



# Vermillion Cultural Association

## 2019 Annual Report



The Vermillion Cultural Association is a 501(c)(3) organization

## Letter from the President

Dear VCA Friends:

At the outset of 2020 we were anticipating the spring and summer movie seasons—always the most vibrant times for the Coyote Twin Theater and the Vermillion Cultural Association—and building on the successes of 2019. The onset of the coronavirus pandemic disrupted those plans, of course, but our community has banded together to ensure that we're all healthy and as safe as possible during this unprecedented period.

Being healthy and safe, however, has meant closing the Coyote Twin, our primary revenue source for the VCA. We've been fortunate to work closely with our partners at First Bank and Trust, Tom Schaack in particular, to keep our staff whole and establish lines of credit to help us through this time. We are uneasy, naturally, but feel that we have reasonable steps in place to re-open the Coyote Twin and the Vermillion Theater once we all feel confident that mass entertainment like movies and concerts can regain footing.

What does 2020 now hold for us? We wish we had a clear picture. Here's what we do know: we're considering how we can take advantage of these times to not just survive but thrive. The Vermillion Theater needs structural help, and we believe we have some ways to make that happen and remain fiscally responsible. The Coyote Twin needs a good cleaning and new protocols. And we are eager to keep limited access to the First Dakota Coyote Twin Gallery so that local art continues to have downtown forum.

Here's what we also know: last year was our best ever. When a small group of board-members-to-be sat down in June of 2015 to contemplate the purchase of the Vermillion and Coyote Twin Theaters from the March family, we had no idea what we were doing. But we had a vision to grow arts and culture in the Vermillion community and make film, art, and music available to anyone, regardless of ability to pay. We crafted a business plan with revenue projections five years. By year four, we projected revenues that we hit almost exactly in 2019. That real moment of accomplishment deserves celebration.

We know that this year will be very different from last. Still, our vision and our belief in that vision are strong, as is the Vermillion community, and the need to support film, art, and music is great. We hope you'll continue to join us on the journey. Once we begin events again, consider safely attending. If you can contribute, please do. And read on to review what we accomplished together in 2019 to give you perspective about how your support has had a phenomenal impact in our community. It's a predictor of what great things will come again after we work through these challenging times together.

Sincerely,

William D. Anderson  
VCA Board Chair

## Community Cinema

This year brought a bumper crop of Hollywood blockbusters to the **Coyote Twin Theater**. *Avengers: Endgame* opened at the end of April and promptly sold out twelve shows. Thanks to *Toy Story 4*, *Spider-Man: Far from Home*, and *The Lion King*, July 2019 went on the books as our highest-grossing month in the movie business. And, of course, *Frozen II* and *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* filled seats throughout November and December. In fact, as of December 31, we totaled just under 26,000 theater admits in 2019, exactly in line with the projections from our 2015 business plan, when the Vermillion Cultural Association (VCA) undertook saving the theaters.



A stormtrooper serves popcorn at the Coyote Twin in December 2019. Photo by Russ Stone.

That we have been able to stay on target with the Coyote Twin while also providing free movies for kids, live music, art exhibits, community murals, and so very many special events with local partners and University of South Dakota (USD) organizations says worlds about the Vermillion community and the leadership we're lucky to have in our board members.

Of the fifty-two weeks in the year, twenty-one featured free **Community Monday** showings sponsored by local businesses, organizations, and USD partners. Notable among these were a screening of '80s classic *The Goonies* sponsored by Tim Hanson Insurance and the



Members of the 2019 winning Fool's 48 teams celebrate in the RED Steakhouse Auditorium.

Vermillion premiere of *Vanished South Dakota*, produced and hosted by South Dakota Public Broadcasting and sponsored by Thurman Law Office.

We also showcased the creations of our Fool's 48 Short Film Project participating teams on a Monday evening, filling the RED Steakhouse Auditorium with a record 115 attendees.

Every second Monday of the month, we also hosted **Chick Flick Club** at the Coyote Twin. The mix of movies ranged from the Ruth Bader-Ginsburg biopic *On the Basis of Sex* (2018) to *Steel Magnolias* (1989). This year's sponsors were Blue Monarch Boutique, Wynie Mae's Spa, and THiNK605.

An excellent addition to our calendar was the institution of regular **Free Movie Fridays** for USD students, sponsored by the USD Student Programming and Campus Activity Board. Once or twice a month, USD students are invited to 7:00pm and late shows of our currently airing features on a Friday, and all they need for admission is their student identification. The uptick in attendance those nights is a boost for the Twin and provides students quality entertainment in the heart of downtown Vermillion.



The Vermillion Public Library, in partnership with the VCA, entertained young Vermillionaires and public-school students with movies every Tuesday afternoon for six weeks during summer break and four times over the course of the school year on early-out days.

Other community partners for public and private showings in 2019 included the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, South Dakota Shakespeare Festival, Sanford Care Center, newly founded Vermillion PRIDE, and the Vermillion Area Arts Council (VAAC).



