

DACOTAH PRAIRIE TIMES

Children's Exhibits Offer Learning & Fun

DPM has been filled with the sounds of children exploring, laughing and having fun in the exhibits created especially for them that opened February 10 on the second floor. In preparation for the opening, staff transformed the Lamont Gallery into an Enchanted Forest where kids could create art projects of all types.



Pillars Into Trees

Five-gallon buckets transformed into mushroom stools

Lamont Gallery becomes Enchanted Forest



The Native American Encampment room offers the opportunity to explore tipis, pick corn, build a camp fire, ride a horse, try on Native American costumes and make Native American crafts. Our young guests have enjoyed them all.



play in a town house with dinner dishes and pioneer clothes, do laundry, pick garden vegetables and explore in a covered wagon.

Whether you have kids or not, a visit to these rooms will bring you a smile. Come soon. The fun continues only through April 10 when the exhibit will close until next year.

The Frontier Town rooms offer three galleries of town fun. Guests shop at a frontier store,



DPM Event Calendar

March

- 27 DPM Board meets 5:15pm
- 30—31 ASDM meets in Redfield

April

- 3 April Fool's Fun at DPM starts
- 6 Good Friday — DPM Closed
- 8 Easter—DPM Closed
- 10 Children's Exhibits Close
- DPM Foundation Board 5:30pm
- 11 Garland Society at DPM 1:30pm
- 14 Brown County Historical Society At DPM 2:00pm
- Genealogical Society at DPM 2:00pm
- 16 DPM Annual Volunteer Lunch 11:30am—1:00pm
- 24 DPM Board meets 5:15pm
- 26—27 Granary High School Art Workshops

The April Fool Strikes

DPM staff is expecting a visit from the pesky April Fool who has visited each year since 2007. He is never seen, coming sometime during the night, but everyone knows he's been here—he leaves items in exhibits that don't belong, some are easy to spot while some are well hidden.

We know we will see evidence of his visit on April 3 and will leave it for everyone to enjoy through the month of April.

Visitors will be eligible to win small prizes in weekly drawings if they correctly identify all the Fool's handiwork. He's clever, so look closely!

Tidbits from DPM's 2011 Annual Report

- Visitors came from 49 states, District of Columbia and 24 foreign countries
- Junior Docent program marked its 18th year; since inception these Roncalli sixth grade students have shared 12,542 hours of volunteer service with DPM
- 498 children from 19 local and area schools visited DPM for Afternoon Into the Past programs
- 76 local and area classrooms traveled to DPM for tours
- Staff made 175 visits to classrooms
- Adult volunteer hours totaled 2,525, which at minimum wage of \$7.25 is valued at \$18,306.25
- DPM hosted 274 events (programs, meetings, classes, receptions)
- DPM participated in 315 events outside the museum
- Two major long-term exhibits were opened (WW II and Brown County Pre-History)
- Fourteen small art and artifact exhibits were installed
- 47 donors added 493 items to the museum artifact collection
- 155 students from North and South Dakota participated in the Granary High School Art Exhibition
- The Roncalli Junior Docent Program received the Peg Lamont Volunteer Service Award
- DPM's annual budget was \$279,506, which included \$12,000 from the city of Aberdeen

If you would like more information or a copy of the 2011 annual report, please call 626-7117. The report is posted on DPM's website at www.dacotahprairiemuseum.com as well.

Brown County Historical Society News

The Brown County Historical Society will meet at 2:00pm on Saturday, April 14 at the museum. The program will be provided by Robert Russell, Director of the Beulah Williams Library on the campus of NSU. Russell will discuss the library's work in digitization, the process of creating digital images of text, photographs, or even artifacts, which can be loaded onto websites making the images accessible to anyone, anywhere. If time allows, Sue Gates will highlight what other museums across the country are doing in this area as well as DPM's digital plans.

This meeting is open to the public; membership in the Society is not required to attend. Call Sherri Rawstern at 626-7117 for more information about this program or the Society.

New Board Members

Nina Vilhauer and Carol Fowler retired from the Dacotah Prairie Museum Board at the end of 2011 having each completed two three-year terms. Alan Hawkinson and Brian Kellar were appointed to begin their first term in January 2012.

The Dacotah Prairie Museum Foundation Board welcomed Carmel Heyd, Jason Pettigrew, and Cindy Schick. They will each serve a three year term.

In January each board elected new officers who will remain in office for one year. Museum Board officers are: President Jacie Schley, Vice President Eric Vetter, and Secretary Kathy Sperry. Foundation officers are: President Dean Webb, Vice President Stacy Levsen, and Secretary/Treasurer, Dorothy O'Keefe.

Prom Trivia Answer

Aberdeen Central High School hosted its first Junior-Senior Prom on Saturday, May 27, 1927. This event replaced the annual banquet Juniors hosted for Seniors. Dancing, bridge and bunco began at 8:30pm and lasted until midnight. Dinner was served at 10:00pm and included chicken salad, olives, stuffed rolls, ice cream, cake and coffee. Music was provided by the Merrymakers orchestra. The hall (gym) was decorated with multi-colored paper streamers suspended from the ceiling.

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Prom Season Trivia

**What Year Did
Aberdeen Central
Host Its First
Junior-Senior
Prom?**

Answer on page 3

The Circus Comes to Town

Aberdeen hosted its first circus in 1886, and Ringling Brothers Circus came for the first time in 1892. By 1896 the troupe featured a cast and crew of 1,000. There were also 400 horses, 100 cages and chariots, and 1,000,000 yards of canvas tenting. The entire circus represented a capital investment of \$3,700,000 and had an average daily operational expense of \$7,500!

The circus arrived via train—actually numerous trains. The first to arrive was always the commissary department, which was quickly unloaded and taken to the show grounds at Eighth Avenue and North First Street. The huge cookhouse tent was erected, and chefs began preparing breakfast for the circus personnel arriving on later trains. Breakfast included 250 dozen eggs, 5,600 griddlecakes and 500 pounds of chops along with gallons of coffee. Meat (3,700 hundred pounds of beef, pork, and lamb) was delivered daily, arriving in a special refrigerated rail car. A local store supplied one-half ton of cabbage, forty bushels of potatoes, fourteen bushels of lettuce; a local bakery delivered 700 loaves of bread and 750 buns.

A barbershop tent was set up, complete with a red, white, and blue barber pole. Other tents were occupied by a lawyer, dentist, doctor, minister, harness makers, bookkeepers and stenographers who traveled with the circus. Children of circus personnel attended school in a tent set up solely for that purpose.

Eventually the expense of these huge operations became so great that many towns could no longer host them. Ringlings provided circus entertainment to Aberdeen into the 1950s, when Aberdeen, too, could no longer afford them. However, the Yelduz Shrine found and sponsored visits by other circus troupes, so Aberdeen continues to enjoy the annual spring rite of going to the circus.