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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

The US And China: Let's Get It Right

CHINA DAILY (March 19): He may have been overly optimistic in portraying relations between the United States and China as "friendship," but Max Baucus, the new US ambassador to China, hit the nail on the head when he said the two countries had to get their relationship right.

Despite all the rhetoric about a partnership, at the moment our countries are half-heartedly working together and endeavoring to build mutual trust because neither can afford to antagonize the other.

Ambassador Baucus' immediate predecessor, Gary Locke, didn't see much headway in improving bilateral ties, not because he didn't work hard. His less-than-impressive personal record in China was symptomatic of Washington's inability to adapt to a rapidly changing China.

Ambassador Baucus claims a long-running personal interest in China, having visited Beijing many times. However, that doesn't guarantee he will fare better. Which is why expectations aren't high.

Observers say Baucus has little experience of China, even less of diplomacy, and his expertise is largely confined to US trade policy.

However, the low expectations may actually be to his advantage. The close interdependence between Chinese and the US economies promises him a broad stage in Beijing. While his sponsoring of an un-enacted legislative proposal to punish China for "undervaluing" its currency may sound less than China-friendly, he will surely be embraced with gratitude here for championing this country's inclusion in the World Trade Organization in 2001.

Baucus' willingness to work across party lines in the US Senate may also prove an asset. The notorious "trust deficit" between Beijing and Washington calls for serious trust-building efforts from both sides, and his consensus-building expertise may make him an effective messenger between Beijing and Washington.

The Chinese leadership has proposed a new-type of relationship with the US, which Chinese President Xi Jinping encapsulated as "no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation." That proposal was received positively by Washington. Yet there is still no consensus on how to build such a relationship.

Trust-building will require long-term hard work. As a marathon enthusiast who once completed a 50-mile ultra-marathon, Baucus knows what each step means to reach the end of a protracted journey.

We wish him well in his new post, and hope his ambassadorship proves to be a significant step toward getting US-China relations right.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, March 20, the 79th day of 2014. There are 286 days left in the year. Spring arrives at 11:57 a.m. EDT.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On March 20, 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe's influential novel about slavery, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," was first published in book form after being serialized.

**On this date:** In 1727, physicist, mathematician and astronomer Sir Isaac Newton died in London.

In 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte returned to Paris after escaping his exile on Elba, beginning his "Hundred Days" rule.

In 1922, the decommissioned USS *Juniper*, converted into the first U.S. Navy aircraft carrier, was recommissioned as the USS *Langley*.

In 1933, the state of Florida electrocuted Giuseppe Zangara for shooting to death Chicago Mayor Anton J. Cermak at a Miami event attended by President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt, the presumed target, the previous February.

In 1952, the U.S. Senate ratified, 66-10, the Treaty of Peace with Japan.

In 1964, Irish poet, author and playwright Brendan Behan, 41, died in Dublin.

In 1969, John Lennon married Yoko Ono in Gibraltar.

In 1974, Britain's Princess Anne was the target of a kidnapping attempt near Buckingham Palace; the would-be abductor, Ian Ball, was captured. Former NBC News anchorman Chet Huntley, 62, died at his Montana home.

In 1985, Libby Riddles of Teller, Alaska, became the first woman to win the Iditarod Trail Dog Sled Race.

In 1994, El Salvador held its first presidential election following the country's 12-year-old civil war. (Armando Calderon Sol of the ARENA party led the vote, but needed to win a run-off to achieve the presidency.)

In 1995, in Tokyo, 12 people were killed, more than 5,500 others sickened when packages containing the poisonous gas sarin were leaked on five separate subway trains by Aum Shintoky cult members.

In 1999, Bertrand Piccard of Switzerland and Brian Jones of Britain became the first aviators to fly a hot-air balloon around the world nonstop as they floated over Mauritania past longitude 9 degrees west. (They landed safely in Egypt the next day.)

**Ten years ago:** Hundreds of thousands of people worldwide rallied against the U.S.-led war in Iraq on the first anniversary of the start of the conflict. The U.S. military charged six soldiers with abusing inmates at the Abu Ghraib prison. The Rev. Karen Dammann, a lesbian Methodist pastor, was acquitted of violating church doctrine in a trial held in Bothell, Wash. Taiwanese President Chen

Shui-bian narrowly won re-election a day after being shot in an assassination attempt. Former Dutch Queen Juliana died at age 94.

