

Barn None: Rock Garden Tour Set For Yankton Show



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Any show geared toward members of a specific state or region is bound to be successful, and fortunately for South Dakotans, one of those shows is hitting the road.

Rock Garden Tour (RGT), a public radio show based in Sioux Falls, will perform its variety show, "Soul Butter & Hog Wash, A Fancy Country

Barn Tour," in front of a live audience at the Bernie and Myrna Hunhoff Barn near Yankton on Saturday, Aug. 29 at 7 p.m. Musical guests will include the electric-Americana band Pleasure Horse.

The barn is located at 43937/3-3rd St., north of Yankton.

"RGT is South Dakota's version of 'Prairie Home Companion,' but the music and humor is tailored to the

state," said Bernie Hunhoff, who is hosting next week's RGT show at his farm.

"The barn looks like it's 25 years old but it was actually built in the 1950s by a man named Robert Schramm. He used Black Hills lumber," Hunhoff said. "He died just as he was finishing it."

Several years later, Hunhoff purchased the barn and moved it onto his property. It was used occasionally to house horses and cattle before the Hunhoffs decided to use it as a community place. The barn has since been used for fundraisers, political events, dances and wedding parties.

"It's kind of a cool place because it looks like an old-fashioned barn but it's in really good shape," said Hunhoff.

The Hunhoffs extended an offer to RGT to use their barn when the group taped a show in Yankton a couple

years back. When the idea for a barn tour came up, Ted Heeren, writer and producer of RGT, knew who to call.

"It seems like the right place for them to do their tour. It fits their flavor," said Hunhoff. "South Dakota is such a rural state and it gives us our culture and personality, so having the show in a barn is a good representation of all that."

"It's going to be a TV show this time," explained Katie Hunhoff, Bernie's daughter. "It will still be a radio show but it will be televised on South Dakota Public Broadcasting (SDPB)." "We've always shared it with the community," said Bernie Hunhoff. "This way, we'll share it with the whole state."

Heeren started RGT in 2000 and did it on and off again for several years before it became regular radio programming.

It is a comedic radio

show that combines gardening with rock and roll, two things Heeren is passionate about.

"I wanted to help keep those things alive," Heeren noted.

When Heeren started the show out of college, he wanted the focus to be on rock songs from the past that weren't typical radio music: Now, the band's music style is mostly folk and country with a little rock and an emphasis on parody.

RGT has done shows throughout the state, including Mount Rushmore.

"As we've taken the show out of a radio studio and onto a stage, it's naturally evolved because now there's an audience and a fourth wall you have to deal with more in a theatrical production," explained Heeren. "Every new thing we try is fun and it's always a learning experience."

The band has expanded through the years to Heeren on vocals, his father-in-law on guitar and two of Heeren's cousins on piano and bass.

For the past three years, RGT has done one television special per year. In 2013, the group performed at the Orpheum Theater in Sioux Falls and last year at the historic Matthews Opera House in Spearfish. This year, Heeren and his crew decided to give the show a different feel.

"A lot of what we talk about involves rural and small-town life," he said. "We thought a barn would be a fun place to play."

RGT is starting its tour at Gov. Dugaard's family farm on Aug. 27. After the show in Yankton, RGT will give its final tour performance at the OTA Conference in Sioux Falls.

"In radio, you get to create a world and the listener

gets to play a part in that," Heeren said. "Playing a show onstage is very different.

"People respond to what we like about the show, which is that it's a reflection of this unique part of the world in this time and place," Heeren said. "We choose to live in South Dakota and we love it here, so it's fun to celebrate the things we love about this place."

This love of the state from RGT is evident to radio listeners.

"We're constantly talking, singing and reacting to things we find interesting about living here. It's very local and unique because of that," Heeren said.

For the Yankton show, RGT has been compiling a handful of new, original tunes and parodies, one of which will involve Myron Floren, the accordion player who was known as "the happy Norwegian" on the Lawrence Welk Show.

RGT's show will be mainly about barns and their changing role and symbol.

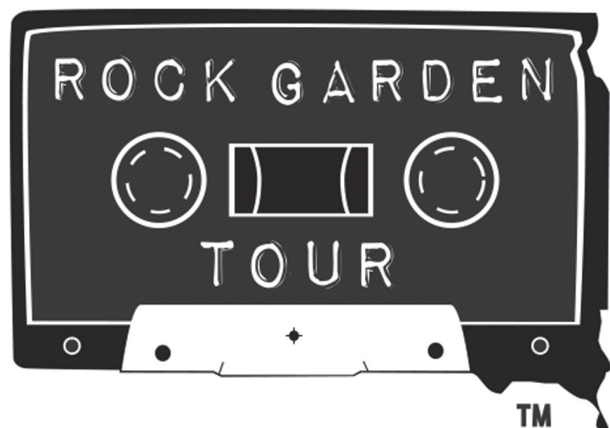
"When you see a barn on the side of the road, oftentimes it's one that's not in use," said Heeren. "It's a relic from a different time of agriculture."

"Some of the show is reflective, but most of it is kind of humorous thoughts about what the barn means and includes some stories that have taken place in barns throughout the region," Heeren said.

RGT airs on SDPB Radio on the last Saturday of every month at 8 p.m.

To purchase tickets for the event, visit sdpb.SHOP.org or call 1-800-456-0766.

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