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Ethnic Christmas Traditions

Why is there lefsa everywhere this time of year? Probably because this area was settled by a preponderance of Norwegians. As I look at the census records for Herrick and Glenwood townships from the early 1900s, I note the origins of many of our early settlers. The Kilpatricks, McMahans, and McLains from Ireland; the Stellmachers and Musches from Germany; Tsacherers from Austria; the Engs, Fritzes, and Almoses from Norway; Petersons and Christiansons from Denmark. Other nations represented are Finland, Sweden, England, Holland, Bohemia, Scotland, and Luxembourg. This area was definitely a melting pot!



What other ethnic foods do we see during the Christmas season? Take your pick. Norwegian Krumkake is made on a special iron and rolled into a cone while still warm. It is then filled with sweet, whipped cream. Sandbakkels, also from Norway, are crumbly tarts baked in special molds. They can be filled with fruit but are traditionally eaten plain. Our family makes rosettes, a delicate, lacy, deep-fried cookie that originated in Norway. Though we are of German and Belgian ancestry, we make dozens of these cookies to share with friends and family.



Belgian cookies are very thin, crispy cookies made on a special iron. They are cooked for 20-30 seconds on each side - long enough to pray one Hail Mary (I was told). The Italian pizzelle cookie is an almond-flavored cookie made with a similar iron. Russian tea cakes and Mexican wedding

cakes are cookies made with butter, powdered sugar, and chopped pecans or walnuts. Kolaches from Poland are pastries filled with nuts, fruit, or jams. Gingerbread originated in Germany along with pfeffernuesse cookies flavored with anise, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg. And England gave us the much-revered fruitcake.



The common thread among these ethnic foods is the time required to create them. Many are made one at a time. Also, special molds and irons are required to make them. Other holiday specialties include many types of candies only made during the holidays - caramels, toffee, peanut brittle, fudge, peppermint divinity, and chocolate-covered everything - peanuts, caramels, pecans, and cherries. Please share your family's special Christmas foods with the editors at GHAIInterstate@gmail.com.



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Fraud and Identity Theft in Our State

Fraud costs South Dakotans a total of \$1.5 million a year, an average of \$251 per event. South Dakota ranks at the bottom of reported identity theft and fraud activity. This sounds pretty good except that this reflects only 'reported' activity. The actual numbers may be much higher, but many people are embarrassed by falling for these scams and thus don't report them. In Federal Trade Commission data from 2020, South Dakota ranks 50th in reported fraudulent activity per 100,000 people. There were 411 reports of identity theft and 3227 total fraud and other reports. Identity theft includes credit card and bank account fraud where someone steals your information and opens new accounts. Many of us who have and use credit cards have had an account compromised. If you notice unusual activity, call the credit card company at the number on your card and ask questions. The banks have practices in place to watch for questionable activity and send you a fraud alert, too. The card company will remove fraudulent charges and may need to issue a new card.

Another scam involves gift cards. The scammer requests that the victim purchase gift cards and give him the account numbers. He will then pull the money from these cards and there is no way to get it back. A similar situation occurs with money transfers - once the money is gone, it cannot be pulled back. Often these scams are connected to a prize supposedly 'won.' If you truly won a prize, you would not need to pay a fee to receive it.

A computer virus scam involves a phone call or pop-up internet ad that convinces the victim that there is something wrong with their computer that must be addressed immediately. Scammers pose as representatives of well-known computer or software companies. Once the victim responds, the scammer asks to take over the computer remotely. Then they can install malware, steal passwords, and sell unneeded products and services - for non-existent problems.

The 'romance' scam involves a romantic interest initiated online and often preys on vulnerable people. Scammers create fake online profiles and build phony emotional attachments until the victim is comfortable sending them money. Both men and women can be victimized by this type of fraud. I personally know of a widow who fell for this and lost her farm. Unfortunately, the victim is so controlled by the scammer that they cannot be convinced that the relationship is not real. This scam is both financially and emotionally devastating.

