

LEAD ME HOME

Lead, South Dakota

Annual Awards Announced

-Wendy Pitlick, deSales Writing

The **Thomas Grier Award** is presented annually to a volunteer who has made a positive impact on Lead through tireless community service. This year, we are honoring Debbie Minter for being one of those volunteers who is always available to help with every project! Whether it's for our organization, or other groups around town, Debbie is always able to step in and offer her talents for the good of our community. She has read to children at the library, has volunteered at the opera house, and we can always count on her to make delicious pies for our pie social events! She also helped with all of our Feeding Lead food distribution events, and most recently she arranged entertainment for our Galentines Cabaret fundraiser. We appreciate her service!

The **Lead the Way Award** is presented to a business that has demonstrated commitment to the Lead community by making a significant investment with their business. This year, we honor Big Trout Deli owner Marty Venburg. Marty took on a gigantic venture to completely restore and overhaul the former Odd Fellows building at 403 W. Main St. The project, which included renovating the main level for retail and deli space, as well as the upper level to be rented out as a vacation rental, was probably a much bigger project than anyone anticipated. But Marty persevered, and for that we honor him and thank him for believing in Lead!

The **Miles Beyond Ordinary Award** is presented to a new business that has shown grit, courage and innovation. This year, Katrina Hutchison decided to try something new when she expanded her mobile fitness training business to include a physical location, at Explore Fitness & Adventures. In this location, Katrina offers a wide variety of services, including dance classes for all ages, yoga, Zumba, fitness training, adventure activity packages, and more. The new business really does include something for everyone!

We also want to extend an Honorable Mention to Mark and Paul McGrane, for their work to open Jailhouse Taps microbrewery. Despite a year of uncertainty, Mark and Paul decided to help boost business on

Main Street by bringing their delicious microbrew recipes to Main Street for locals and visitors to enjoy.

Unprecedented and uncertain are two of the most common ways to describe the conditions surrounding 2020, and that was especially true in our school system. The **Phoebe Hearst Education Award** is presented to an educator who consistently displays excellence, and who inspires those around them to do the same. This award is given to someone who is heavily invested in time and resources, to help shape those around him. This year, our honoree has not only displayed all of these qualities, but he has served as a model for education in the community as well through his involvement with such organizations as Kiwanis and the Lead-Deadwood Community Foundation. Dr. Dan Leikvold, we thank you for your leadership during this crazy year, and for your 16 years of service to the Lead-Deadwood School District.

When COVID-19 pandemic left many Lead residents uncertain about their futures, there were many businesses that stepped up to make sure our people were taken care of. But there's one business that really stood out above all the rest. Their donations to the Feeding Lead program and contributions to the Boys and Girls Club of Lead-Deadwood, including a food basket for every child member and employee of the Boys and Girls Club, helped put dinner on many tables in Lead. For this, we want to honor Coeur Wharf with the **Business of the Year Award** for their continued support of our Lead community.

Chamber Champions abound here at the Lead Area Chamber of Commerce, and this was a difficult award to decide. Every time we encounter this person, she has a smile on her face, and we love discovering new and interesting treasures tucked in every nook and cranny of her store. She is always ready to help with any projects that promote Lead, and her enthusiasm is downright contagious. This year, we want to honor Carol Oolman with our **Chamber Champion Award**.

Editor's Note: These awards were nominated and voted on by our membership and reflect the 2020 year.



Our Annual Banquet was a "roaring" success! Attended by over 60 members, board members and sponsors at the Sanford Lab Homestake Visitor Center

Chamber Overcomes 2020 Challenges to Set the Stage for Success in 2021

-Wendy Pitlick, deSales Writing

It was the best of times that came out of the worst times in 2020, as the Lead Area Chamber of Commerce overcame the challenges of the pandemic to support business in the Lead community.

This year, the Lead Area Chamber of Commerce had a re-structuring of sorts when employees began splitting hours between the Chamber and the SLHVC. It's been an arrangement that has worked well for both organizations that fully complement each other. In 2020, we also added a membership director position, and we expect to reap the benefits as the Chamber reaches out to enhance and improve our relationships with members and the community.

We did see a slight dip in membership numbers, from 243 in 2019 to 231 in 2020. But the addition of our membership director produced nearly immediate fruits, as we saw a slight increase in new members, and annual sponsors jumped from nine in 2019 to 12 in 2020.

Due to pandemic concerns, we were unable to host as many mixers

and social events, with just five mixers held in 2020 compared to 11 the previous year. However instead of focusing on in-person events, we found new ways to reach out to the community and support membership.

