

Cultural Impacts On Rural Communities

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

Every community, whether rural or urban, has residents who are the cultural backbone of their communities. Cultural leaders are probably more apparent in rural communities where geographical isolation occurs, but there is common agreement in nearly all communities about who "sets the tone" of their social environment.

Culture has many meanings. The Webster's Unabridged Dictionary definition is appropriate for this article: "the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic or age group." Sometimes the persons who are most representative of the culture of a community are not necessarily elected leaders, other persons in positions of authority or the most famous citizens of the community. The cultural icons of the community are usually those who are most esteemed.

Generally, these are the persons whose approval is most sought. They are popular and considered "cool." People in the community, especially younger persons looking for role models, emulate their actions. They are the persons whom candidates for elected positions want to reach to influence voters' opinions.

"Keepers of the Culture" is a useful term to describe the cultural leaders of communities. They tend to be most important in determining what is acceptable and not acceptable within the standards of their community.

For example, parents providing beer or wine to minors in their homes is considered to be encouraging delinquency of minors by some communities but acceptable in other communities where consumption of alcohol is part of daily dinner. What is considered beneficial or detrimental depends on one's point of view.

What is considered culturally acceptable behavior for most rural communities? Dr. David "Scotty" Hargrove, Professor Emeritus at the University of Mississippi and former Chair of the Department of Psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said the characteristics of personal and family living are substantially different in rural areas and are particularly apparent in our health behaviors.

Findings reported in recent editions of The Health United States, Urban and Rural Chartbook, which is an annual survey that compares rural and urban residents on health indicators in four regions of the U.S., confirm Hargrove's pronouncement. In comparison to urban residents, rural residents more frequently undertake risky behaviors, like using tobacco products, binge drinking, not having health insurance, and not seeking healthcare services when needed.

Some of these health risks stem from rural people being poorer than urban people as a whole, as well as from having reduced access to healthcare. The prevailing attitude of

many rural residents to "tough it out" and keep one's problems to oneself also significantly contributes to health risks.

This attitude is particularly apparent about behavioral health issues. Many rural residents, especially males, do not like to talk about their emotional vulnerabilities.

It is not commonly acceptable for rural men gathered in coffee shops, bars, or other social groups to talk about personal insecurities. It is more acceptable for rural women to reveal their personal concerns to other women in social circles.

Past generations of rural women often gathered in monthly or more frequent club meetings, sewing circles or other social gatherings where they openly discussed personal concerns and obtained emotional support from their friends. The cultural leaders of these groups made it acceptable for women to talk about their emotional matters.

Talking freely about important personal matters, including emotional health, probably contributes to women having a lower rate of self-imposed death than men.

Overall, men in the U.S. take their own lives four times as frequently as women undertake suicide, according to a 2002 analysis by Drs. Gopal Singh and Mohammed Shiahpush in the American Journal of Public Health that examined the suicide rate for every county in the U.S. from 1970 to 1997. The rates of self-imposed death have changed little since then.

Singh and Shiahpush also found that males in rural areas are about 60 percent more likely to end their own lives than men who do not live in rural areas. The cultural norm among rural men about keeping a stiff upper lip even when unhappy probably contributes to this heightened risk for suicide.

Cultural norms change slowly. It is appropriate for rural males to reach out for help when needed, even from among male colleagues.

One way to change the cultural norms regarding help-seeking is integrating health topics into agriculture courses in rural high schools and in agricultural college curricula so that future "keepers of the culture" in rural communities establish beneficial practices that remove the negative stigma about seeking healthcare when needed, including behavioral healthcare.

Another way to change the prevailing cultural norm is for rural men who know they are keepers of the culture to model to their colleagues that it is okay to talk frankly about the topic of suicide and seeking help.

It is not "sissy" to reveal self-doubts and insecurities. It is a sign of good judgment and personal strength to seek help when needed.

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Dr. Mike ROSMANN

Visiting Hours

There Is So Much 'Good' To Be Done

BY CARLA HUMMEL, CAVS
Avera Sacred Heart Hospital

Volunteering is a great way to do "good", spread happiness around and to share the gifts God has given us. The best way to select your volunteering experience is by taking a look at what you are passionate about.

Do you have a passion for history? Our long-term care residents have lived it and are willing to share it. What better way to appreciate and be a part of retaining this history than by helping document it.

Passionate about plants and/or animals?

Through the Eden program, that helps our care centers provide a more homelike environment for our residents, we have pets and plants and can always use an extra hand. Love gardening - hard to believe with how cold it is outside, but it won't be long and the spring season will be here along with time for planting, tending, and end of the season clean up.

Are you bursting with hospitality? We have several areas available to welcome patients and visitors. Greeting, giving directions, and sometimes

even walking patients and visitors to their destination can be very reassuring and can help relieve fears. Whether it's in the hospital lobby, Benedictine Center lobby, Professional Office Pavilion lobby, or in the Surgery or Same Day Surgery waiting rooms, it is reassuring to know a volunteer is nearby to comfort family and friends.

