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Soap Box Derby

The Gary SD Historical Association sponsored the annual Soap Box Derby again this year. We had an impressive entry this year - an authentic soap box derby car. Piloted by Dylan Meyen, son of Kim and the late Dustin Meyen, and owned by Jodi Engesser, this vintage derby car was purchased at the Regnier Auction Company in nearby Canby, MN. The small car was restored by Marty and Jay Grabow and it was a perfect fit for Dylan. It appears to be a kit car and not a home-built outfit. Check out the before pictures on page 4.



Soap box racing began in 1933 in Dayton, Ohio when six boys were racing homemade push carts and the father of one suggested a race. He then contacted the local newspaper to cover it. Myron Scott, a photojournalist, noted the appeal of such a story and invited the boys to return in two weeks with their friends so he could host a race of his own. Nineteen boys showed



up with racers made of soap boxes, packing crates, scrap wood and whatever else they could find. Grabbing the publicity opportunity, Scott planned a bigger race with the backing of his employer, the Dayton Daily News. It became a "feel-good" story that everyone needed during the Great Depression. Their rules were "anything on four wheels that will coast". Pretty close to the Gary Historical Association's rules today - "the rules are there are no rules".

On race day in 1933, 460 cars showed up - 362 were deemed safe enough to take part. Scott started making plans for a national event to be held the following. Chevrolet was an early sponsor along with the Dayton Daily News. Local newspapers across the country became sponsors for the local races.

Proclaimed to be the "greatest amateur racing event in the world", the soap box derby uses gravity racing cars. The greatest years for soap box racing were the 1950's and 60's when racer participation and spectator involvement was at an all-time high. For over forty years, the sport was exclusively for boys. Girls were introduced in 1971 and four years later, in 1975, Karen Stead won the world championship.

Continued on page 4

**Independence Day
 Celebration**
 Page 9-10

Fairchild Farmgirl
 Hot, Hot, Hot
 Page 2

Fun on the Forth
 Um, We Celebrate on the 3rd
 Page 6 - 7

Fairchild Farmgirl

Did someone ask for more heat? Can we talk about that? Just kidding, but really, this heat and humidity...whoa. Where did that month of June go with all that simply gorgeous weather, comfortable during the day, sweatshirts at night? I have to say, I miss it.

But then again, our produce and flowers are enjoying this hot, sticky weather. I haven't picked so many green beans in my life as I did last week. I know that's a little bit of a stretch, but still. The garden has been loving this jungle weather we've been having. So have the weeds. We had our first sale of green beans and peas, and we bought a weed burner. I'm in love!

Are you doing anything fun this summer? With me teaching wool painting this summer/fall for libraries, and Ron working in town, as well as we're up to 3 farmers markets and the gardens have taken over our lives, we've got nothing big planned for a trip or anything. I know, quite boring. But, something magical happened last weekend when one of our older daughters asked if they could camp at our 40 acres on the other side of the section. Of course I said yes, and we had such a great time. So don't stress out about going on a big trip when actually you can have fun in your own backyard. Or in our case...the hayfield about a mile away.

In other news, I've decided to go back to school. I know, what does a 52-year-old like me think she's doing? Well, right now all I'm doing is getting a certificate in Supply Chain. I figured I'd do that before I spent any money on a degree. I'm also learning Spanish. I actually have been really loving both classes. In the Supply Chain classes, I had to design the layout of a warehouse. This week I have to come up with a product to sell to ten mayors in 10 different cities and then I have to plan a warehouse within 1,000 miles of each. It's been pretty awesome.

As weird as it sounds, logistics has always fascinated me. Shipping out my soaps and wool items, looking where they go and then if they have to be shipped a certain way, etc. It's so cool. What sealed the deal was when I had to send some of my needle felting kits to Canada, and I had to find the tariffs to ship them under. I knew that my encore career was going to be something in logistics!

Am I going to quit making soaps and stuff? Not for the foreseeable future. My soap business and selling wool have enabled me to stay at home with my kids, so I didn't miss out on anything and was right there. But now that our youngest is going into the 8th grade, I want something that I WANT to do for a career. Not something that I have to do. So there you go. It's a 3-6 month course, and hopefully I can find a company that will hire this momma that loves to work, problem solve, and is not afraid to learn new things. Wish me luck!

