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by Cathy Anderson SDRSP President

As autumn paints our landscape with brilliant shades of gold, amber, and crimson, we're reminded of the beauty that comes with change—and of the strength and warmth found in our shared connections. This season invites us to pause, reflect, and celebrate the ways we continue to grow, contribute, and support one another as retired educators.

Across our state, local units are hosting wonderful fall programs that bring our mission to life—luncheons, guest speakers, service projects, scholarship fundraisers, and gatherings that rekindle friendships. These activities remind us that even in retirement, our influence as educators continues to ripple through our communities. Whether you're organizing an event, volunteering or simply attending to reconnect with friends, your participation helps keep our organization vibrant and strong.

Autumn also symbolizes harvest—a time to gather the rewards of what has been planted and nurtured. For many of us, that means seeing the impact of years spent guiding young minds, mentoring colleagues, and building supportive learning environments. Now, as we "harvest" the friendships and shared purpose of our Retired School Personnel family, we continue to enrich our communities in meaningful ways.

I encourage you to take part in your local unit's fall activities, share your ideas, and celebrate the spirit of togetherness that defines our organization. Let's continue to learn, serve, and inspire-not just during this colorful season, but all year long.

May your autumn be filled with cozy gatherings, crisp mornings, and the joy of knowing that what we do-and who we are-still makes a difference.

Officer Reports: Membership Report



by Anita Manning SDRSP Membership

KEEPING OUR CONNECTIONS STRONG: A NOTE FROM ANITA MANNING/MEMBERSHIP

As we continue to celebrate the dedication and spirit of our retired educators across the state, I want to take a moment to thank all the units that have already submitted their updated membership information. Your timely updates help us keep our records accurate and ensure that important communications such as newsletters, announcements, and event invitations reach every member.

Our organization thrives on connection. Whether it's sharing updates about by-laws and benefits, scholarship opportunities, or upcoming conventions, having the most current contact information allows us to stay united in our mission and support one another more effectively.

If your unit has not yet submitted its updated membership list, please take a few minutes to do so.

Updated rosters help us:

- Maintain accurate and complete records of our valued members.
- Ensure that retirees continue to receive state and local communications.
- Strengthen our network and outreach efforts across all regions.

Please email your updated membership information to manning 310@sio.midco.net or send to Anita Manning at 719 N. Shepherd Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD 57103 at your earliest convenience.

Again, **thank you** to the many unit treasurers who have already completed this important task. Your attention to detail and ongoing commitment help keep our retired teachers connected, informed, and strong as an organization.

Together, we make sure every member remains an important part of our community.

Officer Reports: Community Service Fall Report

by Diane Odland SDRSP Community Health Services

Happy Fall 2025!! The weather has been BEAUTIFUL this fall and makes one to stop and ENJOY this time of year!! Winter and Christmas are only a few weeks away. Here are 10 ideas to help you spread Kindness and Joy as you begin this Season.

- Volunteer together at a food bank, animal shelter or soup kitchen
- Donate blood
- Do chores for someone, like cleaning a garage or doing dishes
- · Help clean up a local park or beach
- Bake holiday treats like cookies or make a drink kit to share

- Create a handmade card or a "message in a jar" to share
- Make homemade ornaments or other festive decorations
- Organize a cookie exchange or party
- Make a charitable donation in someone's name

And lastly--

 Donate non-perishable food to a local food pantry



At this time in our country our neighbors and friends are in need of food in order to continue in their daily lives! Here are 10 needed items to donate-

- **Boxed milk** is a treasure as kids need milk for cereal which they get a lot!
- Pasta sauce and spaghetti noodles-kids love this!

- A Can Opener in order to open all of the canned veggies, fruits and soup!
- **Spices and Salt and Pepper** to add flavor to their meals!
- Tea bags and Coffee is a special treat!
- Loaf of bread to go with the peanut butter and jelly that is often given!
- **Stove Top Stuffing** is tasty and easy to make with just water!
- Dishwashing soap is expensive and always needed!

- **Eggs** are a major treat and a valuable source of good nutrition!
- Donate MONEY or include a few dollars with the food that they can choose!!

Have a Blessed Holiday Season and REMEMBER these ideas to help SPREAD KINDNESS and JOY now and throughout the YEAR!

Officer Reports: Executive Director



by Gerri LarsonSDRSP Executive Director

Greetings to All, I hope all Units have had a successful and fun start to their Year.

