

## The Press &amp; Dakotan

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

## CONTACT US

PHONE:  
(605) 665-7811  
(800) 743-2968  
NEWS FAX:  
(605) 665-1721  
ADVERTISING FAX:  
(605) 665-0288  
WEBSITE:  
www.yankton.netSUBSCRIPTIONS/  
CIRCULATIONExtension 104  
jim.gevens@yankton.net  
CLASSIFIED ADS  
Extension 116

tera.schmidt@yankton.net

## NEWS DEPT.

Extension 114  
news@yankton.net

## SPORTS DEPT.

Extension 106  
sports@yankton.net

## ADVERTISING DEPT.

Extension 122  
sales@yankton.net

## BUSINESS OFFICE

Extension 119  
ar@yankton.net

## NEW MEDIA:

Extension 136  
beth.rye@yankton.net

## COMPOSING DEPT.

Extension 129  
kathy.larson@yankton.net

\*\*\*

## MANAGERS

Gary L. Wood  
PublisherMichele Schievelbein  
Advertising DirectorJim Gevens  
Circulation DirectorTonya Schild  
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Classified ManagerKelly Hertz  
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## OPINION

Redistricting Idea  
Worth Considering

South Dakotans may have a lot on their plate — or rather, ballot — during the 2016 general election, with up to eight measures possibly awaiting decisions. The latest measure that is likely to qualify for the ballot merits serious consideration. Last week, the secretary of state certified the petitions for an initiative that would take legislative redistricting away from the Legislature and put it in the hands of a bipartisan (or, technically, tri-partisan) commission.

The measure would assign redistricting to a commission composed of three members from each of the state's two largest parties (which are Republicans and Democrats) and three people who are unaffiliated with either party.

This is a step that voters should take seriously, for it helps lessen the impact that politicians can have on the very process that gives them power.

South Dakota Democrats have complained that Republicans, who have dominated in Pierre for decades, have solidified that dominance by redrawing district boundaries to bolster that advantage. This is particularly relevant in urban areas such as Sioux Falls where boundaries can be more conveniently reshaped.

Of course, this looks nothing like the wildly creative and disjointed congressional redistricting that's been seen in some states. (This is one of the advantages that South Dakota owns in having just one congressional district.) However, the way Bon Homme County was split up in 2010 might make you wonder about the efficiency of the logic that was used.

Frankly, the ability for lawmakers to reshape districts in order to give their party an advantage is legal, but it also looks improper. It turns this facet of representative government into a perk of being in the majority, not as a nonpartisan function of what should be a neutral democratic process.

This proposal is a far more logical and practical method to handling redistricting. It would increase the odds that such matters could be handled without preference to political benefit.

It could also be a first step toward other, more sweeping reforms. For instance, why does the office of the secretary of state, which oversees elections, politically elected? (This is not a comment on the current secretary of state, Shantel Krebs, or others who preceded her, but rather a comment on the mechanism in general.) Ideally, an election should be overseen in a nonpartisan capacity, so perhaps there's a way to look at that down the road.

But for now, this redistricting measure should be seen as some common-sense fine tuning for the election process. It deserves serious consideration next fall.

kmh

## ONLINE OPINION

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

## LATEST RESULTS:

Do you think Donald Trump will be the Republican presidential nominee?  
Yes.....51%  
No.....41%  
Not sure.....8%  
TOTAL VOTES CAST.....438

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 people convicted of domestic abuse be prohibited from owning firearms?

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, Dec. 29, the 363rd day of 2015. There are two days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On Dec. 29, 1975, a bomb exploded in the main terminal of New York's LaGuardia Airport, killing 11 people (it's never been determined who was responsible).

**On this date:** In 1170, Thomas Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was slain in Canterbury Cathedral by knights loyal to King Henry II.

In 1808, the 17th president of the United States, Andrew Johnson, was born in Raleigh, North Carolina.

In 1812, during the War of 1812, the American frigate USS Constitution engaged and severely damaged the British frigate HMS Java off Brazil.

In 1845, Texas was admitted as the 28th state.

In 1890, the Wounded Knee massacre took place in South Dakota as an estimated 300 Sioux Indians were killed by U.S. troops sent to disarm them.

In 1916, Grigory Rasputin, the so-called "Mad Monk" who'd wielded great influence with Czar Nicholas II, was killed by a group of Russian noblemen in St. Petersburg.