Do you love games? Bingo is a favorite and played often at Avera Sister James Care Center (ASJCC) and Avera Yankton Care Center (AYCC). The fun is in the game, but the true joy is in seeing how much the residents enjoy it.

Love to read? Or help with crafts? Adult Day Services would love to have you read the paper to residents or help them prepare for projects.

Can't get enough of shopping? Help our residents on a shopping trip — they will love you for it!

Does your coffee crew meet every afternoon at the same time?

Maybe once a week your "crew" could have coffee with the Avera Sister James or Avera Yankton Care Center residents. Help with the coffee and stay to visit. You could even assist during meal time. There are just so many ways to do "Good."

Just plain love to help people?

The TEAM volunteers answer calls throughout the hospital. They assist patients, visitors and staff. We can always use more legs to help shorten the distances between service areas. The company isn't too bad either.

Something else to think about when deciding to volunteer, find an organization with common values and mission. If you believe in making a positive impact in the lives and health of others through quality services guided by Christian values including compassion, hospitality and stewardship, then come and join us — share your passion!

And if I may end with my favorite quote:

Do all the good you can.
By all the means you can.
In all the ways you can.
At all the times you can.
To all the people you can.
As long as ever you can.
John Wesley.

If you're interested in sharing your passion, doing good for others, and/or want to make a positive impact on the lives of others, please contact Carla Hummel at 605-668-8104 or chummel@avera.org.

SD FFA Recognizes Top Leaders At State

BROOKINGS — The South Dakota FFA Association hosted 512 FFA members from across South Dakota at the 2013 State FFA Leadership Career Development Events on Dec. 8-9 in Pierre.

These FFA members advanced to the state level competition by placing first or second at their district competitions. At the State Leadership Career Development Events, members and chapters were recognized for their success in 11 leadership areas. Winning teams and individuals advance to compete in their Career Development Event areas at the National FFA Convention in Louisville, Kentucky next fall. Paul Dybedahl, 2011-2012 State FFA President, addressed FFA members at the awards luncheon Monday afternoon.

Parliamentary Procedure teams, consisting of seven members per team, demonstrate an FFA business meeting. Our state sponsor is South Dakota Farmers Union, and the national level sponsor is TransCanada. The state level team travel scholarship is sponsored by Monte and Ruth Mason and Brett and Tracy Kaltvedt. The team results are as follows: GOLD — Highmore; SILVER — Lennox-Sundstrom; SILVER — DeSmet; BRONZE — Willow Lake; BRONZE — Clark

The All-State Parliamentary Procedure Team is comprised of the top individual officer from each position. These competitors are the best-of-the-best in their respective position. This area is sponsored by Skinner Financial Services. Those selected are: President — McKenzie Zilverberg, Highmore; Vice President — Andrea Schubloom, De Smet; Secretary — Hayden Houdek, Highmore; Treasurer — Ben Peterson, Highmore; Reporter — Jane Hervi, Willow Lake; Sentinel — Grant Sweeter, Lennox-Sundstrom; Student Advisor — Tristan Ashdown, Highmore

In Prepared Public Speaking, each contestant presents a 6-8 minute agriculture-oriented speech and answers five minutes of related questions. The event and travel scholarship are sponsored by Hetty Seed Company. The national level sponsor is Monsanto. The results were: GOLD — Kierra Leddy, Milbank; GOLD — Haley Boyer, Alcester-Hudson; SILVER — Abby Hora,

Viborg-Hurley; SILVER — Cooper Eliason, Howard; SILVER — Kaley Nolz, Mitchell; BRONZE — Makayla Mathison, Wilmot; BRONZE — Logan Hoffman, Bridgewater-Emery; BRONZE — Sarah McClure, Hoven

In Extemporaneous Public Speaking, an unrehearsed 4-6 minute speech is written and presented on-site. Each contestant is allowed only 30 minutes to prepare. Our state level and travel scholarship sponsor is the South Dakota Farm Bureau. The national level sponsor is the American Farm Bureau Federation. Results were as follows: GOLD — Shelby Riggs, Mitchell; GOLD — Emily Pilatzki, Milbank; SILVER — Jacob Erickson, Milbank; SILVER — Nick Young, Clark; SILVER — Nicole Hamilton, Hitchcock-Tulare; BRONZE — Andrew Streff, McCook Central; BRONZE — Chase Wallace, Harrisburg; BRONZE — Jacyllyn Knutson, Viborg-Hurley

Job Interview challenges FFA members to complete a job application, write a letter of application, participate in an actual interview and compose a follow-up letter. Our sponsor is the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and the national sponsor is CSX Transportation. The winning person travel scholarship is sponsored by Kindra Gordon and Three Corners Agency, Inc. — Melissa Stearns, Agent. The results were: GOLD — Peyton DeJong, Philip; GOLD — Rachel Schartz, West Central; SILVER — Kaden Eisenbraun, Wall; SILVER — Tara Heuer, Hoven; SILVER — Jordanne Howe, Redfield; BRONZE — Sara Waldner, West Central; BRONZE — Bailey Zueber, Hoven; BRONZE — Lisa Smith, Kimball

