

# THE PRESS DAKOTAN

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**OPINION | WE SAY**

**Getting The Message**



**THUMBS UP** to the South Dakota Legislature for finding the will after all to pass a statewide texting ban Thursday. The issue looked dead in the water late Tuesday as the House and the Senate could not reconcile the differences in their two measures. But on Wednesday, lawmakers revived the measure, acting upon a widespread sentiment in both chambers to produce something to address the situation. A measure was hammered out Thursday that makes texting while driving a secondary offense. However, it would not override local texting ordinances, which was a key sticking point. The issue of distracted driving has become a major concern across the nation as the number of portable electronic gadgets has proliferated. As we've said before, this bill's real aim is to remind drivers of the dangers. Hopefully, it's a start in that direction.

**Great Raiders!**



**THUMBS UP** to Gayville-Volin for making it to the school's first-ever state basketball tournament. The Raiders won the region title in Yankton last Thursday to qualify for the State B Girls Basketball Tournament, which opened Thursday in Huron. This is the first time that a Gayville-Volin basketball team, male or female, has ever gotten out of the districts, let alone make it to state. While the team lost its first-round game Thursday to top-seeded Sully Buttes, Gayville-Volin fans nevertheless have a lot to be proud of this March — and the memories of this run will be cherished for years. Congrats to the team and its fans on a great season!

**March Of The Coyotes**



While in the basketball realm, **THUMBS UP** to the University of South Dakota women's basketball team for earning its first-ever NCAA tournament bid this week by winning the Summit League Tournament in Sioux Falls. Amy Williams' crew got off to a slow start this season, but has put it together down the stretch to advance to the March dance. It's a great feat for a team with just one senior on the roster — a sure sign of more great things to come. USD finds out its tournament assignment Monday night. Good luck, Coyotes!

**Poor Grasp**



**THUMBS DOWN** to Rep. Paul Ryan's (R-Wis.) comments on "Bill Bennett's Morning in America" this week regarding poverty in America. During the interview, Ryan suggested that he would focus on creating work requirements in his legislative proposals for reforming America's poverty programs and said, "We have got this tailspin of culture, in our inner cities in particular, of men not working and just generations of men not even thinking about working or learning the value and the culture of work, and so there is a real culture problem here that has to be dealt with." If we set aside the possible racial overtones of this statement, it still demonstrates that Ryan has little understanding of the poverty challenges we face, which have much more to do with a lack of jobs — not to mention living-wage jobs — than with an unwillingness of any segment of the population to work.

**ONLINE OPINION**

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

**LATEST RESULTS:**

**Do you believe terrorism may be involved in the missing Malaysia Airlines flight?**  
Yes . . . . . 63%  
No . . . . . 37%  
**TOTAL VOTES CAST . . . . . 276**

*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 communities be allowed to enact texting bans with penalties that are tougher than state law?**

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

**ON THIS DATE**

**By The Associated Press**

Today is Friday, March 14, the 73rd day of 2014. There are 292 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On March 14, 1964, a jury in Dallas found Jack Ruby guilty of murdering Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy, and sentenced him to death. (Both the conviction and death sentence were later overturned, but Ruby died before he could be retried.)

**On this date:** In 1743, a memorial service was held at Faneuil Hall in Boston honoring Peter Faneuil, who had donated the building bearing his name.

In 1794, Eli Whitney received a patent for his cotton gin, an invention that revolutionized America's cotton industry.

In 1885, "The Mikado" premiered at the Savoy Theatre in London.

In 1900, Congress ratified the Gold Standard Act.

In 1923, President Warren G. Harding became the first chief executive to file an income tax return, paying a tax of \$17,990 on his \$75,000 salary.

In 1939, the republic of Czechoslovakia was dissolved, opening the way for Nazi occupation of Czech areas and the separation of Slovakia.

In 1951, during the Korean War, United Nations forces recaptured Seoul.

