



## **PARKS & ATTRACTIONS MEETING | MAY 7, 2019**

### **Michelle Thomson, BH&B**

- 2019 Publications: Pick up our new publications (vacation guides, maps, etc.) today or set up a time to come to our warehouse to stock up.
- Distribution Week: May 20
- VIP Cards: businesses will have them by the end of May
- Black Hills Visitor Information Center
  - Use the VIC staff as a resource; if your visitors have questions we are happy to help them out; give us a call at 605-355-3700
  - Purchase a spot to promote your business in the BH VIC
  - Stop into the VIC Gift Shop, we have lots of amazing things

### **Jacey Jessop, South Dakota Department of Tourism**

- U.S. Travel Association is forecasting 2% increase in visitation this summer
- Free online hospitality training at SDVisit.com, seven courses to choose from
- Free, three-part marketing webinar, available on SDVisit.com
- Great Face, Great Places slogan is back
- Media activation in Denver at the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall with climbing wall, Mount Rushmore, Thomas Jefferson ice cream, all promoting travel to South Dakota
- Online Dashboard with travel indicators on SDVisit.com; easily find information down to the county; their team is happy to answer any questions you have about the dashboard
- Welcome Centers
  - Wilmot, Vermillion, Chamberlain and Spearfish open May 20
  - Valley Springs is under construction, opening spring 2020

## **COMMUNITIES**

### **1. Pine Ridge Chamber of Commerce**

- a. Powwow Season starts on June 14-16 at Oglala College and events continue throughout the summer
- b. Fourth of July
  - i. Rodeo in Interior
  - ii. Fireworks at Pine Ridge
- c. Oglala Lakota Nation Fair, August 1-4, rodeo
- d. Ridin' the Rez Poker Run Motorcycle Tour August 9 during the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally
- e. New college center building in Kyle, grand opening on May 16
- f. Red Cloud Art Show, opens June 2 to Aug 11
- g. Due to the flooding, there is road construction
- h. Next week's FAM Tour is postponed, will receive details on that in the coming days

### **2. Custer Area Chamber of Commerce**

- a. New downtown businesses
- b. Some lodging changes/new owners
- c. 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Custer Restaurant Week
  - i. Feb 26-29, 2020
  - ii. Likely eight participating restaurants
- d. 6<sup>th</sup> annual Sound of Silence Tesla Rally
  - i. next week
  - ii. 70 Teslas registered, which is the most ever
- e. 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Off-Road Rally June 7-9
- f. Old Time Country Fourth of July
- g. Gold Discovery Days
  - i. Big changes this year
  - ii. Bringing back the carnival
  - iii. New location of events to keep everything together, new band, car show changed up

### **3. Deadwood Area Chamber of Commerce**

- a. Premier of the Deadwood movie
  - i. May 31
  - ii. Tickets available May 9, from Black Hills Central Reservations, first-come, first-serve. See [Deadwood.com](http://Deadwood.com) for more information.
  - iii. Tickets are free, or there is a VIP package
- b. Deadwood Alive, May 25-Sept. 21, shootouts at 2, 4 and 6 p.m. on Main Street
- c. Stagecoach, May 27 to Sept. 2, 1 to 6 p.m., Monday-Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, buy your tickets on the street or on [BlackHillsVacations.com](http://BlackHillsVacations.com)
- d. Trial of Jack McCall, May 25-Sept. 21
- e. Outlaw Square
  - i. Permanent Stage
  - ii. Synthetic ice, can ice skate in the summer
  - iii. Water features
  - iv. Tentatively opening fall of 2019
  - v. First event will be the Deadwood Jam, which will be a free event for the first time in 25 years
- f. Wild Bill Days, June 13-15, Dock Dog competition will be hosted in a new place the Tin Lizzie parking lot due to construction of Outlaw Square
- g. Days of '76 Rodeo, July 23-27, tickets available through Black Hills Vacations
- h. Kool Deadwood Nites, August 22-25
- i. Broken Boot Gold Mine opens May 26, expanded gold panning
- j. Adams Museum has been refurbished, new exhibits
- k. History and Information center, undergoing exhibit renovation
- l. New restaurant

