

The Sound Of USD Holds ‘Spectacular’ Finish

BY SARAH WETZEL
For the Plain Talk

Marching band season came to an end Sunday as the Sound of USD held their annual Year-end Spectacular in Aalfs Auditorium, Slagle Hall on the University of South Dakota campus.

Fans clapped along at the toe-tapping tunes which seemed to shake the very foundation of the building as the musicians did what they do best and have done best the entire semester, not just at football games and not just in Vermillion.

“Our purpose is two-fold: we’re an outreach group and we’re a school spirit group,” said director Dr. Jonathan Alvis. “It all comes together as a marching band. Out of our 16 performing experiences in 15 weeks only six of those were at football games. The majority of what we do is actually outreach to show this is what’s going on at USD. We’re representing the school that way so the pressure is to always be good, always push the bar of quality. Our main goal is not just football games. Our goal is getting out in public and being a positive sight for the university. It’s community service.”

A big thing the students learn during the season is how to be part of a team according to Alvis where everyone’s complete cooperation and effort is required.

“There’s 100 of them and it’s unlike an orchestra or concert band or choir where if one person doesn’t know their part they can hide,” he said. “Marching band, when one person moves at the wrong time everyone sees it so it’s a demanding ensemble. We also memorize everything we do. On the flip side of that it’s a giant family I think more so than any of the other musical ensembles because we travel more, we’re around each other significantly more. If you don’t know your part we have to make it to where you know your part.”

Alvis feels much of the pressure as many of the decisions and planning are up to him.

“The drill movements, I write all that,” he said. “I do the majority of the arranging of the music. I select all of the shows, making sure they learn all of that and making sure they put it all together. Really the only two things I outsource are the choreography the guard does and the choreography the twirlers do. Other than that it’s all me. It’s kind of scary. It’s a high profile spot and there’s a lot of pressure. It makes it fun, constantly trying to be better.”

Alvis and the band members cooperate in regards to the smaller dance moves the musicians do during the show when their section is not playing.

“Usually I let the section leaders decide,” he said. “My rule is as long as everyone does it and it’s PG rated it’s fair game. The



SARAH WETZEL/FOR THE PLAIN TALK

The Sound of USD celebrated a successful marching band semester with a year-end spectacular that left everybody smiling.

one where the whole band did it, one of the sections did it and I decided to have the whole band do it. So I come up with some of those and the students come up with some. I like to let the students come up with that because then they have that personal investment into it. That’s what I try to do because I structure out so much for them that I want them to be able to have fun.”

Having fun certainly helps with the grueling schedule the Sound experiences every year.

“Sixteen performances in 15 weeks, that’s more than one a week,” Alvis said. “When you look at a regular ensemble they do like one a semester. When we perform it’s not just the eight minutes they see at halftime and six minutes of pregame. It’s tailgate nation, it’s walking the football team in from the tailgate. It’s doing the outreach things. It’s a lot.”

Even once the marching band season is over, was barely a chance to take a breath for some with the basketball band rehearsals which began Monday for 30-35 of the students.

“We are at athletic events as much as the athletes are,” Alvis said.

Alvis has been able to look back on the semester with pride with several performances he feels the students will remember for a long time.

“We went to Kansas State on a recruiting tour,” he said. “Every year we go on a recruiting tour and take four days to go and come back from wherever we’re going. We leave on Thursday and we’ll play three high schools on the way to somewhere. Then we’ll do three high schools on the way back. I didn’t have a sixth school and Dr. Olson, our director of bands, knew someone who knew someone so we got in contact with this high school band director at Rock Creek Kansas which is about 30 minutes north of Manhattan which is where Kansas State is. We’re on the phone and I say, ‘I want to bring my band and play your football game on Friday.’ So we went, we sat in the stands with that band, we marched at halftime

and we did a performance afterwards and our students loved it, their students loved it, their community loved it. I had people from Kansas State at the game the next day just hounding me over it. Our Twitter feed blew up.”

