

VIEWPOINTS

Teaming Yankton And Vermillion

From the Press and Dakotan

An interesting and long-overdue idea has been getting a good workout lately, as recent town hall meetings in Yankton and Vermillion have been held to promote closer ties between the two communities.

Such an effort makes a great deal of sense for all concerned, so much so that the relationship and its possibilities should seem obvious. And the notion of branding the ties between these two communities to promote the area better is a logical extension of the idea.

The meetings that were held in February in Yankton and in March in Vermillion focused on what the two communities share in common and how it could be promoted to elevate the profile of this region.

Yankton and Vermillion have a long history together, in no small part because they are two of the oldest communities in what was the territory of Dakota. If you

picture the Missouri River as the great roadway that traveled into the heart of this western frontier for white settlers, you can see why Yankton and Vermillion were one of the earliest such settlements in the region.

Indeed, both communities can claim important roles in the Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery expedition. It was near the present-day Vermillion site where a party from the Corps waded through a sea of chest-high prairie grass to a mysterious little promontory now called Spirit Mound. From this vantage point, the explorers first saw the expansive western prairie and the great herds of bison that thundered across these plains. A short time later, it was near what is now Yankton that the Corps had its first encounter with indigenous inhabitants. They met at Calumet Bluff, located near present-day Gavins Point Dam.

So, from these momentous roots, a great bond between modern-day Yankton and Vermillion was established.

They also share a vibrant manufacturing base, and that has led to a "cross-pollination" of labor pools.

Both communities have strong educational ties. Vermillion, of course, is home to the University of South Dakota, while Yankton has Mount Marty College and once also offered Yankton College.

Both towns share recreational resources on several levels. For instance, when Vermillion hosts the state high school football championships in November, it's not uncommon for some fans to stay in Yankton lodgings. Conversely, when Yankton hosts the world youth archery tournament this June, Vermillion will be part of the lodging scenario.

These are just a few examples of what these two communities share. It would not

be a stretch to say that Yankton and Vermillion are probably closer than any two neighboring communities of significant size in the state, with the exception of Lead and Deadwood.

Branding would be an intriguing prospect. These communities could jointly market themselves as the "cradle of Dakota," or something along those lines, to promote what we have to offer here. There are probably numerous other possibilities that would work even better.

So, Yankton and Vermillion officials could do worse than to look for ways to market this area as one entity and boast of its offering and its opportunities.

Actually, they really COULD do worse by dismissing these possibilities and not exploit the natural historical, social and geographic ties that bind them together.

This is rich opportunity that should be seen as too good to pass up.

Names will never hurt you?

By Paula Damon

My mom was like most. A ferocious multitasker; had to be with six kids and dad only home on weekends for the first 14 years of their marriage.

No nonsense. The only time she'd lighten up a bit was when noticing our spirits needed lifting.

"Perché sei triste?" she jabbed sharply in Italian, her tone laced with sarcasm, as if to say, how dare you be sad?

Her low tolerance for misbehavior was easily detectable, especially when she'd reach for the yardstick.

Mom's celebrity preceded her. Everything made her stand out in our white Anglo-Saxon neighborhood from her distinctive Mediterranean appearance to the aroma of bubbling pasta sauce sifting through open windows and doors.

With sharp features – her long pointy nose, thick dark hair tightly cropped at the base of her neck, disapproving glare and tall boney physique made her an easy target; especially when my two closest childhood friends and I were at odds over secret clubhouse rules.

"Your mother's a witch!" they shouted insults at the back of my head, moving me to tears. My shoulders flailing. My feet clumsily running home.

"She's a witch, alright," their words taunted. "She flies around at night with a broom and cauldron of witch's brew," their teeth seething with a vindictive dossier of hurt until I was out of sight.

I always did take personally even the slightest criticism toward my mother.

Wearing my heart and hers on my sleeve called into question the old adage "sticks and stones will break my bones but names will never hurt me."

Their words stung, defeating me like a prizefighter's final blow.

From that day forward, I looked upon my friends dispassionately with regret. Their sudden onset of betrayal shattered the unbro-

ken loyalty I imagined we shared.

Everything about protecting mom's reputation coalesced around my appreciation of the life she single-handedly provided me and my siblings.

Even as a young child, my old-soul sensibility recognized her sacrifice.

Seasoned understanding in tow, I detected an eternal duality of despair and sadness in her disposition throughout her days hemmed in by diapers and dishes, tears and tantrums.

