

Oral Interpretation team finishes strong at state festival

Members of the Vermillion High School oral interpretation team earned a team excellence trophy and brought home four superior medals from the State Oral Interpretation Festival held in Sioux Falls on Dec. 4 & 5.

The road to state began with the local contest held Nov. 9. From this, one winner was selected in each of the seven interpretation categories to continue on at the regional contest held in Harrisburg on Nov. 17. Vermillion High School captured the first place regional team trophy and advanced the following students to the state festival: Sam Miller, Rosie Ahmed, Holly Irwin, Julie Renner, Doug Kronaizl, Leah Geis, Garret Olson, and Joe Geis. In addition to bringing home a team trophy from state, the following students were superior medal winners: Sam Miller, Rosie Ahmed, Doug Kronaizl, Leah Geis, Garret Olson, and Joe Geis.

Sixteen students comprise this year's VHS oral interpretation team. In addition to their strong showing at regions and state, the team won Division A contest first place trophies in tournaments at Sioux Falls Washington and Aberdeen High School.

Citizens Academy will begin Feb. 16

The city of Vermillion is starting a Citizens Academy for all Vermillion residents over the age of 18. The Citizens Academy is a free, hands-on, interactive public information program that allows citizens an insight into city services and the functions of city departments.

The purpose of the Citizens Academy is to familiarize citizens in the community with the city of Vermillion's government. The program will include the function of city departments, explain the relationship between the city council, planning commission and city administration, allow an overview of the budgetary process and it will provide an outlet for citizen input.

All participants interested in the Citizens Academy are encouraged to attend all of the sessions in order to get the most from the program. All sessions, unless otherwise noted, start at 5 p.m. and will meet at City Hall on Feb. 16, Feb. 23, March 2, March 16, March 23, and March 29. During the course, several sessions will meet away from City Hall at different department sites.

The Citizens Academy is a hands-on experience that will allow Vermillion residents to get a behind the scenes look of how your city government operates. The class will graduate with a certificate in "Governmentology" and a key to the city at the end of the last session. If you or someone you know is interested in this program, please contact Evie Johnson, public

relations and education coordinator at 605-677-7159 or eviej@cityofvermillion.com

Sessions

The Foundation of Your City Government

Introduction to the class, city government, and the finances of the city. Come meet the City Council members and take a tour of City Hall.

The Business of Water

There are more than 4000 residential, commercial, and industrial connections to the City's water and sewer system. All water from the faucets, drains, and flushes come from somewhere and go somewhere. Learn about where that somewhere is and how we get clean water to the places you need it most!

The Landfill: The You'll Never Call it a "Dump" Again Tour and the Recycling Loop

The sanitary landfill of today is not the dump of previous generations. Come learn how the landfill operates and see what stuff we are keeping out of the landfill because of recycling.

Emergency Services - In the Line of Duty

Overview of VPD, fire department, and EMS.

Potholes, Pavement, and Streetlights

Building and maintaining streets, drainage issues, traffic flow and the street lights that light your path.

South Dakotans reminded to utilize Consumer Protection Division

Attorney General Marty Jackley is reminding South Dakota consumers to utilize his Consumer Protection Division. The Consumer Protection Division has been instrumental in getting resolutions to thousands of consumer complaints each year. The division works to protect consumers and the legitimate business community by investigating, mediating and litigating cases of consumer fraud. The division also enforces consumer laws designed to protect the public, including the Deceptive Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act and statutes relating to buying clubs, telephone solicitation, telemarketing, and sweepstakes.

The division handles complaints such as identity theft, internet auctions, door-to-door sales, advertising, paid solicitors/charitable solicitations, new and used vehicle purchases, car repairs, home repair and construction, and more. The division can also assist with questions regarding landlord/tenant relations, federal credit laws and mail order rules. The Consumer Protection Division also has a long list of referral phone numbers to other state and federal agencies that can provide additional assistance. The division cannot repre-

sent individuals in private legal suits. However, they do use the complaint process to establish a pattern of conduct that might constitute deceptive trade practices against unscrupulous companies.

