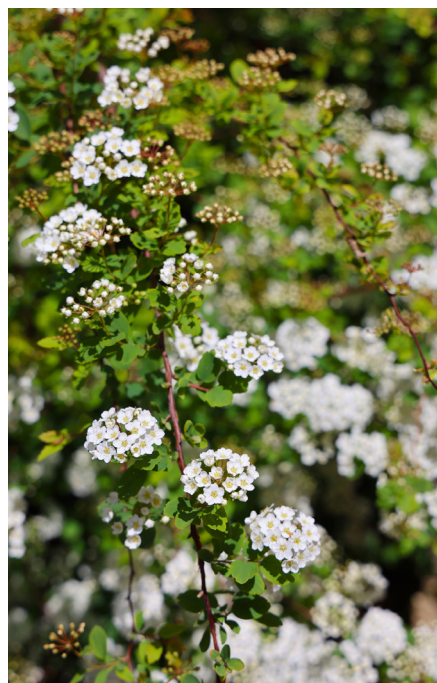


THE STUDENTS' VOICE SINCE 1887

# THE VOLANTE



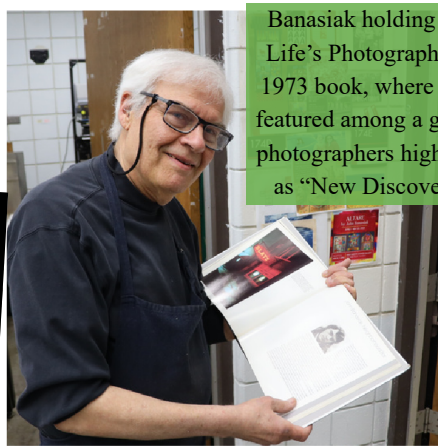
## Summer Edition 2026

[VOLANTEONLINE.COM](http://VOLANTEONLINE.COM)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2026

## John Banasiak

Banasiak holding Time-Life's Photography Year 1973 book, where he was featured among a group of photographers highlighted as "New Discoveries."



Analog photo taken by photography student of Banasiak lecturing in class.

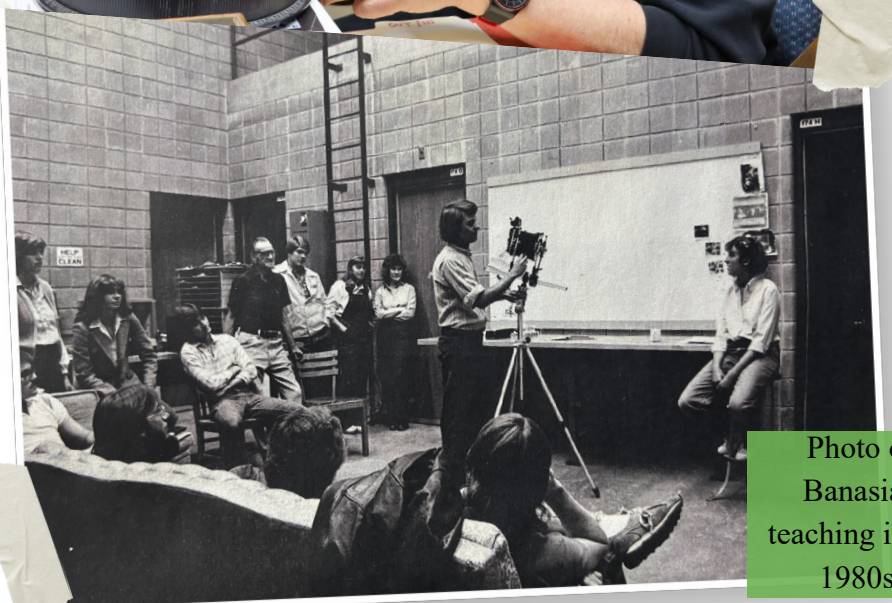


Photo of Banasiak teaching in the 1980s.

## John Banasiak retires after 46 years at USD

**Nathan DeGreef**  
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After more than four decades, the University of South Dakota is saying goodbye to one photography professor. For 46 years, John Banasiak has helped shape generations of students at USD.

Banasiak grew up on the south side of Chicago and attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the University of Chicago.

While attending school, he worked at George Brown's Bar, a working-class tavern in Chicago. There, Banasiak photographed people in the bar.

At age 22, his photos were published in Time-Life's Photography Year 1973, where he was featured among a group of photographers highlighted as "New Discoveries."

Throughout the 1970s, Banasiak traveled around the world, from Poland to New Zealand. After returning to Chicago, he learned of an open photography professor position at USD from a contact at the Art Institute of Chicago.

"She said it was a lot like New Zealand because she knew I went to New Zealand and liked it," Banasiak said. "It did look like New Zealand, the South Island in the middle of it where they do a lot of farming, but that's about it."

Banasiak said he grew to like Vermillion and what began as a short-term plan, turned into a lifelong career.

"One year led into another," Banasiak said. "Now this is the end of my 46 years, it's been fun."

Lauren Freese, USD Chair and Associate Professor of Art, said the department is grateful for all that Banasiak has done for the program, the university and the state.

"I don't know how you put that legacy into words," Freese said. "I think it's really going to live on through his students, but also, I hope through that sense of willingness to play."

While his work has earned

numerous accolades, students and faculty say his impact goes far beyond awards.

"I never thought of myself really as a teacher," Banasiak said. "I knew a lot about technical things in photo, drawing and painting. I thought I contributed a lot on a technical level, but as far as artwork and nurturing creative ideas, I felt more like a collaborator."

Since 1980, Banasiak has taught students mechanical and technical processes that many consider a lost art including gum dichromate, mordantage and hand-coloring photo prints.

"I try to get people to use photo in whatever their majors might be," Banasiak said. "I really enjoy working with people. One of the sad things is seeing people go. After a few semesters, you have a lot of fun, and then they're gone into their lives."

Aside from the physical techniques, he's passionate about helping students find meaning and purpose within their work.

"His generosity with students, his creative generosity with others is something that is kind of intangible," Freese said. "I think people wind up paying that forward."

A retirement banquet was held at the Eagles Club on Monday, May 4, attended by faculty, community members, along with both former and current students.

The banquet featured a book by Sarah A. Hanson-Pareek, program director of the digital imaging lab, digital library and photographs, "The Magic of John Banasiak." An exhibition of the same name will be on display in the John A. Day Gallery from May 7-27.

The exhibit features photos of Banasiak's eclectic office and workspace. Many of the photographed items were also sold in mystery bags at the banquet, with proceeds going toward a scholarship in Banasiak's name for the College of Fine Arts' Photography Department.

"I don't want to be remembered at all. I mean, I try to help people here, and I don't want to be any kind of inspirational added baggage," Banasiak said. "I want them to take credit for it, that they've done it. It wasn't because of anybody else. They made all the choices in the end."

His legacy isn't defined by awards or recognition, but by the impact in the lives he has made to all that have met him.

## A growing season for the Vermillion Community Garden

**Alyssa Batt**

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The Vermillion Community Garden president, Stephanie Nefas, hosted a mason jar terrarium and hanging planter work day on May 2 to fundraise for the upcoming layout renovations. Their goal this summer is to revitalize the community grown food pantry plot area.

“We had an amazing master gardener join us last year to increase production from about 300 pounds of produce to 500,” Nefas said. “They were able to identify that we needed some updates to the layout and a better network of volunteers to help with weeding, watering and harvesting vegetables.”

Not only will the layout be reworked, the garden plans to fundraise for raised beds to make weeding less work. The master gardeners are people who are highly educated on how to garden, and offer tips on planting and caring for plants.

Murphy is a graduate student at USD and this is her second year with a garden plot. As a vegetarian, she feels that she saves money by growing her own produce.