**Five years ago:** President Barack Obama reached out to the Iranian people in a video with Farsi subtitles, saying the U.S. was prepared to end years of strained relations if Tehran toned down its bellicose rhetoric; Iranian officials dismissed the overture, saying they wanted concrete change from Washington before they were ready to enter a dialogue. Pope Benedict XVI, visiting Angola, condemned sexual violence against women in Africa and chided those countries on the continent that approved abortion.

**One year ago:** Making his first visit to Israel since taking office, President Barack Obama affirmed Israel's sovereign right to defend itself from any threat and vowed to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. Five former elected officials of Bell, Calif., were convicted of misappropriating public funds by paying themselves huge salaries while raising taxes on residents; one defendant was acquitted. Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper signed bills that stop sweeping new restrictions on sales of firearms and ammunition. Rise Stevens, 99, a mezzo-soprano who sang with the Metropolitan Opera for more than 20 years spanning the 1940s and 1950s, died in New York.

**Today's Birthdays:** Singer Dame Vera Lynn is 97. Producer-director-comedian Carl Reiner is 92. Actor Hal Linden is 83. Former Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney is 75. Country singer Don Edwards is 75. TV producer Paul Junger Witt is 71. Country singer-musician Ranger Doug (Riders in the Sky) is 68. Hockey Hall-of-Famer Bobby Orr is 66. Blues singer-musician Marcia Ball is 65. Actor William Hurt is 64. Rock musician Carl Palmer (Emerson, Lake and Palmer) is 64. Rock musician Jimmie Vaughan is 63. Country musician Jimmy Seales (Shenandoah) is 60. Actress Amy Aquino is 57. Movie director Spike Lee is 57. Actress Theresa Russell is 57. Actress Vanessa Bell Calloway is 57. Actress Holly Hunter is 56. Rock musician Slim Jim Phantom (The Stray Cats) is 53. Actress-model-designer Kathy Ireland is 51. Actor David Thewlis is 51. Rock musician Adrian Oxaal (James) is 49. Actress Jessica Lundy is 48. Actress Liza Snyder is 46. Actor Michael Rapaport is 44. Actor Alexander Chaplin is 43. Rock singer Chester Bennington (Linkin Park) is 38. Actor Michael Genadry is 36. Actress Bianca Lawson is 35. Rock musician Nick Wheeler (The All-American Rejects) is 32. Actor Michael Cassidy is 31. Actress-singer Christy Carlson Romano is 30.

**Thought for Today:** "Spring makes everything young again except man." — Jean Paul Richter, German author (1763-1825).

FROM THE BIBLE

[I am] holding on to the word of life so that on the day of Christ I will have a reason to boast that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain. *Philippians 2:16 NIV.* Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

Access Issue

**Mary Alice Halverson, Yankton**  
In the March 12 edition of the *Press & Dakotan*, it was noted that there will be a major expansion of Majestic Bluffs Nursing Home to replace Yankton Care Center. As new fea-

tures are considered, hopefully better parking access will be included. The current north entrance, with long distances from parking, limit visits by the elderly to their family and friends. Hopefully, new construction will improve parking options.

Kindle's Korner

A Look At New Testing

DR. WAYNE KINDLE

Yankton School District Supt.

Like all South Dakota school districts, the Yankton School District will begin testing its students in grades 3 through 8 and 11 this month. Unlike the Dakota Step Test, the new Smarter Balanced Test will use online technology.

The new Smarter Balanced Test, will evaluate Math and English Language Arts, and is aligned to the Common Core Standards. The Common Core Standards adopted by the Yankton School District effective for the 2012-13 school year are required by state law.

Folks should know the testing done during the current year is a "trial run." Parents will not receive test results, and the state will not publish district results. As a school district, we are concerned about the testing for a variety of reasons.

We are concerned about any type of on-line shutdown due to overload with so many students testing at one time across the state. Students are required to use online calculators only, rather than their hand held calculators. While testing times are unlimited, this is concerning due to the length of the testing for our students. We have also encountered numerous testing protocol changes leading up to the testing window.

Above all and most concerning is the message being sent across the state to students is that this is a "trial run." As with any testing, we want our students to take testing seriously and to do their best. We also know students and parents are always concerned about testing results. Therefore, an enormous amount of time has been spent preparing our students for the online testing.

