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## **Cultural Heritage Center to offer Northern League baseball program on Saturday, May 21**

PIERRE, S.D. – The Museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society, in conjunction with its exhibit “Play Ball! The National Pastime in South Dakota,” will host a program about the former Northern League of baseball teams from South Dakota at 2 p.m. CDT on Saturday, May 21, at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre.

Paul Gertsen of St. Paul, Minn., will present “Baseball That Mattered: 25 Years of the Northern League in South Dakota” about the teams from South Dakota in the former Northern League. Gertsen’s program will address the history of a league that featured players such as future Major Leaguers Hank Aaron, Jim Palmer, Lou Brock and Willie Stargell.

There is no fee to attend the program but regular admission fees will apply to visit the baseball exhibit and museum galleries.

Gertsen donated a large collection of Northern League materials to the South Dakota State Historical Society in 2014, some of which are now on display in the museum’s baseball exhibit.

“I started collecting baseball cards in 1971, the same year I saw my first Aberdeen Pheasants games,” said Gertsen. “I have collected baseball memorabilia since that time, and started to build my Northern League collection -- slowly but surely -- in 1983. I also thought it was a fitting gift to the people of South Dakota, a thank you to the state that instilled so many valuable things in my upbringing.”

“We are especially excited to bring Paul Gertsen back to the Cultural Heritage Center to talk about the Northern League,” said Jay Smith, museum director, “The Northern League played a major role in the history of baseball in South Dakota, and we are happy to share that story with our audience.”

Gertsen has deep South Dakota ties, having been raised in Aberdeen and graduated from Huron High School. He lived in Pierre before taking a job with the Saint Paul Saints and later with the Minnesota Moose. He presently works for the City of St. Paul.

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### ***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.*