# **FEBRUARY 14, 2024**

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**ISSUE NO. 7** 

# **DINING • ARTS • ENTERTAINMENT • EVENTS**



LIVE ON STAGE — Allen and Jill Kirkham return to Live on Stage this Saturday evening at High Country Guest Ranch outside of Hill City. This will be Allen's first return engagement since he was injured in a motorcycle accident over the summer. The Kirkhams take the stage at 7 p.m. [Submitted Photo]

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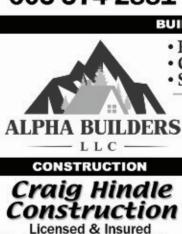
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# Computer coding error snags South Dakota voter rolls

By Stu Whitney South Dakota News Watch

More than 10,000 voter registrations in South Dakota weren't properly transferred to voter rolls the issue stemmed from past. due to a computer coding error dating back to 2022, South Dakota News Watch has learned.

January saying that state officials "discovered some transmitted" due to a "tech- State Steve Barnett. nical programming error that kept new and updated registrations from entering the system. The letter added that the problem has been fixed and "your ability to cast a ballot in an election was not impacted by this

Those affected were people who renewed their driver's license online through the Department of Public Safety and didn't "opt out" of the voter registration section, according to Brad Reiners, director of communications for DPS.

A coding discrepancy resulted in a failure of "just over 10,500" registrations from transferring properly to the Secretary of State's office," Reiners told News Watch in an emailed statement.

Only residents of South Dakota's nine largest counties were impacted because of the state's numbering system for counties based on population, he added.

"The DPS driver license online renewal system created a single-digit county designator code which was forwarded to the Secretary of State's office," Reiners said. "Their system looked for a two-digit code, so it did not recognize the records of counties (one through nine). Once detected, the programming error was fixed immediately, and voter registrations have been properly received by the Secretary of State."

#### Voter registration forms changed after federal lawsuit

The letter to impacted voters was signed by John Broers, director of driver licensing for DPS, and Rachel Soulek, election divisions director for the

Secretary of State's office.

Secretary of State Monae Johnson did not respond to an interview request. Soulek told News Watch

changes made to voter registration forms following a federal court settlement in September 2022. A judge Letters were sent to determined that South impacted voters in late Dakota had violated portions of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) registrations were not fully under then-Secretary of

As part of the settlement Oglala Sioux tribes, the state changed the wording on driver's license applications so that the form requires a person to opt out of voter registration, rather than require them to opt in.

"DPS adjusted their system to be compliant with those required changes and that is when the coding error happened," Soulek. "This began prior to Secretary Johnson taking office. Our current staff discovered there was an error and within a day of finding out the coding error, DPS had a fix in place."

#### South Dakota county auditors concerned about mixup

Minnehaha County auditor Leah Anderson said that 5,153 total registrations were impacted in the state's largest county. Of those, 684 were new registrations and 4,469 were people who updated voting information or didn't realize they needed to opt out, so they updated with no changes.

Anderson, who learned about the system error on Jan. 18, said she plans to bring in seasonal election staff to process registrations and update voter rolls, after which acknowledgments will be sent to new or updated registrants. "I do have concerns

about this error," she told News Watch. "It's creating a large workload at a busy time of year." Pennington County audi-

tor Cindy Mohler estimated that 2,700 voters were impacted in the Rapid City area and said she is working through updates with her

auditor in 2019 but has worked in the office since 2009, was asked if she recalled a voter registration programming error impacting this many people in the

#### "No, I do not," she said. **Election integrity** faces scrutiny

tinguish between a programming error unfounded allegations of voter fraud or election hacking stemming from the 2020 presidential election. South Dakota has seen a with the Rosebud Sioux and rise in electoral activism from citizen demanding access to voting records and pointing to alleged vulnerabilities in state election software.

A statewide poll cosponsored by South Dakota News Watch last November found that about 42% of respondents said they are "not confident "or "not too confident" that election results in America reflect

'We know that's where a lot of people's minds have gone right now," Mohler "Hopefully doesn't lead to any more of that. I don't believe that we've gotten feedback from any voters (referencing fraud) when they received the letter.'