Our social media presence boosted awareness throughout the community, with 3,298 followers on Facebook compared to 3,075 in 2019. Our total email subscriptions jumped to 711, with an average open rate of about 33 percent. That's pretty good, compared to the national average open rate of 22 percent.

When the pandemic forced people inside and discouraged them from going out, our Tough Bucks program and campaign to encourage take-out and curbside orders served to help our membership. Through this program, community members who submitted qualifying receipts from Lead businesses were rewarded with "Tough Bucks" vouchers with a value of 10 percent of the total purchase. The vouchers could be spent at any Chamber member business, anywhere.

REVIEW continued on next page

MARCH CHAMBER MEMBERS

NEW MEMBERS - deSales Writing, 605 Fresh, Mind Body Beauty Institute

RENEWING MEMBERS - Gerald & Martyann Apa, MDU, Black Hills Mining Museum, Blackstone Lodge & Suites, Bond Minerals Services & Engineering, Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Deadwood Dental, Donna Jensen, Doug & Charlene Miller, KEVN Black Hills Fox TV, Lead-Deadwood Arts Center, Lead-Deadwood School District, Mack's Auto Body, Mile Up Marketing Solutions, Miner's Tin Cup, Northern Hills Alliance for Children, Quality Quick Print, Recreational Springs Resort, Road Runner Inc., Simpsons Printing, Spearfish Canyon Lodge, Whites Queen City Motors

Thanks for being a part of all that we're doing in Lead! You make Lead, Miles Beyond Ordinary

Sweet Hellos & Fond Farewells

-Sierra Ward

Right after we sent the March newsletter off, Thomas Golden let me know he would be leaving our team to return to the Homestake Opera House, but this time as the new Executive Director. Thomas was a stellar addition to the Chamber and Visitor Center for the three short months he worked with us. But we're super excited by the opportunity for new partnerships and for making Lead even more amazing. His talents will also be well used in that adventure and we wish him all the luck!

We have been very fortunate to find two fabulous new hires! Bryan Burton, joined us as our new Membership Director. Some of you may rec-

ognize Bryan from his job waiting at Cheyenne Crossing, where he's been working since his recent college graduation. He brings his youthful enthusiasm and energy to our team and for these things we're very grateful!

We're also thrilled to welcome Christine Allen, a Lead resident, as our new Tourism Director. This is a new role for us, and we think Christine has just what it takes to flesh it out and take tourism in Lead to new heights! See both of their introduction letters on page 3 and please stop by and say hello!



Board Member Spotlight: Greg Hershman

From living on a boat to a house in the Hills, Greg Hershman working to make Lead a better place

-Wendy Pitlick, deSales Writing

Living on a boat in Southern California and Mexico was like being on vacation all the time, but now Greg Hershman and his wife, Nancy, devote all of their time to fixing up their historic home in Lead.

Greg is the newest board member for the Lead Area Chamber of Commerce. Before retirement, he worked in manufacturing management and as an industrial engineer. His last job was in the aerospace industry in Southern California, where he and Nancy lived on a 45-foot sailboat.

"When I was working every day, I would come home from work, get out of the car and start walking down the dock. It was like going on vacation," Greg said. "Every day you're on vacation for the evening and then it's back to work."

But when he retired in 2006, Greg said he and his wife decided to take their boat to Mexico, where they spent eight winters sailing up and down the Sea of Cortez.

"Because it gets rather warm down there, we would spend our summers up here in the states," he said. "One year I decided I wanted to go bicycle riding, and so we started in Mississippi and went all the way up the Mississippi River, and cut across the country. That's when we came through Lead and Deadwood during Kool Deadwood Nights. We spent 10 days here just being tourists in 2010 and fell in love with the area."

Greg said while traveling the next year he googled houses for sale and the first one to pop up was in Lead. When he and Nancy went to check it out, they found their latest project in a historic home on Highland Avenue, which they bought in the Fall of 2011.

"It needed lots of work," he said. "It



had no electricity, no plumbing, no heat, and two of the basement walls were caving in. We started working on it and in order to have some place to live we managed the Dakota Spur Hotel."

While they worked on their house, Greg said he also started meeting with area business owners to try and affect change that would help the town grow. At that time, Lead businesses were struggling as the town continued to recover from the Homestake Mine closure. He and Nancy started an area improvement group called LAB (Lead Area Business) for Lead, for small businesses, interested residents and city officials. The group organized several store front decorations, and was responsible for the ski and snowboard benches that can be seen throughout town.

"We love it here," he said. "I would love to see Lead grow, not to be a big city, but to be 5-7k in population. That cannot happen without some good infrastructure and a "can-do" attitude from all..."

