

Nothing to Fear

This is the 36th installment of a multi-part series taken from Bob DuPuy's book, *Nothing to Fear: The Story of Seventh-day Adventism in the Dakotas*, published in 1983.

CHAPTER 9: Hastening the Coming of the Lord - Part 3

The initial interest among the Russians in the area can possibly be traced to a tract on the Sabbath question that was sent from Hamburg, Germany to a Fred Postovit, who lived eight miles northeast of Dogden (later called Butte, in McLean County on the McHenry County border) in the approximate area of the soon-to-be-established Balfour church.

Impressed by the content of the tract, Postovit shared it with two lay leaders of the Baptist Church, John Oleineick and Alex Sitch, who likewise came to believe its message to be true.⁶ Perhaps, it was these men who invited Babienco and Litwinenco to North Dakota in 1906. In addition, it appears that there were already some Seventh-day Adventists living in the area at this time, since only 21 of the 28 charter members are attributed to the work of Babienco and Litwinenco.⁷ The recollections of a later Russian worker who was a native of this area, J.C. Michalenko of Napa, California, indicate that the first Seventh-day Adventist in the area and later the first local elder of the Balfour church, was Anikey Sepchenko, who joined the Adventist Church before 1906, and that the first contact the Russians had with Adventism was through Russian speaking laymen, German farmers from McClusky (possibly including Carl Schwartz) and Denhoff.⁸

In any event, English speaking Conference President John Walker, knew little of the entire matter until he visited with Litwinenco on his farm at Herried in Mid-August.

"I was pleased to learn something about these people and of the condition of the church," reported Walker, "We are glad to see the truth taking hold of people of different tongues. It will hasten the coming of the Lord." Maybe, looking at his polyglot constituency, Walker was reflecting the thoughts of *Review and Herald* editor Uriah Smith, when he editorialized in 1859 that "perhaps" the

church's commission to prophesy to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people could be fulfilled without leaving North America!¹⁰

Babienco visited the June 24 - July 1, 1907, camp meeting at Velva, speaking to and translating for the fifty Russians in attendance, some of whom were Baptists interested in learning more of the Adventist message.¹¹

Work among the Russians apparently continued during 1907, and the membership of the Balfour church more than doubled to 57 members by October of 1907.¹²

These events were apparently the beginning of a great awakening among the Russians during which, almost two hundred people began observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, swelling the ranks of the Balfour church and leading to the organization of the Dogden Russian church, probably early in 1908.¹³

Deprived of ministerial help in their own (and only) tongue, with virtually no Adventist literature in Russian and a high rate of illiteracy due to limited educational opportunities in Russia (where they had often suffered persecution for their religious convictions), the new believers were often easy prey for unscrupulous leaders who arose and divided the churches into factions.¹⁴

External forces may have also played a role in the difficulties of these first two Russian churches. A group known as the Malenkie Subotniki (little Sabbath-keepers) differing from Seventh-day Adventists on the matters of tithing and spiritual gifts apparently troubled the new believers, seeking to draw away a following. As a result of these interacting forces, the Balfour and Dogden churches by 1909 had separated themselves from the body of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and partially organized themselves independently.¹⁵

Across the language barrier stepped German minister, George Wagner. With McClusky layman, Carl Schwartz acting as interpreter, Wagner worked among those who had remained loyal to the Adventist church from the two congregations and succeeded in reorganizing both of them in early 1909.¹⁶

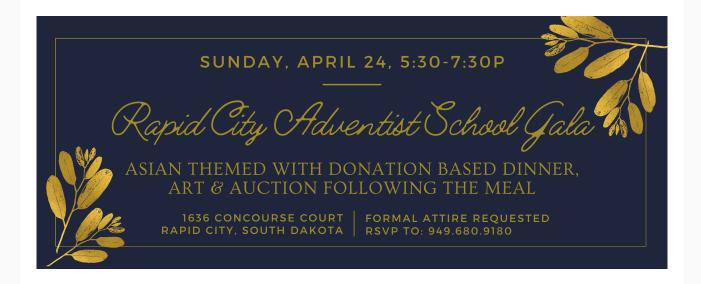
Immediately, the congregation at Dogden launched a project to build the first church structure among the Russian Adventists in North Dakota. The church was apparently occupied by the close of the year.¹⁷