Kansas locals also approached Alvis with gratitude for their effort in performing there.

“It was a huge outreach thing,” Alvis said. “Kansas State folks were saying, ‘We can’t even get the Kansas State band to come up here and you guys drive four and a half hours to do this for us.’ It’s all about that positive energy from USD. We have some coyote fans now in the middle of Kansas.”

Another highlight for Alvis was the students’ drive to accomplish the hardest tasks.

“This year has been incredibly hard,” he said. “I decided to throw some things at the students that I didn’t think we could do and we did them. They should be commended for what they have done. The Enchanted Spaces show is the hardest show I’ve written in marching band, and I’ve written a lot, and they did it and they were successful. That’s a personal highlight for me.”

The Sound of USD has also had international success, being invited to perform in the 2017 London New Year’s Day Parade.

“Getting invited back to London is a big deal because it’s not just we call them on the phone and say we want to go,” Alvis said. “It’s an actual process of being nominated and then selected. We were there for the 2012 New Year’s Day parade. We’re very excited about that nomination so I guess we’ll be going back to

London in 13 months.”

The band also decided last minute to play the French national anthem during the pregame show following the recent Paris attacks.

“At 11:30 I handed them music and at 12:30 we played it on the field,” Alvis said. “The fact that we could do that is impressive. We got it up on Youtube as soon as it happened. As of 2:00 this afternoon it had 9,510 views which isn’t that many views except we usually are in the 600 numbers so the fact we’ve reached almost 10,000 people is big.”

“In addition to that, that performance actually got broadcast over French National television. We probably have 10-15 comments on there all in French. When we translated it, it’s all thank you. It also got picked up by a newspaper in France. Of the views 90 percent of them were French.”

Here in Vermillion Alvis said there is a pretty good response to their efforts.

“We’ve got good university support and good community support,” he said. “There’s so much going on in town that it’s hard for everyone to support everything they want to. When we go downtown for D-Days people talk about that for a couple of weeks afterwards. Can’t complain at all. People have come to appreciate us. When they hear ‘The Sound’ they know what it means whereas before when I first got here they were kind of wishy washy but now with Division one, the responsibilities are very different than that of another level. We’re going where we need to be going. It turns into a grind sometime and it’s stressful but we make it fun.”

ANNUAL
Christmas Festival

Sunday, December 6 • 1-4:30 pm
W.H. Over Museum
Near the Dakota Dome on University St. • Vermillion

Visit with Santa Claus, entertainment, spectacular refreshments, best Bake sale in the State, decorated trees and Children's activities presented by 4-H members in the Discovery Room.

Everyone Welcome!
Donations to the Food Pantry welcome at the door.

Adoption

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parenting can be hard on one’s self-esteem and the power to make it through comes from where you personally draw your strength.

“There will be times when your well runs dry from giving and giving, without gratitude or affection in return,” she said. “It’s easy for others to say to adoptive and foster parents, ‘put self-care first.’ But no one can do self-care from that place of exhaustion. It won’t be about how good, or how clever, or how strong you are as individuals. It will depend on what surrounds

and fills you up when the well runs dry. It’s a painful but very rich, rewarding journey with hazards.”

Surviving these hazards is a topic Patterson hopes to address with a second book.

Got News?

Call The Plain Talk At 624-4429

7th Annual -- Parade of Lights

“Light Up Vermillion”
Friday, December 4th, 2015 • 6:30 p.m.
Downtown on Main Street
Community Christmas Tree Lighting - Fri., Dec. 4th
At the end of the parade please join Santa and Mrs. Claus as they light the community Christmas Tree at Ratingen Platz on the corner of Main and Market Streets.
Holiday Crafts at the Library - Fri., Dec., 4th
After the tree lighting, children and parents are invited to the Vermillion Public Library to make a holiday craft - please bring in your donation for the Vermillion Food Pantry!
Sponsored by the Vermillion Public Library.
Pictures with Santa - Sat., Dec. 5th
Bring your children to Hy-Vee on Sat., Dec 5th from 12:30 to 2:30 for a FREE indoor picture with Santa by Peterman Photography.
It's not too late!
If you would like to submit an entry into the Parade of Lights, entry forms are available at www.vermillionchamber.com or at the VCDC office at 1012 Princeton St.
605-624-5571

