

# The Press & Dakotan

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## We Say

### Light It Up



**THUMBS UP** to the City of Yankton for pursuing new Christmas lighting for the roadways. OK, this isn't exactly the most pressing issue facing the community, but it does address a glaring darkness that settled upon Yankton during the holiday season. For too long, Yankton's holiday lighting has been rather nondescript; in fact, one is sometimes hard pressed to notice the lighted items along Broadway, for instance. And as memory serves, an effort to upgrade the lighting a few years ago produced some rather unnoticeable results. Holiday lighting can actually draw some people to town, which certainly doesn't hurt the retail sector. Hopefully, this effort injects some new light into this dark situation.

### Tourney Time



**THUMBS UP** to the 25th annual Roger Haas Memorial Basketball Tournament — now known as the Hansen-Haas Memorial Basketball Tournament — which takes place tonight (Friday) and Saturday in Yankton. A lot has changed in this tournament through the years besides the name: We can remember, for instance, the days when games were played at every available basketball court in the city (including some outdoor courts ... or so it seemed sometimes). Through it all, the tournament has grown and has become one of the signature events for young basketball players, as well as their coaches and fans, in the region. It's the people who make the tournament work: the organizers and the volunteers who allow this great tournament to happen each spring. Thanks goes out to all of them. We hope everyone has a great weekend.

### Poor Choice Of Words



**THUMBS DOWN** to Nebraska State Sen. Ernie Chambers (Omaha), for this week comparing the police to the Islamic State (ISIS) terrorist group. During a public hearing last week about concealed handguns, Chambers said that residents in his north Omaha district generally have more to fear from police than from a terrorist group. "My ISIS is the police. Nobody from ISIS ever terrorized us as a people as the police do us daily. And they get away with it," said Chambers, who is African-American. To be fair, Chambers insists that people should look at his comments in their entire context — which is his contention that African-Americans have often been treated harshly by law enforcement. But even so, using ISIS as an example is an incendiary piece of hyperbole that recklessly pushes a handy red button to invoke emotional reaction. Chambers' point could have and should have been made without that volatile comparison, which has overshadowed the real point of his comment.

## 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 renovating Yankton's Crane Youngworth Field?**  
Yes.....45%  
No, they should move the football games to Williams Field.....40%  
Not sure/don't care.....15%  
**TOTAL VOTES CAST** .....329

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 support increasing the speed limit on South Dakota interstate highways to 80 miles per hour?**  
To cast your vote in the **PRESS & DAKOTAN'S** Internet poll, log on to our website at [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net).

## ABOUT THIS PAGE

The View page provides a forum for open discussion of issues and interests affecting our readers. Initialed editorials represent the opinion of the writer, but not necessarily that of the **PRESS & DAKOTAN**. Bylined columns represent the view of the author. We welcome letters on current topics. Questions regarding the Views page should be directed to Kelly Hertz at [kelly.hertz@yankton.net](mailto:kelly.hertz@yankton.net).

## IN HISTORY

**By The Associated Press**  
Today is Friday, March 27, the 86th day of 2015. There are 279 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On March 27, 1945, during World War II, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower told reporters in Paris that Germany's main defensive line on the Western Front had been broken.

**On this date:** In 1513, Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon sighted present-day Florida.

In 1884, the first telephone line between Boston and New York was inaugurated.

In 1912, first lady Helen Herron Taft and the wife of Japan's ambassador to the United States, Viscountess Chinda, planted in Washington the first two of 3,000 cherry trees given as a gift by the mayor of Tokyo.

In 1933, Japan officially withdrew from the League of Nations.

In 1940, Alfred Hitchcock's first American movie, "Rebecca" starring Laurence Olivier and Joan Fontaine, premiered in Los Angeles.

In 1958, Nikita Khrushchev became Soviet premier in addition to First Secretary of the Communist Party.

In 1964, Alaska was hit by a magnitude 9.2 earthquake (the strongest on record in North America) and tsunamis that together claimed about 130 lives.

In 1975, construction began on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, which was completed two years later.

In 1977, 583 people were killed when a KLM Boeing 747, attempting to take off, crashed into a Pan Am 747 on the Canary Island of Tenerife.

In 1980, 123 workers died when a North Sea floating oil field platform, the Alexander Kieland, capsized during a storm.

