

EMMONS COUNTY RECORD

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Michael Miller honored as Friend of Extension

Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP), the Extension Service honorary organization, presented a Friend of Extension award to Michael Miller during the North Dakota State University Extension/Research Extension Center fall conference held Oct. 22-25 in Bismarck.

Miller is director and bibliographer for the NDSU Libraries and Germans from Russia Heritage Collection. He uses Extension resources in much of his work. He also facilitates relationships between organizations and individuals, such as the North Dakota Heritage Center, Prairie Public Television and NDSU Extension.

Miller was nominated by Logan County Extension Agent Carmen Rath-Wald who is president of the Tri-County Tourism Alliance.

Below are Rath-Wald's comments in nominating Miller:

Michael has received many awards for his commitment, dedication, and generosity throughout his over 50 years of service in the state of North Dakota. We feel it is time to honor him with the Friend of Extension Nomination.

Miller has facilitated relationships between organizations and individuals and NDSU Extension. Those individuals and organizations include the North Dakota Heritage Center, Prairie Public Television and Producer Bob Dambach, the Center for Heritage Renewal at NDSU, and the Germans from Russian Heritage Collection (GRHC), as well as many others.

In July 2009, Extension Director Duane Hauck, after discussion with Michael, championed a sponsorship from NDSU Extension Service to offer the first Dakota Memories Heritage Tour in September of that year.

Miller and the GRHC went on to host an additional Dakota Memories Heritage Tours of the Tri-County area (Emmons, Logan and

McIntosh), in 2011, and out of that effort the Tri-County Tourism Alliance organization was born.

At the time of the 2009 and 2011 tours, Acacia (Jonas) Stuckle, who is now an NDSU Extension agent serving in Emmons County, was the special collections associate at the GRHC. The Tri-County Tourism Alliance, of which Miller is a member, has relied heavily on NDSU Extension for resources.

In 2014 the NDSU Extension Service awarded German-Russian Country: Prairie Legacy (Tri-County Tourism Alliance) a 2014 Program Excellence Award, and Miller was one of the team members. He is a consummate and "indefatigable" promoter and has included the Extension Service in his efforts.

Miller was part of the Alliance team that worked to bring the Stronger Economies Together (SET) program in Logan, McIntosh and Emmons counties so Extension could help communities in that region understand ways to work together to build a strong regional economy.

Miller has worked as a producer with Prairie Public Broadcasting on an award-winning documentary series including the most recently released ninth documentary which premiered in July of 2017. Of that effort, Michael said, "I encouraged TV director Bob Dambach that we should explore with the Tri-County Tourism Alliance to develop a foodways documentary of women in their kitchens in the three counties, that would also include handing down the foodways traditions to the youth, which includes 4-H groups. This has been especially well received with the filming with the 4-H students and at the Napoleon School. Thus, 'Gutes Essen' became reality, with PPB and the Alliance as cosponsors."

The 10th documentary will be "Women Behind the Plow," telling the story of the



Ken Hellevang, NDSU Extension agricultural engineer and ESP president, presents the Friend of Extension Award to Michael Miller.



With Michael Miller are Logan County Extension Agent Carmen Rath-Wald, left, and Emmons County Extension Agent Acacia Stuckle. Rath-Wald is president and Stuckle secretary of the Tri-County Tourism Alliance.

role of women in agriculture, past and present. Filming and interviews are being done in Emmons, Logan and McIntosh counties, south central North Dakota. This is an area strong on agriculture but even stronger on heritage and stories. Major sponsors of the documentary are Prairie Public Broadcasting, the Tri-County Tourism Alliance and the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, NDSU Libraries, Fargo. Completion and broadcast of the documentary is slated for July of 2019.

Michael M. Miller, son of Mr. and Mrs. Peter P. Miller,

is a native of Strasburg. An honor graduate of Strasburg High School in 1961, Miller received his Bachelor's Degree from Valley City State College and then completed two years as teacher-librarian. In June of 1967 he earned his Master's Degree at the University of North Dakota where he was an assistant at the library and alumni office. He was named to the faculty of North Dakota State University, Fargo, in 1967. In 1978 President Laurel Loftsgard called Miller into his office to create the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection and to place him in charge of it.



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