As a consumer you have basic rights relating to consumer laws and the Consumer Protection Division can help you better understand those rights. If you feel you have been a victim of a scam or just trying to find out the legitimacy of a company don't be afraid to contact the Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-300-1986 or consumerhelp@state.sd.us.

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USD NALSA brightens holidays for Rosebud Sioux children

Christmas came early to the Rosebud Sioux Tribe as The University of South Dakota's Native American Law Students Association (NALSA) delivered gifts to children of the reservation just in time for the holidays.

USD's NALSA chapter raised more than \$1,000 during the organization's first toy drive Nov. 9 through Dec. 11. Toys were collected for children ages 2- to 12-years-old. According to USD NALSA Chapter President Lonnie Wright, several toys were donated at the collection box at the USD School of Law; purchased online directly from Amazon.com and delivered to USD NALSA; and purchased using monetary donations.

"Many of these families living in poverty lack even the most basic items and don't have much hope of toys under the tree at Christmas," added Wright, who is also a National NALSA Executive Board Member. "As a student organization, we are very thankful that the toy drive was an overwhelming success. We could not have done it without the generosity and support of so many."

NALSA members traveled to the reservation days before Christmas



Pictured are Lonnie Wright (second from left) along with Chief John Spotted Tail of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe (far left), USD student Beth Erickson and Teddi Herman, community outreach director for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe.

where the delivered toys to 175 children of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. For more information about the NALSA chapter at USD, including the 2010

National Moot Court Competition at the USD School of Law in February, please visit www.usdnalsa.org.

JA of South Dakota receives top national honor

Junior Achievement of South Dakota has been awarded the non-profit organization's Platinum Summit Award. The Summit Award is one of Junior Achievement's highest honors. It is given by JA Worldwide® Headquarters to local JA offices that have reached outstanding success in financial health, program quality, management effectiveness, and program growth.

The Platinum Award shows that a JA office has received the Summit Award for nine or more consecutive years. Junior Achievement of South Dakota has received the Summit Award for fifteen consecutive years. Junior Achievement of South Dakota was one of forty (40) JA Areas out of 135 to receive the Summit Award for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Only eleven JA Areas received the Platinum Award for the fiscal year.

"These Summit Award winners represent the best Junior Achievement has to offer," said Sean C. Rush, president and CEO of JA Worldwide. "They set the standard by which Junior Achievement's success is measured at the local level.



Kristie Fiegen, President of JA of South Dakota and Dana Dykhouse, 2008-09 JA of South Dakota State Board Chair with the Platinum Summit Award.

Their commitment and dedication to young people is reflected in their achieving this honor."

Junior Achievement impacted more than 43,000 South Dakota students during the 2008-09 school year. Junior Achievement of South Dakota, Inc. provides hands-on curriculum for students in

innum Summit Award this year. We have very dedicated volunteers, board members, investors, educators, and staff who have worked hard, and this award recognizes their efforts. These individuals continue to make a difference for students throughout South Dakota."

For more information about Junior Achievement of South Dakota, Inc., call 1-800-871-7007 or email jasd@ja.org. To learn more about the success of the 2008-09 fiscal year, please visit the Awareness tab on www.jasd.org to view the latest JA Annual Report.

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PLAIN TALK

Southeast South Dakota Experiment Farm annual meeting set for Jan. 26

The Southeast South Dakota Experiment Farm will host its annual winter meeting on Jan. 26.

The meeting begins at 1 p.m. at the farm located 6 miles west and 3 miles south of Beresford. It is free and open to the public.

The farm's board of directors including chairman Alvin Novak welcome participants to the meeting in their newly remodeled office. After a farm business meeting including reports from the secretary and treasurer, these speakers will address attendees:

- South Dakota Cooperative Extension Swine Specialist Bob Thaler will share information on the feeding value of a novel soybean extrusion product, as well as information on bio-filters and PRRS.
- Southeast Farm Manager Robert Berg will explain how crops performed at the farm, including winter wheat and cover crops.
- Extension Grain Marketers Specialist Al May will discuss the impact of current economic conditions on commodity grain markets.

Following the presentations, county meetings will be held that include the elections for director positions.

Call the farm at 605-563-2989 for more information about the winter meeting.

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