



Gary (605)272-5233

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Clear Lake (605)874-2191

## That Was the Town Hall?

by Patti Haas

What is the origin of the "Whistle House" on Coteau Street? It is often referred to as the old jail house but maybe should be called the 'older' jail house as the cells were later moved to the 'Golden Nugget' city building downtown on First Avenue in the 1950's. Anyway, back to the origin of the "Whistle House".

*The village trustees are planning on the erection of a new town hall this season to be built of cement and strictly fireproof. It will contain a couple of steel "retainers" for the safe keeping of the thoughtless and evil inclined person who may so far forget himself as to wander from the straight and narrow way. The building will also be used as a receptacle for the fire apparatus of the town, where it will be handy in case of need. A place will be fitted up for the town trustees to meet and transact any business that may come before that august body, booths will be placed where the voter may mark his ticket on election day and be in complete privacy and altogether the new building will be an ornament to the town and a credit to the sagacity and foresight of the trustees.*



-The Gary Interstate, March 15, 1912

The city council decided in 1912 to replace the existing city hall with a fireproof building made of solid cement blocks. The old wooden building and lots on the west business block of First Avenue were then sold to R. Stellmacher to be remodeled and converted into a "handy and commodious shop for blacksmithing and auto repair".

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### Town Hall #2

Town Hall #1 was wooden

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### Fairchild Farmgirl

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Get Registered!

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## **Fairchild Farmgirl – Who’s Hiring?**

Hold on a minute while I mentally prepare for these next two months. Yes, I know I do this to myself, and I couldn’t be more excited! Here’s my play by play if you care to follow along.

So far in March I had a sculptural needle felting class in Adrain, MN. I love that librarian, and to those of you who came to the class and said you like reading my column, that made my day! Next month I have a class in Worthington and Glenwood as of right now. This year I’m teaching “Painting with Wool” where we do a beautiful scene out wool. If that sounds interesting, sign up for Worthington or let your local library know! I’ve taught classes because of my readers spreading the word and it’s great! I’m working on a campaign to get into all the state’s libraries. Wouldn’t that be something!?!

Work is great, but I’m also looking for a summer job (since there’s no school) and I’m applying at temp agencies. I’ve loved owning my own business, but you know it’s pretty great getting a steady paycheck – not going to lie. I’ll still keep up my website and the farmers market and classes, but I want someone else to worry about things for a while. I want to go somewhere for 8-9 hours, work super hard and leave it at the door. That’d be grand!

We’re also gearing up for our sweet eldest son’s wedding next month. That’ll be a fancy shindig in Sioux Falls. I’m going to be honest, I’ve thought about dropping 40 pounds to get into a dress, but obviously not trying hard enough. The weight is still there and doesn’t have plans to leave my body anytime soon. I mean, working out? I’m shot after work. The couch calls and I head to it like a moth to a flame. In all seriousness. I need a dress, like yesterday. Ron needs a suit too. Can you imagine it? Us fancy? I am pretty excited for that.

While doing this, I have to brush up on my nonexistent Portuguese (so yes, I need to learn it). His dad messages me in Portuguese now and thinks it’s funny. Because our foreign exchange student’s parents are coming from Brazil on May 18 and the mom doesn’t speak English. My Google Translate is going to get a workout and I CANNOT wait to tell you all about it! After all they’re staying for 5 days, truly, I think it’s going to be a blast. I’m planning a party for it.

Okay, so my article has moved into May, but I have to share with you a sneak peek about that too. Levi graduates high school! So this hit me the other night...no more Levi after August. I’m pretty sad about this...but Pipestone is going to be a fun move for him! MN West is going to be great.

That very same day, our Grace graduates from Lake Area. She’s already got her job which is so cool. She’s one smart cookie and is so much fun. She gets married next May. But we’ll talk more about that next year!

Until next time,  
Fairchild “Fale logo!” Farmgirl  
(Your turn to use Google translate)

**Town Hall Continued ...**

There was some criticism regarding the sale as having too low a price. The money was put toward the building of the new and much better town hall and was estimated to nearly cover the cost of the new hall. The town council had been meeting at the C.M. Youman's Lumber office, so it appears there was a need for a new city hall at that time.