Until next time,

Fairchild "get out an pick those beans"

Farmgirl



Take Me Out to the Ball Game

Upcoming Gary Home Games

Tues, July 28th Gary Women vs Headliners (Canby) 7:30pm

Tues, Aug 4th Gary Women vs Buck's (Toronto) 7:30pm

* * Women's League Tournament August 15th & 16th in Canby* *

Concessions!

THE LOVE TIMES

Celebrating Life's Greatest Stories Since 1961

LOCAL SWEETHEARTS CELEBRATE 65 YEARS OF WEDDED BLISS

Gary, South Dakota

August 2026

In the summer of 1961, a young couple from Gary, SD stood before family and friends, promising to love, honor, and cherish one another for all their days.

Robert Keimig and Joyce Kenyon began their journey together on August 28th and over the decades, they have built a life filled with laughter, devotion, and countless cherished memories.

From raising a family to weathering life's storms, their love has remained steadfast — a shining example of commitment and joy for all

FROM THE YEAR THEY WED — 1961

- Average Gas Price: \$0.31 per gallon
- Average New Car Price: \$2,850
- U.S. President: John F. Kennedy (inaugurated January 20, 1961)
- Top Movie: West Side Story
- Hit Song: "Runaway" by Del Shannon

- Fun Fact #1: Yuri Gagarin became the first human to travel into space on April 12.
 - Fun Fact #2: The Peace Corps was established by President John F. Kennedy on March 1.
 - Fun Fact #3: Pampers disposable diapers were introduced to the public.
 - Fun Fact #4: IBM introduced the Selectric typewriter, revolutionizing office work.

Please send your heartfelt wishes, fond memories, and congratulations to:



Robert & Joyce Keimig.
1106 LacQuiParle St.
Gary, SD 57237



"Their love is an inspiration to us all — a true example of what it means to keep a promise made long ago." — Betty Gene Julie Angela

Before Pictures of Dylan's Soapbox Derby car:



There are 3 levels in competition soap box racing

1. Stock , entry level, ages 7-13
2. Super stock, mid-level for kids 9-18
3. Masters, senior level for ages 10-20

Each level has a specific car design. Cars come in kit form , purchased from ISBD (International Soap Box Derby) - the only visibly common component are the official wheel sets. Kids are expected to assemble the cars themselves under the supervision of a mentoring adult.

The cars being raced in Gary run the gambit of design. Most start out as bikes or trikes and are put together with seats, steering and brakes that are cannibalized from parts unknown.

My challenge for our young racers is to build a more authentic looking racer like the ones pictured here.



A Look Back...**125 years ago, July 1901**

Fourth of July celebration huge success
 Earl Haquewood severely cuts leg calf when falling from a horse
 First Class Restaurant and Eating House now open
 Marriage: Mathilda Bartz & Herman Duenow
 Birth: Son to Mr. & Mrs. Fred Bartels

100 years ago, July 1926

Chautauqua program July 5-8
 Ed Dalt thrown from car resulting in his death
 Gary will celebrate Harvest Day picnic July 29
 AH Wallace, Civil War veteran, visiting relatives in Gary
 Death: Ed Dalt
 Births: Girls to Mr. & Mrs. Baer
 Mr. & Mrs. John F Thoeke
 Mr. & Mrs. Wm Hinsvark
 Mr. & Mrs. Earl Lightfoot

75 years ago, July 1951

David Hunt fractures leg when tractor rolls backward over him
 Saturday mail service will now leave at 10am instead of 4:30 pm
 1st Hole in One on Gary course by Ben Jensen
 Fire destroys hen house at Irving Heaton's
 Hentges' Garage opens
 Gene Hults fractures wrist from falling out of tree
 Marriages: Mary Harkins & Earl Gordon
 Maxine Wells & Donald Miller
 Births: Girls to Mr. & Mrs. Robert Rourk
 Mr. & Mrs. Johnny Fitzpatrick
 Boy to Mr. & Mrs. Morris Marcotte

