

**1101 Announcements - Events**

**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH:** 401 Main Street, Makell, NE. Worship: 9am. Communion: 1st and 3rd Sundays. (605)658-0240 (home) (402)-692-3323 (church).

**Faith United Lutheran Church, ELCA,** 44874 303rd St/Po Box 168, Volin, SD 57072, (605)267-2277. Sunday Worship: 9:30am with Holy Communion the 1st & 4th Sundays. WOW Wednesday program beginning at 6:30pm for all children 3 yrs old - 7th grade, and confirmation classes for those in grades 8th & 9th.

**FIRST BAPTIST Church** Elmer "Sandy" Aakre, Pastor 624-6391 home, 624-4658 church. Time: 9:15 Sunday School, 10:30 Worship. Sunday Choir Practice, 11:50 a.m.

**GAYVILLE LUTHERAN Church:** Sunday School 10:15 a.m., Worship 9:00 a.m. Pastor Ralph Egbert.

**GOSPEL CHAPEL Church,** 708 Jessie St./Highway 12, Newcastle, NE. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday worship 10:30 a.m.; AWANA Wednesday at 7 p.m., 402-355-2305. Pastor Chuck Myers, 402-355-1335.

**GRACE BAPTIST Church,** SBC, Pastor Steve Ford, 1102 E. Main. Phone 624-4949. Adult's and Children's Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m. Prayer Meeting Wednesday Night 7 p.m.

**HILLSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH (C&MA)** 1800 Constance Dr. West on Cherry just before you go down the hill. Worship Sept.-May 10:30a.m., May-August 10a.m., AWANA Sunday School small groups. 6 0 5 - 6 2 4 - 4 8 6 2 , www.hillside-cc.com

**IMMANUAL Lutheran Church,** Elk Point, SD: Worship Service 9:00 a.m., Sunday School 10:00 a.m.

**KOMSTAD COVENANT Church,** Rural Beresford and Centerville, SD: Matt Styles, Pastor. 18 miles north on University Road. Phone 563-2402. Sunday School 10 a.m., Worship Service 11 a.m.

**PLEASANT VALLEY Lutheran Church,** Rural Vermillion: Sunday School 9:45 a.m., Worship Service 10:30 a.m., Holy Communion First Sunday of every month. All welcome.

**PROVIDENCE REFORMED Church,** 830 Madison: Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. "We Welcome You To Historic Protestant Worship And Fellowship."

**ST. AGNES Church,** 416 Walker St., Fr. John Fischer: St. Agnes Church and Parish Office, tele. 624-4478. St. Agnes Rectory, 505 Catalina, tele. 624-1995. Mass schedule: 5 p.m. Saturday, 8:00 a.m. and 10:30a.m. Sunday, Week-day Masses - consult weekly bulletin; Sacrament of Penance, Saturday 4-4:45p.m.

**ST. PAUL'S Episcopal Church,** corner of Main and Linden. Sunday: nursery available. 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist. 11:00 a.m. coffee hour. Call 624-3379 for more info.

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL,** 226 E. Main St., Pastor Steve Miller. 10:30a.m. Worship Service. No Longer Strangers www.uccvermillion.org

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# 'Robin Hood: Spirit of the Greene' begins 4-day run July 19

By David Lias david.lias@plaintalk.net

A unique musical experience awaits local lovers of the stage when the Vermillion Community Theatre (VCT) begins its four-day run of "Robin Hood: Spirit of the Greene" on Friday, July 19.

The VCT is dusting off a production first crafted 10 years ago by four Vermillion men who learned something in the process.

When it comes to writing scripts, music and lyrics, they've found a way to be successful.

"This was our first effort at writing a full-blown summer musical back in 2003," said Steve Miller, during a break in rehearsal Thursday at the Vermillion High School Performing Arts Center. "We've actually written three since then."

Steve Miller, David L. Miller, who no longer resides in Vermillion, Anthony Burbach, and George Schlenker pooled their talents, time and considerable creativity to craft the musical.

"The four of us decided a year early (in 2002) that we were going to write a show, and one of my jobs was to choose a story that was fairly well known so that we weren't starting from scratch," Miller said. "We wanted to start with a story that people had some familiarity with."

"So I actually drafted three different storyboards for three different familiar stories, and the team chose Robin Hood, and so that's where we began to work on," he said.

The story of Robin Hood takes place in Sherwood Forest during medieval times. It features castles, royalty, yeoman and archers, but Miller notes the story and its setting have a special appeal that South Dakotans can identify with.

"Robin Hood is actually, in many ways, very rural and agrarian - it's a battle of the haves and the have-nots, and big business and big church and big money versus Robin Hood, the rich and the poor," he said. "It may not be so much agriculture, but the wood, the greene has this sense of the setting. The spirit of that magical greene is the centerpiece of the show."

After the four men decided to base the musical on the story of Robin Hood, Miller created a more specific storyboard to serve as a guide.



