



Ken Hines (left) moved to Spearfish to become President and CEO of Lehman Trikes, but soon fell in love with the Northern Hills and the great biking routes. Lehman Trikes were designed for safety in the 1980s.

## SPEARFISH

KEN HINES RELOCATED from South Carolina to Spearfish to become president and CEO of Lehman Trikes, which bills itself as “leader of the three world.” A former Blue Angels pilot, Hines now enjoys more leisurely motorcycle rides.

“I only rode 900 miles this past weekend,” he laughs. “If you’re in the motorcycle industry and you find yourself in the northern Black Hills, what could be better?”

His company originated in Canada in 1985 and named Spearfish its United States assembly and distribution center in 2004. Initially there were four Spearfish employees, but five-and-a-half years later more than 130 workers are spread throughout four buildings.

“We take a partially assembled two-wheel motorcycle, add a wider differential that will accept two rear wheels, and then we add those wheels,” explains Paul Pankonin, operations manager. “And the framework gets a new body and paint.”

The Lehman story began in the early 1980s. Linda Lehman told her husband, John, that she wasn’t comfortable with their child riding on the back of a two-wheel bike. So for safety John created a three-wheel motorcycle. The customized machine won Linda’s appreciation and lots of attention wherever the family trav-

eled (watch for their prototype to go on display soon at the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum). The Lehmans had struck gold and decided to mass-produce trikes, originally at Westlock, Alberta.

Today in Spearfish there are two assembly lines in a thoroughly modern, beautifully lit, and well-ventilated plant. Product demand keeps day and night shifts busy. One line culminates in a trike built for Harley-Davidson as a Harley product, and the other line turns out Lehman’s own products. About 130 dealers handle Lehman Trikes, across North America and Europe, and in Japan. Dealers who want Lehman kits for assembly in their own shops are invited to Spearfish for a four-day training session. Dealers are also invited to Spearfish for the rally each year, and can use the Lehman parking lot adjacent to Interstate 90 for demo rides and sales. “We open the factory for tours during rally week, too, but we never sell directly to the public,” Hines says. “Only through our dealers.”

It’s not only rally traffic and great Black Hills rides that have Hines singing South Dakota’s praises. “We love our workforce here,” he says, “and this is a state where the governor will come and visit for half an hour, and he knows your name and all about your business.”