In 1962, Democrat Edward M. Kennedy officially launched in Boston his successful candidacy for the U.S. Senate seat from Massachusetts once held by his brother, President John F. Kennedy. (Edward Kennedy served in the Senate for nearly 47 years.)

In 1967, the body of President John F. Kennedy was moved from a temporary grave to a permanent memorial site at Arlington National Cemetery.

In 1980, a LOT Polish Airlines jet crashed while attempting to land in Warsaw, killing all 87 people aboard, including 22 members of a U.S. amateur boxing team.

In 1990, the Soviet Congress of People's Deputies held a secret ballot that elected Mikhail S. Gorbachev to a new, powerful presidency.

In 1991, a British court overturned the convictions of the "Birmingham Six," who had spent 16 years in prison for a 1974 Irish Republican Army bombing, and ordered them released.

**Ten years ago:** Opposition Socialists scored a dramatic upset win in Spain's general election, unseating conservatives stung by charges they'd provoked the Madrid terror bombings that killed 191 people by supporting the U.S.-led war in Iraq. Russian President Vladimir Putin won a second term. Two

Palestinian suicide bombers killed eleven Israelis in the port of Ashdod.

**Five years ago:** President Barack Obama met at the White House with Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva; afterward, Obama downplayed divisions between the U.S. and Europe over how to tackle the world's financial crisis. Finance officials from rich and developing countries, meeting in Horsham, England, pledged to do "whatever is necessary" to fix the global economy. Altovise Joanne Gore Davis, a dancer and actress and the widow of Sammy Davis Jr., died in Los Angeles at age 65.

**One year ago:** During his first full day as pontiff, Pope Francis stopped by his Vatican hotel to pick up his luggage and pay the bill himself, a day after being elected by his fellow cardinals. Some 10,000 workers from across the European Union protested outside a summit of EU leaders in Brussels, demanding they end years of austerity and focus instead on curbing runaway unemployment with more spending. A nearly 19-hour standoff in Herkimer, N.Y., came to an end inside a cluttered, abandoned bar as police SWAT teams killed the suspect in four fatal shootings. The NHL's realignment plan was approved by the league's board of governors.

**Today's Birthdays:** Former astronaut Frank Borman is 86. Singer Phil Phillips (Song: "Sea of Love") is 88. Actor Michael Caine is 81. Composer-conductor Quincy Jones is 81. Former astronaut Eugene Cernan is 80. Actor Raymond J. Barry is 75. Movie director Wolfgang Petersen is 73. Country singer Michael Martin Murphy is 69. Rock musician Walt Parazaider (Chicago) is 69. Actor Steve Kanaly is 68. Comedian Billy Crystal is 66. Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., is 66. Country singer Jann Browne is 60. Actor Adrian Zmed is 60. Prince Albert II, the ruler of Monaco, is 56. Actress Laila Robins is 55. Actress Tamara Tunie is 55. Actress Penny Johnson Jerald is 53. Producer-director-writer Kevin Williamson is 49. Actor Gary Anthony Williams is 48. Actress Megan Follows is 46. Rock musician Michael Bland is 45. Country singer Kristian Bush is 44. Rock musician Derrick (Jimmie's Chicken Shack) is 42. Actress Betsy Brandt is 41. Actress Grace Park is 40. Actor Corey Stoll (TV: "House of Cards") is 38. Actor Jake Fogel is 35. Actor Chris Klein is 35. Actress Kate Maberly is 32. Singer-musician Taylor Hanson (Hanson) is 31. Actor Jamie Bell is 28. Rock musician Este Haim (Haim) is 28.

**Thought for Today:** "Writers should be read but not seen. Rarely are they a winsome sight." — Edna Ferber, American author (1887-1968).

**FROM THE BIBLE**

*Let your way of life be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you." Hebrews 13:5. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis*



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THE BUFFALO NEWS

## It's Test Time At USD

BY KELLY HERTZ

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I've never met Joey James, who until late Monday or so owned the title of interim men's basketball coach at the University of South Dakota. I didn't see the Coyotes play at all this winter, so I cannot attest to James' skills as a coach.

