



# PLAIN TALK

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## Honoring VHS's Top Athletes

### Tanager Hall Of Fame Banquet Set For Saturday

By Shauna Marlette  
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Throughout the years, Vermillion High School (VHS) has produced exceptional athletes, many who have gone on to have successful college and pro careers.

In an effort to help memorialize their efforts in representing VHS, the Vermillion High School Athletic Booster Club is establishing the Tanager Sports Hall of Fame.

This inaugural class includes athletic and coaching stand outs spanning the decades and several different sports.

"Vermillion has a very good history of athletics," said VHSABC president Jim Peterson. "This is an opportunity for us to build closer ties with those athletes and coaches at VHS

who have had great success and help keep their ties to the community."

He added, "This first class we chose six individuals, five athletes and one coach who represent the quality of athlete and coach we have been honored to have here in Vermillion. In the future we will select others, maybe even teams."

The banquet will be held Saturday, May 2 at the Old Lumber Yard, downtown Vermillion, upper level. The social will begin at 5 p.m., with the dinner at 6 p.m. and the ceremony set for 6:45 p.m.

"We are very excited that each of the inductees will be represented and introduced at the banquet," Peterson said. "We are doing it NFL style and introducing each one individually."

The inductees are:

#### RONNIE BROWN - CLASS OF 1947

Ronnie Brown spent his life in Vermillion. He grew up and attended school there, graduating from VHS with the Class of 1947, and then attended the University of South Dakota, getting his degree in 1951.

Brown participated in football and basketball at Vermillion High, and was a four-year football letterman with Harry Gamage's Coyotes, including the fabled undefeated 1949 USD team.

After college he became an assistant football coach at Vermillion High School for one year, then took over as head coach for the next four seasons. Brown then joined Marv Rist's USD grid staff for the next three years before returning to high school football - in Vermillion, of course. He coached



Ronnie BROWN

the Tanagers for the next 15 years, racking up a win-loss record of 85-30. Retiring from coaching in 1973, Brown remained VHS athletic director until 1986.

His enviable record was made in spite of the fact that Vermillion played as an independent and scheduled a number of the three-state area's best teams during those years.

Other career accomplishments include organizing the South Dakota High School Football Playoffs in the Dakota Dome in 1981 and coordinated the annual event until 1986.

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## DEMOLITION UNDERWAY



SHAUNA MARLETTE/FOR THE PLAIN TALK

Demolition on the Vermillion High School heating and cooling system began this week, kicking off a remodeling project that will see the 1965 section of the school get a significant face lift. HVAC, lighting, windows, the chemistry and biology labs, as well as all bathrooms will be remodeled throughout the summer with the goal of being ready for students in late August.

## High School Remodel Project Started

By Shauna Marlette  
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A more than \$5.2 million renovation of Vermillion High School was begun by tearing out the existing heating system.

The project, which will, in the words of superintendent Dr. Mark Froke, "Give the Vermillion community a new school, without the new school cost," is necessary due to the aging of the original 50-year-old high school facility.

"The academic areas, the gymnasium and the music rooms were all built in 1965," Froke said. "After time, things begin to fail. Our current HVAC (heating, venting and air conditioning) systems are not efficient, our lighting is not efficient and the ceilings are beginning to sag. They just all need to be repaired."

Froke said that many of the items listed are on the edge of failure and are not providing an atmosphere conducive to positive learning experiences of the students.

"In some rooms it is too hot, in others it is too cold," he said. "There is just no consistent temperature throughout the building."

Early this school year, the school board asked Johnson Controls, the company the district contracts with to provide services on the HVAC of the district facilities, to do a study of the high school. When it came back, district officials recognized that they could not put off the remodel any longer.

"We, the school board and administration, have known that there were issues due to the age of the building," Froke said. "The school board for the last eight or so years has been saving money for the time

we could not put off the remodel any longer. Because of that, we do have a capital outlay reserve of about \$1.2 million that we will be putting toward the project. The rest of the project will be financed through 20-year capital outlay certificates."

