



NOTES FROM THE TRAIL

A Publication of the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation



SUMMER 2022



Theodore Roosevelt
MEDORA FOUNDATION

Medora
EXPLORE IT. ADORE IT.

Medora Musical

Bully Pulpit
GOLF COURSE

Our Board of Directors:

Harold Schafer (1912-2001) & Sheila Schafer (1926-2016)
Founders

Tim O'Keefe, *Chair*
Levi Andrist, *Vice Chair*
Michael Zaun, *Secretary & Treasurer*

Michelle Mongeon Allen
Twylah Blotsky
Bruce Furness
Kristi Hanson
Doug Mark
Laurel Nelson
Linda Pancratz
Medora Sletten

Rich Becker
Don Clement
Tom Gerhardt
Jody Hodgson
Tracy Martin
Kathy Neset
Barry Schafer
Rolf Sletten



FOUNDATION.MEDORA.COM

6 | The Bully Spirit of Mike & Peggy Bullinger
7 | Ed Schafer Says Farewell
8 | TR Presidential Library: A Historic Partnership
12 | Employee Housing Project Underway
14 | Endowments In Action
15 | Meet Matthew Hills, Our Development Director
16 | Backstage at the *Medora Musical*
21 | The Next Generation of International Employees

4 | A Letter from Randy
10 | What's Happening in Medora
20 | Under Harold's Hat
22 | Life-Changing Experiences



FROM THE DESK OF RANDY HATZENBUHLER



Like the North Dakota Badlands, I feel refreshed.

You only have to be in Medora for a moment to see what I mean. Well-timed, soaking rain – the type of moisture we've hoped for in western North Dakota for years – has painted the buttes a lush green. It's a side of the Badlands' character that I have missed. Native grasses stand three or four feet tall along the tee boxes and fairways at Bully Pulpit Golf Course. The waters of the Little Missouri River are high. And the view from the Burning Hills Amphitheatre is breathtaking.

I can't help but feel gratitude when I contrast it with the charred earth, burned by wildfires, we saw here just a year ago. A refreshing sight, indeed!

But my refreshed feeling extends beyond the beautiful summer landscape. I have been reminded many times already this season: **people make all the difference** in this place.

July brought one of my very favorite days of the year: **Veterans and Military Appreciation Day in Medora**. On Sunday, July 10, **362** veterans, active duty military members, and reservists were welcomed to the *Medora Musical* at no cost. They heard inspiring words from Rear Admiral David Architzel, the retired commander of the USS Theodore Roosevelt. A vintage T-34 aircraft buzzed over the Burning Hills Amphitheatre in their honor. And it was all made possible by generous supporters of our Veterans Endowment fund – including John & Marian Hamilton, who made a substantial gift to ensure we can honor veterans in Medora in perpetuity.

The very next day, a great number of our seasonal and full-time TRMF employees felt the impact of generous people. On Monday, July 11, **motivational speaker John O'Leary** shared an amazing message with us in Medora. His appearance was a gift from generous benefactors who care deeply about the employees who make up TRMF. The amphitheatre was filled with laughter, tears, and smiles as John shared his incredible story of perseverance.



Why else do I feel refreshed? Because the future has me more excited about Medora than ever.

We have begun the process of addressing a well-identified need in our community: housing. In the coming 365 days, a plot of land just north of our Life Skills Center campus is poised to become **Wild Horse Place** – a three-story, 32-unit apartment building. It represents the final piece of our campus-style plan for TRMF employees, which began with our center of operations, the Life Skills Center. The blueprints are finished; the zoning board has given us the go-ahead; now our Development Team, under the leadership of our newly hired Development Director, Matthew Hills, is working to raise funds for this major investment in our team.

We are also focused intently on raising funds for our **Legacy Bully Pulpit** initiative. We have implemented flood mitigation measures, constructed new cart paths, and created intriguing new holes – including a 19th hole, granting our team the flexibility to make improvements year after year without asking golfers to sacrifice an exciting 18-hole experience.

And as our partnership with the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation blooms, even more projects are coming into focus. In the coming months we'll have more to share with you on a variety of big plans:

- An **event barn** that will prove perfect for weddings and other occasions in the Badlands
- **Cabins** that will provide lodging options at the doorstep of Bully Pulpit Golf Course
- A major initiative that will add to and enhance the **Western Heritage** experience in Medora

I believe you too will come away from your next visit to Medora feeling just as refreshed as I do. There is so much to be optimistic about in this magical little place. See you soon!


