

# The Press & Dakotan

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**OPINION**

## Highway 50 Plan Hits Detour

Well, scratch that Highway 50 reconstruction project for a year. The project, which has been several years in the making, was suddenly derailed by the state Department of Transportation last week after the lone bid submitted on the project came in nearly \$3 million above the estimated \$8.7 million cost for the two-year endeavor.

While officials said the project remains in the state's plans, its start will now be pushed back to 2016.

However, while the project is still on the state's to-do list, the pulling of the plug so close to the groundbreaking for the project — which was expected to take place later this month — is very frustrating and perplexing.

And one has to point to the conspicuous fact that the bid-letting occurred with so little time before the work on the project was scheduled to commence.

The bids on the project were opened on March 25, which was merely one month before the work was to begin. Of course, if the bid(s) had come in at or a little below (or even slightly above) the estimated cost, this wouldn't have been a problem.

But when only one bid is received and the cost comes in at more than 30 percent above the original estimate, that's a real problem — and there's no time to adapt.

Ron Peterson, area engineer with the South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT), admitted that the bidding process happened later than is customary for such projects.

"With this being let at the end of March, it's relatively late," he told the *Press & Dakotan* last month. "Usually, we like to let things in December, January or February so that the contractor can get all (their) paperwork in order, (their) bond, insurance and subcontractors."

He said the process took longer because of "a lot of design things," such as finalizing details and acquiring the rights-of-way on some needed easements.

Nevertheless, the end result is the project will be pushed back one year — which represents a year lost.

Ultimately, the process seems to have been poorly managed. No time was apparently allowed for a possibility that things might not align just right in the bidding process, which can be filled with many variables, as we have just seen.

The thing is, this project has been years in the making. The need for the project was assessed and slotted years ago, and city and state officials have been planning for at least two years on the best way to approach it and how to handle the traffic difficulties.

Yankton officials are now working quickly to rearrange some of their own projects that were originally slated to steer clear of the Highway 50 work.

We aren't going to pretend to be experts on such matters, and perhaps there are sound reasons why this particular bid-letting was placed just a month before work on a two-year, multi-million highway project was supposed to begin. We can only judge the consequences of what we're seeing — and, in this case, what we won't see this year. And frankly, no one in Yankton can be terribly impressed.

kmh

**ONLINE OPINION**

The results of the most recent Internet poll on the Press & Dakotan's Web site are as follows:

**LATEST RESULTS:**

<b>Would you rate Abraham Lincoln as America's greatest president?</b>	
Yes.....	46%
No.....	36%
Not sure.....	18%
<b>TOTAL VOTES CAST</b> .....	<b>328</b>

The Press & Dakotan Internet poll is not a scientific survey and reflects the opinions only of those who choose to participate. The results should not be construed as an accurate representation or scientific measurement of public opinion.

**CURRENT QUESTION:**

**Should South Dakotans be given the chance to vote on the youth minimum wage law?**  
To cast your vote in the PRESS & DAKOTAN'S Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.

**IN HISTORY**

**By The Associated Press**  
Today is Tuesday, April 14, the 104th day of 2015. There are 261 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On April 14, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln was shot and mortally wounded by John Wilkes Booth during a performance of "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theater in Washington.

**On this date:** In 1775, the first American society for the abolition of slavery was formed in Philadelphia.

In 1828, the first edition of Noah Webster's "American Dictionary of the English Language" was published.

In 1890, the First International Conference of American States, meeting in Washington D.C., agreed to form the International Union of American Republics, a forerunner of the Organization of American States.

In 1912, the British liner RMS Titanic collided with an iceberg in the North Atlantic at 11:40 p.m. ship's time and began sinking. (The ship went under two hours and 40 minutes later with the loss of 1,514 lives.)

In 1935, the "Black Sunday" dust storm descended upon the central Plains, turning a sunny afternoon into total darkness.

In 1939, the John Steinbeck novel "The Grapes of Wrath" was first published by Viking Press.

In 1949, the "Wilhelmstrasse Trial" in Nuremberg ended with 19 former Nazi Foreign Office officials sentenced by an American tribunal to prison terms ranging from four to 25 years.

