

# Tanager of the week: Erika Moen

By Elyse Brightman  
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Erika Moen wanted to try her hand at performing without the pressure of a big audience watching, so she stumbled upon oral interpretation.

"It's just kind of fun for people like me who don't really want to do theater," said the Vermillion High School student. "We don't necessarily want to perform in front of a huge audience and do plays and put in that time commitment, but then it's nice to be able to do a smaller version of it in terms of just being able to focus on a really small part of a piece and just delve really deep into that and get experience that way."

And last weekend, Moen won two superior ranks and two medals at the state oral interpretation festival in Sturgis naming her this week's Tanager of the Week.

"She really works hard," the VHS oral interp coach Mary Bagley. "(She's) very smart. She was always asking when she could come in and practice her piece and she always took notes really well. I'd give her some pointers and then the next time she came and worked with me she always had worked on those and improved and it paid off. She did really well."

For high school oral interp, participants have a choice to compete in seven different categories: poetry, humorous, serious, oratory, duet, reader's theater and story tell.

In order to win a medal the performer needs to be awarded a superior rank by two of the three judges watching.

"It's basically an activity where you find a piece — like a very small piece, it can be from a book, from a play, a poem or something like that — and then you cut it down to under 10 minutes and then you just perform it," Moen said. "It's kind of mini theater, I like to call it, but, there's different rules

to it. You don't have props, you don't have costumes, and you're not allowed to touch each other if there are other actors, so it's just sort of different, but it's kind of the same premise as theater."

Most of the categories are performed individually, but there are two with more than one performer. Moen competed in the oratory and reader's theater categories, meaning she earned superior rank, and medals, in each of the events she performed.

"Oratory is any kind of persuasive essay or speech that has been written or presented by someone and then the student takes that and presents it," Bagley said. "Reader's theater has up to six (performers), it doesn't have to be six, but it's three to six students. The group that Erika was in had four students in it. It can be any kind of literature that they put in to this 10-minute format and they divide the piece up so they all have a part to speak."

The oral interp season takes place during the fall and VHS competes at different tournaments that all leads up to the state festival at the beginning of December. According to Moen, she earned superior or superior plus as most tournaments.

"(The season) went really well this year," she said. "My reader's theater we did really well and got superior rank or superior plus at most tournaments, same with my oratory."

Moen also participates in a number of extracurricular activities at VHS including debate team, which helped her transition into oral interp.

"I joined debate my 8th grade year," she said. "Debate and oral interp tend to overlap a lot, there are a lot of the same people in both events, and oral interp kind of carries on during the debate season. I kind of knew about it, but I'd never really tried it, so my freshman year, when I came to high

school, I wanted to get involved in more activities, try something new, and oral interp just seemed like a good activity without the stress of performing in front of large audiences, but still gain a taste of theater, so I tried it."

She also participates in quiz bowl, young Democrats, student council, NHS and theater as part of the stage crew.

If you know a high school student deserving of recognition in athletics or otherwise, suggestions for Tanager of the Week can be sent to Elyse Brightman at elyse.brightman@plaintalk.net or by calling 605-624-4429.



## W.H. Over Museum Christmas Festival

By Sarah Wetzel  
For the Plain Talk

Community members flocked to the W.H. Over Museum Sunday to participate in and visit the annual Christmas festival.

"This is our 49th year so we're looking forward to a 50th year next year and I have shared the event for 20 years," said Maxine Johnson of the museum's board of directors. "We feature vendors, a bake sale, a hospitality table and then we usually have some talent."

The talent featured this year included various dance groups from the Vermillion Area Dance Organization and baton twirlers.

"The little kids are so cute, all they need to do is stand there," Johnson said. "They don't have to do anything but smile. They always bring mom and dad and grandma and grandpa and anybody else that's around."

It could be said that the vendors' tables were a talent show of sorts offering many handmade goods from wood-working to decorative jar lids to Native American gifts.

