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"Neon," the theme of the 2012 Vermillion High School Junior/Senior Prom, was appropriately reflected with the brightly decorated stage for the traditional Grand March, held April 21 in the VHS Performing Arts Center. Pictured are Matt Szymonski and Victoria Bergman. See more photos from the Grand March by logging on to spotted.plaintalk.net.

(Photo by David Lias)

## Happy Birthday Charlie ... and USD

By Travis Gulbrandson

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One of Vermillion's most prominent "citizens" celebrated his 150th birthday Friday afternoon.

Faculty and students of past and present crowded the Pit Lounge of USD's Muenster University Center to celebrate the 150th birthday of Charlie Coyote and the school he represents.

"While many things have changed, much has stayed the same," said President James W. Abbott. "Many challenges are still with us, but so is the sense of community that we feel here at USD in Vermillion.

"For more than a dozen decades, students have journeyed to Vermillion to study, to grow, to succeed, and despite all the hard work, and the worry of grades and finances, I'm willing to bet that almost all had a little fun along the way," he said.

The event featured speakers, music from the South Dakota Brass Quintet, birthday cake and a special rendition of the "Happy Birthday" song led by Head Football Coach Joe Glenn sung directly to Charlie Coyote himself.

Not only that, April 20, 2012, was officially declared "USD Day" in an official proclamation from Gov. Dennis Daugaard, which was read by Dusty Johnson, his chief of staff and a USD alum from the class of 1999.

"The University of South Dakota has dutifully executed its mission as the state's comprehensive liberal arts university, offering undergraduate, graduate and professional programs within the South Dakota system of education for 150 years," Johnson read in part.

He added that "academics flourished thanks to the knowledgeable, respected and beloved faculty and administrators, and has grown to include the establishment of a comprehensive college of arts and sciences, schools of education, health sciences and business, and the state's only college of fine arts, and schools of law and medicine."

Johnson said that in addition to their academic reputation, students of USD also have distinguished themselves "in the gallery and on the gridiron."



Head Football Coach Joe Glenn gets down on one knee to sing happy birthday to USD mascot Charlie Coyote Friday afternoon.

(Photo by Travis Gulbrandson)

Founded in 1862 as one of the first actions of the Dakota Territorial Legislature, the University of South Dakota came to Vermillion Oct. 16, 1882.

Since that time, the university has grown from one building to 63, from an inaugural graduating class of three students to a bustling educational center with an average of 10,000 students, with 1,200 full-time and 1,500 part-time faculty and staff members.

"Throughout the university's history, we have had the good fortune of having visionary leaders, resourceful supporters, dedicated faculty and enthusiastically involved students who have invested themselves in this place, and in the people who are the essence of this university," said Alumni Director Kersten Johnson. "It is to their passion and their persistence that we attribute our progress."

Johnson said the university owes those passionate individuals more than simple appreciation.

"We owe them our pride, our

commitment and our involvement as examples to those who will follow in our footsteps," she said.

Student Government Association President Alissa VanMeeteren agreed, adding, "Changes in location, infrastructure, programs, development, geography, opportunities and even football fields cannot change the fact that we are all part of the same Coyote family, a family that is rooted in tradition and excellence.

"To all the alumni who are here, thank you for setting the standard of excellence and giving us all something to uphold and build off of," she said.

Abbott said such growth is assured - it's part of the university's legacy.

"We all have one thing in common - each and every individual played a part in making USD what it is today, a university where academic excellence abounds, rich in tradition, offering our students an unforgettable experience," he said.



Steve Howe, executive director of the Vermillion Area Chamber of Commerce and Development Company, addresses local high school students at Friday's camp.

(Photo by David Lias)

## High school students learn about business at fourth annual camp

By David Lias

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It was an afternoon filled with business appointments, "elevator pitches" and success stories.

The fourth annual 2012 Entrepreneurship Camp, held Friday, April 20, in the Muenster University Center on the University of South Dakota campus, brought students from Vermillion and Dakota Valley high schools together with local educators and business leaders.

At the end of the three-hour exercise, students came away with a better idea of what it takes to turn a good business idea into reality. And the adult

participants, already steeped in the world of business development, walked away with something extra, too.

"We quizzed the students afterwards, to see how they liked it," said Steve Howe, executive director of the Vermillion Area Chamber of Commerce and Development Company. "They all seemed to have a real favorable response to it.

"As much as the students enjoyed it, I also think the mentors enjoyed it every bit as much," he said. "I think it was also nice for the people who are involved with the Yankton angel fund (Two Bridges

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