

# One in a Million

## Meet Margaret Melby

By David Lias  
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If you want to live a life as long and prosperous as Margaret Melby's, you better start at it right now.

She already has a big head start. Margaret has been around the Vermillion area for quite some time now, and she hasn't wasted a moment.

Friends and loved ones will help Margaret celebrate her 100th birthday on Saturday, May 12, from 2 to 4 p.m. at St. Agnes Church in Vermillion. The church is located at 416 Walker Street.

Greetings may also be sent to 612 S. Norbeck St., Vermillion, SD 57069.

Margaret Lucille Bechtel was born in Lebanon, SD, on May 10, 1913, and was the only girl in a family of five children. She and her siblings attended country school 30 miles east of Sturgis, and some of her fondest childhood memories include playing traditional school games, such as Annie Over, Pump-pump-pull away and hide and seek.

While in eighth grade, Margaret won first place in the Meade County spelling contest, and was awarded a free trip to the State Fair to represent the county in a competition there. Her contest ended when she misspelled the word "subtle," and according to family members, she has always been able to correctly spell the word since without giving it a second thought.

Margaret graduated from high school in 1930, and attended Spearfish Normal for one year, enabling her to obtain a "First Grade Certificate." She began her teaching career at the age of 18 in a country school near Sturgis. Her beginning monthly salary was \$40.

The next spring and summer Margaret attended Beauty School in Minneapolis, MN. She was employed in a beauty shop there, but that job was short-lived as she was called back to South Dakota to complete a teaching job.

Answering that call to teach also changed her life. She met Art Melby in 1935 at a local dance. They were married June 13, 1935, and she was employed as a school teacher during the week and ran a beauty shop on the weekends.

Art and Margaret moved to Vermillion in 1940 and settled on a farm



owned by her parents west of Vermillion. The couple eventually purchased the farm, and their granddaughter, Jennifer, continues to live on the farm today.

After working at the local Sears catalogue center in the mid-1940s, and giving birth to a daughter and son, Margaret returned to her teaching career at Spirit Mound School. Her fondest memory at that school was having the Walz triplets as students. Not many teachers have had the honor of teaching triplets.

She completed summer classes and received her master's degree in 1967, and taught at local country schools until she was hired to teach first and second grade students at Meckling Consolidated School. She stayed with that school system and became its principal until it closed. Harold Ashbaugh then asked her to come to Vermillion and teach first grade at Austin School. Margaret always felt blessed to have had two of the "greatest aides" ever -

Helen Brown and Cinda Passick.

Margaret retired from teaching at the age of 65, and it still gives her much enjoyment to this day to visit with her former students, who are her pride and joy. She was always impressed with those students' parents, too, whether it was the farmer who plowed snow in the school yard or the mothers who brought treats for all the special parties.

During her retirement, Margaret has been involved in the Busy Fingers Extension Club, and is currently a member of the Merry Makers Extension Club. She has been a member of the St. Agnes Parish for the last 70 years. Margaret has also been involved in the Altar Society and the Catholic Daughters of the Americas.

Margaret is a Charter Member of the local Eagles Auxiliary and the Vermillion Senior Center, now known as The Main Street Center. She has also enjoyed her membership in the Dakota Hospital

Auxiliary and the many activities that group is involved in.

Epsilon Sigma Alpha is another organization that held a very special spot in Margaret's heart. She has been a member for over 50 years and has held every office at the local level and served as the state president in 1967.

Margaret became a member of Delta Kappa Gamma in 1967. The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education. She has the distinction of being presented the "Order of the Rose Award" by that organization in Pierre on June 5, 2010.

Margaret will always be remembered for her love of teaching, her students, their families, and all of the many friends she has acquired over the years. She keeps her days busy by playing cards, crocheting, embroidering and with any culinary effort imaginable. She is the first to try out new recipes and always manages to pick the best tasting ones.

She continues to make her yearly ventures to sunny California each fall. While she is always anxious to go out west to see her California friends, she is equally excited to come back to Vermillion every spring to reconnect with everyone here.

Many thanks to Margaret's daughter, Margie Schissel, and her husband, John Schissel, who live here in Vermillion, for providing this information to The Broadcaster Press so that we may share it with our readers.

Happy 100th birthday to Margaret on May 10, and may your May 12 celebration in Vermillion be wonderful.

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### 1100 Personals - Messages

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### 1101 Announcements - Events

**BERGEN LUTHERAN Church:** "The little white church on Timber Road." Worship 10:30 a.m. Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Pastor Ralph Egbert

**Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church,** 995 N. Sioux Point Road, Dakota Dunes, SD. Weekend Masses: Saturday, 4:30 p.m.; Sunday, 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

**BRULE Creek Lutheran Church,** Elk Point, SD: Worship Service 11:00am, Sunday School 9:45am to 10:45am.

**CHRIST OUR SAVIOR** Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod: Worship Sunday 6:00 p.m., Bible Study Tuesday, 9:00 p.m., Neuharth Center, 624-5398 or 1-800-998-1234

**CHURCH OF CHRIST,** 102 Prosp: Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.; Bible Study 9:00 a.m.; Bible Study 12:00 noon; Wednesday Night Classes, 7:00 p.m.

**Concordia Lutheran Church (LC-MS)** 7 South University Street, Vermillion. Divine Service - Sunday, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday School - Sunday, 9:20 a.m. Pastor Samuel Needham.

**CORNERSTONE CHURCH:** Located at the corner of Crawford & Cherry St. Celebration Service: Sunday - 9:00 or 10:30am; During school year: Impact for Kids (5-11), Wed - 6:00pm-7:30pm; For more information Check us out at Cornerstonesd.org or (605)624-8809.

**DALESBURG BAPTIST Church** 30503 466th Ave., Beresford, Pastor Darren Regehr. 9:45am, Sunday School; 11:00am, Morning Worship; Mid-week Services Wednesdays, 7:00pm. (605)253-2622.

**FAITH FELLOWSHIP** of the Open Bible on Bypass 50 and Highway 19: Sunday Celebration 10:30 a.m. Pastor Tony Armbrust, 624-2921.

## Help Us Keep Vermillion Looking Beautiful

The City of Vermillion Code Enforcement Department wishes to remind you that it is the duty of the occupant or owner of any lot in the City of Vermillion to keep such lot free from tall grass, weeds and Noxious vegetation and to cut such growth whenever:

1. Grass or weeds grow taller than 6 inches on any developed lot or any lot on a block that is comprised of 50% or more developed lots
2. Grass or weeds grow taller than 12 inches on any undeveloped lot.

Exception: Portions of property used specifically for agricultural purposes, including, but not limited to, flower gardens, vegetable gardens, and the growing of crops as well as property that is unable to be mowed due to topographical or wetland features shall be exempt from divisions (1) and (2) above. No property shall be exempt from the noxious vegetation prohibition above.

Lot in violation of City ordinance will be tagged and assessed an administrative fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) for the first offense with the fee increasing by 20 dollars (\$20.00) of every additional offense with each calendar year. If all the grass and weed have not been cut in the time allowed. The City will cut the grass and or weeds and bill the property owner for the cost of mowing plus a \$25.00 service fee.

Please be courteous to other and help keep Vermillion looking beautiful. If you have any question please contact the Code Enforcement office at 677-7089

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