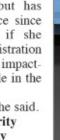
Lincoln County Auditor Sheri Lund said there is a "checks and balances" system that caught the discrepancy at the state level. She and other auditors have questions about the issue stemming back to 2022 and how that affected registra-

News Watch reviewed a letter received by a voter who renewed their driver's license online in 2022 and received the letter Jan. 30, 2024, confirming some registrations were not properly processed for at least a calendar year. "DPS states that it did

not impact voters' (ability to cast a ballot)," said Anderson, who was elected Minnehaha County's auditor in 2022. "I am not able to confirm that informa-

#### 'Inadequate training and oversight'

The "motor voter" issue Mohler, who became was part of a lawsuit filed



Mohler is careful to disgroups

by the Rosebud Sioux and Oglala Sioux tribes accusing South Dakota of violating portions of the NVRA, which was signed by President Bill Clinton in the will of the people. 1993 and took effect in 1995

> The law requires state officials to provide voter registration information and guidance to eligible voters when they renew their driver's license through DPS or when receiving public assistance (such as food stamps or Medicaid) at the Department of Services and other state agencies.

> In representing tribes, the Native American Rights Fund produced data showing that the number of voter registration applications processed through South Dakota public assistance agencies decreased by 57% between 2004 and 2018, from 7,000 applications down to 2,981. The lawsuit also accused DPS officials of not properly transmitting voter registration forms to county auditors in some cases.

> that Barnett as the chief

elections officer

U.S. District Judge Lawrence Piersol granted a summary judgment saying the tribes had "supported their claims of improper implementation of the NVRA by the Secretary of State, Department of Public Safety, and Department of gramming error had no Social Services," adding

RECENTLY INFORMED — Minnehaha County Auditor Leah Anderson said she learned about the voting registration system error on Jan. 18. [Submitted Photo/KELO-TV FILE

Poll: In general, how confident are you that American election results reflect the will of the people?

tributed to these failings through inadequate training and oversight.

#### Process in place for impacted voters

As part of the September 2022 settlement, South Dakota named a state NVRA coordinator to oversee the training and oversight process, which includes public reporting of voter registration data. The state also changed the wording on driver's license applications to make it easier for eligible residents to register to vote. "Unless citizens opt out,

they are automatically processed through the voter registration process system as an update or new," said Anderson. "We were told that most of the 'updates' that were part of the pro-

change in record but are

still regarded as updated

registrations and will receive an acknowledgment card in the mail.'

There have been issues in the past with voters whose registration didn't process from when they updated their driver's license, but it didn't keep anyone from voting, said Lund. She said that is likely the case with those involved in this recent programming error.

"If this change would have affected an election, the precinct worker would have been directed to call the auditor's office," said Lund. "We would have pulled the driver's license application and if it was verified, the voter would have been allowed to vote by using an emergency voting card."

See more stories at sdnewswatch.org.

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BLACK ###
#### HILLS ######

# WINTER FESTIVAL

PRINTEDERFYLLE I HILL CITY

MINER BREWING CO & PRAIRIE BERRY WINERY



# FEBRUARY 17 & 18 ALL-DAY LONG!

Two full days of live music, outdoor games, mulled wine, hot cocoa bar, touch-a-firetruck for the kids, Craft Beer & Bingo, specialty food tent and so much more - It's free and open to everyone!

\*\*Dress warm for outdoor activities!\*\*

# **SATURDAY ACTIVITIES:**

10 AM - 5 PM Pop Up Shopping Event Love of Craft, Krause Family Orchard, & more!

12 - 5 PM Winter Festival Food Tent at Miner Brewing Co.

1 & 2:30 PM Sweet Crumbs Cookie Decorating Classes SOLD OUT

2 PM Miner Mutt Dash Sponsored by Bar K-9
4 PM Live Music at Miner Brewing Co. The Two Tracks

# **SUNDAY ACTIVITIES:**

10 AM - 5 PM Pop Up Shopping Event Love of Craft, Krause Family Orchard, & more!

12 - 5 PM Winter Festival Food Tent at Miner Brewing Co.

