



Greening Vermillion Newsletter

Dear Friends,

Issue 5, December 2020

Welcome to the annual Greening Vermillion newsletter! We made it through 2020 and are looking forward to spending 2021 with you, working to make Vermillion a more sustainable community. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic limited many activities, this newsletter highlights what we accomplished in 2020.



Recycling & Sustainability: New Year, New Green Me

In January 2020, Mark Sweeney, a board member of Greening Vermillion, educated listeners about reducing single-use purchases, repurposing, recycling, and reusing items on South Dakota Public Broadcasting Radio with "In the Moment." Landfills are costly to maintain and expand, often at the residents' expense—a key motivation to keep as much as possible out of the landfill. Sweeney suggested the public can reduce single-use plastics by buying less of them or refusing them. A homeowner can perform their energy audit to reduce heating and cooling costs at [Home Energy Saver](#). Furthermore, the South Dakota Department of Social Services connects eligible families with funding for weatherizing their homes. Mark emphasized that 70% of Vermillion's power comes from renewable energy (40% hydroelectric, 30% wind), and the remainder from fossil fuels. Listen to the full interview at [New Year, New Green Me](#).



In 2020, Greening Vermillion published the "[Vermillion Recycling & Sustainability Guide](#)" in a paper format, which later became available as a PDF on [Facebook.com/GreeningVermillion.com](#) and the [City of Vermillion](#) website. Greening Vermillion also created short videos about recycling and sustainability and posted them weekly on Greening Vermillion Facebook. The videos continue to be available for free as a "[Living Green](#)" guide. Early spring 2020, Maggie Pettersen and Jo Ann Kim took Recycling & Sustainability Guides to Vermillion realtors to give to new residents to communicate appropriate recycling information. During the spring of 2020, the Board of Directors hung recycling door hangers announcing residents' specific home recycling day with brief directions on recycling items and where to obtain more information.

Additionally, copies of the guide were made available to the City of Vermillion, the public library, the Civic Council, City Hall, Recycling Center, and Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Corporation (VCDC). However, due to COVID-19, the City of Vermillion closed the Missouri Valley Recycling Center and suspended curbside recycling pickup, thus stopping recycling in Vermillion until June 2020.





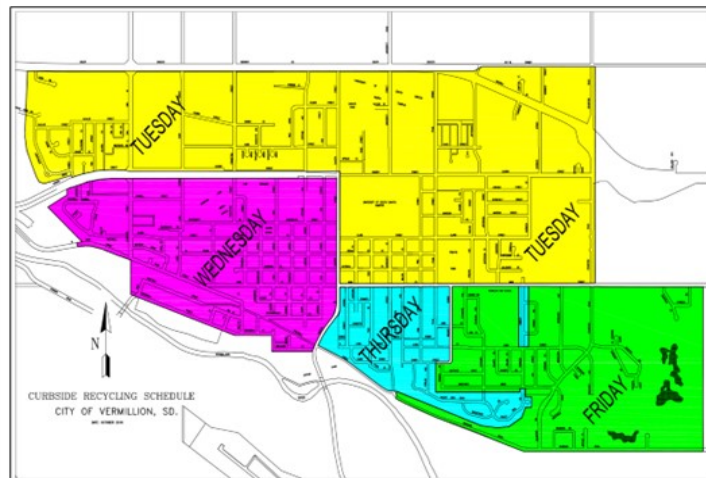

Curbside Recycling Program
605-677-7076



Recyclable materials can be placed at a curbside location by 7:30 a.m. of the day your neighborhood recycling occurs.

Your day is:

Vermillion's Curbside Recycling Program serves single-family homes and multi-family units up to five units.


Yard waste, glass, and large quantities of recyclables can be taken to the Missouri Valley Recycling Center:
840 N. Crawford Road



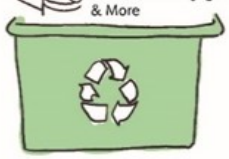



What Can You Recycle?

Paper
Envelopes
Magazines
Cardboard
Newspapers
& More



Tin Cans
Aerosol Cans
Aluminum Cans
Plastic #1: Bottles, etc
Plastic #2: Milkjugs, etc
& More



For more info, including how to get a bin, visit:
GreeningVermillion.org -or- Vermillion.us

Mark Sweeney and Jo Ann Kim presented information about local recycling via Zoom for community outreach through the weekly UpNext coffee hour supported by VCDC. The [presentation](#) was also linked to Facebook, which reported that over 400 people viewed the post. Additional Sustainability and Recycling activities included Maggie Pettersen developing a business card to give new residents and visitors at future Earth Days or Greening Vermillion activities. Furthermore, in November, Anna Moore and Mark Sweeney presented at the University of South Dakota (USD) School of Law, Environmental Law Society, about how, when, why, and where to recycle.



