

AUTHOR

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Maddie,” Dennard said. “She had e-mailed me about my book saying she liked it, so when my agent said, ‘Do you want to go to South Dakota? This girl Maddie wants to have you come,’ I was like, ‘Really? Her? That was a go-getter girl.’”

Meylor and her mother Pam approached the Vermillion Public Library last September asking if Youth Services Librarian Joyce Moore would be interested in helping to host the event.

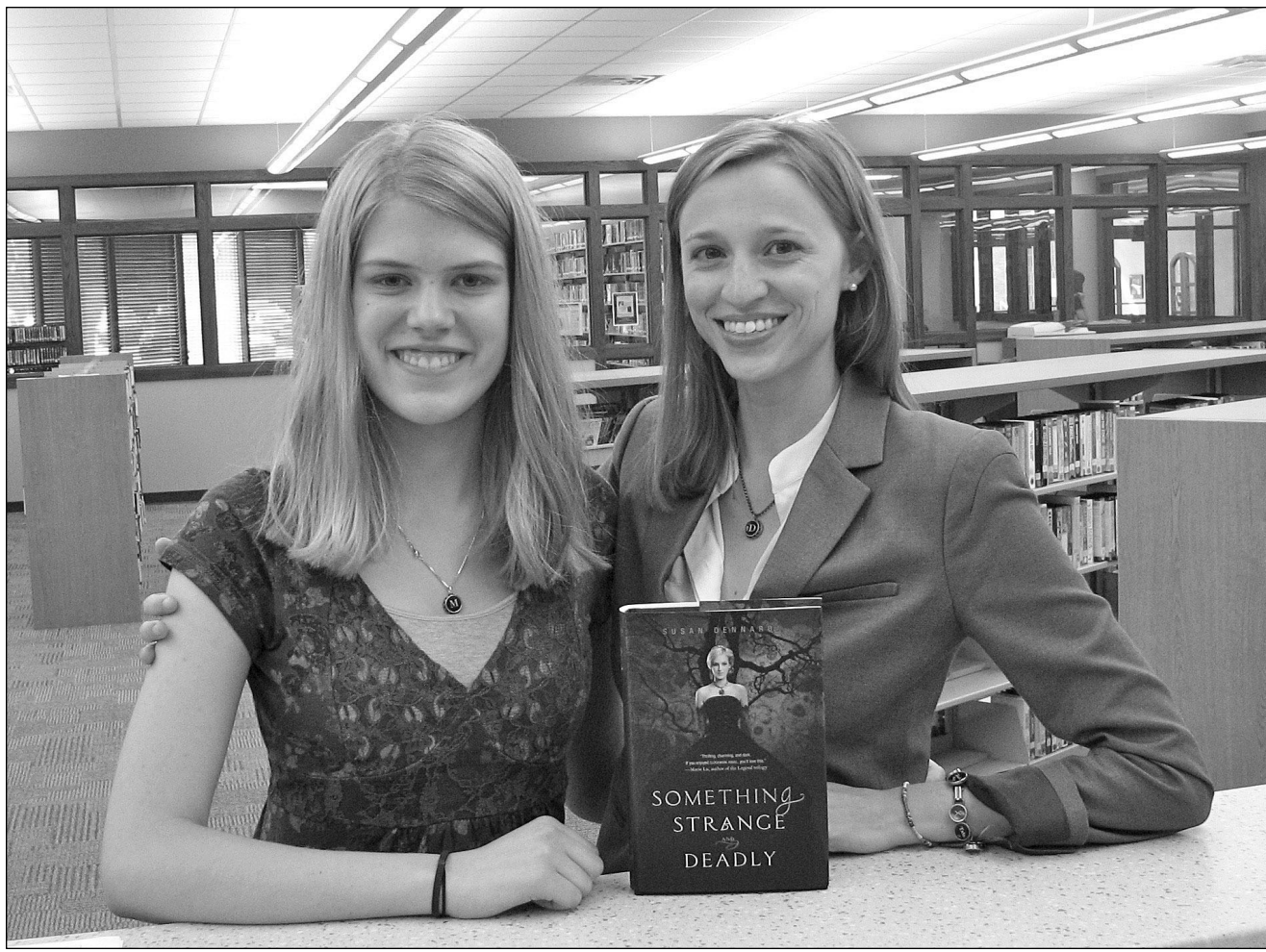
“At the time, we were under construction and in a temporary workspace, and I said, ‘Well, sure, we should be done by then.’ It just came out of that,” Moore said. “I read the book right away, loved it and approached the library board with the possibility of hosting it, and if they would be willing to help fund it. They were very enthusiastic and very generous.”

Moore said Meylor’s efforts were the most important of all.