- 6. This account is based on the recollections of M.S. Krietzky of Munsing, Michigan, who was raised in the Russian settlement in the area, and who worked among the Russians in North Dakota and elsewhere for many years. Krietzky considers this account the origin of the Dogden church, the earliest one he remembers. The location of the Postovit farm, plus the mention of Alex Sitch (misspelled Stich) in the minutes of the 1907 conference session (*North Dakota Conference Session Record Book, op. cit.*, I, 79) as a delegate from Balfour, however, tends to place its application to an earlier event. A study of the subsequent history of Balfour and Dogden illustrates how the mistake may have come about.
- 7. Northern Union Reaper, August 7, 1906, 8.
- 8. Letters from J.C. Michalenko of Napa, California, May 10, 1976, June 4, 1978.
- 9. Northern Union Reaper, August 28, 1906, 2, 3.

- 10. Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, February 3, 1859, 87.
- 11. Northern Union Reaper, July 16, 1907, 4, 5.
- 12. Ibid., October 15, 1907, 6.
- 13. *Ibid.*, October 5, 1909, 3. A delegate from Dogden first appears in the minutes of the conference session in December of 1908 (*North Dakota Conference Session Record Book, op. cit.*, I, 87), but there is no record of its acceptance into the sisterhood of churches.
- 14. Northern Union Reaper, loc. cit.
- 15. Ibid., February 23, 1909, 4. Recollections of the Malenki Subotniki are those of older members of the Max and Butte churches.
- 16. Northern Union Reaper, October 5, 1909, 3.

Next time from *Nothing to Fear:*Chapter 9, "Hastening the Coming of the Lord" - Part 4 by Robert K. DuPuy

If you are a new subscriber or have missed the earlier installments, you can find all issues of the Dakota Dispatch on our website: https://www.dakotaadventist.org/communiques/dakota-dispatch The first installment of *Nothing to Fear* starts in the October 22, 2020 issue.



Thankful for the Scars

Do you ever wonder about Jesus working as a carpenter? What type of carpentry shop did Joseph own? Did they build houses or furniture? Did carpenters have to build crosses for the Romans? Can you imagine owning a piece of furniture built by Jesus? Maybe a family owned a chair and would tell all their guests, "You may have the seat of honor! That chair was built by Jesus Christ, the Messiah!"

Last year my parents replaced their cedar deck and gave me the old boards, which I am using to make raised garden beds. I spent yesterday planing a stack of these boards, discovering the beautiful cedar hidden beneath layers of old stain. As I slid each board through the planer, I kept thinking about the Master Carpenter. I loved watching the transformation of each old board as it

passed through the blades, amidst a fury of wood shavings. How much more must Jesus love seeing our spiritual transformation as He builds us into men and women after His own heart?

The Spirit spoke as I stacked the finished boards. The boards were fresh and beautiful ready for a new beginning, but I could still see the original nail holes; the marks and scars of a former life. It's been said that the only manmade thing in heaven are the scars on the hands and feet of Jesus. Marks left by nails that changed the trajectory of life forever! "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In John 20:24-29, we encounter Thomas refusing to believe that Jesus had risen and declaring that he had to see the nail marks for himself. Jesus spoke to Thomas saying, "put your finger here; see my hands." In verse 29, Jesus speaks about you and me when He says, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Each of you is blessed because while you have not physically seen Jesus, you believe. Thank you for passing that belief along to the people you meet! As we prepare for Easter weekend and the celebration of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection, may we be thankful for the scars.



Worship Thoughts by Kelli Wasemiller, Dakota Conference education superintendent and children's ministry coordinator.

Lehr Church Reaches Out to Community

After evangelism efforts planned for the winter/spring of 2022 fell through, the Lehr Seventh-day Adventist Church engaged in more prayer, discussion, and strategizing. God obviously had a plan, and the members were eager to figure out what that was. They recalculated and felt God's leading in the direction of small monthly community outreach/enhancement events in the form of workshops, meetings, and educational seminars.

