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South Dakota Horizons Projects: Strengthening Rural Communities for the Future of South Dakota

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Armour
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 Bison
 Box Elder
 Conde
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 Eden/Roslyn
 Estelline
 Eureka
 Faith
 Frederick
 Gregory
 Harding County
 Hot Springs
 Hyde County
 Iroquois
 Isabel
 Kadoka
 Kimball
 Leola
 Montrose
 Murdo
 Newell
 Oldham
 Philip
 Presho
 Reliance
 Sanborn Central
 Scotland
 Sisseton
 St. Francis
 Timber Lake
 Tripp
 Tyndall
 Volin/Gayville
 Wagner
 Whetstone Valley
 Whitewood

South Dakota Horizons Project

Strengthening Rural Communities for the Future of South Dakota



South Dakota
Cooperative Extension Service



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Horizons community population and poverty rates are from 2000 U.S. Census.

Access at <http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/articles/ESS1517.pdf>

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South Dakota Horizons Project

Strengthening Rural Communities for the Future of South Dakota

The word “community” is defined as people who share a particular place and all the resources located there. In South Dakota, we have a strong affinity for the rural places we call home and the neighbors we call our friends. Our citizens take pride in valued community characteristics such as neighborliness, self-sufficiency, and resourcefulness. Yet without thoughtful citizen participation, the vitality of a community can suffer.

Today, some South Dakota communities can attest to the challenges they face: poverty, lack of resources, population out-migration, and lack of citizen participation. As a result, community citizens have realized that they must take purposeful steps in rebuilding capacity and vision for the future. They, like any of us, want a better quality of life for themselves and their community as a whole.

The Horizons Project has allowed 38 communities to engage in the building of local capacity and hope for the future. Goals have been identified and strategies put into place for accomplishing them. Citizens can now see the value and importance of involvement and voice and that their input is critical to a community taking action for their future, versus letting inaction dictate the future.

Community work is hard work. Yet the reward can be rich. Within these pages, you will read about the unique and impactful work of 38 communities who have changed their future. They have implemented strategies that both meet their local issues and build the capacity of their community. Their stories document what committed citizens can accomplish by first taking on responsibility and then taking action to change and guide their future.

As Margaret Mead, a famous U.S. anthropologist, once said: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever does.”

ISSUE

- A continually changing economy and migration to urban areas for jobs have taken their toll in rural communities. Faced with economic decline and demographic change, these rural communities are acknowledging the fact that they own their own fates and must work on complex issues from within. The Horizons project challenges community members to build their human capacity and address issues around poverty and leadership development.

The Horizons project helps them form a collective vision for the future.

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South Dakota Horizons project staff, left to right: Martha Landes, David Olson, Kelly Roseland, Dan Oedekoven, Cheryl Jacobs, Karla Trautman, Kari Fruechte, and Darah Darrington.

IMPACT

- Community coaching is a new method of education provided by the Extension Service. Participants in Horizons have often identified the important role of the coach, who continues to come back to town and rally the working committees. Coaches encourage the recruitment of participants from diverse backgrounds and experiences for each segment of the program. This diversity in age, education level, socioeconomic background, ethnicity, and experience demonstrates the power of involving all types of citizens in mobilizing around issues. Coaches listen and learn along with participants at all levels, yet also provide the expertise and connections necessary to move the group forward.
- 10 community-operated thrift stores have opened—Presho moved into a bigger space this year.
- 6 food pantries created or expanded—Leola even delivers.
- 12 individuals opened businesses influenced by Horizons involvement:
 - Frederick – convenience store and Frederick Café
 - Oldham – convenience store and bed & breakfast
 - Bison – bakery
 - Eureka – call center
 - Whitewood – paving company, credit union, and photography business
 - Armour – cabins
 - Philip – consignment store
 - Conde – gift shop in former school building
- 5 family nights where families regularly join together to enjoy food, games and movies.
- 7 community gardens and 6 farmers markets established—Porcupine also sells Native crafts.
- 3 health and fitness sites started, one in the Sanborn Central School.
- 2 wellness programs—50% of school students in Armour saw their first dentist with a Delta Dental mobile unit, and SDSU nursing students assessed the health of elementary students there, finding 7 conditions that needed further monitoring.

- 5 housing initiatives are taking inventory, clearing lots, and offering remodeled homes to new families.
- 3 transportation programs have been initiated—Hyde County involves a countywide system.
- 4 day cares, 3 youth centers, and 2 afterschool youth programs provide youth services; the Hot Springs Boys & Girls Club serves large numbers of school-age young people.
- 2 community areas on reservation land have begun Study Circles addressing racism—Wagner has conducted 5 rounds of dialogue and is presenting a workshop at a regional conference.
- Expanding leadership capacity
 - At least 17 Horizons participants have been elected to public offices, gaining new leadership. 69% of LeadershipPlenty participants report intentions to get more involved in community decision making.
- Hope and vision for the future
 - Youth participation led to the creation of ice-skating rinks, a skateboard park, youth centers, and free movies in the park. Elder coffee spots have opened. Adult education classes on topics like food preservation, money management, and computer skills have been well attended. 4 new community foundations are being established. Work on racism, entrepreneurship, improving recreational sites, and supporting new businesses show optimism in digging into deeper and more complex issues.
- Since Horizons began, at least \$1,336,450 has been brought into communities in grants and donations.

PARTNERS

The Northwest Area Foundation funds Horizons. In-state collaborators include USDA Rural Development, RC&D district offices, Governor’s Office of Economic Development, South Dakota Community Foundation, South Dakota Rural Enterprise, SDSU Engineering Dept., SDSU College of Nursing, SDSU College of Education & Human Sciences, South Dakota planning districts, South Dakota Housing Authority, Rural Learning Center, Consumer Credit Counseling, and small-business development centers. Regionally, we communicate with the Northern Plains Initiative and North Central Extension region. City councils, county commissioners, and a wide variety of local resource providers and businesses are additional partners.

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 St. Francis
 Timber Lake, Isabel,
 and Dupree
 Tripp
 Tyndall
 Volin/Gayville
 Wagner
 Whetstone Valley
 Whitewood

Armour Organizes School-wide Health Screening

In hard economic times, people cut back—even on preventive health care. The Armour Horizons team decided to organize a health-screening fair at the school to identify health needs that could use attention. Little did they know how great those needs were.

72 out of 77 eligible students in grades 7–12 were screened at no charge using ECHO, EKG, BP, or BMI tests:

- 30 students had at least one abnormal result.
- 1 student was discovered to have a heart murmur.

120 k–12 students had free dental exams:

- 50% of the students had never been to a dentist.
- 68 had tooth decay.
- 63% of those screened did not have insurance.
- \$16,325 worth of services provided from an investment of \$2,500.

Dental exams and follow-up work were provided by Delta Dental nonprofit and by University of South Dakota dental hygiene students. Other collaborators included Lions,

Avera Health, SDSU College of Nursing, Cooperative Extension, Sanford Hospital, Indian Health Service, Douglas County Health, EMTs, local businesses, and the Armour-Delmont School District. Free books and health care bags were given to students after they completed their exams.

Many parents were surprised to discover that their children had medical conditions that they did not know about. Others were pleased that their health care practices were affirmed. Everyone was grateful for the discoveries that led to better care of the community’s children.



Other Horizons activities:

- Started free clothing exchange.
- 5,000-plus free books given to children.
- Started school breakfast program.
- Revitalized community foundation.