Albert D. (Bert) Chaon was contracted to build the new city hall, a 24' x 40' building. Chaon was a mason, adept at all kinds of cement work - sidewalks, curbs, foundations, and the like. But he had never built a cement block building. He ordered a new block machine for making the cement blocks. The blocks were two feet long, nine inches thick and the same wide. The machine had a capacity equaled only by the operator and the finished article was turned out ready for delivery. It took about a week to finish and cure a block. The blocks were made on site and erection of the building would begin once enough of the blocks had been made. Bert Chaon had considerable work to complete in the fall of 1912.

On January 11, 1913, the Gary Fire Company met, and a committee was appointed to buy a fire alarm. A.W. Bartels, J.A. Mathews, A.C. Larson made up this committee.

The Gary city council, at the May meeting, voted to buy a combination of two cells for jail purposes, size 4 1/2 x 6 1/2 x 6 1/2 from Pauly Jail Building

Company, St. Louis, Missouri, for the consideration of one hundred fifty-five dollars (\$155) f.o.b. Gary to arrive June 15, 1913.

The big, twelve-hundred-pound bell was installed in the belfry on the town hall. This is to be used in case of fire, and its clear tones can be heard by the soundest sleeper. June 6, 1913, Gary Interstate

I've always suspected that this building housed the early fire company in Gary with

the wider front door and the large rear door. So now we know the rest of that story. It is often reported that this building is on the National Register of Historic places, but I find no record of that. I believe that it was nominated but not accepted. It is interesting that the blocks were made on site and the building stands in very good condition today, one hundred and fourteen years later - and this was Albert Chaon's first attempt at a building. I suspect that Chaon made a major contribution to the building of the Banwarth Garage and Banwarth houses. That will take further research.

**The new town hall building is about completed and presents a very neat appearance. Cement blocks certainly show up in fine shape in a building, and Bert Chaon is to be congratulated on the success of his first attempt at building.**

**Nov. 29, 1912, Gary Interstate**

**Firemen's Report.**

The firemen have cleaned up their masquerade accounts, and make the following report thereon: Number of tickets sold 86. Received for spectators \$5; donation \$2. Total \$93. Paid for music, \$25. for hall, \$10. for advertising, \$5 50. for prizes, \$3.75. Total, \$44.25. Balance on hand, \$48.75, which will be used for the purpose of purchasing a fire bell.

## That's Puzzling

- Patti Haas

Our winter, though mild, has been hanging on long enough and we all need something to liven up the winter doldrums. How about a puzzle contest of some sort? The Gary Community Club hosted a fund-raising "Escape Room" event over the weekend of March 7-8. I have never experienced an escape room, so I asked Jamie (Grabow) Hoffman to explain it to me. Basically, an escape room is a series of puzzles that must be solved in order to escape the game. A team of players works together to solve interactive puzzles and complete tasks within a themed environment to achieve the goal of escaping the room before running out of time. Themes vary from solving a murder to escaping a haunted house to defusing a bomb or navigating a pirate ship, among others.

Teams usually consist of 2-10 players, and the game begins with a briefing by the game master who explains the rules and objectives. A timer starts and the players explore their surroundings and find hidden clues to solve puzzles related to the escape room theme. The puzzles require teamwork and communication to solve. If the players get stuck, the game master may offer them clues – but that is not always the case.

Escape rooms have gained a huge following due to their combination of challenge, teamwork, and

great fun. They test problem-solving abilities and foster team-building skills. What a fun way to spend time with family, friends, and co-workers! Maybe I'll try it out should the Community Club host another "Escape Room."

Another 'puzzling event' is the jigsaw puzzle competition fundraiser. Tour de Kids, a charity that benefits Sanford's Children Hospital, is holding a puzzle tournament on Saturday, March 21 at the Legion 109 Club. Teams compete against each other with the goal to assemble the puzzle faster than any other team. Puzzles of 500 pieces will be provided.