In 1956, Ampex Corp. demonstrated the first practical videotape recorder at the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters Convention in Chicago.

In 1965, the state of Kansas hanged Richard Hickock and Perry Smith for the 1959 murders of Herbert Clutter, his wife, Bonnie, and two of their children, Nancy and Kenyon.

In 1975, Academy Award-winning actor Fredric March, 77, died in Los Angeles.

In 1981, the first test flight of America's first operational space shuttle, the Columbia, ended successfully with a landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

In 1995, Oscar-winning actor-singer Burl Ives died in Anacortes, Washington, at age 85.

**Ten years ago:** The House passed and sent to President George W. Bush legislation making it tougher to erase obligations through bankruptcy (Bush signed the measure six days later). The Oregon Supreme Court nullified nearly 3,000 marriage licenses issued to gay couples a year earlier by Portland's Multnomah

County. Yankees right fielder Gary Sheffield got into a brief scuffle with a fan at Fenway Park during New York's 8-5 loss to the Boston Red Sox.

**Five years ago:** A magnitude-7 earthquake in a remote Tibetan region of China killed some 2,700 people and injured more than 10,000. The Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland erupted, sending out an ash plume that led most northern European countries to close their airspace between April 15 and 20, grounding about 10 million travelers worldwide. Ultra marathoner and amputee Amy Palmiero-Winters won the Sullivan Award as America's top amateur athlete.

**One year ago:** Speaking for the first time in more than two weeks, President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin showed little sign of agreement during a telephone call initiated by Putin, with Obama urging pro-Russian forces to de-escalate the situation in eastern Ukraine and Putin denying that Moscow was interfering in the region. Suspected Islamic militants struck in the heart of Nigeria with a massive rush-hour bomb blast that killed 75 people in Abuja, the capital. The Washington Post and The Guardian won the Pulitzer Prize in public service for revealing the U.S. government's sweeping surveillance efforts. Donna Tartt's "The Goldfinch" won the Pulitzer for fiction; Annie Baker's "The Flick" won for drama.

**Today's Birthdays:** Actor Bradford Dillman is 85. Country singer Loretta Lynn is 83. Actress Julie Christie is 75. Retired MLB All-Star Pete Rose is 74. Rock musician Ritchie Blackmore is 70. Actor John Shea is 66. Actor-turned-race car driver Brian Forster is 55. Actor Brad Garrett is 55. Actor Robert Carlyle is 54. Rock singer-musician John Bell (Widespread Panic) is 53. Actor Robert Clendenen is 51. Actress Catherine Dent is 50. Actor Lloyd Owen is 49. Baseball Hall of Famer Greg Maddux is 49. Rock musician Barrett Martin is 48. Actor Anthony Michael Hall is 47. Actor Adrien Brody is 42. Classical singer David Miller is 42. Rapper DaBrat is 41. Actor Anton Tanner is 40. Actress Sarah Michelle Gellar is 38. Actor-producer Rob McElhenney is 38. Roots singer JD McPherson is 38. Rock singer Win Butler (Arcade Fire) is 35. Actress Claire Coffee is 35. Actor Christian Alexander is 25. Actor Nick Krause is 23. Actress Vivien Cardone is 22. Actor Graham Phillips is 22. Actress Abigail Breslin is 19.

**Thought for Today:** "Change your life today. Don't gamble on the future, act now, without delay." — Simone de Beauvoir, French author (born 1908; died this date in 1986).

**FROM THE BIBLE**

*First of all, then, I urge that ... prayers ... be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life. 1 Timothy 2:1-2.* Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



**The Rez Of The Story**

## Racism And Grief

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives),

The American author and story teller, Gina Lake, who wrote "What About Now? Reminders for Being in the Moment," once wrote that "A lot of things are inherent in life-change, birth, death, aging, illness, accidents, calamities, and losses of all kinds — but these events don't have to be the cause of on-going suffering. Yes, these events cause grief and sadness, but grief and sadness pass, like everything else, and are replaced with other experiences ..."

We all deal with grief in our own way. Some of us honor our cultural and religious protocols while some of us would rather honor our own. No one person can rightfully insist that another grieve in some prescribed and precise way. And so we are left with the one honorable way to help another who's loss is difficult to fully understand; and that is to understand the importance of our support for the aggrieved.

