

truck,” an old green ‘49 Chevy that my parents bought in 1978. We intend to take it on a tour of our state’s festivals this summer. Our plan is to talk to our readers and maybe serve cold watermelon slices in honor of the anniversary. We hear that Lawrence Welk and his band did something like that many years ago for WNAX so we’re in pretty good company. We can’t play the accordion, but he didn’t have a ‘49 Chevy pickup.

Despite our new roles as publishers and a big summer tour, most things won’t be changing. We still publish from Territorial Governor John Pennington’s house on Third Street. We love the old building, and we recently built a fire in the fireplace for the first time in about five years. Dad’s dog Yeller, a 12-year-old golden retriever mix, is still hanging around our offices and is our official greeter at the front door. And the old Chevy may not make deliveries but we do take it out for errands, decorate it for parades and now for the first time we will be taking it around the state.

The magazine is more fun for us than it’s ever been. We intend to make sure that it continues to be just as interesting and fun for our readers because while my name and Heidi’s are on the masthead as publishers, we’ve always known that it really belongs to anyone and everyone who loves South Dakota.

Our talented staff includes nine other co-workers, all of whom have made the transition easy for us. They include John Andrews, Roger Holtzmann and Rebecca Johnson in the editorial department; our graphic designer Andrea Maibaum; Jana Lane, Renee Becker and Emily Vanderhule in our circulation department; our intern Lauren Janssen; our accountant Ruth Steil; and Laura Johnson Andrews, who helps with everything from marketing to writing food articles (she just finished a great story on our area’s kolache tradition).

❖By Katie Hunhoff

❖ FOSTER PARENTING

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BJ and Ken do more than just taking care of the children’s basic food and housing needs. BJ said Ken is wonderful with the children; he loves to spend time with them. Aside from teaching them to cook, BJ will teach the children other skills if they show interest. BJ has a talent for sewing; somehow she finds time for a hobby of making beautiful quilts. Some girls in her care have shown interest in her sewing, quilting and embroidering and she’s taken time to teach them the trade. Taking care of foster children also helps BJ and Ken continue to enhance their own knowledge by brushing up on school studies. As they now mainly take on school age-children, Ken and BJ assure that their foster children have their homework done every night. As most parents do, they learned that reviewing and checking the child’s homework yields better results than taking the child’s word for it.

Over the years, BJ has opened her heart to children of all ages, from infants to teenagers, from one to six children at a time. Her foster children have been with her for various timeframes, up to three years at a time. I asked her for a briefing on how the process works. When BJ and Ken became interested in becoming foster parents, they worked closely with the Department of Social Services during the process. They completed several steps required to obtain their licenses, which they are required to renew annually, along with annual training hours, fingerprinting and a home inspection. When there is a child or children in need of a foster home, a social worker contacts BJ with information about them, including how many, their age(s), and a recap of the child’s situation. BJ can decide at that time whether she and Ken are able to foster that child.

Curious, I asked BJ if there were challenges in helping care for foster children. She explained that there are challenges similar to those with raising any child. As you assure the child’s basic needs of shelter, food and clothing are met you must consider that the child may be facing a behavior issue that you are unfamiliar with, such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. This may challenge the discipline process for the child. School-aged children sometimes take extra encouragement and guidance to complete their homework on time.

BJ feels she has gained just as much as her foster children have over

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