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# HORIZONS

*A Golden West Customer Newsletter*

January 2018

## Whiskey *on the* Weta

*How a Family's Moonshining Past  
Hatched a New Business in Kadoka*



*Mark Eschenbacher  
and Jim Herber  
of Badlands Distillery*

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Golden West is a Member of the SD Telecommunications Association

# Whiskey *on the* Weta

*How a Family's Moonshine Past Hatched a New Business in Kadoka*



*Four years before the United States enacted prohibition, South Dakota passed a new prohibition law of its own, referred to as the "Bone-Dry" law. As the familiar story goes, many citizens disagreed and took to making illegal liquor for their families and friends. This led to numerous busts, destroyed stills and moonshiners going to jail. Prohibition ended in 1933, but South Dakota's "Bone-Dry" law was not repealed until two years later.*

At his previous job in Oregon, Mark's co-workers let him in on a secret. "They invited me to their cabin in the woods where they had a whole still operation set up to make moonshine," recalls Mark. The two neighbors soon realized that the whiskey stories of their past might make for an interesting future.

"Jim grows corn on his ranch and has the family history, while Mark brings manufacturing, business and federal licensing knowledge," explains Sandy. Together, they had what they needed to start. In 2011, Jim and Mark pitched the idea of a distillery at a Kadoka town meeting. "The response was very positive, and we reassured them that we weren't trying to sell to kids or make everyone drink," laughed Jim. "We just want to provide a fine spirit to anyone who wants one."



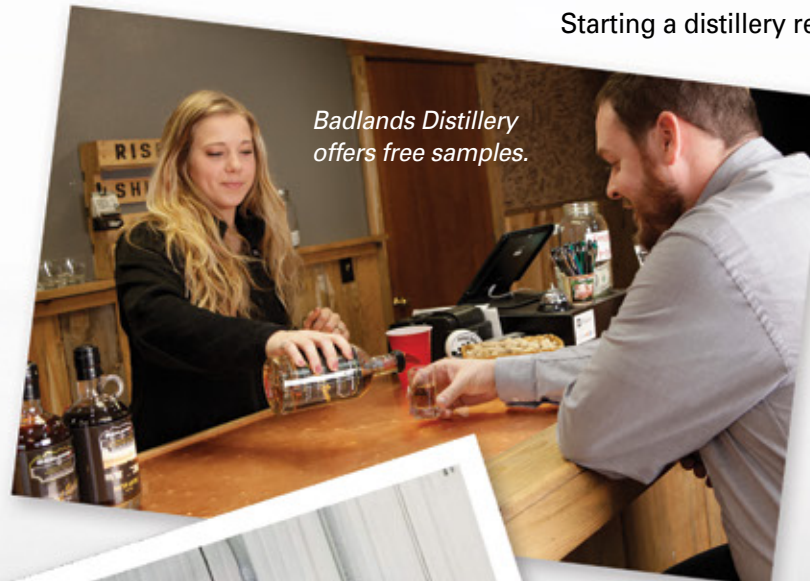
*Jim Herber and Mark Eschenbacher - Moonshining Partners*

One of South Dakota's moonshiners was Joe Herber, who along with his five brothers, was known for making some of the best whiskey in the state. In the 1920's, the Herber family ranched in the Weta Basin, located about 20 miles southwest of Kadoka on the White River. Like many farms and ranches of the time, the Herbers struggled to make ends meet and began making whiskey to pay the bills. And like many moonshiners, the revenueurs (prohibition officers) eventually caught up with them. Joe took the rap for his brothers, spending a year in prison, while the rest of the family decided to start over and moved to Oregon.

Luckily for whiskey drinkers everywhere, the story doesn't end there. Years later, Joe's nephew returned to the Weta Basin to raise a family, purchasing a ranch just upriver from his family's old place. "My aunts and uncles would come visit and tell me stories from growing up on the Weta," says Jim Herber, great-nephew of moonshiner Joe. Jim grew up on the ranch and says, "Their stories of moonshining got me interested in making whiskey."

While looking through an old book belonging to his Aunt Gertrude, Jim found his great-uncle's whiskey recipe. This was the start of making the Heber family whiskey once again -- this time legally.

After visiting friends and hunting in the Kadoka area for twenty years, Mark and Sandy Eschenbacher had decided the Weta Basin was the right place to call home. Call it fate or coincidence, but in 2009, the Eschenbachers moved in next to Jim Herber. Being the friendly neighbor he is, Jim helped Mark lay a new driveway, and they began swapping stories. After hearing about the Herber's history of moonshining, Mark had his own tale to tell.



*Badlands Distillery offers free samples.*

Starting a distillery requires time and patience, due to federal regulations. "We wanted to make sure we did everything by the book, so I tackled all the paperwork and federal requirements," says Sandy. "Honestly, it's a lot of work to report everything the government makes us. It'd be easier to just moonshine illegally and get by," joked Jim.

