

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.netSUBSCRIPTIONS/
CIRCULATIONExtension 104
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

MANAGERS

Gary L. Wood
PublisherMichele Schievelbein
Advertising DirectorTonya Schild
Business ManagerTera Schmidt
Classified ManagerKelly Hertz
EditorJames D. Cimburek
Sports EditorBeth Rye
Digital Media DirectorKathy Larson
Composing ManagerSarah Lynde
Circulation District Manager

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Nicole Myers

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OPINION OTHER VIEWS

Gas Tax: Keep
Eyes On The Road**OMAHA WORLD-HERALD (June 8):** Now that the Nebraska Legislature has passed a 6-cent-per-gallon gas tax increase over the governor's veto, drivers need state, county and city officials to follow through on lawmakers' promises.

An estimated infusion of \$75 million a year in user fees, divided about one-third each among state, county and city road needs, might offer the political temptation to pad the wish list of projects.

Resist.
The 30 state senators who overrode Gov. Pete Ricketts' veto did so by selling the idea that this money was needed to help close the gap between what is needed for already prioritized repairs and road projects and what money is coming in.

Those needs are real, even if the justifications sounded eerily similar to the 2011 debate that earmarked a quarter-cent of the state sales tax for roads. That change helped push state revenues for the Nebraska Department of Roads to the highest level in more than two decades, The World-Herald's Henry Cordes has reported. Cities and counties, too, are seeing an uptick in state road funds.

But the state, county and city share of federal gas tax funds has fallen sharply, due to inflation and people driving fuel-efficient vehicles. As such, Nebraska's 2015 road construction budget fell \$53 million short of its projected needs.

Folks know better than to wait on Washington to fix problems. This lightly populated state contains more than 100,000 miles of roads. It also is home to 20,000 bridges. County and city governments oversee all but 10,000 miles of road and 3,500 bridges.

Over the next 20 years, state roads officials say they expect needs to eclipse \$10 billion. Much of that concerns roads and bridges that get people to work and agricultural products to market.

Officials need to remember the voters who drive those roads and bridges when lobbyists show up with hands out touting the next great paved economic experiment. Discipline will be key.

Faster repairs and replacement of dated roads and bridges are what Nebraskans were promised. Roads and bridges built on the principle of need — that's what they should receive.

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**. Blinked 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.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Monday, June 22, the 173rd day of 2015. There are 192 days left in the year.**Today's Highlight in History:** On June 22, 1945, the World War II battle for Okinawa ended with an Allied victory.**On this date:** In 1611, English explorer Henry Hudson, his son and several other people were set adrift in present-day Hudson Bay by mutineers aboard the Discovery; their fate remains unknown.

In 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte abdicated for a second time as Emperor of the French.

In 1870, the United States Department of Justice was created.

In 1911, Britain's King George V was crowned at Westminster Abbey.

In 1937, Joe Louis began his reign as world heavyweight boxing champion by knocking out Jim Braddock in the eighth round of their fight in Chicago. (A year later on this date, Louis knocked out Max Schmeling in the first round of their rematch at Yankee Stadium.)

In 1940, during World War II, Adolf Hitler gained a stunning victory as France was forced to sign an armistice eight days after German forces overran Paris.

In 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, more popularly known as the "GI Bill of Rights."

In 1959, the Swedish film "Wild Strawberries," written and directed by Ingmar Bergman, opened in New York.

In 1965, movie producer David O. Selznick ("Gone with the Wind") died in Los Angeles at age 63.

In 1977, John N. Mitchell became the first former U.S. Attorney General to go to prison as he began serving a sentence for his role in the Watergate cover-up. (He was released 19 months later.)

In 1984, the British airline Virgin Atlantic began operations.

In 1995, the docudrama "Apollo 13" starring Tom Hanks and directed by Ron Howard, had its world premiere at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills, California.

Ten years ago: White House adviser Karl Rove set off a political firestorm with a speech to the New York state Conservative Party in which he said, "Liberals saw the savagery of the 9/11 attacks and wanted to prepare indictments and offer therapy and understanding for our attackers" while conservatives, he said, "saw the savagery of 9/11 and the attacks and prepared for war." Federal drug agents launched a wide-ranging crackdown on medical marijuana providers in northern California.**Five years ago:** White House Budget Director Peter Orszag announced he was stepping down. South Carolina Republicans chose Nikki Haley, a tea party favorite, to run for governor (she went on to win a runoff and the general election). Dino Ciccarelli, Cammi Granato and An-

gela James were elected to the Hockey Hall of Fame as players; Jimmy Devellano and the late Daryl "Doc" Seaman were elected as builders. South Africa became the first host nation not to advance in 80 years of World Cup play.

