

# BELLE FOURCHE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## BFDC Board of Directors Meeting

April 21, 2021

Time: 7:00 a.m.

Location: BFDC Conference Room - 5th & Grant Plaza, 608 5<sup>th</sup> Ave.

## Belle Fourche Kite Festival & Duck Races

May 22, 2021

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Location: Tri-State Museum and Visitor Center Grounds.

## Leadership Belle Fourche Class

April 22, 2021

Time: noon - 5:00 p.m.

Course Topic: Leadership & Personal Development



**Belle Fourche  
Development  
Corporation**

**2021 Investment Campaign ~**

*Your investment creates opportunities in Belle Fourche!*

Membership Is An Investment In The Future Growth And Development Of Our Community.

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# RPM Minerals Looks to May Opening

**BELLE FOURCHE** - A new manufacturing plant just north of the city is hoping to begin operation in May after hiring its first shift of employees.

RPM Minerals of Alexandria, Egypt, has spent the last two years converting the Black Hills Fiberglass plant three miles north of the city on US Highway 85 into a facility that will manufacture a proprietary drilling fluid to make drilling for oil and natural gas more efficient.



*DR. AHMED RASHEED, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF RPM MINERALS EXPLAINS THE PROCESSING TO HOLLIE STALDER, BF DEVELOPMENT CORP. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AND OTHERS ON A RECENT TOUR OF THE FACILITY.*

Alexandria and Belle Fourche share a common bond in that both cities lie near high-grade bentonite deposits. Bentonite is an absorbent clay material that has uses ranging from skin care to kitty litter to industrial applications. Deposits are generally formed in areas that have seen significant settling of ancient volcanic ash.

"The bentonite here in this area is without a doubt the highest grade that we will work with," said Dr. Ahmed Rasheed, Managing Director of RPM Minerals. "And because of this, this product we will produce here will be the best of its kind available anywhere in the world."

If things go according to plan Rasheed told the Beacon that he hopes to begin operations in May. The renovation of the plant and construction of the tanks, dryers and production tower/reactor was a methodical but steady process.

"We adopted a slower construction system because we are depending on local contractors," Dr. Rasheed told the Beacon. "We spent a year, but we used local contractors and that we hope has long term positive effect. Very few things were brought in from longer distances."

RPM will initially hire a half dozen employees with growth expected as the market expands. This is their first operation in the western hemisphere and Dr. Rasheed says they will make their first batch of trial product, ship it out and wait for reports.

"I do not want to exaggerate on hiring because in Egypt it took me three years," he said. "I hope it will not take that long here, maybe a couple of months. With some customers I know it will just be a purchase order because they already know us that well."

Dr. Rasheed sees a potential for between 30 and 40 employees once the plant is operating at a high-level capacity. The facility in Egypt produces 150 pallets of material per day (non-COVID conditions) and the Belle Fourche location will have that ability. It will largely depend on orders received because the product is produced as needed and cannot be stocked.

The primary product RPM markets will be organo-lignites and organo clays that they create using a proprietary process that Dr. Rasheed, a chemical engineer, developed in 2004. It is used in drilling oil and gas wells. RPM plans



to serve markets in the Bakken and Canadian fields and open up fields in the southern states and even into Latin America. According to Dr. Rasheed the Belle Fourche location is close to necessary raw material suppliers and they will have good access via roads and rails to the Eastern Hemisphere through the port of Duluth, MN.

“Perhaps we can even show that having a facility here is even smarter than having one in Egypt,” he said. “We will see if this plant produces cheaper for Egypt. If this plant turns out to be bigger and more efficient, I believe that it will win out in the end because this is much closer to the raw material. But this will be investigated by time.”



*RASHEED, RPM MINERALS POINTS TO THE TOP OF THE NEWLY CONSTRUCTED, FOUR STORY PRODUCTION TOWER AT THE PROCESSING FACILITY.*

As far as timing, RPM doesn't see the current Biden administration, with their markedly anti-fossil fuel policies, as amounting to an immediate threat to business. “There is concern of course. But I don't think we, as investors, think oil is under threat of disappearing,” Dr. Rasheed said. “We need it right now as human beings. It's the cheapest energy form. We can make it more environmentally friendly but killing it is not the answer. That's why we are continuing with our investment here in the Belle Fourche.”

RPM does have ideas on how to diversify the space at the facility. According to Dr. Rasheed there are plans to market the space at the plant to outside manufacturers for the production of other bentonite-related products.