I recently read an article on fraudulent activity targeting senior citizens in an AARP publication. A couple of days later, I received an email appearing to come from the Geek Squad of Best Buy stating that my account had been charged an account maintenance fee. This seemed fishy as I didn't think we had such an account but sometimes my spouse does things that I am not aware of. My first thought was to call the number on this fictitious invoice and dispute it but then I remembered the AARP article. Instead, I looked up a phone number for Best Buy's Customer Service online and called them. Customer service informed me that, no, I do not have an account with them and, yes, this was a fishing attempt to get my personal information. Best Buy asked if I tried calling the number in the email and I told them "No." They indicated that this was definitely the way to handle this situation. So, I deleted the email and took no further action.

Best Buy did suggest that I could report this activity to the Federal Trade Commission if I chose to. I did not which is why the numbers reflecting fraud activity in South Dakota are not necessarily accurate.



Fairchild Farmgirl

Turkey Day will soon be here. What are you most thankful for? Is it the meal, the family, or the planning of Black Friday? Ron and I did that years ago and we swore to each other we'd never do it again. What chaos! I'm looking forward to pumpkin pie, and my sister in laws cream corn, which I hate all creamed corn, but hers, I don't know what she does...its delicious!

Here's what I'm thank full for. This crazy life we live. Imagine when everyone flies the coop...I'll be so bored! We're torn about football being over-sad that it is over because it's fun, but happy to move inside for basketball...the cold doesn't get easier on an old lady's bones!

We've been busy as bees here at the Fairchild Ranchero. Levi ended up breaking his hand in the football game against Olivia (of course it was the one that we chose not to go to because of distance), so he was out the last couple games, and he's been out of commission here, except for hunting...he looked me square in the eye and told me that he was able to rest his gun on his splint. He was good to go. But it's been a no-go on laundry, dishes, taking out the garbage, and vacuuming. Hmmmm.....

Levi and his buddy got to hunt some pheasants and I made pheasant nuggets that they both loved, and Levi got his deer as well. So far, we've got three deer, we have two more to go. Nothing is better than venison backstraps, or stew. That's good eating! I love a good venison recipe, so if you have one, ship it out to me.

Well, we had some unfortunate bit of business here too besides the broken hand. We woke up a week and a half ago to our goat/calf barn completely burned up along with the lambs and calves in it. What a sick feeling. Nothing is worse than not only seeing critters not survive a fire but all our hard work into them. Not to mention that was the first barn that we built after we were married. It had a bunch of sentimental value! That's where we brought our first sheep up in, the kids played, brought up their animals, etc. Then trying to get it replaced before a ton of snow flies so the goats and horses have protection? Looks like we are going to have to build it ourselves... no one has the time.

Honestly, seeing that burned up and the huge mess made me think back to two years ago when we had that tornado that turned our farm into a huge mess. At least this was contained to one area. Now that the insurance company had the fire inspector out (we still don't know the reason it happened and we may never) we are going to start the cleanup. Yuck!

But the funny story that I'm going to share will be just what you need to read after the sad barn burning. I was subbing for the music teacher a few weeks ago and this sweet little special needs girl asked me how old I was. "Oh honey," I said to her, "I'm old as dirt!" Five minutes later, she raised her hand to ask a question.

"Mrs. Dirt?" Out of the mouths of babes. I love subbing! Have a blessed Thanksgiving and hold tight your loved ones. Appreciate what you have and don't be bothered by the things you don't have.

Until next time,

Fairchild "pass me the leg" Farmgirl

GATE CITY GENERAL

A little bit of everything...