“Had Maddie not come to me, this wouldn’t have happened,” she said. “I actually have had a grad school classmate contact me recently and say, ‘How did you get that author to your town?’ and I gave her Maddie’s e-mail.”

Meylor said she has always been a big reader, but it never occurred to her to talk about books on her blog.

“My dad does Web site designing, so it was something I had. I wasn’t good at doing normal blog posts. I can’t do that,” she said. “People always ask me what books I read ... so I just started putting my thoughts up. It’s not big yet. It’s definitely not well-known, but gradually after I started interacting with more readers and authors, it’s really become bigger than it was before. I think last month I had 650



Maddie Meylor and author Susan Dennard hold a copy of Dennard’s latest book, “Something Strange and Deadly” last week at the Vermillion Public Library. Meylor helped make arrangements for Dennard to speak at local schools and visit the library for “Deadly Day at the Library.”

(Travis Gulbrandson/Vermillion Plain Talk)

unique visitors.”

She added that she does not focus on any particular literary genre.

“I really just review whatever I read,” she said. “If I like it, I review it. I will pretty much read anything you give me.”

Even though the Internet has made such correspondence easier, Dennard said the friendship she has with Meylor is rare.

“Most people don’t know you can just e-mail us and we’ll answer you,” she said.

“That’s something I’ve learned,” Meylor said. “It’s actually pretty easy.”

“Most of us are at a computer, and we see our computers all day long, so we see our e-mails coming in,” Dennard said. “Most authors will answer you, it’s just that most readers don’t know that.”

“I’ve learned it slowly,” Meylor said. “When I first started out, my e-mails were ridiculous fan-girl stuff. I gradually figured out what I needed to say to make it sound more professional, thankfully. I was just making a fool of myself at first.”

Tuesday’s events were funded through the South Dakota Arts Council, the Vermillion Public Library Board and the Vermillion Public

School Foundation.

“We got a lot of community support,” Moore said. “I visited with Anne Dunham, the school district librarian, and she was very enthusiastic, too, and said the school had not brought an author to town for 10 or 12 years. She really wanted in on it, and she lined up the school visits today.”

Dennard spent about an hour at both schools Tuesday, taking 30 minutes for a presentation and leaving the other open for Q&A.

“(The presentations) depend on the age group,” she said. “At the middle school, I talked about how I became a writer, then how I write, showed them some movies and video games that I like. At the high school, it was more just answering questions and talking about how I write, doing more of a workshop-style thing. Tonight I’m going to talk about inspiration and how I became a writer by conquering my fears.”

Meylor said she would “love” to become a writer herself.

“I will have to definitely work on it a lot, but I would love to at least do something in the publishing industry,” she said. “I don’t know what yet – I’m only 14 – but I don’t have to decide quite yet. I know I’m going to continue my blog at least, so that’s something I can work with.”

Events like those that took place are the “highlight of writing,” Dennard said.

“We write all these stories and if you’re lucky enough to get them published that’s pretty amazing, but when you actually meet someone who’s read your book and likes your book and says that your book has affected them, that’s a very powerful feeling,” she said.

For more information about Dennard and her work, visit <http://susandennard.com/>.

For Meylor’s blog, visit <http://Maddie.TV/>.

Attorney General’s SD 4-H Character Education office releases testing results Conference set for June 13-14

Attorney General Marty Jackley this week released the testing results of the ignition interlock devices.

The devices were added to the 24/7 Sobriety Program in October of 2012. Since being added, 119 participants passed 124,771 tests with a pass rate of 99.5 percent.

“The 24/7 Sobriety Program has shown to be an effective means to combat drunk driving using technological advances such as the ignition interlock device,” said Jackley. “This offender pay program takes the burden off taxpayers by keeping qualifying offenders out of jail yet holding them accountable for their actions. This in turn can have a long term positive impact on their lives, their families and their employers.”

Ignition interlock is a device installed in a motor vehicle.

Before the vehicle’s motor can be started, the offender first must exhale into the device and produce a clean test. This particular system is set up with a camera designed to detect if someone other than the offender is testing.

The offender is required to test twice a day, whether they drive their vehicle or not.

The system is also equipped with a GPS that will pinpoint the offender’s location on a map for each test.

There is an additional feature on this device that requires a retest within the first few minutes after the vehicle is moving and then additional retests at random intervals as long as the vehicle remains in motion.

The ignition interlock, as all the other 24/7 testing methods, are defender pay.