The first event was held in the end of January; Dr. Kevin Horton presented on the topic of "Creation in the Age of Science". Attendance at this two-night event averaged at forty individuals. The community was excited and enjoyed the event. Resources were available for further study and

surveys were completed to determine what topics the community would be interested to hear more about.

In February, the church hosted the next event featuring health and wellness tips complied into a meeting entitled "Wellness and Illness Prevention" presented by Jolene Engelhart, Roxanne Dallman, Linda Oswald, and Jan Wolf. The community enthusiastically participated in the hands-on activities and the church was delighted to see more than fifty in attendance with many new faces in addition to the previous presentation.

Following the initial health presentation, church members were approached about helping plan and put on a health presentation in the Streeter community where some dedicated believers have been making strong efforts to reach their friends and neighbors in the area. The following week, church members teamed up to provide a supper and health presentation with demonstrations and hands-on application for nearly forty attendees in the Streeter community center. The most recent presentation was held in Lehr when Kolter and Emma Karges presented "Sustainable Gardening". The church members were delighted with the turnout of over fifty-five people, which included many young families with children. The following night the couple again presented in Streeter where a little over twenty individuals attended.

The Lehr church has many more outreach events planned in the near future. Events include a "Rose of Sharon" presentation being held Sabbath, April 16 at 2:00p, by Lyle Carpenter and another presentation April 24 entitled, "Developing a Mind for Missions" presented by Ostap Dzyndra, founder and president of Build and Restore International. This presentation will include firsthand updates from humanitarian work being done in Ukraine as well as how we can live a missionary lifestyle wherever we are at.

The Lehr church has been encouraged and blessed by the community and surrounding areas' response to their outreach efforts as well as by individuals from the community who have whole heartedly supported and involved themselves in the work being done. When God is at work, others want to be a part of it!

Praise God for His leading and the work that He is doing in the hearts of our communities.



All meetings have been and will continue to be available on Zoom. If you'd like more information on joining in person or virtually, feel free to contact Pastor George Shaver (605.660.5969) or Pastor Kris de Bruin (pastorkrisdb@gmail.com).

Article and photos submitted by Jody Schumacher, member of the Lehr Adventist Church in North Dakota.

Campmeeting Speakers 2022



DR. JOHN MCVAY

John McVay is the president of Walla Walla University. He previously served as a professor, associate dean, and dean of the Andrews University seminary program. He has taught at Pacific Union College in the Religion Department and ministered as senior pastor of the campus church. Prior to his ministry at PUC, he served as a pastor in Iowa and Georgia. He achieved a Ph.D. in New Testament from England's University of Sheffield and is the author of the forthcoming Seventh-day Adventist International Bible Commentary on Ephesians. John and his wife Pam have two children, Marshall McVay and Macy Weir, both pastors, and two grandchildren.



ELDER MIKE TUCKER

Mike Tucker is a former speaker of Faith for Today Television, and host of the award-winning television program, Lifestyle Magazine. He conducts seminars like Mad About Marriage and serves as a teaching pastor for Canyon Creek Project. Mike has served as a pastor, counselor, high school Bible teacher, youth pastor, a pastor's pastor for the Adventist denomination, and senior chaplain for medical and psychiatric facilities. He has authored several books and describes himself as the happiest bad golfer you will ever meet. He lives with his wife, Pam, and enjoys spending time with his daughters, sons-in-law, and grandchildren.



Dr. Kendra Haloviak Valentine



Kendra Haloviak Valentine is a professor of New Testament studies in the H.M.S. Richards Divinity School at La Sierra University. She earned a bachelor's in Theology and English from Columbia Union College, a master's in New Testament from Andrews University, and a doctorate in New Testament and Ethics at the Graduate Theological Union. Kendra has served as a pastor and teacher and has presented over forty seminars on the book of Revelation. She is a published author and is currently writing a book on how people read the gospel of Mark. Kendra is married to Gil and the couple have two sons and four grandchildren.



ELDER GIL WEBB

Gil Webb is a retired minister and former vice president of administration for Mid-America Union. A graduate of Oakwood University, he entered full-time ministry in 1976. During his 44 years in ministry, Gil has served in many conference positions including youth and Pathfinder director, education superintendent, assistant to the president, and ministerial director. His ministry experience has allowed him to engage church officers in effective leadership and function. Gil and Pat, his wife of 44 years, have two children and four grandchildren and have other children in their lives that affectionately call them nana and papa.



