

# Dear Friend, We Will Miss You

BY VAL FARMER  
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*Editor's note: This article offers varied reader reaction to my retirement. If you want to run the companion more "rural" column simultaneously with this column or sequentially in your publication, it may be a good fit. I will be soliciting reader reaction one more time prior to my final column at the end of March. -Val Farmer*

• "Thank you for sharing your talent with me for many years. God has truly blessed you with a wonderful talent. I feel as if I know you and your family. What a blessing you've been to your wife and children.

"These columns have meant so much to me and I know there are many, many other readers that need them as much as I do. You'd have a thick book if you reprinted all your columns. They all have a special place. I'll miss reading your column. I wish you and your family much happiness." - an Illinois reader

• "Oh how I'm going to miss you. I think I am so busy I don't read books like others do - but I never miss a column of yours! It was all interesting and uplifting." - a Minnesota reader.

• "Dear friend, thank you for all the encouragement and time you put into your column. We women needed that - and we will miss it." - a Minnesota reader

• "We will miss your column. I can't recall when I first began to read it back in the eighties. It has kept me sane, helped me raise my family, and addressed many issues we were dealing with." - an Iowa reader

• "I want to wish you the best of everything that retirement has to offer. Congratulations on a job well done. I have been reading your column probably for 28 years. I heard you speak at the Richardton school several years ago. I did not know you are Mormon. (I am Roman Catholic of course.) I really admire the Mormons for their good values in life. At least the few Mormons that I know personally.

"About 15 years ago you devoted one column to your mother. That was so very much like my own dear mother. I made copies of



Val  
**FARMER**

that column and gave it to each of my 12 siblings. Our mother died at age 100 in 2002. Thank you for the good advice, etc.

"God Bless you and yours. Oh yes, the Abbey went out of farming as of Jan. 1, 2012." - Sincerely Bro. Placid Gross, Assumption Abbey, Richardton, ND

• "It is with much sadness that I learned you will soon be retiring your weekly column. I can't tell you how much you have helped me through the years. I often cut out your column so I can refer back to it.

"Particularly the columns on marriage and personal growth have challenged and encouraged me. You seem to articulate some of the problems that my husband and I experience. It helps me to better understand our situation and take positive action to improve our marriage.

"God has used you to help me in so many ways. Regretfully I must say I understand your retirement and wish you the best. We know that everything must end but it's not always easy to accept that reality. Thank you for investing in my life." - A South Dakota reader

• "First of all, I'm depressed that you are retiring (as I'm sure many others are). I don't think you should retire! Why? You still got it. Your articles are insightful, full of wisdom, discernment and great advice!

"You still have much to give! Don't give in to age or that nasty word 'retirement!'" - Austen Schauer, TV news broadcaster in Fargo, ND

• "Just want to congratulate you on your retirement but will miss your very interesting and true to life articles. We will miss your voice but do want to wish you best of luck and enjoy many great days with wife, family and friends traveling and enjoying life." - an Iowa couple

• "I read with mixed feelings your article this weekend. It is wonderful that you have decided to 'retire' and support your wife in her endeavors as she realizes her dreams. However it is very sad for those of us that read your column and have gained so much insight and knowledge from you over the years.

"You have blessed many lives, including mine. May God continue to bless you and your family on the next leg of your journey!" - a South Dakota reader

• "I was sorry to read about you quitting your column. I enjoyed reading it each week in our farm paper. It was the first article I read every week. I used many articles to help raise our children and even have some I clipped out and saved.

"I wish you the very best in the next chapter of your life. Thank you very much for using your talent and helping people." - an Iowa reader

• "I always grab the farm paper and head right for your column. I have a real love/hate relationship with it. I love it because it hits home so often with real issues we face here on the farm. I hate it because I have so many torn out pages stashed in so many places. When I try to thin them occasionally, I can not part with them.

"I wish you, your wife, and family all the best in your next adventures. You will be missed." - an Illinois reader

• "I'm sorry you're leaving for my own selfish reasons. You have guided me thru difficult situations. Your column has probably saved my 50 year marriage. I tell my kids that when I die, and they go thru my 'stuff' they can read the Val Farmer columns I saved. God bless and thank you." - a North Dakota reader

Val Farmer has archived his columns on his website at [www.valfarmer.com](http://www.valfarmer.com).

