

# HOSTING

## Rapid City Area Hospitality Association News

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## NOTES FROM NANCY

Nancy Brady, Editor

### CONGRATULATIONS, JOHNNY B!

Johnny B., a leader in the tourist industry, and a board member of the Hospitality Association, was elected president of the Governor's Advisory Board. Though he serves on many, many other boards, his interest has always been in the tourism industry. His non-confrontational persona gives a good balance to any board he is on, but his head is always churning on ways to attract visitors to the hills. Good on you, Johnny!



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### CRAZY HORSE 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Doesn't seem that long ago, but the Crazy Horse sculpture was started June 3, 1948. This year will be celebrated with two blasts on the mountain. The first one is tentatively set for 11am on June 3, the second in the evening.

Crazy Horse also sponsors a Rodeo Stampede on June 13-14-15 at 2pm daily on Highway 16/385 between Custer and Hill City. What a wonderful experience for our visitors who want the true West experience to head them out to the Crazy Horse blast. The rodeo is a plus—what family wouldn't want to see a rodeo in the Black Hills at a great time of the day. Desk personnel should be directing the visitors to this area and these events.

### LIFETIME DOWNTOWN STARTS JUNE 12

Downtown Rapid City festival is new this year, but certainly not unplanned.

Each Thursday between 5:30pm and 8:30pm there will be music, free events, food vendors and family entertainment on Seventh street between Main and St. Joe. Each week will offer different entertainment, bands, and foods.

This a wholesome family event for our visitors, and gives each of us the opportunity to direct our visiting families to the downtown area for a night of fun. Remember, this is only a Thursday night event, and runs from June 12 until August 28.

### Rapid City Kicks off Tourism!

The Rapid City Convention and Visitors Bureau kicked off the tourism season and celebrated National Tourism Week throughout the month of May in many ways.

During National Tourism Week, May 10-18, Michelle Thomson of the CVB and Wanda Goodman of South Dakota Tourism did radio and television interviews to help increase awareness of the visitor industry and all it does, not only for Rapid City and the Black Hills, but the state of South Dakota as well.

Events that celebrated tourism included a Rapid City Hospitality Association dinner at Reptile Gardens and a customer service training and visitor industry luncheon that was held May 21, co-sponsored by the CVB. Included in the luncheon was the presentation of Black Hills awards, including the CVB's Extra Mile Award, which went to Deb Hadcock from the Rapid City Common Council, in recognition of her efforts that have

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## President's Message

Ginny Wagner



Do you know that everyone has a story? Every person that you meet, whether they are an employee, a guest visiting you or a vendor, there is a reason that they are there. Everyone has their dreams, their strengths, their weaknesses, their fears, and their history. The people that you interact with, do you know what they are doing when they go home? Or do you or your staff realize

how many people's stories have been altered because of something you have done? This is my favorite time of year. There will be people from all over the world visiting our area, take the time to learn about their stories. Have a great summer.

Ginny Wagner  
President  
Rapid City Area Hospitality

## CVB's - Your Best Friend

Have you ever experienced the eerie feeling that no one is hearing or listening to what is being said or written? Each of us at RFN (Reunion Friendly Network) receives a number of trade publications every

month. Lately, there have been an inordinate number of articles about (Convention and Visitors Bureau) CVB's being your best friend. This is not a new premise for us. However, apparently it is a new, recent dis-

covery for so many other meeting planners representing other market segments.

On numerous occasions we have pointed out the benefits a CVB provides. As public (for the most part)

## OUR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

When you have a need or your guests ask for recommendations or suggestions, think of our friends and associate members first. They support us—

### LET'S SHOW OUR APPRECIATION.

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## Michelle's Memos *Michelle Lintz, CVB*

*(Tourism Kickoff . . . continued from page 1)*



significantly contributed to the visitor industry. Boulevard flags in recognition of the tourism also lined downtown.

As in past years, a Hospitality Reference Manual revision has been made and is now available. This manual helps front-line employees assist guests with commonly, and not so commonly, asked questions. It contains information regarding local recreation, national and state parks, accommodations, dining, events, and much more. Stop by the CVB to pick up your copy.

Tourism is big business in western South Dakota. It touches all of us in different ways. The Rapid City CVB is hopeful that Rapid City and the Black Hills will have a banner tourism season! If you have any questions, please call the CVB at 718-8484.

### **Visitor Information Center staffed for summer**

The tourism season has started in the Black Hills and the CVB recently staffed their visitor information center to help visitors to the area.

