

September 2023

Horizons

A Golden West Customer Newsletter

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SOAKING UP HISTORY

Mineral spa rejuvenates locals
and visitors in Hot Springs

 **Golden West**
We're everywhere people connect.

SOAKING UP HISTORY

Mineral spa rejuvenates locals and visitors in Hot Springs



Owner Kara Hagen

Kara Hagen first noticed the vacant Hot Springs property that would become Moccasin Springs Natural Mineral Spa in 2002.

“It was an old abandoned property,” she remembers of the Hot Springs location. The year prior, Kara had purchased a building in town and wasn’t in the market to acquire another property. Yet she innately understood the potential of the springs. “But it wasn’t the time in 2002,” she says.

Indigenous people were said to have used the moccasin-shaped warm mineral pools long before any white settlers arrived in the area. The waters have been compared to the famous hot springs of Carlsbad, Germany, thought to have healing and restorative powers.

In 1881, the first spa was officially opened at the location, aptly named the Black Hills Spa. In 1890, the Dakota Hot Springs Co. built the Hot Springs Hotel and Minnekahta Bath House on the property.

‘Untapped potential’

In 1963, the hotel and bathhouse officially closed and remained that

way until Kara saw the potential in the location. But she didn’t make a move for another 12 years.

“I kept driving by and driving by,” she says. “It was such an untapped potential. Everyone said ‘Someone should do this or someone should do that with it’ ... and I just kept thinking about it.”

In 2014, that thinking turned into action, and Kara bought the property and proceeded to turn it into Moccasin Springs Natural Mineral Spa.

In May 2019, Moccasin Springs officially opened for business.

Expanding offerings

In the nine years since Kara bought the property, it has consistently expanded, adding more with each year. Tucked into the hillside and surrounded by pine trees, Moccasin Springs features six pools, four massage rooms, a three-in-one sauna, and a salt room. Temperatures in the pools range from 80 degrees to 105 on average.

Visitors can take advantage of the springs, as well as massages, yoga, wellness treatments, and spa treatments. The spa also features Buffalo Dreamer, a restaurant “specializing in food alchemy and organic, farm-to-table cuisine.”

Kara chose to retain the history of the pools by utilizing the remains of the former Minnekahta Bathhouse and Open Air Plunge. One especially unique piece of the spa is a brick archway that allows visitors to swim between pools.

Something for everyone

Kara, who also owns the Southern Hills Mercantile and Taproom in Hot Springs, says both the community and surrounding areas have embraced Moccasin Springs.

“We have people from all over coming and we are often completely booked,” she says. Locals can purchase memberships and punch cards while out-of-town visitors can purchase individual soaks as well as massages, saunas, a variety of spa treatments, and even a meal at Buffalo Dreamer on site.

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Soaking Up History

Today Moccasin Springs features six pools, four massage rooms, a three-in-one sauna, and a salt room.

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“A lot of people come from Custer, Hill City, Spearfish ... to have a little get away,” she says. “I really like the idea of having a place where adults can come to relax.”

Internet spurs growth

From the very start, Golden West has made Moccasin Springs’ growth possible, Kara says.

The high speed fiber optic connectivity is critical for a modern business, especially a spa, she says. “We really need that connectivity. We have an intricate booking system,” she says.

And the service the cooperative provides means Moccasin Springs never feels left out alone. “If I ever have a problem or if I need to really get something done, Golden West is there for us. It happens quickly.”

That reliability combined with the high speed connection allows Kara to focus on her business rather than her internet. “Without that connectivity, we’d be lost.”

Connected to history

As Kara continues to bring relaxation, healing, and wellness to her community and beyond, she can’t help but feel a deep connection to the history of the Hot Springs community. She loves that people who visit her spa often visit other businesses in her community as well, spreading the impact.

“Having the hot springs, bringing a little bit of history and providing a unique natural spa experience ... is really important for me and the community,” she says.

And she loves the idea that people find relaxation and solace in her business and it makes her all the more convinced that she made the right decision all those years ago. “It warms my heart to see people having a nice time and leaving relaxed.”



2022 Annual Meeting MINUTES

The Annual Meeting of the members of Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc., was called to order at 10 a.m., September 24, 2022, at the Wall Community Center in Wall, South Dakota by President Jeff Nielsen. Said meeting was held pursuant to notice thereof as required by law. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jeff Nielsen.

