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VOL. 1 ISSUE 2

Box Elder, SD 57719 Friday July 31, 2026

Live & Online

Molly Wetsch
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sdnewswatch.org

Gov. Larry Rhoden handily defeated Toby Doeden Tuesday in a runoff election to decide the Republican Party's candidate for governor.

Rhoden maintained a lead of roughly 71% to 29% over the Aberdeen businessman as results came in and that was the final outcome.

"This has been a lot more fun than other election nights," Rhoden said to a roomful of supporters in Sioux Falls.

His speech thanking his family was interrupted by a phone call from a state lawmaker. He said he received hundreds of calls like that from supporters saying they were praying for him, which helped him get through tough times, also recalling the scripture passage to "walk by faith and not by sight."

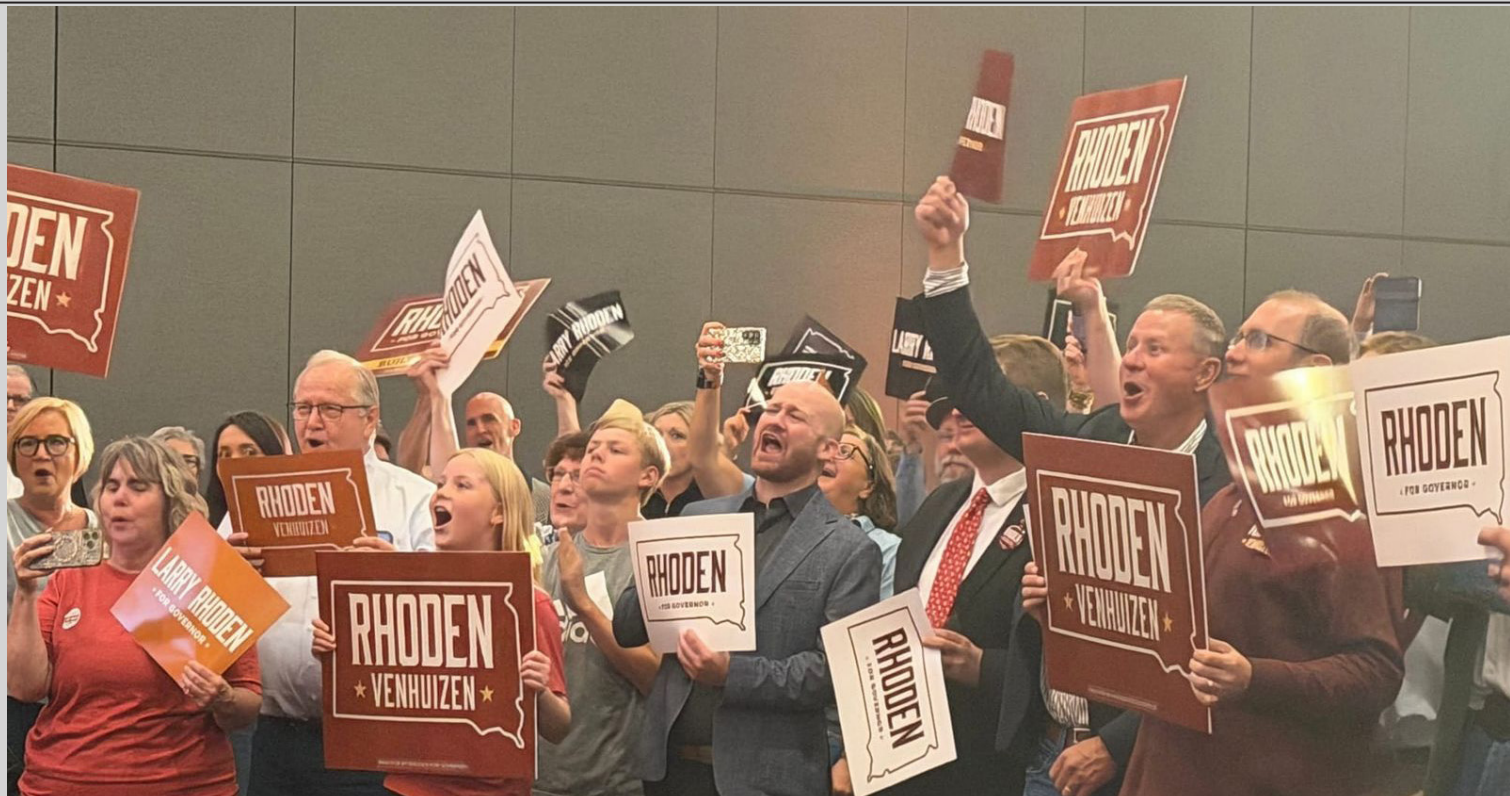
Doeden vowed to eliminate property taxes and get the state on the right track, while Rhoden touted his experience as a rancher, state lawmaker and in the executive branch.

"They don't think that South Dakota needs saving," Lt. Gov. Tony Venhuizen said of the voters who supported Rhoden. "They see that South Dakota is on the right track."

The election was South Dakota's first runoff in state history because of a 1985 law stating that if no candidate reaches 35% of the vote in a primary election, the top two vote-getters advance to a runoff.

Doeden received 31% of the primary vote on June 2 and Rhoden received 25%. The rest of the votes went to Congress-

Rhoden wins South Dakota Republican runoff for Governor



Supporters of Gov. Larry Rhoden at his runoff election gathering June 28, 2026, in Sioux Falls, S.D. (Photo: Elena Tittel/South Dakota News Watch)

man Dusty Johnson at 23% and Speaker of the South Dakota House Jon Hansen at 21%, both of whom failed to clear the runoff threshold. "I did get a call from Toby, Mr. Doeden, just a little bit ago, and he graciously conceded and congratulated me, and he sounded very sincere and offered his help in the general (election). And so I thank him for that," Rhoden said.

Doeden spoke to his supporters in Aberdeen after the call to congratulate Rhoden and lend his support in the campaign against Democrat Dan Ahlers in the Nov. 3 general election.

"I have said since Day 1 on this long, crazy journey that my singular goal was to unite our amazing Republican Party and move this state forward. And that journey has not ended, my friends," Doeden told family and friends.