POPULATION: 782
POVERTY RATE: 12.6%
COACH: David Olson

Other Horizons activities:

- Big Stone City held a successful “Winter Freecycle” in October. A roomful of good, donated winter clothing was collected, and the clothing was then offered for free to anyone.
- The new “Senior/Youth Connection” pairs volunteer youths with seniors who need help. Teens shoveled snow and helped move an elderly couple to another home.

POPULATION: 605
POVERTY RATE: 11.2%
COACH: Martha Landes

Big Senior Moments in Big Stone City

When naming the new monthly Horizons activity, Phyllis Lieb came up with a doozy: Breezers and Geezers. “I was thinking it would be mostly older people, and what do they like to do—shoot the breeze,” said Lieb.

Phyllis Gruenwald organizes the two-hour activities and hosts 8–15 people from Big Stone City and Ortonville, Minn. “I got involved because I visit with shut-ins and they seem so lonely,” Gruenwald says. “Getting them out once a month does them good. I offer rides to those who need them.”

Sharon Smith, who attends Breezers and Geezers, says the activity offers a chance to have fun and reconnect. “Oh, we visit and one lady plays piano, so we play ‘Name that Tune,’” says Smith. “We reminisce about topics such as our first job, favorite toy, best friend, etc. It’s great because people just don’t get together much anymore.”

With the success of Breezers and Geezers, more help for the seniors came forth. Elaine Hofhenke organized the “Senior Box” program to provide free, healthy foods for those over 60 and with a low income.

Every fourth Wednesday, Hofhenke drives to Milbank to get 13 boxes of commodities. The boxes are 40 lbs. each, so a group of youths are volunteering to help distribute them. “It is nice that they get a lot of good food each month without having to drive to get it,” says Hofhenke.

Aaron Smith, a Senior Box recipient, says he appreciates the program. “It’s quite a deal,” Smith says. “I like the juices, fruit, vegetables, and cheese.”

Big Stone City mayor Deb Wiik plans to add information about both programs on the back of water bills soon.



Preschool Debuts in Bison



A new preschool is open in Bison. This exciting addition to the community is the result of hard work on the part of Sarah Juergens, instructor and administrator.

The Horizons project, along with many church and community members, donated funds to start the new school. The Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church donated space, and many church and community members donated time and talent to prepare and furnish the space. One parishioner built a kitchen play center, complete with a stove, sink, and cupboards. Another made doll

clothes, and still other donated books and funds to purchase needed supplies.

Heidi Collins, an afterschool coordinator/teacher and member of the Horizons' Steering Committee, said, "Parents are very impressed with the new pre-school. They are amazed at what their children are learning. It was a great investment for our Horizons money. Christ Lutheran Preschool has been a great success."

According to Juergens, there are five students attending preschool regularly, with three already signed up for fall. The school meets two days per week, but there have been requests to expand to four days in the future. This year, following the Christmas program at the school, a non-church member came to Sarah and told her how grateful they were to have the school in the community.

Juergens said the preschool has been a success. "It has exceeded my expectations. I am very pleased with how it has been received by the community," she said. "Church members are thankful. It has helped to build faith, trust, and confidence in the community."

Other Horizons activities:

- "Making Your \$'s Stretch" and grant-writing workshops by Extension were well attended.
- Afterschool program youths worked with Master Gardeners to make a variety of things with pumpkins they grew in the community garden.
- A collaborative effort brought the community together for meal and future planning ideas.

POPULATION: 373
POVERTY RATE: 12.6%
COACH: Dan Oedekoven

Other Horizons activities:

- Received a grant from Midco for park improvements.
- Working with the city for a citywide cleanup—planning a full force to help do pick ups.
- The citywide newsletter is getting out to more people.

POPULATION: 2,841
POVERTY RATE: 15.9%
COACH: Dan Oedekoven

Box Elder's Future Expands



Box Elder is looking forward to physical city expansions, as well as to expanding the quality of life of its residents. Box Elder city government has plans to develop a downtown area, something the community never really had due to rapid growth. At the same time, Horizons projects are booming, and a collaboration between groups has been formed to coordinate development in the community.

Box Elder's Horizons goals are to create an education center, develop and implement a beautification plan, enhance business development and create jobs, enhance community communication, create a resource center, and provide more recreational and social opportunities for its residents. While, courtesy of city leaders, many of these proj-

ects were already in the idea stage, Horizons helped get additional people involved by providing the structure and funding to make the dreams a reality.

While the Horizons goals may appear to be unrelated, they are dependent on each other. Because Box Elder is so close to Rapid City, many people travel to there to spend their money. But without significant sales tax revenue, Box Elder itself has been unable to provide necessary services that help citizens stay in the community.

Box Elder public works director Al Todd said improved services can lead to improved communities. "By making the city more attractive, people are proud to live here," said Todd. "Education opportunities help people raise their quality of life. And educated people lead to higher paying jobs, which lead to additional business investments. And more businesses in the city provide additional revenue and allow the city to provide better services. It becomes a circle. Any journey begins with the first step, and Horizon's has provided that first step."

Conde Artisan's Gift Shop Opens



After Conde's school closed in 2009, utilizing the building space was important to the community. A Horizon's sponsored meeting in August 2008 featured Karla Benson from the Aberdeen Small Business Administration, and Benson started bringing out ideas. A "Conde artisan's gift shop" sounded like a possibility. The goal was to have the gift shop open in time for the pheasant-hunting opener in 2009.

The shop opened in October 2009 with 10 local people manning their own booths. It has now expanded to 18 vendors, including six from other communities, who display their gifts and crafts. A total of 525 volunteer hours have been donated since the shop opened. The Artisan's Gift Shop has hosted a grand opening, two open houses, a special visitation by the Red Hat Society, and a gathering with gubernatorial candidate Dennis Daugaard. Over 300 have visited the shop since it opened.

The Artisan's Gift Shop includes items such as unique jewelry, doll furniture, etched and stained glass, crocheted rugs, quilted items, pheasant-feather crafts, wooden items, and many other home-based business products. The store is open limited hours on weekends and plans an arts and craft show in the spring. Organizer Bev Wright says the shop is also open by special appointment, and the community is always happy to host visitors.

Other Horizons activities:

- The school is also home to a private preschool and a fitness center. Plans are in the works for a public library, an antique store, and a coffee shop.
- Life skills classes for young people are continuing.
- A "transition picnic" was held for students attending new schools. T-shirts from the new schools were given out.

POPULATION: 187
POVERTY RATE: 15.1%
COACH: Cheryl Jacobs

Other Horizons activities:

- Summer farmers market.
- Visitation Committee that sends military packages to local troops.
- Resource directory.
- Senior meal delivery efforts begun, currently using high school students to make deliveries.

POPULATION: 322
POVERTY RATE: 13.3%
COACH: Darah Darrington

Eden and Roslyn See Trees in Their Future

Knowing that people gain pride when they live in a well-kept community, one of the issues the Eden/Roslyn Horizons team chose to tackle was city cleanup. Highly committed members of this committee wasted no time in researching ways to enhance community beautification. A large concern was the emerald ash borer, which has been consuming trees in neighboring states and is soon to hit this region.

One Eden committee member developed a plan to spruce up Eden's streets by cutting down numerous structurally deficient trees last fall and planning to replant new trees this spring. Stuart Samson, also an Eden City Council member, found the solution by networking and connecting with resources. Samson wrote a grant and was awarded \$1,000 by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture. Horizons is providing matching funds for the grant.

"Most trees on the boulevard were planted way too close and starting to choke each other out. That doesn't make for a healthy tree," Samson says. "And most of the trees



planted are green ash. With the threat of emerald ash bore getting closer and closer, we want to be proactive on the situation."

Roslyn- and Eden-area residents are truly accomplishing community development goals for the betterment of their communities by collaborating as a region and working to pass on a legacy.

