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“Vermillion . . . The Place To Be” VCDC News

A PUBLICATION OF THE VERMILLION AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

January 2011

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Steve Howe, VCDC Executive Director



Steve Howe

I've been thinking about bridges lately. There are two ways to build a bridge, as I see it; we can choose to partner with the folks on the other side and build a common, useful bridge, wide enough for two-way traffic to serve all, or we can throw your respective logs and rope bridges over the river for our own uses and do what we can to keep others from crossing. The latter method seems to describe the relationship between universities and communities, otherwise known as Town and Gown Relationships.

Do a small amount of research and you'll find that almost every university community has the same issues. Ron Kysiak, the CEO of the joint Northwestern University and Evanston, IL Research Park, wrote in a study of university-community relations at Yale and Northwestern, "although universities bring great prestige to a community, many citizens perceive them solely as large, powerful, non-taxpaying entities that soak up city services and provide little in return. This perception, combined with the universities' penchant for making unilateral decisions without city consultation, made the relationship between the two entities more and more acerbic as time went on." The issues are commonplace, but effective solutions are not.

I've been talking to a lot of people lately, both affiliated with USD and those not, on this topic and I hear much of the same as Kysiak described. We've shared this community since the late 1800s, yet there still seems to be a log and rope bridge relationship between us. Yes, we're crossing back and forth, but not without more effort than it needs to be. Vermillion and USD clearly need one another. USD doesn't recruit quality faculty and students without an appealing, welcoming community. Vermillion doesn't have the employment options or lifestyle we desire without USD.

USD students, faculty and staff make up the majority of Vermillion's population (yes, students count in our population numbers), and the better part of the rest of us make our livings either directly or indirectly selling to, employing, renting to, or otherwise working closely with that population. We are a true university town. We're not diverse enough to claim any different.

Even with this interdependence, it slips past some of us that affiliation with a university does not make one a transient or interloper unworthy of our welcome, nor can we hold them responsible for the beer can in our yard. They are not stationed here as on a military base; they are here by choice and we must welcome them accordingly. It also slips past some of us that one's position as a non-university affiliate does not make them responsible for our displeasure with shopping options or our traffic tickets. They are not our cruise directors here to keep us happy and we must appreciate what they do offer.

Affiliation, or non-affiliation, with a university does not absolve anyone of the responsibility of citizenship in a community. Whether here for generations or for the term of a degree, we all share in the responsibility for moving our community forward, and we also share in any failures. So let's start there. Let's start by acknowledging our shared roles in this community and assume our joint responsibility to make this the best community it can be. I recognize I am oversimplifying this issue, but it's a first step. Next step is to throw a friendly wave to our fellow bridge builder across the river and understand that for a bridge to meet in the middle, construction needs to start on both sides.

Steve Howe

Mission Statement

The role of the Vermillion Area Chamber of Commerce & Development Company is to foster and promote the retail, manufacturing, civic, agricultural, and economic development interests of our community and the surrounding area.

2011 VCDC Board:

Dan Kenton
Hy-Vee

Paul Preister
Bank of the West

Paul Eickhoff
Polaris

John Prescott
City of Vermillion

Michelle Maloney
Scoops & RED Steakhouse

Mayor Jack Powell
City of Vermillion

Sheila Gestring
The University of South Dakota

Randy Houska
Houska Dental

Jim Brady
Ace Hardware

Gerald Tracy
SESDAC, Inc.

