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“Smithsonian Night” program to be offered monthly at Cultural Heritage Center

PIERRE, S.D. – The Museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society will begin hosting a new evening program each month beginning April 21. “Smithsonian Night” will be held on the third Tuesday of each month, and it will feature a special webcast of a program produced by, for or with one of the Smithsonian Institution’s museums.

On Smithsonian Night, the museum and Heritage Store at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre will be open from 9 a.m.-8p.m. CDT, giving visitors additional time in the early evening to visit the facility. Each special program will begin at 7 p.m. but visitors are welcome to tour the Museum and visit the Heritage Store from 4:30-8 p.m. during the extended evening hours on Smithsonian Nights.

There will be no fee to view the programs, but standard admission fees will apply for visitors wanting to go into the museum galleries.

“We really want to reach out to our audience with Smithsonian Night,” commented Jay D. Vogt, director of the South Dakota State Historical Society. “By extending our hours to 8 p.m. on Smithsonian Night, we hope that the person who can’t make it here during regular hours has additional opportunities to visit our facility.”

The lineup of special programs for Smithsonian Night over the next six months will include:

- April 21: “A History of America in 36 Postage Stamps” from the National Postal Museum
- May 19: “Organized Crime in the Mail” from the National Postal Museum
- June 16: “Taco Nation/Planet Taco: How Mexican-American Food Conquered the World” from the National Museum of American History
- July 21: “Space Junk: Fast Trash” and “Hot Air Balloons and Air Pressure” from the National Museum of Natural History
- August 18: “Training Underwater for Walking in Space” from the National Air & Space Museum
- Sept. 15: “Bringing an Object to Life” from the National Air & Space Museum

“We tried to create a diverse programming schedule for Smithsonian Night,” commented Jay Smith, museum director, “There is a little something for everyone and we expect the program to continue evolving into the future. Each of the programs is 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.”

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

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About the South Dakota State Historical Society

The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Tourism. The Department of Tourism is comprised of Tourism, the South Dakota Arts Council and the State Historical Society. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen. 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 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>.