



Greening Vermillion Newsletter

December 2018

Dear Friends and Fellow Vermillionaires:

Welcome to the year-end Greening Vermillion newsletter!

We hope you have had a bright and wonderful 2018 and we're looking forward to spending 2019 with you, working to make Vermillion a more sustainable place.

Our 2018 was both busy and exciting! In the spring, we obtained a **South Dakota Community Innovation Grant** focusing on recycling in Vermillion and producing public education materials on recycling and sustainability for the city. We also coordinated **2018 Earth Days**, partnering with organizations around the community to celebrate sustainability and the earth for an entire green week. We got out into the community more this year, tabling at farmers markets, Ribs, Rods 'n Rock & Roll, and other events. We met so many enthusiastic individuals that our volunteer list has grown three-fold! In the latter half of 2018, we partnered with the Living River Group of the Sierra Club on two new projects. The first is the **Skip the Straw campaign** to encourage those who are able to "skip the straw" to help reduce plastic waste. The second is a **climate preparedness and carbon reduction resolution for the City of Vermillion** that is currently under consideration by the city council. You can read up on all of these exciting events here in our newsletter!

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South Dakota Community Innovation Grant and the Recycling & Sustainability Guide



In June 2018, Greening Vermillion was awarded a South Dakota Community Innovation Grant, sponsored by the South Dakota Community Foundation and the Bush Foundation, to help improve recycling and recycling education for the City of Vermillion. Vermillion's curbside recycling program, launched in 2009, collected approximately 1.7 million pounds of recyclables in 2017. While the program has been successful, curbside recycling is not available to residents of larger apartment buildings and mobile home communities, and many city residents are unaware of how to recycle or what can be recycled. For example, while paper, cardboard, No. 1 and No. 2 plastics, and aluminum and tin cans can be sorted and placed for curbside pick-up, residents can also take glass, used paint, yard waste, and more to the Missouri Valley Recycling Center in town.

Mark Sweeney, Ph.D., professor in the Department of Sustainability & Environment and Greening Vermillion board member, is leading a project to develop recycling and sustainability education materials for Vermillion. *Continued on pg 2.*



SOUTH DAKOTA
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GROWING FOR GOOD FOR 30 YEARS

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South Dakota Community Innovation Grant continued...

Recycling has several benefits. One, recycling reduces pollution caused by waste and increases the lifetime of landfills. (Did you know that recent new section of the landfill cost about \$1 million?) Two, recycling reduces the need for natural materials, such as woods from harvesting forests or metals mined from the earth, that are in limited supply. Three, recycling has a positive economic impact. Recycling programs create jobs, reduce dependency on raw materials, and preserve the environment. And products made from recycled materials are often less expensive.

The grant will allow Greening Vermillion to design a comprehensive recycling and sustainability guide that will include the details of what can be recycled and where. In addition, Greening Vermillion will create a series of short videos that will educate everyone on why recycling is important and how materials such as aluminum and glass are recycled, as well as facts about Vermillion's recycling program. Joshua Haiar, a USD undergraduate student majoring in communication studies in the Department of Media and Journalism, is working with Greening Vermillion in the design of the recycling guide and will also create the videos.

The goal is to have the new recycling guide and videos available to residents in 2019. Meanwhile, board members including Jennifer Fierro, an instructor in the Department of Sustainability & Environment, Maggie Pettersen, and Sweeney have been engaging the public at community events to learn what residents want in a recycling program and how recycling can be improved. Sweeney has been working together with city officials, as well as the manager of Missouri River Recycling, to make sure the information to be included in the guide and videos is accurate. Sweeney has also been discussing Greening Vermillion's plan for the recycling guide with the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company, which will help share the videos through social media. He also hopes to connect with other partners, including the Vermillion School District, as part of a broader outreach strategy. Sweeney said, "The ultimate goal, beyond recycling and sustainability education in Vermillion, is to work with the city to expand recycling to all apartments, mobile home communities, and businesses."



