



The SEQU-EASTER BUNNY

Life Continues, Graciously

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.
Tribune Media Services

Really? Bobbie Smith, too? Geez. This is what I'm thinking when word comes that the lead singer of the Spinners has died. It comes a month after Richard Street and Damon Harris, who sang on "Papa Was a Rolling Stone" with the Temptations, passed away just days apart. Now Smith, whose ice cream dollop of a tenor on "Could It Be I'm Falling in Love" serenaded me through junior year in high school, has joined them. It feels — and this feeling has become uncomfortably familiar lately — as if Somebody Up There is taking a sledgehammer to my childhood.

I send Howard a text: "All my heroes are going away."

Howard has been one of my best friends since we were hired within weeks of each other by *The Miami Herald* way back in the year of our Lord 1991 and I am sitting next to him a few days later in the newsroom as he chats with these interns. Half the desks in the place are empty these days, stark evidence of the economic woes the news business faces, and many of the occupied desks are held by interns, none of whom appears to be older than 12. One of them asks Howard a philosophical question:

"Do you feel like your life went by quickly?" Howard, who is 49, with a bit of gray just beginning to infiltrate his blond temples, is dutifully answering her question, when I tap his shoulder and suggest that he did not quite hear what the young lady asked. She spoke in the past tense: "went by." As in done, finito, kaput. As in, this 12 year old sees no difference, my friend, between you and a cadaver.

Her question strikes me in a tender spot, coming as it does, just after Bobbie, Richard and Damon have gone, after Bonnie Franklin has died, after Valerie Harper has announced she is dying of cancer and on the very day, as it happens, that we are having a party to commemorate the end of an era. For 50 years, *The Miami Herald* has been headquartered in a so-ugly-it's-beautiful building on Biscayne Bay. But, the business being in the shape it is, they've sold the place to some company



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that's going to smash it down and wants to put up a casino. So a thousand of us, employees present and past, have come home this day to bid the place farewell.

The old joint is filled with shouts of laughter and those fierce hugs you give people you haven't seen for way too long. There are patches more of baldness, strands more of gray, inches more of fat, time doing its merciless work. There are updates on marriages and divorces, grandchildren, illnesses, career changes, lost friends. There are memories.

And a 12-year-old's question hangs over me like smoke. Do you feel like your life went by quickly?

It's funny. You go to sleep a kid with Spinners songs all over the radio, wake up married with children and Spinners songs suddenly "classics" on the oldies station. You go to sleep yet again and wake up a grandfather. Bobbie Smith is dead and a roomful of old friends are wondering where life went.

And life doesn't just go. It also takes. Your knees, your hair, your waistline, your looks. Your loved ones, your friends, the career you

used to have, the building where you used to work. But — and you don't quite understand this when you're 12 — for as much as life takes, it also gives: the solace of memories, the tough teachings of experience, the hard-won recognition of the difference between marathon and sprint. And grace.

"We are all terminal," said Valerie Harper after her diagnosis. Her point was not despair. It was, rather, to cherish the sweetness of then, but honor the urgency of now, balance the goodbyes with hellos, miss no chance to be in the embrace of old friends. I don't know if the 12 year old stuck around to see all those fat, gray, bald people, but if so, I hope she heard the laughter echoing off the walls of that doomed building.

"Life went by quickly?" No. We live. And that's a verb in the present tense.

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The Quest For Independence

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives), Simon and Garfunkel's "The Boxer" begins with some of the greatest lyrics ever written: "I am just a poor boy though my story's seldom told, I have squandered my resistance for a pocket full of mumbles such are promises, all lies and jest still a man hears what he wants to hear and disregards the rest..." These words jumped out at me the second I heard them because they tell the story of my life and the lives of many Native people as I have come to understand them.

Many Native people recognize the effects of centuries of bad to worse paternalistic policies of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). More and more Native nations are taking the initiative to become less dependent upon the federal government and more independent. Independence — not in the isolationist sense but in the interest of developing sustainable self-government — is the new declaration of many individual Native people as well.

