



COURTESY PHOTO

Dylan And The '60s Revisited Saturday

Gayville Hall and veteran South Dakota musicians Boyd Bristow, Mike Connor, and Jim Groth present "Bob Dylan, The Byrds, and Music of the Sixties," at 8 p.m. on Saturday, June 27, in Gayville.

The show will revisit the exciting time fifty years ago when the premier folk artist and songwriter of that generation inspired The Byrds and other folk and pop artists to enter a new era of musical exploration.

Dylan had written stunning folk anthems like "Blowing in the Wind" that had made him the successor to Woody Guthrie and the darling of American folk music, but in 1965 The Byrds' number-one hit pop recording of Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man" and Dylan's controversial performance at the Newport Folk Festival with amplified guitars proclaimed a new world.

Bristow, Connor, and Groth will celebrate that explosion of musical creativity in a two-hour concert.

The widely known Sioux Falls-area musicians have been mainstays of the South Dakota music scene since the 1970s, individually performing in such events as the South Dakota Acoustic Christmas shows and in South Dakota Rock-and-Roll Hall of Fame honored bands.

Gayville Hall is at 502 Washington Street in Gayville. Call 605-267-2859 for more information.

Damon Wins S.D. Honors

SIoux CITY – Longtime freelance writer Paula Bosco Damon won top honors in the 2015 South Dakota Press Women Communications Contest.

Damon took home two first-place awards for her Informational and Personal Opinion columns and two second-place honors in the Humorous and General categories of the statewide competition. The awards were announced in Brookings.

Her weekly column appears in the Plain Talk and the Carroll, Iowa, Daily Times Herald.

Over the years, Damon has garnered numerous awards in Iowa Press Women, South Dakota Press Women and National Federation of Press Women contests.

Most recently, two of her poems have been accepted for publication in the Scurpea Anthology, a literary journal of the University of Sioux Falls, S.D.

A collection of the author's works is available online at my-story-your-story.blogspot.com and in her book "Look. Don't Look." For more information, email paulaboscodamon@gmail.com.

Damon holds a bachelor's degree in mass communication and a master's degree in English, both from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion.



PAULA DAMON

Major

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might emphasize graphic design and video courses," she said. "Or, if they are interested primarily in marketing, they would select the advertising, sports marketing, social media marketing and business electives.

"Students interested in sport journalism careers would take such courses as sports writing, video production, digital imaging and sports broadcasting."

NEW POSSIBILITIES

The South Dakota Board of Regents recently approved the major. However, the program has been under discussion for at least three years, Van Maanen said. In early 2014, Berkeley Research Group consultants believed it was good timing for adding the sports marketing and media program.

The sports industry has seen tremendous growth fueled by the rise of social media, televised coverage, online streaming and extensive marketing, Van Maanen said.

"The online content has exploded," she said. "There's a high level of interest in sports and a growing awareness of expanded career opportunities in the field."

The new major and minor will use existing resources as well as faculty reassigned to new courses supporting the major. The increased enrollment created by the major will contribute to its ongoing support.

Even before it starts, the USD program has drawn strong interest from current and prospective students, Van Maanen said.

"We have heard from a significant number of existing USD students who plan to transfer into the program, and word is traveling fast beyond campus," she said. "I have already met with a number of high school students who are interested in learning more about the program. We anticipate a graduation rate of approximately 15 students annually."

Graduates of the new major can work at every level, but especially in marketing, media and managerial positions in the industry, Van Maanen said. Those fields include pro sports teams, high school and college teams, facility management, the sporting goods industry, resorts, fundraising, event management and fitness companies.

Those graduates can find a wide variety of careers in the immediate area, she said. She pointed to professional sports teams such as the Sioux Falls Stampede, Sioux Falls Skyforce, Sioux Falls Canaries and Sioux Falls Storm as well as teams in Rapid City, Sioux City and throughout the Midwest.



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

This artist rendition appears on the sign in front of the construction work for the University of South Dakota's Sports Performance Enhancement Complex next to the DakotaDome in Vermillion. The facility will play an educational role in USD's new undergraduate degree in sports marketing & media, which will be offered beginning this fall.

DRAWING ON CONTACTS

In designing the new major, USD officials consulted with professionals in the industry, including USD alumnus John Gillis. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in mass communication from the Vermillion campus. He has served for 26 years — currently as the associate director of development — for the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHSAA).

"He's an insider in the industry who knows its career potential," Van Maanen said. "He has hired USD interns in the past and has provided input on program changes."

Gillis pointed to the wide variety of opportunities with the new USD program.

"I feel that this academic major has unlimited potential as it can be used in several settings," he said.

For example, NFHSAA combines marketing and media on a daily basis to promote various national programs and initiatives, he said.

"As we seek corporate sponsors for those programs and initiatives, we use all kinds of media to reach those goals — which (today) includes the Internet and social media — in addition to traditional."

The USD sports marketing and media program didn't exist when Gillis was in college. However, he said his USD education and work experience have allowed him to adapt to today's sports environment. He described himself as a type of "hybrid staff member with one foot in media and the other in sports marketing."

"However, a person who graduates with USD's new academic degree would do so already possessing the knowledge that it took me years to gain through practical work experience," he said. "Without question, this is an

extremely valuable academic program."

GETTING TO WORK

The new USD program requires internships for the major, Van Maanen said. Each department supporting the major offers an internship coordinator.

"We have had many interns within the sports industry, so the ties to the profession already exist," she said.

USD coordinated the new major among various departments based on industry contacts, Van Maanen said. Each department plans to tailor new courses to meet changing industry needs.

"There are many career possibilities that do not fall neatly into the area of a single college department," she said. "The sports industry is a good example of that."