50 years ago, July 1976

Gate City Golf Tournament held
 Kay Oswald awarded athlete letter at SDSU
 Vicky Wiese named Centennial Queen at Gary
 Alice Schulte and Robert Kelly are Senior Citizens' King and Queen
 Barn burns at Lyndon Limbergs'
 Grass fire south of Larry Weber farm
 Grass fire near Harold Westphal farm near Lake Cochrane
 Marriage: Charlene Kruse & David Thompson
 Deaths: Mark Kenyon - Marvin Stellmacher - Florence Gage

Picture this

The Gary SD Historical Association has been awarded a \$750 grant from the Deuel County Community Foundation to be used to digitalize our collection of historic photographs. These scanned photos will be used to create a searchable database for our use as well as being made available to the public. We would like to encourage the public to share any vintage photos of the city of Gary or the surrounding townships for use in this project. Photos of identified citizens, one-room schoolhouses, local businesses, community events, main street photos, interior pictures of local businesses, etc. would be appreciated. All photos would be returned to their owner after being scanned. We plan to work on this project after the busy summer season. If you have any photos to share, contact a member or email to GHAInterstate@gmail.com.

**GATE CITY GENERAL***A little bit of everything...*

Monday - Saturday
8:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Sunday
8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Grocery • Hardware • Gifts
 227 1st Ave. • P.O. Box 25 • Gary, SD 57237 • 605-272-5779
www.facebook.com/GateCityGeneral • GateCityGeneral@gmail.com

More memories from Mike Peterson, Class of 1970

The big annual July 3rd celebration was on. The town was full of people, cars were parked way down to the Rest Home (Blind School). The highlight of the celebration was the water fight. The water fight was the main event: everyone came to Gary to see the water fight. Fire Departments showed up about 1:00 PM to set the structure that held the steel cable about 30 feet above First Street. These A-frame structures were placed in the middle of the street, one across from Heaton's Store and the other across from the Legion Hall. The object of the contest was for one department to use a high pressure hose to knock a metal pail (suspended at the midpoint of the cable) to one end or the other. It was like a football game.

Water fights were big in every town around this part of the country. Just about every little town had their own water fights. But Gary was the only 3rd of July water fight! This was a big honor for all the other squads.

By 3:00 PM, the fights were getting ready to start. It began with twelve teams, some had byes for the first match. Winners would play winners until there was the championship match. These were so popular in Gary because Gary was always guaranteed to have a really hot, muggy day; perfect climate for a water fight!

Way before the water fights began, the crowds of people would be lining up on both sides of the street with large coolers of ice and beer to sit on. Everyone had their own portable bar. Water fights were way more fun if you had a refreshing beverage along. It was super fun watching the water fights and visiting with everyone in the crowd of people, many of whom returned home for the celebration every year.

The best part was getting sprayed and cooling off a little. Once one fire department made a great connection with the overhead barrel and got the other team backing up, the spectators got excited. The squad that was losing the battle had to back up the their fire hose under pressure and do it as fast as they could. Someone would inevitably slip and lose control of the high powered hose. The hose would swing out of control and spray dozens of spectators, knocking a bunch of them backwards, off their coolers. Everyone in the crowd would laugh. The object for the experienced spectator was to position themselves where there was good chance to take a direct hit, but to be alert enough to anticipate and quickly move out of the way, so they would only get sprayed by the mist - not the full force of the water.

As soon as the winner was crowned, First Street swarmed with people, most of them carrying their beverage of choice. Kids were running around with packs of Black Cat firecrackers. Firecracker were more powerful in the 1960's than they are today. Firecrackers were lit in packs of 12, 16, 32, or 100. Kids loved throwing these packs of lit firecrackers into the crowds of people. They liked making people dance like they saw during all the Western movies and TV shows. I never saw anyone grab a kid and tell them in no uncertain terms that they better never throw another firecracker at people. This was an accepted ritual for the 3rd of July. Kids were running around, lighting bottle rockets and throwing them up in the air hoping the gunpowder would ignite at the right time and send the rocket whizzing into the sky. Most of the time the rockets nose- dived into the ground or flew through the air at face level, smacking into people. Then there were the 16 shot Roman candle which would be used in a duel to settle any disagreement. Two persons would stand facing each other 30 feet apart, light their weapons

and stand there stoic and proud, aiming their fiery weapons at their adversary. One by one, the fiery balls would shoot out of the ends of their magic wands, bouncing off faces and burning holes in shirts, hair and beards. Roman candles were more powerful in the 1960's too. Today's Roman candles go poof, poof, poof. In the 60's they went boom, boom, boom! Nobody ever sued for their injuries. We had good carbolic salve and the really god bag balm in those days. They quickly fixed up any kind of burn.

