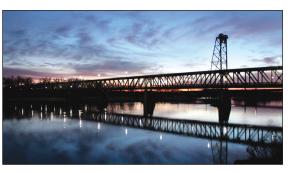
Section B PRESS & DAKOTAN Friday, May 11, 2012 HOMETOWN NEWS 4B GARDENING 5B TV LISTINGS 6B



Today, the Press & Dakotan is resurrecting a feature that was started in our "Neighbors" section, in which we feature a photo submitted by a reader. If you have a photo you would like published, email it to RiverCity@yankton.net. (Photo: Ang Pechous)

Tribute To Life

Country Music Star Collin Raye Brings A Message Of Life To Yankton This Sunday

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COLLIN RAYE

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE

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usic at its most basic is a celebration. And this Sunday, the Yankton Catholic Respect Life (YCRL) group hopes the community will use music to celebrate life. A special concert from award-

winning singer Collin Raye will be held this Sunday at the Summit Activities Center theatre in Yankton. The performance, titled "Tribute to Life," is at 7

p.m. "With the concert ,we are bringing music with a message to Yankton," said

YCRL member Dave Goeckner. "The 'Tribute to Life' title pretty much sums up our purpose - to speak to the life issues recognizing the dignity of every human life regardless of 'quality of life' and social circumstances. In addition, Mother's Day is such an opportune day to offer this concert — what better day to celebrate the gift of life."

Goeckner said Raye, who most people are familiar with because of a string of country music hits in the 1990s, is the perfect

person to bring the message of celebrating life to Yankton.

Five times nominated as country music's Male Vocalist of the Year, Raye has consistently used his fame to advance social causes. Among the organizations he has supported are Boys Town, First Steps, Al-Anon, Special Olympics, Country Cares About AIDS, Catholic Relief Services, Parade of Pennies, Vanderbilt Children's Hospital, The Tennessee Task Force Against Domestic Violence, The Emily Harrison Foundation, Childhelp USA, Silent Witness National Initiative, Easter Seals and Make a Difference Day Most recently, Raye has become the national spokesperson for the Terri Schiavo Life & Hope Network. He travels the country, sharing the personal story of his journey to the Catholic faith and speaking out for the dignity of all human life. "I became reacquainted with (Raye) last fall after watching a television interview where he was talking about how he had recently lost his granddaughter to a neurological disease and he shared the issues his family had faced," Goeckner said. "He spoke of his faith life — how it was challenged but also this deep awareness of God's continuous presence in the midst of suffering. He felt drawn to do an inspirational album to share some traditional hymns as well as some contemporary inspirational music.' From that chance viewing of the Raye interview, Goeckner said he knew bringing him to Yankton would be a wonderful way to celebrate life. "The idea came that it would be great to have Raye come to Yankton to share his music and message of faith and appreciation for life," he said. "I ran the idea by our pastor and he gave me the go-ahead to explore the possibility. From there, I presented the idea to the Yankton Catholic Respect Life group, and there was a great deal of excitement there. "It helped that he is doing concerts in Minnesota

this weekend as well, so we were able to work in conjunction with them for travel arrangements. Raye and his team have been very gracious working with

us.' Raye's journey from country hit maker to Christian artist is a tribute to the loss of his granddaughter, Haley Marie Bell, who passed away in 2010 at age 10 after suffering with a neurological disorder from age 4.

While Raye had been known for recording songs about social issues, after Haley died, he especially took up the cause of defending the right to life of people like his granddaughter who have neurological disabilities. Their stories and their rights, he argues, are not adequately told and defended by the Ameri-

can media, and sometimes — as in the Schiavo's case – not even by American courts.

