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# PLAIN TALK

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**INSIDE:**

- Plain Talk receives SDNA award, **Page 03**
- Burbank girl reinstated as winner, **Page 04**

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Michael M. Vekich shared three important pieces of advice with the 1,400 candidates for graduation at Saturday's commencement exercises at the University of South Dakota.

(Photo by David Lias)

## Three 'important things'

### Vekich shares advice with USD graduates

**By David Lias**

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Saturday's speaker at the 126th spring commencement of the University of South Dakota told graduates he would like them to remember three important things from his speech.

"Important thing number one: You are not special," said Michael M. Vekich shortly before 1,400 candidates for graduation received their diplomas during the morning's ceremony in the DakotaDome.

"You are one of the 1,400 or so students in this graduating class ... For the past 125 years, hard-working, talented, disciplined, creative and passionate students have been graduating from this college," he said. "But you are unique. You are the only person who ever lived that has your exact genetic makeup. You're the only person who has your history. Your life, up to this point, has been lived by no one else. You have one-of-a-kind gifts, and you have learned things and acquired skills and talents that are yours alone."

Vekich is CPA, CEO of Vekich Chartered of Minneapolis, MN, and is chair of HF Financial Corp and Home Federal Bank - South Dakota's largest publicly-traded savings bank. He is currently a member of the Board of

Trustees, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

Previously, he was owner and CEO of Vekich Arkema & Company, a public accounting firm servicing clients in nine foreign countries. In 2008, Vekich was appointed chair of the Governor's 21st Century Tax Reform Commission by Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty. He also served as acting director of the Minnesota State Lottery and as vice chair of the Minnesota Ballpark Authority Commission, which was responsible for the financing and construction of Target Field in downtown Minneapolis.

In 2002, Vekich was a candidate for the nomination for governor of Minnesota. He received a B.A. in accounting and business administration from the University of Minnesota in 1970.

"You have an analytical way of thinking that is 100 percent unique to you. You have a singular way of solving problems and creating options, and so does everyone else in this room," Vekich told the graduates. "That is why I say, 'you are not special.' But you are vitally important. You have a mixture of talents and skills, strengths and abilities that are desperately needed in this world. You have something to give, or discover, or write, or

■ **USD, Page 11**

## AG Jackley encourages USD law school grads

**By Travis Gulbrandson**

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South Dakota's attorney general has some advice for the recent graduates of the University of South Dakota School of Law: Practice, and rely on your classmates.

Marty Jackley spoke to the outgoing students at the hooding ceremony, which was held in Aalfs Auditorium Friday, May 3.

"Some of you are probably sitting here wondering, 'Do I want to practice law?' and in the next few months you're going to have to make that decision," Jackley said.

He added that there are several reasons they should practice, not the least of which is the fact that they have spent the past three years getting their degrees.



**JACKLEY**

■ **AG, Page 11**

## Elvis memorabilia brings visitors to NMM

**By Travis Gulbrandson**

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Although "motorcycle" isn't the thing that comes to mind when most people think of the National Music Museum (NMM), that is exactly what was on display there last Friday.

It helped, of course, that the bike in question belonged to Elvis Presley.

The 1978 Harley Davidson Electra Glide 1200 CC was on display courtesy of the Pioneer Auto Show of Murdo to help kick off the unveiling of the museum's new "celebrity collection."

The two-day event drew approximately 530 visitors to the museum.

"That was a success to us," said Dr. Margaret Banks, senior curator of instruments at the NMM. "The fact that we got a lot of people in from town who had never been in here before, too, was another success I think. A lot of families came in, a lot of kids."

The motorcycle arrived last Thursday, and then went through the arduous process of being brought into the museum without disturbing any of the displays.

"I had to map it out to try to get through all the displays, and the door (to the gallery) was just not quite big enough," said Doug Snider of Pioneer Auto.

The transfer was documented in a series of



This 1978 Harley Davidson Electra Glide 1200 CC motorcycle was on display courtesy of the Pioneer Auto Show of Murdo Friday at the National Music Museum to help unveil the new "celebrity collection."

(Travis Gulbrandson/Vermillion Plain Talk)

■ **NMM, Page 07**



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