“I don’t have space to garden where I live, but that turned into a blessing since I garden at the community garden instead of staying isolated,” Murphy said. “I had gardening experience before I got my plot, but you don’t need to know how to grow anything to join.”

The garden utilizes the free community composting program that runs on a three bin system. Murphy typically composts veggie scraps after a night of food pepper but doesn’t have space to keep a compost bin in the kitchen so she recommends the freezer to store compost because it doesn’t smell or attract flies and it’s out of the way.

“For anyone who does have the capacity to keep a little compost around until they can transport it, I highly recommend the compost system,” Murphy said. “It’s a good way to keep waste out of the landfill and help gardeners make their soil more nutritious.”

The garden has about 47 individual plots that are rented, with one per household, that usually fill up for the season. There’s typically a 50/50 mix of people associated with USD and other community members.

“There are younger college students and older people that all use the garden,” Nefas said. “It’s an important location for people who rent, do not have space in their yard, and people who plan to not garden every year.”

Commonly grown items at the garden include peppers, herbs, garlic and more. The garden also has an international student population that grows a variety of vegetables that aren’t typically locally grown or sold.

“The number one crop in our plot is tomatoes. We planted some garlic in November that’s coming up now,” Murphy said. “I have a couple of native plants, such as anise and bee balm, that I grow specifically for tea. Pollinators also love them, so I make sure to leave enough standing to feed butterflies, bees and other insects.”

At the first Vermillion area farmers market on May 14, they plan on having a plant sale to raise money for the community garden.

“We also coordinate with volunteers to do improvements around the garden, help with maintenance and help with the food pantry plot,” Nefas said. “We have help with internship hours, and can schedule or set up a project if you contact us.”

**Addi Sporleder** | The Volante



## “American Dream Come... True?” satirical Americana exhibit

**Nathan DeGreef**

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A new art exhibit in East Hall is arriving just in time for the United States’ 250th anniversary.

The exhibit “American Dream Come... True?” is curated by students Emmylea Robeson, Summer Freeman and Abigail Zenner. It was originally planned to focus on “classic and underrepresented Americana,” but was later changed based on the available pieces.

Robeson said the exhibit aims to highlight the difference between the original idea of the “American Dream” and the lived reality of many.

“I hope viewers develop a realization on how satire is used as a political statement, oftentimes by those with less power,” Robeson said.

The exhibit was a partnership between the course and faculty.

“The exhibit was chosen for us to do by Dr. Krus, as East Hall was renovated recently and had a lot of empty

wall space,” Robeson said. “This exhibit was curated through the museum internship the class ‘Museum Techniques’ gives students.”

The process of curating the exhibit came with its own challenges, particularly when it came to locating and handling the artwork.

“Finding the art pieces was one of the most difficult parts,” Robeson said. “We used the gallery catalogues to choose which art pieces we wanted, but finding them physically was a challenge due to the amount of heavy art and boxes we had to move around.”

Beyond its academic purpose, the exhibit aims to resonate with current issues.

“I do absolutely see it being relevant today. That relevance is what we used to help curate the pieces,” Robeson said. “The art we chose critiques colonialism, poor regulatory practices, toxic masculinity, capitalism and war, among other issues in American culture.”



**Nathan DeGreef** | The Volante

## Striving for a bird safe campus and community

**Alyssa Batt**

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At the Vermillion Public Library on April 23, the Sierra Club and community members came together to learn more about how to protect birds from deadly window strikes and the effects of night lighting. Speakers shared information about how Sioux City became a certified Bird Friendly City and how Vermillion may do the same.

Marla Keer was one of the speakers and is from the Loess Hills Audubon Society. According to Keer, North American birds are dying at alarming rates, including Meadowlarks, Baltimore Orioles and Wood Thrushes. Grassland birds are at the greatest decline due to agriculture as a whole, but songbirds are the biggest groups of birds.

“The main problem we’ve observed on campus is window strikes; birds are flying into glass building facades and dying” Evan Shirley said. Shirley is a student at USD working on his honors thesis project who wanted to get involved with bird safety because of the joy that birds bring him and the accessible issue of window strikes.

Shirley is trying to get experimental data for Feather Friendly window strike deterrent specifically at residential buildings, to address that gap in the literature he’s found on different types of buildings. The goal is to show that Feather Friendly works on residential buildings.

“The overall goal is to get campus windows treated to deter window strikes and save birds,” Shirley said.

Jillian Murphy and Anna Moore started an on-campus bird safety initiative that Shirley calls “Bird

Safety USD.”

To reach that goal, they’re interested in finding volunteers that will help survey the campus buildings and collect evidence. If people are willing to count the amount of dead birds found, they can report the data on how many birds are dying on campus. For Shirley’s honors thesis, homeowners can volunteer to treat a window at their home and help us collect experimental data.

“This problem isn’t exclusive to USD’s campus though,” Shirley said. “Any structure with transparent or reflective windows can have window strikes, so it certainly happens all over Vermillion, and the rest of the world for that matter.”

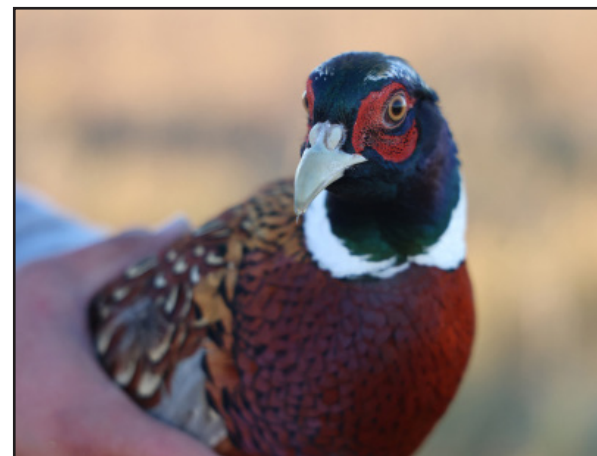
For the Vermillion community, the solution is hypothetically the same as on campus by treating the windows and working towards being a Bird Friendly City. Vermillion also has other bird threats common to urban areas, like light pollution and feral cats.

According to Keer, the Bird Friendly network works on reducing threats to birds by protecting, restoring and enhancing bird habitats, as well as educating people in birding and conservation.

Jillian Murphy is a graduate student at USD and has a petition that supports making USD a campus safe for birds. Murphy’s personal goal is 300 signatures. She hopes to get a mixture of signatures not just from students, but also from faculty, staff and alumni as well.

“The majority of people who signed the statement were students and I love that. I want that to continue because if we’re making changes, they should be ones that will attract new students in the future,” Murphy said.

**Sydney Kolln** | The Volante



USD is not the only university tracking window collisions, as Augustana wants to make a change on their campus as well. If USD gets ahead of the trend, then there’s a potential to attract interested students, faculty and staff.

To help make Vermillion a more Bird Friendly City, keep these tips in mind. Artificial lights at night can lure birds into areas that they think are safe, but aren’t. Lights should be pointed down with no light leaking above the horizontal. Drawing blinds can also be a simple way to prevent birds seeing the light coming from windows.

## North Complex foresees new changes

**Addi Sporleder**

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When students return in the fall, a new look of North Complex will be underway. Olson Hall will undergo construction starting Friday, May 15.

USD is making these changes to ensure the residence halls are in good condition and accommodate the changes of students’ needs. The university is striving to match those needs as much as possible.

Tristan Beck, Director of Housing, has been working behind the scenes during this process.

“My role has been to coordinate resident feedback for potential changes they want to see and to coordinate logistics for housing while Olson Hall is offline,” Beck said. “Part of this is managing where students will be living, part of this is coordinating furniture moving and purchasing.”

Multiple aspects of Olson Hall will receive new upgrades to enhance residential living.