DR. MARK PIOTROWSKI

Mark Piotrowski is vice president of administration and human resources director for the Dakota Conference. Born in Poland, his family moved around Austria, Italy and Australia until they finally settled in South Africa when he was eleven years old. After moving to the United States in 1995, he earned a doctorate of ministry from Andrews University and wrote his dissertation on intercessory prayer strategy for evangelism. He has served as an army chaplain, church pastor, conference prayer ministries coordinator and speaks four languages. Mark and his wife Elbie have two daughters, Cherise and Adeline.



PAM TUCKER

After 25 years in retail management, Pam worked at various Christian ministries before transitioning into full time gospel music. She has produced three albums and performed with Steve Green, Rudy Micellii, Steve Darmody, and Wintley Phipps. Her ministry has taken her all over and she has appeared on 3ABN, the Hope Channel, and several international Christian television programs. In addition, Pam writes and records devotionals for Christian radio. Her passion is to bring the love of God to others through her music, personal testimony, and written word. Pam lives in Texas with her husband, Mike. She has one daughter, Christina.

Are you interested in attending Dakota Campmeeting? Online credit card payments are now accepted. Register online at: dakotaadventist.org/ministries/campmeeting

Work Bee is a Success

Dakota Adventist Academy and the Dakota Conference would like to thank all of the people who took part in the Academy Work Bee. On Sunday, April 3, over fifty visitors teamed up with Academy students and staff to donate their time and skills and helped finish several projects around the school. For those of you who were not able to make it but wanted to, there will be

another opportunity next year on April 16, 2023.

A more detailed article will follow in the next Dispatch.



 $Photos\ by\ Jodi\ Dossenko,\ conference\ communication\ director,\ and\ Susie\ Kahler,\ member\ of\ the\ Jamestown\ Adventist\ Church\ in\ ND.$

Marketing As a Ministry Workshop

DOES CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MATTER TO FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION?

MARKETING AS MINISTRY WORKSHOP

by Teresa Kelchner of Christian Education Matters

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

School Board Members. Principals. Teachers. Volunteers. Pastors. Sabbath School Leaders. Pathfinder Leaders. Lay Leaders. Men's/Women's Ministry Leaders. Christian Entrepreneurs.

APRIL 24, 2022

9am - 3pm Free Lunch RSVP 701.258.9000 Dakota Adventist Academy 15905 Sheyenne Circle Bismarck ND 58503

Count Your Chickens

Recently I was asked to be a member of the Dakota Conference K-12 Board of Education. Shortly after I joined the board, I received a call from Elder Mark Weir asking me to be a part of "The Circle of Faith" for Dakota Adventist Academy. As a new member, I needed an explanation of what this is.

He explained that though money comes into the Academy through student tuition, Conference funding, and the Development Office, there is still a shortfall of operating funds. "The Circle of Faith" is a movement still in its infancy stages, but the concept is a promise to financially contribute above and beyond what the giver is already doing for the next three to five years - without taking away what is being given to the local church, etc. A circle of people is needed to help keep our Academy a viable mission within the Dakota Conference. It starts with the commitment in the circle of various Conference committees and expands as committee members ask friends and family for additional contributions.

I will admit that my first thought was, "I already contribute to the academy by sending my child and paying for his tuition. How can I do more?" I have two other children that attend elementary school at Prairie Voyager in Grand Forks and as this school is my personal mission field, I also contribute a fair amount of funds toward it. However, I believe in the Academy and their mission. I have visited my child and participated in worship services at the Academy. I see his spiritual life growing as well as his academic life succeeding. DAA has been such a good place for him.

With all these thoughts, I was left wondering what I could contribute to the Academy. The answer came from my chickens. My little flock of chickens have been producing in abundance! At one point I had twenty-four dozen eggs stored in my fridge, but I struggled to find buyers for these eggs. Stepping out in faith, I dedicated my chickens to the Lord and the benefit of DAA. "Lord, whatever my chickens produce, and I can sell, will be dedicated to the Academy," I prayed.

