

The Press & Dakotan

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We Say

Basin Basics



THUMBS UP to the South Dakota Legislature for approving a plan that would change water regulation so that it is based on river basins instead of individual counties. Despite some last-minute negotiations that moved the pilot project away from the Vermillion River basin, this is a good, practical idea — something we editorialized about several weeks ago. The flow of rivers and general land runoff does not stop at county boundaries. A river basin is a living system that impacts everyone in its drainage plain. This is a good move, and hopefully it brings more order to the regulation of water rights in regards to drainage in the future.

Numbers!



THUMBS UP to the record number of people who turned out for the Summit League Basketball Tournament held in Sioux Falls this past weekend. The event, which covered four days, smashed 11 attendance records for the tournament when 24,395 people attended the women's sessions and 35,612 attended the men's sessions for a total of 60,007. The previous combined record was 44,868. On a more local level, congratulations to the Cornemann family as they watched their daughter Chloe play a key role in leading the SDSU women to their sixth championship in seven years.

Warming Up



THUMBS UP to the unseasonably warm weather this week. Apart from the burn ban that was put into effect for Yankton County Tuesday and will run through Monday, March 16, due to the weather, we think everyone can agree the sunny skies are literally putting a “spring” in everyone's step. With temperatures approaching (but not quite reaching) 80 degrees Thursday (which is 29 warmer than last year's date), it is safe to say that spring is here.

The Letter



THUMBS DOWN to South Dakota Sens. John Thune and Mike Rounds and Nebraska Sens. Deb Fischer and Ben Sasse for being among the 47 Republican senators who signed a letter sent to Iran in an attempt to scuttle nuclear negotiations between that country and the United States and five other nations. OK, we get the political hostility of these times, and nothing seems to play better to a portion of the GOP base than politically neutering President Barack Obama. That explains the Netanyahu speech to Congress. But what these 47 senators really did was attempt not only to undercut a U.S. president on the global stage but also derail serious international negotiations involving a volatile area of the planet. The letter has been slammed not only (and naturally) by Democrats, but even some Republicans who refused to fall into this juvenile venture. While there has been some overreaction to this episode — the New York Daily News used the headline “Traitors” in its coverage — this does rank as an egregious and sad political commentary by politicians enamored with their illusions of self-clout. These people should know better than t hat, shouldn't they?

ONLINE OPINION

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

LATEST RESULTS:

Do you support the proposed nuclear deal with Iran?

No.....60%
Yes.....26%
Not sure.....14%
TOTAL VOTES CAST.....218

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:

Do you want to own and/or operate a drone?

To cast your vote in the **PRESS & DAKOTAN'S** Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, March 13, the 72nd day of 2015. There are 293 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On March 13, 1865, Confederate President Jefferson Davis signed a measure allowing black slaves to enlist in the Confederate States Army with the promise they would be set free.

On this date: In 1781, the seventh planet of the solar system, Uranus, was discovered by Sir William Herschel.

In 1845, Felix Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64, had its premiere in Leipzig, Germany.

In 1901, the 23rd President of the United States, Benjamin Harrison, died in Indianapolis at age 67.

In 1925, the Tennessee General Assembly approved a bill prohibiting the teaching of the theory of evolution. (Gov. Austin Peay signed the measure on March 21.)

In 1933, banks in the U.S. began to reopen after a “holiday” declared by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1947, the Lerner and Loewe musical “Brigadoon,” about a Scottish village which magically reappears once every hundred years, opened on Broadway.

In 1954, the Battle of Dien Bien Phu began during the First Indochina War as communist forces attacked French troops, who were defeated nearly two months later.

In 1964, bar manager Catherine “Kitty” Genovese, 28, was stabbed to death near her Queens, New York, home; the case gained notoriety over the supposed reluctance of Genovese's neighbors to respond to her cries for help.

In 1975, the first Chili's restaurant was opened in Dallas by entrepreneur Larry Lavine.

In 1980, Ford Motor Chairman Henry Ford II announced he was stepping down the same day a jury in Winamac, Indiana, found the company not guilty of reckless homicide in the fiery deaths of three young women in a Ford Pinto.

In 1995, two Americans working for U.S. defense contractors in Kuwait, David Daliberti and William Barloon, were seized by Iraq after they strayed across the border; sentenced to eight years in

prison, both were freed the following July.