*Val Farmer is a clinical psychologist specializing in family business consultation and mediation with farm families. He lives in Wildwood, Missouri and can be contacted through his website.*

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## BAMAAR Students Of The Month Announced

Four Yankton High School seniors, Ty Soulek, Adisa Formo, Sarah Ekeren and Andrew Adam, were recognized as BAMAAR Students of the Month during the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year.

The award, which received the name BAMAAR because it is sponsored by the building association, manufacturers association and area retailers, was first presented during the 2008-2009 school year. It recognizes outstanding students enrolled in Career and Technical Education classes at YHS and is awarded by Yankton High School in conjunction with the Regional Technical Education Center (RTEC).

Soulek was nominated by Bob Muth, his Building Trades instructor. "Ty shows great interest in everything he is doing," Muth commented. "He is a great leader and shows it by helping others."

Formo, who hopes to pursue cosmetology, is the daughter of Bob and Pat Formo of Yankton. She was nominated by Ryan Hage, her World of Work instructor, because she is a hard worker who puts forth excellent effort and has a great attitude. "Adisa is a quiet and reserved young lady, but one that I believe has goals set high for herself," Hage said. "The high expectations that Adisa has for herself have enabled her to excel in the classroom and graduate at the end of the first semester."

Ekeren, who would like to study elementary education, is

the daughter of Kristi and Dave Ekeren of Yankton. She also was nominated by Hage, her World of Work instructor. "Sarah is a fantastic young lady. She excels in the classroom and on the court," Hage said. "Sarah is eager to learn and leads by example."

Adam, the son of Roland and Susan Adam of Yankton, is planning to pursue studies in industrial maintenance technology. He was nominated for the award by Robert Evans, his instructor for an Industrial Manufacturing and Fabrication course. "Andrew completed all of his first quarter projects in six weeks and also completed three major additional projects," Evans said. "He has proven to be an excellent leader and role model who works hard every day and provides focus for his fellow students."

Students who are enrolled in CTE classes at YHS are eligible for the BAMAAR Student of the Month awards and can be nominated by their CTE instructors. A panel selects up to two monthly winners throughout the school year. Soulek and Formo were chosen winners for the month of October while Ekeren and Adam were selected for November.

For being named BAMAAR Students of the Month, the students received T-shirts, certificates and other prizes donated by local businesses. A recognition ceremony later this spring will honor all of the monthly winners as well as announce the BAMAAR Student(s) of the Year.



YHS Principal Dr. Wayne Kindle, left, and RTEC General Manager, Josh Svatos, right, award certificates to the October 2011 BAMAAR Students of the Month, Ty Soulek and Adisa Formo.



Sarah Ekeren and Andrew Adam were recognized as the November 2011 BAMAAR Students of the Month. They are pictured with YHS Principal Dr. Wayne Kindle, left, and RTEC General Manager Josh Svatos, right.

## Nominees Sought For 2012 SDNA Eagle Award

BROOKINGS — The South Dakota Newspaper Association is accepting nominees for the 2012 SDNA Eagle Award. Established in 2002, this award is given to recognize an individual, group or organization that has demonstrated outstanding efforts to protect and enhance openness in government.

"This award champions those who truly believe in open government," said Maricarol Kueter, chair of the SDNA First Amendment Committee and executive editor, Argus Leader Media, Sioux Falls. "We've honored judges, county commissioners, state officials and private citizens over the years. What they share is a belief that the activities of government at all levels should be open to the public."

The free flow of information between government and the people, commonly referred to as "the people's right to know," is central to the principle of democracy and includes access to government proceedings and records.

The first SDNA Eagle Award was given to the 2001 South Dakota Supreme Court for its efforts helping open the Supreme Court to media cameras starting in August 2001.

Recipients of SDNA Eagle Award also include Mitchell School Board member Rodney

Hall (2003), South Dakota States Attorney Larry Long (2004), Yankton County Commissioner Brian Hunhoff (2005), Codington County State's Attorney Vince Foley (2006), state Sen. Jason Gant and the staff of the South Dakota State University Collegian (2007), state Sen. Nancy Turbak Berry (2008), state Sen. Dave Knudson (2009) and Sioux Falls

resident Gordon Heber (2010).