My ears remained finetuned to discern in her voice, which carried from room to room, whether she was going to battle or baking a cake.

Mitigating the sharp attack by my friends, I pondered mom. She had navigated life so skillfully without neglect or descent.

I thought about these things and more as their insults shoved me homeward.

Mom was a healer of sorts, cheering our spirits and tending to our hurts like a skilled physician, applying her strangely foolproof home remedies.

Wrapping our necks in woolen scarves when we felt a sore throat coming on.

Rubbing cuts and bruises with garlic cloves.

Smearing our burns with petroleum jelly.

Massaging mosquito bites with a dry bar of Ivory soap.

Her remedy for ingrown toenails was equally organic.

Moved by the intense pain such a malady caused, she didn't bother with more common solutions.

Not my mom. No. Instead, she'd reach for the nail clippers and then with an artistic flare carefully cut a good-sized "V" at the crown of her toenail.

"Relieves the pressure," she'd say in a language of conviction, looking up full-faced with sweet relief.

The other day, when reeling with pain at the slightest step, I pulled out the clippers to do the same, smiling heavenward and blessing my mom.

Cancer And Keeping Your House In Order

By Richard P. Holm, MD

There is something about that word cancer, the big C.

When the pathology report displays those abnormal type cells on biopsy and the report spells out those six black letters, then, whether it is a simple treatable condition or one that will most certainly predict an earlier death, the patient hears cancer and it changes everything.

Through the years, I have had to inform too many patients about a new diagnosis of cancer and have learned there is often a paralyzing fear that comes with the word. Due to advancements in science, many more people with cancer are surviving than when I started. Still, when I have had to say to anyone of them, "You have cancer," often the word cancer is the only word they will remember for days, and so I always

plan to keep readdressing the topic until plans can be clarified.

Unfortunately, some people who hear the word cancer come to face their mortality for the very first time, even when the chance of cure is good. I dare say this goes for too many of us, resulting both from unrealistic expectations in this scientifically advanced world, and the cover-up of the dying process in this everything-is-going-to-be-alright society.

This week a friend told me she and her husband were preparing to sell their house by thinning out their stuff collected over 15 years, and remodeling with that new carpet they've needed for a long time. It reminded me of what a realtor friend once said, that he keeps his house ready for sale at all times. Why not put in the carpet, paint the bedroom, and fix the step so that he can enjoy it right now?

In a similar vein, I have heard it said that every once in a while, perhaps yearly, we should all have some kind of significant brush with death and then be rescued. Maybe that would help us to get and keep our house in order.

And then when each of us has our turn to cross the river into that land of the sweet bye and bye, we can feel what the young neurosurgeon, Paul Kalanithi, said before dying of cancer, "(I have found a joy)... unknown to me in prior years... a joy that does not hunger for more and more, but rests... satisfied in this time, right now..."

We shouldn't have to come down with cancer to get our house in order.

KALANITHI, PAUL, MD. "BEFORE I GO: A STANFORD NEUROSURGEON'S PARTING WISDOM ABOUT LIFE AND TIME." THE WASHINGTON POST, MARCH 12, 2015.

CHAMBER BUSINESS

• Business after Hours: Are you looking for an opportunity to showcase your business and network with your peers? Sign up to host a Business After Hours event! These events generally run from 5-7 p.m. on a weeknight and the hosting business provides hors d'oeuvres and refreshments. If interested, please contact Ann at: annbat-vermillionchamber.com or at 624-5571.

THIS WEEKS HAPPENINGS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

• The Dakota Hospital Foundation grant application period is open as of April 1, 2015. Grant guidelines and forms can be found at www.sanfordvermillion.org/foundation. The deadline for grant applications submitted in this funding period is Thursday, April 30, 2015. Dakota Hospital Foundation (DHF) accepts Grant Funding applications from local 501(c)3 organizations during the months of April and October each year.

• USD & National Music Museum (NMM) selected as one of fifty-two sites in the U.S. to host the 2016 traveling exhibit marking the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. The First Folio is the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays published in 1623. Plays such as Macbeth, The Tempest, Julius Caesar and others would have been lost without this publication. The rare book will be on exhibit at NMM. Final touring dates to be announced in April 2015.

• Youth sought for matches: The Clay-Union foundation has 2 adults ready to match with youth in the Vermillion area. One boy age 8-12 and 1 girl age 8-12 can be matched immediately. Call John Gille 605-421-5050 or apply online at www.clay-union-foundation.org under the sign up tab. The foundation creates long term matches.