“Two significant updates include the addition of an elevator and changing from large, common use bathrooms, to private, single person use bathrooms. The change with bathrooms will be a big increase for safety

and there will also be more toilets and showers per floor,” Beck said. “For some additional changes, the laundry machines are being doubled, the kitchens are being moved to have exterior access to allow for better ventilation and the beds will be self-lofting similar to Richardson.”

Brian Limoges, Assistant VP of Facilities Management, stated that the cost of the project is estimated to be about \$10,300,000.

“The plan is every other year to complete another residence hall renovation due to budget constraints,” Limoges said.

While Olson Hall is under construction, the university is working to ensure there is as little disruption as possible to the residents. Contractors will have a designated space for their work around the residence halls to keep traffic flows maintained.

Construction is expected to be done in fall 2027, just in time for the start of the new school year.

**Addi Sporleder** | The Volante



## Native Student Services faculty leaving USD

**Sydney Kolln**

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Sydney Kolln | The Volante

USD's Native Student Services (NSS) maintains relationships with South Dakota's native communities and 25 other tribal communities represented by students on campus. However, the future of the NSS is uncertain, as all faculty will be leaving the university for a number of reasons.

Brooke Jackson is the Coordinator of Native Student Services, and her last day in-person at USD will be May 11. Jackson has accepted a position at the University of Nevada, Reno, as a Tribal Academy Program Coordinator.

"This was an opportunity to be back with my family, and especially my mom," Jackson said. "In this new role, I will mentor/advise Native Students in STEM Fields to graduation to increase economic development opportunities in Nevada's Rural Tribal communities. I will also get to help make a welcoming environment for students in the new Office of Indigenous Relations Center. I am very excited."

John Little is the Director of Native Recruitment & Alumni Engagement, and his last day is May 18. May 21 will be the last day for Dr. Megan Red Shirt-Shaw, Director of Native Student Services.

Together, Little and Red Shirt-Shaw will be co-directors of the Tokahe Institute, a college prep focused organization dedicated to empowering Native youth to dream of, invest in and plan for their futures.

"We plan to stay in Vermillion," Little said. "We plan to visit tribal and rural schools in the fall to create and build a pathway for Native and rural students to successfully attend college in the future."

All of the Native Student Services faculty were honored at the end of the Outreach and Multicultural Affairs/First-Gen graduation celebration by Marcus Destin, Assistant Director of Student Activities & Outreach and Multicultural Affairs at USD.

"I am going to miss Marcus. We have been good friends and great colleagues for a long time," Jackson said. "His words were extremely touching and showed you how much staff rely not only on students coming to USD, but each other. We cannot do the work without the support from each other. [...] Student Services is not a one-person job; it's a team job. Marcus is a good guy who needs and deserves support from all of you students now. [...] I am

going to miss having someone like Marcus who cares and supports students in the same way that I do."

"I have met so many wonderful students and staff at USD over the last five years, but I'm especially grateful to have worked with Marcus," Little said. "I've known him for almost 10 years, and his dad Lamont was my mentor when I was a graduate student. It's been a full circle moment to work alongside him, and I hope USD realizes how lucky they are to have him. He really is the heartbeat of this community."

While USD is currently in the process of hiring a new Director of Native Student Services, they have chosen to not continue the Director of Native Recruitment & Alumni Engagement position at the university.

"The NACC (Native American Cultural Center) is one of the best places on campus. The next person in my role will benefit from all of the lessons and beauty it has to give," Red Shirt-Shaw said. "I grew so much in my time, and I am grateful."

When asked to choose one thing they'll miss most about the NSS and NACC, it was hard to pick just one.

"I think it is difficult to say one memory or thing I'll miss the most, because Native Student Services and the NACC forever changed my life and the path I was on," Jackson said. "The students here helped me find my passion, gain a deeper understanding of the world around me, and inspire me to be a better community member every day."

"I will miss the students the most. They have made going to work every day easy," Little said. "It's just amazing to see students, many of whom I worked with as high school seniors or college freshmen, learn, grow and eventually graduate. I'm proud of everything that our Native Student Services team of Brooke Jackson, Megan Red Shirt-Shaw, and many others have been able to accomplish over the last five years."

"What I want the students to know? I can't remember a single class number from any of my undergraduate classes, and I can't recite back a single grade," Red Shirt-Shaw said. "I remember every single helper I had along the way. Keep looking for the helpers, all my love."



Dr. Megan Red Shirt-Shaw, John Little and Brooke Jackson getting recognized at the OMA/FGSO graduation celebration.



Marcus Destin giving a speech about each of the Native Student Services faculty.

# NEWS

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The Volante covers issues relevant and interesting to USD students. Faculty, staff and community members are welcome readers, but the newspaper is written and presented for a diverse community of students from the students' point of view. The paper should provide a variety of information, entertainment and educational opportunities for the readers. The Volante encourages everyone to write letters to the editor. The Volante wishes to be viewed by students as respectable, objective, accurate, fair and trustworthy. If you have comments, concerns or questions, please contact The Volante at 677-5494. The Volante is distributed Wednesdays during the academic year free of charge locally with the cost of \$1 for each additional copy. One year subscription rates are \$40, which solely covers the mailing costs. The Volante does not endorse, promote or encourage the purchase or sale of any production service advertised in this paper. Advertisements are the sole responsibility of the advertiser.

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The Volante welcomes letters to the editor in regards to campus, local, state and national issues. Letters will be edited for clarity and length and will be printed as space allows.

Please limit letters to 300 words or fewer. The Volante reserves the right to hold letters for publication in a later issue.

Submissions must include the author's name, address, telephone number, year in school and major or job title. Letters must be exclusively for The Volante. We will not publish anonymous letters.

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## One last meet before conference

**Trevan Rychlik**

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The South Dakota track and field teams hosted the South Dakota Challenge at the Lillibridge Track Complex on May 1-2. The team won 21 events over the two day competition.

The distance team led the way on the first day of competition, with the men's 1500 and 5000 sweeping the podium. The men's pole vault team also swept the podium, with former Coyote Erik Haamer taking first place.

Sophomore Isaac Ochoa led senior Mason Sindelar and fellow sophomore Natnael Kifle in the 1500. Junior Piercze Marshall led sophomore Trevor Thomsen and fellow junior Levi Hill in the 5000.

Senior Quincy Warren and graduate Delaney Smith took first in the men's and women's hammer throw, respectively. Graduate Riley Ruhaak took first in the men's 3000 steeplechase, and junior Jade Ecoffey took first in the women's 3000 steeplechase.

The women's pole vault team led the way on day two with a podium sweep, with graduate Marleen Mulla and sophomore Anna Willis tying

for first.

Sophomore Ethan Baessler placed first in the men's 100 and 200 meter dash. Senior Brandon Vander Sluis won both the men's shot put and discus.

Freshman Maya Tedder won the women's 100 meter hurdles. Sophomore Jaden Damiano led a top four sweep in the men's 110 meter hurdles.

Junior Evan Janzen took first in the men's 400, moving to second in the Summit League in the event. Sophomore Berkeley Engelland took first in the women's 800.

Junior Maddie Olson took first in the women's high jump. Senior Bennett Schwenn took first in the men's long jump.

Smith won the women's shot put after she won in the hammer throw the day before, followed by freshman Lillian Allison winning the women's discus.

The team hosts the USD Twilight on May 8 before the Summit League Outdoor Championships and the NCAA First Round and Championships.

**Colton Tolly** | The Volante



Wyatt Stewart vaulting in the men's pole vault.

## Nike swooshing into Coyote Athletics

**Trevan Rychlik**

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University of South Dakota has partnered with Nike and BSN Sports for the next ten years of Coyote Athletics. This partnership will start on July 1.

When fans come back to campus in the fall, Adidas will be gone from the Coyotes' jerseys, and the Nike swoosh will now be there instead. Adidas has been a partner with USD since 2012, lasting in a 14 year partnership.

