

Aloha To The Arts

Yankton Native Amy Miner Says Hello To YAA Helm

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
nathan.johnson@yankton.net

When Amy Miner decided she was leaving Hawaii and moving back to her hometown of Yankton, she wasn't sure where she would land professionally.

But a possible answer soon appeared to her — an ad was in the newspaper for the Yankton Area Arts executive director position.

"I think this position opened up July 1," Miner said. "It took my breath away when I saw it in the paper."

A mere month later, Miner is at the executive director's desk in the G.A.R. Hall Art Gallery located at 508 Douglas. She succeeds Pam Meylor, who resigned as executive director recently after 2 1/2 years with Yankton Area Arts.

With only a few weeks to go before the Summer Arts Festival that comprises a large part of Yankton's annual Riverboat Days celebration, Miner said that is her main focus — aside from not setting off the burglar alarm at the G.A.R. Hall, she joked.

"I've jumped in head first because the arts festival at Riverboat Days is coming up," Miner said. "I will lend whatever support I can to all the volunteers. Beyond that, I need to assess the organization. I've got some ideas of things I'd like to do with young people in the community and using the arts to help people who are seriously ill."

She left Yankton in 2004 after winning a Bush Fellowship that allowed her to attain a master of Fine Arts degree at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Prior to that, Miner had taught English and directed plays at the Yankton Middle School and high school for 11 years.

"In 2004, I made this transition into being a teaching artist, which has been really fun," she said.

The fellowship also allowed Miner to learn about becoming a community leader.

"The dream since I left is to be able to come back to Yankton and show some leadership in fine arts," she said.

However, the more immediate catalyst for moving back to Yankton after seven years was actually homesickness, Miner admitted.

"How can you not miss Yankton — Tastee Treet, Charlie's Pizza and all those things?" she asked.

Miner also wants to work on a book with her father, Jim Miner, who was a science teacher for many years. During that career, he developed many experiments that could be done at little cost.

"With cuts in education, I thought it might be nice to create some sort of classroom supplement that would show people how to create classroom experiments cheaply," Miner said.

After being back in Yankton for about 10 days, Miner said she has



Amy Miner, a Yankton native, has moved back to the community from Hawaii and has been hired as the executive director for Yankton Area Arts. She is seen here with an Art in Bloom exhibit at the G.A.R. Hall Art Gallery located at 508 Douglas.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

'Art In Bloom' Now On At Gallery

Yankton Area Arts and the Yankton Town and Country Garden Club invite the public to participate in the "Art in Bloom" event running through Saturday at the G.A.R. Hall Art Gallery.

This event highlights the talents of local floral designers and garden enthusiasts who are challenged to create arrangements inspired by the photography featured during the annual Mighty Mo Photo Show.

Yankton Area Arts is hosting an artist reception at 5-7 p.m. tonight (Friday). This event is being partnered with the regular First Friday event and is open to the public.

For additional information, phone Yankton Area Arts at 605-665-9754.

observed some differences between Hawaii and South Dakota beyond the obvious contrast in climate.

"We have lots of signs here (compared to Hawaii)," she stated. "We're very clear and direct here."

And it generally doesn't cost anything to park in South Dakota — another nice benefit.

However, Miner added, "We definitely have 'aloha' in both places."

She said she is flattered to be working for Yankton Area Arts, a nonprofit that aims to integrate art into the daily lives of everyone in the community. It's an organization she has worked with and admired for most her life, Miner said.

"It's really an honor to be at the desk and to be a part of it," she stated. "I've observed it and appreciated the benefits of it for so long."

Miner has never managed a nonprofit operation, but she feels she has the resources she needs to

learn the ropes quickly.

"There is a great support system here. I'm just trying to keep up with it," she said. "YAA has all kinds of plates in the air. Right now, I'm just trying to figure out what all is up there so I don't knock it down. They have a fantastic board of directors that is out and about and maintaining the gallery, running the arts festival and putting out food for Art in Bloom, among other things. I'm doing what I can to help."

The state of the arts in Yankton is good, Miner believes.

"I have always seen the arts community here as thriving in comparison to other communities Yankton's size," she said. "I think the arts in general have taken a hit, particularly arts education, and I would like to see us providing new opportunities to young people in the community."

Lewis, MDA Mum On Reasons For Exit

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Comedian Jerry Lewis and the Muscular Dystrophy Association aren't saying why they're fully parting ways after 45 years and raising more than \$1 billion for the nonprofit through its annual telethon.

But the 85-year-old comedian told reporters last week that he plans to hold a press conference the day after this year's telethon to talk about what he thinks is important. When pressed by a reporter about his role with the telethon, Lewis said: "It's none of your business."

The association announced Wednesday that Lewis was no longer its national chairman and he would not appear on the telethon this year. Candi Cazau, a Las Vegas-based publicist for Lewis, declined comment to The Associated Press on Thursday, saying Lewis was traveling outside Nevada, his home state.

Jim Brown, spokesman for the Tucson, Ariz.-based Muscular Dys-

trophy Association, declined to say what prompted the announcement.

In May, Lewis said in a statement issued through the association that he would make his final appearance on the telethon this year and sing "You'll Never Walk Alone" during a six-hour primetime broadcast scheduled for Sept. 4.

But during a session with reporters last week at a Television Critics Association press tour to promote an upcoming TV documentary, "Method to the Madness of Jerry Lewis," Lewis hinted that his involvement in raising money for muscular dystrophy research wasn't finished.

"Who told you that?" Lewis asked a reporter who asked him how he felt about this year being his last telethon. "I never read it."

Lewis also harshly criticized reality television shows that include heavy involvement from telethon co-hosts Nigel Lythgoe and Alison

Sweeney. Lythgoe is executive producer of "American Idol," which Lewis called a singing competition of "McDonald's wipeouts," while Sweeney hosts weight-loss show "The Biggest Loser."

"You just have to be bad. The business is scrounging around for what to do," Lewis said when asked how comedic actors can become great today. "And the first thing a good comic must do is let them know he hasn't changed."

"He can bring that same veracity and that same performance to a medium that's running around, knocking their brains out trying to see how we beat the fat lady at 375 pounds, and in four months she's going to be 240. Who (cares)," Lewis said. "It's ridiculous."

When asked what he'd have to do to be satisfied with his life, Lewis said: "Get the cure for muscular dystrophy, then I'm fine."



Welcome to the World

The following babies were born at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in July 2011:

Adrianna	Dylan	Jasper	Kellen	Roman
Ashton	Elizah	Jax	Kinley	Rosei
Avery	Ethan	Jaycee	Lane	Sylvie
Braxton	Ethan	Jayden	Lee	Tate
Brooke	Gabriel	Joseph	Logan	Titan
Brooklyn	Gabriella	Kaisley	Mariah	Waylon
Colin	Gracie	Kashus	Marley	Wyatt
Collin	Grayson	Kayle	Nial	Zander
Delia	Jane	Kaymari	Parker	

Avera Sacred Heart Hospital

www.AveraSacredHeart.com

Every baby born at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital goes home with a complimentary child passenger safety seat.