A Social Security Webinar sponsored by NRTA was held October 29. Many of you were probably able to listen to the information. Fraud Programs sponsored by AARP are being presented in Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, and Rapid City. The Attorney General or someone from his office will be presenting the information. Postcards and or information has been sent out to Unit Presidents.

Lobby Day and Volunteer Summit will be held Tuesday and Wednesday, January 27 and 28 in Pierre. Hold the dates on your calendars and more information will be coming later.

Delightfully Ridiculous Words for Everyday Things

- CATAWAMPUS SKEWED, DIAGONAL, OR OUT OF PLACE.
- · YAFFLE TO EAT OR DRINK NOISILY.
- · COLLYWOBBLES A BELLYACHE OR A FEELING OF NERVOUSNESS.
- DINGLEHOPPER A "FORK" ACCORDING TO THE LITTLE MERMAID
- · SCROOP THE SOUND SILK MAKES WHEN IT MOVES.
- · JIGGERY-POKERY DECEITFUL OR DISHONEST BEHAVIOR.
- THINGAMAJIG A TERM OF A GADGET YOU CAN'T QUITE NAME.
- MUGWUMP A PERSON WHO STAYS NEUTRAL (SOMEONE WHO SITS ON THE FENCE.)
- · BLIVIT SOMETHING USELESS CRAMMED INTO A SPACE IT DOESN'T FIT.
- DOOHICKEY A THING WHOSE NAME YOU'VE FORGOTTEN.
- NURDLE A TINY DAB OF TOOTHPASTE ON YOUR BRUSH.
- · AGLET THE PLASTIC TIP AT THE END OF A SHOELACE.
- · ZARF THAT LITTLE CARDBOARD SLEEVE ON YOUR COFFEE CUP.
- TITTYNOPE- A SMALL QUANTITY OF FOOD OR DRINK LEFT ON A PLATE.





Looking For

Two South Dakota Teachers

Looking For

Two College Scholarships



Officer Reports: Scholarship



by Vicki Sterling President Elect

Looking for a STAR Classroom Teacher for a \$1000.00 scholarship

- 1. Look for those STARs in your school or within your family.
- 2. These teachers are looking for an advanced degree or national certification.
- 3. The SDRSP website has the scholarship application form.
- 4. Applications can be sent to Dr. Vicki Sterling, 4255 Park Drive, Rapid City, SD 57702

Scholarship Criteria

Purpose: To provide assistance for a veteran South Dakota teacher who is working on an advanced degree or national certification.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Applicant must be a current teacher in a South Dakota K-12 school.
- 2. Applicant must have at least 5 years of teaching experience.
- 3. All applications and recommendations must be submitted electronically to the following email address: vicki.sterling@dsu.edu

Questions can also be e-mailed to this address.

- 4. A \$1000 award for the scholarship winner will be sent to the recipient.
- 5. All applications must be received by April 5, 2026. The winners will be notified, and then announced at the SDRSP convention in May.

The application must include the following:

- Biographical Information
- Name
- Home Address
- Email address
- Current teaching position grade and school
- Number of years applicant has taught
- Teaching history for the past 5 years
- Name of the institution/location the applicant plans to attend
- Planned course of study, including credits/hours

Teacher's response to the following questions (Not to exceed 500 words):

- 1. How will your planned course of study help you toward your advanced degree or national certification?
- 2. How will this educational opportunity impact your teaching?
- 3. Fellow Teacher's or Administrator's Recommendation (between 100 200 words)
- 4. What characteristics does the applicant display in the classroom that merits the awarding of this scholarship?

CONVENTION NEWS



State Convention in Pierre May 4-5, 2026

As we look ahead to our spring convention, I'm filled with excitement for the opportunity to gather, learn, and celebrate together. This year's theme – **Celebrate America** – invites us to honor our shared history, our enduring values, and the educators who have helped shape generations of learners and citizens.

This spring we'll gather in our beautiful state capital, Pierre, to *Celebrate America* in honor of our nation's 250th birthday. Surrounded by the history and heritage of South Dakota, our convention will offer opportunities to reflect on the stories that shaped both our state and our country. From the early settlers who built communities along the Missouri River to the educators who helped those communities thrive, we'll celebrate the pioneering spirit that continues to inspire us today.

Programs may explore topics as the history of the South Dakota State Capitol, notable figures in our state's past, and the role of education in preserving democracy. There may also be sessions highlighting local landmarks-including the Oahe Dam, the largest earth dam in North America, and a testament to ingenuity, cooperation, and progress.

As we come together in Pierre, we'll honor the past, celebrate our shared values, and look forward to the future with pride and gratitude for this great country we call home.

