



SARAH WETZEL/FOR THE PLAIN TALK

Top Left: Second and Third grade Jolley Elementary students sing "I love my country." Top Right: Special Guest speaker Colonels Ines N. White, US Army addresses the crowd at the program. Bottom left: The Vermillion High School Choir sings. Bottom Right: Veterans marched in with their branches of the military they were a part of while the High School Band played their different anthems.

## Veterans

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ate the Veterans."

Austin and St. Agnes Elementary schools each participated with a patriotic musical number as well as the Vermillion High School Choir and band.

Vermillion Middle School submitted a video which was shown on the big screen of the new scoreboard.

"Freedom isn't free or cheap," one student said in the video. "We had to fight for it... I don't know them very well but I try to put myself in their place. I am amazed by the men and women who fight for our country to make it free."

"I'm happy to live in a country where I feel safe," another student shared. "Freedom is an amazing thing that makes me think how lucky I really am. When the flag waves high in the air it reminds me that I'm always free to speak, I'm not judged by the color of my skin or by my gender and I have the right to vote for things I like or want to happen."

Other middle school students expressed their appreciation for uncles, grandparents, fathers, mothers and cousins currently serving or having served in the past showing the wonderful con-

nection the children in Vermillion have to the armed forces.

Jolley Elementary recently held an essay contest regarding Veteran's Day and the two winners, Sophie and Ella, read their essays at the high school event Wednesday.

"Veteran's Day is a way to honor those who have served in the Air Force, Army, Navy, National Guard, Coast Guard and Marines," Sophia said. "The people who have served are brave, noble people... Veterans all deserve a pat on the back for all they have done."

Ella shared Sophia's sentiments.

"To me Veteran's Day is not just a holiday but a memorial for the people who have served our country," she said. "All my grandpas served so I remember them on Veteran's Day."

Ella also shared how she remembers stories from her grandpa and how he taught her how to fold a flag.

"They fought for their country, not for themselves," she stated.

Both girls expressed gratitude in being able to express how they felt about this important holiday. Other special moments in the program included a moment of silence and a 21-gun salute by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Honor Guard while Taps was played by Carl Fairholm and Owen Mechling of the High School Band.

The Special Guest speaker this year was Colonel Ines N. White who spoke on her service and the meaning of the holiday.

White's biography included a lengthy list of service, awards and medals.

She expressed gratitude for everyone in the community and the chance to speak in her hometown.

"I have attended every Veteran's day event for the last 27 years of my military career in different states and different countries but nothing compares with being home with all of you today," she said. "Your songs, your essays, your video were a great tribute to those we honor today."

White shared some interesting insights on Veteran's Day.

"What you may not know is around the world today, they are recognizing their veterans as part of Armistice Day," she said. "In the U.S. we sometimes confuse Memorial Day with Veteran's Day. Yes, both holidays were established to recognize the men and women who have worn the uniform of the United States Armed Forces. Memorial Day is set aside for remembering and honoring military members who have passed serving our country. While we remember those Veterans today as well, like Sophia said in her essay, to remind us that President Eisenhower in 1954 proclaimed this day

as our opportunity to honor all those who serve in wartime and in peacetime."

White also pointed out that many veterans stand by quietly, avoiding recognition.

Though they may shy away, White said it is important to reach out and thank them for their service though they might not at first be recognized as a veteran.

"Out of this uniform you would never know that this Veteran survived seven combat tours and five plus years in combat zones away from her family," White said. "It's never too late to say thank you because to a veteran every day is Veteran's Day."

White remembered Veteran's Day in 2011 when she attended the National Veteran's Day ceremony at Arlington.

"Freedom is not free," she said. "Military veterans know the price that must be paid and the sacrifices that must be made. Less than one percent of our nation has made the decision to serve. In this community, your community right now, young men and women continue to make that selfless decision... We continue to serve because it is our calling."

White, who went to school here, married a local Vermillion boy, and sent her children to spend summers here said she has a debt of gratitude to this community she can never repay.

"For me Vermillion is home," she said. "As a Veteran I want to thank all of you for giving me a place to call home while serving my country. In serving in different states and countries, Vermillion was always home for us. To this community, thank you. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve knowing you were here for my family when I couldn't be here and it made every single deployment that much easier."

White concluded by reminding those in attendance to remember especially those in our own community who are veterans.

