



The Rez Of The Story

Saying Farewell To 2012

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuyepi (Greetings My Relatives),
Another chapter in these new millennia has come and gone. I am speaking of course of 2012, the year it was all supposed to end in the month of December according to some obscure Mayan calendar. So here we are moving ahead in the future in spite of so called “prophecy” to the contrary.

2012 marked some sad events like the passing of AIM icon Russell Means; several mass killings by crazed gunmen, including the most recent shooting of 26 innocents in Connecticut; and Hurricane Sandy sweeping the East Coast and beyond with flooding and even blizzard conditions further inland. We elected to keep our current Commander and Chief in the White House for four more years with the hopes that he would complete his ongoing agenda for better economic conditions, among other things this country has been challenged with.

My friend Charles Trimble finally published “Iyeska” in 2012 and my book, “The Rez of the Story, Volume One” was made available to the American readership, as well.

The Earth’s population reached a staggering 7 billion in 2012, raising questions about the impact and consequences of such an explosion of humanity. Of course, the issue will remain for millennia to come that there is no doubt that overpopulation will result in a strain on the availability of adequate resources. The question is, what will we do about it?

Is there life on other planets in our universe? The probability is high that there is, according to our scientists. 2012 marked the year that a major probe and rover were sent to Mars to try to answer that very question. More sophisticated and capable than anything that has gone before it, the Mars Rover promises great things. Of course, if life or evidence of life is discovered there, the debate for and against the possibility of life elsewhere will naturally heat up, and the core of belief of many folks about ET will forever be altered. The possibilities are absolutely astounding.

There are so many moments all of us can recall over the past year. Memories that either strengthen us or perhaps will haunt us for the rest of our lives



Vince
TWO EAGLES

belong to us individually and collectively.

Karen Casey and Martha Vanceburg, the contemporary American writers, tell us: “What a marvelous capacity we each have to capture and savor the bliss of past moments. They serve to comfort us while we’re enduring the pain of the present. However, it’s this present experience that has called us to attention. Within its context, we’ll be challenged to tackle the lessons for which past memories have prepared us.

“Notwithstanding the comfort of the past, we’d do well not to hang on to past memories unrelentingly. Only by flowing with the present and absorbing how these events punctuate our lives, are we grasping the full experience our lives offer. There are too many people who live half-lives, and thus find half-joys because they fail to give up the past for the fuller measure that is offered in the present.

“Fortunately, we are blessed with the power to live here and now, or in the past, if we so choose. Freedom of choice is the special gift of the human condition.”

We must say goodbye to 2012 and the past and joyfully embrace 2013 and beyond. John F. Kennedy once said, “For time and the world do not stand still. Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or the present are certain to miss the future.”

Tradition is a good thing. Just because tradition, like everything else, also changes does not mean it is still not tradition. Tradition is not about stagnating and staying in one place but is about keeping the good and the lessons learned from past experiences while moving on in the present (where we always live) and into the future with better tools and deeper understanding from experience.

Listen to your elders and use what makes sense to you but also listen to your own heart because the future belongs to you and you have the right to make it what you will. Hopefully, the past generation’s lessons will be relevant. Their words will provide guidance and some comfort as we all face the future together. Goodbye 2012. Hello 2013.

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

fore the firing squad, but it is unlikely that medical doctors or a hospital would assist a secretary of state — or anyone — in concocting a fake affliction.

Besides, you can’t have it every which way. Immediately after the Benghazi attacks, Clinton took full responsibility for the events and was accused by Republicans of falling on her sword to protect President Obama.

Now that she’s temporarily indisposed and unable to elaborate on her admitted responsibility, those same critics insist she’s trying to avoid taking personal responsibility.

The viciousness of the pundit class is disheartening and disgusting. And these days everyone’s a pundit. Got an opinion? Why, step right up to the microphone. If you’re “good TV,” you too can be a “contributor.”

Out in the hinterlands, where Americans consume “news” that suits their political proclivities, opinions are formed on the basis of what-he-said. Reputations and lives are ruined on the tines of pitchforks glimmering in the light of torch-bearing mobs.

And those are just the “news” shows.

One doesn’t have to be a fan of Hillary Clinton, though a Bloomberg poll says that two-thirds of Americans are, to feel tainted by the relish with which she and many other have been attacked — unfairly and disproportionately. Susan Rice, who was Obama’s favorite to replace Clinton as secretary of state, comes to mind.

