

VIEWPOINTS

Ushering In Coronation Day

BY PAULA DAMON

Summer toes, painted ladies take turns flashing through sandals that haven't seen the light of day since autumn broke heatwave's back, riding herd like a wild bull.

A sleeveless thrift store shirt hangs tightly on my once youthful shoulders, now crouched from worry I've employed to keep misery from my doorstep.

Processing into June with a nylon webbed lawn chair under my arm and a lap-slapping playful spirit tucked in my pocket, I prance with pant-legs rolled high, exposing lily-white ankles, shivering now as I wade into summer's cool refreshing water.

Scrambling to get away from the clock, phone and monotony, I snatch the red, white and blue-stripped beach towels and make a fast break from my sin of boredom.

As a cluster of thoughts from the past pays visit, releasing memories locked tightly, I high-step playfully into wide open fields of joyous release.

My watch-less wrist held high like a drum major's baton leading a marching band, shuffling down Main, blowing horns, whistling flutes, sounding clarinets, tapping drums.

Sunglasses slide down the sweaty bridge of my nose in these the first untracked hours of summer vacation.

Hop-skipping lightly on water's edge, I squeeze wet sand under the firm foothold of unbridled relief this Coronation Day, which leans in and extends a strong helping hand.

Ah, June, ushering in the first aromas of summer, hand-delivered and on time.

Sends me back a few years to my childhood home – a squatty craftsman on the corner of Third and Spruce, Phillipsburg, Pennsylvania.

Stick built and covered with rough-cut red bricks, it sat squarely played to the far corners of our tiny lot.

A boxy front porch, emptied of dozens of preceding years, now with only wear and tear to show, waits in silence for lighthearted footsteps to once again clatter up these cement stairs and onto its badly scuffed and warped wooden planks.

How many June evenings I spent here scooping fireflies and pushing to and fro on the rickety porch swing, now missing with only two oversized hooks in the ceiling as remnants of another summer night.

Warm scent of oak leaves and acorns rise as permeating incense.

Once inside, I can taste the smell of dad's cigarette smoke, making its way from the head place at the kitchen table, down the hallway to the foyer where it wraps its arms around me as a greeting.

The comingling of textures inside my childhood home provides an interior calling of my youth.

A yellowed Formica table with smooth chrome legs, matching chairs, stand on all fours, across smooth marbled linoleum tile on the kitchen floor. Unyielding hardwood dining room décor.

In the living room, tightly woven low pile floral carpet contrasts scratchy taffeta couch upholstery.

And customary sounds. Squeaking chipmunks nested inside cavernous fireplace walls. My hands endlessly raking through the toy chest searching for the Lone Ranger's white horse I purchased at the Five & Dime with loose change I'd found underneath couch cushions.

