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The National Bison Association (NBA) Weekly Update is an exclusive service for NBA members.

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NBA Weekly Update for June 3, 2022

The Weekly Update is a service designed to provide National Bison Association members with news and information affecting bison production and marketing. Many items in the Weekly Update are reprinted from outside sources. The content of those articles does not necessarily reflect the policy position of the National Bison Association. The articles are reproduced here only as a means to keep our membership informed as much as possible of all information and opinions relating to bison that is circulating publicly.

Matheson to Address Texas Bison Association This Weekend

NBA Executive Director, Jim Matheson, will be attending and speaking at the Texas Bison Association (TBA) Spring Conference this weekend in the Texas Hill Country of Bandera, TX. Matheson will be updating the group on current NBA activities as well as outlining future plans for the association.

Other meeting topics include a TBA Tribe overview; Charlie and Shauna Ranking talking about their *Native - The Prodigies of an Icon* project; Corral Design and Fencing; Tax Implications of Bison Business Operations; a panel discussion with bison ranchers and a historical overview and discussion about the Caprock Canyon herd.

**Two Weeks Left to
Register for June 18th
NBA Regenerative Field
Day - North Dakota**



[Registration is open](#) now for the June 18th NBA Regenerative Ranching Field Day in North Dakota! **Please [register here](#) by June 15th.** Just \$30/person to attend which includes lunch, ranch tour, and more!

In lieu of a 2022 NBA Summer Conference, we are hosting this one-day ranch tour and workshop just one hour outside of Minot, ND. Hosts Kevin Leier and family have a fun day planned that will include herd tours, moving animals, and a

pasture walk. This is a great chance to see a top-notch bison operation, hear from expert speakers, network with other bison producers and get to know the North Dakota Bison Association to boot!

Register now and contact jim@bisoncentral.com with any questions. We hope to see you there!



Photo Credit: Justin Roemer

National Bison Regenerative Ranching Field Days

The National Bison Association is pleased to announce its *National Bison North Central Regenerative Ranching Workshop Series*, which will span the summers of 2022 and 2023 featuring six one-day workshops on bison farms and ranches in the states of IL, MN, ND, OH, SD, and WI. The field days will also include expert speakers offering first-hand knowledge on how to properly manage bison grazing and handling to maximize their regenerative potential as a livestock species.

Bison have evolved in concert with North American grasslands for over 200,000 years. As a keystone species in the region, and when managed properly, bison have the potential to maintain soil health and fertility, and improve carbon sequestration through the expansion of grasslands, all the while providing a valuable livestock component to working farms and ranches across the upper Midwest.

The bison operations hosting the events encompass everything from cow-calf operations, gate-to-plate and direct marketing, to agritourism-focused farms and ranches. These operations exhibit a wide range of successful bison businesses across the North Central region. See confirmed 2022 workshops to the right. 2023 will include field days at the following farms and ranches, final days to be determined:

June 2023 - Cherokee Valley Bison – Thornville, Ohio
 September 2023 - Double J Bison Ranch – Baldwin, Wisconsin
 October 2023 - Sleepy Bison Acres – Sleepy Eye, Minnesota

Registration will open soon at www.bisoncentral.com.



2022 Field Days

June 18th
Heartland Bison Ranch

Rugby, ND

September 10th
Antelope Creek Bison

Mission, SD

October 15th

Ruhter Bison

Woodstock, IL

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Get Registered for the 2022 IBC!

You are invited to a four-day convention for bison producers, marketers, researchers, and industry experts.

Full Conference Registration*: \$441.00 CAD

Full Conference Family Registration*: \$892.50 CAD – Ticket includes admission for three persons (16+) in the same family (SAVE \$430.50)

IBC 2022 - Convention Agenda

Tuesday, July 12 – TCU Place

6 PM – 11 PM | Opening Night Reception - Taste Saskatchewan



Come socialize at TCU Place and enjoy a selection of appetizers and drinks from some of our favorite local breweries and distilleries.

Wednesday, July 13 - TCU Place

9 AM - 12 PM: Keynote speaker and presentations

1 PM - 5 PM: Tours (must be pre-registered. Sales close July 10, 2022. If you would like to book the tour after the date, please check in with the INFORMATION DESK at TCU Place.)

