



**Forkfly**

Live Local. Spend Less.  
Start getting great local deals today!

[www.forkfly.com](http://www.forkfly.com)

**INSIDE:**

▲ 90 percent of state in drought, **Page 03**

▲ Extension: Assessing drought stressed corn, **Page 03**

Vermillion

**PLAIN TALK**

Serving our readers since 1884.

Volume 127, Issue 31

USPS 657-720

8 38894 00003 1

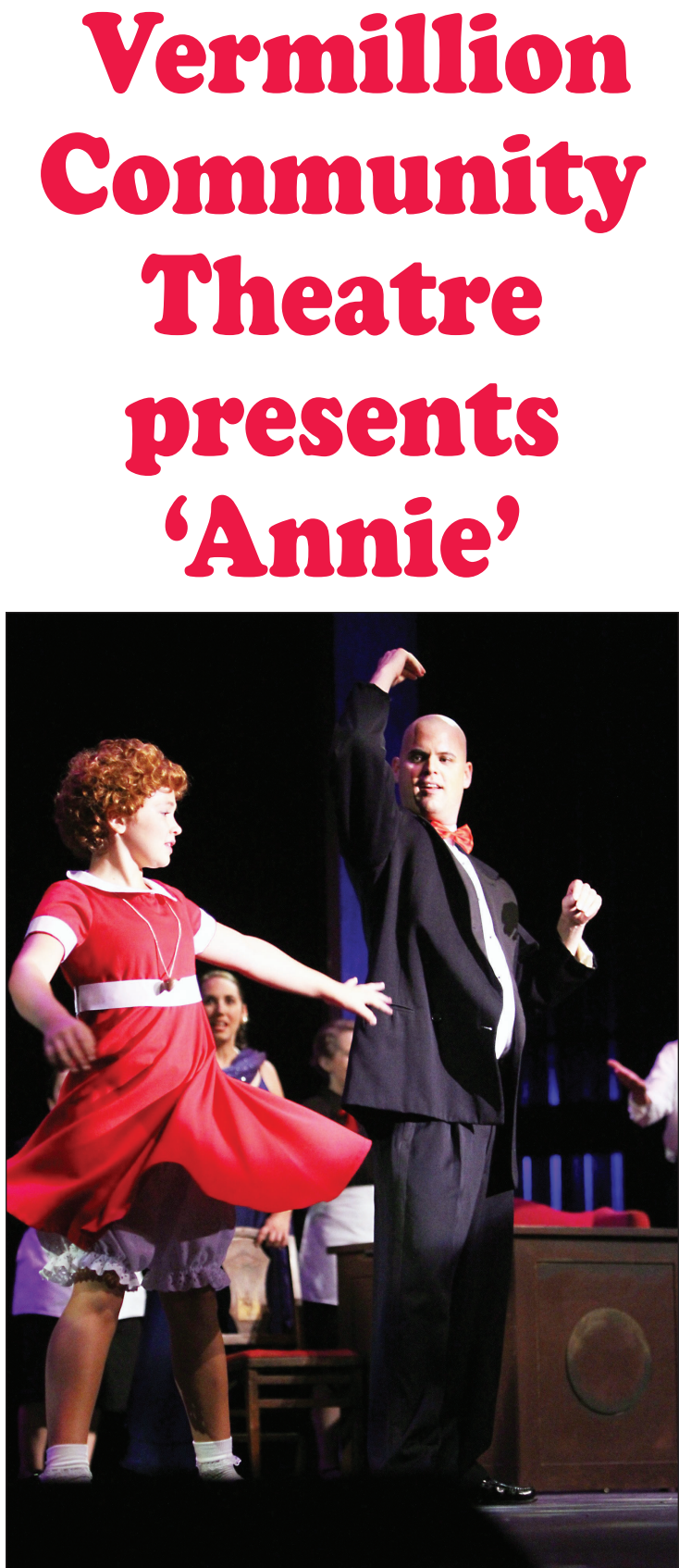
**Friday, July 27, 2012**

**75¢**




© 2012 YANKTON MEDIA, INC., all rights reserved

[www.plaintalk.net](http://www.plaintalk.net)



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:**

After listening to Annie on a radio program, her orphan friends filled the stage with great choreography and music as they perform “Fully Dressed.”

Miss Hannigan (Erin Conlon), her brother, Rooster Hannigan (Matt Nesmith) and Lily St. Regis (Savannah Kirsch) celebrate after hatching a plot that they are convinced will land them on “Easy Street.” They planned to trick Warbucks and receive the award he’s offered to anyone who could locate Annie’s real parents.

Annie (Briseis Schnack) and Oliver Warbucks (David Hulac) dance as they prepare to celebrate Christmas Eve together.

**Photos By David Lias**

View more photos of the VCT performance at [spotted.plaintalk.net](http://spotted.plaintalk.net)

**No charges yet filed in Feb. bomb scare at USD**

**By Travis Gulbrandson**  
travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

Although no charges have yet been filed against a former University of South Dakota student who may have kept explosives in their dorm, it still could happen.

