

BLACK HILLS WOMAN

MAGAZINE // APRIL 2023

SPRING

A time of rebirthing &
discovering yourself

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I grew up in the world of MySpace and AIM instant messenger. The anxiety of carefully selecting your “top friends” and crafting just the right away message to “subtly” let your friends and crush know what “major emotional event” you might be going through at the time. Song lyrics? Check. You had to wait patiently to see if someone you wanted to talk to would come online and then work up the courage to start a conversation.

I’m old enough to remember when Facebook became a thing. You couldn’t join unless you had a college email address, and if you didn’t, you had to be invited by someone who did. I remember thinking it was so cool when an older girl I worked with “got me in” and at the same time, I had no idea what it was about.

I was there for the start of Instagram. I was in college at the time, and a fellow friend who knew how much I loved taking pictures said, “This is a place where you just share pictures, I think you’d really like it.” My first post was of a suitcase tag that said, “Everything I own is in here.” It received one like.

I have watched social media evolve from simply a way to connect with friends and family and share pictures to a dominating force. A personal and professional platform from which people fund their livelihood, cater to a specific audience, and promote products for profit. It is no longer simply a way to connect, but a way of life. I would also argue that it is in most cases, a highlight reel. A showcase of life’s most share-worthy and happy moments.

So while it can be a great tool to connect, it can also be extremely disheartening. Scrolling can quickly lead to a downward spiral of all the ways in which you’re lacking. The adventures you’re not taking. The clothes you don’t own. The kids you’re not having. The healthy ingredients you’re not buying. The exercise you’re not getting. The concerts you’re not attending. The must have’s of life you’re simply missing out on

I got to this place awhile back and simply couldn’t take it anymore. I gave up Facebook and Snapchat quite awhile ago, but suddenly Instagram was consuming more energy than it was worth. I decided to take 30+ days away, and I have to say, it was a refreshing change.

LOGGING OUT



You don’t realize how addicted you are to something until you no longer have it at your fingertips. The amount of times I clicked on the Instagram icon in the first few days, only to be greeted with a reminder that I was logged out, shocked me. I was clicking out of habit, not out of desire or need to see something. As the days went on, this happened a lot less frequently, until eventually, I stopped missing it. Stopped feeling like I was missing out. I read more, engaged more presently with my kids, spent my time more wisely.

What could you do in the amount of time that is occupied by social media? Maybe for you, it’s a non issue. But I would gather for most, we’re doing a lot more sharing and searching than we care to admit. We’ve come to crave that instant gratification, the response from people that says - Hey, me too. I like that. Or to feel as though we’re in the loop on everything the world has to offer.

But there’s a world right in front of you. With the people that make up your day to day life - your family, your friends, your children, your coworkers. And if you choose to invest in them as much as we invest in social media, you might be surprised at the change that occurs not only in your own life but theirs as well. Adventures still happen if nobody sees them. Clothes are still fun to buy if you find them on your own. Someone will always be able to have more kids than you... and that’s okay. You get to choose how to fuel and shape your body. You don’t have to go anywhere or do anything extravagant to be happy. Most of the time, it’s the simplest moments shared by the people you love that make life full.

And that will still be the case if no one but you knows about them.

- Kari



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Therapeutic Horsemanship

with SunCatcher Therapeutic Riding Academy



by Sarah Grassel

Horses are serene, ethereal, and overall amazing creatures. Treasured on ranches and used for work and transportation since the beginning, they also have another use - instilling confidence and building physical and emotional strength through an unlikely bond of therapy.

SunCatcher Therapeutic Riding Academy is a nonprofit organization that helps foster those relationships in individuals from the early age of three years all the way up to over 80! Located just outside of Rapid City, the academy facilitates therapeutic horsemanship in both mounted and ground-work sessions.

“Riding a horse rhythmically moves that rider’s body in a manner similar to a human gait, so riders with physical needs often show improvement in flexibility, balance, muscle strength, circulation, and breathing. In addition, the unique relationship formed with the horse provides benefits such as increased confidence, patience, and self-esteem,” Francie Fortune states.