6 PM - 11 PM: Banquet

Dinner and networking

Thursday, July 14 - TCU Place

9 AM - 4 PM: Keynote Speakers and Breakouts

For more details, please visit our website

6 PM - 11 PM: Banquet

Dinner and networking

Friday, July 15 - TCU Place

9 AM - 12 PM: Speakers and Breakouts

12 PM - 2 PM | Farewell Luncheon

Learn more and register for the IBC at <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/international-bison-convention-2022-registration-126340121705>.

Bison App Webinars Planned for Summer 2022

The NBA Bison App is a powerful tool that producers can use to track, measure, and analyze your bison operation and is available at no charge for Apple and Android devices. Learn more and download it at - <https://bisoncentral.com/conservation-item/nba-producers-app/>.

The only bison-specific field app in the marketplace today, the app's extensive features result in a very powerful herd management tool that literally fits in the palm of your hand.

App features include animal photo ID, birth date, herd, and tag ID, weight, gender, vaccination/dewormer schedule, North American Bison Registry animal history, notes for things like body condition, health, transfer history, animal test results, genetic/parentage information, calving rates, and more.

Mark your calendars to learn everything you need to know to take advantage of this innovative bison tool. Each webinar will have a different theme and will take you through all the steps from downloading and registering, to entering animals and data, analysis and more.

- June 16th
- July 21st
- August 18th
- September 15th

Webinar dates are below, all to begin at 5 p.m. MT. All webinars will be recorded and available to members in the video archive section of www.bisoncentral.com.

Advertising Opportunities in the Fall Issue of Bison World

Production will soon be underway on the Fall issue of the Bison World magazine.



Within the pages of the Fall magazine, there are a variety of advertising options available, from 1/8 page to full page. Lifetime and Active NBA members will enjoy discounted rates as part of their membership perks and contract holders will receive a 5% discount for pre-paid advertising. Karen can work with you to tailor an advertising campaign that fits your budget and targets your message!

The advertising space reservation deadline is July 10 with final materials being due by August 1. Editorial submissions and suggestions are welcome at any time but will also be subjected to the same deadline for the Fall issue.

For more information about editorial submissions or advertising your ranch, business or events, contact Karen@bisoncentral.com or call (605) 381-3738.

Editor's Note: The following news stories were distributed by organizations not affiliated with the National Bison Association. They may not reflect the opinions or the positions held by the NBA on matters such as genetic integrity, animal management, and other issues.

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Two Meat Processing Plants Coming to Western South Dakota *From the Rapid City Journal*

A \$1.1 billion processing plant could be built in the Black Hills Industrial Park in south Rapid City (SD), a realty company announced Friday.

Kingsbury and Associates and Sirius Realty of Rapid City and Greenville announced plans

to construct an 8,000 head per day processing facility over three years. The 1-million-square-foot facility will process beef and a specialty bison line. It could also bring about 2,500 jobs to the area.

Megan Kingsbury, president and managing partner of Kingsbury and Associates and who is spearheading the project, said in a news release that the goal is to restore competition in American meat processing. Kingsbury, a fifth-generation producer from Western South Dakota, said she understands how difficult it is for producers to be profitable. "I want to fix that," she said. "We want to compete with the big four meat packing giants and be that all-important 'second bidder' in the cash market. We will build a brand that is America first focusing on procuring American cattle and feeding American citizens affordable, high-quality protein as our first priority."

The facility will focus on bringing and developing new technologies in robotics and artificial intelligence that make processing easier, safer, and more efficient, according to the release.

Kingsbury said the company will employ and develop technologies to mitigate any negative effect people may associate with processing facilities. She said they would capture the methane to help power the facility, utilize renewable energy sources, recycle a majority of the water used daily, and continue work on efficient transportation plans.

"The American rancher is less than a generation away from being extinct if we don't do something fast," Kingsbury said. "We've already seen the high cost of meat in stores and the low prices producers are receiving for their animals. There is profit in this industry up and down the supply chain if we restore competition. When that happens everyone who produces and consumes high-quality beef wins."

