

The Press  Dakotan

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861

Yankton Media, Inc., 319 Walnut St., Yankton, SD 57078

OPINION OTHER VIEWS

The Biggest Test
Isn't About Material

MCCOOK GAZETTE (July 30): Emphasis on educational test results always bring about objections to instructors "teaching to the test," but along with pressure to improve test results comes the increasing possibility that teachers will fail a test of their own — ethics and morality.

The *Omaha World-Herald* was able to obtain a report showing eight serious cheating incidents across the state since 2010, but not detailed specifics about the cases.

Palisade native Matthew L. Blomstedt, education commissioner, invoked an exception to the state's public records law, saying releasing more details would discourage local officials from self-reporting violations.

The report did give examples of what a serious breach would be, such as changing a student's answers, directly coaching a student or providing test answers to students.

Of the eight, three from the 2014-15 school year are still under investigation and those involved in the remaining cases have been disciplined.

One fourth-grade teacher had her teaching certificate suspended for a year for fixing students' writing on the writing test, and four others received public reprimands.

The report listed 107 security breaches since 2010, 29 moderately serious and 70 least serious as well as the eight serious incidents.

"Moderate" might be something like allowing students to use calculators when it's not allowed or an adult reading a reading-test passage to a student. A least serious incident might be leaving up a wall poster describing the writing process in a testing room.

Cheating on a fourth-grade test is one thing, but remember recent incidents when military crews, in charge of launching nuclear missiles, were found to be cheating?

From what we've heard, test cheating has been widespread in the military.

Increasing emphasis on test results for financial gain will only make the practice more common.

Tests at any level are designed to demonstrate one's knowledge of the material, but inherent in every one of them is the examination of an even more important trait: personal integrity, of both the person taking the test and the one administering it.

Without personal integrity, supposed knowledge of the material is meaningless.

OUR 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, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email us at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Monday, August 10, the 222nd day of 2015. There are 143 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On August 10, 1945, a day after the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Imperial Japan conveyed its willingness to surrender provided the status of Emperor Hirohito remained unchanged. (The Allies responded the next day, saying they would determine the Emperor's future status.)

On this date: In 1792, during the French Revolution, mobs in Paris attacked the Tuileries Palace, where King Louis XVI resided. (The king was later arrested, put on trial for treason, and executed.)

In 1821, Missouri became the 24th state.

In 1846, President James K. Polk signed a measure establishing the Smithsonian Institution.

In 1874, Herbert Clark Hoover, the 31st president of the United States, was born in West Branch, Iowa.

In 1913, the Treaty of Bucharest was signed, ending the Second Balkan War.

In 1921, Franklin D. Roosevelt was stricken with polio at his summer home on the Canadian island of Campobello.

In 1949, the National Military Establishment was renamed the Department of Defense.

In 1969, Leno and Rosemary LaBianca were murdered in their Los Angeles home by members of Charles Manson's cult, one day after actress Sharon Tate and four other people had been slain.

In 1975, television personality David Frost announced he had purchased the exclusive rights to interview former President Richard Nixon.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed a measure providing \$20,000 payments to still-living Japanese-Americans who'd been interned by their government during World War II.

In 1993, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was sworn in as the second female justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1995, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols were charged with 11 counts in the Oklahoma City bombing (McVeigh was convicted of murder and executed; Nichols was convicted of conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to life in prison). Norma McCorvey, "Jane Roe" of the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, announced she had joined the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue.

Ten years ago: A defiant Iran resumed full operations at its uranium conversion plant. President George W. Bush

FROM THE BIBLE

He shall not judge by what His eyes see. Isaiah 11:3. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Moving Onward

Michelle Cwach, R.J. Rieger and Heidi Marsh
Onward Yankton committee

Our thanks to all the people who cared enough about Yankton's future to offer proposals or to comment on the 508 ideas that have been submitted to Onward Yankton as we search for a big project.