Kids Eat Up Gardening in Estelline

*Peppers are green
Tomatoes are red
I like cabbage so much
I could eat a whole head*
— *Leannah Tikrony, Estelline youth gardener*

Who says children can't provide for their families? Fourteen area children ages 5–12 participated in the second annual Children's Garden as part of the successful Estelline Lister Donley Community Garden.

Horizons Green Committee member Linda Svec helped organize the weekly two-hour program for youth, which involved gardening and journaling. Special guests included an entomologist, an author, a poet, a sculptor, a Master Gardener, and a food-safety specialist.

Horizons member and dietician Sharon Klosterman presented a session on nutrition. "I encouraged the kids to try new vegetables," said Klosterman. "Most of them actually liked the fresh raw cabbage they picked and ate."

The garden is located on the land of Harvey Donley and is named for his father, who



promoted gardening for children but died the year Estelline started the Horizons program.

Svec said many people besides children are involved in the garden. "An elderly fellow decided to garden as a hobby over the summer," said Svec. "He fed fruits and vegetables to his diabetic wife, and her insulin requirements went down 70 percent."

Estelline's popular farmers market had a successful third season with many items selling out within the first hour. Produce such as green beans, snap peas, and kale from the Children's Garden were also available for sale. Stop by Estelline Fridays from 4:30–6:30 p.m. and eat fresh!

Other Horizons activities:

- A can-recycling trailer has brought in \$1,600 in 2½ years with earnings going to Missoula Children's Theatre, Community Garden, movies, and other Horizons projects.
- Inflatable movie screen—used for summer movies, homecoming coronation, and community events.
- Estelline Today—a free service to provide daily local information. Call 873-4EST (873-4378) to hear what's happening.

POPULATION: 675
POVERTY RATE: 12.7%
COACH: Martha Landes

Other Horizons activities:

- Avera Eureka Health Care Center will break ground this spring to add a chapel to their facility.
- Voters recently overwhelmingly approved construction of a second 4-plex housing unit for unsubsidized rental housing.
- Eureka Chamber of Commerce placed a second billboard directing travelers to Eureka. Costs shared by Eureka Community Development Company and city of Eureka.

POPULATION: 1,101
POVERTY RATE: 15.9%
COACH: Cheryl Jacobs

Fitness Center Nearing Reality in Eureka

Just in time for winter workouts and fulfillment of New Year's resolutions, a fitness center will open in early 2010 in Eureka.

People living in and around Eureka have long wished for this facility. The problem wasn't enthusiasm; the problem was the lack of a building. Every time a building was located, the building was sold for another purpose. When one of the local cafes closed in the fall of 2009, with no plans to reopen, the lease for the fitness center became a reality.

The Eureka Community Development Company received \$20,000 in grant money (\$10,000 each from the Avera Foundation and the South Dakota Community Foundation) to purchase equipment and renovate the building. Good, used commercial equipment was purchased from closed fitness centers. Treadmills, ellipticals, weights, stationary bikes, other specialized equipment, and a scale fill the space. The walls are covered with posters and mirrors.

The Eureka Fitness Center is overseen by a volunteer board of directors. Membership

dues will pay all expenses. Getting necessary licenses, establishing membership rates, rules for usage, and hours of operation are all decisions to be made as the facility is established and managed by the board. The Small Business Development Center has proven invaluable with these and other decisions throughout the entire process of opening the facility.

Excitement is running high as new members anticipate the new opportunities soon to be available in Eureka. A fitness center provides yet another reason to live in this rural community.



Faith Spreads Holiday Cheer

When Sandy Rasmussen got involved with Horizons in Faith, she started thinking about ways to make people of all income levels feel like they belonged and were cared for in their community. During discussions in Study Circles, an idea came to her that has made holidays special for many Faith residents.

Sandy and her husband, JR, act as the hosts for a community meal at both Thanksgiving and Christmastime. They invite people to the Frontier Room on Main Street, where they join in a meal with others who have no family around or have no extra money to buy fixings for a holiday feast. The meal is often added to by people who bring a dish to pass. The afternoon is spent socializing, and this year, listening to a local guitar artist who volunteered to provide music.

This year at Thanksgiving, three missionaries from Indiana stopped in and ate. They were delivering meals around the reservation, and thought they were stopping at a restaurant to eat. When they discovered what was happening, they felt very blessed that they were out giving meals to others,



and ended up receiving a meal themselves.

Last year, 13 people attended the free meal, while attendance grew to 23 this year. More community members are starting to get involved as they see the benefits to others. During this year's Christmas storm, people were unable to venture out to the free meal. Instead, the Faith Police Department delivered the home-cooked meals to many elderly and needy people who otherwise would have been alone.

Other Horizons activities:

- "Paint South Dakota" project granted Horizons paint for a second house this year.
- The fitness center on Main Street has seen increased use and has expanded to two rooms.
- Horizons continues to connect groups in the community that now communicate better.

POPULATION: 489
POVERTY RATE: 10.8%
COACH: Dan Oedekoven

Other Horizons activities:

- Inflatable theater used for summer movies in the park and available for rent. There is a plan to hire a manager for the theater as a small business.
- Students from SDSU's Department of Engineering are studying Frederick's auditorium. A "secret garden" is one item being considered.
- New signs planned along Highway 281, including a large "Welcome" sign.

POPULATION: 255
POVERTY RATE: 11.4%
COACH: Cheryl Jacobs

Frederick Finn Fest Unites Community



Frederick residents know their community is small—that's something they enjoy. But the Horizons team also proved that they stand strong and united. Frederick is working on using Finn Fest, a three-day festival that celebrates Frederick and its Finnish heritage, as a way to promote the town to those who live in the region.

The festival grew impressively in its second year. Attendance more than doubled to over 500 people. A number of families and a high school alumni class planned reunions around the festival. Community involvement also increased significantly; about \$5,800 was raised in sponsorships, and the community came alive with activity as they prepared

for and participated in the event. Local groups such as churches and the Teener baseball team raised funds during the event by serving as vendors, and local historic sites gained visitors during the festival.

Finn Fest Committee members hope to add to the "Finnishness" of the event each year, so the local community can become more aware of its heritage and so other Finns in the region (including North Dakota and Minnesota) see Finn Fest as a place to celebrate their heritage. Plans include featuring more Finnish foods, entertainment, and activities, as well as developing a Finnish theme each year. Frederick Forward, the host group for the original Horizons program, has also discussed building a sauna in the town, which would encourage visitors throughout the year.

Building Business in Gregory

The Gregory Horizons team believes that change comes one step at a time, and the best way to change their economy is to build one community business at a time. As a first step, the team organized an entrepreneur's fair and brought in all types of resource agencies. However, out of 28 people attending, only three were potential entrepreneurs.

The team then decided to find a program that would help people develop a business idea. When Cooperative Extension hired entrepreneur specialist Dr. Larry Swain, Gregory Horizons volunteered to test pilot the "Business Management Program." This six-session, interactive workshop resulted in a completed business plan designed by each participant.

Fourteen people from the region were recruited for the classes. They each wanted to develop a new business or product, or they wanted to expand their current business. Twelve people have completed their business plans and are ready to begin implementing them. Ideas that may develop include expanding a grass-fed-beef Internet



business, manufacturing energy-efficient homes, a natural-grass and wild-flower seed business, a bed and breakfast, expanding a car wash, expanding a motel, a horse owner's advice service, a nonprofit community corporation, and several new inventions.

The Horizons team will create a support committee to assist the participants who are seeking funding and dealing with challenges. Three additional communities have scheduled the Business Management Program during the first half of 2010.

