

One in a Ver Million Meet Lee Huber



By David Lias
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To say that this has been a busy time of the year for Vermillion-Clay County EMS director Lee Huber and his fellow fire department/EMS members is a bit of an understatement.

This summer's drought preceding this fall's harvest has brought on numerous calls to extinguish burning fields. Things have become so dry that a soaking rain would only provide temporary relief. Once the rain soaks into the soil and the moisture dries, local farmers still

will have fields filled with tinder.

A nice coating of snow this winter, Lee said, will hopefully give both farmers and local firefighters a break.

Lee is currently providing administrative duties to the Vermillion Fire Department as the search continues for a new fire chief to replace Doug Brunick, who recently retired.

The local EMS department simultaneously was preparing last week to be busy as Dakota Days weekend approached in Vermillion.

"It poses unique

challenges working in a college town running an ambulance service during a time like D-Days," he said.

Lee, who grew up in Emery, has been Vermillion-Clay County EMS director since July 2011.

"I came down for school (at USD) in 2001," he said, "to go through business school, and I took an EMT class through Vermillion EMS. They had a grant offering so basically if you passed the class, you got your training for free. So I became an EMT, because I wanted to do that for a while."

He began working for the EMS department in 2005, and also became a member of the fire department at that time. Since 2007, he also been serving as a reserve deputy for the Clay County Sheriff's Department.

"I met a girl who I was working with, and stayed with the girl, and stayed with Vermillion, and that's worked out ever since," Lee said.

That girl - Nikki - and Lee were married in 2010, and are parents of a son,

Carter. Nikki serves as physician's assistant in the emergency room at Sanford Vermillion.

"I came from a small town ... where I watched a lot of the dads who were volunteer firefighters," he said. "The whistle blows, and it's a natural instinct for everyone to stop and hear and watch the sirens and lights, especially when you're a little kid. You know right where to ride your bikes to so that you can watch the trucks rolling out," Lee said. "I was one of those guys,

and always was kind of interested in it, and always thought it would be something that would be fun and neat."

When Lee was in high school, he had an opportunity to join the Mitchell squadron of the Civil Air Patrol.

"I learned about first aid and search and rescue and things like that," he said. "It started as a hobby, as kind of thing on the side. I never thought of it as a career, and once I had the opportunity to

take the EMT course down here, I pretty much immersed myself in it.

"There are so many directions in which you can go, and the training is ongoing," Lee said. "You're constantly learning something new, learning a new tactic, or a new way to look at things. It's an evolving process, and it makes you keep up. It's that constant challenge, constant change that's intriguing, and I was drawn to that."

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CAR: 1992 Buick LeSabre, white, 142,000 miles. **HOUSEHOLD. MISC.**
Many more items yet to be discovered. In case of inclement weather, will be held at Cedar County Fairgrounds.
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