12 - 1:30 PM Craft Beer & Bingo Benefiting Hill City Fire Dept. | Sponsored by Granite Sports

1 PM Sweet Crumbs Cookie Decorating Class Advanced tickets required

4 PM Live Music at Miner Brewing Co. Harbor and Home

**Details at Addiecamp.com/all-events/** 



# BLACK HILLS LIVE MUSIC - LOCAL EVENTS —

## Wednesday 2-14

Valentine's Day

Men's Breakfast Bible Study The Little White Church Hill City, SD 7:30 AM

Driver's License Exams Custer County Courthouse Annex Pine Room Custer, SD 8 AM to 5 PM

Development Corporation Black Hills Energy Custer, SD 8:30 AM Seniors Functional Fitness

Hill City Center

Custer Area Economic

Hill City, SD 9 AM Seniors Bridge Card Games Hill City Center

Hill City, SD 10 AM - 3 PM Friends of the Hill City Library: Friends Preview Black Hills Playhouse

Season Super 8 Conference Room Hill City, SD 10:15 AM

Crafternoon Custer County Library Custer, SD 3 PM

BOLT The Little White Church Hill City, SD

3:20 PM

The Landing
The Little White Church
Hill City, SD
4:30 PM

Middle School & High School Youth Group The Little White Church

Hill City, SD 5:40 PM Crossroads Church Xtreme Youth Group Crossroads Church

Custer, SD 6:30 PM

# Thursday 2-15 Women's Bible Study

Fellowship The Little White Church Hill City, SD 8:30 AM

Seniors Stretch & Flex Hill City Center Hill City, SD 9 AM

Seniors Foot Clinic Hill City Center

Hill City, SD 9 AM - 12 PM Blood Drive

Custer Masonic Lodge Custer, SD 9:30 to 5 PM

9:30 to 5 PM

Custer County Democratic

Party Meeting

Custer County Courthouse Annex Pine Room Custer, SD Noon

Seniors Hand & Foot Card Games Hill City Center Hill City, SD 1 PM

Hermosa/Fairburn Community Food Bank Hermosa Town Hall Hermosa, SD 3-5 PM

Imagination Club Hill City Public Library Kids' Annex

Annex Hill City, SD 3:15 PM

Custer Area Chamber of Commerce Mixer Gold Pine Saloon Custer, SD 5-7 PM

Tony DuBlois, Musical Savant AME The Hills Finest Custer, SD 5-8 PM

Legion Meeting Hill City Center Hill City, SD 6 PM

Bingo The Custer Beacon Custer, SD

6:30 PM

Civil Air Patrol

Custer County Airpo

Custer County Airport Custer, SD 7 PM

# Friday 2-16 ACT Prep

Custer County Library Custer, SD 8 AM



LIVE AT THE CUSTER BEACON — Branson Anderson will return to the Custer Beacon this Saturday at 7 p.m. Singer-songwriter Branson Anderson hails from Logandale, Nev. Anderson's influences include Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash, Jack White and Robert Johnson. Fueled by a humble reverence for Americana, as a performer Anderson channels the spirit of yesteryear imbued with a fresh, unique take on roots music. [Submitted Photo]

Seniors Coffee Club Hill City Center Small Room Hill City, SD 9 AM

Cinnamon Rolls Custer Senior Center Custer, SD 9 AM

Seniors Guest Speaker Lori Comer: Hill City Ambulance Hill City Center Small Room Hill City, SD 9 AM

