One in a ver Million

Meet Steve Miller



By David Lias david.lias@plaintalk.net

Pastor Steve Miller believed the primary reason he was invited to the Vermillion Area Chamber of Commerce & Community Awards

Banquet March 14 was to give the invocation before the evening's meal.

What soon became apparent, at the conclusion of that night's event held at The Eagles, was that Steve needed to make another trip up to the stage before

the banquet audience. Steve was awarded the 2013 VCDC Community Leader Award at the annual

VCDC Board Member Amy Christensen, in announcing Steve as award recipient, noted that community's greatest leaders are those who work to make a better life for others, not for personal or financial gain, but because they truly believe it is the right thing to do.

She noted that Steve and his wife, Jill Tyler, brought their young family to Vermillion in 1995. "He and his wife were considering a number of communities, but as they were driving through Vermillion, they decided to settle here.

"Vermillion is a place where he has made a difference," Amy said, describing the many roles Steve fulfills in the city. "After 18 years, there's not a corner of this community that has not been positively impacted by his choice to call Vermillion home.

"He has mentored countless young people and has carried families through trying times. He provides spiritual guidance throughout the journey of life, at the birth of our children, when we wed, when we are sick, and when we lose those closest to us," she said.

Amy noted that Steve

continues to have a strong influence over the community's children by serving on school communities, speaking at commencement ceremonies, and teaching our kids life skills through heavy involvement in the Character Counts program.

Steve's passion for baseball is also well known in the region.

"As the president of the Vermillion Baseball Association, he helped organize the first DakotaDome Youth Baseball Classic, and rarely misses a season coaching kids," she said.

The arts in Vermillion also have benefitted from Steve's contributions as a talented writer and musician. "He was instrumental in the revitalization of the Vermillion Community Theatre," Amy said, "he has acted on stage, involved youth in children's theatre workshops, and written songs and plays, including 'In Every Generation,' which celebrated the 150th birthday of Vermillion."

On top of his duties as pastor at the United Church of Christ -Congregational in Vermillion, Steve teaches a variety of religious studies classes at USD and has started a prayer group bringing together people of all faiths.

"His influence reaches far beyond the church pews and the members of his congregation. He downplays his role as leader in the church by claiming to lead simply because he is the loudest," Amy said. "The bigger volume he has in the sanctuary is not what makes him a leader in Vermillion. It is his passion for people, and his desire to make a difference in the community he calls home. Imagine a Vermillion today if that young family back in 1995 chose a different community. Consider how many lives would have turned out differently

"Often leaders are measured by elections won or dollars earned. But the leadership of tonight's honoree is measured by each person he inspires. He is the leader of Vermillion's soul," she said.

without his influence.

Steve, upon accepting his award, said that he and his family expected, when moving to Vermillion, to stay in the community for a short time.

"And now, we can't imagine living anywhere else," he said.

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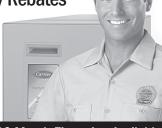
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