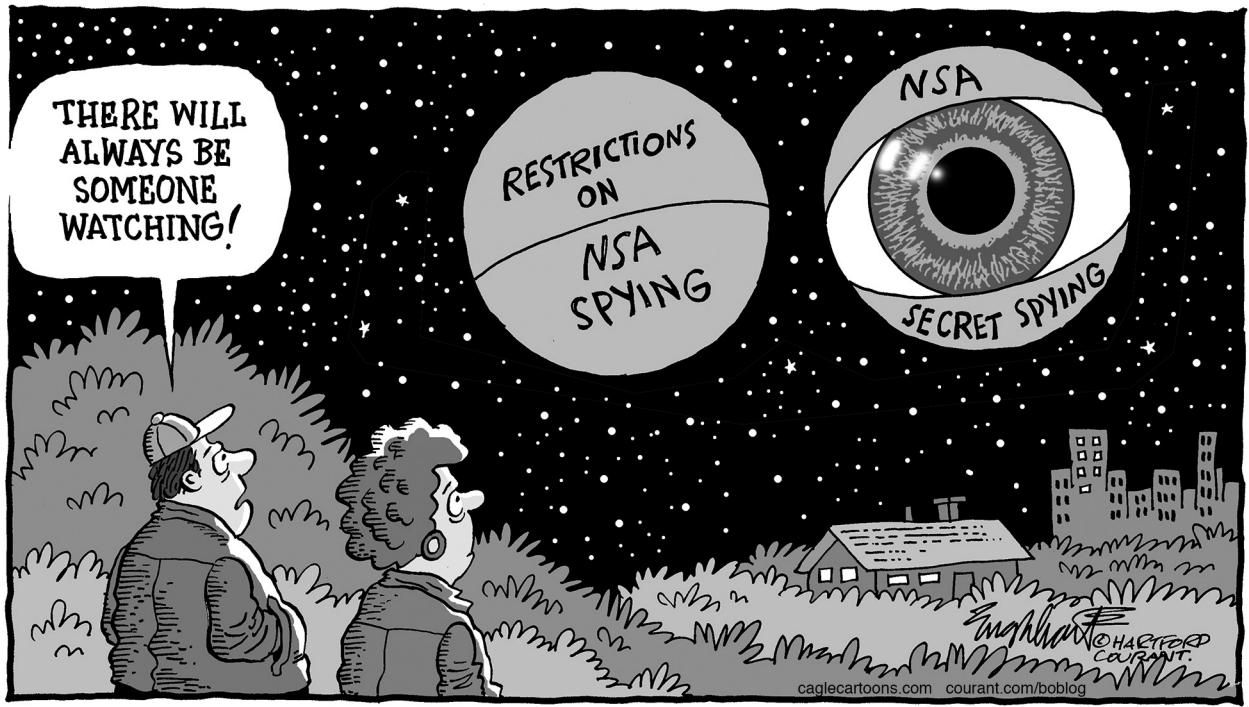
As a backdrop, the deep baritone voice of Walter Cronkite delivering the Evening News on the rounded picture tube. Our free-standing deep fat fryer snapping hardily, transforming bland raw potatoes into golden French fries.

That's what Mom always served with hamburgers she charbroiled under the night sky after shucking corn and later thumping and splitting the first watermelon of the season.

Summer food on another sort of Coronation Day to welcome back June.

Summer has filled her veins with light and her heart is washed with noon.

C. DAY LEWIS,
ENGLISH POET



Rhubarb Day, A Special Vermillion Tradition

BY JAMES COOPER
For The Plain Talk

Since 2003, the W.H. Over Museum has hosted Rhubarb Day on the first Saturday in June. While the date has moved slightly to Sunday, June 7th, Rhubarb Day has long been a day dedicated to celebrating rhubarb for what it is and what it means to the Vermillion community. Each year, Maxine Johnson and others from the museum host Rhubarb Day on site in their conference room, where there shall be activities, prizes, and speeches.

This year, visitors can expect to enjoy a tasting contest at 1:30 PM. This contest will consist of original rhubarb recipes that will include pies, cakes, and Johnson's own rhubarb jam. The activities and culture for Rhubarb Day is, in Johnson's words, "shamelessly modeled after the [rhu-

barb] festival in Lanesboro, Minnesota." Regardless of what the model is, this day is a Vermillion treat that celebrates creativity and a very abundant resource. Winners will receive prizes, but "everybody wins" according to Johnson, as everyone still gets to enjoy all of spoils provided by the, "wonderful, wonderful culinary artists in this town."

Following the tasting contest, and provided that the festival goers have not fallen into a rhubarb induced coma, there will be a guest speaker at 2:15 PM. Previous speakers have included quilters, rhubarb farmers, and Garrison Keillor, host of the PBS variety show A Prairie Home Companion. This year the speaker is Judy Thompson, a watercolor artist from Iowa. Thompson will be speaking about the Midwest and her art on display at the museum from The Homestead Series, which is a series of

paintings celebrating at 150 year period on the plains from 1862-2012. Thompson also provided the cover art to Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography by Laura Ingalls Wilder, which will not be available for sale, but will be signed if visitors bring a copy. Great thanks goes to the South Dakota Arts Council and the United Way of Vermillion for helping bring Judy Thompson to our community.