He said that in 30 years of business he learned more from his losses than his wins.

Reasons behind the vote

Joella Reavis said she voted for Doeden in the primary and did so again Tuesday at the polling site in South Middle School in Rapid City.

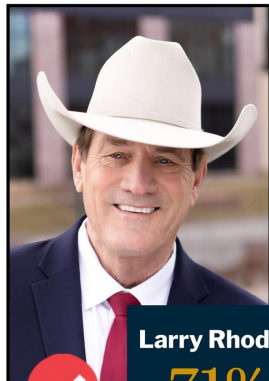
Reavis, 58, who works for

Runoff Contd. A2

SD Republican runoff for governor



Toby Doeden
29%



Larry Rhoden
71%

Precincts fully reporting: 650/650

Source: SD Secretary of State



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Runoff Contd. from A-1

the Rapid City water system, said she voted for the Aberdeen businessman after seeing advertisements where he positioned himself as a political outsider.

“I think he’s got some pretty good ideas, and I think it’s time for a change,” she said.

Reavis said she was also put off by Rhoden’s unwillingness to debate Doeden prior to the runoff.

“I think he was just kind of scared to debate,” she said. “I think he was counting on riding on the coattails he was handed (by former Gov. Kristi Noem) in the first place.”

Retiree Bob Trupe of Rapid City, 87, said he did a lot of homework before deciding to cast his vote for Rhoden at South Middle School on Tuesday. He followed the campaign closely and attended a recent visit to Rapid City by Doeden to see him in person.

Trupe, who owned a local camper sales company for about 50 years, said he appreciated the business acumen that Doeden carried into his candidacy.

But Trupe said he was concerned that Doeden spoke as though he alone had answers to all the state’s big problems and was concerned that Doeden refused to say how he would replace the revenue lost by his plan to eliminate local property taxes.

Trupe said he respects that Rhoden is a rancher and a good man who may not be a good public speaker but who is a “down to earth person.”

“It can’t be all about me, me,” he said. “You’ve got to be able to work with people or you won’t get anything done.”

A poll manager inside the school said turnout appeared to be low on Tuesday compared to the primary in June.

3rd vote for some South Dakotans

In Sioux Falls, some voters cast ballots for the third time this year after a Republican primary and municipal election on June 2 and a subsequent mayoral runoff election on June 23.

In the city, some polling

places on Tuesday noticed a much less busy day than on other in-person voting dates, likely because the only election taking place is the Republican runoff for governor, which is closed to Independents and Democrats. Other elections this year were open to voters from all parties.

The downtown library in Sioux Falls was slower than usual, but other polling stations, especially those in regularly busier precincts, were seeing more typical numbers.

The Embrace Church polling place had seen about 170 voters in total at 11:30 a.m. One poll worker told News Watch that numbers were “on pace” with what she had expected for the day.

Marilyn, a voter at Harvest Church in southeastern Sioux Falls who didn’t want to give her last name, told News Watch she voted for Doeden because she wanted to see a change in Pierre.

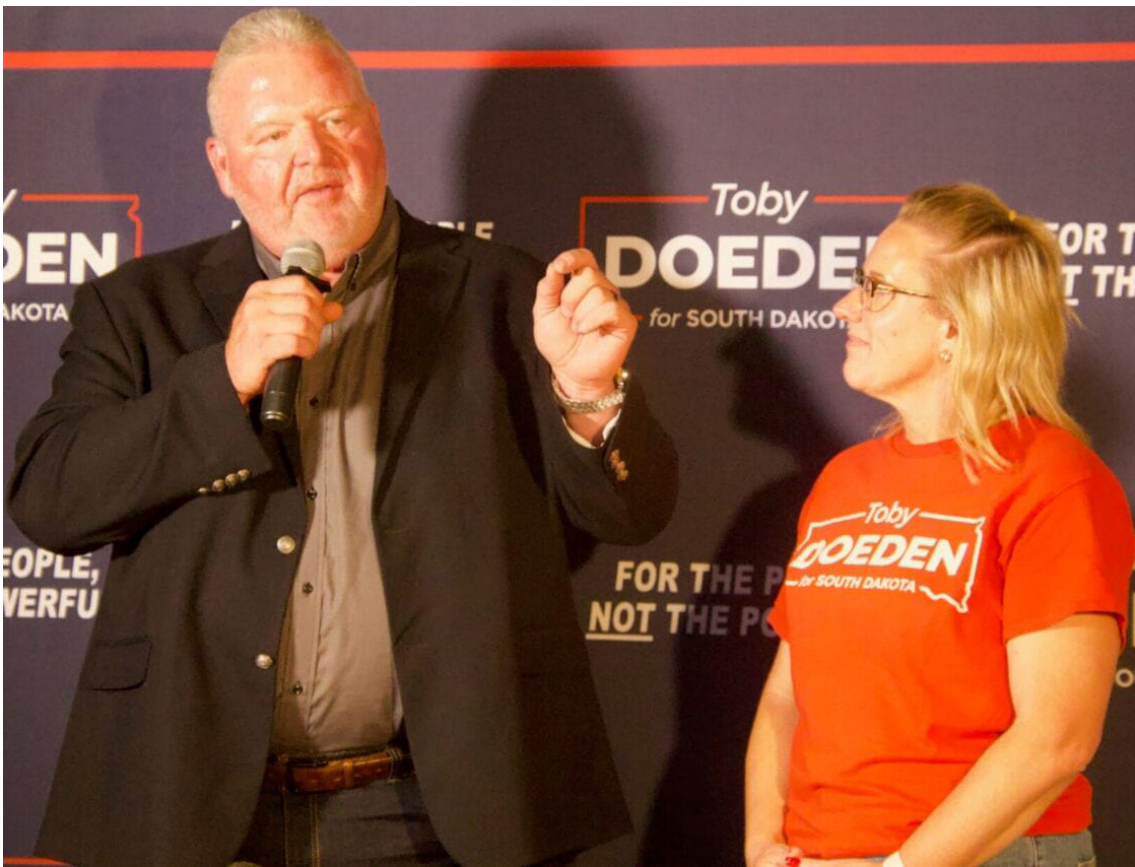
“I think we need a change from (former Gov.) Kristi Noem,” she said. “We need some new blood.”