Other Horizons activities:

- Opened a thrift store and adding a food pantry.
- Started a local transportation service.
- Held mentoring workshops for parents.

POPULATION: 1,342
POVERTY RATE: 18.8%
COACH: David Olson

Other Horizons activities:

Centennial Park construction:

- Built community relations among different age groups and income levels.
- Provided a forum for important discussions about many items, including the clinic and the school bond issue (which passed).
- Allowed new people to engage in community activities.
- Demonstrated the positive outcomes of conflict and problem solving.

POPULATION: 1,353
POVERTY RATE: 21.1%
COACH: Dan Oedekoven

Harding County Rallies for Community Health

Harding County has had a Hospital Association since the 1940s, but because the supervising medical facility in Rapid City was withdrawing its support, the county was in danger of losing its only medical facility. Losing the facility would mean that local residents would need to drive at least 70 miles to seek medical care.

In order to help, the Horizons group partnered with the local hospital board to keep Horizons actively engaged in the activities of the clinic. This included planning for

the upkeep and the rental of the building, while also working with the clinic to provide needed outreach services.

During subsequent months, other health services have been added to the community through the clinic site, including the services of an eye doctor, a chiropractor, and even a domestic violence prevention group. In addition, a weight-loss group has started and will be meeting every week at the clinic; the weight-loss group's focus areas are nutrition education and physical activity plans.



Hot Springs Community Action Comes to Life

The Hot Springs Horizons team began with a big list of community-change efforts that could improve the quality of life for area residents. Not unlike other Horizons communities, the efforts that first took shape kept youth and people in need at the top of the list.

The Boys & Girls Club of Hot Springs opened in January 2009 with only 15 members. Today the club has more than 200 members and serves an average of 60 kids per day. In addition to providing a safe place for kids after school and during the summer, the club has also added one full-time and three part-time jobs to the community. This year the club is gearing up to move to a larger space. With a volunteer board that raises and manages a \$100,000 budget, the Horizons Youth task force can boast of success.

Hot Springs' Community Action Program has also stepped up to serve more people in need. The office is in a new location, has added a thrift store manager, and has revamped programs that the community

lost prior to Horizons. Renewed strength is shown in the Community Action Team (CAT) that now holds monthly open-to-the-public meetings for increased community input and transparency. Team member Penny Wood said the atmosphere has greatly improved for volunteers and customers of the thrift store, and that issues beyond the scope of everyday workings have been addressed.

Hot Springs continues to look to the Horizons in meeting the needs of its people.



Other Horizons activities:

- Published 29-page community resource directory with plans to continually update.
- School-supply vouchers and summer rec voucher to each Boys & Girls club member in collaboration with Pamida and local agencies.
- Horizons participants involved in Hot Springs "Distinctive Destination" award and marketing campaign.

POPULATION: 4,129
POVERTY RATE: 14.8%
COACH: Dan Oedekoven

Other Horizons activities:

- A food pantry was created. An average of 12 families a month use the services.
- A student backpack program will be launched in cooperation with the Highmore-Harold School District to send nutritious food home with k-5 students over the week-ends.
- Launched a community education initiative—including computer literacy, family budgeting, and nutritious cooking.

POPULATION: 1,671
POVERTY RATE: 12.3%
COACH: Kelly Roseland

Hyde County Gives Wheels to Residents

The Hyde County Horizons Resource Committee is dedicated to finding ways of making life better in their small county. They know that providing necessary transportation is a need that, if filled, strengthens businesses and everyone's quality of life.

After several committee members attended a Horizons-sponsored resource fair in Pierre, ideas sprouted. One speaker asked participants what they most wanted to see happen in their communities. Nearly every community wanted some type of public transportation. "Knowing that Hyde County has a large population of elderly and wheelchair-bound people, and how difficult it is to transport them, our committee got to work," says Deb Rinehart.

Several telephone calls were made to com-



munities with existing public transportation, and the group learned about available federal funding. The more they talked, the more excited they became. The group invited their closest Community Action Program (ROCS) to come and speak. The conversations led to the use of two vans, and several dedicated community people volunteered their time to drive. Hyde County's transportation system was born.

The group visited the Hyde County Commissioners and Highmore City Council to address the issue of continued funding. They took letters from people needing transit and explained how federal funding, with help from county and city budgets, would make it affordable. All voted to fund the project, which opened the door to pay drivers.

The benefits are many: With door-to-door service, people can stay in their homes and remain in their small community. Working parents can send their children to school without missing work. And, finally, the service creates jobs, a winning situation for Hyde County.

Iroquois Strikes “Gold” with Regional Partnership

Iroquois, Cavour, and Yale are positioned in a geographical triangle and collectively have become known as “The Golden Triangle.” This cooperative effort, which began in October 2008 and became the home of the Iroquois Horizons team, promises to make them even stronger.

“Our goal is to keep in touch with our neighboring towns” says Iroquois Horizons member Marlys Peskey.

Their slogan, “Three communities, one vision,” tells it all, as the three communities provide meaningful support to one another and the shared Iroquois School District. The group meets at least three times a year and discusses both issues that affect them and how to make their communities better. In addition, they hold town hall meetings and seminars to educate and get input from community members. In fact, a “Saving Money by Saving Energy” workshop was held in late January.

The Golden Triangle plans to promote this collaboration by selling shirts, even including smaller, nearby communities on the

back of the shirt. The shirts will say, “You may blink, but we are still here . . . Cavour, Yale, Iroquois, Esmond, Bancroft, Carpenter, Carthage, Osceola and Manchester.”

Mary Jane Fast, from the Golden Triangle and the Beadle and Spink Enterprise Community (BASEC) in Yale, says, “We are three communities in one school district that are very passionate about our future and the future of our youth.”



Other Horizons activities:

- Park improvements include new benches and a sand volleyball court.
- “Backpacks for Kids” program provides healthy foods for children over the week-end.
- Plans are being made to build much-needed playground equipment at the park.

POPULATION: 278
POVERTY RATE: 17.4%
COACH: Martha Landes

Other Horizons activities:

- The Housing Committee will be using the “South Dakota Housing Playbook” to guide them in decisions about providing adequate homes.
- The Cleanup Committee will work with the city in the spring to gather unused items.
- A community resource directory is in the works for area residents.

POPULATION: 706
POVERTY RATE: 13.8%
COACH: Kelly Roseland

Horizons Makes Christmas Brighter in Kadoka

The Kadoka Horizons team knew that Christmas should be a time for children and families to look forward to a little extra cheer. They came up with three ways to help people in need, while strengthening community traditions.

Every year, grade school students in Kadoka, like in many towns, draw names for a gift exchange. For some students, it can be embarrassing when their families do not have an extra \$5 for a gift. Sometimes teachers buy extra gifts to have on hand, but this year Horizons took on the project. They contacted parents and assured them that there would be a gift at school for their child to give, and the children would be told the gift was dropped off by their parents.

An old tradition that Horizons decided to bring back was taking a trailer loaded with a Christmas tree and bags of candy and peanuts around town delivering treats to households. This year, Kadoka’s kids ran along with the trailer and left bags of treats with residents at their homes. More kids continued to join the delivery throughout the

evening, and great community spirit was felt.

Finally, Kadoka Horizons submitted names of people in need to a drawing for Christmas food. Ten names were drawn, and each household received a basket full of food for a holiday meal. The gift baskets were delivered with the treats from the traveling trailer.

Continuing to help people feel pride and belonging in their community gives Kadoka hope for its future.