- m. New events continue with success, Hops & Hogs and Whiskey Festival in November
  - n. Mt. Roosevelt, 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Friendship Tower
- 4. Sturgis Chamber of Commerce**
- a. Veronica, new chamber director as of January, please come introduce yourselves
  - b. Goals
    - i. More active in the community and add value to members and visitors
    - ii. Evaluating and strategically planning events
    - iii. Nurturing strategic relationship, City of Sturgis, Sturgis Economic Development
    - iv. Rolling out new website, groundwork in 2019, tentatively live in 2020
  - c. Accomplishments
    - i. Most well-attended Cracker Barrels, Forums and Community Showcase of all time since January
    - ii. 30 new members since January, last year only 20 total
  - d. Events
    - i. Sturgis Volksmarch on Saturday
    - ii. Beer & Wine Festival, May 31, some changes to make it a little more casual
    - iii. Hotel Sturgis, renovation on Main Street, grand opening June 14
- 5. Visit Rapid City**
- a. Relocation reminder, upper level of Shops at Main Street Square
  - b. New location for Rapid City Info Center, now outside of the VRC office, May 28-Sept as needed, Mon-Friday
  - c. Website Updates
    - i. Launched an updated events calendar, create a login for shorter lead times, interactive
    - ii. VRC deals section
  - d. Follow us on Social Media to stay up-to-date on events
  - e. Installment of Obama statue set for July 2019
  - f. New businesses to Rapid City within the last year
  - g. Rapid City Regional now offers 13 nonstop destination flights to Rapid City, new in 2019: Los Angeles, San Francisco
- 6. Visit Spearfish**
- a. New restaurants
  - b. Events
    - i. Sasquatch returning for second year, 30 home games, four fireworks nights, opening day is May 24
    - ii. Downtown Friday Nights, June 7-Aug. 30
    - iii. Canyon Acoustic Series, weekends June 26, runs six weeks
    - iv. Festival in the Park, July 19-21, same weekend as Corvette Classic, July 17-19

- v. Phantom of the Mathews Opera House, Mondays, Tuesday, Wednesday nights in July
- vi. Gold Rush Gravel Grinder, June 8
- vii. Dakota 5-0, Sept. 1
- viii. New bike race: BH Super 6, six miles, Aug. 24, Big Hill Trails

**7. Wall Badlands Area Chamber**

- a. Wall Celebration, July 11-13, rodeo, live music
- b. 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Wall Crawl, Aug. 10, poker run, live music
- c. Wheelin' to Wall, Sept. 28, organized bike ride through Badlands National Park
- d. City put in a new parking lot for trucks and cars, includes Tesla charging stations and one electric vehicle charging station
- e. Monthly noon lunches, everyone is welcome to attend

**PARKS AND AGENCIES**

**8. Mount Rushmore National Memorial**

- a. Superintendent, Cheryl Schreier retiring at the end of May
- b. Xanterra: a lot of activity and new projects completed, solar panels on parking facility, automated parking system, re-lamping, re-illuminating entire facility for energy conservation
- c. Large construction project, involved renovating visitor center, replacing elevators, rebuilding public restroom, replacing Grand View Terrace and the entire paver system over the course of about 20 months, construction will likely begin in June and will communicate that when they know
- d. Concessions still available
- e. Continue to offer their programs, with some modifications and better use of different facilities
- f. Sculptor's Studio will be more of visitor center

**9. Mount Rushmore Society**

- a. They have the official Mount Rushmore rack card
  - i. Includes a remapped area specifically for during construction to show visitors where they can go, useful for telling visitors what they can do, Top 10 Things To Do
- b. Mount Rushmore Society moved to downtown Rapid City, 830 Main Street, please come visit
- c. Mount Rushmore Memories Gift Shop now open, downtown Rapid City
- d. Meeting space available (info on website)

**10. Badlands National Park**

- a. Several road construction projects in the park, visitor can expect delays
- b. Sage Creek Campground rules and regulations have been updated, no 18ft+ RVs allowed, only 20 sites, changes to help campsites that's been overrun