By 2:00 AM , the town was deserted, everyone was home, on their way home or sleeping it off somewhere around Gary. By 8:00 AM, Erich Koeppen and his crew would have every one of those thousands of empty beer cans picked up. I would get up early, walking around the streets and alleys looking for any money that might have been lost the previous evening.

And these are Mike's memories of the 3rd of July in our fair community.


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:
 Jul 31st **CONFIRMED** Sweet Corn Feed
 Aug 1st – Prime Rib
 Aug 15th – Smoked Pork Chops
 or Rib Eye
 Sep 5th – Prime Rib
 Sep 19th – Smoked Pork Chops
 or Rib Eye
 Oct 3rd – Prime Rib
 Oct 17th – Smoked Pork Chops
 or Rib Eye **Poultry Party**
 Nov 7th – Prime Rib
 Nov 21st – Smoked Pork Chops
 or Rib Eye
 Dec 5th – Prime Rib
 Dec 19th – Smoked Pork Chops
 or Rib Eye
 *Hamburgers also available

Follow us on Facebook:
[Gary SD Post 109 Supper Club](#)
[Gary American Legion Dance Hall](#)

Sweet
**CORN
AND BRAT
FEED**


Gary, SD
 American Legion Post #109
 Supper Club
Friday July 31, 2026
Starts 5:00 PM


**Free Will
Donation!**


A Thrivent Community Action Event

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 BAR
 GARY, SD



**JULY
31st
8PM**

LONDON JAMES

Gary's Independence Day Celebration

Check out Gary, SD Community Club on Facebook for even more pictures!



Kiddie Parade Cuties



The annual 3rd of July celebration would not be possible without many, **many** volunteers working long hours. These organizations include the Gary SD Historical Association, Gary Community Club, Pieper Rodeo, American Legion Post 109, and the Gary Fire Department. Many civic-minded individuals also volunteer their time, talent, and treasure to put on an amazing community celebration.

Many groups are stretched a bit thin and would appreciate a bit of help. More members would be great but volunteering an hour or two serving ice cream or manning the museum for the Historical Association, assisting at Fire Department Bingo, helping to serve breakfast at the Legion, or guiding the kids' events would be greatly appreciated.

There are opportunities for everyone. Many hands make light work!



Kid Games

Face Painting



Watermelon Eating Contest





Turtle Races



Historical Soap Box Derby



Kiddie Pull



Gary Rodeo



Development Duck Race



Burn-out

William “Bill” E. Kallhoff

July 15, 1956 – June 29, 2026

William Kallhoff, age 69 of Gary, SD passed away peacefully, surrounded by family, at home on Monday, June 29, 2026, after a three-year battle with cancer. Funeral service was held on Monday, July 6, 2026, at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Canby, MN. Visitation was from 5 - 7 pm with a Prayer Service at 7 pm on Sunday, July 5th at the Houseman Funeral Home, Birk Chapel in Canby, MN and resumed Monday one hour prior to the service at the church. Burial will be held at a later date.

William (Bill) Earl Kallhoff was born on July 15th, 1956, in Madison, MN to Robert and June Kallhoff. He graduated from Canby High School in 1974 and continued his education at VoTech. After working for many years in the industry, Bill started his own sheet metal fabrication business, B&C Fab.

On August 5th, 1989, Bill was united in marriage to Cheryl Christianson. Together they built a life in Willmar raising four children, Bruce, Josh, Brad and Sara. In the years to follow, he found his true joy in the role of Grandpa, reading countless books to all his grandchildren and attending as many of their events that he could.

