

Vermillion High School's 'Dance Inferno' team will put on its biggest fundraiser next weekend. The team consists of (left to right) Tomalyn Peckham, Shantel French, Sophia Taggart, Kayla Stammer, Jessie Brady*, Hailey Freidel*, Morgan Halverson, Lauren Bern, Chloe Nielsen, Alex Rosdail, Teddi Settles*, Rachel Finnegan, Emily Schmitz, Cheyenne Mallory, Kylee Retzlaff and Sowmya Ragothaman. *=team captains, manager is Maddie Mockler and coaches are Joni Freidel and Kelsey Freidel Nelson.

An 'Inferno' worth checking out

By Alan Dale The Plain Talk

This inferno is a combination of being as cool as ice while also burning with intensity of purpose.

The Vermillion High School Dance Inferno will present 'Black & Bling', the squad's yearly major fund raiser on Dec. 4-6 at the VHS auditorium

The show starts at 7 p.m. on the first two days and then Inferno will host a matinee on that Saturday at 3

Presale tickets from the team is \$8 for adults, \$3 for students. At the door the prices will be \$10 and \$5 respectively.

Also, Vermillion Area Dance Organization (VADO), a group of prehigh school dancers, will perform.

For these Vermillion High School dancers, to get to this point takes a lot of work, more skill, and even greater time and dedication.

"It's a self-supporting activity here at the high school and we have to raise our entire budget," Joni Freidel, the team's head coach, said 'We do get support from the high school for some expenses like travel and copying and paper. But all of their uniforms, summer camp, and all extras are all self-supporter. So the biggest fundraiser we have every year is this dance recital."

Inferno is also adding a dance clinic for younger kids as an additional fundraiser on the morning of Jan. 27, the same day they will perform at halftime of the high school's basketball doubleheader games.

"In the past we have had car washes, sold some t-shirts, and have had a number of fundraisers over the years," Freidel said.

The coach placed Inferno's existence at approximately 15 years as Freidel has taken the reins these past two seasons with Kelsey Nelson (Freidel) assisting. She had been a cheer and dance coach at the high school before taking over for Kamden Dibley as the leader of the Inferno.

Team parents also help out with the organization.

"We have great dance moms and dads," Freidel said.

The show, planned for 90 minutes to two hours, will see a nice mixture of routines.

"We are going to perform all the dances we've seen at football games, and we have a new one we will show at basketball season, so we will debut that one," senior team member Jessica Brady said. "We throw in a Christmas dance, a glow dance, and we will have class dances, so it will be a variety of different things.

VADO will also perform during the show.

"It is really fast moving with entertainment in between," Freidel said. "It's more like a studio recital you would see if you were involved with that.

One thing that the Vermillion girls are proud to say is that their young women, this town, takes the art of the dance very seriously.

'I've been doing it since I was little," senior Teddi Settles said. "There was Heart and Soul that was here before and then they closed down and VADO came back up. Dance here is pretty important to Vermillion."

What has also become more important is the actual approach to dance itself. What was once more of a showcase for the popular and the pretty has evolved into a true athletic endeavor that provides a smidge of popular and pretty perhaps, but more so the proud, the powerful, and the precise.

"It is more athletic than it used to be where it used to be more of a popularity contest," Freidel said.
"The difference with these guys and some of the other athletic stuff they participate in, is that dance is spread over 12 months. If you are in basketball, the season is three months. With these guys their season is 12 months so they are putting a lot more time in over the course of that period. People don't realize the synchronicity, the effort, time-commitment, and also the knowledge needed to just try to choreograph a routine that is even halfway presentable.'

All the young women representing Inferno participate in other sports making this dance team a true representation of athletic

How different would dance be compared to say soccer, basketball, or volleyball?

"Every sport is different and you have to fit in each sport in a different way and you need to be fit for each sport in its own way," senior Hailey Freidel said. "Dance is a little bit different since you need to have a lot more ankle strength. We need flexibility where you use more skills like they have in gymnastics."

"In dance you have to have every part of your body to be strong," Brady said. "It is a lot more complicated than most people think. In volleyball, you pass, you set, you hit, you pass, you set, you hit, and you have offense where it

becomes muscle memory since you do it over and over again. But in dance it is always something new."

To create a great dance team is at time oxymoronic because the members have to build symbiosis with other squad mates one may not even see for hours in practicing routines.

Of course, the uncredited teammate, beat, lends a hand as does having good relations off of the dance floor.

"Our team is pretty close as a team and we spend a lot of time together," Settles said. "We are all friends outside of dance.'

"The one thing I've noticed over the course of my coaching career is that you live and breathe by the personalities of your team," Joni Freidel said. "This team happens to be a very positive, reaffirming group of girls with each other. I am probably the grumpiest one on the team. The senior leadership has done a good job getting the freshmen feeling included and involved and the freshmen are working as hard or

harder than the upperclassmen. The team's chemistry jelled during a summer dance camp in Des Moines.

