



COURTESY PHOTO
Everyone's favorite Dr. Seuss characters will grace the Knutson main stage at the Fine Arts center on the University of South Dakota campus providing a good time for all ages.

USD Dept. Of Theatre Presents ‘Seussical’

By Sarah Wetzel
For the Plain Talk

The University of South Dakota Department of Theater will continue to present “Seussical,” a musical for all ages based on the beloved Dr. Seuss books this weekend. The show opened Thursday and will run through Sunday with shows at 7:30 p.m. Evening performances will also take place April 22-25 and 27 at 7:30 p.m. Matinees will take place April 19, 25 and 26 at 2 p.m. “When I was told I would be directing this, I was really excited,” said director, Callie Hisek. “I love Dr. Seuss. I was unfamiliar with the musical at the time, and I thought it was cool that it was a musical based on Dr. Seuss. Then I heard the music and it really transported me to a whole different world.”

According to Hisek, the show contains catchy music that not only will transport you to the realm of imagination and fantasy, but stick with you. “The songs are great,” she said. “It’s just a fun, heartwarming show that’s very touching. You can be moved by it, but more importantly, you can be entertained.” Parents are encouraged to bring their children, especially those who are Dr. Seuss fans. “I think this is going to be a case where there’s a lot to look at and if the parents have been reading the books with the children they’ll recognize some of the stuff,” Hisek said. “The children and the parents are going to find something to be entertained by.” Though the show is entertaining and colorful, Hisek pointed out

that the show runtime is about two hours, so, parents should keep that in mind when thinking about what age of children to bring to the show. According to Hisek, young and old will find great messages throughout the show. “I want people to think about fantasy and imagination,” she said. “I think, sometimes, we feel like we’re the only one out there that feels the way we do, or thinks the way we do, and in actuality we’re not. “We all are worthy of somebody’s time,” Hisek continued. “We are all meant to be loved and encouraged and to encourage. I think you can see a lot of that in the show. You shouldn’t have to change who you are to please someone. They’ll notice you when they realize that you

are amazing.” Hisek said she likes how the characters show these messages so clearly. “In the case of Gertrude, she tries so hard to change who she is and what she looks like to get Horton to notice her when all it took was for her to be her generous self and realize that this big fancy tail wasn’t needed,” she said. “I think everyone’s going to take away something.” Ultimately, she hopes the show points the audience in the direction of a good book. “I hope they walk out of here and head to the library and get Dr. Seuss books and realize just what an amazing man he was and how much he wanted both children and adults to fantasize and imagine,” she said.

AG MATTERS

Lawsuit Against Syngenta Raises Questions About GMO Production

By Katie Clausen
For the Plain Talk

Agriculture is an ever changing environment. Global food demand is increasing constantly, and by genetically changing our crops, farmers are able to grow larger amounts of food on smaller amounts of land. Historically, humans have been changing the traits of crops by breeding them to strains of plants that had desirable characteristics. As technologies have advanced, this can be done quickly in a laboratory setting, while also using characteristics from other species. On Sept 12 2014, Cargill filed a lawsuit against seed manufacturer Syngenta in a Louisiana state court with the intent to seek damages from an incident where exported corn was rejected by China, due to being an unrecognized GMO. Genetically modified organisms, commonly referred to as GMO’s, are a controversial subject. Roughly 90 percent of the corn, cotton, soybeans, sugar beets and canola grown in the United States are GMO crops. It is no secret that organic and non-organic crops have made a huge splash in the marketplace. Consumers are now able to come to their own conclusions on what types of food products are best for their family by looking at and interpreting research. Organic produce comes at a premium price, but is very available at most grocery stores. Public and private regulatory researchers have come to both the defense and disfavor of GMO crops internationally. Although there are many realms of plant traits, health and characteristics that can be expressed through genetically modifying an organism, many of the GMO’s in the United States are manufactured because of their resistance to certain insects. This translates to growers having to use less pesticides, which reduces pesticide residues in foods. Along with pest tolerance often comes

larger yields and healthier plants. While GMO’s have been deemed safe by the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association and the U.S. National Academy of Science, which claim consuming GMO crops is no different those that have been altered by more traditional but time consuming methods like breeding, countries across the world have their own approval methods and feelings on GMOs. Plants with certain traits have the capacity to both help and harm different areas of the environment. Recently commodity giant Cargill has filed a lawsuit against GMO seed manufacturer and biotechnology company, Syngenta. “Unlike other seed companies, Syngenta has not practiced responsible stewardship by broadly commercializing a new product before receiving approval from a key export market like China,” said Mark Stonacek, president of Cargill Grain & Oilseed Supply Chain North America in a press release. “Syngenta also put the ability of U.S. agriculture to serve global markets at risk, costing both Cargill and the entire U.S. agricultural industry significant damages.” In 2013, a commodity price crash led to record decreases in the dollar value of U.S. corn. Looking at the larger picture, some felt that part of the reason for this downfall was that China had rejected loads of U.S. corn. The reason for this rejection was the finding of not yet approved Syngenta GMO corn, referred to in the trade as Agrisure Viptera. Cargill, however, is still a proponent of GMO technology and the potential it has in the marketplace and world food system. In the eyes of the lawsuit and according to its supporters Viptera corn caused such a backlash in the market that it drove the price of corn downward causing hardships to farmers who had spent top dollar on input prices. While Syngenta’s pull in the marketplace makes barge loads of U.S. corn

