

## Meet the Captain & Belle...

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With a small scream of disbelief, the journey of Don "Murdo" and Diane Edwards as the 2010 Captain and Belle of Yankton's Riverboat Days "Hawaiian Style" began.

"That is exactly what she did, that little scream." Don said when asked what the couple's response was at being notified of the honor. "I was totally surprised and humbled. It brought a little tear to my eye. I just never thought that something like that would happen. This to me is a big deal, as far as I am concerned. I don't know if I can put myself in the category of some of the people who have been Captain and Belles in the past, but it is an honor to be up there with them."

That humbleness and joy in representing the community is just one reason Yankton Riverboat Days co-chair Chopper Johnson said the Edwardses were chosen as this year's representatives.

"Over the years, we have asked for nominations to be mailed to us," Johnson said. "We had such a conglomeration of picks to choose from that we condensed them down. Murdo and Diane's name was just there, all the time. They have been great for Yankton and great supporters of Riverboat Days and all other activities in Yankton. They have done a lot for the community, but they have real-

ly helped us. It was a very easy choice and we are thrilled that they accepted. We know that they will do a great job."

Johnson said whenever the committee has asked for something from the couple through the years, the Edwardses have found a way to make sure they provided it.

"It is just community involvement in so many areas," Johnson said. "Don is always willing — whatever we ask for — there is never a no."

Don, who owns and operates Murdo's Restaurant, and Diane, who is director of nursing at the Yankton Medical Clinic, stressed that they didn't feel they had done any more than anyone else.

"You take your turn and do things," Diane said. "It starts off, you are there because your kids are there and you get involved that way. Then it grows as your children grow. I expected to do less after they were grown, but it just hasn't worked that way."

The couple said they feel they have contributed in small ways over the years.

"I have been co-chair of the ribbon cutting on the bridge, small things," Don said. "For Riverboat Days, I help anyway I can, be it donations or whatever. A lot of times, we are so busy (at the restaurant) that we haven't been able to be down at the park and volunteer for three days. The volunteers that are down at the river and (with) the committee work

year round to put this event on. It is tough. So when they or somebody needs something, I try to help out."

The couple will now serve as the official face of Riverboat Days. They will be attending celebrations throughout the area promoting the Summer Arts Festival and the other activities associated with the event.

"I think of the Captain and Belle as the ambassador to the community," Diane said. "We want to promote Yankton as a nice place to live, a great place to raise a family. The committee does have an agenda for us, but we are certainly going to do other things as well. Like the (Great West Conference) track meet this weekend was not on the official list of things to do, but we actually go to a lot of community events anyway. So, we will be very visible."

Diane noted that they had already handed out several bags of buttons promoting the Aug. 20-22 event.

"We will be all over meeting and greeting people," she said. "We just hope to be very energetic and a great ambassadors for the community."

Don added, "How could you not be an ambassador? Look down the river, seeing the steeple, how could you not be impressed with what you see?"

At his restaurant, Don shared a wall of photos of all the past Captain and Belles.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTOGRAPHY BY JERRY

Don "Murdo" and Diane Edwards

"I think in the past years they have had excellent selections for Captain and Belle, and I just hope to do as well as they did," Diane said. "I think they have all done such a nice job and have all really enjoyed themselves. If any of them have told us anything, they have

told us how much they enjoyed going to the events and meeting people, and going to the area towns and participating in the events. That is why we are looking so forward to the summer."

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