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

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

Grocery • Hardware • Gifts

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www.facebook.com/GateCityGeneral • GateCityGeneral@gmail.com

A Look Back...***100 years ago, December 1923***

Plans are for a community Christmas tree
 NO postal service in rural areas Christmas day
 Campfire girls present "The Return of Rosalia"
 Blind school presents "Christmas Carol Service"
 Gary School Home Econ girls to have a tea at St. Nickolas Tea Room
 Deaths: John Mayer, Julia Ann Meyer Chaun, Mrs. John Mayer, Theresa M. Helergson,
 Ralph Hersom
 Marriages: Mable Jensen & Dewey Wells, Rose Lee & Adolph Sanden
 Birth: girl to Mr & Mrs Paul Davis
 Special: 5 lb bag of mixed nuts \$1.18
 Ama doll 98 cents

75 years ago, December 1948

First basketball of season is an alumni game
 Ramus Sorenson owner of Gary Creamery takes trip to Denmark
 Students to present "Waltz Time"
 Evidence of Christmas season, streetlights being erected
 Lutheran choir presents "Cantata"
 Robert Teisdale 13, killed in car accident
 Charles Kuecker dies of exposure
 Senior Who's Who: Kenneth Hubbs
 Deaths: John Koelke, Mrs. Fenton Gilbert, Ben Filbert, Charles Kuecker, Robert Teisdale
 Marriage: Jewyll Mortenson & Donald Eng
 Births: Sons to Mr & Mrs Bob Shephered, Mr & Mrs Alvin Lorenzo,
 Mr & Mrs Lawrence Andereson
 Girls to Mr & Mrs Ed Lorenzon, Mr & Mrs Donald Kennedy

50 years ago, December 1973

Gary High School presents band concert
 Gary Housing Assoc. to build another housing unit
 Old fashion Christmas to be held De. 14
 Santa Claus coming to town Dec. 23
 Death: Theodore Hanson
 Births: Son to Mr & Mrs Jerome Billiet
 Girls to Mr & Mrs Melvin Kenyon, Mr & Mrs Larry Thompson

25 years ago, December 1998

Elementary concert will feature seasonal selections
 Jennifer Pederson named to Who's Who list
 Jerry Norton gets dream of world championship
 Community Christmas Party Dec. 13
 Gary Blood Mobile nets 34 units
 Fire destroys home of Stacey & Vicki Hinders
 Deaths: Gussie Johnson, Harvey Oval, Isabelle Oswald, Fred Clarksean

Patchwork of the Prairie

“Patchwork of the Prairie,” the South Dakota Humanities program featuring Yvonne Hollenbeck, was a resounding success. The educational and entertaining program was held in the American Legion Dance Hall on November 12th to a crowd of about 45 persons. The highlight was a trunk show of over 140 years of vintage quilts created by Yvonne’s family. The variety of patterns and the sources of materials were impressive. Also displayed were original feed and flour sacks from the 1920’s and 1930’s. Yvonne is also an accomplished ‘cowboy poet’ and she interjected her poetry into the program to the delight of the audience. The Gary Historical Association sponsored this free program and plans are in the works to host more such events in the future.