Ignition Interlock
Average daily cost for six-month time frame \$4.25
SCRAM Bracelet
(Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitor) ankle bracelets that continuously

monitor wearers for alcohol consumption

Average daily cost for six-month time frame \$6.44

Preliminary Breath Test
Twice a day breath test \$2 (\$3 a day first 30 days)

Drug Urinalysis
Per test \$10

Per Week
Drug Patch
Per patch \$40.00 Per day \$4.00

\$20.00

In 2005, then-Attorney General Larry Long implemented his idea of the 24/7 Sobriety Program as a pilot project in three counties in South Dakota, and in 2007 the state legislature unanimously approved the formal creation of the program. Currently 67 agencies participate in the program, including police departments, sheriff’s offices, and the Unified Judicial System.

Here are the most current program statistics:

Preliminary Breath Test (PBT)

Feb. 2005-May 1, 2013
29,372 participants

5.96 million tests administered

99.2 percent pass rate

Urinalysis
July 1-May 1, 2013
3,276 participants

81,299 tests administered

96.6 percent pass rate

Drug Patch
July 1, 2007-May 1, 2013

169 participants

1,847 tests administered

88.6 percent pass rate

SCRAM Bracelet
Nov. 15, 2006-May 1, 2012

5,335 participants

808,507 total days monitored

77 percent fully compliant

Ignition Interlock Oct. 1, 2012-present

119 participants

124,777 tests passes

99.5 percent pass rate

The tenth annual South Dakota 4-H Character Education Conference is set for June 13 and 14 in Sioux Falls. It will take place at the Ramkota Hotel and Convention Center in Sioux Falls.

To register, go to <http://igrow.org/up/articles/P6015-2013.pdf>.

If you have questions regarding the conference, contact SDSU Extension 4-H Youth Character Education Field Specialist, Karelyn Farrand at karelyn.farrand@sdstate.edu or call (605) 626-2870.

The central theme of the event is “Reflection Leads to Excellence.” The goal of this year’s conference is to address the importance of reflection and evaluating past practices for positive change in character education programs. The SDSU Extension 4-H/Youth Development Character Counts Program staff will host the conference.

“This year’s conference will provide a wide spectrum of sessions with proven strategies and practices that will assist attendees to strive for excellence in their character education programs,” Farrand said.

Pre Conference Session June 13

A pre-conference session is set for June 13 from 1-6 p.m. at the Ramkota Hotel and Convention Center in Sioux Falls. This session is open to parents, teachers and community members.

This training focuses on the history and background of the Character Counts program, including activities connected to the program’s Six Pillars of Character. This training also includes discussion on ethical decision-making and building partnerships.

Deb Austin Brown will open the conference on June 13. She is a teacher, author and nationally known speaker. Her

keynote will inspire attendees with success strategies and a wealth of character knowledge from her 37 years of teaching and from the lessons she has shared within her five published books. Brown’s life work is to be an architect and builder of human potential.

Thom Flamboe will share two presentations, on June 14. Flamboe is an educator, counselor, communication specialist, nationally known lecturer and author. Flamboe will motivate and inspire you to promote good character in positive ways for youth and adults.

On June 14 conference participants are invited to share a Character Education Best Practice Display from their school, organization or community.

The conference will include breakout sessions on a wide variety of topics including classroom strategies, involving community, bullying, diversity,

team building, and more. Participants will also be able to visit vendors.

The conference is approved for one graduate credit.

The Joe and Elaine Floyd Fund of the Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation, Touchtone Energy Cooperative of South Dakota (East River Electric, South Dakota Rural Electric Association & Rushmore Electric), and numerous state and regional Character Counts supporters through the South Dakota 4-H Foundation are sponsors of the South Dakota 4-H Character Counts program.

Character Counts and the Six Pillars of Character are trade marks of the Josephson Institute, and operates in South Dakota under the leadership of the South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service’s 4-H/Youth Development program.

To learn more, visit iGrow.org.

Rally for a Miracle starts June 1

Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 1. It’s the eighth annual Children’s Miracle Network Bikes and Babes motorcycle run. J & L Harley Davidson, Sioux Falls, in collaboration with Sanford Vermillion and Vermillion Wal-Mart have organized a great run.

The proceeds from this event will all be donated to the Children’s Miracle Network. Registration is from 9-10 a.m. at

Vermillion Wal-Mart. Pre-registration available at sanfordhealth.org/forms/bikesbabes.

Cost for the run is \$25, which includes breakfast, bike blessing, poker/map card, long-sleeved T-shirt (guaranteed if pre-registered by May 24), the ride, a Dutch lunch in Orange City, IA, and admission to the Argus Leader RibFest that evening.

The post-bash includes a cash prize for the top place and door prizes donated by local area businesses.

Contact Jill Christopherson, Sanford Vermillion Medical Center for more information at (605) 638-8465 or jill.christopherson@sanfordhealth.org.

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