In 1990, the U.S. began test broadcasts of TV Martí to Cuba, which promptly jammed the signal.

In 1995, "Forrest Gump" won six Academy Awards, including best picture and a second consecutive best actor Oscar for Tom Hanks; Jessica Lange won best actress for "Blue Sky."

**Ten years ago:** Pope John Paul II delivered an Easter Sunday blessing to tens of thousands of people in St. Peter's Square, but the ailing pontiff was unable to speak and managed only to greet the saddened crowd with a sign of the cross. In a live Internet interview with the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Michael Jackson declared himself "completely innocent" of

child molestation charges, and said he was the victim of a conspiracy.

**Five years ago:** Lights were switched off across the world from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. local time to mark Earth Hour, an event organized by the World Wildlife Fund to highlight concerns about global warming. President Barack Obama announced he would bypass a vacationing Senate and name 15 people to key administration jobs using recess appointments. Mao Asada of Japan beat Olympic champion Yuna Kim of South Korea to win her second title at the World Figure Skating Championships, held in Turin, Italy.

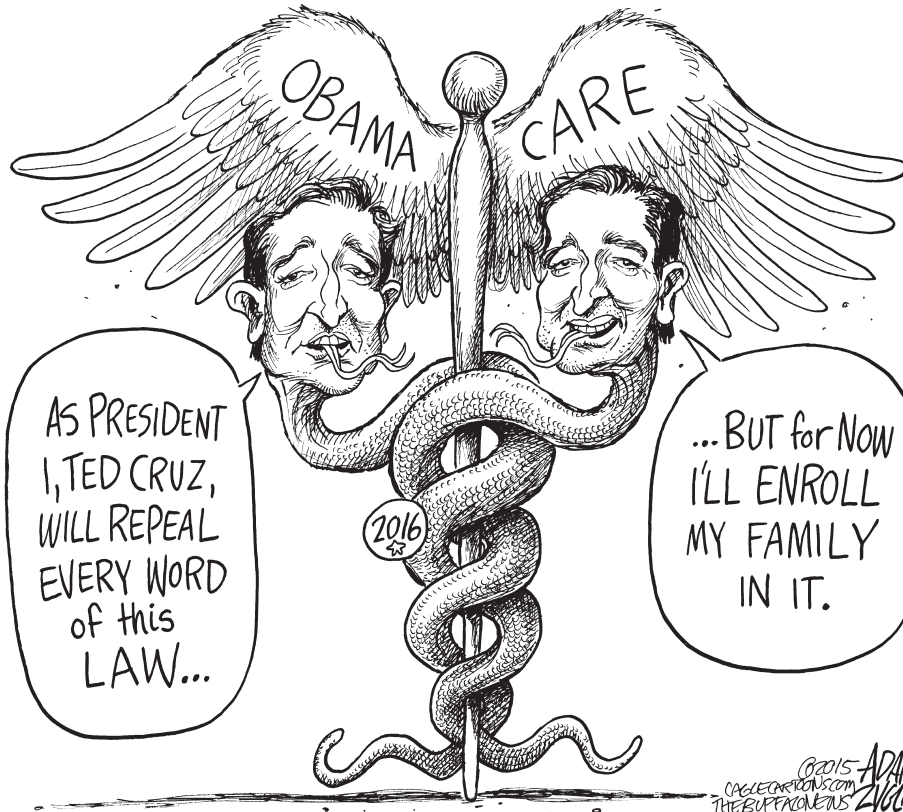
**One year ago:** Face to face at the Vatican for the first time, President Barack Obama and Pope Francis focused on their mutual respect and shared concern for the poor. The U.S. Air Force took the extraordinary step of firing nine midlevel nuclear commanders and announcing it would discipline dozens of junior officers at a nuclear missile base, responding firmly to an exam-cheating scandal. A judge in Missoula, Montana, sentenced Jordan Graham to more than 30 years in prison for killing Cody Johnson, her husband of eight days, by pushing him from a cliff in Glacier National Park. James Schlesinger, 85, who'd held a long string of Cabinet and other high-level positions in three U.S. administrations, died in Baltimore.