In 1934, Japan formally renounced the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922.

In 1940, during World War II, Germany dropped incendiary bombs on London, setting off what came to be known as "The Second Great Fire of London."

In 1957, singers Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme were married in Las Vegas.

In 1972, Eastern Air Lines Flight 401, a Lockheed L-1011 Tristar, crashed into the Florida Everglades near Miami International Airport, killing 101 of the 176 people aboard.

In 1989, dissident and playwright Vaclav Havel assumed the presidency of Czechoslovakia.

In 1992, the United States and Russia announced agreement on a nuclear arms reduction treaty.

**Ten years ago:** International monitors said they would review Iraq's parliamentary elections in response to fraud complaints by Sunni Arab and secular Shiite groups.

**Five years ago:** The Obama adminis-

tration expelled Venezuela's ambassador to the United States, a day after Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said he would not allow diplomat Larry Palmer to become the U.S. ambassador to his country. Suicide bombers succeeded in killing Iraqi police commander Lt. Col. Shamil al-Jabouri, who was renowned in the tense northern city of Mosul for his relentless pursuit of al-Qaida. Character actor Bill Erwin, 96, whose nearly seven-decade career included his memorable role as the grumpy old man on television's "Seinfeld," died in suburban Los Angeles.

**One year ago:** President Barack Obama, in an NPR interview, issued a warning to congressional Republicans set to take control of both houses of Congress, saying he had a veto pen, and would not be afraid to use it. A man with a lengthy criminal record killed six adults and two young children before taking his own life in Edmond, Alberta.

**Today's Birthdays:** Country singer Rose Lee Maphis is 93. Actress Dina Merrill is 92. Actress Inga Swenson is 83. ABC newscaster Tom Jarriel is 81. Actress Mary Tyler Moore is 79. Actress Barbara Steele is 78. Actor Jon Voight is 77. Country singer Ed Bruce is 76. Rock musician Ray Thomas is 74. Singer Marianne Faithfull is 69. Jockey Laffit Pincay, Jr. is 69. Actor Ted Danson is 68. Actor Jon Polito is 65. Singer-actress Yvonne Elliman is 64. Actress Patricia Clarkson is 56. Comedian Paula Poundstone is 56. Rock singer-musician Jim Reid (The Jesus and Mary Chain) is 54. Actor Michael Cudlitz is 51. Rock singer Dexter Holland (The Offspring) is 50. Actor-comedian Myro Clark is 49. Actor Jason Gould is 49. CNN anchor Ashleigh Banfield is 48. Movie director Andy Wachowski is 48. Actress Jennifer Ehle is 46. Actor Patrick Fischler is 46. Rock singer-musician Glen Phillips is 45. Actor Kevin Weisman is 45. Actor Jude Law is 43. Actress Maria Dizzia (TV: "Orange is the New Black") is 41. Actor Mekhi Phifer is 41. Actor Shawn Hatosy is 40. Actress Katherine Moennig is 38. Actor Diego Luna is 36. Country singer Jessica Andrews is 32. Actress Jane Levy is 26. Singer-actor-dancer Ross Lynch is 20.

**Thought for Today:** "Sin cannot be undone, only forgiven." — Igor Stravinsky, Russian-born composer (1882-1971).

## FROM THE BIBLE

And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone." Mark 10:18. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

