

Gayville Hall celebrates Waylon, Willie Saturday, Nov. 21



Gayville Hall presents "Waylon, Willie and the Boys," starring John and Susan McNeill, Nick Schwebach, and Owen DeJong, at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 21, in Gayville.

John McNeill, Gayville Hall's country music host and the creator of its tributes to Hank Williams and Johnny Cash, will lead a two-hour celebration of the "outlaw" country music that rose up in Texas during the late 1960s and '70s and forever changed America's country music landscape.

Susan McNeill will play bass and sing several tunes in the show. Schwebach will play lead and steel guitars, and DeJong, who owns a master's degree in violin performance, will play fiddle. The duo from rural Wakonda are leaders of the band Poker Alice and regulars on the Gayville Hall stage.

Gayville Hall is at 502 Washington Street in Gayville. Call (605)-267-2859 for ticket information.

Visiting Political Science Professor Speaks on India's Foreign Policy at USD and in Sioux Falls

A visiting political science professor from India will speak next week in Sioux Falls and Vermillion about that country's foreign policy. Josukutty Abraham teaches at the University of Kerala, India, and is a visiting assistant professor of political science at the University of South Dakota.

He received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Kerala. His specialization is international relations. The title of his talk is, "New Dimensions of India's Foreign Policy."

USD's Department of Political Science and the Political Science League are sponsoring his speech at 4 p.m. Monday at Farber Hall in Old Main on the USD campus, during International Education Week.

The Sioux Falls event, sponsored by USD's College of Arts & Sciences and International Studies Program and part of the Global Issues Series, starts at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday with a cash bar at Callaway's, 500 E. 69th St. The speech begins at 5:45 p.m.

Both events are free and open to the public.

Moving Martilee Mae Carnival Fundraiser

Those who knew Phil and Vanessa Covington and their family while they lived in Vermillion saw how community-oriented they were.

Now when these givers are in need, the community has chosen to give back to them.

A community fundraiser will be held next Saturday, November 21, from 12-4 p.m. at the Clay County 4-H/Extension Building (515 High St. Vermillion).

Free will donations and other money raised through the Carnival-style event will go towards helping the Covingtons purchase a wheelchair-accessible van to accommodate their 13 year old daughter, Martilee Mae, who is becoming increasingly difficult to move.

"Martilee has Rett Syndrome, a debilitating neurological (movement) disorder that predominantly affects females," the Facebook event says. "Although she is nonverbal, her smile and the sparkle in her eyes speak volumes. She has very little purposeful hand use, suffers from seizures, and has scoliosis."

According to the page, so far Martilee's parents have been lifting her in and out of their car even as she has grown, almost as tall as her mother who has recently sustained a shoulder injury.

"She is a sweet, sweet girl," said Pastor Steve Ford of Grace Baptist Church. "She's entering teenage years and has a father who's six foot eight I think. She's getting really tall and it's difficult for her mother to get her in and out of the car so they decided they need a wheelchair-accessible van."

According to Ford, the family had set up a fund for those who wished to contribute to the purchase which inspired Ford and others to intervene.

"I talked to some people at church and everybody agreed that it was something we wanted to do," he said. "Our goal is to raise about



Community members are invited to attend a Carnival-type fundraiser to assist a previously local family purchase a wheelchair-accessible van to more easily move their daughter, Martilee Mae.

half of what they need. They're about halfway there now and we'd like to finish off what they need. The total they need is about \$30,000. We're hoping to raise between \$10-15,000 for them."

The Covingtons are hoping to attend the carnival if their schedule allows.

"Phil worked for USD," Ford said. "That's what brought them to Vermillion. They were here about five years. Then he took a job with the University of Nebraska in Omaha. They moved just this past summer. They're just a wonderful family, really involved with the community."

Ford and others planning the event have seen a great response from the community already.

"All across town businesses have been donating goods for food and items for a silent auction," he said. "We decided to do a carnival, just a good time for people in the community and then just have opportunities to for them to give while they're there."

The event will also have

hot dogs, chips, bounce houses, cotton candy, snow cones, popcorn, face painting, Twist Ty the Ballon Guy, carnival games, the Vermillion Juggling Club and a bake sale with donation buckets at various stations for free will donations.

Jessica McKenzie, director of the Vermillion Food Pantry has been organizing the event.

"Jessica's just done a wonderful job," Ford said. "She's really motivated, being inspired by the family. When I first mentioned the idea that I wanted to do this she asked if she could head it up and she's just done a wonderful job."

McKenzie's whole family has apparently been inspired by the Covingtons as shown by her five-year-old son.

"My sweetheart of a five-year-old came up to Forest and me earlier to tell us something," McKenzie said

in a Facebook post. "He said, 'Mom, Dad, I decided that I don't care about money anymore at all. I don't need to save it for toys, because I want to give it to my friend, Martilee, so that she feels happy and can drive anywhere she wants to go. So I'm going to give seven dollars and seven quarters and seven dimes and seven nickels and seven pennies. Okay? I already decided. It's a deal.' Talk about a lesson in a tender, loving heart!"

Anyone wishing to volunteer for the event in any way or to donate silent auction items, contact Grace Baptist Church at (605) 624-4949 or visit the Facebook event page, 'Moving Martilee Mae Carnival Fundraiser.'

"I'm sure we can find places for people to serve," Ford said. "There's a lot to do."

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