

OUR TOWNS

Gayville
Mission Hill
Volin

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STATE BOUND



Cole Rupp



Kelia Barta



Alec Barta

PHOTOS: JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

GVHS Sends 3 To State Cross Country Meet

From P&D Staff Reports

Three members of the Gayville-Volin cross country team have qualified for this Saturday's state cross country meet in Rapid City.

- Freshman Cole Rupp qualified by placing 15th in the boys' race at the Region 3B Cross Country Meet in Freeman Oct. 14.
- Seventh grader Kelia Barta finished 13th at the region meet.
- Seventh grader Alec Barta finished ninth at region. Saturday's Class B girls' race starts at 1 p.m. (CT) at the Elk's Golf Course. The Class B boys' race starts at 2 p.m.

For complete state results, look for Monday's *Press & Dakotan* or visit www.yankton.net.

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Vangen Group Keeps In Stitches

Quilting Group Members Still Finds Sew Much Time For Their Passion

BY LORETTA SORENSEN
P&D Correspondent

MISSION HILL — Warmth and comfort come in many forms at Mission Hill's Vangen Lutheran Church, but the quilting group that meets every Wednesday morning is providing at least 400 serviceable, durable quilts that bring long-lasting relief from cold temperatures, as well as a message of care and consideration.

"We don't piece them, so they're not fancy, but they're warm and we make them to last as long as possible," Nancy Nelson, the group's coordinator said. Lutheran World Relief was the recipient of the quilts for many years, but when economic conditions intensified local needs in recent years, the women decided to distribute some of their quilts to regional organizations.

Yankton's Contact Center and Women's Shelter will receive some of the quilts. Outlaw Ranch, a Lutheran youth camp in Custer, and some teen and pre-teen organizations will also receive some of the quilts.

"Pine Ridge has requested that we send them quilts this year, too," Kitty Bormann said. "We sent some to Cedar Rapids last year for flood victims and took some to an unwed mothers' center in Sioux Falls, too."

In years past, Lillian Olson recalled that church women brought their lunch and spent the entire day sewing quilts. As the number of farmers declined and more women joined the workforce, the quilting process evolved along with the culture.

"We have as many as 12 women who come to help," Ruth Gustad said. "Not everyone can be here every Wednesday. We take some time off for holidays. When the weather is bad we're not able to gather."

Three different sizes of quilts come out of the group's labor. The largest quilts are 60 by 80 inches. Youth camps need twin-sized quilts, and the group also makes baby quilts.

"The baby quilts are sold at our ice cream social," Jean Knutson said. "We usually have about 20 baby quilts and some larger quilts to sell at our silent auction. That money goes back into our quilting fund to purchase materials or whatever we need to make the quilts."

While a significant amount of quilting materials are donated, the group also purchases material at rummage sales and watches for bargains in the stores.

LaRue Hanson and his wife come back from Colorado to visit family, and they often bring us a large box of material," Gustad said. "The people who donate the materials don't know us, but they're really good to help us out."

While washable materials are prefer-

able, the ladies don't turn down any type of donation and are adept at making use of many different types of material.

"We received some living room drapes that had backing and lining in addition to the drape material," Highland said. "We were able to make six quilts out of that."

Backing is generally made of sheets or flannel materials. Blankets that are worn are inserted between the quilt top and backing. Used blankets in good shape are distributed just as they are.

Sheets are always needed, the women said. The corners of fitted sheets are dismantled and made to lay flat. A piece of material is sewn into the corner so they can be used as a backing.

Yardsticks are plentiful at the work tables and the women are careful to keep track of their tools as they finish quilts and prepare them for packing.

"We use pliers to pull the needles through when we're tying," Sharon Freng said. "Somehow my pliers — that had my name on them — got caught up in a quilt and was shipped in one of the boxes. Someone received more than they expected when they got the quilt."

Some of the women complete quilting chores at home if there isn't enough time to finish the task at church. Because they also make layettes that contain flannel diapers, much of the work of making the diapers is done at home.

