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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

State Study On Gambling Overdue

THE DAILY REPUBLIC, Mitchell (March 12): A good idea comes our way from Pierre, where lottery officials are proposing a comprehensive study on gambling addiction in South Dakota. If it happens, it would be the first such study in 15 years in our state, which relies heavily on proceeds from gambling.

But some members of the state Legislature see a problem: letting the South Dakota Lottery conduct the study seems akin to "the fox guarding the henhouse," in the words of Rep. Scott Craig, R-Rapid City.

Let's first note that a study like this is overdue. We have said many times we're not against gambling, but we are against expansion of gambling. We feel it's irresponsible of state government to constantly look at ways to increase gambling revenue, and we have been vocal with our concerns. We know of people who are desperately addicted and have ruined their lives over gambling. The state needs to be cognizant of such things.

And then earlier this year, Lottery Commission Executive Director Norm Lingle told a Senate committee that video lottery revenue in the state is stagnant, and that "we need to get the younger folks involved."

We don't agree whatsoever with that thinking. We understand that gambling and the lottery mean jobs in South Dakota, and we're all for keeping it where it's at. But expansion is another story, and peddling it to a younger generation is just distasteful.

So yes, we do agree that a study on gambling addiction would be helpful as South Dakota considers what to do with gambling in the future. And yes, we definitely side with Rep. Craig on this one — the study should happen, but it should be conducted by an outside, independent agency.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, March 17, the 76th day of 2014. There are 289 days left in the year. This is St. Patrick's Day.

Today's Highlight in History: On March 17, 1776, British forces evacuated Boston during the Revolutionary War.

On this date: In 1762, New York's first St. Patrick's Day parade took place.

In 1861, Victor Emmanuel II was proclaimed the first king of a united Italy.

In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt first likened crusading journalists to a man with "the muckrake in his hand" in a speech to the Gridiron Club in Washington.

In 1912, the Camp Fire Girls organization was incorporated in Washington, D.C., two years to the day after it was founded in Thetford, Vt. (The group is now known as Camp Fire USA.)

In 1943, the Taoiseach of Ireland, Eamon de Valera, delivered a radio speech about "The Ireland That We Dreamed Of."

In 1950, scientists at the University of California at Berkeley announced they had created a new radioactive element, "californium."

In 1959, the Dalai Lama fled Tibet for India in the wake of a failed uprising by Tibetans against Chinese rule.

In 1966, a U.S. midget submarine located a missing hydrogen bomb which had fallen from an American bomber into the Mediterranean off Spain.

In 1969, Golda Meir became prime minister of Israel.

In 1970, the United States cast its first veto in the U.N. Security Council. (The U.S. killed a resolution that would have condemned Britain for failure to use force to overthrow the white-ruled government of Rhodesia.)

In 1973, U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Robert L. Stirm, a freed prisoner of the Vietnam War, was joyously greeted by his family at Travis Air Force Base in California in a scene captured in a Pulitzer Prize-winning AP photograph.

In 1988, Avianca Flight 410, a Boeing 727, crashed after takeoff into a mountain in Colombia, killing all 143 people on board.

Ten years ago: A car bomb tore apart the five-story Mount Lebanon Hotel catering to foreigners in the heart of Baghdad, killing seven people. Charles A. McCoy Jr., suspected in a series of highway shootings in central Ohio, was arrested in Las Vegas. (McCoy later pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter in the death of Gail Knisley plus 10 other charges and was sentenced to 27 years in prison.) Former MTV personality John "J.J." Jackson died in Los Angeles at age 62.

Five years ago:

U.S. journalists Laura Ling and Euna Lee were detained by North Korea while reporting on North Korean refugees living across the border in China. (Both were convicted of entering North Korea illegally and were sentenced to 12 years of hard labor; both were freed in August 2009 after former President Bill Clinton met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.) The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* published its final print edition.