Francie is the executive director at SunCatcher Academy and has been involved with horses in one way or another throughout her entire life. She jokes, “I did rodeo a little bit in high school, but I wasn’t disciplined enough to be great at anything.” Growing up on a ranch with three brothers, Francie grew up on the backs of horses, riding as early as six weeks with her parents.



"I ranched alongside my family, and although I've spent the majority of my adult life away from the family ranch in Belvidere, I have always found a horse or two to work with no matter where I lived," she adds.

Since its start in 2001, SunCatcher Academy has been a prism of hope in the community. Francie explains, "We are able to take the challenges and abilities of those we serve, and help them find that rainbow of joy and hope and confidence as they connect with a horse and find themselves doing really big things!"

At SunCatcher, both instructors and volunteers follow strict standards set by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH). Providing a safe environment is the top priority of the academy. Participants are also required to have doctor approval and a physical examination before engaging in any activities.

Activities may include:
riding involving games, trail rides,
stretching, modified rodeo events,
grooming,
saddling and unsaddling,
leading a horse through obstacles,
and facilitated bonding with a horse
during ground-only work

Francie proudly shares, "In the past 22 years, we have been able to serve those with Cerebral Palsy, Down's Syndrome, Fragile X Syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, ADHD, Traumatic Brain Injuries, MS, Parkinson's, depression, anxiety, PTSD, stroke and amputation recovery, at risk youth, and so many more."

From time to time, the academy also invites therapists to bring clients out for hippotherapy or equine-assisted therapy sessions. Facilitating the safe space for that individual to connect meaningfully with a horse, SunCatcher Academy is able to offer more than your typical equine therapy treatment.

BHW



**"Being a
therapeutic
horsemanship
instructor is such a
deeply gratifying
experience!
Helping individuals
who otherwise
struggle everyday
experience the
unbridled joy that
comes with
working with these
animals is beyond
verbal expression."
-Amber Quinn,
instructor**



One participant who started as a volunteer has been able to reap the benefits from both aspects of the program. Anna started as a volunteer with SunCatcher Academy in 2020 and was recently diagnosed with multiple system atrophy which has no treatment and causes extreme pain, stiffness, and difficulty with balance. She shared, “I knew I still needed SunCatcher, but now I am coming as a rider rather than a volunteer. During sessions, I don’t feel the pain, stiffness, anxiety or worry. Francie and Amber encourage me to keep trying and remind me that the horses are there for me.”

Anna is one of more than 70 people that the program helped in only one year. Learn more or donate to the cause at <https://www.suncatchertra.org/>

SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE

A PLACE OF THEIR OWN



BY KARI NIELSEN

Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP) is a nationwide non-profit organization whose mission proclaims, “No kid sleeps on the floor in our town!” Katie Bates, who is a CRNA by day at the Plastic Surgery Center, has been heading the Rapid City Chapter of SHP since 2019 with the help of her husband, Doug.

“I was home one morning watching the morning show,” Katie said. “The founder of Sleep in Heavenly Peace was on there talking about his non-profit providing beds for kids who don’t have adequate sleeping arrangements. I had never heard of that before.”

And she couldn’t get it out of her head. Knowing Doug had access to the biggest expense of wood in his role as a lumber broker, Katie thought that between the two of them they could get it done. She applied to open a chapter in Rapid City, completed an over the phone interview, and soon they were headed to training at SHP Headquarters in Twin Falls, Idaho.

When she came back and started talking to people, Lowe’s provided all the necessary building tools through their Heroes Project to get her started. That coupled with a build crew and donations, Katie and Doug completed their first build in March of 2020.

That first year alone they delivered 110 beds.

The beds are single beds or single bunk beds. All of the components are built ahead of time, and then the bed is put together inside the home. Not only does SHP provide the bed, they also provide the mattress, pillow, and sheets for children ages 3-17.