That's exactly what Greg intends to bring to the Chamber board – a "can-do attitude" that is focused on continually improving Lead.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

deSales Writing Services - As a freelance writer and longtime newspaper reporter, Wendy Pitlick enjoys writing news stories about Lead for the BH Pioneer, as well as articles for the LACC, and internal communications for a variety of clients. Wendy offers a variety of writing services and looks forward to helping you!

605 Fresh - Offering food truck, catering, and personal chef service to the Black Hills, 605 Fresh focuses on fresh and local ingredients, to create artisan meals both in and out of the food truck. Visit www.605fresh.net or call (605)499-9192 for more info.

Jackie van Ruler with Mind Body Beauty Institute - Jackie Van Ruler at Mind Body Beauty Institute offers classes in facial reflexology and massage technique to educate about the connections between the mind, the body and what shows up on the face. You can learn more about her whole new way of self care and beauty at www.jackievanruler.com or watching her videos on YouTube: Jackie Van Ruler. Instagram: @MindBodyBeautyInstitute

NEWS & NOTES

HELP WANTED - We are looking for TOUR GUIDES, TROLLEY DRIVERS and GIFT SHOP ATTENDANTS. If you are interested please stop by the Visitor Center for more information.

CHILI SPONSORS SOUGHT - The First Interstate Bank Lead Deadwood Community Foundation is holding their 9th annual Chili Feed on 4/22 from 5-7pm at Deadwood Mountain Grand. They are looking for chili sponsors (categories are Best Chili and Most Unique Chili). If you're interested in cooking a chili please call Oz to register (605)591-9821 before 4/8.

BA COFFEE CLOSURES - BA Coffee has closed their Lead shop at Explore Fitness & Adventures in order to focus on their Sturgis location. We're sad to lose them, but wish them the best!

SPRING HOURS - Deadwood History Inc. (DHI) will begin expanded hours 4/1. All DHI museums will be open 10am-4pm Tues-Sat. The Brothel Deadwood will offer tours from 11am-7pm, Wed-Sat with the last tour at 7pm. For info or to make group reservations, call (605)722-4800.

MINERS TIN CUP TO REOPEN - We're excited that Amy and Dennis have finalized their move to Lead, and after they finish some remodeling, plan to re-open the shop on April 1st.

GOLD CAMP JUBILEE - Planning has started for Lead's 4th of July celebrations! If you'd like to jump in on that please plan to attend our public meeting on 4/21/21 at 2pm here at the Visitor Center. Anyone is welcome to attend and provide comments and feedback. Member businesses are encouraged to participate and engage in these events to bring traffic to their businesses!

UPDATE WEBSITE LINKS - Spring clean your website! Check your links and make sure that you're not linking to our old Visitor Center link www.HomestakeVisitorCenter.com. Replace with our current website: www.SanfordLabHomestake.com

HOME SWEET HOME

AN ORIGINAL CONCERT DRAMA INSPIRED
BY THE LETTERS OF THE CIVIL WAR

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
LOCAL ARTISTS KATHRYN AND CHARLES
FARRUGGIA

APRIL 16 AND 17 AT 7PM
APRIL 18 AT 2PM



Homestake Opera House
313 W Main St Lead, SD

For tickets visit www.homestakeoperahouse.org
or call 605-584-2067

REVIEW - continued from front page

The total value of receipts submitted for Tough Bucks was \$3,450, and we distributed \$345 in vouchers. Chamber members redeemed those vouchers for \$270 in real cash.

One surprise for everyone this year was that our Bed, Board and Beverage (BBB) tax dollars were on par with 2019. Despite the pandemic, our tourism season was strong, and that helped our city's bottom line, and those of our members, significantly. In 2020, the city of Lead saw \$91,115 in BBB taxes, compared to \$91,579 in 2019.

Membership revenue in 2020 increased slightly, from 19.8 percent in 2019 to 23.2 percent in 2020. Funding from the city of Lead was consistent from 2019 to 2020, comprising about 30 percent of the budget.

Other income sources for the Chamber include our events, fireworks, and the Lead magazine. Though other revenue sources were down slightly, revenue derived from special events was the only significant loss, with 4.2 percent of our budget raised in 2019 and 1.8 percent in 2020.

This year, we also provided vital services for community members, when we helped raise funds and distribute food with the Feeding Lead program.

Expenses for 2020 reflected the restructuring and additions in our staff, as this year's payroll expenses

were on par with 2019, due to the executive director moving into a part-time position for the Chamber. In 2020, payroll expenses comprised 31 percent of the budget, compared to 29.4 percent in 2019.

