

GUEST COMMENTARY

By uniting as individuals, we can build a better future

Dear Editor:

I write in response to your Feb. 5 editorial We Hope Effort is More Than an Empty Gesture.

Thank you for your interest in the Year of Unity. However, I disagree with your opinion that there has been only a tiny sign of progress in improving race relations in South Dakota since Gov. George Mickelson proclaimed the Year of Reconciliation in 1990.

No one can deny that cultural change can be difficult. It takes time, patience, and fortitude. The task can, at times, be disheartening. To move forward and remain energized, it's important for all South Dakotans to recognize that progress is being made.

The Year of Unity not only gives us the opportunity to renew South Dakota's dedication to improving race relations, it also provides us an occasion to celebrate our many success stories.

A prime example of progress is the Indian Education Act, which I proposed to the South Dakota Legislature. Passage of the 2007 law put increased priority on Indian education and cultural understanding through education. Specifically, the act led to development of the Indian Education Advisory Council and re-establishment of the Office of Indian Education. It also infused more South Dakota Native American history and culture in education standards and assessments. In addition, the state Board of Education now includes a tribal member.

Other cultural communication and relationship improvements have taken place in recent years on the tourism and economic development fronts.

Tourism and tribal representatives now meet regularly to work specifically on advancement of tribal tourism in South Dakota. This has led to the addition of a tribal tourism segment at the Governor's Tourism Conference, production of a tribal tourism brochure, and inclusion of tribal attractions during media tours and international tourism tours.

Economic development also is moving forward in Indian Country.

In 2008, cooperation between the Rosebud Electronic Integration Corporation, the Rosebud Economic Development Corporation, and Governor's Office of Economic Development led to opening of Advanced Electronic Rosebud Integration in Mission. The firm started with seven employees and expects to eventually employ 25. The initial partnership has spawned other job opportunities and business development in the area, including a mini-mart, garage, and grocery store.

In the Timber Lake area, local, tribal, and state leaders worked together to bring in Octaflex and Lakota Industries. They design and produce hunting bows, employing more than 20 people – primarily Native Americans.

There have been many other state-tribal successes in South Dakota since I became Governor in 2003. They include:

- Establishment of a state Board of Geographic Names to revise culturally offensive geographic names

- Approval of supplements to the Indian Child Welfare Act, which authorize the State and Indian Tribes to enter into agreements for the foster care and custody of Native American children

- Hiring of an Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) program specialist by the Department of Social Services

- Assisting tribal authorities with disaster recovery efforts on the Pine Ridge and

Cheyenne River Indian reservations in the wake of severe blizzards this winter, including on-site help from state Emergency Operations managers

- Special law enforcement training for tribal officers to combat methamphetamine distribution and use on reservations

- Production of a program by South Dakota Public Broadcasting and the White Buffalo Calf Women Society to address teenage suicides on reservations

- Authorizing the construction of a nursing home on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation

- Devoting a segment of cultural diversity training at the University of South Dakota Medical School to the Native American culture

- Coordinated efforts to upgrade the water system on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation

- An annual Indian Education Conference established by the state Department of Education

- Establishment of the Gear Up program by the state Department of Education and Oceti Sakowin Education Consortium to enhance higher education opportunities for Native American students

- Tribal officials working together with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to clean up petroleum leaks and spills on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation

- The Oglala Sioux Tribe and South Dakota Department of Game Fish and Parks cooperating to build an outdoor classroom at Pine Ridge High School

- Various tax compacts between tribes and the state Department of Revenue

- Tribal colleges and the state Department of Health working together to build an internship program

- Agreement between tribes and the state Department of Transportation on road construction funds

- Tribal Employment Rights representatives being invited to transportation construction project meetings

- Child safety seats and safety-seat technician training being provided on reservations

- Inclusion of a Native American representative on the state Board of Pardons and Paroles

- A public celebration of Native American culture in an annual day set aside at the State Capitol during the legislative session

These are just some examples of the many and diverse efforts that have been implemented in recent years.

Certainly there is work left to do. But as was the case 20 years ago, the Year of Unity is a small – but important – step in a long journey.

During this Year of Unity, on a community and personal level, I ask all South Dakotans to be advocates for humanity. Together, we can strengthen South Dakota for all people and all cultures. By uniting as individuals, we can build a better future.

Sincerely,
M. Michael Rounds
Governor
South Dakota

Vermillion Area Chamber of Commerce & Development Company
116 Market Street, Suite 103
Vermillion, SD 57069
605-624-5571
vcdc@vermillionchamber.com
www.vermillionchamber.com

Chamber Business:

VCDC Annual Banquet will be held Friday, Feb. 19 at the Eagles Club, Vermillion. Social from 5 to 6 p.m. with dinner and program to follow. Featured speaker is Cinda Baxter, founder of the 3/50 Project. Visit www.the350project.net for more information. Cost is \$30/person. Contact Carly @ 624-5571 or carlyh@vermillionchamber.com at 624-5571.

