

# (art) OF VERMILLION



COURTESY PHOTOS: BY CHAD CABLE

The Valiant Vineyard winery in Vermillion is all set up for the wedding season as well as other special events with wine tasting and tours daily.

## Vermillion's 'Valiant' Venue

BY SARAH WETZEL  
For the Plain Talk

Though Vermillion's local winery, Valiant Vineyards, has wine tasting, tours and other events throughout the year, the summer presents the opportunity to host life-changing events.

"Right now we're really focusing on our wedding season," said Adrienne Lewis who has worked at the vineyard for over a decade. "We have lots of weddings throughout the summer. That's really fun."

"We have a wedding this weekend which is definitely fun," Lewis told the Plain Talk last week. "She's a very creative bride too so it's fun to see her vision of her wedding and make that come together for her. She's actually doing her ceremony here and the dinner and reception and everything."

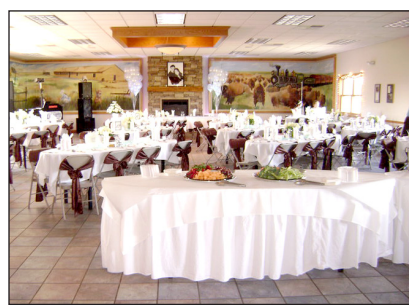
According to Lewis, the use of the vineyard as a wedding venue is popular not only for locals but those who have long since moved on.

"A lot of the times it's people who have some roots in South Dakota and they end up traveling," she said. "We had a couple from Australia. The groom had family ties in Vermillion so they actually had people who flew in from all over the world to come to the wedding. That was pretty exciting. We had another family that had family in the area and they planned the whole thing from Texas where they actually lived."

Valiant Vineyards goes one step farther when it comes to these important events.

"We do a wedding package where we have a beautiful bed and breakfast here as well," Lewis said. "They can rent out all the rooms and kind of take over the whole venue. That makes it really nice for the visit too."

Far from being under-booked, Lewis



said she is currently taking bookings for next year's wedding season. At the close of wedding season, the winery looks forward to an exciting annual event.

"Our main event of the summer is the South Dakota Wine Fest," Lewis said. "This is our thirteenth year. The whole room is wine tasting and we have live music out back and we do a cooking with wine demonstration. All kinds of fun things."

The event even includes an amateur wine-making competition.

The vineyard also hosts celebrations for other major events like anniversaries, graduation parties and reunions year round.

Exciting events aside, Lewis pointed out the most important thing to understand about the winery's main product.

"You could never know everything about wine," she said. "It's just about the experience and the trial and error. That's something I talk about with people on a daily basis when they come into the winery and do wine tasting. We do wine tasting daily. That's part of the experience."

Having worked at the winery for 14 years, Lewis certainly can make some recommendations.

"My most favorite is our Wild Grape Port," she said. "It's kind of on the higher end. Those are actually made of

South Dakota wild grapes. That's our signature wine and the one we've got the most recognition in the wine industry. We actually export that one to China and Paris as well. Pretty exciting for a little South Dakota winery."

According to Lewis, all the wine is made on site using a variety of grapes and methods.

"We have our own vineyard and we also have other local growers that we buy from," she said. "That's really great because then it becomes an added value to our agriculture in South Dakota. We bring in a little bit to supplement. We hope we will have enough someday where we don't have to do that."

According to Lewis, the time it takes to produce a bottle of wine varies widely.

"Some wines could be finished from harvest in like nine months and some age a lot longer like the wild grape we age for six years," she said. "We plan ahead and figure out what we might need for the years ahead."

Modern agricultural technology has made things a lot more interesting according to Lewis.

"It's an exciting time to be in the wine industry in the Midwest because they do keep coming up with new and better varieties of these grapes all the time," she said. "It makes it really fun."

The fun doesn't necessarily stop at grapes either.

"You can make wine out of just about anything really," she said.

"When we do our amateur competition we really see some creative wines from fruits, vegetables and herbs even. We have a rhubarb wine that we make and we also have one that's honey and black currant. Black currant is a really popular fruit for wine making. South Dakota rhubarb wine is sort of a traditional thing as well."

## What's Happening At Newton Hills And Good Earth State Parks

We've had some great weekends of programming so far at the parks this year, and we are not slowing down yet! Stop out to Newton Hills and Good Earth to see some of the different fun and educational activities we have to offer. We look forward to seeing you all out at the parks!

This weekend at Newton Hills we are covering anything and everything about butterflies!

Come find us in the amphitheater on Friday, June 19, at 8:30 p.m. for our movie at the amphitheater.

On Saturday morning at 10:30 a.m. look for us at the amphitheater again for Just Inching Along program where we will be making caterpillar crafts to show how a butterfly first starts out in life. At 1 p.m. we will be in the double shelters for Transformation Time where we will be playing a game to show how the change takes place! You may as well stay close to there because Things of Beauty will also be held at the double shelters where we will be designing our own butterfly at 3 p.m. And at 5 p.m. we will have another game to wrap up your afternoon in the grass area on Sargeant Creek Road. And to finish off a busy day come down to the amphitheater again for another movie at 8:30 p.m. with popcorn and freezies!

On Sunday, June 21st at 9am there will be a non-denominational worship service held at the amphitheater for all who wish to join.

Weekend of summer fun at Good Earth State Park at Blood Run!

Join us for a weekend fun in the sun!

Do you know the secret ancestry of birds? Come explore the world of fuzzy dinosaurs to fabulous fliers at Birds Are In A Class All Their Own, on Friday, June 19, at 7 p.m.