Alan Fritch
CofTrust Bank

Jon Robertson
Cherry Street Grille

Al Pravecek
Vermillion Veterinary Clinic

VCDC Staff:

Steve Howe, Executive Director

Ann Breitag, Member Services Manager

Maureen Cashin, Visitor & Investor Relations

Nancy Nelson, Administrative Assistant

The official publication of the VCDC News is published quarterly. It is sent free of charge to all VCDC Members.



www.vermillionchamber.com ■ Email us at vcdc@vermillionchamber.com ■ Call us at 624.5571

Events Calendar

28th Annual Dakota Farm Show @ USD Dakota Dome Jan. 4-6, 2011
Cracker Barrel @ VCDC Office Jan. 29, 2011
USD Wellness Center Grand Opening Feb. 1, 2011
USD/Vermillion/Yankton Day – Pierre Feb. 9, 2011
Cracker Barrel @ VCDC Office Feb. 12, 2011
VCDC Annual Banquet @ MUC Ballroom Feb. 25, 2011
Cracker Barrel @ Vermillion Fire Hall Station March 26, 2011

For a complete event listing go to www.vermillionchamber.com

Notary Public Service

Notary Public Service is available

to all Chamber Members at no

charge at the VCDC office.

MONDAY MESSENGER

Each week we provide our members with updates on what is happening in the community through the Monday Messenger. We also send out frequent communications and reminders to our members. These communications are a great way for our members to share information with other members. If you have an update that you would like included or if you would like to be added to the emailist to receive it every Monday please call us at 624-5571 or email us at atvcdc@vermillionchamber.com. The Monday Messenger is also available every week on our website www.vermillionchamber.com.

AMBASSADORS REPORT

By Jon Callahan

The Vermillion Ambassadors close out a very eventful 2010 Year and look forward to the opportunity to serve the Community of Vermillion in 2011. The Ambassadors stayed very busy in 2010 assisting with ribbon cuttings, Business After Hour events and other chamber related activities this past year. On October 2nd, Sheila Prosser, Anthony Edelen, and Jon Callahan from the Ambassadors along with Jon's sons Andrew and Josh represented the Ambassadors at the annual Dakota Day Parade. The Ambassadors walked along a Ranger provided by Polaris Industries that was decked out with Vermillion Ambassador Signs provided by the Equalizer. The warm fall day was perfect for the parade and attendance was one of the largest in past years. This was truly reflected by the demand for candy that was being allocated out by the Ambassadors. The October Ambassador meeting was held October 5th at the Bluff Golf Course. The Ambassadors attended a Business After Hours meeting held on October 14th at Valiant Winery which they co-hosted along with Security National Bank of South Dakota. For the Month of November, the Ambassadors held their meeting at Polaris Industries on November 2nd. The Ambassadors welcomed Adrienne Lewis from Valiant Vineyards to the Ambassador committee. The meeting was followed by a tour of the Vermillion warehouse facility. Also on November 2nd the Ambassadors attended the Business After Hours hosted by SESDAC, Inc. On November 23 the Ambassadors attended a Business after Hours hosted by Clay-Union Electric in conjunction with their 75th anniversary. During the month of December, the Ambassadors welcomed Bernie LeCates from SESDAC, Inc. as its newest Ambassador. In December the Ambassadors held their monthly meeting at the Roadhouse on December 7th. The Ambassadors attended one Business after Hours Event hosted by Sanford Vermillion in conjunction with their Tree of Life Celebration. If you would like to be a part of the self-rewarding group please contact Ann with the Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company for more details.



Ambassadors left to right: Seated – Jon Callahan, Sandy Brown, Sheila Prosser – Chairperson, Adrienne Lewis; Standing – Alan Fritch, Anthony Edelen, Kimberley Andres, Sherry Stockwell, Pat Goebel, Keith Brooks; Not pictured – Candy Lubben, Donna Shafer, Bernie LeCates and Leota Conroy

SD Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Speaks at Rotary Club



The VCDC Legislative Affairs Committee sponsored David Owen, President of the SD Chamber of Commerce & Industry, to speak at the Rotary Club meeting at the Al Neuharth Media Center on Dec. 21st. David's main topics during his Pre-Legislative Session speech were:

- The recession continues to leave the state with budget shortfalls and increased demands for services like Medicaid. Budget deficits.
- The crisis in the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Trust fund was addressed last year and the surcharge has ended. The UI Advisory Board will be looking at long term issues.
- There is still work to do on economic development in South Dakota and the kind of incentives that will help strengthen the economy. The Chamber has looked at the issues of our state's higher initial costs for entering business and will begin to seek some solutions.
- Ever wonder how much of the state's economy is used to provide services delivered by state and local governments and schools? The Chamber will bring forth a bill to have an annual report on the "Economic Price of Government" to answer that very question.