Southeast CASA Recruiting Board Members

The mission of the Southeast CASA Program (SECASA) is to advocate in court for safe, permanent homes for abused/neglected children from our communities. SECASA started in Yankton County in October 2011, and it has been present in Clay County since July 2015. With this expansion, SECASA is now seeking Clay County representation on its Board of Directors. Applications may be obtained at the SECASA office at 23 W. Main Street in Vermillion.

Board members support the work of SECASA and provide mission-based leadership and strategic governance. While day-to-day operations are led by SECASA's Program Director and Program Development Assistant, the appropriate involvement of the Board is both critical and expected. Specific board member responsibilities include:

- Regular attendance at SECASA Board meetings.
- Reviewing outcomes of SECASA to evaluate its impact, and regularly measure its performance and effectiveness;
- Reviewing agenda and supporting materials prior to board and committee meetings;
- Approving SECASA's annual budget, audit reports, and material business decisions; being informed of, and meeting all, legal and fiduciary responsibilities;
- Contributing to an annual performance evaluation of the Director;
- Assisting the Director and Board chair in identifying and recruiting other board members;
- Serving on fundraising committees and taking on special event assignments;
- Acting as an ambassador of the organization.

SECASA board members will consider SECASA a philanthropic priority. So that SECASA can credibly solicit contributions from foundations, organizations, and individuals, SECASA expects to have 100 percent of board members make an annual contribution commensurate with their capacity.

Terms of Board membership are three years, and the member would be eligible for reappointment for one additional term. Board meetings are held monthly, with committee meetings held as needed.

This is an extraordinary opportunity for an individual who is passionate about CASA's mission.

If you have any questions regarding this position, please contact Southeast CASA at 760-4825.

Thank you for your interest in carrying on the SECASA mission.

Art Professor Creates State's Ornaments for White House Tree

The National Park Foundation chose a University of South Dakota art professor to create South Dakota's ornaments for this year's National Christmas Tree display at the White House.

Young Ae Kim, an associate professor of graphic design at USD, used laser-cutting technology to create 12 identical paper sculpture ornaments. She said her inspiration was South Dakota's treasures, trees and vast open spaces. Kim grew up in Seoul, South Korea, with few natural surroundings, moved to South Dakota in 2008 and fell in love with the natural beauty of the state's ever-changing landscape.

South Dakota's national parks include Mount Rushmore National Memorial, Badlands National Park, Jewel Cave National Monument, Wind Cave National Park, Minuteman Missile National Historic Site and Missouri National Recreational River.

“It is an honor to be selected because South Dakota has become a new and lovely experience from where I grew up,” she said. “This project gave me the opportunity to share a part of my journey and design with everyone who sees it in Washington, D.C.”

Kim joins local artists from each state, territory and the District of Columbia in designing ornaments for the National Christmas Tree. The designs were inspired by America's national parks and its programs that will pay tribute to the upcoming National Park Service's centennial in 2016. The 93rd annual National Christmas Tree Lighting will be Thursday, Dec. 3.

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The University of South Dakota College of Fine Arts Department of Music

Presents
The USD Symphony Orchestra
Featuring
Vive La France
Music of Bizet and Delibes
7:30 P.M.
Friday, December 4th, 2015
Aalfs Auditorium in Slagle Hall
Free Admission



Happy 100th Birthday Goldie Sealey on December 4th, 2015

Goldie's daughters Joyce Steinmasel, Judy Kronaizl, and JoAnne Johnson wish to honor her with a card shower. Please help us celebrate by sending a card to Goldie. If possible share a memory on the card for her to enjoy.
Send cards to: Goldie Sealey
125 Sycamore St., Apt. 17
Vermillion, SD 57069