

TANAGERS

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experience where we get a day off of school and can go help the community," Schwasinger said. "We can make it look a lot better than where it's at. It's a good experience for us, picking weeds, and I think the library people really, really appreciate our work."

Then he peered over at the window painters.

"Everyone pretty much made sure they got a painting job and rushed over there and we ended up with this job. It's not that bad...maybe we can get snacks first or something like that."

He was correct about how the library felt about the students' efforts.

"It's good experience for them and the town," Shelly Koller, the library's circulation supervisor said. "They are doing a lot of things here at the library that we don't always get to. I think it's a good thing. We have the retired teachers here and they see the students and feel it's a good thing. They'll ask why are all these kids here and we tell them they are volunteering."

At the middle school, the older Tanagers loved being a part of something special.

"It's the best and really brings Vermillion students together," Kaleb Blue said. "It's mostly the fun of volunteering and helping people out."

Sophia Dudley used to be a middle school student that didn't quite understand the whole process.



RIGHT: Some Vermillion High School students were too busy toiling in the weeds at the Vermillion Library on Wednesday.

ABOVE: And of course some got a chance to have the better job of painting a friendly reminder to all about this week's Homecoming.

Photo By Alan Dale / The Plain Talk

"It's good and fun to do to give back to the community," the junior Dudley said. "People appreciate it."

"I remember (watching the high school kids) and asking 'why aren't they in school?' Now I know. Now I get it."

Pat Anderson, the middle

school principal appreciates the efforts of the high school students.

"It's a chance for our kids to get out in the community, do some good deeds, help some people and become visible," Anderson said. "It sends a good message. Our high school kids

are role models for the younger kids and anytime younger kids seeing older kids do something like this it leaves an impression.

"They still wonder, 'what are they doing out of school?'"



D-DAYS

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South Dakota if not in turn America.

A World War of South Dakotan proportions

I.D. Weeks had already been in the role of President for the University of South Dakota for six years when Pearl Harbor was bombed.

He would survive World War II and many other challenges to become the longest tenured USD president (1935-1966) of 31 years.

What he would witness was a cultural shift on campus as the bombs flew, men left for corridors of war, and American women took their place as the backbone of a nation.

"During the war you had very few men on campus so women did everything," Susan Tuve, Senior Director of Planned Giving and a 1970 USD alum, said. "They were student body presidents, in charge of the annual and the paper. It was pretty true across the country. Some of those women later on became fairly prominent and some of them have given back."

"I remember looking at the annuals and saw how women stepped up."

The war saw American involvement for nearly four years and when it ended the nation gave back.

By creating the G.I. Bill, the United States government would change the direction of a nation for years. The bill was a law that provided a range of benefits for returning World War II http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II_veterans (commonly referred to as G.I.s). Benefits included low-cost mortgages, low-interest loans to start a business, cash payments of tuition and living expenses to attend university, high school or vocational education, as well as one year of unemployment compensation.

"The war defined the period," Current USD President Emeritus Ted Muenster said. "After the war there was a resurgence in the student body because of the GI Bill."

"(The bill) made a difference in the student body because these GIs were coming back and they were much more sophisticated," Tuve said. "They had seen the world, they had survived the world. It gave a different flavor to the campus."

It may have been one of the last times where Americans almost

unanimously support the troops following war. "It was a clear cut victory," "Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq are most likely not going to be clear cut victories. It's hard to deal with it when there isn't victory with a peace."

Despite women taking prominent roles during the war, many settled back into what they knew prior to the war.

"Women proved they could do it and women fell back into their former roles," Tuve said. "It was still harder to see women get ahead. It didn't really start until around the early 60s. It still didn't quite affect the Midwest like it did on the coasts."

"I don't think the charge for women started until later."

During all that time, Weeks became what Muenster called the person who defined the USD campus.

Not only had he overseen the enrollment boom after WWII, he established the school of nursing, oversaw construction of the business school, the Law Library, the Lee Medical Building, and multiple dormitories.

He watched as Dakota Days would survive a period where women at USD would worry about their former classmates' survival abroad than who would take them to a dance.

When the war ended and women had set a tone of such importance that would carry to this day. Dakota Days took on special meaning:

The boys were coming home.

With them they would find many more men wanting to join the party.

While all that was happening, Weeks also watched the rise of two prominent men on the USD campus that would help define the culture at USD once again.

Patterson, Farber: Defining USD men

Robert Patterson became a dean at the USD Business School in 1946 and stepped into the high demands of an increasing enrollment and worked to improve programs available and strengthening the school.

Ultimately the business school was fully accredited five years later.

"He was a hard-nosed, no-nonsense character," Muenster said. "Legend has it - and I didn't experience this personally - but he actively discouraged women from enrolling in business school because he didn't think they had a place in the business

community. He thought they belonged in the home. He was a legendary character."

Tuve said Patterson was a history major that found his way into business.

"I'm not sure how he got into business, but his son would talk about how (Patterson) came out of history (studies)," Tuve, who attended USD in the mid-60s and knew of the former dean, said. "But boy did he run a tight ship. Women could be in business education and take typing and stenography, but the first woman that probably made a difference out of that school graduated in about 1970. It was very difficult for women before that."