After losing state funding, as many museums did in the 1980's, the W.H. Over Museum has relied on grants, private donations, and fund raising, in order to continue offering local history and culture to the Vermillion community. As for Rhubarb Day, "It's open and free... we'll put a jar out for free will just to help cover the cost, but one of our members, Marvin Walz and his family have sponsored the major part of the exhibit as a memorial to his wife, Carol."

Johnson went on to mention that later in the summer, there will be barn quilts made to hang on the side of the museum. One of these quilts will be dedicated to Carol Walz.

When searching for culture, history, and local flair in Vermillion, one need look no further than the W.H. Over Museum. Hidden away next to the Dakota Dome, this museum holds a collection of artifacts that illustrate the rich and sometimes sordid history of South Dakota. Their painstakingly organized and displayed collection features exotic wildlife, fossils, Native American treasures, historic firearms, and South Dakotan social culture. Couple these with a dedication to community building and the museum is a hidden gem in South Dakota. According to Johnson, "We're the best kept secret in Vermillion. I know."

I will have to agree with her.

Slices Of Life: Discord In The Bedroom

BY JILL PERTLER

My husband and I have been wrestling with an issue that affects most happy couples at one time or another. It's the between-the-sheets secret that causes irritation, frustration and sleep deprivation. You've probably experienced it firsthand in your own marriage. It happens to the best of us. Snoring.

It's like burping or farting: unappealing and unattractive, yet occasionally unavoidable for those of the human persuasion. It's not a standard topic of normal dinner conversation, but lately my husband and I have grappled with the "S" word. (We sleep! We snore!)

Turns out we aren't the only couple engaged in snore wars. The National Sleep Foundation estimates snoring affects 90 million American adults; that's more than one in three. The conundrum, of course, is identifying the one from the three. No one wants to admit to snoring – at least not at my house.

One study* found that 59 percent of people report that their partner snores; while I estimate that less than two percent of partners will admit to the snoring. The numbers don't add up.

Like many things in life, my husband and I take different approaches

to loud and unseemly behavior in our bedroom.

If he were to snore (I'm not intimating he does) I would roll over and ignore the noise while realizing there are many things much worse than lying in bed, comfy and cozy, next to your snoring spouse. To be fair, I don't mind resting somewhere between awake and sleep, pondering whatever topic might come to mind in the middle of the night. And most nights I fall into slumber easily and stay there, even amid snorts and other forms of noisy breathing (were it to occur, ever, which it probably hasn't, ever).

My husband abhors pondering. Once jarred from dreamland, he may toss and turn and toss, refusing the dozing state as his body refuses to surrender to sleep. If I happened to snore one night (again, we are being completely hypothetical here) he might get up from bed and move to another room to escape the thunder. To him, that would be the logical alternative.

He isn't the only one. All this snoring under the covers is causing mass exodus from the bedroom. Another study by the NSF found that 23 percent of couples sleep apart – many (46 percent) because of snoring.

I've never been one to let logic – or statistics – rule my universe.

Sleeping (or lying awake) next to a snoring spouse might be inconvenient and even a little frustrating, but what is marriage about if not inconvenience and frustration? Inconveniences happen all the time in marriage but too often they go by different much bigger and scarier names. Snoring, on all accounts, should therefore be a piece of cake.

Besides, there are proven benefits to spooning with your spouse. It decreases stress and raises oxytocin (the love/cuddle hormone) while increasing feelings of safety, security and warmth. It also decreases snoring (not really, but I thought I'd throw it in there).

For better or for worse. For richer for poorer. In sickness and in health. Burping, bed hair, morning breath and snoring. It's all the fodder of a good marriage.

At least it would be, if either one of us snored. Which we don't.

But you already knew that.

Jill Pertler is an award-winning syndicated columnist, published playwright and author. She welcomes having readers follow her column on the Slices of Life page on Facebook.

