

# THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861

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## OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

# The Tragic Toll On Our Firefighters

**REPORTER-HERALD, Loveland, Colo. (July 6):** Coloradans have experienced so many wildfires in recent years that too many state residents can say they know of someone who has been affected by a devastating blaze.

And we've gained a great appreciation for the Hotshot fire crews and others who go into fire zones to protect people's homes and properties.

So we mourn along with the Prescott, Ariz., area after 19 Hotshot firefighters were killed last Sunday, the largest loss of life of public servants since 9/11.

Coloradans know too well the pain that community is feeling. Three pilots lost their lives battling the 2002 Big Elk Meadows fire near Estes Park as first an air tanker lost a wing in flight and crashed and then a helicopter crashed. Fourteen firefighters died when they were trapped when a fire blew up on Storm King Mountain west of Glenwood Springs on July 6, 1994. ...

We can only hope that, like after the Colorado firefighting tragedies, lessons can be learned that help keep firefighters safer. The best way to honor the firefighters who lost their lives will be to do work to ensure future Hotshot crews can do this very dangerous job as safely as possible.

## Mohammed Morsi's Fall

**THE JERUSALEM POST (July 4):** The speed of Mohammed Morsi's fall, just a year after his dramatic rise to power, underlines the unpredictability of Egyptian politics. For Israel there are both dangers and opportunities in the wake of Morsi's ouster.

The renewed dominance of the military could be a positive development for Israel. It is, after all, the military that monopolizes force and is a stabilizing factor.

It was the Egyptian military, for instance, that was instrumental in bringing about the cease-fire between Israel and Hamas last November. It is the military that seems most likely to protect the Camp David peace agreement between Israel and Egypt. And it is the military that has a vested interest and the capabilities to maintain control in the near lawless Sinai Peninsula.

The humbling of the Muslim Brotherhood's seemingly inexorable expansion not just in Egypt but also in Tunisia and potentially in Syria and perhaps even in Jordan is another positive development, at least in the short term. ...

The U.S. could make its continued economic support conditional upon concrete headway toward building a more democratic, pluralistic government that does more to defend embattled minorities such as the Coptic Christian community and the smaller Baha'i and Shi'ite populations. More thought should be given to saving Egypt's catatonic economy. And aid in the form of both funding and political know-how should be provided to help harness the energies expended on the streets of Cairo and channel them into political parties and institutions.

Unrest in Egypt has generated much unpredictability and the potential for instability and even disaster.

Morsi's fall, however, also presents new opportunities and can lead to positive developments in the Middle East's most populous country, and in the region in general.

The outcome depends, at least in part, on the U.S.'s response.

## ON THIS DATE

### By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, July 11, the 192nd day of 2013. There are 173 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On July 11, 1533, Pope Clement VII issued a bull of excommunication against England's King Henry VIII for the annulment of the king's marriage to Catherine of Aragon and subsequent marriage to second wife Anne Boleyn.

**On this date:** In 1767, John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States, was born in Braintree, Mass.

In 1798, the U.S. Marine Corps was formally re-established by a congressional act that also created the U.S. Marine Band.

In 1804, Vice President Aaron Burr mortally wounded former Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton during a pistol duel in Weehawken, N.J.

In 1859, Big Ben, the great bell inside the famous London clock tower, chimed for the first time.

In 1922, the Hollywood Bowl officially opened with a program called "Symphonies Under the Stars" with Alfred Hertz conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

In 1937, American composer and pianist George Gershwin died at a Los Angeles hospital of a brain tumor; he was 38.

In 1952, the Republican national convention, meeting in Chicago, nominated Dwight D. Eisenhower for president and Richard M. Nixon for vice president.

In 1960, the novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee was first published by J.B. Lippincott and Co.

In 1973, a Varig 707 from Brazil made an emergency crash-landing outside Paris after fire broke out on board, sending smoke into the cabin; 123 of the 134 people on board perished.

In 1979, the abandoned U.S. space station Skylab made a spectacular return to Earth, burning up in the atmosphere and showering debris over the Indian Ocean and Australia.

In 1988, nine people were killed when suspected Palestinian gunmen attacked hundreds of tourists aboard a Greek cruise ship, the City of Poros, which was steaming toward a marina in suburban Athens.

In 1995, the U.N.-designated "safe haven" of Srebrenica in Bosnia-Herzegovina fell to Bosnian Serb forces, who then carried out the killings of 8,000 Muslim men and boys.

**Ten years ago:** President George W. Bush put responsibility squarely on the CIA for his disputed claim that Iraq had tried to acquire nuclear material

from Africa, prompting Director George Tenet to publicly accept full blame for the miscue. The World Trade Organization ruled that heavy duties on steel imports imposed by the United States violated global trade rules. Thousands marked the anniversary of the 1995 massacre at Srebrenica in Bosnia, burying 282 newly identified victims.