What prompted the runoff

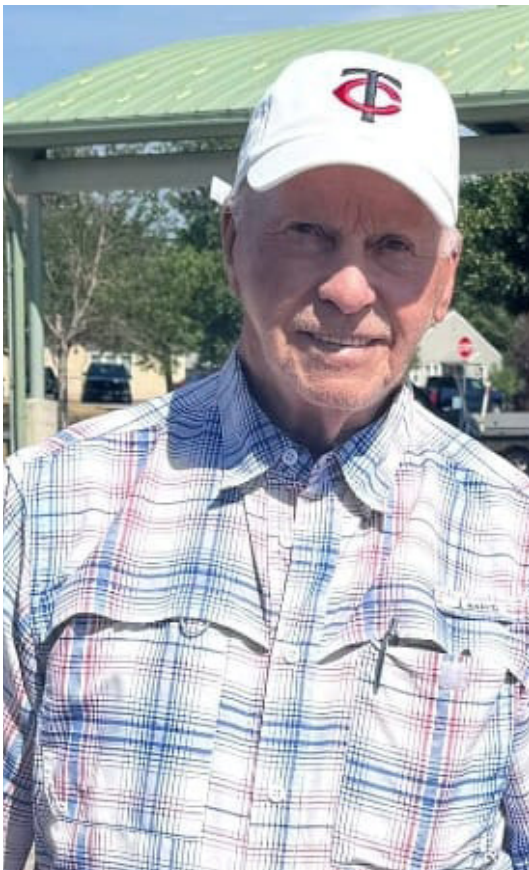
Rhoden, who has served as governor since former Noem stepped down last January, has largely hinged his campaign around his experience in the state Legislature and executive branch. He hopes to be formally elected to the office after serving as Noem’s lieutenant governor since 2018. Rhoden is a rancher from Union Center.

Doeden, a businessman from Aberdeen, has long decried the political establishment as corrupt. He has largely self-funded his campaign, donating \$4 million to himself in the past year. Much of his campaign has centered around his promise to eliminate property taxes and curb government spending.

Bart Pfankuch and Elena Tittel contributed to this story produced by South Dakota News Watch, an independent nonprofit. Read, subscribe for free and donate at sdnewswatch.org. Contact reporter/Report for America corps member Molly Wetsch: 605-531-7382//molly.wetsch@sdnewswatch.org.



Toby Doeden speaks to supporters on July 28, 2026, in his hometown of Aberdeen, S.D. Next to him is his wife, Liz Doeden lost the Republican gubernatorial runoff election to incumbent Larry Rhoden. (Photo: Elisa Sand/Aberdeen Insider)



(L) Bob Trupe, who voted July 28, 2026, in Rapid City, S.D; (R) Voter Joella Reavis on July 28, 2026, in Rapid City, S.D. (Photos: Bart Pfankuch/South Dakota News Watch)

What the Freedom Trucks don’t say about American History Speaks Volumes

Rick Snedecker Special to the MCNews Rick Snedecker, a retired journalist living in Mitchell, is the author of a 2020 memoir about growing up in a Saudi oil camp in the 1950s, “3,001 Arabian Days,” and a 2022 historical overview of Christianity’s coercive evolution in America, “Holy Smoke.”

Some red flags had already popped up in my mind when I visited the Freedom Truck on July 11 in Huron during its three-day stop in that typical, small, welcoming South Dakota city.

But after I experienced it, despite its beautiful, engaging, and by-and-large historically accurate and straightforward design, I soon realized how subtly insidious the mostly federally funded mobile History Truck initiative is, as it aims to airbrush all the most appalling and shameful episodes in American history.

There are six of the massive double-wide semitruck trailers, whose displays and narratives cater to children, visiting hamlets, small cities and metros in all the lower 48 states and Washington, D.C., by the end of this year, the nation’s 250th (semiquincentennial, or sestercentennial, which is one syllable shorter) year.

But all the trucks, including the one in Huron, provide only America’s laudable, uber-positive and heroically exceptional history. As was evident in the Huron Freedom Truck’s narrative, the bad stuff is simply left out.

Like it never happened. One of the main display themes is that the Declaration of Independence codified the then-radical principle that “all men are created equal,” and that the nation, once formed, “conquered” slavery. Incongruously, though, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, among other Founding Fathers, themselves owned slaves at the time. In fact, Jefferson didn’t free his slaves even when he died; Washington, however, freed his. Of course, none of this would be evident to children and adults alike even if they closely read the Freedom

Truck display texts. But who freed whom or when is beside the point. That Founders owned human beings at all is the point and should be clear in the Freedom Truck displays. This fact is irreducibly critical to fully understanding the epic American story, spotlighting an ignoble reality that the fawning hyperbole of the Freedom Trucks ignores or deceitfully understates.

I wasn’t particularly surprised at the Trump administration’s spendy, baroque effort, employing omission, to pull such historical wool over the eyes of children (and adults). My initial wariness stemmed from who wrote the Freedom Truck script and who created its audio-visual extravaganza.

The script for the trucks was written by arch-conservative Matthew Spalding, head of the Washington program at Michigan’s ultra-conservative Christian Hillsdale College, who directed a similar project, the anti-diversity 1776 Commission, at the end of Donald Trump’s first term. Creator of all the trucks’ audio-video displays was Dennis Prager, a conservative talk-show host and writer who in 2009 co-founded PragerU, which is not an accredited university but a nonprofit that produces videos and materials promoting a conservative, right-wing, Christian nationalist, Judeo-Christian-aligned agenda. The platform is highly controversial, particularly for its educational programs criticized as politically slanted that are sold to public schools.

The Southern Poverty Law Center has accused PragerU of pushing historically inaccurate propaganda and ideological indoctrination. The center wrote that PragerU claims it “promotes the American values of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” but in fact “perpetrates far-right ideology vilifying the LGBTQ+ community, immigrants and people of color.”