“We were thinking about taking it to the grand jury last time, but the (Division of Criminal Investigation) agent wasn’t available,” said Clay County State’s Attorney Teddi Gertsema. “It’s just kind of gotten pushed back.”

The incident in question occurred in February when Coyote Village staff members were checking a room that had been vacated by a former student.

During this search they uncovered items that USD manager of media relations Phil Carter termed at the time, “possibly considered explosive in nature.”

Campus police and the Vermillion Police Department were notified, and authorities from Sioux Falls – along with a “bomb squad” vehicle – appeared on the scene that same night.

Approximately 20 students

**■ BOMB, Page 16**

**Youth camps at USD offer life-changing experiences**

**By Travis Gulbrandson**  
travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

All kids want to be accepted for who they are.

Thanks to two camps now reaching their conclusion at the University of South Dakota, more than 300 students have been able to experience just what that feels like.

The 29th Annual South Dakota Governor’s Camp and the 24th Annual South Dakota Ambassadors of Excellence Program have given gifted middle- and high-schoolers the opportunity to gain experiences they might not otherwise have.

“We try to provide a really optimal experience for these gifted campers so they have academics that they don’t get in school, that they have a very supportive environment so they’ll try new things, and that they have a good social environment so they can meet with other campers and realize they ... have common experiences,” said program director Dr. Trudi Nelson.

Kevin Wendt has been involved with the program for the past 15 years – two as a camper, three as an ambassador and 10 as a staff member.

“It was the thing that changed my life,” Wendt said. “I was a loner and I was kind of on the analytical side ... and I moved to a really small town where if you weren’t on the football team you weren’t cool.”

While he said he did not enjoy his first year at the Governor’s Camp, he won an award, which encouraged him to return the next year.

“I met a couple of guys as my roommates and I just started moving out of my box,” Wendt said. “I found I out I don’t have to do what everyone does. I can have my own interests and likes.”

Wendt now works as a senior instructor at the Dunwoody College of Technology in Minneapolis, and teaches a number of computer-related classes at the camp, as well as helping to coordinate end-of-the-week projects.

Heath Weber, who directs the high school program, has been involved even longer – 26 years.

“I think it’s probably the most important work that I do all year,” Weber said. “I love my work as an educator, but I think this work that I do here is powerful on a different level. Gifted kids have different needs, and oftentimes in their schools ... they feel isolated.

“So, they can come to a place like this that is bigger than themselves but yet full of people who are just like them,” he said.

That kind of peer interaction is exactly what encourages participants to return year after year, first as campers, then as ambassadors, then as volunteers.

“The environment here at

**■ CAMPS, Page 16**

**Citizens have chance to ‘round up’ revenue for VACF**

**By Travis Gulbrandson**  
travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

Vermillion area residents now have a chance to donate toward the completion of community projects for literally pennies a month.

On June 4 the city council approved a program called Round Up For Your Community, which was presented by the Vermillion Area Community Foundation (VACF).

Under this program, residents have the option of rounding up their utility bills to the nearest dollar, donating the extra money to the VACF’s endowment fund.

“The more money that gets put into that endowment, the more money that spins off every year that can be used toward community projects,” said VACF secretary Lisa Ketcham. “This program was just a wonderful way that people can give at a very minor level, but in multitudes.”

The maximum a single person can donate for an entire year is \$11.88, or 99 cents per month.

“If you can get hundreds or thousands of people doing that, that would make a huge difference,” Ketcham said. “We wanted a way to provide an opportunity for as many people in our community to be aware of our organization and have an opportunity to give back ... no matter what their income or ability is to give.”

A pilot group of approximately 30 people tested the system for the June 20 billing cycle, and the program is open to everyone as of the July 20 cycle.

City finance officer Mike Carlson said 60 people had signed up as of Monday.

Ketcham said she has heard “nothing but positive feedback” regarding the program.

“People are (saying), ‘This is a no-brainer for \$11.88 a year maximum,’” she said. “And that’s assuming that your billing is a .01 every month and it’s going to go to 99 cents.

“Most people on average are going to be looking at 50 cents a month,” she said.

The program is based on part on one being used in Mitchell, except that is exclusively for educational scholarships.

“We kind of modeled it on that, only we decided to open it up through the foundation with just a single focus, to make the community better,” Ketcham said.

Making the community better is the primary aim of the VACF, which was founded in 2000 to create an endowed fund to build financial resources that aren’t depleted each year that can be used to assist with projects that address community needs.

Some of the projects toward which the VACF has contributed include the purchase of new playground equipment at Prentiss Park, making classroom renovations at the Vermillion Area Arts Council, the expansion of the Vermillion Public Library and the purchase of the clock for Ratingen Platz.

This project is similar in its philosophy, Ketcham said.

“We kind of think about it as a legacy project for Vermillion, because the money that goes in today will be there forever, and it spins back every year,” she said. “The bigger that we grow that endowment fund, the more we’re able to invest back in the community.”

To enroll in Round Up For Your Community, visit <http://vermillion.sdcommunityfoundation.org> or [www.vermillion.us](http://www.vermillion.us), or by picking up a form at the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company or the city finance office.

The utility bills will be rounded up automatically. Citizens can stop participating at any time.