Kimball Food Pantry Goal: A Statewide Network



When new resident Maria Burch became involved in the Kimball Horizons team, she brought a new perspective to the discussions. She found it difficult to get answers to her questions about Kimball’s services, and thought the same might be true for seasoned residents.

The Horizons team decided to create a community resource center—a place to get answers and assistance, and to hold meetings. It will include space for educational activities, a new residents’ center, help for

start-up businesses, a food pantry, and assistance to low-income families. Organizers are learning about local, state, and federal resources in order to refer families in need and successfully coach them.

Two “food raising” events have been held, and food is being distributed to those who are in need. Efforts are being coordinated with other helping agencies. The group is investigating the resources of the Community Food Bank of South Dakota, with a long-range goal of developing a network of food pantries in small towns. This will allow access to truckloads of food and a system to distribute food on short notice.

The system would depend on member pantries furnishing volunteers and participating in transportation costs. The intent is to deliver more food to those who need it. Thinking beyond traditional community lines will assist many South Dakota families in need.

Other Horizons activities:

- Publishing a community newsletter.
- Creating a directory of available housing.
- Developing a community foundation.

POPULATION: 745
POVERTY RATE: 10.9%
COACH: David Olson

Other Horizons activities:

- “Family movie nights” have become a regular event through Horizons and the city of Leola, which donates the use of one of its properties. A free-will offering helps defray costs.
- The Piggy Bank Thrift Shop is open three days a week, and there has been great response for donated items. A local hairstylist had a “Charity Haircut Day” to help get business going. The business site is also a donation.

POPULATION: 462
POVERTY RATE: 10.8%
COACH: Cheryl Jacobs

Leola Food Pantry Starts “Backpacks for Kids”

The Leola Area Food Pantry, a Horizons project, officially started Jan. 1, 2009. In the spring, the committee decided to incorporate “Backpacks for Kids” for anyone 18 years and younger. The backpacks are filled with approximately two days of kid-friendly food to help supply nutrition either over the weekend or whenever the young people need it.

Backpacks are available at Leola Grocery during business hours, or people can call a contact number for more information. One backpack per child per year is issued, and the backpack is numbered on an inside pocket. Once a week the backpacks can be refilled at Leola Grocery. If the youngsters come for a refill without their backpack, a grocery sack is used instead. The food pantry buys all of the backpack items at Leola Grocery to keep the money local. All food pantry information is kept strictly confidential.

“Partnerships are very important with a project like this, and we have been very fortunate to have the community’s support,” says committee member Melissa Lapka.

“The owner of Leola Grocery has been very helpful; they are very willing to be the site for picking up and refilling the backpacks. The Piggy Bank Thrift Shop places fliers in purchases made there, mentioning ‘Backpacks for Kids’ and the contact number. The Leola community has been awesome at making monetary and food donations. We couldn’t supply the needed food without the community’s generosity.”



Montrose “Spudfest” Raises Funds

The Montrose “Irish Spudfest” offers more than potatoes to those in need. This annual August event has become a community tradition after only three years. It has proven to generate community spirit and help eliminate poverty—two goals of their Horizons strategic plan.

Spudfest activities include a parade, a 5k run, vendor booths, a silent auction, a dunk tank, cow pie bingo, kickball, bean bag tournaments, and live entertainment. The children’s area, “Tater Tots,” provides free inflatables, a barrel train, and potato-related games for little ones, and the Community Garden Committee holds a potato dig and serves up fresh, fried potatoes and other produce straight from the garden. “It’s a fun day that is very inexpensive for the community,” says organizer Charla Cope, who is also the mayor of Montrose.

Through generous donations from area businesses, most activities are offered free, and proceeds from the tournaments, concessions, the 5K, and the silent auction go in part to the “Cash for Community Causes” fund.



Cash for Community Causes helps people in need make payments for necessities. Horizons members recruited representatives from the school, each church, and the business community to be on the Cash for Community Causes Committee. The committee suggests recipients and reviews applications for assistance. At least eight families have been helped so far, with funds to cover rent, utilities, paint, house payments, and fees for children’s sporting activities.

“We are a giving and helpful community,” says Cope. “This is just another way that we can help. Some people have fallen on hard times and have needed extra assistance.”

Other Horizons activities:

- Community-education classes on computer skills, money management, and canning fresh foods.
- Community Garden received a \$2,500 Fiskars Grant to purchase gardening equipment and seed. Produce is offered every week on Main Street, and items not taken are delivered free to people in need.
- The Montrose Community Foundation was formed and has received over \$26,000 in donations.

POPULATION: 460
POVERTY RATE: 11.8%
COACH: Martha Landes

Other Horizons activities:

- North Dam project to improve access to recreational activities at the lake.
- Murdo City Park spruce up in collaboration with the Prairie Rangers 4-H Club.
- “Community Garden” project that offers produce to community members

POPULATION: 612
POVERTY RATE: 12.1%
COACH: Kelly Roseland

Murdo Uses Celebrity to Improve Youth Activities



A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held this fall to inaugurate the Turner Community Center, formerly the old Murdo Theater. Ted Turner, the project’s funder, was on hand to praise the efforts. After approximately 2,000 volunteer hours in planning and laboring on the project, the first movie was shown.

Ted Turner is a landowner in Jones County, and he gave funds to establish the Turner Youth Foundation in 2004. The foundation’s focus is on changes youth want to see in

Murdo to keep their hometown thriving. The board of the foundation consists of three adults and six grade-7–12 students.

The task of reopening the town’s theater, which was closed in the ‘70s, began in 2008. The nearest movie theater was 60 miles away, and young people thought drawing people to town would not only give families an activity but also bring in people from surrounding areas to spend money in other Murdo businesses. The board learned about drawing up a business plan, fundraising for the project, and the labor involved in restoration. A total of \$96,000 was spent.

The new community center will be used as a facility for meetings and social events and as a place to play video games on the big screen. It will be run by volunteers from the board and from the community. The Horizons group partnered with many other area businesses and organizations to help make this collaborative project a reality for Murdo.

Newell Groups Unite for Progress



One of the keys to a successful small town is getting all the service organizations to work in partnership on projects. Newell's community groups have worked together to build a brighter Newell during the course of their Horizons journey. The first major project was a collaborative effort between the city of Newell, the Horizons team, the local Thrivent Chapter, and Newell fireman. All contributed to put up a much-needed picnic shelter in the park. The groups intend to add electricity and lighting in the future.

Next, Horizons teamed with the city and brought in the Lions Club to put up new street signs around Newell. Many of the old signs were broken, mismatched, or completely missing; it was becoming a safety issue for 911 calls. The Horizons group reviewed city maps to determine what was needed, made sure the spelling was correct, and then ordered the signs. They were ordered in school colors to promote unity and pride for the school. The Lions Club put up the signs for the community.

Numerous volunteers and groups have also participated in community cleanup days. Horizons worked with the city to establish "free dump days" and a "hot line" where members of the community could call for assistance with items they wanted hauled to the dump. Amanda Keller from the Horizons group said, "Many trips to the dump have resulted in a more beautiful community and a sense of community spirit. When we all work together, much can be accomplished!"

Other Horizons activities:

- Planted new trees at the high school.
- Improved communication between the city and service groups.

POPULATION: 646
POVERTY RATE: 13.7%
COACH: Dan Oedekoven

Other Horizons activities:

- Two-year-old Dragon's Den convenience store and coffee shop makes essentials available locally and is a popular hangout for coffee and visiting.
- Free camp-out weekend for kids held
- "Home Away From Home" rental home opened and is available. It is attractive to hunters and those visiting family in area.