Many critics of the Freedom Truck agenda focus on its lack of full candor about the nation’s unavoidably checkered past, by avoiding upfront discussion of past horrors and continuing



negative effects of slavery, the brutal mistreatment of Native Americans and theft of enormous swaths of their land, and violent persecution of various waves of immigrants, among other shameful periods of our history.

“Notably, America is depicted [in the Freedom Trucks] as a white Christian nation,” wrote The Guardian newspaper. “Several Black luminaries are mentioned: among the 50 American heroes are Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks. But the prevailing wind blowing through the truck is towards the white men who led the charge to nationhood, with minor roles granted to their women dutifully holding the fort back home, and on God as the source of the country’s greatness.”

There’s no mention of how Founders were greatly influenced by a focus on reason, science and religious skepticism during the European Enlightenment, which was still ongoing when the Declaration was penned, and which led to the first American government being set up as a secular project with no official religion dominating, in contrast to the war-mongering governments they emigrated from.

A Freedom Truck was parked on July 18 at the wonderful, enthusiastically patriotic Sioux Falls Air Show, with thousands of people milling about. The throngs entering the truck for an honest, inspiring history lesson were artfully, even dazzlingly, misled. For a hot minute, even I was.

Opinion/Editorial: Stacking The Deck?

Brandon Bennett news@MeadeCoNews.com

STURGIS— Editor’s Note: The following is not a dig on Toby Doeden. I’m sure he felt he was the best choice for South Dakota. But not everyone felt that way.

It’s been said that ONE vote made the eagle our national symbol instead of the turkey, which was suggested by Ben Franklin, (how smart was that?)

Anyhoo, I began seeing some posts on social media that encouraged non-Republican voters to switch parties and vote for Larry Rhoden, as they were concerned about a Doeden administration.

I said to myself, huh. So I grabbed my shovel and emailed Meade County Auditor Dawn Christenson. I’m just going to let the results tell it.

These were the numbers pulled after the voter registration deadline of 7/13/26.

6/2/26 Registered active Republicans 13,043

7/15/26 Registered active Republicans 13,291

Difference 248 Some of the increase in Republicans would be due to new registrations as well.

6/2/2026 Registered active Democrats 2,594

7/15/2026 Registered active Democrats 2,545

Difference 49 6/2/2026 Registered active Independents 2,790

7/15/2026 Registered active Independents 2,730

Difference 60 6/2/2026 Registered active Libertarians 144

7/15/2026 Registered active Libertarians 141

Difference 3 6/2/2026 Registered active No Political Affiliation 2,139

7/15/2026 Registered active No Political Affiliations 2,112

Difference 27 Now when I said stacking the deck I wasn’t suggesting anything illegal or unethical took place.

I just found it interesting that some voters felt this was important enough to switch parties this one time. I didn’t quiz the Secretary of State about this but I’m guessing this happened across the state.

And some are suggesting open primaries and by extension the elections so things like this aren’t necessary. That’s a thought.

From the Meade 46-1 School District: Woodle Field Re-mains Closed Until August

Brandon Bennett
news@MeadeCoNews.com

Thank you for your patience as we put the finishing touches on the new Woodle Field!

While the project is nearing final completion , the field and track remain CLOSED to the public until August 17, 2026.

We ask that everyone please respect the closure by:

Keeping all dogs and other animals off the field and track

Not entering the field or track for walking, running, or recreation

Respecting all posted signs, fencing, and barricades

Entering the area before it officially opens could create safety hazards, delay project completion, or damage the new turf and track surface.

Thanks to Tanya Ludwick, Executive Administrative Assistant with the School District.



Meade County Sheriff Seeks Additional Deputies

Brandon Bennett
news@MeadeCoNews.com

STURGIS— A growing population in Meade County has led Meade County Sheriff Pat West to ask the Meade County Commission for more help.

Meade County Sheriff Pat West is requesting funding for two additional deputies as the county’s growing population continues to drive a sharp increase in calls for service.

West made the request as the Meade County Commission began discussions on the county’s 2027 budget, citing a workload that has more than doubled for deputies over the past decade.

According to the sheriff, Meade County’s population has

grown from 25,453 in 2010 to nearly 32,000 today. During that same period, calls for service have increased from 9,159 in 2013 to more than 21,000 in 2025.

West said the growth has placed increasing demands on deputies and stretched department resources. As a result, calls for service handled per deputy have more than doubled since 2013.

The sheriff told commissioners that adding two deputies would help the department keep pace with the county’s continued growth, improve response capabilities and maintain public safety services for residents across Meade County.

Thanks to Gary Matthews and KBHB News

Attorney General Jackley Releases 2028 Draft Ballot Explanation Allowing Exceptions for Direct Sale of Homemade Dairy Products

PIERRE- South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley has released a draft ballot explanation for a proposed initiated measure that would allow exceptions for the direct sale of homemade dairy products. The measure is proposed by Brenda Anderson of Custer.

The initiated measure would require 17,509 valid petition signatures to qualify for the 2028 general election ballot.

Attorney General Jackley takes no position on any such proposal.

He has provided a fair and neutral explanation on the proposed constitutional amendment to help assist the voters.

This proposed initiated measure would allow dairy producers to sell homemade, raw dairy products directly to consumers. Under this proposal, raw dairy products would be exempt from state laws on licensing, permitting, inspecting, testing, and state packing and label requirements.

State law requires the Attorney General to draft a title and explanation for each initiated measure, initiated constitutional amendment, constitutional amendment proposed by the Legislature, or referred measure that may appear on an election ballot.

The Attorney General’s explanation is meant to be an “objective, clear, and simple summary” intended to “educate the voters of the purpose and effect of the proposed” measure, as well as identify the “legal consequences” of each measure.

Once the Attorney General has filed and posted the draft explanation, the public has 10 days to provide written comment. The explanation was filed today July 24, 2026, and the deadline for comments on this explanation is Aug. 3, 2026, at the close of business in Pierre, South Dakota. The final explanation is due to the Secretary of State on Aug. 13, 2026. To file

written comments for a draft Attorney General’s explanation please use one of the following methods below. Copies of all received comments will be posted on this website.