**Tour De Kids**

# PUZZLE TOURNAMENT

**GARY SD POST 109 SUPPER CLUB**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 21**

**3 PM**

- 10 TEAMS/PUZZLES -

CALL MELINDA TO REGISTER: 507-828-1694

**\$30 / TEAM**

**500  
PIECE PUZZLE  
CHALLENGE!**

**MAX 3 PEOPLE PER TEAM  
ALL AGES WELCOME!**

**Prizes for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest times!  
Participants will be included in a drawing for a  
FREE meal at the 109 Club!**

The Gary Post 109 Supper Club will be open 5:30 - 8:30 pm!  
- Smoked Pork Chops, Ribeye, Burgers -

**March Tidbits...**

The interesting things I find when reading through the archives of the Gary Interstate. Nearly every week, it was reported that Dr. Fonger operated on someone or another for appendicitis. So, of course, I did a bit of research into this. The great number of appendectomy operations in 1910 can be attributed to improved surgical techniques including anesthesia and antiseptic practices. The understanding of the medical condition of appendicitis improved the recognition and treatment of the condition. In a nutshell, doctors knew better how to diagnose appendicitis, and the surgery was now safer due to anesthesia and antiseptics so better to remove the appendix rather than hope to successfully treat if it ruptured. -Patti Haas

**Dust If You Must**

By Rose Milligan

Dust if you must, but wouldn't it be better  
 To paint a picture, or write a letter,  
 Bake a cake, or plant a seed;  
 Ponder the difference between want and need?

Dust if you must, but there's not much time,  
 With rivers to swim, and mountains to climb;  
 Music to hear, and books to read;  
 Friends to cherish, and life to lead.

Dust if you must, but the world's out there  
 With the sun in your eyes, and the wind in your hair;  
 A flutter of snow, a shower of rain,  
 This day will not come around again.

Dust if you must, but bear in mind,  
 Old age will come and it's not kind.  
 And when you go (and go you must)  
 You, yourself, will make more dust.

**A Look Back****125 years ago, March 1901**

Luis Huffman has new updated dealership

Tom O'Shea purchases blacksmith shop

Births: boys to Mr. & Mrs. J T Nelson

Mr. & Mrs. John Taylor

Marriage: Maggie Ebsen & Elvinus

Peterson

Death: Mary E Harkins – Mrs. A W Kenyon

**100 years ago, March 1926**

26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of South Dakota School for the Blind in Gary

Francis Potthoff breaks arm after falling from a horse

Births: Girls to Mr. & Mrs. John Helmberger

Mr. & Mrs. Guy Dougherty

Boy to Mr. & Mrs. Herman Reihe

**75 years ago, March 1951**

Annual Farmers' Night program March 12 & 13

Senior play March 9<sup>th</sup> - "There Go the Grooms"

Two feet of snow Saturday morning

Firemen's Dance on March 17<sup>th</sup>

Senior Who's Who - Elaine Benner

Births –

Twin boys to Mr. & Mrs. Nels Petersen

Boy to Mr. & Mrs. Lester Kelly

Mr. & Mrs. Clyde Helmbolt

Girls to Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Keimig

Mr. & Mrs. Tom Fitzpatrick

Mr. & Mrs. Donald Kennedy

Mr. & Mrs. Bud Thoelke

Mr. & Mrs. McLinus Peterson

Marriage: Ruth Arend & Alvin Krause

Deaths: Pedersen twin boys - Lydia Carton

Auctions: Irving Webber - George Walter Estate

**25 years ago, March 1976**

Large attendance at Tri-County Crop Show

Ann Thorson named Gary Centennial

Queen

Gary hosts state square dance festival

Seniors of the Weeks: Marlin Lorenzen -

James Norton - Mark Oswald - Joletta

Pieper

Deaths: Agnes Anderson - Bennie Grinde –

John Schaefer - Harold Helmberger

Auctions: Frank's Welding - Russell Hardie

**Early Detection Saves Lives****March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month**

Colorectal Cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in Americans under the age of 50 and the second deadliest overall. Early detection is crucial, as survival rates are greater than 90% when caught early at a localized state. Early onset colorectal cancer has an incidence rate in younger adults rising more than 131% since 1994.

Symptoms include changes in bowel habits, unexplained weight loss, fatigue, and abdominal pain and are often ignored by younger patients.