I only know how he got his job and the 12-18 record he subsequently produced in what turned out to be his only season at the Coyote helm.

Today, I feel bad for the guy. And I'm feeling the faintest flashbacks about my alma mater.

I feel bad for James, 37 and a USD grad, because the good intentions of others simply blew up on him.

Most everyone I know who keeps tabs on USD athletics embraces the theory that Dave Boots chose last September to suddenly retire from the Coyote helm after 25 years in order to leave James, his longtime assistant, as the only choice to fill the slot. At that juncture, only about a month before practices were to start, what else could the school do? And why else would Boots do it? USD officials probably weren't particularly happy with being hamstrung like that.

Perhaps this move by Boots was intended to do the popular James a favor — but in hindsight, it didn't. Boots' departure left the USD program in the charge of someone who then had to prove his worth by playing the hand he inherited from his old boss. (To be fair, James surely had a role in recruiting several of those players to come to Vermillion.) It was not a strong cast, as the record would suggest.

It wound up costing James the chance at staying on and seeing what he could do with his own recruits and without the "interim" label around his neck. However, here's the part that bothers me. The news that James was being jettisoned broke big on the same day the USD's women's basketball team earned its first-ever NCAA tournament berth. Winning the Summit League tourney title was a mighty accomplishment for Amy Williams' club and a real jolt for USD's athletic program. But even this triumph was somewhat overshadowed by James' abrupt demise.

Word of it actually began leaking out the night before with a cryptic tweet from James ("Loyalty and commitment — what does that mean these days?"), then ESPN confirmed it early the next day before USD officials could make an announcement. According to the P&D sports staff, the press release from the school never mentioned James at all, de-

claring instead only that the U was beginning a national search for its next coach. Rumor has it that school officials weren't too happy with characterizations that James was "fired" or "let go" — which is understandable since, given that they couldn't even acknowledge that he had a name, they probably didn't want to admit he ever existed. So, USD's first real hunt for a new men's basketball coach in a quarter-century is not off to a sterling start. School officials couldn't control the messy way in which the news leaked out, and they weren't happy that other prying sources took the initiative.

Welcome to Division I athletics. This conjures up ghosts from 1988 when USD last searched for a new men's basketball coach. This process turned clumsy, starting and then re-starting, with people being offered the job and then turning it down through the media. Finally, the school settled on Boots, who faced low expectations from a fan base

that was accustomed to losing and a bit embarrassed by the slapdash way in which that hiring process transpired. The fact that the hire wound up working out so incredibly well may have blurred such facts from the institution's memory.

Now, USD, which has known nothing but stability and (mostly) success in its men's basketball program for more than a generation, must go through this process again. And this time, fans are going to expect a bit more from the next guy than they ever dreamed of seeing when Boots arrived.

This makes me a little nervous. It seems the school is intent on keeping a tight control on the message, just as it tried to do in the pre-Internet and pre-social media days of 1988 — to dazzling non-effect. (Granted, USD is not the first school to take this approach; it surely won't be the last.)

This could go bad fast if the right people in Vermillion aren't careful.

With that in mind, the school must proceed cautiously but quickly (which is not a contradiction) in its search for a new men's coach. Moreover, USD officials should work to stay ahead of the message rather than worry about controlling it.

This will be a crucial test in Vermillion. With a new arena about to break ground and very competitive Division I pressures snapping at their heels, USD officials need to show fans in clear terms they are up to the task.

You can follow Kelly Hertz on Twitter at [twitter.com/kelly\\_hertz/](https://twitter.com/kelly_hertz/). Discuss this story at [www.yankton.net/](http://www.yankton.net/).



Kelly HERTZ

**Kathleen Parker**

## A Serious Look At 'Fergate'

BY KATHLEEN PARKER

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WASHINGTON — I must need to smoke pot.

How else to explain why I wasn't getting President Obama's interview on "Between Two Ferns," the Web show hosted by Zach Galifianakis of "The Hangover" fame.

