

The Press & 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.net

**SUBSCRIPTIONS/
CIRCULATION**
Extension 104
jim.gevens@yankton.net

CLASSIFIED ADS
Extension 108
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

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Advertising Director

Jim Gevens
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OPINION

Education Special Session Not Needed

A group of South Dakota lawmakers are seeking a special legislative session for next month to address the state's increasingly critical teacher shortage. But their motives appear to do less with long-running educational economics and more with concerns about the new Common Core teaching standard, not to mention one of the guidelines of the task force that has been formed to study education funding issues in this state.

Five lawmakers gathered last week in Rapid City to call for a special session on the teacher shortage, which they labeled (not unfairly) a "crisis." Their aim is to convene a session Aug. 17 in Pierre; to do that, they are sending letters to other lawmakers to call the session. The governor can call a special session, but legislators can do so, too, if two-thirds of them agree to it.

However, the lawmakers want the session because the Blue Ribbon Task Force created by Gov. Dennis Daugaard to study education funding is not considering the cost of implementing Common Core in its evaluations. That's because the group is not tasked with getting into a debate over the merits of what is, for some, a contentious program.

During the task force meeting in Yankton last month, it was stated at the outset that the purpose of the meeting was not to get into that kind of discussion. Instead, it was aimed at addressing funding sources, the teacher shortage and potential ways to correct the situation.

This exclusion of a Common Core debate from the task force's work regimen has angered some Common Core opponents. They often rail against the new education standard as a means of instituting a national curriculum. Some call it socialism and a power grab. Some blame the White House, even though the curriculum was originally proposed by the National Governors Association ...

But that's not the point of the task force. The problem is that injecting Common Core into the task force's mission would invariably steer some of the conversation and overall energy in other directions that would have virtually nothing to do with low wages and the lack of applicants for open teaching positions. It would be like focusing on your car tires while your transmission is on the verge of giving out.

The fact that some Common Core foes weren't able to utilize task force meetings as a forum for attacking the new curriculum appears to be what's motivating this call for a special session.

As such, a special session would serve no useful purpose. It would put a spotlight on an issue that has no ties to the problems that are crippling school districts and compelling prospective educators to look to other states to find jobs — issues that existed years before Common Core was ever proposed. We need solutions for, not detours from, these problems.

kmh

ABOUT THIS PAGE

The View page provides a forum for open discussion of issues and interests affecting our readers. Initialed editorials represent the opinion of the writer, but not necessarily that of the **PRESS & DAKOTAN**. Bylined columns represent the view of the author. We welcome letters on current topics. Questions regarding the Views page should be directed to Kelly Hertz at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.

ONLINE OPINION

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

LATEST RESULTS:

Do you see the Confederate flag more as a symbol of racism or as a symbol of cultural pride?
A symbol of cultural pride60%
A symbol of racism27%
Not sure/don't care13%
TOTAL VOTES CAST365

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:

Do you agree with Donald Trump's views on illegal immigrants?
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, July 14, the 195th day of 2015. There are 170 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On July 14, 1865, the Matterhorn, straddling Italy and Switzerland, was summited as a seven-member rope party led by British climber Edward Whymper reached the peak. (Four members of the party fell to their deaths during their descent; Whymper and two guides survived.)

On this date: In 1789, in an event symbolizing the start of the French Revolution, citizens of Paris stormed the Bastille prison and released the seven prisoners inside.

In 1881, outlaw William H. Bonney Jr., alias "Billy the Kid," was shot and killed by Sheriff Pat Garrett in Fort Sumner in present-day New Mexico.

In 1913, Gerald Rudolph Ford Jr., the 38th president of the United States, was born Leslie Lynch King Jr. in Omaha, Nebraska.

In 1921, Italian-born anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were convicted in Dedham, Massachusetts, of murdering a shoe company paymaster and his guard. (Sacco and Vanzetti were executed six years later.)

In 1933, all German political parties, except the Nazi Party, were outlawed. Cartoon character Popeye the Sailor made his movie debut in the Fleischer Studios animated short, "Popeye the Sailor."