“This is 100% ran on community involvement, community support, and volunteers,” Katie said.

That includes donations and financial support for the wood, hardware, linens, and mattresses, as well as, an ongoing team that can help deliver beds year round.

“Doug is in charge of the delivery team,” Katie said. “And we are always looking for more people who can help deliver.”

Last fall, the Rapid City Central High School class of ’77 chose SHP as their project and built over 80 beds. They now have their own delivery team that helps Katie and Doug out a couple of weeks at a time.



Katie has been amazed at the community response as a whole.

“Every time I think I’m going to have to start making phone calls to meet a need something comes up,” she said.

The organization has spread throughout the area by word of mouth. Katie also has a Facebook page where people can access more information about the Rapid City chapter. She receives referrals for certain needs through the Department of Social Services, Love Inc., and Youth and Family Services. Individuals can also request support for themselves or refer another family by filling out an application online.

Regardless of the situation, the response is the same.

“You can see relief on the parents and the caregivers faces,” Katie said. “Every family has always been so very grateful and appreciative. And it is so rewarding to see how excited the kids are to get a bed of their own.”

Katie and Doug host 2-3 builds a year in which they make 50-80 beds at time. Normally these are held in the spring and the fall, with a mini-build thrown in between. These can either be sponsored builds, backed by a certain business or organization, or open community builds in which anyone is welcome to attend.

“Build days are very basic,” Katie said. “We supply all the tools, all you have to do is show up. You don’t need to be a carpenter to join us. We just appreciate the involvement in any way.”

The most crucial goal is that children who need beds are receiving them.

“It is so important for children to have a space of their own and a bed of their own,” Katie said. “It is essential to their physical and mental well being. We are trying to provide for that need and also be a stress reliever for the care giver.”





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CELEBRATING THE RIVETING HISTORY OF BLUE JEANS

By Dorothy Rosby

I still mourn the loss of two pairs of my favorite jeans. There was the one I tore, along with the legs in them, while I was climbing over a barbed wire fence. And there was the one that someone spilled bleach on. I'm not saying who but it was someone I'm married to.

You might think both pairs had fashion potential as distressed jeans, but these had gone way beyond distressed to distraught. So had I.



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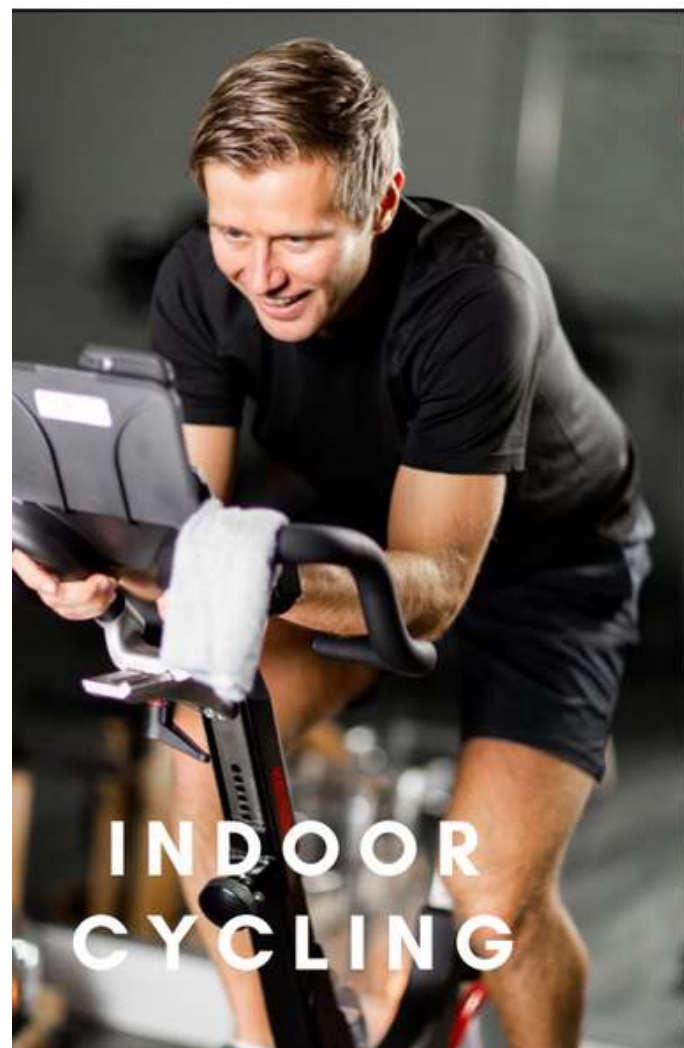
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There are few things more gratifying than finding a pair of jeans that fit and few things sadder than having to part with a pair you love. I doubt I'm alone in that sentiment either. I read that a whopping 96 percent of Americans own blue jeans. And I thought we couldn't agree on anything.