Cracker Barrel Sessions will be held Sat., Feb. 20, 10 a.m. to noon at the Vermillion Public Library and Saturday, March 6, 10 a.m. to noon at the Vermillion Fire Hall conference room. Sponsors include VCDC, VFW Auxiliary, Delta Kappa Gamma, Clay County Democrats and Clay County Republicans.

Business After Hours at Razels on Tuesday, March 9 from 5 to 7 p.m.

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

VCDC Committees: Are you interested in becoming more active with the VCDC and in the Community? Join one of our new committees! We currently have two new committees that we are searching for great volunteers. These committees are the Special Events Committee and the Legislative Affairs Committee. If you love

event planning, the Special Events Committee is for you! This committee will work to plan and promote special events that the VCDC hosts such as the Annual Fourth of July Celebration, the Annual Golf Social, and the Annual Banquet. Are you interested in the legislative issues that affect Clay County and local businesses? The Legislative Affairs Committee will work to stay up to date on such issues and keep the VCDC membership informed. If you are interested in either of these committees or would like more information, please contact Carly at carlyh@vermillionchamber.com or at 624-5571.

The Vermillion Area Community Foundation is accepting proposals for projects to improve our community. Forms for submitting proposals by groups or organizations are available at the Chamber of Commerce office. While funds available are limited we can fully fund small one time requests or partially fund larger projects. Your annual donations to our Foundation will provide us with increasing funds each year for worthwhile projects.

This Weeks Happenings!

- High School Gymnastics State Meet at Aberdeen Friday, Feb. 19 and Saturday, Feb. 20 at 11 a.m.

- High School Bowling at West Central Friday, Feb. 19 (TBA) (T)

- Fun & Games at the Vermillion Public Library will be held in the Community Room on Saturday, Feb. 20 from 1 to 4 p.m. Adults and youth ages 12 and up will play board games and put jigsaw puzzles together. Challenging and interesting games and puzzles available. Drinks and snacks will be provided.

- USD Women's Tennis vs. SW Minnesota State Univer-

sity, Saturday, Feb. 20 in Sioux City, IA at 2 p.m.

- St. Agnes School Classic on Saturday, Feb. 20 at 6 p.m. Appetizers, a prime rib/chicken dinner, silent auction, raffle, music and dancing. Gwen Mount, 2009-2010 Friend of St. Agnes will be honored. Tickets are \$40 each and can be purchased after Mass or from the school office. Call 624-4144 if any questions.

Next Weeks Happenings!

- USD Women's Basketball vs. SIU-Edwardsville Sunday, Feb. 21 at 2 p.m. in the Dakota Dome.

- USD Student Music Recital: Scott Arens presents his senior piano recital, Sunday, Feb. 21 at 3 p.m. in Colton Recital Hall.

- Faculty Trombone Recital by Dr. Jonathan Alvis, director of Athletic Bands and professor of trombone at USD, Monday, Feb. 22 at 7 p.m. in Colton Recital Hall. Open to public at no charge.

- Spaghetti Benefit Dinner for Big Friend-Little Friend, Inc. of Clay and Union Counties Tuesday, Feb. 23 at the Eagles Club in Vermillion. Social 5 to 6 p.m.; meal 6 to 8 p.m. Tickets: \$5; available in Vermillion at Hy-Vee, Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company, PrintSource, Eagles Club, Civic Council and in Elk Point at Pioneer Drug/Edgar's. All proceeds go to Big Friend-Little Friend, Inc.

- USD Concert Band presents a concert on Wednesday, Feb. 24 at public at no charge at 7 p.m. at the Muenster University Center Grand Ballroom.

- Up With People – "A Song for the World" performance on Wednesday, Feb. 24 at 7 p.m. at Vermillion High School. Tickets available at Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company. \$14 adults, \$6 seniors/students, \$5 USD students.

vs. New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark, NJ, Thursday, Feb. 25 at 4 p.m.

- USD Men's Basketball vs. New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark, NJ, Thursday, Feb. 25 at 6 p.m.

- Music Recital-An Evening of Chamber Music with USD's Townsley Trio, String Trio & String Quartet Thursday, Feb. 25 at 8 p.m. at Colton Recital Hall. Open to public at no charge.

- "A Chorus Line" – a heartfelt salute to the Broadway gypsy with music and lyrics by Marvin Hamlisch and Edward Kleban playing Feb. 26, 27, March 1, 2 at 7:30 p.m. and Feb. 28 at 2 p.m. at the Wayne S. Knutson Theatre, USD. Admission: \$12 adults; \$8 youth (K-12); \$5 USD students with ID. Call 677-5400 for reservations.

- USD Track & Field-Great West Conference Saturday, Feb. 27 at the DakotaDome. All day.

- USD Women's Tennis – Northern Illinois University and University of Northern Iowa Saturday, Feb. 27 all day.

- USD Women's/Men's Basketball vs. Chicago State Saturday, Feb. 27 in Chicago, IL at 2 and 4:30 p.m.

Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendars!