Randy Hatzenbuehler
President & CEO

The 2022 Bully Spirit Award

MIKE & PEGGY BULLINGER

"Success or failure is caused more by mental attitude than by mental capability."

Mike & Peggy Bullinger didn't just coin those words – they live by them. And it shows not only in Medora but across North Dakota.

Mike & Peggy are the owners of Western Products, a tremendously successful home improvement company based in Fargo. Successful, not thanks to chance, but to hard work – and a hard-scrabble journey we recognize as "the American Dream."

"They made a deal that whenever they bought a new house, the first meal they ate there would be beans and corn," said their daughter Nikki Nelson. "Because that's what they could afford to eat in the early days."

Their hard work paid off – and their success allowed them to give back to communities for which they care, like Medora. Mike & Peggy have generously contributed to numerous projects, including the Little Bully Pulpit Mini Golf Course, the Old Town Hall Theater, the Life Skills Center, and Bully Pulpit Golf Course.

But their embodiment of the Bully Spirit goes far beyond their philanthropy. To better understand it, we spoke to the entire extended Bullinger family and many of their friends. Scan the QR code on the right to see our complete tribute to Mike & Peggy Bullinger, and to see the pair accept the Bully Spirit Award at the 2022 Rough Riders Roundup luncheon in Medora!



Peggy & Mike Bullinger receive the Bully Spirit Award from Randy Hatzenbuehler (right) at the 2022 Rough Riders Roundup Luncheon.



Scan this code to see the 2022 Bully Spirit Award Presentation in its entirety!

"There's too much here to be lost."

After twelve years of active leadership and a lifetime of dedication to Medora, Ed Schafer has retired from his position as Chair of the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation Board of Directors.

In his farewell remarks, Schafer said his passion for Medora stems from its ability to "inspire people to self-generate the attributes of freedom."

Schafer told those in attendance: "I hope you can look around this place and think about endurance. The Badlands have survived glaciers, storms, erosion, petrification, and fires — and they're beautiful. Let that be a lesson to us in life's storms and difficulties. We can persevere."

"Our organization's success has been because of people like you. I am confident the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation has a bright future."



Scan the code above to watch our tribute to Ed and his farewell speech.



A HISTORIC PARTNERSHIP BEGINS

Theodore Roosevelt
MEDORA FOUNDATION

THEODORE
ROOSEVELT
PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY

The Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation has gifted 3.5 acres to the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation, furthering a special partnership in the Badlands.

The donated land will be used for shared parking, walking and hiking pathways, and a redesigned passage to both the Burning Hills Amphitheatre and the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library.

"The Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation and Presidential Library are crucial partners," said Linda Pancratz, board chair of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation and also a member of the board of directors of the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation. "This gift makes clear that our success is shared – for Medora, Billings County, North Dakota, and our nation."

"The Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation believes in the T.R. Presidential Library," said Tim O'Keefe, chair of TRMF. "The gift of this land is just the start of a mutually beneficial relationship as interdependent neighbors and partners."

Construction of the Presidential Library is set to begin in 2023 and a grand opening is planned for July 4, 2026 – the 250th anniversary of America and the Declaration of Independence.



Scan this QR code or visit
Blog.Medora.com to learn more
about the partnership between the
TR Medora Foundation and the TR
Presidential Library!

SOWING SEEDS

If you explored the Badlands in late June or early August, you may have run into a group of volunteers and staff of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library closely studying what was underfoot.

The purpose of their three-day excursion was to gather seeds of plants that are native to the North Dakota Badlands: sedges, grasses, wildflowers, prairie onions, wild parsley, and more. Those seeds were sent to local greenhouses for storage, cleaning, and planting.

Once mature, the native flora will be transferred to the Library grounds. It's all part of an effort to increase biodiversity in the Badlands — and to carry on TR's legacy of conservation.



Fall Into Fun!



Honky Tonk Angels

September 15 - November 6

When three gutsy gals from different backgrounds take charge of their lives, they decide to follow their honky tonk dreams to the city of Nashville!

Tickets are on sale now at Medora.com/Book!

A Very Merry Badlands Christmas

December 1 - 18

Playing exclusively in Medora this season! This holiday favorite features Badlands stars of past and present, includes some of the season's best music, and tells a wonderful story for the entire family!



Rough Riders Hotel & Theodore's Dining Room

Open Year Round!

