

6A Vermillion Plain Talk**Meet City Council Member: Kelsey Collier-Wise**

By Sarah Wetzel
For the Plain Talk

If you are looking for someone who has completely immersed herself in actively participating in her community, look no farther than Kelsey Collier-Wise.

"I've lived in Vermillion most of my life," she said. "I moved here first when I was two and a half. I went to elementary school and high school here."

After graduating from Vermillion High School, Collier-Wise attended the University of Minnesota at the Twin Cities where she majored in History and English.

"After I graduated I came back here," Collier-Wise said. "I have been here ever since."

Collier-Wise has not idled her time away in Vermillion.

"After I had been back in Vermillion for awhile I went to law school at USD," she said. "I don't have any interest or intention of practicing law. I went to law school with more of an intention to use it in the nonprofit or service realm."

According to Collier-Wise, her interest in law led to her participation in the city council.

"I had participated in Citizens Academy and became really interested in the nuts and bolts of how the city ran," she said.

"Law and policy have always been of interest to me, so I thought it would be an interesting way to give back to the community. My favorite part is when we're able to problem solve and come up with solutions that help people, and working with city staff, who are all extremely knowledgeable and dedicated to their jobs."

Though Collier-Wise has never practiced as a licensed attorney, she does not feel her education at USD Law was a waste.

"I do feel I use a lot of what I learned in the city council context and with my job at United Way," she said.

Collier-Wise currently serves as the Executive Director of United Way of Vermillion, a nonprofit organization dedicated to building community, as well as serving as senior warden at her church. She also worked for the environmental law organization Plains Justice for a year after graduation from USD law school.

Her husband of 12 years, Royce Miller, is currently office manager at the Methodist church in town and also works for the backpack program and Welcome Table as treasurer/bookkeeper.

Though Collier-Wise loves her work, she has other priorities.

"One of the things that really appealed to me with United Way was the schedule is really flexible and that's made it much easier to have the family time that I want," she said. "We've really made [our daughter] a priority. Obviously we are not financially setting the world on fire but she's only a little once."



Collier-Wise said both her and her husband have taken steps to ensure this priority stays in place. "[My husband] was the stay-at-home parent for the first 3-4 months because I was still working," she said. "In 2011 we bought a house with my parents so we have a multi-generational thing going on. Especially when you have a kid it's so nice to have family support around."

So what inspired Collier-Wise to become such an active member of the Vermillion community? According to her, it began with some free time weekday mornings due to the block-class schedule at the high school.

"I used to go to the Coffee Shop Gallery which is now Cafe Brule in the mornings," she said.

"There were always people hanging around talking about community things. That's who I wanted to be, someone who always knows people and what's going on."

"I think it's important to be a big part of your community," she said. "I really enjoy it."

Collier-Wise also recognizes that one person cannot run the whole city. "It's a balance between having an enthusiasm of being involved in a lot of things but also saying you don't have to be part of everything," she said. "You can let some things go to other people."

Collier-Wise enjoys the rare free time hobby as well. "We all like to dance," she said. "I do clogging. It's really a lot of fun. I've been clogging since a couple of years before Aurora was born. I even clogged up till ten days before my due date. You're not jumping a lot at that point but it felt good to stay active."

"I really enjoy knitting," she said. "I've kind of fallen out of the habit since she's gotten older. I started a knitting group here in 2003 that still meets here at the library. I don't get to it nearly as much as I'd like but the group's still active."

According to Collier-Wise, Vermillion can plan on seeing a lot of her in the future.

"I plan on being here indefinitely," she said.

Vermillion High's one-act play parodies ESPN style

Vermillion High School students will present a one-act cutting of Reed Martin & Austin Tichenor's play, *The Complete World of Sports (Abridged)*.

This fast paced comedy takes a satirical look at people's obsession with sports.

It parodies the ESPN-style television coverage while poking fun at individual sports and celebrities.

This forty-minute, laugh-out-loud presentation can be seen for one night only on the Vermillion High School stage: Friday, January 23, at 7:30 p.m.

Admission is free.

- Courtesy of Vermillion High School

Firebird Dance Clinic

The 2015 Firebird Dance Clinic, hosted by Vermillion High School's Dance Inferno, for K-8 graders will be held Saturday, Jan. 24 from 8:30-11:30 a.m.

The registration deadline is Friday, Jan. 16 and the cost is \$25. The costs include instruction, t-shirt, snack, and participation game ticket.

No previous dance experience required.

This clinic is a fund raiser for Dance Inferno and all routines will be choreographed and taught by them. Clinic check-in starts at 8:15 a.m. on Jan. 24 in the high school commons and the morning session will conclude at 11:30.

Firebird dancers should wear comfortable athletic clothing, hair pulled back, no jewelry and bring either tennis or dance shoes to change into from their street shoes.

Dancers will be divided into three performance groups based on grade level.

Firebird dancers will perform twice, at half-time of the Tanager girls and boys basketball games vs. West Central on Tuesday, Jan. 27.

Information for the performances and t-shirts will be sent home with the dancers at the conclusion of Saturday's clinic. For more information contact Joni Freidel via call or text at 605-659-5659.

- The Plain Talk

St. Agnes Youth Group

The St. Agnes Youth Group is set to hold a French toast breakfast fundraiser pm Sunday from 9 - 10:30 a.m. at the St. Agnes School Gymnasium.

The fundraiser is for the St. Agnes Youth Group Winter Trip to Mankato, Minnesota to ski at Mt.