"That probably helped the team dynamic this year," the coach added.

Music is chosen by a mix of opinions coming from coaches and team captains. The music is also selected based on what they think will work within the team's skill set.

"Luckily we have a variety of people with a variety of skill sets so that we can highlight them during dances," Joni Freidel said. "That definitely helps.

All the work seems to have paid

off in the team's confidence level. With as much time as we have given, we are pretty good," Brady

There is very little internal competition and the team is more about sticking together and helping on another out than worrying about who is the better dancer, Hailey Freidel

"We are not self-conscious before a routine, but more jittery or nervous to make sure we have a good performance," Hailey said.

It takes a little bit of a want to ham it up and very little self-consciousness to perform.

"I love to perform," Brady said. "I am not self-conscious at all. We practice it enough that we go out there and we know what we're doing. Sure there are some nerves when you go out there for the state championship football game and there are so many people. But when the music starts it just kind of takes

They hope to take over the hearts, minds, and imaginations, of dance fans for three days in hopes of keeping the Inferno burning.

"Last year people came to support the dance team, but then they leave telling us how good the girls did," Joni Freidel said. "I think just with the nature of the music and how fun it is, it pumps people up. People left feeling like 'happy holidays' let's get them going."

Then there is also the simpler reason to go watch the Inferno dance the night away.
"We're awesome," Settles said.

■ BUNYAN'S

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A staple of the community, Bunyan's didn't start off as an eatery or place to grab a drink with friends.

"He got robbed of \$40 dollars," Blaine Schoellerman said. "Which then was a lot." Schoellerman said. After the robbery, the

building changed hands. "It later became Heck's Texaco Service," Blaine

Schoellerman said, "Heck Harnois changed it from being just a repair shop, and he made it a bar and shop.' Bunyan's was a place

where traditionally the men gathered. And although that's changed, it reflects the history of how things used to

"It was mainly men," Heidi Schoellerman said. "It was basically their version of golf. There wasn't a ladies room.

Schoellerman has owned the bar since 2007, and as a young business owner in Vermillion, he has focused on keeping traditions while catering to the public. Terry Taggart, the previous owner,

was a pivotal asset to Schoellerman, who was just 26 at the time.

"I broke a window on accident with a snow mobile outside," Schoellerman said. "I thought I was going out to talk about a window and Terry Taggart asked me what I thought the whole place was worth.'

Schoellerman never originally had the intention of tearing the old building down, but after owning the structure for a few months and attempting to do some repairs, he realized that salvaging the original Bunyan's was not the direction to go.

"I didn't think I would ever tare down the old Bunyan's," Blaine Schoellerman said. "But the kitchen started to fall in."

Schoellerman didn't make the decision in haste, however. Just as he still does today, he turned to the experts to decide what he should do.

'We tore it down in 2012," Blaine Schoellerman said. "I talked to my locals; we spent a lot of time talking to them, and asked if I was nuts or

Unsure of how to ap-

proach building a new Bunvan's, Schoellerman had several ideas.

"We were going to make it a dive bar, make it look like one," Blaine Schoellerman said. "And then we built that beautiful bar and everyone was like, 'wow this looks really nice' and it ended up being a really nice bar."

The bar itself is unique furnished piece, that helps add to the appeal of the new building.

"It's all clay county wood," Blaine Schoellerman said. "It is hand cut." The new building also

helped Bunyan's become a more diverse business and space for the public.
"When you come in here,

we make it feel local," Heidi Schoellerman said "A family can sit over there and you're not right next to the bar."

Still situated at the same location on Main St. the menu still boasts its famous fish and burgers.

'We hand bread our own fish and hand patty our own cheese burgers," Blaine Schoellerman said. "That's why our burgers are so good."

The old menu is the staple of dishes, but the Schoellermans have added some new items to keep it fresh for their patrons.

"We added the pig wing burger and jalapeño burger," Heidi Schoellerman said. "We also added funnel cake fries.

In regard to the menu, the Schoellerman's still know their best source, is the local source. They listen to their customers, and try to bring items that are suggested by the people.

Aside from cold drinks and delicious food, the Schoellerman's are dedicated to using Bunyan's as a platform to help the community. "We have a prom every

year and that's really fun," Heidi Schoellerman said. "We raise money to go to a certain charity; we've done the backpack program and things like that.'

Bunyan's also contributes to the community by selling raffle tickets for the annual Pheasant Banquet.

"We try to do a lot for make a wish." Blaine Schoellerman said "And the pheasant banquet.' Community involvement

goes beyond fund raisers and events for Bunyan's. They are part of a pool league, and also help with parties and special events.

"Bunyan's birthday party is coming up, and all are welcome," Schoellerman said. 'That is Dec. 20th."

The Schoellermans are happy to serve the needs of the Vermillion area, but having a friendly place for people to gather.

Good food good service and a friendly atmosphere," Schoellerman said. "That is what we do best.

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