In 2013, Jorge Bergoglio of Argentina was elected pope, choosing the name Francis.

Ten years ago: Pope John Paul II was released from the hospital and returned to his Vatican apartment overlooking St. Peter's Square. Robert Iger was named to succeed Michael Eisner as chief executive of The Walt Disney Co.

Five years ago: At least 30 people were killed in a series of Taliban suicide bombings in Afghanistan in what appeared to be a failed attempt to free inmates from a Kandahar prison. The Vatican denounced what it called aggressive attempts to drag Pope Benedict XVI into the spreading scandal of pedophile priests in his German homeland. With the biggest fight crowd in the U.S. in 17 years cheering him on at Cowboys Stadium, Manny Pacquiao dominated Joshua Clottey from the opening bell to retain his welterweight title.

One year ago: Seeking to pacify frustrated immigration advocates, President Barack Obama directed the government to find more humane ways to handle deportation for immigrants in the U.S. illegally. Former Florida Gov. Reubin Askew, who'd guided the state through a period of school busing to achieve integration in the 1970s, died in Tallahassee at age 85.

Today's Birthdays: Jazz musician Roy Haynes is 90. Country singer Jan Howard is 85. Songwriter Mike Stoller is 82. Singer-songwriter Neil Sedaka is 76. Opera singer Julia Milnes is 66. Actor William H. Macy is 65. Comedian Robin Duke is 61. Actress Glenn Headly is 60. Actress Dana Delany is 59. Rock musician Adam Clayton (U2) is 55. Jazz musician Terence Blanchard is 53. Actor Christopher Collet is 47. Rock musician Matt McDonough (Mudvayne) is 46. Actress Annabeth Gish is 44. Actress Tracy Wells is 44. Rapper-actor Common is 43. Rapper Khujo (Goodie Mob, The Lumberjacks) is 43. Singer Glenn Lewis is 40. Actor Danny Masterson is 39. Actor Noel Fisher is 31. Actor Emile Hirsch is 30. Singers Natalie and Nicole Albino (Nina Sky) are 29.

Thought for Today: “Dare to err and to dream. Deep meaning often lies in childish plays.” — Friedrich von Schiller, German author (1759-1805).

FROM THE BIBLE

[God] has also put His seal on us and given us His spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. 2 Corinthians 1:22. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



Dunking The President

BY KATHLEEN PARKER

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WASHINGTON — With a few tweaks to Scripture, herewith today's relevant verse: What therefore President Obama hath joined together, let Republicans put asunder.

The letter from 47 Republican senators to Iran's leaders proffering a civics lesson on the U.S. Constitution has predictably triggered outrage. In a sneeringly adolescent tone, the senators basically said that Obama will be gone in two years and they'll still be here. In other words, any agreement could be null in January 2017.

The letter was a bad but not apocalyptic idea and illustrates one of the more dangerous aspects of Washington's indigenous narcissistic disorder. The world does not revolve around one's own exclusive perspective or wisdom — she wrote, ironically.

It must be relatively simple as one clips along the marble halls of the Russell Building, speaking only to those of like mind, to decide that undermining the president is a public service. Hating the president isn't personal; it's a national imperative! He's not *our* leader, after all. Therefore, he shall not be allowed to lead. Collateral damage? Well, such is the toll we pay for trust, justice and My Way.

Yes, the preceding paragraph could as easily have been written about the president, whose approach to governance has become an executive action (or agreement, in this case) and a pen. The disorder isn't unique to one party and is, apparently, highly contagious.

Sen. Tom Cotton, the freshman senator from Arkansas, whom Salon anointed “Sarah Palin with a Harvard degree,” led the charge not only against Iran but also against the president of the United States, not to mention our allies.

What a pity that my editors insist that I've used up my lifetime quota of “ain't just whistlin' Dixie.” Had I known a senator named Cotton was heading to the Hill, I'd have exercised greater restraint through the years.

Instead, I'm reduced to noting that ol' Tom Cotton, who is actually the youngest senator, is wasting no time establishing himself as a party leader. Rounding up other Republican signatories, Cotton launched a bunker buster smack in the middle of the negotiations. But to what avail? Iran quickly dismissed the letter as “propaganda.” Democrats were forced into a partisan corner. Even the seven heroic Republicans who



Kathleen PARKER

declined to sign the letter have been undermined as they fix their sights on a longer-term strategy to derail a bad deal.