When the Adidas contract was coming to an end at the end of this school year, the university put out a bid, and both Adidas and Nike came back with contracts. Alexa Rudeen, Assistant AD for Equipment and Operations, noted that Athletic Director Jon Schemmel took his time to look through the contracts.

"Jon Schemmel went through every contract very detail oriented, making sure the right numbers were there," Rudeen said. "He got in contact with Adidas and Nike, and when it all came out, the Nike contract looked great."

The decision also came a bit easier as USD will be

the only Division One school to partner with Nike.

"We are now the only Dakota school as a Nike school, so I think that helps a lot," Rudeen said. "It just separates us from the rest of the Dakotas when it comes to recruiting and branding."

Rudeen expects fans to be excited about this change, especially the changes to the jerseys in both colors and styles.

"I think the biggest transition that people are going to notice is just the color change. I mean, we're still red, but Adidas red compared to Nike red is vastly different," Rudeen said. "Adidas red is more the same color as Nebraska, and a little darker. Nike red is almost like a candy apple. It looks more like the Georgia Bulldogs, so the red is definitely going to be the biggest look change."

"Every team sport will be getting three jerseys, which is nice," Rudeen said. "Some of those teams, like soccer, have never had a black jersey before, and now they will get a black jersey because we were able to do that for that team. It will be exciting to have all red, white and black jerseys for every single team."

Gear has been coming into the offices now, as the athletic department prepares to make the switch over the summer. Rudeen commented on just how many boxes the department is receiving.

"Everyday we get anywhere from 20 to 80 boxes," Rudeen said. "It's like those unboxing videos you guys see, so that's been very exciting."

A big part of the consideration for the department was the ability to bring the community into the brand, which Rudeen believes Nike will help with.

"We want the town of Vermillion to be a USD Nike town, and so really working hard with Charlie's and collaborating with some things. I think it was harder to get Adidas into stores and the retail side," Rudeen said. "Being able to shift to Nike is going to help with the retail side as well, so I'm pretty excited."

The athletic department will be with Nike for 10 years as the contract starts in July. Fans will get their first experience with the teams in the fall, starting with volleyball, soccer and football.

## Locked into success

**Trevan Rychlik**

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After finishing third in the Summit League and making the semifinals in the Summit League Tournament, second year Head Coach Carrie Eighmey has received a contract extension.

USD's Women's Basketball team improved by 15 wins from year one to year two under Eighmey. Her new contract is a five year deal that has her at South Dakota until the 2030-2031 season.

"We had a great year this year, a ton of credit to our student athletes," Eighmey said. "We just had a phenomenal group that worked really hard, played hard and played well together."

Most of the team last year was made up of transfer students, which helped with turnaround for the team, but Eighmey wants to focus on local talent to build her roster.

"A lot of our recruiting within the region is if you draw a big six hour circle around where we're at, that's kind of where we'd like to really lean on getting most of our recruits from," Eighmey said.

Even though Eighmey did a large chunk of work in the portal last year, she still wants to focus on homegrown talent, especially in small communities like the Midwest.

"I think that has a lot to do with the recruiting process, and I'll credit our staff," Eighmey said. "They've done a phenomenal job."

Eighmey has a vision set to continue the success at USD after the season she had in year two.

"Obviously, the standard having done what we did this year, we don't want to go backwards, but at the same time, every year, it's a new year, different team, the defense and rebounding," Eighmey said. "We want that to be something that we can rely on year in and year out. Hopefully next year's team is going to come with that same mindset, that same toughness on the defensive end."

Eighmey enjoys having the portal and high school recruiting, but she doesn't look to make a big splash in those areas, but rather the background of a player.

"I think one of the areas that we've been able to be successful in is finding players who fit us and who fit kind of what we're looking for in the way that we want to play," Eighmey said. "Most importantly, we want players who obviously love the game of basketball who work really hard, who are unselfish and great teammates."

Eighmey will look to senior guard Molly Joyce to lead the team next year. Joyce was the newcomer of the year, second team All Summit League and second on the team in points, averaging over 13 points a game.

**Sydney Kolln** | The Volante



**Carrie Eighmey taking a photo with Robles.**

## Coyotes take third at championships

**Trevan Rychlik**

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The Coyotes men's golf team competed at the Summit League Championships from May 3-5.

South Dakota started strong as a team on the opening day, going even on the day, the only team not to go over par. The Coyotes, at that point, held a two score lead over NDSU.

USD struggled getting it going on day two. However, with a score of eight over par as a team, it was the fourth best score of the day. The Bison were the only team to go under par on the second day of competition to sit at one over par overall, holding the lead.

Overall, South Dakota finished third behind North Dakota State and Denver at seven over par as a team. On the third day of the competition, the

Coyotes shot one under par for sixth on day three.

The Bison won the title, scoring five under par, the only team to finish under par.

Junior Parker Etzel led the Coyotes individually, going four under par, finishing tied for first. Junior Cole Witherow finished second for South Dakota, tied at 12. Sophomore Jack Holtz came in third at tied for 14, and junior Joe Rohlwing finished fourth for South Dakota, tied for 25.

Rohlwing was named to the second team All Summit League before the meet kicked off.

The team will be back next school year with their fall schedule of invites and meets.

**Joe Rohlwing golfing at the championships.**



**Graphic** | GoYotes

## Third times the Charm?

### Trevan Rychlik

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South Dakota football went 10-5 in 2025, making it to the FCS Playoffs and going to the quarterfinals. This all happened under first year head coach, Travis Johansen, after former coach Bob Nielson retired after nine years.

In early Feb., Johansen left South Dakota to become the defensive coordinator for Rutgers in New Jersey. Shortly after, Athletic Director Jon Schemmel announced former co-offensive coordinator Matt Vitzthum as the 32nd Head Coach of South Dakota football.

Vitzthum goes into his first year as the head coach for USD in 2026 with much to replace. Perhaps the biggest loss for the Coyotes may come at the quarterback position, as the team will need to replace Aidan Bouman. Bouman ended

his career with South Dakota with the most wins as a Coyote in the Division One era, totaling 32 wins. He is also the record holder in passing yards, completions and attempts.

The biggest focus for Vitzthum over the summer and into the fall will be finding a new starting quarterback with three different players in the battle.

“The thing that we thought was most important as a staff is making sure that whoever that’s going to be, whether it’s Austyn (Modrzewski), Nevan (Cremascoli) or Jackson (Proctor), we want to surround him with a great group of people, so they don’t feel like they have to try to do anything crazy,” Vitzthum said. “Offensively, the only changes we’ll make is that the offense will be centered around our starting quarterback.”

A big hole has been left in the FCS after rival North Dakota State left for the

FBS level, going to the Mountain West. However, Vitzthum doesn’t want to focus on who is and isn’t on the schedule.

“We have a complete laser-like focus on ourselves, and we know that if we continue to improve and we continue to just stick to what we believe in here, we’re going to put ourselves in a position to be there at the end of the year with the top teams,” Vitzthum said. “To create an environment at practice where that’s very competitive, it’s iron sharpens iron every single day. When we go into the (Missouri) Valley, and we know it’s going to be physical, we’re not outmatched. We’re prepared for those moments.”

After Johansen left, a second transfer portal window opened, but only one player left USD. Vitzthum created the environment in the locker room as to why so little players left.

“Your roster can be flipped, and guys

that you were counting on suddenly have a change of heart, but we only lost one player in the portal in that second window, so super appreciative of that,” Vitzthum said.

When it comes to the future, Vitzthum is looking forward to continuing to grow NFL level players at South Dakota.

“You commit to USD, you’re committing to a 48 to 60-month process,” Vitzthum said. “That won’t be easy, but if you believe in it, you grind through it and you stick to it, there will be opportunities at the end of it.”

