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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

Wildfire Deaths Raise **Profound Questions**

RAPID CITY JOURNAL (July 7): Death and danger are never far away in wildland firefighting, and that harsh, heartbreaking reality hit the nation hard last week as it mourns the loss of 19 firefighters in an Arizona forest fire on June 30.

The death of the elite firefighters of the Granite Mountain Hotshots marked the nation's biggest loss of life on a wildfire crew in 80 years. The 20-man crew based out of Prescott, Ariz., lost all but one man, who was moving a truck when his team members were trapped in the inferno.

Γhe tragedy devastated that town, but it also hit hard in the Black Hills firefighting community, where many people fondly remembered Kevin Woyjeck, 21, one of the young men who lost his life. Woyjeck was a California native who spent the 2012 firefighting season as part of the Bear Mountain Hand Crew in South Dakota. Some of those who knew him here will travel to a national memorial service this week and also plan to attend Woyjeck's funeral in California.

We extend our deepest sympathy on these unimaginable, staggering losses to Woyjeck's friends and family, and to all those who knew and loved each of the other 18 lost firefighters, as well.

Ironically, the human cost of fighting forest fires was brought home to South Dakotans again just one day after the Arizona deaths. Families and fellow airmen of the four North Carolina Air National Guard crew members who were killed in the 2012 White Draw Fire near Edgemont gathered on the anniversary of the July 1 fire to dedicate a memorial interpretive site honoring them. The crash killed Lt. Col Paul Mikeal, Major Joseph McCormick, Major Ryan David and Senior Master Sgt. Robert Cannon. Two crew members, Chief Master Sgt. Andy Huneycutt and Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Marlowe survived.

We applaud the private donors who raised about \$4,000 for the interpretive site in time for the anniversary dedication.

And we hope that we never have to erect another like it in this state.

That may well be an impossible wish, given the inherent dangers of fighting wildland fires. No matter how well trained, how well-equipped or how careful a fire crew is, there are quite simply times when a fire's erratic nature can surprise and overwhelm even the most cautious of them. And surely, the 19 men of Granite Mountain were among the most skilled and proficient wildland firefighters who ever lived.

But we call on federal and state fire officials to honor the memory of the men lost in Arizona with not only their customary and thorough investigation of this tragedy, but also with broader questions about U.S. wildland fire policies and procedures currently in place. Was this crew sent into a dangerous situation where the chance they might perish was too high? We must answer the question of how an entire company could suffer such a fate. An examination of just what is, and what should never be, expected of crews when homes and property are on the line is called for. More profoundly, America must answer this question: Do we taxpayers put saving forests or private property or livelihoods above the life and safety of the human beings we ask to protect our homes and businesses from wildfire? There will be time enough for those questions in the weeks ahead.

But first, we mourn.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press Today is Monday, July 15, the 196th day of 2013. There are 169 days left in the year

London. The American League beat the National League in the All-Star game 7-6. **Five years ago:** President George W. Bush said the nation's

troubled financial system was "basi-

cally sound," and he urged lawmakers

to quickly enact legislation to prop up

mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. A judge in Los Angeles sentenced Helen Golay, 77, and Olga

Rutterschmidt, 75, to two consecutive

life terms each for murdering two indi-

gent men to collect insurance policies

taken out on their lives. In an All-Star

game that began at dusk and ended

at 1:37 a.m. the next morning, the American League defeated the Na-

tional League 4-3 in 15 innings at Yan-

bloodbath crossed an important sym-

bolic threshold as the international

Red Cross formally declared the con-

flict a civil war, a status with implica-

tions for potential war crimes

prosecutions. A Russian Soyuz craft

launched into the morning skies over Kazakhstan, carrying three space travelers, including NASA astronaut Sunita Williams, to the International