Actors rehearse a dance scene Thursday, July 11 as they prepare to stage the musical "Robin Hood: Spirit of the Greene" in Vermillion. The unique, homegrown musical, first presented 10 years ago, begins a four-day run July 19. (Photo by David Lias)

"Each of the four of us brought our gifts and our ideas, and once it started to expand, we began to make assignments," Miller said. "Some of us were more toward the music, and some of us were more toward the script. Dan Miller was a good scriptwriter, so he did more in that area. Anthony and George and I were more into the music. I do a lot of lyrics, and so I did a lot of those kinds of things."

As the four men's work progressed, it kept evolving. "It was a lot of fun. The story made several changes as it went along," Miller said, "including what I would call our surprise ending which isn't the traditional Robin Hood ending but I'm not going to tell you what that is."

It took approximately a year for the four men to craft the musical. They met weekly at a Vermillion restaurant.

"We would take an hour lunch break, and at first it was always that hour," Miller said. "We'd all have homework, and come back and report and share and do. One of the goals was, with a huge cast which we're kind of used to, can you write a show that has parts for little kids, that has parts for older people, that can run the gamut?"

"That was part of the fun. This show actually features Robin as a little boy, and Robin as an adult, so there are actually two Robin Hoods in this show," he said.

Creating a musical may be fun, but the process is not without challenges.

"There would be times when we would bring stuff in and we'd be really excited about it," Miller said, "and

then there would be scenes in which we finally had to agree that it wouldn't work and we'd have to get rid of it. There were moments where I can remember, specifically, that we were just kind of brainstorming, and somebody would say 'what about this?' and 'what about that?' And all of a sudden, I remember it was George who came up with the surprise ending, and when he said it, all of us said, 'Yes, that is the way this show will end.'"

Dan Miller was the first director of the musical a decade ago.

"Because this was our first musical, we would tweak it, and rewrite songs, and when we saw the cast we would make changes to adapt," Steve Miller said.

This year, Miller and Burbach have dusted off the 10-year-old work and made a few more changes. "We've worked on a couple new songs, a little bit of the script was changed, and we've rewritten all of the orchestrations," Miller said. "Ten years ago, we had a piano, a drum, a guitar and a flute. Now we have a full 15-piece orchestra, so we have rewritten for a full orchestra, and it will be a little grander in that sense. If you've seen the musical before, this version will be a little different, but not completely different."

Burbach serves as orchestra leader.

Several ballads, each telling a different version of the Robin Hood story, have been developed over the centuries.

Audience members who attend "Robin Hood: Spirit of the Greene" will view a musical tale about Robin Hood as a child. "And you will learn, in this version of the story, that Robin's best childhood friend is Warwick, who becomes the sheriff of Nottingham," Miller said, "so these two who will become arch enemies are actually best friends as children."

Many of the traditional characters of the Robin Hood ballad will be introduced to the audience as children in the first act, which ends with Robin killing one of the king's deer.

"It is near the end of the very first act that the killing of the deer makes him an outlaw," he said. "And then in the second act, you see Robin years later as a 25 year old. He is the Robin that we all know, robbing from the rich and giving to the poor, but several surprising things happen."

This version of the Robin Hood story works so well for the Vermillion Community Theatre, Miller believes, because "there are no huge parts - clearly Robin Hood and Marian are leads, but everybody has a little part. Almost everybody - 104 in the cast - has something to say. Even the little ones have

little lines, and that's really fun."

Jen Dickenson, a Vermillion native who supervised the VCT's wildly popular production of the musical "Annie" last summer, is fulfilling the same role in the director's chair this year.

"It's been so much fun, because we have so many repeats (cast members) from last year, but we also have a whole bunch of new kids and adults who weren't able to be in the performance last year," Dickenson said. "We've got new people and old people together, and it's really great experience."

There are a handful of cast members, she added, who will be appearing on stage for the very first time in this musical production.

"We've been trying really hard to welcome them in," Dickenson said. "It's coming together very, very nicely. And what's cool is I'm able to work with many of the same people as last year, so I know where I can push them harder and help them grow as performers."

She said she is experiencing an added degree of creative freedom in her role as director because of the musical's unique, homegrown quality.

"Since I have 104 people on stage, I'm able to move around some of lines - I have a little more freedom with that, to make sure everybody gets their moment," Dickenson said. "That's a big priority for me, to make sure that everybody is honored in their way."

Rehearsals began six weeks ago, and started mainly with the lead characters.

"It's only been within the last 10 days or so that we've gotten everybody together for all of the rehearsals, and it's just so much fun and energy," Dickenson said. "It's been great."

Show dates are July 19, 20 and 22 at 7:30 p.m. and July 21 at 2:30 p.m. All performances are at the Vermillion High School Performing Arts Center. Tickets are \$14 for adults and \$7 K-12. Children under 5 are free. For more information, log on to vermillioncommunitytheatre.org.

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