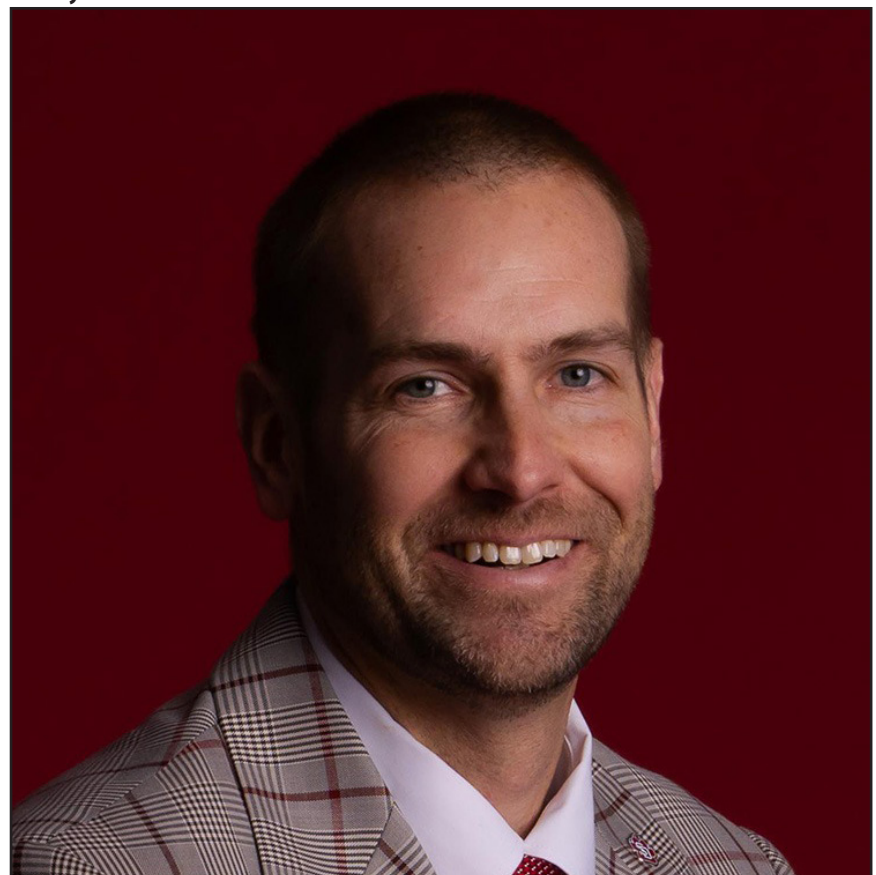
South Dakota and Vitzthum open the season at home against Central Connecticut State, then play Indiana State in early October for Dakota Days. The Coyotes will play the Jackrabbits on Halloween in Brookings.

Running back Charles Pierre Jr. running against North Dakota.



Adam Pearson | GoYotes

First year head coach Matt Vitzthum.



USD Athletics | GoYotes

## Loving USD means letting it go



**Elisabeth Hart**  
is a senior majoring in  
Legal Studies and Political  
Science.

There is something specific about loving a home that you know will be temporary. Every year, approximately 2,000 students graduate from USD. This year, I am one of them. Over the past four years, I have grown to love USD and make it my home, even knowing my time here would be short.

Upon reflecting on my time at USD, I began to think about what makes this college so special. Vermillion is undoubtedly a “small town,” and that lends a unique quality to our community. No matter where you go, you are likely to see someone you know. That familiarity makes Vermillion feel

like home, and the same is true on USD’s campus.

Not only do you recognize people wherever you go, but over time, those people become your community. Professors recognize students in the halls, classmates turn into familiar faces you nod to between buildings and staff members greet you with kindness that goes beyond obligation. Gradually, campus stops feeling like a collection of classrooms and offices and instead becomes a place where people feel known.

Loving USD also means understanding its temporary nature. College is designed to be a chapter

rather than a permanent home, yet students fully invest in the experience anyway. Knowing that time here is limited makes each day and interaction more meaningful.

Letting go of USD does not diminish its value. The lessons learned, relationships formed and sense of community experienced here continue to shape students long after they leave Vermillion.

USD will remain a place of growth and connection for future students, just as it has been for those graduating now. In that way, loving USD ultimately means carrying its influence forward, even after it is time to leave.

## See you in August



**Juliana Oltmanns**  
is a junior majoring in  
Media & Journalism and  
Political Science.

With the end of spring semester every year comes celebration as finals are over, the sun is out and students are free for the summer. However, beneath all of the “see you in august” promises and sappy Instagram posts remains a gloomier reality. The beginning of summer break also means the loss of community, and day-to-day life that college students spend all year creating.

For many students, the end of spring semester feels less like the beginning of a break and more like the bittersweet ending of one’s favorite book. As dorms empty seemingly overnight, friends fill their cars only to disappear, leaving students reminiscing over all the memories they made in one short year.

Somehow the routines that made campus feel like the world was small evaporate into thin air. All the things students take for granted, like late night study sessions, shared meals and spontaneous nights downtown, are left in the review mirror.

Students who go home for the summer face a kind of whiplash, as

they go from living surrounded by their closest friends and classmates, to sitting alone in childhood bedrooms they’ve long outgrown. The move home oftentimes feels like a step backwards, as the people once considered the closest are now states away, with only social media and group chats to bridge the miles between one another.

Similarly, the students left behind, the ones who chose to stay in their college towns instead of going home in order to pick up extra classes or work, are also forced to accept their new routines. As their once lively college towns now feel deserted, coffee shops close early and sidewalks once full of people stand empty. Staying behind can feel like being the last person awake at a sleepover, the party is long over yet you still remain, unsure of what to do with the silence.

I think what makes the seasonal disconnect so shocking is how little it is acknowledged by students and universities alike. USD invests so much energy throughout the academic year to ensure students have a strong sense

of belonging through welcome weeks, student org fairs, themed events, etc. However, as soon as May arrives, that stability vanishes and students are expected to simply endure months without it.

For most students, community isn’t something that simply shuts off in the summer and turns back on as soon as they step back on campus, it’s the emotional backbone of their college experience. Losing it, even temporarily, can feel extremely destabilizing.

I think it’s time campus communities stop treating summer break as a harmless pause in students’ day-to-day lives and start acknowledging the emotional cost it carries.

If universities truly valued students’ well-being, they would think of ways to carry community engagement into the summer months by creating new programs and treating the social challenges summer brings.

The community students find on campus shouldn’t have to be boiled down to “see you in August,” it should instead span miles and months apart.



## A letter from the Managing Editor: One last story

**Sydney Kolln**

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Like all things in life, things eventually come to an end. For me, my time with The Volante is concluding since I am graduating from the University of South Dakota this May.

When I first came to USD in fall 2022, I started off as a reporter/photographer. I mostly took photos at football and volleyball games, but I remember that the first story I wrote was about an Irish dance class that was offered at the Wellness Center.

Over time, I started to join the executive team of The Volante. First I was the Verve Editor, then Social Media Director, before finally becoming the Managing Editor for two semesters.

In total, I've written 39 stories for The Volante and taken more photos than I can count. I've enjoyed writing about more lighthearted stories, such as the theatre department's performances, CABchella and USD sports wins.

However, I'm also proud to have written on

more serious, hard topics, such as stories about how an ICE Detainee was returned home in Yankton, how the community held a candlelight vigil for Alex Pretti and how hundreds gathered for the No Kings protest. It's those stories where I've pushed past my own personal biases and held my integrity as a journalist.

To our Volante staff, especially those on the executive team, thank you for your dedication each print night and for highlighting stories on campus and in our community. The Volante wouldn't be possible with just one person, it takes all of us to build this newspaper and share our voices.

