

THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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OPINION | OUR VIEW

Smoking And The Dream Of Zero

If you've ever tried to quit smoking, you know how terribly hard — and lonely — the battle can be. But can an entire nation "kick the habit"? That's a dream, of course, but some health experts are beginning to believe we are closer to making that dream a reality than ever before.

Many changes in recent years have some experts on the subject envisioning an "endgame" to smoking in America. According to the Fox News website, there is now talk of seeing the smoking rate in this country drop from the current 18 percent to 10 percent in the next decade, and perhaps as low as 5 percent by 2050. (By comparison, the smoking rate in this country was 43 percent 50 years ago.)

For some people, even this rate isn't fast enough. Consider the words of acting U.S. Surgeon General Boris Lushniak, who last month released a detailed report, nearly 1,000 pages long, on the steps to take to eradicate smoking from our culture.

"I can't accept that we're just allowing these numbers to trickle down," he told The Associated Press. "We believe we have the public health tools to get us to the zero level."

Certainly, the habit is on the run. A variety of factors have played into the decrease of smoking the past several years, including increased taxation, the proliferation of smoke-free space designations, a series of legal setbacks for tobacco companies, federal crackdowns on tobacco advertising and the decrease in retail access to cigarettes.

The latter point made headlines again last week when CVS Caremark pharmacies, the second-largest pharmaceutical chain in the country, announced it would no longer sell tobacco products in its 7,600 stores. Some health officials hope the move — which seems entirely logical for a business that is dedicated to health — will put more pressure on the likes of Walgreens and Walmart to follow suit.

All told, this is terrific news when you consider that the U.S. sees approximately 480,000 smoking-related deaths each year.

So, can America really go smoke-free? Don't bet on it just yet.

However, the transformation of smoking's image from a glorified, cool habit to a repulsive, unhealthy addiction has been insistent and, now, sweeping. That tide touches every community. Consider, for example, South Dakota's own smoking ban in public places: If the smoking rate were still at 43 percent, there is no way such a law would have seen the light of day, and there's no way CVS would have made the decision it did. But the law was passed; the decision was made — and the opposition to it has not been as fierce as it would have been in another, cloudier time.

To be sure, free will may well keep this nation from ever reaching the 0 percent level, so the goal may always remain a pipe dream (so to speak). But it's also true that the closer America gets to such a level, the healthier this nation becomes. And there's nothing wrong with the pursuit of that impossible dream.

kml

SPEAK UP!

Share your thoughts with us. Write to the PRESS & DAKOTAN on a topic of the day or in response to an editorial or story. Write us at: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email to views@yankton.net.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Feb. 19, the 50th day of 2014. There are 315 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Feb. 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, clearing the way for the U.S. military to relocate and intern Japanese-Americans during World War II.

On this date: In 1473, astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus was born in Torun, Poland.

In 1803, Congress voted to accept Ohio's borders and constitution.

In 1864, the Order of the Knights of Pythias, an international, non-sectarian fraternal organization, was founded in Washington, D.C.

In 1881, Kansas prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages.

In 1934, a blizzard began inundating the northeastern United States, with the heaviest snowfall occurring in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

In 1945, during World War II, some 30,000 U.S. Marines began landing on Iwo Jima, where they began a successful month-long battle to seize control of the island from Japanese forces.

In 1959, an agreement was signed by Britain, Turkey and Greece granting Cyprus its independence.

In 1964, the French movie musical "The Umbrellas of Cherbourg" premiered in France.

In 1976, calling the issuing of Executive Order 9066 "a sad day in American history," President Gerald R. Ford issued a proclamation confirming that the order had been terminated with the formal cessation of hostilities of World War II.

In 1984, the Winter Olympics closed in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia.

In 1997, Deng Xiaoping, the last of China's major Communist revolutionaries, died at age 92.

In 2008, an ailing Fidel Castro resigned the Cuban presidency after nearly a half-century in power; his brother Raul was later named to succeed him.