TO SCHEDULE A RIBBON CUTTING OR GROUND BREAKING EVENT

Please contact us at 624-5571 or email us at annb@vermillionchamber.com

VISITOR AND TOURISM NEWS



Southeast South Dakota Tourism – Regional Update

The SSDTA office is busy this time of year finalizing production of the 2011 travel publications. The Southeast Regional Visitor Guide is at the printer and expected to arrive first week of January. The South Dakota Vacation Guide "Southeast Section" will join up at the printer with the other three regions and complete the book mid-February. The Southeast Desk Calendar has been mailed to members and friends and will be distributed to our legislators, tour operators and travel writers.

We are redesigning our Southeast Regional Map to be a more "grown-up" user-friendly map, doing away with the adventure cartoon look.

SoutheastSouthDakota.com is being updated with all the 2011 events, new pages and features. Facebook and twitter are doing very well and becoming a real asset to our day-to-day communication with members and visitors.

Our monthly E-newsletter for December went out to about 5000 email addresses of visitors who have provided their address via our website. The E-newsletter provides things to see and do and current vacation packages offering discounts for hotels and attractions. Visitors are able to click on areas of the newsletter and go directly to events, attractions or vacation packages.

The Pheasant hunting season seemed to start off slower but picked up later on. We are predicting a slightly lower number of hunters by season end.

We have begun work on rebranding the region. Out with the old... "Off the Beaten Path" and in with the new "Simply South Dakota." We will be unveiling the new brand with our new 2011 publications and adding another website. *Simply South Dakota* will give new direction to the organization to highlight Southeast South Dakota products, farm and ranch vacations, small towns and a "real" South Dakota vacation experience, away from the tourist traps.

Looking forward to a prosperous New Year.

For more information on Southeast South Dakota Tourism Association call 605-665-2435 or email: Jacquie.sesd@iw.net

Tour de Kota

Next June, hundreds of bicyclists will be pedaling their way into Vermillion. The Sixth Annual Argus Leader Tour de Kota is the "College Campus Cruise" from June 5-10, and Vermillion will host riders during their last overnight of the tour on Thursday, June 9. Riders will begin the tour in Sioux Falls on Sunday, June 5 and camp or stay in residence halls on college campuses throughout the week in Brookings, Madison, Mitchell, Freeman, and Vermillion, finishing their ride back in Sioux Falls on Friday, June 10. Staff members from the VCDC, USD, and City are organizing the Vermillion event which will be located at the USD Tailgate site. Food and beverage vendors and entertainment will be available on the campsite. For non-campers, 250 residence hall rooms have been set aside. We are happy to have the opportunity to showcase our community to everyone associated with the tour and ask our Vermillion residents and businesses to extend a warm welcome to our visitors next June! We will be seeking food and beverage vendors for the event. If you are interested in participating as a vendor, please call Maureen at the VCDC office at 624-5571.



Conference Center Meetings

A conference center task force was established in May to pursue the following goal: determine the need for a conference center in Vermillion, who would be best to address the need, and how a center might be funded. After the initial meeting, VCDC staff met with the Executive Director of the Sioux Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau for more information and to seek input about the feasibility of such a project in Vermillion. We then toured facilities in Mitchell and Huron, researched potential cost and size, and continued discussions within the community. We remain confident there is a need and desire for a facility in Vermillion. To that end, in mid-December we invited the task force to meet again in order to discuss our findings and determine next steps. The group reaffirmed there is a definite need for a conference center in Vermillion and spent the majority of the meeting discussing possible organizational structure, funding, and location. At the close of the meeting, we identified a smaller group of volunteers who wish to continue working toward our goal, and we will meet again with this group after the holidays.