- c. Ranger Programs, begins May 26, with two new programs, Coffee with a Ranger: June 13 on Thursdays; Wildflower Program: June 11, Wednesdays
- d. Paleo Lab opens June 4 in Ben Reifel Visitor Center
- e. Badlands Astronomy Festival, July 5-7
- f. Discover Badlands Day, July 24
- g. Badlands Heritage Celebration, Aug. 17 (North Unit) & 18 (South Unit)
- h. Founder's Day Celebration, Aug. 25
- i. Three new bighorn sheep lambs, including a set of twins, 3 weeks old, one bison calf

#### **11. Badlands National Park Conservancy**

- a. Newly formed
- b. Similar to Mount Rushmore Memorial Society
- c. Helps fund what the government doesn't, official advocate for the park, work closely with Pine Ridge Indian Reservation for the South Unit of the park
- d. Improvements at the park have been approved by the regional office, \$50 million project, will be one of the arms to raise money when fundraising begins

#### **12. Custer State Park**

- a. Celebrating 100 Years, lots of special events
  - i. Free Summer Concert Series, every second and fourth Saturday, different locations in the park
  - ii. 100 selfies in CSP, take in different locations in park based on list, special prize package
  - iii. Tatanka publication is a newspaper for the 100<sup>th</sup> year
- b. Offering some different programming, night programming, Night Under the Stars, astronomy in partnership with SD Mines, night hikes
- c. Open House Weekend, May 17-19, free entrance and fishing, fishing tournament
- d. New massive timeline display in Visitor Center, installed March 1
- e. Gordon Stockade, will start programming there this year, gold panning, reutilize that area
- f. Come see bison calves, 100 to 150

#### **13. Devils Tower National Monument**

- a. Old Settlers Picnic, June 23
- b. Special guest performers, every Friday and Saturday evenings in amphitheater at 8:30 p.m.
- c. Ranger-Guided Walks, 10 a.m. and Ranger-Guided Talks
- d. Evening Programs, Sunday through Thursday, 8:30 p.m.
- e. No construction in the park in 2019, but there is construction on Hwy 110, shortest highway in the State of WY, will break for Rally
- f. 2020 construction in the park, updates coming later

#### **14. George S. Mickelson Trail**

- a. Celebrating 100 years with the State Park system
- b. Now & Then Photo Scavenger Hunt on FB, register for great prizes

- c. In the process of resurfacing the trail, six-year project, Englewood to Dumont done last year, now covered just shy of Pringle to Edgemont, around 43 miles of 109 miles trail resurfaced
- d. Events
  - i. Deadwood Mickelson Trail Marathon, brings 3,000 people to the Northern Hills
  - ii. Lean Horse, 100+ miles in August
  - iii. Run Crazy Horse, October, 1,500 to 2,000 people
  - iv. Mickelson Trail Trek, registration was full and closed with 620 riders eight days after opening registration which is a new record
- e. Trolley on the Trail, for handicap and mobility impaired who wouldn't have any other way to get out on the trail, five individual rides down the trail in a trolley, out of Deadwood and Hill City, June, July and September
- f. New Name: Spearfish Canyon Nature Area; encompasses Spearfish Falls, Roughlock Falls, and Savoy area, roughly 3 miles of new trails to connect all three areas, putting in a bridge

#### **15. Minuteman Missile National Historic Site**

- a. New parking lots and restrooms, at Delta-09 and Delta-01 sites.
  - i. Completed end of season last year
  - ii. Allow charter buses and large RVs, full turn-around, better experience
- b. Debuted new park film last year, award-winning film
- c. Delta-01 Tour, reservation only ranger-tour, call or reserve online through Black Hills Vacations, most tours are full at least 60-days out, visitors must plan head
- d. Working on a cell-phone tour of Delta-01, walk and learn from parking lot to the gate
- e. Fee increase implemented Jan. 1 for Delta-01 Tour, \$12 adults, \$8 for youth