Earth, wind, fire, and water are the forces that have sculpted Good Earth State Park. In celebration of these forces Good Earth State Park is hosting a monthly event. Mark your calendar for June 20, July 18, August 15 and September 19 and come enjoy the various events throughout the day including a riddle hike, scavenger hunt, and crafts from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Murder, mystery, and mayhem await you in this natural tale of who killed whom and where. (No animals or people are harmed in this interactive experience.) Come live through the Murder Mystery experience June 20 at 4 p.m.

To draw or to write, that is the question that you will have to answer when you join us for a journey into the world of journaling. Journals are provided for this Journal Journey, June 21 at 3 p.m.

If you have any questions about the park or the programs for this coming weekend, do not hesitate to give us a call at (605) 987-2263 or email newtonhills@state.sd.us. More info including an event schedule may also be found online at www.gfp.sd.gov. If you would like to receive weekly email updates on programming at the park, like us on Facebook, or send an email to newtonhills@state.sd.us.

The staff at Newton Hills and Good Earth look forward to seeing you at the park this summer!

## 97th Annual American Legion Convention To Be Held In Huron

WATERTOWN – The 97th Annual American Legion Department Convention will be held at the Crossroads Hotel & Convention Center in Huron, SD, beginning on June 25th and running through Sunday June 28th. Hundreds of Legionnaires, Auxiliary Members, Sons of The American Legion and Legion Riders from across the State of South Dakota will be in attendance. This year two Legionnaires have announced their candidacy for the high office of Department Commander. These candidates are Terry Hanson of Arlington and Duane Riedlinger of Piedmont.

Thursday, June 25th, will begin with the Finance Commission Meeting at 10:00 a.m., the Department Executive Committee Meeting at 1:00 p.m. and followed by a meeting of the Five Year Membership Council/Media & PR Committees. Friday commences with a meeting of the Resolutions Committee at 10:00 a.m. The afternoon is filled with meetings of the Convention Committees, Memorial Service and Joint Banquet in the evening. Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. the American Legion Annual Convention will officially be called to order. This session will consist of hearing from special guests and will be followed by the business portion of the convention. At 6:00 p.m., American Legion Go-Getters will meet for a reception and meal at the Beadle County Sportsman Club. At 8:00 p.m., the 6th Annual Fun Auction will be held at the Crossroads Hotel with all proceeds going to the South Dakota American Legion Foundation. Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. the final session of the convention will be held with the election of a new Department Commander, Department Vice Commanders, Sergeant At Arms, National Executive Committeeman and Alternate National Executive Committeeman at noon. A post Department Executive Committee Meeting will be held at the conclusion of the Department Convention.

The American Legion is the largest veteran's organization with a total membership nationwide of 2.4 million members in 12,500 American Legion Posts. The Department of South Dakota has 242 Posts with a membership of 21,000 members in most all communities in the State.

## Gov. Dugaard Names Additional Members To Blue Ribbon Task Force

PIERRE – Gov. Dennis Dugaard announced the appointment of thirteen new members to the Blue Ribbon Task Force.

"I joined with legislators to create the Blue Ribbon Task Force because all South Dakotans want to ensure that we have a school funding system that provides a great education to our young people, based on great teachers," said the Governor. "There was strong interest in participating in this task force, and I thank these appointees for committing their time and thoughtful consideration to this important issue."

The new task force members are:

- Dave Davis, Rapid City – member of the Rapid City Area School District Board of Education
- Dr. Becky Guffin, Aberdeen – superintendent of Aberdeen School District
- Vicki Harmdierks, Mitchell – principal of Gerie Belle Rogers Elementary School
- LuAnn Lindskov, Timber Lake – math and science teacher at Timber Lake High School and 2013 South Dakota Teacher of the Year
- Dr. Brian Maher, Sioux Falls – incoming superintendent of Sioux Falls School District
- DeLon Mork, Madison
- Steven O'Brien, Watertown – English teacher at Watertown High School
- Erik Person, Burke – superintendent of Burke School District
- Beth Pietila, Yankton
- Dr. Michael Rush, Pierre – incoming executive director of SD Board of



Dugaard

Regents  
• Jim Scull, Rapid City  
• Eric Stroeder, Moberg – member of Moberg School District Board

of Education and incoming president of Associated School Boards of South Dakota

• Kevin Tetzlaff, Brookings

These appointees will join the 13 members named earlier this year, to complete the 26-member task force.

The Blue Ribbon Task Force will continue to hold

public input meetings throughout the summer. Beginning in July, the entire task force will meet to consider public input, analyze data and discuss ideas for reform. The task force will make recommendations to

Gov. Dugaard and to the 2016 State Legislature.

Learn more about the Blue Ribbon Task Force and view the schedule of upcoming meetings at blueribbon.sd.gov.

## YOUR NEWS! THE PLAIN TALK

605-624-6291

**Knutson**  
FAMILY DENTISTRY

Dr. Richard Knutson, D.D.S.  
Dr. Matthew Knutson, D.D.S.

[KnutsonFamilyDentistry.com](http://KnutsonFamilyDentistry.com)

Dental Excellence for Children & Adults



## Find the Right Hearing Aids for You

Dr. Farnham can help you find the best hearing aids for your hearing loss. He will create a personal, customized rehabilitation plan for you, including choosing the right hearing aids from a variety of products.



Todd A. Farnham  
Au.D., CCC-A



**Sanford Vermillion Medical Center**

Second and Fourth Wednesday of every month

Call toll free 1-866-665-0062 for an appointment



We're H"ear" For You!  
**EAR, NOSE & THROAT ASSOCIATES, P.C.**

2525 Fox Run Parkway, Suite 101, Yankton • 605-665-0062 • 1-866-665-0062