

First timber box culvert installed in Spearfish

By **KAIJA SWISHER**
Black Hills Pioneer

SPEARFISH — The beauty of the timber making up the newest culvert at the Ward Development caused members of the crew to lament the fact that it would have to be covered with dirt.

The timber box culvert, 60 feet in length, 15 feet wide and three feet deep, is being installed under Pintlar Avenue in the Ward Development in the Exit 8 vicinity of Spearfish.

Jason Ward, the developer, said the wooden culvert is the first of its kind under a roadway in South Dakota. He chose the design to keep with the theme and aesthetics of the development, as well as support local products.

"It's kind of a neat thing," he said.

Jeff Parrett, the vice president of Wheeler Lumber, the company in Whitewood that designed and is installing the culvert, said that timber box culverts were

originally designed in the early 1900s for the railroads. Timber at the time was the most available and economical resource to use, and acidic soil or water does not affect timber the way it can affect metal.

"A lot of people like them," he said, adding that they can be installed in any kind of weather with smaller equipment than is required for a concrete culvert. They are also easily adaptable if the roadway needs to be widened, and the timber blends into the environment.

The wooden culvert fits together with finger joints, and no nails are required in its construction, Parrett said. It is all modular, made of treated Douglas fir, and the pressure of the soil placed over the culvert compresses and locks the wood into place. The culvert fits the highway load requirements, which means it can handle the weight of any vehicle that is legal on the highway.

"This culvert will last longer



A crew works Wednesday to install a timber box culvert in the Ward Development in the Exit 8 vicinity of Spearfish. Designers said that the culvert will likely last longer than the road that will eventually be built over the culvert. *Pioneer photo by Kaija Swisher*

than the road," he added, saying that he's known of wooden culverts that were in place for 70 years that were later pulled out and reused.

The culvert's construction comes after several years of design work and discussions with the city for approval, and

the culvert's construction will be completed this week. Ward said that the cost to install the culvert is approximately \$65,000 to \$70,000, and it will match a second culvert and bridge that will be built in the development at a later date.

The development, which has

the capacity for 340 homes and some commercial properties, is in city limits, and its infrastructure including the culvert will be dedicated to the city of Spearfish.

"It will be a great asset to the city of Spearfish, I think," Ward said.

Eaton Plaza grand re-opening features free food, live music

■ Event to celebrate new restaurant, promote business

By **HEATHER MURSCHEL**
Black Hills Pioneer

BELLE FOURCHE — It's customer appreciation at its best.

Eaton Plaza will be the place to be in

Belle Fourche Friday, as business owners have organized a grand re-opening event that will feature free food and live music.

"It's going to be good time," said Cathy Eaton, with the Real Estate Center of Belle Fourche, and owner of the building. "We'll have live music, and we're making enough food for at least 500 people so we're hoping for a great turnout."

The Wild Brothers will begin playing at 5 p.m. and the menu includes hot dogs and hamburgers.

Eaton said the open house offers the opportunity to promote the businesses in the plaza.

Kersten Verhulst and Shannon Timmer of The Refuge Salon, formerly known as St. James Place, are offering specials during the

open house in hopes to get people to come see the recent remodel at the salon, and advertise their addition of a massage therapist.

"We certainly hope people stop in to say hello," Verhulst said. She said the salon will be giving away free hair flairs and indoor

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PhotoDay
of the Day

Kaija Swisher took this photo of lilacs in Spearfish.

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