“What we are trying to do here is to increase the benefit of the existence of the facility,” he said. “Why not make ourselves available for those who require using the facility for producing some product instead of doing it somewhere else. I am in contact with a couple of manufacturers that would prefer doing it in this facility than elsewhere.

As an example, Dr Rasheed envisions a manufacturer of a product that blends bentonite with another material to supply a specialty market. That manufacturer may be on the east coast with customers in Seattle. Once agreements are signed RPM would be able to dedicate the silo space to fulfill the manufacturer's bentonite blending and packaging requirements in Belle Fourche and then provide distribution.

“I don't know if it will work or not, but we are working on it and I hope that it would bring in even more jobs,” he said.

Belle Fourche Beacon  
[news@bellefourchebeacon.com](mailto:news@bellefourchebeacon.com)

# MJ's Market – a Dakota Value to Open Soon

MJ's Market a Dakota Value will be a store that is part of the community. Owners Molly and Joel Blair are excited to provide a quick place to shop that has fair prices and gives back to the community it serves.

They are very passionate about making shelf space accessible to local brands and products so they can highlight those goods as well.

The pandemic highlighted the need for community-centered markets to be more readily available. "Relying on stores in another town to serve you can be a big problem in times of high demand," commented Molly.

Additionally, those bigger stores don't advocate for the local community by prioritizing local brands and suppliers.

There is no attachment to a big corporation or franchise, so they feel they are able to be more flexible and responsive to the customer's needs.

Molly was born on her family's farm in Newell, SD and grew up in Newell and the Black Hills area.

Joel was born and raised in Fort Pierre, SD. They both attended Black Hills State University where they earned Bachelor of Science in Business. Joel & Molly have owned rentals in Belle Fourche in the past. Molly has worked in a retail drug store for many years previous to opening MJ's in Belle Fourche.

They recently moved back home after spending 3 years living in Casper, WY. They purchased the "old NAPA" building on the corner of Ziebach and 5th Ave. (Hwy 85) in January 2021.

Their plan is to be open in mid-March. Fixtures were expected to arrive this week; be installed; and product to fill in right behind.

The store will have the following categories: Makeup; Skincare & Bath, Haircare, shaving needs, Dental needs, Stationery, Gifts, Toys, Greeting Cards, Vitamins, First Aid, OTC Medicines, Laundry & Cleaning products, Soda, juice, and food products; Paper goods; CBD products; local brands and more!

Their Facebook page is @MJ'sMarketBF and will be getting a website set-up soon.

For inquiries contact them at [dakotavaluestore@gmail.com](mailto:dakotavaluestore@gmail.com) or stop by the store if they are working on-site.



*MOLLY AND JOEL BLAIR ARE THE NEW OWNERS OF THE "OLD" NAPA BUILDING ON THE CORNER OF ZIEBACH & 5TH AVENUE. COURTESY PHOTO BELLE FOURCHE BEACON*







## Robb House Antiques Coming Back

For those of you who thought 97-year-old Jack Wells had retired, guess again. The long time Belle Fourche businessman will soon be reopening his Robb House Antiques in the Robb's Building on the corner of 6th & State. The building that in its history housed the Robbs Store is currently owned by JoAnn Robb Peterson. *Belle Fourche Beacon*



View the video from the annual meeting showing some of the many community successes:

<https://youtu.be/xNcTpAjWwzA>



## **Thank You to our New & Returning 2021 Members**

**Black Hills Energy – Platinum**  
**David Pummel & Associates – Platinum**  
**First Interstate Bank – Platinum**  
**Gillette Fence – Platinum**  
**Grossenburg Implements – Platinum**  
**Jackson Dental – Platinum**  
**Montana-Dakota Utilities - Platinum**  
**Mineral Technologies Inc. - Platinum**  
**Pioneer Bank & Trust – Platinum**  
**Scull Construction - Platinum**  
**State Home Care Services – Platinum**  
**Upper Deck Architects, Inc. – Platinum**  
**Belle Fourche School District - Gold**  
**Bunney's Body & Collision Repair – Gold**  
**Butte Electric – Gold**  
**CBH Cooperative - Gold**  
**Civil Design - Gold**  
**ET Sports – Gold**  
**Johner Trucking - Gold**  
**Pain & Movement Solutions – Gold**  
**Bennett Main & Gubbrud P.C. - Silver**  
**Dakota Home & Ranch Real Estate - Silver**  
**Cowboys Too! – Silver**  
**Ensz Appraisals - Silver**  
**Highmark Federal Credit Union – Silver**  
**Hills Product Group – Silver**  
**Joe Dirt – Silver**  
**Leverington Funeral Home of NH – Silver**  
**Morris Law Firm – Silver**  
**New Generation Supplements – Silver**  
**Clay Birkeland - Bronze**