High-class lodging and dining, ready to serve you all year! Soak up the Badlands in every season.

Visit Medora.com/Do to plan your next escape to the Badlands!

MORE TO EXPLORE IN MEDORA!



Aug 28-29: Founders' Society Day



Sept 10: Finale Night at the Medora Musical



Sept 15: Honky Tonk Angels Opens



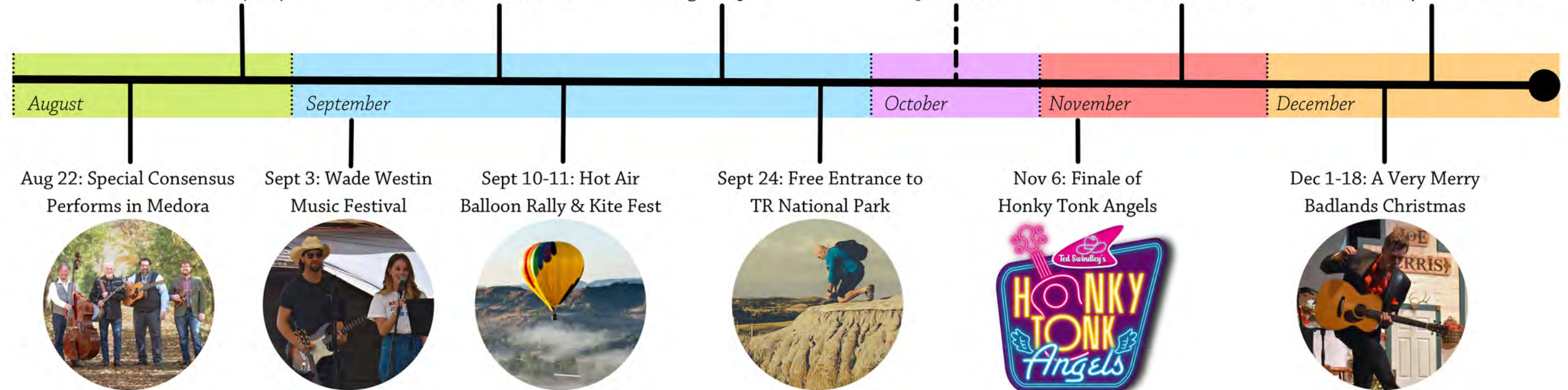
Theodore's Dining Room Open All Year



Nov 11: Free Entrance to TR National Park



Dec 2: Medora's Old Fashioned Cowboy Christmas



Dates subject to change. Visit Medora.com/Calendar for a full list of what's happening in town.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: **Wild Horse Place**



READ THE FULL
PROJECT SUMMARY:



Medora is growing – and the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation is growing with it. In the last two years, our organization's full-time workforce has grown from around 50 to more than 80 people. And we know Medora's future holds even more growth.

Enter **Wild Horse Place**: a 50,000 square foot apartment building that will add living space for 32 families in Medora in 2023.

"Housing has always been a challenge in Medora, and it's never been more important to meet that challenge head-on," said Matthew Hills, Development Director for TRMF. "I'm reminded of Harold Schafer, who took it upon himself to add sewer and water infrastructure to Medora in the 1950s because he knew it needed to happen. I'm grateful to work with a group of people who think this way as well."

Wild Horse Place serves as the final piece of a \$25 million "campus plan" that began in 2008, and includes the Spirit of Work Lodge, the Life Skills Center, and the Elkhorn Quarters. We believe it will enhance the community and help us deliver even more outstanding service to visitors of Medora.

If you are interested in supporting the construction of this multi-million dollar project, the TRMF Development Team would be thrilled to hear from you. Contact us at **701-223-4800**, or email development@medora.com to learn more about the project!



BUILD A BETTER MEDORA WITH US!

Here are three great ways to leave your mark on Medora – and become eligible for the North Dakota 40% tax credit.



Name a golf cart at Bully Pulpit!

By making a \$5,000 gift to the Legacy Bully Pulpit Endowment, you earn **naming rights for a golf cart for four years.**



Name a brick at Point to Point Park!

Buy a park paver to support the **Next 100 Years Endowment**, which allow us to improve the attractions you know and love in Medora. Available in four sizes based on your gift: \$5,000, \$10,000, \$25,000, and \$50,000.



Name a seat at the Medora Musical!

A named seat at the Burning Hills Amphitheatre is a great way to honor a loved one. Name a seat for \$500 – or name an entire row for \$5,000.

