



SARAH WETZEL / FOR THE PLAIN TALK
Charlie shows off the trap he created at the Vermillion Public Library's LEGO club last week.

Lil' LEGO, Big Ideas

By Sarah Wetzels
For the Plain Talk

As part of the Vermillion Public Library's National Library Week celebration, kids gathered to get creative with a universally popular building material, LEGO® bricks.

"I tried to build a combine or a tractor," said Charles, 4. "My car is red. My favorite thing to build with is red."

Though Charles loves these multicolored mini-bricks, he's not the only one in his family who does.

"My dad has his own Legos - a whole room of Legos," Charles said. "He has to follow the instructions."

Charles' dad happens to be a LEGO engineer and will be heading the LEGO club over the summer according to library staff.

The LEGO club currently meets every first and third Thursday from 3:30-5 p.m. at the library. Beginning June 3, the meeting time will change to Wednesday mornings from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Kids are free to come and create and after put their work on display for all to see.

This particular LEGO activity was custom catered by 11-year-old Emily who made LEGO-brick cakes.

"We took banana pans and then for the top we did cupcakes cut in half," she said.

Emily reportedly got the idea from the internet.

Though not particularly interested in building with the bricks, Emily said she does enjoy baking batter.

"For Easter, I did Easter cakes," she said. "One looked like an Easter bunny and the other one was an Easter nest."

The theme of the LEGO build was traps, paralleling the recent rising interest in superhero movies and catching the 'bad guy' according to Beth Knedler, the youth librarian.

Charles, 6 built an ingenious trap for the pizza-loving prowler.

"If he walks up here, the window only opens up that side so when he goes through the window he's stuck in

here," he said, showing off his contraption. "As soon as he gets in, the lasers start shooting then this thing falls automatically. That's basically how it works."

Charles is a veteran LEGO builder himself.

"I have a huge collection of Legos," he said.

Charles went on to say his favorite things to build are traps and castles in no particular color.

"I pick colors randomly," he said. "Some colors are for some things, like if it's a work truck then it should be yellow, but it depends on the thing."

Ronnie, 5, said she prefers working in red, however her creation utilized many different colors.

"I'm not quite done," she said. "That guy's trapped in jail and that guy's talking on the phone to his friend."

Ronnie's scene also included a mailbox with a fence and rubber band around it.

"That guy put a fence up there," she said. "The one that's in jail put the rubber band on."

Ronnie was in the process of working on an edifice kitty-corner to the jail.

"This is going to be a police station," she said. "They wanted it over there."

Ronnie also frequently builds with LEGO bricks in a very organized way, separating colors out on her tile floor for building ease.

"I have tons of Legos at home," she said. "I build with instructions, but I like doing whatever I want, because I do really good things when I do it myself."

Ronnie has recently built with LEGO movie sets including from "Frozen" and "The LEGO movie".

The creations made by the kids will be on display at the library for two weeks at which point they will be disassembled in preparation for the next wave of imagination.

For more information on library activities like the LEGO club, visit vermillionpubliclibrary.org or call 605-677-7060.

Aaron Packard Wins Gold American Advertising Award

Sonia Hernandez
For The Plain Talk

Aaron Packard, local photographer & business owner, has been making a name for himself in the creative community for years. His talents were recognized this year when his work won the regional Gold American Advertising Award (ADDY).

Packard's photographs won the Gold ADDY in the second tier of the competition, and will compete at the national level.

"Winning awards like this one definitely legitimizes my drive to continue making images," says Packard.

The American Advertising Awards consists of a three-tier national competition, and is the advertising industry's largest competition. Applicants compete in the first tier, and are recognized for being the best in their markets. For the second tier, these ADDY winners compete against winners from other local clubs in one of 15 district competitions. These winners are forwarded to the third tier - the national stage of the American Advertising Awards.

Packard did not work alone on this award winning advertising campaign. He collaborated with the Rapid City marketing and communications firm Jackalope to create work on behalf of Black Hills Ammunition. Packard has worked with Jackalope owner, CEO and creative director Jason Alley for five



COURTESY PHOTO
Aaron Packard of Lumo Studios, recently was awarded a Gold ADDY award for his work with Black Hills Ammunition.

years, and the duo have created multiple campaigns for Black Hills Ammunition in the past.

"It's been amazing working with Aaron," says Alley. "I admire that with every campaign he's able to adapt, and he has such a broad range of experience."

Jeff Hoffman, co-owner of Black Hills Ammunition is thrilled about this year's campaign.

"We couldn't be happier with the

work that Jason and Aaron do for us," says Hoffman. Every year we set the bar higher - and every year they somehow manage to do better."

The campaign for Black Hills Ammunition aimed to capture the hands-on approach the company has taken to inspecting its products.

"Black Hills Ammunition meticulously hand inspects their craftsmanship,"

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art OF VERMILLION

Vermillion Next Working To Keep Professionals In Vermillion

Sonia Hernandez
For The Plain Talk

The local organization Vermillion Next aims to keep professionals in the within the Vermillion community.