The following week, Pastor Temple contacted me because he wanted some eggs. He showed me an image on his phone of the egg shelves at Walmart - they were completely bare. The next day, a local Facebook group had a query, "Anyone local have eggs for sale?" I responded right away.

That week I sold eleven dozen eggs, with many buyers wanting a weekly supply.

I shared my story with the church family the following Sabbath. A friend in the church offered the extra eggs from her chickens to go towards this project, if I could find the buyers. More sales came in.

Selling eggs may seem like such a small thing, but I think about the widow's mites in Mark 12: 41-44. She gave what she had and in God's eyes, it was more than enough. So here is my challenge for you: look around and see what you can dedicate to God that could financially bless the academy. What if you committed to giving one dollar, per day, for a year? What if ten other people committed to the same?

Go ahead, count your chickens, and see how God will bless your endeavor!



Article by Leanne Erickson, teacher at Prairie Voyager Adventist Elementary School in Grand Forks, ND. Photos by Troy Erickson.

2022 Camp Registration is Open!



Register today at: dakotayouthandyoungadults.org

Dakota Adventist Camps is searching for camp nurses for their two camp locations this summer. For our South Dakota location, dates needed are from June 8 - July 3. For our Northern Lights location, dates needed are from July 5 - July 31. Candidate must hold an up-to-date nursing license for the respective state. If interested, contact: dakotayouthandyoungadults@gmail.com

Prayer Ministries - Monthly Prayer Emphasis

Please keep the following in your prayers for the month of **April**:

Theme: Breaking Ground - Soil Preparation

Pastoral Staff: To find a new pastor for the north central South Dakota region.

Education Staff: Pam Fenton,

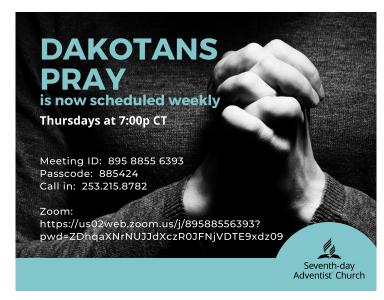
Christine Taylor

Office Staff: Judy Weir

Adventist Entities: Bowdle Church, Mobridge Church, Pierre Church,

Tolstoy Church

North Central South Dakota: Pierre, Mobridge, Selby, Gettysburg, Eagle Butte,



Click here to visit the Prayer Ministries' webpage.

Jamestown Regional Photos: April 2, 2022



Photos by Jodi Dossenko, conference communication director.

McClusky Adventist Church to Host Ladies' Luncheon

All women are invited to join the ladies of the McClusky Adventist Church on April 30, 2022, starting at 12:30p, for a ladies' luncheon. Prior to the event, Marilyn Heilman, member of the Manfred Adventist Church, will be speaking for church. Please RSVP to the numbers listed below so the church can have enough food available for refreshments at 4:00p.



"When Life gives you Lemons" Ladies Luncheon

LEARN WHAT TO DO WHEN LIFE THROWS SOUR THINGS YOUR WAY.

Spend the afternoon enjoying food-laughter-door prizes-fellowship-music-study

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2022

12:30PM - LUNCH WILL BE SERVED

MCCLUSKY SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST FELLOWSHIP HALL



GUEST SPEAKER <u>Brenna Hudson</u> will share her story of unexpected lemons in marriage & career.

Be blessed with music by <u>Grace Goven</u> & <u>Sue Schlafmann</u> Hear about <u>Nadine Tedford's</u> book "Daily Dawn of Hope" Bible Study on Queen Esther "For Such a Time as This"

with **Sarah Christenson**

GUEST SPEAKER BRENNA HUDSON



PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT NOW LIVING HER BEST LIFE. Make refreshing lemon sugar scrub!

FREE WILL OFFERING WILL GO TO MCCLUSKY BACKPACK PROGRAM

ALL WOMEN ARE WELCOME!
BRING A FRIEND!!
THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR THIS
EVENT.
RSVP NOT REQUIRED BUT IS
APPRECIATED.
CALL OR TEXT
LISA HEITZMANN TEXT 701–269–2058
CALL 363–2372
SUE SCHLAFMANN CALL/TEXT

701-391-6725

Kid's Corner

The NAD Children's Ministries department has created a free 3-day devotional for Easter weekend. Download "Fido's Easter Story" at the following link:

https://www.childmin.org/fidoseasterstory

Coming Soon! Join us April 18-30 as we explore the Fruit of the Spirit. Visit the Dakota Conference Children's Ministries YouTube channel, <u>Dakota SDA Kids</u>, and explore the many videos available for children.

