

# Patti Roberts Pizzuto To Speak At Library's Artists And Authors Series

BY SARAH WETZEL  
For the Plain Talk

After the summer hiatus, the Vermillion Public Library is ushering in a new season of Artists and Authors.

Tuesday at 7 p.m. local mixed media artist Patti Roberts Pizzuto will be presenting on her artistic process.

The event is free and open to the public.

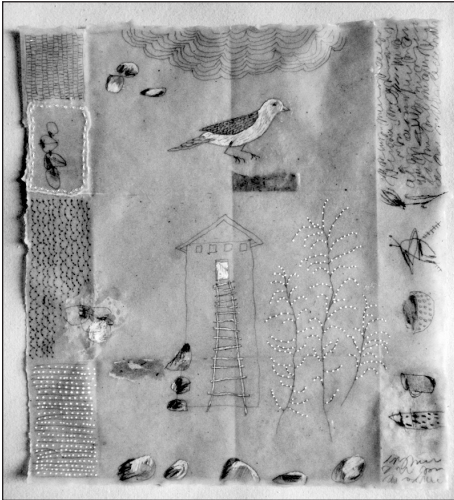
"I'll be talking about my artistic practice and how I work and where the ideas come from and how they kind of reveal themselves and about the artistic journey and the journey through life," Pizzuto said. "It's drawing and painting and a lot of hand stitching. It's mostly works on paper but not always. Kind of small and intimate."

The presentation will include a PowerPoint and examples of her work.

"I'll have a PowerPoint where I talk about the background of the works and the themes that I work with," Pizzuto said. "Then i'm going to bring some actual samples of my work because they're small and portable. There's nothing better than seeing the actual work instead of images of the work. They're very tactile and layered."

Though Pizzuto has been an artist for decades, she still likes to expand her knowledge into different fields, currently finishing a Masters Degree in Adult and Higher Education at the University of South Dakota.

"It's connected and not connected to my



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**Mixed Media artist Patti Roberts Pizzuto will speak at the library Tuesday and discuss her personal artistic approach in pieces such as this.**

artwork," she said. "I think everybody's life, all the pieces of it are interconnected in a way. In that way getting a degree in adult higher education is part of my artistic identity. I spent my working years in libraries so that factors into my artwork as well."

Though aspects of her life factor into her artwork, Pizzuto said it's more metaphori-

cal.

"My work is not about depicting what I see," she said. "It's more ideas and the way I view life and the way I come to understand life through the artwork. That doesn't mean the setting, the landscape isn't part of what inspires me. It just may not be a direct view of that. I'm not painting the river but the idea of the river as a metaphor comes through in the work. I think that there are a million different ways artists can approach their work. That's one of the things I'll talk about, my artistic practice which will not be what another person who makes art will say about how they work or how they go about making art."

Pizzuto looks forward to her presentation saying it feels like returning home since she worked in public libraries.

"There's a wonderful artistic community here in Vermillion," she said. "We know each other and we support each other in different ways. It's nice to come back there and share my own work."

Pizzuto hopes that her presentation instills in her audience the sense that everybody is creative.

"I think that we lose that idea about ourselves the older we get through various means but everybody has that potential," she said. "I would hope that maybe there's a little inspiration for people to go and explore drawing, painting and making art on their own."

Creative streaks don't have to be through art according to Pizzuto.

"Everybody has what I think of as an inner language," she said. "Maybe it's going to happen to you through music or something else. Everybody has a way to be creative. I think that's important I think that people feel that need but they don't know how to express it. We grow up and we get busy with adult life and things like that."

Susan Heggstad, adult programming coordinator at the library and fellow artist also looks forward to the presentation.

"Patti is an artist I've known and admired for a long time," she said. "She worked here at the library up until last summer; I am currently in the position that she was in. She creates wonderfully delicate and evocative pieces that just take my breath away."

"My hope is that folks who attend Patti's presentation will be equally astounded by her work, and will be inspired to experiment for themselves. Patti will lead a hands-on workshop on Saturday, September 12th, that is free and open to the public. I sincerely hope that many will want to go out and create their own mixed media works on paper, and attend the hands-on workshop, as well."

For more information on the monthly Artists and Authors library series and workshops visit [vermillionpubliclibrary.org](http://vermillionpubliclibrary.org).

## Drowning Victim ID'd As USD Student, Dante Native

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
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Authorities confirmed late last Wednesday, that the body found in the Missouri River near Elk Point is the 19-year-old swimmer missing since last Sunday.

The victim was identified Thursday as Brant Joseph Blaha of Dante. He would have been a sophomore at the University of South Dakota. He was a member of the Honors Program, majoring in history education and minoring in archaeology.

Blaha's body was found around 3 p.m. Wednesday after an intense four-day search effort by crews from South Dakota and Nebraska. The body was found about 2 1/2 miles south of where Blaha was last seen.

Blaha's death has hit hard the USD community, which is moving onto campus today (Friday) for the start of next week's classes, said USD Vice President Kim Grieve.

"Brant will be remembered as an intelligent, fun and caring person who loved his family and USD," said Grieve, who serves as dean of students.

Blaha graduated from Avon High School in 2014. He was active in chorus, football and excelled in cross country. He also was very active with the Science Fair, receiving honors in Arizona. He was an honor student at Avon High School.

Blaha's death has been a shock to the school and community, said Avon superintendent Tom Culver.

"Brant was a great kid. He always had a smile on his face and loved to joke around," Culver said. "Everyone in the community will really miss him."

The Avon schools are not in session this morning (Friday) so students and staff can attend the funeral, Culver said. The funeral Mass will be held at 10:30 a.m. preceded by a 9:30 a.m. Rosary, at the Assumption Catholic Church in Dante.