getting rejected feel unnecessary and financially damaging, many economic factors are at play in the commodity markets. Initially, an influx in grain and record breaking yields drove the supply model downward, creating a lower market. The corn market in the United States is dependent on many factors such as supply, demand, ethanol production, livestock production, changes in weather, and fluctuations in the international markets. “Syngenta believes that the lawsuit is without merit and strongly upholds the right of growers to have access to approved new technologies that can increase both their productivity and their profitability,” Syngenta released in a statement on its website. Syngenta’s information shows that the trait was, in fact, approved for cultivation in the United States in 2010, and had been approved in the U.S. by meeting all regulatory requirements. According to Monsanto, one of the largest producers of GMOs, historically over 319 traits in 25 types of crops have been approved across the globe. Over 50 countries have had their own regulatory agencies approve these traits. In fact, the purpose of some GMOs is to increase the health and wellbeing of human lives, by increasing vitamin and nutrient content in food, increase drought tolerance, and resist insects. Crops such as these could be lifesaving in developing countries that have broken agriculture systems and widespread malnourishment. While everyone is entitled to their own opinion on GMO crops and the future of our global agri-economy, it is none the less important to weigh in on all of our options. Agriculture, in general, pulls from our ecological balance while being absolutely critical to our economy. As Norman Bourlaug, Nobel Peace Prize recipient known as the father of the Green Revolution once said, “There are no miracles in agriculture production.”

A Musical ‘Fusion’ Journey

By Christine Feltes
For the Plain Talk

Melodious and syncopated piano music flooded the Colton Recital Hall at the Warren M. Lee Center April 8th, as acclaimed pianist Richard Steinbach performed. The recital featured works from around the world. Steinbach, a Professor of Music at Briar Cliff University, travelled to Vermillion to present music from his project called “Fusion.” “The theme of the concert is fusion,” Steinbach told the audience. “(It) focuses on contemporary composers who in some fashion incorporate jazz, popular music or folk music.” Steinbach shared that the pieces he chose for the evening are new works of composers who bring this synthesis between classical music and contemporary jazz, popular or folk music. “Most of the music is quite new, written within the last 10 years,” Steinbach said.

For the “Fusion” project, he traveled to South America, working with students and dialoguing with composers. “I did this concert tour in South America, performing concerts of new music and also teaching,” Steinbach said. “I went into the schools and universities and worked with students. And then, at the same time, I collected new music from South America from the composers that I met.” After this initial gathering of pieces, Steinbach returned to the United States and began work on his CD. The National Music Museum’s Juliet Everist was the project’s executive producer and one of the organizers for the debut of the CD, which will occur at the Carnegie

Hall in New York, June 12. “The culmination of the project is the premiere of the CD at Carnegie Hall,” Steinbach said. Everist shared that it has been an honor for her to work with Steinbach and to promote his project. “I’m so impressed with Richard. For a long time I have been,” said Everist. “The National Music Museum is involved

with sponsoring part of the Carnegie Hall evening; it’s a collaboration.” The National Music Museum will be sharing the King Cello from its collection with New York. Everist said that the King Cello will travel out with supporters of Steinbach to spend the summer at the Metropolitan in New York. “She worked with me and sponsored me for the South American tour, and then working towards the release of the CD, we contacted Carnegie Hall over lunch,” Steinbach said. “Juliet is a significant part of the concert.” Vermillion was fortunate to have Steinbach share pieces that he will be performing in New York. Many of the pieces he performed in Vermillion will be included on his CD, which will be available from his website, richardsteinbachpiano.com, after June 12. Steinbach is excited to share the music that he loves with a wider audience. “My observation is that the direction that contemporary music is going is this merging of the classical world and the pop world,” he explained. “The young composers are writing these hybrid pieces that are wonderful.”

School

FROM PAGE 1A

“We try to purchase local when we can to try to keep Vermillion money in Vermillion hands,” he said. Graham said discussions on changing Wednesday pizza meals to Fridays are being heard. And, that the school began offering grab-and-go meals for high school students who go off campus for dual-credit classes this week. “We really appreciate all the labor you put into it,” Fairholm said. “You make it seem seamless even though we know it’s not.”

OTHER BUSINESS

• Superintendent Mark Froke reported the receipt of a letter of approval from the Department of Education for the Spanish course waiver the board approved at the last meeting. • Froke announced an open house at the new CTE Building at the high school on Tues. April 21 from 4-8 p.m. The public is invited. • Froke also reported that the Smarter Balance testing is currently taking place. “The high school is complete at this time,” he said. “Middle school will be done on April 23 and the elementary actually begins tomorrow (Tuesday) with their testing. That will go till

May 12.”

• Board members Chris Esping and Doug Peterson reported on the Finance Committee meeting held two weeks ago. “We met and went through a revised budget and it looks like things are good for the coming year, thanks a lot to the work of Dr. Froke and Sheila,” Peterson said. “I think we are in

a position where we can do what we have to do to have a good district.” • The board unanimously passed a 10 percent health insurance premium rate increase for 2015-16. • Grace Benson appeared before the board to report on a grant received to assist with teaching students with disabilities.

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CELEBRATE NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK
Saturday, April 18th
2-3 pm
in the Kozak Community Room
We have a big bash in store to celebrate **National Library Week!** Join us as we honor special library volunteers in a special reception, unveil a special new #librarylove campaign, screen a video of a fun teen event and end the afternoon with door prizes! Additionally, the Children’s Art Show & Sale, a fundraiser for the Summer Reading Program, will be open from **10 – 4 pm.**
18 Church St • Vermillion
VERMILLION PUBLIC LIBRARY 677-7060 or vermillionpubliclibrary.org for more information

Vermillion Area Farmer’s Market
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