

SD Stockgrowers to Host 124th Annual Convention

South Dakota Stockgrowers Association and SD Cattlemen are set to host the 124th Annual Convention and Tradeshow on October 1 and 2 at the Best Western Ramkota Convention Center in Rapid City. The two-day convention will feature a strong line-up of speakers and events along with policy discussions, and the annual business meetings for both associations.

"We are looking forward to hosting our members and friends at the 124th Annual Convention and to celebrate a great year in the livestock industry," said Bob Fortune, President of Stockgrowers from Belvidere. "I really encourage everyone to join us in Rapid City for a great convention that will be a lot of fun."

The 124th Annual convention will feature a number of speakers on issues impacting the livestock industry and several workshops to help ranchers learn tools to strengthen their businesses. The SD Cattlemen's convention will feature planning sessions for future beef promotions, crafts, and a workshop on the Masters of

Beef Advocacy program and social media training.

Thursday's program will open with Bill Bullard, CEO of R-CALF USA followed by a variety of speakers and committee meetings on international trade, property rights, and animal health. The afternoon will feature a workshop by Alan Hojer from First Dakota National Bank's "Keep Farmers Farming" program to help families think strategically about generational transfers within a family ranching operation. Thursday evening's keynote speaker is Mr. Alan Guebert, the author of the Farm and Food Files and critical analyst on a number of issues important to the livestock industry.

Friday will begin with an inspirational breakfast and more great speakers and committee meetings. Tracy Hunt will present information on the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. SDSU Extension will offer a comprehensive look at three key computer accounting programs and using them for ranch recordkeeping. The SD Cattlemen will meet as well to plan their promotion

events and learn about beef advocacy. State Veterinarian Dr. Dustin Oedekoven will present during the luncheon followed with an SDSU ice cream social. The Annual membership meeting will be held at 3:30pm to consider policy changes, directives to the board, and to elect board members and officers.

The Friday evening Awards and Recognition Banquet will recognize leaders and the retiring President, Bob Fortune. The Guy E Ham Beef Industry scholarship winners will be presented before the fundraiser auction begins. Midwest Dueling Pianos will wrap up the convention with a fun and energetic performance, taking requests from the audience and keeping the dance floor moving.

For a full agenda and details of the convention, please visit www.southdakotastockgrowers.org or call the SD Stockgrowers Office at 605-342-0429. Hotel Reservations can be made by calling the Ramkota at 605-343-8550 and asking for the SD Stockgrowers rate. Registration can be completed online or at the convention.

First Nighters: Sharing The Love Of Theatre

BY SARAH WETZEL
For the Plain Talk

Theatre aficionados in Vermillion and surrounding area have found a way to support budding talent at the University of South Dakota by donating to the First Nighters scholarship fund.

"The first-nighters is an organization that its members of the community not just located in Vermillion," said USD Theatre Interim Chair Raimondo Genna. "They contribute money to the department and the First Nighter's talent scholarship which pays for students' education."

According to Genna, members of First Nighters are invited to social events which take place on opening night of USD theatre productions.

"We have usually the director or some special guest come in and talk about the production that they're about to see," he said. "We get together for food, drinks and talk and generally enjoy each other's company then go see the show. It's the highlight of our production calendar. Socials are big to plan and participate in. We have organizations that hold socials with us so the President's office usually hosts one social per year. Last year and it looks like this year the USD foundation hosts something for us."

Genna said that the theatre department is hoping to expand membership in First Nighters to bring more people in to enjoy the theatre and contribute to the scholarship fund.

"The biggest reasons to donate, usually they are patrons who have seen our shows and they've enjoyed the work that we do and they wish to help the students with their education," Genna said. "A lot of times we have newer faculty members who come in and they join. It's a way for them to integrate themselves into the larger USD community."

Though some members of First Nighters are

USD alumni, most aren't according to Genna.

"They really are people who just love the theatre and want to contribute," he said.

Becoming a member is easy according to Genna.

"If they wanted to become a member if they contact us we would just send them a welcome letter and a form to fill out with the various levels of contribution that they can enter in as," he said. "It can be as little as \$100. With that you get season subscription to our shows. It can go as high as they feel comfortable contributing. There are various membership levels. As a way of thanking them there is a mention of them in our programs. We have a couple of members who kind of pool their resources then collectively donate to First Nighters. That happens quite often."

The value of scholarships to a college student means they can focus on their studies rather than dollars in the bank.

"It helps them pay for an education," Genna said. "That way students aren't having to rely on going to work to help pay for school so they can focus more time on their studies."

It also comes back to benefit the community according to Genna.

"The bigger the donation pot can be, the more talented students can come in and we can be competitive regionally and beyond," he said. "As First-Nighters one of the greatest rewards is to see this young, talented person come in and enjoy their work then over the process of four years see them grow and know they helped contribute to that student's education and their growth."

For more information, contact the USD theatre department at 605-677-5418 or visit usd.edu/fine-arts/theatre.

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Knowledge of Desire2Learn (D2L) and Colleague (Datatel) is beneficial, as this position also supports academic program operations by ensuring courses are ready for each semester.
Required Skills include:
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- Ability to learn new skills as needed
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