• Vermillion Area Community Foundation (VACF) updated grant application information: Beginning this year, there are only two grant periods: The second Thursday in April and the second Thursday in October.

Grant guidelines can be found at: <http://vermillion.sdcommunityfoundation.org> or applications can be picked up at the VCDC, 116 Market Street.

FRIDAY, APRIL 3

• Ladies Hospital Auxiliary meeting, Fri., April 3 at 2 p.m. at Sanford Vermillion

• Good Friday: No classes at Vermillion Public Schools, Fri., April 3 and Monday, April 6

• Good Friday: No classes at USD, Fri., April 3. Classes resume Mon., April 6 at 8 a.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 4

• Overeaters Anonymous: Sat., April 4 at 9 a.m. Location: Newman Center-USD Campus, 320 E. Cherry, across from the MUC at the corner of Rose & Cherry St. (West Door-straight through double glass doors on left & first door on left, North Door-down hall to left & first door on left). Description: Overeaters Anonymous is a 12 step program for people with eating disorders & struggles.

• Heartland Humane Society (HHS) to host Meet & Greet, Sat., April 4 from 10 a.m. -noon at the shelter located at 3400 East Hwy. 50 in Yankton. Meet dogs of different sizes, ages & breeds that are available for adoption.

• Art Story time for ages 4-6 at Vermillion Public Library, Sat., April 4 at 10:15 a.m.

• Movement Story time for ages birth to 3 with adult at Vermillion Public Library, Sat., April 4 at 11:15 a.m.

• Kristopher Ohrlund Sophomore Tuba Recital, Sat., April 4 at 2 p.m., Colton Recital Hall in Warren M. Lee Center for Fine Arts. Open to the public.

• Gayville Hall's monthly musical variety show featuring "The Hay Country Jamboree", Sat., April 4 at 8 p.m. in Gayville, 502 Washington St. For ticket information, call 605-267-2859

• USD Outdoor Track & Field The Duels, Sat., April 4 at Howard Wood Field in Sioux Falls. All day.

NEXT WEEKS HAPPENINGS

MONDAY, APRIL 6

• Art Story time (ages 4-6 yrs.) at Vermillion Public Library, Mon., April 6 at 5:30 p.m.

• Al-anon meeting at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Mon., April 6 at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 624-9764

• Rawlins Piano Trio in Concert, Mon., April 6 at 7:30 p.m., Colton Recital Hall in Warren M. Lee Center for Fine Arts. Open to the public.

• Easter Monday: No classes at Vermillion Public Schools, Mon., April 6

TUESDAY, APRIL 7

• Movement Story time for ages birth to 3 with adult at Vermillion Public Library, Tues., April 7 at 10:15 a.m.

• Vermillion Rotary Club meeting, Tues., April 7 at 12:00 pm in the AI Neuharth Media Center conference room. For more information, visit: www.vermillionrotaryclub.org

• Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), Tues., April 7, 4:30-9:00 pm, Kozak Community Room at Vermillion Public Library

• Red Steakhouse to host Meet & Greet with Jeff Mathy, Co-Owner of Vellum Wine Craft & guest chef, Isaac Plueger, Tues., April 7 at 6:00 pm. Call 624-0079 for ticket information.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8

• Art Story time for ages 4-6 at Vermillion Public Library, Wed., April 8 at 11:00 a.m.

• Long Overdue Series presents a screening of the documentary film *Alive Inside*, Wed., April 8, 6:30 pm at Vermillion Public Library. The film highlights a wellness program called "Music & Memory" developed by social worker Dan Cohen. The program has achieved amazing results in engaging with dementia patients & others through the use of music. Following the film, a panel of local experts in the field will facilitate a community discussion with the film's subject, Dan Cohen.

THURSDAY, APRIL 9

• Visiting artist, Alex Kanevsky, painter, Thurs., April 9 at 2 p.m., Warren M. Lee Center for Fine Arts, Room 172

• Recital by guest artist, Keith Krichoff playing electro-acoustic piano, Thurs., April 9 at 8 p.m., Colton Recital Hall, Warren M. Lee Center for Fine Arts. Open to the public at no charge.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Plain Talk encourages its readers to write letters to the editor, and it asks that a few simple guidelines be followed.

Please limit letters to 300 words or less. Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.

In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the Plain Talk will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.

Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.

Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters to the Editor, 201 W. Cherry St., Vermillion, SD 57069, drop off at 201 W. Cherry in Vermillion, fax to 624-4696 or e-mail to alan.dale@plaintalk.net.