Ten years ago: Former Enron Corp. chief executive Jeffrey Skilling was brought to court in handcuffs, charged with fraud, insider trading and other crimes in connection with the energy trader's colossal collapse. (Skilling was later convicted of 19 counts and sentenced to 24 years and four months in prison, but a federal

judge in 2013 shaved a decade off that sentence, which means Skilling could be released by 2017.) The AFL-CIO endorsed Democrat John Kerry for president.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama made a quick visit to Canada, his first trip outside the U.S. since taking office; he reassured Prime Minister Stephen Harper that the U.S. was not cultivating a protectionist streak despite its economic difficulties. A jury in Moscow voted unanimously to acquit three men in the killing of investigative reporter Anna Politkovskaya.

One year ago: The United Nations said the number of U.S. drone strikes in Afghanistan had risen sharply in 2012 compared with 2011. A bail hearing began in Pretoria, South Africa, for double-amputee Olympian Oscar Pistorius, charged with killing Reeva Steenkamp on Valentine's Day; the defense said Pistorius had mistaken his girlfriend for an intruder while prosecutors said he had deliberately opened fire on Steenkamp as she cowered behind a locked bathroom door. Donald Richie, a Tokyo-based expert on Japanese cinema, died at age 88.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Smokey Robinson is 74. Actress Carlin Glynn is 74. Former Sony Corp. Chairman Howard Stringer is 72. Singer Lou Christie is 71. Actor Michael Nader is 69. Rock musician Tony Iommi (Black Sabbath, Heaven and Hell) is 66. Actor Stephen Nichols is 63. Author Amy Tan is 62. Actor Jeff Daniels is 59. Rock singer-musician Dave Wakeling is 58. Talk show host Lorianne Crook is 57. Actor Ray Winstone is 57. Actor Leslie David Baker (TV: "The Office") is 56. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell is 55. Britain's Prince Andrew is 54. Tennis Hall-of-Famer Hana Mandlikova is 52. Singer Seal is 51. Actress Jessica Tuck is 51. Country musician Ralph McCauley (Wild Horses) is 50. Rock musician Jon Fishman (Phish) is 49. Actress Justine Bateman is 48. Actor Benicio Del Toro is 47. Actress Bellamy Young is 44. Rock musician Daniel Adair is 39. Pop singer-actress Haylie Duff is 29. Actress Victoria Justice is 21.

Thought for Today: "There is, I think, nothing in the world more futile than the attempt to find out how a task should be done when one has not yet decided what the task is." — Alexander Meiklejohn, American educator (1872-1964).

FROM THE BIBLE

"Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life." Galatians 6:8 NIV. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

A 'MUST' See

Jean Knodel, Yankton
"Hats Off" to the Lewis Clark Theatre Company, performers and director for another fine performance. If you haven't

seen "Arsenic and Old Lace," please do so this weekend.

We are fortunate to have this venue available to us. Your support will help continue to make it possible.



Pierre Report | Jean Hunhoff

A Look At Trolling, CPR Classes And Libraries

BY SEN. JEAN HUNHOFF

R-District 18 (Yankton)

Judiciary Committee sent six bills to the Senate floor.

SB143 is the "Patent Trolling" prevention bill. It appears that patents can be bought or tweaked by individuals who then go after individuals that have products associated with the patents requesting payment for use of that product or face litigation for using a product without permission of the patent holder. This has resulted in "trollers" intimidating innocent citizens into paying exorbitant dollars to reduce any potential patent litigation. The bill is proactive in that it provides for a civil remedy for a bad faith assertion of patent infringement.

SB85 allows for information — if maintained about calls to law enforcement for service revealing the date, time and general location and general subject matter of the call is not confidential criminal justice information — shall be released to the public. This is a follow-up to last year's bill that did not pass due to inclusion of mug shots. This bill changes the procedure for releasing the information if a log is maintained. Our local and weekly newspapers in the area are already releasing this information to the public.

SB125 prohibits registered sex offenders from loitering in public libraries. This resulted because of a known sex offender in the Rapid City area that was going to the public library and eating his lunch in the children's section. The library had attempted to use what means were available to prevent this person from this type of loitering, but found no legal means to prevent this access. Proponents of this bill said the nature of any library is that it is a welcoming environment for anyone and encourages all to use. The intent is not to loiter but to access the materials. The libraries host many opportunities for children to engage in reading activities and we must keep them safe.