**Five years ago:** Oil prices reached a record high of \$147.27 a barrel. IndyMac Bank's assets were seized by federal regulators. A North Korean soldier fatally shot a South Korean tourist at a northern mountain resort, further straining relations between the two Koreas. Dr. Michael E. DeBakey, the cardiovascular surgeon who pioneered such procedures as bypass surgery, died in Houston, Texas, at age 99.

**One year ago:** Unflinching before a skeptical NAACP crowd in Houston, Republican Mitt Romney declared he'd do more for African-Americans than Barack Obama, the nation's first black president. Hillary Rodham Clinton became the first U.S. secretary of state to visit Laos in more than five decades. The Syrian ambassador to Iraq defected, denouncing President Bashar Assad in a TV statement. Cookbook author Marion Cunningham, 90, died in Walnut Creek, Calif. Donald J. Sobol, 87, author of the popular "Encyclopedia Brown" series of children's mysteries, died in Miami.

**Today's Birthdays:** Actor Tab Hunter is 82. Actress Susan Searfouth Hayes is 70. Singer Jeff Hanna (Nitty Gritty Dirt Band) is 66. Ventriloquist-actor Jay Johnson is 64. Actor Bruce McGill is 63. Singer Bonnie Pointer is 63. Actor Stephen Lang is 61. Actress Mindy Sterling is 60. Boxer Leon Spinks is 60. Actress Sela Ward is 57. Reggae singer Michael Rose (Black Uhuru) is 56. Singer Peter Murphy is 56. Actor Mark Lester is 55. Jazz musician Kirk Whalum is 55. Singer Suzanne Vega is 54. Rock guitarist Richie Sambora (Bon Jovi) is 54. Actress Lisa Rinna is 50. Rock musician Scott Shriner (Weezer) is 48. Actress Debbe Dunning is 47. Actor Gred Grunberg is 47. Wildlife expert Jeff Corwin is 46. Actor Justin Chambers is 43. Actress Leisha Hailey is 42. Actor Michael Rosenbaum is 41. Pop-rock singer Andrew Bird is 40. Country singer Scotty Emerick is 40. Rapper Lil' Kim is 38. Rock singer Ben Gibbard is 37. Rapper Lil' Zane is 31. Pop-jazz singer-musician Peter Cincotti is 30. Actor David Henrie is 24. Actor Connor Paolo is 23.

**Thought for Today:** "The man who has no inner-life is the slave of his surroundings." — Henri Frederic Amiel, Swiss critic (1821-1881).

## FROM THE BIBLE

*And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but He was asleep. Matthew 8:24.* Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis



# Snowden Is No Hero

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.

Tribune Media Services

Mohandas Gandhi went to Yeravda Central Prison.  
Martin Luther King Jr., went to Birmingham jail.

Nelson Mandela went to Robben Island.

Edward Snowden is going to Venezuela.

Or not. His destination was up in the air as these words were written. A Russian lawmaker tweeted on Tuesday that Snowden, the fugitive former U.S. contractor, had accepted asylum from Venezuela. Then the tweet was deleted and the official word was that there was no official word.

Whatever happens, one thing is obvious. Wherever Snowden goes, he has no intention of coming home to answer for what he did.

One struggles to know how to feel about that.

Many of us, after all, believe he struck a blow for freedom in leaking classified information revealing the breadth and depth of government spying on private citizens. But he seems not to have thought through the implications and likely outcomes of that act. How else to explain the fact that he has wound up trapped in the international transit zone at the Moscow airport, unable to enter the country, yet unable to leave because he has nowhere to go?

Well, that's not quite accurate. Snowden is reported to be fielding offers of asylum from several nations, including, besides Venezuela, Bolivia and Nicaragua. It is worth noting that these would-be benefactors all have problematic recent relations with his own country. Surely that plays a part in their eagerness to get their hands on him.

One wonders if he understood what he was getting into. Civil disobedience is never without risk and one accepts this going in. To practice civil disobedience is, after all, to break the law in the conviction that doing so serves a higher moral law.

A visitor from China once asked Dr. Bernard Lafayette with some amazement how such a thing could be justified. Was that not a recipe for chaos? If every citizen can choose for himself or herself which laws to obey and which to ignore,



Leonard  
**PITTS**

does that not show disrespect for the very rule of law? Lafayette, a hero of the civil rights movement, said no, because civil disobedience does not seek to evade punishment. One shows one's respect for the rule of law, he said, by submitting to the penalties prescribed for breaking it.

Dr. Daniel Ellsberg would likely disagree; he supports Snowden's flight to elude U.S. authorities. Ellsberg famously leaked the Pentagon Papers in 1971 and faced a possible 115-year sentence for doing so. Charges were dismissed in 1973.

