

The Press & Dakotan

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861

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Published Daily

Monday-Saturday

Periodicals postage

paid at Yankton, South

Dakota, under the act of

March 3, 1979.

Weekly Dakotian

established June 6, 1861.

Yankton Daily Press and

Dakotian established April

26, 1875.

Postmaster: Send

address changes to Yankton

Daily Press & Dakotan,

319 Walnut, Yankton, SD

57078.

MEMBERSHIPS

The Yankton Daily

Press & Dakotan is a

member of the Associ-

ated Press, the Inland

Daily Press Association

and the South Dakota

Newspaper Association.

The Associated Press

is entitled exclusively to

use of all the local

news printed in this

newspaper.

SUBSCRIPTION

RATES*

(Payable in advance)

CARRIER DELIVERY

1-month..... \$12.09

3 months..... \$36.27

6 months..... \$72.53

1-year..... \$133.09

MOTOR ROUTE

(where available)

1 month..... \$14.51

3 months..... \$43.53

6 months..... \$87.05

1 year..... \$139.14

MAIL IN RETAIL

Trade Zone

1-month..... \$16.93

3 months..... \$50.79

6 months..... \$101.57

1-year..... \$148.82

MAIL OUTSIDE

RETAIL TRADE ZONE

1 month..... \$19.35

3 months..... \$58.05

6 months..... \$116.09

1-year..... \$186.33

* Plus applicable sales tax for all rates

OPINION OTHER VIEWS

Wildlife Habitat Needs A Boost

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD (Aug. 13): It's no surprise that the amount of Nebraska land under the federal Conservation Reserve Program has fallen considerably in recent years.

Acreage under the CRP program "by which landowners are paid to refrain from farming highly erodible and marginal soil" was bound to decline when corn prices were climbing well above \$7 a bushel and soybean prices were reaching skyward, too. There was no way that CRP rental payments could compete.

Now that crop prices have fallen, conservation grasslands are becoming a practical option for more Nebraska farmers.

A tour promoting CRP in Nebraska this summer was sponsored by a group of government agencies and nonprofits: the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service, Nebraska Environmental Trust, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, federal Farm Service Agency, Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever.

Nebraska has about 776,000 acres in CRP status at present.

That's down from the program's high point in Nebraska in the early 1990s, when CRP topped 1.4 million acres.

CRP often involves land that is of marginal quality, floods regularly or is difficult to access. The central benefit is providing habitat for wildlife. There is growing interest, too, in adding flowers and milkweed to conservation grasslands as a way of boosting bee populations in light of stress on the pollinators nationwide.

Haying and grazing are allowed on some lands under CRP, making the program an option for some cattle producers.

The conservation need is especially important in the Great Plains, given the region's overall decline in wildlife habitat. During 2006-11, around 1.3 million acres of grassland and wetland were converted to cropland in Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota and the Dakotas, according to the National Academy of Sciences.

Nebraska's conversion to cropland during 2011-12 totaled nearly 55,000 acres, the most of any state.

The next CRP general sign-up starts Dec. 1 and runs through Feb. 26, 2016. Contracts run for 10 to 15 years, with rates varying according to the type of land.

It's been a while since CRP received attention from a lot of Nebraska producers. This time, the price may be right.

ABOUT THIS PAGE

The View page provides a forum for open discussion of issues and interests affecting our readers. Initialed editorials represent the opinion of the writer, but not necessarily that of the **PRESS & DAKOTAN**. Bylined columns represent the view of the author. We welcome letters on current topics. Questions regarding the Views page should be directed to Kelly Hertz at kelly.hertz@yankton.net.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, August 24, the 236th day of 2015. There are 129 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On August 24, A.D. 79, long-dormant Mount Vesuvius erupted, burying the Roman cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum in volcanic ash; an estimated 20,000 people died.

On this date: In 1572, the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre of French Protestants at the hands of Catholics began in Paris.

In 1814, during the War of 1812, British forces invaded Washington D.C., setting fire to the Capitol (which was still under construction) and the White House, as well as other public buildings.

In 1821, the Treaty of Cordoba was signed, granting independence to Mexico from Spanish rule.

In 1912, Congress passed a measure creating the Alaska Territory. Congress approved legislation establishing Parcel Post delivery by the U.S. Post Office Department, slated to begin on January 1, 1913.

