

# Forum reveals Middle East protests rooted in desire for democracy

By Travis Gulbrandson

travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

It will take time for now-protesting nations in the Middle East to transition to a democratic form of government. However, aiding in that transition is the goal of many of the people who live in those countries.

This was one of several opinions voiced during the regular International Forum, which was held at the Muenster University Center on the campus of the University of South Dakota Monday morning.

"It's a transitional period, and changing decades of oppression is not going to happen overnight," said native Egyptian Nagla Anees. "We have to give it time, and we have to believe that standing against injustice is the right answer and supporting democracy is the way to go."

Dr. Musheera Anis also comes from Egypt and teaches Arabic at USD. She said she has been approached by many people who express concern that rather than become a democratic nation, Egypt will fall into the hands of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Anis pointed out that although Egypt has been without an official government for the past eight months, this has not happened – despite warnings of such an occurrence by former President Hosni Mubarak.

"After the revolution it seems that ... people are really interested in the politics of the Brotherhood," Anis said. "They want the real political change, and the Brotherhood is kind of a dogmatic, has the same issues the Mubarak regime had."

"People are not tolerating that. They do not want these autocratic people telling us what to do. ... We are the people, and we are telling (the officials)



Nagla Anees (second from left) makes a point as Dr. Benno Wymar, Dr. Musheera Anis and Achala Sebit Moi look on at an international forum on the "Arab Spring." The forum took place Monday morning in the Muenster University Center.

(Photo by David Lias)

what to do," she said.

Anis added that while propagandists have said Islamists have been bombing churches and embassies in Egypt, this has not been the case.

"There is not one case of bombing in the previous eight months in Egypt," she said. "Not one church was attacked. Not one mosque was attacked."

Media coverage was an ongoing problem in many of these nations before the protests began.

"Even though you have the illusion of diversity with some media outlets, they just represented the regime," Anees said. "Everyone knew they were just a mouthpiece for the system. We're talking about the print media, the television, the radio, everything."

"It was very interesting to see the transformation of some of these people

who worked for years in the media, when all of a sudden, (reporters were) like, 'The revolution is great!'" she said.

Other troubled nations – such as Bahrain – receive biased or lax news coverage out of fear of antagonizing existing monarchies, Anees said.

"Bahrain is a very small country, and I think people are hoping (the problem) will just go away, which is ridiculous," she said. "The people have legitimate demands and deserve to be represented in their government. But the fact that there are problems in Bahrain and Yemen is a complete disaster for Saudi Arabia, because these are bordering countries, and if these countries were to succeed in their revolutions ... it's a big deal for the monarchy in Saudi Arabia because they're pretty much stuck."

Anis agreed, adding, "Monarchies are really hard for people to talk against because of the emotional involvement they have with their monarchies and how old these monarchies are. So, they have real respect for their kings and princes."

The United States has a role to play in the struggle of these nations, Anees said.

"I think the best role America can have is to continue to be a beacon of democracy – not only just to talk the talk, but to walk the walk," she said.

"Because a lot of times, the problem of American foreign policy is it tends to favor its interests."

She cited as examples the decades-long support of regimes Egypt and Syria.

"We haven't seen them pushing for

change in Saudi Arabia because they just want it to remain stable," she said. "It doesn't matter if women don't get to vote, it doesn't matter that they have all these problems. What matters is to keep the oil flowing and just keep it stable."

The United States represents to the protestors a "democratic ideal" that the protestors are trying to reach, she said.

"Hopefully democracy will prevail in the end, and the people will live to one day be free," Anees said.

Also participating in the forum was Achala Sebit Moi, a native of South Sudan who lived for six years in Syria.

The forum was moderated by Dr. Benno Wymar.

## Hay Country Jamboree Saturday at Gayville

### Jamboree regulars to showcase talents

Gayville Hall presents its monthly musical variety show, "The Hay Country Jamboree," at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 1, in Gayville.

Jamboree regulars, including country music hosts John and Susan McNeill, fiddler Owen DeJong, guitarist and singer Nick Schwebach, and banjo player Dan Kilbride, will welcome Iowa's "Singing Farmer," Ervin Pickhinke, as their special guest.

Staged the first Saturday each month, Jamborees always feature three or more musical

acts on stage together trading old-time tunes, country, bluegrass, and humor by turn, according to producer Doug Sharples.

The shows are two hours long, including a short intermission midway, and are presented in an alcohol-and-smoke free setting.

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



Nick Schwebach and Owen DeJong are two of the stars of "The Hay Country Jamboree" at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 1, at Gayville Hall.



Pictured above is Shawna Christie, lead direct support professional (center) her supervisor, Alice Sealey (right), and Gerry Tracy, executive director.

## Christie is SESDAC, Inc. Employee of the Month

Shawna Christie, lead direct support professional, was selected as the SESDAC, Inc. September 2011 Employee of the Month. Shawna has been employed at SESDAC, Inc. since February 2010.

Shawna was nominated for the award by her fellow co-workers, based on her dedication to her job and the people she supports.

Co-workers had the following compliments written in their nominations for Shawna: "Shawna is enthusiastic

about her job. She models great communication skills and interacts with people in a way that shows everyone that she sees them as an equal."