Or perhaps I needed a hangover, which isn't likely to happen during these Lenten times. Thus left to sobriety and afflicted with acute wakefulness, I kept trying to wrap my head around the mindless — no easy task for the unstoned.

Deadpan is key to the shtick. And monotone. Between two ferns, everyone is Bill Murray. Or, depending on one's generation, Sgt. Joe Friday. Guests on "Ferns" are expected to check facial expressions at the door and banish emotion. Emoting is not funny; not emoting is. I'm dozing off now, so I'll cut the fern talk. But first, could I have some water? It sure is thirsty in here.

In case you missed it, which you won't want to admit because this would mean you don't follow what's trending on Twitter, which would mean you are frozen in a time no one cares about anymore and are, therefore, irrelevant. Let me rephrase that: You're not cool — even if you're frozen.

The president, aka leader of the free world, appeared on the show *allegedly* to pitch health care to the demographic worshiped by producers and presidents alike — Young People. This is because young people rule and, specifically, they rule the success or failure of the Affordable Care Act. If the young and healthy don't buy insurance to help cover the sick and elderly, the plan could collapse.

I might have missed the show were it not for Twitter telling me what people are paying attention to. Other trending topics, at least during the time I checked in, concerned "Teen Wolf," "The Bachelor" and Juan Pablo, who, Google tells me, was the bachelor. Such topics remind us that all is right with the world, at least nothing that would distract a president. Absent was any mention of such downers as Ukraine, Crimea, Vladimir Putin, China, Russia, Venezuela, Syria, Iran, North Korea or other trouble spots, never mind a missing airplane.

What better time for the president to kick back and be a comic foil in service to the greater good of universal health care? Health care is important, of course, but, I repeat, he's the leader of the free

world, parts of which are under siege.

To kick things off, Galifianakis noted that Obama pardoned a turkey in 2013. "What do you have planned for 2014?" he queried.

"We'll probably pardon another turkey," Obama said, his face a decent replica of itself on Botox.

Q: What is it like to be the last black president?

A: What's it like for this to be the last time you ever talk to a president?

Q: You know what I would do if I were president, Mr. President? I would make same-sex divorce illegal, then see how bad they want it.

A: I think that's why you're not president.

And so it went. I did find myself smiling, though probably at the wrong things. I'll never tell. But like most people older than 30, I also wondered whether this was an appropriate venue for the president, especially in consideration of current events.

There are two possible answers: One, lighten up. We're an irreverent nation, proud of our ability to laugh at ourselves and to poke fun, especially during the worst of times. I admit, this is my favorite thing about us. Two, this kind of display is beneath the dignity of the office, and the president should be more circumspect in choosing public appearances, virtual or otherwise. How can we hope to be taken seriously when the world sees our president in such silly circumstances?

Both answers have merit. I was settling on the higher truth of the second choice when I finally got it. My mind expanded of its own volition, no doubt enhanced by the power of two ferns talking, and I could see clearly what apparently was so obvious in Twitterland.

Obama's appearance on an absurd Web program that celebrates the absurd was a masterful, strategic move aimed squarely at Putin. How better to insult a shirtless, pec-flexing thug than to engage in a theater of the absurd? How better to display maximum disrespect toward a man with a child's ego and a nuclear arsenal — who has invaded another country where peaceful demonstrators were gunned down — than by acting as though he hasn't a care in the world?

Brilliant.

Here's a final question for the president: Was it worth it?

Kathleen Parker's email address is [kathleen-parker@washpost.com](mailto:kathleen-parker@washpost.com).

**YOUR LETTERS**

**Food Safety**

George Schebel, Yankton

When it comes to food safety, I am concerned.

In the U.S., we have strict food regulation to protect our health. In China, they do not.

The other day in our supermarket, I found some canned goods that said "Product of China." I will not eat any food unless it is produced in the U.S.

So I look at every package I buy. I think every one should know. Unless you don't care.