

# A Son's Potentially Dangerous Situation

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI

Dear Tom and Ray:

Yesterday a vehicle crashed into some trees near my house. The driver apparently had passed out while driving and was not conscious, but his foot was still on the gas. The engine was racing and the tires were spinning, and there was a lot of smoke. My son was able to reach through the passenger side and turn off the engine. I was afraid it was going to blow up. Which leads to my question: How long would it take for a racing engine to blow up? Or would it "blow up" from racing like that? - Judy

**RAY:** The engine would not blow up, Judy. Just to be sure, I went outside and drove my brother's car into a tree to try it, and I can confirm that, unlike the front grille, the engine is still completely intact.

**TOM:** In the old days, you could make an engine "blow." What was meant by that was that you could rev the engine so fast that centrifugal force would cause important engine parts to start flying apart.

**RAY:** But you can't even do that anymore. All modern cars have rev limiters, which cut the fuel supply to the engine before the



CLICK & CLACK

engine speed reaches the danger zone.

**TOM:** The smoke you saw likely was coming from one of two places: Either the radiator was fractured when the car hit the tree and what you were seeing was lots of steam, or the tires may have been smoking.

**RAY:** And while we commend your son for helping the gentleman, and we'd certainly try to do the same thing, there are three

types of dangers in a situation like this, for future reference.

**TOM:** One is that the car breaks loose from the tree or whatever is holding it in place. If it's a small tree, or if he hit it with the corner of the car, and the wheels are really spinning, the car could free itself and take you with it while you're leaning into the passenger window.

**RAY:** The second danger could come from the tires. If the tires are spinning quickly on the ground, they'll be creating tremendous friction. And if they get hot enough, they could catch fire.

**TOM:** Or, if a tire ends up spinning while it's off the ground, the speed of the spinning tire could cause the tire to fly apart and potentially hurt somebody.

**RAY:** And the third danger is that the guy who passed out could wake up and say: "Hey! Who the heck are you, and what are you doing in my car?"

Got a question about cars? Write to Click and Clack in care of this newspaper, or e-mail them by visiting the Car Talk Web site at [www.cartalk.com](http://www.cartalk.com).

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## State Historical Society Conference Theme Now Officially 'Prairie Politics'

PIERRE — South Dakota politics will be the focus of this year's annual history conference hosted by the South Dakota State Historical Society. The conference is April 30-May 1 at the Ramkota RiverCentre in Pierre.

The theme of the conference is "Prairie Politics From Territory to Today."

The keynote speaker is Tom Isern, professor of history and university distinguished professor at North Dakota State University. Isern's academic specialty is the history and folklore of the Great Plains of North America. He is the author and co-author of six books. Isern's presentation is titled, "Ungovernable: The Political Culture of the Northern Plains."

Public Utilities Commission Chairman Dusty Johnson and South Dakota House Minority Leader Bernie Hunhoff will moderate the conference.

Conference sessions cover a wide variety of political topics, including a video message from former television anchor Tom Brokaw, a comparison between East River and West River politics, Lakota politics, women in politics and the fight for the capital city. Members of South Dakota's First Families, as well as prominent South Dakota political reporters, will lead two different panel discussions — "First Families" and "Politics Then Now."

The conference also features the exhibit "The People's House: Celebrating the Century," the announcement of the Governor's Awards for History and a bus tour of historic Pierre.

For a complete agenda and registration information, visit [www.history.sd.gov](http://www.history.sd.gov) or call (605) 773-6000. The early registration deadline is April 16.

## USD Center For Disabilities Hosts Spring Autism Conference

VERMILLION — The University of South Dakota Center for Disabilities, a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, is hosting a workshop in Sioux Falls, on Early Intensive Behavioral Interventions for Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders with Thomas Higbee, Ph.D., April 12-13, at Schroeder Auditorium in the Sanford USD Medical Center.

April is Autism Awareness Month and the Center for Disabilities, home to the first Autism Spectrum Disorders program in the state, is using the workshop to bring awareness to autism and the impact it has on communities. Autism, a complex neurobiological disorder, impacts a person's ability to communicate and relate to others in socially expected ways. Accompanying behaviors may include self injurious behaviors, repetitive stereotypical hand movements, or fixed inflexible adherence to specific non-functional routines. This

disorder, which impacts boys four times more often than girls, has no known cause or cure.

Established in 1989 through the grassroots efforts of parents and professionals, USD's Autism Spectrum Disorders program provides training, technical assistance, clinical services, and resource and referral assistance to the state of South Dakota. The goals of the program are to provide expertise and support to people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), family members of people with an ASD and professionals working with people with an ASD. ASDs include: Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, Rett's Syndrome and Pervasive Development Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS).