The industrial park is the preferred site for the plant, which is located on State Highway 79 and Old Folsom Road. Groundbreaking in Hot Springs Dakota Territory Beef, a partner with United Ranchers Cooperative, broke ground on a new processing plant in Hot Springs Friday. The facility will be able to process 25 cattle a week and bring seven new jobs to the area.

Full story [here](#)

New Technology in Bison Genetic Testing May Improve Management Practices

From KNBN Newscenter 1

The Custer State Park bison herd was part of a Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences study that compared DNA from historical bison herds in the United States to 1,842 domestic cattle.

"There's like a slight strain that they go back and what they're still trying to figure out is, is that naturally occurring in bison, or was there really an integration at some point in time. So I mean, that's part of what some of the study looks at is as kind of that whole genotype of what's going on with those genetics and the different bison," said Matt Snyder, Custer State Park Superintendent.

The study which was published in the journal Scientific Reports found that all bison in North America carry small portions of the DNA of domestic cattle. The study updates previous findings from 20 years ago that revealed that only a few herds existed that were thought to be free of bovine ingression, including the herd in Yellowstone National Park.

The Custer State Park bison herd originated in 1914 when they purchased 36 head from the Scottie Phillips buffalo herd.

Phillips was a South Dakota rancher who started his own bison herd in 1899, from the Fred Dupree herd.

Dupree, a French Canadian fur trader was married to a Minniconjou Lakota woman

named Good Elk Woman. The Dupree family felt compelled to save the bison after watching the transformation of the Plains Indian culture due to the Black Hills gold rush and the decimation of the sacred herds. Fred and his son Pete Dupree captured five bison calves during the last big American Indian bison hunt on the Grand River in 1881.

In 1906, Phillips appealed to the U.S. Congress to help save bison referring to them as 'the symbol of the west'. He was permitted to lease 3,500 acres of unclaimed U.S. Government land to serve as a reserve for his growing bison herd.

The Custer State Park bison herd was added to in the 1940s and 1950s from the Wind Cave National Park bison herd and the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

"They didn't have a way to surplus their animals at the time and so there was about eight to nine hundred head over the course of about nine years that were actually hazed up into Custer Park so we have some similar genetic backgrounds with Wind Cave because of that event," said Chad Kremer, Custer State Park Bison Herd Manager and President of the National Bison Association. "And then there was just a couple other instances where animals, outside animals were brought in. In the mid-forties, there was one year when about 50 head were brought in from Pine Ridge Reservation at that time. And then other than that, it's pretty much been a closed herd, especially in the last 50 to 60 years."

Custer State Park uses a breeding population formula with high bull numbers to help decrease the chances of inbreeding in their herd and to manage their herd numbers. In the 1980's they did blood type sampling of the herd and then again approximately ten years later. The park found that they had lost a few of the original blood types and came up with a plan to preserve the herd's unique genetic concordance.

"It was a ten-year project that they did where they selected and tested the bull calf crop and then a year later after analyzing that if there were any blood types that were not that frequent, they would select those bulls for breeding bulls to go back out," said Kremer. "After blood typing then technology changed to DNA typing and we have done herd sampling a few times, several years apart from each other and it was identified that the park herd, we did have some cattle integration. We've been working on a plan over the course of time to reduce or eliminate that but the technology is always advancing. Even in my 20 years here at the park, I mean there's been probably three significant changes in the technology."

The new findings of the Texas A&M study could change management practices within the bison community and actually make conservation efforts of closed bison herds like Custer State Park easier since they will no longer need to be isolated from other herds. For private producers, the study provides information to structure genetic management practices to include more genetic diversity.

"It's early enough in the discussion that I'm not sure where it's going to go between conservation groups and the private producers, but, but it definitely may change some things as far as management objectives," said Kremer. "There are still some questions out there. As far as, we know, cattle and bison are actually pretty closely related."

The study suggests that the well-intentioned efforts of ranchers in the 1800s wanting to preserve the iconic animal may have left a complicated genetic legacy through intentional or unintentional cross-breeding between the two species. Although without their efforts it is possible the bison would have been extinct.