Sen. Bob Corker, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, who did not sign the letter, has sponsored what he hoped would be a veto-proof bill requiring congressional approval of any deal with Iran. But to be veto-proof, he needs Democrats.

Nice going, guys.

In the great meanwhile, inching up to the March 24 framework deadline with Iran, there is as yet no deal to protest nor details to fret about. The “framework” is a sort-of, more-or-less outline of theoretically agreeable points, while the “deadline” is a kind-sorta aspirational goal line for a deal that may or may not happen.

So what was the rush to tell Iran, essentially, “*You're wasting your time*”? The 47 senators are like food critics who condemn a chef before he's finished preparing the entree. Their letter also signals to the world that they have zero respect for our president, nor for the other world powers attempting to try diplomacy first.

This cannot have been helpful to any but the signees' legendary standing in their own minds. In comments about the letter, his lips stretched a little tighter than usual, Obama suggested that the 47 were seeking “common cause” with Iran's hard-right religious leaders.

The foregoing observations don't mean that Republicans are wrong about their concerns. Many Democrats are concerned, too. No American disagrees that Iran is a bad actor undeserving of faith or trust. But there are other ways to accomplish our goals than profiling for political profit. The 47 may have felt like Zorro inking their opposition with the bold felt tips of their swords, but they were acting like children at the school fair whose single purpose is to dunk the principal.

No one is jockeying for a bad deal, plainly. And everyone at the table and beyond knows that the U.S. and Israel will not allow Iran to get a nuclear weapon. Period. Thus, an attempt at a diplomatic agreement is more than a hedge against the unthinkable — a nuclear-armed Iran. It is a message to the world that if and when we do take military action, it will be as a last resort.

At least we tried.

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Kelly Hertz

BY KELLY HERTZ

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This is the answer.

It's the answer to a question I encountered a couple of months ago while talking on the phone with a journalist from California. This conversation took place during one of the occasional frigid spells we endured this winter. The journalist informed me she was a California native and genuinely couldn't fathom how anyone could live in a climate that could turn so cold, so bitter, so inhospitable.

Thus, her question to me was, in effect, “*Why?*”

I told her it's because, when spring finally does arrive after a long and unforgiving winter, it feels miraculous.

In other words, days like the last few we've enjoyed here in the Yankton area — with one week still left on winter's clock — are the answer.

This is the answer to the drumbeat of shivering complaints I hear annually about winter — complaints sometimes muttered by myself in some of the icier moments of the season.

It's the answer to all those people who call into question our sanity for putting up with such seasonal misery.

This is why we endure it.

This is how we survive it.

And we can revel in the answer now, although we may actually feel guilty about it. Clearly, the Yankton area has not experienced anything this winter like the people in New England have been buried in. We didn't see the parade of blizzards; we were only sideswiped by the freight trains of brutal cold that raced toward the eastern seaboard. (I mean, YOU may feel guilty. As for me, I'm feeling pretty good about the whole thing.)

But winter is what it is, and no matter how heavy its burden is in any given year, it's still something we all must endure for many dark, frozen months.

Each winter is a siege. The season doesn't arrive gently like summer or fall; it usually invades like an army. It surrounds us and forces us to dig in and fortify the ramparts. It forcibly occupies the land and the water, it devours the light and it steals the life from creation. As a result, it

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Show Of Ignorance

Fr. Tim Lange Yankton.

Regarding the report on Nebraska's gay marriage ban being upheld (*Press & Dakotan*, March 6). It seems that this was a very one-sided report by one man who is for gay marriage.

We are a government for the people & by the people but when 70 percent of the people voted to support the ban, the government is overstepping their power and trust.

It comes down to an ignorance of the teaching in the Bible. God made one man for one

woman, Adam and Eve, in the book of Genesis. Some centuries later, Jesus upheld that teaching.

In this age of relativism lawmakers & a minority of persons cannot change that teaching. It would be easier to rule that 2 plus 2 = 5 than to change God's laws which cannot be changed.

Mr. Kruse concludes by saying, “This whole thing is about human rights.” Granted there are human rights but this is not one of them!

By this report, it makes me wonder how biased the staff of your newspaper is and how ignorant they might be on God's laws which are absolute and cannot be changed!