USD/Vermillion Day in Pierre

The VCDC will once again partner with USD and the Yankton Chamber for our annual Legislative Day in Pierre on February 9th, 2011. Yote dogs, chips and a beverage, served by Aramark and sponsored by USD Alumni and the VCDC, will be served to the Legislators in the Rotunda. The VCDC will have a table set up to display various items and business information unique to the area for the legislators to view. Plans are being made to meet with the following state departments: Health, Education, GFP, Transportation, Tourism, Economic Development, and Ag. A one-on-one meeting with Governor Daugaard is also being planned. If you would like information or materials from your business highlighted at the table or if you would like to join us on the bus trip to Pierre please contact the VCDC office. The cost for the bus ride is \$30. Everyone is welcome!

Pre-Legislative Forum

The VCDC Legislative Affairs Committee held a Pre-Legislative Forum on Nov. 16th at the City Hall Council Chambers. The public was invited to meet their District 17 State Legislators-Elect, Eldon Nygaard – SD State Senate, Tom Jones – SD House of Representatives, and Jamie Boomgarden – SD House of Representatives. The audience submitted questions for the legislators to answer, guests were encouraged to make a presentation on issues or bills, and the Legislative Affairs Committee also submitted questions. The biggest issue of the forum was the budget deficit South Dakota faces, which will be greater than \$100 million. Steve Howe, VCDC Executive Director, was the Moderator.



Visitor Guide for 2011

The 2011 Vermillion Visitor Guide is currently being prepared and plans are to have it available during the first quarter of this year. Print-Source is designing the 2011 guide and currently obtaining advertising and creating the design. Highlights in the visitor guide will be updated photos and attractions, as well as the newly created Vermillion Visitor and Tourism logo and tagline

“close to everything. far from ordinary. “



The regional Southeast South Dakota 2011 Travel Guide “Simply South Dakota” has also been recently finalized and sent to the printer. The Southeast South Dakota Tourism Association prepares this annual publication. Watch for both guides in early 2011.



MEMBER NEWS

The Vermillion Area Farmers Market was the only South Dakota recipient of the 2010 Farmers Market Promotion Program grant. They were awarded \$51,142 which will be used to help increase access to locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables by low-income consumers by supporting the existing electronic benefits transfer (EBT) project. This grant will allow low-income consumers to use their federal nutrition program benefits for purchases at the farmers market and create stronger and broader supply and distribution channels among the growers providing these fresh local foods. In an effort to improve rural economies, the Vermillion Area Farmers Market will recruit and train the next generation of small farmers and support the continued viability of current producers.

Congratulations to Ruth Kern-Scott P.T., who received the SD Physical Therapy Association Physical Therapist of the Year 2010 Award. Ruth owns and runs Great Plains Therapy clinics providing outpatient physical therapy services in Vermillion, Beresford and Yankton.

The Vermillion Area Community Foundation announced the creation of the “Young and Gwendolyn Moore Society”. The society, named in honor of Young and Gwendolyn, is created to recognize individuals who name the Vermillion Area Community Foundation as a beneficiary of a planned gift. The Moores are recognized as the first charter members of this new society. Congratulations Young!

WalMart helped ten teachers from Vermillion High School purchase classroom supplies through its Teachers Reward Program. Each teacher received a \$100 Teacher Reward Card!

Congratulations to Debbie Hansen, LPN, Sanford Care Center Vermillion, on being honored with The DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. Debbie was recognized for her excellent interpersonal skills and her ability to establish special connections with the residents and families she cares for.

The Excellence Through Ethics Faculty, comprised of business and community leaders, presented a program to the entire high school student body at Vermillion High School. The program is sponsored by the Junior Achievement of SD in an effort to educate students on the meaning of ethical practices in business. Members of the Excellence Through Ethics Faculty are: Scott Munger, Craig Thompson, Paul Preister, Paul Eickhoff, Will Kennedy, Andy Anderson, Mike Carlson, John Prescott, Kevin Annis, Farron Pratt, Andy Howe, Tom Sorensen and Jack Powell.