I want to thank our teachers and administrators for preparing our students for this testing. Their positive outlook in the face of uncertainty and ongoing changes being required by the South Dakota Department of Education and the Federal Department of Education, is truly appreciated as we begin testing.

STUDENT SAFETY

One concern in any school district is the safety of our students. A couple of weeks ago, I made a decision to end transporting our students on Highway 46. As most people know, this can be a dangerous road for many reasons.

Our bus drivers and activity staff have been notified they are no longer allowed to use Highway 46 as a route to events. We have instructed our drivers and activity staff to use Highway 50 and the interstate in lieu of Highway 46.

We have also budgeted money in our Capital Outlay Fund to upgrade some very outdated security cameras and add new security cameras throughout the school district. The enhanced technology will provide better security and safety for our students, and staff.

NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL MONTH

"At no other time in the life cycle are the chances of finding one's self and losing one's self so closely aligned." — Erik Erikson  
"It is during these middle years that young people form their own answers to the fundamental questions of life." — John Lounsbury

Those who work with 10- to 15-year-olds, regardless of the grade configuration of the school, understand that their school must meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of young adolescents.

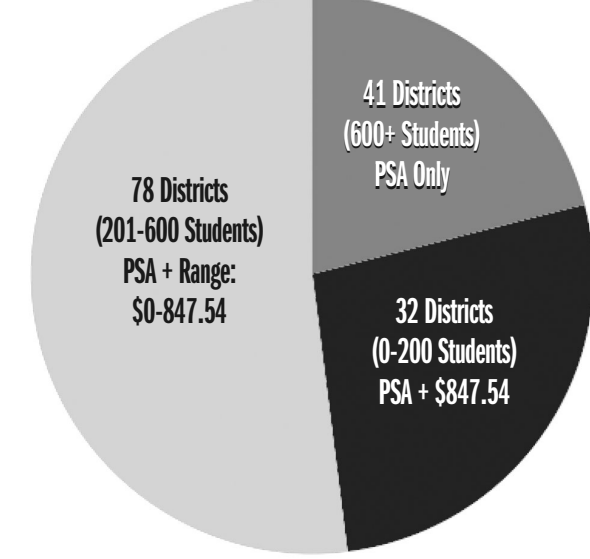
Other than from birth to age three, 10- to 15-year-olds are experiencing the most rapid, significant changes of their lives — changes that are physical, social, emotional, and cognitive in nature.

Successful schools working with the middle grades recognize that these students are seeking more independence and are highly peer centered. The changes they are experiencing affect their thinking and behavior. Yet, each student is maturing on his or her own timeline.

Middle grades curriculum should be relevant, challenging and interdisciplinary — and learning must be assessed through multiple measures, including real-life application and demonstration of knowledge and skills, and not solely based on state test scores.

Instruction should be as varied and diverse as the students themselves. It should take advantage of the young adolescents' need for movement and social interaction, engaging them in thought provoking, and interactive projects.

As many of you have read recently, the Yankton School District was awarded a \$284,000 Career and Technical Education Grant. This grant will be used to provide hands-on, thought provoking, and interactive projects. We will focus on Science Technology Engineering and Math, as



YANKTON SCHOOL DISTRICT  
This pie chart below shows the "Small School Adjustment" breakdown across the state by size of school district.

well as Heath Care through our Technical Education modules. Students attending Yankton Middle School will be a step ahead of other students across the state with these opportunities.

YSD DESIGN BUILD PROJECT UNDER WAY

At the Nov. 12, 2013, school board meeting, the Yankton School Board approved a \$2.87 million Design Build Project, which provides facility upgrades in all six school buildings. In addition, approval was given to finalize an application for a \$1,000,000 no interest loan from the State of South Dakota, payable over a five-year period. This loan will be used for the Design Build Project.

Work on the project has begun on the Design Build Project as follows:  
— YHS/SAC

The pool lighting will start on Monday, March 17, since the pool will be closed. There is some work to do in the boiler room that will occur simultaneously. The rest of the lighting will wait until after Prom. The steel structure strengthening will be after March 24, as the steel being manufactured is not completed.  
— Elementary Buildings

The rooftop units will be shipped directly to Kaiser Heating and Cooling. The curbs will be installed into the roofs sometime in the next 2-3 weeks as weather allows. Once the curbs are finished, rooftop units will be installed.

Yankton Middle School — no work will begin at YMS until April.

