

FEST

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“There will be ‘Mime and Character,’ ‘Beginning Playwrights,’ ‘Improv,’ ‘Folk Dancing,’ ‘Yarn Spinning’ and a scholars’ roundtable, which is a really unique opportunity that the College of Arts and Sciences has sponsored.”

During the roundtable – which will take place from 3 to 4:30 p.m. June 9 – USD professor Darlene Farabee will be joined by Lois Potter of the University of Delaware and Peter Kanelos of Loyola University for a discussion of the inaugural show.

Along with these visiting academics, a number of other professionals will be visiting.

Three actors from New York City and four regional actors from Wisconsin, Nebraska and Iowa will join six USD students in performing the production.

“Our students are getting a great opportunity to work with professionals from other locations in the country,” said Chaya Gordon-Bland, artistic director of the festival.

Additionally, members of the community also will benefit from seeing the higher-caliber players in action, she said.

Gordon-Bland received hundreds of headshots and résumés from New York actors – which then had to be sifted through and narrowed down – to fill the three spots. She held auditions of the finalists on a trip to New York earlier this year.

“I think I saw 60 actors in New York,” she said. “I probably called back 20 to 25.”

Coyoteopoly students have been raising money for the festival for more than a year.

According to Coyoteopoly CFO Jillian Nelson, they

have budgeted \$22,350 to cover payroll costs, \$5,687.73 for marketing, \$4,427.79 for production and \$2,945 for the roundtable.

The group still is waiting for \$3,788 to from various donors and grants.

“Raising money, we did exceed our budget by \$6,000, so that will help with money-raising for next year’s festival and our payroll,” Nelson said.

A significant amount was donated by Sanford Vermillion, Point said.

“They have become our Loyal Patron Sponsor, which is our highest-level sponsor that the Shakespeare festival has to offer,” she said.

Approximately 100 other sponsors were found, as well, all of whom are listed on the festival’s Web site.

These sponsors will be the sole distributors of festival tickets.

“What this means is that each business, depending on the sponsorship level that they have, will receive a certain amount of tickets,” Point said.

Much work has yet to be done before the festival begins, and Point requested the help of at least eight to 10 Rotary members in filling some roles.

“We’re hoping that 500 people come to the festival every day, so therefore, there will be cars and traffic,” she said. “We will need workers for safety, security, traffic control and several other components.”

Point said all of the preparation will lead to a successful festival that can be expanded into the future.

“Coyoteopoly is all about creating long-term relations and partnerships, and the South Dakota Shakespeare Festival is not just a one-time thing. We’re looking at the long-term,” she said.

For more information, visit <http://orgs.usd.edu/coyoteopoly/ShakespeareFestival/index.html>.

FLOOD

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“It expands the aquatic habitat,” he said. “It makes the river bigger and provides more habitat choices for organisms.”

The restructuring of the physical environment along the river makes it possible for young fish to get into the floodplain and avoid predation, Mestl said.

It also can connect habitat patches and increase nutrients in the overall system, he said.

“By having that annual flood, we basically feed the system each year,” Mestl said. “We provide the energy that the system needs to run.”

A rise in water also can result in an increased sand deposition on the floodplain.

Last year, 67,000 acres of land along the Missouri River were covered in sand, Mestl said.

He did add that it “probably only represents land covered by more than 60 centimeters” of sand, and land that is not under vegetation.

“But that’s a massive amount of structural alteration to the floodplain,” Mestl said.

This alteration could lead to an increase among various bird species that have known to be decreasing, he added.

Mestl said there were “about five flood events” along the Missouri over the past 48 years, from 1964 through this year.

“There were a few more floods the last half of this time period than before,” he said.

From 1934 to 1963 the number of floods was actually quite high by comparison, he said.

“I think this was a function of us building the navigation channel, and at the same time not having the dams available to make a complete system,” Mestl said.

Without the dams in place, the water had nowhere to go, he said.

Mestl said that it has long been thought that the Historic Missouri River flooded often in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. However, he said he found this was not quite true.

In actuality, although the river saw dramatic rises throughout that period, there was an average of only one flood about every 20 years, he said.

“Although we were seeing these annual fluctuations, most of these were within the confines of the banks,” Mestl said.

