

# CABIN CLIPS

*November, 2021*

## **2021 Board Members:**

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## WHAT'S NEW?

What can I tell you that has been newsworthy at Operation Black Hills Cabin?

After being closed in 2020, it was so fun to begin again! It was almost like our first season all over! We all felt a renewed spirit and genuine hunger to see our families again. I think this was true for our business sponsors as well, as we received many comments about how the families were missed by owners and employees alike.

Our families were also very excited to come and were so appreciative of their time here. Some of their comments were:

"A much needed respite. I was able to find some peace and relaxation."

"Thank you for the monumental memories we are going home with."



"We have replenished all the joy and energy we lost over the last 2 years."

"I felt the embrace of comfort one would find returning home to family after a long absence."

"Best week of my life." From a 7 year old.

"It was an opportunity to decompress from our everyday stressful lives and cherish one another."

"The people in your town were truly the highlight of our week."

"It was great to rest when needed, cook and share meals and have a place where we felt safe."

"Custer is God's country."

"We looked forward to each morning when we opened the curtain to the deck to say good morning to the deer."

"We were so happy to see your town was full of local businesses not chain stores."

"We didn't want to leave."

So, who knew that the normal warm hospitality, friendliness and respect found in Custer would make such an impact? WE DID! We've heard many stories from our families regarding the numerous life changing effects provided by those involved with OBHC. WE SALUTE YOU ALL!

## UNPLANNED EVENTS

As with so many trips, vacations or respites, there are always some UNPLANNED EVENTS that occur. And even when they do occur, it just adds to the fun and memories made, right? Here are a few of those events from this year.

1. A trip was made to the emergency room due to a fishing hook caught in a cheek!
2. They ran out of gas near Pringle, SD, and Marty and Colleen came to their rescue!
3. A loaded-with-cash VISA card was inadvertently left at a local gas station only to retrace their steps to find the VISA card still waiting for them two days later! This might only occur in Custer, SD.

## OUR PLEA TO YOU . . .

We hope to continue in operation for many more years, providing our families with this much-needed time for reconnection, recreation and healing. In order to do this, we would certainly appreciate some “fresh eyes” and “fresh ideas”. AND DID I MENTION THE INVOLVEMENT OF SOME YOUNGER PEOPLE TO CARRY ON OUR LEGACY?

Please consider getting involved with Operation Black Hills Cabin. We are a well-oiled machine that just rolls along each year. Contact us at [operationblackhillscabin@gmail.com](mailto:operationblackhillscabin@gmail.com) or 605-517-1830.

## VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

We'd like to highlight our volunteers, Kathy and Steve Leonardi. Kathy and Steve moved to Custer from Pennsylvania in July of 2017. They actually camped here on their honeymoon! Steve, a



wildlife artist and Kathy, a former preschool teacher and librarian, found Custer as their current destination. They had a studio in the former Star Academy, participated in the Artist In Residence at Custer State Park and operated their own gallery, “Buffalo Boys” in Custer for two years. They now operate out of a studio they built on their property. Kathy is our Business Involvement chair and also helped on the cleaning committee. Kathy and Steve donated many prints, framing and matting to provide thank you gifts to our business supporters. When asked, “Why OBHC?” Their reply was, “We wanted to find ways to give back to this community and when we became aware of OBHC and the outstanding mission of their organization, we wanted to jump on board! We can’t think of a better organization to share our time and talents with!” And we at OBHC are so grateful! THANK YOU KATHY AND STEVE