

# Festival

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This year also carries historical significance for German-Russians, Jerke said. “This is the 70th anniversary of the signing of the World War II peace treaty at Reims, Germany,” he said.

The GRHS chapter has compiled a historical booklet for sale at Saturday’s event.

“The booklet has information about the German-Russian culture and the Oktoberfest’s history,” Jerke said. “The booklet will have some unique things in it.”

The German-Russians hold a history of moving from homeland to homeland in order to avoid persecu-

tion, Jerke said. In particular, German-Russians settled in pockets of the Dakotas, including Yankton and Hutchinson counties.

“The first settlement in this area was in Odessa Township in northern Yankton County,” Jerke said.

As part of its cultural preservation, the Sodak Stamm chapter has converted a former Lutheran church in Kaylor into a museum, Jerke said.

“We have some exhibits there, and we hold programs there,” he said, noting the Oktoberfest proceeds provide the main funding for the projects.

However, Sodak Stamm isn’t limiting its education efforts to the museum, Jerke said. The chapter sponsored a heritage camp this summer

that drew around 45 children.

“We taught them about our ancestors,” he said. “We talked about things like how they prepared their food, how they used a cast iron skillet and hand-cranked their ice cream.”

However, not all aspects of the local German-Russian culture have been preserved, Jerke said. He noted the disappearance of the sod houses with wide walls and the combination homes and barns that once dotted Hutchinson County.

“The language and dialect are also coming to an end,” Jerke said.

Yankton and Hutchinson counties aren’t the only major German-Russian concentrations in South Dakota, he said. Another area of settlement came in north-central

and northeastern South Dakota, particularly the Aberdeen and Eureka areas.

A German-Russian native of that northern area now lives in Yankton, Jerke said. “Sister Ann Kessler (at Sacred Heart Monastery) comes from Aberdeen, and her family has run the (Kessler’s) grocery store in Aberdeen for years,” he said.

Northern State University of Aberdeen has taken on a role of preserving the region’s German-Russian heritage, Jerke said.

“They’re preserving all aspects of the culture, history, music and architecture,” he said. “They’re so interested (at Northern State) because it’s in their backyard.”

In the same manner, Sodak Stamm is seeking to preserve Geman-Russian

culture through events such as Oktoberfest and through the Kaylor museum.

“We’re trying to expand people’s horizons by reaching out to all ages,” he explained.

Jerke and other GRHS members have enjoyed a unique cultural and historical perspective by traveling through their ancestral homelands. Jerke has toured France, Gernany, Switzerland and Ukraine.

“It meant so much to tour those areas and to see the land where my ancestors came from,” he said. “There’s so much that our ancestors have provided us, like our system of government and our methods of agriculture. Those things wouldn’t be here if they hadn’t settled this area.”

Today’s residents need to

preserve the past so they can hand those lessons to future generations, Jerke said.

“Our ancestors deserve to be honored,” he said. “If we fail to study and remember our history, we’re doomed to repeat it. And if we don’t understand our history, we’re the less for it.”

To purchase advance tickets contact Jerke at 583-4544, Vi Ranney (Yankton) at 665-3596, Eugene Weidenbach (Scotland) at 583-4470, Donna Zeeb (Menno) at 387-5577, Schoenfish CPA (Parkston) at 928-7241, Wyona Hofer (Free-man) at 925-7218 and David Mogck (Tripp) at 935-6781.

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# Ponca

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That property includes a \$7 million complex in Norfolk and a brand new headquarters in Niobrara – along with a transportation facility and renovations to their Norfolk properties. The tribe is also in the planning process of building a 40,000-square-foot clinic in Omaha.

“We are growing,” Wright said. “It is slow but financially sound. We make sure that whatever programs we create are sustainable and provide the best services that our citizens deserve.”

The Ponca tribe provides programs like social services, behavioral health, domestic violence, housing, medical health and education. These services incorporate a travel transportation program designed to help provide transportation for not only members of the tribe, but also the communities at large. It transports people to anything from doctor’s appointments to grocery stores.

“We do the best we can to provide those serves to our tribal citizens,” Wright said. “It is an undertaking because of funding sources; so much of what we do is grant generated through BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) and HIS (Indian Health Services).”

The Ponca Tribe serves more than 1,800 tribal citizens that live in 15 counties in Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota, while utilizing their five office sites. Despite not having a reservation, the tribe shows no indication of slowing down.

“That can be seen as a positive and a negative,” said the tribe’s culture director,

Randy Teboe. “A negative maybe because we don’t have that sense of community as a tribe would if they had a land base. The positive side would be that we are routing better through our community and dealing with everyone in mainstream society. We have gained different opportunities because of that.”

Because the communities are so spread out, members rely on technology to bridge the geometrical gap. Each office has a video conferencing system that connects to all the office sites.