But due to the fact that it is no longer an annual occurrence, a significant rise along the banks has a different meaning today.

“We’ve lost that ability to manage the river within the banks,” Mestl said. “The channel capacity has been changed through channelization and things like that.”

SCHOOL

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downtown; \$20,000 for expenses related to equipment and uniforms related to school activities; nearly \$451,000 that covers the Johnson maintenance contract, new carpet, the replacement of a sewer pipe at the middle school, and refurbishing the outdoor track near the high school.

GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Froke’s discussion of the preliminary general fund expenditures focused on various fiscal challenges the board and administrators must meet as the budget is developed.

It is estimated that total student enrollment will decline by 17 students next year. That will mean the school district will receive \$75,000 less in state aid funding from Pierre.

“And with the renewal of our bank contract, the reduction of interest rates will also impact us in the amount of about \$40,000,” Froke told the board. “So, we’ll have a projected loss of revenue of about \$115,000.”

At the same time that general fund revenue is declining, the school district will be facing increased costs that will impact that fund.

Health insurance is estimated to go up by about 15 percent, bringing an increased cost of \$88,000. “We’re not the worst in the pool anymore, but we’re still at a high level of utilization,” Froke said.

The district also has set aside \$25,000 for next year as extra

payment to teachers who qualify for extra compensation because they’ve earned college credits or advanced degrees.

Another \$25,000 of additional expenses has been identified to pay for the district’s bus contract, utilities and other fixed costs next year.

Total increased costs that will impact the general fund are estimated to be \$130,000.

“When you combine our loss of revenue with our increased costs, you get about a \$245,000 total figure,” Froke said.

The South Dakota Legislature did approve increasing state aid to all public schools for the next school year by \$31 per student. That will bring the Vermillion School District approximately \$38,000.

“We feel we need to utilize the retirement fund,” Froke said, “with the budget. You haven’t been utilizing the full levy. We are looking at utilizing the entire levy plus you may need to use some of the reserve amount in order to make this budget work, so we may be looking at an additional \$40,000 (in revenue).”

Those two factors will bring \$78,000 in new revenue to the general fund.

“When you subtract that from the \$245,000 figure (the total loss of revenue and increased costs), and you get a funding shortfall of \$167,000,” he said. “We’re handling much of that through cuts throughout the budget, again, and through attrition. We have a number of staff members who are retiring.”

Froke said the district will also shift the use of Title I dollars. “There is a lot of shifting and a lot of squeezing in the budget, and it looks like we’ve got everything handled again.”

He noted that the district will carry forward the budgeted use of reserves for 2011-12, totaling \$238,000, to 2012-13. “That stays,”

Froke said. “Normally we usually budget in about \$200,000, but last year we budgeted in \$238,000. How that is going to work by the end of the year, I’m not exactly sure, but we should come out alright.”

The estimated funding shortfall of \$167,000 in the general fund for 2012-13, combined with the \$238,000 in reserves that will carry forward means the total general fund budget shortfall, including the budgeted use of reserves, is estimated to total \$405,000.

“Every year, it becomes a more challenging adventure,” Froke said.

The general fund budget

projections don’t include one-time money of \$68 per student that the district likely will receive from the state for the 2012-13 school year.

Next year’s general fund remains a work in progress.

“I will be working on this with the Finance Committee,” Froke told board members. “This is preliminary, so further discussion on this will be coming back to you.”

The governor signed his controversial education reform bill, HB1234, into law March 13.

It is a multi-point plan the governor says will improve teaching in the state. It includes incentive pay for teachers,

scholarships for teachers in training, bonuses for math and science teachers, a new evaluation system for educators and a gradual phase-out in teachers’ continuing contract rights.

“This law will invest \$15 million a year in great teachers, because great teachers are the key to student achievement,” Daugaard said in a statement.

But critics point out that HB1234 doesn’t appropriate any money, which will need to be done in future years.

A petition drive planned by the South Dakota Education Association and others in the state is underway to refer HB1234 to a popular vote this fall.

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 605-677-5400 or www.usd.edu/theatre
 Post-show discussion after Thursday’s performance.

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 If you are a person with a disability and need a special accommodation to fully participate, please contact Disability Services at 605-677-6389 48 hours before the event.

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