ENDOWMENTS IN ACTION

Since TRMF's founding in 1986, thousands upon thousands of generous people have stepped up to further our mission. And as we look decades down the road, we are committed to a strategy of growing **endowments**. It's a three-step process:

1. **A generous donor makes a gift** of at least \$25,000 to establish an endowment.
2. **The endowment grows** and produces income annually through prudent management by our investment staff.
3. **The income proceeds support TRMF** as designated by donor intentions, with a spending policy of 4 percent annually.

On this page, you'll see the impact of two of our most fruitful endowment funds. They stand as inspiring reminders of the power of philanthropy in Medora!



Created and initially funded by Don & Pat Clement and Michael & Vicki Zaun

1,425 kids saw the *Medora Musical* at no cost as part of Medora WISH Kids Free Week, July 2-10, 2022!

We also welcomed 16-year-old Alyssa Koenig for a VIP trip to Medora, in partnership with the Anne Carlsen Center!



"Her eyes lit up when she met the cast of the *Medora Musical*. What a special experience for our family!"

— Kim Koenig, Alyssa's mom



Scan this code to learn more about the Medora WISH Program!

To learn about TRMF's endowments, or to discuss establishing one of your own, contact our Development Team at 701-223-4800.

Veterans' Day in Medora



Created and initially funded by Mary Larsen

Our annual celebration of our nation's heroes in Medora was bigger and more special than ever before in 2022:

- **362** veterans, active duty, and reservist military members saw the *Medora Musical* at no cost
- A historic **Beechcraft T-32 Mentor** aircraft flew over the Burning Hills Amphitheatre
- **Vice Admiral David Architzel**, the retired commander of the USS Theodore Roosevelt, honored veterans with a speech

...And much more.



Scan this code for a full recap of Veterans' Day in Medora 2022!



Welcome to Medora, Matthew Hills!

Joining the TRMF Executive Team this summer is Matthew Hills, a Fresno, California native who now leads our organization's development and fundraising efforts.

What brought him to North Dakota? "My wife and I knew we wanted to start a family, but weren't sure where to do so. We thought long and hard about it, and decided we felt most comfortable in a place like North Dakota. So here we are!" he said.

He said he won't soon forget the first time he laid eyes on Medora — but what really captivated him was getting to know the team. "I could tell Medora was special when I saw the level of passion everyone has for this place."

Now the work of developing a brighter future for Medora begins. "Philanthropy is Medora. None of us would be here if it were not for Harold and Sheila Schafer's hard work and generosity. I feel fortunate to help carry on what they started."

Medora Musical™ BACKSTAGE PASS

DIRECTOR & PRODUCER CURT WOLLAN BRINGS HISTORY TO LIFE



While audiences at the Burning Hills Amphitheatre are enjoying the 2022 *Medora Musical*, Curt Wollan is dreaming about 2023.

"I started thinking of the concept for the 2022 *Medora Musical* about a year ago," he says. "Ideas we don't end up using this year might find their way into next year's show."

Curt's history with the *Medora Musical* dates back to 1977, when he was a Burning Hills Singer. He has directed the Greatest Show in the West since 1990. He describes his role this way: "I come up with the concept for each season – what we're going to be talking about regarding Medora and its rich history. I get to put it all together into a story each year for the wonderful people who pass through here."

Under Curt's direction, the *Medora Musical* has taken guests on all kinds of fascinating historical journeys. "We've been through the Chateau de Mores. We've had brandings, barn raisings, all kinds of stuff!"

The 2022 *Medora Musical* features a celebration of one of the town's most iconic landmarks: the Old Town Hall. Curt says bringing the historic building to life has been a rich experience for the cast and crew. "Especially those incredible paintings," he adds, referring to faithful recreations of art created by traveling artist Joe Breckenridge.

Curt says digging into Medora's past is one of the most rewarding parts of his duties as director. "There's a lot of history everywhere you turn here. You can't help but stumble over it. My job is to find ways to present it to the audience in a fun way – and set up reasons to sing songs!"



COSTUME DESIGNER JASON LEE RESLER OUTFITS THE BURNING HILLS SINGERS



Guests who take in the *Medora Musical* year after year have plenty to look forward to each summer: new music, new stage designs, new stories and cast members – and of course, new costumes.

For *Medora Musical* costume designers Jason Lee Resler and Trina Benedict, the work of designing each season's fresh looks goes hand-in-hand with every other element of the production. "We spend plenty of time in meetings figuring out what the cast should wear throughout the show," Jason says.