**Today's Birthdays:** Dance company director Arthur Mitchell is 81. Actor Julian Glover is 80. Actor Jerry Lacy is 79. Hall of Fame racer Cale Yarborough is 76. Actor-director Austin Pendleton is 75. Actor Michael York is 73. Rock musician Tony Banks (Genesis) is 65. Rock musician Andrew Farriss (INXS) is 56. Jazz musician Dave Koz is 52. Movie director Quentin Tarantino is 52. Rock musician Derrick McKenzie (Jamiroquai) is 51. Rock musician Johnny April (Staind) is 50. Actress Talisa Soto is 48. Actress Pauley Perrette is 46. Singer Mariah Carey is 45. Rock musician Brendan Hill (Blues Traveler) is 45. Actress Elizabeth Mitchell is 45. Actor Nathan Fillion is 44. Hip-hop singer Fergie (Black Eyed Peas) is 40. Actress Megan Hilty is 34. Actress Emily Ann Lloyd is 31. Actress Brenda Song is 27. Pop singer/songwriter Kimbra is 25. Actress Taylor Atelian is 20.

**Thought for Today:** "Fanaticism consists in redoubling your effort when you have forgotten your aim." — George Santayana, American philosopher (1863-1952).

## FROM THE BIBLE

In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:6. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



# Missing The Lights

BY KELLY HERTZ  
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I've officially decided that I really miss the traffic lights at Fourth and Walnut in Yankton.

Those lights were removed last year, a consequence (in part) of the transfer of postal operations away from the now former post office at that aforementioned downtown intersection. It was determined that the vehicular traffic no longer warranted having traffic signals there.

But that decision now often feels like a mistake. The fact has occurred to me several times in the last few months as I've tried to navigate my vehicle onto Fourth Street, also known as Highway 50, and was forced to wait seemingly forever (or at least two minutes, whichever term better applied to my level of patience at a given moment) while either small packs or large waves of vehicles buzzed by. That's also become clear while I've waited and waited for the right moment to simply walk (or, as a desperate last resort, jog) across the street.

In short, this portion of Fourth St., which can be rather quiet at times, has a tendency to be an intermittent nuisance.

And now it's about to be magnified. The renovation of Highway 50, a two-year project that will stretch from Broadway east to Archery Drive, officially kicked off this week with the letting of construction bids. Work is scheduled to begin sometime next month, which means traffic patterns will be altered and congested, which also means trying to navigate Fourth Street is going to be even more of an adventure.

It turns out there is still a lot of traffic in the downtown district — especially, of course, Fourth Street/Highway 50, which is the only significant road heading east out of town. (Sorry, but Old Highway 50 doesn't count.) The fact that Fourth Street hooks up with an expressway on the eastern edge of the city automatically makes it a vital artery.

But there are also a lot of people who work and/or frequent the downtown district in general, and they are sometimes caught in this waiting game, left to look for that right moment to finally slip onto 50.

That's why the removal of the traffic lights at Fourth and Walnut has frequently turned into an impatient and lamentable inconvenience.

I wasn't sure of this when the lights were scrapped last year. I understood the reasons



Kelly HERTZ

why it was done, even beyond the removal of the postal hub. Traffic counts from all four directions at the intersection had to be factored into the decision, and the southbound traffic moving down Walnut probably wasn't strong enough to warrant the lights. The probable drop in northbound numbers — post-post office — simply reinforced the matter. And, given the community's northward development, I suppose it made sense.

But removing the lights at Walnut has turned the Fourth Street stretch from Douglas Avenue west to Broadway into a short but hectic drag race. While the traffic is not necessarily constant, it does tend to attack in waves, especially after shift changes at manufacturing plants and during the late-afternoon drive time. (And 5 p.m. on Fridays is still frequently a circus.) If westbound traffic on Highway 50 catches the green light at Douglas, vehicles have a long, unfettered shot to Broadway, which usually means they're moving faster and paying less attention to what's coming in from the side streets. The lights at the Walnut intersection, which were synched with the lights at Douglas, created predictable breaks in the traffic flow, which allowed for a better and safer overall flow of traffic accessing Fourth. But those breaks — and that flow — are gone.

What's going to happen starting next month and through the summer and fall could be annoyingly interesting. During that time, Yankton will see the world youth archery tournament, numerous other tournaments and conventions (particularly in June) and, of course, Riverboat Days. Patience is going to be put to a vigorous test as people try to travel through the downtown district.

