

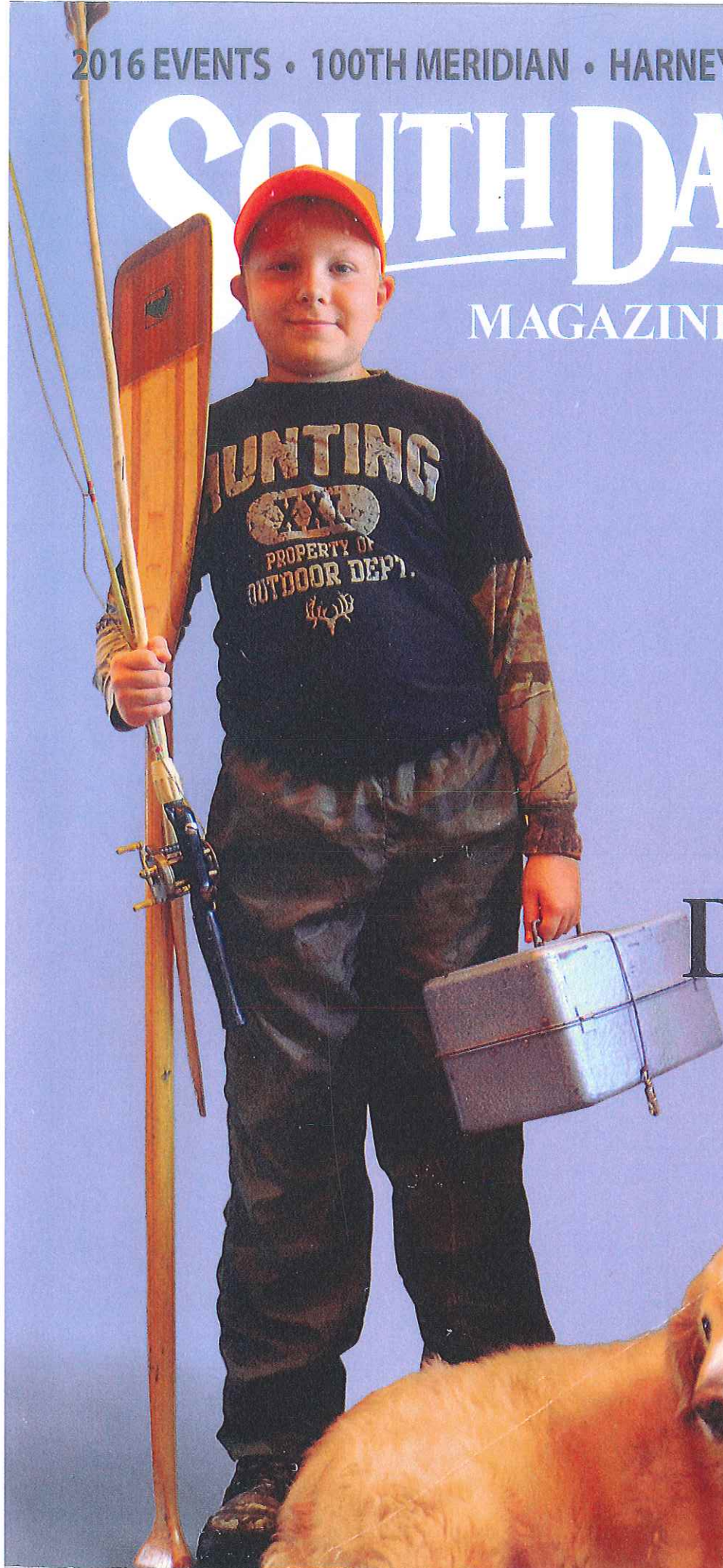
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SOUTH DAKOTA

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HOW TO GROW — a — SOUTH DAKOTAN



LEARN THE LICENSE PLATES

Say you're walking with friends through the parking lot of the Barnett Center at this year's State B basketball tournament and you see a cherry red vintage Ford Mustang. It's your dream car, and your buddies spend a few seconds fawning over it.

"Wow," you say. "Someone in Hughes County sure is lucky."

The gang stares, wondering how you know where this car came from. It's easy if you understand how South Dakota's car licensing system works. Each of our 66 counties is assigned a number that is used as the prefix on every license plate. The nine most populous counties (as of the last prefix change in 1987) are numbered one through nine. Numbers 10 through 67 (except 66, which belonged to Washabaugh County before it was absorbed into Jackson County) are assigned alphabetically. So the minute you saw the plate that began with the number 36, you knew the Mustang came from Hughes County.

Don't discourage your kids by suggesting they learn the license plate numbers of all 66 counties, but make sure they know their home county and grandpa's. Then teach them the nine biggest counties. Make it a game. When you're driving to Sioux Falls, see who's the first to spot a "1" plate. On cross-state trips, give everyone a pen and pad and see who finds and identifies the most plates by the time you reach your destination. Find all nine and you get to choose the next eatery.



Chad Coppess / S.D. Tourism

- 1: Minnehaha (Sioux Falls)
- 2: Pennington (Rapid City)
- 3: Brown (Aberdeen)
- 4: Beadle (Huron)
- 5: Codington (Watertown)
- 6: Brookings (Brookings)
- 7: Yankton (Yankton)
- 8: Davison (Mitchell)
- 9: Lawrence (Spearfish)

36-county plates signify Hughes County, home to the capital city of Pierre.

STORY WALKS

"Our life lessons are in the stories of nature, so we need to get youth to not only listen to these stories but to tell them," says Marla Bull Bear, director of the Native American Advocacy Program that hosts summer camps for youth.

"We learn both in the hearing and the telling," says Bull Bear, so children should learn to retell what they hear. "To really know something, teach it."

At a recent camp, Bull Bear invited youth and adults to take a walk down Ponca Creek Road at Milk's Camp. When the group spooked a blue heron, Bull Bear gathered everyone and told the story of another heron that forgot it was a migratory bird.

"It didn't know its own history and it forgot who it was," she said. "It thought it could be a winter bird, but when the cold weather came it nearly froze to death because it was too proud and refused help."

Finally, the heron came to understand itself and with some help from a family of mice, survived the winter and was able to humbly appreciate its annual fall flight south to safety.



Bernie Hunhoff

Youth and adults enjoy story walks during summer outings at Milk's Camp.