Throughout the years, costumes have reflected fashion changes of the times: bellbottoms, polyester, tie-dye, and fluorescents. But no matter the look, *Medora Musical* costumes are designed to accommodate fast movement and dancing – and classic western looks are a must.

Consider the costumes for the 2022 *Medora Musical*'s opening act. "We found a really fun 1960s vintage advertisement for western wear," Jason says. "That's what we based the costumes on this year. We liked the idea of being bright and summery and fun," he says, referring to the teal, orange, and yellow color scheme.

Jason encourages guests to look closely at the fringes on the men's and women's costumes this year. "The fringes are layered with two colors," he notes. "It fills out the fringe more, and makes different flashes of color pop as the Burning Hills Singers dance."



STAGE MAGIC WITH SCENE DESIGNER ERICA ZAFFARANO



Designing set pieces and props for a show like the *Medora Musical* is a trickier task than you might expect.

Consider the weather. "We have wind, rain, snow, heat!" says Scenic & Props Designer Erica Zaffarano. "Most of our structures have steel armatures. Most of our carpenters have to also be welders. We clad our set pieces in weatherproof materials. It has to be very sturdy to survive 100 performances plus dress rehearsals."

If a set piece is going to be sturdy, you can bet it's going to be heavy, too. So how does the crew get those big pieces from point A to point B without pulling a muscle?

Erica says the secret is an invention known as aircasters. "They imperceptibly lift and lower scenic elements," she explains. "We can have two people moving a gigantic piece of scenery – and you don't even notice them flip a switch to raise it half an inch, enough to move it across the stage. Then it settles onto the stage securely, so actors can jump or lean on it and not have to worry about moving the scenery."

The 2022 set is an impressive one on that front – from a replica of Harold Schafer's desk at the Gold Seal Company (shown on the right) to a massive, multi-piece "San Juan Hill." Erica says collaborating with the *Medora Musical* team is a highlight of the work she does in Medora.

"Our director Curt is a very visual person. Once we get here in the spring, we work hand-in-hand to narrow the concept from something big to something cohesive," she says.



Dusty Drake leans on a replica of Harold Schafer's desk while he performs. Aircasters allow him to apply weight to the prop safely.

THE SOUNDS OF THE MEDORA MUSICAL WITH SANDY TIPPING



What makes a perfect *Medora Musical* song? Music Director and Arranger Sandy Tipping says the possibilities are nearly endless.

"A *Medora Musical* song has to be fun and popular. It's helpful if it somehow references something we're talking about in the show – but most of the time, if you've heard it in the last 40 years, it's a good candidate for the *Medora Musical*," Tipping says.

2022 features a varied setlist – from "The Devil Went Down To Georgia" to "I Wanna Dance With Somebody." But one of Sandy's favorite segments of the show features the gentlemen of the *Medora Musical*.

"We're doing a whole feature on 'guy country' groups – four or five minutes of 'guy country,'" he says. Sure enough, audiences have loved singing along to "Elvira" by The Oak Ridge Boys night after night in the Burning Hills Amphitheatre.



Since the early days of the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation, our friends at **Touchstone Energy Cooperatives** have supported the *Medora Musical*. And for the last 17 years they have been the exclusive sponsors of the **Burning Hills Singers!**

"Concern for community is one of our cooperative principles. So many of our members enjoy the musical and all that *Medora* has to offer every year. We take great pride in supporting the Musical, doing our part to ensure it sees success for many years to come."

– Jeremy Woeste
Basin Electric Power Cooperative


Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperatives
The power of human connections[®]

Under Harold's Hat

Stories, ideas, and values from our founder, Harold Schafer



Erma Wolters with Harold Schafer in his Gold Seal Company office circa 1950.



Erma Wolters surrounded by flowers circa 1990.

To fully appreciate the impact of the Schafer family's decision to make Medora their legacy, **look no further than the flowers.**

1986 was a year of transition for the Schafer family. The Gold Seal Company was sold to Airwick Industries – and the Schafers donated the entirety of their assets in Medora to establish the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation.

What happened next was the first of countless acts of generosity toward Medora – and it began with Harold's beloved assistant, Erma Wolters.

"She gave her shares [of the Gold Seal Company] to the Foundation," Harold told biographer Larry Woiwode for his book *Aristocrat of the West: The Story of Harold Schafer*. "She didn't wait till she died, but gave them then, and said she wanted the income from the principle to be used to beautify Medora – trees, flowers, shrubs."