Comments may be submitted via mail, or through hand delivery, to the Attorney General’s Office at:

Office of the Attorney General
Ballot Comment
1302 S.D. E. Hwy 1889
Pierre, SD 57501

Comments that are hand delivered must be received by the close of business in Pierre, South Dakota, by Aug. 3, 2026. Comments that are mailed must be received by the Aug. 3, 2026 deadline to be accepted. Comments may also be emailed to ATGballotcomments@state.sd.us by the close of business on Aug. 3, 2026. Comments should be clearly expressed in the body of the email. The Attorney General’s Office will not open attachments in an effort to prevent malware or other digital threats. Please include your name and contact information when submitting your comment. The title of the comment must be included in the subject line of the email.

* * *

Raw Milk Map

State-by-State1 Review of Raw Milk Laws

1 Other forms of raw milk distribution may also be allowed in any particular state.

2 Some states further limit the direct-to-consumer sales to on-farm only or other location restriction.

3 There is no law either legalizing or prohibiting herd shares. State is aware herd share programs currently exist and has taken no action to try to stop them.

4 On-the-ground situation may be more restrictive because of agency actions or agency interpretation of statutory language (Nevada and Wisconsin).

Attorney General Jackley Urges Federal Government to Strengthen “Know Your Customer Rules” Against Illegal Robocalls

PIERRE— South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley announces he has joined 49 other Attorneys General in pushing the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to strengthen its “Know Your Customer” (KYC) rules to help prevent scammers from using the U.S. communications network to make illegal robocalls.

“This is an ongoing effort by Attorneys General to convince the FCC to be more diligent in combating robocall scams,” said Attorney General Jackley. “Attorneys General see what such scams are doing to citizens in their states, and the federal government needs to do more.”

Last year, Americans received more than 29.6 billion scam robocalls and texts and lost nearly \$2 billion to these scams.

The KYC rules require phone companies to know who is making calls through their networks and what kinds of business these customers are conducting. With that information, phone companies can suspend or terminate callers who use their networks to make unlawful calls or decline to do business with customers who aren’t legitimate companies or can’t prove that they conduct lawful business.

In addition to what the FCC is already doing, attorneys general urge the FCC to:

- Require providers to

- understand their customers’ business. In addition to verifying a customer’s identity and existence, originating providers should also be required to examine and understand the customer’s business practices, reputation, history, intended use of services, and their compliance with state and federal laws.
- Hold all originating providers to KYC standards. Even small originating service providers should be required to meet enhanced KYC standards. Scammers use originating providers, regardless of size, to access the communications network. In fact, illegal calls are often facilitated by smaller voice service providers. Not holding small providers to the same standards could cause them to be even more attractive to bad actors looking to use them to make illegal robocalls.
- Require originating providers to collect additional information on high-risk customers. While KYC requirements should be universal, the attorneys general support additional, long-term monitoring of customers who are more likely to make illegal robocalls, such as those subscribing to high volume services.

This letter comes after Attorney General Jackley and a coalition of 48 other Attorneys General sent reply comments to the FCC earlier in July, encour-

aging it to crackdown on illegal robocalls by strengthening rules that would cut off scammers’ access to legitimate phone numbers.

The two letters are part of Phase 2 of Operation Robocall Roundup, an effort by the Anti-Robocall Multistate Litigation Task Force to crack down on robocalls across the country. Phase 1 launched in August 2025 with warning letters sent to 37 smaller voice providers that were allowing suspected illegal robocalls onto the U.S. telephone network. Phase 2 launched in December and expanded the crackdown to four of the largest intermediate voice service providers in the country.

Other Attorneys General signing this letter are from Alabama, Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia , Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, U.S. Virgin Islands, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.



Please see these states in the chart below for more details.

5 A traditional herd share is not permissible since the farmer must go through state requirements to set up their herd as a security and further comply with the requirements for the sale of a security (Montana). Please see below chart for more details.

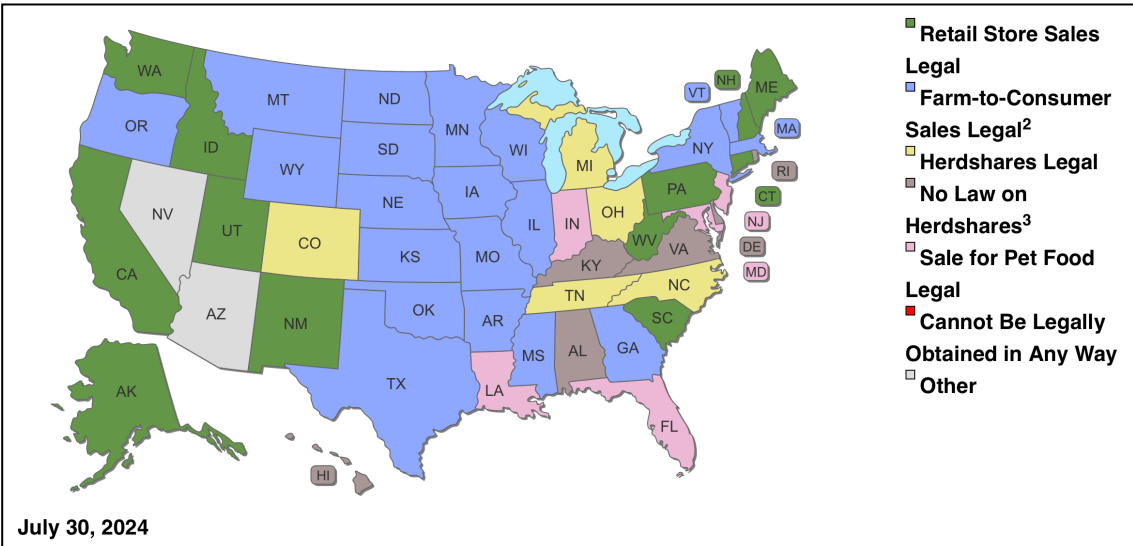
The map above indicates the most permissive category for obtaining raw milk in each state. Please see the chart below for a more detailed look at how raw milk can legally be obtained in your state. See the glossary below the chart.

