

KIDS FOR KIDS



COURTESY PHOTO
The fourth grade Sunday School class at Trinity Lutheran Church collected donations for the Sack Pack Program and donated them to Jill Wermers of the Sack Pack Program.

CASA LEADERS



COURTESY PHOTO
First Circuit Court Judge Glen W. Eng administered an oath to Randy Tramp and Nancy Saunders, authorizing them as Court-Appointed Special Advocates for the Southeast CASA Program serving Yankton County. Highly-trained CASA volunteers are appointed by judges to advocate for the children who have been abused or neglected and are involved in the foster care and family court systems. CASA volunteers ensure that the rights and essential needs of these children are met and that their voice is heard, enabling them to have a brighter future. Southeast CASA is a volunteer-powered network of committed people from all walks of life who believe that every child has the right to be treated with dignity, to be safe, and to thrive in the embrace of a loving family. If you are interested in becoming a CASA volunteer, please email the Southeast CASA Office at: contactus@southeastcasa.org.

MEETING MINUTES

OUTLAW TRAIL SCENIC BYWAY

The Outlaw Trail Scenic Byway held their January meeting via teleconference on Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2012. Members taking part were Sally Snowe, Marita Placek, Mary Rose, Angie Fritz, Al Brock, and Larry Halstead.

Meeting called to order at 10:03 a.m. The November minutes and treasurer's reports were not available. Will be sent to members via email. Bills were presented and approved for payment.

Committee reports were given by: Sally — membership, Doc Middleton trail ride by Al Brock, and Dave Nissen.

Old business: Marita gave report on book, "Legends and Lore of the Outlaw Trail" — the book now had a page on the Outlaw Trail website. Mary Rose report on website changes, Outlaw Trail brochures, and the quiltway.

New business: Sending brochures and workers to 2012 Travel and Trade shows, and free booth at the Nebraska State Fair. Volunteers needed. Tabled until the February meeting.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, Feb. 15, at Butte. Other dates are March 21 - teleconference, and April 18 at Lynch - annual meeting and election of officers.

TOASTMASTERS CLUB 1294

Yankton Toastmasters Club 1294 met at the Fryn' Pan Restaurant on Saturday, Jan. 21, 2012. Club President John Swensen called the meeting to order and asked Harry Voelzke to give the invocation and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Swensen then asked Matt Stone to introduce his guest Jena Lane.

Doug Fickbohm served as Toastmaster of the meeting and called on grammarian Matt Stone to present the word of the day "Remora." Mike Arens gave a manual speech entitled "Coach" and Steve Hamilton gave an impromptu speech on the 2012 elections. After the speeches, table topics were lead by Jeremy Skrenes who called on members at large to answer questions on a variety of topics.

The evaluation portion of the meeting was lead by master evaluator Vernon Arens who asked Kevin Buhl to evaluate Mike Arens and Tara Arens to evaluate Steve Hamilton and then presented his evaluation of the meeting in general.

Other functionaries at the meeting were Roy Wilcox as timer, John Swensen as ah counter, Harry Voelzke as vote counter, and Joy Winther as joke master. Trophies were awarded to Steve Hamilton for best speaker, Joy Winther for best table topics' response, and Tara Arens and Kevin Buhl tied for best speech evaluator.

Yankton Toastmasters Club 1294 meets each Saturday from 7:30-8:40 a.m. at the Fryn' Pan Restaurant and guests are always welcome to attend a meeting. For information about Toastmasters, call 665-1523 or 660-3904.

TOASTMASTERS CLUB 6217

Susan Fiebelkorn was welcomed by Toastmaster Jane Miller and the members of Toastmasters Club 6217. Miller called to order the Jan. 19 noon meeting in the Benedicline Center.

General Evaluator Kary Belk read the duty roster for the day with Tim Bohn as counter of the unneeded pauses, Greg Stach as speech timer, and Eric Taylor leading the invocation.

Unusual and interesting phrases were recorded by Grammarian Fran Kocer. Kocer introduced the word of the day "prodigious".