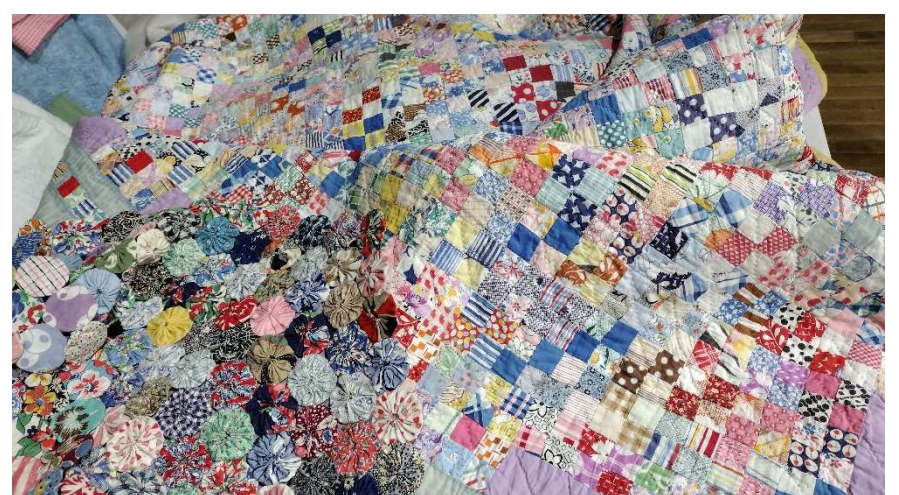


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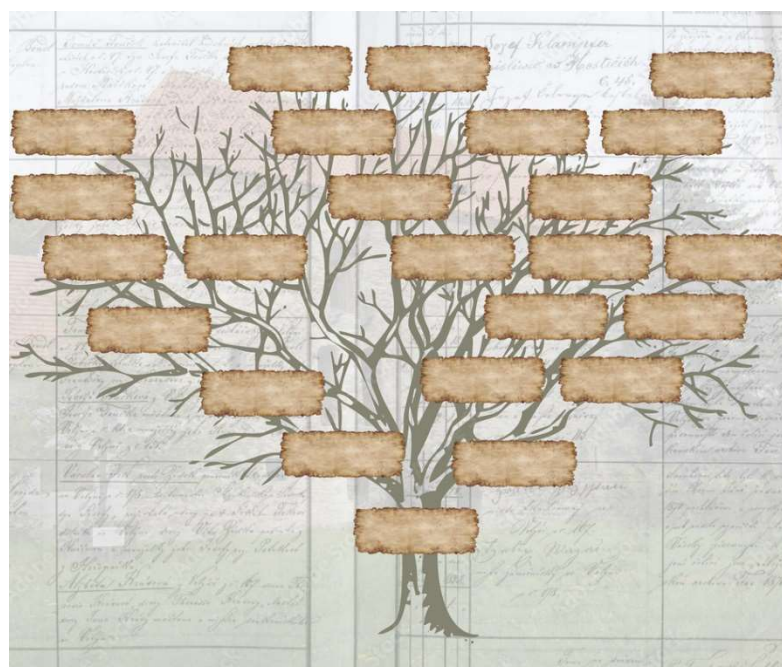
If I Shake My Family Tree, How Many Nuts Will Fall Out?

Genealogy is the study of family origins and history. This family history may contain biographical information, family traditions, and the like but I prefer to link the interesting stories to my family tree.

- The basic rules are:
1. Plan
 2. Start with yourself
 3. Keep very detailed records
 4. Verify everything - always double-check your information.

Start with what you know and talk to as many older relatives as you can - grandparents, great aunts and uncles, cousins. Visit the county courthouses to research civil records such as birth, marriage, and death records, property records like deeds and tax records, and military records such as draft notices and enlistment data. South Dakota had personal property taxes for many years. These records would contain a lot of interesting information. Court and prison records are also available for research. What might you discover about your ancestors? Federal censuses over 72 years old are open to the public for research. The census records will also show who the neighbors were and what your ancestor's occupation was.

Vintage county atlases (plat books) are a treasure trove of information. And don't overlook newspaper accounts of many life events and everyday news. The National Archives holds historical US government documents (including homestead records) to study. Local churches have records of baptisms, marriages, and burials, as well as cemetery records. A walk through the cemetery and viewing the gravestone inscriptions will yield more information. Common websites for researching genealogy are Ancestry (requires a subscription), Family Search, USGenWeb Project, Rootsweb, Cyndi's List, Legacy, and Find a Grave. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has a massive collection in its Family History Center.



Many genealogists compile their research into charts, books, and displays to share with others. One display became a family tree quilt with photos printed on fabric. Many researchers travel to places where their ancestors lived - both here in this country and all over the world. I've walked cemeteries in Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa, and Illinois to gather information. Through genealogy, I've met long-lost cousins here and in Belgium who also share my passion. A visit to Ellis Island is on my bucket list as my ancestors came through there in the late 1800's.

What interesting tidbits will you find? I found an ancestor in the 1940 census - in the SD State Penitentiary; men who abandon their family to go somewhere else and start another family; my gr-gr-grandmother was listed as 'senile' on the ship manifest (she was possibly just really mad that she was taken from her homeland in her old age). One ancestor's death record lists the cause of death as "over-exertion the day before." Very odd until the dots were connected and I realized he died on November 12, 1940 - the day after the Armistice Day Blizzard; extra siblings often show up. Your quest for information on your family will never be complete but the journey is very enjoyable.