#### **16. Wind Cave National Park**

- a. Open year-round, with the exception of some winter holidays
- b. Tours year-round
- c. Full-slate of Interpretive Programs begin June 2, tours leave Visitor Center every 20 minutes
- d. Tickets are first-come, first-serve, on the day of the tour, in person
- e. Two specialty tours: Candlelight Tour, 2 hours, and Wild Cave Tour, reservations are available for both
- f. Tons of great resources on the surface
  - i. Hike to the base of Rankin Ridge Fire Tower
  - ii. 500 bison, 250 elk, 2,000 acres of prairie dog towns
  - iii. Free to drive through and on the surface
  - iv. Campground at park, 62 sites, non-reservable, lots of availability
- g. Some elevator work this summer, will put out more information

- h. Expecting the 7-millionth visitor late summer or early fall

**17. Crazy Horse Memorial®**

- a. Mother's Day Specials, great food
- b. New cultural interpretation program, continues through summer
  - i. First week of every month, artists and cultural bearers come to do workshops, hands-on experiences
- c. Memorial Day weekend, Open House weekend, canned food drive
- d. Laser Show Program Memorial Day weekend
- e. First Night Blast, June 26
- f. Volksmarch, June 1 and 2, waive admission for participants, requesting donations of 3 canned goods per person
- g. Daily Tours to bottom of the mountain and to the top of the mountain
- h. Voted Top 10 Most Spectacular Laser Shows by USA Today
  - i. Update to lasers, they are brighter and more vibrant

**18. Press Release from Governor Noem**

- a. Fireworks return to Mount Rushmore in 2020

**ATTRACTION AND ACTIVITIES**

**19. Big Thunder Gold Mine**

- a. Keystone Chamber of Commerce is "under construction"
- b. Mine tours, expanding and increasing theme
- c. Renovated eatery into a restaurant, serve lots of wild game, seats about 110 people
- d. Gold panning, 15 troughs, breakdown techniques, guaranteed to find a few flakes of gold
- e. Off-site panning, sluice box, whatever you find you get to keep, a hands-on experience, need 24 hours notice

**20. Black Hills Above & Beyond Tours**

- a. New owner

**21. Black Hills Adventure Tours & Vacation Planning**

- a. Interpretive talks at Under Canvas, Tuesdays and Thursday
- b. If you ever need someone to come down to your attraction and lead interpretive talks, would love to do that for you
- c. New: Permits for UTV guides, working with Mystic Hills in Deadwood to lead guided UTV tours
- d. Their BHB VIP card offer: any of your staff members that want to rent a paddleboard or kayak can come out and use them, as long as equipment is available

**22. Affordable Adventures**

- a. Custom tours and smaller van tours
- b. 12-14-person vans, 21-passenger bus, 2-3-person cars

**23. Black Hills Balloons**

- a. New hangar and storefront in downtown Custer on Mt. Rushmore Road
- b. New balloon, flies 4 people, for exclusive and private flights
- c. New pilot full-time this summer, more balloons flying this summer

- d. Events
  - i. Gold Discovery Days, hot air balloon launches
  - ii. Fall River Hot Air Balloon Festival, last weekend in August
  - iii. Historic Stratobowl Balloon Launch, anticipating doing a night glow, Sept. 13-15, follow Stratobowl FB Page
- e. US Top 10 Contest, voting is live, currently number one, can vote every day

**24. Black Hills Caverns**

- a. Opening up on Saturday
- b. Two tours

**25. Black Hills Tour Company**

- a. Green stretched Volkswagen, Fiona, winery and brewery tours
- b. Daily, Scenic Tours, 12- and 14-passenger sprinter vans and smaller SUVs
- c. Book online
- d. Customizable tours for private groups
- e. Bike tours, newer, Badlands and Black Hills

**26. Chapel in the Hills**

- a. They have a lot of time to tell guests what to do while they are here, so they appreciate you sending people to them, too
- b. 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, July 5-7, special events
  - i. Viking-era craftsmen demos, Scandinavian food and artists, artist John Crane releasing summer painting of the Chapel
  - ii. Celebration of Marriage Vows for anyone who has been married at the Chapel in the past 50 years
  - iii. Details on website and Facebook
  - iv. Norwegian singing group