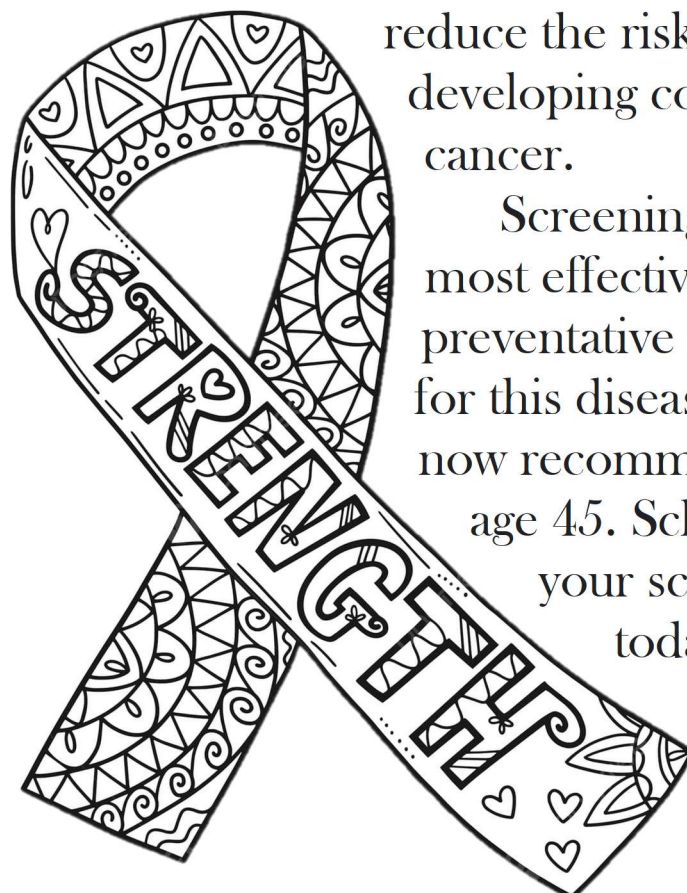
Common risk factors are:

- unhealthy diet
- obesity
- environmental chemicals
- over-use of antibiotics
- consumption of alcohol
- sedentary lifestyle
- family history

Lifestyle changes such as limiting red and processed meat in your diet, adding fiber to your diet, regular exercise and a healthy weight, avoiding tobacco and excessive alcohol consumption all can

reduce the risks of developing colorectal cancer.

Screening is the most effective preventative measure for this disease and is now recommended at age 45. Schedule your screening today.





**Dustin J. Meyen**  
*July 7, 1983 -  
 March 1, 2026*

Dustin Meyen, age 42, of Gary, SD, passed away peacefully at his home in Gary on March 1, 2026, after a courageous nearly two-year battle with cancer. Mass of Christian Burial was held at 10 a.m. Thursday, March 5, 2026 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Clear Lake, SD with burial in the Grandview Cemetery, Gary, SD. Visitation was Wednesday, March 4th from 4 - 7 pm with a Prayer service at 7 pm in the Peden Cole American Legion Hall in Gary, SD. Visitation resumed Thursday one hour prior to the service at the church.

Dustin John Meyen was born on July 7, 1983, in Hendricks, Minnesota, to Harold and ArLoa Meyen. Dustin grew up in Gary, South Dakota, where he began his elementary education. He later attended St. Peter's Elementary School in Canby, Minnesota, attended Middle School in Canby, and graduated from Canby High School in 2002. Gary was always home – the streets he loved to drive, the community that shaped him, and the place where he proudly built his life.

On June 16, 2018, Dustin was united in marriage to Kimberly Hulscher. In marriage, he welcomed his stepdaughter, Katlynn, and together they were blessed with their son, Dylan John. Dustin was baptized and confirmed at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Gary.

Dustin had a true gift for mechanics. A sponge for knowledge, he learned his trade from his grandpa, his uncles, and countless hours alongside friends. He worked at Midwest Converter in Gary, Lammers Construction, and McLaughlin & Schulz, which later transitioned to Dunnick. He then worked at Ag First Elevator in Toronto before founding his own business, Busted Knuckle Repair, in Clear Lake, SD.

He was a meticulous and highly skilled mechanic who could fix anything and refused to do anything halfway. He especially had a passion for Chevrolets. His hands were tough, but his heart was kind.

Dustin loved life fully. He had an adventurous sense of humor that kept everyone on their toes. He enjoyed mud bog racing, cruising the streets of Gary, gathering with friends for a good party, and making trips to Florida. His pallbearers were instrumental throughout his life, and he maintained close relationships with many friends and co-workers. He truly became a friend to everyone he met.