One year ago: President Barack Obama, in a recorded interview aired on CBS' "Face the Nation," said that al-Qaeda-inspired militants who had violently seized territory in Iraq could grow in power and destabilize other countries in the region. Fouad Ajami, 68, a Middle East scholar who rallied support for the American invasion of Iraq and advised policy makers in the Bush administration, died in Palo Alto, California. Steve Rossi, 82, one half of the comic duo of Allen & Rossi, died in Las Vegas, Nevada. Michelle Wie closed with an even-par 70 for a two-shot victory over Stacy Lewis, the No. 1 player in women's golf, for her first major championship in the U.S. Women's Open. "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" received its eighth trophy as outstanding entertainment talk show at the Daytime Emmy awards ceremony in Beverly Hills.**Today's Birthdays:** Actress Prunella Scales (TV: "Fawlty Towers") is 83. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., is 82. Singer-actor Kris Kristofferson is 79. Movie director John Korty is 79. Actor Michael Lerner is 74. Actor Klaus Maria Brandauer is 72. Fox News analyst Brit Hume is 72. Singer Peter Asher (Peter and Gordon) is 71. Actor Andrew Rubin is 69. Actor David Lander is 68. Singer Howard "Eddie" Kaylan is 68. Singer-musician Todd Rundgren is 67. Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., is 66. Actress Meryl Streep is 66. Actress Lindsay Wagner is 66. Singer Alan Osmond is 66. Actor Murphy Cross is 65. Actor Graham Greene is 63. Pop singer Cyndi Lauper is 62. Actor Chris Lemmon is 61. Rock musician Derek Forbes is 59. Actor Tim Russ is 59. Rock musician Garry Beers (INXS) is 58. Actor-producer-writer Bruce Campbell is 57. Rock musician Alan Anton (Cowboy Junkies) is 56. Actress Tracy Pollan is 55. Environmental activist Erin Brockovich is 55. Rock singer-musician Jimmy Somerville is 54. Basketball Hall of Famer Clyde Drexler is 53. Actress Amy Brenneman is 51. Author Dan Brown is 51. Rock singer-musician Mike Edwards (Jesus Jones) is 51. Rock singer Steven Page is 45. Actor Michael Trucco is 45. Actress Mary Lynn Rajsckub is 44. TV personality Carson Daly is 42. Rock musician Chris Traynor is 42. Country musician Jimmy Wallace is 42. Actor Donald Faison is 41. Actress Alicia Goranson is 41. Actor-comedian Mike O'Brien (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 39. TV personality/actor Jai Rodriguez is 36. Actress Lindsay Ridgeway is 30. Pop singer Dina Hansen (Fifth Harmony) (TV: "The X Factor") is 18.**Thought for Today:** "If you look at life one way, there is always cause for alarm." — Elizabeth Bowen, Irish author (1899-1973).

FROM THE BIBLE

If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. Luke 9:23. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Banquet Thanks

Laverta Mauch, Yankton

I want to especially thank all the groups who have served the Banquet in the first quarter of 2015: Calvary Baptist, Avera Sacred Heart, Yankton Ministerial Association, Sacred Heart Parish, Beta, Trinity Lutheran, Knights of Columbus, Missouri Valley Christian Academy, Yankton High School, Walmart, Avera Senior Services, Yankton Fire Department, St. John's Rachel's Circle, Girl Scouts, St. Rose of Lima and Lutheran Church from Crofton, Wakonda St. Patrick's, St. Boniface of Freeman, Catholic Daughters, Well's Fargo,

Riverview Park Reform Church, Parkston UCC, Zion Lutheran, Vangen and UCC Church.

It is a neat experience to serve our people with good food and fellowship every Thursday at 6 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of each month at UCC church basement. In addition to meals and fellowship, we fund school supplies and summer recreation activities programs for each child.

We are looking for a group to serve on Sept. 10 or Dec. 29. If you are interested in accepting this opportunity to serve either night, you may contact Laura Heimes Brown at 605-665-7199.



No Sanctuary

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.

Tribune Content Agency

The main hall of a church is called a sanctuary.

It is where you go to worship, to seek fellowship and solace, and commune with your Maker. The dictionary definition of the word adds an additional layer of resonance. A sanctuary is where you are sheltered and protected. A sanctuary is where you are safe.

Wednesday night, Emanuel AME church in Charleston, S.C., was a church without a sanctuary. Wednesday night, Emanuel AME was a killing ground.

Authorities say a 21-year-old white man named Dylann Storm Roof entered the African-American church Wednesday during Bible study, sat with the black congregants for an hour, and then started shooting. Nine people died in the attack, including the church's pastor, Clementa C. Pinckney, who was also a state senator.

"I have to do it," Roof is quoted as saying. "You rape our women and you're taking over our country. And you have to go."

If there is reason to believe Rev. Pinckney or any of his congregants guilty of raping anyone or plotting to overthrow the government, it has not yet come to light.

