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# Just a thought... t

## Rugby has a lot to offer

April 23, 2012

By Terri Kelly Barta Tribune Editor , Pierce County Tribune

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It never ceases to amaze me how much Rugby has to offer its residents. Not only that, but the quality of the alumni from Rugby High School and nearby schools is outstanding. Alumni continuing to live in Rugby as well as those whose careers have taken them elsewhere have their city as a priority.

If you have lived here all of your life, you may not recognize what I am saying, because mine is an outside observation. I am someone who lived elsewhere after graduating from nearby Harvey High School.

The qualities I have noticed are as follows: Rugby is a community of kindness, respect, and generosity. Rugby is an educated community, many of the residents are either college-educated or have continued to educate themselves. Loyalty to Rugby is abundant. Residents here are proud of their town and it shows.

People of this area support the arts, more than most small towns. The North Dakota Horizons magazine (winter edition) featured an article entitled "The Plains are Alive with the Sound of Symphony Music" by Gwen Hoberg. In it, the Heartland Civic Orchestra of Rugby was featured. In that issue was a photo of Rugby's own Tilman Hovland conducting the orchestra and a smaller inset photo of the brass section of our local orchestra. Although her photo was not included, Deb Jenkins plays a significant part in the conducting of the orchestra.

Rugby is one of the smallest cities in the United States with an orchestra. Only eight formally organized orchestras reside in North Dakota, according to Hoberg. Rugby, Devils Lake, and Valley City are the smallest towns to have them. The others are in Fargo-Moorhead, Bismarck-Mandan (2) , Grand Forks and Minot. In addition, Williston and Jamestown have a string ensemble and chamber orchestra, respectively, in conjunction with their colleges.

On June 3, Rugby alumna Kristi Rendahl will be presenting the first of a series of Prairie Talks, a new lecture series in the Geographical Center of North America. Alan Bjerga an American journalist and author will be the first speaker. He wrote the book "Endless Appetites: How the Commodities Casino Creates Hunger and Unrest". Coming in October will be Roxana Saberi, Fargo native, who worked as a correspondent in Iran for U.S.-based Feature Story News. Saberi was arrested in 2009 and was sentenced to eight years in prison on a trumped up charge of espionage.

For Rugby to get this level of quality speakers is awesome. It just shows the loyalty some Rugby alumni have for their home area.

I have no doubts that the Prairie Talks will be welcomed in Rugby and its surrounding communities. People here want to learn and grow.

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