Space Station. Microsoft pulled out of

the joint venture with NBC News that owned MSNBC.com, which was re-

branded as NBCNews.com. Oscar-

winning actress Celeste Holm, 95,

Cussler is 82. Actor Ken Kercheval is 78. Former Sen. George V. Voinovich,

R-Ohio, is 77. Actor Patrick Wayne is

74. Actor Jan-Michael Vincent is 69. Rhythm-and-blues singer Millie Jack-

son is 69. Rock singer-musician Peter

Lewis (Moby Grape) is 68. Singer Linda Ronstadt is 67. Rock musician

Artimus Pyle is 65. Actor Terry O'Quinn is 61. Rock musician Marky

Ramone is 57. Rock musician Joe Sa-

triani is 57. Country singer-songwriter

Mac McAnally is 56. Model Kim Alexis is 53. Actor Willie Aames is 53. Actor-

director Forest Whitaker is 52. Actress

Lolita Davidovich is 52. Actress Brigitte Nielsen is 50. Rock musician

Jason Bonham is 47. Actress Amanda

Foreman is 47. Actor Kristoff St. John

is 47. Rock musician Phillip Fisher is

46. Rhythm-and-blues singer Stokley

(Mint Condition) is 46. Actor-comedian Eddie Griffin is 45. Actor Stan Kirsch

is 45. Actor Reggie Hayes is 44. Actor-

screenwriter Jim Rash is 42. Rock musician John Dolmayan is 41. Actor

Scott Foley is 41. Actor Brian Austin

Green is 40. Rapper Jim Jones is 37

Actress Diane Kruger is 37. Actress Lana Parrilla is 36. Rock musician Ray

Toro (My Chemical Romance) is 36. Actor Travis Fimmel is 34. Rhythm-

and-blues singer Kia Thornton (Di-

Thought for Today: "There are two kinds of worries — those you can

do something about and those you

can't. Don't spend any time on the lat-ter." — Duke Ellington, American jazz

artist (1899-1974).

e) is 32. Actor Tristan Wilds is 24.

Today's Birthdays: Author Clive

One year ago: Syria's 16-month

kee Stadium.

died in New York.

singer Elisabeth Welch, 99, died in

Pierre Report Board Hears GFP Numbers

BY SEN. JEAN HUNHOFF R-District 18 (Yankton)

The Interim Rules Committee met on July 9. DENR presented rules for redrawing the director areas in the James River, East Dakota and West Dakota Water Development District areas. Miner County had been located in two water development districts James River and East Dakota. The county commissioners brought it to a vote in the county and the voters wanted to be in one district and that was East Dakota. Therefore, this required a change in the director areas.

Amended rules were proposed in the Consoli-dated Water Facilities Construction Program that would allow projects that have received funding from the board to remain in the state water facilities plan for the purpose of requesting additional funding. The rules also removed application restrictions that prohibit a project receiving more than one grant and one loan in a program.

Amendments were made to the State Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund program to: • facilitate project development,

• allow projects needing additional funds to

apply for funding in a timely manner, • eliminate duplication between rules and

statute · allow board flexibility in maximizing available funding,

 and provide for the applicant's financial status to be reviewed by staff during the application review process and those findings presented to the board when the funding application is considered.

The Waste Management Program had amendments to eliminate confusion resulting from the 40 percent cost share requirement and the requirement statute that limits an award for a project to 80 percent of the nonfederal share expenditures, make interest rate setting criteria consistent with other funding programs with board oversight and reduce duplication between rules and statues. Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program had similar amendments to facilitate project development. There was no testimony in opposition to any of the proposed rule changes at the public hearings or at the committee meeting. The rules process was approved.

DSS brought forth rules for Medicaid reimbursement resulting from passage of the appropriations bill in the 2013 legislative session. This was an increase of 3 percent of base from FY13. Medicaid increased by \$909,722 which is the state share and the fed match of \$1,076,571,000. I his equates to the formula of 45.8 percent/general funding and 54.2 percent federal funding. There also were reimbursement changes for outof-state hospital inpatient and outpatient services. The change is calculated at a percentage appropriated by the Legislature. The last change was the dispensing fee for certain items dispensed by a pharmacy or public health service provider is located on the DSS website. The rules process was approved. Finally, GF&P presented a host of rule

changes regarding multiple hunting license nos and access areas.

ZIMMERMAN

NOT

GUILTY!

