

January 2022

# Horizons

A Golden West Customer Newsletter

## Still Going Strong at 90

Wall Drug Keeps Generations  
Coming Back for More

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*Rick Husted with  
daughter Sarah Husted*

# Still Going Strong at 90

## Wall Drug Keeps Generations Coming Back for More

Sure, there are the clever billboards that line the interstate for hundreds of miles. The free ice water and the legendary donuts. But after 90 years in business, the success of Wall Drug might just boil down to a single word.

“Fun,” declares Rick Husted, chairman and grandson of Wall Drug founders Ted and Dorothy Husted. “I think we’re a fun and unique establishment.”



Wall Drug's donuts are a sought-after treat for visitors of all ages.

Few can argue with that, but the business's origins are far humbler. When they opened their doors on Dec. 31, 1931, they were a simple pharmacy with a different name ... and few customers.

### Struggling During the “Dirty Thirties”

Wall Drug wasn't always the block-long attraction it is today. The original store was 24 feet by 60 feet and Ted and Dorothy lived behind a curtain in the back with their four-year-old son Bill. Those first few years in business were no picnic.

“Ted and Dorothy worked really hard,” Rick says. “But, running a small business the first five years, going broke, little Billy in the back of the store thinking he's going to be given up for adoption – that was very challenging.”

Especially given the drugstore's location on the western South Dakota plains in the geographical center of nowhere. The Hustedes had opened the store using a small inheritance as a down payment and gave themselves five years to succeed. This was during the Dust Bowl era, the “Dirty Thirties,” a period when unemployment hovered around 25% and people across the Great Plains struggled to survive.

“It didn't look good,” Rick says. “They thought they were going to go broke.”



Wall Drug started out as a 1,440-square-foot pharmacy in 1931.

“This business, to be successful and continue to thrive, needs the family that owns it to work hard.”

Rick Husted

### Sign, Sign, Everywhere a Sign

One hot summer day in 1936, Dorothy was giving Billy a nap and trying to get some rest herself. As cars drove by on U.S. Hwys. 16 and 14, headed from the Badlands to Rapid City, she had a revelation.

“She's listening to the cars go by and thinking, here we sit with a great big soda fountain and all the ice in the world, but no customers,” Rick recounts. “She went down to the store and said, ‘Ted, we've got to let people know we're here. We should put up a sign saying, *Get a soda, get a beer, turn next corner, just as near to Highway 16 and 14. Free ice water. Wall Drug.*’ Ted thought it was a little corny, but it might work.”



The jackalope in the backlot is ready for a ride or photo opportunity.

Dorothy's intuition was dead-on. Ted hired a local high schooler to help paint and put up a series of signs inspired by Burma-Shave. Before he even got back to the store, the first customers had already stopped in. If one sign made an impact, Ted wondered what 20 or 30 would do. So, he went out along the highway in both directions and added more signs. Today, there are around 300.

“It was a game-changer,” Rick says. “That idea saved the business.”

### 'I Want to Make Wall Drug Spectacular'

Advertising free ice water proved to be the spark that ignited their success. Ted and Dorothy were able to buy a house and expand, changing the name from Husted Drug Store to the catchier, more easily remembered Wall Drug and relocating across the street. With triple the square footage they wondered how they would ever fill the space, but son Bill had grand ideas. After a stint in the Navy and a pharmacy degree from SDSU, Bill returned to the store eager to leave his mark.

Shoppers will find everything from world-class fudge to Western-themed treasures.



Golden West's service and support are great. We're very fortunate to have them so close by.

Rick Husted

“He said, ‘If I go back, I want to make Wall Drug into something spectacular that the family is proud of and our customers really enjoy,’” Rick recalls of his dad. “He had a vision.”

Bill's plan included expanding the soda fountain into a café complete with a Western art gallery boasting original works from esteemed artists like N.C. Wyeth and Harvey Dunn. The menu featured buffalo burgers, hot beef sandwiches, and donuts – staples to this day. The donuts are a California import. Ted was visiting relatives in San Bernardino and discovered a local donut shop. One day, he struck a deal with the owner.

“He said, ‘your donuts are really good,’” Rick shares. “‘Would you let my son come out and work with you for a week for free to learn about them?’”

The owner agreed, and that turned out to be a strategic business investment. Bill came back knowing how to make the donuts, which earned rave reviews from customers.

Continued on page 4

# Still Going Strong at 90

## Wall Drug Keeps Generations Coming Back for More

Continued from page 3



Sarah Hustead is ready to extend the family legacy to a fourth generation.

### Family's Hard Work Helps Business Thrive

Bill implemented other key changes, including adding a Western shopping mall and traveler's chapel and expanding the backyard. By the time he finished his career, Wall Drug had grown to 76,000 square feet. More importantly, it had become the destination Bill had long envisioned.

Rick carries on the family legacy today, and daughter Sarah — currently the manager and vice president — is poised to take the reins.

"This business, to be successful and continue to thrive, needs the family that owns it to work hard," Rick says.