One year ago: Two members of Steubenville, Ohio's celebrated high school football team were found guilty of raping a drunken 16-year-old girl and sentenced to at least a year in juvenile prison in a case that rocked the Rust Belt city of 18,000. Former Oklahoma quarterback Steve Davis, 60, who'd led the Sooners to back-to-back national championships in the 1970s, was killed in a private plane crash in northern Indiana. Louisville earned the top overall seed in the NCAA tournament after a topsy-turvy season in college basketball.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Gabriele Ferzetti is 89. Jazz/New Age musician Paul Horn is 84. The former national chairwoman of the NAACP, Myrlie Evers-Williams, is 81. Former NASA astronaut Ken Mattingly is 78. Rock musician Paul Kantner is 73. Singer-songwriter Jim Weatherly is 71. Singer-songwriter John Sebastian (The Lovin' Spoonful) is 70. Former NSA Director and former CIA Director Michael Hayden is 69. Rock musician Harold Brown (War; Lowrider Band) is 68. Actor Patrick Duffy is 65. Actor Kurt Russell is 63. Country singer Susie Allanson is 62. Actress Lesley-Ann Down is 60. Actor Mark Boone Jr. is 59. Country singer Paul Overstreet is 59. Actor Gary Sinise is 59. Actor Christian Clemenson is 56. Former basketball and baseball player Danny Ainge is 55. Actor Arye Gross is 54. Actress Vicki Lewis is 54. Actor Casey Siemaszko is 53. Writer-director Rob Sitch is 52. Actor Rob Lowe is 50. Rock singer Billy Corgan is 47. Rock musician Van Conner (Screaming Trees) is 47. Actor Mathew St. Patrick is 46. Actor Yanic Truesdale is 45. Rock musician Melissa Auf der Maur is 42. Soccer player Mia Hamm is 42. Rock musician Caroline Corr (The Corrs) is 41. Actress Amelia Heinle is 41. Country singer Keifer Thompson (Thompson Square) is 41. Actress Marisa Coughlan is 40. Rapper Swifty (D12) is 39. Actress Natalie Zea is 39. Actress Brittany Daniel is 38. Actress Eliza Hope Bennett is 22.

Thought for Today: "Television is a device that permits people who haven't anything to do to watch people who can't do anything." — Fred Allen, American comedian (born 1894, died this date in 1956).

FROM THE BIBLE

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. Matthew 6:19-20 NRSV. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