Since the convention is in the middle of the state, we hope that people will take advantage of the shorter distance to travel, gather with colleagues, and *Celebrate America*.

SO, mark your calendars for May 4-5, 2026. *Please note the change to a Monday-Tuesday convention this year.

We hope to see you there.

SDRSP Website Quiz

Do you have any idea how much information one can find on the SDRSP website?

Check it out at www.sdrsp.org

- 1. When was SDRSP (formerly SDRTA) organized?
- 2. What are the dates of the 2026 convention? Where will it be held?
- 3. Which Unit had the top number of hours for Community Service in 2025?
- 4. Why does it cost \$16 for membership when one joins on-line?
- 5. Can you get Medicare supplement insurance through AMBA as a benefit of being a member of SDRSP?
- 6. What is deadline date for the scholarship application?
- 7. Who was president of SDRSP in the fall of 2019?
- 8. Who do you notify if there is a death of a member in your unit?
- 9. When is the school winner's deadline for the Grandparent Essay?
- 10. If you have a question what are two ways you can receive support after contacting SDRSP?

GRANDPARENT ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES

SUBJECT: "Why my grandparent should be the AARP SD Grandparent of the Year" A grandparent is defined as any older adult who fulfills a grand parenting or "senior citizen mentor" role for a child. A familial relationship is not necessary in order to meet this requirement.

ELIGIBILITY: Contest is for 5th graders in public and private schools.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS: Essay must be an original work of the author, up to 500 words in length, be written in English, and include the components of a formal essay, e.g., introduction, supporting points and conclusion. Essay must be submitted on white, 8" x 11" paper (standard size paper), and be legibly hand-written or typed by the author on one side only of the page. Only the WINNING essay from each school building is to be submitted to the local Retired School Personnel SDRSP contact, along with Form A. The author's name and school must also be written at the end of the essay.

JUDGING CRITERIA & AWARDS: Qualifying characteristics: 60% Creativity and Expression 20% Grammar and Form 20% Neatness. Winning essays may be viewed by individual years on the website, www.sdrsp.org. Use the Grandparent Essay link.

DEADLINES: School winner's deadline: February 1. The school winner is chosen by 5th grade teachers (or other appropriate judges) from the participating school based on the judging criteria provided. The winning essay from each school must be received by the local SDRSP unit contact by the deadline provided. Form A MUST be attached to the school winner's essay.

UNIT WINNER'S DEADLINE: February 15 Judging for the unit winner will be among all the school winners in that unit's area. The unit winner is chosen by representatives of the local SDRSP unit. Local units are encouraged to keep a copy of their unit's winning essay so that their winner can be invited to read it at one of their meetings. The winning essay from each unit, along with Form B, must be completed and sent to the RSP Essay Committee Chairperson: Anita Manning, 719 N Shepherd Avenue, Sioux Falls SD 57103, email - manning310@midco.net, phone - 605-351-3112

REGIONAL JUDGING: March 1 The Sioux Falls RSP will do the regional judging for the essay contest. AARP Regions are Southeast, Northeast, and West. The three regional winning essays, chosen by the Sioux Falls RSP Essay Committee, will be submitted to the AARP South Dakota State Office by March 1.

STATE FINALS JUDGING: April 1 The AARP South Dakota office will establish a judging panel consisting of members of the AARP South Dakota Executive Council and the AARP South Dakota State Director.

AWARDS: CASH PRIZES
FIRST PLACE-\$250; SECOND PLACE-\$150; THIRD PLACE-\$100

(See complete information at www.sdrsp.org website)

Unit News:

ABERDEEN – by Gayle Bortnem, President Aberdeen RSP

The Aberdeen RSP started the fall with a bang. We hosted the 2nd annual "Back to School (NOT) Luncheon" to raise funds to put in our endowment through the Aberdeen Public School Foundation. We had 35 attendees and raised about \$1200. Our theme was "Hats off to Education" (sound familiar?).



Fancy "Hats off to Education"

Our speaker was the President of the school board, and he gave a wonderful speech including many of the teachers and staff that were at the banquet. We had many donated door prizes and handed out schedules for our future meetings. The goal is to achieve \$10,000, so that we can give scholarships to students that are going into education. We are getting close!



Registration for Back-to-School Luncheon

Our October meeting brought representatives from Thrivent who donated enough goodies to distribute to ALL the employees of the school system! We helped make over 600 baggies and members took to all the schools with a message, "Congratulations on surviving the 1st month of school".