For more information about the workshop, visit [www.usd.edu/cd/spring-autism-conference.cfm](http://www.usd.edu/cd/spring-autism-conference.cfm) or contact the Center for Disabilities at (605) 357-1439.

## CITY

From Page 1

"I still have a fear that the sales tax revenue is going to decline further than what we're seeing," he added. "We've had a couple lucky breaks in the area with the roofing and pipeline. I think there's still a little bit of that going through that is not showing the true trend. We really need to watch that."

In addition to keeping a close eye on spending in the next two years, Woerner said an important issue will be maintaining healthy relationships.

"Relationships are always critical," he stated. "I think we need to continue to mend any broken relationships we may have and be welcoming to businesses that want to make Yankton their home."

Asked if the city should provide incentives for any business to locate in the community that pays less than \$10.50 an hour, none of the candidates provided a direct response.

"I think our labor force is worth a lot more than it is paid," Swedeen said. "It is extremely

difficult to live on \$9 or \$10 an hour, especially if you have a family. We need to bring in companies that are going to pay people what they are worth."

Woerner said he supports higher wages and noted that sometimes the cost of living goes up without corresponding growth in wage levels.

"However, I'm not sure if the City of Yankton should get too involved with that," he said. "I think there's a bigger brother on the East Coast that tried spending millions of dollars recently. I'm not sure it worked really well. We're not going to spend our way out of debt. We can't stimulate false growth and false hope by bringing these higher-wage jobs at a cost to every citizen."

The city needs to make sure companies don't look to Yankton as a low-wage destination that is essentially an alternative to outsourcing work to India, Lowrie said.

"Whatever we can do to not encourage that would be great," he stated. "The best growth comes from entrepreneurs in your community that start businesses and want to stay and grow."

Gross said that Yankton, with its manufacturing base in addi-

tion to the other industries located here, has an economy that most other communities in South Dakota would love to have.

"We have a manufacturing base that doesn't exist in many communities. The downside of that is obvious right now with unemployment at an all-time high for Yankton," he said. "How do you fix that? I don't know that you can fix that as much as wait for the economy to turn around. As businesses start purchasing equipment again, our manufacturers will be busy again."

Other areas covered during Monday's forum included whether or not the candidates support tax-increment financing districts, the future of the Memorial Park swimming pool and how to encourage more recycling.

The candidates will gather again at The Center Thursday morning at 10 a.m. for a forum sponsored by the AARP. Another forum sponsored by AM 1450 KYNT Radio and the Press & Dakotan will be held at 6 p.m. Thursday at Fry 'N' Pan in Yankton.

AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY:

## Floating On The Margins

BY TED KOOSER  
U.S. Poet Laureate

When we hear news of a flood, that news is mostly about the living, about the survivors. But at the edges of floods are the dead, too. Here Michael Chitwood, of North Carolina, looks at what's floating out there on the margins.

### THE COFFINS

Two days into the flood they appear, moored against a roof eave or bobbing caught in the crowns of drowned trees.

Like fancy life boats from an adventurer's flag ship, brass plating and grips, walnut sheen, scroll work, they slip through the understory on this brief, bad river.

What have they discovered and come back to account? Or is this the beginning of the marvelous voyage and they plan never to return?

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## SCHOOL

From Page 1

School District, all three of the candidates indicated they did not think that teachers were overpaid. In fact, all three indicated that they felt providing a competitive salary in order to retain the best teachers in the district is an invaluable key.

"Fifty-five percent of the teachers in the Yankton School District have a masters degree or greater," Specht said. "Currently the (YSD) provides one of the highest teacher salaries in the state and that is something we need to continue."

All three candidates mentioned that South Dakota's teachers are among the lowest in the nation.

"We educate very efficiently here," Fitzgerald said. "We need to increase funding to our teachers. (YSD) starts out with one of the highest starting wages, but we don't bump up as we need to. Our teachers are staying because they like Yankton and what it offers, not because of the pay."

Each candidate indicated that he felt the current administration has done a good job managing staff and dealing with issues that occur in the district.

"As a school board member, we must be aware of what is going on in the schools, but our place is not to meddle," Specht said. "We pay the administration; we need to let them do their job. We are here as a board to set policy and provide long-term direction for the district."

Fitzgerald noted that the board is the link between the district and the community.

"The board is responsible for taking care of the facilities," he said. "The board is not responsible to the staff."

Winter added, "Problems between the board and school and community happen when things don't seem to be discussed or happen so quickly that people don't feel they know what is going on. The board needs to work toward more openness and directness with the community."

The candidates will participate in two more forums this week: 10 a.m. Thursday at The Center and 7 p.m. Thursday at Fryin' Pan.



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