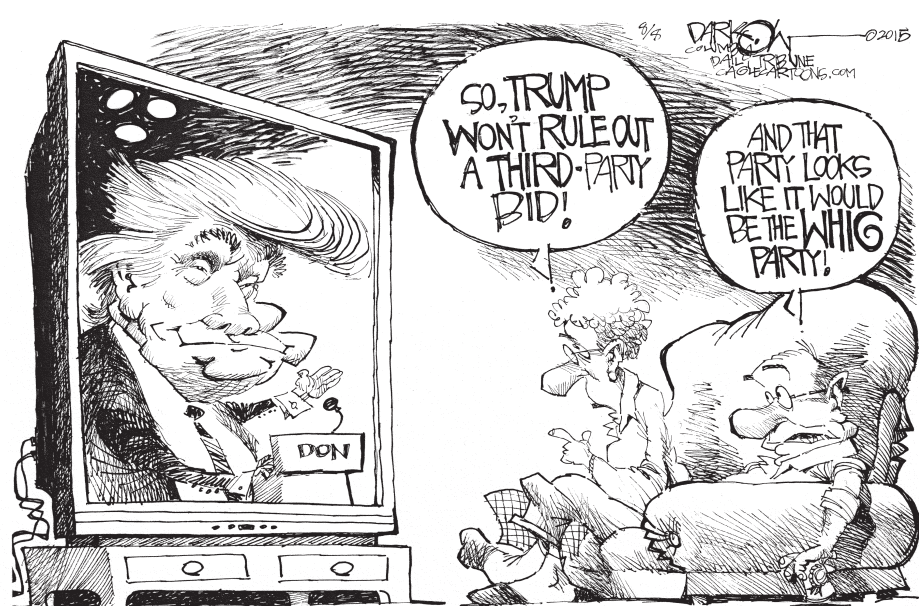
Now we need your input and participation more than ever as we choose among the final six ideas. Our big volunteer committee will meet with any service club, group or association that wants a presentation on the Final Six. Just call R.J. at 665-2480 to schedule us.

The six finalists will present their ideas in person at a community meeting scheduled for Monday even-

ing, Aug. 31. One of the finalists is a Yankton native who is coming home from the East Coast for the meeting. The exact time and place will be announced very soon, so please save the date.

Onward Yankton consists of about 20 volunteers. As it turns out, two of the 20 have ideas in the Final Six. The two agree that they should not be involved in the final discussion and decision. Furthermore, both insist that if their idea is chosen, then the \$10,000 award should go as seed money to the project.

We are breaking new ground with Onward Yankton. As far as we can tell, no other community has conducted such a search for ways to improve. So we're learning as we go. We must choose a Big Idea that is widely accepted, feasible, important and something we can finance. So this is not just a popu-



Capitol Notebook

Planned Parenthood Fight
Might Cut A Different Way

BY BOB MERCER

State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE – The decision by Paula Hawks to be a Democratic candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives means U.S. Rep. Kristie Noem, a Republican, will have an opponent in the 2016 election for South Dakota's only seat in the chamber of 435.

Noem starts with big advantages.

She holds the office, has been through four statewide contests and won all four, and is very much a Republican in a very Republican state. This is Hawks' first statewide run.

On federal funding for Planned Parenthood to provide services to women, Hawks takes the opposite side of Noem and South Dakota's two Republican U.S. senators, Mike Rounds and John Thune.

Noem, Rounds and Thune are part of a national Republican effort to strip Planned Parenthood of the money.

Federal law prohibits using it for abortions. The goal is to financially cripple Planned Parenthood, the only publicly acknowledged provider of abortions in South Dakota.

South Dakota went through two difficult fights over banning most abortions. Each time the question went to a statewide vote, abortion remained legal.

The first came in 2006, after the Legislature approved a ban on most abortions and then-Gov. Rounds signed it into law. Abortion-rights supporters referred it and voters blocked it.

The outcome was 146,648 yes for the law and 185,945 against it.

Abortion opponents came right back and put a similar ban on the 2008 ballot. Voters rejected it too. The tally was 167,560 yes and 206,535 no.

The attempted bans were direct challenges to the 1973 decision in the Roe vs. Wade case where

the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortions nationwide.

Going after Planned Parenthood funding now is a roundabout route toward the same goal.

It is a concerted effort. For example, Thune and Rounds issued identically worded news releases from their offices on the topic last month.

In the U.S. Senate they were part of a Republican effort Aug. 3 to proceed to consideration of legislation from Iowa Republican Joni Ernst to strip the funding.

The attempt needed 60 yes votes. The outcome was 53-46, with Thune and Rounds among the 53.

The Senate Republicans' leader, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, voted no. That maneuver enables McConnell to bring the matter up again.

Noem meanwhile declared she would again co-sponsor House legislation to cut off the funding. It has passed there before.

Hawks, a second-term member of the state House of Representatives from Hartford, immediately staked her spot on the Planned Parenthood side.

Abortions, as reported to the state Department of Health, have declined somewhat in South Dakota but remain prevalent since the attempts at the bans.