Educating Students & Community Residents

In 2020, the Greening Vermillion Board of Directors welcomed Jo Ann Kim, a graduate nursing student at Mount Marty University, to the Board of Directors. Jo's interest in the environment was connected to individual and groups of patients' health outcomes. Mrs. Kim, a Vermillion resident, joined in hanging door hangers to educate residents on the Curbside Recycling Program in the City of Vermillion. Jo also performed a community assessment, made a presentation, sealed murals on drains, and presented a Zoom session poster, "Planetary Health & Sustainability," at the Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments National Conference.

Anna Moore, a graduate student at the USD Department of Sustainability & Environment, joined the Board of Directors in 2020. Anna posted videos about darning socks, plastic-free glue, and homemade paper tape. She also addressed the creeping problem of single-use plastic bags polluting our oceans and land right here in Vermillion. The water picks up pollutants on its way to the Vermillion River, Missouri River, and Gulf of Mexico. This picture shows debris at the Cotton Park deck overlooking the Vermillion River.



Bring Your Bag: COVID Hiccups

The Bring Your Bag campaign aims to encourage people in Vermillion to use reusable grocery bags. However, once COVID-19 hit, retail stores, including those in Vermillion, stopped allowing reusable bags due to transmission concerns. In Vermillion, single-use plastic bags remained the only option at stores through the end of 2020. However, residents who bring their reusable bags to shop in-person during low-traffic times have recently been allowed to bag their groceries without using single-use bags. Some have also used their reusable bags as they load their groceries in their vehicles. Other residents who have used curbside pickup may ask for the groceries to be put into the automobile without bags. According to conversations with checkout clerks in January 2021, Vermillion Hy-Vee and Walmart anticipate restarting reusable bags as early as Spring



Adopt-A-Drain

Adopt-a-Drain continued to be a popular program in Vermillion. In 2020 Greening Vermillion enlisted local artists of all ages for touching up and repainting multiple drain murals that had degraded over time. The updated sites included images on drains around the town of swirling fish, redfish/bluefish, and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Meghann Jarchow led the coordination of the Adopt-a-Drain program with help from Maggie Pettersen and Jo Ann Kim. The City of Vermillion continues to provide annual support for the paint and other supplies, and residents and businesses in Vermillion continue to sponsor the drain paintings.



Artist: Natalie Bremers
Location: Market & Kidder



Artist: Dylan Daniels
Location: R-Pizza Main & Court

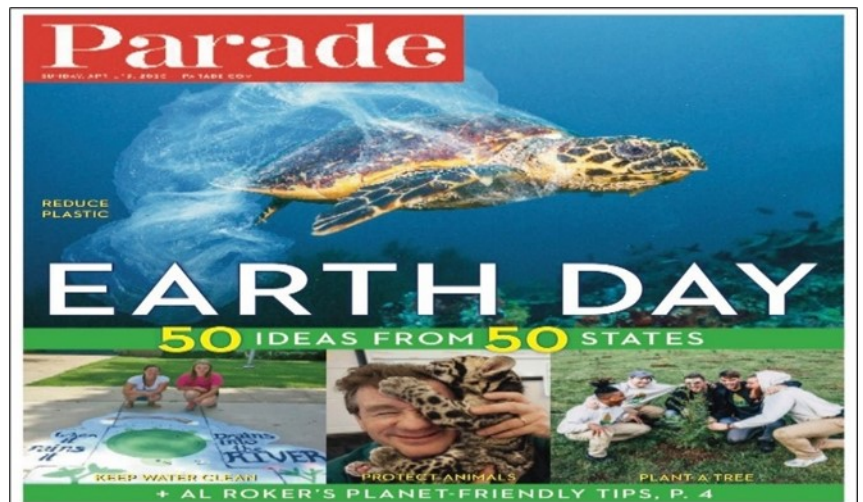


Artists: Bonnie Sorensen & Natalie Stubbs
Location: Southeast Prentis Park



Artist: Alexa Kruse
Location: Kidder & Church

A photograph of
Greening Vermillion's
Adopt-a-Drain program
was featured on the cover of
Parade Magazine's
Earth Day
Earth Day issue.



