



PLAIN TALK

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Holiday Tunes

Dr. Rolf Olson plays the trumpet in a concert given by The South Dakota Brass Quintet Tuesday night in Colton Recital Hall on the University of South Dakota campus. Other members of the quintet are Dr. Clayton Lehmann, Dr. Gary L. Reeves, Dr. Jonathan D. Alvis and Charles "Chuck" Dibley.

(Travis Gulbrandson/Vermillion Plain Talk)



James McGuire, director of technology at Vermillion High School, examines one of the iPads that was distributed to all VHS students earlier this month.

(Travis Gulbrandson/Vermillion Plain Talk)

VHS students to utilize iPads

By Travis Gulbrandson
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Interaction with technology continues to be a growing aspect of most areas of life, and this month, students at Vermillion High School saw this interaction spread to their classrooms.

That's because on Nov. 13, each VHS student was provided with an iPad for use as a tool for doing homework assignments, studying and communicating, both in and out of school.

"All of their assignments will be basically developed off of this," said Jason Gault, assistant director of technology at the school. "Teachers will be able to disseminate all of their stuff to them – notes, PowerPoints, everything that they would initially get through either paper handouts or some other source, they now can receive on their device and have at all times.

"With the device, they get the iPad itself, they get a cover for it, they get a charger, but they also get all the stuff that goes on the inside, all the programs and tools that they're going to use in their everyday schoolwork," he said.

The iPads were acquired as part of the state's "1 to 1 Initiative," part of former Gov. Rounds' Classroom Communications project to provide incentive money for school districts to initiate one-to-one laptop or tablet programs for high school students.

According to James McGuire, the school's director of technology, the iPads were purchased on a three-year lease, with "a significant amount of money" from the technology budget for those next three years going toward their acquisition.

The devices arrived in the

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An Act Of Mercy:

Diagnosed With HIV, Zimbabwean Woman Finds A New Purpose

By Nathan Johnson
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When Mercy Mukumba discovered she had human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), she made a vow that she would not surrender her life to the disease.

"You have to carry on," she said. "It's not the end of life. It's just a condition. If you know how to handle your condition, life goes on."

Mukumba, 62, has been staying in Vermillion for the last several months to care for her newborn grandchild, Eliana Mutinotida Chakawora, who was born in August. Mukumba's daughter, Kudzai, is a doctoral student at the University of South Dakota.

In January, Mukumba will return to her home in Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe.

Defying the temptation to feel sorry for herself, Mukumba has instead chosen to spread a message of love. Much of her time is spent educating dozens of children in Zimbabwe through the school she started several years ago.

During her time in South Dakota, she has spoken to groups about her experience living with HIV and attempted to give others hope.

It was in 2000 that Mukumba learned she had contracted HIV from her husband. He had gotten it from an extramarital affair.

"I said, 'God, I've been faithful to my husband, and I've been faithful to you,'" Mukumba said. "I think the virus is not going to kill me. I'm going to die in the proper way."

Mukumba's story is not unique in Zimbabwe, a country that is among the worst hit by the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa. An estimated 1,159,097 of Zimbabwe's 12.7 million residents were living with HIV and AIDS in 2011. Of those, an estimated 597,293 badly needed antiretroviral therapy.

Despite the number of people with HIV and AIDS, Mukumba said discrimination



Mercy Mukumba has been staying in Vermillion to care for her newborn grandchild, Eliana Mutinotida Chakawora, since August. During her stay, the Zimbabwe native has also been speaking to groups about living with HIV.

(Nathan Johnson/P&D)

against those in Zimbabwe who have them is rampant.

"They are very looked down upon," she stated. "With me, I've decided to be open at my workplace and church, and in my community. I don't feel awkward when I'm

around them. But a lot of people are still hiding, and because of their denial, they are dying. Some of them are dying because they can't reach out for medication because of

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