health care, and he was soon on his way to Northwestern University in Minneapolis to study chiropractic, which he had learned about as a youngster.

"I had been going to a chiropractor from the time I was five or six years old, struggling with asthma."

His choice worked out well, and John Nelson earned his doctorate degree from Northwestern in 1976. He then made another big move – one he's never regretted. He moved to Spearfish.

With more than 45 years of chiropractic experience under his belt, Nelson noted that Spearfish and the northern hills have been good to him. His older son, Bjorn, is "taking the wheel" in his chiropractic business, although John still goes in a



HPWHC Board Member John Nelson (left) being interviewed by Larry Miller. Check out the video on our website and YouTube channel.

couple a days a week. Bjorn and his wife are both chiropractors. John's son Hans is also nearby, working for Black Hills State University as Director of the Center for Hospitality and Business.

Hobbies in Nelson's earlier years included returning to the old family farm to pheasant hunt, escaping to the Big Horn mountains and trailing saddle horses in the Cloud Peak Wilderness, and riding the ski slopes at Aspen or Bozeman. He still occasionally puts on the skis.

"Giving back to the community" manifested more than 30 years ago when Nelson began providing free "next-day adjustments" for rodeo cowboys and staff at arenas, ranging from St. Onge and Deadwood to Hulett and Belle Fourche. It's a volunteer service he still provides.

As a kid, Nelson was like many youngsters – not much interested in history.

"I denied history. I thought it was boring." That has changed remarkably in his later years. Nelson has a passion for reading biographies, western history, and a range of western journals. He's now in his third term as a High Plains Western Heritage Center board member. Something of a "workaholic," John Nelson admits that he's sometimes confused between "work" activities and "hobbies."

In any event, his love of history and the Old West have coexisted nicely with his successful career as a chiropractor.

And that's an "adjustment" that has served our museum well! Thank you John Nelson!

High Plains Events

2021 Cowboy Supper Show Returns

Tuesday: Sept. 7th

5:30pm Chuck wagon Buffet Supper
6:15pm Spirit of the American Cowboy Show
With Alan & Jill Kirkham

Dinner features all the best cowboy fixin's catered by Cheyenne Crossing & served from the back of our authentic 1800's chuck wagon. The show is also available for booking for groups of 30 or more.

Tickets at: WesternHeritageCenter.com

Tuesday: Sept. 14th & 21st

5:30pm Chuck wagon Buffet Supper
6:15pm Spirit of the American Cowboy Show
With Gordy Pratt & Dalyce Sellers

Dinner features all the best cowboy fixin's catered by Cheyenne Crossing & served from the back of our authentic 1800's chuck wagon. The show is also available for booking for groups of 30 or more.

Tickets at: WesternHeritageCenter.com

tered by Cheyenne Crossing & served from the back of our authentic 1800's chuckwagon. The show is also available for booking for groups of 30 or more.

Tickets at: WesternHeritageCenter.com

Saturday Oct. 9 1:00 PM

David Wolff Book Presentation

Author David Wolff will present his latest book "The Savior of Deadwood: James K.P. Miller" in our theater at 1:00pm. Admission is free.

Saturday Oct. 16th 2:00pm

High Plains Live!

Join us for a very special day of music and art.
10:00am Jon & Gail Crane Presentation

11-1pm Meet & Greet - Book signing
"Mystic Travelers" by Gail Crane
2:00 Nina McIntire- "Ivory Fantasy" concert
Concert Tickets: \$15 Reserved \$10 General
Sponsored by the Spearfish Economic Development Corporation & SD Arts Council

Coming in November

Veteran's Day Program

With Clover Potter and Friends
Details coming soon

Coming in December

Christmas at the High Plains

Shopper's Village, Concerts and Shows,
Christmas Movies and book signings



825 Heritage Drive | Spearfish, SD 57783

Be Part of Our New S.O.S. Campaign!

Support our Sign

The High Plains Western Heritage Center is blessed to be the recipient of a \$5,000 matching grant from an anonymous donor to go toward a brand new sign on the front of our building.

Now we are asking our friends and supporters to be a part of our new Support Our Sign (S.O.S.) campaign. Every dollar you give will be matched up to \$5,000 for the project.

The new sign is the HPWHC's logo designed by our current board president Mick Harrison. The "How Time Flies" motif shows a cowboy emerging from an old timepiece to wrangle cattle. The working cowboy was a common sight during

the early days of settlement in this area and still is today.

The sign will be placed on the front of the current building. It will be constructed in such a way as it can be moved to find a more permanent home on the new wing that we hope to build in the near future.

The total budget for the project is \$20,000. The matching dollars with the grant will get us halfway there. As always we appreciate your continued generosity toward the HPWHC and this campaign will certainly be a great "sign" of your support. So join our S.O.S. campaign today. Contact us at the center with your pledge.



Sept. Newsletter Contributors:
Western Sky Media, Inc. Larry Miller