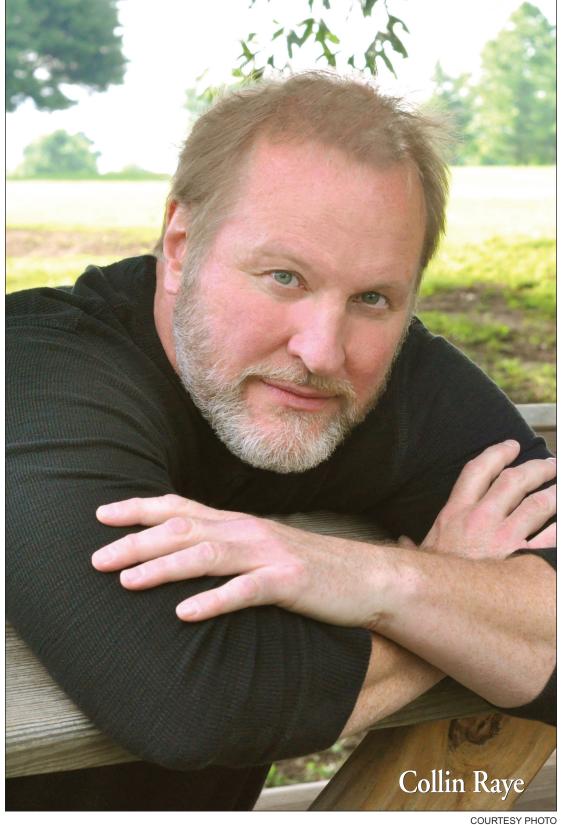
In addition to serving as a spokesman for the Terri Schiavo Life & Hope Network (http://www.terrisfight.org/), Raye is also helping the group raise money. Some of the proceeds from his new album "Through It All, His Love

Remains" — will go to the network. The album is primarily dedicated to religious songs and hymns, including "Ave Maria" and

"Amazing Grace," but also includes a remake of his Top 10 hit "Love Remains," as well as two new songs, "Undefeated" and "I Get What I Need."

"I believe in Providence," Raye said on his website. "I believe there's a reason things happen the way they do. I also believe that if you've treated people right and you continue to work hard at your craft, things will happen. I want to keep going. I want

hit records. I want to make music." That dedication and commitment to life made



him the perfect person for this weekend's family-oriented concert, Goeckner said.

"I guess the message that I hope people take with them from the concert is to really appreciate the gift of life," he said. "We have the opportunity to do something beautiful for God. There is inherent dignity in every life by virtue of our being created in the image and likeness of God. We take that for granted and sometimes don't respect it as we should."

With more than 950 tickets originally available for the concert, Goeckner said that as of noon Thursday, there were only about 150 of the \$10 tickets left.

"Honestly, we didn't really have to sell, his name sold it for us," he said. "I know we have people com-ing from a distance — Topeka, Kan.; Faulkton; Lin-coln, Neb. The word is really getting out, not just locally.

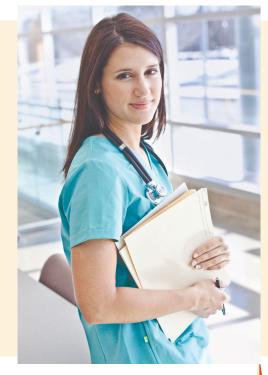
"Tickets will be available at the door if they are still available. It was intentional to put the ticket price at \$10 in order to make this a family-friendly event. Especially on Mother's Day, we want families to be able to attend as a family if they want to."

The Summit Activities Center doors for "Tribute to Life" will open at 6 p.m. Sunday. Goeckner said the show is expected to be about 90 minutes long with no intermission.

For ticket information, contact the Sacred Heart parish office at 665-3655 or stop by the office at 509 Capitol Street.



Touching hearts, saving lives... All in a Day's work.



During National Nurses Week, we recognize the dedication and achievements of our nursing professionals. These men and women make our community and our world a better place by providing encouragement, comfort and professional medical attention to our patients entrusted to their care. Every day, every shift, our nurses touch the lives of patients and their loved ones. We thank them for their extraordinary efforts and tireless commitment to caring.





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