By Jan Rahn Managing Editor

If the community of Venango could describe this year’s chosen Perkins County Good Neighbor in only two words, it would be “big heart.”

Pastor Kevin Hausman indeed has a big heart, as does his wife, Leslie, and they serve their community in such a way that everyone recognizes it.

He will be honored as the 2009 Good Neighbor in the fair parade this Saturday and will be presented a plaque that evening from the event’s sponsors, Beta Sigma Phi Sorority and The Grant Tribune-Sentinel.

“He has given a new spark to Venango and especially to our church family, said Jean Jorgensen in her nomination letter. “We are so thankful that God has sent him to us.” Jorgensen is a member of the Venango Community Church where Pastor Hausman has ministered since August 2003.

The very talented musician said he was attending a Village Missions Church in Yampa, Colo., when the Lord worked in his heart to become a pastor. He had previously taught elementary music in the small Colorado towns of Holly, Lamar and Oak Creek.

Music was not laid aside when he was led into the ministry, however. The very talented pianist continues to volunteer his time as the accompanist for school musical programs and contests.

The most noticeable aspect of his big heart and love for the Lord shines through in the relationship he and Leslie have with their 10 children, nine of whom are adopted. They are guardians for another child for an unknown period of time.

If there’s any spare time in his busy schedule, Pastor Hausman likes to garden and work in the yard, and of course, play the piano.

His large family enjoys camping together and going on family trips, also helping with church camps each summer.

“Pastor Kevin loves working with youth and children,” said the nomination letter. He has developed the Awana program at the church, rotates as pastor at Golden Ours Convalescent Home in Grant, and visits residents who live there.

“He is a very exceptional person. He has a love for the Lord and goes out of his way to show that love to all,” continued Jorgensen in her letter. “He travels anywhere to visit people who are ill or to be with families during surgeries or illness. He takes people out of town when they can’t drive by themselves. He never says “no” when asked to help someone in need.

Pastor Hausman doesn’t view his actions as anything special or extraordinary.

“I’m just doing what I am supposed to do,” he said, feeling humbled and unworthy of the honor. “Because of God’s grace and mercy in my life, what else can I do-—the good things I do can’t earn any favor with God, but rather it is out of gratitude for all He has done for me.”

Those words fully describe his nature as he continues to serve the Venango community in various ways—as a member of the Venango Volunteer Fire Department, picking up groceries for those unable to get out, mowing lawns or helping out in other ways, plus contributing to Venango Days and Christmas celebrations in the village.

Pastor Hausman and Leslie were married 28 years on Saturday. Their children include Mike and wife Linda and four kids in Hutchinson, Kan., Richard and wife Tanya and their baby of Colorado Springs, Alicia in Ogallala, Aimee currently in Montana but moving to Cheyenne, Wyo., in August, Matt who is getting married in August with plans to live in Venango a year before returning to Bible College, AJ who is a junior at Perkins County High School, Mindee who is a sophomore and Rassel who starts high school this year, Garrett and Isaiah who will be in middle school.

The fondness between the community and their pastor goes both ways. He looks forward to continuing to grow and serve the Lord in Perkins County. Venango and the surrounding community admires and supports him in every endeavor, and is proud he will be honored during the 2009 Perkins County Fair.