At the moment, we are drawn to South Carolina's town of N. Charleston where white police officer, Michael Slager, shot and killed 50-year-old Walter Scott (a black man) fully exposed on national media via a bystander's cell phone. I watched with measured horror (along with millions of other Americans) as another black brother bit the bullet but for no other reason than his skin color.

To meet death in this way for any human is difficult to understand but the illustration of the lopsided power structure in this country demonstrated by this and other recent incidents with much the same theme being played out, ought to call our attention to the fact that something is broken and needs to be fixed.

Racism, in all its forms, is like a cancer eating away at our society. Most folks agree with this characterization but clearly there are still pockets of resistance to change racist attitudes and practices. What is paramount is that we do not let this cancer enter the arena of law enforcement in any way shape or form. The public trust of keeping public safety and security is at stake and if we heed not the seriousness of black folks, or any other, being



Vince TWO EAGLES

murdered (on national television no less) it is but a short hop from a free and vibrant democracy to "hello North Korea."

In its booklet entitled, "Facing Racism in a Diverse Nation," Every Day Democracy informs us all about racism in our communities like this:

"Racism affects every community and every person's way of life. It shows up in inequities between groups and tensions among people from different ethnic backgrounds. In order to have healthy communities and a strong country, we need to face racism head-on. In a democracy, there must be ways for everyone to have a voice in finding the solutions and in carrying them out.

"When it comes to facing issues of racism, this is a moment in transition in our country. This moment offers new challenges. It also provides new opportunities to make things better.

... Many communities are looking for better ways to manage ... changes. They want to create places where all people can thrive. More and more people see that racism is not just an issue for 'blacks' and 'whites.' It affects all of us — African Americans, European Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, Arab Americans, those of mixed backgrounds, and those who describe themselves as Americans ..."

America's history is tainted with "wars against Native American tribes and discrimination against native peoples, the enslavement of Africans and the oppression of African Americans after the end of slavery, the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II and discrimination against immigrants."

There has always existed opportunity to make things better, sometimes being implemented and adversity overcome but we clearly have a long way to go. I'm afraid there will be more Walter Scotts in this country, for now we must all (collectively) share our grief with the family of Mr. Scott, for our loss of our brother to the human family and for the circumstances for the conditions that make this tragedy even possible, if not inevitable.

And now you know the rez of the story. Doksha (later) ...

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Patriotic Theme**

**David Hosmer and Doug Haar, Yankton**

A hearty thank you to the Riverboat Days Committee! This year's theme is patriotic — "Red, White and Blue" with a special thanks to our veterans. And this is a particularly wonderful time to do so because 2015 is the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II.

An estimated 12.2 percent of Americans served in the military during that war. That is about 2,000 people from Yankton County, and 54 of those men and women perished. About 125 of those veterans currently live in the Yankton County area. This will be our final grand celebration to pay tribute to them. As we do, it is altogether fitting that men and women who served during World War II be in the Riverboat Days Parade! This letter requests your help.

Do you know of a WWII veteran who should be in the parade? They don't have to walk the route, but it would sure be nice to see dozens of veterans waving at the thousands along the parade route. And, do you have a military vehicle that can make it through the parade?

Do you know of a WWII veteran who should be remembered? We are hoping that we can gather pictures and other memories and present them during the Riverboat Days weekend. It would be grand to see a hall of memories paying tribute to those who have sacrificed to protect our freedoms.

We would be remiss if we did not also thank our veterans from the Korean War, the

**P&D Letter Policy**

The PRESS & DAKOTAN invites its readers to write letters to the editor. We ask that a few simple guidelines be followed:

- Please limit letters to 300 words or less. Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.
- In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the PRESS & DAKOTAN will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.
- Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.
- Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email us at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.

Vietnam War, the Cold War and the Gulf wars. This year's theme is not limited to just WWII veterans. Thank you to all of our veterans for your service!

Nor is this request limited to people in Yankton County. Gratitude does not end at the county line. We welcome people from all over to contact David Hosmer at 661-2947 or Doug Haar at 660-3061. We have a feeling that this Riverboat Days is going to be great!

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