Among so many things, Bill enjoyed raising pheasants, tinkering on everything, shooting pool, and playing cards with friends and family. He was a man recognized by his comforting nature and the smile in his eyes. He loved sitting around a table, sharing stories and cracking jokes. But more than anything, he loved spending time with his wife, kids, and grandkids.

Bill is survived by his loving wife Cheryl; his four children Bruce Loerzel Jr., Joshua Loerzel, Bradley Kallhoff, and Sara (Kevin) Langmade; his nine grandchildren Cayden, Cylee, Nora, Sophia, Bennett, Kallum, Emmett, Colette and Jonathan; siblings Andy Kallhoff and Julie (Pete) Farrell; and many loved nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Robert and June Kallhoff.

Karen Mae Keimig

June 10, 1942 – June 24, 2026

Karen Keimig, age 84 of rural Gary, SD passed away peacefully on Wednesday, June 24, 2026, at Ava's House in Sioux Falls, SD after a short battle with cancer. Mass of Christian Burial was held at 10:30am on Tuesday, June 30th at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Clear Lake, SD. Visitation was from 5 to 7pm on Monday, June 29th at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Clear Lake, SD with a prayer service at 7pm and rosary following. Visitation resumed one hour prior to the service at the church. Burial was at the Grandview Cemetery in Gary, SD. Houseman Funeral Home of Clear Lake, SD was entrusted with the arrangements.

Karen Mae Keimig was born on June 10, 1942, in Gary, South Dakota, to Eilly and Viola (Hillman) Limberg. She grew up in Gary and graduated from Gary High School before continuing her education at Central Washington State University. She later attended graduate school at South Dakota State University.

On August 19, 1967, Karen was united in marriage to Gurard "Jerry" Keimig. Together they built a life centered on family, faith, creativity, and community. They were blessed with three children: Greg, Violet, and Duane.

Karen was a talented and passionate crafter whose creativity touched countless lives. She especially enjoyed sewing and quilting and was known for creating beautiful windsocks, flags, and hobby horses. Her handmade creations reflected the care and love she poured into everything she did. Karen also treasured the friendships and experiences she shared with her beloved Four Moons Rendezvous family.

Above all, Karen's greatest joy was her family. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother whose love and support will be remembered by all who knew her.

Karen is survived by her husband of 58 years, Gurard "Jerry" Keimig; her daughter, Violet (Rick) Keimig-Anderson; her daughter-in-law, Wendy Wollschlager-Keimig; her grandchildren, Chase (Chessa), Colten, Beau, Claire, and Dylan; and her great-grandchildren, Jordyn, Ava and Rowe.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Viola and Eilly Limberg; her children, Greg and Duane; and her siblings, Harvey, Shirley, Eilly "Bubby," Donald "Deadeye," and Janice.

Karen's family finds comfort in the many memories she leaves behind and in the lives she touched through her kindness, creativity, and unwavering love. She will be deeply missed and forever remembered.

Larry Kent Koerlin



September 8, 1951 – July 4, 2026



Larry Kent Koerlin, born on September 8, 1951, in Brookings, South Dakota, was the son of the late Richard and Darlene (Forby) Koerlin. Shortly after his birth, the family relocated to Gary, South Dakota.

Larry attended country school until the sixth grade and then went on to Gary Public School, graduating in 1969. After graduation, he moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he worked for Polytech for two years. In 1972, he moved to Cleveland, Ohio, and worked at Lincoln Electric for the next 42 years. His coworkers and friends affectionately referred to him as Dakota, which he was very proud of.

Outside of work, Larry found great enjoyment in various hobbies, including bowling, fishing, hunting, and riding his Harley-Davidson. These activities brought him immense happiness and fulfillment.

Larry passed away in his home on July 4, 2026. He is survived by his three brothers: Ken and Pat Koerlin of Fort Collins, Colorado; Keith and Deb Koerlin of Granite Falls, Minnesota; Bob and Sheila Koerlin of Rapid City, South Dakota, and his sister, Karen and Nathan Oellien, of Canby, Minnesota.

A celebration of Larry's life will be held at a later date.



The Gary Historical Association Museum Membership

Name: _____

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City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail Address: _____

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Comments: _____




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Ellen Schulte
605-272-5295
Carolynn Webber
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217 1st Avenue
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

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.