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# PLAIN TALK

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## A CROWNING SUCCESS



THOMAS HATZENBUHLER/FOR THE PLAIN TALK

The Clay County Fair was held last weekend and by all accounts it was a great success. Pictured: Mya DeJong (center) of Vermillion was crowned Princess at the Miss Clay County Fair Pageant held on Friday. Tatem Passick of Vermillion (right of center) was awarded as the first runner-up, Kate DeVelder (left of center) was awarded as the second runner-up, Katrina Heles (left) was awarded as the third runner-up, and Skylyn Fitzgerald (right) was awarded as the fourth runner-up of the pageant. For more photos of the three-day event go to pages 10-11 and see next week's issue of the Plain Talk for full results from the fair.

## Principals Looking Forward To Return Of Students

BY SARAH WETZEL AND  
SHAUNA MARLETTE

shauna.marlette@plaintalk.net

With hundreds of students returning the halls of Vermillion Schools this week one thing is clear; the principals of each building are looking forward to a fun, successful year.

### St. Agnes Elementary School

The start of this school year marks an important step in St. Agnes' growth as students and teachers enjoy some new classrooms and office.

"This year we are most excited about our new addition onto the school is complete and so we are just very excited and blessed to be in our new spaces," said Principal Darla Hamm. "We have a new office and we have four new classrooms. Everyone is excited to be able to spread out and we're just feeling very thankful for all the support the parishioners have given for us to enjoy this beautiful space."

The growth experienced by the school certainly merits the extra space as the student population has almost doubled since Hamm began as principal, currently enrolling about 104 students according to Hamm.

"Also our preschool program is full right now and we have, I think there are 54 preschoolers," she said.

According to Hamm, St. Agnes is dedicated to improving in all academic areas.

"We've been implementing the Common Core state standards," she said. "This year we received results back. We're going to analyze those and see if there are spots that a lot of kids struggle with and trying to make those develop. Overall, we're pleased with the scores that our kids have this year."

As far as parental involvement, Hamm hopes the focus is on quality.

"Just being actively involved in their child's education, keeping open lines of communication with the teachers and the staff and also just spending time with them every evening helping them with any homework, reading to them every day and really being involved and being a part in their education," she said. "Making it a priority. It is a challenge balancing everything."

A unique aspect of St. Agnes is the spiritual education the students receive in addition to academic.

"Here we want to teach them that their number one priority is creating a relationship with Jesus and just knowing that they can build their faith and build their trust in God and their relationship with God and that will make

## Passing With Flying Colors



SHAUNA MARLETTE/FOR THE PLAIN TALK

The Clay Area Emergency Services Communication Center recently completed its first ever compliance check to verify that it is meeting state standards. The results: 100 percent compliance. Pictured are dispatchers Dave Stammer, Alyssa LaFramboise, Lie West and director, Ryan Anderson.

## Clay County Communications Center 100 percent Compliant With State

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE

shauna.marlette@plaintalk.net

9-1-1

Three simple numbers that resonate from the smallest of children to the oldest of adults: if you need help, dial 9-1-1.

For Vermillion and Clay County alike, the people behind the scenes of the Clay Area Emergency Services Communication Center (CAESCC) are working to ensure that in an emergent situation, the help you need is just a phone call away.

"We dispatch for fire, EMS, law enforcement, we do some with highway patrol, city workers, and county workers in Clay County," said Ryan Anderson, CAESCC director. "We answer all 9-1-1 calls for

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## Catastrophic Server Failure Impacts VSD

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE  
shauna.marlette@plaintalk.net

Three words caught the attention of the Vermillion School Board Monday night when superintendent Dr. Mark Froke was giving his report to the board: Catastrophic Server Failure.

Dr. Froke explained to the board that on July 17, MSServer3, which stores the data for the all of the district's school libraries and the teacher documents for the Middle School staff, suffered server failure. The reason for the failure is unknown; however there were severe storms in the area that night.



Froke

Froke reported that as a result of the failure all library data bases will have to be recreated as the backup location was also impacted by the failure.

"Late this summer the middle school server crashed for reasons unknown," he said. "That server contained all the library titles in the district so those titles have to be reinserted into the server. The teachers lost some of

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## VMS Garden Growing Lessons

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE  
shauna.marlette@plaintalk.net

Even though the 2014-15 school year has been completed since May, former Vermillion Middle School (VMS) 8th grade students have been in school this summer. The reason: the Vermillion Middle School Garden.

Under the direction of Natasha Gault, VMS 8th grade science teacher, the students have successfully designed, built, planted and harvested the garden, all in the hopes of educating the students about poverty and how they can help alleviate it.

"The students have been working approximately two hours each week on the school garden this summer," Gault said during Monday's Vermillion School Board meeting. "As you are aware, in February the Vermillion Middle School 8th grade science room received a grant from the South Dakota Community Foundation Community Innovation Grant for



Shauna Marlette/ For The Plain Talk  
The Vermillion Middle School Garden project has been a growing success this summer. With hard work the eighth grade teamwork resulted in the removal of 2000 square feet of sod and the construction of 18 garden beds.

\$9,950 to institute a poverty curriculum, as well as the living lab where we planted a garden."

The results speak for themselves.

"We have had a very productive garden," Gault said. "To the Vermillion Food Pantry we have donated

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