In 1932, Amelia Earhart embarked on a 19-hour flight from Los Angeles to Newark, New Jersey, making her the first woman to fly solo, non-stop, from coast to coast.

In 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty came into force.

In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Communist Control Act, outlawing the Communist Party in the United States.

In 1964, the first Roman Catholic Mass celebrated in English took place at Kiel Auditorium in St. Louis.

In 1970, an explosives-laden van left by anti-war extremists blew up outside the University of Wisconsin's Sterling Hall in Madison, killing 33-year-old researcher Robert Fassnacht.

In 1989, Baseball Commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti banned Pete Rose from the game for betting on his own team, the Cincinnati Reds.

In 1992, Hurricane Andrew smashed into Florida, causing \$30 billion in damage; 43 U.S. deaths were blamed on the storm.

In 2006, the International Astronomical Union declared that Pluto was no longer a planet, demoting it to the status of a "dwarf planet."

Ten years ago: Tropical Depression 12 strengthened into Tropical Storm Katrina over the central Bahamas. A federal commission voted against closing the New London submarine base in Groton, Connecticut, and the Portsmouth shipyard in Kittery, Maine. Religious broadcaster Pat Robertson apologized for calling for the assassination of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez.

Five years ago: A Chinese passenger jet broke apart and burst into flames as it hit the runway, killing 42 people and injuring 54 others. A suicide bomber and gunmen attacked a hotel near Somalia's presidential palace; at least 32 people were killed, along with two militants. In Florida, political newcomer Rick Scott beat Bill McCollum for the GOP gubernatorial nomination. (Scott went on to win election in November, narrowly defeating Alex Sink.)

One year ago: A magnitude 6.0 earthquake struck Northern California, causing extensive damage in Napa and the surrounding area. Peter Theo Curtis, an American freelance journalist kidnapped and held hostage for nearly two years by an al-Qaida-linked group in Syria, was released less than a week after the horrific execution of American journalist James Foley by Islamic militants. South Korea won the Little League World Series championship game, defeating Chicago 8-4 in South Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Actor and Oscar-winning director Lord Richard Attenborough died in London five days before his 91st birthday. At the MTV Video Music Awards, Miley Cyrus won Video of the Year for "Wrecking Ball"; Beyonce accepted the Michael Jackson Video Vanguard award.

Today's Birthdays: Former Education Secretary Shirley Hufstetler is 90. Actor Kenny Baker ("Star Wars") is 81. Composer-musician Mason Williams is 77. Rhythm-and-blues singer Marshall Thompson (The Chi-Lites) is 73. Rock musician Ken Hensley is 70. Actress Anne Archer is 68. Actor Joe Regalbuto is 66. Actor Kevin Dunn is 60. Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee is 60. Actor-writer Stephen Fry is 58. Actor Steve Guttenberg is 57. Baseball Hall of Famer Cal Ripken Jr. is 55. Actor Jared Harris is 54. Talk show host Craig Kilborn is 53. CBS News correspondent Major Garrett is 53. Rock singer John Bush is 52. Actress Marlee Matlin is 50. Basketball Hall of Famer Reggie Miller is 50. Broadcast journalist David Gregory is 45. Country singer Kristyn Osborn (SheDaisy) is 45. Movie director Ava DuVernay (Film: "Selma") is 43. Actor-comedian Dave Chappelle is 42. Actor James D'Arcy is 42. Actor Carmine Giovinazzo is 42. Actor Alex O'Loughlin is 39. Actress Beth Riesgraf is 37. Actor Chad Michael Murray is 34. Christian rock musician Jeffrey Gilbert (Kutless) is 32. Singer Mika is 32. Actor Blake Berry is 31. Actor Rupert Grint ("Harry Potter" films) is 27.

Thought for Today: "Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage." — Lao Tzu, Chinese philosopher (born and died in the 6th century, B.C.E.).

FROM THE BIBLE

She was found to be with child. Matthew 1:18. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bridges And Roads

Douglas Sall, Yankton

Regardless what your sentiments are insofar as the "Road and Bridge Tax" levy that the Yankton County Commission passed during a special meeting in July, Randy Gleich should be applauded for his efforts to bring this matter to a public vote. In the past few weeks he, practically, single-handedly obtained the requisite number of signatures to bring this matter to the ballot for a public vote — as it should have been in the first place!