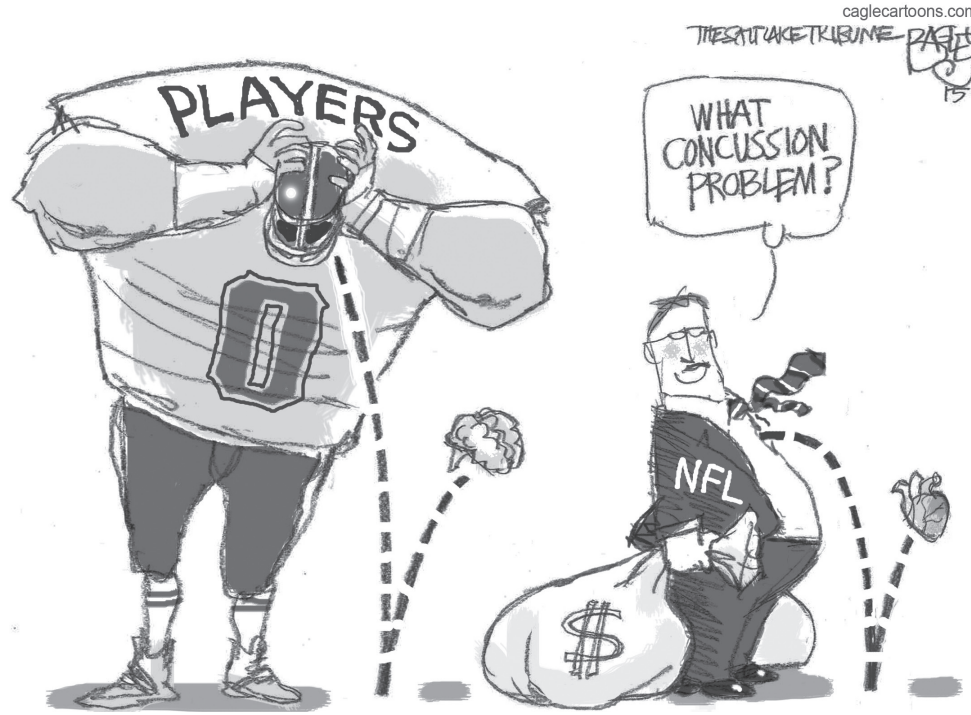
## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## A Local Angel

**Toots Marchand, Yankton**  
There is an angel here in Yankton!  
The other day while I was eating at the Fryn' Pan, a very at-

tractive lady appeared at my table with credit cards and said "Merry Christmas" and to enjoy my next meals with the credit cards!

Who else but an angel would do something so kind?



## The Rez of the Story

## Feeling Left Out ...

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives),  
The late writer, lecturer and philosopher Christopher Hitchens once said, "It's amazing to me how many of my friends send Christmas cards or holiday cards, including my atheist and secular friends."

With another Christmas come and gone, I thought I'd offer a somewhat different perspective on this nationally recognized holiday.

I have witnessed the Christmas holiday every year since 1956 (I was born in 1953) because I still clearly remember Christmas in our house since I was 3 years old. Somehow, some way, my mother managed to have a Christmas tree and at least one gift apiece for my brother and sisters. There were seven of us to tend to — 'round the clock — let alone each Christmas.

This means that I was here to take part in 60 years worth of Christmas holiday. I thank my dear mother, Margaret Ann Zepher, that in spite of our severe poverty and her being a single mother even with a step-father for some of her children, she made it a point to make sure her family stopped to receive our presents and have a holiday meal every year.

In turn, when I raised my children (now 38 and 35, respectively), I made sure they too would have their yearly "visit from Santa Clause." Getting together with my relatives or my then-wife's relatives was a yearly affair I always looked forward to (and still do). Now that my children all grown up and on their own, it is time for me to turn my attention to my grandchildren. They are a whole new crop of Christmas "believers." The delight I see in their eyes or hear in their voices when they get to open their card (with money in it) or their respective present must be how I and my brothers and sisters appeared to my mother (no wonder she kept it going all these years).

Even now, though my mom is entering her 80's, she still insists on "putting up her lights" every year and getting gifts for those close to her.

Vince  
TWO EAGLES

Times have changed from her boarding school days to now in terms of her beliefs about Christmas. She was a devout Catholic up until about 20 years ago. She (like many Dakotah people her age and younger) have rejected the Christian perspective altogether in favor of returning to her traditional Native religious roots. Of course, there is no Santa Claus in the Dakotah culture as there is no Santa in many cultures arriving here seeking the freedom to practice their own religious beliefs. They may not agree with the Christian aspect of Christmas, but they (like much of my family) opt to participate in the secular version of "Happy Holidays."

This means going shopping at Wal-Mart (or where ever they can get bargains, including Goodwill) to make a small dollar stretch. Giving has always been a highly regarded virtue of our Dakotah culture. We have "give away ceremonies" all the time. Anyone who spends even a moderate amount of time among Dakotah people can tell you about the generosity of Indian people no matter how poor they are. Extended families pool their meager resources to meet their traditional, cultural duties and now for many in our communities making sure their children celebrate at least the secular (some may say commercial) version of Christmas. I can only imagine that many other cultures that are non-Christian orientated must do the same.