But this isn’t a problem only for women or Democrats. The rush to character assassination seems to be our only bipartisan imperative and is a blight on our political system. In this brooding age of superstition and portent, every misspoken word is a lie, every human error a hanging offense.

This is not to suggest that we be naive or credulous, but that we seek some balance in our approach to discovery. At the moment, we seem to be ricocheting between hysteria and delusion.

Eventually, Clinton will have to step forward and take her medicine. She is slated to appear before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in mid-January, though the date hasn’t been set. The nation clearly needs answers on what happened in Benghazi, and no doubt Clinton will provide them.

This is not blind faith in a favored politician, but respect for a process that relies on accepted rules of order. We owe our representative to the world — which is to say, ourselves — at least this much.

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BY KATHLEEN PARKER

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WASHINGTON — The new year began not with a cannonball off the fiscal cliff but with an outbreak of conspiratorial cynicism.

This time it’s Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, whose fall and concussion, followed by a blood clot between her brain and skull, have prompted an embarrassment of theories. The gist: *That* woman will do anything to avoid testifying about Benghazi.

Several commentators on the right opined via Twitter and TV, those most deadly hosts for the piranha of rumor and innuendo, that Clinton was faking her concussion to duck out on her appearance before congressional committees investigating the attack on the U.S. diplomatic compound in Libya that killed Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans.

An independent report published last month placed substantial responsibility on the State Department. Not only was security at the Benghazi compound weak, relying heavily on local forces with conflicting loyalties, but requests for additional security apparently had been ignored or denied.

The sentiment that Clinton might not wish to testify is not without reason. It is hard to imagine the agony of knowing that one’s lack of vigilance may have contributed to four deaths. But the attacks on Clinton during her illness, essentially attacks on her character, have been cruel and unfair. What must the world think of us?

Clinton, who fainted as a result of dehydration brought on by a stomach virus, hit her head and suffered a concussion, after which a blood clot was discovered. She had to be hospitalized while blood-thinning medications were administered and monitored.

Although her critics backed off once the clot was reported, initial responses ranged from “She’s faking” to demands for proof of her concussion.

One writer demanded her medical records. John Bolton, former ambassador to the United Nations, called Clinton’s affliction a “diplomatic illness” to avoid testifying about Benghazi. Later he suggested that details were skimpy in an effort to protect her potential 2016 presidential run.

“I think it’s the too-cute-by-half approach that’s reflected in the absence of transparency that’s going to end up damaging her and damaging her credibility,” he said on Fox News.

Again, Clinton may well prefer to miss her day be-

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

Russian Adoption Policy Is ‘Cruel’

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (Dec. 30): Russian President Vladimir Putin just signed a cruel and spiteful law that will bar Americans from adopting Russian children. The new law will wreck the lives of the 46 children whose American adoptions were already under way, hundreds of other American families who had launched the adoption process, and the lives of countless children to come who will now live out their childhoods in Russian orphanages. Americans adopt nearly a thousand Russian children every year.

The worst part is, Putin did it just to thumb his nose at the Americans for daring to protest his government’s loathsome human rights record. It wasn’t enough for Putin to crush dissenters and others who object to his increasingly autocratic rule — he had to bring vulnerable orphans into it, too.

The new law was originally written as a tit-for-tat response to the U.S. Magnitsky Act. Sergei Magnitsky was a 37-year-old lawyer who was beaten and left to die in a Russian prison after implicating many Russian officials in a massive fraud scheme — and in a rare bipartisan moment, the U.S. Congress passed travel and financial sanctions against those officials believed to be responsible for his death.

Those officials remain quite powerful in Russia, however — which is why the Kremlin drafted a bill to impose similar visa and asset freezes on Americans accused of violating Russians’ rights abroad.

That would have been enough to make their point, wretched as that point was. ...

Now those children have fallen victim to a political game which has nothing to do with them and everything to do with Russian officials’ outrageous sense of wounded pride. What’s truly outrageous is denying these children, many of whom had already bonded with their prospective adoptive parents, the chance to have a family and a home.

OUR LETTER POLICY

The **PRESS & DAKOTAN** encourages its readers to write letters to the editor, and it asks 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.

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TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Jan. 3, the third day of 2013. There are 362 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History: On Jan. 3, 1938, the March of Dimes campaign to fight polio was established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who himself had been afflicted with the crippling disease.

On this date: In 1521, Martin Luther was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church by Pope Leo X.

In 1777, Gen. George Washington’s army routed the British in the Battle of Princeton, N.J.