Gillis feels confident about the new program, given his familiarity with USD academic offerings, particularly the Department of Media & Journalism.

"I strongly believe that USD's course offerings and sports marketing major would compare extremely favorably with any such similar course offerings and majors at other universities around the nation," he said.

Van Maanen believes graduates of the new sports marketing & media major will definitely be at the top of their game, so to speak.

"There is a lot of excitement about the new major and minor, just like there is in the sporting industry in general," she said.

For more information on courses, curriculum and requirements, visit the Sport Marketing & Media section of the USD Catalog.

Follow @RDockendorf on Twitter.

Simunek

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competition of interview, talent, swimwear and evening gown. Obviously, things went very well for me. I won the talent preliminary award on the night I competed, which was wonderful because as a singer and a vocal music education major from USD it was nice to have my abilities recognized by the judges."

Simunek said her years in the organization have prepared her to fulfill her duties as Miss South Dakota.

"The Teen program truly is a feeder program into the Miss program, so competing as a teen made me want to compete in the Miss program even more just to reach that next destination," she said. "I was definitely a different person eight years ago. I hadn't been through high school, let alone through college. There was a lot I still had left to learn about myself and my beliefs. You think critically about things going on in the world and what your opinion of things are as a 14 year old girl those were things I thought about, but I don't think I fully understood. To be honest, do I even fully understand them now? We are constantly growing and evolving as people. Fortunately, now I can really think critically and focus on the research

on the current issues going on and develop my own opinions. I have been able to grow monumentally in the last eight years."

She also noted that as she has matured, so has her favorite aspect of the pageant.

"My favorite is the interview aspect," Simunek said. "Had you asked me that a few years ago, you would have not gotten that answer, it used to be very intimidating for me to walk into a room with a panel of judges who are going to throw questions at you. There are no holds on what they are going to ask you, they will tackle any issue from what are your strengths and weaknesses to what is your opinion on ISIS. The range of questions is very vast. It used to be I would walk into the room and be very nervous, but with time, trust and belief in my own speaking abilities, I have been able to turn my least favorite part into my absolute favorite. I walked into the interview this year for Miss South Dakota knowing that I was there to give the judges my most authentic self and that is exactly what I did. I showed them my heart and the things I cared about and believed in."

While winning the title of Miss South Dakota will force Simunek to defer her student teaching for a year, she also notes, it could not have come at a better time in her life.

"This is the perfect year

for me to win this title," she said. "Like we always say, life has a plan for me and you just have to trust it and follow it and enjoy it. Throughout every year that I have competed and not received the title, I have walked away with a valuable lesson, every time. I have been able to learn more about myself, work on my public speaking, and be out in the public serving our communities in South Dakota more. This was the perfect opportunity. With school, I was able to complete all my classes with my friends and be with them and have our study parties. Now I don't have to worry about missing classes with them. It is extremely wonderful timing for me."

Simunek noted that her relationships built at USD and in the community of Vermillion have allowed her to achieve her dream.

"I have been prepping and competing throughout my entire college career and I never stopped with my community service," she said. "I give 110 percent to my school work, which my professors know. I have been able to maintain an extremely high grade point average, on the Dean's List every semester and getting phenomenally great grades in my classes, and I say that with a humble heart. I am a hard working person, so it is just an effect for me. It is difficult at times, but thankfully my professors have worked with me

when I was working with Children's Miracle Network and the Sanford Hospital in Sioux Falls, they understand if I can't be in class that day because I am working for a good cause. This fall I will have one class to complete and will be doing it as an independent study with my teachers. After that, I will have completed all of my on-campus coursework and all I will have left is my student teaching."

"I would like to add a huge thank you to the community of Vermillion," she added. "Throughout the past five years they have been extremely helpful to me with my Veteran's Relief drive. Thank you to everyone at the University of South Dakota for their undying support over the years for helping me reach this goal and help me on my journey to Miss America."

Next for Simunek is preparing for the Miss America Pageant set for Atlantic City this September.

"That takes a lot of prep time making sure my interview skills and making sure that my talent is up to par and ready for a nationally televised stage," she explained. "Once I get back from Miss America I will spend my year touring the state of South Dakota visiting schools and talking

about Children's Miracle Network, which the Miss America Organization is the national ambassador for, but also speaking on behalf of my own personal platform 5 Stars For Serving Those Who Served. I will spend a large portion of this next year really trying to bump up the numbers and help as many military families and homeless veterans making sure they have the tools to reintegrate into the community positively and thank them for all they do."

No matter what happens in Atlantic City, Simunek said she knows this will be a life changing opportunity.

"This has been a dream of mine for a very long time and go to Atlantic City to meet 51 other amazing women from across the country and see what they have to offer," she said.

"You really do create a bond with these women that will last a lifetime. I am fortunate to say I know someone from every single state and will become sisters and have the opportunity to compete on the national stage representing everything that love and truly enjoy doing. I am very excited to represent the University of South Dakota on the national stage. There have been a couple of Miss South Dakotas that have hailed

from USD and I am glad to be added to that list and represent the Coyotes all the way over in New Jersey, that will be very fun."

Simunek said she knows that as the 69th Miss South Dakota she is stepping in the history of many successful South Dakota women.

"It is very historical and that is something that is important to recognize, it is truly much bigger than yourself," she said. "I am representing an organization that doesn't just represent me as a person, but that I am now representing the state of South Dakota. I represent a vast amount of people and opinions — this state — that is quite the task to take on, but I am so excited to take on that opportunity and responsibility and to hold the history of the Miss South Dakota and Miss America organization in my hands. I am excited to be able to nurture it and mold it into what I want it to be and go around the state makes a vast difference in my life."

Simunek will represent South Dakota at the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City in September. The pageant will be televised on ABC on September 13.

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