Table Topics Master, Sheryl Schwartz, questioned Taylor, David and Susan Fiebelkorn, Eileen O'Connor, Greg and Muriel Stach, Taylor O'Bryan and Jen Hovland on presentation methods. The impromptu questions centered on best practices to create interest and be informative when lecturing. Hovland received the Best Respondent award.

Schwartz announced part of the agenda for the upcoming executive meeting with topics ranging from educational materials, "pin" contest, and relaying minutes to officer training ideas.

LILLEHAMMER LODGE #1-633
SONS OF NORWAY

Jan. 21, 2012 the Lillehammer Lodge #1-633 of the Yankton area met at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Yankton. The meeting was opened by President, Carol Broderson leading the group in the national anthems of the United States and Norway accompanied by Esther Knutson and also the flag pledge of Allegiance of the United States of America.

Diane Reese read the minutes of the last meeting and these were approved.

The Treasurer's report by Clarice Holm, was given and approved.

Information about an ad to be placed in the souvenir convention book was discussed and declined.

Ashley Oien, Irene, SD, presented an excellent program based on her 8 weeks of summer spent in Japan through a program called "Youth for Understanding." She gave her talk in a traditional Japanese kimono and held the interest of the members throughout her talk. Ashley told of the vast amount of paperwork needed to complete the application to qualify, and later needed to complete a 3 day training in California before traveling to Japan. She described their family routines, school experiences (including getting lost on the way to school), and travel experiences. The family she stayed with were potato farmers and Ashley told of the various foods she tried.

John Grindvold led the Norwegian table prayer, the birthday names were read and lunch was then served.

Carlson Faces Scoliosis Head-On

BY DAVID LIAS
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VERMILLION—It takes a lot of backbone to face one's fears and meet them head-on, rather than letting them define you.

It's a lesson that Bailey Carlson, 18, has learned firsthand in her rather brief life. It's a lesson that her teammates on the Vermillion High School girls basketball varsity squad can't help but understand.

She teaches them something a bit new every day. All her teammates must do is simply watch the way she has chosen to live her life.

It would be easy, one could argue, for Bailey, the daughter of Kelly Saunders and stepdaughter of Bill Saunders of Vermillion, to choose to avoid participating in athletics altogether, to sit out her senior year at VHS and watch her teammates from the bench — for good reason.

When she's not on the basketball court during a varsity game, Bailey, a 5-foot 9-inch guard for the Lady Tanagers, sits ramrod straight on the bench — for good reason.

Bailey decided three years ago that the constant pain — and the prospect of perhaps eventually being unable to participate in any sports — was just too much to bear.

She decided to undergo major surgery to correct the scoliosis that was curving her back and limiting her ability to participate in the activities she loved the most.

Today, two metal rods inserted in her back have corrected most of the curvature in her spine. Part of her back was fused together in the process of correcting the scoliosis, limiting her movement and pushing some sports off limits.

She's had to say goodbye to volleyball, and soccer. High school golfers are required to carry their clubs, and her back won't allow that. Bailey has hung up her cross-country shoes.

She remains passionate about basketball, however — a sport she's been participating in for most of her life.

"I started playing basketball in fourth grade when we put a traveling team together," Bailey said, "and I've played all four years of high school."

While a seventh-grader and participating in cross-country, she began to discover that her main challenge on the track wasn't her fellow competitors.

"Obviously, you run a lot," Bailey said, "and after the races I'd tell my mom how I was experiencing so much pain, but I didn't know what it was. My step-dad is a chiropractor, and so he kind of knew that this was coming, because he would work on my back when I would have pain. He diagnosed me as having scoliosis."

"During my eighth grade year, when it kept hurting and I wasn't able to do as much as I could normally, I went to see doctors in New York," she said. "They did an X-ray, and that's when my back started looking like an 'S'."

One source of the pain was the added pressure her curving back was causing on her lungs. Simply inhaling enough air while competing in sports was becoming a challenge.

Specialists discovered that the curve in her spine was 56 degrees in her upper back and over 20 degrees in her lower back.

