



## Mayor's Historic Preservation Award Chuck Cecil "Preservation Achievement"

Charles "Chuck" Cecil has received the 2018 Mayors Award for Preservation Achievement. Chuck Cecil has had a long and distinguished career in public service, more often as spokesman and historian for the City of Brookings and communities in Brookings County. Chuck Cecil was born in Wessington Springs, SD, later moved to Rapid City, where he graduated from high school. He joined the Navy and was two years in Japan and Korea during the Korean Conflict. Having completed his Navy service, he went on to study journalism at South Dakota State University (SDSU), graduating with Bachelor of Science degree in 1959 and a Masters of Science in Journalism in 1970.

He has a lifetime of work in public relations and creative journalism, early on for the state and newspapers in Watertown and Vermillion and later for SDSU. Chuck was the first full-time Director of Development at SDSU, in charge of university public relations and news bureau, serving three times as interim alumni director, directing fund drives for the building of the SD Art Museum and chairman of the SDSU Ag Heritage Museum Committee. He was assistant to three SDSU presidents prior to his retirement in 1988.

Chuck then launched a second career utilizing his print journalism background. He organized, published and edited a chain of small town newspapers including but not limited to Volga Tribune, White Leader, Elkton Record, and RDF News, Brookings. These experiences likely piqued an interest in local affairs and history.

Chuck Cecil is honored by this award for his contributions to preservation of history. Now on his third career as author, Chuck has written numerous books relating the histories and stories about Brookings and the County over the years. Some of his many books are: *Becoming Some Place Special – the Brookings Story – 1900 to 2000*; *A Brookings Album*; *Fire the Anvils – The Story of Brookings County 1860-1900*; *Family Matters*; *You Can Bank on It; the Story of Mert Lund and Bank First, once headquartered in Brookings*; *Daktronics and the Man Who Lit It Up*; *Nick's Hamburger Shop*; *The Sky's the Limit*; *The Story of the SDSU Campanile*; *The Corner (History of Ray's Corner)*; *Here and Far Away*; and *the Jerry Lohr Story*.

Chuck Cecil generously donated the book and proceeds from his popular *Fire the Anvils* book to support the Brookings County Historical Society. Chuck has been a long-time columnist for the *Brookings Register*, sharing his wit and insight in the Brookings and South Dakota history. His column "Stubble Munch" appeared from 2000-2017, had a loyal readership. He was a member of the Brookings One Hundredth Anniversary Committee. He has served on the board of the Brookings County Historical Society from 1995 to the present. He was a major benefactor to the establishment of Archives Room at the county museum. More recently he was awarded the SDSU Life Time Service Metal (2017) and was one of a three-member committee to plan and prepare Brookings County's new museum, the Trygve A.

Trooian Horse Drawn Museum, opened in May 2018. Chuck Cecil has been a life-time contributor to the preservation of the history of Brookings and Brookings County.