Hill City Center
Hill City, SD
9 AM

Community Food Pantry

Hill City Seniors Flow &

Relax Yoga

The Little White Church Hill City, SD 9 AM - 11 AM Story Time Hill City Public

Hill City, SD 9:30 AM Story Time Custer County Library

Custer, SD

Center

Library Kids' Annex

10 AM **Jambalaya Dinner** Hermosa American Legion

Hermosa, SD 4:30 to 6:45 PM **Keystone Roller Skating** Keystone Community

Keystone, SD 5 - 8:30 PM Celebrate Recovery Crossroads Church

Custer, SD Meal at 6 PM Lesson at 6:30 PM

Bingo Hermosa American Legion Hermosa, SD 7-9 PM

# Saturday 2-17

Black Hills Winter Festival Addie Camp Hill City, SD 10 AM - 5 PM

Women's Prayer Gathering The Little White Church Hill City, SD 9 AM

Coffee with the Mayor Hill City Cafe Hill City, SD 10 AM Sweet Crumbs Cookies
Decorating Class
Addie Camp General Store
Hill City, SD

Hill City, SD 1 PM & 2:30 PM Tickets \$25 Feeding South Dakota

Buffalo Gap, SD 1-2 PM Miner Brewing Music Series: The Two Tracks

209 3rd St.

4-6 PM Free Tony DuBlois, Musical Savant LME The Hills Finest

Miner Brewing Co.

Hill City, SD

Custer, SD

5-8 PM

Keystone Bingo Keystone Community Center Keystone, SD Dinner at 5 PM, free will donations Bingo at 6 PM

Live On Stage WE
High Country Guest Ranch
Hill City, SD
Doors open at 5 PM
Dinner at 5:30 PM
Show starts at 6 PM
Allen and Jill Kirkham 7 PM

Buffalo Gap Community Dance LNE Buffalo Gap Community Center Buffalo Gap, SD 7 PM

Branson Anderson LNE
The Custer Beacon
Custer, SD
7. DM

# Sunday 2-18

Community Breakfast Hermosa Masonic Lodge Hermosa, SD 7 AM to Noon

Black Hills Winter Festival Addie Camp Hill City, SD 10 AM - 5 PM

Craft Beer & Bingo Miner Brewing Co. Hill City, SD 12 PM

Miner Brewing Music Series: Harbor And Home

Miner Brewing Co. Hill City, SD 4-6 PM Free



so much more! [Submitted Photo]

BLACK HILLS WINTER FESTIVAL — Miner Brewing
Company and Prairie Berry Winery will host their annual
Black Hills Winter Festival this Saturday and Sunday. The
event features a variety of activities, including live music,
pop-up shops, outdoor fire pits, seasonal drinks, outdoor games, a specialty food tent, craft beer, Bingo, and

Bluegrass Jam LNE
The Trailhouse
Custer, SD

Custer, SD 4-6 PM

Adult Bible Study
The Little White Church
Hill City, SD
6 PM

KISS AA Meeting Keystone Community Center Keystone, SD 6 PM

# Monday 2-19

Presidents' Day

Community Food Pantry The Little White Church Hill City, SD 9 AM - 11 AM

Seniors Functional Fitness Hill City Center Hill City, SD 9 AM

Seniors Share-a-Lunch

Hill City Center
Hill City, SD
11:30 AM

Rotary
Custer Senior Center

Custer, SD Noon Pringle Volunteer Fire Department Meeting

Pringle Community Center

Pringle, SD

5 PM

Biblical Citizenship Class Mountainview Baptist Church Custer, SD 6-8:30 PM

Chick Chat and Crafts The Little White Church Hill City, SD 6:30 PM

AA Meeting Lighthouse Assembly of God Hill City, SD 7 PM

### Tuesday 2-20

Seniors Beginning Line Dancing Hill City Center Hill City, SD 9 AM

Hill City Seniors Flow &

Relax Yoga Hill City Center Hill City, SD 10:30 AM Seniors Hand &

Foot Card Games Hill City Center Hill City, SD 1-4:30 PM

Seniors Knitting & Crocheting Group Hill City Center Hill City, SD 1-3 PM

5:30 PM

Hill City Planning and Zoning Meeting City Hall Hill City, SD

Celebrate Recovery The Little White Church Hill City, SD 5:45 PM

Hermosa Town Board Hermosa Town Hall Hermosa, SD 6 PM

# Wednesday 2-21

Men's Breakfast Bible Study The Little White Church Hill City, SD 7:30 AM

Custer County Courthouse Custer, SD 8 AM Driver's License Exams

Custer County Commission

Custer County Courthouse Annex Pine Room Custer, SD 8 AM to 5 PM Seniors Functional Fitness