POPULATION: 206
POVERTY RATE: 20.3%
COACH: Martha Landes

Lots of Free Lots in Oldham

Through Horizons, Oldham recognized the need for a 501c3 organization and formed the Oldham Area Improvement Corporation (OAIC) especially to address the need for affordable housing.

The OAIC worked with the commissioners of Kingsbury County to get tax-delinquent property turned over to them for the purpose of making the lots available free to anyone wishing to build a house or move in a manufactured home. The organization has worked hard to clean up the lots and currently has five double-sized lots available for building. The OAIC is hopeful that someone will take advantage of the opportunity to live in this cozy small town.

The OAIC has contacted ICAP, their area "community action program," about the possibility of a partnership to develop cluster houses where up to five prospective homeowners work together to build a group of affordable homes to be purchased.

The OAIC has advertised the free lots on craigslist.org and has had dozens of inquiries from California to Florida and in

between. Oldham mayor and OAIC president Roger Eide says, "The most common question asked is if the offer is really free. It is."

There have been nine applications for the lots, and developer's agreements have been sent to all of the applicants. Currently, OAIC is waiting to receive the developer's agreements back.

The Oldham group has also partnered with a grass-roots school organization called MORE (Making Oldham-Ramona Excellent). Through this organization there has been an aggressive advertising program to promote the school and both the Oldham and the Ramona communities.



Branding Gives Philip an Edge on Marketing

Great ideas were generated through the Study Circles and LeadershipPlenty portion of Philip’s Horizons program. Those ideas then mixed with a Horizons regional workshop where Milan Wall, from Nebraska’s Heartland Leadership Center, encouraged the group to be bold and think “out-of-the-box” about community branding. That groundwork led the group to focus on a marketing committee to find a brand to take Philip forward.

The Marketing Committee decided to revisit the current logo, slogan, and other branding concepts for the community. They conducted a community survey about a slogan, but low response sent them back to the drawing board. They then invited a more-local guest speaker to give a presentation about branding. Dustin Floyd and Dan Daly, from Deadwood’s TDG Communications, got the town excited about several new ideas, including a Facebook page where the committee can interact with and ask questions of its Facebook fans. The presentation was attended by about 20 passionate people,

and the response was so enthusiastic that the committee has invited TDG to come back and provide more assistance as they develop their branding efforts.

This fall, committee co-chair Mary Burnett took the initiative to apply to the South Dakota Department of Transportation for a special highway designation. Burnett’s request was supported by Philip mayor John Hart and by Ft. Pierre mayor Sam Tidball. Now, South Dakota Highway 14 between the towns of Philip and Fort Pierre will officially receive the designation of the “James ‘Scotty’ Philip Highway.” The committee plans to continue the branding project and look for other ways they can show their pride for their small town.



Other Horizons activities:

- Farmers market going strong July through October with the theme “All Things Local.”
- Chamber of Commerce reorganized with key Horizons leaders as officers.
- Work will continue the summer and fall to improve the community pool and kiddie complex.

POPULATION: 885
POVERTY RATE: 11.0%
COACH: Kelly Roseland

Other Horizons activities:

- Managing the Senior Meal program.
- Family movies in the park.
- Getting a local food pantry running.

POPULATION: 588
POVERTY RATE: 11.2%
COACH: Kelly Roseland

From Trash to Treasure in Presho!



When the Horizons group in Presho opened their small thrift store at the end of Main Street in May of 2008, they had no idea how fast it would grow. By May of 2009, they took out a loan to buy a larger vacant Main Street building from the Chamber of Commerce. The move has been a good one, and after a contest to name the new place, “Thrift Store & More” was christened.

Run strictly by volunteers, the thrift store has used very creative ideas to raise money for operation. The usual barbecue and ice cream sundae fundraisers have helped bring in operating funds, but the big fundraiser is the Fashion Show, now an annual event held the first weekend in October.

One hundred ten people attended this year’s fashion show, which featured local models showing off great finds at the store, plus desserts and coffee. Models get to keep their outfits, and the audience is treated to an unveiling of choice clothing they can purchase that day. A free-will offering is taken, and to add to the excitement, a dessert auction is held after the show. A local auctioneer donated his time to help collect a nice sum to add to the thrift store account.

The main challenge the thrift store has today is trying to give back the profits from the store to aid in local causes. The committee is working on developing a way to distribute funds, as well as starting a local food pantry. As a business, these challenges would seem to indicate success!

Reliance Host to Regional Housing Forum

Reliance is a small community that has found itself in a unique position because of its location to neighboring towns. Over the past decade, Reliance's population has climbed slowly but surely, not because of the businesses or jobs that can be found there but rather as a bedroom community for the surrounding towns. However, the population has plateaued in recent years due to a housing shortage: almost all habitable homes are occupied. Several families seeking to live in Reliance have been turned away and forced to live elsewhere.

The city of Reliance and the Horizons Housing Committee hosted a regional housing forum this fall. The forum was held to

garner ideas about what a small community can and should do to promote housing development. The meeting was attended by 52 people, not only Reliance residents and local contractors but also visitors from several surrounding communities interested in developing housing.

Kelly Roseland, Horizons coach, helped line up speakers that had knowledge about state and federal programs that invest in housing development in communities. Discussions ranged from an in-depth overview of the programs available to an informative talk about a housing project Centerville recently completed and the resources used in the project.

Eric Ambrosion, from the 3rd Planning District, one of the evening's speakers, is now coming back for a smaller meeting in Reliance. He will discuss more details of assistance in regard to meeting housing needs. The connections made in Horizons will help Reliance and nearby towns zone in on housing needs.



Other Horizons activities:

- During a community cleanup in spring 2009, a student volunteer group from the University of Minnesota donated 35 students and 300 hours of labor to the project.
- Successfully launched a local farmers market initiative.
- Redesigned and re-landscaped the port of entry to the community.

POPULATION: 206
POVERTY RATE: 11.2%
COACH: Kelly Roseland

Other Horizons activities:

- Plans to hold first annual Nobles Trail Rummage Sale—a big tri-community event—in September 2010 with lots of activities.
- New bathroom facilities built in Letcher Park.
- Good Stuff! Committee helps people with unexpected challenges in the community by holding benefits and offering assistance.

POPULATION: 374
POVERTY RATE: 14.8%
COACH: Martha Landes

Sanborn Central Works Out a Fitness Center

The Sanborn Central Fitness Center is alive and kicking (and pedaling and running)!

The tri-community effort to start a fitness center in the shared Sanborn Central School has been a big success, with over 1,000 people signing in so far.

It started with an idea from Horizons member Leona Klinkner. "I thought people needed a place for therapy without having to drive to Mitchell or Madison, so we looked into it," said Klinkner.

With the support of the Horizons committee, Klinkner spoke with school superintendent Linda Whitney, and a plan was made. Horizons purchased an elliptical machine, a stair stepper, and a stationary bike. In addition, the school received a physical education grant for three more pieces of equipment. The weight room was then transformed into a full-fledged fitness center, open to anyone anytime the building is open.

People from all three communities use the equipment. Senior citizens from Artesian come twice a week for prescribed physical therapy, members of the school staff exer-

cise daily, and students use it in PE class and on breaks with Whitney's permission.

"One fellow said, 'I don't think anyone will use it way out here,'" Klinkner said. "I'm so proud to prove him wrong. And by the way, he thought it was a good idea in the end."

Whitney said the collaboration between Horizons and the school has been rewarding. "It gets the community in our nice school facility," she said. "It also shows students that fitness is a lifelong activity. No matter your age, you need to stay fit."