Golden West plays a backup role in everything from phones and internet to the store's credit card machines. Wall Drug still attracts throngs of visitors from around the world; this past Memorial Day weekend broke attendance records. Having the support of the cooperative is instrumental.

"Golden West's service and support are great," Rick says. "We're very fortunate to have them so close by."

Rick believes the key to Wall Drug's success is adaptability. The pandemic taught them how to operate more efficiently and convinced them the future is as bright as ever.

"There's a silver lining to everything," Rick concludes. "It proved that we can get really lean if we need to but still maintain that same experience when you come to Wall Drug!"

## Scholarship Program Exceeds \$1 Million

Every year, Golden West awards \$1,000 scholarships to help offset tuition costs for graduating seniors pursuing secondary education degrees. The cooperative reached a milestone in 2021 by surpassing \$1 million in scholarship contributions since launching the program in 1999.

"The scholarship program is one of the best investments Golden West can make," says General Manager and CEO Denny Law. "Assisting our future leaders with education goes hand in hand with the cooperative's commitment to building infrastructure. Both lay the foundation for a successful tomorrow."

The program, now in its 24th year, selects recipients from each of the Golden West area high schools. One at-large scholarship is also given to a student whose parents receive Golden West services, but the student is either homeschooled or attends a high school outside the Golden West service area.



### Applications Open for 2022 Graduates

All high school seniors who meet the following criteria are encouraged to apply for the regular or at-large scholarship:

- The student's parents or legal guardians must reside within one of Golden West's telephone service areas and subscribe to Golden West phone or internet service.
- Applicant must be a high school senior.
- Applicant must take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), American College Test (ACT), or Accuplacer Vocational Entrance Exam by December 31 of their senior year.
- Scholarship awards may only be applied to post-secondary institutions.
- Recipient must take 12 or more classroom credits (or equivalent to a full-time course load) in the fall semester following high school graduation.

Students should contact their local high school to apply. At-large applications are available online at [S](#). The application deadline is March 15.



## 3 Things to Try Before Calling the Internet Help Desk



There are many brands and models of routers available; these are two types that Golden West provides.

It's easy to take the internet for granted these days, but even the most reliable technology occasionally has a hiccup. Fortunately, Golden West's help desk technicians are well-trained in troubleshooting a variety of problems. But sometimes, the issue can be easily resolved without ever picking up the phone.

If you experience issues with your Golden West internet service, try these three things before calling the help desk.

### 1 Double-check the website you're accessing.

The site may not load, or might load slowly or in a limited capacity on your end. Often the issue is related to a particular site rather than your internet connection. Try pulling up different sites and services to rule out the one website itself. You can also visit [downdetector.com](#) for real-time problem and outage monitoring. All atwitter because you can't Tweet? Downdetector will let you know what's going on.

### 2 Reboot your connected device.

Is your smartphone, laptop, or other device saying it can't connect to the network or that the network isn't responding as expected? Try powering off the device, waiting a little bit, and then turning it back on. Sometimes, that's all it takes to get it to work normally again!

### 3 Unplug your internet router.

There's a joke about how most repairmen fix finicky electronics by simply unplugging them and then plugging them back in. Granted, this doesn't always work, but it's worth a shot.

Your router has an internal computer that runs firmware; occasionally, the firmware develops an error that can lead to memory leaks or crashes. Unplugging your router forces the device to restart, clearing the memory cache and making the device reload a version of the firmware that was operating correctly.

To do this, locate your router and either disconnect the power source from the electrical outlet or the device itself — whichever is easier. Wait 30 seconds before plugging it back in; once the router lights come back on, recheck your connection.

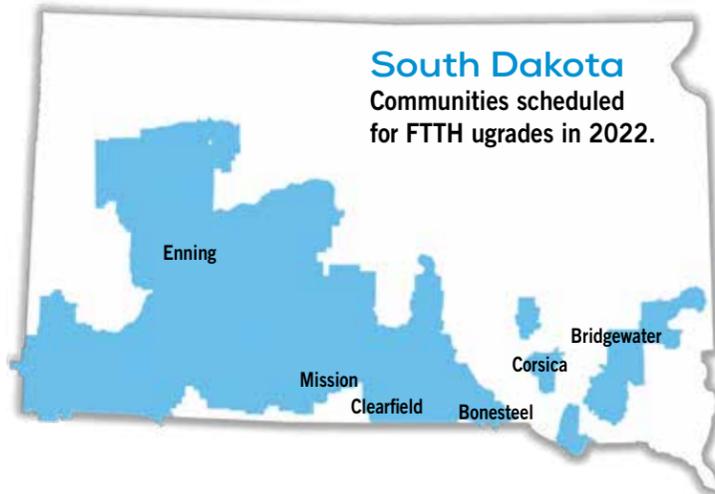
A video of the 3 Things to Try Before Calling the Internet Help Desk can be found at [goldenwest.com/helpdesk](#). More troubleshooting tips and other handy tutorials can be found in our video library at [youtube.com/user/goldenwestcoop](#). If you've tried these tricks and are still having a problem with your internet connection, give our help desk a call at 1-855-888-7777. Technicians are available 24/7 365 days a year.