There were 707 in 2007; 848 in 2008; 769 in 2009; 737 in 2010; 597 in 2011; 634 in 2012; and 601 in 2013. Those numbers include South Dakota residents and others. The 2014 data aren't completely available yet.

Elections are decided on many issues. Eventually the Planned Parenthood fight will come down to voters understanding how body parts of unborn children are disposed after abortions.

This is gruesome. Oddly, if public sentiment from the 2006 and 2008 ballot measures still holds, Hawks might have helped herself.

Bob
MERCER

Pro-Life Is Anti-Gun

BY TINA DUPUY

CagleCartoons.com

Let me get this out of the way: I don't agree with the pro-life position on abortion for two reasons. The first is if abortion is criminalized, all women of child-bearing years legally become public incubators. The ability to bear children will mean being subjected to special scrutiny by the government. If you believe women are more than just transportation systems for wombs, abortion—love it or hate it—has to be legal. Family planning, privacy and the right to keep personal decisions personal are at the core of what we know as choice.

Second is that the pro-life movement is strangely also anti-birth control—conflating very effective means of preventing pregnancy, like IUDs and Plan B, with abortion. These are not abortions, and declaring them as such smacks not only of anti-science, but anti-sex. Specifically, anti-sex-without-consequences.

It strikes me this isn't just pro-life, it's pro-dictating others' lives. This week, former governor of Arkansas, presidential candidate and admitted statutory rapist Ted Nugent-apologist Mike Huckabee said he wouldn't rule out using federal troops to stop women from exercising their constitutionally protected right to terminate their own pregnancies.

Because nothing says freedom more than a martial-forced birth.

But let's just say I'm cynical. I grew up in the foster care system, so I'm very skeptical when people profess they care about the welfare of children, but not actual welfare. Pro-lifers seem to revel in lamenting the fates of unwanted children, but are not holding marches at the steps of the Supreme Court to humanize foster care, reform adoption laws or give public assistance to families in crisis. They're not holding vigils and prayer circles to increase funding to house abused or neglected children. Remember all those child refugees at the Mexican border? They're children, too. When I see a dead fetus placard I see time not spent fundraising for scholarships for kids in the system.

Where's the heavily edited video exposing how macabre and horrible it is to grow up in this country as a ward of the state? I'm still waiting.

But let's say I've misjudged the pro-life movement. Let's say they're not currently using

an activist's hoax in hopes of sparking a moral panic alleging Planned Parenthood sells body parts. Let's pretend abortion clinics haven't been under constant "pro-life" terrorist attacks or threats. Ignore all the bombings and harassment, and forget that Dr. George Tiller wasn't shot in the head while attending church. Let's just take them at their word—that they really believe every life is sacred and they really care about children.

Then I welcome pro-lifers to join the anti-gun movement. There's not as much raucous slut-shaming—but there are a lot of actual children dying. Pro-lifers can be more than just pro-birth. If it really is a moral conviction that life is sacred, then get out of women's birth canals and grow up.

The U.S. has more guns and more gun deaths than any other country. Those who say guns make us safer have disregarded all data and common sense to make that claim. Just in 2013 we lost 11,000 Americans to gun homicides, 21,000 to gun suicides and 500 to accidents involving guns. We, as Americans, have decided kindergartners getting blown away in Sandy Hook is just the price of freedom, yet just under half the country say they're pro-life!

How is this possible?
It's time to branch out. Time to stop using junk science to scare women and time to start rallying against the real death industry in this country: Gun manufacturers. If pro-lifers are incensed and galvanized by the falsehood that Planned Parenthood profits off death as a non-profit organization, why aren't they furious arms dealers are legally immune to lawsuits thanks to an act of Congress? Gun makers and dealers have no liability, all profit and don't screen for cancer.

So in case no one has offered it before now, pro-lifers, you're invited to champion for stricter gun laws. You'd be a welcome addition to those who know the Second Amendment states the militia is well-regulated and not wholly deregulated.

Tina Dupuy is a nationally syndicated op-ed columnist, investigative journalist, award-winning writer, stand-up comic, on-air commentator and wedge issue fan. Tina can be reached at tinadupuy@yahoo.com.

Convention Support

Dale Stibril, VFW Post 791

VFW Post 791 would like to thank all Yankton businesses who supported us by advertising in our annual convention booklet. And we'd also like to thank the volunteers and post members (Joyce Stahlecker, Pat Cerny) who helped to make the convention possible. All efforts are greatly appreciated.

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