“It is four hours from one end of our area to the other,” Wright said. “Knowing that time and travel are issues, being able to use that to bring our groups and staff together has been a real beneficial thing for the tribe to take advantage of.”

The tribe is also embracing many social media outlets – even though, Wright admits, he has no idea what they are or how they work.

“We have elders who still use flip phones,” Wright said. “They want everything in paper. We have the other generation that – if it’s not on their phone – they don’t look at it. How do we satisfy

all those desires?”

Wright said part of that will come from an overhaul of the tribe’s website so that its citizens – whoever they are and wherever they’re from – can have access to the information.

The Ponca tribe is also expanding its communication in other ways. This anniversary has encouraged members to bring back the culture and the language of the tribe’s history.

“Being terminated, we lost a lot of ceremonies, but we didn’t totally lose that culture,” Teboe said. “It more or less went to sleep. My job is to wake that back up and bring it back to the tribe.

According to Teboe, Ponca’s tribe has a handful of good Ponca speakers that are with southern relatives in Oklahoma. Down the road, Teboe hopes to see several northern Ponca speakers.

In order to meet this goal, the tribe relies on translators that use the Ponca language to better incorporate the dialect among the community and especially in the homes.

Tribe members also incorporated language chips in Nintendo DS video game systems for the younger

generation. They are also developing a phone app to take that communication even further. Teboe says the kids are picking up on the language quickly and the hope is that the adults pick up on it, as well.

“That language helps us identify who we are as Ponca people,” Teboe said. “It also shows us how to treat one another and what it means to be Ponca.”

Saturday’s activities will involve a tribal open house at 10 a.m. and a traditional powwow beginning at 1 p.m. The powwow will feature a chili feed and frybread contest. During the festivities, the society members give the elders in the audience baskets of non-perishable goods.

“Our warriors’ society decided to take this anniversary date to celebrate and honor our elders at peace,” Wright said. “That is where we get our guidance and direction from. To be able to honor them, their sacrifice and where we are 25 years later is something that we feel very strongly about.”

Follow @alwooc01 on Twitter.

## SD Takes Comment On Pheasant Plan

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks is seeking public comment on completed revisions to the state’s current pheasant management plan.

Division of Wildlife director Tony Leif says the revised plan refines the department’s approach to managing the popular game bird and its habitats.

The new plan will be in effect until 2020.

Written comments to GFP in Pierre or emailed comments to pheasantplan@state.sd.us must be received by Nov. 22 and include the sender’s full name and city of residence.



## Shopping for a mortgage?

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### OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY, 10/25 12:30 pm - 2:00pm



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Also, see listings on-line at [yanktonrealtors.com](http://yanktonrealtors.com)

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**\$129,900**

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**3005 Mary**  
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- 3-bedroom, 2-bath split level
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**718 W. 8th**  
**\$172,500**

- 7-bedrooms, 2-car garage
- Nearly 4,000 sq. ft.
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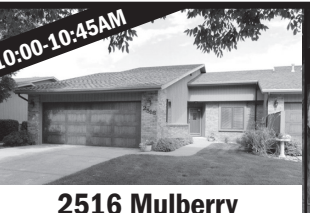
**Rick Daugherty, 760-9976**  
**Anderson Real Estate**



**1000 E. 19th**  
**\$169,900**

- 3 bedroom, 2 bath ranch with double garage
- Updated kitchen
- Great location
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**2516 Mulberry**  
**\$249,900**

- Over 2,600 sq. ft. townhome with golf course frontage
- 3 bedrooms, 2 1/2 bath, main floor laundry
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**\$524,900**

- Hard to find river property
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- Newer trolly to river bank
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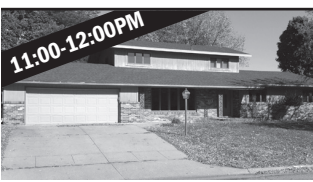
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**1207 W. 17th**  
**\$296,500**

- Built in 2005 by Jason Tramp
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**\$294,900**

- 4 bedroom, 4 1/2 bath, 2 story
- 4,000 finished sq. ft. on Hillcrest Golf course
- Main floor laundry, radon system
- New kitchen counter tops, flooring, paint

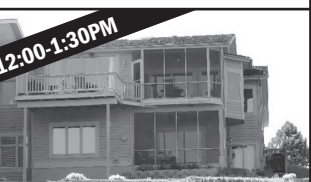
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**2929 Julie St.**  
**\$305,000**

- 3-bedroom, 2-bath home built in 2014
- Master bedroom suite, open floor plan
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- Full, unfinished lower level

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**203 Calumet**  
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- 4 bedroom, 4 bath townhome in Calumet Landing
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