



**Hegge propels USD win over No. Arizona in season-opener**  
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# Vermillion PLAIN TALK

Serving our readers since 1884.

Volume 126, Issue 47  
USPS 657-720



**Friday,  
November 25, 2011**  
**75¢**

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## Stage Presence



The Vermillion School District's show choirs Music In Motion, Maganda Boses, and Rhythm in Red, along with several solo and dance performances, are featured in the Fall Show held Nov. 18 and 19 in the VHS Performing Arts Center. See more photos at spotted.plaintalk.net. The duet of Kobe Provost and Alex Cotton provide their own guitar accompaniment as they perform the song "Fall On Me."  
(Photos by David Lias)

### Guard unit may deploy to Afghanistan next summer

By Travis Gulbrandson  
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A South Dakota Army National Guard unit located in Vermillion will be deployed as part of Operation Enduring Freedom next year.

The 730th Area Support Medical Company is tentatively scheduled to be deployed to Afghanistan in July 2012, it was announced earlier this month.

"Most of the unit is comprised of combat medics along with other medical professionals," unit commander Capt. Zachary Hague explained in an e-mail. "We also have a section assigned to support our main effort in regards to maintenance of equipment, supply and cooking."

The mission of the unit's 75-100 members is primarily to provide Echelon I and Echelon II health support.

"Our goal is to send as many troops back to their units as possible after a medical issue, or to stabilize them and evacuate to a higher level of care," Hague wrote.

The unit is available for state emergencies at all times, such as last year's floods.

"Although the whole unit was not called up, the 730th had soldiers on orders for the majority of the summer to support the mission," Hague wrote. "The most likely combat mission we would receive would be to provide medical care to troops close to the area of combat."

The 730th has a goal of being ready for any mission with which it is presented at any time, although some training will be undertaken before its deployment.

"Prior to deployment we will focus on ensuring our medics are trained in the latest emergency medicine practices," Hague wrote. "Beyond medical training we concentrate on warrior tasks and squad/platoon exercises to guarantee we are at a high degree of teamwork and leadership from those who hold key positions."

Hague wrote that the majority of the unit's members live within an hour of Vermillion.

There also is a three-member full-time staff that resides in Vermillion, he said.

The unit previously was deployed in Operation Desert Storm, and in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2003-2004 in Iraq.

### Rick Pittenger 'couldn't be happier' in new role at First United Methodist

By Travis Gulbrandson  
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A few years ago, the Rev. Rick Pittenger was feeling burned out.

After working as a pastor for 25 years, he left the parish in 2006, moved to Brandon and sold church directories for two years. Then he went to work as chaplain at Sacred Heart Hospital in Yankton.

"I became a chaplain, and at 5:30 I punched out, and I didn't have to worry about being (available)," he said. "I didn't realize how much I worked about the church after hours. Most jobs you have eight to five (shifts) and that's when you're working."

"But, (pastors) work 24/7."

Pittenger now finds himself in that role once more, as pastor of Vermillion's First United Methodist Church. He could not be happier, he said.

"It's been great. We have a lot of things in this church that are unique," he said.

His new position started July 1, about a month after he interviewed for the job.

"In the United Methodist Church, we're appointed," Pittenger said. "The Catholic Church is about the only other church that does it this way, where we have a governing body made up of a bishop and district superintendents. They get together and they say, 'That pastor would be a good match for that church.'"

He said he feels he is a "good match," and enjoys his duties there, which include



REV. RICK PITTENGER

### Becky Pittenger named S.D. New Librarian of the Year

By Derek Bartos  
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Becky Pittenger always wanted to be a librarian.

Last year, an opportunity emerged for her to fulfill that dream when the Yankton Community Library had an opening for a children's librarian.

"They were looking for someone with experience with children, possibly an elementary teacher," said Pittenger, who had spent the previous 25 years teaching elementary students. "I applied and I got it, and it all worked out."

Did it ever. Earlier this month, Pittenger was named New Librarian of the Year by the South Dakota Library Association for her work since joining the staff at the Yankton Community Library in June 2010. "It was a complete



Becky Pittenger of the Yankton Community Library was honored recently as the New Librarian Of The Year by the South Dakota Library Association. An open house in her honor will be held Wednesday, Oct. 26, at the library.

(Photo by Kelly Hertz/P&D)

surprise," she said about the director and the staff nominated me and encouraged the parents and

the children to write in support of my nomination means a lot to me. It's

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preaching three Sundays each month, as well as two Sundays per month in Gayville. He also performs weddings, funerals, pre-marital counseling, couples counseling and works with various church groups.

Working with people on a one-on-one basis is Pittenger's favorite part of the job, he said.

"The one thing I learned about the ministry early on is, it's the one profession where people allow you to come into the most

intimate times in their lives – the birth of a child, the death of a parent – and you're invited in as if you're family. That's really a sacred trust," he said.

Pittenger is not the first member of his family to work in the church – both his parents were pastors, as well as his grandfather and one of his uncles.

He said that during his childhood,

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