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## CRASH 'EM, BASH 'EM



The annual demolition derby didn't fail to entertain the fans last Friday at the Clay County Fair.

Plain Talk Staff Photo

# A demolition of a night

By Alan Dale  
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It could be said that the annual Clay County Fair's Demolition Derby is one of the signature moments every year in Vermillion.

Hundreds of people packed the fairground's arena on Friday night to watch four races play out amongst 39 combined racers on a track muddied into oblivion by abnormal August rains.

In the middle of it all it is quite possible that Newcastle, Nebraska's Tim Kneifl celebrated a long awaited win on the same day he may have called out 'Oh Brother, Where Art Thou?' only hours earlier.

Kneifl, 36, captured the title of the Derby's main event – the Feature – as he won his first ever Demolition contest with his brother's car.

Why? Because after a month of toiling on his own vehicle, Kneifl saw his car break down on him on race day only to have his older brother Dan come through.

**PLAIN TALK READERS**

Final results for the 2014 Clay County Fair were not made available at press time. Be sure to check back at [plaintalk.net](http://plaintalk.net) or in an upcoming print edition of the Plain Talk for all the results. Thank you!

"I was working on my car today and something happened to it so he let me use his car," Tim Kneifl said. "He let me jump into it and it's the first derby I've ever won. I am very grateful since I have been derbying for 10 years and this is the first time I have ever won."

Kneifl outlasted Ponca, Nebraska's Nathan Gill and Cory Hughes who took second and third-place respectively in a race that had plenty of hard hits and go-for-broke dashes across the beaten track.

"I've come close a couple times with two seconds and two thirds, so I finally got it this time," the winner said. "I was seventh last year, so it feels amazing. All the hard work, blood, sweat, and tears all paid off."

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## Kaufman to replace Boomgarden in D17 race

By Randy Dockendorf  
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Republicans have nominated a replacement candidate for the District 17 House race in the South Dakota Legislature.

Sheri Kaufman of Vermillion will run for one of the two seats representing Clay and Turner counties. She replaces Jamie Boomgarden of Chancellor, who had withdrawn his candidacy.

Kaufman's filing date was listed as Aug. 11 (Monday), according to the South Dakota Secretary of State's website.

Candidates had until Aug. 5 to withdraw their nominations for the

November general election. The party central committees had until Aug. 12 to fill vacancies created by candidates who withdrew their nominations.

Kaufman now joins a field that includes fellow GOP candidate Nancy Rasmussen of Hurley and Democrats Ray Ring of Vermillion and Marion Sorlien of Viborg.

Ring and Rasmussen are the incumbents in the race.

In the District 17 Senate race, voters will choose between Republican Arthur Rusch and Democrat Michelle Maloney, both of Vermillion.

The winner will replace Democratic incumbent Tom Jones of Viborg, who chose not to run for re-

election.

Meanwhile, Democrats had not fielded replacements as of early Tuesday evening for two candidates in the District 16 House race. Jim Feddersen of Beresford and Brian Shanks of Elk Point had pulled out of the race.

District 16 covers Union and Lincoln counties.

The Secretary of State's website didn't list any Democratic replacement candidates. If the situation doesn't change, the District 16 House race will consist of Republicans Jim Bolin of Canton and David Anderson of Hudson running

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CURT CAMERON

## VHS principal: It's a numbers game

By Alan Dale  
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It all comes down to numbers and that is pretty apparent to Vermillion High School principal Curt Cameron.

Cameron took some time to speak with the *Plain Talk* and in doing so illustrated the highs and lows or the numbers game as the school year gets closer to starting.

First day of classes is Wednesday while teachers' in-service begins two days prior.

Academically Vermillion High School is doing as well as ever, but the problem is they may not have as many students hitting homeruns as the pupil population continues to dwindle.

"Our ACT scores should be out in a week or two and usually we have the top ACT scores in the state," Cameron said. "What we do is that about 80 percent of our kids take the ACT while about 40-50 percent of the kids from the other schools do... Our ACT scores are probably around the top in the nation. We are anxiously waiting for those to come. We have been averaging 23.5 to 23.9."

Those numbers are definitely strong points for the school district, but the concern is the loss of an average of 40 kids over the last few years.

"Our high school's population last year was the lowest it's ever been," Cameron said. "We were below 360 kids when we normally are around 400."

Cameron also added that the district lost approximately \$4,800 dollars for the difference in 40 kids. "That's a big chunk of change," he said.

There are a lot of potential factors despite the

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## Area temps forecast to stay below norms throughout August

By Alan Dale  
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The pitter-patter of rain became the bane upon Vermillion and Clay County for an extended period of time as the month of August began.

An area used to relatively dry and warm, humid weather has been hit hard – and well – by a large outpouring of tears from the sky.

So while outdoors people may cry in disappointment at having to change plans it is assured that many in the agriculture business were weeping in pure delight as the crops benefitted from the boon of precipitation.

"Obviously since June we were quite dry in July," Brad Adams of the National Weather Service office out of Sioux Falls said. "We had three inches for the month but an inch fell on that last day. The rainfall would definitely help the local farmers and the daily crops."

The rain didn't perk up a lot of spirits. "It was dreary and pretty boring," LeeAnna Murphy of Fonda, Iowa, and a current University of South Dakota student said. "It made things more humid so I didn't really enjoy it. I came in for work on a Sunday and it was supposed to be nice and then I look out the window and it was like a Monsoon. I was surprised by all the rain."

Over a period of four days – Aug. 5-8 – Adams, an observing program leader, said that the Vermillion area was drenched by 2.32 inches of rain. The total up until Tuesday, Aug. 12 was 2.85 inches.

The normal for the month of August? A mere 2.75, so to say that this August has been a bit soggy would be an

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## Sen. Johnson Says Farewell After 36 Years In Office

By Randy Dockendorf  
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After serving 36 years in elected office, U.S. Sen. Tim Johnson has drawn a broad range of supporters across the political spectrum.

The Vermillion native and University of South Dakota graduate, who isn't running for re-election this year, has drawn respect not only from fellow Democrats and independents but also Republicans.

Those Republicans even include former Sen. Larry Pressler, who lost to challenger Johnson in the 1996 general election. Johnson, a U.S. House member at the time, won the narrow U.S. Senate race with national implications.

As a show of respect and admiration, Pressler attended Tuesday's farewell reception for

Johnson at the Yankton Community Library. Pressler told the *Press & Dakotan* he wanted to attend one of the stops on Johnson's farewell tour.

District 18 Rep. Bernie Hunhoff, D-Yankton, noted Pressler's presence at Tuesday's coffee.

"It's very gracious of him, and we're fortunate to have him here," Hunhoff said.

During the program, Pressler raised his hand and rose to address Johnson and the audience. Pressler noted he already held ties to the Johnson family while a University of South Dakota student in Vermillion.

"Your dad was my dean at USD," Pressler told Johnson.

After battling each other in the 1996 U.S. Senate election, Pressler and Johnson formed a



Sen. Tim Johnson (D-S.D.) is greeted by Phyllis Karolevitz of Yankton during a gathering held at the Yankton Community Library Tuesday afternoon.

Press & Dakotan Photo

friendship that has transcended the years and partisan lines.

"You were my adversary at one time, but I voted for you in another election," Pressler said,

drawing a smile from the senator.

In a case of what goes

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