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## **Smithsonian Saturdays program to launch April 2 at Cultural Heritage Center**

PIERRE, S.D. – The Museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society will begin hosting a new program at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre on the first Saturday of each month, beginning April 2.

Smithsonian Saturday will be held at 2 p.m. CDT on the first Saturday of each month, and will feature a special webcast of a program produced by, for or with one of the Smithsonian Institution's museums. There will be no additional charge to attend the programs, but regular admission fees to the museum still apply.

The first program in the Smithsonian Saturday series is "Eddie Van Halen on Reinvention in Rock 'n' Roll." The presentation is part of the "What it Means to Be an American" programming series from the National Museum of American History. The program was first broadcast Feb. 12, 2015.

The program asks the question, what makes rock 'n' roll quintessentially American? The answer may lie in our talent for innovation and reinvention—two subjects few know better than Eddie Van Halen. A Dutch immigrant and naturalized U.S. citizen, Van Halen created an iconic American band—and kept it relevant for five decades by continually reinventing it. As a performer, songwriter and inventor of instruments that allow musicians to make sound in new ways, he redefined how the guitar is played and designed. Is reinvention the definitive quality of the art of rock 'n' roll? Rock icon Van Halen discusses his American journey, and how he's reinvented himself, his band and the way the guitar is played.

"We are developing a diverse and creative programming schedule for Smithsonian Saturdays," said Jay Smith, museum director, "There is a little something for everyone and we expect the program to continue evolving in the future. Each of the programs are entertaining as well as educational. We also want to highlight our affiliation with the Smithsonian Institution, and this is a good way to give the public an idea of what is happening at the nation's largest museum. Rock 'n' roll fans will especially enjoy Mr. Van Halen's reflections on music as someone many consider to be one the great American guitar players."

The State Archives is also open the first Saturday of every month, making Smithsonian Saturdays great days for the whole family to enjoy a variety of activities at the Cultural Heritage Center.

The South Dakota State Historical Society became a Smithsonian Affiliate in January 2013 and is the only affiliate in South Dakota.

**About the South Dakota State Historical Society**

*The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Education. The State Historical Society, an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society's world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit [www.history.sd.gov](http://www.history.sd.gov) for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.*

**About Smithsonian Affiliations**

*Established in 1996, Smithsonian Affiliations is a national outreach program that develops long-term collaborative partnerships with museums, educational and cultural organizations to enrich communities with Smithsonian resources. The long-term goal of Smithsonian Affiliations is to facilitate a two-way relationship among Affiliate organizations and the Smithsonian Institution to increase discovery and inspire lifelong learning in communities across America. More information about the Smithsonian Affiliations program and Affiliate activity is available at <https://affiliations.si.edu>.*