Shawna and her husband currently reside in Vermillion.

SESDAC, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that assists people with disabilities to live, work, and socialize in their community. SESDAC, Inc. began providing services in 1973 and currently serves 75 people with disabilities and has 140 employees.

## OBITUARIES

### Lola Johnson

Lola M. Johnson, 87, of Meckling, went to heaven surrounded by her family, in her home on Sept. 22, 2011, following a lengthy illness.

Lola Small was born July 27, 1924 on a farm south of Westfield, IA to Harley and Eula (Mills) Small. She graduated from Akron High School in 1942 and attended Minnesota School of Business in Minneapolis. She worked for DePonti Aviation making gliders for soldiers to glide 'behind enemy lines' and for St. Paul Hydraulic Hoist making huge snowplows and road graders for the Alaskan Highway. She returned to Iowa and married her high school sweetheart Charles Johnson in October of 1947.

She touched many lives as a lifelong member of the United Methodist Church and Faith and Hope Circle, Eastern Star and she was also active in PTA, and had worked at the Sears store for many years. She had a knack for seeing "good" in everyone, as well as a patient, quiet and cheerful personality. We will miss her generosity and her wonderful cooking.



JOHNSON

III (Jane) Johnson of Vermillion, Linda C. (Jim) Christiansen of Norco, CA, Richard D. (Gayle) of Wakonda; nine grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, three brothers and a sister.

"Small" but mighty – she has left us but will never be forgotten.

Memorial services were 10 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 27 at the United Methodist Church in Vermillion. Visitation began at 5 p.m. Monday, Sept. 26, with a prayer service at 7 p.m. all at the Hansen Funeral Home in Vermillion. Memorials may be directed to the Backpack Food Program for Children. hansenfuneralhome.com

### Artis Knudson

Artis E. Knudson, 97, of Wakonda, passed away Sept. 21, 2011 at Bethesda Nursing Home in Beresford.

Funeral services were 10 a.m., Monday, Sept. 26, 2011 at Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church, rural Wakonda. Burial followed in Lodi Cemetery, rural Wakonda.

Visitation was from 5 to 7 p.m. with a prayer service beginning at 7 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 25, at the Hansen Funeral Home in Irene.

Artis was born to John and Ida (Nelson) Dahlin June 6, 1914 in Clay County and had a twin brother, Arthur. She married Knute Inman Knudson on Nov. 10, 1939 and they farmed in the Wakonda area. He preceded her in death in May of 1968.

She is survived by a daughter, Corrine and husband Ron Hill of Longview, WA; one son, Dennis Knudson of Wakonda; five grandchildren, Rodney and wife Nancy Hill of Washougal, WA, Gregg Hill of Longview, WA, Kevin and his wife Pil Ok Hill of

Havelock, NC, Lindsay and husband Trinity Turnbow of Bismarck, ND, Tyler Knudson of Bismarck, ND; eight grandchildren, Krista Hill, Korea, David of Pensacola, FL, Ryan Hill, Nathan Hill, Madison Hill, Abigail Hill, Gracie Hill of Washougal, WA, Isabella Turnbow, Bismarck, ND; one brother-in-law, Don Merriman Beresford; and a sister-in-law, Agnes Knutson, Hurley; also four adopted grandchildren, Nikki White, Cosette Pease, Nathan White and Amanda White; a special niece, Gayle White, Sioux Falls; and many more special nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by six sisters, Lottie Thomas, Sophie Lowden, Anna Snoozy, Christine Max, Grace Strand, Elaine Merriman; and seven brothers, Nels Dahlin, Joe Dahlin, Clarence Dahlin, Oscar Dahlin, Arthur Dahlin, Melvin Dahlin, and Robert Dahlin.

For obituary and online condolences visit hansenfuneralhome.com

## RN

Help make a difference in someone's life. Join us today!

Full or Part time 6 pm to 6 am.  
LTC experience preferred.

**Prairie Estates Care Center**  
600 S. Franklin Elk Point, SD 57025-0486

Apply in person or fax letter & resume to:  
Jenne 605-356-2241  
or call 605-356-2622  
or email hrdept@lantisnet.com

EOE

### Thank You

The family of Normand Thompson wishes to thank the many friends and neighbors for their kind memories and condolences to the family during our time of saying goodbye to our husband, father, brother, grandfather and uncle. Your presence and acts of kindness help us all get through this sad time.

Sincerely,  
The Family of Normand Thompson

It has been brought to our attention that there has been some confusion regarding the Vermillion Value Cards that were sold by Newcastle Public School and the cards that were being sold by the Vermillion Booster Club. Newcastle Public School wants to apologize for any confusion, inconvenience or ill feelings that may have been caused by this oversight. Next year's cards will be clearly marked as "Raider" or "Newcastle Public School."

We want to assure the Vermillion community that this will not happen again and in no way did we intend to short the Vermillion Booster Club out of any fundraising opportunities. Thank you to all of the businesses on both the Newcastle Card and the Vermillion Booster Card for helping the area schools with their fundraising needs.

Thank you,  
Joey Lefdal  
Newcastle Public School