Kodee Gartner will be working as a visitor information specialist in the VIC for the summer. Kodee is currently a senior at North Dakota State University, pursuing a degree in business administration with a concentration in marketing. She is also working toward minors in advertising and public relations, as well as management communication.

Kodee said of the Black Hills that . . . "my personal visits and experiences have sparked my interest and affection for this area." We are excited to have Kodee join our team and encourage you to stop in and welcome her to Rapid City.

*(CVB's Your Best Friend . . . continued from page 2)*

marketing organizations, the mission of CVB's is to promote the particular destination or region as the ideal location for a meeting, to enhance the economic growth of an area by increasing visitor business and to provide the services to support tourism events.

Quite honestly, I just cannot figure out why some people in our industry "just don't get it." On a personal note, let me cite a classic example about a CVB's expertise having to do with a restaurant recommendation when I had the dubious honor of entertaining some out-of-town guests in a town totally unfamiliar to me. A person at the CVB suggested I try an out-of-the-way Brazilian restaurant.

What a treat and what an adventure! It was an unusual and spectacular dining happening in every sense of the word. The food was incredibly delicious and the service outstanding. As a stranger in a strange land, I seriously doubt I would have found this awesome and exciting restaurant on my own.

"A rose by any other name is still a rose," wrote Shakespeare. What matters is what something is, not what something is called. It goes without saying that every reunion will have the need of a hotel. There are about 48,000+ hotels in the US. Once you have selected your destination, your next step is finding a hotel for your reunion. This is kind of like a guy looking for the "perfect wife." Let your best friend, the CVB, be the matchmaker! Hotels come in all sizes, shapes, brands . . . from the very high end to the economy kind. Each one has its own features and amenities, rates and contractual terms. A CVB can help to level the field and make your life a whole lot easier.

A friend does not let a friend down. Trust and have confidence in your CVB contact to make the best "connection" for you. Come armed with a well-developed RFP (request for proposal) spelling out all the details of your needs and wants. Your CVB reunion specialist will assist you in narrowing down your hotel

choices and options to only those properties that can best accommodate your group. With appropriate guidance from the CVB, you can have a marriage made in Heaven!

There is another area in which a CVB can be of invaluable assistance. Almost without exception, all of you require some mode of transportation for your group. As we discussed in a previous issue, there are choices for your motor coach needs . . . some better than others. A CVB can direct you to a reputable company, ensuring reasonable comfort that you have made the right transportation arrangements for your group.

I will not delve into the many other services a CVB can provide. Your best bet is to ask questions and to determine what, if anything, they can add or do for you to make your reunion a success.

Much of what I have just spelled out has been written about in previous issues. I believe it's worth repeating because it needs to be

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Rapid City Area Hospitality Assoc.  
 PO Box 2731  
 Rapid City, SD 57709

RCAHA Mission Statement - *The Rapid City Area Hospitality Association is committed to provide its members with education, resources, and services in order that they can better serve their customers and guests, exceeding both member and guest expectations.*

## Upcoming Conventions/Events:

### May 2008

May 19-20	SD High School Activities Association – Boys and Girls “B” Golf	
May 28-30	Aberdeen Area Indian Health Service - Embracing Wellness	125 ppl

### June 2008

June 5-7	Mid-America Credit Union Association	300 ppl
June 5-8	South Dakota VFW	250 ppl
June 6-9	SD State Soccer Tournament	3500 ppl
June 9-17	SD National Guard “Golden Coyote”	3500 ppl
June 13-15	Black Hills Quilters Guild	1200 ppl
June 14-15	SD Golf Association – Two Man	200 ppl
June 14-15	West Boulevard Summer Festival	
June 16-22	Region 6 Arabian Horse Association	600 ppl
June 17-19	304th Signal Operations Battalion Reunion	100 ppl

*(CVB's Your Best Friend . . .continued from page 3)*

etched into every meeting planner’s mind, not only military planners but even the more sophisticated meeting planners representing seminars, conferences and gatherings of all sorts. Each one has the same issues, concerns and dilemmas to resolve as you do.

The headlines and banners from the trade journals literally shout out, “The CVB is your best friend,” yet the words often go unheeded and on the part of a number meeting planners “unheard.” Always there are those “doubting Thomas’s” who think/believe they can more effectively do the job and make all the “right” decisions on their own. Shame on those who hear but do not listen!

*Article excerpt by Ron Cohen, Managing Editor of Reunion Friendly News and Vice President of Sales.*

**LAST MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
 May 20, at the Reptile Gardens,  
 is the last membership  
 meeting until September.**



Calendar information provided  
 by Rapid City CVB.