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there were formal dances, coronations, hootenannies, receptions, initiations (some included paddling) and pep rallies.

There is something very special about Yankton College and the small campus in the heart of Yankton, South Dakota, alumni will tell you. While it was still the “College on the Hill,” students received the education that Joseph Ward had envisioned. Friendships and marriages were made, most lasting forever. And with their diplomas, young men and women set their eyes on careers or they furthered their education, well prepared with a liberal arts background.

The financial struggles of Yankton College ebbed and flowed throughout its history. The indebtedness seemed insurmountable by December of 1984, with no relief from banks, endowments or mortgages. Up until then, Yankton College had stoically survived the fiscal ups and downs through the decades, keeping a dedicated staff in difficult times and awarding degrees. At that time, an estimated fund-drive of nearly \$3,000,000 was necessary to save the school. After much deliberating, this option did not seem a realistic achievement, and the Board of Trustees made the fateful decision to close the campus doors “leaving in its wake broken hearts, dreams and careers.” The impact devastated the students, faculty, alumni and the community.

### A Continuing Story!

However, it was a time for a new beginning where the Yankton College saga and its existence, indeed continues.

For more information, visit [www.yanktoncollege.org](http://www.yanktoncollege.org)

■ *By Jan Garrity*

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“I’ve tried to get this message to them as clear as I can: It doesn’t matter if we win this contest or not. What you have done is much more than most people do,” she said. “You have become passionate about a subject. You have educated yourself about a subject, and you have taken it that one, next step, where you’ve shared your education and your passion with your community in order to make a difference.”

The other wonderful thing about this entire experience, Gault said, is the community reaction.

Gault has delivered the Asian carp research to several leaders who will take the effort to the next level.

However, the VMS students have no intention of stopping their projects.

“We’re planning to offer a dual-credit class next year at USD (University of South Dakota) and at Vermillion High School where students will actually be able to do research on Asian carp,” she said.

Gault’s students are also working with the National Park Service to host a summer institute on invasive species.

“I think that may be the most important feedback for them. When you go through all of these steps, and when you do all of that hard work, people will notice,” she said. “People will become invested, and then you need to work together as a community.”

To view the Vermillion Middle School’s video, log on to [www.samsung.com/solve](http://www.samsung.com/solve).

■ *By David Lias*

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