**27. D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery & Archives**

- a. Free, family attraction, year-round, dawn to dusk
- b. 11 acres to walk around, in Spearfish
- c. There are three historic venues, opening Mother's Day Weekend
- d. Fish & Wildlife Service using D.C. Booth for a pilot program with an augmented app this summer
- e. 2021, celebrating 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of U.S. Fish and Wildlife, 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D.C. Booth

**28. Evans Plunge Mineral Springs**

- a. 2020, 130<sup>th</sup> year
- b. Added a Puppy Plunge, fundraiser for Battle Mountain Humane Society
- c. Open year-round
- d. Summer hours started May 1
- e. Outdoor pool opens Memorial Day Weekend
- f. All events listed on FB page
- g. Mothers swim free on Mother's Day, fathers swim free on Father's Day

**29. Main Street Square**

- a. Signature events and concert line up on their new rack card



- b. If you're interested in being a vendor or to rent the Square, contact Main Street Square
- c. Pick up the new Downtown Magazine

### **30. Mystic Hills Rentals**

- a. ATV/UTV rental agency, GPS in most of their equipment
- b. Working with Black Hills Adventure Tours to get ATV/UTV guide permits
- c. Hosting corporate getaways or larger groups, provide lunches, gazebo available for small meetings
- d. Restaurant has lots of tasty specials

### **31. Reptile Gardens**

- a. Invested \$250,000 purchasing new giant tortoises
- b. Mother's Day Special, mom's free on Saturday and Sunday, suggested donation of two canned food items
- c. Bird show updated
- d. Gardeners installing new and more flower beds
- e. Acquired new reptiles from Australia
- f. New: staffed information center with info on Reptile Gardens and the Black Hills to answer guest's questions

### **32. Sturgis Rally & Events**

- a. Off-Road Rally, May 24-27
- b. Music on Main series, Wednesday nights downtown
- c. Tatanka mountain bike race in July
- d. Camaro Rally, end of June
- e. Mustang Rally in September
- f. Ford Rally in May
- g. Motorcycle Rally in August
- h. Expecting 450-550 thousand people, standard number, numbers were up last year
- i. Motels are down but campground are up, expecting a good year
- j. Concerts at campgrounds and venues around town and the Black Hills
  - i. Hoping to continue to grow the Rally by making it a concert rally in addition to motorcycle rally, grew from 4% non-motorcycle riders to 8.5% in the past three years, estimated to jump to over 12% non-riders this year

### **33. The Mammoth Site of Hot Springs**

- a. Summer hours, 8 am to 8 p.m., May 15
- b. Kids Cave was redone this winter, more interactive
- c. Added an elevator into the bone-bed, more ADA compliant, takes them down, part of the tours,
- d. Widening stairways, prevents bottleneck, smoother tours
- e. Updates to the Exhibit Hall, an entire wall dedicated to bison
- f. Summer Programs, starting June 1 to Aug. 15
- g. Junior Paleo Program, now at 9 and 10 a.m. and 1 and 2 p.m. and Advanced Paleo Program, 11 a.m. and reduced price, these do sell out so make a reservation

**34. Circle B Chuckwagon**

- a. Reservations looking good for this summer
- b. Moved the Chuckwagon to High Country Guest Ranch 8 years ago, great partnership

**35. Mountain Meadows at Deerfield Lake**

- a. Small, 24-7 year-round restaurant and store
- b. Year-round cabins
- c. Snowmobile rentals, ATV/UTV rentals
- d. Sell ATV/UTV permits, promote safe and responsible riding in the Hills
- e. Sell fishing licenses
- f. Only resort in the Hills that has a 24-hour credit card gas pump
- g. Paving the road from Rochford to Deerfield Road, will begin this fall

**36. Under Canvas - Mt. Rushmore**

- a. Glamping, new to Black Hills last year
- b. Direct views of Mount Rushmore
- c. Expanded site to 70 sites
- d. Invite everyone to come up and see what they are doing, a unique experience in the Black Hills