Full story [here](#)

Livestock producers invited to Purdue Fencing School

From Purdue University Media

Livestock producers are invited to learn about the latest fencing techniques at the Purdue Fencing School. Topics to be covered include basic fence construction and design, including permanent fencing types, brace construction, fence installation, portable fence options, energizer sizing, and installation, and Indiana fence laws and regulations.

The Purdue Fencing School will be held at the Southern Indiana Purdue Agriculture Center, 11371 East Purdue Farm Road, Dubois on June 18, 2022, from 1-6 p.m. EDT. The fee is \$20, which covers materials, publications, and refreshments.

The event will include both classroom and field tour instruction to provide hands-on demonstrations and is hosted with assistance from Indiana Farm Bureau, Gallagher Animal Management, and Stay-Tuff Fence Manufacturing.

The school provides a valuable opportunity to interact with expert speakers and peers. The school is limited to 30 participants and will be held rain or shine.

Registration forms are due by June 12 and are available online at <https://puext.in/3m71fhh>. Checks should be made payable to the Purdue CES Education Fund, c/o Purdue Extension – Dubois County, 1482 Executive Blvd., Jasper, IN 47546.

For more information, contact Jason Tower at 812-678-4427 or towerj@purdue.edu.

Preschool Assistant Makes Sure Kids Get to Know Indigenous Foods

From NNY360

Bison pastrami is not typical school lunch fare, but it's a crowd favorite at a preschool in Minneapolis.

Fawn Youngbear-Tibbetts — the seemingly always on-the-go coordinator of Indigenous foods at the Wicoie Nandagikendan Early Childhood Urban Immersion Project — is frequently found tweaking recipes in the kitchen or offering homemade goodies like flourless black-bean brownies.

Youngbear-Tibbetts, a longtime Minneapolis resident and member of the White Earth Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, has made it her mission to bring traditional recipes to the 178 children attending Wicoie, who are taught several hours each day in the Dakota and Ojibwe languages. She said the dishes not only help Native American students and their families connect with their culture, but also bolster their nutrition.

"Part of it is getting their palates (used to) eating traditional foods so that they want it," she said. "Our kids are so used to eating all of this processed food — the snacks, the sugar." She hopes students develop a taste for healthier food they will carry through their lives.

Across the breakfasts, lunches, and snacks Wicoie Nandagikendan serves, Youngbear-Tibbetts incorporates sweet potatoes, fresh fruits, leafy greens, fish, and meat from large game animals like bison, which is extremely low in fat, she said. Recently, she distributed a donation of 300 pounds of bison to students' families.

Partly because of a lack of access to healthy food, nearly half of Native American children are overweight or obese, Indian Health Service researchers found in a study published in 2017.

A 2018 report from the First Nations Development Institute found that for "Native American children, their school or school-related meals may be the most reliable, consistent and nutritionally-balanced food they receive," which Youngbear-Tibbetts has found to be true.

Many children at the Minneapolis school come from families with severely limited incomes who may not have cars or be able to get to grocery stores. They often rely on convenience stores for shopping. "A lot of our kids only eat food at school so that's when it becomes really important to make sure we're serving the most nutritious" meals, Youngbear-Tibbetts said.

When money is tight, she added, "people tend to purchase the most calories they can with their dollars."

“That’s potato chips, that’s ramen, that’s highly processed foods because there are more calories and it’s cheaper to buy it,” she said.

Youngbear-Tibbetts said many urban American Indian families never learned how to cook Indigenous food. She has taught students how to harvest wild rice and catch fish. She also has shown their families how to smoke and fillet fish.

“We have multiple generations of people and some families that are removed from even knowing how to clean a fish or how to cook deer meat,” she said.

Read the full story [here](#)

Yellowstone FedEx’d Three Bison to Alaska For \$50,000

From Cowboy State Daily

One of the many priorities for Yellowstone National Park administrators is the repopulation of healthy, genetically pure bison herds across the United States.

And when bison from America’s first national park are sent to Native American tribes throughout the country, the animals absolutely, positively have to get there — well, maybe not overnight, but quickly.

So it’s no big surprise a nationally known shipping company was called in to help. The park is sending bison to tribes across the country so they can begin their own bison herds to honor the culture of the tribes.