Filling goodie bags with help of Thrivent

November, we will have the chief of police come and share about senior safety. So, we hope for the weather to stay kind and user friendly! Happy holiday Season.

BLACK HILLS – by Doris Ann Werlinger, President of BHRSP Greetings All,

Happy Thanksgiving from all of us with the Black Hills Retired School Personnel members.

We have had two very interesting meetings so far this year. Our first meeting in September we had Michael Jacobson from SD Retirement System do a Zoom meeting talking about all the new items for retired school personnel and giving some particulars of the upcoming year.

On 14th October 2025, we had Jean Oleson Kessloff and Darla Drew-Lardal come and present the history of Dr. Valentine

McGillycuddy and tell of his accomplishments as a doctor, explorer, Indian advocate, bank president and more. They also showed pictures of the home that is being restored here in Rapid City on the corner of Rushmore Road and South Street. It was very interesting and hopefully when it is finished in May of 2026 our group will have the pleasure of a tour through this lovely structure.

Our next meeting will be on 11 November, Veterans Day, at the Canyon Lake Activities Center with our social starting at 2:00 p.m. And program will start at 2:30 p.m. Our guest speakers will be Kat Stark from the Salvation Army talking about the programs, upcoming events and their services. Also, we will have Sheila Klosterman from Rapid City, who will be telling us all about the new Ronald McDonald House that is being built in Rapid City and helping families when their child is ill.

I would like to take this opportunity to anyone and all of you to come to our meeting and see what we are doing. Our big project coming in February will be to hand out roses from the Make a Wish program with AARP, so look for more information to follow. If you want to help with this project, please let me know.

I want to also take this opportunity to "Thank All Our Veterans for Their Service to Our Beautiful Country," and God Bless America. **MADISON AREA-** by Marilou Schaefer, Secretary MARSP

The Madison Chapter of "MADISON AREA RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL" (MARSP). has adopted the project of care and preservation of the library at Prairie Village, Madison, South Dakota.

Twenty-six members meet monthly with programs planned to enrich the group. Each year, prior to the Annual Prairie Village Days in late August, members meet at the historical library to plan for the cleaning, upkeep and organization of the contents.



Jan Davis, library project leader

The Prairie Village Library was the first Chartered Library in Dakota Territory, January, 1886. It was first housed in a general store in Howard, S.D. Later it was moved to another site. shared with the city council, jail and the fire department. In 1972 the building was transferred to Prairie Village, where it currently resides. During Prairie Village Days, members of MARSP volunteer as hosts of the library and share

Unit News, Cont.:

information on the history and contents.



Library at Prairie Village

MARSP held their September 30thmeeting at Peaceful Pines Retirement Center in Madison, which is the home of our guest speaker Bonnie Funk. We enjoyed a delicious hot beef sandwich lunch in the resident dining room after which Bonnie gave us a delightful talk on her mission of crocheting sleeping mats for the homeless who are served by Church on the Street (a non-profit in Sioux Falls designed to serve the homeless).

The mats are made with "plarn" which is Bonnie's term for plastic yarn. Her daughter in California saw the instructions on how to make them on the internet and sent the pattern to Bonnie. The "plarn" is made from grocery bags which are folded and cut into strips and then tied together and crocheted. It's a LOT of work to make one mat which requires 800 grocery bags. She demonstrated how to prep and tie the bags and then members got to try their hand at actually making strips. Bonnie says her project helps take some of the plastic out the landfill. She has a collection box

at the front entrance that people bring the bags to and, thanks to local press and volunteers saving bags, she is busy making mats for the homeless. Thank you for a fun and informative time!



Members making mats

Sponsoring the annual Grandparents Essay contest in our region has been a project for our group. Joyce Welbon, MARSP chairwoman is presenting Joanna Molascon with her first-place award in the contest. Joanna attends Madison Elementary School and wrote her essay on her grandfather, Lester Heringer.



Grandparent Essay winner, Joanna Molascon, with Joyce Welbon, MARSP member

She and her family joined our June sack lunch meeting

at the Prairie Village library to present her winning essay and to have dessert with our group. In order to encourage as much participation as possible the group decided to lengthen our time frame in order to allow lots of time for the classrooms to participate. Congratulations to Joanna on her essay!

MILBANK AREA – by Rhonda Preller, President of MARTA

The Milbank Area Retired Teachers/Personnel Association (MARTA) has been busy the last several months with meetings, eating out, community service and field trips. Last spring, we had a successful basket fundraiser and donation in memory of Nancy Bloem to have enough money to award a scholarship to an Educators Rising student graduating from Milbank High School.