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Banner Associates, Inc.

In May of this year Banner announced the opening of our satellite office in Vermillion. Located in the historic downtown district approximately a block from City Hall, the office better extends Banner’s local presence down the I-29 corridor. The new location extends our full engineering, architectural, GIS, and surveying expertise for a vibrant community poised for growth and where previously these services were not available at a local level. We look forward to providing services to the City of Vermillion, the University of South Dakota, Vermillion businesses and the surrounding community. The Vermillion office is headed by Lance Weatherly, PE, LSIT. If you are in the Vermillion area, we invite you to stop by and visit.

14 West Main Street, Suite A
Phone 605-624-6342
Fax 605-692-5714
www.bannerassociates.com

CHAMBER CHAT

Each week we have a printed column in the local newspaper and a “hometown happenings” spot on a radio station to provide information about events, promotions, business activities, and other news that helps keep area residents informed of local happenings. This is an excellent opportunity for our members to share their information with the public.

If you have any news that you would like included please call us at 624-5571 or email it to us at vcfdc@vermillionchamber.com.

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

If you know of someone who may be interested in becoming a Chamber member or for more information on joining, please contact us at 624-5571 or by email at annb@vermillionchamber.com



www.vermillionchamber.com ■ Email us at vcfdc@vermillionchamber.com ■ Call us at 624.5571



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SAVE THE DATE

The VCDC Annual Banquet will be **Friday, February 25, 2011** at the MUC Ballroom.

More information and details will be available in the near future!

February 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

OLLI Winter Programs

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) will offer four winter term programs in Vermillion, including Humor in Literature on January 26, Histories and Mysteries of the National Music Museum on February 8, one time programs on federal fiscal problems on February 9, and a history of Vermillion before the 1881 flood on February 24. OLLI is affiliated with USD and winter term catalogs are available at the VCDC or by contacting Ted Muenster at 677-6708.

Did you know...

VCDC Members may have their company or business promoted in the VCDC lobby area. This service is free to members and provides exposure to hundreds annually. Just drop your flyers or brochures off at the VCDC office at 116 Market St., Ste 103.

Shop Locally Invest In Our Community

In this time of high prices and busy personal time, local businesses can fulfill most of your shopping needs. With the cost to fill your gas tank, out-of-town travel adds significantly to the cost of your purchases. Buying locally saves you money in the long run and your purchasing dollars are recycled throughout the community. It also improves the community through investments and taxes. Vermillion has a wide selection of goods and services available at competitive prices to meet your needs, as well as the needs of several smaller communities in the surrounding area.

In Vermillion one can find everything from fresh flowers to building materials, and from photography to healthcare services – the variety covers the gamut. Our community is home to manufacturers and distributors in our industrial parks, national chain stores along the Cherry Street corridor, and quaint specialty shops located downtown in the heart of the city. Vermillion continues to grow with many new businesses, expansion of existing businesses, as well as extensive renovations to the University and our city services. And local business owners rely on you to become a repeat customer – something most out-of-town big box stores don't depend on.

When spent locally, your money recycles in the community many times. It goes to business employees who use their wages to buy more products and services, and it creates more jobs. It also goes to support our local organizations and sports teams, sponsor local events like the 4th of July Celebration and Ribs, Rods & Rock'n Roll; and to the local banks who loan money to others who will invest in our community. It also keeps your tax dollars supporting our schools and maintaining the city's parks, roads and infrastructure.

In short, every dollar spent locally is an investment in your community. Every dollar improves the quality of your community and expands the selection of goods and services that can be made available right here. Save gas, save money – support your local businesses and buy locally!

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Professional Development Series

Professional Development Series, sponsored by USD's Beacom School of Business SE Entrepreneurial Resource Program (SERP), will be from 6:30-9:00 pm at the Vermillion Area Chamber & Dev. Co., 116 Market St. Total cost for all four sessions is \$10.00. Participants will receive one continuing education credit for attending all four sessions. For more information & to register, contact Lisa Bryan at lisa.bryan@usd.edu or call 605-677-5565.