According to White, there are over 1,000 registered veterans in Clay County, an unusually large number for a smaller community.

"These are ordinary people who responded in extraordinary times," she said. "These men and women rose to the nation's call, a nation which has given them and us so much. Veterans have done their duty when duty calls. Now it is our duty to remember them and to celebrate with them. America remains a land of the free because of the brave."

For those who missed the program, it may be viewed online through Red Eye Sports at portal.stretchinternet.com/redeyesports/ by clicking on "On Demand" and selecting "Veteran's Day Program."

## Board

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fund expenditures and some capital outlay that also qualifies for general fund expenditures like transportation, textbooks, and utilities. Vermillion's cost per student is \$7,899 so just under average per students. That would indicate to me that our administration are good stewards of the tax dollars coming in."

According to Froke, no more advertising will be done until the end of the semester for substitute teachers though more are needed.

"We have preferred qualifications but there are no specific qualifications," he said. "They do not have to have a college degree to be a substitute teacher. They have to pass a background check and be an adult."

In the Business Manager's report, Beerman stated that the Summer Food Service Program had a surprise review by the program's leaders in Pierre which went very well. The program has been very successful thanks to Lunchtime Solutions according to Beerman.

Keith Brooks visited the School Board to go over the District Insurance Plan and answer questions regarding

the plan.

Most pleasurable to those in attendance was the workman's comp. aspect of the plan which provides 100 percent coverage for on-the-job injuries to all district employees.

In unfinished business was the second reading and approval of the Vacancy on School Board and Veteran's Preference.

The Vacancy on School Board policy primarily references state law according to Froke.

The Veteran's Preference policy comes in response to a new law passed by the legislature last year.

In new business, the board approved a Special Education Comprehensive Plan which is no different than last year according to Dawn Wirth, Special Services Director.

According to Wirth, the law requires a plan to be in place while a new plan is being developed.

The Waiver for the 2013-14 eighth grade Spanish Program was approved by the board though there was some misunderstanding as to why it was needed.

According to Middle School Principal Pat Anderson, there was much debate over the action to take on this waiver due to the fact that most of the students did not pass the

final exam even though the teacher was highly qualified and the students received good grades throughout the course.

According to Anderson, the waiver actually only affects four of the 17 students who took the class. Fourteen students are already taking Spanish at the High School. The issue is whether or not the students want the Spanish Program's grade on their transcript or not.

The first reading of Student Communicable Disease and Epinephrine Auto-Injectors for School Administration and Use took place.

"The reason this came forward was Rachel's request to examine the head lice policy," Froke stated. "The head lice policy is included within the communicable disease policy. It used to be the case where students were excluded from school if they contracted head lice but that is no longer the case."

During the meeting it was pointed out that families who cannot afford the shampoo and other head lice treatments should turn to Social Services.

The Auto-Injectors, under the policy, are stocked at the schools and staff is trained on how to use them.

Two Special Education assistant resignations were

accepted and a work agreement was approved for another.

The Board approved the planning process to begin for Title I. The process should take about a year according to Wirth.

Should the schools be designated Title I, the funds would be free to be used for anything in the building

as opposed to only the targeted students according to Wirth. Instruction could be planned so it remains close to how it currently stands.

"It might not look any different than it does now if that's what the team decides that's what it should look like for that group in that year or it could be the teachers working with small

groups of kids in different areas of the room," Wirth said. "It's just that the building now has enough students where we're saying maybe everybody needs that type of instruction."

Discussions over the Soccer Agreement were approved and permission was also authorized with the Tennis program.

## NOTICE OF WINTER EXCAVATION RESTRICTIONS

The City of Vermillion restricts street excavations during the winter except for emergency repair work.

Excavations in winter cannot be properly filled in due to problems with compacting frozen dirt and the inability to resurface the cut. The settling that occurs creates a hazard to the traveling public. Deadlines for completion of work in progress and after which no excavations will be allowed unless an emergency exists are:

- November 15th - for cutting asphalt or concrete streets
- November 30th - for excavation on gravel or dirt streets and grass areas
- Anytime when frost is over 4"

Contractors must notify the 911 Clay Area Emergency Services at (605) 677-7070 whenever a street or alley is closed to traffic or reduced to one lane. Once the street or alley is reopened, it is the contractor's responsibility to call 911 Services again so they can update their records. Your cooperation may help save someone's life.