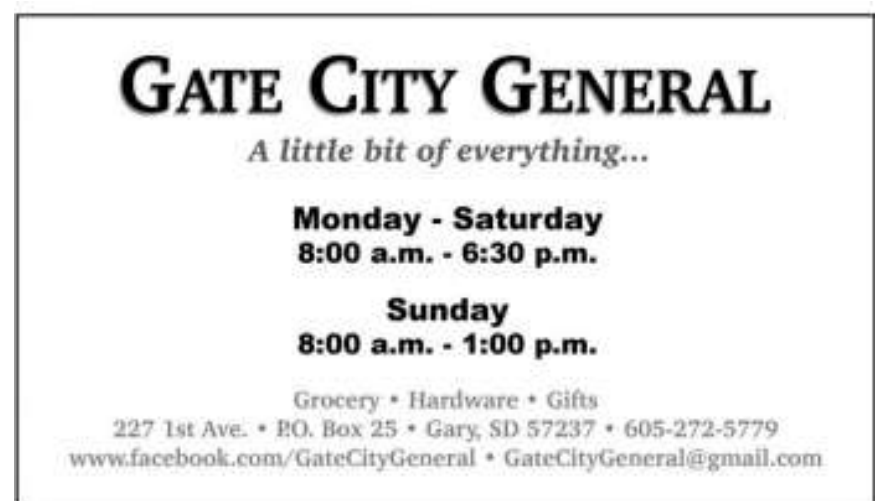
He will be deeply missed by his wife, Kimberly; stepdaughter, Katlynn; and son, Dylan; his father and stepmother, Harold and Sharlotte Meyen of Gary; his sister, Alicia (Dawn) Meyen of Luverne, Minnesota; his father- and mother-in-law, Doug and Patty Hulscher of Gary; sisters-in-law, Jennifer (Jaime Rydbom) Krueger of DeSmet;

and Tina (Scott) Moeller of Gary; and his nieces and nephews, Levi, Chance, Trevor, Keanna, Jasmine, and Tess.

He also shared special bonds with his aunts and uncles: Ron (Mouse) Meyen; Darwyn Engesser; Jeff and Jodie Engesser, all of Gary; Roxy and Scott Radicia of Omaha; Naomi (Marlin Sejnoha) McLaughlin of Tea, South Dakota and Marco Island, Florida; and Al McLaughlin of Humboldt, South Dakota.

Dustin was preceded in death by his mother, ArLoa Meyen; his grandparents, Marvin and Loretta Meyen and Thorval and Carol Engesser; and several aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Dustin fought his battle with grit and determination, never wanting to simply sit still, but to live each day fully. His strength, loyalty, work ethic, humor, and love for life will leave a lasting imprint on all who knew him.



## What Cancer Cannot Do

Cancer is so limited...

It cannot cripple love, It cannot shatter hope,  
 It cannot corrode faith, It cannot destroy peace,  
 It cannot kill friendship,  
 It cannot suppress memories,  
 It cannot silence courage,  
 It cannot invade the soul,  
 It cannot steal eternal life,  
 It cannot conquer the spirit.



**Neil David Olsen**  
January 9, 1952 -  
February 9, 2026

Neil David Olsen, born on January 9, 1952, in Canby, Minnesota, passed away on February 9, 2026, in Dallas, Texas, leaving behind a legacy that reflects his remarkable character and dedication to the community he cherished. After earning a bachelor's degree from South Dakota State University, Neil pursued a fulfilling career at Farm Credit Services that lasted nearly four decades. He began as a loan officer, and his commitment to his work and service to the farming community saw him rise to the senior leadership team. Neil led from a place of positivity and encouragement, and his hands-on approach took him all over the Midwest, building meaningful relationships with his colleagues and the farmers they served.

Known for his integrity and thoughtfulness, Neil was often described as "one of the good guys" and "a farm kid at heart." His warm personality and wisdom provided invaluable guidance through every phase of life for those who were fortunate enough to know him. He wrote many handwritten notes to show appreciation, often including a motivational quote. As a loving father and supportive husband, Neil nurtured and inspired his family, leaving cherished memories that will continue to shape them.

As a devoted family man, Neil celebrated 52 years of marriage to his best friend, Brenda. Together they created and honored many traditions with their children. Neil loved moments spent playing whist during holiday gatherings, boating and fishing, and golfing and vacationing with Brenny and their children at Rainy Lake and Mexico. He enjoyed smoking turkeys and feasting on lutefisk and lefse on Christmas. Neil was an avid reader, a proud Hawkeye fan, and a loving Bumpa to his six grandkids.