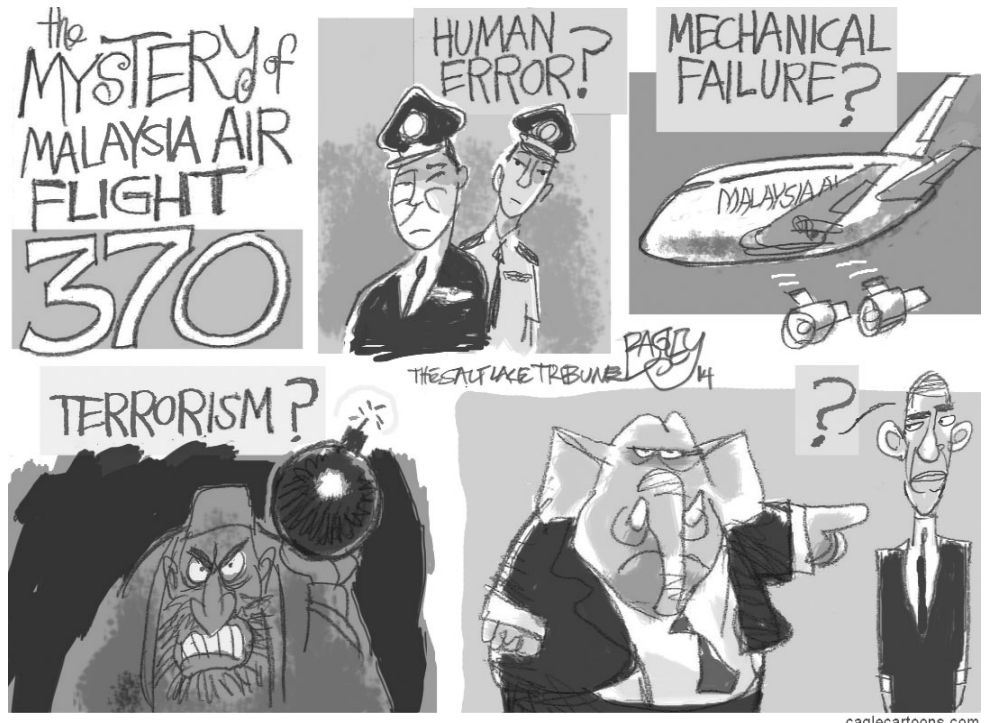
Great Tourney

Todd Larson, Yankton
Director, SE Region Special Olympics Basketball Tournament
Yankton volunteers shined again as the City hosted the SE Regional Basketball Tournament at the Summit Activities Center on Saturday, Feb. 22. The 2014 tournament was organized by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped officiate, scorekeep, run the clocks, and work at all the different events taking place on that Saturday. Thank you to the following people and groups who made the tournament a success: Byron Williams, Yankton High School Special Events Staff; Sheila Woodward, recruited and organized all officials, scorekeepers, and clock keepers; Hailey Baugh, Colby Benson, and Matt

Watt for singing the National Anthem; Don List and the VFW Color Guard for presenting the colors during the opening ceremonies; Pastor Jon Cooke for the invocation; Maddie Larson for carrying the Olympics Flame; Lincoln Waldner, for reading the athlete's oath; Kim Velk, from the Yankton County EMS for medical coverage; the Yankton Police Department for handing out awards; the Yankton High School cheerleaders for administering the cheer competition; the Yankton Sertoma Club for providing workers to the Basketball Skills competition; and a huge thank you to the Yankton Knights of Columbus for providing lunches to 400 athletes and 215 coaches and leaders.

If anyone was missed I apologize, but again "Thank You, Yankton" for making this tournament a shining star for Yankton.



Capitol Notebook

Texting Ban Is A Lawsuit Waiting For Day In Court

BY BOB MERCER

State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — The Legislature's decision to prohibit texting while driving didn't answer what happens for the eight cities and one county that already have bans in place.

Assuming the governor approves the ban, most of South Dakota will have a clear law to follow:

- Texting while driving will be illegal under most circumstances;
- The fine will be \$100; and
- Law enforcement can't write a ticket for texting unless the motorist was stopped for some other reason.

But uncertainty awaits motorists in Aberdeen, Mitchell, Watertown, Box Elder, Huron, Vermillion, Brookings, Sioux Falls and Pennington County.

Their local governments grew tired of waiting. They adopted local texting bans in the past two years.

The problem now is those city and county ordinances, depending on their exact wording, don't match the state ban.

Legislators knew this mismatch was out there. But they chose to overlook it Thursday when they voted to overwhelmingly approve the state ban.

They followed the advice of Sen. Mike Vehle, R-Mitchell, who urged them to not get lost chasing "bunny trails."

No one can say they weren't warned. House Speaker Brian Gosch, R-Rapid City, wanted to expressly prohibit local authorities from enacting, enforcing or expanding any measure that is contrary or varies from state laws regarding rules of the road.

Most of that is already in state law. Gosch wanted it clarified.

When negotiations on the ban broke down Tuesday, Vehle's supporters felt they had still won because local bans still stood.

Gosch didn't see it like that. He spoke pri-

vately with some legislators to arrange for negotiations to resume and to get new people as negotiators. On Wednesday afternoon, he made the motion in the House calling for a new conference committee.

He did something else. He privately told negotiators to remove his section specifically overriding the local ordinances.