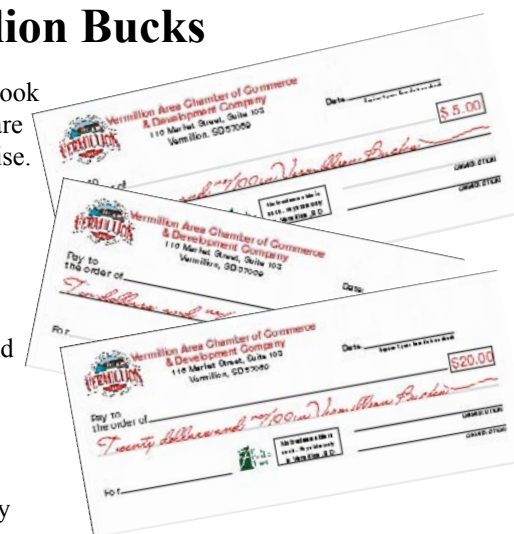
- **Jan. 25** - 'Feasibility of the Business' with Lisa Bryan & Steve Howe. This seminar will assist entrepreneurs in the identification of entrepreneurial opportunities and strategies and the role of personal factors (including creativity). The focus will be on recognizing opportunities & preparing the feasibility analysis for a new or existing venture.
- **Feb. 22** - 'Business Planning' with Mark Slade. This seminar focuses on the components, the process & understanding the business plan writing process. Building the entrepreneurial team & the acquisition & management of financial resources are emphasized along with venture growth, harvest strategies & valuation.
- **March 29** - 'Financing Options for your Business' with Vonnie Barnett. This seminar will explore a variety of funding alternatives, including self-funding, angel funding, venture capital, grants, conventional loans, & special loan programs specifically for small businesses.
- **April 26** - 'Preparing to Launch the Business' with Lisa Bryan & Dustin Pratt. This seminar will provide participants with the tools to launch their business venture. We will focus on the elevator pitch, accessing capital, bootstrapping, utilizing social media to market your business, and business plan competitions.

Are you looking for an opportunity to showcase your business and network with your peers?

Sign up to host a *Business After Hours* event! These events generally run from 5:00 to 7:00 pm on a weeknight and the hosting business provides hors d'oeuvres and refreshments. If interested, please contact Ann at annb@vermillionchamber.com or at 624-5571.

A Facelift For Vermillion Bucks

The Vermillion Bucks will have a new look in 2011, thanks to Pressing Matters who are volunteering their time and design expertise. The Vermillion Bucks program is an ongoing promotion to encourage shopping in Vermillion. Each certificate looks like a check and is processed like a check. Vermillion Bucks can be used at any Vermillion business and can be used for everything from buying groceries to paying local bills. These make great gifts for employees, family and friends. Please keep them in mind when you need birthday, anniversary or wedding presents or prizes and bonuses. Vermillion Bucks can be purchased in denominations of \$5, \$10 or \$20. To place your order please call 605-624-5571 or email annb@vermillionchamber.com.



SDRA Scholarship Applications Available

South Dakota Retailers Association (SDRA) Jerry Wheeler Scholarship applications are now available for students who will be enrolled in a retail field of study during the 2011-2012 school year. The program is named for former SDRA Executive Director Jerry Wheeler, who implemented the program in 1992.

The number and amount of scholarships varies from year to year; in 2010, eleven scholarships were awarded, ranging from \$500 to \$1,200.

To be eligible for an SDRA Jerry Wheeler Scholarship, students must:

- Have completed one year of college or one semester at a vocational school by Sept. 2011.
- Plan to enroll full-time in a retail-related field of study at a college, university or vocational school for the fall 2011 semester.
- Plan a career in a retail field.
- Either have graduated from high school in South Dakota, or plan to attend a college, university or vocational school in South Dakota in the fall of 2011.
- Submit an application by mail or email by April 11, 2011

Applications are available on the SDRA website at www.sdra.org, or by calling SDRA at 1-800-658-5545 (ask for Donna).