On top of navigating all the regulations, Mark and Sandy decided to dive headfirst into learning the whiskey-making process. "We went down to Denver for a two-day distilling seminar, came back and shared everything we learned with Jim," says Mark.

The Badlands Distillery opened on the main drag of Kadoka in 2015 and combines the moonshine legacy of the Herber family with locally-sourced products. Throw in modern distilling, aided by Golden West technology and you have a recipe for success.

"My family ranch grows the corn, but we also use locally grown rye and jalapenos, and Badlands honey from the Kadoka Honey Company," says Jim. "The entire distilling process is done in-house by us from start to finish, including the formulation and creation of our recipes, bottling and sales," adds Sandy. **Continued on page 4:**



*Jim and Dawn Herber, Sandy and Mark Eschenbacher and Shaley Herber.*

## HORIZONS

Volume 18, Number 1

Horizons is an award-winning customer newsletter published bimonthly by Golden West Telecommunications

### POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to Golden West, PO Box 411 Wall, SD 57790.

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# Fiber to the Home (FTTH) 2018

January is a time for new beginnings, which means the start of work on Fiber to the Home 2018! This year's FTTH projects are in Bonesteel, Marion, Midland, New Underwood and Pine Ridge. FTTH is our investment in the communities we serve, as well as our way of systematically upgrading our 14,000 mile network to fiber.

Customers in these communities will have the opportunity to learn more about FTTH and the construction process at Open Houses in the early spring. In the meantime, Golden West contractors and technicians are out and about in these towns preparing for the construction phase of FTTH. They will be hanging clamshells, surveying, marking utility lines, etc. If you have any questions about the project or a contractor working in your area, please dial 777 from a Golden West phone, or call 855-888-7777, and ask for the Engineering Department.

## Whiskey on the Weta *Continued from page 3:*

"Everybody that works for us is family. We all pull together to get it done and that's very rewarding," says Mark. This includes Jim's daughter Shaley, who does everything from running the stills and bottling whiskey, to distribution and pouring samples.

Badlands Distillery relies on their Golden West broadband Internet to market their products and reach their growing customer base, far beyond Kadoka. Shaley uses the connection to run social media and advertising, email customers and distributors, and keep an eye on the working stills.

Making moonshine was originally low-tech, but Badlands Distillery's operation is quite the opposite. They have two large, state-of-the-art stills to make their liquor, one holding 150 gallons and another 300 gallons. Thanks to Golden West's broadband Internet, the stills are run and monitored remotely. The computer program they use is designed for brewing and distilling, so Jim and Mark can keep an eye on the temperatures, pressures and various chemical levels during the distilling process.

Whiskey-making has changed since Joe Herber's days but the original recipe is still in use. "We use it to make our Special Reserve, with some brown sugar for flavor and oak barrels to give it color," says Jim.

While it may be hard to improve upon a classic, Badlands Distillery also offers a variety of other whiskeys. Badlands Venom (bourbon), Un-Branded (colorless moonshine), Badlands Honey (oak-aged and smooth), Branding Iron (cinnamon and jalapenos, watch out!), Weta Latte (fresh coffee and a hint of vanilla) and Cinn-ister Apple (think Grandma's apple pie, but with whiskey!) are all current offerings.

With the help of an interesting family history and some new neighbors, the Herber family's moonshine legacy is alive and well in the Weta Basin. Focusing on local products and run by local people, Badlands Distillery is creating delicious, unique spirits. Or, as Sandy says, "From ground to glass, we're making people happy one shot at a time."

Located in Kadoka, Badlands Distillery is open daily for tastings and tours (hours may vary depending on the time of year). If you are not headed to Kadoka anytime soon, visit [Badlands Distillery.com](http://BadlandsDistillery.com) to find links to their Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts, as well as find where their products are sold, see some recipe ideas, view their merchandise and more.



Shaley remotely monitors the distilling process.



Barrels aging a special batch of bourbon.

# New Year, New You?

One of the most popular New Year's resolutions is to improve health. Lose weight, eat better, exercise more, etc. How to commit to a healthier lifestyle will vary from person to person, but thanks to technology, there are apps for that. Here are some apps to consider if you're looking for help keeping your resolution.

**Lose It!** – This app will help you track your calories, as well as set up a personalized weight loss plan. You can also sync this app with a Fitbit or similar fitness tracker. Lose It! is free and available for iOS, Kindle, Nook and Android.

**Fooducate** – Similar to Lose It!, this app tracks calories and exercise. A unique feature of Fooducate is a barcode scanner that uploads nutritional information and suggests healthier alternatives. Fooducate is free and available for iOS and Android.

**Couch to 5K** – This app will connect you with a supportive, running community and analyze your performance. Pick your interactive coach and commit to 30 minutes a day, three days a week for nine weeks to get ready to run a 5K. Couch to 5K costs \$2.99 and is available for iOS and Android.