Hill City, SD 9 AM Hill City Seniors Board Meeting

Hill City Center

Hill City Center
Hill City, SD
10 AM

Women's Bible Study
The Little White Church

Hill City, SD

10 AM

Seniors Bridge Card Games Hill City Center Hill City, SD 10 AM - 3 PM

Custer County Library Board Custer County Library Custer, SD Vitalant Blood Drive Sponsored by Hill City Lions Club Hill City Center

Hill City, SD 1-5 PM Crafternoon

Custer County Library Custer, SD 3 PM

The Little White Church Hill City, SD 3:20 PM Keystone Town Board

Keystone Community Center Keystone, SD 4 PM The Landing The Little White Church

Meeting

Hill City, SD

Custer, SD

6:30 PM

4:30 PM

Vinyl Record Club

Custer County Library

5 PM

Middle School & High
School Youth Group
The Little White Church

Hill City, SD 5:40 PM Crossroads Church Xtreme Youth Group Crossroads Church Custer, SD

Fairburn Town Board Fairburn Civic Center Fairburn, SD 7 PM

### Thursday 2-22

Women's Bible Study Fellowship The Little White Church Hill City, SD 8:30 AM

Seniors Stretch & Flex

Hill City, SD 9 AM Seniors Hand & Foot Card Games Hill City Center

Hill City Center

Hill City, SD

3:15 PM

1 PM
Imagination Club
Hill City Public Library Kids'
Annex
Hill City, SD

Tony DuBlois, Musical Savant LNE The Hills Finest Custer, SD 5-8 PM

Life Struggles Suicide Prevention Group Custer VFW Custer, SD 6 PM

Civil Air Patrol Custer County Airport Custer, SD 7 PM

# Friday 2-23

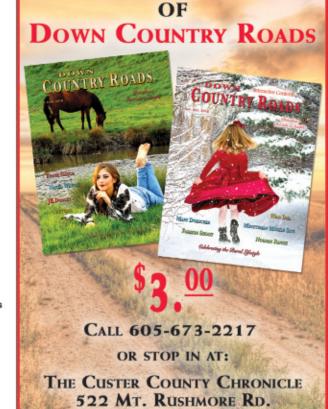
ACT Prep Custer County Library Custer, SD 8 AM

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Custer, SD 57730

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9:30 AM

Story Time
Custer County Library
Custer, SD
10 AM

Seniors Coffee Club

Hill City, SD

Relax Yoga Hill City Center

Hill City, SD

Hill City, SD 9 AM - 11 AM

Custer, SD

Story Time Hill City Public

Library Kids' Annex Hill City, SD

9 AM

Cinnamon Rolls

Custer Senior Center

9 AM

9 AM

Hill City Center Small Room

Hill City Seniors Flow &

Community Food Pantry The Little White Church

Skate Night Custer YMCA Custer, SD 5:30-8:30 PM

Celebrate Recovery Crossroads Church Custer, SD Meal at 6 PM Lesson at 6:30 PM

Brent Morris [ME Chute Rooster Hill City, SD 6-9 PM

Delaney Johnston LNE Sprockets Fun Foundry Keystone, SD 6-7:30 PM

Friday Fun Night Featuring

# Saturday 2-24

Coffee with the Mayor Hill City Cafe Hill City, SD 10 AM

CPR & AED Training Class with certified instructor Hill City Center Hill City, SD 10 AM - 12 PM Free and open to public Instructional only

Keystone Bingo + Benefit and Silent Auction for Butch Koepp Keystone Community Center Keystone, SD Dinner at 5 PM, free will

Tony DuBlois, Musical Savant /// The Hills Finest Custer, SD 5-8 PM

donations

Bingo at 6 PM

# Sunday 2-25

Adult Bible Study The Little White Church Hill City, SD 6 PM

KISS AA Meeting Keystone Community Center Keystone, SD 6 PM