In July, MARTA members met for breakfast and brought school supply items to donate to the Food Pantry for kids that needed Back-to-School supplies. At our August kick-off meeting, the head of the Milbank Backpack Program gave an overview of how the program benefits students in Milbank and surrounding areas. Then our group was able to complete community service by preparing bags that hold food for the backpacks. Also, we made a monetary donation to support feeding a student for the school year.

In September and October,

MARTA went on field trips.



Abbey of the Hills

Our first trip was to Abbey of the Hills for lunch and our member, Vicki Strege, entertained us with her talent on the piano. Then in October, several members toured the Buggy Museum in Stockholm. One of the renovated buggies had previously belonged to MARTA member, Shirley Schmidt. We enjoyed getting the opportunity to sit in it for pictures.



Visit to the Buggy Museum

Everyone is looking forward to the upcoming holidays and party fun!

NORTHERN HILLS – by Sue Degooyer, President of NHRSP

It has been a busy year out here in the Northern Hills. We continue to work on membership. We have been drawing from the Internet on teachers that have retired from the

Unit News, Cont.:

surrounding schools. Our group encompasses the towns of Spearfish, Lead-Deadwood, Belle Fourche, Sturgis, Whitewood, Newell, Vale, and Faith. We have been using the note cards provided by SDRSP to send out to retired teachers. Finding addresses is always the tough part.





Beautiful faces of members of NHRSP

We started out in August this year with a picnic/potluck at a local clubhouse. Air conditioning and no bugs! A great way to touch base after the summer and handout membership postcards.

We have had some great speakers this fall. In September, we had Amber Wilde, Director at the Grace Balloch Memorial Library in Spearfish. She presented on all that the library has to offer. She also talked on the South Dakota Festival of the Book, which was held

in Spearfish in September. The festival was a great opportunity to meet authors and purchase books. There were many local authors to visit with. The Northern Hills has many local libraries that service our area.

In October, we listened to Matthew Tramp, Director of Development and Engagement with Esthers Rising. Their "Mission is to provide restorative care for adolescence, who are at risk or have experienced sexual exploitation or sex trafficking". Matthew has a wealth of knowledge and experience in these areas.



Display from Esthers Rising presentation

As a group, we will be gathering ideas for local service projects this year. We are also getting things ready to go for the Grandparent Essay Project. This takes some planning and strategy to cover the various communities. We increased the number of schools / students that participated last year; and are hoping to include more this year.

In wrapping this up, we wish you all a happy Thanksgiving! And, a reminder to be kind to yourself; and to be safe with the busy holidays ahead.

SIOUX FALLS – by Sharon Dierks, Co 1st VP SF RSP The Sioux Falls Area Retired School Personnel began our 2025/2026 year on August 25th at the Pizza Ranch on 41st Street. Our theme for the year is, "Celebrating America". We meet the fourth Monday of the month (except for November and December) at 11:00 AM. We collect. assorted items each month for many organizations in the Sioux Falls area – toiletries, calendars, cards for Meals on Wheels, and many more. In September, we made 19 trays of baked goods for our 9/11 project.



9/11 Project

This is our 14th year doing this project. The trays were taken to all of the Fire Stations, Police Department, Highway Patrol, 911 Call Center and the Air National Guard Fire and Rescue. We do this project with the AARP, who donates fruit. Our volunteers have worked with various organizations like Lunch is Served. preparing lunches for the working poor and serving lunch for the St. Francis House. With the members of the AARP's Community Service Team, we plan various service projects throughout the year.

Our first program in August was presented by Myron Fuerst. It was a presentation about a Prison Puppy Raising Program with inmates. The dogs are trained to empower people who are blind, deaf, or visually impaired with

lifelong skills for safe and independent daily travel.



Myron Fuerst talking about the Prison Puppy Raising Program

In September, our new Sioux Falls Superintendent, Dr. Jamie Nold, updated us on what is happening in the Sioux Falls District. Wendy McDonald was our speaker in October. She talked about what is happening for us at the Active Generations here in Sioux Falls. In November, the St. Francis House will do a presentation called "Moving People from Homelessness to Hope" with Julie Becker. We will end our year with entertainment and a Christmas Sing-a-Long.



SF School Superintendent, Dr. Jamie Nold

Just a reminder that our theme this year is "Celebrating America". Make a note that our SD State Retired School Personnel's Convention is in Pierre, SD on May 4-5, 2026.