Founded last October, Vermillion Next hopes to continue gaining membership in order to strengthen personal connections within the local community.

The problem the organization hopes to solve is one that plagues many communities. Many young professionals go elsewhere for employment, leaving important vacancies in small communities like Vermillion.

James Caraway, graduate student at the University of South Dakota studying Public Administration, is the Economic Development Assistant at the Vermillion Chamber of Commerce who helped found the organization.

"We are still building membership," says Caraway. "But we started because we saw a need for younger community members to meet others like them."

Vermillion Next has about 30 members at the moment, 80 percent of which are under the age of 30. The group does not necessarily cater to strictly young professionals, stating that the age range is 21-40 years old. The reasoning is a result of negative growth for this particular demographic in Vermillion.

"We want to bring people together," says Caraway. "We also want to be able to enhance community interaction and re-energize events in the community."

The group wants to expose individuals unfamiliar with the area to all the things it has to offer. For example, Vermillion Next has recently taken over Thursdays on the

Platz, which takes place July through August in downtown Vermillion, featuring live music and food. The group plans to enhance what Thursdays on the Platz already has to offer and garner more exposure.

The organization also puts on a social gathering every month at various locations in Vermillion with the intention of exposing members and potential members to local businesses.

Sara Bye, a lifelong native of Vermillion and Farmers Insurance Agent has high hopes for the organization.

"I couldn't wait to have something like this here in Vermillion," says Bye. "I have met some really amazing people that I wouldn't have probably ever crossed paths with. This kind of group can hopefully help retain young professionals in Vermillion by introducing them to

different people and places around town."

Stevie Holmes, geology major at the University of South Dakota, has had a positive experience as a member of Vermillion Next.

"It is definitely serving its intended purpose of creating connect," says Holmes. "The events are low-pressure... but it can be intimidating to try to rub elbows with business owners when you're just trying to get your own career off the ground. My hope is that we can be a solid networking group that is a force for people to stay and help Vermillion continue to be a vibrant community."

To learn more about Vermillion Next, you can find them on Facebook or at <http://vermillionchamber.com/vermillionnext.php>

Heikes Family Farm To Host Event

By Katie Clausen
For the Plain Talk

The Heikes Family Farm, run by Sam Heikes, Vermillion's local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm and source for fresh produce is hosting an event April 24 that agriculture and farm-to-table enthusiasts will not want to miss.

"It's a community invitation," Heikes said. "To see what we are doing on the farm."

Heikes and his family run the farm with the intention of both catering to local food needs and the landscape.

"A year ago, while with the local sustainability group, I thought a big part of what we do with food production here at the farm fits into sustainability," Heikes said. "We'd like to educate people on that."

The award winning CSA will be hosting the Earth



COURTESY PHOTO: HEIKES FAMILY FARMS

Week themed event from 4-7 p.m. Hayrides, music and food will be the centerpiece of the event, but guests are invited to come learn about the farm, food production, agriculture, and the CSA system. In addition to entertainment and tastings, there will be educational displays and animals for the kids to see.

"It's all about family, we encourage people to bring the kids," Heikes said.

The CSA grows a wide

variety of fruits and vegetables throughout the year. Focused around environmentally conscientious practices and healthy and tasty food production, the Heikes farm is an award winning CSA that has been nationally recognized.

"We want families to come here and get people to focus on their health and savor the local flavor," Heikes said. "We want people to eat more local vegetables not only because it's healthy, but because it tastes really good."

Heikes Family Farm offers both a variety of individual shares and commercial shares with the intent of supplying a wide variety of produce needs in the area.

Each year the CSA reaches its goals, the more they are able to expand the operation and increase variety and quantity of healthy fruits and vegetables that with an emphasis on local infrastructure and sustainability.

Katwalk Fashion Show A Success

By Elyse Brightman
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University of South Dakota's Kappa Alpha Theta sorority held its fourth annual Katwalk fashion show fundraiser on Saturday, April 11.

The fundraiser featured students modeling clothes from Lot 2029 Boutique in Sioux Falls to benefit the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). This year, they raised \$4,130 for CASA.

The money raised benefits the Southeast CASA chapter based in Yankton and with the recent expansion into Clay County; the money raised by Kappa Alpha Theta will benefit children in Vermillion and the surrounding towns.

"The money goes directly to this program. It stays locally, but now with our expansion to Clay County,

the money that this sorority raises is going to be earmarked for the services," said Southeast CASA program director Sherri Rogers-Conti.

Southeast CASA made its official announcement of the expansion prior to the start of the show.

"(The show) brings awareness to CASA, which not a lot of people do know about," said Abby Pierce Kappa Alpha Theta's service and philanthropy director.

The night was highlighted by a male model competition where models chose their own outfits and were judged based on audience applause. The CASA board of directors made the final decision on the winner.

Lot 2029 also held a trunk sale with a portion of the sales going towards CASA.

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