Annual Community CHRISTMAS Party

DEC. 17
SUN | 2023

AND
BINGO

11 AM DOORS OPEN

12 PM POTLUCK*
Main Dish:
Lasagna
Mac 'n' Cheese



1 PM Santa & Friends

2 PM BINGO
Jackpot
\$551.25



**GARY, SD
AMERICAN LEGION DANCE HALL**

Christmas
Songs &
Sing Alongs



Nordic Treats
Demonstration

Raffles

Gary
Community
Singers

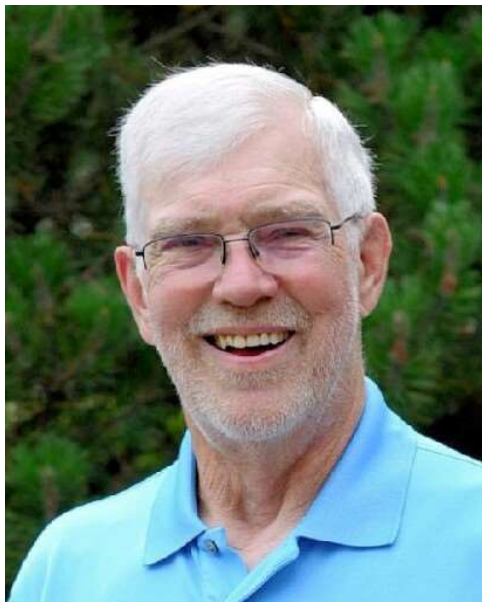


Kids' Craft
Corner



You are welcome to bring a dish to share.
Free Will Donations will help fund this year's 3rd of July Fireworks!

Follow the Gary, SD Community Club on
Facebook for upcoming community events!

**Michael Gilbertson**

November 4, 1945 – November 6, 2023

Michael "Mike" Gilbertson, age 78, of Wilmot, SD, passed away on Monday, November 6, 2023.

A memorial service for Mike was held on Saturday, November 18, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at Mundwiler Funeral Home in Milbank. A private burial was held at Grandview Cemetery in Gary. Scott Sutherlin officiated. Music was provided by Jan Steele. Honorary bearers will be his nieces and nephews: Chad Gilbertson, Kelly Roach, Neil Gilbertson, Emily Finley, and Jim Christofersen.

The service was live-streamed and recorded and is viewable below his obituary at <https://www.mundwilerfuneralhome.net/obituaries/michael-gilbertson>.

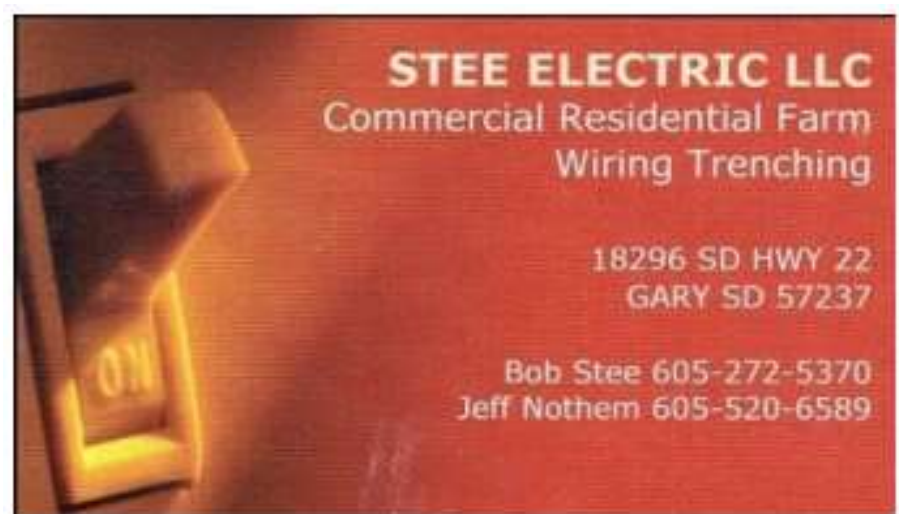
Mike was born on November 4, 1945, in Canby, MN. He was the son of Elroy Gilbertson and Louise (Parsons) Gilbertson. Mike was raised in Gary, SD, and lived there until 1965. He attended South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD. Mike lived and worked in Bloomington, MN, from 1965-2003. He worked for North Central Airlines, Republic Airlines, and retired in 2003 from Northwest Airlines as a Senior Inventory Analyst.