Due mainly to the federal ban on raw milk for human consumption in interstate commerce, the laws are different state to state.

State raw milk laws have been changing in recent years.

If you have specific questions, please Contact Us.

If you have questions about the laws applicable to you in your state, you should consult with a licensed attorney. Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund (FTCLDF) members: you are welcome to contact FTCLDF concerning laws that apply to your farm. Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund farmtoconsumer.org.



Central Meade County News

By Sandy Rhoden, July 23, 2026

I'm not sure, but I wouldn't be surprised to find out that we are setting new records for the hottest consecutive days in a row.

Last week was hot and by last weekend temperatures in Central Meade County hit 112 degrees with Sunday hitting 108. The rest of the week looks to be in the upper 90s or hotter. If prayers for rain were ever needed, now is the time.

Over the weekend the folks in Meade County were finding hilltops to keep watch on possible fires. The lightening on Saturday ignited several fires, we heard 18, north of Union Center up to Hy.212.

As election day for the Governor's runoff race approached us last week, we

were on the road and time did not allow for me to write the CMC News. As I sit here on the home stretch on Sunday evening, we have done all that we can do to serve the state of South Dakota. Larry has continued to stay busy as Governor while keeping up with his campaign. The schedule has been heavy for the last two months. Tuesday night should be the end of a grueling, 2nd campaign and folks should have a nice break from mailers and texts by the time you read this news.

As the first Sunday of the month, this is a reminder there will be a pot luck dinner after church services next week in Union Center. It's hard to believe the end of July is almost here. Any hay that's bailed up seems to be very slim this year. We have had wonderful, abundant moisture for the last two years so this year's condition is a bit hard to accept.

Reggie and Jennifer Rhoden were blessed with a baby daughter on July 23 in Rapid City. Louise Holly Rhoden

came into the world at 8:51 pm weighing 7lb. 90z. and was 19 inches long. Big brother Lincoln settled into his new role right away and seems to adore her.

Louise Holly is the tenth grandchild of paternal grandparents, Larry and Sandy Rhoden of Union Center. Maternal grandparents are Albert and Holly Bruch of Sturgis. Louise joined her family at home in Rapid City on Friday, July 24th. The Lord never stops His blessings from flowing.

By John Newby

"Building Main Street, not Wall Street"

"Most owners never built a business"

In 1972, a 24-year-old bass fisherman named Johnny Morris cleared out eight square feet of floor space in the back of his father's liquor store in Springfield, Missouri, and started selling fishing tackle. Eight square feet. Here is the part almost everybody forgets when they tell that story: that little corner stayed his only location for the next thirteen years before Bass Pro Shops went big.

I think about that every time an owner asks me why business is so hard. Not hard for a season, which is normal, but hard forever, in year one and still in year fifteen. The owners I meet who never stop struggling tend to have one thing in common. They did not really build a business. They just bought themselves a very demanding job.

The numbers back up how

common that is. Federal labor data shows about one in five new businesses close within twelve months, roughly half are gone by the five-year mark, and about two thirds have shut their doors within ten years. Those numbers usually get blamed on bad luck or a bad economy. They are neither.

Dig into the postmortems and the picture sharpens. One recent analysis of 431 companies that shut down found that running out of money showed up in seventy percent of the failures, but the researchers were blunt about it: an empty bank account is the last event, not the cause. The root problem, cited in forty three percent of cases, was that the owner never got clear on who they served and why it mattered enough to pay for. They ran out of cash because they ran out

of reasons for anyone to walk through the door.

That is the real difference between the great owner and the average one. The average owner asks how to make it to the fifteenth of the month. The great owner asks what this business needs to look like in ten years and what has to get built right now so it is ready. One question keeps you alive. The other question builds something.

Look at what that second question produced in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Two partners opened a deli in 1982. Eleven years in, one of them asked the other where they wanted to be in ten years, and neither man had an answer. That embarrassment turned into a full year of arguing and long walks, and it ended with six written pages describing their business fifteen years into the future. They wrote that they would create a community of separate food businesses, each one unique, each one run by a managing partner with real ownership, and all of them within one town because they believed in doing business where you live. Roughly ninety percent of what they wrote came true. Today it is ten businesses, hundreds

of employees, tens of millions in annual sales, and every last one of them still in Ann Arbor.

Now here is the caution, because dreaming big gets confused with growing fast, and they are opposites. Research on high growth companies found that around three quarters of them died from scaling before their foundation could carry the weight. Morris and Bass Pro ran one store for thirteen years while he learned the customer. The Ann Arbor partners decided at the outset they would never open a second deli, ever. Both dreamed enormous. Both built slow. The vision was the blueprint, not the bulldozer.

Every community I have worked with has both kinds of owner on the same block. One prices whatever the competitor prices, waits on walk in traffic, keeps the books in his head, trains nobody to replace him, and when his knees give out the lights go off and the street loses another storefront. The other one wrote down where he/she is going. They hire ahead of the need. They built customers who belong to the business and not just to her. When they step back, somebody is ready, and the building stays lit. Multiply either owner by forty storefronts and you have the entire future of a downtown and a community.

So here is your week. Take one hour, a pen, and a blank page, and write out what your business looks like ten years from today. Not goals. A picture. How many people work there, what you are known for, who runs it when you are gone. If you are not an owner, write the same page about your community. Then, within the next day, do two things. Spend money at a locally owned business and tell the owner why you keep coming back. And go to SBA.gov and find the free counseling or mentoring available in your area or send that link to somebody who is drowning right now.

Unwritten goals and plans are but a simple fantasy. Small dreams are not humble, they are just small. And they come true exactly as written.

John Newby, Pineville, MO., is a nationally recognized publisher, community, business and media consultant, & speaker. His column appears in communities nationwide. He is currently the CEO of the McDonald County Chamber and the founder of Truly-Local, dedicated to helping communities create excitement, energy, and capture the synergies needed to thrive in an ever increasingly complicated environment. He can be reached at John@Truly-Local.org.