Jack Utter, author of "American Indians Answers to Today's Questions," put it like this: "... Roughly \$8 billion a year are pumped through various federal programs devoted to American Indians. Almost \$2 billion a year goes into the Bureau of Indian Affairs alone. But, as much as a third of it is used to be absorbed into the agency before the funds got out to any reservation. According to Arizona Sen. John McCain, former vice-Chairman of the Select Committee on Indian Affairs, in the early 1990s only 12 cents of every dollar appropriated for Indian programs ever reached an American Indian. This has changed substantially, with hundred of tribes now managing government programs themselves under the self-determination and self-governance legislation. It is also important to note that federal and tribal jobs, most with relatively good salaries, account for half of American Indian incomes on many reservations. This leaves little incentive for change in the bureaucratic system. But change is occurring and has been since the 1970s. Furthermore, it seems to be developing an accelerated pace for the new millennium.

"Policy failures, corruption, bureaucratic incompetence and politics have gone far toward holding American Indians back economically since the U.S. became a nation. The many, well-educated Native people of today, however, are very familiar with the laws, economics, and



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government bureaucracies that so thoroughly affect their lives. They and fellow Indians and Alaska Natives appear to be moving in a determined way to take control of their economic destiny. This process is a palpable happening. It may take years for some communities, or generations for others, but it is an ongoing trend.

"The worst thing that non-Indian America can do is to presume — as it has so often done in the past, with such disastrous results - that it knows what is "right" for American Indians. As Wilma Man killer, former principle Chief of the Oklahoma Cherokee Nation, has stated on this subject, 'The best solutions to our problems are within our own communities' (White 1990, p. 275).

"All who are concerned should also remember that tribal business and other economic development are not panaceas for the various problems facing Indian country. Native culture and the hundreds of Indian nations are not so simplistic as that. Better business and job opportunities, however, will go a long way toward improving economic self-determination, to which American Indians seem to be firmly dedicated."

Through hook or crook or through many different influences, the Native American has been thrust into modernity. Obviously the days of the great buffalo hunts are over. Although the twang of the bow string has long since gone quiet, the importance of providing for one's family and all the responsibilities that come with it are still there. Unfortunately, we live in a paper money economy and there doesn't seem to be enough of it to go around, especially if our earth's population continues to grow at the current rate.

I think the press has been doing a reasonable job at keeping us informed and up to speed of current economic conditions, but I think too that we the public would like to see more information about how we get here to begin with. What can be done to more equitably distribute our resources so that all of us can work out the issues with the global environment? What causes some people to have more money than they know what to do with while others on this planet remain poor generation after generation? And so on.

The bottom line is that the more we know, the better off we are.

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

lower taxes for the top 1 percent of multimillionaires, stashing their dollar greed in foreign banks; etc.

In the president's first term, Congress, led by "Tea Party," ignored the fact that "bipartisanship was an American way to help stimulate and govern our way of life," simply because GOP Senate Minority Mitch McConnell in the first three months of swore to work to not let the president have a second term.

This president has accomplished many endeavors that the letter writer chose to ignore.

Would you have voted for Romney? I hope you watched Ed Schultz recently and learned more about the Romney \$50,000-per-person diner cost millionaire meeting fiasco. That was an eye-opener!

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OPINION | OUR VIEW

Highway 52 Vision Is Long Overdue

One could argue that the work that officially began last week in finding a vision for the development of the Highway 52 corridor west of Yankton is a study in — or at least a variation of — the glass being considered either half-full or half-empty.

On the half-full side, the public meeting held last week to begin gathering input on what lake area residents want to see the corridor become is a promising development. The area is one of the most vital sections of the county; it has grown at a vibrant clip in the last few years and is in need of an overall vision for its proper development. After all, if there was no need, there would be no promise. So, this effort is a good sign.