During 2013 session, a bill was passed that allowed golf carts to be operated on roadways in the state parks. Rules were proposed that allows any golf cart having headlamp, stop lamp and review mirror that meets the requirements of

statute and for which the operator can provide proof in insurance coverage to operate in the park. It also allows for any combustion-enginepowered moped or scooter having a maximum engine displacement of 50cc to operate on state park roadways. Golf carts do not need license plates to operate on any roads except those posted with a speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour. The exception is in Custer State Park where it would need a valid license plate except on any road or parking area within a campground. Golf carts, moped, scooter and all-terrain vehicles must have a park entrance license. There are options as how to display the stickers/or transferable park entrance licenses.

Overall, big game licenses were reduced in the state due to the decline in the nos of big game because of disease over the past year. License numbers for the upcoming turkey season : any turkey licenses Yankton County — 130, Bon Homme County — 180 (two tag licenses with each tag valid for one "any turkey"), Clay County 50 (two-tag licenses with each tag valid for one "any turkey").

August Management Take for Canada geese has an expanded season in select counties and increase in bag unit. Open units and maximum number and types of resident licenses available East River Deer: Bon Homme County - 100 "any deer" licenses; Clay County - 300 "any deer" licenses, and Yankton County — 300 "any deer" licenses. For archery one single tag statewide "any antlerless" license may be purchased for all areas open to archery deer hunting excluding the Black Hills Fire Protection District, Bon Homme, Charles Mix, Clay, Codington, Douglas, Grant, Hutchinson, Lincoln, Turner, Union and Yankton counties. The 2013 license numbers for deer and fall turkey project a fiscal impact of a decrease from 2012 by \$108,986 dollars. The rules process was found to be complete.

The Department of Agriculture pulled their proposed rules on raw milk. At the public hearing and following, opponents of the proposed examining what had been initially proposed. Regulation of raw milk sales has been a frequent topic over my years on the rules committee. The debate focuses on how much regulation is needed for public safety in preparing and sales of raw milk and the public's right to purchase raw milk of their choice.



Sally Whiting Brenda Willcuts Jackie Williams

* * *

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Today's Highlight in History: On July 15, 1913, Augustus Bacon, D-, became the first person elected to the U.S. Senate under the terms of the recently ratified 17th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, providing for popular election of senators.

On this date: In 1870, Georgia became the last Confederate state to be readmitted to the Union. Manitoba entered confederation as the fifth Canadian province. In 1916, Boeing Co., originally

known as Pacific Aero Products Co., was founded in Seattle In 1932. President Herbert Hoover

announced he was slashing his own salary by 20 percent, from \$75,000 to \$60,000 a year; he also cut Cabinet members' salaries by 15 percent, from \$15,000 to \$12,750 a year. In 1943, the Diligenti Quintuplets

three girls and two boys - were

born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In 1948, President Harry S. Tru-man was nominated for another term of office by the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.

In 1964, Sen. Barry M. Goldwater of Arizona was nominated for presi-dent by the Republican National Convention in San Francisco.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon delivered a televised address in which he announced that he had accepted an invitation to visit the People's Republic of China.

In 1976, a 36-hour kidnap ordeal began for 26 schoolchildren and their bus driver as they were abducted near Chowchilla, Calif., by three gunmen and imprisoned in an underground cell. (The captives escaped unharmed.)

In 1979, President Jimmy Carter delivered his "malaise" speech in which he lamented what he called a 'crisis of confidence" in America.

In 1983, eight people were killed when a suitcase bomb planted by Armenian extremists exploded at the Turkish Airlines counter at Orly Airport in Paris.