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by DeAnn (Wolkow) Kruempel

PRESSED BETWEEN THE PAGES #44

"Blessed to Have Them"

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

The older I get the more I agree with this statement by Maya Angelou. There are people in this world who simply know how to make others feel special. No matter our age, this conveyed sense of belonging is a wonderful feeling, but I believe it makes an even greater impression on youngsters.

My siblings and I had lots of aunts and uncles. Back then people had big families.

But pressed between the pages of my mind are fond memories of one particular aunt. Born in 1907, one of twins, Julia was a few years older than our mother. She grew up on a farm near Erwin, SD where the girls worked just as hard as their brothers. It was not uncommon for Julia and her sisters to head outside before dawn, help milk the 30 cows by hand, then return to the house and help their mother whip up seven loaves of bread.

Julia never married or had children of her own, but she knew how to treat her nieces and nephews to make us feel treasured. I can still see that twinkle in her eyes when she sat next to us

at the kitchen table and told us the story of the mean goose that tried to chase her from the pond. She would ask about our lives and truly listen to us.

I loved sitting by my aunt at the annual REA meetings. She would find a package of Spearmint gum in her purse and offer me a stick. When the time came for the drawing for door prize winners, Julia held her ticket. Inevitably, as the numbers were called, she would smile. "That's me!" She would go collect the electric hand mixer, which she would later store in her pantry next to the electric can opener she won last year.

When Mom and I

stopped to visit Aunt Julia, I got special treatment. "The Watkins salesman came last week." She smiled as she brought the bottle of Watkins cherry nectar concentrate from the pantry. I think Mom was nervous when my child-hands reached for the beautiful gold-rimmed wheat glass that held my drink. Julia wasn't worried. "You'd better have some cookies to go with that!" she winked.

"Do you want to play my piano? I'm getting pretty good at it. I practice a lot!" she chuckled. Julia fitted a brown paper roll in the holder, then sat next to me on the bench. Until I got old enough to reach the pedals, my aunt's feet would pump away. The keys on that player piano dipped and rose all by themselves while music poured out. "Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do, I'm half

crazy all for the love of you..." Our sister Deloris recalls sitting next to our cousin, Ruth at the piano. Each girl had a foot on a pedal. Aunt Julia cheered them on, almost as delighted as the children.

I hope you have had an aunt or uncle, a grandparent, other relative or friend who made you feel loved and cherished. Even better, I hope you can BE that caring person for others. Believe me, they will remember how you make them feel.

The author's column appears in a growing number of Midwest newspapers. Kruempel has compiled and published her column stories every year for the last five years. She has also published a historical fiction series, "Promises to Keep." Her ten books are available on Amazon. Contact Kruempel at deannkruempelaauthor@gmail.com.

The Good Stuff

by Jim Thompson

Jim Thompson takes motivational stories that listeners and readers send him and incorporates them into the program. It has been on the air for more than 10 years.

there are so many simple analogies in life that all we have to do is pay attention. This one is another great example of how easy life would be if we could handle difficulties better.

Lessons from an Oyster

Author Unknown

There once was an oyster Whose story I tell, Who found that some sand Had got into his shell. It was only a grain, but it gave him great pain. For oysters have feelings

Although they're so plain. Now, did he berate the harsh workings of fate That had brought him To such a deplorable state? Did he curse at the government, Cry for election, And claim that the sea should Have given him protection? "No," he said to himself As he lay on a shell, Since I cannot remove it, I shall try to improve it. Now the years have rolled around, As the years always do,

And he came to his ultimate Destiny stew. And the small grain of sand That had bothered him so Was a beautiful pearl All richly aglow. Now the tale has a moral, for isn't it grand What an oyster can do With a morsel of sand? What couldn't we do If we'd only begin With some of the things That get under our skin.

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Jonathan Ellis & Joe Sneve

BHSU Student Organizations Recognized with South Dakota Board of Regents Awards

Buzz Marketing receives Academic Excellence Award

Buzz Marketing received the Board of Regents Award for Academic Excellence for its applied marketing and market research projects supporting BHSU enrollment initiatives.

Over the past several years, students in Buzz Marketing have worked closely with Dr. John Allred, vice president for Enrollment Management, applying concepts learned in the classroom to support the university's strategic enrollment goals. The organization has completed program improvement projects for BHSU-Rapid City, the MBA program,

and the College of Business, providing recommendations designed to strengthen program marketing and increase enrollment.

In addition to their research efforts, Buzz Marketing students have developed Instagram content for the College of Business based on their project findings and market analyses. The organization has received letters of recognition for all three major projects and continues to provide members with valuable hands-on learning experiences that prepare them for successful careers after graduation.



The award was accepted by Buzz Marketing members Phoebe Allbright, Rachel Manderscheid, as well as faculty member Adam Bailey.

Residence Hall Association earns Community Service Award

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) received the Board of Regents Community Service Award for its commitment to service and community engagement through its annual RA Auction fundraiser.

Now in its 12th year, the RA Auction raises funds for the Spearfish Volunteer Fire Department through the auction of donated prizes provided by Residence Life staff, resident assistants, and RHA executive team members. This year's event was

record-breaking, generating more than \$900 to support the department and its efforts to keep both the campus and local community safe.

Beyond the auction, RHA members regularly volunteer throughout the Spearfish community through residence hall programs and small-group service projects. Their efforts include supporting nonprofit organizations, assisting local shelters, working with senior citizens, and participating in community cleanup activities.



The award was accepted by RHA member Liz Parsons and advisor Megan Kenney.

Psychology Club recognized for Organizational Leadership

The Psychology Club received the Board of Regents Organizational Leadership Award for its efforts to promote advocacy, awareness, student development, and campus engagement.

One of the organization's signature initiatives is "Take Back the Night," an event dedicated to raising awareness about sexual violence, supporting survivors, and connecting participants with resources.

In addition to its advocacy work, the Psychology Club creates opportunities for

students to build connections with peers and faculty while developing leadership skills and confidence.

Through events such as graduate school panels, students gain insight into academic and professional opportunities, including graduate programs, research experiences, and scholarships.