But there is also the blunt, half-empty truth of the situation: This new process to formulate a developmental vision really needed to be done years ago. The demand was always there because the potential was clear. Instead, we settled for years of patchwork development that currently lacks cohesion. In some ways, it's a monument to time lost and it has, perhaps, made what's now being undertaken that much more difficult.

There is no doubt that the Highway 52 corridor looms as an attractive area. It is Yankton's hookup with Lewis and Clark Lake and the parks, and it serves as the main traffic artery for a majority of the large population (estimated in the range of 3,000 people) that lives out there. The area keeps growing as people keep building, and a variety of businesses are also springing up along the highway.

But the development of the area has been driven by any number of individual visions that aren't always compatible. Thus, you find houses being built alongside retail businesses that are situated next to storage facilities that are abutting cropland.

One vision is needed now. At the public meeting last Thursday, officials on hand mentioned that they anticipated developments such as eateries and motels/hotels/convention centers looking at the area (and filling a need for the greater Yankton community in general). Growth is very much on the horizon.

But with growth will come infrastructure pains. One of the concerns mentioned by the attendees at last Thursday's meeting was the plan for dealing with sewage treatment. Most homeowners there now have their own septic tanks, and many aren't keen on helping fund a lagoon system in the area or in their own back yards. So, if this planning process had commenced a couple of decades ago, this issue probably would have been squared away when there wasn't as much development in the region. But that's trying to put the genie back in the bottle at this point.

The planning vision for the Highway 52 corridor is going to directly impact the thousands of people living in that area, of course, but it will also affect this community. The lake area is an extension of Yankton in spirit. Thus, the developmental plan that comes forth for that area is vital for everyone: those who live there and work there, as well as those who pass through the corridor or benefit from its traffic. Whether the glass is half-empty or half-full is not as important as seizing the opportunity now and creating a vision that works for everyone.

kmh

ONLINE OPINION

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

LATEST RESULTS:

Would you support a possible \$28 million renovation/expansion of Yankton's water treatment system?
Yes 53%
No 37%
Not sure 10%
TOTAL VOTES CAST 399

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:

Should the Keystone XL Pipeline be approved?

To vote in the *Press & Dakotan's* Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Tuesday, March 26, the 85th day of 2013. There are 280 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On March 26, 1979, a peace treaty was signed by Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and witnessed by President Jimmy Carter at the White House.

On this date: In 1812, an earthquake devastated Caracas, Venezuela, causing an estimated 26,000 deaths, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

In 1827, composer Ludwig van Beethoven died in Vienna.

In 1874, poet Robert Frost was born in San Francisco.

In 1892, poet Walt Whitman died in Camden, N.J.

In 1917, the Seattle Metropolitans became the first U.S. team to win the Stanley Cup as they defeated the Montreal Canadiens.

In 1937, a 6-foot-tall statue of the cartoon character Popeye was unveiled during the Second Annual Spinach Festival in Crystal City, Texas.

In 1958, the U.S. Army launched America's third successful satellite, Explorer 3.

In 1962, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Baker v. Carr*, gave federal courts the power to order reapportionment of states' legislative districts.

In 1973, English actor, singer, playwright, director, composer and wit Sir Noel Coward died in Jamaica at age 73. The soap opera "The Young and the Restless" premiered on CBS-TV.

In 1982, groundbreaking ceremonies took place in Washington D.C., for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

In 1988, Jesse Jackson stunned fellow Democrats by soundly defeating Michael S. Dukakis in Michigan's Democratic presidential caucuses.

In 1997, the bodies of 39 members of the Heaven's Gate techno-religious cult who'd committed suicide were found inside a rented mansion in Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.

Ten years ago: The Senate approved a \$2.2 trillion budget that provided less than half the \$726 billion in tax cuts President George W. Bush wanted. Former Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan died in Washington D.C., at age 76.

FROM THE BIBLE

Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let Him be crucified!" Matthew 27:22. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

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