Plans are already under way to honor Blaha, Culver said. "His classmates are going to plant a tree at our football field complex in his memory," the superintendent said.

Blaha was part of a group of five swimmers who decided Sunday afternoon to cross the Missouri River at a popular spot west of Elk Point. The other four swimmers safely made it across



COURTESY PHOTO

**Authorities have confirmed the body found in the Missouri River near Elk Point is the 19-year-old swimmer missing since last Sunday. The victim was identified Thursday as Brant Joseph Blaha of Dante**

the river, but Blaha became separated from them and was apparently swept downstream. He wasn't wearing a lifejacket.

The search effort was launched immediately and included sonar devices, search dogs and an airplane. In addition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers voluntarily lowered the river levels about one foot to aid the search.

The rescue crews battled inclement weather that included unseasonably cool temperatures, rainfall, overcast skies and strong winds which gusted to 40 miles per hour.

In addition, authorities were faced with covering a large search area and the possibility of rugged and unpredictable waters.

Blaha's body was located Wednesday, but authorities continued to withhold the teenager's name. On Thursday, the Sanford Health Pathology's office confirmed the young man's identity.

Grieve sent a notice to the USD community upon confirmation of Blaha's death.

"It is with great sadness, I am informing you that Brant Blaha, a USD Honors student studying History Education, passed away this week," she wrote. "Brant's father wanted to thank all of the students and staff who

have offered their support and prayers during this time. A memorial service will be planned on campus to honor Brant's life soon."

As a member of the Honors Program, Blaha was part of a living learning community that took courses together, Grieve said.

However, the young man was known in the larger campus community, Grieve said. USD students contacted university officials immediately after Blaha

became missing.

"We've offered counseling to students both as a group and individually since last Sunday," Grieve said. "Vermillion is a small community, and (his death) is devastating to us."

Blaha's death provides a tragic and powerful learning lesson for other USD students, Grieve said. The tragedy will be incorporated in USD's safety discussions for its students.

"We'll discuss the Missouri River because a lot of our students go to the beach, and (the river) can be so dangerous," she said.

During media interviews, Union County Sheriff Dan Limoges said this week wasn't the first time his office has needed to search for missing persons in the Missouri River.

The sheriff urged the public to show extreme caution – including the wearing of a life jacket – when going on or near the river.

The Missouri River can exhibit treacherous conditions, particularly during poor weather conditions, Limoges said.

"The river is relentless, and it's not always very giving," he told one media outlet.

Assisting in this week's search were South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks; Nebraska Game and Parks; Ponca (Nebraska) Fire and Rescue; Yankton County Search and Rescue; the Union County sheriff's personnel and Union County emergency management.

## The National Music Museum Opens Fall Film Season With Dylan Rock-Doc Classic

"Don't Look Back is hailed as one of the ten best documentaries and one of the greatest rock films of all time," says Patricia Bornhofen, National Music Museum spokesperson. Film lovers and music lovers will have the rare chance to see the acclaimed Bob Dylan film on the big screen this Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. as the NMM starts its 2015-2016 film series at the Coyote Twin Theater, in downtown Vermillion.

"The film is a great story chronicling Bob Dylan's fabled 1965 tour. You'll also see some of the origins of music-video memes in its stylized production and hear indie-rock DNA in its attitude and sounds. You can't turn back time to attend a 1965 Dylan concert — but you can experience this cool film in a movie theater — larger than life."

The Museum is continuing its music film series as a unique means of outreach to the community about its musical instrument collection. "We have a historic Dylan guitar with its own history, which people must come see at the Museum," says Bornhofen.

Partnering with the new Vermillion Theaters group this season, the NMM will show its movies at the Coyote Twin Theatre, once monthly, at 10:00 a.m. on Saturdays, a great way to start the culture day – especially with help from delicious breakfast concessions: coffee, tea and pastries for \$5.00, catered in by Café Brule.

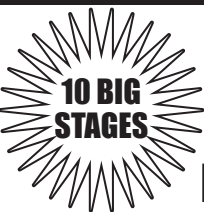
Proceeds from NMM movie admissions go to the Museum. General public admission is \$5.00, while admission for USD students and NMM members-with-benefits is complimentary of the National Music Museum.

For its fall 2015 season, the NMM plans to show three more films "that you must see and hear in a real theater," says Bornhofen.

On Saturday, September 26, at 10:00 a.m., the NMM presents "Shine", Jeremy Rush's Oscar-winning portrayal of the troubled piano-genius David Helfgott, with a brief introduction by University of South Dakota Keyboard Professor Susanne Skyrn. The following month, on Saturday, October 24, at 10 a.m., the NMM is working to show the recently debuted documentary "Some Kind of Spark", a powerful film-festival winner about what happens when great music education meets music-hungry, under-served kids. Closing out the NMM's four-movie fall series, on Saturday, November 21, at 10 a.m., will be the passionate, energy-filled "Buena Vista Social Club" – director Wim Wenders' and Ry Cooder's wildly popular, award-winning 1999 documentary about a legendary ensemble of Cuban musicians who are brought together to tour and record their golden-age Afro-Cuban sound again. Patricia Bornhofen will give that brief introduction.

While the Vermillion Theater is under renovation, the NMM movies will continue to be shown at Coyote Twin Theatre, 10 E. Main, downtown Vermillion.

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### Thank You

to my son, Bill Brown & dauter-in-law,  
Cheryl for hosting a very special 80<sup>th</sup> birthday  
party for me. It was great to be remembered by



all my family & so  
many friends. Also,  
thank you for the  
card shower. So fun  
to be remembered  
by so many.

Doris Brown

### Happy 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday!

*Glennis Hood Stewart*  
**September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1925**



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