Greening Vermillion tables at the farmers market. Look for us there and come say hello!

VOLUNTEERS!

Signed up to volunteer? Interested in volunteering? We will be hosting a volunteer meet and greet in February! We hope to meet you all, see what campaigns, future campaigns, or local green issues you are interested in, and get you involved! Look for an announcement for date and time on Facebook and email.

Earth Days 2018

Earth Days 2018 occurred April 16-21. The Vermillion Public Library sponsored the family films “FernGully” and “The Lorax” and both were well attended. Students and residents alike came to the Munster University Center to enjoy the Earth Days fair. At the fair, local businesses and organizations had demonstrations and informational sessions for all to enjoy. The Star Party sponsored by the Sierra Club was a rousing success, with more than 50 people braving the cold to learn about the stars and planets above Spirit Mound with large telescopes. A late April blizzard didn’t hamper anyone’s enthusiasm as Earth Days drew hundreds. We are in the initial planning stages for Earth Days 2019. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for news and updates!

A special “THANK YOU!” to our Earth Days 2018 Event Coordinators and Sponsors (*):

USD Sustainability Club*
 USD Office of Diversity
 USD Sustainability program



Vermillion Rotary Club*
 Living River Group of the Sierra Club
 Barking Dogs Bicycle Club
 Vermillion HyVee*
 Coffee Cup*



Students staffing tables at the Sustainability Fair on the USD campus.

Monday April 16
 Earth Day Fair 11-2 PM
 Local Food Fair 11-1 PM
 MUC Pit Lounge, USD Campus
 Family movie: FernGully 6:30 PM
 Coyote Twin Theatre *Free Popcorn*

Tuesday April 17
 Ufford Hills Country Market and Petting Zoo 3-7 PM
 Ufford Hills Country Market (3691 E. Main St.)
 Earth Days Keynote Lecture: Peterson Toscano 7 PM
 Everything is Connected: An Evening of Stories, Most Weird, Many True
 Farber Hall, Old Main, USD campus
 Offered jointly with the USD Diversity Symposium

Wednesday April 18
 Mulberry Bend Overlook Hike 6 PM
 Mulberry Bend Overlook
 HWY 19 just off the Missouri River Bridge

Thursday April 19
 The Lorax Showing 2 PM
 Coyote Twin Theatre
 Green Thursday on the Platz 6-8 PM
 Ratingen Platz, Downtown Vermillion

Friday April 20
 Spirit Mound Star Party 8:30 PM
 Spirit Mound Historic Prairie (5 mi N of Vermillion)

Saturday April 21
 Check with the Edith B. Siegrist Vermillion Public Library for events all week

Sunday April 22
 Tour de Verm Bike Ride 2:30 PM
 Start at the high school & ride to Barstow Park *Helmets required*

Sponsors
 Platinum: Greening Vermillion, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA
 Gold: THE FRIENDS OF THE VERMILLION PUBLIC LIBRARY, COFFEE CUP Travel Pizzas
 Silver: Rotary, Vermillion, HyVee

For more information, visit: www.GreeningVermillion.org

Prairie Sun Organic Farm
 Ufford Farm
 Heikes Family Farm
 Aramark
 Friends of the Vermillion Public Library*
 Missouri National Recreation River
 National Park Service
 Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company*



Skip the Straw

Susanne Skyrn, a professor emeritus of piano and a member of the Sierra Club, is spearheading a campaign to encourage Vermillion residents to reduce their use of plastic waste. With the help of two political science students, Divya Neopaney and Jade MullerSmit, Skyrn has been suggesting to local businesses they provide straws only when customers ask and encouraging residents to use sustainable alternatives when able and available. Many Vermillion businesses are already participating! Greening Vermillion is supporting them in their efforts. More details can be found in [the Oct 25 article from the Volante](#).