So began the first named endowment of TRMF: The Erma Wolters Beautification Fund. "It represents a chunk of money, and only the interest can be spent each year," Harold said. "Medora will probably be one of the prettiest towns in North Dakota."

Indeed, thanks to the Erma Wolters Beautification Fund, flowers bloom all summer long, year after year in Medora. And it all began with a generous gift from one of Harold Schafer's most trusted advisors and friends.



Theodore Gour outside the Badlands Pizza Parlor. Gour is Medora's first-ever 2nd generation international employee.

The Next Generation

TRMF Welcomes First 2nd-Generation International Employee to Medora

17-year-old Theodore Gour of Bandung, Indonesia has been to Medora before.

But he can't tell you much about his first visit. "I was born here!" he says.

The year was 2005. Theodore's mother Uli was pregnant when she came to Medora for her second summer working at the Rough Riders Hotel.

Uli says she was charmed by Medora at first sight. "I had been to places like Miami and New York, and suddenly I see this little town in the middle of nowhere," she says. "I was stunned by the Badlands – like something you see in cowboy movies."

"I fell in love with Medora," she says. "Then Theodore was born."

Uli says her TRMF family made the first few months of Theodore's life special. "They took care of me while I was in the hospital. And when I got back to Medora, my house was decorated to welcome us."

"It's a historic place for us," Uli says. "That's why we sent Theodore there!"

Theodore Gour has made history as TRMF's first 2nd-generation international employee. He spends his days hard at work in the Badlands Pizza Parlor, across the street from the Rough Riders Hotel, where his mom worked for five summers.

So what's Theodore's impression of Medora so far? "It's nice. It's cozy!"

"The weather is actually very similar to Bandung. The only difference is the size," he says with a laugh.

It's the farthest Theodore Gour has ever been from his home in Indonesia – but his mom Uli says it was meant to be.

"After he was born, we visited the horse stables, and one of them kissed Theodore's head," she recalls. "My friend Winston Santran said, 'That's just to make sure Theodore comes back here some day.'"



Medora
EXPLORE IT. ADORE IT.

Medora Musical

Bully Pulpit
GOLF COURSE

Our Vision

We connect people to historic Medora for **positive, life-changing experiences.**

Our Mission

PRESERVE the experience of the badlands, the historic character of Medora and the values and heritage of Theodore Roosevelt and Harold Schafer;

PRESENT opportunities for our guests to be educated and inspired through interpretive programs, museums and attractions that focus on the Old West, our patriotic heritage, and the life of Theodore Roosevelt in the badlands;

SERVE the traveling public, providing for their comfort while visiting historic Medora, the Badlands and Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Our Values

Have **fun.**

Show **respect** for people and place.

Live life with an **ownership** mentality.

Always be **grateful.**

Promote **sales.**

Bringing the TRMF Vision to Life

POSITIVE, LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCES

"I made my Medora debut playing guitar at the Great American Folk Show in July. Music makes a lot of people smile – and I like making people smile!"

– Herlof Huso

9-Year-Old Junior Rough Rider from Aneta, N.D.



"When we get company from Germany, we bring them all to Medora. And when they come back, they say, '**When are we going to Medora?**' Because they love it just as much as we do. There's nothing not to love about Medora!"

– Hannelore & John Davis

Rough Rider Members from Bismarck, N.D.



"In 1967 and 1968, LuAnn was a college student working in Medora during the summer. **Now we're volunteering for the first time.** We've seen many beautiful places around the world – but Medora still tugs at the heart."

– Randy & LuAnn Cogliser

Volunteers from South Carolina



"Our great-granddaughter Lily was about nine when we visited Medora together. She was extremely sensitive to touch, and had never accepted a stuffed animal. But **when Theodore Roosevelt gave her a teddy bear at his show, she hugged it and would not let go!** That little attention Teddy gave to Lily was beautiful."

– Mike & Marianne Blasco

Bismarck, N.D.

What's your Medora story? Email it to timo@medora.com, and your positive, life-changing experience could appear in the next issue of Notes From the Trail.



Theodore Roosevelt
MEDORA FOUNDATION

Medora
EXPLORE IT. ADORE IT.

Medora Musical

Bully Pulpit
GOLF COURSE

P.O. Box 1696
Bismarck, ND 58502

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
UNITED PRINTING