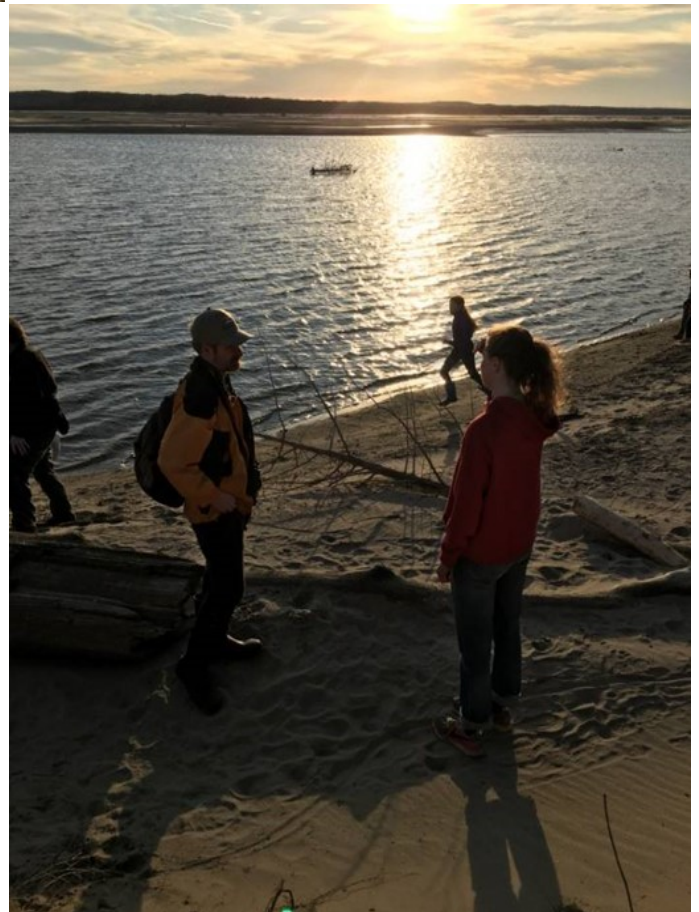


Nature Walk: Our Own Beach, Just Minutes from Vermillion



On Leap Year day, 2020, a hearty team of local explorers discovered a beautiful beach just minutes from Vermillion! Geoffrey Gray-Lobe, a volunteer naturalist with the National Park Service, led adults and children from a parking lot, through a meadow and finally to a beach to stroll, play, and watch the sunset on the Missouri River, North Alabama Bend, which is managed by the Army Corps of Engineers.

North Alabama Bend is public land that can be enjoyed year-round. The beach can be accessed 1.8 miles south from the intersection of Highway 50 and Highway 19. Visitors can park at one of two lots that are available immediately off Highway 19.





2020 Earth Days: Virtually

Since 2014, Greening Vermillion has taken the lead in providing the overall coordination of Earth Days – although the individual events continue to be organized and offered by a wide range of individuals and organizations. For Earth Days 2020, Greening Vermillion had organized a range of events, including USD and community fairs with live music, documentary screenings, service events, and a keynote speaker to celebrate Earth Days 50th anniversary. Then the pandemic hit, and all events were canceled.



The Board of Directors, led by Anna Moore and Maggie Pettersen, reimagined Earth Days 2020 virtually. The focus was on engaging participants on the Greening Vermillion Facebook page around sustainability and local food. Some of the posts were nationally developed materials, such as the "[Foodprints of the Future](#)" video produced by Earth Day Network. Most of the posts were local, including sharing the "COVID-19 Restaurant and Bar Hours" from the Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company (VCDC), which had more than 5,500 views and was shared 34 times through the Greening Vermillion Facebook page.

The Greening Vermillion Board of Directors and Facebook users shared information for seven days with kitchen videos, recipes, resources, pictures, recipes for vegan recipes, sandwiches, no-knead bread, pizza dough, sour milk pancakes, how to make sauerkraut and Kimchi, stir-fry, frittatas, peanut butter and jelly granola, chickpeas, soups for zero waste, food scrap recipes, homemade broths, cookies, ideas on how to store foods safely, and defining carbon footprint.





Community Composting

Greening Vermillion helped publicize a community compost forum after reviewing 144 Vermillion residents' surveys conducted by Jacinda Maasen (Ph.D. student in Sustainability and Environment program at USD). Ms. Maasen's presentation redefined composting and discussed the next steps for Vermillion to collaborate with neighbors and friends to reduce food waste. Residents were encouraged to compost at home, but if they did not have the capacity to compost, they could sign up with a global non-profit organization to help build a Vermillion neighbor-to-neighbor compost network. The Greening Vermillion Board of Directors is interested in promoting composting in 2021.



Planning for 2021 Earth Days

Earth Days 2021 will be a mix of in-person and virtual events. For all in-person events, steps will be taken to prioritize safety. And, Earth Days 2021 will return to being a community-wide series of events. Engagement of a wide range of organizations such as the Vermillion Public Library, Vermillion Public Schools, Spirit Mound Trust, City of Vermillion, USD Art Galleries, Vermillion Area Farmers Market, USD Environmental Club, and USD Department of Sustainability & Environment is needed. A variety of talented volunteers are required to achieve a successful Earth Days event. If you are interested in participating, please e-mail Meghann Jarchow (Meghann.Jarchow@usd.edu).



Greening Vermillion Board of Directors

Meghann Jarchow - Chair
Maggie Pettersen - Vice Chair & Treasurer
Mark Sweeney - Secretary
Mark Daniels - Board Member
Dave Everding - Board Member
Jo Ann Kim - Board Member
Anna Moore - Board Member



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Our Mission

To engage our community in creating a more sustainable Vermillion. We are working to make Vermillion the Greenest Town in South Dakota.