This fashion staple is about to turn 150 years old. And if anything calls for celebration, it's jeans. On May 20, 1873, businessman Levi Strauss and tailor Jacob Davis were granted a patent to create work pants reinforced with metal rivets on blue denim "waist overalls." The rivet idea was Davis's. The cash was Strauss's and the patent for "Improvement in Fastening Pocket-Openings," the innovation that gave birth to blue jeans as we know them, was granted to both men. Had Davis been a richer man we'd be wearing Jacob's instead of Levi's.

According to my research the story of blue jeans actually began long before 1873. Heavy pants dyed with indigo were worn as far back as 17th century India. Talk about vintage clothing. And in America, enslaved people were making and wearing them before gold miners and gunslingers did. It was the rivets that did it for Strauss and Davis—that and clever marketing. It makes me wonder what gold miners and gunslingers wore before they had blue jeans. Khakis?

The creation of women's jeans was a big deal considering that as late as the 1950s there were laws in some parts of the country making it illegal for women to wear pants at all, let alone jeans.

Our foremothers had to choose between being arrested and getting their dresses caught in their bicycle spokes.

Defiant women still did it though and until 1934 they had to borrow jeans from the men in their lives when they wanted to risk arrest. Women could actually vote before they could legally wear pants, and you could say they voted for jeans. Today the average woman owns seven pairs, though apparently we only wear four of them—not all at once.

We do love our jeans and for good reason. They're comfortable and versatile. You can wear them to roller skate or to work—depending on where you work. I doubt they have jeans day at Buckingham Palace or the White House. But I think they should.

They're durable. We could wear the same pair for decades if styles didn't change—and bodies. Also if we stayed away from barbed wire fences. And they're low maintenance. Barring a mishap with a plate of spaghetti, you can wear them many times before washing them. Some experts say as many as 10 times or when they start to smell, whichever comes first. Then just turn them inside out and wash them in cold water. Don't use bleach.

(Dorothy Rosby has five pairs of jeans but only four of them fit.)

BHW

DAWN *chorus*

By Chasity Marcus



It's birthing time! Okay, maybe that's a weird way to say, "YAY, Spring!" but it's true. Birthing happens all around us, never ending, but especially in springtime. Spring is all about birth and renewal. So, what's coming alive that we can notice?

Pasque, the official SD State flower, can be found peeking through late frost or fully blooming in some fields. Check out where: [Finding the Elusive Pasqueflower: 5 Prime Spots](#).

Then there's the mammal babies making their way through their mothers' wombs. So many new generations of species between animals and humans, it's mind-blowing.

Because our world evolves so rhythmically and rapidly, I believe my human duty is to keep up, or at least try. Thoughts of expanding and re-birthing run across my mind all the time. And, let me tell you, the payoff is bountiful.

Are you interested in re-birthing yourself this spring?

Re-birthing brings its' own labor pains, dilating to an open mind, ready for insight. First must come the questions, starting with the most basic, and by basic I mean the hardest question only you can ask yourself, doing the worm work of sifting through your own dirt: Who am I?