Not only did he provide a

spot for folks to drop in and sign the petition he placed couple of "Notices" in the *Press & Dakotan* — all at his own expense and initiative. Thanks, Mr. Gleich, for taking on this effort and for being successful. Increasing property tax levies for any project, particularly for one of this magnitude, should not simply be a matter of routine business at a "special meeting". No matter the outcome, one can only hope that the Yankton County Commissioners will be a little more sensitive to the wants and needs of the taxpayers in the future.



Capitol Notebook

'18 Gov's Race Is Off To A Fast Start

BY BOB MERCER

State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — The state constitution prohibits a governor from serving more than two consecutive terms. That means Gov. Dennis Daugaard can't run again in 2018, and so campaigns for election to the office have already started.

There isn't a Democrat running yet, but there appear to be two Republicans for certain, in state Attorney General Marty Jackley and state Rep. Mark Mickelson of Sioux Falls. Each ended 2014 with some cash remaining in their campaign accounts.

Jackley reported \$325,129.18 on hand. Mickelson showed \$86,325.99.

Jackley formed a new campaign committee in June called Friends of Marty Jackley. He didn't designate its purpose, but it replaces the campaign committee he had used for election as attorney general. He is term-limited at attorney general.

Mickelson faces re-election to his state House of Representatives seat in 2016. In that respect, he is in somewhat the same position as a third Republican, U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem, who might be running for governor in 2018.

Noem faces re-election in 2016 for her current seat in Congress. Earlier this year, she filed her federal statement of candidacy for re-election in 2016.

Noem's quarterly campaign-finance report for July showed \$1,200,973 cash on hand. In the second quarter, she raised \$299,280 and spent \$137,529.

Noem has an announced Democratic opponent, state Rep. Paula Hawks of Hartford, for 2016.

How these various Republican potential candidates for governor handle their campaign finances in the coming three years can be complicated.



Bob
MERCER

State law allows a candidate to transfer money from one state campaign committee to another state campaign committee.

However, federal regulation generally prohibits a candidate transferring money from the candidate's state campaign committee to the candidate's federal campaign committee.

Unclear is what happens when a former candidate for federal office becomes a candidate for state office.

South Dakota law limits a candidate for statewide office to accept no more than \$4,000 per year from a person.

But the law doesn't set a maximum amount that can be accepted from a candidate committee, political action committee or political party. This might bear watching.

A frequent speculation is Lt. Gov. Matt Michels will run for the Republican nomination for governor in 2018.

There isn't any indication he will, however. He wanted to run in 2010 but deferred to Daugaard.

Michels' state campaign account showed only \$21,329.22 remaining at the close of 2014.

He didn't receive much last year; he reported \$4,000 from Dan and Arlene Kirby of Sioux Falls; \$4,000 from Frank and Pat Farrar of Britton; \$4,000 from Kevin Schieffer of Sioux Falls; and \$4,000 from Laney Pacquin of Sioux Falls.

The one big burst of spending from the Michels account was a \$40,000 contribution to the South Dakota Republican Party.

You might think it's early for the governor's race. But on June 22, 2007, nearly three full years before the 2010 Republican primary, then-Lt. Gov. Daugaard filed for a new committee but didn't say for what.

He finished 2006 with \$12,637.65 in his lieutenant governor account. On Jan. 3, 2008, he reported \$404,605.56 — and that he was running for governor.

Point Of View

Support Bypass At Tonight's City Commission Meeting

BY FRANK KLOUCEK

Scotland

Recent comments by our city manager and DOT Regional Supervisor concerning their indifference over a truck bypass petition signed by over 750 concerned citizens, many of whom are Yankton citizens, is a cause of great concern. When bureaucrats do not listen to the grassroots, it is a sad day for democracy and in this case an even sadder day for taxpayers.

Anyone who is supporting a truck bypass please come to the Yankton City Commission meeting at 7 p.m. tonight (Monday). Testify if you wish and show support for such a project.

I was asked many times for many years to try to get such and effort going. After seeing the rejected bid on the proposed Fourth St. project and the waste of tax dollars going into it, I got involved.

Citizens who signed the petition do thousands of dollars of business, are property taxpayers and pay sales tax on many purchases in Yankton have the best interest of Yankton in mind. As concerned taxpayers, the wasting of dollars is an issue of importance to all of us.