In an op-ed published Sunday by the *Washington Post*, he argued that Snowden's situation cannot be compared to his — different circumstances, different era. Snowden, he writes, would likely be disappeared into solitary confinement if returned to these shores and have little chance to contribute to the debate on government surveillance.

Perhaps. But here's the thing: Civil disobedience is, almost by definition, an act of faith. Not faith in government, nor even faith in law, but faith in vindication. It is an act that says, I am right, so I refuse to obey this law and will take my medicine until you see that I am right.

Snowden is not willing to do that, not willing to stand, with head held high, upon the courage of his convictions. There is something unseemly about that. It makes his action feel unfinished. And undermined.

Yes, there's also something unseemly about some guy sitting safely behind his desk smugly advising some other guy to put the rest of his life at risk for the sake of principle. But consider the alternative. Should he go to some unfriendly nation and become a propaganda tool against his own country? No. There are no seemingly options here — only a narrowing range of unseemly ones.

So Snowden should come home. You may say that is the worst possible choice, and you'd be right. It is the worst.

Except for all the rest.

Leonard Pitts is a columnist for *The Miami Herald*, 1 Herald Plaza, Miami, Fla., 33132. Readers may contact him via e-mail at [lpitts@miami-herald.com](mailto:lpitts@miami-herald.com).

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## Writer's Block

# Saying Goodbye To Yankton

BY ANDREW ATWAL

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March 6, 2012. Spring break.

I'm at a Princeton University vs. University of Pennsylvania basketball game when the news comes in. I have an offer to join the staff at the *Press & Dakotan* to cover the education beat as a reporter, even though I'm not set to graduate from Michigan State University for another two months.

Without hesitation, I accept the offer, knowing life in South Dakota will be much different than what I have been accustomed to.

After growing up in New Jersey and going to school in Michigan, I became used to the hubbub of large cities and knew I'd be in for a different lifestyle coming all the way out to South Dakota for my first job out of college.

During April 2012, I decided I would come out to check out Yankton and look for an apartment. I quickly realized how nice the town was and how nice the people in the community were. Everyone in the community and at the *P&D* quickly made me feel right at home and made my transition from the urban to rural much more manageable.

I moved into my apartment in Yankton that Memorial Day weekend, and started at the *P&D* a few days later. With a lot of help from coworkers and members of the community, I quickly felt at home and was able to build sources within the community.

As time went on, I continued to realize how good of a decision I made to make the move from the urban areas I was used to all the way to the South Dakota rural life.

By the time winter came, I had to take six weeks off of work to deal with surgery and recovery. After that happened, I felt a lot of support from members of the community for my well-being and speedy recovery.

When I arrived back in Yankton in January, the support continued. People would walk up to me seeing how I was feeling and wishing me



Andrew  
**ATWAL**

nothing but the best as my recovery continued in Yankton.

Although my classmates at Michigan State gave me a hard time for making the move to Yankton from the big cities I'm used to, I have felt nothing but love and support from the Yankton community.

Sources that I've built within the community, particularly those at the Yankton School District (YSD) and Mount Marty College (MMC), have been honest and willing to speak to me about a number of issues ranging from budget problems, to events, to the hiring of a new superintendent.

However, after more than a year in Yankton with the *P&D*, it is time for me to say goodbye.

I have accepted a new position close to home in New Jersey that keeps me in the newspaper industry, but working in a new capacity.

Instead of focusing heavily on reporting and page design like I have during the past year in Yankton, I will have an even greater emphasis on page design and social media.

Instead of being a three-hour plane ride from home, I'll be a two-hour drive from home and within an hour or two of the biggest cities on the East Coast, including New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington.

I am excited for the change, but will also miss a lot about my time here in Yankton.

I'll miss the friends I've met, sources I've built and my job here at the *P&D*.

*Press & Dakotan* publisher Gary Wood, managing editor Kelly Hertz and sports editor James Cimburek, all of whom I interviewed with on the phone, took a chance on me fresh out of college and months before I graduated, and I cannot thank them enough for doing so.

I will miss a lot about Yankton and thank everyone for making me feel right at home from the day I moved here up until the time I leave next week.

You can follow Andrew Atwal on Twitter at [twitter.com/andrewatwal](https://twitter.com/andrewatwal)

## YOUR LETTERS

### Successful Rodeo

#### The Irene Rodeo Association

The 2013 Irene Rodeo was a huge success and the Irene Rodeo Association wants to thank all of our sponsors, spectators, contestants, and volunteers, including the Irene/Wakonda Volleyball Team, I/W After Prom Parents and all of the area community members that donated

their time to help out.

We could not pull off an event like this without your support whether you were a sponsor, donated your time to work or were enjoying the rodeo from the bleachers. We need all of you and you were there to support us. It shows what a great community we live in.

Thanks again, and we hope to see you again next year.