Kato in February. There will be a free will offering taken at the door.

For more information contact Ray Hofman at 605-624-6457.

Catholic United will have matching funds for this event.

-The Plain Talk

Center for Disabilities announces topics and another keynote speaker for 2015 Spring Symposium

The University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine's Center for Disabilities is in the final planning stages for its second Spring Symposium, to be held March 30-April 1 in Chamberlain, S.D. at Cedar Shore Resort. The symposium's theme is "Promoting Leadership and Engaging Communities." Today, the Center announces the different types of topics, sessions and workshops that attendees will experience at the symposium, and an additional keynote speaker.

For the 2015 Spring Symposium, topics are focused on using technology apps, dealing with behavior issues, family leadership, employment supports, collaborative leadership, along with the expertise the Center is known for, like Autism Spectrum Disorder and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder related topics. Like last year, there will also be a World Café community conversation and topical table talks where attendees can share their knowledge and experience and work together as a team to discuss how to overcome job-related challenges and community issues.

Some of the session titles include "Adaptive Skills Lab," where attendees move from station to station and learn how to incorporate support in a home environment with washing clothes, dressing independently and shopping skills; and "What to do when 'Leisure' isn't all Fun & Games," a session focused on individuals and their struggles during unstructured times like recess and play time, and how to reduce the stressors during those times. More titles will be announced soon.

The first keynote speaker this year is Andy Imparato, Association of University Centers on Disabilities executive director. The Center is excited to announce another keynote speaker, Joe Steffy, the sole proprietor of Poppin' Joe's Gourmet Kettle Korn. Steffy is a business owner with a dual diagnosis of Down Syndrome and ASD, and since founding Poppin Joe's in 2005, you can now find his popcorn in Walmart, fairs, and other events throughout Kansas, Georgia and nationwide.

- Courtesy of USD News

■ SUCCESS

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about 44 years."

Though Lavin has been running Davis Pharmacy for over four decades, it's nothing compared to how long it's been open. According to Lavin, its' origins predate South Dakota itself.

"Originally it started back in 1879," he said. "It was one of the first towns up the river. That was back when this was still Dakota Territory. There was the Sioux City then the Vermillion then the Yankton pharmacies. It went up the river that way."

As one of the first pharmacies in the territory, the original location was in old Vermillion below the bluffs.

According to the History of Dakota Territory, the pharmacy began as a drug store which was founded by Alfred Helgeson, a graduate of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy.

"This is actually the fourth location," Lavin said. "The flood of 1881 wiped out the first location. It was down below the hill. Then it moved up to Market St. where Civic Council is."

Watermarks from the flood can still be seen on some early records.

But the pre-Civic Council was not to be the pharmacy's final resting place.

"After 20 years they built around the corner on Main St," Lavin said.

The Main St. location is now the home of Silk Road Cafe.

During the time the store was on Main St. it changed hands to Roy C. Davis, Sandy Lavin's grandfather, and became Davis Pharmacy. Since then ownership has passed to Davis' son Marshall and then to Lavin and his wife.

"We stayed [on Main St.] until about 15 years ago and we moved out here," Lavin said of their current location.

According to Lavin, the current building is in a better location with better parking.



Davis Pharmacy serves the local community with prescriptions as well as over-the-counter medicine and gifts.

SARAH WETZEL / FOR THE PLAIN TALK

"It's a good location here," he said. "In the retail sense we're in the part of town that matters. We have to get so many people through. If a person runs a place that only has to get 20 people through a day, that's different. We just wound up downtown with new restaurants starting up and it was just a killer as far as parking was involved."

Lavin said that the customer pool consists entirely of locals and students.

"We serve the local area," he said. "As far as further than that, none at all. There are some students but most of them are pretty healthy so they don't need much."

So what keeps a business like Davis Pharmacy running for over a century?

"It's a personal touch," Lavin said. "These people are all friends and neighbors. They live next door and they come in here every week or every month. We've known them for years."

Lavin agrees that this is a key aspect that separates their pharmacy from other larger pharmacies.

"Of all things that's kept us going, that's probably the biggest," he said. "One of the nicest things about this business is you get to work in a place where you have people pop in that have been friends for years. You wouldn't be in

business without them."

This does not come without challenges according to Lavin.

"One of the challenges is working with the insurances of the state," he said. "Some of the insurance companies if they make their money and you don't make any, that's just too bad."

Davis Pharmacy has also been held up at gunpoint twice with the culprits arrested both times.

According to the pharmacy history, the gunman from the first robbery returned to apologize to Lavin following his release from prison.

Despite any difficulties, Lavin said they have no plans to move on any time soon.

The pharmacy stocks not only prescriptions but also over-the-counter medicines and various gifts.

The inventory has changed drastically over

the century.

According to its history, the store was "the legal" source of alcohol during prohibition. It served as a sort of general store selling paint, wallpaper, tobacco, cosmetics, fountain treats, five-cent Cokes, coffee and pastries.

The current staff is dedicated to doing what they do best.

"We have people stop in and they'll say they have a stuffy nose, what can we do about it and we're experts at that," Lavin said. "That's probably where we get the most people. It makes for some fun stories and that's what I love. It's all about people."

Lavin and his wife have five children, two of which are pharmacists as well.

Their son, Matt, actually works at Davis pharmacy alongside Lavin.

"With any kind of luck when I'm done maybe he might want it. You never know, it's hard to say. You cross that path when you cross that path."

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