And by I, I don't mean wife, grand/mother, sister, daughter, dog mom, cousin, friend, classmate, stranger, cyber-wallflower, I mean who the heck are you, deep down, digging through the layers. Can you find her?

And, not just that, but follow with the question: Who do I want to be?

Then, you can take a very crucial step, or rather steps, meant to be followed every day, big or small. Simply stepping toward the answer of who you are and where you're going. There is a caveat: you'll need to find pleasure in those steps - Yes, praising; no shaming. Become your best gal pal. Hold your own hand. Absorb the feel-good experiences of your journey. Know each day will bring different scenery and characters and storylines, but it's YOU strolling through the reality of your own existence, so enjoy!

Not always that easy, is it?

Well, that's when I try to remember to listen for the dawn chorus, another spring greeting to awaken our senses. What's a dawn chorus you may ask? Or, maybe you are already familiar with the phrase. Anyway, a dawn chorus is a congruent, original melody, sung by birds to signal daylight, also good mating time. Raw tunes.

I remember as a young child growing up east river in the small town of Cavour, laying my cheek on our linoleum kitchen floor... waiting for the warm stream of the sun's rays to reach me after my mom opened the main door, leaving only a screen between me and the chilly breeze, while the robins, sparrows, and finches performed a dawn chorus just for me! Or so it seemed, I guess maybe they were trying to get lucky too, but my innocent ears heard songs meant as mine.

I forgot about that until now...

All that to say, when you choose to re-birth, you are fully in charge of the life you are creating. So, rejoice!

Your life IS meant for you. So when you pay attention, especially to nature, gifts of synchronicity will come along your path and make you laugh more authentically than you can ever remember. (P.S. You have to believe they're meant for you.)

What are your memories of hearing a dawn chorus?

You can find more of Chasity's rants @ Dakota Soulshine.



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Why You Should Shop Consignment

By Tara Morgan,
Owner of Wear It Again Sam

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The Savings - DUH! You will find great amazing quality items that are like new - at a fraction of the cost of what you would pay in a retail store. Now who doesn't like saving money? Designer brands that are maybe normally out of reach for a person's budget become completely affordable at consignment store prices.

The Planet - Shopping consignment is just plain good for the environment. When we shop resale, it means there is a lesser need for clothing to be produced. Because trends come and go, our planet often can't keep up - nor can our landfill. Choosing to shop resale means giving new life to items that have a lot of life left.

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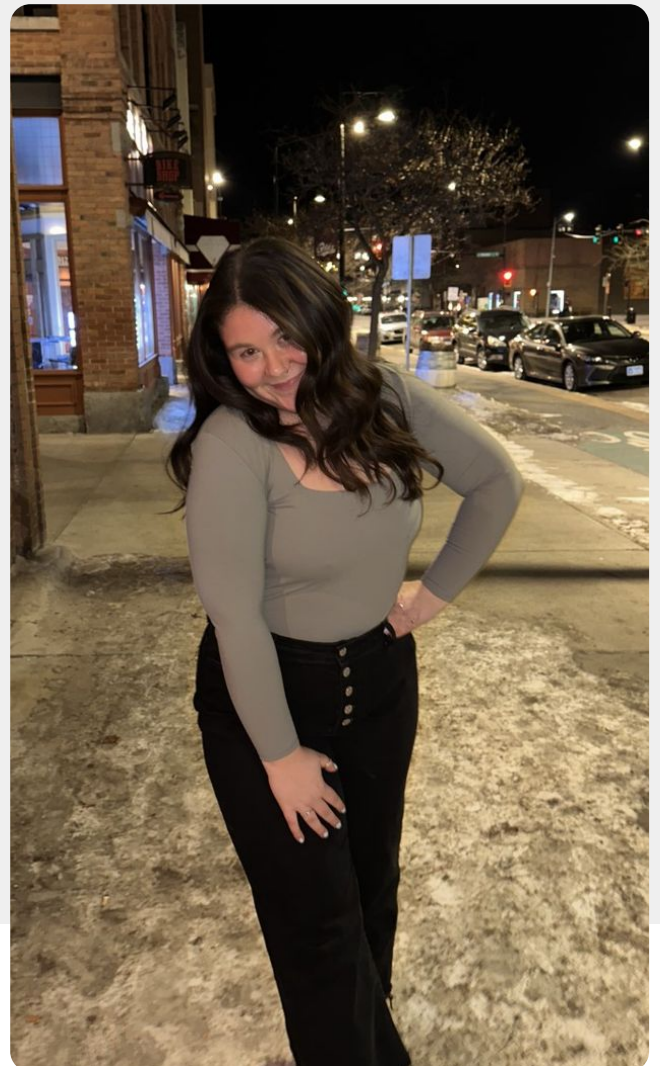