Growing Up with a Youth Center in Scotland



Homework first, then play—that’s the rule at the Scotland Youth Center. This after-school center was the vision of two Horizons members: Shelly Konstanz, who has three children too old for day care but too young to be home alone; and Erin Odens, who was thinking ahead for her little ones. “We wanted a safe place in town for kids to be off the streets, supervised and with structured activities,” said Odens.

Horizons rented a spot on Main Street and with the help of a 20th Century Grant were able to pay staff. The funding ran out this year, but the community has stepped up by

donating money to pay for the director and three part-time employees. Proceeds from a recycling program, the “Harvest of Soups,” a bake sale, and a haunted house go to the Youth Center.

In addition to the paid staff, retired school teachers volunteer to tutor children daily. It is truly a community-wide effort, and connecting the generations adds another beneficial dimension.

The center had served children grades 1–12 for afterschool activities, but this year added kindergarten to the already-popular center.

Tuition amount varies depending on the number of children from a household, but there is a drop-in rate of \$1 per day. The generosity of community members has made scholarships available so that no child is turned away, regardless of ability to pay. This year, 90 percent of the children are on some type of scholarship, proving the need for assistance. Spending time in the youth center makes growing up in Scotland a little friendlier.

Other Horizons activities:

- Good Stuff! provides free household items and furniture on an as-needed basis.
- A community foundation is starting.
- Fleece For Families provided 49 fleece blankets to those who needed some extra warmth.

POPULATION: 891
POVERTY RATE: 11.4%
COACH: Martha Landes

Other Horizons activities:

- The Horizons committee is partnering with the Northwest Area Foundation on Diversity Study Circles to bridge gaps and help with cultural understanding.
- The committee also hopes to work with the city to install a bike/walking trail.
- Plans are under way to update the Sisseton Strategic Plan.

POPULATION: 2,572
POVERTY RATE: 18.4%
COACH: Martha Landes

Be Green, Be Clean, Be Proud—Sisseton!

The Horizons Recycling Committee is really cleaning up! Sisseton’s most active Horizons committee is making a big effort to encourage environmental consciousness.

Starting a few years ago with a “spring swap” and town cleanup, the committee gave out free brooms and rakes. On St. Patrick’s Day 2009, they held a “Go Green” event and the community participated in an interactive survey about recycling. The guest speaker, from MinnKota Recycling in Fargo, enlightened the crowd of 100 about the benefits of recycling. That evening, they recycled batteries.

The biggest recycling event occurred last April, when Horizons held a successful electronics-recycling program. Over 500 computer monitors and TVs were collected for transportation to Wisconsin for safe disposal. The committee took care of the cost of shipping to move the large load, and that’s not cheap. Boy Scout Troop 35 helped prepare the pallets of electronics.

A number of other corded items were also collected and picked up by a recycling busi-



ness from North Dakota. “People thanked us for doing this,” says Horizons member Sandi Jaspers. “They didn’t want to just throw things out and didn’t know what to do with them. It made you realize that there are a lot of people who want to think green.”

“It really jump-started people in Sisseton and surrounding communities on recycling,” said Recycling Committee member Theresa Chilson. “It truly was a joint effort from the schools, businesses, students, and residents, old and young.”

St. Francis Encourages Local Businesses

For a community of over 600 people, St. Francis is short on businesses and long on unemployment. Residents must often drive out of town to find jobs. With unreliable transportation and young families, this causes a real challenge.

Part of the Rosebud Reservation, St. Francis was originally named Owl Bonnet. Its early Lakota people have a rich history of self-sustainability. Lifelong resident and enthusiastic Horizons organizer Lone Quigley says, "Our people today have many talents. They just need help figuring out ways to use their talents to support their families."

Quigley, along with a Horizons committee, launched the Owl Bonnet Entrepreneur Fair on Dec. 12, 2009. The group put together an impressive program mixed with experts on entrepreneurial assistance and successful Lakota entrepreneurs. Folks like Donita Fischer, of Four Bands Community Funds, spoke of their support of small businesses on the Cheyenne River Reservation. Fischer brought along proof of their success in RJ Lawrence, a young Lakota entrepreneur who

built a lawn-care business in his community at the age of 18. The presenters at the fair could not help but inspire others considering a business of their own.

The next step for this project is a Dakota Digital Network (DDN) broadcast of the fair. Bringing the presenters together via distance education will allow regional high school youth, educators, and interested adults to hear the speakers' stories. The committee learned there is assistance available for aspiring entrepreneurs, but the community has the responsibility to support them and keep their businesses growing.



Other Horizons activities:

- Family-based activities.
- Traditional youth activities.
- A new park.

POPULATION: 675
POVERTY RATE: 57.1%
COACH: Kari Fruechte

Other Horizons activities:

- Communities operate regionally searching for economic development opportunities through TREE (Tri-community Economic Enhancement).
- The annual Christmas cantata attracts singers and an audience from all three communities.
- Each community markets themselves in the region and state with slogans created in Horizons.

POPULATION: 1,116
POVERTY RATE: 37.4%
COACH: Cheryl Jacobs

Timber Lake, Isabel, and Dupree Rally for Tots

Finding affordable, quality day care is a challenge for many small communities in South Dakota. Rural communities face unique challenges as they struggle to find funding, facilities, and a sustainable solution to creating a small business. In north central South Dakota, three Horizons communities have worked to create three separate community day care centers.

In Timber Lake, the creation of the community day care helped in the creation of one part-time and two full-time positions.



They also received a USDA Rural Development grant in the amount of \$50,000 for a Governor's Daycare Facility; the facility is now located a block from the public school.

In Dupree, community members utilized grant dollars from the South Dakota Community Foundation and other funding sources. They also took advantage of the Governor's Daycare Facility program. In addition, they raised funds locally and truly understand the importance of community support.

The recent closing of the school in Isabel didn't diminish the need for quality childcare in the Isabel community and surrounding area. Isabel also used a Governor's Daycare Facility and tapped into several funding sources to help the project become a reality in their community.

All three communities recognize the importance of providing the families of their rural communities a positive, safe, and quality environment for their children. Many volunteers also help the day-to-day operations of the centers.

Tripp Holds Third Annual Free Flea Market



Got stuff? Need stuff? Come to Tripp's three-day Town and Country Exchange and donate or pick up whatever you want for free. Last June, the Horizons group had its third successful year with a constant stream of people from Tripp and outlying areas attending.

Unbelievably, the committee receives enough items to keep the Exchange running for three days straight. Starting in April, while advertising the citywide rummage sale, the committee requests that remaining items from individual sales be donated to the

Exchange. "We provide a service—a place to bring left-over items in town—so nobody has to take them to Yankton or Mitchell," says one organizer, Carol Schoenfelder.

In May, the Fair Lane Ballroom begins to fill up with treasures. This year, this huge dance hall was filled and over 50 tables were used to display items.

The event is easy to run because there is no pricing or need to collect money. Exchange organizer Wilma Herr says, "We had fun helping people shop because there was so much product, we knew where to take them to find what they needed. It never seemed like work at all."

Herr and Schoenfelder agree that there is a definite need in the area for free clothing and household items.

Despite the fact that it is a free flea market, it is still a fundraiser. During the event, a free-will donation box is available. Donations go to the food pantry and other projects in the Tripp community. People have been very generous.

Other Horizons activities:

- The Tripp Multi-Generational Center averages 5–20 middle and high school youths daily.
- In September, the Community Foundation Board was sworn in. The Foundation will raise money to help with projects.
- The house that the Horizons Housing Committee remodeled is owned by a family that has made the house into a home. If another house becomes available, another remodeling may take place.

POPULATION: 711
POVERTY RATE: 18.6%
COACH: Martha Landes

Other Horizons activities:

- Paid off \$72,000 youth center loan.
- Bargain Shoppe donated \$9,000 to nonprofit causes.
- Raised \$26,000 for the new Tyndall Community Foundation.

