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PLAIN TALK

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Grand Finale



The Vermillion High School Symphonic Winds, under the direction of John Alpers, and the VHS concert choirs performed in the 2012 Grand Finale Concert Tuesday in the high school's performing arts center. Pictured are members of the concert choir, under the direction of Trisha Fisher, (from left) Andrew Heine, Jim Yao, Jessica Nygaard, Carter Andre, Allison Heine, Meghan Sauder, Heidi Kronaizl, Edward Martineau, Will Card, Jackie Hulse and Matthew Wasley. See more photos from the night's performance at plaintalk.spotted.net.

(Photo by David Lias)

USD students suspected in fraud investigation

By Plain Talk staff

On April 25, the Vermillion Police Department was notified of a man acting suspiciously at an ATM in downtown Vermillion.

Follow-up investigation revealed the man was using a debit card that had been issued as part of a tax return to withdraw money and appeared to be attempting to conceal his identity from the ATM camera.

Further follow-up uncovered a conspiracy to file false tax returns using stolen identities.

The conspirators are able to have thousands of dollars placed on debit cards which were then mailed to them. The money was then drawn out of the debit cards before the IRS is able to determine that a fraud has been perpetrated.

Police detectives contacted and worked closely with U.S. Treasury Special Agents to secure and serve search warrants on the suspects, who were USD students living in the dorms.

The USD police department and university

officials have cooperated fully and continue to assist in the ongoing investigation. The extent of the conspiracy still is being investigated.

"IRS Criminal Investigation has made investigating refund fraud and identity theft a top priority," said Kelly R. Jackson, special agent in charge of the St. Paul field office. "Filing fraudulent tax returns in the names of other individuals may result in significant harm to those individuals whose identities were stolen, as well as a monetary loss against the U.S. Treasury."

Refund related identity theft occurs when the identity thief uses the victim's SSN to file a false income tax return to obtain funds. If the thief files before the victim, the victim may not receive his or her refund in a timely manner.

Officers found convincing evidence that the suspects were attempting to collect names and social security numbers in the Vermillion area. They believe that if the suspects were able to collect that information it was likely

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Parry to USD grads: 'We need you' Public input sought for swimming pool design

By David Lias
david.lias@plaintalk.net

Rodney R. Parry, M.D., the former dean of the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine, told USD graduates that their soon-to-be alma mater is not resting on its laurels as it celebrates its 150th anniversary this year.

"Today, the university, while celebrating 150 years, is actually developing a new long range plan for commitment to education," said Parry, the keynote speaker at USD's 125th annual commencement exercises held Saturday in the DakotaDome. "During a review of the expanded vision statement, President (James) Abbott state, 'USD exists for great students.' With a promise like that to our students, success of this institution going forward is assured."

In the meantime, life moves forward, and history is created, Parry said.

"Today at the university, graduates will receive the first masters of social work degrees ever granted in South Dakota," he said. "And, there will be graduates from USD's newly developed health sciences program. You will also meet vice president of health affairs, Dr. Mary Nettleman, the first dean of the MD-degree granting school from outside of South Dakota, and one of the few female deans of medicine in the United States."

Graduation is day of looking forward, and looking back, Parry said, "but today is also a time to look inside. Graduates, you may be asking yourselves if you can achieve your goals given the culture in which we live.

"Yes, you can," he said. "You have been given the knowledge, experience and capacity to succeed in your chosen careers. President Abbott recently reflected that you, the USD students, are the kind of people we would hope you to be."

A native of Canistota, Parry became the 13th



Rodney R. Parry, M.D., former dean of the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine, addresses graduates of the university during commencement exercises Saturday morning in the DakotaDome.

(Photo by David Lias)

dean of the medical school in 2004. He retired as dean of the Sanford School of Medicine last June, however, remained dean on an interim basis until April 1, 2012.

Parry was a member of the medical school faculty for 35 years and also served as president of the South Dakota State Medical Association in 1998. In 2008, he was presented with the South Dakota State Medical Association Presidential Award and from 1986 to 2004, Parry served as the director of the USD Cystic Fibrosis Center.

He was also chair, Medical School Section, American Medical Association from 2007-2008. Parry received an undergraduate degree in pharmacy at South Dakota State University in

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Public input sought for swimming pool design

By Travis Gulbrandson
travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net


Conceptual designs for a swimming pool to replace the one at Prentis Park could be submitted to the public for feedback by the end of the month.

The announcement was made by City Manager John Prescott at the regular meeting of the Vermillion City Council Monday night.

"The (current) pool was constructed in 1965 and has an approximately 50-year lifespan to it," Prescott said. "We are looking at some issues with respect to the filter room needing some major renovations if we continue with this facility. Our bathhouse is not something that meets the current code of bathhouses built today and is in need of an upgrade."

These and other repairs could cost up to \$250,000, he added.

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