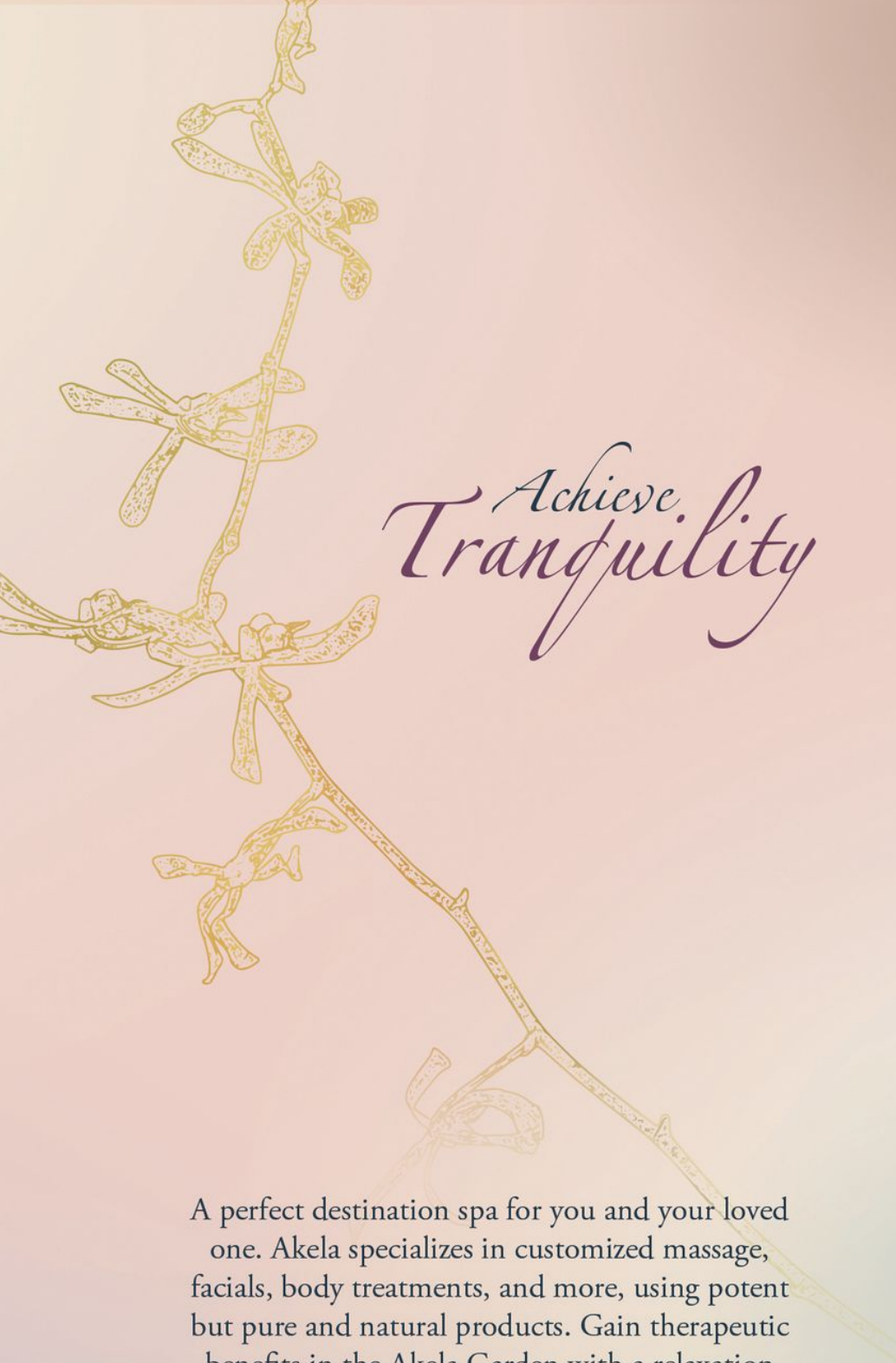
*Study of homeowner perceptions of leading national brands. Study commissioned by Pella, 2019.