The organization strives to foster an inclusive environment where students feel welcomed, supported, and empowered to succeed both academically and personally.



The award was accepted by Psychology Club member Kara Daum and faculty advisor Dr. Cheryl Anagnopoulos, chair of the School of Behavioral Sciences.

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“For the Love of Bees”

Meg English
news@bellefourchebeacon.com

Recently, I had a chance to catch up with Bernadette Jensen. I became acquainted with Bernadette when I interviewed her for a story about her business enterprise, Owl Creek Organics, a couple of years ago.

Bernadette’s story is a trajectory of propitious events.

Visiting with her is like reading a book that you don’t want to put down.

Bernadette is one who follows her heart. As such she wears many hats. She’s a beekeeper, an organic gardener, a culinary artist, and an entrepreneur to name a few. A 2004 graduate of Belle Fourche High School, Bernadette has undergraduate degrees in Spanish and French as well as a Masters’ degree in French.

In 2006 and 2007 she made several trips to France where she became very interested in French culture and especially the high quality of French food products. It helped that she was fluent in French and it helped that her dad, Bernard was born and raised in France.

Following her formal education and travel, Bernadette followed her heart back to the farm where she and her six siblings grew up.

Near Orman Dam, just 15 miles East of Belle, on land adjacent to her parents, she began raising bees in 2012. She started Owl Creek Organics & Natural Products in 2015. At this time, she was

making and selling jams from wild plums, sweetened with organic sugar.

In 2018 Bernadette began sweetening her jam with honey, a ‘win-win situation’ in her words. In 2021 she got her commercial kitchen license and built a warehouse and storefront.

Soon things began to change.

Always a beekeeper, I’m confident that Bernadette informed the bees about the changes in her life immediately. According to traditional beekeeping folklore when anything major happens in a family, the bees must be the first to know the good or bad news. To overlook this tradition is bad luck.

Bernadette explained, “In just two years I went from running a business to getting married, having a baby (our daughter Adeline) and being a stay-at-home Mom.” The change also involved a momentous move from Nisland, South Dakota to McVile, North Dakota where Bernadette’s husband Brandon farms with his family

“McVile is a lot like Belle Fourche only smaller.” She described her new home. “We have a grocery store, a cafe, a bar, a bank, a mechanic shop, a post office and a few other businesses.” Only around 400 people live here.”

It has been a time of slowing down, learning to be a wife, and a mother.

It’s been a good change. “So, I have done a lot of baking. I love it. I have taken up reading a lot and learning new things

As with all transitions there are some downsides. Bernadette misses her family

in the Belle Fourche area. McVile is a good distance from her parent’s farm, approximately 7.5 hours driving and around 500 miles. “When I lived near my parents, I enjoyed running next door to see them for coffee or seeing my brothers when they dropped by.”

Bernadette admits that she misses the local coffeeshops in Belle Fourche and Spearfish too.

Marriage is something new too. “The best part of marriage is finding love, of course, and finding the person you are going to share your life with.”

Bernadette has enjoyed embracing both marriage and parenthood.

“The best things about parenting are the little everyday joys of having a child.” Bernadette described the satisfaction of seeing Adeline’s ‘super big’ smile upon waking in the morning. She also described the simple joys of watching her daughter discovering things as simple as grass between her toes for the first time. “Her joyful smile and happiness mean the most to me.” Bernadette reflected.

Bernadette admits that it’s a challenge as well as an adjustment to suddenly having to take care of a baby full time. “Your baby needs you all day.”

Bernadette’s husband farms with his family, and Bernadette enjoys riding along with him especially in

the fall during harvest and looks forward to bringing Adeline now that she is big enough.

For Bernadette another transition is having to adjust her Owl Creek Organics activity.

“I have had to cut back, but I am making a few jams a week now when possible and mixing honeys as well.”

Owl Creek Organics maintains a good following in the Black Hills with products available in Lueders Belle Fourche and Spearfish stores, The Red Onion in Belle, Lynns in Sturgis, and Staple and Spice in Rapid City.”

Thanks to her own parents, the Owl Creek Organics store is open by appointment. “If people text or call my mom Laurie, she opens it up for people to shop”. Bernadette added, “Mom and I make a great team.” My Dad, Bernard always has helped me too as well as encouraged me. He is a big believer in agriculture and small business.”

Bernadette has plans to expand the McVile branch of Owl Creek Organics. She has a commercial kitchen for making jams in McVile and plans to open it one day a week for the public to shop for her products. “I sell my products through Bernie’s in Grand Forks and through McVile Market.”

Although she is taking a step back this year and reducing her hives Bernadette’s vision for the

future of Owl Creek Organics is coming into focus. With her research and Brandon’s help the couple plans to plant fields of flowers for the bees. Bernadette wants to ameliorate the flavor of the honey she produces by changing what the bees eat.

‘I’m excited as that’s something I’ve always dreamed about. Many hives can do well on an acre of land if the right flowers are planted.”

Bernadette’s preferred breed of honey-bees is the Carniolan. They are more docile than other bees which is a good choice for the family friendly business model Bernadette has envisioned. “I am excited for what is to come. I want to teach my kids sustainability and how to grow and make your own foods.”

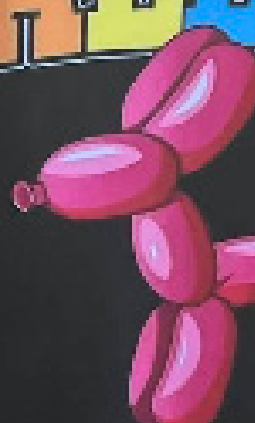
Somehow, despite taking care of Adeline, Bernadette managed to plant a garden this year. “It is the latest I’ve ever gotten it in the ground- June 12th- but I’m hoping it produces some vegetables. Running out to the garden to pick something fresh that you grew for dinner is one of my favorite parts of summer. My mint, sage and thyme are all coming up again from last year.”

For Brandon, Bernadette, and Adeline Jensen in McVile, ND the art of building the foundations of family is paying dividends. The bees are happy too.



Adeline, Brandon, and Bernadette Jensen

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