## Fiber Upgrades Scheduled for 2022

As part of Golden West's ongoing commitment to provide rural communities across South Dakota with the most advanced broadband access, our Fiber to the Home (FTTH) projects will connect more customers in 2022. Areas scheduled for FTTH upgrades this year include:

- The remainder of the **Bonesteel** (rural) exchange.
- The **Bridgewater** exchange (town and rural).
- The **Corsica** exchange (town and rural).
- The portion of the **Clearfield** exchange in Tripp County.
- The **Enning** (rural) area north and west of Enning and Union Center. The remainder of the Enning exchange will be upgraded in 2023.
- The town of **Mission**, including the communities of **Antelope** and **White Horse**.



### More Info Coming by Mail, Online

Start dates for the 2022 projects are still being determined. The projects will take most of the year to complete. Customers scheduled to be upgraded should watch their mailboxes for a letter from Golden West.

Detailed information, including maps of the projects and lists of the contractors doing the work, will be shared online. Visit [goldenwest.com/ftth](https://goldenwest.com/ftth) for an overview of the upgrade process. Bookmark the site to revisit often as periodic updates by community will also be posted on this webpage throughout the year as the projects progress.

For questions after visiting [goldenwest.com/ftth](https://goldenwest.com/ftth), call 1-855-888-7777, option 3, and ask for the Engineering Department.

# Congratulations

## 2021 Shop Local GIVEAWAY WINNERS

Every year, Golden West sponsors a Win Big, Shop Local Customer Appreciation Giveaway to support local businesses. When you shop locally, your money goes back to the community, helping to fund local projects and agencies. Your dollars help pay for street repairs; support emergency

services such as law enforcement, fire, and rescue efforts; and more! Twenty-three winners are selected at random and receive gift certificates ranging from \$100 to \$500 to a local business they chose when entering. This year's winners are:

### \$500 Winner

Name	Town	Local Merchant
Linda Hines	Dell Rapids	County Fair

### \$250 Winners

Name	Town	Local Merchant
Kim Krull	Freeman	Ace Hardware
Carolyn Manke	Midland	Double H Feed & Supply

### \$100 Winners

Name	Town	Local Merchant
Darla Black	Pine Ridge	Buche Foods
Richard Bloom	Hot Springs	Bomgaars
Michael Chester	Vivian	Murdo Family Foods
Christina Decker	Winner	Family Dollar
Maria Eisenbraun	Wall	Wall Building Center
Susan Feuerhelm	Trent	County Fair

### \$100 Winners continued

Name	Town	Local Merchant
Lori Haukaas	Winner	Runnings
Ron Healy	Hartford	The Goat Bar & Grill
Esther Iron Cloud	Porcupine	Badlands Quilting
Larry & Doris Jelinek	Gregory	Buche Foods
Albert Luikens	Menno	Total Stop
Brad Otte	Martin	Martin Auto Parts
Brian Pearson	Philip	Coyle's Super Valu
Bernard Ratermann	Bonesteel	Cahoy's General Store
Robert Ridgway	Avon	Farmers Co-Op Elevator Co.
Lyla Roth	Avon	Ron's Market
Harlan Silbaugh	Armour	Krull's Market
Robert Stiefvater	Plankinton	Ron's Market
Marilyn Wilsey	Creighton	Wall Food Center
Nathan Wunder	Armour	Krull's Market

*Watch online for this year's chance to win starting in November!*



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PO Box 411, Wall, SD 57790

This offer is for new or existing customers who add a new internet service or increase their internet speed. To be considered a new customer or a new service, you must have been without Golden West internet service for four months. Credit will be applied as a one-time bill credit. New service or upgrade must be maintained for 12 months or the bill credit and the installation cost will be billed back to your account. Credit does not include taxes and fees. This is an advertisement. Golden West shall not be held liable for errors or omissions in pricing. In the event of an error we will make every effort to accommodate our customers. Some restrictions may apply. Golden West is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

# Don't Let Snow Days Be Slow Days

***Last Chance to SAVE & Go FAST!***

Offer ends Jan. 31, 2022



## Increase Speed or Add Internet Service

and Get a One-Time

**\$100 Bill Credit!**

## BROADBAND INTERNET

For email, browsing online, and  
streaming on one or two devices.

Up to **50** Mbps

For streaming on and connecting  
multiple devices to your network.

Up to **100** Mbps

For telecommuters, HD streamers,  
gamers, and seasoned internet pros.

Up to **250** Mbps

NO DATA LIMITS • FREE INSTALLATION

[goldenwest.com/gofaster](https://goldenwest.com/gofaster)

**1-855-888-7777**

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to  
Golden West, PO Box 411, Wall, SD 57790

Dee Sleep, Editor • [goldenwest.com](https://goldenwest.com) • 1-855-888-7777



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