Total event costs were down, as many events were cancelled. In 2020 event expenses were at 14.1 percent of the total budget, while in 2019 they were at 16.3 percent. A new line item was added to the budget this year, as the Lead Area Chamber of Commerce absorbed the cost of renting space in the SLHVC, at a cost of 8.3 percent of the budget. In 2020, we also stepped up our advertising campaigns, spending 16.2 percent of our total budget on advertising, compared to 9.5 percent in 2019.

Overall, despite the challenges of a slow year, Executive Director Sierra Ward said 2020 helped set the Chamber and its membership up for success in 2021 and future years. The addition of the VISIT LEAD arm of the Chamber, as well as hiring a new tourism director and a specific membership director, is expected to reap benefits throughout the community.

"The 20s have shot off like a bomb," said Ward. "It changed us. It changed our state and our country. In the midst of all that change, there is so much opportunity and so much that is exciting and new. It's going to be a really great decade and I so appreciate you being here to represent our community and our businesses."

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTORS



Sierra Ward, Executive Director

Benjamin Franklin once said, "Change is the only constant in life, one's ability to adapt to those changes will determine your success." As I wrote up our reports and pie graphs (both the LACC and SLHVC) for the Annual Report I am struck by how true that is, and not just for 2020. Because we didn't have a proper annual banquet to review 2019, I compared and contrasted these two years. This was fascinating because it also summed up almost my entire tenure (I started at the LACC in November 2018).

Yes, 2020 was a strange and complex year, but it seems pretty par for the course when one looks at all the changes we've navigated through both of these years - maternity leave, taking on the management of another organization and various staffing changes - it's been a wild ride! Every time I think we've hit a calm spot to regroup, another change just breaks in on us. It turns out I probably thrive best in chaos, because I guess otherwise I wouldn't still be excited and energized by this environment.

Despite (or maybe because of) all the craziness, I'm so proud of the progress we've made, and how we've navigated all the various changes for the better! Both our organizations are in better health in so many ways, and I can honestly say that we have been blessed to be in the right place at the right time with the right people wanting to do the right thing. I'm proud to be here, and proud to work with my team, my board and my community, thank you for being a part of this! // sierra@LeadMeThere.org



Leigha Patterson, Assistant Director

Welcome to April! Four months into 2021, where has the time gone? Congratulations to all of the annual award winners and thank you to everyone that attended the LACC/SLHVC Annual Banquet. We had a roaring good time! With the Banquet over, it is time to look at the summer. I have been busy ramping up the SLHVC gift shop inventory for all of the summer tourism. Like Sierra said in one of her weekly emails, "A wave is coming!" Before this wave comes and things get crazy, consider stopping by to check out all our new gift shop merchandise. We have taken into serious consideration the brand of items we sell as to not compete with our wonderful Lead businesses. // leigha@leadme-there.org.

Director's Note: With the transition to new staff, Leigha has stayed on to assist on the Chamber side of things for a few more months. As she transitions with the start of her bakery, she will focus more entirely on the Sanford Lab Homestake Visitor Center. We're so lucky to have her talents and skills - and especially while we welcome our two new staff members!



Bryan Burton, Membership Director

I am delighted to introduce myself as the new Membership Director for the LACC. Lead has a special place in my heart. Since childhood I have come here with my family and always marveled at the ecological wonder. I am originally from Houston, Texas and I went to school at the University of North Texas. I have been living in Lead full time and enjoying the natural beauty that the Black Hills have to offer for over a year now. I look forward to further engaging with the rich community that exists here in this hidden mountain oasis.

I recently graduated with my Bachelors in Biology and Chemistry and feel like this place is a wonderland of wildlife and unique natural phenomena. I go hiking regularly and try to always take a path that I haven't travelled before. Spearfish Canyon has become one of my favorite places for observing plant life and self-reflection. I also love to create art, with inspiration from the landscape, through painting with watercolors and making small sculptures out of unique branches and other materials from the woods on my parent's property. I am excited to step into this position because it will allow me to become more acquainted with this beautiful community and also give me a chance to use my personal skills to help enrich the web of connection that already exists here.

