

CHAMBER CHAT

Vermillion Area Chamber of Commerce & Development Company
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www.vermillionchamber.com

Chamber Business:

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

Announcements:

The Clay-Union Foundation is offering a \$500 community service scholarship to graduating seniors from Vermillion or Elk Point-Jefferson High School. Applications are available at <http://www.clay-unionfoundation.org/> under the events tab. Students will be able to fill out the application online, and e-mail it directly for consideration. Applications will be accepted until March 1, and then reviewed by the board. Awards will be announced at their school awards night, with the scholarship given in January of their second semester. For further information, call

John Gille at (605) 421-5050 or e-mail jgillerrsd60@yahoo.com.

Are you interested in an intern for your business? USD students are eager to gain real-world work experience with you! Internships can be paid or unpaid and students can gain college credit for their experience with you. If you are interested in accepting interns at your business, please contact Carly at Carly.Heard@usd.edu.

Sharing the Dream, 10 W. Main St., is having two months of sales on current inventory. Beginning the week of Jan. 14 all jewelry will be 25 percent off; the week of Jan. 21 all scarves will be 25 percent off; the week of Jan. 28 all purses/bags will be 25 percent off; week of Feb. 4

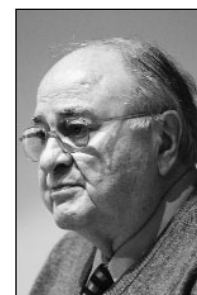
all kitchen/glass items will be 25 percent off; week of Feb. 11 all wood items will be 25 percent off and the week of Feb. 18 all children's items will be 25 percent off. Our products are handmade by Mayan artisans using many traditional techniques. Purchasing these products not only provides work for these artisans, but the profits go to support community development projects in Guatemala. For more information, visit www.sharingthedream.org.

Exhibition: "Picturing Native: photographs from Edward Curtis, Horace Poolaw and Zig Jackson" at John A. Day Gallery located in Warren M. Lee Center for the Fine Arts on USD campus. On display through end of January.

Abourezk: U.S. should end Middle East involvement

By Travis Gulbrandson

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ABOUREZK

Former Sen. James Abourezk has some advice regarding the United States' foreign policy.

"I think it's in the interest of the United States to get the hell out of the Middle East," he said.

Abourezk spoke about the issue, as well as the rebellion in Syria and the influence of Israel on U.S. policies, Monday during a forum in Farber Hall on the University of South Dakota campus.

The U.S. government currently is aiding the ongoing rebellion in Syria by sending the rebels weapons through Saudi Arabia, Abourezk said.

"My theory is ... the reason we're helping try to overthrow the Syrian regime is that we want to break the alliance between Iran and Syria," he said. "The reason we want to break the alliance - even though Iran is no threat to us - is because Israel wants the regime to be overthrown."

"And that's exactly what's happening."

Abourezk said the U.S. would be better off not to help the rebels overthrow Syria's current leader, Bashar al-Assad, because "that is the most progressive government you'll ever get in Syria."

"It's a dictatorship, but they're not making anything better," Abourezk said. "In fact, if the rebels take over, it's going to be worse. Much worse."

Approximately 75-80 percent to Syria's current population consists of Sunni Muslims, which is a more orthodox form of the religion, while the country itself is ruled by an Alawite group.

"The Alawites are considered by Sunnis to be non-believers because they are the progressive religious sect over there," Abourezk said. "For example, they don't require the women to wear veils, where Sunnis mostly do, and the

dictator of Syria provides freedom of religion to everybody."

Abourezk said that "entire Alawite villages" are currently being slaughtered by the Syrian rebels.

"Pay no attention to what the American press says about this," he said. "They're following the government line. The government line is to support the rebels, and they're not going to run anything on television or in major newspapers that will help Assad. They want Assad out, so the press goes along with it."

The former senator's wife comes from Syria and is herself an Alawite. Her family still lives in an Alawite area, he said.

"She talks to them every day by telephone to make sure they're OK," he said. "They give her the news every day, and Alawite villages, one after the other, captured by the rebels, and they slaughter the people there. Then they take photos of it and they say, 'The government did this.'"

"The propaganda machine by the rebels is almost perfect, and they're being aided by money from Saudi Arabia and Qatar," he said.

Abourezk added that if there were no involvement from Israel, "we wouldn't be involved as much as we are."

The main reason for this is lobbyists, he said.

"The Israeli government has a lobby in Washington that threatens and terrifies every politician in Washington, except for one or two," Abourezk said. "They didn't terrify me, although they came after me many, many times."

Huber's work focuses on flu outbreaks

By Travis Gulbrandson

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This past flu season has been one of the strongest and widespread in years, and researchers at the University of South Dakota are working to determine how to predict and prepare for other outbreaks.

Victor Huber, Ph.D. assistant professor of basic biomedical sciences at the USD Sanford School of Medicine, said part of the research is focused on understanding what makes the virus more severe, and secondary bacterial infections in particular.

"We have the ability to take these viruses and put them into models of secondary bacterial infections," Huber said. "Specifically, we have viruses that are likely to cause secondary infections, and ones that are not likely to cause secondary infections, and we're comparing those two viruses."

In the lab, researchers can mix and match the components of the two different viruses so they can identify which proteins or genes are controlling the ability to set up that secondary infection, he said.

"We have the ability within these models with this technology to try and understand how these specific proteins are setting up that favorable environment for the bacteria to persist," he said.

Secondary bacterial infections are most often the cause of flu-related

mortalities, Huber said.

"The virus comes in, it sort of weakens the immune system, and then bacteria comes in and has the ability to flourish and cause death," he said.

In stronger flu seasons, these secondary infections are all the more common, but thanks to the research being performed at USD and other institutions, knowledge of these virus-related proteins can be put toward developing antivirals, and potentially vaccines.

Huber said it also can lead to the development of diagnostic tools so people can start treating with antibiotics before bacteria enters, thereby preventing secondary infection.

"Our lab also focuses on developing vaccines that are more broad against the influenza virus so that you instead of updating the vaccine every year, you could do the predictions and provide a more broad immune response," he said.

However, research takes a long time, and Huber said it could be "a number of years away" before people see some of these developing technologies

become fully applicable.

"It's all part of the process," he said. "Usually, 10 to 15 years is when we see some of the stuff we're doing coming out."

Huber has been a researcher for approximately 14 years, with the past four being at USD. Prior to this, he worked at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, TN.

His USD lab receives funding from the national Institute of Health, and his work is performed in collaboration with the St. Jude Center of Excellence in Influenza Research and Surveillance and South Dakota State University.

Huber said that the best preventative measure against influenza and the possibility of a secondary bacterial infection is to get a flu shot - even if you already have had the flu.

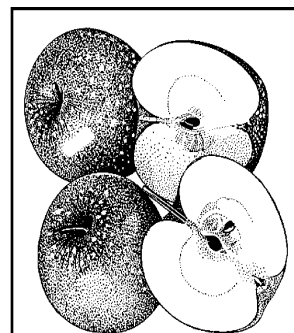
"There's always a good boost to the immune system from getting the vaccine," he said. "Exposure to the virus in nature is going to be superior to what you would get in a vaccine ... but the more times that the proteins

Spotlight On

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH DAKOTA



stimulate the immune system, the stronger it will be, and the less likely you'll be to get infected."



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