

RIBS

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it is a chance to sample variously prepared wings by teams trying to earn your vote.

"The people pay \$5, you get to sample one of everyone's wings and you get to vote," French said. "You sample everyone's and see how they cook."

There is also a people's choice on Saturday night where, if you pay \$10, you can be the judge of the best pulled pork.

Aside from the people's choice competitions, the public will also have access to numerous street vendors to either wet your whistle or silence your stomach.

Tables and chairs will be provided for those who wish to sit and listen to live music as they enjoy their food.

RODS

The event also features a classic car and cycle show. "The car show gets 180 cars in it," said French.

Collector cars and motorcycles will be on display on Saturday from noon-4pm.

"I loved taking our boys there last year," said Mandy Christiansen, a current Vermillion resident. "They loved seeing all the old cars."

ROCK 'N' ROLL

A stage will also be set up for live music during various times during the two-day event.

Music lovers are welcome to either sit and listen or dance on by as the bands perform. Scheduled to perform are the Clay Creek Deaf Cowboy Band, Mrs. Begley and the Boys, Go Figure and the Guilty Pleasures Orchestra (see related story).

A FAMILY AFFAIR

For those with small children, a family fun area will be set up.

For a \$5 wristband, children can have unlimited access to blow-up activities.

"People can spend the afternoon, get some food, eat and relax," French said.

The central hub of the event is located at Main St. and Market in Vermillion.

More information on the event plus a schedule can be found at www.sdbbq.us

Sept. is Honey Month in S.D.

PIERRE – Gov. Dennis Daugaard has proclaimed September as Honey Month in South Dakota.

South Dakota ranks in the top five honey producing states. The state has 225 beekeepers who maintain 324,000 colonies. Last year, over 14 million pounds of honey were produced in South Dakota with a value of over \$30 million.

While actively foraging for pollen and nectar, honey bees contribute significantly to the pollination of our food supply and play a vital role in maintaining productive farms, forests and grasslands.

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Bands ready to rock Vermillion

By Sarah Wetzel
For the Plain Talk

A variety of musicians will be putting the 'rock' into this weekend's Ribs Rods and Rock & Roll.

Walking down Main St. on Friday and Saturday everyone should hear something they love.

Dawn Nelson, of the Clay Creek Deaf Cowboy Band, says that their group hopes to see people tapping their toes to familiar tunes.

"We've got a good fan base that likes to dance. We're more of a dance band than a show band," Nelson said.

This will be the band's first time appearing in the Ribs, Rods and Rock & Roll event.

"We haven't been asked before because we're more of a country band. We do some classic country, we do some oldies type and southern rock type. We definitely like the upbeat country."

Dedicated to playing catchy music that everyone loves, the

musicians are far from deaf.

"To make a long story short the guys wanted something more than a one-name band, a little bit longer, a little bit catchier. The deaf was put in there because the first time they played together quite literally they were afraid they were so bad they'd get booed off the stage. They threw that in at the last minute as a joke and it just stuck."

The band actually does have fans in the deaf community, Nelson said. "They can feel the vibrations and the music and they



The Clay Creek Deaf Cowboy Band is set to play this weekend during Ribs, Rods & Rock and Roll.

(Courtesy Photo)

play is the band Go Figure. This is their second year performing for this event.

"We love doing these kind of shows," Kim Sawatzke said.

enjoy it too."

The band, which was inducted into the South Dakota country music hall of fame last year, has been together 35 years.

Two of the four current members (Nelson and her husband) reside in Vermillion.

"We're honored to finally get to play in Ribs Rods and Rock and Roll"

Also

scheduled to play is the band Go Figure. This is their second year performing for this event.

"We love doing these kind of shows," Kim Sawatzke said.

"They're always a good time."

Like the Clay Creek Deaf Cowboy Band, Sawatzke said they would love to see people sing and dance along to their mix of 70's, 80's and 90's rock.

"I hope we get people to stick around and have some fun with us."

Go Figure has certainly stuck around. Three of the band's members are USD graduates and Sawatzke says it's fun coming back.

Not only do these bands enjoy making music together, they use their talents to help others.

"My husband and I buy all the materials for the cds and whatever gets sold goes to charity," Nelson said. Go Figure regularly plays for benefits and the Vermillion Make a Wish event during the summer.

Also scheduled to perform are the Guilty Pleasures Orchestra (GPO) and Mrs. Begley and the Boys. For the performance schedule and other information on the event, visit www.sdbbq.us.

How about a Smokey Showdown?

By Sarah Wetzel
For The Plain Talk

Grills will be heating up for the Ribs, Rods & Rock'n Roll event this weekend.

Teams coming from all over the country will be in Vermillion this Friday and Saturday to compete for the grand prize in this nationally-recognized BBQ contest. The winning team will earn the title of BBQ Grand Champion plus a \$10,000 purse.

Earning a title is no small feat as the competition is stiff.

According to Jennifer French, organizer and BBQ chair, anyone can enter but usually it's just the "big boys."

Kase Allison and his team, Charcoal Lounge, won third place in the event last year. Allison himself has been doing Ribs, Rods & Rock'n Roll since 2006.

"We do 8-10 contests per

year and we travel a radius all the way up to Minneapolis and anywhere in between," Allison said.

Allison and his team come into this competition riding high from a recent victory.

They won Grand Champion at a BBQ festival in Marshall, Minnesota just a few weeks ago, a result they hope to replicate this weekend.

What will it take to win? "Good meat, good ingredients, a lot of patience, then hope for luck at the judging table," Allison says.