I am honored to be a part of the LACC. We have a unique platform to help connect local businesses and encourage economic development within the community. I am elated to also serve at the Sanford Lab Homestake Visitor's Center as Development Director, because I have a passion for science education and believe that the services offered here at the facility are important for the enrichment of the community and present a wonderful face to visitors. As the season changes, and spring blooms, I smile at this new chapter of growth and development for the people and businesses of our tight knit community. // bryan@leadmethere.org



Christine Allen, Tourism Director

Hello Lead! My name is Christine Allen and I am so excited to serve this great community as your new Tourism Director. I am an Iowa girl who fell in love and married a native son of Lead. Here I am (five snowy and sunny years later!) and I can't wait to share with our visitors all the reasons I have fallen in love with Lead. I am coming from a background of social services and am looking forward to this new transition. I would love to see our visitors stay in town longer to learn, shop, dine, and get to know us. We have so much to offer and I look forward to hearing from the businesses and the community at large about your tourism ideas. Please stop by my office in the SLHVC anytime or join me on the trolley this summer! // christine@leadmethere.org



Thank You to our
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125th All-School Reunion
Fri & Sat,
June 25-26



See schedule and register here: www.leaddeadwood.k12.sd.us/125th-all-school-reunion

APRIL 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	31	1 6pm - City Commission Candidate debates, SLHVC*	2 GOOD FRIDAY	3 10am Basic Navigation & Survival Course @ EF&A* Pond Skim @ 10am Terry Peak
4 EASTER FINAL DAY @ Terry Peak	5 5pm City Commission @ City Hall	6 SCIENCE ROCKS: 5pm Science of Beer @ SLHVC*	7	8 8:15am SLHVC & LACC Board Meeting	9	10 Lead Volunteer Fire Department Annual Banquet, SLHVC*
11 3:30-5:30pm MOPS @ SoTH*	12	13 7-7 Municipal Elections, SLHVC* 4 & 5pm STEAM classes for k-8 @ SLHVC*	14 12:30 - BHSU Jacket Job Fair, Virtual	15	16 7pm Home Sweet Home @ HOH*	17 9:30am Makers Market @ SLHVC* Patsy's Day - DHI* 7pm Home Sweet Home @ HOH*
18 2pm Home Sweet Home @ HOH*	19 5pm City Commission @ City Hall	20	21 2pm Public Planning Meeting: @ SLHVC*	22 12pm - Preservation Thursday @ HARCC* APRIL MIXER: Chili Feed @ Dwd Mtn Grand, 5-7pm	23	24
25 3:30-5:30pm MOPS @ SoTH*	26	27	28	29 10:30am GOLDEN FOLD @ SLHVC*	30	1

**EF&A - Explore Fitness & Adventures // *SLHVC - Sanford Lab Homestake Visitor Center // SoTH - Shepherd of the Hills Church
DHI - Deadwood History Inc. // *HOH - Homestake Opera House // *HARCC - Homestake Adams Research & Cultural Center

Weekly & Monthly

For more info and details visit www.LeadMeThere.org or 584-3110

WEEKLY:
Mondays: **Kiwanis Meetings** - 5:30pm at the Christian Ministry Center.

Tuesdays: **Poker for Fun** - Texas Hold'em, 7pm at Hangar 7 Lounge at Blackstone Lodge.

Wednesdays: **Trivia Night** - 6pm at Jailhouse Taps.

Thursdays: **Beer Bingo** - 3pm at Jailhouse Taps

MONTHLY:
Northern Hills Prospectors - First Saturday at 9am, SLHVC*

Free Community Dinner - First Saturday at 5pm, Assembly of God Church

VFW Meeting - First Tuesdays at 7pm

Rod & Gun Club Meeting - First Wednesdays at 7pm, Clubhouse

Shepherd's Pantry - 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 9-12, SoTH*

Classes in fitness, adult and children's dance and yoga @ EF&A*

Want to see your event listed? Call and let us know to get it posted!

Lead Area Chamber of Commerce

501(c)6
(605)584-3110
Office Hours: 9am-5pm Monday - Friday

Mission To promote and enhance to opportunities for its membership and the community; to encourage the growth of existing industries and businesses while giving all proper assistance to any new firms or individuals ... to encourage and promote a positive, balanced and vibrant local economy...

Staff

Sierra Ward, Executive Director
sierra@leadmethere.org

Leigha Patterson, Assistant Director
leigha@leadmethere.org

Bryan Burton, Membership Director
bryan@leadmethere.org

Christine Allen, Tourism Director
christine@leadmethere.org

Board of Directors - terms go through years listed

President, Marsha Nichols, ('20-'23)
Vice President, Scott Engel ('19-'22)
Secretary, Kim Huber ('20-'23)
Treasurer, Dave Brueckner ('20-'23)
Autumn Anderson, ('20-'23)
Greg Hershman, ('21-'24)
Duston Morehead ('18-'21)

Ron Everett, ex-officio
Mike Headley, ex-officio
Dan Leikvold, ex-officio

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TUES
4/6
5PM

PAUL MCGRANE
CO-OWNER OF JAILHOUSE TAPS

SANFORD LAB HOMESTAKE
VISITOR CENTER

Lead Area Chamber of Commerce
160 West Main Street
Lead, SD 57754