*Vermillion kiddos settle in for a movie.*

Finally, the Coyote Twin received a facelift this year, thanks largely to community donations collected during the 2018 Giving Tuesday campaign. We painted all first-floor public spaces, laid new carpet in the lobby, renovated the lobby restrooms, updated our soda service, and replaced our aging ice machine. Behind the scenes, we were also able to complete a long overdue update to our VCA office upstairs, including new carpet, paint, and furniture donated by the USD Foundation.

## Cultural Programming

Between exhibits at the **First Dakota Coyote Gallery** and events at the historic **Vermillion Theater**, 2019 featured a robust calendar of cultural programming.

The Coyote Gallery housed twelve exhibitions featuring works from over 80 individual artists. Many exhibitors were local photographers, sculptors, and painters, the majority of whom were students, graduates, or faculty of USD.

In conjunction with Labor Day in early September, the VCA hosted Art Works: The New Deal Lives On, a joint exhibition with the USD University Art Galleries. Art Works displayed prints commissioned by the Works Progress Administration in 1930s and 1940s from the USD Art Galleries' permanent collection. A short series of talks on local ties to the history of the WPA, the collection of prints, and the artists who created them were held on the final day of the exhibit, followed by a tile-painting workshop where participants created original pieces to contribute to a USD student-led art mosaic project and enjoyed New Deal-era songs performed by the Public Domain Tune Band.



At the end of December, the Missouri River Watercolor Society was established as a partner project with the VAAC. The weekly watercolor open studio welcomes painters of all skill level and is held in the gallery. It featured local artist Michele Mechling as the primary instructor.



*Sleigher performs a sassy Christmas-themed cover song.*

Our Vermillion Cultural Programming Committee hosted fourteen unique events in 2019, including a murder mystery party, a karaoke night, the annual River Honoring potluck, and incredible concerts by the Jim McKinney Quintet, Big Red Rawkit Riot, and the Christmas cover band Sleigher. Each event was a smash hit for those in the audience, but attendance at individual events was worryingly low. Without revenue from larger audiences in the future, the time, cost, and effort invested by our programming

committee and the acts they book may prove unsustainable.

## Vermillion Community Mural Project

The Vermillion Community Mural Project painted the town again this summer, under direction of USD professor Amber Hansen. Thanks to the time and talent of lead artists Reyna Hernandez, Elizabeth Skye, and Inkpa Mani, the back wall of the Coyote Twin Theater, facing City Hall, has been transformed into a stunning tribute to indigenous women and the Sioux creation story. The mural, titled *Eúnkičhetupi* (Come Back to Life), is the first half of a planned diptych that will wrap the northeast corner of the Coyote Twin building. The second portion is planned for summer 2020.

In early 2019, the lead artists held public meetings, during which they invited members of the community to share their thoughts on what they would like to see represented in a mural through workshops that included storytelling, drawings, and poetry. Their design was informed by these input sessions.

The central figure of *Eúnkičhetupi* is based on a photo of an indigenous woman found in the W. H. Over Museum archive. Together with the star quilt pattern featuring an eagle, the mother breastfeeding is an allusion to the Sioux creation story in which a woman is carried by an eagle to the top of a hill, away from the flood waters, where she bears twins who are the first of the Sioux people.

The future completion of this mural will represent a significant investment in and dedication to enlivening and enriching the Vermillion downtown experience, and the VCA is proud to have served as conduit for this remarkable addition to our community.



*Community members add color to mural outlines in July 2019.*

## Finances

After holding prices level for nearly five years, the VCA Board of Directors approved inflationary price increases for tickets and concessions effective July 1, 2019. Management

kept a tight lid on labor costs, reducing them by 3% in 2019. Gross receipts, including tickets, concessions, rental and program revenue, increased again this year, continuing a four-year trend. Net operating income—the best measure of the theater’s operating performance—ended in the black at \$4,540.

Notwithstanding the positive financial news in 2019, small-market movie theaters face an extremely challenging future. Operating costs continue to rise. Maintenance costs in our aging facilities—the Coyote Twin and the Vermillion Theater—are growing, presenting difficult choices. Many of these projects are typically postponed for lack of funding. The cost of first-run movies will also stress the budget, requiring management to continue the “save it for side 2” strategy announced last year of offering a mixture of first-run, second-run, and independent films in order to reduce film costs.

**2019 Revenues and Expenses**

Revenues	
Ticket sales	\$183,353
Concessions	104,756
Other	17,679
Expenses	
Cost of Goods Sold	138,584
Operating	162,664
<b>Net Operating</b>	<b>4,540</b>
Other Revenues	
Contributions	37,722
Grants	5,000
Programming	5,704
Other	106
Other Expenses (w/o depreciation)	
Programming	6,370
Other	5,041
<b>Net Other</b>	<b>37,121</b>
<b>Net All Funds</b>	<b>41,661</b>

Financial statement not audited at time of publication.