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a measure providing funds for a national monument honoring scientist George Washington Carver; the monument was built at Carver's birthplace near Diamond, Missouri.

In 1958, the army of Iraq overthrew the monarchy.

In 1965, the American space probe Mariner 4 flew by Mars, sending back photographs of the red planet. United Nations Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson II died in London at age 65.

In 1966, eight student nurses were murdered by Richard Speck in a Chicago dormitory.

In 1976, Jimmy Carter won the Democratic presidential nomination at the par-

ty's convention in New York.

In 1980, the Republican national convention opened in Detroit, where nominee-apparent Ronald Reagan told a welcoming rally he and his supporters were determined to "make America great again."

In 1999, race-based school busing in Boston came to an end after 25 years.

Ten years ago: Chief U.S. Justice William H. Rehnquist, ending a two-day stay in the hospital, pledged to continue working as long as his health permitted. (Rehnquist died in September 2005.)

Five years ago: An Iranian nuclear scientist who'd disappeared a year earlier headed back to Tehran, telling Iranian state media that he'd been abducted by CIA agents. (The U.S. said Shahram Amiri was a willing defector who'd changed his mind.)

One year ago: Citigroup agreed to pay \$7 billion to settle a federal investigation into its handling of risky subprime mortgages. The Church of England voted overwhelmingly in favor of allowing women to become bishops.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Harry Dean Stanton is 89. Actress Nancy Olson is 87. Former football player and actor Rosey Grier is 83. Actor Vincent Pastore is 69. Music company executive Tommy Mottola is 67. Rock musician Chris Cross (Ultravox) is 63. Actor Jerry Houser is 63. Actor-director Eric Laneville is 63. Actor Stan Shaw is 63. Movie producer Scott Rudin is 57. Singer-guitarist Kyle Gass is 55. Country musician Ray Herndon (McBride and the Ride) is 55. Actress Jane Lynch is 55. Actor Jackie Earle Haley is 54. Actor Matthew Fox is 49. Rock musician Ellen Reid (Crash Test Dummies) is 49. Rock singer-musician Tanya Donelly is 49. Actress Missy Gold is 45. Olympic gold medal snowboarder Ross Rebagliati is 44. Rhythm-and-blues singer Tameka Cottle (Xscape) is 40. Country singer Jamey Johnson is 40. Hip-hop musician Taboo (Black Eyed Peas) is 40. Actor Scott Porter is 36. Rock singer Dan Smith (Bastille) is 29. Rock singer Dan Reynolds (Imagine Dragons) is 28.

Thought for Today: "The willing contemplation of vice is vice." — Arabic proverb.

FROM THE BIBLE

I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word. John 17:20. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



The Rez Of The Story

Pezhi (Pot) Revisited

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives), I wanted to underscore by concern about the growing interest to use pot as a cash crop as part of some Native Nation's emerging strategy for economic growth and opportunity and here's why.

In accordance with an article by Eliza Gray in a recent *Time* magazine, there appears to be some food for thought on this subject as follows:

"On June 18 [2015], Delaware became the 19th state to decriminalize possession of small amount of marijuana, joining a growing number of U.S. cities and states that have loosened restrictions on the drug. But pot remains illegal under federal law, which has made studying its effects particularly challenging. That may finally be getting easier. On June 22, the White House announced that cannabis researchers will no longer have to submit proposals to the U.S. Public Health Service, lifting a major bureaucratic hurdle. "Scientists need to be making policies, and the only way we can do that is through fast research so we can answer some questions that the public is asking," says Yasmin Hurd, who has researched the drug at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. Despite the challenges, pot researchers have turned up some interesting recent findings. Here is a short guide to the latest:

"BUYER BEWARE A study published in the June 23 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that most of the 75 edible marijuana products researchers purchased in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle inaccurately labeled the potency of the treats' THC, the psychoactive ingredient in pot. Some 60 percent had less THC than advertised, while around 20 percent had more — a variation researchers attributed to a lack of industry standards and regulations.