About Our Summer Intern

Madigan Schmitz

Hey there! My name is Madigan Schmitz, and I'm really looking forward to working with Black Hills Woman! I'm a Spearfish native, and a sophomore studying Journalism at the University of Montana. I grew up looking at copies of BHW that were in the local coffee shops and restaurants throughout the Black Hills, and I always admired how stories of female strength and empowerment were showcased. Highlighting women's stories is so valuable, and I think that stories coming from our little pocket of the Midwest are so unique and special. Since studying journalism, my eyes have been opened to the importance of a magazine like BHW for our area; I knew that I wanted to be involved in any capacity. Getting the opportunity to get a glimpse at how these stories are told is such an incredible opportunity, and I'm really looking forward to meeting and learning from the women who make the Black Hills such an amazing place. When I'm not working on my journalism degree, I love to travel, read, and I'm always searching for a good cup of coffee!





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Dare To Explore

With Fischer Rounds & Associates

by Sarah Grassel



Oh, hail! Destructive derecho winds, car accidents, etc. Every day South Dakotans and individuals across the nation face unknown peril and risk. Rather than live in fear, ensure that you are covered no matter what you face. Create a life worth living and dare to explore with the knowledge and security that Fischer Rounds & Associates has you covered.

With roots in South Dakota going back to the wild west, Fischer Rounds has been proudly serving communities in both east and west river regions in the state. Offering a wide variety of coverage in home, business, life, health, farm and ranch, Fischer Rounds started as a one man shop in Pierre.

Locally, Fischer Rounds is located in the bustling west-side of Rapid City. Agency administrator from the branch, Samara Campbell, shares that the company goes above and beyond for each customer. “Meeting the needs and giving them service and care they should expect, we have always prided ourselves on being one big family, and our customers are a large part of that,” she says.

Over the years, the business has grown state-wide with more than 100 employees. “Not only do we write in South Dakota, we’re able to help customers nation-wide,” Samara adds. No matter where customers find themselves at risk, Fischer Rounds is able to help provide the coverage they need and navigate customers through finding the appropriate policy for it.



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The agents throughout the branches understand what risks apply to each customer across the country and recognize what policies will best fit. For example, a Floridian company isn’t going to need hail insurance. Instead, they are going to want coverage for hurricane damage and risk.

Agents also anticipate the needs of customers before they realize they need a specific set of coverage. Piecing together the policies that fit each individual and family or business, insurance is easier with Fischer Rounds agents at your side.

“Being able to provide different lines to the customer affords them to have a ‘one stop shop’ to go to for all insurance needs,” Samara adds.

Insurance doesn’t just protect individuals, but it ensures that after you are gone your family or business is in good hands, too. Here is an extensive list of the insurance types Fischer Rounds provides:

- Life Insurance
- Personal Insurance: homeowner, personal umbrella/liability, boat, motorcycle/auto,
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