The New York doctors sent Bailey home with a back brace that she wore all during her freshman year at VHS. "I played basketball that year, too — I didn't play with the brace on; you had to wear it 22 out of 24 hours each day. Coach (Nick) Mayer, who is now our varsity coach, was our freshman coach that year. He knew I was going through that pain, and he played me, but I had to come out for many breaks. And that's when I told my mom that it was time."

Bailey's parents took her to see a back specialist in Sioux Falls. New tests revealed the curve in her spine was worsening, and had grown to 70 degrees in her upper back and 56 degrees in her lower back.

"I watched this happening the whole time, and it's pretty frustrating when you can't do a whole lot about it," Bill said.

In May 2009, Bill and Kelly took their daughter to the Twins Cities Spine Center in Minneapolis, MN, to undergo the needed surgery.

Without the surgery, "she could have functioned, but she would have been in a lot more pain," Bill said. "From a pain standpoint, it was putting such a strain on her body that when she would do any activity, she couldn't hold out very long because her muscles were so weak and in different proportions than the rest of



BY DAVID LIAS/VERMILLION PLAIN TALK
Bailey Carlson shows backbone and fortitude every time she steps on the court.

us. Her body mechanics were causing her too much pain."

The surgery was a difficult ordeal for the entire family.

"Just watching my wife deal with it all — I didn't think she would make it," he said. "I remember the trip going up to Minneapolis. We had time to go out to a restaurant for one last meal together. We just said to her 'where do you want to eat?' and I can't even imagine what was going through the kid's mind at the time."

Surgeons used portions of bone they clipped from Bailey's vertebrae to fuse part of her spine together. "The back is all twisted, so they take these two rods, and with some screws and some clips, they actually pulled part of her vertebrae over — almost like a hand pulling the spine together — and then they tie it in with these two rods," Bill said. "The bone they clipped off is basically used as a glue, and the bone actually ends up forming more bone."

When Bailey returned home, her brother immediately noticed one significant change caused by the surgery. She was three inches taller.

"He just looked at me and went, 'Whoa,'" Bailey said with a grin.

During the summer of 2009, she couldn't participate in basketball camps and could only watch her friends play. "That was kind of hard, to just watch," Bailey said, "and the doctors said you have to have six months of recovery, so I missed my sophomore year of volleyball."

As her recovery progressed that year, she began dribbling a basketball on a court while taking lessons from Coach Chad Lavin. "That's what got me started in basketball once again."

She was able to resume playing basketball competitively for the Tanagers while a sophomore.

"It was a little scary. When we started out practicing that year, I was a little timid. They could tell.

But, I stayed more outside, so I wouldn't get bumped into as much," Bailey said. "It was a little hard, but I just kept icing and heating (my back) and keep my muscles so they wouldn't get so tight."

One source of Bailey's growing confidence during her high school years has been the insight she's received from others who have undergone similar health challenges.

"I received an email from a woman who is 33 now, and she said, 'I had this surgery, too, but I was too scared to go out for sports.'"

"I was nervous, too, but I love basketball, so I told my coaches I was going to come back. There was a chance that I couldn't have, but I practiced a lot and worked a lot in the gym to catch up."

Mayer, now head coach of the Tanagers girls team, is more than happy with Bailey's decision to press on.

"It's been nothing but a positive approach on her part," he said. "She's got a great attitude, and this was obviously a life-changing surgery for her, but she really has put a positive spin on it. She said she'd be back after rehab, and that she would be taller."

"That attitude right there really separates Bailey from a lot of people," Nick said. "That constant, positive attitude, and the idea that she wasn't going to let her back problems and surgery stop her from doing what she loves to do, which is compete. She's a great competitor, and she does a lot of great things for us. She has really overcome insurmountable odds to be able to be where she's at today."

"I have restrictions, because my back is fused," Bailey said. "I can't twist as much as others, or go after the ball as much. I can move my lower back, but the whole top is fused, so it's a little hard to twist."

"She has the most perfect posture now," her step dad said. "Even when I get in her car, her seat is so straight — you know how most of us are slouchy — but hers is perfectly straight but she doesn't know any better because that's just the way she is."