"Gloria does a lot of that at home," Carol Broderson said.

Gloria Brandon also noted that Broderson found a way to make use of the yarn the women no longer use to tie quilts.

"They asked us to use crochet thread," Broderson said. "It lasts longer. In places like Africa, they're washing the quilts in the river, and the yarn frays and doesn't wear as well as the thread. I've made 81 baby sweaters from the yarn."

Banana boxes serve as sturdy packing boxes, and the women are thankful that they have a church member with access to the empty boxes. Creativity and inventiveness have helped make the work easier through the years. PVC pipe that extends the legs of tables in the fellowship hall and women who are willing to offer their skills wherever needed make the work flow smoothly.

"They don't waste any time here, though," Olson said. "When my daughter came from Colorado to visit, we told her she should stay and help. She said we work too hard at this. These women are eager beavers on the job. They get a lot done."

Carol Swanson, who lives a block from the church but isn't a member, joins the group each week for a number of reasons. The social aspect of the morning and the idea of using time constructively appeals



PHOTO: LORETTA SORENSEN

Lillian Olson (forefront) has been helping construct quilts at Vangen Lutheran Church for more years than she can remember. The 96-year-old church member relies on her daughter, Betty Highland, to bring her to the Wednesday gathering and usually helps pin quilt hems to prepare them for the women who work at sewing machines.

to all the women.

"It was a good way for me to get acquainted when we moved to town," Swanson said.

Bormann enjoys the sense of reward from her work and Nelson appreciates the fact that the group is able to "make something out of nothing."

Each September, the women bring a sampling of the quilts into the church sanctuary so the congregation can see what they've done through the year. Their hope is that the tradition will continue far into the future.

"You never know," Gustad said. "We hope our younger members notice what's

done and have a desire to continue making the quilts. They're draped over the pews and dedicated before they're sent out, so it's a nice way to help people see what's been done."

At least 14 women regularly assist with quilt-making. They include Gustad, Knutson, Broderson, Brandon, Olson, Highland, Freng, Nelson, Swanson, Karen Lindgren, Helen Severson, Ruby Cutts and Dorothy Holman.

The women are happy to have new members join their group, and church membership isn't a requirement.

"If someone wants to come and help, they're more than welcome," Nelson said.

Hay Country Jamboree Saturday at Gayville

Gayville Hall presents "The Hay Country Jamboree," starring Wakonda native Dan Kilbride, Dalton Coffey, John and Susan McNeill, Nick Schwebach, and Owen DeJong, on Saturday, Oct. 24, at 8 p.m. in Gayville.

The two-hour show is a fast-paced "extravaganza of old-time American popular song, country, bluegrass, and humor," according to Gayville Hall proprietor Doug Sharples.

Kilbride and Coffey, of Sioux Falls, perform traditional bluegrass music on banjo and guitar, respectively, and have been members of the Jamboree from its beginning in 2007. Kilbride, the duo's singer, is widely known

for both his humor and his virtuosity as a player.

The McNeills, of Springfield, sing classic country and original tunes and have been Gayville Hall's country music hosts since the alcohol-and-smoke-free music venue opened in 2001.

Schwebach is a singer and guitarist, and DeJong is a fiddler who holds a master's degree in violin performance. The rural Wakonda residents began playing American popular tunes from the early 20th century as a duo in 1979. They also lead the Poker Alice Band.

Gayville Hall is located at 502 Washington Street in Gayville. Tickets are \$12.50 at the door, or \$15 reserved. Call 605-267-2859.



Dalton Coffey and Dan Kilbride

NSU Representative To Visit Gayville-Volin High School

GAYVILLE — Tena Westling, Northern State University admissions representative, will be at the Gayville-Volin High School 11:45 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28.

Westling will be available to speak with area students and members of the community who are considering applying to Northern State University located in Aberdeen. She will share information and answer questions on NSU's many programs including the Wolf PACT scholarship, academic programs, costs and financial assistance, and any other questions about NSU.

For more information visit www.northern.edu or call the NSU Office of Admissions at 800-NSU-5330.

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