SUBMIT AN EVENT

Do you have an event you'd like to submit to our calendar?

Call 624-5571 or email it to vcfdc@vermillionchamber.com.

Please include the event date, time, event name, contact name and phone number.

Steve Howe Named to MAEDC Board of Directors



VCDC Executive Director, Steve Howe, has been named to the Mid America Economic Development Council (MAEDC) Board of Directors. MAEDC is a 10 state organization dedicated to providing education for economic development professionals, and to promoting regional economic development programs and cooperation across the region. MAEDC board members are dedicated economic professionals who share best practices to make each member more valuable to their organization. MAEDC is the best resource for making contact with site selectors, advancing regional economic development programs and accessing through leadership.

Have something to add?

If you have something that belongs in the VCDC News, please call us at 624-5571 or send it to us at vcdc@vermillionchamber.com. The deadline for articles to be included in the April 2011 issue is March 15th.

Congratulations Mike Chaney!

A retirement celebration for Mike Chaney, Chaney CorInsurance, was held at CorInsurance & CorTrust Bank on Dec. 14th. Mikes' career as an Insurance Agent started in 1968. The VCDC would like to thank Mike for his many years of service, hard work, and community support!



VCDC Committee Opportunities

Are you interested in becoming more active and involved with the VCDC and in the Community? Please contact Ann at annb@vermillionchamber.com or at 624-5571 for more information.

Clay County Commissioner Candidate Forum

The Clay County Commissioner Candidate Forum was Oct. 19th at the Al Neuarth Media Center. The forum not only gave the public an opportunity to meet the candidates and listen to where they stand on the issues, but it also gave them an opportunity to address the candidates with their own questions. The forum was sponsored by the VCDC Legislative Affairs Committee. Committee member Ted Muenster was the Moderator.



BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Valiant Vineyards/Buffalo Run Resort & Security National Bank of SD (Dakota Dunes) co-hosted Business After Hours on Oct. 14th. Brochures and information on the two businesses were available for all of the guests. Wine tasting and great hors d'oeuvres were enjoyed by everyone! Winners of the fabulous door prizes were Julie Fritch and Jennifer Steele.

SESDAC hosted Business After Hours and an open house on Nov. 2nd. Tours and presentations on what SESDAC is all about were given to the large crowd. The meal provided by Merrigan's Hog Roasting by Cherry Street Grille was enjoyed by all!

Clay Union Electric hosted Business After Hours on Nov. 23rd in celebration of their 75th Anniversary. The crowd enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, refreshments, making new contacts and networking with their peers. The lucky door prize winners were Sheila Prosser, Randy Hammer and Steve Howe who all received commemorative 75th Anniversary glasses.

Sanford Vermillion hosted Business After Hours on Dec. 12th in celebration with their Tree of Lights Open House. The large crowd enjoyed a lovely holiday atmosphere, Christmas music, refreshments and a fabulous buffet of hors d'oeuvres!

Our next Business After Hours will be Jan. 18th, hosted by Heartland Home Care at 25 West Main Street from 5:00 – 7:00 pm.

Thank you to all of the businesses who hosted and to all who attended the Business After Hours these past few months. It is a great time to understand what the host business has to offer, network with your peers, meet new contacts and socialize!



Clay Union Electric hosted Business After Hours on Nov. 23rd



SESDAC hosted Business After Hours and an open house on Nov. 2nd.



Valiant Vineyards/Buffalo Run Resort & Security National Bank of SD (Dakota Dunes) co-hosted Business After Hours on Oct. 14th.