Froke said all of the improvements will address one or more issues including student safety, student and staff comfort and enhancing efficiencies of the facility.

"I think it is important to emphasize that the building structure is solid," Froke added. "This is an expensive venture, but it is minor when compared to the cost of building a new high school."

The scope of the work will see all windows, except those that were replaced two years ago, updated. It will replace

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## CAFOs Top Discussions At Planning And Zoning Meeting

By Shauna Marlette  
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For the second time in as many weeks the Clay County Planning and Zoning Board tabled the issue of changing the county ordinances governing Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) in Clay County.

The proposed changes, which as currently written, include elimination of the caps on the number of animals allowed and reducing setbacks, were first proposed at a public hearing on April 13.

During Monday's meeting it was clear; the board had not come to consensus on the issue.

While it was not a public hearing, the board did hear from Jay Gilbertson of the East Dakota Water Development system.

Gilbertson, stressed his concern is with making sure the shallow aquifer, which supplies water to more than just Clay county, is not contaminated. He questioned why, a system that has worked well for close to 20 years was now being looked at for change.

"The first ordinances protecting the water supplies in the state came out about 20 years ago and have worked very well," he said. "In that time the ordinances have improved problem areas rather than risking new ones. Honestly, this is a risk that we are better off not taking. I encourage you to hold fast on allowing large permit facilities over shallow aquifers."

He also noted that 1/3 of the eastern half of

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## Saginaw Avenue Reconstruction Bids Heard At County Meeting

By Elyse Brightman  
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The Clay County Board of Commissioners met in regular session Tuesday morning at the Clay County Courthouse.

During the meeting the commission accepted opening bids on the Saginaw Avenue reconstruction. Bids came in from Double H Paving, Asphalt Servicing Company, Knife River, Dakota Road Builders and Dunnick, Inc.

The commissioners accepted the lowest bid of \$833,356.13 from Double H Paving, Inc. The engineers estimate came in at \$900,500.

Community Health and WIC nurse Jill Munger presented the quarterly report, stating that counties are going to start offering private immunizations to bill insurance companies, which the county has never offered before. Clay County gave 1,350 flu shots as of the end of March, many of which went to county employees.

In other business, the board of commissioners signed a joint powers agreement with the state for weed spraying services provided by the county to "control the growth of declared noxious weeds within the right of way of the state highway routes".

## Area Youth Receive Free Bike Helmets

By Shauna Marlette  
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According to Dr. Charles Yelverton, a member of the Vermillion Rotary Club and a medical doctor at Vermillion Medical Clinic, one of the most preventable, yet most devastating injuries a child may receive is head trauma caused by a bike accident.

In order to help keep Vermillion's youth safe, the Rotary Club and Vermillion Medical Clinic have once again joined forces to provide a free bike helmet to every second grade student in Vermillion.

"It's a common injury that happens: head trauma from a bike accident," he said. "Kids who have head trauma, a large percentage of them can die from it. We want to protect them."

Stating that this was the

21st time the two have joined forces, Yelverton noted that they would be handing out 110 helmets, typical for the event.

"Rotary Club and the Vermillion Medical Clinic have sponsored this event since the beginning in 1994-1995," he said. "We started it as a community project. Rotary Club's mission is to support things like this. It is popular, the community likes it and it is making the kids safer."

Throughout the assembly held at Jolley Elementary, the students also had the opportunity to learn more about biking in general.

"Today the different stations are different types of bikes," Yelverton said. "The first station is the difference between a mountain bike and a road bike, and all the different apparatus on them. The next one is a townie bike; it



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has forward set pedals and is more for doing your errands around town. The third station is a display of all the clothing that a cyclist might wear. Then

fourth, is an elite road bike, a racer type, big time road bike. Then, finally, here at Dr.

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