

Omaha Program Helps Karen Community Retain Its Language

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — An Omaha program is working to help children from Myanmar nurture their roots by devoting time to their native languages.

The Karen are an ethnic minority group from Myanmar who began arriving in Omaha around 2005. Many of them fled persecution and first landed in Thailand before coming to the United States.

The Omaha World-Herald reports

more than 150 Karen students attend Hartman Elementary on Saturdays to receive extra lessons in math, reading and writing for about two hours. During the third hour, Karen interpreters and bilingual liaisons take over from English-speaking teachers and teach kids how to read and write in Karen.

Another class is devoted to the Karenni dialect. According to program organizers, the students

who attend the classes have varying degrees of fluency depending on their age and when they arrived in the U.S.

Lotplar Laywah, a bilingual liaison with Omaha Public Schools, says the one-hour Karen program, which is funded by grants the school district received for migrant and refugee education, is crucial to helping younger generations retain their language.

"Our priority is to learn English, to speak English. The younger generation thinks it's cool to be fluent in English. But then I went to college and realized how helpful it is to be bilingual. It gave me a sense of pride and an advantage," Laywah said.

OPS has also written and published a few illustrated books written in Karen and English since Karen-language children's books are not widely available at local bookstores.

Susan Mayberger, OPS's coordinator of English as a second language, migrant and refugee education, says that decades ago it would have taken two to three generations for an immigrant family to lose grasp of the members' native language. Mayberger says that children now quickly learn second languages and primarily use English to speak to their parents, friends and teachers.

WJ Ranch 14th Annual Cowboy Christmas
Saturday & Sunday
Nov. 28th & 29th
Watch Next Week's Paper For Details!
(7 mi. south of Yankton, SD just off Hwy. 81)
See www.schiferlswjranch.com

Out On The Town

VFW
Post 791 209 Cedar
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
Sunday
5-7pm Cooks Choice
Thursday
5-7pm – Domestic Beers **\$1.50**
5-7pm – Hamburger/ Pizza Burger & Fries **\$5.00**
Friday
BBQ Ribs
Serving 5:30-8:00
Closed Thanksgiving Day
Saturday Entertainment
No Band
Regular Menu 5:30-8:00
Bingo Wed. at 7:00p.m.
Sunday at 6:30p.m.
Happy Hour M-F 4:30-6:00
Chislic Served Last Wednesday of Month

DAILY SPECIALS
\$7.35
11AM-2PM
Yesterday's Cafe
23rd & Broadway, 665-4383

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Yesterday's Cafe
23rd & Broadway 665-4383

Feather Party
Sunday, Nov. 22nd
1:00-4:00PM
Play for Turkeys, Hams & Pork Loins
Pitch Players Welcome!
Food Available 5pm-7pm
Auxiliary Bingo 6:30pm
VFW Post 791 209 Cedar, Yankton

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List available on Facebook by searching "Holiday Kick Off"
Activities for the kids! Lunch & Goodies will be available!
All proceeds from raffle will be donated to the Theta Omega Chapter of ESA in Vermillion to assist with gifts for the Giving Tree

2nd Annual Vermillion Armory Holiday Kick Off Vendor/Craft Show
Vermillion National Guard Armory (kitty corner from Hy-Vee) 603 Princeton Ave., Vermillion
Saturday, Nov. 21st
10AM-3PM
FREE ADMISSION!

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Saturday, Nov. 28, 2015
9am - 3pm
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• Lunch Served
• Door Prizes
Admission: Adults \$1
Sponsored by: The Beresford Lions Club
For Booth Information: 763-8349

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Saturday, Nov. 21st 2:00pm & 7:30pm
Sunday, Nov. 22nd 2:00pm
Yankton High School Theatre, 1801 Summit St.
Sleeping Beauty Ballet 2015
Directed and Choreographed by Dorota Dannenbring
Production Managers: Carolyn Golden; Lynn Hiltunen, Linda Frick.
Guest Directors: Linda Haar; Kathryn & Jim Reimler
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Saturday 9am-12pm
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