

May 15, 2012

Dear Rapid City Council members:

Mayor Kooiker tells me that he has submitted my name for consideration as a member of The Journey Museum Board. He asked me to tell you a bit about what skills and experiences I might bring to that position.

In 2001 I retired as a secondary teacher and moved back with my husband Richard to land that we purchased when we lived here in the 1980s. Because we loved western history and geography and valued friendships with Lakota people, we soon became enthusiastic volunteers at The Journey Museum. We have been members of both The Journey and Minnilusa Historical Society for more than a decade.

I want to be a board member because I know that our 15 year-old museum is an invaluable cultural and educational asset for the whole region. My county residency is an asset because The Journey is truly a Black Hills area museum.

This summer will be my sixth season as a tour leader for Road Scholar/Elderhostel tours in the Black Hills and Badlands. Every tour group comes to the Journey Museum. Our widely-traveled tour members rave about what a gem our museum is. They love its design, its collections and its combination of science and cultural history. For these visitors, The Journey Museum suggests that Rapid City has a progressive economic and educational climate.

What experience do I bring?

- For nearly ten years I was the editor of the newsletter *Turtle Times*. In that role I formed working friendships with Journey staff members and worked on a variety of programming and publicity efforts.

- In 2007 Reid Riner and I wrote a South Dakota Humanities Council grant and a Mary Chilton D.A.R. grant for an Adelstein Gallery Exhibit on Grace French, the first resident artist/teacher in the Black Hills region. We did original research, wrote a small book and material for a DVD, and a series of programs and presentations in addition to the exhibit. I have been involved in a number of other major exhibits.

- I have designed and am coordinating the five-part Storyteller series for the current “Megaflood: the 1972 Awakening” exhibit in the Stanford Adelstein Gallery.

- For the last two years I've served on the Interpretation and Continuity Committee (ICC) charged with enhancing the visitor experience in our four collections. We have written new exhibit guidelines, strengthened and clarified relationships among the Museum Alliance of Rapid City (MARC) partners, updated signage and raised funds to accomplish a number of projects. I sit on both Marketing and Membership Committees to coordinate efforts between those committees and the ICC committee.

- Along with my husband, I am a “regular” volunteer, too, helping with receptions and working as a docent or leading school tours—three in the next five days!

If I am named to The Journey Board, I will bring hands-on experience and a passionate spirit of advocacy. I'm proud of The Journey Museum as it is, but I want it to grow in wider local use, deeper financial stability and stronger partnerships with other educational and cultural institutions.

Respectfully submitted,

*Donna M. Fisher*

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