In 1992, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton was nominated for president at the Democratic National Convention in New York

In 2010, after 85 days, BP stopped the flow of oil from a blown-out well in the Gulf of Mexico using a 75-ton cap lowered onto the wellhead earlier in the week

Ten years ago: The Bush administration dramatically raised its budget deficit projections to \$455 billion for fiscal year 2003 and \$475 billion for fiscal 2004, record levels fed by the limp economy, tax cuts and the battle against terrorism. Scott McClellan assumed his duties as White House press secretary. Philadelphia's archbishop, Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua, retired. Tex Schramm. who'd turned the Dallas Cowboys into "America's Team," died at age 83. American-born

FROM THE BIBLE

For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins, 1 Peter 1:9. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

The Pointless Politics of Fame

BY BILL O'REILLY

Creators Syndicate

One of the downsides of being famous is that folks pay far more attention to you than they should. American celebrities are constantly under surveillance, and every word they say is subject to scrutiny. So be careful what you wish for if you desire fame. No human being should be a goldfish.

That being said, some celebrities simply cannot keep their mouths shut, weighing in on topics they know little or nothing about. And when that happens, the famous person often under-

You may remember that in the wake of the Newtown, Conn., shootings, comedian-actor Jim Carrey

in an anti-assault rifle rant on the Internet. Seeing as Carrey's career is not exactly on an upward trajectory, the controversy he created was not to his benefit. So this week, old Jim recanted, at least somewhat.

Here's what he tweeted: 'Asslt rifle fans, I do not agree wth u, nor do I fear u but I do love u and I'm sorry tht in my outrage I called you names. That was wrong. ... Calling ppl names is inappropriate but my position on assault weapons hasn't changed.

Now, why is Carrey asking for forgiveness? Is he genuinely consumed with love and remorse, or is it a career ploy by his management people to bring him some positive attention? Impossible to say, but one thing is clear: Carrey does not want to talk about his gun position in detail. When offered a hearing on the highest-rated cable news show in the country, he declined

YOUR LETTERS

Pipeline Potential

Harry Manshein, Brookings

For many months, I've seen publicity against the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Let us remember that progress for the sake of total public welfare must be measured by whats good for the most people.

Granted, there are risks that exist in respect to human error and effect of natural causes of oil-line spill. I have personally talked to reliable sources near the path of that line in western S.D.

The next rules meeting is scheduled for Sept. 17. If you have questions/concerns, please con-tact me djhunhoff @iw.net or 665-1463.

often speaks before he thinks, something most

human beings are guilty of from time to time. But

cyberspace to opine on all kinds of

things. This does not often lead to pros-

folks released an Internet video calling

for 'an end to nuclear weapons.' That's

very nice, is it not? Who wouldn't want

a world free of nukes? Well, maybe Iran.

Perhaps North Korea. China kinda likes

So while Alec Baldwin, Michael Dou-

its nuclear arsenal. And that Vladimir

Putin really likes the flash-bang con-

glas, Whoopi Goldberg, Matt Damon

and others opine that all nukes should

A few weeks ago, a bunch of famous

I suspect that Carrey is an emotional guy who

there is now a growing trend in Hollywood to use

goes even more scrutiny.

mocked the death of Charlton Heston

go, the world's villain lineup giggles. I mean, can't you just see the Chinese big shots meeting in the Forbidden City saying, 'Hey, Baldwin and Damon don't want nukes, so we must comply immediately!'?

perity.

cept.

Here's why this dopey stuff happens: It's all about approval. Somebody comes up with a concept for a video, and some famous people hop on the bus. Why not? All their friends agree that nukes are bad, and certainly, taking liberal positions is a resume enhancer in show business.

But in the end, 'stupid is as stupid does,' to quote Forrest Gump. If celebrities want their opinions to be taken seriously, they need to get off the Net and into the debate arena. Otherwise, they're just tweeting in the wind.

Veteran TV news anchor Bill O'Reilly is host of the Fox News show 'The O'Reilly Factor' and author of the book 'Pinheads and Patriots: Where You Stand in the Age of Obama.

and find that anti XL is in the minority. I recall the concern of many of our public when electric high lines were constructed from the stand point of appearance to the felt risk of radiation from the lines, to risk of collapse, danger to birds in flight, to the effect and inconvenience to humanity when they could be without

way of life. Likely the XL pipeline has a greater potential for the positive than for negative for the overall greater good of society.

that which they'd become dependant on for a



Bill **O'REILLY**