To the Editor-in-Chief, Nathan DeGreef, I am so incredibly proud of you. I've previously worked with DeGreef when we were co-producers for Coyote News in the Spring of 2025, so we've seen each other at our best and our worst. Nathan, you have turned this paper around for the better and I

am so grateful for the time that I've gotten to see you grow as a leader, as well as be your friend.

I leave you all with one last thought. Everyone has a story to tell. It doesn't matter how big or small it may be, every story is important, special and unique. It's our job as journalists to share those stories with students, faculty and the community. It's our job as journalists to highlight those harder stories that need to be told and highlight the issues in our nation. It's our job as journalists to decide how to share the story, and it's important to be as neutral as we can be, even when we do have our own opinions on those topics.

Here's one last story, my story, with The Volante. While my time with this paper has come to an end, this won't be my final time writing as a journalist. To everyone reading this, you have your own story to tell and it's your decision how you're going to tell it.

### OVERHEARDS

*Here you'll find the weirdest, funniest and stupidest things we've heard during the week. Context is for suckers.*

*"I used to be a naive little girl, now I've hardened."*

- Al Neuharth

*"My uterus is getting mad at that."*

- Beede Hall

*"Even hungry people deserve more than watermelon off the floor."*

- Prentis Park

*"Oh yeah, my sex column."*

- MUC

*"They don't get breast cancer as often."*

- Old Main



## Opera puts on one last performance

**Andrew Schwarz**

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On May 2 and 3, the USD Opera Department performed the Broadway musical and opera “Light in the Piazza.” The opera is set in Italy in the 1950s, where a southern woman named Clara Johnson meets a young Italian man, Fabrizio Naccarelli and they fall in love.

Although “Light in the Piazza” is recognized as an opera, it debuted on Broadway as a musical in 2005. It also won a Tony Award for Best Musical Score that same year. It was last performed internationally in 2019 at the Royal Festival Hall.

Among the USD performers was Max Bruguier, who played the priest and was a background ensemble member. He talked about the work he put in for the opera.

“I had to go and do a bunch of research for what priests would wear, how they would act in that certain era and how they would carry themselves,” Bruguier said.

Although the opera has the style of a classic Broadway musical, it is still classified as a modern

opera. Although both are a part of the performing arts, there are still major differences between the two.

“Operas are almost always sung-through, whereas with musicals, you won’t see that as often,” background ensemble member Madi Maschmann said. “They’ll tend to be broken up with spoken dialogue.”

“In operas, we don’t have mics,” Bruguier said. “We are fully dependent on belting all of our notes and being heard from all the way at the back of the audience.”

The “Light in the Piazza” was the last major performance by USD’s Opera Department for the 2025-2026 academic year. Although the Opera Department rarely puts on major theatrical arts such as these, Maschmann emphasizes the importance of putting on these performances.

“The existence of both art forms allows for people with any vocal technique to perform at that caliber. People with voices for musical theater aren’t necessarily going to perform as well in an opera,” Maschmann said.

## Nikte

A Column

### Nunca dejamos de decir “adiós”.

**Nadia Castillo is a Spanish and Media & Journalism double major. Her column is written in Spanish. An English translation is available on our website, [volanteonline.com](http://volanteonline.com).**

Una vez en clase de español, mi maestro, el Profe Siefker, nos dijo que le encantaba la manera en que los latinoamericanos nos saludábamos al pasar. Generalmente, cuando nos cruzamos con alguien, simplemente le decimos adiós porque no vamos a entablar una conversación, ya que los dos vamos de paso.

Pero aquí en Estados Unidos es diferente: cuando te cruzas con alguien, empiezas con un saludo y le preguntas cómo ha estado. Lo cual es inútil, ya que ninguna de las dos personas va a contestar la pregunta y seguirá caminando. Por eso, Profe Siefker nos dijo que prefería decir adiós en lugar de hola cuando se cruzaba con alguien.

Ahí es cuando me di cuenta de que estamos muy acostumbrados a decir adiós. Pero para alguien que está tan acostumbrada a decir adiós, nunca he podido hacer que duela menos.

Desde pequeña me he tenido que despedir de muchas personas, ya sea porque tenía que mudarme o porque era su momento de irse. Y aunque a veces la despedida no era la última vez que los vería, sí sería la última vez que viera esa versión de ellos.

Me he despedido de amigos de la primaria, secundaria, preparatoria y ahora de la universidad. Me he despedido de versiones de mi casa que nunca volverán. Algunas veces, de las cuales me arrepiento, no me he despedido porque, en mi mente humana, di por hecho que los volvería a ver y, tristemente, el fin de la vida llegó antes que yo.

Hay muchas personas que dicen que la despedida de algo es simplemente el inicio de algo más. Y eso es cierto, pero ese inicio, en el que ahora caminarás nuevos caminos, lo harás sin las personas con las que estabas acostumbrado a hacerlo, y eso es lo que tal vez te deja un nudo en la garganta cuando ves el reloj y

te das cuenta de que tu tiempo con ellos es cada vez más corto.

Tal vez sea un cliché decir que es importante disfrutar de cada segundo que pasas con alguien. Pero es, en verdad, lo mejor que podemos hacer. Creo que muchas veces vivimos en el futuro, pensando en lo que vamos a hacer más tarde, esperando el momento en el que veremos a alguien más. Somos criaturas raras; nos la pasamos añorando el pasado y esperando el futuro, pero pocas veces viviendo el presente.

Estoy en un momento de mi vida en el que pronto tendré que despedirme de amigos que marcaron mi etapa universitaria. Estos amigos que me enseñaron tanto ahora se van a lograr cosas maravillosas, y aunque sé que seguiremos en contacto, extrañaré entrar a las oficinas y reír con ellos. Extrañaré hacer tarea y platicar hasta las dos de la mañana en nuestro cuarto de estudios.

Dadas las circunstancias, también me encuentro con la posibilidad de tener que despedirme de alguien que amo y que ha sido parte de mi vida durante mucho tiempo. Y aunque rezo todos los días para que no tenga que hacerlo, me doy cuenta de que si no es hoy, en algunos años más tendré que despedirme de familiares que amo tanto. Cuando pase, espero haber disfrutado cada segundo a su lado.

Aunque digo adiós con lágrimas en los ojos, también lo hago con una sonrisa, porque sé que adonde sea que vayan estas personas, me llevaré un pedazo de ellas y las encontraré en todo lo que hago: cuando juegue con mis anillos, cuando vea una película de superhéroes, cuando vea el color azul, o cuando cosa un vestido. Siempre estarán ahí.

Estoy acostumbrada a decir adiós, pero no he logrado hacer que duela menos. Estoy acostumbrada a decir adiós; tengo que estar, ya que, al parecer, nunca dejamos de hacerlo.



Visit  
[volanteonline.com](http://volanteonline.com)  
or scan the QR code  
to stay up to date  
on campus and  
community news

## Essential albums for the summer months

Alyssa Batt

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### “Exodus” by Bob Marley

“Exodus” is a reggae album with hints of electric guitar that accelerate the listening experience. It’s a classic album released in 1977 with some of Marley’s greatest hits. The first song of the album, “Natural Mystic,” feels like summer with the iconic bassline and Marley’s vocals. “Exodus,” an almost eight-minute song, is an obvious standout song due to the different instrumentals including keyboards, guitars, percussion, drums and a horn section. Other well-known and recommended songs with that summer feel are “Jamming,” “Waiting In Vain” and “One Love/People Get Ready.” The album has an overall unifying, beachy feel to it.