**Black Hills Monument - Bronze**  
**Black Hills Pioneer – Bronze**  
**Black Hills Vision Care – Bronze**  
**Branding Iron Steakhouse – Bronze**  
**K & M Buchholz – Bronze**  
**Carl's Trailer Sales – Bronze**  
**Ferman & Barb Clarkson - Bronze**  
**Jeb & Maureen Clarkson - Bronze**  
**Clutter Buster Storage – Bronze**  
**Dakota Lumber - Bronze**  
**Denim & Opal - Bronze**  
**Jim Doolittle – Bronze**  
**Graps Burgers - Bronze**  
**Brandon & Julie Hatling – Bronze**  
**Hills Interiors - Bronze**  
**Dirk & Betty Jo Hoffman - Bronze**  
**Lensegrav & Sons Motor Express – Bronze**  
**NeighborWorks Dakota Home Resources  
– Bronze**  
**NH Federal Credit Union – Bronze**  
**Redwater Eye Clinic – Bronze**  
**Annie Reich - Bronze**  
**SD Dept. of Labor – Bronze**  
**Karen Wagner – Bronze**  
**Legacy Financial Partners – Associate**  
**Reese Property Mgt. - Associate**  
**Z Productions – Associate**  
**Wendy Bowers – Individual**  
**Jay Cordell - Individual**  
**Stan Harms – Individual**  
**Renae Schaeffer – Individual**

# **BELLE FOURCHE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

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[WWW.BFDCSD.COM](http://WWW.BFDCSD.COM)  
DIRECTOR@BELLEFOURCHEDEVCORP.COM

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## **2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS and OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT: Renae Schaeffer**

**PAST PRESIDENT: Jim Doolittle**

**VICE-PRESIDENT/TREASURER: Wendy Bowers**

**SECRETARY: Brandon Hatling**

**Julie Wingen**

**Chad Pelster**

**Ashley Pearson**

**Derrick Jones**

**Marsha Nichols**

**Karen Wagner**

**REPRESENTING - BELLE FOURCHE SCHOOL DISTRICT:**

**Dr. Steve Willard (appointed)**

**REPRESENTING – CITY OF BELLE FOURCHE:**

**Travis Martin (appointed)**

**REPRESENTING – BUTTE COUNTY COMMISSION:**

**Frank Walton (appointed)**

**REPRESENTING – BELLE FOURCHE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**Miranda Gallagher (appointed)**

<u>Board Terms</u>	<u>Board Terms</u>	<u>Board Terms</u>
2022 terms up	2023 terms up	2023 terms up
Brandon Hatling	Julie Wingen	Ashley Pearson
Renae Schaeffer	Karen Wagner	Derrick Jones
Marsha Nichols	Chad Pelster	Wendy Bowers





# Belle Fourche Development Corporation

## 2021 Investment Campaign ~

*Your investment creates opportunities in Belle Fourche!*

Membership is an investment in the future growth and development of our community. Select your membership level and return this Member Application with your pledged amount.

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### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION Belle Fourche Development Corporation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one:

- ☐ Platinum  
\$1,000 or above
- ☐ Gold  
\$500 - \$999
- ☐ Silver  
\$250 - \$499
- ☐ Bronze  
\$100 - \$249
- ☐ Associate or Individual  
\$50 - \$99

**See page 2 for membership benefits and payment options**

**Page 1**



***We appreciate your investment and offer these member benefits in our promotional material:***

**1. \$1000 Membership**

- ~ receives a scrolling logo on the BFDCSD.com home page.
- ~ member shout-outs in the BFDC newsletter and social media posts
- ~ a special BFDC gift

**2. \$500-\$999 Membership**

- ~ member shout-outs in the BFDC newsletter and social media posts
- ~ a special BFDC gift

**3. \$250-\$499 Membership**

- ~ member name listed & social media shout-outs

**4. \$100-\$249 Membership**

- ~ member name listed

Submit this application and membership investment to:  
**Belle Fourche Development Corporation**  
PO Box 344  
Belle Fourche, SD 57717

## ***3 Easy Ways to Pay!***

**1.** Mail this application and membership investment

**2.** Mail this application with card information:

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Card expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_ MASTERCARD \_\_\_\_ DISCOVER

A 3.5% transaction fee added to all credit card payments.

**3.** **OR Apply AND Pay Online**  
**at [www.bfdcsd.com/memberships/](http://www.bfdcsd.com/memberships/)**