President Nielsen then called upon Darla Pollman Rogers, attorney for the Cooperative, who gave the Credential Report. A motion was made and seconded to approve a quorum. Motion carried.

Next, President Nielsen called upon Kenneth Tonsager, Jr., secretary, to read the Notice of Meeting and the Proof of Mailing, after which a certified copy of each was duly filed as part of the minutes of this meeting.

President Nielsen introduced the special guests in attendance at the meeting.

President Nielsen asked that the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting be approved, if there were no additions or corrections, as written. On a motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the president declared the minutes approved.

A motion was made, seconded, and the financial report was approved.

President Nielsen welcomed the Cooperative members and introduced the present Board of Directors of Golden West.

President Nielsen then delivered his presidential report. He reported this year marks the 70th annual meeting of the Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, since becoming a cooperative in 1952. Nielsen noted Golden West’s commitment to connecting its members and reviewed the advancements in technology over the past 70 years, highlighting Golden West’s high speed internet connection.

Next, President Nielsen called on General Manager/CEO Denny Law to present his annual report. Mr. Law noted

the importance of telecommunications and its critical role in medical care in rural areas. He went on to share that Golden West is undergoing its largest capital expenditure in its history. The multi-year project to update the remainder of the Golden West service territory with fiber-optics will result in approximately 14,000 miles of fiber being buried. Since 2011, Golden West has invested over \$400 million dollars in construction. The cost is outweighed by its benefits for subscribers and communities.

President Nielsen called on Darla Pollman Rogers, attorney, to report on the proposed amendments to the Bylaws of Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc. The proposed amendments covered a few areas. Rogers facilitated audience discussion.

Darla Pollman Rogers advised the membership of the balloting process and requested that the ballots for the proposed amendments to the bylaws be handed out. After the membership had the opportunity to vote, the ballots were collected by a three-member balloting committee appointed by the Board of Directors to count the ballots and report to the membership. The members of the balloting committee were: Sandra Vankekerix, Philip Pearson, and Steve McCormick.

Next, Darla Pollman Rogers, attorney, discussed the nominating petitions for the Board of Directors. Vacancies on the Board of Directors were as follows:

District II – John Knutson (four-year term) one vacancy with one candidate

District VIII – Randy Koerner (four-year term) one vacancy with one candidate

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to seat the uncontested incumbents:

District II – John Knutson

District VIII – Randy Koerner

Darla Pollman Rogers, attorney, introduced the director candidates for District I – Angela Simons and Duane Wood

District V – Kenneth Tonsager, Jr. and Penny Svenkeson. Each candidate was allotted three minutes to address the membership.

Next, Darla Pollman Rogers advised the membership of the balloting process. After the membership had the opportunity to vote, the ballots were collected. The same three-member balloting committee was used to oversee the ballot counting and report to the membership.

Drawings were held to give away more than 25 door prizes.

President Nielsen called for any old business. There was none.

President Nielsen called for any new business. CEO/General Manager Denny Law answered a question from the audience; no action was taken.

Meal tickets were distributed to all those in attendance.

Then, Darla Pollman Rogers announced the election results: Angela Simons was elected director for District I (four-year term) and Penny Svenkeson was elected director for District V (four-year term).

Darla Pollman Rogers also announced the balloting results that the proposed amendments to the Bylaws passed.

The grand prize \$500 check went to Marvin and Marcella Schmidt.

President Nielsen adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Jeff Nielsen, President

Three Director Candidates Run Unopposed

Members of the Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative will elect three members to four-year terms on the Board of Directors. Two incumbents seek re-election. In District IV, a new candidate is running for the seat left open by Kenneth Bolzer. Director elections will occur at the annual meeting on Sept. 23. See back page for meeting details.



Arnie Hill, – District III, Unopposed Incumbent

Arnie operates Arnie's Repair, a windshield repair service in White River. He has served on Golden West's Board of Directors since 2011.

Arnie worked for the Country Pride Cooperative for 39 years. He started as a senior shop mechanic in 1969 and took over as general manager of the White River location in 1989. He then served as a contract postal mail carrier from 2006 until he retired in 2015.