- Music Recital: Truran Guest Pianist Assaff Weisman who has performed in some of the major venues in Europe, the Middle East and the Americas will perform Sunday, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. in Colton Recital Hall.

- Spring Break for USD and Vermillion Public Schools, March 8-12.

Does your business or organization have an event you would like included in the Chamber Chat? If you do please call us at 624-5571 or email us at vcdc@vermillionchamber.com.

USD piano activities to feature pianist Weisman

Pianist Assaff Weisman will be in residence at the University of South Dakota from Feb. 26 through the 28. All events are free and open to the public.

Mr. Weisman, the 2006 Iowa International Piano Competition winner, will perform a recital of works by Haydn, Brahms and Schumann on Sunday, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. in Colton Recital Hall of the Warren M. Lee Center for the Fine Arts. On Friday, Feb. 26 at 7 p.m., University of South Dakota piano students will perform for Mr. Weisman in a master class in Colton Recital Hall.

Mr. Weisman's appearance is in conjunction with the Sixteenth Annual Genevieve Truran Piano Competition for Grades 8-12. On Saturday, Feb. 27 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Colton Recital Hall, more than 20 young pianists will compete for cash prizes. Mr. Weisman will serve as adjudicator of this event. The competition is named for Genevieve Truran who taught piano at USD on a full-time basis for forty-seven years. The Genevieve and John Truran Endowed Fund supports the competition as well as other University of South Dakota keyboard activities.

Assaff Weisman has been captivating audiences with his intensity, lyricism and com-

municative style since his solo debut at the age of 12. The Greenville News observed "this piano virtuoso has facile fingers that toss off daredevil passages with ease and a mind for music that is as nimble as his fingers."

As first prize winner in the 2006 Iowa International Piano Competition he has appeared as soloist with the Sioux City Symphony, American Chamber Orchestra, Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra, Connecticut Valley Chamber Orchestra as well as the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional of Peru.

Mr. Weisman's performances have taken him to some of the major venues in Europe, the Middle East and the Americas. These include appearances at the Rudolfinum in Prague, Beethovenhalle in Bonn, Philips Hall in The Hague, the Millennium Piano Festival in Spain as well as in Italy, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.

Making his home in New York City, Mr. Weisman can often be heard in such local venues as Alice Tully Hall, BargeMusic, St. Paul's Chapel,

Trinity Church and Rockefeller University. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School where he studied with Herbert Stessin and where he now is a member of the Evening Division piano faculty. Prior to his studies in New York Mr.

Weisman studied with Professor Victor Derevianko in Israel and was supported by scholarships from the American-Israel Cultural Foundation.

For further information call the USD music department at 605-677-5274.

Thank You

Dear friends of Pat & Bob Lewison and family,

We would like to thank everyone for their support through this difficult time. We cannot express how grateful we are to have so many wonderful people in our lives.

Our family would like to thank everyone for the visits, prayers, hugs, goodies, lunches and continued love. You have all helped us in the healing process. We want you all to know how much we appreciate your kindness and support. Thank you.

Love,
The Lewison Family

WHO'S WHO IN BUSINESS

Advertise Your Business Here!

Call Jenni at 624-2695

LOWELL COOK CONSTRUCTION, INC.

- Light Commercial Construction
- Commercial Renovation
- New Residential
- Concrete Flat Work

25+ Years in Commercial & Residential Construction

LOWELL COOK, OWNER
624-9998

HARTINGTON TREE LLC

TREE SERVICE NURSERY

Evergreen, Shade & Ornamental Trees for Sale

Insect & Disease Control, Tree Fertilization & Iron Injections, Tree Trimming & Removal, Tree Moving, Stump Cutting & Cleanup

Licensed Arborist, Fully Insured – Free Estimates

Kyle & Kent Hochstein
402-254-6710
Kyle Mobile: 402-841-7141
56303 882 Rd. • Hartington, NE

PROEFROCK Electric

- Commercial
- Residential
- Industrial

Professional Grade Service

915 Cornell St. Vermillion, SD
(605) 624-7000

Advertise Your Business Here!

Call Jenni at 624-2695

JOHNSON ELECTRIC INC.

1011 E. Cherry Vermillion, SD
624-2994

Electric Contracting Commercial & Residential

COYOTE TWIN & VERMILLION THEATRES
Downtown Vermillion 624-3331
WEEK OF FEBRUARY 19-FEBRUARY 25, 2010

"DEAR JOHN" – PG-13 –
"VALENTINES DAY" – PG-13 –
"PERCY JACKSON & THE OLYMPIANS" – PG –

Call 624-3331 For Show Times
Visit us at www.jitheatres.com

Every little bit helps

LENNOX

But here's where it counts –

As much as 1/2 of your household energy use goes to Heating & Cooling.

Receive up to **\$1000 Rebate**

with purchase of Lennox high-efficiency home comfort system. Financing Available.

2010 Tax Credits of up to \$1500 still available

Larry's HEATING & COOLING

920 Broadway • 665-9461 • 1-800-491-9461