## Staff

**Executive Director** — Shannon Cole

**Operations Lead** — Brody Stone

**Accountant** — Lori Rofles

## 2019 Board of Directors

**President** — Bill Anderson

**Vice President** — Michelle Maloney

**Treasurer** — Greg Redlin

**Cultural Programming Chair** — Jessi Hanson

### Members

Kevin Bliss (joined Dec 2019)

Melissa Eberts, VCDC Representative  
(joined Oct 2019)

Kim Grieve

Susan Heggstad

Jen Peterson

Kathy Prasek (joined Dec2019)

Betty Smith

Susan Tuve

Ariel Wai (joined Dec 2019)

Jim Wilson

Carson Zubke, USD Student Body President

## Find us online!

Coyote Twin

 [vermilliontheaters.com](http://vermilliontheaters.com)

 [@vermilliontheaters](https://www.facebook.com/vermilliontheaters)

 [@vermtheaters](https://twitter.com/vermtheaters)

VCA Programming

 [vermiculture.org](http://vermiculture.org)

 [@vermiculture](https://www.facebook.com/vermiculture)

 [vermiculture](https://twitter.com/vermiculture)

## 2019 Partners

American Legion Wallace Post 1

The Bean Community Coffeehouse

Beyond School Adventures

Blue Monarch Boutique

Classic Hits 106.3

Elk Point-Jefferson High School

Heartland Humane Society

Lawrence Brothers Science Camp

Maloney Real Estate

MASABA, Inc.

National Music Museum

Oscar Howe Summer Art Institute

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

Pressing Matters

The Quarters Vermillion

R-Pizza

Red Roof Inn

RED Steakhouse Auditorium

Sanford Care Center

Sanford Vermillion

SESDAC

The Spa at Wynie Mae's

South Dakota Public Broadcasting

South Dakota Shakespeare Festival

THiNK Thread & Ink

Thurman Law Office

Tigert Art Gallery

Tim Hanson Insurance

US Census

Vermillion Area Arts Council

Vermillion Area Chamber & Development  
Company

Vermillion Federal Credit Union

Vermillion Human Relations Commission

Vermillion Lion's Club

Vermillion Parks & Recreation

Vermillion Parent-Teacher Organization

Vermillion PRIDE

Vermillion Public Library

VermillionNEXT

Vermillion Right to Life

Vermillion Schools District

University of South Dakota

- Amnesty International
- Athletics
- Campus Activities Board
- Dept. of Art
- Dept. of English
- Dept. of Psychology
- Dept. of Theater
- Gallagher Center for Experiential Learning & Education Abroad
- International Studies Program
- Marketing
- Modern Languages Dept.
- Native Student Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Sculpture Culture
- Spectrum
- Student Government Assoc.
- Student Programming
- TRIO
- University Art Galleries
- Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies

Karon & Bob Fuller  
 Barb & Doug Goodman  
 Bob & Barb Hansen  
 Angela Helmer  
 Ray & Pam Hofman  
 Greg & Susan Huckabee  
 Candy & Keith Joy  
 Matt Knutson  
 Jeannette & David Lorenz  
 Greg & Janet Merrigan  
 Jim & Susan Moran  
 Lynn Muller  
 Tom & Nancy Nelson  
 Gary & Frances Rasmussen  
 Earl & June Sampson  
 Kal & Betsy Simons  
 Richard & Marlys Stenaas  
 Jim & Ann Stewart  
 Cliff & Tangi Summers  
 Rod & Joanne Tieman  
 Steve & Carol Ward  
 Jerry & Norma Wilson  
 Jerry & Barb Yutzenka  
 Joyce Zimmer  
 Judy Zwolak

**Glow Getter**  
 Sandy & Larry Bradley  
 Kurt & Susan Hackemer  
 Josette & Ron Lindahl  
 Michelle Maloney  
 Greg Redlin  
 Art & Lana Rusch  
 Sanford Vermillion  
 Betty & Larry Smith  
 Darwin & Diane VanDenOver

**Rising Star**  
 Vermillion Federal Credit Union

**A-Lister**  
 Kyle & Michelle Hinseth  
 Jim & Bergen Peterson

## 2019 Members

### Individual Level

Arlene DeVany  
 Doris Heine  
 Anne Hinseth  
 Ron Johnson  
 Linda Kogel  
 Luann Ouellette  
 Amy Schweinle  
 Jo Ellen Schweinle  
 Suzanne Skyrn  
 Robert Stoner  
 Jeanette Williams  
 Jim Wilson  
 Diane Zak

### Dual/Family Level

Deb & Clark Christensen  
 Dan & Gloria Christopherson  
 Kelsey Collier-Wise & Royce Miller  
 Don & Jeanne Dahlin  
 Tom & Karen Davies  
 Bob & Vicki Dehner