Mike was united in marriage with Lynette Sutherlin on December 11, 1993, in Bloomington, MN. Following retirement, Mike and Lynette built a home on the shores of Big Stone Lake in rural Wilmot, SD. Mike was an avid sportsman; he loved fishing and hunting. This year he was proud to have caught a 20-pound northern and a record walleye off the dock. He loved the sound of the flush of a rooster pheasant while hunting with Dot, Sadie, or Kota. Mike enjoyed watching sports, especially college sports, including the South Dakota State Jackrabbits. He also was a Minnesota Vikings fan and faithfully watched NASCAR, often making Lynette hold dinner for the "last four laps."

Left to cherish his memory are his wife, Lynette of rural Wilmot, SD; two step-sons: Scott (Erin) Sutherlin of Eagan, MN; and Robert Sutherlin of Apple Valley, MN; two brothers: Keith (Becky) Gilbertson of Alexandria, MN; and Merle (Linda) Gilbertson of Ft. Myers, FL; nieces and nephews: Jim (Gaye) Christofersen of Blaine, MN; Chad (Shannon) Gilbertson of Delafield, WI; Kelly (Brian) Roach of Maple Grove, MN; Neil Gilbertson of Fargo, ND; Emily Finley of Fargo, ND; and six step-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents: Elroy and Louise Gilbertson; sister, Karen; and stepfather, Robert Jesme.

Mike's family and friends will remember him as a practical teacher and a great storyteller that often taught a lesson. He was humble, an outdoorsman, and lived simply. He had a deep voice that left an impression and a contagious laugh. You never saw him without a cap on his head and a toothpick in his mouth! He loved living on Big Stone Lake with his best friend, Lynette.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Mike's name can be given to the American Diabetes Association.





GARY GIVERS
EUCHRE
TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY'S @ 10:30

JANUARY 13TH, 2024
FEBRUARY 10TH, 2024
MARCH 9TH, 2024

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THE JACK

THURSDAY NIGHTS
at the Gary Liquor Store

TICKET SALES: 5 P.M. – 7 P.M.
Drawing: 7:15 P.M. – Must be present to win!
**** Must be at least 21 years old to participate. ****
2 tickets – \$5 ♥ 5 tickets – \$10 ♥ 20 tickets – \$20



Gary Legion Hall

JOIN US FOR A
New Year's Eve Party

COME AND CELEBRATE WITH US AS WE
BRING IN THE YEAR
Dec 31st

8PM - Midnight

Follow the [Gary American Legion Dance Hall](#) on Facebook for upcoming events!



Gary, SD Community Club

Christmas lights
Contest

Judging: Saturday, Dec. 9th!

1st: \$125 2nd: \$75 3rd: \$50

Our judges will be driving around Gary and Lake Cochrane. If you have a light display in the country near Gary, please let us know!
 Melinda: 507-828-1694

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Gary Givers
CHRISTMAS
GIFT CARD BINGO

December 15, 2023
6-7:15pm bingo book sales
Balls drop @ 7:30pm

Gary Bar

The Gary Historical Association Museum Membership

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www.experiencegarysd.com

It is loaded with interesting information, including,
Bill Stone's book at:
<http://experiencegarysd.com/billstonebook.cfm>

And the Gary High School Orange Book at <http://experiencegarysd.com/garyschoolorangebook.cfm>

Gary Historical Ass'n is on FaceBook
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Board Members: Albert Bekaert, Carolynn Webber, and Pam Hults.

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If you have any story ideas or questions pertaining to the Gary area that could develop into an article, feel free to email them to ghainterstate@gmail.com.