POPULATION: 1,239
POVERTY RATE: 17.2%
COACH: David Olson

Tyndall Effort Opens Community Day Care

The Tyndall Horizons team realized that there could be a day care crisis in their community when a provider retired and there were 19 children under the age of 5 whose parents taught in the Bon Homme School District. This led to the creation of an exploratory committee.

After determining that there were interested parents who would like the services of a licensed day care center, the committee approached the Cavalier Corner Youth Center, which had 501c3 status. The Tyndall team asked to partner with them and to approach the city of Tyndall to apply for a rural development loan. The city agreed, and the Lil' Cavs Corner Daycare Board was formed.

The group acquired a purchase option was for a house that could be razed, the house's lot being across the street from the school, and a Governor's Daycare Facility was reserved while the loan application was processed. The lot was cleared in October, and the foundation was poured. The Governor's Daycare Facility arrived in November, and volunteers did the majority of the finish

work with the help of professionals. The total project cost was \$135,000; \$95,500 from the loan/grant from Rural Development and \$39,500 from the Governor's Daycare Facility.

An open house was held to introduce the center to the community. Lil' Cav Kids has sunny play rooms, space for outside equipment, and space to separate children by ages. The board is presently interviewing operator candidates and registering children. Janet Wagner, one of the organizers, hopes this investment will be a community asset that attracts more families to Tyndall and provides quality day care for their children.



Volin/Gayville Team Up to Provide Local News



Volin and Gayville are six miles apart. They are also each 20 minutes from larger towns that have newspapers, but they didn't have their own paper filled with local news.

To deal with this, the Volin/Gayville Horizons team created their own newspaper,

What's UP G/V. It is published monthly and is printed by the local bank. There is an on-line version that can be emailed if requested, and hard copies are left at the bank in Gayville and at a restaurant in Volin. Copies can be mailed to those that provide postage.

The paper is used to publicize community meetings, Horizons activities, school activities, and articles of interest to community members. The response has been excellent. The issues left at the pick-up sites vanish within hours, and members of the newly organized business group are interested in advertising locally to support the cost of the newspaper.

One of the benefits has been getting timely information out to residents. Another is the freedom the Horizons team has to get their message out the way they want it. The best benefit of all is that *What's Up G/V* has been a tool to bring the communities closer together. The communities have a better idea of what each other is doing and can invite people from both towns to participate.

Other Horizons activities:

- Created a mobile food pantry.
- Organized a business association.
- Developed garden-produce sharing.

POPULATION: 625

POVERTY RATE: 14.1%

COACH: David Olson

Other Horizons activities:

- Two city cleanups each year.
- Held an employment-skills workshop.
- Created a nonprofit housing corporation.

POPULATION: 1,675

POVERTY RATE: 25.1%

COACH: David Olson



Wagner Honors Diverse Culture

When the Horizons team in Wagner held a forum to prioritize ideas the community wanted to pursue, one need that surfaced was for the community to build bridges between its Native American and European cultures. A committee was formed to figure out ways to begin this journey.

The primary tool of the committee has been the Racism Study Circles program created by the Everyday Democracy organization. The program allows participants to learn about the cultural assets and differences of different cultures, share the impact of racism on people's lives, and identify actions that might be taken to reduce racism in the community. They do this through a series of guided small-group discussions.

Local residents have facilitated the program six times, and a seventh program will begin in January 2010. Each Racism Study Circle group has implemented an action step:

- Establishing a weekly column, "The Rez of the Story," in the local newspaper. The column features Native American views by Vince Two Eagles.

- Organizing customer service training for employees of local businesses.
- Entering a multicultural float in the annual Labor Day parade.
- Supporting a Native American candidate in a campaign for school board.
- Organizing quarterly family gatherings of the graduates of the Racism Study Circle program.
- Applying for funding to assist in the reduction of racism, especially among the community's youth.

The Wagner team has presented lessons they've learned at a regional rural conference, and they continue to work with Everyday Democracy to deal with structural racism in the community. They are investigating a model of community development specifically for Native communities and hope to adopt it to fit Wagner's needs. Their long-term commitment is to reduce racism one relationship at a time, while building new relationships across cultural barriers.

A Big Heart in “The Heart of Whetstone Valley”

Wilmot resident Mike Green doesn't remember the collision of his semi-truck and the train. In fact, he can't remember the past 25 years—the November 2007 accident resulted in severe memory loss. After 1½ years in the hospital, and continued therapy, Mike is giving back to the community that gave to him.

Once released from the hospital, friends encouraged Green, a former chef and handyman, to get involved in Horizons. Starting with LeadershipPlenty classes, trainer Cheryl Rondeau-Bassett gave Green individual sessions so that he could catch up.

Green is eager to help. “I like working with Horizons because I can go in and try something, and if I make a mistake, nobody gets mad,” he said. “I have a whole garage full of tools and am re-learning how to use them.”

Green used his tiller to prepare the new community garden in Wilmot last summer, and his outgoing nature encouraged people to get involved. “It's great and allows those who don't have access to gardens to grow fresh food,” Green said. “We hope to start

a garden in Corona and begin a commercial kitchen soon to preserve produce from both gardens.”

Green also helped get the Horizons Replay thrift store ready, and he will build a storage shed to hold garden and excess thrift store equipment.

The Heart of Whetstone Valley, which consists of Wilmot, Corona, and the central Big Stone Lake area, plans to involve new people when they hold their Horizons graduation during the annual Corona St. Patrick's Festival in March.



Other Horizons activities:

- Horizons Outreach Center in Wilmot consists of the Horizons Replay thrift store and a meeting area. It will soon include a food pantry and certified kitchen.
- Fresh Foods workshop.
- LeadershipPlenty classes will be held again in Corona this winter.

POPULATION: 655
POVERTY RATE: 17.5%
COACH: Martha Landes

Other Horizons activities:

- “Turn off the TV” nights held where families attended and played bingo and games.
- Established a permanent page in a regional newspaper to keep residents informed.
- New leadership has emerged on the Horizons steering committee, on the city council, and in the form of new businesses due to Horizons influence.

POPULATION: 844
POVERTY RATE: 17.8%
COACH: Dan Oedekoven

Whitewood Youth Skate for Fun and Fitness

A community-wide Horizons survey conducted in 2008 found that Whitewood residents wanted better parks in their town. Enhancements to the underused parks in Whitewood became one of three areas the Horizons team chose to focus their efforts.

A committee of youth and adult volunteers met with the Parks and Recreation Department to suggest improvements to Memorial Park, the town's most accessible park. Efforts had recently been made to update playground equipment, but the park still lacked many basic amenities. Horizons received permission to proceed, and went to work. A split-rail fence running parallel to the street was donated for the safety of the children. Park benches and concrete pads were donated offering seating. Teen committee members rallied around the idea of raising funds for a skate park to be housed in an unused tennis court.

Volunteers age 8–68 helped, and soon fundraising was underway. Donation jars were set up at local businesses, aluminum cans were recycled, a pancake feed and

haunted house were held, and fireworks were sold. Larger donors were given permanent recognition. Grant money from the Spearfish Optimist Club and Horizons was utilized. The committee even wrote a grant proposal to the city of Whitewood petitioning for money budgeted for park usage.

The \$15,000 skate park and new asphalt surface hosted a ribbon cutting on Sept. 9, 2009, and included a community celebration. In 2010, construction of a picnic shelter will begin, offering the park's first picnic tables. This project became a reality due to the collaboration of many donors and will serve Whitewood for years to come.