*Statistic Brain Research Institute via Vancouver Sleep and Breathing Center

CHAMBER CHAT

CHAMBER BUSINESS ANNOUNCEMENTS

• Coming this fall: Welding Boot Camp-introductory course for basic welding skills. Tentative start date: Oct. 1, 2015. Classes meet Tues. & Thurs. evenings (approximately 2 hours per class) for a total of 35 hours at the Vermillion High School. Tuition is \$250. Tuition reimbursement is available for those who obtain a welding job with a Clay County employer. Register early to save your spot - class size limited to first 10 applicants. Call the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Co. at 605-624-5571 or email: vcdc@vermillionchamber.com. Sponsored by VCDC, in partnership with Masaba and the Vermillion School District.

• The 2015 Vermillion Area Visitor Guides have arrived! Please contact the VCDC office at 624-5571 or stop by and pick them up at 116 Market St. Also available are the 2015 statewide SD Vacation Guides and the SE SD Travel Guide. FREE!

• Stop by New 2 You, 2719

SD Hwy 50, and check out their new expansion and renovation! 1,800 sq ft of retail space has been added, including additional dressing rooms. Everything is now under one roof - furniture, clothing, purses, shoes, books, games, DVD's, jewelry, housewares, glassware, knick-knacks, craft supplies, toys and more! They consign and sell most household items.

TUESDAY, JUNE 16

• Please join Wireless World for a Business After Hours on Tues., June 16 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. We are located at 839 E Cherry. Enjoy some food and refreshments while you browse the newest and greatest in smartphones, tablets and wireless internet with some specials that night! There will be giveaways and a Grand Prize drawing. See you then!

MONDAY, JUNE 22

• The Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Co. Annual Golf Social is for you, your coworkers, friends & family-4 Person Best Ball Scramble Golf Tournament at The Bluffs Golf

Course, Mon., June 22. Registration & team photos begin at 11:45 am, Shot Gun start at 1:00 pm. To register your 4 person golf team, be a hole sponsor or donate a pin or door prize, please go to www.vermillionchamber.com or call the Chamber at 624-5571 or email annb@vermillionchamber.com

• Business after Hours: Are you looking for an opportunity to showcase your business and network with your peers? Sign up to host a Business After Hours event! These events generally run from 5:00-7:00 pm on a weeknight and the hosting business provides hors d'oeuvres and refreshments. If interested, please contact Ann at: annb@vermillionchamber.com or at 624-5571.

THIS WEEKS HAPPENINGS ANNOUNCEMENTS

• The City of Vermillion will be closing the intersection of Cottage Avenue and W. Duke Street Wed., June 3 to Fri. June 5 for the Water Main Reconstruction Project. The purpose

of the project is to replace a deteriorating segment of ductile iron pipe along Cottage Avenue. The road closure is necessary to provide the contractor with a safe working environment and space to store equipment and materials.

To maintain access to Ace Hardware, Chlotique, Wells Fargo, Mr. Smith's, and the Municipal Liquor Store, the project will be completed in two phases. In the first phase, Cottage Avenue will be closed from W. Duke Street south to the third Ace Hardware driveway access. In the second phase, Cottage Avenue will be closed from W. Cherry Street north to the third driveway access. Access to Cottage Avenue from the W. Cherry Street service road will be closed at times during the second phase as well. If you have questions please contact Jason Anderson, Assistant City Engineer, at 677-7050.

• Summer Food Service Program at Jolley Elementary School, 224 S. University, Mon.,

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LETTER TO EDITOR POLICY

The Plain Talk encourages its readers to write letters to the editor, and it asks that a few simple guidelines be followed.

Please limit letters to 300 words or less. Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.

In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the Plain Talk will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.

Specific individuals

or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.

Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters to the Editor, 201 W. Cherry St., Vermillion, SD 57069, drop off at 201 W. Cherry in Vermillion, fax to 624-4696 or e-mail to shauna.marlette@plaintalk.net.