Neil is survived by his wife, Brenda; his daughter, Brooke; his son, Seth and daughter-in-law, Christi; and his grandchildren, Rylan, Tate, Roya, Nora, Mitra, and Samira. He is further survived by his siblings, Annette (Dave), Jan, and Dean (Anne), along with many nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his son, Brett, and his parents, Harry and Margaret.

Neil's presence will be deeply missed by all who knew him, as his spirit of kindness, friendship, and dedication will remain in the hearts of those he touched throughout his remarkable life.

Family and friends celebrated Neil's life at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Canby, MN on Saturday, March 14th at 3pm, with visitation starting at 2pm. Food and fellowship followed at Lancer Lanes next door. The service was livestreamed on the Facebook page of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Canby, MN.



**AMERICAN LEGION 109 CLUB**  
1107 COTEAU ST. GARY, SD 57237

**SERVING** | 5:30 - 8:30 P.M.

TAKE OUT AVAILABLE CALL: 605-272-5832 during serving hours

### 2026 Schedule:

Mar 21<sup>st</sup> – Smoked Pork Chops  
or Rib Eye

Apr 4<sup>th</sup> – Prime Rib

Apr 18<sup>th</sup> – Smoked Pork Chops  
or Rib Eye

May 2<sup>nd</sup> – Prime Rib

May 16<sup>th</sup> – **NO SUPPER  
MAY 16<sup>th</sup>**

May 30<sup>th</sup> – BBQ Ribs

June 6<sup>th</sup> – Prime Rib

June 20<sup>th</sup> – Smoked Pork  
Chops  
or Rib Eye

Jul 3<sup>rd</sup> – **BBQ Pork Sandwich &  
Burger Bar**

Jul 4<sup>th</sup> – Prime Rib

Jul 5<sup>th</sup> – Pancake Breakfast  
(at the Legion Hall)

Jul 18<sup>th</sup> – Smoked Pork Chops  
or Rib Eye

Aug 1<sup>st</sup> – Prime Rib

Aug 15<sup>th</sup> – Smoked Pork Chops  
or Rib Eye

\*Hamburgers also available

Follow us on Facebook:  
Gary SD Post 109 Supper Club  
Gary American Legion Dance Hall

The Gary Givers  
**FUNDRAISER**



**THURSDAY NIGHTS**  
at the Gary Liquor Store

**TICKET SALES: 5 P.M. – 7 P.M.**  
Drawing: 7:15 P.M. – Must be present to win!  
\*\* Must be at least 21 years old to participate. \*\*  
2 tickets – \$5 ♥ 5 tickets – \$10 ♥ 20 tickets – \$20

Gary Givers



**Euchre**  
Tournament

Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026

10:30 registration  
11:00 start time

\$25/player  
100% payback

held at the Gary Bar

Please pre-register to  
guarantee a spot. Call the  
Gary Bar at 605.272.9743

COME CELEBRATE WITH US!

CLEAR LAKE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**ST. PATRICK'S  
DAY**

**PARADE  
4:30 PM**

PARADE LINE-UP AT 4 AT  
FRONTAGE ROAD ACROSS FROM TAILFEATHERS

Queen Eden Schiernbeck  
Parade Marshals Rich  
and Carol Halverson

DCMH PIE AUCTION FOLLOWING PARADE AT COMMUNITY CENTER

The Gary Historical Association  
Museum Membership

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Gary Historical

WILL OPEN IF YOU CALL AND  
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PLEASE CONTACT:

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- Vice President – Ellen Schulte
- Secretary – Gene Hults
- Treasurer – Barb Stangeland

**Board Members:** Albert Bekaert, Carolynn Webber, and Pam Hults.

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Gary, SD 57237

Jodi Mercer  
(605)277-8880



GARY AMERICAN LEGION  
DANCE HALL

Accepting Bookings for

- ⊃ Wedding Receptions & Dances
- ⊃ Graduation Parties
- ⊃ Anniversary Parties
- ⊃ Youth Events
- ⊃ Birthday Parties

Contact Loran at 507-277-5525

Or email [garylegionhall@gmail.com](mailto:garylegionhall@gmail.com)

If you have any story ideas or questions pertaining to the Gary area that could develop into an article, feel free to email them to [ghainterstate@gmail.com](mailto:ghainterstate@gmail.com).