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# PLAIN TALK

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## 'It is time for me to say good-bye'

Johnson comes home to announce retirement

By David Lias  
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Sen. Tim Johnson ended weeks of speculation Tuesday.

Standing before reporters and well wishers, with his wife Barb at his side, he announced during an afternoon press conference that he would not be seeking a fourth term in the U.S. Senate.

"I will be 68 years old at the end of this term and it is time for me to say good-bye," he said. "I will not be running for re-election to the United States Senate in 2014 or any other office."

"I look forward to serving the remaining two years as the country is facing difficult times on many fronts and I will work every day to find a bipartisan solution to these challenges," Johnson said, reading from a prepared text.

During a question-and-answer session with reporters following his formal remarks, Johnson noted that the time is right for him to step away from public office when his term ends in 2014.

The senator said he will not let up his pace of work during the remainder of his U.S. Senate term. "I am on the Banking Committee, and that will remain a priority with me," he said. "The Lewis & Clark Water System and the Mni Wiconi Water System are two key things that deserve to be built."

Johnson said he also believes deeply in K-12 education, higher education and Head Start, and will continue to work on issues involving health care, notably the continuation of the Affordable Care Act.

When his term ends, "Next comes the opportunity to do other things," Johnson said. "Those other things



Sen. Tim Johnson said his decision to not seek re-election means no campaign planning. "That will be strange," he said, his remarks drawing laughter from the capacity audience in the Al Neuharth Media Center on the USD campus. "I've planned for elections 36 years in a row, and it's now time to give it up ... I'm certain that I can get over it."

(Photo by David Lias)

involve living in South Dakota and working with my kids and grandkids."

Johnson has held political office since he was elected to the South Dakota Legislature in 1978 while practicing law in Vermillion.

"I've won 12 elections in a row - four in the state Legislature, five in the United States House of Representatives, and three in the Senate, including some very tough campaigns," he said. "But I have maintained moderation. I won the

middle in my campaigns, and I left the left-wing and the far-right wing alone. I can't win them anyway, but I am proud of my record and I'm proud of the moderation that I've brought to South Dakota."

Age isn't the only element that factored into Johnson's decision to not seek a fourth term.

In December 2006, Johnson suffered bleeding in the brain caused by a cerebral arteriovenous malformation, a congenital defect that causes enlarged and tangled

blood vessels. He underwent surgery to stop further bleeding.

Johnson then underwent a lengthy regimen of physical, occupational, and speech therapy to gain strength and mobility and restore his severely affected speech.

The brain bleed has slowed his speech and placed limits on his mobility. He used a motorized scooter to get to the podium at Tuesday's news conference.

"I feel great, but I must be honest and I appreciate that my right arm

and right leg aren't what they used to be, and my speech is not entirely there," he said. "I think mostly that it's time to go. I feel that I have other things to do besides what I'm doing now."

Whether Johnson was planning to retire has been grist for the political rumor mill for months in South Dakota, and has caused speculation about possible Democratic

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## Strong focus on local service is goal Area media outlets join forces

Students shine at annual state Science Olympiad

By David Lias  
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5 Star Communications, owner of Classic Hits 106.3 KVHT-FM and ESPN Radio 1570 KVTM-AM of Yankton, are joining forces with Broadcaster Press and Vermillion Plain Talk with one goal in mind: to provide the best service possible to local readers, local listeners and local advertisers.

"The Broadcaster Press' and Vermillion Plain Talk's commitment to the local community is very similar to the commitment put forth by the radio stations," said Simon Fuller, the two station's sales manager.

"What we're trying to accomplish is serving the Vermillion community and surrounding communities with good, local information, which includes the only local print news source, and the only local licensed radio station in Vermillion," said Gary Wood, publisher of the Broadcaster

Press and the Vermillion Plain Talk. "We're here to serve; we're here to do what's best for our readers and advertisers by partnering like this with KVHT FM and ESPN Radio 1570 AM."

Making this collaborative effort possible is a stronger presence and the radio station's strengthening presence in the Vermillion community.

"We've never left Vermillion, but the physical presence was gone. When we (5 Star Communications) purchased the stations a couple years back, one of our goals was to continue our commitment to local broadcasting," Fuller said. "The second goal was to get the University of South Dakota back on our stations, and that happened, and the third was to get back here physically."

KVHT and KVTM now have a presence in Vermillion, with plans to broadcast from a small studio location at 16 E. Main Street in the heart of downtown.

Beginning April 1, radio



Gary Wood, publisher of the Broadcaster Press and Vermillion Plain Talk, and Simon Fuller, sales manager of Classic Hits 106.3 KVHT-FM and ESPN Radio 1570 KVTM-AM, announce plans to launch a collaborative effort to provide the best service possible to local readers, listeners and advertisers.

(Photo by David Lias)

personalities Joe Van Goor and Randy Hammer will be broadcasting a show from Vermillion. Van Goor will likely man the Vermillion location from 8 to 10 a.m. each weekday morning, and both he and Hammer, from the Yankton

studio, will focus on news and information of interest to Vermillion listeners.

Plans also call for Hammer, along with radio staffers Sammie Ginsbach and Andrea

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By Travis Gulbrandson  
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Vermillion Middle School came away with third place in Division B at the 29th annual South Dakota Science Olympiad State Tournament Saturday.

This is the second year in a row the school has won that place, with Yankton Middle School and Sacred Heart Middle School earning first and second, respectively.

"The event went very well overall," said Clark Bennett, mathematics instructor and Science Olympiad organizer. "It was very well-attended, the students were very prepared, and I think everyone had a very good time."

Sixteen teams from two divisions across the state came to compete in events as varied as anatomy, experimental design and metric mastery, which were held in locations across the USD campus, as well as the Vermillion Armory.

While some events utilized the students' test-taking skills, others required practical experience in designing and building.

One of these was the mousetrap vehicle event.

"You have a car that's supposed to be powered by a mousetrap," explained Kristen Rezac, an eighth-grader from

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**A NOTE TO OUR READERS**

Because of technical problems, only a portion of each of the four front-page stories of the March 22 Plain Talk were published.

Those stories appear in full in this week's edition. They can be found on page 02

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