In 1861, more than two weeks before Georgia seceded from the Union, the state militia seized Fort Pulaski at the order of Gov. Joseph E. Brown. The Delaware House and Senate voted to oppose secession from the Union.

In 1868, the Meiji Restoration re-established the authority of Japan’s emperor and heralded the fall of the military rulers known as shoguns.

In 1911, the first postal savings banks were opened by the U.S. Post Office. (The banks were abolished in 1966.)

In 1949, in a pair of rulings, the U.S. Supreme Court said that states had the right to ban closed shops.

In 1959, Alaska became the 49th state as President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a proclamation.

In 1961, President Dwight D. Eisenhower announced the United States was formally terminating diplomatic and consular relations with Cuba.

In 1967, Jack Ruby, the man who shot and killed accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, died in a Dallas hospital.

In 1980, conservationist Joy Adamson, author of “Born Free,” was killed in northern Kenya by a former employee.

In 1990, ousted Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega surrendered to U.S. forces, 10 days after taking refuge in the Vatican’s diplomatic mission.

In 1993, President George H.W. Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed the START II missile-reduction treaty in Moscow. (However, the agreement ultimately fell apart.)

Ten years ago: Taking a brief timeout from his two-week vacation, President George W. Bush visited Fort Hood in Texas, where he rallied Army troops as the

nation faced the prospect of war with Iraq. David Westerfield, the man who’d kidnapped and murdered 7-year-old neighbor Danielle van Dam, was sentenced to death by a judge in San Diego. No. 2 Ohio State won its first championship in 34 years, beating No. 1 Miami 31-24 in the Fiesta Bowl.

Five years ago: Sen. Barack Obama won Democratic caucuses in Iowa, while Mike Huckabee won Republican caucuses. After nearly 27 years in prison, Texas inmate Charles Chatman was set free by a judge because of new DNA evidence showing he’d been wrongly convicted of rape. Pop star Britney Spears was hospitalized after a child custody dispute with ex-husband Kevin Federline resulted in an hours-long standoff with police. The No. 8 Kansas Jayhawks won the Orange Bowl by defeating No. 5 Virginia Tech 24-21.

One year ago: The Iowa Republican Party held its caucuses; although Mitt Romney was originally considered the winner by an extremely narrow eight-vote margin, officials later said that Rick Santorum had in fact beaten Romney by 34 votes; however, the party refused to declare a winner, saying that eight precincts had never turned in certified results. In the Democratic caucuses, President Barack Obama ran unopposed.

Today’s Birthdays: Record producer Sir George Martin is 87. Actor Robert Loggia is 83. Actor Dabney Coleman is 81. Journalist-author Betty Rollin is 77. Hockey Hall-of-Famer Bobby Hull is 74. Singer-songwriter-producer Van Dyke Parks is 70. Musician Stephen Stills is 68. Rock musician John Paul Jones (Led Zeppelin) is 67. Actress Victoria Principal is 63. Actor-director Mel Gibson is 57. Actress Shannon Sturges is 45. Jazz musician James Carter is 44. Contemporary Christian singer Nichole Nordeman is 41. Actor Jason Marsden is 38. Actress Danica McKellar is 38. Actor Nicholas Gonzalez is 37. Singer Kimberley Locke (“American Idol”) is 35. NFL quarterback Eli Manning is 32. Pop musician Mark Pontius (Foster the People) is 28. Rhythm-and-blues singer Lloyd is 27. Pop-rock musician Nash Overstreet (Hot Chelle Rae) is 27. Actor Alex D. Linz is 24.

Thought for Today: “If people never did silly things, nothing intelligent would ever get done.” — Ludwig Wittgenstein, Austrian philosopher (1889-1951).

FROM THE BIBLE

Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Psalm 95:1. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

Education Funding

Dennis J. Muser, Pierre

Here we go again — the never-ending harangue over funding of public education in South Dakota begins again.

There may be a multitude of issues, but here are two that don’t get much press:

• From what I’ve read, there are a number of studies showing that simply throwing more and more money at education has done nothing to improve the academic performance of American students. If anything, that performance has been stagnant or declined relative to other countries. What’s wrong with this picture?

• I think that the real question is WHO is responsible for the education of children? The simple answer in three words — PARENTS, PARENTS, PARENTS! The point being, if schools really do need more funding, it is way past time that parents start paying tuition to their public schools rather than relying on the coercive power of government to hit property owners, etc. I suspect that if parents have a real vested interest (meaning money directly out of their pockets) in their children’s education, they will get a lot more involved in their academic performance and give much less attention to the next basketball, football or volleyball game.

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