

■ USD's future goals feature more med students,
Page 03

■ Fischbach named to USA team
Page 05

PT

Serving our readers since 1884.

PLAIN TALK

Friday,
June 28, 2013

Volume 128, Issue 26
USPS 657-720



© 2013 YANKTON MEDIA, INC., all rights reserved

www.plaintalk.net

75¢

Tradition + memories = Midsommar



A long line forms in the basement of Dalesburg Lutheran Church late Friday afternoon as people serve themselves, smorgasbord-style, to the home-made, ethnic, Scandinavian meal prepared that day by women of the church. Besides the meal, Friday's activities included music, children's activities, and Scandinavian ring dances.

(Photo by David Lias)

144th annual festival celebrated at Dalesburg

By David Lias

david.lias@plaintalk.net

Time marches on, and with each step comes progress mixed with a bit of yearning for the way things used to be.

Robert Lundgren, who served as pastor at Dalesburg Lutheran Church four decades ago, was among the crowd that gathered in the church Friday afternoon to celebrate the 144th Midsommar at Dalesburg festival.

The celebration, he said, is way for local people to continue to tightly cling to tradition.

"This is my 41st Midsommar. Forty years ago, I took part in my first one here," he said. "It's fun to see all of these people," Lundgren said. "I can't believe some of them are 40 years older than they were, and now they are in their 90s."

Lundgren witnessed a resurgence of the traditional celebration four decades ago that he believes, in part, may have been a response to some societal changes that were going on in the region at that time.

"I'm happy that they are still celebrating Midsommar here; we revived it a great deal back in the '70s, and had as many as 2,000 people here for the Midsommar Fest, and the Swedish ambassador from Washington, DC came out and visited here," he said. "The people have really kind of clung to the Midsommar fest."

Midsommar was an event that people could turn to during uncertain times.

"I think once the rural schools were closed back in about 1972 and 1973, what were the people going to hang on to? Right in this particular area, here at Hub City, you have people divided in this congregation, in this community, into three different school districts. The ones to the south go to Vermillion; the people in the

northeast go to Beresford and those in the northwest go to Centerville," Lundgren said. "This Midsommar becomes a community homecoming for the people here. It's a way to come back and a way to celebrate a way of life that is fast disappearing."

He recalls the celebration 40 years ago pales in comparison to the more contemporary Midsommar festivals held at Dalesburg.

"Back then, when people were just hanging on, trying to keep it alive, they had a catered meal," Lundgren said. "My first Midsommar 40 years ago, they had a crew from Alcester that came over (to provide the meal) and it was nothing to write home about."

"It was not ethnic, it was not even good American food," he said, laughing, "and we turned it around and brought back authentic home cooking that's Swedish and in some cases Norwegian, and there are some Danish dishes, too. We put together a smorgasbord, and a lot of people loved that, along with the traditional Swedish music that is always offered here."

While the Swedish folk group Bjarv was performing before a capacity crowd inside Dalesburg Lutheran Church Friday afternoon, women from the congregation and the region were busy in the basement, preparing the traditional meal that would be served smorgasbord-style.

Ron Johnson, a long-time driving force behind the annual Midsommar celebration, began welcoming people to descend to the basement at 4:30 p.m. Friday. The proceedings were calm and orderly; groups of 30 people at a time were allowed to descend the steps according to the numbers on their tickets.

■ **TRAD.,** Page 03

Bjarv provides Swedish folk harmonies

By David Lias

david.lias@plaintalk.net

The three young men who make up the musical group Bjarv demonstrated two things immediately to their Midsommar audience at Dalesburg Lutheran Church Friday afternoon: 1) They are very good musicians, and 2) Their personalities are as bright as their performances.

Beautiful harmonies filled the church, which by early Friday afternoon featured a near capacity audience, as Mikael Grafström, 34, Olof Göthlin, 29, and Ben Lagerberg-Teitelbaum, 27, performed.

The folk trio opened the 114th celebration of Midsommar in Dalesburg on June 21. The festival dates back into the late 1860s, when settlers from Dalarna County of Sweden came to Dakota Territory, to the area that is now southeastern South Dakota. These pioneer families started a Midsommar celebration tradition, based on the festival in Sweden.

Dalesburg Lutheran, located 12 miles north of Vermillion, provided some relief from Friday afternoon's heat and humidity with its modern air conditioning. Midsommar attendees lingered inside

■ **FOLK,** Page 02

Leaky pool still a place for locals to beat the heat

By Travis Gulbrandson

travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

There are plans to replace the swimming pool in Prentis Park with an aquatic center, but until that time comes, the old pool is still in use.

The question is, for how long? "It's like an inefficient house," parks and rec director Jim Goblirsch said of the old pool, which was built in 1967. "You live in your house and your windows leak air, hot or cold. When do you want to replace them?"

"I can't give you a guarantee and say it'll be open another five years," he said. "These guys are doing a great job keeping it operational, but it is falling apart, and it takes considerable man-hours to keep it operational."

Goblirsch made these comments earlier this month, when members of the city council took a tour of the current swimming facility.

One of the biggest problems with the pool is that it leaks. According to parks superintendent Aaron Baedke, it loses two inches per day.

"I did the math earlier, and it came out to a little over 10,000 gallons a day going into the ground," Baedke said. "I don't know what that would be in a year for water and money. It does slow down as the summer goes on because



This group of kids found relief from Monday's hot and muggy conditions in Vermillion by taking the plunge together in the city pool at Prentis Park. Pictured are Natalie Buckman, Avery Johnson, Olivia Regnerus, Hannah Christopherson, Hannah McKernan, Rachel Brady and Jack Freeburg.

(Photo by David Lias)

the ground becomes fully saturated. "Last year I think we did 160 feet of re-grouting the seams in the worst areas we could," he said. "It slows the leaks, but I'm hoping that it's not in a main line, that it's just cracks in the pool."

All the water the pool loses each day must be replaced, and also must be cleaned.

■ **POOL,** Page 14