“Bison are really important culturally and historically to the tribes,” said Yellowstone Superintendent Cam Sholly. “The genetics of the Yellowstone bison are very pure, and so it’s been fantastic to get the Yellowstone bison onto 19 different tribal lands.”

But when a tribe from Alaska requested bison from Yellowstone last fall, the tribe’s preferred method of shipping was... unusual.

“They actually drove the three bison from Fort Peck (Montana) all the way to Seattle,” Sholly told Cowboy State Daily, “and then put them in a FedEx crate. And obviously, they were configured so the bison were comfortable, and then put them onto a plane and flew the bison up to Alaska.”

Sholly said from the airport, the three bison were transferred to a barge, where they floated to the tribe’s island community.

“I understand the bill was like \$50,000,” he said. “The government didn’t pay for it, it was tribes and philanthropy and some other ways of paying for that.”

Federal Express declined to be interviewed for this story.

The export of Yellowstone bison to tribes across the country is an ecological triumph. Yellowstone is the only place in the lower 48 states to have a continuously free-ranging bison population since prehistoric times. However, as of 120 years ago, there were only around two dozen bison left in Yellowstone National Park due to decades of hunting and poaching.

Since 1902, however, Park officials have made a dedicated effort to rebuild the herd. As of the summer of 2021, there were a total of about 5,450 bison in the two primary Yellowstone herds (northern and central).

Park managers have been so successful in repopulating the species that they now face the challenge of managing the migratory bison that frequently roam beyond the park’s borders and onto private land, as well as land managed by other federal agencies.

In an effort to keep the herds at a controllable number, the Interagency Bison Management Plan (IBMP) was established in 2000. The eight groups involved in the plan,

who play a role in making decisions about Yellowstone bison, include tribal nations.

"Tribes were here for 10,000-plus years before Yellowstone ever became a Park," Sholly pointed out, stressing the importance of including Native Americans in the conversation regarding the Park's bison herd.

One of the goals of the IBMP is to reduce the number of bison that are consigned to slaughter every year, Sholly noted.

So rather than send the animals off to be butchered, the federal government, the state of Montana, and the Assiniboiné and Sioux tribes at Fort Peck created a program in which animals are held in a quarantine facility to ensure they are free of the contagious disease brucellosis.

"We've just put a \$1 million into the expansion of our bison conservation transfer program, which puts live, disease-free bison onto tribal landscapes," Sholly said. "We've transferred over 200 in the last two and a half years to Fort Peck, where the Assiniboiné and Sioux are, in concert with the Intertribal Buffalo Council. Those 200 bison have been transferred to 19 tribes across nine states, including Alaska."

The first export of bison from Yellowstone occurred in 2019 when park officials moved 55 bison to the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana. Because Montana law prohibits the live transfer of Yellowstone bison to new areas unless they are first certified as brucellosis-free, the animals had been held at the quarantine facility for 17 months and had undergone rigorous testing for signs of the disease that induces abortions in pregnant cattle, elk, and bison.

"We need to continue to reduce the potential for transmission of brucellosis to livestock," Sholly said. "The bison we've transferred up to the Assiniboiné and Sioux in Fort Peck has gone through the brucellosis protocol, so they're deemed brucellosis-free... and allowable to be transferred to the tribes."

Read the story [here](#)

Yellowstone Bison Will be Studied for Federal Protection

From E&E News/Greenwire

Yellowstone-area bison — an animal not to be trifled with — will now be studied for possible protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Following an initial review that happened to coincide with a dicey encounter between an aggrieved bison and an overly curious park visitor, the Fish and Wildlife Service today announced that several petitions presented "substantial" information indicating that ESA protections "may be warranted."

"We find that the petitioners present credible and substantial information that range curtailment may be a potential threat to the Yellowstone bison," the agency stated. FWS added that there's credible information that management actions were taken under an interagency bison management plan "may curtail the species' available winter habitat through culling, hunting, hazing, and quarantine."

This so-called 90-day finding will now lead to a 12-month assessment of whether to list under the ESA a distinct population segment of the plains bison in and around Yellowstone National Park.

The upcoming assessment has been years in the making, and it's starting with a reminder that respect is owed to the surprisingly fleet-footed animal that can tip the scales at upward of 2,000 pounds.