Ladies from the First Lutheran Church in Wakonda had an ongoing Lefse cooking demonstration.

The tasty Norwegian potato pancakes were sold out in less than an hour leaving the group to only offer hot-off-the-pan Lefse.

"I think I counted 25 vendors this year and that's about our top because we're getting so many exhibits that are around," Johnson said. "We have to remember that we're a museum not a shop. I like the woodworkers that come. The lacemakers have been continuous every year I've been here. They're all so gracious to come. Some come from Nebraska, Sioux Falls. It's just a nice afternoon."

Various organizations decorated trees including Monday Morning Crafters, Lions Club, Clay County Democrats, Girl Scouts, 4H, United Way of Vermillion, Eagle Nest Dining, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Clay County Relay for Life, St. Agnes School, Alpha Lambda ESA and Civic Council.

Johnson begins months ahead of time preparing for this event.

"It's always fun setting up," she said. "I start making

contacts in early summer, sending out my initial letters inviting people to come. I'll put an ad in the paper and things just go from there. I give them an October 15 deadline but I took a reservation last night at 6:30 so if I can find a spot for a table and we have one we just have people come. It's detail-oriented and labor-intensive, that's how I'd describe getting ready for this festival because we have to be ready to go and I always take one last walk through on Saturday and just enjoy it. It's always so pretty and quiet."

It's all worth it in the end though Johnson was exhausted.

"I just like to see folks come and enjoy the day," she said. "Every booth is my favorite. I enjoy seeing the different things people do and how many different crafts there are to be seen in town."

For more information on the W.H. Over Museum visit [www.whovermuseum.org](http://www.whovermuseum.org).

## Dave Says

# Getting back on the wagon

BY DAVE RAMSEY  
Courtesy of EveryDollar.com



Dave RAMSEY

**Dear Dave,**  
I started working your plan earlier this year. I even budgeted for Christmas and got my shopping done early, but in the process I overspent and blew my whole monthly budget. Now I'm having a hard time getting motivated again. Do you have any suggestions?  
**Misty**

**Dear Misty,**  
Lots of folks make mistakes like this, even though they went into things with the best intentions. The Bible says that no discipline seems pleasant at the time, but it yields a harvest of righteousness.

The best way I know to encourage you to get back on the wagon is to ask one simple question: Where do you want to be in five or 10 years? Is your current path going to reward you with a financially secure life? Is it going to give you the ability to retire with dignity and to have fun living and giving in your golden years, or is it going to leave you broke, scared and desperate? There's one simple answer if the path you're on isn't going to get you what you want and where you want to be in life: Change the path!

Most people don't even take the time to identify where they want to go

in life or how to get there. They just shuffle along, blame others and circumstances for their situations, and think someone will take care of them. That's called being a child. Children do what feels good at the moment, but adults devise a plan and stick to it.

**Dear Anne,**  
Your debt required you to personally sign for it, right? So, it's all personal debt. The law is going to treat you exactly the same if you don't pay a Small Business Administration (SBA) loan as the law treats you with an unsecured personal line of credit. You're still going to get your butt sued, and they're still going to come take your stuff or garnish your wages. It's debt! The only way it's personal debt versus business debt is in your mind.

If I'm in your shoes, I'm going to live on as little as I can and pay this off like I was trying to pay off a house. If I made \$200,000 a year on investments, and everything was paid for except one of my investments, how quickly would I pay that one investment off? Two years. In your situation, surely you can live on \$100,000 a year!

—Dave

Lazy is always easier, and more fun, in the short term. But it's a huge mistake when it comes to the future, Misty. Think ahead, plan ahead, and jump back on the wagon!

—Dave

### Personal vs. business

**Dear Dave,**  
Do you view personal debt and business debt the same way? I have about \$210,000 in farm loans that are mostly tied up in land I rent to farmers. It's the only debt I have, and the rental prices supply me an income of about \$200,000 a year.

Anne

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