Kelli Wasemiller is the Dakota Conference education superintendent and children's ministries coordinator.





Dakota Conference Calendar

Offering schedule is in purple.

Office preaching schedule is in blue.

April -

- 11-15: DAA Spring Week of Worship
- 16: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching at Bismarck Church, ND
- 16: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching at DAA Church, ND (6pm)
- 16: Elder Mark Weir preaching at Cleveland Church, ND
- 16: Local Church Budget
- 18: Conference Office Closed Easter Weekend
- 20-24: DAA Homeleave
- 23: Elder Ted Struntz preaching at Jamestown Church, ND
- 23: Dakota Challenge

- 24: Ministry Seminar by Teresa Kelchner at DAA (9am)
- 30: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching at Watford City Church, ND
- 30: Elder Ted Struntz preaching at Turtle Lake Church, ND
- 30: Camp Development

May -

- 1: K-12 Board of Education at Conference Office (10am)
- 2-6: Teacher Appreciation Week
- 7: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching at Edgeley Church, ND
- 7: Elder Bob Forbes preaching at Ellendale Church, ND
- 7: Local Church Budget
- 10: Executive Committee Meeting via Zoom (7pm)
- 14: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching at Yankton Church, SD
- 14: Elder Bob Forbes preaching at Invitation Hill Church in Dickinson, ND
- 14: Disaster / Famine Relief
- 14: DAA's Spring Music Concert
- 20-22: DAA Graduation Weekend
- 21: Elder Bob Forbes preaching at Richardton Church, ND
- 21: Local Church Budget
- 22: Brentwood 8th Grade Graduation at DAA (TBD)
- 24: Invitation Hill 8th Grade Graduation (6:30pm)
- 25: Hillcrest 8th Grade Graduation at Jamestown Church (7pm)
- 26: Rapid City 8th Grade Graduation (TBD)

For more scheduled events, please see the calendar on the Dakota Conference website: www.dakotaadventist.org/events

Blessed & Kept

May you experience reconciliation.

May God's desire for you stir up a longing for the cleansing presence of the divine. May the satisfaction God feels towards you lead you to let go of your perceived defects.

May you leave behind all of your sinful thoughts about yourself as you hear over and over from every source imaginable God's declaration over you,

You are my beloved child, I am so pleased with you.

May you see yourself as God sees you.

May you speak to yourself as God would speak to you.

May you treat yourself as God would treat you.

May you see others as God sees them.

May you speak to others as God would speak to them. May you treat others as God would treat them.

And may this divine benevolence towards others come from the never ending spring within you The spring that insists that you are loved, cared for, desired, and good.

May you demonstrate to others how worthy they are because you know how worthy you are.

You are a child of God. And God is so pleased with you.

Written by Casey Bartlett.

To follow Casey's Podcast Blessed & Kept click here.

April 14 Dispatch Photos

The Dakota Conference office closed the morning of Tuesday, April 12, due to an epic North Dakota blizzard. The Bismarck area has seen a snowfall of over 17 inches with highways and sections of the interstate closed for several days. Blizzard warnings remain in effect through Thursday evening and wind gusts in the region have been recorded as high as 60 mph. Staff have been working from home and look forward to being back at the office to take your calls on Tuesday, April 19, following Easter Weekend.



Photos taken by Conference office staff of their yards and streets in Burleigh and Morton counties, North Dakota.

If anyone has local church news or stories to share, please send event information, news suggestions and/or articles and pictures to: j.dossenko@gmail.com

Dakota Dispatch Mission: To build a climate of encouragement and blessing through the sharing of witnessing and evangelism activities. If you have news to share or would like to be added to the **Dakota Dispatch** mailing list, please email Jodi Dossenko at <u>j.dossenko@gmail.com</u>. Bison <u>Copyright</u>. Cover photo credit: soybean field by Chrystal Rittenbach.

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- Dakota Youth and Young Adults / Camps

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