In 2014, FWS received a petition from the Western Watersheds Project and Buffalo Field Campaign, requesting that plains bison in and around Yellowstone be listed as threatened or endangered. In 2015, the agency received a related petition from an individual.

Both petitions were rejected in 2016.

Conservationists then sued, and in 2018 a federal judge ordered FWS to take another look. In 2019, the agency again rejected the petition. The conservationist groups, joined by Friends of Animals, sued again and last January a judge once more ordered another review (*Greenwire*, Feb. 1, 2018).

At the time of the original 2014 petition, an estimated 4,900 bison occupied a 20,000-square-kilometer area around and inside Yellowstone National Park.

Bison are currently managed through an interagency bison management plan for the state of Montana and Yellowstone National Park.

Currently, the park's bison population is partially managed through tribal hunts and state hunts outside Yellowstone's boundaries. Bison are also captured for brucellosis testing before being transferred to Native American tribes for slaughter. Some bison have also been transferred to tribes so they can try to start their own herds.

The plan permits culling the population if target levels are exceeded.

In the petition, the conservationists contended that hunting, disease, and climate change threatened the bison and that target population numbers were too low to ensure the genetic diversity of the two herds located in Yellowstone.

The target population numbers have stirred at times heated debate. Former Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk clashed with former Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke over the number of bison the park should hold, with Wenk saying 4,200, while Zinke argued 3,000 would be more appropriate.

Full story [here](#)

Bison Gores Yellowstone Visitor, Tosses Her 10 Feet, Park Officials Say

From NBCNews.com

A woman visiting Yellowstone National Park was gored by a bison and tossed into the air, park officials said Tuesday.

The 25-year-old woman, who was visiting from Ohio, was not identified in a news release from the park.

The woman approached the female bison Monday morning after it came close to a boardwalk at Black Sand Basin, near Old Faithful geyser, the park said.

Park rules require visitors to remain more than 25 yards from the animals, the largest mammals in North America, which are unpredictable, can top speeds of 35 mph and can jump several feet.

An estimated 2,300 to 5,500 bison live at the park, and they have injured more people than any other animal, the park said.



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Save the Date!

- 6/03/2022 - Texas Bison Association Spring Conference - TX
- 6/17/2022 - Montana Bison Association - MT
- 6/18/2022 - NBA Regenerative Ranch Tour Workshop - Rugby, ND
- 6/23/2022 - Western Bison Association Spring meeting - UT
- 6/23/2022 - Jack Auction Group Video Bison Auction - Online
- 7/06/2022 - ITBC 3rd Annual Buffalo Worker Safety Workshop - SD
- 7/12/2022 - International Bison Conference - Saskatoon, SK
- 7/21/2022 - Jack Auction Group Video Bison Auction - Online
- 8/15/2022 - TNC Joseph H. Williams Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Auction - Online
- 9/10/2022 - NBA Regenerative Ranch Tour Workshop - Mission, SD
- 10/13//2022 - ITBC 3rd Annual Buffalo Worker Safety Workshop - SD
- 10/15/2022 - NBA Regenerative Ranch Tour Workshop - Villa Grove, IL
- 11/05/2022 - Custer State Park Annual Buffalo Auction - SD
- 11/9/2022 - Antelope Island State Park Bison Auction - Online
- 11/25/2022 - Minnesota Bison Association Bison Fundamentals - MN
- 11/26/2022 - Minnesota Bison Association Legends of the Fall Sale - MN
- 11/14/2022 - TNC Joseph H. Williams Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Auction - Online
- 12/01/2022 - Kansas Buffalo Association Sale - KS
- 12/01/2022 - Western Bison Association Meeting and Show/Sale - UT
- 1/07/2023 - Turner Bison Exchange Prairie Performance Simulcast Auction - SD
- 1/18/2023 - NBA Winter Conference - CO
- 1/21/2023 - NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale - Denver, CO
- 2/11/2023 - Dakota Dynamite Buffalo Sale Simulcast Auction - SD

Please visit <https://bisoncentral.com/calendar/> for details and more up-to-date events. If you have a bison event coming up that's not listed, please send the details to jim@bisoncentral.com and the NBA will post the event on its website at no charge.

Click Here for NBA Calendar of Events

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