But of course, when Roof said "you," he did not mean "you," singular. Rather he meant, "you," plural. "You" people. "You" all. Individuality is, after all, the first casualty of racism. And indeed, an image circulated after the shooting shows Roof scowling at a camera while wearing a jacket with patches depicting the flags of two famously racist regimes: Rhodesia (now called Zimbabwe) and apartheid-era South Africa. Roof was apprehended the following day not far from Charlotte, N.C.

It was to seek sanctuary from people like him and beliefs like his that the church Roof shot up was founded in the first place. Emanuel AME, affectionately called "Mother AME," was one of the earliest churches of the African Methodist Episcopal denomination, which was started in the late 18th century by black worshippers fed up with the discrimination they faced in the white church. In 1821, one of its members, Denmark Vesey, organized a slave revolt that failed when an informant leaked word of the plot. Nevertheless, the people-traders of the South were galvanized by the audacity of the plan. The church was burned as a result.

It was rebuilt. In 1834, black churches were outlawed in South Carolina. Emanuel went underground until the law was changed. An earthquake destroyed the building in 1886. The church was rebuilt yet again.

Now, there is this.
Roof's alleged attack is being called many things. It is being called appalling and tragic, and it is. It is being called a hate crime and it is. It is being called an act of white extremist terrorism and it is that, too. But one thing, let no one dare

Capitol Notebook

Are We Our Own Worst
Economic Enemy?

BY BOB MERCER

State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — For South Dakota, the great recession of 2008 and 2009 continues to hang around.

Enrollees in Medicaid and children's health insurance programs, which are funded by the federal and state governments, were at nearly 119,000 through April.

That is the largest number in modern times.

Our non-farm employment growth kept pace with the nation for the first few years coming out of the recession.

But South Dakota fell off the pace in 2012 and 2013. We continue to lag.

South Dakota's unemployment rate remains lower than the nation — 3.6 percent vs. 5.4 percent in April — but we haven't seen a South Dakota number in the 2s since June 2008.

Instead, we're in the same neighborhood that we saw in 2002 through 2005.

Times are never certain in a state whose economy depends so much in so many places on agriculture. We saw that effect in 2014.

South Dakota's gross domestic product grew 2.7 percent in 2014 over the previous year. That was 37th best in the nation. The nation's GDP increased 3.9 percent.

When adjusted for inflation, those numbers don't look any better.

According to the state Bureau of Finance and Management's latest economic-outlook report, South Dakota's real GDP growth was 0.6 percent for 2014, while the nation was 2.2 percent.

The BFM report noted that South Dakota saw a 10 percent decline in the agriculture, forestry and related industries in 2014. All states across the Great Plains saw declines in

to call it, and that is, "surprising." This attack can be regarded as surprising only by the very innocent, the very ignorant, and those who have not been paying attention.

In the first place, a nation whose gun love amounts to nothing less than fetishism has no right — ever — to describe a mass shooting as a surprise. Indeed, at this point, one is more surprised when the country passes a day without one.

But if the means of the attack is unsurprising, the motive is, too.

There is a myth in this country, a fable some people cherish because it makes them feel good and demands no moral or intellectual heavy lifting. That myth holds that we are done with race and have been for a very long time; that we overcame, learned our lesson, reached the Promised Land and built luxury condos there.

Bill O'Reilly believes that myth. Sean Hannity believes it. Rush Limbaugh swears by it. Indeed, for most of the people who are pleased to call themselves "conservative," that myth is nothing less than an article of faith.

Let them go to Charleston. Let them visit a church with no sanctuary.

For that matter, let them go to Baltimore, let them go to Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas, Atlanta, St. Louis, Miami. Let them go to any of a hundred cities and talk to black people who are sick of hearing how America overcame, learned its lesson, reached the Promised Land, yet somehow, sister can't get a loan, dad can't find a job, brother has to factor stop-and-frisk encounters into his travel time to and from school and Walter Scott gets shot in the back while running away. All for rapes they never committed and government takeovers they never planned.

If what happened in Charleston was extraordinary, and it was, this is the ordinary, the everyday of existing while black that grinds your faith down to a nub and works your very last nerve. Especially when the background music is provided by a bunch of people who don't know, don't know that they don't know, and don't care that they don't know, singing operatic praise to a faded myth.

Solange Knowles, sister of Beyonce, put it as follows Thursday in a tweet: "Was already weary. Was already heavy hearted. Was already tired. Where can we be safe? Where can we be free? Where can we be black?"

Where, in other words, can we find just a moment to breathe free of this constant onus? Where can we find sanctuary?

What happened Wednesday night at a storied church in Charleston is a painful reminder that in America, no such place exists.

Leonard Pitts is a columnist for *The Miami Herald*, 1 Herald Plaza, Miami, Fla., 33132. Readers may contact him via e-mail at lpitts@miamiherald.com.

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Leonard
PITTSBob
MERCER