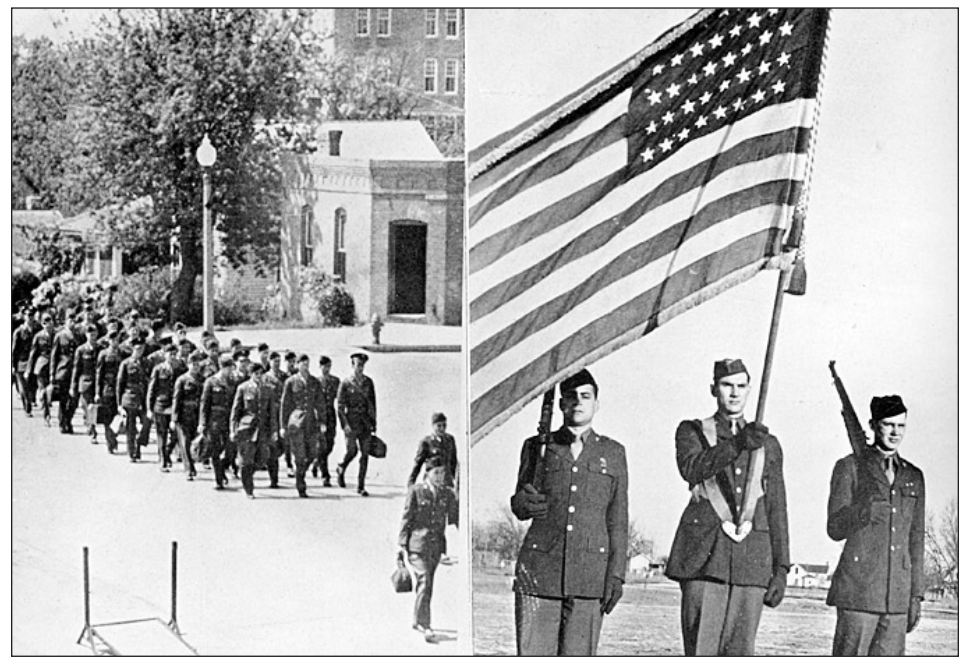
Before Patterson arrived, William O. Farber had already been on the USD campus for a decade.

Farber began his career as a professor of political science at The University of South Dakota (USD) in 1935. He served as chair of the Department of Government (now the Department of Political Science) from 1937 until 1976.

"He was considered Tom Brokaw's mentor," Muenster said of the celebrated news anchor and journalist. "Depending on who you listen to, Farber pulled Brokaw out of a trash can and set him on his career. He would select students from among the student body and guide them into political science. He would extract young men with great potential and they would be called 'Farber Boys' and helped them in political careers."

Farber, a lifelong bachelor, and Patterson had similar views about the roles of women, but most things stopped there.

"They were two rival, power centers on the campus," Muenster said. "Farber would tell someone 'You want to be a dentist? The perfect preparation is political science.' Or he'd say 'You want to be an astro-physicist? The perfect preparation is political science.' He could recruit people with the force of his persistence and personality."



TOP: In times of War. LEFT: In times of marriage.

Photos Courtesy of USD Archives and Special Collections

As students on campus benefitted from both men's roles and significance at USD, the Dakota Days, that survived the times of war and saw homecoming mean something much deeper than during other times before and after, continued to be a landmark time in Vermillion.

After school years were shortened to fill the needs of the wars and being "confused and befuddled" according to Weeks, the campus was brimming with a large population of nontraditional and married students.

Fraternities and dormitories were tuna can stuffed and that would lead to Weeks' moves to expand living arrangements.

But there was nothing that could deter Dakota Days and the added number of students would add to the flavor of the Homecoming festivities.

It became one of the busier seasons of the school year.

More students brought more needs and interests and the Days expanded to fulfill more students' desires to make the event

even bigger. The Greek system grew - a third of the students on campus were affiliated with a fraternity or sorority - while religion began to play a bigger role from the 30s through the 50s.

A growing population brought more attention and even in 1962 the nationally famous Chad Mitchell Trio played the Dakota Day dance.

Even Marilyn Peterson (class of 1966) would be chosen as Miss Vanity Fair in 1963.

USD had survived a war of epic proportions and the early days of the Cold War, to see an increase in student population that brought more texture to Dakota Days.

Students were enjoying

a 'Golden Age' according to KUSD sports announcer Chuck Ruhr over 50 years ago.

Those days would be challenged to maintain its course and the student population would come under threat of a military draft and the growing shadow of Vietnam.

From another war that tore a nation apart, to disco, to Reaganomics, the Dakota Days would carry on.

Read next week to find out how it maintained...

- The Plain Talk would like to thank the University of South Dakota Alumni Association for its assistance in providing needed information regarding the Dakota Days celebration and its history.

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Remembering Rebecca Kroeger

The Plain Talk staff would like to send out its best wishes and support to the family of Volante photographer Rebecca Kroeger. Rebecca passed away recently following a car accident and I happened to meet her this weekend at the USD football game. She came off as a genuinely nice person with a glowing personality. I know she will be missed by many and I for one will miss having had a chance to know her better.

To the Volante staff and the Kroeger family, you both have our total support.

- Alan Dale.