Any individual, group or organization who had demonstrated commitment to the ideals of open government in South Dakota is eligible to be nominated.

Nominations for the 2012 SDNA Eagle Award should be submitted in writing and sent to: SDNA Eagle Award, South Dakota

Newspaper Association, 1125 32nd Ave., Brookings, SD 57006. The deadline for nominations is March 1.

Contact SDNA General Manager David Bordewyk for more information. The award will be presented during the 130th annual SDNA convention April 27-28 at Cedar Shore Resort, Oacoma.

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### Visiting Hours

## The Dangers Of Exposing Children To Excessive Noise

Feb. Is Kids Ear, Nose And Throat Month

PRESENTED BY CRYSTAL B. DVO-  
RAK, B.S., MATTHEW D. RUMSEY,  
AU.D., JEFF LIUDAH, M.D. AND  
DAVID WAGNER, M.D.

Avera Yankton Ear, Nose and Throat  
Physicians and Audiologists



The world is a very noisy place. Many of the noises in our world are helpful. Some noises allow us to engage in conversations, enjoy music and avoid dangerous situations. Other noises can be harmful if they are excessively loud or if we listen to loud noise for too long. Noise induced hearing loss is the most common cause of hearing loss which affects people of all ages. Most noise induced hearing loss occurs gradually, which makes it more difficult to notice.

A recent survey revealed that approximately 13 percent of children ages 6 to 19 have permanent damage to their ears caused by exposure to loud noises. The same survey showed that approximately 16 percent of adolescents ages 12 to 19 have some permanent hearing loss in one or both ears from noise exposure. These numbers have risen in recent years, but the good news is this type of hearing loss is 100 percent preventable.

Children of all ages can be exposed to excessive noise in their everyday lives. This noise can come from almost anything: toys, mp3 players, farm equipment. It is the role of parents to help identify the sources of loud sounds that can contribute to hearing loss and try to reduce exposure to those sounds or reduce the sounds to safe levels. Parents can also help their children by being good role models on how to protect their hearing. If hearing and the use of hearing protection are important to a parent, it will be important to their children, as well.

Toys for very young children are often noisy. Unfortunately, toy companies are not required to keep toy noise at safe levels. A toy might be perfectly safe when it is used appropriately, but we all know kids like to be creative with the way they play with toys. For example, a whistle blown appropriately would not likely cause immediate harm, but a whistle blown loudly in a sibling's ear has the potential of causing irreversible hearing loss.

The Sight and Hearing Association publishes a list of the noisiest toys each year ([www.sightandhearing.org](http://www.sightandhearing.org)). Each year they find popular toys for young children sold in this country which are louder

than chain saws. Some of these toys can begin causing damage after just 15 minutes of play. Many parents have a false sense of safety because they assume harmful toys are not permitted to be sold in this country.

As children grow older, their risk of damaging their hearing comes from different sources. One of the most prevalent causes of hearing loss for children through young adults is the use of iPods or mp3 players. Maximum sound levels of personal music devices are estimated to be between 100 and 115 decibels which is extremely harmful to listeners. Other dangers include video games, firearm exposure and concerts.

When encountering excessive noise, there are three options to protect our hearing and the hearing of our children:

1. Walk Away – Simple enough. Remove yourself from the source of noise or at least increase the distance between yourself and the noise. (An example would be to sit further back at a concert. Never stand near the speakers.)

2. Turn It Down – Turn the volume down. (This is effective for music, television, radio, video games, etc.)

3. Protect Yourself – Earplugs, earmuffs or even custom earmolds can all offer protection when used properly. (This is best used for noises without adjustable volume such as mowing the lawn, hunting, tree trimming, etc.)

Avera Yankton Ear, Nose and Throat is celebrating Kids Ear, Nose and Throat Month, an annual national public information campaign, by offering Free Hearing Screenings for school aged children scheduled in February. For more information on kid's ear, nose and throat health, contact Avera Yankton Ear, Nose and Throat at (605) 665-6820 or visit our website at [www.averayanktonent.com](http://www.averayanktonent.com) or the AAO-HNS website at [www.entnet.org/kidsent](http://www.entnet.org/kidsent).

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