

SNOW FORT FUN



SHAUNA MARLETTE/FOR THE PLAIN TALK

The first snowfall of the season impacted the area last Friday and it was one for the record books. The National Weather Service (NWS) reported 18 inches at Tea, 17 inches at Harrisburg, 16 inches at Marion and Sioux Falls. Other totals included 12.5 inches at Centerville, 12 inches in Yankton, 11 inches at Tripp and Tyndall, 9 inches at Vermillion, 8 inches south of Armour, 7 inches south of Corsica, 6.5 inches at South Sioux City, Neb., and 5 inches at Salem. Friday's snowfall started in the morning and gained intensity during the afternoon. Visibility was reduced to nearly zero, and dangerous driving conditions were reported on U.S. Highway 81 and South Dakota Highway 46. Roads conditions across southeast South Dakota were generally slippery with snow and ice cover, according to the South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT). The storm system moved out of the region Friday night. Pictured in the aftermath of Vermillion's 9-inch accumulation of snow, some children built the first snow fort of the season. Standing nearly six-feet tall in front of a house on Sharp Street, there wasn't much snow left in the yard.

USD Theatre Production Of 'Young Frankenstein' Exceeding Expectations

BY SARAH WETZEL
For the Plain Talk

Even after everything I knew about this production going in, this musical surpassed my personal expectations as well as everyone in the audience judging by the amount of laughing and singing along that was going on.

I'm always suspicious of movie-turned-Broadway productions as often it's just a cash-grab and the musical aspect feels forced but in this case the storyline, characters and comedic elements perfectly translate to the musical theatre genre.

Another thing fans worry about is a knockoff ruining the spirit of a classic film.

Again, nothing to worry about here.

Mel Brooks who wrote the film also wrote the musical so the spirit of the show is exactly the same as the movie. The changes that are made only complement the musical version and make it its own rather than ruining a classic favorite.

That leads me to another positive aspect of this show: even those who know the movie by heart will still find new things to enjoy in the show. The characters, though fundamentally the same, shine with their own light. The talented cast in this case certainly helped that along as each and every part found their own interpretation of their character so even the punch lines copied verbatim from the movie were a fresh new experience for the audience.

I also can't say enough about the sets, costumes, makeup and technical aspects about the show all which seemed of far higher quality than a typical university production.

I would mention specific actors which impressed me but honestly the list would be too long as almost every line drew laughter from the audience even from the smallest role. I don't know how casting decisions were made as everyone seemed equally talented. More than once I changed my mind as to who seemed to be stealing the show.

One word of caution I would give is not to take your children.

Obviously there is no nudity and the swearing is fairly minimal, the show is riddled with strong innuendo which children will probably not understand but be prepared with a response because they just might ask you what a certain term or two means or possibly even what certain characters appear to be doing onstage.

That being said, the director handled those moments tastefully and should not be too offensive to adults as long as they are comfortable with the content of the film version which can be viewed online.

You know you as an audience member are having fun

when you feel like you are drawn into the show to the point where you are practicing the choreography from the first act during your bathroom break at intermission, humming your favorite tunes and getting out an extra giggle on the way home. Let's just say I know I had

fun watching this show.

There is still time to see it if anyone missed the first weekend with performances this Wednesday through Sunday. Visit usd.edu/fine-arts/theatre for more information.

'Light Up Vermillion' Next Friday

The Special Events Committee for the Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company (VDCDC) is sponsoring the 7th Annual "Parade of Lights" in Downtown Vermillion on Friday, December 4 at 6:30 pm. Vermillion area merchants, businesses, schools and organizations are encouraged to put together a float or entry for the parade. The theme is "Light Up Vermillion". First, second and third places will be awarded. Entry forms can be found on the VDCDC website, www.vermillionchamber.com, or at the Chamber office at 1012 Princeton St. Deadline to enter is November 30.

At the end of the parade, Santa and Mrs. Claus will light the community Christmas Tree at Ratingen Platz on the corner of Market and Main Streets. After the tree lighting, children and parents are invited to the Edith B. Siegrist Public Library to make a holiday craft and are asked to bring a donation for the Vermillion Food Pantry.

Children in grades 5 and under are encouraged to enter a coloring contest for a chance to have "Lunch with Santa", sponsored by HyVee, on Saturday, December 5 at 11:30 am at HyVee and meet him before Christmas. Coloring pages will be available at the public schools, HyVee and the VDCDC office at 116 Market St. The coloring entries must be received by November 23.

Also on Saturday, December 5, from 12:30 to 2:30, bring the children for FREE pictures with Santa at HyVee by Peterman Photography.

For more information please call the VDCDC office at 605-624-5571.

USD Arts And Sciences Dean Advances Humanities Across South Dakota

Matthew C. Moen, dean of the University of South Dakota's College of Arts & Sciences, has been elected to a two-year term as chairman of the 18-member board of directors of the South Dakota Humanities Council (SDHC). Its signature event is the free annual Festival of Books, which attracts several thousand participants to programs over several days.

Funded mostly by the National Endowment for the Humanities and by private contributions, the South Dakota Humanities Council also delivers cultural programs to dozens of communities around the state each year through book tours, speakers, library and museum events, and major and mini grants to humanities scholars and other cultural organizations.

Moen joined the SDHC in 2011 as one of four gubernatorial appointees to the board. He said he is grateful to Gov. Dennis Daugaard for the chance to serve with other citizen volunteers to promote the public humanities and advance its three-fold mission of celebrating literature, promoting civility and telling the stories that define our state.

"The South Dakota Humanities Council is an organization that cares deeply about the quality of life in our entire state, from our population centers to our reservation communities to our most rural towns," Moen said. "We work to enrich the lives of our fellow South Dakotans by exposing them to interesting books, prominent authors and challenging ideas. And we try to do so in a quiet and civil way in an often noisy world."

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