Arnie served as a Mellette County Commissioner from 2007 to 2010. He has also been a member of the Mellette County Volunteer Fire Department for 53 years and is a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in White River.

Arnie and his wife of 53 years, Connie, have three children and five grandchildren. He enjoys camping, hunting, fishing, and helping his nephew when needed through haying and calving seasons.



Thomas Zickrick – District IV, Unopposed Candidate

Thomas was born in Kadoka and grew up in Long Valley where he attended grade school. After graduating from Kadoka High School, Thomas earned a bachelor's degree in secondary education math and computers from Chadron State College in Chadron, Nebraska.

After teaching his first year in Mission, Thomas taught 15 more years at Crazy Horse

School in Wanblee. Today he farms and ranches.

Thomas has been married to Jennifer for 22 years. The couple has two kids; Max is 19 years old, and Emily is 17. He and his wife like to travel, taking the kids somewhere at least once each year. Thomas is a member of the Long Valley Fire Department, Long Valley Our Saviors Lutheran Church, and a Jackson County Commissioner.



Ansel Wooden Knife – District VI, Unopposed Incumbent

Ansel joined the Golden West Board of Directors in September 2011.

He was born and raised in Corn Creek, on the Rosebud Reservation along with his 11 siblings. Ansel moved to Interior for his job with the Milwaukee Railroad, which is where he met his future wife, and has lived there ever since.

Ansel and his wife, Teresa, have owned and operated their family business in Interior for over 40 years. He loves living in the Badlands.

Ansel and Teresa have four grown children and two grandchildren. He enjoys spending time in the outdoors, especially fishing and gardening, and getting together with his family.

Members Will Vote On Bylaws

Proposed bylaw changes would allow for more engagement

Members at Golden West's 71st Annual Meeting will vote on bylaw amendments that are being proposed to help enhance member satisfaction and participation in the Cooperative.

Last year members approved bylaw changes giving the Board of Directors flexibility in establishing additional voting methods for member meetings, such as voting electronically or by mail. This year's proposed changes expand the timeframe for submission of nominations and notice of member meetings as needed for certain voting methods. The changes would also allow voting to occur in advance of the meeting.

To engage as many Cooperative members as possible, the Board of Directors approved the proposed bylaw changes for member consideration. Upon member

approval, the board will be able to consider several options for members to vote on future annual meeting business without the need to travel. Examples include voting online securely or requesting a paper ballot by mail to be completed and returned by mail.

Golden West mailed every member a Notice of 2023 Proposed Amendments document indicating the proposed changes to the bylaws. It arrived in mailboxes earlier this month in the same clear wrap as the annual report, which serves as the official annual meeting notice.

For more information, visit goldenwest.com/annualmeeting.



Attention Businesses, Churches, School Districts, Towns, Etc.

Authorization to Vote process for non-individual members

The process for voting authorization that enables non-individual members to vote at the Annual Meeting was updated last year. Non-individual members must contact Golden West to request an Authorization to Vote form, complete it, and return it back to Golden West by 2 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023.

Examples of a non-individual member include a school district, town, church, corporation, LLC, etc. Each non-individual member shall designate a representative to vote who is an officer, an LLC member, or other senior official within their organization. The Authorization to Vote form is not a Proxy Statement.

Sole proprietor businesses and residential customers are individual members and cannot use the form. They must vote in person at the Annual Meeting. For more information about this change, visit goldenwest.com/annualmeeting.

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PO Box 411, Wall, SD 57790

Members are invited to the
71st Annual Meeting

Golden West Telecommunications
Cooperative, Inc.

**Saturday
September 23, 2023**

Wall Community Center,
501 Main Street, Wall, SD

Registration: 8:30 to 10 a.m.

Meeting Called to Order: 10 a.m.

Meal tickets distributed after the meeting.

Many door prizes and a \$500 grand prize will be given away to registered members during the meeting. Must be present to win.

1-855-888-7777, option 3
goldenwest.com/annualmeeting



Golden West will give away one laptop and two \$50 Visa gift cards to three lucky members.

Enter to win at theexchangesd.com/win.

You must be a Golden West customer and be 18 years of age to register. No purchase necessary and only one entry per household. Drawing will be held on Monday, Oct. 23.



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