The Christmas holiday tradition can be an overpowering message, but I am glad to see of late that other cultures are getting recognized for participating in their own version of the yearly "Happy Holiday" season and that being American does not necessarily mean being exclusively Christian. Diversity is an asset not a liability.

So Happy Holidays to you all and to all a good night.

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

## An Embarrassment Of Riches

BY KATHLEEN PARKER

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WASHINGTON — The biggest political news is that Donald Trump may be doing even better than polls have suggested. Yikes.

Apparently, many Trump supporters have been fibbing to pollsters, saying they're for someone else when they really intend to vote for The Donald. And those fudging the most are college-educated voters because, it seems, they're too embarrassed to admit their preference. As well they should be. *I'm kidding.* Sort of.

Imagine it this way: Guy on the phone asks whom you prefer for president. You can say, I really like the bragging, eye-rolling, profane, nativist, misogynist, policy-free billionaire-birther "jerk" (Jeb Bush's word). Or, you can select a more-sensible candidate — and keep your Trump crush to yourself.

Thanks to this treasonous gap — OK, this interesting anomaly — these recent findings by the polling group Morning Consult could shake things up a bit. Notably, Trump's predicted ceiling of 35 percent to 40 percent, the figure many prognosticators have used to argue against Trump's becoming the Republican nominee, may be much higher — and his nomination, therefore, more likely.

Morning Consult revealed this propensity to prevaricate, which was unique to Trump, by posing the which-do-you-prefer question to registered Republicans and independents who lean Republican. The polling was done by three means — a live person on the phone, an automated call, and an online survey. Turns out, people are more honest online than when speaking to another person, as any Twitter follower knows.

In the live surveys, just 32 percent chose Trump compared with 38 percent who picked him in the online poll. Among college-educated voters, the gap was even wider — nearly 10 percentage points. This phenomenon has previously been described as "social desirability bias," meaning that people will say what they think the pollster wants to hear in order to be liked.

A reverse Bradley Effect, if you will. Bradley, you'll recall, was former Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, an African-American who ran unsuccessfully for California governor in 1982 and 1986. His 1982 defeat surprised pollsters who had predicted an easy win based on polling. Apparently, many people were fearful of being considered racist and falsely said that they were going to vote for him.

Now we have people *not* saying they'll vote

for Trump lest the telephone surveyor think they're out of their minds. But the question remains: Why do people like Trump even knowing that they probably shouldn't? Morning Consult's revelations got me thinking and, by Jove, I think I've got it: Donald Trump is White Man's last stand.

Hold your donkeys. This doesn't mean that Trump supporters are racist, xenophobic, nativist, anti-immigrant — or ignorant. It isn't only that our nation's approach to immigration defies law and logic — or even that whites will soon become a minority, though this is no small thing in the identity equation. Nor, finally, is it because Trump is the precise opposite of Barack Obama, though this surely helps.

No, I think it's more than embarrassment that prevents people, especially college-educated folks, from confessing to Trumpism. I suspect they know it's wrong to want such a person as president of the United States. To choose Trump requires a conscious suspension of judgment in exchange for the passing pleasure of hearing one's buried feelings expressed.

Based on my research and observations in writing "Save the Males," conservative white guys aren't so much trying to hold on to power and privilege as much as they're trying to find their footing in a culture they feel devalues and disrespects them. They're tired of hearing that they're the source of all problems. They're sick of being the single demographic about which one can say anything at all and suffer only the annoyance of deafening applause.

Into this world gone awry drops Trump, the rich and powerful Wizard of Fifth Avenue, the deal-making champ with plush planes, a Palm Beach palace and a pin-up girl for a wife. His politically incorrect shtick may often be pure meanness masquerading as truth, but to those who've watched the country of their childhood reshaped into something unfamiliar, it sounds like the Mormon Tabernacle Choir singing Handel's "Messiah."

Trump is That Guy. He promises to return America to its greatness, in English, while defiantly shouting "Merrrr-ry Christmas!" and waving from the mistletoe-draped portal of his jet, his other arm encircling the wasp-waisted babe every man secretly wishes were his.

*Hell yes, I'm voting for that,* thinks White Guy to himself as he says to the pollster: "Ted Cruz." Because as far as he's concerned, Donald Trump is the American Dream, and his minions want that back, too.

Kathleen Parker's email address is kathleen.parker@washpost.com.