### Sublime’s Self Titled

In my opinion, this is a no skip album that I recommend others to replay throughout the summer and purchase on vinyl. Sublime is a Southern California band that blends ska, reggae, rock and other genres to make the listeners feel the summer vibe of beach culture. “Sublime,” released in 1996, includes 17 different songs. Their most iconic songs are “Santeria,” “What I Got” and “Wrong Way.” “Doin’ Time” is widely considered a summer song because it’s built on the reggae beat that describes the sunny feeling of summer time. Songs that stand out to me on this album are “Garden Grove,” “Pawn Shop” and “Under My Voodoo” because of the electrifying guitar and the memorable bassline. Sublime is currently releasing new music and touring under the past lead singer’s son, Jakob Nowell. If you’re wanting to listen to more of Sublime during the summer, I highly recommend their “40z. To Freedom” album that features songs like “Badfish.”

### “Can’t Buy A Thrill” by Steely Dan

Yacht rock is a genre that is prominent throughout the summer and Steely Dan dominates the Yacht Rock universe. “Can’t Buy A Thrill” contains Steely Dan’s most iconic song, “Reelin’ In The Years.” The song is a summer classic, especially

for many recent graduates. The 1972 album contains a vast variety of instruments that set Steely Dan apart from most bands. They utilize instruments like a horn, piano, percussion, sitar, fugelhorn, bass and more. Donald Fagen has unique vocals and a stand out range. The album starts off with “Do It Again,” an almost six minute song with a sitar solo. “Dirty Work” is another popular song on this album that stands out due to its catchy and relatable lyrics about the complexities of love and relationships. “Midnite Cruiser” is a catchy song that references Steely Dan’s appreciation of jazz influences with their blend of rock. “Fire In The Hole” is one of my favorite songs on this album because of how the piano and keys play a significant and interesting role throughout the song. “Only A Fool Would Say That” is probably one of the most summery songs on this album because of its light and relaxed guitar rhythm.

### “American Pie” by Don McLean

An album and song that makes every Fourth of July is “American Pie.” “American Pie” is the iconic eight minute song that describes “the day that music died.” This reference is when a plane crash killed rock and roll stars Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and J.P. “The Big Bopper” Richardson in Iowa. Throughout the album, McLean sings relaxing songs about summer days in “Vincent.” This is more of a melancholy album with the acoustic guitar complimenting McLean’s vocals in his songs. Even though this is shorter with ten songs, totalling out to 36 minutes in length, this is still a renowned summer album that was made in the 70s.

### “Voulez-Vous” by ABBA

When many Gen Z people think of ABBA, they’re thinking of the first “Mamma Mia” movie. “Voulez-Vous” is an upbeat album that will cure anyone’s summertime sadness. It features songs like “Gimme! Gimme! Gimme! (A Man After Midnight),” “Chiquitita,” “Angel Eyes” and “Voulez-Vous.” The 1979 album has high energy disco vibes that feels like dancefloor music made for the night

life with songs like “Summer Night City.” The lyrics throughout the album focus on a European summer romance surrounding the party culture.


### “Citrona” by Flipturn

“Citrona” is an indie rock album with unique vocals and fast-paced beats. This album highlights the feeling of nostalgia through the sound of the synths and the fun melodies. The album feels coastal and youthful describing care-free summer days. “August” is the band’s most well-known song overall and rightfully so. “August” is a song with sad lyrics, but an upbeat and fluttering tempo. The song describes a young summer love. Even though this album is only 24 minutes long with seven songs, I think this is a no skip album. The album cover itself is memorable with a painted picture of a roadside. Other songs I highly recommend are “Churches,” “Six Below” and “Nickel.” Once you listen to this album, you’ll want to keep discovering more songs from this band.


### “Californication” by The Red Hot Chili Peppers

“Californication” is another must-have for vinyl collectors to have. One of their most popular albums is full of weird and upbeat songs. The Red Hot Chili Peppers are known for each one of their band members and the qualities they bring to each song. The album starts off with “Around the World,” known for Flea’s basslines and John Frusciante’s neverending guitar. The 1999 album contains some of the band’s most-streamed songs, including “Scar Tissue,” “Californication” and “Otherside.” Each song has its own unique tempo and lyrics to set each one apart. The beat of the songs varies when playing the album start to finish. The album ends with a chill song called “Road Trippin,” which is a necessary listen for every road trip. The funk-rock album contains a summer feel with Frusciante’s glowing guitar sound and lyrics that capture the feel of California. This album is perfect for days on the beach and long drives.

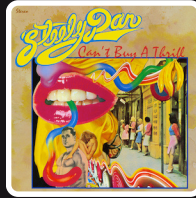
## Music Playlist




Cover courtesy of  
Island Records




Cover courtesy of  
MCA Records




Cover courtesy of  
Geffen Records




Cover courtesy of  
EMI Catalog



Cover courtesy of Polar  
Music International



Cover courtesy of  
Flipturn



Cover courtesy of  
Warner Records Inc

## Social Justice Choir: Activism through music

**Nadia Castillo**

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Submitted | The Volante

All songs tell a story and some of these stories come together to raise awareness against injustice. The Social Justice Choir in Vermillion seeks to use the art form of music to fight discrimination.

On Thursday, May 7 at 7:00 p.m., the choir will host their LGBTQ+ Rights Concert at the First United Methodist Church. During the performance, the choir will sing music from LGBTQ+ composers. The initial thought for the concert was to include mostly transsexual composers, but there were some difficulties in putting it together.

“It’s really hard to find music that’s always accessible to the community choir, so I included gay, lesbian and bisexual composers as well,” Chris Larson, Director of Music at the First United Methodist Church, said.

The choir does only one concert a semester, so they rehearse weekly, about 14 hours in total. They focus on specific social issues at a time. This semester’s topic was chosen after much consideration.

“I try to keep things topical with what’s going on in the world,” Larson said. “I was kind of seeing towards the end of last calendar year more threats to the rights of LGBTQ+ persons.”

The lineup of songs is extensive, ranging from happy tunes to more serious songs, therefore, showing

the variety of music of LGBTQ+ composers.

“Lavender Song is kind of a choir favorite,” Larson said. “It was written, I think it was around 1920 in Germany, and it’s considered the first gay anthem.”

During the concert, people will not only listen to the music, but also be educated about the history of the LGBTQ+ social movement through it.

“I’m hoping that everybody feels a bit more sense of empowerment to either embrace your own identity or feel empowered as an ally, and to also just enjoy the variety of music that queer composers have written,” Larson said.

The Social Justice Choir has created a space for people to come together and, through music, call out injustices.

“I think that people have been finding a nice sense of community, finding people who share similar ideas, beliefs and it’s open to anybody,” Larson said.

With their concerts, the choir hopes to bridge the gap between differing opinions and make a safe space for conversations about social issues. With the concert coming up soon, Larson is already thinking about what to do next semester.

“For next semester, the idea that I have right now is peaceful protests, so some protest songs, songs

### Vermillion Social Justice Choir

Presents:

LGBTQ+ Rights

Thursday, May 7th at 7 PM

At the Vermillion United—16 N. Dakota St.

(formerly First United Methodist Church)

Directed and accompanied by Chris Larson

Free admission

Soloists: Laurie Brown, Noa Bunkers, Vance Crowley, and Nan Lambertz-Schager



about peace,” Larson said.

The choir takes a break during the summer, but members and anyone interested may join the United Church of Christ and Trinity Lutheran Choirs for the Vermillion Pride church service on June 21.