Ag Sales team members work together to develop a strategy for selling pre-determined products to specific customer scenarios. Partici-

pants also practice their individual sales skills by selling an agricultural product to a customer. This event is sponsored by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture. The winning travel scholarship is sponsored by Eastern Farmers Cooperative. The national level sponsor is Monsanto. The results were:

Individuals: GOLD — Tate Ketelhut, Miller; GOLD — Alex Trautman, Rapid City; SILVER — Bailey Zerfoss, Wolsey-Wessington; SILVER — Jim Ellsworth, Chamberlain; SILVER — Brandon Houska, Chamberlain; BRONZE — Hunter Johnson, Rapid City; BRONZE — Adam Eichacker, McCook; BRONZE — Sidney Carey, Wolsey-Wessington and Chelsey Langbehn, Wolsey-Wessington (tie)

Teams: GOLD — Philip; SILVER — Mitchell; SILVER — Garretson; BRONZE — Sioux Valley; BRONZE — Watertown

The Junior Conduct of Meetings event is designed for high school freshmen to present a mock FFA meeting. This event is sponsored by Gary Bachman, Prairie Appraisal Service of Bowdle. The team results were: GOLD — McCook Central; SILVER — Highmore; SILVER — Lennox-Sundstrom; BRONZE — Harrisburg; BRONZE — Garretson

In Marketing Plan, teams

of students determine a local community need and create a complete strategy for marketing a new agricultural product or company to fill that need. The sponsor is Legend Seeds, Inc., and the state winning team travel scholarship is sponsored by Hurler and Associates. The national level sponsors are Bunge North America and Kerry Ingredients and Flavours. The results are: GOLD — Lennox-Sundstrom; SILVER — Mitchell; SILVER — Garretson; BRONZE — West Central; BRONZE — McCook Central

In Ag Issues, a team of 3-7 students discuss the pros and cons of a major agricultural issue facing their area. The event is sponsored by South Dakota Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers, and the state winning team travel scholarship is sponsored by Dakota Risk Management. This event is sponsored nationally by Elanco. The results were: GOLD — Lennox-Sundstrom; SILVER — Newell; SILVER — Milbank; BRONZE — Deubrook; BRONZE — Viborg-Hurley and Howard (tie)

In Ag Broadcasting/Journalism, students have 30 minutes to prepare a five-minute agricultural radio newscast and then "air" it. This event is sponsored by Ludens Implement. Results were: GOLD — Cassie Binger, Hitchcock-Tulare; GOLD — John Begeman, Selby; SILVER — Jenna Skinner, Mitchell; SILVER — Sydney Arneson, Bison; SILVER — Alissa Krause, Deuel; BRONZE — Joshua Liestner, Garretson; BRONZE — Derrick Elsingher, Brookings; BRONZE — Tia Powlowski, Miller

In Ag Communications, teams of students play the role of communications consultants to develop and present a media plan for an assigned scenario. This event is sponsored by the South Dakota Broadcasters Association. The winning travel scholarship is sponsored by Dakota Farm talk. The national level sponsor is Osborn Barr. Results were: GOLD — West Central; SILVER — Hoven; SILVER — McCook Central; BRONZE — Viborg-Hurley; BRONZE — Miller

USD's MUC Expansion Opening Set For Jan. 13

VERMILLION — The University of South Dakota will celebrate the expansion of the Muenster University Center with a grand opening at noon on Monday, Jan. 13.

The brand new, 31,000-square-foot addition not only offers expanded seating with booth and table areas; it also introduces contemporary dining options with national brands Chick-fil-A, Qdoba and Einstein Bros. Bagels.

"The campus community is very excited for the completion of this project, especially knowing the significance of the MUC and what it means to our student body," said Jeff Baylor, vice president of Marketing, Enrollment and Student Services at USD. "Since its opening in 2009, the Muen-

ster University Center has served as the focal point of our campus. It's USD's 'living room' so to speak."

The celebration includes lunchtime entertainment on Monday and throughout the rest of the week as well as giveaways during the Monday lunch hour and USD student leaders serving as hosts and hostesses. In addition to celebrating the opening of the new seating and dining areas, the Muenster University Center will also debut its new media wall: 16 60-inch HDTVs spanning 16 feet along the south wall of the cafeteria area.

The Muenster University Center celebration will continue with "Community Night" from 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 16. Families and individu-

als from Vermillion and surrounding communities are invited to dine at the new food court, attend a basketball game or visit the Wellness Center. The USD men's basketball team will host IUPUI at 7 p.m. at the DakotaDome. High school students will be admitted free while family members will receive a 50 percent ticket discount. Vouchers for the free admission will be available at the MUC. The Wellness Center will be free to visitors from Thursday night through the weekend.

For more information about the Muenster University Center or the grand opening celebration, please contact USD Marketing & University Relations at (605) 677-5759 or email urelations@usd.edu.

We cordially request the honor of your presence for

Afternoon Tea

on
Saturday,
January 11th, 2014
at 4pm

We will be serving
Finger Sandwiches, Scones,
Exquisite Desserts and Delectable Teas

Bella's Restaurant

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Riverfront Event Center
Downtown Yankton
Admission fee of \$20.00
Call for reservations
605.689.3333