Unlike the People's Choice where the public's vote will decide the victor, the main BBQ competition will be judged by certified BBQ judges and representatives from the Kansas City BBQ Society (KCBS).

Ribs, Rods, & Rock'n Roll has been a KCBS-sanctioned event since 2008. The society is the largest BBQ body in the

world with over 19,000 members worldwide.

To the average home cook, BBQ might mean simply dousing the meat of choice with BBQ sauce before sticking it in the oven or on the stove.

To the entries in the Ribs, Rods & Rock'n Roll however, it is slightly more complicated. "To me and the BBQ gurus, a gas grill is a swear word," Allison says. Good BBQ takes, "hours of painstaking work" according to him.

"It starts with quality meat and that's hard to get, fresh ingredients as far as rubs and sauces and just putting in the time."

That's time with a capital-T. Some meat can take up to 12 hours.

"When it's done it's done," Allison says.

Fire management and smoke also play a huge part. Allison has his theory.

"That's make it or break it. I use hickory wood, that's my main wood of choice. I also use a little of pecan and cherry wood."

BBQ aficionados know that different fuels make different amounts of smoke which gives the meat certain flavors.

While some might say "the more the merrier," Allison says that in the case of smoke, "A little goes a long way. That's people's biggest mistake, over-smoking their meat."

Those who started the competition had a very different fuel of choice that is unique to the area: corn cobs.

Larry Mart will be doing a demonstration sponsored by Ribs, Rods & Rock'n Roll using corn-cob coal.

"When the cobs are down to a cinder, I put them under the grill and that's what we use to heat," Mart said.

The corn cobs apparently

give the meat a good flavor which viewers of the demonstration will be able to sample.

Luckily this meat will take only three hours – as opposed to 12.

Even though the heat is on, the contestants remember the real reason for being there. "We just do it for fun," Allison says. "It kinda started out as just that. Three guys got together, built a smoker out of junk, did well there, won the next one and were hooked after that. The Ribs, Rods & Rock'n Roll has its roots in simple pleasure as well. According to Mart, the founders began as simply "guys over to have ribs and food and play cards."

The rest, as we say it, is history.

For more information on the event, visit www.sdbbq.us

Hahn working hard as a musician, grad student

By Alan Dale
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From the world of music to the gridiron and back again, Austin Hahn is doing what he loves to do while working on what he needs to do.

In the end, be it as a graduate student at the University of South Dakota or a musician with designs on something great, Hahn is working to make something happen one way or another.

Take the tail-end of this week for instance.

Thursday night, Hahn will perform at Thursdays on The Platz in downtown Vermillion, on the corner of Main and Market streets, starting at 6 p.m., hoping to deliver with his own style of solo show.

Then the next day, Friday, Hahn travels to play Bracco's in Sioux Falls from 5-7:30 p.m. before rushing down I-29 to Sioux City to play at McCarthy and Bailey's Irish Pub for a 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. set.

"I try to play a wide variety of stuff from country music to classic rock," Hahn said. "I play to a lot of mixed audiences so I try to play some old classic music and then some more popular, current music to keep everyone happy."

Hahn, a former football player for the University of Minnesota's program, is a Hartford, Wisconsin native who recently began his third-year of graduate school in political psychology at USD.

"I would like to work in Academia as a researcher and maybe be affiliated as a research professor with the university," he said. "That's if the music thing doesn't work out I guess."



Vermillion's Austin Hahn takes times out of a busy graduate studies schedule at USD to play plenty of music.

(Thomas Hatzenbuehler / For the Plain Talk)

Hahn was taught piano and guitar and despite a reserved start and a quiet, private, affinity for music he really didn't get going until he latter years in high school.

"I started taking piano lessons when I was four-years-old, but I started playing at bars and coffee shops when I was a junior and senior in high school," he said. "I played college football so I would play at bonfires and stuff but my schedule didn't permit me to play on weekends and stuff like that."

"I still got music in, but I didn't make any profit from it like I can now."

Hahn averaged about four shows a week during

this past summer and played a stretch of eight shows in 10 days recently.

The biggest venue he played main stage at was Latitude 42 in Sioux Falls and he has played in the lounge of The District, also in Sioux Falls.

"I want to expand to Omaha and get into Minneapolis," Hahn said. "A lot of people I play with at Lake Okoboji are telling me who to get in contact with down in Omaha. I would also like to play in Yankton or any places that want me to play."

His catalogue includes plenty of newer titles while also running the gamut with Elton John, Steve Miller, and Billy Joel – "because

everyone loves "The Piano Man."

Hahn also enjoys playing the music of lesser-known artists like Stephen Kellogg.

"He has a lot of soulful lyrics and is a singer-songwriter who plays acoustic guitar," Hahn said of Kellogg. "I like playing

'Thanksgiving' by Kellogg I don't play it often because its eight-minutes long, and people get bored of it when they aren't listening to the lyrics.

"I have a set list of songs I play for sure and some that I might play, so I judge if the audience will dig that or not, or like that style of music."

Hahn isn't just a cover artist, he also makes his own music.

"I do write my own songs and will probably play one or two at normal shows," he said. "But at a place like Latitude 42 I will probably play 90 percent originals."

After playing at The Platz in late July, Hahn is looking forward to the return engagement.

"I really liked it, it was a really solid crowd and everyone was having a good time," Hahn said. "It's something about playing outdoors where people seem to enjoy the music more and aren't as confined. It's a nice mixture of small kids with parents, couples, older folks. It's a nice, diverse, crowd."

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