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For the love of tennis

Mary Gertsema of Yankton traveled to Vermillion Saturday to take part in the "Save Our Sport" Tennis Tournament. The event was held last weekend to raise funds so that the tennis program at Vermillion High School may continue. (Photo by David Lias)

Tournament organized to save sport at VHS

By David Lias
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Unseasonably hot temperatures didn't stop a strong turnout of athletes from participating in the second annual Vermillion High School "Save Our Sport" Tennis Tournament, held last weekend at the outdoor courts near the DakotaDome.

The event, open to female and male junior and adult participants, featured singles and doubles play. The athletes

paid a fee to participate, and that money will go toward the goal of restoring high school tennis for the 2012-13 school year.

"All the parents have tried to get together to raise the money we need to keep the tennis team going," said Steve Ford, who helped organize the tournament, "and I've played in a number of tennis tournaments over the years so I felt like that was something I could contribute."

Ford's son, Jacob, who will be a

sophomore at Vermillion High School this fall, will also be one of the members of the VHS tennis team if enough funds are raised in the community this summer.

Budget cuts to the school district's budget on both the state and local level led to the Vermillion School Board's decision to drop the funding of the tennis program in 2011.

"When they (the school board) cut the tennis program, they cut two sports, really, not just one," Ford said,

noting that there are separate high school seasons in the spring and fall for girls and boys.

Parents and other local tennis lovers successfully raised enough revenue to allow the district to offer tennis without taxpayers' support in the 2011-12 school year. Backers of the young tennis athletes are hoping net enough funding to allow the sport to continue in the coming school year.

The tournament action began Friday, June 29, with the junior

participants competing. Adults took to the courts on Saturday. Championship rounds had been scheduled for Sunday, but Ford was optimistic Saturday afternoon that the smooth operation of the tournament would allow it to conclude later that day.

"There may be a couple of matches that may spill over into tomorrow (July 1), but we should be able to wrap up most of it today," he said.

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Alleivant preparing to open Vermillion location soon

By David Lias
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Vermillion's newest employer, Alleivant, LLC, is getting its furnishings and office equipment settled into its new home at 907 N. Norbeck Street.

No firm date has yet been set for the company's first day of business in the community. That day is approaching, soon, however, and it brings with it the prospect of employing up to 60 people by the end of the year, and double that number by the end of 2013.

Alleivant is a subsidiary of Navigant Consulting, Inc., of Chicago, and likely will open the doors of its Vermillion facility sometime in the third quarter of 2012, according to John Boland, managing director with Navigant Healthcare and head of Alleivant.

"July, August, September – it will be within that timeframe," he said.

Vermillion residents took advantage of an opportunity to meet Wednesday evening with Boland and other members of the Alleivant staff that currently are on board during an open house held at its local



John Boland, managing director with Navigant Healthcare and head of Alleivant, LLC, addresses Vermillion citizens Wednesday evening, June 27, during an open house at the company's local office building. (Photo by David Lias)

office building.

Navigant works in a number of industries – including healthcare, energy, and financial services, and its Alleivant office in Vermillion will be part of its national

medical billing and coding offerings. It currently operates similar offices in Mitchell and Plankinton.

"We do all of the back office administration that physician organizations need to be able to

bill and collect the money that is due to them for the services that they provide," Boland said. "Really, why people want to do business with us is that we can

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DCI arrest man in Vermillion for forgery

By David Lias
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A man who arrived in Vermillion intending to take a chance on deceiving a local business and its video lottery machine ended up losing in a big way last week.

Agents from the South Dakota Department of Criminal Investigation, with assistance from officers of the Vermillion Police Department, arrested Travis Law at approximately 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 27.

Law is alleged to have played a video lottery machine at a Vermillion establishment and after winning a very small amount of money, left the premises with the ticket.

He then returned later in the day to cash in the ticket. The dollar amount on the paper he presented had apparently been forged to increase its value.

Chief Matt Betzen of the Vermillion Police


Department said the owner of the local business contacted law enforcement after noticing the Law's suspicious behavior and appearance.

Earlier this month, video lottery machine owners in southeastern South Dakota had reported being duped by a man who had turned in forged tickets.

"Some information had been sent out to local businesses that there was a gentleman that was using a wig and other stuff to hide his appearance," Betzen said. "What he was doing was cashing out lottery tickets, getting small wins, and then taking them and forging them into larger wins and then bringing them back a few hours later."

The Vermillion business reported Law's suspicious behavior last Wednesday. "He was wearing a white wig, and had won 5 cents, but

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