Sanford Vermillion hosted Business After Hours on Dec. 12th



VCDC Holiday Events Committee Brings 'The Spirit of Christmas' to Vermillion

The VCDC Holiday Events Committee were busier than Santa's elves from September through December to bring 'The Spirit of Christmas' to Vermillion on the weekend of December 3rd and 4th. The weekend started off with the 2nd Annual Parade of Lights at 6:30 pm on Friday. Over 1,000 people lined the streets in Historical Downtown Vermillion to watch the spectacular lighted parade lead by the USD ROTC Color Guard, and listen to the USD Drumline. Once again Randy Hammer did an incredible job of emceeing the evening! At the end of the parade, Santa and Mrs. Claus made a grand entrance on the lighted Vermillion Fire Truck to Ratingen Platz for the Community Christmas Tree Lighting and listen to the incredible voices of the USD Carolers. After the Christmas tree was lit, Santa invited the children and their parents to the Vermillion Public Library to make "Stockings for Soldiers", an opportunity for them to decorate a stocking for a soldier serving overseas and also to make a stocking to take home. Nearly 200 children participated in decorating the stockings. Santa and Mrs. Claus were also at the Library for the children to talk to and sit on their laps. On Saturday, the Christmas coloring contest winners had lunch with Santa at Hy-Vee. After lunch, Santa went to the Hy-Vee parking lot where his 'Santa Shack' from Herren-Schempp was decorated for 'Pictures With Santa' by Peterman Photography. It was a fun filled Holiday weekend in Vermillion!

Congratulations to the Christmas coloring contest winners: *Addison Naslund, Anna Armbrust, Haley Folkena, and Maya Schmidt!* The VCDC Special Events Committee would like to thank everyone who made "The Spirit of Christmas" weekend a huge success:

- City of Vermillion*
- Vermillion Street Dept.*
- Vermillion Police Dept.*
- Vermillion Light & Power Dept.*
- Vermillion Public Library*
- Mick & Cheryl Breske*
- Randy Hammer*
- Herren-Schempp*
- Natasha & Jason Gault*
- Hy-Vee*
- Peterman Photography*
- USD Fine Arts Dept.*
- Mayor Jack Powell & Lisa Ketcham*
- United Church of Christ*
- USD ROTC Color Guard*
- Parade of Lights Entrants:**
- Bank of the West*
- USD Drumline*
- Dakota PC Warehouse*
- Brad's Plumbing - Ponca, NE*
- USD ROTC Color Guard*
- Herren-Schempp*
- Vermillion Public Library*
- Vermillion Fire Dept.*
- Hy-Vee*
- Steam Global Services*
- Nook'n Cranny/Never Never Land*
- Taco John's*
- USD - Charlie 1 Shuttle & Charlie the Coyote*



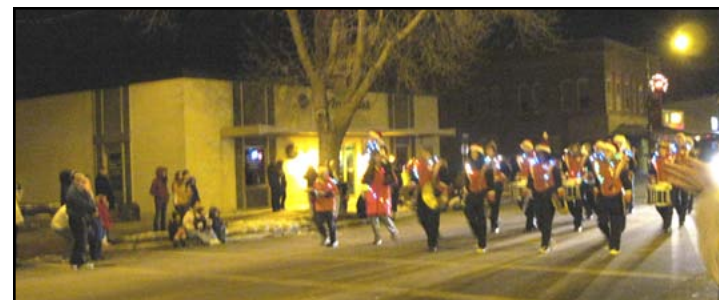
Congratulations



Winning Parade of Lights entry Stream Global Services!



Lunch with Santa held at the HyVee Cafe



USD Drumline strutting their stuff along the parade route



Onlookers watch the walking participants and the strolling vehicles that took part in the Parade of Lights



USD Carolers entertain during the Spirit of Christmas Weekend in Downtown Vermillion



Almost two hundred children participated in the "Stockings for Soldiers" event at the Vermillion Public Library



Thank You

A huge, heartfelt debt of gratitude is owed to the VCDC Holiday Events Committee, who during the busy holiday season took time away from their families and business commitments to volunteer their time and energy to make "The Spirit of Christmas" come to life in Vermillion.

VCDC Holiday Events Committee members:
Chairperson – *Kimberley Andres, Michelle Maloney, Kelsey Thomas, Stacey Allen, Laurie Siegel, and Barb Martin*