Unit News, Cont.:

WATERTOWN AREA- by

Denise Ottenbacher, Co-President WARSP
The Watertown Area
Retired School Personnel
(WARSP) have had a fun and
educational fall. Two new
members have joined WARSP
since our membership kickoff
picnic at the Foley Shelter
at Lions Park in August.
Members reconnect at this
annual potluck.



WARSP members tour the newly finished Allen R Mitchell field complex.

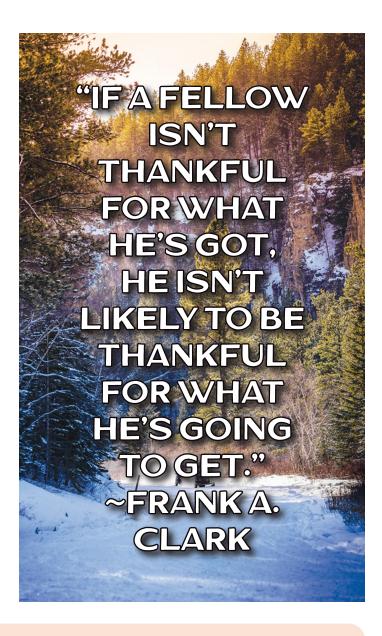
In September, WARSP member and school board president Jon Iverson hosted a tour of the new Allen R. Mitchell complex. What an awesome facility! We met Watertown's new city

manager, Alan Stager, in October. Highlights included an update as to the economic happenings in Watertown and a lengthy question and answer session.



Jon Iverson shares the building process of the new facility

Future meetings include a celebrating our community with a visit from local non-profit leaders in November and our yearly Christmas party. We will also learn about foot care from a local podiatrist.



Chocolate Raspberry Pie

This recipe came from my husband's mother. It is a holiday favorite. ~Jacque Sly

Raspberry layer:

3 tablespoons Sugar1 tablespoon cornstarch2 cups fresh or frozen unsweetened raspberries

Cook sugar and cornstarch with raspberries. Bring to boil over medium heat. Boil for 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Cool 15 minutes. Spread into baked pie shell (or graham cracker crust). Refrigerate.

Cream cheese filling:

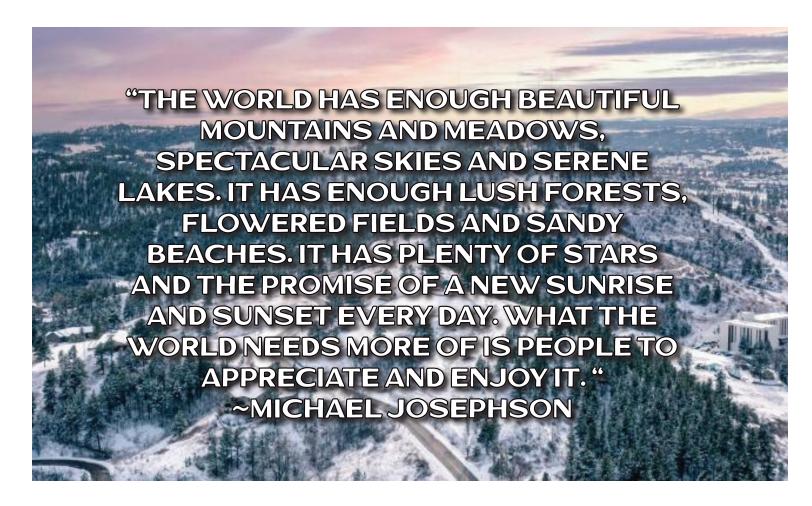
8-ounce pkg softened cream cheese 1/3 cup sugar ½ teaspoon vanilla ½ cup cream, whipped (or Cool Whip) In mixing bowl, combine cream cheese, sugar and vanilla till fluffy. Fold in whipped cream. Spread on raspberry layer. Refrigerate at least 1 hour.

Topping:

½ cup chocolate chips 3 tablespoons butter

Melt chocolate and butter together. Pour over filling. Chill at least 2 hours before serving. (Serving hint: dip sharp knife in hot water first to help when cutting through chocolate topping.)





CHECK MEMBERSHIP ADDRESSES!

It is important for all unit officers to check with each member for their correct address. Not having correct addresses costs the organization a great deal of money. Send all address changes, as well as names and dates of deaths, to

Anita Manning, 719 N Shepherd Ave, Sioux Falls SD 57103 Email: manning310@sio.midco.net • Phone: 605-351-3112

I want to join South Dakota Retired School Personnel!