One saving grace in all this is that it's a sign of progress and a down payment on better things to come. The community endured the slogging Broadway reconstruction a few years ago, which really frayed some nerves, but we got a much better roadway out of it. We'll probably see the same thing with Highway 50, and that will be nothing but good for Yankton.

But there will still be those of us who will be sitting at stop signs waiting out the herds of traffic on Fourth Street. And there is no light at the end of that tunnel.

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/).

## Kathleen Parker

# Wacko Birds Nesting In Senate

BY KATHLEEN PARKER  
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WASHINGTON — President Obama got it two-thirds right when he said that the delayed confirmation of his attorney general nominee, Loretta Lynch, is owing to Senate dysfunction and Republican stubbornness.

He left out the part about Democratic intransigence and at least one incident of "wacko-birdness" from the left.

When John McCain originally used "wacko-birds" to describe a few of his Senate colleagues, including now-presidential candidate Ted Cruz, he seems to have released a contagion. The U.S. Senate, once the perch of eagles, has begun to resemble an aviary of grackles. Much a-cawing about little.

Lynch's qualifications aren't really in question. Most agree that she's more than up to the job, yet her confirmation has been stalled by Republicans who want something in exchange for their blessings. Within this construct are at least four moving parts that have little or nothing to do with Lynch's confirmation — sex trafficking, abortion, race and immigration.

If you're not confused, stick around.

First up, abortion and sex. What else?

Republicans are demanding a (Henry) Hyde Amendment-type component to the sex-trafficking bill. This sort of restriction of federal spending for abortion has routinely been included without debate in relevant legislation for nearly 40 years. This time, Democrats say no-go.

Republicans respond: No Hyde, no Lynch.

Both points of view have merit though neither is germane to the Lynch nomination — or necessarily apt in this particular piece of legislation. We are, after all, talking sex trafficking of mostly women and children, some of whom may have become pregnant in the process. Given that most Republicans are willing to grant exceptions to their anti-abortion stance for victims of rape or incest (the language for which is included in the Hyde Amendment), I'm not sure what either Republicans or Democrats are worried about. With or without the Hyde language, a sex slave is going to get what she needs medically.

Meanwhile, what does it profit the GOP to tie the confirmation of Lynch — who would be the first African-American female attorney general — to legislation that needn't be controversial?

Answer: It doesn't. Lynch has been waiting in the wings now for longer than any other attorney general nominee in U.S. history. Repub-

licans, principled or not, have merely opened themselves up to challenges of racism and even sexism.

Clamoring to this low branch is grackle du jour Sen. Dick Durbin, whose hyperbole is exceeded only by his wearying lack of originality. Republicans, he cawed, are forcing Lynch to "sit in the back of the bus."

The "bus"? Really? The back burner, perhaps, but the Lynch debate hardly centers on race relations in America. Now if we were talking about coffee ...

Durbin has earned ample criticism for his remark, but the double standard deserves a fresh airing. To wit, or *tu-whoo*, if I am to sustain this now-burdensome bird metaphor, Durbin's vote against Condoleezza Rice for secretary of state 10 years ago. Was he being racist?

Finally, we arrive at the fourth moving part — immigration. All but four Republican senators thus far say they won't confirm Lynch because of her kinda, sorta, roundabout cautious embrace of Obama's executive actions on immigration as at least "reasonable."

At least these objections are based somewhat on concerns about legal reasoning, but are they smart? One of the GOP's persistent flaws is picking the wrong battles — and this seems yet another.

As a matter of record, nearly every president in the past 50 years has taken some executive action on immigration. More to the core of the problem, Republicans could have pre-empted the president's action with a comprehensive reform bill. Instead, they've taken a piecemeal approach, first by threatening to shut down Homeland Security (brilliant!) and now trying to block access to Earned Income Tax Credit for immigrants affected by Obama's executive action.

The quid for their quo isn't applause but fresh nourishment for three familiar narratives: Republicans wage war on women; Republicans are racists; Republicans don't like Latinos. It doesn't matter that these are false, just as are right-wing taunts that Obama is a Muslim who hates America.

It only matters that the narratives survive through this election cycle. In the game of branding and perception, truth sits in the back of a bus called Narrative, steered by a wacko bird called Twitter. And Republicans seem to get off on the wrong stop every time.

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