SB77 repealed outdated provisions regarding county prisoners. It repealed the statute that, if there is a refusal to work or obey necessary orders, the prisoner was to be kept in solitary confinement and fed only bread and water unless other food required for preservation of health. Rather outdated in this era.

SB81 added a new section to law that no cellular telephone, electronic communications device, tobacco product or any other item not provided by or authorized by the operator of the jail facility may be possessed by an inmate of a jail. Violation is a Class 1 misdemeanor. Inmates cannot have nonprescription medications that have not been authorized by the sheriff and are not available to inmates except through authorized jail personnel or the inmate commissary system.

Finally, HB1178 states that if a person who knowingly makes a false statement of a material fact in the certificate of registration pertaining to an aircraft registration, transfer of registration of an aircraft to purchaser or in the event of loss or destruction of a registration, is guilty of a Class 5 felony.

Local Government only met once last week due to low volume of bills. SB173 was the bill to provide authority to establish special purpose districts for libraries. This is a second version of the bill that was brought last year from Hot Springs. The challenge is by establishing these districts, it could encompass many counties or portions of counties giving them taxing authority. Local entities already can tax for libraries. The concern is that a small amount of voters could initiate a district and impact a much larger group to pay the taxes in the district. I know that libraries need resources, but this approach can have the unintended consequences of citizens being taxed twice for libraries — once at the local level and again at the district level. The bill did pass out of committee.

Health and Human services heard several bills.

SB145 would require schools to provide in-



J. Hunhoff

struction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). This is a national effort at getting our kids trained in CPR. There was enough evidence in the past to support placement of AEDs in schools; now we need to have kids trained on using them and initiating CPR. There are two obstacles that the bill is

faced with: 1) requiring this class is credited for graduation; and 2) unfunded mandate. The training would involve 30 minutes max for a student sometime between grades 7-12. The best testimony came from students — both middle school and high school — that were advocating for this. It appeared that the concerns would kill the bill, so it was deferred to allow the proponents and opponents to find a workable solution.

SB150 would allow EMTs to use a new type of airway for treating patients in the field. Passed.

SB172 contained provisions to allow dental hygienists to perform services for IHS and tribes if employed by a nonprofit entity providing the services beyond 13 months of not being seen by a dentist. Last year, the Legislature passed a bill that allowed for dental hygienists to perform preventive and therapeutic services under the general supervision of a licensed dentist. However, this collaborative supervision was only for 13 months as the dentist needed to see the patient. Delta Dental has a grant to provide these services to IHS and the reservations, and due to shortages of dentists to serve the reservations, it needed to have this extension so the dental hygienists can continue to provide these services. The down side is that dental hygienists were able to serve other vulnerable populations of the reservation as residents in long-term care facilities, but this change in statute only impacts IHS and reservations. So, though it is great to serve one sector of the population that needs this care, we are not able to service other populations with dentist shortages off the reservation where dentists are not able to make the 13-month time frame for an evaluation. Bill passed out of committee.

HB1092 requires that crematories be under the direction of a licensed funeral establishments and funeral directors. There were exceptions with medical school and health care facilities that cremate either whole or specific body parts as they are regulated in their licensing process.

HB1094 prohibited a person from interfering with a 911 call center by instituting a penalty of a Class 6 felony. The opponents to this bill were many advocates and providers of mental health services. The concern being that a cognitively impaired individual with no willful intent to disrupt the service could end up with a Class 6 felony. This bill came as a result of one individual that made more than 300 calls to the Brown County Sheriff's Department. The calls came from out of state and the person was ultimately apprehended in Minnesota. The only proponents came from Aberdeen. The Public Safety Department opposed it. Bill died in committee.

HB1110 was not a health bill but rather allows South Dakota medical or dental resident students doing their residency in another state to be a resident for the purposes of hunting, fishing and trapping licenses in the state. The proponent testimony was short with no opponents. Apparently the sponsor of the bill in the House was on the Health Committee so it was sent to the Senate Health Committee. The positive aspect is that hunting is now viewed as a healthy activity!

Just a reminder that the next Cracker Barrel is 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 22, at the Pavilion on the Avera Sacred Heart Hospital campus. We are moving to crossover week so bills from the House of origin need to be passed out of that House on Feb. 25. For questions or concerns, please contact me.

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