Climate Preparedness and Carbon Reduction Resolution

Can Vermillion go greener? In September, Greening Vermillion partnered with the Living River Group of the Sierra Club to introduce a climate preparedness and carbon reduction resolution to the Vermillion City Council. The resolution would establish a technical advisory board to then produce a climate preparedness plan for the city and find ways to reduce our carbon footprint. The city council agreed to consider it, and Mark Sweeney and Kelly Dilliard of Greening Vermillion have been working with the city manager and city council to help make it a reality. Vermillion already participates in a number of green and energy-saving strategies, such as LED streetlights, new meters to determine times of peak electric use, and the development of the new bicycle master plan. Many citizens hope the city can do more. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates on this important resolution.

Why Should I Skip the Plastic Straw?

1. Everything that ends up in our waterways eventually makes its way to the oceans.
2. By 2050 there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish.
3. 80% of all marine debris found in the ocean is land-based, and 80-90% of the marine debris is made from plastic.
4. Plastic straws are among the top ten items collected every year during Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup. Volunteers have picked up more than 9 million straws and stirrers from beaches and waterways over the 30+ year history of the International Coastal Cleanup!
5. In the US we use 500 million straws a day!
6. A disposable straw is used on average for 20 minutes, a plastic stirrer for 4 seconds. Either can spend 100s of years in a land-fill. And there is a good chance that these items will get lost and end up in the waterways and the ocean.
7. Straws present a real danger to sea turtles, birds, fish, and other ocean wildlife.
8. It's an easy thing to do to help the environment!

Adopt-a-Drain

Our Adopt-a-Drain campaign is still going strong. This year, we added a new painted drain on Bower Street near Walmart and worked with the city to obtain new and improved paints for concrete so that the designs will last longer. If you have seen some of the vibrant drains in downtown, that is because students from the USD Sustainable River Research Undergraduate Experience (REU) and Brianna Olson spent a day re-painting and touching up drain designs that were fading or wearing off completely. We greatly appreciate their help. Coming this spring and summer, we hope to repaint and touch-up all of the other painted drains in town. Please be on the lookout for times to help us accomplish this goal.

HOW DO I BECOME A DRAIN SPONSOR?

- STENCILED DRAINS ARE \$25
- PAINTED DRAINS ARE \$100.
- EMAIL GREENINGVERMIL-LION@GMAIL.COM



Students from the REU repainting a drain this summer.



Looking ahead...

Looking toward 2019, we plan on continuing all of our popular campaigns, and we are in the early stages of planning Earth Days. We also plan to repeat a birding hike we sponsored in October of this year. Led by Jeffrey Gray-Lobe, a field ecology research assistant at USD, small group of all ages spent the morning hiking, watching birds, and learning about the ecology along the Missouri River. We'll be rolling out our Recycling initiative in 2019 as well and we look forward to working with the Vermillion community to make our town a greener place. Thanks for a great year Vermillion. See you in 2019!



Your Greening Vermillion Board of Directors

Meghann Jarchow - Chair

Maggie Pettersen - Vice Chair & Treasurer

Sara Packard - Secretary

Jenny Fierro - Board Member

Kelly Dilliard - Board Member

Mark Daniels - Board Member

Mark Sweeney - Board Member

Greening Vermillion
P.O. Box 146
Vermillion, SD 57069

greeningvermillion@gmail.com
<https://www.greeningvermillion.org/>
Facebook: Greening Vermillion

FRIENDS OF GREENING VERMILLION

Like what you see? Want to help? Consider becoming a Friend of Greening Vermillion! With your \$25 donation, you'll receive one of our reusable bags and a window cling for your vehicle or business to show your support. In addition, we'll add you to our mailing list so you can receive Greening Vermillion updates and opportunities to volunteer. For more information or to become a Friend, please visit [our website](#) or fill out the form below.

Yes! I want to become a Friend!

Please enclose this form + \$25 and mail to: Greening Vermillion, PO Box 146
Vermillion, SD 57069



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____