A number of local Yankton Contractors were awarded bids for the majority of the project:

- Electrical — L&S for Yankton Middle School, Beadle, Lincoln, and Stewart
- Plumbers (Mechanical & Domestic) — Fejfar Plumbing for Beadle, Lincoln, and Stewart
- Sheet Metal — Kaiser Heating and Cooling for Yankton High School, Yankton Middle School, Beadle Elementary School, Lincoln Elementary School, Stewart Elementary School, and Webster Elementary School
- General Construction — Wellf Construction — Yankton Middle School breezeway, wall openings/patching at Yankton Middle School, Beadle, Lincoln, Stewart, and Webster. Roof structural support for Yankton High School Auxiliary Gym A/C unit.

YANKTON HIGH SCHOOL BOWLING TEAM

Jim Palmer, owner of the Yankton Bowl, approached the school board at the September meeting with the idea of bringing back bowling at Yankton High School as a club sport.

The Yankton School Board approved the addition and recognition of bowling at Yankton High School as a club sport, with no additional cost to the school district. The addition of bowling at YHS has provided a wonderful opportunity to a group of students who may not have otherwise been involved with an activity outside of school.

Congratulations to our YHS Bowling Team on a very successful first year and with many more to come. A special thank you to Patrick King, Don Casey, and Todd Kautz who coached the club bowling team. They volunteered their time, talent, and resources to make this a very special year for student athletes.

Our gratitude to Jim Palmer for his initial presentation to the school board and his willingness to support this event throughout the school year. He was instrumental in the revival of bowling at Yankton High School.

BUCKS HEADED TO STATE

Congratulations to the Yankton Bucks, as they return to the State Boys Basketball Tournament being held March 20-22 at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City.

The fan support at our Activity and Fine Arts events has

been tremendous! On behalf of our entire Activity and Fine Arts program, I thank our community! All of these programs add to the value and importance of education our students receive in the Yankton School District.

SMALL SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT

At the request of several community members, I was asked if I would reprint the information regarding the Small School Adjustment. I am happy to honor this request.

Along with other schools in South Dakota currently receive a Per Student Allocation (PSA) of \$4625 per student enrolled in the YSD. In addition to the \$4625 Per Student Allocation, a majority of school districts in the state also receive additional money per pupil enrolled in their schools. This is called the "Small School Adjustment." However, we are not receiving that additional money. Let me explain.

During the 2007 legislative session, legislators changed the "The Small School Adjustment" to a fixed dollar amount per student based on a sliding scale that declines as enrollment grows. The "Small School Adjustment" can range from zero dollars per pupil up to \$847.54 per pupil in additional money for a school district.

In FY 2013, 110 (73 percent) of the 151 public school districts qualified for the "Small School Adjustment." Essentially, the "Small School Adjustment" was created to ensure additional funding for smaller schools, which helps them to provide an education to their students.

The smallest school districts, those with 200 or fewer students, received an additional \$847.54 per enrolled student. School districts with more than 200 students, but less than 600 students are assigned a per enrolled student increase on a sliding scale up to an additional \$847.54 per enrolled student.

Therefore, our school district patrons should understand that the Yankton School District receives no additional funding through the "Small School Adjustment."

As superintendent, I would like to see the other 41 public school districts receive at a minimum half the amount of the \$847.54 per pupil "Small School Adjustment." If this were the case, the Yankton School District would receive an additional of \$1,127,228. This additional funding would provide adequate revenue for a balanced budget.

KINDLE'S COFFEE

The coffee time is open to anybody who wishes to come and visit. The Superintendent will provide a 10-minute update on the Yankton School District. The building principal will give a 10-minute overview of their school, and a 15-minute tour of the building. The remaining 25 minutes will be Question-and-Answer time from those attending. Along with coffee, there will be rolls/donuts served.

The following are dates/times/locations for upcoming Kindle Coffees:

- April 9 — 9-9:45 a.m., Webster Elementary School
- May 14 — 9-9:45 a.m., Beadle Elementary School

In addition to the Kindle Coffees, I would be happy to visit with you personally or speak to your group/organization. I am also willing to host your group at our Administration Building or one of our school buildings. I would also come to your facility or meeting place.

If there is a specific topic you would like for me to address in the future, please call me at 665-3998 or email me at wkindle@ysd.k12.sd.us. Let's continue to have a great year!

Henry Ford stated, "Coming together is a beginning, Staying together is a process, Working together is a success."