**SworKit** – Standing for "Simply Work It," this app offers guided workouts plans and customizable workouts on any device. With more than 200 types of workouts and exercises for kids, this versatile app will find the right fitness plan for you. SworKit is free and available on iOS, Android and web browsers, and will soon be available on Apple TV.

**Pocket Yoga** – Whether you're a beginner or an experienced "yogi," this app has a variety of skill levels, practices and durations available. This app works offline too, so you'll never miss a time to practice your poses and breathing exercises. Pocket Yoga costs \$2.99 and is available for iOS and Android.

*Golden West does not specifically endorse any products or services in this article.*



## Congratulations

### to our **Customer Appreciation Giveaway Winners**

#### Grand Prize Winner, \$500 Local Shopping Spree

Kim Fuzesy      Hot Springs      Shopko

Rita A. Archambeau      Wagner      Ron's Market

Leah Ekeren      Colton      Ace Hardware

Arlie Radway      Howes      Philip Hardware

#### 20 Winners, \$100 Local Shopping Spree

Dawn Black Bull      Porcupine      Singing Horse

Dorothy Two Bulls      Pine Ridge      Sioux Nation

Lisa Pickford      Custer      Granite Sports

Calvin Ratzlaff      Avon      Ron's Market

Brenda Klein      Winner      Mid Dakota Meats

Jason Van Winkle      Dell Rapids      County Fair

Lucy Reifel      Rosebud      Runnings

William Lindwrum      Gregory      Karls TV

Kimberly Upton      Hartford      Sunshine Foods

Kim Petersen      Philip      Ignite

Leota Shouldis      White River      Wig Wam

Emma Jealous      Wounded Knee      Sioux Nation

Robin Fast      Colome      Runnings

Gayle Van Genderen      Plankinton      Ron's Market

Laverne Diede      Freeman      Smidt Furniture

Julie Peneaux      Rosebud      Turtle Creek

Kayla Warnke      Gregory      Dollar General

## 2018 Golden West Scholarships

**Golden West is proud to offer \$1,000 scholarships to 45 qualifying students!**

At Golden West, we believe in investing in the future. We train our employees on the latest technology and are in the process of upgrading our entire network to fiber optics, all to help our communities thrive in the years to come. Supporting the education of our youth is just as important, because they are tomorrow's leaders and innovators. The Golden West scholarship program is an investment in local students pursuing higher education, an investment we're proud to make.

The Golden West scholarship program awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a qualifying student from each of the 44 Golden West area high schools. One at-large scholarship will also be given to a student who is home-schooled or attends a high school outside of Golden West's service area. High school Seniors who are interested in applying for the regular or at-large scholarship must meet these requirements:

- The student's parents or legal guardians must reside within one of Golden West's telephone service areas and subscribe to at least one Golden West service (phone, cable TV or Internet).
- Applicant must be a high school senior.
- Applicant must take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the American College Test (ACT), or Accuplacer Vocational Entrance Exam by December 31st of their senior year.
- Scholarship awards may only be applied to post-secondary institutions.
- Recipient must take 12 or more classroom credits (or equivalent to full-time course load) in the fall semester following high school graduation.

Students interested in applying for a scholarship should contact their local high school. At-large applicants can obtain the same information at [goldenwest.com/scholarships](http://goldenwest.com/scholarships).

**The deadline for returning all applications is March 15, 2018.**



## Scholarship to Learn, Live and Work in South Dakota

The Build Dakota Scholarship is a great deal for South Dakota's future workforce. This program, established by T. Denny Sanford and the South Dakota Future Fund, aims to keep talented individuals living and working in South Dakota.

### Here is how to apply for a Build Dakota Scholarship:

1. Apply to one of South Dakota's four technical institutes.
2. Review the Build Dakota Scholarship fields of study for that specific institution.
3. Read the instructions and apply. (Each institute's instructions vary.)

Recipients of this scholarship will have their tuition, books, fees and other required program expenses paid in full. Recipients must then commit to living and working in South Dakota, in their field of study, for three years following graduation. The fields of study that qualify for this scholarship range from telecommunications and construction, to information technology and agriculture.

Visit [builddakotascholarships.com](http://builddakotascholarships.com) for program details, eligibility requirements and past recipient testimonials. **The application window for the 2018-2019 school year closes on March 31, 2018.**

## 2017 Brian Meyer Scholarship Winners Announced

The South Dakota Telecommunications Association (SDTA), of which Golden West is a member, recently awarded two Brian Meyer Memorial Scholarships. The SDTA received dozens of applications from students across South Dakota, including many outstanding Golden West students. The two winners are:

**The recipient of the \$1,250 scholarship is Alyssa Stevens from Wessington, SD.** She is an Entrepreneurial Studies major with a minor in Legal Studies at SDSU. Her family is served by Venture Communications Cooperative.

**The recipient of the \$500 scholarship is Jonathan Linke from Woonsocket, SD.** He is double majoring in Agronomy and Animal Science with minors in Ag Business and Ag Marketing at SDSU. His family is served by Santel Communications Cooperative.