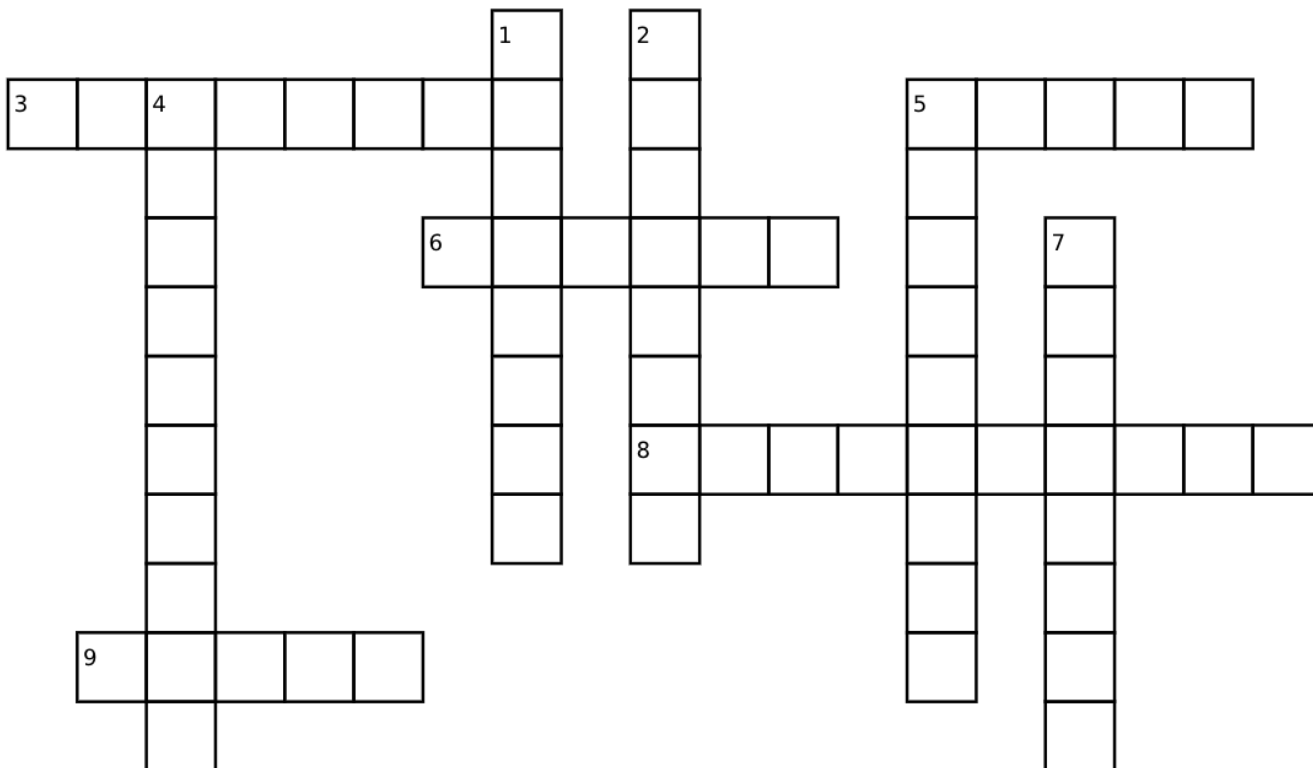
## Summer Crossword

Down:

1. Cold drink made with lemons
2. Long drive with friends between destinations
4. Bugs that buzz in summer evenings
5. Protects your skin from UV rays
7. Frozen treat on a stick

Across:

3. You sit around at night outdoors
5. Sweet treat you roast over a fire
6. Grilled meat that goes between buns
8. Summer work experience for students
9. Sandy place by the ocean



## Sensory garden: A mindful space

**Nadia Castillo**

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Submitted | The Volante

In a world with constant stimuli, activating the senses in a controlled environment might be just what people need to relax. The Southeast South Dakota Activity Center's (Sesdac) new sensory garden is set to open to the public on Thursday, May 28, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

"We have visual art installations that are going to include mosaic pieces that are actually made by the people that we support," Ionela Georgescu, Executive Director of Sesdac, said.

Sesdac offers services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They provide habilitation and training through a range of recreational activities that allow people to socialize.

"We also have garden beds for the people that we support," Georgescu said. "They are all going to be working during the daytime services with some of our staff planting flowers and taking care of them."

The garden aims to create a space for everyone to practice mindfulness through sensory integration. This outdoor space will serve different therapeutic reasons for the people visiting.

"This is going to be open to the public, and it's going to be a place to provide inclusion for people that we support into the community and share our vision with everybody," Georgescu said.

The layout of the space includes a butterfly garden with specific plants that attract butterflies. There's also a smell-and-touch garden with aromatic plants where people can feel their textures. The garden also has water features, like a bubbly fountain. Additionally, there are wind spinners and chimes, as well as swings, one of which is wheelchair-accessible.

"It's been one of my goals for the past five or six years," Georgescu said. "We started, in the beginning, with a very small sensory room. When we saw how beneficial that was and how calming it was for the people that we support, we said, 'Why not take it outside?' So I have been dreaming of this for a long time."

The initial sensory room has now become a gaming room after they decided to expand it and move it into a larger space. This new room has a sound system for mindfulness exercises. It also has a projector that projects onto the floor, where people can play interactive games. This room is still available within the Sesdac offices, whereas the Sensory Garden is an outdoor, more nature-centered version of this idea.

"If I have to pick one part of it, it would be the pond, the water and the bridge," Georgescu said. "I think the water features are probably my favorite part



in the garden."

After the ribbon-cutting ceremony, attendees are welcome to stay for the Sesdac Garden Party, where they'll explore its various features. People who want to attend are encouraged to RSVP by filling out the form at [sesdac.org](http://sesdac.org).

## Summer 2026 movie preview

**Quinn Gienapp**

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Here are some quick previews of notable films coming out this summer, along with a list of other films to keep an eye on.

### "Backrooms" (May 29)

Inspired by a series of popular internet horror stories, this film follows Clark (Chitwel Ejifor) as he discovers a seemingly never-ending series of yellow rooms in the back of a mall. The horror of this film will most likely focus more on "liminal spaces" and the anxiety of being stuck somewhere seemingly endless. Internet creators have interpreted this concept in a variety of ways, so I am interested in how it will be depicted here.

### "Disclosure Day" (June 12)

The latest film by Steven Spielberg follows a whistleblower (Josh O'Connor) as he attempts to divulge the truth about extraterrestrial life living on Earth. The film will then seemingly follow the world's reaction to this information and how governments attempt to cover it up. Not much

more is known about the plot currently, but initial trailers give the impression that it will be an intense drama that delves into the horror of aliens secretly affecting the world around us.

### "Toy Story 5" (June 19)

Woody and the gang return for another movie, where the toys face a new threat in the form of an electronic tablet that demands the attention of their owner, Bonnie. If you like the other "Toy Story" films, I imagine this one will continue to be immensely charming and visually pleasing. I also enjoy it tackling the issue of "iPad kids" and how giving kids tablets can be harmful in the long run.

### "The Invite" (June 26)

While initially seeming like another "relationship-troubles" story, this film stands out to me with its stacked cast of Olivia Wilde, Seth Rogen, Penélope Cruz and Edward Norton. It looks like it will be a funny drama that follows a troubled couple meeting their eccentric neighbors, and the

night spiraling into insanity from there.

### "The Odyssey" (July 17)

Perhaps the biggest blockbuster of the season, this is director Christopher Nolan's take on the foundational story of the same name. The film will follow the 10-year journey of the Greek king Odysseus (Matt Damon) as he attempts to return home after fighting in the Trojan War. As of now, I am a little skeptical of the film's quality, even with strong names behind. A lot of the classic elements of the original story I feel may come across as hokey when expressed through a lot of modern day actors. Nevertheless, I am sure this film will be a great theater experience.

### Other films to make note of:

"I Love Boosters" (May 22), "Super Girl" (June 26), "Spider-Man: Brand New Day" (July 31), "I Want Your Sex" (July 31), "The End of Oak Street" (August 14) and "The Dogstars" (August 28)

Have questions?

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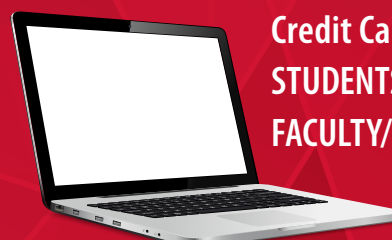
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