"MIXED VERDICT ON MEDICAL USE: A review of 79 randomized clinical trials of nearly 6,500 patients, also published in *JAMA*, found limited existing evidence of marijuana's benefit for some medical conditions. The researchers found "moderate-quality" evidence that marijuana helped with chronic pain and reduced muscle spasticity in patients with multiple sclerosis. However, they found only low-quality evidence that it helped with nausea caused by chemotherapy and weight gain for patients with HIV and no reliable evi-



Vince TWO EAGLES

dence that it improved psychiatric conditions like depression or relieved eye pressure in patients with glaucoma—all conditions that can qualify people for medical marijuana under state law.

"WEED BEHIND THE WHEEL: The spread of legalization has raised an attendant question:

Can adults drive safely after using? A study from the National Institute on Drug Abuse offers new data on marijuana's impact on driving performance. Researchers tested drivers after 10 minutes of drinking and 10 minutes of inhaling pot. Observing the level of their driving impairment, they found that drivers with a blood concentration of THC of 13.1 ug/L showed a level of weaving similar to drivers with a breath-alcohol concentration of 0.08%—the legal limit in most states. Another finding: while alcohol increased the number of times a car left its lane and the speed of weaving, marijuana did not."

Clearly there is much research yet to be done to convincingly render pot safe for public consumption on many levels.

What I find more than a little interesting is the willingness of the public to rush to legalization of pot. What is the motive for wanting to legalize recreational use with the verdict still out as to pot's relative safety? Pot clearly needs to be regulated to assure quality and minimum standards for checking out "claims of potency" made by sellers.

I am very concerned about putting more intoxicated (driver impaired) citizens on U.S. roads and highways. There are no definitive or reliable stats to help regulate and set blood levels that would help our law enforcement officials to act when removing impaired drivers from our roads. It is not responsible to allow impaired drivers on any substance to be putting at risk the safety of the rest of us that don't use. And what is this obsession with mind-altering experiences all about in human kind? What is it about reality that we feel the need to "check out" for a while?

It is a scary thought, to say the least, to wonder if the pilot of the airplane I'm riding on is being piloted by an impaired individual or other operators of other public transportation let alone individual operators of vehicles on our roads.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Getting 'Real'

Eric Leise, Yankton

In regards to Kim Dale's Letter ("One Same-Sex Marriage," *Press & Dakotan*, July 7):

Kim, thank you for your letter to the Press and Dakotan. I'm so proud to know we live in a country where voices like yours are allowed and welcomed to be heard, despite the fact they might be hurtful, hateful, misguided and bigoted. What a great country we live in, and what a blessing it is our Supreme Court and Constitution have time and again upheld your rights to do so!

But your letter makes me sad. Have you ever met a gay person? Who is your preacher? Have you read the Bible yourself front to back, and employed your own, independent judgment of what it tells you? Have you ever considered yourself equal to all humans? Have you ever thought about the fact that it was YOUR government, Supreme Court and Constitution that endowed upon you, as a born female, the right to vote and express your opinions as you have in your letter? If not, I encourage you to take a moment and reflect on these questions.

If ever you want to meet a "real" gay person who calls Yankton, South Dakota, home, who is gainfully employed and contributes to

your and your family's well-being through paying the same taxes you do, who owns his own house and cares for it, and who has a family, like yours, who loves him and whom he loves, I'm open to buy you a coffee or a beer. Let me know. (I give the good people at P&D my permission to release my info to you.)

May your God bless you and care for you, for only He is to judge upon our death, so the Bible tells me so in my 10 years of Catholic-school education.

A Job Well Done!

Tim Downing, Yankton

On behalf of many patrons of Fox Run golf course I would like to extend a public thank you to Jim Gevens for his many years of outstanding service.

Jim exhibited exceptional organizational skills and professionalism. He handled difficult situations with diplomacy and had a positive attitude that was contagious. Jim's dedication was demonstrated by working countless hours of overtime with no additional compensation as he was a salaried employee.

I wish Jim all the best and I wish the City good luck in finding a replacement with similar traits.

P & D LETTER POLICY

The **PRESS & DAKOTAN** invites its readers to write letters to the editor. We ask 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.

- Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.

- Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email us at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." — **The FIRST AMENDMENT to the U.S. Constitution**

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS: It's Your Right To Know!