"When you compare before the surgery to after her surgery, her options were limited before," Bill said. "She was in pain until after she had the surgery. And she likes basketball, and she's definitely worked hard at it."

"She can do just about anything that anyone else can do now, except she's not supposed to skydive," he said, laughing, adding there are certain twisting actions that she can't perform while on the basketball court.

She makes up for physical limitations caused by the surgery with sheer determination.

"I can't imagine the pain she was going through right after her recovery, with those two rods in her back," Nick said. "And she never complained about it. She always has a positive attitude. It just shows what kind of kid she is."

Plus, she's a valuable member of the team roster.

"She's always been a good shooter; even before the surgery, she could shoot the ball," Nick said. "She just continues to work on her game. Defensively, she has improved a lot, and she moves so well without the basketball. She's a very savvy player, she understands the game — she does a nice job of getting her teammates open and looking for her open shot."

"Most of those things you can't teach — you've either got it, or you don't, and she's got it," he said.

Bailey said she loves being part of a team sport, and the performance of the Tanagers in her final season of high school basketball has made the experience particularly rewarding.

"It's fun to see what we can do, and this season has been incredible," she said Monday. "We've only lost one game, and it was a close one, too, against Parkston. It came down to the wire."

Bailey said she is willing to reach out and communicate with people who must face the same challenges she has. "I'd be happy to talk to anyone, because people talked with me who went through the surgery, too, and I contacted them, and they helped me get through it. They told me what was coming — they wouldn't lie to me — and my mom talked to other moms who went through it."

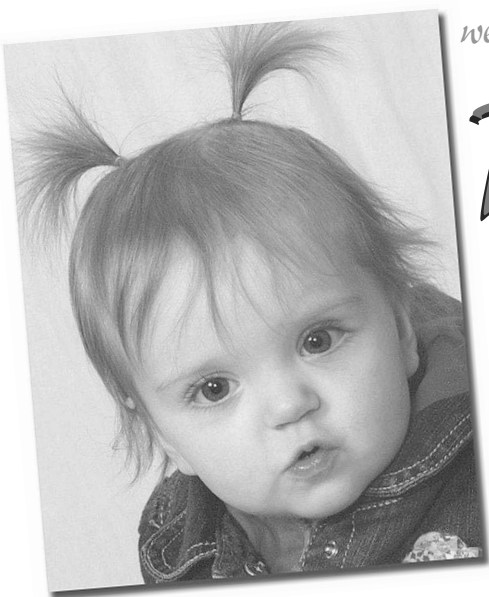
"They weren't easy on her, too," she said. "They told her what was coming."

Bailey admits that pursuing athletics has remained a challenge, and at times, it's been a discouraging pursuit.

"It's hard. Some days I just want to quit, because it hurts," she said. "But there's still something inside of me that doesn't want to."

Young girls facing the challenges of scoliosis may reach out to Bailey. Email her at Bailey.Carlson@hotmail.com.

Attention Parents, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Godparents & Friends



we are featuring our annual ...
Beautiful Baby Contest 2012

In print and online on
Wednesday, February 22
Only this time our online readers will determine the winners!

If you or someone you know has a beautiful child, we would love to include them in our feature and they might even have a chance to win prizes from local businesses and a framed winners print!

To enter, simply log online by going to:
<http://play2win.upickem.net/>

Register to submit your photos: 1 entry per email address

Upload your photo to one of the following categories:

0-6 months • 7-12 months • 13 months-2 years • 3-4 years

You have until February 3rd to submit your photos. They will then be voted on by the public. You can help promote your child to win through Facebook and email! People will be able to vote once per day per registered email address. Voting will take place from February 4th-19th. Winning photos will be published in the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan on February 22nd. First place winners will receive a framed winners print and gift certificates to local businesses. Employees and family members of Yankton Media Inc. and any of its subsidiaries are ineligible to win. Your online submission authorizes the publication of this photo in this contest in print and online at <http://www.yankton.net> and <http://play2win.upickem.net>



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