He believes they already are illegal under existing state law. "It was only there," he said about the section he let be taken out, "to bring awareness to that statute."

Gosch is a 1996 graduate of the University of South Dakota law school. While a student he learned about a 1993 state Supreme Court case on a local traffic ordinance that didn't match state law.

In the State v. Eidahl decision, the Supreme Court upheld a circuit judge's decision to dismiss a drunk-driving arrest.

A Huron police officer had followed a woman who didn't use her turn signal on her final two turns.

The city ordinance required signals for all turns. State law required signals when another vehicle was present.

There wasn't proof of another vehicle in sight.

"This case presents an example of the precise conflict in existence," the justices wrote.

The driver's lawyer, Doug Fosheim, had just finished six years in the House. His father, Jon Fosheim, was a former chief justice of the Supreme Court.

Regarding the new texting ban, Gosch's opinion is local bans will be enforced, until someone fights a ticket in court.

When that happens, he expects local ordinances will be overruled.

What about cities with home rule such as Aberdeen, Watertown, Brookings and Sioux Falls? "I'll let the courts figure that out," Gosch said.

Pierre Report | Bernie Hunhoff

Youth Lose To Infrastructure In Session's Waning Hours

BY REP. BERNIE HUNHOFF

D-District 18 (Yankton)

Smart community development would balance infrastructure investments with programs that invest in people, especially our youth.

While some good happened in the 2014 legislative session, it ranks poorly in helping people succeed through education and health care. Here are some glaring failures:

• PRENATAL CARE — South Dakota has the highest infant mortality rate in the region, and yet Republican lawmakers blocked efforts to provide prenatal care for the unborn whose mothers aren't citizens of the U.S.

The children are American citizens with their first breaths, and taxpayers cover their deliveries and future costs but because they didn't get prenatal care the babies often end up in Neonatal Intensive Care Units that cost more than \$3,000 a day. Prenatal care would save lives, and it would save taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. But it didn't happen this year.

• AUTISM THERAPY — New therapies are very successful in helping kids with autism, but they are too expensive for many families. An effort requiring insurance coverage has failed even though it would have cost less than 50 cents per policy a month.

• BUILDING SOUTH DAKOTA — The future of a major economic development that was passed last year is also in doubt. Building South Dakota is designed to assist local schools with career tech programs, to partner with local affordable housing projects and to assist and encourage local ideas for entrepreneurship and small business startups.

But the revenue source for Building South Dakota is jeopardized by changes rammed through by Republican legislators. The next three years are adequately funded, but after that the program will have to depend on budget scraps in a complicated new formula that is based around budget reserves.



B. Hunhoff

Building South Dakota would have received about \$15 million a year under the original plan, but the annual funding is likely to be far less.

• MEDICAID EXPANSION — The worst decision of the 2014 Legislature is the stubborn refusal to provide Medicaid expansion for 48,000 uninsured South Dakotans.

Expansion would have infused \$274 million into the state's economy, and provided health care to all low income workers. It would have saved lives, provided a healthier workforce and created new jobs in health care.

South Dakota citizens are paying for the program through their federal taxes, so it is short-sighted to not participate. Expansion of Medicaid would save millions of dollars for county governments, lower health insurance rates by reducing the costs of indigent care and stabilize the budgets of smalltown community hospitals.

The Legislature also failed to address the state's teacher shortage, the rising cost of college and tech school tuition, the need for early childhood education and the low wage culture in South Dakota.

However, lawmakers did spend millions of dollars in the closing hours of the session on infrastructure — everything from water pipelines to fracking development, research parks, railroad tracks and pine beetles. All the above are worthy projects but its debatable whether general funds should be spent on them when basic priorities of government go unfunded.

It's sad that lawmakers can't find a better balance between investing in our people, especially our youth, and investing in brick and mortar and pine beetle wars. Sadly, the youth of South Dakota fared poorly in this session — especially youth who come from poverty backgrounds or face special challenges in life.

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**

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